



FOR THE TRANSPORTATION PROFESSIONAL

"Elite" FLEET® MAGAZINE

Special Issue

NATIONAL CARRIERS RELIES ON T-680 *For Enhanced Driver Satisfaction and Fuel Economy*

NCI SUCCESS STORY – It Almost Cost Me My Life

Obstructive Sleep Apnea *Affects National Carriers Drivers*

NCI SUCCESS STORY – Reversing Diabetes

VIN EJ389653

The O, S, & D Doctor *Dr Alejandro Estrada*



VIEW FROM THE WINDSHIELD



JIM FRANCK
PRESIDENT

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Already halfway through 2015. Time flies when you're having fun, doesn't it. We have already had a years' worth of accomplishments. All the T700s have been replaced with the new T680s and Cascadia's. In a few short weeks our oldest truck will be a 2014 and all are equipped with automated transmissions, refrigerators and APUs. Spec'd with driver comfort in mind. One hundred and fifty trailers have been replaced with two hundred more in the wings for later this fall. New maintenance software has been installed. It was up and running June 1st. This will help tremendously with predictive maintenance which equals up-time.

Our new Driver Training program kicked off the first of the year and we already have over twenty proud graduates running solo. Goldie Seymour, was named 2014 Driver of the Year. The first female to earn that recognition in our 47 year history. And justly deserved I may add. As always, we will all continue to diligently work at being the carrier of choice not only for our Drivers, but also our Customers. After all we can't have one without the other. That is at times not an easy task. Will we always get it right? No. Will we work harder and longer than anyone to make it right? Yes. That is our commitment to you every day.

What's in store for the rest of the year.....

.....stay tuned!

Be safe out there!



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ON THE COVER - 2014 NCI Driver of the Year: Goldie Seymour poses beside her Kenworth T-680

Texas Motor Speedway Racing Tickets Express Appreciation to Drivers

“Our drivers are very important to National Carriers, and we wanted to show our appreciation in a tangible way with something extraordinary,” Al Love, Director of Driver Services, said. “In February we met with representatives from the Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth to see what they had to offer that would show our sincere gratitude toward our drivers. Speedway officials put together a package that included NASCAR Sprint Cup Series, NASCAR Truck Series, Indy Car Series and XFINITY Series race tickets. TMS also included a photo shoot featuring a 2015 NCI Kenworth T-680 truck pulling one of our new 2015 Utility aero-dynamic trailers equipped with the Thermo King Precedent ultra-quiet refrigerated unit.”

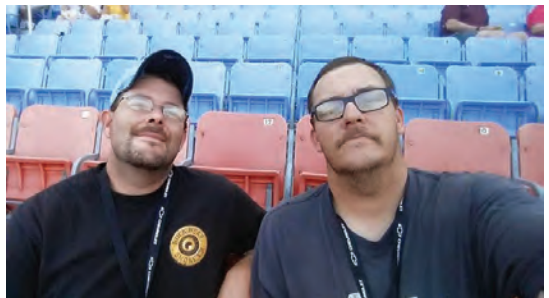


Dawn and Craig Petty

and attend the Firestone 600 Indy Car Race, we were very excited. Neither one of us had ever seen an Indy Car race. Thank you National Carriers for making this possible, it was one of our best days ever.”

Two special sets of race tickets were set aside to reward the drivers who submitted the best two photographs featuring National Carriers equipment in a scenic location. Company drivers Jeff Kimberlin and Larry Atwell were named winners of the contest.

Atwell said he very much enjoyed attending the Winstar Casino 400 NASCAR Truck Series. His only disappointment was the failure of his phone to stay charged to take photos during the full race.



Jeff Kimberlin and his brother Charles Young



Jeff Kimberlin reflected on his experience, “My brother Charles Young also drives for NCI, and he and I had a blast at the race. I want to thank NCI again for this experience and the time off to attend. For me, NCI has been nothing but a positive change in my life and the lives of my family. I believe my brother feels the same way.”



Kirk Lester

NCI fleet driver Laura McCullough was the guest of NCI owner operator Kirk Lester for the O’Reilly Auto Parts 300 XFINITY series race. “It was our first time to attend a race. We had always wanted to go, but we’ve never been able to afford to take off the time. Weather-wise it was the

perfect time of the year. We were allowed to visit in the pits and victory lane, checking out both INFINITY and NASCAR cars. We spent two days at the track; it was an awesome opportunity. We had a great time!” reported Kirk.

