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On the Recovery

The recessionary storm clouds that cast such a dark shadow over our economy are finally starting to clear, and the forecast is calling for sunnier climes. In the world of transportation, that means the railways are back on track, the ocean carriers are going full steam ahead, and the trucking industry is on the road to recovery.

In the month of August, for example, Canadian railroads originated 204,824 intermodal units, an average of 51,206 per week, according to the Association of American Railroads. That's the highest non-seasonally adjusted weekly average *ever*, up 23.4% over August 2009 and 0.7% over the heydays of August 2008. Seasonally adjusted Canadian intermodal volumes in August were the highest since September 2008.

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REPORT on **TRANSPORTATION**

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ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

....continued from the cover

Container traffic is also up at the major ports – 12% at Metro Port Vancouver as of mid-year, 50.8% at the Port of Prince Rupert as of end of August, and 12.6% at the Port of Montreal in the first quarter of the year.

The outlook for the trucking industry is equally bullish; 72% of the carriers who completed the Ontario Trucking Association's (OTA) second-quarter 2010 Business e-Pulse Survey said they were optimistic about the industry's overall prospects for the next three months – a significant 20 percentage points higher than the first-quarter

survey. The proportion of carriers who are optimistic about the industry is now at its highest level since OTA began conducting the quarterly survey in the third quarter of 2008. Most of the optimism, according to the Association, appears to be based on a revival of the domestic economy.

The laggard continues to be U.S. freight, as only 26% of respondents reported volume improvement over the past three months. But that's still higher than in the previous eight quarters. Just check the line-ups at the Ambassador Bridge, where truck traffic increased by 26.25% in January to June 2010, and by a whopping 40.42% in June, compared to a year earlier. According to the latest available figures, truck traffic has increased every

month this year over last, and will continue to grow as the economy improves. It's still down from pre-recession levels, but heading in the right direction.

Infrastructure investments also look promising (and necessary). Infrastructure Ontario has released a request for qualifications to extend toll route Highway 407 eastward from Brock Road in Pickering to Simcoe Street in Oshawa, which OTA president David Bradley says is an indication of the Government of Ontario's continued commitment to highway infrastructure investment. Meanwhile, the OTA continues to advocate for the proposed new bridge at the border crossing between Windsor and Detroit; as of press time, the state Senate was considering a revised Bill to approve the project.

There are still plenty of potholes to negotiate – inequities in the provincial Workers' Compensation system, driver shortages, poor rail freight service, to name just a few. But the trucking industry has overcome many challenges in the past, and will continue to do so.



As Bradley said at National Trucking Week in September, "The industry is emerging from the depths of the recession. And, while we are far from out of the woods yet in terms of the economy, it is a testament to the hard work, the dedication, and the perseverance of everyone in every company that there is every reason to believe that the industry is poised for new growth and new opportunity."

There *is* light at the end of the tunnel. If it turns out to be a speeding freight train, let it be loaded with intermodal containers!

QUEBEC: THE "HAVE" AND "HAVE-NOT" PROVINCE

By Alan Boughton, President, Trailcon Leasing Inc.

As the political pundits continue to speculate ad nauseam about when the next federal election will take place, I question the point of it all. In my opinion, it really doesn't matter whether or not we have an election because it will accomplish absolutely nothing.

We will end up with yet another minority government, whether Liberal or Conservative, with the balance of power held by the Bloc Québécois. That's not about to change, now or in the years to come.

Even if the NDP and Liberals were to merge, as the right-wing parties did with the alliance of the Progressive Conservative and Reform parties, what would happen then? You guessed it – another minority government, with the balance of power residing with the Bloc. As the inimitable Yogi Berra put it, "it's déjà vu all over again."

And no matter which party is in power, you can be sure they will work with the Bloc whenever it suits their purposes (but when they're not in power, they will accuse the other party of being in bed with the Bloc).

After all, the Conservatives needed Bloc support to pass their first two budgets. So

how do you get the Bloc on your side? By doling out more money to Quebec to sustain its rich – and unaffordable – social programs and other subsidies.

Take, for example, the province's university tuition fees, which are by far the lowest in Canada. Ditto for its hydro rates and drugs, not to

mention daycare to the tune of \$7 a day, and a more generous parental-leave program. Quebec offers 26% more in services than Ontario, while its gross domestic product (GDP) is 14% less, according to four Quebec economists. In other words, Quebeckers are living beyond their means, and the rest of the country is paying the price through the federal equalization program, which is supposed to ensure that public services are at a comparable level across the country.



In 2009-10, the Government of Quebec received \$16.7 billion in major transfers – an increase of \$4.7 billion since 2005-06. These transfers were estimated to account for about 27% of its revenues in that year. In 2010-11, the Government of Quebec will receive \$19.3 billion through major transfers (Canada Health Transfer, Canada Social Transfer and Equalization), direct targeted support, and trust funds – an increase of \$281 million from the previous year.

Among the Canadian provinces, Quebec

is in the most precarious fiscal situation, says the Conference Board of Canada, with provincial net debt of \$129 billion – equal to 43% of provincial GDP (up from 22% two decades ago). According to figures released by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Quebec is in the fifth-

worst position in terms of fiscal debt burden in the western industrialized world. Only Italy, Japan, and Greece have higher debt-to-GDP ratios.

For fiscal year 2009-10, the province will post its largest deficit — \$4.3 billion – since the recession of the early 1990s, and that number will rise to \$4.5 billion in 2010-11, according to the Conference Board. Even more troubling, the province expects its gross debt to climb to more than half of provincial GDP through the near term, peaking at 55% in 2012. By 2011-12, debtservicing costs will eat up nearly \$8 billion of the province's provincial budget.

Editorial

Clearly, the writing is on the wall for Quebec, and the Liberal government of Jean Charest is at last attempting to address the province's massive deficit. In its latest budget, introduced in March, the provincial government implemented health-care fees, increased provincial sales tax, and added a new fuel tax to help meet transportation and infrastructure needs. Of course, the predictable hue and cry from the opposition parties and consumer advocates ensued. "Public services aren't free," responded finance minister Raymond Bachand in an interview with CBC. "We offer \$16 billion more in public services than Ontario. We're going to say, 'OK, we're going to cut our costs. And we, as citizens, we're going to make one-third of the effort. Sacred cows exist only in India."

