

Page 12 Road extension: Industry gets long-awaited extension to 61st Ave. S.E., improving access in area.

Page 17 Transformers: Western Star shows off its real-life Optimus Prime, the Multi-Body Transformer.

Page 26 Health/hiring: Healthy Worker outlines Top 3 health issues facing drivers, as well as best hiring practices.

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This 1967 Peterbilt 351 found its way from a California farm to Wild Rose Country and was on display at the Southern Alberta Truck Expo in Lethbridge, Alta. With less than 300 made, it could be the last remaining of its kind.



Reach us at our Western Canada news bureau

Contact
Derek Clouthier
Derek@
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or call
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Last of its kind?

Classic Peterbilt makes journey from California to Alberta

By Derek Clouthier

LETHBRIDGE, Alta. – Every truck has a story, but for some, there is more to their history than others.

A 1967 Peterbilt 351 was on display in Lethbridge, Alta. for the second annual Southern Alberta Truck Expo June 17-18, and over the years, this rig has developed a story.

Charles Nickol purchased the truck from California dairy farmer Art Van Beek. Van Beek, along with his family, is a well-known figure in The Golden State, owning El Monte Dairy in Tipton, Calif. The Van Beek family (Art, Doug, Bill, Rick and Raymond) was presented with the 52nd Farmer of the Year award in 2012 by the Kiwanis Club of Tulare. Nickol said the '67 Peterbilt was originally a logging truck, with only 299 of its kind manufactured, and it was the only one to his knowledge left. He said Van Beek purchased the truck from another Californian, presumably from the individual who put the 'Lopez' name on the doors, which remain to this day, but Nickol said Van Beek never used the vehicle on his dairy farm.

With a 355 horsepower Cummins engine measuring 855 cubic inches, Nickol said the truck is now mostly used as a farm truck to haul grain.

"It's a working truck," he said. "It has one of the biggest engines you could get in (1967)."

Nickol said the particular 351 model of Peterbilt was often referred to as a 'needle nose,' – a term he uttered reluctantly – as the size of the radiator was much narrower than most other models, giving it a 'needle-like' appearance.

Due to increased horsepower in today's trucks, most newer models must have larger radiators to allow for better airflow to cool the engine.

The truck also features what Nickol called center-point steering, which he said was rare. The concept behind center-point steering is based on 'Ackerman Angles,' where there is a relationship between the front inside tire and front outside tire, with the inside turning tighter, as it makes up a much shorter distance on a corner or curve.

Nickol said one of the issues with center-point steering is that unlike power steering, the wheels do not automatically return to a straight position, but rather remain turning even when the driver takes their hands off the steering wheel, which can pose a challenge to some.

The truck also tests mechanics with a hood featuring a butterfly design, which Nickol said makes it difficult to get under to work on the engine. Despite its age, the truck does the job it's intended to do, but it still takes some getting used to.

"By the time you get this thing up to what you think is 80 mph, but is really 30," he said, "you're hanging on for dear life."

Saying he has never been a guy to trade things in, Nickol loves the vehicle's originality and said he would never customize the truck.

In an odd twist to the story behind the '67 Peterbilt, after purchasing the truck from Van Beek, Nickol discovered that he lived right next to the California dairy farmer's cousin, just outside Lethbridge.

It is a small world indeed. **TW**

Responding to a spill

B.C. government looks to create new land-based spill preparedness and response regime

By Derek Clouthier

VICTORIA, B.C. – In response to what it feels is a lack of adequate information being provided when a hazardous substance spill occurs, the British Columbia government is in the process of amending the province's Environmental Management Act to ensure when a train, plane, boat or truck suffers a spill, proper response and recovery measures are being employed.

The B.C. Trucking Association (BCTA) has voiced some concerns over the details of the amendment and what effects it would have on the trucking industry.

"We have recommended no duplication of requirements, recognition of the voluntary measures trucking companies currently take and enhanced communication between federal and provincial agencies so they can exchange information directly rather than trucking companies potentially having to make multiple reports," said BCTA CEO and president Louise Yako. "In other words, our emphasis has always been on identifying any gaps in current systems and finding ways to fill those gaps."

However, Yako said the provincial government has not yet provided the BCTA with the data it is using to influence its decision making process.

On July 4, the BCTA submitted its third intensions paper to the Ministry of Environment (MoE) detailing its position and recommendations for the proposed new spill response regime.

In that report, the BCTA states that when it comes to reporting a spill, the association agrees with the government that there should be some kind of standardized reporting requirements aligned with those of other regulators and industry best practices to avoid duplication, and that a single portal for all spill reporting would be ideal.

The BCTA also recommends a preparedness and response organization (PRO) be established through a phased in approach to focus on communication, coordination and data management of a spill. The association, however, said the organization

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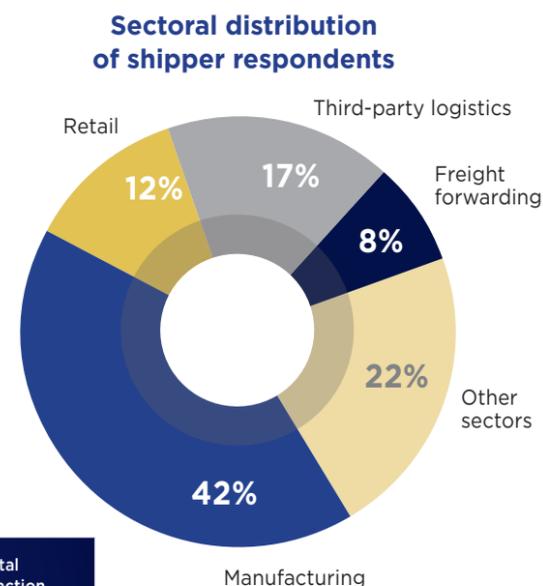
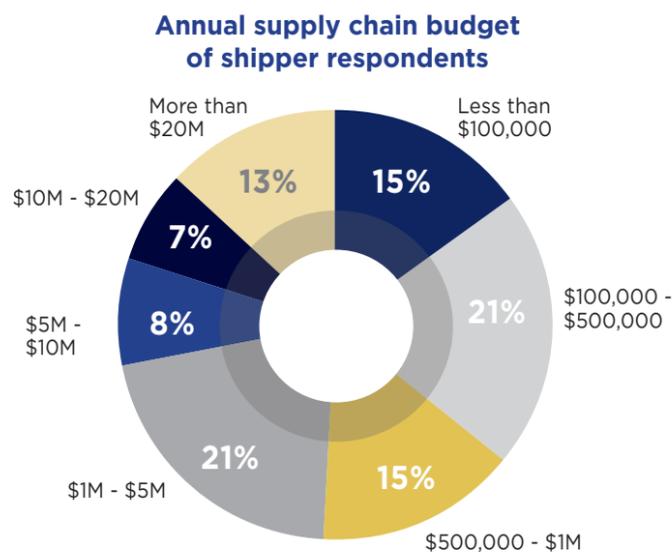
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Ocean Carriers	4.637	4.452	4.384	4.761	4.641	4.494	4.068	4.207
Couriers	4.866	4.418	4.599	4.751	4.682	4.417	3.914	4.197
Air Carriers	4.899	4.560	4.614	4.684	4.673	4.559	4.024	4.205
Rail Carriers	4.586	4.430	4.331	4.745	4.601	4.345	3.921	4.248

Shipper Satisfaction Ratings By Mode

Mode	On-time performance	Quality of equipment & operations	Information technology	Competitive pricing	Customer service	Leadership in problem solving	Ability to provide value-added services	Sustainable transportation practices	Total satisfaction score
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TL Trucking	21.34	19.59	16.40	20.42	20.16	18.49	15.63	17.17	149.208
Ocean Carriers	19.47	18.47	17.57	19.95	19.23	17.59	15.16	16.43	143.851
Couriers	20.88	18.71	19.16	19.44	18.40	16.47	14.46	16.45	143.962
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Mark Donnelly is the executive director for SafetyDriven. Read more about his role on pg. 13.

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PRESIDENT:
 Jim Glionna

VICE PRESIDENT:
 Joe Glionna

PRODUCTION:
 Beverley Richards, Carolyn Brimer

CIRCULATION MANAGER:
 Pat Glionna

Sales inquiries

Delon Rashid
 Sales & Marketing Consultant
 - Western Canada
 403-713-1054
 delon@newcom.ca

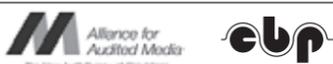
Subscription inquiries

Lilianna Kantor
 Phone: 416-614-5815
 Fax: 416-614-8861
 Email: lily@newcom.ca

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Joe Glionna
 GENERAL MANAGER
 416-614-5805
 joe@newcom.ca



Lou Smyrlis
 PUBLISHER &
 EDITORIAL DIRECTOR
 416-510-6881
 lou@newcom.ca



Kathy Koras
 ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER
 416-510-6892
 kathy@newcom.ca



Tony Hohenadel
 PUBLISHER
 truckandrailer.ca
 416-614-5800
 tony@newcom.ca

EDITORIAL



Derek Clouthier
 EDITOR
 403-969-1506
 derek@newcom.ca



James Menzies
 EXECUTIVE EDITOR
 416-510-6896
 james@newcom.ca



Sonia Straface
 ASSISTANT EDITOR
 416-510-6890
 sonia@newcom.ca



Julia Kuzeljevich
 CONTRIBUTING EDITOR
 416-510-6880
 julia@newcom.ca



Dan Robinson
 DIRECTOR DIGITAL
 MARKETING
 416-510-5123
 dan@newcom.ca



Brad Ling
 VIDEO PRODUCTION
 416-442-5600 ext. 3620

ACCOUNT MANAGERS



Delon Rashid
 SALES & MARKETING
 CONSULTANT
 - WESTERN CANADA
 403-713-1054
 delon@newcom.ca



Nickisha Rashid
 REGIONAL ACCOUNTS
 MANAGER
 416-614-5824
 nickisha@newcom.ca



Heather Donnelly
 NATIONAL ACCOUNTS
 MANAGER
 416-614-5804
 heather@newcom.ca



Denis Arsenault
 QUEBEC ACCOUNTS
 MANAGER
 514-938-0639 ext. 2
 denis@newcom.ca



Doug Copeland
 REGIONAL ACCOUNTS
 MANAGER
 905-715-9511
 doug@newcom.ca



Paul Beelien
 REGIONAL ACCOUNTS
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How would an outsider view truck driving when choosing a career?

In an effort to put the topic of ELDs to bed for at least a month and avoid any further damage to my ego (check out the letter to the editor on page 43), I figured I'd shift the conversation to another major issue facing the industry - the driver shortage.

Now I know just like ELDs this topic has been discussed a lot lately, but I'd like to use this opportunity to encourage *Truck West* readers to take a few minutes to write me a short letter describing why you love being a truck driver.

One of the biggest issues, I've been told, surrounding the driver shortage is that the industry does not do a good job recruiting young people, and for a profession facing a critical shortage in the coming years, it's essential for that shortfall to turn around.

And what better tool to utilize in the effort to entice the next generation of drivers to get behind the wheel than those who are doing it today and have been for decades?

There are obviously several favorable aspects to being a truck driver, or else why would you choose it as a career?

But as with any job, I'm sure there are some negatives as well. So what are those negatives? What is it about truck driving, or perhaps the industry as a whole, you would like to see changed?

