

SPEC MY TRUCK

Check out Tom Veronesi's rig. Page 14.

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Service Truck

THE MAGAZINE FOR MOBILE REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE

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SPECIALISTS

Custom-built rail service trucks thrive in a growing marketplace

A variety of needs means no one style of truck can serve the entire railway industry

MARK YONTZ

Today's U.S. freight rail network consists of nearly 140,000 miles of track owned and operated by more than 560 private companies. In turn, these companies are part of a \$60 billion dollar industry that moves more freight than any other rail system worldwide.

Keeping this extensive network of tracks properly maintained and serviced is something that's taken very seriously by companies like Iowa Mold Tooling Co. Inc., Maintainer Corporation of Iowa Inc., Stellar Industries Inc., and Custom Truck & Equipment.

"Railroads have defined specifications for their servicing vehicles, as well as specific jobs these vehicles need to do," explains Tim Worman, a business development manager with Garner, Iowa-based IMT, which is owned by Oshkosh Corporation. "There are lots of dif-

.....
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This 438TR model from Custom Truck & Equipment's rail division features a small thermite welding truck with custom body, rail gear, crane, and hydraulic tool circuit.

Photo courtesy of Custom Truck & Equipment

EQUIPMENT

Miners dig their service trucks

You want to get the shaft — It's hot down there!

SAUL CHERNOS

Looking for a warm, mid-winter break? Consider spending January in northern Ontario's Sudbury basin, servicing some of the heavy equipment found in its deep underground mines.

With all the heavy equipment needed to build mines and extract natural resources, service trucks are key. Mechanics use them to visit jumbos, scoops and other big toys that have broken down and can't be easily moved.



Industrial Fabrication's Minecat service trucks are designed for underground mines. Photo courtesy of Industrial Fabrication Inc.

Based near Sudbury and with dealers extending into Montana, Nevada and Alaska, Industrial Fabrication Inc. custom-builds a variety of Minecat-brand utility vehicles.

The company's UT99 mechanics' trucks feature a Cummins engine and Dana powertrain. Users can choose

.....
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DIVERSITY

"I go shoulder to shoulder with my guys out on the road. To me, that's equally important. I'm not going to ask them to do something I wouldn't."

— Stacy Richardson,
owner, Wrecker 1,
Atlanta, Ga.



Women blazing trails in service truck sector

Mobile heavy equipment maintenance is a changing industry but women still make a small fraction of its workforce

ERIN GOLDEN

When Stacy Richardson launched her heavy truck towing and service business nearly a decade ago, she found plenty of receptive customers.

But the feedback wasn't all glowing. When they found out a woman was calling the shots, some people reacted poorly. Richardson recalls one man who came in to talk business and wouldn't look her in the eye.

"It was very hard for a female to get into a man's world," Richardson said. "You got looked at as: females don't need to be doing this, and what could you offer that we're not already doing. Or laughing, or giving snide looks."

While the service truck industry is modernizing and adapting to changing trends, it's still an industry that's overwhelmingly dominated by men.

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NEWS

Medium-duty truck sales rise

Net orders of medium-duty trucks in classes 5 to 7 in North America increased in September, according to a recent news release from ACT Research Co. LLC.

Net orders of larger Class 8 trucks meanwhile remained flat in September, said the Oct. 21 news release, which cited ACT's latest State of the Industry report.

Classes 5-7 posted 22,000 net orders for the month, compared with 19,400 net orders in September for Class 8 trucks. ACT previously reported that net orders of classes 5-7 totaled 17,900 in August, while the Class 8 figure for August was 20,200.

In the most recent news release, Kenny Vieth, ACT's president and senior analyst, said that collectively the classes 5-7 market "experienced yet another strong" month-to-month increase in orders. He also noted that Class 5 trucks enjoyed a year-to-year increase of 22 percent while classes 6-7 grew by nine percent.

"Strength in the Class 5 market was concentrated in trucks, while step van activity drove the incremental gain in the classes 6-7 market," Vieth added.

Overall, however, Vieth noted that new vehicle demand has appeared to grow tired as 2016 approaches.

"We're seeing a pullback from the recent white hot activity, and are moving toward a more sustainable pace



Net orders of new medium-duty trucks, like these Ford F-550s on display at the Demo Expo in Kentucky this fall, increased in September, according to an industry report.

for heavy truck demand," Vieth said, adding later, "While the heavy truck market is poised for a correction, it is important to note the correction is occurring in a growing economy and in a period of healthy trucker profits."

For more information on ACT, which stands for Americas Commercial Transportation, visit www.actresearch.net.

Class 8 trucks getting older

The average age of used Class 8 trucks in the U.S. has climbed to 93 months, according to a recent news release from ACT Research Co. LLC.

Average prices of those trucks slipped in September, by four percent from the previous month, and eight percent year-over-year, said the Oct. 23 news release.

The release cited the latest release of ACT Research's *State of the Industry: U.S. Classes 3-8 Used Trucks*.

According to the report, metrics for Class 8 trucks were mixed during September, with dealers "inching

closer to the six-month average," the release noted. Volumes gained eight percent month-over-month but only one percent year-over-year. Average mileage was flat compared with the previous month but dropped eight percent year-over-year.

"According to our dealer conversations, used truck sales continue to be strong overall, but some dealers have reported a slowdown in used truck sales, with the summertime lull hanging on a little longer than usual," the release quoted Steve Tam, ACT's vice-president of the commercial vehicle sector.

Tam added that the looming new truck model year is also a factor.

The report from ACT, which stands for Americas Commercial Transportation, also looks at the average prices for top-selling Class 8 models from such brands as Freightliner, Kenworth, Peterbilt, International, Volvo, and Mack.



Comic headlines Work Truck Show

Famed comedian Jay Leno will be the keynote speaker at the annual Work Truck Show in Indianapolis in March.

Leno, former longtime host of television's *The Tonight Show* and a renowned car collector, will give his address as part of the Work Truck Show's President's Breakfast on March 3, said a news release from the show organizers.

The NTEA, which markets itself as The Association for the Work Truck Industry, is holding next year's show March 2-4 at the Indianapolis Convention Center. The related Green Truck Summit, as well as educational programming, starts a day earlier.

"Jay Leno is one of the most accomplished, hardest-working entertainers in show business," the news release quoted Matthew Wilson, 2016 NTEA convention chairman, and chairman and CEO of Switch-N-Go, AmeriDeck & Bucks Divisions of Deist Industries Inc. of Hadley, Pa. "In addition to being a famous late night host, he has pursued many other successful endeavors, including an online venture showcasing his affinity for automobiles. I think attendees will appreciate Leno's relatable manner and comedic style as he shares his life lessons and experiences."

Tickets are required to attend the President's Breakfast. Registration and housing for the Work Truck Show opened Oct. 8.

The annual event typically draws about 11,000 attendees, including fleet managers, dealers, and equipment distributors.

For more information about the Work Truck Show, visit worktruckshow.com.



Jay Leno



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COMMENT

Propane autogas promoted as clean fuel for service fleets

It also costs less than gasoline or diesel, according to the Propane Education & Research Council.

MICHAEL TAYLOR
SPECIAL TO SERVICE TRUCK MAGAZINE

An approved alternative fuel under the Clean Air Act of 1990, propane autogas is not a new fuel to the transportation industry. It has been used in vehicle engines as a way to reduce emissions and operating costs for decades.

Over the years, the Environmental Protection Agency has increased emissions regulations. As a result, fleets across the U.S. are exploring cleaner and more affordable alternatives. For service truck fleets in particular, propane autogas has emerged as a practical solution due to its growth of available vehicle options, lower total cost-of-ownership, and clean emissions profile.

Growth of vehicle options

Propane autogas offers vehicle options from an array of OEM-supported vehicles that provide equal horsepower, torque, and towing capacity as conventional versions of the same models. Most recently, medium-duty product offerings such as the Roush CleanTech Ford F-650, Freightliner Custom Chassis Corporation's S2G, and aftermarket options from Alliance Autogas and ICOM have emerged, giving service truck operators heavier-duty options suitable for bucket and crane trucks.

Roush CleanTech built its first Ford F-650 propane-autogas-powered bucket truck for Asplundh Tree Expert Co. in late 2014. The bucket truck, fitted with a 58-foot aerial lift, is used to prune trees in North Carolina. Reports from John Talbot, director of fleet services at Asplundh, have echoed similar sentiments as other fleets across the nation — that the new vehicle offers a greener and more affordable alternative to conventional fuels.

As propane autogas continues to see growth in customer demand, technology and product offerings will also continue to grow. Fleets looking to adopt propane autogas can find a complete list of OEM-supported vehicles and aftermarket options at propane.com.

Lower total cost-of-ownership

Further encouraging fleet managers to consider propane autogas is its lower total cost-of-ownership. Propane autogas is typically 30 percent less than gasoline and 50 percent less than diesel.

Fleet managers should also take maintenance and



Propane Education & Research Council promotes this propane-powered service truck at the 2015 Work Truck Show in Indianapolis. Photo by Keith Norbury

“For service truck fleets in particular, propane autogas has emerged as a practical solution due to its growth of available vehicle options, lower total cost-of-ownership, and clean emissions profile.”

— Michael Taylor, director of autogas business development, Propane Education & Research Council

training costs, cost of replacement parts, and uptime versus downtime over the life of the vehicle into account.

Unlike diesel vehicles, propane autogas engines do not require additional fluids, filters, or preventative maintenance outside of what is outlined in the OEM warranty. Newer diesel vehicles require a combination of complex emission-reduction devices such as diesel oxidation filters, diesel particulate filters, selective catalytic reduction systems, or exhaust gas recirculation systems.

With the addition of these aftermarket treatment systems, diesel-fueled vehicles require extra training, maintenance, and parts — inevitably leading to greater downtime when repairs are needed and systems malfunction.

Additional parts and emissions systems also lead to extra weight, which can become an issue for utility fleets concerned with towing capacity or payload. Propane autogas vehicles are lighter than EPA-compliant diesel vehicles, allowing service fleets to keep the same size truck while staying below 33,000 gross vehicle weight rating and avoid paying a federal excise tax.

A green-green Solution

Adopting propane autogas not only leads to saving green, but also is much greener for the environment. Clean, American-made propane autogas is a non-contaminant of soil, air, and water, helping fleets affordably meet environmental goals and reduce emissions.

To improve the safety of work environments, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees recommends replacing diesel engines with propane-powered engines when possible. Allowing operators to breathe a little easier, propane autogas' environmental benefits also lead to fewer anti-idling laws and EPA requirements for on-site storage.

Overall, service truck fleets will find propane autogas a sustainable and economic business solution.

To learn more about propane autogas, visit propane.com/on-road-fleets.

Michael Taylor is director of autogas business development for the Propane Education & Research Council, based in Washington, D.C.



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NEWS



PalFleet plans to have 25 service technicians in the field by the end of 2015.

Service truck fleet poised for growth

PalFleet Truck Equipment, a wholly owned distribution company of equipment manufacturer Palfinger North America Group, expects to expand its field service team to about 25 technicians by the end of 2015.

Over the next five years, PalFleet aims to triple that team to 75 technicians, the company said in a recent news item.

As of mid-October, PalFleet was well on its way to that goal with 18 experienced field technicians in the U.S. They consist of five each in Dallas and New Jersey, three in Oklahoma, two each in Florida and on the Gulf Coast, and one in Michigan.

"Rather than bringing a machine into a shop for repair, field service offers end-users greater value and faster response times," the news item said.

At present, each technician is skilled in truck-mounted cranes and forklifts. The service trucks, consisting primarily of Ford F-750 and F-550 chassis, are outfitted with Palfinger equipment, including Pal Pro mechanics bodies, service cranes, corner mount cranes, and air compressors.

"When equipment is down and work cannot be completed, the result is lost business and the need for a reliable service solution," the news item said.

PalFleet repairs all brands of truck-mounted cranes and forklifts. However, the company notes that the program "adds great value" when promoting the sale of Palfinger products.

Headquartered in Salzburg, Austria, Palfinger builds mechanics trucks, cranes, hoist, truck-mounted forklifts, lift gates and other equipment. It has manufacturing and assembly facilities in North America, Europe, Asia, and South America, according to the PalFleet website.

For more information, visit www.palfleet.com.



