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TRUCK CENTERS INC.
FREIGHTLINER

Truck Centers
Inc.

DRIVEN

P.30

NEW HOME IN
SOUTH BEND

P.32

REWIND
WITH LEN THOLE

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WESTERN STAR
49X WORKHORSE

P.42

DTNA ENHANCES
CUSTOMER SERVICE



MASTERS of METAL

Fifty Years of Heart & Heritage



FULL-SERVICE
COLLISION
CENTERS

Truck Centers
Inc.

TROY, IL > MORTON, IL > SOUTH BEND, IN

preface

We plan. God laughs.

-Yiddish proverb

We had grand plans for a blowout year in 2020 for our 50th anniversary. Then, coronavirus happens...

One thing that the Truck Centers' team does well is adapt. With the uncertainties, real and anticipated impacts from the virus, celebratory plans were put on pause for us to focus on our team and customers' immediate needs. This year has changed all of us – we are a little more wary and reluctant to forecast too far ahead. It has reminded us to be grateful for the opportunities that we have and how quickly life changes. We are abundantly blessed with the health and safety of our team as well as the financial good fortune to be still able to open the doors and turn on the lights each day to serve our customers who are trudging alongside us fighting the good fight.

This year has proven to be a strong reminder that milestone anniversaries are not just notches on your belt and years passing by but also celebrating the journey that we share. It is crucial to remain committed to your mission, especially amid the less-than-ideal times. We often showcase the accolades, the high praises, and awards but so much of our defining moments are often left in the shadows. It is vital to reflect on the more solemn times when

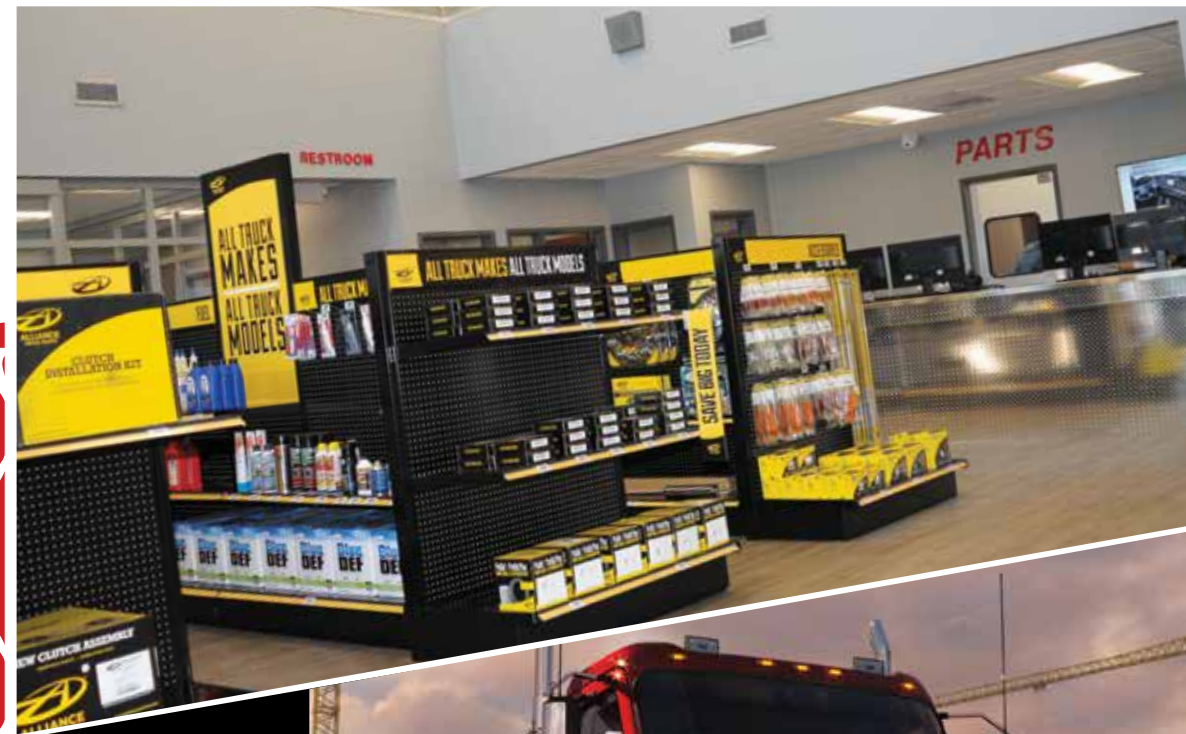
personal dedication, the near-misses, the loyal friendships, and a sense of community carried us through. These hard times are often blessings in disguise. They help define who we are and what we stand for but are often lost in the narrative for times of fanfare.

Well... 2020 will always be an integral part of our story, not a diminished footnote, because it showcases the richness of our relationships. This 50th anniversary serves as a reminder of the best that Truck Centers has to offer. We choose to celebrate our dedicated team that is passionate about the products and services that we provide to our valued customers, day in and day out, to deliver unparalleled service. Thank you to the people who make it all happen, to our DTNA and vendor partners, and our customers, both new and returning, who honor us with the opportunity to serve them. We are truly humbled and grateful for each of you.

Cheers to 50 Years!



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MANAGING
EDITOR:
MICHELLE PETROFF
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FEE MCCASKILL

TRUCKCENTERS

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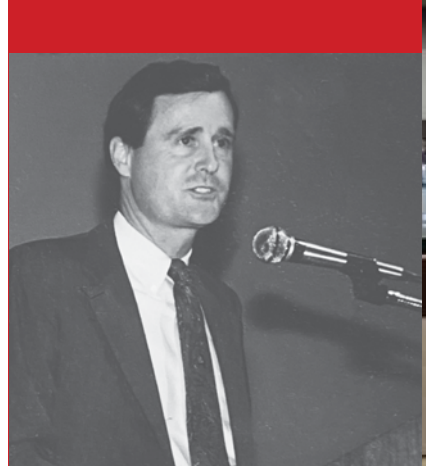
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greetings

The past year has seen historic challenges for families, businesses, churches, and life as we know it. Even amid these difficult times, I hope that you are reminded of the blessings we have each day.

We have also experienced some of these challenges, but nothing that we could not overcome, thanks to our TCI family, customers, and our valued business partners at DTNA, FCCC, and DTF. As a company, we have faced hardships before and will undoubtedly do so again. I am incredibly grateful that our team members and their families have mostly stayed healthy and safe thus far. They have also continued to show up and serve our customers as a

mission-critical business. They have exemplified dedication and teamwork, and I am deeply appreciative and thankful for each of them.

Thank you... we have been abundantly blessed. 🙏

On December 11th, we opened the doors to our new 97,000 sq. ft. facility in South Bend. This new facility is located with direct frontage on the I-80/90 Toll-Road to better serve our FCCC, on-highway, and vocational customers. While we had to forego a community Grand Opening due to COVID-19 restrictions, we were able to have a meaningful celebration with our South Bend team to mark this special moment in TCI's story. We have

included more information and photos in this issue with hope that you will take a moment and enjoy them. While we are so proud of this new facility, it is the people who truly make it unique.

Once again, thank you to each and every person who has helped us navigate this crazy pandemic, supported us, and especially to the men and women who never wavered in their commitment to our customers.

May 2021 bring you nothing but health and good fortune.

John Hopkins
Chairman/CEO





The best way to describe 2020 is that it can take your breath away! When the New Year turned, we were getting ready for what we hoped to be a strong year in our industry and business. However, just a few months into the new year, we were confronted with a mystery no one had ever experienced, along with no processes on how to deal with the unfolding situation. Even though we had heard about this mystery virus in other countries, we didn't quite know what to think until the COVID-19 pandemic burst on to the scene in North America. It created fear within people because no one knew how to detect it, test for it, or combat it in the early days.

Our business, like most others, slowed, without any indicators of how bad it could get. We only had speculation that it would be bad. We took all the

precautions that we knew and did what we could to educate ourselves on how best to protect our customers and team members. We learned how to construct plexiglass partitions to allow for proper distancing, keeping visitors at a safer distance, and developing policies for our team members to remain current with recommended guidelines. We fumigated customer vehicles before and after we worked on them as well as the facilities after each shift.

We were fortunate to be classified as an essential business so that we were able to stay open. We supported our trucking customers who transported the freight, food, and essential supplies our nation relied on.

We experienced work stoppages, team members working from home, and establishing new service/parts/body shop hours and workgroup shifts to reduce cross-contamination. We were poised and ready in case the pandemic struck a given group/facility. We were prepared to support each other, no matter what the task.

We had a few scary months, with service, parts, & body shop falling 18-23%, while truck sales fell 55-65%. The real fear was the unknown and uncertainty of how long this was to last or seeing what is becoming the new norm. We responded to these questions for ourselves numerous times daily, not knowing the short-term or the long-term answer or effect of actual results. Many acquaintances were being furloughed or had their jobs eliminated. The chaos around us was on an upswing with the unknown of where it was taking us. Prayer was undoubtedly on the everyday "things to do list"!

I speak of these experiences, knowing that our customers, colleagues, family, and neighbors experienced those same fearful thoughts through the semi-adjustment periods. The new processes put in place and how we were to live our daily lives were becoming a little clearer, and there was a slight settling in of what seemed to be our temporary new normal.

Our business has rebounded to some degree, as our essential role is to keep trucks on the road and delivering freight. We have right-sided ourselves to a point, have a better-equipped arsenal of information and supplies, and feel a tinge more confident in the

ability to handle what the future may bring. We have had sporadic cases within the company but fortunate enough to overcome the shortage to fulfill our essential roles. With the holidays, we are seeing a steady increase in regional outbreaks, and it is once again a disturbing trend that makes even the most confident of leaders a bit uneasy.

Even as the mystery continues, a vaccine is rolling out. It gives us a ray of sunshine on establishing a more structured way of living and working environment, but it is still too far away to change our day-to-day operations. It has been a tough road to limit social gatherings that are a mainstay of our society and the holidays. Still, we are trying to keep everyone as safe as possible and feel a personal responsibility to do our best.