Derek's deliberation

Derek Clouthier



And, is it because of these adverse factors that the industry has had trouble finding new drivers, or does it have nothing to do with the industry at all; maybe it's just the reality of what today's younger generation of worker is looking for when it comes to employment.

Let's look at some positives (and keep in mind, I am not a truck driver, so in essence, what I see as positives and negatives could very well be what those the industry is looking for sees as well):

Freedom - This must be one of the main reasons people get into truck driving. You are on the highway for the majority of the time with nothing but the open road looking over your shoulder.

Travel - Though this facet of the job could get old over time, and not apply to some, depending on the type of routes they drive, being able to see a variety of different locations around North America is definitely a positive aspect to any job; much better than sitting in an office five days a week.

Camaraderie - I can imagine being

out on the road, that over time, truck drivers develop a certain amount of fellowship between one another. You are all doing the same job and got into it for similar reasons, and during those moments when you do see each other at a truck stop or elsewhere, it's great to chat up.

Though you may feel some level of satisfaction knowing you're responsible for bringing the world's products to consumers, freedom, travel and camaraderie seem like they would be the Top 3 reasons for getting into trucking.

So what are the negatives?

Salary - I've heard conflicting accounts of how much a truck driver makes, which is likely because it varies so greatly depending on location, distance traveled and what you're driving. Some long-distance haulers can make upwards of \$80,000 a year, while the majority who start out make much less, sometimes as low as \$20,000.

Away from home - Although this doesn't matter to some depending on their life situation, it can get difficult being away from home as much as a driver has to be when they have children and/or a significant other wanting to spend



more time with them.

This is how a relative outsider would view the world of truck driving when making a career choice. Please write me and let me know your thoughts, where I may have gone wrong and what I may have missed all together. **TW**

Derek Clouthier can be reached by phone at (403) 969-1506 or by e-mail at derek@newcom.ca. You can also follow him on Twitter at @DerekClouthier.

Make way for the quiet leader who listens

The leaders who shaped the trucking industry of today were forged in the cauldron of deregulation in the late 1980s.

At a time of regulatory upheaval which saw once powerful companies get mired in outdated thinking and become paralyzed by indecision, these leaders saw great opportunity and were unrelenting in their pursuit of it.

They started as small operators but grew quickly, often at the expense of older and more established brands that could not keep up with this new dynamism. They were able to grow because when people were uncertain about the way forward they knew what had to be done and inspired others to follow. These were the people I met as I started writing about the industry in 1990. They were bold, they were charismatic and audacious, they were loud about the issues

The view with Lou

Lou Smyrlis



they cared about. They molded their companies in their own image.

But as these leaders start to retire and we consider who can fill their shoes, I hope we can also make room for a different type of leader; the type of leader whom by his or her nature doesn't frequently make headlines. The kind of leader whom *Good to Great* author Jim Collins describes as someone who demonstrates "a compelling modesty, shunning public adulation and never boastful."

In plain language: the quiet lead-

er. The kind of leader, who rather than molding a company to his or her own image, builds a brand based on values employees and customers respect and then makes his or her own identity subservient to it. The kind of leader who builds an organization that can carry on after his or her retirement.

While there is no shortage of such people in our industry, I wonder if too often they don't get passed over for executive positions because they are not the loudest voice in the room, and that's the image of leaders we've become accustomed to.

Leadership comes in different forms and the style of leadership is not what we should get hung up on, but rather its effectiveness. Being soft spoken and considerate should not be considered disadvantages to being a leader. Such

attributes should be considered an advantage.

Research conducted into effective leadership by Wharton School associate professor Adam Grant, PhD, indicates that listening is key to good leadership and that quiet introverted leaders often deliver better outcomes than extroverts because they're more likely to consider other people's suggestions.

The new generation entering our industry is the most educated and technologically adept generation our country has seen. They have ideas to share and they will flourish best when working within a system whose leaders cherish listening. They are ready for the quiet leader who listens. **TW**

Lou Smyrlis can be reached by phone at (416) 510-6881 or by e-mail at lou@newcom.ca. You can also follow him on Twitter at @LouSmyrlis.

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Spill 'unlikely'

Continued from page 1

should avoid placing arduous costs or requirements on the trucking industry due to a variety of factors, including reporting duplication, the effectiveness of regulations already in place for the trucking industry, the small size of most trucking companies in B.C., third-party liability insurance and the limited risk of an in-transit spill from a truck.

Yako underscored a 2012 report from the Canadian Trucking Alliance indicating there were 1.64 spills per 10,000 loads transported by a truck, and only around 30% of those spills occurred while in-transit. The BCTA's report also indicated about 90% of B.C. trucking companies were made up of five trucks or less, but that the remaining 10% run around 60% of the province's fleet.

In the BCTA's third intentions paper response, it states: "Since MoE is committed to developing a risk-based model, spill contingency planning should consider the most likely scenario for a spill rather than a worst-case scenario, since worst-case scenarios are the least likely occurrence."

The MoE said while every industry in the province is captured currently by other regulators in some capacity, those regulators have varying degrees of spill preparedness, response and recovery requirements, and the new regime would look to regulate all of these industries under one cohesive plan.

"To fulfill its legislated responsibilities, the ministry requires information from all industries about the hazardous substances they are moving or storing, as well as the planning and preparedness efforts undertaken before a spill occurs to be assured an effective response can occur," the MoE told *Truck West*. "Although these other agencies do address portions of a strong spill program, their lens is primarily not focused on environmental concerns, which is the principle responsibility of the ministry."

The MoE said despite various regulators having some overlap in their requirements, there are a lot of inconsistencies at both the federal and provincial levels, which leads to uncertainty for the public and other governments about the obligations of industry in the event of a spill.

"This regime is not targeting the trucking industry in a different manner than any other industry," the MoE said. "The goal of this regime is to ensure world-leading spill preparedness, response and recovery across all sectors."

The ministry said its environmental emergencies program and accompanying regulations have not been updated for more than 20 years, and must move forward to best address B.C.'s growing economy. The MoE said it was premature at this point to describe in detail how the proposed amendments to the Environmental Management Act would affect how a spill is responded to with discussions ongoing with First Nations, local governments, industry and others.

The proposed PRO would be intended to provide certain services, like those suggested by the BCTA, in the event of a spill, but ultimately it would be the responsible party that would be required to ensure the spilled material is cleaned up to the satisfaction of the MoE.

The BCTA provided supplementary recommendations to the MoE with relation to safety and spill prevention, including shipper education and mandating electronic logging devices (ELDs), citing the US's move to do so starting in 2017. "While the trucking industry's crash rate is low (about 5% of all crashes in B.C.)," the report stated, "driver error is the most common cited crash factor. Improving compliance with these regulations would help reduce driver fatigue, which would reduce crash and spill risks."

The BCTA also recommended the use of speed limiters on trucks, activated to a maximum of 105 km/h, and an entry-level training program for truck drivers that meets a national standard.

The MoE said the current system for tracking spill reports does not adequately compare data for spills from one mode of transportation to another, but the new model would put this type of information in place. **TW**

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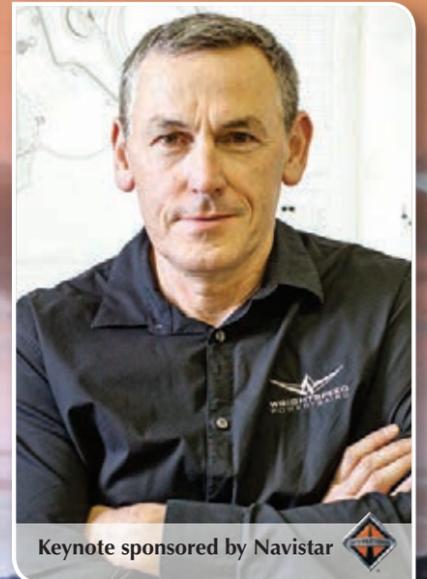
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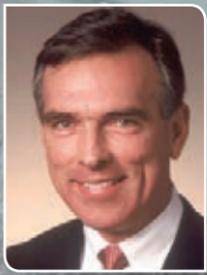
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Access granted

Extension of Calgary's 61st Ave. S.E. to improve access for truckers and motorists

By Derek Clouthier

CALGARY, Alta. – The City of Calgary celebrated the opening of the 61st Avenue S.E. extension June 23, which will give truckers a much more direct route between transportation corridors and distribution centers in southeast Calgary.

There to mark the occasion was Gene Orlick, chairman of the Canadian Trucking Alliance and Alberta Motor Transport Association and owner of trucking company Orlicks.

"We're extremely pleased the City of Calgary has completed this connector project, as it provides an accessible east-west link for motorists and truckers alike," Orlick said. "This effectively accomplishes the goal of reaching the major distribution centers and transportation corridors in southeast Calgary on a timely basis, and alleviates a great deal of congestion on Stoney Trail allowing motorists to move freely. It's something we've seen as a need for some time now, and we can all enjoy the benefits immediately."

Also present was Calgary's Ward 9 councilor Gian-Carlo Carra, who said the extension would mean better transportation for people, goods and services, and would energize the growth of the area.

"I'm also excited that the project provides for pedestrian movement along 61 Avenue, including a regional pathway," Carra said, "which will ultimately connect with Ralph Klein Park."

"The project team made sure that the sensitive environmental elements were well protected, recognizing that the project would have some affect on local wetlands," added Mac Logan, the city's general manager of transportation.

"Working with Alberta Environ-

ment and the city's parks department, all mitigation strategies available were applied to minimize any impacts."

The 61st Ave. S.E. extension is a



Above: An Orlicks company truck breaks through a ribbon opening the 61st Ave. S.E. extension in Calgary June 23. **Below:** Gene Orlick, owner of Orlicks, speaks during the ceremony.

two-lane road from the existing flyover at Stoney Trail to 68th Street S.E. and a four-lane road from 68th Street S.E. to 57th Street S.E.

Environmental protection initiatives include the construction of a longer bridge over Forest Lawn Creek, upgrades to the wetlands area along 61st Ave. and development of a sidewalk and pathway for pedestrians.

Dave Gilkes, president of the 84th Street S.E. Access Association, was also pleased with the opening of the extension, something he said he had been advocating for for some time, and, during a 2009 meeting with then minister of transportation, Luke Ouellette, was able to garner approval of several add-ons for area businesses and construction plans

for Stoney Trail.

Those add-ons included a full interchange at Peigan Trail, an emergency access gate at the south end of 84th Street S.E., upgrades to 100 Street S.E. from 61st Ave. S.E. to Glenmore Trail, interchange upgrades to 84th Street S.E. and 17th Ave. S.E. and the flyover at 61st Ave. S.E. to connect to the industrial area.

"The 61st Ave. S.E. connector would have been completed two years earlier," said Gilkes, "but, in a meeting with (Calgary) mayor (Naheed) Nenshi, the association agreed there was a higher priority in the completion of the airport tunnel project and to divert funds that had been allocated for the 61st Ave. S.E. project to the airport tunnel project."

Gilkes said completion of the 61st

Ave. S.E. extension "was a great achievement for the 84th Street S.E. Access Association, and for me as well."

To celebrate the grand opening, one of Orlick's company trucks broke through a ribbon, making it the first vehicle to drive on the new thoroughfare.

Construction of the extension began in May 2015 with a budget of \$23.5 million and helps fulfill an agreement between the City of Calgary and provincial government to construct roadway connections along specific locations on the city's southeast ring road.

