

TRUCK NEWS WEST

Delivering daily news at trucknews.com

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Reach us at our Western Canada news bureau
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Derek@Newcom.ca
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Jay Palachuk got second place in the Classic Working Truck category for his 1996 Kenworth at Shell Rotella SuperRigs 2019.

Free training for aspiring women drivers in B.C.

By Derek Clouthier

LANGLEY, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Attention hopeful female truck drivers in B.C., there is an opportunity that may be hard for you to pass up.

Valley Driving School is facilitating driver training for the YWCA's Changing Gears program, which aims to get more women behind the wheel of a truck, and it's free to all qualified applicants.

The program is a 23-week Class 1 driver training course for women who are on employment insurance or have received benefits within the past five years.

Joel Donnelly, operations at Valley Driving School, said training covers a variety of areas, including a combination of in-class, in-yard, and on-road instruction.

Students will learn about air brakes, the transportation of dan-

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Canadians shine at SuperRigs

Manitoba driver takes home second place in truck beauty contest

By Derek Clouthier

ALBERT LEA, MINNESOTA

The 37th annual Shell Rotella SuperRigs show brought drivers from across North America to small-town Minnesota with hopes of taking home an award in the truck beauty contest, and a Canadian driver did just that.

Some of the nicest rigs on the road came to Albert Lea, including two from Manitoba and one from Ontario. Jay Palachuk, an owner-operator who drives for Krenkevich out of Winnipeg, took home second place in the Classic Working Truck category for his 1996 Kenworth.

"This is crazy, it blows me away," Palachuk said after receiving the award, which also netted him \$1,000 in prize money. "If you look around at everything here, I wouldn't have expected this at all. There's so much nice stuff here."

Palachuk said when they announced the fifth-place winner in his category and it wasn't him, he thought there was no way he would hear his name called.

"Then I got second and my buddy (Tod Job) got first, so it was pretty cool," he said.

Barry Kasdorf, a driver with Jade Transport in Winnipeg, also took part in the contest and said SuperRigs is a great event to meet up with old friends.

"Once you've done it for a while it almost becomes like a family gathering," said Kasdorf. "And when you don't show up, guys are asking, 'Where is he?'"

Winners were announced July 27, the final day of the event. The most prestigious award for Best of Show went to Theresa DeSantis for her "Witches Truck." DeSantis received \$10,000 for the win, and she also took home the awards for Best Theme and Best Engine.

Other winners included Dustin Shipman for Best Interior, Gary Jones Jr. for Best Lights, Cody Jaeschke for Best Tractor, and the People's Choice Award went to

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Renewal realities

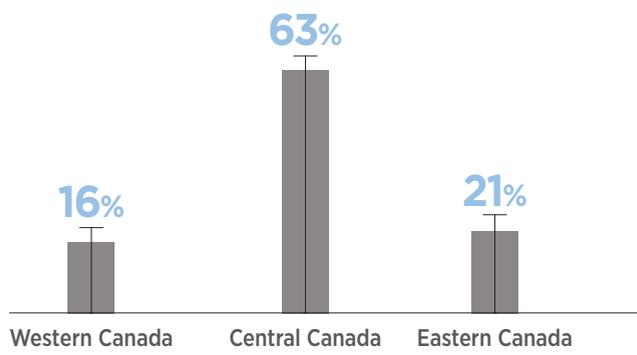
Canadian private carriers continue plans to upgrade aging fleets

Private carriers are known for running some of the best equipment in the industry. And that doesn't seem to be changing despite growing concerns about the long term health of the North American economy. Our annual Equipment Buying Trends Survey examines the purchasing intentions of private motor carriers across the country. This year's survey found private carriers remain committed to continuing to update their fleets with new purchases this year.

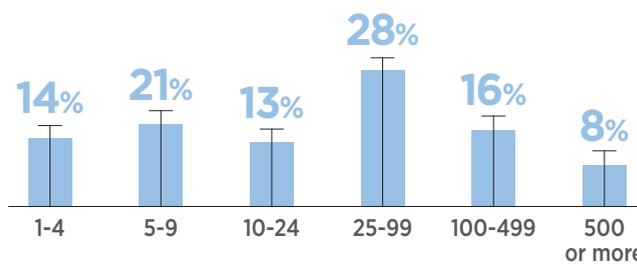
Two thirds of private carrier respondents said they plan new Class 8 truck purchases in 2019. Fuelling their interest is the reality that some private fleet vehicles are in need of replacement. Our survey shows that 62% of private carriers are hanging on to their vehicles for over 7 years. And, as we mentioned last month, it doesn't hurt that the new trucks coming off the assembly line are so much better in terms of fuel performance



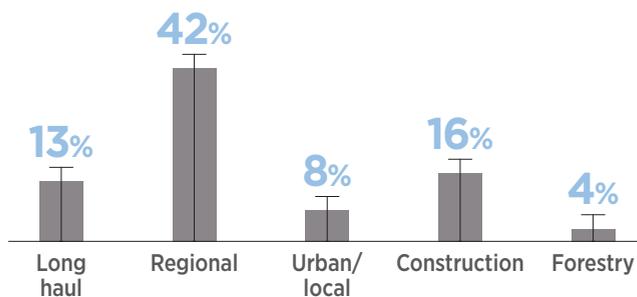
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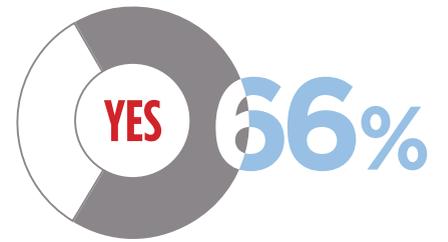
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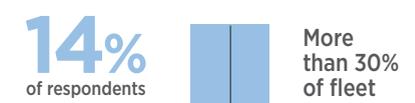
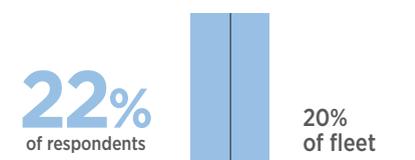
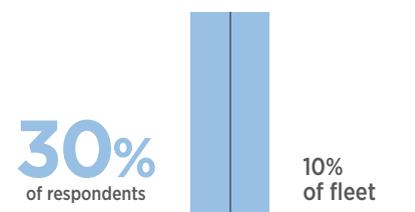
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BORN READY.

Derek's deliberation

Could prejudice be another factor in driver shortage?

Underlying prejudices tend to be a subject no one particularly enjoys talking about, but it's something that needs to be discussed, including within the trucking industry.

That's not to say trucking is full of bigots. In fact, the vast majority of those I speak to in the industry welcome those from all cultures with open arms.

But as is the case in many sectors in our society, discrimination does exist. On rare occasions, I have been contacted by a reader who exhibits prejudice against the growing number of immigrant drivers.

But could this be a reason why we are seeing a changing of the guard with truck drivers, resulting in a diminishing number of Caucasian male drivers entering the industry?

Traditionally, truck drivers in Canada (and the U.S.) have been white males. Our own research at Newcom Media proves this, showing how as recent as 1996, there were only 4,655 visible minority truck drivers in all of Canada. By 2016, that number had risen to 44,490.

The majority of immigrant drivers come from South Asia. Between 1996 and 2016 the number of South Asian drivers increased from 2,355 to 32,260 – nearly 30,000 in two decades.

According to a National Household Survey, there were 283,185 truck drivers employed in Canada in 2011. So, even if using Newcom's 2016 stats, immigrants make up 15.7% of truck drivers in the country. Compared to 1.6% just 20 years earlier, this is a significant jump.



But has immigration had an impact on why more young white males are not choosing a career as a truck driver?

On one hand, you could argue it has had no impact at all. The number of truck drivers needed to haul freight has only gone up since 1996, as had the population and demand for goods. So, 20 years ago, there were plenty of white, Canadian males to fill those driver seats.

I use the term Canadian white males rather generally because traditionally, Caucasian males were by far the most common image in Canada, same for females. Canada has always had large numbers of immigrants coming into the county,

but not until recently have they primarily been from countries like India, the Philippines, and China. During the early 1920s, people moving to Canada were predominantly from European countries, with those from Britain given the highest priority.

Since the early '70s, however, those moving to Canada have been described as visible minorities.

According to the Canadian Immigration Newsletter, between April 1 and July 1 of 2018, Canada's population grew by 168,687, 82% of which was due to immigration. That's a lot.

With this trend poised to continue into the foreseeable future, one could argue that the traditional Canadian truck driver (Caucasians) has presumed a new reality in the trucking industry. A reality that without immigrant drivers, specifically South Asians, the industry will suffer immense shortages, and therefore the influx of drivers who are visible minorities will carry on.

Is the increase in immigrant drivers enough to steer some potential drivers away from the industry? It could be in some cases, and would reveal how prejudice can have a negative impact on an entire industry. **TN**



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SuperRigs hands out hardware

Continued from page 1

Todd Brenny of Brenny Specialized.

Trucks were judged in one of two categories – working or show truck – as well as several sub-categories, all competing for \$25,000 in cash and prizes.

Twenty-six trucks in total received awards in categories including Best of Show, Tractor, Tractor-trailer combination, and Classic.

Judges scored the rigs on exterior appearance, design, details and finish, originality, and workmanship.

Twelve drivers were also selected to be featured in the 2020 Shell Rotella SuperRigs calendar.

The show took place at Trail's Travel Center, located at the intersection of I-35 and I-90. Trail's provides a variety of services to truckers, including the availability of heavy-duty truck parts, trailer washout, tire, wheel and suspension repair, oil change packages, and several driver amenities like showers, a movie theater, and dining options.

In addition to the truck beauty contest, the three-day event also included a truck light show, fireworks, and a performance by



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Truck of all models, and colors, vied to be recognized at the Shell Rotella SuperRigs show. Judges scored on several factors, and a light show lit up the lot.

Casi Joy the evening of July 26. Joy was the fifth-place finalist on the NBC show *The Voice* in 2017.

Due to rain, a scheduled truck convoy into Albert Lea was canceled for the evening of July 25.

Shell Rotella will scout locations for its next SuperRigs event for 2020 and make an announcement later in the year.

"This is probably one of the best shows I've ever been to," said Mike Wilkinson, an owner-operator from Ontario who entered his 2020 Kenworth into the truck beauty contest. "I love going to the U.S. show circuit because I've met so many awesome people. It's the comradery of meeting new friends and hanging out with old friends."

For more on the pair of Manitoba drivers who attended SuperRigs, see page 30. **TN**

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Training a new generation

Continued from page 1



B.C. program looks to get more women behind the wheel of a commercial truck.

gerous goods, the National Safety Code, and other topics in-class, while both city and mountain driving will be covered on the road, with 68 and 24 hours of instruction respectively.

The program has been offered for some time now, beginning in November of 2015.

“To date, there have been over 50 students who have successfully taken part in this amazing opportunity,” said Donnelly, “including a new intake.”

