

# TRUCK WEST

October 2009 Volume 20, Issue 10

Delivering daily news to Canada's trucking industry at [www.trucknews.com](http://www.trucknews.com)



**A SPECIAL EVENT FOR SPECIAL ATHLETES:** Once again this year, despite troubled economic times, truckers and law enforcement officers rallied to support a great cause during the World's Largest Truck Convoy for Special Olympics. Pictured are just some of the special athletes who benefited from the Manitoba leg of the event. Since the convoy was held while this issue of *Truck West* was going to press, we'll include a complete rundown of the occasion – as well as other Canadian legs of the event – in next month's issue.

## Manitoba truckers take part in World's Largest Truck Convoy

**WINNIPEG, Man.** – Manitoba truckers hit the highway in droves over the Sept. 12 weekend, as part of the World's Largest Convoy to raise money for the Special Olympics.

This year's Manitoba event, kicked off with a breakfast at 8 a.m. at Oak Bluff Recreation Hall with the convoy itself getting underway at 11 a.m.

After the convoy travelled around the perimeter, the group was welcomed by Special Olympics athletes, families, friends, colleagues, law enforcement community, and various

industry organizations, companies and agencies for a celebratory BBQ.

Truck drivers paid a \$100 entry fee and collect pledges. Each year, the driver with the most money raised wins the honour of leading the convoy.

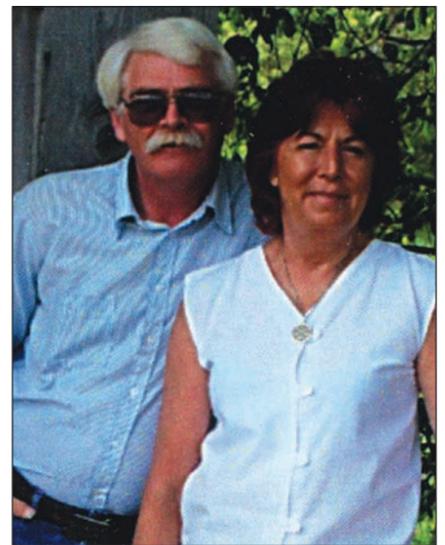
"These are very trying times economically for the trucking industry, yet drivers and companies are remarkably generous," said Mark Van Schie, RCMP inspector and member of the Law Enforcement Torch Run committee.

The convoy, which started as Law Enforcement's Torch Run

before growing into its current form, is the brainchild of Corporal Norm Schneiderhan of the Orange County Sheriff's Department in Florida.

Schneiderhan was inspired by the impact the Special Olympics had on his life, and through his family's connection to the trucking industry, the World's Largest Truck Convoy was created.

For a complete rundown of the event and other legs of the convoy from across Canada, see next month's issue of *Truck West*. □



**MEMORIES:** Ron and Wendy Foulis, photographed in better times before tragedy struck.

## A trip from hell

*Widow hopes one trucker's tragedy will serve as a warning to others*

By Jim Bray

**WEYBURN, Sask.** – On Hwy. 21 in southern Ontario, there's a cross that burns with a bright white light – a lighthouse-like symbol that

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## One quiet shhh-unt truck



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- **Climate control:** Refrigerated goods haulers are looking at ways of driving down their refrigeration costs. Page 12
- **Power play:** In a summer shocker, MacKinnon Transport has acquired Walker Group. What do analysts have to say about the deal that creates a new TL powerhouse? Page 14
- **Focusing on fuel:** As diesel prices creep back up, we report on what some of Canada's best-run private fleets are doing to keep costs in check. Page 20
- **Cap-and-trade:** What are the implications of a carbon cap-and-trade system for the transportation industry? Page 22

### Mark Dalton O/O



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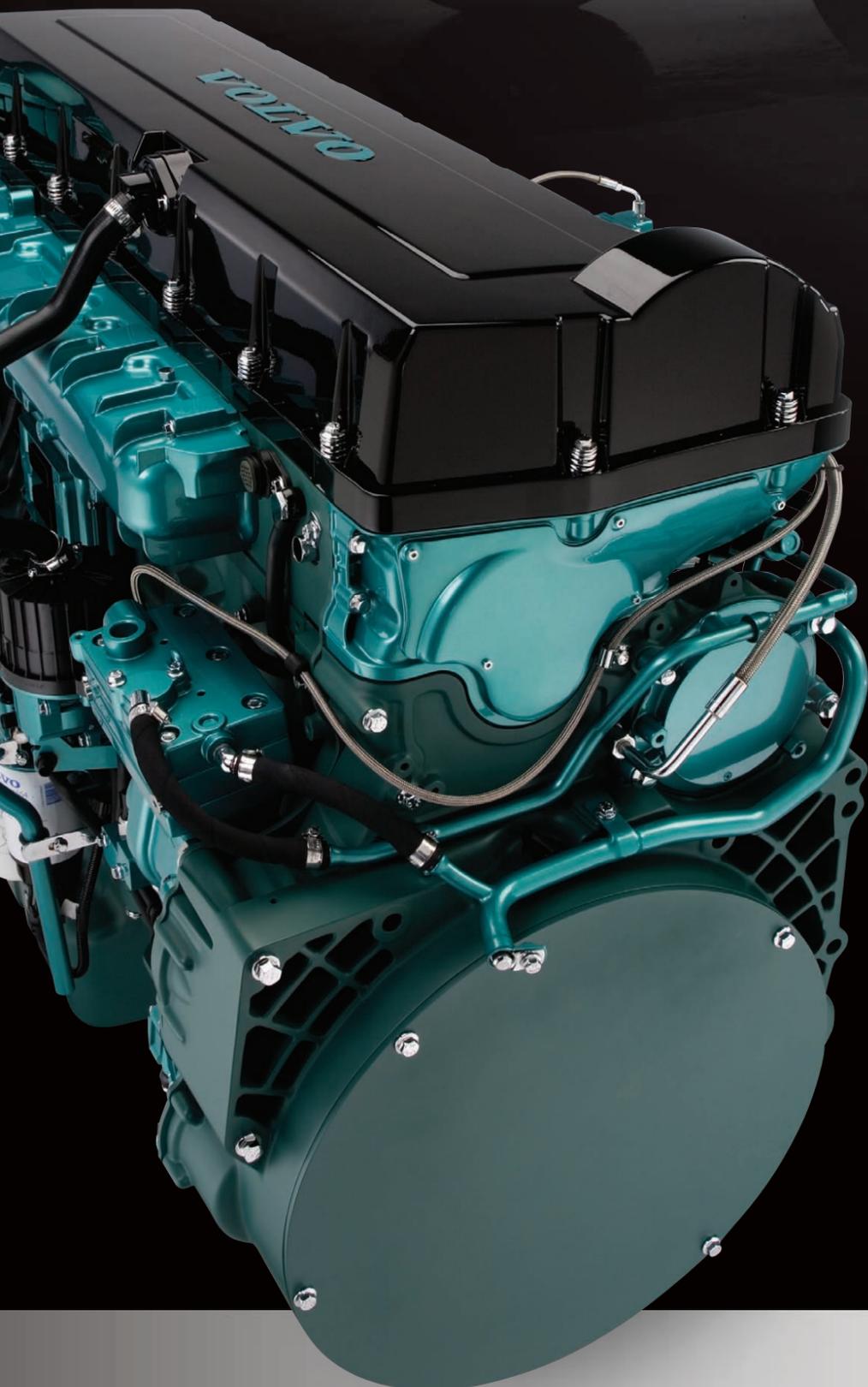
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# Are you ready to capitalize on the recovery?

There's no doubt, the last couple of years have presented some of the most trying times ever faced by the trucking industry. And while nobody's popping the champagne just yet, there's reason to believe the economy is slowly beginning to find its legs. Some bold prognosticators have already declared the recession over in Canada and in parts of Europe. But I've yet to hear any fleet managers or owner/operators voicing such optimism.

At any rate, a return to better times is inevitable, which raises a few questions: Have you taken advantage of the opportunity to improve your business or was it merely a matter of survival? Are you a stronger company coming out of this recession or will you emerge battered, bruised and still vulnerable?

Here at *Truck West*, we've faced many of the same challenges those of you operating trucks have faced. There's been a significant decline in advertising (our version of 'freight') and in some months we've had less space to work with within our traditional printed products. But the editors here didn't go on an extended vacation. Instead, I'm proud to say we've found new ways of disseminating information.

We launched and grew our weekly WebTV show, *Transportation Matters*, which has no equal anywhere in the North American trucking industry and we've developed our own YouTube channel. We've expanded our blog line-up and provided a great forum for two-way conversations between our readers and editors as well as other bloggers from within the industry. And we've become active on social media sites such as Twitter to further enhance our communication capabilities.

We've also developed a new subscription-based online information video series at

## Editorial Comment

James Menzies



www.TheDriversSeat.ca and published our first comprehensive collection of industry stats and trends, *Inside the Numbers*.

Now I'm not trying to boast about all this (okay, maybe just a little), and I know our world is different than yours. But before you accuse me of comparing apples to oranges, take a look around and see what the fleets around you are doing. And ask yourself a few questions.

During the slowdown, have you taken advantage of a stable workforce to implement meaningful, lasting driver training? It doesn't have to be costly, but when drivers aren't jumping ship every few months due to an abundance of job opportunities, some well-run fleets have stepped up training initiatives.

Have you elevated hiring criteria? When you do hire drivers, you can now be more selective about who you put behind the wheels of your vehicles. Are you taking advantage of that and revisiting hiring tactics that may have been compromised when there were always more loads to move than drivers to move them?

Have you sought out partnerships or developed new

business opportunities as other carriers have closed their doors and left customers high and dry? One successful Ontario fleet has seized an opportunity to work with US carriers that don't want to restrict their trucks to 105 km/h to run into Ontario. It's picking up 25 loads per week at the border and delivering them into Toronto. This isn't about speed limiters – it's about identifying and taking advantage of emerging opportunities.

As the trucking industry prepares for recovery, ask yourself: Are we stronger/leaner/more competitive coming out of this than when we went in? If not, you may have missed a major opportunity. □

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# So, how's your patience?

For the third straight month, I must admit to doing a double take when going through the monthly Class 8 truck sales stats. There must be a mistake, I thought once again; they can't possibly be that low.

The unfortunate reality though is that there was no mistake; the blood bath continues. The first quarter of the year was strong foreshadowing of things to come in this dark year.

Just three months into the year and sales were more than 2,000 off last year's year-to-date pace, (hardly a banner year in itself); about 3,000 off the five-year YTD average and about 5,000 off the banner year of 2006. Seven months into the year (the latest point for which sales results are available) and Canadian Class 8 truck sales are at their lowest YTD mark over the past decade and almost 10,000 units off the five-year average.

For Class 8 truck manufacturers this will definitely be a lost year and very indicative of the predicament our industry finds itself in, two years into a freight recession. Trucking company executives and owner/operators feel like they've had the wind knocked out of them

## Viewpoint

Lou Smyrlis  
 Editorial Director



and for good reason. Basically in our industry when it rains, it pours.

Researchers studying the relationship between transportation data and measures of the economy over a 23-year sample period found a distinct relationship between changes in the transportation services sector and economic recessions. The transportation sector typically reaches a peak six months ahead of the economy, while lagging by two months at the trough, which means truckers have to live in recession eight months longer than the rest of the economy.

I have my doubts about the second finding. I believe how quickly truckers come out of recession has a lot to do with inventory levels as the economy starts to recover.

But this time around I don't think that distinction will make much difference. That's because the V-shaped recovery that is typi-

cal of many past recessions is not likely to materialize, as Peter G. Hall, chief economist with Export Development Canada pointed out in his latest weekly column. True the US economy is expected to outperform the other major world economies, expanding by 2.3% next year, and Canada's outlook is similar. While that growth is welcomed news, it is well short of a typical rebound and what's needed to bring prosperity back to our industry. We need growth of at least 3% to fully engage the trucking industry. Unfortunately, the kind of growth trajectory currently envisioned means both the US and Canadian economies would take twice as long to climb back to the pre-collapse level of output than they took to fall, as Hall points out.

The kind of inventory depleting growth necessary to resuscitate our industry will be some time in coming. We may need to hang on till the latter half of 2010 to experience the rebound and until 2011 to return to prosperity.

How's your patience? □

– Lou Smyrlis can be reached by phone at (416) 510-6881 or by e-mail at [lou@TransportationMedia.ca](mailto:lou@TransportationMedia.ca). You can also follow him on Twitter at [Twitter.com/LouSmyrlis](https://twitter.com/LouSmyrlis).

# CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

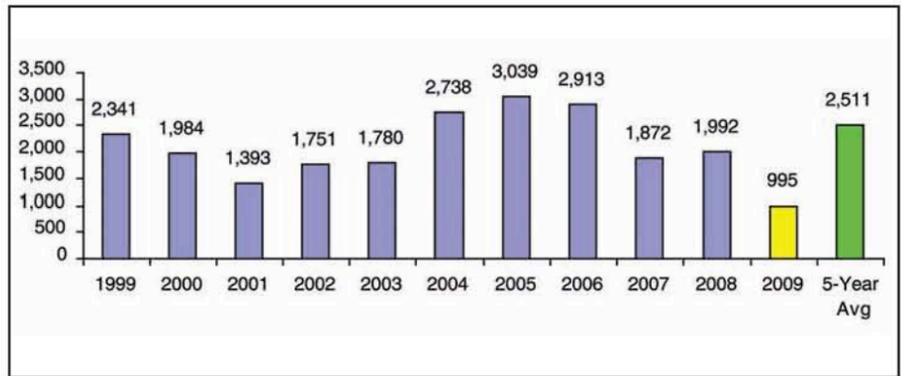
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The blood bath, unfortunately, continues unabated on the Class 8 sales front. There were just 995 Class 8 trucks sold in Canada in July, which was by far the lowest July sales tally for the decade. It was also about 1,500 units off the five-year average. (It should be noted that five-year average includes the industry's peak years of 2004 to 2006.) The industry's excess capacity situation combined with an economy that, although may have hit bottom, is looking to grow slowly until year end is resulting in a significant drop in sales even from last year's lackluster performance and the first seven months of 2009 have proven to be even worse than expected.

### Monthly Class 8 Sales - July 09

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	107	332
International	290	496
Kenworth	186	285
Mack	80	150
Peterbilt	113	219
Sterling	88	192
Volvo	91	193
Western Star	40	125
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>995</b>	<b>1992</b>

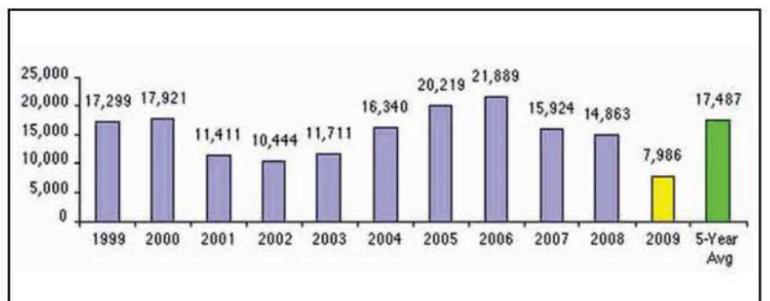
### Historical Comparison - July 09 Sales



### Class 8 Sales (YTD July 09) by Province and OEM

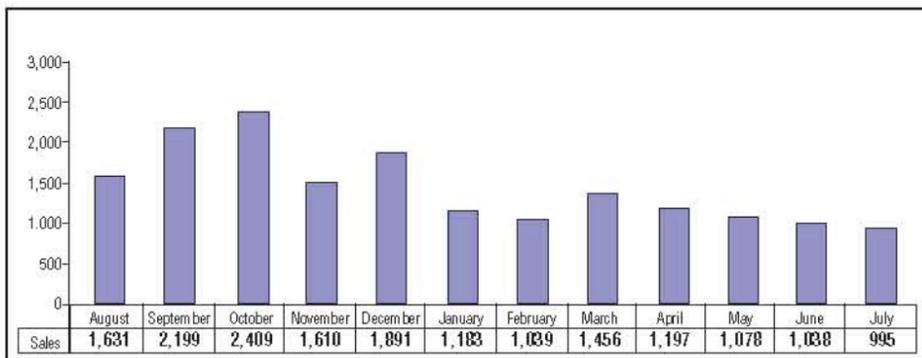
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	83	194	80	96	625	343	110	80	0	5	1,616
Kenworth	119	216	54	64	180	245	32	12	0	0	922
Mack	29	54	73	43	327	79	23	15	0	0	643
International	74	309	42	115	1,007	561	90	48	23	44	2,313
Peterbilt	69	113	56	45	93	73	25	15	0	0	489
Sterling	84	88	18	8	193	206	17	5	3	3	625
Volvo	44	79	58	121	317	114	40	41	0	6	820
Western Star	63	170	28	21	92	82	41	60	0	1	558
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>1,223</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>2,834</b>	<b>1,703</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>7,986</b>

### Historical Comparison - YTD July

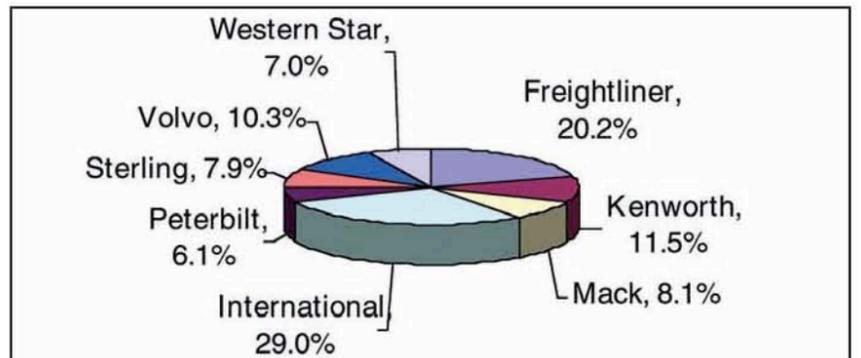


The second quarter showed little improvement over the poor sales results of the first quarter with April, May and June all posting very anemic numbers. The first quarter of the year was strong foreshadowing of things to come in this dark year. It proved to be the quietest first quarter in terms of sales of the past decade, coming in about 100 units below the 2002 total. Just three months into the year, sales were more than 2,000 off last year's YTD pace (hardly a banner year in itself), about 3,000 off the five-year YTD average and about 5,000 off the banner year of 2006. Seven months into the year now Canadian Class 8 truck sales are at their lowest point YTD over the past decade and almost 10,000 units off the five-year average. This will definitely be a year worth forgetting.

### 12 - Month Sales Trends



### Market Share Class 8 - July YTD



Looking back over the past 12-month period and also looking ahead to the start of the third quarter in terms of Class 8 truck sales, it is difficult to feel any confidence for an immediate surge. This will be a lost year for Class 8 truck sales in Canada. Sales for the first quarter were anemic and the second quarter was even worse. Sales have not hit the 2,000 unit mark since October of last year, despite the fact this was supposed to be a pre-buy year. Last year was far from a banner year but April, May and June did show Class 8 truck sales above the 2,000 mark for each of the three months as did September and October.

International retains its lead in this downward market, controlling 29% of Class 8 sales in the Canadian market YTD. But Freightliner, a former front runner for many years, has fallen to 20% of total sales. Traditionally strong performers Kenworth and Peterbilt continue to fall back considerably so far this year compared to previous years. In fact, Peterbilt is down to just over 6% of the market and Kenworth's share is just over 11%. Volvo is the only truck manufacturer, other than Freightliner, International and Kenworth, with more than a 10% share of the market.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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# Playing the blame game

## Widow wants answers about how her husband slipped through the cracks

Continued from page 1

guides drivers safely through darkness, snowstorms and fog. The cross stands not only as a beacon, however, but as a memorial to a driver who practically gave his life to get his load – and himself – home to his beloved wife.

