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FALL 2021

NORTH DAKOTA MOTOR CARRIERS ASSOCIATION PUBLICATION



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The North Dakota Motor Carriers Association has been publishing the Rolling Along magazine since 1948. Each issue provides members with information concerning their association and the issues impacting the trucking industry.



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# MEETING THE NEW NDMCA PRESIDENT, ERIC GROVE

By Nicole Vander Vorst

Newly-elected NDMCA President, Eric Grove, has known about the importance of the transportation industry ever since he was a child. Growing up on a dairy farm near Steele, ND, a truck was an essential element of the Grove family business. The Grove families' hard work literally went down the drain if the truck used to transport their milk to the processing plant was unable to get to their farm.

Now, after being in the transportation industry himself for nearly 30 years, Grove's awareness of the importance of the industry has grown tremendously. His goal is to share that knowledge, and to be an advocate for motor carriers across the state. Helping him with that goal is the NDMCA. Helping him with that goal is the NDMCA, an organization he has been a board member of since 2013.

"At NDMCA, we work for change, success and evolution. We really strive to be a voice for the truck drivers and we want to help to provide them with a better quality of life at and away from the job," Grove said. "We want to give them not just a job, but a career."

Grove's involvement with the trucking business began after he received his Associate degree in Auto Technology from Bismarck State College. From Bismarck, he moved to Fargo to attend North Dakota State University to acquire a degree in Business Finance. In 1993, his friend, who worked at Magnum Transportation in Fargo, talked him into starting a job in the shop. From there, Grove moved on to become the Terminal Manager in Bismarck, and is now the West Region Manager for Magnum LTL, encompassing Bismarck, Minot and Billings.



*Pat Severson congratulates Eric Grove on being elected the next President of NDMCA.*

"The Magnum group/companies really made me fall in love with the industry," Grove said. "The culture and go get em attitude, along with the growth of the company, has just been awesome to be a part of."

When Grove started with the company, it was made up of only a few trucks. Now, the business has grown to be one of the largest trucking companies in North Dakota. Magnum is a family-owned and growing company with Midwest values, and is one of the most innovative transportation and warehousing companies in the industry. In

March of 2021, Magnum acquired BC Freightways out of Nebraska, and has increased its terminals from 18 to 26. The Magnum Company, which is North Dakota's only bonded warehouse, includes Magnum LTD, Magnum LTL, Magnum Dedicated, Magnum Logistics and Magnum Warehousing.



ERIC GROVE

Growth of the company and the industry has come with many changes. In his 30 years in the industry, Grove has seen several advancements take place among the trucking business, with the biggest being the evolution of the driver, along with technology.

"Truckers really have had to become computer experts," Grove said. "The quality and experience of the driver has really evolved. The truckers have really learned to embrace the technology, and have used it to their advantage."

But, being a part of a successful business does not come without challenges. Grove says that one of the biggest challenges plaguing the trucking industry today is the driver shortage.

"We really need to work at bringing people into our industry," Grove said. "We need to bring awareness to young adults coming out of high school, that trucking is a good life and a good way to make a living. One of the problems is that a trucker can't cross state lines until they are 21 years of age, and by that time, many young adults have chosen a different career path."

Grove hopes that working with lawmakers and legislators will help bring change to the issue.

"We at the NDMCA, really have a great working relationship with our legislators and the governor's office, and they have been very in-tune to what we have to say, and helping us come up with solutions," he said.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, it was made apparent that truck drivers were essential workers, as they were at the forefront of keeping the world going. Grove said that he thinks the situation brought a new appreciation to the trucking world.

"From delivering medical supplies to food, our truck drivers were really paramount in keeping the economy and world moving, and I think many people who didn't realize how important they were before, do now."

Working with and listening to the input of the truck drivers, who are the closest connections to the industry, has allowed the NDMCA to come up with solutions to problems, and make life better for truckers.

