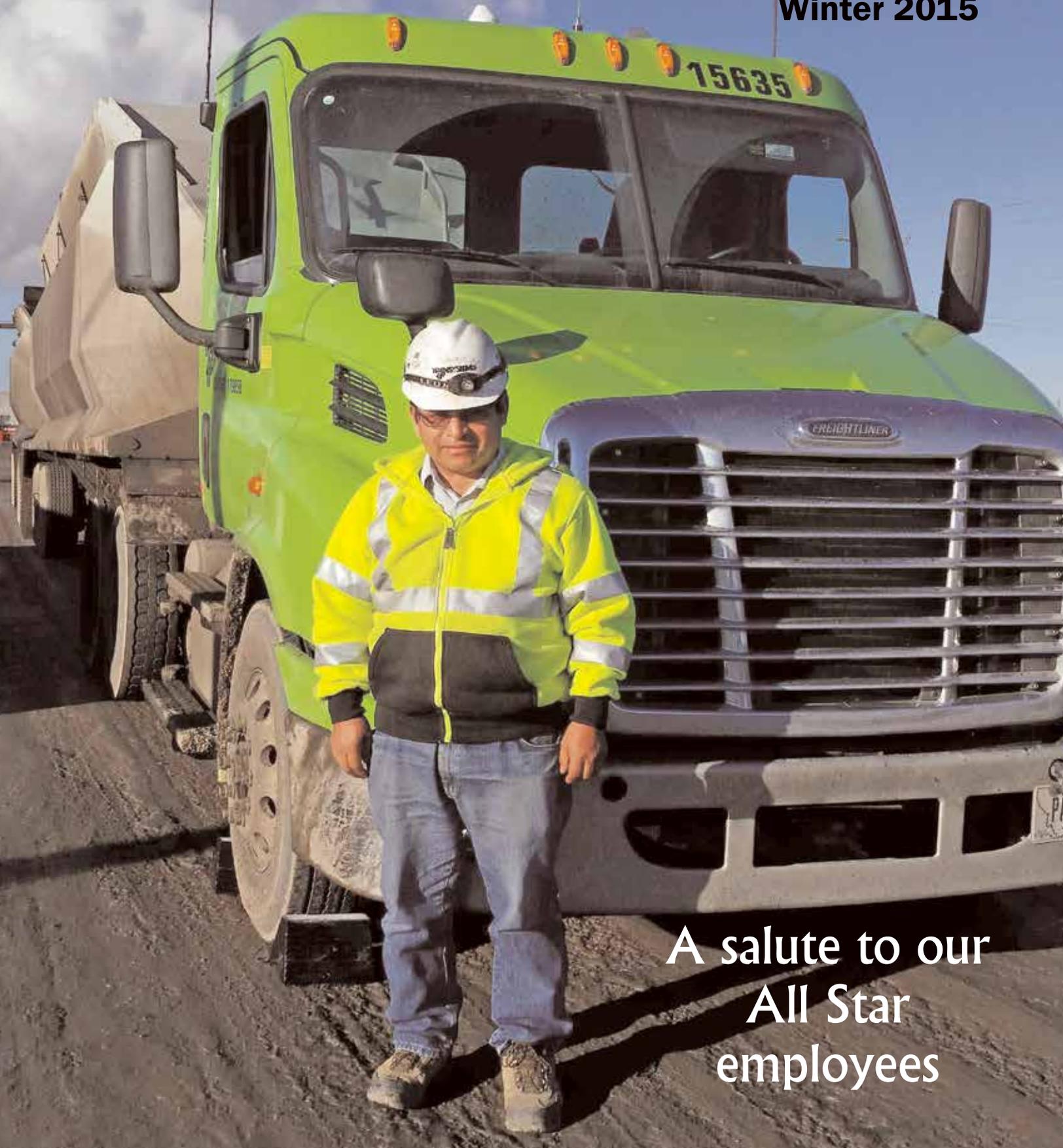


# TransTopix

Winter 2015



A salute to our  
All Star  
employees

# President's Corner: Staying above the line

The cultural belief in “staying above the line” supports Transsystems’ guiding values, particularly the value of respect.

Staying above the line means caring about the success of the team or a fellow employee and looking for ways to help the team or fellow employee.

Another aspect of staying “above the line” means hearing out ideas and avoiding premature responses to others’ ideas. There are big differences among: “It’s a new idea, but I do not understand how it would work;” and “That will never work;” and, even worse, “That’s a stupid idea.”

Staying above the line is about turning around a negative response and saying: “How can I make this idea work?” or “How can I be a part of the solution?”

Managers can help others stay above the line by being sure that employees understand why Transsystems follows certain procedures and policies and encouraging feedback on how we can operate within procedures and policies.

A good example is that Transsystems wants drivers stopped at traffic lights to count one thousand one, one thousand two, and one thousand three before proceeding after the light has turned green.

The reason for this procedure is that most vehicles that run red lights do so during the first three seconds after the light has changed. Waiting three



Scott

seconds is a sensible safety precaution.

I think that employees who understand the reason for this procedure are more likely to

observe it both on duty and in their personal vehicles.

We can do a better job of explaining the reasons behind procedures. Line employees are responsible to ask about the reasons behind procedures that they do not understand.

Asking: “What else can I do?” is easy. For example, an employee might ask: “How can I support Transsystems’ key result of being fully staffed?”

A good response is: “Participate in the employee referral program. Find a new employee and earn a referral bonus.”

Employees who become part of the solution rightly feel they are a valuable part of Transsystems. This feeling spreads beyond the workplace and into the community.

Asking for an explanation is another good example of staying above the line and seeking to understand Transsystems.

Sometimes the manager’s answer may be: “I do not know, but we always have done it this way.” A better “above the line” response is: “I do not know, but I will find out why we do it this way and get back to you. Then we can work together to see if there is a better way.”

## Cultural Beliefs

**Leader of Safety:** I take action and respectfully address unsafe acts and conditions.

**My Voice Will Be Heard:** I seek information, listen to others and share my ideas.

**Own It:** I choose to stay above the line and always ask, “What else can I do?”

**Innovate:** I explore and share my ideas.

**Unleash Potential:** I am eager to learn. I am eager to teach. I am eager to grow.

It is important for employees to understand that at times the manager may not know why Transsystems has a particular procedure. We do not always do a good job of communicating to managers the “why” behind every procedure or policy.

Staying above the line is particularly important when it comes to innovation.

We always should hear out ideas about constructive change. Lots of good ideas never surface in a culture that is not open to innovation.

Being receptive does not exclude being critical, but tearing down an idea without exploring the idea destroys the culture of respect.

I think that Transsystems is good at listening, and I hope that if we are not good listeners, you will let me know.

*Scott Lind,  
President and COO*

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# John McCann: Mission accomplished

Director of Training  
retires after 18 years  
with Transystems

**W**hen John McCann took on the job as Transystems' Director of Training in 2007, he set some high goals. When he retires this spring, he will have achieved most of them.

Over the past seven years, John developed Transystems' level training programs, trainer development and leadership training for managers and supervisors.

“We had a vision to bring better and consistent training to all levels of management, and John helped us accomplish that goal,” Scott Lind, Transystems President and COO, said.

“My primary goal was to organize a program that ensured all company employees received the training required based on FMCSA, OSHA and MSHA rules and Transystems standards,” John said. “We did not have a well-organized training program when I started; today all of our training history is recorded electronically and available for our managers to access and track employee development. An-



**Transystems Director of Training John McCann is retiring after 18 years of service to Transystems.** Jessica Harris photo

other goal was to make sure we were uniform and consistent in all of our training programs and the information provided to our employees.”

“More training and information allow people to work smarter and safer to accomplish each task,” he added. John's safety success has not gone unnoticed by his co-workers.

“John is the best at keeping managers on task with safety,” Vice President of Safety Rich Carl said. “He is the most organized person I have ever known and he wrote the book on punctuality.”

Rich cited John's ability to

deliver quickly information needed for a project or process. Hillsboro Supervisor Tim Higdem echoed Rich's assessment of John.

“I have the utmost respect for him,” Tim said.