The Alberta Government built the 61st Ave. flyover in response to continued requests from stakeholders on the east side of Stoney Trail. **TW**

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Safety makes sense

SafetyDriven's executive director keeps his focus on the tasks at hand

By Derek Clouthier

LANGLEY, B.C. – Since taking over the role of executive director for SafetyDriven, the Trucking Safety Council of B.C., in October of last year, Mark Donnelly has made it his mission to do everything he can to ensure any and all safety measures are in place for industry professionals in his province.

Though admittedly not a health, safety or trucking industry expert, Donnelly said SafetyDriven experts have been an invaluable resource during his inaugural year.

"As I continue to learn more about health and safety and the industry," Donnelly said, "I also see an excellent opportunity to build more awareness of SafetyDriven as a valuable partner for our clients."

Donnelly brings more than 25 years of experience leading operations, marketing, communications and community programs to the position with SafetyDriven, which, among a variety of industry initiatives, awards the Certificate of Recognition (COR) to those in the trucking, transportation, warehousing, shipping and logistics sectors which exceed regulatory requirements when it comes to health and safety.

"As I learned details about the role and the challenges," Donnelly said, "it became clear that the board was looking for someone with the experience and related skills to complement a strong team and an excellent foundation of health and safety expertise and programs."

SafetyDriven's efforts to help trucking companies become safer and healthier comes at no cost to the businesses, and as Donnelly points out, aims not only to help the larger fleets, but hopes to reach those of all sizes.

"The trucking industry in B.C. comprises of a relatively small number of medium to large sized companies and a large number of inde-

pendent, small operators," he said. "Prior to my joining, the team at SafetyDriven had done some excellent work delivering health and safety to larger organizations. But it has proven difficult reaching many of the small operators with a traditional safety management system approach."

Donnelly said the small- to medium-sized market is an important one for SafetyDriven, and after nearly a year of sitting in the executive director's seat, his vision for what he would like to accomplish has not changed.

"One of the most rewarding parts of my job is helping the industry by ensuring they have access to the best information possible to keep drivers and employees safe and healthy," Donnelly explained. "In 1996, the B.C. commercial trucking industry had injury rates of 10.4 incidents per 100 workers. With a renewed emphasis on safety, that number dropped to 4.7 by 2014.

"But that is still double the provincial average of 2.3 across all industries. We still have a way to go to improve both safety and health and wellness."

One of the initiatives Donnelly is particularly excited about is a new model SafetyDriven has derived which works for small operators who sub-contract to a single, larger employer, something he is optimistic will help small companies see safer outcomes in their operations.

SafetyDriven is also in the process of employing a new approach to how it looks at road safety, and how it impacts the trucking industry in B.C., something they have done in collaboration with the B.C. Trucking Association, RCMP, WorkSafeBC, the Insurance Corporation of B.C. and Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement.

"Our research tells us that passenger vehicle drivers are a very signifi-

cant factor in many large truck/passenger vehicle fatality collisions," Donnelly said, adding that the collaborative partnership on this project is developing a program that will be aimed at providing education on safe driving around large commercial trucks to passenger vehicle drivers.

In the end, for Donnelly it all comes down to common sense – being safe is a good thing from both a human and financial perspective, which is exactly what SafetyDriven strives to help B.C. trucking companies achieve. **TW**



Mark Donnelly

Loss of Snake Pit Road could be hidden blessing for trucking industry

DAWSON CREEK, B.C. – There's a reason locals called it Snake Pit Road, with its sharp, slithering turns and tendency to welcome recurrent accidents.

But flooding wiped out the Dawson Creek, B.C.-area highway, and now the Northern B.C. Truckers Association (NBCTA) hopes the snaky thoroughfare will be reconstructed to be more driver friendly.

With rains beginning to pour June 15, several roads in the area were damaged (including Pine Pass, another truck route), causing motorists and truckers heading toward Prince George, B.C. and the Peace Region to take time-consuming detours.

Locally referred to as Snake Pit Road, it is the thoroughfare that joins the highway leaving Dawson Creek heading toward Pouce Coupe, B.C. and eventually Grande Prairie, Alta., and the Spirit River Highway east of town.

"For many years we've been advocating to get that road straightened out," said Gary McLeod, business manager for the NBCTA. "There have been a lot of accidents and there have been some fatalities on that road already, and it seems that it gets brought up every time there is a truck laid over or someone gets killed; there seems to be a big push to do something with that road but it never seems to get done.

"It's completely wiped out now, so there should be no excuse for them not to be able to fix it properly."

McLeod said local officials had been discussing the road prior to it being destroyed by the flooding, as there had recently been numerous trucks tipped over due to the winding nature of the road.

With the road now gone, truckers entering the Dawson Creek area by way of the Spirit River Highway (Hwy. 49) are forced to drive through town.

McLeod said the main issue with heavy trucks coming through Dawson Creek is it adds significantly to the town's traffic congestion.

"You're going to have an influx of tank trucks that now have to go through the main streets of town," he said. "The way that Dawson Creek is designed, we have an industrial park with trucks on one side of the creek and another industrial park full of trucks on the other, so it's nice to have all the road accesses open for sure."

With several roads in the Dawson Creek area being washed away from the June flooding, McLeod remains hopeful Snake Pit Road will again be put on the front burner, where it was before it met its demise.

"Hopefully they go with a bridge-type scenario," McLeod said of the possible reconstruction of Snake Pit Road. "It seems that every time we get these floods, it's usually the culverts that end up plugging and that usually backs the water up in a matter of a half hour to an hour and then the city's flooded out."

For the time being, however, those in the 'Mile 0 City' will be seeing more trucks on their main roads with the loss of two key truck routes. **TW**

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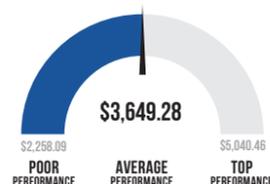


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$[\text{Line haul} + \text{Accessorial Revenue not including Fuel Surcharge}] \div \text{Active Trucks} \div 4.348$

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Raiders of the lost fuel receipt

Treasure is defined as a concentration of riches, often ancient in origin, considered lost and/or forgotten until rediscovered.

For a fleet tax manager, no treasure is as highly prized as a fuel receipt. It's our Spanish doubloon or piece of eight, and when one goes missing it can set off a frantic search that would put Indiana Jones to shame.

Let me explain.

Under the International Fuel Tax Agreement (IFTA), you need a valid receipt or invoice order to substantiate that tax was paid on the fuel you put into your commercial vehicles.

Without a receipt, you're left with two choices. You can pay fuel tax twice (once at the pump and again on the IFTA return because you'll have to declare the purchase as non-tax paid fuel), or you can bury your head in the sand and pay the tax plus penalties and interest once an auditor uncovers your mistake. Either way, you're going to walk the plank unless you have a valid fuel receipt.

Why you need a receipt

The whole idea behind IFTA is to dis-

Permits & Licensing

Sandy Johnson



tribute tax to jurisdictions based on where your vehicle consumes its fuel.

When you buy more fuel than you use in any one jurisdiction, you get a fuel tax credit since you paid more than you actually owe. Buying less fuel than you consumed in a jurisdiction means the jurisdiction is due more tax.

Receipts are like a dotted line on a treasure map, detailing how much fuel you purchased and where you bought it.

In the olden days, they were hand-scrawled on paper. Today, receipts are printed on little slips at the pump or register, or sent electronically from a fuel distributor. Heck, you can use your phone to snap a picture of a fuel receipt or invoice and use the digital image to support your claim.

Technology has changed a lot of things, but regardless of what a fuel receipt looks like, it must include specific information in order to be valid evidence of tax paid.

This includes the date of purchase, price, the quantity of fuel purchased, the seller's name and address and information to verify that the vehicle consuming the fuel is IFTA-credentialed and belongs to your fleet. The receipt must show that fuel tax was paid at the pump or directly to the taxing jurisdiction. There are similar requirements for fuel stored onsite in bulk tanks.

Serious loot

So how much of your company's treasure would you have to hoard away to cover missing fuel receipts?

Let's say you misplace a fuel receipt for 500 liters in British Columbia, where you paid 0.2267 cents per liter in tax for a total of \$113.

Losing the receipt would in essence double what you owe since you can't claim the tax you paid at the pump. If you had the bad luck to lose one receipt a month that showed \$113 in fuel tax paid, you'd owe an extra \$1,356 a year in tax. That's a whole truck payment!

Now you know why a missing receipt is like buried treasure.

Costly errors

Given how much information a receipt has to contain and the sheer number of fuel receipts a truck can generate, it's easy to make mistakes.

A lost receipt is the most common, but I also see receipts with wrong information. For instance, guys will have a fuel card assigned to them but drive multiple trucks. They get mixed up and write the wrong unit number on the re-

ceipt. In an audit, the receipt may be disallowed - and send up a red flag that you're not careful in your reporting.

You'll wish you had taken the time to make sure you had a valid receipt for each fuel purchase.

Three quick tips

Fuel receipts are hard to manage because there are so many of them.

Here are three things to make the job easier:

1. Summarize your fuel tax data monthly. Don't wait until the end of the quarter when your fuel tax return is due and you have to scramble for information. Good luck tracking down that owner-operator for a missing receipt after he's moved on to another carrier.

2. Continually audit your own records. Make sure each receipt you take credit for is valid and contains all the information IFTA requires. Self-audits show that you're in control of your data - even data that's missing or needs further examination.

3. Pay for non-receipted fuel on your quarterly IFTA return. It might cost more at the time, but it will show an auditor that you're making an effort to comply. **TW**

Sandy Johnson has been managing IFTA, IRP and other fleet taxes for more than 25 years. She operates FleetTaxPro.com, which provides vehicle tax and licence compliance services for trucking operations from single vehicles to large fleets. She can be reached at 1-877-860-8025 or www.FleetTaxPro.com.

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Three Bison drivers take home top honors for Volvo Canada's Driver of the Year

WINNIPEG, Man. – Bison Transport was holding its head high after three of the company's drivers were recognized as Volvo Canada's Driver of the Year in their respective provinces.

In Manitoba, Roger Maltman took home the honor. A long-haul driver for years who has won several safety awards in the past and has been driving for over 40 years without a preventable accident, Maltman joined Bison in 1994.

Bison said Maltman was someone "who takes pride in what he does on a daily basis and holds himself to a standard which can be used as an example to other drivers in the company. His relationship with his fleet is outstanding. He is always willing to help out when they have a problem with a load. He is reliable and never complains. He believes that everyone works together to be successful."

"Ultimately, it's me behind the wheel, but there are a large group of people doing their jobs with exper-

tise, which enables me to do mine at a high performance level," Maltman added.

Getting his start with Bison in 1987, Randy Kuryk was honored by the British Columbia Trucking Association as Driver of the Year for his commitment to safety and involvement in the community.

"Drivers like Randy are the main component in Bison Transport having been North America's safest fleet for so long," said Garth Pitzel, director of safety and driver development for Bison. "Randy is a great example of what safe driving should encompass, and the level of professionalism he exhibits makes him a pleasure to work with."

"These trucks now are the best," Kuryk said, while accepting his award. "They make my job a whole lot safer and easier."

Finally, Vern Stratton was named Driver of the Year by the Alberta Motor Transport Association (AMTA).

Stratton started with Bison 17 years ago, and was awarded for over 30 years of safe driving.

