

TRUCK WEST

September 2008 Volume 19, Issue 9

Delivering daily news to Canada's trucking industry at www.trucknews.com

A truly vintage flavour

Every truck has a story in Glen Morrow's collection

By Jan Westell

SURREY, B.C. – Don't call multi-vintage truck owner Glen Morrow a mere collector. His hobby is also a business – he modifies his trucks for commercial use, vehicles which he says can compete with any other vehicle on the road.

"It's not collecting. It's changing," says the 65-year-old owner of S.W.A.T. (Specialty Work All Types). "Everything I do is an improvement. It's worth more, in all respects, the value of it."

His vintage modifications meld easily with his specialty four-wheel drive service, and other miscellaneous repair service, which includes fabricating and welding. Morrow works out of a mechanic's dream facility, a spacious commercial shop that's almost 3,000 sq.-ft., and located on the Fraser Highway in Surrey. It's the back half of a larger 5,000 sq.-ft. facility that he owns, with an adjacent yard. The other portion of this increasingly valuable property in the pricey Metro Vancouver region is rented out to another business. It's a solid real estate in-

Continued on page 6 ■



TEAM EFFORT: Marty Gardner, the 2008 *Truck West* Owner/Operator of the Year, credits his wife Lisa (pictured) and a supportive carrier for much of his success. Gardner runs five trucks – each of them contracted to FedEx Ground – on various lanes across Canada.

– Photo by David Benjatschek

Slow and steady

O/O of the Year shares his recipe for success

By James Menzies

FERGUS, Ont. – With owner/operators and fleets of all sizes going broke and decrying the state of the trucking industry on a daily basis, it's refreshing to speak with Marty Gardner.

Business for the 15th annual *Truck West* Owner/Operator of the Year, crowned at the Fergus Truck Show July 25, is thriving.

He just added two more trucks to his small stable, bringing his total to five. All are contracted to FedEx Ground, running various lanes ranging from Vancouver to Southern Ontario.

In an industry sometimes accused of having its share of dinosaurs, Gardner's success has come as a result of evolving with the times. His traditional-styled trucks have been replaced with fuel-efficient, aerodynamic models, and it doesn't dampen his pride a bit.

"I used to run a lot of nice rigs,

Continued on page 10 ■

Focus on Fergus

A pictorial look at some of the most eye-catching rigs from the Fergus Truck Show.

See page 11



Inside This Issue...

- **Exploring alternatives:** A detailed look at the benefits, and some of the problems with a variety of alternative fuels which may pave the way for CO₂-free transport. Pages 12-17
- **Keeping it steady:** A look at the maintenance requirements of truck and trailer stability systems. Page 19
- **Criminal behaviour:** All contraband shipped into Canada spends some time aboard a motor vehicle. Police want your help in stopping illegal activity. Page 20
- **Road test:** Harry Rudolfs drives the International 5600 SBA construction truck. Page 24

Mark Dalton O/O



Page 34



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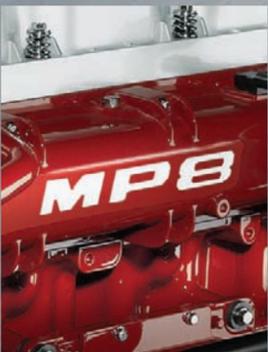
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The driver shortage hasn't permanently disappeared

The current plight of the trucking industry may provide some relief to one of its biggest problems: the shortage of qualified drivers. However, it would be naive to think this issue has permanently disappeared and would be a major mistake to place human resources issues on the back burner.

There's reason to believe the lack of qualified drivers will once again be at the forefront of carrier concerns when the industry recovers. In fact, the problem may even be greater than it was before the current downturn.

While some carriers have reeled in their fleet size and others have disappeared altogether, it must also be remembered that this is a cyclical industry and demand for drivers will return as soon as the freight does. When it does rebound, it may be more difficult than ever to find qualified drivers. Consider that many owner/operators are also going out of business during these difficult times. There's no guarantee they will return to the trucking industry when the industry recovers. Chances are good that they've already moved on to 'greener pastures.'

Also, while the industry remains mired in its current slump, its driver population continues to age. Drivers are continuing to hang up their keys and despite the best efforts of the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council (CTHRC) and the industry as a whole, there still aren't hordes of young folks beating down the doors to get into this business.

So instead of pretending the driver shortage is no longer an issue of concern, now may be an excellent time for fleets to re-evaluate their hiring procedures and take a closer look at how they can minimize turnover. Recently at the Private Motor Truck Council of Canada's annual convention, the CTHRC's

Editorial Comment

James Menzies



Linda Gauthier provided an excellent analogy (which she borrowed from some of the CTHRC's most recent training material).

She likened turnover to the foundation of a house. Without a solid foundation, the walls (recruitment) and roof (retention) will not remain intact. The issue of driver turnover must be addressed – or all the recruiting and retention initiatives in the world will not provide any meaningful long-term relief, she pointed out.

Why address turnover? The CTHRC estimates it costs between \$7,000-\$8,000 to replace a single driver, and that's not even considering the related intangible costs. Too many fleets have accepted turnover as a cost of doing business, but Gauthier said it doesn't have to be that way.

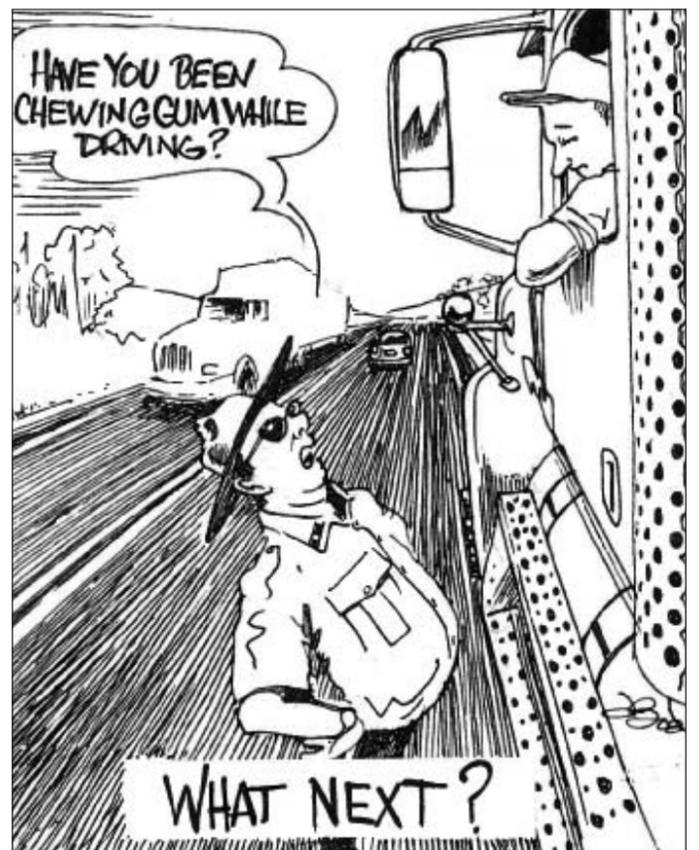
"We can stop turnover," she insisted. But with an industry turnover rate of 20-32% per year (which believe it or not, is better than it recently was) tackling the issue may seem like a daunting task.

To that end, the CTHRC has developed many tools for fleets, one being: *Your*

Guide to Human Resources: Practical Tips and Tools for the Trucking Industry. This comprehensive guide serves as an HR toolbox for managers who generally wear many hats, HR being one of them. It's currently being supported by a half-day course the CTHRC offers when and where there's enough interest, which helps unlock the guide's vast capabilities.

The shortage of qualified drivers may not be top of mind at the moment. But forward-thinking fleets will continue to invest in HR-related training and solutions even in the toughest of times, with the knowledge they will be better positioned to compete when the industry bounces back. □

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You gotta hang on

Have you finally managed to tan your body and your brain during your summer vacation? They didn't actually say it (being Canadian they were too polite) but I could tell by the look on their faces they were thinking it.

What prompted this was the idea I floated during several presentations to transportation industry groups this summer that we could actually be an economic uptick away from another serious capacity crunch in the trucking sector and a return to upward pressure on rates – perhaps as early as the next few months.

Talking about a capacity crunch and rising rates in the midst of the worst downturn the industry has faced in a decade is admittedly jarring. I understand all too well that many motor carriers are too busy hanging on by their fingernails right now to have the luxury of thinking ahead.

But there really is a reason to my "madness." And it has to do with the end result of the carnage going on right now.

The 935 trucking company failures reported in the first quarter

Viewpoint

Lou Smyrlis
Editorial Director



of 2008 in the US represent not only a 142.9% increase over the previous year but about 42,000 power units exiting the market or around 2% of the country's total truck capacity.

To place that in a Canadian perspective, it's the equivalent of pretty well wiping out the entire British Columbia trucking industry.

Then on May 20, 2008, Jevic Transportation closed its doors, representing the largest failure of an LTL carrier since the departure of Consolidated Freightways in 2003.

Canadian motor carrier bankruptcy figures aren't as up to date. Al's Cartage was the biggest name to go under this year and it wouldn't surprise me if a few more familiar names joined the ranks of the departed.

But it's just as important to keep an eye on lower-profile small carriers exiting the market; their contribution to capacity, although not what it once was, is still important.

The last economic downturn in the late 90s, claimed about a quarter of our small carrier base.

After 2005, tight capacity was loosened to a significant degree by the pre-buy.

While another pre-buy is likely, it won't be any where near the size we saw back in 2005 and 2006. There simply isn't much time to put a pre-buy strategy in place this time around and, more importantly, there aren't as many Class 8 trucks up for replacement.

If we assume a seven year average life cycle there are only 18,361 trucks up for renewal in 2009 – too low a base number to envision Class 8 truck capacity being increased by 35,000 to 39,000 as was the case for 2006 and 2007.

In short, there are enough significant factors limiting supply that as soon as demand perks up we'll feel an instant impact on truck transportation pricing. □

– Lou Smyrlis can be reached by phone at (416) 510-6881 or by e-mail at lou@TransportationMedia.ca.

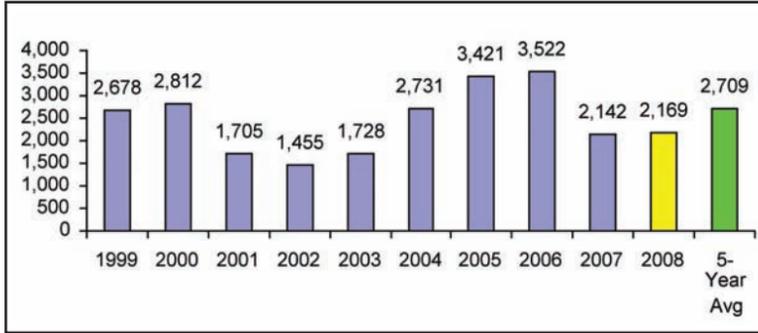
CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

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Monthly Class 8 Sales - June 08

| OEM | This Month | Last Year |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Freightliner | 386 | 400 |
| Kenworth | 376 | 355 |
| Mack | 175 | 127 |
| International | 445 | 495 |
| Peterbilt | 202 | 253 |
| Sterling | 195 | 213 |
| Volvo | 250 | 130 |
| Western Star | 140 | 169 |
| TOTALS | 2,169 | 2,142 |

Historical Comparison - June 08 Sales



Motor Vehicle Production to Jan 08

| | Total Prodn | For Export |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| International | 4,444 | 3,729 |
| Paccar | 4,659 | 3,964 |
| Sterling | 17,156 | 14,563 |
| TOTALS | 26,259 | 22,256 |

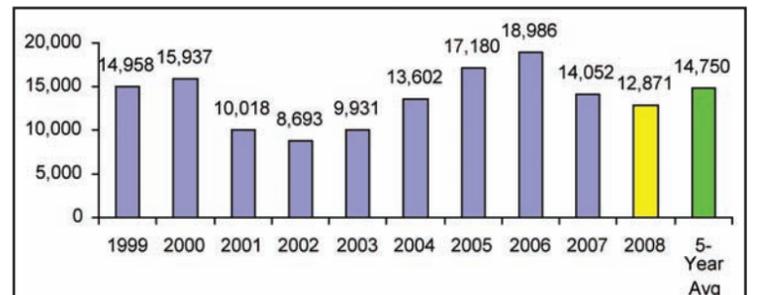
Canadian Class 8 sales during the first half of 2008 have offered a mixed bag of disappointments and pleasant surprises. Sales started off quietly in the first quarter, coming in below last year's level and considerably below the record numbers posted in the 2006 - not surprising considering the impact of the pre-buy strategy and the serious doubts about the economy's health. However, sales for March climbed above 2,000 units, avoiding the steep declines of 2001 to 2003, April's sales were higher than last year's, May's were not far off last year's pace and June's were slightly better than last year's. Can this pace be sustained into the third and fourth quarter? It wasn't last year.

With the days of coping with parts and materials shortages and record demand for new trucks nothing but a memory, truck manufacturers instead now face continuing to bring their operations in line with the reduced sales. They also are preparing for the next jump in sales volumes as fleets and owner/operators respond to the next round of engine emissions standards in 2010 and the anticipated rebound of the North American economy.

Class 8 Sales (YTD June 08) by Province and OEM

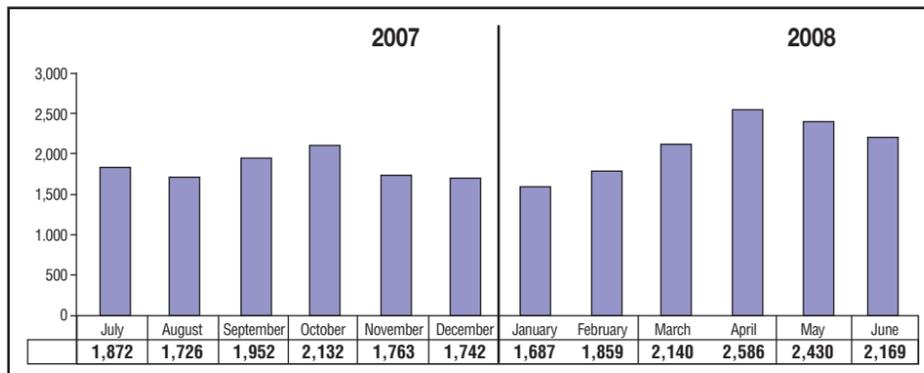
| OEM | BC | ALTA | SASK | MAN | ONT | QUE | NB | NS | PEI | NF | CDA |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------|------------|----------|-----------|---------------|
| Freightliner | 206 | 451 | 105 | 121 | 954 | 375 | 132 | 64 | 0 | 10 | 2,418 |
| Kenworth | 292 | 763 | 122 | 97 | 458 | 436 | 21 | 39 | 0 | 0 | 2,228 |
| Mack | 83 | 148 | 65 | 89 | 361 | 117 | 25 | 35 | 0 | 0 | 923 |
| International | 125 | 373 | 45 | 177 | 1,313 | 774 | 112 | 56 | 3 | 41 | 3,019 |
| Peterbilt | 149 | 454 | 160 | 77 | 298 | 170 | 83 | 31 | 0 | 0 | 1,422 |
| Sterling | 124 | 188 | 50 | 41 | 346 | 265 | 16 | 36 | 0 | 3 | 1,069 |
| Volvo | 80 | 161 | 79 | 155 | 445 | 176 | 34 | 35 | 0 | 7 | 1,172 |
| Western Star | 107 | 163 | 22 | 14 | 175 | 92 | 21 | 24 | 0 | 2 | 620 |
| TOTALS | 1,166 | 2,701 | 648 | 771 | 4,350 | 2,405 | 444 | 320 | 3 | 63 | 12,871 |

Historical Comparison - YTD



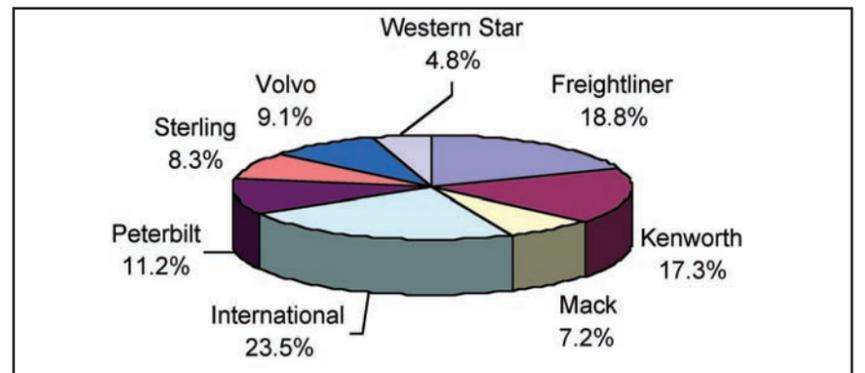
After a stronger than expected second quarter, Class 8 sales for the first half are at 12,871 or about 1,100 units off last year's admittedly slow pace but less than 2,000 units off the 5-year average in Canada. Obviously, this year's sales are way off the record pace set back in 2006. Currently, 2008 is shaping up as the fourth worst sales year in the past decade as the pre-buy strategy employed by many fleets combined with a slowing North American economy is giving fleets second thoughts about adding capacity.

