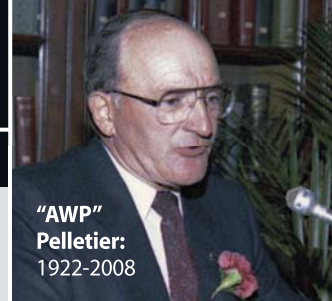


AL PELLETIER: Mack executive was industry leader; role model, PG. 9



"AWP"
Pelletier:
1922-2008

December 2008
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Today's Trucking

The Business Magazine of Canada's Trucking Industry

THE ROAD AHEAD

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WHAT'S HOT IN EUROPE;
and why...
BENZ'S ACTROS
IS SUCH A WINNER

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RIGHT TURN BLOG Right Turn

Senior Editor Marco Beghetto's commentary on trucking news, observations, and random thoughts.

New post | Admin

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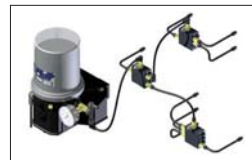
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BIFA WORLDWIDE

Letters

Gentlemen, stop your engines

I've read about lots of expensive solutions for reducing idling but I haven't read anything about the cheapest solution: the driver.

I often see trucks idling for no reason, especially at the truck stop when drivers are inside having supper, a shower, or even watching a movie.

Also, I see trucks idling lined up to get loaded or unloaded. As a flat-bed driver I know it can take a few hours but if you shut your truck off during those moments it is easy to cut idling time by 20 percent or more.

Also at night when temperatures are pretty good (let's say 12 to 18 degrees) you really don't need air conditioning to get a comfortable night's sleep.

In wintertime you can use a bunk heater and that means you can cut idling even more.

I understand you need battery power for your laptop, tv, microwave or—if you're parked at a sidewalk all night—for parking lights.

But there are also easy solutions for that, too.

I am originally from Europe, and the trucks there run on a 24V system.

You can park a European truck all night with the cooler on, use your laptop or tv, leave your parking lights on and start it in the morning.

It shouldn't be difficult to switch to 24V over here. (In Europe they're discussing going to 36 or even 48V.)

Heck, even I let my truck idle from time to time. But I think it's helpful to at least think about ways to cut back and save money.

J.H. Wiertsema,
Kitchener, Ont.

Caution: Rage ramp ahead

If concerns regarding fuel consumption lie behind the new speed-limiter rule, why

are some vehicles like buses, RVs and cranes exempt?

If safety is the concern it seems immeasurably short-sighted to exclude RVs. Truck drivers must undergo far more rigorous education and testing prior to being given the keys to a quarter-million dollars worth of equipment than do RV drivers whose most stringent qualification is having the money to buy the unit of their dreams.

The best way to enforce this legislation is to ignore it.

If you have heard complaints about trucks taking too long to pass before, it will become an epidemic now. With every truck limited to 105 km/h (Even though no two speedometers ever indicate precisely the same speed) every truck in the province will be inching past the competition.

Pity the poor four wheeler who will now be contending with miles of gridlocked trucks in the slow lane as Joe Mustang tries to thread his steed into the eye of the needle at break neck speed, trying to make the exit at the last moment. Safety and efficiency has obviously been the least of your concerns in this legislation.

I found freeway gridlock to be one of the greatest aggravations of life in the banana belt of southern Ontario, though I loved almost everything else about the province. With this ridiculous legislation passed I am glad I am out of there.

Prepare yourselves for a season of road rage the likes of which you have never seen before. I suggest grief counselors and behavior modification therapists at all major exits.

Henry Friesen,
Arbrog, Man.



HOW TO REACH US: We want your feedback. Write editors@todaystrucking.com, or Letters to the Editor, *Today's Trucking*, 451 Attwell Dr., Toronto, ON M9W 5C4; fax: 416/614-8861.



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Beyond today's standards.



By Rolf Lockwood



Still Some Bright Lights

Amidst all the woe, some carriers fared well this past year. Here's how 2008 looked to me.

What a year it's been, what a lot of turmoil. And in the worst of ways, what a great year to be a journalist. There's no glee in that last sentence, I assure you, because I certainly don't enjoy writing about the trouble our industry sees. But the truth is, there's so much happening that's truly significant, and much of it very positive, that we don't have to dwell on the woeful side of things anyway.

A question I'm asked all the time is, 'How do you fill those pages?' My standard response is to say that there's never a shortage of subjects, only a shortage of space to give them. It's been that way for 30 years, really, even in my early motor noter days when I had trouble understanding how this trucking game worked. It seemed pretty complicated—and it actually is—so I just chose subjects I could, with a little work, understand.

Anyway, with this piece I thought I'd review some of the things we've been writing about this past year, the highlights and their implications, and take a trembling look at 2009 and beyond at the same time.

I guess the unpredictable value of the Canuck buck is one of the three biggest stories of the year. As I write this in mid-November, our dollar is continuing to fall and presently sits at just above US\$0.80. That's where we were in the latter half of 2005, and an awful lot lower than the peak of about US\$1.10 that we reached near the end of 2007. I'm guessing we'll stay low for a while, until the price of oil rises again. As it surely will.

Our high dollar caused a bunch of uncompetitive Canadian manufacturing enterprises to expose their weaknesses and many of them failed, permanently, especially in Atlantic Canada. It also made our exported trucking services less competitive and many cross-border carriers suffered as a result.

But worse yet, of course, the faltering U.S. economy meant a lot less freight to be hauled south anyway. That ain't going to change any time soon, I fear, so the loonie's fall and the resultant attractiveness of Canadian international carriers is a bit of a moot point.

The astonishing drop in the price of fuel is not moot at all, on the other hand. It reached crisis proportions in the summer and has since fallen way back, but what does that really mean? It means a sizeable break for a lot of outfits big and small that were on the verge of collapse just a couple of months ago, obviously, and a better bottom line for the healthy operations carrying no debt. But it also delays a necessary culling of the herd, so to speak.

We're at yet another survival-of-the-fittest moment, the most dramatic one anybody can remember, and the fittest aren't being helped by competition from the poorly managed, over-leveraged also-rans. Artificial and temporary competition in a very real sense, because the price of a barrel of oil won't stay at 60 or so bucks for long. Then again, who can predict anything at all any more? Certainly not me.

Amidst all that unpredictability, however, I saw some bright lights. I've noted recently that a trio of major, publicly traded carriers posted nice third-quarter income numbers, for example. Trimac Income Fund's net earnings got up to \$7.6 million, or 24 cents per unit, from \$5.7 million and 19 cents in 2007. Likewise,

They're doing what anyone can do—rigid cost control, expanded sales efforts, intelligent choice of freight mix, and keeping an eye on the long term, not the next load.

Contrans Income Fund hit net earnings of \$11.4 million, which was 40 cents a unit, up from \$9.1 million and 32 cents a year ago.

And at ATS Andlauer Income Fund, a similar story, with revenue rising 14 percent in the third quarter of '08 compared to the previous year. More impressive still, the company says that quarterly linehaul costs fell by 1.48 percent as a result of improved efficiencies. The end result for the quarter was a rise in gross margin from 33.88 percent to 36.53. Impressive, given the times.

Are those three typical? No, but in all likelihood they're doing what anyone can do—rigid cost control, expanded sales efforts, intelligent choices in terms of freight mix, and keeping an eye on the long term, not the next load. At the other end of the size spectrum, I know of 30-truck fleets doing just fine for similar reasons. Challenged, yes, but not truly threatened.

And that's the last thing I'll write for 2008. It remains only to wish you all a fine Christmas and the best of luck in 2009. As with this one, I'm sure there'll be no shortage of things for me to write about next year. ▲

Rolf Lockwood is vice president, editorial, at Newcom Business Media. You can reach him at 416-614-5825 or rolf@todaystrucking.com.

Dispatch

Ban on the Run

Ontario is next in line to ban hand-held cells, even as there's lots of trucking issues still to iron out

This Christmas, truck drivers that haul in Ontario should be asking Santa—or at least their carrier companies—for Bluetooth in their stockings. If you use a cell phone a lot on the road, you're going to need it next year.

Following in the footsteps of Quebec, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, Ontario introduced legislation that forces drivers to hang up their hand-held cell phones while behind the wheel.

Drivers caught talking, texting, emailing or using manual GPS systems could face fines of up to \$500, plus demerit points. Hands-free phone technology such as Bluetooth as well as automatic, dashboard-mounted GPS and telematic

devices will be allowed, however. Most of those latter systems are designed so that the vehicle must be stopped before routing information is entered or changed. The move represents a change of heart for Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty, who—never one to be shy about flipping on policies—said months ago that current careless-driving laws are sufficient to weed out problem drivers.

It's still unclear, though, just what sort of devices will be hands-off for truckers. As *Today's Trucking* reported in an exclusive article earlier this year, Quebec (which joined Newfoundland and Nova Scotia in banning cell phones in May), doesn't specifically make an



Got The Message?

exemption for push-to-talk cellular functions such as Telus' "Mike" and "10-4" from Bell Mobility, which are popular among local and short-haul drivers. And there doesn't appear to be any hands-free voice recognition option for this kind of technology at the moment.

MTO spokeswoman Emna Dhahak confirmed that CB radios, as long as they're hard wired, will not be

banned under the proposed law. However, the language in the legislation so far is very broad as to capture whatever new technologies may be developed in the future. Therefore, hand-held communications and entertainment devices, including "push-to-talk" and email devices like the BlackBerry seemingly fall under the proposal—for now. Dhahak says the government continues to

Notes

work with industry stakeholders like the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) about including possible exemptions in a supporting regulation that would be developed.

For its part, OTA—which previously encouraged a more “sensible” approach where charges would be laid for distracted driving rather than an outright ban on devices—thinks there’s a good chance a provision for the use of these systems will be dealt with following the bill’s passage.

In most jurisdictions that ban cell phones while driving, police routinely check records of drivers involved in serious crashes. Cops can already do that in Ontario when investigating dangerous driving, says Sgt. Pierre Chamberland of the Ontario Provincial Police, but it’s up to the officer on the scene whether they’ll go down that route. Many times, the decision will be based on the severity of the incident. “If you go to a scene of a crash where there’s a fatality, many times you’ll see a cell phone on the ground or the phone will indicate [on the screen] it was in use so, if required, we will do a search warrant and gather those records,” he said in an inter-

view. But can police examine records or even the data stored in the phone when issuing simple traffic tickets for using a hand-held device under the new law? Again, “that would be up to the officer’s discretion and what can and can’t be proved in court,” explains Chamberland. “We can’t just arbitrarily seize people’s phones and look at their screens...there is, though, the issue of compliance. If I say to you ‘can I see your phone?’ And you say, ‘sure go ahead, fill your boots’ then that’s [another matter].”

THE WEST WANTS OUT

Like on many issues, the country is split on cell phone legislation. Ontario will become the fourth province to enact such rules, while New Brunswick, P.E.I., and, reportedly, Manitoba are considering it.

Not surprisingly, Alberta and Saskatchewan have shrugged off similar plans—citing a lack of conclusive evidence that banning electronic distractions leads to safer roads—and even B.C. (one of the more nanny-like provinces) doesn’t have anti-cell regs on its radar.

At least one of Canada’s former top cops justifies this sort of apathy towards in-vehicle cell phone laws. Driver

MACK’S AL ‘AWP’ PELLETIER: 1922-2008

The world of Canadian trucking has always been populated by people of great character and immense resourcefulness, but few—if any—deserve such a description quite as much as **Al Pelletier** did.

Rising from very humble beginnings in Toronto’s east end, he took a mechanic’s licence and ran with it all the way to the top of Mack Trucks, spending 10 years as president, CEO and chairman of the board in Allentown, Pa. And he did it while being admired and often loved by almost everyone he came in contact with along the way. Alfred William Pelletier died on Oct. 21, 2008, at the age

of 86 after a five-year battle with Alzheimers disease.

Al was the son of a French Canadian from New Brunswick and his British war bride. His father died of

wounds suffered in WWI.

Growing up, Al persevered through poverty and left Danforth Technical School to become an apprentice mechanic with the Toronto Transit Commission in 1939. By 1941 he had volunteered for service in the Royal Canadian Navy, ending his WWII experience in 1945 as Chief Petty Officer. At the end of hostilities he returned to the Toronto Transit Commission as a journeyman mechanic. Pelletier’s long career with Mack began in 1952



when he became shop foreman at the company’s Toronto branch. By 1960 he was national service manager, followed by several progressively larger management roles that culminated in his being named president of Mack Canada in 1974.

Not two years later he was named president of Mack Trucks, quickly followed by the additional titles of CEO and chairman of the board. In December of 1985, at the age of 64, he retired from Mack after an illustrious career that included a major expansion of

the Canadian operation and record sales on both sides of the border.

But he didn’t retire at all. Always active in volunteer roles with charity organizations,

he took on a full-time volunteer job after moving back to Toronto with his wife Pat. Continuing his work with young people, Pelletier became president of Junior Achievement of Canada, a role he held until 1990 before retiring more firmly to Naples, Fla. The family’s longstanding tradition of summers spent on Lake of Bays in Ontario’s Muskoka district continued to the end. By any measure, Al Pelletier’s long and productive life was one very well lived.

“He had a way of making you feel special. He will be remembered fondly by all he came in touch with.”

—Brad Grant of Grant Haulage who knew Al from childhood



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compliance will prove to be extremely challenging for law enforcement and do little except to “satisfy some of the critics,” retired RCMP chief superintendent Dale Boire wrote in an *Ottawa Citizen* op-ed. He agrees that there are few “credible statistics, from those jurisdictions that already have a cell phone ban in place, that a new law will reduce accidents.”

While cell phones may be one of the more obvious distractions, they are “just one of the many non-driving functions that most people do while behind the wheel.”

COVERING ALL BASES

As most drivers and carriers already know, negligent in-vehicle activity that results in an accident affects insurance rates. But like most other minor traffic tickets, it's likely that getting convicted for simply using a device would be enough to make insurers adjust premiums. “Every insurer will make its own decision as to what they use in underwriting. But it's possible that some insurers will choose to use that as a factor,” says James Geuzebroek of the Insurance Bureau of Canada. He guesses it might take multiple infractions for insurers to crack down. Though, our own guess is that it wouldn't be wise for truckers to test out that theory. — Russ Fairley

And all such actions, he points out, are already addressed in negligent driving legislation. “We should resist the temptation to legislate what is clearly an issue of education and the use of common sense.”

