



# Trail Blazer

DECEMBER 2006



## A Day To Remember

### Students shine in truck rodeo

November 21 was a chilly day in La Ronge, but at NRT Training Facility, the students were hot! With amazing confidence and without hesitation, they handled difficult manoeuvres like the professional drivers they had become in the short span of eight weeks.

Each student completed a three-point turn, navigated a back up lane, manoeuvred

through pylons, did two 'S' turns and backed up into a dock. It was also a time trial.

Though these are moves that are second nature for seasoned NRT operators, they are not easy to do, especially pulling a trailer, which creates a whole different dynamic.

The three-point turn involves going up the straight, turning to the left, straightening out, backing up to the stop sign and turning left again.

**CGH**  
C. Gibson Holdings

**NRT**  
Northern Resource Trucking

2945 Millar Avenue  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7K 6P6  
Phone (306) 933 3010  
Facsimile (306) 242 3156  
[www.nrtlp.com](http://www.nrtlp.com)





*Rodeo Grand Champion Pearl Clark*

Manoeuvring through pylons with a regular vehicle is easy enough, but add a trailer with independent articulation and it takes the most skilled driver not to take out a few pylons on the way. Students learned the importance of tracking.

The inherent difficulty in backing up a tractor-trailer combination so that it remains in a straight line is fairly evident.

The important 'S' turn that a driver does on right-hand turns must get the truck out from the curb while still blocking so that a car can't come in on the right. This is an important safety move.

Backing into a dock on your blind side requires great precision, with no room for error.

Family and friends, wrapping their hands around coffee mugs for warmth, cheered and wowed the students on as they achieved these great feats. They were probably more photographed than Tom Cruise at an awards night.

Besides being able to safely and skilfully operate a tractor-trailer combination vehicle, students finished this course with knowledge of proper vehicle maintenance, load safety, air brakes operations, driver and vehicle safety procedures, pre-trip operations and troubleshooting techniques.

As the SGI examiner said, they are "ready to be truck drivers – not just able to pass the test, but ready to go to work."

It was a fun time and a time to demonstrate and celebrate success. NRT Safety, Training



*Randy Mihiliwicz instructs on the brake board*

and Compliance Manager Lloyd Driedger, Lead Instructor Cam Graves and instructors Terry Robbins and Randy Mihiliwicz were quite obviously brimming with pride.

All of this activity was fuelled with fantastic food. Cam, Terry and Randy slaved over the barbeque, producing tasty wieners and burgers for their students. Lloyd and Irene (Lloyd's wife, who deserves a medal for service to NRT students) served the students, with all the trimmings.



*Cooking for the students*

But the day was yet young. Following the rodeo, everyone met at Eddy's for a great banquet and the bestowing of awards.

As Lloyd said later at the awards dinner, "Everybody was a winner. Everyone did a remarkable job and you were all so much fun to watch. Watching the confidence I saw out there as you climbed behind that wheel and ran the course to a stopwatch made me proud. Pearl, you did a lovely three-point turn. Carmen, you cruised through those pylons as if they weren't there. Ray, you are the straightest backer upper. John, your S turn was excellent and Roger, you backed

into the dock like a pro. And the winning time was 9 minutes 18 seconds, achieved by Lyndon. Remember when it took half an hour? And our grand champion is Pearl who got the most points."

Sixty six family members and friends came to the banquet to celebrate with the graduates of the NRT Training Facility September-October course – Pearl Clarke, Carmen Jobb, John Jobb, Ray Masuskapoe, Lyndon Linklater, Roger Beatty and Nelson Haineault.



*Graduating class of September-October 2006*

Nelson Haineault wasn't at the banquet. He had already left for Alberta and a new job. While everyone was celebrating, Nelson's new qualification was already working for him.

Good luck, NRT Training Facility graduates. You have a great future ahead of you.

In 2006, NRT celebrates not only its graduates but, with the birth of NRT Training Facility, entry into a new arena of self-determination for this aboriginal partnership and northern people. □



## Born To Teach

### Cam Graves makes a smooth transition from driver to Lead Instructor

When the new NRT Training Facility was launched, in La Ronge, on July 4, Cam Graves stepped into a major role that is proving tailor-made for him; that of Lead Instructor.

Cam had already gained extensive experience as an NRT instructor and was able to approach the job of Lead Instructor with confidence. What has been a bonus is the tremendous satisfaction he has found in helping people succeed and reach their goals.

“The best part is to see people come from having no experience to being on the road,

competent and confident. That’s a pretty big accomplishment,” says Cam, with obvious pleasure. “Just recently, we had a lady from Southend come to train here. She’d never driven a car with standard transmission and now she’s driving a Super B through Saskatoon.”

“We take on eight students at a time, all from different places - La Ronge, Southend, Pelican Narrows, all over the north. They come here with a Class 5 licence. They take two weeks in the classroom and six weeks of practical training and they graduate with a fully-fledged, S.G.I. Class 1 licence with an

airbrake endorsement. That’s a huge accomplishment,” says Cam.

“The best addition to the NRT training program,” he says, “is the classroom setting we now have in our training centre. Everything is set up to make learning easy. We have a brake board with a complete air brake system. It’s fully functional, with trailer lights and brake lights. You can actually come up to the board, press the brake pedal and see what happens under the truck. You can have eight people looking at the board at the same time, seeing exactly what’s going on. It’s not so easy having eight guys under a truck.”

“Classroom equipment also includes an overhead projector and a TV monitor. A photocopy machine makes it easy to produce eight practice exams. A fax machine facilitates flow of information and forms to S.G.I. We have a computer and internet-access. There’s a coffee room where students can gather to chat and lockers where they can stow their belongings. There are nice pictures on the walls.”

“Also, we have a large, heated, state-of-the-art shop where we can instruct students in general maintenance and store several trucks overnight. This shop has everything. It gives us a place to do what we need to do. On really cold mornings, we can drive a unit right in and instruct students in an excellent environment. For us, that’s a huge thing,” says Cam. “We spoil the students,” he says, laughing. “And when SGI comes up, we can do the first part of the testing – the circle check – in there, in the warm, instead of having the examiner out in the wind and cold. That’s always impressive.”

“Altogether the new training facility offers a really pleasant and convenient environment that is conducive to learning,” says Cam. “It’s very easy to spend from 8 to 5 here and have everything you need on the spot. It also means we gain maximum classroom time. None is wasted.”

