



FOR THE TRANSPORTATION PROFESSIONAL

"Elite" FLEET® MAGAZINE

Special Issue

2018 DRIVER OF THE YEAR BANQUET

Bob Duncan Center

APRIL 5, 2019

Arlington, TX

**Goldie
Seymour
2014**



**Phil Nix
2013**



**Randy
Barnett
2012**



2018



**Carlinci Pete
2018**



**Jeff
Gutzler
2017**



**Allen and Sandy
Smith - 2016**

VIEW FROM THE WINDSHIELD



JIM FRANCK
PRESIDENT

Another year has flown by quickly.

2018 was a great year to be a trucker. With the economy booming, so was the freight. With the ability to finally raise freight rates we were able to pass along 2 significant pay increases to our company drivers and contractors. We also instituted our first Company Driver incentive pay program. This allowed our "Elite" drivers to earn up to an additional four cents per mile paid quarterly. This program rewards our over-achievers and gives everyone an opportunity to make more money based on performance. It is truly exciting and a program we look to expand and increase as we move forward.

The Driver Banquet is truly my favorite night of the year. The opportunity to salute and celebrate the "Elite" of the "Elite"

is an honor that I cherish. Every one of our drivers, whether they are refrigerated, livestock or hides, are truly special and unique. Each in their own way. I am proud to be associated with all of you.



Dmitri Kompaneyets
with Jim Franck



**Let's make
2019 a
great year
and, as
always,
please be
safe out
there!**



Ina Marinelli with Jim Franck



Steve Neal with Jim Franck

BARNEY PAST AWARD WINNERS



JAMES RAMPY
2017



BILL DUNCAN
2016



JEANA HUEBERT
2015



JAMES WHITE
2014



WILLIE JEFFERSON
2013



STEVE SPENCE
2012

Bonnell Edmonds worked several years in our safety department helping educate drivers in the tedious process of keeping paper logs accurate, and she was more affectionately known as “Barney”. She loved her job, she loved the drivers, she loved her co-workers and above all she loved her NCI family.

During her NCI journey Barney was diagnosed with lung cancer. Her attitude remained upbeat, and she was determined to continue to help others.

Shortly after her passing, former owner operator Mike Jenkins was named Driver of the Month. He asked that his \$500 bonus check be used to begin a memorial to Barney from NCI drivers to recognize the office or shop personality who best represents the spirit of our beloved Barney.

Since that time, **The Barney Award** has been presented each year at the Driver of the Year Banquet.



DRIVER OF THE MONTH - JANUARY



**CLARK
JOURNAGAN**

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Clark Journagan was awarded Driver of the Month for January 2018. He operates a company truck on the 48 State Division. Clark is a second generation NCI driver following in the footsteps of his stepfather, Leonard Journagan. He is now a finalist for NCI Driver of the Year 2018.

Safety has always been a key component in Journagan's world view. Earning his chauffeur's license at age 19, he drove at National Carriers for a short stint from 1998 thru 2000. He returned to NCI in 2010.

"National Carriers treat their drivers like a person instead of a number. NCI is always interested in how to make things better by asking the driver's opinion about what can be done to help the company to improve. The equipment it top-notch and well maintained. Our onboard log system assures the driver of operating safely and legally," he confided.



DRIVER OF THE MONTH - FEBRUARY

**ARTURO
LOPEZ-
GALLARDO**



Driver of the Month for February of 2018 was company driver, Arturo Lopez-Gallardo. He operates his truck on the 48 State Division. Gallardo began pulling for NCI as a regional west coast fleet driver. When the regional fleet ceased operation, this southern California resident began pulling freight nationwide.

"Arturo started driving for NCI in December of 2013 and has never had a service related issue. He is a very special guy, a great husband, and father of three daughters and one son. He is admired by many. In the past, he had some hardships to overcome, but he kept smiling and persevered," shared Al Love, former Director of Driver Services.

Love continued, "The operations department loves him as there is no place he won't go. He is a hard runner who is always on time and puts safety first. His former Driver Manager, Mary Marquez, shared with me he is an awesome driver. He always had a great attitude and she enjoyed working with him. Arturo is truly ELITE."

Arturo said with a smile, "National Carriers provides late model equipment for their drivers. My first truck was a Kenworth T-700 and my current truck is a Kenworth T-680. It has an auxillary power unit, inverter, double bunks, and a work area. When I started with NCI, I needed to be close to the house. Now, I will go wherever I am needed, I'll go wherever the loads take me".



