



Trail Blazer

May / June 2003



Jim Corman, General Manager of McClean Lake Mine

Above Reproach

Working Together, Cogema and NRT Put Safety First

Saskatchewan's mining industry lives in the limelight, subject to close regulatory and public scrutiny. That is why, says McClean Lake Mine General Manager Jim Corman, the industry must not only operate to the highest standards, but be seen to do so. While a spill could

be of a substance that is totally harmless to the environment, it is perceived only as a spill, without qualification, and that is what people focus on, he says.

Interestingly, it is this need for a squeaky clean image that has made mining industry

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C. Gibson Holdings

WCL
Woodland Cree Logging

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From mining, to milling to transportation, all product must be handled with extreme care

standards some of the most stringent in North America. Collectively, Saskatchewan's mining industry had taken responsibility for taking the utmost care of the environment during production and in decommissioning and site reclamation at the end of a mine's useful life. The northern landscape is left in the pristine condition in which it was found.

In all its endeavours, from mining, to milling to transportation, all product must be handled with extreme care.

As a primary carrier for the mining industry, NRT must share that responsibility. "The relationship between NRT and ourselves is very close," says Jim. "In the event of an incident, Cogema is responsible. There is no differentiation between Cogema and NRT. So the onus is on us to make sure that every care is taken."

"NRT has done a great job," he says, "But we must remain vigilant. It comes down to every individual in the process taking responsibility for doing a job that is above reproach. We call it the Internal Responsibility System. A company can put a program in place, but only the operator can fully control what he is doing. It comes right back to the individual to carry out the task so that the desired end is achieved. In this business there is no room for shortcuts and a

momentary lapse of judgment can have major consequences."

Jim has, since assuming the position of mine manager last October, worked towards enhancing communication between NRT and Cogema personnel. Monthly meetings bring together everyone involved to discuss site-related issues. It's a very positive and proactive approach, he says.

Jim is also in the process of establishing a Training and Orientation Program. "Eight years ago, at startup, we gave NRT an orientation course, but people change and details can be lost in routine, so we will be rolling out a refresher orientation in Saskatoon for all operators and keeping a closer eye on routine procedures. I think it's important. It's natural that as confidence grows in the operators, we tend to get away from watch-dogging, but there is no such thing as being too careful. Putting back the checks and measures and follow ups is a proactive and positive step."

"When there have been issues," says Jim. "Lloyd Driedger has come to site at the drop of a hat to investigate and, typically, we're happy with the corrective measures."

"The bottom line is that a clean slate for NRT drivers is a clean slate for us and that goes far towards regulator confidence and

public confidence. NRT drivers do a very important job and we rely on them to maintain the integrity of our operation.

In fact, the entire relationship is one of trust and reliance on the professionalism of NRT drivers, says Jim. "They provide all the essential services and products to keep our operation running; everything from food and fresh produce to reagents for the mill process, fuel for trucks, backup generators, everything. NRT supplies us with the fundamentals and building blocks of our operation."

