

TRUCK WEST

Western Canada's Trucking Newspaper Since 1989 • June 2013 Volume 24, Issue 6

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trucknews.com



Tex Bussey, a retired commercial truck salesman, is among the volunteers who've rescued a collection of antique trucks and found them a new home where they can be enjoyed by visitors.



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Home at last

B.C. Vintage Truck Museum returns to its roots in Cloverdale

By Harry Rudolfs

CLOVERDALE, B.C. – It took a lot of meetings and about two years of work, but the collection of vintage trucks that was once at the core of the B.C. Transportation Museum, is once again back where it started in Cloverdale, B.C.

Eighteen of the trucks are now housed and on display in a building beside the Fraser Downs horse track. I recently walked in on a group of ardent volunteers who were preparing the trucks for the grand opening on Victoria Day Weekend.

The spirit of volunteerism was everywhere. I found Brian Busby, a retired driver, behind the wheel of a 1929 White tanker painted up in Shell colours. The engine purrs along as Busby rolls it into the driveway.

"It runs okay, but I need a swamper to help me steer it," he joked.

Tex Bussey, another retiree and a former commercial truck salesman, was doing a final patch on the floorboards of a 1941 Chevrolet Maple Leaf, manufactured in Oshawa, Ont., during WWII. Another retired driver Lloyd Lemky showed up to help

with the preparations, and it was then I realized this museum is about more than just the vehicles – it's also about the stories and the passion that the volunteers bring to the artifacts.

Lemky, for instance, was among the first drivers to haul A-train gasoline tankers for Trimac.

"They thought we could do the job with 270-horse engines, when really we needed about 350," he told me. "That is until we started to bill them by the hour instead of the trip. It would take me almost six hours to go from Hope to Princeton, and most of that was in second and third gear."

The story of these trucks and their people is as varied as the history of trucking in British Columbia. The bulk of the collection comes from Aubrey King, a trucking magnate who shut down his drayage business rather than cave into labour pressure from the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, who were courting his drivers at the time.

King simply closed up operations and many of the trucks were preserved in mint condition in an old warehouse. One of the Chevrolet Maple Leafs had only 77 miles on the odometer.

Continued on page 10

Embrace change

Navistar's Jack Allen tells AMTA conference more change is coming

By Jim Bray

BANFF, Alta. – Jack Allen thinks there are some pretty heavy-duty times coming in the not too distant future – as if there haven't been some already! But he also thinks that, rather than bemoan the situation, the industry should look at the changes as opportunities.

Allen, the new chief operating officer for Navistar, also told the 75th Alberta Motor Transport Association Management Conference in this Rocky Mountain resort town that his company is moving full steam, or at least "full diesel and alternate fuels," ahead into that future and intends to be a big part of it.

Saying it's a great privilege to be leading Navistar through what he called "a great time of transition and challenge," Allen noted that the company – like the industry – faces some pretty big challenges, but everyone goes through challenges at one time or another. "To paraphrase Mark Twain," he said, "the rumours of our demise have been greatly exaggerated. Despite some elegantly crafted obituaries I've read recently, we're moving ahead with a renewed dedication and resolve."

But his address dealt more with what's coming for the industry as a whole, in light of some possibly disturbing trends and looming new rules. "If there's one thing I've learned, there's really no industry that is immune to change. Change is the only constant we can count on, and we succeed by turning uncertainty and change into opportunity." Allen said he believes the trucking industry has a tremendous future and it's the shared responsibility of all the stakeholders to recognize that they need to adapt and, in some cases, even be "the driver of that change."

One big change – and a good one – Allen bets is coming, is a more stable price for diesel fuel. He noted that the price of diesel has seesawed over 30% over the past three years, a situation exacerbated by instability in the Middle East and the European financial meltdown.

"It seems like every global crisis there is results in the price of diesel fuel in North America being...on a wild ride," he said, "And it's very difficult to

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CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

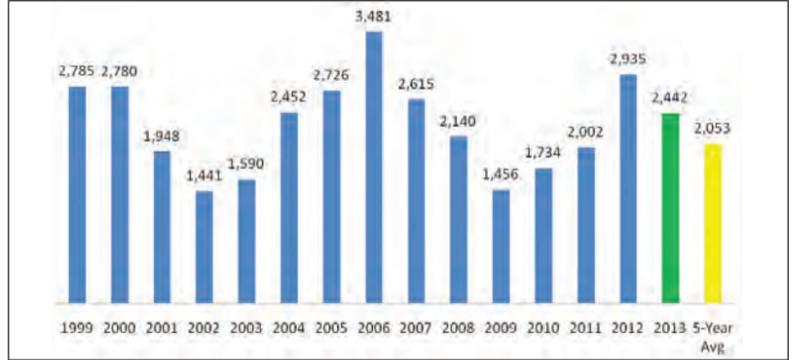
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The first quarter has been a disappointing one for Class 8 truck sales in Canada. Although Class 8 sales for the month returned to a level above 2,000 and were about 400 units above the 5-year average, they were considerably behind the monthly total from 2012. The drop reflects a six-month slide below last year's totals. All truck makers, with the exception of Mack and Western Star which made minimal gains, have suffered setbacks in sales totals compared to the previous year.

Monthly Class 8 Sales – Mar 13

| OEM | This Month | Last Year |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| Freightliner | 630 | 779 |
| International | 344 | 462 |
| Kenworth | 553 | 581 |
| Mack | 183 | 171 |
| Peterbilt | 308 | 330 |
| Volvo | 239 | 429 |
| Western Star | 185 | 183 |
| TOTALS | 2442 | 2935 |

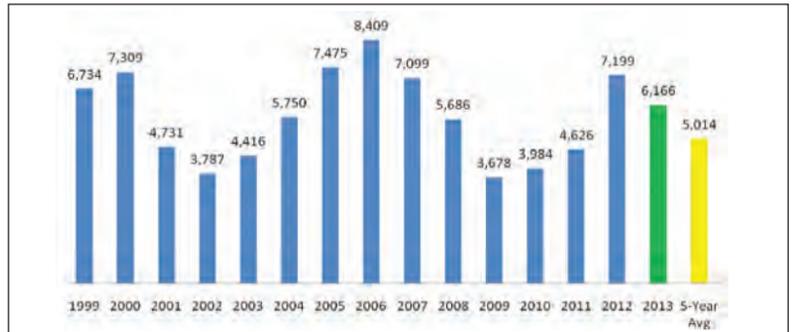
Historical Comparison – Mar 13 Sales



Class 8 Sales (YTD Mar 13) by Province and OEM

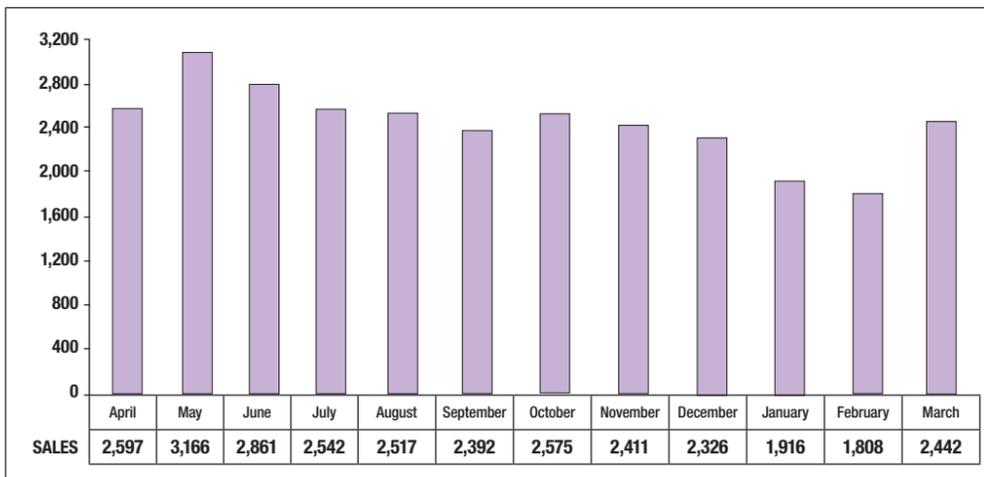
| OEM | BC | ALTA | SASK | MAN | ONT | QUE | NB | NS | PEI | NF | CDA |
|---------------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------|------------|----------|-----------|--------------|
| Freightliner | 165 | 190 | 38 | 101 | 703 | 288 | 60 | 35 | 1 | 10 | 1,591 |
| Kenworth | 290 | 468 | 103 | 27 | 169 | 195 | 31 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,283 |
| Mack | 39 | 95 | 36 | 26 | 132 | 73 | 18 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 424 |
| International | 34 | 179 | 9 | 27 | 415 | 216 | 32 | 8 | 3 | 9 | 932 |
| Peterbilt | 109 | 286 | 62 | 58 | 113 | 179 | 30 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 852 |
| Volvo | 60 | 36 | 21 | 35 | 235 | 147 | 29 | 15 | 0 | 1 | 579 |
| Western Star | 97 | 192 | 17 | 9 | 83 | 70 | 10 | 23 | 0 | 4 | 505 |
| TOTALS | 794 | 1,446 | 286 | 283 | 1,850 | 1,168 | 210 | 100 | 4 | 25 | 6,166 |

Historical Comparison – YTD Mar 13



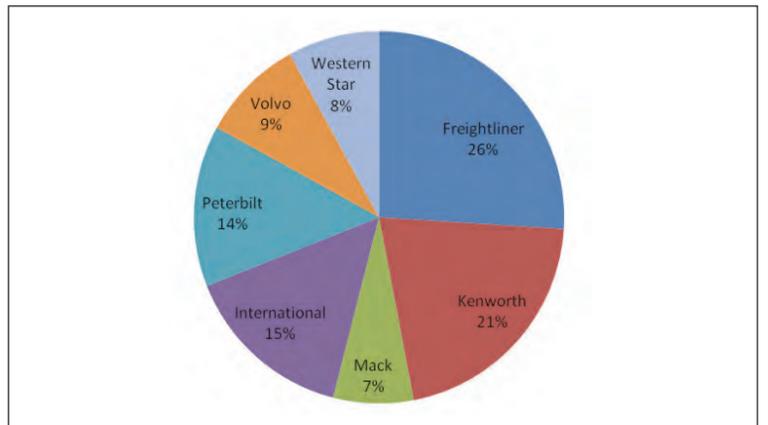
With sales of 6,166 Class 8 trucks to close out the first quarter, 2013 is more than 1,000 units behind last year's pace but also about 1,000 units above the five-year average. Assuming an 8-year life cycle for Class 8 trucks (a truck could go through several owners during this period), there are more than 35,000 trucks due for renewal in 2013. If in fact all those trucks are renewed that would put 2013 on pace with the sales totals posted in 2005, the second best Class 8 sales year in Canadian history. But after three months of disappointing results it is very unlikely this will happen in 2013.

12-Month Sales Trends



After 15 straight months of sales coming in above the 2,000 mark, reminiscent of the industry's capacity boom years of 2005 to 2007, they dropped slightly below 2,000 in January and yet again in February. They did rebound to over the 2,000 mark, however, in March but were still behind last year's totals for the month. Over the past quarter we have been pointing to the worrisome trend of sales declining each month since October. In fact sales have been in general decline since the year's high mark of 3,166 back in May.

Market Share Class 8 – Mar 13 YTD



Freightliner, last year's Canadian market leader, has started off strong again, despite a drop in sales totals compared to the previous year. Kenworth finished 2012 in the number two spot for market share, its strong wide western network tapping into the stronger western economy. The company sits at 21% market share. Troubled Navistar International finished the year with 15% market share but has shown improvement in the first three months.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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Notes from a visit to Germany

Editorial Comment

James Menzies



I recently had the good fortune of visiting Germany, home to the world's largest truck manufacturer, Daimler. The occasion was the start of production of the company's Detroit DT12 automated manual transmission, which is now being installed in Freightliner trucks with the DD15 engine.

The transmission is poised to make a big splash in North America, with many customers already placing orders. The benefits of automated transmissions have been well documented. They include: fuel economy improvements for less-experienced shifters; safety enhancements as a result of drivers keeping two hands on the steering wheel; and improved efficiencies from functions such as eCoast, which disengages the transmission on downhill grades, allowing the truck to cruise without consuming fuel. You can read more about the DT12 on pg. 32.

While the plant tours and product presentations were interesting, I also found it fascinating to observe the subtle – and not-so-subtle – differences between trucking in Germany compared to here. Would you believe trucking practically comes to a halt on weekends and holidays over there? On weekends, trucks are banned from the main highways – the legendary Autobahns – from about lunchtime Saturday until Sunday night. The truck stops and parking lots along the highway are packed with trucks and the freeways remain devoid of truck traffic, so motorists can

have the roads to themselves and take full advantage of the non-existent (on stretches) speed limits.

I chuckled at the thought of all the truck traffic along the 401 scrambling to find a place to park at the same time on a Saturday morning. Okay, it's not that funny. There'd be pandemonium and pure chaos if this were to happen.

Such a restriction would also grind our economy to a halt. In Germany, trucks hauling perishables can continue on with their deliveries over the weekend but for the most part, the main highways are truck-free. We simply have too much distance to cover in Canada to allow for a weekend truck ban. When an Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) delegation of trucking industry leaders visited Europe to see how mandatory speed limiters were working over there, I notice they left this particular idea in Europe.

Another interesting difference between trucking in Canada and in Europe involves the trucks themselves. The obvious difference is that Europeans predominantly run cabovers, for various reasons. But those cabovers in many cases are more technologically advanced than the trucks we run here. I rode in a Mercedes Actros equipped with all the latest systems, including one that uses radar to automatically apply the brakes and throttle in stop-and-go traffic. Traffic jam? Just keep the truck between the lines and the truck will do the rest.

Some of these systems are already

available on this side of the pond and others could easily be adapted to North American trucks, but the reality is, most would fall under the category of 'nice-to-have-but-too-expensive' options. European truckers are more inclined to invest in the latest technologies.

The other thing the Europeans do particularly well is, they know how to celebrate a holiday. Our visit to Germany ran through May 1, which is May



Day, or the German version of Labour Day. And labour they do not. Most of the stores were shut down so that the inhabitants could carry on a laudable tradition, in which they pack little wooden wagons full of beer and traipse about the countryside, catching up with old friends and making new ones. This is a tradition I'd like to bring back to Canada, but I worry if I left my property with a wagon full of beer, I'd be apprehended before I made it to my nearest neighbour. Okay, like the weekend truck bans, I'll leave that idea in Europe. **TW**

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See you at our 2013 Summit

We've just come through a slower than expected first quarter with a great deal of uncertainty about what the next quarter will bring.

Lingering downward pressure on rates continues to affect carrier revenues just as it's time to replace trucks that have gone considerably beyond previous life cycles and are becoming a drain on maintenance budgets.

The country's fleet managers and executives are clearly earning every penny of their paycheques these days trying to dodge multiple obstacles to business growth.

And it looks like they will have to keep on dodging. Economic experts are calling 2010-2020 the Low Growth Decade. It's a time that calls for the most innovative of business strategies to get ahead.

We are hoping to be of some help in that regard with our next Surface Transportation Summit, which we put on in partnership with Dan Goodwill & Associates.

The all-day event, scheduled for Oct.

The view with Lou

Lou Smyrlis



16 at our new venue The Mississauga Convention Centre, will bring together carrier, shipper and industry supplier executives to discuss the industry's most pressing issues and share insights on how to solve them.

We start off the Summit with an economic forecast provided by one of Canada's leading economists and look at the implications for shippers and transportation providers as they prepare their 2014 business plans.

Our most popular session from last year's Summit, The View from the Top, is back featuring CEO perspectives on major transportation trends.

For this track we assembled a blue chip group of transportation company executives from the LTL, truckload, rail and insurance industries as well as arranged for insights from a leading global management consultancy.

We round out an information-

packed morning with expert panels examining the growth potential of dedicated transportation and inter-modal services.

The afternoon will include several concurrent tracks, including insights on Best Practices to Cross Border Transportation; Leading an Effective Transportation Sales operation; Carrier Scorecards and Compliance Management, and the current environment for Mergers and Acquisition Strategies.

We close out the day with one of the hottest topics in transportation today: An in-depth look, from both the shipper and carrier perspective, on running a successful Freight RFP.

But that's not all.

The Summit is designed to be of practical use to both shippers and carriers alike and last year attracted more than 200 transportation and supply chain executives. So it's sure to present delegates with the ideal business networking opportunity.

To register, go to www.surfacetransportationsummit.com. Looking forward to seeing you there. **TW**

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Study proves emissions testing program for trucks unnecessary: BCTA

LANGLEY, B.C. – The B.C. Trucking Association (BCTA) says a mandatory AirCare-like emissions testing program for trucks would be wasteful and unnecessary, based on the results of a recent remote sensing study of truck emissions.