We have no beef with that. So let's stop pandering to the Bloc Québécois and let la belle province get its own house in order, rather than relying on federal handouts. The recent provincial budget is a start. Let's ensure that this "have-and-have-not" province *has* some fiscal restraint and *doesn't have* programs that are beyond its means, rather than the reverse.

And let's not rush into yet another a pointless election, n'est-ce pas?



PITCHING Trailcon awards inaugural scholarship

The 2010 **Trailcon Leasing** Service Technician Scholarship has been awarded to Sky Wemigwans, Wikwemikong, Ont., a former truck driver.

Wemigwans, the first to receive the Trailcon Leasing scholarship, is enrolled in Waterloo-based Conestoga College's Truck Trailer Service (Co-op) program. The father of one daughter, he chose that course so that he could work closer to home. Additionally, he was familiar with the equipment through his three years as a tractor-trailer driver.

"I'm so pleased to be able to provide some financial assistance to such a hard-working student, and particularly one who has firsthand experience in the trucking industry as a driver," says Al Boughton, president of Trailcon Leasing Inc. and sponsor of the scholarship. "This is a wonderful opportunity for us to encourage individuals to pursue the trailer service trade while providing much-needed assistance to someone who has demonstrated a strong commitment to his education." Conestoga College selects the winner using academic performance criteria along with established criteria to assess financial need.

The Trailcon Leasing Trailer Service Technician Scholarship is funded by an endowed fund sponsored by Trailcon Leasing and administered by the OTA Education Foundation, Inc. For more information on the Foundation, or to donate, visit **www. ontruck.org/educationfoundation**.





Volunteers build "homes away from home"

Trailcon Leasing helped raise thousands of dollars this year in support of a small charity called **Volunteer Builders**.

Formed 10 years ago, Volunteer Builders is similar to Habitat for Humanity, but instead of building homes, volunteers build "homes away from home." The organization's goal is to design and build one structure each year for a summer camp in Ontario. Recipients are generally camps for children with special needs. Many date back to the early 1900s, and are in dire need of upgrading.

This year, Trailcon employee Pamela Towler joined the Volunteer Builders' executive team as the fundraising chair, and helped raise a record-breaking \$19,000 for the charity's 10th Anniversary Build at Camp Winston in Gravenhurst.

From June 2-6, nearly 300 volunteers gathered at the Camp to build an eightbedroom bunkhouse, office, and wellness centre – the biggest and most successful build to date, in terms of both volunteer support and square footage. The new 3,700square-foot building replaces the former medical and office building, which collapsed in 2009. Besides constructing the main building, volunteers rebuilt staircases and decks, re-shingled existing roofs, restructured the playground, and painted and did general maintenance on the facility.

Volunteer Builders hosts several fundraising events throughout the year to prepare for its next build. Because the organization survives solely on volunteering and supporters' donations, Trailcon contributed both time and money to this worthy cause.

For its 2011 Spring Build, Volunteer Builders will provide a new structure for the Scarborough Outdoor Education School in Kearney, Ont.

For more information on Volunteer Builders or how you can help, please visit **www.volunteerbuilders.org**.



CUSTOMECTION HLS Linen Services Cleaning up in commercial laundry



If you show up at **HLS Linen Services** commercial laundry expecting to see rows and rows of laundromat-style washers and dryers, you couldn't be more mistaken. Instead, you find a 185,000-square-foot fully automated facility boasting five state-of-the-art "tunnel" washers that handle 5,000 pounds of laundry an hour. After all, you can't wash, dry, fold, and pack 40 million pounds of linens a year without some pretty sophisticated equipment. "We're probably one of the most technologically advanced plants in the world," says CEO Rocco Romeo. "We have a slogan: we do more linen in one day than you'll do in your lifetime."

Founded in 1974, the Ottawa-based company serves over 120 customers in the healthcare, long-term-care, and hospitality industries in eastern Ontario – including Toronto – and Quebec, never missing a delivery. "The service we provide to healthcare facilities, long-term care, and even hospitality is equivalent to water and electricity," says Romeo. "Imagine trying to run a hospital without bed linen or towels, or an O.R. without operating-room linen. It's a commodity that people just expect to be there. Therefore, our job is to design systems to ensure we provide uninterrupted service levels."

To make sure the laundered linens reach their destination each day, workers start their shifts at 4:00 and 5:00 a.m. and finish by 12:15 or 1:15 p.m. Not only does the early start give the company time to deal with any

emergencies that may arise, but it also allows it to reap savings by using electricity outside of peak times. The organization's 300 employees like it too, notes Romeo, as it allows them to avoid rush-hour traffic. "It works for everybody."

When the company made plans to build a new facility in 2004, it was handling 18 million

pounds a year. "In just under six years, we've grown by almost two and a quarter times that amount," says Romeo. "And when you grow at that rate, it presents a lot of challenges in terms of ensuring quality and service levels meet present and new customer expectations. I think we've done an exceptional job of making sure that our current customers aren't affected. We deliver the same quality product, we're consistent in our delivery, and we provide exceptional customer service. We're now known as the place to go for laundry and linen needs, and we do it in a cost-effective way."

And also in the most environmentally friendly way. Already certified for ISO 9001 quality management standard, the company

> recently earned ISO 14001 certification for environmental management.

> As HLS Linen Services grew, so, too, did its transportation needs. The company recently leased eight trailers from Trailcon Leasing, each customized with rail gates to facilitate the loading and unloading of the bar-

coded carts in which it transports the linens. "We were impressed with the knowledge level at Trailcon, as well as the professionalism and the customer-service level," says Romeo. "The people we dealt with really knew their stuff, and went above and beyond to give us the peace of mind that they were a good company to deal with."

As the saying goes, it takes one to know one.



INTERMOSENSAL

Traffic rebounds at Metro Port Vancouver

A strong indicator that the economy is improving, 2010 mid-year results at Metro Port Vancouver showed an overall tonnage increase of 20%, to 58.4 million tonnes to date.

Container traffic is up 12%, a direct result of consumer spending. The Port says demand for consumer goods is increasing as the economic recovery begins to take hold.

