

# TRUCK WEST

Western Canada's Trucking Newspaper Since 1989 • February 2013 Volume 24, Issue 2

**Page 10** **For the love of livestock:** Alberta first-responders have new trailers to assist in the event of a crash.

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**Page 16** **Strong opinion:** Bill Cameron writes about why many small fleets oppose mandatory EOBRs.

**Page 20** **A natural fit:** Vedder Transport is using LNG to fuel new opportunities in the trucking business.

[trucknews.com](http://trucknews.com)



Three massive transformers, each weighing about 295,000 kgs assembled, were recently transported around Winnipeg using a self-propelled modular trailer. The extreme heavy haul attracted a lot of attention, according to Manitoba Hydro.



Reach us at our Western Canada news bureau

Contact Jim Bray at: [jim@transportationmedia.ca](mailto:jim@transportationmedia.ca) or call 403-453-5558

## Power play

By Jim Bray

WINNIPEG, Man. – It was a show that gave Winnipeg-area insomniacs – as well as those involved and interested rubbernecks – a trio of opportunities to witness something that doesn't come along every day: the sight of giant electrical transformers inching along area roads on the back of an even more gigantic transporter. Transformers and transporters might sound futuristic, but this was indeed a real-life situation that unfolded for all to see over the new year – starting in early November 2012 – with Manitoba Hydro and its partners apparently bringing it off beautifully.

"It was an amazing thing," said Scott Powell, media relations and production supervisor for Manitoba Hydro. "We had a pretty big crowd out for it."

Powell said that, while the sheer size of the undertaking was undoubtedly the biggest attraction for sightseers, there was more to it than pure bulk. There was also the sight of watching the entire shebang maneuver its girth in some surprising ways: "Just the work they had to do to get around some corners is pretty impressive," he said.

The odyssey of enormous electrical equipment was made necessary by Manitoba Hydro's purchase of three new power transformers for use on lines linking the province with the state of Minnesota. The transformers, according to Manitoba Hydro, are meant to enhance "the reliability of the 500,000-volt line that Manitoba relies on for the bulk of its power exports and imports."

"They're some of the biggest transformers in our system," Powell said. "They basically change the voltage from 230,000 volts to 500,000 volts or 500,000 volts to 230,000 volts and allow us to feed power to that line from a different location."

The transformers were purchased locally, through the Winnipeg branch of CG Power Systems (who also contracted the move). The Self-Propelled Modular Trailer (SPMT) itself was brought in from Ontario, in pieces, and assembled at CG's operations on the west side of Winnipeg for the trip from there to Manitoba Hydro's Riel Station on the east side.

Powell said the SPMT was built by Goldhofer, a German manufacturer of such heavy-duty equipment. "They're modular and they come apart so they can be hooked onto a semi and towed," he said, "and once you have them (at the location) they're reassembled."

Once the SPMT gets to its destination, Powell said, "you unload the item and then (the trailers) come apart and you hook them back onto a semi and they're hauled back at a more regular speed to where you started and then you put 'em back together and put the next item on and away you go again."

Sounds like quite the rigmarole, but tearing them down for transport back to CG Power made more sense than crawling them along at their 3 mph cruising speed and blocking off all the roads again for a deadhead trip back to base. At

Continued on page 8

## Welcome to the new Truck West

Welcome to the new face of *Truck West*. Trucking in Western Canada is bold, independent and dynamic and we wanted the *Truck West* you hold in your hands every month to reflect that.

As participants in this dynamic and fast-changing industry, you also need access to timely, meaningful and in-depth information about industry trends and issues in order to make the most informed decisions about your operations. And we want to provide you with a news source that makes it easy for you to access such information.

So over the past six months we have worked closely with our Creative Art Department to come up with a fresh new look for *Truck West*; a look that emphasizes the magazine's independent spirit as well as its family ties to our multimedia information sources.

As you work your way through this issue, we hope you will note the many design changes creative artist Roy Gaiot has made – from the cover page, which includes a bold new logo and teasers providing an easy way to discover what's inside your current issue of *Truck West*, to the last page where editor Jim Bray gets to write about the many important happenings in the Western Canada trucking community.

We hope you will enjoy the more powerful design for our features, with more prominent display type to help you quickly decide whether a particular feature is right for you and the more prominent display of your own insights on industry issues in our Western Perspectives. Note the new and more consistent look for our columnists and how Gaiot has used colour and font size to make certain stories stand out better in the departments such as OEM/Dealer News.

But our commitment goes beyond providing a fresh look. We publish *Truck West* because we strongly believe Western Canada deserves its own publication. And what you can expect in this and every issue to come is an even greater focus on issues important to Western Canada carriers, owner/operators and suppliers.

As mentioned, *Truck West* is part of a multimedia family, which includes *Truck News*, *Fleet Executive*, *Canadian Transportation & Logistics*, two Web sites, our award-winning TMTV Web TV show, several e-newsletters, our Surface Transportation Summit, and a research division that undertakes multiple Canadian transportation-related research projects each and every year. In short, we have a great deal of

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# CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

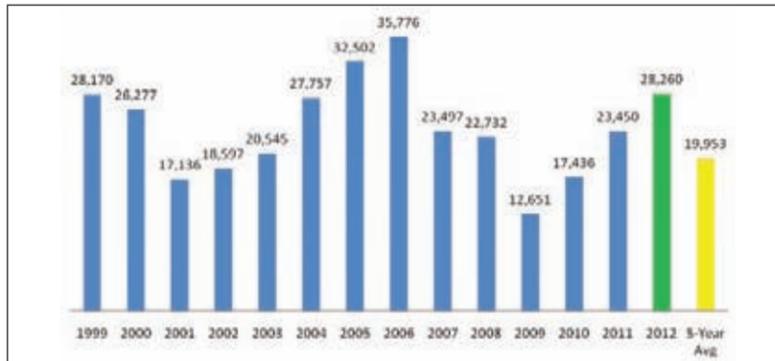
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Class 8 truck sales in November topped the 2,000 mark, making for the sixth best November total since 1999. Monthly sales were also 600 units above the 5-year average. However, the 2,411 Class 8 trucks sold in November also reflected a drop of more than 200 from the November totals last year, reflecting a slowing in sales first witnessed in August and now continuing for the fourth straight month.

### Monthly Class 8 Sales – Nov 12

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	723	713
International	236	461
Kenworth	421	546
Mack	164	169
Peterbilt	343	320
Volvo	312	303
Western Star	212	151
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2411</b>	<b>2663</b>

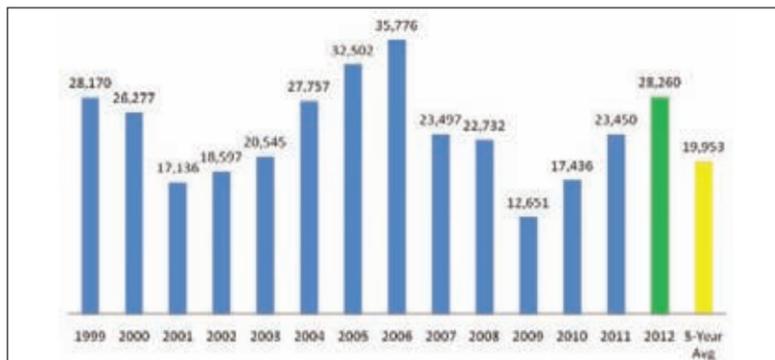
### Historical Comparison – Nov 12 Sales



### Class 8 Sales (YTD Nov 12) by Province and OEM

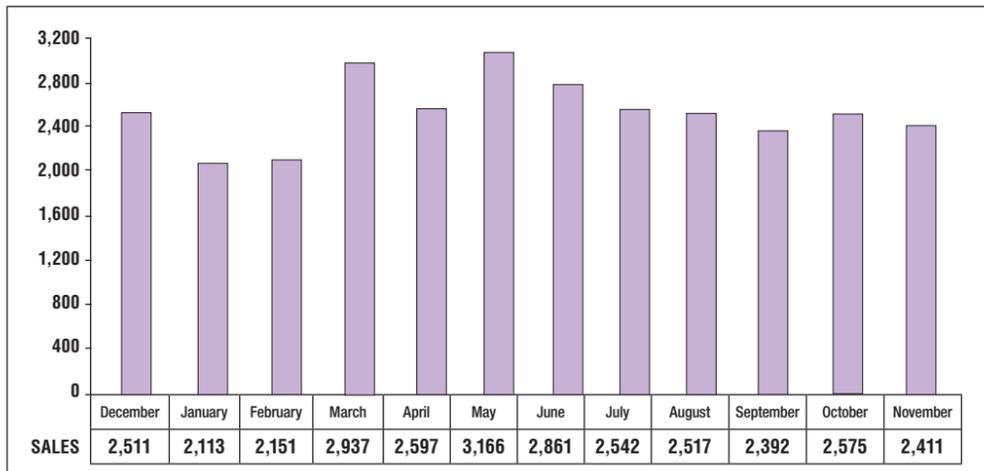
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	556	727	204	564	3,349	1,197	311	138	28	23	7,097
Kenworth	602	2,300	372	202	952	995	114	0	0	0	5,537
Mack	98	371	186	103	834	361	81	37	0	32	2,103
International	145	731	77	250	1,778	828	161	78	25	59	4,132
Peterbilt	362	1,294	294	501	668	537	155	27	0	0	3,838
Volvo	212	279	105	241	1,632	717	105	62	0	7	3,360
Western Star	379	793	84	50	308	378	72	113	7	9	2,193
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2,345</b>	<b>6,495</b>	<b>1,322</b>	<b>1,911</b>	<b>9,521</b>	<b>5,013</b>	<b>999</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>28,260</b>

### Historical Comparison – YTD Nov 12

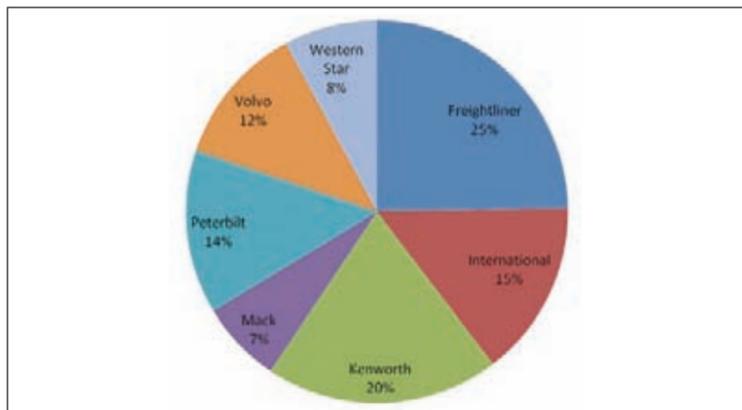


The summer slowdown in the Canadian and US economies and the uncertainty of the fall, are having an impact on Class 8 sales it would seem with the brisk sales pace easing off the last few months. Sales in August, September, October and now November have shown signs of a slowdown but the earlier monthly sales totals are still helping boost 2012 to the third highest YTD total dating back to 1999. The 28,260 trucks sold after the first 11 months in the Canadian market are more than 8,000 better than the 5-year average.

### 12-Month Sales Trends



### Market Share Class 8 – Nov 12 YTD



Truck sales came in above the 2,000 mark for the 14th straight month, reminiscent of the industry's capacity boom years of 2005 to 2007. Our Transportation Buying Trends Survey found that 46% of Canadian carriers expect to purchase new Class 8 trucks in 2012. Question is if most carriers are looking to simply replace older equipment rather than add capacity, how long will the buying spree continue?

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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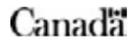
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ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER – Kathy Penner  
EXECUTIVE EDITOR – James Menzies  
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CIRCULATION ASSISTANT – Anita Singh  
CREATIVE – Carolyn Brimer, Beverley Richards  
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**Advertising inquiries**

Kathy Penner (416) 510-6892  
Fax: (416) 510-5143



**Rob Wilkins**  
Publisher  
(416) 510-5123  
rwilkins@trucknews.com



**Kathy Penner**  
Associate Publisher  
(416) 510-6892  
kpenner@trucknews.com



**Brenda Grant**  
National Account Sales  
(416) 494-3333  
bgrant@istar.ca



**Don Besler**  
National Account Sales Manager  
(416) 699-6966  
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Regional Account Manager  
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**Laura Moffatt**  
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# Western Canada, this one's for you

**Editorial Comment**

James Menzies



**I** may not live in Western Canada anymore, but it remains a big part of who I am – both personally and professionally. I began covering the trucking industry in late 2000, having moved to Calgary from Ontario on what was mostly a whim.

I wasn't sure what I wanted to do with myself, but had always felt the allure of the west. I moved into a townhouse in northeast Calgary I'd never seen to pursue a job I didn't have with a girl I'd never keep. Yes, I was young and maybe a little foolish. Jobs weren't falling off trees as I had presumed and I put in some lean months delivering newspapers I felt I should be writing for and freelancing for *Truck West*, which despite serving the western Canadian trucking industry for about a dozen years at the time, had always done so from Ontario.