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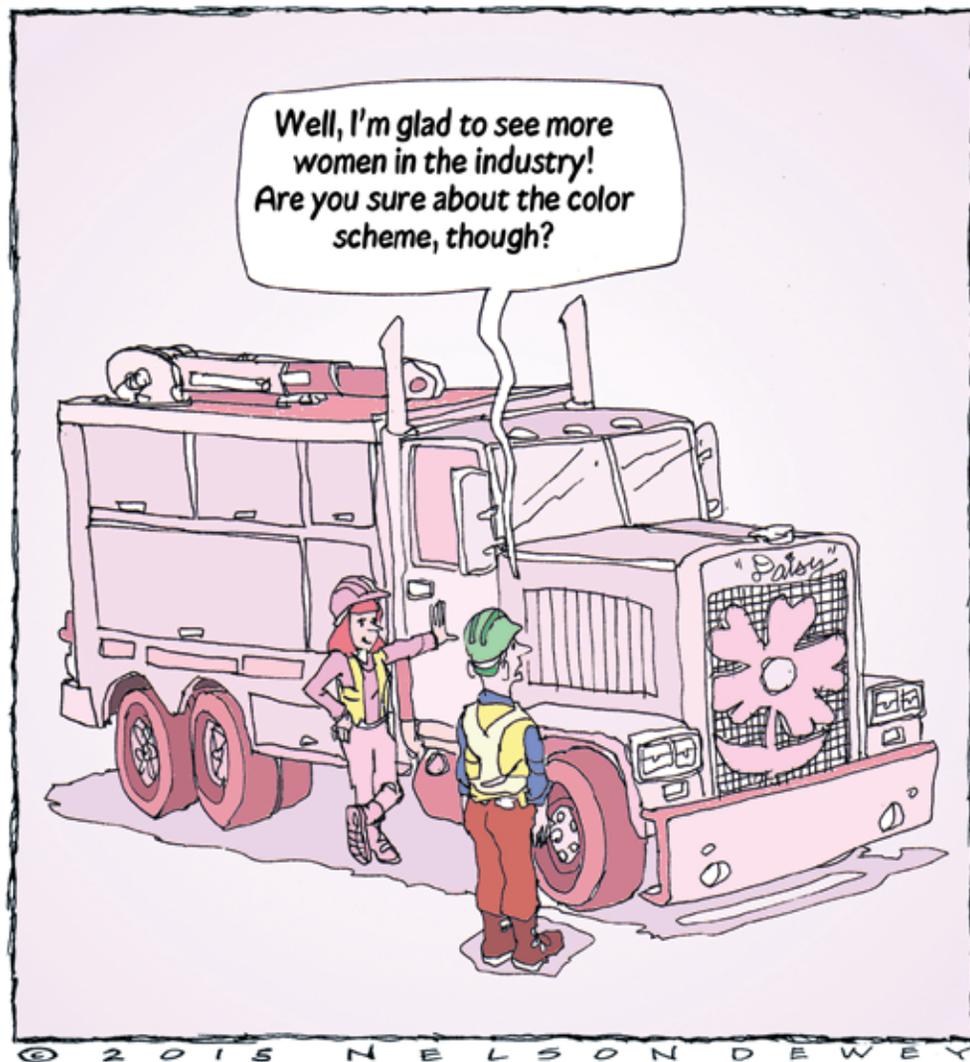
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EDITORIAL

Just to be clear, spells things out

Acronyms can be confusing. That's why, whenever possible, this publication spells them out on the first reference.

Yes, acronyms can perform valuable service as a form of shorthand. Everyone knows what a TV is. The same goes for DVD and VCR, although the latter will mean as much to future generations as eight-track and hi-fi. (That said, we imagine large parts of the population would have trouble saying exactly what DVD and VCR stand for.)

As with any industry or profession or diversion, those sectors associated with service trucks have their fair shares of acronyms. Some are simple and pretty easy to digest: RPM (revolutions per minute), PSI (pounds per square inch), and GVW (gross vehicle weight). However, we often see the latter represented as GVWR, with the R referring to "rated."

Most people in service truck industries know what PTO stands for. But for the benefit of those new to the industries — or for those who just never knew but have been afraid to ask — we're going to spell it out at least some of the time. (Adding to the confusion, though, is that it can be spelled out as power take-off or power takeoff. We're going to arbitrarily pick the version without the hyphen.)

Organizations also have a fondness for acronyms. We can probably figure out that ISO stands for International Standards Organization and that ASME is short of American Society of Mechanical Engineers. Others strain brain cells: DNV CL, for example. It's a mashup of two classification societies (Det Norske Veritas of Norway, and Germanischer Lloyd of Germany).

OK, those last two are extreme examples. We shouldn't have to learn Norwegian to be understood. (Note that we all know the meaning of OK, even if its origins are obscure.)

Nevertheless, an acronym often presents a barrier to understanding. That's especially true for people from different cultures, as cross-cultural consultant Tina Varughese explained at a recent crane industry conference.

"Are we really speeding things up, increasing our productivity, efficiency and profitability if people are confused?" Varughese said.

To illustrate the point, she asked the audience for a common crane-industry acronym. "ATB," a man blurted out.

When he explained that ATB stands for "anti-two-block," Varughese was still perplexed.

Which just goes to show that knowing what words acronym signifies is often just the first step in understanding what they mean.

It turns out that anti-two-block is a system on a crane for alerting the operator of a two-block situation, "where the hook block comes in contact with the boom head of a crane," according to the website of Massload, a crane scale company.

The lesson for businesses in any industry is that a new hire, regardless of cultural background, might not know the acronyms — and be too embarrassed to ask. Your customers might also be too afraid to ask.

For that reason, Varughese recommends that every organization create an on-boarding diary ASAP that explains all its acronyms. Better yet, try to avoid acronyms as much as possible — unless they are internationally recognized.

So it's fine to use TV and DVD, and even SUV and ATV. The same goes for sonar and radar, which were originally acronyms but long ago turned into regular lower-case words.

Most readers of this publication will know what the NTEA means. But we'll continue to spell it out on first references — National Truck Equipment Association — for the benefit of those new to the business or who might be picking up the publication for the first time, as well as for those with short memories. (And if we have space, we'll also point out that the NTEA refers to itself as the Association for the Work Truck Industry — which would theoretically create the acronym AWTI. Hey, nobody said this is easy.)

We'll also spell out International Construction and Utility Equipment Exposition, and try only to use the shorthand version, ICUEE — pronounced IQ — when it won't prove confusing. Actually, we're just as likely to use its nickname, The Demo Expo.

A shortcut is a great idea. But one needs to know clearly where it's leading.

If you get lost trying to figure that out, then it's a maze and not a shortcut at all.



NEWS

New crane safety guide released

A new Guide to Mobile Crane Safety Management is now available from the Specialized Carriers & Rigging Association.

The 104-page book "reflects substantial changes in tools, technologies and perspectives over the last two decades," says a recent news release from the SC&RA, which has more than 1,300 members in 46 countries.

Items covered include the updated American Society of Mechanical Engineers, or ASME, B30.5 standard for mobile and locomotive cranes as well as Occupational Safety and Health Administration rules, the release said.

Guide authors Robert Hontz and professional engineer Ronald Kohner both have over 40 years of experience in the industry and have written extensively on crane safety.

The chapters cover such areas as risk management, lift classification, lift planning, and the roles and responsibilities for cranes on a job site.

SC&RA members can buy the guide for \$99 U.S. The price for non-members is \$199 U.S.

For more information, visit www.scranet.org.



The Specialized Carriers & Rigging Association has published new guide.

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Product announcements: Are you a supplier to the industry? Has your company developed a new product or process? If possible, attach a photograph.

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might publish only part of a press release or use it as starting point for an article by one of our writers.

Story ideas: Maybe you have an idea you'd like us to explore for an article. A good rule of thumb is to limit your story idea to no more than 30 words. If it takes longer than that to describe it, then chances are we won't be able to take it on.

All submissions are subject to editing and publication cannot be guaranteed. The deadline for our next issue of *Service Truck Magazine* is Dec. 12, 2015. Sooner is always better than later.

About our cartoonist

Nelson Dewey has been a prolific cartoonist for over 50 years. If his work looks familiar, maybe you read a lot of comic books when you were younger.

In the 1960s, '70s and '80s, Dewey was a frequent contributor to those comics, particularly *CARToons*. He also drew for *Hot Rod Cartoons*, *CYCLEtoons*, *SURFtoons* and *SKItoons*.

To see samples of Dewey's car cartoons, go to his website, www.nelsondewey.com.

Service trucks squeak through oil downturn

As the oil slump persists, companies look to other industries to pick up the slack

BY SAUL CHERNOS

Bone-chilling winters and sweltering summers have been a rite of passage for truck operators servicing North Dakota's Bakken oil reserve.

Over the last year and a half, however, extreme temperatures and working conditions have been their least concern. Plummeting oil prices have seriously deflated resource activity in this northern prairie state, sending operators and service companies scurrying for other business.

"Last winter was really slow but we made it through," said Joel Rychard, who manages Riverbend Machinery's store in Hazen, a town of 2,500 people on the eastern fringe of the Bakken.

More than a year ago, when oil prices were peaking, the shop had one service truck and one lube truck covering several hundred miles.

"The lube truck was really busy, especially in the winter," Rychard said. "People didn't want to change their oil, so we'd go out and do it for them."

That truck's gone, now. "It sat all last winter," Rychard said. "We sold it to a guy in Georgia."

Oil-related business drops significantly

The service truck, meanwhile, is down to a few calls a week.

Two years ago, oil made up 80 percent of Colorado-based Riverbend's customer base in Hazen. Now it's closer to 20 percent.

Fortunately, there's much more to the Riverbend shop than its service truck. The business supplies parts and sells and leases a wide range of industrial equipment and heavy machinery to multiple sectors.

In fact, this past summer business was brisk.

"There's a lot of home building going on here," Rychard said. "That's been pretty hot right now."

That begs the question, then — with oil down so sharply why are so many new homes being built? Other sectors, it turns out, are thriving or at least doing well enough.

"There's several coal mines here and the gas plant is building a new urea plant, so we're renting a lot to them," Rychard said. "That's keeping us busy."

However, times are changing. Riverbend used to travel to the oil fields to service wells and other equipment on-site. Now, activity is becoming increasingly sales- and rental-oriented.

That's because the oil operations were small and lacked the size and scale to do their own mechanical work. The mines and gas plant are much bigger and have their own machines and mechanics, Rychard said.

In Alexander, a town of just over 200 people in western North Dakota, Youngquist Brothers North Oil and Gas ND Inc. services oilfield wellheads and has

weathered the downturn thus far with its modest fleet of two mechanics trucks and one lube truck.

Office manager Charles Reynolds says Youngquist uses its one-ton Chevy trucks outfitted with small cranes to service its own machinery.

"Whenever there's a maintenance issue we'll send out a service truck with all the tools and lifting capacity needed to change out generators, pumps, and hydraulics,"



ABOVE: Youngquist Brothers North Oil and Gas ND Inc. services oilfield wellheads and has so far weathered the slump in the oil sector.

Photo courtesy of Youngquist Brothers Oil and Gas

LEFT: An 11-foot Reading Classic II truck body, customized with lift gate and IMT crane, works in the oil and gas sector. Image courtesy of The Reading Group LLC

Reynolds said.

Business has slowed considerably, but Reynolds said there's still plenty of work. "It's dropped off 50 to 60 per cent," he said. "We have as many rigs going as we can — it all depends on the bigger oil companies wanting to complete or repair their wells."

While oil often undergoes boom-bust cycles, Reynolds isn't entirely sure when to expect a turnaround. He's confident things will eventually improve, but that hasn't stopped some belt-tightening.

"You slim down, cut prices, cut wages," he said, adding that his employees number about 180 when all systems are running, and the company is now down to about 20 people.

Sometimes, a smaller operator will close shop, leaving a few customers behind, and Youngquist will recall some of its laid-off workforce, Reynolds said.

"That's kind of how we're surviving," he said. "The really small companies or the ones that are in bad debt situations that just can't survive anymore, they'll go away and then we'll pick up the work as it comes in. We're just sitting tight. It's a long-term proposition."

Manufacturers also feeling the effects

Service truck makers and component suppliers are noticing a ripple effect. Steve Coffee, national sales manager with Houston, Texas-based Liftmoore Inc., said oil has accounted for about one-third of the company's business.

"Business is off some from what it was prior to oil going to a lesser level. However, it's probably been more limited by chas-



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continued on page 8

NEWS

Service trucks squeak through oil downturn *continued from page 7*

sis availability than the price of oil," said Coffee, whose company manufactures cranes for service trucks.

"Some people are busy, some people are not," Coffee added. "It kind of depends on where you are and exactly who you're involved with. A lot of our cranes in the oil part of the industry are on the service side of the business, not the drilling side."

Other oil-producing areas are also affected besides North Dakota, of course. "Western Texas is off, but not off as much as south-central Texas," Coffee said. "The wells that are running still have to be maintained."

Truck manufacturers are also seeing evidence from the slump. "Our business with the oil and gas industry is down but we've made it up in other areas," said Eric McNally, sales vice-president with Reading Truck Body in Reading, Pa.

"We have distributors that have relied very heavily on the oil and gas industry, and we've seen 2015 numbers about 35 to 40 percent off sales to our distributors who play in the oil and gas market," McNally said.

