



Trail Blazer

November/December 2005

*"It felt like you were driving right into the lake."
NRT Owner Operator Dwight Twigg*



Sea of Heartbreak!

Summer rains wreak havoc on northern roads

It never rains but it pours. This was certainly a fitting saying in the north, this year.

As if a record snowfall and swift spring melt that rendered roads impassable were not enough to contend with, the elements, after a brief lull, hit once more with a

vengeance. Summer's unrelenting, torrential rains created washouts that left drivers, again, on the wrong side of a blocked highway.

"Highway 905, from km 0 to km 80 was the worst hit area for flooding, with traffic held up for six days," says Operations



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Manager Glen Ertell, "There were a couple of other trouble spots, such as on Highway 102, which were not as long lasting and traffic was down for just a short time," he says.

So what could the drivers do? "They waited," says Glen, with a wry smile. "We had six NRT rigs, on highway 905, going nowhere."

"It was a long old wait," says NRT Owner Operator Dwight Twigge. "When I got there, there were already three guys lined up and three others came after me; all NRT except a Beebe and an equipment hauler. We were there for 6 days in all and it was a situation we had to make the best of. We did a lot of sleeping and a lot of yapping," he says, laughing.

laughed a lot. That was the good part of it. You work together and you know people for years, but you don't really know them. We got to know each other real well. It was quite fun," he says, laughing.

Meanwhile, the Department of Highways, not fully realizing how big an area had been encompassed by the

"By now we were getting a bit hungry," he says. "We ate what little we had between us and drank lots of coffee. But we were starting to wonder where our next meal would come from."

"So," says Dwight, "it was a welcome sight when Irvin from Davin Lake Lodge rode up in the Highways boys' truck and said, 'You guys come to our place.' The Highways crew and Irvin had managed to walk over the culverts and through the washouts and scale the bank at their end. So we went with them to the lodge. The water had gone down some, so getting up onto the bank wasn't really dangerous," he says.

"It's a good thing the lodge was



True men of the north, they were all capable of fishing and hunting for food, but the floods made the roadside land impassable. Fortunately, however, the Beebe truck was hauling a load of fish from Wollaston to Winnipeg. "We managed to have one feed before the fish went bad," says Dwight. "We made a camp fire and cooked the fish in a tinfoil container that one of the guys had. It was half the size of a bread pan, but we made do. We sat around the campfire, we drank a lot of coffee, we talked a lot and we

storm, believed that water levels would subside within a couple of days, says Glen. It didn't happen.

Finally, on the second day, the Highways crew came out, from the north, to check the road. The road washed out behind them.

"So they were stuck between the washouts and they were no good to anyone," says Dwight. "They stayed further north, down the road from us, however, and told us what they could until such times as they were able to get equipment across."

close by. Diana and Irvin looked after us really well. We had a shower. They put on a great meal and we spent the night at the lodge. It was real good!" he says, with feeling.

But the guys felt they should get back to their trucks, says Dwight, so back they went and slept in their trucks for another two nights.

"While we'd been gone, Highways had been there with a helicopter and left some sandwiches in the refrigerated van. So those were there when we got back. We also went



Culverts were washed out

back to the lodge for another meal, but we didn't sleep there again. We wanted to stay put with our trucks and be ready to roll out as soon as the road was fixed," says Dwight.

The Department of Highways, realizing the water was not going anywhere in a hurry, moved into high gear. It hired northern contractors who zeroed in on the trouble spots with gravel trucks, cats and loaders and began hauling gravel to raise the grades. They replaced washed-out culverts and installed some new ones, says Glen.

But, once on the move, it was not the end of the adventure for our intrepid truckers. "It's something you don't see too often," says Dwight, reliving the moment. "In one area, the lake went right over the road and we had to take it real slow. The Highways people were around to keep an eye on us, but I had

a real sense of 'I shouldn't be here. I shouldn't be doing this'. It felt like you were driving right into the lake. You just do the best you can and hope for the best," he says.

"All in all, it was an amazing experience. Everybody shared the same idea of it. There were all good people there and we had a lot of laughs," says Dwight.

"Huge recognition must be given to NRT drivers Chris Thurber, Ken Joinson, Dwight Twigge, Derek Hlewka and Glenn Huber (as well as Wendel Hiltz, driving for Beebe and Ray, an equipment hauler), for their amazing patience and level-headed handling of less-than-ideal circumstances," says Glen. "Also to Brian Keyes, who was stuck further north."

"A big thank you must also go to Diana and Irvin, from both NRT management and the drivers. Davin Lake Lodge was literally a port in a storm. The folk there were very hospitable," he says.

"This has been a most unusual year in the north," adds Glen. "The last rainstorm of this magnitude was, I believe, in 1973."

