

TRUCK WEST

Western Canada's Trucking Newspaper Since 1989

June 2015 Volume 26, Issue 6

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trucknews.com



Daimler Trucks North America has developed a Freightliner truck that can, under certain conditions, drive itself.



Reach us at our Western Canada news bureau

Contact Jim Bray at: jim@transportationmedia.ca or call 403-453-5558

Who's driving that thing?

Freightliner has introduced the world's first road-legal autonomous truck

By James Menzies

LAS VEGAS, Nev. – With a record-breaking light show displayed upon the towering Hoover Dam, Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA) on May 5 heralded the arrival of its Freightliner Inspiration Truck – the world's first road-legal autonomous truck.

Earlier in the day, Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval issued Daimler the first licence to operate its autonomous truck technology in the state.

"Today is history. It is the next step in revolutionizing the way we move goods and services... Eventually this will transform the future of commercial transportation. Today will be a day we will all look back on and remember," Gov. Sandoval said in thanking DTNA for "looking at the impossible and finding a safe way to make it possible."

"The autonomous vehicle technology we are showcasing in the Freightliner Inspiration Truck

will help reduce accidents, improve fuel consumption, cut highway congestion, and safeguard the environment," added Dr. Wolfgang Bernhard, head of Daimler Trucks globally.

The Freightliner Inspiration Truck – still disguised by hood bonnet – then whisked away Sandoval and Bernhard. Journalists visiting from around the world were later that night taken to the Hoover Dam, where a spectacular light show preceded the complete revealing of the Inspiration Truck atop the dam.

The projection – at 1.17 million lumens – earned Freightliner the Guinness World Record for the highest light output projection ever.

"The Hoover Dam provides the ideal setting for a debut as significant to the trucking industry as this. Not only was it built primarily using trucks, but it signifies inspiration like few other structures in the world. To show the significance and

Continued on page 26

AMTA leaders gather for conference

By Jim Bray

LAKE LOUISE, Alta. – The remarkable landscape surrounding Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise may not have contributed to the success of this year's annual Management Conference for the Alberta Motor Transport Association, but it certainly didn't hurt. And by the time the last member had gone home again they'd been treated to some fine wining and dining, as well as plenty of food for thought they can take with them going forward.

"I think overall it came off pretty well," said Lorraine Card, the AMTA's executive director, about the event. "We heard lots of positive feedback and from the comments I heard it was a spectacular venue. The service was great, all the meals, the rooms, we had no issues with the venue."

There was a bit of typically Albertan spring snow on the evening of May 1, but it didn't seem to put a damper on the festivities and Card said the organization will probably go back to the same venue next year, though the final decision has yet to be made.

The 2015 event saw a larger
Continued on page 7

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TRUCK SALES TRENDS

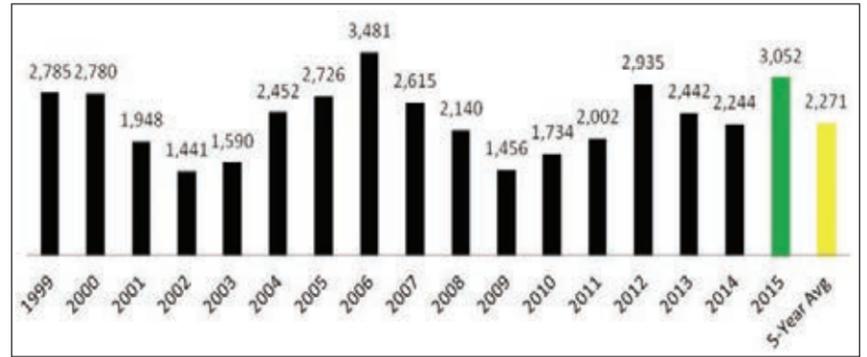
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It has been almost a decade since the Canadian Class 8 market has seen March sales like this. There were 3,052 Class 8 trucks sold this March. The last time this happened was in 2006 under much more favorable economic conditions. Sales rose by almost 800 trucks sold over the five-year average. Market leaders Freightliner, Volvo and Kenworth had particularly good months. Peterbilt was the only OEM to post a drop from the previous March sales.

Monthly Class 8 Sales – Mar 15

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	978	581
International	350	287
Kenworth	566	380
Mack	217	169
Peterbilt	279	330
Volvo	460	331
Western Star	202	166
TOTALS	3052	2244

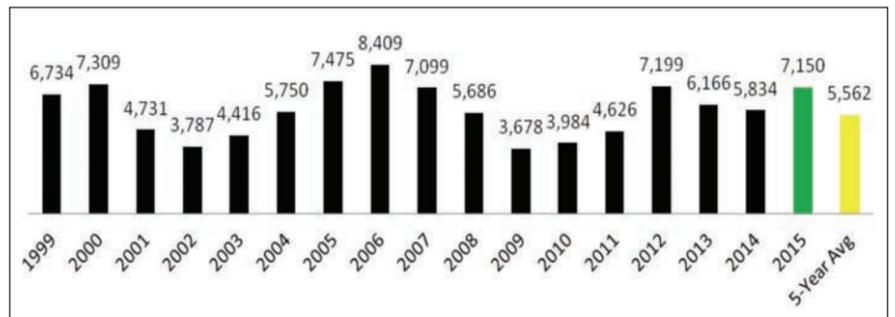
Historical Comparison – Mar 15 Sales



Class 8 Sales (YTD Mar 15) by Province and OEM

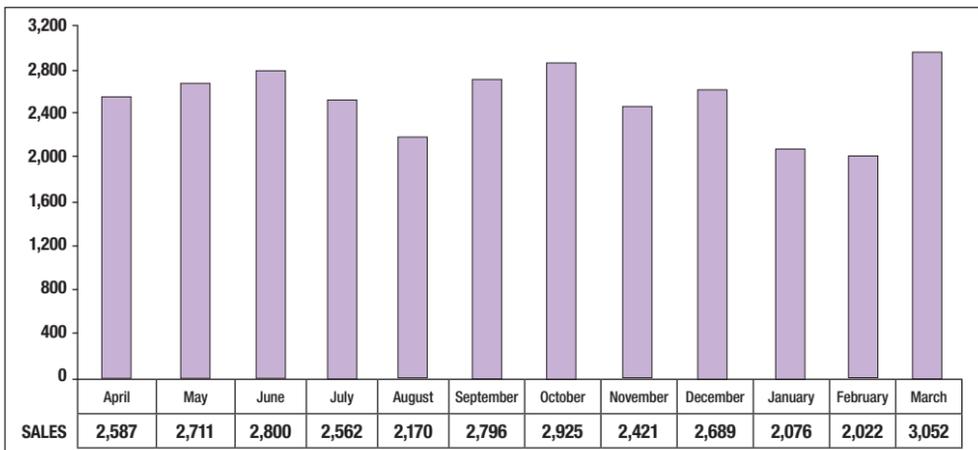
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	161	196	77	93	1,101	365	93	39	2	12	2,139
Kenworth	172	351	54	54	258	207	37	0	0	0	1,133
Mack	30	63	17	10	270	74	9	25	0	0	498
International	51	135	20	46	460	163	30	7	41	4	957
Peterbilt	99	201	42	54	135	146	36	1	0	0	714
Volvo	147	150	22	69	463	276	12	39	0	6	1,184
Western Star	113	173	16	9	114	68	14	15	3	0	525
TOTALS	773	1,269	248	335	2,801	1,299	231	126	46	22	7,150

Historical Comparison – YTD Mar 15



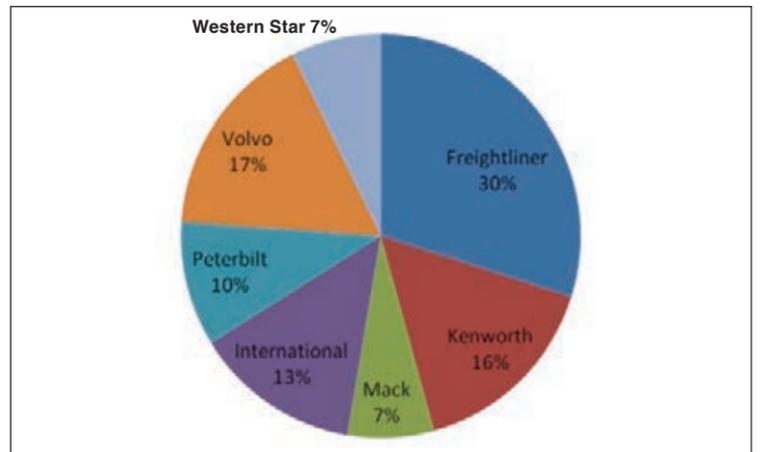
After a stellar sales performance in March, Canadian Class 8 truck sales close out the first quarter 22.5% ahead of last year and 28.5% ahead of the five-year average. The strong first quarter is the 5th best since 1999. The strong sales year is occurring despite slumping sales in Alberta and Saskatchewan, which are suffering the impact of plunging energy pricing on economic prospects. Class 8 Sales have fallen off by 11.5% in Alberta and 21.5% in Saskatchewan. Sales in Ontario are up 41.3%.

12-Month Sales Trends



The Canadian Class 8 truck market has now enjoyed 13 straight months of sales above 2,000 and its first month of sales above 3,000 since the Great Recession. Prior to that, however, the market enjoyed a 10 month streak of sales coming in above the 2,000 mark. The strong and steady numbers are reminiscent of the industry's capacity boom years. Market analysts remain optimistic about continued growth into 2016.

Market Share Class 8 – Mar 15 YTD



Market leader Freightliner has jumped out to a truly impressive 30% share of the Canadian Class 8 truck market after the first quarter. Also showing impressive numbers for the first quarter is Volvo which continues to hang on to narrow lead over Kenworth for second place. Peterbilt meanwhile has dropped down to 10% market share while Mack remains tied with Western Star at the bottom of the market share race with each OEM enjoying a 7% slice of the market.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association



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Autonomous trucks aren't driverless

Editorial Comment

James Menzies



We all knew autonomous trucks were coming, but they've arrived on these shores much sooner than any of us would likely have predicted. Daimler, when it demonstrated its autonomously-driven Mercedes-Benz Future Truck on a closed section of Autobahn highway in Germany last year, made it clear it would bring the technology to market in whichever global jurisdiction would be the first to make it legal.

The state of Nevada took that bold step in May, and in spectacular fashion, Daimler Trucks North America introduced the world's first road-legal autonomous truck - the Freightliner Inspiration Truck. This news transcended the trucking industry. It was widely covered by mainstream news outlets - CNN, CBC, the *National Post* - you name it. Good Morning America even flew out to Vegas and broadcast live reports from the site of the truck's launch.

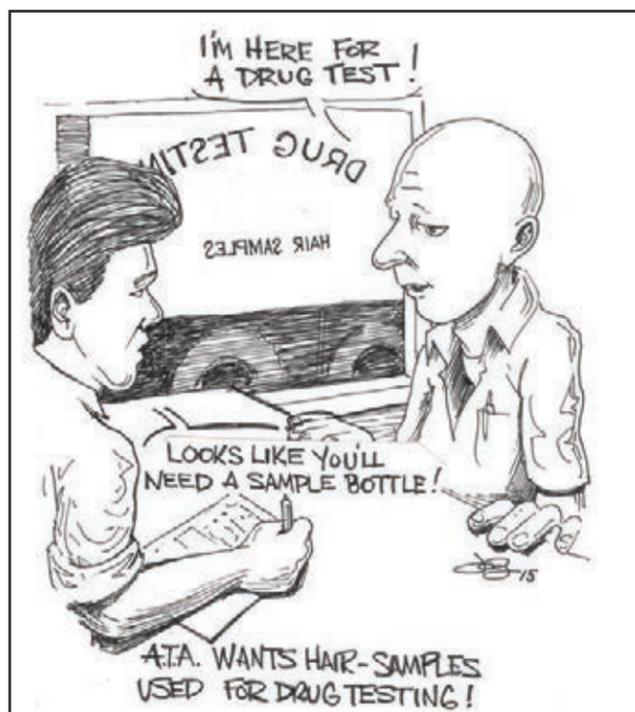
When was the last time a truck, an 18-wheeler of any kind, captured the public's imagination such a way? I can't remember one. Of course, not all reaction has been positive, especially within the trucking industry. I read the Facebook posts and reader comments to the news and pictures we filed from the demonstration in Las Vegas and most feedback was decidedly negative. This development was seen by many drivers as the first step towards eliminating their careers and livelihoods.