"Safety has always been Vern's top priority, not just for himself but also for the people he shares the road with," Pitzel said. "We are proud to have nominated Vern for the AMTA Volvo Canada Driver of the Year, and know he will represent the award, Bison, our drivers and the industry with honor."

"All those awards Bison wins are so well deserved," Stratton said. "The focus on safety and the 'people first' attitude within the company make it an amazing employer to work for."

Each driver is now eligible for the Canadian Trucking Alliance/Volvo Trucks Canada National Driver of the Year award.

In addition to its drivers' success, Bison's three companies – Bison Transport, Britton Transport and Searcy Trucking – were the recipients of the Volvo Safety Award. **TW**

Ryder opens new pre-owned vehicle facility in Calgary

CALGARY, Alta. – Ryder Systems has opened a new pre-owned commercial vehicle sales facility in Calgary, Alta.

The new 7,140-square-foot facility sits on 1.78 acres and features a reconditioning operation where used vehicles are serviced to meet the rigorous standards for operating within Canada and the needs of Ryder's customers.

"Ryder is committed to offering the greatest selection of pre-owned commercial vehicles for sale at prices that make sense for our customers in Canada," said Michael Cagney, Ryder Canada director for asset management.

"As the Alberta market grows, we'll grow with it. With our new facility, we can provide customers in Alberta with more quality pre-owned commercial vehicle options in a larger, more modern space that is dedicated solely to their purchasing needs."

The new facility is situated at 4535 8A Street N.E. A grand opening ceremony was held July 13 at the location from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. **TW**

Lime Creek Logging gets first International HX Series truck in Canada

LISLE, Ill. – The first of International Truck's HX Series truck has been delivered to Canada.

British Columbia's Lime Creek Logging ordered the vehicle, the HX620, configured for logging operations, a 120" BBC set-back axle truck or tractor suitable for a variety of applications, including heavy-haul tractor, logging, construction dump and platform stake/crane. It is also designed as a tri-drive truck with a quad logging trailer, and is part of a four-truck deal with International dealer Cookson Motors, a division of IRL Truck Centres.

"When we began developing and designing the HX Series, the customer and driver were at the center of our focus," said Roman Lewinsky, president of Navistar Canada. "It was our goal to create a vehicle that delivers unparalleled driver satisfaction, a quality truck that is reliable with unprecedented uptime and provides the lowest cost of ownership. Those goals are being realized as we hand over the keys."

Lime Creek Logging is a family-owned logging company based in Grand Forks, B.C. and offers a full service stump and dump operation with 14 trucks and 40 pieces of equipment. **TW**

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Western Star shows off actual Transformer

By James Menzies

LAURENS, S.C. -- Western Star, known around the world as the brand behind Optimus Prime in the Hollywood blockbuster *Transformers*, has brought the concept to life through a new truck that can be converted – in minutes and without tools – into a completely different vehicle.

The new MBT-40 is built on the Western Star 6900 chassis configured for off-road applications. MBT stands for Multi-Body Transformer, for its ability to quickly change from one vocation to another.

Western Star recently demonstrated the concept for the first time at Michelin's Laurens Proving Grounds. A fully functional water truck was converted into a dump truck in just eight minutes. The conversion was performed by the driver without assistance or the need for any tools.

A Palfinger G68 hooklift rose from the chassis and removed the tank body from the truck, setting it on the ground. The same hooklift was then attached to a nearby dump body, which was then lifted and secured into place. From water truck to dump truck in eight minutes. "You can drive to any road and see a water truck sitting there," said John Tomlinson, XD and vocational sales manager, Western Star. "It's a chassis he's paid \$700,000 for and it's sitting on the road doing nothing. Now I can

water in the afternoon and dump all morning and it's quicker to change than it is to fuel a truck up."

Western Star is working with a variety of body builders to add applications to the mix. It can also convert the truck to a flatdeck and soon more options, including crane and vacuum trucks, will be possible.

"We'll supply the cab to any body builder that wants to play with us and they'll make equipment for it," Tomlinson said. "A construction company with a couple pieces of equipment can move dirt a lot faster, and can do things quicker with just a change of thinking."

Tomlinson said body builders are excited about the concept and lining up to have their bodies integrated. The controls inside the cab are used to control each body type. Bodies are typically less expensive because the hydraulics are built into the truck chassis.

It can even be converted from a truck to tractor, with the addition of a dump trailer with integrated fifth wheel.

The MBT-40 is less expensive than traditional off-road machines as well as being more versatile, Tomlinson pointed out. Carco Industries worked with Western Star to integrate the hook lift and various bodies.

"The MBT-40 package is a game changer in construction applications for its ability to be multiple pieces of equipment in one chassis," said Tomlinson. "The development of this plat-

form was all about finding better economic ways of filling needs for our customers. Off-road chassis equipment can be expensive to buy and maintain and new emissions levels are making the investment even more costly."

Also new is an Extreme Duty (XD) off-road package that simplifies the ordering process for customers and dealers.

Spec's include rugged hood and fenders, slipper springs on the front suspension, Allison transmission and availability of on- and off-road engines. Tomlinson said the XD trucks will offer lower maintenance costs and improved parts availability and a perfect option for customers that tend to over-spec

their off-road equipment.

"If you have a very expensive piece of equipment and 95% of the time you're doing conventional hauling, we have a solution for that and it's much cheaper to run and buy," Tomlinson said, adding the XD machines can be bought for as much as \$100,000 less than articulated Cat and Volvo machines often found in such applications." **TW**



The Western Star MBT-40



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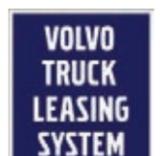
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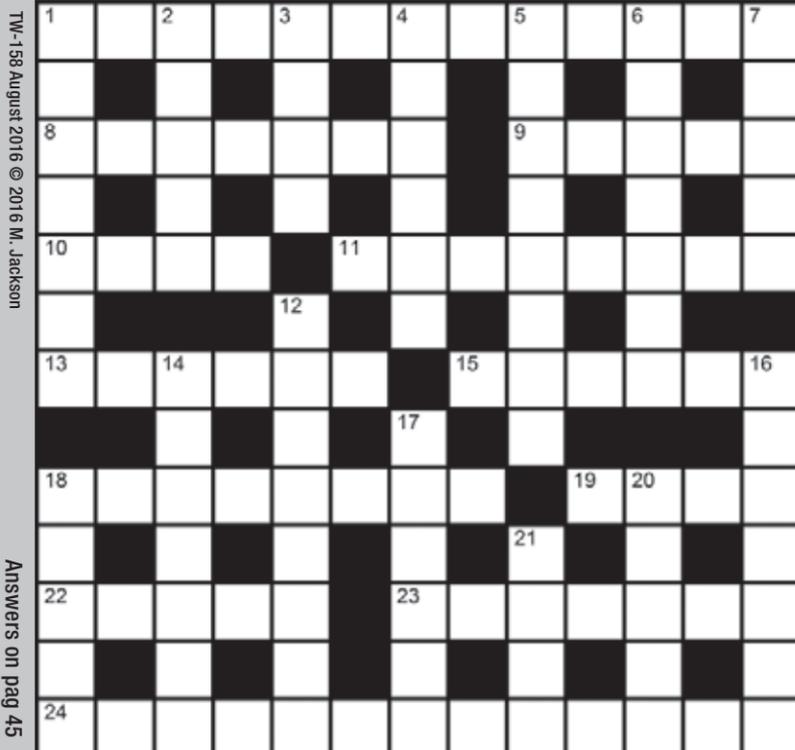
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THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE



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- 8 Logging truck destination
- 9 Canadian diesel pump unit
- 10 Diagnostic scanner output info
- 11 Certain pickups (4,4)
- 13 ON home of Bruce R. Smith
- 15 Long term truck rentals
- 18 LT in LTL (4,4)
- 19 Airplane cop, a.k.a. ____ in the air
- 22 Supersized road hazard beast
- 23 Terrifically tight tur
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Down

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- 5 Truck stop zone, sometimes (4,4)
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- 12 It's nicknamed The Swamp
- 14 Bracebridge, ON-based carrier
- 16 Suspension components
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- 20 Bunk heater brand
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TW-158 August 2016 © 2016 M. Jackson

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Driving the Volvo VHD with I-Shift crawler gears

By James Menzies

SHIPPENSBURG, Pa. – Sometimes, you just have to take it slow. Really slow. And in vocational applications where low-speed precision is required, the automated manual transmission (AMT)



Volvo's crawler gears offer better control, when even 1 mph is too fast.

tends to be overlooked in favor of fully automatic Allison or manual transmissions, which can allow greater low-speed control through clutch manipulation.

Volvo aims to change that with the addition of two new crawler gears to its I-Shift AMT.

“This gets us into all the applications we haven’t been able to play in with an AMT,” said Wade Long, director, product marketing with Volvo Trucks North America, when introducing the new product to truck editors.

The new 14-speed I-Shift with two crawler gears was demonstrated in several Volvo VHD 200 dump trucks at Volvo Construction Equipment’s sprawling customer center in Shippensburg, Pa. The facility boasts an off-road course with grades of up to 21%. The trucks were loaded with 26 tons of gravel. The crawler gears allow the truck to creep at speeds as low as 0.6 mph – even up and down that 21% grade – providing the operator with exceptional control of the vehicle.

It’s also an ideal fit for mixer applications, where crawler gears can be used to slowly and consistently pour cement, or chemical and livestock applications, where smoothness at low speeds is equally important.

Volvo also demonstrated the benefit of crawler gears in a paving application. Long said the new I-Shift offers better low-speed maneuverability and control while also offering efficient performance at highway speeds. This also makes it ideal for heavy-haul applications in the VNX, where loggers, for instance, may want the low-speed precision offered by the crawler gears while in the bush but also demand efficiency at highway speeds.

“With the VNX heavy-hauler, we’re bringing fuel efficiency to a market that’s just been focused on getting to the top of the hill first,” Long said, noting the new I-Shift offers great startability off-highway and lower cruise speeds on-highway.

The I-Shift is rated for gross combination weights of up to 220,000 lbs, and possibly more, with special permission.

Magnus Koeck, vice-president of marketing and brand management, predicted the addition of crawler gears would all but eliminate manual transmissions in vocational applications within five years.

“The I-Shift we have now with crawler gears can do all the work the customer needs,” he said. Already, 88.8% of all trucks Volvo sells in the North Ameri-



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can market are being spec'd with the I-Shift.

I drove a VHD 200 with 500-hp D13 engine rated at 1,850 lb.-ft. of torque. The transmission shifted smoothly and the C1 and C2 crawler gears allowed me to easily and safely maneuver the truck in ultra-slow-mo. Other features of the I-Shift 12-speed have been carried over to the new 14-speed as well, including Hill Start Assist and Power Launch. I experienced Hill Start Assist by stopping the loaded truck halfway up the 21% grade and then removing my foot from the brake. The transmission held the truck in position, providing ample time to move my foot to the accelerator.

Power Launch helps the driver break free of mud or sand, by building up torque and then thrusting the truck out of whatever sticky situation it finds itself in. Collectively, Volvo feels these features offer vocational truck operators all the tools they need to do even the most demanding off-road jobs with an AMT.

"This is going to open the door for a lot of applications," said Volvo's Ash Makki, who was my co-driver on the course. "A lot of our construction guys in the business are really excited."