“NCI President Jim Franck wanted to make sure every driver had a fair opportunity to earn a set of tickets,” Operations Director Jeremy Hinson explained. “The first round of tickets for the April races were selected from drivers who had participated in a safety meeting during the fourth quarter of 2014. The second round of ticket winners for the June races were chosen from those who had been nominated for driver of the month during 2015 plus completed a safety class in the first quarter. The criteria for the upcoming November races will be announced via our social media sites in October.”

NCI SUCCESS STORY

Gordon Walker

Truck #4442

It Almost Cost Me My Life



It all started with a headache.

I was simply doing my job, driving to Dodge City, KS for a load going home when the headache started. Honestly, I don't remember much about it, beyond feeling worse than usual, and thinking something just wasn't right. Having had esophageal cancer and many health scares associated with that, I never really felt "normal". But for about a week in June of 2014, I felt stranger than usual. What I didn't know was that my headache was only a symptom of the terrifying and deadly brain infection that would keep me hospitalized and in rehab for months, and almost cost me my life.

Most of my memories of this time are actually recounts given by my wife, Cindy, and friends. For about a week I had been acting strangely- more irritable than usual, confused, and very tired. I was supposed to pick up a load in Kansas to take back to California, and then help my wife move into a new house, so we all assumed it was just stress-related. I had been away from home for almost 2 months, and I had a lot going on.

During the first weekend of June, it became evident to my wife and my dispatcher that it may be more serious than just stress. I wasn't returning phone calls, I couldn't be reached on my satellite, and I hadn't checked in with anyone on Facebook. Occasionally, when I did answer my phone, I sounded exhausted. I would describe an intense headache that kept me from eating, moving or getting out of my truck.

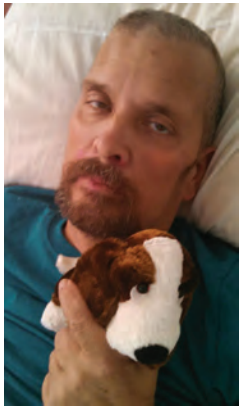
Cindy kept calling dispatch at National Carriers to see if they had been in contact with me. Although I had recently been assigned to a new DM, my wife spoke to my former DM who knew me well and knew it wasn't like me to be unreachable for so long. Instead of brushing it off as an over-reacting wife, or a driver choosing not to respond, he recognized the unusual behaviors as warning signs. He spoke to supervisors, had drivers in the area stop at the Dodge City Flying J to check on me, and even sent police and paramedics to my truck. Knowing that my company was taking this situation seriously gave comfort to my worried wife, who was too far away to do much to help.

Apparently in my confused state I didn't want to admit there was a problem and refused help every time someone came to my truck. I just wanted to rest,

and hoped it was all an over-reaction to a simple problem. When I couldn't lift my head off my pillow, I could no longer deny that I needed help. I called Cindy at home in California and told her I felt like I was dying. I told her I loved her and asked her to tell my kids I loved them, too. I thought I was never going home again.

She called 911 in California, and they accessed 911 in Kansas. The paramedics were quickly on their way. They knew exactly where I was, because they had already been out to check on me. I vaguely remember the ambulance arriving and being pulled from my truck. The next thing I really recall was being in a rehab facility in Wichita two months later.

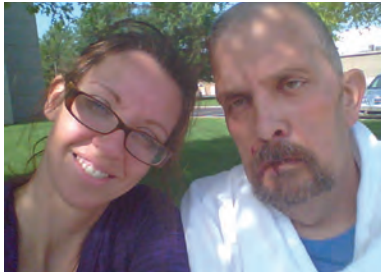
According to everyone's reports (and the pile of medical bills) I was driven to the Dodge City Hospital and immediately flown to a trauma center in Wichita. The doctors saw 3 lesions on my brain and first believed them to be cancerous tumors. They told Cindy via telephone that the oncology team was preparing a plan, but the prognosis was not good. She immediately called our family, our pastor, and National Carriers. Without delay, Director of Driver Services, Al Love, set up a flight for her to be at my side at the hospital in Wichita, Kansas.



When my wife got to the hospital, the doctors had new information. It didn't appear to be cancer after all, but rather a serious infection from an air-borne bacteria called Nocardia. It's rare, but aggressively attacks the brain. The doctors began to treat me for Nocardiosis using antibiotics and multiple brain surgeries. The mortality rate of this type of infection is 89%, even with treatment. Fortunately, I responded well to treatment and, almost three months later after extensive physical, occupational and speech therapy, the hospital was able to send me home. Once again, Mr. Love offered to set up flights for both me and my wife to return to our family back in California.