The story of Ron Foulis' final months on the job could serve as a cautionary tale for any driver who ranges far from home. It's a tale of frustration and heartbreak, peer pressure and economic pressure, and it illustrates the importance of knowing your health and your insurance coverage, knowing your own body and the signals it sends you, and knowing your rights and responsibilities.

Foulis had been driving for more than 30 years, but the last few hadn't been kind. He'd been involved in a fatal accident in Alberta, in which his truck had backed over a man and though, according to his wife, no fault had been found with his actions, it affected him greatly and caused him to be off work for an extended period.

"Ron had been seeing a trauma counsellor over the accident," Wendy Foulis says, "paid for by our insurance company and the union, and he'd been complaining about tingling in his fingers and feet and a numbness in his arms."

Wendy says their family doctor ordered a stress test after some prodding from Ron's trauma counsellor, but it had to be put off because they were seriously behind with their rent and other expenses. "Ron always believed he had to support his family," Wendy recounts, "so he decided to go out west and earn some money."

As it turned out, that was a fatal decision.

Wendy says Ron's boss told him he'd get him work in Saskatchewan. "He told Ron to just keep driving until he told him to stop, so he really had no idea where he was going." She says it didn't feel right. "There was an ominous feeling," Wendy recounts. "We were both crying, but we knew it had to be done, especially knowing he was only going out there with \$60 in his pocket."

Foulis picked up his trailer in Woodstock and headed west, waiting for the call that came finally when he reached Estevan, Sask. "But the western office didn't even know he was coming," his widow says, "and he didn't get a very good reception."

They did try to find him work, though, and she says he ended up doing "some real boondock kind of things, out in the bush." The tingling and numbness he was still experiencing meant he had difficulty handling the truck's hydraulics, Wendy says, but he pressed on.

Ron thought the sensations stemmed from an accident years earlier in which a high-pressure water hose had let go and ripped open his chest, took out part of his

lung and torn across his arms. He'd had pains and strange feelings ever since, so he tended to ignore them.

Another unfortunate decision.

"Ron was run hard in Saskatchewan," Wendy remembers, saying that at one point he had to drive from Saskatchewan to Calgary for a two-day Red Cross course on his days off, after working 11 days straight. Ironically, one of the things he learned was how to defibrillate.

Then, in early June of 2008, his health bubble burst.

"When I talked to him on the phone he was whispering so I couldn't hardly hear him," Wendy says. "I told him to speak up and he said 'Baby, this is as loud as I can talk.' He was coughing and couldn't catch his breath. I told him to get to the hospital right away."

The way Wendy tells it, Ron showed up at the emergency room of the Weyburn General Hospital, but was turned away "because he was from Ontario. But he was in such bad shape he had to go back."

She says the emergency room doctor diagnosed Ron as having a chest infection, gave him a steroid inhaler and prescriptions for antibiotics and Sudafed, then released him. It turned out that his real health problem was very different and much more serious.

His health situation didn't help him at work, either. "The people thought that because Ron was sick he wasn't giving his all to the job," Wendy says, "but he was the kind of man who goes further than he has to. He had a great reputation."

Reputation or not, however, sick is sick. "He called me, crying," Wendy remembers, "and said 'I can't even get this right. They're sending me home because I'm sick.'" Wendy says Foulis was told if he was too sick to drive safely on Saskatchewan roads that "he should go back to Ontario and get checked out by his physician."

Wendy says the company eventually told Ron they had a load for him to take back to Woodstock, but he'd have to wait for it to come in from Calgary. "It was unbelievable," Wendy remembers. "The man was sick, was on antibiotics."

The trip home took four-and-a-half days. "I was out waiting for him," Wendy says, and "when he finally backed into the driveway, he literally fell out of the truck and into my arms. He said 'My baby, we will never be apart again.' I started crying because I took one look at him and I knew he was so sick."

They spent the night at home, after which Wendy took Ron to the

Petrolia hospital, where tests showed he'd suffered a heart attack.

"The doctors told him he wasn't leaving the hospital," Wendy says.

The good news was that he was at least close to home. "Everyone at church who knew where he was came down to see him – his room was filled with people," Wendy says, reminiscing about Ron laughing and talking to the visitors. "The nurses couldn't get over what a bubbly person he was – he lit up the room. He was like a little boy, so excited to be back."

Unfortunately, the bad news

kept coming. Foulis was sent to London for an angioplasty and Wendy says that, when she asked one of the doctors for

the result "he said 'Have you got a bullet?' And he laughed, like we should put him out of his misery." Wendy says she was "off in La-La land" by that point, not knowing what was going on and "nearly falling apart."

Surgery was called for and "they had to take five veins out of his legs and use them," Wendy says. "And when he came out of it they told me to brace myself and not to let Ron know how I felt about how he looked." He was in dire straits, his head tied down with an elastic band and one wrist and both legs restrained. "I thought 'My God I didn't know it was this bad!'" she remembers.

Ron came to the next day, but was still "out of it" because of the pain. "He'd motion with his feet because he couldn't talk," Wendy says. "Motioning for me to move

to his side. He was able to raise his arm up and he grabbed my hand and said "I love you" and then waved goodbye to me and fell asleep again."

It was the last thing Ron ever said to Wendy.

"He was resting peacefully, so I eventually decided to go home and come back in the morning," Wendy says, adding that the hospital called at 5:30 the next morning and advised her to get back there immediately. "His heart stopped 13 times," she says, "and every time they'd come in with this equipment and put these paddles on his chest – I had to cover my eyes."

Then came one of the worst questions imaginable. "They came into the room where I was sitting and (the doctor) asked me if I wanted to keep him on life support. I said 'My God, no. Let him go. Let him go.' I'd had no idea it was that bad."

Ron Foulis, from whom Wendy had been virtually inseparable since they met in 1992, died the day before their 16th wedding anniversary.

More than a year later, Wendy Foulis says she's still angry with the hospital in Weyburn, and with the company he was working for.

"They sent him home in that condition with a load of trains," she says of the latter, "and through northern Ontario, with all those hills. I can only say that God was at the wheel on that trip because there's no way Ron could've driven that truck. He couldn't even pick up his overnight bag when he got home."

Wendy says doctors determined that Ron had a 90% blockage of his left ventricle and 100% of his right. "His family doctor didn't even do anything about it," she says, "and wouldn't you know this doctor moved away a couple of months later."

Foulis says her efforts to get legal recourse in Saskatchewan have been frustrated. "If you have a malpractice suit against a

Continued on page 6

**'God was at the wheel on that trip because there's no way Ron could've driven that truck.'**

Wendy Foulis

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## Cover Story

# Lessons can be learned from husband's passing, Wendy Foulis says

Continued from page 5

doctor," she says, "you have to have a lot of money and it's going to go on for years."

She says the lawyers wanted a retainer of \$10,000 to \$15,000 as well as a heart specialist's report, which she says can also cost thousands.

"I would dearly love to sue the pants off this man who determined that Ron had a chest infection, but I don't have the money."

All she was left with, she says, was her husband's life insurance policy.

"I turn 60 this year and can get old age pension – but if Ron knew

how I've been left to fend for myself after the way he put me on a pedestal..." her voice trails off. "We'd always say to each other 'Forever and ever,'" she says finally. "Every night he'd put his arm around me when we went to bed and I'd hold his thumb to go to sleep. Now my buddy isn't with me."

Wendy hopes her and Ron's story will serve as an example for other drivers who may find themselves far from home when a medical emergency strikes – and maybe as a wake-up call for bureaucrats, unions and companies.

"I want people to know that this

wonderful man had all the cards stacked against him," she says bitterly.

"No matter what way he turned it wasn't going to turn out good and for all the people he helped in his life there was no-one to help him when he needed it."

She also has some advice for dispatchers.

"They need to be a little more compassionate," she says.

"The dispatcher (out west) was so ignorant to Ron, and it shouldn't be that way because the drivers are making them money, they are paying them. It's a rough world right now and they need to

give their drivers the respect they deserve."

That respect for drivers of which she speaks is one of the reasons why the illuminated cross Ron Foulis built still shines brightly on Hwy. 21.

"After he passed away," Wendy says, "I found a plant there with a card saying 'Thank you so much for that cross because it has given me hope every time I've felt down or felt lost. It has helped me get through'."

And so the bright white beacon remains, a safety marker for drivers and a luminous monument to Wendy Foulis' best friend. □

## Industry reaction: What went wrong?

By Jim Bray

**WOODSTOCK, Ont.** – While Wendy Foulis is understandably upset and bitter about the circumstances of her husband's last trip to Saskatchewan, her experiences don't appear typical.

They do raise important issues, however, about knowing your responsibilities and your rights when it comes to contracts, insurance and even professional conduct.

We told her story to some people in and close to the industry, as well as the company, hospital and union involved in the Foulis case.

The company he worked for, understandably, was reluctant to address the individual issue, citing employee privacy issues. A company spokesman said he is familiar with the case, however.

"It's a tough story," he says, noting that after the earlier, fatal accident in Alberta that had Foulis off work for an extended period, "CLAC and the WCB were basically managing the situation," he says. "(We were) only involved peripherally."

So far as Foulis' time in Saskatchewan is concerned, however, he points out that his company has a collective agreement with

the Christian Labour Association of Canada and so Foulis would have been working under its provisions. "We've got all our own insurance," he adds, "So he would have been covered, absolutely."

He also mentioned the realities of federal legislation, and the fact that every driver is required to keep a logbook with their hours, as evidence that Foulis should not have been driving excessively or while ill.

"I don't know what the deal would be on that," he says, "but it's not something that (we) or any significant trucking company would fool around with. We're very focused on safety. That's your reputation, really."

The company spokesman also points out that drivers aren't forced to work overtime. "We have a supply of drivers and we keep within their hours," he says.

"I feel sorry for Mrs. Foulis," he adds. "It's a horrible situation. But (we) treat all our employees, whether drivers or staff, really well. It's just a great company."

"It's surprising he would have been turned away (from the hospital) suggesting it was because he didn't have coverage," says Glenn Caldwell of insurance provider

National Truck League.

"I really didn't think they could decline to provide medical treatment to anyone in need, especially if it was as serious as this."

He cites as an example his mother-in-law from the US. "She had an issue when visiting us in London a few years ago. They took her in no questions asked and just sent a bill to her US address."

Chris Henry, general manager of NAL Insurance agrees, noting that the worst that should have happened was that Foulis could have been charged the difference between what's covered under his Ontario health insurance and Saskatchewan's.

"Every province has an agreement with each other," he says. "The only exception that we know of is certain prescriptions, ambulance, etc. that may need to be absorbed."

As for the Weyburn, Sask. hospital, the quality of care coordinator for the Sun Country Health Region was unaware of the situation when first contacted and, like Foulis' employer and CLAC, was constrained by privacy issues.

Dianne Green did express surprise at the claim that Ron Foulis was turned away initially, however.

"It would not happen," she said. "We treat whoever comes in. We certainly try to get the money from the correct source when we can and, if it's an emergency, it's after the fact."

She said that if it's Wendy Foulis' perception that her husband was turned away, "We'd really like to correct it."

According to Wendy Foulis, Green got in contact with her after being apprised of the situation and has promised to look into it.

The Christian Labour Association of Canada was familiar with the case, though also constrained from talking about it very much, due to privacy issues.

But Alex Pannu, director of public affairs, says that the appropriate actions have been taken. "It's a tragic situation," he says, "but from what I've been able to understand it looks like the family had been in some financial difficulty before the death."

He says CLAC made a voluntary payment out of its "hardship fund" before Foulis' death and that the widow "received an insur-

ance payment and a bereavement fund."

Pannu says CLAC provided everything Foulis was permitted under the collective agreement.

"We felt badly," he says, "and feel we did everything we could for him and his family. Hopefully she can resolve whatever issues she has."

Pannu says he isn't aware whether she's made any additional representations to the union.

George Fraser, director of safety for Sharp Transportation Systems and an expert on the trucking industry, isn't familiar with this particular case, but says if there were problems with the hospital, the trucking company, or the system in general, Mrs. Foulis should have plenty of avenues open for redress.

"It sounds to me like this poor lady is the only one speaking on behalf of her husband and when she makes the phone calls the first weak-kneed individual just gets rid of her," he says.

"I'm surprised she isn't going after the company. I would be going to a lawyer if I were her. There's always a lawyer who'll take a case like this pro bono."

"She has some rights here," Fraser says. "She just needs someone to be her champion."

Fraser says if it were him, he'd get a local (Ontario) lawyer involved, who'd then have to start dealing with a counterpart in Saskatchewan.

Regardless of who is right and who is wrong – if anyone – in this particular case, Fraser says "In today's world, you should be able to go to a trucking company, get hired on and everything's going to be paid for, you have insurance covering you for medical, dental, and out-of-province."

That isn't always the case, however, though he isn't specific about companies who may not provide such benefits.

"With some companies you almost have to pay out of your pocket to get hired and it can be a lot of money," he says. "It's very unfair and sometimes not legal. I hate to see that."

Fraser also advises drivers to have a well-organized, financially smart spouse or other trusted person to keep them on the business straight and narrow to help avoid the kind of financial situation the Foulis' found themselves in. □

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# Healthy weight gain could be in store for Maine Interstates

**Carroll McCormick**  
**BANGOR, Me.** – Like a poor man guarding his only pair of good shoes, much of Maine's Interstate is off limits to trucks with a GVW over 80,000 lbs unless they buy special permits; only the Maine Turnpike, the portion of the I-95 running from Kittery on the New Hampshire state line, north to Augusta, allows 100,000 lbs as a matter of course.

Truckers running up to 100,000 lbs are, however, welcome to pound the state's secondary roads to their heart's content. Were the Interstate limit raised to 100,000 lbs, the trucking industry would enjoy fuel efficiency improvements of 14-21% and emission reductions of 6-11%, according to a recently-completed report by the American Transportation

Research Institute: *Estimating Truck Fuel Consumption and Emissions in Maine*. Safety and quality of life for rural residents would also be greatly improved.

"There would be a big difference in traffic patterns," says Rob Elder, director of the Office of Freight and Business Services, Maine Department of Transportation. "If this proposal passes it will remove 7.5 million loaded truck miles from primary and secondary arterials to the Interstate system."

This year, Senator Susan Collins wrote a pilot project provision for the 2010 Senate Transportation Appropriations Bill, which the Senate will vote on this fall. If this provision survives the vote, the Interstate limit will be raised to 100,000 lbs for one year.

"After the pilot project is over, the DoT will have to demonstrate that the traffic patterns have shifted, and pledge to maintain the (Interstate) at its current levels, which we do," Elder explains.

The 80,000-lb cap causes plenty of grief for carriers coming from neighbouring states and Canada, where higher weight limits rule.

For example, Gosselin Express in Thetford Mines, Quebec, trundles around freight such as huge blocks of granite in Maine, mostly on its secondary highways, sometimes on the Interstate under special permit. According to Sylvain Poirier, Gosselin's director of operations, the negative attributes of the secondary highways include, "curving roads, villages, two-lane highways, and we can't travel at the speed limits."

Quebec has two direct border crossings into Maine: Armstrong and Woburn.

A call to the Canadian Border Services Agency yielded the following facts: From Jan. 1, 2009 to Aug. 31, 2009 2,676 southbound trucks taking Quebec's highway 73/173 crossed at Armstrong onto Maine's Route 201.

At Woburn, the other Quebec-Maine crossing, 1,813 trucks taking highway 212 entered Maine onto Route 27 during the same period. Curious for hard facts about how the pilot might help Quebec carriers, I contacted Mark Bowie, president of ProMiles Canada. He kindly agreed to use one of ProMiles' routing and

mileage applications to analyze some trips in which carriers may prefer the Interstate over secondary roads.

I created eight trips: Three southbound trips from Quebec City to Bangor, Augusta and Houlton via Armstrong; three northbound trips from Portsmouth, on the New Hampshire state line to Bangor, Houlton and Quebec City.

The last two trips I created for southbound traffic via the 55, crossing at Stanstead onto Vermont's 91, then swinging east at St. Johnsbury, VT toward Maine: They run from St. Johnsbury to Bangor and St. Johnsbury to Houlton.

A programmer built the trips on ProMiles XF Kingpin Version 14, which has address-to-address routing at street level. First, he ran each trip with the appropriate parts of the Interstate capped at 80,000 pounds GVW. Then he ran the trips with the GVW increased to 100,000 lbs.

The only trip that yielded no improvement between 80,000 lbs and 100,000 lbs in miles driven or gallons burned was Quebec City-Houlton: the 95 was 40 miles longer and used seven gallons more.

A look at the table for trips, roads and time results reveals that seven of the eight trips yield improved times. Truckers already know that using the Interstate more would reduce wear and tear on rigs and nerves. □

*ProMiles XF Kingpin Version 14 trip simulation times at 80,000- and 100,000-lb Interstate limit scenarios. (The Maine Turnpike was set at the current legal maximum of 100,000 lbs. for both scenarios). Green figures indicate time savings:*

Trip (weight limit)	Route	Time
Quebec City-Bangor (80K)	173/201/2	5:01
Quebec City-Bangor (100K)	173/201/2/95	4:54
Quebec City-Augusta (80K)	173/201	4:45
Quebec City-Augusta (100K)	173/201/95	4:39
Quebec City-Houlton (80K)	173/201/16/2/2ALT	6:12
Quebec City-Houlton (100K)	173/201/95	6:44
St. Johnsbury-Bangor (80K)	2	5:00
St. Johnsbury-Bangor (100K)	2/95	4:53
St. Johnsbury-Houlton (80K)	2/2ALT	7:13
St. Johnsbury-Houlton (100K)	2/95	6:43
Portsmouth-Bangor (80K)	95/202	3:04
Portsmouth-Bangor (100K)	95	2:50
Portsmouth-Houlton (80K)	95/202/2/2ALT	5:05
Portsmouth-Houlton (100K)	95	4:40
Portsmouth-Quebec City (80K)	95/201/173	6:32
Portsmouth-Quebec City (100K)	95/201/173	6:16

## FTR conference hints of slow recovery

**INDIANAPOLIS, Ind.** – Despite reports that the Canadian economy is bouncing back quicker than expected, it may be a long road back to prosperity for the US trucking industry, according to speakers at FTR Associates' annual Freight Transportation Conference.

The two-day conference, held Aug. 25-27, featured speakers from the Federal Reserve, Wall Street, freight carriers, shippers, suppliers and consultants as well as FTR itself. Highlights included: the US recovery will be slowed by subdued consumer spending, leading to continued high unemployment and slow growth for freight volumes; the US is currently at the bottom of its steepest freight decline since 1980-1982, with freight down 15% from the previous peak; it'll be a buyer's market for freight transportation services in the near-term, as depressed volumes and excess capacity continue to rule, putting continued pressure on carrier margins; high levels of excess capacity will continue, as US banks are still reluctant to foreclose on heavily-discounted assets from near-bankrupt carriers; and carriers may not reach "equilibrium" until 2011. □

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# Firestone

**Industry**

**Deja vu all over again at CBP with new Customs requirements for container residues**

It seems like we have been through all this before. The US Customs and Border Protection Agency (CBP) comes out with proposed new rules or programs, doesn't consult meaningfully with industry, forges ahead regardless, rushes implementation, gets industry in a lather and then at the very last minute pulls back for long overdue sober-second thought.

