

TRUCK WEST

December 2011 Volume 22, Issue 12

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

Convoys for a Cure RAISE BIG BUCKS

See story, pg. 14



B.C. fleets can earn cash for credits

By Jim Bray

VICTORIA, B.C. – A new venture in B.C. claims to offer truckers a way to enhance their bottom lines, saving them money via reduced diesel fuel purchases while putting cash in their jeans by selling “carbon offsets.”

That's the carrot, anyway. The stick, as it were, is that the trucking company has to buy equipment that allows its fleet to be monitored and mentored and, if B.C. joins the “Cap and Trade” wave being made currently in some jurisdictions around the world, they could even lose the capacity to make their own decision in the matter.

“The ability to remove carbon is going to be a larger and larger requirement as we move forward,” says George Stedeford, CEO of the Carbon Offset Aggregation Cooperative of B.C. (COAC), who likens his group to a kind of “Wheat Board” for carbon emissions,

Continued on page 12

One year later...

A year after the attack, the ‘Good Samaritan’ truck driver speaks out

By Harry Rudolfs

LUMBY, B.C. – It's been a little more than a year since Alex Fraser's life changed forever. On Sept. 24, 2010, the 67-year-old owner/operator was heading home on a Friday night after unloading in Edmonton.

It was a warm autumn evening on the Yellowhead Highway and

everything was going well, the truck was purring and Fraser was only about five hours away from his home outside of Vernon, B.C.

Then he noticed a car parked on the shoulder facing towards him, and what looked like somebody waving arms at the side of the road.

Continued on page 8

Driving Volvo's 750-hp FH16

The I-Shift shines in Sweden

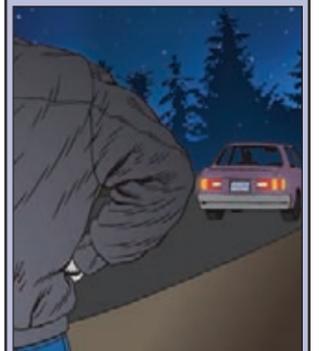


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Mark Dalton O/O



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Are provincial nominee programs really the answer?

In mid-October, B.C. carriers lauded a decision by the province to permanently include long-haul truck driving among the professions qualifying for inclusion in its provincial nominee program (PNP).

That essentially means B.C.-based long-haul trucking firms will be able to recruit qualified drivers from overseas and the province will expedite their immigration process, fast-tracking their transition to permanent resident status. Reaction has been mixed. Many fleets insist they can't find qualified Canadian drivers willing to accept the pay and lifestyle afforded by a career as a long-distance truck driver. Bringing experienced drivers from countries in Europe and the Middle East fills a vital need for the industry and will benefit the economy, proponents contend.

On the flip side, others are left wondering how conditions for professional drivers will ever improve if we're simply willing to look further abroad for workers who will accept the way things currently are? Have we no appetite to improve conditions for our existing workforce to make professional driving an occupation in which one can earn a decent living, achieve some semblance of work/life balance and take pride in their profession?

In a recent e-mail exchange, Larry Hall, an owner/operator and former fleet owner and head of the North American Truckers Guild, told me he feels the PNP is "the single biggest thing to happen in this industry since deregulation." He went on to say it "has the potential to undermine our entire labour force," and he insisted the nation's professional drivers are "willfully ignorant" of the program's impli-



Editorial Comment
 JAMES MENZIES

cations. I certainly wouldn't go that far. In my opinion, the PNP is a stop-gap measure that will not have far-reaching implications on the industry, simply because it's an ineffective and shortsighted solution to the driver shortage. It's costly (some estimates peg the cost of recruiting a foreign driver through the program at \$10,000), many drivers either return home or jump ship to another carrier when their initial contract expires and in many cases, drivers who arrive here realize they were sold a bill of goods and the realities of long-haul trucking in Canada are not as glamorous as they imagined or were led to believe.

I feel the PNP programs will have limited long-term success and eventually will fade into oblivion as progressive carriers seek more effective, permanent solutions to attracting workers (and some are already doing this). While I'm skeptical of the PNP, I do believe immigration will play an important role in keeping the industry rolling. We have an abundance of foreign-born and second generation employees working as truck drivers in this

country; progressive fleets could be tapping into this pool more effectively and offering training and compensation that would elevate the quality of our overall driver force. They're right here, folks, you don't need to cross any oceans to find them.

As far as the PNP is concerned, I think when we look back on it five years from now, we'll find it had no significant impact on the trucking industry, good or bad.

Larry's not so sure. He sees the PNP as an elaborate plot by big carriers to drive down wages. The answer may be somewhere in the middle. What do you think? Should Canadian carriers be permitted to recruit from abroad? Check out my blog on the subject at Trucknews.com and have your say. □

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Not all drivers are cut from the same cloth

What do drivers want? The simple answer is usually more money, better benefits. That's what just about every survey I've read on this topic says.

While no one would turn down a nice increase, I think motor carrier executives need to look deeper than that to understand what it takes to put the right people at the controls of their increasingly expensive moving assets and keep them there. Assuming it's just an issue of more money may simply leave us with higher paid drivers who still hop from job to job during the good times and continue to exit the industry in utter frustration during the bad times.

At the recent American Trucking Associations annual conference, I attended a session led by Ricardo Ramon and Susan Magrino from Caliper Research and what they had to say is worth repeating. Caliper conducts personality assessments for job placements and has done more than 3.5 million of them. It has also studied why drivers are leaving the industry. Ramon and Magrino believe job success and satisfaction has a lot to do with finding the person with the right personality for the job in the first place and that's a connection the industry is not considering closely enough.



They say the most common hiring mistake is to find someone with the right skills but the wrong personal drivers and hire them on the assumption that you can change them with the right coaching, the right incentives, the right rewards, etc. They believe people are actually hard to change; their personalities are already hard set before they walk through your door. You can provide incentives but after a while they no longer serve as a motivator. In their own words: Job techniques can be taught; drive and motivation can't be. The right drive and motivation are essential for success.

Caliper has researched the personalities of local, regional and long-haul drivers and found some significant differences. For example, local drivers tend to have higher sociability traits and enjoy dealing with clients. They can be more accommodating, pragmatic and do paperwork without resenting it. But they also want to know exactly what they're supposed to do, want to feel com-

fortable on the job and don't like to take risks.

Long-haul drivers on the other hand typically show more independence and are less accepting of company structure. They don't feel as great a need to socialize as that's not something that satisfies their ego. They are more like the lone wolf that can take the ball and run with it without a great amount of direction.

Hire someone with typical long-haul traits and stick him in a P&D city-type operation and you may find you have someone who is going to turn off your clients. Take someone with a personality more suited to local hauls and set him up for long stretches of highway work and you may find you turn off your employee.

If you are requiring them to do something that is not natural to them, they may not tell you about it but inside they will be feeling the pain. And two years is about the time for fatigue and stress to show up to a high enough degree that they decide to leave. □

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CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

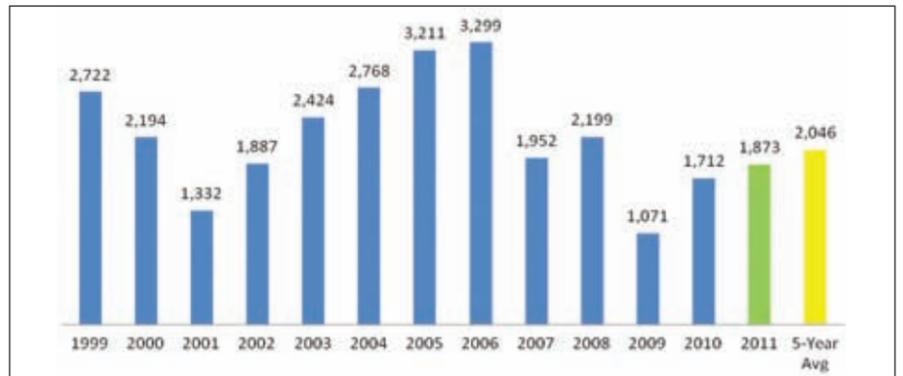
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Monthly Class 8 Sales – Sept 11

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	528	362
International	438	358
Kenworth	485	361
Mack	174	114
Peterbilt	288	181
Sterling	0	1
Volvo	325	245
Western Star	163	90
TOTALS	1873	1712

Following one of the best Augusts the Canadian Class 8 market has experienced over the past decade, September is a bit of a downgrade. The 2,425 Class 8 trucks sold in August far surpassed the monthly totals from last year as well as 2007 to 2009 and from 2000 to 2003. In comparison, the 1,873 trucks sold in September was only better than 2009, 2010 and 2001 and fell below the five-year average for the first time in three months.

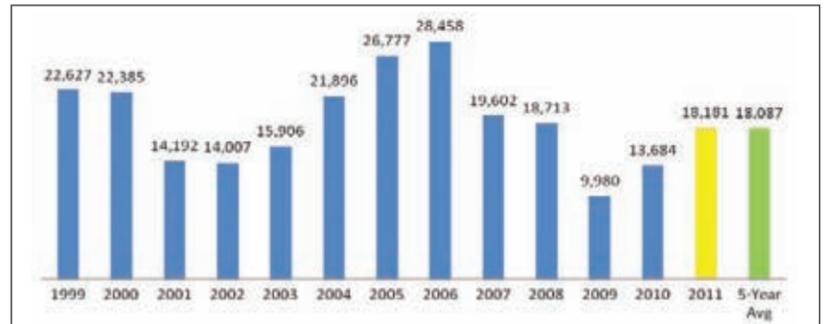
Historical Comparison – Sept 11 Sales



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

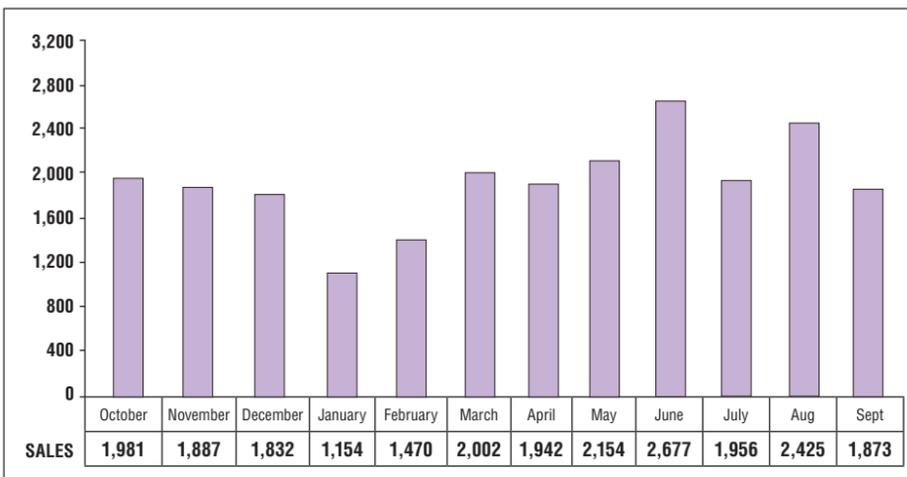
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	258	441	121	259	2,477	738	213	85	17	24	4,633
Kenworth	353	1,374	255	143	653	807	98	0	0	0	3,683
Mack	55	171	94	58	586	178	32	24	0	23	1,221
International	246	575	69	223	1,266	824	207	107	9	59	3,585
Peterbilt	232	601	165	177	412	279	100	23	0	0	1,989
Volvo	142	121	49	203	807	358	100	42	0	5	1,827
Western Star	240	395	57	26	192	205	50	65	2	11	1,243
TOTALS	1,526	3,678	810	1,089	6,393	3,389	800	346	28	122	18,181

Historical Comparison – YTD Sept 11



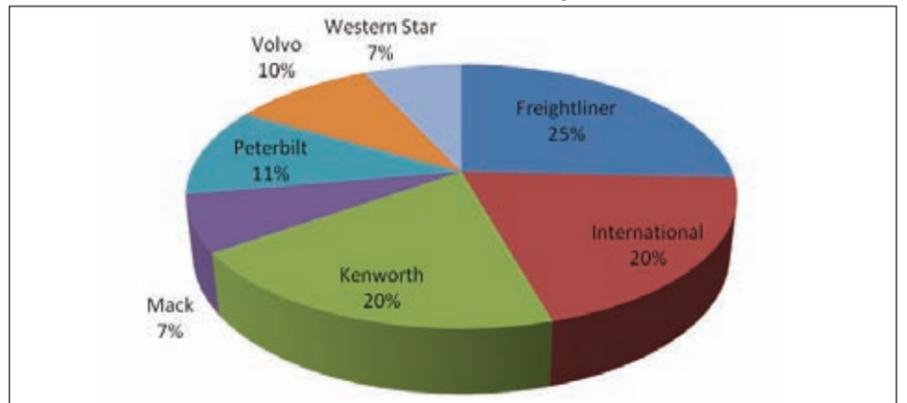
Despite the economic uncertainty, Class 8 truck sales continue to rebound in 2011 buoyed by years of deferred purchases – only one fifth of Canada's Class 8 truck fleet is less than 5 years old. So far the YTD sales totals are significantly better than the sales figures posted in both 2009 and 2010 and also better than the YTD results after the first half of 2001, 2002 and 2003. The YTD totals are also now running above the five-year average for the first time. Our forecast for 2011 was for Class 8 sales to come in between a low of 23,100 and a high of 24,300 and it appears that will prove accurate.

12 – Month Sales Trend



The 1,873 trucks sold in September made for another month with sales close to 2,000, closing out a strong third quarter. So far sales have climbed above the 2,000 mark for four of the first nine months of 2011 and came within less than 200 of achieving that mark on two more months.

Market Share Class 8 – Sept 11 YTD



Freightliner jumped out to an early lead at the start of the year with 28% market share and continues to hang on to that lead, although its share has declined. International, a former market leader who has adopted different engine emissions technology than the rest of the OEMs, is battling it out with Kenworth for second place with Kenworth having sold about 100 more trucks YTD. Peterbilt and Volvo are the only other two manufacturers enjoying a 10% or greater share of the Canadian Class 8 market.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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IN BRIEF

Fleet optimism waning in Ontario

TORONTO, Ont. – Ontario carriers are less certain about their immediate future, according to the latest Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) quarterly survey.

The number of carriers reporting they were unsure about the industry's prospects jumped sharply from 26% last quarter to 40% in the Q4 survey. That marks the highest level of uncertainty since the second quarter of 2008, the OTA reports.

Still, 55% of responding carriers were optimistic about the industry's prospects over the next three months, down from 64% in the Q3 survey. There have now been three consecutive quarterly declines in optimism among Ontario fleets, the survey has found.

But while fleets may be less optimistic, they aren't panicking just yet. The number of carriers saying they were pessimistic about the industry's prospects actually declined from 9% last quarter to 5% in the fourth quarter.

The OTA survey found freight volumes are steady, with 57% of carriers indicating intra-Ontario freight is about the same as last quarter and 36% reporting improved volumes. Forty-nine per cent said interprovincial freight has stayed the same with 39% reporting improvements from last quarter. Meanwhile, carriers reported some modest improvement in the southbound US market, with 21% reporting improved volumes compared to only 19% in the last quarterly survey. Most carriers

(58%) said northbound volumes have remained about the same.

As rates go, most respondents said they were "about the same" while some fleets (21%) noted improvements in southbound US rates.

The latest OTA survey found, not surprisingly, that carriers are being faced with rising costs. Sixty-four per cent reported fuel costs increases of more than 10% over the past year; 86% reported an increase in maintenance costs; 80% complained of higher tire costs; labour costs rose for 88% of carriers; the majority of fleets noted rising employee benefits costs; and 52% of fleets said they've had to pay between 2-10% more for new tractors.

Most carriers reported no change to the percentage of loaded miles they are running and the average length of haul appears to have remained steady.

Half of responding carriers said they expect capacity will stay the same over the next six months, up from 22% in the Q3 survey. Where drivers and owner/operators are concerned, 49% of carriers say they'll hire more company drivers while 44% have no plans to change their net number of drivers. Fifty-one per cent said they'll add more O/Os while 47% plan no change. Most fleets say they don't plan to purchase new equipment, with 73% indicating they won't be adding to their fleet of tractors and 56% saying they won't add trailers over the next quarter. □

Trucking program gets GrEEEn light to continue

WINNIPEG, Man. – A Manitoba-based trucking incentive program has been given the "GrEEEn" light to continue. Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation (MIT), together with the University of Manitoba Transport Institute and the Manitoba Trucking Association (MTA) have reintroduced the GrEEEn (Economically and Environmentally Efficient) program this fall.

The program offers incentives to companies and owner/operators to install various technological improvements that work to reduce vehicle emissions and fuel consumption. Companies are eligible for rebates of up to 25% on proven fuel-saving devices, to a maximum of \$2,500 per tractor or trailer. Eligible upgrades include aerodynamics for tractor and trailer units such as side skirts and front fairings, low-rolling resistance tires, automatic tire-inflation devices and anti-idling technologies. For more information on the program, visit www.greentrucking.ca. □

Ontario high school to develop trucking course for Grade 9s

BRAMPTON, Ont. – Bramalea Secondary School in Brampton, Ont. is launching a truck and coach program for Grade 9 students interested in careers in transportation.

The *Brampton Guardian* reports the program will be the first of its kind in the area.

The school will host a public information night Dec. 8 at 7 p.m. to inform students and parents about the program and the many careers available in the transportation industry.

A new facility is being built specifically for the transportation

program. It will feature drive-through bays, an open lab and two computer-equipped classrooms.

"Having owned and operated a trucking company before returning to a career in education, I know first-hand the opportunities that exist in the industry – in fact, our area of Ontario is the highest-density transportation corridor in the province," vice-principal Peter Gibson told the *Guardian*. "Our program will appeal to students who are active learners, like hands-on assignments and enjoy courses that take them outside a traditional classroom." □



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BRITISH COLUMBIA

Master Promotions buys Truxpo

ABBOTSFORD, B.C. – New Brunswick-based Master Promotions has expanded its portfolio of B.C. trade shows with the purchase of Truxpo. The biennial event, which features exhibitors and manufacturers of Classes 5-8 trucks from across North America, was acquired by Master Promotions in a deal with the British Columbia Trucking Association (BCTA).

“We are very excited about our continued growth in B.C. and are pleased to be on-board with this successful event for the 2012 edition,” said Keith Peacock, vice-president of operations and sales with Master Promotions.

In addition to owning and managing a group of other non-trucking-related shows in B.C., Master Promotions also operates the National Heavy Equipment Show in Toronto and the Atlantic Truck Show in Moncton, N.B.

“This event meshes perfectly with our current portfolio of heavy equipment, construction, forestry, commercial fisheries and trucking shows that we currently own or manage across the country,” said Peacock.

“We are looking forward to meeting exhibitors and working with the well-established B.C. Trucking Association and will continue on with their guidance and that of their steering committee to make this show one of the best trucking and logistics shows in North America.”

Louise Yako, president and CEO of BCTA, says she is confident in handing over the reins to Master Promotions. “With the expertise and resources that Master Promotions will bring to Truxpo, BCTA looks forward to significant innovation and promotion that should delight exhibitors and show visitors alike.” □

B.C. suggests drivers practice chaining up

VICTORIA, B.C. – The province of B.C. is reminding truck drivers to chain up when conditions dictate and recommending they practice chaining up before having to do so on the side of the road.

Chaining is often required along the Coquihalla Highway at the Box Canyon chain-up zone. “This area receives some of the most unpredictable weather in the province and is close to a number of avalanche zones,” the province reported in a truckers’ bulletin. “This chain-up zone becomes congested quickly and ensuring the safety of all highway users by keeping the avalanche zones clear of stopped traffic is a top priority.”