These trucks were also equipped with Volvo's 2017 engines, marking the first time the revamped engines have been provided for test drives. The new D11 and D13 feature a new common rail fuel system, which is fully encased underneath the valve cover, where Long said it's less susceptible to damage.

"It improves flame propagation for increased efficiency and reduced soot," Long explained of a new wave piston design. The six tabs along the rim of the piston bowl force the fuel and oxygen to better circulate, providing a cleaner burn, Volvo claims, adding soot in the cylinder has been reduced by 90%.

Volvo says the engine enhancements will provide a 2.2% fuel economy improvement in the D11 and 2.5% in the D13, making them GHG17-ready. Power in the D11 has been boosted to 425 hp and a new assembled camshaft reduces weight by 27 lbs.

Long said moving to the D11 from the D13 allows an operator to shave off 390 lbs and this is now viable, thanks to the extra power, in applications topping out at 80,000 lbs gross.

The D13 features the same improvements as its smaller sibling, as well as a 44-lb weight reduction in the block, which when combined with the lighter assembled cam, affords a 71-lb total weight savings.

The D13 now has an extra 100 lb.-ft. of torque, allowing drivers to get up to road speed faster and maintain top gear longer. The new D11 goes into production in January 2017 while the D13 improvements will begin rolling off the production line in November of this year.

Also new, but not yet made available for test drives, is a D13 with turbo-compounding, which Volvo says will improve fuel economy by up to 6.5%.

The turbo-compounding system collects previously wasted exhaust heat and converts it into 50 additional hp, which is then transferred back into the engine.

When spec'd with a 2.47 rear axle ratio and the XE powertrain package, Long said the new D13 with turbo-compounding will allow a driver to cruise down the highway at 1,050 rpm. The D13 with turbo-compounding will enter production in mid-2017. **TW**

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Just wait till next year

I like to think that after 30 years of driving trucks, I'm pretty good at it.

But thinking it and knowing it are two different things, so I decided to take part in the Manitoba Professional Truck Driving Championships to see what I'm made of.

The Manitoba Trucking Association put on the event in Winnipeg, with judges being MTA people, including police and volunteers from safety and compliance departments of local trucking companies, so these guys know their stuff.

After a walk around the course, the competition started. First to go were the B-trains, then the straight truck, single/single, single/tandem and finally my class, the tandem/tandem, which was also the class with the most entries.

Because of the different classes and disciplines, each group was doing something most of the day. While early competitors were on the course, I was doing the pre-trip and written part of the test and vice versa; it was a well-oiled machine. To avoid cheating, while a particular discipline was underway, the remaining competitors in that class were not allowed to see what the others were doing – a time spent in nervous silence at first, but as the day progressed, we all started yapping away as drivers do.

I realized I had missed something obvious during the pre-trip, but in my defence, it was an easy mistake to make; the tractor had no safety decal, but as I only drive my own truck, I know when the safety expires, so I never checked it. I was reasonably happy with my written test; I thought I had got 100%, but not quite.

Finally, it was time to hit the course, or not hit it to be precise. First up was a serpentine reverse through three barrels. I managed to leave everything standing, though I did go out of bounds as I swung the unit around to get the trailer to go where I wanted, so I dropped a few points

**You say tomato
I say tomahto**

Mark Lee



for that. Then I had to drive through the barrels, and I did that just fine. Next was a diminishing width test; poles are placed six inches wider than the truck and further poles are placed half an inch closer until the final pair, which are two inches wider than the truck. I rubbed the last two pairs on the passenger side as I exited with the rear of the trailer, so more points dropped.

Onwards to the scale stop, where I had to put the middle of the rear passenger side trailer hub directly over a line on the ground, which I nailed.

Then it was the right turn, having to steer around a parked car, get the tractor close to the curb and stopline as possible and button hook around a 90-degree right turn; again, I thought I had done well.

Now came the real test – backing 90 degrees into an alley three feet wider than the trailer and getting as close to a pole representing a loading dock as possible. We were allowed two attempts and I nailed it on the first try.

From there it was through an offset alley, where barricades are placed a little wider than the truck, and as soon as you exit the first ones, the next are offset to the right, and I managed just fine.

The final test was a bullseye stop. I had to put the front of the truck directly over a bullseye the size of a Toonie. Now this was pure luck, unless I hit the bullseye, then it would be pure skill. Let's just say, it's luck and nothing more.

A banquet was later held at a nearby hotel and the awards were dished out. After my turn on the course, I watched the guys who competed after me and I was very pleased with my effort and was looking forward to

climbing up on the podium.

As the winners were called, the third place guy in my class went up and I started to feel very good, as I had seen him hit the barrels on the serpentine. Second place was announced and I was still sitting down. Had I really gone and done it?

No, I hadn't. I never even got a mention! I wasn't as close as I thought on the scale stop or the curb and stopline, and even though I hit the dock in one go, I pushed the pole back too far and lost all my points. The bullseye was another spectacular fail, as I never got any points on

that either. I got 75% on the written test and we know about my mistake on the pre-trip, so my score was 223 out of a possible 500 points, which is not something you want published in a national magazine, so please skip this paragraph!

Next year will be very different, I promise. **TW**

A fourth generation trucker and trucking journalist, Mark Lee uses his 25 years of transcontinental trucking in Europe, Asia, North Africa and now North America to provide an alternative view of life on the road.

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Planning to exit the stage

The other day, I had the pleasure of speaking to a client who has been with us since 1995. At one time, I was his account manager and dealt with him on a regular basis. I happened to answer the phone and take his call because his regular account manager was away on holidays.

We spent some time catching up and the client told me how, after 30 years as an owner-operator, he's coming to the end of his working days.

I asked if he planned to take time off this summer and he laughed and said this is when he gets the most work done (despite the tourist traffic). In fact, he's taken the last three winters off, trading the icy roads and frigid weather for the warmth of his cozy home.

Planning ahead

This guy has always been a good planner and he was just calling to brainstorm about how and when to wind up his corporation now that he's mulling retirement.

Thinking ahead and asking for advice is why he and many other clients of ours have been so successful. This guy has worked hard and smart and he's been able to save a decent amount of money over the years.

A carefully planned exit is the best way to make sure you can move on to the next chapter in your life.

Also, he'll bank some money when he sells his truck. He's been checking out websites and talking to dealerships to see what it's worth. He could sell the truck now and be a company driver again.

I'm sure with his experience, many carriers would hire him, even with his not wanting to work winters. Or he could hold on to his truck for a while knowing he'll get less for it later but have the ability to work when he wants to.

Either way, this owner-operator is in a great spot as he winds down his career. He's mapping out a plan for himself and for his truck.

But what about his corporation?

Circles of life

When I first met this client 20 years ago, he asked a lot of questions about incorporating his business.

I gave him the same response then that I give owner-operators today. I drew two circles on my notepad: in one circle, I wrote the client's name, and in the other, I put "corp."

These circles illustrate how a corporation keeps business and personal finances separate. Think of all the business in-



Tax
Talk

Scott Taylor

come going into the corporation's circle.

When you need money for yourself, I explained, you can move it into your personal circle for you to spend.

This relationship exists whether you're working or retired. Remember that a corporation can live on whether

it's actively in business or not.

Until it files a final tax return and applies to be formally dissolved, the corporation can continue to hold assets and pay dividends.

It may seem strange to let your corporation go on after you've hung up the keys.

But, if over the years you have managed to save money in the corporation, or if selling your equipment has put money in there, it may be better that way because you may end up paying a lot less tax.

Rather than dissolving the corporation and having to pull money out and add that income to your personal tax return, you can withdraw it over time.

You could in essence treat your corporate bank account like a pension fund and withdraw X-amount of money each month until it's gone (or of course withdraw nothing if you don't need the money).

We have many clients who are retired from driving but continue to draw from their corporation.

They come to us once a year and we do the T4s or T5s as necessary based on their drawings from the company and provide some tax planning based on other potential income.

We file their corporate and personal tax returns and then say goodbye until next year. Most of these folks have been clients for 20-plus years.

Eventually, every owner-operator will close the business. When that time comes, a carefully planned exit is the best way to make sure you can move on to the next chapter in your life. **TW**

Scott Taylor is vice-president of TFS Group, providing accounting, bookkeeping, tax return preparation and other business services for owner-operators. Learn more at www.tfsgroup.com or call 1-800-461-5970.

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Alberta truck drivers go head-to-head in driving championships in Red Deer

RED DEER, Alta. – The Alberta Motor Transport Association (AMTA) has released the official results of its 2016 Professional Truck Driving Championships held in Red Deer June 25.

Also known as the Roadeo, the event features truck driving competitions in several divisions, including straight truck, single, single tandem, tandem and B-train.

Drivers from across the province competed for the honorary titles and prizes, and the chance to represent Alberta in the National Truck Driving Championships in Brantford, Ont. this September.

Here is the list of winners in each division from first to third place:

Straight truck – Keith Franklin (Canadian Freightways); Alex Smith (H&R Transport); Carey Naismith (LTT).

Single – Darren Hodgkins (Bison Transport); Darren Tychkowsky (Fedex); Shaun Thompson (Grimshaw Trucking).

Single tandem – David Lowe (Bison Transport); Kevin Chapman (CCT Canada); Gregory Cresine (LTT).

Tandem – Rod Harrison (Canadian Freightways); Tim Bingley (Lac La Biche Transport); Curtis Phillips (Safe-way Sobeys West).

B-train – Robert Smith (TDL); Ron Johnstone (Canadian Freightways); Terry Saitz (Home Hardware).

Awards also went to Rod Harrison (Canadian Freightways), who was named Grand Champion, Terry Saitz (Home Hardware) as Rookie of the Year, and the Team Award went to Bison Transport. **TW**



Despite the soggy weather, drivers competed in the AMTA's 'Roadeo,' the 2016 Provincial Truck Driving Championships in Red Deer June 25.



Team Manitoba named at MTA banquet

WINNIPEG, Man. – Five drivers finished first in their respective divisions at the Manitoba Trucking Association's (MTA) 2016 Manitoba Professional Truck Driving Championships June 18 at Peterbilt Manitoba.

Each of the drivers and their companies will represent the province at the National Truck Driving Championship Sept. 15-18 in Brantford, Ont.

The following drivers will make up Team Manitoba:

- **Straight Truck:** Bruce McKechnie, Bison Transport
- **Single-Single:** Brian Hrabarchuk, Canadian Freightways
- **Single-Tandem:** Greg Muzychka, Canadian Freightways
- **Tandem-Tandem:** Denis Roberts, TST Overland Express
- **Super B Train:** Murray Manuliak, Bison Transport

The team was announced during the Professional Truck Driving Championships Banquet, where the winners of the MTA-Custom Truck Sales Inc./Kenworth Truck Company Industry Excellence Award were also announced. Recipients included Don Ens of Gardewine; Henry Janzen of Bison Transport; Juliusz Przywara of Bison Transport; Marc Cohen of Big Freight Systems; Murray Manuliak of Bison Transport; Peter Nassau of Big Freight Systems; Richard Reimer of Arnold Bros.; Robert Ready of TransX; Roger Maltman of Bison Transport; and Wesley Pauls Kindersley Transport. **TW**

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Top 3 health concerns

Darcy Hansen of Healthy Worker lists the trucking industry's top health issues

Stories by Derek Clouthier

LETHBRIDGE, Alta. – The Top 3 health issues facing the trucking industry today are sleep apnea, medical marijuana and age, Darcy Hansen of Healthy Worker believes.

