

# The Flatbed Flash

Volume 2 Issue 1 March 2004



A quarterly newsletter published for the Owner Operators, Employees and Customers of Tri-Line Freight Systems LP's Flatbed Division

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**Christmas 2003**

“As I am writing this article we are into our 5th consecutive day of 5 degree + weather and Spring is fast approaching. Although we have more winter to come, I really appreciate these warm periods that we experience in Calgary... it sure makes the winter go faster.”

I hope everyone had a great holiday season. It was great to see so many of you at the Christmas Party... I hope that you all enjoyed it as much as I did and look forward to having more of you join us next year. The holiday celebrations are easily forgotten as we work through the toughest time of the year for a flatbed operation. Freight is slow to pick up after the holidays, bad weather slows down travel and chaining / strapping / tarping is never fun at -30 degrees, but soon we will start to see a few signs of Spring – and a light at the end of the tunnel! Monique always reminds me that winter comes every year and that I can't change it (something that I should accept that I can't change)... but I look forward to it being over so our Owner Operators can get back to driving and working in decent weather.

We continue to make improvements to the Tri-Line Flatbed operations to make ours the best flatbed operation in the country. One of the core beliefs of the Contrans organization is the divisionalization concept. This allows each operation to focus directly on its core business and provide its Customers, Owner Operators and Staff with a clear business direction and better service. We have completed the separation of our Van and Flatbed divisions from an operations perspective and now are entering step two, administration. Our Owner Operator payroll is now being completed by each terminal for their guys, putting the task as close to the operations as possible. Cindy, Lee and Shannon are looking after this function at their respective terminals. Clean operating authorities are essential to a successful operation in today's environment and we must make every effort possible to protect our record. We monitor our records in the various jurisdictions regularly and follow up on every infraction. Owner Operators are awarded with a Home Depot Gift Certificate for every clean roadside inspection received. We are holding training sessions for our Owner Operators and Operation staff to teach them about the new US Hours of Service regulations and the North American Load Security regulations. In November we held an Owner Operator Business Skills Seminar, teaching tax planning and bookkeeping tips to our group.

As we grow our Customer base and develop our lanes of regular travel, Owner Operator recruitment continues to be a focus in our operation. As I have said many times before, the only way to recruit good new Owner Operators is through our present group. If you have a problem with something in our operation, TELL ME... if you have good things to say TELL EVERYONE!!!! Positive talk in the trucking industry is not all that common, but I have to congratulate and thank many of our guys out on the road. I hear a lot of feedback from other companies and the word is getting out... we are serious about making a great Company and the best home for Owner Operators in the flatbed world.

Congratulations to Larry and Thelma German, the winners of 2 Steer Tires in our Owner Operator business card/referral draw. Thanks to all of you talking up Tri-Line and handing out your business cards!! Good luck in the next draw in June!

Thanks to each of you for your contributions to our company.

Drive Safely,  
Brent

## Tri-Line's Regina Staff



### Les Duke (Kojak)

Les started with Tri-Line in 1979 as a dispatcher in Regina. In 1982 he moved his family to Rocanville Saskatchewan to experience a small town life where he was employed by the potash mine as a loadout operator. Tri-Line called him back as Operations Manager for Regina in 1984, which didn't last long as the Regina terminal closed in 1988 and he was transferred to Winnipeg. Big city life wasn't in the cards for Les and his Family and they moved back to Regina in 1989. He worked for Richard's Transport until they in closed; he then worked for The Percival Mercury Ford Dealership. Tri-Line re-opened the Regina terminal in 1991 and Les began his journey with us again. For most of the time it was just Les and Jeannie working in Regina so he became a "jack of all trades"-dispatching, hiring and firing, fork lift operator, safety issues etc. etc. etc. In 2001 Jeannie became a stay at home mom and Les welcomed Vince to the two man show, then in 2003 Lee came on board to round out the Regina terminal.

Les has been married to Shelly for 32 years. They have two girls Wendy and Heather. His family has expanded to include two sons in law, Michael (Wendy) Kevin (Heather), one granddaughter Julie and two grandsons, Nicholas and William. Les and Shelly have decided that if they had known how much fun grandchildren were, they would have had them first. His favorite pastime in the summer is to sit on his deck and watch the grass grow, In the winter he becomes quite a couch potato and spends his off time watching the Western Movie Channel.