Compliance

New Year Ushers In Speed Limiters

After nearly four years of planning and intense debate, 2009 will be known as the year of the truck speed

limiter in Canada. As we first revealed online (todaystrucking.com) last month, the province of Quebec has finalized its speed limiter rule and is on pace to have it take effect on New Year's Day.



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A Quebec Transport spokesman confirmed that barring any last-minute setbacks during final consultations, the regulation is scheduled to kick-off Jan. 1. We're also told that the fine in *La Belle Province* for not having a speed limiter set at 105 km/h will be \$350.

The decision negates Quebec's prior promise to enact speed limiters only after every other province follows suit. Ontario, which was the first province to draft legislation for mandatory speed limiters on trucks, had still not formally approved its own rule at press time, but a Ministry of Transportation (MTO) official admits that is expected to happen shortly and the province hopes to mirror implementation with

ONTARIO DISCOVERS HYBRID INCENTIVES

The Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) has seemingly cashed in some political capital at Queen's Park. On Halloween, hybrid truck lovers got a treat as the Liberal government greenlit a pilot program to accelerate market penetration of hybrid trucks in the province—a policy the OTA has lobbied for years for.

Under the four-year, \$15-million Green Commercial Vehicle Program, select carriers will get grants to either purchase new hybrid and alternative-fuel vehicles or retrofit heavy-duty vehicles with anti-idling technologies, such as APUs. Ontario becomes the first province to offer incentives for hybrid technology. Such programs have already been available in the U.S., which has helped advance purchases. Applications

for the program will be available November 28, 2008. It will be retroactive to August 2007.

Around 2,500 commercial vehicles are expected to be eligible for conversion to hybrid and alternative fuels (natural gas and propane) and use anti-idling technology. "While the [program] is modest in terms of the overall grants available to the industry, it is a good start and something we can build upon," says David Bradley, OTA president. "While we have yet to see all of the details, we think MTO is taking the right approach."

OTA continues to pursue other elements of the enviroTruck initiative—weight allowances for wide-base single tires, an accommodation in the dimensional regulations for tractor and trailer aerodynamic enhancements, and longer combination vehicles.



GREEN MACHINE: Canada's first incentive program for hybrid purchases is modest, but a "good start," says OTA.

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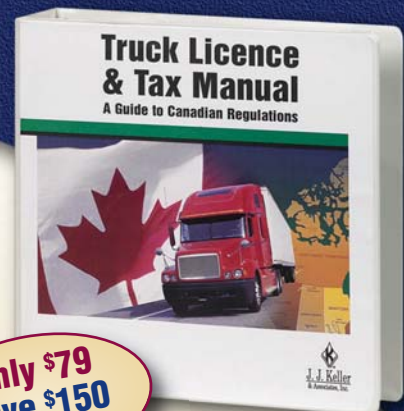
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Quebec on Jan. 1, 2009. MTO spokesman Bob Nichols said there would be an educational enforcement period of six months in Ontario after the rule takes effect. During that time, truckers who do not have the engine ECM set at a maximum speed of 105 km/h would not receive monetary fines, but will be warned of the rules. Marc Cadieux of the Quebec Trucking Association (QTA) says he's not sure if the length of the "soft" enforcement period has yet been determined there, but it'll more than likely be the same as its neighbor.

While QTA and Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) member carriers strongly support the mandate, the sentiment from other truckers and industry insiders has

been mixed. Many smaller fleets and owner-operators have been vocally against the idea. The Owner-Operators Business Association of Canada (OBAC), along with the U.S. based Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA), have led the drive to have the rule shelved—with little effect. OOIDA, however, has threatened to sue the Ontario government on the grounds that speed limiters violate NAFTA—a claim that OTA says has no merit.

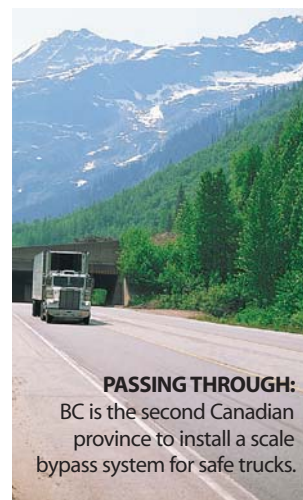
Asked if any 11th-hour comments by critics convinced officials to revise anything in the controversial rule, Nichols said: "the general information and guts of the bill remain, as far as I'm aware."

Most fleets will already have the codes to set speed limiters themselves. Those that don't will have to bring their trucks into a dealer or coordinate with another maintenance provider for a cost of about \$100.

Inspections

Green Light, Red Light

They'll have to prove they are safe and compliant, but if they can, truckers will soon be allowed to bypass weigh stations in B.C. The province's transportation ministry is putting the Green Light Transportation System through a three-month pilot period, with hopes for full production by June 2009.



PASSING THROUGH: BC is the second Canadian province to install a scale bypass system for safe trucks.

During the testing phase, about 500 vehicles will help shape the system into deployable form. The department will be relying on a cross-section of short-, medium-, and long-haul participants during the initial phase.



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heard on the Street

“We’ve done driver consultations and spent a lot of time in industry consultations,” notes Robin Dunn, senior business analyst, business services, B.C. Ministry of Transportation. “There’s a lot of things we could do, but we need an early win and then we’ll grow incrementally.”

So how does it work?

Not so dissimilar from the Partners in Compliance (PIC) program in Alberta, approved trucks, once weighed at an inspection station in B.C., will be given pre-clearance for all stations in the system for the next 12 hours.

Automated Vehicle Identification (AVI) equipment and Weigh-In-Motion technology installed at the stations will identify a truck through its transponder. A green light means the driver can continue down the highway and a red light means, basically, “get in here.”

“Our system is sophisticated and complicated to implement because we built it as an intelligent network,” says Dunn. “We’re possibly the first jurisdiction in North America to take this approach.”

Currently the weigh stations hooked up to the network are Port Mann eastbound, Golden eastbound and westbound, and Hope and Kamloops in between. Once the system is in full swing, more weigh stations will be upgraded and included in the network.

To prevent abuse, a random report factor will be implemented, so there’s a slight chance a truck will still have to report to a scale within its 12-hour Green

■ **MACKIE MOVING SYSTEMS** marked its 80th anniversary with an open house celebration that attracted 200-plus guests from far and wide, along with a bevy of local politicians. Company chairman Ross Mackie, grandson of the founder, left the speaking to sons Norm and Dean as well as president Gilles Bernier, but proudly led tours



Ross Mackie, with sons Scott, Dean, Norm and local MP Colin Carrie.

of the head office and the 115,000 sq ft of space that serves as the main facility in its warehousing and storage division. Mackie also has another 120,000 sq ft of warehouse space in Mississauga, Ont., and Montreal.

The Mackie Group is a family-oriented company and nowadays a diversified enterprise that

Light period. “It’s a system that incents good behavior,” says Dunn.

The program will be free to enroll, aside from the \$25 cost for a transponder. The initial random report percentage will be based on current NSC ratings.

Alberta revitalized the similar PIC program two years ago and the two provinces are currently working out a reciprocity agreement. There are some differences in the two programs, though. For PIC, a company has to prove its safety record to administrators on a quarterly basis and in turn gets to bypass weigh stations in Alberta 95 percent of the time, all the time.

In B.C., while the transponder takes care of the reporting for you, there is a requirement to enter the weigh stations once every 12 hours and bypassing can range from 95 to 40 percent of the time.

One thing the two provinces have agreed on is taking the bypass initiative beyond their own borders.

— Steve MacLeod

Economy **Oh-Oh For '09** **OTA Survey Finds**

Any veteran hockey player knows that sometimes you need to go back to move forward. According to a recent Business Pulse e-Survey con-

cludes a commercial and household moving division under the North American Van Lines flag. Other divisions cover general freight, high-value freight, specialized auto hauling, trailer rentals, and there’s even a Harley-Davidson dealership.

■ There might be something in the water in Manitoba, or it might just be a coincidence, but Canada’s best driver and dispatcher both call our country’s middle province home. **Burton “Bud” Rush** from Oakbank, Man., was recently named the 2008 **Canadian Trucking Alliance/Volvo Trucks** Canada National Driver of the Year. At the same banquet, **Janet Murray** of Warren, Man., was named Canada’s 2008 Dispatcher of the Year by **SHAW TRACKING** and the CTA. Rush is a transport driver with Armstrong Moving and Storage—a division of United Van Lines Canada—and has driven 6.6 million collision-free kilometres in 40 years of commercial truck driving. Janet Murray is a dispatcher with Payne Transportation in Winnipeg.

■ **FIRST TRUCK CENTRE** of Edmonton celebrated its 30th birthday last month by adding a Vancouver Freightliner dealership to its network. First Truck Centre Vancouver operates out of a 68,000-sq-ft facility and offers a complete line of services, including a body shop with a heavy-duty frame straightener and 60-ft down-draft paintbooth.

ducted by the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA), there are major changes afoot in trucking—many alarming, sure, but the endgame isn’t all that bad for the capacity balance in this industry.

The survey found there’s definitely some northern blowback from the struggling U.S. economy. A large majority of the 90 carrier respondents indicated that the financial crisis stateside has had a significant impact on capacity and the balance of freight for Canadian carriers. (The survey corresponded with the recent troubles on Wall Street in early October).

Thirty-five percent of respondents said they were

TURN HERE

He's Italian and talks with his hands a lot. He's funny (he thinks so, anyway). He foams at the mouth talking about soccer. On second thought, *Today's Trucking* senior editor Marco Beghetto seldom speaks. He retorts. He's also an industry watcher extraordinaire who has a thing or two to say about all the nonsense and common sense that pervades the Canadian trucking industry. With that in mind, Beghetto launched the

Right Turn Blog a couple of months ago (Blog, is short for 'Web Log' by the way), with a goal to assemble and discuss daily transport material from around the world, while bridging those conventional issues with the amusing; the absurd; the political and the environmental. No matter your point of view, we promise this is the most informative—not to mention, entertaining—trucking blog on the Net.

You can participate in any discussion by going to www.todaystrucking.com/blog/. In the meantime here's a taste:

try requires a healthy economy and 2009 is shaping up to be more of a challenge than 2008," Bradley said.

And in retreat, you want to be careful about sticking the puck in your own net.

Players

Capacity Spin Cycle

As one carrier leaves, another returns through this enduring turnstile of trucking capacity.

Not atypical of what's taking place in every corner of Canada, two fleets, half a country apart, spent November heading in complete opposite directions.

TransForce, for one, has decided to close Transpel, one of the specialized truckload carriers under its corporate umbrella, *Today's Trucking* first learned.

Transpel—acquired by the Quebec-based trucking giant four years ago—was mainly a container hauling and flat-deck carrier.

A number of factors explain TransForce's decision, Sylvain Desaulniers, vice-president of Human Resources, told us. "The company was having trouble and last April, we made some changes to the direction and made some decisions to turn around Transpel but it was impossible to do it," he said. Desaulniers admitted there were some wage issues as well—somewhat similar to what TransForce's Highland Transport subsidiary experienced earlier this year—but in the end it was the souring U.S. economy and difficulties in the container sector out of the Montreal port that

The screenshot shows the Today's Trucking.com website interface. At the top, there are navigation links for NEWS, PRINT EDITION, DECISION CENTERS, FULL STORY, PRODUCT WATCH, TRUCK STATS, and INDUSTRY EVENTS. A search bar is visible with a 'Search' button. Below the navigation, there are several menu items: RIGHT TURN BLOG, DECISIONCENTERS, THEFULLSTORY, and PRODUCTWATCH. The main content area displays a blog post titled 'A Few Signal Bars Short on Common Sense' by Marco Beghetto, dated November 6, 2008. The post discusses the safety of cell phone use while driving and the impact of cell phone bans in various jurisdictions.

“pessimistic” about the overall outlook of the industry, while 41 percent said they were “unsure” of what the future holds. Only 24 percent indicated they have any confidence going forward.

Very few carriers said that volumes were improving either in Canada or into the U.S. compared to three months ago. About 65 percent said volumes were “the same” inter-provincially, while 25 percent said shipments improved within Canada. For southbound lanes, the view was more circumspect, with only 18 percent saying volumes have improved. About 50 percent said they were worse.

It was a split decision for northbound backhauls (or reverse headhauls, depending on how you look at them these days). About 28 percent said volumes were improving and 24 percent indicated they were decreasing. Worse, cash flow is increasingly under assault as customers take longer to pay freight bills. About 45 percent of respondents said receivables are being delayed compared to a year ago. At the same time, access to credit is tightening (65 percent)—most likely as a result of banks and credit markets collapsing south of the border. But while there's a lot of concern in the industry, there are also indi-

cations that capacity will continue to adjust and be brought more in-line with demand for transportation service, notes OTA President David Bradley.

The survey indicates as much. Over 50 percent of carriers expect capacity to exit the market over the next six months as carriers go out of business and the driver shortage worsens. Only 18 percent think we'll see more slack capacity. “Trucks are not going to go away; they will remain the preferred mode of freight transportation regardless of what is happening in the broader economy. Obviously, however, a healthy trucking indus-

took the largest toll on the company. Added Johanne Dean, VP of Marketing and Communications: "Like any corporation, we tried to correct the situation when something goes wrong, and we did it on many levels. Unfortunately, despite all the efforts made, it was just impossible to save Transpel." Meanwhile, prairie hauler Winnipeg Motor Express (WME) got a new lease on life. Speaking with *todaystrucking.com* in early November, company president Brian Page confirmed that the carrier survived the last six months under creditor protection and is now gearing up to resume operations as normal. Page is part of an ownership consortium that won a bidding process to buy the company from a former group, of which Page and another executive were also large stakeholders in.

WME is now about 30-percent smaller than the 243-truck (80 owner-ops), 420-trailer fleet it was at the start of 2008, but Page insists the leaner, more efficient company has a fighting chance in the volatile New Year. "We believe tougher times will continue through 2009. But we took that into account when we did our

modeling. We did not put any growth into our forecast. In fact we basically shrunk below what our optimum level was to make sure that if we had to shrink some more the ability would be there to do so," he said. "Flexibility in this business environment is probably the primary key to success."