Glen happens to have firsthand knowledge of that event, because he was working on the highways crew that summer, when the rainstorm took out bridges and the Hanson Lake Road was closed for two months.

Hopefully, it will be at least another 32 years before our long-suffering drivers, traffic supervisors and customers have to deal with the fallout of such a wet and troublesome year. □



We Are The Champions

NRT 2004 Safety and Long Service Awards Night

*(L to R) Back Row: Phil Croisietiere, Lloyd Driedger, Rick Reynolds, Dave McIlmoyl, Lawrence Matchee, Kelvin Kitzul, Harold Brand, Andy Lamontagne, Dave Campbell, Kevin Bannerman, Lawrence Joannette, Emile Frechette, Richard Wilm, Ron Milligan, Tom Grimsdale
Middle Row: Alice Genaille, Marianne Thomas, Wendy Featherstone, George Magee, Ron Magee
Front Row: Allan Rebalkan, Tyson Carriere, Glen Ertell, Rick Sproull, Glenn McKinney, Chris Sanderson, Allan Campbell*

Awards night was a lot of fun this year. Good food, good company and some great in-house entertainment, as the life of the NRT operator was transferred to the big screen.

Wendy Featherstone, NRT's Executive Assistant and closet film maker, stepped on the gas to create an action presentation, jam-packed with NRT memories.

Beautiful rigs on northern roads flashed across the screen to the stirring accompaniment of Convoy by C.W. McCall.

(sing along)

"Cause we got a mighty convoy rockin' thru the night

Yeah, we got a mighty convoy, ain't she a beautiful sight

That about sums it up! Particularly in 2004. And then - LeAnn Rimes, tragic as only a Country singer can be, pleaded, "Why can't you be blue over me?"

Well, those graphic shots of sad, hurt semis



2004 Champions of the convoy

were enough to make any grown man cry. So why were you guys laughing?

After Wendy had had her bit of fun, she finished the power point presentation with a lovely array of gleaming, bells-and-whistles trucks while Queen's Freddy Mercury belted out, "We are the Champions"

And it's true. In 2004, NRT operators defended, hands-down, their exceptional safety record. President Rick Reynolds was duly impressed and thanked them for, once more, exceeding all expectations and ranking at the forefront of the industry. He was actually quite emotional, for an engineer!

It was a good time; another good year.

Here are the 2004 Champions ...

SAFE DRIVING AWARDS

1 YEAR

Conrad Borycki
Dwayne Carriere
Tyson Carriere
Lyle Clouthier
Darren Evans
Emile Frechette
Tom Grimsdale
Tim Hrenyk
Maurice Kyplain
Perry Scherle

2 YEARS

Donavon Atkinson
Clarence Bryant
Rene Gareau

3 YEARS

Cameron Grewcock
Kenneth Heyer
Conrad Lehmond

4 YEARS

Brad Caisse
Trevor Dumont
Tim Frook
Lionel Heppner
Larry Smith
Troy Webb

5 YEARS

Barry Gidluck
John Harding
Curtis Hubel
Dean Oscienny
Chris Thurber
Dale Peacock

6 YEARS

Jerome Niekamp
Gerald Breland

7 YEARS

Ronald Milligan
Stan Porter
Richard Wilm

8 YEARS

Dave Campbell

9 YEARS

Larry Balon
Jamie Harbicht
Robert Kustaski
Andy Lamontagne
Edward Schappert
Leo Voz