### Vince Cottrill

Vince joined Tri-Line Freight Systems in 2001 as dispatcher and is now Fleet Manager for 28 trucks based out of Regina. Before working at Tri-Line, he was part of the TCT operations in Regina for many years. "It's a challenge that I'm up for" Vince says. He has always enjoyed working with the drivers and likes to see things through to the end! "We have great owner/operators and if they have a problem, then we have a problem". Vince has been married to Lori for 15 years and has two sons, Dustin 14, and Brett 10. "The boys are very active and keep us hopping with school activities, but we really enjoy it." In his spare time Vince likes to pack up the family in the camper and head to the lake. "It's a nice way to relax, and after a busy week it's what I need!" Vince also enjoys playing baseball and taking his boys to the hockey games.

## Welcome to Tri-Line

<i>Charlie Allen</i>	<i>Kingston, ON</i>
<i>Carl Kriwez</i>	<i>Calgary, AB</i>
<i>Ken Rye</i>	<i>Millet, AB</i>
<i>Bob Genest</i>	<i>Callander, ON</i>
<i>Ken Byers</i>	<i>Edmonton, AB</i>
<i>Roger Vanderlee</i>	<i>Leduc, AB</i>
<i>Blair Corrigan</i>	<i>Asquith, SK</i>
<i>Darral Snyder</i>	<i>Bjorkdale, SK</i>
<i>James Russell</i>	<i>Coronation, AB</i>



### Lee Alzomal

Lee joined the Regina office as dispatcher in July 2003 and feels right at home! She had worked many years at TCT in Customer Service, always enjoying dealing with drivers and customers, even daily dealings with Vince. “It’s a great place to work” Lee says, “Les and Vince have a great sense of humor and that is important to me; we get along really well, and work together as a team and that is vital to our business. Although the guys won’t do a group hug yet, I’m working on it!!”

Lee has two daughters, Jennifer 25 and Aja 15, and a son Dana 18. “I am very proud of them; they are great kids and keep me young at heart. We are a very close knit family and I do all I can to keep it that way”.

Lee is an avid football fan, always cheering on the Saskatchewan Roughriders and University of Regina Rams. She has taken up dance lessons recently, “It’s fun, good exercise and a great way to meet and make new friends, and I can do a mean **cha-cha** so far, who knows maybe River Dancing is next!!”

## Driver Profiles



### James Reavie

James Reavie started at Tri-Line Freight Systems in 1990. He is one of our “Fleet 51” drivers dispatched out of the Regina office. James has seen a lot of changes in the past few years. He has ridden out the tough times along with the company, but has nothing but optimism for the future.

James has been married to his wife Cheryl for 25 years and has 4 children and 9 grandchildren. He likes to spend time at the cottage with the whole family; it’s a great way to spend time with the grandchildren!! He also enjoys horse training and trail rides. James has done ice road trucking in 2001 and 2003 and found it challenging on both man and equipment but plans to try it again. In his spare time he farms 600 acres as well as raising cattle with his brother, who also drives with Tri-Line.



### Rick Baker & Krystelle Welsh

Rick a.k.a. Grizz has been with Tri-Line since July 1996 when he started with the van division before joining the decks four years ago, and he has currently teamed up with Krystelle Welsh in August of 2003. He has been driving for the past twenty-four years and enjoys running loads up north to Inuvik and the ice roads.

During his off time he likes to go hunting, fishing and golfing. Photography is another one of his passions and I would guess that being a truck driver would make for some pretty interesting pictures, “the perfect profession for his hobby”!

Grizz checks in each day with the office and each time he does he puts a smile on my face. It’s co-workers like Grizz who make receptionists actually enjoy what they do!

Krystelle a.k.a. KC has been a part of Tri-Line since October 2000 and has recently teamed up with Grizz this past August.

She has two children. Her son Patrick is 19 and finishing courses before he goes to the East Coast to join the Coast Guard College in Sydney, NS. Her daughter Shantelle is 13 and is very active in karate, being an alternate to the zone 2 Karate team for the BC Winter Games in 2004, and a member of the Taneda Dojo team heading to the worlds in Australia this summer. *We wish her the best of luck!* She is also involved in Cadets.

During her time off KC enjoys fishing and spending time with her family and she can't wait to learn how to hunt.



