

TRUCK NEWS

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Business outlook

Three 'game-changer' issues to define trucking in 2016

By **Sonia Straface**

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Electronic logging devices, Phase 2 of the greenhouse gas regulations for heavy trucks and the driver shortage will be the three main issues facing the trucking industry in 2016.

That was the assessment of Ontario Trucking Association and Canadian Trucking Alliance CEO David Bradley, when speaking recently at the PeopleNet Canada Transportation Symposium in downtown Toronto.

Bradley said that ELDs, GHG17 and the driver shortage are the three "game-changer" issues affecting the trucking industry and that they should be the focus for the industry going forward if it is to prosper. Though claiming to be upbeat and hopeful for the sector's future, Bradley warned that if government and industry don't take these issues seriously, it could be in some hot water.

ISSUE #1: Mandating ELDs

In March 2015, the federal Transport Minister at the time, Lisa Raitt, announced that she was personally supporting the use of electronic logging devices in order to improve safety for everyone on the road.

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Heiko Lichtenberger has been named the 2015 Owner/Operator of the Year. Photo by Derek Clouthier.

Making the most of a second chance Owner/Operator of the Year Heiko Lichtenberger overcomes adversity to 'Keep on trucking'

By **James Menzies**

Heiko Lichtenberger wears his heart on his sleeve, in the form of a tattoo. The 2015 *Truck News* Owner/Operator of the Year revealed during a dinner in his honour that he has booked an appointment with his tattoo artist and was scheduled to have 'Keep on Trucking' permanently inscribed on the inside of his right forearm in mid-December. A portion of his \$6,000 cash prize was set aside for the new ink.

Lichtenberger also took home a diamond ring, a plaque and a variety of prizes from the award's sponsors, Castrol and Goodyear, including a year's supply of heavy-duty engine oil. He and a guest were also flown to Toronto from his home in Calgary, Alta. to receive the award.

Lichtenberger, who drives for Emerald Park, Sask.-based D.J. Knoll Transport, may have travelled further - geographically, at least - than any previous Owner/Operator of the Year to win the prestigious honour. He was born and raised in northwestern Germany, where from an early age he dreamed of becoming a truck driver, though his fa-

ther had different plans for his future.

"Since I was a little boy, I wanted to drive a big truck just like my brother did," Lichtenberger explained. "My dad, on the other hand, wanted me to follow in his footsteps and be a bricklayer. In fact, I did actually train for three years to become a bricklayer but I failed the certification exam three times and was not allowed to take it again. On the bright side, this gave me the opportunity to pursue my dream - employment insurance would pay for me to become a truck driver!"

In Germany, Lichtenberger hauled everything from wood chips in walking floor trailers to chemical tankers. His trucking career took him through the Netherlands, France, Spain, Denmark, Belgium, Sweden, Portugal, Austria, the Czech Republic and Russia. But it was a chance meeting with a recruiter while vacationing in Canada that brought Lichtenberger and his wife permanently to North America.

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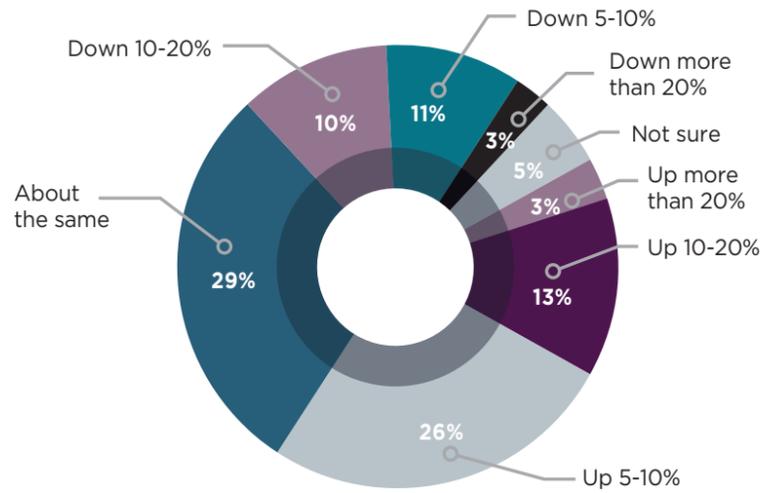


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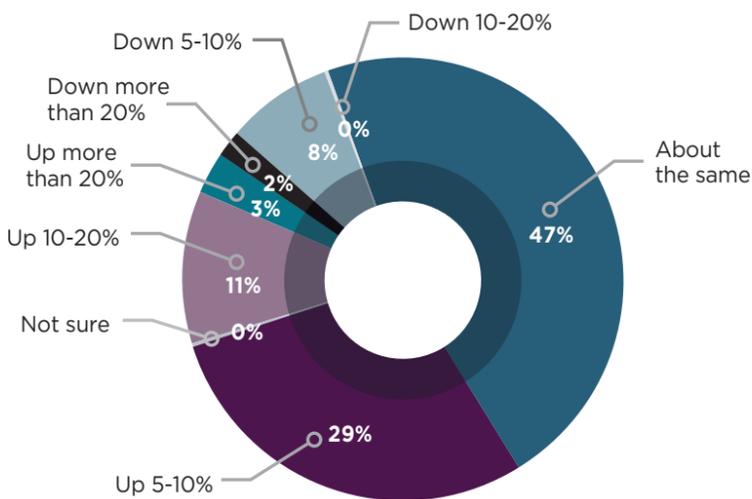
FAST FORWARD

As Canadian shippers, who cut back on their freight volumes this year, look ahead to 2016, they see a similar year, interim results from our annual Transportation Buying Trends Survey indicate. Just a little over 40% expect to grow their freight volumes in 2016 - a similar amount to those who grew their shipments this year. On the good news side, 47% expect their freight volumes to remain even, compared to 29% who thought likewise last year.

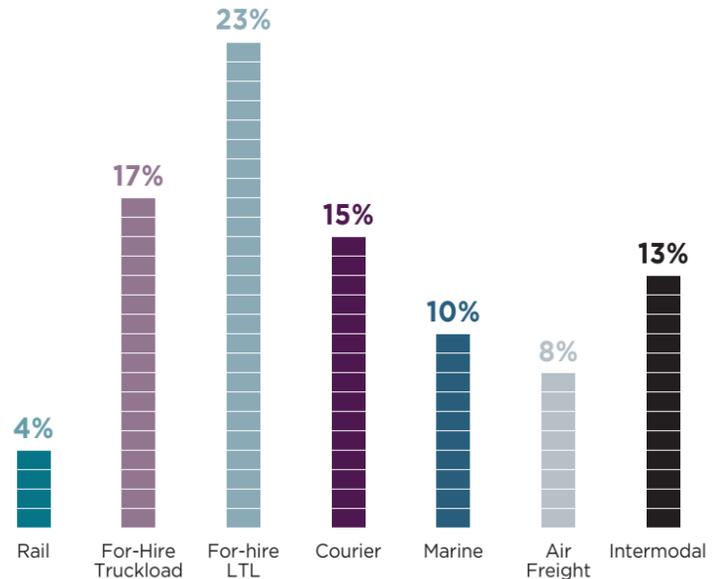
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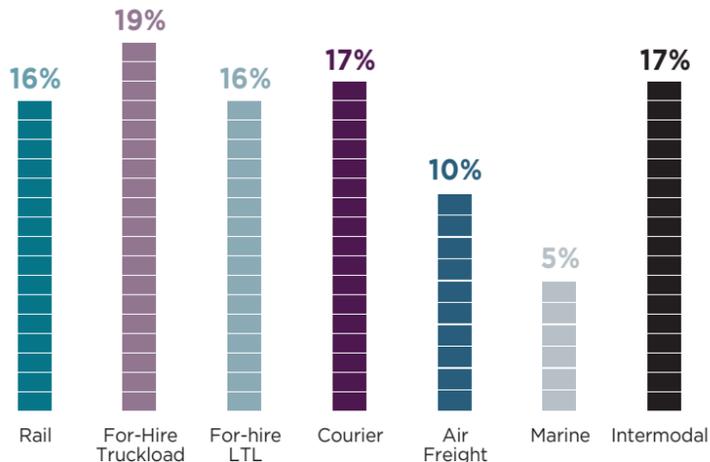
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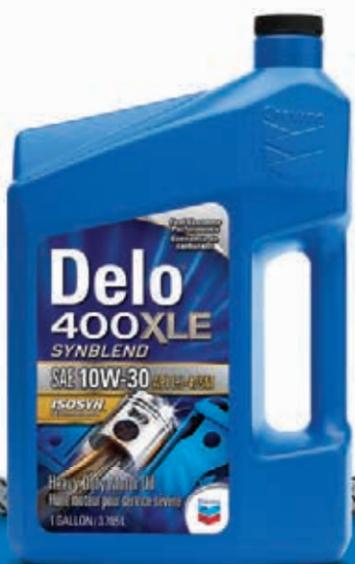
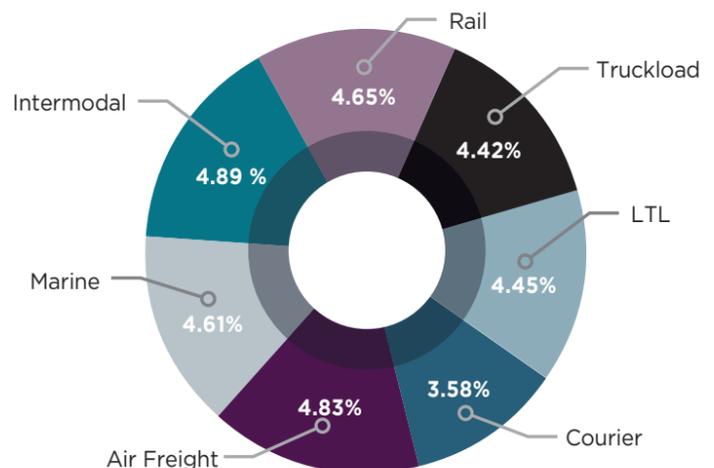
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Shipper perceptions of capacity by mode (10 = tight capacity; 1 = excess capacity; 5 balanced capacity)



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Editorial Comment

JAMES MENZIES



Three lessons learned in 12 hours

A couple weeks ago, I spent 12 hours in a truck making an LCV rounder from Moncton to Edmunston, N.B. Going out with a professional driver on a real-world run is something I do as often as I can, but still not often enough.

A ride-along is something everyone in the industry who is one step removed from the steering wheel should do on occasion. I learned or re-affirmed a few things on my drive. For starters, if you're spec'ing trucks the same way you were 10 or 12 years ago, you're doing it wrong. The spec'ing process has evolved drastically in recent years. A heavy-duty engine today can be configured 1,000 different ways and dialed in to optimize performance and fuel economy in the specific route and application you run for the specific payload you haul.

Also, never before have the various powertrain components been as well integrated and interconnected as they are today. It's really a good time to revisit how you spec' new equipment and to work closely with your engine and OEM representatives to ensure you're getting

the most out of your vehicles, as Armour Transport did with the vehicle I rode along in on our trip to Edmunston.

My second takeaway was that automation truly is king. I've driven enough trucks with automated transmissions and interviewed enough drivers - including old-school professionals who've worked a stick for decades - to conclude that automated transmissions are well-suited for the vast majority of applications out there. I can't remember the last time I spoke to a driver who experienced one of today's current-generation automated manual transmissions (AMTs) and pined for his old stickshift back.

I defy you to convince me otherwise. I don't want to hear about the time you drove one of the original three-pedal AutoShifts or Freedomline transmissions and then swore off AMTs for good; I'm talking about current generation product such as the I-Shift, mDrive, DT12 or UltraShift Plus. There's not much these transmissions can't do and even long-time drivers who approach them with an open mind usually concur. AMTs have

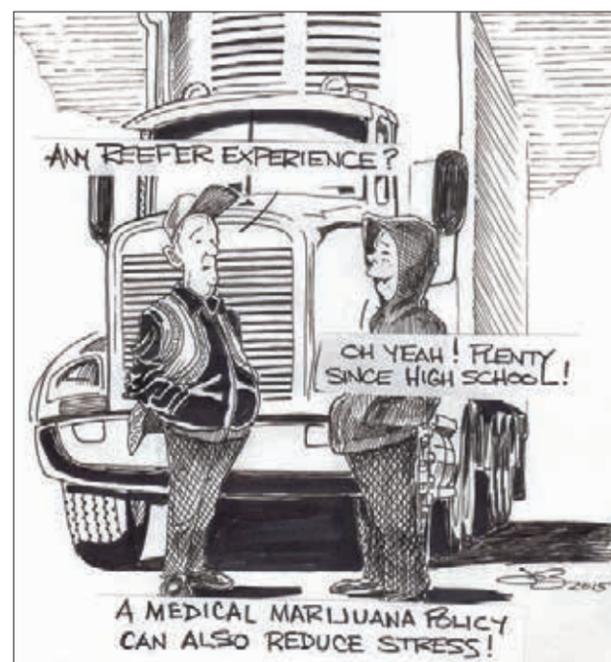
truly come of age.

Lastly, my ride reaffirmed something I already knew - that trucking is a damned tough job. The driver I rode along with, Dwayne Schurman of Armour Transport, put in a 12-hour day pulling double-53s, stopping at the switch yard to do the LCV shuffle: Drop the trailing trailer, disconnect the converter dolly, park the lead trailer, connect to a new lead trailer, reconnect the dolly and then slide it under a new 'tail.' All this in about 30 minutes on a frigid November night.

I was exhausted when we returned back to Armour's yard around 2 a.m. - and not only because I haven't seen 2 a.m. in several years. It wears a guy out - and I was just riding. And I got to go back to my comfy Marriott bed while Dwayne climbed into the bunk for his sleep, ready to repeat the entire process the next three nights. I couldn't do what you guys (and

gals) do. I want to thank Dwayne, the consummate professional for having me along for the ride. A 12-hour stint in the truck can be exhausting, but as I told Dwayne, it still beats a day in the office. ●

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The view with Lou

LOU SMYRLIS



Under one roof and ready to expand

Every year at this time I take this space to comment on the developments and trends I believe will shape our industry in the years ahead.

This year I need to take a more inward-focused approach and share with you the changes that will reshape the publications I head as publisher and editorial director, *Truck News*, *Truck West* and *Motortruck Fleet Executive*. You see, 2015 proved to be a momentous year for us. After almost 30 years of intense competition with our rivals *Today's Trucking*, *Transport Routier* and *Truck and Trailer*, owned by Newcom Business Media, we all came under one roof at the start of this year. Newcom purchased about a third of the assets of our former owners, Business Information Group, with my trucking group being the largest part. The bold move created the Newcom Trucking Group, the largest and most diverse

publishing group dedicated to Canada's trucking industry and the largest and most experienced editorial team.

Since the announcement we've devoted most of our time to fine-tuning back-office operations. With the coming of the new year, however, expect to see more visible, more exciting changes.

Truck News and *Truck West* will continue as the newspapers to the industry but we've added a full-time editor to *Truck West* as we build our presence in the West. Those of you interested in used trucks and trailers must check out our new Marketplace section, which is now linked with the TruckandTrailer.ca Web site and search engine.

One of the most significant changes will be our focus on a segment of the Canadian trucking market we felt has traditionally been underserved: truck fleet maintenance. Maintenance managers

and service professionals are the backbone of every successful fleet. They play an integral part in vehicle and equipment decisions because no one knows more about vehicle and equipment spec's and capabilities and how to keep vehicles on the road and generating revenue.

We believe they deserve a magazine of their own. And that's what we will give them next spring as we launch *Motortruck Fleet Maintenance*, the only Canadian trucking magazine exclusively serving the information needs of maintenance managers and service professionals.

But we're not stopping there.

We are also introducing a premier educational and networking event dedicated exclusively to truck fleet maintenance. In conjunction with PIT Group, we are bringing together the ATSSA, CTEA, OTA and TMTA to produce the Canadian

Fleet Maintenance Summit. The Summit will bring all industry stakeholders - service professionals, manufacturers, researchers and enforcement officials - under one roof to discuss the most pressing maintenance issues and point the way forward. The event takes place April 13, 2016 at the International Centre in Toronto. And there's more...the Canadian Fleet Maintenance Summit is being held one day before, and at the same place, as the crown jewel of the Newcom Trucking Group: Truck World, the trucking industry's largest show. Your pass to CFMS gets you into Truck World too.

I simply don't have room on this page to speak to all the new touchpoints we are building into this industry and the investments in new staff and technologies we are making in the process. But let me say this: Next year will mark my 30th in journalism yet I find myself bursting with the enthusiasm of a rookie when I think of the positive changes ahead. ●

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Ontario, Alberta trucking industries unfazed by climate change strategies

Trucking industry officials in Ontario and Alberta said the industry will do its part to help both provinces meet their carbon emissions-reduction targets, but some costs may have to be passed on to shippers.

Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne and the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, Glen Murray, recently revealed highlights of the province's climate change strategy, which aims to reduce greenhouse gases (GHG) by 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.

As announced earlier, the province will adopt a cap and trade system to reduce GHGs. The system will directly affect major stationary GHG sources such as fuel producers. Indirectly, this will likely mean higher prices for consumers of traditional fossil fuels. Now, the province is also planning to re-invest the proceeds from the cap and trade system into projects and tech-

nologies that will help consumers and businesses transition to a lower carbon economy.

Of particular interest to the trucking community is the statement that Ontario's "strategy will focus on measures that support the use of natural gas and low carbon fuels in goods movement, and the electrification of goods movement where possible."

Although specifics weren't outlined, the plan goes on to say: "short-term reductions will occur by reducing carbon intensity of transportation fuels sold in Ontario. Low-carbon fuels will also allow modes of transportation like long and heavy haul trucking and marine transport that are not easily electrified to be part of Ontario's sustainable transportation future."

The Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) says a delegation of members will be meeting with the Environment Minister to discuss the potential for al-

ternative fuel vehicles in the trucking industry and the action needed to accelerate the penetration of these vehicles into the marketplace.

"The trucking industry recognizes that it's being called upon to do its part to reduce its carbon footprint," says OTA president David Bradley. "Trucking is the only freight mode whose vehicles are subject to regulated GHG standards, but there is more that could be done to improve the economic equation and to reduce some of the practical and operational barriers that impede investment in GHG reduction technologies."

In Alberta, the NDP government there has announced its own climate change strategy. One of the biggest effects on carriers will be a 7.5 cent-per-litre increase in diesel prices beginning in 2017. Though it acknowledges there will be added costs with regard to the plan, the Alberta Motor Transport As-

sociation (AMTA) believes the cost of not implementing a strategy moving forward could prove much greater.