Amazingly, a few months after returning home, my doctors gave me the stamp of approval to return to work at National Carriers. While I still get pretty tired at times and have scheduled follow-ups with my doctors, I have no lasting neurological problems from this brain infection.

I truly believe that my recovery was God's work in action, putting me in the hands of people who would take my situation seriously. If my dispatcher had not stayed in contact with my wife, had not paid attention, had not recognized my unresponsiveness and changes in behavior, I think the outcome may have been tragically different. Had National Carriers not offered financial and emotional support to my wife, she would never have been able to spend those months with me, motivating me to recover fully. National Carriers has played such an important part in my recovery, and I am so appreciative!



I cannot urge drivers enough to pay attention to your body. If you feel weird or "not right", don't be stubborn. Get help. It may delay your trip, but it may also save your life. I also urge driver managers to pay attention to changes in your driver's behaviors. If someone is sounding and acting unusual, take it seriously. Remember, dead drivers cannot deliver on time.



NATIONAL CARRIERS RELIES *For Enhanced Driver Satisfaction And*

IRVING, Texas, June 4, 2015 - When it comes to selecting a truck model to use in the National Carriers fleet, Jim Franck is quick to the point. "Reliability and cost of ownership are key to me," he said. "The key is to find a truck that gives you uptime, and a truck that drivers like to drive. And, that truck has to have a low cost of ownership, otherwise it won't make you money."

As president of National Carriers, Franck said he's found the right balance with the Kenworth T680 with 76-inch sleeper, which has become the "standard" for the reefer division's fleet. National Carriers operates 670 tractors, of which 70 percent are company-owned.



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"The T680's aerodynamics, reliability – and that of the PACCAR MX-13 engine – coupled with driver acceptance, is what sold us," Franck said. "From a dollars and cents standpoint, we're seeing a 1 mpg improvement in fuel economy over the performance of our previous standard truck. Our fleet also is now equipped with APUs and idle time has been reduced to less than 10 percent. That reduction represents about half of our savings – so all told we have a fleet average of 7.5 mpg*, with our best drivers getting around 8."

With most routes south of I-80, National Carriers hauls beef in about 40 percent of its loads with the other 60 percent a combination of refrigerated, frozen and dry loads. Its on-time delivery rate is exceptionally high, testament to the reliability of its equipment and diligence of its drivers.

National Carriers, known as the "Elite" Fleet®, began transitioning into the Kenworth T680 two years ago, purchasing the driver-friendly, aerodynamic trucks through MHC Kenworth – Dallas. The company's latest Kenworth T680s are specified with the 455-hp PACCAR MX-13 engine and driven through the Eaton Fuller Advantage™ 10-speed automated transmission. "We really spec'd these trucks with driver comfort in mind," said Franck. "And we feel they contribute in part to our low driver turnover, which is well below the industry average."

According to Franck, the T680s feature rotating tables so they can be used as desk top, or dining table. The trucks also feature a drawer style refrigerator/freezer, TV installation package, and inverter for converting DC power to AC power for use with microwaves and other appliances.

While reliable trucks are critical to National Carriers' success, so is dealer support. "MHC Kenworth has been a fantastic partner with us," said Franck. "Their dealership locations fit our footprint. With a fleet as large as ours, there will also be issues, but how you handle them – and how fast you handle them – is the key ingredient and MHC bends over backwards for us, here and on the road."

Franck said that MHC is also there with support if service works ever gets bogged down at National's own service facility. "For any warranty work, they can handle that at their shop, which is nearby, or at our facility with their mobile service units. And, if we need any support for regular service work,

ON KENWORTH T680S

Fuel Economy

they're quick to respond – it's great to have that high level of service and customer service supporting us. It makes a huge difference."



National Carriers driver Goldie Seymour is shown with her Kenworth T680. Seymour has been a truck driver for more than 40 years.

One of the first drivers to operate the Kenworth T680 was Goldie Seymour, who has driven trucks for more than 40 years. "You couldn't get me out of this truck with a crowbar," Seymour said. She originally began driving the T680 as a company driver, but then converted the truck into National's lease program. "That's been a great decision," she said. "National wants me to be successful and they work with all their lease drivers closely to help ensure that happens. If I'm successful, they're successful."

According to Seymour, "Baby Blue," as she calls her T680, has nearly 200,000 miles under the hood. "It's the quietest truck I've ever driven in and it's very smooth – a great ride," she said. "The truck was also designed with women in mind; you can tell by the dash layout and seat travel. I'm 5'4" and can easily reach all the controls and pedals. That can't be said about all trucks out there."