Also, says Cam, it’s a huge advantage having the facility in the north, when the bulk of the training is in the north with 10 to 12 days devoted to learning city driving in the south. “City driving is a challenge,” says

Cam, “but northern driving and driving on gravel is not easy either. Here, our students are immersed in that.”

Teaching excellence shows up in results. The success of the NRT Training Facility is self-evident.

“Some schools do their own testing,” says

Cam. “But S.G.I. does the testing for our students and S.G.I. issues the licence. That’s really good.”

The feedback from S.G.I. has been excellent, he says. “One of the good things an examiner said was ‘It was nice to see a group of students ready to be truck drivers – not just able to pass the test, but ready to go

to work.’ This is the second round and it’s just gone excellently.”

On November 2, students were able to demonstrate and celebrate their skills in a Truck Rodeo, impressing friends and family with all the slick backing up and manoeuvring they’d mastered on the course. It was a fun and festive occasion complete

Photo: Tom Grimshaw



## New Truck Drivin’ Men

### First graduates of NRT Training Facility

The first students of the NRT Training Facility in La Ronge have recently graduated with flying colours. With a 1A licence, they are now firmly on the road to a career in trucking.

The first graduates of the school, in the July-August course, are Henry Bird, Glen Halkett, Solomon Cook, Morley Cook, Jackie Olson, Lorin Ratt and Conrad Fontaine.

All have had an excellent opportunity to maximize the northern driving experience in NRT’s new training facility, centred in the

heart of the north. In their ongoing training, they will continue to gain the specialized knowledge required to work safely and effectively in the northern environment.

We shared the experience of two of these students.

Glen Charles Halkett appreciates the opportunity to choose a new career that he views as secure and rewarding. “I wanted something new and thought this a good choice,” says the former Director of Public Works for the La Ronge Indian Band. Glen

is no stranger to responsibility. In his former position he trained water and sewer systems operators for the Band. He also comes from good NRT roots. His uncle is Senator Myles Venne, the visionary Chief who was a major player in the creation of NRT.

Glen has the same easy-going humour as his uncle. “I always wanted to drive those big trucks. The opportunity was there and I grabbed it,” he says with a smile. “The training went real good and it was a lot of fun. Good guys, good trainers. Now I want to stay with it. I can see having a career with NRT.”

“I like the idea of driving in the north. It’s the only way. I like the country and I know all the roads in the north.”

The biggest challenge, says Glen was city driving, but the instructors were there to help and they made it easy, he says. “We got to work with all types of trucks and all three instructors. That’s what made it so good. The way this training was delivered, there was no way we could fail.”

“The new facility is set up real nice. There’s a great setup for learning about airbrakes. It’s a model that allows you see how it all works and is much easier to understand than when you look at a diagram in a book. Also the school is in a really good location and there are fewer distractions than in the city.”

“I’m driving now with NRT owner operators and company drivers. I’m on my way,” says Glen, with a smile.

For Solomon Cook, the Peter Ballantyne First Nation is home and he is pleased that there are plans for a mine development on the Southend reserve. There is no permit yet, he says, but when that opportunity opens up, he would like to be ready to haul graphite. “It would be nice to get work close to home,

with a splendid banquet. A good time!

Cam believes the training facility will continue to be much in demand and fill an important need in the north.

“There are no limitations to what we can do in this field,” he says, “We have an excellent warehouse and shop and plan to offer

forklift training and warehouse safety training to NRT people, to Cameco and to any other industry people who need this training. We also plan to offer Class 5 training and bus driver training. We don’t have to be limited to truck driver training. We can train in all areas of driving.”

“When I was asked to do this job, I said I’d think about it,” recalls Cam. “I remember calling Lloyd at Brabant and saying, ‘I’ll try it,’ and I’m glad I did. I work with good guys and it’s very rewarding and enjoyable. Each day and at the end of a course, it feels good to see people who have come so far. I definitely wouldn’t want to do anything else.” □



Glen Charles Halkett

but the alternative, working as an NRT driver, is good too. No matter what happens, it’s a win/win,” he says.

In the meantime, Solomon plans to build driving experience with NRT. Formerly a

carpenter and construction worker, he feels this is a good career move.

“This is my first time in a semi and I really enjoy it. It’s been challenging and there are lots of things to learn but, as time goes by, I find I’m putting it altogether. What at first felt difficult now feels O.K. And it’s all been so interesting to learn - double shifting one day, low gear and high gear, plunger and splitting the next - learning how to brake when pulling a load or pulling an empty trailer. When you’ve got a heavy load you have to leave more time to shift and do everything slower.”

“Our trainers did a really good job,” says Solomon, “especially our chief instructor, Cam. All of them made it easy for me. Now I’ve passed everything and I’m ready to drive. I just have to build the experience now.”



Solomon Cook

Congratulations to all of the graduates. Many thanks to the excellent NRT instructors of NRT Training Facility - lead instructor Cam Graves and instructors Randy Mihilewicz and Terry Robbins. □



Raymond & Brayden Young

## A Trip With Papa

### A father and son trip to the McClean Lake Mine

Brayden’s face lights up with pleasure as he recalls his trip to the McClean Lake mine in early July with his ‘Papa’ - known to everyone at NRT as Raymond (Happy) Young. It’s the stuff that young lad’s dreams are made of - riding co-pilot in a semi, calling out the mile markers on the 102 and the 905.

Twelve-year-old Brayden explains that process most clearly and concisely. “Every 10 kilometres, when you come to a mile marker, you have to call out your position on the radio, so that oncoming semis know where you are at all times. You have to do that southbound and northbound. For example, going in to the mine, I called Km30 northbound and everybody else

nearby responded with their location. Then you decide if you are close enough to slow down and go to one side. This makes it safe to pass. It was fun,” he says, with a big smile.

“When Brayden called the markers, drivers in range would ask, ‘Who’s that?’ and I would say, ‘My co-pilot.’ And he was a good co-pilot too,” says Happy, with a wide smile.

“You really have to be paying attention, so that you don’t miss the markers,” adds Brayden. “Sometimes they are covered by bush.”

Brayden, it seems, was paying attention to everything on that trip. “I learned how to tie down the load. That’s really important for safety. I watched. I didn’t actually do it,” he says. “But I did help crank up the dolly legs and guided Papa into the bay when he was backing up.”

