

# TransTopix

Spring 2016



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# Small steps, big results

**T**his issue of *TransTopix* emphasizes the guiding value of trust. Part of trust means being able to depend upon fellow employees to work safely and protect themselves and others from injury.

The people of Transystems have a great record of doing just that.

Sometimes it is difficult to measure objectively how well we do at achieving our guiding value of trust, but one national rating agency

measures the performance of



Scott

Transystems people relative to their peers.

The National Council of Compensation Insurers (NCCI)

rates Transystems as an especially safe place to work. In fact, NCCI rates Transystems as 29 percent safer than the average employer with comparable job classifications.

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## President's Corner

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The most important characteristic of this rating is that it relates solely to people. The rating does not consider property damage or other costs of losses.

The people of Transystems created this result one small, safe step at a time. Small steps build big results.

*Scott Lind,  
President and COO*

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## .71: One way we measure safety

**T**ransystems has reason to celebrate. The National Council of Compensation Insurers (NCCI) rates businesses on performance in employee safety.

The NCCI ratings relate to

businesses with employees in similar job classifications.

NCCI's rating for Transystems is .71. The average rating is 1.00. That means that working at Transystems is 29 percent safer than working at the average employer in the same job classifications.

Transystems people should

be proud of this rating.

We are the people who built the safe working environment that made the rating possible.

It will take continuous effort to improve safety and improve that rating. Transystems employees are up to the task.

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### Inside this issue of TransTopix

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# Summer work is rolling in

A good mix of projects will keep Transystems employees busy this summer.

“We have signed up several projects in both North Dakota and Idaho as well as a Utah project that is already up and running,” Executive Vice President of Strategic Development Errol Rice said. “We are awaiting word on a big Montana project and there is another North Dakota letting in mid-May that may produce some additional work in that area. We have also have been successful in securing some ‘local’ work in the Idaho markets and hope to be able to replicate that success this year.”

With more of the bidding season yet to come, Errol outlined the projects Transystems has already secured for summer 2016.

1. I-80 near Wendover is a paving job that began in late April. It is for Knife River out of Utah. The project should run through late May and require 12 to 14 employees.

2. Northside Canal/I-15 Downey/I-15 Fort Hall to Burns/ West Bliss Interchange in Idaho. These proj-



**Last summer, Transystems worked on the South Heart project hauling road bed aggregate for Knife River. Employees and equipment will return to North Dakota for another project this summer. Rick Larson photo.**

ects should combine to fill the entire summer for Idaho construction. Two of the projects are centered around Pocatello and the other two should be staged out of Paul and Twin Falls.

Each of the jobs runs about 10 to 15 working days, though Fort Hall should run for 32 days and provide work for 16 drivers.

The others have higher driver counts, but timing is still being determined. All these jobs are with Knife River.

3. North Dakota 68 State-line is a large paving project for Nelcon, the company we worked with on the Fryburg

project last year. This job should begin in early July and run through the remainder of the summer.

The project is located near Sidney, MT, and we will have man camps available for the 20 drivers.

4. North Dakota 19, Devil’s Lake is a base and paving haul for a new customer, Hardrives, Inc., out of Minnesota.

The project is on the north side of Devils Lake in North Dakota and should begin by mid-June.

The Devils Lake job calls for 22 drivers and should last into August.

# Employees bring home with them

**P**rivacy, peace and quiet, and no cigarette smoke are the reasons veteran Worland Project driver Jean Sulzbach often brings her own housing to summer projects.

“I got my first little motor home back in 1998. I could pull my little car behind it and have everything I needed in one trip,” she said.



Jean

She upgraded to a 25-foot Big Foot in 2004.

“I don’t take it to every job, but I take it quite often,” she said.

Jean carefully evaluates housing options at each job. Company housing varies. Sometimes employees are put up in motels. Other projects have access to man camps, which come in different styles, Jean said.

“Some company housing is great, with a bedroom and bathroom on each end and a shared kitchen in the middle. The ones we stayed in during the last Montana project were pretty deluxe,” she said. “They were well set up. Each person had her own bathroom, bedroom and microwave.”

Jean also takes in to account the cost of parking a motor home near a summer project.

“My goodness, they sometimes want a lot. You could rent an apartment for what they charge at some RV campgrounds,” she said. “If I can find reasonable rates, I’ll take my camper.”

“The people you drive with do things the universal way when on the job. I like sharing the road with Transystems drivers, but I don’t necessarily like sharing a bathroom,” she said.

“When I am sharing with someone, I try to be considerate, taking my toiletries to and from the bathroom each time I shower. There’s often very little space.”

Then there is the cooking challenge. In shared housing, the stove is a hot item. Jean got around the problem of an over-crowded stovetop by preparing a weeks’ worth of meals on her days off and popping them into the freezer.