12 - Month Sales Trends



Monthly total sales never climbed above the 3,000 mark last year, after doing so seven times in the previous record-setting year. It's highly unlikely to see such strong monthly figures this year either. The 2,586 Class 8 trucks sold in April marked the strongest sales so far this year with May's 2,430 trucks sold the second best. The 2,169 trucks sold in June marked the third-best performance of the year and also the fourth consecutive month over the past 12-month period that monthly totals have climbed above 2,000 units sold.

Market Share Class 8 YTD



Last year, International wrestled the market share lead from perennial front runner Freightliner and International jumped out of the starting blocks with a lead in the first quarter, capturing about 22% of sales. With a very strong second quarter showing, International has added to that lead and now controls almost a quarter of the market with Freightliner controlling almost 19% and Kenworth 17.3%. Peterbilt is the only other truck manufacturer with a market share greater than 10%.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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University of Manitoba looks at route selection

By Jan Westell

WINNIPEG, Man. – The Transport Institute at the University of Manitoba has researched and published an *Innovative Freight Practices* summary notebook, which addresses the importance of route optimization.

The initiative is intended to encourage local small- and medium-sized fleets to improve operating efficiencies, and to adopt efficient truck routing practices to reduce emissions and increase energy conservation, said Jairo Viafara, a researcher with the Transport Institute.

“The summary notebook was launched last January at the Innovative Freight Practices Seminar,” he said. “The event was established to assess the applicability of the proposed solutions at the regional and national level.”

Some of the practices proposed for the trucking industry’s consideration, are: Computerized Vehicle Routing and Scheduling (CVRS) technologies; use of load planning computer and Web-based solutions; load consolidation and backhauling to eliminate under-use of resources; concentration of cargo origins and destinations near intermodal terminals; consideration of freight in urban mobility transportation plans; thinking about freight carrier cooperation to reduce the number of vehicles or kilometres driven, improve urban use of distribution networks and consolidation centres; market-

based approaches to idle-reduction by supporting fuel consumption reduction technologies; promotion of performance management program to measure transport efficiency across different fleets; and training in safe and efficient driving practices. One of the most pressing issues in the transportation industry is the need to modify certain industry perceptions and driver behaviours that lead to engine idling, according to the report.

“Idling increases fuel consumption, augments noise levels in adjacent facilities, and negatively contributes to air pollution. Engine idling cost money and weakens the health of drivers. Thus the effects of idling on the economy, environment, and community are significant,” the report says.

The publication was produced in the context of the “WinSmart Showcase,” a three-level Manitoba government sustainable transportation initiative, advanced to evaluate, demonstrate, and promote effective best practices to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) from urban transportation resulting from the operation of local distribution vehicles. Limited quantities of the *Innovative Freight Practices* summary notebook are available for distribution free of charge to transportation companies and truck driver schools wishing to adopt this material as part of their training programs.

For more information contact Viafara at 204-474-6798. □

No tolls planned for B.C.’s South Fraser Perimeter Road

VANCOUVER, B.C. – The B.C. government formally launched the controversial South Fraser Perimeter Highway project recently, confirming it will be built and operated as a public-private partnership, but saying it will not be a toll road.

The province has called for qualified teams to design, finance, build, operate and maintain the highway, less than a week after it got the environmental go-ahead. The four-lane truck route is to run about 40 km along the south shore of the Fraser River, from Highway 99 and Deltaport in the west to the Trans-Canada Highway east of the Port Mann Bridge.

Transportation Minister Kevin Falcon said the project has undergone significant scrutiny over five years, but he was confident the government had respected the concerns of its opponents.

“I think it’s important to remember that the project is to deal with a huge problem,” Falcon told local media. “The local roads are totally congested by truck traffic. Remember, on any major project, you’ll have opponents.”

The highway is part of the province’s Gateway program, which includes twinning the Port Mann Bridge across the Fraser, widening the Trans-Canada from Vancouver to Langley, improving existing roads for a North Fraser Perimeter Highway, and building a new bridge over the Pitt River. The Gateway program has been championed by transportation-related industries, especially regional port authorities, and fits into the Liberal government’s plans to turn Metro Vancouver into a container-trade gateway between Asia and North America.

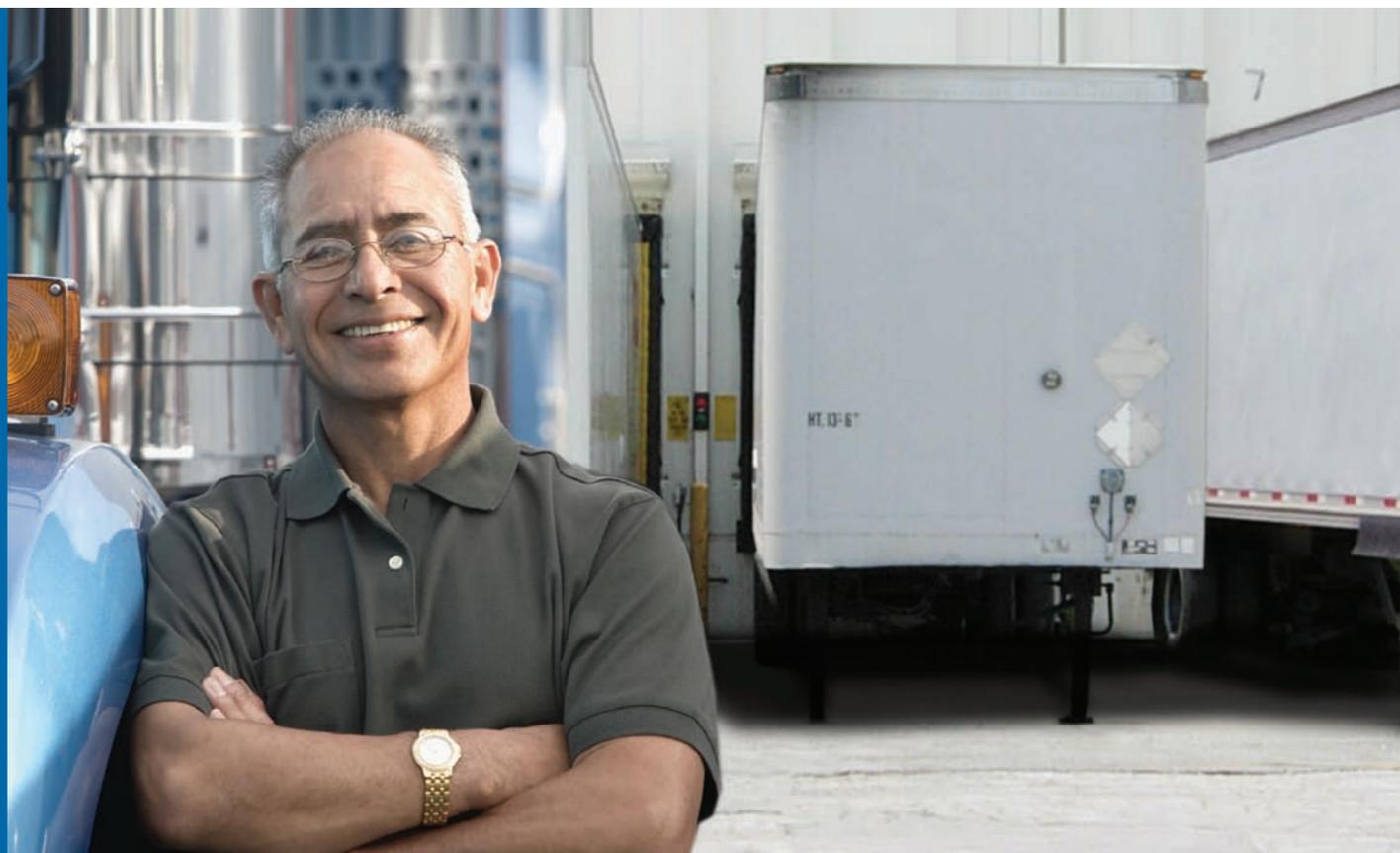
The call for qualifications went out from the province’s Partnerships B.C. agency, and Falcon confirmed the highway will very likely be built as a public-private partnership. Tolls weren’t a feasible option for the highway, Falcon said, because there wouldn’t be enough traffic to earn a return, unlike the twinned Port Mann Bridge, which will require payment of tolls. The highway got the green light last month from the province’s Environmental Assessment Office.

Partnerships B.C. said the highway “will relieve heavily congested city streets and re-route truck traffic away from residential neighbourhoods, thereby improving safety related to freight movement and restoring municipal local roads as community connectors.” It said the highway is to be finished in 2012.

In contrast, the Golden Ears Bridge, which is now more than half complete, will be tolled. The \$808-million bridge is expected to open in June 2009, and it will be the first tolled bridge in the Lower Mainland, a Fraser River crossing that will connect Maple Ridge and Langley.

Tolls will be as high as \$9.75 per trip for a large truck. □

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Unique collection is more than just a hobby

Continued from page 1

vestment, but the facility also brings in revenue that helps to support Morrow's singular passion.

Inside his commercial shop, there are three vintage vehicles on the main level, with a loft overtop for spare parts and other equipment, and a corner for a huge display of truck show trophies. In the opposite corner, the mechanic/welder/metal fabricator, has parked one of his proudest possessions: a 1959 Chevy five-tonne Spartan 80, slide tilt roll back. That multi-award winning vehicle formerly had a basic cabin chassis, which he has modified to a six-wheel drive. He calls it a six-wheel drive, because it has gear lockers in both ends, which mean all six wheels turn exactly at the same time, "even if it is in the air" they will still be turning, he says.

"Most of them have an open dif-



CHEVROLET WAY: Antique truck collector and restorer extraordinaire, Glen Morrow, shows off a couple favourites from his private collection.

ferential, so if one wheel is in the air, then the power won't transfer to the ground."

Morrow has plans to improve the

mileage on the '59 Chevy truck, by replacing the gasoline engine with a Cummins diesel twin turbo, "bigger" fuel injectors and other "miscella-

neous components," including a six-speed, double-overdrive Allison transmission. "Those things shift so smooth," he says. "Unless you are watching the tach – the RPM – you'll never know it shifted, especially in town."

When he bought the 59 Chevy, it had 12,889 miles on it, and was previously a fire truck in the Fraser Valley, with an 80-gallon a minute pumper, according to Morrow, before it was sold to the Chilliwack army base as a Vancouver-area emergency back-up vehicle. At that time, it packed 15,000 lbs of water in the tanks, adds Morrow, who enjoys researching the background of his vintage vehicles and talking about the historic, and modified technical details of his unique collection.

Also in the commercial shop, Morrow has made space for his latest project, a decayed, but rare 1928 2.5-tonne Pontiac flatbed truck, which has an adapted box from another dilapidated truck, all of which came from a 100-acre antique vehicle junkyard at the Reynolds-Alberta Museum, located near Wetaskiwin, Alberta. He has big plans for the rusty antique, from the ground up – some of which are already complete – although not immediately apparent.

"It will take a while, because we are doing the woodwork in the cab now. But all the sheet metal is done: the fenders, the aprons, the running boards, the grille radiator surround is done. It just needs to be plated in the bumper. I've got to cut one, and organize that for the plating. The box in the back is a grain box, with all the cast iron stuff on the side. I'm going to duplicate that, rather than having a flatdeck. Flatdecks to me are not very exciting. No imagination."

Outside in the yard, Morrow has parked his "everyday" truck, a 1959 GMC.

He took the GMC, with the two other vintage trucks, to a truck show in Chilliwack a few weeks ago, but otherwise it could have 5,000 pounds of scrap loaded on it, he says.

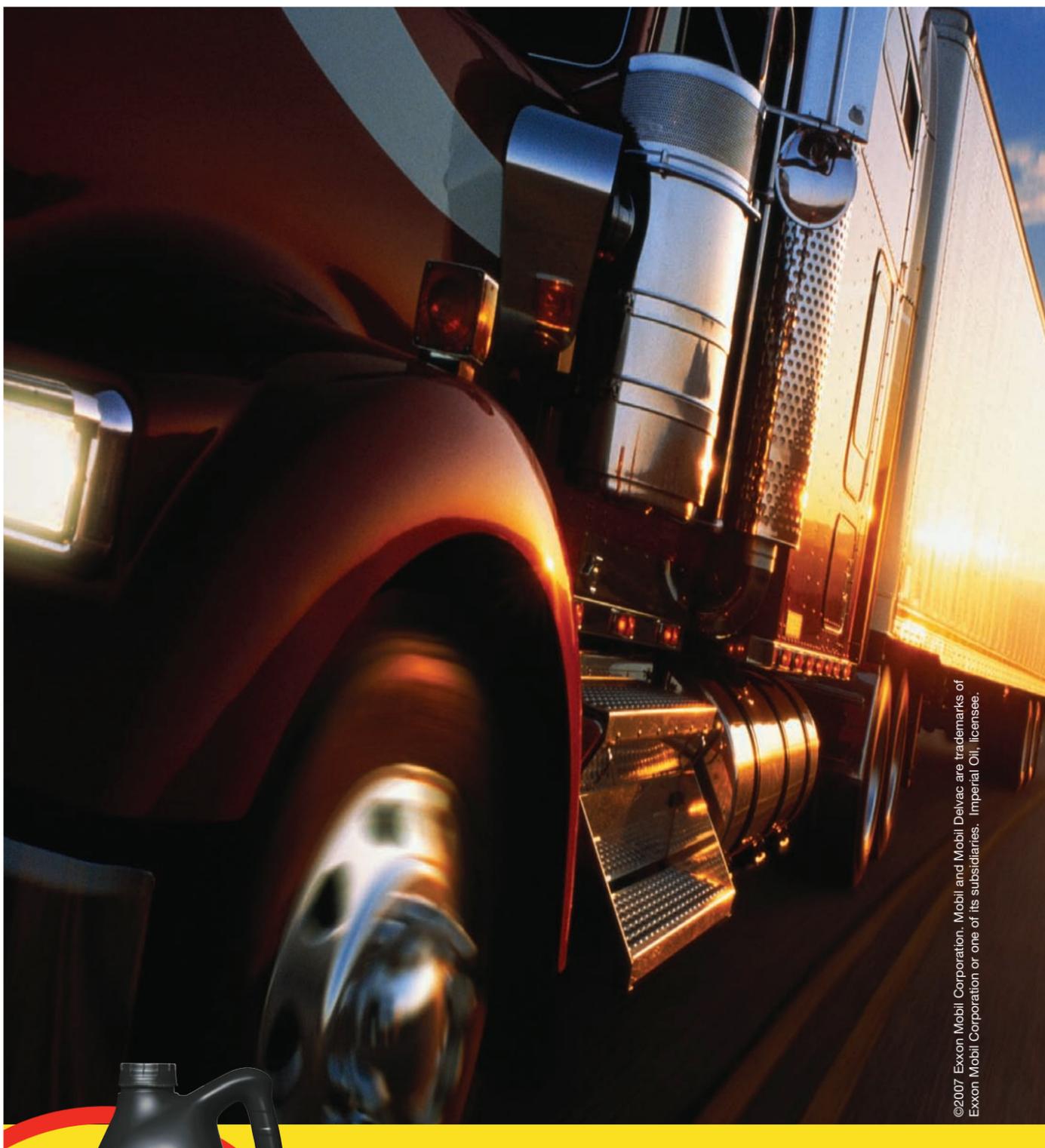
"I work everything."

His home is only five minutes away from the commercial shop, where Morrow has another large 1,200 sq.-ft. six-car garage, where four vintage vehicles are kept dry and warm. That's where he houses the only car in the collection: a 1938 Chevrolet two-door trunkback town sedan, which he purchased almost 50 years ago, when he was 17.