I am sure that most of you know someone who has been affected by COVID-19. I was one of our "positive" cases and was fortunate to have slight, if any, symptoms. I can relate to the difficulty of the quarantine period and not being able to see loved ones. It was a tough 14 days, and I hope never to experience that forced mandate again. But, until we are free to travel, be with our friends and family more often, and forgiven for not

hugging, we shall continue this mission remaining safe distance.

Lastly, the election has been declared a win for Joe Biden. I understand that there are still lawsuits, recounts, and discussions on voting security, but it is quieter on the homefront without the politicians continually slandering one another. I became very frustrated with the rock-throwing and our candidates not working toward a united front. I don't know where this will lead to the current outcome, but I do believe we need to start caring about our country more and not so much to satisfy our party's objectives. It seems, no matter what package was put together for the pandemic, there was a considerable amount set aside to fund some not so essential ideals, just to get a bill passed. We need to support the whole and put people first.

I hope that you were able to have a safe and healthy holiday season with those who are the most special to you. Here's to 2021 and a time when the world can once again come together.

May God Bless You and Be Safe!

Michael J. Yates
Mike Yates
Vice-Chairman

a note from



Katie HOPKINS

I normally don't wish time away, but 2020 was quite a test. Never in my life have I ever been so excited for a new year! Now, 2021 is full of promise, and let's hope she only brings positive changes that the world needs to heal. The lessons that we have learned in the past twelve months will prove instrumental in 2021 and beyond.



My biggest takeaway from 2020 was getting "back to basics." The constant barrage of information, ever-changing policies, and genuine fear put me in survival mode. In the beginning, it was like the *Hunger Games* each time I went to the grocery store or Wal-Mart. Health, safety, and caring for family (plus our work family) consumed most of my days and many nights. Zoom calls, strategy meetings, CDC briefings, and team memos day in and day out. But we made it. We didn't just make it; we rocked it!

I was confident in the people of Truck Centers, but 2020 made me proud and humbled to call them my team. They showed real leadership, commitment,

and determination when it would have been convenient to call off. They worked together to retrofit dealerships with safety measures, sanitized, adapted to constantly-evolving protocols, changed shifts, and looked out for one another while never missing a beat taking care of our customers. Our purpose was keeping trucks on the road and keeping the supply chain moving. They showed that it isn't "the people of Truck Centers" after all... it is the people ARE Truck Centers. Our team is what makes TCI truly a cut-above the rest.

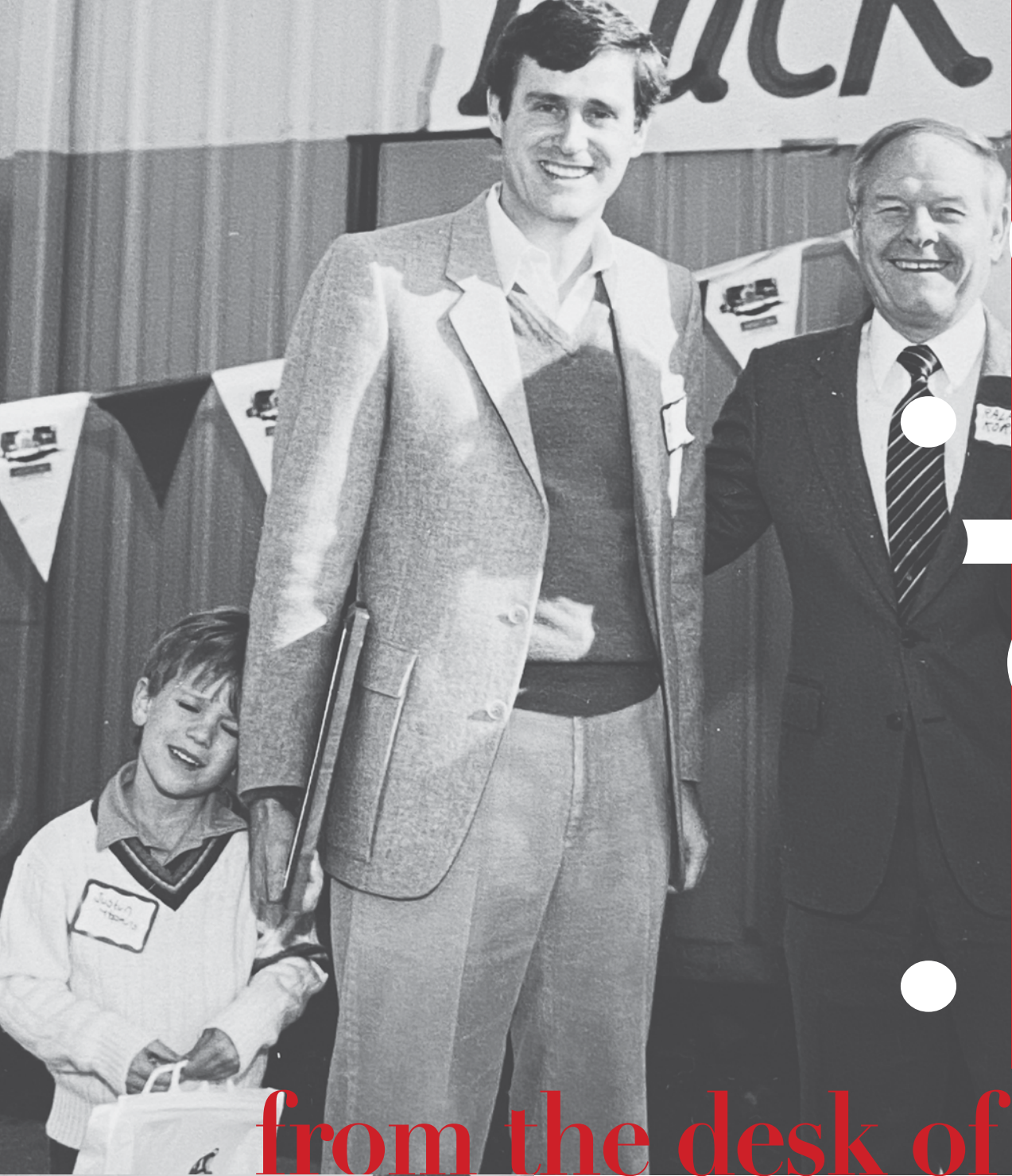
With most of 2021 still before us, I am reflecting on what has proven itself true time and again and how to capture that. Our purpose and role in the trucking

industry and for America is more straightforward than ever. The personal commitment to delivering exceptional products and services to our customers has seen us through 50 years of highs and lows. During our golden anniversary, we used the phrase "One Team, One Goal." This simple phrase defines our culture perfectly for 2021 and beyond.

May 2021 be the best year yet for you and your loved ones. Together, anything is possible!

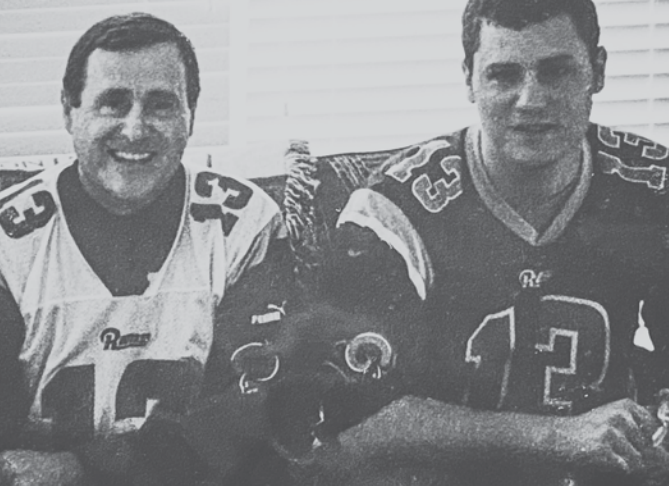
One Team, One Goal.

Katie
Katie Hopkins
President/COO



JUSTIN HOPKINS

from the desk of



Wow! That was a year to remember, wasn't it?! I thought 2019 pushed our flexibility, but 2020 was more of a crazy train!

We went from a hot truck sales market in January and February to a screeching halt in March through June. We have had a slow, steady recovery during the second half of 2020. We appear to now be in an American economy



that completed the shift from big-box retailers to online retail fueled by grocery delivery service and takeout food. So long sit-down steakhouse dinners and bring on the Taco Bell and Imo's Pizza! I will not lie, though; I don't know anyone who wasn't already enjoying The Bell and Imo's before the lockdowns.

So, what does this mean for all of us at Truck Centers and our customers? Heck, I don't know! But I can say that we haven't stopped evolving and trying to continually serve our customers better and keep current with the times. During the height of the COVID lockdowns, we rapidly deployed multiple systems and agile responses to keep our essential team and customers safe. We also developed new programs like Elite Extra and Exclerator to give our

customers more flexible solutions and control of their parts ordering and delivery scheduling. People may say that Amazon is revolutionizing the just-in-time delivery service, but it is something that we have been doing for five decades!

Another 2020 plot twist was the completion of a new facility along the I-80/90 Toll-Road in South Bend, IN. There were many sleepless nights full of worry and uncertainty during the pandemic's height on how we will rebound from this as a company and an industry. We stayed the course on moving forward with the new dealership, and we are now operating in one of the most state-of-the-art truck dealerships in the country, in my opinion, of course! I am so excited to have been a small part of that opening and cannot

wait to see how our South Bend team can now better serve our local customers and those traveling along the I-80/90 corridor. I feel that it is necessary to capstone 2020 with some look ahead. Man, I wish I had a DeLorean to help with that! Sadly, my dad said no, so we are stuck here nervously anticipating what is next and what the future holds, as I am sure most of you are doing the same. I, for one, hope that it includes fewer masks and more backyard BBQs! Here's to a 2021 that feels a lot more like 2019 than 2020. And, most of all, I hope that you had a Merry Christmas and 2021 brings nothing but good things!


Justin Hopkins
Executive Vice President

NEWS FROM THE **GMS**



CONTROLLING THE UNPREDICTABLE

TROY

2280 Formosa Road
Troy, IL 62294
(618) 667-3454

M-F: 6AM-12AM
SAT-SUN: 6AM-6PM

General Manager:

Travis Dunn

Parts Manager:

Steve Bartels

Acting Service Manager:

Travis Dunn

Body Shop Manager:

Kent Zobrist

Greetings from Troy!