Anybody remember the rush to get FAST cards, ACE implementation, or DTOPS?

On July 17 2009, CBP published a ruling modification requiring all empty tanker trucks, ISO 20-foot tanks, rail tanks and large bulk carriers to provide a manifest and file a Customs entry for all cargo residue entering the US starting Sept. 16.

Prior to this change, cargo residue was treated as part of the Instrument of International Traffic, exempting it from manifest and entry requirements. Now, the little bit of residue left in a tank truck after unloading will have to be measured, valued and treated like a good for CBP purposes.

The original notice proposing the rule change was issued in August 2008.

At the time, CTA and other groups objected strenuously.

However, CBP categorically rejected everyone's concerns, once again leaving cross-border carriers and shippers to struggle to implement costly operational and policy changes in response to new CBP rules that many feel are over-the-top and unrealistic and which have not been subject to a meaningful consultative process.

CBP claims the rule is needed to protect the health and safety of CBP officers, arguing that officers have a right to know if they are in close proximity to a partially empty container that may contain substances that may pose a risk. That's fair enough.

CTA does not dispute the importance of that objective. However, the ruling extends beyond chemi-



**Industry Issues**

**David Bradley**

cals and hazardous materials to include all bulk commodities, such as wood chips or milk, which pose little or no health and safety risk.

Moreover, under current practice, a manifest indicates the presence of residue.

An alternative but more effective approach could be to require a description of the residue on the manifest. This would allow CBP officers to reasonably assess product safety while acknowledging that the product is in residual quantities. This is a more realistic and operationally feasible solution than having to somehow measure all residues and classifying them for Customs entry.

The challenge of measuring a quantity of cargo residue can be enormous and costly.

Many companies simply don't have the capability. In the case of liquids, viscosity is a factor in accurate measure.

Adjustments to quantities will be required in nearly every instance, negating the purpose of providing a quantity to CBP in the first place.

If the quantity is residual, it is minimal by definition. Does CBP expect drivers, shippers or receivers to stick their heads into a tank to try and measure residual quantity? What about their health and safety? How will CBP check if the quantity is accurate?

Furthermore, in the absence of a formal transaction, it is unclear who the owner of the residue is. How will CBP determine ownership? Who will they sanction in the case of errors? If an entry is required, there will be Customs broker charges associated with the preparation, submission and post-import adjustment of an entry.



**CUSTOMS CHAOS:** Crossing the borders continues to be complicated by new requirements that are not always well thought out.

And, what about border crossing times? Since residue is currently treated as part of the Instrument of International Traffic, carriers are not required to wait for a Customs entry. Under the new requirements carriers will be subject to additional delays where currently there are none as they wait for the Customs broker to file the entry.

CBP contends the ruling will not adversely impact FAST shipments.

Currently if a carrier is a member of C-TPAT/FAST, the carrier hauling residue is able to take advantage of FAST lane privileges regardless of the importer's status in the low-risk programs since there is no current requirement for a Customs entry. Once the ruling takes effect and an entry is required for the residue, the importer will have to be C-TPAT certified for the carrier to be able to use the FAST lane.

These otherwise empty trailers will be forced into regular traffic lanes. One mid-size CTA carrier with 35 cross-border residue trips a week estimates the cost of manifesting and subsequently waiting for a Customs broker to file an entry will exceed \$150,000 per year. Washing each tanker prior to entering the US is not viable.

There is significant additional

overhead associated with the cost of cleaning agents, administration, and the purchase and/or rental of additional trailers that will be needed to ensure customer service needs are met. All of this is also likely to require extra miles and will impinge upon drivers' hours-of-service.

Then on Aug. 25 – about three weeks from the Sept. 16 launch date – CBP announced that while not withdrawing the new requirements, a decision had been made to postpone enforcement of the new rule for a minimum of 60 days to provide an opportunity for CBP and industry to assess the impact to trade and address the many questions that remain.

Better late than never, I suppose. And, we are certainly pleased that CBP appears to now be listening. But it follows a disturbing pattern and unnecessarily puts the industry through periods of panic when meaningful consultation from the get-go could have perhaps avoided all the disruption. We have between now and November to try and get things on the right track. □

– David Bradley is president of the Ontario Trucking Association and chief executive officer of the Canadian Trucking Alliance.

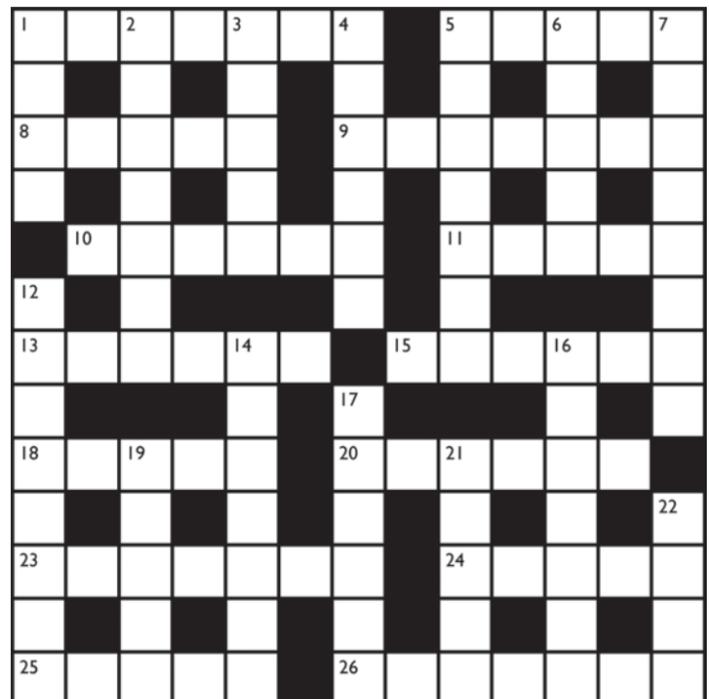
**THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE**

**Across**

- 1. Border crossing south of Montreal
- 5. Windshield adjunct
- 8. Dash dial
- 9. Home of "Heart of Dixie" plates
- 10. Compression-ignition engine
- 11. Uses the horn
- 13. Direction indicators, often
- 15. Country-road coating, commonly
- 18. Cartage company's delivery range
- 20. Diesel counterpart of gasoline octane
- 23. A pneumatic suspension (3,4)
- 24. Unwanted tire-tread items
- 25. Trip pauses
- 26. Truck-stop offerings, often

**Down**

- 1. Load on sawmill-bound rig
- 2. UPS or FedEx driver
- 3. Lenders' claims on trucks
- 4. BlackBerry messages from home
- 5. Driver's concern, especially in winter
- 6. Unmarked police car, a.k.a. \_\_\_\_ wrapper
- 7. Truck-eating substance (4,4)
- 12. Commercial-carrier consignments
- 14. Certain sleepers (4,3)
- 16. Trucking-company type (3,4)
- 17. Certain fasteners
- 19. Peterbilt payload
- 21. Radio code for T
- 22. Used-truck ad's worrisome words (2,2)



Answers on page 23

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# Taming free-radicals

Over the past 20 years the words free-radicals, anti-oxidants and phyto-chemicals have become common terms used by health promoters.

The basic understanding is that when your body has more free-radicals your health declines; when you have more anti-oxidants and phyto-chemicals your health improves. Why?

The body uses oxygen for metabolic reactions. When oxygen reacts with other body compounds in these reactions, it often creates free-radicals as a byproduct – a highly unstable molecule. In addition, other stressors can produce free-radicals, like exposure to cigarette smoke, radiation, a high fat diet and pollution.

Why be concerned about free-radicals? What makes them bad?

Because a free-radical molecule has at least one unpaired electron, it travels through the body looking for an electron to steal from another molecule in order to balance its own electrical field. This instability makes a free-radical highly reactive.

This isn't always bad. Our immune system uses the high-reactivity of free-radicals to create a burst of energy to destroy disease-causing bacteria and viruses.

Outside of that, the reactivity of free radicals can wreak havoc with our health.

When a free radical steals an electron from a stable molecule,

## Preventive Maintenance

Karen Bowen



that molecule becomes unstable and begins travelling around the body looking for another electron to steal from another molecule in order to balance itself electrically. Then, the molecule that is now missing an electron begins searching for another electron to steal, causing a chain reaction. This chain reaction changes the composition of healthy molecules throughout the body, leading to disease.

This is where anti-oxidants help out. The great thing about anti-oxidants is that when they donate one of their electrons to balance a free-radical, they, themselves, do not become free-radicals. They are stable with or without an unpaired electron. For example, when ascorbic acid (Vitamin C) gives up two hydrogen (and their electrons) to balance a free-radical, ascorbic acid simply becomes dehydroascorbic acid, which is also a stable molecule. So, the chain reaction ends.

This is important because free-radicals can cause extensive damage. They attack and damage the fatty acids in fatty proteins, and in cell-membranes. As a result, substances can't travel freely in and out of our cells, so our body has dif-

iculty getting nutrients in and getting waste out of our cells. Free-radicals also damage cell proteins, so cells stop functioning as they should. Free-radicals also cause DNA to mutate, so when cells reproduce to create new cells the new cells are flawed and don't work like the original cell.

Fortunately, our body has some built-in defenses for controlling free-radicals. Enzymes disarm the most harmful ones. To keep the enzymes effective the following minerals are essential: selenium, copper, manganese and zinc.

However, as we get older, these defense and repair systems become less effective. So, the damaged cells accumulate over time, leading particularly to cancer, arthritis, cataracts and heart disease.

Luckily, our body also creates some of its own anti-oxidants. However, most of our anti-oxidants come through the food we eat. Our body uses the Vitamin E and beta-carotene in our diet to protect its fats. Vitamin C protects the body's fluids. Vitamin C is especially good at neutralizing free-radicals caused by air pollution and cigarette smoke. It also can make Vitamin E active again after it's been oxidized.

Because cancers are often caused by damaged DNA, anti-oxidants may be the best prevention. Studies have certainly shown that people who eat lots of fresh vegetables and fruits rich in anti-oxidants have significantly lower rates of cancer.

Foods high in beta-carotene are particularly effective against lung,

mouth cervical and breast cancers. Vitamin C seems to protect against mouth, larynx, and esophageal cancers. Vitamins E and C protect against heart disease.

Another tool to prevent disease is phytochemicals. These are not actually considered nutrients, but are compounds found in food. They create the colours and flavours in the foods we enjoy and are closely tied to the health benefits of those foods. It seems that the unique combination of anti-oxidants, fibre and phytochemicals of foods is what creates the health benefit package of that specific food. A diet rich in a variety of fruits, vegetables and whole grains gives your body the best benefit because it contains a combination of all the different ingredients of many food options.

When deciding which fruits or vegetables to choose, generally speaking, the brighter/richer the colour of the fruit or vegetable, the greater the benefit for your health.

As the fall season approaches, it is certainly a great time to take advantage of all the excellent fresh fruit and vegetable choices available. Consider your lifestyle and then provide your body with everything it needs to keep your cells in tip-top shape.

The bright fruits and vegetables you pack in your brown-bag lunch today may help you avoid the doctor's black bag in the future. □

– Karen Bowen is a professional health and nutrition consultant and she can be reached by e-mail at [karen\\_bowen@yahoo.com](mailto:karen_bowen@yahoo.com).

# Feeling dog tired despite a good sleep? It could be anemia

Do you feel tired and weak even after a good night's sleep? Do you run out of energy very easily? If you said yes to either of these questions then you may have anemia. In simple terms, anemia is a condition in which your red blood cells do not carry sufficient amounts of oxygen to the tissues of your body. There are several causes of anemia, however some are more common than others.

In order to understand anemia we must first discuss red blood cells. The main purpose of these cells is to transport oxygen from your lungs to your brain, organs and tissues, through your blood stream. In order for your body to function normally, it needs a constant supply of oxygenated blood.

Red blood cells contain proteins called hemoglobins which are mainly made up of iron. This is what gives your blood its red colour. Oxygen from your lungs is carried in the hemoglobin proteins through your bloodstream.

The most common cause of anemia is an iron deficiency. In fact, this type of anemia affects about 1-2% of adults in North America.

Due to the lack of iron, your body is unable to produce enough hemoglobin for healthy red blood cells.

Another cause of anemia is vitamin deficiencies. In addition to iron, your body requires folate and Vitamin B-12 to produce healthy red blood cells. A diet which is lacking in these nutrients may lead to decreased red blood cell production.

## Back behind the wheel

Dr. Chris Singh



Other chronic conditions such as cancer, HIV/AIDS, Crohn's disease and kidney failure may also cause anemia. The signs and symptoms of anemia can vary from person to person depending on its cause however, many people experience fatigue, shortness of breath, chest pain, headaches, dizziness and irregular heartbeat.

In most cases, the symptoms start very mild and then progress as the anemia worsens.

It is important to consult your doctor if you are experiencing fatigue and cannot explain it, as untreated anemia can cause severe complications and even death.

The most common complications of untreated anemia affect the heart and nerves. So, how is anemia diagnosed? Doctors diagnose anemia after completing a medical history, physical exam and a series of blood tests. These blood tests measure the levels of your red blood cells as well as your hemoglobin.

In some cases, your doctor will examine your red blood cells under a microscope looking for abnormalities in size, shape and colour.

This will help your doctor pinpoint the exact cause of your ane-

mia. If your doctor suspects that there is an underlying condition which is causing your anemia he or she may order additional specialized tests. As you may have guessed, the treatment of anemia mainly depends on its cause.

For example, if there is a nutritional deficiency your doctor will recommend taking supplements for several months or longer. However, in the case of an underlying condition causing anemia, once the condition is identified and treated, the anemia will often disappear on its own.

Although many types of anemia are not preventable, you can help

avoid iron and vitamin deficiency anemias by eating a balanced diet. Good sources of iron include beef and other meats as well as beans, lentils and dark green leafy vegetables. Folate can be found in citrus juices and fruits, bananas and pastas. Vitamin B-12 is found in meat and dairy products.

The good news about anemia is that in most cases, anemia is a very mild and treatable condition. The key is early detection. □

– Dr. Chris Singh runs Trans Canada Chiropractic at 230 Truck Stop in Woodstock, Ont.

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# Cooling it

## Alternative climate control units could put fleets on path towards energy savings and lower maintenance costs

By Julia Kuzeljevich

**TORONTO, Ont.** – With customer demand for ‘greener’ technology on the rise, plus pressures within companies themselves for reduced carbon footprints and cost control measures, there’s no shortage of factors to consider for fleet managers running reefer-equipped vehicles.

At the 46th Canadian Fleet Maintenance Seminar, a panel of industry experts discussed the options on the table for alternative climate control that would reduce fuel consumption and harness renewable energy sources.

John Sheikh, a reefer leasing specialist with PLM Train Trailer Leasing, said that challenges to fleets using climate control units aren’t few: the need for reliable performance, product integrity, the reduction of trailer downtime, increased driver productivity, lower maintenance costs, fuel economy, the reduction of carbon footprints, and an increased profit margin.

But the true cost of running these units relates to fuel, said Sheikh.

“Carriers are making good strides towards hybrids but are not there yet,” he said, cautioning that hybrids are not to be confused with electric vehicles.

“Hybrid vehicles offer two different energy converters, and two different energy storage systems on-board for the purpose of vehicle propulsion,” said Sheikh.

Rick Boily, district service manager with Thermo King, said that the company has several options in terms of alternative climate control available now, and is currently testing others for use down the road.

The B100 is an all-electric, temperature control unit for fresh food applications in small vans. With low amp consumption, the unit requires no added compressor or vehicle modifications, is strictly battery-powered, and offers road and electric standby operation as an option.

The company’s new T-series uses a hybrid smart power option.

“Its exterior skin offers 50% reduced noise with a honeycomb grille that directs noise upward. Panels are made from recyclable gelyoplastic,” said Boily, adding that the unit has a robust construction that hides scratches and offers one body hole size, and one bolt pattern for all units.

The T-series offers a Tier 4 diesel engine that runs 10% better on fuel, and has an EMI 2000 filter that reduces waste.

“The hybrid smart power electrical operation has a next generation TK 04 and TK 06 scroll compressor, and the same SR2 controller board that’s been used in trailer ap-

plications since 2004. There is more parts commonality,” said Boily.

The T-series also offers stationary ‘Over the Road’ hybrid smart power.

“We’ve developed and are testing a smart power option that converts DC voltage from lithium batteries to AC power. It will have diesel, hybrid (that can run while the truck is running) and shore power. The unit will also auto-switch between modes based on ambient and power supply requirements. It will be smart enough to know which is the cheapest way to go, whether it is plugged in or driving,” said Boily.

By running on electric standby power, and by plugging in the unit at a distribution centre instead of running on diesel, you could save some 71% of your overall costs, based on diesel at seven cents a gallon and electricity at nine cents per kW/h, he noted.

“This doesn’t include the savings you’d get on the maintenance of your engines. This is an option that was very popular in the 70s and is coming back,” said Boily.

Cryogenics, a technology that’s been offered in Europe for a while, and that’s being tested in California, offers no engine emissions, and silent and reliable technology, he said.

Liquid carbon dioxide moves from the tank through an evaporator coil inside the cargo area.

Air circulates over the coil. After useful energy is extracted from the carbon dioxide, vapour is exhausted into the atmosphere, and heat generated by the vehicle engine coolant.

It’s ideal for distribution purposes. There are fewer moving parts, and rapid temperature recovery. There is no refrigerant but you have to fill up the tank daily and get about an 8-10 hour use, depending on the tank size.

“You have to weigh the initial cost against your long-term gain,” said Boily of the technology.

Tripac, another technology that’s been out for about five years, offers a 1,000-hour maintenance interval.

“You can put it in sensing mode so it doesn’t work during out-of-service days. It has automatic start/stop for maximum fuel economy,” he said.

Fuel savings in the future will most likely be achieved through cryogenics technology, electrical engines, compressor technology, hydrogen power fuel cells, and ‘super insulation technology’ that would save gallons of fuel through better thermal insulation, said Boily.

Wayne Scott of Loblaw’s, said the company has some 2,000 reefers in Canada which each run



**COOLING COSTS:** Fleets that haul refrigerated goods are looking for ways to lower their refrigeration costs with new technologies such as hybrid reefers.

about 10 hours a day. They are looking at two areas of opportunity to reduce their carbon footprint: trailer refrigeration and distribution center/trailer refrigeration.

“The vision has to be ‘top down’ and there has to be a culture in place. Within our 910 million kg carbon dioxide footprint in 2008, 25% of that footprint is based on refrigeration,” he said.

Companies like Loblaw’s that are heavily involved in distribution functions with high cube requirements, can only go so far in terms of gaining thermal efficiency through trailer walls, roofs, and sealings, given the fact that thicker walls and sealings won’t fit as many skids.

The company is partnering with Sunwell Technologies to eliminate the diesel engine out of reefers with ‘deep chill thermo battery refrigeration,’ and reduce the amount of refrigerant gases used in their distribution centres.

The technology involves setting up chilling stations at distribution centres, at the temperatures required for grocery distribution. Thermal storage tanks can hook up to a trailer, then the tanks are plugged in and will maintain the temperature as they cycle through, said Scott, who noted that Loblaw’s wants to reduce its carbon footprint by some 3%.

“This product can maintain 96 hours at a constant temperature of -6 degrees Celsius, with most distribution centre deliveries taking between a five to six hour or less delivery window. I’ve got a lot of reefers in the marketplace right now that are single and multi-temperature. I can put this technology into all types of units or I can leave it empty and use it as a dry box. Part and parcel of this is if I can take this into a DC as well I can use it in my cooling chambers or freezers, and it results in 1/10th of the former refrigeration needed at a DC,” said Scott.