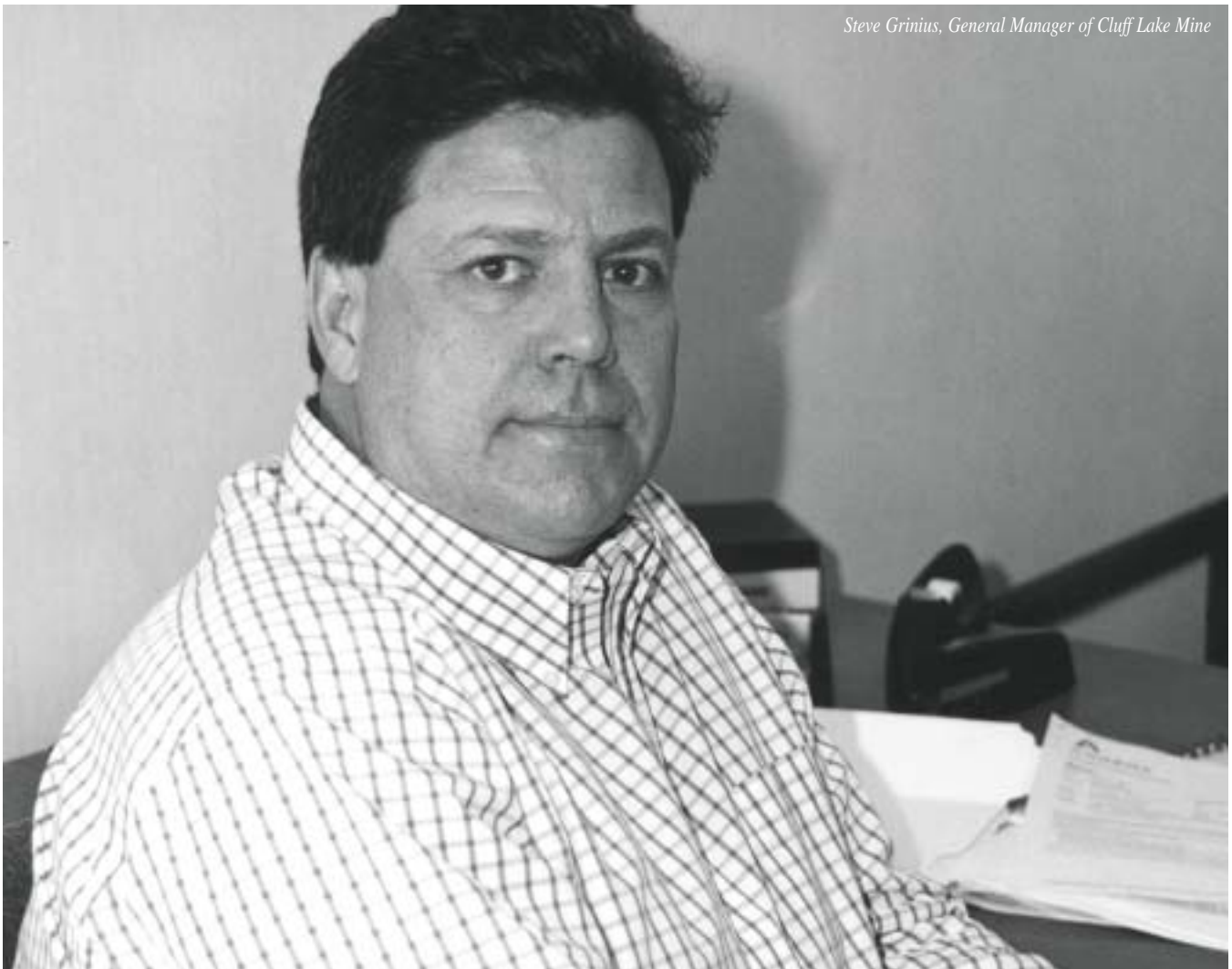
Timeliness is critical, he says. "We don't have excess capacity on site to store product. At certain levels, we reorder and we don't leave ourselves with much cushion. But we know that we are able to maintain that lower inventory because NRT has always been excellent at supplying product in a timely manner. In winter, from a personal and operational aspect, a reliable supply of propane is critical. We go through huge amounts of propane during those months and NRT has always been there and on time."

With a projected life of 40 years, our northern drivers will be travelling to the McClean Lake mine site for a long time to come, working alongside Cogema to contribute much to the economy of the north in a safe and productive way. □



It comes right back to the individual to carry out the task so that the desired end is achieved

Steve Grinius, General Manager of Cluff Lake Mine



Lifeline To An Industry

A Thank You From Cluff To The Drivers of NRT

Trucking is, quite literally, a lifeline to our business, agrees Steven Grinius, General Manager of Cogema Resource's Cluff Lake mine.