The study, entitled *Remote Sensing Device Trial for Monitoring Heavy-Duty Vehicle Emissions* and conducted in the Metro Vancouver area last summer and fall, concluded that most trucks tested are operating within the standards mandated for with their particular engine year, and that emissions from newer trucks reflect the increasingly stringent engine emissions standards that were introduced in the 1990s and tightened significantly in 2007 and again in 2010. The study was commissioned by Metro Vancouver in collaboration with the Fraser Valley Regional District, AirCare, Port Metro Vancouver



The BCTA says a recent study on heavy-duty truck emissions proves they're clean and that no AirCare-type program is required for trucks.

and the B.C. ministries of Environment and Transportation and Infrastructure. "The Metro Vancouver study confirms what we already knew," said Louise Yako, BCTA president and CEO. "The diesel engine emissions stan-

dards introduced in 1994 and tightened further in 1998, 2004, 2007 and 2010 are yielding impressive results in terms of reduced air emissions from trucks with diesel engines."

The BCTA estimates that model year

2007 and newer trucks currently account for 35% of the heavy-duty truck fleet across the province. The BCTA further estimates, based on a fleet replacement rate of 5.5% per year, that model year 2007 and newer trucks will make up more than half (52%) of all heavy-duty trucks in B.C. by 2015 and 63% of the fleet by 2017.

"A large-scale AirCare-like emissions testing program for trucks would impose unreasonable costs on the industry and produce very limited results," added Yako, pointing to an emissions testing program for heavy-duty trucks in Ontario which has produced a failure rate of less than 4%. "As older trucks are retired and replaced with newer, cleaner trucks, diesel emissions will naturally decline over time, making an onerous and expensive testing program unnecessary." **TW**

AMTA working on enhanced driver training standard

CALGARY, Alta. – The Alberta Motor Transport Association (AMTA) wants to develop a minimum commercial driver training standard, and recognize drivers who've met the new standard with a special designation on their licence. The association says it will soon start developing the standard and will present it to the province later this year.

"AMTA would like to see the province recognize commercial truck drivers with a special designation on their licence," said AMTA executive director Don Wilson. "Professional drivers should meet a training standard to attain a professional designation and maintain that designation through continuing education."

AMTA president Dan Duckering, added "Professional drivers undergo extensive training that goes well beyond what is required for a provincial licence. Yet at this time there is no recognition for that advanced training or the high-level of skill that professional drivers attain."

AMTA has put together a stakeholder committee it says spans many sectors of the province's economy, to collaborate on what the new standard should entail. The committee won't re-establish qualifications for a Class 1 licence, but instead will develop a professional designation for those who transport goods for-hire.

"Albertans will benefit from minimum commercial training standards for commercial drivers too," said Wilson. "Setting a minimum standard will enhance road safety across the board and make driving a more attractive occupation for career seekers. We have targeted the fall to deliver a proposal to the minister. The committee has set out to determine what a minimum standard should consist of, to find a standard acceptable to all stakeholders and to outline what continuing education of commercial drivers will include."

There are 132,000 Class 1 licence-holders in Alberta. **TW**



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Fuel fiasco

Pilot Flying J alleged to have fraudulently shortchanged customers' fuel rebates

By James Menzies

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. – On Apr. 15, law enforcement officers swept down on the headquarters of Pilot Flying J, as well as the residences of several of its employees. Three days later, the FBI released a 120-page affidavit, which detailed a long-running scheme the FBI alleged saw the truck stop chain short-change customers on their agreed-upon fuel rebates. The affidavit included damning transcripts of conversations secretly recorded by an FBI informant.

In those conversations, Pilot Flying J managers openly discussed how they would reduce the rebates paid to customers without their knowledge. In one example, the company was alleged to have arbitrarily reduced a \$10,000 rebate to \$7,500, anticipating the carrier would be too unsophisticated to catch on.

In fact, it appeared the scheme was directed at smaller carriers that didn't carefully monitor their fuel spending and negotiated rebates, though large fleets such as Mesilla Valley Transport and Western Express were also named as victims in the affidavit.

During a Nov. 19, 2012 sales meeting, Brian Mosher, director of sales for national accounts, said in a recorded conversation: "Some of 'em don't know what a spreadsheet is. I'm not kiddin'. So, again, my point is this: know your customer. Know what you're sending him. Know what his preferences are, know how sophisticated he is, okay? If the guy's sophisticated and he truly has gone out and gotten deals from the other competitors and he's getting daily prices from us, don't jack with his discounts because he's gonna know, okay?"

Mosher, who was quoted extensively in the affidavit, explained in one recorded conversation the reasoning behind the tactics.

"It's a fair price. You're getting a fair price," he said to a colleague. "And I'll tell you this: If I send this guy \$21,000 instead of 25, and (his) buying hasn't changed? Well that's a pretty fair price. I sent the guy 21 cents a gallon, you know. And he has no earthly idea what the hell he did to get 21 cents a gallon. Has no clue. But that's when this whole thing started for me, was back when Flying J filed for bankruptcy, that's when we started. And I had a handful of guys on rebates. And when you put something on paper or on a computer screen in front of me that says last month you paid \$278,000 in rebates, this month you're gonna pay \$798,000 in rebates, I'm goin', 'Oh whoa whoa, that's not good, we're not gonna do that.' And that's when we really started doin' manual rebates and lookin' at it and goin', 'Psst, here's the real number.'"

Added Heather Jones, regional account rep, to another employee: "And to the point of them not knowing, I mean, on a percentage-wise, very few of 'em actually ask for backup. I would say less than 10%."

To which Mosher said: "Yeah, you're only gonna have a handful. And usually,

guys, the guys that are asking for backup are the guys that are asking for pricing up front."

Of the 35 Pilot Flying J employees named in the affidavit, two live and work in Canada: Ron Carter, director of sales for Canada and Joe Sigurdson, regional sales manager. It was unclear if any Canadian carriers were caught up in the alleged wrongdoings; none were named. The affidavit said those Pilot Flying J employees named "are or have been involved in, supervised, overseen,

or supported, the direct sale of diesel fuel to Pilot customers since January 1, 2008."

No formal charges have been laid against any of the employees.

Jimmy Haslam, CEO of the truck stop chain, was also named in the affidavit and was alleged to have been aware of the activities. He issued the following statement after the affidavit was released: "I've read the affidavits. I now understand more clearly the questions the federal investigators are exploring. I maintain that the foundation of this company is built on its integrity and that any willful wrongdoing by any employee of this company at any time is intolerable. We will continue to cooperate with the federal investigation and continue our own investigation in these allegations."

Haslam later outlined a five-step plan to deal with the allegations, including: inviting in a field audit team to review all 3,300 contracts the fuel supplier has with customers; placing several members of

'If the guy's sophisticated... don't jack with his discounts because he's gonna know, okay?'

Brian Mosher, Pilot Flying J

its field sales team on leave; converting all customers to electronic rebate calculation and payment systems; creating a new position of chief compliance officer; and the hiring a special investigator to oversee and validate internal inquiries related to the investigation. **TW**

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Volunteers passionate about trucks and their history have been putting in countless hours to ensure the museum lives on.

Museum on the move

Continued from page 1

The trucks were eventually acquired by the B.C. Transportation Museum and were on display in Cloverdale from 1987-1992. At that time, the government changed hands (Social Credit was defeated by the provincial NDP and the museum was shut down for economic reasons).

The Teamsters took over the collection in 1998 and added a few more vintage trucks over 12 years. Retired teamster and heavy-hauler Norm Lynch shepherded the museum in Port Coquitlam with his own army of volunteers when it was known as the Teamsters Freight Transportation Museum and Archives.

As present director of the B.C. Vintage Truck Museum, Paul Orazietti will tell you, "Museums don't make money," and the Teamsters ran into their own economic roadblock, causing the collection to be mothballed in 2010. During this time, the Teamsters were shopping around the collection and seeing who would take the trucks for the nominal fee of \$1, and provide the trucks with a new home and presentation space.

Some B.C. communities were interested and for a time it looked like the trucks were going to Merritt, but eventually the Surrey District Historical Society came to bat for the project providing some funding and a location for the trucks. Former curator Lynch is happy with the transfer.

"Everything went smoothly. We wanted them to get the right equipment to move all the trucks and they've done that," he said. "I think it's a good location, a place that they can build on."

Then it was time to line up some funding and that's where the private donors came through - big time - according to Orazietti. He estimates the cost of moving 18 trucks, from Port Coquitlam to Cloverdale alone, would have cost in the neighbourhood of \$50,000, but two towing companies, Partel and Unitow moved the trucks at no charge (six of the original collection are billeted out to various locations and are expected to join the other trucks at a later date).

Orazietti cites several local businesses

that were also instrumental in this project: trucking company owner Bruno Zappone; the Lark Group of developers; Cobra Electrical, which installed and donated a \$3,500 14-foot overhead door for the building; and Fraser Downs racetrack and casino which continues to support the endeavour.

Another tireless proponent of the project was Bill Reid, former Social Credit Cabinet minister from the time of Premier Bill Bennett. Orazietti told me that without the advocacy of Reid this museum would not have happened.

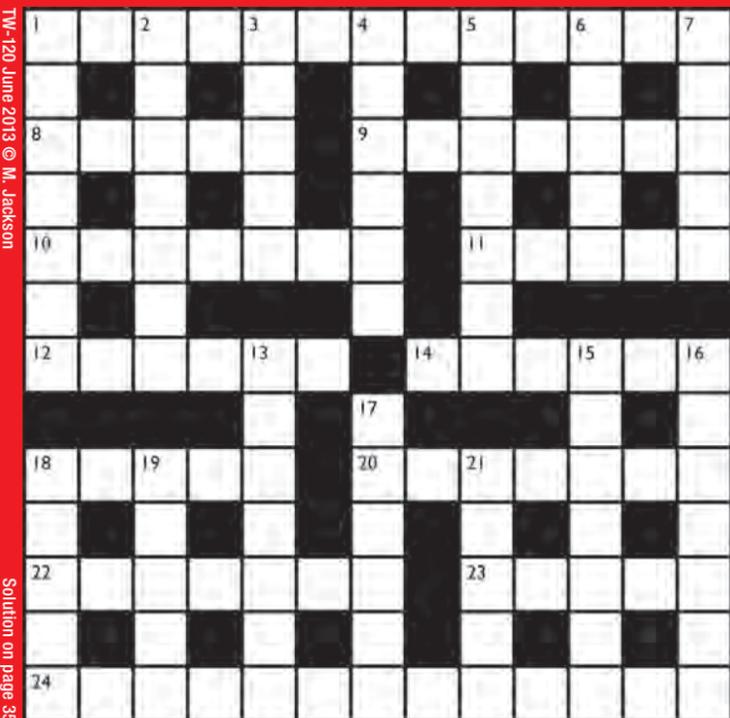
In fact, Orazietti told me he that the upcoming museum opening is a "mixed bag of euphoria" for him. On the one hand, the vintage truck museum is actually a reality, while Reid, his mentor at the Surrey Historical Society and BIA, is in hospital with a terminal illness and probably won't ever get to see the exhibition.

Although the B.C. Vintage Truck Museum has found a home, it's only here for three years. Then the museum will have to find a new building. Orazietti thinks that space can be found near the present municipal museum and the restored train station. The Fraser Valley Historical Rail Society already has a rail barn adjacent to the museum where a group of equally dedicated volunteers is restoring century-old electric trains.

"We're in the business of marketing heritage," Orazietti said. "At the centre of this is a dream of a heritage transportation park. I want to draw on some of the remarkable synergies in this area. Surrey is a major trucking hub in North America, and we have a lot of people interested in heritage transportation, from cars to buses, to trucks and trains."

In the meantime, Orazietti is making the final preparations along with about 30 tireless volunteers for the grand opening on Victoria Day which is also the weekend of the Cloverdale Rodeo, Canada's second biggest rodeo after the Calgary Stampede. For now, the museum will be open on weekends during the summer and admission to the public will be free of charge or by donation. **TW**

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Across

- 1 Cargo trucked from Saint John, NB (9,4)
- 8 Trucking company's rigs
- 9 Hammer-lane activity
- 10 Teen in driving-school car
- 11 Trip-odometer button
- 12 McCain frozen fries carrier
- 14 Volvo auto-manual transmission (1,5)
- 17 Walking-_____ trailer
- 20 Vehicle volume
- 22 ON auto-insurance type (2,5)
- 23 Engine cooling-fan component
- 24 Squeegee kids' workplaces (6,7)

Down

- 1 Exhaust-system silencer
- 2 Really rural road description (3,4)
- 3 UltraShift transmission maker
- 4 Truck goods from Canada to USA
- 5 Bangor, ME 60-acre truck stop
- 6 Offramps
- 7 East, on road map
- 13 Goin' down the road, QC style (2,5)
- 15 Add air to tire
- 16 Smokeys' signed souvenirs
- 17 Unwanted CB sound
- 18 Traffic-court penalties, perhaps
- 19 Second O in used-truck-ad's OBO
- 21 Traffic-light colour

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Loss of independence, freedom causes drivers to adopt victim mentality

It has become increasingly difficult over the past decade for drivers to maintain a positive outlook day in and day out as they go about their business.

I think the greatest challenge that drivers face in this industry is to not subscribe to a victim mentality. But unfortunately I think that a great majority of drivers do just that.

Many drivers appear to believe that decision-making is becoming increasingly out of their control, whether it's decisions made at the company policy level or decisions made at the legislative/compliance level. In an industry that markets commercial driving as a career providing a high level of freedom and independence to the individual, that's a big problem don't you think?

I'm into my 15th year now as a long-haul driver and I've met some of the most creative problem-solvers in the guise of other drivers over the course of that time. But these days it seems the outlet that trucking has provided for that creativity and independent thinking is drying up.

I think in large part that is due to how the trucking industry is adopting all the technological changes. I believe the driver has a lot bigger part to play in how technology is adopted and deployed than what we currently do. Whether we are talking about engine emissions, telematics, or EOBRs, the operations, safety, and compliance side of trucking see technological advances in these areas as positives whereas drivers see these as the opposite.

Okay, I'm painting both sides with a very broad brush here so cut me a little slack. Let me see if I can use my own experience to make a few points.

Let's start with emissions systems. First off let me say that I believe the intent behind the adoption of this technology is sound and I'm all for leaving a better world behind for my grandchildren, or at least a world that offers them the same opportunities I've had. But eliminating pollution of any type is ongoing and repairing damage already done through past activity is a long-term endeavor that all of us will have to pay for.

The free ride on the fossil fuel train is over. But that doesn't mean all the hardship should fall on the shoulders of one group, such as owner/operators.

Freight rates have to increase to cover added costs. Fragile economy or not, consumers need to bear the true cost of getting products to market. Period. This technology comes with a price tag for the positive changes we all benefit from in the long run. We're all consumers, we should all pay. If you disagree with me on this point that's fine. Let's move on to how I think this affects a driver's freedom and independence.

It was not many years ago that the engine in your truck was free from any form of electronic gadgets. No electronic control modules and no sensors. Like any mechanical device, they were not too difficult to understand. Mechanical controls can be seen and fairly easily understood. The relationship between working parts is fairly obvious.

For a driver - especially a driver that

Over the road

Al Goodhall



owns their own truck - maintaining that piece of equipment was simply part of the driving job. It was a part of the job that many of us took pride and pleasure in. The ability to service and maintain your own equipment added to the freedom and independence you would experience on the road. A driver would not find themselves sitting on the side of the

road waiting for a tow because the engine had shut itself down.

This past winter I've experienced downtime as a result of DEF pump failure, DEF dosing valve failure, and cracked DEF hoses.

In each instance the only indication I had of a problem was a Check Engine light and a malfunction indicator lamp lighting up on my dash, accompanied by a loss of power of at least 25%.

I have no idea how long I can drive before the engine de-rates even further. I have lost all independent control over my equipment with no means to correct it myself. Only other drivers can relate to

the immense sense of frustration and stress this brings on.

Drivers are also experiencing this sense of 'loss of control' in other areas. The introduction of electronic on-board recorders and the ensuing expansion of telematics within the industry is leaving drivers with the feeling that Big Brother is watching every move and decision making is increasingly being removed from the confines of the cab to the home office. This translates to a loss of independent control the driver experiences and hence the loss of the sense of freedom that is an integral part of attracting professionals into this field.

I'll come back to this topic next month and dig deeper into that victim mentality we seem to have fallen into. **TW**

Al Goodhall has been a professional long-haul driver since 1998. He shares his experiences via his 'Over the Road' blog at truckingacrosscanada.blogspot.com.

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Staying small by choice

A carrier survey early this year gave results which had some industry insiders very concerned. Events of the last few months seem to suggest the survey was somewhat accurate. I don't often believe such survey results; I don't think I've ever responded to one, making me wonder how many others don't either.