It was a purchase he instantly refitted for street-racing, and subsequently raced in a circuit that included the old Mission drag strip, as well as Washington State events, including Arlington, Bremerton, Kent and Puyallip. It's a resurging hobby, not only for himself, but many of his peers who were otherwise compelled to forfeit drag racing due to family and business responsibilities that often curtail youthful pursuits.

Also in the same home shop, is a 1934, 2.5-tonne Diamond T refrigerated cube van, that Morrow believes was used to deliver cheese in Vancouver. He also has a beloved 1979 Toyota four-wheel drive pick-up, which he believes was the first, and is the oldest Toyota four-wheel drive truck in Canada, which makes it a

Continued on page 9 ■



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PROFILE

Every truck's a work truck: Morrow

■ Continued from page 6

likely attraction at truck shows.

"I got it right from the dealer: serial number 00009365," he says. "It came from Japan on a special order."

When Morrow initially enquired about placing an order for what was then considered a pint-sized truck compared to the larger vehicles popular at the time, he was told by a B.C. Toyota dealer that the new model couldn't be supplied for another two years – a waiting period that gave preference to a US launch. But Morrow was smitten with the new truck, and was relentless with his enquiries. He also offered a compelling reason for Toyota to consider showcasing the truck's rugged durability, from a B.C. point-of-view.

Morrow intended to use the small pick-up for an off-road adventure in upper B.C., with a group of other four-wheel drive enthusiasts. The group planned to follow the Blackwater River, from Quesnel to Bella Coola, or the land portion of the original canoe and portage route taken in 1793 by the explorer Alexander MacKenzie. It was a wilderness experience that Morrow believes impressed the Toyota marketing team, who eventually agreed to supply the new truck to the Canadian buyer, at a cost at that time of \$7,400.

Before the off-road excursion, Morrow stripped the truck. He changed the suspension, the wheels, and the tires. He gave it new fuel tanks, added a new canopy. The vehicle had 243 km on it when it left his own shop for the trip, according to Morrow, who appears to have perfect recall with any technical feature – past or present – about any of his trucks.

When the other drivers in his off-road club saw the smaller, imported Japanese truck, it was met with great skepticism and endless taunting. Yet, the little Toyota truck stood up well on a journey that took 11 days to go 166 miles, an unprecedented ordeal, according to Morrow, and a route with no trails or roads to follow at that time. In the end, the little blue truck was the only vehicle out of eight that made it through the bush-whacking truck expedition without a problem.

"You would never try one of those trips by yourself," says Morrow. "It's so brutal we carried welding machines, torches. Everybody had extra axles, steering boxes – everything."

Morrow has long since given up long distance four-wheel drive pursuits, and is now focused on his business and refitting his vintage trucks for commercial standards and show purposes, vehicles that he doesn't pamper, even in severe winter weather.

"I don't care if it's raining or snowing. I'll take the (Chevy) '38 out in anything. I'm not afraid of rain drops. Most people are afraid of a rain drop. They'll trailer them to a show, rather than drive them," he says.

As for salt, or other roadway grit, Morrow says you just have to deal with it, and clean it thoroughly later.

"The Toyota has been so brown, you don't know what colour it is. But

right now you could eat off of it, anywhere, underneath it. The (59 Chevy) five-tonne is the same way. You could eat off of it anywhere, (including) underneath the deck."

Morrow has an efficient, and thorough system for cleaning and polishing his vehicles, and he doesn't get fancy about the products that he uses, favouring plain dish soap liquid and hot water. He recently spent five and a half hours to prep the 59 Chevy for a show, a job that he prefers doing solo.

"If you get help, it takes longer because you're fighting over the hose and the bucket. I have a system that works. I've done it long enough. I've figured out a way, that's inside and out. I could get even fussier, if it was important," says Morrow.

At the shows, Morrow enjoys the older visitors, who recall driving similar models of the working vintage

trucks that he displays. However, when critics start to advise, he's not impressed, or open to further discussion.

"Everybody has an answer or a comment saying: 'shoulda, coulda, woulda.' However, I've found the ones with the lips that flap the most, say the least, or don't do anything. They just talk."

Quite a few of Morrow's trucks have appeared in locally shot TV or film productions numerous times, sometimes with Morrow driving, which means extra remuneration in this credit-conscious business. The 59 Chevy Spartan was in *Dark Angel* (a 2000-2002 TV series). The 1934 Diamond T was in the film *Reefer Madness: The Movie Musical* (a 2005 film). The 1953 GMC truck has been in a number of productions, including: *Smallville* (an ongoing TV series), the *X-Files* (a

1993-2002 TV series), and *Riding the Bullet* (a 2004 horror film). This truck is frequently requested for TV/film production, not only because of its authenticity.

"They like it because it's not too shiny," says Morrow. "They don't like shiny vehicles, because there's too much glare from the lights."

Morrow has an interesting background: first purchasing a welder as a teenager, for hobby purposes. He also had a long stint building aluminum boats for the fishing industry before its downfall, and subsequently did specialized welding for pulp mills and breweries, as well as working on logging trucks and flatdeck trailers. He eventually opened his own business, and purchased his Surrey property in 1973, where he's earned a regular flow of customers, much of it through word-of-mouth, including over the Internet.

"It's just steady," he says. "I'm busy all the time." □

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COVER STORY

At home behind the wheel

■ Continued from page 1

the polished large cars," Gardner admits. "I cut back and got more into the aerodynamics, watched the motors, spec'ed the trucks right, went to super-singles on a couple of them, put speed limiters on them – anything just to get the fuel savings."

While image is important to Gardner, it simply can't come at the expense of running a profitable business, he says. But that's not to say he doesn't still appreciate the glitz and glam of the show trucks which dotted the fields that played host to the Fergus Truck Show. After all, that's what lured him into the business in the first place.

"Being a young kid in the back of Dad's pick-up trucks, I always looked up at the chicken lights on the big trucks and thought 'Gee, it'd be nice to get into that someday,'" Gardner recalls.

He bought his first truck at 18 – a Kenworth T600 that he put to work hauling auto parts for Ram Automotive between Windsor and Montreal.

Gardner's trucking career has taken him around the country, and even around the world. He spent six months supervising a crew of eight drivers in Africa while they installed a fresh water pipeline.

"That was quite the experience," he recalls. His responsibilities involved teaching the locals how to drive commercial trucks. It was a year-long assignment that was cut short after six months due to some instability with the government there.

When the position to haul for FedEx Ground came up in 1994, he leapt at the opportunity. Since then, he has slowly grown his business to where it is today – five trucks, the latest two additions joining the fleet just days before he was notified he was this year's Owner/Operator of the Year, a prestigious award sponsored by Freightliner, Markel Insurance, Goodyear and supporting partners OBAC and Natural Resources Canada.

"I wouldn't go anywhere else," he

says of his carrier, FedEx Ground. "It's a great company to work for."

Gardner credits FedEx Ground with much of his success as an owner/operator. The company provides him with tools and criteria to assist with the hiring process and other elements of running the business.

The support he receives was evidenced by the presence at the awards ceremony of both Jack Brown, senior linehaul manager, FedEx Ground Canada, and all the way from FedEx Ground headquarters in Pittsburgh, Penn., John Payne, vice-president, linehaul.

Gardner is all too happy to deflect the glory from himself, onto those who have helped him achieve success in the business. Most notably, his wife Lisa, who in addition to running the home while he's away and working a full-time job across the border from their home in Belle River, Ont., still finds time to manage the trucking business after hours.

"If it wasn't for her, I wouldn't be here today," Gardner says humbly. "She has a full-time job working in IT at Detroit Diesel. She travels from Windsor across the border every day, she comes home – we have four kids at home – she manages the household and then after that she'll be on the computer managing the business. There's times she's up until two or three in the morning and then she's back up at seven in the morning to do her regular job," Gardner explains, his voice painted with admiration.

As with anyone who makes a living out on the highway, Gardner admits to missing his family while on the road. He appreciates the regularly-scheduled runs, which get him home every weekend, but that's not to say he doesn't pine for home when he's away.

"It's very hard," he admits. "You miss out on the kids. I miss a lot of their soccer games. Even with Lisa, I don't get to see her that much during the week. We might see each other for half an hour during the evening – she'll meet me at work with a coffee

then she'll go home and I'll go to work. We kinda meet in the middle. But come Friday, I'm done. I have Friday, Saturday and Sunday to hang out with the family."

With four other trucks hauling steady for him, one wonders what keeps Gardner out on the road in the first place? The way he sees it, it's the only way to properly run the business.

"I like being in the truck myself," says Gardner, who personally averages 120,000 miles per year. "I find that being in the truck, it's easier to manage the business and know what's going on. You know what's going on with the trucks, you know what's going on with the drivers. If I sat at home, it would be hard to manage my business."

Gardner's willingness to spend time in the trenches also extends to the maintenance of his vehicles. He personally meticulously maintains his equipment, while ensuring he has a decent warranty to cover the big stuff.

His hands-on approach has earned Gardner the respect of his drivers. While large fleets deal with double-digit – sometimes even triple-digit – driver turnover rates, Gardner has a loyal team of drivers piloting his vehicles.

"All my drivers have stayed with me," he says. "They like the runs because they're dedicated runs. They have a schedule, they have home time. They know when they're going, when they have to be back and they can have a life with their families too."

While Gardner is quick to credit others for his accomplishments, his safety record speaks for itself. During his 22-year driving career, Gardner has never been involved in an at-fault accident.

He was part of a 10-member linehaul team at FedEx Ground that set a new safety record, accumulating more than 20 million miles without an accident. He has covered 2.2 million miles on his own at FedEx Ground, without an accident.

The key, he says, is just taking it slow.

"I take each day as a challenge,"



A COMPANY THAT CARES: The humble Gardner says having regular runs with scheduled home time is key to finding happiness and one reason why driver turnover has not been an issue for him. Photo by James Menzies

he explains. "You get in the truck, and you can't just look at your job as though it's the same routine. You have to watch the people around you, avoid getting in big clusters, lay low, take your time and do your thing."

"FedEx is good with us," he adds. "They allow us plenty of time to get to our stop, so we have plenty of time to deal with weather conditions." There he goes again, crediting others with his success.

While Gardner wasn't born into a trucking family, there's a chance he may have started one. He says two of his and Lisa's four children (three boys and a girl, aged seven, 11, 16 and 18) have shown an interest in the trucks.

Whether it's his own children, or just another youngster staring up at the chicken lights from his father's pick-up truck, Gardner does have some advice on how to achieve success in what can be a grueling industry.

"Start slow," he suggests. "Start with a used truck. Get low payments on it because you have to factor in the price of fuel and how much work there is out there. Start slow and work your way up. I did the same thing, basically. I worked as a sub-contractor, built up a little bit and said 'You know what, I think I can make a go at it,' and I've been doing so ever since." □

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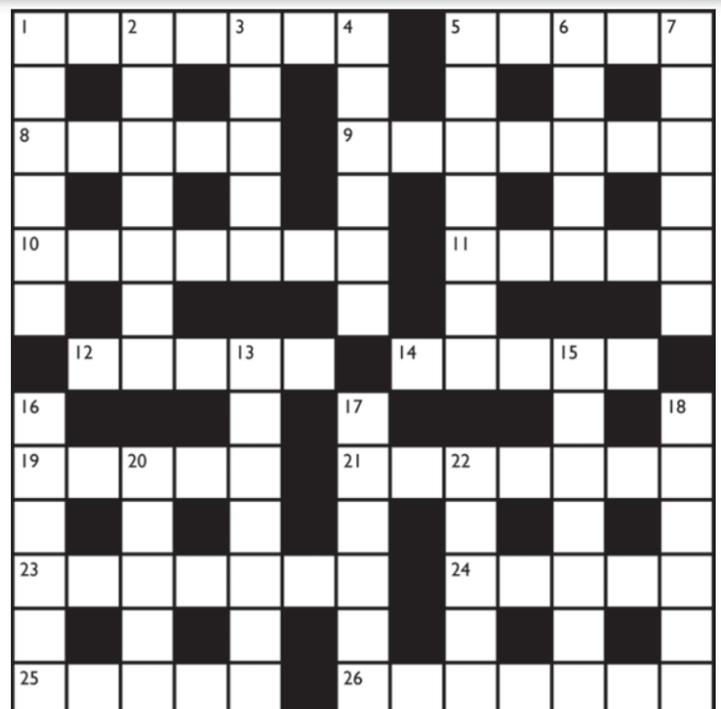
THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

1. Easy-engine-access design (4,3)
8. Put the _____ to the metal!
9. An International tractor
10. Obeyed a triangular sign
11. International tractor, debuted in '07
13. Word on RI and NS plates
15. Piston's lower section
18. Road-map compendium
19. Van-body portion above cab
21. International vocational model
23. Allied, for example (3, 4)
24. Up, on a road map
25. Obeys an octagonal sign
26. Houses trucked to building sites

Down

1. Temporary traffi delays (3,3)
2. The daily diary
3. Top of the hill
4. Truck-dealer's quest
5. Coach company with Sainte-Claire HQ
6. '45-'68 Power Wagon brand
7. Bill of _____ cargo document
13. Western Mountains
15. Medium-duty Sterling model
16. Tarp material
17. Ongoing truck maintenance
18. McDonald's golden emblem
20. Radio code for T
22. Truck line with Saskatoon head office



Answers on page 29

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Best in class

Fergus Truck Show on top of its game

FERGUS, Ont. – The Fergus Truck Show stayed true to its title as one of the best festivals in Ontario during its 23rd installment July 24-27.

Truck customizing enthusiasts turned out in droves to take part in the event's annual show'n'shine competition, which featured about 500 trucks pitted against each other in various categories (see opposite page for selected winners).

The event also attracted some big names in the music biz, with Canadian rockers April Wine and Kim Mitchell, David Wilcox and country stars such as Aaron Pritchett among the many acts to grace the main stage.

About 200 participants competed for \$75,000 in prizes at the truck and

tractor pull on Thursday, while revelers enjoyed the sights, sounds and smashes at Sunday's demolition derby.

Over 225 trade show exhibitors were present to display the latest equipment, technology and accessories throughout the weekend.

Truck West was on-site to present its annual Owner/Operator of the Year Award (see cover story), but also got out its video cameras to film a segment for its weekly WebTV show, *Transportation Matters*. To view the video, visit www.trucknews.com/Video/transportationmatters20.asp.

For full details on plans for next year's event, visit www.fergustruckshow.com. □



WEB-SLINGING WONDER: This spider-themed rig, owned by Vic Pannu of Pannu Transport (Diesel Truck Centre), doesn't really show its stuff until you turn the lights out. The truck's light show was good enough to take home second place in the Best Light Show Single category of the show n' shine. *Photo by Adam Ledlow*



BLACK BEAUTY: Spectators at this year's show'n'shine were talking a blue streak about this truck by Mar-bo Farms of Belwood, Ont. *Photo by Adam Ledlow*



COOL KENWORTH: Tom Ellis's cool red and blue Kenworth was a winner twice over in the show'n'shine competition, taking first place in the Best Tractor/Trailer – Tandem – Float, Flat or Curtain-side category and second place in the Best '00 to '03 O/O Working Tractor category. *Photo by Adam Ledlow*



CHILD'S PLAY: A young boy (left) gets up close and personal with a Burmese python at the NAL booth, while other pint-sized revellers (right) get prepped for a free fall at the Fergus Family Fun Zone. Both events were sponsored as part of NAL's Trucking for Wishes charity fundraiser. *Photos courtesy of NAL Insurance*



Fergus 2008 Show and Shine winners

Public Choice – Best Truck of the Show:
Shawn Bowles (Keena Truck Leasing and Transport)

Judge's Choice – Single:
Larry Josie

Best Mural Straight or Tractor-Trailer combination:
Doug and Kim Fisher (TransportNService)

Best Tractor/Trailer – Van:
Cliff King (Castle Rock Transportation)

Best Light Show Fleet:
Ontario Potato Dist. (Alliston)

Best Tractor/Trailer – Tanker:
Troy Bunney (Liquid Cargo Lines)

Best 2008 or new O/O Working Tractor:
Steve Joyce (Sleeman Brewery)

Best '89 to '99 Company Working Tractor:
Dan Prentice (WD Potato)

Best Pre 2007 Dump Truck:
Glenn Watts (Watts Haulage)

The above is just a sampling of some of the winners from the Fergus Truck Show show'n'shine. Space does not permit us to reprint the list of all winners here. For a complete list of winners, visit www.fergustruckshow.com. □

Trucking for Wishes raises \$30K at Fergus

FERGUS, Ont. – Trucking for Wishes raised more than \$30,000 at the Fergus Truck Show to make dreams come true for children with life-threatening illnesses.