"There is no question that, without the excellent job NRT drivers do, we could not survive as a remote community. It's not just the production aspect. It's the whole living aspect and our dependence on a reliable and timely supply of fuel, food and all the things

we need to live here in comfort. Since I've been here, NRT has always come through with deliveries, despite the fact that the road is not always in the best shape and it has been very cold this year. It's the coming through thick and thin that I appreciate and that we rely on."

"The other thing for us that is very important is safety and we appreciate the attitude to safety that NRT drivers have. Cluff Lake

was awarded the John T. Ryan 2002 Award for Safety. To reach such standards, it is essential that contractors share our goals and NRT drivers do.

"Over the years," says Steve, "NRT has done a wonderful job. It's not a matter of us and them. We work together and that makes for a good working relationship. That's not to say we never have problems. The key is finding a solution. With Glen Ertell there, things get

dealt with. If there's a problem, we don't let it build up. We get communication going, talk about it and resolve it."

Most of NRT's drivers who come to Cluff Lake are northerners. They know this wild country and operate well in it, in all the extremes of temperature. We are very strong supporters of our northern work force and we appreciate them.

In 2004, with the depletion of economical ore reserves, Cluff Lake's stellar 20-year production life will come to an end. Over that time the mine and mill have produced 62 million pounds of yellow cake and will finish with a glory run - a record 4 million plus pounds of product.

Decommissioning will begin in 2004 and continue for at least two more years. Although NRT drivers will not be hauling the usual supplies that have fed the mill, they will be providing essential services for some time yet, says Steve.

"As General Manager, I would like to thank the drivers of NRT for supplying everything we have needed over all those years. I'm sure I speak for everyone at Cluff Lake as well. It's been good to work with such a reliable group of men." □



Last Load of Yellow cake from Cluff Lake
Left to right: Wade Petrishen, Rod Ryzak, Brad Caisse, Jim Travis



Man On The Job

There for our drivers for 23 years

"Who is this story for? CNN?" asks Rod Gardner, and you know you're talking to a northerner, with that unique dry humour that makes the north go round.

"Almost as good," I say, with a smile. "NRT Trail Blazer. I hear you're the man who looks after our drivers at the mine site."

"I've looked after warehouse and freight and assisted many NRT drivers on site," says Rod, for 23 years Cluff Lake's Services General Foreman. "If they're in trouble, I help them out. If they're stuck I pull them out. Generally, when they report to the warehouse, I direct them to the fuel tank they have to go to. But the guys know that if they need help, say if a hose broke or anything went wrong, I'm there for them. I'm a

northerner from Ile a la Crosse. It's what we do for each other."

"And NRT drivers have certainly come through for us," says Rod. "We haven't suffered over the last 23 years. The food has always been there, even when it's not been easy to get here. They always seem to make it through and I don't believe we've ever had a really serious incident."

That has a lot to do with NRT's training program, he says. "NRT's done a terrific job with that. There's no doubt those guys are well trained. And we have always worked very closely together to keep things running smoothly. Teddy Ratt, Maurice Kyplain, Phil Macala, Robert Giroux, Harvey Moosehunter, Brad Caisse, Eli Roy (we call

Rod Gardner, Cluff Lake's Services General Foreman



him Leeboy) - all on this run, all good drivers. I'm sure I've missed some. Oh yes and there was Happy, who works for Cameco now. And we sure got to know Roger well over the years."

"Of course," says Rod, "I grew up with a lot of those drivers. Brad, Maurice and Teddy are from Ile a la Crosse. Eli is from Beauval. Some of the drivers that were trained by NRT have gone on to other jobs and that's O.K. with NRT. NRT's mandate is to give northerners the training and opportunity for employment. It's a good attitude."

"Cogema is good to northern people too," says Rod. "I've been treated very well and Cogema has given NRT much help to succeed. NRT and Cogema. It's a good relationship. We work together, hand in hand." □

Ron Dale, heading up WCL's NRT management team



Strong Roots, Excellent Growth

WCL Exceeds Expectations

In the world of northern trade and commerce, history, it seems, is repeating itself. In 2001, a second generation aboriginal business was born and is making its parent proud.