Seymour said she was a little hesitant about the truck at the start since it was spec'd with an automated transmission. "I'm old school and had never driven an automated – not even in my car," she said. "I've just always wanted full control of my vehicle. But I'll tell you what – you can teach an old dog a new trick. I wouldn't want to go back to a manual."

As a "new" owner-operator, Seymour said she's getting fuel mileage in the mid-7's to low 8's – "depending upon what I'm hauling. Since I'm now paying my own fuel bills, those mileage numbers are important to me."

According to Franck, Seymour is yet another shining light behind the wheel of a National Carrier rig. "Goldie was named our 2014 driver of the year for good reason," he said. "She exemplifies the 'Elite' Fleet. She always has a positive, can-do attitude and goes out of her way to be professional in everything she does."

Kenworth Truck Company is the manufacturer of The World's Best® heavy and medium duty trucks. Kenworth's Internet home page is at www.kenworth.com. Kenworth is a PACCAR company.

**Individual fuel economy improvement will vary depending on use, road conditions and other factors.*

Story courtesy of Kenworth Truck Company.

Obstructive Sleep Apnea Affects National Carriers Drivers



Lola Edwards and husband Willis

“I hate having anything covering my face while I sleep,” team driver Lola Edwards said. “I went to have my DOT physical renewed, and the doctor said my neck was too big and I needed a sleep test before he could sign off on my paperwork. I went to a sleep disorder company in Dallas where I paid \$350 for the equipment to monitor myself while I slept that night. I hooked up the wires from the machine to myself and fell asleep. The next day I took the machine back and their people looked at the read out. It recorded my snoring was excessive, and I had stopped breathing 165 times throughout the night.”

Lola had to purchase a CPAP machine for \$1000. Sleeping in the bunk of a moving truck has proved challenging to keep the machine stabilized while keeping it attached to her face. The hose is attached to a small humidifier to help keep her nasal passages from drying out. To keep her face as unobstructed as possible while sleeping, she choose a smaller nose mask verses a full face mask. After one week of using the device, she is beginning to feel the positive effects.

According to the National Institute of Health, obstructive sleep apnea is a common disorder in which you have one or more pauses in breathing or shallow breaths while you sleep. Breathing pauses can last from a few seconds to minutes. They may occur 30 or more an hour. Typically, normal breathing then starts again, sometimes with a loud snort or choking sound. Sleep apnea usually is a chronic (ongoing) condition that disrupts your sleep. When breathing pauses or becomes shallow, you’ll move out of a deep sleep and into light sleep.

While BMI, neck size, and age are objective parameters for assessing the risk of OSA, there are many other risk factors. Upper airway, cranio-facial anatomy, excessive daytime sleepiness, loud snoring, observed apneas during sleep, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, morning headaches, age over 50, acid reflux or heartburn, bruxism, large tongue or crowded pharynx, cardiac conditions, recent traffic accident (including passenger vehicles), insomnia, restless legs, close relatives with OSA, mood disorders, erectile dysfunction, and others.

“Sleep apnea occurs in all age groups and both sexes, but there are certain factors that put you in at higher risk,” shares Jill Maschmeier, Director of Safety at National Carriers. “A family history of sleep apnea, being overweight, a large neck size (17 inches or greater for men, 16 inches or greater for women), being age 40 or older, having a small upper airway, having a recessed chin, small jaw or a large overbite, smoking and alcohol use, and ethnicity. My guestimate is nearly 50% of NCI drivers may fit into this category. If our doctor recommends a sleep test and that test finds that you have sleep apnea, you’re going to have to wear and use a CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) machine while you sleep at night. There’s a little card that you’ll have to download information from so they can verify that you’re using it.”

Owner operator Rich Enarson was the first driver in the state of Iowa to have a CPAP machine in his truck. After years of horrendous headaches, restless sleep, drowsiness while driving, deafening snoring and waking up more exhausted than when he went to bed, Rich sought medical help. He visited his doctor who made the



Richard Enarson poses beside his truck



Rich Enarson

proper diagnosis even though OSA was relatively unknown. The machines were only manufactured for electrical power in homes and would not work off an inverter. Rich found an experimental machine and began using it until the technology caught up with the need. Recently, Medicare paid for him a second machine.

“The sleep test I participated in ten years ago was very primitive compared to what they do now. However, I knew immediately after the test this was what I needed. I felt like a new person. I now feel rejuvenated when I wake up compared to before. I use it even if I am taking a 15 minute nap. I use the full face mask and the benefits certainly outweigh any

discomfort,” Rich stated.