This past year was quite a rollercoaster. None of us saw this one coming in late 2019, did we? Business was good, everyone was careful, and life was quite good. We were all eagerly looking ahead and excited for Truck Centers' 50th anniversary. And then everything turned on a dime. It is a not-so-subtle reminder of how little we really control.

During these unprecedented, challenging times, I am so proud of our Troy team. We have the largest facility and staff of the entire TCI network, so processes and changes usually require a lot of coordination and management. But, in the case of our COVID-19 safety planning, it was all hands on deck immediately and full collaboration that, as a leader, made me proud. Everyone showed that they are fully committed to taking care of one another and our customers. Their spirit and dedication show why I believe that we are the very best dealer out there.

Trying to retrofit a facility of this size and three different buildings for social distancing and safety precautions was exhausting, but we learned how many talents our team members have. We also divided our entire team into two groups that worked opposite one another and disinfected in between shifts to reduce potential contamination. Our goal was to remain safe and open for our customers who needed us and were vital to delivering essential freight. If the virus struck, we wanted to limit its spread as much as possible, avoid cross-contamination, have thorough sanitation processes, and maybe be a bit down in staffing but not out.

Thus far, we have had some near misses, a handful of affected team members, but abundant blessings of good fortune.

The pandemic ironically helped a few new programs and existing services flourish. Our Parts team unveiled the new online ordering system called Excelerator. Excelerator conveniently allows customers to search for parts via various queries, check dealer inventory, EZ Wiring guides, and much more. The Elite Extra program also rolled out simultaneously to allow for real-time, GPS delivery tracking of Parts deliveries. Customers also continued to take advantage of some of our convenience-added services, including contactless curbside delivery, vehicle pickup/delivery for scheduled Service appointments, mobile repair service, and on-site Body Shop estimates.

We are also very proud that TCI-Troy was named Freightliner Custom Chassis Corporation's (FCCC) "Oasis Dealer of the Year". This award is the highest annual distinction available to FCCC dealers across the nation who offer exceptional service to our FCCC custom chassis and RV customers. Thank you to all of the customers who took the time to complete their survey and recognized our team's work!

And THANK YOU to all of our customers who have so many options for dealers and service providers but continue to choose Truck Centers! We look forward to serving you and hope to be able to see you back in a mask-free zone at some point. Let's hope 2021 is a little more predictable.

Travis Dunn



INCREASING YOUR UPTIME DURING OUR DOWNTIME

What a crazy health and economic twister we have all endured for 2020! I hope that you and your families did not have to endure the loss of a loved one or experience extreme financial distress.

While working our way through the hourly, daily, and weekly CDC and public health updates, we were hanging plexiglass and erecting enclosures for everyone's safety, splitting employees for shifts, adjusting and maintaining robust cleaning routines, and many more details that I could keep mentioning. I am beyond proud to say that our team pulled together to become even stronger and more unified.

With business somewhat throttled, we were able to dissect and discuss all facets of our business to review a list of continuous improvement initiatives that we previously developed. These projects would improve many customer- and employee-oriented situations or processes. I want to share a few of these with you.

- Express Write-Up for customer repair order for increased efficiency, online repair scheduling, and improved throughput times.
- LED Lighting and fresh paint upgraded our Service shop to improve lighting and reduce our energy consumption.
- Three Mobile Service trucks were put into service this year. Two units are wrapped with patriotic themes in honor of our veteran employees. If you were not aware of our Mobile Service offerings, please contact your local TCI Service department for more information on this value-added service. We will send a certified TCI technician to your location for PMs, DOT inspections, or repairs.

■ Continuous education for our team was another critical area for us. By the time you read this article, we will have an additional Cummins-certified tech to help expedite repairs for our customers. DTNA recently released new, online training for our Parts staff.

■ DTNA's Excelerator e-commerce parts ordering platform was redesigned for an improved customer experience. Inner Circle Rewards now replace the Truck Bucks parts promotions and are integrated into Excelerator for upfront pricing discounts on selected monthly specials. If you haven't already received information, please contact our Parts department for assistance getting set up for savings.

We also had several internal team movements and changes worth sharing. Zac Ragusa, Springfield front parts counterperson, has moved to an OPS role based out of our Morton location. We wish him great success in growing relationships with customers. James (Lee) Long has transitioned from Parts Shipping & Receiving to training at the counter. Two of our team members, Kelen Trelz and Merisha Mollet, were united in marriage this year and are expecting a new addition, so congratulations to them both!

And, on a more somber note, we experienced significant loss this year. We know that other customers, TCI team members, and partners have also had a challenging year. Our receptionist and a great personal friend of mine, Jude Boggs, passed away following a tragic ATV accident on Independence Day. Her God-loving soul and amazing way of putting a smile on anyone's face will always be cherished and remembered fondly. In her honor, our team planted a memorial tree and plaque near the picnic table at the dealership, where she spent many lunches enjoying God's beautiful creations around her. Her spirit and kindness will continue to be a light for all of us to try and emulate.

I wish everyone well in the new year and encourage you all to stay as safe as possible.

God Bless,
Jeremy Williams

SPRINGFIELD & DECATUR

2981 East Singer Ave.
Springfield, IL 62703
(217) 525-1280

M-F: 7AM-12AM
SAT: 7AM-3:30PM

5002 Cundiff Court
Decatur, IL 62526
(217) 877-0152

Parts: M-F: 7AM-6PM,
SAT: 8AM-12PM
Service: M-F:
7:30AM-3:30PM

General Manager:

Jeremy Williams

Parts Manager:

Marc Lindsey

Service Manager:

Charlie Melvin

NEWS FROM THE **GMS**



MT. VERNON

621 South 45th Street
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864
(618) 244-2545
M-F: 6AM-12AM
SAT: 7AM-5PM

General Manager:
Julie Klebba
Parts Manager:
Webb Eastham
Service Manager:
Antonio Buckley

UNITED WE STAND

Greetings to everyone from Southern Illinois!

Over the past year, I cannot say enough, how proud and thankful I am for my entire Mt. Vernon team. At the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, I asked people to change shifts, adjust hours, totally rethink how our workplace should look for everyone's safety, and be prepared for things to change without notice. We divided and conquered.

Literally, we divided our entire team into two groups. One team came in early and worked until mid-day. We would then shut down the whole facility for thirty minutes to disinfect everything and exit through one door while the next team would enter through another. They would then shoulder the load until closing time and do another thorough cleaning. No one pushed back, and everyone used their talents and skills to help the team. We all worked through this together. That was a true testament to what these dedicated front-liners are committed to keeping our customers on the road and delivering the essential supplies that our nation needed.

While we couldn't participate in many of our annual events, DTNA quickly shifted gears and made their Technician Skills Competition virtual in true 2020 style. I am proud to share that Nick Dillow placed 3rd in the vehicle repair division. This is a huge accomplishment! Nick competed in a virtual setting with the best technicians across the DTNA network. Clint Gordon also competed in the DTNA Tech Tips & Tricks Challenge, where he earned a runner-up finish with his "No Crank, Clutch Switch" entry. We are so proud of these technicians showcasing their skills and representing TCI-Mt. Vernon so well.

I would also like to extend a sincere thank you to all of our customers. We are fortunate to have dedicated business partners, and we've weathered this year's storm together. We may be a little battered, but we have learned a lot, accomplished even more, and endured the unthinkable. I pray that all of our TCI families and those of our customers stay healthy and strong. May you have a blessed and safe holiday and start to the New Year.

Julie Klebba

LOOK FOR THE SILVER LINING

As we move in to 2021, I reflect on all that our team has been through this year. We started 2020 on a high with employee appreciation luncheons but had no idea how much we would treasure those events, interaction, and light-hearted fun of life pre-COVID-19. We had to postpone group gatherings for the rest of the year.

The Morton team has rallied together during these difficult times to develop and implement new processes, safety measures, and ways of doing business to ensure that our customers continue to receive the best service possible while remaining safe. We installed plexiglass throughout the facility, bought fogging disinfection systems, underwent extensive disinfection safety processes, and continually spend hours sanitizing the facility and vehicles. We continue to improve our processes to get our customers back on the road as quickly and safely as possible.

We have had several defining moments in our team – changes in job duties, in families, and celebrated these moments together, albeit socially distanced. This year, we celebrated nine of our team members who received their 5-20-year service awards. It is so inspiring to see so many valuable individuals committed to our company and customers. We were also fortunate to congratulate 13 team members on their first year of service and welcome eight additional new members into our TCI-Morton family. While we had a lot to celebrate, we also said good luck and goodbye to three of our long-time employees as they moved into the next stage of their life. Retirement sure does look good on them!

Looking back, 2020 was a challenge but there is always a silver lining. For us, the people that make this company great and the customers that continue honoring us with their business are the best part of this year. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you!

Cassandra Caccia

MORTON & HUDSON

300 East Ashland St.
Morton, IL 61550
(309) 263-4240
M-F: 7AM-12AM
SAT: 7AM-3:30PM

19336 North
1425 East Road
Hudson, IL 61748
(636) 614-3470
M-F: 7AM-11PM (Parts Only)

General Manager:
Cassandra Caccia
Parts Manager:
Jeff Blane
Acting Service Manager:
Cassandra Caccia
Body Shop Manager:
Cheryl Williams

NEWS FROM THE **GMS**



ILLINOIS

EFFINGHAM

1700 Gillenwater Avenue
Effingham, IL 62401

(217) 342-3300
M-F: 7AM-12AM
SAT: 7AM-3PM

General Manager:
Anthony Johnson
Parts Manager:
Dave Mahaffey
Service Manager:
Chris Webb

FOCUSING ON THE POSITIVE

Greetings from Effingham! This past year has proven to be one of many challenges but nothing unique since we are all dealing with the same COVID-19 fallout. I want to take the time to share some of the bright spots in our year.