Just as Trimac Transportation, in 1986, nurtured NRT in its infancy, enabling it to rapidly become a strong, vibrant company, rooted in good management practices, so now



Ron divides his time between the NRT office and the WCL site

NRT is parenting Woodland Cree Logging(WCL), a partnership of Woodland Cree Resources, NRT and Trimac.

Similarly, alongside experienced NRT management, the strength of WCL can be found in its northern work force; men who know wood and are at home in the forest.

With NRT vice-president Dave McIlmoyl at the helm, WCL's hands-on NRT management team is being headed up by Ron Dale. Northerner Randy Nelson, Field Operations Supervisor, keeps the on-site operation running like a well-oiled machine.

The apple, as they say, doesn't fall too far from the tree. In its first full year of operation WCL has exceeded all expectations.

"Due to circumstances beyond our control, we started two months late and still finished our contract on time, delivering a total of 110,000 cu meters of lumber to the mills; 20,000 cu meters more than target.," says Dave. "We've made a good start."

Weyerhaeuser agrees and has demonstrated its faith in WCL's ability in its allocation of 200,000 cu meters for the coming season.

Ron Dale has been lining up the additional equipment that will be needed for an expanded operation. With reclamation to do, the crawler and loader are still at work, putting back the underbrush that creates a forest floor for small creatures and stabilizes the ecosystem. NRT mechanics Steven Smith and Dale Gibb, along with Don Seegerts, have, during operations downtime, been working on the running list of repairs that build up over the year and carrying out the routine 5000-hour inspections. By start-up, all equipment will be in top shape and ready to go.

Weather permitting, on May 20, the forest will once again be a busy place. Startup will begin back in the Bird Lake area, so there should be minimum down-time. Hank Gondek, our crawler operator and Terry Sarabin, operating the loader, won't get much of a break this year," says Ron.

"Although rain can stop the haul, we can usually continue harvesting. And looking on the bright side, any rain will lessen the threat of fire," says Ron.

A larger allocation means a larger operation

and a new, bigger camp facility. WCL will double its work force and go from one line to two lines. "That will be a learning experience for a lot of people, but I'm sure we can handle it with Randy Nelson and Danny Ross on the job. Both have been small contractors in the industry and know how to get things done," says Ron.

For Randy, Danny and WCL, this is an ideal alliance. Randy and Danny bring their expertise to WCL and have agreed to sell their allotment to the company. Throwing in their lot with WCL provides the two men with a greater measure of security and support. Moreover, having grown up together in the Montreal Lake area and helped each other out as contractors, they know they can work well together.

As the new season approaches, Ron and Weyerhaeuser Contract Administrator Gerald Sayese are meeting with Randy to plan and discuss operations expectations.

"All of these things are pluses," says Ron, "and that's good because this next season is going to be a further learning experience. But I have every confidence that, with the team we have, we will be successful. We have a strong work force in the field supported by solid administration. Marianne(Thomas) and I work well together. At the outset of this venture, we set up the camp and kept things on an even keel all year, even though so many aspects were new and different. It's quite a stretch to go from trucking for the mining industry to logging. But we're doing it."

As Marianne says, "The difficult we do immediately. The impossible takes a little longer."

While Ron divides his time between the NRT office and the WCL site, Marianne holds the fort at the office and takes care of ongoing administration. Randy is working on getting additional operators for the second line. "It takes time to find good people. We want the best," says Ron.

"Without doubt this venture is a challenge," says Ron. "And I'm enjoying it. It's very exciting. I have no doubt that we can meet the demands of higher production. Everyone is ready to help. NRT is a success and that mind set seems to carry on into everything

we do. In '94, we went from a handful of trucks to a large fleet overnight and did what had to be done. With this venture too, we're off to a good start and we'll build on that. Building on the NRT experience, with the people we have now, we can do almost anything."

"I have to say that Weyerhaeuser has been a

big part of our success to date. Gerald Sayese has been very patient with us and we've learned a lot. He has always been free with information and ready to help us out of any difficult spots."