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DRIVER OF THE MONTH - MARCH

**JAY
HEATER**



Former offshore drilling rig operator and retired Merchant Marine Captain, Jay Heater, has added another accolade to his long list of accomplishments. National Carriers

named him Driver of the Month for March 2018. Heater makes his home in Florida and operates a company truck on the NCI 48 State fleet.

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"I saw a very positive online review of National Carriers so I gave them a call. Director of Recruiting, Rick Ham, spent over an hour with me discussing exactly what I could expect if I joined the "Elite" Fleet. I appreciate the time he spent with me and everything he said would happen, has happened," Heater shared.

Rick Ham elaborated, "Jay was working for another Company who was not meeting his needs. When he called, Jay had many questions, good questions, and he knew what he was doing. He told me if he came to NCI he'd be the best driver we have if we could keep him running. I told him if he would do what we do and go where we go, he'd stay busy. This Driver of the Month recognition is an example of both parties working together for mutual driving success."

Heater gives additional credit to Director of Operations, Lex Mendenhall. He feels he can go to Mendenhall with any questions or concerns he may have. National Carriers keeps his truck moving, allowing Heater to run the miles and receive the home time he needs to be successful.



DRIVER OF THE MONTH - APRIL

**RAUL
DAVILA**



Owner Operator Raul Davila was named April Driver of the Month. Raul lives in Dodge City, Kansas and operates his truck within the NCI Hide division. In April he ran 21% more miles than the fleet average. He has an exceptional safety rating, with no accidents, incidents, late pickups or late deliveries. He joined NCI as a company driver in March 2014. Later that year he leased his truck through NCI Truck Leasing. After completing his lease he exercised the option to buy his truck.

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Initially, Davila applied to National Carriers and was turned down due to lack of over the road driving experience. He reapplied after he achieved the required experience and was rewarded with a new truck which he later went on to purchase.



DRIVER OF THE MONTH - MAY

**TOMMY
McMAHON**



Driver of the Month for May of 2018 is company driver Tommy McMahon. He lives in Jasper, Texas, and operates a company truck throughout the lower 48 states. McMahon began working at National Carriers in January of 2010. For his accomplishment, he received a bonus of \$1000.

"In December of 2009, the company I had worked for eight years closed

their doors, leaving drivers stranded all over the country. NCI called me before I had a chance to look for another job. They were looking for people that were not job hoppers, who wanted stability and wanted to work. In a matter of days, I was in Irving, Texas, attending orientation. I've stayed at NCI because of the family atmosphere. I feel like I belong here. I'm not just a driver." McMahon shared.

National Carriers spokesman Ed Kentner stated, "Whether the subject is safe driving habits, on time deliveries, truck maintenance or customer service, Tommy McMahon is a leader in each area. From the first day he attended orientation through today, he has made himself an invaluable contributor to National Carriers continued success."

McMahon said earnestly, "I haven't any hesitation to walk into the president's office and visit. He treats me as a human being, not just as a driver. He cares what is going on with me, my business and my equipment. Customer service, dispatch, the shop, safety and driver services all have an open-door policy. Even our settlement department is excellent in communicating with our drivers. I don't worry about my payroll, because I know it is done right. If I send in the right information, I will get the right paycheck each week. I receive an email on Wednesday stating what my deposit will be. Friday, when I wake up, I can check my account and it will be there."



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DRIVER OF THE MONTH - JUNE

★
**ANGEL
KNOPP &
JODY
WILCOX**

Recognized as Drivers of the Month for June were co-drivers Angel Knopp of Killeen, TX, and Jody Wilcox of Pearl, MS. Working as a team, they've driven accident free and set a high standard for on-time service throughout the lower 48 states. Originally operating as NCI solo drivers, they decided to combine their talents to see if team driving would better meet their goals, and as they say, the rest is history.

On behalf of the team, Knopp said, "We're involved in Special Olympics and National Carriers has been very supportive. They even donated a model truck and trailer for truck ride-alongs we participate in. The smiles on the kids' faces reflect pure joy as they ride in our truck. I have an autistic grandson, and it's our way to give back to the community."

Driver Manager, Aaron Dunbar smiled as he shared, "They are the highlight of my day. When I am working with Angel and Jody they keep me laughing and smiling. They are always in good spirits with an outstanding attitude. When it comes to service, they are excellent!"