Speaking to *Truck West* during the Southern Alberta Truck Expo in Lethbridge June 18, Hansen, president of Healthy Worker, a provider of occupational hygiene and health services in Southern Alberta, said with North Americans commonly weighing in on the obese side of the scale, those at risk of sleep apnea is on the rise.

Sleep apnea is generally seen in those whose neck circumference measures 47 cm or more, which indicates an excess of fat or other components in the neck that are blocking an adequate amount of oxygen getting into the blood stream, causing an individual to wake.

“(The trucking industry) is a sedentary job,” Hansen said. “There are physical requirements to strap down a load, to do your inspection of your vehicle... but then the majority of your job, when you're not doing your pre-trip, post-trip, loading or unloading, is going to be a sedentary duty.”

Hansen said a lack of exercise and poor hydration and nutrition means ‘everything is stacked against truck drivers’ when it comes to their health and risk of sleep apnea, and more should be done to help those in the industry have access to these necessities, even suitable rest stops.

“We don't really support the trucking industry to have lots of washrooms for them where they can pull in, go to the washroom, get back in the truck and



Darcy Hansen of Healthy Worker said sleep apnea, medical marijuana and an aging workforce are the Top 3 health issues facing the trucking industry today.

roll,” he said. “We don't support adequate hydration, we don't support elimination of that hydration and we don't support a very quick and nutritious meal for those in the trucking industry...and they work long hours.”

Medical marijuana is another health issue many companies will have to face, if they have not had to already. But it is not the fact that people are being prescribed the substance that concerns Hansen.

“I personally believe that medical marijuana is fantastic,” he said, adding that he is a former Canadian Armed Forces member and there is a program being launched called ‘Marijuana for Trauma’ for those who suffer from issues like post-traumatic stress disorder.

Hansen said physicians who prescribe medical marijuana to a patient

must also ensure the person is able to perform safety-sensitive duties in the workplace, like driving a truck.

“I think that's the best road to go down, is to stay on that medical marijuana side and just focus on how that impacts that workforce before they even talk about recreational use,” Hansen said. “When you see the LCBO talking about distribution of recreational marijuana prior to any discussion in legislation about what we're going to do long-term as a plan, that's irresponsible.”

Other issues arise when additional drugs or narcotics come into play, something Hansen believes can be a problem when trucking companies look to other industries which may not have the same drug and alcohol standards to find employees.

“Having new drivers coming in from

industries where they already know and understand all the drug and alcohol components is probably the biggest risk for pre-employment,” he said, adding that several drivers from other industries “knew how to cheat a test.”

“The majority of the time for established drivers, they know the rules.”

The Department of Transportation is now screening for a wider variety of drug use in potential new drivers, adding in tests for things like ecstasy and methamphetamines. Hansen said fentanyl use has become a growing concern, as it is not testing for during drug screening, yet it is 100 times more potent than morphine.

Though it may not fall under the standard definition for ‘health concern’, age rounded out Hansen's Top 3 issues facing the industry.

He said there are two problems with age – one being that young, or any new drivers coming into the industry cannot get hired by trucking companies because their lack of experience means they do not qualify for the business' insurance policy.

New drivers must first put in hours behind the wheel doing local, in-town trips, or take part in a mentorship program to gain necessary experience.

The other issue with age arises when older drivers are baring down on retirement age get back into a truck despite any health issues they may be bringing with them.

Hansen believes the industry will be facing a challenge in the next decade with younger drivers being unable to work due to insurance liability issues and older drivers starting to retire coupled with the imminent onset of automated trucks, particularly in the warmer, more predictable climates, becoming more commonplace.

With fewer bodies behind the wheel of semi-trucks, the industry's image is sure to be altered for good. **TW**

Finding and hiring the right people

LETHBRIDGE, Alta. – You may think it's a simple process, but it isn't.

While it certainly depends on what particular position is being applied for, the days of walking into a business with a resume in hand and hearing the words, “When can you start,” seem to be coming to an end.

During the Southern Alberta Truck Expo in Lethbridge, Alta., Darcy Hansen, president of Healthy Worker, outlined some of the best hiring practices trucking companies need to be using when hiring new and managing current employees.

Hansen said the best way to start is to clearly define the position that needs to be filled by using a physical demand analysis that includes the bona fide occupational requirements and bona fide occupational qualifications, which, according to Alberta's Human Rights Act, are what define a job.

Bona fide occupational requirements include vision, range of motion, ability to lift, repetitive tasks and any fears a potential employee may have, such as claustrophobia or a fear of heights.

“If the worker has any difficulty performing any of the bona fide occupational requirements for the position, then the employer has to accommodate the employer to the point of undo hardship,” Hansen said.

On the flip side, using his own profession as an occupational health nurse as an example, Hansen outlined the bona fide occupational qualifications necessary to be accepted into a position in the first place – he must be in good standing with the College Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta, have his audiometric technicians course, spirometer technicians course and the Canadian Nurses Association Specialty for being a certified occupational health nurse in Canada.

“Almost every job has its own qualifications,” Hansen said. “So for an employer, they define the job first, and once you define the job, that job needs to be set...all the job duties are defined in that job. If you increase the lifting requirements for that job, then you need to recreate a new job position name.”

When a worker is hired to do a job with specific bona fide occupational requirements, an employer cannot simply change those requirements with the expectation the person currently in the position will be required to perform the duties of the new job without changing the job title itself.

A key reason these rules have been put in place stems from a case in B.C., where Hansen said a female firefighter was given additional duties as part of her job, could not perform those duties

and was subsequently fired, setting the blueprint for bona fide occupational requirements across Canada.

Once an applicant has passed all the components for hire, they can be given a conditional offer of hire, which Hansen said is required before an employer can ask any further questions about the worker.

It's not until then that an employer can further assess the worker for their ability to perform the bona fide occupational requirements for the position.

Healthy Worker specializes in tailoring these assessments – the bona fide occupational requirements assessment – for employees, and includes a drug test, where a worker is screened to determine whether they are using any kind of drugs, if those drugs are prescription or otherwise and whether the worker can continue performing safety sensitive work under the bona fide occupational requirements for that particular position.

In Alberta, employers must make an attempt to accommodate the worker if they are on prescription medication and cannot perform safety sensitive work.

But if the test reveals recreational drug use, the employer no longer has to make any accommodations for the worker.

One exception to this rule is if it is determined by a health professional that the worker has an addiction, which Hansen said is considered a medical condition in Alberta, and therefore, the employer must attempt to accommodate the

worker by allowing them to perform duties they can complete in a safe manner.

“We want people to get better,” Hansen explained. “We push them toward Alberta Health Services for addiction services. I don't want to see people who are impaired by things in the community...I want them to get treated and get better.”

The next step in the bona fide occupational requirements assessment is the legislative components, which includes several elements, such as baseline hearing, vision and exposure tests.

For truck driving, vision is vital.

“A lot of people who are getting into a job, they have an old pair of glasses and they're not adequate for the demands of the position,” Hansen said. “For driving you should have a corrected vision of less than 20/30.”

Drivers must also be able to differentiate colors, as well as possess good peripheral vision and depth perception.

Other facets of Healthy Worker's assessment include hand, arm and wrist range of motion, height, weight, blood pressure, respiratory tests, fit tests...the list is extensive.

“You're looking to see that the worker doesn't have aggravation of existing conditions in the assessment,” Hansen explained.

For more information on the assessment, or any other type of occupational health issue, visit www.healthyworker.ca. **TW**

Truck Expo grows second time around

By Derek Clouthier

LETHBRIDGE, Alta. – In only its second year, the Southern Alberta Truck Expo in Lethbridge, Alta. saw more than 3,000 attend the June 17-18 event, in addition to 46 booths and more than 50 trucks take part in the show and shine.

Southern Alberta Truck Exposition Association secretary and event coordinator Kani Jacobson said she was very pleased with the turnout and with how the event flowed from start to finish, including raising more than \$530 in cash donations and over 1,000 pounds of food for the Lethbridge Food Bank.

Jacobson said she is optimistic the expo will be even better in 2017, with more people registering and attendee numbers continuing to grow.

She also said her association would carry on advocating for the trucking industry in the Lethbridge region.

“We are going to continue to work with the City of Lethbridge and the County of Lethbridge to get a truck stop in the Lethbridge area,” Jacobson said. “We know that it will be a very important part of the city and to the trucking industry as a whole.”

In addition, the association will campaign to have the trucking industry recognized as a skilled trade and to get a mentorship program in place.

“We will be working with some larger companies within the industry to move forward with these plans,” Jacobson said.

The introductory expo event was a one-day show held July 18, 2015, while this year it expanded to include a Friday evening sneak peek.



Five things to think about when buying a tarping system

And why the tarp is as important a buying decision as the trailer itself

The primary purpose of a rolling tarping system is to protect the freight you're hauling, but the system you choose will have a direct impact on your profitability for up to a decade. That's why you should give as much thought to the tarping system you purchase as you would to the trailer itself.

Choosing the wrong tarping system can reduce productivity, limit the types of loads you can haul, increase downtime and lead to cargo damage. The good news is, today's tarping systems have never been better, according to Paul Vandenberg, president of Brantford, Ont.-based Trison Tarps.

"These systems have really improved, as far as the rolling of the systems and the longevity of the systems," he said.

Still, no two sliding tarping systems are the same and it pays to do your homework.

Choose quality

Inspect tarping systems closely – especially the seams – to see how well they've been constructed.

"They all look good when they're brand new," says Lloyd Verduyn, president of Verduyn Tarps. "It's when it gets to be used a little bit, usually after six months, that the quality starts coming to the front."

Verduyn related the story of a customer who purchased an inexpensive tarping system elsewhere and had to return to the supplier for repairs 24 times over a 22-month period.

"He bought a system that used a lot of parts from offshore and two weeks later he was back for his first repair," Verduyn cautioned.

Geordan Gay, sales and marketing director with Chameleon Innovations, suggested examining the inside of the

tarp for quality.

"If you look from the inside, you'll see that a well designed tarp is usually reinforced around the rail area and the top corners," he explained. "It's not just one layer of fabric wrapped over. We've got about 50 ounces of fabric down near our rail locations and about 40-some ounces of fabric near the top corners."

Also examine the door area. Gay warned against the use of Velcro, which can come loose over time. Mechanical closures cost more but will last longer, he said.

How about support?

If you're a long-haul operator, consider the ease of service while on the road. Can repairs be made by any tarp or trailer shop? How about those covered by warranty; can you get the work done on the road or do you have to return to the manufacturing facility? These are some of the questions Gay said you should ask of your supplier.

"One thing that is really important is, where is that warranty supported?" he pointed out. "A lot of warranties state you need to come back to the factory if you want the repair to be done free of charge."

Rolling tarps are designed to last up to 10 years, but will likely require some service over that time. How quickly will repairs be made?

"A week of lost loads can really cost a lot," Gay pointed out. He said to choose a tarping system that can be easily repaired by any tarp or trailer shop and to shy away from welded assemblies that need to be ripped apart for repairs.

Verduyn tells customers to ask other users about product quality and support.

"The best bet is to talk to other owners," he said. "I can't stress that enough."