With electric standby reefers, there’s still an electrical carbon footprint, but depending on how electricity is generated and where you’re using it, this footprint can vary, he said.

“I can pre-charge this and shut it off, and benefit through a reduction in utility costs when utility rates are high,” said Scott, who noted that Loblaw’s is looking at acquiring 30-40% more equipment offering hydro only or hybrid power.

Jim Clarke, executive account manager for Carrier Transcold, said that when looking at some of

the proposed alternatives to climate control, there are still some technological hurdles to overcome, with regards to power, limited ranges, cost, and weight issues.

Hybrid reefers, however, could offer a real advantage in terms of savings, he said. There are fewer parts to contend with, greater reliability, high system efficiency, and electric standby power. They also have less environmental impact.

“At their core, today’s conventional systems are mechanical. When you adapt these systems through various components to run electric standby equipment it adds additional weight and complexity, and additional maintenance items,” said Clarke.

Hybrid technology is specifically designed with an all-electric architecture, with reliability in mind, to eliminate moving parts, he added.

“A hybrid unit eliminates many of the maintenance elements of mechanical transmission components, such as drive belts, fan shafts, compressor drive shaft, shaft seals, and centrifugal clutch mounted on the compressor of the conventional standby unit. A multi-temperature hybrid unit shows a 30% decrease in maintenance costs. It also runs when it needs to so it saves fuel. With a conventional unit, once the engine starts, every component (ie. compressor, evaporator fan, condenser fan) runs, whether you want it to or not. Hybrids also use 33% less refrigerant, and have 50% fewer brazed joints,” said Clarke.

While use of hybrid units offers the promise of maintenance savings and lower fuel usage, batteries themselves have their own footprint. The lifespan of a hybrid lithium-ion battery will depend on how far you deep-cycle it, said Boily.

“It might have 400 cycles. What kills batteries is the cycling. Your best option is to keep that battery efficient, keeping the voltage as constant as possible,” he said.

The longer the battery can be kept in service, the ‘greener’ its footprint.

“There is technology that is more expensive, for example the EON Thermo King that contains no acid. It’s completely dry, and has a four-year warranty replacement. But the typical battery today will run one and a half to two years at best,” said Boily.

With regard to what issues might arise if electricity costs spike, as they already have in places like Europe, “It’s a struggle everyone has to deal with,” said Boily. □

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**MILES AHEAD**

## Fleet News

By Lou Smyrlis

**GUELPH, Ont.** – This summer's most sizzling acquisition announcement – the purchase of the St. Thomas, Ont.-based Walker Group of companies by MacKinnon Transport – is getting two thumbs up from industry analysts who believe it to be the start of further consolidation in Canada's beleaguered truckload sector.

The deal, announced at the end of August, creates a combined entity that will operate out of MacKinnon's head office in Guelph where the company will now manage over 1,300 pieces of equipment and employ a workforce of 420 people. The Walker Group consisted of LE Walker Transport and Mid America Freight Systems, both major players in the dry van and flatbed marketplaces in North America.

The Walker Group was led by the highly visible Julie Tanguay, current chair of the Ontario Trucking Association. Tanguay will now have joint ownership in the combined entity and will take on the newly-created role of executive vice-president sales, heading up sales efforts for the combined fleet.

"I think this is a very interesting play for MacKinnon and Walker. I think it's the right move and I expect more consolidation in the TL sector," said Elian Turner, a director of investment banking with Scotia Capital.

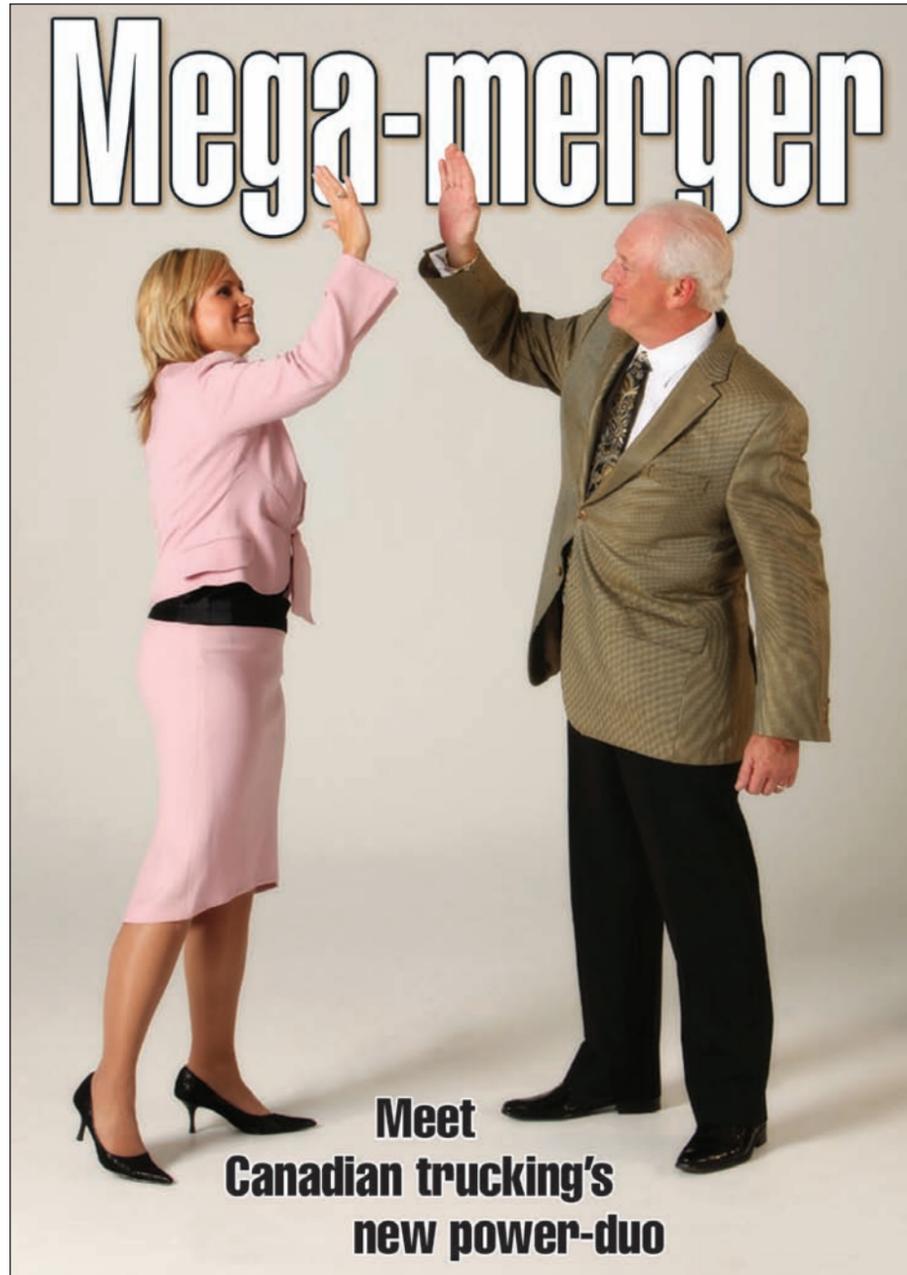
This also represents a different type of deal than what the industry has seen in the recent past. A lot of the mergers and acquisitions the market had seen prior to the recession involved moves into new market segments for the carriers involved. Over the past year, with access to credit tightening significantly, the activity had focused instead on small opportunistic "tuck-in" type deals.

"This one is really more of a consolidation play in a weaker segment of the industry. The TL sector has taken a big beating and I've got to think TL owners are thinking that to be ready for another business cycle they're going to have to pair up with someone. But in terms of attractiveness of TL, it's not really attractive to any other type of carrier. If a guy is asset light, he's not interested in TL; if he's specialized, he's not interested in TL," Turner said. "The TL guys are going to have to solve it on their own and I think MacKinnon and Walker are doing the right thing in being a first mover here."

Well-known industry consultant Dan Goodwill, a former trucking company executive himself, also praised the deal as a good move with a real chance for success.

"Everything that I read and hear is that the economic rebound is going to take three to four years to get back to where things were. It's supposed to be a long and bumpy road and slow building up one's business," Goodwill said. "If MacKinnon and Walker can retain the revenue, right size the business, drive some synergies, and the financials of the deal are solid, this would be a good move."

Tanguay and Evan MacKinnon, who continues as president and CEO of MacKinnon Transport, believe the acquisition provides the new entity with several advantages as it continues to deal with the cur-



**HIGH FIVES ALL AROUND:** Industry analysts applauded the summer's major trucking acquisition, with MacKinnon Transport acquiring Walker Group. Pictured, Julie Tanguay of Walker Group and Evan MacKinnon of MacKinnon Transport celebrate the new deal which creates the newest Canadian truckload powerhouse.

rent downturn and the eventual economic recovery as well as new benefits for shippers.

Both carriers are involved in transborder hauls. But Walker's strength was greater in southbound freight hauls to the US while MacKinnon was stronger in their northbound runs into Canada.

"We are both irregular route TL carriers. We get in places where we are not there every day. And so we rely on freight brokers quite often to reposition our trucks. When we start mixing their customers with ours there will be less reliance on freight broker freight going forward and we will be able to close up some empty miles. Even 1% fewer empty miles is three quarters of a million dollars to us," MacKinnon told *Truck West*.

Walker's St. Thomas terminal will continue to operate in the short-term but eventually (likely by year end) will be merged into MacKinnon's Guelph operation. All drivers and owner/operators have been retained but there will be some savings realized in combining support staff.

Both companies deal with some large shipper accounts. The Walker Group has some large food products accounts while MacKinnon deals with some large building materials accounts. Both companies haul liquor but for different accounts. Adding Walker's more than 500 pieces of equipment to MacKinnon's 800, creates a significant amount of capacity, better geographical coverage and new capabilities.

Tanguay says bringing together

MacKinnon and Walker strategically positions the beefed up new entity in a way that will help it respond rapidly to changing markets and customer requirements. And she adds the customer bases of the two companies were quite diversified with very little duplication of accounts (5% or less).

Turner concurs: "The TL guys service the big box guys and the big box guys are elephants and they like to dance with elephants. The more scale and concentration you can present the better positioned you will be for the upswing," Turner commented. MacKinnon sees plenty of opportunity for growth within existing Walker and MacKinnon accounts, which are operating at about 60% of normal freight volumes today after two years of freight declines. In addition to better geographic coverage and more capacity, Walker clients will also benefit from access to MacKinnon's warehousing offerings. But MacKinnon believes the greatest benefit to customers stemming from the transaction will be the ability to grow in a financially sound manner.

"There are more and more customers concerned these days if a company has a financial problem: where is their freight going to be when that happens? As far as a customer looking to develop a relationship for the long-term, this is going to make us very financially strong," MacKinnon said.

"When the opportunity for growth comes, now that we've combined the two companies and with the level of profitability we're going

to achieve, it means we will not be eating up equity to sustain the business, which is what most trucking companies are doing these days."

Tanguay and MacKinnon have known each other for over a decade, working together on the OTA and as partners in the Fleet Resolutions insurance captive both of their fleets belonged to. The relationship forged during those years allowed for the deal to happen quickly once interest on both sides was confirmed. MacKinnon added that although the freight recession has left many trucking companies available for sale, Walker was not actually one of them.

"They weren't for sale. We started talking to them about opportunities. What probably initiated it was the mutual respect Julie and I had for each other and it evolved into something more than an acquisition because Julie now also has ownership in MacKinnon Transport," he said. "There are lots of opportunities out there but there are not always owners and CEOs who can work together in a partnership. That really helped when the two of us were putting this together. Both of us shared common values and ethics and that's another thing that was really key to us. It's going to make a huge difference when we start merging everything under one facility, the fact that we have similar cultures in our two businesses because trying to change cultures is very difficult."

Both companies are also family-run businesses, which MacKinnon believes also paves the way for compatibility. MacKinnon credits his company's long-standing relationship with Bank of Montreal (BMO) for helping to make the acquisition possible. He adds that his company's focus over the past year to improve its profitability was key to being able to negotiate the deal with BMO.

"We came out of special loans, where pretty near every trucker is, a few months ago based on our results. We proved to them that we do what we say we are going to do. And we turned over just about every rock we could to put this together on an ongoing basis, figuring out where we want to be six months from now, a year from now, 18 months from now," MacKinnon explained. "This whole thing was put together in about 10 weeks, which to do that in today's banking environment is pretty amazing."

Is the fact that BMO was willing to participate in the MacKinnon-Walker deal indicative of a financial market finally loosening up?

"In terms of the banks we have seen them now be fairly open vis-a-vis refinancings. In terms of new financings it certainly was tight end of last year and start of this year but we are starting to see discussions around acquisition financing," Turner says. But although he expects to see more merger and acquisition activity in the months to come, he cautions that such activity is not only driven by credit financing but also by confidence.

"You need to have CEOs and business owners confident about what they see over the next 12 months. To the extent they are confident they will be interested in looking at transactions and that confidence will also flow to their bankers. The two go hand in hand," he said. □

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There will be a skill testing question.



## Hybrids

# One quiet shhh-unt truck

Glasvan Great Dane showcases first hybrid Capacity terminal tractor

By James Menzies

**MISSISSAUGA, Ont.** – A hard-run terminal tractor burns fuel pretty much around the clock, so it was only a matter of time before fuel-saving hybrid technology was applied to the shunt truck industry. Capacity of Texas showcased its new PHETT (Pluggable Hybrid Electric Terminal Tractor) recently during an open house at Ontario dealer Glasvan Great Dane.

Billed as the industry's first hybrid terminal truck, the PHETT impressed customers and media as it glided around the yard nearly soundlessly. Gone is the noisy diesel engine that normally powers such trucks and in its place is a 220-horse-

power AC traction motor. A 20-kW on-board gen-set recharges the batteries when power dips below 50% of their charge, however it does not propel the vehicle itself, according to Capacity's Kevin Hebert. He said the PHETT can typically run for one to three hours between charges and is still operational while the gen-set kicks in to recharge the batteries.

"The only thing you do have (while charging) is a little increase in the decibel level," he said.

The truck is loaded up with two battery packs containing 52 absorbed glass mat (AGM) batteries, which have a life expectancy of at least five years, according to Hebert. The frame has been beefed up to



**STAR ATTRACTION:** The new Pluggable Hybrid Electric Terminal Tractor (PHETT) from Capacity attracted much attention during its Canadian debut at Glasvan Great Dane.

Photo by James Menzies

## MISSING

### WENDY HUDAKOC 5472-U



**D.O.B.:** Aug. 12, 1984

**Missing since:** Nov. 15, 1998

**Missing from:** Naples, Florida

**Height:** 5' 7"

**Weight:** 130 lbs.

**Eye Colour:** Light Brown

**Hair Colour:** Hazel



Photo age-enhanced

**Characteristics:** Wears braces on her top and bottom teeth; left ear has double piercing.

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## WOWTRUCKS - Canada 2008

An Image Tribute to the 2008 Show 'n' Shine Season

By David Benjatschek

This book, created in conjunction with Pro-Trucker Magazine and Truck News, is an image tribute to 525 trucks met at several major Show 'n' Shine competitions across Canada in 2008.

**Trucks covered are from the following shows:**

- The Pro-Trucker Alberta Big Rig Weekend
- The Pro-Trucker BC Big Rig Weekend
- The Fergus Truck Show
- Rodeo du Camion

Also including: the Vancouver Island Truck Show and the Northern BC Show 'n' Shine.

[www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/626313](http://www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/626313)



accommodate the extra weight, some of which is recovered from the absence of a heavy diesel engine.

The PHETT operates much the same as a traditional shunt truck, but drivers will appreciate the extra torque and responsiveness you'll get only from an electric motor.

"This unit has a lot more torque than our diesel product," explained Hebert. Specifically, the PHETT delivers 1,376 lb.-ft. of torque at the rear wheels whereas a typical diesel-powered Capacity shunt truck delivers only 700-800 lb.-ft., he said.

Inside the cab, the dash layout is no different than what you'll find inside conventional Capacity terminal tractors. However, a new 'Fast Fifth Feature' has been added. It's a small red button on the top of the shifter that allows the driver to energize the hydraulic motor RPM to raise or lower the fifth wheel at various speeds while the truck is at idle.

Also new is an optional fold-down seat that a trainer can use to tutor new drivers. This nice touch was made possible by the absence of the bulky diesel engine under the cab, Hebert explained.

In addition to the main electric motor, the PHETT features two smaller electric motors. An accessory drive motor powers the hydraulics and steering and another small motor runs a coolant fan.

The 40-horsepower, 20 kW

Cummins gen-set will include an optional plug-in outlet so customers can power small equipment and devices in the event of a power loss.

The PHETT comes with a charging station that requires a 220-volt, 50-amp receptacle for charging while not in use. The PHETT is EPA2010-compliant without costly exhaust aftertreatment. However, like anything hybrid, it will be more costly than your conventional shunt truck. Hebert said the PHETT will cost roughly \$180,000 – or about 80% more than a traditional terminal tractor today. But even so, the fuel savings of 50-60% will result in a 3.5-year payback even without any government funding, Hebert said.

"Most of that is because of the reduction in fuel usage and then the maintenance costs you have without the standard diesel engine," he explained. And for environmentally-conscious fleets and shippers, the environmental benefits are also worth considering. According to third-party testing in the US, Hebert says the PHETT provides a 77% reduction in hydrocarbons and NOx and an 85% reduction in particulate matter (PM) compared to today's typical shunt trucks. That's to say nothing of the reduction in noise pollution.

To see video of the PHETT, check out the Sept. 10 episode of our WebTV show *Transportation Matters* on Trucknews.com. □

## Navistar's hybrids exceed five million mile mark

**WARRENVILLE, Ill.** – Navistar says it is the first OEM to exceed five million real-world miles with its hybrid-powered trucks and buses.

"With a wide range of hybrid trucks and buses, we continue to be a leader in providing energy-saving, environmentally friendly transportation solutions," said Jack Allen, president, Navistar's North American Truck Group. "By developing clean vehicle technologies that reduce fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, we're able to deliver significant savings to the customer's bottom line and, at the same time, help them reduce their overall carbon footprint."

Navistar entered the hybrid market in earnest in November 2007 with the release of the Class 6 medium-duty DuraStar hybrid. In 2008, it added the Class 7 DuraStar hybrid tractor and has since introduced a Class 7 severe-service WorkStar hybrid 4x4. The company says its hybrids have proven to deliver fuel savings of up to 40%.

Navistar is now working on an all-electric delivery vehicle, after receiving a US\$39 million federal grant to develop the technology. It expects to build 400 all-electric delivery vehicles in 2010 and ramp up to several thousand of these trucks annually within a couple of years. □

## Safety

## Thorough driver qualification files offer accurate picture of any driver

Every business is only as good as its employees, and the trucking industry proves just how true that is. Any fleet will only be as good as the drivers who turn the wheels.

While there is no single measure of a driver's ability to do a professional job, the documents in a thorough driver qualification file can offer an accurate picture of a driver's level of skill, highlight specific training needs, and even help to determine the likelihood of a future collision.

The simple photocopy of the driver's licence that is stapled to the file folder confirms some key information on its own.

The licence class will confirm whether the driver is legally entitled to drive a specific type of equipment, and the document will provide proof of the birth date that will determine whether the driver meets the minimum age of 21 to operate in the US.