That's in stark contrast to 2009, when overall container volume fell nearly 14%, and laden container imports plunged 19% due to erosion in consumer demand.



The Port currently holds a 93% market share of the Canadian container trade, with approximately 92% of its import containers distributed within Canada.

A recent management analysis, however, notes that the Port of Prince Rupert, built and initially promoted to serve the US Midwest market, is increasingly focusing on Port Metro Vancouver's inland Canadian markets.

Still, the overall outlook is positive. "Significantly improved half-year numbers are good news for all Canadians, and signs of continued growth point to a return to 2008 pre-global economic downturn levels possibly as soon as 2011," says Robin Silvester, president and CEO, Port Metro Vancouver

CN posts strong Q2 and half-year results

The railways are on track for economic recovery, if CN's second-quarter and half-year results are any indication.

For the second quarter of 2010, net income increased by 38% from the yearearlier quarter to \$534 million. Operating ratio improved by 6.1 points to 61.2%, while revenue jumped 18% to \$2,093 million, and 25% in the intermodal sector. For the first half of the year, net income was \$1,045 million, up from \$811 million for the comparable period of 2009.

The railway attributes the 18% increase in second-quarter revenues in part to significantly higher freight volumes in all markets as a result of improving economic conditions in North America and globally. Consequently, it has implemented a number of initiatives to expedite its handling of intermodal traffic, citing a sharp spike in demand to "pre-recession levels," due to surging imports from Asia at West Coast ports and higher volumes moving through East Coast ports.

Prince Rupert Port posts sharp growth in containers

As of end of August, containerized cargo at the Port of Prince Rupert was up 50.8% for the year to 228,793.3 TEUs (20-footequivalent units), compared with 151,740



TEUs for the same period in 2009. For the month of August, container traffic was up 11.1% compared with the same month a year ago.

For the first quarter of this year, export traffic at the Fairview Container Terminal grew a whopping 108.9%, leading it to post an overall increase of 87.3% to 76,860 TEUs, compared with 41,042 TEUs for Q1 2009. Much of the growth in containerized export cargo is due to the backhaul of Western Canada resource-based commodities to China, including northern British Columbia lumber, logs, and aluminum. The federal government recently announced a \$2.5-million investment in the Terminal's project to provide shore power capacity to container ships. The project is expected to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions by up to 4,000 tonnes and criteria air contaminants by 160 tonnes annually by enabling container ships to shut down their engines and connect to the Port's electrical grid while docked. Prince Rupert will be the first Canadian port to provide this service.

Shellfish board ships for trans-Atlantic crossings

East Coast shellfish are crossing the Atlantic in ship shape, thanks to a new technology developed by Maersk Line in partnership with Aqualife. With the return of a weekly call to the Port of Halifax, Maersk is transporting live shellfish in containers destined for Europe. Each refrigerated container (reefer) holds 20 water tanks, allowing the shellfish to remain in their natural environment.

The patented technology, which has been in development for five years, offers an economical, environmentally friendly alternative to air transportation, since sea transport involves significantly lower carbon emissions than airfreight. In 2011, the French government will require fresh food products to be labelled with their carbon footprint.

CN signs agreements to enhance service at ports

CN has signed Level of Service agreements with several Canadian ports to promote and better measure improvements in port performance. The agreement establishes performance targets, customer-service measures, and productivity indicators to improve the flow of containers, including specific times for unloading and loading containers between vessels and rail cars, dwell times at terminals, and CN transit times. Agreements have been signed with container-terminal operators at the Port of Halifax, Port Metro Vancouver, the Port of Quebec, and Prince Rupert Port Authority, as well as a memorandum of understanding with the Montreal Port Authority.

CN president and CEO Claude Mongeau has urged the railway's supply-chain partners to work more closely with it to deliver



better end-to-end transportation solutions that will help mutual customers compete more effectively in end markets. "A transportation system is as strong as its weakest link," he said in remarks to the Journal of Commerce 5th Annual Canada Maritime Conference. He said CN has a vital interest in greater collaboration with its port partners, as no railway is more tied to the strength of the North American port system than CN, with access to ports on three coasts and more than a quarter of its revenue derived from overseas shipments.

Full steam ahead at Port of Montreal

Like most other Canadian ports, the Port of Montreal is enjoying much better results



this year. Overall traffic in the first half of 2010 was up 7.9% compared to the same period last year. Containerized cargo traffic, one of the main drivers of this growth, posted an increase of 12.6%, rising from

5,445,878 tonnes for the same period last year to 6,129,712 tonnes. The strongest growth came in traffic with the Mediterranean and the Caribbean, with 35% and 19% increases respectively.

"The increase in containerized cargo traffic over the first six months of the year is confirmed, bringing us back up to the 2007 level for the same period, while last year at this time, we were below the 2005 level," says Sylvie Vachon, president and CEO of the Montreal Port Authority.

Canadian railroads set a monthly record for intermodal volumes

ugust was a very good month for Canadian railroads, as they originated 204,824 intermodal units, an average of 51,206 per week. That's the highest non-seasonally adjusted weekly average *ever* for Canadian railroads, up 23.4% over August 2009 and 0.7% over the heydays of August 2008. Seasonally adjusted Canadian intermodal volumes in August were up 0.6% from July 2010, and were the highest since September 2008.



For the first 33 weeks of 2010, Canadian railroads reported cumulative volume of 1,531,922 trailers or containers, up 15.4% from last year, according to the Association of American Railroads. Containers accounted for the bulk of the increase, at 16.1% versus only 0.1% for trailers, as railways continue to shift from intermodal truck trailers to containers.

Average Weekly Canadian Rail Intermodal Traffic (not seasonally adjusted)



Data are based on originations, include CN and CP (including their U.S. operations), and reflect revisions to original reporting. Source: AAR Weekly Railroad Traffic

% Change in Total Canadian Intermodal Traffic From Same Month Previous Year: Jan. 2006 – Aug. 2010



SOURCE: Rail Time Indicators, published by the Policy and Economics Department of the Association of American Railroads. Reproduced with permission.



A taste of Poland By Ashley MacLeod, billing administrative coordinator, Trailcon Leasing Inc.

Welcome to Warsaw, Poland. Be sure to arrive well-rested and with an empty stomach. There is so much to see – and eat! – in this sprawling city.