The province says drivers who do not immediately begin chaining up when stopped there will be either turned around or towed away. “There is to be no parking in the chain-up zones, aside from the time taken to actively install chains,” the bulletin warned. The province also warns that learning on the job can be hazardous, especially during heavy snowfall. □

B.C. adjusts PNP to permanently include long-haul truckers

VICTORIA, B.C. – British Columbia has made changes to its provincial nominee program (PNP), including making a pilot project that includes long-haul truck drivers a permanent part of the program.

The PNP provides accelerated permanent resident status to qualified workers from other parts of the world, based on labour market and economic development priorities, the province announced.

Long-haul truck drivers have been included in the program on a pilot project basis under the Entry Level and Semi-Skilled category of the PNP. The B.C. Trucking Association has been lobbying to make the inclusion of truck drivers permanent. The province announced the change is effective immediately.

B.C. also announced it will begin more aggressively marketing its PNP and regional business opportunities to immigrants internationally, with a strong focus on Latin America, Eastern Europe, Russia and India. The province also indicated it is lobbying Ottawa to increase the maximum number of nominations it is allowed. It’s currently limited to 3,500 nominations.

“The changes announced today will significantly enhance the effectiveness of the BC PNP in promoting job creation and eco-

nomie growth in B.C.’s regions,” announced Pat Bell, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation. “The program is a vital component of our jobs plan and one that benefits every region of British Columbia through job-creating investments and by helping to meet the growing demand for workers in key sectors of our economy.”

While the BCTA lobbied for the permanent inclusion of truck drivers among the accepted occupations, not everyone was in favour. Larry Hall, head of the North American Truckers Guild lobbied against the move, arguing the province was overstating the earning potential of long-haul truck drivers and misleading potential immigrant workers. □

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Truck West’s publisher Business Information Group has moved to a new building. *Truck West*, along with its sister publications *Truck News*, *Motortruck Fleet Executive*, and *Canadian Transportation and Logistics*, are now housed at 80 Valleybrook Drive in Toronto, just southwest of Leslie St. and Hwy 401. Company phone numbers, fax numbers and e-mail addresses will remain unchanged. □

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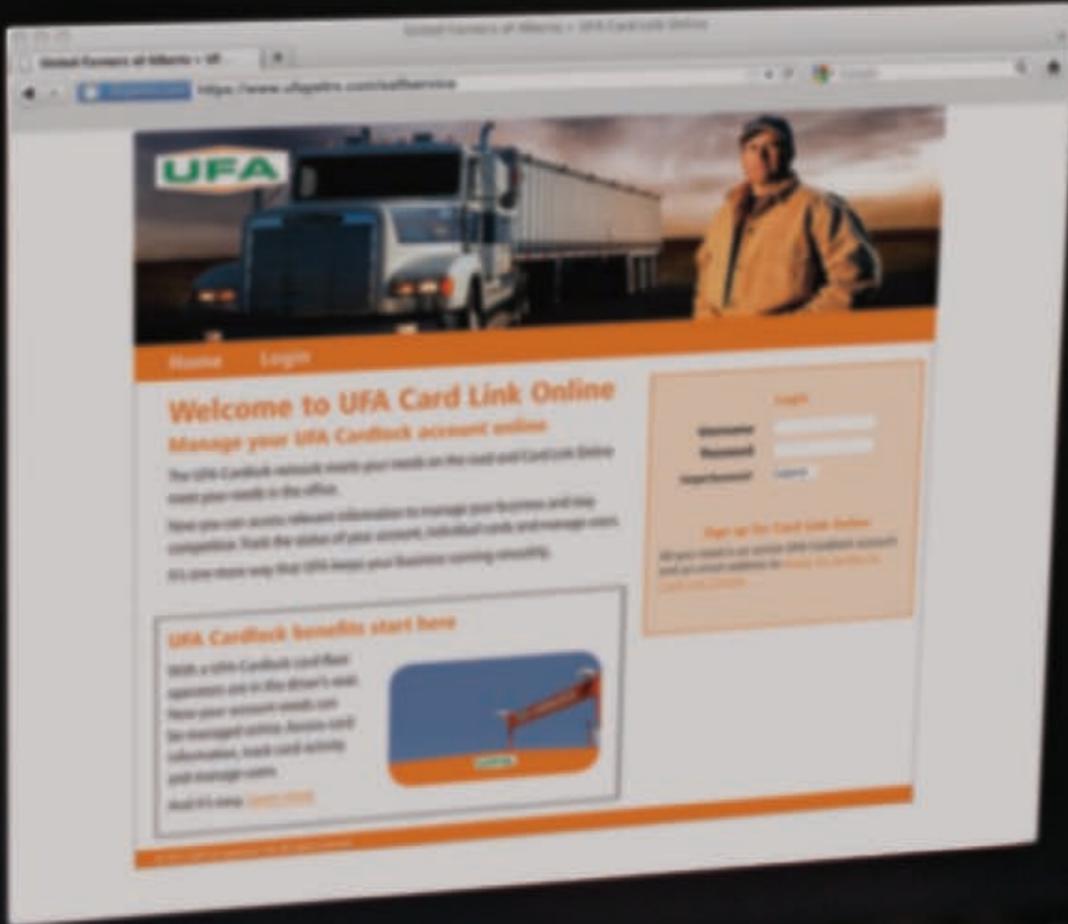
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COVER STORY

Police lack evidence to charge suspects in beating

Reward money presented to Fraser

Continued from page 1

Fraser stopped in front of the car and got out to offer assistance. A few seconds later he was viciously attacked, beaten and left unconscious.

"I really don't know what happened," Fraser tells me on the phone from his home in Lumby, B.C. He thinks there may have been three men around the vehicle and one of them cold-cocked him from behind. "I should have been suspicious when the guy under the hood didn't even look up as I approached. I asked him, 'Got a problem?' and I think I heard someone say 'No, but you do'."

It was raining when Fraser regained consciousness in the ditch

about six hours later. Somehow, with his face half-caved in, bloodied and fighting blackouts, he managed to pull himself into his still-running 2005 Freightliner and drive 35 kilometres to the Blue River Husky where he pretty well fell out of the tractor.

"The wife of the manager of the Husky is a paramedic, and it's a good thing she was there," says Fraser. Later in the hospital in Kamloops, it was discovered that his skull had been fractured in three places, and he underwent extensive reconstructive surgery to repair smashed orbital and cheek bones.

The story was picked up by the media and Fraser became widely known as the 'Good Samaritan

Trucker.' The senselessness of the act itself is puzzling, since there doesn't appear to be any motive: he wasn't robbed and his tractor remained intact and apparently untouched. Was it some kind of hate crime against truckers and Fraser was the randomly chosen victim because he stopped to help what he thought was a stranded motorist?

The B.C. Trucking Association and North American Truckers Guild stepped up and offered rewards that eventually totalled about \$30,000. A bank account was set up by the BCTA that raised about \$8,000 on Fraser's behalf. Fraser tells me he was touched by the response.

"I even had donations from truck drivers in Ontario." He received get-well cards from his employer Monarch Transport of Calgary, as well as Barry and Smith Trucking of Penticton, with whom he's worked alongside over the years. "Do you know every one of the drivers signed the card and put in some money?" says Fraser. "It was truly awesome."

He also adds that he's been treated fairly by worker's compensation, and gets a weekly call from someone at Monarch Transport to chat and enquire about his condition. Fraser goes to physiotherapy three times a week and likes to putter around in his garage doing decorative woodwork with a scroll saw.

But the attack has left a piece of steel plate in his head and some cognitive difficulties. He gets fatigued easily, and often has trouble finding the right words. "Yesterday I was out picking apples off the ground but I didn't last long," he says.

Whatever happened to the assailants is unknown.

A faint hope was raised that the attackers would be brought to justice in March 2011, when the RCMP announced that they had suspects in the incident but not enough evidence to charge them.

Since that time, the trail has gone cold.

Which brings up the reward money collected by the North American Truckers Guild.

Since over a year has passed since the attack, the Guild has offered to give the money, about \$10,000, to Fraser and his wife Carole instead of issuing it as a reward for information leading to an arrest.

Fraser is touched by this generosity, but would still like to see the perpetrators caught. Still, he admits, the money will go a long way to helping with

expenses. "I went from making big money to no money at all."

Last year Fraser sold his Freightliner and the family RV is up for sale. But he acknowledges the worst thing is that he will never drive commercially again. "I loved doing it and I wasn't ready to retire," he says. "Now I'm not a driver anymore; my wife drives me to all my appointments."

Somehow we slip out of the interview mode and get talking about trucks.

I mention that I run Toronto-Montreal for a courier company and he tells me he had a steady run with UPS running Calgary to Kamloops.

"Good job, steady hours," he says. "But my favourite times were running the ice roads up north. I used to live in the Yukon, and you don't leave someone broken down by the side of the road up there, not during the winter time."

Fraser admits to being bitter at one time, but says he's gotten over it.

"You've got to move on," he says philosophically. When I asked if he would do it again he replies: "I probably would, but I'd do it differently. I'd pull up and roll down my window and ask what's wrong. That way I'd have the chance to drive off if I sensed there was any danger." □

'I used to live in the Yukon, and you don't leave someone broken down by the side of the road up there,'

Alex Fraser

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B.C. trucker injured by pumpkin

KAMLOOPS, B.C. – A B.C. trucker was sporting cuts and bruises on his face well after Halloween night – but not because he forgot to wash off his costume make-up. Kamloops trucker Gary Henville, 55, a driver with Arrow Transportation, was driving east on the Trans-Canada Highway around 9:30 p.m. on Oct. 31, when a pumpkin tossed over an overpass in Dallas came smashing through his windshield, according to the *Kamloops Daily News*.

The report says the pumpkin, estimated to be about a half-metre in diameter, shot through the truck's windshield and clean through the cabin's back window, causing broken glass to strike Henville in the right side of his face.

Arrow Transportation's division manager Steve Gayfer said Henville's driving skills helped prevent a multi-vehicle accident that night, as traffic had been travelling in both directions at the time of the incident.

According to the report, Henville's truck had been struck while travelling under the same pedestrian overpass involved in a previous incident.

Arrow Transportation's director of safety, Rick Viventi, says the company is considering making recommendations to city council, such as having a cage installed on the overpass. □

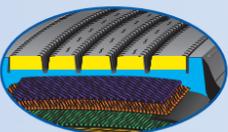
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TAX TALK

To CPP or not CPP?

Planning required to get most out of CPP changes

Back in my February column, I discussed the various changes the federal government is making to Canada Pension Plan retirement benefits.

These revisions take effect gradually from 2011 to 2016, but one of the biggest starts on Jan. 1, 2012.

It's called the Post-Retirement Benefit (PRB), and depending on your age and whether you collect a CPP retirement pension, it may affect the size of your paycheque.

Under the current rules, if you want to take your CPP retirement benefits before age 65 you have to either stop working or significantly reduce your earnings for at least two months.

Then you can go back to your job and receive your pension at the same time – without having to pay CPP



Tax Talk

SCOTT TAYLOR

on your employment or self-employment income.

That's changing.

Effective Jan. 1, 2012, if you're between 60 and 65, you can receive your CPP retirement pension without having to stop work or reduce your income.

However, you and your employer must continue to pay into CPP through the new PRB program.

If you're an employee, your employer will automatically deduct your contribution from your paycheque.

If you're self-employed, CPP will be calculated and payable when you file your 2012 federal income tax return a year or so from now.

If you are between 65 and 70 and work while receiving your CPP pension, you'll be able to choose whether you want to make CPP contributions or opt out.

If you decide to make the contributions, your employer will have to as well.

It's an all-or-nothing decision – you can't pay on only part of your income.

What to do?

There's a game to be played here because the PRB is in addition to your regular CPP retirement benefit.

Even if you are receiving the maximum retirement benefit under CPP, any contributions to the PRB will be paid back to you.

So if you're an employee it may be the best choice to choose to pay it.

Why, you ask?

Because just like any other

CPP deduction, every dollar you contribute must be matched by your employer.

Your boss is therefore paying half of any additional benefit.

Let's look at an example at the maximum rate.

In 2012, if you make \$50,100 (yes, I realize you'd be working a lot) the CPP deduction to you as an employee is \$2,306.70 and your employer must contribute the same amount.

So now you have \$4,613.40 in your PRB account to receive in the years to come.

You may not want to pay the deduction, but having your employer making such a sizable contribution toward your pension is certainly tempting.

Now let's cut to the chase and address owner/operators who are receiving their CPP retirement benefit while working.

If you are a sole proprietor and between 60 and 65 when you file your 2012 tax return, you will have to pay into the PRB.

If you are between 65 and 70 when you file your 2012 tax return, you can indicate your choice to pay or not.

If you are an incorporated owner/operator between 60 and 65, then you must start deducting CPP from your wages and pay it toward the PRB.

If you are between 65 and 70, then you can elect not to contribute to CPP.

If you are an employee (of your own company or someone else's) and between 65 and 70, and you wish to not contribute to CPP starting in 2012, you must complete and file Form CPT30 with Canada Revenue Agency and with your employer.

I have of course written this column presuming you're an owner/operator or employee driver.

If you're an employer (owner/operator or carrier), this topic is just as relevant to you.

If you have employees in this 60-70 age bracket, you will potentially have to start deducting and remitting CPP for them. This may affect your pay as well.

More information

Not everyone who wants to retire can afford it, and not everyone who can afford it is ready to retire.

Either way, you deserve every penny you've paid into your pension, and PRB gives you a little more flexibility with your retirement savings and income.

If you have a choice about CPP and PRB, make the right one. You can learn more about at: cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/ndvdl/tpcs/cpp-rpc/cpp-menu-eng.html.

Better yet, talk to your accountant about how changes to CPP will affect you and your specific retirement plan.

Finally, as we wrap up the year in *Truck West*, I want to thank you for reading and for all of your ideas and feedback.

Here's to a safe, happy holiday season, and to a prosperous 2012. See you then. □

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

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B.C. fleets can turn green initiatives into dollars

But first they must sign up for program, invest in costly tracking equipment

Continued from page 1

buying carbon offsets from companies and then selling them.

According to the Pacific Carbon Trust, a carbon offset is “One metric tonne of carbon dioxide (CO₂) or equivalent that is reduced or removed from the atmosphere as a result of emission-reducing (offset) activities.”

What that means to a trucking company, according to the Trust’s Web site, is that if it cuts its carbon emissions sufficiently, “through a qualifying energy efficiency initiative, it can sell those emissions savings or offsets to us. We will in turn offer a portfolio of offsets to clients to counter their emissions.”

You can’t just sell the offsets yourself, though.

The ‘wheat board-like’ Carbon Offset Aggregation Cooperative of B.C. basically acts as a middle man between the trucking company and the Pacific Carbon Trust, the latter of which is a B.C. Crown corporation founded to “Deliver quality made-in-B.C. greenhouse gas offsets to help clients reduce their carbon footprint and drive the growth of B.C.’s low-carbon economy.”

The two organizations recently signed a five-year agreement to cover all of B.C.’s carbon offsets.

COAC CEO Stedeford describes it like this: “The truckers bring in their carbon credits, we put them in a ‘silo’ and then we are able to sell them because with a much larger volume we can get a better price.”

The reason trucking companies can’t earn carbon offsets on their own is that, in order to qualify to sell offsets to the COAC, a company has to sign on with its program.

Stedeford says it’s because there need to be standard methods for calculating a company’s carbon emission reductions.

“The big thing about our program from a carbon standpoint is, if you don’t have approved methodologies, then the carbon offsets you claim are voluntary and can’t be validated.”

In other words, if you don’t sign up, then you’re basically on your own. And then the deck is stacked against you.

Stedeford says that under the COAC’s program, however, “There’s a specific method of calculating baseline information and of calculating actuals and then you relate the two against each other to get the change in your litres per kilometre tonnes. And as long as you fulfill the requirements of the methodology then those carbon offsets will be validated.”

To take advantage of COAC’s program, you sign up, your drivers are taught how to drive in a manner prescribed by the COAC to help them reduce their diesel use and, via monitoring, your emissions are validated and audited. “Then, when you say ‘I reduced

carbon emissions by ‘X’ you’re saying it with confidence that it’s a correct number,” Stedeford says.

How much money is involved? COAC board member MaryAnne Arcand, who’s also executive director of the Central Interior Loggers Association, was quoted in the *Vancouver Sun* as saying the offsets are valued at \$12 to \$13 per tonne. Or, as Stedeford puts it, “If (a company) consumes 70,000 litres of diesel a year and we can help him reduce it by 10%, then that will be about 22 tonnes in carbon offsets and currently he’d get about \$240.”

That might not seem like a lot of cash back considering the work and investment involved, but if nothing else it could give a company bragging rights – and maybe a marketing tool. On the other hand, the financial or marketing bottom line may not be the most important aspect of the program,

very much a win-win.”

Truckers who find the idea of selling carbon offsets attractive but who may not want to surrender their independence may find themselves out of luck.

“If someone does it all on their own – just does it – the carbon offsets won’t be available because you have to be in the program,” Stedeford says.

“So while they might (reduce their emissions) they can’t sell their offsets unless it’s gone through some sort of auditing, an agreed-upon methodology.” And if they haven’t, he says, “They shouldn’t be out there telling their customers that they’ve actually reduced (their emissions) by ‘X’ amount.”

It may end up being a moot point before too long, anyway, if the so-called “Cap and Trade” concept becomes a reality in B.C., something Stedeford says is

‘The value of the fuel saved outweighs the value of the credits and it always will,’

MaryAnne Arcand, CILA

to some.

“The value of fuel saved outweighs the value of the credits and it always will,” Arcand told the *Sun*, “but the social value of contributing to a cleaner environment is priceless.”

As for what a trucking company has to do to comply, Stedeford says COAC provides the expertise and does all the work.

“We basically come in and do all the installation,” he says. “We do an awareness session, we put our modems in (the trucks), we capture all the data and we send reports to the company to let them know where they need to focus, which operators need a little bit of help in a certain area.”

Equipment is installed by COAC to accurately measure fuel consumption.

Stedeford says it isn’t really about the hardware, though.

“Ours is a behavioural program,” he says. “So it’s just trying to work with all of the operators to be aware of changes they can make that will significantly reduce the amount of fuel that they’re burning.”

COAC’s Web site says a normal installation of their equipment into a truck and “non-hydraulic lifting equipment” such as an excavator is \$4,000, including the cost of the setup itself.

That’s a healthy chunk of change for a vehicle, but Stedeford says COAC can help there, too.

“We actually do the whole thing,” he says. “We come in, we put the program together, we suggest the equipment they should put into their units, we can schedule when to do it, we can even finance it, so it’s

going to happen (short of a change in provincial government, perhaps).

Cap and Trade is where a central authority (such as a government) sets a “cap” on how much of a particular pollutant can be emitted, then issues “carbon credits” (ie. “licences to pollute”) based on the size of a company, its industry, etc. If a company can’t meet its “cap,” it’s forced to buy permits from those who get under the cap – the “trade” part.

It’s basically a carrot and stick approach, where the “polluter” pays while the “seller” is rewarded for “being green.”

Stedeford says the cooperative already has a number of members across the province. “We have a cross-section of forest industry, highway trucking contractors and road maintenance contractors,” he says. “It’s certainly a program that is open to anyone that uses heavy equipment.”

Other ways to go green

Different jurisdictions have or are pursuing ways to reduce emissions and fuel use that don’t necessarily amount to marketing what, basically, appear to be merely mathematical calculations (carbon offsets), but which instead help trucking companies increase their efficiency in other ways, sometimes offering government rebates to help encourage companies to become more efficient.

Alberta’s Trucks of Tomorrow program, for example, offers rebates to companies who improve fuel efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by embracing such equipment as cab heaters, auxiliary power units, trailer skirts, and the like. Stedeford says

the COAC’s system works better, however.