But the array of other records that are required to operate a US-bound vehicle with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating of 10,001 lbs or more can offer details that are important to every fleet – even those that haul domestic freight.

Just consider everything that can be learned in a candidate's application for employment. Fleets that hire US-bound drivers need to verify the previous three years of work history and collect the details for an entire decade.

The three years of work experience is a vital measure of whether the driver has the experience to gear and steer the same type of transmissions and engines used in a new job.

The number of employers will tell a story as well. A new driver can be expected to change jobs one or two times in the early days of a career, but someone who has accumulated five or 10 employers in just three years will likely be bringing other baggage to the workplace.

The same driver who is unable to build a working relationship with dispatchers may also be gruff when dealing with customers, and this aggressive nature often translates into poor driving habits behind the wheel.

Meanwhile, the driver's abstract offers the telling signs of on-road infractions that can have a direct impact on a fleet's own operating record. We all know there is a definite link between the number of violations and the possibility of a collision occurring in the next year.

Serious violations such as dangerous or careless driving are definite indicators of a driver's poor mindset, as are more than a pair of convictions for violations such as improper passing, driving an unsafe vehicle or failing to yield the right of way. In contrast, a recruiter may be justified in accepting violations such as not wearing a seatbelt or a vehicle weight infraction, as long as there is a commitment to address the issue through the appropriate training.

These violations do not need to be limited to a truck, either. The drivers who have five or six

### Ask the Expert

Dennis DuBois



speeding tickets on a motorcycle will likely extend the heavy use of an accelerator to every vehicle they drive.

The related criminal background check can unveil a number of other potential restrictions. Job candidates who have any Criminal Code convictions such as driving while intoxicated or driving with a suspended licence may not be able to cross the border and may even be denied insurance coverage.

The medical documents in the file also help to determine any other restrictions to the routes

that a driver can travel. The US DoT will accept Ontario's three-year cycle for medical examinations, for example, but drivers in other jurisdictions may require a medical check-up every two years. And certain medical waivers are not recognized by the US Department of Transportation.

Even if the driver has the skills to drive a truck, a copy of the data sheet outlining the hours-of-service records for the previous seven days will determine when they can actually begin to turn the wheels. This information will need to be provided by occasional employees before every work cycle.

The driver qualification file is a living, breathing file.

A driver's abstract that was generated within 30 days of the hiring of the driver needs to be supplemented by annual updates of the driving record and proof of

any violations that occur.

This is the type of information that will identify emerging habits before they become a problem.

The collection of these documents goes a long way to proving the due diligence of a fleet that is committed to hiring the right drivers for the job. □

– This month's contributing expert is Dennis DuBois, senior advisor in Markel's Safety and Training Services Department. Prior to joining Markel in 1995, he had served as a district safety manager for a large truck rental firm, and as an independent safety consultant. Send your questions, feedback and comments about this column to [info@markel.ca](mailto:info@markel.ca). Markel is the country's largest trucking insurer providing more than 50 years of continuous service to the transportation industry.



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## Tax Talk

# How to ring up a \$20,000 tax bill

*Doing it yourself only works if you actually do it yourself*

It's not often that I get frustrated with a client. I've been working with owner/operators for more than 20 years and have yet to meet one who got into the business for the satisfaction of filling out forms and paying taxes.

So it's no surprise when a client says, "Can you explain this in plain English?" or "Why are they sending me this?" or "When is this due?" I'm happy to take those calls because I know how tough it is to manage a business from the seat of a truck. And nothing feels better than to help an owner/operator take control of his finances and earn a better living.

But every now and then I get a call like this one, from a former client.

This owner/operator had us do his quarterly accounting for a few years until he decided he could do it himself. We were supposed to hear from the guy each year to help him file his annual tax return, but after three years passed I assumed he had taken his books to someone else.

In fact, he didn't have time to do his own accounting so he just didn't do it at all. In the three years since he left us, he had filed an income tax return just once, and had only recently managed to file his outstanding GST returns.

## Tax Talk

Scott Taylor



It wasn't long before Canada Revenue Agency called him. They wanted to audit one of his 2006 GST returns. He wasn't sure how to handle CRA, and of course wanted to avoid the whole issue about his unfiled income tax returns, so he didn't respond to CRA's phone calls and letters.

Ultimately, CRA denied his GST refunds as non-supported and denied the related expenses on his tax return. Now the guy owes about \$20,000 and he's in collections.

That's when he called me for advice.

At this point, I'm thinking he still can halt the collections process by having the audit re-examined. When CRA issues a Notice of Assessment or Re-Assessment, you have 90 days to file a Notice of Objection. When a Notice of Objection is filed, collection actions are stopped immediately while a higher-level CRA employee reviews the case. It's a great way to help ensure that the audit was fair.

Unfortunately, the owner/operator was about 115 days past the Notice of Re-Assessment date.

Now he's in real trouble. Because he ignored CRA's calls and letters, it's going to be hard for the owner/operator to persuade them that he simply made a mistake in his effort to meet his tax obligations.

This isn't the first time I've seen someone let CRA notices pile up unopened or miss filing deadlines. In fact, we have clients who came to us in desperate straits and, after some hard work, now are in complete control of their business. How do they get there? They all take two important steps:

**1. Ask for help.** Long story short, the owner/operator underestimated how much time it would take to handle his own books. He couldn't get caught up, let his filing deadlines pass, and then ignored the notices from CRA. Any money he thought he'd save in accounting fees is going to be blown in interest and penalties. In this case the guy's options may be limited, but at least now he's getting good advice.

Tax codes are confusing and they change from year to year. If you need help, ask an expert. There's no such thing as a stupid question.

**2. Hold quarterly reviews.** Ask your accountant to provide financial statements each quarter. With a three-month snapshot, you're in a better position to take advantage of deductions and other tax-saving strategies before the year is over and it's too late.

This won't guarantee a low tax bill, but it will guarantee you the right tax bill.

I can't tell you how many times a client has found a receipt for a major repair months after a review of the last three months financial statements clearly showed that a big expense item was missing. This probably would have been overlooked with only an annual review.

Right now, we're reviewing our clients' first nine months of operation and preparing tax estimates so they can take advantage of any further tax deductions and make sure their cash flow is ready at filing time.

No one wants the surprise of a big tax bill.

Instead of counting down the days to a deadline, insist on quarterly tax-planning sessions with your accountant so you can plan, budget, and make adjustments throughout the year. □

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

## Opinion

## Depressed and drowsy

*Is it the driver's fault, or is the job to blame?*

What's next, smelly feet? Bad breath? There appears to be an assault underway on our persons under the guise of human factors in truck accident causation that may leave no stone – or ingrown hair – unturned. Last fall, FMCSA got American tongues wagging when word got out that the agency is considering screening overweight drivers for obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). Truckers with the disorder are at greater risk of daytime sleepiness, the agency says, and are therefore at greater risk of having a crash. A panel of sleep experts recommended mandatory sleep apnea screening during DoT medical check-ups for drivers meeting a certain physical profile.

Overweight drivers who have a body mass index of 30 or higher (this could change to 33, we've heard) and/or a neck size of 17 inches or larger would be the prime targets. That profile captures about one-third of the US commercial driver population – and about the same here in Canada.

And then just the other day, I read that the Australian Trucking Association wants drivers down under screened for depression during their "DoT" medicals. The association claims to have research showing that drivers suffering from severe depression are up to six times more likely to have accidents.

## Voice of the O/O

Joanne Ritchie



Stuart St. Clair, chief executive of the Australian Trucking Association, has asked the National Transport Commission (the Australian version of Transport Canada or FMCSA) to include "psychological distress" testing as part of routine driver medical check-ups. The Australian Transport Workers Union, among others, is outraged by the proposal. Union leader Tony Sheldon says rather than banning drivers with health problems and preventing them from earning a living, the Australian Trucking Association should be looking at why truck drivers suffer from depression.

An author of the Australian study into truck drivers' mental health, professor Harvey Whiteford of the University of Queensland, says that pressure to meet deadlines is a considerable factor in on-the-job stress; heavy vehicle operators drive for long hours and often must try to be at a certain point within a certain timeframe. "It seems to be an occupation which carries a significant amount of inherent psychological

stress in it," concludes Whiteford.

Exactly. Driving is a stressful occupation with limited opportunity for even temporary relief. When you're cooped up in a truck sleeper for days on end, even a 36-hour reset doesn't provide adequate relief from the environment. In much the same way that professor Whiteford suggests depression can be linked to job stresses, I'd argue that the frequency of OSA in truck drivers is no coincidence either. Many drivers don't eat well, they get little meaningful physical activity, and they often don't get proper rest.

Simply screening drivers for sleep apnea and depression isn't enough. If these disorders can be linked to a higher propensity for crashes among sufferers, then trucking has to come to the table and address the root causes of the problem.

Take carpal tunnel syndrome for example. It's common in workers who perform repetitive tasks such as typing or grasping. While there is still some debate linking that disorder with specific work-related causes, in many jurisdictions, workers diagnosed with carpal tunnel syndrome are entitled to time off and some compensation. Those workers aren't simply screened out of a job; they're given paid time off to recover, and workplaces are often modified to accommodate workers' needs. That's something this industry would no doubt strongly resist, but I don't think North American truck drivers should settle for anything less.

I don't want to downplay the significance of carpal tunnel syndrome. It's uncomfortable and inconvenient to be sure, but it's not life-threatening. If there is in fact a link between OSA, depression (and who knows how many other disorders), and crash propensity, then their prevalence in this industry has to be examined not only in light of limiting liability and reducing the risk of crashes, but in the worker health and safety context too.

If the work, the work environment, or the cumulative effects of the difficult lifestyle can be linked to elevated crash risk, then they become occupational health and safety issues. Period.

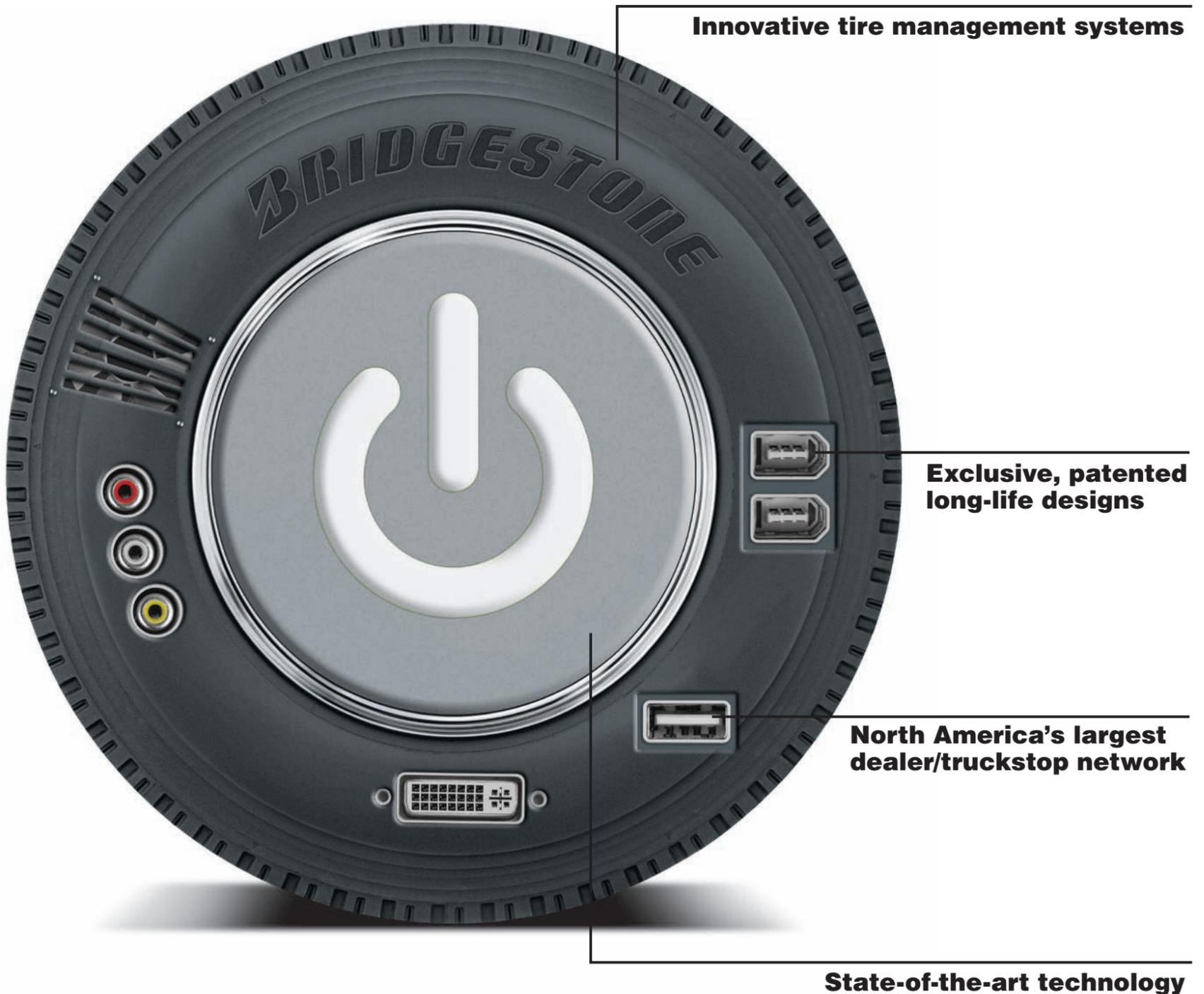
If industry and regulators are considering screening as a means of limiting liability, then there had better be programs in place to support disabled workers, or those sidelined while undergoing treatment. I've seen too many drivers pushed out the door with back and leg problems, and left to fight endlessly with various workers' comp agencies for something more than a subsistence allowance to live on. Truckers deserve better.

Presently, only OSA is on the radar screen in the US (and undoubtedly in Canada before long), but if depression screening catches on in Australia, it won't take long to migrate here. And what might be next after that? □

— Joanne Ritchie is executive director of OBAC. Sick and tired? E-mail her at [jritchie@obac.ca](mailto:jritchie@obac.ca) or call toll free 888-794-9990.



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By James Menzies

**NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE, Ont.** – Fuel represents about a third of the cost of running a truck from Point A to Point B, so it's only natural to take a close look at fuel economy when looking for ways to drive down operating costs.

Private fleets attending this year's Private Motor Truck Council of Canada (PMTCC) convention were more than happy to share some tips on how they've tackled fuel costs in their own operations.

Danny Vettoretti of Frito-Lay Canada said for his fleet of 84 Class 8 tractors, it begins with slowing down. The Frito-Lay fleet is limited to 90 km/h in Quebec, 100 km/h in Ontario and 105 km/h in Alberta. The fleet consists of aerodynamic International ProStar tractors with Cummins ISX engines and fuel economy is tracked using Qualcomm's Fleet Advisor.

Vettoretti said drivers are given a quarterly fuel mileage scorecard and driver rankings are posted weekly to ignite some healthy competition. Auxiliary power units (APUs) have helped the fleet lower its idle-time to less than 5% in the winter and under 1% in the summer, Vettoretti claimed. The company also uses long combination vehicles (LCVs) where possible. About a third of Frito-Lay's shipments in Alberta and Quebec are done via LCV, which use 30% more fuel per trip but doubles cargo capacity for lightweight items such as potato chips.

"That's a pretty compelling argument on why we need to use LCVs wherever we can," he said.

According to Wayne Scott of Loblaw Companies, there are four controllable factors that affect fuel costs: maintenance; spec's; aftermarket fuel-saving devices; and driver behaviour.

### Maintenance

Don't wait around for your drivers to inform you a vehicle needs maintenance, Scott pointed out.

"Ninety-nine per cent of the drivers out there will not tell you," he said. Instead, fleets should have processes in place to ensure vehicles are properly maintained at all times.

Drivers do have a role to play, however, most notably via the pre-trip inspection.

"If you turn around at a fleet and watch guys doing their pre-trip, they walk around, check the lights, thump one or two tires, hook up and leave. That's reality," Scott said.

Loblaw's has come up with a clever way to ensure drivers are doing a thorough pre-trip before their tractors leave the yard. Between two and five brass tags are attached to key items (maybe on a valve stem cap or perhaps near the oil dipstick) and the guard at the gatehouse is provided with a list of tractor-trailer numbers and the number of brass tags attached to that particular unit.

If the driver doesn't turn in the corresponding number of tags, he's turned around and told to report to safety.

Tire maintenance is especially important, explained John Overing, heavy truck tire segment manager with Michelin. He said there are six factors that can cause tires to negatively impact fuel mileage: low air pressure; high air pressure; missing

# Every drop counts

*Fuel prices are on the rise again. Here's a look at some fuel-saving strategies that worked for private fleets...*

valve caps; dual mismatch air pressure; dual mismatch height; and irregular wear. A set of duals with a 6/32nds height mismatch (the height of three stacked pennies) will result in one tire wanting to rotate more than the other. Over the course of 100,000 km, the shorter tire will have tried to travel 800 km more than the other, which can be a real drag on fuel economy, Overing pointed out.

### Spec's

Engines should be geared for optimum performance at the speed at which they'll be running, Scott pointed out.

He recalled taking over responsibility for a fleet only to find drivers had discovered a way to change the engine parameters.

"If you give somebody an opportunity to screw the system over, they will do it," he said. Trucks in Quebec, for instance, were geared to be running 90 km/h yet they were running 110, so they were cruising at 1,750-1,800 RPM.

"Our fuel economy was not good," he said. "These are legacy issues we as fleet managers sometimes inherit."

Scott said other spec'ing decisions to consider should include: aerodynamic fairings; APUs and bunk heaters; overdrive vs direct drive transmissions; engine horsepower; and truck and trailer models.

Michelin's Overing added low rolling resistant tires are "the least expensive technology available to reduce fuel consumption."

Every 3% reduction in rolling resistance translates to a 1% fuel economy improvement, he pointed out.

### Fuel-saving devices

Of all the fuel-saving devices that have emerged in recent years, there are two tried and true technologies that will save a line-haul fleet money, according to Scott: trailer side skirts and wide-base single tires.

He cited Energotest 07 test results which were conducted to SAE/TMC standards.

"These two (technologies) have

made it mainstream," he said of Michelin's X One wide-base tire and trailer skirts which are available from several manufacturers. "These are the ones out there that have been certified, have actually had government testing and actually went out there and made their mark."

Now, when a vendor calls Scott and claims he has just the device to save the company fuel, he tells them to call back when they've had an SAE/TMC Type II fuel test completed and certified by an engineer. If you do decide to test a fuel-saving device on your own, Scott warned fleet managers not to get too excited over the results. He recalled buying into the hype surrounding the hydrogen units that hit the market with much fanfare a few years ago.

He installed a unit on a truck, told the driver about it and then watched the truck's fuel economy improve. Weeks later, the system ran out of the distilled water that was necessary to its operation. But rather than top it up, Scott decided to wait and see what happened.

Fuel mileage remained unchanged for several weeks, leading him to conclude that the hydrogen unit itself didn't improve fuel mileage at all – rather the driver improved his driving habits because he knew his fuel economy was being tracked.

When looking at an aftermarket device, Scott suggested asking whether the benefits match the application. Aerodynamic devices, for instance, will reap little reward for a fleet that averages 30-35 mph in and out of downtown Toronto. Loblaw's has selectively spec'd trailer skirts and wide-base tires on tractor-trailers that are running line-haul at higher speeds.

Scott is a big believer in wide-base singles and especially trailer skirts, and expressed amazement that they haven't caught on with more long-haul fleets.