While oil and gas are particularly prominent in the Dakotas, Colorado, Montana, and Texas, those regions have other activity sustaining truck sales, McNally said. "Some of our distributors play very heavily in the oil and gas sector, but others don't," he said.

That, and Reading's large user base in sectors ranging from telecom to construction have kept the manufacturer busy.

At Bert's Truck Equipment across the Red River from North Dakota in East Grand Forks, Minnesota, owner Riley Gregoire expressed optimism for the future of the company his great grandfather founded in 1939.



Oil prices have been on the downswing in 2015.

"He started out servicing farm tractors," Gregoire said. "He would go out to their farm, fix their tractors, and for payment he'd ask for gas money to fill up his tank to get back home."

Business back then was mainly in the agriculture sector, and with oil's downturn leading to a 25 per cent decline in business this past year, agriculture, logging and construction are picking up the slack, Gregoire said.

Have boom-and-bust cycles ended?

At Wallwork Truck Center in Fargo, general manager Mike Lausch keeps watch on assorted truck markets across the Dakotas and beyond.

"A number of operators have hundreds of trucks, and business has gotten so slow that if a truck has an issue they just park it and take another one," Lausch said. "They're not fixing them."

Lausch points to an increasingly complicated geopolitical context and expresses uncertainty. "The dynamics of past boom-and-bust cycles don't really apply anymore," Lausch said, factoring in consolidation of drilling activities on more compact sites, and pipelines that carry commodities such as oil.

"It's reducing the need for equipment and infrastructure ... and that's changing trucking," Lausch said.

In the energy sector right now, customers, vendors and dealers are just planning to wait out another long winter, he said.

"We'll know a lot more when spring hits, because if you don't see any sort of a rebound by then you'll see a whole bunch more people getting out," Lausch said. "Right now they're just trying to hang on."



"Business is off some from what it was prior to oil going to a lesser level. However, it's probably been more limited by chassis availability than the price of oil."

**— Steve Coffee,
national sales manager,
Liftmore Inc., Houston, Texas**

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Women blazing trails in service truck sector

continued from cover

According to a 2009 U.S. Department of Labor report on women's employment, just 1.6 percent of the country's approximately 223,000 heavy vehicle equipment and mobile equipment service technicians were women.

Only a handful of jobs — crane operators, cement masons and pipe layers, among them — had smaller numbers of women among their ranks.

There are more women working in the industry, running companies, managing sales and marketing and taking on other roles, but they too are in far fewer numbers than their male counterparts. And the people they're serving are predominately men; fewer than seven percent of industrial truck and operators in the U.S. are women.

Confused looks often greet them

Women who work in various aspects of mobile maintenance say they love the pace and the challenge of the work. But they are well aware that they're also trailblazers in an industry that often welcomes them with a confused look.

Alyssa Donegan, sales coordinator at Star Equipment in Des Moines, Iowa, followed her grandfather, father and uncles in the business. Her family's fingerprints are all over the business — which offers mechanic's trucks, lube trucks and cranes, among other equipment — but she's the only female family member who has joined the company.

Donegan handles inventory control, does all of the major stock orders for all of the company's locations and makes sure everything is properly priced and distributed for sale.

It's a natural fit for a woman who grew up driving skid loaders and excavators. Still, that's not always apparent to customers who call or drop in. More than a few have seen Donegan or heard her voice on the phone and immediately assumed they need to talk to someone else.

"I get a lot of people who don't want to talk to me because I'm a woman," she said. "They think I don't know what I'm speaking about, think I don't know the product."

For a while, Donegan said, the reactions from customers were "extremely frustrating." But with more experience under her belt, she's gotten used to watching customers hesitate — and then change their tune as soon as she starts rattling off information about the equipment they're looking to buy.

"Usually all you have to do is start talking about it, and they understand that you're not dumb," she said.

Apoligies due, and received

Bonne Karim, a retired fleet trainer for the U.S. Postal Service and chairwoman of the American Trucking Associations' Technology and Maintenance Council, earned an engineering degree and began her Postal Service career in plant maintenance. When a manager's job opened on the truck side of the business, she jumped at the chance — and then got more and more involved in automotive training.

She was the only woman training others at her location for more than a decade, surprising some students who didn't expect her to know much about mechanics.

"I once had two older gentlemen who came up and apologized after class; they had done their best to try and trip me up, and they didn't and were ashamed," she said.

Richardson spent seven years running daycare businesses before opening Wrecker 1, her Atlanta-based towing and recovery business. It was a big shift, but it came out of a longtime interest; Richardson's father had been a trucker, and she remembered him coming home with "horror stories" of being broken down on the side of the road for hours, waiting for service help to arrive.

"My thought behind it was to have a company that would be able to get the dad — or the mom, in today's world — back to the family as fast and safely as we could," she said.

In the early days in particular, Richardson worked hard to meet with people face to face, and doing any and all



Janis Orr

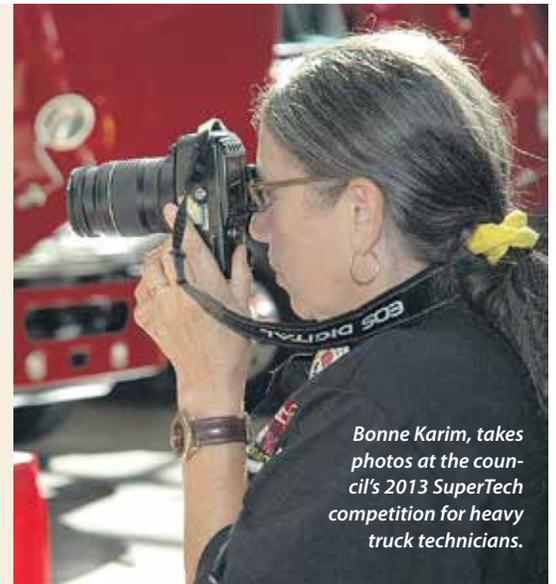


Christina Haug, then a diesel technician for Swift Transportation, competes in the Technology and Maintenance Council's 2013 SuperTech competition for heavy truck technicians.



"I once had two older gentlemen who came up and apologized after class; they had done their best to try and trip me up, and they didn't and were ashamed."

— Bonne Karim, chairwoman, American Trucking Associations' Technology and Maintenance Council



Bonne Karim, takes photos at the council's 2013 SuperTech competition for heavy truck technicians.

work of the business herself.

Her staff of eight does everything from service calls to cleaning up hazardous materials spills and wrecks, and Richardson makes sure she has the skills to back up every part of the business.

"I go shoulder to shoulder with my guys out on the road," Richardson said. "To me, that's equally important. I'm not going to ask them to do something I wouldn't."

"Usually all you have to do is start talking about it, and they understand that you're not dumb."

— Alyssa Donegan, sales coordinator, Star Equipment in Des Moines, Iowa

All they want is an equal shot

While they pride themselves on being able to perform just as well — or better — as the men who hold similar roles, women in the industry said they'd be happy to see more of their gender represented.

Donegan said she thinks schools and parents can do more to encourage girls who might show an aptitude for or interest in trucking or mechanics. Donegan's father told her she could do anything her brothers did, but she knows many girls don't get the same message.

"I think a lot of it has to do with when you're going through middle school, high school, college and a lot of those sciences and hands-on type activities are not marketed or geared toward girls," she said.

Janis Orr, another former Postal Service maintenance supervisor who once earned a "Supervisor of the Year" award from the ATA's Technology and Maintenance

Council, remembers telling a high school teacher about how she was fascinated with auto mechanics — and watching him scoff when she said she'd like to be a mechanic someday.

Years later, when a job came up with the Postal Service, Orr thought: "I'm just going to see if I would still want to do that." Turns out, she still did.

"Going into a garage, the smell, the sounds, I thought: Man, that's where I need to be," Orr said.

Embrace the work and become expert

Other women learned to embrace the industry much later, but said it's proof that anyone can get involved.

Nina Frischherz, director of marketing at QT Equipment, a service truck dealer in Akron, Ohio, worked at a company that sold ballet shoes before she traded the dancing business in for heavy equipment.

In short order, she had to become an expert on service trucks, cranes and chassis. Now, she's the woman surprising people with her knowledge of the vehicles cruising by on the road.

"I'll be driving on the highway and I'll say: 'Oh my gosh, look at that crane — I bet that can lift so much,'" she said. "Or I'll be talking to my guy friends about Peterbilt chassis."

Richardson, with Wrecker 1, said the key for any woman looking to break into the industry is persistence and a real interest in doing the work.

"You've got to want to do it, first and foremost," she said. "You can be the difference that you want to make. That's what I've been: the difference I wanted to make in this industry."

Erin Golden is a journalist in Minnesota.



COVER

Custom-built rail service trucks thrive in a growing marketplace

continued from cover

ferent service needs for railroads and no one truck covers it all. So each service vehicle is custom built because everyone wants it done their way.”

Worman, who is responsible for product management for commercial vehicles, says that IMT focuses, for example, on selling telescoping and articulating cranes into the rail servicing market. That’s primarily because of the customization expected and the difficulty in developing a standardized truck body that fits the needs of everyone.

Each railroad has its own specs

“The specs are all different for every railroad company, even with the same end goal. We have the easy part, though. We just build the cranes they use,” says Worman, who adds that IMT typically works with the contractors the rail companies hire to build (or “up-fit”) their service vehicles.

This is good for IMT because there’s much more standardization when it comes to cranes, but Worman says it’s also a very price sensitive marketplace because there’s less specialization. Given this, IMT relies on building brand recognition and loyalty for their lifts, as well as finding ways to differentiate them in a marketplace where the size of all cranes is usually limited to certain lifting capacities because of the environments in which they work.

“A lot of the specialization we offer has to do with addressing lift capacities and accounting for tip factors when deploying cranes to the sides,” adds Worman, who says that being a U.S.-based company is an important selling point for some.



This Maintainair EE153 locomotive service truck is shown with a toilet service station.

“This industry, like many others, is looking for the most ergonomically designed products to support the safety needs, as well as assist technicians as they perform their jobs as efficiently as possible.

– Tom Wibben, Maintainair Corporation of Iowa Inc.

Tom Wibben, a sales and service manager with Maintainair Corporation in Sheldon, Iowa, agrees that railways place great importance on customizing their service vehicles. That includes taking into account the varied climates they operate in.

“Some of the vehicles used in the northern climates will have enclosures for the technicians to work inside, along with the equipment designed for both hot, and cold weather conditions,” Wibben explains.

Maintainair manufactures a variety of service trucks for



This Maintainair EE153 locomotive service truck is shown with a sand and oil service station.

different industries. For the rail market, they includes two-and one-ton service bodies, custom lube trucks, a full series of mechanics/crane trucks, and combination vehicles like Maintainair’s Signature Series 5, a two-ton combination service, lube, and crane truck.

Equipment that can perform a multitude of tasks – like a Maintainair locomotive service trucks, or LST – is important for rail companies, Wibben says.

“The locomotive requires routine servicing and preventative maintenance just like any other machine. The challenge is that some distances are too great in between terminals, so the LST will fill these gaps,” Wibben explains. “The routine items the LST services are the engine and air compressor oils, along with the toilet, and the reloading of sand storage tanks.”

Ergonomics, safety, and efficiency are key

The rail industry is a leader in designing safe and efficient equipment such as grab handles, access steps, worksite and safety lighting, ground-level tool storage, and conspicuity tape, Wibben notes.

“This industry, like many others, is looking for the most

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This 524 model from Custom Truck & Equipment's rail division features a medium section truck with custom body, rail gear, articulating crane, and twin hydraulic tool circuits.

Photo courtesy of Custom Truck & Equipment

ergonomically designed products to support the safety needs, as well as assist technicians as they perform their jobs as efficiently as possible. Given this, the current trend continues to push for products that promote safety and efficiency, but also looks for designs that provide lighter weights and longer lasting products," Wibben says.

Innovation is also important in the rail servicing industry, even for well-established players. Stellar Industries in Garner, Iowa, has long been a provider of 5,000- 7,500-pound capacity telescoping cranes, compressors, and other accessories for rail service work. Nonetheless, the company continues to work on enhancing its products, whether it's through technology, or the quality of components used.

As an example, some Stellar cranes are now equipped with the company's trademarked Crane Dynamics Technology, or CDT, a proprietary operating system that employs colored LEDs and other "sensory indicators" to warn when the crane is approaching maximum capacity. CDT also includes a "safe mode" that slows down operation in case something goes wrong, as well as pulsating



This Maintainer FF206 railroad service truck has a crane, compressor, and tool storage compartments.

Photo courtesy of Maintainer Corporation of Iowa Inc.

vibrations that can be felt when using the handheld controls. A boost system on CDT-equipped cranes also allows for brief operation at 118 percent of normal capacity.