Once again, we were recertified as an Elite Support dealer, a distinction that we have had since we opened our doors here. Freightliner's Elite Support program is to certify a network of dealers that meet or exceed stringent requirements to consistently deliver a superior customer service experience, a great value, and receive customer validation. We understand that customer uptime is a cornerstone of a positive dealer experience. We are fully committed to remaining one of the Freightliner network's top dealers in the nation for throughput. Getting customers in promptly, repairs started, and the customer back on the road within 24 hours is our continued goal, and our team have been Allstars at exceeding their benchmarks.

A focus on continuous improvement is part of the shared success of the Elite Support program. Even the best dealers have opportunities to

evaluate their processes to increase efficiency or productivity continually. Our Continuous Improvement Coordinators (CICs) at each TCI location undergo extensive training to facilitate our Elite Support efforts. Our Effingham CIC, Lindsey Elmore, is attending her second level of training this year. We are fortunate to have Lindsey and a dedicated team to continue pushing us ahead of the pack by doing great work for our customers.

We have added two new individuals to our team. Don Blaney joined us as a Service Technician. Don has over 30 years of truck repair experience and will be a great asset to our team and customers. Chris Whitehead brings more than two decades of experience in trailer parts and service and is our new Trailer Technician. These gents, alongside the other talented men and women, work hard for you each and every day.

TCI-Effingham recently was inspected to become a FCCC dealer. We are looking forward to joining that network and offering our RV customers the same great service that is synonymous with Truck Centers.

Anthony Johnson

THE TENACITY OF THE TUNDRA

Within TCI, we refer to those of us who are in the Elkhart and South Bend area as "The Tundra." Our loyalty and tenacity to sit through football games in the freezing cold, commute through lake effect snow, and sheer toughness have served us well during 2020. To say that this past year has been a challenge is an understatement; however, I am incredibly proud of our team that has continued to stay focused on doing a remarkable job of taking care of our customers.

There have been updates for both Northern Indiana locations as well as dealer-level specific adjustments. Both locations have undergone some retrofitting and modifications to follow recommended social distancing and COVID-19 guidelines. Our phone system was upgraded to a Voice-Over-IP (VOIP) system that has been tested by other stores within the TCI network.

Ongoing development and processes to support uptime and productivity are always at the forefront. We have been very focused on technician training to improve efficiency and customer uptime via timely, thorough repairs since the reduced workloads allowed for the completion of training modules. I am pleased to say that we have been able to get nearly a dozen technicians certified in our four core areas in recent months. Similarly, our Parts personnel have been very focused on becoming more proficient with the new Exceleator online parts ordering platform and improving the delivery process utilizing the new Elite Extra real-time tracking tool. They are all making great strides at taking our customer service to the next level!

Our Elkhart location continues to shine. It is a small but mighty store with a spirited and knowledgeable team. We have expanded our Parts warehouse to allow for added inventory to stock our most requested items and routine customer parts. We have also added an adjoining facility

and expanded parking to improve our new truck delivery process. This expansion will afford us more room that was direly needed to support our bodybuilder and custom chassis customers and also allows us to utilize our primary facility to better support our local and over-the-road customers.

As for South Bend, we only made safety upgrades to our facility during the COVID-19 crisis. It isn't that we don't care about this ol' place because she has served us well, but we're movin' on up! As you have probably seen or heard (or at least I hope so), TCI-South Bend has a new home! This relocation has been a massive project that has taken years to come to fruition, and it is so rewarding to see it come to life. I am so excited at what this means for our team and our customers – frontage on the Toll-Road; easy on and off access for customers; nearby amenities including lodging, travel plazas, and food; secured parking; and a vast new facility with even more smiling faces waiting on you. We have been working on increasing our staffing and training within the Parts, Service, and Body Shop teams to better support our customers. This new, state-of-the-art facility has the most current shop equipment, tools, and amenities available, plus some cool solar power and unique TCI twists. The expanded space and resources will allow us to serve you even better than before so please come by for a visit.

That is a summary of our 2020. Some of our team members have been blessed with growing families, and some have suffered immeasurable losses. Everything about this year reminds us that we are fortunate to have a new day and that the most important things are our health and the relationships that we develop. We are honored that you continue to choose Truck Centers and will continue to work hard to exceed your expectations.

Tyler Yates

SOUTH BEND

4145 Ameritech Drive
South Bend, IN 46628

(574) 289-4065
M-F: 6AM-12AM
SAT: 7AM-3PM

General Manager:
Tyler Yates
Parts Manager:
Dave Almack
Service Manager:
Michael Stahly
Body Shop Manager:
Mitch Pearish

ELKHART

2000 Cassopolis Street
Elkhart, IN 46514

(574) 262-3441
M-F: 6AM-6PM
SAT: 8AM-12PM
(Parts Only)

General Manager:
Tyler Yates
Parts Manager:
Dave Almack
Service Manager:
Eric Dushane

INDIANA

NEWS FROM THE **GMS**



**TEAMWORK
MAKES THE
DREAM WORK**

2020 - WHEN EVERY DAY FELT LIKE A MONDAY

EVANSVILLE

325 Rusher Creek Road
Evansville, IN 47725
(812) 868-2700

M-F: 7:30AM-12AM
SAT: 7:30AM-4PM

General Manager:
John Kobylanski
Parts Manager:
Suzanne Talley
Service Manager:
Jason Powell

I think that we can all agree that 2020 was undoubtedly the strangest and most challenging year we will hopefully ever encounter during peacetime. Most people remember significant dates in history and where they were during defining moments, and

I believe that everyone will remember 2020 the same way. This year has brought many challenges, but it has also taught us many things. For instance, we now know what pandemic means, what PPE stands for, how to wear a mask, and a refresher on washing our hands properly. Along with those things, I believe we have learned what it means to adapt. Our team did just that starting back in March when the pandemic started. We asked a lot of our people, and they responded positively not only for ourselves but also for each other and our customers. We learned to adapt, stay positive, and stay focused together.

Throughout the year, we have been focused on critical areas to improve our customer experience. One of our initiatives was to monitor a technician's first punch on a job and to track measurable data on how we deliver our goal of having a technician on a job less than an hour from when the truck is checked in. We are currently achieving this goal 96% of the time! We know the importance of getting the right technician on a job as soon as possible helps the repair process and reduces customer downtime. Another customer experience quotient we are measuring is getting trucks repaired and back on the road in 24 hours or less. Of course, some jobs are catastrophic failures or require a lot of labor, but we are pleased to have 62.3% of all jobs completed in 24

hours or less, and we are seeing a steady trend of that number increasing. On the Parts side of the house, the new Elite Extra program's introduction has been a gamechanger. Elite Extra is a tracking system that helps our delivery teams create the most efficient routes possible, allows real-time GPS tracking, and translates to customers being better informed on precise delivery times to staff and plan accordingly to reduce excessive downtime.

Even during the uncertain times over the past year, there was still a lot of happiness in the world, as we saw with our people and their families. While we could not do as much together as a group or some of our traditional activities, we remained connected through one common goal - taking care of our customers and one another. Did our business suffer? Yes! However, we are still together as a team and an extended family, which is the driving force for us.

Uncertainty looms as we look ahead to 2021, but I know that the Evansville team is in it together. Unrelenting commitment to customer service, progress, and continued improvement is what drives us day in and day out. On behalf of our entire team, I want to say thank you to our great customers. Without you, I wouldn't be blessed to have the opportunity to write this. Also, from the bottom of my heart, a huge kudos, and thank you to my entire Evansville family. It has been a trying year, but you have all been exceptional so let's keep doing great things!

John Kobylanski

Hello from the land of the Cardinals, the Blues, Budweiser, and the best TCI team! That last part may be a bit biased, and I know all General Managers feel that way. We are all lucky that year over year, our customers, rankings, and numbers show that Truck Centers, Inc., as a whole, shines bright in the DTNA network.

Writing articles is not my strongest skill. When I was thinking of what to say to recap 2020, everything seems different BC (before COVID). I did not want to relive all of the ups and downs, uncertainties, and slow days because that is not the kind of people we are. I kept coming back to our team here in St. Louis and how fiercely loyal, passionate, and committed they are to one another, our customers, and the jobs that they do.

Sure, we have sanitized everything so much that the ink wears off and have implemented as many safeguards and recommended processes as possible in a good-faith effort to try and keep ourselves and our visitors safe; but it is more than that. Everyone here had no problem stepping up to the plate and doing more than their part. We split into workgroups to ensure that we continued to remain open for our customers should we need to quarantine some of our team, and we closed between shifts to sanitize. Everyone had to learn to adapt to this new way of doing business, face masks, and social distancing. There was no pushback about the unwillingness to do something or job roles. It was a great example of people working together for one another, which made me so proud.

For anyone who has been to TCI-St. Louis, you know there is one thing that draws you here, and that is the people. Our urban surroundings, packed parking, and facility that is bursting at the seams all have their quirks, but the candors here are second-to-none. We recently had our DTNA Elite Support re-certification and once again sailed through with flying colors as we remain committed to continuous improvement and our customers.

We continue to offer the same services that we always have, such as Express Assessment and Rapid Repair to maximize uptime, vehicle pick-up and delivery for scheduled Service, and Parts delivery. Due to COVID-19, we have increased our convenience features to include curbside delivery, upgraded online parts ordering program, and real-time delivery tracking. Our team is usually moving at a steady pace because of a healthy workload and, like most places, that did decline during 2020. We are fortunate it was not as significant as in some industries or businesses, but we were able to utilize that time to work on other projects or processes that usually get shelved because of the limits on time.

Our Change Management team used this time as an opportunity to delve into a few large-scale, customer-oriented projects. One such project is currently in place and undergoing fine-tuning. Our data showed that the average wait time for a walk-in Parts customer between greeting and being helped was 8 minutes 41 seconds. We have several customers who place orders via phone and need a "will call" method to pick up their items. We redesigned our Parts counter area with a working "Will Call Express Lane" for customers who have already placed their orders and need to pick-up and pay. Rather than making those customers wait for counter sales, we have been testing the use of a Parts puller to run the window, receive orders, and invoice. The preliminary results show a 50% decrease in the average wait time for these customers! We hope to continue to refine this process and gather data on the benefit to the walk-in customer who can also interact with a Parts expert in a more timely manner.