This past May, my boyfriend Przemek and I flew to Poland to visit his family and attend a First Communion for his niece Blanka.

Our first few days were spent with his family in Radom, about 100 kilometers south of Warsaw. With just a small, picturesque town square and a more modern shopping mall, surrounded by a close-knit rural community, there isn't much to Radom. But that's exactly the point.

Although Warsaw can provide a sensory overload of things to see and do (and eat), you shouldn't overlook the small towns and villages of Poland, or you could miss out on the cultural experiences they offer. For instance, don't be alarmed when the postman walks right through the front door and sits next to you at the table to chat about the weather when delivering a package. I have to admit, I was. Everyone is treated like extended family.

Not that I could join in on the conversation. Speaking of culture, one thing Poles are particularly proud of is their language. With their clusters of consonants, many words are challenging for a Canadian like me to pronounce, but the attempt is greatly appreciated. Don't worry – as foreign as this country may be, it's also very welcoming.

A few days after we arrived, we returned to Warsaw for the First Communion. Let me tell you, this is an event. The exterior of the church was stunning, but we didn't make our way in, as it was packed. The ceremony played outside on speakers for the crowd that gathered, and the children poured out for pictures when the ceremony concluded. About an hour later, we headed off to a beautiful restaurant, built to resemble a traditional log cabin, to continue the celebration.

After some more pictures and a few speeches, the dinner courses rolled out one after another until I lost count. Traditional

Polish food can consist of a few pretty scary things, but you'd never know it unless you had a translator. I can assure you, it's all delicious. It's also apparent that, to a Polish person, you can never have too much of it. As with most places in Europe, your hosts assume you must be sick if you're not eating. It couldn't be that your last meal was only 20 minutes ago, or that you managed to survive four or more courses and would simply like to pass on dessert. Or possibly, you've just found out that Flaki Wolowe means beef tripe soup, or cow stomach. Enough said.

We took advantage of our next few days in Warsaw to do some sightseeing. References



Ashley and Przemek enjoy a typical Polish meal at a restaurant in Warsaw: big plates of food washed down with even bigger mugs of beer, capped off with a shot of vodka. to Chopin abounded, especially since it is the 200th anniversary of the composer's birth. Of course, we had to hit the newly opened Chopin museum. Inside, you are given a tag programmed in your selected language, and the whole museum is interactive with this tag. You can scan it over any video or piece of music to hear it in your headphones – ironically modern, considering the museum is housed in the 17thcentury Ostrigski Castle.

Dominating the skyline of Warsaw is the Palace of Culture & Science, a gift from the Soviet Union to the people of Poland. It's the tallest building in Warsaw, and the seventh tallest in the European Union. Completed in 1957, it is still controversial among some of the city's residents, who resent its symbolic reminder of Soviet rule. Following the overthrow of communism in 1989, all references to the late dictator Joseph Stalin were removed; the Palace now serves as an exhibition centre, office complex, and university.

Back at street level, there's still much to explore. Although an astonishing 85% of Warsaw was destroyed in WWII, most of the city has been meticulously restored to its original form. The historic "Old Town" is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Market Square within the Old Town stands out in my mind as a favorite. It truly looks as if you've been transported into the scenery of a perfectly painted picture. Within the Square, you'll find the fountain of The Mermaid of Warsaw, thought to be one of Triton's two daughters who set out on a journey through the sea, with one daughter staying in Copenhagen and the other in Warsaw. The symbol appears on taxis and even government officials' uniforms.



Outside the Presidential Palace is a memorial to President Lech Kaczynsky, his wife, and the 95 other government personnel who perished in the ill-fated flight to Russia to mark the 70th anniversary of the Katyn forest massacre, in which Soviet Secret Police killed an estimated 22,000 Polish nationals in April-May 1940.

Also of historical significance is Nowy Swiat, which means "New World." The street dates back to the 16th century, and is still "the place to be" today. One the most expensive streets in all of Europe, Nowy Swiat rivals Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills and The Avenue des Champs-Élysées in Paris. We got coffee and continued on.

We chose to walk the city. It was my first time in Europe, and I wanted to see as much as possible. If you prefer to get around a little faster, the Warsaw Trams (Tramwajie Warszawskie) and the Warsaw Metro allow easy access to anywhere in the city.

Soon enough it was time for dinner. Przemek and his brother are particularly fond of Podwale25 in the Old Town. Once inside, I could see why, although I can't imagine anywhere else in Poland is any different when it comes to food; it's serious business. Here's how it goes: big plates, even bigger beers, and finish off with a shot of vodka. Vodka, of course, comes with every meal. Why wouldn't it?

The next morning, Przemek and I boarded a plane to Barcelona, continuing on to Paris, then Rome. We returned to Poland 12 days later, and headed back to Radom for a rest. This time, I really got to appreciate how time seems to literally slow down as you pass back into the countryside.

We visited with Przemek's family, snuck in a little shopping, and explored Radom's old town square. I tried my hand at pierogimaking, and was put to shame. It was pretty easy to spot the two I contributed, even next to the 400 or so that seemed to take two women almost no time to prepare.

Unfortunately, the southern part of Poland was experiencing mass flooding at that time, hampering travel plans to mustsee places such as Krakow (the original capital city) and Auschwitz. A state of emergency had been declared in most areas we planned to visit in the latter half of our trip. However, we were very thankful not to be sitting on a rooftop somewhere waiting to be rescued. It gave us a bit of down time and a great excuse for a second trip.

INDUSTRY Notes

Trucking industry to star on TV and social media

The Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council (CTHRC) and the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA), along with the provincial trucking associations, have teamed up to produce a profile of the trucking industry that will air on an upcoming episode of



"The Profile Series," an award-winning informational TV series hosted by Lou Gossett Jr., and distributed in the U.S. to CNN, Bravo, and via the Internet.

The program will air in Canada on a stillto-be-finalized national network. It will also be posted to You Tube, Google Video, etc. Viewers can get a sneak peak of a customized version of the profile by visiting the CTA website at www.cantruck.ca/media /clip/cta.html or the Ontario Trucking Association website at www.ontruck.org/ media/clip/ota.html.