“The government has tried plans on their own to offer rebates and the like, but they don’t catch on very well because of the paperwork and trying to figure out what you’re supposed to do for it.”

Besides, he says, his group offers “extremely aggressive pricing, so the cost for people to get the equipment and put it in will be better than if they do it themselves. Plus, we have trained installers so (companies) don’t have to figure out how to get it done and whether it’s done right.”

The biggest positive, Stedeford says, is that there’s money in the pocket of the trucking company.

“If we can help a trucker reduce his fuel consumption by 10%,” he says, claiming that is a conservative estimate, “then for the amount of equipment we put in and our commission charge, the operator is putting money in the bank.”

As for COAC’s commission, “If you don’t reduce fuel we don’t get anything other than for the equipment,” he says.

“We take (our commission) on the fuel saved, so we bear a lot of the risk there.”

Not only that but, “because we have the administrative ability, we can help smaller companies who can’t afford all the administrative costs of setting up that whole infrastructure to follow the required methodology.”

So is this program a money-making proposition for trucking companies faced with a tough, uncertain market, or is it a way to entice truckers into signing over their sovereignty for 30 pieces of silver? Or is it both? Only time will tell.

In the meantime, Al Gore will undoubtedly be smiling. □

CN greens fleet

TORONTO, Ont. – CN Rail has purchased an additional 200 EcoTherm containers, bringing its fleet to nearly 500 units – the largest in North America. The containers are designed to protect products such as food, beverages, paints and pharmaceuticals against low temperatures.

The super-insulated 40-ft EcoTherm container is designed to be an alternative to the 53-ft heated container, with the ability to hold the same volume of product without the need for the blocking and bracing required in a larger container.

CN also announced the purchase of 25 EcoRide chassis. They weigh 15% less than conventional chassis and are equipped with aerodynamic features such as side skirts and low-rolling resistance tires, providing an 8-11% fuel savings, CN claims. □

ALBERTA

AMTA safety toolbox hopes to demystify health and safety program development

By Jim Bray

Think of it as a “safety consultant firm in a box.”

Okay, that isn't a completely accurate image – unless you consider a computer “a box” – but it does describe what the Alberta Motor Transport Association's new Safety Tool Box is meant to provide to trucking companies.

The Safety Tool Box is an online resource, released at the beginning of September and meant to help companies design and manage a health and safety program on their own. The idea, according to the AMTA's Web site is to, “Allow you to have the confidence that your materials are current and meet COR [Certificate of Recognition], industry, and OH&S requirements.”

Fred Gould, AMTA's administrator of COR, quality assurance and review, says the Tool Box can “simplify the process of becoming COR-certified and maintaining contractor registry requirements.”

Gould notes that, while the Tool Box isn't aimed at large employers with “a dedicated department and safety people with degrees,” most of Alberta's 14,000 or so trucking companies don't have the resources in-house to create such programs.

Hence the Tool Box, which includes information on transport industry-specific safe work practices and procedures, tutorials on building and implementing a safety program and safe work culture, a library of commonly used forms, and resources a company can use to comply with the requirements of contractor registries.

Setting up such programs from scratch is “a very, very onerous thing,” Gould says, noting that the hoops a company has to jump through are the same whether it's a large multinational with deep pockets or a guy just starting out with a single truck.

Further muddying the waters, he says, is the fact that many small employers, especially ones that deal in upstream oil, have to deal with contractor registries who “developed their procedures to the Masters [degree] level, instead of for our industry.”

To help bring the procedures a tad more down to earth as far as the transportation industry is concerned, Tool Box developers mapped all the WCB Industry Codes to their corresponding contractor registry “work types,” so subscribers can simply select the appropriate WCB code and the Toolbox will narrow down the topics to which it cross references with the registry.

Gould says that alone should be a major time and frustration saver, since the registries have more than 600 different work types from which to choose, most of which aren't transportation industry-related.

The AMTA also included professionally-voiced “screen casts” to help make the Tool Box easier to understand.

“They explain everything,” Gould says, “What [the business owner] has to do, how to do it,

how to get started, what's a COR – and it walks them through the process of developing and establishing a health and safety management system.”

Once such a program is up and running, Gould says, “Then they can go to the contractor registry and build their profile with that – because all of our policies are written to stay current.”

The Tool Box not only walks users through all the ins and outs, Gould says, “You can also go back; you can review the screen casts any time you want, if you don't remember how to do something.”

Despite its purported advantages as far as simplifying the procedures is concerned, Gould says the Tool Box isn't designed to be merely a “plug and play” solution requiring little attention from the user.

“All the pieces of the puzzle are there,” Gould says, “but they still have to do the work themselves.”

The rationale is to ensure users are exposed to the safety culture during the process, so its philosophy can seep through – even if by osmosis.

“Our theory is that we'll give you the policies,” Gould says, “but you still have to go in and build the manual. That way you are involved, rather than just going off and buying a manual and putting it up on the shelf.”

Gould says the Tool Box is also meant as a weapon against less than competent – or scrupulous – people passing themselves off as safety consultants.

“There are 50,000 people in the city right now that would call themselves a safety consultant and some of them are pretty shady,” Gould claims, mentioning a new Canadian who approached him after a safety class not too long ago.

“Someone wanted to sell him this Duo-Tang folder for \$400 that was supposedly a safety manual and it was like a seventh generation photocopy,” he says. “It was horrible to look at and I thumbed through it and handed it back telling him it wasn't good for anybody. That's the kind of thing that goes on out there.”

The AMTA hopes its name will help make people comfortable coming on board with the Tool Box.

Unplanned Obsolescence...

Staying in compliance may not be as painful as getting there in the first place, but one's information may have to be updated periodically over time as well, a process Gould says can be nearly as big a deal as the initial chore.

“When these (small employers) sit down to do their audit, it's really intimidating,” he says. “I've had people call me up and say they're not doing it this year, that they're just hanging it up. They're done. It's just too much.”

With a Tool Box subscription, however, if updates come out, “Subscribers will get notice that a particular policy's now atro-

phied and the new one's ready,” Gould says.

“They can go and get it, update their manual and update the contractor registry so they're always current. We tried to make it resource-rich, and with a lot of links.”

The Tool Box's first offering price is \$395 a year for members. Non-AMTA companies can subscribe for \$795 a year.

Gould says the AMTA tried to price the product attractively enough that employers will not only use it, they'll be encouraged to join the AMTA as well.

“We want to find enough member benefits to drag these people in and get them interested in getting involved,” he says.

“Safety has become ridiculously expensive and very onerous. When you think about it, if you bought a safety manual right now, it's going to cost you five grand and in 10 years it would be atrophied so badly it would be bizarre.”

Gould promises the Tool Box will be upgraded over time, to keep it as valuable as possible.

“We're going to try using the Apple business model,” he jokes. “They constantly keep you on an upgrade path. Sometimes they're their worst competition.”

He assures subscribers that the product will improve every year, with even more resources added. “I don't know if there'll be a ‘Toolbox 2.0’ as such,” he says, “but we'll continue making it so people find value.”

And while the Tool Box is Alberta-specific for the moment, Gould says the grand plan is to offer it to other jurisdictions as well.

“We're looking for ways to develop revenue streams that will help the AMTA become more independent,” he says, “and having been involved in industry and appreciating how underfunded it is, we also wanted to make sure

everyone's getting bang for the buck.”

Gould says the AMTA also plans to make the program part of its regular Transportation Safety Basics training regimen, a two-day introduction that outlines what a health and safety program should look like and which, he says, often leads to small employers suffering from information overload afterward.

“That's really when they need to know it,” Gould says.

“All these newbies coming into the business aren't going to have any kind of resources and they're the ones whose heads explode from all the knowledge they get over the course. And by the time they actually sit down and do any of this stuff, they're pooched. They have no idea what they're doing.”

Though the Tool Box was rolled out in September – delayed from its original June target – Gould says they haven't promoted it yet because they want to ensure it's bulletproof.

“I don't want to discover any major flaws in it,” he says, noting however that, “It seems pretty sound. We've been working on it for a long time.”

Early reaction to the Tool Box has been muted so far, Gould says, but, “We will no doubt get some real-life feedback, so we're going to put our ear to the track and listen to what people say once subscriptions start rolling in.”

Gould hopes that, whether the Tool Box really is a “safety consultant firm in a box” or not, its intuitive nature will prove to be the proverbial spoonful of sugar that helps the medicine go down.

“People will like it because they can sit down with a cup of coffee go through it and (the voice actor) is going to teach them what to do,” he predicts.

“She's going to walk them right through it, holding them by the hand.” □

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CANADA

Cancer convoys raise more than \$83,000



PINK AND PROUD: The focus of this year's convoys expanded to include other forms of cancer. Photo by Dave Wilson

By Adam Ledlow
WOODSTOCK, Ont. – A group of Canadian trucking convoys bookended the Thanksgiving

holiday this October by hitting the highway in support of various cancer charities. And the end results provided a lot to be thank-

ful for, with a combined total of more than \$83,000 raised at the three events.

Convoy for a Cure was back for its fourth instalment on Oct. 1, and despite a lower than usual turnout, event founder Rachele Champagne says she was pleased with the nearly \$20,000 the 25 participating trucks were able to raise.

The convoy featured two new aspects designed to shake things up. For one, the convoy decided to forgo its usual all-female troupe of truckers driving in support of breast cancer research, and included both male drivers and other cancer charities, including lung, colon and prostate.

The convoy also featured two starting points – one in Cardinal, Ont. and one in Dorion, Que. – with both convoys finishing up in Cornwall, Ont.

“We had anticipated way more trucks with the two start points but we only got 25 trucks participate in total, (so) the amount we raised is amazing considering the few trucks we had,” Champagne told *Truck West*. But she added the weather conspired against them to decrease numbers. “It was freezing and raining so our idea to have it in Cornwall to attract the local people to see the free Shania Twain (tribute) show didn’t work, because I myself would probably not want to leave my home in that weather to go stand outside in the rain.”

The Alberta version of Convoy for a Cure also hit the road on Oct. 1, raising \$15,833 for its efforts. The event attracted 17 participating trucks – which drove from Sherwood Park, near Edmonton, to Nisku – as well as more than 100 other supporters.

As with the Ontario-Quebec version of the convoy, the event

was opened up to men.

“People in general were very happy that we were opening the convoy up to men,” said event organizer Mylene Rusk. “Opening the event up to men also meant that we could increase our number of participants as well, and every person helps raise more money and awareness. It was important to acknowledge the men in their efforts to make us realize that they too, are affected by breast cancer.”

Male participants were asked to dress up their rigs in pink in support of breast cancer, and a best “drag” outfit prize was offered for drivers who decided to get in touch with their feminine side. Five drivers took the bait: four from Canadian Freightways and the fifth was Chris Scheetz a radio personality from CISN Country FM, who drove a Rosenau truck and pulled a CISN trailer. “As we travelled...Chris did live radio play-by-play of our ride,” Rusk said.

“We really wanted to let everyone know who supported us, participated and those that just came by to see the convoy, how much we appreciated all they did for us. It was great to see the day come together, after all the hard work of organizing it.”

The second instalment of the Ontario West version of Convoy for a Cure (not affiliated with the above convoys) was back once again Oct. 15 and was able to eclipse last year’s total by more than \$11,000. The 38 participants raised a whopping \$47,501, with Donna Hoogendoorn and Stephanie Schroeder leading the charge, bringing in the highest pledges with about \$3,000 and \$1,900, respectively.

Winning the top prizes for the best “pinked out” trucks were Monique Menard of Highland Transport and Bruce Petrie of Molson Coors.

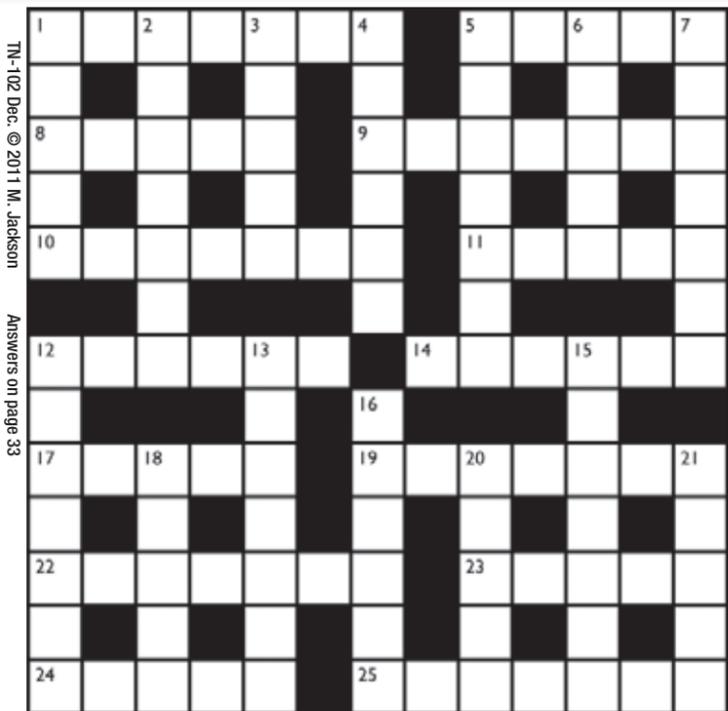
This year’s convoy got its start at the Fifth Wheel Truck Stop in Dorchester before finishing at the TA Travel Center in Woodstock. The Fifth Wheel hosted a free breakfast for all participants in the convoy, while the TA featured live music, a kid’s play zone, a BBQ, and a silent auction after the last rig pulled in.

The 2011 event also featured the song ‘Convoy For The Cure’ written by Anne Finley and Bill Petrie. The song was released for download on June 28 with proceeds going to the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation.

“For only being our second year, I think the event went very well. The drivers and supporters all seemed to be enjoying themselves even with the cold rainy weather,” said event coordinator Joanne Mackenzie.

“It’s such a sight to see everyone ‘pinking out’ their big rigs for their ride along Hwy. 401. The compassion, dedication and friendship you see in the drivers and supporters all having their own personal reason or some with heartfelt stories of some kind of cancer affecting their lives. Everyone there that day was wanting to help give the ‘Gift of Hope’ in finding a cure. This is why they are all called the driving force battling breast cancer one truck at a time.” □

THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Across

1. Coiled cable between cab and trailer
5. Protruding van-body portion
8. Orange traffic diverter
9. Mirror-mounted CB adjunct
10. Cargo-terminal service
11. “Country _____, take me home”
12. Driver’s work-history document
14. Company making engine retarders
17. Burned fuel pointlessly
19. Licence-plate makers, sometimes
22. UPS or FedEx driver
23. Vehicles-affected atmospheric layer
24. Four-wheeler trailer-hitch brand
25. Applied lube to a fifth wheel

Down

1. Oil-country cargo, perhaps
2. US diesel-pump units
3. Fatigue-causing sleep problem
4. Suspension-spring components, sometimes
5. Medium-duty Sterling model
6. Brand on toddler’s sandbox truck
7. Frame, suspension and running gear
12. Canadian Pacific rolling-stock unit
13. A sleeper design (3,4)
15. New truck’s price boosters
16. Heavy highway hauler (3,3)
18. Cab dispatcher on ‘80s “Taxi” series
20. Supersized roadkill
21. Accident-investigation factor

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Answers on page 33

OVER THE ROAD

Identifying burnout

The first couple of weeks in October brought perfect driving and weather conditions to enjoy the fall colours in northern Ontario.

The show was north of Sault Ste. Marie for the first week and south of the Soo for the second. Bright red, orange, and yellow hues under brilliant blue skies. Awesome!

The vivid autumn colour was just what I needed to refocus my mind on the simple enjoyment of driving.

I shut off all my various electronic gizmos and paid little attention to the goings on of the outside world for that couple of weeks, becoming little more than a tourist in a big truck.

But on reflection, I had to wonder whether I was truly enjoying the change of seasons or using it as a means of escape from the daily stress of life on the road?

Was I reacting to a feeling of burnout I had been experiencing over the previous few months?

Had I just gotten used to the stress and imbalance inherent in the life of a trucker, and dropping out for a couple of weeks was a pressure relief valve for the psyche?

I've never thought of driving as a difficult job but lately I've come to appreciate the psychological challenges that this lifestyle poses, especially the stresses it brings to bear on other aspects of our personal lives. Many of us within the industry maintain a macho attitude towards coping with daily stress brought on by work; ignore it and it will go away. But it doesn't go away, does it? It just continues to build until it reaches a breaking point.

So I thought I would share some information about what burnout is and how we can cope with it. This information comes from a workshop I attended in June. The presentation was titled *Stress and Work: Implications for the Canadian transportation Industry*, and was presented by Vishwanath Baba, PhD.

Dr. Baba characterized burnout on the job in three distinct phases.

First you experience 'emotional exhaustion.' You may feel drained by your work. You may feel fatigued in the morning. You may feel burnt out. You may feel listless (lack of energy). You may be easily frustrated. You feel you don't want to work with other people.

The emotional exhaustion leads to 'depersonalization.' (You are nothing more than a cog in a large machine). Have you become calloused by the job? Do you feel others blame you for their problems?

Finally you end up with a feeling of 'low personal accomplishment.' You are not dealing with problems effectively. You are not having a positive influence on others. You don't empathize with others. You no longer feel exhilarated by your job. You are not living up to your own expectations.



Over the Road

AL GOODHALL

Does anything on that list sound familiar to you? It sure struck a chord with me. I don't think there is a truck driver out there who has not had to deal with elements in any of those three areas at some point in his or her career, whether or not they want to admit it. I believe it is an ongoing daily battle for many of us.

So Dr. Baba moves on to ask the question: What will make us resilient? Or what will help us bounce back from the effects of burnout? There is *physiological* resiliency characterized by good cardiovas-

cular conditioning and proper diet (exercise and eat healthy).

There is *psychological* resiliency characterized by a balanced lifestyle, a hardy personality, and a small wins strategy.

Finally there is a *social* resiliency characterized by supportive social relations, mentors, and teamwork.

What really stands out for me in this resiliency list is 'balanced lifestyle.'

A balanced lifestyle is one that sees an equal amount of time spent in physical, spiritual, family, social, intellectual, work, and cultural activities.

All I know is that out of the 168 hours that are available to me every week, I spend between 110 and 130 hours of that time in the truck.

So the question to be asked is how on earth does any driver living the trucking lifestyle maintain a balanced lifestyle?

I don't have an answer and ob-

viously our line of work will never allow a driver to spend an equal amount of time in the various life balance activities outlined above. I do believe the trucking industry needs to develop a more supportive approach to mentoring, teamwork, and developing social support networks for its drivers to help cope with stress and burnout.

It's not getting any easier out here, that's for sure. Sometimes the world around us seems to be coming apart at the seams.

Dealing with it as I did at the start of October by simply turning off the world around me certainly isn't an effective way of dealing with stress and burnout in the long-term. □

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

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BORDER

Growth signals for trucking are present, but so are risk factors

By Lou Smyrlis

GRAPEVINE, Texas – The economic outlook for trucking may be as muddled right now as that for the North American economy but fears of a double-dip recession are overstated, the *All Eyes on the Economy* panel concluded at the American Trucking Associations annual conference. Trucking is facing softening demand and rising costs but capacity should continue to remain tight making continued improvement to revenue-per-mile possible, according to Bob Costello, chief economist and vice-president, American Trucking Associations.

“Right now freight demand is moving sideways, rather than falling off a cliff like it did in 2008. That indicates to me that we might just skirt by another recession,” Costello said.

Costello was part of a panel that also included John Felmy, chief economist, American Petroleum Institute and Martin Regalia, PhD, senior vice-president and chief economist, United States Chamber of Commerce. The popular *All Eyes on the Economy* session was moderated once again by Fox News’ Stuart Varney.