"Crane operators don't have to guesstimate what a load is ... the system tells you," explains Tim Davison, a product manager at Stellar. "We give operators a lot of visual information and there are diagnostics and codes that help identify problems, but it's a simple system that's very easy to use."

Davison says being able to provide this level of information is critical, especially since rail service fleet managers want to accurately track when they need to service their equipment.

"Cranes are more than hydraulics and metal. You have to be smart with electronics and precision and data collection, which is why we want to be good at relaying information about the crane back to the operator," explains Davison, who says Stellar's systems indicate the hours of use, when it's time to change filters, and much more — all built so operators can download the information themselves.

Payload a major consideration

Electronic advancements aside, rail service vehicles still have to stand up to the rigors of harsh working environments. Truck bodies have also gotten heavier in recent years because of safety requirements, says Bryan Boehm, director of the rail division for Custom Truck & Equipment in Kansas City, Mo.

"Payload is a big issue, so we're working a lot now with aluminum beds and rims," says Boehm, whose company is an "up-fitter" that builds rail service trucks at various locations around the country. "We add up to 2,500 pounds just for the rail gear, which about 90 percent of all trucks will have, so we're always looking for ways to give our customers more payload."

Most rail companies, however, want many of the same things on their trucks, such as hydraulic tool circuits, specialized bodies, racks for carrying rail timbers, and cranes, Boehm says. Safety features are also high on the priority list.

"Safety is a big deal, especially slip resistance surfaces and payload safety," says Tim Minor, a sales operations manager at Custom Truck. "Maintenance is always a common thread when you talk about designing a truck, but there's more stress being placed on safety all the time, so it's never not a part of the conversation."

Also worth talking about is that rail traffic keeps on growing. That means the outlook for rail service trucks is encouraging.

"Rail is very consistent, even in times of down markets, but the key industry measure to look at is gross ton miles. The bigger the number the more track wear and, in turn, the more service required," Boehm explains. "Rail companies might replace 10 percent of their service fleet yearly, so we've experienced a very consistent volume of orders over the last 20 years."

Mark Yontz is a freelance writer from Urbandale, Iowa.



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COVER

Miners dig their service trucks

continued from cover

between a staggered cab for a single driver and passenger or a crew cab for up to five people, and equipment options include oxy-acetylene bottles, compressors, welding machines, generators, small Liftmoore or Hiab cranes, and assorted toolboxes.

Industrial Fabrication vice-president Peter Villgren says Minecat trucks are meant for underground mines, where heat and dampness can be intense and road conditions difficult.

Mines throw curves at service trucks

Appearances can be deceiving. Mines underneath the Nevada desert can have water table issues, and temperatures deep in a northern Canadian mine such as Vale Creighton near Sudbury can exceed 100 degrees Fahrenheit due to natural heat from the rock formation.

A cooling package, with fans and radiators of sufficient size, can help, Villgren says.

Mines can throw other curves at service trucks. Freely flowing groundwater can be acidic and can contain minuscule, abrasive grains of sand known as fines.

"If you don't have enclosed braking systems you'll run into high maintenance," Villgren says, explaining that a spring-applied hydraulic release brake system seals delicate areas from the elements.

Minecat UT99 trucks are not modified highway-type vehicles but, rather, designed and built to operate in difficult conditions, he adds. Villgren says the modular construction of the UT99 allows it to be disassembled to fit inside a cage and then quickly reassembled down below.

While Minecat trucks are designed to work under-

ground, Ventures Manufacturing Inc. of St. Albert, Alta., builds utility trucks for above-ground, open-pit operations.

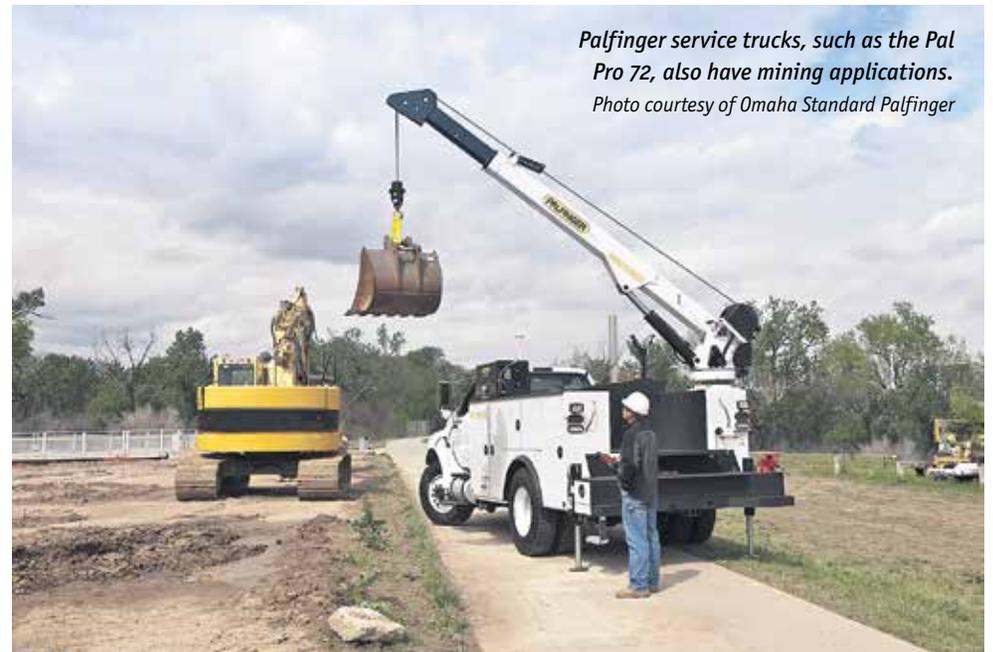
"In Alberta, it's mostly coal mining and oil-sands bitumen mining," company salesperson Barry Adkisson says.

"We've built a lot of flat-decks but also a lot of mechanics' service bodies and welding trucks," Adkisson says. "Mostly what we do is custom work — everything from a seven-foot-long body for a short-box pick-up truck to 18- and 20-foot-long service bodies for tandems and oil and lube trucks for tandem-axle mine-site service work."

Ventures Manufacturing starts with a two-ton Dodge 5500 or Ford F550 four-wheel-drive and typically adds an 11- or 12-foot mechanics' service body with a VMAC or Airworks compressor, a service deck, and straight-boom or knuckle-boom crane able to reach 20 feet and lift 5,000 pounds.

"The highest-end thing might be a 20-foot box with a 1,500-gallon fuel tank on the front ... something on the back of a tandem-axle Kenworth, maybe even a tri-drive (three-drive axles)," Adkisson says. "It all depends on the application and whatever works best."

Mainline manufacturers also supply service trucks for mines.



Palfinger service trucks, such as the Pal Pro 72, also have mining applications. Photo courtesy of Omaha Standard Palfinger

Open-pit mines require bigger trucks

Bruce Bunting, of service body maker The Knapheide Manufacturing Company, says trucks supporting open-pit operations tend to be larger than conventional vehicles.

"Everything is larger, from the need for additional storage of larger tools to larger air compressors to operate the one-inch-and-up pneumatic impact guns," Bunting says.

A key differentiator between underground and above-ground service trucks is that only diesel engines are allowed to operate underground. "This particularly applies to auxiliary equipment such as welders or portable generators," Bunting explains.

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While mechanics and their trucks sometimes freelance as independents, mining companies often employ and include them in their fleets.

Detour Gold is a case in point. The Toronto-based company opened a mine in northeastern Ontario three years ago and has a wide-ranging fleet of Caterpillar vehicles and other big equipment that need routine and emergency servicing.

Some machines, including 330-tonne Caterpillar 795 off-highway trucks, are so massive they arrive onsite in pieces on flatbed trucks.

Industry flat but slowly improving

Derek Teevan, senior vice-president of corporate affairs, says Detour Gold owns its own fleet but has a separate maintenance contract with a tire company “because that’s a huge undertaking in terms of both light vehicles as well as the heavy equipment.”

Detour also has a maintenance contract with Caterpillar, though most work is done in a large on-site garage rather than with trucks in the field. Massive shovels that are hard to move are the exception, Teevan says.

While the trucks do their thing, the buzz in mining circles these days is low commodity prices and flat-lined activity.

At Industrial Fabrication, Peter Villgren says customers are looking at costs and measures to increase efficiency. “We’re not breaking any records currently,” Villgren adds.

Commodity prices may be low but Ventures Manufacturing’s Barry Adkisson considers the economy strong. “It’s not as good as good as it was last year but there’s lots going on,” Adkisson says. “We’re probably doing half of what we were doing last year, but it’s slowly getting better.”

Bruce Bunting reports reduced demand at Knapheide for large-scale service trucks for direct support of coal min-

“We’ve built a lot of flat-decks but also a lot of mechanics’ service bodies and welding trucks. Mostly what we do is custom work — everything from a seven-foot-long body for a short-box pick-up truck to 18- and 20-foot-long service bodies for tandems and oil and lube trucks for tandem-axle mine-site service work.”

— Barry Adkisson, Ventures Manufacturing Inc.

ing. However, he’s predicting demand for commodities picking up as the global economy regains strength. “Most of the mining sectors are experiencing corrections in their demand levels, but mining in general has always been a boom and bust cycle,” Bunting says.

Trucks vital for maintenance programs

At Detour Gold, Derek Teevan says gold prices seem to be stabilizing, demand hasn’t waned, and favourable Canada-U.S. exchange rates have helped north of the border.

Still, Teevan adds, markets are tight and the service trucks and other heavy equipment are vital to maintaining overall efficiency.

“They’re essential to the safety and the continuation of our operation,” Teevan says. “As a large bulk tonnage operation, we measure everything to the minute, to the half-kilometre, to the half-a-tonne — everything’s constantly measured and managed to make sure that we’re working



Ventures Manufacturing Inc. makes various custom service bodies for mining, including this one.

Photo courtesy of Ventures Manufacturing Inc.

efficiently. So maintenance is a critical part of the success of the mining operation.”

Brian Heffron at Caterpillar’s competitor, Palfinger, concurs.

“Heavy equipment and machinery generates a lot of capital,” says Heffron, who is a product specialist for Palfinger mechanics bodies, service cranes and compressor with Omaha Standard Palfinger, which is based in Council Bluffs, Iowa. “Any time it is down for repairs, scheduled or otherwise, it is costing money in downtime and loss of productivity. This is one of the reasons why many companies employ their own service mechanics’ fleet as well as utilizing their heavy equipment vendor’s fleet of mechanics.”



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BY DAN ANDERSON

Spec My Truck

The Machine Whisperer

Growing demand for his services after-hours encouraged Tom Veronesi to take a leap of faith in 1999 and start his own business

Tom Veronesi, owner of Veronesi Welding and Repair in Bristol, Conn., is one of those mechanics who can walk up to a complex hydraulic system or pull the cover off an unusual transmission, look it over, and quickly understand how it all works. Ask him how he does it, and he shrugs.

"I surprise myself sometimes," admits 51-year-old Veronesi. "Machinery just makes sense to me. Even if I've never worked on a particular machine before, I open 'em up, kind of look 'em over, and all of a sudden I understand how it all works. I can't explain it — it's crazy."

This natural talent led Veronesi through a series of mechanic's jobs for various heavy equipment contractors and dealerships. A growing demand for his services after-hours encouraged him to take a leap of faith in 1999 and start his own business.

As his business grew, he eventually was able to design and order his "dream" service truck, a 2008 Peterbilt 367 equipped with a Cummins ISX500 engine and 18-speed Road Ranger transmission ahead of tandem axles mounted on Peterbilt's Air Trac suspension. The business end of his carefully spec'ed chassis carries a custom-built 25-foot Feterl service body equipped with a 14,000-pound Feterl hydraulic crane.

"For the service body, I drew up plans of what I wanted and sent them to several service body manufacturers," says Veronesi. "Feterl was very flexible and willing to work with me on building exactly what I wanted. Mostly, I just wanted more room."

Specifically, Veronesi designed his service body with 72-inch-tall front compartments instead of the standard 60-inch compartments, an extra thick floor in the gas cylinder compartment to bear the weight of up to seven gas cylinders, a 36-inch welder deck, and more space in every compartment. The left side of the body is "nothin' but toolboxes," loaded with hand and air tools that range up to 1.5-inch drive. He carries two hydraulic torque wrenches that enable him to torque fasteners to as much as 12,000 foot-pounds. A welding rod oven is stocked with 7018 low-hydrogen welding rods. He also carries one-quarter to half-inch carbon-arc rods.