Another potential skewing of results is the fact that many of these surveys are conducted by the Canadian Trucking Alliance, American Trucking Associations – or their provincial and state counterparts – which are not known for having a huge membership of small carriers. Also, viewing projections strictly on a percentage basis is not always ac-



Small Fleet, Big Attitude

Bill Cameron

curate. Unfortunately, there is really no other system to conduct a simple survey. I tend to believe this particular survey, I'm just not alarmed at the results.

The survey was the usual first-of-the-year quiz, regarding optimism about your potential business growth, rate improvement, hiring, new equipment purchases, etc. The survey showed that small carriers, unlike large carriers, were less optimistic about the future, less apt to buy new equipment or hire new people, and less likely to expand.

On the surface, this would seem to be cause for concern, but when weighing all the facts, I don't believe so.

Small carriers are less optimistic about rate increases, but we are also generally less concerned about it. During the recession, we watched as many large carriers slashed rates to ridiculously low levels (we started business in 1999, and our starting rates were far higher than what a lot of companies charged in 2009).

Rates were reduced to keep massive amounts of equipment moving, and to retain drivers, and not always by choice. If a customer utilizing 100 of your trucks insists on rate reductions, the carrier obviously had to at least consider it. In most cases, I guess a bean counter must have calculated that this could be done for a given time period without causing financial devastation, while still maintaining market share. Small carriers don't have the equipment inventories

to be able to sustain such actions, so our rates had to stay at least close to where they were. Most of us stayed afloat by offering a more personalized, reliable service that the large carriers, by virtue of their size, couldn't offer.

We traditionally work for smaller customers, who have no interest in dealing with large carriers, or vice-versa. Any slowdowns in our business were dealt with by trimming high-maintenance or poor-paying customers, and losing staff that may have been less than desirable. Occasionally, a customer strays to the lower rate carrier, but they usually come back after they learn why we were worth more.

When too many trucks show up without the proper knowledge or accessories to safely haul the load – a reefer shows up for a van load, or a tridem trailer shows up for a US load, resulting in the load requiring reduction – we start to look like we are worth the extra money after all. Another extremely dangerous side-effect of rate cutting is that you are setting a precedent that you are able to work cheaper than you have been. It takes a very talented sales staff to increase rates to acceptable levels after several years of bargain-basement trucking, and even if successful, they'll still instill a certain animosity in the shipper.

Small carriers feel less apt to hire this year, and less likely to expand our operation, because we know we can't. There is still enough economic uncertainty that profitable, sustainable growth is barely possible. If it was, we can't hire driving staff anyway, for reasons I have previously explained. A more prudent plan appears to be to continue at your present size, with the best of your current clientele, and remain profitable.

We are much less likely to buy new equipment. I'm the poster child for that statement. I've never bought anything brand new in my life. The closest to new I've ever had was a one-year-old flatbed, purchased for 75% the cost of new. It's a lot less difficult to grow if your equipment costs are lower. Because of our small size, our maintenance is usually more diligent, so the older equipment can still be as reliable as new, especially in the case of power units. Even large carriers, who need new equipment because of driver retention and extended maintenance cycles, are not pleased with reliability or fuel mileage of the new tractors. Small carriers can't afford the aggravation and expense of brand new iron waiting for weeks for emissions systems to be repaired, or higher fuel bills for the same trips, so we avoid it.

Stagnant growth in any industry is rarely a good thing, but it may be the new reality. I don't believe in growth for the sake of growth; it needs to be profitable growth. Many will disagree, but I doubt that I will be in this industry long enough to see the type of economic growth that a lot of carriers are counting on. I think that bluntly, this generation has had the daylights scared out of it by the economic meltdown, and even if anybody had money, it would take the next generation's overspending to really get things moving. It seems to be a lot more prudent and responsible to make the best of what we have now, and at least for now, be happy with it. It may be the best we can realistically hope for. **TW**

Bill Cameron owns and operate Parks Transportation. He can be reached at williamcameron.bc@gmail.com.



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Common sense can solve most of trucking's problems

Sometimes you can say so much more by saying less; quite often two simple words can have a profound effect on a situation. Take the words "I do" for example. There's only three letters between them, but say them at a certain time and they have life-changing consequences. At other times a single word will do. 'Stop' is one that is sometimes all that needs to be said. Another is 'no,' although our industry has an aversion to using that word at the right time. Sure, we use it and hear it all the time, but it's seldom beneficial to us.

I want to concentrate on two simple words this month, the words themselves will not have any effect whatsoever, but the meaning behind them could actually change things for the better for every last one of us.

The words I refer to are 'common' and 'sense.' Put together, they are almost a misnomer as common sense is a rare thing indeed. An application of common sense is all that's needed to solve most of the problems we face. Applied properly, common sense will bring an end to so many of the things that cause problems in our industry.

Take the much publicized driver shortage. It's a fact, not just something we use to fill pages in the magazines and it's not only here now, it's going to get so much worse. Use a bit of common sense and it's easy to see why we have a shortage of drivers. Hardly anyone wants to drive truck. We have to compete with every other niche in the labour market and apart from sailors, there aren't many industries that require the long work hours and time away from home that driving truck presents. Added to that is the fact that, compared to most other jobs, wages are poor. Some jobs barely pay minimum wage if you work them out to an hourly rate.

Common sense tells me that a career in trucking is not an attractive proposition for anyone who doesn't have a love of trucks and trucking. It also tells me that continuing to do things the way they're being done now is only going to make the situation worse. The true definition of insanity is to continue with the same behaviour and expect a different result, so common sense has to be the better option here, surely?

Let's look at the reasons that trucking isn't a popular career choice. We need to do this so that we can eliminate as many of the downsides as possible and make our industry more attractive; the nation's economy depends on it. If we cannot find drivers to drive our trucks, industry will move to a country that doesn't have problems delivering their products.

Throwing money at the problem is not the answer, not that a little extra wouldn't help. That would do more to retain current truck drivers, something that also needs attention, but it's the tip of the iceberg.

We have to change our way of thinking. The recent use of LCVs has reduced driver requirements, but not every lane or type of freight can accommodate those, so we need to think laterally. Maybe we could use a relay system; instead of Winnipeg to Calgary, for ex-

**You say tomato
I say tomahto**

Mark Lee



ample, we could have a changeover at Regina and get a load moved in each direction and both trucks and drivers back at base at the end of their shift.

The trucks could even be used to do this run with a day and a night driver, not only getting drivers home, but improving productivity at the same time. On paper it looks like the perfect solution, but it's not, it still involves a shift that runs for four or five hours more than most other industries.

The only way that we can compete

with them is to do what they do; a 10- to 12-hour working day is one of the reasons people look at other careers before trucking. We may well be accustomed to working far longer hours, but look where that's getting us. It's time to accept that we cannot beat them, so we had better join them.

So that Winnipeg to Calgary run will now need a proper relay system with three tractor units moving one trailer in each direction. That will add costs - or will it? I mentioned earlier about using day and night drivers, well that's impossible if each driver is doing more than a 12-hour shift, simple math tells us that. However, if the day driver is only doing 10-12 hours, then it will be possible to use the truck overnight, so on-paper increased productivity becomes real-life

improved productivity and it's the second one that will add to the bottom line.

Obviously this will not work for every operation. There is no one-size-fits-all solution, but it's a step in the right direction. We cannot fix every problem we face if we try and do it all with one magic bullet, but if we do what we can, when we can, and deal with our problems one at a time, we have a greater chance of success. That's just common sense. **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.

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Health and safety committees can tackle an array of dangers

It's easy to understand why many fleet managers focus on the open road when discussing employee health and safety. Large vehicles and highway speeds combine to form obvious threats to people and equipment alike. But many workplace dangers are found much closer to home.

Look no further than the simple walk from a parked truck to a fleet office. Drivers who choose to juggle a 32-ounce coffee and some paperwork, rather than securing three points of contact with the truck, can slip off a running board and

Ask the Expert

Jason Shiell



break a leg. Tripping hazards can range from the debris in a parking lot to the air lines used to power tools in the hands of nearby mechanics.

Drivers are not the only employees to face on-the-job dangers, either. Mechanics have been known to wrench their backs when wrestling with heavy

equipment, fall into unmarked pits, or be injured by unguarded tools. Warehouse workers can be crushed by poorly stacked freight or injured in a fall from a loading dock. Office workers, meanwhile, could be trapped by blocked emergency exits or be threatened by fellow employees.

They are just a few examples of the dangers which exist – and each of them can be tackled by an active health and safety committee.

The Canada Labour Code requires every company with 20 or more employees to establish a formal health and

safety committee which meets at least nine times a year, documenting all related activities. Half of the committee's members also need to be employees, reflecting the fact that workers tend to offer valuable frontline insight into workplace-related hazards.

Their duties involve developing, implementing and monitoring programs to prevent hazards; participating in inspections and studies around health and safety; keeping adequate records on workplace accidents; and assessing exposure to hazardous substances.

Related inspections must look for potential hazards at least once a month, covering the entire workplace at least once a year. And the committees are also responsible for investigating incidents or accidents of every sort, to see how they happened or can be avoided in the future. (Companies with 300 or more employees are expected to go a step further, introducing a policy committee which can tackle challenges across their broader organizations).

The emerging solutions don't need to be limited to immediate threats. Drivers, for example, have been known to develop carpal tunnel syndrome by resting their hands on vibrating gearshifts. Others have lost hearing in their left ears after decades of travelling with the window rolled down. Many strain-related back injuries, meanwhile, could be solved by properly adjusting seats. All of these issues can be reduced through enhanced education and training.

The more immediate dangers are not limited to the actions of inexperienced employees, either. Look no further than drivers who open the barn doors of their trailers with one hand, even though a gust of wind could turn the door into a virtual sail and send someone into a live lane of traffic. Technicians have been known to remove guards from their tools to save a few seconds of time, and experienced warehouse workers have stepped right into the paths of forklifts that are always zipping up and down the aisles.

Specific guidelines for preventive measures like the amount of lighting required in a workplace are outlined in Canada Occupational Health and Safety Regulations. Ontario's Infrastructure Health and Safety Association, funded by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, offers many free programs including a workplace safety assessment to examine everything from existing safety programs to the Material Safety Data Sheets which identify hazardous materials. For its part, Ontario's Fleet Safety Council meets 10 times a year, giving participants the chance to share best practices. Shippers have even been known to introduce standards that are much tougher than minimums established under the Canada Labour Code.

Insurance providers can offer some support of their own, helping to build on the best practices embraced by customers throughout the industry. Of course, some jobs will always be inherently dangerous. A fleet which transports the dynamite used for blasting rock cannot be expected to stop hauling explosives altogether. Fleets of every type also require people to work around moving machinery. This will never change. The goal is to limit any challenges which do exist, and always to put safety first. **TW**

Jason Shiell is a senior risk services consultant for Northbridge Insurance.

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The Answer Man has a few questions

Is incorporation the right strategy for you? There's no one-size-fits-all answer.

Reviewing tax bills with owner/operator clients often leads to questions about incorporating. Folks are curious and want to know, "What would I have paid if I was incorporated?"

Instead of giving them a complex, detailed, and probably confusing answer, I've learned to respond with a few questions of my own: Did you save any money this past year? Could you have saved any money this past year? Does your spouse work and if so, how much money does she make? How many days were you away last year (so I can calculate a meal claim)? It's the start of a conversation that ultimately will lead to a good decision about how that owner/operator should structure his business.

If there's one thing I've learned, it's that everyone's circumstances are different, there's no one-size-fits-all solution, and you should have all the facts before you make up your mind about anything.

The problem is, when it comes to owner/operator taxes and finances, the facts get convoluted with opinion and buried under blanket statements.

Half the time, it seems like the person asking me whether he should incorporate has already made up his mind based on something he's heard or read.

He just wants me to confirm it.

Just last week I was talking to a new owner/operator and when the conversation naturally flowed to incorporation he told me he read that an owner/operator doesn't need to incorporate until he owns three trucks. I was flabbergasted. If it were that easy, we could all save ourselves a lot of time and get down to the only question that really matters: how many trucks do you own?

I told him I would never say anything like that. Sometimes, of course, people hear only what they want hear, or they only hear part of the whole message.

So I circled back around and asked some questions about this new owner/operator's business and personal life. He's divorced, and his kids are grown and living on their own. He's going to work at a long-haul carrier that will keep him out on the road for three weeks at a time. He rents a small apartment and his personal vehicle is paid for.

I said, "Wow, it sounds like you don't need a lot of personal spending money to maintain your lifestyle. Are you going to make any changes?"

Nope, he said. His priority is to drive as much as possible in order to make as much money as he can, and build up his savings before he's too old to do so.

Tax Talk

Scott Taylor



Based on the carrier pay package, this owner/operator's goal is to gross about \$200,000. After direct expenses

(fuel, insurance, licence, payments and maintenance), he should have about \$80,000 net income left.

If he's a sole proprietor, he makes whatever the truck makes, so his personal taxes will be based on \$80,000.

I asked if he knew how much income tax he'd have to pay on \$80,000. He wasn't exactly sure, but explained that he had made about that much as an employee the last few years, so he had some idea based on all the deductions from his pay stubs.

"Probably a lot," he said. I did some quick calculations and told him it would be roughly \$23,000.

Yup, that's a lot.

Then I asked how much of that \$80,000 would he spend on rent, groceries, and personal living when not on the road.

I explained the reason for asking was to do a corporate tax estimate. If he were to incorporate, his personal

draws would become his income and any leftover money would stay in the hands of the corporation.

He estimated his draws would be \$30,000. Back to my quick calculations, I determined that his personal tax bill will be \$6,400 and his corporation's tax bill will be \$7,800. That totals \$14,200, a whopping \$8,800 less than this owner/operator would pay as a sole proprietor.

Yup, that's a lot less.

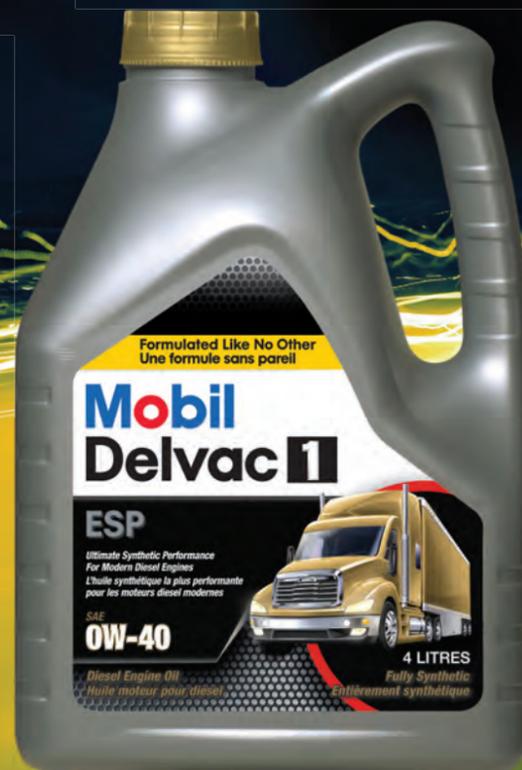
Next month we'll go over a few answers to my questions and how different answers explain why buddy on your left is incorporated while buddy on your right is not. **TW**

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 or call 800-461-5970.

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Primary truck and engine: _____

Number of vehicles: _____

Contracted to (if applicable): _____

My choice is based on:

Safe driving record Industry/community involvement Heroism Going "Green" Initiatives

Explain: _____

Nominated by: _____ Phone: _____

Mail completed forms to "AWARD" Truck News/Truck West, Attn: Kathy Penner
80 Valleybook Drive, Toronto, Ontario M3B 2S9

FORM MUST BE FILLED IN COMPLETELY AND NOMINEE MUST HAVE CLEAN DRIVER'S ABSTRACT

The implications of the driver shortage

Much has been written lately about the anticipated driver shortage, including the CTA's Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Driver Shortage and the recent release of the Conference Board of Canada's report, *Understanding the Driver Supply and Demand Gap and Its Implications for the Canadian Economy*. Both reports received extensive media coverage at the times of their release, but beyond those blips of coverage, what do these reports mean for our industry?

First and foremost, these reports draw attention to a significant issue in our industry that is not often considered by anyone outside of trucking. What will happen to the Canadian economy should the trucking industry face a shortage of skilled drivers? Our economy is dependent on trucks; by some estimates, approximately 95% of goods in this country have been on a truck at one point in their lifespan. Our biggest trading partner is the US, and 75% of goods traded with them travel by truck. We are an invisible industry, yet we are the industry that drives the Canadian economy. While rail is also an important and significant mode of transportation in this country, it simply cannot meet consumer demands the way the trucking industry can.

The trucking industry provides door-to-door service, something that many of today's shippers expect. Realistically, rail cannot and will not ever be able to provide the same level of service the trucking industry can. Even for goods transported long distances by rail, they must at some point be moved by truck from the rail line to the customer. The trucking industry gets the job done as demanded by shippers, and beyond that, by today's consumers.