Regalia echoed Costello’s contention that North America would escape a double-dip recession, explaining that the weak economic data that had everyone spooked was the result of a combination of unforeseen events such as the earthquake in Japan, heavy flooding in the US and rebellions across Africa and the Middle East. Regalia expects growth in the order of 2.25% to 2.5% over the next 12 months.

He cautioned, however, that economic growth of this magnitude is not enough to drive down unemployment, one of the major reasons behind the economic malaise in the US.

“We are not headed into double-dip recession,” Regalia assured. “But we have to do more. We have to do better...the dirty little secret

about economic growth is that the US economy is supposed to grow at least 2.75% per year. If you don’t have that kind of growth, you don’t have jobs. It’s that simple.”

What it seems we are headed into for 2012 is more volatility. About 70% of the US economy is dependent on consumer spending and that is only expected to grow about 2% in 2012. Our major trading partner is also getting little out of the trade sector and virtually nothing out of government spending now that stimulus packages are wrapping up and there is pressure to concentrate on austerity measures to reduce federal and state deficits.

A slow growing economy also makes for uneven and choppy progress and that is evident in the fortunes of for-hire carriers. In general, Costello said large fleets are seeing stronger volumes than smaller ones, likely because of their relationships with larger shippers.

“No one is doing great but it feels like larger companies and shippers are outperforming small business right now,” Costello said.

Volumes for large truckload carriers, for example, are up 11.2% from January 2009 while small truckload carriers are still struggling with volumes 5.4% below January 2009. It’s a similar story when examining revenues. While revenue-per-mile for large truckload fleets has grown 9.1% since January 2009, small truckload fleets are only experiencing a 3.2% gain.

Costello pointed out, however, that any growth in the current environment is a welcomed development.

“This is remarkable. We have never seen anything like this.

Freight is growing slowly but we are still seeing revenue-per-mile growing,” he said. “There has been some growth in capacity but supply and demand remain close to equilibrium. Fleets did a good job of ‘right sizing’ during the recession...this

industry is significantly smaller than it was a few years ago.”

While growth signals are present, the risk factors are equally clear. Cost pressures in particular pose a risk for motor carriers over the next year with the inflation rate for items such as

fuel, equipment and driver wages exceeding the inflation rate for the broader economy, Costello said.

Take driver wages for example. It’s a sad commentary on the plight of the US motor carrier industry that drivers make no more today in real terms (taking inflation into account) than they did in 1990. Driver turnover is running at 79% on average among US carriers and was at 138% at its height prior to the

The US economy is supposed to grow at least 2.7% per year. If you don’t have that kind of growth, you don’t have jobs. It’s that simple.

Martin Regalia

Don’t let current uncertainty divert your attention from future opportunity, ATA’s Graves advises

Lou Smyrlis

GRAPEVINE, Texas – Motor carrier executives grappling with the current economic uncertainty need to be careful not to miss out on the opportunities that lie ahead, warned American Trucking Associations president and CEO Bill Graves in his annual state of the industry address.

Graves acknowledged there is much going on right now to divert an executive’s focus from the road ahead.

He recalled that at last year’s annual conference he forecasted bigger and better things by the time they met again this year in Texas.

“Little did I know that ‘bigger’ was going to be the size of the federal debt; ‘bigger’ was going to be the unemployment rate; and ‘bigger’ would characterize the number of government regulations our industry would be facing. And ‘better’, well ‘better’ is apparently caught up in some sort of political traffic jam and just hasn’t been able to get here yet.”

Yet despite the frustration with Washington’s inability to come together on seemingly simple issues such as the need to fix roads and bridges and pass a highway bill, Graves said he was still optimistic about the economy and the industry’s future.

He referred to a personal “aha” moment he had while out on a run recently where he found himself slowing his pace while focusing on cracks and crevices in the road. When he finally looked up he got past all the imperfections and saw the road that was truly stretching

recession.

“Even with unemployment over 9% many fleets are having a hard time finding drivers. For a group that is so sought after, these numbers (driver pay) will go up,” Costello said.

Motor carriers face a similar situation with spending on new trucks. The average age of the US Class 8 truck fleet is approaching seven years. Yet research shows there is a financial penalty associated with hanging on to older trucks. While maintenance costs average out to about five cents per mile for trucks with under 550,000 miles on them, maintenance costs rise to about 15 cents per mile once that 550,000-mile threshold is reached. Costello anticipates solid truck sales due to the significant pent-up demand for new trucks to renew aging fleets.

“We are going to have to be on a replacement cycle for quite some time,” Costello said.

Cost will be a challenge, however. The average sticker price for a Class 8 truck in 2006 was \$95,000. Today it is around \$125,000 – a \$30,000 increase that somehow has to be absorbed during a weak economy.

“In this cycle, you can’t forget about the cost side of the equation,” he emphasized. □

out ahead of him.

“It’s a metaphor that so appropriately explains our industry. We are dealing every day with a myriad of policy and regulatory cracks and crevices that threaten to overwhelm us. And we have no choice but to devote tremendous time, energy and money in an effort to fix them so we achieve positive near term results for our industry. But at the same time we need to be careful not to become so obsessed with the challenges of the moment that we give up on the opportunity of the future,” Graves said.

He went on to outline the reason to be optimistic about the future.

America’s population is expected to grow from 300 million in 2006 to 400 million by 2050, something on the order of adding a city the size of Houston or Chicago each and every year. “Four hundred million people need a lot of good stuff and most of the time we’ll be bringing it,” he said.

The ATA’s most recent freight transportation forecast calls for trucking’s share of total freight tonnage to rise from 67.2% in 2010 to 70% by 2022.

And that’s from a tonnage pie that grows from just less than nine billion tonnes of freight to over 11.5 billion tonnes. During that same period of time, the corresponding trucking revenue pie is forecasted to grow from \$563 billion to \$937 billion.

“I’m sure you can split up \$374 billion in revenue growth among you and be happy,” Graves quipped. □

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CANADA

Low-speed truck chase brings attention to industry's cargo theft conundrum

TORONTO, Ont. – The Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) says a much-publicized truck chase in Ontario on Oct. 31 is an indication that cargo crime is a growing problem.

The organization says while media reports focused on the ‘trucker’ who led the police chase along the QEW in a tractor pulling an empty flatbed trailer, in reality the trailer carried a load of wafer board when originally pilfered from a Niagara area truck stop.

The CTA also takes issue with the driver being referred to as a ‘trucker’ when it appears he was a professional thief – not driver. The driver was out on bail after being charged in December 2010 for possessing a load of stolen Sony Playstations valued at \$1 million,

the CTA indicated.

“(This) incident highlights the need to take cargo crime more seriously and it demonstrates how truck drivers work together to protect themselves and to fight cargo crime,” CTA CEO David Bradley said in a statement following the incident.

The CTA has also discovered an observant truck driver played a role in capturing the thief. The driver was a colleague of the owner/operator who owned the stolen truck and became suspicious when he saw it travelling along the 401 without a load. He called his friend's cell phone and found out his truck had been stolen. He then called police to report the location of the rig.

CTA's Bradley said it's alarming the truck was stolen from a well-lit, secure yard, where the owner had been safely parking his trucks for 20 years. Further, the trailer was equipped with an immobilizing device.

“And, yet, the thief was still able to take the unit,” said Bradley. “Thankfully, the event ended peacefully. The police should be commended for keeping the travelling public safe and bringing the stolen truck to a safe stop. But it could have been much worse. What happened shows us that the industry, government and the enforcement agencies must do a better job of working together to develop countermeasures to combat this serious area of criminality.”

Bradley said truckers are at risk of personal harm during truck and cargo thefts while the cost to the industry is enormous.

“Often, there is little to no risk but potentially huge profits to be made (by thieves). If perpetrators keep getting out on bail or serve only very short sentences, what's stopping them from doing this again? Much tougher sentencing is needed,” Bradley said. The CTA, meanwhile, has developed a Cargo Crime Incident Report in partnership with the Insurance Bureau of Canada. Truck fleets are encouraged to report cargo theft incidences so the industry can better understand the true costs and strengthen its lobbying efforts for harsher sentences. □

CTHRC to forge ahead despite funding loss

OTTAWA, Ont. – Federal grants and contribution programs that support the work of the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council (CTHRC) are in the midst of a comprehensive change, but according to CTHRC officials, several existing initiatives will continue as planned while the new funding model is established.

“Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) recently unveiled plans to refocus the Sector Council Program, phasing out core funding and some elements of project funding by March 31, 2013,” says CTHRC executive director Angela Splinter. “This funding will be replaced by a refocused grants and contribution program to support many vital human resources priorities.”

The new approach will use calls for proposals to focus on labour market intelligence, National Occupational Standards, and certification/accreditation regimes. Sector councils including the CTHRC will also be able to submit funding proposals through HRSDC initiatives such as the Foreign Credential Recognition Program and the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills.

“The CTHRC is already actively involved in each of these areas of interest,” Splinter says. “And we will be exploring every emerging funding avenue or partnership opportunity to support the Council's future work.”

Meanwhile, the task of developing HR tools for the trucking industry will continue.

Ongoing projects for 2011-12 include tools for hiring new Canadians (The Foreign Credential Recognition Project), updated labour market information (via surveys and other data), the latest volume in CTHRC's HR series (*Your Guide to Human Resources: Volume 3*), and research into the link between licensing standards and safety.

“Tools like those offered by CTHRC will help us to identify emerging trends, welcome new Canadians who are vital to our industry's future, and enhance skills development for key occupations in need,” says Gord Peddle, chair of the CTHRC's board of directors. □



GUEST OF HONOUR: National Truck League kicked off its tenure in Mississauga with a visit from the mayor herself: Hazel McCallion. Pictured from left to right are Jas Sahota, McCallion, Rod Stiller and Charlie Singh. *Photo by Adam Ledlow*

National Truck League opens new location

By Adam Ledlow

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – National Truck League has expanded its operations with the addition of a new office location in Mississauga, Ont. The insurance provider invited staff, customers and even Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion to its grand opening

event Oct. 22.

Company president Rod Stiller says the new office will operate as an extension of its London head office with a full line of products and services, including WSIB alternative, health, commercial, home and automobile insurance.

“(Our clients) called us and they have been asking, ‘Can you provide home and automobile insurance?’” Stiller told *Truck West* at the event. “Now we have the companies to do that and new expertise to do that.”

Part of that expertise comes in the form of Jas Sahota and Charlie Singh, a husband and wife team that have been selling home and auto insurance for about 12 years.

“Many of our clients have indicated they want to be protected by one brokerage,” said Sahota, who serves as office manager at the new location. “We are providing our clients with that opportunity. We want to look after all their protection needs.”

Stiller says the location was strategically selected to meet the needs of National Truck League's South Asian customer base.

“With this Mississauga office we are reaching out to our Toronto and GTA clients and to the South Asian community which is a big part of our customer base,” Stiller told the crowd during the ribbon-cutting.

The new office is located at 2980 Drew Road in the Malton area.

For more information, visit www.nationaltruckleague.com. □



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Truck parking at Confederation Bridge is adequate, industry says

APTA refutes CBC report that truck parking area is a boondoggle

By Jim Bray

BORDEN-CARLETON, P.E.I. –Is Confederation Bridge parking for trucks a major problem or a tempest on a turnpike?

If you imbibe the CBC, you might think it's the former. How big the problem really is, however, depends on who you talk to in the trucking industry.

According to an Oct. 6 CBC news story, truckers are avoiding a government-funded parking area on the P.E.I. side reserved for their use when the bridge is closed to them. The public broadcaster sent a reporter to the lot during a 36-hour storm closure and found only a couple of trucks using it. Not only that, but: "Truckers told CBC News it was too far away from restaurants and washrooms. They also can't see when the bridge reopens," reports read.

The report also noted that: "20 long-haul trucks were scattered in streets and parking lots around Borden-Carleton."

Sounds like a lot of roadside angst and potential traffic havoc.

The story revolves around weather-related closures of the bridge to big trucks when high winds make it unsafe to cross the 13-km artery, a trip that takes about 15 minutes normally.

According to Jean Marc Picard, executive director of the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association, though, there isn't much of a problem. "I talked to a few of my members, and a lot of them say it's a non-issue," he says. "Most of them say when the bridge is closed they just turn around and go home anyway."

Besides, Picard says, it isn't as if most of the closures catch the industry by surprise. "The company that manages the bridge sends out weather advisories, and all the companies have either e-mails or instant messages – and we put it on our Web site and send messages to our members, or they can call," he says.

Not only that, local firms have gotten used to incorporating the closures into their operating plans, Picard says.

"It's like going to Newfoundland," he says. "It's quite a ferry ride, but it's just a fact of life."

Picard admits that trucks arriving at the bridge from longer distances may be more affected by the closures, since they may not have access to up-to-date information, but considering the communications technology available these days, "Unless a sudden storm blows in, it's very rare that a driver gets to the bridge and finds it shut down."

As for the parking area in question, it appears it isn't that far from civilization anyway, depending on how you define the word. "They can use facilities next door," Picard says, "and if they need a coffee or something they can go across the street to the Tim Horton's. It's just a five-

minute walk."

Picard admits the bridge isn't visible from the parking area, but says the reason was logistical and that steps are being taken to help there, too.

"Obviously they needed to find some land that's workable for everyone," he says, noting there's signage coming to notify drivers of when the bridge is open, "so it's not necessarily that bad."

On the plus side, Picard says, the parking area is a secure and safe place to put a truck.

"At the end of the day it addresses the concerns of having to leave your truck at the side of the road. I think it's a good thing. They (government) could have

just put their heads in the sand and pretended there was no problem when the bridge is closed," Picard points out.

To its credit, the CBC followed up the next day with a report quoting P.E.I. Transportation Minister Ron MacKinley as saying improvements (such as the signage Picard mentioned) are coming, and perhaps other services as well.

Meanwhile, Picard says if there's a real issue over bridge parking, it's on the New Brunswick side, where that province hasn't seen fit to build such a parking area. Even there, however, he says it isn't a particularly dire "strait."

"Maybe we should be lobbying harder," he admits, adding "we addressed it at one public consultation, but there are other issues that have been more pressing over the past year. It's been on the

back burner."

Drivers on the mainland side do have a few areas into which they can squeeze, Picard says, if they know far enough in advance that the bridge is closed. "There are a few gas stations a couple of minutes from the bridge," he says. "But it would be more convenient to have one right at the bridge with some facilities."

However the parking situation is perceived and reported on, it appears the closures are a minor inconvenience at worst. Picard says they only happen a few times a year and don't usually last long enough to cause a considerable kerfuffle.

"Obviously, if the bridge is closed four days in a row I can see that being an issue at some point," he says. "But usually it's 12 hours or so and it reopens again and everyone's good to go." □

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ALTERNATIVE FUELS

Fueling for the future

Robert's natural gas trucks now have a place to fuel up

By Carroll McCormick
BOUCHERVILLE, Que. – By about Dec. 1, Robert Transport trucks fueled by liquefied natural gas (LNG) will be hauling freight from Montreal to Toronto, topping up their cryogenic tanks at an LNG fueling station at the carrier's Mississauga terminal and heading back to home base to fuel up, hook up and head out again.

This will be the realization of a project by the Quebec carrier to at least partially switch over its fleet to LNG, which it regards as the fuel of the future. Robert estimates that savings over diesel will be at least 30% and that the LNG engines will emit 25% fewer greenhouse gasses. However, each truck can cost as much as \$80,000 over the price of a similarly equipped diesel truck.

"All of the trucking to Toronto will probably switch over to LNG," says Yves Maurais, the engineer at Robert in charge of the LNG project.

As for putting LNG trucks on other lanes in Canada and the US, the limiting factor today is the lack of fueling stops. In Canada, anyway, Quebec natural gas giant Gaz Metro has begun investing in fueling stations, which it owns, and the mutually supportive supply/demand relationship it has with Robert speaks well for the gradual development of a national fueling infrastructure.

Gaz Metro started building the country's first LNG fueling station this July in Robert's yard in Boucherville, just across the St. Lawrence River from Montreal. The first LNG truck took on fuel there on Sept. 19. Gaz Metro also built the Mississauga station

this summer and was just waiting for word from Robert that it was ready to begin regular runs to Toronto before doing the one-week commissioning this fall.

Gaz Metro will build a third fueling station in Quebec City in 2012, although the location is still a matter of internal deliberations between Gaz Metro and Robert Transport.

While waiting to begin Montreal-Toronto operations, Robert has been running a B-train between Montreal and Lac-Mégantic, south of Quebec City and 53-foot, two-, three- and four-axle trailers in the Montreal area – easily within the 1,000-kilometre range of each truck's pair of seven-foot long, 119-gallon (US) cryogenic tanks.

By the end of October, Robert had acquired two new Peterbilt 386 LNG tractors with 228-inch chassis and wide-base tires, and eight used LNG tractors, including six Kenworth T800s and a modified 2005 Volvo, purchased from around North America. More of the 180 LNG tractors it has ordered from Peterbilt will have arrived by now, and the rest of the order will be delivered over the next three years.

Robert settled on two Peterbilt models: the 367 and 386, equipped with Westport's 2010 GX 15l engine, with two engine displacements: 400-hp/1,450 lb.-ft. torque and 450-hp/1,650 lb.-ft.

The Boucherville fueling station has two positions for trucks: One is a self-standing unit, rather like a pump in a regular gas station; the other position is built into a robust cement wall that protects a labyrinth of stainless steel

cryogenic piping, steel-encased wiring, air-actuated valves and a 10x40-foot high glossy white tank – a two-walled thermos bottle actually – that holds 15,000 US gallons of LNG at a frosty -162 degrees Centigrade.

By the end of October, 10 trucks a day were filling up at the Boucherville station. A second tank will be installed on a concrete pad alongside the first tank once the LNG fleet outgrows the single tank. Gaz Metro purchased three 12,000-gallon road tankers to feed the three stations.

The Ecole de technologie gazière of Gaz Metro is providing the bulk of the training for the Robert technicians and is providing assistance at the pumps. Robert is giving its drivers two hours of classroom time and one hour of hands-on training.

Fueling is straightforward. Drivers carry gloves and a face shield in their trucks, which they must wear to protect themselves

from any errant spray of LNG that might result from a defective nozzle seal.

A driver uncouples the fueling hose from the fueling unit by pulling back on two handles on the hose, plugs it into one of the side-by-side curbside or roadside tank connectors and pushes the handles forward to secure the connection.

The driver pushes a big green button and voila, the LNG flows until the tank pressure reaches a pre-set fill level, between 90-95 gallons, and then automatically stops flowing.

The remaining 20% of the space is for vapour. The driver then disconnects, returns the hose to the fueling unit and bon voyage, he's ready to go.

Robert has been busy this fall modifying a special maintenance bay for the trucks, and 12 technicians had already completed their training. More technicians are expected to receive training in 2012. □



OPEN FOR BUSINESS: Martin Blanchet, Gaz Metro business development manager, at Canada's first LNG fueling station. Photo by Carroll McCormick

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DISTRACTED DRIVING

Behaviour-based safety management is 'old school': Schneider exec

Distracted driving beliefs must be instilled in the subconscious

By James Menzies

GRAPEVINE, Texas – Fleet safety programs that focus on driver behaviour are ineffective, as it's an individual's beliefs that drive their behaviour and in some cases those beliefs must be reshaped before any meaningful outcome is achieved.

That was the thought-provoking message from Don Osterberg, vice-president, safety and driver training with Schneider National when he addressed an audience on distracted driving at the American Trucking Associations Management Conference and Exhibition.