Right-size the system

Some tarping systems impede on the cargo area, reducing payload and potentially ruling out certain sized loads. Talk to your supplier about the dimensions of the tarping system and the requirements of the freight you'll be hauling.

"Choose a manufacturer that has thought about a way to maximize your load volume," said Gay. Is the bulkhead installed in front of the deck or does it extend into the cargo space? Many are mounted on top of the deck and a 48-ft. trailer becomes a 47-ft. trailer. Width is equally important. Slimmer tarping systems will allow for wider freight, especially important if you plan to haul containers or certain building products that require a full 102 inches of deck space. Having a couple extra inches of width also affords some room for error for forklift operators who don't load the cargo completely square.

Gay also suggested customers consider the benefits of combining a lower deck with a higher tarping system, rather than automatically choosing a standard 98-inch interior height.

"When you're doing LTL, do you really want to be stuck with only 98 inches of interior height when you could have had 104?" he questioned, noting with a low deck, a 104-inch interior height is achievable while staying within the 13'6 overall height allowance.

"We try to find out as much as we can about what they haul and what their needs are," Vandenberg noted.

Maintenance-free?

The maintenance-free tarping system sounds appealing but a little effort can go a long way towards extending tarp life. Operators should wipe down the rails every time they've been loaded, Gay suggested.

"There are lots of loads that dump

mud or dirt onto the rails. Imagine a wheel scraping up against your rail with the addition of little particles of dirt. That wears through aluminum quite quickly so it's very important to wipe down the rails quickly after loading each time or at least inspect them to make sure there's no debris on the rails," Gay cautioned. Verduyn is a proponent of greasing the wheels and ratchets, even if they are purported to be grease-free.

Vandenberg said drivers should be trained on proper use of the system as well as maintenance requirements, especially if they're unfamiliar with the equipment or have been using a different system.

"It's probably wise to have training on the system before it leaves the location where it was purchased," he said.

Drivers should also inspect the system for loosened connections and regularly replace rail protectors. Any rips or tears should be duct-taped immediately and taken in for proper repairs as soon as possible, before the damage gets worse. Also consider the wheel material. Some suppliers have adopted nylon or rubber wheels in place of steel, citing better longevity.

The convenience factor

Finally, choose a tarping system that's easy to operate, especially with an aging workforce. Verduyn said one customer says he'll be able to work an extra 10 years because of the simplicity of operating a rolling tarping system, which can be operated entirely from the ground.

Vandenberg thinks the industry will see even more innovation in ease of use, indicating electric systems are likely the way of the future.

"An automated system of some sort will take the marketplace," Vandenberg predicted. But Gay countered that sometimes simplicity is better.

"When you're out on the road and an electrical or air system fails and you can no longer tension or lock your tarp system, what do you do then?" he reasoned. "As new technologies come, you have to be really sensitive about, what is it going to take to fix this in the field if it breaks? Sometimes simpler is better." **TW**



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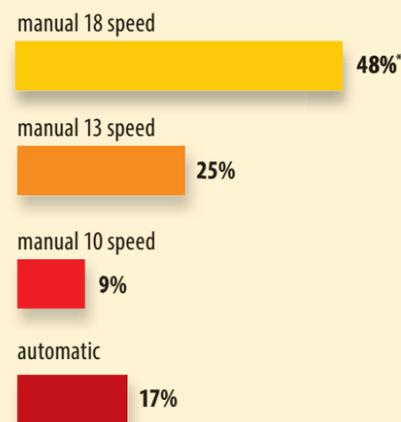
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By Edo van Belkom

THE STORY SO FAR

Mark finds himself stuck in downtown Toronto traffic as the city's taxi drivers protest the start of Goober, the ride-sharing service that is cutting into their business. After an hour, Mark is so upset about his wasted time that he decides to sign up for Goober and make some extra money on his next trip west...

Mark had little trouble qualifying for Goober. He'd thought that because his vehicle was a semi and he'd be taking a load the entire way to Vancouver that the ride service might not accept him, but that wasn't the case. In fact, once he'd completed the questionnaire and all the required forms, a small message popped up on his computer screen and asked him, "Would you like to start earning money, now?"

Mark deferred, not wanting to use Mother Load to provide rides within any city limits because there were so many roads he couldn't access in a rig. Instead, he clicked on the long-distance page and broke up his next trip into several smaller trips that would see him providing rides for a bunch of different people on his way to the western coast of Canada. The first leg would be Toronto to Timmins, then Timmins to Winnipeg, Winnipeg to Regina, Regina to Calgary and Calgary to Vancouver. By the end of it, Mark would have a good idea if Goober was for him.

When Mark was done logging his trip into the website, he realized that he had already spent a half-hour working for Goober without earning a cent. He could accept that as just a part of doing business, as he couldn't start any new endeavour without investing either time or money into the process, so a half-hour of his time seemed reasonable.

"Okay," he said allowed, as he clicked on the submit icon. "Let's see how this works out."

He got a notification on his cellphone less than 20 minutes later. "Need to get to Timmins fast. When can you pick me up?"

"Seven a.m. tomorrow morning. No pick-up. Meet me at Flying J truck stop on Albion Road."

Mark was prepared for his rider to balk at the prospect of having to meet up with his ride at a truck stop, as Goober drivers usually provided door-to-door service, but the response was positive.

"Cool. See you there at 7 a.m."

"This just might work out," Mark said under his breath.

Mark pulled into the Flying J truck stop at 6:45 the next morning expecting to park his truck, grab a coffee and wait for his rider to show. Instead, he saw a young man sitting at a picnic table along with a backpack, a duffle bag and a guitar case by his side.

That's got to be him, Mark thought. He was wearing a dirty jean jacket, brown denim pants and a pair of cowboy boots of the kind Mark thought they didn't make any more. He had sideburns, long hair combed

straight back and looked like he'd lost either his motorcycle or the rest of his band.

He pulled up close to the picnic table, rolled down his window and said, "You going to Timmins?"

"I am if you are," the man said in reply.

Mark parked Mother Load and got out so the young man could tie his bags down on the back of the rig.

"What about the guitar?" Mark asked after they'd secured the first two bags.

"It stays with me."

"Is it valuable?"

"Not really, but it's the only one I've got."

They were an hour out of Toronto on Hwy. 400 when

Muffaraw,' but it was 'The Hockey Song' that Mark enjoyed most since it was the only song to which he knew the words to the chorus. In no time there were on the outskirts of Timmins and Mark was actually sorry to see the ride come to an end.

"How long are you going to be playing here?" Mark asked, as he pulled up in front of a low-rent watering hole on the edge of town.

"Who knows?" Joey said. "If they like me, a couple of days...If they don't like me, a couple of days."

"I'd really like to see your show."

"Well, look me up in any small town you're in. Chances are our paths will cross again sometime."

"I sure hope so," Mark said.

Goober for hire

PART 2



The next morning, Mark was ready to hit the road by 8 a.m., but his rider was nowhere in sight. He'd arranged to meet the next passenger at an intersection near the highway leading out of Timmins, but here he was idling fuel through his exhaust stacks and wasting precious time. And then a car pulled up, a woman got out dressed in a multi-color coat, bright yellow rubber boots and hat that had two flowers sticking out of it like antennae, one red and one blue. Then, after the woman, two, three...five bags fell out of the car onto the shoulder.

"You going to Winnipeg?" Mark asked.

"Yes," she said. "You the guy taking me there?"

Mark almost said, "No," but resisted. "That's me."

"About time you got here!"

Mark almost apologized for being late, but then realized he had been waiting for her to show up.

"I was waiting for you!"

"Whatever."

"Let me help you with those bags."

"No!" she shouted. "Absolutely not! I've just got their karma right and I don't need you to upset them by touching them...with your hands." Mark was speechless, unsure whether she had been talking about her bags or something else that he'd missed.

"My stuff is important to me," she said. "I can't have people messing up my stuff by putting their vibrations on them."

Again, Mark was at a loss for words and wondered if this woman knew they would be riding in the truck together for the next few hours. She was sure acting as if she didn't.

"Let's go!" she said, as she got into the passenger seat. "I've got no time to waste waiting for you to decide you're ready." Then, as she was eating a rice cake she'd pulled out of her bag, she said, "If we're still on the road when the moon comes out, I'll have to spend the night in here."

Mark didn't need to hear another word. He put Mother Load in high gear and booked it all the way to Winnipeg, earning himself a speeding ticket at the Ontario-Manitoba border along the way. **TW**

Mark Dalton returns next month in Goober for hire Part 3.

Mark couldn't ignore his curiosity any longer. "You live in Timmins?"

"No, I'm from Stouffville. I've got a gig in Timmins tomorrow night."

"A professional musician," Mark said.

"Last couple of years, yeah."

Mark drove on for a kilometer before saying anything else. "You mean to tell me I'm driving Stompin' Tom Connors across Ontario?"

The young man laughed. "I do a lot of his songs in my act, but my name's Joey Willis. I perform under the name Joe E. Canada."

Mark was beside himself. This Goober thing was working out better than he could have hoped. Here he was on his first day on the job and a new Canadian folk hero was a passenger in his truck. "You mind singing a few songs? It would make the drive go by faster."

"Sure," he said, turning around to grab his guitar. The rest the trip went by in a flash. They sang all kinds of Stompin' Tom songs, from 'Bud the Spud' to 'Big Joe

Illustration by Glenn McEvoy

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Dear editor:

With a minor level of amusement, and far more "Here we go again," I read your editorial in *Truck West*. It blows my mind how people who have never spent any time actually driving a truck for a living seem to think so highly of ELDs. I have trucked 35 years as of this past May, so I certainly feel qualified to offer an opinion on this subject.

In mid-May, I started working for a fleet that is using ELDs. The very fact they hid that fact, until I was in orientation, is very telling. I have now completed five rounds from Calgary to California and back, and my assessment is that they suck. Actually, I don't have the words to accurately describe my loathing for them.

Now, let me assure you, I like to operate safely and still get the job done. That means sleeping when I'm tired and working when I'm not. Illegal maybe, but if I'm not fit to drive, I don't, plain and simple.

First off, ELDs instill a sense of panic from the moment you hit that 'on-duty' button in the morning. I have gone from being a person with the patience of God to being pissed off with every idiot who sees fit to waste their time and mine, while being oblivious to those around them. Pull up and spend a half hour at a fuel pump, because you're selfish? No problem, everyone else can deal with it. Nonsense like that happens all the time and no one seems to care. You can almost always spot a driver on an ELD, because of the way they drive. I haven't fallen into that trap, but I know the fleets that

use them, and I can see it in all their drivers' attitudes.

Spend all day unloading and unloading a flatbed, in 100-degree heat and Alabama humidity, and no hours to get to a truck stop for a shower? Tough! You get to smell like an out-house for 10 hours, plus however long it takes to get to a shower the next day. Now, you get to lose another hour, or more, of your next day's productivity to feel like a human being.

Recently, I was coming north on I-15 in California with enough time to make it to Baker, and some to spare. That is, right up until I came up on a wreck on the highway and a four-mile backup at 2 a.m. The road is closed and the only solution is to sleep on the shoulder for eight hours with my lights on. Awesome...eight hours on the shoulder of a 70-mph interstate because the ELD says so. Now, who's responsible when some drunk driver who is texting while driving 80 mph rear-ends me? I'm parked, because the law says so. Are the civil courts going to see it that way when that guy's family sues me for being parked there? I can assure you that is but one of many faults with the ELD system coming in, but the list is endless.