Roadways

Mainelining Freight

A bold plan to build an east-west toll highway across Maine that would connect southwestern New Brunswick with Quebec near Sherbrooke was one of several highlights at the 2008 International Transportation Summit, hosted in Halifax in the fall by the Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association. (APTA).

The proposed corridor idea was first made public in the summer of 2007 by Cianbro Corp., one of Maine's largest construction outfits, Cianbro has since partnered with Berger Group, engineers. The idea is to connect the Maine/New Brunswick border at Calais/St. Stephen running northwest to the

Maine/Quebec border at Coburn Gore/Woburn.

A billion-dollar project, it's to be financed with private money only. As well, it's hoped the deep-water ports of Nova Scotia are soon going to attract large container ships coming from India and the Far East to North America through the Suez Canal.

The most direct route from Halifax to Montreal and Toronto as well as Chicago and other midwestern U.S. cities is clearly through Maine. Compared to the Trans Canada Highway route via Riviere du Loup, the planned 350-km Maine toll road would shave some four

the crossing at Woburn, Quebec to Sherbrooke. Cianbro's Laurette Laverdiere told the APTA audience that the highway, not being part of the Interstate system, would employ Canadian size-and-weight laws. She also said modern electronic border clearance and security tools would be employed to make the crossing process easy. Confidently, she said the road would be ready in 2014. The next speaker, however, brought things down to earth. Paul Morris, an executive director in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, said things might not be so simple. "There should not be an expectation

that our security measures are going to go away," he said. Morris also noted that the Coburn Grove, Maine crossing is one of many 70-year-old border facilities in the U.S. that badly needs upgrading. It's not

even vaguely capable of handling truck volumes like those that this toll road would bring, he said, and the timeline for the necessary upgrading is typically at least seven years. ▲



MAKING GOOD MARITIME: The new road could shave six hours off the Halifax to Montreal run.

to six hours and more than 300 km off the normal Halifax-to-Montreal trip. Cianbro, not incidentally, would also undertake to build a new four-lane highway covering the 90 km from

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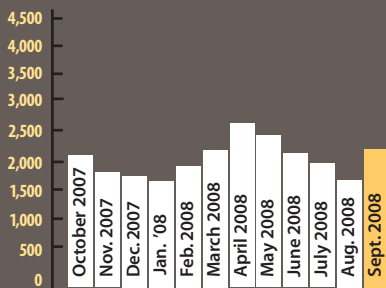


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Canada: Truck Sales Index

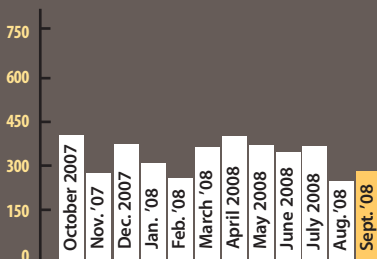
September 2008

CLASS 8	This Month	YTD '08	YTD '07	Share
International	609	4450	4288	23.8%
Freightliner	379	3443	3763	18.4%
Kenworth	319	3102	3193	16.6%
Peterbilt	246	2053	2325	11.0%
Volvo	230	1773	1360	9.5%
Sterling	181	1627	1980	8.7%
Mack	137	1331	1238	7.1%
Western Star	98	934	1455	5.0%
TOTAL	2199	18,713	19,602	100.0%



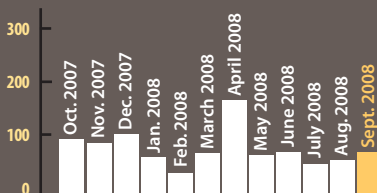
12-month Class-8 Sales

CLASS 7	This Month	YTD '08	YTD '07	Share
International	109	995	911	34.0%
Peterbilt	57	541	489	18.5%
Kenworth	57	529	499	18.1%
Freightliner	25	347	449	11.8%
Hino Canada	23	303	370	10.3%
Sterling	13	215	243	7.3%
General Motors*	0	0	531	0.0%
Ford*	0	0	104	0.0%
TOTAL	284	2930	3596	100.0%



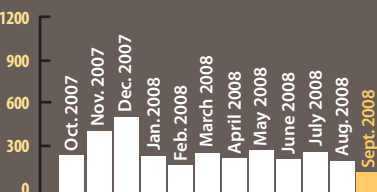
12-month Class-7 Sales

CLASS 6	This Month	YTD '08	YTD '07	Share
International	30	293	207	49.0%
Hino Canada	15	156	308	26.1%
Freightliner	18	110	89	18.4%
Sterling	3	39	24	6.5%
General Motors*	0	0	130	0.0%
Ford*	0	0	102	0.0%
TOTAL	66	598	860	100.0%



12-month Class-6 Sales

CLASS 5	This Month	YTD '08	YTD '07	Share
Sterling	69	676	129	36.7%
Hino Canada	39	504	600	27.4%
International	21	444	436	24.1%
Kenworth	6	176	0	9.6%
Freightliner	0	41	158	2.2%
Ford*	0	0	1823	0.0%
General Motors*	0	0	1092	0.0%
TOTAL	135	1841	4238	100.0%



12-month Class-5 Sales

Canada: Provincial Sales (Class 8)

CLASS 8	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PE	NL	CDA
International	25	121	8	9	315	104	8	2	0	17	609
Freightliner	25	76	21	12	117	83	35	10	0	0	379
Kenworth	24	124	22	7	74	59	2	7	0	0	319
Peterbilt	18	87	38	8	47	36	11	1	0	0	246
Volvo Trucks	7	10	4	21	122	47	13	6	0	0	230
Sterling	9	24	16	2	75	43	1	11	0	0	181
Mack	9	17	10	22	59	13	5	2	0	0	137
Western Star	20	36	2	3	21	8	5	3	0	0	98
TOTAL	137	495	121	84	830	393	80	42	0	17	2199

Sources: Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers Association and Ward's Communication.

* The Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association, which supplies these numbers, reports that it is in the process of making changes to its monthly GVW sales stats report. Until that project is completed, the sales stats report no longer contains Ford or General Motors monthly sales numbers or current YTD numbers. Because of this, we've defaulted these totals to zero for the time being. CVMA indicates that reported sales numbers for both OEMs will resume for the June 2008 monthly report. Thank you.

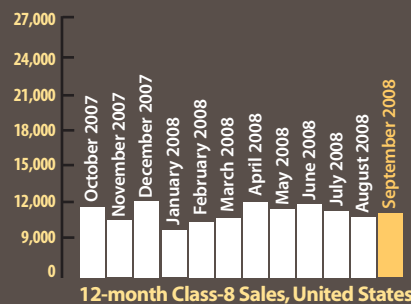


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U.S.: Retail Truck Sales

CLASSE 8	This Month	YTD '08
Freightliner	2781	24,966
International	2617	22,807
Peterbilt	1525	12,905
Kenworth	1305	12,065
Volvo	850	9621
Mack	1006	8832
Sterling	666	5857
Western Star	139	945
Other	2	107
TOTAL	10,891	98,105



12-month Class-8 Sales, United States



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CONTAIN YOURSELF

From coast to coast and even in the middle of the prairies, there's evidence that shippers are bullish about container traffic.

For one, the bagpiper who has for generations welcomed visitors to Cape Breton Island might soon be welcoming container shipments from around the world because in September, Melford International Terminal was given the green light to proceed with a \$300 container facility on the mainland side of the Canso Strait.

It should be up and running by 2011.

The terminal will be the closest North American mainland port to Europe, Asia and India, via the Suez Canal.

Earlier this year, Loblaw's started work on a huge intermodal facility on the outskirts of Regina, and when it's up to capacity it will serve up to 1,400 trucks per week.

And last but, well, most, the gigantic Prince Rupert terminal is still in growth mode. The first six months of 2008 saw 42,555 TEUs move through the Prince Rupert's Fairview terminal and the volumes of imports have been rising, in marked contrast to declines at other North American ports. Phase two of the Prince Rupert Container Terminal project is scheduled to start early 2009.

Time for a Little Off-roading?

intermodal *Why more carriers are slicing off larger pieces of the intermodal pie. By Steve Bouchard*

You've read about the fuel shortage and the driver shortage. Well, the *Wall Street Journal* tells us that the United States is on the verge of experiencing a container shortage.

And in its May, 2008 report, *Intermodal Market Trends and Statistics*, the Intermodal Association of North America (IANA) indicated that for the quarter ending March 31, 2008, the domestic volume of containers had increased by five percent to 892,417 units, compared to 2007. It was the 10th consecutive quarter during which an increase was registered.

However, the downturn in the

American economy has led to a slight reduction in cross-border intermodal transport during the first part of this year. Between January and March of 2008, the U.S.A. saw a decrease of 5.2 percent, the most important quarterly decrease in the sector in nine years.

As IANA President Tom Malloy says, "once we have gotten over the current economic tumult, imports should return to a decent level. Gains in the domestic market are encouraging, and if the industry can maintain these gains when imports rebound, we will be in a good position to achieve even better growth in the future".

THE CANADIAN MARKET

Closer to home, we are beginning to feel a boom in domestic intermodal transportation.

Benoit Risi is the General Manager of Prolam in Cap Saint-Ignace, Que. Prolam manufactures trailer floors and works closely with Asian manufacturers of intermodal containers.

He says it is clear that the increased cost of energy and limited capacity are forcing shippers and carriers to look for various means of reducing their costs.

"And one of the means to do it is to use rail," he says.

Street Smarts

“Carriers react by buying domestic intermodal containers that can be used on the road [hailed on a container chassis or even a flatbed trailer], and then moved on rail.”

“Carriers like J.B. Hunt and Schneider are progressively giving up traditional transport in favor of the container. Even Wal-Mart has decided to use more rail transport to reduce its transportation

costs. That these companies adopt such a strategy, is a significant sign for me,” he says.

But if intermodal transportation has become attractive for some shipping, it obviously has its limits.

For Jacques Roy, a professor of logistics operations management at *Hautes Etudes Commerciale*, which is affiliated with the University of Quebec in Montreal, the rise of sea and rail—stimulated by Asian and

European markets—is undeniable. But he has serious reservations about how much of the North American freight volume could actually be moved by rail.

“I would be surprised if shippers that want to see their goods delivered on a fixed schedule and with a certain reliability turn heavily to intermodal rail transportation,” he told *Today's Trucking*.

His reservations stem mainly from the limited capacity of the railway and the congestion being created in yards like those of CN in Chicago. “It’s all very well to increase the capacity of rail on this side of the border, but when everything is blocked in Chicago, there’s not much advantage. I’m not convinced that rail transport is able to absorb a large increase in demand.”

The main problem that plagues intermodal transportation? Speed. Or lack thereof.

At the same time as shippers are trying to decrease costs they’re also more sensitive to delays. In certain cases, goods can spend as much time if not more in a marshaling yard than in transit.

“This has always been the problem with intermodal,” affirms Roy. “But in the last few years, things have improved, for example with projects like Expressway, which guarantees fixed delivery times.”

Expressway was launched in 1998 by Canadian Pacific to provide trucking companies with a complementary service designed to reduce their costs and be more efficient.

The Expressway principle is simple: a road trailer (of any type, it doesn’t have to be a container) is rolled onto and secured on a special shock-absorbing rail platform and is transported by train along the—at this point in time—Montreal-Toronto-Detroit corridor.

According to Expressway, the trains with these trailers have highest priority of all the trains on the route. Currently, Expressway capacity is four trains per day. Each train can have up to 105 trailers. Trailers are ready to be hitched to a road tractor in less than an hour.

Stéphane Gauthier, Expressway General Manager in Montreal, has noticed a recent marked increase in Expressway intermodal services. Trucking companies that were not so receptive just a short time ago are now knocking at his door, he says. ▲

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He Trucks, He Scores!

truck show *What hundreds of eastern truckers picked up on their recent visit to Quebec. By Today's Trucking Staff*

Your freight might be off and your trucks against the fence, but whatever you do, don't freak out. Because if the person at the top; a.k.a., you, panics, so will everybody else.

That advice came from former NHL coaching legend Jacques Demers, the keynote speaker at the Friday VIP luncheon at this year's CamExpo, held early November at the Centre de Foires de Quebec in the provincial capital.

Demers won the Stanley Cup primarily because of his leadership and motivational abilities—attributes he happily shared with the audience of truckers from all over eastern Canada. "When you have a bad season," he said, "it's time for the coach to stand up and show leadership. And it's during the bad times that you see the real leaders."

And if the local trucking industry was going through hard times, there was little evidence of it at the show. Attendance was just as strong as it was at the last CamExpo; and the people who did show up were more than pleased with what they found.

Said Frank Mangifesto of Truck-Lite: "Friday, we were able to talk to decision-makers from the big fleets. Saturday and Sunday were more focused on technical issues. People wanted to be informed and asked great technical questions."

Among the more pressing issues, according to Cummins' Pierre Archambault, was the requirements for meeting 2010 emissions standards.

It wasn't only dealers who benefited. Louis-Charles Pelletier, who works with Levio Transport, said he promises to return to the next edition of CamExpo. "I like to know what is new in my industry, and that's what CamExpo gives me."

CamExpo is a production of Newcom Business Media, which also publishes *Today's Trucking*, *highwaySTAR*, *Transport Routier*, *Logistics*, *Truck and Trailer* as well as *Truck and Trailer West* magazines. Newcom also produces *Truck World* and *ExpoCam*.

Newcom's Show Division Manager Elizabeth McCullough says the show, which coincided with the historic 400th

birthday of Quebec City, was a welcome addition to the local business scene.

"Visitors had the opportunity to see new products and technology from more than 200 companies from across Canada and the U.S.," she said.

McCullough says she was particularly pleased at the "full-house" turnout to the Energotest presentation by FERIC/FP Innovations. Presenters were Yves Provencher and Rejean Laflamme.

Energotest 2008 is part of the Project Innovation Transport, which is examining



Mario Dumont

various technologies designed to enhance fuel efficiency and minimize greenhouse gases within the road-transportation industry.