“Brayden was helping all the time,” says Happy, with a proud smile. “And it was nice to have the company. Also I found having Brayden along made me doubly aware of safety. If I lost sight of him when I was backing up, for example, I had to check where he was. You can’t assume anything. You always have to think safety in all aspects of trucking and be on constant watch, but when Brayden was there I REALLY thought safety.”

“I learned there’s a lot more to being a driver than driving,” says Brayden. “And Papa’s right. Safety is such a big thing. We stopped every two hours to tie the load down. You’ve got to check, because the roads are bad and the load is bouncing around. Two chains broke on our trip. Also, if you see an animal crossing the road, you have to be able to stop faster than usual, so you can’t be going too fast. You have to be very observant. There’s definitely more to it than driving,” he says sagely.

“Speed will kill on that road. There are places to use speed and places not to. On the northern roads you just have to relax and take it easy. Brayden is learning,” says Happy.

“I really appreciated being given this opportunity to take my son along with me,” he says. “I talked to Glen and he called the

mine site. It was always my responsibility for Brayden’s safety, but everyone looked out for him and made him so welcome. I’d like to especially thank Larry Buckley, who made this happen. He met us at the mine gate and gave Brayden his hardhat and safety glasses to wear. He really made him welcome. I’ve known these guys for years and they are great guys. Also Norm McKay, the Head Chef. He was very good to Brayden.”

“Yeah, the food was awesome!” says Brayden, a sentiment every visitor to the northern mines will second.

Was the mine site what he expected? “The mine was a lot bigger and more spaced out than I’d thought it would be. There’s a 12-mile haul between the mine and the mill. And I thought the food would be connected to the main building, but there was a long road to the restaurant. The warehouse is really big. It’s one big building full of aisles where all the packages and parts are and everything. I didn’t know there would be an

really clean, very technical, very organized and very big. There’s NO garbage on the ground. It’s all beautifully kept. It’s nothing like you would think if you hadn’t been there. I really liked it up there. It was a great adventure.”

Well, that sums it up well.

With the load safely delivered, it was time to head home. The 448km return journey to La Ronge was another great adventure. It took all day and included several fishing stops along the way. At Wathaman River Brayden caught ten fish. “He was catching faster than I could clean them out,” says Happy. At the next stop, they walked half a mile off road to Rainbow Lake – beautiful but not their best fishing feat. At Otter Rapids, Braden fished off the dock and caught two more fish.

It was a tired and happy boy who finally crawled into bed at Duck Lake - 6 more hours from Otter Lake - and fell fast asleep, soon after midnight.

“I love my son. Brayden is not shy and he’s



*Brayden the happy fisherman*

office in the warehouse. I didn’t think a Cat would fit in there either! It’s huge!” says Brayden, duly impressed.

He pauses, and then adds, “My overall impression is that it’s a good place. It’s

not scared to learn. NRT is a great company to work for and I was proud to show him what I do. This was a great trip,” says Happy. “I really want to thank all the great people at NRT and AREVA for making this possible.” □



Photo: Blair Alderton, NITROIMAGE Photography

## Laying Down Rubber

### Owner-Operator Excels on the Racetrack

The engine revs. It's the sound of power - the promise of speed. It's Dwight Twigge's passion.

The immaculate 1970 Dodge Challenger RT moves into the staging lane, lining up alongside its powerful opponents - mighty horsepower with noise output to match - waiting for a heads up from the race official and the wave into the water box. There begins the ritual burnout, preparing for the timed, quarter mile run (just 1320 feet).

Dwight is totally focussed. The brakes are engaged. Dwight's eye is on the tach RPMs as he does a 3-gear burnout 'til the tires are nice and smoking hot. The huge, soft rubber tires turn tacky, laying down a sticky coat of rubber on the track surface to gain optimum

traction on the vital launch where this race will be lost or won.

The mighty car sits poised to spring on the asphalt track and behind the wheel is a happy man. This is the rush. His target time of 11.600 - 11.603 seconds in one quarter of a mile is written on his window and it's his to claim.

The tree lights will flash - yellow, yellow, yellow, green and red. If he goes before green he'll get a red. If he starts when the green comes on, he's lost precious time and the race is over before it starts. He must anticipate the green. Before the green, his mind must be sending the message to go so that his body is already in motion when the light comes on. It's a major feat of mind/body coordination, jumping on the

green, but without getting a red. "You have to take off literally nanoseconds before green, right between the light change," says Dwight. "It's this split second timing that makes or breaks the race."

Dwight aims high and reaches his pinnacle speed at 118 mph (note MILES per hour), covering the quarter mile in 11.600 seconds.

He's running on C12 high-octane fuel, full throttle and doing 2 miles to the gallon. "But what a two miles!" he says.

Considering that the top fuel dragster is starting from a dead stop, it would likely not be a stretch to say that this is the fastest accelerating vehicle on earth. Drag racing, which got its start on the streets and graduated to a safely-run and sanctioned



*Happy man at the wheel!*

motor sport on a race track is arguably one of the most exciting, addictive, heart-stopping track events you will find anywhere.

This is what NRT owner-operator Dwight Twigge lives for. When he's not driving a semi, he is behind the wheel of a dragster, or under it, rebuilding and tuning it to outperform the highest performers on the track.

That passion and the racing community have been an important part of Dwight's life for more than 30 years "Drag racing is my passion. I've been racing my own cars for six years, but I've been going to drag races for years - right back into the '70s, when these cars were new," he says, referring to his Dodge Challenger. Next on the blocks is a '74 Dodge Dart he says. "It's time to take the Challenger off the track." But that's not the end of the relationship. "It's very valuable, but I'll never sell this car," he says with feeling. "There's too much heart and soul in there. I rebuilt the whole power train. But it doesn't matter how many dollars you put into parts, half the horsepower you get is knowing how to tune. I KNOW this car. I know how to squeeze power out of the power train and out of the suspension."

"The excitement and beauty of the muscle car has always been with me and my good solid friends at the track have always been there for me," he says.

"I especially want to mention Ryan Doherty, my good friend who works at Kal Tire. He helped me get into racing and hooked me line and sinker! Ryan is my 'head tuner' I definitely owe a debt of gratitude to Ryan and the rest of the "low-bucks" crew. These

are the guys who believe that it's not spending a lot of money that makes you successful. It's knowing what to do!"