Alberta's sweeping proposed piece of legislation would introduce a carbon tax on every Alberta resident, individuals and businesses alike, phase out coal plants and place a cap on greenhouse gas emissions on production in the province's oilsands, all aiming to reduce Alberta's carbon footprint by around 20 megatonnes by 2020 and 50 megatonnes by 2030, compared to if no action was taken at all.

AMTA board chairman Dan Duckering recognized the fact that all levels of government are currently faced with tough decisions when it comes to balancing environmental priorities with economic drivers.

"Carbon taxes will drive behavioural changes in all industries impacted by them," he said in an e-mail to *Truck News*. "Some will have positive and negative outcomes in terms of economic growth and capital investment. The AMTA will continue in its mandate to understand how industry will be impacted as the ramifications of the new climate change plan becomes more apparent."

Duckering said the AMTA would continue in its efforts to educate industry leaders, and in other cases, lobby for better policies on industry's behalf.

He also said that it was important to remember that the trucking industry was a 'lean business' where all cost increases must be passed through.

Alberta's climate change plan will mean Albertans will be paying more at the pumps - diesel will go up 5.5 cents per litre starting in 2017.

"The industry standard of attaching fuel surcharges is a strong indicator of the commitment industry has to keeping costs as low as possible, while providing safety for carriers when volatile fuel prices climb," Duckering said. "Once the industry gets a more complete picture of how the climate change plan will work, it will work to find the most equitable way of passing those costs forward."

The government's plan calls for a \$30 per tonne charge on carbon emissions, which would be fully implemented by 2018 and is at par with neighbouring British Columbia's carbon tax. A \$20 per tonne tax will commence January 2017 and will have an effect not just on businesses but also individuals, increasing the cost of gas, natural gas and electricity.

Low and middle income Albertans will be eligible for government rebates to offset these new costs.

Duckering said that although it would be irresponsible for any organization to discourage positive steps to protect the environment long term, it was incumbent upon the AMTA to continue to provide needed information to ensure regulators can make informed decisions.

"Often, an idealistic approach to these issues can do more harm than good as industry gets put between a rock and a hard place," Duckering said, adding that government also needs to continue to engage industry and consider the impact of new legislation, like the climate change plan.

"Thankfully, to date, our experience has been that this government is more than willing to have good dialogue on their policy positions," Duckering said. "We hope to continue this dialogue within Alberta and across provinces to facilitate better regulatory compliance by industry." ●

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FMCSA takes steps to outlaw driver coercion

Carriers, shippers and receivers to be more accountable for driver safety under new rule

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The US Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) announced recently the publication of a final rule that prohibits coercion and helps to safeguard commercial truck drivers from being compelled to violate federal safety regulations.

The rule gives FMCSA the authority to take enforcement action not only against motor carriers, but also against shippers, receivers, and transportation intermediaries.

"Our nation relies on millions of commercial vehicle drivers to move people and freight, and we must do everything we can to ensure that they are able to operate safely," said US Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. "This rule enables us to take enforcement action against anyone in the transportation chain who knowingly and recklessly jeopardizes the safety of the driver and of the motoring public."

According to FMCSA, the rule addresses the three key areas around driver coercion: procedures for commercial truck and bus drivers to report incidents of coercion to the FMCSA,

steps the agency could take when responding to such allegations and penalties that may be imposed on entities found to have coerced drivers.

"Any time a motor carrier, shipper, receiver, freight-forwarder, or broker demands that a schedule be met, one that the driver says would be impossible without violating hours-of-service restrictions or other safety regulations, that is coercion," said FMCSA acting administrator Scott Darling. "No commercial driver should ever feel compelled to bypass important federal safety regulations and potentially endanger the lives of all travelers on the road."

While formulating the rule, FMCSA heard from drivers who reported being pressured to violate federal safety regulations with threats of job termination, denial of subsequent trips or loads, reduced pay, forfeiture of favourable work hours or transportation jobs.

The final rule takes effect 60 days following its publication in the *Federal Register*. For more information on what constitutes coercion and how to submit a complaint to FMCSA, visit: www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safety/coercion.

US truck tonnage rises

ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

The American Trucking Associations' For-Hire Truck Tonnage Index went up 1.9% in October. According to the ATA, in October, the index equaled 135.7 (2000=100), up from 133.1 in September, and just below the all-time high of 135.8 reached in January 2015.

Year-over-year the index went up 2%, which was above the year-over-year increase of 1.6% in September.

"It was good to see tonnage increase nicely in October after contracting a total of 1.6% in August and September," said ATA chief economist Bob Costello. "However, tonnage has been overall pretty flat this year, as October's reading is just shy of January's level. Like I've said over the last couple of months, I remain concerned about the high level of inventories throughout the supply chain. We recently learned that inventories throughout the supply chain and relative to sales rose in September, which is not a good sign. This will have a negative impact on truck freight volumes over the next few months."

Top trucking chokepoints revealed

ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

The American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI) released the latest findings of its annual list of the top truck freight congestion locations.

The *2015 Congestion Impact Analysis of Freight-Significant Highway Locations* assesses the level of truck-oriented congestion at 250 locations on the national highway system and uses several customized software applications and analysis methods and data to produce a congestion impact ranking for each location.

This year, the most congested location is the Tom Moreland Interchange in Atlanta, Ga.

The location is known to commuters

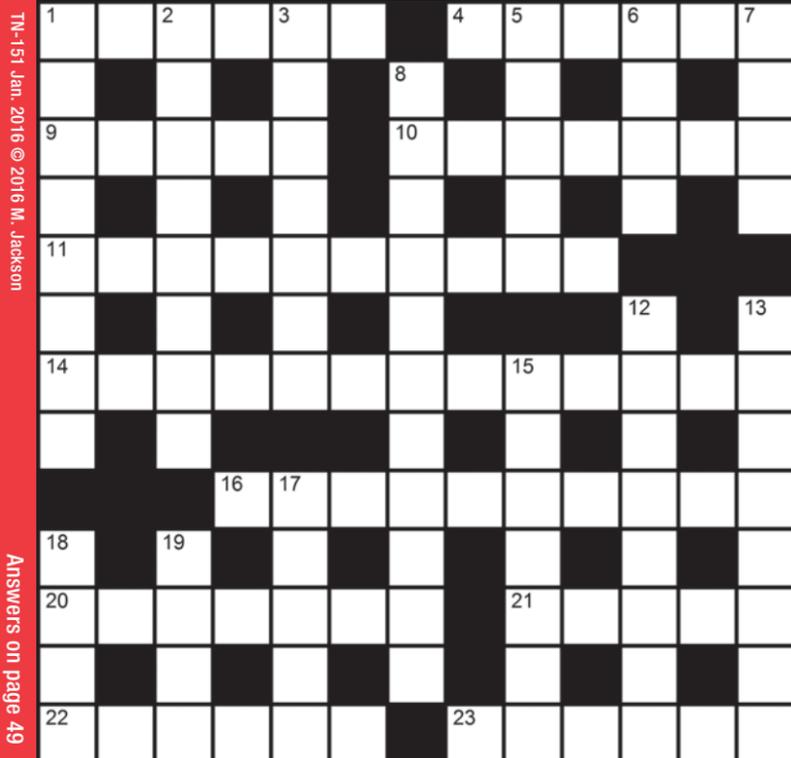
as "Spaghetti Junction" and is a five-level stack interchange at the intersection of I-285 and I-85.

ATRI said it should be noted that four out of the top 10 worst locations are in Houston, Texas.

The top 10 locations on the ATRI list this year are:

1. Atlanta, Ga.: I-285 at I-85 (North)
2. Chicago, Ill.: I-290 at I-90/I-94
3. For Lee, N.J.: I-95 at SR 4
4. Louisville, Ky.: I-65 at I-64/I-71
5. Houston, Texas: I-610 at US 290
6. Houston, Texas: I-10 at I-45
7. Cincinnati, Ohio: I-71 at I-75
8. Houston, Texas: I-45 at US 59
9. Los Angeles, Calif.: SR 60 at SR 57
10. Houston, Texas: I-10 at US 59

THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE



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- 13 Salvage yard purchase (4,4)
- 15 Edmonton based ___ Transport
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IT'S UPTIME AT



Maritime-Ontario opens new \$20-million Moncton hub

By James Menzies

MONCTON, NEW BRUNSWICK

"The times of the old, run-down trucking terminals are coming to an end."

That was the declaration made by Doug Munro, president and owner of Maritime-Ontario Freight Lines, just moments before cutting the ribbon to officially open the company's state-of-the-art new \$20-million terminal and cross-dock facility in Berry Mills, N.B., on the outer edge of Moncton.

"We have to get the industry in line with better equipment, higher quality, and doing it efficiently," Munro said to an audience including customers, business partners and local politicians on Nov. 26.

That palatial new Atlantic Canada hub sits on 46 acres of land, about 18 of which have been developed to house the facility's 20,000 sq.-ft. of office space and 70,000 sq.-ft. of warehousing. The plan, Munro said, is to further develop the property as demand dictates.

"We've developed about half of it here with this first phase with the hope that we can add on to the building as demand increases," Munro explained.

It took about three years to choose the location, Munro said, before the company selected its new site, which is just off the Trans-Canada Hwy. and also near CN's rail facilities. The idea is to get into the long combination vehicle (LCV) business and to run double-53s from Ontario right through to Atlantic Canada, once twinning is completed on a short stretch of the Trans-Canada in Quebec. Maritime-Ontario doesn't yet run LCVs in Ontario or in Atlantic Canada, but it's planning to add the service and will be spec'ing new equipment accordingly.

Munro said Maritime-Ontario's strength is in moving freight efficiently, and it does this by employing logistics loading in containers and trailers to ensure all available capacity is utilized. It also works closely with the railways, with intermodal representing 50-60% of its overall business in Atlantic Canada.

"What we do that's different, is we take freight and stack it so that we can optimize the cubic utilization of each trailer or container and send it by CN or CP or by truck," Munro said. "For every two trucks our competition is moving, we're moving one and that is the benefit of shipping logistically as we're doing."

The cross-dock facility was intentionally built much wider than most, so that freight can be staged in the centre section and more strategically loaded to cube out trailers and containers, Munro explained.

Another unique feature of the new terminals is a roller compacted concrete yard, which is stronger than asphalt, so that trailers can be parked anywhere without concerns the landing gear legs will break through the asphalt. Munro said it's a costly new technology, but Lafarge is one of Maritime-Ontario's biggest customers and they were able to work out a deal. The concrete is also in place at the company's Brampton yard.

Freight moved through the new hub will come from all over Canada. The plan is to sort freight in the new facility and then re-load it for further distribution on to other points in Atlantic Canada.

"This will be our main operating hub," Munro said.

Maritime-Ontario currently operates more than 23 terminals across Canada. Its Moncton location was previously located in the Caledonia Business Park and offered just 10,000 sq.-ft. The new location, on a well-travelled route on the outskirts of Moncton, attracts more attention, according to Steve Snow, vice-president of sales and marketing with Maritime-Ontario.

"We're already getting unsolicited calls from people who are driving up the highway, have watched this building go up and some of them are saying they're looking for solutions but they never thought of calling us because we were tucked away," Snow said.

Roger Melanson, Minister of Finance, Transportation and Infrastructure in New Brunswick, congratulated the company and thanked it for bringing jobs to the province. He project-



Maritime-Ontario has moved into a new \$20-million Moncton hub, built on 46 acres of land with room to expand.

ed the New Brunswick economy will grow 1.3% in 2016.

"Maritime-Ontario will help us

achieve those goals and we will see more jobs created and more people working," Melanson said. ●

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Groupe Robert harnesses solar energy to power electric devices

By Carroll McCormick

BOUCHERVILLE, QUEBEC

Keen eyes have noticed that many of Quebec-based Groupe Robert's liquid natural gas (LNG) trucks have solar panels mounted atop their hoods and cab deflectors. They are charging batteries that deliver power to the cab's air conditioning (AC) and electrical devices when the rigs are parked and the engines turned off. It is a simple, yet remarkably successful home-cooked idea. The 300-watt, four-battery system that Robert has devised provides enough electricity to last from dusk to dawn, and eliminates the need for an on-board diesel-powered generator.

The LNG fleet is being retrofitted with the system, so the return on investment is earned by not having to run the trucks' diesel generators anymore. For new trucks destined for long-haul work, however, Robert is using the money not spent on Thermo King TriPacs to purchase the solar hardware and have its dealers install the systems. (Robert is investigating the possibility of using a Webasto electrical heater to replace the Webasto direct-fire cab heaters).

Since the outlay for a solar system – about \$14,000 – is the same as for the diesel-powered system that trucks would otherwise require, Robert is not out of pocket any extra money for

new tractor orders. Robert goes into the black on the first overnight trip, to the tune of the cost of a litre of diesel saved every hour the solar system runs the in-cab equipment. This is a rare and enviable affair for a fuel-saving technology.

The solar project began in 2013 when Robert bought a 2x4-foot, 100-W rigid solar panel, originally developed for recreational vehicles. Robert's dealer in St-Julie, Excellence Peterbilt, cut a hole in the cab deflector and installed the solar panel. Excellence also installed a controller to prevent overcharging of four deep discharge batteries mounted behind the cab in a steel box; these batteries are used only to power the in-cab equipment. The system, which includes a Bergstrom NITE Phoenix AC system, is completely separate from the rest of the tractor's electrical system.

Since AC is stock equipment on all tractors, they run when the tractors are running.

The NITE Phoenix units take over when the engines are shut off.

The 100-W system was not quite enough, Robert learned.

"It gave us five to six hours of autonomy, with AC, in very warm weather in the southern US in the summer," says Yves Maurais, technical director, asset management, purchasing and conformity, Groupe Robert.

After learning about the availability of 50-W flexible panels, about 1x2-ft

apiece, Robert added four – two on the hood and two up on the cab deflector, to boost the system to 300 watts.

The more powerful system was able to power the cab equipment all night. Robert is roughly halfway through the process of retrofitting its fleet of 115 LNG tractors with the 300-W systems.

Robert is also installing them on new tractors as they come into service – a total so far of 50 Macks and Volvos. (The Mack trucks have 250-W systems).

"For all of the new trucks in which drivers use bunks – long- and medium-haul work – the solar panels will be installed. We buy the parts and send the trucks to Excellence Peterbilt, or the Centre du Camion Ste-Marie in Saint-Hyacinthe," Maurais says. "The adoption rate is only limited by the fleet renewal rate."

Robert prefers the flexible panels, which are simply riveted to the hood and cab deflector. "I don't think we will use the rigid panels anymore, because they are more susceptible to damage," Maurais says. The rigid panels are more difficult and costly to install and in any case, cannot be installed on high-cab tractors.

Too, Maurais notes, "If there is any issue with a flexible panel, they are easy to change. As well, when a tractor outfitted with the flexible solar panels is retired from long-haul duty, the entire system can be removed. As the trucks age and are moved to more local applications, we can move the system to a new long-haul truck. My ROI is even better."

Since the boost to 300-W systems, there have been no performance or maintenance issues. On the topic of



Another Groupe Robert innovation: 300 watts of solar power to run in-cab equipment. (Photo by Carroll McCormick)

winter duty, Maurais says, "People ask us whether there is an issue with snow and ice. With the engine heat and the warming of the black panels there is no problem. And there is so much wind up on the deflector, snow does not stay there."

As for this solar system catching on in the broader trucking industry, Maurais suggests that, "Maybe OEMs will look into that and incorporate them into their whole electrical systems. It could reduce problems with cold weather starting, because the batteries would always be charged." ●

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OTA honours top driver, a hero and an industry veteran

TORONTO, ONTARIO

In early November, at its Annual Executive Conference, the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) gave out a slew of awards to some noteworthy people within the trucking industry.

Driver of the Year

Jack Fielding of Bison Transport was named Driver of the Year by Volvo Trucks Canada during the conference in downtown Toronto.

"Jack is a modest guy. But it's his actions - both on and off the road - that speaks volumes," said Peter Currie, Ontario district manager for Volvo Trucks Canada. "He's passionate about safety and leads by example. We couldn't be more proud to recognize outstanding truck drivers like Jack who make this industry great. It is with pleasure to present him with this prestigious award."

During his career, Fielding has tallied approximately three million kilometers...collision-free.

"Jack is the kind of driver we'd like to clone," said Norm Sneyd, Bison's vice-president of business development. "He's our go-to guy. When we have a special situation that requires immediate attention - something that requires the Fielding touch - we bring Jack in and he gets it done every time."

Fielding's influence came from his father, who would take him out on the road during weekends when he was only 17 years old. Before long, Fielding bought his own truck and signed with Bison Transport.

"Safety is the number one priority for me," Fielding said. "I take pride in my safety record and I'm going to try to everything I can to keep it that way."

In addition to being safe on the road, Fielding, who also received the Driver of the Year award in 2013 by the US-based Truckload Carriers Association, enjoys mentoring new drivers, and says they need to have patience, always think about what they are doing and get a good night's rest.

Fielding was also a member of the

2011-12 OTA Road Knights team, which visits schools province-wide to help promote safe driving, environmental awareness and enhance the image of the trucking industry.

"It's drivers like Jack who are backbone of our industry and help make Ontario roads the safest in North America," said OTA president David Bradley. "I want to thank him for his overwhelming support of the trucking industry and specifically the OTA Road Knights program. Whatever the role he's taking on, he always does it with professionalism and class."

Bridgestone-OTA Truck Hero

The OTA also recognized Lindsay Findlay, a truck driver who lost his life near Whitby, Ont. on Hwy. 401 earlier in 2015.

"We are very proud for what he did," said Findlay's wife, Sandy, during the award presentation. "We are proud he saved the other driver and possibly more drivers on the road that night. That was just his instinct to put people before himself."

Lindsay's truck crashed into a guardrail the night of Feb. 3 when he was cut off by an impaired driver. Instead of slamming into the driver's car, Lindsay was able to limit the impact by maneuvering and braking before eventually losing control and hitting the guardrail.

He died on the scene.

"A more inexperienced driver would have done something different and perhaps more people would have been killed or seriously hurt," said Derek Crosby, Lindsay's employer with D&J Transportation. "He was definitely a hero. Even without this, he was a hero."

"Lindsay's story is certainly tragic and shows us the catastrophic results of impaired driving," added Bradley. "But it's also a story about a resilient, loving family and the incredible truck drivers who rallied around one of their own. It's stories like this that show how trucking is made up of passionate communities and is a dignified way of life only a truck driver can truly understand."