## Denis Alaïre

Denis has been with Tri-Line since May 7<sup>th</sup>, 1993. During his time here he has been on our Canada only deck fleet. He resides in Devon Alberta, with his beautiful wife Francine. The attached photo is of Denis hauling the refrigeration machine for the 2003 NHL Heritage Classic.

## Welcome Olynyk Transport Ltd.

Contrans continues to expand its flatbed operations in Western Canada with the acquisition of Olynyk Trucking Ltd. Olynyk operates Super B and Tridem equipment in the 4 western provinces from their office in Edmonton, AB.

Please welcome Darcy and Denise Olynyk and all of their Owner Operators and staff to the Contrans

## Payroll...

Happy New Year to all the Owner Operators! As we all know, we have cutoff on the **15<sup>th</sup>** and **31<sup>st</sup>** of every month for pay, you have two additional days after each cut off to fax your paperwork in, and you have been fantastic in getting your paperwork in.

Just a few reminders:

1. Please make sure your order number and your unit number are marked clearly on the bill of lading.
2. Fax them in as soon as you're done with your load "**the sooner the better**". You can fax them to 1 866 279 6616.
3. Toll reimbursement, and scale tickets, (the originals) need to be handed in with each trip. New York tolls are needed as well for fuel tax purposes.
4. All fuel purchased without a company card; (please hand in a receipt and record it with MACRO #29 on your Satellite). Fuel purchased with company cards is downloaded electronically.

If you have any questions you can call me anytime at the Calgary office. Take care out there and be safe.

*Cindy Smith*

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# 4 SALE

**1995 Dodge Caravan**

**Former Safety Van**

**"As Is - Where Is"**

**May be seen in Calgary**

**Call Brent with your offer!**

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**Congratulations Cal Davidson!**

**On naming the newsletter**

**"The Flatbed Flash"**

*When are you sending us some of those pictures you've been taking with your new digital camera!*

## O/O Business Skills Seminar

On November 29, 2003 Transport Financial Services presented their Operate Smart Seminar which provided tax planning and business management tips to our Owner Operators.

The meeting reviewed many areas for profit improvement.

1. Fuel Economy
2. Fuel purchasing strategy
3. TL2 meal allowance vs per diem strategy
4. Lease vs Purchase – change in tax handling of lease payments

### ***Fuel Economy:***

The reduction of speed by 10 k/ph can save as much as 12% on your annual fuel bill. Based on an annual fuel bill of \$37,000 the savings would be approximately \$4,500. To put this number into perspective you would have to run another 13,500 miles to generate the same profit (based on 33 cents per mile profit). So slow down and save money – sounds easy to me!

### ***Fuel Purchasing Strategy:***

Every province and state has a different tax rate that is included in the pump price of the fuel. It is important to compare the raw cost of fuel excluding taxes when comparing prices to make a fuel buying decision. The pump price (including tax) can be very deceiving, and the cheapest fuel may actually look more expensive at the pump due to fuel tax rates. TFS publishes a fuel price comparison quarterly which allows you to compare fuel costs across North America. This is very helpful in planning fuel purchases to minimize fuel costs. This chart is available on their website at [www.tfsgroup.com](http://www.tfsgroup.com).

### ***TL2 Meal Allowance vs per Diem Strategy:***

In the recent past Revenue Canada has been testing the TL2 meal allowance in the courts. The one area we must remember is the TL2 meal allowance is for Company Drivers. Revenue Canada has accepted this practice for the Self-Employed Proprietorship for many years, but the Tax Act was never changed to reflect this. It is expected that proprietorship Owner Operators will no longer be allowed to claim for meals via the TL2 meal

allowance. The rules for Sole Proprietors are to save the receipts and claim the amount spent (has to be reasonable). The other way to maximize your meal allowance is to incorporate your business and pay yourself as a company driver and develop a policy for a per diem for travel away from home. The Federal Government pays a per diem of \$69 per day so if it is good enough for the government it should be good enough for you. The money comes to you as the driver tax free and the incorporated company gets the deduction for tax purposes. Therefore, it is like receiving \$17,250 per year tax free (based on 250 days away from home).

This is becoming a popular strategy for Owner Operators and worth having your accountant look into.

### ***Lease vs. Purchase***

There are some new developments in the lease vs purchase financing decision; it would be advisable to contact your accountant to discuss before purchasing/leasing a new unit. If it is not done properly you can be taxed on any recapture on your leased truck when you deal it for a new one. Each situation is different so it is important to consult an expert before finalizing your deal.