On behalf of the entire A-Team, we would be honored to have you visit us if you are in the area or ever have a need. I hope that you and your families are healthy and happy throughout the coming year. Our region has been significantly affected by COVID-19, and our abundant thanks and recurring prayers are with the frontline workers in our many hospitals and emergency response agencies as well as all of you who are essential workers. Thank you!

Stay Safe,
Jim Pennington

ST. LOUIS

747 East Taylor Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63147
(314) 381-3800

M-F: 6AM-11PM
SAT: 6AM-4PM
SUN: 6AM-4PM
(Parts Only)

General Manager:
Jim Pennington
Acting Parts Manager:
Jim Pennington
Service Manager:
Neil Yahl

INDIANA

MISSOURI

NEWS FROM THE GMS



COVID, CAMARADERIE, & CUSTOMER SERVICE

MISSOURI

FORISTELL

720 North Service Road
Foristell, MO 63348
(636) 978-3870

M-F: 7AM-12AM
SAT: 7AM-3PM

General Manager:

Gerald McCombs

Parts Manager:

Jason Brown

Service Manager:

Doug Pennington

While I am not aware of what my fellow General Managers are writing about, I am confident that some will mention the same three things that stand out for me: COVID-19, our dedicated team, and the importance of continuing to serve our customers even in turbulent times.

I don't think COVID-19 being one of the defining things of 2020 would surprise anyone. This virus and its aftermath have impacted the entire world. We've all been in situations that we didn't ask for, experienced unimaginable hardships, and seen things we never fathomed. These are concerning times, but, as a person of faith, I believe we will get through this and it is just part of a larger plan. As a team, we learned that we could accomplish a lot together and have no problem sticking it out when it gets tough.

Our people and the camaraderie are what allow this location to shine. We are a relatively new team, still sorting each other out, but we have a strong group of just dedicated, small town, down to earth people. We work in an environment based on respect, honesty, and always doing the right thing by one another and the customer. That means I am just plain lucky! We have some hurdles of being in a new facility and working things out without the added pressures of retrofitting for safety and social distancing due to coronavirus.

I am proud to say that we are working through it together, just as we always do. Our location also received another Elite Support recertification this year and is now an FCCC Oasis certified dealer for our RV customers.

At the end of the day, we are all willing to roll up our sleeves and do whatever it takes for our customers to have a positive experience and get them back on the road as quickly as possible. We have been working on improving our communications processes as one of our continuous improvement initiatives. Some of our newer programs have also been well received during the pandemic. Our Elite Extra Parts delivery allows real-time tracking so customers can schedule their workloads and staffing since they know when their parts will be delivered. We also offer rolling Parts delivery throughout the day, including contactless curbside options. Our new Exceleator Parts Program allows for easy online ordering of DTNA, reman, Alliance, and key vendor parts. These new features plus our Mobile Service, vehicle pickup and delivery service for scheduled Service visits, and scheduled Service appointments are all value-added customer services to make your visit as least disruptive as possible.



On behalf of everyone at TCI-Foristell, I hope that you stay safe and 2021 has fewer surprises in store for all of us.

Gerald McCombs

Truck Centers
Inc.

SALES
GO UP AND DOWN
SERVICE
STAYS FOREVER

Elite Support Certified Dealerships in Illinois, Indiana & Missouri

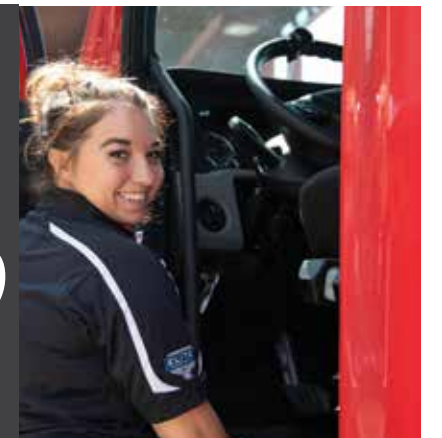
truckcentersinc.com |   truckcentersinc



2020 SERVICE AWARDS

THANKS

for your dedication



5 YEARS

Brandi Akers (TCI-Foristell)
 Jeffrey Aslin (TCI-Foristell)
 James Beaver (TCI-Troy)
 Mason Bertolis (TCI-Troy)
 Ray Braden (TCI-Springfield)
 Clifton Burr (TCI-Foristell)
 Alexander Butler (TCI-Evansville)
 Anthony Caruthers (TCI-Foristell)
 Andrew Christ (TCI-St. Louis)
 Kayla Cleveland (TCI-South Bend)
 John Clemons (TCI-Springfield)
 Jacob Feldmann (TCI-Troy)
 Dennis Fischer (TCI-Foristell)
 Joshua Flatley (TCI-Hudson)
 Makayla Glover (TCI-Evansville)
 Melody Graham (TCI-St. Louis)
 Daniel Haley (TCI-Troy)
 Trevor Hall (TCI-St. Louis)
 Brennan Haynes (TCI-St. Louis)
 Cody Hunter (TCI-Troy)
 Faleniko Isaia (TCI-Foristell)
 Brian Johnson (TCI-Evansville)
 Zachary Kachuba (TCI-Mt. Vernon)
 Cody Kratochwil (TCI-Troy)
 Christopher Low (TCI-Elkhart)
 Boyd Masterson, Jr. (TCI-Foristell)
 Gregory McCauley (TCI-South Bend)
 Thomas Nimitz (TCI-South Bend)
 Ronald Paidle (TCI-South Bend)
 Brandy Rassi (TCI-Morton)
 David Robb (TCI-Morton)
 Kylea Robinson (TCI-Elkhart)
 Jeanette Sheffer (TCI-Evansville)
 Daniel Spell (TCI-Foristell)
 James Westjohn (TCI-Effingham)
 Chasity White (TCI-St. Louis)
 Kaylyn Witt (TCI-Corporate)
 Billie Sartin (TCI-St. Louis)

10 YEARS

Jeffrey Boshers (TCI-Mt. Vernon)
 Frederick Bownes (TCI-Troy)
 Terry Brown (TCI-South Bend)
 David Dillon (TCI-Springfield)
 Joey Fairchild (TCI-Mt. Vernon)
 John Forbes (TCI-Troy)
 Bernard Harrison (TCI-Evansville)
 Jeffrey Heaton (TCI-Morton)
 James Holguin (TCI-Foristell)
 Joseph Howard (TCI-Mt. Vernon)
 Kyle Huene (TCI-Mt. Vernon)
 Jason Jones (TCI-Effingham)
 Fred Kachuba (TCI-Mt. Vernon)
 Clinton Kochis (TCI-Evansville)
 Matthew Lane (TCI-Morton)
 Audie Martin (TCI-Troy)
 David Meyer (TCI-St. Louis)
 Jacob Meyer (TCI-Springfield)
 Timothy Peterson (TCI-Springfield)
 Michelle Petroff (TCI-Corporate)
 Jeremy Reed (TCI-Mt. Vernon)
 Jason Von Hatten (TCI-Troy)
 Paige Wallace (TCI-Corporate)
 Timothy Wayman (TCI-Evansville)

15 YEARS

Bradley Blackley (TCI-Springfield)
 Charles Boyer (TCI-Elkhart)
 Eric DuShane (TCI-Elkhart)
 Darrin Garrison (TCI-South Bend)
 Matthew Gibbs (TCI-Troy)
 Richard Owens (TCI-Decatur)
 Joshua Reed (TCI-Evansville)
 Stephen Richardt (TCI-Evansville)
 Buddy Shires (TCI-Evansville)
 Joe Wohlford, Jr. (TCI-South Bend)

20 YEARS

Kenneth Abbadusky (TCI-Morton)
 Gerard Feigl (TCI-Morton)
 George Freeman (TCI-South Bend)
 Ricky Hamm (TCI-Morton)
 Randy Hayden (TCI-Evansville)
 Leslie Hellrigel (TCI-Morton)
 Scott Koenig (TCI-Troy)
 John Lamke (TCI-Corporate)
 Donal Langendorf (TCI-Troy)
 Jenna Langendorf (TCI-Corporate)
 Patrick McDougal (TCI-Troy)
 Suzanne Talley (TCI-Evansville)

25 YEARS

Mary Deuser (TCI-Corporate)
 Amy Evans-Tribble (TCI-South Bend)
 Sheri Eveland (TCI-Troy)
 Robert Ferry (TCI-Troy)
 Michael Grawe (TCI-Troy)
 Joseph Gowen (TCI-St. Louis)
 Donald Junge (TCI-St. Louis)
 Michael Krieger (TCI-Troy)
 Ray Shaw (TCI-Troy)

30 YEARS

Mary Daiber (TCI-Troy)
 Ronald Donze (TCI-Troy)
 Nancy Highlander (TCI-Corporate)
 Jeremy Williams (TCI-Springfield)

35 YEARS

Darrin Laird (TCI-Mt. Vernon)
 Michael Tiemann (TCI-Mt. Vernon)



The Parts

YOU NEED

AT THE VALUE YOU DESERVE!

Our full line of OEM, Alliance, and reman parts plus an extensive product lineup of aftermarket parts and accessories are now **easy to order and get delivered to your door.**



Truck Centers
Inc.

NOW OFFERING

New Resources for Convenient PARTS ORDERING & DELIVERY

EXCELERATOR

Your parts ordering is now as easy as **SEARCH – FIND – BUY – DELIVER!**

The new **Excelerator Parts Program** offers our preferred customers:

- One-click access to order history & favorite items
- Customer-specific pricing
- Powerful search by VIN, part number, partial number, VMRS & more
- Dealer & PDC part availability
- Links to EZ Wiring items

ELITE EXTRA

Elite Extra enhances your delivery process with:

- Real-time, cloud-based tracking of your TCI deliveries
- Text or e-mail alerts to know exactly when you can expect your delivery
- Electronic capture of delivery photos and signatures
- Proof of Delivery documents that can be automatically e-mailed

Contact your OPS or Parts Salesperson for free registration!