"I believe behaviour-based safety management is old school," he said. "If you want to attack it at the root cause, it's at the belief level that we store what is really relevant. Your beliefs shape your attitudes, which shape your habits, which shape your behaviour. If you're focused on behaviour, you're already too late. You have to address the beliefs."

Osterberg said people behave in accordance to the people they believe themselves to be. "If we know we're undisciplined, if we know we cut corners, if we know we're prone to adverse behaviours, we will behave that way," he explained. "And those beliefs are stored at the subconscious level. The challenge then is to reprogram people, to reprogram their beliefs. That's not easy but it's not impossible to do."

Specifically addressing the issue of distracted driving, Osterberg said it's not enough to simply create policies. Safety leaders must make the message personal and instill in drivers the belief that things like using cell phones while driving is wrong. At Schneider, drivers are required to sign a business card-sized pledge that reads: 'Because I am a disciplined, safety-conscious professional, I lead by



STRICT ENFORCEMENT: Schneider National first banned the use of cell phones while driving in 1998. It's now a fireable offence.

example and maintain constant situational awareness while driving.'

"They sign it, tape it to the steering wheel of their truck and it's something they see every time they get in," Osterberg said. "If you have people sign their name to something, they tend to read it and tend to feel they have made a commitment."

Still, when you run a fleet the size of Schneider National's, not everyone is going to buy into any policy. Osterberg is under no illusions that the carrier's strict distracted driving rules aren't regularly broken, yet he says that's no reason not to have a policy.

"I will tell you candidly that our no cell phone policy is violated in my company every day. I know that it is," he admitted. "If you strive for perfection and won't create a policy that you can't perfectly enforce, I would argue you are missing an opportunity to at least influence the behaviour of a

significant number of your associates. The existence of a policy alone will have a deterrent effect on the behaviour of many of your associates."

Osterberg cited a study that found the presence alone of a policy against cell phone use was enough to influence the behaviour of at least some drivers.

In Schneider's case, the carrier's distracted driving policies have a history that can be traced right back to the company's formation 75 years ago. At that time, founder Al Schneider preached: "Nothing we do is worth hurting ourselves or others."

The company was focusing on distracted driving even before it became a mainstream issue. It banned the use of all cell phones while driving back in 1998.

"I think that was a very forward-looking policy to have in place back then, because I don't think we even understood the effects of

distracted driving in 1998," Osterberg said of the policy that predated his employment at the company.

In 2005, Schneider National used axle sensors on its tractors to blank out the screens of its in-cab mobile communications systems when the trucks were in motion. In 2009, the company increased the severity of violating its distracted driving policies, making using a cell phone while driving a fireable offence.

Meanwhile, the company has developed policies for non-driving staff aimed at making it easier for drivers to stay focused on the job at hand. Drivers' cell phone numbers are not given to customer service staff, so drivers don't have to worry about receiving calls from anxious office staff looking for information on the status of a delivery.

And when a prospective new hire calls the driver recruitment department from a cell phone, recruiters are advised to instruct them to park some place safe and call back.

"We spend a lot of money to make that phone ring and there are a lot of organizations that say 'I really need to have this conversation,' but think about the message we send to that driver, who isn't even one of our drivers yet," Osterberg said. "A lot of them probably don't (call back) but in my view, that's okay. That's walking the talk."

The company is taking a look at some emerging technologies that disable cell phones while the vehicle is in motion, however Osterberg doesn't think they're "ready for prime time" just yet.

But invasive technologies like cell phone signal jammers may not be required if a carrier is able to instill in its drivers a belief that distracted driving is just plain wrong. Osterberg said he himself has taken "the pledge" to not use a phone while driving, and he hopes everyone else in the organization is equally vigilant.

"You can't say 'I'm going to cut back on distracted driving; I'm going to talk on my cell phone less,'" he pointed out. "What I have come to learn is, this is an all-or-nothing proposition. You have to make the commitment to say 'I will not do it' and then hold yourself accountable to that standard. It's the only thing in my experience that works."

Finally, Osterberg said he would like to see the US as a country develop a national safety culture. And he left attendees with this poignant message: "In 2009, 3,380 people were killed in truck-involved crashes. We do a lot of celebrating in these venues – and I'm not being critical of our friends at ATA – saying, we've never been safer as an industry. And while that may be true, I frankly find that may be interesting but irrelevant. Because I know 3,380 is levels of magnitude too many. We have to do better than that. We have to hold ourselves collectively to a higher standard. We have to, as a society, say it's unacceptable that we kill nearly 100 people every day in traffic crashes." □

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FUEL ECONOMY

One-year payback predicted when fuel economy standards take effect

By James Menzies
GRAPEVINE, Texas – When phase one of the NHTSA/EPA fuel economy standards for medium and heavy trucks goes into effect with model year 2014 vehicles, most progressive fleets will not have to spec' trucks any differently than they do today.

If you're currently spec'ing fuel-efficient trucks, the early requirements are already likely being met. Which begs the question: 'Why bother, then?'

Faced with that very question at the American Trucking Associations Management Conference and Exhibition, Cheryl Bynum, manager of the EPA's SmartWay Transport Partnership, noted 80% of US trucks belong to fleets with 20 or fewer vehicles, and they're not necessarily spec'ing the most fuel-efficient trucks.

"Leading fleets are already doing a lot of this," Bynum admitted, when listing some of the technologies that will be employed by OEMs to meet the 2014 standard. "But there are a lot of trucks on the road that are not operated by leading fleets."

Some of the technologies that may be used to meet the 2014 fuel standard include: chassis fairings; low rolling resistance tires; lightweight components; speed governing; anti-idling devices; and auto-shutdown features. Bynum said the NHTSA and EPA had a hard time figuring out why said technologies weren't already being used by all trucking companies?

"This was one of the primary discussions we had," she said. "If these technologies pay back in three years or less, why isn't everyone using them if the trucking industry has thin profit margins and fuel is the second highest cost after the driver?"

The government's answer was to mandate their use. The new fuel economy standards will focus both on the truck and the engine. The trailer escapes the NHTSA/EPA's scrutiny, for now.

"When EPA/NHTSA began looking at this, we realized trailers are very complicated," she said. "We felt that for right now, it was better to defer action on trailers. We did state the intention at some point in the future to regulate trailers but we're not doing it as part of this rulemaking."

The new requirements will see truck fuel efficiency improve from 10-23% between 2014 and 2018, depending on vehicle type. Phase one will focus on currently available technologies while the more aggressive 2018 standard will require advanced technologies such as waste heat recovery.

"There is going to be a tremendous amount of fuel savings from this rule," Bynum said. "It's going to be the most beneficial rule we've done for vehicles since the EPA began regulating vehicles."

The onus will be on the truck and engine manufacturers to increase the uptake on their fuel-saving options. There will, however, be changes to how fleets spec' trucks as a result of the rules.

Take for example speed limit-

ers. OEMs will receive credits for selling a speed-limited truck, but only if the speed setting is hard-wired and tamper-proof. If a fleet wishes to spec' a speed-limited truck with a setting that expires at a certain mileage (prior to resale, perhaps), or one that provides drivers with an extra boost of power for passing to reward fuel-efficient driving, the OEM will be docked credits accordingly. Therefore, you can expect manufacturers to encourage fleets to order trucks that will be permanently governed.

One fleet manager in attendance wondered aloud if trucking companies will enjoy extra pricing leverage with OEMs when spec'ing options that allow the truck and engine manufacturer to maximize the credits they earn on the sale.

The biggest change, Bynum noted, is that truck dealers and manufacturers will now have a greater incentive to encourage the uptake of fuel-saving technologies.

"Manufacturers didn't have an incentive to offer a lot of aluminum on the truck unless the fleet asked for it, now they have an incentive," she said. "There wasn't an incentive to talk to fleets about vehicle speed limiters, now they have an incentive."

She also suggested fleets will benefit because the latter stages of the program will require OEMs to spend the money to develop more efficient engines.

"You as a fleet may not have the clout to convince the engine manufacturers to spend millions of dollars to design new engines. This is going to help the engine manufacturers improve the efficiency of their engines," she said.

When asked how the NHTSA and EPA will ensure fuel-saving options aren't tampered with (chassis fairings removed, for example), Bynum didn't have an answer.

She said an upcoming compli-

ance workshop will look to provide some answers on how to ensure a fuel-efficient truck stays that way throughout its useful life.

Some fleet managers in attendance, nervous that they'll be forced to use devices that are not practical in their application, were assured they will continue to have access to trucks that don't meet the standard. Manufacturers will be measured across all their sales, so while not every vehicle they sell will have to meet the standards, the average must fall within the accepted range. OEMs also will have the opportunity to collect credits in advance of the 2014 standard if they comply with the fuel standard early – and it seems likely they will.

Freightliner officials indicated at a press event preceding the ATA convention that they hope

to meet the 2014 standard by next year.

EPA's Bynum repeatedly emphasized the benefits for trucking companies. She indicated a Class 8 truck in 2018 may cost \$6,220 more than today, but over its lifetime it will reduce fuel consumption by 26,150 gallons providing a lifetime fuel savings of US\$79,100 based on \$3/gallon fuel.

That translates to a one-year payback. A medium-duty vocational truck, meanwhile, will see its purchase price increase only \$380, saving 2,000 gallons of fuel over its lifetime, delivering US\$5,900 in fuel savings and also providing a one-year payback.

"Fleets said they wanted an 18- to 24-month payback," she said. "That's what we aimed for and I think we did a good job of doing that." □

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INDUSTRY

Economic outlook

More of the same, but significant regulatory changes will make 2012 a pivotal year for Canadian trucking

The biggest question on most carriers' minds as we head into 2012 is much like it has been in the last couple of years: What is the economy going to look like?

The answer also appears to be "more of the same." The economists are telling us to expect slow, choppy growth combined with a lot of uncertainty. While Canada's economy has up until now fared better than most of the rest of the G20 economies, we are not immune from the effects of the ongoing problems in the US economy and the European debt crisis. The risk seems to be more to the downside than the upside, but that too is something we have become used to.

Not surprisingly then, in terms of what carriers can expect for their businesses in 2012, from an economic perspective at least, I expect more of the same. In other words, not bad, but not great either. The ratio between freight volumes and trucking capacity appears to be more or less in balance and as long as things don't go south in a hurry and carriers continue to take a more



Industry Issues

DAVID BRADLEY

disciplined approach to capacity, the industry should be fine and well-positioned for improved growth which the forecasters are now putting off until 2013. (Economists are always eventually right).

While the economic outlook might be more of the same in 2012, not so for the regulatory environment that governs the industry. The list of major regulatory changes we are likely to see over the coming year is a long one.

First, what I call the Big Three.

Number One: The US DoT will publish its final changes to the US hours-of-service rules and no one is expecting them to become more flexible. The question for us is what will Canada do? At this point there appears to be little appetite at either the federal or provincial level to re-open this can of worms – there cer-

tainly appears to be no safety rationale for following the US – but one never knows.

Number Two: The US DoT will also publish its long-awaited final rule on EOBRs. A universal mandate is expected. Again, what will Canada (the federal government and the provinces) do?

Number Three: Both the US and Canada will finalize their new fuel economy/GHG reduction rules for heavy-duty tractors and engines. What will this really mean for product availability? How will differences in Canadian weights and dimensions standards be accounted for in the regulations? Will the Canadian government grant the industry's wish for a program of complementary measures to accelerate investment in the new 'GHG-compliant' equipment and voluntary retrofits of the existing fleet?

But, that's not all.

The reports from the two committees established by the US president and the Canadian prime minister in 2011 – the Beyond Borders Working Group and the Regulatory Cooperation Council – will reveal whether in fact there is an appetite, particularly in the United States, for a better balance between security and border/trade efficiency. Will Canada adopt a new dangerous goods security regime similar to the US program of mandatory security plans, training and management systems? Will the US introduce new food safety security regulations? How will Canada respond? The report of the Red Tape Reduction Committee will indicate

whether the federal government is prepared to tackle the problems associated with the current lack of regulatory harmonization, at least in those areas where it has constitutional authority.

There are a host of other issues at the provincial level that the industry will be interested in. Will the rest of the provinces follow the lead of Quebec and Ontario by equalizing the allowable axle weights for wide-base single tires and conventional duals? Will a national accord be reached on extending B-train combination lengths to accommodate the maximum tractor wheelbase? Will the provinces and the federal government introduce regulatory/legislative amendments to nullify indemnification clauses in freight contracts that transfer the liability for shipper/3PL negligence to carriers? How will Ontario expand its LCV program?

Last but not least, carriers will continue to debate how to deal with the looming driver shortage (which many in some jurisdictions say has already arrived).

In combination, these issues pose potential challenges and opportunities for the industry and for the associations that represent the industry. Some have the potential to change the face of the industry itself. Make no mistake, 2012 promises to be a pivotal year for trucking in Canada. □

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

We're not getting any younger

Of the myriad issues facing truck transportation in North America, none may be as potentially impactful for its future as the seemingly innate inability to attract young people to the workforce. And in many respects the industry is the author of its own misfortune.

A good deal has been written about trucking's aging workforce. Often those articles focus on the driving corps, but the issue is much broader. Mechanics, technicians, office staff and other so-called white collar workers (although you seldom see a white collar in the office these days) are equally in demand.

The usual manner of addressing the issue in the short-term is for one company to poach from another, maintaining the cycle but not doing anything that will have a longer-term impact on improving the situation. The quick fix approach is understandable, but a longer-term view is needed if the industry is to have a prosperous future.

Research by the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council (CTHRC) a few years ago identified that the largest proportion of Canadian drivers was over 40 years of age and that 27% were over 50.

Absent an influx of younger people to the industry, this situation can't improve.

The need to attract young people is not unique to trucking of course – every conceivable industry wants to do exactly that. But because young people do not rate trucking very high



Private Links

BRUCE RICHARDS

on their list of chosen fields of employment, and due to age restrictions on entry, competing for that talent is a difficult chore.

We know many of the reasons why trucking is not seen as a desirable vocation: low pay, long hours, potentially lengthy time away from home, poor training, limited opportunity for career advancement – little wonder that truck driving, and the industry generally is not seen by the broader populace as any more than a default job.

And then as if to pile on, we have government departments that look for the least expensive – rather than the best – training that can be offered for those seeking to become a driver.

This approach can point potential drivers to substandard training that will not lead to a good job. It's not a very encouraging start to a career in trucking.

Another example of obstructionism is British Columbia's recent decision to change its funding model that pretty much makes it unaffordable for young people to get the level of driver training that the industry wants in a new hire.

The irony is that despite the image issue, there are many trucking com-

panies and private fleets that operate in a professional manner, that treat their employees well, that offer training and advancement opportunities – in short, that do all the things companies in other industries do in order to attract and keep good employees. And yet, the image of the industry remains an over-riding obstacle to attracting new talent.

So, the long-term question becomes, can the industry do something to promote its more attractive side and thereby become of interest to young people?

One step is for trucking companies with hiring and retention issues to take a hard look at their human resources policies. For many, that might mean beginning at the start and actually developing those policies, and then training their management group on using them effectively.

Once again there is help at hand. For those truly interested in improving their hiring and retention practices, the CTHRC's *Guide to Human Resources for the Trucking Industry* provides the answer.

PMTC recently hosted a small group of fleet operators in a walk-through of the guide and the reviews were overwhelmingly positive. The guide's three volumes cover a lot of ground, but its templates and instructions make it relatively easy for any carrier to develop HR policies and practices that can help make their operations more effective, and help attract people for all positions.

Another interesting initiative is Quebec's attempt to attract and train young people in the 17-18 years of age bracket to become drivers. This was a topic of conversation during a recent meeting of the PMTC Board of Directors.

Some expressed concerns with having people of that age group in charge of a transport truck, but the components of the program may allay some of those fears. The requirements, which include pre-screening of applicants, high-level training, a probationary period, an experienced company mentor, and ongoing evaluations of the probationary driver, seem designed to make this program successful.

So, what conclusions can be drawn on the subject of how the trucking industry can compete in the entry-level employee market and sustain its future workforce?

Well, there are a lot of negatives, as itemized above, but solutions to the problem are being offered that, if acted on, could help make our industry one of choice for our target market.

The opportunity to improve HR practices (CTHRC's guide) will lead to better hiring and retention practices and by default a better industry image, and Quebec's initiative aimed at attracting young people could lead to similar programs in other jurisdictions.

There's hope yet if we start thinking about the future. □

– The Private Motor Truck Council is the only national association dedicated to the private trucking community. Direct comments and questions to trucks@pmtc.ca.

OPINION

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas

As we approach the holiday season, on behalf of our members, family and friends we would like to wish everyone in the trucking industry a very Merry Christmas.

This is the time of year I would like to give thanks to some very important men and women who don't often get thanked or appreciated near enough:

To the snow plow operators who keep our roads and highways plowed and sanded during and after winter storms, thank you.

To the road construction crews that build and repair our highways, thank you.

To the flag persons and crews who flag the traffic during road construction, avalanche control and collisions sites, thank you.

To the avalanche control crews that shoot down the avalanches to

Constructive Dialogue

RON SINGER



keep our mountain passes open and safe to travel, thank you.

To the police and motor transport enforcement officers who make sure our roads, highways and communities are kept safe and compliant, thank you.

To the firemen who keep our roads and communities safe and free from fires, etc., thank you.

To the ambulance personnel, doctors, nurses and health care workers that tend to the victims of collisions and sickness within our communities, thank you.

To the park wardens and forestry

personnel who tend to the wildlife and keep them safe and keep our forests free from fires, thank you.

To the line painters who paint the lines on our highways so we can see where we are going, thank you.

To the tow truck drivers who attend the collision sites, clean up the debris from them and tow the damaged vehicles off the road to the repair facilities when they break down, you are truly the broken down driver's best friend, thank you.

To the mobile repair personnel that tend to the broken down vehicles on our highways under dangerous conditions, thank you.

To the truck stops, restaurants, food take-out facilities that keep our professional drivers fed to keep them healthy, thank you.

To the service and repair facilities that stay open late to make repairs

on our equipment, so we can continue on to our destinations to deliver our loads on time and on budget, thank you.

To the trucking journalists and their magazines for keeping us up-to-date, informed and current on all relevant information, thank you.

To the trucking associations, their members and staff who work tirelessly to represent the best interests and concerns of their members, thank you.

To the government legislators, bureaucrats, politicians and their staff and agencies who keep us honest and compliant, thank you.

To the driving schools that work diligently to do the best they can to educate and train the new recruits entering into the trucking industry as drivers, thank you.

To all the drivers, mechanics, welders, driver trainers, supervisors, executives, owner/operators, secretaries, office staff, etc. in the trucking industry, thank you.

To the general public and all other road users, thank you.

To everyone else who has a concern for the trucking industry or helps and assists our industry in any way, shape or form, thank you.

To everyone or anyone who I have forgotten to mention, thank you.

This is also the time of year I like to think about doing something nice and considerate for some of the less fortunate people in our society.

Like the unemployed who are down and out, try to help them find a job.

Like the homeless people on the street, give them a lift to the closest shelter and offer them a hot meal.

Like the elderly that are on a fixed income and are unable to pay all their bills or do all the maintenance work around their homes, offer them some financial assistance, cut their lawn, shovel their sidewalk or just talk and visit with them to let them know you care.

Like the person walking down the road, pick them up and give them a lift to where they are going.

Like the driver whose vehicle has broken down on the road, assist them in the repair; offer your phone so they can make the appropriate call for assistance or just give them a ride to where they need to go.

When at the local 7-11, Tim Horton's or other check-outs, put your change in the donation boxes to help out the needy.

When you grow out of your clothing or have old clothing you no longer use, take it to your local Salvation Army so someone less fortunate has something warm to wear.

Volunteer at your local nursing home to visit and assist the elderly.