And Dwight's Challenger is not just fast. This is indeed a beautiful car to behold. "It's the original colour on it," says Dwight. It looks perfect. It's not, he says. He's the only one who'd know. And beautiful it will stay. While travelling at breathtaking speed, Dwight draws the line at upping the ante on speed to require a roll bar. I'm not doing that. It's too valuable a car," he says.

Right now, Dwight is racing 100th of second away from a roll bar and he knows he's still in control. "At take-off, you've got to know when to lift your foot off the gas if you're getting into trouble. You've got to listen to your motor. You're not a hero for keeping your foot down. One guy, 200 feet out from the launch, never lifted his foot when he should have, lost traction and did a 360-degree. That puts everyone at risk. If someone spins out in front of you, you lift off and try to avoid him. You've got to be fast and watching the other guy - ears open, eyes open and watching your RPMs - totally tuned in to the track and your car."

It's this kind of car/driver relationship that creates a bond.

Though it's ending its track life, the Challenger will not be retired under a dustsheet. "I don't just race my cars, I drive them. They are part of my everyday life and

this is a super street car," he says. "The guys on the street better beware," he adds, with a boyish smile.

But Dwight is joking. His passion for racing is equalled only by his passion for safety. "Back in the '70s, when these cars were new, kids got away with racing in the streets. But you didn't see or hear of accidents. I remember a time when the cops wouldn't mind a little tire smoke. There were a lot of fast cars in the '70s and kids would rip off from the lights. But they knew the rules. Now you can't do it. There are idiots out there who don't know where to shut it down. There are imports running red lights to win, doing 100 mph on the street. You've got to think a little bit. It's not on."

"At the track, that's the place to do it," says Dwight with feeling. You've got the excitement without the danger. Drag racing, which got its start on the streets, is now a safely run and sanctioned motor sport where the action is on the track, not on the streets. There's a strip with guard rails in between, purpose built."

The racetrack Dwight and hundreds of other drag race fanatics frequent is located 12 miles out on Hwy 11 South at the Saskatchewan International Raceway (SIR). "What better place to test your car than this?" he asks. "You don't even have to be a member. On street legal days you can come and have some fun. You don't have to be



*Dwight with his immaculate 1970 Dodge Challenger RT*



scared to be a 'slow car'. No one cares. The police guys come here to race themselves. You can give it all you've got. Just don't do it on the street. Have fun and stay safe. The car that runs 25 seconds is having just as much fun as you. Any kid who wants to get started, I'll be there for him."

Established in 1966, SIR recently celebrated with a 40th Anniversary Race. "People came from all over North America. There's only one quarter-mile track in Saskatchewan and that's here and it's the best," says Dwight. This sport has staying power!

It's also the fastest and surest way to bridge the generation gap!

"My sons come with me lots. They are 20 and 17. I remember the first time I took my oldest boy," recalls Dwight, with a smile. "I was called into the staging lane. I did the burnout and waited for the countdown. Then we were off. His head snapped back and his hat flew off his head and into the back seat and he said, 'Wow dad, I didn't know it hooks up like that!' He had a grin a mile wide. There just isn't that much out there that can give you that kind of adrenaline rush,"

"I'm totally hooked," says Dwight. At this point, not a great revelation! "What better way to be taken out of your normal driving routine of doing 100km/h on the highway

and 80km/h on gravel. On the weekend I can come out here and give it."

And having been a professional driver for 33 years, driving with NRT for 16, "I know how things can happen in a split second. I always have a game plan, because I am a professional driver and have that training and experience behind me," he says.

Out on that track, after all the hard work in my garage and all the scraped knuckles, I can see what my car can do. And you're up against the best. You always try to do better. No doubt about it, it's my passion." □



## Blazing A Trail To Success

More than 70 semis have followed in the tire tracks of the original seven

They've been riding into the northern sunset for 20 years - the first, original seven who blazed a trail for a trucking company that would become one of the most successful Aboriginal partnerships in the land.

Lloyd LaRocque's was one of the first rigs to roll out of the NRT yard and head for the wild rugged country of Northern Saskatchewan. After 20 years driving under the NRT banner and a total of 30 years

hauling to the mines, this owner-operator is still loving it.

"It's a lot better than running south," says Lloyd. "Two days or a little better and I'm back with my family. And I love the north. It's my home. It's nice and peaceful."

"You can get four seasons in one trip," says Lloyd, with a grin. "So you've got to be prepared for anything. If your truck quits

miles from anywhere, you make a fire and make a cup of tea. No big deal." This is obviously a man totally at home in the wild.

"We've got satellite tracking, which is more than we had in the early days. If you break down, you can send a message and dispatch knows where you are. But you could still wait 12 hours 'til they get to you," he says, laughing. So you just set up camp. No problem."

Thirty-five years on the road, 20 with NRT, and owner-operator George Magee is another man still happy to be there, hauling bulk lime to Key Lake and hauling back ammonium sulphate, a by-product of the milling process at the Key Lake operation.

“Joining the NRT family was a good move, because that’s exactly what it is, he says. It’s like family. All the drivers know each other and run in the same territory.

And that’s territory he loves. “It’s beautiful country. We have bad times and good, but there’s nowhere I’d rather be - even when you’re fighting snowstorms and ice. It’s all in a day’s work,” says totally imperturbable George.

Like Lloyd, George appreciates industry progress over the past 35 years. “You may be travelling alone, but you’re never isolated. With our satellite tracking system, we’re always in touch with dispatch and those guys really look out for us. With the old CB, you were lucky if you could contact a truck 5km away,” he says, laughing.

Though maintenance of northern roads is an ongoing challenge, George has seen a big improvement over the last 20 years, thanks in part, he says, to the major industries like Cameco and Areva that have had an impact on building the infrastructure of the north.

Follow George home to Prince Albert, where he lives with his wife Marlene, surrounded by his four children, their husbands and wives and grandchildren and you’ll find his secret to happiness. His youngest son Ronnie is also one of the original seven and father and son run north together. Beside his house, George has built a home for his rig and Ronnie’s rig, where they can do minor repairs. What a family!

