

TRUCK WEST

September 2011 Volume 22, Issue 9

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



RING OF HONOUR: Robert St. Vincent, an owner/operator with Bison Transport was selected as the 2011 *Truck News/Truck West* Owner/Operator of the Year. Among his prizes was a diamond ring seen here as St. Vincent was recognized at the Fergus Truck Show. *Photo by Adam Ledlow*

A passion for the business of trucking

O/O of the Year says challenge of managing his business is what drives him

By James Menzies
FERGUS, Ont. – At 49 years of age, Robert St. Vincent is by no means old. But old school? He'll wear that badge with pride. The

18th annual *Truck News/Truck West* Owner/Operator of the Year got started in the trucking industry early. His father owned a small transfer company in the

1950s, instilling in St. Vincent a passion for trucking.

"Every chance I had, I'd go with him for a ride and I just

Continued on page 24

Cargo crime crunch

Trucking industry is getting serious about fighting back

By Carroll McCormick
MONTREAL, Que. – It's a criminal free-for-all featuring cargo theft, fraud, cyber-fraud, identity theft, extortion, robbery, drug and weapons smuggling, brokerage fraud, Internet crime, credit card theft, gun violence, kidnapping, murder, infiltration by organized crime...but the Canadian trucking industry thinks it's ready to fight back.

As proof of a new commitment to shut down this crime Mecca, last year the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) with the cooperation and financial support of a pretty long list of trucking, insurance and police parties hired Lansdowne Technologies to prepare what it termed a "threat and risk assessment" of cargo crime in Canada.

The report bills itself as the first of its kind in Canada, possibly the world, "to clearly explain cargo crime in Canada and to promote awareness of the issues and challenges facing Canada in coming to grips with the problem of cargo crime."

Carriers, insurance companies and

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Guess who's turning 25?

We test drive Kenworth's T800 to celebrate the milestone



Inside This Issue...

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Mark Dalton O/O



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– Brian Brandenburg, Fleet Maintenance Manager, ThyssenKrupp Logistics, Inc.



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Fergus deserves another shot to get it right

This year's Fergus Truck Show was, by all accounts, a disappointment.

And for once we can't blame it on the weather.

One of Canada's greatest trucking events has lost its way in recent years, straying too far from its original roots as a truck show and focusing too much of its attention on becoming one of Ontario's grandest festivals.

Some big name entertainment acts have graced the stage of the Fergus Truck Show in recent years and it proved successful at drawing from beyond the traditional trucking audience.

But what happens when the entertainment acts are no longer a big draw and the truckers begin to feel alienated and find something better to do with their weekend? You get this year's Fergus Truck Show.

Top it off with an early morning visit from the RCMP, who seized counterfeit merchandise from several vendors and you've got the recipe for discontent.

There were more flies than people at this year's Fergus Truck Show and maybe it was symbolic; this year's show was merely a rotting corpse of its former self.

Having said all that, there's still time to get it right and revive a show that was once a mainstay on the trucking industry calendar. Let's remember the show is run entirely by volunteers and they have nothing but good intentions.

They erred in raising entrance fees and I think they realize that. As one neighbouring vendor told



us, visitors were "leaving all their money at the gate, they have nothing left to spend inside."

Last year's truck show resulted in similar grumblings and I wrote a blog at the time called 'Let's not bury the Fergus Truck Show before it's dead.'

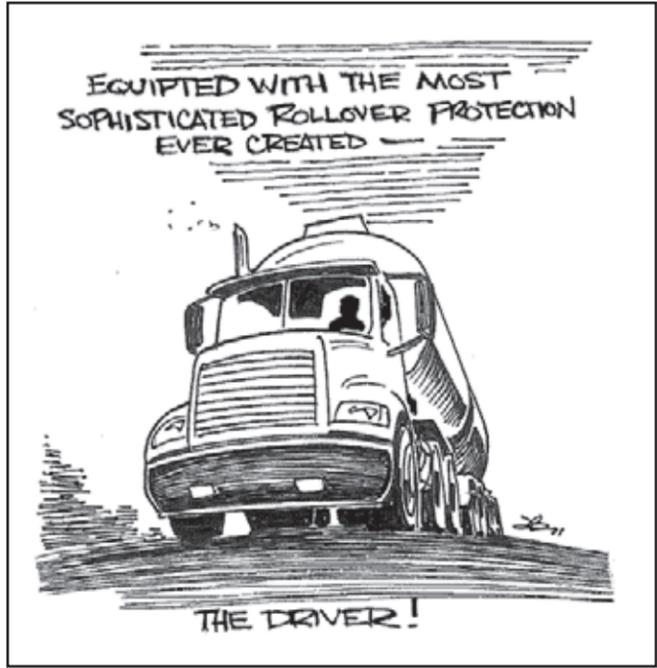
It's now one step closer to being dead, but I am still hopeful it can return to its former glory.

Sure, many vendors swore that this year's show would be their last.

And if all those who said that meant it, the show may not go on.

But people were speaking emotionally under the hot July sun and it's still possible they will have a change of heart.

Hopefully organizers will return the show to its roots, with a greater emphasis on the trucks and their owners and keeping in mind the enormous pressures today's truckers are under, entrance fees will be brought back in line with what it is – a truck show.



Theft by deception

Cargo crime is an issue that deserves prime time attention. It could be costing our industry up to \$5 billion annually, although that's just an estimate because until recently disjointed interest has led to a lack of proper data in addition to insufficient security and enforcement.

This is starting to change. The Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) with the cooperation and financial support of a pretty long list of trucking, insurance and police parties hired Lansdowne Technologies to prepare what it termed a "threat and risk assessment" of cargo crime in Canada. The report bills itself as the first of its kind "to clearly explain cargo crime in Canada and to promote awareness of the issues and challenges facing Canada in coming to grips with the problem of cargo crime."

We think this is a smart move by the CTA.

It's time we fought back in an intelligent and well orchestrated manner. To show our support, we made cargo crime our cover story this month.

Most of the attention on cargo crime is focused on cargo theft. However, I want to draw your attention to another form of cargo crime that is cropping up and needs your attention when brokering freight: cargo fraud. Markel's



Rick Geller had an eye-opening presentation on cargo fraud at TransCore's recent users' conference.

As Geller pointed out, cargo fraud, or theft by deception as he called it, only works if the perpetrators can create the facade of a legitimate carrier ready to partner with you to move freight.

But some are so good at creating that facade that unsuspecting trucking executives end up thanking them for taking the load off the dock.

This is a crime that has been made much easier by the rise of the Internet and how much business information is available on it and can be copied – from your company logos to necessary operating authorities.

Geller said in one case even a fake Markel insurance certificate was produced by the perpetrator. The alarm bells only went off because the policy number was that used by a different insurance company.

Don't expect much help from the police authorities, Geller warned.

This isn't Lollapalooza, folks, it's a truck show.

I have faith in the organizers to get the show back on track. They seem receptive to feedback – good and bad – and willing to make whatever changes are necessary to rejuvenate the show.

So, as an eternal optimist, I'll repeat my message from last year: Let's not bury the show before it's dead. If there's an effort and willingness to return the show to its roots and make it more trucker-friendly, then I know we'll be there and I hope more of you are, too. □

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Cargo fraud is hard to track down and since it doesn't tend to leave victims bleeding on the roadside, it's not high priority for police.

This is a battle you will have to fight on your own.

The good news is that vigilance does pay off.

As Geller says, if you are getting a deal to move freight that seems to be too good to be true, look into it.

Fraudulent carriers working the spot market tend to offer rates to move freight at a fraction of the going rate.

The documents produced to fake their legitimacy also don't stand up to closer scrutiny.

Company logos may be blurred, the numbers on the produced operating authorities won't match with the actual government records, the company address may look funny if you double check it on GoogleMaps Streetview.

In one case, the fraudulent carrier was giving a church as its address.

If one thing doesn't look right, the company may be a fraud. To find out more ways to fight cargo fraud, see my blog on www.trucknews.com for Geller's 10 Best Practices for Brokering Freight. □

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CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

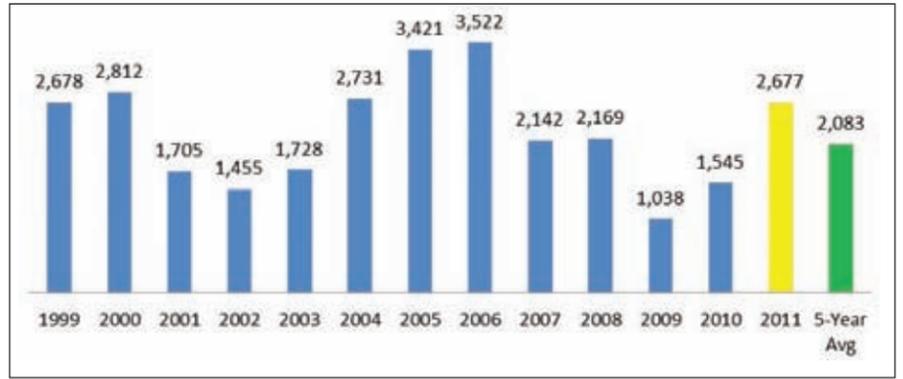
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There were 2,677 Class 8 trucks sold in the Canadian market this June, a significant increase over last year's total and close to the totals of strong years such as 1999 and 2004. June also closed the second quarter with another healthy upward movement in Class 8 sales. And it continued the recent trend of surpassing the monthly totals set back in 2001, 2002 and 2003. Last month's total came in just about 100 trucks short of the five-year average for truck sales and, in June, sales were actually above the five-year average.

Monthly Class 8 Sales – June 11

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	738	199
International	431	461
Kenworth	604	303
Mack	201	100
Peterbilt	281	176
Sterling	0	46
Volvo	234	141
Western Star	185	119
TOTALS	2677	1545

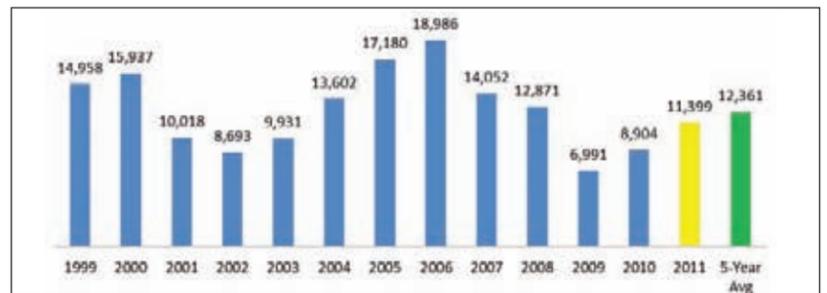
Historical Comparison – June 11 Sales



Class 8 Sales (YTD June 11) by Province and OEM

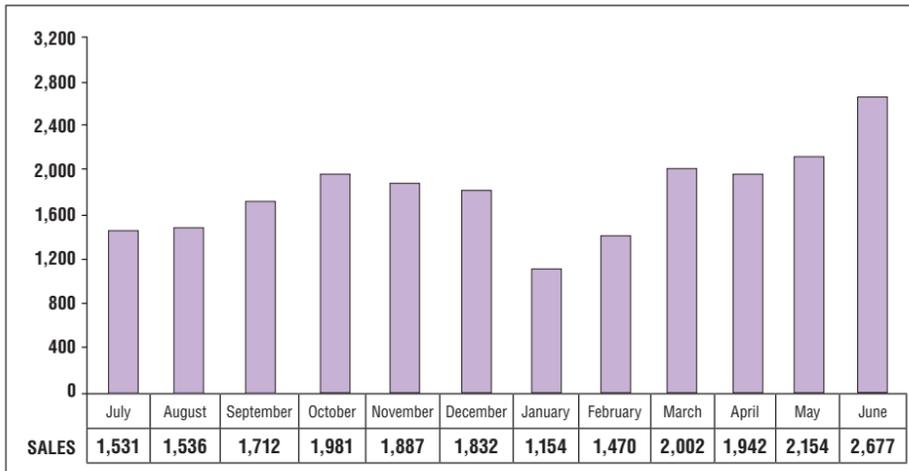
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	160	274	79	188	1,691	484	158	52	5	11	3,102
Kenworth	213	794	138	85	359	503	59	0	0	0	2,151
Mack	29	118	55	52	376	115	19	19	0	11	794
International	171	353	39	149	762	538	136	58	8	34	2,248
Peterbilt	130	373	199	82	286	177	65	14	0	0	1,227
Volvo	66	91	24	131	466	235	64	32	0	4	1,113
Western Star	164	230	40	20	126	111	25	40	1	7	764
TOTALS	933	2,233	475	708	4,066	2,163	526	215	14	67	11,399

Historical Comparison – YTD June 11



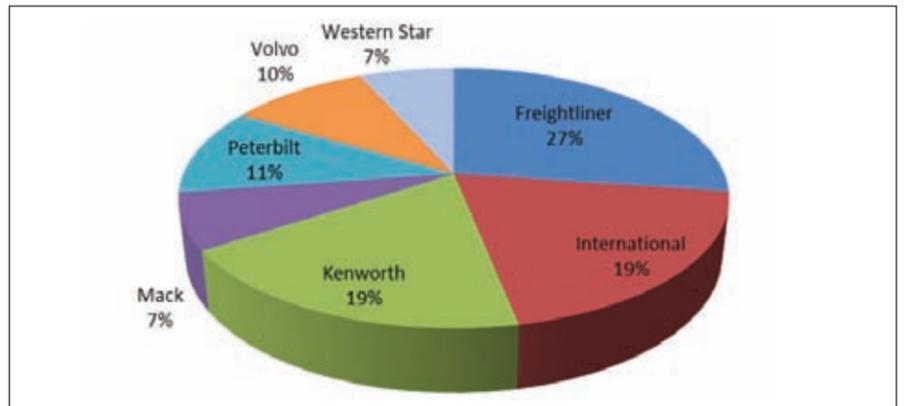
So far, the YTD sales totals are significantly better than the sales figures posted in both 2009 and 2010 and also better than the results after the first six months of 2001, 2002 and 2003. The YTD totals are about 1,000 units off the five-year average and showing continuing improvement. But despite a strong second quarter, it is still far below the industry's greatest growth years of 2004 to 2008 and also behind the sales totals of 1999 and 2000, which indicates trucking in Canada may still be a year away from true strong growth.

12 - Month Sales Trend



June is now the strongest month of the past 12-month period, climbing above 2,600 Class 8 trucks sold. This is the third time this year that Class 8 sales have managed to rise above 2,000. It is also the third time in the past four-month period and April was close with sales of 1,942 Class 8 trucks. With the economy expected to show improvement in the final two quarters, it's likely Class 8 sales will continue to strengthen through the rest of the year.

Market Share Class 8 – June 11 YTD



Freightliner, a market leader in the Canadian market for many years before International took over the top spot a few years ago, jumped out to an early lead at the start of the year with 28% market share and continues to hang on to that lead. It now stands with a commanding 27% lead, far ahead of International, whose market share has been on the decline over the past year and now stands at 19%. Kenworth's numbers have also risen to the 19% market share it held at the end of 2010.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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IN BRIEF

Vancouver container trucks re-routed

VANCOUVER, B.C. – Port Metro Vancouver has announced a new truck traffic pilot program that will force container trucks onto Major Road Network (MRN) routes, reducing truck traffic in residential areas including Nanaimo St.

“The City of Vancouver is committed to addressing the concerns of residents impacted by container truck traffic on Nanaimo Street,” said Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson. “This issue is a priority and by working with the port on mitigation strategies, we will be able to better manage truck traffic on authorized truck routes in a way that balances local community needs with efficient port operations.”