When you are Christmas shopping and you see your Salvation Army volunteer ringing their bell in their red suit, put some cash in their donation bowl, shake their hand and thank them for their volunteer time and service. It's a time to give thanks, appreciate what you have and do something nice for someone. Merry Christmas everyone. □

— Ron Singer is owner of Ron Singer Truck Lines and Alberta director of the North American Truckers Guild. He can be reached at 403-244-4487 or by e-mail at ronsing@telus.net.

A Groundbreaking Study on Canadian Private Fleets

This hot off the press report seeks to provide a Canada wide, detailed portrait of private carriers. The results are based on a comprehensive questionnaire completed by approximately 200 fleet managers across the country – from Newfoundland to British Columbia.

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FEATURE

Smooth movers

Movers face unique challenges. Like what do you do when you find a gun in the nightstand?

By Julia Kuzeljevich

LANSING, Mich. – Moving day, which happens for more than four million Canadians each year, is said to be one of the most stressful days in a person's life.

Usually you're moving because something has happened – often something negative – to spur on the move. But even when circumstances are positive, moving at the same time as running your everyday life is an immense challenge for most people.

A move could be the result of a divorce or because seniors are leaving their family home and moving to assisted living. In many cases, clients are emotionally unprepared for their move.

Movers, on the other hand, are dealing with nightmare items such as plasma screen TVs, pianos, curio cabinets full of knick-knacks and delicate china.

Or, they might come across a stash of drugs, cash shoved in a hiding place or a handgun in the drawer of a nightstand.

A good moving company can step in and smooth the process, laying out the steps and counting down with the customer what must be looked after, and when.

Franchised moving company Two Men and a Truck has built its marketing platform on being 'movers who care,' aiming to treat customers 'as you would treat your Grandmother.'

In Lansing, Mich., new franchisees attend an eight-day training session at the Stick Men University, named after the stick men in the company logo.

The training aims to cover every circumstance of what happens during a move, from the aspects of the physical move to the customer service issues that can arise before, during and after.

About US\$300,000 has recently been put into the training facility, which hosts franchisees, trainers, drivers and sales staff throughout the year for courses and conferences.

A typical house layout has been recreated, with rooms staged to represent what movers would find at a typical residence and that can create moving challenges: plasma screen TVs, leather couches, chemical cleaners (that cannot be moved by Two Men and a Truck), and your typical awkward furniture that can't get through the door.

Some rooms are also staged with an "unorthodox" scenario such as a gun left in a bedside table drawer, or marijuana under a mattress. (The correct response? Stop all moving activity and ask the customer to remove the item).

Trainees can also practice loading a truck, the interior of which has been set up within the facility. The trucks are framed so that loads can be sectioned off and well secured.

Movers are taught to zero in on the piece of furniture or valuable

or sentimental item that customers are most worried about, and to explain exactly how it will be handled.

While you might expect that when movers arrive at a house they will find only packed cardboard boxes, it is not unusual, even when a customer service representative calls several times in advance to prepare the client, for movers to arrive and find nothing packed, or some items left scattered around.

"Day of the move" boxes are provided for the smaller items like keys and TV converters that are needed right up to the last minute, and that can easily be transported in the client's car.

Cardboard boxes and a glass case modeling a packing box for china are on display for the training.

As a packaging "test" of sorts, the china box, when properly packed, can be heaved off the back of the truck with the china remaining intact.

Since his early days driving the original pick-up truck with which the company was launched, Two Men and a Truck's president and CEO Brig Sorber found that the moving industry "had a lot of closure to it."

"It was an easy way to make people happy. We train movers to always talk positively about the moves and the location they're going to, seeing themselves as problem solvers, making the customer happy at the end of the day," said Sorber during a tour of the company's Michigan head office in September.

'We train movers to always talk positively about the moves and the location they're going to,'

Brig Sorber, Two Men and a Truck

The company has grown from modest beginnings in the 1980s, when brothers Brig and Jon Sorber drove an old pick-up truck purchased by their mother, Mary Ellen Sheets, to a current fleet of 1,300 trucks featuring the now-trade-marked hand-drawn logo of two stick men in a truck.

Sheets made an initial \$350 investment in the company, purchasing the pick-up for her sons and fielding calls for moving services. She franchised the company in 1989.

Franchisee accountability, said Sorber, is not just lip service, and the company asks for a lot of transparency from its franchisees.

"A rogue franchise can really hurt your system. In some years we might non-renew or terminate more franchises than we add," he said. "It's more important to us that our existing franchises can handle multiple moves. If the model works, the customer is wowed, and franchisees gain market share."

Sorber noted that the company has experienced 34% growth over the last two years in a bad US economy,



TRUCKING OF A DIFFERENT SORT: Two Men and a Truck franchisees must adhere to certain spec's – including automatic transmissions – when purchasing their trucks.

and he said the company has gotten better at getting recognized even as fewer moves may be going on.

In Canada, Two Men and a Truck has focused Canadian growth in the Southern Ontario market, developing 12-15 franchises with plans to develop 45-50 franchise territories in total to service the Canadian market.

Trucks are spot-checked on a regular basis to ensure that maintenance is on schedule, that the logo always looks the same and that the truck's appearance is well maintained.

In Lansing, COO Randy Shacka said that 60-70% of the company's costs are people- or truck-related, with 5% of costs relating to fuel.

The company is in the midst of piloting a Web-based automation project that will integrate scheduling, estimating, accounting and intranet capabilities for the franchisees.

match," he added.

Moving trucks are not running their engines constantly, but the floors and walls do get a lot of wear and tear, noted Hopkins.

Commercial Babcock manufactures and installs the 24- to 26-foot moving boxes on the back of the chassis, which franchisees can select from one of the four recommended manufacturers: Kenworth, Freightliner, General Motors Corporation and International.

New trucks must be a 2009 or newer model year, spec'd for an expected front axle load of 8,500 lbs, rear drive axle load of 17,500 lbs and gross vehicle weight capacity of 26,000 lbs and with an automatic transmission.

Only a G licence is required to drive the trucks, but drivers are still trained in techniques such as skid control, reduced idling and proper loading. GPS technology tracks idling and the metrics data is stored electronically, said Hopkins.

The moving industry, not unlike the trucking industry, has seen its reputation affected over the years by a few bad apples.

In 2010, this led Two Men And a Truck Canada to create a Customer Bill of Rights to differentiate the franchise after a police crackdown in the Toronto area uncovered moving companies using a variety of illegal tactics – from overcharging customers and changing estimates mid-move, to holding goods ransom until customers pay up to triple the amounts quoted in the estimates.

"We wanted to be on the right side of that and to be an initiative to band together the good moving companies. We've gone out of our way to promote the message," said Hopkins.

Among the rights listed are that customers can request a written quote outlining the scope, cost per hour and have both parties' legal rights and responsibilities explained to them in advance of a move.

Movers must adhere to the pre-move estimate and the terms provided, while also supplying an itemized invoice upon completion of the move when requested.

"In Canada, the way fuel costs are handled is that they are calculated as part of the hourly rate, so that they are not shown as an additional charge and are absorbed into the total price," said Hopkins. □

TECHNOLOGY

Waste not

A Canadian company has designed an APU powered by recovered waste energy

By James Menzies

BOLTON, Ont. – As engine manufacturers look to improve the efficiency of their products to comply with impending fuel economy standards, one of the obvious advancements to explore is waste heat recovery; harnessing wasted energy produced by the inherently inefficient internal combustion engine.

It's estimated that as much as 30% of the energy produced by a diesel engine is lost through the tailpipe in the form of heat.

Several engine manufacturers have hinted they are working on waste heat recovery systems that will capture that wasted energy and then use it to power certain aspects of the truck, however such systems are still in the early stages of development.

A small Canadian firm, meanwhile, has quietly designed a fully functioning auxiliary power unit (APU) powered solely by waste heat recovery, capable of providing heating, cooling and hotel load power for up to 10 hours without any fuel consumption.

It's also able to provide heating and cooling while the truck is in motion, providing fuel savings and eliminating the need for an AC compressor.

Truck West was the first trucking news outlet to see the Hyper (Hybrid Power and Energy Recovery) storage system at work, at developer EnerMotion's modest lab in Bolton, Ont.

The project has been kept under wraps while all the necessary patents were filed by global legal giant Norton Rose.

Now with the muscle of one of the world's largest patent protection law firms behind it, EnerMotion president and CEO Jack MacDonnell is able to openly discuss the project.

His excitement is palpable as he describes the system.

"Several of the OEMs are looking at waste heat recovery technology and have been for a year or so, but we've been developing this system for a number of years now, so we believe we are ahead of the curve," MacDonnell told *Truck West*.

MacDonnell assembled the team that would be responsible for the design of the system in 2007 and incorporated the company in 2008, just as oil prices were hitting record highs.

Last summer, EnerMotion received a \$1 million grant from Sustainable Development Technologies Canada and the Toronto Atmospheric Fund has since come to the table with some additional financing.

Meanwhile, some of the first Canadian fleets to see the system at work have also come on-board; and they include some of

the more sustainability-minded and technically-savvy companies in the business; not the types to be enamored by an unproven or implausible technology.

MacDonnell said JD Smith and Sons was so impressed, it has purchased a stake in the company, donated a truck for test trials and is eager to take delivery of the first field trial unit in the coming weeks.

Challenger Motor Freight, Kriska Transportation and Loblaw have also committed to field-testing the system, MacDonnell added.

The premise behind the Hyper system is simple, even if the technology itself is not. MacDonnell describes it this way: "If you think of a bar fridge at the cottage; you plug it in and it runs a refrigeration cycle. That's what we're doing; we're driving a refrigeration cycle without plugging into the wall. We're using high temperatures to pressurize the system. There's high-grade heat in those big diesel motors, anywhere from 300-800 degrees C. We just pull that heat out and drive this refrigeration cycle and we drive the heat cycle too. We massage those thermal conditions and store them – either hot or cold – and we can store 5 kWh of energy within an hour of running this system."

Importantly, that's enough to provide long-haul drivers with a full 10-hour rest cycle of heating, cooling and hotel load power without having to burn any fuel, MacDonnell noted.

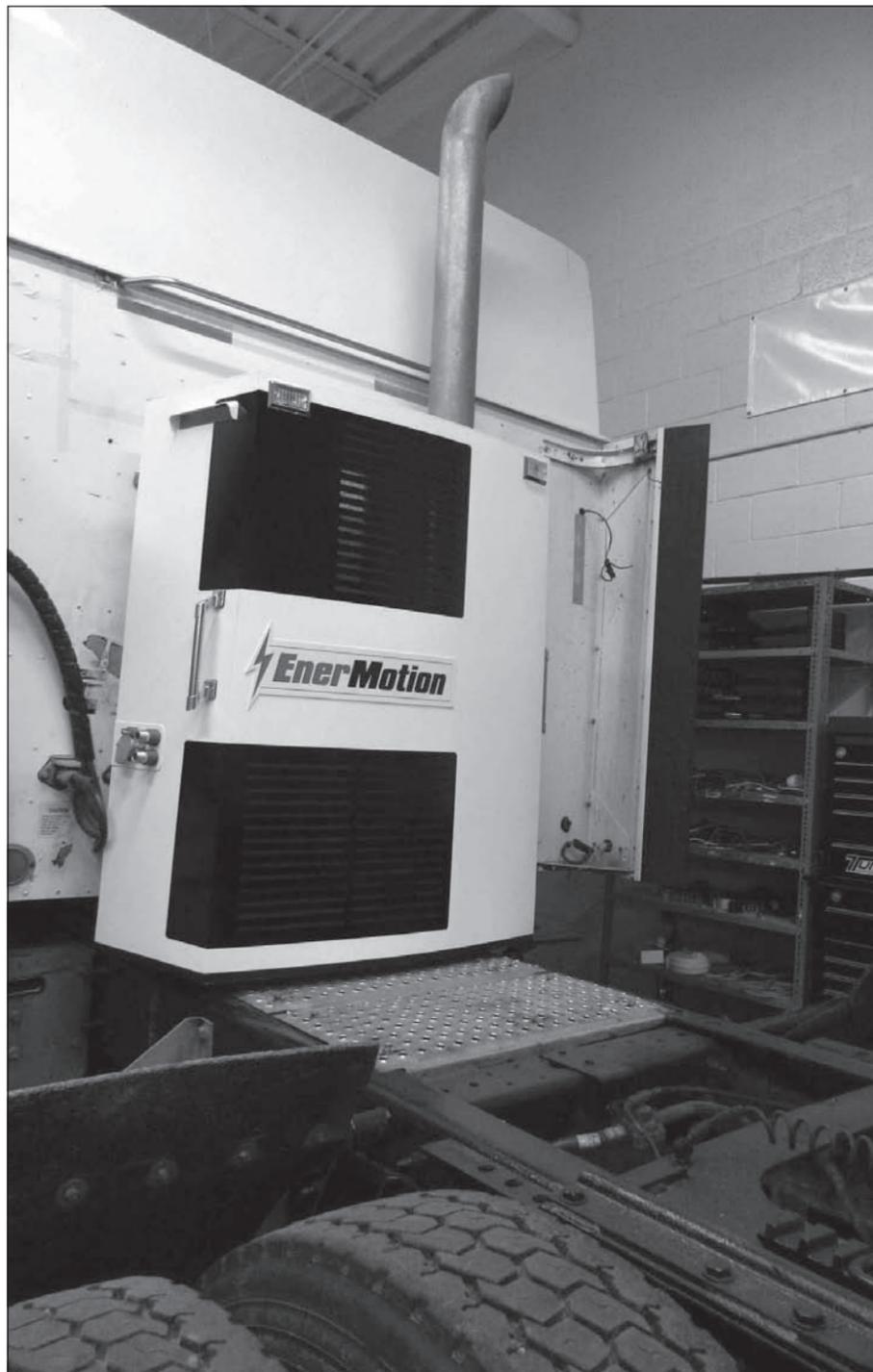
The driver uses the existing HVAC controls, as the unit is integrated with the truck's existing dials and ducting. Regional fleets such as Loblaw and JD Smith and Sons are interested, he added, because their drivers can keep the cab comfortable without idling while waiting to load or unload.

Based on metrics collected by EnerMotion and then supported by Canadian fleets, the company is expecting to reduce fuel consumption by 9% with its system, providing a payback in less than a year – as long as it works, that is. And proving its reliability in the field is the next step for the developer.

"We're entering the demonstration phase, which is to validate the metrics we have on paper with real road trials and also to put it into different drive cycle environments," MacDonnell said. "We've been simulating this thing but it's one thing in the lab and a different thing out on the road."

EnerMotion has been running its own trials on a 2003 International with a C12 Cat engine with 435 hp. So far, so good, the company claims.

"From an engineering perspective, it's now all about scaling



HYPER APU: Could this Canadian-designed APU be the first real breakthrough using waste heat recovery technology?

Photo by James Menzies

components down," MacDonnell explained. "Some of the components are over-engineered right now; they're heavy and some are bulky. I don't want to blow smoke out in the industry and say this is ready for prime time right now, but by the same token we can't wait any longer."

MacDonnell realizes that with engine manufacturers developing waste heat recovery systems of their own, they'll soon be competing for the same lost energy. But he's comfortable with the patent protection his company has secured and wants to license the technology to the OEMs in addition to offering the system in the aftermarket.

"We want to partner with these guys and license the technology to them," he said. "We have resisted the urge to knock on their doors until we have some units out there. The time is now to tell them what we're doing, we have to get out there and expose ourselves because we've been flying under the radar for too long."

The prototype system is similar to a trailer refrigeration unit in size and shape, and is mounted to the back of the cab.

It weighs about the same as a diesel-powered APU and contains no moving parts.

The thermal storage unit boasts a higher energy density than lithium-ion batteries, MacDonnell noted.

"The system ties into the stock exhaust," Dave Gibbs, director of technological development, explained during a demonstration. "We capture some of that thermal energy and use it to drive our system, providing heating and cooling to the occupants both while the truck is in motion and while at rest. You no longer need to turn a mechanical air-conditioning compressor, because the system will do the cooling while you drive. It makes no noise and the driver doesn't have to do anything. It's a very simple and very elegant system."

The Hyper system also provides engine pre-heating and even cooling if temperatures reach dangerous levels.

With 20 units set to be deployed with some big name fleets across various duty cycles, MacDonnell figures it'll be 12-18 months before the Hyper system is launched commercially. Meanwhile, the company is also studying other applications, such as using the same technology to refrigerate trailers. MacDonnell is understandably excited to get the message out.

"Nobody's doing this anywhere in the world," he told *Truck West*. "There are some industrial applications but nobody is doing it at this scale and nobody is doing hot and cold and storing it so it runs itself in an autonomous mode as ours does." □

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FLEET NEWS



TRUCK-PULL CHAMPS: The winning Dr. Hook team in action.

Trucking companies, suppliers pull together to raise funds for United Way

WINNIPEG, Man. – Six Manitoba-based trucking companies and suppliers have raised \$3,000 for the United Way after taking part in a friendly truck-pull competition Oct. 13.

The six companies each assem-

bled teams of 10 that competed to pull a truck 150 ft in the shortest amount of time.

Taking first place was Dr. Hook, with Bison Transport coming in second “by milliseconds,” according to event organizers. Round-

ing out the list in order were Sysco Foods, Beaver Truck Centre, Payne Transportation and Maxim Truck and Trailer.

“I would sincerely like to thank you and your teams for your participation and the donation of the trucks in the Local Industry Truck Pull competition,” said Laura La Palme of Bison Transport.

“Your involvement in the truck pull, answered our challenge to help show support for our community and raise money for the United Way.”

This is the second year that Manitoba trucking companies have held a truck-pull competition to raise money for the charity.

“There are over 400 for-hire trucking companies headquartered right here in Manitoba so it is important for our industry to show continued community support and leadership which is why the MTA is a proud supporter of this event,” said Terry Shaw, manager of the Manitoba Trucking Association. □

TransForce announces plans to purchase Quik X

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – TransForce has announced it has entered into an agreement to acquire all the shares of Quik X Transportation, including its US operations.

Quik X has a network of 17 centres across Canada and the US, with more than 600 employees and agreements with 325 independent contractors.

Founded in 1990, Quik X specializes in time-sensitive

freight and is known for developing its own sophisticated proprietary software. It’s an asset-light carrier with annual revenues of about \$200 million.

The deal should close near the end of the year, TransForce announced.

“The transaction...should provide a solid return on our investment for shareholders,” said TransForce president, CEO and chairman Alain Bedard. □



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OEM/DEALER NEWS

Titan Trailers to open new plant, welding school

TILLSONBURG, Ont. – Aluminum trailer manufacturer Titan Trailers has announced plans to build a new sub-assembly plant in Tillsonburg, Ont. The company, best known for its lightweight, extruded aluminum smooth-side trailer bodies, is headquartered in Delhi, Ont. where it operates a 32,000 sq.-ft. facility housing its trailer finishing and engineering operations.

Company officials say the new facility in nearby Tillsonburg offers 60,000 sq.-ft. of multi-purpose manufacturing space that's well suited to the trailer manufacturer's requirements.

"This property gives us a ready-made solution to Titan's needs for added capacity and efficiency," says Mike Kloepfer, founder and president of Titan Trailers. "It has everything we need for secure, enclosed storage and custom assembly work, plus space for us to develop other opportunities

we've been exploring."

The new facility will be used primarily to receive running gear components such as axles, tires and suspension parts, which will be assembled to order on-site. The running gear sub-assemblies will then be shipped to the Delhi location for installation on trailer bodies, the company indicated.

The new plant will also be used to install the moving floors on Titan's self-unloading trailers.