In addition to the employment insurance stipulation, there are several criteria women need to meet to take advantage of the Changing Gears program. They must possess a valid Class 5 B.C. driver’s license with a clean abstract, have no outstanding fines or bridge tolls, speak English, be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident, and be able to commit to the 23-weeks of full-time training.

Valley Driving School also requires a valid Class 1 learner’s license and the desire to become a safe, independent driver.

Valley Driving School does not limit itself to helping women get into the industry. It also partners with organizations like WorkSafeBC and Douglas College to entice both men and women into trucking.

The YWCA’s Changing Gears program is a project-based labor market training program. It is funded through WorkBC to support projects that provide benefits to the community and to individuals with a combination of on- and off-the-job training delivered under a project-based training model to assist eligible individuals obtain the skills they need for employment.

Valley Driving School, which has been providing driver training since 1955, offers customized instruction to aspiring drivers of all ages.

“Our programs are designed to include one-on-one on-road training with a strong focus on road safety and accident prevention,” said Donnelly.

The school is also a supporter of the implementation of a mandatory entry-level training (MELT) program in B.C. for Class 1 drivers.

“MELT for commercial driver training, done with proper thought, consultation, and consider-

ation,” said Donnelly, “would only serve to better prepare individuals and provide a stronger base for safe, independent driving within the commercial transportation industry.”**TN**

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BRITISH COLUMBIA

SafetyDriven's Speaker Series headed back to Prince George

PRINCE GEORGE, B.C.

On the heels of a successful 2018, SafetyDriven – Trucking Safety Council of B.C., is headed back to Prince George for its speaker series.

The event will address a slew of topics and offer several speakers, including B.C. Trucking Association president and CEO Dave Earle talking about diversity in transportation, Cathy Cook on mental health in the industry, and Angela Splinter delivering the closing keynote on how carriers can modernize their HR approach.

Jacqueline Morrison, an industry specialist with WorkSafeBC, will also introduce the organization's new effort Industry Driven New Safety Resources, while Linda Edgecomb will open the event with her presentation, Breaking Busy: Energy and Resilience in Crazy Times.

In addition to the panel of speakers, there will be a post-conference course for those interested in completing on joint occupational health and safety, which will take place Oct. 22, a day following the Speaker Series.

Anyone looking to attend the event can register online at www.safetydriven.ca/speaker-series, by emailing safetydriven@safetydriven.ca. TN

Canadian companies among top woman-owned businesses

PLOVER, WISCONSIN

Two Canadian companies are among those recognized by the Women in Trucking (WIT) Association as being the top woman-owned businesses in transportation.

B.C.-based Lodgewood Enterprises, owned by president Arlene Gagne, and Ontario Truck Training Academy, owned by president Yvette Lagrois, made the list. They will be recognized at a special program at WIT's conference Sept. 30-Oct. 2, in Dallas, Texas.

Criteria for selection included: majority ownership by a woman, financial stability and growth, innovation, and entrepreneurial spirit.

Ellen Voie, president of WIT, said the program supports the group's mission, to encourage the employment of women in the trucking industry, promote their accomplishments, and minimize the obstacles they face. TN

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Truck insurance review underway

TORONTO, ONTARIO

A national review by Facility Association – an insurer of last resort for fleets that can't secure coverage elsewhere – is looking to keep trucking companies from misrepresenting themselves when negotiating insurance premiums.

The Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) and selected insurers began to shine a light on the potential challenge last year, following reports that a growing number of truck fleets were being covered by Facility Association. A formal meeting of the two groups was held in May.

Facility Association's commercial insurance premiums rose an

astounding 47% in the 12 months leading up to March 2019, and those linked to interurban vehicles were up 200%.

"When we see a growth in any given sector, it's a heads-up for us to look more closely," said Saskia Matheson, Facility Association's president and CEO. "We want to make sure we are charging the right and fair price."

Some of the growth is believed to be linked to carriers that are misrepresenting where they are actually based. A fleet that does most of its business in Ontario, for example, might tell Facility Association that it's based in New Brunswick.

The problem emerges because the insurance premiums are based on risk. If the high-risk fleets insured by Facility Association file more insurance claims than expected, the extra costs are absorbed by the rest of the insurance industry. Those insurance providers then need to increase the rates paid by their customers.

"Where the vehicle is used is important to determining risk," Matheson said. Other factors include how many trucks are run, and the length of time they're on the road.

"When applied for an issued properly, insurance with Facility

Association has a legitimate and important role in supporting the trucking industry," said OTA president Stephen Laskowski. "Our goal in partnering with Facility Association is not to eliminate these legitimate uses, but rather to review with insurance regulators the existing Commercial Residual Market insurance policy framework – and ensure the proper rating of carriers that reflects road safety and fleet responsibility in this market."

Other groups now involved in discussions include the Alberta Motor Transport Association (AMTA).

The AMTA told *Truck News-West* it is currently working on its official position when it comes to Facility Association.

The national review is scheduled to conclude this fall, with revised rules to be in place by the end of the year, subject to regulatory approval, Matheson says.

The OTA's own Facility Association Commercial Underwriting Working Group began to meet in June, and will continue working throughout 2019 to review specific technical issues relating to underwriting rules and procedures. It wants to make recommendations regarding underwriting rules, documentation requirements, a fraud mitigation strategy, audit strategy, and key risk indicators.

Facility Association emerged in the 1970s after governments began to mandate automotive insurance. The insurer of last resort now operates in Alberta, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, the Northwest Territories, Nova Scotia, Nunavut, Ontario, P.E.I., and the Yukon.

The rising cost of truck insurance, and the challenge of getting coverage in the first place, was recently highlighted during a rolling protest by a group of Toronto-area aggregate haulers.

They're among a growing list of fleets and owner-operators who face higher premiums as insurers re-evaluate the risks they're willing to cover. Some insurers are simply stepping away from trucking industry sectors thought to represent an unacceptable risk – like the aggregate haulers serving construction activities in and around Toronto.

Truck insurance claims have generally been rising quicker than original projections because of factors such as pricey legal settlements and technology-laden trucks that can be costly to repair. **TN**

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Canadian Tough

Wakefield looks to boost its market share by expanding its portfolio of heavy duty lubricants

Fleet and maintenance managers across Canada know there's way more to engine oil than a generic greasy film circulating along cylinder walls.

While many base oils can be similar, the difference between a lubricant that will provide uptime and one that will have your trucks spend more time than you'd like in the shop, is how the product was blended, the quality of additives used, and most importantly, which OEMs have approved it.

Wakefield Canada certainly masters the science behind oil formula-

tion, as it blends its products right here in Canada, tailored for Canadian driving conditions.

New portfolio and image

With demand growing rapidly for its products, Wakefield Canada has taken another step forward by providing its customer base a broader, diversified portfolio of engine oils, gear oils, hydraulic fluids, greases, and bar & chain oil designed to keep equipment running more efficiently, and improving uptime at competitive prices.

"Our Wakefield heavy duty portfolio is growing fast and we con-

stantly need to adapt and meet the ever-evolving customer needs," says Dave Fifield, President of Wakefield Canada. "But our motto remains the same: It's quality you can trust at a price you can afford," he adds.

Wakefield's latest products have also been redesigned and repackaged, making them more consumer friendly and reflecting their strong Canadian roots. The brand and new packaging also builds on their international recognition coming in the form of OEM certification.

OEM certification

"Wakefield doesn't merely meet the original equipment manufacturers' specs like other suppliers sometimes do. We make sure our products are approved by many of the market-leading diesel engine OEMs in North America," Fifield says, referring to independent tests that prove

Wakefield's products comply with the highest modern and clean diesel engine technology standards.

Once again, the key is the right formula, and Wakefield's legacy of blending some of the best lubricants in the world at its Toronto plant ensures consistency in quality and products providing long life and high performance under any load.

Sharing the proficiency

With great knowledge comes great responsibility, and Wakefield Canada lives up to this with the consultative role it plays with fleet managers who make lubricant choices that help reduce downtime and increase profitability.

"Being a reliable source for Canadian customers whose trucks operate all across North America has become Wakefield's corporate signature. They need us to deliver high performance lubricants and that's exactly what we do," says Mian Usman, Marketing Manager, Commercial and Industrial Lubricants at Wakefield Canada.

"Our experienced sales team members don't just sell oil; they sell value by focusing on cost per kilometer and fuel economy," Usman says, to emphasize confidence that trucks can spend thousands of kilometers on the road generating revenue instead of being in the shop.

With the American Petroleum Institute's (API) introduction of new higher performance categories CK-4 and FA-4 – both rendering longer drain intervals, higher shear resistance, aeration resistance, and minimizing engine "hot spots" as well as soot accumulation – technical savviness and field knowledge are more important than ever.

"Modern diesel engine technology has presented new challenges for lubricant formulators and marketers. Add the extreme conditions of Canadian winters and not all marketers rise to this challenge," says Tony Fallico, Quality and Technical Manager at Wakefield, while referring to the company's extensive experience with its Canadian customer base's unique requirements.

Satisfying customers

Wakefield's customer base is broadening every day. Their customers include trucking fleets, some of Canada's largest and most prominent retailers, truck dealerships, fuel resellers, agriculture customers, and a sizeable and growing segment of owner operators.

"We intend to deliver on our aspiration to be leaders in the Canadian marketplace. This is a strategic move for Wakefield and provides us with greater flexibility to satisfy our customers' needs who are looking for both a premium and superior quality lubricant from one supplier," Fifield says.

The story goes on and the new Wakefield brand is a formidable player to contend with.

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Local carriers flock to Southern Alberta for annual truck show

LETHBRIDGE, ALBERTA

The Southern Alberta Truck Expo and Job Fair held its 5th annual event in Lethbridge, Alta., recently, handing out several awards to drivers who showed off some stunning rigs at the show.

Nine awards were handed out in total, including two for John Stewart of Watt and Stewart out of Claresholm, Alta., for both the Southern Alberta Truck Exposition Association Choice Award and third place in the Peoples' Choice Award for tractor trailers.

Other Peoples' Choice Award winners included first place recipient Mike Lloyd of Fort Garry Industries for tractor trailers and second place winner Ray Wolfe of Double V Trucking out of Picture Butte, Alta.

In the bobtail category, Hyper Tech Ltd., won top honors, while Hengerer Farms and Ross Turlock Trucking took home second and third place respectively.

Dennis Dirtworx Trucking from Medicine Hat, Alta., and Wendorff

and Sons out of Lethbridge both received the Mayor's Choice Awards.

Now in its fifth year, the show has been consistent over the years, seeing a handful of local businesses aim to recruit new employees during the event as part of its job fair.

The show is organized by Kani Jacobson, who said this year's event was intended to shed some light on the shortages currently facing the trucking industry, specifically in relation to drivers.

Several trucks are on display each year, with around 20 booths set up offering information on companies ranging from software producers, dealerships, and carriers.