Finally, a surprise Saturday visitor to the show was Action Democratique du Quebec Leader Mario Dumont. Days before the show opened, Quebec Premier Jean Charest called the election and Dumont took advantage of CamExpo because the elite of the trucking industry would be there, and well, who better than a trucker to gladhand? ▲

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Stressed For Success

safety *My Christmas Wish: Wisdom, patience, and a fret-free New Year.*

By Brian Botham

I recently had a driver who, not more than a week after passing a refresher course in vehicle inspections, was ordered out of service for something so minor it makes me cringe.

But the circumstances around the situation taught me some valuable lessons and I realized that what all of us could use in our Christmas stockings this season might be patience.

The driver's training was based on Schedule 1 and stressed how each item must be inspected and each defect reported.

A few days later, she got stopped for a roadside inspection and was put through a Schedule 1 roadside—paperwork, truck, trailer, everything.

Obviously she felt very confident, as her pre-trip inspection had been well documented and she found no defects.

But guess what.

She was placed Out of Service, simply because the blue (supply) line between the truck and trailer had a very tiny wear mark and the inspector could see the white underneath.

Was the line leaking? No.

Was this a defect under Schedule 1? No.

Is this a defect under CVSA Out of Service criteria? Yes.

So we train the drivers properly, according to the new rules, we make sure they implement the training and they document their inspec-

tions and yet they are still placed OOS because Schedule 1 does not mirror the OOS criteria published by CVSA because, according to a government representative, it

and which side will claim they were right and the other was wrong. You can bet that both camps will find plenty of ammunition to support their claims. As the saying goes,



would have been too difficult to put all of the OOS criteria on Schedule 1.

Stressor number-two: It's time to worry about speed limiters. Ontario and Quebec will probably be implementing their speed-limiter regulations very soon. This has been a very hot topic and whether you are on the pro or con side of this issue, the reality is if you operate into these two provinces in '09 it is something you will have to be in compliance with.

I think it'll be very interesting to see how it plays out

some people use statistics like a drunk uses a lamp-post; more for support than for illumination.

Another touchy subject will be the cell-phone ban.

In-cab distractions are far more plentiful than they used to be and can include laptops, satellite screens, ipods, dvd players, and of course all those things drivers strap to their sunvisors.

I have to admit I'm amused at the thought of a police officer or Ministry inspector typing a trucker's licence and registration numbers into his

dash-mounted computer because the trucker has been stopped for some in-cab distraction.

In the end, I'm sure the ban on handheld cell phones will be implemented and lived with, but just like with inspections and limiters, I guarantee there'll be some questionable calls made and you'll find yourself having to take sides in disputes.

Here's another scenario that came across my desk recently.

A driver has maxed out his 70 hours and is now pulling in to a truck stop to take a reset. During this rest period, the driver shows all of the time spent at the truck stop as off duty. Right?

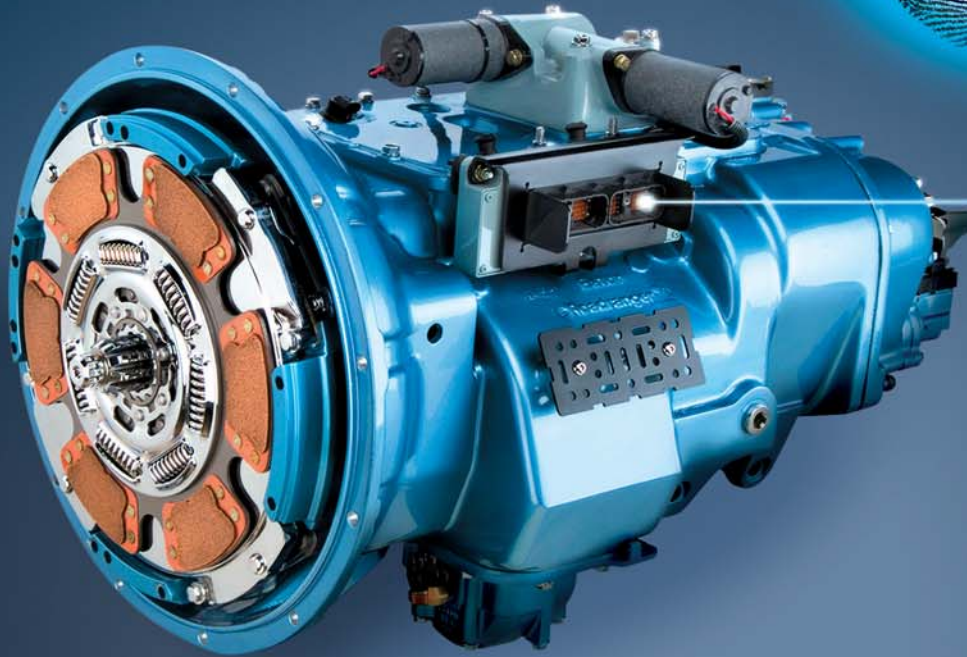
Wrong. This is considered a falsification. The driver must show exactly how much of the off-duty time was spent off duty and in the sleeper.

If he gets goes in for a shower or bite to eat and then returns to the truck for a nap and then back in for a meal, he must draw the lines up and down from off duty to sleeper berth as it occurs. Go figure.

For Christmas, my sincerest wish is that you find the patience you're going to need to deal with all these new high-tech stresses. Because it's pretty clear that like it or not, there's plenty more where these came from. ▲

Brian Botham, CDS, is a certified director of safety through NATMI. He can be reached at 519-533-3656 or bbotham@cmvsafety.ca.

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Keep On Cybertruckin'

technology *High-tech trucking's fun, but only if you put your people first.*

By Dave MacNevin

More history is made by secret handshakes than by battles, bills, and proclamations" — John Barth

Remember how your Dad always said "Once you get to my age you'll know what I'm talking about."?

Of course I never listened to him. I already knew everything. But now, I've reached the age Dad was when he doled out that advice. I've also been in trucking going on 38 years.

And it's a world that has changed dramatically over that time. So it's my turn to share some of my hard-earned wisdom.

Trucking has embraced state-of-the-art technologies once privy to NASA and the CIA.

On-board satellite tracking has replaced the tachograph. Logs are not written but typed on to the keyboard. Even roadside boxes talk to trucks as they pass by, if they're in the Partners in Compliance (PIC) program. (See "Green light, red light," page 15).

So I'm tempted to respond to Dad that he wouldn't understand such things.

But, wait. Turns out there is one thing that's been constant throughout all this time; and it's more important than all the technology and wizardry.

Remember when they promised us a computerized society? They lied.

The fact is, even though we're long past the days when the supervisor, key in hand,

walked out to insert the tachograph (a.k.a. tattletale) card in your truck, there are more and more people behind these high-tech processes.

There is only one constant that remains in trucking today and as far as I can see, it's people. They might be communicating via keyboard rather than telephone but really, all that does is allow the driver to expedite the information that used to have to wait until he returned or called in later.

There is less wasted time at truck stops and payphones, and drivers are better prepared

Cybertruckin' is exciting, amazing, and impressive but it doesn't get the load on to your dock.

than they were in the past, but that's where the high-tech stops.

My mantra for technology in trucking is "Fear not the Computer. Use it but don't rely on it". (Let's not forget Y2K. We have to be able to survive a computer crash. They're nowhere near as bad as a truck crash.)

I think for every dollar you spend on computers, you should think about spending a similar amount on your people. I'm talking about everyone from the drivers through clerks and sales folks to the operations guys and yes the IT-types, too.

One huge reason for investing in people is the demise of the family firm. Trucking has historically been run generation-by-generation. Personally, I've worked for—among others—the Arnold Bros., the Robinsons of

dad. And when it comes to treating people humanely, nothing has changed since the tachograph days.

So to all those graduates full of ambition bent on improving by techno-morphing this trucking industry, put down



Yellowknife, and now, I'm with the Evasiuk family of Whitecourt Transport.

In each of those cases, the successors learned the business at the supper table. They inhaled trucking with their breakfasts.

Nowadays, family life equals fewer kids and more careers. Handing over the reigns to the young guns is going the way of Commodore 64 and Pong games. So as the family businesses are replaced by mergers and acquisitions, we have to be careful not to lose the people-side of our business.

Truckers raised in the businesses never forget how deals are made and how service is delivered. They are always aware that those aren't megabytes backing that 53-ft. load into your dock; they are somebody else's brother or

that wireless contraption for a minute and take a close look at what drives these trucks and their money-making cargo.

Make the machines fit the people, not the other way around.

Cybertruckin' is exciting, amazing, and impressive but it doesn't get the load on to your dock or on to the shelves. That, my friend, takes something other than bits and bytes. It takes looking in the mirror and remembering what your father told you. ▲

Dave MacNevin is Operations Manager at Whitecourt Transport. In his 36-year career, he has managed operations for—among others—Molson Breweries, Texport, Arnold Bros, Public Freightways and RTL Robinson. MacNevin also was a highway driver for almost a decade.

The search has begun for the
2009 highwaySTAR of the Year

We're looking for one driver who embodies the term professional. A driver with that certain outlook on life and the industry that sets them apart from the rest. A driver who gives to the community, operates with the highest regard for other road users, and who generally sits tall in the saddle. In short, we're looking for a driver with STAR quality to be the 2009 highwaySTAR of the year.

The highwaySTAR of the Year award is open to

ALL drivers — company drivers and owner-operators alike. If you know someone worthy of such an honour, please take the time to complete the nomination form and return it to us as soon as you can. We'll be presenting the award during ExpoCam 2009 in Montreal, Place Bonaventure, on Saturday April 18, 2009. Forms are available on-line at www.highwaystar.ca, www.todaystrucking.com, or use the form on the opposite page to tell us about your nominee.

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Please take a moment to NOMINATE someone today.

The highwaySTAR of the Year may be nominated by anyone with a business or personal relationship to the nominee. We will conduct follow up interviews with both the nominee and the nominator to ensure the accuracy of the information provided.

I WOULD LIKE TO NOMINATE:

Name: _____

Company driver Owner-operator

Current employer/contracted to _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Tel. home: _____ Bus: _____ Mobile: _____

NOMINATED BY:

Name: _____

Relationship to nominee: family/spouse ; employer ; co-worker ; friend .

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Tel. home: _____ Bus: _____ Mobile: _____

TELL US ABOUT YOUR CHOICE. USE ADDITIONAL SPACE IF NECESSARY.

In your own words please explain why you think this person is deserving of the title highwaySTAR of the Year: Discuss their unique approach to work, their problem solving skills and business skills. Detail any courses taken, and certifications earned. Give examples of extraordinary customer service or any unique hobbies or extra-curricular interests including any community involvement.

Remember, we can only judge your nominee by what you tell us. You may make a stronger case by sending additional information on a separate sheet. Feel free to include supporting documentation with your nomination.

FAX THIS FORM TO (416) 614-8861. This form can also be found at www.highwaystar.ca and can be electronically submitted. You may e-mail your nomination with all of this information to rolf@highwaystar.ca, or, mail this entry to:

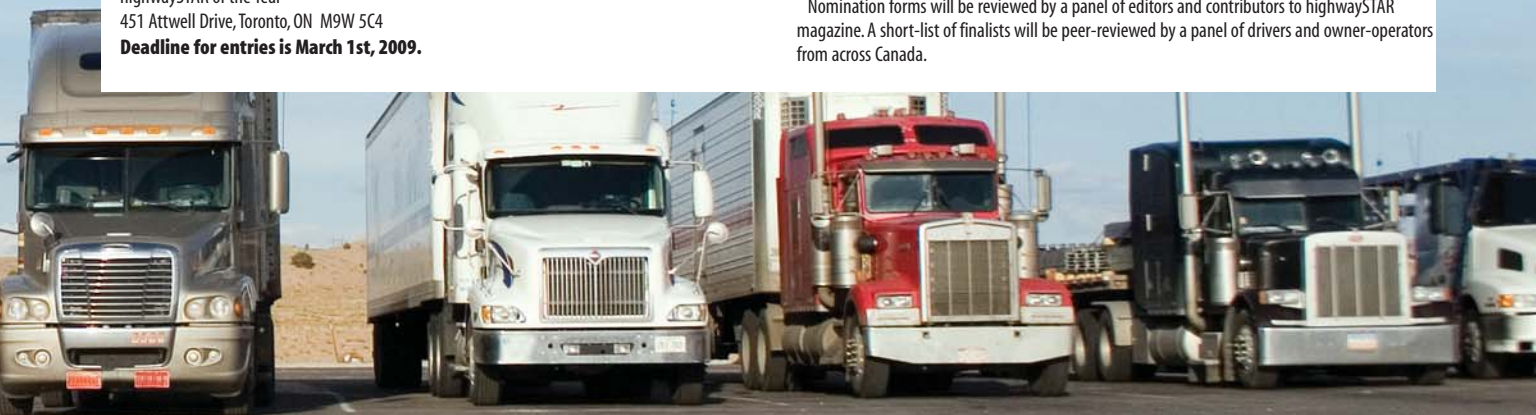
highwaySTAR of the Year
451 Attwell Drive, Toronto, ON M9W 5C4
Deadline for entries is March 1st, 2009.

Description of selection criteria

In keeping with highwaySTAR's mandate, we are looking for a well-rounded, community-minded company driver or owner-operator who is active outside the trucking industry and takes the image of the industry personally. While driving record, years of service, and driving habits are important; they will be considered along with other aspects of the driver as a whole.

All nominees will be awarded points based on the extent of their community and industry involvement, efforts to improve our industry's image, general outlook on life, safety record, and years of service.

Nomination forms will be reviewed by a panel of editors and contributors to highwaySTAR magazine. A short-list of finalists will be peer-reviewed by a panel of drivers and owner-operators from across Canada.



Outlook

A year-end look at trucking down the Trans Canada

BY PETER CARTER

Wounds need a hit of salt? How about this? Not only are North American consumers buying fewer goods than they used to, the things that they are buying are a lot smaller.

Even econo cars are littler than they used to be. You can fit far more Smart Cars on a trailer than you could, say, Civics.

Think of how many ipods could be crammed into the same-size package as a ghetto blaster. And never mind the fact that people are buying software and music—a list soon to include books and movies—through cyberspace instead of off store shelves in brick-and-mortar buildings.

