

# TRUCK NEWS

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## Losing it

Wheel-offs continue to be an issue, largely caused by sloppy pre-trips.

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A look at four summer truck shows that will be worth attending.

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## Turning 50

Western Star turns 50 this year, and its future has never looked brighter.

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## Slick thinking

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## Puff, puff, pass

The feds have tabled legislation to legalize marijuana. What does this mean for trucking?

By Sonia Straface

### OTTAWA, ONTARIO

Well, it's official. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has made good on his campaign promise to legalize the recreational use of marijuana. On Apr. 13, the long-awaited suite of bills was

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## Exercising a good work culture

Free healthy meals. Paid workouts. Is Scotlynn Canada's healthiest trucking fleet?

By Sonia Straface

### VITTORIA, ONTARIO

Imagine getting paid to eat a nutritious, catered lunch after a personalized 30-minute workout by an accomplished trainer every workday.

The office staff at Scotlynn's Vittoria facility don't have to imagine. This is their reality. They get paid to eat healthy and work out every single day as part of their wellness program, which was rolled out 18 months ago.

The program was created entirely by the president and CEO of the company, Scott Biddle, who believes having healthy, productive workers translates to having a healthy, productive business.

Biddle said the idea came to him a few years ago when he found himself training for Cain's Quest – a 3,100 kilometer snowmobile endurance race in Newfoundland. He hired a young trainer to meet him every morning at 6 a.m. before work to get prepared for the race.

"Right after I started training, I just realized how good I felt and how much better my days were, and how much more productive I was," Biddle explained. "And I thought if I can take those benefits, the way I feel, and if everybody that worked for me felt as good as I did, you know, the things we could accomplish could be endless. So, I hired that trainer full-time and brought him into the office."

The trainer, Wayne Barnett, sees groups of office staff throughout the day and personalizes their workouts according to their needs. Each of the 60 or so staff members enrolled in the program (Biddle says about 90% of the office staff participates in the program) get a 30-minute workout during the day. Workout plans depend on the person, but Wayne says he likes to combine cardio and strength training when he can.

"And when I first thought of introducing the program, I thought I've got to pay them to do it," Biddle said. "They've got to do it during their workday. Because people aren't going to come in before or come in after – everybody's always got an excuse why they're not going to go to the gym."

So, staff members work out during work hours, and literally get paid to do so.

To complement and round out the fitness program, Biddle also hired a trained chef to join the company to prepare staff nutritious lunches and snacks every day, free of charge.

The chef, Andy Murdoch, worked locally in Port Dover, Ont. for a while before Biddle picked him to join the company. Every day he creates a morning snack at 10 a.m., which consists of things like fresh fruit, yogurt, and granola, a lunch, like grilled chicken and salad, served at noon, and an afternoon snack at 2 p.m., consisting of fresh vegetables and hummus.

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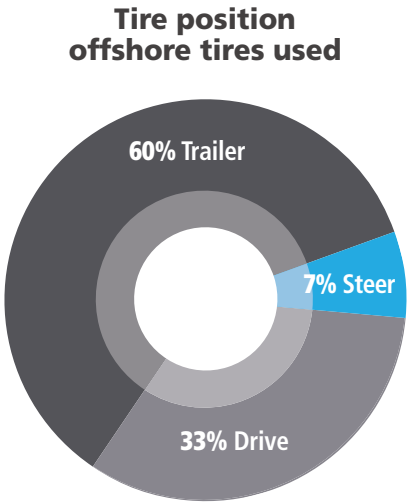
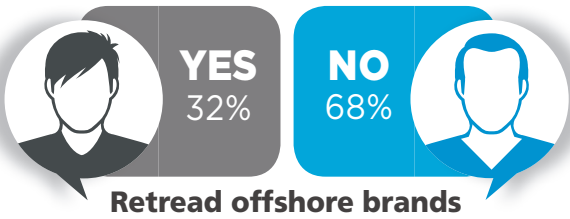
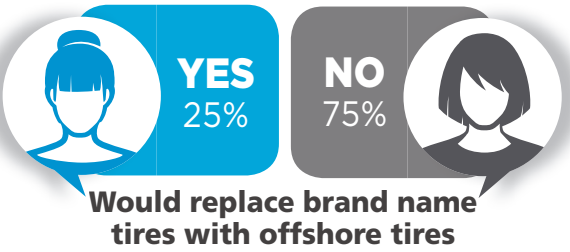
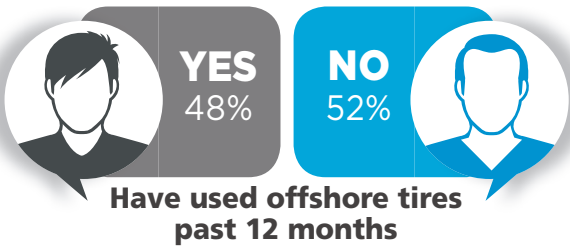
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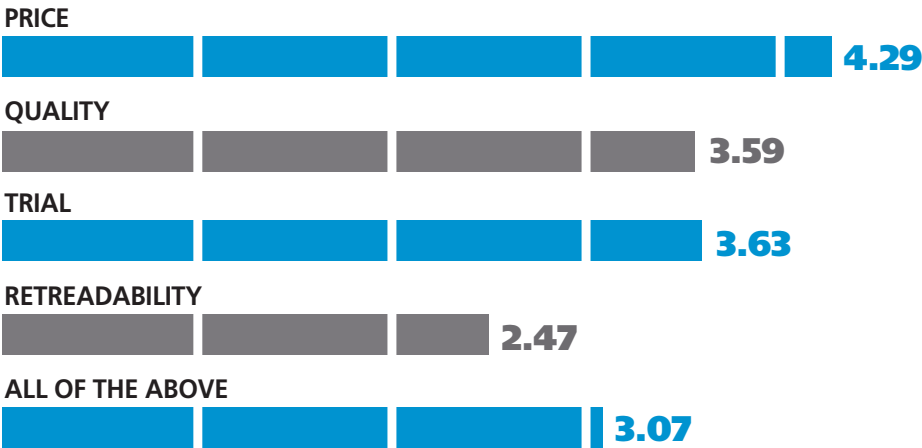


Follow Lou on Twitter @LouSmyrlis.



Plan on continuing to use offshore tires	
Yes, to a greater extent	12%
Yes, to a more limited extent	14%
Yes, to the same extent	35%
No, will not continue to use	40%

**Main reason would switch to offshores** (scale of 1 to 5)



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# Four predictions for the future of trucking

The North American transportation industry is in the early stages of an era of unprecedented change. Our industry has been inundated with reports of autonomous vehicles, the electrification of trucking and other potential alternative fuels, and the “uberization” of the freight market. It’s an exciting time to be connected to this industry. In just a few short years, I suspect our industry will be barely recognizable. Those who best adapt to the changing landscape will be the ones who prosper, while those who fail to do so will be left behind. Here are a few predictions I believe will take place in the coming years:

## Drivers won’t be drivers

I don’t subscribe to the theory that driverless trucks will be delivering freight all on their own. I do, however, see the role of the driver changing drastically. In fact, the driver of the future won’t even be called a driver. He or she will be referred to as a logistics manager, freight engineer, or other such title. Their role will be not to drive the truck, but to oversee systems. They’ll be required to manage transactions with shippers and receivers, to coordinate pickups and deliveries, to take over the controls when needed, and to supervise or manage loading and unloading. All this in an autonomously-driven – not driverless – truck. I also suspect the changing role

of the driver will finally solve the long-running shortage of professional drivers. The job will be more appealing to youth because of the technical nature of it coupled with the fact the more repetitive and mundane aspects of steering the truck down the road have been removed. Drivers, sorry, freight engineers, will be highly regarded as the skilled professionals they are, the importance of their role respected. They’ll be the airline pilots of the highway.



## Trucking will be safer

Trucking, today, is a dangerous job, and don’t let anyone tell you otherwise. Sure, today’s trucks are safer than they’ve ever been and highway safety in general is trending in a positive direction. However, there is increasing congestion on our high-

ways and no shortage of bad drivers who put your life at risk every time you hit the road. Increasing vehicular automation and the rise of vehicle-to-vehicle communications will make highway crashes an extremely rare occurrence. Something will have to go terribly wrong for a collision to occur. Vehicles will also be safer, so it will be possible to walk away from more severe crashes when they do occur. I suspect new safety technologies and the continued evolution of those we’re seeing implemented today will make trucking an extremely safe profession – maybe one of the safest.

## Trucks will be more reliable

As the complexity of trucks has increased in recent years, their reliability has decreased. I expect that trend to reverse and envision a future in which unscheduled downtime is practically unheard of. Predictive diagnostics will allow OEMs to monitor vehicle health in real-time, as they do today, but to take it a step further and predict when parts will wear out. Precision maintenance schedules will be customized for each vehicle and will nearly eliminate breakdowns. The trucking industry will look to the airline industry for inspiration, and implement systems, protocols and layers of redundancy to ensure trucks just don’t break down while they’re out on the highway.

## There will be new manufacturers

Finally, I believe we will see the arrival of new truck manufacturers, something we haven’t seen in North America in a long time, aside from Caterpillar’s short-lived attempt to establish itself as a truck builder. We’ve already heard of Nikola Motor Company, which is working on a hydrogen-fueled Class 8 line-haul truck. Tesla is working on an electric semi and who knows what other Silicon Valley startups are eyeing the trucking industry as ripe for disruption. These threats will force the incumbent OEMs to continue pushing the envelope and exploring new methods of moving freight down the highway. Trucking providers will have new options when it comes to the power they put on the road. **TN**



**James Menzies** can be reached by phone at (416) 510-6896 or by e-mail at [james@newcom.ca](mailto:james@newcom.ca). You can also follow him on Twitter @JamesMenzies.

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A close-up, low-angle shot of the front of a white Thermo King Precedent reefer trailer. The trailer features a large, illuminated grille with a honeycomb pattern and four glowing yellow lights. The Thermo King logo and a stylized 'TK' emblem are visible on the side of the trailer. The background is a dramatic, cloudy sky with warm, golden light.

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# Examining the Trump effect on trucking

One potential impact: Higher costs for truckers

By James Menzies

**BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA**

What can the trucking industry expect from the pro-business Donald Trump administration? Ironically, it could be higher taxes.

Noel Perry, truck and transportation expert with industry analyst FTR, said during the most recent *State of Freight* webinar that somebody will have to pay for Trump's planned infrastructure investments – and it could be the trucking industry. Trucking could also be called on to fund increases in social program spending, as the US population ages, he added.

Perry said Trump could raise the money to fund his trillion dollar infrastructure promise through the issuing of bonds, road tolls, or other forms of taxation. The trucking industry in the US currently pays about five cents a mile in taxes. Perry said that could climb to 15-20 cents a mile if trucking is targeted through new taxes and road tolls to pay for infrastructure.

"It wouldn't fundamentally change the economics of trucking," he said. However, Perry added that if trucking is called on to help fund needed spending increases for social pro-

grams, as in Europe, its taxes per mile could increase to as much as \$1 or more. Perry said spending on health care and social security will need to rise from US\$6 trillion today to more than \$10 trillion by 2025.

"If the US does what Europe does, and pays for social spending by taxing fuel, the tax on an average mile of trucking would be well over a buck, potentially as much as \$2," Perry warned. "The whole issue of infrastructure and social spending having to do with health care and social security is a major exposure looking at trucking going down the road."

He noted many states are becoming more comfortable raising fuel taxes.

If Trump's infrastructure spending does reach the \$1 trillion he promised, trucking's gains would likely be restricted to the flatdeck and dump segments, Perry noted.

"Most of the market will not be affected that much," he said, noting the benefits to dry van and reefer carriers would be negligible.

Currently, only about 30% of the highway taxes collected by the US federal government are reinvested back into the maintenance of highways, Perry pointed out, with the bulk going towards other transpor-

tation needs such as transit. Perry also noted that while the US currently spends about \$250 billion a year on infrastructure, three quarters of that comes from states and local governments.

"Even if Mr. Trump and Congress pass a major expansion, it will affect only a quarter of what we do," Perry said. He added sewage and water treatment infrastructure accounts for the biggest need, so not all the increase in infrastructure spending will go towards roads and bridges.

But whether Trump can live up to his campaign promises remains to be seen.

"Congress has so far spent a lot of time resisting him, so it's possible the tax cuts...will either bog down or be associated with enough angst and rhetoric and name-calling that could mute the economic effect," Perry said. "It's a well known fact in business that people invest when they're confident and things are stable and not otherwise, so we have to hope for the sake of the economy that the president and both sides of the aisle can see eye to eye on these programs, something that hasn't happened so far."

In an informal poll before the webinar began, moderator Jona-

than Starks asked attendees to indicate whether they believe the Trump administration in 2018 will: make business stronger; provide a small upside; maintain the status quo; or have a negative effect. The majority, 45%, felt it will deliver a small upside, while 24% said they expect the status quo and 22% voted for stronger growth. Only 9% are expecting a negative impact.

Perry warned of another risk of the Trump administration: a trade war.

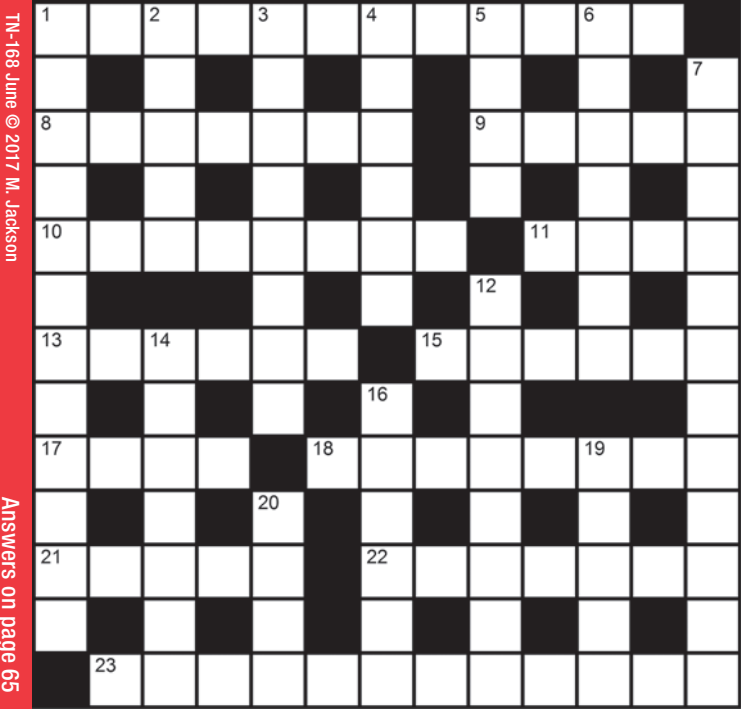
"So far, he has toned down his rhetoric very substantially," Perry said. "If we were to have some kind of trade war that interrupted (freight) in some way, it would have a pretty major effect on transportation."

As far as regulations are concerned, Perry is not expecting any disruption of the electronic logging device (ELD) mandate set to take effect later this year, since it's statutory requirement and doesn't come from the executive branch.

However, FTR is anticipating some of the regulations that were in the pipeline for 2019 and beyond to be scrapped.

"We were originally thinking 2019 would be a big regulatory year and we are saying it's not now, with the exception of the drug and alcohol database," Perry said. "There has been a major effect in reducing the potential regulatory burden (on trucking)." **TN**

THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE



TN-168 June © 2017 M. Jackson

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Across

- 1 Daimler Trucks NA brand
- 8 Castrol diesel engine oil
- 9 Highway hill top
- 10 Hot shot, in other words (4,4)
- 11 Slangy abbr., a PACCAR truck
- 13 A in CBSA
- 15 Espar bunk comfort equipment
- 17 Fictional Truck News driver Dalton
- 18 Day & Ross NB HQ town
- 21 Pre-metric weight unit
- 22 Obligatory CB adjunct
- 23 Employers' offerings, perhaps (7,5)

Down

- 1 Service station handouts, long ago (4,4,4)
- 2 Highway offramps
- 3 No movement traffic jam
- 4 CB, slangily
- 5 I in PSI
- 6 Great Dane reefer model
- 7 Certain big rig tires (5,7)
- 12 Mid-trip pause (4,4)
- 14 On the way, in QC (2,5)
- 16 "Aloha State" plates home
- 19 Driver's sleep problem, perhaps
- 20 Slowest engine speed

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# OOIDA not giving up on e-log challenge

## GRAIN VALLEY, MISSOURI

The Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA) is taking its challenge against the US electronic logging device (ELD) mandate to the Supreme Court.

The organization, which represents small business truckers, appealed a court ruling handed down by the US Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, which ruled against OOIDA on its lawsuit against the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). OOIDA claims mandating e-logs amounts to warrantless surveillance of truckers.

"We were very disappointed and surprised by the ruling against us by the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals," said Jim Johnston, president and CEO of OOIDA. "That same court had ruled in our favor on a previous lawsuit of ours on this same issue."

OOIDA argues that requiring drivers to use ELDs to record their hours-of-service does not improve highway safety, since they are no more reliable than paper logs. OOIDA is also asking the Supreme Court to determine whether the ELD rule violates Fourth Amendment rights, by failing to establish

a regulatory structure at the state and federal levels that serves as a substitute for a warrant.

"We believe that the Seventh Circuit erred in allowing warrantless searches of 3.5 million drivers, designed specifically to uncover evidence of criminal activity," Johnston said. "In doing so, the Seventh Circuit decision splits directly with rulings by both the Fifth and Eleventh Circuit Courts. This is also the first time that the pervasively regulated industry exception has been applied directly to the search of an individual to serve the ordinary needs of criminal law enforcement." **TN**

# Truck tonnage slips in March

ATA projects moderate growth going forward

## ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

US for-hire truck tonnage slipped 1% in March, according to the latest data from the American Trucking Associations.

Year-over-year, the seasonally-adjusted truck tonnage index rose 0.7%. Year-to-date, compared with the same three months in 2016, the index is up 0.2%. For all of 2016, tonnage was up 2.5%.

"Like several other economic indicators, March truck tonnage was likely hurt by some late season winter storms," said ATA chief economist Bob Costello. "Despite last month's dip, seasonally adjusted tonnage rose 1.2% during the first quarter overall from the previous quarter, and increased 0.2% from the same quarter last year. While I'm not expecting a surge in truck tonnage anytime soon, the signs remain mostly positive for freight, including lower inventory levels, better manufacturing activity, solid housing starts, and good consumer spending. As a result, we can expect moderate growth going forward." **TN**

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***Great Dane***

# Ontario cargo thefts on the rise

Ontario edges up on list no state or province wants to climb

## TORONTO, ONTARIO

Ontario was the second most common place in North America, in the first quarter of 2017, for cargo theft activity, according to a recent analysis by CargoNet.

California remained the state with the most cargo thefts, reporting 51 cargo theft events in Q1 2017. Normally, Texas follows California but in this quarter, it was displaced by Ontario. Ontario reported 29 cargo theft events in the first quarter, an increase of 262% year-over-year.

Most of the reports were in the Greater Toronto Area.

In the first three months of 2017, there were 10 cargo thefts reported in Brampton, five in Mississauga, and five in Toronto. In many cases, the thefts in these cities occurred on the same street or even at the same address, CargoNet said.

A total of 358 supply chain risk incidents occurred across the US and Canada in the first quarter.

According to the data, of the 358 incidents, 58% involved theft of a trucking vehicle, 54% involved theft of cargo, and 7% were classified as fraud (often identified as theft and wire fraud).

In total, 192 cargo theft events were recorded, and the cargo in each theft was worth an average of US\$149,522, bringing the total estimated loss to US\$28.7 million for the quarter.

There were 339 trucking vehicles reported stolen, including 137 tractors and 143 trailers.

CargoNet said secured yards were the most common location where cargo thefts occurred this quarter. Warehouse locations were next, followed closely by parking lots with 28 thefts.