Accomplished hot road semi-truck racer Gord Cooper and his Smokin' Gun has become a staple and fan favorite during the show. A sponsor of the event, Cooper offered up a ride in his speedy truck to a lucky raffle winner.

Approximately 2,500 people attended this year's show. **TN**



The Southern Alberta Truck Expo held its 5th annual event in Lethbridge, Alta., July 20.



THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE

TW-195 Sept. © 2019 M. Jackson

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Defining who they are

Sutco goes from pink to plaid in ongoing effort to raise funds to fight cancer

By Derek Clouthier

SALMO, BRITISH COLUMBIA

On the heels of its success “driving toward a cure” to raise money to fight breast cancer, Sutco Transportation Specialists is at it again with a new initiative, transforming from pink to plaid.

Five years ago, the carrier unveiled its pink, 2015 Kenworth T680, which it named Pink Power, raising over \$61,000 for the Canadian Cancer Society to fight breast cancer.

“This was one of the most recognizable tractors on the highway in Southern British Columbia and was present at multiple community events,” said Melanie Sutherland, co-owner and accounting manager at Sutco, adding Pink Power was decommissioned after traveling more than one million kilometers since 2014. “The pink tractor was the beginning of something very special in our organization and it was important that we followed up with another community initiative which would create the same powerful impact.”



Sutco Transportation's Plaid for Dad truck.

That initiative turned out to be Plaid for Dad, which raises money to combat prostate cancer. As part of the effort, Sutco has launched a new truck – a 2019 Kenworth T680 – decal in plaid.

Garnering more than \$30,000 for the campaign thus far, Sutco is the top workplace in Canada with the amount it has raised for Plaid for Dad.

“Being involved in campaigns like this really helps us define who we are as an organization,” said Chris Sutherland, Sutco president and co-owner. “Our commitment to community is truly what our team members, business partners,

and community as a whole have come to expect and appreciate from Sutco.”

During the time Pink Power was on the road raising funds to fight breast cancer, Melanie said the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) was looking to have trucking companies support the Plaid for Dad movement.

“We loved the idea, but wanted our pink tractor to complete the full campaign,” she said, adding that the seed, however, was planted for the transition to Plaid for Dad once the time was right. “This truly is a strong fit for Sutco. Sutco’s co-founder, Bob

Sutherland, is a survivor of prostate cancer.”

Melanie said one in seven men are diagnosed with prostate cancer during their lifetime, and with 97% of truck drivers being male, the impact is significant.

“At the end of the day, these odds strain numerous families and it is our goal to pave the way for increased awareness,” Melanie said. “If diagnosed early, prostate cancer can be defeated quickly and efficiently.”

Sutco is projecting to raise more than \$100,000 over the next four years with its Plaid for Dad campaign.

The company has several sponsors who have committed to support Sutco’s effort, all making a yearly donation of \$2,000.

The Sutherland Group of Companies – Sutco Transportation, Summit Truck and Equipment Repair, B.C. EcoChips, Landmark Timber Services, and Hadean Aggregate Solutions – has also raised an additional \$10,416.

Doug Sutherland, co-owner, vice-president, and general manager for Sutco, said other trucking companies like Arnold Bros. Transport, Kriska Transportation, and Tandet have all paved the way for the Plaid for Dad movement.

“Consistently, the trucking industry is the highest fundraising section in the country,” said Doug. “Also, a lot of the success for Plaid for Dad in trucking comes from the CTA and T4C’s (Trucks for Change) involvement. They introduced this platform about four years ago to their members.”

Melanie said other companies looking to launch similar initiatives should first get their team members engaged in an effort important to them.

“Once you touch your people emotionally, you have so much more success in creating fundraising engagement,” she said. “Our entire team of people involved are honored and proud to be involved in something so amazing.”

Anyone looking to donate to Sutco’s campaign can do so on the company’s website starting May 2020 once its Plaid for Dad page is back up and running and the campaign is again active during the summer.

Other carriers can also start their own fundraising efforts.

“I would strongly encourage people to reach out to Prostate Cancer Canada,” advised Melanie. “They have everything you need to run a campaign at www.plaidfordad.ca.” **TN**



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Why is TIRE MAINTENANCE important?

Reliable tires are a vital part of any fleet. They are quite literally the foundation of a truck. Yet, tire maintenance is often overlooked, even though most tire failure cases can be tied to improper maintenance, overheated tires, and road hazards. Northbridge expert on the trucking industry, Bill Cowan, weighs in on the importance of driver training and tire maintenance policies, as well as best practices for preventing tire blowouts and disintegration.

NEW VERSUS RETREADED TIRES

There's a common misconception that retreaded tires are at a greater risk of failure because of their less expensive and reconstructed material. Yet, a recent analysis found that retreaded tires account for nearly half of all commercial truck and bus tires in the U.S. and Canada. It also found that approximately 15 million commercial tires are retreaded annually.

Why are retreads so prevalent in North America? One reason could be that studies by numerous entities, including the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the American Trucking Associations, and the states of Arizona and Virginia have found that retreads are no more prone to failure than new tires. The overwhelming cause of commercial truck tires failing was improper maintenance, such as low tire inflation.¹

WHY MAINTENANCE MATTERS

If best practices are not understood or emphasized, you increase the risk of tire disintegration and equipment damage, which will cost your company time and money to replace. The shreds of rubber flying from tire failure can hinder safe driving and cause damage to others, such as broken windshields and windows. If a driver can identify the signs of tire damage, they can repair or replace the tires before a catastrophic blowout occurs.

ENSURE YOUR DRIVERS KNOW WHAT TO DO

Drivers and maintenance staff should receive proper training and resources that help them become accustomed to routinely checking their tires and responding quickly to road hazards. Preventative measures can often stop an incident from occurring on the road entirely, but if something should happen, drivers need to be prepared. As an owner or manager, you need to establish the company's best practices for your employees to follow that will help reduce the risk of tire damage or disintegration.

As you put your maintenance and training strategy together, consider these key tips:

- Check tires at least once a day, and always during your pre-trip inspection.
- Once out on the road, if a driver encounters road debris or is driving

on rough terrain, they should be instructed to inspect all tires at the next stop or when it is safe to do so.

- Educate your maintenance staff on how to safely uninstall, install, and inspect all tires for defects and damage.
- Check tire tread and sidewalls for any signs of damage, punctures, excessive scuffing, or misalignment. If any defects are found, replace the tire.
- Periodically rotate, balance, and align tires to ensure proper wear.
- Choose an appropriate tire and tread design for the time of year and the current weather conditions.
- During cold weather, tire pressures should be checked frequently to ensure the recommended tire pressures are maintained.

INVEST IN EXPERTISE

Even if numerous checks are performed and precautions are taken, a company is only as good as the partners they choose to work with and the training they provide. Here are just a few tips to keep in mind when it comes to tire maintenance:

- Train drivers on how to identify the signs of tire failure and how to report defects based on company policies.
- Drivers should be trained in sound defensive driving techniques, such as active road scanning.
- Provide a defensive driving course which focuses on actively scanning the road for hazards, and how to safely avoid them.
- Seek out a reputable supplier of tires, whether you are purchasing retreads or new tires, and ensure you use an experienced tire installer/repairer to properly install, repair, and maintain all tires.

Tire safety doesn't end there. It should also be applied to the workplace. Use safety equipment like tire cages to protect staff from undetected tire defects, such as zipper defects during tire inflation.

MANAGE YOUR RISKS

Performing routine tire maintenance can help you identify the signs of tire damage early so you can repair or replace the tires before costly breakdowns occur. By providing training and ensuring any partners you use are experts in their fields, you can also help prevent tire blowouts.

But despite your best efforts, there's no surefire way to prevent incidents from happening on or off the road. That's why Northbridge has customized insurance solutions, tailored for the transportation and logistics industry, to help you get your company, and fleet, back on track.

Bill Cowan is a Senior Risk Services Trainer at Northbridge Insurance. Bill has served the trucking industry for 40 years as a driver, safety manager, driver trainer and in loss control and risk management.



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Carbon tax becoming a reality for carriers

By **Derek Clouthier**

REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN

Having to pay any new tax is seldom a welcome expense for businesses and individuals, and Saskatchewan's carbon tax is no exception.

With carriers now needing to keep track and record the amount of tax they pay for carbon emissions, the Saskatchewan Trucking Association (STA) has had its fair share of enquiries regarding this new responsibility.

As Nicole Sinclair, director of policy and communications for the STA, explains, there are a lot of misconceptions out there regarding the carbon tax.

One such misunderstanding is that the new tax does not apply to trucking companies.

"This was mostly from the language used during the explanation from the Canada Revenue Agency," said Sinclair. "Trucking companies were called 'road users' and diesel was included under 'light fuel oil.'"

The STA even had one carrier ask, "If we do not register for this because we think it's a terrible idea, what will happen?"

"Some companies were weighing the cost-benefit of simply not complying with the program," said Sinclair, adding there were a number of carriers that didn't register because they did not understand that the carbon tax applied to them.

Fact is, the carbon tax does apply to carriers and they need to comply with the law.

There are several things companies should be doing to avoid issues when filing their taxes. As Jordan Ewart, policy analyst for the STA, explains, carriers should "track the mileage they travel in each province, not just Saskatchewan."

Sinclair said to "understand why you are being charged, as

Saskatchewan was a 'backstop jurisdiction,' meaning where you travel and where you are based impacts the administrative responsibility."

The STA has had several carriers contact the office recently asking questions like, "I thought companies in Saskatchewan weren't on board with the carbon tax, so why do we have to do this?" And, "How do I calculate the carbon tax? Do I register for the carbon tax if I fuel in the U.S. and drive in Canada?"

"Some companies were weighing the cost-benefit of simply not complying with the program"

— **Nicole Sinclair, STA**

Despite the STA advising its members to comply with the new law, it does not shy away from how it feels about the carbon tax.

"As the STA has stated many times before, this is a burden for trucking companies," said Sinclair. "Not only is everyone now paying more at the pump, but costly hours are being dedicated to filling out paperwork that is confusing and unnecessary."

In addition to Saskatchewan, the federal government imposed a carbon tax April 1 on Manitoba, Ontario, and New Brunswick at a cost of \$20 a ton for 2019, increasing by \$10 annually until reaching \$50 a ton in 2022.

The federal carbon tax was levied on provinces that did not implement their own plan. **TN**

Fort Garry moves into new, larger facility in Saskatoon

SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN

Fort Garry Industries has a new home in Saskatoon, Sask.

A provider of aftermarket parts, as well as truck and trailer equipment and repair services, Fort Garry's new building has 40,000 sq.ft of space, a significant increase from its previous location which encompassed 27,000 sq.ft.

"We are continuing to invest in our facilities to ensure a great customer experience," said Robyn

Spitzke, president of Fort Garry Industries.

"As growth continues in the Saskatoon market, we wanted to provide our customers and employees with a new and modern facility that meets everyone's needs and helps provide the best customer service."