“As an important economic generator for Vancouver and the region, Port Metro Vancouver understands the need to work with communities that may be impacted by port operations,” added Chris Badger, COO, Port Metro Vancouver.

“Together with the city, and with the cooperation of the trucking community, we are confident this pilot program will have a positive effect and reduce the impact of container truck operations on residents of Vancouver.”

The 90-day pilot begins Aug. 25, giving the port 30 days to first notify truckers of the change. Container trucks will be directed to use MRN routes, as laid out by Translink.

For instance, trucks travelling via the Knight Street Corridor from Richmond/Delta will have to use the following route to access the McGill/Commissioner Street entrance to the Port: Clark Drive to Hastings Street; Hastings Street to Cassiar Street/Highway 1; Cassiar Street/Highway 1 to Bridgeway Street; Bridgeway Street to McGill Street.

Port and city officials will be monitoring Nanaimo St., to ensure truckers comply. Officials say they’ll continue to monitor the situation and evaluate the effectiveness of the program. □

Avaal continues western expansion in Winnipeg

WINNIPEG, Man. – Avaal Technology Solutions has marked the opening of its newest office in Winnipeg, Man. with a grand opening celebration held in late July. Avaal officials say the new facility has been strategically placed in the heart of the Manitoba trucking community and views its presence on the Prairies as a key component of the company’s expansion of services to current and new clients. The office will serve Northern Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

“Opening this office signals the importance of this commitment,” said Dara Nagra, president and CEO of Avaal Technology Solutions. “We are ensuring that we have people on the Prairies to cultivate relationships and meaningful exchanges of knowledge.”

The event was attended by more than 300 guests, including representatives from local businesses, government, schools and the transportation industry, the company announced. □



REASON TO CELEBRATE: Avaal staff and guests celebrate the grand opening of the company’s Winnipeg office.



OmniTRAX Canada names new president

WINNIPEG, Man. – OmniTRAX Canada has named transportation executive Brad Chase as its new president.

Chase was formerly senior vice-president at Kleysen Group in Winnipeg, a company handling commodities throughout Canada and the US via rail and truck transportation. Chase joined Kleysen in 2001 to lead the intermodal business unit. He was responsible for strategic planning and business development and was instrumental in the company’s growth.

Chase will be based at the OmniTRAX Canada offices in Winnipeg and have oversight of the company’s operations in Canada, including the Port of Churchill, the Hudson Bay Railway, the Carlton Trail Railway, and the Kettle Falls International Railway. □



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CANADA

Trucks on Demand to offer affordable online heavy-duty technician training



TECH TRAINING: Heavy-duty truck technicians will soon have a new source of cost-effective online training courses. Photo by Adam Ledlow

By James Menzies

TORONTO, Ont. – Long recognized as a provider of quality online training modules for automotive technicians, the Cars Network is turning its attention to the heavy-duty trucking industry.

The Cars Council is a not-for-profit sector group funded by the federal government that develops online training programs for auto technicians and the Cars Network is the organization charged with delivering that training. As it spreads its reach to the trucking industry, the group will be known as Trucks on Demand.

The group has been providing online training for auto technicians since the early 90s and is now preparing to launch a series of training programs for heavy-duty technicians through a new Web site TrucksonDemand.ca.

“What I’ve heard from the industry in the last six or seven months since we

began working with the heavy-duty sector of the industry is that there really isn’t that much aftermarket training available,” Linda Brown, manager of industry relations with Cars Network told *Truck West*. “I think this will prove itself to be a very cost-effective and convenient way for our technicians to access quality training.”

Each training program will be two hours in length and delivered entirely online. It will be accompanied by a 20-25 page learning guide featuring diagrams, illustrations and schematics. Upon completion of the course, the technician will take a test and be awarded with a certificate if achieving a grade of 75% or greater.

The group has already developed a half-dozen or so training programs, which will be uploaded to the site in September, Brown announced. Topics include: computerized management systems; diesel emission controls; electronic braking controls; and multiplexing, to name a few. In addition, Trucks on Demand will offer previously developed training courses on business management and light- and medium-duty truck repair.

“The way we arrive at determining what topics we will be covering is, we have an advisory committee consisting of key stakeholders within the heavy-duty sector, fleet managers, independent garage owners, a few OEMs and people who represent educational institutions,” Brown explained. “We bring these people together and they provide guidance and direction on what training is required to address the industry’s needs. They provide the topics and then we develop the curriculum.”

The online training involves visual demonstrations to replicate a classroom environment, Brown said, but the course can be taken at the technician’s convenience.

“People can come into the shop in the morning, do a bit of training and then as the shop gets busy go back on the shop floor and when the day is over, go home, have dinner and finish the course at that point in time,” Brown explained. She also pointed out the online courses are easy to use, even for those with minimal computer skills.

Fleets and service providers that are interested in providing the training courses to their technicians must subscribe to the service. They’ll pay a monthly fee depending on how many technicians they have. Fleet managers or shop supervisors will be able to log in and view the courses their technicians have completed.

“This provides a very cost-effective way for people to get the training they need to stay up to date,” Brown said. “Everybody has expressed a lot of interest and enthusiasm with regards to this training. It’s been a long time coming and I think there’s a need for this training. It’s been difficult to find a source of aftermarket training for journeymen and I think once people have the opportunity to experience Trucks on Demand, I think they’re going to be sold on it.”

For more info, you can visit www.TrucksonDemand.ca in mid to late September or to get an idea of what the site will look like, you can visit the already existing www.CarsonDemand.com Web site. You can also call 888-224-3834. □

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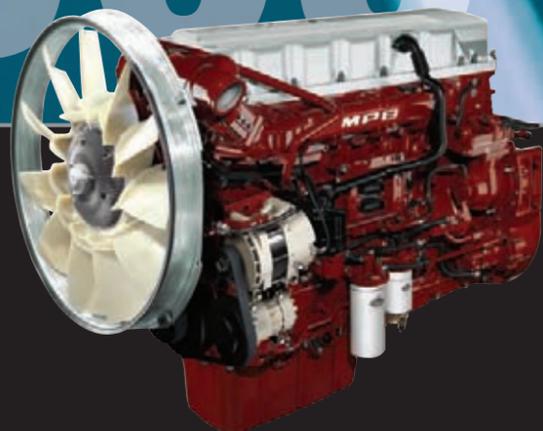
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TAX TALK

Four things you should know about filing online

The percentage of people filing their federal tax returns electronically now easily exceeds those who do so the old-fashioned way. According to Canada Revenue Agency, 16 million of the 24.5 million returns it had processed through May 31 were sent using E-file, Netfile, or Telefile, the agency's electronic filing methods.

Paper filing continues to decrease in popularity. Just over 8.5 million returns were filed on paper compared to 9.1 million at the same time last year.

The reasons are simple. More Canadians have Internet access. We're accustomed to doing business online. You get electronic confirmation that your return arrived (no more dropping an envelope into a box on the corner). Plus, think how many trees electronic filing saves (the average paper return is 13 pages).

Tax Talk

SCOTT TAYLOR



The real kicker, though, is speed. On average, it takes two weeks for CRA to process a return filed electronically versus four to six weeks for one sent by mail.

If you're due a refund, you're going to get it that much faster when you file online.

The CRA has done a good job making electronic filing simple and intuitive, but each year we get questions about the process. Here are four things you should know about filing electronically:

Keep your receipts

While you don't have to send your receipts to CRA when you file

electronically, you are required to keep all the documents necessary to support your claims. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise. If you're audited, you'll be asked to produce valid receipts or statements to back up your deductions.

Review your return

Whether you do it yourself or have your accountant or tax preparer file for you, make sure every detail is correct and that you double-check your return. Like your paper return, you are responsible for ensuring that the information you submit electronically is 100% accurate whether you personally hit the "send" button or not. Leave yourself time for a thorough review.

Electronic filers get audited, too

Canadians file about 27 million in-

dividual income tax returns each year, and all are reviewed by CRA to make sure that income, deductions, and credits are accurately reported and filed.

Don't let anyone tell you that filing a paper return reduces the chance of audit. Whether paper or electronically filed, every return is subject to four types of review:

Pre-assessment Review: Your return is electronically analyzed. Various deductions and credits are reviewed for anomalies and missing information. If CRA has questions about your return, you'll be contacted before receiving a notice of assessment.

Processing Review: After a notice of assessment is issued, your return is reviewed to make sure that certain claimed deductions and credits are accurate and are supported by appropriate documentation. In specific instances, you may be asked to provide cancelled cheques or bank statements. If a review identifies an error, you'll get a new notice of assessment.

Matching Program: At this point, CRA makes sure that information slips filed by third parties, such as an employer or a bank, correspond to the information you reported.

This program is typically run late summer and into the fall of each year.

If there is a discrepancy between the income you report and the income reported by a third party, you'll be asked for clarification.

If the CRA determines that an adjustment is required after completing the review, it will send a new notice of assessment.

RRSP Excess Contribution Review: After the CRA makes sure that taxpayer records are correct and that you have filed any required adjustment, the CRA looks for any excess contributions to your RRSP.

Track your account online

CRA's electronic services like My Account and Quick Access are useful all year. You can log in and track your refund, check on your benefit and credit payments and your RRSP limit, set up direct deposit, and more.

In most cases, you'll see information on the My Account pages before you receive the official documents from the CRA by mail.

For more information about these and other electronic services, go to www.cra.gc.ca/eservices. If you don't have an access code for My Account, visit the CRA Web site (www.netfile.gc.ca/dsclmr-eng.html) to get one.

By now your accountant should be well versed in CRA's electronic filing options and how to use them.

If you have questions, don't hesitate to ask. □

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



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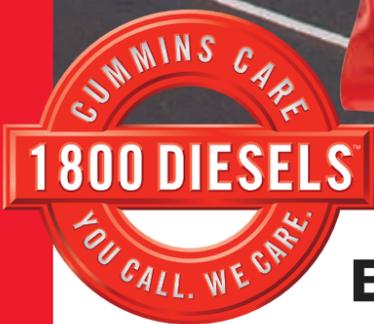
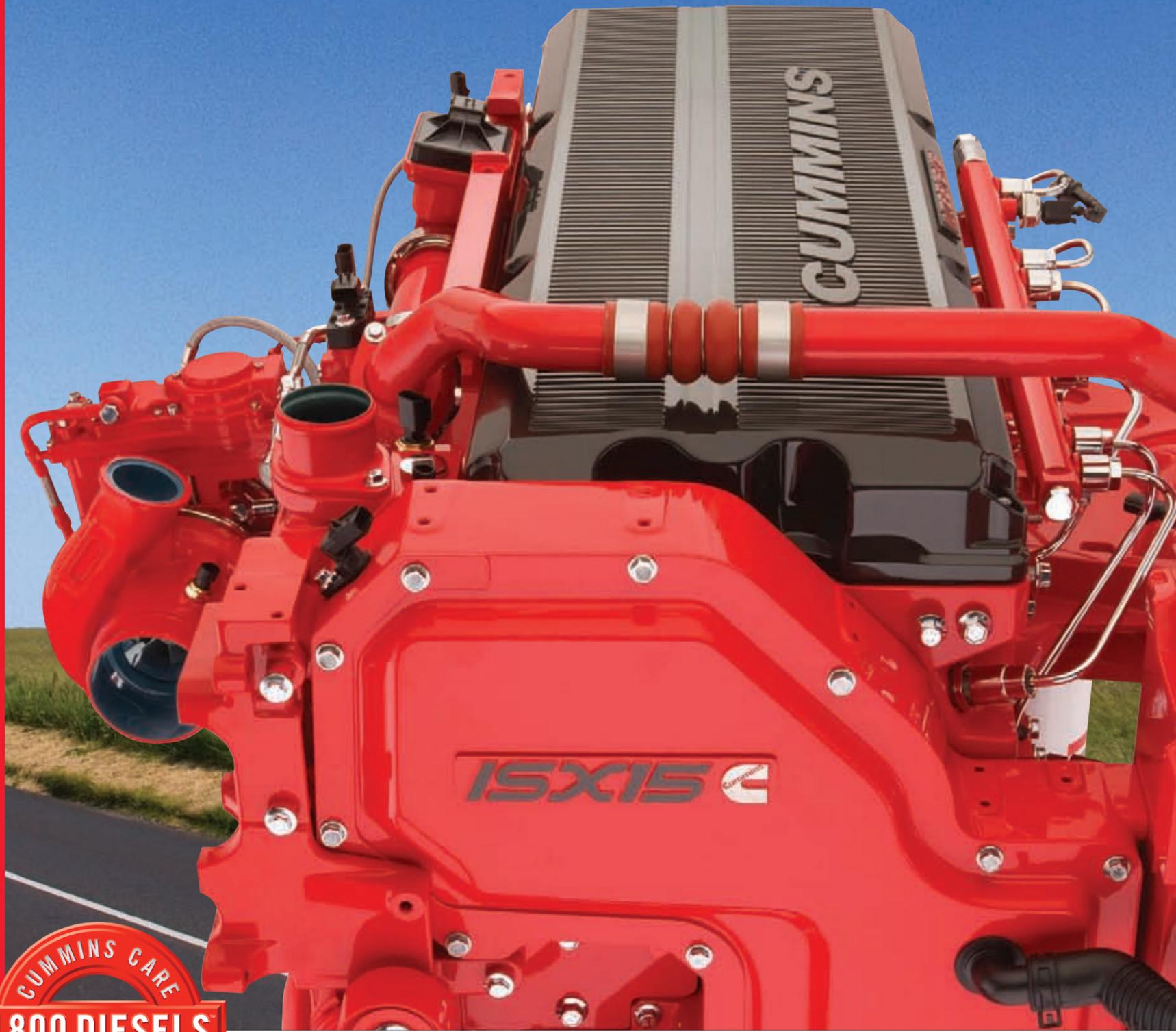
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OVER THE ROAD

As professional drivers, we need to look after ourselves first

I wanted to continue writing about driver health issues this month, but was beginning to feel like I was flogging a dead horse.

That isn't the case according to the results of a recent Health and Wellness Survey of Transport Truck Drivers conducted by the Department of Family Medicine at McMaster University and the City of Hamilton, Public Health Services.

According to the survey, 33.1% of drivers say they are willing to participate in workplace wellness programs on their own time. So a large number of drivers recognize that the trucking lifestyle has a negative impact on their health and they would like to do something about it. As drivers, we know there is a huge divide between our intention to live a healthier lifestyle and our ability to carry through with that inten-

tion. I think most drivers would agree that time is the limiting factor we all share. It's fair to say we simply don't have enough of it. This point was driven home to me over the course of the past week.

I left southwestern Ontario last Saturday morning and headed up to Winnipeg/Brandon where I peddled freight around all day Monday. Tuesday, I reloaded down around Fargo and was back at my home terminal early on Thursday. Over 3,000 miles, 12 picks and drops along with the border crossings makes for a busy week. My on-board recorder showed me either on duty or driving for a total of 67 hours. Not any different than the 300,000 other Canadian truck drivers doing the same thing as me. We do that week in and week out, right? You bet we do.