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DRIVER OF THE MONTH - JULY



**CLEAVON
WARD**



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Driver of the Month honors for July, 2018, was awarded to Cleavon Ward of Colorado Springs, CO. Ward operates his truck within the 48 State Division. Prior to joining NCI he supervised drivers in his military unit. Joining NCI as a trainee, he quickly proved himself and soon became a driver trainer. Cleavon has driven at NCI for over two years and has quickly found a home with the “Elite” Fleet.

“My occupational specialty in the army was 88M truck driving. I choose NCI because they are veteran friendly,” he said. “One of my former soldiers worked for NCI and gave them great reviews. I joined National Carriers, went through a period of training, and now I train new drivers. My passion is driving and I love to help people new to the industry.”

Director of Driver Services, James White, said, “Cleavon does a great job all around. He’s an awesome trainer, is always positive, and never fails to lend a hand. He always has a smile on his face and a good word to say.”



DRIVER OF THE MONTH - APRIL

**MARY
REDDICK
&
RONNIE
WALLETT**

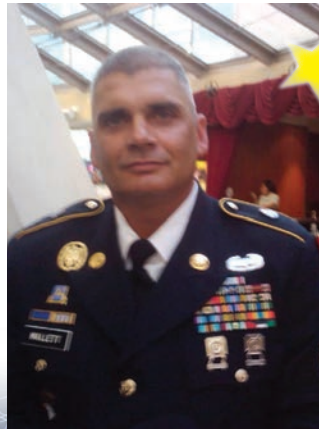
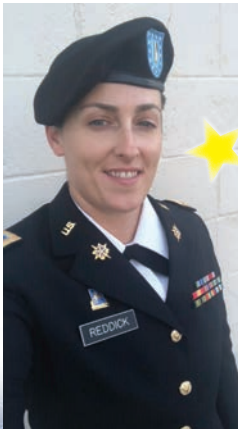
Husband and wife team, Ronnie Wallett and Mary Reddick were chosen as August 2018 Drivers of the

Month. Both have extensive military backgrounds with Mary currently serving part-time in the Texas National Guard. They operate their truck on the Regional Southwest Division. Both used the training program offered new NCI drivers to become qualified to drive for National Carriers.

Ronnie joined NCI after his retirement from the U.S. Army. He had briefly worked at NCI under special circumstances then returned several years later to drive full time. After completing his driver training, he operated a company truck, became a driver trainer and learned all he could about the business. After becoming an owner operator his wife Mary Reddick joined him as a trainee. Together they have formed one of the top teams in the "Elite" Fleet.

Driver manager, Logan Tenopir shared, "Ronnie and Mary

have a good understanding of how loads sometime work out. They take it in stride, are good communicators, and always friendly."



DRIVER OF THE MONTH - SEPTEMBER



**MIGUEL
ANGEL
PENA**

Miguel Angel Pena was Driver of the Month for September 2018. Pena is an exceptionally safe and on-time driver with zero accidents, incidents, late pickups, or deliveries. He leases his truck through NCI Leasing and operates it on the

Regional West Coast lease. Pena and his wife live in Phoenix, Arizona and are originally from El Salvador.

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Pena joined NCI in 2008, but had considered the company for some time. "I was always seeing their trucks, hearing good things, and knew that if I ever changed jobs, NCI would be the place I wanted to work. When his former carrier made changes that reduced his income, Pena made the switch. "I moved my truck to National Carriers and have been happy here ever since. They keep me moving with pre-plans, and I have a good working relationship with my driver manager, Aaron Dunbar." Pena also took the opportunity to upgrade his truck he brought to NCI through NCI Truck Leasing.

National Carriers Leasing representative, Kim Obholz said, "I would take one thousand more drivers just like Miguel. He is the epitome of an independent owner operator. He is reliable, respectful, and dedicated to doing things the right way in the refrigerated freight business. He is very self-sufficient and is always on time. He is also a good businessman who has paid off two leases with us. I just love the guy and appreciate him so much."



DRIVER OF THE MONTH - OCTOBER

PHILLIP STAROSTA

Phillip Starosta was named October Driver of the Month. Starosta is a company driver delivering freight within the lower forty-eight states. The Florida resident, who was born and raised in Indiana, has driven over 30 years including the last four at the “Elite” Fleet. Nicknamed “Froggy” for his love of swimming underwater, Starosta served six years in the United States Air Force.