Since 2007, Trucking for Wishes has raised more than \$75,000 for Make-A-Wish on behalf of the trucking industry.

"I would like to thank everyone who attended the Fergus Truck Show and all of our sponsors. Without the generous support of the trucking industry this would have never been possible," said event coordinator Aaron Lindsay of NAL Insurance.

Much of the money was raised through a charity draw at the NAL booth with prizes including a 42" Samsung flat screen TV, Napoleon BBQ, round-trip airfare for two to any WestJet destination in Canada and more.

Ticket holders are asked to visit www.truckingforwishes.com to see if they are a winner.

New this year, Trucking for

Wishes and NAL Insurance sponsored the Family Fun Zone at the Fergus Truck Show. The Family Fun Zone was expanded to over five acres of space and was filled with amusement rides and fun family games brought in by Robertson Amusements.

"This was a great attraction for kids. The family rides and games added a lot of excitement to the show," said Wayne Billings, chief operating officer of the Fergus Truck Show. A portion of the proceeds of the Family Fun Zone was donated to Make-A-Wish.

Also brand new this year, Kido TV will be filming all of the Trucking for Wishes major events. "The extra exposure on television will not only help Trucking for Wishes but it will also shed a positive light on the trucking industry as a whole," Lindsay says.

For more information or to become a sponsor, contact Lindsay at 800-265-1657 or info@truckingforwishes.com. □

7 Future fuels

Volvo says it's ready to roll out CO₂-neutral trucks in North America – when the fuels are available

By James Menzies

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Volvo Group stole the show at the Washington International Renewable Energy Conference (WIREC) held here this spring. The company dominated the trade show floor, with a massive display that took up one entire wall. The highlight of the exhibit was the unveiling of seven alternative fuel-powered trucks that are completely carbon-neutral and adapted for use in North America.

The exhibit garnered the attention of US president George W. Bush, who took time to tour the display and speak with Volvo executives about their pursuit of carbon-neutral transport solutions.

Truck West first reported on the seven alternative fuels being pursued by Volvo Group from Brussels, Belgium last September (see the November, 2007 issues of *Truck News* or *Truck West* for the full report. Archives can be viewed online at www.truck-news.com).

But unlike the trucks first displayed in Belgium, the trucks showcased at the WIREC show were adapted for North American use. Volvo officials were also able to delve more deeply into each of the alternative fuels, highlighting the pros and cons of each. The fuels showcased by Volvo Group were evaluated based on a set of seven criteria: climate impact; energy efficiency; land use efficiency; fuel potential; vehicle adaptation; fuel cost; and fuel infrastructure.

Synthetic diesel

Synthetic diesel can be used today with no vehicle adaptation required, said Anthony Greszler, vice-president, advanced engineering with Volvo Powertrain North America. It can be used on its own or blended with traditional diesel.

Synthetic diesel meets existing fuel standards, with the exception of lubricity requirements which are inferior to those of regular diesel. Greszler said this can be easily corrected by using lubricity additives. The challenge will be to get the cost of synthetic diesel production in line with that of traditional diesel, Greszler noted.

On the plus side, synthetic diesel produces very little CO₂, offers improved performance over today's diesel (including an

operating range that's equal to that of regular diesel) and there is no need for vehicle adaptation.

Biodiesel

The use of biodiesel is already prevalent in the trucking industry today. Greg Shank, co-ordinator lubricants, fuels and coolants technology with Volvo Powertrain said one of its greatest challenges is the use of a wide variety of feedstocks during biodiesel production.

"All those different feedstocks can cause different problems," said Shank.

Biodiesel also comes with a fuel economy degradation of 5-10%, Shank pointed out. And it has corrosive properties which can eat away at elastomers, causing fuel system problems. There are also some well-documented cold weather operability issues that have plagued early adopters of biodiesel.

Shank also pointed out biodiesel tends to become ineffective after as little as six to nine months in a storage tank. There's also a popular school of thought that biodiesel increases NOx, a pollutant targeted by the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Having said all that, Shank pointed out that biodiesel is an attractive option because its cost premium can be offset through government incentives in some regions, it's already available, it boasts an operational range nearly equal to traditional diesel and very little vehicle adaptation is required.

Methanol/Ethanol

Ethanol is the most common biofuel used in the world today, explained Greszler, but that doesn't mean it is without its issues. Ethanol has inherently low cetane levels, which must be offset with the use of additives. It also suffers a lack of energy density compared to traditional diesel.

"Ethanol's operating range is reduced because it has less energy," explained Greszler, noting ethanol reduces operating range by as much as 60%.

Ethanol and methanol are also difficult to ignite, so Volvo has added ignition additives as well. Volvo also added catalysts to its ethanol- and methanol-powered trucks to control high concentrations of hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide. Volvo engineers also contend that ethanol and methanol are more corrosive than traditional fuels.

Like each of the fuels being explored by Volvo, methanol and ethanol do have their redeeming



READY AND WILLING: Volvo has already developed the trucks, now it needs the fuel to provide CO₂-neutral transport options, the company claims.

qualities. Most notably, the fuels produce very little CO₂, particulate matter and NOx. However, when all criteria are evaluated, Shank said methanol and ethanol do not measure up well compared to other options when conducting a complete well-to-wheel analysis. These options score particularly poorly in the land use efficiency category.

Dimethylether (DME)

Of all the alternative fuels discussed by Volvo officials at a seminar on the subject, it was Dimethylether (DME) that excited them the most. Volvo's Greszler said "Volvo has been investigating DME for a few years."

DME is a gas that's handled in liquid form at low pressure, formed through the gasification of biomass (black liquor generated by the pulp industry is an ideal source). It's already being used in Asia, but Greszler admitted "Very little is heard about it here."

As with all other alternative fuels, there are significant sacrifices when using DME, most notably viscosity and lubricity, Greszler explained. He added DME will dissolve some rubber and plastic components. It also offers a greatly-reduced operating range compared to diesel – you'll only get about 55% as far down the road on a tank of DME compared to diesel.

"However, we do want to say DME is a fuel that can compete head-on with diesel in many areas," Greszler said. No changes are required to the base engine, but the fuel system must be upgraded with a special fuel pump and injector. And the tanks must be designed to liquid natural gas (LNG) standards.

But Greszler said that performance-wise, DME is equal to or better than today's diesel. He also noted no diesel particulate filter (DPF) is required and the engines and fuel will eventually cost about the same as today's. Other benefits include: high torque at low engine speeds; low CO₂ emissions; reduced noise levels; and a simplified exhaust aftertreatment system, sans DPF. While Volvo is excited about the prospect of DME, Greszler admitted "It will take longer to build the infrastructure than it will take us to get the vehicles ready." In the short-term, it will likely only be suitable for local distribution applications where a truck can be fueled up at one central location.

Biogas

In addition to liquids, there are also

gaseous options available for future CO₂-neutral transport, including biogas which can be extracted from sewage treatment plants and landfill sites. Gaseous options boast reduced engine noise and biogas has the added benefit of recycling man-made waste.

Biogas has a low cetane index, Greszler explained, meaning ignition must be triggered via a spark plug or a diesel pilot injection system. Unfortunately, biogas (and hydrogen for that matter) have low energy content. If used in a compressed gas state, the fuel suffers from a reduced operating range. When used in liquid form, it has the tendency to evaporate.

Biogas + Biodiesel

Biogas may have too many challenges to overcome on its own, but it can also be used in conjunction with biodiesel, according to Volvo officials. In this case, the two fuels are housed in separate tanks. A small percentage of biodiesel (10%) is used to achieve compression ignition.

Biogas options eliminate the need for a DPF and they offer good throttle response and low exhaust emissions, Greszler pointed out.

Hydrogen + Biogas

Biogas can also be mixed with hydrogen. In Volvo's case, an 8% mixture of hydrogen is used. Pros include very low well-to-wheel CO₂ emissions, the elimination of particulates and smoke, good throttle response and as with other gaseous options, reduced engine noise. This option is well-suited for urban applications, Greszler said.

As witnessed at WIREC, there are many options available to the trucking industry to achieve CO₂-neutral transport. Volvo has proceeded with developing trucks that can utilize each of the seven most promising alternatives, despite the fact there is currently no widespread availability of most of these fuels.

"Availability is crucial. That's certainly going to be limited for a number of years," Greszler admitted. "But we see a lot of potential for second generation biofuels."

In the short-term, Volvo officials said the most logical approach is to blend emerging alternative fuels with traditional fossil fuels.

"We can do that immediately and gain some immediate benefits," Greszler said. □

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Bio-Mess?

Challenges remain for biodiesel users

ORLANDO, Fla. – Biodiesel certainly sounds like a cleaner fuel. Who could argue against the idea of replacing “black gold” with an option made from “amber waves of grain”?

As clean as it sounds, however, biodiesel still presents a number of challenges for those who want to use it. Higher concentrations of this plant-matter-turned-power-supply happen to flow poorly in cold weather. And there is also a lack of standards governing the way any of the fuel is made.

“There’s too many feedstocks out there,” says Mark Louzon, chief engineer at Volvo Powertrain.

Most biodiesel is made with a fatty acid methyl ester, which can be found in a variety of material including soybeans, rapeseed, palm oil and canola. But one of the biggest problems is that each type of plant matter will generate a fuel with different performance properties, speakers said during a meeting of the Technology and Maintenance Council.

When compared to some of its counterparts, a formula made with palm oil is more likely to crystallize in cold weather, explained

Technical Correspondent

John G. Smith



Tom Weyenberg of Lubrizol, which makes fuel additives. A fuel made from soybeans will flow better in cold weather, but its poor “oxidative stability” can leave a lacquer inside an engine’s injectors.

“A manufacturer can swing his plant from soybeans to tallow if the price of soybeans goes higher,” he added.

Buyers will probably have no way of knowing which of the commodities was used.

The concentrations of the fuel can also make a big difference in the way the biodiesel performs.

At the extreme end of the offerings, a B100 mixture – signifying that it is 100% biodiesel – contains 11% less energy than the same volume of ultra low-sulfur diesel (ULSD).

The cloud point and cold filter plugging point will also rise along with any increase in the amount

of biofuel.

“Flow improvers” may be able to address the latter challenge in mixtures up to a concentration of B10, but there are limitations in mixtures that are more concentrated than that, Weyenberg says.

Of course, any fuel requires additives.

Today’s ULSD includes “lubricity improvers” to reclaim some of the lubricating properties that are lost when sulfur is removed from traditional diesel.

A “conductivity improver” is also needed to ensure that static electricity is not a safety issue at fueling terminals.

But Louzon warns fleets against selecting their own additives to address the different challenges.

“It’s really important that it’s done at the refineries or your fuel terminal, but not in your tanks,” he says.

Meanwhile, there are also challenges relating to the tanks that hold the fuel.

Biodiesel may act as a great detergent, but that means it can also attract the water bottoms in a fuel tank, depositing all of these nasty contaminants into a fuel filter.

“You have the possibility of having three things that microbes like most: fuel, water and heat,” Weyenberg adds, referring to the conditions in some heated storage tanks. “The hygiene of the fuel storage system now becomes more important.”

“It has a short shelf life when compared to the diesel you’re

used to,” Louzon adds, noting how a supply of B20 might last as little as six months.

Regardless, there is only so much biodiesel to go around in the short term.

The 1.7 billion litres that were generated in 2007 still represents a mere 0.7% of the overall diesel supply in the US, Weyenberg says. “Nearly half of what was used as B100 and exported to Europe.”

He suggests that the future of such fuels will probably be found in the form of a “synthetic” diesel created with products including chicken fat, beaks and feet. (Tyson and ConocoPhillips have teamed up in a deal to produce this mixture).

Unlike the biodiesel of today, it is almost identical to traditional diesel, and it is produced right at the refinery level, he says.

“In a decade, these might go from the research stage into the pilot stage.”

The research into potential standards also continues. Engine manufacturers are in the midst of creating tests for B20 fuels, to determine the fuel’s impact on piston deposits, valve train wear and piston cylinder wear.

The ASTM has set standards of its own (see the article on page 17 for details).

This continuing focus – and the political will behind it – suggests that biodiesel will live on as an alternative fuel supply for years to come. □

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ALTERNATIVE FUELS

Industry welcomes new standards for biodiesel blends

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The biodiesel industry is celebrating following the recent vote by the ASTM International D02 Main Committee to approve a trio of long-awaited specifications for biodiesel blends.

After more than five years of extensive research and subsequent balloting by the ASTM fuel experts in the blended fuel balloting process, ASTM has finally voted to approve three key sets of biodiesel specifications that industry insiders say should significantly bolster manufacturer support and consumer demand for biodiesel:

- Changes to the existing B100 biodiesel blend stock specification (ASTM D6751);
- Finished specifications to include up to 5% biodiesel (B5) in the conventional petrodiesel specification (ASTM D975); and
- A new specification for blends of between 6% biodiesel (B6) to 20% biodiesel (B20) for on- and off-road diesel.

Automakers and engine manufacturers have been requesting a finished blend specification for B20 biodiesel blends for several years, with some citing the need for that spec' as the single greatest hurdle preventing their full-scale acceptance of B20 use in their diesel vehicles. Steve Howell, chairman of the ASTM Biodiesel Task Force, said, "The new ASTM specifications for B6-B20 blends will aid engine manufacturers in their engine design and testing processes to optimize the performance of vehicles running on biodiesel. The new specifications will also help ensure that only the highest quality biodiesel blends are made available to consumers at the retail pump."

John Gaydash, director of marketing for General Motors fleet and commercial operations, said "The new ASTM spec' for B6-B20 is a major building block in GM's efforts to elevate biodiesel as part of our overall energy diversity strategy. We are eager to work with the National Biodiesel Board on efforts to continue to ensure biodiesel fuel quality, as well as to increase our support for biodiesel use in our diesel vehicle lineup." Currently, GM accepts the use of B5 in all of its diesel vehicles, and offers B20 use as a Special Equipment Option (SEO).

The approval of ASTM specifications for inclusion of up to 5% biodiesel (B5) in the regular diesel fuel pool also means that biodiesel could soon become more readily available at retail fuelling stations nationwide, the biodiesel industry hopes.

Biodiesel must be properly processed to meet the approved ASTM specifications regardless of the feedstock used to produce it. Biodiesel blends up to B20 meeting ASTM specifications can be used in any diesel engine without modifications, and nearly all major automakers and engine manufacturers in the US currently accept the use of at least B5, including Caterpillar and Cummins, which are already accepting blends of B20 or higher. □

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Tame the Road



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Experts offer tips on wheel-end maintenance

By Lou Smyrlis

TORONTO, Ont. – Waiting til something goes wrong to check for issues with your trailer wheel-ends is about as smart as waiting til you're sick to visit the doctor, according to the experts at the Canadian Fleet Maintenance Seminars session on trailer wheel-ends.

"The options are narrowed down quite a bit at that point and it's the same with maintenance," pointed out Ron Gervais of the Freinmeister Group, part of the panel which also included Rob Monster from the Ontario Ministry of Transportation and Bill Ratliff from Timken.

In Ontario, according to Regulation 611 of the Highway Traffic Act, trailer wheel-ends must be inspected annually "but just because the regulation says once a year, doesn't mean that's good enough for you operation," cautioned Monster. "You have to base it on your rate of wear."

For example, a bus fleet may need to be checked every two months. Vocational fleets may also need inspections that are more frequent than annual.

A proper inspection should include the following steps, according to Ratliff:

1. Get the wheel off the ground, spin it to check how smoothly it runs, and "listen to your wheel bearings." If there is any deterioration in the system, you will hear it. Too noisy in the shop to hear well? Ratliff suggested putting a two-foot piece of 1.5-inch hose to your ear with the other end applied against the hub cap to hear better. Or you can use a stethoscope.

2. Feel for excessive end play. Since that's a judgement call that can vary from mechanic to mechanic, use a dial indicator if you have any concerns. If the end play exceeds the maximum allowable for adjustable wheel-ends, do not simply adjust the wheel bearing. You must remove and inspect the system as under normal operating conditions end play should not increase.

3. Inspect the seals. If you are running oil or semi-fluid grease, you must inspect for any signs of leakage. If it's running on to the face of the hub, it's best to change the seal, Ratliff advised. Grease seals should be dry and dirty on inspection. If they are found to be leaking, it's likely too much grease was placed inside.