Waiting at the yard for me was

Over the Road

AL GOODHALL



my car sitting on one very flat tire. Okay, I kept ignoring that 'need new tires' item on my to-do list and now I was forced into crisis management mode. I also had a 'needs brake service,' and 'needs emissions test for permit renewal' on that same list. At home I had another list with items such as: 'trim cedar hedge around backyard,' 'fix slow leak (for now) on upstairs toilet,' and let's not forget, 'meet deadline for *Truck West* column.' There are many other items I could add to these lists and I know that every driver out there has lists just like them. Where does 'fam-

ily time' and 'leisure time' fit on those lists? What about 'exercise time?' It's pretty easy to see why we call truck driving a lifestyle and not a job or a career. When you drive a truck it becomes a part of who you are not just what you do for a living.

Something else happened recently that put all of that on the back burner. My daughter went into labour with our first grandchild four weeks ahead of schedule. Surprise! Thankfully everything went smoothly, mom and baby are fine, healthy, and happy. Standing next to my daughter this morning with Nate, my grandson, in my arms and my wife by my side, I recognized that making the time to live a healthy lifestyle was about my whole life not just about my physical well-being.

When was the last time anyone within our industry took the time to coach you on the benefits of including your own time into your trip planning? Making sure that you had time to sleep, to eat, to relax, etc. Why don't we plan for ourselves and in doing so still accommodate the needs of our shippers, receivers, carriers, and enforcement agencies and they for us (drivers) in their planning?

I've become involved with a Transportation Industry Health Promotion Research and Policy Planning Group, which was created by the two organizations I mentioned earlier that are responsible for the driver survey that kicked things off. I'm impressed with the passion, sincerity and genuine concern the members of the group have for improving the quality of life for transport drivers. The thing that bothers me is that of the 37 or so members that attended the first session, I was the only driver. Drivers are a very diverse group and greater representation and participation is needed in order for the professionals and academics that drive the group to make the best use of their skills to help us improve the quality of our lives out here on the road.

Too often we bitch and complain after the fact about plans and policies that are put into place for our benefit. Think of the hours-of-service rules and policy regarding EOBRs. The intense research done prior to the implementation of these policies was intended to benefit us, not limit us or control us.

As drivers we too often sit back and allow things to happen without participating in the process. I know it takes time – of which we already have little to spare – but if we don't actively participate in the process we are giving up the independence that attracted most of us to this profession in the first place. □

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



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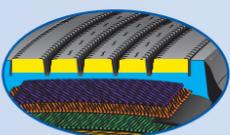
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CARGO CRIME

Crime fighting time

Continued from page 1

police have been squawking about cargo crime since Canadians invented long-haul.

There has also never been a shortage of sincerity and great ideas about how to pick away at cargo crime, including reporting systems like Cargo Watch and a long list of security measures and protocols many carriers have adopted.

Unfortunately, there has been a lack of unity in the industry. "There has been disjointed interest with it in the trucking industry, let alone between the trucking industry and law enforcement," says Jennifer Fox, vice-president, customs and compliance, CTA.

"It is a blame game," spouts Rob Ruiters, who recently stepped down from an 18-year tenure as the RCMP's national program manager for the Pipeline Convoy Program. "Everyone is pointing the finger at each other. The only thing (carriers) care about is what is affecting them today. I have been trying to have the trucking industry develop more of a sense of ownership, to take on more responsibility. They are good old boys and there is too much trust."

Recently, so it is said, players have become, well, particularly concerned. "There are more crimes, victims and types of crimes. We have seen a lot more interest and cooperation in the past two years," Fox says.

The report itself is proof of this. "Just getting the CTA – a consensus for all trucking associations to come on board – was a big deal," Ruiters acknowledges.

Lansdowne completed the report this spring. It is considered to be too sensitive to make public, but Lansdowne prepared an executive summary that CTA released this April.

Historically, cargo crime has been underrated. Pockets of excellent police activity notwithstanding, police have triaged it into the ditch as a victimless – ie. low priority – crime and politicians have blown it off as an issue too thin on proof and missing a panic button. The goal of the report is to change this very mistaken impression, but there is much to do.

"There are no reports out there, no data collection, no definition of cargo theft. We were not able to get a good picture of cargo crime anywhere in Canada. There was no real starting point. We tried to find data, but it is not out there. We were scrambling around to pick up pieces. This is now a starting point. The report is to set the tone," Fox explains.

How big is this rolling disaster? It could be \$5 billion a year big, but this is a guess, not gospel. "This is a figure quoted by an interviewee in the insurance industry. This was his most accurate bet," Fox says.

Recall too that a decade ago the Ontario Trucking Association put Canadian transport company losses and claims at over \$1 billion. "There is no data on the value of merchandise stolen," Fox insists. In any case, stolen goods are only part of the problem. "It very quickly became not an issue of cargo theft, but of cargo crime," Fox says.

Is this really victimless? Take a reality pill: Truckers are being threatened, robbed at gunpoint, kidnapped

and murdered.

"Drivers are really hard to come by. Ask them what is on their minds, as an increasing point of discussion, and they say, 'personal security.' This is a big negative in the industry," points out Rob Penner, vice-president, operations, Bison Transport, which contributed resources to the CTA study.

Carriers, insurance companies and every Canadian are paying, penny for penny, cargo criminals' generous wages. The executive summary also notes that the proceeds of cargo crime are used to fund other illegal activities such as gun and drug smuggling.

Amazingly, plenty of people insist that there is no real problem.

"The 'give a s--t' meter is in southern Ontario, but not elsewhere in Canada. In other parts of the country truckers are saying that this is not a problem. But it is happening all over," Ruiters says.

In the executive summary's rough sketch, the west coast is the land of opportunistic thefts. The Windsor to Montreal corridor is the scorched earth of highly organized cargo crime. The east coast is a bit of a mystery.

"On the east coast we are not sure if it is not happening as much, or not being reported as much. There is no data for the east coast," Fox says.

In Nova Scotia, for example, the RCMP says that there have been no trailer thefts. This may be, but it is equally likely that thefts are simply not being reported. In fact, fearing poaching of their customers by other carriers, insurance rate hikes and just general bad publicity, real or perceived, carriers can be very secretive about being victimized.

"Everyone here is in competition mentality," says Cody Jorgenson, co-owner, Terra Nova Transport of Petitcodiac, N.B. He had a trailer stolen out of a secure yard in Grand Falls this July.

Cargo crime can also get paved over by police as "theft over \$5,000" or something equally featureless; inconsistent coding of police reports across the country is a recognized impediment to collecting cargo crime data.

"The lack of a standardized reporting system to capture cargo crime activities is hampering the effective combating of this crime," notes the executive summary in a section titled Law Enforcement Challenges.

"There is absolutely no standardization for reporting. There are so many ways it can be reported, depending on how the office picks it up. We've seen reports of theft over \$5,000 and truck and trailer, with no mention of stolen cargo. No-one had a clue that any cargo was even missing," says Garry Robertson, national director of investigations with Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC).

The law does not differentiate cargo theft from general property theft, the executive summary notes, and penalties do not match the seriousness of the crime.

"Police sources note that someone caught with \$10,000 in cocaine will spend time in prison, but someone caught stealing \$1 million worth of plasma TVs may not even go to jail," writes Lansdowne. The fallout from toothless laws includes police turning their attention elsewhere and a sense

of learned helplessness in the industry.

"When we got the trucking community together we were told that most didn't report thefts," Penner recalls. Why? "Police were too busy. They can't do anything. I was surprised by it and continue to be surprised by it."

There is so much wrong with this picture, but much that can be done. For example, the executive summary recommends that: simple theft be re-defined to include cargo theft; make the penalties fit the crimes; make legislative changes to give the law some bite; give police more training and resources; and encourage carriers to adopt best practices to improve their security.

Yet if wishes were fishes there would be less cargo crime today, not more. It has never been a lack of ideas that has kept the industry and law enforcement floundering; rather, the flaw has been in their execution. But if one were to pick a single point from the executive summary and shout it out from Victoria to St. John's, it is the need for data collection and communication. The CTA has been working closely with IBC to develop a trucking incident report to fill out and send to its members.

"The incident report is being circulated to provincial trucking associations. They are soliciting feedback to see if carriers will use it. Over time we will start to see where thefts originate, where recoveries happen, the value of loads, what was recovered, how was the crime initiated. This will assist CTA in getting more law enforcement resources dedicated to cargo crime," Fox explains.

Robertson adds, "Trucking associations and members like the idea that

we are separate and apart from the insurance companies. We are independent and non-profit. We are not collecting information for resale. The sole purpose of collecting this cargo theft data is analysis. This has been lacking for a very long time."

Good data will build a case to take to government. Also critical is rapid reporting by victims.

"If we can get this data and get a bulletin out immediately and police can go search this system 24/7 and the police are preparing a warrant... this would be a good starting point," Robertson says.

Referring to one theft data collection project in Ontario, Robertson notes, "In the first six weeks collecting data in the Golden Horseshoe, three patterns emerged immediately. We were able to develop one into a successful police project immediately."

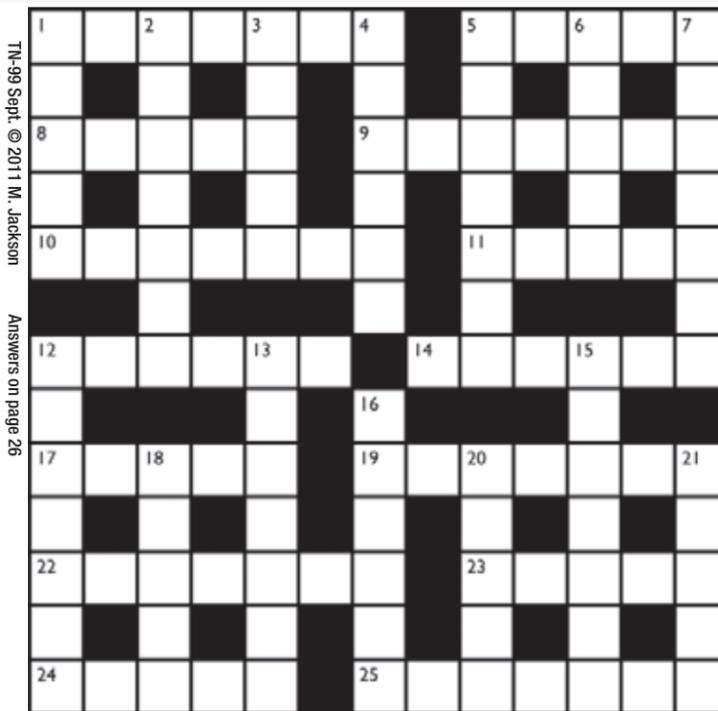
There is another, underutilized resource that can be tapped to aid in the rapid reporting and broadcasting of cargo crimes committed or being plotted: the millions of eyes and ears out there.

"Discussions are ongoing with Crime Stoppers groups," Robertson says. "The problem so far is, 'who do I call? Whom do I report a theft to?'" There is also Twitter, Facebook...

This enthusiasm has the ring of 'deja vu all over again,' to borrow from Yogi Berra, but Robertson insists that this time it is different.

"All the participants in this study are very keen to follow through on this. Everyone has said from day one that we have to collaborate, and they mean it." Fox adds, "There has never before been this level of interest." □

THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Across

- 1. Driver's pre-hiring exam
- 5. Radar's laser-based cousin
- 8. Watercraft on four-wheeler's roof
- 9. Trucking-company type (3,4)
- 10. Key-activated item
- 11. Rolls' car-building partner
- 12. Turn the steering wheel abruptly
- 14. Traffic tie-ups, colloquially
- 17. It's nicknamed Rubber City
- 19. Driver's assistant, slangily
- 22. Well-known rink-rig brand
- 23. TCH egress opportunities
- 24. Chopper backrest, a.k.a. ___ bar
- 25. City feature, rapid ___ system

Down

- 1. Bulldogs
- 2. Cargo protection or support material
- 3. Highway hill's top
- 4. Gear-shifting devices
- 5. Coast-to-coast trip, you might say (4,3)
- 6. Photogenic "Dukes of Hazzard" Jeep driver
- 7. Frozen-fish trailers
- 12. Poem parts and defunct Nissans
- 13. Straight-job type, perhaps (3,4)
- 15. Truck-stop offering
- 16. Volvo auto-manual transmission (1,5)
- 18. Interstate entrances and exits
- 20. Workplace for 22-Across vehicle
- 21. Trip-odometer pushbutton

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It's a Guys thing



How being there for a single customer has helped a small Alberta trucking company achieve success

By Jim Bray

RED DEER, Alta. – To succeed in business, sometimes you don't need to build a better mousetrap. Sometimes you just have to find a niche and serve it faithfully and professionally.

That's the lesson one can take from Red Deer, Alta.'s Guys Freightways, a small company that has been serving its niche successfully since 1975.

Not that the "Guys guys" haven't dabbled in other things but, according to Todd Schwartz, co-owner and son of Guys' founder Bernie Schwartz, they've stayed true to their roots for the most part and it has worked out well.

"We're super busy – spring and fall are our busiest times," says Schwartz during an early April interview with *Truck West*. Most of Guys' business comes from a long-term marriage of convenience: they have delivering product for Peavey Mart ("Hardware and a whole lot more"), a gig Schwartz says began before there even was a Guys Freightways.

"We do a little bit of other work here and there on the side," Schwartz says, "but mostly we work just for them now. Dad started there with one truck and they just kept growing – and so did we. You don't get many relationships like that."

As for Guys Freightways itself, Schwartz says, "Dad drove for Duckering's Transport back in the day and they hauled for Peavey Mart."

The chain had fewer links back

then, though, a mere seven small stores.

"And so you'd be feeding three, four stores on one trailer and you make one loop and you almost deliver to them all," Schwartz recalls. The elder Schwartz eventually took over the account and bought his own truck with which to service it as an owner/operator for Duckering's, Todd Schwartz says. "And then Duckering's said basically that since he was doing it all anyways, why didn't he just take it over? So he did and it kind of grew from there."

Today, Guys has about 15 trucks and delivers to 30 Peavey Mart stores in the four western provinces.

"They keep growing and we've kept growing," Schwartz reports with satisfaction.

Guys moved to its current location near the western edge of Red Deer in 1980, a handy spot just off the Queen Elizabeth II highway. It may or may not be a coincidence that it's also a stone's throw away from the local dealership of his preferred truck marque.

"I'm a Peterbilt fan," Schwartz admits. "We've tried others throughout the years; Dad started with White Western Star in 1975, then went into Macks and we stayed with them for quite a while. Then we went into having all Peterbilts and then Freightliner and Kenworth and now we're back to Peterbilt."

And while it definitely doesn't hurt

that the dealership is "just across the street now – it's really quick to get parts," Schwartz admits it's really more a matter of personal preference. "It's the style – kind of that old school style, classic look. We've tried the Aerodynes, sloped hoods, and sure, there are benefits in fuel and that kind of stuff – but we've found that with Peterbilts the best thing is their resale value; it almost makes up for the fuel costs, so you might as well drive something that you like."

Schwartz says his favourite is the Peterbilt 389, though "when it comes down to it, a truck's a truck so it's more just a personal preference with what you're comfortable with. And of course the dealer has a lot to do with it and Peterbilt's been excellent to us."

Guys flips the trucks about every three years, to keep the fleet fresh and to help give the people to whom they sell the Peterbilts a break.

"We take them up to 650,000-750,000 kilometres for the three years," Schwartz says, "then sell them privately. It gives the next buyer a little bit of warranty and we can pay cash for the new trucks. I usually have my trucks almost pre-sold before the new ones show up."

Guys hasn't tried Paccar's MX engine yet, and probably won't.

"I have two new trucks coming and I've debated it," Schwartz says. "But I mostly pull tandem weights so I really don't need high horsepower or heavy spec's."