Customers can find the new location at 3426 Faithful Ave., around the corner from its old facility. **TN**



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The Canadian Economy and the Freight Transportation Outlook for 2020

Canada's economy grew at a modest pace during the initial stages of 2019. There are concerns about how it will perform during the balance of the year as Canada's political leaders seek to conclude a revised trade agreement with the United States and Mexico while addressing various geopolitical challenges. This panel will discuss the Canadian and US economies and transportation industries in 2019 and share their expectations for 2020.



Presented by:

Stephen Laskowski,
President, Canadian Trucking Alliance
& Ontario Trucking Association

David Ross,
Managing Director, Global Transportation
& Logistics, Stifel Financial Corp.

Josh Nye,
Senior Economist, RBC

Anna Petrova,
Director, Head of Supply Chain Canada,
Conagra Brands

Scott Tilley,
President, Tandet Group

October 16, 2019
International Centre, Mississauga

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Mack building presence in the west

By James Menzies

PORTLAND, OREGON

Mack Trucks, perennially strong in the conventional straight truck and low-cabover engine segments, now feels it has the right truck for line-haul, too.

That, of course, is the new Mack Anthem, which is getting the company into some new fleets and interesting applications. The truck maker is now pushing for a stronger presence in the west, where it took trucking industry press to highlight some of its new and long-running relationships.

In Portland, Ore., the press was introduced to Vital Speed

Motorsports, whose founder Rich Baek bought two Mack Anthems to haul his fleet of Ferrari race cars to events across the U.S. Baek was as giddy over his Anthems and custom-built trailers as he was the Ferraris themselves. He recounted how one of his truck drivers visited the Mack dealer to take the Anthem for a test drive after ordering a truck of a different brand.

When he drove the Anthem, and learned it was fully loaded while performing as though it was empty, he canceled the original order and bought two Anthems. Kevin Swartout, director of strategic programs for Vital Speed, said, "Ferrari is the pinnacle of the benchmark

for speed and precision, and for us, Mack Trucks is the benchmark for quality and toughness for trucks. Having the Anthem in front of our trailers has been pretty fantastic. The durability, quality, and performance has been great."

Roy Horton, director of product strategy, Mack Trucks, said the "Anthem has been doing extremely well for us." He highlighted four key areas in which it provides lower total cost of ownership for customers: fuel efficiency; driver recruitment and retention; dealer network strength; and uptime support. He noted the Anthem is up to 9.5% more fuel efficient than its predecessor, when spec'd with turbo-com-



pounding. The dealer network continues to grow, with 95 service points now available in Canada and 345 more in the U.S.

Mack also took visiting journalists to Seattle, where it highlighted several long-term customer relationships in the vocational segments. Some of the latest enhancements brought to the Granite include a new interior that mirrors that in the Anthem, as well as an mDrive HD automated transmission that now accounts for 40% of Granite sales. Both the Anthem and Granite are capable of over-the-air software and parameter updates.

Horton said that since October 2017, more than 350 customers have done remote updates on more than 6,200 vehicles. They've averaged 22 minutes, eliminating more than 1,900 days of downtime. There are now more than 100,000 Mack trucks on the road that are equipped with the company's GuardDog Connect telematics suite.

City Transfer and Silver Streak were two Seattle-area fleets Mack highlighted. They both deliver aggregate products to construction sites in the area. TEC Equipment, a Mack dealer that covers the entire west coast, has fostered a strong relationship with the two customers. It even hosts an annual barbecue for Silver Streak's employees and their families at their own yard.

Kevin Benson, owner of City Transfer, spoke of the Mack's reliability.

"We have never had a de-rate event in the field," he said, noting the company has bought about 200 Mack trucks beginning in about 1965. "The over-the-air updates have been really helpful. We're not chasing that equipment up to Mack."

Silver Streak is owned by Tina Benson, who purchased it from her mother in 1998. She merged it with her own trucking company called T-Max, which she founded in 1993. It's one of the largest non-union trucking companies in the Pacific Northwest. It operates 75-135 trucks in the peak season.

"We've never had a tow with any of our Granites," said Kevin McCann, operations manager.

Mack officials said they're confident they can grow their presence in the west, but some education is required. Mack doesn't offer a 15-liter engine, and big bore power is still the preference in this region. The company claims its 13L is fully capable of handling the vast majority of the loads moved out here – even over mountainous terrain. **TN**

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Peterbilt customers get behind the wheel

'Cowboy' spec' 567 gets the most attention.

By James Menzies

MOUNT VERNON, WASHINGTON

Peterbilt recently hosted more than 100 customers at the Paccar Technical Center to show off its new UltraLoft sleeper and other offerings.

But it was a Model 567 decked out in a "cowboy" spec' that stole the show. The 567 was dressed up in an oversize chrome bumper, dual stacks, a menacing "Legendary Gray" paint scheme and an interior to match, including leather seats with red stitching. It's the kind of truck that makes you want to lower the seat, turn up the radio, sit back and peer out over the large hood to relish the driving experience. It's a truck that would be right at home in Western Canada.

The 510 horses under the hood gave the truck ample power to pull a fully-loaded trailer on the test track, getting up to speed quickly, but was remarkably quiet at cruise. The Paccar MX-13 engine was paired with the Paccar 12-speed automated transmission (AMT) and the truck had a 58-inch bunk, sufficient for short overnight trips.

But while the styling of the 567 was hard not to like, most customers at the demonstration were more likely to order the Model 579 for their businesses. The 579 EPIQ is an ultra-fuel-efficient spec' designed for linehaul, though a day cab I drove would serve as a nicely appointed, luxurious even, regional haul tractor. It came with heated and cooled seats. The MX-13 engine put out 455 hp and 1,650 lb.-ft. of torque and was mated to the familiar 12-speed Paccar AMT.

The day cab was spec'd with the EPIQ package, even though it's likely to be running regional where fuel savings from aero enhancements may be somewhat muted. An interesting feature was a collapsible roof fairing.

The UltraLoft sleeper has put Peterbilt into new markets with new customers. Wesley Slavin, on-highway product marketing manager with Peterbilt, explained the truck was inspired by the efforts fleets were going in order to attract and retain drivers. Driver lounges at fleet terminals including everything from showers and laundry facilities, to big screen TVs and games, are making the home terminal a more comfortable place to visit.

Slavin said Peterbilt wanted to ensure drivers are equally comfortable when they go out on the road. The UltraLoft gives them a

spacious, well-designed living quarters. It's an open design – not closed off by large pillars at the entrance – giving it an even airier feel. It's ideal for team drivers, or those who carry lots of supplies and stay out on the road for extended trips.

The arrival of the UltraLoft has landed Peterbilt new business with fleets who required a larger sleeper, and it has boosted the company's sleeper-to-day cab ratio to levels not seen in quite some time, Slavin said.



Like the day cab, this truck had a Paccar MX-13 engine with 455 hp and 1,650 lb.-ft. of torque as well as the 12-speed Paccar AMT.

The Paccar transmission was developed by Eaton and programmed for optimum performance with the MX-13 transmission. Integration was a frequently mentioned

Customers driving the truck at the Technical Center were clearly impressed by the new sleeper. I drove a 579 with an 80-inch UltraLoft sleeper in "Legendary Red" paint. It was a sharp looking truck and an ideal home away from home for the professional driver.

theme during the event, and was on display in each of the trucks that were available to drive. In addition to driving opportunities, visiting customers sat in on educational sessions covering different aspects of Peterbilt's product offerings. **TN**



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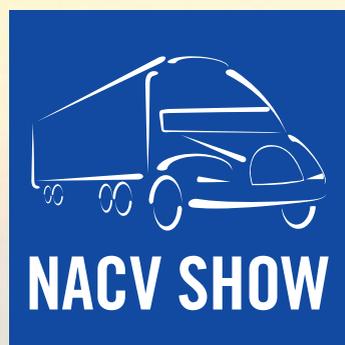
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Finding the Smokin' Gun

Racer Gord Cooper looks to set world records after Smokin' Gun's engine rebuild

By Derek Clouthier

MEDICINE HAT, ALBERTA

Legendary hot rod semi racer Gord Cooper doesn't shy away from setting high standards for himself and his trusty sidekick, the Smokin' Gun.

But at the Medicine Hat Speedway on July 21, his efforts to best his quickest time in the quarter mile and break the MPH record were sidelined, partly due to what was a persistent headwind that slowed racers down just enough to make a difference.

Cooper ran the Smokin' Gun twice during the National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) event solo, as he was the lone semi racer participating that day. Cooper was hoping to beat his time of 11.44 seconds, a record he set at the Medicine Hat location a few years back and just shy of his world record of 11.40 seconds. He was also looking to break the speed record by hitting an unprecedented 125mph, which would have shattered the current record of 120.9mph.

Cooper achieved his world record time at Castrol Raceway just outside Edmonton, Alta., a place he knows



Gord Cooper and the Smokin' Gun in Medicine Hat, Alta., July 21.

well and will return to for his next event of the season.

As for the MPH record, Cooper said he wants to "set it out of sight for anybody else to touch it," and is confident with the upgrades he and

his team have done to the Smokin' Gun that his goal is doable.

Last year, Cooper squared off against Mario Monette, known as the "Diesel Freak" at Castrol Raceway, where Monette was cred-

ited with setting the MPH record, a mark Cooper aims to reclaim at some point this season.

The Medicine Hat Speedway, however, did not allow Cooper's dreams to become a reality. For his two passes, Cooper posted times of 12.09 seconds and 12.05 respectively, hitting a max speed of 112mph.

To put these times in perspective, Cooper once told *Truck News-West*, "It's hard to run under 12 seconds. The average truck, single-axle, hopped up is hard to get under 13 seconds, but to get under 12, there's only been myself and Wayne Talkington from California."

Cooper said he is not making excuses for falling short of his goals, but Mother Nature certainly could have been a bit more cooperative.

"An eight to 10mph wind kind of kicks the heck out of the timing, but it was still a good day," he said. "I got some runs in and worked out a few bugs."

Next up for Cooper is the Outlaw Truck Drags at Castrol Raceway, where he expects to settle the score against the Diesel Freak and reach his personal best.

Upgrading a classic

The Smokin' Gun is a 1968 Kenworth. It has an 8V92 two-stroke Detroit engine, Allison automatic transmission, which Cooper shifts manually, and twin turbo with nitrous.

But if any racer is going to stay in the game they have to stay with the times, constantly looking to upgrade and improve their equipment.

Cooper and his team – which includes Talkington – have completely rebuilt the Smokin' Gun's engine.

"We went through the engine completely," said Cooper. "New pistons and liners, new setting, and new, specially built injectors. I had six new seasons on the previous rebuild, with over 100 passes, and out of those six seasons, the last three were world championship runs in Texas for hot rod semi, which I'm really proud of the whole setup and my crew."

After six seasons, several issues were found with the engine, including a bent connecting rod and cracked piston heads.

"I might have made one more pass, but I probably would have blown up the engine on my next burnout or pass," said Cooper, "so it was due."