John made a lasting impression on Tim when they first met at a job fair in 1999. “He was the safety manager in the Red River Valley and hired me,” Tim said.

Through the years, Tim has worked with John as a trainer. “Every question I ever had, John could answer. He always gets back to you,” Tim said. “John is a fabulous person and a great asset to the company. Uffdah! We are all going to miss him.”

Everyone who worked with John seems to agree.

“John worked with me as a Division Safety Manager in the Grand Forks office,” Scott recalled. “He was very organized and was respected by all the managers he worked with.”

“When John had a project to do, he worked through the process very methodically and completed the project on a timely basis,” Scott added.

John joined Transystems in 1997 after a long career in the U.S. Air Force. His first assignment was as Division

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**ON THE COVER:** Twin Falls driver Estanislao Orihuela is among the 28 Transystems All Stars for 2015.

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# John McCann

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Safety Manager in the Red River Valley. Rich succeeded him in that job.

Four years later, when the company started working with The Amalgamated Sugar Company in Idaho, John and his wife, Susan, headed west. John helped with the start up of the Idaho operation and also provided safety support for Transystems projects in Wyoming and Nevada.

He recalls that time in his career with Transystems as occasionally hectic, with lots of travel and a lot of ground to cover.

## New programs

“I am very happy with the training program we have developed,” John said. “I leave the company with a program that will take us a long way down the road.”

The biggest change John saw during his tenure was the switch to electronic online training.

“eLearning has provided uniformity to our compliance training requirements throughout the company, based on each specific job, and the needs of each individual employee to help them work efficiently and safely,” he said.

John leaves well pleased with the learning programs in place. “I am very happy with

the comprehensive training programs and with the development of our own training videos to focus on specific Transystems processes.”

He also is justifiably proud of his “Train the Trainer” program.

“The trainers are a success story,” he said. “They are actually the best part of my job.”

Line employees who become trainers are the ones John holds up for praise. Last year alone, John trained more than 70 trainers, including drivers, loader operators and technicians, who took what they learned back to their projects to share with the company’s 1,000-plus employees.

Assisting John in the implementation of the program, Division Safety Managers, Project Managers and Supervisors play a huge part in ensuring the training is completed at each project.

“They are especially involved during start-up, rehire orientations and safety orientations,” John said. “Transystems has a huge team out there doing excellent training.”

“I feel we far surpass the minimum when it comes to training. The information we provide our employees keeps them abreast of FMCSA, OSHA and MSHA rules. All those things come into play to help employees make better decisions and be in compliance while accomplishing their jobs.”

Over his many years with Transystems, John undertook a

number of special assignments to investigate potentially difficult situations. Pat Rice, the company’s Secretary and lawyer, said that he could always count on John to be professional, thorough and discreet.

Retirement will give John a break from long days at work and allow him more time with family and his favorite pastimes: bowling with Susan, fishing, hunting and camping in the mountains.

There’s one thing John will truly miss: Transystems people.

They will miss him, too. Scott recalled the great camaraderie of the staff in the Red River Valley when John was there.

“We would have very enjoyable visits with John and Sue when Theresa and I hosted company dinners,” Scott said. “Sue has the greatest sense of humor. She brought enthusiasm and laughter to those gatherings.”

Rich also remembers John’s early days in the Red River Valley.

“John trained me well and I have always looked up to him,” Rich said. “His integrity is second to none. He is one of the most professional people I know.”

“John leaves a valuable legacy to everyone at Transystems. Thank you, John, for everything you have done for the people of Transystems,” Rich added.



# Transystems salutes All Stars

**W**hen it comes to moving materials, nobody does it better and safer than Transystems. The scores prove it.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's Safety Measurement System puts Transystems at the very top of its list of motor carriers. That is no small feat considering Transystems' units run more than 33 million miles each year hauling more than 22 million tons of sugar beets and other goods to factories and project sites.

The credit for that top safety score lies with the company's dedicated team of 900-plus drivers, backed up by dozens of skilled technicians, loader operators and an administrative staff focused on getting the job done safely.

The effort put forth by employees does not go unnoticed. In this, our third annual salute to Transystems All Stars, we focus on two outstanding employees from each of the company's 14 projects.

With thanks for a job well done, here are the 2015 Transystems All Stars.



**Mike Hughley, above, and Ron Weir, below, were chosen as Worland All Stars.** Ryan Moore photos

## Worland

Since joining Transystems as a driver in 2009, **Mike Hughley** has been willing to travel to other locations to help out with beets and has been on many summer jobs.

He is always willing to go the extra mile by picking up extra shifts or covering for someone who is ill, Project Supervisor Ryan Moore said.

Mike is very safety conscious and always has an idea on ways to fix problems. Before the beginning of each campaign, Mike helps out in the shop with beet racks, radios and whatever needs looking after before the campaign.



**Ron Weir** brought a wealth of beet knowledge with him when he came to Transystems in 2003. Before he joined the Worland crew, he was a long-time loader operator for Holly Sugar. In the off season, he worked as a ditch rider for a local canal company.

There are few people Ron doesn't recognize during harvest when the growers bring in their crop. He served as a

**See ALL STARS, next page**

# All Stars pitch in to get the job done

Continued from Page 5

loader operator and substitute supervisor.

Ron's extensive knowledge of loaders and beets always has been helpful.

Ron served on the safety committee and was a leader in recruiting for Worland. He always found a few extra team members when we needed to fill spots.

An avid fisherman, Ron can be found at the lake or the river on his days off. He would return to work talking about how many fish he caught and how relaxing it was.

This campaign was Ron's last with Transystems. He is retiring and moving to Iowa with his wife Marilyn. There he will be closer to family and, of course, fish.

Ron will be missed here.

## Twin Falls

Twin Falls driver **Estanislao Orihuela** has been a dedicated employee for eight years. Estanislao's dedication takes him wherever his skills are needed, according to Project Manager Joel Garrison.

"He spent the last two summers working on our North Dakota projects, and always makes it back to our Twin Falls project to start the beet campaign," Joel said. "You can count on him being prepared daily wearing all his PPE and completing tasks safely."

Estanislao came to us when



**Estanislao Orihuela, left and featured on the cover, and Jim Henderson, above, were selected as Twin Falls All Stars because of their willingness to go the extra mile.** Joel Garrison photos

Transystems was running a new hire training program.

"Little did we know, that just a few years down the road, he would still be with us and striving to obtain his U.S. citizenship," Joel said.

Driver and loader operator **Jim Henderson** has been a Twin Falls employee for the past 13 years.

Jim is always willing to help with any projects that come along, including putting in a few extra shifts.

"When it comes to new hires looking for a little help to get started as a Transystems driver, you can count on Jim to be there to help," Joel said.

"Whether it is training in a loader or a truck, Jim is your guy. He ensures that new hires obtain the skills they need to become successful for Transystems."

## Sidney

**Penny Worley**, a driver who

transferred from Nampa, has been with Transystems since 2008. She has one of the most challenging jobs in the Sidney project. She hauls coal to the sugar plant in some of the most adverse conditions.

"Penny is a real trouper," Project Manager John Hoadley said. "Through minus-20 degree weather with the wind howling, she stands next to her truck load after load keeping the plant boilers stocked in coal."

"Thanks, Penny, to you and all the other drivers who have made Sidney what it is today."

**Curtis Anderson** is another Sidney All Star.

"Now, here's a gentleman who is a great pleasure to work with," John said.

Curtis is a dedicated employee. He always shows up on time for his shift and eagerly takes on extra shifts.

"He is always looking out for

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# All Stars tackle challenging assignments

Continued from Page 6

his fellow drivers. His attitude is awesome,” John said. “Curtis, from all of us here at Transystems, thanks to you.”



**Curtis**

Although only two All Stars could be selected, John expressed his gratitude to his entire staff.

“A special thanks to all the Sidney employees for making this place rock,” he said.

## Renville

**Eduardo Zuniga** really stepped up to help the Renville project.



**Eduardo**

Eduardo grasped Transystems’ processes and policies and helped interpret and work with the other drivers. He also helped with scheduling the van for rides and banking needs.