10 YEARS

Lawrence Joannette
Kelvin Kitzul
Lawrence Matchee

11 YEARS

Dwight Twigge

12 YEARS

Merv Stacey
Ross Wilson

13 YEARS

Ron Magee

14 YEARS

Lloyd LaRocque
Phil Macala

LONG SERVICE AWARDS

5 YEARS

Brad Caisse
Wendy Featherstone
Tim Frook
Troy Webb

10 YEARS

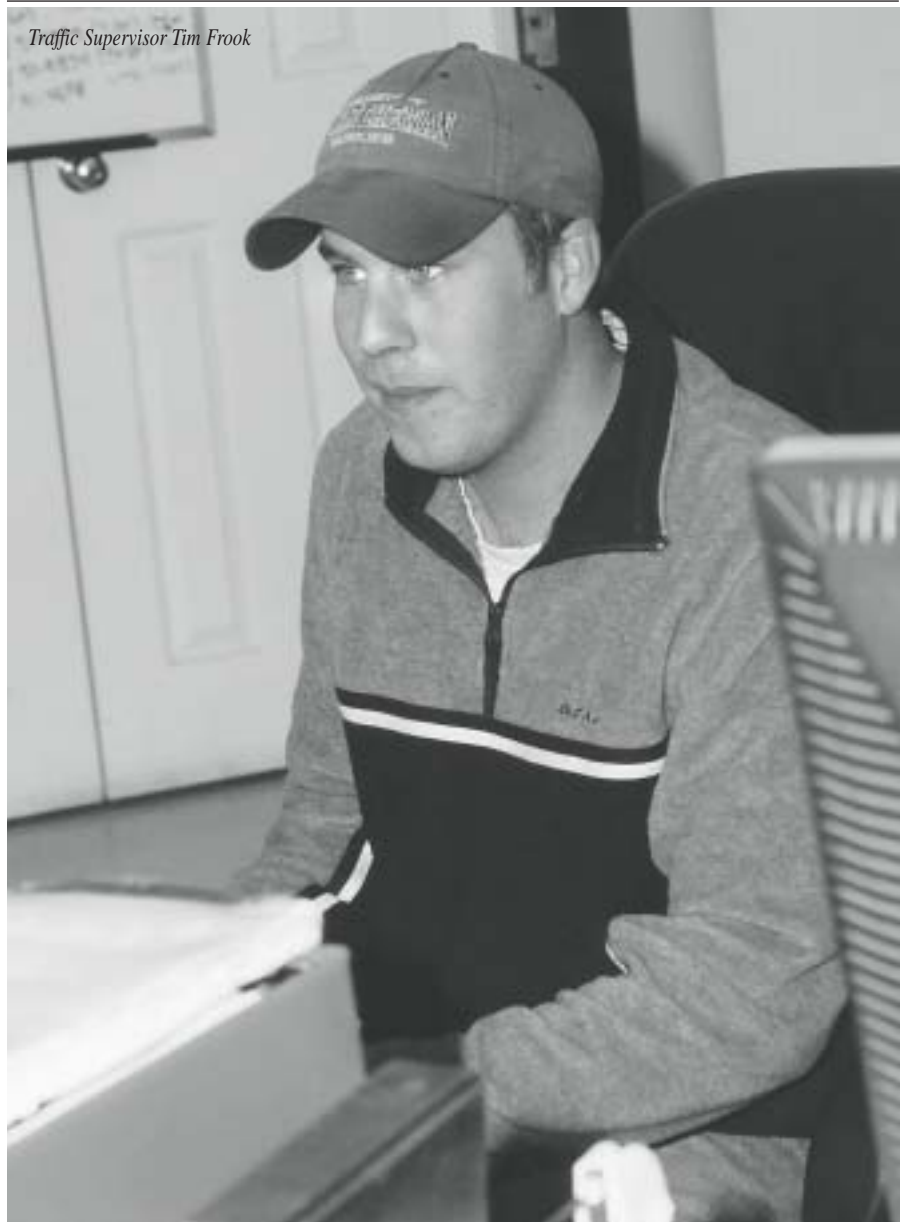
Larry Balon
Mort Harbicht

Curtis Hubel
Lawrence Joannette
Robert Kustaski
Andy Lamontagne
Stan Porter
Len Zinovich

15 YEARS

Robert Cremers □

Traffic Supervisor Tim Frook



His Best Foot Forward

A young driver joins the dispatch team

“This job is definitely character building,” says Tim Frook, newest recruit to the NRT dispatch team. “I put my best foot forward and I always try and try and try. I won’t give up on it. It’s a good job and I want to build off the skills from this job.”

Indeed, it is a radical change to move from

the driver’s seat into the traffic supervisor’s seat, where every other driver on the fleet is now your concern.

“In this job, you’re more inclined to worry about everyone else on the road and not yourself. You carry it home with you,” says Tim. “It’s stressful that there are things I

have to ask a driver to do. But I wouldn't ask if it wasn't important. Plans change and I'm well aware that drivers don't like change. But it's hard to get negative feedback when you're doing your best. It's very hard to please everybody."

For every new traffic supervisor, especially those who have travelled a more independent, autonomous route as drivers, caring without taking everything to heart is probably the first most important learning experience on this job.

But, as an ex-driver, Tim also brings some valuable knowledge to his new position. He knows, firsthand, what his drivers have to contend with on a daily basis. Tim is an NRT man through and through. He graduated from the NRT training program in 1999, trained with long-time friend and Owner Operator Jaimie Harbicht and drove for Jaimie for the next few years. He's travelled the road.

"I remember who I was on the road and how I felt and I try to make it fair and to always be polite. I'm always going to be as friendly and polite as I can, because that's who I am," he says. "I know the regular runs and 99.9% of the guys. I know what they do and what they like to do. When I pick up the phone, I know their voices. I know the mines, the managers and the senior officials. Ralph and Robin carry a ton of numbers in their head and I'm not there yet. But Cameco and Cogema know who I am."