When attention is focused on an industry discussing labour shortages, it also encourages people to think about that industry as a viable option for a career. The trucking industry is such a unique industry in that people don't have to get locked onto a certain career path; there is a fluidity and movement among career choices in our industry that is rare. For example, how many trucking companies do you know of where people have worn a number of different hats, including driver, dispatcher, safety/claims officer, and recruiter?

I would suggest that many people in the trucking industry have had career paths that did not necessarily take them on a straight line; rather, they experienced a variety of roles within the industry. Our industry is incredibly dynamic, and as a result, our people have opportunities that they might not find in other industries, moving from operations to human resources to driving, all within a period of a few years. Further, with all of the various opportunities that we can provide to our people, we can find ways to retain good people. There is always room for growth – both as organizations and individuals – in our industry, which means that we can find ways to keep those people in our industry who are real assets to our organizations. Extra media attention on the need for people in our industry makes people think about and discover the wide

Manitoba musings

Bob Dolyniuk



range of opportunities and options that the trucking industry can provide them.

However, the recent media attention is good for our industry not only from an external point of view. Both of these reports have made our industry look internally, and when an industry takes a hard look at itself, the results can be very positive for those in the industry. For example, the Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Driver Shortage has identified several reasons why people might be discouraged from entering the trucking industry. Some of those reasons include sig-

nificant periods away from home, hours of work, and driver wellness concerns. If we as an industry want to continue to attract good people to our industry, we need to resolve these issues.

The Blue Ribbon Task Force has come up with suggestions for how we can do that. Some of their suggestions, which are identified as 'core values' of the Blue Ribbon Task Force, include stop wasting drivers' time (either at customers, in the shop, or waiting to hear back from dispatch), honouring time-off requests and respecting drivers' time off once they are at home, placing a priority on driver wellness, and ensuring that our drivers' safety when they are on the road. As is stated in the Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Driver Shortage, "carriers have the primary responsibility, influence, and

control over quality of life issues in the driver occupation. They (carriers) need to hold their internal people (e.g. dispatchers, payroll, safety, etc.) accountable for addressing driver concerns."

The Conference Board report showed us that we have an aging demographic of drivers in our industry. That's the glass half-empty perspective. The glass half-full view would say that we have a huge wealth of knowledge in our industry as to how we can improve things for drivers – lifestyle, pay issues, home time. It is anticipated that our industry will experience a driver shortage of over 30,000 drivers by 2020 – let's take advantage now of what we have and learn, as an industry, how we can make trucking appealing to more people. **TW**

Bob Dolyniuk is executive director of the Manitoba Trucking Association and a vice-president of the Canadian Trucking Alliance.



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Running compliant a weighty problem

I never know what to expect when I answer the OBAC phone. Sometimes it's a driver passing through town who has time to meet up for a coffee, or perhaps someone calling to join OBAC or renew their membership. But mostly it's questions.

Probably two-to-one, the most common questions have something to do with Canadian weights and dimensions, which is why I keep the numbers of my weights and dimensions gurus handy. One of the most common questions, especially from our American friends and members, 'Can I run a truck in Canada with a tractor wheelbase longer than 244 inches?' is easier to answer now. The answer is yes, provided you use a formula to shorten the trailer wheelbase according-

Voice of the O/O

Joanne Ritchie



ly, and in most jurisdictions, you'll need a permit. Then a couple of weeks ago, one of our members called with what seemed a fairly straightforward query: "I have a truck with a 13,200-lb steer axle, and tires rated for 14,000 lbs. Can I run more than 12,000 lbs on a steer axle anywhere in Canada?"

Bless his compliant little heart. Here's a guy who wants to stay on the right side of the law, and naturally, I'm prepared to help.

The starting place is the more or less

"national standards" document called the Heavy Truck Weight and Dimension Limits for Interprovincial Operations in Canada. Back in 1988, the federal and provincial/territorial ministers responsible for transportation endorsed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) intended to improve uniformity in regulations covering four (later increased to eight) types of commercial vehicles operating between provinces and territories on a nationwide highway system. The idea was that every province and territory would permit MoU-compliant vehicles to travel on a designated system of highways in their jurisdiction.

But of course – since this is Canada – each jurisdiction retains authority to allow more liberal weights and dimensions, or different types of vehicle con-

figurations, for trucking operations in their own backyard.

And just to add a bit more complexity, there are a number of regional agreements in place: the Atlantic provinces have endorsed uniform regulatory requirements throughout the region; Ontario and Quebec have established common standards on a variety of tractor-trailer combinations; and more recently, B.C., Alberta, and Saskatchewan have their own side deal on harmonization under the New West Partnership. There's a national committee called the Task Force on Vehicle Weights and Dimensions Policy whose job it is to manage the MoU and keep track of the various amendments and regional agreements. Assuming you knew about the MoU and about the Task Force, you could go to their Web sites and get the information I've just given you, and you would also find links to the weights and dimensions regulations in each province and territory.

But if you didn't know this (or didn't call me to ask), and decided to Google, say, "Canadian truck weights and dimensions," you'd get over two million hits, an intoxicating array of magazine articles, studies, and copies of regulations, most of which are useless. The first two my search found, for example, were a 2003 study by a railway association and a 2005 out-of-date copy of the MoU document. And, heaven forbid, if you searched for "12,000 lbs on a steer axle in Canada," you'd probably draw a blank because you wouldn't find pounds and steer axle and Canada in the same sentence.

But my friend's question is legitimate, and one more drivers are asking as truck weights continue to increase. Emissions systems are the chief culprit here, and most of the extra 1,000 lbs or so that recent emissions hardware has added to a truck has gone straight to the steer axle.

The standard steer axle weight limit for a highway truck in North America is 12,000 lbs (5,500 kgs), but now we have trucks with 13,200-lb axles (6,000 kgs), so is there anywhere in Canada where we can load the steer axle up to that weight? In other words, do the provinces recognize that steer axles have become heavier, and do they allow for that extra 1,000 lbs of weight?

I've discovered that indeed, some provinces have recognized the problem with heavier loads on steer axles on many late model trucks. B.C., Alberta, and Saskatchewan, under the New West Partnership, have agreed to increase steer axle weight to 6,000 kgs from the usual 5,500 kgs typically allowed on line-haul steer axles across the country. Ontario, as well, allows 6,000 kgs, although I had to confirm this with the resident MTO weights and dimensions expert who directed me to the specific regulation; the only reference my Web searching turned up was rules specific to LCVs.

Next to finding a place to park your truck at the end of the day, the most challenging thing is figuring out where you can operate it legally in the first place. Save yourself a bit of aggravation by checking out the Compliance/Regulatory section of the Toolbox on obac.ca. And keep those calls – and the memberships – coming. **TW**

Joanne Ritchie is executive director of OBAC. E-mail her at jritchie@obac.ca or call 888-794-9990.

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Bison buys Searcy, goes flatdecking

WINNIPEG, Man. – Bison Transport has announced the acquisitions of Searcy Trucking and its distribution division, Universal Reload.

Searcy Trucking of Winnipeg was founded in 1969 and is a family-owned carrier specializing in flatdeck transportation services. Its subsidiary Universal Reload offers 12 acres of outdoor storage and 24,000 sq.-ft. of indoor space, specializing in open deck freight handling logistics.

Together, they operate 72 trucks, 90 trailers and employ about 100 people. The acquisitions will continue to operate as a standalone company, Bison announced.

Norm Blagden, director of business development for Bison Transport, has been named vice-president of Searcy Trucking, while Gerry Searcy will stay on as president and CEO.

“The acquisition of Searcy Trucking is part of our continued investment in serving the transportation needs of the North American marketplace,” said Don Streuber, president and CEO of Bison Transport. “Searcy Trucking brings a committed management team, support staff and

driver base, along with significant expertise of flatdeck services. Through Bison, they will have access to the depth and support of a much larger national carrier, including our systems, IT, and administrative services.”

Gerry Searcy, president of Searcy Trucking, added: “Bison Transport has proven their ability to build a strong transportation business, staying true to their core values, and committed to their people. We look forward to being part of that culture, and gaining from the administration, systems and marketing support, while at the same time running Searcy as a distinct separate business.” **TW**

Schneider reduces cargo theft for sixth straight year

GREEN BAY, Wis. – Schneider National has reported declines in cargo theft rates for the sixth consecutive year. The company’s 2012 security results – including a 40% decline in full-truckload thefts and a 50% reduction in total value per load stolen – far exceed US industry rates for 2012, according to the company.

According to FreightWatch’s International 2012 Annual Cargo Theft Report, the overall number of nationwide stolen freight incidents in the US decreased by 0.5%.

Schneider officials say the company has steadily bucked the trend of rising cargo thefts in the industry, realizing a reduction from 25 thefts in 2006 to just eight last year. Schneider moves about three million loads

of freight each year.

Walter Fountain, director of safety and enterprise security at Schneider, says the company concentrates on making ongoing improvements to its technology and training programs while emphasizing situational awareness and a load-specific communication strategy across its fleet of 13,000 company drivers and independent contractors.

“I’ve always believed our proactive planning makes Schneider’s security program a success story year after year,” Fountain said. “It’s all about knowing the ins and outs of the freight we’re moving, keeping our customers updated, and arming our drivers with exceptional training and information.” **TW**

Manitoulin buys Edmonton’s Matco

EDMONTON, Alta. -- Manitoulin Transport has acquired Matco Transportation Systems of Edmonton. Established in 1966, Matco is a fully integrated Canadian transportation services company providing domestic and international freight, household goods relocation services and warehousing. Its geographic focus is Edmonton and Calgary in Alberta, the Northwest Territories and Yukon.

Matco is the second transportation company Manitoulin has acquired in the last four weeks and its fifth acquisition since last May.

“We are delighted to announce that we have purchased Matco, a company known for more than 40 years for its exceptional customer service, professionalism and expertise,” said Don Goodwill, president of Manitoulin Transport. “This brings together two highly complementary businesses which should significantly benefit both Manitoulin and Matco customers. Manitoulin customers now have the benefit of accessing expertise in the household relocation business, as well as even greater coverage in Canada’s northwest. Matco customers now benefit from easy access to Manitoulin Group of Companies full suite of services, and can continue to experience the same high level of customer service they have come to expect.”

Matco has seven terminal locations in Edmonton, Calgary, Inuvik, Norman Wells, Yellowknife, Hay River and Whitehorse. Matco will be lead by Wayne Wishloff, vice-president and general manager. Founding partners Lloyd and Ray Anderson will stay on in a consulting capacity. **TW**

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Expansion minded

Rob Penner, COO of Bison Transport, on how the company is leveraging its people and expertise to expand into new areas

TW: Bison has been very active over the past couple of years acquiring other businesses, opening new terminals, experimenting with new fuel sources and growing to over 2,000 staff. Companies may lose their corporate focus when experiencing such transition. How is Bison retaining its focus on the corporate strategies that have made it successful?

Penner: We've made the list of the Best Managed Companies every year since 1994. One of the best things about Bison is that we are a learning organization. Our core truckload business is important and it generates the capability for us to expand into other opportunities. We are really using this

approach to grow our people. We have the right number of eyes on the total picture and we are mentoring and developing people to take a more active role in building new opportunities.

TW: Bison's focus on safety also seems unwavering. Bison did very well at TCA's National Safety Awards yet again, winning the Grand Prize for its safety record and programs. For the seventh consecutive year, Bison has attained the lowest US Department of Transportation recordable accident rate in its division and mileage category: 100 million mile line-haul. And Bison also received the ATA's President's Trophy

for being the safest fleet and having the best overall safety program, as well as ATA's Safety Improvement Award for its reduction in workplace accidents and injuries. The benefits of operating such a safe fleet are obvious for the carrier but what are the benefits that accrue to the shippers you contract with?

Penner: The most critical benefit for shippers is that their product is reaching its intended destination safely and on time. As a carrier, we are serving our customers' customers and so we are keeping intact the shippers' commitment to serve their clients. If someone is expecting a load of cargo to arrive and it's upside down in a ditch somewhere and they have to produce another load of that same cargo, there is a significant negative impact to the supply chain. As we grow into more challenging and rewarding opportunities - HazMat being a perfect example - we need to use our experience and strong safety record as leverage to support commodities and clients that critically rely on their freight being both safe and on time.

TW: Do you feel shippers in general appreciate the importance of contracting with a carrier that walks the talk on safety?

Penner: I believe the CSA legislation in the US has elevated clients' interest and ability to look more deeply at the carriers they partner with. I don't believe it has yet had the full impact that carriers who put their time, money and energy in investing in the right safety strategies were hoping for. There is still an overriding focus on cost and if all things are equal then the safest carriers have an

'It's a bit early to draw any conclusions on whether LNG is right for us.'

Rob Penner, Bison Transport

edge. But there is no question there are more conversations today about safety among the shipping community.

TW: Bison is one of the early adopters in the industry of natural gas power for its trucks. You've entered into a five-year agreement with Shell Canada to run 15 liquefied natural gas (LNG) tractors in Alberta. How is that project coming along and what are your expectations? Should shippers expect to see growth in your natural gas-powered fleet?

Penner: It's a bit early to draw any conclusions on whether LNG is right for us. It was important for us to learn the technology. As mentioned earlier, we are a learning organization and for our fleet to be informed on what technologies are out there, whether it's to power the truck or make us safer or manage our operating systems more efficiently, we need to know what that looks like. We've put these 15 trucks into play.

They came into service Jan. 1 and we are now getting their utilization into a range where we are comfortable we can start to gather reliable data. Optimizing the spec only comes through running the trucks and figuring out what works and what doesn't work.

We have the LNG tractors working in our heavy-haul long combination vehicle operations. There are many little challenges to deal with, most of them expected and none of them catastrophic. It's on us to work through, fine tune and optimize the range on these vehicles. The technology works; we are just not sure if it is ultimately effective in the applications we are looking for. It's expensive and today it limits our operational flexibility due to lack of infrastructure. We can overcome a lot of that, however, there are still things that remain unclear.

We are waiting to see what the fuel suppliers are going to do to provide appropriate infrastructure. There is also uncertainty about the long-term road tax implications for natural gas. We believe Ottawa and the provinces will tax natural gas similar to how diesel is taxed. We are infrastructure challenged in North America and as users of the highways, it is necessary for fleets to help fund highway improvements through fuel tax

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programs, but any new costs in the system affect payback. Our business can't afford to invest in this technology as an environmental initiative. It has to have its business case.

TW: Even if natural gas was taxed at the same rate of diesel, would it still not be cheaper?

Penner: It is still cheaper, but there are other factors to consider. The capital costs of equipment limit how much of this a private carrier like ourselves can fund. Do you buy 60 LNG powered tractors or 100 diesel? Those are going to be real fleet decisions. Is this an alternative energy strategy or an environmental play? What is the true impact to the environment? There are differing opinions on the cost/benefit/impacts and we are trying to go into this as informed as possible.

TW: What do your drivers think about the LNG vehicles?

Penner: There are lots of little start-up nuances surrounding spec', electronics and tuning that need to be worked through with each tractor to optimize it and we've tried to limit the impact to the driver of that. Our drivers have been understanding of the necessity to learn the technology. The truck itself is quieter and does have plenty of power and after we worked the bugs out the driver feedback has been largely positive.

TW: Bison recently purchased Searcy Trucking of Winnipeg, a family-owned carrier specializing in flatdeck services, and its distribution division, Universal Reload, which offers 12 acres of outdoor storage and 24,000 sq.-ft of indoor space, specializing in open deck freight handling logistics. Why was this the right move for Bison?

Penner: Customers routinely asked us if we had flatbed service and our logistics team has helped some of our key clients move flatdeck freight for years, so it is not completely foreign to us. As we look to acquire companies, our strategy is to find a strong business with a solid platform that we can leverage. We will look at how we can better manage their cost base, add value or inject horsepower in terms of money, strategy and of course people to help grow what is already a successful business. Searcy is a well run company that did well through the recession, did what needed to be done to protect their business and has looked after their customers and employees.

TW: What is the strategic thinking behind this move to expand your service offerings?

Penner: Although we are certainly not a trucking giant in terms of the scope of North America, in Canada we run a very large van fleet and we are very conscious of what our overall growth capabilities and limitations might be. We don't want to be too heavily concentrated on a particular set of customers. We certainly don't expect we could have 2,500 tractors doing exactly what we do now in Canada. But we do understand there are many industry segments we are not a part of and so we can leverage our strengths - strategy, purchasing, safety, training, people development - in different segments of the marketplace. And we feel we can do that without being distracted. We have good people in our organization who can do bigger and



better and more things. Trucking is about people. If you have good people and you can leverage good people you can grow your business.

TW: Flatdeck was hit hard during the recession. Are there companies that would be available for sale if you wanted to expand your reach in that sphere?

Penner: Yes, we have looked at several that are available.

TW: What do you see as the major challenges that could get in the way of your growth plans for the future?