“Eduardo is always willing to pick up extra shifts and is noted for his smiling face and good attitude,” Renville Project Manager Mike Rood said.

**Toni Blood**, a new clerk this campaign, stepped into Renville’s fast-paced environment and excelled.



**Penny Worley’s dedication to her challenging job made her one of Sidney’s All Stars.** John Hoadley photo

“Toni has a real willingness to learn, and committed to every project thrown her way,” Mike said. “Her great work attitude, accuracy and reliability are



**Toni**

keys to her success,” Mike said. “Thank you, Toni, for a job well done!”

## Paul

**Johnny Jones** came to work for Transystems in 2001, when the company first started in Idaho. He started as a driver but that lasted only three months before we discovered that he had great potential as a loader operator.

“Johnny has since set the standard for loader operators here in this area,” Project Manager Coral Torix said. “There’s not an operator out there who doesn’t strive to load trucks as well as Johnny.”

He has been the Lead Loader Operator Trainer for several years and has trained countless employees to operate loaders. He also helped in creating loader training videos.

Johnny’s attitude and demeanor are right up there with his loading skills, Coral said, “Top notch!”

“In all the years he’s worked for Transystems, I don’t think that anyone has ever seen him without a smile on his face, even in the worst loading conditions,” Coral said.

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# All Stars set the standard for co-workers

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Johnny is also known for keeping his loader very clean. “It’s been said you could eat off the floor in his loader,” Coral said.

Johnny and his wife Coleen have a beautiful home north of Paul, where they share a passion for wildlife, mainly elk. They have a small elk ranch on their property and it has become one of their favorite hobbies.

“I’ve heard Johnny say, ‘Soon as I get home to my elk, all the worries of day just go away.’”

Johnny is loved and respected by all at Transystems, Coral added.

**Damian Paredes** has been working at Transystems since 2008.



**Damian**

“He is one of the best flumers out there,” Coral said. “He works hard and never stops. Every chance he has, he will work an extra day.”

While his abilities and strength are notable, what is really special about Damian is the fact he is always smiling.

“His attitude and demeanor are impressive. In rain, sunshine, snow or dealing with frozen trucks, he always keeps



**Johnny Jones has been with Transystems since the company started working in Idaho. He sets the standard for loader operators.** Coral Torix photo

smiling,” Coral said. “I am so proud to have Damian as part of my team at Transystems. Thanks, Damian, for the loyalty, devotion and hard work.”

## Nampa

“He just gets things done for us on nights and he always has a great attitude.” That is how



**Dustin**

Nampa supervisors and drivers describe **Dustin Graham.**

Dustin joined the Transystems Nampa shop as a maintenance technician in October 2011 and has been an

integral part of our team from his first day, Project Manager Jim Woodward said.

“Although Dustin’s background was in the building trades, his knowledge of working on cars was quickly adapted to maintaining our fleet of trucks and loaders,” Jim said.

In his off time, Dustin enjoys spending time with his two children, ages four and two. He is also a motorcycle and four-wheeler enthusiast.

“Thanks, Dustin, for living out our values while helping keep our fleet on the road,” Jim said.

In only his second campaign with the Nampa Project, **Rick Pottenger** has established himself as a real go-to guy. After many years of working in all levels of management in the wood products industry, Rick brought his many skills and a “get it done” attitude to Transystems.

Since joining the Nampa team, Rick has worked as scheduler, dispatcher, yard coordinator, loader operator and truck driver.

During the off season, Rick works for Mobile Concrete as a loader operator, driver and quality control inspector. In his spare time he loves to fish and play with his three grandchildren. He is also an ardent Boise State University supporter.

“Rick is a tremendous asset to our project and upholds

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# All Stars uphold company's cultural beliefs

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the cultural beliefs and guiding values of Transystems," Jim said.

## Moorhead

**Maxwell Lamb** has been with Transystems since August 2008, working in the Red River Valley.

Max is dedicated and is a proven hard worker for the Moorhead Project. He steps up to help deliver beets to the Hillsboro Project when needed.

"Max is a hard working individual who stands out from the



**Maxwell**

group when it comes to safe driving," Project Manager Jason Holm said. "He has done a great job with his hard brakes.

Max's hard brake report shows that he is an outstanding defensive driver while operating-Transystems equipment."

Max has driven 38,500 miles since the beginning of the 2014-2015 campaign in Moorhead and has only two hard brakes. To the Moorhead management team he is a leader in safety and is an example to other drivers, showing that the safety goals set by the company are attainable. Max takes company policies to heart.

When asked what he most likes about at Transystems, Max's reply was simple: "Working with the family."



**Rick Pottenger brought a "get it done" attitude when he joined the crew in Nampa.** Jim Woodward photo

During summer months, Max loves to spend time with his wife, 10 children and 13 grandchildren.

Lucky grandbaby number 13, Ethen Maxwell Flecher, was born Jan. 1, 2015, at 6:43 a.m. and was officially the first baby born in Fargo, ND, in 2015. Grandchild Number 14 is due in May.

**Sheri Evenson** started with the Moorhead Transystems team in February of 2014.

She has made an important impact on the project when it comes to ensuring that the em-



**Sheri**

ployee payroll is accurate and helping with the hiring process in Moorhead.

"I would say one of Sheri's greatest assets is working with the employees on accurate paperwork and helping them with their e learning," Jason said.

"Sheri always takes the time to help others and that is what makes her an All Star employee," he added.

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# All Stars take pride in a job well done

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## Manufacturing

Pride in his work and a wide range of skills set technician **Terry Sieving** apart.

Terry started with Transsystems in August of 2006 as a shop coordinator to help control inventory and paperwork. Coming from a computer background, he quickly picked up on new skills.

“Terry quickly mastered TUMS and started to learn to repair things. He then moved out into the shop where he has excelled as a technician, welder, plumber of anything else that is needed,” Project Manager Derek Torix said.

“Terry has always shown pride in his work and been a huge asset,” Derek said. “Since he has worked here, he has been involved in just about every step involved in the trailer builds. He has had a hand in all the trailers that we have built in one way or another”

Terry also is an on-call technician and helps keep the fleet going day or night, in snow, rain or sunshine. He is ready to work hard and get jobs done. He went from having very limited knowledge of this field to becoming an expert at his job.

Terry is a man who wears many hats, Derek said. He will go from fixing a truck to welding trailer parts to plumbing trailers together and then to getting a broken truck fixed on



**Terry Sieving takes on whatever tasks need to be done in manufacturing.** Derek Torix photo

the side of the road. Terry also continues to help with the inventory.

A native of San Diego, Terry is a Chargers fan and enjoys watching football on his time off.

**Mark Wilkinson** is another manufacturing project All Star. Mark began his career with



**Mark**

plumber

“Mark has proven to be well worth his weight for both the maintenance and manufacturing positions,” Derek said. “He is always willing to go the extra mile to get a truck going no matter the condition. He has

Transsystems as a flumer at the Twin Falls factory in 2004. In 2011, he joined manufacturing as a technician and

been an on-call technician who comes in anytime, any day, to help keep the fleet going.” Mark’s skills as a plumber have proven to be a huge help in manufacturing.

“He has worked with our vendors to come up with plumbing kits that are broken down to sub-kits for every part of the trailer,” Derek said. “It is an ongoing process, but he is determined to get it perfect.”

The kits help to make the trailers easier and faster to plumb. Each kit has exactly what is needed and a label of where it goes in the trailer, Derek said.

“For example, mud flap bolts or ABS valve fittings or so on. This has made it so that anyone can help plumb with little experience because they just grab a box and put it where the label says it goes. This has also made everything more uniform. Mark is also great at helping to train others.”

## Hillsboro

**Chuck Hunt** gets things done in Hillsboro.

Chuck has been with Transsystems for two years, and what a great two years it has been for us, Hillsboro Project Manager Tim Plumley said. “Lately you will find him in the lowboy moving equipment all over the valley for the RRV projects. On any day you might find him hauling beets,

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# All Stars are willing to go the extra mile

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running a loader, training drivers, helping the techs on those cold winter days with freeze-ups, working on safety committee tasks, assisting with employee housing needs, or in the



**Chuck**

office as a substitute manager. Chuck excels at all of these tasks.”