"For being such a small fleet and only having two major customers, the volume of work in dispatch is high," says Tim, who also understands, firsthand, why this is so. "It comes with the territory. Driving north, maintenance issues are more prevalent; runs are long and drivers need breaks; and we are operating on gravel roads in all weather conditions. So we are juggling equipment maintenance, talking to suppliers and customers about whether drivers can make it on time and discussing alternate solutions. When there's a breakdown, we're calling tow trucks and are simultaneously busy getting everything lined up for a timely delivery. That makes this a tough, 24/7 business. Stress levels are bound to be high"

It seems clear, however, that despite the frustrations inherent in the dispatch role, Tim brings to this job a real desire to be there. When he was a driver, there were many days, he says, when he was spending time in dispatch and drinking coffee; hanging out instead of heading north. "I bugged Dave and Glen - and at that time it was a joke - that perhaps this is where I belonged. The next thing they were offering me a job."

But important decisions are not made on a joke. No doubt Dave and Glen saw dispatch potential in this young man who they know will learn how to wear the mantle of dispatch more easily as time goes by.

Well aware of stress levels and burnout potential, management recently retooled dispatch, switching to a 4-days-on/ 4-days-off, 10-hour-day work schedule. They have also allocated the handling of bulk and freight, separately, to specific traffic supervisors, to facilitate monitoring.

"In a job this difficult and stressful, the team needs to get along," says Tim, "and we do. This is a good group. Sure there are going to be some rocky times, but Ralph, Robin, Chevy and Phil are good to work with."

"I've been here for just three months and it's early days. It's just the start. I always have a good attitude. You can't walk in someone else's shoes and you have to do your best to understand where they're coming from. Everybody has problems. I just want to be happy and make a comfortable living. I believe that respect given is respect earned. And you have to praise the drivers. They give their whole lives to this business. They are skilled people who do an important job. They are needed and we have the best drivers."

On a lighter note, Tim smiles, "I'll do my best for the them. But don't think of my accidents," he says, laughing. "I'd like to lose my "Tippy Tim" name. I screwed up early driving and I bounced back. I did the best I could and I did O.K. I'll try to do a good job here too. I won't give up on it."

That sounds like the best credentials for most tasks in life. □



It's the Northern

NRT Owner Operator returns to the fold

Our northern drivers need to be able to do a lot more than follow company procedure and drive. They need to be able to survive in a wild and isolated environment, carrying a heavy responsibility for the hazardous goods they



Kelvin McKay proudly wears his Canoe Quest Champion jacket

fleet, is a most capable and accomplished northerner. As well as being a northern driver, he also runs a successful Outfitting business and is inventor of the patented BuckVu multi-use blind, which can double as a utility trailer and an ice-fishing hut. Ask Kelvin for his brochure. It's an amazing invention! And as if that weren't enough, he was also in the winning boat (sponsored by NRT!) when Cumberland House paddled to victory in the Great Canoe Quest this summer.

This was a race of accomplished paddlers, so Kelvin began training early for the June race. In March he was skiing which, he says, was great training for paddling. As the Saskatchewan River started thawing he was on it and then on Cumberland Lake, training hard. "It was worth it," he says. "You get tired, but you recover quickly, because you're fit."

After the Canoe Quest had been won, Kelvin continued paddling and racing, often with Derwin McKenzie in pairs races. "If you keep training," he says, "then you can just jump in with whoever is available, paddle hard and race hard. It's lots of fun and, at the same time, you're taking care of your body."

Ever the inventor, Kelvin also invented a nifty little camp stove, during Canoe Quest. You'd have to get the plans from him, but all you need is a coffee can, a tool to drill holes and some gas line antifreeze. This camp stove even has the sophistication of a high heat- low heat option!

Though he's a busy man, Kelvin has all the time in the world for his family. On November 15, Kelvin and Wilma celebrated their 25th year together. In that time they have raised three sons and two daughters of their own and adopted a boy and a girl. There are still five children living at home. "If we had a bigger house, we would have more kids," says Kelvin, laughing. "As it is, there is always a bunch of teenagers at our house. I like to take a group of teenagers to the camp and do activities with them. It keeps them away from town and trouble. I can share what I have, share my faith in the Gospel, give them advice and just be with them," he says.

Kelvin is not actually a newcomer to NRT. He drove for this company for a few years, up until 1991, when he decided to put his energies into the outfitting company.

With his outfitting business established, he decided to return to his first calling, and enjoy the best of both worlds. Since game hunting is a seasonal pursuit, driving helps fill in the financial gaps, he says, with a smile.

Kelvin purchased a 2003 truck (with his eye on a new one, soon!). I really enjoy driving and I really enjoy working with NRT," he says

This was not a difficult decision to make, says Kelvin. "I knew NRT was a good company to work for, from my experience here before. There are a lot of new guys, but there are also a lot who were here before and I get along well with everyone. There may be some new faces, but it's the same atmosphere," he says with a smile.



Kelvin's Buck Vu multi-use blind

"And of course there's a new boss now. I've got to know Dave and found that he's sure here to help and listen whenever he can."