For one of my first assignments, I crawled into the back of a livestock trailer to photograph pigs from within during the loading process. They look pretty menacing when you're crouched down on the lower deck and they're clambering on-board in full stampede mode.

There was so much happening in Western Canada, so many stories to tell, that before long I became a full-time editor with the magazine. I immediately appreciated the accessibility of the people who drove the industry, from the drivers themselves to association representatives and company owners. Your candor, honesty and integrity made this a rewarding industry to cover.

Of course, it was a steep learning curve. I remember receiving a call from Kevin Agar, owner of training school WT Safety,

taking issue with something I had written. Rather than admonish me, he offered me a free education in the form of full Class 1 training at his respected training school.

He wouldn't even accept our offer of advertisements in lieu of training; he viewed his offer as a service to the industry.

I'm proud to say I've put the training I received at WT Safety to good use, driving in some pretty challenging situations across North America and even abroad.

The constant pull of family and the opportunity to oversee *Truck News* brought me back to Ontario in 2005, but I'll always remember with fondness those years spent in Calgary. So, with all that said, I'm extremely excited to be launching a completely redesigned *Truck West* this month.

You have undoubtedly noticed the new look, even if you haven't yet made it beyond this page. From the cover, right through to western editor Jim Bray's Brayings column on the back page, this magazine has received an overhaul.

*Truck West* has been serving the western Canadian trucking industry for more than 24 years now and it was due for a tune-up.

The improvements don't end with the layout, however. You may have noticed in recent months the addition of Western Perspectives, where influential trucking insiders from Western Canada comment on issues and topics that have been written from a national perspective.

There's also the aforementioned Brayings column, which highlights commu-



nity news from the Western Canadian transportation industry. Beginning this issue is a monthly Inside the Numbers report, which shares results of our Transportation Media group's research, specific to the Western Canadian market.

We're also working on an exciting partnership that will bring more high-quality photographs of Western Canadian trucks in action to the pages of *Truck West*.

And while I may no longer call Calgary home, western editor Jim Bray is a constant presence in your part of the country.

Accessible at [jim@transportation-media.ca](mailto:jim@transportation-media.ca) or 403-453-5558, he's always looking for interesting stories to pursue, and hey, he just may be willing to climb into the back of a livestock trailer to get to them. **TW**

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

# Feeding the beast

**W**hen it comes to trucking, Western Canada is a beast. The western provinces account for 38% of the total number of the country's owner/operators; 37% of its small for-hire carriers; and 38% of its couriers and local messenger operations.

Twenty five of the nation's top 100 for-hire carriers have their headquarters in Western Canada. Perhaps more important than the sheer size of the trucking industry that calls Western Canada home is that some of the fastest growing and most innovative carriers – operations such as Bison Transport, Mullen Transport and many others – hail from the west. The Western Canada economy is also outpacing that of the rest of the country and directly feeding the fortunes of the carriers in the west.

The belief that the Western Canada trucking industry is large enough and important enough to warrant its own

**The view with Lou**

Lou Smyrlis



publication, tailored to addressing its unique set of issues and giving voice to its own industry leaders, has been the reason we choose to publish *Truck West*, run by its own western-based editor, Jim Bray.

But we have to keep feeding this beast. Its growth and dynamism demand it.

In his column, our award-winning executive editor James Menzies (who actually cut his teeth learning about trucking as editor of *Truck West*), talks about the many design and content changes and additions we are making with *Truck West* to make it a better, more enjoyable read for you. I would like to discuss one addition that starts with this issue that is near and dear to my heart: research.

Those of you who know me well and have invited me to speak at your events, know of my passion for accurate, timely and meaningful research about our industry. Since I took over as editorial director of our magazine group 10 years ago, we have made a concerted effort to provide such research on industry issues and trends, just as our government has been letting the industry down by severely reducing the research it conducts on the industry.

With this issue of *Truck West*, we are launching Inside the Numbers, a new section designed to provide research specifically tailored to the interests of the Western Canada trucking industry. This is the page you can turn to in every issue from now on for research conducted in Western Canada, addressing the direct issues and challenges faced by Western Canada carriers, shippers and owner/operators. We kick things off with a look at business projections for 2013. Have a look and let me know what you think. **TW**

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

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# Introducing the new Truck West

Continued from page 1  
 information to share with you about this industry and the new design will make it easier for you to find out about it and access it. Read a feature or story and want to know more? Look for our tabs telling you where you can find more information. Interested in research related specifically to the Western Canada trucking industry? Check out the new Inside the Numbers page.

We greatly appreciate your loyalty as readers of this magazine and value your feedback. We also appreciate that, like the trucking industry, magazines must continue to evolve to remain useful to their readers. Let us know what you think of our new look. We would love to hear from you. **TW**

**Lou Smyrlis**  
 Editorial Director

## 18 Wheels of Christmas delivers huge haul for Calgary Food Bank

**CALGARY, Alta.** – The 18 Wheels of Christmas trailer pulled into the Calgary Food Bank Dec. 18 carrying 26 skids totaling 24,250 lbs of food donated by companies and individuals in the Western Canadian transportation industry.

The centerpiece was a Christmas tree made entirely of baby food purchased with cash donations made to this year's campaign.

Another 1.5 skids of baby food was donated by Heinz Canada and Save-On-Foods. Two cheques for \$3,550 were also donated to the Calgary Food Bank. This year marked the tenth that the 18 Wheels of Christmas campaign has been held.

"We are still amazed with the generosity of the companies and individuals we contact each and every year for donations," organizers said.

The campaign now covers: Calgary, Saskatoon, Regina, Edmonton, Lloydminster, Sparwood, Dawson Creek and Fort St. John. It is organized by staff from Rosenau Transport, which also donates use of the special-decorated trailer.

Trucking companies that participated this year included: Stan Poulsen Trucking; Bess Tank Lines; Rosenau Transport; Vitran; TST Overland; Consolidated Fast Frate; Westfreight Systems; J&R Hall; Hill Bros.; and Mika Trucking. **TW**

# Manitoba looks to enhance trucking productivity

**WINNIPEG, Man.** – Manitoba has proposed changes to its Highway Traffic Act, which could extend winter weight periods and shorten detour lengths in the event of flooding.

Proposed amendments would take a weather-based approach to determining when spring weight restrictions go into effect, allowing commercial vehicles to haul heavier payloads for a longer period of time when weather permits.

Currently, allowable vehicle weights are set by Cabinet regulation.

Amending the regs can be time-consuming, which is why changes are not made to address short-term situations. The proposed changes would allow the minister to temporarily increase weights and classifications on highways within a short time-frame.

Under the proposed amendment, trucks would be able to remain at higher weight thresholds for as long as weather allows.

In addition, the changes would allow the province to act faster when a road or bridge is damaged by flood-

ing, to more quickly provide access to temporary alternative routes. This could shorten detour lengths by hundreds of kilometres, the province claims.

"These proposed amendments will help drive rural economic growth by allowing farm and com-

We view this as a positive move

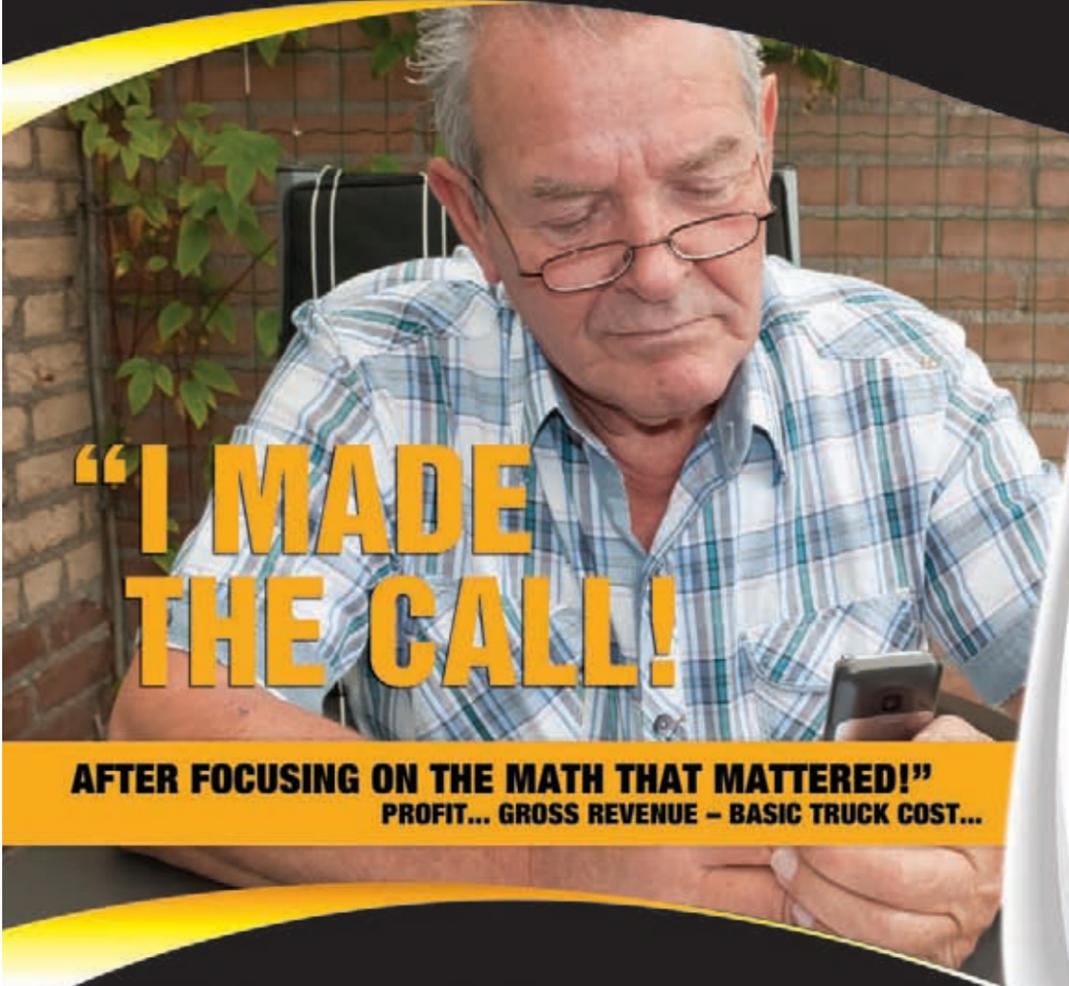
**Norm Blagden, MTA**

mercial trucks to carry heavier loads on our highway system sooner," said Transport Minister Steve Ashton. "They will also offer greater flexibility when natural disasters damage part of that critical system."

The trucking industry welcomed the changes.

"This proposed amendment will allow government to react more quickly to industry needs; as such, we view this as a positive move," said Norm Blagden, president of the Manitoba Trucking Association. **TW**





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# Mega-movers

How do you haul three power transformers weighing 295,000 kgs when fully assembled? It takes planning, specialized equipment and plenty of patience.

Continued from page 1

least they didn't have to worry about speeding tickets.

And speaking of rigmarole, "there was a lot of planning between Mani-

toba Hydro and CG power systems and Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation to, first of all, develop a route that could take the weight of these units and also minimize disruption to traffic," Powell said. "Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation worked very closely with our supplier - and with us, too - to get this route planned."

The trip was only about 45 kilometres as the mosquitoes fly, but because of the unique cargo and the logistics involved, the actual 144-km route curved around the southern outskirts of Winnipeg, creating a slow crawl that took three nights to accomplish, with days taken off. So did they just pull off to the side of the road and pitch a tent for the "overday" rest stops?



It took a specialized piece of moving equipment, complete with 320 wheels, to haul these oversized power transformers for Manitoba Hydro.

"There were parking areas set up," Powell said. "They had to be off the road by 6 a.m. and we had areas set up where you could pull these units off

the highway and they'd sit there during the day and at eight o'clock the next night, the units would come back onto the roadways for the next leg."

As you can see by the pictures accompanying this piece, finding a parking spot suitable for such a rig can be a challenge: you can't just pull off the road and into a convenient parking lot.

"Some of the parking areas were service roads, gravel pads, etc.," Powell said. "We planned the route to have these areas available as they moved along."

And as it turned out, there weren't a lot of big asphalt parking lots available anyway, since the chosen path went primarily through somewhat rural parts of Manitoba. Each transformer was moved individually, not only to minimize disruption - and the need for more than one SPMT - but also because of the delivery timeline for the transformers themselves.

"Weather has some impact on it," Powell said, noting however that the more important factor was that the transformers had to be checked out completely before they could be moved: they had to be sure they worked before hauling them around Winnipeg.