Penner: The limiting factor is always people. Finding good people to attract into this industry and train and develop has always been and will always be the biggest challenge.

TW: I'm glad you said "people" because a lot of companies in this industry are focused on drivers when attracting good people to all positions is important and challenging.

Penner: The people who support your drivers and your customers are every bit as important. It is a team effort and an entire network that builds success. Drivers earn you money but if you don't have good people who understand the driver's role and how to provide true support, a driver won't stick with you. Nor will your customer. Bison has a great team and we are constantly looking to build the team. We strive to hire, train and develop the very best people in the industry so that we can ultimately provide the best in services for all involved.

TW: How do you see Bison evolving over the next five years in response to market trends and demands?

Penner: We will have maintained our culture of doing the right thing for our customers, our employees, our business and those we share the roads with. We will continue to build on our successes and expand our reach into market segments that require a higher level of expertise, complexity or risk management. We are an organization built to provide full service transportation solutions. Truckload van, heated, refrigerated and flatbed, expedited, HazMat and LTL services, LCV and asset-based logistics, intermodal, trailer on flatcar, boxcar, warehousing and distribution. What have I missed? Stay tuned! **TW**



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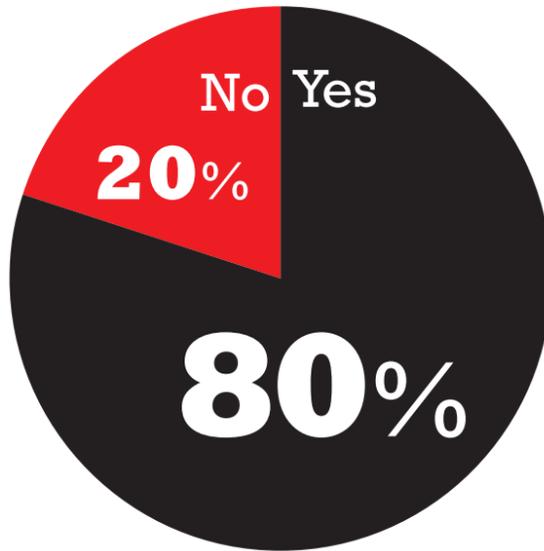


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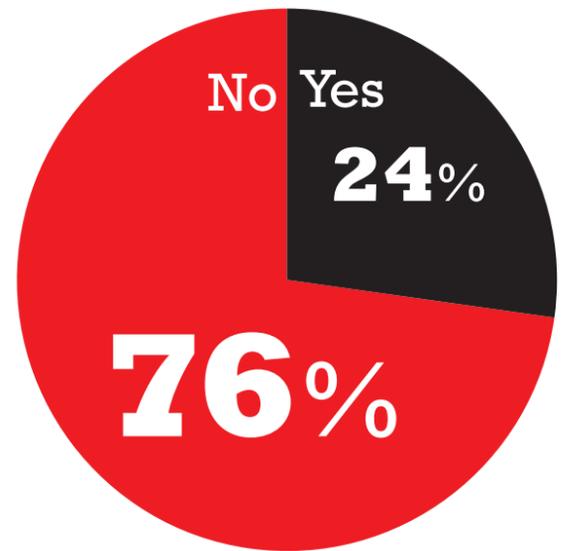
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WESTERN CANADA TRUCKERS' THOUGHTS ON PURCHASING USED TRUCKS

Purchased a used truck before



Planning to buy used truck(s) in 2013



Top three reasons will be purchasing used trucks

Adding to fleet due to growth projections

38%

Increasing costs of repairs on used vehicle(s)

30%

Looking to avoid new engine emissions standards

29%

Current truck(s) have reached replacement mileage

21%

Looking to improve fuel economy

20%

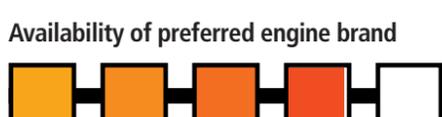
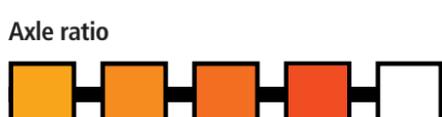
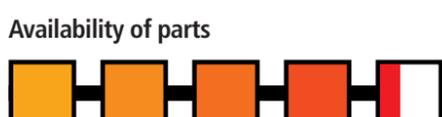
Current truck(s) beyond repair

8%

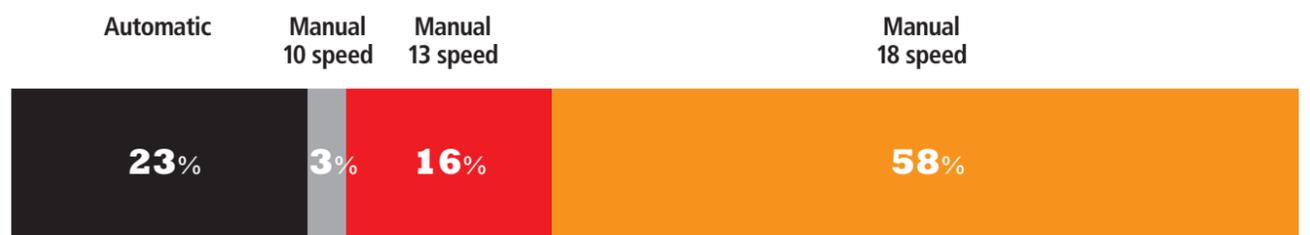
Responding to fleet mandate to replace current vehicle(s)

3%

Most important factors in selecting a used truck
(scale of 1 to 5)



Type of transmission most likely to prefer on a used truck



The average cost of a Class 8 truck has increased from \$95,000 in 2006 to \$125,000 by 2012. With new truck prices seeing such a significant increase, purchasing a used truck is a common strategy for both Western Canada motor carriers and owner/operators. Our annual Equipment Buying Trends Survey indicates that 80% of Western Canada truckers have purchased a used truck in the past. The practice is particularly prevalent among owner/operators, with 88% reporting they have done so in the past. Almost a quarter of fleets and owner/operators were looking to purchase used trucks in 2013. The main reasons cited for purchasing used in-

clude the need to add to the fleet due to company growth projections; increasing cost of repairs on the current fleet; and looking to avoid engine emissions standards that come with the later model new trucks. The selection process, of course, is a critically important part of purchasing used trucks. Our survey, however, found that used truck buyers feel they are quite knowledgeable about spec'ing used trucks. Overall, our survey respondents rated their knowledge and ability to properly spec' a used truck a 4.06 out of 5. O/Os were particularly confident of their abilities. They rated their knowledge an average of 4.30 out of 5. The most important factors considered when selecting a used truck in-

clude the age and mileage of the truck, its history, availability of parts and the type of transmission. Manual 18-speeds are the most sought after transmissions, particularly by owner/operators. But interestingly, automatic transmissions were the most preferred by almost a quarter of respondents. Peterbilt, Kenworth and Freightliner are the three truck brands Western Canada truckers are most likely to purchase when they buy used, our survey also found. This year's Equipment Buying Trends Survey, which has been conducted for more than a decade, launches in May. Look for it in your e-mail and please respond. We look forward to sharing the latest results with you later this year. **TW**

GOING THE DISTANCE

Hang gliding is an air sport employing a foot-launchable aircraft known as a hang glider. Typically, a hang glider is constructed of an aluminum alloy or composite-framed fabric wing. The pilot is ensconced in a harness suspended from the airframe, and exercises control by shifting body weight in opposition to a control frame.



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Change brings opportunities

Continued on page 1

manage a fleet when (that happens)."

Fortunately, new exploration techniques are leading to significant growth in the domestic supply of oil, and projects like the Keystone XL pipeline could also play a significant role in the effort to get fuel to market, which Allen said could greatly stabilize the cost of diesel.

Diesel is only one part of it, though. "Over the past decade, we've seen a number of technologies come to mar-

ket, things like hybrids and electronic drivetrains," Allen said, "but if there's one technology that people in this industry are really excited about, it's natural gas."

Allen thinks natural gas may be the most significant change the industry has seen since commercial vehicles switched from gasoline to diesel power in the 1950s, and noted that new technologies such as fracking are making vast new reserves of the stuff available in the US and Canada. "There's

plenty of supply for today and for the future," he said, "and because of this ample supply, it should cost less."

Allen said another advantage to using natural gas is that "this is a domestic solution, not a foreign solution. The next Arab Spring, the next European crisis, will not impact the price of natural gas, which should translate into more stable prices and, as an alternative to diesel, help moderate diesel price inflation and volatility as well."

Not only that, but "the environmentalists like natural gas," he pointed out. "It has 20% less carbon than an equivalent energy unit of diesel."

While he admitted that there's a lot of work to be done before natural gas power is available widely (such as setting up infrastructure and getting the hardware price down) "if industry volumes increase and more suppliers come to market, we can expect these prices to fall. Natural gas has been called the fuel of the future for

a long time, and I think that that future is going to arrive sooner than we think," he said.

Allen also expressed surprise that, considering current unemployment rates, there aren't more people lining up to climb into cabs. He opined that the driver shortage isn't just about how demographics and regulations make the profession less attractive to new people, however. "There's also a social issue here," he said. "Driving a truck doesn't have the same appeal (to today's youth) as it did to previous generations. The thought of being on the road for an extended period of time, away from friends and family, is really an issue."

To combat this, Allen said, "you're going to need to address the fundamental deterrence to driving trucks today, including quality of life." He warned that could come at a price, however, and said manufacturers have to help out here, too, by building products that are more driver-centric, easier to drive and safer, in order to help facilitate "shorter training periods for drivers to become more efficient and productive."

Many of these features exist today, such as automated manual transmissions, lane departure warning systems, parking assist, the use of more blind spot cameras and satellite connectivity, but "they're going to become more prevalent and sophisticated," he said.

Allen also blamed new rounds of regulations for challenging the industry's bottom line. "Compliance has come at a price," he said, noting that over the past decade emissions surcharges have added an average of more than \$20,000 to the price of every heavy truck sold and more than \$10,000 on medium-duty trucks. Furthermore, "used truck values today show that this added expense is not being retained over time...and as a result, fleets are being forced to adjust their depreciation schedules to reflect today's new reality."

Allen doesn't think we've seen the end of new rules, either. "The leaders in Ottawa and Washington alike have a strong regulation mindset," he said. "It's just the business they're in."

He thinks new rules will be different from current ones that have focused mostly on vehicle systems, though. "We'll see more stringent fuel standards and that means most manufacturers are going to have to ensure that each specific truck/trailer combination will meet regulations."

He predicts that manufacturers and suppliers will not only need to engineer new technology, but "as an industry, we have to keep in mind the cost that this could have on all of us. So we need to work together with the regulators in a collaborative way so that they fully understand the financial impact of policy decisions that they make on our industry."

The good news is that this is under way, both in Ottawa and Washington, and Allen credited many industry associations with playing an important role in this effort.

Allen also had some sobering thoughts about whether or not the trucking industry will return to what was considered its normal state of only a few years ago, before the bottom fell out of the economy. "What's normal?" he asked rhetorically, noting that in the



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past several years, larger fleets have been growing, while small fleets are becoming scarcer. "A variety of factors have driven costs up to the point where it's very difficult for many smaller operators to survive," he noted. "The burden of increased fuel costs, labour costs, and regulation have simply made the economics unfavourable for too many trucking companies."

Fleets are also getting older, which Allen said implies that "we really may have experienced a formative shift in the age of trucks on the road. With the increased costs due to emissions changes and access to capital, trucks are running fewer miles today and are lasting longer, so naturally vehicles on the road today are older. What many of us thought might be a pent up demand for trucks may not be at all. So welcome to the new normal."

The average length of hauls is also changing. "Many of our largest customers have seen a significant shift... over the past decade," Allen said, citing a number of factors – one of the largest being the growth of rail and intermodal. "In many cases, it's simply more affordable to transport freight by rail than by truck," he said.

Allen also predicted that factors such as the expansion of the Panama Canal will have a dramatic impact on freight patterns throughout North America. "As new ports are opened to larger container ships at the east coast," he said, "then more freight is going to arrive at those ports...closer

to its final destination."

On a more positive note, Allen predicted that "there are going to be growth opportunities in places where there weren't in the past."

'Even with all this change and uncertainty, I remain incredibly optimistic about the future.'

Jack Allen, Navistar

He also predicted that his side of the industry will have to adapt as well, since its customer base is changing in order to remain competitive. "They're bigger, more diverse, and they're more national in scope," he noted, "and they're relying on our dealers for more support. I bet that these changes are permanent and they're going to result in a more sophisticated level of customer support and integration that's going to be needed by the manufacturers, dealers, and suppliers."

Allen's bottom line is also upbeat. "Even with all this change and uncertainty, I remain incredibly optimistic about the future," he said. "Trucks aren't going away. The economy thrives on trucks and there's opportunity wherever you look. Commerce cannot and will not happen without trucks. This is a tremendous responsibility that we all bear." **TW**

Kananaskis corner to blossom with truck-friendly development

By Jim Bray

KANANASKIS, Alta. – Truckers on the Trans-Canada Highway may have a new place to stop, grab a bite, and maybe even play a few slots in the not-too-distant future.

That's if a development envisioned by the Stoney Nakoda Nation goes ahead – and there's no reason to think it won't.

In fact, the group sent out a Request for Proposals in early February asking for "experienced proponents to form a business relationship with the Stoney Nakoda Nations for the design, construction and operation of a Travel Centre catering to the travelling public; particularly truckers and large RVs."

The new development will take place on a big, flat area at the junction of Hwys. 1 (the Trans-Canada) and 40 (the highway through Kananaskis), where the Stoney Nakoda Resort, a hotel/casino complex that opened in 2008-2009, can be found.

According to Tribal Administrator Heather Carnahan, the development is the next step in a journey the Nations began more than a decade ago.

"The Nation in 2002 held a referendum vote to designate 240 acres of land for economic development," Carnahan told *Truck West*, "and because it's Reserve land and we have no choice but to be following the Indian Act, it allows outside investors to have some ability to invest in and have a financial interest registered on the land. So that's why in this situation we've done a Request for Proposals to have outside groups put in their expressions of interest and their proposals for putting a development on that land."

Carnahan said that when they started the master planning, they had "envisioning sessions" with people in various industries who helped come up with some ideas.

"The thinking always included a travel centre type of development,"

Continued on page 28

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Truckers may soon have a new place to rest, relax, eat or play some slots before or after crossing the Rocky Mountains if a proposed development goes ahead.

New rest area to provide amenities for truckers in Rocky Mountain foothills

Continued from page 27

she said, noting that "the intersection of the two major highways on that east-west thoroughfare is a good site for this - we've heard that repeatedly - and we're hearing it again now."

The idea is to develop destination properties, a concept into which the existing Resort and Casino obviously fits, with the new Travel Centre being envisioned as a way of "inviting people to come and stop and rest and relax at the site," Carnahan said.

They're thinking along the lines of a Flying J-type of development that, she said, "would have enough parking for people and a truck stop... with the amenities that people who do long-distance trucking are used to finding. We're hoping to make it a bit of a rest stop for people."

The Nation has received proposals - though Carnahan wouldn't say how many, from whom or what exactly was pitched - and now they're in the review process. "I can't talk about it too much, but we're happy," she said. "There's lots of interest."

As for who pays, and who owns the facilities, Carnahan said that when they did the RFP, they specifically allowed people to submit proposals dealing with different options.

"We gave people a range," she said. "We didn't want to restrict people from bidding based on the structure, so people could bid as a strict land lease, people could bid as a co-ownership with the Nation or anywhere in between. So we have proposals in varying business structures. It will be a lease of some kind, a very long-term lease."

Carnahan said they're hoping to get things going ASAP, and to have a facility open by the end of 2013, if possible. "That's going to obviously depend on the construction season," she admitted, "so let's just say that we want to have construction underway in 2013 and be as far along as we can be by the end of the year."

As for the reaction one might expect from environmental groups, it appears the Nations are getting the green light - or at least a grudging pass - which means construction shouldn't be slowed down by any green issues.

"We had an environmental assessment done for this site when the Stoney Nakoda Resort and Casino was built and we've had environmental work done for this development," Carnahan said, noting as well that "Highway 40 is already there and we aren't proposing any new roads. And it's not really a wildlife corridor."

Carnahan said they haven't even been contacted by environmentalists, and puts it down to the Nations' record on matters green.

"The Stoney Nakoda Nations are very respectful of the environment and of the wilds, so I think they are probably the best stewards we could possibly have on the environmental front," she said.

"The Nations would not do a development that's going to be detrimental to the land."

Though Calgary and its facilities are only about an hour east of the development, truckers and other travellers may enjoy the beautiful surroundings of this particular location, which sits right on the eastern edge of the Rocky Mountains and offers some glorious views.

That, and the fact that the development will offer a restful area for truckers coming out of the often-challenging mountains, could prove a pretty good incentive for truckers to stop and hang out for a while.