All in all, a good fit. Welcome home, Kelvin! □

transport over mile upon mile of winding gravel road. It's a tough assignment. Only the best become NRT drivers. Only the best will do.

So it is not surprising that Owner Operator Kelvin McKay, a recent addition to the NRT

Owner Operator Phil Macala



Tales From The Road

Another highway hero - saving lives

Although the northern roads may seem largely deserted, our drivers have always been well aware of the need for vigilance. Wildlife, of the huge variety, can cause major damage should truck and animal collide.

That vigilance paid off, just recently, when a totally unexpected and potentially fatal collision was averted.

Phil Macala tells the story. "I was going north when Curtis Hubel, heading south, calls out a mile marker. I call out 180 and Hubel calls out 200. We're chatting, 'cos

we're meeting. All of a sudden Hubel gets all excited. He tells me there's a pickup on the highway, just over a crest of a hill and it's straddling the road. Hubel managed to get past it and he says to me, 'You've got to do something.'"

Sure enough, as Phil got closer, with the high vantage point that only a semi can provide, he could see the pickup parked dead centre in the middle of the road. A regular vehicle coming over that hill, he says, would not have seen it in time. "To do nothing would have been a criminal thing. It would only have been a matter of time before a family would have come over that hill and been killed."

"I stopped and went walking up to the pickup," says Phil. "One guy was slumped over the steering wheel and the seat belt was holding him up. The guy next to him was slumped over the console. Both appeared to be totally passed out. All signs indicated that they were drunk. And there they were, in the middle of the road, with the lights shut off."

When Phil tried to extricate the driver to move the truck, it wasn't easy. So, he says, he did the only thing he could think of. He crawled in, sat on top of the guy, started the engine, moved the truck to the side of the road and removed the keys from the ignition.

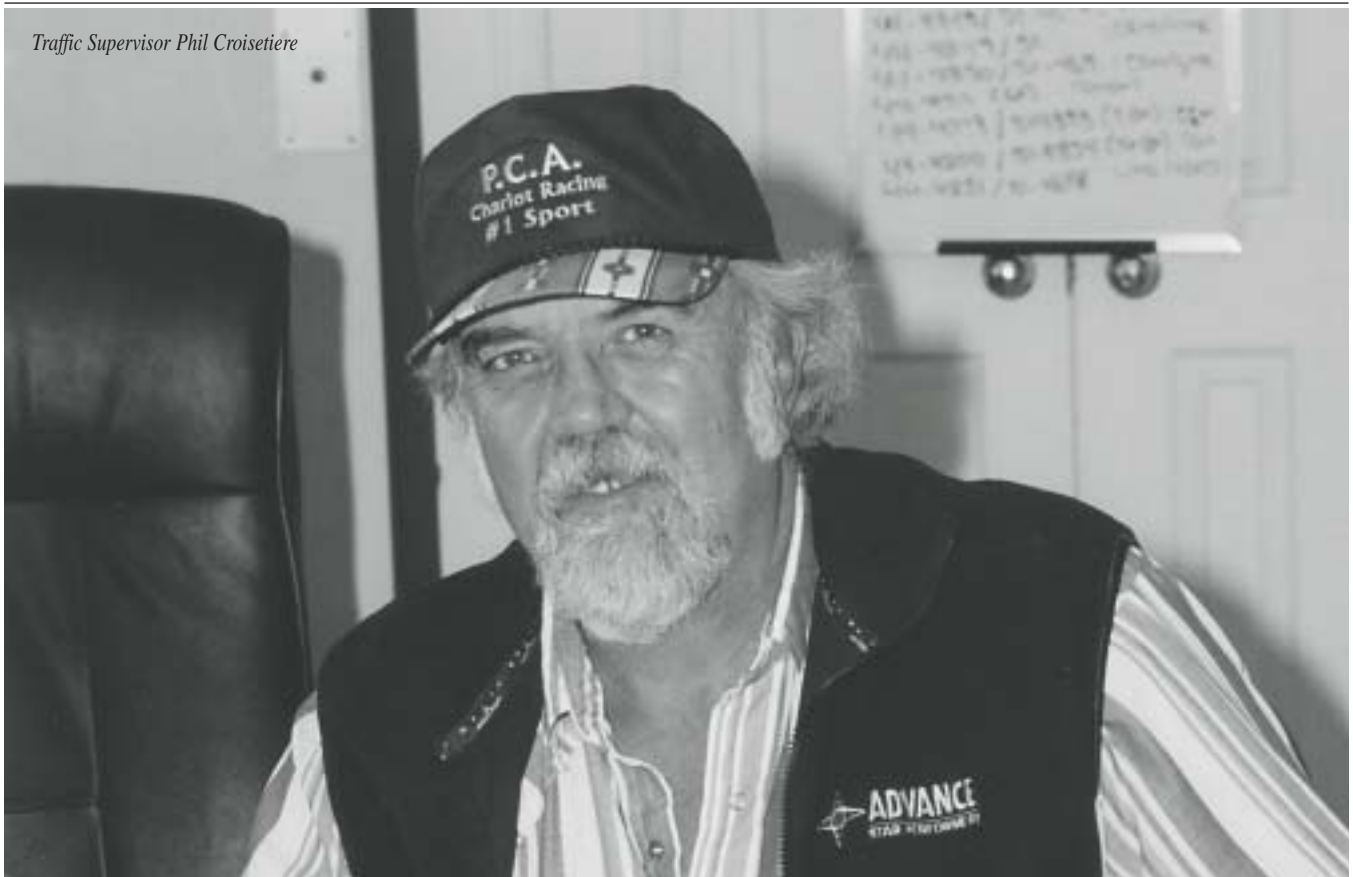
"The guy started thrashing about when I sat on him and struggled to get out of the half ton, but he was pretty much out of it," says Phil.