"I was able to start using half-inch rods when I upgraded from a 400-amp welder to a Miller Big Blue Turbo 600-amp welder," Veronesi says. "It's a beautiful freakin' machine. I run three Lincoln and Miller wire-feed welders off it. One is a Lincoln LN-25, one is a Miller 12VS, and one is a Miller S-22P12

constant-speed I use on my line bore welder. I've got all my welding cables set up with quick disconnects, with the different grounds on short whips so I can switch from a spring clamp to a screw clamp to a magnetic ground, whatever I need for a particular job."

An exothermic slice pack, a Hypertherm plasma cutter, and a York line-boring machine are also part of his on-board inventory. A hydraulically driven 60 cubic-feet-per-minute Boss Infinity rotary screw air compressor feeds a 30-gallon air tank mounted under the body. If he needs high volumes of air, he'll bring along his Atlas Copco 186 trailer-mounted air compressor.

"If I'm doing a track job on an excavator, I use the Atlas to run two one-inch-drive air wrenches, with me on one side, another guy on the other side, and a third guy on the machine rolling the tracks," Veronesi says. "I've got the tools to get a job done without messing around."

Getting a job done as quickly and efficiently as possible includes using an on-board dry ice maker to shrink bushings before installation.

"For the service body, I drew up plans of what I wanted and sent them to several service body manufacturers. Feterl was very flexible and willing to work with me on building exactly what I wanted. Mostly, I just wanted more room."

— Tom Veronesi, Veronesi Welding and Repair, Bristol, Conn.

"It only cost maybe \$300 20 years ago, but it's saved me a ton of time," Veronesi says. "I carry a liquid CO₂ (carbon dioxide) bottle and make dry ice on the spot. It's a no-brainer compared to chasing around to find some place with dry ice or liquid nitrogen. My whole thing is to be efficient. My goal is to get there and have what I need to fix it, all in one trip. That makes both me and my customers happy."



Photos courtesy of Tom Veronesi



Tom Veronesi estimates his truck's gross replacement value, when loaded with tools and accessories for a "big" job, at more than \$500,000.



Veronesi started his business in 1999 and eventually designed his "dream" machine.



A Lincoln wire-feed welder anchors a compartment of welding supplies.



Up to seven gas cylinders neatly ride in an over-tall compartment with a heavy-duty floor.

Dan Anderson is a part-time freelance writer and full-time heavy equipment mechanic with more than 20 years of experience working out of service trucks. He is based in Bouton, Iowa.

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A Miller Big Blue Turbo 600-amp welder fills even the oversized 36-inch welding bay Veronesi special-ordered on his Feterl service body.



Heavy-duty screw and hydraulic portable pin presses help remove massive pins used in excavator booms and other industrial applications.



A plasma cutter shares storage space with an assortment of huge C-clamps and one of dozens of heavy-duty hammers.



Tom Veronesi is dwarfed by the service truck he spec'ed with oversize everything.



Veronesi carries a bottle of CO2 and uses a dry ice maker to make bricks of dry ice to shrink bushings and pins for easier installation.



A Hi-Torque hydraulic pack, a one-inch drive hydraulic torque wrench and a 1.5-inch drive hydraulic torque wrench, provide torque up to 12,000 foot-pounds.



Veronesi uses a variety of wire-feed welders in conjunction with his Miller 600-amp welder for everything from sheet metal repairs to welding for line-boring.



Over-size side compartments carry an array of bolts, spare parts and tools.



Acetylene and carbon arc torches, along with exothermic cutting tools, are part of Veronesi's metal melting arsenal.

ICUEE WRAP

Scores of service trucks displayed at Kentucky's biennial Demo Expo

Despite a soggy beginning, exhibitors and attendees report a successful show

KEITH NORBURY

Makers of mechanics trucks and their accessories had an outsized presence at the biennial International Construction and Utilities Exposition early this fall in Louisville, Ky.

Jeff Williams, inside sales rep for Oregon-based Highway Products, said the show was amazing for his company, which was exhibiting at ICUEE for the first time. "We now get to hear compliments and constructive criticism about our products when they actually get to touch them, which we never get otherwise," Williams said.

Like other exhibitors, Williams was also impressed with the "quality" of attendees, such as fleet managers.

"We may get one call a week from a fleet manager who's got 1,200 (or) 5,000 vehicles. I've met 20 of them within two hours here," Williams said. "It's something I can never get from the inbound phone (or) off our website."

As result, while Highway Products had a budget of about 10 times what it would typically spend on a trade show, "already I can tell it was so worth it based upon the leads I got and the people I've spoken to, the feedback from customers, existing

customers that have come and finally got to meet us in person, you know, from the East Coast, which we never ever get to see," Williams said.

Exhibition attracts record numbers

The exhibition, also known as "The Demo Expo," drew a record crowd of 18,000 registered attendees to the Kentucky Exposition Center, said a news release from the Association of Equipment Manufacturers, which organizes the show. That surpassed attendance at the previous Demo Expo in 2013 by 13 percent.

"Registrants came from all 50 states, nine of the 10 Canadian provinces and more than 60 other countries worldwide," the release said.

Many attendees compared the show to a mini-ConExpo-Con/Agg, a reference to the triennial heavy equipment show in Las Vegas that the AEM also organizes. Con-Expo typically draws more than 100,000 visitors, about six times as many as attend The Demo Expo.

Taking part in the ICUEE show is nevertheless a gruelling affair. The 2015 show, which took place Sept. 29-Oct. 1, boasted more than 950 exhibitors and over 1.2



Obie Hansen left and Jeff Williams tend the Highway Products booth at the 2015 Demo Expo.



Ian Lahmer, marketing director with Venco Venturo LLC, meets with Nick Moss, sales manager of Service Truck Magazine, at the publication's booth.



Craig Bonham (center), vice-president of business development with Reading Truck Body LLC, talks with Bob Dinallo (left) and Thegen Robbins, regional sales managers with hardware makers Eberhard Manufacturing Company.



John Burke, central sales manager of commercial vehicles and modifications for Monroe Truck Equipment promotes a Monroe body under the big tent at the Ford booth.

million net square feet of exhibition space, both indoors and outdoors.

Among the pieces of equipment displayed at The Demo Expo were dozens of service trucks — from manufacturers like Stellar Industries, Iowa Mold Tooling Inc., Palfinger, and Maintainer of Iowa Corporation. Many of those trucks were equipped with small cranes from those manufacturers as well as others, such as Venco Venturo LLC, Jomac Ltd., Auto Crane, and Italy-based Next Hydraulics s.r.l., which makes Cobra cranes.

One such Cobra crane at the show was fitted to a service body made by Pride Bodies of Cambridge, Ont. Pride built the unit, which is equipped with a high-rail system for travelling on railroad tracks, for Canadian Pacific Railway.

"CP's very proud of the vehicle and worked hand in hand putting it together," said Kevin Lanthier, Pride's sales coordinator. "So we've had CP's fleet manager here, showing it off to some of the other (rail) guys down south. That's been a good opportunity for us to meet new leads."

While it was Lanthier's first time at the Demo Expo, Pride has exhibited at the show before. He described it as a good show for his company.

"I didn't know a thing about Kentucky before I got here," Lanthier said. "The people are very nice. Everyone's got their A game it seems like today and it's very friendly, a nice atmosphere."

Early rains sends everyone indoors

For the outdoor exhibitors, however, this year's show got off to a soggy start. After a sunbaked day on Monday, Sept. 28 as exhibitors were putting their booths together, rain drenched the outdoor exhibits when the show opened the next day. That was good news for inside exhibitors as attendees sought refuge. But not so good

for those stuck outside.

It could have been worse, though. Forecasts called for thunder showers Tuesday but they didn't materialize.

Inside a big tent at the Ford booth on one of the outdoor exhibition areas, John Burke was able to keep relatively dry. The central sales manager of commercial vehicles and modifications for Monroe Truck Equipment, Burke was promoting a Monroe body on a Ford chassis. "At least people were coming here to get out of the rain. It helped us out," Burke said, noting that traffic picked up considerably the next day. (Monroe, which is based in Wisconsin, also had its own booth on the more distant lot L of the exhibition grounds.)

Like many others, Burke said the show is very important for service body makers. "A lot of people know the Monroe brand and what we do but some of them don't, you know," Burke said. "I was just talking to somebody and they didn't realize that we had our own bodies and the differences between that and some of our competitors."

Among the exhibitors that benefited from being inside was Liftmoore Inc., a manufacturer of cranes for service trucks. "We've been outside until about three shows ago," said Steve Coffee, Liftmoore's national sales manager. "It was a good decision we feel like to move indoors."

Being indoors also benefited EZ Stak LLC, said marketing manager Bruce Hardy. Reciting what a colleague had observed, Hardy said, "We were slammed. We can thank the rain for that."

EZ Stak, which makes drawer systems for service bodies as its core product, also benefited from some advance preparation. "We sent postcards out. We sent emails out. We ran ads," Hardy said. "So I think that helped too."

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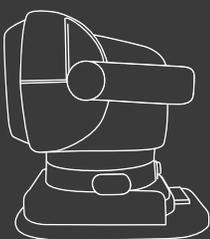


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ICUEE WRAP

Plenty of quality leads

Back outside, Donna Popp-Bruesewitz, communications manager with Stellar Industries Inc., said that traffic picked up after Tuesday's deluge and Wednesday's intermittent sprinkles. "I think the leads we have gathered are definitely quality leads and we'll be following up the next couple of weeks and closing some deals," Popp-Bruesewitz said.

Stellar didn't launch any news products at ICUEE, although the company was touting its CBT Plus crane controller, introduced at the 2014 ConExpo-Con/Agg show in Las Vegas. Two years ago, Stellar didn't exhibit at ICUEE at all. "We had enough people come and say we missed you there," Popp-Bruesewitz said. "So we decided to come back and give it another try. And, you know, I think it's worth being here."

This year's ICUEE show is more important ever because of the worldwide slump in the oil and gas industries, noted Dain Samuelson, marketing manager with Casco Truck Body.

"And construction has been picking back up and filling that void," Samuelson said. "So, actually coming to this show and seeing how much construction is back is encouraging to say the least."

Venco Venturo Industries LLC has been exhibiting at ICUEE for as long as company president Brett Collins can remember. And he joined the firm in 1994.

Despite the weather, the show is a great event for Venco Venturo, probably its second most important show after the NTEA's annual Work Truck Show.

"It's only an hour and a half away from our home city of Cincinnati," Collins said of ICUEE. "So we get to connect with a lot of our customers. It's become a bit of an up-fitter show as well. So we get to connect with our various truck builders from this part of the world."

Venco Venturo's products include truck cranes for service bodies. The company also partners with California-based Phenix Enterprises, which builds service bodies for Venco Venturo.

Collins said the show has been getting bigger all the time. It also serves to astound him how many competitors, including recent entrants, his company has in the industry.

"Of course, the recovery from the great recession has really been strong in our industry," Collins said. "We've seen a lot of growth. Venturo itself has grown 45 percent in just two years. So it's bigger, better, more technologically advanced equipment."

Time for a coming out party

For Utility 1 Source of Kansas City, this ICUEE was a "coming out party," said inside sales manager Jim Hottel. The company is an umbrella brand for five firms, including Custom Truck & Equipment, which has its own lines of service bodies. Utility 1 Source companies are also dealers for the likes of Iowa Mold Tooling, Stellar, and Reading, Hottel said.

At ICUEE, the Utility 1 Source logo could be seen almost anywhere one turned. According to the company website, it had 52 units on exhibition in the outdoor lots. They included a CTE high-rail service truck.

For Teamco Inc., makers of Feterl service bodies, exhibiting at the show is



Dain Samuelson, marketing manager with CASECO Truck Body, watches over the company's booth.



Charles Mehlhaf, president of Teamco Inc., promotes his company's Feterl brand of service bodies.

important for "name recognition," said Teamco president Charles Mehlhaf. Teamco acquired the Feterl brand and assets in December 2011 following about five years in which the trucks weren't made. Once Teamco resurrected the brand, it had to connect with former customers to let them know that parts and new bodies were now available, he said.

"Over the last couple of years we've grown our business substantially from what it was when we got it to begin with," said Mehlhaf, who overall was "pretty satisfied" with the show despite the weather.

For a company that makes a niche product, such as air compressors, ICUEE is valuable "to just show that you're in this business," said Mike Pettigrew, marketing manager for VMAC (Vehicle Mounted Air Compressors), based in Nanaimo, B.C.

"You actually have to be in front of people, show them that you're a real company, that your products are available, and that they can touch them and feel them," Pettigrew said.

For Vanair Manufacturing Inc., another maker of compressors, ICUEE is "the best show that we've got," said Jim Perschke, Vanair's vice-president of sales.

"So no matter what, every time we come here it's a solid show for us," Perschke said. "It wouldn't matter if the weather's good or bad. Our customers are here and we have to be here."

How ICUEE compares with WTS

The biennial ICUEE inevitably draws comparisons with the annual Work Truck Show in Indianapolis. A common observation was that the Work Truck Show is more geared toward distributors whereas ICUEE attracts more end users, particularly in the utilities sectors.