Chuck is a “get it done” type of em-

ployee. It does not matter if it is 30 degrees or -30 degrees outside, you will never hear him complain about anything.

“He is always on the ball, doing what needs to be done without being asked,” Tim said. “Even with the multitude of tasks that Chuck balances, safety is his first priority. He watches closely to make sure that he works safely and ensures that his co-workers do.”

Chuck spends most of his free time with his family, which grew by one member early this year. Teagan Lee Hunt was born Jan.13, 2015.

If you don’t find Chuck with his wife, Melissa, and three boys, you will find him on his Harley enjoying the fresh air during the summer months. Chuck also enjoys working with his cattle and horses and farming.

“Chuck all around is someone who you can count on. He

is always right there prepared to lend a hand when help is needed,” Tim said.

In his 17th season with Transystems, **Bruce Jacobson** maintains his role as one of the friendliest and most helpful



**Bruce**

drivers in Hillsboro.

Bruce began this campaign with Transystems by assisting with the CDL

training courses offered to new drivers in the RRV. He is an excellent trainer who makes sure all of the drivers fully understand the operations of our company with the highest level of safety in mind.

Any time that the company or any employee needs assistance, Bruce is there.

“In his free time, Bruce has been helping our international workers and other employees who have moved here to haul for us,” Tim said.

“When they are looking for a ride to go shopping or a day away from Hillsboro, Bruce is always willing to make their stay a little bit better.”

## East Grand Forks

“**Bruce Voelker** is a big asset to the East Grand Forks Transystems family,” Project Manager Rick Larson said.

“Bruce is a dependable, well-rounded employee who can do anything asked of him. He has



**East Grand Forks All Star Bruce Voelker is in his 32nd campaign with Transystems.**

Rick Larson photo

plenty of hours in all equipment used by Transystems.”

Bruce started with Transystems Sept. 1, 1983, the year Transystems started in the Red River Valley. Bruce is in his 32nd campaign and arrives for every shift with a smile on his face.

Through the years, Bruce has had a positive impact on many other employees. He passes on his knowledge through training and personal experiences. Bruce has made many great friends while working at Transystems.

When Rick asked Bruce what brings him back year after year, Bruce said, “I appreciate the safety culture and flexible work schedule that allows me to help on our family farm.”

Bruce finds the time to be an

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# All Stars are eager to help fellow employees

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active member of the Northern Pullers, competing in tractor pulling contest all around the area. He uses antique tractors restored by his brother.

Rick said, "Thank you, Bruce, for your dedication and service during 32 campaigns."

East Grand Forks driver **Robert Chambers** strives to be safe in everything he does. "Safety isn't like a light switch, you have to practice it at home as well as you do at work," is one of his favorite sayings.

Robert started with Transystems on Aug. 21, 2010, and is a great member of the East Grand Forks team. He is a driver trainer for EGF and takes



**Robert**

ownership in the work he does. Robert passes on great knowledge of safety and driving experience to new and upcoming drivers, Rick said.

Part of Robert's advice to new drivers is to work at a steady pace and be consistent, instead of pushing to get the job done.

When Rick asked Robert what he enjoys at Transystems he replied, "I enjoy training drivers about our safety culture and having pride in the equipment we have."

Robert has a few hobbies he

enjoys doing with family and friends. He enjoys hunting, fishing, camping and watching his grandkids grow up.

"We are excited to have Robert on our team," Rick said.

## Drayton

Veteran Transystems loader operator **Jeff Sylskar** is a Drayton project All Star. In his 19<sup>th</sup> season with the company, Jeff doesn't



**Jeff**

confine himself to working as a loader operator. He also helps out in the shop when needed.

"Jeff is the first one to help out in the shop or to come in on his day off to help with whatever needs to be done," says Project Manager Billy Holum. Jeff also picks up extra days whenever needed.

When he is not hard at work at Transystems, Jeff enjoys spending time with his girlfriend, Sue, and fishing on the Lake of the Woods.

Linehaul driver **Tammy Halldorson** is a Drayton project All Star. A Transystems employee for eight years, Tammy has a great attitude and great personality, according to Project Manager Billy Holum.

"Tammy picks up a lot of extra shifts when needed and is always willing to help new



**Tammy**

drivers and drivers from other projects," Billy said.

"Tammy joined the safety committee this

season and is a great asset. She is what I consider to be a professional truck driver."

On her days off, Tammy enjoys spending time with her son Zackery who is a sports enthusiast.

## Crookston

**Mark Hanson** started driving for the Transystems Crookston project in September of 1998 and has been back for every campaign since. He has taken on increasing responsibility as a driver



**Mark**

each year and can usually be found hauling yard loads while efficiently controlling all traffic to the skip or unloader.

Crookston's skip is unique and requires special knowledge to safely approach and dump each load. Mark, or "Sparky" as he is called affectionately, is always watching new or visiting drivers at the skip to ensure they dump on time without damage to Transystems equipment. Mark often gets out of

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# All Stars are the first ones to lend a hand

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his truck to ensure others are lined up properly and are dumping at the correct times, saving several bumpers from damage when being tipped up. There is little wiggle room when tipping.

“Mark constantly inspects the skip and has found issues before they caused down time for us and our customer,” Project Manager Robin Novak said.

Mark is ever ready to suggest a better way to manage his and others’ time to minimize line drivers’ wait times.

“Because he does all this and does it with a smile on his face and a chuckle is his voice, Mark is a true All Star at Transystems,” Robin said.

In his spare time, Sparky is often hunting or fishing with his brother, Mike Hanson, with whom he rides to work every day.

“Thank you, Mark. We appreciate the pride you put into your daily endeavors,” Robin added.

Crookston All Star **Jeremiah Wishard** wears two hats during the beet campaign. Jeremiah starts each campaign as a loader operator during the fresh beet haul. Later, he switches to an excavator to work on frozen piles.

He excels in both positions.

“I noticed it the first day we hauled beets in Crookston this season,” Robin said. “I



**Jeremiah Wishard runs both a loader and an excavator for the Crookston project.**

Robin Novak photo

weighed seven loads and there was only 400 pounds difference from the lightest to the heaviest load. When I mentioned it to others at the project, they said, ‘Oh, those are Jeremiah loads.’”

Jeremiah’s weights are consistently nearest to the target haul weights of all operators.

Jeremiah is very good at taking care of the customer’s beets, minimizing spillage and not running over beets. He is usually near the top on tons per hour and is well liked by all. “In fact,” Robin said, “I have received phone calls from drivers from two visiting projects commenting on what a good job he does.”

Jeremiah also is meticulous in his pre- and post-trip inspections. He has discovered problems on his loader. His actions save time and money by catch-

ing issues early before they cause damage

In addition to his duties with Transystems for the past five years, Jeremiah stays busy on a family cattle operation near Mentor, MN. He and his wife have 1-year-old girl.

“Thank you, Jeremiah for being a true All Star operator,” Robin said.

## Boise

All Star driver **Geoff Glenn** has been with the Boise Project for more than two and a half years.

“He is a driver trainer and does a good job teaching new drivers the whole routine:



**Geoff**

From startup and pre-trip to running the winch trucks, safety on the route and loading and unloading at different locations,” Boise

Project Manager Kirk Ellingford said.

Geoff has not had a loss in more than 125 loads. He is a member of the safety committee and always can be counted on to bring good ideas and suggestions to both the safety committee and everyday operations.

“Geoff has been a big part of some of the changes that we have made to ensure that safety

**See ALL STARS next page**

# All Stars work both safely and efficiently

Continued from Page 13

is on the minds of our Boise Team,” Kirk said. “I can send Geoff to any location with his crew and know that they will be safe and the work will always get done.”

In his spare time, Geoff and his family raise goats.



**Russel Oyler is an All Star technician for the Boise Project.** Kirk Ellingford photo

Boise All Star **Russel Oyler** started with the Nampa project more than three years ago and quickly became a major part of that project’s maintenance side. He worked with other shop employees to ensure that Transystems equipment was up-to-date and safe for all the drivers to operate.