As of this writing, the third transformer had yet to embark on its meandering mission to its new abode. As for the first two trips, Powell said they went off without a hitch. "It went very well; we're very pleased."

While the sheer bulk of the transformers as configured for their journey was, indeed, spectacular, Powell said they had actually been disassembled for shipping. Each transformer, as perched on the SPMT, measured approximately seven metres tall by four metres wide, but when they stick all the bushings, insulators, cooling units and other stuff to the transformers on-site, each one will be nearly 12 metres high, and just shy of 10 metres across. Each unit also requires over 112,000 litres of insulating oil.

When they're finally all put together, each transformer will tip the scales at nearly 295,000 kilograms. That means they also need a heckuva base on which to sit.

"There's specially-prepped concrete pads - all electrically tied in - they're special bases constructed just for them. You just don't park these things on the ground," Powell said.

All that ancillary stuff - bushings, oil, what have you - was shipped to the site in regular trucks. Powell said the SPMT itself is an interesting vehicle to behold. "There are 320 tires on each of the units," he noted. "And the tires can articulate and turn. It can go sideways. Imagine all 320 tires going 50 degrees to the right, the whole unit just slides laterally." **TW**

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# Round'em up, keep'em safe

**By Jim Bray**

**CALGARY, Alta.** – A set of new “Live-stock ER” trailers now appearing around Alberta is hoped to help facilitate corralling escaped and frightened farm animals that are involved in accidents on the road.

Despite the “ER” moniker, however, the trailers aren’t anything like the mobile surgical hospitals of M\*A\*S\*H\* fame. They are mobile, obviously, but

instead of being dedicated strictly to the type of “meatball surgery” outlined in the Korean war movie and TV series – quick and dirty procedures designed to keep trauma victims alive until they can reach a “real” hospital – these trailers are meant more to keep livestock collected and safe at accident scenes, so they don’t wander off and get lost, hurt or cause damage.

And while some medical assistance could be in order while the trailers are being used, their “emergency” aspects are decidedly more, well, pedestrian.

According to Heini Hehli, executive director of Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC), “the reason they’re called emergency trailers is that they’re pulled by firefighter personnel and are equipped with red lights.” The extra illumination is required, he said, because “if an accident scene is secured (by police or whoever), nothing will get through without emergency lights.”

The trailers are stationed at fire stations, and operated by people specially trained to handle them.

“They know what’s in them, they know what to do in any situation; they’re trained for that,” Hehli said.

The trailers were developed to help solve the problem of loose livestock at accident scenes, Hehli said. “We had some fire people calling for that, saying they had no way to catch or contain (livestock running wild) and that’s actually dangerous to the people who are working there.”

All of which means that the firefighters involved in the program now have among their duties the chasing down and gathering together of lingering livestock.

“Right now they’re training four people per trailer wherever they’re situated,” Hehli said. “They probably know a bit more about livestock than the regular firefighters do – and of course if the livestock runs loose all over the place, there’ll be other people called in – farmers, etc., to help them along.”

Hehli said the initiative was begun because “basically there was nothing around to contain animals and we’d had a few rollovers on the highway where animals were able to run loose – they get shock too, and they can run for an awful long time – and with an overturned semi-trailer, sometimes you have to cut the vehicle open to let the livestock out, especially with cattle.”

The system was inspired by similar units that had been developed and put into operation in Red Deer County and Ponoka and was developed by representatives from the Alberta Equestrian Federation, the Alberta Beef Producers, Livestock Identification Services, RCMP, Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC) and Alberta Agriculture and Rural. Funding was provided through the federal/provincial/territorial Growing Forward initiative. Inside the 18-foot trailers are panels for use in setting up corrals, as well as halters, feed, wire, etc.

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"The five trailers we've just equipped pretty well have everything in them to contain an accident," Hehli said. "As you can imagine, an accident that involves livestock will be different than one under normal circumstances, so these people are trained to read the situation and know how to act and what tools to use."

The idea is to locate these trailers strategically around the province so they can be called up any time they're needed – which can be done 24/7 with firefighters – as well as to add some security to an accident scene.

Hehli said that the first rule of order at an accident scene is to contain any loose stock that may be wandering around.

"They're a danger to themselves and the people who work there, so the quicker they can contain livestock, be it cattle, poultry, or whatever, the better off the whole situation is."

And despite the trailers not really being comparable to a veterinary M\*A\*S\*H\* unit, medical help shouldn't be too far away if it's needed.

"As soon as livestock is concerned (in an accident)," Hehli said, "a veterinarian will be called and will assess the livestock and what needs to be done."

Farm animals don't actually have to be running all over the place before the trailers can be brought into play, either.

"Quite often you see a trailer overturned and completely closed," Hehli said, "so there's nothing actually running loose, but (the animals) still have to be taken out of the trailer because they're upside down in there."

In cases such as that, he said, they can set up the panels right outside the trailer, "break it open, cut it open, let the livestock out and see what happened. But they will be contained and that's the main thing."

And while the trailers are designed for use at road accidents, Hehli says that isn't the only potential problem at which they can help out.

"It could be used in the case of a barn fire, for example," he said. "You need to let the cattle out and it's most important to contain them somewhere, somehow, and this comes in handy."

As of this writing, the training manual had yet to be finished, but Hehli said the first course designed specifically for this program was scheduled for January and would be handled by Lakeland College. "Vermilion has the first response training course (firefighter school) and that's why the training will take place up there," Hehli said.

The training is actually open to anyone, Hehli said, but the grant money only covers the training of four people for each of the five trailers.

Current funding only covers the five trailers and the training involved to operate them.

"The trailers, once they're placed, they'll be ongoing," Hehli said, noting that the units are mandated by contract to be manned and equipped as part of the routine firefighter equipment, as if they're just another of the units they use in their regular duties.

Locations for the trailers represent a reasonable cross-section of Alberta: Claresholm, Medicine Hat, Westlock and Vermilion, with a roaming unit for use by the ASPCA.

"The SPCA has a little different mandate," Hehli noted. "Sometimes they have to go and seize livestock that might not be under immediate distress, so it's a little different for them – time might not



Trailers designed to help first responders round up and protect stray livestock following a crash have been deployed throughout Alberta.

be of the strict essence in that situation, in that it doesn't matter how quickly the trailer gets there. But in an emergency you want the trailer there as quickly as possible."

The way it's set up currently, the program appears to be primed to offer fairly good coverage, but Hehli would like to see it expanded.

"We figure about 10, 11 trailers would cover the province pretty well," he said. "We had asked for more than five but the grant was for five. If there's a need for more, I'm sure we'll get requests to set up another program or something. But right now, that's what we have."

As for the impact the roaming livestock rescue trailers will have, "it re-

mains to be seen how it plays out," Hehli said. "I hope we'll never need them, but you never know. As livestock producers, we know that livestock care doesn't end when animals leave the farm. Safe transport is a top priority and an area where we have long worked with the transportation industry, those involved in emergency response, and different levels of government, to continually improve approaches and resources. This type of teamwork is absolutely essential to livestock care progress."

Hehli said it's a very hands-on project that will benefit "the entire livestock industry in Alberta."

And although Alberta is leading the way with this initiative, Hehli said other jurisdictions may not be far behind. "I know B.C.'s looking at it, and so is Saskatchewan," he said, "and we've had some requests from Ontario to have someone explain the program to them. I guess in the end it'll depend on the funding; it isn't cheap." **TW**

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# Coming up roses at tax time

**D**o you smell that? It's February, something is brewing, and the aroma is wafting this way. It's not the sweet smell of snowmobile exhaust. It's just as toxic and oddly familiar. No, it's tax season, and that smell is fear from all the folks who are not prepared.

Hopefully, that odor is not being projected by you. You've been diligent throughout the last year and your bookkeeping is up to date. You know what your income statement looks like and approximately what your tax bill is going to be. You're actually looking forward to seeing it finalized in your hand and not just a



## Tax Talk

Scott Taylor

projection from your accountant.

Tax season is all about one thing: reducing your tax obligation so you owe Canada Revenue Agency as little as possible. How do you do it? First, you need a plan. Owner/operators who come through tax season smelling clean typically have a clear understanding of their income, expenses, paperwork requirements, filing deadlines, and any new tax rules that apply to them.

They take the business end of their trucking business seriously and set aside time away from the road to get good advice about their specific circumstances. Every person is different, and what you hear on the grapevine may not apply to you or even be correct.

Second, they remember one simple rule: it's not what you earn, it's what you keep. The amount of tax you owe is based on the net income (profit) shown on your business statement. Whether you gross \$100,000 or \$250,000 does not matter. What counts is your net income after deducting all of your expenses. If \$250,000 of gross income less fuel, insurance, licence, repairs, etc. becomes \$50,000, then your income tax and CPP are based on \$50,000.

So the way to reduce the tax you owe is to get your net income as low as possible. That's why it's important to deduct every possible valid expense.

This is where dealing with accountants who specialize in trucking can help. Their expertise can ensure that you've properly recorded every expense, especially those that come under scrutiny by auditors. I've written about these "gray area" items in this column before:

**Service vehicle:** The key is to log your business-related travel in a journal so you can calculate the percentage of kilometres the vehicle was used for business during the year (your accountant can provide specific details about CRA requirements). To find the business-use percentage, divide the number of business kilometres by the number of total annual kilometres. You can then apply this percentage against lease payments or loan interest, fuel, repairs, maintenance, washes, and other service-vehicle expenses.

**Office in the home:** You must detail the square footage and possibly the hours of use of your office workspace in your home to determine a business-use percentage. Apply this percentage against heating, electricity, home insurance, property taxes, rent, or mortgage interest.

**Income splitting:** This can get complicated with worker's compensation and other employment-related issues, but the object here is to get income onto the tax return of the family member in the lowest tax bracket. Any income paid to your spouse, son, or daughter has to be shown on their return and has to be reasonable in terms of an hourly wage for work they have done for you.

**Interest:** You can deduct the interest expense on money borrowed for business purposes. It's easy to calculate on your truck loan, but not so easy on credit cards and lines of credit that are both personal and business related. I went into great detail about this in my December column.

**Medical premiums:** These can either be expensed as part of your business or go directly on your tax return. As with most anything else, the rules seem to be constantly shifting and there are minimums and maximums to be concerned with. Ask your accountant for advice based on your personal circumstances.

**Meal claims:** Meal claims of course continue to baffle the inexperienced. Whether incorporated, sole proprietor, or employee, I see new-client tax returns all the time with meal claims not handled correctly.

Many clients come to us just at tax time for help with these issues. They want our review of not only standard nuts-and-bolts expense claims like fuel and insurance, but also our input on other items that can potentially reduce the amount of tax they owe.

Of course, we have other clients whom we meet with for planning throughout the year so there are no surprises or last-minute stresses.

Either way, the goal is to reduce your net income and your tax payable legitimately, not to just expense items without a sound approach and knowledge of the industry. Nothing draws an auditor to a tax return like a stinky expense claim. **TW**

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

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# Staying positive on the road: It's all about perspective

**T**here is a lot of negativity in our industry. Look at the disturbing trend of unreliability in our equipment that I highlighted in last month's column and it's easy to see why. We also have impending legislation that will shake up hours-of-service rules and the Sword of Damocles that are electronic on-board recorders (EOBRs) hanging over our heads.

The roads are getting worse, spending cuts have left them in a state of disrepair. The economic downturn has seen rates and wage levels stagnate and fleet replacement schedules have been extended. Manufacturers, shippers and receivers have made job cuts, meaning less freight. And when there is freight, we spend more time on the dock, decreasing the dollars that go in our pocket.

I try to keep my ear to the ground while I'm out on the road and just recently I've seen things taking a turn for the worse. Speaking with some drivers in a Calgary truck stop, I learned that they hadn't hit 10,000 miles in a month since the summer. They reg-

**You say tomato  
I say tomahto**

Mark Lee



ularly spend a day sitting around between loads.

Another driver was fuelling on the next island in Regina. We got talking and after fuelling, we went our separate ways. I returned to the yard, went home for the night and as a weekend was approaching, I came back in the next day to do some local work before taking the weekend off. At my first pick-up in Portage la Prairie I spotted the driver from the fuel island the day before.

He was still waiting for a door, as he was early for his appointment. I dropped and hooked and returned to the yard, dropped and hooked again, went out and delivered another load and then went to drop and hook in Portage again. My new friend was still there! He had his load off by now and was waiting on dispatch for his next load. I went back to the yard, parked the truck and went home for the weekend.

On Monday I set off again, heading out west. I was fuelling in Moose Jaw when my new friend rolled in next to me again. He had been sitting for the weekend and had loaded Monday morning from Portage la Prairie.

He arrived there on Thursday night and left on Monday morning. That was a total of 80 hours sat with neither the truck nor the driver earning a single cent! A team operation could have put 4,000 miles under the bumper in that time.