"A family came by from Wollaston Post and I gave the keys to the lady and asked her to give them to the RCMP," he says, matter-of-factly.

"Every so often you see these situations and there are no RCMP around, so you pretty much have to make your own decision. Not to get involved would have been wrong. If they could have been seen for a kilometre or two, that might have been different, but not where they were sitting, just below the crest of a hill."

"Every so often we have a little fun up there," says Phil, with smile. □

Traffic Supervisor Phil Croisetiere



New Challenges

Now holding the fort for the guys on the road

"It's a shock to the system," says Phil Croisetiere, laughing, when asked how he feels about his move from a semi cab to a dispatch hot seat. "It's very different. Challenging, enjoyable, some days frustrating. A big learning curve!"

But he doesn't look too worried. Those who have worked alongside Phil know that he's one cool dude and good at whatever he does; be it driver, SIAST-accredited driver trainer or traffic supervisor.

It was actually, says Phil, not a planned move. A chronic health condition, rather abruptly and prematurely, put an end to his driving career in the north, which he loved and still hankers after. A pinched nerve in Phil's neck created problems that made it impossible for him to continue driving or farming; the two pursuits he loved. So Phil and his wife, Wendy,

have had to sell their farm, 30 miles south of Moose Jaw in the Blue Hills and say goodbye to their beloved Aberdeen Angus cows that they have bred for many years.

But it's a new life, a new experience and a new a new job for Phil, which he has approached with his familiar optimistic, supremely calm and easy-going attitude.

"We've just moved to Warman and, although my wife was sad to leave the farm, she loves her new house; brand new with all the colours and fittings of her choice," says Phil, smiling. "And Wendy does have a commerce education, so she will be able to get a job when she's ready."

"I really appreciate Dave and Glen giving me this opportunity. It's good to be able to stay in a good company and NRT is that. I started

on June 1, so it's early days. But I think I'm doing O.K. and, overall, I'm enjoying it."

The main challenge is keeping all the drivers happy," says Phil, grinning at Ross Wilson (one of the nicest guys on the fleet!), who has just come to the window. "And that's coming from an ex-driver. Also it's a challenge keeping the customers satisfied when there are so many variables - rain, flat tires, road washed out - and a truck is expected to reach it's destination at a certain time. But we do our best to keep everything on schedule."

"Learning the computer is also a definite challenge. All I'd ever done was play games on the computer. This is a lot more difficult," says Phil, laughing. "But I've had lots of help. Chevy, Robin and Ralph were my trainers and Marianne, Wendy and Glen have

been really good at showing me things when I'm stuck."

"I'm now enrolled in a computer and typing class for November and it won't be a moment too soon," he says. "I watch these guys typing a message in seconds and I take a few minutes. Now Tim, on the other hand (Frook, who has also recently joined the dispatch team) knows computers well. He's young and the young have grown up with computers."

However, Phil does have the advantage of age

and experience, as he tackles this new task.

"I never took this job to be popular," he says, laughing. "This is not a popular position. There's always someone who is not happy with your decisions, but the job has to get done. I've handled a lot of stress in my life and I've learned you can't take it to heart. You're not always going to make the bosses, customers and drivers happy. Shit happens," he says, simply.

Having said that, overall, the drivers are really good, he says. "You've got to be a

people person in this job. Everybody hates being told what to do. If you explain the job and ask if they will do it, 99 out of 100 will say 'yes'. I know for myself, as a driver, when you're told 'take it or leave it', you resent that."

"The drivers have all been willing to help me out. The 905 was closed for a while with washouts and, as soon as it was open, they pulled together and got the loads out – bang, bang – and it was really nice. I was really green then and they were a great bunch to work with."



It's all about staying in the driver's seat ...