In February of 2014, Russel moved over to the Boise Project to help out with the maintenance and upkeep of our 25 tractors and trailers.

“Russel stepped right in and did not miss a beat from day one,” Kirk said. “He does a



**Kim Linzy’s great work ethic is one of the reasons he was chosen as an American Falls All Star.** Carson Munk photo

great job working with the drivers and keeping all of our units ready to go.”

He has been a big part of some of the modification to the trailers and tractors to help make daily operations easier and safer for the whole team.

“It is a pleasure to work with Russel all the time,” Kirk said.

“I would like to thank John Brandel at the Nampa project for making a sacrifice on his team and letting Russel move to the other side of town to the Boise Project,” Kirk said.

## American Falls

The American Falls All Stars are **Kim Linzy** and **Greg Simmons**

“Kim has always demonstrated a great work ethic and is not afraid of hard work and

long hours,” Project Manager Carson Munk said.

Kim is in his third beet campaign with Transystems, and has worked the past two summers on the company’s construction projects in North Dakota and Idaho.

“Kim is willing to go anywhere we need him,” Carson said. “He is always available to work extra days when we need him, whatever it may be.”

He works as a driver and also is a fill-in loader operator and Holmer operator.

Fellow driver and fill-in operator Greg Simmons is in his second beet campaign at American Falls.



“He is a great asset to the company,”

**Greg**

Carson said. “Greg will jump in and fill a truck on his days off and is always available as a fill-in loader operator and Holmer operator. Greg and Kim stepped up to the challenge of learning the Holmer basket loading procedures.”

After the beet campaign is over, Greg is not afraid to go out on the road. Last year, he went to North Dakota to help haul beets. Greg spent two summers busy on the Island Park and Sheep Falls projects.

“Greg is a great member of the team,” Carson said. “It is a pleasure to work with him.”

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## History

# Innovation runs deep in company's roots

**T**ransystems' innovations have contributed to the success and even the realization of projects.

Early in the 1960s, aviation-grade gasoline was expensive in Montana because there was little competition among local refiners and transporting av-gas from refineries in Washington was expensive.

Railcars could bring av-gas from Washington but returned west empty. Moreover, there was no good system of distributing av-gas from railcars to users at airports which usually did not have access to rail service.

John Rice, Transystems' founder, devised a system to modify petroleum tankers to haul grain from Montana to elevators and a brewery in Seattle and to return to Montana loaded with av-gas.

Contamination of cargo was a challenge in both directions, but effective cleaning systems in both Washington and Montana addressed that issue. The "grain-out, gas-back" system worked flawlessly for many years.

In another instance, a glue manufacturer in Missoula, MT wanted to sell glue to a plywood manufacturing plant at Columbia Falls, MT. The

distance was not great, but rail shipments were not feasible because of the long and circuitous routing. Moving glue one-way without a return cargo to Missoula was too costly.

Transystems developed a system to haul glue in bladders strapped to flat-deck trailers. Glue moved to Columbia Falls and, after unloading, the empty bladders were rolled up and stowed, plywood was loaded onto the flat-decks and transported to the fast-growing Missoula area.

Another customer had a distillery in southeastern British Columbia.

The distiller relied upon corn shipped from the US mid-west. Only one railroad provided service to the site of the distillery.

The distiller needed some leverage in order to negotiate rail rates.

Transystems supplied that leverage by setting up a rail-to-truck transfer and storage facility in northern Washington on a railway competitive with the local carrier in BC. Transystems could deliver corn to the distillery in competition with the local railway. The alternative for corn delivery held rail rates in check.

In the mid-1970s, a potential

customer was exploring the possibility of buying a stockpile of chrome concentrate (chromite) located high in the mountains of southwestern Montana.

The project could not move forward unless the chromite could move economically from the high-mountain storage site to a long distance rail system. The nearest access to the Burlington Northern Railway was about 40 miles away.

Moving the chromite by truck was a way to meet all parties' expectations.

Some residents were concerned about the amount of truck traffic.

Some residents and local governments suggested moving the chromite in standard 10-wheel dump trucks because these vehicles were smaller than Transystems' equipment.

Transystems people pointed out that using 10-wheelers would require 33,000 loads. Using Transystems' larger capacity trailers would require only 14,000 loads.

Local residents and governments realized that using larger equipment made sense.

Transystems built a facility to unload trucks, store chromite, and transfer the material to unit trains. The project lasted a number of years.

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# Cultural belief nurtures safety programs

**I**n this edition of *TransTopix*, the emphasis is on the cultural belief: I choose to stay above the line and always ask, “What else can I do?”

We saw a great example of that approach a few days ago at the Moorhead project. During a freezing rain event, a seasoned driver got on the radio and encouraged several less experienced drivers to pull over and stop until road conditions improved. The seasoned driver himself parked in order to set a good example.

A part-time driver at Renville is another good example of asking: “What else can I do?”

This driver reports wearing all of his PPE and, without being asked, spreads salt around the parking area and fuel island. He always is willing to help out in the yard, shop and office, wherever he is needed.

I know that every day at Transystems people step up to help others. Likewise, people stay “above the line” by being positive and constructive.

That approach is especially important in safety. Auditing for safety is a good example of constructive input that supports the safety culture. Every time one of us completes a good quality safety audit, that person says “yes” to the question:

“What else can I do?”

Throughout his career at Transystems, John McCann set the standard for asking: “What else can I do?” John brought a new level of professionalism to the company’s safety program. John then asked: “What else can I do?” and took on training for front line employees. In his role as Director of Training, John introduced eLearning and train-the-trainer programs. John also formalized the company’s system of recording training and following up on uncompleted training programs.

*Rich Carl,  
Vice President of Safety*

## New equipment gives manufacturing an edge

**C**hristmas came early for Transystems manufacturing project. In mid-December, the project took delivery of a water jet and press brake. The new equipment reduces the cost of producing trailers and allows the project to make parts quickly.

“When using outside vendors, we are constantly at the mercy of their schedules,” Project Manager Derek Torix said. “In order to keep their costs competitive, they run our parts in batches so we don’t always have what we need.”

Derek offered an example.

“An outside vendor would cut fenders for 10 trailers, but not cones to put them on. With the new equipment, we can cut



**A new press brake allows the Manufacturing Project to bend its own parts.**

today what we need tomorrow,” he said.

The water jet is used to cut sheet material into parts.

“Using water pressure and sand, it cuts about any kind of material there is – steel, aluminum, glass, rubber, plastic, granite,” Derek said.

It is the biggest water jet in

the region and provides manufacturing with very tight tolerances and little preparation work.

The new press brake also makes life easier for the project. It is used to bend parts.

“We are able to bend 90 percent of the parts we require,” Derek said.

Reduced cost and a ready supply of necessary parts are two of the benefits the new machines provide. Having the equipment on hand allows the project to make design changes or part changes less costly.

“It allows us to handle better our inventory of material and reduces scratches and tarnishing on the aluminum,” Derek added.

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## Division Reports

# Idaho continues to innovate to serve TASCO

**I**n Idaho, we struggled with the weather this fall and winter. A cold snap in November caused some problems, but we worked with our customer, The Amalgamated Sugar Company, to save every beet we could. Some beets froze, causing beet storage issues when warmer weather returned. However, we managed to keep discard beets to a minimum.

The loader operators have been instrumental in achieving that. They keep a sharp eye on the beet storage piles and can spot problems before they grow into big problems.

Again this year, we have a lot

of long hauls. We are hauling 100,000 tons from the Twin Falls area to Nampa. The long hauls are good news for our drivers, providing longer employment opportunities.

We continue to innovate and adapt to better serve our customer. Basket headers on a couple of our Holmer cleaner loaders are working well in American Falls. We are cleaning the ice, mud and dirt off the sugar beets, which allows us to haul and unload frozen beets without beets hanging up in the trailers.

We had a near-record crop for tonnage, with the bonus of better than ever sugar content

in the beets. We will haul the last beets to the factory in February in Nampa and toward the end of March in Twin Falls and Paul.