During my conversations with the drivers I mentioned above, we spoke about EOBRs and HoS, lack of freight and all that good stuff. Their responses were typical: they're hanging up the keys, there's no way they can earn any money with all the extra regulations, blah, blah, blah. By contrast, the way I see it, whatever comes down the pike will come - no matter what I think about it - so I have to adapt and learn how to make the best of it.

I'm not alone in this respect. There are many within our industry who are doing better now than they ever have before. They will continue to do so, no matter what regulations are implemented. Speak to them and all you hear are positive comments. Even

when you ask them about the bad parts of our industry, they manage to find a positive. One such driver who had nothing to complain about worked at the same company as the driver in Portage; he had plenty of miles.

That's the big difference between the negative and the positive. The negative are consumed by their situation and make a lot of noise about it.

The positive just get on with it and look forward to the future. So what if we have a little black box in our cab? So what if we have to drive a little less each day? So what if freight levels drop? They're confident that they do a good enough job that they have nothing to fear.

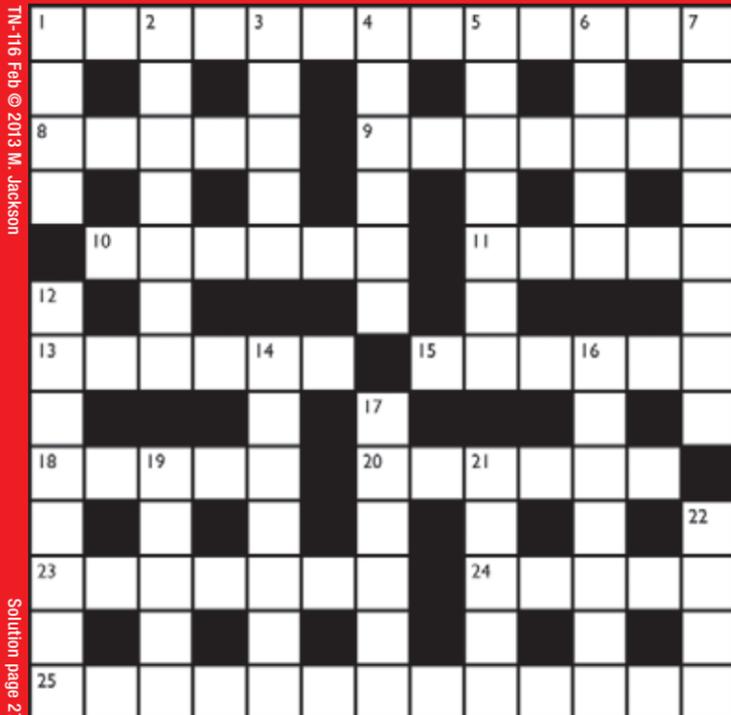
It's all about state of mind. If you wake up each morning dreading the day ahead, you can be sure it will be awful. Concentrate on negativity and you will find something to confirm your thoughts around every corner.

The same applies to those who wake up looking forward to the day ahead. They go around the same corners and find something to be positive about.

Even if they turn the corner and there's a big black cloud waiting to greet them, at least they get a free truck wash. **TW**

*A fourth generation trucker and trucking journalist, Mark Lee uses his 25 years of transcontinental trucking in Europe, Asia, North Africa and now North America to provide an alternative view of life on the road. You can read his blog at [www.brandtruck.com/blog](http://www.brandtruck.com/blog).*

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE



TN-116 Feb © 2013 M. Jackson

Solution page 27

### Across

- 1 Formations on the super slab (3,3,7)
- 8 Median material, maybe
- 9 CB-radio button
- 10 Hwy 401/Hwy 25 Fifth Wheel site
- 11 Truck \_\_\_\_, annual Notre-Dame-du-Nord event
- 13 Temporary traffic delays (3,3)
- 15 Nasty oil-pan residue
- 18 State with potato-promoting plates
- 20 Goods moving under Customs supervision (2,4)
- 23 Peterbilt interior-trim level
- 24 They're sometimes on wheels
- 25 Trucking-industry safety concern (6,7)

### Down

- 1 Summertime windshield coating
- 2 Mack vocational model
- 3 Road-map's city-blowup section
- 4 Tire's basic structure
- 5 Shifter selection
- 6 Applied liquid lubricant
- 7 Prairie \_\_\_\_, pioneer's cargo carrier
- 12 Removed parts from totaled truck
- 14 Trucking companies' objectives
- 16 Cargo protection or support material
- 17 Stopped for fuel, at the track
- 19 Name once seen on US pumps
- 21 Roadside deer, slangily
- 22 Fixer-upper truck-ad term (2,2)

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This International ProStar+ is one of the first to be built with a Cummins ISX15 engine and selective catalytic reduction (SCR). The company began delivering such units to customers in mid-December.

# Navistar's transformation

We take you inside Navistar's SCR War Room and on the road in one of the very first ProStar+ tractors with ISX engines

By James Menzies

LISLE, Ill. - The International ProStar and Cummins ISX engine - at one time one of the best-selling truck and engine combinations in the North American Class 8 market - are officially back together. Navistar International reached an important milestone this week, achieving an internal 'Ok-to-ship' status on the first 300 ProStar+ builds with ISX15 engines.

The designation, reached five days ahead of schedule, means the ProStar+ with ISX15 has been sufficiently field-tested and is now ready for deployment into customer fleets.

It's a significant milestone for Navistar, considering the launch of the ProStar+ with ISX power was only announced in August, requiring an unprecedented four-month development program.

Truck West executive editor James Menzies visited Navistar's Lisle, Ill. headquarters this week and enjoyed a behind-the-scenes tour of Navistar's 'SCR War Room,' as well as a spin in one of the very first International ProStar+ tractors with a Cummins ISX15 engine.

## The challenge

Navistar's long and winding journey to EPA10 compliance has been well documented. While all other North American truck and engine manufacturers chose selective catalytic reduction (SCR) exhaust aftertreatment to meet the EPA10 NOx standard, Navistar saw an opportunity to differentiate itself from its competitors and offer what it perceived to be a more customer-friendly solution. Navistar would opt to eliminate NOx emissions in-cylinder, through heightened levels of exhaust gas recirculation (EGR), a technology employed to some extent by all engine manufacturers.

Detractors felt it wasn't possible to achieve the mandated NOx reductions using EGR alone, at least not without significant compromises in engine performance and reliability. One of those engine manufacturers was Cummins, which initially declared it would meet the EPA10 standard without SCR, but backtracked soon after and announced it would join the rest of the pack, minus Navistar, in pursuing SCR.

That left Navistar at a crossroads, as the lone manufacturer to shun SCR. Would the company join Cummins in changing course and employing SCR, or continue to pursue the EPA10 standard without exhaust aftertreatment? Navistar opted to proceed with its in-cylinder solution, effectively ending

its longtime relationship with Cummins, at least in the North American market. (Navistar continued to offer Cummins engines in certain export markets with less stringent emissions requirements).

Here in North America, Navistar's International trucks would not be reconfigured to accommodate the bulky SCR hardware and its related plumbing. Instead, the company would forge ahead with what it dubbed Advanced-EGR and would cease offering Cummins engines.

Navistar, having banked a sizeable stockpile of EPA emissions credits for

July, when Navistar acknowledged it would be unable to meet the EPA10 standard before its steadily dwindling bank of emissions credits would be exhausted.

"That's really where the wheels came off the cart," Jack Allen, Navistar's North America truck and parts president, told a small group of trucking industry journalists in August. "It's not in the technology; it's really in the timing of that technology being ready versus when the credits were going to run out. We got to the point in the intersection where those two factors were coming together like a freight train."

Allen's comments followed a July 6 conference call, in which Navistar declared it would change directions and adopt SCR. On Aug. 2, it announced it would bring Cummins back into the fold and offer its ISX15 in several of its trucks. That same day, Navistar announced it would begin by offering the ISX15 in the ProStar+ in January 2013. It was an ambitious target, and meeting it would require a Herculean effort from the engineering departments of both Navistar and Cummins.

## The execution

When I arrived in Navistar's Lisle, Ill. headquarters this week, much had changed since the last time I visited in August. Former CEO Dan Ustian had been replaced with Lewis Campbell, who was charged with making the difficult decisions required to get Navistar's financial house in order. Troy Clarke, the recently named president and chief operating officer of Navistar, was taking on a more visible role in the company's restructuring. A very public battle for seats around the boardroom table had been resolved, with Navistar finally relenting to activist investors Carl Icahn and Mark Ratchesky and granting them or their representatives, positions as directors.

Very quickly, the new leadership has instilled a culture of transparency. For example, staff now receive daily updates on how the company is performing in relation to key performance indicators. This transparency was on full display during my visit this week when I was invited into what Navistar has dubbed its 'SCR War Room.' This is the command centre from which the transition from Advanced-EGR to SCR has been orchestrated.

Here, Thomas Smith, director of integrated ISX and SCR programs, serves as General.

"A well-planned effort is really what leads to a well-executed effort," he told me while explaining the meaning behind dozens of wall-mounted charts, timelines and diagrams. The largest of these charts is dubbed the "Integrated Master Schedule" in which every task is assigned and then updated by the team that's working on the project.

"The champions of those tasks update it so that as leaders, we can come in and quickly visualize if we are falling behind on something (marked in red) or are on track and completed (marked green)," Smith told me. "All this is done so we can get fixated down to the detail level of what people

Continued on page 26

'From the ISX program, there isn't a milestone we established that we haven't met,'

Thomas Smith, Navistar

having been cleaner than required in previous emissions go-rounds, was able to work on its in-cylinder solution well after the Jan. 1, 2010 implementation date for EPA10. While the industry came to accept, even embrace SCR, Navistar steadfastly defended its position to eliminate emissions in-cylinder. That all changed this past

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# Why many small fleets don't support an EOBR mandate

**W**hether it's speed limiters, or now electronic on-board recorders (EOBRs), there seems to be a strong feeling in

the industry that if you do not agree with the large carriers on an issue, you are not only wrong, but also an irresponsible law-breaker.

Everyone in the free world is entitled to an opinion and I don't begrudge the proponents of EOBRs theirs. What I have always disagreed with is the traditional media's lack of coverage of any opinions offered by opponents to such legislation. Although we don't have the public profile of our larger counterparts, we still make up the vast majority of trucks on the road, which, in a free, democratic society, should make our opinions notable, if not equal.

The pros and cons of EOBRs are being argued from a "one-size-fits-all" perspective. In this industry, one size never fits all, so why should the vocal minority be judge and jury? I'm sure the proponents of recorders have very valid, sound reasoning. Likewise, we opponents have valid reasoning as

## Small Fleet, Big Attitude

Bill Cameron



well. I would like to outline the reasons I'm against them, which I know are shared by many small carriers. Please note, my desire to blatantly and frequently break the law will not be a part of my argument. Avoiding unnecessary expense, however, is.

My company, and many other small carriers, run primarily within 500-600 miles of home. Driving right to the customer's location before stopping for the night is the norm, primarily to ensure being unloaded early the next morning.

One example of this is the weekly run our dry van does to the Washington, D.C. area. We always run through, and back up to the customer's dock just as our hours-of-service expire. This customer starts at 9 a.m., and within 30 minutes, the trailer is empty. There is only one door in the building. If something delayed me from arriving till midnight, I should technically refuse to move the truck until 30 minutes after being unloaded.

Common sense has me moving the truck 300 ft. to clear the door. How was safety jeopardized here? I can't sleep in a noisy truck stop, so I continue to drive to the location where the following morning, I awake well rested and not having to fight morning traffic. Although laws were not followed to the letter, common sense was.

I've had several people correct me on the operational parameters of some of these devices.

If they are correct, you are able to move the truck on the same piece of property without registering any duty status changes. If so, what have we gained? I firmly believe that the worst offenders of HoS violations are primarily steel haulers, or those operating at large distribution centres, or other locations where expeditious truck processing is an oxymoron. After spending the entire day loading or unloading, many will log it as off-duty, then drive half the night to get

back on schedule. This is, to my understanding, still a possibility with EOBRs. I don't particularly believe drivers are blatantly driving in serious excess of the law just for the hell of it. Us old guys don't have the energy or desire to do so, and the younger crowd generally doesn't even want to use up all their available hours, much less exceed them.

I've also read the argument that paper logs are eating up too much of the driver's time; 30-40 minutes per day. What colour crayon are these folks using if they require that much time in a day filling out a logbook?

Statements like this add a level of

With paper logs I was able to trace his indiscretions very easily

Bill Cameron

absurdity to the discussion. It sounds more sensational to the uninformed, but utterly ridiculous to those of us with daily involvement.

With today's technology, I don't feel these systems are really necessary, and they're certainly not inexpensive. I don't feel there will be any appreciable gains made in highway enforcement.