He spec's his trucks higher than he needs to, though, "because as soon as you put them up for sale the first thing they want is 18 speeds and all that kind of stuff. We don't need that but it's what everybody wants, so that's how we spec' them."

Guys doesn't really do a lot to minimize fuel costs or increase aerodynamics, either. "It doesn't seem to make much difference for what we do," Schwartz says. "Sometimes I wonder how much of it's for show – you know, you put all these big fairings or skirts underneath the trailer. Maybe if you're one of the big guys – like a Bison – if you can save 2%, that would be huge. But 2% on 10 trucks, really by the time you buy all that stuff the savings probably aren't there."

They do try to keep their idling down, however, and "I've got engine and bunk heaters in all of the trucks" Schwartz says. "And we watch where we fuel up to keep an eye on pricing because that's a huge expense right now, a real killer."

Schwartz, the younger, came into the industry right out of high school.

"I started in the shop and kind of worked my way up," he says. "I got my heavy-duty ticket right away and then I drove for three or four years straight and gradually got more into dispatching and helping to keep everything rolling."

And while one might expect some interesting times when working with



NICE IRON: While Todd Schwartz calls himself a Pete guy, he's added a couple International LoneStars to the fleet, which don't look out of place among the Pete 389s.

your father, Schwartz says there have actually been very few conflicts.

"We've been really good, actually, and probably over the last 10 years or so, (Bernie)'s gotten more and more out of it and I've been doing more of everything. It's actually worked well."

He puts it down to the fact that he didn't try to reinvent the wheel. "I think a lot like him and I didn't try to come in and try to change a whole bunch," he says.

It seems to have worked: the company has flourished even in these difficult times.

"We've been pretty lucky," Todd Schwartz says. "I think over the last 30-plus years we've only had to put an ad out for drivers once. For a lot of years we had stacks of resumes and guys pretty well lining up to work here."

Times were a little tougher during the oilfield boom of the mid 2000s, though, and it was during those years that they had to place the ad.

"The oilfield would just scoop them up," Schwartz remembers. "We're just freight haulers. We can't compete against the oil patch."

They've also had to look at their standards in order to ensure a steady flow of new blood.

"We used to have fairly high criteria," he says. "We wanted guys with at least five years' driving experience, and since we used to haul pork from Red Deer to Vancouver we always wanted guys with mountain experience. With the driver shortage now,

though, it's tough to ask for five years plus the extra. But drivers seem to always want to come here. It's kind of a nice feeling when someone wants to come and work for you."

And while drivers still heed the call of the wild goose, moving on for whatever reasons, Schwartz says they don't have a lot of turnover – and it's even rarer that Guys has to show someone the door.

"I've only had to fire two guys personally, and over the company's 30 years I think we've only had to let go maybe 10 or 12. We've always had a good group. It's tougher to find guys now, but the group I've got has been really good."

This stability means he hasn't had to mentor a lot of young drivers, either, though he admits that may be in part because there just aren't that many of them in the first place.

"It doesn't seem like there's a big group of young guys coming into trucking as there was once was. It's easier to find guys that are 35 to 45 years old, especially here in central Alberta."

Schwartz says the people who approach Guys generally have already been out there for a while, "and maybe the oil field isn't as fun as they'd hoped. Sure, there's some big money, but you really have to work for it. It's not the cleanest work out there, either, whereas here it's relatively clean, there's no chaining up or anything like that."

The Guys guy has some damning words for today's trucks – or perhaps it's for the bureaucrats who've forced changes on today's trucks.

"Ever since 2008, the new emission trucks have given us the biggest challenge we've had in a long time," he says. "They just don't run like they used to." Schwartz says he's had more breakdowns and has probably towed more trucks in the last three years than over the history of the company.

"A lot of it's related to the emissions stuff," he notes. "The motors are fine. If you could take off the stuff that's causing the grief and just have the motor there, the thing'll run."

Schwartz tells of an associate who hauls fuel: "He's bought a couple of my used trucks," he says, "and is looking for another spare because, it's sad to say, we have to keep one or two spare trucks around just for breakdowns. And he has noticed the same thing, he's actually bought an old winch truck and a flatbed just for hauling his own trucks because there's so much breaking down. It's the same problems we're having. It's stupid when you have to buy your own tow truck."

It isn't only the breakdowns, of course; it's the time lost. "In years past, some trucks would be out of service for maybe a day, but I've had trucks over at Peterbilt for three weeks, and it's all to do with this emissions stuff. It's an ongoing issue. I probably have a truck in there at least once a week on average with some kind of sensor gone or something with the electronics."

This unfortunate fact of business life today makes him glad he hung onto a couple of pre-emission models to use as spares, and he's not letting them go.

"I know they'll run," he says, adding with a laugh "I should've quit buying trucks in 2007!"

He also bemoans a kind of "just in

time" philosophy with dealers today that he says leads to parts not being stocked locally.

"There's a main warehouse in Edmonton," he says, "so why would (the dealer here) carry a part when he can have it the next day? But I wish the dealers would recognize that we make money only if the trucks roll and the quicker you get back on the road, the better."

Schwartz thinks the situation will only get worse, with new regulations coming.

"I think it's going to be quite interesting in the next five or 10 years," he says. "I have a feeling that they'll quit making the trucks I like, that if they ever get those regulations in where you have to get a certain fuel mileage and all that kind of stuff, I don't think you'll get it from the trucks with the classic look."

To hear him tell it, the whole regulatory exercise has been going after the wrong villain in the first place.

"I think instead of doing all this emissions stuff, right off the bat we should have gone for fuel mileage. I could never quite figure that out." Schwartz says his new trucks actually get worse fuel mileage than the old ones, as well as having shorter intervals between oil changes, "So we're burning more fuel, using more oil – it doesn't make sense. Why don't they get technology going so the truck makes 15 miles per gallon instead of seven? To me, that's saving. But there's a big oil company somewhere that doesn't want to see that."

Schwartz is also not a fan of Electronic On-Board Recorders (EOBRs) and other technologies that are meant to monitor drivers.

"It's getting a little bit much," he says, noting that the establishment always seems to pick on the big trucks.

"I don't know what their theory is. Maybe we're just easier to pick on. You have a snowstorm and there's an accident on the highway – they sure like to say that a semi ran over the car, but nothing about the fact the car may have swerved into the semi in the first place. It goes both ways."

He also doesn't look forward to the extra expense EOBRs and the like will add to his operating costs – unnecessarily, in his opinion.

"Right now, I've got a \$20 cell phone in each truck and I can run my 15 trucks like that." He admits that his smaller fleet has it easier than some companies, however, because "We're only dealing with a few customers, where some of these guys have 15 different customers on one trailer and are doing drops and pickups and that kind of stuff."

Challenges aside, it appears that Schwartz wouldn't have it any other way. "Sure we're not the Bison-type of company, but we have 15 trucks, which is still a few – and there are some days you wish you only had one – but it's nice to see them all lined up and clean, to have a good little company that runs well and is well thought of."

When asked if he has any advice for a young up and comer who

wants to get into the business, Todd Schwartz laughs and says: "I've got one for sale!" Trucking is still a good industry, he notes, but it's also a tough one. "I get guys that look at us and think it must be very lucrative, but we got where we are because the business is 30 years old and we've just built it gradually. Dad wasn't buying chromed up Peterbilts back in '75, he was driving a truck himself and trying to make ends meet just like everyone else."

In other words, he says, "Go in slow, keep your overhead down."

Schwartz intends to continue going slowly, expanding as his market dictates while enjoying life as he does it. That doesn't mean they haven't branched out in the past, however. At one time, the company had lease operators and 30 reefer trailers, but Schwartz likes it better now.

"Sometimes bigger isn't always better," he says. "Sure, we had 30 trucks and 60 trailers, but we had three more mechanics, more people in the office, and I'm not sure we were further ahead. It depends on what you want from life."

Besides, as long as Peavey Mart keeps growing, Guys Freightways will keep growing with it.

"It seems like we add a truck every three years or so as they grow," Schwartz says. "In the meantime, everything just keeps rolling, and keeps us steady and busy and trying to enjoy what we have."

Schwartz says the secret to Guys Freightways' success – besides keeping its expectations manageable – is a reputation for honesty and punctuality.

"Customers like dealing with us because if I say we'll pick up a load on Thursday morning that's when I'm going to pick it up. I think a lot of



companies out there say they'll take the load on Thursday not knowing if they'll even have a truck available then, because they don't want to turn stuff down. We've always just gone on the honesty and just hard work, to do the job."

Schwartz notes proudly that the company has never missed a load in 30 years.

"We've even had the odd wreck and still never missed a load – it got delivered that day." So they promote themselves on punctuality and giving good service and good hard work, "Which today is sometimes in short supply."

It may sound like an old-fashioned way to work, but for Guys Freightways it's a formula that works. "We have a good relationship with the people we haul for," Schwartz says. "They're still that old-school, handshake kind of deal and that's how we've always been too." □

LIVESTOCK

Road hogs

Hog haulers have role to play in new supply chain security program

By Jim Bray

CALGARY, Alta. – There are road hogs, and there are roads that carry hogs. And before long, roads that carry hogs will require the use of a new tracking and reporting system to help ensure the health of the nation's meat supply.

And while this probably won't have a huge impact on the transportation industry over how it works already, one of the people involved in creating the new program thinks the pending changes could offer trucking companies new opportunities to better service their customers.

The program is called PigTrace and, according to Jeff Clark, Canadian Pork Council traceability manager, the idea first and foremost is to help ensure – and expedite – food safety.

"It relates to animal health issues and our responses to foreign animal disease and/or food safety issues, food recall, things of that nature," he explains. "And while we're really just looking at live animal movements, we're trying to structure it so food processors can trace food back right to the originating farm."

According to *Portage Online*, the program will require hog movements to be reported within 48 hours and make Canada the first country with a national swine traceability system.

Clark says the program has been under development since 2003, but they're finally getting close to rolling it out – though it may take another year for all the i's to be dotted and t's crossed. When that happens, however, the new database and reporting methodologies should help ensure not only the health of the supply chain, but also the quick tracking of any unhealthy animals that may be discovered.

The idea was born after what Clark refers to as a recent history of food recalls that were expensive for everyone involved, mainly because movement tracking documentation wasn't easily accessible to those who needed it.

"Instead of doing a narrow trace back that limits the amount of product recalled," Clark says, "the recalls have been quite broad because the knowledge of exactly what products might be contaminated or diseased isn't there."

Clark says one such high-profile incident was an outbreak of BSE in Europe, the well-publicized 'Mad Cow Disease,' which he says was devastating not only to the European agricultural economy but the overall economy as well – including tourism and all the agriculture support systems. He says PigTrace program developers are using such incidents as learning opportunities. One ailment the PigTrace program targets is foot and mouth disease, which Clark says represents their worst-case scenario. "It's highly contagious," he says, "it's got a high mortality rate and it can spread be-

tween species – so it can go from cattle to goats to hogs to sheep, all cloven-hoofed animals."

Clark also cites what he calls "foreign animal diseases" that aren't in Canada currently, but which could affect Canadian agriculture drastically if they do show up – diseases such as the highly contagious avian influenza, outbreaks of which cropped up in the Fraser Valley in years past and, more recently, in Saskatchewan.

There are also "production-based diseases" which Clark says aren't necessarily reportable but which can still cause a lot of financial losses. "So we can see the benefits in getting on top of an investigation and trying get the disease out of the producers' herds."

The new reporting regime should be a big step forward from the system in place before PigTrace where, Clark says, "You might locate a farm where you have some diseased animals, so you quarantine them or you euthanize them – but you also need to find out where else the animals from that farm may have gone."

The PigTrace program is trying to consolidate all the movement information and will be accompanied by regulatory changes under the federal Health of Animals Act administered by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. "There are proposed amendments to include swine," Clark says, noting that while there is limited coverage in the rules that cover cattle, bison and sheep (mostly for identification using ear tags), "we're really the first commodity to start looking at the laws for farm-to-farm movement."

Clark envisions the system as a way to help ensure the markets that buy Canadian pork – and other hoofed animals, eventually – can be confident they're getting a safe, quality product.

And while safety is the prime motivation, Clark says the PigTrace program could also give Canadian meat a competitive advantage around the world. "There's certainly interest in international markets," he says, "so once we're set up and proficient I think it'll give us an edge in the international marketplace as well."

PigTrace infrastructure is already in place and is basically just waiting for the new regulations to come into effect. "People can access our database on the Web, via peripheral devices like mobile phones, or with their own software," Clark says, noting they've also created the ability to capture additional information above and beyond what's actually required by the program, to enhance producers' business interests. "They can create an online account and see all their business transactions there should they want to."

So, what does all this have to do with the trucking industry?

Clark sees it as an opportunity for transporters to offer a value-added service to their customers. He claims to have talked to some truckers who "keep very good information on the movements they're doing, so it's very conceivable that a transport firm could report movement information on a producer's behalf."

The regulations allow such reporting to be deferred to a third party – such as a trucker – Clark says, so "whether that's a fee-for-service or whatever, we've built (the system) to allow it and if a trucking firm wants to take advantage I certainly encourage them to do so. We'd be willing to help make that happen as much as possible, too."

It doesn't sound like it'll be particularly onerous for the trucker, either. "The vast majority of our movements are called group movements," Clark says, "so there are no identifiers on the individual animals. All we really care about is knowing where a movement originated, where it ended up, how many pigs are on the truck and its licence plate."

While the authorities may not know the specific animals involved, they will know that if, for example, a shipment originated at two specific farms and one farm's animals are infected, the disease was probably carried to the other farm on

that particular movement as well.

The bottom line is that the PigTrace program will bring about added efficiencies while helping to ensure food safety, Clark says. As for the transportation industry requirements, Clark says a document with the base movement fields filled out will be required to accompany a load, though he also says most truckers are doing that already. If it isn't a big deal for truckers, then, why are the PigTrace people bothering trumpeting their plans to the industry? Basically, Clark says, they just want the truckers to know what's happening, to be in the loop.

"We want them to be informed and we will be making every effort to let them know it's happening when the time is right," Clark says. "They should know it will be a requirement for their customers and that there's potentially an opportunity for transportation firms to report that information on behalf of their customers." □

FLEET NEWS

Yanke to become major tenant at Regina's Global Transportation Hub

REGINA, Sask. – The Global Transportation Hub in Regina got a shot in the arm this week, with Yanke Group of Companies breaking ground on a 40-acre transportation and logistics centre.

Yanke is the first trucking firm to commit to the project and also the first homegrown Saskatchewan company to build there.

Yanke CEO Russell Marcoux took part in a groundbreaking ceremony earlier this week to announce the beginning of a three-stage development in partnership with the City of Regina. The development will see Yanke and its affiliate AFI Distribution Group spend up to \$20 million to establish a presence at the hub. It expects to ship 400-500 loads per week in and out of the hub.

"Our concept plan for this site involves expansion, the development of new service offerings and greater efficiencies for each of our operating entities," Marcoux said. "The potential and the infrastructure are a great fit for our operations as the major anchor tenants of the GTH have long-standing relationships with Yanke."

"The addition of the Yanke

Group of Companies to the GTH is another major step forward for what is clearly one of the most important economic development initiatives in Saskatchewan," added Wayne Elhard, chair of the Global Transportation Hub. "The GTH has the opportunity to be a recognized, world class template for cooperation, participation and efficient operation of multiple transportation modes and we are pleased to welcome Yanke as a partner."