I have a suggestion for you. Go get your license, get a job driving and make sure it is with an ELD fleet. Spend two years driving under that plan, then come back and tell me how happy you are about this. Until that happens, you have no place touting the benefits of an ELD, because you have zero experience with them, or trucking period.

Andy Stoeckl

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By Edo Van Belkom

"It can get a lot busier."

"It looks like chaos now. How does everyone know where to be?"

"There are a lot of rules, but --"

"Look at that!"

"What?"



"There's a woman driving that truck!"

Vic laughs. "There are plenty of women truck drivers."

"But she looks like she could be the man's wife... Like me... But, she's driving!"

Vic says nothing. It wasn't all that strange to see a woman behind the wheel of a semi in Canada, but his wife was acting as if she's just seen some unbelievable feat of magic.



"If she can do it," she says. "Why can't I?"

Vic wondered about that. Back home, he would never have considered his wife becoming a truck driver. Women there cleaned house, cooked food and raised children and the other male drivers would have ridiculed Vic and made jokes about what kind of man he was. But they were in Canada now and it was all new. New land, new society, new ideas about what was acceptable and normal. He thought for a long time about why she couldn't learn to drive a truck and couldn't come up with a single good reason. "I don't see why not," he says at last.

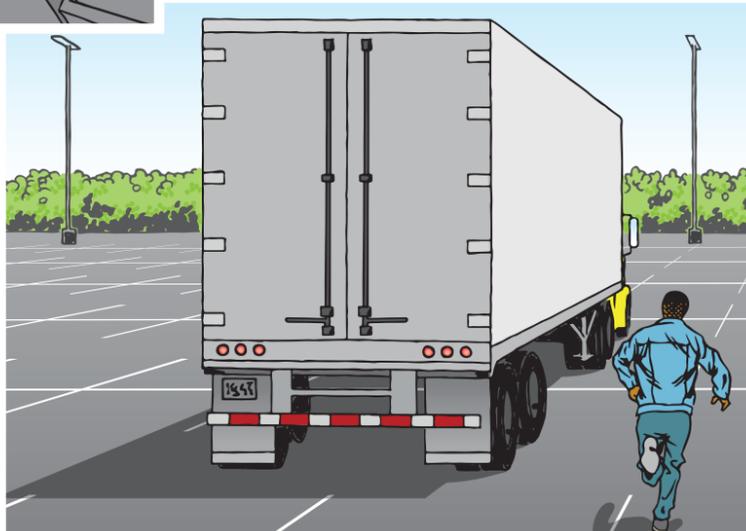
After they pick up a container in Montreal they headed for Toronto. Vic drove out of the city and found a large warehouse complex that had a bunch of large parking lots where a new driver could practice without hitting anything expensive.

"Let's switch seats," he says.

"Now? Here?"

"How else will you learn?"

Vic gets out of the truck, but before he can get around to the passenger side she slides over, gets behind the seat and starts driving.



They return home, but before they reach the truck yard Vic gives up his seat so his wife can drive into the yard.



One week later, Vic's wife has a new job driving a school bus so she can get more driving experience and eventually go out on the road with Vic more often.



Illustration by Glenn McEvoy



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TRUCK NEWS CAREERS www.trucknews.com

Drivers come first

RDK Transportation employs the adage that drivers are top priority

By Derek Clouthier

SASKATOON, Sask. – The province's motto may be 'Strength from Many Peoples,' but for Ray Milne, co-owner, president and CEO of RDK Transportation, success has come from Saskatchewan's diverse economy, a solid customer base and staff that go that extra mile.

Along with Milne, who started the company in 2004 with two partners who have since departed, Rod Freisen co-owns and is vice-president of RDK Transportation, coming on board in 2013 and bringing a wealth of trucking industry experience with him for the ride.

But it's not just Milne and Freisen who have made the business a success; like many small trucking companies, family has been a big part of it.

"The company has a number of family members who work here," said Freisen, with co-owner Ray being his brother-in-law, Ray's wife Kerri the office manager, Sean Freisen, Rod's son, heavy haul and dispatch and Julie Freisen, Rod's wife, doing a bit of everything, as a few examples.

"Julie came in to help out with various admin areas in the company," Rod said, "so she really has no specific position other than you can always rely on her being there to help."

Julie said both Ray and Rod, in addition to managing previous trucking companies, come from owner-operator backgrounds and have always maintained the principle that 'drivers come first.'

"The company has been upfront with the drivers (and) operators," Julie said, "and we believe that is why the company has been able to stray strong."

"The operators who join the company know on a load-by-load basis what they're being paid. When times are slow, they know the office team has been doing their best to provide the freight to be hauled."

Julie said her husband emphasizes to drivers that they are the sales people on the road, and their professionalism is what represents RDK, drives advertising and brings repeat business.

With more than 75 owner-operators and company drivers, along with around 30 office and yard-based employees, RDK has grown over the past few years, expanding its fleet and customer base.

The company provides truckload and less-than-truckload shipping on flat-deck trailers, heavy haul and specialized freight with companies such as Specialized Bulk Trailers, Step Decks, Double Drops, RGN Trailers and Heavy Haul Trailers. They also offer cross-docking/warehousing, container de-stuffing and additional warehousing and assembly services.

And, despite the recent economic downturn in neighboring province Alberta, those at RDK believe the 'Land of the Living Skies' offers enough diversity to keep the company moving forward.

"Saskatchewan's economy has been able to stay fairly strong through the western downturn in the oil industry," Julie said. "Although freight has been harder to achieve, the young energetic staff has been able to work through

'A company's growth is only as strong as the efforts employees put in making things work no matter how difficult the load may seem.'

Julie Freisen, RDK Transportation

these hurdles and keep the freight moving and the operators on the road week after week."

"RDK is in a good position to weather the slowdown in the oil and gas sector due to the fact that we are very diversified and have a large loyal customer base that we strive to keep up with," Ray added.

Saskatchewan's economy has been affected by the drop in oil and gas prices, but like Julie and Ray pointed out, has been able to endure the downturn better than Alberta.

In June, the Saskatchewan government announced the province's May



Rod Freisen, left, vice-president of RDK Transportation, and president/CEO Ray Milne believe Saskatchewan is the best place for their business.

unemployment rate had fallen to 6%, down from 6.3% the previous month, second lowest among all provinces and lower than the Canadian average of 6.9%.

The government also said there were 2,200 additional people working in May compared the month prior, which it said suggested the employment market may be stabilizing.

"Resource sector challenges have hit Saskatchewan's labor market," said immigration, jobs, skills and training

through the economic slide.

"Pulling together and working together has seen many obstacles having been worked through," she said.

Customer value and appreciation is also a key priority for RDK, with scheduling and daily load location being relayed to customers, as well as after-hours communication to ensure loads that need to be hauled are shipped. The company's fleet is satellite equipped, which provides tracking and information on all deliveries to its customers.

"A company's growth is only as strong as the efforts employees put in making things work no matter how difficult the load may seem," Julie said. "Management and staff can sometimes be seen sitting together and making things work out with ideas from the oldest to youngest team members."

Safety is another key for RDK, with fully trained drivers who are provided with classroom and on-site training and testing by qualified staff. The company's equipment is serviced and maintained by technicians and subject to an internal maintenance plan.

But treating everyone like family is what RDK is all about.

"Our company is on a first-name basis with everyone who comes through the door," Julie said. "Management is always available to talk to every driver...the phones are open 24/7 to hear any concerns."

"(This) young team is growing and facing many situations that will see the company grow and prosper into the future." **TW**



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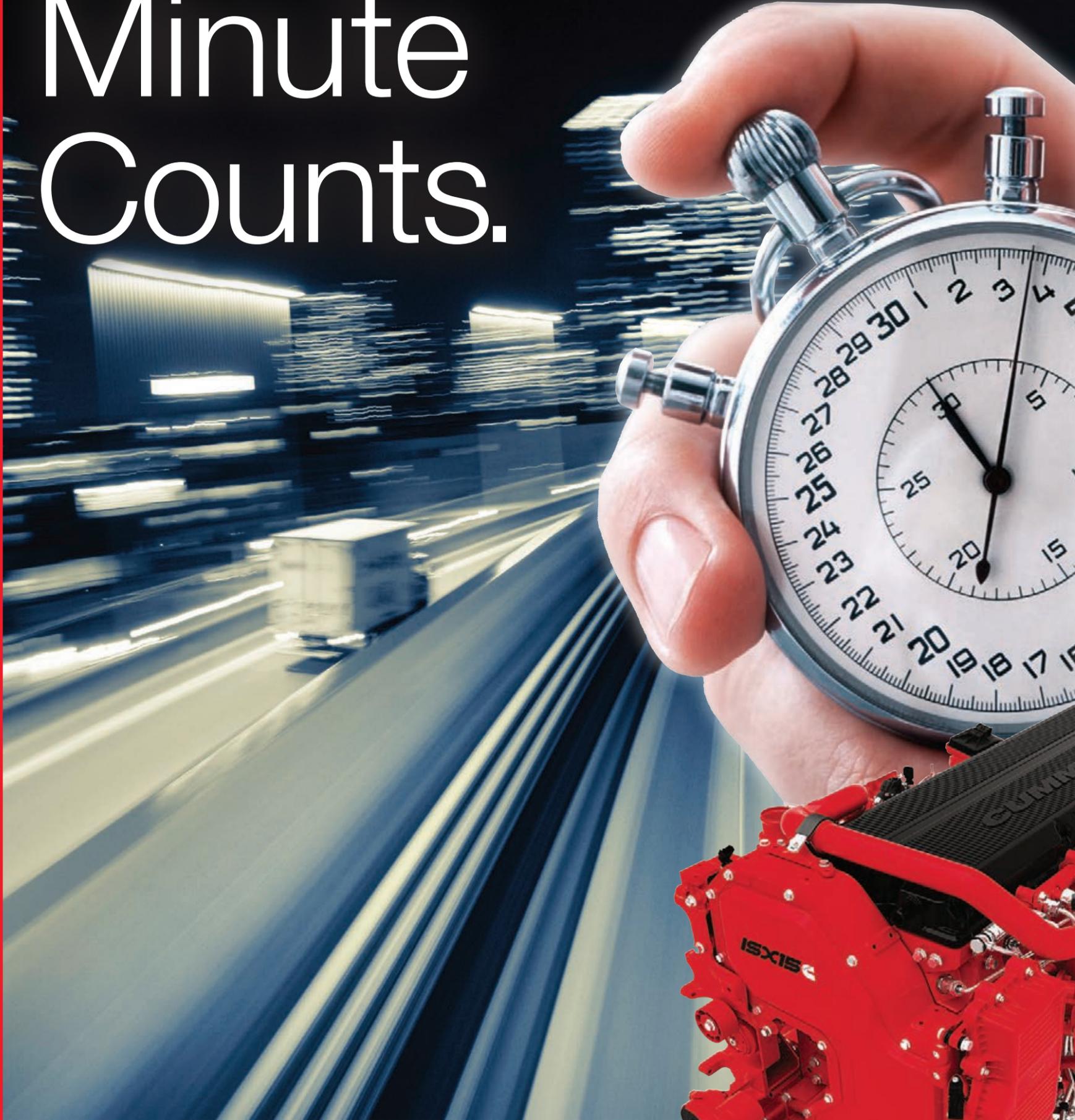
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