A mouse click will display border crossing times, and a simple phone call to the fuel card provider will expose fuelling times. I don't have the resources of a police force, but those very actions once caused me to fire one of our otherwise best owner/operators. With paper logs, I was able to trace his indiscretions very easily and, more importantly, deal with it accordingly, even though it was our busy season and I had no replacement.

I didn't need a computer device to force my decision; I took the proper, responsible action, without being legislated to do so. This is possible without expensive technology, when you only have a handful of trucks. Tracking a few units is not that difficult.

We small carriers don't deal with the large companies whose distribution centres keep our trucks captive all day. We can't justify the long equipment tie-ups, so we avoid customers who can't load and unload promptly.

If your customers put you in this situation, you need to deal with it, rather than foisting additional expensive technology on the rest of us, who are driving sensibly in a way that ensures us the best mix of productivity and sleep. We have all heard from older drivers, already feeling overlegislated, who say they will leave the industry if this law passes. Not from fear, just on principle. Can we afford to lose more of our best? **TW**

*Bill Cameron and his wife Nancy currently own and operate Parks Transportation, a four-truck flatdeck trucking company. The company was founded in 1999 with a 20-year-old truck, rented flatbed trailer and a big dream. Bill can be reached at williamcameron.bc@gmail.com.*

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# Embrace change

## Publisher's Comment

Rob Wilkins



**A**s a publisher, I take great interest whenever I hear of magazines or newspapers shutting their doors. Nine times out of 10, the owners/management will blame declining advertising revenues, increased printing and labour costs or that nasty information source called the "Internet" for ruining their early retirement plans. Last week I watched an episode of *60 Minutes* that detailed the restructuring of the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*.

Although still profitable, over the past few years the newspaper had witnessed a steady decline on its bottom line. In an effort to reverse that trend, the powers that be decided that they could maximize their returns by reducing its publishing frequency and staff. I always hate hearing about staff layoffs but it's a common and sad reality when companies restructure. Hopefully these changes will result in a brighter future for those still left on-board this partially submerged ship.

My hat goes off to the management for being proactive. Rather than being satisfied with a shrinking bottom line and blaming it on changing times, they decided to take the bull by the horns.

The staff of *Truck West* has always embraced the Internet. Our Web site ([www.trucknews.com](http://www.trucknews.com)) has truly become an extension of this magazine. We recently took the next step forward in delivering the news by increasing the frequency of our e-newsletter. Instead of twice a week, it's now sent out daily.

I don't mind sharing with you that the logistics of making such a bold move have proven to be a challenge. In a nutshell, at the end of the day (well after 5 p.m., I might add) our editorial staff must determine what news items are worthy of inclusion in the next day's edition.

Once the content is determined and the layout completed, it's forwarded to our IT department who then marry it with our e-mail database and in turn, deploy it well before most of you have taken your first sip of java.

We're pretty proud of this accomplishment. We've always been first on the streets with the news and now we're continuing the tradition electronically.

Leading rather than following, we've embraced social media, won awards for our online *Transportation Matters* TV series, created information modules and produced a number of highly popular webinars. Unlike some of the larger US newspapers, we welcome the Internet and look forward to a long fruitful relationship! **TW**

*Rob Wilkins is the publisher of Truck West and can be reached at 416-510-5123.*



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# Don't get discouraged if your health goals get derailed

**S**o, how are you making out with those New Year's resolutions you made? No doubt there were more than a few drivers that resolved to shed a few pounds, take a daily walk, or cut back on the junk food. If you resolved to adopt

a healthier lifestyle then you may be doing all of the above, or at least you intended to do all of the above. It's not easy.

It's been over a dozen years now since I started to change how I live on the road and every year I seem to fall off the healthy living bandwagon for a period of time. That time usually falls during the winter months when the days are cold, daylight is in short supply, and the snow and slop on the roads presents an added obstacle to going for a walk or run. As a result, I would usually pack a few pounds back on in the winter. That's the way it has been for me. I'll say it again, it's not easy.

Last year I was determined to break that cycle of loss and gain. I decided to get a health club membership with a national chain so I could at least get on a piece of cardio equipment a couple of times during the week as I did my regular route. It worked. I still don't exer-

## Over the road

Al Goodhall



cise as much during the winter months but I get enough exercise to maintain my conditioning and feed my need to be active. It's become somewhat of a positive addiction for me now. If I don't get exercise, I feel downright crappy, not just physically but mentally and emotionally also.

It's incredibly difficult for drivers to find the motivation to get out and do something physical every day. After being in the seat for 12-plus hours each day, there's no getting away from that feeling of exhaustion. A meal, a shower, and sleep is what you really crave. It takes a huge effort to pull on your walking shoes and step out the door for a brisk walk when you feel that way at the end of the day.

The irony is that the meal, the shower, and the sleep is so much sweeter if you walk off the day's stress first.

One of the great advantages that non-drivers have is that they are able

to exercise with a friend or as part of a group. This is a great way to stay motivated because you have made a commitment to another person and it adds a little healthy competition to your workout. Changing your eating habits, dieting, and exercise is much easier and much more enjoyable if you are able to share the experience with a friend or group and feed off one another's success.

There is nothing I enjoy more than trucking for a living. I'm quite certain you wouldn't be reading this copy of *Truck West* if you didn't enjoy it too.

But when you start struggling with health issues resulting from all those years in the seat and you decide to do something about it, you can easily become frustrated by the difficulties you face in making the necessary changes in your life.

Most often you will find that you say to yourself: 'I just don't have the time or the energy.' Finding that motivation within to push yourself out of your comfort zone is very difficult. But it's worth it.

So I thought for the next few columns, I would share some of the techniques I've used over the years to keep

myself motivated when it comes to healthy eating and getting a few hours exercise each week.

Making lifestyle changes needs to be for life. The changes you make need to be enjoyable. The changes you make need to address the issues that are feeding the stress and discomfort in your daily life.

As a driver, I don't believe there is a quick fix to health issues that we may have developed over a lifetime. My own experience bares this out. I've already said that every year for the last 12 years I've been challenged come wintertime to stay on my program.

What I do believe is that if you have a desire to find that "feel-good" feeling that comes with a healthy body and mind, then it's never too late to make changes in your life.

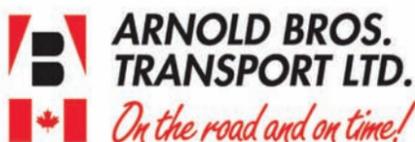
If you made one of those New Year's resolutions that I mentioned at the start of this column and you've fallen off the wagon, so what? Climb back on again. Don't be solely focused on short-term goals and quick-fix solutions (like rapid weight loss).

Instead, picture yourself five or 10 years down the road. Then you can start taking the smaller steps toward a healthier lifestyle that your busy life will allow you the time to take. **TW**

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



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Vedder Transport is an early adopter of natural gas-fuelled tractors in Western Canada. The investment seems to be paying off. The company has launched a solid waste fleet, which otherwise would not have been created.

# Cooking with gas

For Vedder Transportation Group, an investment in natural gas trucks has resulted in the creation of a solid waste division that would never have happened if it wasn't for the transformation.

By James Menzies

**ABBOTSFORD, B.C.** – Being an early adopter of liquefied natural gas (LNG)-powered trucks has landed Vedder Transportation Group some new business opportunities, including the formation of a solid waste division, which seems an unlikely fit for a company whose core business has been hauling dairy and food grade products.

Fred Zweep, president of Vedder Transportation, said the opportunity came along in August 2010, when word was beginning to spread about the company's investment in natural gas trucks.

He vividly remembers the phone call he received while travelling to Calgary to visit a client. The caller said he'd heard Vedder was investing in natural gas trucks and asked if they'd be able to service a solid waste haul contract shuttling trash from Metro Vancouver to a landfill in Cache Creek, B.C.

"People often ask how did we get into the business of hauling garbage when we're a food-grade hauler," Zweep recalled. "That was because of the natural gas technology. I remember when they phoned. I said 'We haul food, you want me to haul garbage?' He said 'Will you think about it?' and I said 'I'll have to think about it'."

Today, Vedder has 15 LNG-fuelled Peterbilt 386s dedicated to the trash contract, hauling solid waste between Vancouver and Cache Creek, grossing a whopping 140,000 lbs each way along the 410-mile round-trip.

"Where we're travelling with the solid waste is in a very sensitive airshed," Zweep said. "This equipment produces 27-33% less greenhouse gases (than die-

sel-powered trucks)." The route between Vancouver and Cache Creek was also a good test for the LNG trucks.

"I would have to say, 200 of those miles are probably some of the toughest pulling in the province of B.C. that you'd find, maybe anywhere in North America, with 6-8% grades over about 50% of that round-trip," Zweep said.

Vedder Transport deployed the latest of its 50 LNG-powered Peterbilt trucks in March 2012, and has now collected enough data to declare the program a resounding success. The trucks are operated across three divisions: 22 in the dairy fleet (140,000-lb GVW); 15 in the solid waste fleet (140,000-lb GVW); and 13 in the food-grade fleet (105,000-lb GVW). The highest-mileage units now have about 250,000 kilometres on them.

"From a mechanical perspective, we're seeing very good results," Zweep said. "We're now starting to pull oil samples and we're seeing the cleanest oil samples we've ever seen in our fleet, and we've been around for over 50 years."

Last month marked a milestone for Vedder Transportation, as its fuelling station – offering LNG, CNG and diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) – opened for business in mid-December. Up till then, Vedder had been fuelling its trucks via a temporary filling station. The new fuelling site has been opened as a commercial cardlock, available to other fleets operating natural gas-powered vehicles.

Zweep said he watched 11 of Vedder's LNG trucks fill up at the new fuelling station during a half-hour interview with *Truck West*. "We're fuelling 77 times a day on average," he said.

Vedder's investment in natural gas trucks has been an unmitigated suc-

cess, according to Zweep. Not only did it launch a new solid waste division, but Zweep said the carrier is in discussions with two additional companies to operate natural gas trucks for them within their own fleets. The trucks have been up to the task, with no widespread reliability issues. Any mechanical issues the trucks have experienced have not been related to the natural gas components.

"It's definitely a technology that works," Zweep said. "There's no question, we're seeing the durability out of the technology. Was there reason to be skeptical at first? No question. Were we nervous? Absolutely. But we also recognized from an economical perspective that we needed to satisfy our requirement of managing our fuel costs, so that's why we took a good long look at the technology."

Vedder Transportation extensively researched natural gas trucking before taking the plunge, and Zweep said there have been no surprises.

"We took a lot of time to plan," Zweep said. "We were in the discovery and planning stage for about 18 months. We visited a number of locations, so we've seen the good, the bad and the ugly of what was really going on in the market."

Zweep wouldn't disclose specific fuel savings, but he said they were right in line with expectations, as were maintenance costs. Upgrading the shop to accommodate LNG vehicles required an investment of \$80,000-\$120,000.

"The enhancements to the shop aren't about the tools to work on the equipment," he noted. "It's about the safety protection for the people who are functioning in the shop. You have to install methane detectors, automatic door openers and exhaust fans to be able to ventilate the building in the event methane is detected."

Zweep said drivers and technicians alike have embraced the technology.

"From day one, the driving fleet bought into it and the technicians that service the equipment bought into it," Zweep said. "From a driver perspective, there are three things they're proud of: they know they're driving cleaner technology; the decibel level of operating that vehicle is significantly reduced because of the quietness of the natural gas engine; and they're proud to be on the leading edge of technology. They know our organization pioneered it in the region we operate within, and they're proud of it."

Currently, Vedder's 50 LNG tractors are consuming nearly 500,000 diesel equivalent litres of natural gas per month. Vedder has employed dedicated fuellers to ensure the trucks are receiving consistent fills. Each of the initial 50 trucks are in return-to-base duty cycles, returning to the yard every 10-12 hours. Now, Vedder is looking to transition its long-haul flatdeck fleet to natural gas.

"We run a fleet of 100 vehicles every day between the Lower Mainland of B.C. and northern Alberta servicing the oil and gas industry with materials coming off the docks in Vancouver," Zweep said. "The average length of haul one way will be 875 miles with a 105,000-lb GVW."

Zweep said he's already been in discussions with Peterbilt to spec' a natural gas truck for the long-haul fleet.

Zweep said he still receives one to three phone calls per day seeking information on natural gas. While other carriers are just now beginning to consider the possibilities, Zweep added "It's so mainstream in our business today, we hardly even think about it." **TW**

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**OUTSTANDING!**



One of the very first Bison Transport LNG tractors is fuelled up in Calgary. Bison has purchased 15 LNG trucks from Peterbilt and inked a fuelling deal with Shell.

**Bison's first LNG tractors hit the road**

CALGARY, Alta. - The first of 15 Bison Transport LNG (liquefied natural gas) tractors rolled out of its Calgary terminal the morning of Dec. 20, a development the company believes marks "a turning point in creating awareness of LNG as a sustainable and abundant alternative fuel source."