It undoubtedly won't hurt the development that it comes at a time when all kinds of traffic - commercial and private - are increasing through the area, offering a wonderful chance for the Nations to grab a piece of the disposable income flowing by.

"The Reserve is right along the corridor that goes between Calgary and Canmore and Banff," Carnahan pointed out, "and the Nations are seeing the growth in...tourism travel that goes through and they are intending to be a part of that. And I think they're excited to be a part of it, they're excited to be contributors because this is going to make an amenity that will be available to people using Kananaskis Park, people using Banff Park, and (the Nations) are really excited about this development and welcoming more people to the site." **TW**



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John Haines, national fleet director with Canada Cartage, was named the Canadian Fleet Maintenance Manager of the Year.

Tops in the shop

John Haines discusses the importance of preparing your shop, staff and self for success.

By Adam Ledlow

“Doing something is better than doing nothing.” A simple adage, and one that John Haines, national fleet director for Canada Cartage and winner of this year’s Canadian Fleet Maintenance Manager of the Year award offered when asked to give advice to young technicians and managers in the industry.

“You’ve got to work hard every day at it,” he told *Truck West* in his office at Canada Cartage’s Mississauga terminal. “You’re going to make mistakes – I’ve made lots of them over the years – but I’ve learned from them and, hopefully, the next time you do it better, and you do it better, and you do it better, and you’ll eventually score.”

The 35-year veteran was presented with the award at the 50th annual Canadian Fleet Maintenance Seminar, hosted by the Toronto, Ottawa and Belleville chapters of the Automotive Transportation Service Superintendents’ Association (ATSSA). Steve de Sousa of Volvo Trucks Canada, which sponsors the award, said Haines was chosen for his scheduled maintenance program, quality and frequency of training programs, major accomplishments and his contributions to the industry and his community. Candidates for the prestigious award must manage a fleet of at least 25 Class 8 vehicles, perform at least 80% of their own maintenance and repairs, be involved in spec’ing equipment and be

charged with maintaining the fleet.

Haines surpassed those requirements, overseeing a diverse fleet that includes about 2,000 Class 8 power units – in addition to straight trucks and more than 27,000 trailers – operating out of 11 terminals across Canada. One of the challenges of that diversity is the necessity to ensure mechanics are well-versed in a variety of skills, Haines said.

“We cross-train all our mechanics. And that’s how we do our apprentices too,” he says. “I find if we can get our apprentices and teach them right from day one – I start them at one end of the shop and work them right through to

the other – by the time they’re finished and ready to write their licence, you can take that guy and put him anywhere.”

Apprenticeship is something Haines believes strongly in, having been recognized for his advocacy of Centennial College’s apprenticeship program as part of his award win, but noted that the younger generation of apprentices coming into the industry represent “a different world” from the older guard of technicians – and have to be managed differently as a result.

“It’s not like the old days when you used to get a kick in the backside and you learned your lessons; you can’t do that anymore. You’ve got to pat them on the back,” he says.

“With the computer games that young

“We don’t want a truck coming in between PMs. Come-backs cost money.”

John Haines, Canada Cartage

people (play), they get gratification right away with that. I think you’ve got to give them that gratification when they’re doing their job. I think barking at them all the time is not a good thing. You have to talk to them and show them where the problems are. You want them to learn, not just to replace parts; why the problem happened or how to solve the problem. You want them to learn how to do the troubleshooting. It’s a little painful at first, but you’re going to end up with a good person at

the end of it.”

But the need for communication isn’t limited to younger staff, Haines insists, adding how crucial it is for all staff to “buy in” to a company’s way of operating – especially with frequent changes to technology.

“Talking to your staff is probably the best thing. Getting them to buy into the whole cost-efficient, cost-effective ways; they have to buy in. If they don’t buy in, you’re done,” he says. “It’s hard to get them to change, but we have to look at going forward with new products.”

One of those new products that truck technicians have had to adjust to are the latest generation of emissions-reducing engines. Though the engines have become somewhat renowned as problematic for fleets and their maintenance staffs, Haines admits that, in hindsight, fleets who opted for a pre-buy ahead of the new technology’s launch made a mistake and simply “delayed the trouble we were going to have.”

“I think right now we’re starting to catch up,” he adds. “The industry and suppliers are realizing some of the mistakes they’ve made and they’re correcting it. Things are a little bit better.”

Haines says the biggest problem, currently, for the engines is the effect that idling is having on the diesel particulate filter (DPF) systems.

“We’ve started a program where our idling is going to be a big issue this year and we’re going to stop it. Not only is it costing money for fuel, but it’s killing us on maintenance.”

That sort of conscious prevention has been part of Haines’ success at Canada Cartage via his “stringent” preventive maintenance program. Haines says that if trucks are coming in between PM periods, his supervisors work to discover if there are trends that spring up related to the year, make or model – or the mechanic performing the work.

“Sometimes we need to do some more training for the mechanics,” he says. “We don’t want a truck coming in between PMs. Come-backs cost money, so if we can keep them on the road, that’s the way we like to do it.”

Canada Cartage’s maintenance shops also look to save money in environmentally-friendly ways, recycling its oil and filters, and using high-efficiency lighting in the shops. The Mississauga branch is also looking into a new screw-type compressor for the shop. Shop safety is also number one with all the guys in the shop, Haines says.

“Even if we bring a new guy in, like our co-op students, they go through our safety programs once a month, and our safety training and first aid courses.”

Haines says that his desire to constantly improve processes at Canada Cartage stems from laying out some specific goals for himself.

“At the beginning of the year, I always try to set some goals; I’m going to work on this, I’m going to work on this and hopefully you can save the company some money, do a better job at maintenance and have a profitable year,” he says. “Hopefully that’s the way I’ll work myself all through my career: set the goals and try to go for them.”

With a career spanning four decades, and having reached a pinnacle with his award win, where will Haines head from here? “Well, I’ll go for v.p. next,” he jokes. “It’s been quite a ride, but I started out just like everybody else: on the floor as a grease mechanic. It goes to show, you can work hard, you can end up here.” **TW**

Watch video of John Haines at TruckNews.com/Videos



A truer light

Truck-Lite's LED headlight system seems ready for prime time

By Harry Rudolfs

My trucking job mostly involves night driving between Toronto and Montreal, in all weather conditions. So I'm keenly aware of the importance of a good headlight system. And commercial drivers obsess about lights all the time – just leave your fog lights on after the mist has cleared and you'll hear about it on the CB. Don't get me wrong. The halogen bulbs in my dedicated Volvo do a pretty good job illuminating the road. But recently I've noticed that the clearest and brightest low beams belong to Freightliners, specifically Pen-

ske-owned Cascadias, as they slide past me on the Big Road.

I recalled seeing a news blurb somewhere about Penske outfitting its tractor fleet with LED headlights, and was genuinely thrilled when editor James Menzies asked me to test drive one of the retrofits. So one April night my godson Zak and I booked a newish 10-speed Freightliner Cascadia with a 425-horse Cummins ISX engine, and went looking for "the darkness on the edge of town."

Truck lighting has come a long way since 1896 when Karl Benz mounted candles on his prototype truck. From lanterns to acetylene lamps to sealed

beams, to halogen, HID-Xenon and finally LED headlights, it's always been about seeing and being seen. Over the years, lighting solutions have paralleled – and sometimes lagged behind – other aspects of the automotive trade. But occasionally something new comes along that significantly moves the bar several notches.

The round two- and four-headlight sealed beam systems that we're all familiar with were standard for 50 years or more, and rectangular headlights, mostly found on trucks, became more common after the 1970s. A major step forward came in the early 1980s when bulbs could be changed separately from the lens and reflector, followed in 1983 by the halogen bulb. By replacing the vacuum lamps with halogen (a combination of several gases) the tungsten filaments burned brighter.

Halogen remains the mainstay among trucking fleets but that could be changing. It tends to yellow with age and grow dimmer, and the bulb life is only about 1,000 hours. You often notice the difference when replacing a burned-out headlight. The new one

burns much brighter. Depending on the manufacturer, halogen headlights can lose 20% of their luminosity in only 160 hours. Compare this to the "new generation" LED low beams which might eventually lose 7% of their output, but would take 20,000 hours to do so.

At 16 years of age, Zak is a physicist-in-training, and patiently explained to me the difference between candle power and lumens, photons, neutrons and electrons, as we spent several hours trundling the back roads between Toronto and Georgetown looking for dark stretches of highway. This is the time of year when a lot of animals are moving around and getting struck, so we were actually hoping to see some wildlife darting in front of the truck.

This didn't happen, but the directional fluting of the beams onto the shoulders of the road was excellent. "Sixty degrees," Zak announced when we stopped, measuring the sideways flaring of the headlights with his protractor.

This is an intentional design feature, according to Brad Van Ripper, chief technology officer at Truck-Lite, which produces the LED headlights.

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"We interviewed drivers during the development and they wanted more light on the shoulder of the road, more visibility of fog posts, pedestrians and animals."

To accomplish the enhanced "road-shoulder" lighting, the design team went to computer simulation technology to formulate the complex reflector-style beams of the Cascadia.

"We used a computer-based optical design system to collect and direct the light to the area that we wanted," says Van Riper.

Stellar is a word I would use for the overall performance, in more ways than one. Besides reaching further into the night than anything else I'd driven, the frequency and spectrum of the white light is meant to mimic that of sunlight or starlight. The only thing comparable right now might be the HID-Xenon system available on Kenworth and Peterbilt packages.

HID-Xenon lights are plenty bright, but tend to have a purple tint, swinging towards the blue, or cooler, end of the spectrum. I talked to one driver of a new Kenworth who thinks they are too bright. This is probably not the case, since all headlamp systems have to meet NHTSA standards. But this particular driver confided via CB radio, "I get flashed all the time."

By comparison, no one flashed their high beams at me while test driving the Penske Cascadia, but I personally think the intensity of both systems is about the same, though they have slightly different penumbras, and they are both brighter than that to which Joe Highway is accustomed.

I was nervous about the amount of light the LEDs were emitting. But to the credit of the Truck-Lite engineers, the horizontal cut-off of the LED's beam lined up just below a car's trunk lid at a stop light. LEDs are monochromatic and narrowly focused. To fill out the rest of the light spectrum Truck-Lite used a blue chip that is coated with a phosphor.

"There are many ways of doing this," says Van Riper, "but the most effective way is by coating the top surface of the LED with a phosphor and when the blue wave length light sees the phosphor, it releases photons that fill the rest of the spectrum, giving you white light."

Like sunlight, Truck-Lite LED light is designed to be neutral, sitting midway between the cooler signature of the HIDs and the warmer halogen lights that we see on most of today's trucks. Van Riper cites a study by the University of Michigan which suggests certain wavelengths of LED light suppress the release of melatonin, a naturally occurring hormone that factors into one's sleep cycles.

"We've had feedback from a lot of drivers that they feel like they're more alert," he says.

Truck-Lite has never been that interested in halogen technology and they see LED systems as the way forward. In 2007 they were asked to design an LED system for the US Army which was field-tested on army trucks in Iraq and Afghanistan. They eventually sold 300,000 LED headlights to the US military. These days, the technology is available to anyone as seven-inch round beams and five-inch rectangular units.

But it is Truck-Lite's application of LEDs to custom aerodynamic headlights like the Cascadia, which marks

a new direction for the lighting manufacturer. According to Van Riper, LED headlights for several other truck makes and models should be available later this year.

After fumbling about on concession roads and secondary highways, Zak and I turned the Cascadia towards the industrial wilderness of Milton, Ont. Yes, lots more illumination in the dimly-lit truck yards. Then I remembered a grocery store in Brampton where I used to make night deliveries.

This site featured a set of receiving docks that was separated from the nearby suburban townhouses by a wall. The area was always cluttered with debris, abandoned shopping carts and an overflow of garbage from the bulging refuse compressors. It was the loneliest feeling pounding on the steel doors at night and ringing the bell for an eternity with some kind of small creatures shuffling around my feet, anxious for the night receiver to open the door.

Not to my surprise, the delivery docks were the same, with the same amount of refuse and cabbage leaves scattered on the ground – only now I could see better. And once again I came to realize why I don't miss delivering to supermarket receiving docks, especially at night.

The last stop was the Husky Truck Stop off Dixie Road. There are always a number of tractors lined up in the parking lot and I was hoping to get a picture of the LED lights beside a conventional system. Nothing doing. Guys are in their bunks and sleeping. Oh, there are always a few drivers fuelling, and a couple in the coffee shop, but despite a full yard, like most truck stops on a Friday night it's a quiet place. But I finally did sidle up beside a fuel hauler, old style halogen, and there's no contest in terms of brightness between the two.

The remarkable thing, I suppose, is how a technology that's so clear and precise could be so much more effi-

cient. According to Van Riper, a rig and trailer completely outfitted in LEDs, as compared to a contemporary truck running on all incandescent lights, actually uses 33 less amps. This is significant, especially to an owner with a big bunk and lots of electrical gadgets, who might have to otherwise consider going to a bigger alternator. The power savings may result in a reduction in fuel consumption which is currently under study.

No question about the benefits and longevity of LED headlights, but the cost involved (\$750) is considerably more than halogen or HID-Xenon. But Van Riper estimates the price will come down as manufacturing and consumer demand heats up, and with Volvo and International coming online, that could happen sooner than later.

Meanwhile, Truck-Lite's offering interested Canadian fleets free one-week trials to see the difference for themselves. **TW**



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Detroit's DT12 ready to roll

By James Menzies

GAGGENAU, Germany – The first production model Detroit DT12 automated manual transmissions are now rolling off an assembly line at Daimler's Gaggenau, Germany powertrain plant.

Transmissions destined for the North American market will be built here until sometime in 2015, when production will shift to the company's Redford, Mich. plant. The DT12 is currently available with the Detroit DD15 engine in the Freightliner Cascadia. The first installation was scheduled to take place May 6 at Freightliner's Cleveland, N.C. truck plant.

Daimler is expecting to sell about 3,000 Freightliner tractors with the DT12 transmission this year alone. Currently, AMTs comprise about 10-15% of the North American truck market, but it's a steadily growing segment.

In Germany, all Mercedes-Benz trucks feature a complete Daimler powertrain, the vast majority with an automated manual transmission. About 90% of the parts in the DT12 are derived from the European version. The most notable difference is that the DT12 has been converted to 12-volt power, from 24.

The high parts commonality benefits customers, because economies of scale allow Daimler to minimize its production costs, Dr. Frank Reintjes, head of global powertrain, procurement and manufacturing engineering with Daimler Trucks told a group of visiting trucking journalists.

In North America, the DT12 will be made available with the DD13 engine this October and the DD16 next May. Availability in other models, including Western Star, and the planned launch of eight- and 16-speed versions of the transmission are still being worked out.

Daimler officials said the DT12 offers a 54 kg (119 lb) weight savings, thanks to its single countershaft design and use of aluminum within the housing. It can handle GVWRs of up to 60 tonnes and is available in four versions, suiting a wide range of applications.

Features include: eCoast, which allows the truck to coast down a grade without consuming fuel; skip shift, which uses aggressive skip shifting to get the truck into top gear sooner; active driveline protection; and optional direct drive. Drivers can switch between Performance and Economy modes or can override the gear selection in situations that warrant it.

Brad Williamson, manager of engine and component marketing with Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA), said fleets could see fuel savings of about 4% compared to trucks equipped with manual transmissions. Reintjes added the top-performing drivers in a fleet will be able to match, or come close to matching, the performance of the DT12, but those drivers are getting harder to find.

"To get educated, experienced, well-trained drivers is one of the major challenges everywhere," he said. "The average driver is significantly below the performance of what automated transmissions are offering as potential fuel

consumption reductions."

Fleet testing conducted by DTNA has shown a significant reduction in fuel consumption when the DT12 was placed into the fleet and benchmarked against trucks with manual transmissions, Williamson added.

Other benefits of automated transmissions in general include easier handling, improved safety and less driver fatigue. They're particularly beneficial when bringing on and training drivers with limited experience.

The DT12 is being offered with a five-year/750,000 mile warranty.

When production shifts to Redford, capacity will be for about 20,000-30,000 transmissions per year. The transmissions assembled there will predominantly be sold into the North American market.

Williamson said initial fleet response to the DT12 has been excellent, and drivers like it too, even if they're initially resistant to the concept of automated transmissions.

"It's going to be a great product," he said. "It's going to change the market in terms of what drivers accept."

Daimler itself has good reason to be pushing a fully-integrated powertrain. Reintjes pointed out globally, the powertrain accounts for about 50% of the truck's value chain. It also influences about 37% of a truck's total cost of ownership (TCO).

"If the powertrain or its components collapse, the truck is done," Reintjes said. "If the truck operates (customers) hate two things: too high fuel consumption and trucks being off the road



An employee at Daimler's Gaggenau, Germany plant assembles a DT12 automated transmission. Production will move to Michigan in 2015.

and not earning money."