Imagine how lightweight a big-screen TV is, compared to its earlier, 32-in. version.

Not only that but companies such as Wal-Mart are rewarding minimal packaging. They've redesigned their milk cartons so it takes fewer truckloads a week to deliver the same amount of product.

What this radical morphing of commodities means, in part, is that it takes far less truck to move far more wealth.

So, according to Dave Ross, a transportation analyst with Baltimore-based Stifel Nicolaus Financial, even if consumer demand happens to improve over the next few months, there will be no definite corresponding increase in the shipment of consumer goods.

Yes, Ross agrees, the spinal cord of the economy is the North American consumer. But determining how consumer activity affects trucking isn't as clear cut as it used to be.

And retail purchasing power is just one of the 300-odd variables economic forecasters use to predict where the economy's going. No wonder so many people out there are sort of shaking their heads.

Ross and numerous other market-watchers assert that trucking will be gearing up when consumer confidence returns to the Canadian and American marketplaces. When people start buying houses again. When banks resume lending. When there's more confidence.

But at the moment, as Noel Perry, a managing director and senior consultant at FTR Associates put it, "it takes gross domestic product [GDP] growth of 3.5 percent or greater for freight to accelerate."

And in the last quarter of 2008, the American GDP actually shrunk. Any wonder freight has decelerated to the point where record numbers of American carriers have left the market?

The most optimistic estimates have American GDP heading back into the positive figures sometime in the third quarter of 2009.

FTR Associates are world leaders in freight transportation forecasting. In a late October seminar entitled "Credit Crunch and Transportation: Update and Potential Effects of the Bailout Bill," Bill Witte, the director of something called the Center for Econometric Model Research, predicted the coming downturn will be worse than the previous two slides—the early 2000s and the first part of the '90s, and longer than the recession at the beginning of the '80s.

Forecasting no noticeable increase in freight demand until the middle of 2010, FTR President Eric Starks said after the seminar: "We know this forecast will be a blow to many industry participants, but our instinct is to take the information we have and generate as reliable an outlook for equipment build as possible."

The less trucking that's being done, the less wear and tear on equipment, so trade cycles are lengthening. There's less demand for new builds.

It's no secret that economists and market watchers have had to revise their predictions. Within these pages in the past years, trucking industry types predicted that the high oil price in the summer (US \$147 per barrel) would never decrease. At press time, it was US\$55.

The loonie, so strong six months ago, slid partially in response to the American interest-rate cut to a point at which—if the American economy were in good shape—Canadian exporters and manufacturers would be high-fiving each other in



2009

Doing the ipod shuffle

EVERYTHING'S MORE STREAMLINED:
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anticipation of good times all-around.

Alas, and to nobody's surprise, the Canadian economy trails in the wake of the American. Perhaps it was best described by Mak Kawahara, president of Isuzu Commercial Truck of America Inc., at a recent press conference. He was asked during a market forecast for the medium-duty truck market in Canada if it was any different than that of the American scene, and he said, "When we think of the Canadian marketplace, we just cut-and-paste American information."

For a few months, particularly during the Canadian federal election, Canadians who weren't in the trucking business could have been forgiven if they thought we were insulated from the American economic meltdown. Our banks, although they had some exposure to the mortgage mess in the States, seemed secure. We had a few plant closures but governments assured the country that more jobs were being created than lost.

And some companies did just fine. Even truckers. MSM

Transportation's Mike McCarron reports that his company had a record year in '08.

Moe Faddoul is founder and president of Moe's Transport, an eight-year-old Windsor, Ont.,-based fleet running about 150 tractors specializing in car parts. Faddoul says he has managed to keep operating with no cutbacks; and in fact, counts himself among those Canadians hard-pressed to spot the effects of the recession.

"I think the worst thing is, people are afraid," Faddoul told *Today's Trucking* in a late-November interview.

"I took my kids out for a supper on Saturday and we had to try six different restaurants before we found one that didn't have a line-up. Where's the evidence that people are broke?"

"You go to Michigan, the malls are packed. As far as I can tell, people still have money."

Like a lot of observers, Faddoul believes that the second half of '09 will see a measurable uptick in activity and consumer

confidence. "I think we have to hang in there because the second half is going to be crazy."

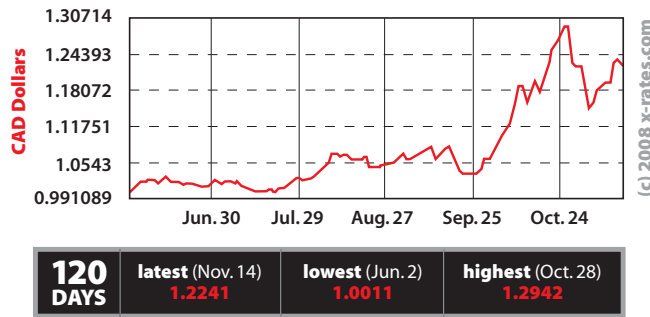
"These car manufacturers are changing the products they make and they can adapt very quickly if they have to."

Up to road from Moe's is J&R Hall Transport, a third-generation family outfit providing expedited service between Toronto and Western Canada. President Andy

Hall, like Faddoul, says he is definitely worried about the prospect of people losing their jobs, but adds "so far, so good."

Despite industry-wide concerns that medium-size fleets like Halls will delay equipment purchases because of the

Canadian Dollars to 1 USD (invert, data)



economy, he says he maintains his regular trade-in cycle, come what may. In fact, he says, this has worked to his benefit. Because of the wildly fluctuating Canadian dollar, the trucks that he's paying more for now as a result of the low

Canadian dollar are offset by those that he bought when the buck was high, compared to the Greenback.

"It's hard to figure out what makes the dollar fluctuate like it does, but because we just kept buying throughout it all, we end up paying pretty much par for our equipment."

The biggest change for the Halls, he says, will be a move away from Cat engines, which have been his company's go-to power plants for years. Caterpillar's move out of the market, which was announced this past summer, will mean increased share for the other diesel manufacturers.

WHICH WAY DIESEL?

It's clear we are in the midst of an economic tsunami that is threatening to breach seawalls on a global basis. The disasters of 9/11 and Katrina are the most notable causes for price spikes. And considering the seriousness of the two events, recovery to normal levels was relatively rapid.

The current situation is a different story. The wild fluctuations in prices have not been an overnight occurrence, but rather a self-induced financial vortex, which originated with the investment houses on Wall Street. As the problem became more obvious, crude oil began to lose its investment sheen, credit became more difficult to get and the consumer began to lose its addiction to gasoline.

And what has happened to diesel prices? When crude was in the area of \$140/barrel this summer, the added costs could not be passed on to the gasoline consumer due to dropping demand and the political sensitivity of high gasoline prices during the run up to the U.S. Presidential election.

The oil industry shrugged off the lower gasoline margins and took the profits from the high value of crude while at the same time, increased margins on diesel due to demand increases outside the continental U.S.A. It was particularly strong in Europe and South America. In essence, diesel prices were, and still are, subsidizing the poor returns on gasoline with diesel refining margins being 700-percent higher than those for gasoline.

We do not foresee this relationship changing for at least the first half of 2009 for the following reasons:

Crude has dropped by over 60 percent in value and so have the crude oil revenues for the oil industry. The golden goose has flown the coop. Gasoline demand has remained in negative territory for 31 weeks in a row and the margins in some cases are negative.

This will result in higher than justified diesel prices to support the lower crude and gasoline revenues.

The election of Barak Obama will cause a direction/leadership vacuum as the current Bush administration will be a lame duck entity and even with the inauguration of the new president on Jan. 20, 2009, there will still be a two-month learning curve before anything of any substance will be announced and another two months before any meaningful results can be measured. That takes us to June, 2009.

If we have an early, long and cold winter, diesel prices will remain high versus the cost of crude through to the end of March. If on the other hand we have a mild winter, the oil

industry will reduce refinery runs to lower inventories. Either way, prices in the first half of 2009 will remain high counter to the apparent lower crude costs.

As we enter summer, the gasoline inventories will take precedence over those of diesel. Currently, the U.S. gasoline

inventories are at the lower boundary of the five-year average. If this trend continues, which we suspect will be the case, gasoline prices will spike in May and June, dragging up diesel in a slip stream effect.

By early fall, the economic situation should have turned the corner, and crude prices will rise possibly to the \$90/bbl level as consumer confidence returns. This is not without cost.

Between December, 2008 and September 2009 there will be precipitous declines in investment in the tar sands, mining, forestry and automotive sectors resulting in mega takeovers and a severe pruning of employment numbers.

Although painful, this will ultimately give birth to a stronger, disease-resistant Canadian economy.

— Roger McKnight, Senior Petroleum Analyst, En-Pro International Inc.



Kevin Snobel is general manager for Caravan Logistics Inc., another fleet which has held its own throughout the tumult. When asked about how another fleet might follow suit and survive, Snobel echoed the popular idea that the current realignment of capacity will cull the national fleet and the strong will emerge. "But I have to say," Snobel adds, "it's kind of late to be taking action now."

"If a company had taken steps 16 to 18 months ago and redid their business plan, they'd be in far better shape to survive the next year."

Snobel says Canadian truckers would benefit if the Canadian dollar remains low. "We're an exporting country and if our dollar stays where it is, it'll be fantastic. We can't really afford to have it higher than 85 cents."

But the fact is, it's been a dreadful year for the overall industry. Some bottom feeders were giving their services away.

According to the CEO of the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) David Bradley, "Carriers have been reducing their fleet sizes, getting rid of trucks and not buying new ones. Many trucking companies have left the market; either because they decided they'd had enough, or they couldn't get sufficient credit and/or they went bankrupt. Tighter credit has also made it more difficult for people to enter the marketplace."

And, he agrees with Carvan's Snobel: It's hard to run a business when you don't know how much your money is worth.

"The modest depreciation of the Canadian dollar that we have seen this autumn is not unwelcome, but when a currency loses almost 20 percent of its value over a period of weeks, then jumps back by four percent in one day, it's hard to run a business."

However, like Moe Faddoul, Bradley believes that 2009 will be wheat-from-chaff time. Faddoul, from his vantage point in Windsor, Ont., thinks that "the second six months of '09 will be crazy. We're all getting reorganized and re-orchestrated and the bankruptcies are slowing down."

Bradley is a bit less bullish. He reckons that, "it may take the better part of 2009, at least, for the North American economy to stabilize and begin to recover. But when it does, the demand for trucking services

will likely outweigh the supply."

Rates, he says, which have been hammered, will be under pressure to rise again."

Bradley predicts that by the end of the year, capacity will be lower and the perennial pain—the driver shortage—will become one of the biggest issues facing the industry.

"Shippers, Bradley said, "would be advised to partner with carriers now to

lock-in capacity for when things do inevitably start to come back"

In the view of Bradley—and other optimists—the Canadian trucking industry a year from now will be just like the ipod. But instead of delivering music, trucks will deliver freight. And like those amazing handheld devices, trucking will be tighter, more streamlined, user-friendlier and more powerful than anything that preceded it. ▲



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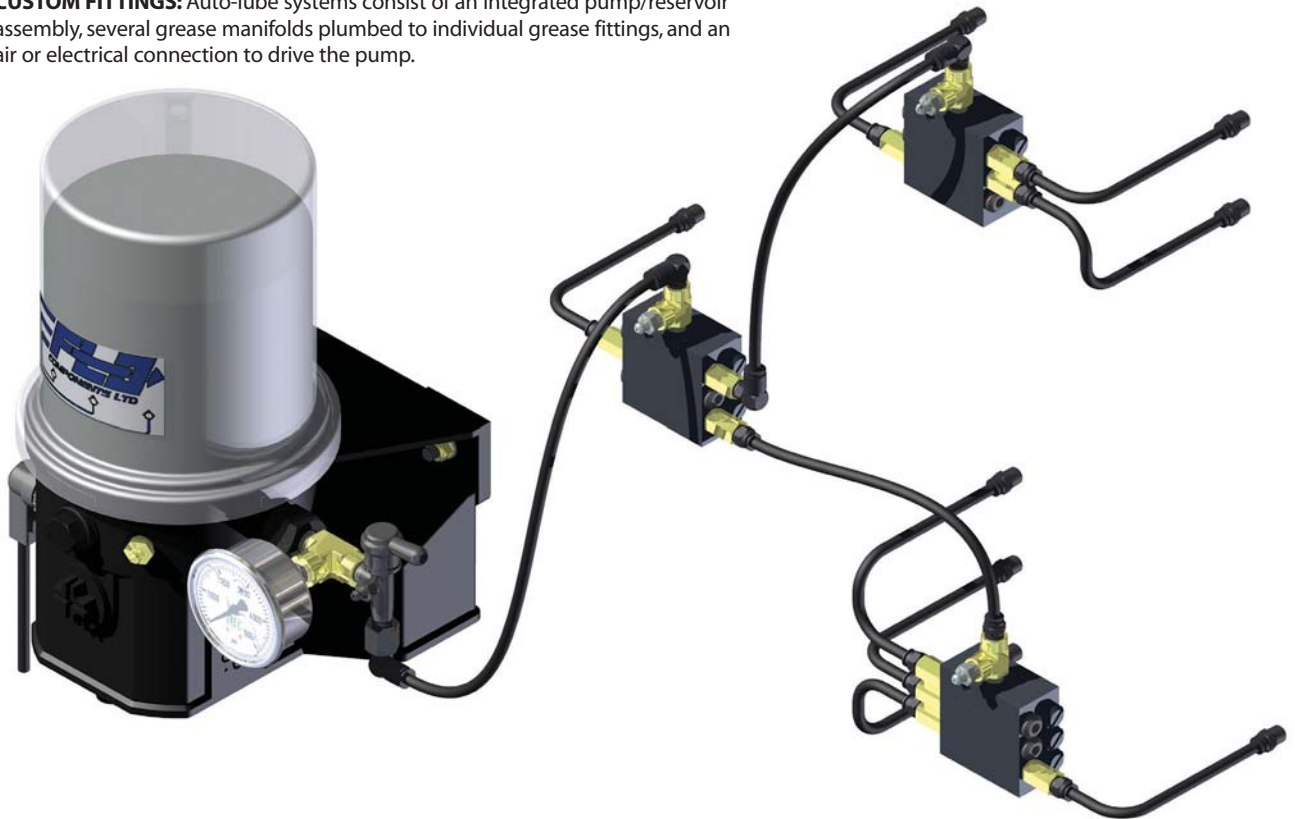
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EQUIPMENT NEWS, REVIEWS, AND MAINTENANCE TIPS

CUSTOM FITTINGS: Auto-lube systems consist of an integrated pump/reservoir assembly, several grease manifolds plumbed to individual grease fittings, and an air or electrical connection to drive the pump.