Bison Transport has signed an agreement with Shell Canada to run the 15 LNG tractors in Alberta. Bison's five-year fuel supply agreement marks the first step in launching Shell's LNG refuelling infrastructure in the province.

Under the terms of the agreement, Bison will use Shell Flying J refuelling facilities in Calgary, Edmonton and Red Deer, which are scheduled to open in early 2013.

This agreement is the first of its kind in Canada and will bring LNG to public access fuelling facilities; it also highlights LNG as a transport fuel option.

"We are very pleased to be working with Shell on this leading edge initiative that stands to transform the commercial freight and fuel industries in North America," says Trevor Fridfinnson, Bison's vice-president of western operations.

"Proving that this alternative fuel source can be economically and practically viable is our objective, aligning perfectly with our company values."

Shell believes its LNG refuelling infrastructure will support an increasing number of commercial fleets with LNG fuel options.

The company is constructing a natural gas liquefaction plant at its Jumping Pound facility, west of Calgary, to supply this growing market.

"LNG can be a cost-effective fuel from an abundant resource of natural gas, and, we believe it can help our customers build competitive advantage," says Lorraine Mitchelmore, Shell Canada Country Chair. "The opportunity to work with one of Canada's leading fleets marks an exciting milestone for Shell." **TW**

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4) This location operates, controls or administers:

Diesel powered vehicles...  YES  NO

Refrigerated vehicles...  YES  NO

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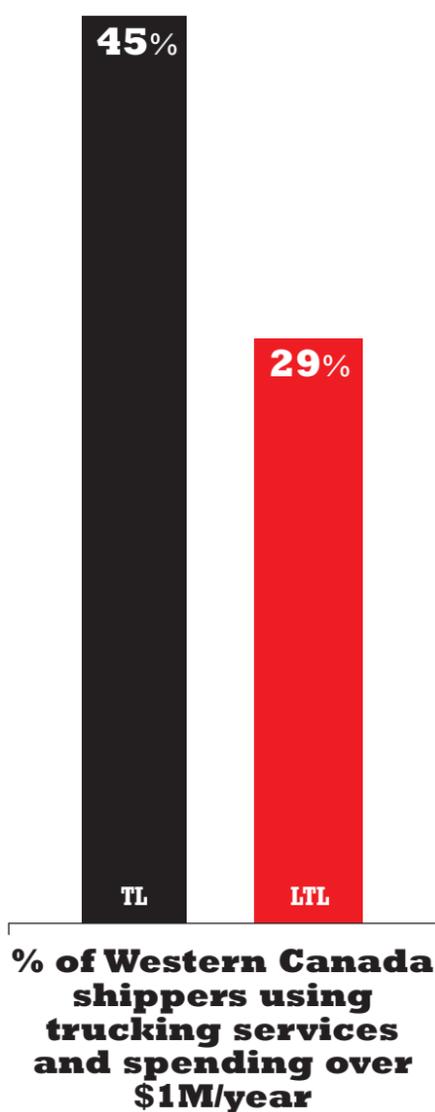
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# ROOM TO GROW?

WHAT WESTERN CANADA SHIPPERS FORECAST FOR FREIGHT VOLUMES IN 2013

# 6.48

That's the degree of optimism (on a scale of 1 to 10) for company growth in 2013 among Western Canada motor carrier executives polled by Transportation Media. That's better than the national average of 6.29

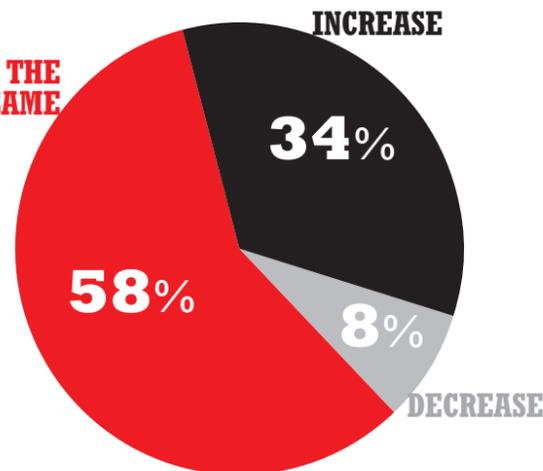


**W**elcome to Inside the Numbers, a new section in *Truck West* dedicated to providing research specifically tailored to the interests of the Western Canada trucking industry.

Inside the Numbers will be the page to turn to every issue for research conducted in Western Canada and geared to provide insights into the issues and challenges you face. We start this issue with a look at business growth projections for 2013.

The economy in Western Canada outperformed much of the rest of the country in 2012; can that growth continue in 2013? Our own annual Transportation Buying Trends Survey of Canadian motor carrier executives, conducted in the final quarter of 2012, found the degree of optimism for business prospects in 2013 among West-

Western Canada motor carrier projections for freight volumes in 2013

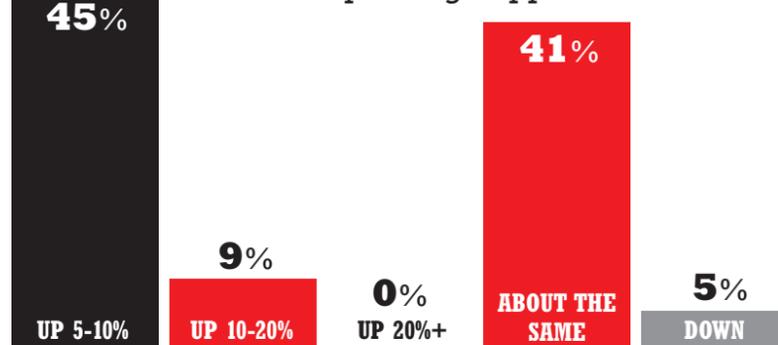


% of responding shippers

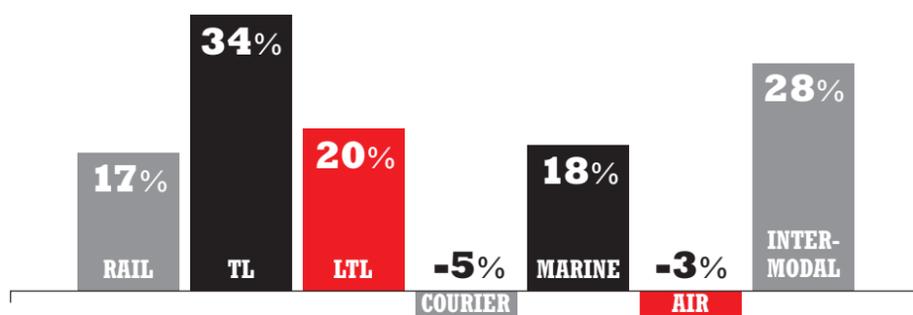


Western Canada shipment levels in 2012 compared to previous year

% of responding shippers



Western Canada shipment level projections for 2013



Anticipated net growth per mode

ern Canada executives to be higher than the national average. In terms of freight volumes, a bit more than a third of Western Canada motor carriers believe freight volumes will increase in 2013 over last year while 58% expect freight volumes to stay the same.

Yet Western Canada motor carrier executives are actually less optimistic about freight volume growth in 2013 than their own customers. Our Transportation Buying Trends Survey of Canadian shippers (conducted in the third quarter) found that more than half of Western Canada-headquartered shippers were expecting a year-over-year increase in freight volumes for 2013. The majority (45%) were expecting freight volume growth in the range of 5-10% over the past year with a 9% expecting even greater growth than that.

Slightly more than 40% expected freight volumes to be about the same in 2013 as the previous year but it

should be noted that Western Canada led the country in freight volume growth in 2012. A survey of Canadian shippers conducted by Leger Marketing on behalf of UPS Canada in the third quarter of 2012 provides further indication of continuing growth in Western Canada. It found Western business leaders (69%) are the most likely to feel confident their profits will increase next year.

Our research also specifically questioned shippers about the mode of transport with which they project growing their freight volumes in 2013. Truckload is seen as getting the lion's share of net freight volume growth in Western Canada, followed by intermodal and then Less Than Truckload.

In the next issue of *Truck West*, we examine shipper perceptions about trucking capacity and plans among Western Canadian fleets and owner/operators to purchase new trucks. **TW**



Volvo's new president Goran Nyberg, in his Greensboro, N.C. office where a map of Volvo's dealer network serves as a constant reminder of what's important.

# Meet Göran

New Volvo president looks to bolster dealer network, improve safety and grow market share in regional and vocational segments.

By James Menzies

**GREENSBORO, N.C.** – When Göran Nyberg, the recently appointed president of sales and marketing with Volvo Trucks, moved into his corner office at Volvo's Greensboro, N.C. headquarters in October, one of the first things he requested was a large map of the Volvo dealer network. That map is the most prominent fixture in his office today, a point of pride for Nyberg, but also a constant reminder of an area of the business in which continuous improvements are always attainable. Nyberg, who came to Volvo Trucks North America by way of the United Kingdom, says he has held virtually every position within a Volvo dealership throughout his career, so it's an element of the business that will receive plenty of attention as Nyberg settles into his new role.

"If you look at that map and the number of dots we have compared to many of our competitors, we are fairly well represented," Nyberg told *Truck West* during a recent sit-down interview. "Over the years, that has not always been the case for Volvo and of course, our competition has been using that against us. But today, we can be quite proud of our network."

Today, Volvo has 343 dealers in the US and Canada, and Nyberg said they continue to invest in their facilities and increase their capacity.

"Over the past 24 months, we have increased our bay capacity within our dealer network by 20%, which is quite impressive," Nyberg said. "Having dealers investing in their businesses tells me two things: it tells me they believe in the industry and in the Volvo franchise, and it tells me they are willing to invest their money into their franchises. I feel quite good about the set-up we have. It can always get better but we're already in a good place."

The personable Nyberg brings a varied background to the position, including a stint as a log truck driver near his hometown of Sundsvall in northern Sweden. He pursued an engineering degree and then got back into the trucking business. He has served many roles with Volvo throughout the world, including in Malaysia and his latest stint in the United Kingdom. His first impressions of the North American market are positive, but he recognizes there are some unique challenges in this region.

"I am impressed with the North American market both in terms of volumes and speed on the roads," he said. "I think it's a technology-driven market and of course, there are other prerequisites than in any other market in the world...After two months into the job, I can see the business is moving faster here, the decision-making is faster and the demand on short lead-times is higher, which needs to be managed and supported."

Nyberg spent most of his first few weeks on the job travelling the US – with a trip to Canada coming soon – to meet with dealers and customers and to learn as much as possible about the North American market. One of his priorities is to expand Volvo's market share, and this means focusing on market segments where Volvo's presence has been lacking.

"I think Volvo has done a good job when it comes to growing and getting a firm position in the long-haul part of the business," Nyberg said. "We will defend and continue to push in that area. There are other areas

where we have more business to capture, where we have products that will bring value to our customers."

Day cabs, regional-haul, petrochemical, food and beverage and vocational markets are among those that Volvo will be targeting more aggressively. Nyberg said he'd like to see Volvo grow its Class 8 market share to 13% within the next few years, up from the 10.7% it owns today.

Nyberg also vowed Volvo will be bringing forward technologies that will make its trucks even more appealing to customers, including enhancements to the company's integrated powertrain, which could deliver further fuel economy improvements over the next few years.

He is pleased with the I-Shift's penetration into the North American market, and noted 80% of Volvo trucks now have Volvo power under the hood and of those, nearly 50% are being ordered with the I-Shift automated manual transmission. Nyberg believes the trend towards smaller-displacement engines will continue, and he sees potential for the D11 to gain a stronger foothold in the North American market.

"If you look at Europe today, the Volvo D11 is making a lot of inroads into the business," Nyberg said. "We have the D11 here in North America as well and we have seen good results, in regional haul, for example. I believe there is headroom for the 11-litre engine in the market and I think the big block era might be challenged by these new (smaller displacement) engines."

Volvo also will remain active in pursuing alternative fuels, whether it be the suddenly mainstream natural gas, or dimethylether (DME), a fuel Volvo has been bullish on for several years.

"I think diesel will be the main source (of fuel) for the next several years, but I'm quite sure that alternative fuels will take a share of the business," Nyberg said. "If you look at the full spectrum of alternative fuels available today, we believe DME is the most efficient both from a cost point of view, technology point of view and from an efficiency point of view."

Volvo is working on developing its own liquefied natural gas (LNG) engine, due out in 2014, which will utilize the company's high-pressure direction injection engine technology. In addition to the dealer network and emerging engine and fuel technologies, Nyberg also is passionate about truck safety. He sees further opportunities for technology to improve the safety of a truck's occupants, as well as other motorists.

"Ten years ago, we were looking at reactive safety. If an accident comes, we need to have air bags, frontal protection and we tried to protect the driver and the people around the truck in a reactive way," Nyberg said. "Now, we are investing in technology that proactively avoids an accident from happening."