Offering a completely integrated powertrain gives Daimler more control over the performance of its vehicles. It also allows the manufacturer to optimize performance between the engine, transmission and other components. AMTs in general cost more than manual transmissions. Daimler officials said the DT12 will be priced comparably to other automated trans-

missions in the market. There are currently 16 carriers in North America running pre-production DT12s and Williamson said they're looking to add more to their fleets.

The DT12 is being offered with Virtual Technician, which remotely monitors fault codes and then provides guidance to the customer when a problem is encountered, reducing downtime. **TW**

Daimler's global focus paying off

WOERTH & GAGGENAU, Germany – Despite a volatile truck market, Daimler Trucks' vast global presence and unified engine strategy has helped the company retain its position as the largest truck manufacturer in the world.

"We are still number one by far," Dr. Frank Reintjes, head of global powertrain, procurement and manufacturing engineering with Daimler Trucks told visiting truck journalists in late April. "If you take sheer size, we are far bigger (than Volvo Group) and we are far bigger than Volkswagen. We're still the world's largest manufacturer and our outlook is that we'll stay there, at least compared to the western competitors. If you include Chinese competitors, the picture is different; we are still number one but nevertheless, Chinese manufacturers are within the top five there."

The primary benefit to being the world's largest truck manufacturer is unmatched economies of scale, which Reintjes said allow the company to "generate customer value and translate that into market share and customer satisfaction."

The backbone to Daimler's strategy is its global Heavy-Duty Engine Platform (HDEP), launched in 2007 and largely derived from the Detroit Diesel engine built in the US. Engines produced under Daimler's various brands around the world now boast 90% parts commonality, which helps control costs. Reintjes said a generally accepted rule within the commercial vehicle manufacturing business is that by doubling production volumes, you can reduce costs by 6-10%.

That's why the company now offers one common platform across all displacements in each global market Daimler serves.

Daimler is now applying those same principles to other components such as air compressors and turbochargers.

The constant struggle to reduce costs mimics, in some ways, what the truck maker's own customers are doing.

"Fleet customers are literally counting the beans," Reintjes said. "They are calculating total cost of ownership to two digits after the decimal. They are very intelligent people. The times are over where truck operators, at the end of the month, calculated what (revenue) came in. The big fleets in the US are big companies and they are turning every stone to save money. So, operational excellence in our plants is a top job."

The North American market remains a pillar of strength for Daimler, having obtained more than 40% of 2013 Class 8 truck sales to date through its Freightliner brand.

"With market share above 40% in Class 8, that's tremendous and we are quite proud that with the HDEP engine platform, that we could contribute to this excellent market position," Reintjes said. However, he noted there are still challenges in other markets, particularly Europe.

"The debt crisis of the European states; this is driving down economic growth, and driving down GDP and specifically in southern Europe, the business is still shrinking," Reintjes said.

One of the great challenges for a global truck manufacturer is to manage volatile – and at times unpredictable – demand cycles. For instance in 2009, production at Daimler's Woerth truck plant fell 50% within six months.

"Management of cycles is the top job within the truck business," Reintjes said.

Daimler's Woerth plant is the largest commercial vehicle plant in the world, with a 1.2-kilometre assembly line. The plant is 2.9 million square metres in size and last year produced 90,000 trucks. It's staffed by 12,000 employees and about 550 truckloads of parts are shipped into the facility each day. Assembly occurs in a just-in-time fashion, with required parts arriving exactly when they're needed at specific spots along the production line. **TW**



Pictured (L-R): Tyler Kronebusch, Dan Orser, Clarence Oosterhoff and Matthew Giesbrecht from Babine Truck and Equipment of Prince George, B.C. earned first place at the Volvo Trucks North America Vista World Championship semi-finals.

B.C. techs win N.A. challenge

PRINCE GEORGE, B.C. – Service technicians from Babine Truck and Equipment of Prince George, B.C. have earned first place at the 2012-2013 Volvo Trucks North America Vista World Championship semi-finals. Conducted every two years, the competition recognizes technician excellence among Volvo dealer service personnel. By finishing first, Babine Truck and Equipment claims a spot among the best 32 teams in the world and will compete at the Vista World Finals June 25 in Gothenburg, Sweden.

Members of the winning team – Tyler Kronebusch, Dan Orser, Matthew Giesbrecht and Clarence Oosterhoff – outperformed 208 other teams representing Volvo dealers across North America. All four members of the Babine team are Volvo Master Technicians, the highest level of certification for service technicians.

The 2012-2013 Vista competition – which stands for Volvo International Service Training Award – began in August and included three rounds of online competition involving technical questions. The field was narrowed to five teams of finalists from the US and Canada which travelled to Volvo Trucks' North American headquarters in Greensboro, N.C. for the final round.

In Greensboro, the finalists were tested on their knowledge of service and parts literature and ability to look up parts and service information within the Volvo system. Contestants also had to troubleshoot pre-determined faults placed on two Volvo trucks and a Volvo D13 engine. Volvo officials note that participation in the competition requires a significant dedication of time and effort, with each of the five finalist teams investing up to 34 hours of additional service training throughout the process.

The best preparation for the competition, according to Babine's Matthew Giesbrecht "is doing our everyday jobs. We have to be keen and aware of every truck that comes into our shop, diagnose the issue, fix it to the best of our ability and get the customer satisfied. The competition has been a great team-building experience, creating a lot of unity within our team and the dealership," Giesbrecht added. "It's good to have a team of really accomplished individuals that can do their job and work well under pressure."

This year's competition was the largest yet, with a 70% increase in dealership participation compared to 2011.

"The high level of participation in the 2012-2013 competition is a real win for technicians, dealers and custom-

ers," said Göran Nyberg, president of Volvo Trucks North American sales and marketing. **TW**

Navistar now shipping MaxxForce 13 with SCR

LISLE, Ill. – Navistar has started shipping its first International ProStar units powered by the company's SCR-based MaxxForce 13 engine. The first units began shipping April 26 – ahead of schedule, according to the company – from truck manufacturing plants in Escobedo, Mexico and Springfield, Ohio. Earlier in the month, the company received certification for the SCR-based 13-litre engine from the US Environmental Protection Agency and the California Air Resources Board.

"Delivering our 13-litre engine ahead of schedule is another important milestone for Navistar and completes our transition to SCR-based heavy-duty engine offerings," said Troy Clarke, Navistar president and CEO. "We continue to receive great customer feedback on the refined 13-litre engines we're delivering today. And, customers will continue to see outstanding levels of quality, reliability and uptime with our 13-litre engine combined with the proven Cummins SCR aftertreatment system."

Navistar introduced its first SCR-based trucks for the US and Canadian markets in December with the launch of the International ProStar with the Cummins ISX 15-litre engine. The remaining line-up will be phased in over coming months, the company says. **TW**



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Taking the show on the road

Meritor invites fleet customers to experience an assortment of its products at first in a series of special events

By James Menzies

ATLANTA, Ga. – Meritor was absent from this year's Mid-America Trucking Show, having decided the considerable resources required to exhibit there would be better spent giving fleet customers the chance to experience its products first-hand.

The first of those customer-oriented events was held at Atlanta Motor Speedway in mid-April, with about 50 fleets attending. The focus was on cur-

rently available technologies that can improve safety and/or efficiencies for fleet customers.

Customers were joined by more than 50 Meritor engineers and technical product experts, who over the course of the day were readily available to discuss the technologies at a high level.

"We decided to put our funds towards doing these events and on technical presentations to end customers through the year," said Timothy Burns, vice-president, North America, with Meritor.

Products demonstrated included: Meritor's RideSentry trailer suspension; the Q Plus drum brake and EX225 disc brake; the RPL permanently lubricated driveline; the Fuelite 6x2 axle with electronically controlled air suspension (ECAS); and collision mitigation systems from Meritor Wabco, including the new OnGuard and their SmarTrac stability system.

As brakes go, Matt Creech of Meritor's brake group, said the new Q Plus drum brake, designed to meet tighter stopping distance requirements for tractor-trailers that went into effect in August 2011, have strengthened the value proposition for drum brakes. He said lining life has been extended up to 100%, meaning fleets with short

trade-in cycles may never have to do a brake job.

The larger brakes are better at dissipating heat and the new friction material used on the Q Plus brakes has been specifically designed for either steer or drive axle positions.

With the new stopping distance requirements, the steer axle is now providing an equal share of the braking power, meaning it's working 60% harder than it did previously. The enhancements, Creech said, "change the whole dynamic of the vehicle, provide more even wear and better driver feel."

While there was initially a widely held belief that disc brakes would be the only answer to the new stopping distance requirements, Creech said Meritor's Q Plus provides stopping power that's almost equal to discs. The Q Plus boasts stopping capabilities of 220-230 feet compared to 210-220 feet for disc brakes, both options well under the new requirement of 250 feet.

Meritor has also taken weight out of the Q Plus, thanks to a stamped steel spider that shaves five to six pounds per wheel end, without a compromise in performance, Creech said.

Meanwhile, Meritor will soon be offering its EX225 disc brake in line-haul applications, with Mack and Volvo planning to offer it on steer axles in the third quarter and drive axles in the first quarter of 2014. Peterbilt is currently conducting field trials on the new disc brake, International is providing it upon special request and Freightliner and Western Star are expected to offer it next year.

Pad changes can be done up to 75% faster than a drum brake shoe replacement, which was demonstrated at the Speedway, where fleet attendees had the opportunity to swap out a set of discs while a seasoned technician conducted a drum brake job nearby. The fastest of the truck guys was able to replace the discs in less than three minutes.

Still, Creech said the drum/disc debate must take into consideration many factors, not the least of which is purchase price. Creech said the high-performing drum brakes are likely still a more attractive option for most line-haul fleets, with the exception of those who are willing to pay a premium for enhanced performance.

Karl Mayer introduced the RPL driveline, which is the only permanently lubed driveline on the market. It's not exactly new – its development can be traced back the Rockwell days, hence the R in RPL – but Mayer said it's not well known that the RPL is widely available and usually for less money than competitive models that require lubrication.

Meritor had on display an RPL driveline that was pulled and disassembled – and still in good shape – after 1.25 million miles with a large US carrier. While fleets may be wary of lube-free drivelines, the RPL is backed by a four-year/400,000-mile warranty. Mounted with four bolts, it can be easily removed if necessary.

The RPL makes up about 40% of Meritor's driveline sales and it's standard on Volvo trucks and an

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| 8,846-11,793 kg. (19,501-26,000 lbs.)... | <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 4,536-8,845 kg. (10,000-19,500 lbs.)... | <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
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|-------------------------------|--|
| Diesel powered vehicles..... | <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| Refrigerated vehicles..... | <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| Pickups or Utility Vans..... | <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
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Fleet managers try their hands at conducting a brake job using Meritor's soon-to-be-released EX225 disc brake.

unpublished option on others.

Mayer said fleet customers should be asking for it, because "There's definitely a chance to upgrade performance and lower the acquisition cost of your vehicle." Grease savings alone, he noted, can total \$414 based on 18 grease jobs over 900,000 miles.

Sean Gainey, product manager for Meritor's drive axle group, discussed

the benefits of the 6x2 FueLite and Meritor Wabco ECAS. The FueLite reduces weight by 400 lbs, while the ECAS electronics seamlessly shift weight to the driven axle in low traction scenarios.

Gainey noted trucks have put on about 300-400 lbs over the past decade due to new emissions systems, and a 6x2 spec' can restore that lost payload. Fuel savings can total 2% or more, which amounts to \$1,400 per year at \$5/gallon averaging 7 mpg.

The FueLite comes standard with the DualTrac axle so wide-base tires can be used, providing another 370 lbs of savings, bringing the total weight savings to close to 800 lbs.

ECAS is available as a retrofit kit for fleets that are using 6x2 axles and struggling with traction. Meritor recommends spec'ing the FueLite and ECAS together as a system. Officials told *Truck West* some Canadian fleets have expressed interest in 6x2 axles, but B.C., Ontario and Quebec have regulations on the book that currently prohibit their use. Industry is working to have those rules - which were intended to address issues with lift axles - clarified to allow the more widespread use of 6x2 axles in Canada.

Meritor is planning more customer-focused events throughout the year. **TW**

Petro-Canada to launch natural gas engine oil

Petro-Canada is developing a new oil formulated for natural gas engines, which will be available beginning in June. John Pettingill of Petro-Canada Lubricants gave maintenance managers a preview of the new Duron GEO LD 15W-40 engine oil at the Canadian Fleet Maintenance Seminar. Natural gas engines require a special oil, because they operate at higher temperatures.

"Higher operating temperatures are something you need to think about" when operating natural gas engines, Pettingill warned.

Natural gas engine oils require additional nitration and oxidation control, he said. Nitrogen, at high temperatures, has a thickening effect on the lubricant and can cause gelling and varnishing.

"That makes it hard for that oil to pump through the engine and if you can't pump the oil, you won't get the protection you need for the engine," Pettingill said. Soot control is less of an issue with natural gas engines, because they produce more ideal combustion conditions resulting in a more complete burn, and less soot, than traditional diesel engines. The trend in diesel engine oils has been to reduce ash content, but natural gas engines require a very specific level of sulfated ash, because it offers valve protection characteristics. The new natural gas engine oil will offer ideal flow, without much foaming or evaporation, with an optimized sulfated ash level for natural gas, Pettingill said. **TW**

PacLease Edmonton Kenworth wins top franchise award

EDMONTON, Alta. - PacLease has presented its top franchise award to PacLease Edmonton Kenworth and Rush Truck Leasing - Houston. The awards recognize the top Peterbilt and Kenworth PacLease locations for success in sales and for the effort employees put forth to deliver products and services that meet and exceed customer needs.

"Franchise of the Year award winners consistently display outstanding quality throughout their enterprises," said Neil Vonnahme, president of

PacLease. "Award criteria were based on the PacLease Standards of Excellence program. The standards evaluate PacLease locations in key functional business areas based on quality performance."

PacLease also named its regional franchise award winners. Canadian regional winners included:

- Northwest Region: PacLease Edmonton Kenworth, Edmonton
- Canada East Region: Kenworth Ontario PacLease, Concord, Ont. **TW**

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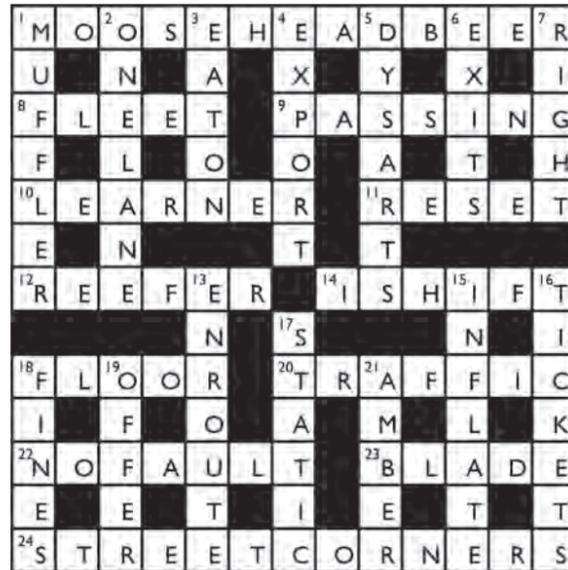
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By Edo Van Belkom

THE STORY SO FAR...

Mark has put the accident in Ontario behind him and delivered a load of snowmobile parts to Vancouver. Bud gives him a load of livestock from B.C. to Quebec, and a return load back to B.C., to be driven in a convoy with two other drivers.

After arriving at Fraser Farms, Mark meets his fellow drivers, Karl and Jerome, and watches his trailer being loaded with lambs. They'll be driving 36 hours to Thunder Bay, offloading their lambs for a 12-hour rest, then continuing on to Quebec.

On the way, one of Mark's lambs falls ill. At first they just to make it warmer in the trailer, but the animal gets worse. At another stop, Karl gives the lamb four aspirins and a Coke, which seems to perk it up for the rest of the trip...

When they reached Thunder Bay, the veterinarian was waiting for them. They unloaded Mark's trailer first, singling out the sickly lamb for a visit with the vet.

The woman checked the animal out quickly with moves that looked like they'd been performed thousands of times before. Then she took the animal's temperature and was nodding her head before she was even done.

"Like I thought," she said. "It's got a bit of fever." She rifled through the contents of the bag she'd brought with her and pulled out a large syringe pre-filled with some sort of medicine.

"What's that?" Mark asked.

"Antibiotics, vitamins, a bunch of other stuff." A shrug, and then a jab into the animal's rump. "I just call it a boost."

The serum was aptly named, Mark thought, because the lamb was soon able to get to its feet and make its way over to a nearby feed trough. After a couple of sniffs, it started eating.

"I think it's going to be alright," said the vet.

After the sheep and the three drivers had rested for 12 hours, both were loaded back onto the trucks. Mark had watched his trailer being loaded and was happy to see that the sickly lamb was back with him, seemingly as fit for the journey as the rest of them.