"Well, the Work Truck Show I would say that is our industry show," said Roy O'Neal, sales manager for TruckCraft Corporation, which is based in Pennsylvania. "People know our name there. Nobody knows our name here. So we're having to get our name around this one, whereas at that one (the Work Truck Show) all of our



Steve Tracy (left), southeast sales manager with Maintainer Corporation of Iowa, talks about the features of a Maintainer truck body displayed at the Ford booth with Bill Johnston (center) and George Glenn of the Chatsworth Waterworks Commission.



Jan Lahmer (left) and Tony Albanese of Venco Venturo Industries LLC flank their president, Brett Collins, at the Cincinnati-based company's booth.

dealers come. This one we're hoping to find new dealers."

Fritz Ekstam, general manager of Jomac Ltd., noted that ICUEE is more oriented toward utilities, which means many attendees aren't necessarily looking for the service bodies and cranes his company manufactures. "But obviously there's a lot of competitors here. So it gives you some exposure," said Ekstam, who company had a truck equipped with a VMAC underhood compressor at the latter's booth.

The Knapheide Manufacturing Company has a longstanding tradition of showing 10 to 12 trucks at ICUEE, said Brian Richards, marketing communications manager.

"It gives us an opportunity to show the power generation, distribution, construction, equipment utilities companies, the customization that we can offer to those customers," said Richards, noting that the show broke attendance records despite the weather.

"You never know about the weather in Louisville come late September, October, so it's always weather dependent," Richards added. "But we see a better influx of customers over the years as we've kind of spread across and around our product lines."

Whole lot of walking going on

Suppliers also attended the show, looking for customers among the exhibitors. For example, Eberhard Manufacturing Company makes door latches and hinges for service bodies. It didn't have a booth at ICUEE but two of its regional sales managers, Bob Dinallo and Thegen Robbins, made plenty of connections just by walking around.

"It's a big show," Dinallo said as he stopped by the Reading Truck Body booth.



Persistent rain dampens attendance at outdoor exhibits on the first day of Demo Expo.



Roy O'Neal, sales manager for TruckCraft Corporation, tends his company's booth.



Donna Popp-Bruesewitz, communications manager, Stellar Industries Inc., braves the weather.



Fritz Ekstam, general manager of Jomac Truck Bodies & Cranes, shares booth with compressor makers VMAC Global Technology Inc.

"It's a lot of walking and a lot of manufacturers. It's a good opportunity for us to see our product in action."

Dinallo also received some suggestions from Craig Bonham, vice-president of business development with Ready Truck Body LLC, about how to make hardware more ergonomic.

"The expectations of the customers, they want the back of the truck to look as great as the front of the truck. And that goes with the technology swing that needs to pick up pace," Bonham said in an interview later. "The OEM manufacturers right now out there are creating products that have new ergonomic features in them that make the work life for the customer very, very pleasant."

As for the ICUEE show itself, Bonham said, "There are people from all facets of the industry and many of the customers come here in hopes of finding the next win for their business."

On that score, the show was "fantastic" as always, he said. "If you're in the business, you need to be here."



ICUEE WRAP

Scenes from the 2015 Demo Expo

Photos by Keith Norbury

More than 950 exhibitors, many of them related to service bodies and accessory makers, and more than 18,000 visitors attended the biennial International Construction and Utilities Exposition, held Sept. 27 to Oct. 1 in Louisville, Ky. *Service Truck Magazine* bumped into many of them, as the photos in this gallery attest.



Jeff Harrison, northwest region manager for Auto Crane, demonstrates the NexStar 3 remote controller to Ron Johnstone (center) and David Barnes of Calgary-based Raytel Fleet Outfitters this fall at The Demo Expo in Louisville, Ky.



Danno Hoff, tool drawer product line manager with CTech Manufacturing, takes notes while checking out equipment at the Iowa Mold Tooling Company Inc. booth.



Donnie Rogers (left) and Ben Henderson of the SJWD Water District of Lyman, S.C., check out the hose cabinet of a Southwest Products fuel and lube truck.



Terry Hardwick, an account manager with Snap-on Tools, demonstrates the tool maker's torque multiplier wheel torque system, which he described as a safe and easy way to tighten wheel lugs to the correct torque.



Tom De Soo, director of I&I Sling Inc. and a certified rigger and examiner with the National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators, promotes NCCCO rigger programs at the Demo Expo.



Jackie Hawkins of Florida-based Mile Marker Recovery Gear speaks with Tom Confer, southeast regional manager of Omaha Standard Palfinger, in front of a Palfinger service truck.



Ken Dedor, sales rep with American Eagle Accessories Group, a division of Stellar Industries Inc., holds down the American Eagle stand.



Tina Voss, outside sales rep with of BrandFx Body Company, promotes the company's 661DLS service body.



Rachel Abel, an intern with Altec Industries, staffs a desk that pays homage to a service body at the Altec Bodies Showcase booth.



James Singleton, an apprenticeship and training crane instructor with IUOE local 18, maneuvers a steel weight through a course designed to test the capabilities of service truck crane operators.



Justin Groover tends the Monroe Custom Utility Bodies Inc. booth.



Sheldon Baker, president and owner of Ontario-based Canadian Crane Rentals Ltd., chats with David Cavegn, regional sales manager for the mid Atlantic region with Morgan Corporation.



Magician Scott Tokar entertains visitors to the GPS Insight booth.



Scott Fenimore (left) and Rich Rulon of Utility One Source talk with Mark Partlow of Iowa Mold Tooling Company Inc. about IMT's new Dominator III mechanics truck on display at the Demo Expo.



Justin Wheeler of Parkin Hannifin Corporation promotes the new Chelsea 249V Series PTO.



Derek Marshall, a field service technician with Terex Corporation, stands by one of the company's service trucks, which is on display at the Terex stand.

Impressions of The Demo Expo

The following are a few comments from exhibitors and visitors at the 2015 International Construction and Utilities Exposition, a.k.a. ICUEE or The Demo Expo, held Sept. 29-Oct. 1 in Louisville, Ky.



"It's very important. We get to see a lot of our customers. Obviously, it's a big show so all of our customers come to a central location. It's great for us to be able to get to everybody."

— Matt Ames, technical sales rep, Boss Industries



Jeff Jackson, zone sale manager with Muncie Power Products, staffs the company's booth where it keeping under wraps a new PTO designed for Ford transmissions. The PTO will be revealed in 2016.

"The show's been very good. Been very busy — a lot of activity coming through. We are the manufacturers of commercial industry products such as power take-offs and hydraulic pumps, pneumatic systems. We have a lot of customers who are at this show and, of course, a lot of their customers are at the show and come by and see our products."

— Jeff Jackson, zone sale manager, Muncie Power Products



"We had great traffic today but with the outside booths being slow it gave us a chance to go around and talk with our dealers and our distributors that are displaying. So the interaction with the people that we're working with the most has been really good today."

— Darrell Martin, marketing director, CTech Manufacturing



Jennifer Wing and Tim Nelson watch over the Hannay Reels Inc. booth.

"I'm getting a lot of great marketing connections and stuff because I'm interested in our application shots and how our reels are used. We have a lot of dealers here as well as a lot of people who use our reels."

— Jennifer Wing, marketing manager with Hannay Reels Inc.



"We've seen a lot of people from all over. And I think it's just been very good. The people that have come by, we've had some new people interested in our products and, of course, quite a few of the old customers have stopped by too."

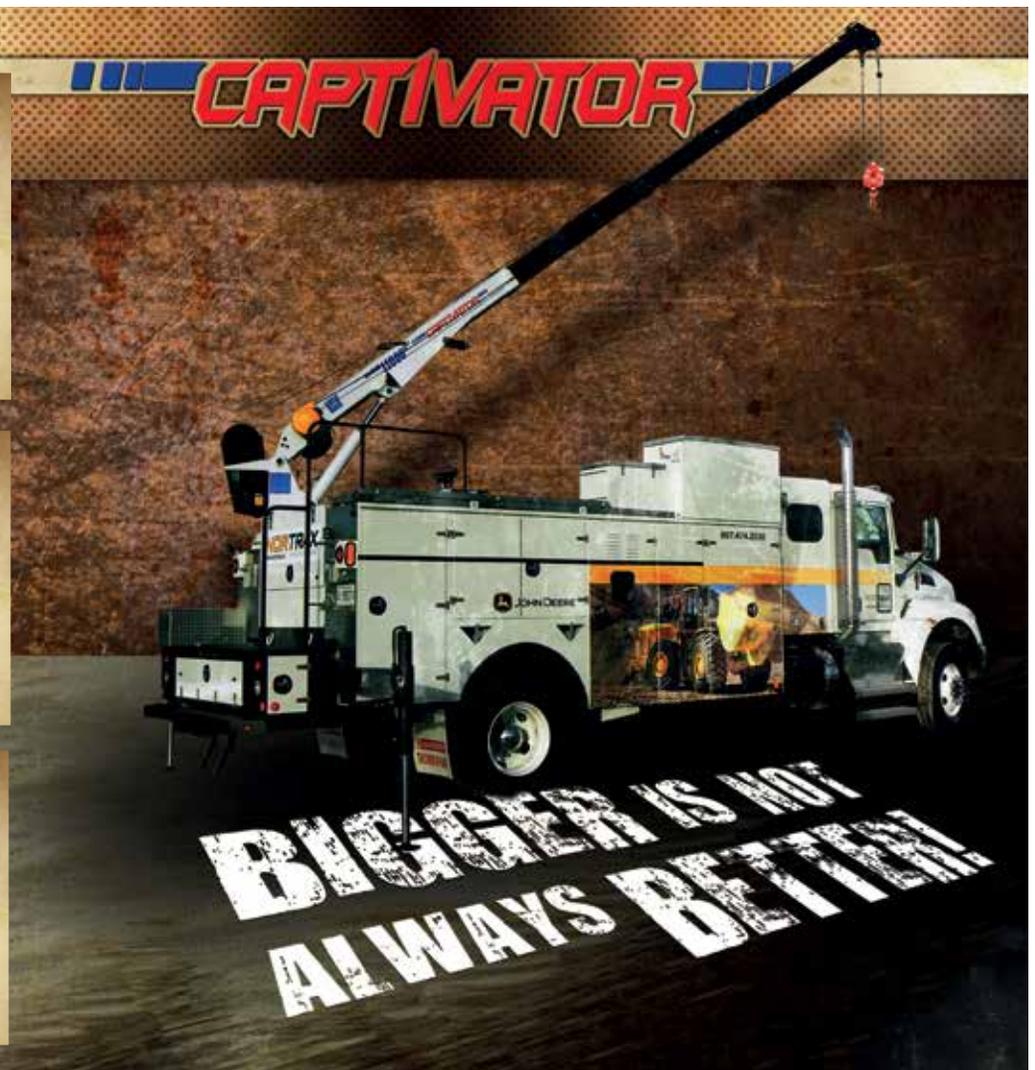
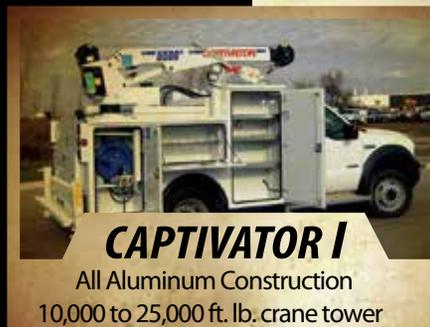
— Roger Wareham, territory sales manager for work truck solutions, Miller Electric Mfg. Co.

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NEWS

Firm nominated for manufacturer's award

Compressor maker VMAC has been named a finalist for a B.C. Hall of Fame Manufacturing Award.

Based in Nanaimo, B.C., VMAC — which stands for Vehicle Mounted Air Compressors — is one of three finalists for Manufacturer of the Year, according to Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters, the industry association that runs the awards.

The winner was to be announced Oct. 28 in New Westminster, B.C.

The Greater Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce nominated VMAC for the award, which was an honor in itself, the company said in a news release.

"Being nominated by our own chamber of commerce is the icing on the cake," company president Jim Hogan said in the release. "Our people work so hard to develop amazing air and multi-power systems, and serve our customers the best we possibly can."



Tom Henry, Service Truck Magazine's publisher, chats with Ian Simpson, marketing analyst with VMAC, at the Work Truck Show in Indianapolis this March.

All's well at Pennsylvania firm

Curry Supply Company has hired a wellness life coach.

Tina Kunstbeck comes to the Martinsburg, Pa.-based company with over eight years experience as a personal trainer and having been a wellness director with the YMCA, said a news release.

"The health and safety of our employees is of paramount importance," Curry Supply president Jason Ritchey said in the news release. "Having a wellness professional like Tina on board and available will certainly help to keep our employees healthy and happy."