Canadian Pacific and Canadian Logistics Services have already committed to the hub, which sits on 2,000 acres.

Yanke says it will build a yard for its intermodal and over-the-road operations, while expanding AFI's services including refrigerated warehousing and transportation. Yanke also plans to build a storage yard for containers to provide a ready, fluid supply for shippers. Additions could include a transload bulk or bagged operation to facilitate the movement of commodities from Saskatchewan as well as a refrigerated warehouse for current customers, Yanke announced. □

Energy company buys oilfield trucking firm

CALGARY, Alta. – Provident Energy has taken ownership of two-thirds of oilfield hauling fleet Three Star Trucking in a deal worth about \$20 million.

Three Star Trucking is based in Alida, Sask. and operates in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and North Dakota hauling crude oil and other oilfield-related liquids.

"The acquisition of this two-thirds interest in Three Star expands Provident's logistics footprint in the Bakken area, one of the most exciting resource plays in North America, and creates a strong partnership with a highly regarded and growing player in the industry," announced Doug Haughey, president and CEO of Provident Energy.

Three Star Trucking operates 170 tractors and 160 trailers. Provident said the acquisition will also allow it to expand its NGL and diluent logistics services businesses.

The deal is expected to close on or before Oct. 1, and Provident has the option of buying the remainder of the company after three years. □

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SAFETY

Six steps to address the challenges spotted in CSA warning letters

Now that CSA data is being used to measure fleets and drivers who travel US highways, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration is preparing to deliver the first 50,000 warning letters to those who are already approaching (or passing) a number of related thresholds.

The content will obviously vary from one envelope to the next. Some documents will come in the form of a basic warning, a call for a corrective action plan, the news of an on-site review or various steps in between. But every letter will still share one thing in common.

They will all tell stories about safety-related challenges.

A tool that has become known as the Safety Management Cycle is one of the keys to tackling any of the challenges that emerge, or even creating a safety program from scratch. A careful look at each step in this cycle can identify unwanted gaps in policies and



Ask the Expert

DAVE ROTH

procedures, and spot a number of underlying issues along the way.

Policies and procedures

The Safety Management Cycle is built on a foundation of policies and procedures for a good reason. When combined and uniformly enforced, documented steps offer employees a step-by-step guide to follow on the job.

A well-written policy or procedure is clear and concise, making sure that everyone can understand the company's position on a particular issue or concern. Put another way, its readers will know what to do and when to do it.

Roles and responsibilities

Those who are involved in any part of a safety program need to understand what is expected of them, and how they will be held accountable for various responsibilities. For example, what happens once a driver's truck is cited for a mechanical defect? Who reports the defect, fixes the problem and documents the work? For that matter, who is responsible for learning why the defect emerged in the first place?

Qualification and hiring

As important as that understanding may be, employees need the skills to perform their individual roles. This ultimately means finding the right person for the job.

But a job's demands can also change over time, especially in an evolving industry like trucking.

Every worker – regardless of their existing experience – is expected to adapt to changing roles, industry practices and regulations. That means em-

ployees might need to be requalified to perform a number of tasks.

Consider those who monitor driver logbooks as an example. An existing safety manager may have a complete understanding of the hours-of-service rules that apply to a fleet's traditional shipments between Toronto and Montreal, yet be unaware of the different rules which apply to the team drivers who cross into the US. This will obviously present a problem if the fleet begins to deliver shipments to California.

A well-structured and documented safety program identifies the specific skills that employees need to have in their evolving roles, as well as any gaps that might exist. With that information, managers even have the tools they need when deciding whether to hire a new employee or reassign people to different tasks.

Training and communications

Regardless of the safety management program that is introduced, training in the related policies and procedures will be a key to success.

Ongoing communication with every member of the team will also help to make sure that everyone is informed about changes that are introduced along the way.

A documented training program covers every step along the way, and demonstrates due diligence when someone is asked to prove that employees had the skills to perform their roles.

Monitoring and tracking

Once a safety management program is put in place, ongoing monitoring can help to ensure ongoing success. One of the most important tools for this task will come in the form of statistics.

Details on the number and type of violations, crashes and incidents can be used to establish benchmarks and set targets, clearly defining success and setting individual milestones along the way.

That data can be collected through everything from the CSA reports to provincial safety ratings or internal fleet documents. Insurers, meanwhile, can help identify targets and the best practices that can help to make these targets a reality.

Meaningful action

As important as the structure of a safety program may be, its ultimate success will depend on meaningful action. Those committed to making goals a reality – and take the steps to make them happen – will be less likely to receive CSA's warning letters in the first place. □

– This month's expert is Dave Roth. Dave is the Ontario regional manager of safety and training services for Markel Insurance Company of Canada and has more than 20 years experience in managing safety and operations in the trucking industry. Markel Safety and Training Services, a division of Markel Insurance Company of Canada, offers specialized courses, seminars and consulting to fleet owners, safety managers, trainers and drivers. Markel is the country's largest trucking insurer providing more than 50 years of continuous service to the transportation industry.

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OPINION

Where did all the toy trucks go?

I was walking around a toy store a few days ago and something struck me: there were hardly any toy trucks for sale. In fact, apart from Bob the Builder's construction equipment and a few Transformers, there was nothing that resembled a big truck

at all. As I have written before, all I ever played with as a kid were my model trucks. My friends all had toy trucks too; not all of them wanted to become truck drivers, but they all saw a truck as a fun thing. But kids today don't get that opportunity.

Twenty years ago if you asked a classroom full of kids what they wanted to be when they grew up, a good percentage would have replied that they wanted to drive truck. Ask the same question today and the answers will be very different. Back then you would get answers based on the stuff they played with; the same applies today, but they don't play with toy trucks anymore so the idea of driving one for real never pops into their head.

This is one of the reasons we are experiencing a driver shortage again. We have no fresh new blood entering the industry, which is a big problem. As older drivers retire, we need youngsters coming in at the other end. Trucking used to be a family tradition, that's no longer the case. Children of lorry drivers see their friends' parents doing stuff with them on weekends and during holidays while they rarely see their own parents. Most drivers don't want that kind of life for their children when they grow up, so they guide them towards other careers.

This all leaves a gaping hole in the industry's recruitment pool. So, how do we fill it? We've tried immigration, with some success. I'm living proof of that, but that's not the answer, not long-term anyway. We have to make the job more attractive. More money is one way, but it's not going to fix the problem. The biggest drawback to our industry is the fact that we're away from home all the time. Most of you, like myself, will have no problems with this, but we're already in the industry. Not only are we in the industry, but we have an interest in it too, that's why you're reading this.

To attract new recruits we need to move with the times. The world is changing and we need to get up to speed before we lose what we have. You think that's not possible? Surely we're safe, right? We have legislation that protects us from American carriers moving freight within our borders. Yes we do, but when we stop being able to cope with the amount of freight that needs to be moved and

You say tomato,
I say tomahto

MARK LEE



the grocery stores have empty shelves and the factories have no raw materials to produce their goods, you can bet your bottom dollar that new laws are passed to allow the freight to be moved by anyone with 18 wheels.

I've seen this happen in Britain. We had a driver shortage; first of all we imported drivers from within Europe (mostly from the former Communist countries), we attracted them with higher wages than they could possibly earn in their homelands. This solved the problem, for a while. Then to finally fix the problem the European governments opened up the borders. The immigrant workers used their newfound wealth to buy their own trucks, register them in their own country (with much cheaper operating costs) and have now all but taken over the international transport industry in Great Britain. I spent much of my career driving international routes, but one by one all the jobs disappeared.

The pilot program for Mexican trucks to cross the US border is now in place. Anyone who has been to any of the border cities will know that there are lots of Canadian trucks down there every day. We do a lot of business with Mexico, at present it all goes as far as the southern US border on a Canadian truck, but if we have nobody to drive them, pretty soon the Mexican truck that delivers the load to the border will be crossing that border and the next border too and delivering the load in Canada. With their lower operating costs, they'll be able to take a load from Canada back down to Mexico much cheaper than we can and before you know it, that freight lane will no longer be financially viable to a Canadian carrier. We need to protect what we have; not just the Canada-Mexico lane, that's only the acorn from which a large oak tree will grow. Looking at the industry today, the only way I see that we can do that is to resolve our driver shortage problems.

Money alone will not do that, so we need to look at what the next generation of truck drivers wants from a job. More money is a priority, but it's not number one, that's more time at home.

Now it hurts me to even think about this as I love the long-haul life – I moved halfway around the world so that I could carry on trucking – but we're going to have to offer more regional jobs where drivers can do a trip in a day. It'll need to be a shorter day than 14 hours, too. We have to offer similar conditions as other industries to be able to get young people interested in joining our industry. Most people don't really care who it is delivering the food to the grocery store. They couldn't care less about which country the truck's registered in, they only care about the shelves being full. We're the only ones that care, so we have to do something about it now, before it's too late. □

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

Announcing a new member of the team



Mark Blucher, senior vice president of Insurance, is pleased to announce the appointment of Tim Courtney as vice president of Commercial Insurance.

TIM COURTNEY

VICE PRESIDENT OF COMMERCIAL INSURANCE

Mr. Courtney is a Chartered Insurance Professional with over 30 years of experience in the commercial insurance industry. He most recently served as vice president of Corporate Underwriting and Product and Service Innovations at Markel Insurance, a leading insurance company for the trucking industry. At Markel, Mr. Courtney was responsible for underwriting infrastructure and governance, as well as the development of highly customized insurance and risk management advisory solutions. His extensive experience also includes 15 years with Zurich Canada's Commercial Lines Underwriting group, with the last two years as vice president of Underwriting.

Mr. Courtney's depth of experience in product design, development and pricing for the commercial market will strengthen ICBC's approach to working with customers in this key market segment.

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GOODYEAR



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As a professional driver with over 30 years experience, and nearly four million miles under his belt, Robert St. Vincent is no stranger in the trucking industry. He's actually very well known, especially for his safe driving, excellent customer service skills and impeccable composure in any situation that may arise.

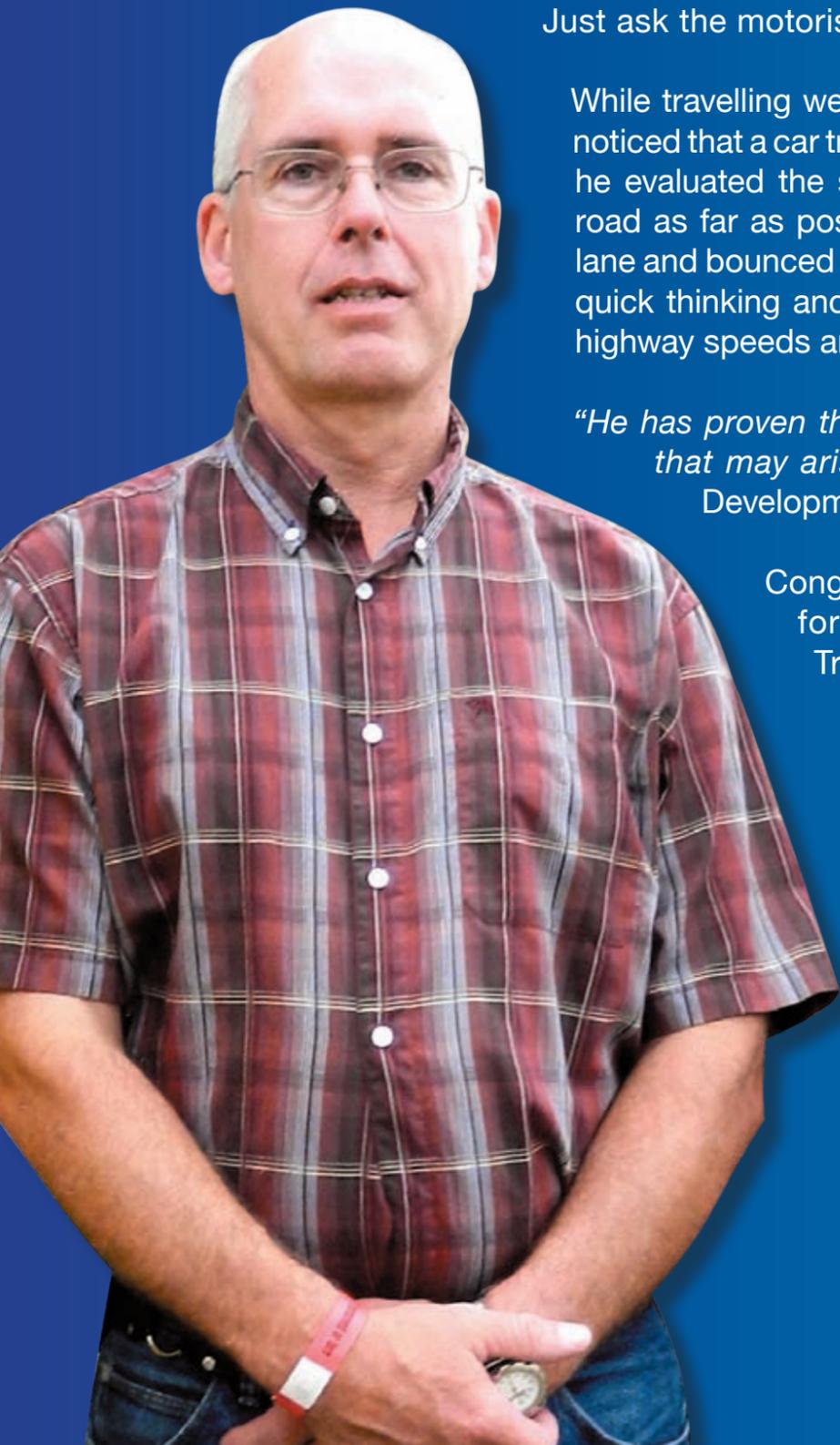
Just ask the motorist whose life he saved on that snowy day in 2008.

While travelling west along Hwy 17 near Steep Rock, Ontario, Robert noticed that a car travelling towards him was losing control. Immediately he evaluated the situation at hand, slowed down and pulled off the road as far as possible. Sure enough, the car travelled into Robert's lane and bounced off his truck, sending it into the ditch. It was Robert's quick thinking and fast actions that prevented a head on collision at highway speeds and saved that motorist's life that day.

"He has proven that when on the road, he can handle any situation that may arise." – Garth Pitzel, Director of Safety and Driver Development, Bison Transport.

Congratulations Robert, on winning yet another award for your remarkable service in the industry. Bison Transport is lucky to have you on their team.

**FROM ALL OF US AT GOODYEAR,
THANKS FOR RAISING THE BAR, ROBERT.**



CANADA

Manitoba 0/0 drives like there are eggs under the pedal

Continued from page 1

loved being in that truck,” St. Vincent recalled. His aspirations, however, involved bigger trucks and far-off places. As a teenager, St. Vincent got a job driving a parts truck around Winnipeg and he began volunteering at TransX – then a fledgling long-haul trucking firm – shuttling trailers around the yard to gain experience.

“They had trailers coming in off the rail line that needed to be manoeuvred around the yard and backed into the dock. I did it for free just to get experience handling the trucks,” St. Vincent said. “That’s what it was like then. There weren’t many schools so you worked for free to get experience. Guys now wouldn’t even think of doing that for free, but I wanted it and that’s what you had to do at the time.”

Soon, St. Vincent was riding along with tractor-trailer drivers on local runs to “get used to the highway.” With his Class 1 licence in hand, St. Vincent’s enthusiasm paid off in a trucking job with TransX, first driving a straight truck between Winnipeg and Brandon and later graduating to the trickier job of hauling freight aboard triple pups. His route involved 30-40 deliveries per day, requiring some strategic loading on his part.