Between father and son and NRT dispatch, Key Lake is kept supplied with lime around the clock, seven days a week. They haul fertilizer back. George and Ronnie travel three hours apart so they don’t have to wait for the other to unload, but they do have time for a break and a chat at the mine. Father and son are best friends and they’ve got spending time together down to a fine art.

“I’m a lifer,” says Ronnie, laughing. “I love the north and every second night I’m home. What can I say? I’m a happy trucker!”

Of his 30 years behind the wheel, Kelvin Kitzul has spent 20 of them in a silver semi.

“NRT is a good company. I like working in the north. Even before NRT, I worked in the north and trucking is what I’ve done all my life,” he says, matter-of-factly.

“My first trip north was in 1978. Back then there were just winter roads. Things have changed and the northern roads are better now. Going east, west and south, though, the changes are not for the better. There is a lot more traffic on those roads that I’m glad I don’t have to contend with on a daily basis. The industry has changed over the years. There are more rules and regulations now and that’s a good thing. It makes our job safer.”

“But,” he adds, “trucking has got tougher. You have to be a good businessman to make it work,” he says.

But, despite the rigors of the industry, NRT is still the best company to work for. A lot of guys have left and come back. What does that tell you?” he asks.

Owner-operator Ross Wilson, who has been trucking for close to 25 years, is one of the men who left and came back. He wasn’t gone for long. “I left NRT in May, 2000 and was back by October of the same year,” he says with a smile. “Trucking is tough. I guess I had to go and find out for myself that it’s better here than anywhere else. NRT is a good company and I’m here to stay.”

A tough, unforgiving climate, long hours, endless gravel roads in a vast wilderness may not be every driver’s cup of tea, but for these men of the north, it’s where they want to be. Those who opt for southern highway routes more often than not return to the roads less travelled, where they find a beauty and camaraderie seldom found elsewhere.

“The guys get along well together,” says Ross. “We run all the way up to the mine together and talk back and forth on the radio. It passes the time. We stop and have coffee - maybe at the Co-op in La Ronge or Bears Camp or Johnston River. This is way better than running the highway and I’m home every night.”

Phil Macala’s first run for NRT in 1986 was hauling general freight to the Cluff Lake side

of the north and he’s been making happy trails there ever since - general freight in, yellowcake out, the winter run, the grocery run, to Rabbit Lake, Key Lake, Cluff Lake, McClean Lake and McArthur River.

“I’ve always enjoyed running north,” says Phil. “I tried the U.S. and the east-west runs, but the north is by far the best. It’s more challenging with the turkey trails we run on, but you can’t beat it. You get to do some fishing and take a break - just 15 or 20 minutes’ break from the monotony of driving and you are less tired, and you’re safer. Actually, the truth is, the only reason I’m still here is for the fishing,” he says, laughing. “And I’m home every second day. That’s worth money to me - coming home.”

There are plenty more fish in those lakes and plenty more miles to go. Phil should be an NRT guy for some years to come!

Owner Operator Rick Sproull has seen a lot of changes in the more than 25 years he has been behind the wheel. “The industry has become very regulated,” he says. “There’s a lot of paperwork, but that’s not a big deal. The regulations are good ones and NRT management is good. We get along well and are properly treated.”

Also, says Rick, NRT training and operating standards are high. “When you’re dealing with big loads and dangerous goods, travelling over dangerous roads, you have to be good. Everyone at NRT is a highly trained and skilled person. Our drivers are some of the best in the industry.”

Each year, a new group of northern trainees becomes a part of the NRT team. To them, this veteran owner operator says, “You’ve got to pound a lot of miles to make a good living as a driver. Pay attention and learn your business. Learn good money management. Learn about trucks and equipment. There’s no better place to learn than at NRT. You will have all the help you need. At NRT, we do it all. We haul it all, in all weather conditions, over the roughest terrain. Once you’ve worked here, you can work anywhere. So learn it all while you have the opportunity.”

With day-one men like these, NRT, in 1986, laid firm foundations.

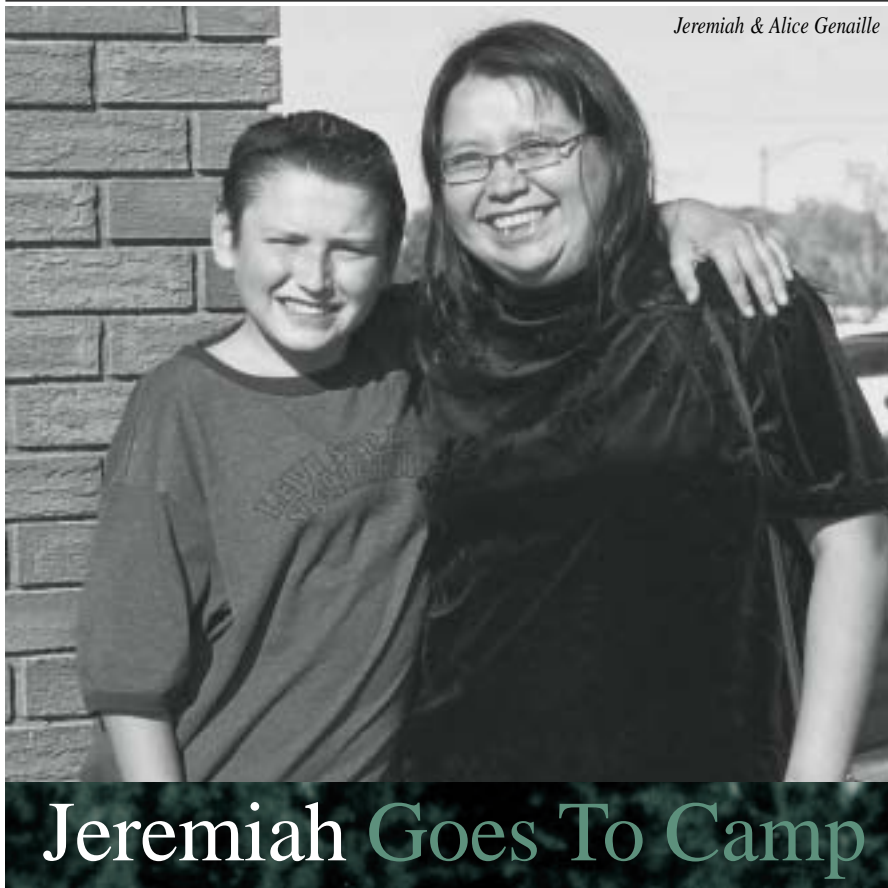


Today, NRT's fleet of over 80 semis are an integral part of the northern landscape – plying their way, 24/7, to and from the northern mines. The familiar NRT logo has become an emblem of pride and ownership.