"This Tillsonburg site will help to streamline our entire production process," Kloepfer explains. "Our existing facilities will be better focused on their key functions, while our storage and sub-assembly activities will finally have a dedicated space of their own. We'll have a better process for building better trailers."

The new site is located at the junc-

tion of Hwy. 4 and Jackson Side Road, just six kilometres from the company's head office. Titan also plans to open a new welding school on its new property.

"Finding and recruiting enough qualified welders has always been a challenge for us," Kloepfer says. "So we decided we should start training our own."

He notes that working almost exclusively on aluminum rather than steel is a new challenge for many welders, so the new program will provide welders with the skills needed by the manufacturer. The school will focus on fabricating with aluminum, with extra attention paid to reading and interpreting blueprints, the company says. Courses will be offered to students as a competitive trade school



DUAL PURPOSE: Titan's new plant will also house a welding school so it can train its future hires.

and successful graduates will have the chance to earn back their tuitions through employment at Titan.

Finally, the new Tillsonburg location will include a retail walk-in counter, so local customers can purchase off-the-shelf trailer parts. □

DTNA rebrands powertrain portfolio; Detroit Diesel becomes Detroit

GRAPEVINE, Texas – Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA) is dropping the Diesel from Detroit Diesel, as part of a new branding initiative designed to better reflect the diversity of its powertrain portfolio.

The new Detroit brand was showcased for the first time at a press conference at the American Trucking Associations Management Conference and Exhibition. Company executives said the Detroit brand was created to encompass all powertrain-related components and is evidence of the OE's intentions to respond more quickly and efficiently in "developing an optimized line of vertically integrated components."

Andreas Renschler, management member of the Daimler board, said "DTNA and Detroit Diesel have embraced Daimler Trucks' strategy through implementation of uniform production standards and processes, and a modular strategy for engine development, engineering and manufacturing processes that draws upon Daimler's global resources."

The new Detroit brand will be supported by more than 800 dealers and distributors across North America, the company noted.

"The Detroit brand of powertrain components continues our commitment to innovation, which is the essence of DTNA," said Martin Daum, president and CEO, DTNA. "Based on the existing Detroit Diesel brand long synonymous with quality, reliability, fuel efficiency, power and performance, the new Detroit brand will be the platform for all current and future DTNA optimized vertically integrated powertrain components."

Daimler officials said the new brand will officially be rolled out next March, likely at the Mid-America Trucking Show. □

Daimler optimistic about future growth

By Lou Smyrlis

GRAPEVINE, Texas – It may be that being a market share leader in North American Classes 6-8 truck sales makes for a more optimistic outlook, but Andreas Renschler, head of Daimler Trucks is not buying into all the economic doom and gloom.

In his address to the media prior to the start of the American Trucking Associations convention, Renschler acknowledged that economic indicators today are making it feel a bit like the fall of 2008 but was optimistic we would not see a return to global crisis.

"The clouds are a little bit darker but I'm still optimistic we will not see a global crisis... while it's true that the risk of a double-dip recession has become more pronounced over the course of this year, it's still a less likely scenario," Renschler said.

He added that the more real threat is a crisis of confidence.

"As President Franklin Roosevelt famously said: The only thing we have to fear is fear itself," he said.

Renschler said Daimler is not seeing any significant negative effects on its business, adding he is confident 2011 will prove to be a good year.

As of August, three of Daimler's four core markets were showing significant growth compared to the previous year: Europe by 41% in the medium- and heavy-duty segments; the NAFTA region by 38%; and Brazil by 16%.

Year-to-date, global sales of Daimler trucks have climbed by 18% through August.

Daimler Trucks North America in August achieved its best sales results since March 2007. Sales climbed by 52% and Canada did even better with 53%. Incoming orders are running a full 114% higher than the same time last year.

"Our production capacity is full until the first quarter of 2012," Renschler said.

He cautioned that when looking at these extreme growth rates, one needs to keep in mind that they are based on low levels from the previous year, so "it's absolutely okay if we'll see lower numbers in the time to come."

But both Renschler and Martin Daum, president and CEO of DTNA, expected more growth for 2012 in Class 8 truck sales. Daum said that growth could be in the 30-40% range should the economy prove stronger than currently forecast or 15-20% under a more tepid economy.

Renschler also liked what he saw when he looked further into the future. He sees global automotive markets growing by over 40 million units in sales by 2020. And there is great demand for truck replacements in the North American market.

"The average age of truck fleets here has now reached the highest level in about 30 years," he said. "In spite of any short-term fluctuations, in the medium- and long-term, our business is a growth business. As a global truck manufacturer, we'll profit from this growth – no matter where it occurs."

The company is preparing to meet this increased demand by expanding its capacity in Santiago, Mexico with a US\$45 million investment. □

Hiring OWNER OPERATORS

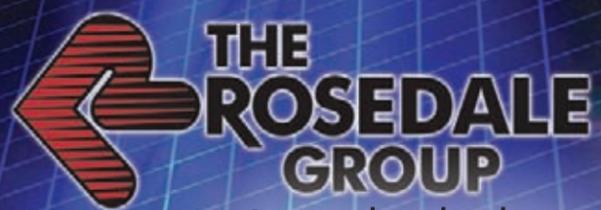
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Western Star adds second shift

PORTLAND, Ore. – Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA) is looking to ramp up production at its truck manufacturing plant in Portland, Ore. with the addition of a second shift and the creation of about 350 new jobs at the facility by the end of 2012.

The additional workers represent a nearly 50% increase in personnel at the plant and will include about 330 shop employees, and an additional 20 engineering and support positions to facilitate increased production.

The Swan Island facility exclusively produces heavy-duty Western Star brand Class 8 trucks for use in mining, logging, oil field and construction, as well as on-highway trucks and other specialized vehicles.

Officials say the increase in production capacity and hiring comes in response to a strong and steady rise in Western Star orders throughout 2011 and company expectations for continued growth in 2012. The Portland plant currently employs approximately 700 shop workers and 50 engineers, managers and support staff.

“Western Star is known as a serious work truck, and for good reason,” said Martin Daum, president and CEO of DTNA. “They’re built here in Portland with a heritage of the toughest vocational uses: logging, mining, specialized heavy hauling and military use. Despite global economic challenges, Western Star has been able to leverage its well-earned reputation and access to Daimler resources and technology to capture market share, leading to our announcement today.”

The current hiring activity is the first time since 2006 that DTNA has had open-market hiring for shop positions at this plant. Hiring of new employees will begin in November and the new production shift is slated to be at full capacity by February. A second wave of hiring is planned for next summer to support the projected increase in demand. □



BRISK BUSINESS: Western Star’s Portland truck plant is adding a second shift and taking on 350 new employees.

Wakefield opens Canada’s first DEF solutionizing facility for H2Blu

TORONTO, Ont. – Wakefield Canada has opened its H2Blu diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) solutionizing facility in Toronto. The recent ribbon cutting ceremony took place well ahead of the original business timetable, officials said.

The company says the strength of sales of H2Blu in the first six months justified increased Canadian production and the construction of the facility.

The new facility will take prilled urea, the raw ingredient in DEF, and process it into ready-to-use H2Blu DEF. The solutionizing facility is housed within Wakefield’s existing lubricant blending plant in Toronto’s Long Branch area.

Officials say the facility is the first

of its kind in the country. Wakefield sources prill through CDI (Cervantes-Delgado Inc), a partner of PotashCorp.

Wakefield says by manufacturing and packaging H2Blu in its own facility, the company is able to control the product’s purity.

“Purity is critical to the operation of today’s SCR (Selective Catalytic Reduction) clean diesel vehicles,” the company said in a release. “Impurities can cause engines to operate improperly, slow down (derate) or even stop.”

In addition to the manufacturing equipment, Wakefield has also increased its distribution fleet adding the specialized trucks required for distribution of sensitive DEF. □

New England ferry company wins Cat CT660

PEAKS ISLAND, Me. – A family-run ferry company in Maine has been awarded a Cat CT660 vocational truck as part of Caterpillar’s ‘Win a Cat Truck’ contest.

LPA Marine, a fourth generation family business, submitted the video that received the most votes from visitors to the contest Web site. The contest garnered more than 300 entries that received over 47,500 votes, Caterpillar announced.

“We have always struggled to find a truck that can match Caterpillar’s balance of good design, reliability and durability. We think Caterpillar can do for our trucks what it has consistently done for our marine and excavating equipment,” said LPA Marine’s Coley Mulkern in his entry.

He noted the company has used Cat equipment and engines to serve communities and islands along coastal Maine.

“We received many great submissions, but when you watch LPA Marine’s video, it’s easy to understand why this entry garnered more than 3,000 votes from the general

public,” said George Taylor, director of Caterpillar’s On-Highway Truck Group. “Mulkern and the LPA team did an outstanding job explaining their business, their loyalty to Caterpillar and their need for a new CT660.”

LPA Marine was founded in 1967 as a barging company. Today, it operates two large Cat-powered landing crafts that deliver cargo between the New England coast and island properties.

“We buy Cat earthmoving equipment and depend exclusively on Cat marine engines to power our ferries,” Mulkern said.

The Win a Cat Truck contest was opened Aug. 1 to US and Canadian companies. Entrants were asked to describe the vocational application in which they’d work the Cat CT660 and how the truck would aid their operations.

Online voting occurred between Oct. 1 and 15. Cat says LPA Marine will begin spec’ing its new CT660 in the coming weeks and will take delivery in the first quarter of 2012.

The winning video can be viewed at DriveCat.com. □

Dana wins award for lightweight driveshaft

GRAPEVINE, Texas – Dana has received a Frost & Sullivan technical innovation award for its Spicer Diamond Series driveshaft, which uses a unique welding process to join an aluminum tube to steel u-joints, reducing weight by up to 100 lbs, the company announced.

In an interview with *Truck West* at the American Trucking Associations Management Conference and Exhibition, Santiago Salazar, senior director, global product planning, said the new aluminum driveshaft will also be more resistant to corrosion than its steel counterparts.

The lightweight driveshaft, initially announced at this year’s Mid-America Trucking Show, is set to roll out commercially in the first quarter of 2012, Salazar indicated.

Dana developed a new welding process called ‘magnetic pulse welding,’ which allows it to attach dissimilar metals, something that has traditionally proved difficult.

In addition to using lighter weight aluminum for the tube, Dana was also able to eliminate the centre bearing for further weight savings. Salazar said the Spicer Diamond Series Driveshaft is the industry’s first one-piece aluminum driveshaft.

The new lightweight driveshaft is one of several developments Dana has been trumpeting to help fleets lower their operating costs.

“Understanding how best to minimize our customers’ cost per tonne mile driven is critical to maximizing value,” Salazar said.

Other technologies Dana has developed specifically to minimize cost per tonne mile include: Spicer Life Series (SPL) Service-Free U-Joints, which are permanently lubricated for reduced maintenance costs; and the Spicer Pro-40 Tandem Drive Axle, a 40,000-lb tandem axle that reduces weight by 100 lbs and reduces parasitic losses. The Pro-40 will be of limited use in Canada where 46,000-lb-rated tandem axles are the norm, but Salazar said the new driveshaft will be popular north of the border. □

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SPECIAL REPORT



The I-Shift shines in Sweden

Think your application is too severe for Volvo's automated mechanical transmission? Think again.

By James Menzies

GOTHENBURG, Sweden – It may pain us to admit it, but the Europeans are far ahead of us when it comes to adopting certain truck technologies that have the potential to transform the industry for the better. Take, for example, automated mechanical transmissions (AMTs). Volvo Group, manufacturer of the highly touted I-Shift AMT is finally enjoying some well-deserved market acceptance in North America, where close to 45% of trucks sold with Volvo power are now being spec'd with the transmission. (About 80% of the trucks Volvo sells here are now powered by Volvo engines).

Still, it's a far cry from Volvo's homeland Sweden and other parts of Europe where practically every new truck is spec'd with an automated gearbox. Certain sectors of the North American trucking industry, as well, are slower to embrace automated transmissions.

There's a widely held perception that automated transmissions are intended exclusively for on-highway trucking, and that there's no place in the bush, the pit, or any other off-road destination for anything other than a stick shift.

That's not so, according to Volvo, which recently invited a group of North American trade journalists to Sweden to see that over there, the I-Shift is being put through its paces in the toughest duty cycles one can imagine. And so began a little Swedish adventure...

A historical perspective

The roots of Volvo's I-Shift can be traced as far back as the 1980s, when a group of engineering graduates sat down to contemplate ways of automating the shifting of a manual transmission, Sven-Erik Tibb informed us during a briefing at Volvo headquarters in Gothenburg.

The I-Shift project was formally launched in 1997 with the first generation unveiled in 2001, making this the 10-year anniversary for the product. The benefits of an AMT are obvious: it requires less skill to operate than a manual transmission; allows drivers to keep two hands on the wheel and focus on their surroundings; and sophisticated programming enables it to shift at the optimum rpm every time, often improving fuel mileage.

The first generation I-Shift was constructed completely from scratch and features a proprietary Volvo 'powertrain can' that transmits data between the engine and gearbox. Because both the engine and transmission software was written by Volvo, "We have all the information we need to make the right decisions," said Anders Eriksson, software design engineer. The two most powerful micro-controllers on the entire truck were located in the transmission, which allowed Volvo to essentially give the transmission supreme control over the engine in contrast to the historical order of things.

"The transmission is master of the system," Eriksson said. "It controls the engine."

The driver interface is remarkably simple. Two types of shifters are available; a basic and premium version. Drivers simply put the truck into the desired gear and go, much like in a passenger car. However, key to gaining the trust of experienced truckers, Volvo has incorporated a 'Manual' mode that allows the driver to override the I-Shift – as long as it won't incur any harm as a result.

A versatile transmission

While the I-Shift is making inroads in the linehaul sector of the North American trucking industry, you won't find many in vocational trucks where manual gearboxes are still the norm and torque converter-style automatics compete with AMTs for the remaining space.

Surprisingly though, the I-Shift can be ordered with a number of features designed specifically for vocational operators. A 'Rock-Free' function, for instance, provides the ability to rock a stuck vehicle back and forth, simply by pumping the accelerator rather than manually switching between forward and reverse gears. It works well in situations where a truck is stuck in the mud and its wheels are spinning, Eriksson explained. When the Rock-Free feature isn't enough to free the vehicle of mud or clay, a 'Power Starting' feature allows a driver to rev the engine as high as 1,300 rpm in the lowest gear and then by pressing the minus (-) button, dump the clutch and use the momentum to pull free.

"It's not that hard on the truck, but it's wonderful to have as an emergen-

cy feature when stuck in deep clay," chimed in Ed Saxman, Volvo Trucks' powertrain product manager.

Also available is 'Greatest Possible Downshift,' ideal when approaching a long grade. Drivers can increase engine speed in advance of reaching the hill, press the minus button, put the shifter into Manual mode and then the transmission will complete one large downshift (instead of multiple downshifts), allowing the driver to run the entire hill in one gear without any further shifting.

Finally, there's the 'Prevent Upshift' function, which is also useful on hills and in poor traction situations. Drivers can push the minus button to prevent upshifting and can delay a downshift by pushing the plus (+) button while the engine rpm is low.

In addition to these vocational-minded options, one of the smartest capabilities of the transmission may be EcoRoll, which decouples the engine from the transmission on gradual downhill grades, allowing the truck to coast along without consuming fuel. About 50% of European customers are now spec'ing EcoRoll, which is equally useful among Canada's rolling hills. The engine returns to normal operation as soon as the brake or throttle is applied.

Another neat feature is 'Idle Driving Mode,' which allows drivers to creep along using the idle governor, adjusting speed by using the plus or minus buttons on the shifter and alternating between the lower six gears without applying the gas.

Collectively, these options amount to what is a very sophisticated piece of equipment. The full capabilities of the I-Shift require a high level of integration between engine and transmission, which is why the I-Shift is available only on trucks spec'd with Volvo engines. Still, despite all the technological wizardry that went into the design of the transmission, it is having trouble finding a home in the more rigorous of applications. Not in Sweden, however.

Handling huge torque

During my visit to Sweden, an assortment of Volvo cabover trucks in a variety of configurations were made available for test drives, first on the track at the Volvo Trucks Demonstration Centre and later along a 120-kilometre route between Gothenburg and, well, the middle of nowhere.

From there, we were to meet up with some real-life Swedish loggers, who have been spec'ing Volvo D13 engines with the I-Shift for operation in a pretty harsh off-road environment. When choosing from the available trucks, I naturally gravitated towards the longest, heaviest, highest-horsepower of them all: a FH16 750 – and yes, the 750 represents horsepower.

Believe it or not, in Europe there's an insatiable appetite – and apparently a practical need – for a 750-hp engine, according to Carl Axel Hedstrom, who's in charge of customer activities in Gothenburg.

He told me the 750, which is currently in pre-production with the commercial rollout slated for February, is ideal for applications with gross combination weights of 40 tonnes (88,000 lbs) or more, especially in the hillier regions of Scandinavia.

However, you'd be naïve to think Volvo's rivalry with Scania wasn't a consideration when launching the

750. The bitter Swedish rivals have taken turns upstaging one another in an ongoing battle of horsepower. Volvo's FH16 750 is the decided winner – for now – offering greater horsepower than has ever been offered in a European commercial truck.

But is it possible to get good fuel mileage when managing 750 horses and a staggering 2,600 lb.-ft. of torque? Hedstrom says so: "Because of the hill climbing capacity, it doesn't gear down, it just keeps in the higher gear, which is fuel-efficient," he told me.

Before you get too excited, it's unlikely the 750 will ever make its way to North American shores. For starters, it's not EPA2010-compliant. While the FH16 750 uses selective catalytic reduction (SCR), it doesn't add exhaust gas recirculation to the mix, falling short of North American emissions requirements.

Aside from that, introducing a 750-horse monster would buck the North America-wide trend towards smaller displacement, 13-litre engines; Volvo's bread and butter.

Still, I wasn't about to pass on the opportunity to drive the beast.

The timber truck I drove grossed 60 tonnes (132,000 lbs). The truck itself was loaded with three stacks of three-metre logs; one on the truck and two on the drawbar trailer that rounded out the combination.

Interestingly, while popular opinion is that AMTs are limited to lower gross combination weights and mainstream applications, the 750 cannot be ordered with anything but the I-Shift. Frankly, Volvo doesn't trust the average driver to be able to handle such high power and torque on their own.

"If you are not careful, when you go off the clutch, you put all the torque from the engine straight down into the wheels and you will spin the wheels and use the fuel in an inefficient way," Hedstrom explained. "It is easier for us to handle the strong engine torque through the I-Shift than through a manual transmission."

And that's to say nothing of the number of clutches an average driver would burn through if using a manual transmission. The fact the I-Shift is a must-have on a 750-hp/2,600 lb.-ft. engine says a lot about the capabilities of the transmission.

On my drive, which included a mix of city and rural driving along some hilly terrain, the I-Shift never missed a step when pulling 60 tonnes. I even tested its Hill Start capability at that weight, on a steepish grade at the demonstration centre. That invaluable feature lets you come to a complete stop, and then take up to a second and a half to move your foot from the brake to the accelerator without rolling back (or forward) as much as an inch, even when opposing 60 tonnes and serious forces of gravity.

Built for the bush

After a leisurely, scenic drive from Gothenburg to Kalleryd in southern Sweden, we stopped for coffee and met up with some loggers from six-truck timber fleet Sundbergs Akeri AB. Sundbergs is owned by Johans Sundberg and the fleet is comprised of Volvo FH trucks with D13 engines ranging from 520-540 hp, all with the I-Shift. Sundbergs' drivers checked out my 750 with envy and needed their boss to put in an order for one, but he smiled and countered the D13s

do just fine in southern Sweden.