4. Check the condition of the oil. There are several things to consider: Is there enough oil inside; is there milky water contamination; does it smell when it gets hot; and is there any metal debris when you insert a magnet? If any one of those indicators are found, then you need to conduct a closer inspection.

During his many years in the maintenance business Gervais has seen his share of dangerous practices involving trailer wheel-end inspections, such as resorting to the cutters to solve the problem of trailer warning lights that stay on and S-cam bushings that "if I could shake them, would ring like a bell." And it's not just the fleets that make errors.



AVOIDABLE: Proper wheel-end maintenance practices can help reduce flats.

He showed pictures of pushrods taken straight from a manufacturer's brochure that had an incorrect length. Although there is a long list of things to consider, some of his most pressing points included the

importance of using a dial indicator. The dial in procedure calls for each automatic brake adjuster to be checked with the factory-supplied template to ensure the release angle of the adjuster meets the manufac-

turer's requirement.

"It is not an exact science but a simple check can help get this right. Sometimes the correction is a few turns of the clevis yoke," he said.

Ratliff added that in his experience only about half the shops he visits have a dial indicator and of those only about half actually use it.

"That's pretty sad. Maybe it's because the system they have takes too long to set," he said, adding there are systems that can be set up in under a minute. Gervais also stressed the need to understand the importance of axle alignment to vehicle performance. "Axle alignment is critical. If it is biased, your fuel mileage goes to hell, not to mention what will be happening to your tires. If it's making a noise, take it off and check. Failing to do so is just asking for trouble." □

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Steady as she goes

Tips on maintaining stability systems

By James Menzies

TORONTO, Ont. – Stability systems are becoming a standard spec' on many types of trucks and there's pressure to legislate their use in some jurisdictions, including here in Canada. But Praxair Canada is one fleet that's not waiting for government intervention. A brutal rollover in B.C. that claimed the life of one of its drivers was all the motivation the fleet needed to begin spec'ing stability systems on all new tractors and trailers.

The tanker fleet began tracking its rollovers in 2000 and noticed an increase over the next several years. Praxair's tankers have a rollover threshold of just 0.23 Gs. That compares to a relatively

high threshold of 1.3 G for passenger vehicles. A rollover typically costs Praxair between \$125,000-\$150,000. Even worse, there's a high probability of a fatality when a rollover occurs.

In North America, Praxair now has 520 tractors and 125 trailers equipped with stability systems. In Canada, the number of rollovers experienced by Praxair has dropped from 45 in 2004 to only three in the first quarter of 07. The good news for drivers is that the systems have worked as advertised, and have dramatically reduced the number of rollovers. But have the systems created new headaches in the shop?

Not according to Praxair's Tracy

MacDonald, who insists that no additional maintenance has been required, except the need to recalibrate the sensors after a vehicle realignment.

There are several types of stability systems available. Tractor Roll Stability Systems (RSS) are useful in preventing rollovers, but don't protect against a jackknife or other loss of control situations, explained Tom Weed, engineering supervisor, ESP and future systems with Bendix. Electronic Stability Programs (ESP) include additional sensors such as a steer angle sensor and yaw sensor which provide the added functionality of protecting against jackknifing and other slip-and-slide scenarios. Then there are trailer stability systems, which are fully-compatible with both types of tractor stability systems and are also effective on their own.

In an ideal world, every tractor-trailer combination would have both a tractor stability system and

one on the trailer, MacDonald said.

The biggest responsibility for the technician who maintains this equipment, is to ensure the wiring is correct. Wires should be attached to hoses using approved clamps, not tie-wraps, noted Dave Engelbert, chief engineer, braking controls division with Haldex.

"Tie-wraps will cause you problems down the road," he pointed out, explaining that they don't allow enough room for the hoses to expand.

Recalibrating the sensors is simple, if you have the software provided by the manufacturer of the stability system you're using, explained Weed. To calibrate the steer angle sensor of an ESP system, for instance, you just point the wheels straight ahead and click 'Calibrate' on your laptop.

Technicians are warned against swapping ECUs between trucks.

"With stability systems, you're not able to swap ECUs from one vehicle to another," Weed explained. "That's because the ECU is tuned for that particular vehicle. Also, some ECUs are programmed with the VIN inside the ECU and if the VIN doesn't match the VIN from the engine, the ECU will send a fault."

Trailer stability systems are the only ones that can be retrofitted at this time. Tractor stability systems must be installed by the OEM. Trailer systems use the trailer's existing ABS architecture, Engelbert explained. Additional components include: a lateral accelerometer; a brake apply; a port to connect to the air bags; and five pressure transducers. Haldex's trailer stability system works with both air and spring suspensions.

While maintenance of a trailer stability system is fairly simple, Engelbert warned that a good understanding of ABS is required.

"If you haven't gotten your head around ABS, you're probably not ready for trailer roll stability," he said, noting the ABS platform is the backbone of the trailer stability system. Other maintenance requirements involve lightly greasing connections and also taking care of the gladhands when they're not in use. Oh, and don't be dumping alcohol into those gladhands in the winter, he added.

Matthew Williams, manager fleet sales and service with Meritor Wabco, added that while a little grease is good, a lot of grease isn't necessarily better.

When a truck equipped with a stability system is started up, a lamp on the dash should light up momentarily before turning back off. If it remains on, the system needs to be serviced, Williams explained. If the stability system suffers a failure, the ABS will continue to function.

Troubleshooting a stability system is similar to troubleshooting ABS – blink codes are used to communicate a problem. As long as the technician is competent in working with ABS systems, stability systems should not pose a problem, the panel agreed. But Williams did warn that a technician should be equally well-versed in tractor and trailer maintenance. □



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Putting the brakes on crime

Are criminals using YOUR trucks to transport contraband? You may be surprised.

By James Menzies
NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE, Ont. – Times are tough, and the temptation to run a load of contraband across the border may be greater than ever. Opportunities abound for truckers to make a few bucks on the side by concealing drugs, guns or dirty money inside a legitimate load. So how do you ensure your equipment and employees aren't being used for illegal purposes?

Const. Paul Webb of the Niagara Regional Police was on-hand at the Private Motor Truck Council's annual convention in June to offer some advice, and to solicit the assistance of the trucking industry in combating crime.

"No matter how contraband gets into this country, at one time or another it ends up in a motor vehicle," said Webb, adding police are often uncomfortable dealing with trucks. "When we go to police college, they don't teach us anything about trucks. We need your help. The more eyes and ears we have out there, the better the chance we're going to catch these bad guys."

Generally, the North American drug trade sees marijuana trucked into the US, where in some regions it has a street value comparable to cocaine. Weapons, money and cocaine are usually shipped back north into Canada, Webb explained. In many cases, the contraband is concealed within legitimate loads, which are usually trucked at a discounted rate.

"They need a load – they need something to hide that in, so they'll lowball rates," Webb said.

"The bad guys are screwing you guys out of money."

A recent increase in major busts involving tractor-trailers sends mixed messages. It could mean the police are doing a better job of detecting illegal loads.

Or it could mean that more contraband is being transported by truck. One thing's for sure, the recent rash of busts has caused criminals to take more precautions, Webb pointed out, especially when it comes to concealment.

Webb said some people are making a living by installing hidden compartments in highway tractors and false walls and floors in trailers. A false wall can be installed in as little as six hours, he said.

He has also seen cases of criminals loading their tires with dope, attaching it to the rims with C-clamps.

Each tire can hide 60-70 lbs of drugs, Webb pointed out, adding a tire that doesn't make the familiar 'ringing echo' when tapped with a hammer should trigger suspicion.

Fleet managers should periodically inspect their vehicles for any signs of modification, advised Webb. Owner/operators as well should be on the lookout for tell-tale signs of illegal activity, said Webb.

He recalled the story of one owner/op who was pulled over and found to have a hidden compartment in the sleeper. It was dis-

covered that the truck had been involved in a drug bust and then was auctioned off soon after with the compartment still in place – the new owner never even knew the compartment was there.

One of the most common ways to transport contraband is to "pyramid" the load, according to Webb.

This involves stacking the load to the roof at the front of the trailer with the bad stuff hidden underneath the legitimate freight. Webb also suggested checking the tops of cardboard boxes to see if they've been crushed.

If so, that may indicate someone was crawling around on top of the load, which should be cause for further investigation.

"Your legitimate drivers can see this and we want to know about it," Webb said.

He said that about 25% of the time there's a bust, the driver was not knowingly transporting the contraband. It's fairly easy for criminals to have their illegal goods transported for them by law-abiding carriers, considering the constant trade-off of trailers within the industry.

One trick criminals will use is to call a third-party carrier and ask them to complete the delivery of a load due to a tractor breakdown. That carrier may unwittingly transport the trailer across the

border or to its destination without ever realizing there was contraband on-board.

The bad guys will also occasionally steal a trailer, use it to make their delivery, and then return it to the yard it was stolen from without its owner ever realizing it was missing.

Other suspicious signs may include: a lone driver travelling with the sleeper curtain closed; hockey bags in the bunk – but no hockey sticks; a cab with an overpowering scent of air fresheners; bobtailing long distances; and peculiar looking DoT numbers.

Drivers, fleet owners and shippers should also be wary of: illegible signatures on documents; unusual seals; vague destinations; and drivers who don't know what they're getting paid to deliver the load.

"It's common sense," said Webb. "You guys know your industry, you know what's not the norm."

Webb urged attendees to dismiss their preconceived ideas of what a criminal will look like.

"If you're looking for Cheech and Chong, you're only going to get user amounts of drugs," he explained, adding most big-time trafficking is done by more sophisticated criminals.

Webb urged fleet managers in attendance to screen their drivers on a regular basis – but more importantly, to encourage them to report suspicious activities to Crimestoppers (or 911 if a crime is in progress).

"Empower your employees to air their concerns," Webb suggested. "We need help. We can't do everything on our own. We want to get the illegitimate drivers off the road who are taking money out of your pockets."

Hopefully, with a little help from the industry, law enforcement can help ensure these criminals end up spending more time behind bars than behind steering wheels. □

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'The bad guys are screwing you guys out of money.'

Const. Paul Webb

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The lessons about cargo securement procedures can be tragic.

One driver who recently travelled a scenic route through Washington, D.C. didn't notice that his load of dressed lumber was shifting inch by inch with every turn of the wheel.

And when the lumber did break free in the midst of a curve, it fell off an overpass and onto the traffic below. Three cars were crushed and two motorists were killed.

Tragedies like these do not need to happen.

The North American Cargo Securement Regulations offer clearly detailed guidelines for virtually any type of load, whether it includes coils of steel, boulders, crushed cars or even dressed lumber.

But as detailed as the rules are, the regulations are only effective if they are understood and followed by fleets and their employees.

A fleet's commitment to load securement begins the moment that candidates are first interviewed for a job.

While interviews should gather information about experience with freight that will be associated with specific contracts, road tests should also include a practical example of the related procedures.

Do your job candidates know that a rub rail is not actually an anchor point?

For that matter, how many straps are required for a particular load?

Any securement system is supposed to withstand 0.8 g of force in a forward direction and 0.5 g from side to side.

To put these forces in perspective, a typical stop on a dry road will produce less than 0.6 g in a forward direction.

And unless the right tools are properly used, the cargo will continue to move as the truck comes to a stop.

Whenever a fleet agrees to move a new type of freight, it also needs to secure the detailed information about the way everything should be strapped, chained and blocked to the trailer. These details should be included in a document that a driver can use as reference materials, and be incorporated into any training programs.

Fleets also need to be aware of any needs to upgrade equipment. A new contract to haul loads of steel, for example, may require the addition of headache racks to protect drivers from the threat of any shifting cargo. And purchasers should familiarize themselves with the ratings of every component within a securement system. A 5,800-lb strap may appear to offer enough protection, but it will only be as strong as the lesser-rated winches at the other end.

The attention to load security should not be limited to flatbeds, either. The cargo that is shielded inside a van trailer also needs to be held in place with the help of friction mats, dunnage bags and

Ask the Expert

Jean Marie Gagnon



load bars.

Drivers, meanwhile, need to be confident that everything is ready for the road before they ever accept a load.

Granted, that can sometimes be easier said than done, particularly if a trailer has been sealed.

But your employees should look for the opportunity to witness loading procedures, check bills of lading for details about cargo that presents a potential threat, and inspect the load from one end to the other.

According to an interpretation

guide from the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators, drivers should even document situations in which they are instructed not to break a seal and inspect a load.

Once they are on the road, drivers need to pay close attention to en-route inspections. A load that appears to be properly secured when it is first added to a trailer can wiggle itself loose, ultimately becoming a projectile.

The elements of any securement system should be inspected at 160-km intervals, even though the regulations require an inspection for every change in duty status, 240 km of travel or every three hours.

There is no such thing as being too careful.

These efforts are not simply needed to secure the freight as

a vehicle travels down the highway. Personnel should also be confident that they can open a trailer's barn doors without dumping the cargo onto the ground or themselves.

It is all a matter of safety, and that comes by following the clearly defined standards that allow everyone to feel more secure. □

@ARTICLECATEGORY:3361;

— This month's expert is Jean Marie Gagnon. Jean Marie is the manager of Markel's Safety and Training Services, Eastern Canada (Quebec and Atlantic Provinces), and has over 25 years of experience in safety, training, and management positions. Send your questions, feedback and comments about this column to info@markel.ca. Markel Safety and Training Services, a division of Markel Insurance, offers specialized courses, seminars and consulting to fleet owners, safety managers, trainers and drivers.

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Test driving the International 5600 SBA construction dump

A lot has changed since the last time I drove a construction truck

BRANTFORD, Ont. – Driving dump truck is a completely different world from hauling freight, and I haven't done any of the former since the early 80s. Those trucks were noisy, rough and poorly insulated. Running empty half the time was a rattling experience and I should have worn a kidney belt. Driver comfort wasn't a major priority in that era.

So it's great to see the boys and girls of today driving something much better. Carrier Truck Centers of Brantford, Ont. fixed up *Truck West* editor James Menzies and myself with an International 5600 Set Back Axle (SBA) construction dump. This was similar to the 5900 SBA model introduced by Navistar in Las Vegas in the spring.

Skipping three gears at a time, we took Highway 403 towards Woodstock (I've always wanted to see Paris). According to the spec's, with 3.91 rear ends, this thing was geared to go 84.4 mph. We didn't go quite that fast but the speedometer had a tendency to creep upwards.

Power was supplied by a 485-horse Cummins ISX500V engine which puts out 1,850 lb.-ft. of torque at 1,200 RPM. But if you need more horses you can order it with a 565

On-road Editor

Harry Rudolfs



Cummins. And if you're a Cat fancier, you can go with either the 475- or 550-horse engine.

One would expect good maneuverability with the set back axle, so I steered into the Lynden Park Mall parking lot. I'm happy to report that we didn't clip anything, even with those giant front tires. The turning radius was amazingly tight (42 feet, nine inches), seemingly able to turn concentric circles inside itself. A nice tool when you're working in close quarters at a cramped building site.

The front axle has been moved rearward about 18 inches. Besides the increased mobility, this is also advantageous for load distribution. The set-back axle makes it easier to get the weight transferred up on the front axle. With the load slightly forward of centre, a unit like this one, with 20,000-lb front end and 46,000 rears, and with the addition of a 20,000-lb air lift axle behind the cab,



ON A DIME: The author appreciated the tight turning radius, thanks to the set back front axle, a feature that will be welcomed in tight quarries.

should always be able to draw full loads and run legal axle weights.

The 5600 is made to accommodate 20.5-foot or 21-foot boxes, either steel or aluminum. There's even a lightweight steel version that's less expensive than aluminum. Cement companies like this type of truck because it is easily adaptable. They can put a mixer on the back and run it as is, or add another steerable front axle for heavier applications.

I was surprised to hear that an 18-speed automatic is a common option on the 5600. But there was nothing automatic about the transmission I drove. It was a Fuller 18-speed manual with a double low and double overdrive. That's five deep reduction gears you can use when you're coming out of a hole. Lift the lever and you've got four more gears to split, plus five gears at the top which makes 18. Think of it as a nine-speed with two buttons, or a 13-speed with five deep reduction gears.

Regardless, there were plenty of gears and you'll need all of them when you're pulling a fully-loaded pup down the highway. The chassis comes with rear air and hydro hook-ups already in place for a pup trailer – and it's prepped to be easily equipped with a plate and pintle hook.