Over the years, many highly skilled northern NRT operators have followed in the tire tracks of these seven, setting an industry record for safety, dependability and long service. This is a company where northerners come and

northerners stay - in for the long haul.

To the original seven and the other illustrious stars of our fleet, we say 'thank you' for creating a company that is going from strength to strength. □



*Jeremiah & Alice Genaille*

## Jeremiah Goes To Camp

### NRT sponsors a wonderful summer experience

The Co-operative Youth Camp set out to create a summer getaway for Saskatchewan youth, in which they could have fun, make new friends, explore new ideas and experience the rewards of leadership, good communication and teamwork.

For NRT sponsored, 14-year-old Jeremiah Genaille, it seems, the Hannin Creek Camp at Candle Lake, northeast of Prince Albert, met its goals and offered an experience Jeremiah will remember and appreciate for a long time to come.

In talking to Jeremiah, the primary strength

of the program emerged; the creation of an environment where each person took responsibility for self and was enabled to grow and discover potential, within a safe and caring camp family.

Of course that wasn't how Jeremiah expressed it. He talked of being the only kid who smoked at the camp. Did the camp counsellors take the cigarettes away or forbid him to smoke? No. The other kids affectionately nicknamed him "Smokey" and, when he'd finished smoking the cigarettes he'd brought with him, with no

opportunity to purchase more, that was the end of smoking for the remainder of camp time. With positive response and encouragement from fellow campers, Jeremiah decided to quit.

Each day there was fun on tap – canoeing, trips to the beach, volleyball, variety nights, campfires and dances. But, alongside the fun, there was responsibility. The kids were divided into colour groups to perform different tasks throughout the week, among them meal preparation.

Seamlessly built into the fun was a chance for kids to gain perspective on their lives and the world they live in, discover the person they are and more fully understand others. This was a process of self-discovery through interactive play.

There's nothing better than hearing a feisty young teen talk about skill building, leadership and how to work with people; how it's important to take the initiative, set a good example and be a good friend.

With great animation, Jeremiah described one of their treasure hunts where they had to put a puzzle together. As they problem-solved each puzzle piece, they moved on to the next.

"In the last stage, we got to a girl who was pretending to be deaf," explains Jeremiah. "Everyone was asking her questions to try to solve the puzzle and she wouldn't answer. So I grabbed a piece of paper and wrote her a note, asking for the last puzzle piece and she just handed it to me. I raced back and our team had won," said Jeremiah, his face wreathed in smiles. Jeremiah had gained more than a puzzle piece and a win. He'd experienced the satisfaction of caring and thinking enough to find a path to communication.

'Secret Friends' highlighted the pleasure of both giving and receiving.

“My secret friend gave me a beaded bracelet. I gave her chocolate bars and made her a necklace,” said Jeremiah. How did he know it was a “she”? “I’m really good and finding things out,” he says, with a grin. “It was one of the lady counsellors.” Smart kid!

Quick mind and quick reactions too, made Jeremiah Camp Juggling Champion. The award-winning juggler was able to keep four oranges airborne. “It’s easy,” he says, casually. Just then an unsuspecting fly lands

on the table around which we are talking. Jeremiah swats and kills it with the flat of his hand. He’s quick all right!

At the close of each day, campers gathered around the campfire for a last hurrah before bedtime. It was a chance for everyone to laugh, yell, cheer, let loose and just be a kid.

Every kid can do with a confidence boost and, as the week drew to a close, Jeremiah received affirmation and appreciation from

the many comments that appeared on the group poster. “All the kids had nice things to say about Jerry,” says his proud mom, Alice, who is NRT’s Safety and Compliance Coordinator. “There were comments that said they liked having him there. That he was a fun guy to know.”

At the end of the 5-day camp, Jeremiah returned home with great memories and a host of new friends, among them Evan, who lives nearby in Confederation Park



Photo: La Ronge Northerner

## Goals Being Met

### Exciting incentive for perfect school attendance

He shoots. He scores. It’s another action-packed goal that brings the crowd to its feet. Meanwhile, alongside goals being won on the ice, another goal is simultaneously being met in the La Ronge and surrounding schools – motivating kids to aspire to perfect school attendance. It’s a win/win situation that rewards perfect-attendance students with rewards from both the sponsors and the La Ronge Ice Wolves.

Kitsaki Management Limited Partnership, business arm of the Lac La Ronge Indian

Band, and its businesses Northern Resource Trucking and Athabasca Catering, have long supported community projects and lent their sponsorship to initiatives that enhance quality of life for northern people.

The group’s recent Attendance Program is a most ingenious two-pronged plan that maximizes the benefits of its major Ice Wolves sponsorship, while netting many happy young students in the process. The program recognizes perfect school attendance within the Lac La Ronge Indian

Band Schools and local provincial schools with a student reward.

“The idea came to life when Kitsaki’s new CEO Russell Roberts raised the question of how we could get more mileage from our combined \$10,000 sponsorship of the La Ronge Ice Wolves,” explains Mavis Cross, Kitsaki’s Executive Secretary. “So Brandi Bell, the Marketing Director of the Ice Wolves, Russell and myself came up with the Attendance Program.”

and has become a fun biking partner.”

“I’ve called all my friends in Saskatoon and we keep in touch,” says Jeremiah.

“It is experiences like Jeremiah’s that make this camp so rewarding,” says Victoria Morris, Program Officer of Saskatchewan Co-operative Association, who spent a week with Jeremiah at the camp.

“We were so blown away by Jeremiah. We all greatly enjoyed our time with him and

seeing him open up and communicate so well,” she says. “One of his proudest moments was when he was the one to find a way to communicate with the “deaf” girl. Everybody was “wow!” Jeremiah is such an interesting person. And underneath his teen cool, he is SO sweet and such a great guy. We loved having him at camp.”

It seems the feeling is mutual. Asked if he would like to go to camp again, Jeremiah responds with a lovely smile, “You bet. It

was a good time,” he says. “Thanks, NRT”. It was nice that they sponsored me.”