Food and beverage products were the most stolen items in the first quarter, and 31% of all reported cargo thefts involved those commodities. Specifically, meat products were the most stolen food and beverage item, with 17 thefts. Non-alcoholic and alcoholic beverages followed with nine and eight thefts, respectively. Household items were the next most common category; 15% of cargo thefts involved this commodity. **TN**

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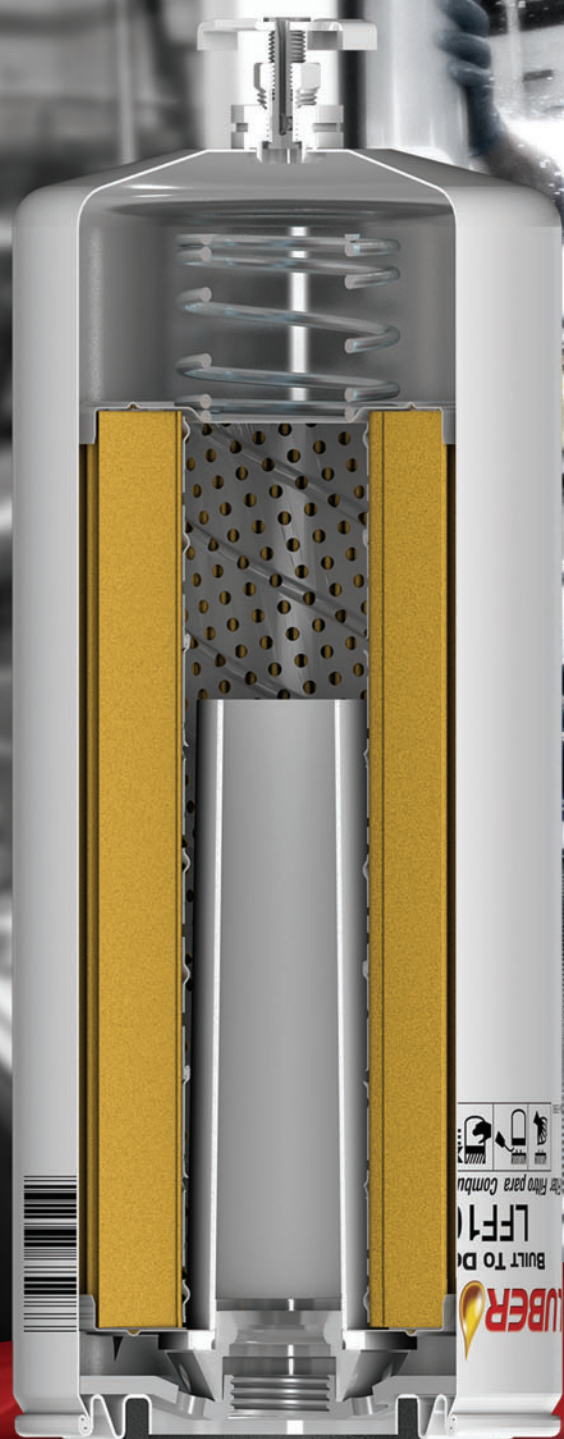
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# Woodstock gets CNG fast fill station

## WOODSTOCK, ONTARIO

Rural Green Energy has announced the opening of a compressed natural gas (CNG) commercial cardlock facility here.

“We are pleased to have the support of our local municipality Oxford County and a large number of Ontario fleet owners. We are committed to providing a cleaner, more sustainable, economical fuel option. We are fueling change,” said John Ysselstein Jr., president of Rural Green Energy.

The facility provides CNG fast fill and in Phase 2 of the project will add a blend of CNG and RNG (bio-methane from livestock waste). The facility was engineered, constructed, and is maintained by Faromor CNG Corp.

“This is a timely and welcome development that provides our community with another energy choice to support our efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions,” said Woodstock Mayor Trevor Birtch. “The City of Woodstock’s Municipal Energy Plan establishes a goal of reducing energy use and greenhouse gas emissions by 38% and 37% by 2031 from the 2013 baseline. We look forward to the Phase 2 introduction of RNG for a more sustainable energy choice.”

The official grand opening was held May 5. **TN**

# Women to be saluted June 10



Female truck drivers gathered for the first Canadian Salute to Women Behind the Wheel last year.

## MONCTON, NEW BRUNSWICK

The second annual Canadian Salute to Women Behind the Wheel is set and scheduled.

The salute is set to take place this year at the Atlantic Truck Show in Moncton, N.B. on Saturday, June 10 at 11 a.m.

Organizers say this is a chance for attendees at the show to celebrate female drivers and highlight the work they do for the trucking industry. Refreshments will be served and there will be door prizes and goodie bags for drivers.

The highlight of the event will be a group photo of all the women drivers in their red Salute t-shirts. Drivers must show proof of a commercial driver’s licence at the event, organizers confirmed. Drivers can pick up registration forms for the salute at OBAC booth #504 during the show. **TN**

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Husky



## BIG NEWS ABOUT THE HUSKYPRO CARDLOCK NETWORK



## Business

# Shifting into healthy gear

Continued from page 1



Scotlynn's president and CEO, Scott Biddle said he started the wellness program to boost employee morale and productivity.

Biddle said he hired a chef due to the company's demographic and its remote location.

"The people we hired were generally younger people in the logistics business," he explained. "They don't think about what they are going to eat the night before. Like me, they think about what they're going to eat 15 minutes before they need to eat. So, they're wasting 15 to 30 minutes before they eat, then they drive and get the food... that's usually garbage food, that they pick up and bring back to eat at their desk. Then at 2 o'clock they're laying on their desk because it's garbage food. So, I found it very beneficial just to implement the healthy food. Plus, we're a 10- to 15-minute drive away from any fast food places. Hiring a chef just felt like the right thing to do."

Murdoch works hard to ensure that he doesn't repeat too many meals and injects a lot of color into the staff's diet.

"We always like to switch the meals up and use a lot of local farmers and butchers for our meat and eggs," he said. "We like to stay with local vendors and buy fresh fruits and vegetables that are in season. So right now, we're eating a lot of asparagus and corn."

Murdoch also puts a large emphasis on portion control.

**"If everybody that worked for me felt as good as I did, you know, the things we could accomplish could be endless."**

— Scott Biddle, Scotlynn Group

"When we first started the program, we ran out of chicken," he said. "And I had it all portioned out per person, four ounces. So, after that, I figured that I was going to have to teach portion control. So now we do an example plate each day of what your portion should look like."

A fan favorite of the office is Taco Tuesday. And though it seems like a high-calorie lunch option, Murdoch says he makes it nutritious by offering healthy alternative to put in the tacos like lean ground beef, black beans, avocado, and tons of fresh vegetables.

"It's definitely a crowd pleaser," Murdoch said. "Plus, people save money every week on groceries,

which I'm sure they appreciate. I know packing a lunch at home isn't something most people look forward to. So, with this program, it makes it easier for staff to focus on other things."

The benefits Biddle has seen are endless, he said. Staff are looking and feeling better and he has seen it boost production for the 250-truck operation.



"The culture within the office, the realm, everything is just better," he said. "People feel a lot better. We strive to be the best in the industry and every day we look at ways to improve morale in the company and this has definitely helped."

Success stories aren't hard to come by in the office, as many have lost a significant amount of weight and have reached their fitness goals.

One example is the company's chief financial officer, who suffered a heart attack a few years back. Through the program, he dropped close to 40 pounds. Now, according to Biddle, his CFO runs at least two miles every morning. Another staff member weighed 165 lbs and wanted to bulk up and gain more muscle. He's now up to 190 lbs thanks to the program. Another staff member, in the payroll department and in her 60s, went from deadlifting 45 lbs in the gym to deadlifting 150 lbs.

"On the whole, everyone who participates in the program is doing amazing," Biddle said. "We sit at our desks all day, so to get up and get moving and eat something healthy every day is a good thing." **TN**

# Marijuana bill leaves employers dazed and confused

Continued from page 1

tabled in the House of Commons, which outlines that those 18 and older will be able to possess up to 30 grams of (dried or fresh) cannabis and grow up to four plants at home come July 2018.

Though some find the bill drastic, a government news release promises a “strict legal framework for the production, sale, distribution and possession of marijuana.” Trudeau’s government ensured that selling cannabis to a minor would be a criminal offense and that there would be a “zero-tolerance approach” to drug-impaired driving.

As it relates to trucking, the Liberal government also explained that for the first time in Canadian law there will be a regulated limit to how much tetrahydrocannabinol (THC, the impairing ingredient found in cannabis) can be in a driver’s blood while behind the wheel. The new bill outlines that it will be illegal to drive within two hours of having an illegal level of drugs in the blood. Penalties will range from a \$1,000 fine to life imprisonment, depending on the circumstances of the impairment.

As well, according to the release, the bill would put stricter penalties in place when drivers are impaired both by marijuana and alcohol. The Liberal government has also pledged to have a public campaign rolled out to educate people on the dangers of marijuana use, especially when driving and combined with alcohol and other drugs.

The existing access to medical marijuana legislation will remain unchanged, the bill outlined.

Because the bill is so new, there are a lot of unanswered questions for the trucking industry as it relates to drivers, drug testing, employability, and human rights. However, experts are certain that as July 2018 nears, the smoke will clear and questions will be answered.

“We’re at the very beginning stages in respects to recreational marijuana,” confirmed Toronto employment lawyer, Shelley Brown, in an interview with *Truck News*. “This is just the first step. There are many elements that still need to be put in place from a regulatory standpoint.”

Brown says that going forward, employers – especially those who employ people in safety-sensitive positions like fleet executives, who hire and manage truck drivers – need to have a detailed and comprehensive drug and alcohol policy in place.

“Employers at this stage of the game need to take a hard look at their workforce and identify those positions that are safety-sensitive and have policies and procedures in place,” he said, adding that drug and alcohol policies should be updated if a carrier already has one that directly outlines expectations and requirements of employees about recreational marijuana use. “And make sure that your policy is well written and fully understood by all of your employees.”

Brown said a legal limit – or impairment threshold – needs to be set by the government. And a way to test for impairment, not usage, still needs to be rolled out.

“Impairment is what an employer can act upon,” he said. “Not usage. So, the difficulty there is, marijuana stays in the system for a long period of time after it has been consumed, therefore if you have a regular user who stops using days or weeks before a random drug test, he or she can test positive but that doesn’t mean they are impaired. Colorado is dealing with this now. They’ve determined a drug threshold and we need the same in Canada so we can take action.”

The Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) said recently that it has already started the discussion with other safety-sensitive industries, to make sure safeguards and regulations are in place before marijuana becomes legal.

“Employers in industries like trucking have a

paramount responsibility for the safety of our employees and of the motoring public with whom we share the road,” said David Bradley, CEO of the CTA. “We are asking for a cut-off limit for impairment, like .08 for alcohol; a practical and less evasive roadside test; and the regulatory framework for employers to conduct workplace testing of employees in safety-sensitive occupations, including random testing.”

Brown said that employers concerned about the legalization of marijuana should “keep abreast all of the changes that will be happening to ensure policies and procedures in their own plans reflect these changes and are responsive to regulations and laws that will be coming down the pipe in the future.”

Since the plan to legalize marijuana was formally announced, Connor Page, business development manager at DriverCheck, said more fleet owners are calling his office with concerns.

“After the news was released, and we talked to several clients, we think the legalization is just going to result in more testing,” Page said. “More companies who previously never did drug testing or had drug and alcohol policies, will start testing, I think. We’re getting lots of calls asking what they can do, so they can keep their workplace safe.”

**“It’s a medical fact that marijuana is not a harmless drug. It’s proven to affect work performance and more importantly for our industry, it affects driving skills.”**

– David Dietrich, Erb Group

Page added he thinks the news will make random testing in trucking companies a lot more common because it is the most effective deterrent, meaning drivers who know their workplace has random testing will be less tempted to smoke up while off-duty.

However, one has to wonder what kind of effect this will have on recruitment efforts – something the trucking industry isn’t exactly managing well. If the industry wants to attract new, young blood, will such efforts be hampered by taking a zero-tolerance approach to marijuana consumption, even while off-duty?

David Dietrich, vice-president of human resources for Erb Group, thinks it won’t be an issue.

“Maybe I’m naive, but I don’t think it will have an impact on recruiting,” he said. “I believe truck drivers are used to testing and drug policies. Drivers are professionals and most love their jobs and wouldn’t want to jeopardize their jobs. Most want to be safe drivers.”

Right now, Dietrich said Erb has a comprehensive drug and alcohol policy in place for its employees that he classifies as a zero-tolerance approach. It does pre-employment, post-accident, random, and reasonable suspicion testing.

“When I first heard about the legalization, myself, it was troubling,” he said. “From a safety perspective, it’s a major concern. It’s a medical fact that marijuana is not a harmless drug. It’s proven to affect work performance and more importantly for our industry, it affects driving skills. So it’s concerning that this drug will be legal, but it does have us thinking about our next steps.”

Dietrich said Erb will be updating its drug policy as more information becomes available.

“The way I see it, our current policy prohibits the use of alcohol – a legal substance – in the workplace, so I’m going to assume the treatment of marijuana will be the same,” he said. **TN**



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# As serious as a wheel-off

## Improper pre-trip inspections blamed for majority of wheel separations



A thorough pre-trip inspection is crucial when it comes to wheel-off prevention, according to the experts that spoke at the TTA's seminar on Apr. 19.

By Sonia Straface

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Wheel separations are 100% preventable if a proper pre-trip inspection is done.

That was the clear message from presenters during a special seminar hosted by the Toronto Trucking Association on Apr. 19, which covered the scary and deadly topic of wheel separations.

Robert Monster, vehicle standards engineer with the Ministry of Transportation, Sgt. Scott Parker of the Ontario Provincial Police, and Rolf VanderZwaag, manager of maintenance and technical issues at the Ontario Trucking Association, all took to the podium to discuss the issue of wheel-offs and what can be done to prevent them in the future.

The number one cause of wheel separations, explained Monster, is failed wheel fasteners.

"About 80-90% of wheel separations are caused by the fasteners," he said. "Bearings would be the next one, and having a cracked wheel – that's very low. What sticks out is wheel fasteners and it's probably the most preventable defect."

Monster said if a proper pre-trip inspection is done by drivers, these dangerous fasteners would be caught before they come anywhere close to causing the wheel to separate.

"Wheels separations don't occur instantly," Parker stressed. "It takes time for a wheel to separate. All 10 fasteners don't fail at the same time. So, I'm asking you, the industry, how is this happening?"

The answer to that, according to Monster and Parker, is sub-par pre-trip inspections during which drivers skip the tires and wheels entirely. This speculation holds water when you look at another trend that both Monster and Parker revealed.

"When you're inspecting your truck in the morning and it's -20C and snowing, is the truck going to get as much of an inspection as when it's 20C and sunny?" he asked. "Probably not."

Last year, according to OPP statistics, there were 74 wheel separations in Ontario alone.

"Just like any other crime, I know there are more instances than those that are reported," Parker added.

And this number is pretty steady, despite the hefty consequences that wheel-offs can bring, Parker said.

"Prevention starts with the driver," he said. "It's all there and it's being missed and it's being missed seasonally."

Parker said that to prevent wheel separations in your own fleet, it is crucial to have an open communication policy between drivers, staff, and management.

"Drivers need to know what state the equipment is in," he said. "They need to know when the wheels were last off that trailer. Because we'll ask them if there's a wheel-off investigation. We'll ask them when the last time there was a torque check done. So the drivers need to have

that communicated to them."

At the same time, Parker said, it's important to listen to drivers, too. If a driver goes to management or a maintenance worker and says his or her vehicle is unsafe to drive and is told to drive it anyway, and a wheel separation occurs, that manager or worker can be held accountable.

To prevent wheel separations, VanderZwaag reiterated that proper pre-trips are key.

He added if you're not the driver, but the owner of the business, or are in charge of maintenance, it's important not to save money when it comes to buying wheel nuts.

"It's all about the quality and characteristics of wheel nuts," said VanderZwaag. "Buy a brand name, buy a nut that's marked so you know the manufacturer, so if two months later something happens, you know who to reach out to."

He also added to ensure that during an install, steps aren't missed.

"The number one problem with hub piloted wheels, when it comes to installation is they don't lubricate. The manufacturers of hub piloted wheels have said from day one, lubricate the threads, lubricate the washer...this is the most overlooked step when I watch guys doing the install. If your guys are (not lubricating), you're going to have problems. It's so simple," VanderZwaag concluded. **TN**

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# Safely moving food

ATA outlines new rules for transportation of food during Omnitracs Outlook 2017

By Derek Clouthier

PHOENIX, ARIZONA

Amendments have been made to the US's 2011 Sanitary Transportation of Human and Animal Food rule, with many of the guidelines having a direct effect on trucking companies that transport food across the country.

Sean Garney, director of safety policy for the American Trucking Associations (ATA), outlined these changes during Omnitracs Outlook 2017 earlier this year, highlighting several provisions the ATA advocated for on behalf of the industry.

One of the main areas of concern was the matter of food temperature, and what that means in terms of whether a shipment is considered to be "adulterated" and destined for the dump.

Garney said the ATA stressed to the government that there are two types of temperature control – those that are deemed for safety, such as the shipping of chicken, and those for quality, such as for food items like lettuce. Food temperature control for safety has a direct effect on the public's health, as eating contaminated chicken can cause severe illness or even death. On the other hand, food

temperature for quality, where there is not a health risk, is something the ATA said should be kept between the shipper and receiver.

A significant change to the 2011 rule is that requirements for recording temperatures will be left to the shipper's discretion and the term "adulteration" has been replaced by a "see something, say something" approach, meaning if there is a possible issue with a shipment, an expert will be brought in to check the quality of the load.

"This is based on the safety of the food, not what happened during transit," Garney said.

Recordkeeping was another focus area for the ATA.

Garney said the approach of having a "roomful of recordkeeping" was onerous, and was not the best fit for the trucking industry.



ATA director of safety policy, Sean Garney.

"You cannot fit the trucking industry into a box," he said. "It's huge. They all have different requirements. Every commodity is different."

Ultimately, companies must document that they know what they are doing when shipping human and animal food.

Keeping the trailer that is transporting food sanitary is another emphasis of the new rule and brought about the change that sanitary transportation requirements are to be based on the intended use of the vehicle and on the production stage which the food is in (raw or finished).

The rule also states that the vehicle and transportation equipment being used to move the food must be made from material that can be adequately cleaned and sanitized.

"Does anyone know what 'adequately cleaned and sanitized' means?" Garney asked those in attendance, referring to the broad requirements of the new rule. "Neither does the government."

Food must also be stored in a manner to prevent pests or contamination, and temperature control systems must be designed, maintained and equipped to provide proper temperature control.

Those exempt from these new rules include "very small businesses" with less than \$500,000 in annual revenue, food transshipped through the US, food located in a facility already regulated by the USDA, and farms performing transportation operations.

Food completely enclosed by a container that is not temperature controlled, compressed food gases, human food byproducts used for animal feed not subject to further processing and live animals are also not covered in the new rules.

Overall, Garney said the new rules give flexibility back to the industry and shippers will be responsible for most of the new requirements.

The compliance date for large companies was Apr. 6, while small businesses (less than 500 employees or less than \$27.5 million in annual receipts) get an additional two years.

The 2011 Sanitary Transportation of Human and Animal Food affects all food traveling by land and not loads shipped by sea or air. **TN**

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# Gordie Howe bridge start date now set for next summer

New bridge could bolster Windsor’s transportation industry, proponents say

By Ron Stang

## WINDSOR, ONTARIO

Construction of the new Gordie Howe International Bridge should get underway in the summer of 2018, and take four years to build, top officials with the Crown corporation overseeing the bridge’s construction and future operations say.

Windsor Detroit Bridge Authority (WDBA) president and CEO Michael Cautillo said the consortium to build the bridge will be chosen next spring. Asked by reporters following the WDBA’s annual public meeting here if this means construction could start by summer 2018, Cautillo said, “I would think so, yes.”

Originally it was thought bridge construction would have been underway by now. But the process has taken longer than expected, in part owing to the time it has taken to acquire properties – especially on the American side – and a delay in issuing requests for proposals to prospective contractors. A change in the federal government following the October 2015 election has also been considered a factor. Three interna-

tional proponents are now bidding to build the bridge, which has been estimated to cost \$2 billion, but which authorities say is not an official figure, and is largely dependent on the winning bid’s price.