TRUCKCENTERSINC.COM



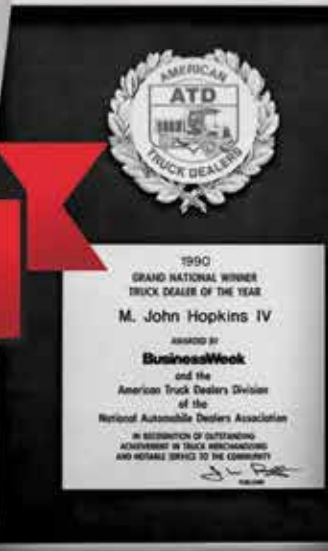
Hopkins IV got Truck Centers a second chance



1970 - 2020

50 YEARS

Truck Centers Inc.



50 YEARS

1970-2020

FIVE DECADES... A HALF OF A CENTURY.

It's a long time, no matter how you want to label it. In 1970, Milton J. Hopkins, III; Rich Hartbeck; and Ralph Masters purchased the Highland White Autocar dealership. The dealership was a 4,000 sq. ft. building not far from the town square in a quaint, farm town in Madison County. It is remarkable to think of how much we have grown from that little building at 1213 9th Street and 15 original employees. But, those are our proud roots. As much as things seem to change, they also remain much the same.

We have had many grand openings, new product launches, and new hires since then. Similarly, there have been some darker days, sign changes, and farewells along the way. Three things vividly stand out as being consistent through the years and changes.

First and foremost, a commitment to superior customer service is the foundation of TCI's values. From the beginning, it was reiterated that you always do what is right by the customer, value a handshake, and have pride in honoring your word. While TCI now consists of 12 locations in three states, we still celebrate and value our small-town roots.

Additionally, you are only as good as your team. Divisions between leaders, managers, and frontline workers do not matter here as much as we all must work together as can-doers. From the top-down, all of our jobs are to do whatever it takes to offer efficient, quality products and services at a fair price, and ensure our customers have a positive experience. This mindset has meant that there have been some growing pains and coachable moments along the way since that way of doing business has fallen out of favor with some who

are worried about low costs, high profits, and titles mattering more than the work that needs to be done. But, it is unapologetically who we are, and, honestly, rather than changing more to adapt to the trend of society, it is more satisfying not to be mainstream and appreciate who and what we stand for.

And lastly, the consistent, passionate leadership of M. John Hopkins, IV. The younger Hopkins worked at the dealership before being drafted into the military. He returned to a situation where his father was in declining health and the company was faltering. In early 1976, lenders called in loans and the company was near collapse. Along with his sister, Charlotte, John persuaded the bank to give them a chance and they took over the company. The following year, he relentlessly campaigned and successfully got one of the first Freightliner dealer franchises. Persistence and hard work changed the company's course from near bankruptcy to acquiring other dealers and being recognized as one of American Truck Dealers' "Regional Dealers of the Year" less than four years later. Since then, the company has continued to evolve and expand into the enterprise that it is today, and that is because of the vision and leadership of John.

He will be the first to shy away from this claim and instead say that it was the people of TCI and loyal business partners plus a bit of God's good grace who did this. While all of that is true, one thing is for certain, without his personal sacrifice, dedication, and tenacity, nothing else would have saved us. He and minority owner, Mike Yates, have built a company that has weathered many storms. Their experience and leadership has cultivated another generation of passionate, roll-your-sleeves-up leaders.

Looking back at the journey to this point, it was not for the faint of heart. We will have many more challenges ahead of us, but hopefully, they are shadowed by remarkable shared successes. Together, we can do great things. And every team member, customer, business partner, and vendor is part of the Truck Centers' story.

1970
2020

Our anniversary logo is a stylized Freightliner New Cascadia grille noting the anniversary years (1970-2020) and a ribbon paying homage prior TCI logos while integrating our current logo.

OUR ROAD TO 50

TCI FAST FACTS

Team Growth

OVER 200 SERVICE BAYS

80 Collision Bays

TCI has seen 9 Presidents in office over the past 50 years

15 Charities

from children's hospitals to Truckers Against Trafficking were supported in 2019-2020

x77

We are a proud veteran-owned company with 77 VETERAN team members (2020)

Our Troy Dispatch team shuttled 11,000 units last year compared to 9,814 for other stores.

Over 20,000 safe moves!

Our Mt. Vernon team has the longest average tenure **12 Years**

TCI literally serves over **1 ton** of popcorn annually and **1 ton** of hotdogs at Troy/St. Louis

105 Counties

9 Counties

Our AOR has grown from 9 counties in Southern Illinois to 105 counties in 6 states

1970

Humble beginnings as a White Motor Truck dealer in Highland, IL

1976

M. John Hopkins, IV, assumes helm of the company

1977

One of the 1st dealers granted a Freightliner franchise

1978

Acquire Freightliner dealership in Mt. Vernon, IL

1984

Sales, Parts & Service move from Highland to Troy, IL

1987

Name changed to Truck Centers, Inc.

1988

Purchase Springfield, IL, dealership

1994

Purchase E. Peoria, IL, franchise

1995

Acquire dealership in St. Louis, MO

1999/2000

Facility construction in Morton and Troy, IL, and expansion of Mt. Vernon location

2020

50 YEARS AND BEYOND

2019

Break ground on new South Bend location along I-80/90 toll-road

2018

State-of-the-art dealership opens in Foristell, MO

2017

Open 10th full-service dealership in Effingham, IL

2016

Acquire South Bend and Elkhart, IN, assets from Hill Truck Sales

2014

Purchase Freightliner of Evansville and honored as *Successful Dealer* "Dealer of the Year"

2011

St. Peters, MO, expands to full-service dealership location

2001

Training Center opens at Troy campus

Truck Centers Inc.

TRUCK CENTERS' NEW HOME IN SOUTH BEND



TCI EXPANDS WITH STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITY ALONG I-80/90 TOLL-ROAD

4145 Ameritech Drive
I-80/90 @ US-31 (Exit 72)
South Bend, IN 46628
(574) 289-4065
M-F: 6AM-12AM, SAT: 7AM-3PM

Facility Features:

- > 97,728 sq. ft. facility with 125kw solar array for clean energy
- > Secured, 19.8-acre campus with easy on/off Toll-Road access and ample parking
- > 8 RV spots with 50-amp service and full hook-ups



OUR NEWEST DEALERSHIP IN SOUTH BEND IS NOW OPEN!

Since acquiring Hill Truck Sales in January 2016, plans were laid to upgrade the aged facility that was in a decaying, industrial part of town. The demands of the industry, evolution of products, and workload made it evident that relocation was necessary rather than a simple expansion. The new facility located at the intersection of the I-80/90 toll-road and US-31 provides convenient access to the dealership and other nearby amenities for customers. The TCI leadership team has worked tirelessly to create a welcoming, state-of-the-art dealership for our team to deliver the same great products and services that you expect and deserve from Truck Centers.

- > 4 overhead bridge cranes
- > Expansive Parts warehouse, 2 Service write-up lanes, 20 Service repair bays, and 15 Body Shop bays for expedited repair capabilities
- > 95-ft. multi-section Garmat paint booth
- > 45-ft. capacity Hunter alignment system

- > Shaftmaster 62000 III driveline machine
- > Flywheel grinding equipment
- > 40-ft. frame-straightening machine
- > Modern, comfortable Customer Lounge with WiFi, TV, Quiet Room, Laundry Amenities, and Showers



In true 2020 fashion, change is the only constant.

This year marks our 50th anniversary and the 20th issue of *DRIVEN*. This “little” in-house publication that came to life out of big ideas and a lot of heart and hustle has come along way. For the crossroads of these special events, it was only fitting that we change things up. At a glance, it looks a bit different, the content is familiar yet unique, and our cover is something that we have never done.

The paper finishing is new and classic yet modern. This is also the first issue that we have produced that did not have a truck on the cover and featured a person. One would probably expect this moment to be a snapshot of our multi-generational ownership team. However, the cover is symbolic of what Truck Centers, Inc. really stands for.

Len Thole, our longest-tenured team member, kindly cooperated with a photoshoot to get this shot. He represents the very best that TCI has to offer – an experienced, dedicated team of true professionals who are committed to excellence. The Challenge Coins that he is holding were a project in production long before we heard of COVID-19. They feature our 50th-anniversary logo, locations, and company values. These coins actually arrived just as the first wave of coronavirus hit the U.S. in the spring and were quarantined until relatively recently.

Len and those who worked alongside him in the early years of the company helped lay the foundation for the company that we have today. Their passion, dedication, and skills continue to serve the next generation of employees, technicians, and customers. It is only fitting to document this new era as just part of the continuum in Truck Centers’ story.



REWIND

with Len Thole

Len Thole is the longest-tenured TCI team member. He started his career as a technician and is now our senior technical trainer at our Training Center in Troy. Len’s experience has technicians from other dealer groups and customers travel from across the U.S. and Canada just to take his classes. Len has been a real pioneer for our technician development and industry. He is a tremendous asset to our company, the DTNA network, and our customers, so we are honored to have him as part of our family. He took the time to sit down and answer some of our questions about his time here.

Q: When was your official start date and job role?

A: I started as a Technician on January 31, 1972, in Highland, IL.

Q: What do you remember about those early days and what were your first impressions?

A: I came from two different fleets where we mainly did a lot of maintenance work. It was at TCI that I was introduced to the full gamut of truck and engine repairs. I remember that my first job was helping Lenny Gall replace walking beams. A high standard of cleanliness has always been part of TCI and stood out from the beginning. We used to wash bays between jobs and that is something I never saw before. I also remember the wishbone stripes being painted on the floor of the new Highland shop.

Q: When did you take on the trainer role? How does it feel to now directly impact all of our current and future techs and those from other dealer networks and customer fleets?

A: I became a trainer officially on September 30, 1994. My goal has always been to impress upon those I teach that quality work is better than quick work and the importance of doing it right the first time and planning your jobs, so you think through each step. I also try to convey that presentation is essential. I used to paint CAT engines after completing an overhaul just for going the extra mile.

Q: Equipment and technical skills have changed a lot throughout your career. What is something you feel that newer techs should know or understand about “the way it was”?