Service to Industry award

Finally, at the conference, Mark Seymour, a man well-known in the trucking community, was honoured with the 2015 Shaw Tracking/OTA Service to Industry award.

"Some people are destined to lead, and Mark is one of those people," said Bradley. "I have had the distinct pleasure of watching and learning from Mark as he evolved from a rather shy new guy on the OTA board to one of the greatest leaders the industry has ever had."

Seymour, a Kemptonville, Ont. native, who at the age of 17 left home to pursue a career in hockey, only to return in 1983 to join the family fleet business, is the CEO of Kriska Transportation, a Prescott, Ont.-based trucking business that delivers dry and temperature-controlled truckload commodities.

Seymour has a full resume in the transportation sector, including being a two-time chairman of the OTA, current chairman of the Canadian Transportation Association (CTA) and board member for the Trucks for Change Network. He was the architect behind the OTA's speed limiter proposal, the CTA's Blue Ribbon Task Force on the driver shortage and for putting driver issues at the forefront, demanding respect for the job they do each day.

"Mark doesn't ask to lead, people look to him to lead, and he's selfless in his willingness to put all his energy into causes that affect the industry in a positive way," said Seymour's friend Scott Smith, president of JD Smith & Sons and last year's recipient of the same award. "Mark deserves this award because of the enormous amount of passion and time he's put in, and how he's answered the call time and again."

Kate Rahn, Shaw Tracking's national director of sales and marketing, presented Seymour with the award, and added, "Mark exemplifies what this prestigious award is all about. His commitment and tireless support have inspired many others to take leading roles in the issues that are vital to advancing the industry." ●

Trucking industry gives back

By Sonia Straface

ETOBICOKE, ONTARIO

Trucks for Change hosted its fourth annual partner reception Nov. 18, where its sponsors, charity partners and media partners all gathered to toast the organization for its giving spirit at the MasterCard Centre in Etobicoke.

President and founder Pete Dalmazzi said the day is one he looks forward to each year.

"It's frankly my most exciting day of the year to share the room with people who 'get it' from our industry," he said. "And what they 'get' is when people invest in communities, we invest in ourselves and invest in our businesses. And we don't just do good for others, but we're doing the right thing for ourselves and our industry, as well."

Trucks for Change began in 2011 with the vision of simply moving freight for charities across the country.

"We can make a real difference by helping charities do what they do best, which is change lives and make a difference in our communities while fighting hunger, homelessness, disease and disaster," he added. "We didn't invent trucking philanthropy, but we like to think we changed the way that it happens by working collaboratively and efficiently. The premise is whenever there is a charitable load out there, whether it be a truckload of mannequins for Goodwill, or if it's a load of potatoes for Food Banks Canada, or it's a load of books...we somewhere can find the trucker with space on the truck to move it, and a heart big enough to donate or discount that service which may make the difference of accepting that donation or not."

Dalmazzi said the organization has 70 trucking partners that span across Canada's 10 provinces. These partners have helped moved more than 12 million pounds of donated goods to date. The companies have also donated more than \$200,000 of in-kind donations.

The event also saw a wide variety of speakers including Angela Splinter of Trucking HR Canada who discussed how being involved in networks like Trucks For Change will help to attract younger people into your business since giving back is a big priority for millennials when it comes to choosing an employer.

Also speaking about the good that Trucks for Change does, was Kriska's Mark Seymour, and Mark Napier, retired NHL player and current leader of the NHL Alumni Association.

After the reception, seven teams of 10 from the trucking industry followed Dalmazzi to the Daily Bread Food Bank where competition heated up and Trucks for Change showed just how easy it was to mix trucking and charity through the Food Sort Challenge.

The Daily Bread Food Bank operates within the boundaries of Toronto and provides food hampers to those in need.

"We deliver food in five trucks with five drivers all in the Toronto core," explained Gail Nyberg, executive director of the food bank. "So it gets

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complicated. Our drivers are busy doing the work, so when we have a really special event, we have to call Pete. We have to call on you to help us because we only have five trucks and five drivers. Once we had to do 700 pick-ups in three days. We can't do that with five trucks. But you helped us do that. And so I want to thank you. You are helping the most unfortunate in this city and we count on you to help us.

"(The Food Sort Challenge) is in my opinion, the best event that was ever conceived by a charity. We get you to come compete with each other, do our work in sorting the food and you pay for the honour," she joked. "And it is a lot of fun, too."

Teams from the trucking industry were pitted against each other in the Food Sort Challenge and had to sort and pack thousands of pounds of food for the food bank. Food donations were checked for expiry dates and sorted in appropriate boxes to help those in need and teams were definitely hustling in the process.

According to organizers, the Food Sort Challenges help them sort through as much food in 90 minutes as volunteers do in close to 50 weeks.

Teams also donated money to the food bank to participate.

The object of the competition was to sort through as much food by weight as fast as possible.

Rankings were calculated by the time taken and total weight sorted.

In the end - yours truly - team Newcom, came out above the rest. All seven teams helped to sort more than 22,000 lbs of food in just 90 minutes, while raising more than \$18,000 for the Daily Bread Food Bank.

"This event was the kickoff for Rolling Over Hunger, a holiday campaign involving food collection drives happening across the trucking industry," said Dalmazzi.

Carriers and industry supporters who are either already planning food collection drives for their local food bank agencies, or who would like to do so should contact Trucks for Change at 905-844-8658 or pete@trucksforchange.org.

The official ranking of the competition was as follows:

1. Newcom Business Media - 47.97 lbs/minute



Team Newcom came in first place at Daily Bread Food Bank's Food Sort Challenge on Nov. 18 in Etobicoke, Ont.

2. Midland Transport - 47.62 lbs/minute
3. Trailer Wizards - 44.25 lbs/minute
4. Midland Courier - 44.24 lbs/minute
5. Navistar - 43.91 lbs/minute
6. Manitoulin - 38.92 lbs/minute
7. Bison - 37.34 lbs/minute

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Meet Elias

The entrepreneur who founded a trucking company, survived the Great Recession and carved out a niche — all before turning 30

By James Menzies

ETOBICOKE, ONTARIO

There was really never any doubt Elias Demangos would get into trucking. His father Angelo arrived in Canada from Greece in 1969 and bought a truck. From that one truck, he established Fairway Canadian Express, which in 2004 merged with Watkins Motor Lines.

The combined entity was generating \$1.4 billion in revenue when it was acquired in 2006 by FedEx.

Some of the younger Demangos' earliest memories involve exploring



Elias Demangos founded Fortigo Freight just before the Great Recession, through which he was able not only to survive, but to achieve growth.

his father's warehouses.

"I used to see all the different products sitting there — all the different coloured freight, and I was enamored by it," Demangos recalls. "It was always exciting. It's not an easy business. My father used to say trucking is like owning a restaurant in New York City on Saturday night. It's crazy all the time and you've got to get every dish out of the kitchen perfect. You can't send out one bad dish and say, 'Well, I had 1,000 people here today — only one dish came out bad.' To that one individual, that's the only dish they had. So to them, you're 100% off."

Demangos attended York University's Schulich School of Business and

earned his BBA, with an eye towards starting his own trucking business. He had identified the dedicated fleet segment as one that was growing and rich with opportunity.

"My father had dedicated fleet customers and he just found that he had more consistency in the relationship, in the partnership and in the revenue stream," Demangos explains. "You could find better drivers and you could marry a good driver with a nice contract and he's home every night, because it's final mile."

The trade-off for that is generally lower margins than in truckload or LTL, Demangos acknowledges, and sales cycles that can run three to five

years, making it difficult to generate cash flow early on.

When he launched Fortigo Freight Services in 2006, at the age of 22, Demangos started out much like his father — with a single truck. He even delivered its first load himself.

"I remember the first delivery; it was a delivery from Aurora to Bolton and it was across King Side Road and it was a tailgate delivery. I went out and rented a truck. I had pallets to pick up and I remember being the driver and dispatcher and I had to bill it later on," Demangos recalls. "When I first started my mindset was, I'm going to start it the way my father started his business, which was very bootstraps."

Soon, Demangos was able to add trucks and hone in on his goal of becoming a dedicated fleet provider.

In 2006, when it came time to hire his first full-time office employee, Demangos called Marie Deveau, who had been his father's first employee in 1975. He asked her to join the company in a customer service role, the same capacity in which she helped his father grow his business decades earlier. She accepted. The plan was coming together. Soon after, the bottom fell out from under the global economy.

Demangos remembers exactly where he was when it dawned on him the global economy was about to tank, threatening to derail the momentum he had worked so hard to develop with Fortigo.

"The revenues dropped 50% month-over-month," he said. "I was at a business meeting down in Florida and I remember watching CNN. It was October. I remember watching CNN and it was like the world had just collapsed."

At that time Fortigo had about a dozen trucks on the road and better-established trucking companies were meeting their demise.

"I would equate it to being in the Atlantic Ocean, in one of the worst storms, and you're in a rowboat going up and down and you look to your right and to your left and you see these big ships — and they can barely handle the waves," Demangos recalls. "Some of them are breaking and sinking and you're thinking, how the heck am I going to do this?"

During the tumultuous months of the Great Recession, Demangos' father Angelo was a calming influence.

"He kept telling me, 'Son, I've been through three or four of these ups and downs over my 50-year career. Don't focus on the negative. Even if the economy has shrunk by 10%, you can still grow. There's still business out there. It's not like there's no business out there, you just won't grow as quickly.' He always said there's no excuse — you can still grow," Demangos says.

In hindsight, he now feels he may have been better positioned to survive the recession than better established competitors.

"I wouldn't say it was easier, but it was certainly a different challenge," Demangos says. "To start a business at that time, everything (from there) was up. You didn't go down. It maybe took a bit longer to grow, versus the guys who were losing business and having to really restructure things. For me, it was a growth story. I grew at a bit of a slower rate, but it was still growth all throughout those years. It was actually not a bad time to grow. We didn't have legacy costs. It really taught me how to manage with little resources and to this day, we still manage a tight ship. It



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was good training.”

Many trucking companies would not survive the recession, but Fortigo emerged larger and stronger. By now it was pursuing its initial mandate of providing dedicated fleet services to shippers wanting to shed their own private fleets. Many manufacturers, Demangos realized, had developed trucking divisions almost by accident, and were becoming increasingly concerned with the growing risks and liabilities their trucking fleets were exposing their core businesses to.

“Most companies just fell into trucking,” he says. “They were delivering some stuff and they rented a truck to do some deliveries. Then, they had enough deliveries that they went out and leased a truck and the shipper’s name was on the truck. Then it grew enough where they needed another truck and hired a driver – so they just sort of fell into it.”

Many of those manufacturers were eager to return their focus to their core competencies and let a pure trucker worry about things like recruiting drivers and complying with the trucking industry’s increasingly complex regulatory environment. Outsourcing transportation also allowed them to redirect capital to projects that support their manufacturing activities. However, relinquishing control of a crucial element of their supply chain is not an easy decision to make for any manufacturer with a private fleet – and it’s one that, if not executed properly, could lead to their downfall.

Because of this, mistakes during the transition simply can’t occur. Demangos refers to the on-boarding process as “open heart surgery.”

“A customer who makes widgets sources the widget, prices the widget, warehouses the widget and finally sells its widget. If you’re not there to deliver the widget, the entire process they went through is all gone. They’ve lost it and it’s hinging on you,” Demangos explains. “In the LTL world you can try one pallet and if you do well, you’ll get a second one the next day. If you don’t do well, you’ll just never see a pallet again. In the dedicated world, you’re either in the water or you’re not in the water. You get all the trucks in the fleet or you don’t get any of the trucks in the fleet.”

On-boarding a new customer can take weeks or months, depending on the complexity of the operation. This also means when Fortigo lands a new customer, it can find itself having to hire dozens of drivers – and fast. Sometimes the company will hire the private fleet’s drivers but other times it deploys its own, meaning a steady pipeline of driving talent is required.

“Even if we don’t have an opportunity, we’re constantly cultivating our relationships and cultivating drivers that we know in our network, so that when a customer comes on-board we can draw from the best of that list of people that we have,” says Demangos.

For drivers, working for a dedicated fleet can mean more than just driving.

“We’ve got drivers that will stock shelves at a customer site,” says Demangos. “We’ve got drivers who will do things for customers that their shipping and receiving staff should do or that their customer service staff should do.”

Despite the variety of work involved, or maybe because of it, driver turnover at Fortigo is extremely low.

Demangos’ approach to finding and keeping talent is simple.

“Compensate them fairly,” he rea-

sons. “Help them realize they’re part of a family. The fact that it’s a dedicated contract certainly helps. The fact it’s last mile certainly helps, because they’re home every day in most cases – they’ve got some consistency to their life.”

Fortigo’s treatment of its drivers is another value that was instilled in Demangos by his father.

“My father started off as a driver and I remember as a kid in the ’80s going to driver meetings on Saturday mornings,” he recalls. “I remember driv-

“In the dedicated world, you’re either in the water or you’re not in the water. You get all the trucks in the fleet or you don’t get any.”

Elias Demangos, CEO, Fortigo Freight

ers always coming up to him after the meetings and sharing their concerns and then on the way home, my father would talk to my brother and I and share with us how important the drivers were – that without the drivers, you wouldn’t be able to move anything come Monday morning.”

While Angelo Demangos isn’t involved in the day-to-day operations of Fortigo Freight, he still serves as an invaluable mentor to his son. They share ideas about business development strategies and business in general.

“We talk every day and I share with him my challenges,” Demangos says. “He’s a mentor and a cheerleader and he keeps me motivated and keeps me grounded.”

One of the biggest differences today, from when Angelo was running Fairway, is the role of technology. While Fairway was considered a progressive company in its day, early to automate certain processes, Elias has a different philosophy about technology.

“In my father’s time, technology wasn’t as customer-facing as it is today,” he says. In fact, the younger Demangos has a unique approach to technology adoption: If it doesn’t directly benefit the customer, he won’t invest in it. And rather than forcing its

technologies and systems on a customer, Fortigo ensures its own technologies can be integrated with those its customers are already using.

“Our technology platform has to be one that we can adjust regularly. Not just adjust, but integrate with (customers’),” he says.

Today, Fortigo Freight continues its growth and is closing in on 500 trucks across its network, which is centered in Ontario and has a strong presence in neighbouring provinces. Demangos’ vision has been validated by the fact all of the company’s customers have renewed their contracts – none have returned to operating their own trucks.

“We haven’t lost a customer since

day one,” he says, adding that maintaining that record is one of his highest-priority goals.

He is also turning his attention to succession planning – though at age 31, he’s not planning on going anywhere himself.

“As our senior executives begin to retire, one of my responsibilities to our customers and to our organization and to our drivers is to have the right management team in place and bringing the right people on-board and training them,” Demangos says. “It’s a challenge and it’s something that we’re spending a lot of time on.”

Given the success Fortigo has achieved and its enviable growth trajectory, clearly, if he wished to, Demangos could sell the company, cash in, and spend the rest of his days sipping ouzo on some Mediterranean beach. But that’s not in the cards, nor is it something he aspires to. Demangos says he’s in love with the minutia of the business and doesn’t see a time where he’d relinquish control of the day-to-day operations.

“I enjoy the hustle and bustle of the business,” he says. “I enjoy the challenges of it. I enjoy the ups and downs. I don’t like weekends, because there’s not a lot of hustle and bustle.”

Sundays are just *the worst*, he says.

But during those quiet days, on Sundays and on holidays, Demangos can still relive his youth, walking through the warehouse and marveling at the different-coloured freight stacked high, bound for all kinds of different places. The only difference between then and now is that it’s his warehouse. ●



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Why fleets shouldn't go AWOL when hiring veterans

By Sonia Straface

TORONTO, ONTARIO

It seems like the trucking industry has tapped every possible underrepresented demographic of late to deal with the driver shortage. The industry is desperately trying to recruit the younger generation because it knows it could benefit from replacing the old hands that are turning in their keys. And it's also trying to recruit women because it knows it needs to change the stigma of being an old boys' club.

But there's another pool of job-seekers who are qualified and trained to be safe and loyal employees and are used to being away from home for a long time: Canada's military veterans.

Canada's military veterans haven't really been looked at as a resource before, mainly because most of them have been serving actively, but with a new Liberal government, and changes in Canada's military direction, thousands of military people will be looking for new careers and be transitioning back into civilian life.

Fortunately, Canada Company has been ahead of the curve and has created a program where veterans and those looking to get out of their military positions can connect with military-friendly employers. Canada Company is a charitable, non-partisan organization and its goal is to ensure that the men and women in the Canadian Armed Forces receive the support and recognition they deserve.

To further prove its mandate, in the fall of 2013, it introduced the Military Employment Transition (MET) program, now known as the Canada Company MET Employer Coalition, which was designed to assist Canadian Armed Forces members, reservists and veterans who are looking to find jobs in the civilian workforce.

According to Canada Company its goal is to help the workforce hire 10,000 veterans by 2023 with help from its more than 100 military-friendly employer partners. Employer partners work with Canada Company to hire skilled, disciplined veterans and help them transition into civilian life and work as easily as possible.

Among more than 100 employer partners are a handful of transportation companies who see the opportunity with Canada Company to not only solve the driver shortage, but to give back to the men and women who serve our country.

Canada Company recently hosted a National Transition Symposium at the Fairmont Royal York in downtown Toronto, where approximately 70 of its employer partners were on hand to provide military attendees with information about the positions available within their organizations.

Recruiters from Kriska were there and said the event provided the opportunity to add even more veterans to their company. To date, Jonathan Wahba, chief operating officer at Kriska, said the company has hired approximately 50 veterans. It has been an employer partner with Canada Company for two years.

"The vast majority of vets that

work for Kriska today are behind the wheel," he said. "Part of the reason we're here today (at the symposium) is to connect more with folks who want to join us in the office environment because that's an area where we see a lot of potential but we haven't really gotten into. We're looking for people who want to join us in operations, in IT, and in planning and strategy."

Wahba said Kriska is eager to hire more veterans because, in its experience, veterans make excellent drivers and employees because of the similarities between the transportation and military ways of life.

"We are anxious and eager to grow that population because we find veterans to be some of our hardest-working and most dedicated associates," said Wahba. "They're used to working under difficult operating conditions, they're used to being away from home, many have been around heavy equipment in adverse conditions... so they turn out to be outstanding associates in transportation. And I think they do well because in many ways (the transportation environment) is similar to the environment they're coming out of. An over-the-road driver is away from home often, they don't sleep in the same bed every night, they operate large pieces of equipment, they have to deal with situational problems in the field, so if they have a breakdown, or a problem with Customs while crossing the border, these are all issues they have to figure out in real time, largely on the road. And with their background, many of these (veterans) have done this for many years. So the transition for many seems fairly easy."