At the end of last season, WCL got a good evaluation from Weyerhaeuser and everyone can take credit for that, says Ron. "The crew

worked really hard and put in extra hours to make sure we made our allotment. We can't do without them."

No doubt, he says, there will be some growing pains as WCL expands. "But we'll work through them. We always have," says Ron, with the confident smile of experience. □



Len Chevrier (alias Chevy) checks the ice thickness on the lake

Follow The Winter Ice Road

A Busy Season For NRT Drivers

This year, the 63 kilometer winter road to Claude Resources' Seabea gold mine was paved, early in the season, with more than 30 inches of ice and very little snow -

quite literally, a measure of its success.

Without the expense of major snow removal, road maintenance dollars went into improving portages and NRT drivers enjoyed

a bumper year of good driving, making about 360 crossings.

January to March is a busy time. The winter road facilitates the annual resupply of



At Seabea Gold Mine, getting ready to unload rock truck at 40 below

consumables that would otherwise be difficult to transport to this fly-in community. Huge amounts of fuel are required for underground operations.

With a work force of 140 at Seabea, living in permanent camp facilities, everyday living requirements are also sizable and the winter road offers the only opportunity to stock up on non-perishables. For the rest of the year, when Seabea is accessible only by air, it requires up to three flights a day out of

La Ronge to keep the site serviced.

“Once the winter road is built, Seabea relies on NRT to haul 90 percent of everything they need, every day, until the end of the ice road season,” says NRT Operations Manager, Glen Ertell. “This year, that translated into groceries, general freight, extra bunk houses, chemicals, heavy equipment and 1.4 million liters of propane, and also 2 million liters of fuel out of the Gibson facility in La Ronge. We’ve had

more loads this year than the last couple of years. There’s been an increase in production and a bit of expansion to the underground mine, and that has required extra equipment and building materials.”

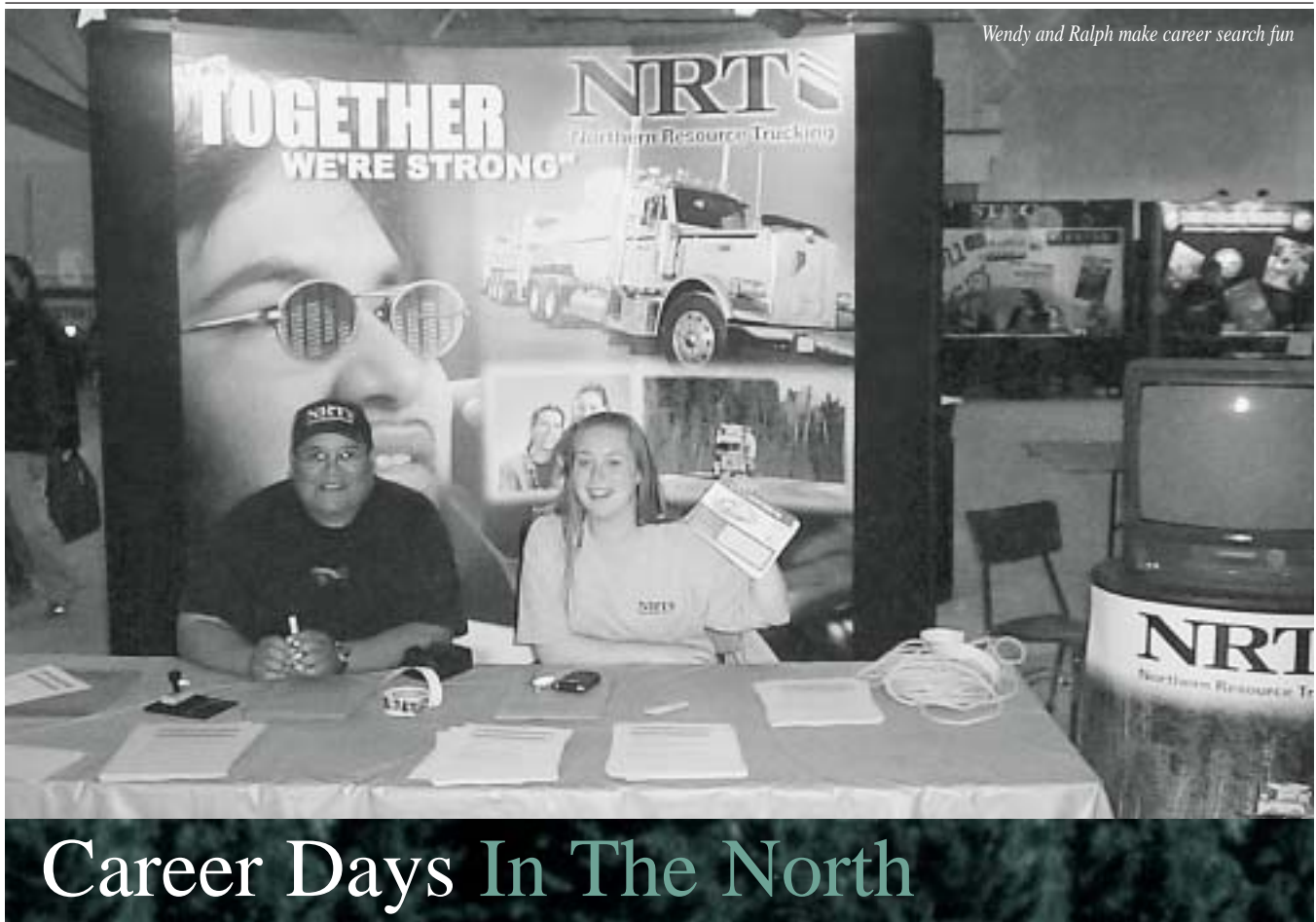
“We got off to an earlier start than usual and sent in the first load with a tandem truck on January 6,” says Glen.