The profile is intended to showcase the Canadian trucking industry and its many

career opportunities to a younger demographic. "We need to attract more young people to the industry, so it's logical that we would use media that they are more likely to tune into," says David Bradley, CTA's president and CEO.

The stars of the show are members of the Canadian trucking industry who promote various job opportunities, including drivers, mechanics, driver trainers, administrators, and company owners.

SCL endorses "Empty Miles" service for efficiencies

The Supply Chain & Logistics Association Canada (SCL) has endorsed the VICS Empty Miles service for driving cost efficiencies and supporting the sustainability efforts of its members. The Empty Miles service is an industry-led backhaul transport solution for the North American supply chain, created through collaboration between global standards bodies GS1 Canada and GS1 US, and the Voluntary Interindustry Commerce Solutions Association (VICS).

"This service successfully addresses a perpetual challenge in the transport supply chain network, namely, reducing empty backhauls," says SCL president Bob Armstrong.

Recognized by Walmart Canada's "Share Green" best practices as one of Canada's top

Trucking revenue up, but so are expenses in Q4 2009

anadian trucking companies earned revenue of \$9.9 billion in the fourth quarter of 2009, according to Statistics Canada's Quarterly Trucking Survey. That's up from the third quarter, when they earned revenue of \$9 billion. However, operating ex-

penses in Q4 were \$8.9 billion, versus \$8 billion in Q3, for an operating ratio of 0.898, compared with a slightly more profitable ratio of 0.888 in the previous quarter. Salaries and wages accounted for 28% and fuel expenses 18% of total operating expenses.

The trucking industry is dominated by Ontario, where the 37% of all trucking companies located there account for 33% of total revenue.

The Survey covers all businesses with annual revenue from trucking establishments of \$30,000 or more.

sustainable corporate business initiatives, Empty Miles is a web-based solution that matches a company's trucks and trailers on the return leg of their journey with cargo that can be retrieved or delivered along the return route. Besides removing empty transport vehicles from the road, it helps curb greenhouse gas emissions, decrease fuel consumption, increase user productivity, and save money.

"The service offers an opportunity for companies to share transportation data in a way that they've never had visibility to do before," says N. Arthur Smith, president and CEO, GS1 Canada.

Launched in Canada in February, the service has enjoyed considerable success in the U.S., where it was established a year earlier. In one case study, retailer Macy's realized an increase of 30 backhaul loads per week, and a reduction in annualized transportation costs by an average of \$25,000 as a result of using the service.

For more information, visit www.empty miles.org

Mullen Group completes acquisition, wins award

Mullen Group Ltd., Okotoks, Alta., has acquired Smook Bros. (Thompson) Ltd., a heavy civil construction company located in Thompson, Man., that provides services such as infrastructure construction, mine site work, and tailings ponds construction to the energy, natural resources, and government sectors.

In addition, the company's wholly owned operating subsidiary, Mullen Trucking L.P., has received the Order of Excellence Award from the National Quality Institute, a notfor-profit independent organization whose goal is to help Canadian private- and publicsector organizations implement programs of excellence.

The Mullen Group is a provider of specialized transportation and related services to the oil and natural gas industry in western Canada, and a supplier of trucking and logistics services in Canada.



TransForce adds business, improves Q2 results

The TransForce Inc. juggernaut rolls on, with the company's acquisition of an equity interest and substantially all the assets of EnQuest Energy Services Corp., Calgary. The assets, which generate estimated annual revenues of approximately US\$50 million, are in several segments of the energy services business, primarily in the United States, including transportation services, rig-moving, crane services, and specialized heavy hauling.

TransForce has also purchased a 52-

door cross-dock terminal in Calgary to support the growth of subsidiary TST Overland Express in the region. The terminal triples the capacity of TST Overland in Calgary, and supports the company's commitment to provide customers with a less-than-truckload network across Canada and the United States. "We are continuing to invest in our operations in Western Canada because of the region's economic strength and growth potential," says Alain Bédard, chairman, president and CEO.

In other news, TransForce's Canpar package and courier subsidiary has won a

contract to supply overnight courier services to the Government of Ontario for a period of three years. Canpar will hire about 90 drivers and add new vehicles to deliver approximately 16,300 shipments a day for the McGuinty government.

For the second quarter of this year, TransForce increased its revenues 9% to \$497 million over the same period in 2009. Operating income before depreciation grew 29% to \$71 million, and adjusted net income almost tripled, from \$12 million to \$23 million. "These quarterly results are the best since 2008, and make us cautiously optimistic for the future," says Bédard.

Balancing workers' rights and union privileges

— by Joseph C. Ben-Ami and Garnett Genuis

anadian law with regard to unions and workers' rights is sharply different from that of other western nations. Forcing workers to join a union as a condition of their employment is prohibited by law in most, and those individuals who exercise their right not to join a union are either exempted from paying union dues altogether, or they are entitled to a reduction in their dues in recognition of the fact that unions often spend money on activities from which they derive no

benefit, or causes with which they disagree.

In contrast to this, Canada allows collective bargaining agreements to stipulate that workers must join a union as a condition of employment, and where there is a union, but workers are not forced to join as a condition of employment, they still must pay union dues, regardless of whether or not they become a member.

The power of unions in Canada to either compel workers to join against their wishes, or to collect dues from those they do not force – and cannot convince – to join, is more than just

extraordinary. It is unique among non-government institutions.

It is also a recipe for abuse.

In June, the Canadian Centre for Policy Studies released a discussion paper suggesting changes to Canada's labour code that would protect the rights of workers under federal jurisdiction and significantly reduce this potential for abuse. These changes would allow unions to spend dues only on activities related to collective bargaining, or on programs that directly benefit workers and their families. They would also require unions to disclose their spending to the public annually. The paper called for similar changes to provincial laws.

The response from union big-wigs to these modest proposals was both swift and predictable. Ken Lewenza, president of the Canadian Auto Workers union, dismissed them outright, calling them "absurd" and a diversion from the real issues facing the Canadian economy, telling reporters that "Unions are the most democratic institutions in the world." Lewenza also told reporters that documents detailing union spending are already public, claiming that "anyone who wants it (sic) can see it" and that, in any event donations by unions to political



parties are already banned in Canada. Considering that they can make people join against their will, or collect dues from people who are not even members, the claim that unions are "the most democratic institutions in the world" would seem a little exaggerated.