The original projected opening of the bridge in 2020 has been moved to 2022.

Officials at the public meeting announced that 60% of US properties have now been obtained for the American port of entry and connection to Interstate 75. (All properties on the Canadian side have been acquired). The chief opponent of the bridge, Detroit businessman Matty Moroun, who owns the competing Ambassador Bridge, also owns some of the remaining property that’s needed.

But WDBA interim chairman Dwight Duncan was undaunted in the face of any opposition. Despite Moroun’s well known litigious nature, Duncan said the Gordie Howe’s construction timeline will be met.

“You can be assured that we’re going to fight them every single step of the way and we will win,” he said. “And we have confidence, not only that we will win, but that we’ll have



the properties in the timelines we need them by.”

Duncan said that long-term, the Gordie Howe bridge will generate significant economic activity for Windsor as a center for freight consolidation and logistics.

He said the new bridge will greatly expedite crossing the border whereas the present bridge is “effectively down to one or two lanes,” due to rehabilitation work, and “trucks are lining up again.”

Pointing to the vast transportation-related industries in the western Greater Toronto Area (GTA), Duncan said Windsor could get a piece of that pie.

“I have had conversations with people who are looking at a range of opportunities,” he said. “Think about when you drive (along) the 401 – you go through Brampton, Mississauga, and you look at all those warehouses, that’s all transportation, that’s all

logistics, there are a lot of people working in those places.”

Meanwhile, WDBA president Cautillo suggested most truckers now using Windsor’s Huron Church Rd. to access the Ambassador Bridge will shift to the Gordie Howe from the already completed six-lane Herb Gray Parkway, an extension of Hwy. 401.

“We do see that this crossing is going to be of great interest to commercial traffic, so truckers, and they in all likelihood will come off of Huron Church because this crossing is going to be more convenient to cross,” he said.

Asked if he could specify a diversion target of truck traffic, Cautillo would only say “It’s going to depend on the experience that the truckers are going to have on the new crossing of travel time savings that are going to be there, trip time repeatability, and ease of getting across the border.” **TN**

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## Polaris Transportation Group acquires J.G. Drapeau



Margaret Hogg will stay on as general manager of J.G. Drapeau.

### ETOBICOKE, ONTARIO

Polaris Transportation Group (PTG) announced on May 3 that it acquired the shares of J.G. Drapeau and Commercial Warehousing Limited.

According to Polaris, Drapeau and Commercial Warehousing will continue to be led by the current management team, including Margaret Hogg, who will remain general manager of the companies.

"We are thrilled to be welcoming another best-in-class company to the PTG family," said Larry Cox, president, Polaris. "Drapeau is an award-winning carrier (most recently recognized by Trucking HR Canada with the prestigious 2017 Top Fleet Employer award), with a top tier safety record, strong management team, and consistent financial performance over their 47 years in the industry. In addition, they bring deep subject matter expertise in the field of specialized products warehousing, Canada and US distribution programs, and full truck-load work (temperature control and hazardous materials)."

Hogg said the decision to sell the family business to Polaris was an easy one.

"We are extremely happy with the deal," she told *Truck News*. "Especially since we've had such a long relationship with Polaris. We're like family. It just felt really good

and really right. It's the perfect fit for the company."

Hogg said that Polaris approached J.G. Drapeau a few years back, but the family wasn't ready to let go of the business just yet.

"But now we feel like we're ready," she said. "My parents deserve to retire so we made the decision."

"We are incredibly proud of the business we have built over the past 47 years," added George Hogg and Jocelyne Hogg, co-founders of Drapeau, in a statement. "The next generation of leaders at Drapeau and Commercial will benefit from all the opportunities a large organization like Polaris can bring, coupled with what we believe to be an excellent cultural fit between our two companies. Polaris' operational focus, with a passion around safety and well-being for employees, makes them an excellent fit for our team and longstanding customers and suppliers."

George and Jocelyne retired on May 5, with a retirement party at the main Drapeau facility in Etobicoke.

"I feel like everyone got what they wanted out of the deal," Margaret added. "Our customers are thrilled knowing that we can take on more for them, if necessary. I'm just so happy and I'm looking forward to our new journey with Polaris."

This marks Polaris' third acquisition. **TN**

## Trucking HR Canada recognizes top trucking employers

### OTTAWA, ONTARIO

Trucking HR Canada has recognized 48 trucking companies through its Top Fleet Employers program.

Fleets were rated on categories including: recruitment and retention strategies; workplace culture; compensation; training and skills development; and innovative human resources practices.

"We received a record number of applications this year, with a small increase in the number being recognized," said Angela Splinter, CEO

of Trucking HR Canada. "These 48 fleets demonstrate a commitment to good people management and effective human resources approaches. We commend them for their leadership in showcasing the trucking industry as a great place to work."

Trucking HR Canada will recognize the 2017 Top Fleet Employers at its annual Gala Awards Dinner on Oct. 12 in Toronto.

For a full list of winners and details about the gala dinner, visit [www.TruckingHR.com](http://www.TruckingHR.com). **TN**



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# Big Freight joins Daseke

## WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

Big Freight Systems, a Winnipeg-based, open-deck specialized transportation company, has merged with Texas' Daseke.

The Schilli Companies has also joined Daseke, the largest owner and a consolidator of open-deck specialized transportation solutions in North America, which is now comprised of 11 companies with more than 3,500 trucks and 7,300 open-deck trailers.

Big Freight Systems has been providing supply chain solutions for nearly 70 years, and is an award-winning trucking and freight management company, with a specialization in the power sports market segment. The company serves all Canadian provinces and 19 states.

"There was a natural comfort level immediately with the other Daseke leaders," said Gary Coleman, president and CEO of Big Freight Systems. "There will be many synergies between the companies. We all share the same DNA for wanting to be the best, and I look forward to sharing best practices with the Daseke family. What's more, we will



be a beachhead for Daseke in Canada. From an operational standpoint, we now have the financial resources of Daseke to grow our company further, along with consolidated purchasing power and risk mitigation coverage."

The Schilli Companies began in 1961 and services open-deck specialized transportation, as well as industrial warehousing and distribution. The business is comprised of four companies – Schilli Transportation Services, Schilli Special-

ized, Schilli Distribution Services, and Schilli NationalLease, a member of NationalLease.

Big Freight Systems and The Schilli Companies had an estimated combined revenue of US\$119 million. **TN**

# Speedy inks cross-border partnership

## TORONTO, ONTARIO

Speedy Transport Group recently announced it has entered into a relationship with Estes Express Lines, through which it will handle Estes' freight in Eastern Canada.

Speedy Transport will be providing linehaul services for Estes' freight to Eastern Canada through three strategic gateways in Michigan, New York, and Massachusetts, the company said.

"We share many of the same values as Speedy Transport," said Estes president and CEO Rob Estes. "They are proactively customer-focused and committed to helping their customers achieve the highest level of success. Their longevity in the industry, coverage area, and internal culture make this a great fit, and we're excited to move forward with our new alliance."

Speedy Transport CEO Jared Martin added: "Estes' integrity was evident in the initial meetings with Rob and his team. It didn't take long to realize how well aligned Estes and Speedy were and what we could create together. We look forward to many years of collaboration, providing industry-leading national solutions to our joint customers."

The new alliance begins May 22. **TN**



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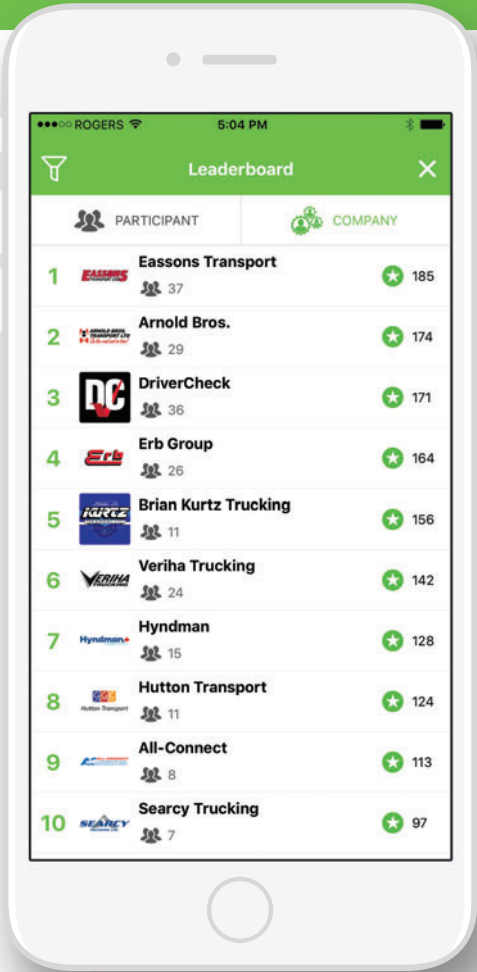
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# Optimism returning to oil and gas industry: Mullen

By James Menzies

## OKOTOKS, ALBERTA

Mullen Group reported improved revenue in the first quarter of 2017 in both its trucking/logistics and oilfield services segments, but the markets remain “fragile,” according to chairman and CEO Murray Mullen.

The company posted Q1 revenue of \$284.9 million, up 4.9% year-over-year. The trucking segment grew revenue 4% while oilfield services saw revenue climb 4.8%. Drilling activity improved but Mullen saw a decline in pipeline hauling demand.

Net income was \$14.5 million, down 32.2% year-over-year, primarily due to a negative variance in unrealized foreign exchange. Nonetheless, Mullen said he’s seeing optimism returning to the oil and gas segment.

“After two years of reporting declining revenues we are finally starting to experience some growth. The \$285 million generated in the first quarter of 2017 remains well below prior peak levels but the results are 4.9% above last year, representing that some early stage stability is returning to the battered oil and natural gas service industry as

well as reinforcing our acquisition strategy,” Mullen said.

“I remain of the view that the markets we serve are fragile and that a period of adjustment is still required before our financial performance improves in a more meaningful way but there is a sense of optimism returning to the oil and natural gas industry, which I fully expect will benefit our organization in the second half of the year. In terms of the overall Canadian economy, the story is very similar. Freight demand is starting to increase, which will ultimately lead to improved pricing later this year. In the meantime, however, the trucking and logistics sector of the economy remains very competitive.”

Mullen said the company continues to be on the lookout for acquisition opportunities.

“One of our stated strategic initiatives for 2017 centered on growth through acquisitions. In this latest quarter we closed two transactions, the most notable being the acquisition of Envolve Energy Services Corp., opening up a new growth platform for Mullen Group,” said Mullen.

“For the balance of the year we will continue to identify new opportunities that we can benefit from for many years. In addition, we are announcing an increase of \$25 million to our 2017 capital expenditure budget in anticipation of a recovery in the energy sector. This is exactly why we took the necessary steps to strengthen our balance sheet in 2016. We are uniquely positioned to proactively pursue opportunities.” **TN**

## TFI International earnings weighed by sluggish US truckload market

### MONTREAL, QUEBEC

TFI International saw earnings weighed down by continuing difficulties in the overall US truckload market as well as integration costs related to its CFI acquisition.

The company reported Q1 revenue of \$1.06 billion, a 22% increase excluding fuel surcharges. Net income from continuing operations was \$14.1 million, down from \$15.3 million in the first quarter of 2016.

“As anticipated, TFI International’s first quarter results were affected by difficult conditions in the US truckload market and certain integration costs related to the CFI acquisition. This overshadowed significant profitability increases in all other business segments, reflecting our commitment to improve efficiency and to focus on niches generating superior returns,” said Alain Bedard, chairman, president and chief executive officer of TFI International.

Bedard said the company remains “cautiously optimistic” about the North American economy, given low unemployment and healthy consumer spending.

“We are also seeing a modest rebound in the level of investment in the energy sector,” Bedard said. “These factors should, over time, improve market conditions, but we do not expect any significant improvement before the end of 2017. TFI International will also continue to execute its selective acquisition strategy, targeting profitable and well-managed companies that offer synergies, reinforce existing operations, and further expand its geographic footprint.” **TN**

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# Titanium posts stronger Q1 revenues

Management “cautiously optimistic” about remainder of the year

## BOLTON, ONTARIO

First quarter earnings improved for Titanium Transportation Group, particularly in its logistics business, which benefited from the expansion of its sales force and the company’s move into a consolidated terminal.

The group posted Q1 revenue of \$29.8 million, a 6% increase year-over-year. EBITDA was \$2.9 million, a 17% increase. Net income for the quarter was \$129,284 compared to a net loss of \$185,129 during the first quarter of 2016. Titanium attributed the sharp increase in net income to growth and improvements in the logistics business, reduced corporate costs, and the non-recurrence of a foreign exchange loss in Q1 2016.

The logistics group saw revenue increase 33% to \$9.5 million. Truck transportation revenue was \$20.6 million, a 3% decrease year-over-year.

Ted Daniel, CEO of Titanium, said the company’s balance sheet is strong and it is ready to continue pursuing its mergers and acquisition strategy. It is considering both “tuck-in” and “transformative” acquisitions.

“Despite continuing softness in the transportation market, our logistics division exhibited strong organic growth in the quarter,” Daniel said. “This was driven by the growth and development of our in-house sales team after moving to our larger purpose-built head office location in the third quarter of 2016. From a strategic perspective, Titanium continues to remain focused on delivering the company’s next phase of growth and is well positioned in a weak overall industry environment.”

On a conference call with analysts following release of Q1 results, Daniel said he’s “cautiously optimistic” about the year ahead. The first quarter is typically the company’s weakest, due to the higher fuel and repair costs incurred in the colder months.

However, Titanium management isn’t expecting the impending electronic logging device (ELD) mandate to save the industry from pricing pressures any time soon.

“I don’t think anybody really knows when that’s going to happen, in terms of seeing prices increase in the market,” Daniel said.

Operations manager Marilyn Daniel suggested there could be an impact, and some relief on pricing pressure, in the latter half of 2017 and into 2018.

“ELDs are a huge component, but there are other (factors),” she said. “We are anticipating an exit of some drivers from the industry who are in

their senior years because of a lack of desire to use ELDs.”

Titanium said prices have been driven down by 5-10% over the past year, as shippers leverage excess capacity in the market.

Ted Daniel said Titanium is in a position to double in size and is in discussions with several acquisition targets. It has an additional \$35 million in credit it can tap into to meet its growth objectives, but Daniel said acquisitions must be “accretive and synergistic.”

What kind of acquisitions does the company have in mind?

“I don’t believe in a good deal, I believe in a fair deal,” Daniel explained. “Because I don’t think you can have a situation where someone can buy a company and it’s a smoking deal and you have a winner and a loser. That is a formula for disaster. I believe, first and foremost, the right price is where everyone is a winner. The vendor is selling something that has good value and we are getting a good price and that way both of us are happy. We are integrators, so one thing I’m looking for is, some overlap and expansion to our geography, some overlap and expansion

on product lines, we like sticky customers where there is some value added in terms of the mix, and we like good corporate cultures.”

As far as organic growth is concerned, Daniel said Titanium has expanded its sales force by about 20% since moving into its new headquarters last year.

Last year’s acquisition of a Windsor terminal has been a success, management said, with revenue climbing to \$775,000 in the first quarter compared to \$630,000 in Q4 2016. The North Bay terminal is also in growth mode, Daniel said. **TN**

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# It's show time

Four summer truck shows that should be on your calendar

By Sonia Straface

While the warm weather may signal to some that summer is almost here, for drivers and truck enthusiasts alike, the warm weather also means it's almost truck show season.

For those who take pride in showing their trucks, it's a relief to scrub the salt from the tires and show off their rigs as sunny summer skies provide the perfect backdrop to the glistening chrome and fresh paint jobs found at the truck show.

For those who just like to look, it's an opportunity to bring the whole family out, meet fellow truck lovers, and get some inspiration.

Not sure which truck show is for you? Not to worry. We've rounded up the essential truck shows for big rig lovers of every type, so you can decide which one to check out this summer.

**For the nostalgic:**  
**Clifford Antique and Classic Truck Show**  
**When:** June 30-July 1  
**Where:** Rotary Park, Clifford, Ont.

Now in its eighth year running, the Clifford Truck Show is an event for antique lovers of all ages. Come one, come all to the event that has those thinking of a simpler time. The truck show is known for its antique, untouched trucks and fully-restored rigs.

There's no contest here. Simply bring your truck to the show, and have a good time, explained organizer Verdun Zurbrigg.

"It's a laid-back show," he said. "We don't have judging. There are no winners or losers. So, there's no pressure for those who want to display a truck. We just want to make it easy for them, so we tell them to wash them and bring them. That's it. It's a visiting weekend for people. Every year people come back to see old friends they've made and meet new people."

Zurbrigg said that the event gets a lot of love for showcasing cabovers of all ages and trucks that you wouldn't see at your typical truck show.

"People come because it's different," he said. "Nobody is doing



old trucks. Not as big as us, anyway. Last year we had 280 trucks registered. And people love to see the cabovers."

The event is a family-friendly one, said Zurbrigg, where children are encouraged to come in and soak up the activities. Partying is discouraged.

"Lately we've been gearing towards the older generation," Zurbrigg added. "Because that's who ran the old trucks. So, we're trying to cater more to older people. We accommodate them with prime parking and offer shuttle services to them around the grounds."

And the kicker? It's only \$5 to attend.

**For the Fergus-mourners:**  
**Great Canadian Truck Show**  
**When:** July 21-23  
**Where:** Full Throttle Motor Speedway, Durham, Ont.

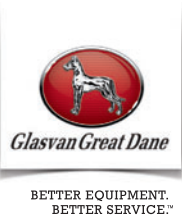
After the news hit earlier this year of the Fergus Truck Show coming to an end, many were disappointed the fan-favorite long-standing truck show was gone for good.

Like Jennifer Hatch, a long-time race car driver and Fergus volunteer. When the news broke, Hatch had an a-ha moment and thought, what if they moved the truck show to a race track? "Because you know truckers love NASCAR," she reasoned.

She phoned up an old friend, Gord Bennett, owner of the Full Throttle Motor Speedway in Durham, Ont., not far from Fergus, and pitched the idea to him. Shortly thereafter, the Great Canadian Truck Show was born.

"It was just kind of a no-brainer to reach out to him," she said, adding the show is set to take place the same weekend Fergus would have been on, July 21-23.

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The event is being put on by a mix of old and new volunteers, including Hatch herself, who said the idea was to really give a different spin to the truck show and essentially “bring it back to grassroots.”

On Friday, along with the Show’n Shine that spans through the weekend, the event will have truck pulls on the inside of the racetrack.

But if you opt to come out on Saturday, you’ll get the most bang for your buck, Hatch says.

On Saturday, your ticket will grant you full access to the truck show grounds, complete with access to all vendors and food trucks, and will also get you tickets to the regular race night.

The price for an adult is just \$13, a strategic price, according to Hatch. Affordable camping is also available on the grounds, while children can get in for a mere \$2.

“Fergus had priced itself out of the market and people just didn’t feel like they were getting good value,” she said. “So, we wanted to change that and make it affordable for everyone.”

And even though it’s too early to talk numbers, Hatch says organizers are expecting a good turnout at the debut.

“The response so far is absolutely amazing,” she said. “On Saturday, a regular race night will get 5,000-8,000 people. So, who knows what the race night will bring to the truck show or what the truck show will bring to the race night? It’s really a fabulous marriage.”

#### For the thrill-seekers:

##### Rodeo du Camion

**When:** Aug. 3-6

**Where:** Notre-Dame-du-Nord, Que.

This event, now in its 37th year, is almost a Mecca to truck lovers. How else do you explain the town with a population of just over 1,000 people expanding to more than 20-30 times that over the course of the weekend?

Tens of thousands of people flock to the small town for the Rodeo du Camion’s renowned heavy truck races, where loaded and even bobtail

trucks race up a 12% grade with a circuit length of 700 feet. The competition goes on for two days, so there is plenty of time to pick a favorite and see if he or she takes home the prize.