“This year, the road was the best it’s ever been and putting dollars into road improvements speeded up some of the trips,” says Glen. “Added to that, we’ve enjoyed a longer season than usual. Under normal winter conditions, operators have a permit to have the ice road open until March 31. This year the mine site applied for and was granted an extension to April 10. That extension confirms that the insurance in place is still good,” he explains.

“Today, the last deck load of freight goes in and that’s done,” says Glen on April 7th. “The last load of propane will be delivered tomorrow. Then it’s pretty much all wrapped up,” he says with satisfaction. “All of our guys, dispatch and drivers, have done a hell of a job and deserve a big thanks for getting things done safely and efficiently.” □



Lake Athabasca at the end of the dirt coming from Stony Rapids



Wendy and Ralph make career search fun

Career Days In The North

Opening up the future for the work force of tomorrow

On May 4th, our NRT ambassadors, Wendy Featherstone and Ralph Settee, headed north to spread the news about exciting career opportunities in the transportation industry.

With their easy-going, approachable style, ready answers for all the questions bright young minds could dream up and a very cute ‘footprints’ stamp handout, the NRT booth, once again, proved a popular one.

“Ile a la Crosse was busier than past years and La Ronge has always been well attended, so traffic was pretty steady throughout both days,” says Wendy. “This year there were a lot of students asking about our training program.”

“Yes, I found, this year, more kids seemed interested in what they were going to do

after high school. More kids want to graduate,” agrees Ralph, with a smile. “For me, when you ask what was great about this year’s career days, well, that’s way up there. There used to be just a few students who were seriously interested. A lot didn’t care. But things are changing.”

The future of young northerners is a subject close to Ralph’s heart. Ralph, who grew up in Cumberland House, can speak from experience on the opportunities NRT can offer. In seven years, he has moved from driver trainee, to company driver to a junior management position as Traffic Supervisor.

“Some of the kids who saw me here at Career Days when they were in the lower grades are in high school now, and they remember me. They see that I’ve been here

for a while and that things work out if you stick to a job. I give them my card and ask them to call or e-mail me if they are coming to Saskatoon so we can meet up. I like being there for them.”