Sundberg has earned a reputation for carefully specifying the most efficient timber trucks possible. His efforts seem to be paying off; the company recently opened a beautiful new shop that would be the envy of any fleet owner. The pristine shop was an extraordinary sight, surrounded by tall evergreens in the Swedish countryside.

Sundbergs runs 23-metre (75-ft.) combinations grossing 60 tonnes, not unlike my own ride from earlier that morning. I joined driver Magnus Andersson on a run deep into the Swedish bush to pick up a load of logs for delivery to a nearby paper mill.

Asked if he liked the I-Shift, Andersson admitted it took some getting used to, but said he wouldn't have it any other way.

He still works the shifter constantly, overriding the transmission's decisions at times, depending on the terrain. The I-Shift's predictive capabilities are remarkable, but the one thing it does lack is a set of eyes.

When I tell him the I-Shift isn't very common in North American forestry applications, he shoots me a quizzical glance and asks "Why?"

"It's very convenient, I don't have to think about gearing on roads like this," Andersson explained as we wound along a paved logging road, which would later give way to a dirt road and then little more than a trail through the woods leading to the loading point, which was marked by a red triangle on the in-cab GPS.

During our drive, Andersson provided a glimpse into the life of a



THAT'S EFFICIENT: A Sundbergs driver unloads at a sawmill. It took less than 10 minutes for him to offload about 42 tonnes of logs. *Photo by James Menzies*

Swedish logger. The truck he drives is operated around the clock; in Andersson's care from 4 a.m. till 4 p.m., though European laws only permit nine hours of driving per day.

The Volvos are meticulously maintained and clean inside and out, which is impressive given their surroundings. Another Sundbergs driver who hosted us even asked visiting editors to remove their shoes before climbing into his truck.

Trucks with trailers are limited to 80 km/h in most of Europe, though many of Sundbergs hauls are over logging roads where they'd rarely reach highway speeds. Sundberg favours fuel-efficient D13s, but Hedstrom told me 16-litre engines are still the norm in most logging operations.

All driving activity is tracked by

computer; drivers must insert their operator's licence into a slot in the cab when they begin their shift and the information can be downloaded by enforcement officers at any time. It's not unusual for Swedish trucks to be equipped by an Alcolock device, which requires drivers to blow a sample before starting the engine to ensure they're sober.

About a third of Volvo trucks sold in Sweden are equipped with the option, which costs about \$1,500, according to Carl Johan Almqvist, traffic and product safety director with Volvo. Increasingly, he noted, shippers are requiring their trucking providers to spec' the device.

Depending on the customer, Sundbergs is paid either by the volume or weight of the load. Either way, over-

loading beyond 60 tonnes is strictly forbidden.

"When he delivers to the pulp mills, they pay for the first 60 tonnes," explained Volvo's Hedstrom. "If you transfer anything else, it's on your account. You don't get paid for it. (Company owner) Johans has been very careful about how to reduce the total weight of the truck itself. He has over 42 tonnes of payload, which is a very good figure for timber trucks. He doesn't allow the drivers to be above 60 tonnes (gross), as he has optimized the design of the truck and trailer to carry 60 tonnes and not more."

For all the subtle differences, a logging operation in Sweden is not entirely unlike those here in Canada.

The terrain is similar and the Sundbergs drivers are highly skilled; able to unload 42 tonnes of logs in less than 10 minutes, turn a truck around in a space so tight it defies logic, and demonstrating constant situational awareness and a vigilant attitude towards safety. They'd fit right in over here, but they may not want to trade you trucks.

The I-Shift has become a welcomed part of their daily lives and I don't think they'd be willing to return to the old ways of jamming gears all day long. Will the same eventually be true on this side of the pond? After all, the I-Shift sold here is the same as the one used in Europe, aside from some small programming modifications.

Yet, here in Canada, we cling so desperately to our traditional way of doing things. But you can only keep progress at bay for so long. □

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Total Truck Driving Experience _____/yrs Has your license ever been suspended? Yes No
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Name _____ Company City _____ Prov/State _____
Tel _____ Start/End Date _____
Job Description _____ Reason for Leaving _____

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Mark Dalton: Owner/Operator

The Good Shepherd

By Edo van Belkom

The story so far...

Mark is at a truck stop near Winnipeg and sees a woman talking to drivers, asking them for a ride. She's attractive, and when Mark learns she's heading to Vancouver, he offers her a ride hoping they might get intimate along the way. She stops that train of thought cold.

Cindy seems like a nice girl with a good head on her shoulders. Mark can't figure out why someone would leave her stranded. But as they talk, Mark discovers she's a hardcore Christian woman and her constant talk of God can get annoying. Mark decides to let Cindy drive. After first saying a prayer, she drives as if she's on glass. Mark is strangely at ease and immediately falls asleep. Later, she stops at a Habitat for Humanity build, convincing Mark to donate a bit of his time, giving his life balance...

Mark spent the bulk of his day cutting, sanding and painting gingerbread molding that would be going on the outside eaves of the house. It was tedious work, but the time went by quickly for him, talking to people from walks of life he'd never encounter on the road. There were housewives, students, tradesmen and even another truck driver who had a day off and was dragged out to the job by his wife.

At one point in the day, the landscapers needed to remove a tree stump from the front yard and Mother Load was called in to get hooked up to a chain and pull it from the ground. After that, Mark was a hero and it was even easier to go back to sanding and painting wood. At day's end a coffee truck stopped by and donated what was left on the truck to everyone working on the house. Mark had a salami sandwich, a sugar donut and a hot coffee. All things considered, it was a pretty satisfying meal.

"Well, how did you like it?" Cindy asked as they made their way to Mother Load after the job site was all cleaned up for the day.

"Not as bad as I thought it would be."

Cindy smiled. "That's a sense of fulfillment for having helped someone less fortunate than yourself."

Mark knew she was right on some level, but he wasn't about to give her the satisfaction of knowing it. "No, I thought I'd be a lot more sore."

"And you're not?"

"No, I'm exhausted."

A day later they were halfway through the Rockies when a thunderstorm broke

through the valley and was pounding the highway with raindrops as big as black flies. Mark slowed Mother Load to a crawl and set the wipers to their fastest setting. Still, the rain kept coming down harder, looking at times as if someone was standing on top of the cab emptying buckets of water onto the windshield.

"Never seen it this bad," Mark said.

"It is coming down pretty hard," Cindy agreed.

"I imagine this is what Noah saw in the days before the ark set sail." He looked over at Cindy thinking the joke would ease some of the tension, but she had her eyes closed and seemed off in another world. Mark pressed on, but the driving conditions weren't getting any better. He could feel his rig hydroplaning over the water and the steering wheel often went light in his hands as the wheels became separated from the pavement by a thin layer of water.

"We might have to stop," he said at last. "It's getting dangerous and I don't want to wreck my truck...or get both of us killed."

But Cindy was silent, eyes shut and lips moving every so slightly.

"I said, it's getting dangerous..."

And just then, there was a break in the clouds. Light poured into the cab and the drumming of the rain on the roof eased up until it was just a slight tapping sound. And then, moments later, even that was gone and sunshine beamed down into the cab.

"Wow," Mark said, taking a peek at the suddenly blue sky, "that was weird. I thought for sure we were going to have to stop, or be stopped."

At last Cindy turned to face him. "It was God," she said.

"Huh?"

"He answered my prayers for safe passage through troubled times."

Mark had to admit that the weather cleared up all of a sudden, but then again the forecast had been for clearer skies. "It had to be a coincidence," he said. "God can't be concerned with the plight of every person on the planet."

"He's not," she said with conviction.

"Only with those who believe in him and serve him with their lives." Mark nodded, knowing better than to disagree. However it happened, the roads were dry now and the driving was easy.

Mark dropped Cindy off at a truck yard on the outskirts of Vancouver. He stuck around long enough to make sure she did indeed have a rig and a load waiting for her and used the time to figure out her pay for the trip west. Then he

counted out a bunch of twenties equal to what she was owed.

"Thank you," she said as she took her pay.

"No need to thank me," Mark said. "You earned it."

"I'll keep you in my prayers."

Mark sighed and shook his head a little. It was nice to be in someone's prayers, but he doubted it would make any difference in his life. "Maybe I'll see you on the road sometime," he said pragmatically.

"God willing," she said, closing the door to the cab and waving goodbye. "Yeah, sure" he muttered. "God willing."

It wasn't until a day later and he was well on his way into Northern British Columbia to pick up his next load that he noticed a drop off in power. Mother Load had been chugging up a steep incline and her speed kept slowing until she was moving along at a crawl...and the engine finally gave out. He pulled to the side of the road with what little momentum he had and came to a stop. He tried restarting the engine. It would turn over, but wouldn't catch. Mark had a feeling the problem wasn't serious – a bad switch, or a clogged fuel line – but he knew he wouldn't be going anywhere without the help of a mechanic. He pulled out his cell phone to call Bud and ask him to send someone, but when he flipped open his phone the graphic on the screen told him it was "Searching for a network connection."

"Dammit!" he said.

He looked up and down the highway and there was no one in sight. And when he thought about it, he realized that while he'd been driving, he hadn't seen anyone going north or south for a very long time. On top of that, he was thirsty and hungry, and there was nothing in the truck to eat or drink. All of a sudden, the situation looked dire. If he didn't pick up his load soon – cedar shakes for a distributor in Ontario – that sweetheart load would go to someone else and he'd have to bobtail back across the country. What to do? He could start walking, but there were thick woods on either side of the road and who knew what kind of animals lurked within? Or he could set up some reflectors, get some rest and hope a fellow trucker stopped to see if he needed any help. But neither option held a lot of promise.

"How the hell am I going to get myself out of this mess?" he said aloud.

He thought about it a moment, then looked skyward.

"Why not?" he said. Then, "God, I know I'm not a religious man, but I've always tried to do the right thing and that's got to count for something...I know Cindy's praying for me, so I was won-

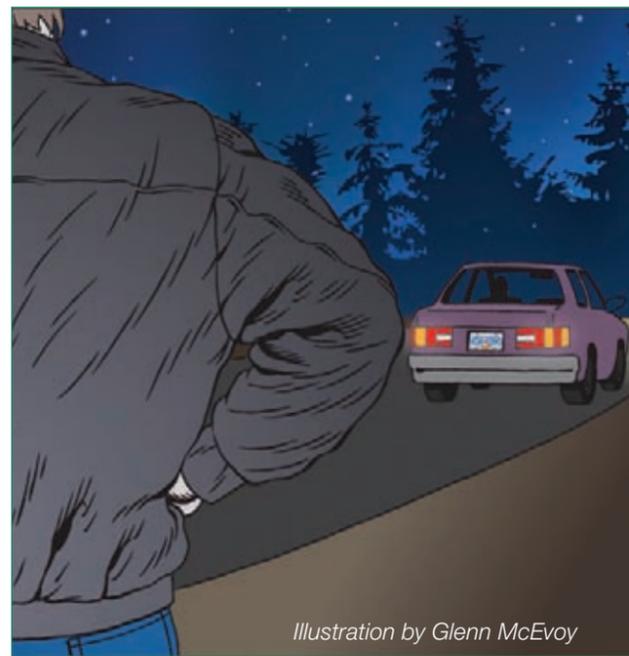


Illustration by Glenn McEvoy

dering if you could take my good deeds and add them to Cindy's prayers and maybe help me get out of this."

Mark took a deep breath, and waited. Nothing but silence all around.

"Well, it was worth a try."

But then there was a sound of an approaching car coming from the south. At first he saw the glow of headlights off the trees, then the headlights themselves. Mark stepped out onto the road and waved his arms. The car stopped, pulled over. Inside was a pretty blonde-haired woman wearing a white top and pants.

"Problem?"

"Broke down," Mark said. "And my cell phone doesn't work out here."

She smiled. "You have to have the right provider. Here, use mine." She handed him her cell phone.

Mark took it and called Bud. A mechanic would be on the way.

"Do you need anything?"

"Water, maybe...if you have some."

"You're in luck. I've just been shopping." She handed him a two-litre bottle of water, a couple of granola bars and some apples. "Best I can do," she said.

"No, that's fantastic," Mark said. "Just what I needed."

"Do you need a cigarette?"

"Thanks, but I don't smoke."

"Okay, then. I'll be on my way."

And just as quickly as she'd arrived, she was gone. Mark stood dumbfounded staring down the road thinking it had been like a miracle. He'd needed help and there she was, giving him all the help he'd needed. He paused a moment as the realization hit him like some flying alligator. Then he looked up into the night sky and thought about God. □

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

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OPINION

Fighting for your beliefs

Michael Schmidt. Remember that name. He's taken up a fight that many believe he can't win, a fight that ultimately may cost him his life.

Mr. Schmidt has, according to the Ontario Court of Justice, broken the law. He's been convicted of 15 provincial offences all related to what many consider to be Mother Nature's most wholesome food: milk.

You see, Mr. Schmidt is a dairy farmer who has been giving his fellow co-op members (who technically own part of his herd) unpasteurized milk and that is what has gotten him into a heap of trouble. The law states that anyone selling milk is required to have it pasteurized for safety reasons.

Mr. Schmidt doesn't think he's broken any law. He's asked Dalton McGuinty to listen to his side of the story but the Premier refuses. After numerous futile attempts to set up a meeting, the Durham farmer decided his only recourse was to begin a hunger strike. That strike began in early October and was still on when I wrote this column on Nov. 1.

He's bound and determined to get the powers that be to listen...even if it means losing his life in the process.

If our beloved Premier doesn't allow him the time to be seen, and this gentleman does end up making the ultimate sacrifice because of his convictions, it would be a shameful example of what's wrong with our country.

Accessibility to an elected government official shouldn't be something

Publisher's Comment

ROB WILKINS



that requires countless hours of negotiating and stick handling.

Mr. Schmidt believes that people should have the right to make their own choices in the foods they eat. That sounds like it should be a given in a country like Canada, land of the free. Unfortunately, it doesn't appear to be the case.

This fundamental fight over pro-choice has been rearing its head a tad too often lately. We've seen the advent of speed limiters and more than likely EOBR legislation is just around the corner. South of the border, CSA is now the law.

The argument can be made that these were all mandated for safety reasons. Maybe so, but none of you had a choice. Either you comply or get out of the business.

Mr. Schmidt is fighting for pro-choice and deserves to be heard. I hope our Premier takes the time out of his busy schedule to save this man's life. All it will take is a few minutes; about the same time it takes him to get his hair cut. □

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

PEOPLE

Cavalier Transportation Group has appointed **Rick Brooks** to vice-president of business development. Operating out of Buffalo, N.Y., officials said Brooks will be working closely with the company's US marketing partners, managing select corporate accounts and developing new opportunities for Cavalier, including the continued growth of its domestic US logistics business.

Brooks recently held the position of senior vice-president of sales for a leading expedited carrier. Over his career, he has held senior management roles with USFreightways, CP Express and Intercity Truck Lines. Brooks will be reporting directly to Brian Ledson, executive vice-president of sales and marketing for the Cavalier Transportation Group.

Douglas Harrison has been named president of Day and Ross General Freight. Harrison was previously president of Calyx Transportation Group. Prior to that he was president of Acklands-Grainger, an industrial supply company, and vice-president and managing director at Ryder Integrated Logistics, where he held responsibility for Ryder's Canadian and European logistics organizations.

He has served on a number of corporate boards and is currently a member of the board of directors of Horizon Utilities, the Conference Board of Canada and Mohawk College of Applied Arts and Technology.

Jim Pines, executive vice-president of sales and operations at Great Dane Trailers, will step down from his role

at the end of 2011 in order to devote his full attention to personal and family business concerns, the company announced.

Pines' responsibilities will be taken on by other members of the Great Dane executive team. **Dean Engelage**, executive vice-president of strategic planning, will assume responsibility for the sales organization, and **Rick Mullinix**, executive vice-president of engineering, will oversee the warranty and quality departments. In addition, Sam Gupta has been promoted to executive vice-president of manufacturing.

Michelin North America has a new chairman and president in the form of 29-year Michelin veteran **Pete Selleck**. He succeeds Richard "Dick" Wilkerson, who is retiring to become chairman emeritus. Selleck assumes responsibility for coordinating all Michelin activities in Canada, Mexico and the US. He returns to Greenville, S.C., from the Michelin Group's global headquarters in Clermont-Ferrand, France, where he has served as president of Michelin's global Truck Tires division since January 2006.

Mark Pillow has been named director of business solutions for Goodyear's commercial tire systems division. In his new role, Pillow will oversee Goodyear's business solutions portfolio, including the company's fleetHQ program, on-highway operations, and retreaded tire business. Pillow most recently served as director of commercial systems and off-highway tires for Goodyear Canada. □

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TSQ

MILTON, Ont. – British Columbia’s recent changes to its provincial nominee program (which provides accelerated permanent resident status to qualified workers from other parts of the world) to include long-haul truck drivers as a permanent part of the program has brought a touchy subject to light for the industry: should Canadian carriers be recruiting drivers from overseas?

While some argue that such programs are a necessity to fill empty seats with qualified drivers, others are calling the practice a raw deal and one that takes jobs away from Canada’s workforce. We dropped by the Fifth Wheel Truck Stop in Milton, Ont. to ask drivers if Canadian trucking companies should be searching for drivers in other parts of the world.

Mike Lynch of LCL Bulk Transport in Green Bay, Wis., says he’s in not favour of such far-reaching



Truck Stop Question

Should trucking companies be recruiting from overseas?

ADAM LEDLOW



Mike Lynch

recruitment practices – especially when both Canada and the US have so many unemployed looking for work.

“The US has a 9% unemployment rate and I think that they could retrain these people that

are unemployed and properly train them to be safe drivers,” he told *Truck West*.

“They could put people in their own country back in employment and work trucking into the peoples’ lifestyles.”

Neil Vlatz, an owner/operator with Black Pearl Express in Stratfordville, Ont., echoes Lynch’s sentiments, saying we should be looking for skilled workers in our own backyard.

“I think that there is enough job loss here and that there would be enough people here,” he said. “If you want to qualify anyone then get people from over here. I don’t



Neil Vlatz

think there’s any need to bring anyone else from anywhere else.”

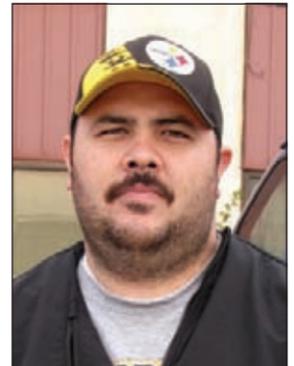


Tom Beggs

Tom Beggs, a driver with Ulch Transport in St. Mary’s, Ont., disagrees, saying the mass exodus of older drivers from the industry is going to require seeking out talent wherever carriers can find it.

“I don’t think that there are enough people around the rest of Canada that can fill the jobs for Canadian truck driving,” he says.

“There are so many people, especially in the truck driving business, that are coming up for retirement, and there are not enough people to fill those jobs. If they have to bring them out of another country to fill them, fine by me.”



Martin Domingues

Martin Domingues, a driver with Mesilla Valley Transportation out of El Paso, Texas, says for those who are hard workers, they shouldn’t feel threatened by workers from overseas getting trucking jobs.

“I think that for the people that are lazy here and don’t want to work, it’s going to be harder for them to get a job, and that is why they are taking people from other places to get the jobs because obviously they don’t want to work and just (want to) collect government benefits. If you are a hard worker then you have nothing to worry about,” he says.

“Trucking isn’t a job for everyone; it’s a hard life, but it’s good pay.” □

– Do you have a topic idea for the Truck Stop Question? Contact Adam Ledlow on Twitter at [Twitter.com/adamledlow](https://twitter.com/adamledlow) or by e-mail at adam@transportationmedia.ca and we may feature your question in an upcoming issue of *Truck West*.

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