The show also features a Show’n Shine competition, plenty of food and beverage vendors, live music and entertainment, and tons of activities for kids including bouncy castles and trampolines and bungee jumping. If you’re a truck driver or fan of the industry, this show is a must-see.

#### For a little bit of everything: Havelock Recreation and Performance Motor Show

**When:** July 14-16

**Where:** Havelock Jamboree Grounds, Havelock, Ont.

Are you a fan of trucks, cars, and motorcycles? Do you like boats and RVs too? Can’t decide which vehicle

you like the most? Then the Havelock RPM Show may be for you.

The show promises to “have it all” when it comes to vehicle shows and according to Kim Firlotte, vendor relations at the Havelock Jamboree grounds, big rig lovers should be sure to check out the event’s Truck Show’n Shine and the truck area in general. On Saturday, there is also a truck and tractor pull scheduled.

Firlotte assured that the event is family-friendly, with plenty for kids to do and see over the course of the weekend.

You can even register the car you’ve been looking to sell at the event’s park-and-sell location.

According to the event’s website, “if you have a vehicle you want to sell, then this is the spot for you.”

Tickets cost \$30 for the weekend and camping on the grounds is also available for just \$75. **TN**

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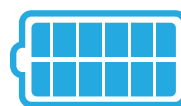
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# At 50, Western Star just getting rolling

From humble Canadian roots, Western Star celebrates 50 years in business

By James Menzies

PHOENIX, ARIZONA

The Western Star truck brand turns 50 this year, which seems improbable, given the truck maker's humble Canadian roots and tumultuous past.

The company was launched by White Motor Company in Kelowna, B.C. in 1967 to serve the needs of

the logging industry. White Western Stars soon found a home in the oil-patch, the construction and mining industries, and in other off-road sectors. Its claim to fame was that it was a custom-built truck, made to order.

"If you had something specific you wanted on that truck, you could walk out to the assembly line and tell the guys you wanted the bracket a different shape, or the air tanks



Western Star is offering a 50th anniversary paint scheme as it celebrates the milestone.

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mounted here, and they would do it on the line," said Kelley Platt, president of Western Star, when celebrating the milestone at a press event here Apr. 27. "They could never repeat it twice in a row because nothing was documented, but you got exactly the truck you wanted."

After several changes in ownership – and some years in which the very survival of the brand was in question – Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA) purchased Western Star in 2000 and moved production to Portland, Ore., but still maintained the custom-design philosophy.

"We took the same concept and made it more formal, so that it's repeatable these days," Platt explained.

After 16 years as part of the Daimler family, the Western Star brand is beginning to see some steady growth, thanks largely to the expansion of the product line. The 'Baby 8' 4700 was introduced in 2011, giving Western Star an ideal product to pitch to municipalities needing a lighter-duty vocational truck for plow, light dump, and other applications. And in 2014, Western Star brought to market an edgy, aerodynamic highway tractor in the form of the 5700XE. For the first time, the brand had a highway tractor that could compete with the Freightliner Cascadia on fuel economy while also appealing to those buyers who prefer the traditional styling of classic iron.

Peter Arrigoni, vice-president of Western Star sales, said the brand grew its market share to 3.4% in 2016, selling 7,323 units in the US and Canada.

"In 2016, we had a market that dropped significantly (year-over-year) and we were the only OEM that was able to retail more volume than in 2015," Arrigoni said. "So, that was a big accomplish-

ment for us. We're expecting in 2017 to have a smaller market than in 2016, but as of today we are on track to meet these numbers in terms of build volumes."

Longer term, Western Star plans to capture more than 8% of the market by 2025 and beyond. Sales in Canada have been fairly flat, but in the US, they're growing.

"The 4700 gave us the tool to go after the lighter-duty markets, a lot of what the US buys, in applications that require a lighter-duty product," Arrigoni explained. "That has helped us drive some of our US growth. The US continues to pick up steam in terms of our overall percentage of sales and we expect that to continue."

**"We want the next 50 years to be just as awesome, and more so, than the last 50 have been."**

– Kelley Platt, Western Star

Sales of the new 5700XE highway tractor are also growing, while demand for the 4900 has been declining, in large part due to the lack of activity in the Canadian oil patch. But Platt said Western Star is seeing some signs of life in the Canadian oilfields, and orders are beginning to trickle in.

Large fleets are choosing the 5700 to offer as a reward truck for their best drivers, while small and medium-sized fleets are buying it to enhance their brand image. Platt noted some fleets have even adjusted their own branding to match the lines and design of the 5700XE.

But Platt said the company is not yet satisfied with its modest growth

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Jimmy Zborowsky  
President

and has a plan to further expand its presence.

“We want the next 50 years to be just as awesome, and more so, than the last 50 have been,” she said.

For inspiration, the company looked to its sister company Freightliner to see how it has become the market share leader in the on-highway segment of the Class 8 market.

“What is it that made us really, really good and what is unique about the on-highway market?” Platt asked.

She credited Freightliner’s success with a product design that she said resulted in the most cost-effective vehicle in the marketplace to operate, and an unsurpassed dealer network.

But the vocational truck market is different. Platt noted many of these customers keep their trucks for 10 or more years, they’re usually serviced by the selling dealerships, and customers require more help from their OEM to optimize the spec’. Reliability is also crucial in the vocational truck market, she added.

“We have to build trucks that are going to last,” she said. “The bodies are so much more expensive than the cab chassis portion of the trucks, so they want to be able to use them for a long time – frequently 10 years or more. They can’t be disposable. It has to be something that is going to last, in order to make it a good value proposition for our customers.”

Western Star is also taking steps to expand its dealer network, and Platt said it’s being cautious about the types of dealers it brings on. They must have an innate understanding of the vocational truck market and its intricacies.

“It’s frequently service that sells the truck, and not necessarily the sales guy,” Platt said.

Her vision, to ensure Western Star lives to celebrate its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, is to ensure the brand is “customer-focused” and has a “committed dealer network.”

“We think this is going to be one of the real keys to our being a growing player in the vocational marketplace,” she said. **TN**

# In conversation with Kelley Platt, Western Star president

Platt discusses diversity, growing market share, and expanding the dealer network

By James Menzies

## PHOENIX, ARIZONA

In addition to overseeing the Western Star truck brand, Kelley Platt also serves as chief diversity officer for parent company Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA). It’s a role she clearly relishes and finds gratifying, and she spoke of the benefits of improving diversity during a one-on-one interview with *Truck News* Apr. 27.

“We want everybody to feel comfortable bringing their authentic self to work every day,” she explained.

DTNA’s efforts to become more diverse included changing where it has traditionally recruited talent from, so it can appeal to a more diverse base. It works with organizations that represent female and African American engineers to attract a broader demographic. Platt is confident the efforts are paying off.

“We are definitely seeing tangible benefits,” she said. “Not only do we have a more diverse workforce, the more diverse your workforce is, the more likely you are to get better solutions to problems.”

Platt has been a proponent of networking since even before she took on her current role as head of diversity two years ago. She was involved in setting up a networking group for female managers within DTNA. Daimler calls these employee resource groups (ERGs). “The first one we did was a women networking group about a decade ago,” Platt recalled. “We discovered there were about a dozen women in management all across DTNA at that point in time and they didn’t even all know each other.”

Additional ERGs have been set up to appeal to various segments of the employee population within DTNA.

They include parenting groups, for example, who organize bring your kids to work activities.

In addition to concentrating on improving DTNA’s diversity, Platt is also focused on growing the Western Star brand’s success within the organization. She has a plan to grow market share from about 3.4% to more than 8% by 2025. With the recent additions of the 5700XE and 4700, Western Star now boasts the broadest product portfolio in its history. Platt said she sees an opportunity for the brand to grow both its

periods of time than on-highway users and usually don’t have spare trucks parked against the fence, so uptime is critical. Nor can they call up Penske or Ryder and order a replacement truck when one breaks down, as they are usually highly specialized vehicles.

“We look for somebody who builds relationships with their customers,” Platt said of the ideal Western Star dealer. “Somebody who knows their customers, knows the kinds of concerns they have, knows their operating cycles, knows how to support those trucks in the long-term, and how to fix them at the customer’s location or to get them in and out of the shop quickly, because time is serious money to these guys.”

Western Star dealers must also be able to help customers spec’ the right trucks in the first place and work with body builders to get the trucks ready to roll without delay.

“It’s much more complicated (than on-highway) and it’s a long-term relationship,” Platt said.

Since vocational truck buyers operate their trucks for longer life-cycles than on-highway fleets, Platt said the dealer-customer relationship is vital and must be fostered. Platt doesn’t feel Western Star has any glaring holes in its product line.

“We are pretty happy with where we are, but we’re always looking to improve what we’ve got and thinking about where we want to be three, five, 10 years down the road,” she said. “So, a lot of time and effort is going into trying to figure out where the industry is going, where customers are going, and what we want to do differently.” **TN**



Kelley Platt, president of Western Star Trucks.

vocational and on-highway market share. To do so, the dealer network must be expanded, Platt said.

“There are still parts of the country we don’t play in at all because we don’t have a distribution network there,” she admitted. “We’ll fix that problem. We will play in all markets in the US and Canada.”

But while there are many interested dealers looking to represent the brand, Platt said the company won’t accept just anyone. It wants dealers that truly understand the needs of vocational truck buyers. After all, vocational truck operators are a different breed. They operate their trucks for longer



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## Western Star adds new options, 25-ton XD OffRoad hauler



Western Star has expanded its XD line with a new 25-ton machine.

### PHOENIX, ARIZONA

Western Star has added a new 25-ton hauler to its XD OffRoad line of equipment, aimed at smaller off-road applications, such as construction, mining, and quarry site hauling.

“The XD-25 provides yet another extreme duty option for customers who tackle the toughest challenges,” said Kelley Platt, president, Western Star Trucks. “These units are specifically designed to handle off-road jobs without compromising fuel economy and cycle time efficiency.”

The new XD-25 is available with a Tier 3 Series 60 or Detroit DD13

engine, and is powered by the Allison Off Road Series (ORS) transmission and planetary gear sets. Together, the engine and transmission combination results in more power for loaded applications and higher speeds when unloaded.

Additional features found with all Western Star XD OffRoad products include rugged slipped spring suspensions, simplified maintenance components, and metal fender butterfly hoods for long-life durability.

“Our customers want an off-road solution that has great ton-per-mile savings, and a lower purchase

price over conventional articulated equipment,” Platt said. “The XD-25 OffRoad’s low maintenance design and versatile platform configurations deliver on performance every time.”

The company also announced a host of new options available on Western Star trucks. They include:

- RollTek Seats: Available for Western Star 4700, 4800, and 4900 truck models, the RollTek seat system inflates side-impact airbags, tightens seat belts, and compresses air suspension seats to the lowest position to prevent serious injuries to the driver, in the unlikely event of a rollover.

- Sealed frame rails: The new sealed frame rail for Western Star 4700, 4800, and 4900 truck models, reduces corrosion on double channel and partial liner configurations, the company says. Sealed along the edges, the flexible water-tight seal prevents the intrusion of liquids and minimizes rust that might occur due to environmental factors and road de-icing products.

- Abrasion tape for exterior harnesses: Intended for applications that can cause abrasion in the chassis, such as construction, logging, and road maintenance, the new abrasion tape for exterior harnesses for Western Star 4700 and 5700 truck models will improve durability. Each harness is wrapped in an abrasion-resistant seal and then fastened securely to the frame rails to prevent damage to the wires from

debris, water and chafing.

- Aluminum diamond plate tool box: With cab access and increased ground clearance, the aluminum diamond plate tool box for the Western Star 4700 is durable enough to withstand harsh working conditions, and features the traditional Western Star style.

- Detroit 23,000-lb front steer axle: New for Western Star 4800 and 4900 truck models, the Detroit 23,000-lb front steer axle is ideal for applications that require a higher front axle weight rating like snow plow, dump, and heavy haul. Up to 40 lbs. lighter than other brands, Detroit front axles improve durability, reduce tire wear, and provide smoother steering control.

- Five-man crew cab: Western Star 4700, 4800, 4900, and 6900 truck models can now be spec’d with an aftermarket-installed five-man crew cab option with either two or four doors. A 12-dash inch backpack is also available for additional storage.

- 5700 truck configuration: The Western Star 5700 is now available in a truck configuration for expeditor and RV applications in a day cab or sleeper.

“The needs of our customers continue to grow and change, so we will continue to add new options that will help our customers while delivering the power, performance, and comfort expected from a Western Star truck,” said Platt. **TN**

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## SAF-Holland introduces new fifth wheel slider

### MONTREAL, QUEBEC

SAF-Holland revealed at ExpoCam a new severe-duty slider fifth wheel system. It’s designed for heavy- and severe-duty hauling operations, and boasts an 80,000-lb vertical load and 200,000-lb drawbar pull capacity. It’s compatible with Holland FW35, FW33, and FW0070 fifth wheels and features inboard and outboard mounting systems, which are adaptable to all fifth wheel configurations, including Holland Kompensator and No-Tilt wheels.

Kompensator mounting provides top plate side-to-side cradle movement on uneven terrain, the company says, relieving torsional stress and twist. No-tilt mounting systems provide for a seamless conversion to a rigid no-tilt fifth wheel for applications where articulation is provided on the trailer.

The new slider comes with a service-friendly design that allows fifth wheel heights to be easily changed, the company says. The slider system provides slide travels from 12 to 72 inches, accommodating a wide range of weight distribution and clearance needs.

New visual plunger lock indicators are located toward the front of the slide bracket for easy visibility, allowing drivers to quickly ensure the slide bracket is securely locked in place. **TN**

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# Western Star's Kelowna roots still evident today

More than 100 employees made the move to Portland

By James Menzies

## PHOENIX, ARIZONA

The fact Western Star still shines bright 50 years after the creation of the brand is a small miracle. Western Star trucks in the late 1990s were still being custom-built, largely by hand, in Kelowna, B.C. while the major truck makers consolidated and pumped millions into modernizing production facilities and processes. That environment was not conducive to the survival of a small independent manufacturer.

Kelley Platt, who today serves as president of Western Star, was involved with the committee that conducted due diligence on the company before Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA) stepped in and purchased it in 2000.

"Western Star had a rocky ride in the 80s and 90s," she recalled, when speaking about the brand's history at a recent press event Apr. 27. "It went through multiple sets of ownerships. There was more than one Friday when (employees) went home and were told the auditors had the locks and keys and probably were going to shut the place down over the weekend, so don't expect to come back to work Monday morning. There was always some white

knight on the horizon that bailed them out."

DTNA saw in Western Star a strong vocational product that would complement the Freightliner brand to help the organization achieve market share growth.

"It was a good fit because it was a heavy-duty vocational company," Platt recalled. "There were fewer vocational offerings at DTNA at that

**"We brought a great set of people down from Kelowna when we moved manufacturing to Portland and they have really helped the rest of us learn the Western Star culture and what it takes to be successful in that kind of marketplace."**

— Kelley Platt, Western Star

time and the thought was, if you put a strong vocational player together with a strong on-highway player, it would be possible to have that dominant 40%-plus market share – and it worked."

Daimler moved production of Western Star trucks from Kelowna to Portland, Ore. More than 100 employees upped their Western Canadian roots and relocated to the US.

"We brought a great set of people down from Kelowna when we moved manufacturing to Portland and they have really helped the rest of us learn the Western Star culture and what it takes to be successful in that kind of marketplace," Platt said.

One of those employees who made the move was John Tomlinson, who now heads Western Star's new XD off-road equipment line. He started at Western Star in 1992 as a junior engineer in the powertrain department.

"There was a lot of uncertainty back then," he recalled in an interview with *Truck News*. "I remember the supervisor I was working for walked me past the order board and said, 'If it ever gets below 300, you have to worry.'"

At the time of the DTNA purchase, Tomlinson was working out of a Charleston, S.C. engineering facility, which was shuttered. He was offered the opportunity to move to Portland and continue working for Western Star and there was never any doubt he'd accept.



John Tomlinson, head of Western Star's XD off-road equipment line, is a Kelowna transplant.

"Once Star's in your blood, it's not really much of a question," he said. "You love the product."

About 100-150 families made the move, and they have remained a tight-knit community to this day, Tomlinson said.

"Even the retired guys and the guys who are still working all still get together," he said.

Tomlinson said he never would've dreamt he'd be working in Portland, Ore. and celebrating Western Star's 50th anniversary.

"I'm very happy with how it has played out," he said. "Our thoughts and core beliefs were well respected, and the more Daimler as a whole understands us, the better off we are." **TN**

## UAP acquires Freno's distribution activities

### MONTREAL, QUEBEC

UAP announced the acquisition of the distribution activities of Service de Freins Montréal (Freno) on Apr. 19.

The four Freno stores located in Anjou, Boucherville, St-Laurent, and Mirabel, Que. will be integrated into UAP's Traction store network, as well as all the employees involved in sales, distribution, and delivery.

In addition, UAP and Freno have concluded a strategic agreement to accelerate the sales growth of remanufactured clutches and specialized radiators manufactured by Freno. The agreement also covers parts supply by UAP's distribution center located in Longueuil, for the needs of Freno. Freno's heavy vehicle repair center located in Anjou will join the TruckPro network, which now includes more than 125 repair centers in the Canada.

"We are very pleased to welcome the Freno team to our Traction network," said Pierre Rachiele, executive vice-president, heavy vehicle parts division, UAP. "There are numerous synergies between our two companies and this agreement will allow us to better meet the needs of our customers and continue our growth." **TN**

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**By James Menzies**

## GALESBURG, MICHIGAN

The partnership, Eaton Cummins Automated Transmission Technologies, was announced Apr. 10. On a conference call later that day, Ken Davis, president of Eaton's vehicle group, said the 50-50 joint venture will include the design, development, and sales of medium- and heavy-duty automated commercial vehicle transmissions, beginning in North America and then expanding across the world. Existing product, including the Eaton Procision and UltraShift Plus transmissions, will be covered under the JV but will retain their current branding.

Future products, some of which will be launched later this year, will be marketed under the Eaton Cummins Automated Transmission Technologies brand. Eaton and Cummins for several years have worked closely together in bringing to market the SmartAdvantage line of integrated powertrains, combining Eaton automated transmissions with Cummins engines.

"We are two strong companies with very similar values and a shared commitment to our customers' success in the commercial vehicle market," said Ed Pence, head of Cummins' high horsepower business. "We will create an unmatched and fully integrated global support network for our customers by lever-

The deal was first discussed in September 2015, when Cummins chairman and CEO Tom Linebarger identified key areas for critical growth.

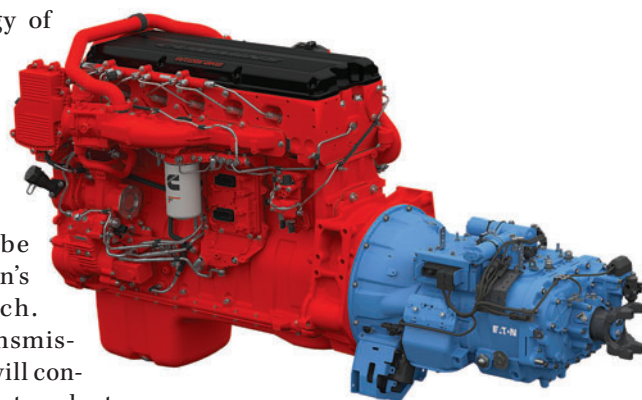
"We have been talking continuously since 2015 on ways we could take the SmartAdvantage concept to the next level, if you will, and this opportunity emerged through those discussions," said Pence.

Davis characterized the partnership as “an extension” of the collaboration that already existed between the two companies.

"We think this fits very nicely with

our core strategy of offering comprehensive system solutions to our global OEM and joint venture partners," said Pence.

The JV will be based out of Eaton's Galesburg, Mich. campus and transmission production will continue at existing Eaton plants. The joint venture still requires regulatory approvals and is expected to close in the third quarter of this year, around the time the first new product developed under the JV will be launched. **TN**



**Eaton and Cummins have expanded their collaboration through a launch of a new joint venture.**



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## Confirmed 2017 Exhibitors:

# International debuts RH Series regional haul truck

## MONTREAL, QUEBEC

International Truck launched its new RH Series regional haul tractor at ExpoCam.