With plenty of snow in the mountains, there will be adequate water for irrigation. It looks good for next year's crop.

Staffing has been good this year. We have been able to meet our customer's needs and everyone has done a good job, working hard as a team. To me, all of the Idaho Division employees are All Stars.

*Kevin Iversen,  
Vice President and General  
Manager, Idaho Division*

## After a good campaign, plenty of thanks to go around

**W**orland drivers got the last load of outside beets in just before Christmas and wrapped up the yard beets

in mid-January.

All in all, it was a good campaign with a few challenges from the weather and some mechanical problems. We worked our way through it.

In December, we had a lot of snow to contend with and had to move snow away from the piles. We shut down outside beets for several days because the roads were closed. There was just more adverse weather than normal this year.

In their usual fashion, Rocky

Mountain Division drivers stepped up to lend a hand to other projects when the job was complete in Worland. Drivers headed to Sidney and Idaho to help move the beets there. Project supervisors and technicians moved to other projects as needed to help out.

Staffing levels were good for the campaign, with the usual group of reliable drivers and loader operators returning. We are blessed because our people come back year after year. We took on a couple of new employees this year.

At the campaign's end, the crew at Worland said farewell to one of our best workers. Ron Weir, a loader operator

and substitute manager, retired. With great knowledge of operations, Ron went above and beyond for us. We will miss him.

Two traveling technicians also deserve praise. Peter Pereira and John Welker traveled from Paul, ID, to Sidney to help out. When they are on site, everything runs smoothly. They spent several weeks before Christmas in Sidney, and then returned after the holiday. Peter and John do an outstanding job. Thank you. If project managers had to wrestle to get their services, there would be a lot of people wrestling.

*Steve Torix, Division Manager,  
Rocky Mountain Division*

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## Division Reports

# Fluctuating weather challenges RRV

**W**ith temperatures finally dipping well below zero, the outlook is positive in the Red River Valley.

It has been an interesting campaign so far and we expect it to get better.

Weather and road conditions were favorable through the early parts of the campaign.

Our staffing levels are right where we need them to be. I have received many compliments on our operation from our customer, American Crystal Sugar Company. ACSC is happy with us.

Unlike last year's campaign, which was bitter cold from beginning to end, this winter started out relatively mild then turned into a rollercoaster of temperatures and conditions.

Snow and cold came later than usual but, fortunately,

winter arrived with the necessary frigid temperatures to get the beets into deep freeze.

The cold is a Godsend for us. Forcing cold air into the beet piles now ensures that they hold until the campaign wraps up in April. While the cold is tough on equipment and people, it is what we need to keep the beets frozen.

We will be finished with the fresh beets early in February and then will dig into the deep freeze operation. The rim beets on the fresh piles are doing all right but it is time for them to be processed.

Our team's hard work on staffing brought huge dividends this year. Managers put forth a lot of effort and it paid off. It has been wonderful to have so many good people on staff, which makes things easier for all of us.

Our maintenance crews stepped up and their hard work

on the after-treatment systems has kept our trucks running better than ever.

The five new Volvo power units we received in December are running well and the feedback on this new equipment is very helpful. Our drivers are the best source for input on our equipment. Thanks for sharing the Volvos with us, Idaho team!

I thank Stacy Buchl and the administration team for providing us with timely and accurate information. This has aided the managers to achieve the key result: Transystems will be fully staffed.

With winter settled in and the campaign running well, we are looking forward to a good season here and great opportunities for summer construction work down the road.

*Troy Carl, Vice President and  
General Manager  
Red River Valley Division*

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## Good crop, good weather in Minnesota

**A**n average crop, better than average weather and excellent staffing numbers all added up to a campaign with few bumps in Minnesota.

While -10 degree weather may seem frigid to some, it's warmer than usual for a Min-

nesota winter. Weather-related shut downs were minimal this year and the crew contended well with some passing ground blizzards. Overall, there was not a lot of snow to fight.

An increase in our fleet size meant we needed more staff. We went from a base of 84 drivers to 96. Fortunately, we

were able to count on a large group of reliable returning drivers and loader operators as well as 21 international workers who joined us from Mexico.

Even though the weather has been milder than usual, the beets are holding well. We will

**See MINNESOTA, next page**

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## Administrative Report

# Administrative staff supports the team

**T**he “What else can I do” attitude defines a successful member of the administrative staff.

We expect the administrative staff to take on additional duties every year. We expect them to be willing to help out other employees, no matter what department. Our clerks support operations, maintenance, safety and their peers.

This year, our administrative staff supported our key result to be fully staffed by helping hundreds of driver applicants complete applications.

The new eLearning program posed challenges to many employees getting used to a new system. I would bet that every day a clerk at every project helps a fellow employee with eLearning.



Kari

I would like to recognize a few administrative employees who have stepped outside their own projects and put in ad-

ditional hours when another project was short staffed.

In the Red River Valley, Katie Galland, Ariel Peichel, and Sheila Hoffland helped Drayton, East Grand Forks and Hillsboro projects when those projects were short a clerk.

In Idaho, Shelly Brummond put in extra time to fill in for another clerk on leave, so the division office would only need to fill in for one day.

Gloria Soto helped all projects get caught up on driver

log corrections and record loader moves for billing.

Gloria and Echo Jackson from Nampa project also help support Boise project whenever needed.

The clerks in Renville, Toni Blood and Michell Harder, help out Sidney project on the weekends so Christy Dingfelder can have a much needed day off.

We are the support of Transystems and we help others reach their goals.

We train, we research, we report, we keep information updated, we meet deadlines, and keep things on task. This is how the administrative team owns it.

*Kari Franks,  
Senior Administration  
Manager*

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## Minnesota

Continued from Page 18

have no discards.

In mid-December we brought in a driving simulator to help our drivers improve their skills. The simulator is only one of the many items in the company’s treasure chest for training.

About 50 employees went through simulator training.

They had nothing but good

to say about the experience.

They appreciated the extra training. It will keep us safer and we hope to repeat simulator training next year.

Our last trucks will be off the road in late February and the factory should finish slicing early in March. When we are finished with yard beets, we will switch our focus to getting our equipment ready for the summer construction season.

Our new and revamped equipment worked well throughout the campaign. We were fully staffed in the shop all year long. Our excellent team of technicians rose to every challenge presented. There is less wrench work and more computer work in our new equipment. The techs stayed ahead all season.

*Mike Rood,  
Manager, Minnesota Division*

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## From seed to sugar bowl

# Keeping factories fed all winter long

**“White sugar is stable, but beet piles are not”**

**T**ransystems works with its customers to ensure a steady supply of sugar beets to factories from Idaho to Wyoming and on to Montana, North Dakota and Minnesota. More than 20 million tons of sugar beets are harvested each fall. Every ton

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**Editor’s note: This is the third in a series that follows the production of refined sugar from the seed to the sugar bowl.**

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must make it through a factory sooner or later. Several million tons of those beets are held in beet piles until the last round of slicing in the spring.

The company’s far-flung customers do not share a similar climate, so

sugar beet storage practices vary.

In Idaho, sugar beet storage is all about getting the outside edges of the piles to the factory as they freeze.

In North Dakota and Minnesota, it’s all about getting the piles frozen hard and keeping them that way until the factories are ready for them.

“White sugar is stable, but beet piles are not,” Ken Dahl,



Ken

Agricultural Superintendent for Southern Minnesota Beet Sugar Cooperative, said.

That is why sugar beet

pile storage management is crucial to the success of Transystems customers.

Ken summed up beet pile management succinctly.

“We like to keep pile heights low, level the piles, split the non-ventilated piles, and use temperature probes and infrared scans. We cover some piles with insulation and tarps. We remove snow and break up ice crusts with a snow cat to keep air moving through the beets. And finally, we slice as fast as possible since white sugar is stable but beet piles aren’t. This is the abbreviated storage strategy for SMBSC.”

In a nut shell, it sounds relatively simple. In practice, it is anything but.

Ken explained how SMBSC handles more than 2 million-tons of stored beets. He said the principles apply to storage in general, but other co-ops use some different methods.