He was speaking of technologies like enhanced cruise control, lane departure warning systems and blind spot detection systems. Nyberg expects more fleets to buy into these systems as they come to understand the cost savings they provide.

"On top of that is always a drive to do more with the driver," Nyberg added. "We know driver behaviour is key to any KPIs that we measure."

Looking ahead to next year, Nyberg said demand for new trucks is expected to be "on par" or slightly better than today's volumes. **TW**



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# Navistar hitting SCR targets

Continued from page 14

ple need to do to meet our deadlines with quality and really make a flawless launch. It's a visual representation of what's in front of us."

Another chart serves as a "Risk Matrix," highlighting potential pitfalls and action plans to ensure they don't come to bear. One example identified on the chart was a potential shortage of electrical harnesses.

"We wanted to monitor that very closely," Smith explained. "There was a lot of risk of not being able to have the physical parts we needed when we built the trucks. I'm happy to report we didn't have any significant harness issues with our builds. No risks have manifested themselves into issues."

With its transition to SCR, Navistar is fast-tracking a launch process that would ordinarily take years. That, said Smith, has been the greatest challenge.

"The time scale we've had has made us become more rigorous because we don't have time to make a mistake and then recover from a mistake," he explained. "This team didn't have the chance to not hit it the first time, so we added some sub-elements to ensure we did hit it the first time. Typically, a 36-month to a four-year program builds in some 'what-if?' scenarios. We had to streamline that. We didn't have the luxury to do a lot of development. We successfully squeezed this program down because we didn't have a lot of develop-



Cummins engines under an International hood. This previously successful combination is back together at last.

ment to do. We have a proven product in the ISX, we had an aftertreatment system that has been in production for four years and a truck that's been in production since 2007 and that had this engine in it at one time. We just had to marry those back together again. We're not developing any new technology and that was the real key."

The obvious risk in accelerating such an important project would be that of taking shortcuts, resulting in mistakes that would manifest themselves somewhere down the line. Smith insisted that hasn't been the case.

"The common misconception people have about engineering is, they think to go fast you have to cut corners, but in fact it's the exact opposite," Smith told me. "To go fast, you have to overlay more tests and more analysis, because you can't afford to have a failure and back yourself up again - it'll set you too far back."

While most of the initial focus within the SCR War Room has been on integrating the ISX15 and Cummins' SCR aftertreatment system within the International ProStar+, at the same time, engineers are adapting Navi-

star's own International MaxxForce 13 engine to accommodate SCR. The ISX project, however, has thus far presented the greatest challenge.

"The ISX was the most challenging (project) because of the time scale," Smith said. "We have a little bit more time with the other launches. Relative to when we made the decision to put the ISX in our trucks to when we had to produce the trucks that are going to customers at a great quality level, that was the most challenging aspect."

Navistar officials, including Smith, are quick to credit Cummins and its team of engineers with contributing to the success of the program. The two companies have fully-integrated engineering departments working together on the project and those not working under the same roof have twice-daily conference calls to discuss progress and to resolve any issues that have surfaced.

Another wall chart within the War Room details Navistar's timeline for its transition to SCR.

So far, all the deadlines have been met, however unrealistic they may have seemed at the outset.

"From the ISX program, there isn't a milestone we established back in August that we haven't met," Smith said. "Delivery is key to this program and we have to hit our mark."

## The results

Shane Spencer is director of integrated reliability and quality with Navistar. It was his job to oversee field-

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testing of the initial International ProStar+ tractors with ISX engines. In addition to the 300 ProStar+ tractors slated to be delivered to customers as early as this week, Navistar's Escobedo, Mexico plant has also churned out 15 more that were placed into the "Q-build" (Q for quality) fleet that Spencer oversees.

He has these trucks scattered between test sites in Dallas, Texas; Denver, Col.; Boston, Mass.; Las Vegas, Nev.; and Fairbanks, Alaska.

Then there was the truck parked in the Navistar parking lot on the day I visited. It was a ProStar+ 122 day cab with 450-hp ISX15 engine.

The SCR system was tidily packaged in what Navistar calls a 'switch-back' configuration.

This common installation will be suitable for over 90% of Class 8 tractors operating in linehaul applications. The SCR packaging is similar, if not identical, to what you'll find on any other truck make.

Of the 15 Q-build tractors Navistar has produced, most have now reached about 230,000 miles in real-world testing. They're run 22 hours a day, leaving two hours between driving shifts for engineers to conduct inspections, make necessary repairs, download trip reports, etc.

During a two-hour drive over a combination of interstates and city streets, Spencer explained that testing has revealed no significant failures.

"It has all been minor," Spencer said of any problems that have arisen in testing. "Nothing has fallen off the truck. There have been no mechanical failures throughout the program. The only things we've had have been some on-board diagnostics monitoring tuning that we're working on with Cummins."

One advantage Navistar enjoys by being the last to employ SCR, is that most of the initial hiccups with the technology have already been worked through.

The Cummins engine and after-treatment system are well proven, leaving Navistar to spend more time focusing on the smaller details, such as how the hardware is packaged and mounted to the vehicle.

"We relied really heavily on the Cummins experience on the engine side of it," Spencer explained. "We assumed they did their job right and it looks like they have, and we have

focused more on the structural components; the new electrical system and plumbing that our trucks never had a need for and all that extra stuff, like the routing and clipping of harnesses. We've added extra clips even if we didn't think we needed them to make sure the harnesses are staying put and staying dry."

The performance of the Cummins engine on the highway presented no surprises.

It's the same Cummins ISX15 you already know.

On our drive, it was as smooth as ever, pulled our 77,000-lb load effortlessly and lived up to its reputation as the benchmark to which other 15-litre engines are compared.

As for the ProStar+, it's a well-designed, fuel-efficient tractor. Navistar has taken its share of criticism over the course of the past two years, but few, if any, shots were directed at its flagship tractor.

The truck we were in was a fairly basic spec', but forward visibility was excellent and the cab was comfortable and ergonomic.

The ProStar/ISX combination was a winner before, and there's little reason to believe it won't once again return to its former glory.

Still, Navistar isn't looking to bring more Cummins engines into the fold, at least not as of yet. Spokesman Steve Schrier told me the company currently doesn't have any plans to introduce smaller displacement Cummins engines.

There's no surprise there. Navistar has too much invested in its MaxxFer engine line to be introducing an alternative. And the company is very pleased with its own engine, especially when SCR is added and it can be tuned for optimum performance. The 15-litre was a different story altogether, since the MaxxFer 15 was not yet fully developed when Navistar chose to adopt SCR.

As for the MaxxFer 13, Spencer told me it is "really liking the SCR" and that initial tests are encouraging.

"You do things the engine likes when you have SCR, like more (focus on) timing and less EGR, so the engine really runs great," he said.

He noted the engine is currently within the EPA10 emissions limits, but has yet to be certified by EPA.

"We start our field testing here in a couple weeks," he said. **TW**

## Travis bodies and trailers come to Canada, Ocean Trailer named importer of record

WINNIPEG, Man. – Travis Body and Trailer has announced its line of aluminum dump bodies and trailers will now be offered in Canada.

Travis says it's among the top three manufacturers of aluminum dump products and transfer trailers in the US. Effective immediately, it will be offering its aluminum end dumps, aluminum bottom dumps, aluminum refuse trailers and specialty trailers in Canada.

These offerings include the recently acquired Alumatech product line, which Travis took over in 2011.

Ocean Trailer will be Travis' importer of record and will be the exclusive dealer of Travis products through its branches in: Coquitlam, B.C.; Delta, B.C.; Calgary, Alta.; Edmonton, Alta.; and Winnipeg, Man.

"With over 30 years serving Canada's transportation industry, Ocean is well equipped to introduce the Travis product into Canada," the company announced.

"Ocean is also the Utility Trailer dealer in Western Canada, and represents several other prominent US and Canadian manufacturers." **TW**

## Mack, Volvo receive GHG14 certifications

GREENSBORO, N.C. – Mack and Volvo's full line-ups of model year 2014 trucks and tractors are now certified by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) in accordance with 2014 fuel efficiency and greenhouse gas regulations.

"Certification of Mack's entire vehicle portfolio reflects our continued commitment to fuel efficiency, environmental stewardship, and the country's long-term energy security," said John Walsh, Mack vice-president of marketing.

"Volvo is committed to leadership in fuel-efficiency, and to reducing the carbon footprint of our operations and products," said Göran Nyberg, president of Volvo Trucks North American sales and marketing. "Environmental care is a longstanding Volvo core value, and we will continue to work with EPA and NHTSA to deliver on the important goals of these regulations." **TW**

## Goodyear retreads SmartWay-verified

AKRON, Ohio – Three of Goodyear's truck tire retreads have received SmartWay certification from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): the G316 AT Fuel Max, the G572 LHD Fuel Max and the G305 ATS Fuel Max.

"Our retread products are designed and built to deliver great benefits," said Brian Buckham, brand manager, linehaul and mixed service, Goodyear Commercial Tire Systems. "The G316 AT Fuel Max, the G572 LHD Fuel Max and G305 ATS Fuel Max are prime examples of this."

The EPA established low rolling resistance requirements for retreaded truck tires in 2012. Verified low rolling resistance retreaded tires must help reduce truck fuel consumption by at least 3%, according to the EPA.

Currently, nine Goodyear brand new truck tires, as well as three Dunlop brand new truck tires, have received SmartWay verification. **TW**



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By Edo Van Belkom

THE STORY SO FAR

Mark is driving along Steeles Avenue in Brampton with a clear road ahead of him. Suddenly a car pulls in front of him and slams on the brakes. Mark rear-ends the car and five people get out, all injured. Mark calls Bud for some advice about what to do.

Mark videos the damage to both vehicles and the injuries to the people involved. A bystander suggests a mechanic to Mark, but Mark has his own, thanks. The police and ambulance arrive, taking two passengers to hospital and issuing Mark a ticket.

Mark gets a call from an insurance adjuster asking for help in dealing with the claim from his accident. Mark tells the man he's got video and the adjuster is thrilled. It'll go a long way in helping them deny many of the outrageous claims being made...

Months passed and Mark had been across the country dozens of times. He'd been to Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, Montreal, Halifax and every other city of any size in the country and not once had he hit another car. Not only that, he hadn't hit anything since his collision in Brampton – not a parked car, not a fencepost, not another trailer. In fact, he'd been driving so well, he'd all but forgotten his rear-ender until he got a call from the police.

"Hello, Mr. Dalton?" the voice on the phone said.

"Do I owe you money?"

"No, sir."

"Then, yeah, I'm Mark Dalton."

"This is Constable Sutari of the Peel Regional Police Frauds Bureau. I was informed by officers in our Traffic Bureau that you were involved in a staged auto accident several months ago."

"That's right."

"We're in the process of a large special project whose aim is to cut down of the number of fake accidents and insurance frauds going on in our region."

"Anything I can do to help," Mark offered.

"I understand that you took some video after your accident. We'd like to have a copy of that if we could."

"No problem."

"We'd also like you to come in and give a statement regarding what was said to you just after the accident occurred regarding police involvement at the scene."

"They didn't want any police involved."

"That's what we need to have documented."

"Do you think you can stop this sort of thing?" Mark asked.

"Probably not completely, but right now we're not just going after the people who stage the accidents, but everyone who profits from them, like physiotherapy clinics, massage therapists, medical clinics, even people who sell orthotics."

"Orthotics? Aren't those special kinds of shoes?"

"Yeah, we had an accident a while back where orthotics were prescribed for an eight-month-old baby."

"What does a baby need orthotics for?"

"Exactly."

"I had no idea it was so widespread."

"That's why were working so hard to shut it all down."

"I'll do what I can to help."

"Appreciate it."

In the mail one day, Mark found a bill for the repairs to Mother Load. Although the damage to his front bumper was minor and required minimal repairs – some straightening, a bit of body work and rechroming – the bill still came to over \$2,000. He wasn't happy about having to pay it since the accident hadn't been his fault and that was \$2,000 he could have spent on something else – anything else – but he was glad it wasn't more. Judging by the claims made against the insurance company, and how pervasive this



# Collision Course

PART 4

kind of insurance fraud was, Mark could have easily been on the hook for more.

The day of Mark's court date came in June. It was actually the second time he'd been to the courthouse, having already taken a half-day off work to attend in person and arrange a trial date.

If it had simply been a matter of a fine, Mark might have considered paying it. But a charge of "following too closely" carried with it demerit points and those were to be avoided at all costs.

At the moment, Mark's driving record was clean, and while points were eventually taken off your record after several years of safe driving, you could never be sure when something bad might happen. No matter how carefully you drove, accidents happened and Mark could find himself in another one. His insurance rates could rise, his licence could be suspended, or he could lose his licence altogether. Obviously that was unacceptable for a professional full-time driver like Mark. And so, here he was, taking more time off work to make sure he wouldn't get dinged for something that wasn't his fault.