The Class 8 tractor is powered by the new International A26 12.4-liter engine.

“The new International RH Series continues our commitment to build trucks that lead the industry in uptime,” said Bill Kozek, president, truck and parts, with Navistar. “We are confident this truck will continue to build on our momentum and be successful in the regional haul market.”

New features include: cab wiring with all-new harnessing and an

in-cab power distribution module that’s inside the truck, away from the elements; ergonomic placement of key service points; and a single canister aftertreatment system that’s 60% smaller and 40% lighter for easier servicing.

Drivers will appreciate redesigned side windows and mirrors, which contribute to better visibility. The truck also features a large swept-back windshield and aerodynamic sloped hood for better forward visibility. The truck provides an inside wheel cut of up to 50 degrees and a curb-to-curb turning radius of just 27 feet, 10 inches, the company says.



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Hundreds of drivers were interviewed when designing the truck.

“We drew upon the expertise of drivers to ensure that the RH Series is the most driver-centric Class 8 regional haul vehicle we’ve ever built,” said Denny Mooney, senior vice-president, global product development with Navistar. “Many of our customers tell us that their number one challenge is attracting and retaining drivers, which is why we put so much effort into understanding and responding to drivers’ needs. These improvements also contribute to increased driver ease of use that will boost the vehicle’s productivity.”

The RH Series will be offered in configurations including: day cab; 56-inch low-roof sleeper; 56-inch high-rise sleeper; day cab with roof fairing; and 56-inch high-rise sleeper with roof fairing. The company is taking orders now and production will begin in June. **TN**

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# Volvo debuts all-new VNR regional truck at ExpoCam

New interior design heavily influenced by drivers

By James Menzies

MONTREAL, QUEBEC

Volvo’s new VNR regional haul truck made a flashy debut at ExpoCam Apr. 19, in front hundreds of customers, dealers, and industry press. The truck, which will replace the VNM, features a more modern interior and aerodynamic design.

It will be about 3.5% more fuel-efficient than a VNM with GHG14 engine, according to Wade Long, product marketing manager, Volvo Trucks North America.

Brian Balicki, chief designer, said Volvo looked to motorsports for inspiration, and set out to design a truck that embodied the terms: bold, edgy, innovative, modern, and human.

“We really translated these statements into the product,” Balicki said at the ExpoCam launch. “We wanted to make sure this was an iconic design, that many years down the road this will still feel very modern and people will know from very far away that this is a Volvo truck.”

The exterior features a redesigned hood that provides better visibility of the road. It’s also 70 lbs lighter.

A new honeycomb-style grille gives the truck an updated appearance. Headlights are mounted in from the edge of the fenders to prevent damage. The three-piece bumper has two replaceable end caps that can be swapped out when bent or broken.

The interior of the truck is homier, with an automotive-inspired design and many new amenities for the driver. For example, a refrigerated passenger seat, where a driver can store beverages within reach. Drivers can even adjust the interior volume of the turn signal. Balicki said Volvo looked to the airline industry for inspiration when designing the interior, specifically at how first class cabins are designed.

“With the new VNR, we brought aesthetics – it’s pleasing to the eye – and we brought aerodynamics to a segment that has not historically had that brought to them,” said Long.

The new grille was designed to optimize air flow, and comes with a chrome bezel surround. Options include rain-sensing windshield wipers and automatic headlights. More than 2,000 drivers were inter-



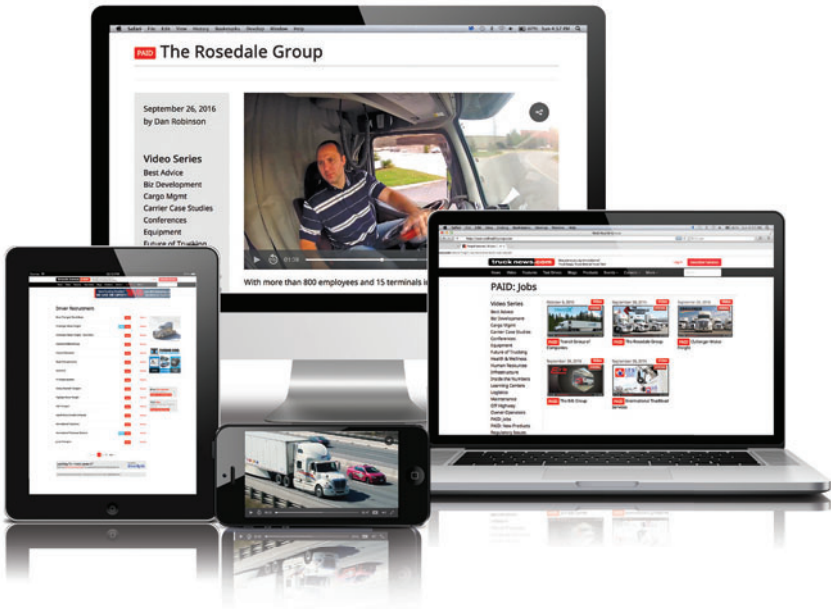
viewed during the design process, Long said.

“Regional drivers had different needs,” he said. “There are more requirements for ingress and egress, they’re in and out of the cab frequently. We wanted to make sure our VNR was designed around that.” Three interior levels are offered.

The cab features a new modular rail system with cupholders that can be placed exactly where the driver wants them. And there is no shortage of power options; there are multiple USB and 12-volt power outlets in the front, and up to 12 in the sleeper.

Long said the steering wheel has been redesigned and can now be

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rotated 32 degrees, with a 4.5-inch telescoping range. There's also a 30-degree head tilt feature. Long said this was done to make comfortable a wider variety of drivers.

"The stature of the driver pool is changing," he said. "We can accommodate the shortest to tallest driver."

Up to 19 buttons can be placed on the steering wheel for easy access to controls. A new five-inch color driver display lets drivers know at a glance if something requires their attention. The driver display can be controlled using the buttons on the steering wheel.

Interior lighting also received a lot of attention. Cool blue lighting is provided throughout the cab, because research indicates that color makes drivers feel better rested at the end of a driving shift. Red reading lights are available and a new "puddle lamp" shines from the bottom of the door onto the steps and ground when the door

is opened. Deeper door pockets are provided for increased storage.

Long said the seats have also been redesigned, providing two inches of additional travel and improved positioning, including a lower hip point to accommodate shorter drivers. There are seven seats available, in all interior packages.

"Customers found drivers want the same seat in every cab they have," he said. "Now they can have the same seat in all their cabs, you don't have to worry about having different (seat) features in different levels of interior."

Cooled seats are also available.

Volvo achieved a 113-inch bumper-to-back-of-cab (BBC) measurement, while adding four more inches of corner visibility, due to the new hood. The 3.5% fuel efficiency improvement is due in part to the more aerodynamic design, but also enhancements to Volvo's D-series engines. Long said the D11,

which is now available with up to 425 hp, will be a popular option in the new VNR. It provides customers with about 365 lbs in weight savings compared to a 13-liter engine. Design improvements have taken about 175 lbs out of the truck. The VNR shown at ExpoCam weighed in at 14,500 lbs, dry.

Models include the 300 (day cab, flat roof), 400 (42-inch mid-roof sleeper), and 640 (61-inch mid-roof sleeper).

The regional haul truck market is growing, as fleets shorten aver-

age haul lengths and attempt to get drivers home more frequently. Last year, regional haul trucks represented 21% of the Canadian Class 8 truck market.

The new truck will enter production in August, but orders are being taken immediately. The tagline for the VNR was "the shape of trucks to come," suggesting, just perhaps, that a new linehaul tractor is in the works. But Volvo officials were unwilling to share any details about other models that may, or may not be, in development. **TN**

# Train Trailer bringing new shunt truck to Canadian market

## MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO

Train Trailer Rentals has announced it's now offering Terberg shunt trucks. The yard tractors are used in more than 90 countries. "We strongly believe Train Trailer can make a difference in the Canadian logistics market with the Terberg terminal tractor. Great ergonomics, safety, and quality are just a few of the unique selling points. With Train Trailer, we have found a very strong partner and look forward to making our new relationship a great success," said Ron Van Arkel, vice-president, Americas, for Terberg Special Vehicles. Shawn Rogers, national sales manager for Train Trailers, added: "The North American market is ready for a new competitor in this space. Our team is excited to bring this high-quality European design to new prospects and existing customers alike. Becoming Terberg's exclusive distributor for Canada allows us to offer their quality shunt trucks for lease, sale or rent at very competitive rates. Our Canadian service network is backed by their 48-hour parts distribution promise, worldwide." For more info, visit [www.traintrailer.com](http://www.traintrailer.com), [www.terberggroup.com](http://www.terberggroup.com) or contact Rogers at [srogers@traintrailer.com](mailto:srogers@traintrailer.com). **TN**

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# Peterbilt salutes Canada with special edition 389



**OTTAWA, ONTARIO**

Peterbilt is saluting Canada's 150th anniversary through its special edition Model 389 with exclusive Canadian features.

"Canadian owner-operators and premium carriers can honor Canada with the addition of Peterbilt's Model 389 Canadian 150th Anniversary Edition," said Kyle Quinn, Peterbilt general manager and Paccar senior vice-president. "It delivers proven productivity, dependability, and uptime combined with unique styling and understated elegance."

The Model 389 Canadian 150th Anniversary Edition is configured with a 131-inch BBC and can be spec'd in 72- and 78-inch sleeper configurations. Exterior features of the Model 389 Canadian 150th Anniversary Edition include: exhaust stacks etched with 'Canada 150'; bumper with 150th Anniversary emblem; polished battery box, fuel tanks and quarter fenders; numbered Canadian 150th Anniversary emblem on each side of the sleeper; and a specially formulated legendary Canadian red paint color.

Inside the cab, the truck has exclusive features and branding that includes: a platinum-level Arctic Gray interior with a dark top dash with blackwood finish accents on the dash, doors, manual transmission shifter knob, and sleeper cabinet trim; Peterbilt premium leather seats featuring a maple leaf on the headrest; and a stylized steering wheel.

"The Model 389 Canadian 150th Anniversary Edition holds its own among Peterbilt's most iconic trucks," Quinn added. "Through unparalleled performance and unique design, it commands attention and furthers our tradition of providing trucks with industry-leading quality."

The Model 389 Canadian 150th Anniversary Edition is available now for order through Peterbilt dealerships with production scheduled to begin in mid-May. The truck was shown at ExpoCam in April. **TN**

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# Crevier Group buys Gaz-O-Bar

"It was very important for Gaz-O-Bar and the community to find a reliable, growing partner who shares the same values and who will ensure the network's future and further devel-

opment," said Bernard Cote, president of the Gaz-O-Bar Group.

The deal includes commercial cardlocks as well as corporate and affiliated sites. Gaz-O-Bar says it will continue to ensure management of service station convenience stores in Trois-Pistoles, Rivière-du-Loup, Dégelis, Rimouski, Pointe-au-Père, Matane, and Mont-Saint-Hilaire, and will continue its other commercial activities, including distribution of heating oil and transportation of petroleum products.

A comprehensive network analysis will be conducted over the next few months to determine branding, positioning, and investment strategies to maximize synergies from this acquisition, Crevier Group announced. Some sites will be converted to Crevier, while others will retain the Gaz-O-Bar brand. **TN**

## East Coast International adds trailer lines

**MONCTON, NEW BRUNSWICK**

East Coast International (ECI) has announced it is now offering Transcraft and Benson trailers.

The company is authorized to sell and service the two lines in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, P.E.I., and Newfoundland.

“We are excited to add the Transcraft and Benson trailer lines to our existing product offerings,” said David Lockhart,

president of East Coast International Trucks. The trailers are manufactured at a Wabash National plant in Kentucky.

"We have a full-time trailer sales representative who is well known in the industry and committed to his customers' satisfaction," Lockhart added. "He is now supported by a full-time trailer parts sales person which allows him to focus on his customers' needs every day." **TN**

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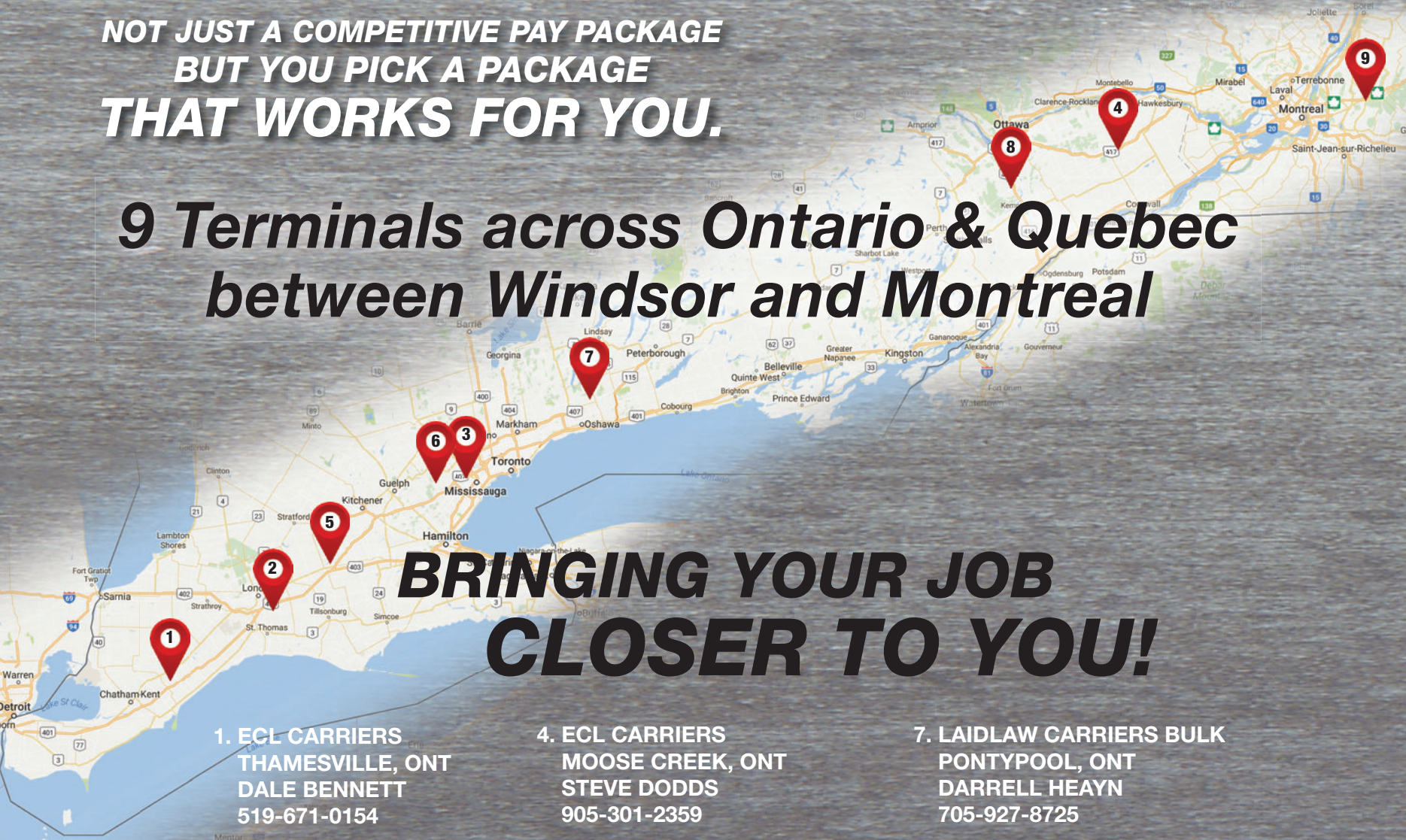
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## Equipment

## Mack introduces 16,000-lb front axle



Mack is now offering a proprietary 16,000-lb front axle.

### MONTREAL, QUEBEC

Mack Trucks announced at Expo-Cam Apr. 20 availability of a proprietary 16,000-lb front axle on its Pinnacle axle back and axle forward models.

The new offering is geared towards flatdeck and heavy haul carriers in regions that allow heavier front axle weights.

“Our 16,000-lb front axle improves performance with the same legendary durability and reliability that Mack pioneered,” said Roy Horton, director of product strategy for Mack Trucks. “It’s designed significantly heavier so that our customers can improve their efficiency by transporting more payload at one time.”

Mack has been espousing the benefits of vertical integration for more than 100 years, and is selling more trucks adorned with gold bulldog hood ornaments, indicating the truck has a Mack engine, transmission, and axles.

Dayle Wetherell, vice-president, Mack Trucks Canada, gave a corporate update, and indicated Mack’s market share is growing after reaching 8.8% in the US and Canada last year. He also said dealer inventories have been reduced and orders have been strong so far this year. Mack’s projecting the market to reach 215,000 units this year, down from 243,000 last year.

Wetherell said Mack dealers have made significant investments into their facilities, specifically in Quebec City, Montreal, Laval, and Chilliwack. Mack is also investing US\$84 million into its Lehigh Valley operations.

Horton said Mack’s success is in part due to a strengthening dealer network. Six Canadian dealers have become Certified Uptime Centers, a program that was inspired by Vision Truck Group in Ontario. There are 88 Mack Certified Uptime Centers across the US and Canada. By adopting best practices, they’ve reduced diagnostic time by 70%, repair times by 21%, check-in times by more than 40 minutes, and have improved shop efficiency by 24%. **TN**

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# Will autonomous trucks be common by 2030?

Most at Omnitracs Outlook 2017 believe autonomous trucks are closer than people think

By Derek Clouthier

## PHOENIX, ARIZONA

If “ELDs” was the most common term uttered during Omnitracs Outlook 2017, “autonomous” was a close second. But while most believed the timing for autonomous trucks rolling down North American highways is close, some find the notion more difficult to grasp.

“The path to self-driving trucks is probably sooner than people think,” said Wes Mays, director of OEM solutions for Omnitracs.

Mays predicted that 2025 will mark the start of autonomous trucks on the road, and by 2030 the practice would be considered commonplace.

“Improving road safety is not about any one item,” said Mays. “The car of tomorrow will be vastly different than anything we can think of today.”

Mays highlighted several of the technological advances that have been introduced to trucks over the past several years, starting with power brakes and steering, and progressing to automatic transmissions, blind spot detection, stability control, lane departure warnings, collision warnings, active steering and braking, platooning, and autonomous driving.

**“The car of tomorrow will be vastly different than anything we can think of today.”**

— Wes Mays, Omnitracs

Mays said several next generation vision technologies are already changing the trucking landscape, such as video recognition to detect posted road speeds, street sign and light violations, and yield/merge violation detection systems. Products that warn of tailgating, improper lane changes, truck/trailer backing, and vehicle passing prognos-tics only add to the multitude of advancements toward a fully-autonomous reality.

But for autonomous trucks to work, Mays said precise vehicle communications is necessary, and for that to happen with the accuracy required, there is a need for what is called dedicated short-range communications (DSRC), which is used for wireless communication, specifically designed for automotive use.

“We need that DSRC system dedicated for traffic safety,” Mays said.

Mays told attendees of the Outlook 2017 breakout session that when fully-autonomous trucks come to fruition, to try and imagine a day when driving on the highway is so safe that a fatal collision is considered a homicide. For some, this is difficult to envision in 2017. Many have voiced regulatory barriers and public acceptance as roadblocks to the idea of driverless trucks. But others urge the public to be prepared, because it’s much closer than they think. **TN**



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Insurance is on every small trucking company's list of top three aggravations for several reasons, cost being the biggest. Assume you've had no claims for a few years.

Think of the premiums spent: hundreds of thousands of dollars for just a few trucks, not a nickel of which you'll ever see again. What if we could set it up like life insurance?

Don't use it, and you can cash it in later. Put that idea right up there with a fiscally responsible government on the fantasy shelf.

Like any service provider, the cheapest option should obviously always be avoided. I once made the mistake of switching from a thorough, knowledgeable broker, to one located closer to us, who came highly recommended.

He was reportedly very good at his job. His nephew, who handled our account – apparently his first job after his fast-food career – wasn't nearly as good as the broker we left. We experienced constantly changing driver qualification standards, rejections of almost every good driver I tried to hire, and he needed frequent reminders of which forms we were supposed to be given. All this guaranteed that we didn't have a long working relationship.