If you are interested in finding out more about the Saskatchewan Co-operative Youth Program or attending one of our camp seminars, contact SCYP:

Ph: (306) 244-3702

Fax: (306) 244-2165

E-mail: victoria.morris@sask.coop

Website: www.sask.coop ☐

It’s a fun and exciting idea. Perfect-attendance students, over the course of the 6-month hockey season, will have an opportunity to win some great sponsor-donated prizes.

To determine the winner, all the names of the perfect attendance students will be placed in a hat. An Ice Wolves player will draw one lucky student’s name during the intermission of a home game, once a month. The thrill and anticipation of hearing a Wolf hero announce, “The Attendance Winner of the Month is \_\_\_\_\_.” at centre ice is all part

of the plan to equate school attendance with a cool reward.

“Russell, Brandi and I wanted to do something that was geared away from hockey and sports achievement, because not all kids play sports, but just about every child goes to school and Kitsaki promotes “School is Cool,” says Mavis.

The attendance draw is, in fact, just a small part of what the Kitsaki/NRT/Athabasca Catering group do for both the Wolves and the students of La Ronge’s Indian Band and

local public schools.

“Each season, 57 season tickets are donated to schools to be given out as awards for different student achievements. We let the schools decide,” says Mavis.

The response has been really good, she says. The kids are excited.

The new Attendance Program looks like a triple win for La Ronge – Ice Wolves pride, students excited about winning and, hopefully, the discovery that perfect attendance really is cool. ☐

## La Ronge Ice Wolves Game Tickets School Distribution - TABLE 2006/2007

### SEPTEMBER 2006

#### 1. GRANDMOTHERS BAY SCHOOL (N-9)

High School Level=2 youth ticket per game  
Elementary Level=3 children tickets per game  
Chaperone=1 adult ticket per game

#### 2. BELLS POINT SCHOOL (K-4)

Elementary Level=7 children tickets per game  
Chaperone=2 adult tickets per game

#### 3. HALL LAKE SCHOOL (N-10)

High School Level=3 youth tickets per game  
Elementary Level=3 children tickets per game  
Chaperone=1 adult ticket per game

#### 4. SENATOR MYLES VENNE SCHOOL (GRADE 5-12)

High School Level=4 youth tickets per game  
Elementary Level=5 children tickets per game  
Chaperone=2 adult tickets per game

#### 5. SUCKER RIVER SCHOOL (N-8)

High School Level=2 youth tickets per game  
Elementary Level=3 children tickets per game  
Chaperone=1 adult ticket per game

#### 6. STANLEY MISSION HIGH SCHOOL (7-12)

Elementary Level (N-6)=5 child tickets per game  
Chaperone=1 adult ticket per game  
High School Level=5 youth tickets per game  
Chaperone=1 adult ticket per game

#### 7. GORDON DENNY COMMUNITY SCHOOL (K-6)

Elementary Level=2 children tickets per game

#### 8. CHURCHILL HIGH SCHOOL (7-12)

High School Level=1 youth ticket per game

#### 9. PRE-CAM ELEMENTARY COMMUNITY SCHOOL (K-6)

Elementary Level=2 children tickets per game

#### 10. CHURCHILL LEARNING

High School Level=1 youth ticket per game

Youth Season Tickets=18

Children Season Tickets=30

Adult Season Tickets=9

= 57 SEASON TICKETS

# A Tribute to the Best of the Best

## NRT's Safety and Long Service Awards Night



For every guy who has ever dreamed of taking his wife out for a gourmet dinner by candlelight, while simultaneously watching the hockey playoffs on TV, the NRT Safety and Long Service Awards Night was the place to be on May 25th.

It was another NRT one-off event, with all the casual, classy, family charm we have come to expect, complete with excellent food, extremely short speeches, peppered with the usual jokes and jabs - and a TV tuned to Anaheim versus Edmonton for the diehard playoff fanatics.

Gathering together a group whose job it is to be on the road 24/7 is a bit of challenge, but suffice it to say that those who were there to represent driver excellence had a good time for everyone.

Dave started a round of jokes about the absent president saying, "I was going to invite Rick Reynolds to this, but he spoke so long at the 20th Anniversary program, I decided to cut him out of this event."

Joking aside, Dave talked about the importance of safety. "Nothing can take a

backseat to that," he said. He thanked all the drivers, present and on the road, for their continuing vigilance.

Glen, heeding Rick's fate, was also a man of few words. He thanked our veteran drivers for their help in sharing their knowledge with younger drivers and teaching them to "extinguish fires in trees and deal with things that pop up". He offered his personal thanks to them for keeping up their end of the stick.

Lloyd, taking his brief turn at the podium, explained a very nice change in the Long Service awards allocation that recognizes drivers who have not worked full time for NRT, but have returned faithfully, for many years, to help with the busy season. "When you add up this seasonal work, they've put in a lot of miles. Few have worked so faithfully for so long," said Lloyd adding, "I'll be getting the eye from Dave soon, so I just want to also thank all those who brought in a satisfactory audit."

Everyone posed for photos, amid the usual fun and laughter and the evening finished with one of Wendy's evocative NRT power point productions of life on the road. □

## SAFE DRIVING AWARDS 2005

### 1 Year

Harold Brand  
Hope Hay  
Ken Joinson  
Vern Maltby  
Ryan Mihilewicz  
Ray Richard  
Mark Ritchie  
Don Sanderson  
Chris Sanderson