“When I relocated to Florida, I had to find a company who hired from the area. I looked into NCI and found the people friendly. Most importantly, they never lied to me. Everything they said concerning their trucks and freight has been true. The trucks are constantly updated, well maintained, and attractive. I don’t focus on recognition and bonuses. I feel if I do my job well, I will be rewarded,” Starosta stated.

“Phillip Starosta received bonuses in all 3 categories in the NCIS Quarterly Bonus Program since the inception of the program. This shows his professional attitude and his willingness to succeed in his profession. If by chance, Phillip is delayed at the shipper or the receiver, he does not get upset and realizes this is part of the trucking business. He is a “go with the flow” kind of guy. Phillip is always willing to help National Carriers when we are in need. When not working, he likes to relax by fishing,” shared his driver manager, Sandy Yale.

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DRIVER OF THE MONTH - NOVEMBER



**JOSE
ARAGON**



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José Aragon has been an owner operator in the National Carriers livestock division for the past twenty-one years. He has operated his vehicle without any accidents for over two million miles. A leader in cattle handling, he also raises livestock on his 500 acre ranch outside of Liberal, Kansas. His wife, Argelia, is an employee of the Liberal Police Department.

When asked his secret to long term success, Aragon replied, "I like my job. It is a good way to provide for my family. When I am not hauling livestock or working on my truck, I am taking care of my cattle. I began working at National Carriers in 1997. There have been many changes over the years, including my son Andrew joining me hauling cattle in the livestock division. I appreciate being chosen for this award."

National Carriers Director of Livestock, Jason Greer exclaimed, "What can I say, he's perfect! If you can imagine the highest standard that can be set, Jose is above that. Always clean, respectful, on-time, safe, and helpful, Jose is more than a good dude, he's a great guy. We are pleased to have him representing the livestock division."



DRIVER OF THE MONTH - DECEMBER

**INA
MARINELLI**

National Carriers was pleased to name Ina Marinelli as Driver of the Month for December 2018. She is an exceptionally safe and on-time driver with no accidents or incidents. Marinelli joined NCI in 2012 and delivers freight within the 48 state fleet. Known for exceptional customer service she currently delivers in a tri-state area providing service for one of NCI major customers.

"This has been a goal of mine since I began driving at National Carriers. I would walk past the area in the offices that features the current Drivers of the Month and imagine my photograph being displayed. I am not at ease with the attention, so this recognition is uncomfortable yet very gratifying. The best thing about driving at National Carriers is the family atmosphere. I feel like I am part of something bigger than myself. I want National Carriers to love me as I love them," Ina said enthusiastically.

Ina went on to say that her driver manager, load planners, and their supervisors are instrumental in her success. Driving a 2018 Kenworth T-680 with an automatic transmission, she enjoys the amenities, such as the refrigerator/freezer, auxiliary power unit, inverter, and extra storage areas. National Carriers is owned by National Beef Packers, one of the largest beef processors in the United States.

2014 National Carriers Driver of the Year and current member of the NCI Safety Department, Goldie Seymour shared, "Ina is a credit to women drivers not only at National Carriers, but throughout the industry. She prepares delicious meals in her truck, cutting her personal expenses while eating healthy at the same time."



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2018 DRIVER OF THE YEAR NOMINEES



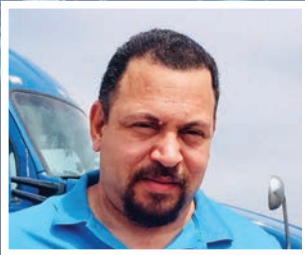
Clark Journagan
January



Arturo Lopez-Gallardo
February



Jay Heater
March



Raul Davila
April



Tommy McMahon
May



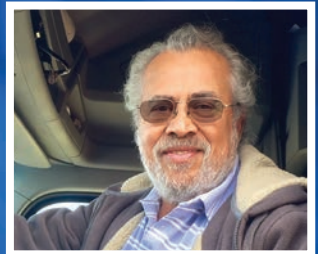
Angel Knopp / Jody Wilcox
June



Cleavon Ward
July



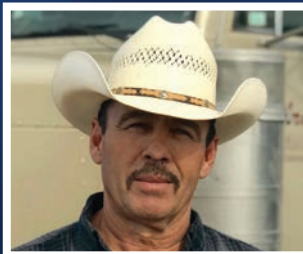
Ronnie Walleth/Mary Reddick
August



Miguel Angel Pena
September



Phillip Starosta
October



Jose Aragon
November



Ina Marinelli
December