One of Kriska's biggest military success stories has been JJ Mercer - a former major with the Canadian Air Force who began driving for Kriska in June of

"We find veterans to be some of our hardest-working and most dedicated associates."

Jonathan Wahba, Kriska Transportation Group

2014. Mercer had a full career with the military that lasted 35 years, but when he got out, he decided he wanted to continue working to save up some extra cash for retirement. He did some research and found that the transportation industry would be one he could get into without a number of years back in the classroom. So far, Mercer said the driving gig is great and he especially likes the Kriska environment.

"I love driving," he said. "I'm on the road seven days and I'm home for three. This is one of the great things about Kriska. Essentially if you're willing to work, and you can work unsupervised - without them having to babysit you - as long as you can do that, they pretty much leave you alone and allow you to do your own thing. Which is really great. It allows you to set your life up the way that is most convenient for you."

He agreed with Wahba that his



JJ Mercer (above) was a major with the Canadian Air Force for 35 years before he started driving for Kriska in June 2014.

skills from the military were transferable to his current job as a driver.

"I was a combat operations officer. I led thousands of troops in the field so I bring a lot of organizational skills to the job," he said. "And I certainly like working independently and I work in isolation very well. I'm also a very skilled planner and I'm very articulate. I like being alone in my truck. I wasn't really prepared, as a new civilian, to go into a large office setting. I couldn't take that."

He added that he appreciates Kriska and how they bend over backwards for veterans to ensure they have a position waiting for them during the time that they get their licence.

"Kriska tries to make trucking a very structured environment when

and it can be transferable to what we have to offer in driving and non-driving applications," she said. "We also recognize the fact that the military really develops leaders and strategic thinkers. We can look further and say they also really care about safety, which is something Bison is very proud of and invests a lot of time in. We look at veterans as a talent pool that can bring a lot to our organization, whether its non-driving or driving, because they have that strategic thinking ability. We know they can also be useful outside of the driver's seat as a mentor or driver-trainer."

To date Bison has hired only a handful of veterans but is actively working with Canada Company to expand that number.

Fensom added that hiring veterans, and putting those respected people in the seats of trucks will not only benefit Bison from a profit perspective, but it will help to improve the image of the truck driver among the public.

Challenger Motor Freight is a recent partner with Canada Company, only joining earlier this year.

So far, it hasn't hired any veterans through the MET program, but is anxious to grow its veteran population said Geoff Topping, its director of recruiting and retention.

"We have hired some veterans that came in through the normal channels," he said, adding that most of them have been drivers.

He echoed Fensom and Wahba's observations that veterans make great employees because of their training and safety focused skills, but said the main drive to hire veterans is to give back and thank them for their service.

"I think it's very important to support those people who are looking for their second career," he said. "One of our recruiters is an ex-military person and he has a lot of background in training and safety. And so we really are trying to work to expand the number of military hires in our company and we want to do that out of all of our offices in Ontario, Quebec and B.C." ●

Work hard, stay open-minded: Lichtenberger

Continued from page 1

"We were here in 2000 doing an RV-ing tour around Canada when we met a consultant out of Edmonton who made everything possible," Lichtenberger said. "He gave me his card and two years later we signed the paperwork and five years later, we were here."

For Lichtenberger, it was a dream come true. He was always enamored with the North American-style conventional trucks driven here.

"They're much fancier, much nicer," he said.

Driver pay in Canada is better than in Europe and traffic in Saskatchewan a lot easier to deal with than in congested European cities. Lichtenberger also said professional drivers are generally more highly regarded in Canada than in Europe.

His first Canadian gig was with D.J. Knoll, who he has remained with for the 11 years he has been here.

He began as a company driver with an eye towards buying his own truck. But first he had to master the English language – no easy feat since there was no dictionary for industry lingo.

"I didn't know what the word wrench, or slack adjuster meant," he recalled. "I knew what they were and how they worked, but not the English names for them. The biggest barrier was definitely the English language because there's no translation for mechanical terms, so I had to re-learn everything about trucks."

Lichtenberger's dream of becoming an owner/operator arrived when his friend decided to sell a well cared

"I think the key is just to stay open-minded and work hard. Then, you can basically make it anywhere."

Heiko Lichtenberger

for Kenworth T660. It wasn't the long-nose W900 he had envisioned when first arriving here but it was an efficient and economical truck to operate and so he jumped at the opportunity, lured by the promise of more freedom and more money.

"You've got to work hard for the money," he acknowledged. "But it's definitely a difference (versus being a company driver). You're your own boss, it's your own truck – it's just everybody's dream as a company driver."

Lichtenberger soon realized, however, that the dream of becoming an owner/operator could just as quickly become a nightmare. Repair and maintenance costs began to pile up more quickly than he expected, including a \$14,000 head gasket replacement that was required just in time for Christmas of 2012.

"I worked harder than ever, missing out on even more, but I had to provide for my family and the continuing repairs," Lichtenberger, who by this time was the father to three young



After his first truck met a fiery demise on the side of a Saskatchewan highway, Lichtenberger got back on the horse and bought a second truck appropriately dubbed *Second Chance*.



Lichtenberger's first truck went up in flames on the side of the road.

Canada-born children, recalled.

Soon after getting that truck back on the road – and more heavily invested in it than ever – it met its final, fiery demise on the side of Hwy. 11 near Findlater, Sask.

"My cab started to fill with smoke quickly. I opened the driver and passenger windows in order to be able to see when I realized that my brake line had burst, meaning I had to get down quickly and pull over onto the shoulder," Lichtenberger recounted.

He got the truck pulled over, burn-



This custom tattoo was chosen by O/O of the Year Heiko Lichtenberger to commemorate his achievement and his passion for trucking.

ing his hand on the shifter in the process, and then tried hopelessly to extinguish the fire, but the truck burnt to the ground.

"I was unscathed except a few blisters, a slightly broken heart and worries about the future," Lichtenberger said.

It took only a few weeks for Lichtenberger to find a new ride – a brand new Volvo VN630 he appropriately named 'Second Chance.' He likened the pur-



Heiko Lichtenberger (second from left) is congratulated by (L-R) Hasan Zobairi, Castrol, Aleks Uzelac, Goodyear and Greg Doyle, Canada Cartage (parent company of D.J. Knoll).

chase to getting back on a horse that has just bucked you off, something he speaks of from experience since his wife and children are riders.

"When you fall off a horse, you just get back on," he reasoned.

This time around, he has the peace of mind afforded by a full warranty on a new truck. "I didn't want to go through that hassle again of having to pay for all the repairs," he said.

Lichtenberger hauls Super-B trailers loaded with grain in the Prairies, but has seen most of Canada and the US and says he's happy going anywhere and hauling anything, "as long as I have something in the trailer."

This past year, he took each of his three young children along with him for a week-long ride, an experience they all enjoyed.

He also participated in his first truck driving competition (he won, setting a new category record) and show'n'shine, supporting the Moose Jaw, Sask.-based Jobransa Foundation for Children.

As for the key to his future success as an owner/operator, Lichtenberger says it all comes down to hard work – a price he's willing to pay.

"I think the key is just to stay open-minded and work hard. Then, you can basically make it anywhere," he said. ●

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Regulations, driver shortage key issues in 2016

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However, there's a new Transport Minister in town, (former astronaut Marc Garneau was named Transport Minister after the Liberals won a majority government) and Bradley said he's hopeful that despite this change, Canada will move forward and mandate ELDs in the near future.

"I'm always optimistic - I have to in my business or I'd go out of my mind - and the fact that we have a spaceman as our new Minister of Transport suggests to me that he knows a little bit about transportation, logistics, and the need for communication and the need to monitor things," he said.

Bradley expressed his disdain for the fact that Canada has taken a back seat when it comes to leading the way in mandating ELDs in North America, since it was initially ahead

of the curve.

"Canada was ahead...at least Canada's trucking industry was ahead," Bradley said. "We were the first association in North America a decade ago to take the position that any truck where currently the driver was required to use a paper logbook should be replaced with an ELD of some sort. That was 10 years ago and I think that we had hoped at that time that Canada would lead North America. We were ahead of the US at the time, however our governments chose not to pursue the issue. But, I have some hope that things are starting to change."

He said that old arguments for why ELDs should be voluntary, like cost and productivity, no longer hold water, and added that ELDs could actually help the relationship between the driver and enforcement.

"The relationship between the driver, the carrier and the enforcement officer is going to change," he said. "Right now so much of it is focused on, 'Is the driver lying to me? Is he/she trying to cover something up?' But once you've got an ELD, all of a sudden you're talking about facts."

ISSUE #2: GHG Phase 2 regulations

"In no time in our industry's history has our carriers' economic goals been as aligned with society's goals in terms of the environment, specifically GHG emissions, than they are now," said Bradley when discussing the issue of GHG Phase 2 regulations. "It's a good thing because it appears the new government is going to be taking a more proactive approach to GHG reductions than the previous federal government."

The *Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Fuel Efficiency Standards for Medium- and Heavy-Duty Engines and Vehicles - Phase 2*, from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is set to apply further fuel efficiency standards to trucks and engines beginning with model year 2021 vehicles.

Now, it's up to Environment Canada and Transport Canada to develop a similar rule. But Bradley said he doesn't want Canada to simply mirror the US regulations.

"We have to go about it intelligently. Canada is way behind in terms of developing the policy and framework and I, for one, don't like Canadian laws being developed by US Congress," he said, adding that Phase 2 regs are a whole new kettle of fish in comparison to Phase 1 regs, because Phase 2 involves trailers as well.

ISSUE #3: The driver shortage

In order to attack the driver shortage issue - which according to the Conference Board of Canada will reach 33,000 for-hire drivers and cause a major crisis - the industry has to look at compensation and training, said Bradley.

'Not to disparage hairdressers, but that is a skilled occupation, whereas truck driving isn't': OTA's David Bradley

"It's a very complex issue and there are issues with compensation as there always are when you're talking about a shortage of anything," he said. "Compensation hasn't gone up though, as it should in our industry. We have to be competitive in order to attract people from other sectors, or those who are looking for work."

He added that the industry cannot be complacent and should alter driver pay because "nobody else can solve this issue, except the industry itself" and that the role for government in helping solve the driver shortage issue is to make driving a skilled trade.

"Trucking should be a skilled trade. Not to disparage hairdressers, but that is a skilled occupation, whereas truck driving isn't," he said. "It doesn't make a whole lot of sense. What we've been pushing for is mandatory entry-level training and have the occupation deemed to be skilled. How can it be designated a skilled trade when there's no training?"

He added that the industry needs to step up and recognize drivers' skills too and said that decals on trucks placed by companies who are looking for drivers who need "no education" to apply, pushes the industry backwards.

"Notwithstanding the issues I mentioned, for the most part and for the foreseeable future...the future of trucking is bright and it will continue to dominate and I look forward to watching that happen," he said. ●



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H.R. issues to be on the front burner in Eastern Canada

By **Sonia Straface**

MONTREAL, QUEBEC

The Quebec Trucking Association (QTA) says going forward in 2016 its focus will turn to addressing the driver shortage problem that is affecting its member carriers.

“Our main issues for the coming year is our human resources issues,” said Marc Cadieux, CEO of the QTA. “The shortage of drivers is great concern for our industry. And it’s not only the shortage of drivers, but the shortage of employees in the transportation industry as a whole. Whether it’s dispatch, mechanics, logistics – there’s a great shortage and we need to fix it.”

To help combat the issue head on, the association put together a special HR committee that looks at strategies for attracting younger people into the industry that severely needs them.

Normand Bourque, engineer and

technical advisor for the QTA and GM of the committee, said: “The main project that we’re working on with the government is to try and get younger people into the industry. In Quebec, you can’t drive a truck until you’re 19 so we’re losing a lot of young people’s interest and they’re going into other trades. So we are going to be working with them there to help lower the age.”

Bourque added that ads for jobs in the trucking industry will be going up in places younger people will be exposed to more frequently, like Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram and at bus shelters in the coming year. The QTA also said it is working with high schools and guidance councillors to help promote jobs within the industry.

“We’re distributing pamphlets to them to give to high school students,” said Bourque, adding that informing high school students about the opportunities in trucking is important because they should know about the industry



Attracting youth into the trucking industry will be one of the priorities for the QTA in Quebec.

when they haven’t made a commitment to college or university yet.

Cadieux went on to say that 2015 was a tough year for carriers in northern Quebec in terms of the economy.

“Certain sectors are doing fairly well, but others are having a harder time,” he said. “In the northern part of Quebec where the mining and forestry is located, they are having tough time. In southern Quebec, things are a little easier.”

Frederick Francois, the association’s economic advisor, predicted that the country won’t see much of a change in the economy in 2016.

“I think 2016 will be equal to 2015 – nothing more and nothing less in terms of the economy,” he said, adding this is good news to carriers who prospered in 2015.

Further east into the Maritimes, Jean-Marc Picard of the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association (APTA), echoed the views expressed by the QTA in terms of the economy.

“I don’t see the economy picking up a whole lot of steam next year,” he said, adding that business in the Maritimes is steady, and that they are holding their own. “In terms of capacity as well, it’s not tight, it’s well balanced right now, but the rates I mean, anybody should be taking their rates up based on that because there’s not an overflow of capacity, it’s manageable, but any good carrier should keep that in mind and take that into

consideration.”

Picard said that 2015 was “an okay year” for Atlantic Canada because of the slow growth experienced by member carriers in the year.

As far as regulatory issues go, Picard said his association is looking forward to the government helping with establishing mandatory entry-level training across Canada.

“E-logs are also a priority for us right now,” he added. “And single wide-base tires have been in discussion as well, though we’re not moving as quickly as we’d like on that.”

“We’re also hoping that the provincial government is not going to raise the price of diesel taxes anymore, especially here in New Brunswick,” he added. “We are at 21.5 cents/litre and that is one of the highest in Canada, not including carbon taxes.”

Despite the busy year ahead, Picard said he is optimistic for the trucking industry in 2016.

“Here in Moncton, we’ve got a good hub,” he said. “There’s buildings going up and that’s all good because it means it’s busy. We’re holding our own, so we’re happy as well and hopefully 2016 will bring lots of growth and good things for us. It doesn’t seem like it’s going to slow down and everyone here in Atlantic Canada both large and small carriers seem to be doing well, despite the economic conditions we dealt with in 2015.”

Ontario carriers increasingly concerned about economy

TORONTO, ONTARIO

The Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) revealed the results of its fourth quarter 2015 business conditions survey, which revealed responding carriers are still generally optimistic – but increasingly concerned – about the economy and overall business conditions.

The OTA said that results showed that for the most part, carriers remain optimistic the Canadian freight market can withstand current economic conditions. Though, things like the weakness of the Canadian economy and unprecedented rising prices for new equipment appear to have affected carriers’ moods, shifting their current and future outlook more significantly than in the recent past.

Despite this, the OTA says 69% of carriers in the survey say they are “generally optimistic” about the prospects for the trucking industry over the next three months – 16% lower than this time last year, but still a large percentage of respondents overall.

FREIGHT VOLUMES:

The OTA claims that intra-Ontario and intra-provincial freight volumes showed early signs of cracking in the 2Q2015 survey and that trend is continuing.

The survey showed that 29% of carriers reported volume increases in the previous three months, just above the 25% who saw improvements in the previous survey but still well off the 44% average of carriers who expressed volume growth throughout 2014.

In addition, 56% report unchanged volumes.

The survey also showed that only 16% of carriers reported improved volumes in Ontario which is 20% less than the last quarter and a 43% drop from mid-2014. While the overall majority (60%) still indicate no volume change in this sector, 24% report shrunken volumes – the highest percentage since the midst of the recession in 2009.

Of those surveyed, only 35% of carriers foresee volumes improving over the next

six months – down from the 54% who indicated positive expectations in 2Q2015. The number of fleets who anticipate contracted volumes are still in the single digits, but previous optimism has shifted towards an expectation of stagnancy as 69% predict no changes for at least the next six months.

RATES AND CAPACITY:

The OTA said in regards to pricing in Ontario, 20% expect improvements, down from 33% in the last survey.

Only 10% of carriers expect rates to actually decrease – although that’s 10% more than in the last three surveys when no carriers suggested the industry should brace for softer rates.

Compressed capacity also continues to be an issue, the OTA found. A majority (56%) of carriers report no change in capacity over the last three months, although only 20% say capacity has tightened, which is the lowest level since 4Q2013. Looking ahead, 20% think capacity will increase, another fifth of respondents expect tightening and 60% don’t think there will be any fluctuation.

CARRIER COSTS:

The survey also showed that fleets are struggling to keep costs in check. Nearly all respondents said that tractor and engine prices have gone up by at least 10%, while 40% of carriers surveyed said that prices increased 20% or more. Until this year, OTA said that almost no respondents have ever reported engine/tractor costs rising more than 20%.

In addition, the survey found that 92% of respondents reported report wage increases in the 2-5% range with nearly one in 10 carriers saying they have increased pay by 10%.

TOP CONCERNS:

The top concern facing Ontario carriers, according to those surveyed, is still the driver shortage with 40% (down from 50%) citing it as their biggest worry. The second top concern was the economy (27% said it was their top concern) and the third was capacity/rates (23%).

The year that was

How did the trucking industry fare in 2015? Here’s a snapshot of how key indicators of the trucking industry’s health performed year-to-date through October compared to 2014:

Indicator	Source	YTD change
US for-hire truck tonnage	American Trucking Associations	+3%
Canadian spot market freight volumes	TransCore Link Logistics	-24%
NAFTA Class 8 truck orders	FTR (FTRintel.com)	-17.6%
Trailer orders	FTR (FTRintel.com)	-11.4%
Canada Classes 6-8 truck orders	Daimler Trucks North America	+3.7%

Ask the Expert

KEVIN DUTCHAK



Don't worry about 'Big Brother'

George Orwell didn't describe Big Brother in a flattering light. In his book *1984*, the slogan "Big Brother is watching you" offers a recurring reminder that everyone is under constant surveillance.

It's an image that many drivers tend to reference when they're worried about the way their activities are monitored.

The days of a truck driver disappearing from view between a fleet yard and a customer's dock are long gone. Equipment locations can be plotted right down to the intersection, and that is just the beginning. Electronic logging devices track

hours of service.

Telematics can identify how light or heavy someone is on the throttle or brakes.

Add cameras into the mix, and fleet managers now have a view that was once limited to people riding along in the passenger's seat.

They are all valuable management tools, but the secret to driver acceptance involves clearly explaining how the technology will make a positive difference in their lives.