"You see (trailer skirts) out of the US, you see them out of Quebec, you see them now and again but if everyone wants to reduce their fuel costs, why aren't they on more

trucks?" he implored.

Scott speculated it may be because it's hard to get CFOs to see the long-term value in such investments rather than the up-front costs.

"How can I justify going into my board of directors and say 'I can put recaps on for \$200 or I can buy brand new X Ones for \$1,000, plus new rims and drop a lot of money'?"

Fleet managers must also weigh the costs of fuel-saving technologies over the life-cycle of the vehicle. As a case in point, Scott spoke of his company's experience with tractor side fairings.

"We found even with the 1-2% they might save you, the life-cycle costs of the driver smashing them and damaging them represented about \$500-\$800 per unit per year," he recalled. "We opted out of putting them on our trucks in the future."

### Driver behaviour

The biggest factor influencing tractor-trailer fuel efficiency is the driver, who has the ability to swing fuel economy 30% for better or for worse.

Even veteran drivers need training, Scott pointed out, since they often learned how to shift and drive on older engines and have received little training as technology evolved.

"We brought out our best guys and asked them 'What's progressive shifting?' and they had no clue. They were taught so many years ago, they've developed their own habits. They're good drivers but that engine they started driving 20 years ago isn't the same as the engine we have today, but nobody ever told them this is different and why. They just give them the truck and say 'Go drive'."

Scott says drivers should be taught to eliminate unnecessary shifting.

"Every time you shift, it costs you fuel," he said.

Driver training is a subject close to Any Roberts' heart. He's president of Castlegar, B.C.-based Mountain Transport Institute.

"There are still a lot of people out there who ignore the driver, and the driver has the single biggest impact on fuel economy," Roberts said. "They can destroy (the results of) just about every technology out there, including automated transmissions."

Roberts said driver training should consist of three phases: train; measure; and reward.

Even small rewards will be well-received, like acknowledging top performers in a newsletter or giving the driver with the best fuel economy a special parking spot at the terminal.

Feedback must be timely and relevant, Roberts said. For instance, drivers hauling B-Trains through the Rockies should not have their fuel mileage compared to others who are hauling donut holes across the prairies, he pointed out.

MTI and Natural Resources Canada are currently offering free fuel economy training to drivers working for fleets that have collected historical fuel economy performance data via satellite. For more info, visit [www.drivemti.com](http://www.drivemti.com) or call 877-965-3748. □



**PROVEN:** Trailer side skirts and wide-base single tires (pictured) are the two proven fuel-saving technologies, according to Loblaw's Wayne Scott.

# Writer wants to bring gentleman trucker's story to the big screen

Do you think it's time for another trucking movie? Writer Greg Martin thinks so and he's got a story that he thinks is a winner.

*Dispatch Me Home* is a narrative of the North American truck driver, embodied in the figure of Sam (the Man) Morris, an independent truck driver making his way across the US one last time. Not surprisingly, his truck Chloe (a 1986 Freightliner XL) is his closest companion. According to the author, "Sam the Man is a gentleman trucker who's walked the walk for 40 years."

He's feeling his age, and so is his truck. In one chapter Sam even turns down a heavy load over some mountains because he doesn't want to embarrass Chloe.

We all know drivers like Sam, what Martin calls the last of a dying breed.

He's from the old school and believes strongly in hard work and fair play.

He wouldn't hesitate to assist a broken down motorist or help change a flat tire – courtesies that have been lost in the modern world of just-in-time freight and computer-controlled dispatches.

"This is a man who embodies all the best qualities of this great profession," says Martin. "The times call for a feel-good story about someone we can all relate to, someone who's made a decision in life and done it his way. He set the bar for other drivers whether he knows it or not."

Sam runs into adventures on his way across the States: encountering old friends and drivers, reminiscing about old times, and even gives advice to a young driver still wet behind the ears.

Sam has decided to hang up his keys and put Chloe up on blocks at his sister's place in Washington State. It's time, he figures, "to leave the good dispatches for younger drivers."

Author Martin is no stranger to the world of trucking.

The writer began his career as a swamper for Mayflower Lines in Indio, Cal.

Later, he became a motor transport officer in the US Marine Corps, and spent some time working with a fleet of trucks in waste management.

To sell the project to Hollywood, Martin has enlisted voice-over artist Troy Duran and has posted a very sophisticated audio storyboard on the Internet ([www.dispatchmehome.com](http://www.dispatchmehome.com)) where you can sample a few chapters.

As expected, the narrative is spiced with lots of trucking music from Dave Dudley to Alabama to Bob Seeger.

It's also fun to speculate about who would play the lead role. Martin consulted various Web site forums including Women in Trucking and came up with a short list that includes Kevin Costner, Harrison Ford, Sam Elliot, Tom Sellick, Ed Harris, Bruce Willis, and Sam Shepard. What he's looking for is someone in his early sixties who could best fit into Sam the Man's cowboy boots.



**On-road Editor**

**Harry Rudolfs**

"What about Clint Eastwood?" I ask Martin on the phone from his home in the San Francisco Bay area. "I think he might be a little too old," he says. Even the name Billy Bob Thornton comes up, who Martin admits might be perfect for the part.

A couple of recent documentaries like *Drive and Deliver* (a film made by International to showcase its LoneStar tractor), and *Big Rig*, have missed the mark, Martin thinks.

"What's important," he says, "is to spotlight the industry in a good

light and present a positive stereotype. There are a lot of career opportunities in trucking for hard-working men and women, it's an opportunity to become your own person."

Martin knows he has something good here that could go in many directions. It could spawn a truck radio serial, a book, or even a compilation CD of the great music he wants to include.

But most importantly, he believes a feature film is just waiting to be made.

So here comes the pitch: Martin needs about \$35,000 to finish the script and secure the music rights. When that's accomplished he'll tuck the screenplay under his arm and take it to the major studios.

"My hope is that some gentleman or lady who's been in the trucking industry will read about



The story of an American Trucker

**SAM THE MAN:** The creator of *Dispatch Me Home* is hoping the tale of a gentlemanly trucker will eventually hit the big screen.

this and will want to get involved," he says. □

– For more on this topic as well as Harry's thoughts on 'Trucker as an anti-hero' check out his blog on [Trucknews.com](http://Trucknews.com).



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Feature

# A low carbon diet

**As government policy heads for cap-and-trade rules on GHG emissions, how will the transportation and logistics industries fare on curbing an appetite for carbon?**

By Julia Kuzeljevich

**OTTAWA, Ont.** – The environment may be taking a back seat to the economy these days, but that doesn't mean that the US and Canadian governments have abandoned any moves to 'put a cap' on greenhouse gas emissions.

In June 2009, the US government's House of Representatives passed the American *Clean Energy and Security Act* by a 219-212 vote. Under the cap-and-trade rules, high emitters will be given

or will have to purchase carbon offset certificates. If the emitter doesn't produce that much carbon, it can sell its certificates in a carbon exchange market to be established by the Act.

The cap-and-trade portion of the act is just a small part of the bill and for now is directed at high carbon emitters, such as power plants and big manufacturers.

But, according to John-David Phyper, author of the sustainable supply chain book *Good to Green*,

by the year 2020 there will be a one trillion dollar carbon market. So how fast does the transportation industry have to get on this bandwagon, if at all?

Today's market in carbon trading is in its infancy, but consider in 2008, said Phyper, investors in American and Canadian companies filed a record 57 climate-related shareholder resolutions, seeking emissions reductions and greater disclosure from companies on their strategies to address climate-related business trends.

In March of this year, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) declared carbon emissions to be a health issue, forcing reporting rules on some emitters.

In Canada, carbon taxes of one kind or another have already been deployed in Quebec and British Columbia. And a federal 2007 Regulatory Framework for greenhouse gas emissions aimed at 20% reduction in GHG from a

2006 baseline, with an absolute reduction of 150 megatonnes by 2020.

"If you operate a 100-tonne plus emissions facility in Alberta now you must report," said Ian MacKinnon, president of Jomini Environmental. "If you drive your trucks through the state of Oregon and you emit more than 2,500 tonnes in a year, you will now be reporting to the state of Oregon. It's essentially a fuel tax. The concern is that you may have to pay at both state and national level," he said.

MacKinnon added that a market-based approach to managing greenhouse gas emissions is becoming more widely supported by governments and stakeholders, as a cost-effective way to achieve climate change objectives.

"We sit on 22 committees, and we're writing the guidelines for the Canadian government cap-and-trade system. We're working with the US government on programs that they are going through. We also look at operations and we can recommend technologies that have already been quantified. We can verify, one year out, the number of carbon tonnes that can be traded on a voluntary market, and eventually used in a regulated market. We work with the ISO 14064 standard in Canada as the backbone as well as a couple of standards used in the US," he said.

Jomini was also involved in drafting the Canadian government's ISO 14064 Greenhouse Gases standard, a voluntary series of standards developed through an international consensus-based approach involving stakeholders from industry, government, non-governmental organizations and service professionals.

"ISO 14064 is designed to help organizations and governments in measuring, reporting and verifying GHG emissions. It has been approved as the national standards of Canada," said MacKinnon.

Another major player in the mix is IPOG, an inter-provincial protocol standards group comprising approximately 93 companies and organizations representing over 60% of all covered industrial greenhouse gas emissions.

IPOG is dedicated to the design of a domestic offset system that "ensures environmental integrity first and foremost, but also has the necessary flexibility for business solutions that leverage actions across the entire Canadian economy."

In the voluntary markets, the European Union is currently trading some 70 billion Euros (CDN \$110 billion) in carbon credits, at (CDN \$20) a tonne. Voluntary trading in Canada takes place for about \$10-15 a tonne, noted MacKinnon.

"We base our programs in Canada on intensity targets, so we're not crippling growth. At \$15 a tonne, people are looking at offsets to sell or offsets for their own business operations," said MacKinnon of the voluntary market.

"While awaiting the final feder-

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al regulations for industrial emitters, (carbon) offsets are the only trading tool available to fill the market void in the current period. Environment Canada projects carbon prices to rise from \$25/tonne in 2010 to \$65/tonne in 2018. By 2012, there is an expectation for emissions trading in Canada to have evolved to a cap-and-trade system and for the Canadian market to link to a US counterpart scheme," said Phyper.

Among the cap-and-trade schemes currently in existence, or in progress, across North America, there is the WCI, or Western Climate Initiative, which is a collaboration of seven US states and four Canadian provinces. In September of 2008, the WCI partner jurisdictions released a cap-and-trade program design, which when fully implemented will cover approximately 90% of the economy-wide emissions in the member states and provinces. The program is scheduled to start in 2012, and emissions reporting to begin with 2010 emissions. The WCI partner jurisdictions include: Washington, Oregon, California, Montana, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec.

Together these states and provinces account for about 20% of the US economy and 76% of the Canadian economy.

The WCI recently sent comments to Environment Canada on the department's own Offsets System Draft, stating that any harmonization attempts with other North American offset systems must enable recognition of Canadian offset credits outside Canada or on recognition of international credits within Canada, to avoid any price differentials "likely to have competitiveness impacts as well as border adjustments under the current version of the American Clean Energy and Security Act," said the WCI.

The WCI went on to "encourage the federal government to adopt an offset limit that ensures emission reductions occur at Canadian entities covered by the cap-and-trade system. As currently designed, the WCI is concerned that the project registration process may be onerous, requiring significant time and correspondence between Environment Canada and potential project proponents. Furthermore, the federal government intention to operate the system on a cost-recovery basis using fees may be cost prohibitive for project developers," said the WCI.

The US-based Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), meanwhile, comprises 10 Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic states who intend to cap and then reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the power sector by 10% by 2018. States will sell emission allowances through auctions and invest proceeds in consumer benefits: energy efficiency, renewable energy, and other clean energy technologies.

In the face of cap-and-trade policy and offset schemes, an already hard-hit transportation industry is expressing concerns



**AN EASY TARGET:** The trucking industry may have cleaned up its act environmentally, but legislators are still eyeing cap-and-trade carbon trading systems that would affect the transportation industry in a big way.

about additional cost and regulatory burdens.

"If GHG reduction is the fight of our lives there is so much more we can and should be doing today that does not involve increased taxes or complicated cap-and-trade systems. The industry's economic goals and society's environmental goals have never been more aligned," said Canadian Trucking Alliance CEO David Bradley.

"We also need the federal government to come to the table more and to support enviroTruck. We'd like them to restore programs similar to the previous APU rebates initiative – that program worked with a modest investment from the Government of Canada paying big dividends. Truckers should also receive some of the same accelerated capital cost allowances that other industries receive when they buy environmental technology. They can also play a role in bringing all the provinces together to harmonize standards," added Bradley.

Fear of what cap-and-trade policies could do to industry costs led the ATA (American Trucking Associations) to draft a letter to the House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee this summer detailing the trucking industry's "strong reservations" about the June 2009 *Clean Energy and Security Act*.

ATA said it believes that trading reform should be passed, implemented and enforced prior to the creation of new carbon commodity markets, and said that mobile sources, such as commercial trucks, should be addressed differently than traditional stationary sources under any proposed carbon reduction regulatory program.

G. Tommy Hodges, ATA first vice chairman, told *Truck West*, "I don't know that we feel (as an industry) that we're targeted but not enough consideration has been given to the current impact and what that's going to do to the economy. We feel it's the wrong thing to do at the wrong time. The carbon resulting from various loads is not taken into account in the current bill."

Provisions in the US's proposed cap-and-trade program grant oil refiners 2% of the carbon allowances between 2014 and 2016 to help mitigate refinery greenhouse gas emissions, but the 2% allotment ignores carbon emissions from the combustion of pe-

troleum production, which leaves downstream users like trucking companies exposed to sudden fuel price spikes, Hodges pointed out.

Hodges said there are fears fuel prices will go up anywhere from 88 cents a gallon US on the diesel side. And another concern is when there are normal fuel interruptions because of fires and shut-downs.

"It just creates a whole lot of uncertainty and unknowns when dealing with projected costs," he said.

"There's a lot of dynamics to what happens within the trucking industry – one set of rules doesn't meet everything. We'd rather see them come down with help and incentives to help meet fuel economy goals, to raise the productivity of a gallon of diesel. We've had mandates against industry for carbon output, we've reduced nitrous oxides and particulate matter, but we burn more fuel and it's well past time to get a more efficient diesel burn from 5.6-6.2 to 10 miles a gallon. A 65 mile an hour speed limit would create 200 million tonnes savings in CO<sub>2</sub>. There are other ways to handle the problem," said Hodges, who added that the trucking industry has been at the "forefront" of solutions, such as ATA's progressive sustainability agenda that will reduce fuel consumption by 86 billion gallons and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 900 million tons for all vehicles over the next 10 years.

Skepticism about cap-and-trade is somewhat justified for some. Noted MacKinnon, "The danger of 'green washing' is very real, and

only 2% of products are really green. The beautiful thing is that the carbon market exists, but it will not be the panacea to environmental objectives or economic objectives," he said.

And there are advantages to seeking out sustainable business practices, amidst the hype.

"You can make money by making smart business decisions. I would argue that sustainability is better than free," said MacKinnon. "If you do not go out and shake the market yourself, the government will do it for you. If you think you're going to fly below the radar because you're not digging it out of the ground, you are wrong. It will affect everybody's business and all options."

And, stressed MacKinnon, businesses must be aware of any jurisdictional impacts where they do business.

"We advocate that if a company operates on both sides of the border they should be able to work back and forth. We've put some position papers down in Washington with the goal to harmonize regulations between Canada and the US."

Phyper said you either take the attitude you're being beaten up, or you reposition as a value-added company that will look to maintain costs and lower greenhouse gases.

"Voluntary trading is definitely in place, that's cosmetic environmentalism, but that doesn't ignore the big 800-pound gorilla that you need to optimize logistics. At the end of the day, you need to change your business, and figure out ways to do things more efficiently."

It remains to be seen what path the carbon markets and cap-and-trade policies will take, but making the most of your 'carbon opportunity' can result in a positive change, suggested MacKinnon.

"If I can make a positive change to what is traditionally done in my business, I have a carbon opportunity that can be measured. If I deploy something, it has to be measured to a life-cycle to be recyclable. That's the participation in the carbon market, that's the 'who says.' The competition wants to see, how did you quantify? What did you do? That's how you'll score on the economic end," he said. □

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## New Products

## Tires & Wheels

Double Coin has expanded its **commercial truck tire** line. New to Double Coin are the FR605, FD405 and FT105 fuel-efficient tires in steer, drive and trailer positions respectively. The company also unveiled a new RR202 tire for mixed service applications, which it describes as an ultra-premium five rib highway service tire. Double Coin also introduced its RR680 and low-profile RT600 to round out its regional all-position steer tire line-up. And for off-the-road applications it has come out with the 3700R57 tire for mining and other severe-service applications. Double Coin also introduced a North America-wide Government Fleet Net Pricing program, which offers special pricing for federal, state and local government entities and municipalities. For details, talk to a Double Coin dealer.

Promising the appearance of **up-graded aluminum wheels** at standard aluminum wheel prices, Accuride Corp. has made an enhanced finish standard. The new finishing process produces a semi-polished appearance on unpolished wheels, according to the company. It's now standard across the company's entire line of aluminum wheels, except for small diameter trailer wheels.



Alcoa has announced its LvL ONE line of **lightweight aluminum wheels** is now able to accommodate load range H tires. The 24.5-inch LvL ONE is being dubbed the strongest wheel in the 24.5"x 8.23" standard wheel category, with a load rating of 7,580 lbs, some 450 lbs more than steel alternatives, while weighing about 30 lbs less, according to the company. Alcoa says the new rating allows fleets and owner/operators to trim 540 lbs from the weight of an 18-wheeler. It's intended for vocational trucks and over-the-road trailers. Meanwhile, Alcoa has added an online tool called CalcuLighter to its Web site at [www.alcoawheels.com](http://www.alcoawheels.com), which allows fleets and owner/operators to measure a payback when converting from steel to aluminum wheels.

## Trailers

Haultec Trailers was at the Fergus Truck Show to showcase its new **Chalmers 1300 series air-ride suspension kit**, which has been approved by the MTO to comply with 2011 SPIF requirements for older



trailers. The suspension kit was displayed on a 1995 trailer at the show. The company says owners of older trailers now can avoid mandatory weight reductions by retrofitting their existing trailers to comply with SPIF requirements. The conversion can be done at a fraction of the cost of purchasing a new trailer and about half the cost of replacing the frame, Haultec reports. Chalmers says it will be ready for full production by the fourth quarter and Haultec will handle the retrofitting. The Chalmers 1300 series is a walking beam, rubber spring, two air bag suspension. For more info, call Craig Cadenhead or John Martin at Haultec at 905-673-3200 or Steve Clarke or Livio Luchini at Chalmers at 905-362-6400.

Great Dane showcased its newest trailer – the **Classic Truckload reefer** – recently at the Great American Trucking Show. The company says the CTL reefer is designed to meet the needs of today's truckload carriers offering protection against everyday abuse combined with low-maintenance features for greater peace of mind. The trailer features Great Dane's ThermoGuard interior lining which it says extends the useful life of the trailer while reducing the run-time required by the refrigeration unit as well as CorroGuard, a spray-in-place thermoplastic elastomer that protects against deterioration and corrosion.

## Accessories



Gilbarco Veeder-Root has announced it has shipped its first **Encore diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) dispensers** in North America. DEF will be required by 2010 engines using selective catalytic reduction (SCR) exhaust aftertreatment systems. Pilot Travel Centers has installed the dispensers at 100 locations. Gilbarco says its DEF dispensers are designed to prevent the fluid from freezing and have stainless steel hydraulics to

avoid corrosion.