As is the claim that details of union spending are available to "anyone who wants it." In fact, Section 110 of the *Canada Labour Code* only requires the disclosure of a limited amount of a union's financial information, and then only to union members who request it. The

> public – including workers who are not members of the union but still must pay full union dues – is not entitled to even this partial disclosure.

> As for a ban on contributions to political parties, that only applies to federal political parties, not provincial (read NDP) parties. What's more, the ban also does not apply to contributions to third-party advocacy groups that advance causes unrelated to the workplace that individual workers may not support. Even if unions are "the most democratic institutions in the world," as Lewenza says – a dubious claim at best – the right not to

be forced to contribute financially to causes and political parties that they do not support is an individual right that cannot be negated by a majority vote, especially if those being forced to make those financial contributions aren't even members of the union, and therefore, cannot vote.

There is no denying that unions have, at times, played an important role in providing benefits to workers and protecting workers' rights. Unfortunately, many of our laws and practices, originally intended to recognize that role and protect it, have eroded workers' rights and opened the door to abuse, ironically at the hands of unions themselves.

Other countries recognize this and have modified their laws in an effort to restore a balance of power between union management and workers. It is time for Canada to do the same.

Joseph C. Ben-Ami is the president of the Canadian Centre for Policy Studies (www.policystudies.ca). This column was first published in The Ottawa Citizen, and is reprinted with permission. For more information, visit www.josephbenami.com.

FOR YOUR INFORTE

Thinking outside – but living inside – the box

While we have written in the past about shipping containers being converted into homes and even used as art exhibits, we had no idea the trend was so widespread until we paid a visit to the ISBU (Intermodal Steel Building Units & Container Homes) Association website, at **www.isbu-info.org**. There we discovered that the affordable, durable and eco-friendly recycled boxes are being used for many types of modular construction.

For example, an organization called TempoHousing in Amsterdam shipped a 72-room container hotel to Haiti to replace an older collapsed hotel. A U.S.-based non-profit group called Containers to Clinics shipped the first container-based medical clinic to Haiti. A Montreal-based Haitian-Canadian musician, Luck Mervil, is spearheading an effort to build a village in his home country using retired shipping containers. In The Netherlands and the U.K., shipping containers are popular for student housing.

Closer to home, Architecture for Humanity Vancouver hosted the Quick Homes Superchallenge, a one-day program to promote, design, and build attractive emergency and transitional housing using ISBU containers as their superstructure. Both the City of Vancouver and the City of Winnipeg are considering using refurbished shipping containers for affordable housing.

Meanwhile, demand for shipping containers is at an all-time high. "The sudden global demand for shipping containers has caught the global shipping industry completely off guard, and the result is the largest shortage of shipping containers in history," says the ISBU Association newsletter. To alleviate the shortage, Maersk and others have ramped up production of thousands of new containers.

Something to carp about

The Great Lakes have been invaded by aliens – not from outer space, but from the Mississippi River.

Earlier this year, commercial fishermen found a nearly one-metrelong nine-kilogram Asian carp in Lake Calumet, which connects with Lake Michigan about 10 kilometres away. That's the first time the dreaded invasive species – which can grow up to 1.2 metres and 45 kilograms, and quickly crowd out native species – has been found beyond the electric barriers constructed to keep it out of the Great Lakes. Fishermen are afraid the carp could ruin the region's \$7-billion fishing industry.

Asian carp escaped into the Mississippi River in 1993, and have been migrating northward ever since.

The U.S. Supreme Court denied a petition by the State of Michigan to close the lock in the main route between the waterway and Lake Michigan, according to *The Journal of Commerce*. The American Waterways Operators opposed closing the lock because of the loss of business the barge industry would incur. However, barge traffic has been on the decline, and could move to truck or rail, said John Taylor, associate professor of supply chain management at Wayne State University in Detroit. He equated the yearly tonnage to about two freight trains a day.

Joel Brammeier, president of the Alliance for the Great Lakes, told the Associated Press that the carp's capture highlights the need for a long-term solution that goes beyond the electric barriers.

Word Watch



"Pass the buck"

e've all run into people (many of them work for the government) who habitually try to **"pass the buck"** – in other words, dodge responsibility by shifting it to another person.

But we bet you didn't know the term has its origins in 19th century poker games. Because the dealer had the greatest opportunity to cheat, the players would take turns in this role. To keep track of whose turn it was, players placed a marker known as the "buck" – often a knife with a handle made of buck horn – on the table in front of the dealer, and passed it to the next player before each round.

By the early 20th century, the expression had expanded from transferring responsibility for dealing the cards to its modern-day meaning.

But how did "buck" come to be a slang term for "dollar"? One theory is that silver dollars were later used as markers, and hence the buck. Another possibility is that "buck" is short for "buckskin," a common medium of exchange in trading with the Indians. As early as 1748, it was written: "Every cask of Whiskey shall be sold to you [Indians] for 5 Bucks. "The transition to dollars seems like a natural evolution.

Sources: www.word-detective.com, www.wikipedia.com, www.Thestraightdope.com

Lines for lexophiles

- (lovers of words)
- Police were called to a day care where a three-year-old was resisting a rest.
- The short fortune teller who escaped from prison was a small medium at large.
- The dead batteries were given out free of charge.
- A dentist and a manicurist fought tooth and nail.
- A plateau is a high form of flattery.
- A thief who stole a calendar got 12 months.
- A will is a dead giveaway.
- If you take your laptop for a run, you could jog your memory.

Site-seeing OneSpout.com, Dealradar.com

Group buying is one of the hottest trends in online shopping. Sites such as TeamBuy.ca, GroupOn.com, StealTheDeal.com, and several others in the Toronto area and other Canadian cities have sprung up offering deals on everything from cupcakes to facials, restaurants to helicopter rides – even trapeze lessons for the high flyers. Group-buy operations offer a discount for a limited time on a local service or product. Users receive an e-mail in the morning featuring the day's deal, including the actual retail price, percentage discount, and the minimum number of people who must buy in for the deal to go through.