Your Invisible Mechanic

oil and lubes *Automatic greasing systems offer financial and mechanical payback by reducing maintenance costs and protecting against component failure. By Jim Park*

Short of tire-pressure inspections, the monthly grease job is probably *the* maintenance chore most mechanics and owner-ops would avoid if they could. It's a messy, labor-intensive job requiring more physical dexterity than mechanical acumen.

It's not a pleasant task, yet it's not the kind of job you'd fob off on a rank amateur or the eight-dollar-an-hour guy at the garage down the street. The proper function of some expensive componentry hangs in the balance, and it's one of the

few moments when trucks and their keepers get up close and personal.

Automatic lubrication systems offer a reliable and efficient alternative to the drudgery of the grease job, along with a few other very tangible benefits. They'll keep the truck greased when you don't feel like doing it, or when your techs are tied up on more important jobs, and with many maintenance intervals now going out beyond recommended chassis-lube intervals, you're not faced with pulling a truck into the shop prematurely just for a lube job.

Regular greases may require re-application at anywhere from 5,000 to 10,000 miles or so. If you're pushing PM intervals out to 25,000 miles or more, you need a grease that will last longer—or one that can be applied regularly without human intervention.

Short of rotating parts like U-joints, an automatic lubrication system can relieve you of this particular chore, while ensuring that the job is done properly.

Automatic lubrication systems are available from manufacturers such as ALS (Vogel), CPL Systems (Groeneveld), Graco, Interlube, Lincoln (FloComponents), and Lubriquip. While they all work a little differently, the concept is the same. Lubricant is pumped from a reservoir through tubing to the various lube points on the chassis at specified intervals to keep the chassis constantly lubricated.

Kevin Rooney, vice-president of sales

and marketing at Groeneveld CPL Systems, says the greatest advantage to an automatic lubrication system is with fleets whose assets are away from home more often than not.

"It's one thing in a P&D fleet where the trucks are home every night and the mechanics can schedule maintenance, but in an over-the-road application—particularly with trailers—the possibility of missing a service interval is much greater," Rooney says.

Mike Deckert, vice-president of sales and marketing at Flo Components, Canadian distributors of the Lincoln Quicklub system, says kingpins and the fifth-wheel top plate are among the critical items you don't want to miss. Obviously, a dry fifth-wheel creates vehicle handling and potential safety issues, he says, "but a kingpin damaged by lack of lubrication or the presence of contaminants such as sand, can affect steering, steer tires, and more."

Deckert explains that the greasing of two mating surfaces or a bearing well has two purposes.

"We want to keep the friction surfaces wet with lubricant, and we want the fresh grease to make its way through the joint, pushing out the old grease and any trapped contaminants with it," he says. "With a manual application of grease, much of the lubricant is pushed through the system in a matter of hours. With an auto-greaser, we can replenish the lubricating layer between the surfaces at very short intervals using smaller shots of grease."

NLGI #0 vs. NLGI #2

Traditionally, auto-lube systems have relied on a lighter, semi-fluid NLGI #0 grease, and for a few good reasons: it's said to flow more easily into bearings and between friction surfaces, and it flows well even in cold temperatures. While the lighter grease may not cling like a heavier #2, its proponents claim it holds fewer surface contaminants in suspension and flushes contaminants out more frequently.

Lincoln's Quiklub system defies convention, using a #2 grease. Deckert says the heavier grease has advantages, like providing a better lubricant film retention rate than #0 grease, better sealing performance, and better viscosity retention in hot



SLIPPERY SLOPE: Heavier greases cling, while lighter greases flow. If you don't have enough where you need it, the grade doesn't matter.

GREASE IS GREASE, RIGHT?

WRONG. The National Lubricating Grease Institute (NLGI) provides standard ratings and certification for grease. Different thicknesses are designated with NLGI ratings from #6 (block grease) to #000 (fluid grease), which is very fluid. NLGI #2 is the most common grease for chassis applications, but it's by no means the only grade used.

A #2 grease is relatively thick, and offers good clinging power. It stays where you put it, but it thickens at cold temperatures and holds contaminants in place. Consequently, it requires regular purging to push the old grease out of the joint.

Most auto-lube manufacturers recommend a grade #0 semi-fluid grease for ease of application. It's a lighter grease that won't cling to the degree a #2 grease will, but the theory is that less grease is applied more frequently, which keeps the friction surfaces and bearing wells wet, purged, and well sealed. It has better cold-flow properties, too.

If you bother to read the lubrication recommendations for various chassis components, you'll discover that one type of grease will not meet all requirements. Make sure your grease meets the minimum. An auto lube system will ensure your chassis is getting grease when it's needed.

weather, but admits it can be a challenge in really cold weather.

"You need a heavier pump to push the #2 grease, but the Lincoln is up to the task. It was designed with #2 grease in mind," he says. "Sure, the fluid-type greases flow better, but the #2 stays in place longer, and in theory, you'll use less of it."

WHERE'S THE PAYBACK?

With fleets and owner-ops under horrendous cost pressure, can they afford to tack another few thousand dollars onto the upfront cost of a truck? The question many fleets ask is whether these systems are really worth the money when a mechanic can knock off a grease job in 30 minutes. Labor and materials for a fleet grease job wouldn't amount to much more than \$50. The annual costs for even a

biweekly greasing wouldn't exceed \$1,000.

But if you think in terms of failure prevention, the all-in cost of a single bearing failure at an inopportune moment can easily exceed the price of an auto-lube system, says CPL's Rooney. Of course, you can't always compare hypothetical costs with real and quantifiable costs.

Promotional material from Lubriquip suggests the typical return on investment is two-and-a-half to three years. When fleets were turning trucks over in three years, the payback wasn't there. Today, with longer life cycles, the payback is looking better—especially for owner-ops, who often keep their trucks five years or more.

Owner-operators might be hard pressed to shell out a few thousand dollars for something they perceive as an exercise done in the driveway on a Saturday

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AN ECONOMIC ALTERNATIVE: Auto-lube systems can be installed on tractors or trailers. Less expensive centralized lube systems omit the reservoir and pump. You hand-pump the grease through a central grease zerker.

afternoon. But when including the reduction in potential component wear over the life of the vehicle, the longer the vehicle stays in service, the more cost-effective the auto-lube system becomes.

Rooney says fleets with a more sophisticated approach to maintenance are in a better position to test and evaluate these systems.

“The biggest challenge is just getting them to try one,” he says. “Once they have a few in service, the results speak for themselves.”

Rooney points to Europe, where uptake is very high. “They’re a decade ahead of us. Here, even in the construction sector, less than 10 percent of the equipment is equipped with an auto-lube system. It’s much less than that in transportation,” he says.

“But look at where componentry and maintenance requirements are going. No lube, low lube, extended service intervals...

Pretty soon it’s not going to make sense to pull a truck off the road just to grease it,” he predicts.

But all the no-, low-, and auto-lube technology in the world won’t relieve fleets and owner-ops of the need for visual inspections. Traditionalists say the weekly grease job provides a convenient opportunity to get under the truck for a close look at things. Nothing will really

change in that regard after you install an auto-lube system.

“Simply replace the grease gun with a flashlight and a couple of wrenches,” Deckert advises. ▲

Jim Park is the former editor of *highwaySTAR* magazine, now a freelance truck writer. He can be reached at 905-227-5755, or j.park@sympatico.ca.

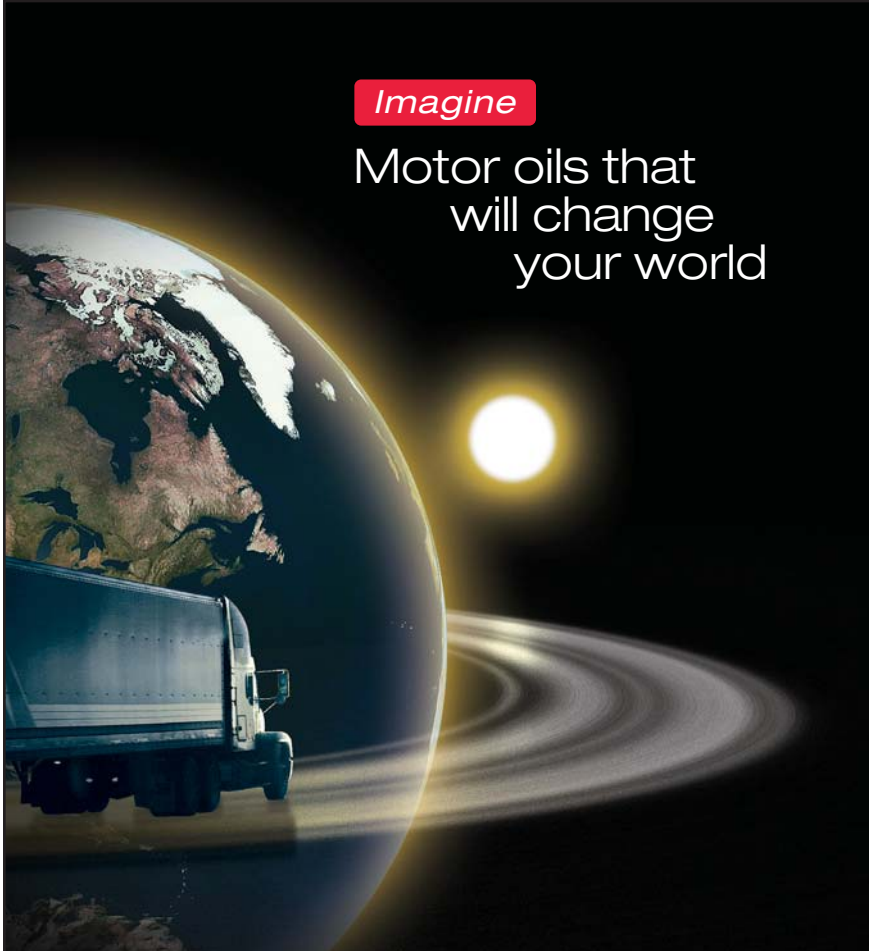
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ACTROS WINS BIG AT GERMANY'S IAA SHOW



Predictably, the 62nd running of the **IAA Commercial Vehicles Show** in Hannover, Germany, was dominated by issues of fuel and the environment. And it seemed that every truck maker and first-tier component supplier had something serious to say about hybrid powertrains. It was clear, though, that North America is much closer to hybrid commercialization than Europe is.

The highlight of the show, certainly for Daimler Trucks, was the European Truck of the Year award for 2009. The latest

Mercedes-Benz Actros, introduced this past spring, was the winner, and not for the first time—it has actually won the award in all three of its incarnations since the original introduction in 1996.

Journalists from 21 European countries vote in the award program, and in declaring the new Actros the champ, they noted its enhanced economy, environmental compatibility, safety, and comfort. Among its features is the Mercedes PowerShift 2 automated transmission that's now standard equipment in over-

DAIMLER'S THREEPEAT: The Mercedes-Benz Actros won European Truck of the Year honors in an award ceremony during the IAA show. The truck has won the award each of the three times it's been revised since its introduction in 1996.

the-road Actros trucks. It remains the only truck with Active Brake Assist, or Emergency Braking Assist, which automatically triggers emergency braking if a collision with the vehicle ahead is imminent. Not incidentally, this and other safety systems are supported by insurers in the form of premium discounts. Two engines in nine power ratings are offered, in both Euro 4 and Euro 5 emissions trim, including a 15.9-liter V8 with up to 598 hp. So far Daimler has sold more than 600,000 of these things, so you'd have to call it a success.

The Daimler stand was otherwise dominated by green—11 vehicles, three of them new, powered by some alternative means or other. They ranged from a diesel engine fuelled by natural gas all the way up to a fairly exotic hydrogen fuel cell, with diesel/electric hybrids in between.

Ironically, that 'exotic' fuel cell vehicle is the oldest of the bunch, a Citaro city bus that first hit the road at least six years ago. There are actually 36 such buses running worldwide and they've already covered more than two million kilometers. This long-term demonstration proves durability but the fuel cell is still a long way from being commercially viable.

Mercedes had three hybrid world premieres at the show, including the Axor BlueTec hybrid tractor, the first European hybrid prototype aimed at long-distance transport, emphasis on 'prototype'. It sports a 7.2-liter diesel producing 326 hp paired with a 60-hp electric motor and the Mercedes PowerShift 12-speed automatic transmission. The company says this will use between four and 10 percent less fuel than an ordinary truck.

Arch rival MAN had its TGL hybrid

truck on display at IAA, a world premiere, though it's only a prototype. It's aimed at what the German company calls "distribution transport with longish distances driven at a constant speed."

The new TGL is a 12-tonner with a four-cylinder EEV engine of 220 hp that delivers its output through a ZF hybrid powertrain—an 80-hp electric motor and 6-speed ASTronic Light automated transmission. Electric power is stored in compact lithium-ion batteries, and ZF says this battery technology won't be improved on for some time to come.

Interestingly, MAN press material on this truck concludes by saying that, despite an expected 15-percent fuel saving, a business case can't yet be made for it.

EURO 5 ENGINES

All truck makers showed off their Euro 5 engines, as well as those meeting the new and voluntary EEV standard.

'EEV' stands for enhanced environmentally friendly vehicle, and the spec is between Euro 5, which doesn't come into effect until this time in 2009, and the more stringent Euro 6, which presently has a 2012 target date. It's a uniquely European approach to emissions, having the next standard available in the market well before the deadline, with a varied array of country-by-country incentives to promote early adoption. Euro 6 engines aren't available yet, but we're sure to see them well before they're required.