New brake pads were also a necessity, as Cooper is hoping to launch off the start line at around 2,600rpm, and the old pads were no longer up to the task.

"I want to be able to hold it and launch as hard as I need to bring the time down," said Cooper.

Time will tell if Cooper and the Smokin' Gun will achieve their goals, but even if they don't, they're bound to put on a show trying. **TN**



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Increasing B.C.'s refining capacity a pipe dream

There's this one particular news story that just won't go away, and it has a surprise ending — or is it just the beginning? I think, in the media world (a world within itself), this is called a teaser. An opening line that forces the reader to read on.

One aspect of our own less convoluted world of energy that I have commented on a few times is the investigation initiated by B.C. Premier John Horgan into the reasons why record high gasoline pump prices are only in his province — and, of course, in the Vancouver area where all the voters are.

You are all aware of my opinions, so I won't repeat them here.

However, I was asked for my views on a national TV show recently. After pointing out the fact that refining margins in Vancouver were 43 cpl compared to 27 cpl in Toronto and 10 cpl in Halifax, I told them that in order to lower gas prices in Vancouver, they need more than one refinery in B.C., or more domestic supply of gasoline. The interviewer then said how just that day Justin Trudeau said he sup-

ported adding more refining capacity in the province.

Whew! Presto, problem solved? Well sort of.

Just a few minor details like, who would build it? It's taken 10 years to gain approval to expand an existing 66-year-old pipeline, the Trans Mountain pipeline (TMX), which in the end had to be bought by Trudeau's very own — and our own — government. A new refinery would cost at least \$8 billion, and what investor, or oil company in its right mind, would fork out that amount of cash when reviewing the progress report on an existing pipeline, let alone a greenfield refinery in a province really run by the Green Party supported by domestic and foreign funded eco activists?

The current Burnaby refinery was purchased by Red Deer based Parkland Industries after Chevron decided to not only rid itself of the facility, but all of its retail service stations, cardlocks, bulk stations, and wholesale operations. Got to hand it to Chevron, they saw the writing on the wall, an imposing,

intimidating financial roadblock.

Let's assume a new refinery was approved for construction in Mr. Trudeau's imaginary world. Well, first, to run it you will need feedstock in the form of crude oil. To do that you will need a pipeline. To do that you will need to find both a rabbit and a hat and both at the same time.

Continuing with the animal-themed metaphors, it looks like the PM is putting the cart before the horse. Build the TMX expansion to double refined product supply to the Lower Mainland. This will lower pump prices and political temperatures.

“No one is going to offer up cash for a new refinery that will take 10 years to supply a single drop of gasoline to the Vancouver market.”

No one is going to offer up cash for a new refinery that will take 10 years to supply a single drop of gasoline to the Vancouver market.



Roger McKnight is the chief petroleum analyst with En-Pro International Inc. Roger has more than 25 years of experience in the oil industry. He is a regular guest on radio and television programs, and is quoted regularly in newspapers and magazines across Canada.

I say to myself — Aha!

If we own a half-built pipeline, why not build our very own refinery as well? Mexico and Venezuela did it by nationalization didn't they?

Ignore the fact that both countries now import gasoline and diesel from the U.S. because their own refineries are beyond repair because their owners — the government — failed to realize that they weren't in the oil business.

A lesson that politicians in our federal government should take note of, and govern themselves accordingly, or come October they won't be governing anybody. **TN**

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Steering government in the right direction

As we enter into an election period, both provincially and federally, the output from governments has screeched to a halt.

As I'm sure you already know, this is due to election laws that prevent governments from making certain announcements during the pre-election period. However, the reality is that the government is moving too slowly for the industry, whether they are in an election mode or not.

The trucking industry is at a tipping point: as a new, younger generation is poised to take over the seats both literally and metaphorically, new ideas and ways of doing business will increase. This in an environment that is already seeing a steady pace of change due to new technologies and techniques, be it in terms of HR, efficiency, safety, or elsewhere.

At the same time all of these fantastic innovative opportunities are available in the industry, we are also seeing a movement toward the professionalization of our drivers. While many in the industry are fully aware of the skills and professionalism of our commercial drivers, the introduction of MELT

(mandatory entry level training) will provide classroom and in-cab training to elevate the standards of drivers. While the standard being implemented is pre-licensing training rather than pre-employment training, it is still a standard higher than what we have had, and is long overdue.

I'm not aware of all of the reasons why the government makes the decisions it makes, but as an industry, we need governments to be more responsive as we enter this new phase. It sometimes feels that our interactions with the industry are forward-looking, but we have to keep looking over our shoulder to ensure the government is catching up.

While we have moved on to the next technology (electric trucks, for example), government is still playing catch-up on old technology (glider kits or delete kits). It makes for a strange dichotomy, which we see not only in engine technology, but also in human resources, truck-trailer combinations, and many other areas.

While we are encouraging the governments to move at a quicker pace, we also encourage them to make well informed decisions. We

have seen instances where decisions have been rushed, to the detriment of industry.

We are the subject matter experts, and we need the government to involve us so as to make the best decision possible based on available information. When decisions are ill-informed, the process is slowed down as we mount counter arguments after regulation and legislation has passed without our knowledge or input. It is a fine balance to strike.

Again, I appreciate wanting to have Is dotted and Ts crossed, but what we see so often is that another study, meeting, or conference call simply isn't necessary. Decisions based on quality information with a desire to move ahead and improve is needed.

Where does that leave us as an industry association? Unfortunately, and with regularity, it leaves us in limbo, as we advocate on behalf of our industry for improvement. Yes, we understand we have one stakeholder and the government has many, but when all of the stakeholders have had their say, it is time to make a decision and share that. Will we always

Terry Shaw oversees the planning and priorities of the MTA, is the lead for political liaison and relations with all levels of government, media relations, and acts as a spokesperson for the industry. He is a member of several MTA committees and represents the association through his involvement with Trucking HR Canada, the Manitoba Employers Council, and the Winnipeg and Manitoba Chambers of Commerce. Terry also engages on national issues as a regional vice-president of the Canadian Trucking Alliance, of which he is a board and executive member.

be happy with those decision? Of course not, but our industry is resilient and innovative and will always work with those decisions.

So, we will continue our efforts, ensuring we are providing the best information possible to governments – federal, provincial, and municipal – to ensure our industry can keep moving ahead, keep improving, keep safe, and remain competitive. **TN**

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Manitoba drivers bring Canadian flavor to SuperRigs show

By Derek Clouthier

ALBERT LEA, MINN.

Deep in the heart of Minnesota, two Manitoba truck drivers brought their rigs to the Shell Rotella SuperRigs show to take part in a competition that honors the best of the best in truck transportation.

Barry Kasdorf has been a driver for 17 years with Jade Transport out of Winnipeg, Man., and hopes to repeat his success of 10 years ago, when he made the Shell Rotella calendar

after attending SuperRigs in Oak Grove, Mo.

Kasdorf has a love affair with trucks and truck driving, one that was sidelined in 2013 after he suffered a health issue that required cardiac surgery, halting his driving career.

It revealed, however, an opportunity that he otherwise would never have had the chance to explore.

In Canada, as Kasdorf explained, any Class 1 driver who goes through a cardiac procedure has their license suspended for a period of three months. Only after their

doctor informs their insurer that they are fit to drive can they get back behind the wheel.

During this period, Jade moved Kasdorf to a dispatch position, one that was supposed to last just three months, but turned into a two-year stint.

It was during this time that Kasdorf gained a better understanding and appreciation of the job of a dispatcher.

"Everyone should spend at least a week or two in there to better understand why a dispatch does what they do," said Kasdorf. "A lot

of drivers think they're picking on them...no they're not. They're trying to make it efficient."

During his time away from driving, Kasdorf also entered a program with the Reh-Fit Centre, where he learned healthier eating habits to hopefully avoid similar future cardiac issues.

On the technology front, Kasdorf spends the majority of his time in the U.S. and is well-versed in how to use electronic logging devices (ELDs). He was one of the first drivers with Jade to start using the device.

"I consider myself to be an old-dog, so if I can adapt, almost anybody can," he said. "There are changes in everything...it's just a matter of rolling with it and if you're going to fight it, you're just going to get frustrated."

Kasdorf said planning ahead has never been more important for truck drivers and there will be a learning curve for both drivers and dispatchers once ELDs are mandated in Canada.

"Everybody says with ELDs that they can't get here or there...well, to me you just didn't plan ahead," he said. "With the ELD you need to plan more than you did before."

As for his hopes at SuperRigs, Kasdorf said the key to keeping up the appearance of his truck is to be on top of it every week when it comes to washing and polishing.

The event is a special one for Kasdorf, who sees a lot of familiar faces when he attends the SuperRigs shows.

"Once you've done it for a while it almost becomes like a family gathering," said Kasdorf. "And when you don't show up, guys are asking, 'Where is he?'"

Another Winnipeg-based driver, Jay Palachuk, brought his 1996 Kenworth, with all of its 2.5 million miles, to be judged in the SuperRigs competition, and took home second place in the Classic Working Truck category.

Palachuk doesn't come from a trucking family, and attributes his love of the industry to his sister's boyfriend.

"He taught me everything I needed to know about trucking and that's why I'm here today, because he taught me the right way," said Palachuk. "I'm a first-generation truck driver...it's not a family business or anything like that. I was young, needed a job and unemployment said, 'How would you like to drive a truck? We'll send you to school.' Don't ask me why I love trucking, because I have no background in it or anything."

Launching his career in 1979, Palachuk bought his Kenworth from Krenkevich, the company he hauls for, in 1999 when it had tallied a mere 1,500 miles.

Like Kasdorf, there's nowhere Palachuk would rather be than behind the wheel of his rig. He loves



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Barry Kasdorf.

to see a nice truck, a sentiment he believes is rare these days, particularly with young people.

But there are exceptions.

Palachuk purchased his first truck from a friend whose son is now 25 years old, and is dedicated to the trucking industry.

“He’s 25 and he has a really big

trucking heart,” said Palachuk.

“You don’t see that today.

Everybody just wants into this for a paycheck. I want a paycheck, don’t get me wrong, but I still love the truck. I couldn’t do this if I didn’t love the truck...what would be the point of going to work if you didn’t love what you are doing?”



Jay Palachuk’s 1996 Kenworth.

Palachuk believes the industry needs to go much further when it comes to how it trains new drivers, and said mandatory entry-level training programs in Canada don’t go far enough.

“When I came out of school, I had my license but I didn’t know how to drive,” Palachuk said, again

recognizing the influence his sister’s boyfriend had on his career. “I wouldn’t be here today if it wasn’t for him.”

And now, he is hooked on truck driving.

“As long as I can,” Palachuk said of how long he intends to continue driving. “I like a nice truck.” **TN**



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Owner-operator blues

How good drivers become bad owner-operators

By Abdul Latheef

TORONTO, ONTARIO

“Be your own boss,” says the recruitment ad from an Ontario carrier.