Kenworth has updated its **Web site** to include a section for its new T470 medium-duty truck. The T470, aimed at vocational and municipal markets, entered production recently. It's well-suited for snowplow, dump, mixer, winch, refuse and other heavy front axle vocational and municipal applications, according to Kenworth. Visitors to Kenworth's Web site ([www.kenworth.com](http://www.kenworth.com)) can now view and download the T470's online brochure as well as browse available spec's.

Rislone says its **Liquid Copper Block Seal Intake and Radiator Stop Leak** seal radiator and gasket leaks without requiring a full system flush. Customers simply pour it into the radiator, idle the engine for five minutes, let it cool down, top it off with coolant and then go on their way, according to the company. Flushing the entire system can take six to 10 hours and requires a complete coolant refill as well, the company points out. Liquid Copper uses an advanced antifreeze-compatible sodium silicate liquid glass formula so no draining of the cooling system is required. It works with all types and brands of antifreeze, including conventional green or blue (silicate-based) and extended life red/orange or yellow (OAT/HOAT) coolant, according to the company. It stops leaks by forming a seal using organic and synthetic fibers, copper and an ionic-modified mineral. For more info, visit [www.rislone.ca](http://www.rislone.ca).

## Components

Thermo King is now offering **closed loop cooling** as an option on its TriPac hybrid APU. Benefits include: reduced installation complexity; emergency tractor alternator back-up; and the ability to run the APU independently of the tractor's cooling system. Thermo King said it made closed loop cooling available in response to customer demand. It's well-suited for drivers who operate in warm climates or simply prefer their APU system not to tap into the tractor's coolant. The closed loop cooling option is available on any new TriPac and also as an aftermarket option through Thermo King dealers.

Detroit Diesel has introduced a new two-year, 150,000-mile warranty on its **PowerPacks replacement fuel injectors**. The company says fuel injectors tend to wear out at the same rate, so replacing the entire pack at one time rather than individually can reduce downtime and save money. The remanufactured PowerPack replacement fuel injectors qualify for the warranty when installed by authorized service outlets, the company says. The qualifying replacement fuel injectors are compatible with Detroit Diesel Series 60 and MBE 4000 engines. For more info, visit [www.detroitdieselstepup.com](http://www.detroitdieselstepup.com).

## Eaton unveils new generation of UltraShift

**KALAMAZOO, Mich.** – Eaton has introduced a new generation of its UltraShift automated transmission.

The UltraShift PLUS family of transmissions features new automated clutch technology and intelligent shift selection software that employs grade sensing, weight computation and driver throttle commands to make more intelligent shift decisions, according to the company.

The new series has been several years in the making, with Eaton developing it in cooperation with North American truck makers so each model is specifically engineered to be integrated into its intended powertrain configuration.

"The many different models reflect our commitment to now offer the trucking industry the best possible automated transmission solution for a variety of applications," said Staci Kroon, senior vice-president and general manager of Eaton's transmission business. "We have taken into account customer feedback, industry demands and field testing data, and designed these transmissions to offer our customers the perfect solution for use in virtually any vocation."

There are hundreds of individual configurations available, so customers can choose the transmission that's best suited for their application and powertrain, Eaton says.

The new UltraShift PLUS family includes six platforms: Linehaul Active Shifting (LAS) available in overdrive and direct drive; Multipurpose High Performance (MHP); Multipurpose Extreme Performance (MXP); Vocational Construction Series (VCS); Vocational Multipurpose Series (VMS); and Vocational Extreme Performance (VXP).

A new self-adjusting electronic clutch actuator (ECA) allows for fast, smooth clutch engagements, according to the company. Each model also employs a new Hill Start Aid, which prevents rollbacks on grades. A sight glass allows operators to easily check fluid levels and a new creep feature allows for better maneuverability with continuous low-speed control, Eaton claims. Eaton says the new series has been in development for seven years, with test fleets collectively logging 2,500 months of testing across North America.

The UltraShift PLUS transmissions will soon be available through limited quantity release with full production slated to begin in 2010. The new generation UltraShift was unveiled as this issue of *Truck West* went to press, however the November issue will feature a first-hand review of the new transmissions, tested at Eaton's proving grounds over grades of up to 20%. □

## Alberta

By Jim Bray

**GRIMSHAW, Alta.** – An ill wind blowing in Northern Alberta has at least one long-time independent trucker warning about a potential confrontation between his peers and what he claims are cut-rate competitors who are putting them out of business.

Marvin Belcourt of Grimshaw, has been hauling since the 1970s, but in the past few years has seen his business drop off to the point where he's forced to take on other duties to make ends meet. And though he won't name names, he blames unfair competition and government representatives who he says care little about their constituents for creating an intolerable and unsustainable situation.

"Edmonton companies are coming up here and charging less than half the going rate," Belcourt says, claiming that while the road builders' rate in Alberta is \$120 an hour, some companies are offering their trucks for only \$45.

He calls it a "really dumb move," and expresses his frustration that truckers don't get together and refuse to work for that rate. Unfortunately, he says, "there's always scabs. What do you do? You can't start shooting out tires."

Yet this is precisely what he fears if the situation doesn't change. "In our area people are getting tired of these groups coming in and working for less than half rate," he says.

The groups of which he speaks include Mennonites and other farmers Belcourt says will work for less to augment the farm income Belcourt says is government-subsidized and which therefore gives them an unfair advantage.

"One guy I won't name has four or five trucks and farms on the side, so he gets government hand-outs. Farmers get hail money, crop failure money, drought money, even cattle farmers get hand-outs. We get nothing." He also says these groups stick together and won't let outsiders in on the work.

Belcourt claims these farmers can also own trucking companies and gravel pits and are "buying up everything using farm money."

He thinks they're trying to run everyone else out of business so they can raise prices but "they'll go broke before that happens. All it would take would be a couple of years of bad crops and they won't be able to pay their trucking bills."

And while that might be poetic justice and a free market equalizer, it could also be too late for independents such as him.

Belcourt also aims his ire at governments who he says not only refuse to step in and help level the playing field, but who actually make the situation worse. Chief among these culprits are municipal districts who he says hired local truckers in years past, but who over the past few years have stopped doing so. And now, "the last MD in our area has tendered their gravel jobs out," he says, "and the tender for next year went to a company from Edmonton. That means there'll be 20 or 30 local owner/operators out of work."

According to the Municipal District of Peace No. 135, where Grimshaw is located, this shouldn't even be an issue.

"The only trucking we do is with

# Picking at 'scabs'

*Tensions mount in Alberta as trucking conditions deteriorate.*

*Should the industry be concerned?*

our gravelling program," says chief administrative officer Lyle McKen. "And it's tendered out on an annual basis." McKen says the tender goes typically to a local contractor, and that "when we do our tendering we require them to supply a minimum of four trucks."

He admits that some may subcontract to local individuals, but "I believe most of the times the trucks are company-owned. They may hire on privately-owned trucks occasionally, but our gravelling program only goes on only for a couple of weeks and to our knowledge this hasn't been an issue."

The neighbouring MD of Northern Lights No. 22, however, makes no apologies for tendering to the lowest bidder. According to chief administrative officer Theresa Van Oort, "we're kind of stuck with tendering requirements and can't cut anyone out of the process," she says. It isn't just trucking that's being affected, either, she says, but "other contractors are bidding for quite a bit less than last year."

Van Oort blames the economy. "We had one contract unrelated to trucking that we tendered last year," she cites as an example, "and this year the costs were exactly half – and it was the same contractor both years. We're certainly not trying to purposely cut out our local guys, but we do have a responsibility to ensure we're getting the best bang for the buck."

The district has open tendering, Van Oort says, and if a company meets the requirements – such as bonding, proper WCB coverage, liability insurance and the like – "there isn't a lot we can do." She points out that if a company has given them problems in the past the MD won't work with them again, but that hasn't happened.

"We don't see that we can turn down a tender from someone just because they're from outside the area," Van Oort says. "Once you start playing favourites, people quit bidding because they figure the game's rigged – and you don't want to see that."

That's small consolation for truckers like Belcourt who see their livelihood slipping from their grasp. "I'd like to see truckers across Canada completely shut down and cripple the country for two, three weeks like they did in France," he says in frustration. "It won't solve anything, but at least it'll show people how important truckers are."

He also wants a government solution. "This is where the MLAs should step in," he says, "but they don't care." Belcourt says he spoke

with two area MLAs and the upshot was that "It wasn't their concern and there's nothing they can do."

Alberta Transportation agrees, saying it's basically a free market issue. According to spokesperson Trent Bancarz, "our concern is if the vehicles being used are properly

registered, have the proper permits and safety records and the like, and that qualified people are driving them. Other than that we don't get involved."

Bancarz says the province certainly doesn't direct municipalities who to hire, but "we would hope they would hire qualified people with the right permits, licences, vehicles, and the like – and of course that they're following the regulations, with no overloaded vehicles and the like. But that's really where our concern ends."

Stuck between a rock and a hard place, Belcourt says the dissatisfaction among he and his peers is

mounting – and he sees the potential for things to get ugly. "In our area people are getting tired of these groups coming in and working for less than half rate," he says, "and I think something might happen down the road that isn't going to be pretty."

Such talk alarms Alberta Transportation's Bancarz. "That (kind of activity) worries us from a safety perspective," he says. "What if the victim gets into his truck and doesn't know about the damage someone did? It could be very dangerous, and I hope no-one does anything to compromise public safety."

Bancarz is sympathetic to the truckers' plight. "There's lots of frustration because the economy has dropped out and things are difficult," he says. "It's very competitive and from time to time we field calls from people in the industry wanting things like guaranteed contracts or that contracts only be open to people who live in a certain area. Of course we can't do that."

Faced with a situation he's unlikely to change, Belcourt is being forced to diversify.

"I'll work for other people if they pay a decent rate," he says. "I do other stuff in construction that doesn't involve tucking, and we have our own butcher shop in Grimshaw. My son Marcel's a really good meat cutter and we make a little extra that way." He also cuts grass for a Peace River businessman with several properties.

"You've got to do what you have to, to survive," he says. "We're kind of the forgotten people up here." □

There's always scabs. What do you do? You can't start shooting out tires.'

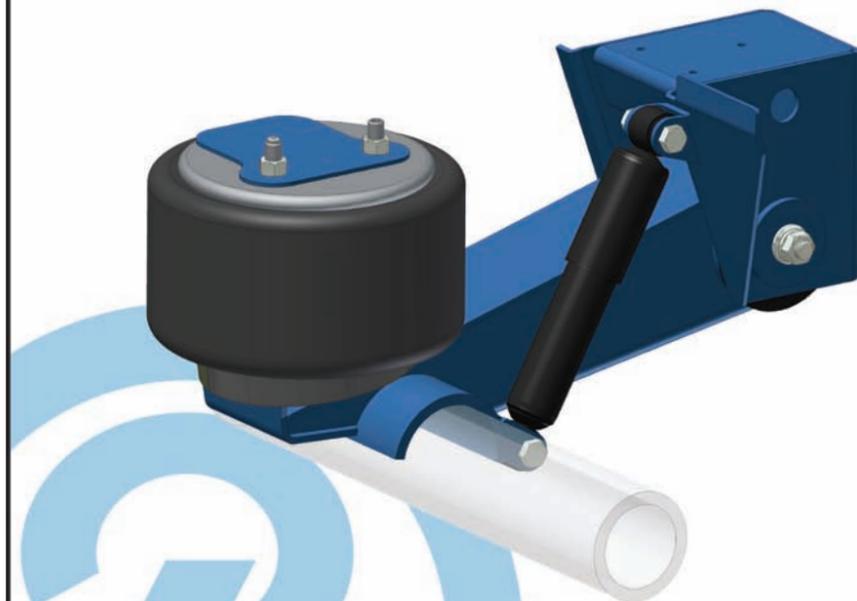
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## Cat, Navistar alliance takes shape

First N.A. truck under joint venture slated for 2011

**WARRENVILLE, Ill.** – More details are emerging about the joint venture transaction between Navistar International and Caterpillar, which will now operate under the name NC2 Global LLC. The joint venture was first announced in June 2008 and will operate out of the Chicago area.

Al Saltiel, former vice-president of marketing with Navistar has been named president of the new entity.

“Together, Navistar and Caterpillar have moved this project from concept to reality in little more than one year,” says Saltiel. “We now have a dedicated and experienced leadership team that will hit the ground running.”

Other newly-named executives include: Bob Iacullo, chief financial officer of NC2, formerly from Caterpillar and Motorola before that. There have also been appointments for business units such as product development, sales and marketing, dealer operations, production, supply chain and parts and service, the company has announced.

“NC2 will produce and market a full line of commercial on-highway trucks for markets outside of North America,” says Saltiel. “Customers will benefit from the unparalleled depth and scope of support provided by Navistar and

Caterpillar’s global dealers.”

Both Navistar and Caterpillar have contributed three people to NC2’s board of directors, which will be chaired by Cat president Doug Oberhelman. Navistar Truck Group president Dee Kapur will serve as lead director from Navistar.

“The formation of this joint venture represents a long-term strategic decision,” Oberhelman says. “Despite the current challenges facing the global economy, both Caterpillar and Navistar are dedicating the right people and investing significant resources to ensure NC2’s long-term success in the global on-highway truck market.”

NC2 will manufacture and distribute commercial trucks globally, initially focusing on Australia, Brazil, China, Russia, South Africa and Turkey. Both cabover and conventional trucks will be sold under the Cat and International brands.

Here in North America, Navistar and Caterpillar will continue to develop a purpose-built heavy-duty Cat vocational truck which will be sold and serviced through Cat’s North American dealer network.

The company says the North American trucks will be slated for full production by mid-2011. □

## Freightliner’s Slice of Life program extended

**PORTLAND, Ore.** – Freightliner has announced it’s expanding its popular ‘Slice of Life’ program, which allows people to follow three professional drivers online as they traverse the US with Detroit Diesel DD15-equipped Freightliner Cascadia’s.

However, as the program moves forward, the three drivers – Dick McCorkle, Henry Albert and Kurt Grote – will be behind the wheels of Freightliner trucks with EPA2010-compliant engines using selective catalytic reduction (SCR).

“Given the positive response we’ve received so far, we decided to extend the program and introduce the drivers to BlueTec emissions technology by giving them three new Cascadia trucks to test drive with DD15’s with BlueTec technology,” said Jamie Heck, owner/operator product marketing manager for Freightliner Trucks.

“As Kurt, Henry and Dick continue to cross North America, we will be eager to read their blogs and hear their reports detailing their experiences and the performance of these new products.”

The three drivers that take part in the program blog about their travels on the program’s Web site: [www.SliceofTruckerLife.com](http://www.SliceofTruckerLife.com) and also share better business practices. They drivers also attend popular truck shows, including the Mid-America Trucking Show (March 25-27 in Louisville). □

## Study shows AMTs save more fuel than true autos

**KALAMAZOO, Mich.** – Research conducted by Roush Industries for the US Army has indicated automated manual transmissions can be up to 22% more fuel efficient than conventional automatics.

The findings stem from an independent simulation conducted for the US Army Tank Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Centre/National Automotive Center (TARDEC/NAC). Eaton Corp., a manufacturer of automated mechanical transmissions, is applauding the results.

“We are extremely pleased with the results of this study as it once again confirms the fuel-saving benefits that are inherent in our growing line-up of automated transmissions,” said Staci Kroon, senior vice-president and general manager, commercial vehicles for Eaton’s Truck North America Division.

The test was conducted using analytical simulation software in order to keep uncontrollable outside variables from impacting the results, Eaton said in a release. The company says the fuel economy gains may be attributable to the increased number of gears available on AMTs and an optimized shift schedule that “will keep the engine running in its most efficient range.” □

## Detroit Diesel’s 2010 engines surpass testing milestone

**DALLAS, Texas** – Detroit Diesel’s 2010 engines with BlueTec selective catalytic reduction (SCR) technology have exceeded 25 million miles of testing, according to the company. The 25-million mile mark was reached by pre-production test trucks and revenue-generating customer demonstration units ahead of schedule, Detroit Diesel announced. By the time EPA2010 Detroit Diesel engines are rolled out on Jan. 1, they will have surpassed 28 million miles of testing.

“We are pleased to have taken full advantage of our early choice of SCR as the best technology for our customers for 2010. The 2010 BlueTec technology will be one of most extensively tested emissions technology systems in our company’s history, and having this decade of experience has allowed Detroit Diesel and DTNA to not only have an extended period of time for system design and performance refinement but also to gain significant testing and validation experience,” said David Siler, director of marketing, Detroit Diesel. □

## N.A. Class 8 truck, trailer orders improve

**NASHVILLE, Ind.** – North American Class 8 truck orders reached their highest point since November, 2008 in August, according to preliminary figures from industry forecaster FTR Associates.

Class 8 net orders totaled 10,758 units in August, according to the company, including the US, Canada, Mexico and exports. August order activity was 19.9% better than the previous month and reflects an annualized rate of 129,096 units.

“FTR is cautiously optimistic about the increased August preliminary Class 8 net orders; however we believe some of the orders being placed are in response to 2010 EPA emissions requirements,” said Eric Starks, president of FTR. “We still expect any recovery in the transportation industry to be slow and bumpy through next year.”

Meanwhile there was also some good news for trailer manufactur-

ers and retailers. ACT Research said net orders for commercial trailers increased 4% in July and were up 16% from July 2008. The findings were published in ACT’s *State of the Industry US Trailers* report. The year-over-year gain was the first recorded so far this year. Year to date through July, net orders for commercial trailers are still off 39% over the same period in 2008.

“Demand for commercial trailers continues to be soft as there remains excess capacity and weak profits in the freight transportation industry,” said Kenny Vieth, partner and senior analyst with ACT Research. “The current order levels are less than half of the normalized industry replacement rate, but with seven of nine trailer types tracked posting increases in new orders from June to July, it appears demand is beginning to move in the right direction, if incrementally.” □



**PRETTY IN PINK:** A plant fire did not dampen Delta Spring and Chassis’ plans to celebrate its customers. A customer appreciation day went ahead as planned, benefiting a local breast cancer centre.

## Fire can’t burn spirit at Delta Spring and Chassis

**BRESLAU, Ont.** – Delta Spring and Chassis hosted a customer appreciation day recently, despite suffering a fire a week earlier that temporarily shut down its repair bays. The fire was contained and nobody was hurt, but the seven-bay facility suffered extensive smoke damage, the company said.

It remains open, however, and customers are still being served as repairs are made. The company planned to be back at full capacity by the beginning of September.

Despite the setback, the customer appreciation day went ahead as scheduled and this year it focused on breast cancer aware-

ness. Two pink trucks were displayed, courtesy of CBM and Tri City Materials, as well as several other antique trucks.

“In past years, we’ve appreciated our customers and this year we wanted to pay special tribute to customers who have given back to their community. When the fire occurred, we just couldn’t close the doors on such an important event,” said Herb Preikschas, account manager at Delta.

Donations collected during the event were presented to the Waterloo-Wellington Breast Cancer Centre of Grand River Hospital. □

## ATDynamics gets funding to develop new aero technology

**ALBANY, N.Y.** – The state of New York is awarding ATDynamics a grant to develop active flow control (AFC) technology that reduces aerodynamic drag by modifying airflow at the rear of tractor-trailers. ATDynamics itself will also match about 50% of the US\$499,645 funding from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, the company announced.