However, it's important to point out, the technology showcased in Vegas will always require oversight from a trained professional driver. The Inspiration Truck

is defined by NHTSA as a Level 3 autonomous vehicle, meaning the driver can cede control of the vehicle only under certain conditions and in certain environments. A driver must always remain at the controls and be able to take over when needed. Plus, the Highway Pilot system in Freightliner's Inspiration Truck, for now at least, is only intended for use on interstate highways and freeways.

Professional drivers will always be required to pick up and deliver the load, to manage the transaction, to take over in bad weather and under the many other scenarios in which Highway Pilot will not properly function. It's a driver aid, not a driver replacement - and Freightliner officials said they've no interest in pursuing a Level 4 autonomous vehicle, which would require no driver whatsoever.

Aircraft have featured autopilot capabilities for many years and yet a pilot and co-pilot are still required to be at the controls while in flight and the autonomous trucks of the near- and mid-term future will require driver oversight as well. Well then, if the driver's to be retained, where's the pay-off, you wonder? I see Highway Pilot as an advanced safety system - far more advanced than anything else that exists today - capable of significantly reducing truck crashes and fatalities. Stats show most truck crashes are the result of driver error. Highway Pilot can eliminate this, especially in monotonous driving situations. Stud-



ies have shown it can reduce driver fatigue and react faster to dangerous scenarios than human drivers.

It can result in a more productive driver, who's able to perform other duties while behind the wheel, such as scheduling loads or completing paperwork. And perhaps most significantly, once the safety benefits are proven, it could be the catalyst for regulatory changes that improve truck productivity by extending driver hours-of-service or convincing government to allow longer, heavier truck and trailer configurations. The possibilities are endless but one thing it will not do - at least not until after most of you have retired, if ever - is completely eliminate the driver. **TW**

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Wake up to the dangers of sleep apnea

The view with Lou

Lou Smyrlis



Sometimes the most obvious of things are the most important. These are the things we must pay the most attention to out of all the noise that is part of our daily lives in the office and at home.

Take sleep for example. As carriers come to understand the need to consider employee wellness as critical to creating a healthy work environment, is there anything more essential to wellness than being able to get a good night's sleep?

Yet obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) - the most common form of sleep apnea - is the thief in the night that robs so many people in our industry of that precious, restful sleep, turning it instead into a nightmare in which breathing stops and carbon dioxide builds up in the body hundreds of times a night, night after night.

I learned a great deal about sleep apnea while listening to doctors, lawyers and insurance professionals during a conference I moderated for Northbridge Insurance on the subject mid-May.

But perhaps most informative was the first-hand account I received from a sleep apnea sufferer and a trucking executive who by dealing with his own

momentum on both sides of the border to pass legislation that would require commercial drivers to be screened for sleep apnea.

As happens too often in government circles, however, that momentum has slowed. It could be years before we see legislation.

But why do we need to wait for the legislators? Why not take action by adopting voluntary sleep apnea programs to identify and deal with sleep apnea within Canadian fleets? Why not help sleep apnea sufferers get their life back?

The CTA partnered with OSA Canada and Precision Pulmonary Diagnostics a few years ago to develop a full-service program to assist Canadian trucking fleets in implementing, administering and monitoring obstructive sleep apnea programs for all their drivers. Let's wake up to the need to take advantage of such help that is out there. **TW**

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sleep apnea took the first steps towards meeting the needs of the sleep apnea suffers among his own staff.

Let me tell you, the consequences to sleep apnea sufferers and to the people who employ them can be severe in terms of both health and safety. Such chronic sleep deprivation results in daytime sleepiness, slow reflexes, poor concentration, and an increased risk of accidents.

Feeling irritable, depressed or having mood swings and personality changes are other side-effects. Sleep apnea left untreated can also lead to serious health problems over time, including diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke and weight gain.

Sleep apnea is particularly prevalent in our industry. Why? because being male, overweight and a smoker are among the top risk factors.

A couple of years ago there was mo-

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AMTA conference turnout the strongest since 2010

Continued from page 1

turnout than in recent years, a fact that came as somewhat of a surprise to the AMTA.

"We had 180 delegates registered and we haven't had numbers that high since 2010," said Card, noting that "we had something like 27 member carriers - and really good strong member carriers - that came out, some of whom hadn't come out in a long time. And if you get the carriers to come out then the associate trades members come out."

The surprise for Card was that the turnout was so good "given the economic situation here in Alberta. Last year's numbers were 130 and we were thinking if we broke 100 we would be doing well."

This year's Conference lacked a speaker from the Alberta government, though the reason for the omission was understandable.

"It was because of the election," Card said. "We had our Minister scheduled to attend and then the election was called and he was not able to, so we called the assistant deputy minister to see if he was available."

As it turns out, he was - and the AMTA had him scheduled to speak, but "he called back a few days later and said he wouldn't be able to give an address on behalf of the Alberta government because of the election."

Card said they encouraged him to show up anyway because there'd be plenty of opportunity for him to network, an offer he took them up on. "There's a lot of high-profile trucking companies that had not met him," she said, "so I think to be able to just make those introductions this weekend was extremely beneficial. And he did talk to lots of key people."

Trucking HR Canada's CEO Angela Splinter rode to the rescue, filling the hole in the speaking schedule. "We'd asked Angela to come anyway," Card noted. "So we just moved her up and gave her a little bit more time."

Splinter outlined her organization's duties and talked about issues such as its Driving the Future initiative, which she said "has us clearly identifying the knowledge, skills and abilities that Canada's commercial vehicle operators or truck drivers need to perform their jobs."

She noted the work started a year ago with the establishment of a national working group made up of experienced drivers, driver trainers and others "to help us and to guide our work."

She also previewed her organization's National Occupational Standards document, which she said "will support certification programs which identify drivers who have the required knowledge, skills and abilities."

The Friday afternoon session dealt with transmissions, specifically automated ones, with a panel of industry experts on hand to extol their virtues, not only from a technology standpoint but also as a way to recruit and retain drivers. "(We) did engines a number of years ago,"

Card said, "and it was such a success before it was decided we'd try doing transmissions. It was a huge hit and there was lots of participation."

For the less "shifty" in the crowd, the afternoon "Pampered Spouse" program was where delegates' significant others could sample wine and cheese and partake of some line dancing before Friday night's evening extravaganza, which had a Western theme and was held in the nearby Brewster Cowboys' Barbecue and Dance Barn. Transportation between the Chateau and the barn was via open-sided, horse drawn coaches, and of course that was when the snow started. Brewster served up a healthy

Continued on page 9

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COMMIT WITH CONFIDENCE



Awards presented to top industry contributors and ambassadors

Continued from page 7

Alberta dinner of beef, beans and beer (and other stuff) and rumour has it the evening went on, there and elsewhere, till the wee hours.

Saturday morning's post-breakfast events were kicked off by the Canadian Trucking Alliance's David Bradley, who noted that Canada needs a strong Alberta. His wide-ranging address covered everything from the driver shortage to electronic logging devices, wide-base tires and cross-border issues. Bradley said he's still bullish on the industry, despite its challenges and when asked how healthy he thinks the industry is right now, replied that it's "basically okay. It could be worse." When asked about the trend toward consolidation among carriers noted that he thinks it's "a long way from the end of the family-owned trucking company."

At the AGM, held after Bradley's address, it was revealed that, like the growth in attendance at the Conference, the AMTA itself has also seen substantial expansion in its membership.

"We've been very proud of our growth this past year," Card said, noting that she credits hard work by the organization overall for the approximately 15% increase. "It's just our getting out there and really promoting the AMTA brand," she said. "We have a lot of committees that people are very active in and (president and CEO) Richard Warnock had a lot to do with it as well. He really raised the bar again and got (the organization) very engaged again in industry and with government and I think he should take credit for some of the strong growth within our membership."

A new board was named at the AGM as well, with Dan Duckering taking over the centre seat from Carl Rosenau. The new board shakes out like this:

Chairman of the Board - Dan Duckering

Senior Vice Chairman - Rod Shopland

Vice Chairman - Gene Orlick

Past Chairman - Carl Rosenau

Past Chairman - Willie Hamel

Director at Large - Greg Sokil

Director at Large - Don Achtemichuk

Director at Large - Don Goodwill

Director at Large - Richard Warnock

Director at Large - Bob Hill

Director at Large - Ed Malysa

Director at Large - Ken Rosenau

Director at Large - Grant Mitchell

Calgary Regional Director - Vacant

Central Regional Director - Cam Jesse

North East Regional Director - Vacant

Fort McMurray Regional Director - Jude Groves

Edmonton Regional Director - Tim Boychuk

Southern Regional Director - Doug Paisley

North West Regional Director - Shirley McDonald

At the meeting's close, the new crew of Road Knights was intro-

duced, a quintet of pros decked out to the max in their Road Knight suits. The Knights will represent the industry around the province for the next two years, basically being the face and voice of Alberta's truckers.

After a lunch that featured a return engagement by the Atomic Improve troupe, the AMTA unveiled officially its new portable driving simulator, a heavy-duty and state-of-the-art trailer-mounted bit of technology that can travel the province and offer companies a virtual driving experience - and an instructor - for \$30 an hour, travel costs not included. Card said the simulator and its fixed brother at the AMTA's Edmonton office cost about \$500,000 in total and were in the planning stages for sev-

eral months.

"The opportunity came that we might be able to make this happen last year," she said, "and so we put together the business plan, it was approved and (the simulators were) purchased in December of last year."

So far, the reception has been everything for which they've hoped. "We've had tremendous response to the simulator ever since the word started getting out."

The conference wound up Saturday evening with the Presidents' Banquet, a semi-formal fete at which the Service to the Industry Award, sponsored by BFL Canada Insurance Services Inc., was given to the outgoing chairman of the board, Carl Rosenau.

As is customary, other award presentations were spread throughout the two days:

Alberta Driver of the Year (sponsored by Volvo Trucks Canada): Al

Nicholet, Bison Transport

Associate Trades Award (sponsored by the AMTA): Arup Toore, First Truck Centre.

Safety Person of the Year (sponsored by HighStreet Insurance Brokers): Don Achtemichuk, ATS Healthcare Solutions

AMTA Historical Award (sponsored by American Truck Historical Society): Tom Fredericks, ECL Group

While Card speculated that the AMTA will probably return to Lake Louise for its 2016 Management Conference, the decision may hinge partly on the results of a survey the AMTA plans to send to everyone who was on hand. But if this year's event and its initial feedback is any indication, a return to the Chateau would be popular. "It was just a tremendous weekend from all accounts," said Card, "and we certainly thank all our members for coming out." **TW**



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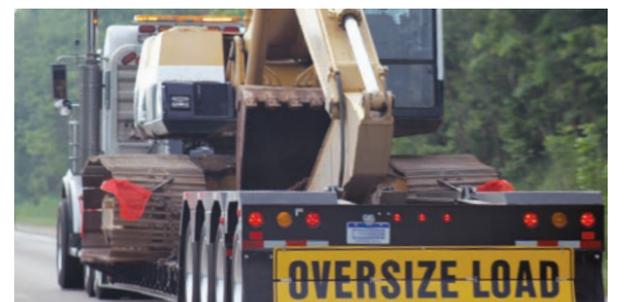
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IN BRIEF

Date set for Manitoba's Truck Driving Championships

WINNIPEG, Man. -The MTA announced that the Manitoba Provincial Truck Driving Championships has been set for June 20, 2015 at Peterbilt Manitoba in Winnipeg.

The MTA said it is always trying to change things up and this year is no different as it has added a new rule to the provincial championships. This year, Manitoba instructors who hold a valid permit will be able to compete.

"For years instructors have been asking us why they couldn't compete," said committee chair, Darcy Olson. "We felt it was time to make a change and shake things up a bit. Although instructors can compete this year, they are currently unable to go on to Nationals, as there is no instructors category at that level of competition. As this is a first for the MTA, our hopes are to inspire the other provinces to do the same in coming years. Although everyone will be competing together, the instructors scores are compared to other instructors, not the competing drivers."

The Championships will follow the same layout as the rest of the provincial championships. There will be one written test, one pre-trip inspection and an obstacle course. Drivers will be divided based on truck class.

The MTA is also urging people to start registering early. "There are limited spots for competitors and instructors, so to avoid disappointment competitors should register early," added Olson.

The MTA changed how to register for this year's provincial championships. You can only apply online this year at <http://bit.do/mbtruckchamps>. **TW**

CSA Group opens new laboratory in B.C.

LANGLEY, B.C. - CSA Group has announced it has opened a new laboratory for testing and certification of high pressure fuel systems and related components used on-board low and zero emission vehicles.