Long-time drivers, for example, often push back in discussions about electronic logs, usually insisting that they will no longer be able to perform their job, or have to drive when they need to rest. Many are surprised to

learn how the systems can improve situations. Aside from eliminating a form of paperwork, one fleet found that drivers gained about 30 minutes of driving time per day after eliminating common logbook errors. (They were often applying "on duty" time to "driving" time).

The more forthcoming and detailed the related explanations can be, the better. It is always better to address questions and concerns in an open meeting than to leave room for the rumours and innuendo that come from "truck stop philosophers."

The introduction of speed limiters offer a perfect example of that. When Ontario and Quebec first introduced the requirements, I actually

came across drivers who insisted that setting speeds at or below 105 km/h would void an engine's warranty.

Of course, nothing could be further from the truth, but it is difficult to address concerns until they are raised.

Some technologies are even being embraced by drivers before the fleets themselves. In recent years, many owner/operators have begun to install dash cams after viewing YouTube videos of close calls that showed other motorists at fault.

Truck drivers, after all, are often not to blame for collisions. After studying more than 8,000 collisions, the University of Michigan Transport Research Institute (UMTRI) found that trucks were at fault 26% of the time. With video evidence, drivers can offer more than their word as proof of what happened.

The best way to introduce dash cams is to explain to drivers how the images can prove they were also in the right. Even the lenses that point into a cab can prove someone was not texting while driving.

The data generated through telematics can give fleets valuable insights to help improve everything from fuel economy to insurance claims.

An unusually high number of hard-braking events can identify a driver who tends to tailgate, making it possible to focus training in defensive driving.

Data from the US-based CSA program, meanwhile, suggests that a driver caught speeding by more than 24 km/h is 67% more likely to be involved in a crash. They won't all get tickets for these speeds, but the engine and GPS data will watch the rest of the time.

Drivers are even more likely to accept the idea of monitoring if the data is combined with incentive programs. The secret is to ensure that any related criteria is specific and manageable. The ultimate goals and targets need to be within reach as well. Some of the most successful rollouts involve installing the equipment to gather data to establish benchmarks before actually suggesting what drivers have to achieve.

A fleet-specific tracking system can also protect people from using the wrong types of technologies.

Without an in-cab guidance system, for example, someone could decide to use the mapping software already on their smartphone.

The problem is that many of the recommended routes may not take into account restrictions on vehicle heights and weights, or steer a truck onto an expensive toll route.

And one of the best ways to introduce any new technology is to involve champions within the fleet. Coaches, trainers and supervisors need to understand the reasons for these tools so they can convey the same details to those who are driving the equipment. It is just another example of how powerful information can be. 

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This month's expert is Kevin Dutchak, risk services specialist with Northbridge Insurance. Kevin has served the trucking industry for more than 25 years as a driver, in operations, safety, training and risk management services. Northbridge Insurance is a leading Canadian commercial insurer built on the strength of four companies with a longstanding history in the marketplace and has been serving the trucking industry for more than 60 years. You can visit them at www.nbins.com.

Guest Column

NATALIE MERRITT



Trucking takes a toll on wives, too

This is in response to Al Goodhall's Over the Road column in the December issue of *Truck News*.

I wanted to share the other side of the coin, so that other women and the men they love understand it is difficult for both partners in this relationship.

In 2001 I met the man who will become my husband in 2016. He is the most important man in my life, but my life with him over the last 14 years hasn't always been easy.

When Tom and I met, I never had any idea what being his girlfriend would mean.

While my friends had their spouses home every night, I was never sure when Tom would be home. Some weeks he was home every night and other times he was gone for a week or two at a time.

There were - and still are - times when our cell phones spend more time with us than we do with each other. I'm glad for the technology, it has helped, especially in those times when I missed him so much but hearing his voice helped a little.

When we first got together I would sometimes go on the road with him. It served two purposes.

One, I got to spend time with him

and two; I learned to appreciate his job and the challenges it presents.

I didn't simply sit in the truck when he arrived at his destination, I got out and helped. I have never been one to sit back and let others do manual labour on their own, especially if I knew I could help and it brought us together as a couple. Needless to say, I impressed more than one trucker when I got out of the truck, put on a pair of work gloves and started undoing straps and chains.

When we went on long hauls together, I stayed up as long as I could. We didn't always talk but I like to think that simply having the company helped to alleviate his feeling alone on the highway.

The miles and days were long. At least I got sleep whenever I wanted but I did my best to keep up with Tom. It wasn't always easy.

In addition to being involved with a trucker, I was also a step-parent to his two children. I have no children of my own so this was an additional challenge for me. I was lucky because his kids appreciated me from the start.

We had our differences and thankfully, Tom was only a phone call away to help us get through the rough spots. With their dad on the road, we had to learn to get along and are stronger as a family now because of it.

Being involved with a trucker also requires me to be a jack of all trades. Living alone part-time means taking charge if something goes wrong in the house. There were many times when I really wish he had been home but again, technology was a saving grace. A phone call to calm me down and then I did what I needed to fix whatever problem life threw at me. I have my own tool set for a reason and I wasn't afraid to use it.

Our relationship has emotional highs and lows. There were times when I didn't like Tom's job. I didn't like the fact that his job took him away from me so much and I didn't like that it took him away from his children. They love their dad but I knew his being away was hard on them as well. I used the guilt card on occasion. It wasn't fair but I did it.

Usually the guilt was dealt out over the phone and I should have appreciated him when he was home but there were times when I wasn't as nice as I should have been. It was my way of saying, 'This is what you get for being away.' I hurt and without thinking about it, I wanted to hurt him. It took a few years before I learned I was hurting us both.

I can't get that time back but now I appreciate my time when he is home that much more, even though I joke

about wanting him to go back to work five minutes after he gets home. We truly have a special relationship. I still get frustrated sometimes but at least now I am honest and open about it. I keep myself busy and no longer give up my plans on the off chance he will be home. When you live with a trucker, you are both single and in a relationship - it all depends on the day as to which relationship I am in.

I used to worry back in the day when I heard of an accident involving a trucker and never knowing if he was the one involved. I learned early on that I couldn't worry every time there was an accident. I had to trust in a power greater than both of us that he was okay. It was probably two years into the relationship that I stopped calling when I learned of an accident. I couldn't live my life that way but I hoped he appreciated my concern. I called because I cared and always will.

It takes being with a trucker to appreciate what they do and going on the road made me appreciate Tom and all the other truckers more. I really wish everyone understood the effort that all truckers put forth to keep themselves and those around them safe.

I wouldn't give my trucker up for the world, I love him and I know without him and all the other hard working truckers I wouldn't have any of the beautiful things I do. 🍎

Natalie Merritt lives in Melancthon, Ont. and writes about all the fascinating themes life has thrown her way.



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Titanium continues buying spree with ProNorth acquisition

WOODBIDGE, ONTARIO

Titanium Transportation Group announced that it has acquired ProNorth Transportation. Titanium acquired all of the stock of ProNorth for a total cash consideration of \$5.8 million and 1,750,000 common shares.

ProNorth is an asset-based company based in North Bay, Ont. with terminals in Mississauga and Sudbury, Ont. and facilities in Timmins, Ont. It provides truckload van services to more than 250 customers with 110 power units, 280 trailers and 150 employees and owner/operators.

Titanium says the acquisition increases its fleet size by more than 30% to a total of more than 450 power units and 1,200 trailers.

Titanium will also be purchasing certain real estate used in the operation of ProNorth for the aggregate purchase price of \$2.5 million.

"Titanium has a proven track record of acquiring asset-based transportation companies, extracting syn-

ergies, and implementing its leading edge technology," said Ted Daniel, CEO of Titanium. "This acquisition expands Titanium's geographic profile in Northern Ontario, allows for synergies with Titanium's existing lanes and Bracebridge terminal, and creates a platform for growth in the region. In addition, ProNorth's dry van business is highly complementary to Titanium's existing flatbed business in Northern Ontario."

Brian Glass, CEO of ProNorth added, "Titanium provides a unique and compelling opportunity to participate in the rapid growth of a new generation transportation company. We are excited to be joining the Titanium team." ●

Trimac wins safety award

CALGARY, ALBERTA

Trimac Transportation has received Certificate of Recognition (COR) status from the B.C. SafetyDriven COR Program, winning two awards of excellence for Large Employer – General Trucking and Best Overall.

"Being recognized as a safety leader is very important to Trimac," said Ross Driver, manager of safety, service and security for Trimac Canada's dry bulk product line. "'Service With Safety' has been our company commitment and motto since day one. Receiving these COR achievement awards is validation of all the hard work and effort of every employee at Trimac to put our company in a position of safety, service, and performance leadership in the delivery of bulk transportation, logistics and related transportation services."

Trimac has head offices in Houston, Texas and Calgary, Alta., where the company has been COR-certified for several years through the Alberta Motor Transport Association.

Now being recognized by COR in B.C. means Trimac qualifies for a 10% rebate on its WorkSafeBC premiums.

"Obviously the financial aspect is good from the business side of things, but having the recognition of being one of the top carriers out there is definitely good for promoting the program internally with our staff and also with our branches and customers," said Driver. "Having that plaque in your office is definitely a morale booster for staff. It shows you're being recognized for going above and beyond safety legal and regulatory requirements and achieving the highest standards."

Prior to a company audit by COR, B.C.'s SafetyDriven Program offers a gap analysis with a health and safety advisor free of charge, which provides employers with a list of deficiencies and corrective measures the company should rectify.

The audit process is to ensure an employer's health and safety management system is working at a base level or better and continuing to improve. ●

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MIKE MILLIAN



Addressing and avoiding wheel-offs

Wheel separations have made their way back into prominence in media coverage lately, bringing back not-so-fond memories of the wheel separation epidemic in Ontario in the mid- to late-90s, which resulted in numerous crashes, leading to injuries, and in far too many cases, death. In those days it seemed a wheel separation was reported in the media almost daily.

The recent media coverage has been, in part, a result of a tragic incident near London, Ont. that occurred on Nov. 6, in which a separated wheel went over the median, slammed into the driver's side of a car and killed a driver heading in the other direction.

Six days after this, in close to the same location, another wheel separated and went over the median, striking a van carrying two adults and four children. The van was destroyed, but luckily everyone survived. Both of these incidents were covered by the *London Free Press*.

In 1997, 215 wheel-off incidents were reported to the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO). To help combat this problem, laws were changed drastically, with increased fines and an absolute liability law put in place, meaning no defence could be offered if a wheel separation charge was laid. The change in laws, in part, played a role in reducing wheel separations and by 2010, reported wheel separations were reduced to 47.

Since 2010, these numbers have increased steadily, to 56 in 2011, 97 in 2012, 147 in 2013, 148 in 2014, and 82 up to the end of October of 2015. These recent tragedies, and an increase in reported wheel separations, have led the Ontario Transportation Minister Steven Del Duca to ask his Ministry to report back to him on suggestions to improve safety.

Have wheel separations really increased? When we look at the numbers, there is no denying the number of reported wheel separations have increased, but do we really think the trucking industry has gone back to the days of the mid-90s when it comes to proper wheel installation, maintenance and inspection?

Strides have been made in technology, and our knowledge as a whole as to proper installation, maintenance and inspections has increased dramatically since the 90s. I also believe the majority of the companies in the industry do a much better job of overseeing and ensuring proper procedures and inspections are carried out.

With this being said, you may be asking, what gives with the increase in numbers? One thing that may explain some of the increase in reports, is the way in which the wheel separations themselves are reported. In 2012, the MTO went to an electronic reporting procedure, tran-

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Wheel-offs a concern for all of us

Continued from page 27

sitioning from the previous paper reporting format. This made the reporting process much simpler for the OPP, who report the majority of the wheel-offs to the Ministry. It is likely more than coincidence that the reported numbers increased with the new reporting system. I believe the improvement in ease of reporting is a good thing, as in order to remedy our problems, we need to ensure we have as much accurate data as possible. Whether we believe wheel separations have increased or not, however, in reality does not change the fact that any wheel separation is a bad thing and any serious injury or death as a result is a terrible tragedy. We as an industry must do everything we can to prevent this.

We all need to do our part, especially in the winter months. Statistics have shown that the number of wheel separations increases during the months of January and February. There are likely a number of reasons for this, ranging from materials becoming more brittle in cold weather, to roads becoming rougher with more potholes, cracks, snow build-up, etc., which increases the strain put on the wheels, as well as possible shortcuts being taken on trip inspections by some operators during bad weather. In order to ensure you, your company, and the travelling public are all protected and as safe as possible, here a few simple steps to reduce the chances that you are involved in a wheel-off:

- Ensure you stress to your drivers that a thorough trip inspection needs to be completed daily - and perhaps even more so during the winter - as the harsh conditions increase the chance of defects. Ensure drivers are fully trained on proper inspection procedures and know what they should be looking for and reporting.
- Ensure you have a preventive maintenance program that has your equipment going through a shop to be checked over by licensed technicians on a regular basis. No matter how thorough an inspection your drivers do, there are just some things they can't see.
- Have a procedure in place to ensure your shops, whether internal or third-party, communicate to your drivers and operations personnel when a wheel has been removed, and therefore must have the lugnuts re-torqued. (A best practice is to ensure lugnuts are re-torqued within 100 kms). Ensure you have a follow-up system in place to make sure the re-torque was done as required. The procedure must be communicated to all parties involved to ensure compliance.
- Ensure your technicians are fully trained and kept current on proper wheel installation procedures, and certified to do wheel installations. If you work with third-party facilities, make sure their technicians are certified to work on wheel installations. Never assume.

This is just a short sample of a few simple things you can do, and is by no means exhaustive. Check with regulations to ensure all procedures are being followed. ●

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



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Tax
Talk

SCOTT TAYLOR



Scamming season is here again

Within the first 10 days of December we had several clients call to say they were almost scammed by someone claiming to be from Canada Revenue Agency collections.

This “agent” was telling people they needed to pay their debt immediately or face jail time. Our clients explained that if they owed money this was the first they’d heard of it. The caller was relentless with threats and trying to obtain payment. Thank goodness these folks had the confidence to hang up the phone.

Tax agencies like CRA are perfect foils for scammers. Innocent people will give up their social insurance number, credit card number, bank account number, passport number – whatever it takes to satisfy the taxman. At the same time, people are naturally attracted by the idea of paying less tax.

Easy targets

Unfortunately, this combination makes them easy targets for thieves.

Christopher Houston and Steven Kendall were found guilty on fraud charges in relation to a complex RRSP scheme. Houston and Kendall offered the owners of self-directed RRSPs an opportunity to invest off-shore with-

out paying federal withholding tax.

A significant number of investors lost their retirement savings: court documents show that Houston received \$2,466,028 and Kendall received \$833,593 from the various entities that were involved in the scheme.

Richard Stanchfield, an “educator” for an outfit called Paradigm Education Group, “taught” students how to restructure their affairs to avoid paying income tax. He was compensated with a percentage of each student’s gross income in exchange for his teachings.

CRA said Stanchfield failed to report \$224,048 in taxable income for the 2003 to 2008 tax years, evading \$31,012 in federal income tax. He was found guilty on one count of income tax evasion and one count of counseling others to commit fraud.

Anthony McPhail, a tax preparer and proprietor of Valet Vending Services, created a scheme whereby he convinced 49 of his clients they could make money by buying and reselling chocolates to benefit charities.

A CRA investigation revealed that no charities benefited from these sales. McPhail then claimed more than \$3.8 million in fictitious business losses over a four-year period on his clients’ tax returns. As a result, \$231,599 in income tax was evaded. McPhail was sentenced to 18 months

in jail and fined \$323,402.

Be vigilant

If something sounds too good to be true – even if it’s coming from your accountant – get another opinion.

It’s especially so if someone tells you that Canadians do not have to pay tax on the income they earn. Canadian courts have repeatedly and consistently rejected all arguments made in these tax protester schemes, and people are paying big fines for failing to file tax returns.

If something sounds too good to be true – even if it’s coming from your accountant – get another opinion.

Look, no one wants to pay more tax than they have to, and trying to reduce what you owe takes planning and discipline. By taking more control over your finances, you’ll have the confidence to question someone who promises something that sounds

too good to be true.

If you receive something suspicious and want to make sure it’s from CRA, call the agency yourself at 800-959-8281 for personal services or 800-959-5525 for business services. Agents will be able to confirm whether any CRA department is looking to contact you.

CRA does not ask for personal information of any kind by email or text message (chances are, they have it already), including communications that direct you to a CRA Web site where you’re then asked to verify your identity by entering your SIN or passport information. They don’t request payments by prepaid credit cards or ask for information you wouldn’t provide in your tax return.

While there is always a cost for doing things the right way, doing things the wrong way almost always costs more. The cost of getting duped by someone you thought you could trust, however, can be devastating both personally and financially.

The best way to protect yourself from fraud is to understand what you’re signing and who you’re dealing with. Don’t keep this warning to yourself. Make sure your spouse, kids, parents, and fiends all know.

If you have questions, ask. If your gut tells you to seek a second opinion, trust it. ●

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

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New CNG fuel station opens in Quebec

COTEAU-DU-LAC, QUEBEC

GAIN Clean Fuel together with C.A.T. and Gaz Metro opened Quebec's first GAIN Clean Fuel compressed natural gas public station in November.

The new station is located at 4 Transport Street in the industrial park of Coteau-du-Lac and will provide North American carriers with alternative fuel to support C.A.T.'s growing fleet of CNG trucks.

Many local dignitaries attended the grand opening.

"The fight against climate change pushes us to innovate and rethink the way things were done in various sectors, including the transportation sector which emits close to 45% of total greenhouse gas emissions in Quebec. The Government supports Quebec businesses in their transition into this carbon constrained world. The Eco-camionnage program gives businesses the necessary leverage to contribute, in their own way, to reducing their GHG emissions, and thus, take steps toward more sustainable practices," said Robert Poeti, Quebec Minister of Transport.

Daniel Goyette, president of C.A.T. added, "We're proud to be a leader in the industry in utilizing CNG to reduce emissions. We've made an investment in our future with the conversion of more than 100 trucks to CNG. It's been a very positive move by reducing our greenhouse gas emissions and creating fuel price stability. We couldn't be happier with our partnership to make this facility a reality."

Goyette added that close to one third of C.A.T.'s fleet operates on CNG.

The partnership involves US Venture Gain Fuel Canada - which owns the GAIN Clean Fuel brand and builds and operates the station, and Gaz Metro - the supplier of natural gas to the facility.