*Article continued on page 9 ►*

# FLEET SAFETY AWARD BANQUET

## NDMCA ANNOUNCES 2020 DRIVER AND SAFETY PROFESSIONAL AWARDS AT ANNUAL CONVENTION

The winners of the 2020 North Dakota Motor Carriers Association's (NDMCA) Driver of the Year Award and Safety Professional of the Year have been named. Don Buettner took home the Driver of the Year Award, and Paul Gibree has been named the Safety Professional of the Year.

These awards were highlighted at the NDMCA's Annual Convention, which took place on September 14th and 15th at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks. The Awards Banquet occurred on the final day of the convention. This year's convention marked the 76th year of the annual gathering, and it focused on the safety and challenges faced by those in the trucking industry. The first day started with a Golf Tournament at King's Walk Golf Course to support the NDMCA Foundation and was followed by a social hour, dinner, entertainment and desert.

The second day of the conference featured opening keynote remarks by Harold Sumerford, Jr. from J&M Tank Lines and the ATA First Vice President, and lunchtime keynote remarks by Larry Oxenham, a national leader in asset protection.

Among those successes celebrated were the awards given to Mr. Gibree and Mr. Buettner. The winners were determined by an independent panel of officials from the North Dakota Highway Patrol and the Department of Transportation. Kacey Heidrich from NDMCA discusses the significance of these awards by stating, "These winners represent hard work, dedication, and a commitment to keeping our roads safe. We are so honored to celebrate them and thank them for their contributions to the industry."

The winner of the Driver of the Year Award, Don Buettner, is currently employed by TMI Transport Corporation, and has 34 years of total commercial driving experience with 3.6 million career miles driven. He has been employed with TMI for over 20 years and has accrued more than 2.4 million of his career miles during his tenure with the company. When starting his career in 1987, Don realized early on that this would be a lifelong career for him. He states, "I really love driving and traveling all over the country. I don't really consider it a job because I love doing it and it doesn't feel like work much of the time."

When discussing his career with TMI, Don's supervisor Pat Severson notes that the drivers are the face of TMI Transport. Pat goes on to say that, "Our company respects our drivers. They are the people who get it done. All of our drivers are professionals and are treated with respect." Mirroring this sentiment, Don notes that he is incredibly grateful to work with TMI Transport as they are an amazing company with great employee retention.

At TMI, Mr. Buettner is recognized for being conscientious, dependable, considerate, and level-headed. He takes extremely good care of his equipment, and has no chargeable accidents on his record despite a career that spans more than three decades. He has received 11 TMI Safety Awards since starting with the company,

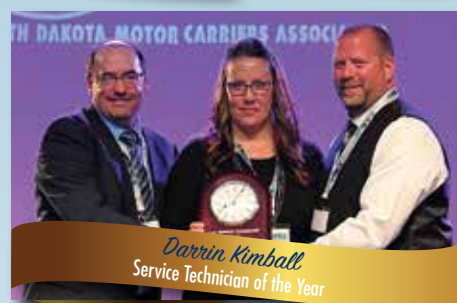
and reached his 2 million mile achievement with the company in May 2017.

Mr. Buettner's employers also recognize that he is diligent in completing his duties efficiently and on time, noting that his paperwork is always in order. He is also known to address issues promptly and professionally. Don and his wife, Cindy, reside in Dickinson and have two children together, Kate and Matt. Notably, Don recognizes the importance of family support in his accomplishments.

He advises anyone considering a career in truck driving to understand that, "It is a lifestyle. You need family support to succeed at this career."

Paul Gibree was also honored at the convention as NDMCA's Safety Professional of the Year. Paul has 28 years of commercial driving experience and 10 years working as an industry safety professional. Paul has also been serving as the Chairman of the NDMCA Safety Committee since 2017 and has volunteered for several NO-ZONE Events. He donates his time and expertise to attend these events and share his knowledge to improve safety in the industry. His dedication to safety in trucking is evident through his active participation in these events and willingness to go above and beyond to improve safety.