“You had to load them in a certain way so when I’d do my deliveries, I’d make a big circle,” St. Vincent recalled. “I learned the hard way. I don’t now how many times I went past the Brandon Mall because the freight wasn’t in the right place. Some stores didn’t open until later in the day, so you’d keep that stuff in the nose of the truck.”

St. Vincent’s ability to load the pups properly and maximize the efficiency of his route often had him finished his deliveries by lunchtime. Having cut his teeth



CLASSIC: Who says a classic-styled truck can’t be fuel-efficient? St. Vincent averages over 8 mpg with his Pete 379.

on local runs, the call of the open road was growing louder and St. Vincent’s penchant for operating as efficiently as possible had him dreaming of buying his own truck.

St. Vincent’s introduction to the long-haul trucking world – and his eventual opportunity to become an owner/operator – came when he went to work for a local grain hauler, a “pretty shady character” who ran a handful of trucks and was forever struggling to pay the bills. But at the age of 19, St. Vincent saw only an opportunity to truck beyond the Manitoba border and even to sneak into the US to make the odd delivery even though he was too young

to do so legally.

“I wasn’t supposed to be down there, but as long as you did the job and didn’t do anything crazy, nobody bothered you back then,” St. Vincent recalled. As it turned out, the owner’s financial problems provided the impetus for St. Vincent to buy his first truck.

“He said ‘If you want to stay working, you have to buy this truck that you’re driving.’ So that’s what I did,” St. Vincent said. “The bank right away said ‘No way, we’re not lending you the money.’ I had no money but my dad had good credit, so we went to the bank and he got the money for me and it started from there.”

St. Vincent had already grown attached to the truck that was now his own; a 1978 Ford Louisville that was five years old at the time.

“That was my pride and joy,” he said. St. Vincent got to know the local parts dealers and they lent him the tools he needed to maintain and repair the Louisville. St. Vincent grew wary of some of the business practices he was witnessing at his current workplace, and took his truck back to TransX. As the Ford Louisville became older and less reliable, TransX convinced St. Vincent to drive one of their company trucks.

“I did that for five years, but I always had the itch to get back

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as an owner/operator,” St. Vincent said. “My dad said I was crazy. He said ‘These guys are giving you a new truck every three years, you’re making lots of money. Why do you want to own a truck?’ I said ‘Because I wanna.’ That’s trucking to me: owning it and working on it.”

In those early days as an owner/operator, the draw for St. Vincent was the call of the open road and the opportunity to explore the continent. Now that he’s been pretty much everywhere, the appeal of the job is as strong as it ever was, but now it’s fueled more by the challenges of operating his own business as efficiently as possible.

“Back when I first got into it, travelling all around North America was the appeal. Trucking was fun then. You moved around, went to different areas, saw different stuff,” said St. Vincent. “Now what interests me is the challenges of the business; how can I better myself? How can I be more profitable and how can I make more and do less? How can I run this thing smarter?”

Today, St. Vincent has a 2006 Peterbilt Model 379 leased to Bison Transport, running a regular route from Winnipeg to either Chicago or Green Bay where he drops a load and picks up another for Mississauga or London, Ont. From there it’s back home to Winnipeg and nearby St. Malo, Man., where he lives with his wife Lori and their dog and cat. Lori swears the couple’s dog can identify the sound of St. Vincent’s truck; his ears perk up before the white Pete appears on the horizon and the dog eagerly greets Robert to see what goodies are left over in the cooler. Lori runs a craft shop in St. Malo; an owner/operator of another sort.

“She’s my accountant,” Robert said of his wife. “She’s good with numbers, she’s good with books and she does the taxes.”

“But he has the business sense,” Lori interjected. “He can think things through.”

St. Vincent’s current rig – a classic-styled, long-nose Peterbilt – may seem a contradiction for a business-savvy O/O who is constantly seeking ways to operate more efficiently. It’s a knock he’s heard before.

“I guess, from a business aspect where you can make the most money is fuel mileage, and some guys will say to me ‘Look what kind of truck you’re driving, you can put more money in your pocket if you’re running more aerodynamic,’” St. Vincent admitted. “I’ve taken this 379 Pete and done everything I could do to it to get the best fuel mileage out of it.”

Some of his upgrades include low rolling resistance tires and an air deflector on the roof of the cab. But most of St. Vincent’s attention goes to how he operates the truck.

“You drive it like you’ve got a dozen eggs underneath the pedal and if you break one, it’s going to take you the rest of the day to clean it up,” St. Vincent reasoned. “It’s all in how you drive; slow down before you have to, read the traffic, take your time.”



SPONSOR SUPPORT: Robert St. Vincent and wife Lori are congratulated by sponsors (from left): Brad Houle, Goodyear; J.P. Soucie, Castrol; and Mark Laine, Mack Trucks.

St. Vincent’s top speed is 95 km/h – below Bison’s corporate max of 100 km/h – and he’ll run even slower if his schedule permits. Taking it slow has paid big dividends; St. Vincent averages over 8 mpg (Canadian) and is routinely among the top fuel efficiency achievers at Bison. He has even gotten better than 9 mpg with a

head. “I know what it takes to be profitable, I know what I need for tire life. I know what I need for fuel mileage.”

However, he attributes much of his success to Bison Transport, the carrier he’s been leased to for 11 years.

“My success is due to Bison,” he insisted. “Not all of it, of course.

‘You drive it like you’ve got a dozen eggs underneath the pedal and if you break one, it’s going to take you the rest of the day to clean it up.’

Robert St. Vincent, O/O of the Year

light load and a tailwind.

The benefits of running slow don’t end with fuel savings either. St. Vincent said he recently got 800,000 kms out of a set of drive tires, driving his tire costs down to less than a cent per mile.

He’s convinced he could’ve gotten another 100,000 kms out of them but he wanted to pull them while there was still some value in the casings.

While the casings were okay, St. Vincent didn’t get anything for them because the tires had been on his truck so long the sidewalls had become weatherworn.

St. Vincent tracks his costs “up here,” he said, gesturing to his

But they’re a solid company. I’m still waiting for the honeymoon to end, but it’s been going full-on for over 10 years now.”

At just 49 years of age, St. Vincent has already accumulated a careers’ worth of experience: 30 years of professional driving and nearly four million miles. He was involved in an accident in November 2008, but police say it was his quick reaction that kept it from being fatal. St. Vincent was headed westbound near Steep Rock, Ont. in blustery weather when an oncoming Ford Bronco shot into his lane. St. Vincent instinctively slowed down and pulled his truck over to the shoulder as far as he



TEAM AWARD: Robert’s wife Lori is an O/O of another sort, running a craft shop in St. Malo, Man.

could go.

The Jeep smacked the truck hard and sent it into the ditch, injuring both the Jeep’s occupants, but police said St. Vincent’s attentiveness and quick reaction prevented the accident from being a fatal head-on collision. St. Vincent shrugged off any suggestion that his driving was heroic.

“Nobody knows,” he said matter-of-factly. “And I don’t want to know. When I was told that ‘Thanks to you she didn’t get killed,’ the first thing I said was ‘You don’t know that. She doesn’t know that.’ You’ve read of people getting killed in stupider accidents than that. It gets back to the big guy upstairs was looking out for us. I’ve played it a million different ways in my head and I’m just happy it played out as it did. Fortunately, she’s not dead. I don’t know what would have happened to me if she would be. That was a night I’ll never forget and I hope nobody will ever have to experience.”

When the snow settled following the collision, both the driver and her passenger had survived, but St. Vincent’s beloved Pete 379 was a write-off. Or so it appeared. The steering was broken and the front end torn up. But as one of the last of Peterbilt’s legendary 379s, St. Vincent wasn’t eager to let it go, and so he pleaded with Peterbilt Manitoba to repair the truck.

“They said ‘We’ll fix it to better than it was – guaranteed,’ and they did,” St. Vincent said. The truck was down for two months and St. Vincent took the opportunity to reenergize himself over the Christmas season. When he and the truck were ready to return to work, Bison asked him if he wanted to return to his old route? St. Vincent said “I’ve got to face the music sooner or later,” and he resumed his regular run that took him through northern Ontario and past the scene of the accident. That fateful night aside, St. Vincent said he enjoys the challenge of running Ontario’s north.

“It’ll put a driver to the test,” he said. “They’re not long hills, but steeper than what you’d see on the Trans-Canada Highway in B.C. It keeps you on your toes, but then again, it’s just part of the business.”

What’s next for St. Vincent? He plans to keep running his current truck as long as he can but he does see another truck in his future. He recently built a shop in his yard to house the truck during his downtime. He has no ambitions to add a second truck however.

“I’m an owner/operator,” he said emphatically. “I own it and I drive it.”

As Owner/Operator of the Year, St. Vincent won \$3,000 cash, a vacation for two valued at up to \$2,500, an all-expenses-paid trip for him and Lori to the Fergus Truck Show, a diamond ring and an assortment of prizes from the award’s sponsors.

The *Truck News/Truck West* Owner/Operator of the Year award is sponsored by Castrol, Goodyear and Mack Trucks. □

ROAD TEST

BUCKKING the trend



In an era of slippery trucks, the T800 stays true to its roots

By James Menzies

CHILLICOTHE, Ohio – If it ain't broke, don't fix it. That seems to be the mantra for Kenworth as far as its long running T800 is concerned.

This is a significant year for the T8. Introduced in 1986 – one year after the sloped hood T600 shook up the trucking world – the T8 is celebrating its 25th birthday. To date, 235,000 T800s have been sold; enough to stretch 2,080 kilometres when parked bumper to bumper. More remarkably, Kenworth officials estimate about 80% of them are still on the road.

“The only thing that takes it off the road is a major accident and that's one of the reasons we have such a high resale value on it; even the second, third and fourth owner of that vehicle is going to make money on it,” said Alan Fennimore, vocational marketing manager with Kenworth. He boasts the T800 lasts, on average, twice as long as its competitors and says it's not difficult to find a buyer for a T8 with 750,000 to a million miles on the odometer.

The T800 is not a spectacular looking truck. It's easy to forget just how prominent it is on Canadian roads, as it blends into the traffic landscape. But start looking for them, and they are everywhere, dressed up in all types of funky configurations.

In an era where truck design engineers collectively rack their brains to squeeze fractional improvements in fuel economy out of new and existing models, the T800 has remained refreshingly consistent since its debut. It could be said the T800 was actually ahead of its time when it was first introduced with a sloped hood that earned the T8 and its highway cousin the T600 such unflattering nicknames as “Anteater” and “Ditchsniffer.”

But in the mid-80s, truckers were beginning to take notice of rising fuel prices and it took very little time for them to warm up to the new look when it meant fuel savings of up to 22% compared to flat-nosed models such as the iconic W900.

Since their introductions, the T600 received continuous updates in pursuit of greater fuel economy until it was eventually replaced by today's T660 in 2007. By contrast, the T800 has stayed true to its roots with an exterior that has remained largely untouched over the years.

You can't get an EPA SmartWay version of the T800. It's not available with chassis fairings, which pretty much rules it out for SmartWay consideration.

There's something laudable about that; can't a truck just be a truck anymore?

But that's not to say the T8 is a fuel pig. As already mentioned, it was ahead of the curve with its sloped hood and there are a wide range of options – low rolling resistance tires, for one – that can contribute to respectable fuel mileage.

What has happened in recent years is there has been an unmistakable divergence between the T600/T660 and the T800, driven more by fuel economy than by personal preference.

Built on the same chassis, there was a time when in on-highway applications, either model would do. With the cost of fuel today, however, the aerodynamic advantages of the T660 are too great to ignore. This has caused the T800 to revert back to its roots as a true vocational truck, and that suits its maker fine.

“A lot of customers that in the past would buy a T800 are now going for a T660, so it's going back to its original heritage which is vocational,” Fennimore said. “Vocational customers are less concerned with fuel economy and more concerned with durability and ruggedness.”

While no one will deny the importance of fuel economy, which is inextricably tied to aerodynamics, other factors are equally important, especially to vocational customers. Chief among them are visibility and maneuverability, and the T800 with its sloped hood and set-back front axle delivers both. It could be argued that no other vocational truck offers better forward visibility. But it's probably the truck's legendary durability that has won it so many fans over the years.

Those who like the T800, like it a lot. You won't find a bigger fan of the T8 than my pal Gord Cooper, owner of Calgary, Alta.-based oilfield trucking company OCEAN Hauling. He bought his first T800 in 1990 and claims to have one of the first such trucks to be fitted with a 60-inch bunk. With a picker behind it, no space on that frame went to waste.

Cooper currently runs two T800s, a 2003 tri-drive with 540,000 kms on it and a 2007 tandem. I asked Cooper what he likes about the T800?: “The set-back axle is a better ride for one thing,” he said. “It also offers a much better turning radius and with the set-back axle I could afford a bigger bunk on a winch or picker truck.”

Cooper has noticed another benefit as well; one that only an off-roader could

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diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) tank that was discretely tucked behind the fuel tank. Since this truck was spec'd for local haulage, the smallish DEF tank should be sufficient while adding minimal weight to the vehicle. Dump truckers will likely want to keep a good supply of DEF at their home base and top the tank off nightly or while doing their pre-trip inspection. The entire SCR aftertreatment system was neatly packaged under the passenger access step.

The Paccar-powered T800 was fun to drive on the highway but in a dump configuration, it's real home would be in the quarry or on the job site, where I'm sure its visibility and maneuverability would be fully appreciated. The set-back front axle makes turning in tight spaces effortless. While I didn't have the chance to visit a work site, I did maneuver it around the Kenworth employee parking lot and suffered little angst as I easily steered around the parked cars that lined the lot.

The real fun part of my day came behind the wheel of the T800 heavy-hauler, spec'd out for what looked to be some sort of oilfield application, but this one also had a pusher axle making it an unlikely Canadian spec'. This tractor had an expansive 259-inch wheelbase and for convenience sake, I was pulling a partially loaded 53-foot van trailer. It was a curious set-up; this truck would be more at home pulling some heavy equipment aboard a lowboy or maybe even an oversized load, but the key to the T800's long reign has been its versatility and it wouldn't be the first time it was asked to pull a plain ol' van trailer.

"That truck will haul 140,000 lbs with permitting," Fennimore told me during a phone chat a few days after my drive. "It's comfortable pulling 80,000 lbs in a 53-ft. trailer or 105,000 lbs through the mountains on the West Coast."

The possibilities are endless with this truck, which was incidentally equipped with an Eaton UltraShift Plus transmission, proving there's a place for the newest generation automated manual transmissions (AMTs) in even the most rigorous

lines of work.

The UltraShift's Hill Start feature, in fact, is perfect for heavy-haul applications. I benefited from the feature while stopped at a stop sign on a moderate incline.

When the road was clear, I moved my foot from the brake to the gas and away I went without any concern of either stalling or rolling back into a bumper-riding four-wheeler.

The T800 heavy-hauler was fitted with a 38-inch bunk, making it suitable for overnight trips. Let's be honest, it was no Four Seasons back there, but the small 38-inch AeroCab bunk would do in a pinch and god knows there aren't a lot of Four Seasons in Fort McMurray or Yellowknife. For a small bunk, the AeroCab offered sufficient storage space with room under the bunk for either a cooler or a drawer-style refrigerator.