Three-axle pup trailers are popular for longer highway runs. You might as well haul as much weight as possible and that amounts to about 42 metric tonnes, with 22 on the lead unit and 20 on the pup (about 140,000 lbs, GVW).

Navistar stresses the severe-duty aspects of this truck, including a double frame along its entire length: 12-inch frame rails reinforced by an outer frame of 12.5"x3.5"x0.25" rails, both rated at 110,000 psi yield, among the best in the field, according to Doug Hagan of Brantford Carrier Truck Centers. The tires are Michels: 20 ply 425/65R22.5 XZYs on the front, and the rears were 14 ply 11R22.5s.

Cummins has tucked the exhaust gas sensors and particulate burner under the chassis away from the stack, out of harm's way. As well, the 5600 gets good marks for driver ac-

cessibility. The big nose is easy to tip and balanced so it's no problem even for a small driver. The set back front wheel also provides a little more room to service the engine.

Although our truck hadn't been fitted with a box or mixer yet, the ride was smooth and quiet, as you'd expect in an air ride cab with pneumatic rear suspension. The National air seat supplies lots of back and seat-fitting position, and a heated seat is even available as an option.

With half a dozen toggle switches on the dash, you've got lots of wiring options when you want to add lights or axles. Electronic cruise control is included with this model, and I liked the instantaneous fuel mileage readout. The 5600 also came with a three-level Cummins engine brake which I left in the third position with the switch off. Otherwise, the component was so effective, you could hear it activating between shifts.

The cab interior was outfitted in the deluxe Eagle package, wood grain and burgundy trim and a leather-wrapped steering wheel. You might as well have a nice looking office because you're going to be spending a lot of time in it.

Typically, a dump truck will put on over 100,000 km per year, working around quarries, cement and asphalt plants, and construction sites. It could be drawing gravel, or winter salt, or snow, or rubble, or muck soil, top soil, or even environmentally-unfriendly soil.

And those trucks pulling pups along the 401, drawing aggregates from the Milton area, might log more than 150,000 km per year. International has been making trucks for over a century. And although these may be tough economic times, their trucks have historically outlasted the up and down cycles of the industry.

After all, you're buying a truck that will make money for years to come. According to Hagan, longevity is what these International trucks are all about. "Some of these cement trucks are 20-25 years old," he says. "That's what you get with a severe-duty truck." □

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It's tax planning season

Why preparing your taxes should be a year-round process

In accounting, there's tax season and there's tax planning season. Tax season is that three-month rush before the April 30 deadline to file personal income tax returns. We work crazy hours and hammer out returns like Santa's elves before Christmas.

The priority is to help owner/operators get organized, find all possible deductions, and avoid late penalties and fees.

Now, on the other hand, is ideal for tax planning and tax estimates. You have at least three months before the books close on your year-end, plenty of time to weigh various tax-saving opportunities and decide how to act. You'll also get full value from your accountant, who will have the time to help you get a handle on your financial statements rather than just sorting through broker settlements and receipts days before a return is due.

Still, people put it off. Taxes are complicated, they're a blizzard of paperwork, and no one likes opening up their financial life to scrutiny (better me than a Canada Revenue Agency auditor, I always say). It's like going to the doctor: come in, close the door, and drop your pants.

I've been in this line of work for

Tax Talk

Scott Taylor



20 years so chances are I've sorted through files more disorganized than yours. I've seen owner/operators who haven't filed a tax return in years and need to get into compliance in a hurry. Most of my clients simply like the "trucking" part of the trucking business a lot more than the business side and want someone to guide them through it.

In any case, the first step is asking for help, preferably from an accountant who knows trucking. From there, you can talk about what's important to you – reducing taxes, setting a budget, planning for retirement, incorporating the business, and so on – and what you can do to act on that plan.

Getting organized

Organizing receipts and statements is the first step toward managing your business and critical to supporting expense claims. It's also one of the first things clients want to talk about. What

records do I need to keep? For how long?

Ask your accountant for a checklist of items needed to prepare your financial statements and tax returns. This should include all receipts, bank statements, credit card statements, and income statements; details about any big purchases; your log detailing use of a personal vehicle for business; and so on.

One vital record that many people (including general accountants) overlook: daily hours-of-service logs.

With the recent changes in meal-expense deduction limits, you can bet that CRA will be looking closely at meal-expense audits. If they're used to validate meal expense claims, your log-books are a tax document and must be kept for seven years.

Quarterly reviews

While April 30 is the deadline to file your personal income tax return, talk to your accountant about reviewing your financial statements four times a year-at the end of each quarter.

A financial review every three months can highlight gaps in information. I can't tell you how many times a client has found a major repair receipt under a truck seat months later, after a review of the last three months' financial statements clearly showed that a big expense item was missing.

This probably would have been overlooked with only an annual review.

In the heat of a tax deadline there's no time to plan, only to plow through the receipts in the shoebox. If you use the shoebox system, answer me this: Did your accountant call while preparing your tax return and ask you any questions? I'll bet not. So what value and expertise do you think you received?

Once a mistake is made it may not be easy to fix. Owner/operators bring their tax returns to me all the time for analytical reviews. Sometimes the mistakes I find are obvious and corrected by submitting an adjustment letter to CRA.

However, mistakes in the "gray" areas always are cause of concern for adjustment as now you're sticking it under CRA's nose. Better to get it right the first time.

With quarterly reviews, you'll be in a better position to take advantage of deductions and tax-saving strategies before the year is over and it's too late.

You'll be able to accurately estimate your tax payments so you're not faced with a "surprise" tax bill that puts a squeeze on your cash flow. Better still, you'll gain a working knowledge of your finances and tax obligations. □

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

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Turning the tide

Programs that really make a difference

Public perception of trucking and truckers – frequently negative and often mistaken – is a concern that’s always with us. When you’re struggling to pay the fuel bill or driving around in circles looking for a place to park, it’s not always top-of-mind. Then wham! You learn through the mainstream media that trucks are responsible for all the death and destruction on our highways, and global warming to boot.

And, so the story goes, you – the driver – are part of an unskilled and unwashed pack of hooligans who is driving truck because you’re unemployable elsewhere.

While it’s individual drivers who take the hit at the personal level, public image is a concern for the industry as a whole. The perception of driving as an unskilled trade is a huge barrier in attracting career-minded people into the industry. So, in a business environment where there’s stiff competition for workers from a shrinking labour pool, trucking, like many industries, is looking at a makeover as one strategy for survival.

In the US, for example, the industry-wide “Good Stuff. Trucks Bring It” image campaign presents the public with a positive, modern image of the industry and emphasizes the relevance of trucking to their lives. In Canada, the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council has engaged industry stakeholders in a concerted effort to reposition the industry, enhancing the profession’s image and promoting recognition of driving as a skilled trade.

The industry is investing in top-down strategies to combat negative stereotypes, but at the grassroots level, where the rubber hits the road, I can’t think of two initiatives that foster more goodwill and understanding and help bridge the divide between trucking and the public than Trucker Buddy and the World’s Largest Truck Convoy.

Trucker Buddy, a pen-pal program that matches truck drivers with elementary school children in grades two to eight, boasts close to 4,000 drivers communicating with more than 100,000 students around the world. Trucker Buddies send postcards, notes, letters, e-mails, and photos to the children in their assigned class each week; the kids track the driver’s travel on maps in the classroom and write individual letters to their Trucker Buddy each month.

The benefits of improved skills in reading, writing, geography, mathematics, and history are obvious, and it’s learning in a fun and stimulating way. But Trucker Buddies also teach important road safety lessons – like sharing the road – and send positive messages to their kids as well: don’t do drugs, study hard, stay in school.

Since its inception in 1993, Trucker Buddy has helped educate over a million school children and introduce them to the world of trucking. And every one of those

Voice of the O/O

Joanne Ritchie



million kids has a family – parents, siblings, or other relatives – whose lives are touched in a meaningful way by truckers. How many “Good Stuff” stickers is that worth?

It’s hard to describe the potpourri of feelings – pride, satisfaction, and just pure joy – that overwhelm one when a Special Olympics convoy comes rolling over the finish line.

The World’s Largest Truck Convoy for Special Olympics brings truckers, cops, and athletes together for a very special cause: a one-day celebration every September to raise awareness – and money – for Special Olympics.

The Convoy, a spin-off from the Law Enforcement Torch Run, was the brainchild of Cpl. Norm Schneiderhan, of the Orange County Sheriff’s Department in Florida, who created the Convoy as a way to get his friends in trucking involved in a fundraising effort.

Since the initial convoy in Florida in 2000, the idea has spread to more than 40 jurisdictions in the US and Canada. Last year, nearly 400 drivers participated in five events staged across Canada, and hundreds more took a day out of their schedules south of the border to participate. Their efforts raised a whopping US\$698,000, and the best thing about the money? All the money raised locally stays in the community to benefit that community’s Special Olympics programs.

The impact that participating drivers have on the athletes is obvious – the smiles and the cheers are not soon forgotten – and when you see truckers hugging cops, and tears flowing freely all around, you know there’s something happening inside.

But it’s not just the athletes and the cops who come away from a Convoy with a greater appreciation for truckers. Hundreds of community volunteers work throughout the year to plan and stage each event; that’s hundreds of people who experience first-hand the generosity and compassion truckers.

We celebrate Trucker Buddy and the Convoy because they are unique and effective approaches to teaching, mentoring, role-modeling, and fundraising, but their value as image-builders and stereotype busters can’t be overlooked. Perhaps it’s time broaden the top-down strategy for changing public opinion to include tools that work. □

– Joanne Ritchie is executive director of OBAC. Are you ready for a makeover? E-mail her at jritchie@obac.ca or call toll-free 888-794-9990.

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Bendix white paper furthers push for 'full-stability' systems

By James Menzies

ELYRIA, Ohio – Not all stability systems are created equal. That's the message contained in a comprehensive white paper on the subject, recently published by Bendix. The parts and component manufacturer has long been a vocal proponent of 'full-stability' or Electronic Stability Control (ESC) systems which protect against more out-of-control situations than just rollovers.

However, the company became alarmed when its own surveys suggested that while 81% of its dealer sales reps claimed to be familiar with stability systems, only 28% knew the difference between 'full-stability' and what Bendix calls 'roll-only' stability systems.

Fred Andersky, director of marketing for controls with Bendix, said the same seemed to ring true with government officials and regulators, which prompted the company to publish the white paper.

"We're really trying to take this information and help educate the market to understand first of all, that there are a couple systems out there, and that there are significant differences in those systems," Andersky said during a conference call with media.

Roll Stability Control (RSC) systems utilize a lateral acceleration sensor to determine if a vehicle is travelling too fast to safely negotiate a corner. When a rollover is imminent, the system takes action to de-throttle the engine and apply the necessary brakes to prevent the truck from tipping over.

However, Andersky said roll-only systems have limited effectiveness, pointing to a study commissioned for the National Tank Truck Carriers that showed 53.2% of rollovers occurred on a straight road.

"Rollovers aren't just rollovers," explained Andersky. "It's not the situation of a truck going around a turn too fast and flipping over. A lot of rollovers actually start with a loss-of-control type event."

ESC systems include additional sensors to measure factors such as yaw rate and steer angle, so they not only read what the truck is doing, but also what the driver is attempting to make the truck do, Andersky explained.

"ESC includes a lateral acceleration sensor plus a vehicle yaw sensor and also adds sensors to measure driver input, specifically his steering input," explained Rick Conklin, product manager for Bendix ESC. "It's very important that full-stability systems understand what the driver wants the vehicle to do."

In testing both ESC and RSC, Bendix engineers have used the term 'Stability Margin' (basically a driver's margin of error) to measure the effectiveness of each type of stability system.

Since ESC can detect more than just potential rollovers, Bendix claims it can react more quickly and precisely, thus increasing a driver's margin for error. In fact, Andersky said ESC provides a stability margin 2.5 times greater than RSC.

"If you only have the lateral acceleration sensor, braking is limited, they cannot achieve the same level of deceleration and the end result is they're not as effective," insisted Conklin.

To back its claim, Bendix examined the results of the US Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's Large Truck Crash Causation Study. The study provided details of nearly 1,000 truck accidents.

While Bendix found about 130 of the 275 accidents where the trucker was at fault could have been mitigated or avoided by a stability system, 68% of those could only have been mitigated by ESC while RSC would only have changed the outcome in just 29% of the accidents.

By extension, Andersky reasoned that ESC has the potential to save nearly twice as many lives as RSC.

However, there's still a signifi-



SETTING IT STRAIGHT: Bendix has published a white paper outlining differences between various stability systems.

cant price point differential between the two types of systems. While OEMs ultimately set the price, Andersky admitted ESC generally runs about US\$1,600-\$1,900 per truck while RSC can cost about half that.

"There are always going to be fleets out there that are going to be taking a look at the bottom line," he admitted. "It really shouldn't be a price decision, it should be a performance decision."

He noted the price of ESC is less than 1% of the cost of a new truck and similar to the cost of a chrome bumper. Bendix has developed a value calculator fleets can use to measure a payback period. Bendix engineers also acknowledged that even ESC has its limits, and won't completely eliminate heavy truck accidents.

"(ESC) isn't the end-all in and of itself," said Conklin. "It's not going to prevent every incident – the laws of physics still apply. We're not going to make a bad driver a good driver, our intent is to make a good driver avoid a bad situation."

Andersky added the system is designed to bail out the decent driver who makes a mistake. When an intervention occurs, it will "let him know he almost screwed up big-time, but he's keeping the shiny side up and he's going home for dinner that night."

The timing of Bendix's latest

push for full-stability coincides with discussions that stability systems may be mandated on commercial vehicles. In the US, all passenger vehicles must be equipped with stability systems as of 2009.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration administrator Nicole Nason has noted that only seatbelts have greater potential than stability systems in terms of saving lives and reducing injuries on the roads.

Andersky pointed out it stands to reason stability systems will be forced upon the commercial vehicle sector, where "large trucks are heavier, less stable and more prone to these types of situations." NHTSA is currently evaluating both RSC and ESC to determine which, if any, type of system will be mandated.

Here in Canada, the Canadian Trucking Alliance is pushing for regulators to mandate the use of stability systems on all new trucks.

While Bendix has said it would prefer to see the industry adopt stability systems without government mandates, Andersky added "If we are going to mandate, let's mandate the technology that's going to help us today as well as tomorrow."

The white paper, entitled *Road Map for the Future: Making the Case for Full-Stability* is now available at www.bendix.com. □

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Alberta Freightliner dealers change hands

CALGARY, Alta. – Calgary Freightliner and Freightliner of Lethbridge has a new owner, effective June 1.

The two entities have been purchased by Greg Stahl, who has renamed the dual franchise, under one title: New West Freightliner.

The new owner/president has been a part of the trucking industry for the majority of his life, including working in a family-owned Cummins Distributorship in Alberta from an early age, and continuing to work with Cummins in Columbus, Ind. through to 2002. He joined the Freightliner family in 2002 and worked with the company in Los Angeles, Portland and Morris Plains, N.J., a career that specialized in marketing, sales and service.

Stahl is looking forward to serving the many customers that he's previously gotten to know personally and professionally, as well as new Freightliner customers, as he moves into this business.

"It is my goal and commitment to provide excellent sales, parts, and shop service in a winning team atmosphere," he says.

"As you know, Doug and Carole Goodwin have been the Freightliner dealers in this trade area for many years. They have done a great job building a strong, customer-oriented business, and have constructed an excellent team at the dealership."

Stahl views the Freightliner franchise in Southern Alberta as a tremendous opportunity for the Freightliner team.

"The Freightliner truck is in a class by itself and we feel very fortunate to be able to represent them in the Southern Alberta trade area." □

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Michelin makes the case for wide-base singles

By James Menzies

WATERLOO, Ont. – Spend a dime, save a buck? It's a pretty intriguing value proposition, touted by Michelin when discussing its wide-base single tire, the X-One. A couple of factors have developed recently, which have led the tire company to adopt the new tag line.

For one, wide-base tires are now more widely accepted in Canada. A Memorandum of Understanding inked by the Council of Ministers Responsible for Transportation and Highway Safety in July has paved the way for the more widespread use of the tires. They can now be used to haul US-legal weights from coast-to-coast in Canada, albeit with a few regional exceptions.

At the same time, the unprecedented cost of fuel has also changed the value proposition for wide-base tires. For every dollar spent on tires, a fleet or owner/operator spends about \$25 on fuel. The X-One has proven to deliver a 4% fuel mileage improvement in most applications, according to Michelin, hence its latest slogan – spend a dime, save a buck. (The X-One costs about 10% more up-front than a set of duals).