Mr. Gibree's nomination application highlights his commitment to safety and overall contributions to the trucking industry. Paul is also known for reaching out to potential new future drivers attending regional safety conventions, student outreach events, and career fairs. He is known for his expertise, sincerity, professionalism,



# 2020 NDMCA SAFETY AWARDS

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Truckload / 2.5 Million - 5 Million Miles

Truckload / 5 Million - 10 Million Miles

Truckload 10 million - 25 Million Miles

Truckload / Over 25,000,000 Miles

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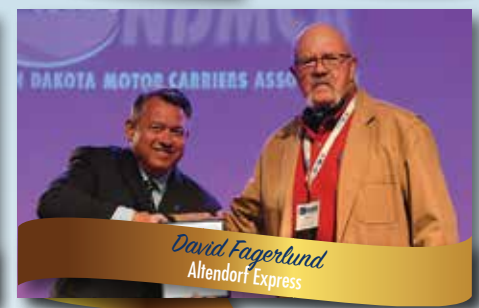
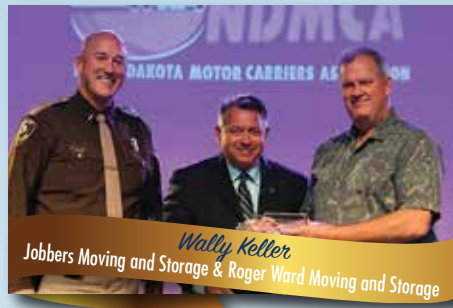
*Baker Boy*

*TMI Transport Corporation*

dedication, and willingness to interact with others in the industry. Paul resides in Grand Forks with his wife, Kim. The couple have four adult children – Chris, Kyle, Cole, and Logan.

Kacey Heidrich sums up the importance of the annual convention by stating, “The transportation industry has continued to be the lifeblood of the economy, delivering life’s essential goods to Americans. The convention is a great opportunity for members to network with each other and celebrate our industry.”

NDMCA also recognized Darrin Kimball, Holland Enterprises as Service Technician of the Year and North Dakota Highway Patrol Trooper Andrew Cashin as Trooper of the Year. In addition, several companies were awarded Fleet Safety Awards for their safety effort accomplishments. These awards are based on total fleet mileage, and all contestants are classified according to fleet size, type of operation, and accident rates.





# ANNUAL FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP GOLF TOURNAMENT



NDMCA Foundation held its annual Foundation Scholarship Golf Tournament, September 14th at Kings Walk Golf Course, Grand Forks. The NDMCA Foundation's mission is providing scholarships to students entering the transportation industry. This year's event featured opportunities to win a trip to the Super Bowl, a vacation get-away and cash prizes. A special thanks to all those who came out to support the NDMCA Foundation.

For more information on how you can learn more about the NDMCA Foundation, visit <https://www.ndmca.org/foundation/>



## Winners

**1<sup>st</sup>** Sam Worwa  
John Simonson  
Tyler Steifel  
Ridge Zielke

**2<sup>nd</sup>** Justin Okeson  
Ryan Paradis  
Jake Greenwood  
Ethan Paradis

**15<sup>th</sup>** Greg Budde  
Jeff Salmonson  
Jeremy Olstad  
Adam Baker

Pictures are not in any particular order.





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**AVI Maintenance Seminar**  
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**OCT 26** Virtual

**Virtual DOT Compliance**

**OCT 27** Mandan, ND

**AVI Maintenance Seminar**  
Baymont Inn & Suites

**NOV 16** Virtual

**AVI Maintenance Webinar**

*Continued from page 3:*

## MEETING THE NEW NDMCA PRESIDENT, ERIC GROVE

"I think that one of the reasons I love both being on the NDMCA board and being a part of the Magnum Transportation team, is because both groups take their commitment to society very seriously," Grove said. "Both are striving to contribute to the well-being of our world, and make sure we are advancing both our industry and society."