The company says the new lab caters to the growing market for environmentally-friendly vehicles and the resulting infrastructure that will accompany the shift to alternative fuel sources such as hydrogen and compressed natural gas.

"CSA Group is proud to encourage the adoption of new technologies that promote sustainable living, and our new laboratory in Langley will help introduce new infrastructure and sustainable products to people across North America and globally," said Magali Depras, COO, CSA Group.

The new lab and office is 1,800 square metres and "provides contract testing services to all national and international standards and regulations worldwide related to high pressure fuel and fueling systems, allowing for access to North American, and global markets." **TW**



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BORN READY.

B.C. Kenworth dealer cuts a big cheque to interior college

By Jim Bray

KELOWNA, B.C. – A B.C. truck dealer will see its name displayed prominently and proudly at the Kelowna campus of Okanagan College after it made a \$50,000 donation to the school. Inland Kenworth, which opened its West Kelowna outlet recently, made the gift as a way to help ensure a healthy stream of technicians is available to fill its upcoming positions, as well as to raise its profile in its new community.

According to Inland Kenworth's vice-president, Kent Brownlow, the idea came from the college initially, but it fit Inland like the proverbial glove.

"They were trying to reach out to the industry and other benefactors to the college to see if they could get some contributions," he told *Truck West*. And while he said Inland has traditionally supported its own apprentices' schooling as part of their work experience, "more recently we've realized we have to develop better interest in the trades vocations – in our particular case the commercial transport mechanics and the heavy-duty mechanics and parts men – in order to keep our business viable for the future. We have to take a higher public profile right at the high school level to make sure that all the students are aware of who we are, what we do and what the opportunities are. The College is obviously a good spot to begin."

The donation is the first of its kind

for Inland, though Brownlow said he wouldn't be surprised to see the family-owned business make more of them in the future.

"This is kind of an opening start, with the ownership and the senior management taking a look at what an investment might look like and where it would make sense," he said. One of the reasons that particular institution made sense is that, despite the company having 16 locations across B.C., the Yukon and the southern US, its roots are in the Okanagan.

"Our company began in Penticton," Brownlow said, "so Okanagan College seemed like a good choice."

John Haller, development officer, Okanagan College Foundation, noted that the College's new trades training complex was made necessary by the extreme growth of the Okanagan market.

"We used to be the fifth or sixth largest trades training facility in the province," he said, "and now we're number two, next in size to BCIT out of Vancouver."

Part of the funding for the complex came from government, to the tune of \$28 million, but that left them a few million short, which led to them seeking corporate help. "Basically, our foundation is now responsible for providing naming opportunities and marketing strategies for corporations, businesses, associations or even individuals who would have an interest in trades in the region or even in B.C. or Canada or international as

well," he said. "So we're speaking to all of the companies that would hire our grads, and Inland Kenworth is one of those. They're a well-known company, they've been in business for almost as long as we have been in training and when I started talking with their new branch manager here in Kelowna there was definitely an interest for them to get involved in our new building."

For its 50 grand, Inland not only helps to ensure a talent pool for the future, it also gets some promotion at the College. "Basically, one of the drive-in bays will now be called the Inland Kenworth bay," said Haller, noting that "the goal of the foundation is to name all the bays as part of our fundraising but Inland Kenworth was the first in and they've basically set an example now for the rest of the industry." Being first in means Inland will have the prime bay, he said "with some very good exposure to the students and instructors, and also to the general public as they tour through out buildings."

The concept is similar to other naming opportunities where corporations sponsor educational – or even sporting – facilities. "Like many college campuses," Brownlow said, "you see rooms named after individuals or companies, and in our case it's going to be a very significant sized truck bay in the truck shop."

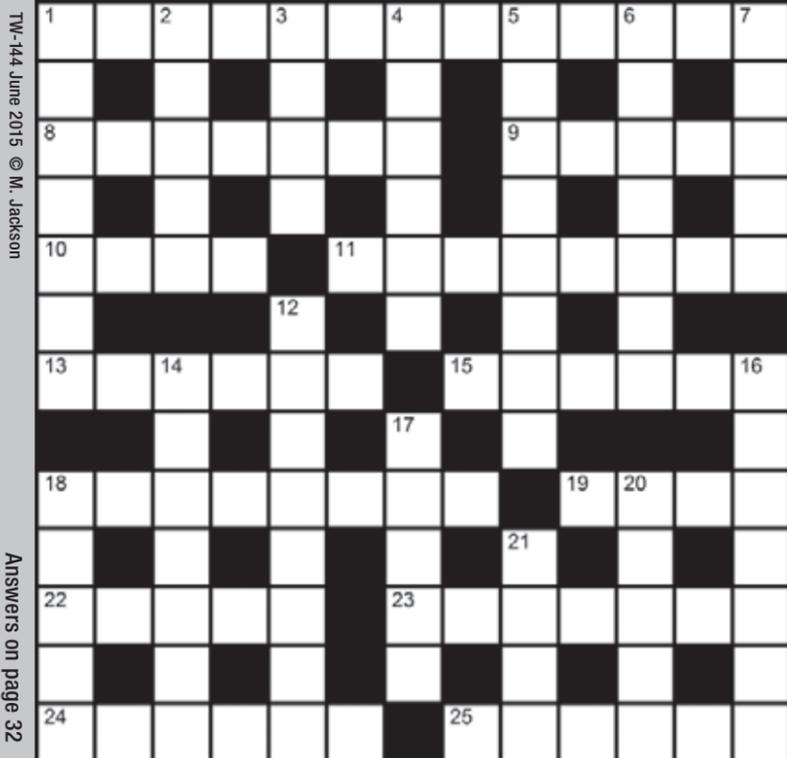
The donation was made with a big splash at the open house Inland threw to promote its new West Kelowna facility.

The money – and the Inland signage

– is meant to last the life of the building. "It's a one-time sponsorship marketing strategy and they basically remain in there until the building falls down," said Haller. "We're not about to...create partnerships with industry and then ask them again for more money. We're looking at long-term partnerships that we can establish and then maintain over long periods of time. And Inland Kenworth, because of their success in the industry, gravitated towards that." He said Inland was a great catch because "they're new in the community and one of their first sort of acts of community is that they get involved with the College and make a substantial donation to the training complex. It makes them a good neighbour and for us it set a very good example of the leadership they have and how well respected they are in the industry."

To Inland Kenworth, it's about taking responsibility. "The sort of underlying theme here is that our industry really needs to do a little bit better job of growing its own," Brownlow said. "The forecast is very good for our industry... and we need to make sure that students graduating from high school are considering our trades and technical side of business as a career choice – so we're trying to do better job of reaching out and contacting high schools and counselors and job forums and of course the social and electronic media. We've not been good at that up to date." **TW**

THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE



TW-144 June 2015 © M. Jackson

Answers on page 32

Across

- 1 Truck or trailer capacity spec. (7,6)
- 8 Rand's map-making partner
- 9 Air-brake system component
- 10 Oft-heard "___ on truckin'"
- 11 '70s White conventional (4,4)
- 13 Dead-end street sign (2,4)
- 15 Word following load or chain
- 18 GM '60s-'90s 1/2 & 3/4 ton model
- 19 CB-signal's atmospheric reflection
- 22 Trip-odometer button
- 23 Biennial Montreal truck show
- 24 Some big-rig drivers
- 25 CB query, "Got your ___?" (4,2)

Down

- 1 Schneider truck, slangily
- 2 Saskatoon-based carrier
- 3 Engine lubricants
- 4 Trailer type (3,3)
- 5 Adjusted engine lube level (5,3)
- 6 Snowbelt driving hazard (3,4)
- 7 Mud-flap ___ silhouettes
- 12 Former International medium-duty LCF
- 14 Manitoba border-crossing town
- 16 Lender's truck-recovery pro (4,3)
- 17 Highway traffic paths
- 18 Trucked goods, collectively
- 20 "Get Your ___ on Route 66"
- 21 NB-based trucking assoc., briefly (1,1,1,1)

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We need training, not speed limiters

There are many very good reasons to limit truck speeds to 65 miles per hour. In fact, there are many very good reasons to limit all vehicle speeds to 65 mph. This is the position of the American Trucking Associations (ATA).

They want federal regulators in the US to pass legislation requiring all heavy trucks to be equipped with electronic speed limiters and see a uniform 65 mph speed limit for all vehicles passed into law. Safety is the primary reason cited by the ATA in their decision to take this path. The problem is that you can teach and embrace safe practices and develop a culture of safety but you can't legislate that attitude. Consequently the whole issue of using technology to impose safety has become highly politicized and the benefits of effective safety practices such as managing vehicle speed are lost in all the noise.

So how has a speed limiter rule on big trucks affected safety in the province of Ontario? It's hard to know. But wait, let's remember the speed limiter legislation was passed in Ontario in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; im-

Over the Road

Al Goodhall



proved safety was to be a positive fall-out as a result.

Let's also remember that a large percentage of carriers had already embraced limiting their speeds on purely economic grounds prior to the passage of speed limiter legislation in Ontario. It's pretty hard to make an argument that safety will be improved by limiting heavy trucks to 105 km/h in a jurisdiction that has a maximum speed of 100 km/h for all vehicles.

Perhaps the better question to ask is, has the speed limiter law affected the attitudes of drivers and motor carriers in the province of Ontario (and Quebec which also has the same law in place)? I think it has affected attitudes, but not in a positive way.

If you travel in Ontario, you know that speeds on the 400-series highways don't flow at 100 km/h, which is the posted speed limit. It is common knowledge that if you don't exceed 115 km/h you're

not going to catch any grief from enforcement officials. In fact you will probably be travelling with the flow of traffic at that speed - if you're in a car, that is.

In fact a December 2013 article posted on Trucknews.com regarding MTO enforcement officers being equipped with radar in their vehicles stated "They'll be able to clock commercial vehicles and fine any driver travelling over 115 km/h for violating the province's speed limiter law."

So for heavy trucks we have an imposed 105 km/h limit on the equipment in a jurisdiction that has a 100 km/h speed limit and those laws are enforced when the vehicle exceeds 115 km/h.

What we have created in Ontario is an environment where it has become an accepted practice to run at governed speed no matter what.

Drivers are increasingly abandoning their responsibility of governing their own speed based on the equipment they are driving and the environmental conditions they are driving in and carriers are abandoning their responsibility to provide adequate ongoing driver training that improves both safety and profitability.

Let's face it, the best piece of safety equipment in any vehicle is a professionally trained and engaged driver behind the wheel. Using technology to limit a vehicle's speed then passing that into law removes a degree of responsibility from all the players in the game. Some say this is leveling the playing field. I say it is more like passing the buck.

Many drivers will put forward the ar-

gument that limiting truck speed causes "elephant races" and causes hazards on the road since trucks become rolling road blocks to other vehicles. My own experience is that this is not the case.

As a driver you can manage your own speed to prevent these situations from developing. Since the speed limiter legislation was passed I started travelling at 60 mph (97 km/h) as my cruise speed. This provides me with 8 km/h to pass any slower moving vehicle that I approach and those packs of trucks that are engaged in their ongoing elephant race simply pass me by. I would say that over 80% of my travel time is spent within a huge stress-free space cushion even in relatively heavy traffic.

When I find myself in heavy traffic, well, the flow of traffic is then considerably less than the posted limit. Does this limit my earning potential? No. Does it create a time burden for me? No. Do other vehicles run in to me because of the speed I'm travelling? No. Am I profitable? Definitely.

The speed limiter law in Ontario is a foolish law. We could attain even better results with improved driver training and a paradigm shift on how traffic laws are enforced for all vehicles. **TW**

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

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UNIROYAL



Fun with ELDs

I got the call today that my new car will be ready for pick-up next week, so by the time you're reading this, I'll be driving my new VW Golf Sportwagon. I've been waiting months to order this car, available in Canada only since March, so I've had time to do lots of research. After 11 years with my tough little Jetta, there was no question that I'd be buying another Volkswagen diesel. But this would be my first car with the new emissions system, so I pestered my salesperson relentlessly with questions about DPF lifespan, when to check for ash loading, and how often to refill the DEF tank.

He was patient and accommodating, and had a sense of humour, too. Along with heaps of technical information, he directed me to The Fun Theory (thefuntheory.com), a Volkswagen initiative dedicated to the idea that simple fun can be an easy way to change people's behaviour for the better.