My 75-minute route took me over portions of US-23, OH-104 and, for the majority of the route, along US-35. As I drove past two sprawling prisons – one on either side of OH-104 – I couldn't have felt freer, with the radio on and the windows down and the open road before me.

For most of the journey, I was the meat in a Kenworth sandwich; a T700 in front and a T660 bringing up the rear. Depending on your perspective, I may have been driving the third best looking of those vehicles, but as trucks go, the T8 was the unquestionable alpha male of the pack. In central Ohio, pulling a 53-ft. van at 80,000 lbs, ei-



OLD SCHOOL: It's the type of truck that gives the EPA fits, with its oversized external air cleaners.

ther of those trucks would suffice. But what would you rather have in the northern Alberta oil patch or pulling a set of B-trains over the Rogers Pass?

This is the type of truck that wins awards at truck shows, yet gives EPA scientists fits with its large external air cleaners and a stainless steel sun visor to boot. Spec'd for overnight hauls, the T800 heavy-hauler had an 18-gallon DEF tank with a stainless shield to conceal the unsightly plastic tank.

While the exterior of the T800 has remained largely unchanged through its 25-year history, the same cannot be said of the inside.

All of the amenities that can be spec'd on the T660 are available on the T800. The truck I drove had a stylish sunroof, which is an option on any T800 with a sleeper cab.

The T660 and T800 share a

Continued on page 28

appreciate: "With a conventional, the mud and road grime always comes right up into the side windows," he said. "On the T800, the mud will come up behind the windows and onto the stacks, but the windows stay clean and you can still see the mirrors."

Cooper bought a W900L in 1996, but reverted back to the T8.

"It looked great, it just wasn't as practical as the T800 in tight situations in the bush," he said. "So I bought the T800 and haven't looked back."

That type of fandom is not unique. Over the years, entire fleets have been built around the T800.

As was the case when it was first introduced, the versatility of the T8 is still among the truck's strongest selling points today. It's why it has endured. It can be put to work as a dump truck, mixer, snowplow or heavy-hauler. It can pull tanker, flatdeck, van or float. You're as likely to see a T800 day cab pulling B-train tankers over the mountains, as you are a T8 with an oversized sleeper pulling a van trailer in Eastern Canada. You'll find them on the west coast, the east coast and everywhere in between in all kinds of oddball configurations.

On the road

To fully appreciate the appeal of the T800, you really have to drive one. This summer, I spent the better part of a day driving a couple of T800s on the roads around Kenworth's Chillicothe, Ohio truck plant in order to get to know the T8 a little better.

The two trucks I spent the most time with were a viper red T800 dump truck with extended day cab and, the real highlight, a T800 heavy-hauler with an amped up 565-hp Cummins ISX under the hood.

The dump was powered by the quiet and capable Paccar MX with 485 hp paired with an Allison 4500 RDS six-speed automatic transmission. The Paccar engine was responsive and powerful and on the flatlands of central Ohio, it was not challenged in the slightest by the light load I was carrying. The truck had disc brakes on the front and rear axles and a raised pusher axle where you'd likely find a tridem (where permitted) in Canada.

With an EPA2010-compliant Paccar MX engine, the T800 dump truck I was driving had a tiny 5.6-gallon



SCR: This T800 heavy-hauler had a stainless steel cover to conceal the unsightly plastic 18-gallon DEF reservoir.

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ROAD TEST



TIGHT TURNING: This T800 dump truck with Paccar MX power was maneuverable in the tightest of spaces. *Photo by James Menzies*

Returning to its vocational roots

Continued from page 27
wuries enjoyed by the highway crowd, as it should be.

The interior of the T800 heavy-hauler was nothing short of luxurious, with a well-appointed dash that put chrome-rimmed gauges and rocker switches within easy reach.

More commonly used controls, such as cruise and the engine brake were integrated right into the optional SmartWheel, so you can make adjustments without taking your hands off the wheel. Even the latest toys such as Kenworth's NavPlus in-dash "infotainment" system is available on the T800. Forget the notion that vocational trucks can't be comfortable and luxurious.

I've gushed over the UltraShift Plus automated transmission enough in the past, but it bears repeating that this is a spec' worth considering in even the harshest operating environments. The newest editions of the transmission



LUXURIOUS DASH: The T8's dash is nicely appointed.

are up to pretty much any job and the VXP version in my T8 heavy-hauler is approved for loads of up to 170,000 lbs – even heavier with Eaton's consent.

Fennimore tells me about 30% of T800 mixers are now spec'd with automated or automatic transmissions, up from as few as 5% in the late 90s. It's a trend he sees continuing.

"For the most part, I think everybody has accepted the new AMTs," he said.

Another trend you'll notice is the shift towards air disc brakes. The dump truck I drove had disc brakes at every position, while the heavy-hauler had discs on the steer axle and drums on the drives. You don't need to do a panic stop to notice the improved stopping capabilities of disc brakes. Like automated transmissions, disc brakes get a bad rap because early versions were not up to snuff. That has changed, and both components deserve a fresh look.

Here to stay

With the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and EPA soon to implement minimum fuel economy standards for heavy trucks, one must wonder about the future of non-SmartWay models like the T800.

There has been plenty of speculation that fleet operators will eventually have no choice but to pick from an assortment of SmartWay-approved truck designs. Fennimore shrugged off any such concerns.

"The T800 still has a long life ahead of it," he insisted. "We build ahead aerodynamic models that it offsets anything we do with the T800."

For a purist, that's encouraging to hear.

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Transmission: Eaton UltraShift Plus Hill Start VXP
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Front Axle: Dana Spicer D2000 20K
Front Suspension: Taperleaf with shocks
Rear Brakes: Drum
Rear Axle: D52-190P 52K Dual/WC 10 K Tru-Track
Rear Axle Ratio: 3.91
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HEALTH

Claiming immunity

How do you stay well? Think about how many germ-covered surfaces you touch each day. What dirty hand last touched the steering wheel in your rig; the truck stop bathroom door; the money with which you paid for your meal; the pen you used to sign the bill of lading; or the computer keyboard you used? Certainly, your immune system fights hard every day to help your body stay on top of sickness.

Your immune system, your main defense against disease-causing micro-organisms, is made up of a number of different components, including your: bone marrow; thymus gland; lymph nodes; mucosa-associated lymphoid tissue (MALT); gut-associated lymphoid tissue (GALT); and spleen.

Your bone marrow is responsible for developing all the cells in your immune system through the stem cells, including red blood cells, white cells (including lymphocytes and macro-



Preventive Maintenance

KAREN BOWEN

phages) and platelets.

Then, your thymus gland matures these lymphoid cells before releasing them into circulation to attack invaders. This process allows the matured lymphoid cells (T cells) to develop 'self tolerance,' which prevents them from attacking themselves or other healthy cells.

Lymph nodes, small bean-shaped structures distributed along the course of the lymphatic system, both filter particulate matter and micro-organisms and introduce antigens into the immune system. Lymph nodes are found in the neck, groin and para-aortic region.

Lymphoid tissue, although especially concentrated within the lymph nodes and spleen, its mucosa-associated lymphoid tissue (MALT) is also found in the gastrointestinal tract, the respiratory tract and the uro-genital tract. Gut-associated lymphoid tissue (GALT) is found in the tonsils, adenoids, appendix, large intestine, esophagus, and the stomach. Painful, swollen glands in one of these areas let you know that you are fighting an infection.

The spleen, the largest secondary immune organ in the body, is another vital component of your immune system because your spleen instigates immune reactions to blood-borne antigens, while at the same times filters foreign material and old or damaged red blood cells out of your blood.

Considering the germs all around you, your immune system usually does a remarkable job of keeping you well.

However, could you intervene in the process and make your immune system even stronger?

Could improving your diet and life-

style give your body's immune system a boost? According to current research, some general healthy-living strategies could.

First, take these steps towards a healthy lifestyle: Avoid smoking. Eat a balanced diet high in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and low in saturated fats.

Exercise regularly. Maintain a healthy weight. Control your blood pressure. Get enough sleep. Avoid contact with possible infected areas by washing your hands frequently and cooking your meat thoroughly.

Participate in regular medical screening as appropriate for people in your risk category and age group. Unfortunately, aging – one aspect totally out of your control – does reduce the effectiveness of your immune system.

So over time, you will become prone to more infections, more inflammatory diseases and more cancers. Let's face it, healthy older people are not as healthy as healthy young people. We become more susceptible to respiratory infections, influenza and particularly pneumonia, which is the worldwide leading cause of death for people over 65.

Many researchers feel that this is the result of older people not paying enough attention to their diets. Historians have said that an army marches on its stomach. Well, so does an immune system. Since malnourished people cannot fight infectious diseases, consider these particular nutrients, which can be immunity boosters:

Selenium, found in seafood, meat and grains, can reduce your risk of risk of bladder, breast, colon, rectum, lung, and prostate cancers.

Vitamin A, found in fortified dairy products, dark leafy vegetables and deep orange fruits, maintains vital mucosal-lymphoid surfaces.

Vitamin B6, found in spinach, broccoli, banana and chicken breast, improves the development of disease-fighting 'T' cells.

Vitamin D, found in fortified dairy products, beef, and fatty fishes, has been shown to specifically fight tuberculosis and may also fight other diseases.

Zinc, found in meats, fish, and whole grains, is essential for immune system cells. However, because zinc is a trace element, only 15-25 mg per day is required. (Too much zinc can inhibit the function of your immune system).

These following herbs have also been recognized as health boosters in recent research:

Garlic appears to help fight bacteria, viruses, and fungi; Aloe Vera, used topically, helps heal minor burns, wounds, or frostbite, and skin inflammations when mixed with hydrocortisone. However, it does not improve any other immune response. Since we've already considered diet, let's think about exercise.

Could regular exercise help maintain a healthy immune system? Certainly, exercise contributes to general good health.

Additionally by promoting good circulation, exercise improves the flow of cells and liquids throughout the body, which improves the efficiency of your immune system for flushing out germs. When confronted with sickness – claim immunity! □

– Karen Bowen is a professional health and nutrition consultant, and she can be reached at karen_bowen@yahoo.com.

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By James Menzies

HALIFAX, N.S. – Log truck owner/operator Richard Countway has earned a bit of a reputation among the enforcements folks in Nova Scotia. He's got the uncanny ability to load to the precise maximum gross vehicle weight allowed without going so much as a pound over.

That's a rare feat in logging, where two identical looking loads can cross the scales at vastly different weights depending on how waterlogged the wood is.

Countway's secret is the TruckWeight on-board scale system from Smart Scale Technologies based out of Halifax.

"You could pretty much stand on the back of that trailer and I could tell you how much you weigh," Countway boasted during a recent roadside interview.

Countway has been using the system since it was introduced in 2005. In fact, TruckWeight president Peter Panagapko said Countway was his first customer.

"It was the first installation I ever did," he recalled.

Countway now claims he'd never be without the on-board scales.

"I don't have to worry about going across the sales and being overweight," he said. "And I can max it out. I'll throw my load on; different nature wood and different cuts is different weight. It takes the guesswork out of it."

Besides the obvious benefits of avoiding overweight fines, Panagapko says the real payback comes in the form of additional payload. He cited a study that showed log haulers routinely leave 5-8% payload on the table in exchange for the peace of mind in knowing they're legal.

With an onboard scale, truckers can load to their maximum allowable weight, which Panagapko said typically increases revenue by \$10,000 to \$20,000 per year.

Only once over the last five years has Countway run afoul of the enforcement officers at his local scale house. He later determined his trailer's air suspension leveling valve got bent by some debris, giving him a false reading on his drive axles. Since Countway had built up so much goodwill with the enforcement officers over the years, they let him off with a warning and he made the repair to bring his scale back in synch.

The TruckWeight system consists of a set of strain gauges (sensors), transmitters and a handheld receiver. The receiver, which has a range of up to 500 feet, displays axle group and gross vehicle weight readings at three-second intervals, providing truck weights practically in real-time. Loggers, farmers and bulk haulers have been the quickest to embrace the technology, but Panagapko says heavy-haulers are now seeing the benefits as well.

"They can see the axle group weight as they're positioning the equipment, so they're optimizing their time," Panagapko explained. "When they tie the load down, they have it right the first time. They don't have to reposition or reweigh the load."

Weighing a truck at a commercial scale costs about \$10 per trip, but Panagapko pointed out there's also a productivity loss associated with that.

"This will eliminate the half-hour of travelling to check-weigh the load as well as the \$10 scale fee, so it doesn't take long to pay for a unit," he said. "A lot of people look at that \$10 fee because they see it. What they don't see is the half-hour they're burning each time – and that's more expensive. That's a half-hour of productive driving time they're spending every time to go check-weigh a load."

Currently, TruckWeight has about 6,000 systems deployed in the field, most of them on air suspension equipped trucks and trailers. The company recently enhanced its mechanical suspension system, making installation easier and repairs more cost-effective. Previously, the strain gauge was mounted to a metal bar that had to be welded to the suspension. Now, the strain gauge can be mounted directly to the suspension providing greater accuracy and improved reliability.

"The strain gauge goes directly on the surface of the metal, no welding involved," Panagapko said. "It gives a true measurement right from the source itself. Traditionally, that strain gauge was attached to a bar that was then welded to the axle or to a bracketing system. We got away from that because the measurement isn't exact from the axle itself and any kind of offset from bouncing down the road is an issue. You had to correct the offset from time to time and the axle OEs were reluctant to give official authorization for welding on axles."

The current system allows the strain gauges to be mounted directly to the axles using, you guessed it, super glue. Testing has shown the new solution to hold up better in rig-

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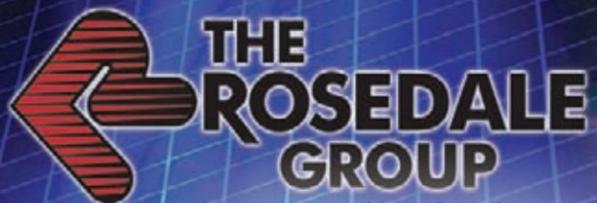
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PEACE OF MIND: Log hauler Richard Countway says his on-board scale system allows him to maximize payload while avoiding overweight fines. *Photo by James Menzies*

orous applications and harsh environments, such as the logging roads Countway travels in the Nova Scotia bush. Preparing the surface area and installing a strain gauge takes about an hour and the process is demonstrated in a video on the company's

Web site at www.TruckWeight.com.

Strain gauges typically last five years and are inexpensive to replace, Panagapko said. TruckWeight's air suspension and mechanical suspension scales are fully compatible, so a truck with air suspension

matched with a trailer with mechanical suspension will provide accurate weights. Both systems use the same transmitters and receiver.

Panagapko said TruckWeight's on-board scales are accurate to within 1% of government-certified weigh

scales. The handheld receiver is powered by two AA batteries that last six months to a year on mechanical suspensions and well over a year on air suspensions. Besides replacing the batteries every year or so and the strain gauges every five years, the TruckWeight system is virtually maintenance-free. But as Countway found out, a malfunctioning air suspension leveling valve can result in faulty readings.

"If you have an air sensor on there it's important the leveling valve is functioning properly," Panagapko warned. "If it's not functioning properly it will throw the readings off and if that's the case, the leveling valve has to be replaced. Leveling valves are maintenance items on trucks and in a lot of cases have to be replaced every five years."

With its mechanical suspension on-board scale now perfected, Panagapko hinted TruckWeight is in the process of finalizing a new generation product that will take on-board weighing to the next level, providing telematics capabilities.