Growing the NDMCA is one of the main goals that Grove hopes to achieve during his time as president of the organization. He emphasizes

that the more members the group has, the bigger voice they have to lend urgency to issues and opinions, and the better chance they have to achieve their mission which is: "To Promote Highway Safety, Deliver Services and Provide Representation for Our Members."

"The NDMCA has been a wonderful group to be a part of and we will continue to look for solutions to better our industry as challenges keep coming our way," he added.



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## WHAT DOES THE DOT CLEARINGHOUSE MEAN FOR MY BUSINESS?

By: Jared Rosenthal, Founder/CEO of Health Street

The DOT Clearinghouse is the new, secure, online database used by the Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. It is intended to eventually replace the ad-hoc and manual procedures that FMCSA-regulated employers currently follow when confirming that their drivers are free of any past drug or alcohol program violations.

You may be wondering, "Is the DOT Clearinghouse mandatory?" In a word, yes. All FMCSA-regulated employers must follow the DOT Clearinghouse rules in the United States. In particular, the FMCSA Clearinghouse final rule requires that all FMCSA-regulated employers run a Clearinghouse query before allowing an employee to operate a commercial vehicle on public roadways.

Continue reading below to learn the answers to some of the most commonly asked questions about the DOT Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse and to stay abreast of your new responsibilities as an employer.

### DOT Clearinghouse Queries

As an FMCSA-regulated employer, you will need to query the DOT Clearinghouse in two different situations:

- **You have hired, or intend to hire, a new employee.**  
Before you can let your new driver operate a commercial vehicle on a public highway, you must query the Clearinghouse to ensure they have not failed to report to you any drug or alcohol program violations. Note that, for now, the DOT Clearinghouse does not absolve you of the responsibility to contact previous employers. Until the Clearinghouse contains three years of consecutive reporting data, you must still manually contact prior employers to obtain this information.
- **An annual check for each existing employee.**  
For every driver, an FMCSA-regulated employer employs, the employer must query the DOT Clearinghouse database once per calendar year to ensure their record remains clear of any unreported drug or alcohol program violations.

### DOT Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse FAQ

Continue reading below for some of the most frequently asked questions about the new DOT Clearinghouse.

#### What is the DOT Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse?

The Clearinghouse is a secure database, accessible online, that contains information about drug and alcohol program violations by commercial driver's license and commercial learner's permit holders. It is operated by the Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA).

#### Is the Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse mandatory?

Yes, the use of the Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse is mandatory. This means that FMCSA-regulated employers must promptly report any drug or alcohol program violations to the Clearinghouse. It also means that employers must run a check on prospective employees before those employees operate a commercial vehicle on public roadways.

#### Who has to sign up for the FMCSA Clearinghouse?

The following groups of people must sign up for the FMCSA Clearinghouse:

- FMCSA-regulated employers
- Holders of commercial driver's licenses
- Medical review officers
- Substance abuse professionals
- State driver's licensing agencies
- Third-party administrators

The responsibilities of each of these groups will differ depending on their function. For example, FMCSA-regulated employers of drivers will need to submit queries of their employees to ensure the safety of the public. Substance abuse professionals, on the other hand, will be required to report any failed drug or alcohol program violations to the Clearinghouse to ensure the database remains comprehensive and current.

#### If my driver fails a DOT drug test, do I have to report it?

Yes, you must promptly report a failed DOT drug test by one of your drivers to the Clearinghouse. Failure to report a drug or alcohol violation is itself a violation of regulations found in Parts 40 and 382 of Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations.

#### Do I still have to call prior employers or can I just check the Clearinghouse?

For the time being, you must still call prior employers in addition to checking the Clearinghouse. However, once the Clearinghouse



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contains three consecutive years of data (which will occur in 2023), manual previous employer checks will no longer be required.

#### Final Thoughts about the DOT FMCSA Clearinghouse

The FMCSA Clearinghouse is an attempt to harmonize the rules around drug and alcohol safety in the transportation industry and to simplify the ability of employers to meet their obligations in this area.