Only weeks into the job, Kunstbeck had already met with every Curry Supply employee to discuss their wellness goals and health status, the release said.

Established in 1932, family-owned Curry is a manufacturer and dealer of such equipment as mechanics trucks, lube trucks, and lube skids.



Tina Kunstbeck

Stellar introduces new faces

Brady Christianson is the new regional sales manager for Stellar Truck & Trailer.

He will cover southern Minnesota and northern Iowa, says a recent posting on the Stellar Industries Inc. website.

Christianson previously worked as an appliance salesman, and as the lead TIG welder at Kiefer Manufacturing.

Christianson graduated from Tulsa Welding School and North Iowa Area Community College, where he won the top welder award, the NIACC Student Leadership Award and the entrepreneurial certificate. He currently lives in Mason City, Iowa.

Stellar also recently announced Nelson Carlson as a new national accounts sales manager.

He brings to the company 38 years of international and national experience through his previous job as director of HyRail Sales for the Americas at Harsco Rail.

Carlson graduated from Winona State University with a bachelor's degree in business/marketing. He currently lives in Alpharetta, Ga. Carlson succeeded Alan Marsh, who retired May 15.



Brady Christianson



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Iowa firm names new sales manager

Ryan Vos has been promoted to sales manager of Service Truck International, the company announced on its website in September.

Vos brings over 23 years experience in the construction equipment and truck industries to the STI/Tiger Crane sales team, the news release said.

He takes over the position from Walt Van Laren, who has moved on to become operations manager.

In his new role, Vos will oversee the STI sales team. That will include "the management of STI division marketing, production demand and scheduling, and STI/Tiger Crane research and development groups," the release said.

Vos lives with his wife Michelle and their two children in Sanborn, Iowa.

STI, based in Sioux Center, Iowa, manufactures Eagle Pro bodies and a complete line of Tiger Crane telescoping service cranes, according to the company website, www.servicetrucks.com.



Ryan Vos

NEWS

Iowa company names VP and operations manager

Steve Schnieders has been promoted to vice-president of supply chain and operations at Stellar Industries Inc., the company announced in mid September.

His is the first vice-president position at Stellar — which is headquartered in Garner, Iowa — since David Zrostlik became president in 2000, a news release said.

In addition, Stellar appointed Jim Fisk as director of operations for both of Stellar's facilities — in Garner and Kanawha.

A Stellar employee for nearly 20 years, Schnieders has been engineering manager and operations manager. He has also served on the company board for 11 years.

Zrostlik said in the news release that Schnieders "was a key leader in helping us navigate through some rough economic periods" and "has been pivotal in helping us become the successful company we are today."

In his new role, Schnieders will oversee the supply chain and the overall operations of the company and align those strategies with the company's overall growth strategies, the release said.

Adding Fisk to the team will free Schnieders from much of the day-to-day operational issues while leveraging Fisk's "extensive knowledge and experience in operations," Zrostlik said.

Fisk brings to his new position nearly 20 years experience with lean manufacturing in various industries, including truck and trailer manufacturing and up-fitting.

Stellar's products include mechanics trucks, cranes, and work truck accessories.

For more information, visit www.stellarindustries.com.



Steve Schnieders



Jim Fisk

Design engineer joins Ohio firm

Venco Venturo Industries LLC has announced a new addition to the company's engineering team.

Design engineer Stuart Phipps joins the Cincinnati-based firm after 10 years as a senior product development engineer for conveyor and sortation equipment in the warehouse, distribution and fulfillment industry, says a news release from Venco Venturo.

Before that, he spent two years with Venco Venturo as a mechanical engineer and eight years with an engineering and consulting company that provided engineering and machine designs for Proctor & Gamble.

"I'm looking forward to getting settled in and starting on some of the larger, long-term strategic projects that Venco Venturo has planned," Phipps said in the release.

He has a bachelor of science in mechanical engineering technology degree from the University of Cincinnati. Prior to engineering, he was a certified auto technician. A life-long Cincinnati resident, Phipps currently resides in West Chester, Ohio with his wife and two children.

Venco Venturo manufactures such products as truck-mounted cranes, crane bodies, and accessories. For more information, visit www.venturo.com

Truck dealer named distributor for filtration, fuel catalyst products

Salt Lake City's Mountain Truck Sales has been appointed an exclusive distributor for Utah of by-pass filtration and fuel catalyst products from R&R Universal Technologies Inc.

A manufacturer and dealer of mechanics trucks in the region for 25 years, MTS was one of R&R's first clients and very knowledgeable about R&R's trademarked 1-Micron Filtakleen by-pass oil filters, company CEO and founder J.R. Roberts said in a recent news release on R&R's website.

"We manufacture and sell a complete line of work vehicles and accessories designed with features to fully equip the mobile mechanic with the kind of vehicle required," the news release quoted MTS president Barry Richins.

MTS's territory will include the Utah counties of Salt Lake, Utah, Wasatch, Davis, Morgan, and Summit. Because R&R products are "most effective on over-the-road and heavy-duty diesel powered equipment, both organizations are looking forward to achieving significant sales from this territory," the release said.

MTS specializes in building and supplying medium- and heavy-duty trucks, including mechanics and service trucks, for mining, construction, and equipment companies. R&R is based in Cocoa, Fla.

Master technician program launched

Equipment maker JCB has introduced a master technician program to its North American dealer network.

Service personnel must be nominated by their dealership and pass an entry exam to qualify, says a news release from JCB.

To earn the master technician designation, participants must then also pass a series of training programs and hands-on skill challenges at 100 percent, in addition to all distance learning classes, JCB systems efficiency testing, core product component testing, and other service-based tests, the release said.

"We feel it is very important for any technician to understand all training opportunities that are available, and



JCB equipment performs at ConExpo 2011 in Las Vegas.

how they can continue to learn and grow with the company and advance their career," the release quoted Rick Papalia, senior vice-president of corporate operations for Northland JCB.

Master technicians compete annually in each of JCB's 12 regions earns a special master technician ring. The regional winners then square off in a national competition in which the champion wins an all-expense paid trip to JCB's global headquarters in the U.K.

"Service technicians are often the unsung heroes of a dealership, yet they are vital to its success and support of the JCB brand," said Chris Giorgianni, JCB vice-president of product support and government and defence.

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NEW PRODUCTS

New system boosts batteries

A new battery starting system, ideal for cold weather, was unveiled by Vanair Manufacturing Inc. at the recent Demo Expo in Louisville, Ky.

The trademarked FST3000+ Air boasts what Vanair calls Fast Start Technology. With over 3,000 amps of charging capability, the product features the Vanair Super Capacitor or VSC, a 240 amp alternator, a gas fuel-injected Kohler engine, and reciprocating two stage air compressor, says a news release from Vanair, which is based in Michigan City, Ind. The compressor produces up to 24 cubic feet per minute, at up to 175 pounds per square inch, "enabling the operator to use a variety of air tools at the job site," the release said.

"Combine this technology, along with our core products, like our air compressors and generators, and you have another fantastic mobile power solution," Dean Strathman, Vanair's vice-president of Above decks, said in the news release.

The FST3000+ Air can be equipped with either a 12-volt or 12/24-volt engine start and battery charge capability.

Safety features include reverse polarity and short circuit lockout protection, con-



Dean Strathman, vice-president of Above decks sales at Vanair Manufacturing Inc., and Jim Pereschke, Vanair's vice-president of sales, brave the chill at their booth on the final day of this fall's Demo Expo in Louisville, Ky., to promote the company's newest product, the FST3000+ Air.

Photo by Keith Norbury

nection faults, and voltage protection. A remote control panel provides a central, safe location to operate the machine.

"Combining the VSC capacitor, along with our alternator, gives us longer power durations to turn over a variety of heavy equipment, even from a completely dead battery," the news release quoted lead product engineer Kai Justice.

For more information, visit <http://www.vanair.com>.



Big DEF tanks makes debut

A new 1,200 gallon diesel exhaust fluid tank is now available from Thunder Creek Equipment.

The tank is a turnkey system designed for "retail and large fleet operations, including on-road trucking and off-road construction," said a news release from Thunder Creek.

The company, based in Pella, Iowa, introduced the tank at its booth at the recent International Construction & Utilities Equipment Exposition, a.k.a. The Demo Expo, in Louisville, Ky., Sept. 29-Oct. 1.

"As with our entire product line, the key to this product is fluid purity and operational flexibility," Thunder Creek general manager Luke Van Wyk said in the news release. "We ensure ISO compliance through the life of the product, and we offer a number of options and choices that let the buyer match it to their operation."

A closed system, the new tank is available with either a polyethylene or a stainless steel tank. It can be outfitted with single- or dual-sided dispensing stations, the company says.

The tank meets the International Standards Organization's ISO 22241 specifications. According to the ISO, that standard specifies the "quality characteristics" of a nitrous oxide reduction agent.

"The Thunder Creek dispensing system pumps DEF at 10 gallons per minute and features a digital DEF meter, 20-foot auto-retracting hose reel and weather-sealed nozzle enclosure," the news release noted.

A thermostatically controlled cold weather package is an option. It includes a six-sided, two-inch R19 insulation wrap, a tank temperature monitor, a trademarked Powerblanket heating system, heated dispensing cabinet, and a heated piping bridge enclosure, the latter available with the retail model.

For more information, visit www.thundercreekequipment.com.



Thunder Creek Equipment's new 1,200 gallon diesel exhaust fluid tank is displayed at The Demo Expo, in Louisville, Ky., this fall.



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New tire designed for severe service

Continental Tire has launched a new on/off road drive tire for severe service applications such as construction, mining, oil fields, and logging.

The new HDC1 HT features the innovative Conti 3G casing of Continental's new generation of tires, said a news release from Continental Tire the Americas LLC's commercial vehicle tire group.

That gives the HDC1 HT, the 12th tire to be built on the 3G casing, "improved durability, retreadability and traction versus Continental's original HTC1," the release said.

The new tire has a "specialized" diamond lug tread design, on/off-road belt package and 32/32-inch tread depth.

"To make the tire more suitable for off-road environments, the on/off-road belt package has a shoulder-to-shoulder, full-width fourth belt," the release said. "This increases stiffness and provides more protection from penetrations to improve durability. The diamond lug tread design combines rotating angles and stone bumpers to maximize stone ejection and is optimal for chaining. Additionally, the full-inch-deep tread will keep the tire gripping in all conditions."

Alex Chmiel, Continental's director of marketing for commercial vehicle tires for the Americas, said in the news release that the new tires will appeal to those whose trucks operate daily in mud, snow, gravel and off-road conditions. "If a fleet is searching for application specific coverage that meets their driving needs, Continental's HDC1 HT provides the answer by offering the 11R22.5 and the 11R24.5 heavy drive construction, high traction solution," Chmiel said.

Based in Hannover, Germany, parent company Continental AG generated about 34.5 billion euros in sales in 2014, with the tire division achieving 9.8 billion euros in sales.

For more information, visit www.continental-truck.com



The new HDC1 HT features Continental's Conti 3G casing.

New headset designed for trades

A Bluetooth headset designed for tradespeople will be available in mid November.

The Jabra Steel headset features large buttons, a 98-foot operating range (depending on the phone), six hours of talk time, about two hours of charging time, and a weight of 10 grams, according to a news release from the manufacturer.

The headset is also built toward U.S. military standards for dust, water and shock resistance, said the release from Jabra, which is a brand of GN Netcom, a subsidiary of GN Store Nord A/S (GN), which is listed on the NASDAQ OMX.

Jabra created the headset following "an extensive examination and global survey of the daily needs of over 1,000 trade workers," the release said.

The company says the headset has been "tested rigorously," including high drops on hard surfaces and tests of liquid and dust ingress.

The large buttons are designed to be used with gloved or even wet hands.

"It also gives easy access to Siri/Google Now and allows voice activated call pick-up, as well as message readout (Android phones only)," the release said.

Its HD Voice feature has dual-microphone noise cancellation technology to isolate the user's voice in noisy environments.

The headset will be available Nov. 16 exclusively at Radio Shack stores or from www.RadioShack.com.

For more information, visit www.jabra.com/steel.



Jabra Steel headset is designed for tough working environments.

New Paccar engine added to mix

The new Paccar MX-11 engine will be available in January 2016 for Kenworth's vocational and regional haul customers in the U.S. and Canada, says a news release from Kenworth.

The 11-liter MX-11 produces up to 430 horsepower and 1,550 foot-pounds of torque, the release said. Positioned between the MX-9 and MX-13 engines, the MX-11 gives Kenworth, which is a Paccar company, "an expanded range of proprietary engines for its Class 8 product line."

The MX-11, which will be built at Paccar's engine plant in Columbus, Miss., will be available for Kenworth T880, T680, T800 with front-engine power takeoff, and W900S models.