Tending the beet storage piles is crucial since each ton of beets in storage can lose half a pound of sugar each day. Millions of beets are in piles for the long haul, some as long as nine months.

“The beet is a live organism and burns up stored sugar through respiration as it tries to grow new leaves and survive. Higher temperatures in the stored beets equal higher respiration rates and resulting higher sugar loss,” Ken said.

“We try to lower pile temperatures using various methods in an effort to lower respiration rates and reduce the half pound per day of sugar loss.”

### How do they do that?

The first thing to do is limit pile heights since heat rises and is released out the top of the piles. In piles that don’t have ventilation fans, 18 feet is the optimum pile height. This allows heat to escape effectively and also keeps from creating too many rim beets which are subject to weathering.

“Since pile strip length is limited and we have to get harvest concluded before we run out of storage space, sometimes we have to pile higher than 18 feet in order to fit the piles on the strips we have,” Ken said.

After piles are created, snow cats come in to level the tops. “This accomplishes two functions,” Ken said. “First, it reduces rim beets, which are subject to weathering. Before they are leveled, the pile tops have a corduroy type surface with peaks and valleys, which is a function of how beet pilers

**See BEET STORAGE, next page**

# Beet storage

Continued from Page 20

operate. After leveling, piles are smooth with less surface area exposed to the elements.

“Second, the leveling creates a smooth heat radiation surface, which is more efficient than the peaks and valleys since heat normally migrates to the peaks,” he added.

The snow cats are the same machines used to groom ski hills and snowmobile trails.

In the Red River Valley, the same machines and techniques are used.

“Pilers leave ridges all over the piles,” Dan Gowan, American Crystal Sugar Company’s Director of Agriculture, said. “The groomers flatten them out and fix a lot of our problems.”

## Cooling strategies

Splitting is another pile-cooling technique. Normal beet piles are from 220 feet to 240 feet wide. By taking about a 50-foot-wide section lengthwise out of the pile, the pile mass is reduced and cool ambient air can get at the remaining two shoulders to cool them quicker. Splitting begins as piles are created, Ken noted.

Ventilation is another pile-cooling strategy used in Minnesota and North Dakota. This involves using mechanical fans to blow cool air into the storage pile through perforated culverts which are buried at the base of the beet pile.

“In the Valley, about 3.3 million tons of beets are put in deep freeze, using a forced air



**Culverts are placed under sugar beet piles. Fans blow air through them to keep the beets cold.** Ken Dahl photo

system to freeze them well,” Dan said. Beet managers take advantage of Mother Nature’s abundant cold.

“A third of our crop is piled over air,” Dan said. “We use the natural gift of frigid air. Some people think the bitter cold is a problem. We think it’s great.”

Pile ventilation is accomplished using fans spaced at varying intervals along each side of the storage pile. The fans blow air into perforated 30-inch diameter galvanized culverts which are buried by beets and are oriented crossways to the pile. Soon after the piles are built, cool air is forced through them to begin cooling the beets but not freezing them immediately. The fan operation is automated and the temperature parameters are adjusted as the beets cool.

“In Minnesota, we use three

cooling regimes: refrigeration for the ventilated piles which will be processed first; soft frozen for the piles to be processed next; and hard frozen for the last piles to be processed,” Ken said.

## Tucking them in

SMBSC covers all piles that are not scheduled to be processed by the middle of February. Poly tarp is used on piles scheduled to be processed in late February. For beets in it for a longer time, heavier poly tarp and a 1½ -inch concrete blanket are placed on the piles. They protect the beets to be sliced at the end of the campaign.

SMBSC hires a contractor to install, monitor, remove and dispose of the pile covering and insulation. Insulation can be reused. Tarps are used once.

**See BEET STORAGE, next page**

# Beet storage

Continued from Page 21

Spreading a giant tarp over a massive pile isn't easy. The tarps are installed and removed using a variety of equipment, including snow cats, tracked ATVs, telehandlers, and portable sewing machines. Even with the machines, it takes a lot of manual labor to accomplish the task.

ACSC also covers many of its beet piles. Five-panel insulated tarps are rolled on using the snow groomers. The tarps are positioned and further unrolled by contract employees. ACSC also stores beets in sheds. The company has a dozen beet sheds, each of which can hold between 50,000 and 75,000 tons for a total of 675,000 tons. Shed beets are the last ones to be processed in the spring.

## Monitoring the piles

Co-op agriculturists are responsible for monitoring piles from harvest until every pile is gone.

In Minnesota, they do this by installing T probe temperature sensors: a tube with a point on one end and a handle on the



Immense tarps are placed over the beets piles. Ken Dahl photo

other end. The probe is about 5 feet long and is pushed into the top of the pile at a certain spacing. An alcohol thermometer is suspended inside the tube and the open end of the tube is sealed with a rubber stopper.

Each week, an agriculturist-walks assigned piles to assess storage conditions, Ken said.

"All of the human senses are used. The observer may see melted snow, beet regrowth, or sunken areas which indicate warmer areas. They may smell fermenting which may indicate beet deterioration. They may notice that their feet sink into the pile which may indicate warmer or deteriorating beets."

Ventilated piles have radio transmitting probes instead of the T probes. The temps from

these piles are transmitted to a computer that controls the fans.

"We also use infrared technology to help look for anomalies in pile temps," Ken said. "Every week we fly over the storage piles with an infrared IR camera. A detachable camera monitor that is operated from the cockpit allows the information to be stored on a card. The card is then analyzed on a desk top computer."

In the Red River Valley, ACSC also flies over the beet piles to monitor them.

"With this great technology and with many years of history, we can rely on the camera and we can move fleets to attack areas of concern before they become larger," Dan said.

## Happy Birthday

### February

1. Tim Cantrell, Lorena Dominguez, Jeremy Knudson, Virgil McKay, John Weimer.
2. Douglas Forsythe.
3. Donald Cline, Jason Strunk.
4. Dennis Anderson, Jay Bolinske, Roberto Carhuas.
5. Maxwell Ormsby, Troy Tjaden.
6. Charles Frew, James Fritz.
7. Keith Klawitter, Layce Whitworth.
8. Peter Perreira, Cesar Ramos, Wayne Suda, Scott Troska.
9. Ralph Novak, Dave Taylor.
10. Daniel Flores Mendoza,

- Charles Matthews, Michael Sirek, Bruce Watts, Paul Yerbich.
11. Benedict Dvorak, Jose Gonzalez Vega, Andrew Teal.
13. Jack Gochnour, Karim Kehelaouinet, Donald Trogdon.
14. Dawn Bergquist.
15. Adam Cwikla, Frederick Fowler, Laurel Jensen, Richard Lohman, Jacob McHargue.
16. Sophia Bortz.
17. David Christopherson, David Hakeneis, Kenneth Leathers, Andrew Yost.
18. Edward Ewanek, Scott Lothert, Patrick Paslay.
19. Dustin Wilson.
20. Joseph Crego Sr., James Forth.

21. Lucas McHargue, Zackary Newton.
22. Guillermo Mata Gonzalez, Thomas McKinzey.
23. Randall Hess, Abuzar Salim.
24. Kathryn Durrant, Allen French.
25. Julian Dahl, Billy Johnson, Curtis Lenoir, Fernando Mayo Sanchez, Chad Rolland, Daniel Stusynski, Chad Thompson.
26. Brian Kitt, James Miller, Ezekiel Nott, William Thompson.
27. Frank Marsh, Evan McEntire, Brion Nelson, Jaymes Swenson, Rory Yekel.
28. Barbara Brendt, Jose Romo, Gale Wright.
29. Robin Roney, Steven Vansell.