The current high cost of fuel, combined with the MoU which lifted prohibitive weight restrictions on wide-base singles, meant the time was right for Michelin to hit the road and spread the word about its wide single tires.

The *Go Wide, Save Green* demonstration event was held throughout

North America this summer, with a stop in Waterloo where fleets and owner/operators were invited to compare the ride in identically-spec'd trucks – one with traditional duals and another with the X-One on the drive and trailer axles.

The improvement in stability was obvious, both visually and from inside the cab. An evasive maneuver routinely caused the trailer wheels to lift on the unit equipped with duals, while the tractor-trailer with the X-Ones barely swayed.

But while stability improvements are a nice bonus when using wide-base tires, the real question on the minds of fleet managers and owner/operators who attended the demo was how a switch to the fat tires would impact their bottom line.

According to Francois Beauchamp, special projects coordinator with Michelin, "The economic structure has changed over the last four years," when Michelin first began promoting its X-One. He said a wholesale shift to wide-base tires in Canada could save the industry about 920 million litres of diesel per year.

"There used to be a tire budget and a fuel budget," he added. "Now there's only one budget there, and tires can become an integral part in saving fuel. We want our customers to make tires an integral part of their fuel strategy."

Of the fuel consumed by a tractor-trailer as it moves down the road, 35% is a result of rolling resistance.

This is where tires can play a major role in affecting fuel economy. For every 3% reduction in rolling resistance, a 1% improvement in fuel mileage is achieved, Beauchamp explained.

Michelin says there are several factors that reduce the X-One's rolling resistance compared to traditional duals. They include: tread depth; tread design; rubber compound; and casing architecture.

With all those factors taken into the equation, Beauchamp said the X-One trailer and drive tires measure 73 and 92 respectively on the company's Rolling Resistance Index, which uses the XZA-1+ as a benchmark. The lower the rolling resistance, the better the fuel mileage, and by comparison the XDA3 measured 115 and the XDA Energy measured 104, making the X-One more efficient than any other Michelin dual.

But while the fuel savings are difficult to dispute (especially in light of the well-documented Energotest conducted last year, an independent test which showed the X-One demonstrated a 9.7% fuel mileage improvement over duals), the real measure of value is total cost of ownership. Beauchamp admitted the X-One tends to have a slightly shorter life span than traditional duals. Even so, Beauchamp said when the fuel savings and reduced maintenance costs (fewer tires should result in less maintenance) are taken into account, a savings of \$5,086 per



truck can be achieved. Over a five-year lifecycle, that can amount to about \$25,000 per truck, he noted.

The X-One can also result in higher payloads in some applications, he added, since converting from steel wheels and duals to aluminum rims with X-Ones can save 1,290 lbs if the steer, drive and trailer wheels are all converted. (You can save about 660 lbs if you're already on aluminum wheels, Beauchamp pointed out).

A common concern about wide-base singles is availability in the event of a blow-out. However, Beauchamp said Michelin is in the process of ensuring each of its dealers will have a ready supply of X-Ones available.

Other concerns involve reliability, but Beauchamp said fleets are experiencing fewer failures with the X-One, because it's usually the oft-neglected inside tire on a set of duals that expires on the highway.

And while it's true that you can't limp home if you blow a wide-base tire, Beauchamp countered that it's a bad idea even on a set of duals as you risk damaging the casing on the remaining tires.

For more information on the potential benefits of wide-base singles, visit www.gowidesavegreen.com. □

A natural solution

Natural gas-powered Sterling trucks offer significant fuel-saving opportunities

By James Menzies

NAPA VALLEY, Cal. – Earlier this year, Sterling Trucks announced the availability of its liquid natural gas (LNG)-powered Set-Back 113 tractor designed for US West Coast port operations.

The truck was made available to the trade media for the first time at a recent ride-and-drive, where it lived up to claims of quiet operation and diesel-like performance.

The Set-Back 113 with LNG, however, won't likely be coming to a highway near you anytime soon. Instead, a compressed natural gas (CNG) version is under development, which will be more practical in Canada where CNG is much more widely available. CNG has several benefits over LNG, said Robert Carrick, general manager, western region with Sterling Trucks. For starters, drivers can fill up their own trucks – a special licence and protective clothing are required to handle the natural gas in its cryogenic liquid form. There's also already a CNG filling station infrastructure in place.

"We're hoping that in the late first quarter or early second quarter of next year, we'll start with some CNG products," Carrick said during an interview.

He said the fuel apparatus will

be similar to the LNG truck that was on display, with "a different tank configuration and controls."

The initial natural gas-powered Sterling trucks used LNG because the ports of California and Long Beach wanted to maximize the distance the vehicles could travel, Carrick explained.

"LNG allows more fuel to be put in a more compact space. In a tractor application, they wanted to use LNG for greater range."

But outside the ports, the vast majority of natural gas is available in compressed form, even in the US. The performance characteristics of both types of natural gas are the same, Carrick said. "The engine doesn't know the difference."

In Canada, Sterling trucks operating off CNG will be a fit for "any application where they utilize about 60 gallons of diesel fuel per day or less and where they have access to CNG fueling and if they can get the amount of fuel they need on their chassis," said Carrick. Frame rail space is an issue on some types of chassis and in some applications.

But where feasible, the natural gas-powered Sterling trucks will certainly be an attractive option as fuel prices continue to rise. Sterling officials said fuel savings



FUELING CHANGE: Natural gas is less expensive than diesel, resulting in savings of up to US\$6,000 per year, according to Sterling Trucks.

of about US\$6,000 per year can be achieved by opting for natural gas versions of their vehicles. In the US, tax incentives make natural gas even more appealing. Better yet, while diesel prices aren't expected to decrease anytime soon, there's already enough natural gas available in North America to meet the continent's needs for 120 years, said Richard Shearing, manager, product strategy with Sterling Trucks.

"The timing is right," Shearing said at the ride-and-drive. "Over the last five years, there has been more legislation with alternative fuels than the last 30 years combined."

He noted that 4% of the vehicles in California already use alternatives fuels, adding "where California goes, others will follow."

Sterling already plans to deliver 400 LNG-powered trucks this year alone. The Sterling Set-Back 113 with LNG is powered by a

Cummins Westport ISL G engine with ratings up to 320 hp. It's already EPA2010-compliant and a well-to-wheel analysis shows the technology produces 5-20% less greenhouse gas emissions than a 2010-complaint diesel, Shearing explained. An Allison automatic transmission is standard. LNG runs about \$3.15/gallon in California compared to diesel which is about \$5/gallon, but natural gas does have less energy content. The Sterling Set-Back 113 with natural gas has a range of about 275 miles per 119-gallon tank (the equivalent of a 65-gallon diesel tank). A second tank is optional.

"Natural gas technology has come a long way...these next generation NG powertrains have more power because less air is needed for combustion," Shearing said. □

NEW PRODUCTS

Working the NightShift

Sterling sleeper rounds out diverse product lineup

By James Menzies

NAPA VALLEY, Cal. – Sterling Trucks has re-entered the sleeper market, with the introduction of a mid-sized integrated sleeper cab.

The NightShift sleeper cab will be offered in a 60-inch mid-roof configuration on the Sterling Set-Back 113 and Set-Back 122 models. It's targeted towards LTL, distribution and leasing markets and is ideal for drivers who spend several nights per week on the road. It's not intended for long-haul, over-the-road applications, Sterling officials said during the launch. It also shouldn't be confused as a resurrection of the SilverStar – the NightShift is much lighter and more functional, specially designed for drivers in LTL and distribution segments, where Sterling already has a strong presence. The sleeper was designed specifically with Sterling customers in mind, and represents a two-year, US\$20 million investment, the company says. There's no upper bunk and no high-roof option will be available, however the NightShift boasts an 80-inch floor-to-ceiling height allowing a driver over 6'4" to stand upright, as is.

"Our customers have asked for a sleeper configuration and we listened," said Richard Shearing, man-

ager of product strategy for Sterling Trucks. "We have developed a working class sleeper that provides outstanding comfort and storage."

The sleeper features a comfortable eight-inch coil spring mattress, which is double the depth of the industry standard four-inch foam mattress. Shearing said it's the thickest mattress in the industry.

In speaking to drivers, Sterling officials found the most important thing they wanted out of a sleeper was a comfortable bed. Not far behind was ample storage space.

"Drivers often noted that there wasn't much room in their sleepers and the room they did have was inefficient," said Shearing. "We therefore incorporated useful storage in every possible area."

Sterling officials say the NightShift offers more storage than any other mid-sized sleeper. Overhead storage bins have lips along the bottom to prevent stuff from falling out and the bed lifts up to reveal additional storage space underneath. Also under the bed is what Sterling dubbed a "coolbox" – a 32-litre pullout drawer that can be used as either a fridge or freezer.

Drivers can simply flick a switch to convert the coolbox from fridge to freezer. Or, if it's not required,



INSIDE LOOK: The NightShift boasts a functional interior with plenty of storage (above) and on the outside, a stylish appearance with several windows (below).

customers can instead opt for additional storage space underneath the bed. The NightShift sleeper provides ample light, thanks to a 36"x10" rear window, which is also helpful when backing up and maneuvering the vehicle. Side windows let in additional light, as well as provide ventilation.

A control panel by the head of the bed allows the driver to adjust the temperature and control an integrated reading light. Despite its compact size, the NightShift can still accommodate a TV and microwave.

On the outside, the sleeper features a right-hand access door with a sliding window as well as a left-hand window. A left-hand luggage door and rear work lights also come standard. If aerodynamics are important, optional side and roof fairings are available. The NightShift comes standard with Sterling's noise control package, which the company says reduces interior noise by as



much as 25%. The package consists of new door and engine cover seals, shifter and steering boot material; a new door weather seal for improved surface contact and improved sealing at joints. Sterling's NightShift rounds out a complete line of Class 3-8 vehicles offered by the company.

"With the addition of the NightShift to our family, we now offer the broadest product line in the Class 3-8 market," said Shearing. The NightShift will be available to order in December. Sterling expects to initially sell 500-800 units a year, ramping up to 1,000-1,200 units thereafter. □

Detroit Diesel expands engine family with launch of DD13

By James Menzies

NAPA VALLEY, Cal. – Detroit Diesel's popular DD15 engine has a new little brother.

The 12.8-litre DD13 was introduced to unsuspecting trade press editors at a Sterling Trucks event here in early August. The six-cylinder, in-line engine will be well-suited to applications where Sterling has a strong presence, namely LTL, regional distribution and vocational markets.

The engine, which will replace the MBE4000, will be available with 350 to 450 hp and 1,350 to 1,650 lb.-ft. of torque.

The DD13 was built with reliability in mind, and has a B50 rating of one million miles, meaning 50% of the engines will last a million miles. By comparison, the Series 60 had a B50 rating of 750,000 miles, Detroit Diesel officials announced.

The DD13 is expected to provide 5% better fuel mileage than the MBE4000, thanks to an efficient Amplified Common Rail Fuel System (ACRS).

"The DD13 is the only engine in its class to offer ACRS," said Admir Kreso, director HDEP engineering with Detroit Diesel.

David Siler, director of marketing with Detroit Diesel, added ACRS "delivers fuel with higher pressure and with more flexible and precise measurements," which results in "lower engine-out emissions without the customary fuel economy penalty."



NEW ADDITION: The DD13 will be targeted towards LTL, regional distribution and vocational applications, Detroit Diesel officials announced.

The fuel system features a relatively low fuel pressure to reduce the potential for leaks at connection points, Siler explained, but in the injector itself the fuel pressures is boosted to up to 32,000 psi.

Unlike the DD15, the newest member of the family will not use turbo-compounding, because Detroit Diesel engineers wanted to allow for rear-PTO capabilities.

"The PTO capabilities of the DD13 will be as diverse and universal as any that Detroit Diesel has offered before," said Siler, noting the types of applications

best suited for the DD13 won't benefit as much from turbo-compounding as line-haul does.

The DD13 shares 65% of its parts with its bigger brother, simplifying maintenance and repairs for fleets using both engines.

"Many of the most commonly replaced items, such as filters and belts, are already in stock at dealers and distributors and we're still several months before the start of production," Siler said.

The DD13 weighs about 400 lbs less than the DD15, albeit it's slightly heavier than the MBE4000. Siler said the engine

boasts a wide sweet spot and pulls strong down to 1,100 RPM. Its peak torque band is 500 RPM wide, Siler said.

"We all know getting into higher gears sooner and staying there longer, reduces fuel consumption," he reasoned.

The new engine also features an enhanced cooling system that prefers to run hotter, minimizing fan-on time.

"For every moment the fan is cycling on, that's up to 50 hp of parasitic load," Siler pointed out.

Another benefit of the DD13 is its extended service intervals. The engine can go up to 50,000 miles before requiring routine maintenance such as oil and filter replacements – nearly double the length of some competitive engines, Detroit Diesel claims. When it does come time to perform routine maintenance, upright, easily-accessible filter cartridges make the job easier and tidier, Siler noted.

Another feature to be enjoyed by drivers is a quiet, lightweight Jake Brake capable of up to 546 braking horsepower by shutting down two, four or six cylinders.

The DD13 will initially be available in Sterling and Freightliner trucks beginning in 2009. Western Star will receive the engine in 2010. The engine was designed to be compatible with a Selective Catalytic Reduction system in 2010. □

OPINION

Congrats to our 2008 Owner/Operator of the Year

Congratulations Marty Gardner! Marty is this year's recipient of the Owner/Operator of the Year Award.

Presented during this year's edition of the Fergus Truck Show, we facilitate this award annually on behalf of Freightliner Canada, Markel Insurance and Goodyear Canada.

It has been our custom for the past 15 years to take the winner out for a nice dinner after the ceremony. This year was no different. After the formal proceedings, 14 of us made our way to a small Japanese restaurant located adjacent to our hotel. Two of our staff had recommended the food and with our only other option being chicken wings and nachos at the local Country and Western bar (nobody wanted the responsibility

Publisher's Comment

Rob Wilkins



ty of driving, so it had to be nearby) we decided it would be a wiser and healthier choice.

Don't get me wrong, chicken wings and nachos were my staple for many years but the majority ruled on this one.

Part of this dinner gang included two high-ranking executives from FedEx (Marty's carrier).

The vice-president had made the trip from its US headquarters located in Pennsylvania (a nice show of support) and the Canadian line-haul manager was

in attendance as well.

We entered the tiny restaurant and were ushered into one of two small dining areas. How small were they? I think the table in our room was supposed to hold a maximum of 10. At 14, it made for a "cozy" experience giving us the opportunity to really get to know each other.

Cozy quickly became crowded as the temperature hovered around 90 degrees. It seems we had picked the only restaurant in southern Ontario that didn't have A/C.

With third-degree burns to my melon from way too many UV rays during the day, I felt like I was in a Japanese steam bath. I'm sure my pulsating red and purple head gave off more light than the pot lights.

In order to sit at this table we had to take off our shoes (nice...especially after a long hot day in a dusty fairground) and crawl around on our hands and knees to get to our seats.

It certainly was unique. So was running out of beer...and glasses...and knives. It seemed that every time there was an order, the poor waitress had to report back that they didn't have it.

In the end, it really didn't matter. It turned out to be a great night. The food really was good and the company even better.

Winners of this award never cease to amaze me. They are the type of people we should all aspire to be and this year's recipient was no exception! □

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

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|---|--|
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| 4,536-8,845 kg. (10,000-19,500 lbs.)... | <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| Under 4,536 kg. (10,000 lbs.)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |

3) This location operates, controls or administers:

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Diesel powered vehicles..... | <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| Refrigerated vehicles..... | <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| Pickups or Utility Vans..... | <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| Propane powered vehicles..... | <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |

4) Do you operate maintenance facilities at this location? YES NO
IF YES, do you employ mechanics?..... YES NO

5) Indicate your PRIMARY type of business by checking ONLY ONE of the following:

| |
|---|
| a) <input type="checkbox"/> For Hire/Contract Trucking (hauling for others) |
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TODAY!

PEOPLE

Steve Meagher has been named the new vice-president of sales for Peterson Manufacturing Company.

He succeeds Art Richardson, a well-known industry figure who is retiring after more than 41 years with the company.

No effective date has been announced for the move, as Meagher will be transitioning into his new role over the next several months. Richardson will stay on during this period to ensure a smooth transition of duties, the company announced.