VW was looking for ideas and inventions that would help prove its fun theory; the top Fun Theory Award went to a guy who posed the question: what if, instead of focusing on punishing speeders, speed cameras were used to reward good behaviour? His answer was the Speed Camera Lottery. The camera "catches" all drivers, but drivers who obey the speed limit are automatical-

Voice of the O/O

Joanne Ritchie



ly entered into a lottery to win the pot, which is built from the fines of speeders. Brilliant.

That got me thinking about FMC-SA's recent call for public comment on what it dubs Beyond Compliance, a potential program that would take a carrier's "proactive voluntary implementation of state-of-the-art best practices and technologies" into consideration when evaluating the company's safety program. The agency, it seems, agrees that an incentive-based approach to improving carrier safety would be a more effective tool than the current penalty-based system. Beyond Compliance is just an idea so far, and may never get off the ground.

The whole "voluntary vs. mandatory" dilemma is one that will soon be facing Canadian regulators as the electronic logging device (ELD) debate heats up. ELDs have been on our radar screen since even before our new HoS regulations came into force in 2007. It was recognized then that emerging technologies had the potential to improve compliance, but also raised a number of issues in terms of uniform enforcement

protocols and harmonization with the US. Years ago, the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators (CCMTA) set up a project group to develop a technical, performance-based standard for ELDs.

More recently, Canada has begun to consider the policy options for a national ELD program and has invited input from industry stakeholders. What would it look like: universal mandate? Targeted approach? Voluntary adoption? Groups like the Canadian Trucking Alliance, as well as suppliers of the more comprehensive tracking systems, are strong proponents of mandating ELDs.

On the other hand, provincial and territorial governments, who would be accountable for regulation, delivery and enforcement of any new ELD program, are not so gung-ho. In fact, in a roundtable check at a CCMTA meeting last Fall, every jurisdiction, with the exception of Ontario, favoured a voluntary approach to ELD use. Last year when the US published its proposed rulemaking to mandate ELDs, Canadian regulators picked up the pace in anticipation of the final US rulemaking expected this September. Currently, Transport Canada is in the process of assembling and analyzing a whole pile of data trying to determine costs and benefits, both to industry and government, of a mandatory ELD requirement.

From what I've seen so far, it's a pretty superficial exercise. When you're simply weighing the cost of the ELDs, verification equipment for inspectors, and inspector/driver training against the huge

reduction in administrative burden for carriers and enforcement, there's no doubt in my mind that Transport Canada's exercise will show benefits outweighing the costs. What irks me most, though, is that no one is looking past the numbers to the real issues behind the pro- and anti-ELD arguments. For the naysayers, it's less about the technology, and more about driver pay and the unforgiving inflexibility of HoS. On the pro side, it's the companies who are paying a decent dollar off the e-logs and managing their operations (legally) to compensate for the shortcomings of HoS that have earned their drivers' acceptance of the technology.

But in any case, if the darn things are so cost-effective, why do we have to mandate them? Why not promote voluntary adoption, combined with some kind of incentive for their use? Why not make them fun? The Netherland's prestigious Institute for Road Safety Research has studies showing that road safety behaviour can be changed more quickly effectively by rewarding desirable behaviour rather than by penalizing undesirable behaviour. Could our prosaic and somewhat humourless regulators get their heads around the idea of ELDs, incentives, voluntary, and fun, all in the same sentence? Sigh. I think I'll just go play with my DPF. **TW**

Joanne Ritchie is executive director of OBAC. What's your incentive to run compliant? E-mail her at jritchie@obac.ca or call toll free 888-794-9990.

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BY SONIA STRAFACE

Sergiy Filippov UKRAINE

It's no secret that the trucking industry is in trouble when you look at the statistics surrounding the recruitment of young drivers. It seems young people aren't interested in driving as a career, especially in North America. Of course, there are always exceptions to account for.

From his experience and many accomplishments, you'd never know that Sergiy Filippov owner and driver of Natfil Enterprises in Regina, Sask. is only 33 years old – he's a walking advertisement showing success at a young age is a possibility in trucking.

Before he moving to Canada in May 2007, Filippov lived in Ukraine with his wife. Like many truck drivers before him, he followed in the footsteps of his father when he chose to pursue a career in trucking. His father had driven trucks professionally when Filip-

pov was growing up, and eventually started his own business in Ukraine. Filippov started driving in eastern Europe when an opportunity came along he couldn't pass up – a chance for him and his wife to move out of the country and to Canada.

"I really wanted to come to Canada," said Filippov. "Unlike Ukraine, there is no corruption here and the government takes care of its citizens."

Corruption is an ongoing problem in Ukraine where bribes are customary. Recipients of the bribery include the police, health care officials and the education system. It's estimated that nearly three quarters of the population who deal with government have been involved with corrupt transactions. In 2012, Ernst & Young placed Ukraine among the top three most corrupted nations in the world alongside Colombia and Brazil.

Filippov's life changed when he met Denis Prud'homme, a trucking veteran who started Prudhomme International – a company devoted to recruiting foreign drivers to Canada's workforce.

"He was one of the first people to start bringing people over," said Filippov. "He started with the Ukrainian workforce and because I spoke English and I had experience driving, I was chosen by him to go to Regina."

Filippov's wife, who at the time

was living in Japan, joined him in Canada a year later once he was settled at work and at home.

"It wasn't an accident, it was planned and we were looking for the opportunity to come to Canada," he said, adding he was fortunate to have met Denis Prud'homme. "Canada was the number one choice for us, because it's a huge country with a very small population and it's considered to be one of the best countries to work in."

He says that he didn't experience any sort of culture shock after moving to Regina, since he had gone to the US before he officially moved to Canada and saw the North American lifestyle. Filippov added that he and his wife have no regrets moving to Canada, and don't miss Ukraine in the slightest. Both became Canadian citizens in July 2014.

"We feel very at home here," he said. "There is no homesickness. We love Canada. The way we are treated here, and the lifestyle here is much better from the Ukrainian way of life."

Filippov worked for Prud'homme as a driver for two years. He took a break from trucking from 2009-2010 and drove a taxicab in Regina when his wife got pregnant, so he could be home with her.

Today, his business, Natfil Enterprises runs ten trucks and primarily services the oil and gas industry in Alberta and Saskatchewan by hauling crude oil and frac sand. Filippov still drives daily even though he is the owner.

This year, Filippov saw his business hit a speed bump when the price of oil nosedived. Regardless, he is hopeful for the future of the business and, more importantly, the future of his employees.

"I would like to see my business become more steady and not bigger necessarily," he said. "I want to see all my drives making money. I want to see them happy and their families happy."



Dean Kennett UNITED KINGDOM

When most think of vacation, they think about being on a beach in Mexico under an umbrella with a frosty drink in their hand. But for Dean Kennett, 48, originally from London, England, vacation came in a much different form. And it even changed his whole life.

More than seven years ago, Kennett, who had been driving almost two decades then, decided to visit his fellow truck driver friend in Canada for vacation. His friend, who worked for Bison Transport at the time, thought it was a good idea to take Kennett out on a run with him. At the time, Kennett had no intention of living in Canada or North America for that matter, but after meeting the Bison recruiting team, he changed his mind. He went home to his wife, and then young son to tell them about his vacation and future job prospect.

"My wife and son decided they'd be interested, too," he said. "So they went to Canada for vacation to see what it was like here and when they arrived back in England they said, 'let's go.'"

Kennett and his family have lived in Canada as permanent residents since September 2008. Currently they live in Marchand, Manitoba and Kennett says things for the family have never been better, even though the Canadian weather took a little adjusting to at first.

"It was very hard in the beginning, you





Raj Singh INDIA

Adjusting to life as a truck driver in a new country is a hard thing to do. But, building your own truck company from one truck to almost a hundred is even harder.

Raj Singh, originally from Punjab, India, moved to Canada in 1995 when he was fresh out of university. He had no intention of getting into trucking, but settled in Montreal, where he hoped to find a job in technology management. The tech industry at the time was changing so much, that layoffs were commonplace and Singh decided he should change his plan and stumbled into the world of trucking. So he set out to get his license and his own truck and hasn't looked back ever since.

"I started driving locally with my



know we had heard about the cold, but until you've experienced it, you don't really know," he said. "What we imagined wasn't what we got. It was very different. But we've all gotten used to it, and we're acclimatized now. I love my job now too. I've never been happier work-wise. My wife loves what she does too. She works for the local credit union...and my son loves school. He does fantastically well here. We love Canada now."

Kennett worked for Bison his first four years in Canada, until he made the move to a small, local company that gave him the opportunity to do something that is nearly impossible to do in the UK – become an owner/operator. The small, local company he worked for after working for Bison got bought by Payne Transportation, a company that uses owner/ops almost exclusively and Kennett decided it was the perfect opportunity to take the leap and buy his own truck, a brand new Volvo VNL 780.

"It was something I've always thought about," he said. "It's a very difficult thing to do in the UK. I didn't have the money over there to do it. But over here, at the end of the night if you can finance it, then you can be an owner/operator. I like it much better than being a company driver; you've got more responsibilities and all that. I find it a lot less stressful I'm not be-

own truck," 42-year-old Singh said, adding that at the time he was having a hard time finding stable work in trucking because he was so young at the time. "And then I moved from local to hauling to the US once I got older."

Today, Singh is the president and owner of Nishan Transport in Montreal – a company he began in 1995. Singh said his work ethic and dedication are what transformed Nishan from a one man operation to a reputable LTL-truckload transport company with a fleet of 90 trucks.

"I have lived my life so far according to work," he said. "Work and my business comes first for me in every way and that is the main thing. I don't go home unless everything is finished."

Singh said that most nights he is in the office well into the wee hours of the early morning, adding that Nishan's "service level is do or die."

Three years ago, Singh became a Canadian citizen. He said that the success of his business wouldn't be possible if it wasn't based out of Canada – the country he chose to move to after university because of the large community of Punjabis that reside here.

"What I am today is because of Canada," he said. "It's just the way the industry works and the demand and all that. If I had tried it back home, it would have been hard."

As for the future, Singh says he doesn't like to think of specific targets or numbers on where he wants to be in five, ten, twenty years. Instead he says, "I just want to make sure we continue to grow without compromising the service level."

ing pushed, as you tend to be as a company driver. I would never go back to being a company driver. And I love the truck and I've spent a lot of money making it nice. I never realized you could find so many things to buy for trucks. It's my first truck so I want it to be something I'm proud of."

Besides his job, Kennett says his favourite part of living in Canada is the lifestyle and lack of traffic.

"Well, the obvious difference (be-

Randeep Sandhu INDIA

When meeting fleet executives and transportation business owners, you learn quickly that people in the trucking industry have been around a long time. It's common to meet presidents and CEOs of fleets who have been around for two to three decades and have watched the industry evolve.

However, Randeep Sandhu, co-owner and vice-president of operations of Load Solutions Inc., a 100-truck fleet, is just a child in terms of his time spent in the industry.

Sandhu, who currently lives in Brampton, Ont., has been in trucking for only 10 years. He and friend launched Load Solutions Inc., a transport company servicing the US and Canada, in 2005, and despite being rather young and new to the industry, the business took off rather quickly. The company currently hauls refrigerated items, like meat and produce as well as automobiles from companies like Toyota and General Motors. Sandhu moved from a small village outside of Punjab, India to Canada in 1997. He had just graduated from university in India and came to Canada under the skilled worker points program. At first he set out to be an agricultural engineer (what he had studied in university) but when he got to Canada he changed his mind.

"I was working as a production supervisor in Canada and me and my partner both worked at the facility at that time and we wanted to start a business," Sandhu said. "He's more of a technical hand and so we got together and we started it and for the first few years we were on the road driving. We went all over Canada and the US."

Work-wise, the business couldn't be doing better.

"We're doing very well," Sandhu said. "We are expanding into the United States. We put a terminal in Niagara Falls last year and we're putting another one in Michigan



next year, so for the business itself, I don't see any road blocks."

Business wasn't always smooth, according to Sandhu who was new to the transportation industry when he started the business.

"Business wise, there's a lot of things nobody teaches you and things you can't learn from a book in school," he said. "During the first few years of the business, we were robbed by unscrupulous brokers in the industry. We ran around the transportation minister back in the day and sent petitions. And to this day, nothing has been done."

Sandhu said that experience has not only let him be a smarter business owner, but also sparked an interest in politics. During the last provincial election, Sandhu ran for the Ontario PC party. He didn't win his riding, but said it was a good experience.

Overall, Sandhu said he enjoys living in Canada and even convinced his parents to make their way over a few years ago.