Our longest-serving insurance broker is the kind to search out. They handle trucking insurance, period, and have knowledge of the industry that others only wish they had. This broker, if you can fathom this level of diligence, even included a clause to cover cargo damage caused specifically by tarp damage occurring in transit.

I'd have never dreamt that was even available. They even have the patience to frequently answer stupid questions.

After you've spent enough years in business to be noticed, you'll be approached by your local household insurance broker. The person who sold you home, car, or life insurance is rarely the same person to trust your truck insurance to.

Typically, they have no clue about our industry. Pay close attention to

the questions they ask, and you'll figure that out quickly. There are too many ways your company will be dangerously unprotected if your insurance broker isn't knee-deep in our industry. Ask them some truck-specific questions, and when they can't answer, be wise enough to move on.

The part of the insurance game that infuriates me is the obvious double standard that exists between small and large sized fleets. I've joked that the only driver acceptable for a small carrier policy is a former driving instructor, while large companies can hire almost anybody.

If you question this double standard, the phrase "risk management" will be used as justification. I prefer to call it "profit management."

It's obviously good business to give priority treatment to the trucking company insuring 500 trucks, rather than only five; I just can't find an insurer courageous enough to admit it. Apparently, a driver with minimal experience – or demerit points – is a safe driver at a large carrier, but totally unacceptable at my company.

Can anybody explain that one to me? If I only have a few trucks, and am familiar with every component on all of them, I'm not putting a driver in one unless I have full confidence in them. Someone with lesser experience is a lot easier for a small outfit to monitor than at a big company, where it's easy to be just a number on a roster.

Our first insurer taught me to question everything any insurer tells me. Initially, they were very obliging, until the policy was in place, after which nearly every driver was unsatisfactory. I tried to insure a good driver, with 10 years' experience, who hadn't driven for three years.

They wouldn't allow it, without a refresher course. Coincidentally, the insurance company had a driving school. Angry, I sent my full stack of resumes, to show what level of talent was available. They asked why I didn't hire the driver who'd attended their school. Easy answer: he couldn't drive. Despite my evaluation, since he'd been to their school they were willing to insure him immediately.

Insurance a top three aggravation? Maybe the top. **TN**

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## Tax Talk

# Why your chargeback looks Loonie

And why driving in the US is suddenly more expensive

You may be looking at your International Fuel Tax Agreement (IFTA) chargeback from your carrier and thinking, “*What the? Those people have finally lost it...*”

And they may have, but the fact that your IFTA chargeback is greatly different from previous quarters is probably not your carrier’s fault.

Blame US exchange rates and Michigan.

As our dollar tumbles, everything you buy on the US side of the line is more expensive. Whether you pay by cash or credit card, it’s essential that you and your bookkeeper distinguish between US and Canadian dollar expenses and make the appropriate adjustments on your business income statement.

But let’s get back to fuel tax and why you should plot your fuel stops and find out what you really pay for diesel. It might change your approach to where you fill up your tanks.

## What you owe is calculated based on where you burn the fuel, not where you buy it.

When you buy diesel fuel, part of the price is tax. Canada and the US both levy a federal tax; in Canada, you pay GST or HST as well.

You also pay provincial or state fuel taxes. These really are fuel-use taxes, because what you owe is calculated based on where you burn the fuel, not where you buy it. If you travel 100,000 miles in Manitoba but never buy a drop of fuel there, Manitoba is still owed fuel tax on those 100,000 miles.

In order to make sure each jurisdiction gets its due, 48 states and 10 provinces are members of the International Fuel Tax Agreement, or IFTA. Instead of filing fuel tax returns with each state or province, you file one quarterly report with your base jurisdiction that reflects your net tax or credit, and it will apportion any tax you paid according to the number of miles traveled in each jurisdiction. If the net result is an overpayment, you’ll receive one consolidated refund from your base jurisdiction.

If you’re like most owner-operators, your carrier is responsible for fuel tax, licensing, and reporting for your vehicle. Who actually pays state or provincial taxes is another question. Depending on your contract, the carrier may pay all fuel taxes.

But if the carrier charges you when you owe fuel taxes or pays you when you’re due a refund, you

should be concerned with where you buy your fuel so you can maximize your refund.

The fact is, you don’t really know how much fuel costs until you take the taxes out. Just because you have an IFTA refund doesn’t mean that you have purchased in a cost-efficient way. The big picture goal is to pay the least amount for your fuel including the upfront purchase cost and factoring in the IFTA refund or payable.

If you buy most of your fuel in Canada then your Canadian-currency fuel tax refund must be credited against your US-currency fuel

tax debt. This could put you in a payable or reduced refund. Even though it appears to be more money up front, buying more fuel in the US obviously could create the opposite.

So, why blame Michigan?

On Jan. 1 it upped its fuel tax rate by a little more than 11 cents per gallon. That’s a one-time increase of more than 40%. Pennsylvania and a dozen or so other states increased their fuel taxes as well. So now every time you drive in the US, it costs more – and you’re paying for it with a sliding Canadian currency.

It may pay to buy as much fuel as



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

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## Insights

Voice of the owner-operator

# The good old days?

Why does life so often look better in the rear-view mirror? I must admit, I like the look of, say, the Louisville Fairgrounds in my rear-view mirror come Saturday. At any trade show, after a flood of press events and miles of glitzy trade show booths, it feels good to leave it all behind. But many of us are inclined to look back through the metaphoric rear-view mirror of time and pine for the good old days.

As Gladys Knight says in her version of *Try to Remember*, "The winters were warmer, the grass was greener, the skies were bluer, and smiles were bright."

At a recent truck show I met a 60-ish fellow whose good old days would have been the late 1970s and 80s. He's unhappy with the nature of the job today and how there seems to be less camaraderie among drivers. Specifically, he bemoaned the fact that few drivers will stop and help another driver anymore, whether he or she is broken down, or maybe having trouble backing in somewhere.

As we talked, it became clear that what he really missed were the days when drivers had more discretion in their routes and deciding when to stop, maybe to spend some time

over lunch with an old buddy.

"Those days are long gone," he said. "When we're stopped too long, we get a call from dispatch wanting to know why we aren't moving."

He was also on about today's equipment and how unreliable it is, how the electronic invasion has made it all but impossible to fix anything short of changing a fuse or a windshield wiper blade. He definitely isn't a fan of the advanced safety systems designed to prevent rollovers or rear-end collisions, but he grudgingly admits that he likes his automated manual transmission.

Playing devil's advocate, I pointed out that those old 70s- and 80s-vintage engines did well if they made it 250,000 miles before needing an in-frame or an overhaul compared to today's engines (when they aren't sidelined by a funky sensor) that will easily run a million miles before you have to open one up.

"At least you could fix those engines on the side of the road without a laptop," he reminded me.

The threat of automation has my friend worried, too. He wonders if the occupation of truck driver could become obsolete once automated driverless trucks take to the high-

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ways. The fact is, there will be pretty limited applications for that technology, and it's at least a decade away. My aging friend needn't worry about being replaced by a black box. Even at its most basic (adaptive cruise control with assisted steering), the enormous cost of the technology will be a barrier to widespread uptake.

It's really the pace of change that my friend is anxious about, and who isn't? Technology, automation, telematics, and connectivity, have changed trucking – or at least the trucks – more in the past five years than in the previous 50, and that trend will continue. But what hasn't changed much is how trucking is done. Many drivers are fed up with running cross-country and having to lay over on the way home doing a reset.

A return to relaying loads in a hook-and-drop scenario would be good for those drivers who don't like extended tours of duty. The freight would actually move across the country faster if the relays were properly scheduled, because carriers could cut at least two off-duty periods from the travel time.

Gone would be the real pressure on drivers to make customer appointments with 15-minute windows, and so too would be the additional pressure put on drivers to keep the freight moving, no matter what.



**Joanne Ritchie** is executive director of OBAC. How nostalgic is your perspective? E-mail her at [jritchie@obac.ca](mailto:jritchie@obac.ca) or call toll-free at 888-794-9990.

With a return to that good part of the old days, electronic logging devices (ELDs) would ensure that drivers have predictable schedules to follow, and no more pressure from dispatch to keep pushing when weather or traffic conspires against them.

With all that's changing, even my grumpy friend agrees that trucks are more comfortable and capable today. He agrees that ELDs really aren't the problem, but the inflexibility of hours-of-service is. He doesn't disagree that some level of driver monitoring is not a bad idea, and he even concedes that the job is physically easier today than 20 or 30 years ago.

But, as bad as we think they are, these days will become, in Gladys' words, "the good old days of our children." Twenty-five years from now, the job will be as different then as it is now from the 70s and 80s. But one thing won't change, today's drivers will be the old-timers, and they'll still be grumbling. It's all a matter of perspective. **TN**

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Over the Road

# Don't underestimate your ability to influence change

In April 1970, David Brower founded Earth Day and coined the slogan "Think globally, act locally." It is a term that can be, and is, applied widely outside the environmental movement. According to *New Geography* the phrase "exemplifies the millennial generation's outlook towards implementing societal changes on a direct, local level, and their belief in changing the world one community at a time."

Last month I ended my column with the words "A universal method of training and certification is the only way to manage this (technological) change in a way that will minimize disruption across the trucking industry while defining the job of the truck operator in a rapidly changing market. That's what we need to attract new blood."

That statement is a global one, not a local one. Big ideas are great, but we need to be able to act on them as individuals to bring them to fruition. This is outside our individual sphere of influence. So, what do we do if we want to influence change?

One way to influence change is to throw your support behind people like Shelley Uvanile-Hesch and the Women's Trucking Federation of Canada (WTFC).

Shelley is a full-time truck driver and founder of WTFC. Don't let the name of her organization deceive you, it's not for women only. Although its focus is to assist women breaking into the trucking industry, it does so by focusing on training and mentorship. She brings together experienced truck drivers with newly licensed truck drivers, integrity-based carriers, and training organizations. As she likes to say, WTFC is about creating a network for drivers, created by drivers. The WTFC slogan is "Join our drive to drive."

Whereas I have the privilege of presenting my thoughts and ideas in this column each month, WTFC

brings training to the front line. It does some great grassroots social media work such as creating mentoring groups that bring seasoned drivers and new drivers together.

WTFC is a non-profit group, run by a board of professional drivers. WTFC provides a wonderful place for those interested in joining the trucking industry to go for a driver's perspective on the industry. Go to the WTFC website and to its Facebook page to get the full picture.

Shelley and her associates in the women's trucking movement deserve huge kudos for the efforts they are putting forth. They are making a difference while still driving full-time. It's a huge challenge for them. But this is what happens when drivers that live and breathe trucking get sick and tired of watching from the sidelines and jump in feet first to make a difference.

We can support them and participate ourselves by becoming a member of the organization. This is an effective way to bring the expertise and experience of drivers to the cutting edge of the rapid changes that are happening right now in the trucking industry.

Another effective way to act locally and influence change is to speak up within your own company. Don't underestimate the power of your own voice.

Any credible employer values the front-line experience you bring to their organization. After all, you as a driver are the face of the company you work for. Don't underestimate the importance of your position in this regard. In fact, I'm surprised that we spend so little time bringing customer service training to the driver.

How often do you, as the driver, end up solving customer service issues on the loading dock? It happens all the time. I have a feeling that drivers will be taking on a larger role

in the customer service and public relations fronts as we move forward.

So, joining organizations that represent the interests of drivers and speaking up as a driving professional within your own company are just two ways of acting out on a local level and influencing broader change. It's incremental change, but it works. **TN**



**Al Goodhall** has been a professional long-haul driver since 1998. He shares his experiences via his blog at <http://truckingacrosscanada.blogspot.com>. You can follow him on Twitter at @Al\_Goodhall.



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You say tomato, I say tomahto

# Gliding in a new direction

Maybe I'm not ready to stop chasing my dreams just yet

No sooner had I submitted my last column to *Truck News* on maintaining the status quo in my career, when I saw something that caused me to reconsider everything I had written. My comfort zone suddenly felt a little too comfortable.

It was quite by accident. I was driving into Winnipeg to drop a trailer and passing one of the

truck dealerships, I saw a truck that caught my eye. A few days later, my wife and I were heading into the city for some more supplies in the seemingly never-ending task of "putting our personalities" into our house; this time it's a new family bathroom. Trucking is now something I do to relax in between major construction projects.

Anyway, I went to the dealership and had a closer look at the truck. It was not something I would ever consider running, but it was a thing of beauty. I spotted another truck on the lot that caught my eye and peered below to see which color engine it had, just out of curiosity, and was shocked to see that it was yellow. The truck I was looking at was a glider and this catapulted me right out of my comfort zone and back to the normality of my 'what if?' life of imagining new possibilities.

The following Monday I made a phone call and found out the details of the truck. It was as if whoever built this truck had read my mind and built my dream truck, just for me.

Like most dreams, it seemed at first that it would remain just a dream. But then I started crunching numbers and buying this truck started to make more sense, so I started to go through the motions and got approval to finance the truck. It all hinged on selling one of my current trucks though, and that's where things started to look a bit sketchy.

Now I say sketchy, but that's only part of it. The reason it's sketchy is because of the residual value of the truck I want to sell – in short it isn't enough, which underlines one of the main reasons why buying the glider truck makes so much sense.

It will never depreciate to the same extent as a brand new truck. In fact, it will almost be like a savings plan as the extra cost to purchase it over a stock truck will end up back in my pocket at the end of the term.

So, I've convinced myself that it's the way to go and as long as I can sell my current truck for the price I want to get for it, I will be going for the new glider. Obviously, that is not a foregone conclusion.



A fourth generation trucker and trucking journalist, **Mark Lee** uses his 25 years of transcontinental trucking in Europe, Asia, North Africa and now North America to provide an alternative view of life on the road.

Somebody could come along with a trunk full of cash and buy it before I do, or I may not get what I want – or more accurately, need – for my current truck. But that's life. The encouraging thing is discovering that I'm still me. I'm not content with just sitting back and watching the world go by. I still have the desire to constantly make improvements in my life and business.

Life is short and it's what you make of it that matters. I don't want to get comfortable, really. Well, I do, but not in the way that I become a passenger in life, especially as the clock keeps on ticking.

Soon I will reach an age where I will be unable to exercise much freedom in certain aspects of life. Buying a truck with a projected 15-year lifespan is just one of those decisions.

There's not much point doing that if I'm only going to be working for another 10 years. That's a way off just yet, but as that clock ticks away, it draws closer. So, I need to be thinking about that and coming up with a strategy that allows me to continually challenge myself and improve.

The first step towards that goal is to do just that, turn my dreams into targets. The new truck is just the first step in that direction and if it doesn't work out, then I'll just move on to the next step, whatever that may be. **TN**

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# The changing role of HR

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Ford’s moving assembly lines revolutionized manufacturing and changed the way people work. Automation meant the company could produce a complete car every 10 seconds of every working day. Ford was able to cut prices, build a better product, and still make a profit.

But he also recognized that his biggest advantage was his people. He doubled their minimum daily wage to \$5 and made sure they had the skills to keep up with the pace of change.

Any time an industry or business faces monumental and rapid change, employees experience them, too – and the importance of human resources (HR) intensifies.

Successful fleets today are aligning their organizational goals and HR planning. It is especially true among small fleets: in our 2017 Top Fleet Employers program, 18 of the 48 fleets recognized are small fleets, and 50% of them have an HR lead on staff. While those responsible for HR at the other 50% may not have ‘human resources’ in their job title, they’re clearly in charge of HR management.

The HR role has evolved beyond payroll and other administrative tasks and today should be part of your strategic management team, giving a competent manager or executive the insight necessary to link your business goals to recruitment, retention, compensation, and training.

If you want to remain competitive in a changing market, make sure your HR function is evolving along in step. Let’s look at three ways the trucking industry is evolving and how an HR manager can help.

### Workforce demographics

Millennials (employees under 35) are the largest cohort in Canada’s workforce, yet baby boomers and Generation X still dominate managerial positions. We are witnessing more generational tension that can negatively impact morale, productivity, and overall workplace culture.

The large number of projected retirements combined with an influx of younger workers means that a lot of young people with limited experience will be taking on management-level positions at an accelerated pace.

Also, our workforce is more diverse than ever as new Canadians, women, and people from a variety of backgrounds enter the industry.

Your HR person can help with approaches to support all of the above, from assessing your workforce demographics to managing your pipeline of talent to helping you

build a workplace where all employees feel welcome.

### Technology

Technology like telematics and automation is putting pressure on fleets to assess their options and determine what will work for them – meaning an increased focus on data analysis.

New technologies also bring new training requirements. And, as many people are misled about autonomous technologies, we are seeing an urgent need to manage messaging around the continued importance of the driver occupation.

Your HR people can help identify the skills and competencies you need in order to assess new technologies, determine training require-

ments, and ensure that employees are engaged, informed, and aware of their role in the organization.

### Regulations

Our federal government is committed to amending the Canada Labour Code to provide workers in federally regulated industries the right to request flexible work arrangements from their employers. It is also committed to developing new accessibility legislation that will have impacts on the workplace.

The impending legalization of marijuana will have a significant impact on the workplace, and on the trucking industry in particular. It will have a direct impact on occupational requirements for safety-sensitive positions; human rights;



**Angela Splinter** leads Trucking HR Canada, a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to addressing the human resources challenges and opportunities in the trucking and logistics sector. Learn more at [www.Truckinghr.com](http://www.Truckinghr.com) or follow them @TruckingHR.

the provision of workplace accommodations; and public perception.

As employers, you need to be educated and armed to address all of the above. When it comes to workplace issues, the assembly line isn’t slowing down. Competent HR managers can help you keep up – and keep your people on board. **TN**

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Preventive Maintenance

# Keep in the swing of things

Tightly gripping your steering wheel over years and many miles can take a toll on your elbows and cause golfer's elbow, even if you've never swung a golf club.

Golfer's elbow is a painful condition that affects the elbow where your forearm muscles attach to the bony bump on the inside of your elbow, causing pain that sometimes radiates into your wrist and forearm.

Although this condition is common for golfers, rock climbers, and baseball pitchers, it also affects truck drivers, plumbers, construction workers, and others who excessively or repeatedly use their wrists, clench their fists and/or engage in frequent, grip-intensive activities.

For truckers, it's the tight grip exerted by your fingers, along

with wrist torsion while steering over long distances, that stresses the tendon that attaches the forearm muscle to your elbow, causing pain, tenderness, stiffness, weakness, numbness and/or tingling in your fingers.

Golfer's elbow can be caused by any activity in which you repeatedly bend and straighten your elbow for more than an hour a day over many days, especially if you are 40 or older, overweight and smoke.

Although the symptoms of golfer's elbow may appear gradually or suddenly, the following activities may exacerbate the condition: tightening or loosening a fuel cap, shifting gears, shaking hands, turning a door knob, flexing your wrist, lifting weights, squeezing or pitching a

ball, and/or swinging a golf club or a racquet.

If left untreated, golfer's elbow can lead to chronic elbow pain, a reduced range of elbow motion and even a lasting, fixed bend in your elbow. Fortunately, there are many effective options for self-treatment. Since you still need to work, taking time off for complete rest is probably not an option. However, even when driving, you can take the strain off your affected elbow by wearing a counter-force brace or an elastic bandage.

To reduce pain, consider using over-the-counter pain relief like ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin IB and others), naproxen sodium (Aleve and others) or acetaminophen (Tylenol and others) and/or a topical, deep pen-



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etrating hot/cold cream (Medistik and others).

Between loads, ice your inner elbow for 15 to 20 minutes, three or four times per day. (To protect your skin, be sure to wrap the ice pack in thin cloth).

To keep your elbow limber, try the following stretching exercises: Extend your affected arm in front of you, palms up. Bend your elbow to a 90-degree angle and turn your hand towards you. Move your fingers and thumb towards each other to make a 'quacking duck' movement. Repeat this 'quacking duck' exercise 20 times, three to five times a day.