An irresistible offer, one would think, but an expert warns: not so fast. As the longtime executive director of the Owner-Operator’s Business Association of Canada (OBAC), Joanne Ritchie has been handling key issues affecting the sector for years.

“We are dealing with decades of bad custom and practice. Carriers have been complicit in this... in taking good drivers and turning them into bad owner-operators,” she told *Truck News* in an interview.

So, how does that happen?

Some drivers fall for the “Hey, you can own that truck” offer from the carriers without realizing what is in store for them in the months and years ahead, Ritchie said.

A key problem is the lack of good business sense.

“One of the big mistakes a lot of owner-operators make is not paying themselves. Not understanding that they’re an employee, and that they have to make a living.”

There are no reliable statistics on the number of owner-operators in Canada, with estimates ranging from anywhere between 35,000 and 60,000. The fact that there is no real definition of an owner-operator complicates the matter.

What is clear, however, is that the industry is ready to hire thousands more, and all the recruitment ads point to a red-hot market.

Ritchie’s advice to wannabe owner-operators: Look for a company that will treat you as a business partner.

Miles-hungry couple

Solange Gallant, 35, and Rene Arseneau, 38, have found such a company, and are quite happy about their choice. The New Brunswick couple have been driving for Challenger Motor Freight for a little over eight years. They previously worked for a carrier in Nova Scotia.

“I have never been without him in the truck,” Gallant said of her husband, who was sleeping in the cab after his night shift. Gallant spoke to *Truck News* as she pulled into the Headingley Truck Stop near Winnipeg, Man.

“It’s all down to how much money we can make. Challenger has been great with us. That is why we’re still here, and not really planning to leave.”

She said she had nothing to complain about, and at Challenger, team drivers are even paid wait times.

Gallant and Arseneau are on the road for almost 2.5 months before they take a break and go home to Petit-Rocher, N.B. They don’t have any children, but their dogs Lily and Luna always accompany them.

They are open-board drivers solely focused on accumulating as many miles as they can.

Asked whether they were workaholics, Gallant replied: “No, moneyholics.”

Dependable driver

Another owner-operator brimming with confidence is Anil Raveendran.

The 57-year-old has been working for CEVA Logistics for the past 10 years. He owns five trucks, four of the them leased to another carrier and operated by his eight employees.

“I have driven nearly five million ticket-free kilometers,” Raveendran said.

He is content with his job because he feels he is well-treated and respected by the carrier. His own employees are also doing well, making between \$8,000 and \$9,000 a month, depending on the mileage.

Raveendran is happy with the arrangements he has with the two carriers. The main benefits he looks forward to in choosing a fleet are the pay package, fuel deal, insurance coverage, regular work and most crucially, dedicated routes.

“All my trucks run the same routes all the time.”

Going forward, Raveendran is worried that emission-related issues could badly hurt the business model.

Unsafe driving

Chris Barron, 41, works for metal hauler Kim-Tam Logistics, a division of Samuel, Son & Co. A long-time owner-operator, the Port Dover, Ont., resident says the business model has its ups and downs.

Like others, Barron also has concerns about high fuel prices and low rates, but what worries him most is the proliferation of poorly trained drivers on the highways.

“It used to be that we were able to follow a truck down the road and feel safe. Now you follow a truck down the road, you don’t know if you are safe or not,” he said.

Another issue, he said, is the lack of safe, adequate parking, a problem OBAC’s Ritchie said has worsened over the past few years.

Straight talker

One person who believes owner-operators are being taken for a ride is Mike Shree.



Solange Gallant and Rene Arseneau in their hometown of Petit-Rocher, N.B.



Chris Barron and his daughter, Paityn, at the Great Canadian Truck Show in Millgrove, Ont.



Anil Raveendran

Shree, 54, has been in the business for just three years, but he is not happy with the way owner-operators are treated by the carriers.

“They don’t get respect,” he said. “Initially everyone talks nicely, and you won’t know the truth until something happens.”

He cited a long list of grievances such as alleged driver harassment, unpaid wait times, lack of transparency in processing insurance claims and surprise mileage deductions.

“If you drive for 1,000 miles, they pay you for 950 miles.”

He is convinced that he will never be able to grow his business by driving for another company.

“You will make the company rich and just sustain your living while taking all the blame.”

Shree has three trucks, but hopes



Mike Shree

to have a fleet of his own soon.

“Then I will clean up the mess in this industry, and show them (the carriers) how to treat people respectfully.”

That is not an easy task, considering the number and types of players in the market.

No surprise

Ritchie called Shree’s complaints “not an uncommon story,” but she said there was absolutely no reason why frustrated people like him have to stay in that situation.

“With today’s market, somebody who has a good record won’t have any trouble in getting a decent carrier.”

Going independent is a whole different thing, though, Ritchie said. Those who want to do that must first make sure they have some customers lined up, she warned. **TN**

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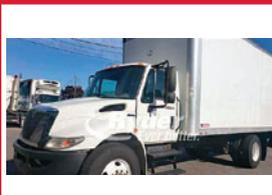
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MACK ENGINE: MP8 13 LITER, 505 HP, M-DRIVE TRANS, MERITOR 46,000 REAR AXLE(S), 46,000 AIR-RIDE SUSP, 227" WHEELBASE, 70" MID-RISE SLEEPER, 1800 WATT INVERTOR, DELUXE CABINTRY, ALL POWER GROUPS, 3 OF THESE AVAILABLE! -1282314



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MACK ENGINE: MP8 13 LITER, 505 HP, M-DRIVE TRANS, MERITOR 46,000 REAR AXLE(S), 46,000 AIR-RIDE SUSP, 215" WHEELBASE, 48" FLAT-TOP SLEEPER, COLLISION AVOIDANCE SYSTEM, DELUXE CAB WITH ALL POWER GROUPS. IN STOCK.-1282315

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2014 MACK CHU613 RAWHIDE EDITION HEAVY-HAUL TRACTOR
MACK ENGINE: MP8 13 LITER, 505 HP, M-DRIVE TRANS, MERITOR 46,000 REAR AXLE(S), 46,000 AIR-RIDE SUSP, 243" WHEELBASE, 70" MID-RISE SLEEPER, TIRES ALL 70%, LOW MILEAGE, MOOSE BUMPER, TOOL BOX, CHAIN HANGERS, NEW 6 MONTH MVI. -1282316

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MP8-505C Eng., mDRIVE-HD, 14.6/46 Axles, 213" W/B, Holland 5th Wheel, Stk: 026858 -1270477



2019 Mack Pinnacle 64T 70"
MP8-505C Eng., mDRIVE-HD, 13.2/46 Axles, 243" W/B, 70" Stand up sleeper, Stk: 026693 -1269361



2018 Mack CXU613 70" MR
MP8-505C Eng., mDRIVE-HD, 13.2/40 Axles, 221" W/B, Stk: 024413 -1259017



2019 Mack Anthem 64T D/C
MP8-505C Eng., mDRIVE-HD, 13.2/40 Axles, 3.79 Ratio, 197" W/B, Stk: 027899 -1276897



2018 Mack Anthem 70"
MP8-505C Eng., mDRIVE, 12/38 Axles, Foldable top bunk, Stk: 029510 -1273915



2018 Mack CXU613 Dump Truck
MP7-345C Eng., mDRIVE, 14.6/40 Axles, 16' NeuStar gravel box, Electric tarp, Stk: 023216 -1273133



2019 Mack Anthem 70"
MP8-505C Eng., mDRIVE-HD, 12/40 Axles, 221" W/B, 70" Stand-up sleeper, Stk: 026860 -1285084



2019 Mack Pinnacle 48"
MP8-505C, mDRIVE-HD, 12/46 Axles, 3.73 Ratio, Stk: 028528 -1285390



2019 Mack Anthem 86T 70"
MP8-505C Eng., 18 Sp., 14.6/50 Axles, 265" W/B, 70" Stand-up sleeper, Stk: 030760 -1285085



2019 Mack Pinnacle Grain Truck
MP8-415C Eng., mDRIVE-HD, 14.6/40 Axles, NeuStar 20' grain box. Stk#028479 -1276150

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2012 KENWORTH T800 FEED/GRAIN TRUCK, PACCAR ENG; MX12.9, 430 HP, 12K/40K AXLE(S), 3.70 RATIO, 173" WHEELBASE, WHITE IN COLOR, 20FT GRAIN TRUCK, PACCAR 430, 10 SPEED ULTRA SHIFT, 40,000 REAR AXLES, GRAIN/SILAGE 3 PIECE END GATE, 11R22.5 TIRES, 607,141 KMS, STK#CJ308391. -1264641 **\$101,500**



2012 KENWORTH T800 FEED/GRAIN TRUCK, PACCAR ENG; MX, 430 HP ULTRASHIFT 10 SPD TRANS; 3.70 RATIO, 12K/40K SUSP; 230" WHEELBASE, WHITE IN COLOR, NEW 20' RED GRAIN BOX, GRAY SPLENDOR INTERIOR 10 SPEED ULTRASHIFT, PINTLE HITCH WITH AIR/OIL, ELECTRIC TARP AND CHUTE OPENER, 3 PIECE END GATE. 599,304 KMS, STK#CJ308375. -1269360 **\$99,500**



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2013 KENWORTH T800 DUMP TRUCK, PACCAR ENG; MX-13, 455 HP, ULTRASHIFT 13 SPD TRANS; 12K/40K AXLE(S), 3.55 RATIO, AG380 SUSP; 244" WHEELBASE, GREY IN COLOR, NEW LOADLINE GRAY DUMP BOX WITH FLIP TARP, 11R22.5 TIRES, ALUMINUM RIMS, 3 WAY LOCKS, ENG HOURS 14,740 872,718 KMS, STK#DJ960037A. -1270845 **\$97,500**



2012 KENWORTH T800 DUMP TRUCK, PACCAR ENG; MX12.9, 455 HP, 10 SPD TRANS; 12.35K/40K AXLE(S), 3.70 RATIO, WHITE IN COLOR, NEW NEUSTAR WHITE 16' DUMP BOX, GRAY SPLENDOR INTERIOR, FLIP TARP, PINTLE HITCH, 11R22.5 TIRES, ALUMINUM RIMS 670,660 KMS, STK#CJ950992. -1270617 **\$97,500**



2013 KENWORTH T800 DUMP TRUCK, PACCAR ENG; MX-13, 455 HP, 13 SPD TRANS; 14.6K/40K AXLE(S), 3.90 RATIO, 212" WHEELBASE, WHITE IN COLOR, NEW 15' DEL GRAVEL BOX, FLIP TARP AND PINTLE HITCH, GROENEVELD AUTOMATIC GREASE SYSTEM, BENDIX COLLISION WARNING SYSTEM 918,873 KMS, STK#DR958713A 918,873 KMS, STK#DR958713A. -1272632 **\$89,900**