"I like Canada a great deal," he said. "When you move from one place to another there are a lot of culture differences. Like how to ride a bus and all that, but I really don't have any sad experiences to mention. I was well received in Canada. I wouldn't trade it for anything."

tween driving here versus driving in Europe) is the lack of traffic," he said. "I've been to Toronto many, many times but still compared to the traffic around London and Paris it's still nowhere near as bad. The facilities are far superior over here too. And I enjoy the laid back way of life here. It's not hectic and so on as it is in the UK. It's a more relaxed way of life. There's a lot less stress."

Kennett says he doesn't miss much

back home, save for a traditional English breakfast, something he says can't be duplicated anywhere else.

"I think it's something every one of us Englishmen miss once we come over here," he said. "For the last 20 years, I've carried around a postcard picture of an English breakfast with me. Even when I drove around Europe, I found you just couldn't get a breakfast like you can in England. So I still carry it to this day."

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Year one in the books

My first year as an owner/operator in Canada has passed under the bumper. It's been a good year, I'm pleased to say, not always going according to plan but without any major problems so far. Prior to signing on with my chosen carrier, I had helped a couple of friends forecast costs and revenue as they started out as first-time owner/operators. There's no magic formula, but it's really quite simple: You just underestimate your income and overestimate your costs, then subtract outgoing costs from income and then halve that figure. If there's anything left, you'll be making money.

There are times when things don't work out the way you want them to – downtime due to weather, breakdowns or even family commitments – that will stop you from working and will reduce income and increase expenditure. You need to know that in a worst case scenario, you can still make money. If it's touch-and-go and you need things to go right all the time to make a profit, then you're decreasing your odds of success significantly. So with the numbers all worked out for my friends and the added benefit of seeing those numbers materialize as they had a six-month head start on me, I knew my choice of truck and



carrier was going to work for me. I also knew to expect the unexpected and that even though my friends had been doing well, that didn't mean that it was going to work out for me. Even with my method of forecasting, there is still a lot of luck required and there are two kinds of luck.

The first potential hurdle was the complexity of the truck itself. I went for a brand new truck. Now this is not the best way to get into the game, or it wasn't in the past, but times have changed. Since the emissions regulations came into effect there are so many things that can go wrong with a truck that buying a used one can be a huge gamble. You may be able to buy one with cash, or with a big down payment and a small monthly payment, but when you start throwing money at garages who seem unable to fix things and lose loads and therefore income through unscheduled downtime, it all works out the same in the end; you're going to be spending a similar amount of money, so why not have the new truck and get all the advantages of that.

I mentioned my fear of complexity and

the new trucks are even more complex now, except that the manufacturers have started to get a grip on all the add-ons and the newer trucks are far more reliable than the earlier emission-level trucks. Buying a new truck today is less of a gamble than it has been since the introduction of the emissions regulations.

It was a gamble that I thought I had lost when I turned the key to start my truck and head out with its first load. I got the dreaded check engine light flashing at me and my heart sunk. However it wasn't anything to worry about as it was caused by a low voltage output from the batteries. Whatever it was, it went away after cycling the ignition a few times.

My introduction into the expected unexpected came late at night a few clicks east of Regina. A creature of some kind ran into my path and I hit it before I had the chance to take avoiding action. It was only a small critter, but still big enough to put a slight bow in the bottom bar on my moose bumper and rip both hoses out of a brake pot on its way through.

I pulled onto the shoulder to inspect the damage and quickly found the problem. The first task was to clean the guts and snot off the brake pot, before I caged it to release the brakes and MacGyver'd the hoses to stop air from leaking out with a couple of pairs of vice grips. I was delivering in Regina, so I dropped my trailer at a door the next morning and bobtailed to a parts supplier to get the parts. It was then that I discovered that my less-than-athletic physique didn't fit between my side skirts and the ground, so I got the garage to fit a new brake pot

and hoses. Lightening my wallet was going to be far easier and faster than lightening myself. My next venture into the unexpected was a faulty seal on a new fuel filter. I lost prime and the engine would crank but not fire, so I lifted the hood to hand-prime it. After the third or fourth time doing this I thought I'd try a new fuel filter and lo and behold, when I took the old one out I noticed the seal had been pinched. Five minutes and a new filter later and I was problem-free.

Next up was a steer tire that lost a fight with a nail. It had plenty of life left in it, but I will not run a repaired tire on the front axle, so that had to be replaced. I decided to replace the one on the other side too, as I prefer having matched tires on the front, so that was a four-figure bill that came way before it was due.

My next little problem is happening as I type this column. I have a slight oil leak at the back of my engine. I took the truck into the dealer for the annual maintenance to be done and they discovered the leak. The repair is covered by warranty, so that's good. It's a 60-hour job, so I've lost my truck for a week. That's bad enough in itself, but it gets worse, much worse. My wife, bless her, has come up with a "good" idea. So instead of a nice relaxing week off work, I am now remodeling the family bathroom. Now that is an unexpected I really didn't expect! **TW**

A fourth generation trucker and trucking journalist, Mark Lee uses his 25 years of transcontinental trucking to provide an alternative view of life on the road.



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Hot shots, wreckers and FRP

A few weeks ago I got a call from the owner of a hot shot service in Alberta. He read my April column about the Full Reciprocity Plan, or FRP, and had a question.

FRP, you might recall, streamlines the International Registration Plan. It eliminates any provisions related to estimated distance. Instead, fees are based on actual distance, and your apportioned vehicle gets one cab card with all IRP jurisdictions on it so it can travel to any member state or province during the license year, any time, without permits.

"We need that," the hot shot owner said. "Can we do that?"

Like so many regulatory issues, big truckload carriers dominate the discussion about the benefits of prorate. Not enough specialized carriers have gotten the message about FRP even though it might help them the most.

Consider the hot shot carrier. Hot shots get paid to deliver a dedicated load, fast (there's one in Edmonton with the slogan, "From A to B, don't stop to pee!"). These carriers never know where they're going on any given day.

Applying for trip permits takes time that no one really has. It's the same for wreckers and other carriers in "emergency" service. IRP is ideal for these fleets. Yet traditionally they avoid it.

Pick your poison

If you think trip permits are a pain, try prorating registration fees when you don't know where your next job is going to take you. I mean, how do you estimate distance when two years ago you travelled in Alberta and British Columbia, last year you were in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Montana, and this year, who knows? What do you put on your cab card? Let's say you're based in Alberta and didn't travel in Saskatchewan last year but you might this year.

Permits & Licensing

Sandy Johnson



Before FRP, you'd have to estimate distance for Saskatchewan, pay fees for distance you haven't travelled, and get new cab cards.

What a mess!

It's expensive, too. When you're renewing a fleet, the distance used to calculate your fees is from the previous year (the reporting period is July to June). Imagine the distance you accumulated between July to June of the previous year as a complete pie. That pie is

then divided out on a percentage basis to all of the jurisdictions you travelled to during the reporting period. To add a jurisdiction, you need a slice over and above what's in your pie tin. You're paying more than 100% of the amount you should be paying for license fees. If you add a bunch of jurisdictions, it makes for a very expensive pie.

Why FRP words

FRP takes all of that away. If you're an existing carrier renewing your fleet this year, you're going to report all actual distance accumulated during the distance-reporting period. The beauty is you pay for only the jurisdictions where you travelled in the previous year regardless of where you need to

travel this year. It eliminates estimated distance on renewals and assesses fees based on actual operations. And when you get your cab card it will have every IRP jurisdiction on it, giving you the ability to help a customer at the drop of a hat.

The hot shot, wrecker, and emergency freight haulers I know got into the business because they want a "go anywhere, anytime" type of job. If you're running irregular routes and have been put off by prorate in the past, FRP – and the flexibility it gives you – make it worth another look. **TW**

Sandy Johnson is the founder and managing director at North Star Fleet Solutions in Calgary. The company provides vehicle tax and license compliance services for trucking operations ranging from single vehicles to large fleets. She can be reached at 877-860-8025 or northstarfleet.com.



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Nevada becomes first state to allow autonomous trucks



Daimler says drivers will be able to perform non-driving tasks while in Highway Pilot mode, becoming logistics managers and not just drivers.

Continued from page 1

opportunities of autonomous driving functions for the global trucking industry we were willing to go ways that people did not dare to think about before," said Dr. Bernhard. "The Inspiration Truck's debut was made even more notable with Freightliner's Guinness World Record of the highest light output projection ever."

The launch was simulcast on FreightlinerInspiration.com, where a collection of videos are now available to view.

The Inspiration Truck debuts Daimler's Highway Pilot autonomous truck technology, demonstrated last year at

two events in Germany. Bernhard said then that the system would first be deployed into whichever global market developed the regulatory framework to allow it. Nevada was the first to step up - though DTNA CEO Martin Daum ac-

'The driver is a key part of a collaborative vehicle system.'

Richard Howard, DTNA

knowledgeed other states and provinces must follow, for it to become widely viable across North America.

The Inspiration Truck still requires a driver to oversee the system, which can take control and handle driving duties at times, even allowing the operator to focus on other, non-driving tasks. Daimler says 90% of truck crashes are the result of driver error and that autonomous vehicles can reduce crashes while improving driver productivity and road safety.

No roadside infrastructure is required by the Inspiration Truck, besides a set of legible lane markings. The technology has already undergone significant testing.

"Putting the Freightliner Inspiration Truck on the road is an historic day for Daimler Trucks and the North American trucking industry," said Dr. Bernhard. "Our team has done a marvelous job in bringing this breakthrough technology to the road."

The Hoover Dam was selected for the launch because it represents the ability to dream big and accomplish amazing things, even in the midst of adversity, Daimler officials explained. It was built during the Great Depression under harsh conditions, yet took fewer than five years to complete.

The Freightliner Inspiration Truck was demonstrated to journalists, who were allowed to ride along inside it, on May 6 (see accompanying story, this page). The event also garnered attention from the mainstream media, with numerous major newspapers attending and featuring a live TV report on *Good Morning America*.

The Inspiration Truck features what NHTSA defines as Level 3 autonomous vehicle capabilities, enabling the driver to cede full control of all safety-critical functions under certain traffic or environmental conditions.

"Freightliner Trucks does more than any other commercial truck manufacturer to integrate the truck, the driver and the business. The Freightliner Inspiration Truck is a case in point because it is not a driverless truck - the driver is a key part of a collaborative vehicle system," said Richard Howard, senior vice-president, sales and marketing, DTNA. "With the Freightliner Inspiration Truck, drivers can optimize their time on the road while also handling other important logistical tasks, from scheduling to routing. The autonomous vehicle technology not only contributes to improved safety and efficiency, but allows for improved communication through connectivity and integration." **TW**

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Riding in the Freightliner Inspiration Truck

By James Menzies

LAS VEGAS, Nev – After a flashy prime time introduction of its Inspiration Truck atop the Hoover Dam, Freightliner on May 6 offered further details on how the world's first road-legal autonomous truck works, and how it will benefit the North American trucking industry.

Martin Daum, president and CEO of Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA) stressed it was customers that drove Freightliner to develop a truck that will help improve safety and trucking industry efficiency.

"The easy things are already invented," he said of truck efficiency, noting it's time now to push the envelope on innovation and to help shape future regulations as well. When it comes to autonomous trucks, it's the regulatory obstacles that may be more difficult to overcome than any technical challenges. In Nevada, Freightliner found a like-minded government willing to help develop autonomous vehicles by putting a regulatory framework in place to allow their use.

There, drivers of autonomous trucks must have a commercial driver's licence and also take a course developed by the truck manufacturer and approved by the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

"DTNA elected to debut the Inspiration Truck in Nevada, because of the fact the Nevada government has regulatory requirements for needing a licence to test autonomous vehicles on public roads in this state," said Sean Waters, director of compliance and regulatory affairs with DTNA. "We wanted to do it in a regulatory environment that sets standards."

Daimler conducted 10,000 miles of testing on its Inspiration Truck to satisfy the state that the technology is safe. Nevada requires a data recorder to be installed in autonomous vehicles that will store at least 30 seconds of data in the event of a crash, however Daimler captures and stores all the data generated by the vehicle over the course of its entire life, far surpassing the minimum requirement. In the event of an accident, this data will be vital in determining who – or what – was at fault.

Until other states come on-board, the Inspiration Truck can only be operated in the state of Nevada. Daum said more states and provinces must follow suit to make autonomous trucks more widely viable.

The truck can only be operated in autonomous Highway Pilot mode when it's being driven on Nevada freeways and interstate highways. Mechanisms are in place to prevent the driver from operating in autonomous mode when and where it's not permitted.