Incidentally, while nothing is cast in stone, the European industry is pushing the EU lawmakers in Brussels to relax

VOLVO SHOWS BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

Among the most interesting introductions at the IAA show was one by Volvo, though it's just a prototype. Its Overview Surveillance System is being tested on the company's hybrid refuse trucks. Developed in concert with Toshiba, it gives drivers a unique bird's-eye view of the vehicle and its surroundings. It's designed primarily to support the driver in slow-speed situations like backing up, parking, or driving down narrow city streets.

The system utilizes four fisheye cameras mounted on each side of the vehicle. This electronic eye system "de-warps" and seamlessly combines the images to produce an overhead view of the truck and its surroundings. Uniquely it gives the driver a sense of distance by showing the positions of objects or people in relationship to the truck itself.

the vaguely proposed Euro 6 standard, and it seems that they might succeed. Even if they don't, it still won't be as tough as EPA 2010.

Scania offers a mix of EGR and SCR engines meeting both Euro 5 and EEV standards. Its year-old inline engine platform uses the common-rail injection system, called XPI, that was developed in concert with Cummins. It reduces particulates with its extra-high injection pressures.

Scania truck buyers in the medium-output range have a choice of EGR and SCR, though the high-output V8 engines use SCR only. There's an EEV version of the 420-hp truck engine.

The Do8, D20 and D26 MAN engines achieve the Euro 5 emissions standard (not as stringent as EPA 2007) without using selective catalytic reduction (SCR). The keys are advanced exhaust gas recirculation (EGR), along with third-generation common-rail fuel injection, two-stage turbocharging, and further improvements to combustion engineer-

ing. MAN claims they don't suffer on the fuel-consumption front.

Volvo will start delivering its first FH and FM trucks with EEV engines during 2009. The first stage of its EEV offering, based on an optimized D13 engine with SCR, will cover most of the D13's current sales volume. These EEV engines will allow users to take advantage of tax incentives available in some markets.

The next IAA show will be held in the fall of 2010. ▲



▲ **NICE BOD:** The world's sexiest dump truck has to be this Fuso concept truck, based on a Canter hybrid chassis.



▲ **EMISSION ACCOMPLISHED:** Scania truck buyers in the medium-output range have a choice of EGR and SCR, though the high-output V8 engines use SCR only. This is a 12-liter Euro 5 motor using SCR.

► **WELL BRED HYBRID:** The DAF LF prototype hybrid truck is equipped with a four-cylinder 4.5-liter Paccar FR (EEV) diesel developing 160 hp, linked to the Eaton electric hybrid system with six-speed Autoshift transmission known so well in North America. Using a small motor saves almost as much weight as is added by the hybrid system and its lithium-ion batteries.





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MODULAR ELECTRICS

GROTE'S MODULAR POWER DELIVERY AND LIGHTING SYSTEM

Grote Industries has developed what it calls the industry's first totally modular power delivery and lighting system, complete from trailer nose box to tail-light. The Ultra-Blue-Seal harness system, paired with a new Ultra-Nose-Box receptacle and the company's range of

client records, book loads, track delivery and arrival times, and view driver availability with a range of reports, including delivery manifest, invoicing, and bill of lading. Home page 'dashboard' alerts allow users to keep track of loads to be dispatched and loads behind schedule.

Keller says it saw a need in the market for an affordable program that included core features, and in this case that means

a retail price of US\$1,400. Dispatch Manager can be used as a stand-alone program, or can interface with any of J. J. Keller's other software titles to manage operations and compliance. Among those others is software to manage driver logs, maintenance, and fuel tax, all of which can run alone or interface with Dispatch Manager.

See www.jjkeller.com



Grote Industries modular power delivery

lighting products, provides a solid trailer electrical and lighting platform. The system minimizes wiring mistakes and downtime, says Grote.

The Ultra-Nose-Box is said to solve the problem of cracked, corroded and crowded electrical junction boxes. It features double the standard number of pin connections, a push-on plug function, a durable glass-filled nylon housing, insert-molded pins that seal out moisture and corrosive materials, and easily replaceable parts. A special mounting gasket protects against moisture.

The modular Ultra-Blue-Seal (UBS) harness system is said to offer excellent connection sealing, configuration flexibility, and expansion capacity. UBS is claimed to be flexible without being complex. The design allows for many types of connections without having to change the entire harness system. The system is easy to expand, because all plugs use the same sealing technology.

See www.grote.com

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ALL-POSITION RADIALS

BRIDGESTONE ADDS TWO TO R250 ED LINE

Bridgestone Bandag Tire Solutions (BOTS) is adding two sizes to its lineup of Bridgestone R250 ED all-position radials. Aimed at regional and pickup-and-delivery

fleets, the tires are said to offer better protection from the stresses of curbing, tread cuts, and impacts. The new sizes are 255/70R22.5 and 275/70R22.5.

Vehicles in these applications often see the need for tight cornering, so this tire is made from an extra-heavy-duty cut—and chip-resistant compound and features sidewall protector ribs. Five ribs with four wide, straight grooves are designed to produce precise handling and excellent traction, the company adds.

See www.BridgestoneTrucktires.com



BLU UPGRADED

PEOPLETNET'S DISPLAY PLATFORM IMPROVED

PeopleNet has made a series of enhancements to its BLU driver-display platform as part of its Fall 2008 product release. Some of them were announced when BLU was launched last year, while others resulted from customer feedback and suggestions. The enhancements

include text-to-speech capability, enabling drivers to hear as well as read content on the BLU display.

Driver shortcuts allow quick navigation to displays such as the 8-day driver-log summary, e-mail inbox, or log-out and change-driver screens. The driver can program up to seven such shortcuts.

There are new safe-mode options as well. Fleets can choose to make selected

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The new lube is formulated for both pre- and post-2007 heavy-duty engines as well as light-duty diesels. It's said to offer excellent cold-startup capabilities and potential for improved fuel economy, while being fully backwards compatible with previous API categories.

Chevron says the benefits of the new Delo oil can include increased corrosion and wear protection for cylinders, pistons, rings, bearings and injectors; reduced valve and piston crown deposits; and improved fuel economy

See www.deloperformance.com or www.chevron.com



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KENWORTH MEDIUM-DUTY ONLINE MANUAL

The new 124-page **Kenworth** Medium Duty Body Builders Manual aims at T170 class 5, T270 class 6, and T370 class 7 trucks normally used in applications like P&D, towing and recovery, fire and rescue, landscaping, construction, fuel hauling, and utility applications.

It contains sections on dimensions, safety and compliance, body mounting, frame modifications, and electrical systems for Kenworth 2008 and later medi-

um-duty conventional models with 2007 Paccar PX-6 and PX-8 engines.

The manual is especially useful when the body builder is involved in the vehicle definition and ordering process.

See www.kenworth.com

MONITOR TIRE PRESSURE

ADVANTAGE PRESSUREPRO'S NEW TPMS The new Drop-and-Hook tire-pressure system from **Advantage PressurePro** has been designed to work specifically with multi-trailer fleets, allowing automatic tethering and un-tethering of trailers to tractors. It's said to be an industry first.

It's comprised of an intelligent monitor (IM), intelligent repeater (IR), and sensors. The in-cab monitor displays current pressures and alerts to the driver, or it can be integrated with other telematics products to report to an office/remote management system. The IR is installed on the trailer and hooks into its power (ABS) line.

When tractor and trailer are tethered,

the monitor picks up the ID's, pressures, and sensor positions on the trailer. When a trailer is unhooked and there's no communication for 20 seconds, the monitor 'forgets' that trailer and begins to look for new readings. When a new trailer is introduced, the monitor recognizes the new 'IR' and accepts its full information.

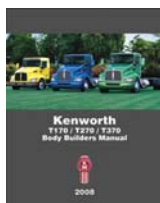
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NON-MARRING PRY TOOL

SNAP-ON TOOL ALLOWS ACCESS TO TIGHT SPOTS

Snap-on's new five-piece non-marring pry tool set (PBN500) can do many different jobs while greatly reducing the possibility of damaging work surfaces, the company says. The new tool is said to be ideal for service technicians removing molding clips, power seat and window



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KELOWNA	129.2	-1.3	101.4
FORT ST. JOHN	132.9		104.9
YELLOWKNIFE	136.9		117.3
CALGARY *	121.2	-2.2	102.5
RED DEER	123.2	-1.3	104.3
EDMONTON	121.7	-1.8	102.9
LETHBRIDGE	122.4	-1.0	103.6
LLOYDMINSTER	126.4	1.0	107.4
REGINA *	122.1	-1.6	97.3
SASKATOON	124.5	-1.4	99.6
PRINCE ALBERT	122.9		98.0
WINNIPEG *	118.7	-1.8	97.5
BRANDON	118.9	-3.0	97.7
TORONTO *	109.6	-1.3	86.0
OTTAWA	109.2	-2.7	85.7
KINGSTON	106.8	-2.5	83.4
PETERBOROUGH	109.9	-1.0	86.4
WINDSOR	103.3	-2.6	80.1
LONDON	108.1	-0.7	84.7
SUDBURY	111.4	-3.0	87.8
SAULT STE MARIE	109.9	-4.0	86.4
THUNDER BAY	124.5	-1.0	100.3
NORTH BAY	112.8	-2.3	89.2
TIMMINS	114.9	-4.2	91.1
HAMILTON	106.2	-2.5	82.8
ST. CATHARINES	106.4	-0.8	83.0
MONTRÉAL *	116.9	-2.7	83.4
QUÉBEC	117.6	-1.9	84.0
SHERBROOKE	115.9	-3.0	82.5
GASPÉ	117.4	-3.0	83.8
CHICOUTIMI	115.7	-1.0	82.3
RIMOUSKI	116.4	0.5	82.3
TROIS RIVIÈRES	118.9	-0.5	82.3
DRUMMONDVILLE	112.9		82.3
VAL D'OR	117.9	-2.5	82.3
SAINT JOHN *	115.7	-2.7	81.5
FREDERICTON	116.4	-2.6	82.1
MONCTON	116.5	-2.7	82.2
BATHURST	117.9	-2.7	83.4
EDMUNDSTON	117.8	-2.5	83.3
MIRAMICHI	117.7	-6.1	83.3
CAMPBELLTON	117.9	-2.7	83.4
SUSSEX	116.0	0.5	81.8
HALIFAX *	108.1	-5.8	76.2
SYDNEY	111.9	-5.2	79.6
YARMOUTH	110.2	-5.2	78.1
TRURO	109.3	-5.2	77.3
KENTVILLE	109.6	-5.2	77.6
NEW GLASGOW	111.0	-5.8	78.8
CHARLOTTETOWN *	112.4		82.8
ST. JOHN'S *	124.1		89.3
GANDER	120.6		86.2
LABRADOR CITY	132.8		97.0
CORNER BROOK	122.8		88.2
CANADA AVERAGE (V)	117.5	-1.9	91.4

V-Volume Weighted

(+/-) indicates price variations from previous week.

Diesel includes both full-serve and self-serve prices.

The Canada average price is based on the relative weights of 10 cities (*)

www.espar.com



In Gear

buttons, and gaskets, among others. Uniquely, each tool in the set features a handle with a crown that can be tapped into place to allow techs to insert the working end in tight places.



The five-piece set includes a wedge tool with a narrow point for reaching in narrow spaces; a wide sticker and gasket scraper; a narrow-forked pry bar, for removing door panels and grommets; a wide-forked pry bar; and a flat-forked tool for straight access. The pry bars are made of glass-filled nylon.

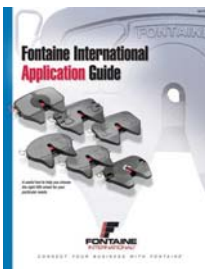
See www.snapon.com

FIFTH WHEEL GUIDE

FONTAINE UPDATES ITS APPLICATION GUIDE

The **Fontaine International Application Guide** walks customers through the various top plates and mounting options available and provides recommended assemblies by application. They include van trailers, tankers and bulk trailers, flatbeds, stretch and stake trailers, lowboy trailers, frame end-dump trailers, bottom-dump trailers, and frameless end-dump trailers. Color photos, product descriptions, selection suggestions and a chart of duty class restrictions are also included. The guide is available for download from the Fontaine website and printed copies can also be ordered.

See www.fifthwheel.com



ONLINE INSPECTION COURSE

ONLINE TRAINING FROM CARRIERSEDGE AND TECHNI-COM

CarriersEdge and **Techni-Com Inc.** have released the jointly developed Practical Vehicle Inspection online training course. Designed as a companion to the Practical Vehicle Inspection handbook, the online course uses real-world scenarios and exercises to illustrate the latest

National Safety Code regulations. Separate programs for tractor-trailers and straight trucks, along with mini-course refreshers, allow fleets to tailor the content to best suit their individual needs.

CarriersEdge subscription customers will automatically receive the new course as part of their subscription service. The course may also be purchased individually through CarriersEdge or Techni-Com.

See www.carriersedge.com

LNG-FUELLED PETERBILTS

THREE FACTORY-INSTALLED LNG CONFIGURATIONS

Peterbilt will offer three new liquefied natural gas (LNG) configurations on its Models 387, 386 and 367 in 2009. The factory-installed system, on Cummins ISX engines, is part of a joint agreement between **Peterbilt** and **Westport Innovations**. LNG is a clean fuel that's both domestically available and economical—as long as taxes don't increase.

The LNG Models 387, 386 and 367 join Peterbilt's existing offering of Model 320 CNG vehicles, of which over 50 such trucks are in operation in the U.S.

Westport's ISX G engine offers the same horsepower, torque, and efficiency as the base diesel. The LNG system comprises fuel tanks, proprietary Westport fuel injectors, cryogenic fuel pumps, and associated electronic components. It's 2007 EPA and CARB certified to 0.8g/bhp-hr NOx and 0.01g/bhp-hr PM. It's available with 400- and 450-hp ratings and up to 1,750 lb ft torque. LNG fuel tanks can be configured to suit range requirements.

See www.peterbilt.com and www.westport.com

KENWORTH CALENDARS

2009 CALENDARS IN WALL OR APPOINTMENT STYLES

The new 2009 **Kenworth** is now available, in two versions. The six-page, 2009 wall calendar features six trucks. It's 26-1/4 by 28 in. wide.