A: Today, it is a lot of guided diagnostics that lead you to solutions. You can just plug in a computer, and it will spit out the codes or repairs needed. We used to have to actually understand how a system operated to troubleshoot and do repairs. Unfortunately, that leads to some techs not fully understanding the system or seeing the value in it. This is a detriment in the big picture and a differentiator between good techs and parts changers.

Q: What about “the way it was” as far as shop culture?

A: Back when I started, Lenny Gall, Tim Klaus, and Ken Thole were the new guys, and most people probably don’t even know those names now. Our training started with growing up working on cars and equipment. In the shop, senior techs would kick you and say you are doing it wrong with maybe a few choice words and then show you the right way. I also firmly believe that the flat-rate pay system has worked against really training newer techs. Mentors need to read and teach the book, not shortcuts. It isn’t just about speed and making more money but doing a job correctly AND efficiently. The system has each tech working for their own good now rather than working collaboratively, and the way it was is how I and others developed our skills.

Q: The early 1980s were challenging times for TCI. What do you recall about the team pulling together and getting through that era?

A: Frankly, TCI was bankrupt, and John (Hopkins, IV) pulled it out of the fire. He was very transparent with the entire team since there were only 20-30 of us, and we were all friends in a small company. Everyone pulled together and worked hard. Even our sales guys were out selling service to try and bring in work

Q: What do you feel is one technology or innovation in our product line that has been a real game-changer?

A: Definitely the advancements with technology and the electronic systems on our trucks and engines. It was a game-changer for diagnostics.

REWIND

with
**Len
Thole**

CONT.



Q: I recall one of your stories about winter weather and the extreme measures of getting to work. Can you share that story with everyone?

A: Yeah, that was back in the Highland days when we would get 10-11 inches of snow overnight. I was snowed in at home and the township snowplow got towed in that day. Jim Potthast called me at home and wanted me to come in. I told him that I couldn't get out of my driveway, let alone all of the way there. Jim drove a snowmobile to my house to get me and then took me back after my shift. Nowadays I am sure that would scare a few people if they come to your home for you. Ha!

Q: Over the past five decades, how would you say that the company culture changed, and how has it remained the same?

A: Obviously, it has changed because we are much bigger than back in the early days. John has been a hands-on leader and he knew everyone's name and family situation. Things are so much bigger and that close relationship with the ownership and amongst employees has changed. We do not have the camaraderie and company gatherings as we did before because of the logistics and fear of leaving some people out.

Q: You have grown alongside both John (Hopkins) and Mike (Yates). What do you feel have been three defining moments in TCI's history that charted the course for where we are today?

A: I would say: (1) John taking over the company and saving it, (2) Moving us to Troy in a shop that we could grow into and a better future with direct highway frontage, and (3) TCI becoming large enough that we could do our own training at an in-house Training Center. Now, techs come from all regions of the continental U.S., Hawaii, and Canada to train here.

Q: If there was one thing you could bring back from TCI's past, what would it be and why?

A: I would bring back the Christmas parties for the whole team. I think many of us who have been around a long time felt a connection to one another and that's why we worked well as a team since successes were more significant than just each of us. I miss knowing people and their families and feel it would help our team connect.



CABOVER OR CONVENTIONAL?

Conventional – it was a big move in the right direction for techs to be able to work on trucks

COLUMBIA OR CENTURY CLASS?

Columbia - it is the dumbed-down, simplified Century Class

CONVOY OR SMOKY AND THE BANDIT?

Smoky and the Bandit - a lot more humor in that one

TWIN-STICKS OR NO STICKS (AUTOMATIC)?

No Sticks – for industry, automatic makes good sense. The DT12 transmission is nearly bulletproof - the only weak point I would identify would be the clutch.

S60 OR DD15?

S60 – The S60 is the proven gold standard and bulletproof. Detroit® needs to figure out how to keep the low end together in the DD15 to go 1 Million miles. Issues with bearings, rods & mains are massive repairs when a DD15 goes down.

INTERSTATE OR HIGHWAY?

It depends on what you are doing. I would say it is an interstate to get somewhere fast, and a highway is for a more scenic route.

BIODIESEL OR CNG?

Both are bad ideas. Biodiesel needs better standards, but it is better than CNG. CNG is only viable because of governmental subsidies.

LET'S
PLAY A
LITTLE
GAME
OF...

THIS OR THAT



WESTERN STAR 49X

This latest addition to the Western Star family has earned the distinction as the most-tested truck in the brand's history. DTNA spent six years designing and validating the truck to ensure it not only lives up to Western Star's synonymous toughness but raises the bar.

The 49X tips the scales 350 pounds lighter than a similar spec'ed 4900. Single-channel frame rail options are available in various thicknesses and feature best-in-class RBM (resisting bending moment) strength ratings up to 3.7 millionth inch-pounds. The hood is another new advancement in engineering. It uses a patented suspension system that behaves similarly to a typical be coil-over shock suspension to dissipate the chassis' vibrations while driving on rugged terrain. This will help reduce stress on the components and protect the hood from cracking or premature damage. The Product Validation Engineering team spent over 400 hours on component shakers and performing 10,000 frame twists to replicate a lifetime of wear and tear equivalent to 800,000 miles of use.

Integrated technology and operating efficiency is the name of the game with this workhorse. The 49X, when powered by either a Detroit® DD15 Gen 5 or DD16, the most powerful diesel engine available in the U.S. heavy-duty truck market, offers proprietary Detroit® Connect Virtual Technician remote diagnostic services to increase uptime and productivity. The Detroit® Assurance suite of advanced collision mitigation systems, including active brake assist, adaptive cruise control, side guard assist, and more, is an available option on the 49X. Similarly, the Detroit® DT12 vocational or DT12 vocational extreme series of automated manual transmissions seamlessly integrate into the vehicle's design and are validated in over 35 million miles of testing. Customers who prefer their truck to be paired with a Cummins engine and/or Eaton transmission will still have options available.

Comfort and safety were paramount to the design team. Slips and falls are the second most common type of workplace injury. In conditions where operators may enter and exit a truck up to 50 times a day, careful attention was paid to ergonomic ingress and egress for the 49X. The truck features five handholds, door opening

angles of 70-degrees, widened step treads to the ground to facilitate safer entry and exit from the cab. The 49X also showcases a dual-stage LED headlight system that features internally printed heat grids and ambient air temperature sensors that can melt 3mm of ice in less than 10 minutes.

The 49X will be available for ordering this winter, with deliveries beginning early CY2021. Reach out to your local Truck Centers' Western Star brand expert to learn more about the 49X and how it can help you get the job done safely and in style.

Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA) recently unveiled its new Western Star 49X model geared for the heavy-duty vocational market. **The latest Star stands on an all-new vocational frame that was built after extensive consultation with body-builders.** From logging in Western Canada and snowplow operators in New England to oilfield truckers in West Texas, this truck is built to work.



OUR SAFEST & MOST ADVANCED TRUCK. EVER.

WORK STRONGER – AND SAFER.

SEE AND BE SEEN WITH DUAL-STAGE LED INTELLIGENT HEADLIGHTS AND STAINLESS-STEEL AIR INTAKES WITH INTEGRATED, HIGH-VISIBILITY TURN SIGNALS.

WORK HARD WITH A STATE-OF-THE-ART, STEEL-REINFORCED VOCATIONAL CAB.

SEE WHAT'S AHEAD. GET MORE DONE.

DETROIT ASSURANCE

KEEP THE JOB SITE SAFE AND PRODUCTIVE WITH INDUSTRY-LEADING FUSED CAMERA AND RADAR TECHNOLOGY.

COVER YOUR BLIND SIDE.

DETROIT ASSURANCE

WORK CONFIDENTLY WITH A SIDE RADAR THAT DETECTS MOVING, PASSENGER-SIDE PEOPLE AND OBJECTS.

TAKE ON ANY TERRAIN WITH NEW VOCATIONAL TRANSMISSIONS.

IMPROVE PERFORMANCE WITH THE DETROIT® DT12® VOCATIONAL SERIES – RUGGED TRANSMISSIONS DESIGNED FOR THE JOB SITE.



THE ALL-NEW WESTERN STAR 49X – POWERED BY DETROIT.

Engineered for ultimate safety and performance in the most extreme environments. The 49X is the only truck to bring the latest generation of Detroit's legendary lineup to the job site – from new vocational transmissions to cutting-edge technology that keeps workers safe. With seamless integration of the powertrain, safety systems and connectivity technology, the 49X is changing the game on job site productivity.

Discover the future of tough at WesternStar49X.com.



DAIMLER

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★ TOGETHER ★ OUR SERVICE CHANGED THE WORLD



US Army White Motor Co. M3A1
Half-Track in Nazi Germany

LET'S KEEP IT GOING

To all of the brave men and women who are currently serving our country and to all of those who previously served, thank you for your service. Your dedication protects our freedom as well as that of others around the globe. Our prayers are with those who are awaiting a safe homecoming and the families whose loved ones will never return. God Bless America.

- ★ VETERAN OWNED.
- ★ VETERAN DRIVEN.
- ★ AMERICAN STRONG.

Truck Centers
Inc.



HEROES WORK HERE

You may wonder why we are including a Veterans Day piece after November 11th? At Truck Centers, we are proud to be a Veteran-owned company. **We are also honored to have a workforce of over 10% veterans.** Their dedication, teamwork, work ethic, and passion for high standards of excellence are the cornerstones of TCI's values. Thus, our support of vets and active-duty military are at the forefront of what we stand for, and that is bigger than one day in November. We wanted to publicly acknowledge them for their patriotism and personal sacrifice to protect our freedoms and our great country.

MAY GOD BLESS AMERICA AND ALL WHO DEFEND HER.