At first, the new rules, especially the FMCSA Clearinghouse final rule, simply seem to add another layer of obligations on top of employers' already existing responsibilities. After all, as an employer, you will now be required to run a Clearinghouse query in addition to running manual checks of previous employers.

However, once the Clearinghouse contains three consecutive years of data (which will occur in January of 2023), employers will no longer be required to run manual checks, and the process will be significantly simplified.

For more information about DOT Clearinghouse rules and your responsibilities as an employer, see our DOT Drug Testing Requirements.

#### Citations

- Drug & Alcohol Clearinghouse. Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), <https://clearinghouse.fmcsa.dot.gov/>
- "What is the FMCSA Commercial Driver's License Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse?" Factsheet. Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), <https://clearinghouse.fmcsa.dot.gov/Resource/Index/Factsheet>
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- "Procedures for Transportation Workplace Drug and Alcohol Testing Programs." Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). Title 49, Part 40, Office of Drug and Alcohol Policy & Compliance (ODAPC), U.S. Department of Transportation, <https://www.transportation.gov/odapc/part40>
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# TMC HOLDS DEBATE ON THE FUTURE OF TRACTOR-TRAILER CONNECTIONS

*The following article originally appeared in Transport Topics, September 16, 2021*

**CLEVELAND** — Trailer connectivity was a key focus of product announcements at American Trucking Associations' Technology & Maintenance Council Fall Meeting and Transportation Technology Exhibition, but debate continues on how to best implement and integrate the various technologies in the mix.



*Dirk Wohltmann addresses the TMC audience. (John Sommers II for Transport Topics)*

During a Sept. 15 technical session, two teams of experts with three members each took sides on the matter. Dirk Wohltmann, director of engineering at ZF Group, argued for a unified, updated solution that encompasses various technologies into a physical connection. Duke Drinkard, president of 21st Century Driver, led a team that argued for diverse solutions based on wireless technologies.

"We need an enhancement," Wohltmann said. "We also need to have good communication between the truck and the trailer. With that one, I think there is no question, no debate, there needs to be an upgrade."

Wohltmann noted that continuing to add connectors between the tractor and trailer as technologies are introduced creates more connections a driver must remember when hooking up a trailer. And Wohltmann doesn't think wireless is the answer; he expressed concerns about reliability and data security risks.

He also stressed that any solution must ensure backward compatibility between old and new tractors and trailers.

"I described what we all don't want to do and where we don't want to go," Wohltmann said. "We nailed down that we have to have a change. We nailed down that we don't want to have another connector. We nailed down... that it has to be safe. For that all, I think we agree. So where do we want to go?"

"When we talk about enhanced connectivity, we've got to talk about whether it's going to be physical," Drinkard said in response to Wohltmann's comments. "But you already probably know where this is going. We're going to say no to physical."

While Drinkard agreed with ensuring backward compatibility, he advocated for more wireless connectivity and argued against the idea of a single integrated system. He stressed that trucking is not a cookie-cutter industry, and therefore believes that one unified solution for connecting tractor and trailers cannot be the right approach.

"The transportation industry is not just a one kind of equipment company," Drinkard said. "One kind is not what we do."

Still, Drinkard stressed that the growing demands being placed on the trucking industry mean change needs to happen. For example, he noted that customers want to be able to track their shipments more precisely. Plus, telematics data is becoming more precise and can determine, for example, when preventive maintenance needs to occur.

"Can we get that with hardwire? Yes we can. Can we get it to all these locations at one time? No. Not in my opinion," Drinkard said.

He also looked to current technologies as a guide for what will be popular in the future. Drinkard noted that nearly everything in everyday life is connected wirelessly. With 5G coming into play and 3G systems headed into sunset, wireless is a future technology that is here to stay.

"What technology is being used now that we may be able to use in the future?" he said. "Well, you've got WiFi, you've got Bluetooth and you've got near-field communications, mobile communications."