All in all, there is a lot of support for northern students. Both Wendy and Ralph agree that the positive attitude of the communities contributes much to the success of the annual Career Symposium. The private and public sector professionals who come to share their knowledge and experience with students are given a warm welcome.

“The whole community helped out, preparing for the event and providing meals,” says Ralph. “Max Morin, The Mayor of Ile a la Crosse, came and spoke to

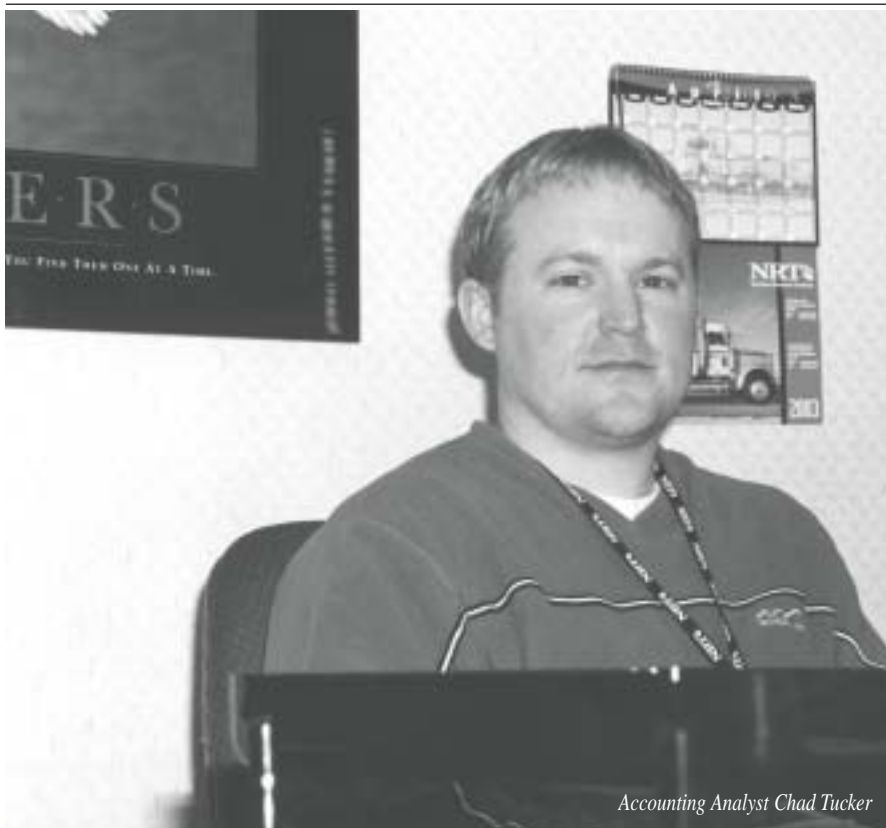
us. He talked about the history of the town and created a real feeling of community. It felt like everybody was pulling in the same direction. They want their kids to succeed. Teachers brought kids to Ile a la Crosse from Buffalo Narrows and La Loche.”

“It was the same in La Ronge,” says Wendy. “On Wednesday evening, the town hosted a steak dinner at the Uniplex where the Symposium was being held. It was wonderful.”

“Actually, Tuesday evening was pretty good too,” she says. “Corporal Brian Innes and Ralph golfed 9-holes on La Ronge’s beautiful Eagle Point golf course. I went along for the walk. It’s pretty tough doing these symposiums,” says Wendy, with that familiar huge smile. □



Ralph with a new friend - Conservation Team's canine companion



Accounting Analyst Chad Tucker

Helping Mind The Shop

An Expanded Role For Accounting

For quite some time, as NRT grew and flourished, Administration Manager Robert Cremers single-handedly managed the growing workload. Now, happily, he has a most able assistant in Accounting Analyst Chad Tucker. For a little over five months, Chad, a University of Saskatchewan graduate and a hair's breadth from CGA (Certified General Accountant) status, has been NRT's Senior Accounting Clerk. Working alongside Robert, Chad handles all the accounting for WCL and also takes care of company inventory accounting. Rounding out the accounting team and contributing much to the smooth running of this department are Accounting Clerk Donna Bartholomew and Driver Pay Clerk Shawna Merriman.