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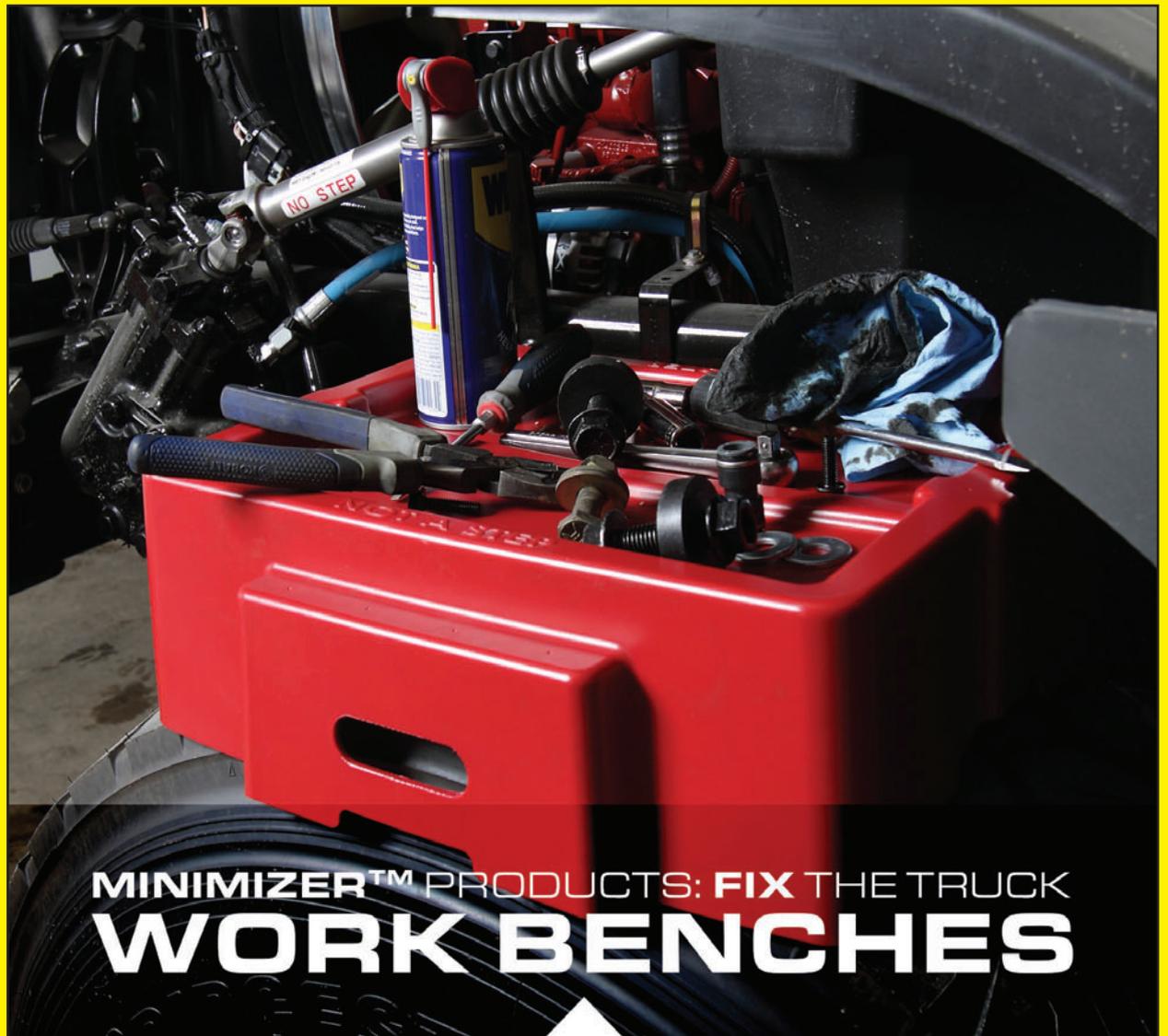
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2019 KENWORTH T880 HIGHWAY TRACTOR

40" INTEGRAL LOW-ROOF FLAT-TOP SLEEPER, CUMMINS ENG; X15, 565 HP, 18 SPD TRANS; 14.6K/46K AXLE(S), 4.10 RATIO, AG460 SUSP; 220" WHEELBASE, WHITE IN COLOR, GRAY VANTAGE INTERIOR, 11R24.5 TIRES, ALUMINUM RIMS, 4 WAY LOCKS, STK#KJ950358. -1282460



2019 KENWORTH T800 HIGHWAY TRACTOR

62" ACFT SLEEPER, CUMMINS ENG; X15, 565 HP, 18 SPD TRANS; 20K/69K AXLE(S), 4.30 RATIO, NEWAY ADZ369 SUSP; 260" WHEELBASE, WHITE IN COLOR, TRI-DRIVE, BLACK SPLENDOR INTERIOR, 385/65R22.5 11R24.5 TIRES, 3 WAY LOCKS STK#KR999294. -1282036



2020 KENWORTH T370 STRAIGHT TRUCK (CAB AND CHASSIS)

PACCAR ENG; PX-9, 350 HP, 6 SPD TRANS; 16K/40K AXLE(S), HAS402 SUSP; 228" WHEELBASE, WHITE IN COLOR, PINNACLE INTERIOR, 385/65R22.5 11R22.5 TIRES, ALUMINUM RIMS, 4 WAY LOCKS STK#LM958563. -1282492



2020 KENWORTH W900B HIGHWAY TRACTOR

62" ACFT SLEEPER, CUMMINS ENG; X15, 565 HP, 18 SPD TRANS; 3.91 RATIO, 13.2K/46K SUSP; 244" WHEELBASE, BLUE IN COLOR, GRAY DIAMOND INTERIOR, 11R24.5 TIRES, ALUMINUM RIMS, 4 WAY LOCKS, STK#LJ962827. -1286524



2020 KENWORTH W990 HIGHWAY TRACTOR

76" MID ROOF SLEEPER, CUMMINS ENG; X15, 565 HP, 18 SPD TRANS; 13.2K/40K AXLE(S), 3.81 RATIO, AG460 SUSP; WHITE IN COLOR, BLACK LIMITED EDITION INTERIOR, 11R24.5 TIRES, 3 WAY LOCKS, STK#LJ961702. -1285213



2020 KENWORTH W990 HIGHWAY TRACTOR

76" MID ROOF SLEEPER, PACCAR ENG; MX-13, 510 HP, 18 SPD TRANS; 13.2K/40K AXLE(S), 3.91 RATIO, AG460 SUSP; 244" WHEELBASE, GREY IN COLOR, BLACK LIMITED EDITION INTERIOR, 11R24.5 TIRES, ALUMINUM RIMS, 4 WAY LOCKS .TK#LJ961756. -1286526



2020 KENWORTH T880 HIGHWAY TRACTOR

76" MID ROOF SLEEPER, CUMMINS ENG; X15, 18 SPD TRANS; 13.2K/40K AXLE(S), 3.91 RATIO, AG400 SUSP; 232" WHEELBASE, BLACK IN COLOR, GRAY DIAMOND VIT INTERIOR, 11R24.5 TIRES, ALUMINUM RIMS, 4 WAY LOCKS, STK#LJ960983. -1286525

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CUMMINS ENG; ISX15, 485 HP, 18 SPD TRANS; 12K/46K AXLE(S), 4.30 RATIO, AG400 SUSP; 185" WHEELBASE, WHITE IN COLOR, EXTENDED DAY CAB, BLACK SPLENDOR INTERIOR, 11R24.5 TIRES, 4 WAY LOCKS, 764,944 KMS, STK#GJ977670A. -1282014 **\$95,000**



2016 KENWORTH T680 HIGHWAY TRACTOR

76" ACAD SLEEPER, PACCAR ENG; MX-13, 455-500 HP, FLULER RTLO 13-18 SPD. TRANS; 12 & 40 / 13.2 & 40 / 12 & 46 AXLE(S), AG460 SUSP; WHITE IN COLOR, GRAY SPLENDOR INTERIOR, 11R22.5 TIRES, ALUMINUM RIMS, 4 WAY LOCKS STK#GJ980782. -1285060 **\$57,500**



2017 KENWORTH T880 HIGHWAY TRACTOR

PACCAR ENG; MX-13, 500 HP, ULTRASHIFT TRANS; 13.2K/46K AXLE(S), 3.91 RATIO, AG460 SUSP; 185" WHEELBASE, YELLOW IN COLOR, GRAY SPLENDOR INTERIOR, 4 WAY LOCKS, 11R22.5 TIRES, ALUMINUM RIMS, 9696 ENG HOURS 492,239 KMS. STK#HJ988647. -1288346 **\$97,500**



2014 KENWORTH T660 HIGHWAY TRACTOR

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75" INTEGRAL SLEEPER, PACCAR ENG; MX-13, 485 HP 13 SPD TRANS; 13K/40K AXLE(S), 236" WHEELBASE, WHITE IN COLOR, 75" INTEGRAL SLEEPER, PRESTIGE INTERIOR, 11R22.5 TIRES 1,055,973 KMS, STK#ED221210. -1283291 **\$47,500**



2015 KENWORTH T680 HIGHWAY TRACTOR

76" ACAD SLEEPER, PACCAR ENG; MX-13, 455 HP 13 SPD TRANS; 3.55 RATIO, 13.2K/40K SUSP; 232" WHEELBASE, BLUE IN COLOR, GRAY VANTAGE INTERIOR, 3 WAY LOCKS, 11R22.5 TIRES, ALUMINUM RIMS 750,690 KMS, STK#FJ976249A. -1272205 **\$62,500**



2014 KENWORTH T680 HIGHWAY TRACTOR

76" ACAD SLEEPER, PACCAR ENG; MX-13, 455 HP 13 SPD TRANS; 3.55 RATIO, 13.2K/40K SUSP; 232" WHEELBASE, WHITE IN COLOR, GRAY SPLENDOR INTERIOR, 11R22.5 TIRES, ALUM/STEEL RIMS. REPO TRUCK, 732,545 KMS, TK#EJ967545A. -1280418
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Ocean Trailer expands Winnipeg facility



WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

Ocean Trailer has finished renovations at its Winnipeg location.

Additional shop bays have allowed the company to hire more technicians and better utilize its

space, according to branch manager Mack Key.

“This added space has already improved our ability to fix more of

“We’ve also taken care to buy food-grade cleaners that are non-acidic,” Key added.

The new wash bay went into service May 21.

The facility now boasts 14 service bays, tire service,

our customers’ trailers every day,” he said, “but it will also give us the chance to keep our own rental fleet better maintained and cleaner.”