The 2009 appointment calendar incorporates the six wall calendar photographs in addition to six other pictures. It's 9-3/4 in. tall, 13 in. wide.

To order the calendar, visit your dealer

or go online (see URL below). Cost is US\$15.95 for the wall calendar and US\$10.60 for the appointment calendar, plus shipping and handling.

See www.shopkenworth.com



HVAC DUST FILTER

NEW CHARCOAL CAB AIR FILTER

The Pure AirFlo charcoal filter is said to be unlike others on the market. Manufactured by **Filter Clean Services**, it's claimed to improve a driver's comfort level. It's made from odor- and fume-absorbing media created out of polyester non-woven material impregnated with activated carbon charcoal.

Filter Clean says the filter is competitively priced with paper filters and below other charcoal filters on the market.

PureAirFlo filters are unaffected by moisture, and their polyester non-woven material allows contamination to saturate



the filter without decreasing air flow. As well as filtering out dust, they also eliminate outside pollens, asphalt dust, and carbon monoxide.

See www.pureairflo.com

RUBBER SPRINGS

HOLLOW SPRINGS FROM TIMBREN

Timbren Industries says its new Aeon hollow rubber springs and mounting brackets are more compact and lighter, but still provide gains in ride quality, stability and ease of installation.

The company makes four different Aeon designs as a supplement to conventional leaf springs, coil springs, torsion bars, or air springs. The empty

DETROIT DIESEL SCR TESTING

HITS SEVEN-MILLION MILE MARK

DETROIT DIESEL has passed seven million miles of testing on its BlueTec selective catalytic reduction (SCR) technology, to be used in meeting the EPA 2010 emissions standard.

Detroit's test fleet is still expanding monthly and will continue to log millions of miles prior to production in January 2010, the company says. The testing includes extreme conditions like below-zero winter weather as well as searing heat in the desert regions of Arizona, Nevada and California.

As well as SCR, Detroit's 2010 DD15 and DD13 engines will use the ACRS common-rail fuel system and the diesel particulate filter already in use today.

Since adopting the technology in early 2005 for Europe, German parent company Daimler has delivered more than 200,000 trucks and buses around the world utilizing BlueTec SCR.

See www.detroitdiesel.com.



ride is not affected. The spring is gradually brought into operation according to the load being applied and progressively increases in proportion to the load being carried. Initial take-up is very smooth, Timbren says, and the spring-rate increase is progressive.

In logging applications Aeon hollow rubber springs act as vibration isolators.

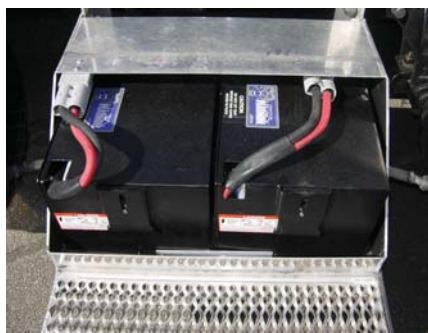
See www.timbren.com



BATTERY POWER

ENERTEK'S AUXILIARY POWER SYSTEM

Said to be the very first commercial-vehicle auxiliary power system (APS) using a series of advanced lithium-ion battery modules, the all-electric Infini-Gen is configurable to the kilowatt hours needed. From **Enertek Solutions**, it's a



plug-and-play system. Installation usually takes as little as six hours on a standard class 8 truck, the company says.

The patented system provides cab heating, air conditioning, and hotel-load power, using advanced battery technology originally developed for the military while using significantly less fuel than an idling truck engine would use.

See www.enerteksolutions.com

CARB-COMPLIANT APU

DIAMOND'S DIESEL-POWERED APU

Diamond Power Systems offers a diesel-powered APU that's been approved by CARB (California Air Resources Board) and so doesn't require a diesel particulate filter for operation in California and western States.

It runs sleeper AC and heating systems as well as household accessories. It also recharges the truck's batteries, warms the engine, and monitors the batteries' charge. It's a fully contained unit in a shock-resistant, weatherproof compartment that mounts directly to the frame rail.

The APU measures 26L x 21D x 29H in. and is powered by a 14-hp, two-cylinder, water-cooled diesel engine.

See www.diamondpowersystems.com





So... what's The Full Story?

The Full Story offers a deeper look at the industry's most important issues such as border-crossing, hours-of-service legislation, the upcoming diesel emission regulations and much more.

To keep on top of these and other issues, you'll want to check out The Full Story next time you visit todaystrucking.com.



BATTERY-POWERED AC

ARCTIC BREEZE OFFERS 12 HOURS OF COOLING

Hammond Air Conditioning of Ingersoll, Ont., has developed Arctic Breeze Truck A/C, a battery-powered cooling system that's said to be quiet and vibration-free while using sustainable energy resources. Systems are available for both sleeper and day cabs. Systems come in a boxed kit with all necessary components included and can be installed in five to six hours. Hammond claims a potential payback of less than 12

months and as few as six.

Designed to maintain the overall temperature of the truck cab once the engine's shut down,



the system draws a low 45 amps and provides 6800 BTU of cooling. Based on a duty cycle of 50 to 60 percent, it consumes only 350 watts per hour on average, the company says. Powered by up to six truck batteries, it keeps drivers cool from 10 to 12 hours, depending on factors like the time of day, color of the truck, window tinting, and how many accessories are running. Systems come with a battery-protection switch that automatically shuts off the A/C at 12.2 amps, ensuring that there will always be power to turn over the engines. The system weighs 105 lb.

See www.hammondac.com

CROSS-BORDER GUIDE

OTA RELEASES 100-PAGE HANDBOOK

To help drivers stay on top of ever-changing rules at international border points, the **Ontario Trucking Association (OTA)** has released a new handbook, 'Practical Border Crossing'. It answers the top questions facing cross-border drivers, with tips concerning pre-arrival preparations and routines while at the border in an effort to reduce delays. The OTA says the CB radio and truckstop chatter are not always the best places to get border advice.

The association says the 100-page handbook was created by visiting the

major truck ports in Ontario and meeting with front-line border officials from the U.S. and Canada, along with bridge operators and custom brokers, to get their insights into what steps drivers can take to reduce delays at the border. A section of the handbook is devoted to the unique requirements of individual crossings in Ontario along with contact information.

OTA member price is \$10 per book, with volume discounts available, while non-members pay \$15.

See www.ontruck.org

AUXILIARY AC

DOMETIC UPGRADES HVAC SYSTEM

Dometic Environmental's new truck HVAC systems, based on its patented split-system technology, consist of a redesigned compressor/heater/evaporator/blower (CHEB) unit, which mounts inside of the truck, and an external compressor/fan (CF) unit, all running on the



CHEB unit

new Qt-series digital controls. The inside and outside units are connected by pre-charged, re-usable refrigerant linesets with quick-connect fittings.

Both units are made with powder-coated aluminum covers to resist corrosion. The CHEB has been engineered to minimize compressor noise inside of the truck, the company claims. The low-profile CF unit, which can be mounted horizontally under the truck or vertically on the back of the sleeper, has lost both size and weight. The Qt Control/Display panel can be programmed for power-saving preferences.

The split HVAC systems run on 115-volt AC power, which can be supplied by a bank of batteries, an onboard auxiliary power unit (APU), or shore power. They're available in 7000, 10,000, and 14,000 BTU capacities.

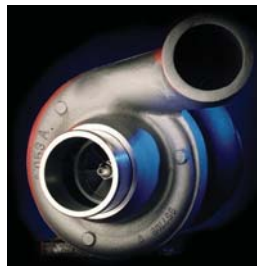
See www.dometicenviro.com

MACK TURBOCHARGERS

BORGWARNER RELEASES AFTERMARKET TURBOCHARGERS FOR LATE MODEL MACK E6 & E7 ENGINES

BorgWarner Turbo & Emissions

Systems now sells replacement turbochargers for late model Mack E6, and E7



engines, including both new and remanufactured units, covering the most popular Mack S3B, S300, and

S400 part numbers. The warranty for the turbos under this new program is one year, or 100,000 miles.

These Mack turbochargers will be available through the network of BorgWarner service partners.

See www.turbo driven.com and www.borgwarner.com

COLLECTOR TRUCK CARDS

CAT SCALE'S 9TH SUPER TRUCKS SERIES

CAT Scale has released its ninth series of Super Trucks Limited Edition collector cards, available at CAT Scale locations. Series Nine contains 60 cards to be distributed in random order on CAT Scale tickets through to the fall of 2009, featuring a mix of antique and newer trucks. Each time a driver weighs on a CAT Scale he'll automatically receive a collector card. The cards are adhered to the scale ticket with a clean-release glue.



Collector books, to protect and display the cards, are available through participating CAT Scale locations and can also be ordered on-line at <http://www.catscale.com> in the merchandise section of the web site. Each collector book contains plastic sleeves to hold the complete set.

You can also apply to be featured on a future set of cards, via an application form on the website.

See www.catscale.com ▲

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- Price reduced to \$475,000 per acre
- Zoned M2, outside storage permitted, located at Hwy 25 and the 401

BRAMPTON – SUB-LEASE

- 122,917 sq.ft. on 6.69 acres, M2 ■ 20 truck level & 2 drive in doors
- \$4.95 per sq.ft. net rent + taxes \$1.42 ■ Ideal warehouse/mfg. facility

BRAMPTON – CROSSDOCK – SUB-LEASE

- 20 door crossdock w.levellers
- Close to Steeles/410 ■ Fenced & secured yard for trucks

WHITBY – TRANSPORTATION TERMINAL – FOR LEASE

- 33,915 sq.ft. on ±12 acres, zoned M1
- Includes cross-dock, office, garage & yard ■ Options available, space is divisible

ETOBICOKE – CROSSDOCK – FOR SALE

- Close to hwy's 401/427/QEW ■ 25TL doors ■ 1 bay repair shop ■ Zoned IC.2



BRAMPTON – REPAIR FACILITY – FOR SALE

- 5,100 sq.ft + 1.25 acres of excess land
- Zoned M2 (permits outside storage)
- Minutes from Hwy's 410/401

BRAMPTON – FOR SALE

- 2 properties totaling 5+/- acres; minutes from Hwy 410
- 4.52 acres, zoned M2 (currently used as truck parking)
- 8,500 sq.ft. on .44 acres, zoned HC1 (currently used as repair shop)

AVR – CROSSDOCK – FOR SALE

- 13,400 sq.ft. on 6.55 acres, zoned Z11 ■ 16 doors with levellers
- Full service repair shop with 2 DI doors (drive-thru) ■ Minutes from Hwy 401

GORMLEY – REPAIR/SERVICE FACILITY – SUB-LEASE

- Hwy 404 exposure ■ 3,000 sq.ft. - expandable ■ Zoned IG-W, outside storage permitted

Today's Trucking Forum



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By Peter Carter

A Wait Gain

What a little force-fed patience can teach a guy

On the morning of Nov. 5, 2008, I sat “on hold” for almost three hours. One hundred and sixty minutes. As long as it takes to drive from Toronto to, say Kingston,

When I first punched the phone number, my call was answered immediately. Then I heard a pretty voice saying: “Thank you for holding. A customer associate will be right with you.”

Then some music—the kind of soft whiny stuff you hear in hotel lobbies—started. It ran for exactly five seconds. I timed it. Then we were back to “Thank you for holding...”

I put the phone on hands-free so I could do other stuff.

First, I took a call on another line from a driver who wanted to talk speed limiters. He thinks they’re trucking’s death knell.

At about 9:40, I started fine-tuning Dave MacNevin’s column about people vs. high-tech which appears on page 29 of this issue. His point: No matter how techie trucking gets, woe is the company that doesn’t put people first.

I had a coffee. Talked about the previous day’s American election with some colleagues. Democrats in the White House can only make the bloated government bigger. Imagine.

The voice. The music.

I was tempted to hang up and try later. After all, my call wasn’t that critical. I had dialed The City of Toronto to ask a question about our new pay-as-you-throw garbage-collection system. I wanted to know how we were to dispose of old garbage cans.

The City hadn’t told us what to do with out-dated garbage bins. The kind with handles and wheels. You can’t fit them into the new collectible containers.

But after the first 30 minutes of on-heldness—and by this time you could have convicted me of having a bit of a relationship with the “thank you for holding” lady,—I was determined to find out how long it would actually last.

It became a quest.

10:30 to 11:00—I searched through our file of letters to the editor to see which should appear on page five of this issue. One was from an accountant in Alliston, Ont. The last thing this country needs, he said, is more taxes.

11:05 to 11:20—I had a phone conversation with a gentleman from the Canadian Competition Bureau about how rates get more competitive as the going get tougher. Them what holds on

When I first punched the phone number, my call was answered immediately. Then I heard a pretty voice saying: “Thank you for holding. A customer associate will be right with you.”

to customers through slender times will be the ones who emerge from this downturn most handsomely, we agreed.

All the while, in the background like white noise, there was, “thank you...right with you.” and whiny music.

11:49—My colleague Simon Blake asked if I want to go for lunch. My priorities changed. The City of Toronto could wait. The government’d be there tomorrow.

But a few things became apparent.

First was, The City responds to emails faster than phone calls. I got word later that afternoon that City Hall had no plans for the bins and suggested I use them for household storage.

More importantly, I also realized that my life would carry on as usual, with or without that crucial piece of information. In fact these things have a way of disappearing into obscurity. Half a year from now we’ll have all but forgotten that at one time pick-up was weekly, covered by our regular taxes and all the junk thrown together.

Whether we’re talking how to separate our household waste or adjust our driving habits, we have an amazing ability to adapt and get on with business. Remember how many people predicted that non-smoking laws would spell the end of the nightclub scene? I’m thinking a few years from now, we’ll be reminiscing about the days trucks could hit 125 clicks.

Another thing: If the City of Toronto had competitors vying for my business, I would be a pushover. If I’m feeling frustrated and there’s competition waiting to pick up the slack, I’m outta there.

Finally, the next time somebody asks me what kind of music I like, I’m going to say, “Country, classical, punk, anything but on-hold.” ▲



4:30 A.M.

I just blew a tire in Kakabeka Falls

The customer's freight needs to be delivered to Thunder Bay by 8:00 A.M.



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