Wohltmann noted that as trucking heads into these new waters, it shouldn't try to completely change overnight. At the end of the day, he stressed that the connection between the tractor and trailer must be fast and secure, maintenance teams should be able to adapt easily to the changes, and it must also be user friendly for the driver. Solutions, he said, must also have an eye toward the future in order to adapt to the march of changing technologies.



## INDUSTRY NEWS

### USDOT OFFICIALS PRAISE TRUCKERS' CONTRIBUTIONS

The following article originally appeared in *Transport Topics*, September 16, 2021

Truck drivers are key to ensuring the country's economic prosperity and maintaining safety along the highways, said top officials at the U.S. Department of Transportation.



*"Careful, professional truck drivers, attentive to driving, are saving lives every day," says FMCSA deputy Administrator Meera Joshi. (U.S. Department of Transportation via Twitter)*

At an event at its headquarters Sept. 16, the department honored commercial drivers in recognition of National Truck Driver Appreciation Week.

**MORE DRIVER RECOGNITION:** Praise, perks and prizes during #NTDAW2021.

"Truck drivers are the lifeblood of our economy. More than 3.5 million professional truck drivers haul 70% of the country's freight," said Carlos Monje, undersecretary of transportation for policy. "The essential nature of the work that truck drivers do every day, often behind the scenes, is crucial to the nation's economy, public health and roadway safety."

Meera Joshi, deputy administrator at the Federal Motor Carrier

Safety Administration, emphasized their contributions.

"As we become more and more reliant on e-commerce, and through pandemic and climate crises, their critical role is even more evident," she said. "Truck drivers, with their broad highway presence, set the tone for highway driving."

Joshi continued, "Careful, professional truck drivers, attentive to driving, are saving lives everyday."

Henry Bruster, an America's Road Team captain and a professional driver with TForce Freight, was at the event.

"My love for trucks and the trucking industry began at a very early age," Bruster said. "As a little boy, I always wanted to climb in the truck, talk to the driver, and grow up to be one of those drivers I idolized as a young child."

Alongside Bruster was April Coolidge, also an America's Road Team captain and a professional driver with Walmart Transportation.

National Truck Driver Appreciation Week, held Sept. 12-18, is meant to amplify the industry's role in safety, communities and the economy.

American Trucking Associations President Chris Spear, noted, "In times of crisis, they are among the first to respond. And when others stay home, we hit the road delivering the things this country needs to keep moving.

"National Truck Driver Appreciation Week is just a small gesture acknowledging the efforts of drivers like Henry and April, and we're glad that DOT has taken time to recognize them and all of the 3.7 million professional drivers."