While the driver is able, under certain conditions, to relinquish control of most driving responsibilities to Highway Pilot, he must remain in the driver's seat and must always be in position to take back control of the truck when necessary. Still, Waters said when Highway Pilot is active, the driver will eventually be able to complete paperwork, plan their next load or take care of other responsibilities, effectively allowing them to make bet-

ter use of their downtime once their driving shift is completed.

A driver will always be required to oversee the operation of the truck, Daum added.

"Will it make the driver obsolete? I don't see that," he said. "The human brain is still the best computer. We want to give the driver a tool that enhances their capability significantly."

The brains of the Highway Pilot system are a collection of advanced cameras, radars and sensors, integrated with the truck's engine, transmission, braking system and electronics. The Inspiration Truck is defined by the Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) as a Level 3 autonomous vehicle, explained Martin Zeilinger, director of advanced engineering with DTNA, meaning it "enables the driver to cede

full control of safety-critical functions, including steering, in certain traffic or environmental conditions."

There are four levels of autonomous vehicles, the fourth being a true driverless truck, but that's not the technology Freightliner is currently developing.

"Freightliner is not interested in pursuing a full self-driving vehicle," said Al Pearson, chief engineer, product validation for Freightliner. Zeilinger added one of the biggest myths around autonomous driving is that it is 'driverless' – a frequently used, but misleading term.

"An autonomous highway truck is not a driverless vehicle," Zeilinger emphasized. "We still require a qualified truck driver with a CDL to be in the cab and at the controls."

In fact, since the technology is so

new, Nevada currently requires *two* people to be in the cab of an autonomous truck at all times. One can only assume that condition will be lifted in time, otherwise it would certainly offset any productivity gains the industry hopes to achieve.

While the driver will not be eliminated by the technology, there are still benefits to be had, officials pointed out. Since 90% of crashes are caused by driver error, Freightliner officials said autonomous trucks have the potential to reduce crashes. They profess the technology can also improve fuel efficiency, reduce the strain on components, improve traffic flow and reduce driver stress and fatigue in monotonous driving situations.

The Inspiration Truck also boasts

Continued on page 29

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Autonomous truck still requires driver to be at controls

Continued from page 27

platooning capabilities, where further fuel savings can be achieved by linking up several such trucks via vehicle-to-vehicle communications. They can then travel in a tightly packed convoy with the braking activities of the lead truck causing the following trucks to slow or stop in unison.

This technology has shown a 5.3% average fuel savings among the trucks in a three-truck platoon and a 6% average fuel savings in a five-truck platoon, chiefly by minimizing the air pressure zones between the trucks.

The Highway Pilot system – while impressive and far more advanced than any other such system – still has some concerning shortcomings. It requires clearly visible lane markings to function, so it won't be usable in snowy conditions – not likely to be an issue in Nevada – or when lane markings are absent or difficult to discern.

Also, the camera/radar combination can't yet identify non-metallic objects and then apply braking, so a driver who's reading a book or making dinner reservations on his iPad when he comes upon a sizable piece of tire debris or a deer, moose or pedestrian in his path...well, that could be an issue.

However, it seems a fix to this is already in the works. Zeilinger noted as the system is further developed, it will eventually be able to recognize non-metallic objects through technology he referred to as "sensor fusion" – the combining of camera and radar capabilities to recognize a wider variety of objects. Since it's not yet clear when the Inspiration Truck will be production-ready, this will likely have been sorted by then.

With the technical sessions complete, it was time to climb inside the Inspiration Truck for a journey on Nevada highways. The tractor-trailer was buffeted by powerful, gusting crosswinds, which put the Highway Pilot system to the test. At one time, the system did ask the driver to take control but we never felt at risk.

The driver obliged and after a few seconds placed it back into Highway Pilot mode. The truck held its course remarkably well while driven autonomously. The route was pre-programmed into the GPS so when we approached the intended highway exit the system reminded the driver to take the reins. While on Highway Pilot, the driver was able to remove a tablet from the dash to perform non-driving tasks. During our drive, the truck always felt completely safe and in control, even when the driver's feet were planted firmly on the floor and his hands were off the steering wheel.

Highway Pilot will eventually be able to use sign recognition abilities to maintain the posted speed limit but for now, the driver programs in the desired cruise speed. The truck adjusted its speed as required to maintain a safe following distance. It was able to effortlessly handle any scenario that it encountered on our short drive. Daimler, so heavily invested as it is in autonomous trucking technology, is hoping regulators across North America will be equally impressed and convinced.

Once more states allow the use of



autonomous trucks, DTNA's Daum said the hope is the technology can be used to drive further productivity gains for the industry. These could

come in the form of longer driver hours-of-service due to the reduced fatigue they experience when driving autonomous vehicles, or larger, longer

truck and trailer combinations, which will be safer than ever to operate because of the safety benefits automation brings. **TW**

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Are you ready for PC-11?

Continued from page 31

If we go back to CJ-4, originally the engine manufacturers during the development process said 'We don't think this is going to be backwards-compatible.' It turned out enough data was generated and they allowed for it. So what I'm really saying is, although we say it may not be backwards-compatible, I think the jury is still out on that one. We'll have to wait until we get closer to get a definitive statement from each of the individual OEMs on

what their position is on it."

That's good news for customers, as most oil experts agree there's little reason not to opt for the fuel economy oils, aside from simplicity and the ability to stock one oil to prevent potentially costly misfills.

"If it's not backwards-compatible, there could be some issues with fleets having to carry multiple tanks - one for new engines and one for older engines - and everything that goes along with training tech-

nicians," Arcy said.

Just how great the fuel savings will be when PC-11 oils come to market is not yet clear. All oil companies say they'll be significant, but it's still too early in the development process to share any hard numbers.

"We haven't released our numbers yet," Shell's Arcy said. "Right now we say there's a 1.6% improvement going from the current 15W-40 to the current 10W-30. Going to a PC-11 10W-30 is going to be significantly more than 1.6%, I can say that."

The introduction of the PC-11 category may mark the tipping point in terms of a widespread shift to lower-viscosity engine oils. Many fleets are using 10W-30 and even 5W-30 engine oils today, because engine protection has not been compromised and fuel economy savings are being realized. A thinner oil reduces friction within the engine and provides other benefits as well.

"There are great benefits when it comes to cold temperature operations," said Tessier. "In Canada, that's a big plus. Typically with the 10W-30 and 5W-30 you can operate in a very large range of temperatures."

Cold-weather startability improves, said Arcy, because a thinner oil provides less resistance at start-up and also draws less power from the batteries, alternator and starter while cold-cranking.

"If it's cold and the oil is thick, it takes more energy to crank over that engine," he reasoned.

If improved fuel economy and better cold weather startability weren't enough to get you excited - or at least as excited as one can get about a new heavy-duty engine oil category - there may also be the opportunity to extend oil drain intervals. Though, this is as much to do with cleaner-burning engines as new oil technologies.

"We're seeing less and less soot being produced, so there's an opportunity, we believe, that drain intervals will start to increase even more than where they are today," Chevron's Badal said. "The other thing too, is with the new category you're going to have new technologies -

new anti-wear components, new oxidation components - that are built into it, that are also going to add to that better performance, potentially for a longer drain. I wouldn't doubt that we would see in the future that some of the OEMs will start to push (drain intervals) out even further."

Of course with any new heavy-duty engine oil category, a price hike can usually be expected. Someone has to pay for the all the R&D that went into the formulation of the new oils. Price is a sensitive subject with manufacturers, who like to parry the question by indicating price is "market-driven," which it is.

However, Chevron's Badal provides some reason for optimism on the price topic - at least as it relates to the A category oils.

"I would expect that the backwards-compatible oils are not going to be much more expensive than where CJ-4 is today," he said. "If you go back to when CJ-4 launched, there was probably a 50 cent per gallon premium versus the API CI-4 Plus oils. I don't think you'll see that. You will not see that big of an uplift on the CK-4 (Category A) oils. Now the low high-temperature, high-shear (Category B) product, you probably will see a slight increase in price point on those."

Even so, the market is already slowly transitioning to lower-viscosity engine oils, and PC-11 can only accelerate the shift, as more customers buy into the benefits of lighter-weight oils. Eager fleets don't have to wait for the new category; they can achieve fuel savings today by transitioning to lighter-weight oils in advance of PC-11's implementation.

"15W-40s have been - and will continue for a period of time to represent - a large portion of the market," said Barnaby Ngai, category portfolio manager, transportation oils Petro-Canada Lubricants. "But as people start to get more educated and more aware of the benefits of lower-viscosity engine oils such as a 10W-30 and 5W-30, I think you will start seeing a more exponential adoption rate." **TW**

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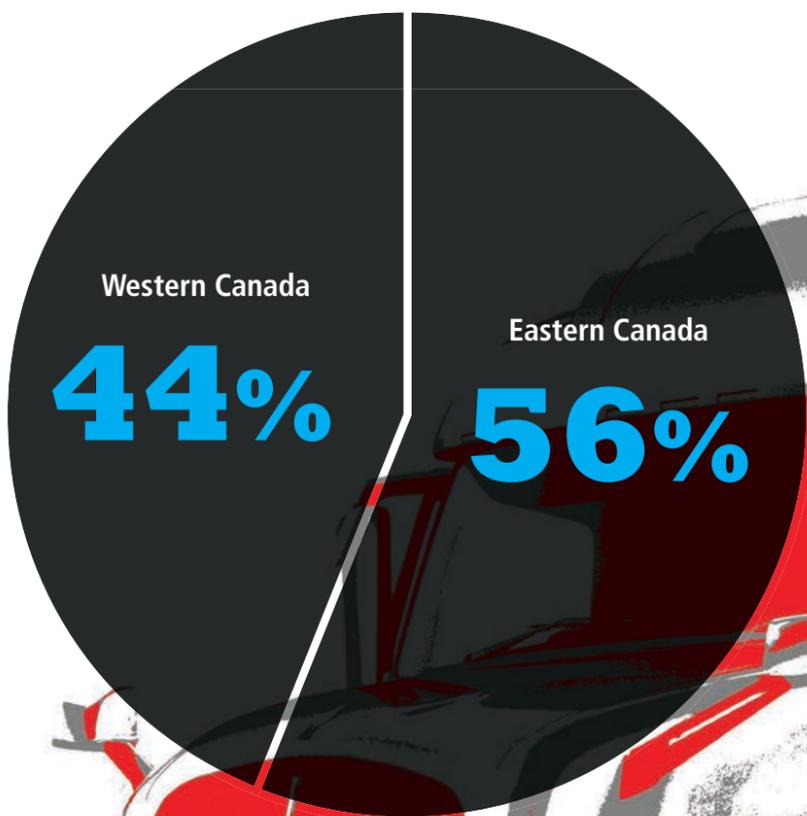
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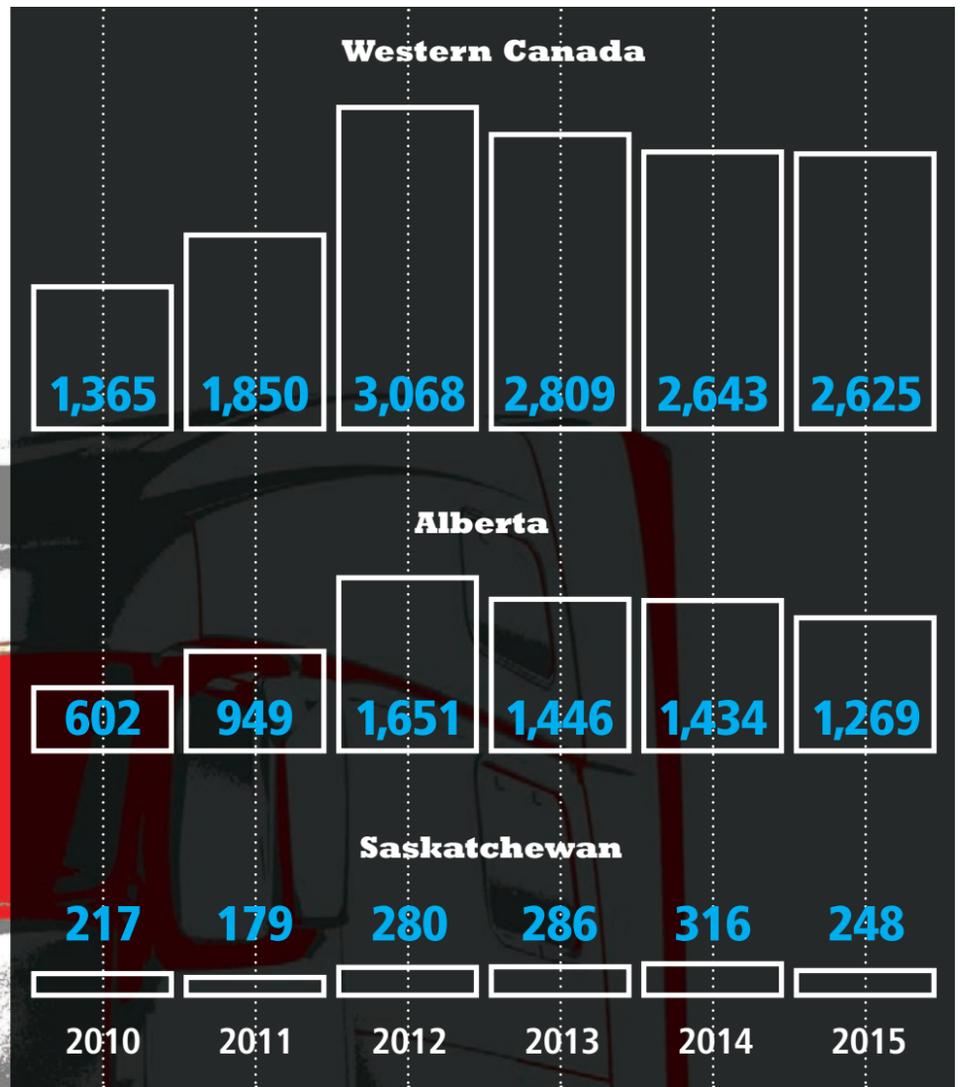
WESTERN WOES

CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES ARE ENJOYING A STRONG YEAR – JUST NOT IN WESTERN CANADA

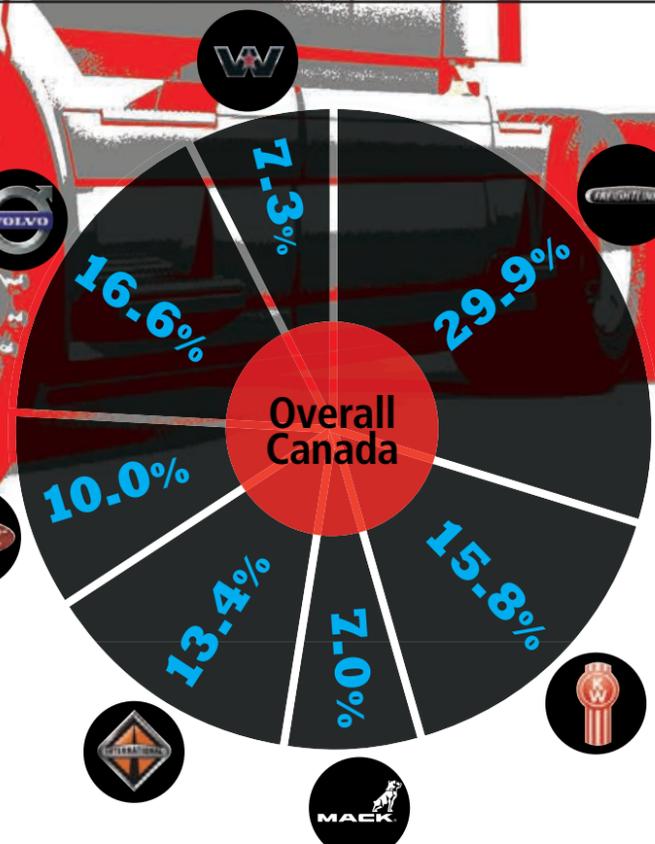
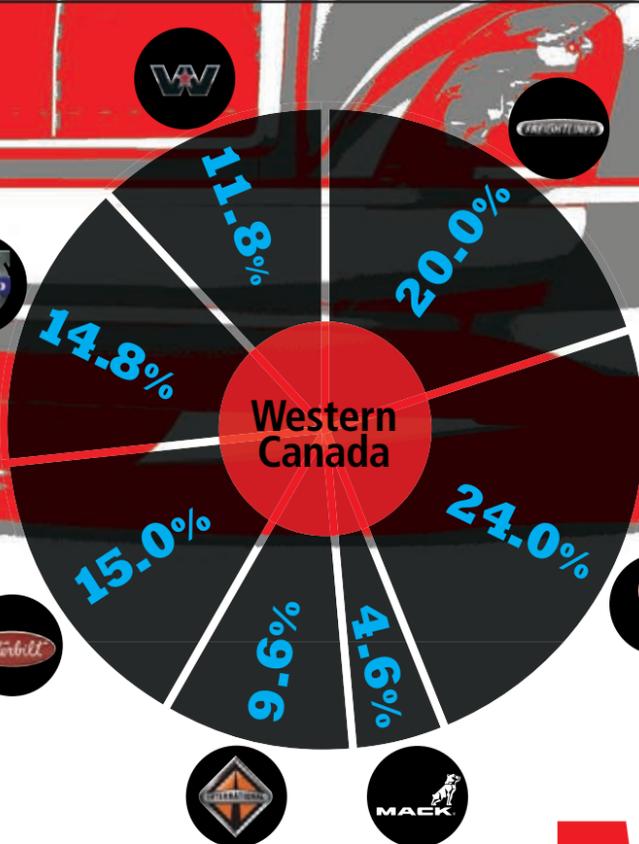
Canadian Class 8 truck sales (2014)



Class 8 truck sales historical comparison 1Q



Most popular Class 8 brands



M

otor carrier appetite for new equipment has made for a 22.5% increase in Canadian Class 8 truck sales during the first quarter over the previous year and the 5th best first quarter

sales since 1999. Don't tell that to Western carriers though. A sizeable slump in Alberta and Saskatchewan is contributing to their worst first quarter since 2012. **TW**

By Edo Van Belkom

Mark had been driving through Alberta with a load of hot tubs destined for a warehouse in Calgary. The spa tubs were a sure sign that summer was just around the corner and Mark for one looked forward to the coming months of good weather and easier driving.

Sure, there was a feeling of accomplishment that went with tackling the worst winter had to offer... and winning, but there was no comparing to driving miles of dry asphalt with a clear sky overhead and a warm summer breeze coming in through a rolled-down window.

And then, as if on cue, Mark's cell phone rang.

The only thing that could make Mark feel better about the day was if the call was coming from a lady friend, preferably one from the Prairie provinces. Unfortunately, a glance at the phone's caller ID told Mark it was Bud calling, probably with another load.

"Hello," Mark said.

"Mark, it's Bud."

"Bud who?"

"Bud-der, as in bread and budder," Bud said. "I've got a bunch of sweet loads if you're interested."

"Sure, what do you got?"

"Edmonton to Yellowknife, as many loads as you want...all spring and summer."

"Hauling what?"

"Everything they're going to need to move north when the ice road opens up in the winter."

Mark shook his head. "I don't want to drive on any ice. I did that once already with your nephew Jimmy and that road is too dangerous...even for me."

Mark had spent a week on the Tibbitt to Contwoy to ice road north of Yellowknife that serviced the gold and diamond mines in Canada's North only to find himself the subject of a murder attempt by a mob hitman.

"No ice roads," Bud said. "Just the stuff that will travel on it."

Mark's first load north was a flatbed of cement bags that would eventually be used to fortify walls deep under the earth in one of the diamond mines far north of Yellowknife.

It was heavy and unglamorous, but the pay was good and the work was steady so he decided he would drive the north for the little while and hope he didn't hit a caribou in his travels.

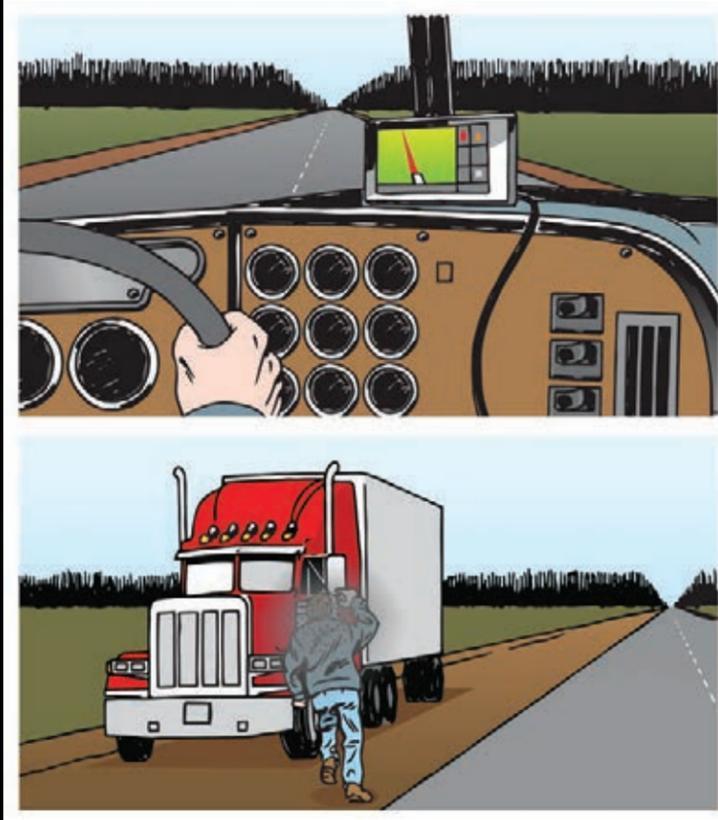
Just a couple of hours out of Edmonton, Mark came to understand why transport companies might all ways be on the lookout for new drivers.

At 16 hours, the drive was long and monotonous with not a lot in the way of scenery or traffic to keep you entertained or focused on driving.

When the best things you can say about the trip is that it's paved the entire way and there's a bridge now instead of a ferry, it says a lot about the quality of the drive.

And now, just four hours into his eight-hour drive from Edmonton to High Level and the halfway mark of the journey, Mark was feeling sleepy.

Despite having what he'd thought was a full night's sleep the previous evening, and listening to one of



Miles to go before I sleep

PART 1

his favourite audiobooks – Stephen King's *Shawshank Redemption* – Mark could feel his eyelids getting heavy.

And while the roadway was paved, it wasn't like driving the Trans-Canada through Quebec or the 401 through Ontario.

There were plenty of rough patches and the shoulders seemed like they crept in on either side of the highway, pulling at Mother Load's front wheels every chance they got.

And the scenery...at first Mark thought it was beautiful and majestic, but after a while even that began to wear thin and each vista blurred into the next. And while the road signs and mile-markers were helpful, what he wouldn't give to see a gas station, garage or house along the way.

Mark glanced at the screen of his GPS and saw that there were still over a thousand kilometres to go before he reached his destination.

Suddenly, Mother Load began to tremble and lean to the right.

Mark looked up and saw that the forest had closed in on him and the ditch at the side of the road had become a gaping trench that had opened up to swallow him whole.

The wheels of his truck began to shudder as his tires began to cut into the loose gravel and dirt beneath them.

Eyes wide and knuckles white, he avoided the temptation to suddenly jerk the steering wheel and

the sounds and smells and vastness of it all was almost too beautiful for him to be a part of.

In the distance – less than a half-kilometre away – a group of caribou crossed the highway behind him.

Too perfect.

And then...buzzing in his ear. He swatted at it, but the buzzing came back louder. Mark's head swiveled on his shoulders to see mosquitoes swarming about his head. Mark brushed his hands over his face and head feeling the insects land on the backs of his hands and break into his flesh.

"Ahhh," he screamed as a black fly tore a chunk of skin from the outside of his ear.

Without hesitation he bolted back toward Mother Load. Hopefully he'd be able to open the cab door on the first try and escape the swarms of beasts that were out for his blood.

His hand grabbed the handle firmly on the first try. The door swung open with ease and he was up and inside Mother Load in seconds...

Along with a hundred or more of the pesky, blood-thirsty insects.

Mark released the parking brake, threw Mother Load in gear, and headed back out onto the highway.