Another stretch that works well is called the wrist flexor stretch. For this stretch, extend your affected arm straight in front of you with your fingers pointing up and your palm facing outward. With your other hand, pull your fingers gently back toward you and hold for 30 seconds. Repeat five times at least three times per day.

**If left untreated, golfer's elbow can lead to chronic elbow pain, a reduced range of elbow motion and even a lasting, fixed bend in your elbow.**

You could also try an exercise for forearm pronation and supination. With your affected elbow at your side, bend that elbow 90 degrees, and keeping your elbow at your side, turn your palm up and hold for five seconds. Then, slowly turn your palm down and hold for five seconds. Be sure that your elbow stays at your side, bent at 90 degrees for this exercise. Do two sets of 15 repetitions.

For persistent golfer's elbow, surgery is occasionally recommended. Take steps to avoid it. Before pulling out with your first load, warm up your elbow joint by doing a few 'quacking duck' stretches. Regularly exercise to strengthen your forearm muscles – carry a tennis ball in your rig and squeeze it 50 to 100 times over each day. If you are prone to elbow pain, keep an elbow brace/elastic bandage handy and support your elbow at the first twinge of pain.

Get a grip on your future elbow strength by taking these measures today. **TN**



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Back behind the wheel

# It's in the wrist

How to identify, treat, and prevent carpal tunnel syndrome

Carpal tunnel syndrome is one of the most common conditions that affect the wrists and hands of professional truck drivers. I think it is safe to say most of us have heard the term carpal tunnel syndrome at some point in our lives. However, many people do not know exactly what it means.

Carpal tunnel syndrome occurs when the median nerve in the wrist is compressed as it passes through a narrow passageway called the carpal tunnel on its way to the hand. The median nerve provides sensation to the palm side of the thumb and first four fingers. It also provides nerve motor function signals to muscles in the thumb.

**Repetitive shifting, as well as resting the wrist on the shifter, are the most common causes of carpal tunnel syndrome in drivers.**

There are several potential causes of carpal tunnel syndrome. Any condition that causes pressure or irritates the median nerve in the tunnel may lead to symptoms.

Wrist fractures, as well as repetitive strain injuries, are common causes of the carpal tunnel narrowing. In my practice, I commonly see this condition in the shifting hand of professional truck drivers.

Repetitive shifting, as well as resting the wrist on the shifter, are the most common causes of carpal tunnel syndrome in drivers. To add to this, flatbedders are at greater risk due to the fact they must secure their loads by repetitively tightening chains and binders.

The symptoms of carpal tunnel vary from person to person. However, in most cases, symptoms begin gradually.

Symptoms usually include occasional numbing and tingling in the thumb and first two fingers. This sensation may radiate from the wrist up into the arm. Some patients experience an 'electric shock' feeling in their fingers. It is common for individuals to find relief from the symptoms by shaking out their hands. Over time, as the condition progresses, weakness of the thumb muscles may occur.

If you suspect that you may have carpal tunnel syndrome, it is important to consult with a health professional, as permanent damage can occur without treatment.

Your doctor will usually be able to diagnose carpal tunnel syndrome by taking a detailed medical history and performing a

physical examination. Orthopedic testing, which includes bending the wrist in different directions and pressing on the nerves in the wrist, is usually included in the physical exam. If necessary, your doctor may recommend further testing such as x-rays to help diagnose the cause of the carpal tunnel syndrome.

A nerve conduction study, which measures how well the median nerve is conducting the signal, may also be performed.

Once a diagnosis of carpal tunnel syndrome has been reached, your doctor will be able to recommend the proper course of treatment.

Conservative treatments such as lifestyle and job modifications are usually the first course of treatment. Ice application and over-the-counter medications are often recommended to help reduce inflammation.

Braces and splints are sometimes suggested to help immobilize the affected wrist. To add to this, physical therapy is often successful in treating mild cases of carpal tunnel syndrome.

If conservative treatments are unsuccessful, your doctor may suggest a corticosteroid injection to decrease inflammation and swelling within the tunnel. Finally, if all conservative treatment options fail, surgery may be recommended.



**Dr. Christopher H. Singh** runs Trans Canada Chiropractic at the 230 Truck Stop in Woodstock, Ont. He can be reached at 519-421-2024.

The most common surgical procedure is called a carpal tunnel release. During this surgery, the surgeon cuts through the carpal tunnel ligament to relieve pressure on the median nerve. As the ligament heals, it will leave more room for the nerve to pass through the carpal tunnel. Recovery from surgery usually takes a few months.

Until next month, drive safely. **TN**

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# Performance and protection

New category engine oils are better, but CJ-4 isn't yet extinct



New heavy-duty engine oils are packaged at Total's blending facility in Montreal, Que.

By James Menzies

December 2016 ushered in a new category of heavy-duty engine oils, giving fleets improved performance and additional choices. The previous category oil, CJ-4, is still in production by some oil suppliers, while the new CK-4 and FA-4 oils offer better performance and are recommended for new engines. In addition to the new American Petroleum Institute (API) standard, the various OEMs have also issued their own, often more stringent, specifications. Clear as a bucket of used oil? Here's what you need to know to make the right decision for your trucks.

## The case for sticking with CJ-4

One misperception about the category changeover, is the idea that the new categories would completely replace CJ-4 on Dec. 1, 2016. That's not true and some oil providers have chosen to extend the offering of CJ-4 product indefinitely, which can be safely used in pre-2017 engines.

The boldest of these is Chevron, which is still producing and offering CJ-4 with no firm end date in place.

"Initially, going into it, a lot of people expected there would be a mandatory conversion to CK-4 or FA-4 and that hasn't been the case," Rommel Atienza, commercial brand manager for Chevron in North America told *Truck News*. "To that point, we still have a 15W-40 CJ-4 product available in the market today. That decision was made when we started to hear about the direction OEMs were going and the hesitation some of our customers had in that conversion. They really wanted to see the benefits of CK-4 and FA-4 products before they made that transition."

Castrol also continues to provide CJ-4 product, for now. Hasan Zobairi, commercial marketing manager with Castrol distributor

Wakefield Canada, predicts Castrol will complete its changeover by the end of the year. It opted to extend availability of CJ-4 in response to customer demand.

"We decided to do a gradual transition and make sure all customers were comfortable with the change rather than doing an abrupt change," Zobairi said.

But not all oil companies see a benefit to maintaining CJ-4 oils in

**"From our perspective, by continuing the production of previous category engine oils – namely CJ-4 – customers are faced with unnecessary confusion and complexity."**

– Brian Humphrey, Petro-Canada

their portfolio, when the new category oils are simply better.

"We don't feel there's any benefit to keeping CJ-4 around," said Dan Arcy, global OEM technical manager with Shell. He cited better oxidation control, improved shear stability, and the opportunity to extend drain intervals as a few of the benefits of moving to the new category oils.

Andre St-Jean, MSC chemist, lab and technical service manager with Total, said the company has transitioned completely to the new category oils, a decision that was made easy because it was able to upgrade its portfolio without passing on much, if any, upcharge to customers. "The cost of the two products is nearly the same, so we decided we will discontinue the CJ-4 as soon as possible," he said.

And Petro-Canada took a similar approach, removing CJ-4 from its portfolio.

"From our perspective, by continuing the production of previous category engine oils – namely CJ-4 – customers are faced with unnecessary confusion and complexity,"

said Brian Humphrey, OEM technical liaison with Petro-Canada Lubricants.

## The benefits of CK-4

Even those oil companies that continue to offer both the new and old oil categories acknowledge that CK-4 and FA-4 oils perform better, making a compelling case to upgrade. The new category oils deliver "better overall engine protection and longer drain intervals," according to Petro-Canada's Humphrey.

But while the tighter specification may bring more parity to the performance of CK-4 oils, not all are created equal, Zobairi cautioned.

"Some companies have gone ahead and reformulated, or uptreated, their CJ-4 oils to transition to CK-4 and other companies have taken a different approach, started from scratch and re-engineered the oil," he explained. "Those companies would see even better performance in moving from CJ-4 to CK-4."

When choosing a CK-4 oil, don't just look for the API donut that identifies the category, but also ensure the oil has met all the OEM specifications as well. In many cases, according to Total's St-Jean,

those OEM standards are much more stringent than the tests the API requires.

"There are two different kinds of oil in the market: the people who have the (OEM) approvals and the people who pretend to have the approvals," St-Jean said, noting just because an oil meets the API specification doesn't mean it has also gained the required OEM approvals.

Zobairi agrees that it's important to look for OEM approvals, not just the API symbol.

"I think it's absolutely critical for oil companies to be meeting those standards and for customers to be asking whether the oils they are using are actually meeting those standards and passing those tests," Zobairi said.

In fact, St-Jean went so far as to predict the OEM certifications will eventually dictate the type of oil fleets use – and it may have to vary by engine make.

"More and more, the oil is part of the original design of the engine, so we will have more and more (OEM) specifications," St-Jean predicted. "The OEM approval will be the

decider of what product you need for your vehicle and if you want to carry one oil, maybe you will have to buy all one brand of truck."

## How about FA-4?

FA-4, the new lower-viscosity oil optimized for fuel economy thanks to its high temperature high shear properties, has seen little interest among fleets since its introduction. This is mainly due to a lack of OEM support and a lingering conviction among fleet operators that lower-viscosity engine oils offer inadequate protection.

Among the OEMs, Detroit has been the most vocal cheerleader for FA-4 oil. It factory-fills new engines with FA-4, recommends it for continued use and has even eliminated the backwards compatibility restrictions the industry was expecting, allowing FA-4 in engines as far back as model year EPA2010 engines.

"Not only do we recommend the continued use of FA-4 in our GHG17 engines, but we also recommend switching to FA-4 for EPA10 and later Detroit engines to fully achieve their fuel economy potential," said Ed Byk, Detroit heavy-duty engine product marketing manager.

After extensive testing, Detroit is convinced engine protection isn't compromised when moving to a thinner weight FA-4 oil.

"Our testing shows that FA-4 performs the same as CK-4 from a durability and reliability perspective and both perform better than CJ-4," Byk said.

Humphrey said FA-4 oils can deliver a fuel economy improvement of up to 2% compared to a 15W-40 or 1% versus a 10W-30, "so there can be real cost benefits to switching to the new FA-4 category."

Zobairi wonders why more progressive fleets aren't taking advantage of the fuel economy performance of FA-4 oils.

"I'd like to understand why customers are hesitant, especially those using Detroit Diesel trucks, where FA-4 is backwards compatible to 2010," he said.

But not everyone is surprised the uptake of FA-4 has been slow.

"We kind of knew it would be," Arcy acknowledged. "Not 100% of the OEMs have elected to use FA-4 at this time. From Shell's standpoint, we planned the uptake would go this way, that it would be slow at first and then ratchet up."

He compared the adoption of FA-4 to when 10W-30 was introduced in 2007. At that time, Arcy pointed out, there was a gradual adoption by the OEMs and it wasn't until 2013 that 10W-30 became a fast-growing viscosity grade.

"The rate at which the industry embraces FA-4 oils will be determined by a variety of factors, including the OEM recommendations and the purchase of the newer 2017 engines," Humphrey agreed. **TN**

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**2015 UTILITY 53' X 102" DRY FREIGHT VAN**  
Front & Rear Vents, Hendrickson Air Ride Suspension,  
70% Michelin X-Line 1122.5, 48" Ceiling Runner,  
Stainless Door Case & Bumper,  
**Clean Unit.** -874049



**2014 VANGUARD 53 X 102" PLATE VAN**  
Holland air ride suspension, Galvanized door case  
& bumper, excellent overall condition. - 501943



**2013 UTILITY 53' REEFER**  
Carrier 2100A unit, 100 gal tank, Stainless front panels,  
radius corners and rear doors, front & rear vents,  
side skirt, aluminum wheels, new brake linings,  
HD flat floor, exterior rub rail. - 501942



**2014 STOUGHTON 53' X 102" PLATE VAN**  
Side skirts, exterior rub rail, Automotive interior  
protection pkg, Holland air ride suspension,  
very clean. - 501941



**(50) 2011 - 2013 WABASH & GREAT DANE  
53' REEFERS**  
Thermo King SB210 units, chute and bulkhead,  
duct floor, Hendrickson air ride suspension,  
445/50R 22.5 super singles, aluminum wheels,  
side skirts, Trailer Tails, corrugated side panels,  
stainless front panels, radius corners, rear doors,  
and door case. -227777



**2016 VANGUARD 53' PLATE VAN**  
Hendrickson air ride suspension, near new  
Bridgestone 1122.5 tires, front & rear vents,  
sky lights, HD 24" side panels/slots,  
exterior rub rail, side skirt. -772671



**(5) 2006 WABASH 53' X 102" REEFERS**  
Carrier XTC units, stainless front panels,  
radius corners, rear doors and bumpers, front & rear  
vents, exterior scuff rail, side skirt, aluminum wheels,  
1 row recessed "E" track, duct floor,  
**GOOD OVERALL CONDITION.** -123449



**(6) 2009 GREAT DANE 53' X 102" REEFERS**  
Thermo King Spectrum multi-temp units,  
3 remote evaporators, 2 sets of ceiling  
mounted bulk heads, 24" aluminum scuff  
liner, HD flat floor, 1 row recessed "E" track,  
Overhead rear door, Stainless rear door case.  
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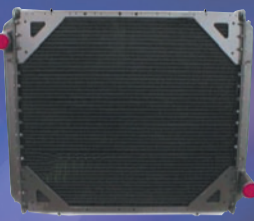
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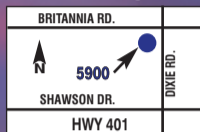
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The Private Motor Truck Council of Canada (PMTC) and its membership always look forward to this time of year, as it marks our annual conference.

This is one of the biggest events on the calendar each year for the private and dedicated trucking community. This event provides unsurpassed value for the industry.

This year’s conference takes place June 15-16 in a new venue for the PMTC, the Crowne Plaza Fallsview Hotel in Niagara Falls, Ont. The event offers educational seminars, networking opportunities, and our expanded

awards program, which celebrates the best of the best in our industry.

Although this conference is geared towards private fleets, the education and networking opportunities provide great value for everyone in the industry, whether private, for-hire, dedicated, or suppliers to the industry. Many who have attended in the past have called this one of the best values in the industry. As always, this year’s conference includes several educational seminars and celebrations.

This year’s conference will kick off with the annual general meet-

ing for members only at 4 p.m. on June 14. The conference events will kick off with the PMTC Young Leaders Group cocktail reception from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on June 14. This event is open to all Young Leaders, the PMTC Board, conference speakers, and sponsors.

June 15 marks the beginning of the educational and awards portion of our conference, starting at 8 a.m. with a legal update, followed by seminars on: Using data to create efficiencies; Introduction of the 2017 PMTC Canadian Benchmarking Survey; A US regulatory update;



Mike Millian is president of the Private Motor Truck Council of Canada, the only national association that represents the views and interests of the private fleet industry. He can be reached at trucks@pmtc.ca.

the PMTC-CPC Logistics Canada Drivers Hall of Fame Award Luncheon; Policies and procedures for marijuana – an update on recreational usage legislation; and The current and future state of autonomous vehicle technology.

This session is sponsored by the PMTC’s Young Leaders group, and as such, this year’s Young Leaders Education Bursary award recipient will be introduced after the seminar.

Day one events wrap up with the Chairman’s Dinner, which includes the PMTC Fleet Safety Awards, the PMTC Truck Driver Training Scholarship, and the President’s Award. Mixed into these events are networking and cocktail receptions in our Exhibitor’s Showcase area.

Although this conference is geared towards private fleets, the education and networking opportunities provide great value for everyone in the industry.

June 16 begins with a seminar discussing the risks associated with autonomous vehicles, and what companies should do to ensure they are prepared for the technology.

This is followed by a seminar on the changing landscape of motor vehicle incident protocols. The conference wraps up with the PMTC Vehicle Graphics Awards Luncheon. Just before the luncheon, we have one more networking opportunity with a cocktail reception around our Exhibitor’s Showcase.

If you have attended this conference before, you know the value it provides in education and networking, and we look forward to seeing you again. If you have not attended before, this would be a great year to attend your first event and see what all the talk is about. I assure you that you will not be disappointed. For full conference details, e-mail Vanessa Cox at info@pmtc.ca, or visit our website at www.pmtc.ca. **TN**

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11,794-14,968 kg. (26,001-33,000 lbs.)    ☐ YES    ☐ NO    4,536-8,845 kg. (10,000-19,500 lbs.)    ☐ YES    ☐ NO

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4) Do you operate maintenance facilities at this location?    ☐ YES    ☐ NO    IF YES, do you employ mechanics?.....    ☐ YES    ☐ NO

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c) ☐ Food Production / Distribution / Beverages    g) ☐ Construction / Mining / Sand & Gravel    k) ☐ Wholesale  
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6) Are you involved in the purchase of equipment or replacement parts?    ☐ YES    ☐ NO

7) Are you responsible either directly or indirectly for equipment maintenance?    ☐ YES    ☐ NO

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Announcements

Major OEMs announce executive promotions; **Humber** appoints new trainer; **BR Smith** gets new leaders; and **Train Trailer** names national sales manager.

Humber College has named **James A. Pattison** its new manager of the Truck Driver Training Program at the college's Transportation Training Centre. Humber said Pattison has extensive experience in negotiation, transportation training, accident investigation, as well as comprehensive knowledge of compliance and transportation-related government legislation.

Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA) has promoted two senior executives. As of Aug. 1, **Jeff Allen** will assume the position of DTNA's senior vice-president of production, quality, and specialty vehicles. He is currently the vice-president of operations at Detroit Diesel in Redford, Mich. With Daimler, Allen has more than 20 years of leadership and operational responsibility.

Effective July 1, **Stefan Kuschner** will lead DTNA's after-market business units as senior vice-president. He is currently the president and CEO of Daimler Vehículos Comerciales Mexico. Stefan brings more than 25 years of Daimler global experience, including management positions in Germany, Argentina, Brazil, Spain, USA and Mexico.

Tepper Holdings has announced that **Larry Cormier** will be taking on the role of president and chief operating officer for BR Smith's truckload division. Cormier will work out of the company's operational headquarters, now integrated within the Consolidated Fastfrate head office facility in Woodbridge, Ont. In his new role, Cormier will report directly to Fastfrate president, Manny Calandrino.

As well, **George Bichara**, a 23-year veteran of the Fastfrate Group, was named vice-president

of commercial development for BR Smith. Before accepting his new position, Bichara was vice-president of special projects for Fastfrate.

Navistar has named **Phil Christman** its new president of operations. According to the company, Christman will be responsible for procurement, product development, manufacturing, and supply chain.

Christman has been with Navistar for nearly 30 years. During that time, he has held leadership roles in engineering, led Navistar's severe service and global businesses, ran the company's procurement and supply chain functions, and most recently, served as senior vice-president, joint strategic operations and planning.

Mack Trucks has named **Richard (Rick) Hoyle** vice-president of national accounts. Hoyle will be responsible for all national accounts activities in North America, as well as leading efforts to grow this segment of Mack's business. Prior to joining Mack, Hoyle served in a variety of senior leadership positions for a leading bulk transportation and logistics company. Hoyle also owned and operated a bulk haul business for 16 years. He will be based in Greensboro, N.C.

Train Trailer Rentals announced it has promoted **Shawn Rogers** to be its national sales manager for Canada. Before the promotion, Rogers was the district sales manager. Train created the new national position in response to Train Trailer's ongoing expansion across multiple locations in Quebec, Ontario, and Alberta. In his new role, he will be responsible for the sales process and customer service on a Canada-wide basis. **TN**



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Mark Dalton: Owner-Operator

By Edo van Belkom

THE STORY SO FAR

Mark agrees to take on a student driver as a favor to his Aunt Mary. When Mark meets the young man, Kevin, he's unimpressed by what he sees.

Kevin is a quick learner and has some natural driving ability, but he likes to cut corners a bit too much and Mark wonders if he's already tired of wanting to learn how to drive long haul...