“To carry on our role as a pioneer in trailer aerodynamics, we’re providing the long-haul trucking industry with a technology that is well established in aerospace engineering,” said Andrew Smith, CEO of ATDynamics. “With support from New York State, we can turn active flow control into a trucker-tough product that is cost-effective for our fleet customers and OEM partners.”

Chuck Horrell, vice-president of engineering with ATDynamics said fleets with trailers that use roll-up doors stand to benefit from the emerging technology, since they cannot take advantage of current technology designed for swing doors.

“We are engineering AFC to integrate directly into the rear frame of a roll-door trailer,” he explained.

ATDynamics will be evaluating AFC in real-world conditions through New York state, beginning in 2010. □

## Hino gears up for launch of 2010 engines

**NOVI, Mich.** – Hino Trucks is taking a number of steps to prepare both customers and dealers for the launch of its Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) engine technology to meet the upcoming 2010 emissions regulations.

For starters, Hino has created a new microsite ([www.hinoscr.com](http://www.hinoscr.com)) explaining the manufacturer’s development of the new technology and what it means for Hino owners. Included will be a page with frequently asked questions about SCR and Diesel Exhaust Fluid.

In addition, Hino has scheduled a series of 2011 model year launch events for its dealers beginning the first week in December. During these events, dealers will have the opportunity to test drive and learn about Hino’s new 2011 products.

“Hino Trucks will be fully compliant in meeting the 2010 emissions regulations by using the proven technology of SCR,” said Glenn Ellis, vice-president of marketing and dealer operations. “The ability to reduce emissions to near-zero levels while improving fuel economy distinguishes SCR as the only proven emissions control technology that is as good for business, as it is for the environment.”

George Daniels, vice-president of service operations for Hino, says the technology “allows the engine to operate at max per-



**GETTING READY:** Like most OEMs, Hino will be using SCR to meet 2010 emissions standards. The company says it’s already laying the groundwork and will be ready.

formance level without the additional engine stress needed to control NOx with EGR alone,” adding that the company is seeing excellent results in its customer field tests. Hino will implement an emissions surcharge of \$6,700 per vehicle. □

## SmarTire/Bendix deal finalized

**RICHMOND, B.C.** – SmarTire Systems shareholders have agreed to terms of the acquisition of certain assets by Bendix, the companies have reported. Bendix said that the addition of the tire pressure monitoring system diversifies its business.

“The final approval of the SmarTire asset acquisition will enable Bendix to continue to provide a full range of commercial vehicle systems solutions that improve highway safety for our customers and everyone on the road,” said Scott Burkhart, vice-president, controls business unit at Bendix. “Despite current market conditions, Bendix has continued to expand its technological offerings, while diversifying its business.”

Shareholder ratification was the final step in Bendix’s acquisition of SmarTire, which was first announced in December, 2008. □

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# Hands On Trucking

By Edo van Belkom

**The Story So Far...**

**Before making a delivery of hardwood flooring to a big warehouse, Mark jumps from his cab and injures his knee. Working through the pain, Mark is told by the shipper that all the warehouse workers are gone, so if Mark wants his truck unloaded he'll have to do it himself. Mark wants another load so he unloads it himself. His knee aches.**

That night Mark bought two bags of ice and found a quiet parking lot where he could sit in a lawn chair and ice his knee. Over the course of the day the knee had swollen to the point where it looked as if it had been encased in a big red melon. And there was pain, too. Not so much to walk on it, but to bend and twist it. While he sat there with the ice on his knee and the cold water dripping down his leg, he couldn't put the leg in a comfortable position or one without pain. Any slight twist or pressure from any angle other than straight up and down created a dull aching throb.

'How in the world could I hurt my knee so badly just jumping down from the truck?' he wondered.

But he knew it happened all the time.

He knew plenty of truckers who had blown out their backs lowering the landing gear or opening the barn doors on their trailers. And how many had sprained an ankle or even broken a leg jumping down from the rear of a trailer or off a loading dock? And what about winter ice? Sure, roads got slippery in the winter, but so did the ground beneath your feet.

And it didn't just happen to truckers.

Even professional athletes got injured in the silliest ways.

A year or so ago, didn't that kicker for the Arizona Cardinals, Bill Gramatica, celebrate a field goal with a jump only to land awkwardly on his feet and wind up out for the rest of the season with torn cartilage and ligaments? And you're always hearing stories of guys who threw their backs doing odd jobs around the house or playing at home with the kids.

The difference was that those guys had big fat contracts that were still paid out in the event of an injury. Even most company drivers had some kind of plan that would help them make ends meet while they were off work. But Mark was an owner/operator, meaning that he was the employee, the boss and the company all rolled into one. If he didn't work the company suffered, and if the company suffered, then he might start missing paydays.

It all came down to him...and his knee. He shifted the ice bag and felt a

fresh stream of cold water run down his leg and into his boot. The running water aside, the ice felt good on the joint and was doing a good job of keeping down the swelling. It was even helping to ease the pain to the point where he could almost walk on it normally. That was all well and good for now. It was getting up tomorrow morning that he was worried about because it wasn't a question of whether he would be working tomorrow or not – of course he would be working. The real question was, would he be able to stand the pain long enough to get himself through the day?

Mark opened his eyes. He was comfortable in bed and had enjoyed a good night's sleep. He turned his head and looked at the clock he'd set up in the sleeper. It was just after seven. Enough time to get up, find some breakfast and be on the road by nine.

He lay in bed a few moments staring at the ceiling, stretching his arms and getting the blood flowing. So far, so good, he thought. Then he tried a leg, no problem. Then the other – Aahh!

A needle of pain shot through his knee, feeling as if someone had put a nail gun up against the back of his leg and pulled the trigger.

Gasping for breath, Mark tried moving the knee again. Slowly, this time, inch by inch. There was pain and stiffness and at first he thought he'd never make it out of bed, but slowly...very slowly, he was able to straighten his leg.

'How the hell am I going to work today?' he wondered. But the answer was simple. He would just do it. He'd work through the pain and if he had time at the end of it all, maybe he could see a doctor about it. But even then, the doctor's advice would be to take some time off work to let the knee heal. But they always said that, as if there were no consequences to not working.

Mark worked the leg back and forth and the more it moved the better it felt. Eventually, it was working normally with just a hint of soreness. He could manage the pain, but this was a long-term thing that would be dogging him for weeks.

Mark rolled out of bed and got ready for his day.

By nine he had another load of hardwood from Bud that needed to be delivered to the same warehouse he'd delivered to the day before.

Hopefully, this time, there'd be shippers there to unload his trailer so he could get a couple of loads in. If he could manage three or four deliveries today, maybe he'd be able to take the next morning off to see a doctor.



But when he arrived at the warehouse, the place was as deserted as it had been the afternoon before. That had been close to quitting time, but this was the first thing in the morning.

'Where is everybody?' Mark said aloud.

'Oh, I thought I heard someone here,' said the shipper from the day before. He was wearing different clothes today, but they were as clean and as freshly pressed as the outfit he'd had on yesterday.

'Another load of hardwood,' Mark said. 'Twelve skids.'

'Right,' said the shipper. 'They go over there.' He pointed to a spot in the middle of the warehouse that had been cleared to accommodate 12 or so skids.

Mark waited, saying nothing.

Finally, he had to ask. 'Where are your workers?'

The shipper shook his head. 'One of them called in sick and the other one's on lunch.'

'What about you?'

He jabbed a thumb over his shoulder. 'Office.'

'When does your man come off lunch?'

'He started at six this morning and he just left. Said something about taking his kid to the dentist, so...'

Mark could see where this was going. 'Never mind, I'll do it myself.'

'Fine with me,' the shipper said, spinning on his heels and heading back to his office.

Mark stood there, shaking his head. How could this happen two days in a row? Part of him wanted to just wait and see if anyone ever came back from lunch, but the owner/operator in him

wanted to get the load off his truck and get back on the road.

With a sigh and slight limp to his gait, he found the lift truck he'd used the day before...and got to work.

Because he was used to the way the pump truck operated, and was familiar with the layout of the warehouse, the unloading went a lot quicker than it did the day before.

But as fast as the work was done, his knee didn't feel any better for it. The pain was back and he had trouble bending and extending it fully.

When he was done he gave a hard pull on the pump truck and sent it rolling along the warehouse floor, not caring all that much where it ended up or what it crashed into.

He found the shipper a little while later in his office snacking on a sandwich and sipping a hot cup of Tim's.

'All done?' he asked as Mark appeared in the doorway.

'Yeah,' Mark said. 'I unloaded the truck for you.'

'Great. I'm sorry about my guys not being here. It doesn't happen that often. You know, once in a while things come up and they need the time off.'

'This is two days in a row.'

'Is it?'

'Yeah, it is.'

'Isn't that curious?'

'Yeah,' Mark said. 'Curious.'

He handed the man papers to sign.

The shipper signed them and said, 'See you later.'

Mark took a step, winced as a stab of pain shot through his knee, and said, 'Not if I can help it.' □

– Mark Dalton returns next month in Part 3

The continuing adventures of Mark Dalton: Owner/Operator  
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# Things are beginning to look a little bit better

It seems you can't read a newspaper or watch the TV these days without hearing some expert or another weigh in with their two cents on the economy.

But unfortunately, it seems nobody's on quite the same page.

'Things are looking up, expect a rapid recovery,' says one. Only to be contradicted by another who says 'We're not out of the woods yet, brace yourselves for more job losses.'

What gives? Are these economists not studying the same numbers?

I guess all we can do is take it all with a grain of salt and rely on our own observations to find out what's truly in store. I, for one, am pitching my tent in the optimists' camp.

Don't get me wrong, trucking companies aren't throwing any parties to celebrate the end of the recession just yet.

In fact, one of the industry's best parties – the OTA convention and banquet – has been scaled back to just one day (Nov. 19) this year.

However, the people I've been talking to over the past eight weeks or so seem more optimistic than they have been at any time over the previous 18 months.

## Publisher's Comment

Rob Wilkins



Maybe 'cautiously' optimistic is the better term.

Here at *Truck News*, we're seeing signs of a recovery.

For one, this issue has more driver ads than any other recent issue. Instead of parking trucks against the fence, it looks like some carriers are seeing a spike in demand.

Also, recent reports from industry forecasters have shown Class 8 build rates are beginning to climb from their low points in the second quarter. That's more great news, especially for dealers and OEMs.

One thing's for sure, whether your glass is half full or half empty, it's not going to change how things play out.

Which is why I'm pitching my tent in the optimists' camp – it's much sunnier over here. □

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

# Guest commentary: HST, trucking safety and the environment

By Paul R. Landry

The HST is going to give the trucking industry a boost in improving truck safety and reducing harmful smog and GHG emissions.

Those are two unique reasons why the B.C. Trucking Association supports the HST, in addition to the oft-cited public policy rationales of improving B.C.'s competitiveness, stimulating job creation and enhancing our economic future.

So, what's the link?

Simply put, the availability of input tax credits associated with the HST will reduce the effective tax on new investments in BC by 40%.

This, in turn, will encourage trucking companies to invest in trucks, trailers, safety and energy efficient technologies.

By the time the HST is introduced in July 2010, many trucking companies will have deferred investments in new equipment for several years due to recessionary pressures.

Since the economy will be recovering and there will be pent-up demand for new equipment, the HST will grease the wheels of renewal.

The timing of the HST couldn't be better for trucking.

Trucks manufactured on or

after Jan. 1, 2010 will have to meet a new emission standard that will make them virtually smog-free. Most of the new engines will also be more fuel-efficient, thus reducing GHGs.

Input tax credits will also make several expensive energy-efficient technologies, such as aerodynamic devices and low-rolling resistance tires, more affordable.

Similarly, there are new advanced safety technologies such as vehicle stability systems that reduce rollovers and electronic on-board recorders that monitor driver hours of work that will be more affordable.

Safety technologies and energy efficiency devices aren't limited to new purchases.

These can also be installed on existing equipment.

"Input tax credits" sounds technical and boring – and not particularly useful or productive.

But in the hands of the trucking industry, ITCs will be parlayed into sound investments in new technologies, equipment and facilities that will help us to be safer and greener while improving our productivity and efforts to help the B.C. economy rebound. □

– Paul R. Landry is president and CEO of the B.C. Trucking Association.

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**BOWMANVILLE, Ont.** – The economic downturn has dominated headlines for the better part of a year, leaving numerous trucking companies and their drivers in its wake.

Many of the surviving companies have had to scale back operations and streamline processes to adapt to the new economic realities. Many drivers have seen a decrease in miles – meaning a drop in pay – causing many to rethink their expenditures in their home lives as well.

Others have lost their jobs altogether, which seemed unthinkable just a couple short years ago when the trucking industry was struggling to find qualified drivers.

Since the Canadian economy appears to be turning a corner, *Truck West* decided to mark the occasion by speaking with drivers at the Fifth Wheel Truck Stop in Bowmanville, Ont. to see how the recession has affected them both professionally and personally



## How has the recession affected your job?

over the past year.

**William MacCulloch**, a driver with Starship Equipment in Alexandria, Ont., was forced out of his truck this past winter when loads became scarce.

“I went back into construction, actually, for five months,” he told *Truck West*.

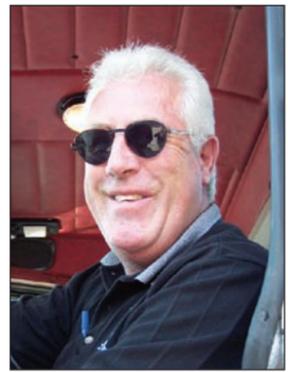
On the home front, MacCulloch has changed his spending habits to adapt to the new economic realities as well.

“Just a little bit more of the leisure stuff we don’t do, that’s



**William MacCulloch**

all,” he said, adding that he’ll likely continue his frugal ways into the future.



**Steve Smith**

**Steve Smith**, a company driver based in Belleville, Ont., says he’s been fortunate to be basically unaffected at work during the recession.

“It’s mostly steel and we do a lot of cement too. It’s been pretty steady,” he said.

However, like MacCulloch, Smith says he’s done his share of belt-tightening at home.



**Steven Abraham**

**Steven Abraham**, a driver with Kriska Transport in Prescott, Ont., has been trucking for just 11 months but says he has seen the effect of the recession to a degree.

“Freight isn’t moving as it normally moves, so (the recession) has indeed affected (us),” Abraham said, adding that business seems to be picking up now compared to six months ago.

Abraham says he is sure not to overspend since his income is not as fluid as it once was and plans to continue this habit until the upturn is in full swing.



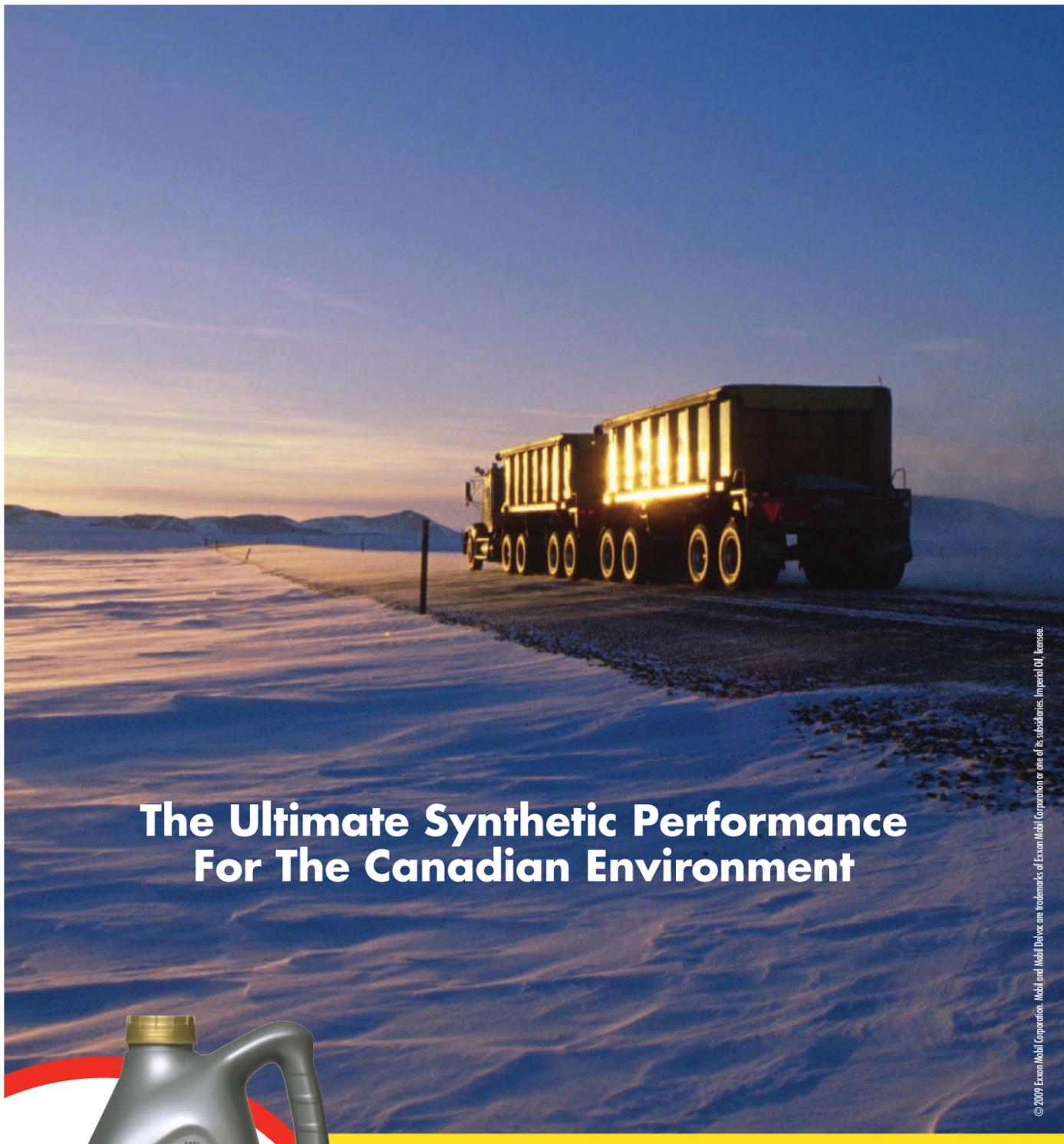
**Lawrence Owen**

**Lawrence Owen**, an owner/operator who hauls ingredients for animal feed at a Leamington, Ont.-based farm, says business has been steady because “people still need to eat.”

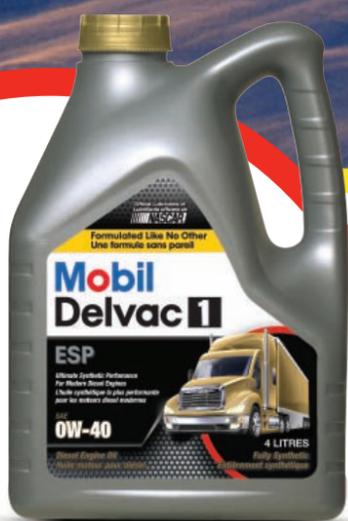
But just to be safe, Owen has scaled back the amount he eats at truck stops while on the road.

“It’s a good habit to get into. It’s a lot of extra money to spend out here when you could spend way less than that at a grocery store and get a cooler and have a little microwave in the truck. I’m really getting ready to start as a more permanent thing,” he added. □

– Adam Ledlow is now on Twitter! Join today and follow his tweets at [twitter.com/adamledlow](http://twitter.com/adamledlow).



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