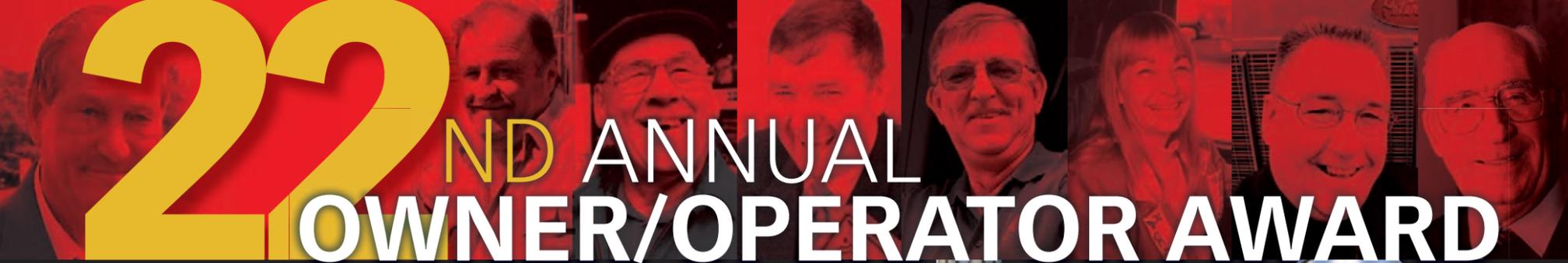
Now, with passengers on board, he was easily alert and attentive the rest of the way to the midway point of his journey in High Level. **TW**

– Mark Dalton returns next month in Part 2 of *Miles to go before I sleep*.

Illustration by Glenn McEvoy



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Contracted to (if applicable): _____

My choice is based on:

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

Explain: _____

_____ (Include additional information on separate paper if insufficient space)

Nominated by: _____ Phone: _____

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

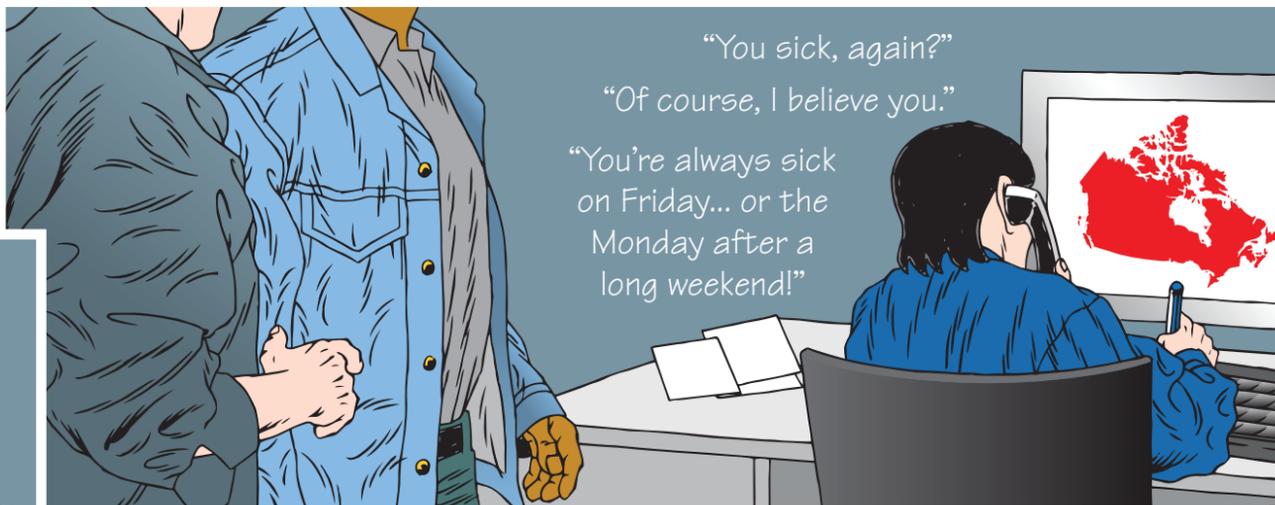
FORM MUST BE FILLED IN COMPLETELY AND NOMINEE MUST HAVE CLEAN DRIVER'S ABSTRACT



The New Adventure Continues

By Edo Van Belkom

Mark takes the new driver to see Bud at his office. When they get there, Bud is yelling into the phone.



Still on the phone, Bud turns around and smiles at Mark and the new driver, almost like he's enjoying his conversation. Mark takes the opportunity to tell Bud, "This is the guy I was telling you about." Bud nods and gives Mark the thumbs up. Then he turns around to resume his telephone conversation. "Of course I don't want you driving sick. In fact, I don't want you driving for me until you're feeling better, like in a year!"

Bud slams the phone down and turns around smiling. "This is Vic," Mark says, urging Vic forward with a gentle push from behind. Vic shakes hands with Bud. Bud asks, "Vic, eh? Like in Victor or Vikram." "Yes," Vic answers.



Mark drives Vic to the yard where the truck he'll be driving is parked. When Mark asks him what he thought of Bud, Vic says, "He seems like he might be a hard man to work for." Mark shakes his head. "No, not Bud. He can be an ass a lot of the time, but he's a fair ass." Vic nodded, but Mark couldn't be sure he understood. Mark stops in front of a worn and beaten truck that looks like it's been on the road forever. "Is that it?" Vic asks as they approach the truck. Mark sighs. "Sorry, man. I'll call Bud and ask him to find you another truck."



Illustration by Glenn McEvoy

"No," Vic says pointing to the driver's door. On the door is the name of an old trucking company that's been blocked out by three strips of duct tape. Vic tears the tape off the door to reveal the trucking company name. **NEWLAND TRANSPORT** "It's perfect," he says sliding an open hand over the lettering.



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Keystone Western names new president

GRANDE POINTE, Man. – Keystone Western has named Dave Davis its new president, while former president Norm Curtis moves into the CEO role.

Davis joined Keystone Western on Apr. 6 and previously served in management roles with carriers including Wildwood Transport and Canada Cartage.

As CEO, Curtis said he'll focus on developing new business opportunities and managing the company's rolling

stock.

"Keystone has been growing considerably over the past four years", said Curtis. "The plan over the next few years is continual growth at a rate of 15-20%. I personally want to acquire new opportunities that will enhance our overall service offerings. I can't do that in my current role, so I am pleased to have hired Dave as president to take over my day-to-day responsibilities." **TW**

Manitoulin buys Ridsdale Transport

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – Manitoulin Group of Companies has acquired Ridsdale Transport of Saskatoon, Sask.

The new purchase makes Manitoulin Saskatchewan's largest transportation and logistics provider.

"We have had our eye on Saskatchewan for coverage improvement for some time," said Gord Smith, chief executive officer, Manitoulin Group of Companies. "Ridsdale not only provides the routes, the equipment and the human resources we desire, but demonstrates a culture of service excellence and dependability that we and our customers expect."

Ridsdale Transport Ltd. will operate as a separate business unit within the Manitoulin Group of Companies under the leadership of Greg Ridsdale, vice-president.

Wayne Ridsdale, the former president of Ridsdale Transportation Ltd., will remain in a consulting role.

"We built our business from the ground up and are very proud of where we are today," said Greg Ridsdale. "By joining Manitoulin, I know what we have created will flourish and that our customers will benefit from the many additional services that the Manitoulin Group of Companies can provide them." **TW**

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Name of Course Completed _____ Over-Size Loads

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Air Brake (Drive)

Tankers

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TRUCK NEWS CAREERS www.trucknews.com

Orlick's success comes from great service, communication

By Jim Bray

Gene Orlick was frustrated when *Truck West* sat down with him for an interview. The long-time Calgary carrier owner was faced with finding a quick replacement for a driver who quit suddenly after one of his loads was cancelled. Yet it was just another in the challenges he – and many other owners – faces on a daily basis. “That’s trucking,” he said. “It changes 10 times a day, 20 times.”

It irks Orlick that today’s “typical” employee doesn’t represent what “typical” used to mean. “I struggle with it because we have a nice company here and we’ve got good people and there’s no reason to just up and walk away from us because we treat them all fairly, like family.”

Though recruiting is always a challenge, Orlick said his company has a steady flow of people coming through, though Murphy’s Law does raise its ugly head sometimes. “The last guy who quit (after his load was cancelled) is 60 years old; I personally hired him, checked his references, evaluated his history, and he was an excellent driver with lots of experience.”

Orlick is a second-generation owner. His Dad, Max, and his Uncle Tom started the original Orlick Transport and the young Gene worked for them “right from when I could walk. I picked nails out of the yard and every Saturday I’d get the same old pail and cash them in again the following Saturday. That was where my entrepreneurial blood came.”

Tom Orlick has since passed away, but that wasn’t the end of Orlicks. “I was working at another company and then my wife, Nancy, and I started this company under Gene Orlick Transport Limited and about six, seven years into that we changed to Orlicks Inc., because we were into warehousing and environmental as well.”

They subsequently rebranded as Orlick Transport, with the blessing of Uncle Tom. “After he retired I asked him if I could use the name and he said absolutely. He was very proud of that. He was a mentor to me.”

One of Tom’s best pieces of advice for Gene was “collect your

receivables,” a bit of counsel that was spurred when Gene tried to borrow some money from him. “And that’s held true to me for years and years and it is true,” Orlick said. “If you’ve got \$1.5 million in receivables, they’ve got your money, so go get it.”

The new Orlicks began from scratch in 1995, with two trucks and four trailers. “We worked for Coca-Cola hauling their bottles and then hauling their product to warehouses,” Orlick said. Over the next 20 years, the company grew quickly and now boasts 30 trucks and 180 trailers. “We’re a nice little company,” he said proudly. “We’ve got our 10.5 acres here now and our shop, and we’re doing maintenance for others as well.”

The company moved to its current digs in southeast Calgary in February of 2012, a location close to the Stoney Trail ring road. “We used to be down in deep Foothills (Industrial Park) and our drivers would spend an hour getting out of Calgary on Deerfoot and now it’s only 15 minutes. And having all our shop, our fuel, our



Gene Orlick, proud business owner, says the day-to-day challenges of trucking keep him going and keep him excited to go to work each morning.

communicate – so (if there’s an issue) somebody gets out of bed and sends an e-mail to all the parties that require that information, and the service is provided. It may be delayed, but at the end of the day you’ve made an agreement and the service is good – because a lack of performance on the part of the carrier can really impact their supply chain.”

The company hauls general freight – soup to nuts, as Orlick described it – mostly through Alberta and Northern B.C. About a third of its tractors

Even though the economy may be threatening to blow up, Orlick isn’t worried. “We’re pretty lean,” he said. “We use a lot of turnpike doubles because you have two loads pulling with one tractor.”

He said turnpike doubles are environmentally friendly and are the safest mode of trucking, because their drivers need two years’ experience and 100,000 miles to qualify for an LCV licence.

“You have to get extra training,” he said, “so the turnpike double drivers are...more expert at their job.”

The company is also vigilant about safety and maintenance.

“We do a lot of different things I’m not sure others do,” he said. “We have our licensed mechanics go through the yard twice a day, morning and night – to pre-trip equipment that’s going out that day and make sure lights, brakes and air pressures are up and everything’s right, and they repair deficiencies prior to the trip.”

The company also does a weekly safety lane, using its drive-through bay.

“On safety lane day, no trailer leaves the yard unless it goes through our shop – that means truck, trailer and driver,” Orlick said. “That’s been really successful for us in terms of training our drivers.”

Challenges aside, Gene Orlick loves going to work. “I’m very proud of our company,” he said, “and I’m excited every day. The neat part about my job is that it’s never the same; each day’s different, with different challenges. That keeps me going. I get charged up by the sale, I like getting new contracts and working with customers on long term projects because we add value.” **TW**

“Anyone can buy a truck, but it’s what you do with the truck that counts.”

Gene Orlick, owner, Orlick Transport

weigh scale, and warehouse, everything together – we’ve been able to have synergies there to improve our profits.”

Orlick credits the company’s success to its commitment to service. “Anyone can buy a truck, but it’s what you do with the truck (that counts),” he said. “Can you provide the added value of good service?”

Failure, he said, comes when you don’t deliver as promised and the customer is left wondering where the load is.

“Our customers are just-in-time,” he said. “All the groceries have 10 p.m. to 4 a.m. appointments so we have to have a system where we’re getting out of town here by 6 p.m. so we can (make) the 10 p.m. appointment in Edmonton. With such a short window of delivery time, we have to

and half its trailers are based out of Edmonton, where Orlicks has three yards.

Orlicks recently bought eight 2016 Freightliners it expects to have by July and the company has added some tri-axles as well.

“It’s kind of a new thing for us,” Orlick said. “There’s some bigger accounts, beverage companies, that are using the 60,000-pound load, so a tri-axle is required. And that’s another type of service that requires expertise because you have to load the trailers correctly so you don’t have axle overloads.”

That’s an area in which Orlicks’ scale’s comes in handy.

“We don’t have any overload fines to worry about and the guys don’t white knuckle it, wondering if they’re overloaded,” he said.

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