Mark let Kevin drive as much as possible along the Trans-Canada, hoping that hours behind the wheel would make it easier for him to drive in stop-and-go city traffic later on. From what Mark could see, the young man was comfortable behind the wheel and picked up on things even before Mark had to instruct him. But Mark was most impressed when they finally reached their destination in Calgary. The warehouse was right off the highway and Mark figured it was a good opportunity to see how Kevin was at backing up. It was one thing to be able to drive an 18-wheeler forward, it was another thing altogether to back it into a loading dock – even one that was wide open – when left is right and right is left.

"Put it there," Mark said, after checking with the receiver. "Loading dock number 18."

"You want me to back it up?"

"Are you unsure?"

"Not at all," Kevin said. "Just get out and spot me, if you don't mind."

"You won't always have someone to help you back up, you know."

Kevin looked at Mark and smiled. "I know, but you're here now, so I might as well use you."

Mark nodded and hopped out of the truck, happy that the young man took safety so seriously. His reversing was a bit wobbly and he had to make two tries at it, but when he finally had the line right the trailer backed up to the loading dock perfectly with barely a bump.

"Nice job," Mark said. "Where did you learn to do that?"

"We had a cottage when I was growing up. I backed our boat into the water just about every weekend in the summer for years."

Maybe this guy might work out after all, Mark thought.

But for all the good Kevin had done behind the wheel early in their time together, over the next few days Mark noticed there was still a lot the young man had to learn about driving for a living. On one occasion,

The Mark Dalton Project, Part 4

when they were taking on a new load headed for Montreal, Kevin spent all of his time in the coffee shop across the street from the warehouse playing video games, and didn't even bother to look inside the trailer to make sure everything was secure.

"But you were here," he said. "And the guy loading the truck looked like he knew what he was doing."

"You're training," Mark pointed out. "You have to act like I'm not here. And besides, no matter how well anyone loads your truck, you're the one who will be on the hook when something shifts and breaks while you're driving, or falls out the back end of the trailer as you're going up a hill."

Another time Mark had Kevin do a circle check just after he'd done one himself. Mark had noticed a few things wrong and wanted to see if Kevin could spot them on his own.

"All good," he said after he'd done a cursory check.

"Are you sure?" Mark asked.

"Why? Is there something wrong?"

"You tell me."

He looked the truck over again and when he was done, he said, "There's a clearance light broken, and one of the tires on the trailer is flat."

"Can we continue?" Mark wanted to know.

"The trailer's got plenty of tires. We should be alright."

Mark just shook his head. The light was a minor defect and could wait, but the tire had to be serviced right away. And then there was the morn-

ing they got underway after a cold night of rain. Mark allowed Kevin to start the day because he wanted to see how he would handle the truck's iced-up windows. Instead of waiting until all the windows were cleared, Kevin insisted on getting under way with just a small patch of the front windshield clear of ice.

"It'll warm up in a minute or two," he said, pulling out onto the highway. "Besides, we're just driving in a straight line for the next hour. I can see good enough."

Mark was stunned by how easily Kevin cut corners, especially when he was still training. He said nothing about the window incident, but he had just about formed an opinion about Kevin and he would have to do a complete turnaround if he was going to last more than a few more days. In the middle of their second trip out west, Mark was slowing Mother Load down so the engine could cool off properly before shut down. He was looking for a spot just off the highway to rest for the night, but Kevin was having none of it.

"Another night in this truck?" he said.

"It's what we do."

"How about a night in a motel?" Kevin asked.

Usually Mark would immediately say no, but they'd been making good time on all of their loads and as a team had earned more than enough to justify a night's sleep in a real bed. In addition, they could do laundry,

get in some exercise, take a nice hot shower, and check their e-mails.

"Alright," Mark said. "We could use a decent night's rest."

"As long as the motel has a bar, we'll be alright."

"Whoa!" Mark said. "There's no alcohol on the road, especially if we're driving the next day."

"Okay," Kevin said, the disappointment thick and heavy in his voice.

Mark awoke just after one in the morning to go to the bathroom. The television in the motel room was on, but Kevin wasn't in the other bed. "Don't tell me," Mark said.

He put on his clothes and headed to the motel lobby. Kevin was in the bar, closing the place down along with two young men who looked to be in college.

"What are you doing?" Mark asked as he approached.

"Just having some fun, unwinding. Why don't you join us?"

"No thanks," Mark said. "You have fun. I'll see you in the morning."

Early the next morning, Mark was doing a circle check of Mother Load when Kevin trudged out toward the truck looking like something the cat had pulled out of the garbage.

"Morning," Kevin said.

"Morning," Mark said. Then he held out an envelope and said, "This is yours."

"What is it?"

"It's your pay."

"I thought I got paid on Fridays?"

"You won't be with me on Friday."

"Where will I be?"

"Probably explaining to your mother what happened."

Kevin didn't seem to understand. "I told you not to drink, but you did."

"But I'm not driving today."

"And if something happened to me and you had to take over, then you'd be driving with alcohol in your system." Kevin looked into the envelope. "There's only \$200 here. I've earned more than that."

"Yes, you have," Mark said, handing him another envelope. "I put the rest of it toward this bus ticket."

"Huh?"

"And I called your mother. She's waiting for you, and I can't say she's proud." **TN**

Mark Dalton returns next month in another adventure.



Illustration by Glenn McEvoy



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## New Products

**Mack Truck's** refuse cabover, the Mack LR, is now available in a 4x2 configuration, the company announced at WasteExpo 2017. The new configuration gives customers a lighter, more maneuverable option for refuse collection, Mack said during the announcement. It was previously only offered in 6x4 configuration.



With a shorter wheelbase and tighter turning radius, the 4x2 LR model has the ability to fit into alleys and other small spaces. The 4x2 LR model is also lighter than its 6x4 counterpart, improving handling. The LR model was also designed with expansive front glass to provide greater visibility. Wrap-around rear cab corner windows were also added to improve visibility and safety.

Mack also announced at WasteExpo that over-the-air engine programming and parameter updates will now be available on refuse vehicles including the Mack 2018 Granite, TerraPro and LR models equipped with Mack 2017 GHG engines.

**Penske Truck Leasing** announced its new fleet solutions, which connects its systems with nearly any truck and engine configuration or telematics service provider. Penske said its connected fleet solutions offers faster roadside assistance call triage and improved vehicle maintenance through remote diagnostics, location data, and big data analytics. The company believes it is the first truck leasing company to provide connected fleet solutions at the size and scale it does, with more than 20,000 vehicles in its truck rental and logistics fleets using the new platform and with more customers joining daily.

**Penske Truck Leasing** also rolled out a new free mobile app, called Penske Fleet. The new app is to benefit its full-service truck leasing and contract maintenance customers. The mobile app allows Penske's customers to: view real-time fuel prices; review a 90-day history of vehicle maintenance services performed; search for Penske locations; and make one-click roadside assistance calls.

The app is available for free download on the Apple App Store and on Google Play. Penske Truck Leasing customers are asked to contact their local representative to request log-in credentials.

**SAF-Holland** has launched a new Canadian website at [www.SAF-Holland.ca](http://www.SAF-Holland.ca). The new site has a

fresher look and features a user-friendly navigation, the company announced. The new site also enables users to create their vehicle product application right online.

Using the new Create My Vehicle tab on the home page, users can select from nine vehicle applications including van, reefer, flatbed, tanker, grain, container, livestock, gravel, and heavy haul.

As well, the new website provides information on SAF, Holland, and Neway brand tractor and trailer products with all the detailed product information including standard and optional features as well as variations. A new download center provides quick searches of all literature through a filter check box function. There's also a new video page for easy access to the archive of SAF-Holland service and operation videos.

**Dayton Parts** announced a new all-makes air disc brake for heavy truck and trailer applications. The new offering will cover all major original equipment (OE) air disc brake products comprising a large majority of the market requirement, Dayton said.

The Dayton Parts all-makes portfolio will cover original products from Bendix, Hendrickson, Meritor and Wabco and consist of a wide variety of air disc brake components. More information is available at [www.DaytonParts.com](http://www.DaytonParts.com).

**Vigillo** has announced availability of Roadside Resume, a comprehensive driver safety, compliance, and risk profile. Integrated in Roadside Resume is Vigillo's CSA Scorecards and parent company SambaSafety's DriverMonitor, along with a constantly growing number of public, telematics and other third-party vendor data sources. Included are CSA BASIC inspection, violation and accident data, and MVR license status, expiration, monitored status, med cert expiration and endorsements as well as citations, violations, actions, suspensions and revocations. For more info, visit [www.vigillo.com](http://www.vigillo.com).

**Air-Weigh** has rolled out a new LoadMaxx trailer scale. According to the company, the new scale combines the best of previous LoadMaxx and Quickload trailer scales into one trailer scale with two options: LoadMaxx base model, and LoadMaxx with ComLink.

The updated scale includes: an icon-based touch screen display; built-in LED alarm lights; dual-point calibration and high precision

pressure sensor for weight accuracy; compensation for temperature and altitude change; PIN protected calibration; and English, Spanish and French language options.

The ComLink option now available for the LoadMaxx trailer scale enable drivers to view steer, drive, trailer, GVW, and net payload on an in-cab LoadMaxx tractor display. Tractor/trailer weight information can also be sent to the fleet's management software via the built-in data communication interface. For details, visit [www.air-weigh.com](http://www.air-weigh.com).

**Pirelli** has a new all-position tire for long-haul and regional applications. The Formula Driver II is the first tire to launch in the Formula by Pirelli product line, the company announced. It was designed with an optimized tread pattern for increased mileage, with siping at the groove edges to resist irregular wear. It also has large circumferential grooves for better stability and handling and stone ejectors to improve retreadability and durability. For more, visit [www.pirelli.com/commercial/us](http://www.pirelli.com/commercial/us).



**Peterbilt** showcased an electric Model 520 refuse truck with an advanced battery-electric drive system at the WasteExpo 2017 show. The Model 520 features a Transpower ElecTruck drive system, which has accumulated more than 80,000 miles of Class 8 heavy-duty use in a variety of commercial applications since 2013. The ElecTruck system uses high-power electric motors, inverters, and batteries to power commercial trucks. The ElecTruck system also features a 70-kilowatt onboard battery charger that can fully charge the truck's lithium-ion battery pack in two-four hours.

Peterbilt also announced it is rolling out three new cab configurations for the Model 520: left-hand drive, right-hand drive, and right-hand stand-up drive, in addition to the existing dual seated drive configuration. **TN**

# FAST FORWARD

## PART II

### A DEEPER LOOK INSIDE THE FUTURE OF TRUCKING

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**Mobil Delvac**

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# The Adventures of NEWLAND TRANSPORT

By Edo Van Belkom

Vic calls the city and asks about special parking consideration for his truck.

"What kind of truck is it?" the person on the line asks.

"It's a big one," Vic says. "A semi."

"Oh, I'm sorry sir.. consideration is for cars only. It lets you park your car on the street a specified number of nights out of the year."

"So, I can't park my truck on my driveway?"



"Our by-law officers may, or may not ticket your truck overnight. But if someone complains about the truck being parked in your driveway, they'd be dispatched to investigate."

But by the time Vic is off the phone, a by-law officer is out in front of the house looking at his truck.



"That didn't take long," Vic says when he gets outside. "I'm just responding to a complaint from one of your neighbors, sir."

"Which one?" Vic asks, looking up and down the street.

"I can't tell you, sir, because I don't even know."

"Can't I just keep it here for one night?"

A pause. "If you move it now, I'll consider this a warning, but if I find it here later tonight I'll ticket it. If that's not enough, it could be towed."



Vic goes to several different places in his neighborhood asking everyone if he can park his truck on their property. They all want money... much more than Vic thinks it's worth, but in the end, he needs to park his truck and get home because he has to work in the morning.

The place he finally decides on is a small shopping plaza three blocks from his house.

Vic walks home the three blocks in the rain.

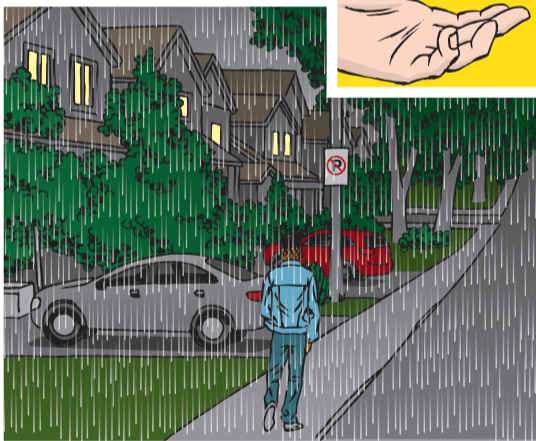


Illustration by Glenn McEvoy



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It started with Mansfield

**Dear Editor:**  
 Re: Trailer companies should be applauded for safety improvements, April Truck News  
*If you didn't know already, you may find it interesting to learn that the rear impact guards were a consequence of the death of Jayne Mansfield, who had the misfortune of driving under a large car. Under some circumstances, any protection won't compensate for the physics of mass in motion.*

**Bruce Williamson**

It comes down to pay

**Dear Editor:**  
*I've always enjoyed your magazine. You do a good job of keeping me up to date on the industry.*  
*There are a number of articles in recent editions dealing with driver recruitment. None of them mention compensation!*  
*Is this purposely left out? To explain to a man or woman that they're going to work incredibly long hours away from their family and incur the expenses involved with living on the road is difficult enough. Now, tell them that this lifestyle will bring them \$45,000 to \$65,000 annually. It's no wonder it's difficult to bring new blood into the industry.*

**Michael Cain**

Like the new look

**Dear Editor:**  
*I can honestly say in brief, that I do find the approximately one inch narrower and 1.5-inch shorter version of Truck News much more compatible to read when opened up in a space that's a tad confining.*  
*There's not too much different with the new design. But I'm sure if I was wearing a Truck News cap on my 70-year-old head, my buddies would smile and say 'That Dean features a new look!'*

**Dean Butterfield**  
 Kilburn, N.B.

# Have an opinion?

**We'd like to hear it.**

Please send letters to the editor to [james@newcom.ca](mailto:james@newcom.ca). Letters should not exceed 200 words and are subject to editing for length and style.

Corner-cutting causing wheel-offs

**Dear Editor:**  
*As a wheel installation instructor, I often see technicians in classrooms with great interaction who seem grateful to receive new information on keeping wheels on – especially hub piloted wheels. But later, they return to their old habits.*  
*It is very discouraging to see this, as it is as if they are attending only because their boss wants them there, and not because they want to be in the classroom.*  
*Secondly, I have seen refurbished wheels going on trucks or trailers that were clearly not inspected well before painting. Some refurbishing companies do a great job, but clearly the low-priced ones are cutting corners on their work. This provides a real false sense of security for fleets.*

**Robert Goodwin**

Slow down in bad weather

**Dear Editor:**  
*I have been a truck driver for 40 years. The company I work for hauls dangerous goods in dump trailers.*  
*I was caught in that accident on Hwy. 401 near Prescott that occurred back in March. The weather was really bad. I was empty with a food grade tanker coming back from Montreal that day.*  
*The roads were never salted. The Ministry knew the weather was going to be bad, but I never saw any salters or liquids being sprayed on the roads. I blame the accident that occurred on road conditions because the road was never salted.*  
*I was caught in that accident for a couple of hours. And then they had the stopped vehicles turn around and take a detour. Everyone drives far too fast, even in bad weather. I believe 90 km/h should be the law for bad weather and in city limits.*

**John Freeman**

Support the truck stops

**Dear Editor**  
 Re: Pay to park, April Truck News  
*Truck stops live on revenue from the restaurant, the convenience store, and the garage. Fuel is a customer convenience only.*  
*I have been in too many restaurants that have been almost empty at only 7 p.m., but the parking lot is full. When the restaurant goes broke, it will take the entire operation with it, including the parking.*  
*We were told to save our money and buy coolers. Use the microwaves provided by truck stop.*  
*They aren't greedy for more money. They are desperately looking for a different revenue stream to stay alive. TN*

**David A Galbraith**

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# F1 Freight Systems: Communicating competitively

**BRAMPTON, ONTARIO**

F1 Freight Systems, for all intents and purposes, is a company in its infancy. Born in 1999, the company is just 18 years young. But you wouldn't be able to tell its age when you look at its accomplishments, employee retention, and customer base.

The company was started by current president, Adrian Strank, in 1999. Adrian had been working in trucking since 1978, and though he never drove a truck, he did know how to manage drivers and run a business from an operational standpoint. So, he started F1 and it has taken off ever since.

Today, the company boasts 50 trucks and hauls general freight and temperature-sensitive products to the continental US. It has two terminals in Canada, one in Belleville, Ont., and one, its headquarters, in Brampton, Ont. It also has six terminals in the main US cities it operates out of. The business also offers what it calls supply chain solutions, including warehousing and specialized freight moves.

F1 is also very much a family business, as Adrian's sons, Chris and Geoff, are also heavily involved. Chris Strank is general manager, while Geoff Strank is the head of operations.

According to Chris and Geoff, the business is doing well because of its dependability, family values, and approach to employment.

"In general, our biggest strength is our dependability," Chris said. "Our goal is to become our customers' first call, whether they need something moved or stored. And the way we look at it is, we try to make partnerships, not just transactions. Because the better we can understand the requirements of who we're working with, the stronger, longer, and more mutually beneficial the relationships become."

For what it's worth, Chris said, many of F1's customers have been with it for years.

"We're also great at communicating," Geoff added. "We are an LTL carrier, which requires a lot of communication, because one truck

could have 10 shipments for 10 different customers and one delay can affect 10 customers. So, we try and communicate anything we can in advance to avoid issues. When you don't communicate, that's when there's issues and customers get upset. But, if you give them bad news in advance, they can plan ahead. We put an emphasis on communication in our company. When our sales reps bring in new customers, it's always because they've had service and communication issues in

members that have been with us since day one. Our turnover is very minimal and we take pride in the fact that the majority of employees have been here for five years or more."

Chris said the low turnover rate is due to the family business feel of F1.

"We work very hard to create a welcoming work environment for all of our employees," he said. "We take the time to listen to our guys. I work outside of our safety administrator's desk and (drivers) always go to her when they have questions

drivers. We didn't invest to increase profits, we did it to increase driver pay, because we believe in taking care of our people."

Chris also said the company makes sure to spec' its trucks to suit driver needs.

"We know (a truck) is a driver's office, and sometimes for weeks at a time, it's their home," he said. "So, we want them to be comfortable and make sure they have a good night's rest, because if the driver is happy and well rested, then he's focused and he's safe. And that's what we want."

More than that, F1 said it has the value-add that other companies just can't give their drivers.

"The way our operation works, we try and do as much as we can for drivers," Geoff said. "Our drivers don't have to worry about customs paperwork, or anything like that, because we handle all of that ourselves here internally in the office. We want the driver's focus to be on the road, which is different from a lot of companies, because most believe that paperwork should be completed by the driver."

Going forward, F1 said it believes it will continue to grow and keep its focus on its staff, customers, and drivers.

"They're all equally important to us, because without customers, staff, and drivers, we wouldn't have a business," Chris said. "We want to be here for tomorrow, not just today." **TN**



(L-R): Adrian Strank and sons Geoff and Chris manage F1 Freight Systems.

the past, so we try and address that. We communicate as much as possible as soon as possible. In short, we try and be proactive as opposed to reactive."

Not only does the company focus on keeping its relationships with its customers thriving, it does the same for its employees. Relative to its track record on retaining customers, F1's employee turnover rate is quite low.

"We want to create a career home for our employees," Chris said. "Because we don't want them to think of driving as just a job. Whether they're in the office or on the road, every member of our company is of value and we try our best to show them that. We have drivers and staff

or concerns, but as I see them, I have my own conversation with them. In today's day and age, it's hard to find that personal touch, it's very cold, and I even see it with newer recruits, they come from a company where they aren't listened to or they're just a number, not a name."

The company also makes sure its terminals have an open concept layout, so drivers have a driver lounge area that isn't segregated from the rest of the office, added Geoff.

"We try to break down barriers, literally," Chris said. "That's why we treat our drivers so well. We invest in innovative technology so we can increase compensation levels for



**Sonia Straface** is the associate editor of *Truck News*. She has been covering the Canadian trucking industry since 2014.



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