“WCL is looking good. There's lots of opportunity there,” says Chad. “This really is a great job. There's so much variety and things are changing every day, which makes my job a lot more enjoyable.”

Dealing with accounts payable, accounts receivable and inventories, Chad is constantly monitoring the financial health of the company. “Robert is the main person, but I am very involved in all aspects,” he says. “NRT is the perfect size, especially when one is new to an organization. If I'd

joined a much larger company, I would have been limited to one aspect of that operation. With NRT I can grow with the company as a whole.”

Chad also enjoys the occasional NRT field trip. “It’s very interesting to go out to the logging site. It gives me a chance to see the

actual operation that, as a rule, I only see on paper.”

As a newcomer to NRT, he has also been most interested in the makeup of the partnership and the strong north south relationship. Also, he says, the way in which NRT is involved in the building of WCL is

so positive. “It’s a good combination of companies working together,”

“Robert is really good to work with. I’ve learned a lot and continue to do so. I feel very fortunate,” says Chad.

The feeling is mutual! □



NRT pioneered 9-axles in the north

Testing The 9-Axle Rig For Logging

NRT takes experience of high gross equipment to WCL

In the mid 1980s, NRT’s highly trained drivers were the first to pull high gross, 9-axle trains on northern roads and continued to develop trailers that increased payloads from 54,500 kgs to 62,500 kgs to 72,500 kgs. At that time, NRT worked with the

Department of Highways, testing heavy equipment running on CTI (Central Tire Inflation) to monitor the reduction of high gross vehicle impact on the roads.

Taking this experience into the logging industry, WCL will test a 9-axle King B trailer with CTI.

“We’ve just ordered a truck to pull Weyerhaeuser’s King B,” says Dave. “It’s good that both Highways and Weyerhaeuser have confidence in what we do. The 9-axle rig will certainly maximize payload and enhance the operation.” □

Scrapbook



Congratulations Joan!

She's the calm, kind woman with the lovely smile who greets you when you enter the NRT Head Office. She's the pleasant voice on the other end of the line when you call. In late July Joan Sanderson will also be the mother of a new baby. Happy motherhood Joan, from everyone at NRT.



Way Beyond The Call!

Can you imagine it? Tim Mansuy's mum washed and line dried all these smelly shirts. Are our NRT hockey heroes spoiled or what?

Birthday Greetings

February: Clarence Bryant, Lionel Heppner, Myles Keighley, Lawrence Matchee, Ron Milligan, Vincent Mitchell, Harvey Moosehunter, Jerome Niekamp, Bryan Otte, Stanley Porter, Terry Sarabin, Rick Sproull, Richard Wilm,

March: Brad Caisse, Leo Gaudet, Curtis Hubel, Edward Sanderson, Chad Tucker, Earl Turner.

April: Jonathon Bird, Gerard Hannotte, Robert Kustaski, Ron Magee, Timothy Mansuy, Perry Medynski, Randy Nelson, Neil Ross, Don Sanderson, Ed Schappert, Mervin Stacey, Leo Voz.

May: Don Bilinski, Leonard Chevrier, Les Driedger, Lloyd Driedger, Tim Frook, Robert Giroux, Terrence Grams, Andrew Lamontagne, Conrad Lemond, Dave McIlmoyl, Ralph Settee, Robin Stomp, Chris Thurber, Ben Wald.



Words To Live By...

"Loading errors are mobile terrors"

"Safety conscious drivers get all the brakes"

"One final check may save a wreck"

"Patience is a virtue. Safety is a must."

"Good visibility is no accident."

"Pave the road to safety with common sense"

"Play it safe and leave enough space."

"Let's not meet by accident!"

"Only a secure load is one for the road."