"Steve brings a world of knowledge and experience to his new position," said Don Armacost Jr., Peterson's president and CEO. "With his dedication and proven management skills in all marketing and merchandising areas, we're confident that Steve will guide the Peterson sales team for continued great success."

Reimer Express Lines has awarded the 2008 Reimer Express Scholarship to **Monica Cella** of Westbank, B.C.

The Reimer Express scholarship has a value of \$5,000 annually for a maximum of four consecutive years, up to a total of \$20,000.

The scholarship is open to dependants of Reimer Express employees. Cella is the daughter of Claudio Cella, who is in his 25th year with Reimer Express and currently serves as the sales and operations supervisor at the Kelowna service centre.

Cella is the seventh recipient of the award and earned the scholarship through academic achievement, community involvement and participation in many extracurricular activities. Cella will attend the University of British Columbia in Kelowna this fall, seeking a bachelor of science degree.

She intends to pursue studies in ecology and microbiology and hopes to one day earn her master's and doctorate degrees in these fields. □

ON THE BIG ROAD, THE LITTLE THINGS MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE.

Pam has been at the 10 Acre Truck Stop in Belleville since 1983. In that time she's realized that big rig drivers come in for more than just a cup of coffee. "They come here when they'd just like someone to talk to".

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Dalton and the Bandit

By Edo van Belkom

The story so far...

After a long day on the road, Mark turns in for the night. Since it's cold that evening, he turns on his auxiliary power unit to keep his cab warm. In the morning, he finds his fuel tanks empty and realizes he'd been robbed during the night. To comfort himself, Mark has a breakfast of chocolate chip pancakes and spends some time watching "stupid trucker" videos on YouTube, then he heads back out on the road.

The next night, Mark goes to bed without the assistance of his APU. Nevertheless he wakes up in the night to the sound of something humming nearby. He checks it out and discovers a huge, tattooed biker type pumping fuel from his tanks. Rather than confront the man, Mark captures his image on his cell phone, then makes some noise inside the cab to scare the bandit away.

Two days later Mark spots the bandit's truck at a stop. After ordering a bite to eat, Mark spends some time on a computer at the stop's Internet cafe sending off dozens of e-mails. Then, on his way out, he considers putting sugar in the bandit's tank, but decides on another tactic when he sees the truck stop also sells coloured diesel for use in agricultural vehicles. Once his dirty work is done, all that's left to do is wait...

Mark continued his journey west, but now he was constantly on the lookout for the bandit and his green and yellow Dobb and Ithaca trailer. Mark slowed as he neared each truck stop and rest station along the Trans-Canada, but by the end of the day there had been no sign of him. While Mark would have liked to have caught sight of the bandit, he took solace in the fact that his fuel was safe in his tanks because the man wasn't around. Sure Mark was down on fuel, but that was because he'd been putting miles under his wheels – the way it was supposed to be.

Of course, there was a chance the bandit had veered off and headed north to Edmonton or south across the border to Spokane or Butte. If that were the case, Mark could only hope that there was a border guard on either side of the line that was sharp enough to recognize the bandit for what he was and arrest him for what he'd done. Realistically though, the chances that the bandit would be crossing the border in the Midwest was slim. If the guy had driven this far west, odds were good he was heading for a port, like Vancouver, or Prince Rupert, or maybe even Seattle.

Still, north into Canada, south to the US, or into some international port, it didn't matter because the bandit wouldn't be getting very far. Not with such powerful tools as the Internet and e-mail

working against him.

All Mark had to do was be patient and the rest would take care of itself.

As it turned out Mark only had to wait one more day.

He was approaching the weigh stations outside Kamloops when he caught sight of the distinctive Dobb and Ithaca Trucking trailer parked in the lot past the scales.

The lights in front of Mark were green and he wasn't being called into the scales, but he decided to slow down and pull off the highway anyway, just to see what was going on.

Then, as he neared the scales Mark slowed down – almost to a crawl – just so he could drink in the wonderful sight. The bandit's green and blue rig was parked in the lot surrounded by what looked like a half-dozen smokies, mostly RCMP and maybe a municipal copper or two. The bandit himself was leaning up against his trailer, his hands cuffed behind his back while two officers talked to him. The officer on the left was holding the bandit's briefcase in one hand, and pulling out one of its hoses with the other. Meanwhile, the officer on the right was busy writing in his notebook, laughing and shaking his head with each stroke of his pen.

Mark rolled down the passenger side window and shouted, "That's what you get when you steal from Mark Dalton!"

The bandit and most of the smokies stopped what they were doing and looked over in Mark's direction, but not for long. At this distance they probably hadn't heard a word Mark had said and thought he was just some crazy trucker passing through.

But as satisfying as all this was, Mark hadn't had his fill.

That's because after he'd captured the footage of the bandit stealing fuel from his truck, Mark had downloaded the file onto YouTube and then given the clip subject words like "Stupid Trucker" "Thief" and "Bandit" which were sure to attract plenty of viewers from the trucking industry who logged onto YouTube on a regular basis.

But that wasn't all.

He had also spent time searching for

addresses and when he had them all, he'd sent the file to every law enforcement agency between Winnipeg and Vancouver, letting them know that the bandit was heading west through their jurisdiction. So in addition to the RCMP, all sorts of municipal police forces, and both border agencies had been warned to look out for a Dobb and Ithaca Trucking trailer with a tattooed biker type behind the wheel.

Then, once he was done with the Internet, Mark had gone one step further.

Through the scales now, Mark turned

tinct red dye that set it apart from the regular, road-going variety.

And so, as Mark inched past the scene, he could see one of the smokies standing over the bandit's tank scooping out a sample of the fuel inside it. A moment later, there it was...a cup of fuel emanating a distinct red glow as the officer held it up to the light of day.

Seeing the red fuel that had come out of his tank, the bandit was incredulous, stomping his feet and shaking his head while making wild gestures with his arms that said he had no idea how that fuel got into his tanks.

Which of course, was true.

Mark laughed out loud imaging the bandit's conversation with the officers. After all, what could the man say? "I never bought any coloured diesel... Someone else must have bought it and I stole it from them." That was a Catch-22 situation if there ever was one. And even if the bandit had known the coloured fuel was in his tank, he wouldn't have been able to do anything about it. The dye wasn't easy to get rid of, taking as many as five tankfuls of clean fuel to get rid of the taint. Sure Mark could have poured sugar into the man's tanks until his rig

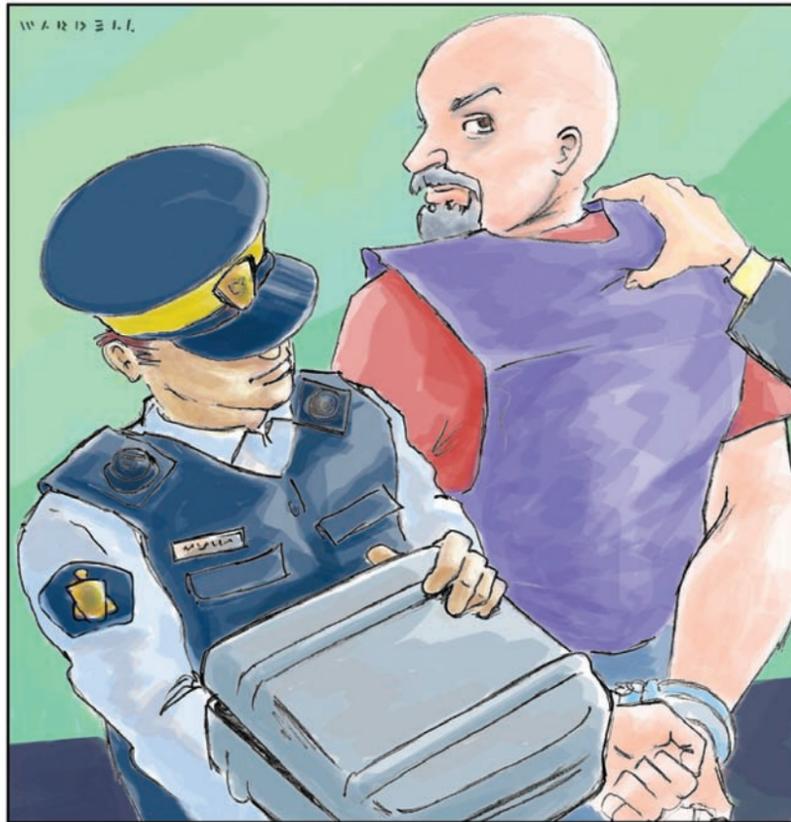
ground to a halt somewhere down the road, but that was boring. This way, the bandit was going to be charged with several counts of theft AND faced thousands of dollars in fines for using the wrong fuel.

That made it feel like real justice for Mark because it was just so ironic. The bandit, for all his thievery, had probably never stolen any coloured diesel in his life. Instead, it had been given to him, at no charge...a sort of gesture of goodwill from one trucker to another.

"No need to thank me!" Mark shouted through the open window after he'd completed his loop through the lot and was driving back through the scales once more. "My pleasure!"

With that, Mark rolled up his window and continued on his way west. □

- Mark Dalton returns next month in another exciting adventure.



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ALL IN THE FAMILY: Gary, 'Red' and Earl Coleman (L-R) have kept Big Freight pointed in the right direction for 60 years now.

Big Freight Systems turns 60

STEINBACH, Man. – Big Freight Systems is celebrating its 60th anniversary.

The company has been in operation since 1948, initially as South East Transfer, and has grown under the guidance of Seaton 'Red' Coleman and his father George. The company has evolved into a leader specializing in open deck long-haul transportation, most notably hauling glass products, which require special care.

Today the company is still family-run, with Gary Coleman serving as CEO and his brother Earl as president. This year, Earl is also serving as president of the

Manitoba Trucking Association.

"Big Freight is committed to providing the best service and we are always looking to the future in anticipation of value-based opportunities," Earl recently told Big Freight staff.

"Red built the foundation of the company based on his belief that sticking to the basics of on-time pick-ups and deliveries for a fair price is a critical factor to success," the company said in a release. "Through the leadership of Earl and Gary, the company evolved, all the while responding to the ever-increasing demands of the marketplace." □

Al's Cartage calls it quits

KITCHENER, Ont. – Al's Cartage, a family-owned fleet that once employed 230 people, has ceased operations due to rising fuel costs and a sluggish economy. Randy Frohlich, vice-president of operations for the 80-plus-year-old company, told the *Kitchener-Waterloo Record* that it decided to close shop after its fuel supplier cut it off.

"We got squeezed out," he told the paper. "There's too many trucks out there and not enough freight."

The company was heavily-reliant on the auto parts industry. The fleet had already trimmed its size from its peak of 230 workers down to 50. "Because the pain the industry in, there's no hope for Al's, that's for sure," Frohlich told the *Record*. "In this day and age, you can't give the business away." □

Highland revisits contract with O/Os

MARKHAM, Ont. – Negotiations between Highland Transport's parent company, TransForce, and the Steelworkers Local 1976 are ongoing, with a membership vote scheduled for late August, a union official told *Truck West* at press time.

The union was not willing to discuss intimate details of the talks until the vote is determined. The main issue is a "new proposal" and a substantial concession in favour of Highland. TransForce wants to cut the union's negotiated per-mile rate, and eliminate the cap on fuel, although the existing contract doesn't expire until Dec. 31 according to a union official.

"They've asked us to negotiate early," Dave McCutcheon, the union steward, for the 270-member United Steelworkers 1976, told *Truck West*. "They needed the contract to be opened earlier," added McCutcheon, who wouldn't elaborate on why the union wasn't insisting TransForce abide by the existing contract.

"There are extenuating circumstances," he explained. "The members of the Local are well aware of the extenuating circumstances: the reasons why we cannot maintain the status quo."

McCutcheon has been with Highland for 23 years, a working arrangement that he has been very satisfied with.

"They've always been a pretty good company," he said.

McCutcheon indicated that existing economic pressures on trucking have been difficult for everyone.

"The industry itself is changing and certainly Highland is changing with it. The industry itself is not changing for the better: not for an owner/operator or a driver," he said. "The current economic conditions, we're going to ride them out. We've ridden them out before, and we'll do it again."

For its part, TransForce did not respond to requests for an interview. □

Mullen thrives in second quarter

OKOTOKS, Alta. – Mullen Group set a new record for revenue in the second quarter and boosted its profit over the same period last year.

Mullen's Q2 record for revenue was \$249.1 million (a 13.8% increase from 07) and its net income was \$19.9 million, up from \$16.6 million the same quarter of 07. The trucking/logistics segment was largely responsible for the record-setting revenue, making a \$10.9 million contribution, Mullen reported. The company said it is experiencing continued strong freight demand in Western Canada.

"We were very pleased with the overall financial performance of our businesses in the second quarter. Both of our operating segments contributed to the growth last quarter, this despite the well-publicized economic challenges that persist in the market and a 6.9% decline in oil and gas drilling activity in Western Canada," said Murray Mullen, chairman and CEO. □

Trimac revenue, profit decline in Q2

CALGARY, Alta. – Trimac Income Fund suffered a drop in net earnings and revenue during the second quarter and first half of 2007.

Revenue for the second quarter was down \$1.2 million in the second quarter compared to the same period a year earlier, but net earnings for the quarter dropped from \$7.9 million to \$2.6 million. In the first half of 08, Trimac's profit fell from \$9.4 million to \$3.2 million.

Trimac reported its total loads hauled declined due to reduced demand, however, volumes remained relatively strong in Western Canada. □

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BOWMANVILLE, Ont. – With so many issues facing the trucking industry, many wonder how this year's Roadcheck Safety Blitz returned such successful results.

The Roadcheck Safety blitz is an annual event, with this year producing the best results and the fewest drivers put out-of-service in its 21-year history. During the first week of June, CVSA- and FMCSA-certified inspectors at 1,683 locations across North America randomly pulled over trucks and buses for a North American Standard Level 1 inspection. Of the 67,931 trucks and buses pulled over, an astounding 94.7% passed the evaluation, proving that today's trucks and drivers are safer than they have ever been.

But what is at the cause of this extreme commitment to safety? *Truck West* stopped by the Fifth Wheel Truck Stop in Bowmanville, Ont. to find out what is making the industry the safest it has ever been.



Truck Stop Question

Jared Lindzon
Special to Truck News

What's behind the great results of Roadcheck 2008?



Dale Johnstone

Dale Johnstone, who drives for Barry Direct, argues that safety regulations are being enforced beyond

necessity.

"There's a big emphasis on road safety right now, and it's normal for truck drivers to make sure their trucks are driving safely and are road-safe before they hit the highways," Johnstone said. "Everyone's safe before we go. Everyone has to do their road checks and their annual safety checks before they can even start their truck up so it's normal procedure. I think that trucks are even safer today than they need to be."

Richard Solomen, who works for



Richard Solomen

the Ministry of Correctional Services in Milton, Ont. argues that it just makes sense to keep your truck up to safety standards.

"Well, it gets pretty expensive to take a truck off the road, and with the time involved, it's better to invest the time making sure you have a safe truck so you don't have to go through all of that," Solomen explains.

"Trucks are absolutely safer today than they ever have been. I've noticed a lot less trucks off the side of the road, a lot less breakdowns and that type of thing."

Joe Dignard, who retired from Canadian Kenworth in 2002, offers his opinion based on his 42 years behind the wheel.

"They're forcing the drivers and the companies, not just the drivers, to bring their trucks up to standard, suspension-wise and fuel-wise, right down the line, brakes, tires, everything," Dignard said. "There are much fewer wheels coming off the trucks now. They're forcing them to maintain things a lot better than before. I also find the drivers are a little more conscious of what they're doing. I think drivers have to know more about their trucks now than ever before. They have to. They're forcing them to with the A/Z licence and all that, they've got to be more knowledgeable."



Bill Martinusen

Bill Martinusen, who drives for Roadex Services in Saskatoon, Sask., believes that road safety is the key to survival in this industry.

"There are less trucks on the road in general, there are less old trucks on the road, and because of enforcement, people are forced to keep their trucks in better shape," Martinusen said.

"I think it's just a cost benefit to have your truck in better shape than in poor shape. If your truck's sitting on the side of the road broke down, it doesn't make you any money. If your truck's in good shape you can keep running down the road and make money. It's that simple." □

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– *Jared Lindzon is enrolled in media studies at the University of Western Ontario and will be working as a summer intern at Business Information Group. He can be reached at jlindzon@bizinfogroup.ca.*

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