**If you have any questions please contact Les, Dave, Bruno or Brent.**

# ATTENTION OWNER OPERATORS

## FOR “PO’S AND COMCHECKS”

**Calgary Drivers Call “Bruno”:**  
Weekends Call: 403-613-1548 CELL

**Edmonton Drivers Call “Dave”:**  
Weekends Call: 780-445-4044 CELL

**Regina Drivers Call “Les”:**  
Weekends Call: 306-596-3775 CELL

## Safety Message

Hello everyone, well it's the first newsletter of 2004 and there are a few things to mention as far as the Safety Dept. is concerned.

1. I want to thank you all for your co-operation in turning in your CVSA inspections promptly. It is very important I get all your inspections – good or bad – citations, warnings, etc. as soon as possible. (Faxed to 403-723-3362 in 24 hrs is preferred)  
Effective January 1, 2004 we will be issuing \$50 Home Depot gift certificates for each clean inspection you receive.

**Congrats:** Bill McMillan - unit 300909  
Eugene Daoust – unit 310321  
Arlen Hilsen – unit 310329

For being the first to receive their gift certificates!

2. **ACCIDENT REPORTING** – At this time this is probably the most important responsibility we have. Any accident no matter how small or trivial it may seem to you “must be reported immediately” to Brian Dunk. Let him make the decision on how it will be handled. If it is after hours he can be reached at 403-279-7099. Please remember to use your accident kits if you are involved in any incident and please take pictures. Remember one picture is worth a thousand words.
3. Drivers meetings were held in Calgary on Feb 10 and Edmonton on Feb 18, thank you to all those who attended. Topics discussed were the new Load Securement regulations as well as reviewing Hours of Service regulations. Additional meetings will be held in March. I will advise you of the dates later on. Please try to attend, your input is important. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to give me a call.  
Last but not least – Log Books – Please turn them in promptly, don't wait until I ask for them! Form and manner on log books are very important, chances are if your log book is neat and complete most inspectors will not look any further for log book infractions.

One last thing on this subject (at least for this issue) please complete the post and pre- trip inspection portion, even if you are “Off Duty”. If off-duty, simply put the date, your unit number and write “off duty” across the page and sign it. We are required to keep that portion of your logs for 5 yrs as proof of trip inspection. (Logs must now be kept for 1 year instead of 6 months)  
Again any questions call me.

Thank you all for your help in keeping Tri-Line a safety first company!

Ev Crosbie



**Virginia Smith, Lori Cottrill, Ev Crosbie, Lee Alzomal, and Santa at The Deerfoot Mall**

While the boys were at the seminar in the hotel, the ladies were shopping at all the malls in CowTown.  
**SURPRISE! SURPRISE!**

*Lee apologizes for the incident at the mall.*

**Now the question is girlees...  
Was Santa naughty or nice????**

**WE'LL NEVER TELL!**

# CHRISTMAS 2003



*Brent & Monique Ryan*

Tri-Line's annual Christmas Party was held on November 29<sup>th</sup> at the Radisson Hotel Calgary Airport. It was a great time for us to reflect on the past year's changes and future challenges for the company.

There were many new faces including my own but it was a great opportunity to meet co-workers under circumstances other than work and there was a great turnout; with that we can only hope for more to join us next year!



*Dave & Dianna Stremick*

To sum up the night I would have to say that everyone had a wonderful time, over 100 people from our Edmonton, Regina, and Calgary terminals were there for an interesting evening of dinner, dancing and Dirk's other face (as you can see from the picture Jeannie Leer thought she'd be funny and draw a face on the back of Dirks head, little did she know there were more pictures taken of Dirks head on the cameras than of anyone else!).

Many thanks to all who joined us, as well as the staff of the Radisson Hotel and Gary Robertson Music Services.

**Have a Safe and Happy New Year!!!**

Amber



*Andrew Wheatley & Bruno Robichaud*



*Amber Doyle, Lori Schroeder & Wanda Taylor*



*Dirk Gordon's Head*



*Allan & Bev Watt*



*Chris Brower*



*Dianne & Mike Reiben*



*Dirk Gordon & Gord Lewis*



*Pam Austin & Phillip Gawluk*



*Gord was preaching "Amen"*



*YMCA*



*Alphonse & Elaine Schuh*



*Lee Alzomal & Keith Rotariu*



*Shannon Crook & Darwin Cromarty*