"We're excited for the opening of the first GAIN Clean Fuel station in Quebec," said David Vincent, director, business development and renewable energies at Gaz Metro. "It's great to see C.A.T. take a leadership role in helping to get this station built. They have definitely embraced alternative energy and we hope that other carriers follow C.A.T.'s lead and take advantage of the many benefits CNG offers."

This is the second of five GAIN Clean Fuel station locations to open in North America in partnership with C.A.T.

The first station opened in Mississauga, Ont. in late October. The other three stations locations include Laredo, Texas; Charlotte, North Carolina and Scranton, Pennsylvania. These stations are finishing up on construction and will be opening soon.

"We're thrilled to have our second location in Canada open for business," said GAIN Clean Fuel's Marc-Andre Paquin. "This is one of the most heavily traveled trucking corridors in all of North America (A-20/H-401) and we look forward to serving not only C.A.T., but other carriers seeking to take advantage of the benefits. We hope this station will encourage other US based carriers to seek new opportunities in Canada." ●

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This will be music to your ears

As you travel the roads, do you pass the time listening to talk radio? Sure, social issues are important, but why not tune your radio to a music station sometimes instead?

Whether you prefer country, rock or classical, listening to the music you enjoy is good for you. Music is therapeutic; it's an integral part of many different types of therapies. So, why not commit some time each day on the road to catch some tunes and enjoy music's many benefits?

Did you know that music can help you physically? Listening to music improves heart rate and blood pressure. According to a study in Italy, listening to classical, Celtic, or Indian music while consciously breathing slowly for 30 minutes a day dropped the listeners' systolic blood pressure by four points, which is the same improvement you would get by cutting back your salt intake. Just 30 minutes of music every day

could significantly reduce high blood pressure.

Listening to joyful music also contributes to healthy blood vessels and particularly improves your endothelial cells' (the cells lining your circulatory system) ability to function properly, allowing your blood vessels to dilate and constrict appropriately.

In a recent study, joyful music was seen to increase the flow-mediated dilation (FMD) in the listener's brachial artery by 26% – a result usually only seen with aerobic exercise or statin therapy.

Conversely, this same study showed that listening to anxiety-triggering music negatively impacted blood vessels, decreasing the FMD by 6%.

If you have pain, listening to music may help lessen its severity. According to a study from the University of Utah, focusing on a melody can blunt even sharp pain.

In this study where volunteers listened to music tapes while receiving brief electric shocks, people listening to

music reported a much lower the level of pain when shocked than people not listening to music.

Music is more than just a distraction. It changes how your brain responds to pain stimulus by reducing activity in the amygdale – an area of the brain that regulates negative emotions.

At the same time, music triggers the neural systems that stimulate pleasure, releasing endorphins to counteract the feeling of pain. Music may even reduce your level chronic pain by up to 21% for

Just 30 minutes of music every day could significantly reduce high blood pressure.

a variety of painful conditions, including osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, and disc problems.

As well, scientists have seen that listening to music that creates a positive and profound emotional experience can help your body maintain its level of good health.

Music improves your immune function by triggering your body to secrete immune-boosting hormones to help fight sickness and disease.

Music can also improve your physical performance.

Music that motivates you can take the drudgery out of any activity, making it seem more like recreation and less like work.

Because music releases muscle tension, it improves body coordination and movement, improves mental awareness, and enhances the ability to physiologically relax.

Lively music can boost your energy level and effectively eliminate fatigue caused by monotonous work or exer-

cise-induced fatigue, improving productivity. Listening to upbeat music can be a great way to find some extra energy to help you think clearly and perform better in high-pressure situations.

Music is good for your brain, too. According to a report in the journal Neuroscience of Behavior and Physiology, people are able to more quickly recognize visual images, such as letters and numbers when either rock or classical music is playing in the background. Music has the power to enhance some types of higher brain function, such as reading and literacy skills, spatial-temporal reasoning, math abilities, and emotional intelligence.

Music can be a great mood-booster, too. Music is relaxing and has been found to be as effective as massage for reducing tension.

According to Stanford University, music with a slow beat encourages the slow brainwaves that are associated with relaxed or meditative states.

Slow music can also lower the stress hormone, cortisol – a hormone that is also responsible for weakening your immune system, increasing your risk of heart disease, interfering with your learning and memory, lowering your bone density, and increasing your blood pressure.

For some people, music can also trigger other biochemical stress effects which can help reduce the symptoms of migraines, PMS and/or depression. Just a half-hour of relaxing music each day could noticeably impact your mood and overall health.

Because it is relaxing, music is an effective, drug-free method for reducing sleep issues. Studies show that listening to 45 minutes of classical music before bed can help lull you to sleep and improve your general quality of sleep. It promotes better sleep patterns by relaxing muscles, reducing sympathetic nervous system activity, and decreasing anxiety, blood pressure, heart and respiratory rate.

So, the next time you get into your rig, turn your radio on and enjoy some tunes – stay healthier for just a song. 🎵

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

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Nail fungus is no fun

Nail fungus, which is also referred to as tinea unguium, is a common condition that can affect both toenails and finger nails. However, the majority of the time

nail fungus tends to grow in toenails. In order to understand nail fungus, it is important to know exactly what fungus is. Fungi are microscopic organisms that do not require sunlight to survive. Fungi thrive in warm and moist places such as showers and swimming pools. For this reason, toenails are more often affected by fungi due to the fact that they are frequently in a dark, moist and warm environments such as shoes or work boots. In addition, toes usually have less blood flow, which decreases the immune system's ability to detect and stop infections.

Although anyone can get a nail fungus infection, some populations are at greater risk. First of all, older people are at more risk of developing nail fungus due to reduced blood flow to the lower extremities as well as slower growing nails. People who perspire heavily such as athletes or construction workers also are at a higher risk. Males seem to develop nail fungus more often than females. The reason for this is still unclear. Finally, individuals with a weakened immune system or circulation problems are also at a higher risk.

A nail fungus infection usually starts as a white or yellow spot under the tip of the nail. As the infections progress, the fungus may cause the nail to discolour, thicken or become brittle. It can affect one or more nail at a time. In severe cases the nail may separate from the nail bed, causing pain.

In mild cases, no treatment is usually required. However, if pain is present or there is significant thickening of the nails, medication may be needed. If self-help and over-the-counter treatments are unsuccessful, it may be necessary to seek medical attention.

A doctor will generally be able to diagnose nail fungus by simply examining the nails. However, your doctor may scrape off a sample of the nail and send it to a lab in order to identify the type of fungus causing the infection. Other micro-organisms such as bacteria and yeast also cause nail infections. Thus, it is important to identify exactly what the cause of the infections is in order to determine the best course of treatment.

Oral antifungal medications such as Lamisil are often prescribed to patients with severe nail fungus infections. These drugs are usually taken for six to 12 weeks, depending on the severity of the infection. The goal of these medications is to grow a new nail which is free of infection.

Another form of treatment is medicated nail polish. Studies have shown that using oral antifungal medication in

conjunction with a medicated nail polish have the highest success rates. If all other forms of treatment fail, your doctor may recommend surgically removing the nail. A new nail will usually grow in its place however, this can take up to a year.

As I always say, prevention is the best medicine. Washing your hands and feet often and keeping your nails short and dry is by far the best way to avoid getting a fungal infection. In addition, wearing socks that wick away moisture is also good practice, especially if you wear work boots on a daily basis. To add to this, changing socks often, especially if your feet tend to sweat a lot, is also good practice. Finally, try to avoid going barefoot in public places such as showers and pools.

Keep these simple tips in mind and you will be well on your way to fungus-free nails. Until next time 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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36 OVER THE ROAD

Over the Road

AL GOODHALL



tion workers, and airplane pilots on
this list.

But safety is not about compliance
with a set of rules, in my opinion.
Rules are simply the checklist of ac-
tions that lead to a safe working envi-
ronment.

Safety in our business is about
awareness.

It's about focusing on the task at
hand. It's about being mindful of the
present moment, always.

That focus is incredibly hard to
maintain over the course of an 11- to
13-hour driving shift.

We tend to think of safety revolving
principally around the task of driving
and take for granted the other tasks
we perform in the course of a day.
One of the dangers of working around
heavy equipment by yourself is that
experience can breed complacency,
which can lead to injury.

I received a wake-up call this past
November when I came close to trap-
ping myself between the bed of a
trailer and the trailer tandems.

I was in the process of sliding the
tandems on the trailer and was strug-
gling with a locking pin that was
sticking in place.

This was a task I have performed
countless times over the years.

The short answer to the question,
'What were the circumstances lead-
ing up to this close call?' is that I was
not focused and being mindful of the
task at hand.

It is very easy to get ahead of your-
self in this game of trucking. I had a
full agenda on that day.

There were four pick-ups waiting
for me to do that were spread across

**A close
call
prompts
a safety
reflection**

There is an awful lot
done in the name
of safety within the
trucking industry.

The word safety is
used to justify every-
thing from the hours-
of-service rules to the random drug
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two states with a fairly narrow window of opportunity to get the job done.

The American Thanksgiving holiday was looming and thoughts of planning my time to avoid the heavy traffic around Chicago the following day while meeting the delivery requirements were on my mind.

I also had to work in a fuel stop and look after the Customs paperwork for all four orders.

All of this would have meant nothing if I ended up with my arm pinned from shoulder to wrist between 30,000 pounds of trailer and a set of duals.

Needless to say, my life moving forward would have changed forever if luck had not intervened.

So I stood there in the parking lot that day gathering my thoughts, giving thanks to the fact that I used a 4-ft. pry bar to knock that pin loose and had not opted to grab a hammer and reach under the trailer to knock it loose. I just wasn't thinking.

If I was, I would have grabbed the pry bar knowing what the potential dangers were, not just because it was the handiest tool.

I was lucky and the experience raised a lot of questions. Here are a few of them: Am I protecting myself in the appropriate manner when I'm performing all of the routine tasks in my day?

Am I wearing my safety shoes, work gloves, and safety glasses every time I step into the trailer to load or unload freight?

How many times have I dropped a load bar or freight on my feet over the

years? How many nails have I pulled out of the floor of trailers? How many times have I cut myself on sharp metal on bars or pulled large splinters out of my hands?

How many times have I undecked freight above my head and dropped dust and other crap in my face and eyes? Have I always been fully conscious of how freight shifts when I release straps? How many times have I come close to trapping myself between pieces of freight or the sidewall of a trailer or have to jump out of the way of freight falling from above?

You get the point. Many of you, probably *most* of you, have suffered at least minor injuries being in one of these situations over the years.

So do you or does your company provide out-of-country medical coverage? Do you have a long-term and short-term disability insurance plan to look after you if injured?

How do these plans work if you are even aware of them? What would be the consequences to you and your loved ones be if you were injured and did not have coverage?

It's January, a new year is at hand. If you're looking to make some simple resolutions that can have a lasting impact on your career and personal life, this would be a great place to start. Safety first folks, nobody has our back out there. 🙏

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

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Meet the softer, gentler me

Starting now, you'll notice a change in my attitude. I still intend to call attention to – and encourage change regarding – some of the foolish habits that exist within this industry, particularly relating to large-small carrier relations, driver pay, and freight rates. I'll just be a lot less militant and snarky about it.

On Nov. 17, my priorities and attitudes were drastically changed. At 6:50 p.m. that day, I had arrived at my next-day delivery point near Ann Arbor Mich., and hadn't even shut the truck off yet when I received the phone call we all dread.

Our 18-year-old son had been involved in a devastating single-car accident. Since he's stubborn, cocky, lead-footed and invincible (like me at that age), he wasn't wearing a seatbelt, and was ejected from the car as it rolled. They were preparing to airlift him to Victoria Hospital in London, Ont. when I got the call. Despite the severity of the situation, he suffered only somewhat minor skull fractures – not requiring surgery – and a major concussion, including a minor brain bleed. His nurses and neurologist have all told him how lucky he is; that any prior patients who've been through his experience either didn't survive to see the trauma unit or were paralyzed.

He's the first patient any of them recall that will walk out of that facility with no permanent damage. The abrasions on his face and limbs are commonly referred to as "road rash." I prefer to think of them as chafing, caused by the rapid beating of his guardian angel's wings. I now have a different perception of what really matters enough to justify my outrage.

I never delve into family issues in this column; I'm doing it now simply to explain the mood change you may notice in future columns, but there's still an industry connection here.

First, for those who still don't wear a seatbelt, wake up. Enough of this crap about seatbelt use being an infringement of your personal rights. Your personal rights don't include causing nightmares for rescue workers and family members who are left to deal with the serious ramifications of your actions.

Second, some of you with family should consider switching to shorter trips. I was less than 200 miles from the trauma unit. I can't imagine how long-haulers handle these situations.

My third point helps explain my mood swing. I complain a lot, mostly to myself, about my failure to grow our company as I initially planned. I now see what an advantage small size can be. Not yet thinking straight, obviously, my first plan was to leave the load unstrapped and the truck parked in a corner of the property, somehow get to the hospital and retrieve the truck later.

My first phone call was to John Bults, owner of Diamond Transport. Coincidentally he would be passing by in two hours. The passenger seat was mine, right to the car rental desk at the Windsor airport. John was also one of the many people making concerned calls and texts the following day.

My next call was to Larry Calhoun, owner of Foghollow Express, who I knew had the phone number I needed.

Less than five minutes later, I had it. That number belonged to Pat Campbell, owner of Campbell Transportation, who, despite trying to load several of her own trucks home in the worst freight month any of us remember of late, immediately added our currently undispached owner/operator to the list, a gentleman who seemed less concerned with the upheaval of his schedule than of the condition of our son.

By the time those arrangements were all in place, I was slightly more clear-headed. I found the supervisor of the skeleton night crew working at the lumber facility, who aren't supposed to leave the confines of the building. After hearing my story, within 10 minutes two huge Hyster lifts were beside me. Fifteen minutes later, my trains

were empty. I experienced the same compassion from other customers who were later informed of the situation and who became more concerned with our son's condition than the status of their delayed shipments.

My point is, would any of this happen within large companies? Could I still reach people by phone at 8:30 p.m. who would willingly absorb my problems as their own, and even if I could, would they be more concerned with the well-being of a teenager some had never met than with the added burden on their operation? I seriously doubt it.

I've learned, through nearly catastrophic circumstances, that despite the general degradation of society, I am fortunate to know – and do business with – some very compassionate,

terrific people.

There's often a great deal of name-calling in this industry, usually involving influential people frowning upon people like me. The phrase 'competitive advantage' is used a lot, usually as it relates to the use of older equipment and lower overhead. Accusations of shoddy maintenance practices, hours-of-service abuse, or of our refusal to join national associations are frequent. Well, I have a competitive advantage, and I didn't join any organization to get it.

My competitive advantage is something as simple as the great people we do business with and associate with, all people that we know on a first-name basis.

That's a competitive advantage that nobody can legislate away from me and an advantage that I'm proud to have. 🍎

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

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7 Trailer Trends That Influence Buying Decisions

By Truck News Staff

Over the past two years, the North American trailer market has been on fire as carriers have rushed to replenish aging equipment that has passed its best-before date. In the van and reefer segments especially, underbuying through the lean years of 2008-2010 meant trailers were worked harder and longer than what was originally intended, which has driven the unprecedented demand seen this year and last.

Order backlogs in some segments have reached six months or more, meaning fleets have to be more forward-thinking in terms of their renewal strategies. We spoke to Canadian trailer dealers about the trends they're seeing in the marketplace and found seven themes that came up again and again.

Trailers, trailers... Who's got trailers?

Unprecedented demand for new trailers over the past couple years has extended lead times for new orders and sent many fleets looking to the used market to fill their immediate needs. As a result, well-spec'd used trailers in good condition are as difficult to obtain as Blue Jays playoff tickets and are currently priced at a premium.

"It's easy to get used trailers if you're willing to pay big money," says George Cobham Jr., vice-president of sales and marketing with Glasvan Trailers. "People are hanging onto their trailers longer now because of the cost of new trailers and the exchange rate, so the supply of used trailers is less than it was four to five years ago. If you hunt around you may find what you're looking for but definitely expect to pay a premium."

Nick Lambevski, president of Transport Trailer Sales, agrees. "Used trailer values are still high and good late-model equipment is still very difficult to get and there's still a lot of stuff going down to the US."

New trailers are more expensive, too

The strength of the US dollar relative to the Canadian loonie is driving up the cost of new trailers as well. Even Canadian-based manufacturers such as Manac are not completely insulated against the effect of the exchange rate.

"About 70% of the components we use to build the trailers - whether it be suspensions, tires or some of the raw materials - are priced in US dollars, so we do have to pass that back on to the customers," explains Tom Ramsden, vice-president of sales with Manac.

However, since labour costs for trailers built in Canadian facilities are not affected by the exchange rate, there is some advantage to buying Canadian, Ramsden adds.

"We've actually started moving more product back up into Canada to service the Canadian market, that we typically used to build in our US facilities over the years," he says. "It has allowed us to

offer additional savings to help customers not realize the full impact of the increase in the exchange rate."

All kinds of aero

In terms of spec's, customers are increasingly looking for accessories that will improve fuel economy. Options such as trailer side skirts have become mainstream in van applications.

"Fleets are looking at every detail of their spec' as to how it will affect their operating costs," Cobham says. "When it comes to aerodynamic devices, we're definitely seeing heightened fleet attention on trailer tails. We're seeing more fleets adopt the trailer tails and the one that they all seem to be paying attention to is the ATDynamics Trident model."

Some fleets, Cobham says, are equipping trailers with tails as a way to attract and retain owner/operators, since their earning potential is greater when pulling aero trailers.

He also says trailer undertray devices are receiving some attention, especially in applications where side skirts can get hung up.

"The undertray is nice because it maintains a more traditional look to the trailer," Cobham says. "Skirts can make it difficult to access things like toolboxes, chains hung underneath the trailer and the tire carrier whereas the undertray is a simple device and gives you access to that bay area of the trailer. The other nice thing about the SmartTruck undertray is if you're going to docks with a heavy slope to them, sometimes the skirts will catch the ground and can get damaged. The SmartTruck undertray is set far enough back and has a low enough profile that it's highly unlikely it will catch the ground, even on severe slopes."

Interest in aerodynamic devices is beginning to catch on in segments beyond dry van and reefers, adds Lambevski.

"It's not just the people running to California anymore, everybody seems to be asking about it," Lambevski says of aerodynamic trailer devices, adding even flatdeck fleets are looking for ways to improve trailer efficiency. "We have never seen that before," he says.