The Joy and the Pain

A young rodeo rider in the NRT family

"I love the feeling of being there. It's an adrenaline rush. I love everything about it," says Bull Rider, Ryan Mihilewicz who, in

daily life, is also a very capable NRT driver for Len Zinovich.

"Over time you get better and better. But you

can be the best and still get thrown off," says Ryan who, for seven years, has been pitting his skill at staying on against the bull's at

“Some days are really exhausting. There are evenings I go home at 7.30 and just fall into bed. I’d rather be driving. Driving has its stressful moments, but it’s a lot less stressful than this and it pays a lot more,” says Phil. “But, overall, I do enjoy this job. Chevy, Robin, Tim, Ralph and myself all get along and it seems to be working. As a driver, I know what other drivers are going through and I understand, and that’s an advantage. Every day is a new challenge and no matter what yesterday brought, it’s gone and you

can’t worry. Everyone makes mistakes and that’s only human. And there’s a brand new challenge waiting to be dealt with. You can bet on that. This job never gets boring.”

It was a little difficult for both myself and Wendy, getting used to being together every day,” says Phil. “We’ve been apart all our lives and full time is different from part time. After the first few nights I wanted to go out and find a truck and get a good night’s sleep. It’s hard to sleep when the bed’s not shaking and the engine’s not roaring. It’s hard to lose

all that stuff,” he says with that great laugh of his. Then he adds, with a smile “My wife loves having me home and I’m enjoying it. It’s like a whole new adventure. I have a lot of enjoyable days.”

Driver Jake Pocrnic comes in with a dozen Tim Horton doughnuts and puts them on Phil’s desk. “A lot of the drivers do that,” says Phil. “They’re a pretty good bunch of guys and they should know, they’re much appreciated.” □

tossing him off. This is not a sport for the faint-hearted.

There’s no doubt that this is a sport of strategy and skill, with a dash of instinct and luck thrown in. “Before you ride, you spend a lot of time visualizing what’s going to happen. You know what bull you’re going to ride. You try to know all the bulls and work out what they’re likely to do,” says Ryan. “But once that gate opens, it’s jump for jump.”

“Bull riding is very unpredictable. You can’t say what’s going to happen. There is going to be a time when you get hurt, but you can’t worry about that. You’ve got to put it out of your head,” he says. “It helps to be young, though. I’ll be 27 next



... for as long as possible!

January, so I’ve got lots of years to ride.”

“I plan to do it for the foreseeable future. I love it. I do it for the thrill,” he says. Which is just as well, because he’s certainly not in

it for the money. Although Ryan has won more than \$10,000 in prize money since he started riding, it costs \$100 a ride to compete, plus all the expenses of travelling around the Saskatchewan/Manitoba circuit.

“I had help this year,” says Ryan, with a smile. “Dwight Twigge sponsored me through his company, as an NRT Owner Operator. I drove for him in 2001 and we’re good friends. I’d like to thank Dwight greatly for ALL his help throughout the years. He’s taught me a great deal about driving and about everyday life.”

Good friends and the roar of a Sunday crowd. What more could a young bull rider wish for? □

A Warm Welcome

A Path to Native Spirituality and Peace of Mind

First Nations Elder Walter Linklater extends a warm welcome to all members of the NRT family who would like to attend his Sweat Lodge at the Whitecap First Nation, held every Saturday morning at 10.30.

To get there, take Highway 219 south of Saskatoon for 26 kilometres to the Whitecap Dakota/Sioux First Nation. Turn right at the Sasktel tower, go 2km and follow the road to the end. You will arrive at the Sweat Lodge.

This is a place where all people can gather to pray.

Sweats are held outside in small lodges, framed with willow branches and generally covered in canvas. The lodge is a round dome, symbolically not unlike the womb. Often lodges are called Mother Earth’s womb. The willow branches are set up in such a way as to symbolically mark off the four quadrants of the universe – everything of the earth and sky is thus represented.

Inside, in the middle of the lodge, is a circular pit. It is here that heated rocks are placed that have been prepared in a nearby fire. This pit, created for the rocks, is deeply

symbolic, even holy; within Plains Indian tradition it represents the centre of the universe. Dirt from this centre is used to form a small altar mound in front of the lodge entrance.

Sweats begin in silent darkness, inside the lodge. The glowing rocks are a constant reminder of the Creator’s penetrating goodness and radiance. Silence is the voice of the Creator.

Songs are often shared in the lodge. Through a combination of silence, singing, praying

Company That Plays Together

NRT Family Day at Wanuskewin

If you want to enjoy a family atmosphere within a company, you have to act like a family. NRT has, from the beginning, strived for that.

We have always worked hard and played hard. Go into the NRT archives and you'll find high days and holidays galore, from fishing trips to Family Days, to fancy food and great entertainment.