### 2 Years

Allan Campbell  
Lyle Clouthier  
Emile Frechette  
Tim Hrenyk

### 3 Years

Don Atkinson  
Rene Gareau

### 4 Years

Cam Graves  
Ken Heyer  
Conrad Lehmond  
Greg Kruger

### 5 Years

Brad Caisse  
Trevor Dumont  
Lionel Heppner  
Larry Smith  
Troy Webb

### 6 Years

Barry Gidluck  
John Harding  
Curtis Hubel  
Dale Peacock  
Chris Thurber

### 7 Years

Gerald Breland,  
Jerome Niekamp

### 8 Years

Stan Porter  
Richard Wilm

### 9 Years

Dave Campbell

### 10 Years

Larry Balon  
Jamie Harbicht  
Robert Kustaski  
Leo Voz

### 11 Years

Lawrence Joanette  
Kelvin Kitzul  
Lawrence Matchee

### 12 Years

Dwight Twigge

### 13 Years

George Magee  
Merv Stacey  
Ross Wilson

### 14 Years

Ron Magee

### 15 Years

Lloyd LaRocque  
Phil Macala

## LONG SERVICE AWARDS

### 5 Years

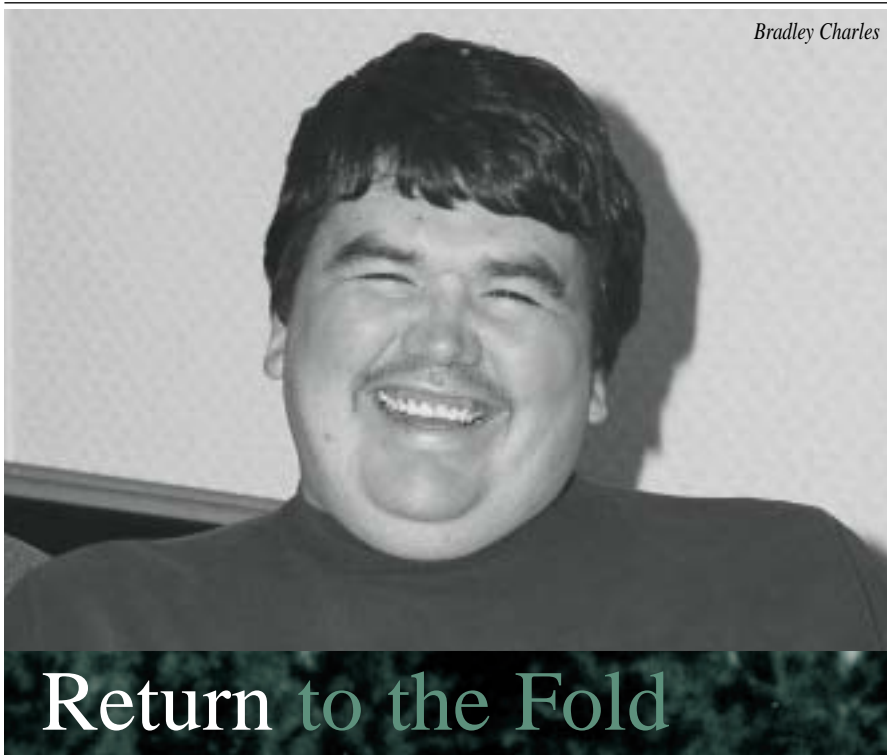
Trevor Dumont  
Cam Graves  
Ken Heyer  
Larry Smith

### 10 Years

Dave Campbell  
Jamie Harbicht

### 15 Years

Merv Stacey  
Dwight Twigge □



Bradley Charles

## Return to the Fold

### NRT-trained student rejoins the fleet

Ten years ago, Bradley Charles joined the NRT training program. He drove for NRT for two years but, with the restless spirit of the young, he moved on with his excellent training to work for other trucking companies. "I was just young and wanted to try other things. But I never wanted to leave

the north," he says. "I got a big thrill from driving big machines all over the north."

But the pull of his first love has brought him back to the NRT fold.

"I talked to some old NRT buddies and thought I'd like to go back to NRT. When I was a little kid, I'd sit on the side of the

highway and watch NRT trucks go by. I wanted to be an NRT driver."

"So I thought I'd come back and give it another try. If I do well, I'll get my own truck. I drove a company truck the first time around. This time I'd like to be an owner operator."

"Maturity brings you to a place where you choose where you want to stay. NRT is a good choice. Also, Glen (Ertell) called and said he'd hire me if I wanted to be a permanent driver. It felt nice to be asked and I get the feeling that I will stay here for the rest of my career."

Now a father, he says, "My kids are all excited that I'm driving for NRT. NRT is quite the big wheel in the north." Cara is 8, Krista is 9 and Tyler, 14, plays for the Wolf Pack in La Ronge and wants to be an NHL hockey player. Co-caring for this little brood is Bradley's wife, Grace McKenzie, who is a TB nurse in Stanley Mission.

"There are a few leased operators I wouldn't mind driving for," says Bradley. "For now, I'll stick to company driver."

"It was definitely beneficial to go through an NRT course again," he says, "It was nice to refresh everything that I will be doing the NRT way."

"I look forward to working with these guys again and doing things with NRT. It's a real family. There are nice people here. My future is looking very bright," he says, with a smile. □



# Scrapbook

## YOUNG MAN ON THE MOVE



Chad Tucker

We are sorry to see Chad Tucker go, but we are happy that NRT has been a valuable stepping-stone in his career. He has accepted a post as Corporate Accountant at the Pacific and Western Bank of Canada Head Office in Saskatoon.

We wish Chad all the best in the future.

## TIME OUT

Hope Hay, Phil Macala and Kelvin Kitzul know how to mix business with pleasure!



## BEWARE OF WENDY THE VAMPY VAMPIRE



Unsuspecting Shawna works away!

## ALICE ROCKS!

Alice Genaille, NRT's Safety and Compliance Coordinator accepted the challenge to drive the training circuit with instructor Terry Robbins. Well done, Alice. Mission accomplished!



## DRIVE SAFELY ON OUR NORTHERN ROADS



Photo: Dale Penock

NRT trucks are a common sight on our northern roads. When you are sharing the road with an NRT truck, you can rest assured that you are in good company. NRT operators are some of the safest drivers on the road. That is their job. They are professionals and drive more miles in a few years than most of us drive in a lifetime.

But they need your consideration - their partners on the road. Here are some facts that will increase your knowledge and understanding of trucks on the road and help keep everyone safe.

### Fast Facts...

- Did you know that fully loaded NRT trucks must drive 10 km per hour below the posted speed limit?
- If an NRT driver receives more than 2 driving infractions in a year or 3 in two years, they will lose their job. Even if the infraction takes place in their own car, on their own time. We take safety seriously.
- Trying to pass a nine axle NRT bulker is like passing about 4 regular vehicles in a row.
- Even the paved shoulders of a road are not designed to handle the weight of a loaded truck and trailer so, when a truck is loaded, the driver can't pull over to let vehicles pass.
- All of our trucks are equipped with satellite tracking, so we know the speed, direction and location of all our trucks at all times.
- Our drivers are doing their best to follow the rules and be safe on the road. Please leave them some space, and pass safely!