Heather Wright, Compliance Manager for National Carriers cautions, “FMCSA warns that symptoms of sleep apnea are dangerous and potentially deadly for commercial truck drivers. These symptoms can include the following: daytime sleepiness, falling asleep at inappropriate times, loud snoring, depression, irritability, loss of sex drive, morning headaches, frequent nighttime urination, lack of concentration, and memory impairment.”

Number One Customer Appreciated

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THE O, S, & D DOCTOR

Dr. Alejandro Estrada

“I very much enjoyed working at National Carriers,” began Dr. Alejandro Estrada. “I was responsible for any overages, shortages or damages for the entire fleet. Whether the product would be sold to someone else or donated to a worthy cause, I oversaw the transaction. I liked selling the items that had a claim charged against it, trying to recoup as much money as I could on behalf of NCI. There were times I sold directly out of the trailer to customers, this I enjoyed the most.”



During his tenure at National Carriers Dr. Estrada also helped drivers and owner operators attain downtime and compensation if they were involved in an accident that was not their fault. If an outside party caused damage that resulted in limiting or eliminating the NCI driver’s income, he would lobby on behalf of the driver or owner.

“While attending community college my advisor informed me National Carriers had a job opening. I interviewed with safety director, Jill Maschmeier, who hired me to work in her department. I felt welcomed immediately. I worked one full year, then while I attended

Kansas State University, I worked each summer. After I graduated from KSU, I attended Cleveland Chiropractic College where I received my degree. I returned to Southwestern Kansas to practice with my brother Dr. Uriel Estrada, and with my bilingual abilities I feel I can help more of the estimated 70% Spanish speaking patients in the area,” he continued.

Dr. Estrada encourages National Carrier drivers to be aware of simple techniques to limit back pain that is created when driving. Lower back pain can occur while driving due to continuous vibration and movement as the truck travels across less than perfect pavement conditions. The large nerve roots in the lower back that go to the legs may be irritated; smaller nerves that supply the low back may be irritated; large paired lower back muscles (erector spinae) may be strained; bones, ligaments or joints may be damaged; and/or an intervertebral disc may be degenerating.

He concluded, “Drivers need to get out of the seat and walk around stretching their back muscles. A driver can have back or neck discomfort that normally occurs after extended time slumping over the steering wheel. It’s not intentional, it just happens after a period of time while driving. If a driver will roll their shoulders back for ten to fifteen minutes at a time it will help alleviate the anterior shoulder pain.”



NCI SUCCESS STORY

Kurt Knox

Truck #4592



BEFORE



NOW

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"I thought my increased need to stop and urinate was just one of the facts of getting older. As the urge continued to increase, I knew something was wrong, but I didn't know what it was. I had started driving at National Carriers almost four years earlier and felt I was in good shape, even though I tipped the scale at 300 pounds," shared National Carriers company driver, Kurt Knox.

Knox continued, "I had unscheduled major dental work that kept me off the road for awhile. When I was ready to begin driving again, I had to update my medical card. During the urinalysis the medical staff found that my sugar levels were up, and I was diagnosed with type II diabetes. I was devastated when they told me. An A1C Test found my glucose levels were at 16%. Normally it should be 6-7%."

Hemoglobin is a protein that links up with sugars such as glucose and is found inside red blood cells. Its job is to carry oxygen from the lungs to all the cells of the body. Glucose enters your red blood cells and links up (or glyicates) with molecules of hemoglobin. The more glucose in your blood, the more hemoglobin gets glycated. By measuring the percentage of A1C in the blood, you get an overview of your average blood glucose control for the past few months.

"I was immediately placed on oral medication. If the condition worsened, I would have to begin using insulin. If that occurred, I would lose my CDL. I began a tight regimen of working out and changing my diet. I started eating clean; all the vegetables, beans and salads became a huge part of my eating habits. I use a blender to juice vegetables, making sure I add beets for the potassium and iron nutrients that help increase my energy levels. I also enjoy a variety of berries - blue, black, raspberries and strawberries - as well as nuts for snacking. I eat yogurt for its probiotic benefits. As my body is cleansed daily, I make sure that the amount of carbohydrates such as bread and potatoes are limited as well as salt and sugar intake," he stated.

"I have lost over 80 pounds since I found I was diabetic. Every time I eat right, my body says 'thank you'. I feel 100% better. I feel great and I hope I can be an example to others who are facing the same issues. My goal is to reverse the diabetes and minimize the oral medication I now have to take," he summarized.



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48 State

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DM: MICHAEL RITCHEE



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JAMES JOHNSON
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DM: DEBBIE SMITH



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