While he doesn't want TruckWeight to be confused as a telematics company, he said its next generation scale will be capable of integrating with existing telematics platforms, providing fleet owners with real-time weighing information back at the office. Fleets will be able to run reports and take steps to improve route optimization and maximize payloads... but Panagapko wouldn't reveal any further details until the company is ready to launch the product later this year. For more info, visit www.truckweight.com or call 877-757-7888. □



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OPINION

Ontario Transport Minister takes a wrong turn

Passenger car drivers no longer need Class A licence to pull 40-ft., 24,000-lb. RV trailers

A couple of years ago I was getting fuel at the Shell station in Ignace on Hwy. 11 in northern Ontario, when I watched a pick-up truck towing a fifth-wheel trailer wipe out in the middle of town. The driver was doing about 50 km/h, I'd guess, when he began swerving from side to side. The swerving worsened, and in a flash he was flipped over and lying at right angles to the roadway.

The driver over-steered while trying to correct the swerving motion, and made a hard left turn in the middle of the road. The trailer split open like an egg and junk spilled out all over the place, closing Hwy. 11 for several hours. Poor guy. I guess that was the end of his vacation.

I recall that event here because the province of Ontario has just amended its driver licensing standards to allow passenger car drivers (Class G licences) to pull fifth-wheel trailers with a gross combination weight as high as 11,000 kgs (24,250 lbs). Previously, RVers pulling trailers weighing more than 4,600 kgs (10,000 lbs) needed a Class A licence, the same licence truck drivers have, minus the air brake endorsement.

A little research on RV manufacturer Web sites reveals that RVers with absolutely no experience or training can jump into a pick-up truck hitched to a fifth-wheel trailer up to 46 feet long, weighing as much as 18,000 lbs, and go pretty well anywhere they please – or dare.



Voice of the O/O

JOANNE RITCHIE

Kathleen Wynne, Ontario's Minister of Transportation, announced the changes to regulation 340/94 on July 1, saying, "Summer is a very popular season for the RV community. This timely change will make it easier for RV operators, will promote tourism and the overall RV experience in Ontario, while keeping our roads safe."

My question is, where does the Minister get the 'keeping our roads safe' part?

There is nothing in the text of the regulation, in the *Ontario Gazette*, or in the Regulatory Registry that indicates how this move will keep our roads safe. The only requirements are that the trailers meet Transport Canada manufacturing standards, and they not be used for commercial purposes. Noted too is that the Ontario Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association – which represents RV dealers in the province and Ontarians who operate RVs – would provide *voluntary orientation and training* to the operators of such vehicles. The emphasis is mine.

What irks me most is how this runs contrary to all the justification various ministers have provided in the past for not amending the same regulation for Class A licence testing requirements

for drivers over age 65.

Here we're talking about changes to the licensing standards that will allow drivers with passenger car licences to tow trailers darned near as big as tractor-trailers, and the Minister is content with the offer of the RV association to provide voluntary training. All the while, Class A drivers with 30 or 40 years of experience are failing driving tests for something as simple as forgetting to turn on an AC/heat-fan.

Regulations for truckers ensure things like vehicle inspections are done properly, and the proper type of equipment is used for a job; not so for the RV crowd.

There are no specific spec's for the pick-up truck to ensure it's up the task, like suspension capacity or engine power. Stupidity notwithstanding, there's nothing to stop a driver with a basic half-ton from hooking it to a 42-ft., 18,000-lb trailer.

There may be physical limits to the weight of these vehicles, but there are no requirements that the operators pay attention to load distribution or vehicle handling characteristics. Or, as that fellow in Ignace discovered, how to handle a long high-profile vehicle in a crosswind. Remember, their training is voluntary.

Minister Wynne also felt it worthy of mention that this change would save RV drivers \$200 in initial licence costs, and that it would help support the province's RV industry and pro-

mote tourism.

OBAC has explained to a series of transportation ministers that the Class A renewal can cost a driver upwards of \$1,000 in truck procurement fees and lost earnings for the road test, but cost and inconvenience to the commercial driver has never been an issue as far as MTO is concerned.

This is as pure and clear a double standard as you're ever likely to see in driver licensing. MTO just sent a message that saving a couple of hundred bucks and promoting the RV industry has a higher place on its agenda than road safety. And if any of these RVers are over 65, by the way, they aren't required to retest for their G licence until they're 80.

OBAC, the CTA and others have been after MTO for years to rethink the testing requirements for older, experienced Class A drivers, proposing equitable alternatives based on medical fitness to drive and driving record. As a result of our lobby efforts, a comprehensive review conducted over three years ago led bureaucrats to make recommendations that would put an end to discriminatory age-based testing.

The status of those recommendations? "Waiting for briefing time with the Minister," we're told. Makes you wanna jump into the nearest RV and take a trip to Queen's Park. With a provincial election scheduled for October, that may not be a bad idea. □

– Joanne Ritchie is executive director of OBAC. Is it time this Minister took a vacation? E-mail her at jritchie@obac.ca or call toll free 888-794-9990.

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Mark Dalton: Owner/Operator

The Good Shepherd

By Edo van Belkom

The truck stop outside of Winnipeg was busy for a Thursday afternoon with all kinds of people taking time out from their cross-country treks to eat, grab a coffee, or otherwise take a break from the endless miles of road that stretched out in every direction.

Mark was hauling a trailer full of boxed, pre-assembled furniture to a distributor in Vancouver.

The weather over the next few days was clear and he'd have no trouble making his delivery time three days from now. That meant he could take his time, chat up an older driver or two, the sort who always seemed to have an anecdote or bit of wisdom to share.

While Mark had time on his hands, there were plenty of other drivers who didn't seem to have the luxury, frantically grabbing something to eat and brown-bagging it back to their truck.

There was even a guy who ran everywhere he went within the truck stop, then glanced at his watch every minute or so while he stood in line waiting to get something to eat. Talk about a rat race.

But of all the interesting people coming and going, there was one person in particular that truly caught Mark's eye.

The woman looked to be in her thirties with blonde hair, blue jeans and a backpack that suggested she was on her way to somewhere. But it was the way she stood there, looking left and right and talking to everyone who passed her by, that told Mark she was lost.

When one of the drivers she'd just been talking to took a seat at the table next to Mark's, Mark decided to ask what was going on? He leaned in the man's direction, caught his attention and said, "What is she, lost or something?"

The man smiled and gave half a shrug as he unwrapped his hamburger. "Sort of," he said. "She's looking for a ride to Vancouver."

Mark looked back at the woman. She was too old to be a runaway or backpacking across the country in search of adventure. And her clothes were too clean and fresh for her to be a vagabond or hobo. Maybe she was a lot lizard looking for a new place

to slither, but even if that were true she didn't have the grittiness or desperation that made those women stand out from the crowd. He turned in the man's direction again. "She homeless?"

The man shook his head. "Hardly. According to her she was part of a driving team out of Ontario, but the other driver took off." A slight chuckle. "He gave her money and sent her into the restaurant for coffee, then just drove away."

Mark's jaw hung slack. He never would have guessed that one.

"So, she's without work and without a ride. There's a load waiting for her in Vancouver, if she can get there."

The man looked admiringly at the woman who was still stopping drivers as they passed. "If I wasn't heading in the other direction, I might give her a ride myself, heh." A sigh. "As it is, I'm tempted to double back and make it a four-thousand kilometre round-trip. It ain't often you get to have company as fine as that."

Indeed, thought Mark, eyeing the woman more closely. She looked to be in good shape, with a nice figure and a pretty smile. It didn't make sense that someone would just leave her stranded in the middle of the country. Maybe he could give her a lift.

He was going to Vancouver anyway and taking on a driver and doing it as a team would get him there faster, giving him a couple of days to relax on the coast before taking on his next load.

Even if he didn't let her drive, it would be nice to have some companionship on the long drive west. And, he wasn't proud of himself for thinking it, but you never knew what might happen when a man and a woman got together in a confined space over an extended period of time...he decided to offer her a ride.

He got up from the table, brushed a few crumbs off his shirt and walked over to where the woman's backpack sat on the floor.

"Hi," he said.

"Hello."

"I heard you're looking for a ride to the coast."

"You heard right."



Illustration by Glenn McEvoy

"Well, I'm heading to Vancouver."

"Perfect," she said, picking up her bag.

"You're coming with me, then?" Mark asked, wondering why she wasn't asking questions like...are you married? Do you have any diseases? A criminal record?

He extended his hand. "My name's Mark, by the way."

"Cindy." She took his hand and shook it.

"My truck's out in the lot."

He tried to grab her bag, but she wouldn't let him have it. In the end he smiled awkwardly, let go of the knapsack, and tried to find someplace to put his outstretched hand.

"Uh, this way."

As they neared Mother Load, he could tell she was impressed with the truck from the look on her face.

"That's a nice rig," she said. "It looks like you take good care of it."

"I have to look after it," Mark replied. "It's pretty much my home."

"It should be really comfortable, then."

It is comfortable for one, thought Mark. For two, hopefully it's cozy. When he reached Mother Load, he went to the passenger side and opened the door for her.

"Thanks," she said, smiling.

Mark returned the smile and held the door open.

But before she stepped up into the cab, she stopped and glared at him with suddenly narrowed

eyes.

"Just so we're clear. If you think there might be a chance – any chance – of some hanky panky with me along the way, you can forget about it right now. I'm not that kind of girl."

She looked him up and down, then after a pause, said, "And to be honest, I don't think you're my type."

Mark felt as if he's been hit in the gut with a tire iron.

"Uh...no, of course not," he said, doing his best to look insulted that she would even think that he could think such a thing. She nodded. "Well, alright, then," and climbed into the truck.

Mark just stood there feeling stupid for thinking this girl – this good-looking younger woman – would be interested in him, maybe even physically attracted to him, just because he was giving her a ride to the coast.

Shaking his head as he closed the door, Mark said under his breath. "Well, maybe at the very least we'll have some interesting conversations along the way." □

– Mark Dalton returns next month in Part 2 of *The Good Shepherd*.

Did you know that there are two full-length novels featuring Mark Dalton?: Mark Dalton "SmartDriver" and Mark Dalton "Troubleload." For your free copy register with ecoENERGY for Fleets (Fleet Smart) at fleetsmart.gc.ca. Both are also available in audio book format.

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OPINION

The lost weekend

Publisher's Comment

ROB WILKINS



On the August long weekend, I watched countless hours of CNN reporting on the US debt crisis and the rest of the time reading former British Prime Minister Tony Blair's new autobiography. I don't know why. I know I wasn't on the golf course, hiking with the dog, or enjoying barbecues, because I was laid up under the weather.

I turned on the TV and there was Wolf Blitzer telling me the world as I knew it might come to an end on Wednesday. I was intrigued enough to watch and somehow got hooked.

I began to doubt that America would truly go bankrupt and the world, and *Truck West* was going to be around on Wednesday, but I couldn't stop watching. During a commercial I picked up a discarded book from the coffee table, which turned out to be Tony's autobiography. The next thing I knew it was Monday night. Wolf told me the crisis wasn't really a crisis because it was a self-imposed crisis.

Wolf interviewed Tea Party people while I switched back to my Tony Blair book. Tony is at the opposite end of the political spectrum from the Tea Party guys, but he was also

talking about numbers containing an unknown number of zeros, and solving problems that sometimes weren't problems at all.

Tony has a chapter dealing with the fuel crisis in Britain. I was surprised to learn it took him 48 hours to figure out that fuel was transported by truck from the refineries to the "Petrol" stations on a daily basis. He had been under the impression that each Petrol station had a never-ending supply of fuel on-hand and protesters couldn't block all the stations. Of course they could and did block the trucks from leaving the fuel refineries. Here's a quote from Tony, "The trouble is at the time when I needed to know this, I didn't, and neither did anyone else in a position of authority so when we heard of some protests at two refineries the enormity didn't sink in."

The end of that chapter was predictable. Once he recognized he had manufactured a problem that didn't have to be, he just told the oil companies to sack any driver who didn't plow through and guess what, the oil companies did and the drivers did. I don't mean to suggest Prime Ministers and senators are buffoons. You have to have some smarts to reach those positions. Anyway, that's the story of my lost weekend. I know I can never have it back but I believe it will build my character. Everyone has to step off into the deep end at some point in order to better appreciate what one has and who one is. I am the publisher of *Truck West* and I'm good with that. □

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

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TSQ

FERGUS, Ont. – One of the hottest truck shows of the season, the Fergus Truck Show, was back at the Fergus Fairgrounds July 22-24, coming on the tail of some of the hottest weather in the province's history.

Thousands braved the heat to take part in some of the many activities at the show, including live music, tractor pulls and the always popular show'n'shine competition. But what makes the show – which has often made the annual list of the Top 50 Ontario Festivals – a cut above the rest? *Truck West* did a special on-site version of the Truck Stop Question at the 2011 Fergus Truck Show to see what keeps truckers coming back year after year.

For **David Selig**, a driver with Celadon Transport, 2011 marked his first appearance at the show – and it sounds like he'll be back again.

"I am usually away and on the other side of the continent some-



Truck Stop Question *What keeps you coming back to the Fergus Truck Show?*

ADAM LEDLOW



David Selig

where when it's on. It's a nice show with lots of vendors and exhibits. I liked seeing the truck pull in the corner and it's been a nice day. Glad they got nice weather for it this year," he said. "Maybe I might clean up the truck

one year and bring it down (for the show'n'shine competition)."

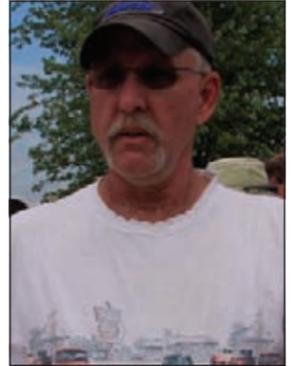


Jeff Logan

Jeff Logan, a driver with Ayr Motor Express in Mississauga, Ont., has been coming to Fergus for the

last 10 years at least and he, his friends and his family like to stay and camp and make a weekend of it.

"We just love coming here, seeing all the people and trucks, seeing the MTO and the OPP; they're doing a wonderful job here," he said at the show. "I came in here this morning and brought two of my boys in and we've been walking around. A wonderful place for the kids. Fergus is a beautiful place and this has been a wonderful place to come and visit."



Randy Paton

For **Randy Paton**, a driver with Gary Mercer Trucking out of Mississauga, Ont., it looks like the 2011 Fergus Truck Show is also going to be his last.

"It costs too much money now. I have two 14-year-old daughters and it cost me \$108 just for them to sit here for the weekend. Why can't they have kids free? It's all about having fun, not making money."

Prior to the price hike, Paton says he used to come for the people, but "I have to work two weeks in a row now to afford to go to the truck show, so who cares about the people anymore?"



Gerb Dykema

Gerb Dykema, a driver with Appleby Transportation in Burlington, Ont., was making his second appearance at the show.

"I just like fancy trucks and all of the chrome and cool stuff on these trucks. I like looking at the owner/operator vehicles," he said. "I'm a company driver and probably won't ever be an owner/operator because I would want one of these fancy rigs and I'd be broke all the time."

Steve Kovacs, a driver with IFS Transport out of Tillbury, Ont., likes to make the trip out to the Fergus Truck Show about once every five years for a little "something different," as well as a chance to take the kids out and make it a family weekend.

"We were looking at some dump trailer stuff there, and a lot of stuff for the kids. It's a pretty good time."

Asked whether he has any plans for taking part in the show'n'shine competition himself: "No, I'm too old for that," says the 20-year veteran of the road. "Too lazy for all of the polishing." □

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