Trailer orders remain robust

COLUMBUS, INDIANA

According to ACT Research, October wasn't the best month for trailer orders. Despite exceeding 33,000 units, trailer orders were down 7% from September and 30% from October 2014. However, according to the most recent *State of the Industry: U.S. Trailers* report published by ACT Research, the solid order season continues for this segment of the commercial vehicle industry.

"The solid order season continued for US trailers in October, although month-over-month and year-over-year comparisons were both in the red," said Frank Maly, director, CV transportation analysis and research at ACT. "As we noted last month, there was little chance of solid y-o-y comparisons, given last year's all-time record order volumes. The key is that orders were sufficiently strong to grow backlog, and indications are that more strength remains in the order pipeline. October's strength was provided by an all-time monthly record for reefers, along with a jump in flatbed volume. This is the season when we would expect order volumes to generate backlog growth, and that occurred in five of the 10 trailer categories in October." ●



Fleets are looking at trailer accessories such as side skirts to save fuel.

In the van segment, even nose cones are seeing some renewed interest, Lambevski adds.

Worried about your weight?

Another way to save fuel, beyond aerodynamics, is to reduce trailer weight. This can be done by spec'ing wide-base single tires attached to aluminum rims.

"The weight savings are huge if you compare that to just a standard tandem steel rim trailer," Ramsden says. "Going to super-singles and aluminum wheels, these guys can save upwards of 700 lbs."

A trailer of all trades

Fleets are also looking for trailers that can offer additional versatility and perform multiple roles within the fleet, according to Kelly Knight, marketing manager for K-Line Trailers in Langley, B.C.

"We have seen more examples of customers moving away from single-solution equipment and wanting trailers that can more readily adapt to multiple environments to help them keep their competitive edge," Knight explains.

Them's the brakes

Another option receiving lots of attention is disc brakes, especially among manufacturers where the upcharge is a more palatable \$1,000 per axle or so, according to Lambevski.

"The problem with disc brakes is that with some manufacturers the additional charge is higher than with others," he says, noting there seems to be more pushback when the premium reaches about \$1,500 per axle.

Disc brakes provide greater stopping power, require less maintenance and even allow fleets to streamline inspections. "A lot of people are starting to see the benefits of spending the extra money up-front to save in maintenance and downtime," Lambevski says.

Manac's Ramsden has noticed the same trend.

"Everybody wants to know, what are the cost benefits of disc brakes versus standard drum brakes," he says, noting there are pros and cons to both options, which must be considered relative to the

application in which the trailers will be deployed.

Feeling the pressure

Maintaining proper tire inflation pressure has never been easier, thanks to automatic tire inflation systems, which more fleets are spec'ing straight from the factory. The use of inflation systems has been more prevalent in the US, maybe because Canadian trailers must operate in a harsher environment, but the systems available today have much-improved durability, Cobham says.

"We are spec'ing tire inflation on more and more trailers every year," he says. "It appears the new tire inflation systems are very reliable; they're not like the systems of the past where people would try them once and say they're not doing that again."

Preventing just one roadside service call due to a tire blow-out can nearly pay for the system, Ramsden notes.

"Over the life of a trailer, most guys will run one or two flat repairs because of something that was a run flat," he says. "For them, it's a no-brainer to go to a tire inflation system."

Tire inflation systems also correct changes in tire pressure resulting from ambient temperature fluctuations and can speed up circle checks since the tires will always be properly inflated. Running at the optimum psi has been proven to improve fuel economy and extend tire life. ●

Trailer Wizards buys AI's

LONDON, ONTARIO

Trailer Wizards has acquired London, Ont.-based AI's Trailer Service, which adds to the company's existing network and will bring support to its nearby London Total Customer Care Centre.

"AI's Trailer Service is a well-respected, independent trailer solutions provider, recognized for its expertise and customer relationships," said Anne McKee, Trailer Wizards' executive vice-president. "This acquisition will enhance our ability to service our rental fleet in the 401 corridor, as well as support our customers with additional capacity for emergency response and maintenance."

AI's Trailer Service provides trailer repair and maintenance, in addition to road and emergency calls. The procurement brings service employees, mobile service vehicles and a strategically-located service facility to the Trailer Wizards' organization.

"I am excited about being able to capitalize on Trailer Wizards' expertise and resources to extend our services in the southwestern Ontario market," said AI Down of AI's Trailer Service. "We look forward to joining the Trailer Wizards team and building on success together." ●



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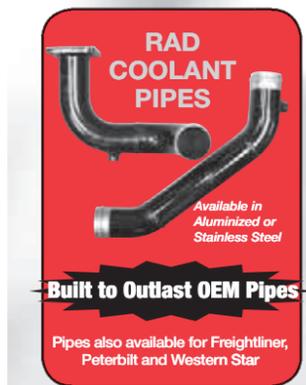


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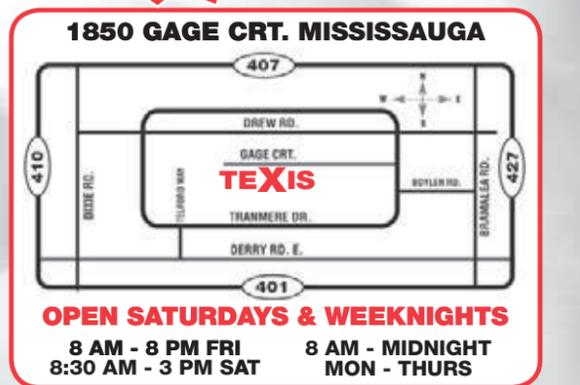


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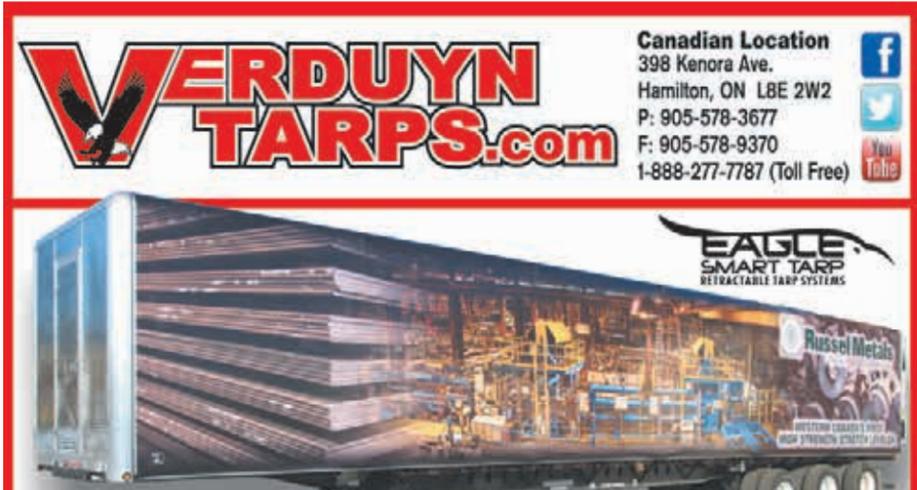


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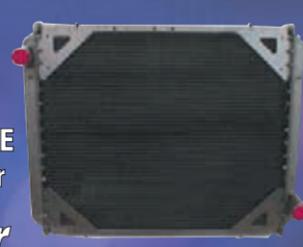
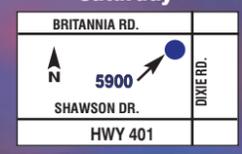
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By Edo van Belkom

THE STORY SO FAR

Mark has some time to kill in Saskatchewan and comes across a local paper advertising a truck rodeo that weekend. Mark enters, but right away he's labeled as a City driver and wonders if he's even welcome here.

Mark does the written test and is surprised to learn he doesn't know as much as he thought he did. Even more surprising is that the old man who looked to be struggling with the test the whole way got the top score.

Mark gets the third highest score on the pre-trip inspection part of the rodeo, missing some small, but important things along the way. He's amazed that the old man finished first when he'd been hardly able to look under the truck...

The last part of the rodeo was the road test. It wasn't actually a test of a driver's ability to drive on the road, but rather, a test of a driver's skill in negotiating the type of tight turns and obstacles that were faced every day on the job.

They would all be driving a new Freightliner that had been donated for the day by one of the area farms. Like any other driver, Mark would have preferred to drive his own truck through the course but this seemed to be a fair way to level the playing field. Of course, if one of the competitors drove a similar model on a daily basis there might be an advantage, but he was satisfied the competition was as fair as they could make it.

Mark's turn would come in the middle of the pack, which gave him the chance to watch several other drivers go through the course and hopefully learn something that might help him drive better.

When Mitiuk took to the course, Mark watched every turn of his wheels closely and was amazed to see the man take out four cones on the "S" course, then take three tries before managing to wrestle his trailer into the parallel park. On the measured park, he touched a cone leaving it leaning backward with one end of the base up in the air. And in the back up to the loading dock, he actually hit the dock hard enough to make some people who weren't watching jump.

Well, thought Mark, at least I won't have to worry about him.

But when Mitiuk exited the truck and walked across the lot, every one of the other drivers - except for Mark - were giving him a big round of applause. Then, when he reached the group, everyone stood in line to shake the man's hand.

What the hell is going on here, thought Mark.

Several drivers later, it was Goldrick's turn. The defending champion swerved through the "S" course like an oiled eel and it was clear to Mark that this man was the defending champ for good reason. He was just so smooth and confident behind the wheel, it looked as if he had this competition all sewn up. But after the flawless run on the "S" course, Goldrick must have lost his mind because he knocked over a few cones on the parallel park, stopped short on the measured park, and took out a few more cones right at the end, seemingly for good measure.



Not his first rodeo

A lot of the drivers were laughing at how Goldrick had screwed up so badly, but all Mark could think was that maybe he had a chance to win this thing.

"Dalton, your turn!"

Mark got up from his seat and realized that his legs were weak and wobbly. He thought this would be easy, but his body probably had a better handle on the situation. This was a competition in which Mark really had no experience. He could drive with the best of them, but this was a test of his skill.

It was like someone who'd been driving the family car for years without incident suddenly having to take a driving course to keep their license. Most are doomed to fail simply because it's a test that marks everything by the book.

Nevertheless, Mark was eager to give it a try. His first realization was that the Freightliner everyone was using was nothing like the Peterbilt he'd been accustomed to these past 15 or so years. Nothing was where it was supposed to be except for the steering wheel, shifter, brake and clutch pedal.

This is gonna be real hard, he thought.

After taking the truck for a short spin around the lot to familiarize himself with the cab set up and the view in the mirrors, Mark attacked the "S" course with a bit of speed and managed to avoid all but one of the cones.

Mark's parallel park was near perfect, but his measured park was off by just over six inches. He was doing well on the loading dock, but got too close to the truck parked at the next bay and wound up putting a scratch on his trailer's trim, and taking out a cone on the other side when he was trying to straighten him-

self out before finally backing into the dock.

"Okay," he said under his breath. "It's a lot harder than it looks."

After parking the truck and setting the brake, Mark slowly climbed out of the truck careful to keep three points of contact every step of the way.

"Good to see you're learning," one of the judges said.

"I'm not one to make the same mistake twice," Mark said, after having been penalized in the pre-trip inspection portion for jumping down from the cab.

"But I still have to ding you for not wearing your seatbelt."

Mark shook his head. Are these guys ever by the book, he thought. Well, second place won't be too bad for my first time.

Later that afternoon at the awards presentation ceremony, Cyril Mitiuk was announced as the champion who would go on to compete at the provincial championship in a couple of months time.

"What?" Mark said under his breath.

How in the world could that guy - making so many mistakes - win the whole damn thing? Something was wrong. This thing had to be rigged. Mark moved up to the front of the crowd of drivers and was about to cup his hand around his mouth and shout, "Fixed!" when a strong hand grabbed his arm and pulled him back.

"Relax, city boy."

Mark turned and saw that Goldrick had a firm hold of his arm and wasn't about to let go for anything.

Mark gestured to the stage where Mitiuk was slowly climbing the steps to receive his trophy. "How did that happen?"

Goldrick yanked on Mark's arm again and led him to the back of the crowd where no one would hear what he had to say.

"Listen, you drove well and everything, but you were never going to win today."

"Why not?"

"That's Cyril Mitiuk up there. He's competed in this rodeo for 20 years and never finished higher than third."

"So?"

"So, he's been diagnosed with colon cancer and probably won't make it to next year."

Mark suddenly understood what had been going on and felt like a complete and utter jackass.

Goldrick finally let go of Mark's arm and together the two men applauded the the old man up on the stage.

Mitiuk struggled to hold up the trophy for a moment, then said a few words. "First of all I want to thank all of you guys. I have a feeling a lot of you didn't do as well as you could have because of me... But I don't care." Everyone cheered, Mark included. "Thanks for giving me something to live in the coming months." Mark couldn't help but get teary-eyed, proud to be part of this group...not just of good truckers, but of good, good people. ●

- Mark Dalton returns next month in another exciting adventure.

Illustration by Glenn McEvoy



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Daimler launches medium-duty engines

Continued from page 48

2018, it will add about 160 new jobs. Until then, they'll be produced in Mannheim, Germany. The new engines will be available for order in 2016 in the Freightliner M2. Details regarding engine ratings and other specific features of the new mid-range engines were not yet revealed. Daimler Trucks North America has in recent years become a stronger player in the medium-duty market, capturing about 40% of the US Classes 6/7 segments in each

of the past few years.

Daimler also announced its entire lineup will comply with impending 2017 greenhouse gas emissions requirements early.

Daum said he expects the truck market to remain strong in 2016, though orders will likely land somewhere between an excellent 2015 and a very good 2014.

"We will finish the year strong and the start of the year will be strong through the first quarter," Daum said. "We'll see how the rest of the year un-

folds. We don't have that security we had a year ago where we were sold out at the beginning of the year but this is

not normal for business, you should every day worry for your business and fight for it." ●

Pacific Coast named top Canadian Volvo dealer

LANGLEY, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Volvo Trucks has named Pacific Coast Heavy Truck Group of Langley, B.C. its 2015 Canadian Dealer of the Year.

Volvo Trucks also handed out Dealer of the Year honours to Michigan's M&K Truck Centers for North America and to Tractoremolques del Noroeste for Mexico.

M&K was awarded for outstanding performance in several areas, including truck and parts sales, market share, customer satisfaction and operating standards, as well as doubling its sales objectives for the year.

In addition to its Langley location, Pacific Coast Heavy Truck Group is also located in New Westminster and Kamloops, B.C. ●

Ryder System helps fleets prepare for winter driving conditions

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Ryder System announced today that it has activated its online Winter Preparedness Hub - where best practices are shared on how to keep fleets winter-ready throughout the cold season.

Last year, Ryder said drivers and fleet managers relied on Ryder's Winter Preparedness Hub to remain informed of best practices surrounding fleet maintenance proactive planning, proper fuelling, driver training, and driver safety.

On the hub, visitors can find informative tip sheets and videos about the do's and don'ts of prepping a fleet for winter, Ryder shop closure notifications, and a listing of other helpful online resources.

"Last winter, we witnessed a great improvement in uptime and efficiency, and received positive feedback from customers, who said they turned to Ryder's Winter Prep site for consistent, up-to-date information and maintenance/safety tips," said Bill Dawson, vice-president, maintenance operations and engineering, Ryder. "We were the first - and remain the only - in the industry to provide this kind of rich content in one location, to fleets whose safety and businesses depend on it. As many brace for cold temperatures, we aim to continue to be a trusted, reliable source that drivers and fleet operators can count on."

You can visit Ryder's Winter Preparedness Hub at campaigns.ryder.com/winterdriving. ●

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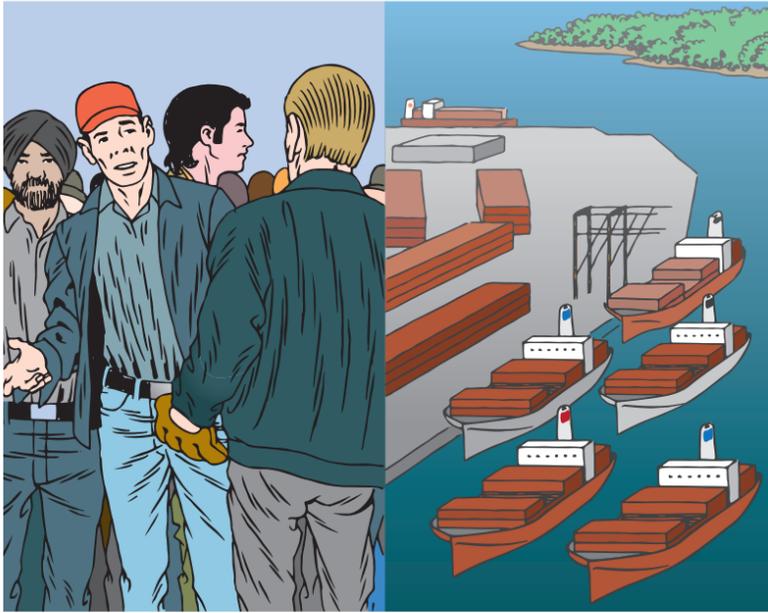
By Edo Van Belkom

The strike goes on for another four days. Some of the major carriers have filed for court injunctions to stop the strike, but the strikers are complying with all the wishes of the police on each of the strike lines and no one has done anything wrong. Support among the drivers and in the community continues to grow each day resulting in the choking off a vital pipeline of international goods through not only Ontario, but overseas as well.

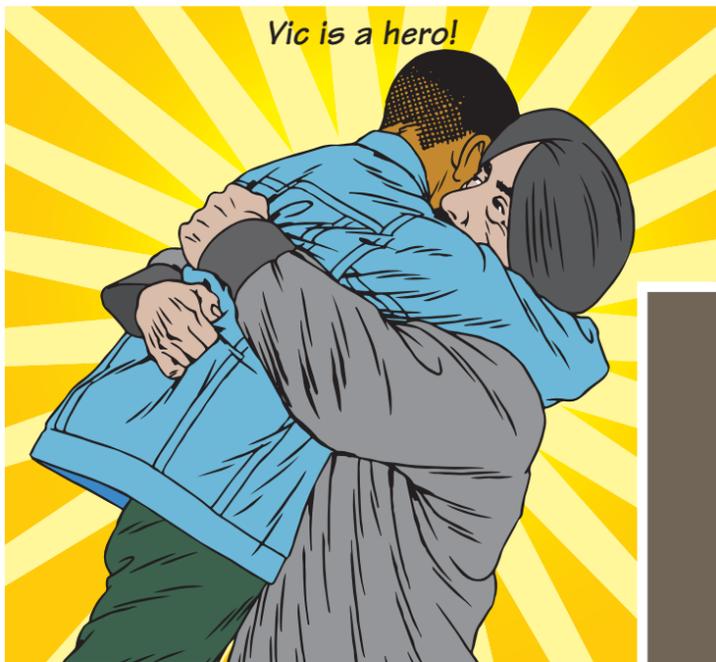
Booyed by the support, Vic agrees to continue as the spokesperson for however long it take to get a better deal for the drivers. Only after four days do any of the executives from the carriers ask to meet. Vic hopes this is a sign that they are ready to agree to some changes but only two CEOs show up for the meeting.



