

LRFT newsletter

**Little Rock
Farm Trucking**
www.lrft.net

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Department	Ext
Sales	127
Live Haul Dispatch	125
Long Haul / Local	124
Safety	133
Milton Office	207
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Value Added Services

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- Experienced Drivers
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- Accurate Billing
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- CFIA Approved Docs
- Bio Security Aware
- Ace Manifests

Your dedicated regional, national, or international carrier of dry goods or refrigerated loads. We also haul live poultry between the USA and Canada. We can do regular scheduled runs with dedicated drivers.

**Learn more about us
at www.lrft.net**

Volume 3, Issue 7

July 2010



Striving To Be Green



Meet A Few Of Our Families



THANKS FOR ATTENDING OUR PICNIC

On behalf of the social committee, we would like to thank all who attended our family picnic. It was a wonderful picnic with severe weather forecasted during our Saturday. Some how... some way... the clouds stayed away and presented us with ideal temperatures and clear skies for the evening.

The Reuber Family provided a delicious supper

with BBQ Hamburgers and Dogs!

As always, Liz and Barb plan outstanding shing-digs for all of us here at Little Rock. Special thanks to Mark, Johnny, Washers & Mechanics for setting up our picnic and getting everything prepared in the backyard.

Thanks Again, *Michael*

The Trucking Company's Reputation Relies On Driver Performance

With the economy in turmoil, this industry is about as tough as I have ever seen it. There are three times more trucks out there than loads to haul. The pricing competition is fierce to cut throat levels more than ever before. Shippers rarely have just one dedicated carrier these days.

The third party logistics people are really just load brokers. They are not asset based and therefore operate at a huge advantage, even when it means it's tearing trucking companies to pieces and forcing many into bankruptcy. They will go to a shipper and low ball a quote. So low, they know a trucking company desperate for work will eventually accept the quote, even if working at a loss. The reason they can do this is simple. They have no trucks, insurance, maintenance facilities, yards, and administration required to run a trucking company. They don't have the wages of the drivers, mechanics, and office personnel to worry about.

When a third party logistics handler (TPLH) gets involved, they post a message on a load board waiting for a trucking company to respond to their order. Negotiations happen and the TPLH refuses to play fair with prices. Most times the pricing is below the costs of transportation. TPLH's can't lose because they keep 10—20% of the rate for themselves giving the trucking company the scraps. Also, they have no liability, they have only offered customer service. The trucking company is left all the responsibilities of constant updating, time management, appointments, waiting and etc. Trucking companies work on very low profit margins such as 1—3%, therefore, volume is everything in order to stay in business. It's that 1—3% that is able to buy new equipment or make investment choices on the future.

As an open board carrier, the only way to attract new customers and there is only one way and that is through service.

We cannot cut the rate and stay hauling a shipper's goods. We need to back this up with quality services.

When we take a load from a customer 99% of the time we do it with an agreement that the truck will have a scheduled pick up and delivery time. It is imperative that those appointments are met. First impressions are everything.

When you pull into a shipper's facility and you walk up to the shipping desk, what are you doing? You are representing the carrier. In this case LITTLE ROCK Farm Trucking.

Are you prepared to load? Are you early or late for your dock appointment? Do you have the correct shipment information? Do you have a pen? Are you clean and presentable? Is your trailer clean inside? Do you have load securing bars if required? Is your trailer pre-cooled? Did you drive through their facility in a safe manner or did you tear through their grass when you pulled in?

All these things are what the shipper is basing opinions on. The first impression is what sticks in their mind and guess what. Your name is right across both sides of the trailer. LITTLE ROCK FARM TRUCKING.

This is what they remember and when calling around for quotes, they will remember us if we provide great customer service.

I often hear people referring to other trucking companies doing much better. How are they doing it? How are they able to grow and operate those great shiny trucks? They could be doing it a variety of ways. They could be providing excellent customer service with a broad enough customer base to make it happen. OR They could be losing their shirts and putting on a big show and appear to be doing better than they are. They could also be hiring only the best drivers as well, weeding out the weak drivers who aren't customer service oriented.

Bottom line, the drivers are the company. The other employees are important but not front line like a driver. The first impression is everything... Make it a good one. It will take all of us further down the road.

Fueling Issues & Receipt Reconciliation

For long haul drivers, it's been noted that some of you are not separating your Reefer Fills from your Tractor Fills on the receipt. The declaration of Fuel for both are different. The taxes and reconciliation is to be separated. By getting two receipts, this assists in keeping our records accurate to where our fuel purchase are being used.

Some drivers are not turning in their Foxton Fuel Re-

ceipts. This is a surprise when we receive our invoice from Foxton and it shows we have purchased more fuel than we have accounted for already. This causes Mike McCann to search through Trip Envelopes to find where the fuel could have been used. It's an administrative pain and very time consuming.

Please do your part to record your fuel and turn in your receipts.

Michael McCann

Safety Meeting 2010 - Point Of View

The leader behind our safety committee, who also coordinated the agenda and issues, was Sandy MacInnis. Committee members were Mark Reuber, Steve McEntee, Dave Robert, and Michael Sellick.