It's one thing to stage an event, but it's the people who make it fun. And the NRT family unfailingly does that. Wherever there is an NRT event, there's fun and laughter.

NRT Family Day, this year at Wanuskewin, was another great NRT event. With the approach of NRT's 20th Anniversary, it was an opportunity for one of two photo shoots for the "big photo" of everyone, traditionally created by ace photographer Gene Hatori.

This was also an opportunity for families to get together for a feast fit for a kid – and the kid in all of us! Many thanks to Wanuskewin for another wonderful meal.

Wanuskewin Heritage Park is a tribute to the traditional life of Aboriginal people who lived off this land for more than 5000 years as hunters and gatherers. It is, therefore, the perfect place for northerners to feel rooted in their rich history. So everyone enjoyed a Tipi erection demonstration, with all the children helping it along. What fun!

An Indian dancer created the combination of mystical spirituality, superb skill and high drama that is unique to First Nations – dance steeped in history and lore.

The Wanuskewin Trail took those who walked it to the scene of the Buffalo Jump and the valley where First Nations ancestors wintered and created their own community for a season.

It was a good day and a happy day. It was an NRT Day! ☐





Santa Claus Is Coming to Town

Hooray for Transwest Air's Annual "Santa Claus Takes Flight" Project

Santa will swoop down from the sky a little early this year, bringing fun and joy to children in the northern communities of Wollaston Lake, Fond du Lac, Stony Rapids and Black Lake.

On December 18th, Transwest Air will fly Santa and his helpers into town with gifts for up to 1250 children, from toddlers to pre-teens. Each gift will have been carefully chosen by Santa to please boys

and girls alike. Santa's bag will also, of course, include oranges and candy canes for each child.

This is truly a labour of love. This it will be the 6th year that Transwest Air has flown a dedicated aircraft loaded with gifts and volunteer helpers, as well as the great man himself, into these small communities.

Transwest Air's annual "Santa Claus Takes Flight" project is, each year, supported by

sponsors, whose donations contribute to the purchase of toys. So, of course, when 'Santa' asked for NRT's help, we were happy to support this lovely event taking place in four of our NRT Partnership communities.

Bon Voyage Santa and all your wonderful Transwest Air helpers! □



Strength In Diversity

Youth Action Now Offers a Blueprint for Action

In our last issue, we profiled the Youth Action Now (YAN) multi-cultural Gathering Conference in Regina, where NRT's Wendy Featherstone was a guest speaker. Wendy introduced the NRT Partnership to the gathered youth and outlined the tremendous value of multi-cultural companies, which can capitalize on diversity and combined strengths.

As promised, YAN has since brought together the findings of symposium discussions, youth forums and surveys in a

Blueprint for Action, presenting clear priorities for action on the part of governments, multicultural groups, youth, business and media, based on hundreds of hours of discussion.

The Blueprint for Action document, in colour-magazine format, is a most interesting and informative read. For every young person and their parents, this is a great place to begin, taking all the information and momentum built over the last two years and further building on this

foundation. YAN is a fun, action-packed group to belong to.

And this, it seems, is a fount of change. It is our youth who will continue to shape a sharing, connective, multicultural future for Saskatchewan; one in which we combine our strengths to create a province where all people can flourish and grow.

If you would like a copy of YAN Blueprint for Action, you can call 306-652-0961 or e-mail info@youthactionnow.ca □

Scrapbook

Wedding Bells Rang!

Lucky men. Beautiful brides. Welcome to the NRT family Stephanie and Paige.



Congratulations Driver Trainer Cam Grewcock and Stephanie



Congratulations Company Driver Tyson Carriere and Paige

He Shoots, He Scores!

Wendy is still looking for great photos of the north that only the guys who travel that terrain can capture. If your photo is chosen to be used in any NRT promotional material, you score \$200. Keep shooting!

More Congrats for Cam



NRT Driver Trainer Cam Grewcock

Cam Grewcock, who recently joined our illustrious NRT Driver Training Team, has just returned from the SIAST Training Program and is now a SIAST-certified Driver Training Instructor.

Ready To Roll And Still Loving It!



Owner Operator Robert Kustaski

"It's my 11th Anniversary with NRT today, Eleven years with the same company and I'm still loving it," says Robert Kustaski, as he jumps into his truck to head north. That kind of feedback is the real McCoy!

A Sad Passing



Jerrin Herman: 1981-2005

It's so sad to see a young life lost. Our hearts go out to the family and friends of Jerrin Herman, 24.

In 2003, Jerrin was a graduate of our NRT Driver Training Program.

Great Shots from the Master!

Tom Grimdsdale, an NRT award-winning photographer has done it again! Here are a couple of his latest shots.



*Top: Barry Gidluck fishing for dinner!
Bottom: Friends on the road!*