That’s due to a new wash bay that will operate from 8 a.m. till 5 p.m. every day.

two 24-hour mobile repair trucks, pickup-and-delivery service, and a full-service wash bay. It also offers 80 truck parking spots, and a fleet of more than 820 rental trailers. **TN**

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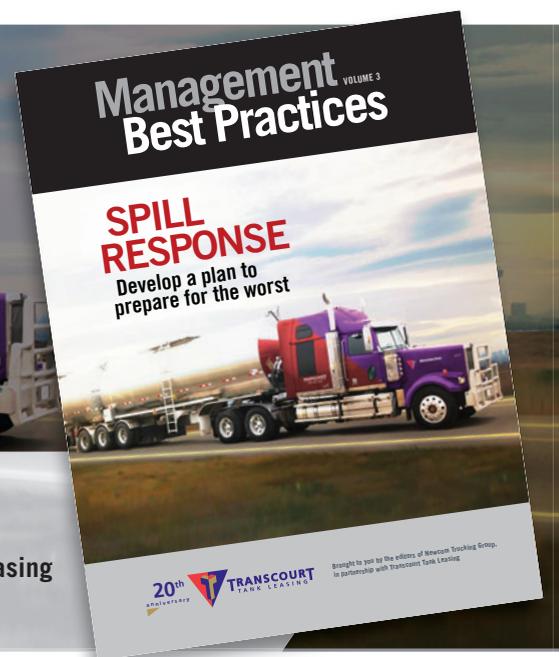
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Mark Dalton: Owner-Operator

By Edo Van Belkom

The truck without a driver

- Part 3 -

THE STORY SO FAR

Mark is driving across the Prairies and comes across a truck like no other he's ever seen before. He pulls up alongside of it and realizes the man behind the wheel isn't driving, but rather he's reading a magazine. It's one of those autonomous trucks that is operated without a driver, and Mark was awestruck.

He spends a while thinking about what driverless trucks mean to the trucking industry and is able to see both sides of the argument. Trucking goods would eventually be more economical and there would be less need for drivers. However, drivers would still be needed in some capacity and other opportunities might open up for them in the industry...

Mark decided to follow the autonomous truck to wherever it was going in order to get a better look at how it worked and how it might eventually put him out of a job.

The problem was, the truck never stopped.

That was obviously the appeal of the whole thing, as this truck could drive for days – provided it had enough fuel – without stopping once to rest, go to the bathroom, or have a bite to eat. Now, there was a person inside the cab monitoring the truck's progress and that person no doubt had to eat, sleep, and relieve himself, but there had to be provisions inside the truck to accommodate all of its human cargo's needs.

But Mother Load wasn't autonomous and Mark desperately needed to relieve himself. He could have grabbed an empty soda bottle, relieved himself and dropped it off at the next truck stop, but Mark was never a fan of that, especially when more than a few drivers disposed of their bottles – full – on the side of the road.

Mark had to stop.

After a trip to the bathroom, Mark topped up on fuel and bought a sandwich at the counter and was back on the road in less than 20 minutes. But by now the truck he was following was long gone, no doubt 25 or 30 kilometers down the road. There was no questioning how a trucking industry without human drivers might appeal to long-haul carriers.

When Mark got back out on the road, he kept his eyes open for the driverless truck, but to no avail.

However, after an hour on the road – driven at slightly over the speed limit – Mark did come upon the truck. Or at least it was a similar auton-



Illustration by Glenn McEvoy

omous truck, differing only slightly in its markings from the first.

The first truck had a code number of four, this one's was 12. So, there have been at least 12 of these built, he thought. Probably not all of them were on the road at the same time, but even if only half were undergoing trials, that was a significant number of trucks that didn't need drivers out on the road.

And just as he was contemplating the number of trucks, there appeared yet another of the trucks up ahead, this one stopped on the side of the road with its driver – uh, monitor – standing on the shoulder smoking a cigarette.

What good luck, thought Mark.

He pulled over to see if the man needed a hand...after all, that was the proper thing to do, one driver to another non-driver.

"Broke down, eh?" Mark said as he approached.

"Not really," the man said, butting out his smoke. "Truck's running fine, but the computer interface is down."

"The what?" Mark said, doing his best to sound clueless.

"The computer inter..." he hesitated. "The system that runs the truck."

Mark put a hand to his chin. "But you're the driver... aren't you the system that runs the truck?"

He shook his head. "This truck has no driver," and when he said the word driver, he put a pair of air quotes around it.

"I'm an engineer. I've got my A/Z licence, but only because they wouldn't let me ride the thing without it."

"No driver?" Mark furrowed his brow and shook his head. "But you still need a driver's licence even if you just want to ride in this truck?"

"It's a long story," the man said, lighting up another cigarette. "But the short version of it is, this truck has no driver, and a lot of people are spending a lot of time and money trying to make it work."

"Not doing too well, are they?" Mark said, gesturing to the truck parked on the side of the road.

But instead of getting defensive the man smiled.

"This is the first breakdown this truck has had in two weeks. It's gone between Regina and Calgary 32 times in 14 days before today.

Mark swallowed once and found his throat had gone dry.

Thirty-two times in 14 days was a pace that even a driving team couldn't match. Mark could feel the start of something sick growing in the pit of his stomach.

And just then, a van pulled up and two men jumped out.

"My help has arrived."

Mark marveled at the men who looked more like computer technicians in their spotless coveralls. Instead of wrenches and oil cans, they carried tiny bags with testers that had wires bristling in every direction, and several laptop computers, no doubt so they could talk to the truck and ask it what was wrong.

Something told Mark that drivers might not be the only ones out of a job if these things ever took over the highways in earnest.

Before leaving, Mark found the monitor he'd spoken to earlier and asked him where the man was heading.

"Calgary," he said. "There's a terminal off the highway just before you get into town. That's where they all end up."

"Thanks," Mark said, knowing exactly where he was heading. **TN**

Mark Dalton returns next month in the conclusion.

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Fifteen years in the making, patience pays off in the end

By Derek Clouthier

OSOYOOS, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Better late than never, as they say, and a B.C. truck driver certainly took that to heart.

Bill Plaskett always knew he would one day be his own boss, and 15 years after purchasing a company, he finally got it up and running.

"I was a truck driver back in those days and had an idea that someday I'd like to be in my own business, though I didn't think it was going to be trucking," Plaskett said of the time leading up to the opening of Iron Bull Holdings. "So, I conned (my father) into selling the company to me for a dollar."

Growing up on an orchard in Osoyoos, B.C., Iron Bull was a family business launched by Plaskett's grandfather. It was purchased by his father in 1934, who incorporated and named the business before selling it and retiring.

There was nothing to Iron Bull Holdings other than its name, which is derived from a nickname given to Plaskett's grandfather by indigenous people he worked with on an English-owned ranch in Southern Alberta.

It wasn't until 1998 that Iron Bull became a trucking company thanks to an aspiring, yet patient, entrepreneur.

Plaskett did not squander the 15 years leading up to his company's opening. Working as a driver for several carriers, he has now been in the industry for 51 years. With an initial goal of being a mechanic, Plaskett suffered an injury after a car accident, sidelining his apprenticeship but leading to a career behind the wheel.

"I earned my education by working cheap, and I spent a number of years working out of Calgary hauling meat," he said.

Plaskett moved just about everything, even making the switch to the construction industry in the hopes of spending more time with his wife and children.

But when the compensation did not meet his expectations, Plaskett returned to the road, ultimately working for Arrow Transportation in Tumbler Ridge, B.C., before returning to Osoyoos to be closer to family.

For the first two years, Plaskett was a lease operator, but said to *Truck News-West* that he "was growing disenchanted with leasing to somebody else, so I ended up pulling both my trucks off (the job)."

Plaskett admits his luck was better than his career management at the time he opened Iron Bull. The carrier he had been hauling for ceased its operations, and Plaskett was able to step right in and take over.

"Here I am with brand new hauling authority and I knew most of the customers and my main competition went out of business," he said. "I mean, how much more can you ask for?"

The first three years were up and down for Iron Bull. But Plaskett continued to grow the business and add to its fleet.

"My wife and I made a deal that when we got up to five trucks that I would quite driving and come and work in the office," Plaskett said. His wife is a bookkeeper by trade and was trying to run the company pretty much on her own until 2002 when Plaskett traded the driver's seat for the desk.

"I thought I was doing a good job when I was driving a truck full time every day and trying to run the company through a cell-phone," said Plaskett. "I thought I was doing alright until I got out of the truck and got behind the desk. I don't care who you are, you



Bill Plaskett took his time getting Iron Bull off to the races, but now business is rolling.

cannot do justice to two jobs at the same time."

Today, Iron Bull has 11 trucks and 16 trailers, servicing B.C., Alberta, Washington, Montana, Oregon, and Idaho. Five of his trucks haul juice apples from Washington State exclusively for Sun-Rype Products out of Kelowna, B.C.

Though he is no longer in the driver's seat (of the truck, that is), Plaskett misses being behind the wheel, especially during the last couple of years.

"I look at what these trucks I'm buying today and what they offer the driver in creature comforts, and I look back to when I started," he said. "Trucks have come a long way. These last Freightliners I bought are fancier than my pickup."

One thing Plaskett would like to see return is driver seniority, the absence of which he said has a negative impact on the industry.

"When I started, all the senior guys did all the linehaul stuff and you used to start out working in town or doing short-haul, city tractor kind of stuff," he said. "Today, the guys fresh out of school are running B-trains up

and down the mountains and the senior guys are picking jobs where they can basically stay at home every night.

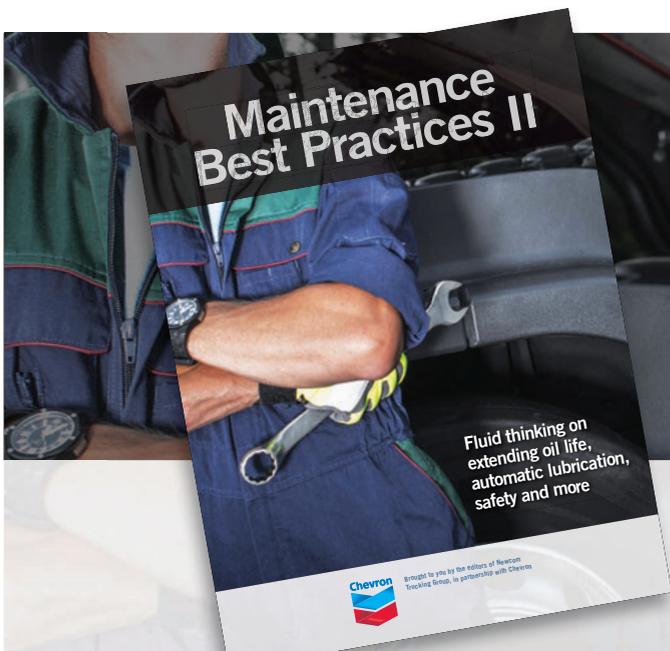
"You can't train a driver in 120 hours. I don't care who they are. You can teach them to drive around the block, but that doesn't make a truck driver."

Plaskett said if the federal government recognized truck driving as a skilled trade, our roads would be much safer.

"I defy you to get into one of these new trucks and deal with the rules, regulations, and technology and tell me that's an unskilled trade," he said. "I'll argue that one with anybody." **TN**



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