But subscribe to enough of these services – some cities have more than a dozen – and you could be looking at serious in-box clutter. At least, that's the logic behind Toronto-based start-up One-Spout.com. The brainchild of "a good Canadian boy from Ancaster, Ontario," OneSpout collects and consolidates relevant offers from daily-deal websites. Consumers receive a personalized e-mail with offers around their city, and can customize their e-mails by filtering out keywords or viewing by discount percentage.

OneSpout joins Chicago-based Dealradar.com, which launched a similar service in Canada, the U.S., and the U.K. earlier this year.

TED

Short for "Technology Entertainment and Design," TED is a series of annual conferences featuring the world's best and brightest thinkers and doers, who are challenged to give the "talk of their lives" – in 18 minutes. Over the years, the scope of the non-profit organization has expanded to include science, business, the arts, and global issues.

While tickets to the conferences are by invitation only, the archives of TEDTalks are available as free webcasts. More than 700 are now on the website, with more added each week. Besides high-profile speakers like Bill Gates, Al Gore, Jane Goodall, Frank Gehry, Peter Gabriel, Bono, and Quincy Jones, there are lesser-known but equally absorbing presenters, such as Li Lu, a key organizer of the Tiananmen Square student protest; Aimee Mullins, a Paralympics competitor who tried out a new pair of artificial legs onstage; and Jennifer Lin, a 14-year-old pianist whose six-minute improvisation moved the audience to tears.

At least they tried





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TECTALK Savings by design

Benny Di Franco has a passion for turning the ordinary into something extraordinary. The president of Innovative Trailer Design Industries (ITDI) in Mississauga takes what most would consider standard designs, and improves them in order to increase efficiencies. "Our focus is trying to take things that people overlook and make them better," he explains.

Take, for example, your basic container chassis. Di Franco and his team devised ways of making it lighter, without sacrificing tensile strength. "We re-engineered and refined something that people just take for granted, and improved the weight of it," he says. The company also incorporated side skirts on the chassis to reduce wind drag and improve mileage. CN is currently testing a prototype of the redesigned chassis, and while the final results aren't in yet, Di Franco is anticipating fuel savings of 8-10%.

The company now offers the lightest chassis on the market. "Lighter weight is always better," says Di Franco. "It is more maintenance-free, it saves fuel, and you can get more payload, so there's always a payoff somewhere."



This prototype chassis for CN features side skirts and super-single tires to save fuel.



On the trailer side, the company has also designed some innovative customized solutions, including a trailer for hauling linens. In the past, explains Di Franco, commercial laundries had a wash facility in every city, whereas they now have one central, automated facility, like Ottawa-based HLS Linen Services (see "Customer Connection," page 5). That means longer trips between the facility and its customers than in the past. Therefore, ITDI developed a double-decker







This double-decker trailer can transport twice as many linen carts between the laundry facility and its customers. An internal lift gate facilitates loading/unloading on the second level.

trailer for HLS Linen Services that cuts deliveries in half. "Normally, the company would do pickups in, say, Brampton, and take them all the way to Ottawa, two trips a day," he explains. "With the double-decker trailer, they can stack their linen carts two rows high, so they can make one trip instead of two." That means fewer trucks, fewer drivers, and lower fuel costs. "Efficiencies at the plant go up drastically," notes Di Franco.

The linen trailers have a gate inside for loading the two levels, either at a dock or from the ground. Di Franco has also developed specialized legs to raise the trailer, so the lower level can be loaded from a dock underneath the platform.

ITDI is also customizing trailers for many other unique applications, both in Canada and internationally. "Right now, we're working on mobile command and control centres for The Ministry of Natural Resources," says Di Franco, for use by firefighters. "We do a full command-and-control package, where we have kitchen trailers, wash trailers with showers, and bunk trailers where firefighters can sleep while they're fighting fires. We have offices where they control the water bombers and helicopters, and control centres with the data networks and Internet. and the radio rooms they need to control all the manpower and equipment that they've deployed during a forest fire."

As ITDI is proving, there's a hot market for innovative, cost-saving solutions.

BOYS AND TOYS

here can you eye more than 1,600 makes and models of Chrysler cars and trucks – Plymouth, Dodge, AMC, Jeep, Hudson and more – dating from 1924 (a Dodge Brothers classic from Muncey, Ont.) to the present?

Head on down to New Hamburg, Ont. – just 10 minutes from Kitchener – to Moparfest, Canada's largest all-Mopar car show. (Mopar, short for MOtor PARts, are original equipment manufactured parts for Chrysler vehicles.) This year, **Trailcon Leasing** president **Al Boughton** made the scene in his beloved 1969 Dodge Charger.

Besides all the classic and contemporary models on display, there are nearly 250 vendors selling all manner of car-related merchandise, as well as plenty to eat and drink, and activities for the kids. On the Friday night before the show, the downtown of New Hamburg closes to traffic and becomes one giant car show; on Saturday and Sunday, it's the site of an enormous flea market.

Several hotels in the area offer special Moparfest rates. Next year's show will be held August 20-21, 2011. For more information or to register your car, visit **www.moparfest.com**.





This 1970 Plymouth Superbird is the pride and joy of Scott Sinclair, of Bolton, Ont., a former owner of All-Ontario Transport.

More than 1,600 Chrysler cars and trucks are on display at Moparfest in New Hamburg, Ont.

FRANK SAYS..

hile the weather may be cooling off, Frank is certainly not. He was characteristically hot under the collar when I ran into him at a recent industry meeting. The latest target of his wrath: affirmative-action hiring.

It seems the Conservative government is set to end race-based hiring policies.

Not so fast, says Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff. Apparently, huffed Frank, Ignatieff has been spouting off to anyone who will listen that he is in favour of affirmative action, BUT that public-sector hiring should also be based on merit."Well, which is it?" demanded Frank. "Affirmative action or merit?"

According to *Merriam*-*Webster* dictionary, Frank explained, "affirmative action" is defined as: "an active effort to improve the employment or educational opportunities of members of minority groups and women."

"And yet lggy is quoted here," said Frank, brandishing a dog-eared newspaper clipping, "as saying 'public-sector hiring should be based on merit but it should also be based on giving everybody an equal shot.'Well, here's the thing: a minority candidate MAY NOT BE the best person for the job, so how can hiring be based on both merit and affirmative action?" asked Frank indignantly." Iggy is sucking and blowing at the same time. That's like saying it's OK to wear a burga as long as you don't do it in public."