After the eighth day another meeting is scheduled with the carriers and this time they all show up and are eager to come to terms.



In the end, the drivers and the carriers agree to new terms and to reduce wait times. While the details still have to be worked out, it's a victory for Vic and the container drivers.



But the next day Vic is alone and back back behind the wheel, happy to have done some good, but even happier to be out of the spotlight and on the road again.

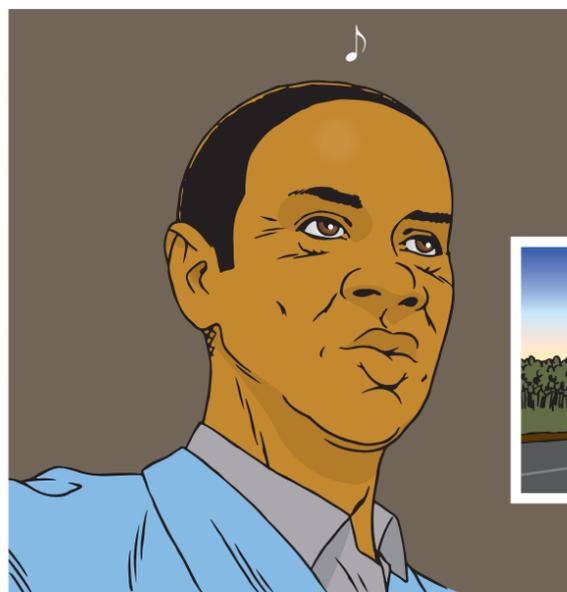


Illustration by Glenn McEvoy



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Ross Mackie wins award, Maxim's Doug Harvey recognized for philanthropy and Canadian Mitsubishi Fuso representative promoted

Ross Mackie has been presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award by North American Van Lines. He received the honour at the North American Van Lines Convention in San Diego, Calif. on Oct. 21. Mackie is the first recipient of the award, which recognizes more than 60 years in the moving industry throughout North America.

Mackie the Mover was founded in 1928 by Ross's parents, Amanda and Merle, who operated out of their Oshawa home. Ross began working for the company at an early age, washing the trucks after school.

At the age of 17 in 1951, Ross began his driving career by hauling household furniture belonging to a military employee to Whitehorse, Yukon. In 1952, Ross's parents started a North American Van Lines agency in Canada. Today, Mackie Moving and Storage is one of the largest privately-owned moving companies in Canada. It was also one of the founding North American Van Line agents in Canada.

Mackie says the company's success is due to the hard work of his parents, his sister Marilyn, his sons Norman, Paul, Dean and Scott and their families, as well as all the company's employees, suppliers and customers.

James Johnstone has joined ETA Transportation as vice-president of business development. With more than 10 years of progressive experience in North American transportation, a strong background in opera-

tions and building strategic customer solutions, the company says Johnstone will be a welcome addition to the team, which has plans to further develop its corporate portfolio.

Doug Harvey, president and CEO of Maxim Truck and Trailer, was named Outstanding Philanthropist for 2015 by the Association of Fundraising Professionals of Manitoba (AFPM). The honour, which was awarded Nov. 13, recognizes Harvey's generous support of the Cancer Care Manitoba Foundation (of which he is also the board chair), the Canadian Museum for Human Rights and the Assiniboine Park Conservatory, as well as the way the Winnipeg native has inspired the philanthropic spirit in his staff, encouraging them to volunteer and partake in fundraising initiatives.

Harvey's company Maxim sponsors arts, culture, education, health and sports initiatives in several Canadian cities and each year a percentage of the business' revenues are donated to charity.

Brian Shantz has been appointed as the new director of dealer network development and operations for Mitsubishi Fuso Truck of America. In his added role, Shantz, who is also the general manager of Canadian operations, will be responsible for dealer network development for all of Mitsubishi Fuso's North American operations, including Canada, the US, Puerto Rico and Guam. ●



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 Lease Purchase Moving Driver Trainer Other _____

TOTAL TRUCK DRIVING EXPERIENCE _____/yrs

OWNER OPERATOR? Manufacturer _____ Year/Model _____ Engine/Size _____

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Start/End Date _____ City _____ Prov/State _____

Contact Person _____ Tel _____

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TRUCK NEWS CAREERS www.trucknews.com

How the Halls are hauling and hauling well

When John T. Hall started a trucking company in the 1940s, it's unlikely that he envisioned that it would become what it is today – one of Canada's most successful transport companies. Sonia Straface caught up with his grandchildren, who are now running the business, to talk about its success.

It's ironic that more than half a century ago, a man named Hall decided he would invest in the hauling and trucking industry. Today, his company is still kicking and is a household name and respected carrier in the Canadian trucking industry.

J&R Hall is known for its shiny black trucks that haul across Western Canada. Recently, it was named one of Canada's Top Fleet Employers by Trucking HR Canada and of late, business has been flourishing according to its third-generation of owners.

The history of the company dates back to 1949 when John T. Hall founded a transportation company that hauled livestock and farm products around southwestern Ontario. The second generation joined the business in 1959 and expanded the venture into the transportation of aggregate products. In 1969, the business added dry vans, and by 1982, the third generation of Halls was on-board. The name J&R Hall was incorporated in 1987 and in 1988 it was decided that the company would focus on hauling primarily to Western Canada.

Today, the business is being led by president Jeff Hall, grandson of founder John T. Hall, and his siblings, Andy Hall, v.p. and Lynn D'Aguilar, v.p. It has 80 trucks, more than 180 trailers and some 130 full-time drivers on its payroll. It hauls general freight, or as Jeff puts it: "If it fits in a van, we'll haul it."

Jeff's eldest son Cody also joined the family business in operations, marking the entrance of the fourth generation in J&R Hall. Jeff's other son Dylan works as a licensed mechanic in the company's shop.

So far, the Halls are hauling well and are turning heads in the industry. The company has a loyal customer base and has been nationally recognized for its integrity and human resources best practices, since it's not

losing drivers and is capitalizing despite trucking's tough times. In addition, J&R boasts an excellent CVOR rating and its damage claim ratio is close to 100% – all impressive when you consider it is in the LTL side of things.

The company's secret to success or biggest strength is a combination of the reputation the company has earned over the years, according to the senior staff.

"Our reputation in the industry is our biggest strength," said D'Aguilar. "Our drivers are very professional and exceed customer expectations on a regular basis. Communication is one of our strongest points with our customers, and we definitely think a lot of it has to do with the size of our company. We're not too big, but we're not too small. We have a group of dispatchers that are communicating and letting our customers know when their freight is arriving."

Communication is so strong, according to Cody Hall, because of the longstanding employees at J&R that become familiar faces for customers to deal with when a problem arises. This helps customers feel comfortable and allows them to express problems freely.

The company's communication also extends further to its senior staff and employees.

"We always take the time to talk with the drivers and know each and every one of them by name," said D'Aguilar, adding that if a driver ever has a problem, they have no issues discussing it with management.

The company's driver turnover rate is well below industry average and that is thanks to a combination of using only brand new equipment and the state-of-the-art terminals across the country.

"Our terminals make a really big difference because our terminals in Western Canada and Ontario all have laundry facilities, a kitchen, showers, a drivers' lounge and a full gym available to our staff," said D'Aguilar. "Drivers do appreciate those comforts of home that our facilities provide. I also think the fact that we offer satellite TV and Internet in our terminals as well has to do with it...the drivers have said they really appreciate those things when they are on a reset."

According to Jeff Hall, the addition of a gym in the terminals was recent because of how much health and



J&R Hall

wellness has been in the spotlight in the trucking industry.

"We receive positive feedback about the gym facilities each and every day," he said. "All of us are understanding our personal health more and more these days and we are paying attention to those needs and right now focus on wellness is at the forefront for us."

At the end of the day, the company credits its low turnover rate to treating drivers like people.

"We build their work schedule around their personal needs," said Andy. "We cater to them for their schedules and what they need for home time. When they can't work, we work with them to see what they need."

Though the driver shortage isn't exactly affecting the business today, it is something that is on the company's radar for the future.

Cody Hall one of the two fourth generation-ers at J&R expressed the company's concern with the lack of interest of trucking from millennials, like himself.

"There aren't too many up and comers coming into the industry," he said. "And we've got an aging population of drivers, and it's definitely going to continue on. But it's something we're thinking about and something we need to address in the future."

The third generation of Halls – the management team – all have different opinions on the company's biggest concern.

Jeff thinks that the education sys-

tem has failed the industry as a whole because of how many teenagers are in the dark about the opportunities present in the trucking world. He thinks this is the company's biggest struggle because in the future, when it comes time to replace his retired drivers, he's not going to have many options.

"People is our biggest struggle," he said. "I feel our school system has failed our industry in the last 20 years. We have chased kids into university to learn how to be an IT professional or a Google guru and we have not educated kids in the trades and I classify our industry as a trade."

Andy argued that the company's greatest challenge is the weak Canadian dollar that is making buying new equipment – which in turn keeps their drivers around – an expensive and difficult task.

D'Aguilar agreed with Jeff that education is a problem for students, but is also an issue with shippers. She claims that some shippers aren't aware of the hours-of-service rule and this causes tension on a daily basis.

As far as the future is concerned with J&R Hall, the youngest of the company's management team, Cody, said the future is looking good and that steady growth is the focus for now. The company is currently expanding even further into the west, adding a terminal in Abbotsford, B.C.

"Everything you use comes by road, so there's always going to be the need for our industry," he said. ●

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2016 Calendar of Events

January

Jan. 15 – **Toronto Transportation Club Ski Day** – Craighleith Ski Club, Blue Mountains, Ont. www.torontotransportationclub.com

Jan. 16-20 – **National Private Truck Council's Private Fleet Management Institute** – Jacksonville, Fla. www.nptc.org

Jan. 20-22 – **SAE's Government/Industry Meeting** – Washington, D.C. www.sae.org

Jan. 24-26 – **Retail Industry Leaders Association's Leadership Forum** – The Ritz-Carlton Naples, Naples, Fla. www.rila.org

Jan. 25-28 – **National Biodiesel Conference and Expo** – Tampa Bay Convention Center, Tampa, Fla. www.biodieselconference.org

Jan. 25-28 – **Heavy Duty Aftermarket Week** – The Mirage Hotel, Las Vegas, Nev. www.hdawg.com

Jan. 25-29 – **Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance's COHMED Conference** – Hilton Palacio del Rio, San Antonio, Texas. www.cvsa.org

February

Feb. 6-13 – **Toronto Trucking Association's Convention** – Iberostar Grand Rose Hall, Montego Bay, Jamaica. www.torontotrucking.org

Feb. 23-24 – **TTSOA 2016 Annual Conference** – Sandman Signature Mississauga Hotel, Mississauga, Ont. www.ttsao.com

Feb. 25 – **Delta Nu Alpha's Dinner and Seminar** – Toronto Airport West Hotel, Mississauga, Ont. www.deltanualpha.ca

Feb. 29-March 3 – **Cold Chain GDP & Temperature Management Logistics Summit** – Hyatt Regency Toronto, Toronto, Ont. www.coldchainpharm.com

Feb. 29-March 3 – **TMC Annual Meeting & Transportation Technology Exhibition** – Music City Center, Nashville, Tenn. www.trucking.org

March

March 1-3 – **Green Truck Summit** – Indiana Convention Center, Indianapolis, Ind. www.ntea.com

March 1-4 – **The Work Truck Show** – Indiana Convention Center, Indianapolis, Ind. www.ntea.com

March 3 – **Women with Drive Leadership Summit** – Crowne Plaza Toronto Airport, Toronto, Ont. www.truckinghr.com

March 6-9 – **Truckload Carriers Association's Annual Convention** – Wynn Las Vegas Resort, Las Vegas, Nev. www.truckload.org

March 13-15 – **IWLA's Convention and Expo** – The Omni Orlando Resort at ChampionsGate, Orlando, Fla. www.iwla.com

March 24 – **Delta Nu Alpha's Dinner and Seminar** – Toronto Airport West Hotel, Mississauga, Ont. www.deltanualpha.ca

March 31-April 2 – **Mid-America Trucking Show** – Kentucky Expo Center, Louisville, Ken. www.truckingshow.com

April

April 8 – **Manitoba Trucking Association's Annual General Meeting** – RBC Convention Centre, Winnipeg, Man. www.trucking.mb.ca

April 12-14 – **SAE World Congress and Exhibition** – Cobo Center, Detroit, Mich. www.sae.org

April 13 – **Canadian Fleet Maintenance Summit** – International Centre, Toronto, Ont.

April 14-16 – **Truck World** – International Centre, Toronto, Ont. www.truckworld.ca

April 17-20 – **Truck Renting and Leasing Association's Annual Meeting** – Fairmont Scottsdale Princess, Scottsdale, Ariz. www.trala.org

April 17-20 – **Retail Asset Protection Conference** – Gaylord Texan Resort, Dallas, Texas. www.rila.org

April 21 – **Delta Nu Alpha's Dinner and Seminar** – Toronto Airport West Hotel, Mississauga, Ont. www.deltanualpha.ca

May

May 2-5 – **Advanced Clean Transportation Expo** – Long Beach Convention Center, Long Beach, Calif. www.actexpo.com

May 3-5 – **IANA's Intermodal Operations and Maintenance Business Meeting** – The Westin Lombard Yorktown Center, Lombard, Ill. www.intermodal.org

May 13-14 – **Truxpo** – Tradex, Abbotsford, B.C., www.masterpromotions.ca

May 15-18 – **Warehousing Education and Research Council's Annual Conference** – Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence, R.I. www.werc.org

June

June 4-8 – **Heavy Duty Aftermarket Canada's Annual Business Conference** – Four Seasons, Whistler, B.C. www.hddc.ca

June 10-12 – **BCTA's Annual General Meeting and Management Conference** – Delta Grand Okanagan Resort, Kelowna, B.C. www.bctrucking.com

June 15-17 – **Supply Chain Management Association's National Conference** – Niagara Falls, Ont. www.supplychaincanada.com

June 16-17 – **2016 Private Motor Truck Council of Canada Annual Convention** – Kingsbridge Conference Centre, King City, Ont. www.pmtc.ca

June 18 – **Manitoba Provincial Truck Driving Championships** – Peterbilt Manitoba, Winnipeg, Man. www.trucking.mb.ca

June 19-22 – **Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators' Annual Meeting** – Halifax Marriott Harbourfront Hotel, Halifax, N.S. www.ccmta.ca

July

July 1-2 – **Great Lakes Trucks Club's Antique and Classic Truck Show** – Clifford, Ont. www.greatlakestruckclub.com

July 13 – **TransCore's 18th Annual Link Conference and Charity Golf Tournament** – The Country Club, Woodbridge, Ont. www.transcore.ca

July 16 – **Ontario Truck Driving Championships (Skills Competition)** – Flying J Truck Stop, Napanee, Ont. www.otdc.ca

July 22-24 – **Fergus Truck Show** – Fergus, Ont. www.fergustruckshow.com

August

Aug. 8-12 – **North American Inspectors Championship** – Hyatt Regency Indianapolis Hotel, Indianapolis, Ind. www.cvsa.org

Aug. 13 – **Quebec Truck Driving Championships** – Centre de formation du transport routier Saint-Jérôme, Saint-Jerome, Que. www.carrefour-acq.org

Aug. 24-25 – **Commercial Vehicle Outlook Conference** – Dallas, Texas www.cvoonline.com

Aug. 25-27 – **Great American Trucking Show** – Dallas, Texas www.gatsonline.com

April 24-26 – **NPTC Educational Management Conference & Exhibition** – Cincinnati, Ohio www.nptc.org

April 24-27 – **NASSTRAC Shippers Conference and Transportation Expo** – Rosen Shingle Creek, Orlando, Fla. www.nasstrac.org

April 24-28 – **CVSA Workshop** – Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers, Chicago, Ill. www.cvsa.org

April 29-30 – **Alberta Motor Transport Association Annual Conference** – Rimrock Hotel, Banff, Alta. www.amta.ca

April 30-May 4 – **Material Handling Equipment Distributors Association's Annual Convention** – Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center Maryland, Washington, DC area. www.mheda.org

September

Sept. 8-10 – **North American Trailer Dealers Association Trade Show and Convention** – Music City Center, Nashville, Tenn. www.natda.org

Sept. 14-18 – **National Truck Driving Championships** – Brantford, Ont.

Sept. 15-16 – **National Private Truck Council's National Safety Conference** – Dulles, Virginia. www.nptc.org

Sept. 19-22 – **TMC Fall Meeting & National Technician Skills Competition** – Raleigh Convention Center, Raleigh, N.C. www.trucking.org

Sept. 21-23 – **North American International Powertrain Conference** – Chicago, Ill. www.sae.org

Sept. 30 – **Fleet Safety Council's Annual Educational Conference** – Centre for Health and Safety Innovation, Mississauga, Ont. www.fleetsafetycouncil.com

October

Oct. 1-4 – **ATA Management Conference and Exhibition** – Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino, Las Vegas, Nev. www.trucking.org

Oct. 12-14 – **National Trailer Dealers Association's 26th Annual Convention** – JW Marriott Desert Ridge, Phoenix, Ariz. www.ntda.org

Oct. 13 – **Surface Transportation Summit** – International Centre, Mississauga, Ont. www.surfacetransportationsummit.com

Oct. 18-20 – **SAE Thermal Management Systems Symposium** – Mesa, Ariz. www.sae.org

Oct. 25-27 – **APTA's Transportation Summit** – Delta Beausejour, Moncton, N.B. www.apta.ca

Oct. 26-28 – **CITT's Canada Logistics Conference 2016** – Delta Brunswick, Saint John, N.B. www.citt.ca

November

Nov. 4 – **MTA's Annual Fall Awards Gala** – The Metropolitan Theatre, Winnipeg, Man. www.trucking.mb.ca

Nov. 9-10 – **Ontario Trucking Association's Annual Convention** – Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Toronto, Ont. www.otaconvention.ca

December

Dec. 1 – **Annual Toronto Transportation Club Dinner** – Fairmont Royal York Hotel, Toronto, Ont. www.torontotransportationclub.com

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