"Way to hang in there," Mark said.

Karl and Jerome just looked at him.

"He's a fighter," Mark said. "I like that."

He'd expected the other drivers to laugh at him, but instead they nodded in agreement. Six hours later, they pulled into a truck stop on the Ontario-Quebec border. With just a few more hours to go to their destination, they decided to eat in rather than take their meals to go.

This gave Mark his first chance to ask the others about some of the things he'd been wondering since they'd left B.C. nearly three days before.

"Things must be better now than when you first started driving livestock, eh?" he said.

"Yes and no," Karl said. "The roads, no question, are better now, and while the trucks are better in a whole lot of different ways, they can sometimes be worse."

"How's that?"

"Well, 20 or 30 years ago it took an awful lot to stop a truck dead. No matter what it was, you could usually count on being able to limp into a service sta-



Like a lamb to slaughter

PART 4

tion or make it a few more miles. Nowadays, one little thing goes wrong and you've got no choice but to call a mechanic."

Mark nodded. Jerome, a man of few words, finally chirped up. "One time...my truck broke down just inside Ontario," he said. "The mechanic was there in a couple hours, but he couldn't get her going and it was getting close to the 48-hour limit for the animals to be inside the trailer."

"So what did you do?" Mark wanted to know. Jerome smiled. "I called a nearby dairy company and they sent a truck to get the trailer and take it to Thunder Bay so the animals could be let off in time."

"Sounds like a headache you don't get hauling other products," Mark said.

"That's right," said Karl. "And that's one of the reasons why it's hard to get young drivers to stick with our industry. There's added responsibility, and a lot of drivers don't want it. It's too bad because there's no better feeling of pride a livestock driver has when delivering his product in good condition."

"And receivers are appreciative too," Jerome said.

Mark thought that last bit was a little over the top, but he didn't say anything because it was obvious these men were very passionate about their work.

When they returned to their rigs after their meal, Mark checked on his load. To his dismay, the same animal was again lying on its side, once again listless.

When he told Karl, the man shook his head. "The vet already gave it a shot so I'd rather not give it any more aspirin and Coke."

"So what can I do?"

"It's getting colder in the trailer. Obviously, the other ones can handle it, and this one can't."

"Gotcha," Mark said.

Leaving Karl and Jerome out in the parking lot, Mark

went back inside the restaurant and asked around for a big cardboard box. A staff member gave him a box that had contained a replacement part for the restaurant's dishwasher and he took that out to Mother Load.

"That'll work," said Karl.

Mark opened up the trailer and filled the box with loose straw. Then he struggled to get the large box through the open passenger door and into Mother Load, but once he was past that the box fit snugly on the floor of the sleeper.

Finally, he went back inside the trailer and grabbed the stricken lamb. The animal was too ill to put up a fight and within minutes he had it nestled into the box inside Mother Load's warm, dry cab.

"Let's go!" Mark said, eager to get underway. On the highway, he turned the cab heater on full blast. And after just a few hundred kilometres he heard: "Bah." Mark laughed out loud. He'd thought it might work, but not this well.

"Hey little fella," Mark said. "What do you think of Christmas?"

"Bah!"

"I bet you don't like my dispatcher Bud, either, huh?"

"Bah!"

And on and on they went, conversing with each other until they arrived at their destination, a vast farm 200 kilometres north of Montreal.

As each trailer was unloaded the receiver counted off the animals one-by-one, seemingly pleased with their condition and general wellbeing.

But when all three trailers had been emptied, he looked at Karl and said, "Did you have any casualties on the way?"

"Why?"

"Because you're one short."

"Hold on," Mark said, hurrying out to Mother Load.

He came back holding the lamb in his arms. It wasn't struggling against his hold, but it was making all kinds of noise like it wanted to be let go.

"It got sick on the way," Mark said, putting the animal on the ground. The instant all four hoofs touched down the lamb gave a loud "Bah!" jumped forward, then kicked out with its rear hoofs.

"Doesn't look like it was sick."

"He just wanted some company," Mark said. "You know, someone to talk to." The receiver looked over the paperwork again and probably saw that one animal had been tended to by the vet in Thunder Bay. "Well, good on you. A lot of drivers would have let him pass."

"Just doin' my job," Mark said, understanding now what Karl had said about feeling pride in making a good delivery.

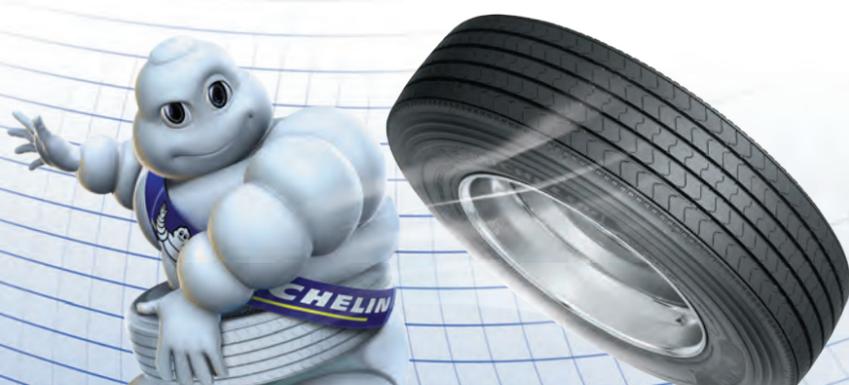
"Well done," Karl said. "How would you like working with us full-time?"

Mark didn't answer right away. When he did, he said "I'll think about it."

Another thing he'd be thinking about was meat. While he wasn't about to become a vegetarian, or change his diet in any drastic way, he was sure he'd never be able to look at a hamburger, lamb chop or chicken finger the same way again. **TW**

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.

Illustration by Glenn McEvoy



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Buyer beware

I recently had a flashback. I was 17 and about to buy my first car, a very cool Buick Century, dark blue with a white landau roof complete with white fake leather interior and radial T/A's. My mom was going to help finance the purchase. I still wonder to this day if my parents were being generous or if they were just sick of handing me the keys to the family Volvo. My friends nicknamed it the "Revolvo" and that car was a common sight Friday nights in the local donut shop parking lot.

My good friend Jack was a mechanic and volunteered to give the car a once-over. Mechanically, it looked fine but there was something bothering him. The odometer numbers didn't quit line up correctly. He removed it and after much deliberation, it was determined that it had been rolled back. Shattered, I had no choice but to pass on the deal.

The flashback to my misspent youth was the result of a truck dealer in the Toronto area recently being convicted of doing the same thing. I thought it was next to impossible to roll back odometers these days. After all, how do you roll back an LED? Apparently, this person got around the problem by installing new (or in this case old) speedometer units.

Regardless of how he did it, it's highly

Publisher's Comment

Rob Wilkins



illegal. It's called fraud, plain and simple. He's under house arrest, serving 18 months probation and has been ordered to pay back \$28,000 in restitution. With his reputation destroyed you'd think this would be enough to chase this guy out of the business. Wrong. What really burns my butt is that it's believed he's already opened up another dealership under a different name and is at the same time, trying to recoup some of the fine by suing a local fleet who supplied him with the trucks. He claims the paperwork wasn't completed properly.

There are a lot of used truck dealers out there that are worried they'll be painted with the same brush. It's not fair, but it's going to happen. There may be a few bad apples, but the vast majority are honest and hard working. Got a line on a 2005 Freightliner with 68,000 kilometres? Head south and buy that swamp-land in Florida. You'll be better off. **TW**

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



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OWNER OPERATOR? Manufacturer _____ Year/Model _____ Engine/Size _____
Preferred Trailer Type (check all that apply): Flatbed Heavy Hauling/Specialized Moving Van Tanker Straight Truck Super B Reefer Van Other _____
Trailer Type Experience (check all that apply): Flatbed Heavy Hauling/Specialized Moving Van Tanker Straight Truck Super B Reefer Van Other _____

CURRENT DRIVERS LICENSE: Do you have a Commercial License? Yes No
License# _____ Prov/State issued _____ Type _____ Exp Date _____
Total Truck Driving Experience _____/yrs Has your license ever been suspended? Yes No
Last Employer _____
Name _____ Company City _____ Prov/State _____
Tel _____ Start/End Date _____
Job Description _____ Reason for Leaving _____

CERTIFICATION / TRAINING: Can you lift 50lbs? Yes No
Name of School _____ Doubles/Triples
Name of Course Completed _____ Air Brake Adjustment
Prov/State _____ Start/End Date _____ Over-Size Loads
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JIM'S BRAYINGS



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. We can't run everything, of course, but we'll try to get in as much as space permits...

Never mind about that "spring has sprung" stuff. I write this on May 1 and here in Calgary we had flakes yesterday – and I don't mean the type that occupied Olympic Plaza.

It hasn't stuck to the roads lately, which makes driving a bit nicer, but it certainly is turning out to be an interesting, if not particularly warm and pleasant spring. Must be that global warming stuff Al Gore and Suzuki talk about so endlessly.

Banff Springs eternal

Spring also brings the Alberta Motor Transport Association's (AMTA's) annual Management Conference, held again this year at the Banff Springs (which should probably be renamed the Banff Neverending Winters now), a marvelous venue full of history, beautiful vistas and – as this year's 1970s theme night showed – hippies and freaks. Hey, I dressed up too, though all I really needed to do is just attach a picture of myself from that era onto my face!

Anyway, this was the 75th such bash for the association, and it came off well, with some interesting breakout sessions (which until I attended them I thought meant they issued everyone with zits), the usual AGM and some fine dining courtesy of the Banff Springers, er, Neverending Winters.

Thanks, and a tip of the word processor, to Don Wilson (whose clone showed up to play bass with NightLife on the 70s night), Peter Vaudry, Monica Schott, Brian Bell, Dave Jorgenson, Bud Rice and the rest of the AMTA gang for their hospitality and their kindness. It was nice meeting some of the people with whom I've interacted via phone or Skype, too, putting a face to their names and voices. It was nice touching base again with Paul Landry, too, former head of the BCTA, who was on hand for the festivities.

The Conference is also when the AMTA hands out its annual awards, and this year was no exception – with hardware copped by some extremely deserving individuals. Here's a list of who won what:

Driver of the Year: Robert Wells, a proud lease/operator for Bison Transport, who eschews a regular run because he's happy to go wherever the job requires him.

Safety Person of the Year: Jude Groves, director of health, safety and environment with Diversified Transportation in Fort McMurray.

AMTA Heritage Award and the American Truck Historical Golden Achievement Award: Recognizing people who have spent 50 years or more in the trucking industry or a related business, this award went to Bob

Peake (whose resume is so long it won't fit here – heck, it could fill a library)!

Associate Trades Award: Bill Bereza, Fleet Brake, Calgary.

Service to the Industry Award: Dan Duckering, Duckering's Transport, Red Deer. Dan is also the outgoing president of the AMTA.

Which brings us to the new board, a gaggle of gregarious gents and "genettes," who've stood up to be counted. Here's how the AMTA's executive board stacks up: President, Willie Hamel, Trimac Transportation; senior vice-president, Carl Rosenau, Rosenau Transport; vice-president, Jane Douziech, Mullen Group; and past president, Duckering's Duckering. Congratulations to all and good luck! The AMTA's second team of Road Knights, as outlined in last month's Brayings (you do read it, don't you?) was also introduced to much applause and adulation, as was appropriate.

Honourable Bison

No buffaloing here, just a congratulatory bit for Bison Transport driver John Lilley, who was named a Truckload Carriers Association (TCA) Highway Angel because of his help at a collision scene.

The incident happened last Dec. 11, when Kelowna-based Lilley – on his way to deliver a load – got stuck in a long line of traffic between Revelstoke and Golden, B.C. Lilley heard over his CB radio a request for people with medical training and volunteered his 23 years of experience as an unpaid search and rescue medical technician for Kelowna Emergency Services.

Lilley was taken to the accident scene, where a driver had lost control of a passenger vehicle entering a tunnel and slammed head on into another vehicle. Five people were in the car, but Lilley was asked to focus on the driver, which he did – checking the man's vital signs and doing his best to maintain his pulse. Alas, despite Lilley's best efforts, the driver didn't make it, due perhaps to a 40-minute delay (because of dense fog) before a helicopter could land and medivac the victim out. "I tried everything I possibly could," Lilley said later. "I don't regret what I tried. I know I did my best."

For his efforts, Lilley was presented with a Highway Angel lapel pin, certificate and patch. Bison Transport also received a certificate acknowledging that one of its drivers is a Highway Angel.

The Highway Angel program is sponsored by Internet Truckstop and, since its inception in 1997, has recognized hundreds of drivers as Highway Angels for their above-the-call-of-duty kindness, courtesy, and courage.

Congratulations, John. You're a fine example for everyone in and out of the trucking industry.

Saskatchewan company named Distributor of Year

Kudos, too, to Redhead Equipment, named by Mack Trucks Canada as its 2012 Distributor of the Year for Canada. The award recognizes top-performing distributors based on sales, facilities, service, general management, customer satisfaction, parts, personnel and community service. Dan Roberge, truck sales manager for Redhead's Saskatoon operations, credited the staff – some of whom may not even be redheads, not that there's anything wrong with that.

"We're very fortunate to have a great bunch of dedicated parts, service and sales people on the Redhead Mack team," he said. And I warrant the Mack folk are "dog-gone" proud of them.

Pulling to fight cancer

Mark June 9 on your calendar if you're in the Vermilion to Lloydminster, Alta., area. It's the fourth annual – and expanded for this year – Tony's Convoy for Hope (in honour of Tony Rossi, who passed away from cancer in 2010). The Convoy starts at the Vermilion weigh scale with a pancake brekkie (sponsored by the Vermilion Rotary Club – to whom I'm sure the organizers say "Thanks Vermilion!") at 9:30 a.m. sharp, then heads for the Lloydminster Ex grounds, where there'll be stuff like a fundraising barbecue. There'll also be games for the kids, which sounds like a fair trade to me.

This year adds a show-and-shine event, with prizes for the first, second and third best decorated truck. Organizers claim over \$20,000 in prizes are up for grabs in all. There'll also be a radio auction (in case you need a radio) put on by 106.1 FM The Goat (named, maybe, because their music is "baahhd?") in Lloydminster.

A driving simulator will be on hand as well, in case you don't get in enough driving during the week!

The event is organized by Tom Jack Trucking and Action Towing and Recovery. For more information, or to get involved, contact: Tom Jack (a.k.a. Trucker Tom), phone - 780 603-0140 or e-mail tomjacktrucking@hotmail.com. Or you can contact John or Ginette Buhnai at 780-871-3347 or by e-mailing actiontowinglloyd@hotmail.com.

Proceeds go to the Cross Cancer Institute Edmonton, for Patient Care and Research. To date, the events have raised \$81,972.08, and that's no small change!

In COR-igible

Jimmy Sandhu of the Trucking Safety Council of B.C. reports that Arrow Transportation Systems, with offices in Kamloops and Vancouver, has achieved its

Certificate Of Recognition. The COR acknowledged the longtime transportation company's commitment to workplace safety – though the TSC's blurb notes that it's merely a natural step in the company's pursuit of safety excellence.

According to Arrow's safety director, Rick Viventi, focusing on the safety and well-being of their employees is important to the company's success and he advises other good employers to work proactively to tackle challenges before they become problems.

"We set high standards and live up to them," Viventi said, noting that because of these efforts, he believes Arrow Transportation Systems is a preferred place to work. Viventi said there were never any doubts as to the company's pursuit of COR in B.C., especially since it has had its COR for over 19 years in Alberta.

Helping bring missing children home faster

Here's an initiative close to the heart of just about any parent. It's called Code-Search, and is being spurred by the Missing Children Society of Canada (MCSC).

Executive director Amanda Pick outlined the program briefly at the AMTA's Banff bash, and it sounds quite worthwhile. According to the MCSC, partner employees download a smartphone app and sign on as field agents who can be notified if a child goes missing – kind of an extra set of eyes and ears to help expand the search for the missing kid(s).

And if the situation requires law enforcement or other resources in the search – anything from ATVs to helicopters and search and rescue trained personnel – they can be included in the search as well.

Companies and organizations are already coming on board, including Tervita, who claims some 1,500 trucks, 1,300 corporate cell phones and 4,000 employees in Canada and the US. The Petroleum Services Association of Canada, which represents over 250 member companies employing more than 65,000 people, has also signed on.

For more information about Code-Search visit: www.mcsc.ca/code_search, or contact Tricia Harder by email at partners@mcsc.ca, or phone her at 800-661-6160, ext 221. Let's get those kids home again! **TW**

That's it for this month (is that a sigh of relief I hear?). Remember, if you have something you'd like to get off your chest, or that you think deserves publicizing to your industry peers, drop me an e-mail at jim@transportationmedia.ca. We can't publish everything, but we sure try!



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