After finding the courtroom where his matter would be spoken to, Mark took a seat in the lobby and took a look around. In the months since the accident Mark had forgotten what the officer looked like. There were plenty of police milling about and they all wore the same uniform making it impossible to tell them apart. So when his matter was called before the Justice of the Peace, Mark stood before the court, stated his name, and waited anxiously for a police officer to step up from the body of the court. But no one came forward.

"Your Worship," said the prosecutor. "The officer doesn't seem to be in attendance and as a result we have no reasonable prospect of conviction. We ask that the charge be withdrawn."

Mark breathed a sigh of relief and exited the courtroom. But while Mark was relieved to know that his driving record was intact, he slowly grew angry over the mere fact that he had to go through all this trouble because of someone else's actions. "I hope they nail those bastards to the wall," he said under his breath as he left the courthouse.

Several more months down the road, Mark picked up his mail and noticed an envelope from his insurance company in among the letters. Mark wondered if it was a personal letter to him thanking him for all his help, or a renewal notice outlining his insurance costs for the next year. He opened it up, unfolded the letter and discovered it was a little bit of both.

Dear Mr. Dalton,

First of all, allow me to thank you for the help you provided in regards to your recent accident. Most of the claims were denied and criminal charges were advanced against those who tried to make false claims against our company. Because of your assistance, we have decided not to raise your insurance premiums as a result of the accident. If more of our clients were as diligent as yourself, fraudulent accident claims might not be so pervasive in our industry. However, despite your efforts and ours, the problem still exists, and for that reason we have no other choice but to raise insurance premiums by 3% across the board for customers with mailing addresses where the frauds are most prevalent.

Mark folded the letter and placed it back in the envelope. 'Insurance fraud,' Mark thought. 'No one gets hurt.' Except...he had to take a day-and-a-half off work for court appearances, spend \$2,000 for a repair he shouldn't have had to make, not to mention all the stress and aggravation of being in a collision. And despite all that, his and everyone else's insurance costs still go up to cover the cost of the frauds.

'Maybe,' he thought, 'I should be renting a PO Box in Saskatchewan instead.'

Did you know there are two full-length novels featuring Mark Dalton?: Mark Dalton "SmartDriver" and Mark Dalton "Troubleload." For your free copy register with eco ENERGY for Fleets (Fleet Smart) at [fleetsmart.gc.ca](http://fleetsmart.gc.ca).



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# Walk this way

**T**here's an old adage that says a journey of 1,000 miles begins with a single step. I took that first step last fall, and as of mid-January I'd hiked over 780 kms, and placed one foot in front of the other no less than 1,319,418 times. If you'd told me back in October that in a 90-day period I could walk from Ottawa to St. Leonard, N.B., I'd have said you're nuts. But that's just what I've done. I'm not bragging – well, maybe a little bit – but I wanted to share with you how easy it was once I got into the routine.

Forgive me for being a little preachy, but I know how difficult exercise can be for someone cooped up in a truck all day. The few square feet in front of my computer is like that. I work alone, so traipsing off to the gym at lunchtime with a bunch of co-workers isn't an option, and left on my own, well...

But in an industry where the average life span of a driver is 61 years, health and wellness – yours and mine – is a big concern.

Back in November I wrote about the highlight of our healthy driver activities at Truxpo, the nifty HealthChek station that was generously loaned to us by Coastal Pacific Xpress (CPx), the Surrey, B.C.-based industry leader in developing wellness programs for its drivers and employees.

In addition to vital biometric statistics, the kiosks are used by members of the walking club – one of the many innovative CPx healthy staff initiatives – to track their progress. Walkers upload data from their company-supplied pedometers, and there are rewards for the achievers and encouragement for the stragglers.

I was intrigued by these simple devices that a couple of hundred CPx drivers and employees walk around with in their pockets, so I bought one myself. And I'm completely hooked. CPx uses the HJ-720ITC Pocket Pedometer from Omron Healthcare, which is a little more expensive than some on the market, but the device has tracking and recording capabilities that make it well worth the extra bucks. I think that's the key to my success with it.

For me, I discovered that an average day's walking is around 10,000 steps. That includes a trip to my favourite greasy spoon for breakfast (one poached egg, rye toast, grapefruit wedges), a trip or two to a coffee shop near home, and another dash out to the grocery store or maybe the bank or the library. It's nothing I wouldn't already be doing, though on cold or rainy days I'd probably have driven instead of walked. Now I bundle up or grab an umbrella.

Such is the addiction to walking – or maybe it's an addiction to achieving a goal.

The pedometer tracks regular steps and also gives credit for 'aerobic steps' if you walk at least 10 minutes continuously at a pace of more than 60 steps a minute. I plot my routes so I can get the full 10-minute stretch, and therefore the credit and benefit of 10 minutes of aerobic walking, with my heart beating a little faster for a little longer. I've had to

**Voice of the O/O**

Joanne Ritchie



come up with a couple of tricks to get credit for aerobic steps, like taking a one-block longer route to the diner to stretch the usual eight-minute walk to 10 minutes. And no more cutting across the vacant lot on the corner.

My pedometer also tracks calories and fat used, so I know that I've burned up 26,335 calories and 1,559 grams of fat since I started. It's all there in a little graph on my computer, courtesy of soft-

ware that comes with the pedometer. It's a marvelous way to track my daily progress and maintain my enthusiasm for the next walk.

But is it really worth it? Can a walk around the block benefit anyone with a 70-hour work week that involves sitting for up to 14 hours a day? You betcha. Research has shown that as little as 150 minutes of brisk physical activity a week, broken down into 10-minute increments, leads to noticeable health benefits. That's a 10-minute walk (aerobic steps!) three times a day, five times a week. I expected to have difficulty reaching my goal when I was travelling, especially on my long car rides back and forth to the Maritimes, but I was pleasantly surprised. In some ways, it was actually easier, as I was already out and about and didn't have to lure myself away from the cozy nest in front of my computer. A couple of laps around a rest area, or the long way back to the car across the truck

stop parking lot would usually net me a mile or more.

I'd like to see more truck drivers hooked on this low-impact, low-burden way of getting a little exercise. There's no gym membership and no spandex involved. The only necessary equipment is a good pair of walking shoes, although the pedometer was the deal maker for me. It helps with goal-setting and discipline, which I so sorely need, and the sense of accomplishment you feel when you see the mile-meter creeping up into double and triple digits is exhilarating.

Anybody can squeeze 30 minutes out of a day. Just spend it walking rather than sitting in a truck stop complaining about the price of tomatoes. Which you can also do, by the way, while walking. **TW**

Joanne Ritchie is executive director of OBAC. Wanna join the club? E-mail her at [jritchie@obac.ca](mailto:jritchie@obac.ca) or call toll-free 888-794-9990.

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Welcome to Jim's Brayings, a quick look at some interesting community news items from across the west that we think will interest you. If you have some news you think will be a good match for this column, pop me off an e-mail at [jim@transportationmedia.ca](mailto:jim@transportationmedia.ca). We can't run everything, of course, but we'll try to get in as much as space permits...

Well here it is, the dead of winter, arguably the worst time of the year if you aren't a skier (and that sport's mostly going downhill these days anyway)! It's cold, there's snow just about everywhere short of coastal areas, and if you're anything like me (a frightening thought, indeed) you just want to stay inside and huddle by the fireplace, moaning quietly and waiting for spring. But business carries on no matter how you feel about it - and despite whatever Person Nature might bring. Perhaps the only good thing about the time of year is that it's NHL season! Oh, wait...

## Making winter 'bearable' without the NHL

I'm not a hockey fan, so the NHL lockout didn't bother me a whit. I seem to be in the minority when it comes to my aversion to "Canada's national sport," however (I thought for many years that the term referred to Sheila Copps), and while many people continue to express angst about the lack of professional puck play at the premium plane, other leagues keep on keeping on.

Not only does "less stratospheric league play" give fans a much-desired hockey



Totran Transportation sponsored the recent Teddy Bear Toss at a Calgary Hitmen game, generously offering to haul away all the donated teddy bears to where they're needed.

hit, it gives companies like the fine folks at Calgary's Totran Transportation a chance to continue doing some good work, in this case via the Western Hockey League. Totran has been involved with the WHL's Calgary Hitmen for the past three years, through the team's annual Teddy Bear Toss (and doesn't tossing teddy bears sound a tad more pleasant than tossing holiday cookies)?

The Teddy Bear Toss, according to the never-mistaken Wikipedia, is a popular

annual, Christmas-season event at many venues in North America, especially in Calgary and Portland, Oregon. The 2012 version of the Petro-Canada Teddy Bear Toss game in Calgary was the 16th annual event in which the Hitmen participated, encouraging fans to bring a small or medium-sized stuffed toy (whether Teddy bear or not) to the game and chuck it onto the ice when the Hitmen scored their first goal. An interesting change from chucking octopi on the rink! And because the Hitmen don't suck, fans weren't forced to wait long to toss their teddies. Imagine if such a promotion involved the NHL's Maple Leafs!

## A charitable outreach worth flipping over!

Kudos to Winnipeg's Maxim Truck & Trailer for raising \$8,265 for the Christmas Cheer Board of Winnipeg through its annual charity Pancake Breakfast. Now in its 12th year, Maxim's flapjack flipping frenzy on Dec. 6 raised not only cash, but also a full van of non-perishable food items.

The event was held at Maxim's Winnipeg head office and saw over 450 guests show up to chow down. In addition to pancakes, guests were treated to a medley of Christmas carols performed by a choir of Maxim's music mavens.

So it was food for the body, as well as the soul! President Doug Harvey said "the pancake breakfast makes me very proud, so many great Maxim employees, customers, suppliers and friends helping to make Christmas special for those less fortunate."

The Christmas Cheer Board provides assistance to the working poor as well as families receiving Provincial assistance.

## Rosenau rolls up the donations...

The 10th annual 18 Wheels of Christmas, which was outlined in this column a couple of months ago, turned out to be yet another resounding success, allowing Rosenau Transport to deliver 26 skids of food (totaling 24,250 lbs) to the Calgary Food Bank just in time for Christmas. This year, the centre of attention was a Christmas tree made entirely of baby food purchased thanks to cash donations collected

throughout the campaign.

Makes one think of the traditional strains of "O Gerber tree, O Gerber tree, How are thy leaves so verdant..."

As if that "tree"mendous feat weren't enough, Rosenau reports they also had an additional 1.5 skids of baby food donated by Heinz Canada and Save-On-Foods. "The Rotary Youth built a Christmas tree out of these jars and had it on display at Fifth Avenue Place in support of the Food Bank's annual food drive," the company reported in its event wrap-up. And as if the food weren't enough, cheques totaling \$3,550 were also donated to the Calgary Food Bank, adding a bit of fibre to the menu.

The 18 Wheels of Christmas rolled into the Lake Bonavista Promenade, Douglas Square Mall and the Fluor Canada Jeans Day Event for Food. Supporters included Stan Poulsen Trucking, Bess Tank Lines, Boghean & Company, Style-Craft Printing, Midwest Surveys, Vitran, TST Overland, Consolidated Fast Frate, Desa Glass, Univar Canada, Gibson Energy, Westfreight Systems, J&R Hall, Hill Bros., Mika Trucking and The Filling Station.

## Bison breeds great Samaritans

And bravo to Bison, or at least in this case to a couple of their honourable employees, for stepping up when they were needed to help a man in distress. According to Bison's safety counselor, Martin Cowie, two of their team drivers saved a gentleman from danger not too long ago, by picking him up during a cold winter night and "following their instincts."

It happened when George and Cynthia Sutherland were heading west on the Northern Route 17, making their way toward Nipigon, Ont. As Cowie tells it, George noticed tire tracks in the snow, tracks that left the highway.

He couldn't see a vehicle, but a bit west of there they were flagged down by a man standing in the eastbound lane. It was about 3:45 in the morning and the temperature was -11 C with a wind chill of -17 C. Not a nice time to be out, let alone on foot! George and Cynthia stopped to see what was up and noticed the 20-year-old man was a tad disorientated and obviously freezing. He had an open wound on his forehead, no hat, and ice and snow in his hair and jacket.

George and Cynthia got the man into their truck, after which Cynthia gave him one of George's winter jackets to wear. When they realized the guy wasn't warming up quickly enough, they wrapped him up and put him into their bed, then gave the OPP cops a head's up and drove off to meet them and EMS at a Tim Horton's near Nipigon. And where else would you meet the police than at Tim's? **TW**

*- That's it for this month. As always, if you have an item you think would fit well in this little rant and rave revue, please feel free to get in touch with me at [jim@transportationmedia.ca](mailto:jim@transportationmedia.ca). We don't guarantee that every item will get in (space is limited, of course - and we have lawyers!), but we do our darnedest.*

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