K. ABBADUSKY S. ABBADUSKY G. ADAMS C. ADAMSON R. ADAMSON R. ALMON D. ASHLEY M. BAER B. BAKER J. BEAVER B. BICANICH A. BLACK V. BLANCHARD S. BLUHM-FORNEY F. BOWNES J. BRADBURY J. BRAUNAGEL J. BULLOCK S. BUMGARNER D. BURGESS W. CHRISTOPHER T. CORYELL	C. CROWELL A. DARIAN D. DILLON R. DONZE R. EVANS D. FAITZ T. FEDAK R. FERRY J. FLATLEY G. FREEMAN G. FULTZ A. GLOVER R. GOLDEN J. GOWEN M. GRAWE J. GRIM M. HARRIS M. J. HOPKINS, IV C. HUBLY F. ISAIA C. KNIERIM D. LAWRENCE D. LENNING S. LONG C. LOW J. MARTIN J. MCCREARY T. MCFAIN K. MCGRATH	W. MCLAIN J. MILCHERSKA J. MILLS J. MOOSE E. MORGAN I. MUNDSTOCK D. PENNINGTON J. PENNINGTON M. PENTECOST W. PETERS C. REYNOLDS K. RHODES S. RICHARDT M. SCHMEIDERER F. SKUBISZEWSKI R. STEINMYER S. THRONE E. TURNER T. WAYMAN J. WESTENHAVER C. WHITE B. YAHL
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We Salute Those Who Serve.

Truck Centers Inc.

DTNA ENHANCES

CUSTOMER

SERVICE

EXPERIENCE

EDITED FROM AN ARTICLE
BY JERRY HIRSCH,
TRANSPORT TOPICS,
NOVEMBER 19, 2020

Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA) is making headway on a year-long customer service improvement initiative, opening up more communication channels with its customers, and working with dealers to have parts and technicians ready to go when a disabled truck reaches the service bay.

The Portland, Ore.-based owner of the Freightliner and Western Star truck brands wants to “bring faster speed, effectiveness, and thoroughness in solving our customers’ most immediate needs,” said Paul Romanaggi, DTNA’s chief customer service officer, on a Nov. 18 conference call.

Romanaggi discussed how DTNA efforts to more effectively stage parts at dealers, streamline service authorizations, and improve technician productivity are starting to pay off.

“We have seen a nice steady clip in 24-hour turnaround,” he stated.

Dealers now repair about 60% of the company’s trucks within 24 hours and 45% the same day they are brought in for service, Romanaggi said. That compares with 55% and 41%, respectively, just one year ago.

All of the major truck manufacturers are working to reduce the time that it takes to repair trucks and provide better customer communications.

Daimler is speeding up service through a pre-authorization program that allows service centers to immediately launch diagnostic and repair services. For example, fleets can authorize U.S. and Canadian

Freightliner dealers to charge up to a set amount, such as \$1,500, Romanaggi said. A dealer would have to contact the fleet if the repair looked to top that. It also must present a detailed report on its work.

“Overall, the program has been a gigantic success. It has eliminated the wait time for a technician to get started on the job because we have the preauthorization ready to go,” he stated.

Big fleets also are getting more attention from Daimler. It has created a strike force of 25 fleet service managers that focuses on the top 75 fleets running Daimler equipment.

“The fleet manager digitally checks in on a downed trucks’ status daily and then works to solve bottlenecks to get the rig back on the road quickly,” stated Romanaggi.

The company is also is working to overcome a hurdle fleets encounter when they have a warranty claim with an equipment supplier rather than Daimler. He added, “Suppliers typically make fleets file separate claims and often have different procedures. It was a real pain and real chaos for our customers.”

To ease the customer burden, Daimler is now signing suppliers on to a one-stop system in which fleets file a warranty claim with the truck manufacturer using a single system. Daimler pays out and then collects the money from the supplier.

“Daimler’s parts and service business has fully rebounded from the slump created by the COVID-19 pandemic and is running about 5% ahead of where it was a year ago,” declared Romanaggi.



ASK THE TECHNICIAN

DETROIT® ASSURANCE 5 NEW
TECHNOLOGY & SAFETY FEATURES

BY TIM STELLHORN, TCI TRAINING DEPARTMENT

Two things that are continually changing and evolving are technology and safety. The Freightliner New Cascadia now offers some newly updated safety features and proprietary technology. The following list is a brief compilation of some of the best new features that are available with Detroit® Assurance 5 (DA5) that is available on trucks built after September 2019.

ADAPTIVE CRUISE CONTROL (ACC) WITH AUTO RE-LAUNCH

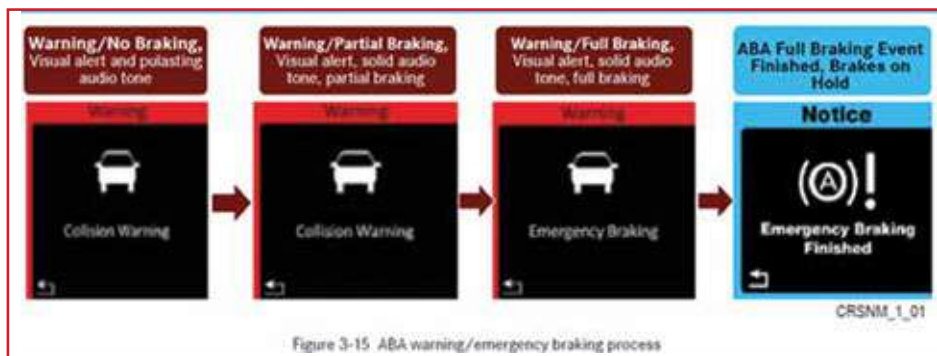
ACC continually monitors and regulates speed and the distance between your truck and a vehicle detected in front of it. If there is no leading vehicle, ACC operates in the same way as standard cruise control when the vehicle is traveling above 10 mph. As traffic in front of the unit slows and eventually stops, the system will adjust with the flow of traffic all of the way down to 0 mph. If the leading vehicle ahead is stopped for two seconds or less, ACC will resume when it accelerates. If the system detects a stop for more than two seconds, the driver needs to press the resume button or tap on the accelerator to keep moving.

TAILGATE WARNING

The Tailgate Warning feature alerts the driver when they are following a leading vehicle too closely. Acceptable following distances vary based on the vehicle's speed. If a driver remains at the unsafe distance for 10 seconds or longer, the visual dash alert is triggered. This feature continues to operate even when ACC is not engaged.

ACTIVE BRAKE ASSIST (ABA) 5.0

The Active Brake Assist (ABA) 5.0 system is always on and detecting the distance to objects ahead in its path, calculating speed, and determining if a warning or braking action is necessary. ABA is designed to perform autonomous emergency braking on moving, stationary objects, and pedestrians. This system is designed to perform collision mitigation when the speeds and situations are ideal.

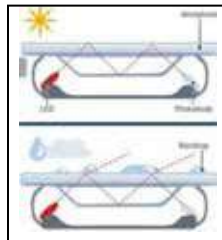


INTELLIGENT HIGH BEAM HEADLIGHTS

When this feature is activated and the truck detects headlights or taillights of another vehicle in its path, the headlamps default to low beams. Once the vehicle is out of sight, the high beams automatically come back on to reduce driver distraction.

AUTOMATIC HEADLIGHTS AND WIPERS

When the headlight switch is in AUTO mode, the rain light sensor (RLS) detects low light or poor visibility conditions and turns on the headlights for safety. Similarly, when the RLS detects rain on the windshield and the wipers are set to any mode other than OFF, the wipers will automatically activate.



APS3 POWER STEERING GEAR

The Bosch APS3 is connected to the chassis wiring harness and contains an electric motor and worm gear that allows the vehicle safety system to adjust the steering to keep the vehicle in the lane.



The Detroit® Assurance 5 suite of safety features offers the latest innovations in technology. Contact your local Truck Centers, Inc. dealership for more information.

TRAINING SCHEDULE

JANUARY-MARCH 2021

DATES	DAYS	SEC	COURSE	CLASS DESCRIPTION	PRICE
Jan 5-7	3 Days	02	CVG18	DT12™ Transmission	\$1,050
Jan 5-8	4 Days	01	CEP42	DD Heavy-Duty – Basic Diagnostics	\$1,400
Jan 6-8	3 Days	03	CVE06	Common Electrical & Electronics Architecture	\$1,050
Jan 11-15	5 Days	02	CVG01	Heavy-Duty Truck Systems	\$1,750
Jan 19-22	4 Days	01	CVH02	HVAC Service & Repair	\$1,400
Jan 19-22	4 Days	03	CVL01	Western Star	\$1,400
Jan 26-29	4 Days	01	CEP45	DD Heavy-Duty – Air & ATS Diagnostics	\$1,400
Jan 26-29	4 Days	03	CVL05	Cascadia P3/P4	\$1,400
Feb 2-5	4 Days	02	CVE12	Electrical Troubleshooting	\$1,400
Feb 2-4	3 Days	01	CVG18	DT12™ Transmission	\$1,050
Feb 1-5	5 Days	03	CVG01	Heavy-Duty Truck Systems	\$1,750
Feb 9-10	2 Days	02	CVD13	Advanced Diagnostics Vibration Analysis	\$700
Feb 15-19	5 Days	01	CEP44	DD Heavy-Duty – Fuel System Diagnostics	\$1,750
Feb 16-19	4 Days	03	CVE12	Electrical Troubleshooting	\$1,400
Feb 23-26	4 Days	03	CVL02	Business Class M2	\$1,400
Mar 2-5	4 Days	02	CVL05	Cascadia P3/P4	\$1,400
Mar 2-5	4 Days	01	CEP42	DD Heavy-Duty – Basic Diagnostics	\$1,400
Mar 2-5	4 Days	03	CVE05	Electronic Systems	\$1,400
Mar 9-12	4 Days	02	CVL01	Western Star	\$1,400
Mar 15-19	5 Days	01	CEP43	DD Heavy-Duty – Major Repair	\$1,750
Mar 15-19	5 Days	03	CVG01	Heavy-Duty Truck Systems	\$1,750
Mar 23-26	4 Days	01	CEP70	Medium-Duty - Diagnostic & Major Repair	\$1,400
Mar 24-26	3 Days	03	CVE06	Common Electrical & Electronics Architecture	\$1,050
Mar 30-Apr 2	4 Days	02	CVL02	Business Class M2	\$1,400
Mar 30-Apr 2	4 Days	01	CEP45	DD Heavy-Duty - Air & ATS Diagnostics	\$1,400
Mar 30-Apr 2	4 Days	03	CVH02	HVAC Service & Repair	\$1,400



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**DRIVE
DRIVEN**

thank you
FOR CHOOSING TCI