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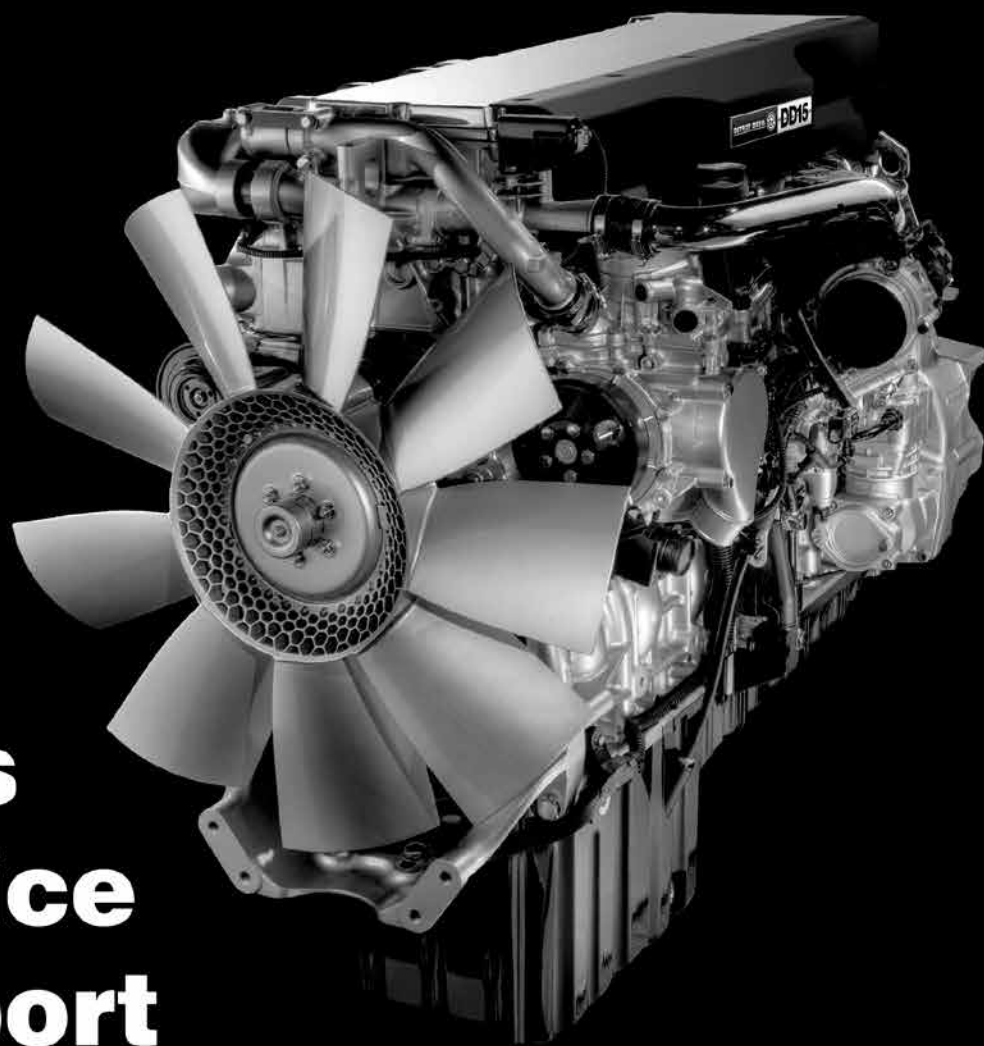




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## LOCAL NEWS

### NDMCA “NO ZONE”



In August, the North Dakota Motor Carriers Association had the opportunity to set-up its “No Zone” display at 2 events. The first was held in Bismarck at the first annual “Celebrate My Ride” event. The event was hosted by the Camaro Club of North Dakota and featured a car show and several safety demonstrations by various local and state agencies.

The second event on August 18th, was held in Grand Forks for the Ford Driving Skills for Life program. This program helps teens learn the skills they need to take personal responsibility to make the right choices every time they get behind the wheel.

“Any time that we can educate the public on the importance and safety required when driving around trucks is a good day. We all have to share the road together. Allowing drivers to sit in the seat and experience the view from a truck driver’s perspective is an eye-opening experience for most.” says Kacey Heidrich, NDMCA.



### NEW MOTOR CARRIER MANAGER AT NDDOT

HELLO,

My name is Tracy Voegele and I am the new Motor Carrier Manager for the NDDOT. I have worked at the NDDOT in the Motor Vehicle section for over 3 years. I started out as a Licensing Specialist II in the Motor Vehicle Consumer section working at the front counter. As a licensing specialist, I learned all the systems, processes for titling and registering vehicles and most importantly, how we can improve processes and make things easier for our customers. I had the opportunity to be part of several committees that allowed me to grow my knowledge and leadership skills at the NDDOT. Before my journey at the NDDOT, I was a manager for a Durable Medical Equipment store.



TRACY VOEGELE

Moving forward as the Motor Carrier Manager, I will apply my knowledge and leadership skills to continue making great changes at our NDDOT Motor Carrier office to help enhance and simplify processes for our carriers. We want to ensure we are providing the necessary educational needs and utilizing Record reviews to greatly help all our carriers, both new and old. I look forward to working with all of you!

Thank you,

TRACY VOEGELE

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