## March

1. Jeffrey Dillman, Eleazar Reyes, Jason Sorrick.
2. Kellie Barker, Cason Baumgartner, Donald Hansen, Sherri Lankford, Fredy Ramos Vasquez.
3. John Brandel, Jeffrey Fields, Jerome Larson, Mark Neumeister.
4. Scott Smith, Kevin Thompson, Dennis Weigt, Nicholas Wittman.
5. William Brockway, Jared Davis, Robert Rainey Jr., Richard Wiseman.
6. Gary Brown, Joshua Eide, Kevin Higdem, Jordan Kisler.
7. Travis Cline, James Coburn, Brian Kimpling, Carson Munk,

- Arthur Poppe III.
  8. Wendell Berg, Kyle Boudenbush.
  9. Steven Altepeter, Ronald Brackett Sr., Ronald Rubino.
  10. Mark Buethner, William Burling, Dale Johnston, Bryan Roush, Kurt Winkler.
  11. Steven Ash, Thomas Goeddel, Derrick Vilven.
  12. Becky Purkett, Gloria Soto.
  13. Jay Amundson.
  15. Aaron McCann, Tyler Pierston.
  16. Rodney Bodley, Randy Estes, Tammy Larson, Stormylynn Manley, Iland Mariner, Anthony Negen, Anthony Smith,
- See BIRTHDAYS, next page

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# Beet pile management Idaho style

A typical harvest in Idaho for The Amalgamated Sugar Company is 6.3 million tons or 35 to 36 tons per acre. That is a lot of beets to move from field to factory.

“Sometimes it is less. Sometimes it’s more,” John Schorr, Corporate Director of Agriculture, said.

Growers are responsible for bringing their crops to 74 piling grounds operated by the company. From that point, Amalgamated and Transystems take over.

Piles range in size from 30,000 tons to 85,000 tons. The piles can be as long as a quarter of a mile and as wide as 220 feet, depending on the type of pilers used. Still it may not be enough to hold the crop.

“Our beets travel a lot of miles,” John said. “Our constant challenge is how far the beets must go to get to the factory.”

Amalgamated has a vast growing area. Some sugar beets come from across the Washington state line, traveling more than 200 miles from

field to factory. Other beets come from the far eastern area near Blackfoot.

The work is far from over once the beets make it to a piling ground.

Piles are constantly monitored. Crop consultants walk the piles, keeping a sharp eye out to ensure that the beets are storing well, John said. Eyes on the ground and eyes in the sky work together.

“We fly over the piles and, using thermal imagery, watch for hot spots,” John said.

Managing beet piles in an area that is defined as a desert is challenging. Amalgamated has a unique process that makes pile management work.

“Once we get our piles made, we strip them, taking three to five feet off the edges,” John said. This removes the dirt ring and dirt cones that can hinder cool air flow through the piles. The bitter cold that both plagues and blesses the Red River Valley does not come into play in Idaho. While piles freeze in Idaho, they are subject to thawing as well. And they thaw quickly.

“We can never get piles

frozen clear through, so we don’t even try,” John said. “Our piles freeze just 15 feet in,” John said. “So we strip the frozen beets from the outside of the piles. We want to keep those frozen beets going into the factories. Once they start to thaw, cells break down and sugar seeps away. Bad things start going on,” he added.

Amalgamated uses eight covered piles and two storage buildings to protect approximately 700,000 tons of beets that will be processed at the end of the season. These beets are held at 36 degrees using air ducts in the bottom of the pile.

Determining which beets move to the factories and when are part of the Ag Managers’ balancing acts. Some beets are moved simply because more room is needed at a pile ground. Other beets are first in line because the pile fails to store well and the beets are at risk of thawing. A pile with diseased beets is dealt with promptly. The Ag Managers and Transystems must factor in road conditions, distances, and the availability of Transystems units to move the beets.

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## Birthdays

Ronald Thornton.  
17. Keith Bergstresser Jr.  
18. James Hove, Richard Pottinger.  
19. Jose Roberto Cortes Riveroll, Brian Dufault, Daniel Hendrickson, Michael Mesheski, Eric Nephew.  
20. Jerry Strickland, Aleksandar Zovko.  
21. Gary Crowder, Thomas Daniel, Fidelis Fitterer.  
22. Loren Bittner, Arlen Hurst.  
23. Jimmy Barbre, Todd Breezee, Christopher Canfield, Bruce Feldman, Darcy Hawk.  
24. Mark Andreasen, William Hel-

goe, Michael O’Keefe, Omar Rodriguez Rosales, Julio Cesar Sinohui Ochoa.  
25. Kevin Casey, Humberto Ramirez, Jennifer Strohman.  
27. Starr Coleman, Maxwell Lamb, Randall Price, Nathan Wrigley.  
28. Joseph Hanson, Michell Harder, Michael Hollon, Zachary Jones, Otis Noel.  
29. Peggy Brown, Codey Carrick, Carl Glenn, Eustacio Mendoza.  
30. Ryan Belen, Steven Burton, Don Christensen, Raymond Higgs, Aron Mullis, Derek Torix, Dirk Torix, Robert Whitaker.  
31. Rodrigo Arteaga, Carl Van Voorhees, Dee Yeaman.

## April

1. Kenneth Brooks, Ryan Combs, David Lines, Randall Rabideaux, Sheri Roberts, Benjamin Walters.  
2. Irvan Butler, Deeann Kroshus.  
3. Debra Turrentine.  
4. Viki Gallagher, Jesus Gomez, Rigoberto Rivera, Dawayne Volk.  
5. Brady Schroeder, Bruce Wheatley.  
6. Dylan Branden, George Myhre.  
7. Brett Roomgaarden, Dennis Dammann, Jim Woodward.  
8. James West, Wayne Zimmer.  
9. Rase Basta, Juan Ramirez, Roger Rutherford.  
10. Kevin Anderson, Craig Berg, Paul Henningsen, Michael

Luibrand.  
12. William Luepke, Dedrea Munson.  
13. Jason Dybedahl, Kevin Mueller, April Sharp, Steve Worner.  
14. Corey Datzell, James Johnson, Farron Rice.  
15. Rodrigo Flores Ruiz, Howard Jensen, Jacob Larson, Ronald Lusk.  
16. Jeremy Love.  
17. James Burgmeyer, Rodolfo Cabrera, Ervin Kerr, Scott Mincer, Dallin Munk, Kent Stokke, Joshua Tousignant.  
19. Patricia Culbertson, Todd Jorgensen, Mark Pearson, April Van Voorhees.  
20. Wanda Belanus, Wayne

Lusk.  
21. Hussain Al Harbyah, Clinton Berg, Omar Elisheo Ibarra Mendez, Michael Wilcoxon.  
24. Harry Bullis, Christopher Sommercorn, Brian Thompson.  
25. Eulogio Garza Leal, Mark Stevens.  
26. Howard Calhoun, Skip Fowler, Pedro Gonzales, Ronald Ruona.  
27. Anastasio Floriano Luquin, Zachary Love, Jaisiel Morales Garcia, Erik Trejo Gonzalez.  
28. James Coleman, Colleen Danielson, Travis Tomberlin, Merrill Valentine, Ryan Walker.  
29. Casey Dahl, John Peterson.  
30. Jason Baumgartner, David Fuss, Cory Manolovits.

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## Good news

**P**aul Supervisor Blair Ross added another little Ross to the bunch. Blair's wife Spring gave birth to **Abigail** on Dec. 12, 2014. She weighed 8 lbs. 14 oz. and was 21 inches long. She is the ninth child born into the Ross family. Her siblings are: Esther, 16; Katrina, 14; Elijah, 13; Boaz, 11; Michael, 10; Noah, 8; Moses, 7, and James, 3.

In Renville, Julio and Dania Gonzalez welcomed baby **Leo Rey Gonzalez**, born Dec. 8, 2014. Leo weighed 8 lbs. 6 oz. and was 19¼ inch long.

Scott and Paula Pederson welcomed grandbaby No. 4 when **Kimberly Pearl Tebben** was born to Tyler Tebben and Stephanie Cheadle. Kimberly was born Jan. 11 in St. Cloud. She weighed 5 lbs. 5 oz. and was 17½ inches long.



Abigail Ross



Leo Rey Gonzalez

**Teagan Lee Hunt** was born Jan. 13 to Chuck and Melissa Hunt. Baby Teagan joins two brothers. He weighed



Scott and Paula Pederson with granddaughter Kimberly.



Chuck, Melissa and Teagan Lee Hunt

7 lbs. 8 oz. and was 21½ inches long.