This year we tried something a bit different which included doing a Safety Meeting here at LRFT Walkerton on a Friday Afternoon. This was placed on the table to allow drivers to have their Saturday morning free. We were missing only 4 drivers out of our Walkerton driver line up which was excellent. Thanks to all who came.

Steve McEntee took initiative to invite the Walkerton Fire Department to come to LRFT to demonstrate Fire Extinguisher Usage. Our fearless Wayne Meyer, Ed Hall,



and Geoff Goetz put out the fires during a live demonstration with the supervision of the Fire Department.

Our safety meeting presentations were short with factual visual presentations. Sandy MacInnis provided detailed graphs to show us a terrific downward trend of expenses. She also went through a detailed audit report which indicated where drivers need to pay attention to receipt and logging discrepancies.

Steve McEntee presented to our employees the importance of weight balancing and procedures of scaling. Steve provided a write up and detailed schematic of the truck balancing. If you need a copy, talk to Steve about getting another one.

Michael Sellick went over the procedures for the brand new trip envelopes. He then dove head first into the Chicken Paperwork, looking at the importance of completion and why we are needing the information.

Mark Reuber brought our meeting to a conclusion with Driver Routing. He presented a copy of one month's New York State Tollway check that was issued for nearly \$4000.00. It came down to making better financial choices as a company. Drivers had opportunities to discuss equipment and other issues directly with Mark as a group.

I say, this was the best Safety Meeting I had ever attended.

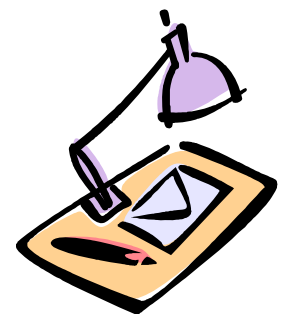
Remember that if you have concerns or issues. Talk to Mark or the people who make the decisions directly. Don't rely on others to speak up or champion your concerns. It's up to you.

Also, do not wait for several months to go by when the issue are continuous. Change can only happen when you speak up.

Michael

A Few Reminders:

- Live Haul Drivers particularly, it is your responsibility to call Dispatch prior to 4pm On Fridays. Do not wait for after hours as it causes a large mess if something scheduled doesn't meet your expectations.
- Summer is here, Holidays are booked on a first come first serve basis. Seniority is not considered. Please give enough advance written notice to help avoid being disappointed.
- If you are a chicken hauler and are required to load at two farms (generally called split loads), be sure to write that on your "Notes Area" of the Fuel & Expense Sheet so it will be compen-



New Style Trip Envelopes and Logs Just Being Released Now.

Any Questions, Please Ask.

LRFT Papparazzi - At The Safety meeting



Around The Rock - I Can Feel The Changes

I've been around "The Rock" 6 years now and I have seen changes. I have been here in THE BOOM... when the shipments were plenty and the drivers were utilized in every possible empty truck. It wasn't uncommon for me to be pulling in the Parking Lot and there's another driver waiting to move into my truck for his trip. The trucks were operating 24-7.

I could foresee a change coming in the economy. As truckers, we can see the falling of the economy years in advance with shippers shipping one or two less truckloads per week... I could see, the steady decline of our economy.

I've been here in "THE BOOM" when those 15 new tractors arrived and the economy fell to it's knees within months after the trucks arriving with years of payments ahead.

There were times where I was thinking how is LRFT going to survive when many companies our size are closing? I try my best to watch the dollars and cents that pass over my desk. I'm watching for opportunities to save pennies here and there.

I've seen drivers take initiative in suggesting changes. Geoff Goetz, Sharon Miller, and Paul Sarhan come to my mind instantly but there are others without blowing any more brain cells. They changed what I do at my desk which betters LRFT as a whole. Most of what was suggested is about saving LRFT Money with very little effort or procedural changes.

Having just attended our annual safety meeting yesterday. I thought it was the best Safety Meeting LRFT has ever had.

We kept our presentations short without a meal breaking up the

meeting. There was laughter at many segments. Of the drivers that could attend, only 4 drivers were missing out of our Walkerton Driver Line Up that could have attended.

Sandy's presentation was her best yet. Her informative presentation and detailed analysis looked at the small things that can cost us all. Sandy showed us terrific graphs indicating that our drivers have greatly improved their driving performance.

The drivers had excellent points and questions. I can feel positive changes coming ahead! Can You?

Michael

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Shelley, Accounting ext 123
Michael M, Admin ext 139
Mike S, IT Support ext 139
Michael S, Weekend ext 135

Sales:

Mark., ext 127

Executive:

Mark, Owner ext 127
John, Owner ext 137
Theresa, Controller ext 136

LRFT employs over 80 people who include drivers, mechanics, students and administration to serve our customer's needs.

The company newsletter is produced by Michael Sellick, administrator for LRFT.

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Contributors welcome. Submissions will be considered and decided based on theme and content.