Jason Skoog, Kenworth assistant general manager, said in the news release that

the MX-11 "hits a sweet spot" for customers needing a lighter engine that provides ample torque and horsepower.

"It is 400 pounds lighter than 13-liter engines, and due to the weight savings, provides our customers a boost in payload capacity and fuel economy," Skoog said.

The MX-11 has a six-cylinder, 24-valve design with double overhead camshafts and high-pressure common-rail fuel injection. As with the MX-13, the MX-11's engine block "is constructed from compact graphite iron with vertical ribs to maximize strength while reducing noise levels."

For more information, visit www.paccar.com.



The Paccar MX-11 has a six-cylinder, 24-valve design as well as double overhead camshafts along with high-pressure common-rail fuel injection.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Companies earn MVP status

Several companies in service body related industries recently received Member Verification Program status from the National Truck Equipment Association.

Among companies achieving MVP status in the third quarter of 2015, said a news release from the NTEA, were American Eagle Accessories Group, based in Garner, Iowa; and Casper's Truck Equipment, of Omaha, Neb.

Companies that renewed their MVP status in the third quarter, which ended in September, included Knapheide Truck Equipment Southeast, of Orlando, Fla.; and VMAC, of Nanaimo, B.C.

As of Oct. 9, 274 companies have MVP status, the NTEA reported.

The program reached its 10-year milestone in 2015.



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NEW PRODUCTS

Mid-sized service body now comes in two sizes

A new version of the Dominator III mechanics body has been released by Iowa Mold Tooling Co. Inc. The manufacturer, based in Garner, Iowa, announced the new Dominator III on Sept. 28 in advance of the biennial International Construction and Utilities Exposition in Louisville, Ky.

The new Dominator III was on display at the IMT stand at ICUEE, which took place Sept. 29-Oct. 1.

"The new body design accommodates the IMT model 12000 telescopic crane without a front stabilizer for customers that do not require 100 percent lift capacity in all load zones," said a news release from IMT.

That crane, which has a trademarked Penta Boom design, provides up to 30 feet of reach.

"With a flat top that eliminates stress concentrations inherent with certain boom designs and a half hex that controls tracking at long reaches, the innovative five-sided boom offers premium strength and durability," the release said.

The new body is available in 14-foot and 11-foot lengths, which replace the earlier 13-foot version. It is designed for those who need more capacity than the 10,000-pound maximum Dominator II but less than the 14,000-pound capacity Dominator IV.

IMT introduced the 13-foot Dominator III at ConExpo-Con/Agg in Las Vegas in March 2011, according to a news release in advance of that show.

"Since its release, the IMT Dominator III mechanics truck has been serving a unique niche customer with mid-range lifting needs," IMT general manager Jim Hasty said in the latest news release. "Our new body design is the result of listening to our customers' needs, and demonstrates our unyielding commitment to providing reliable and durable products that help them get their work done."

The new Dominator III comes in four configuration options: "two side pack configurations for each body length — a right



Scott Fenimore (left) and Rich Rulon of Utility 1 Source talk with Mark Partlow of Iowa Mold Tooling Company Inc. about IMT's new Dominator III mechanics truck on display at The Demo Expo. Photo by Keith Norbury



The new Dominator III features the IMT 12000 telescopic crane.

front raised with the left side all raised and an all raised version," the release said.

Features of the IMT 12000 crane include the following:

- 10 degrees of negative boom angle,
- a fully proportional piston grip radio remote control,
- LED overload indicator lights on the remote control handle,
- a flip sheave boom tip,
- a planetary winch, and
- a patented boom hook stow.

Other features of the Dominator III include front vertical compartments with single doors; a patented shelf hanger bracket system; an energy absorbing boom stow; high-intensity LED compartment lighting; and a multiplex electrical system with programmable logic.

For more information, visit www.imt.com.

New motors promise low speed, high torque

Muncie Power Products Inc. has released a new line of low-speed high-torque motors.

"Featuring the MB and MJ Series, the new line offers 23 different displacement sizes between the two series," said recent news release from Muncie, which is headquartered in Muncie, Indiana. "A spool valve design (MB) and disc valve design (MJ) allow each series of Muncie Power's motors to achieve high efficiencies across a broad torque range."

The MB series has a gerotor option while the MJ series has a roller gerotor option, the release said. In each case the motors "meet a variety of application needs" and "are ideal for industrial and mobile applications."

A manufacturer of power takeoffs and fluid power components, Muncie has served the truck equipment and other markets since 1935.

For more information, visit www.munciepower.com/motors.



MJ series is among the new line of low-speed high-torque motors from Muncie Power Products Inc.

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NEW PRODUCTS

New composite service body designed to take a pounding

KEITH NORBURY

Stahl's new Razorback service body is made of a high-impact composite plastic that is so durable that it will outlast the life of the truck, according to the company's vice-president of sales and marketing.

"We believe you could easily switch out two chassis or more underneath these depending on the application," Jeff Jerousek said during a press conference to announce the Razorback body at the 2015 Work Truck Show in Indianapolis this March.

Stahl, a Scott Fetzer Company based in Wooster, Ohio, developed the Razorback in partnership with United Plastic Fabricating of North Andover, Mass. UPF makes bespoke polymer plastic tanks for the fire industry, tanks that are employed in "incredibly difficult situations," Jerousek said.

"They know how to build incredibly durable plastic components," Jerousek said.

Stahl worked with UPF on a design that "first and foremost" would meet the often demanding conditions that service trucks work in. "Whether that be in the oil and gas fields, whether that be in the construction site or whether that be at negative 15 in northern Minnesota trying to fix a downed power line," Jerousek said.

Gerry Eckel, Stahl's midwest and western regional sales manager, said in an interview later that it took about a dozen years to develop the Razorback body, which is expected to go on sale in the third quarter of 2015.

One challenge was to figure out how to mount the body so that it wouldn't sheer off the bolts because of expansion. "So there is a lot engineering that went into



Jeff Jerousek, vice-president of sales and marketing for Stahl, talks about the company's new Razorback service body at the Work Truck Show in Indianapolis in March. Photo by Keith Norbury

that," Eckel said.

He hesitated to provide more details because the solution is a proprietary process with a patent pending. However, he did hint that "maybe you spring load them. Maybe there's a lot of ways to go."

Eckel said the impact-resistant polypropylene is similar to the material used in dasher boards at ice hockey rinks. The rink version contains a little more ethanol to make it softer, whereas the Razorback material needs to be more rigid. "But essentially it's pretty comparable."

In testing the material, Stahl had personnel pound it with sledge hammers in below-freezing temperatures as well as in the hot summer sun and under heat lights, Eckel said.

"We put one of the shop guys on it and (he) pounded the life out of it and couldn't damage it, couldn't break, couldn't crack it," Eckel said.

Jerousek said the Razorback is designed specifically to take a beating. "Whether you're dropping your tool from 20 feet out of a bucket or, let's just say, there may be

a gentleman on the construction site who might not take care of their equipment as well as the fleet would want them to, this product is meant to stand up to those conditions and then some," he said.

The Razorback won't rust like a steel body or corrode like an aluminum one, he said. Like fiberglass, the Razorback polymer is non-conductive. Unlike with fiberglass, the Razorback can be scratched without requiring a major repair, Jerousek said, comparing the polymer to Corian, a durable material often used in high-end kitchen countertops.

"You get into an accident, we can repair this just like steel because we can re-weld it," he said.

The initial cost of the polymer is about 30 to 40 percent more than steel and about 10 percent more than aluminum, he said. However, it has a lower total cost of ownership.

"The lifecycle cost is going to depend on the usage pattern," Jerousek said.

Stahl is receiving a lot of interest from utilities that also use their service bodies as marketing pieces. "They want it to look good," he said, noting that the Razorback won't rust or require repainting.

"They never have to worry about a scratch," he said. "If it scratches — most utilities are white — you'll never even see it."

The Razorback comes in white and black. Stahl will paint them other colors, although Jerousek says it's preferable to keep the interior of the cabinets white — the better to see inside.

In a minor accident, the body might not suffer any damage. Or should a sidepack blow a seam, it can be re-welded, he said.

"If something happens where you punch a hole through one of these side

packs, you have much bigger issues because the amount of force that it would take to do that would mean that you've probably destroyed the truck," Jerousek said.

Like other Stahl service bodies, the Razorback has such features as stainless steel three-point T-handle door latches and watertight continuous-bulb door gaskets. Stahl also now offers Rhino vehicle lining protective coatings for body load spaces, bulkheads, bumpers, compartment tops and

The Razorback service body from Stahl is made from impact-resistant polypropylene plastic similar to the material used in dasher boards at ice hockey rinks.



other surfaces.

For fleets, Stahl can customize the Razorback design to fit various chassis, including those by Ford, Ram, and Chevy, as well as cabovers like Isuzu and

Fuso, and even bigger trucks from the likes of Peterbilt and Freightliner.

"Now there's a limit to that, of course, from the buying perspective, but if the fleet has something that they specifically want to accomplish or a specific product or tool they want to store a certain way, we can accommodate that," Jerousek said. "Whereas with fiberglass component, it's much more cumbersome because you have to mould it in."

The Razorback polymer sidepacks have a lifetime warranty while the steel components have a five-year warranty.

The company is combining its nationwide service network with UPF's service network so that both companies can repair the high-impact polypropylene and address any other issues that might arise, Jerousek said.

For more information, visit www.stahltruckbodies.com.



New gas-driven compressor unveiled

The new Raptair G30 gasoline-drive air compressor from VMAC Global Technology Inc. produces a continuous 30 cubic feet per minute at 100 pounds per square inch, tested to American Society of Mechanical Engineers standards, says a news release from the manufacturer.

That's enough power for most day-to-day jobs, only faster, the release said. That's because the rotary screw Raptair G30 is rated for a 100 percent duty cycle, "meaning it never stops producing the air that is required."

VMAC, which stands for Vehicle Mounted Air Compressors, introduced the Raptair G30 at the recent International Construction & Utility Equipment Exposition, a.k.a Demo Expo, in Louisville, Ky., Sept. 29-Oct. 1.

The Raptair G30 has a footprint that takes up a space only 20.3 inches wide and 33.5 inches long on a vehicle, the company says. Its height of 21 inches and weight of 205 pounds are half that of comparable gas-drive compressors, VMAC says. It can be easily mounted with four bolts on the top of the

sidepack of a service body, the release said.

The Raptair G30's Subaru EX40 14-horsepower overhead-cam engine is covered by Subaru's five-year warranty. VMAC, which is based in Nanaimo, B.C., backs the Raptair G30 itself with a lifetime warranty.

Dan Hutchinson, VMAC's original equipment manufacturing business development manager, said the company's manufacturing and engineering teams "have developed a pricecompetitive product that we are so confident in, we are backing it for life."

The unit employs VMAC's patent-pending WHASP tank technology in which "both the air and oil are cooled in this fully integrated package, eliminating the need for bulky accessories," the release said. "And with the constant and smooth air delivery of the VMAC rotary screw air end, most customers will not require a large cumbersome receiver tank."

For more information, visit www.vmacair.com/g30.



Tamara Hutchinson, marketing coordinator with VMAC Global Technology Inc., touts the company's new gasoline-powered Raptair G30 compressor at the recent Demo Expo in Louisville, Ky.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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Nov. 10, 2014

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<http://www.oesa.org/Events/Event-Calendar/OE-CONF111015.html>

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<https://www.cranesafe.com/lifting-load-handling-training-expo>

DECEMBER 2015

Dec. 2-3, 2015

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A rigging rodeo is part of the Lifting & Load Handling Training Expo in Las Vegas, Nov. 16-19.

Dec. 2-4, 2015

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Dec. 14-15, 2015

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<http://leea-int.com/uk/Events>

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<http://www.natmconvention.com/>

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Cargo Logistics Canada
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Feb. 21-24, 2016

The Rental Show
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<http://www.therentalshow.com>

Feb. 24-25, 2016

Buildex Vancouver
Vancouver Convention Centre West,
Vancouver, B.C.

"Buildex Vancouver is Western Canada's largest tradeshow and conference for the construction, renovation, architecture, interior design and property management industries."

<http://www.buildexvancouver.com>

MARCH 2016

March 2-4, 2016

The Work Truck Show
Indiana Convention Center,
Indianapolis, Indiana

"Showcasing 500,000 sq. ft. of the latest vocational trucks and equipment, The Work Truck Show is the place to check out the latest innovations."

<http://www.ntea.com/worktruckshow/>

March 15-16, 2016

Buildex Edmonton
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Edmonton, Alta.

"With over 150 exhibits, and more than 35 educational seminars Buildex attracts over 2,500 attendees annually."

<http://www.buildixedmonton.com>

March 31-April 2, 2016

Mid-America Trucking Show
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