CALENDAR^e**VENTS**

November 4-5

CCMTA Fall Meetings

Delta Ottawa Hotel Contact: Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators Telephone: 613-736-1003 E-mail: ccmta-secretariat@ccmta.ca Web: www.ccmta.ca

November 11

HTC 85th Annual Dinner Hamilton Convention Centre Contact: Hamilton Transportation Club Telephone: 905-549-3777 E-mail: hamtransportation@cogeco.ca Web: www.hamiltontransportationclub.com

November 14-16

IANA's Intermodal Expo & Annual Membership Meeting

Greater Fort Lauderdale/Broward County Convention Center, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Contact: Intermodal Association of North America Telephone: 301-982-3400, ext. 332; 1-866-438-EXPO (3976) E-mail: iana.expo@intermodal.org

Web: www.intermodal.org

November 19

84th Annual OTA Convention

DoubleTree - by Hilton - Toronto Airport Hotel Contact: Melanie Kowdrysh, Ontario Trucking Association Telephone: 416-249-7401, ext. 231 E-mail: melanie.kowdrvsh@ontruck.org Web: www.ontruck.org

December 2

TTC Annual Dinner and AGM

Fairmont Royal York Hotel, Toronto Contact: Andrée Baillargeon, Toronto Transportation Club **Telephone:** 416-886-5450 E-mail: sec_treasurer@ torontotransportationclub.com Web:

www.torontotransportationclub.com

December 15

Waterfront Centre, Hamilton Yacht Club Contact: Hamilton Transportation Club Telephone: 905-549-3777 E-mail: hamtransportation@cogeco.ca Web:

HTC Christmas Luncheon

www.hamiltontransportationclub.com

Jan. 31-Feb. 4, 2011

2011 COHMED Conference (Co-operative Hazardous Materials **Enforcement Development)** Doubletree Hotel Tampa Westshore

Airport, Fla. **Contact:** Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance **Telephone:** 301-830-6143 E-mail: cvsahq@cvsa.org Web: www.cvsa.org

Feb. 28-Mar. 2, 2011 **The Logistics Management**

Course Miles S. Nadal Management Centre, Toronto **Contact:** Schulich Executive Education Centre, York University Telephone: 416-736-5079:

1-800-667-9380 F-mail:

execedinfo@schulich.yorku.ca Web: www.seec.schulich.yorku.ca

March 6-8, 2011

120th Annual IWLA Convention Renaissance Vinoy Resort and Golf Club. St. Petersburg. Fla. Contact: International Warehouse Logistics Association Telephone: 847-813-4699 E-mail: email@iwla.com Web: www.iwla.com

March 13-16, 2011 Annual Convention of Truckload

Carriers Association Hilton Bayfront Hotel & San Diego Convention Center **Contact:** Truckload Carriers Association Telephone: 703-838-1950 E-mail: tca@truckload.org Web: www.truckload.org

March 21-24, 2011 ProMat 2011

McCormick Place South. Chicago Contact: Material Handling Industry of America (MHIA) Telephone: 704-676-1186; 1-800-446-2622 E-mail: customer.service@ promatshow.com Web: www.promatshow.com

April 7-9, 2011

ExpoCam Place Bonaventure, Montreal Contact: Joan Wilson, Show Manager, Newcom Business Media Telephone: 416-614-2200; 1-877-682-7469 E-mail: jwilson@newcom.ca Web: www.expocam.ca

April 12-14, 2011

SAE 2010 World Congress Cobo Center, Detroit, Mich. Contact: Society of Automotive Engineers Telephone: 1-877-606-7323 E-mail: CustomerService@sae.org Web: www.sae.org/congress

April 12-14, 2011 2011 CVSA Workshop

Hyatt Regency O'Hare, Rosemont, III. Contact: Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance Telephone: 202-775-1623 E-mail: cvsahq@cvsa.org Web: www.cvsa.org

April 17-20, 2011

NASSTRAC Logistics Conference & Expo

Buena Vista Palace & Spa, Orlando, Fla. Contact: National Shippers Strategic Transportation Council Telephone: 952-442-8850, ext. 208 Web: www.nasstrac.org/conference/

April 28-30, 2011 **60th Annual Convention of** Quebec Trucking Association

Chateau Frontenac, Quebec City Contact: Quebec Trucking Association Telephone: 514-932-0377, ext. 211 E-mail: info@carrefour-acq.org Web: www.carrefour-acq.org

May 4-5, 2011 **17th Annual Intermodal Operations**

& Maintenance Seminar Oak Brook Hills Marriott Resort, Oak Brook, III. Contact: Intermodal Association of North America Telephone: 301-982-3400, ext. 332

E-mail: info@intermodal.org Web: www.intermodal.org

May 15-18, 2011

WERC Annual Conference Orlando, Fla. Contact: Warehousing Education and Research Council Telephone: 630-990-0001 E-mail: wercoffice@werc.org Web: www.werc.org

May 15-19, 2011 **CCMTA Annual Meeting**

Delta Ocean Pointe Resort & Spa, Victoria, B.C. Contact: Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators Telephone: 613-736-1003 E-mail: ccmta-secretariat@ccmta.ca Web: www.ccmta.ca June 10-11, 2011

Atlantic Truck Show

Moncton Coliseum Complex, Moncton, N.B. Contact: Mark Cusack, Show Manager Telephone: 506-658-0018; 1-888-454-7469 E-mail: mcusack@mpltd.ca Web: www.atlantictruckshow.com

June 17-19, 2011 The Stirling Truck Show

Stirling, Ont. Contact: Stirling and District Lions Club Telephone: 613-395-0055 E-mail: ruth.potts@hotmail.com Web: www.truckshowandshine.com

July 22-24, 2011

26th Annual Fergus Truck Show Centre Wellington Community Sportsplex, Fergus, Ont. Telephone: 519-843-3412; 1-866-526-7379 E-mail: info@fergustruckshow.com Web: www.fergustruckshow.com

August 8-13, 2011 **NAIC 2011**

Orlando, Fla. **Contact:** Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance **Telephone:** 301-830-6143 E-mail: cvsahq@cvsa.org Web: www.cvsa.org