“I just had to microwave them while everyone else lined up at the stove,” she said. “I learned to work around a problem.”

Summer construction project manager and Sidney beet campaign supervisor Scott Wilson is new to RVing.

“I just purchased my older model 34-foot motor home last year,” he said. However, he quickly came to appreciate the benefits.



Scott

“So far, it’s like a working vacation,” he said. “You have your stuff around and that in-

creases your comfort level. From the big screen TV to the coffee pot, it’s just a smaller version of home.”

Scott has also found the motor home to be cost effective in the Sidney area.

There are, however, things he worries about when living in a motor home on a summer project.

“There is always the fear of running out of something,” Scott said. “You are, after all, camping kind of. Things also have a tendency to go haywire, more so than when you are home.”

Scott has been with the company for three years and has worked on projects including the Sidney sugar beet campaign, Sidney coal, Crookston sugar beets, and summer construction with Mayo, Knife River and Nelcon.

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# Idaho's GVW change benefits all

## Studies prove larger loads are safer and easier on highways

**B**igger is better. Idaho's recent change from 105,500-pound gross vehicle weight (GVW) to 129,000 pounds on the Interstate system is a good thing for Transystems, our customers and the roads.

Idaho joins Montana, Utah, Nevada and Wyoming (non-interstate) in allowing the higher GVW.

"The larger trucks accomplish several important goals," Transystems Chairman Dan Rice said. "The most important of those is better safety for the traveling public because there are fewer and safer trucks on the highway."

Bigger trucks reduce wear on roads because the larger trucks have more axles and tires that spread the weight load over a greater surface area.

"It is a bit counter-intuitive to say heavier trucks are easier on the road, but the reality is our current 7-

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axle rigs weigh 105,500 pounds or 15,071 pounds per axle," Dan said. "Our 129,000 trucks have 10 axles, which equates to 12,900 pounds per axle. Each axle transmits 2,000 pounds less load to the road."

When the size of the trucks goes up, other things go down.

"With the larger trucks, there will be a 23 percent reduction in truck traffic compared to the 105,500 pound GVW variant," Dan said. "There also will be significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions because of the reduction in fuel burned."

Idaho did not go lightly into the change. After a decade-long pilot study by

Idaho Transportation Department (ITD), the Idaho legislature passed a bill that allowed these trucks on selected state highways. It did not have the authority to allow them on the Interstate system.

Idaho Congressman Simpson proposed the federal legislation, Dan said. The governor, ITD and the entire Idaho congressional delegation supported it. That bill passed and was signed into law in December of 2015.

The bigger trucks are not rolling on the Interstate yet.

Two more steps remain, Dan explained. A negotiated rule making within ITD should be complete by July 1, 2016. Since individual highway districts in Idaho have jurisdiction over their roads, they will be asked to grant permits for their routes that are affected.

Transystems is already gearing up to replace much of its fleet of trailers. When there is consistent 129,000 pound GVW in Idaho, there will be much less confusion about which vehicles can travel to which locations, Dan said.

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# AccuPress expands possibilities

## Manufacturing Project goes DIY with press brake

If you want something done right, do it yourself. That old saying pretty much sums up how Transystems manufacturing project works.

The close-knit and creative team designs and builds everything from safer loader steps to gate limiters and from trailers to the layout for the new building and office.

One of the newest tools in the team's box is the Accu-Press 725020, a press brake that allows the team to bend nearly 90 percent of the parts needed to crank out new trailers and other equipment.

"It's a 250-ton press with 20-foot length capability," Project Manager Derek Torix said. "We may still need to outsource some of the longer pieces, but not many."

A lot of thought went into the purchase of the press brake.

"We got the machine so that we could be less reliant on vendors and be able to process our material as we needed it," Derek said. "Sometimes there can be long lead times, waiting for vendors to process our parts."



**The AccuPress 725020 allows the Manufacturing Project to bend nearly 90 percent of the parts needed to build trailers.**

Manufacturing no longer will be tapping its toe waiting for a part.

"When vendors process parts, they tend to make all of one part at once then do the next and so on, Derek explained. "While this works well for labor and set up costs, we sometimes get held up waiting on the last parts to be processed," he said.

Derek gave an example. "We may have fenders processed and on hand for 5, 10 or 20 trailers, but no front or rear cones to actually start building the trailer. Or we may have the cones but can't keep moving without fenders and so on."

By having our own processing equipment, we can

process today for the next trailer. As parts are used, manufacturing restocks its inventory.

Another thing the press brake helps with is innovating on the fly.

"Rather than cut and bend say 10 trailers worth of parts at once, we can limit what we do in case there is a change in the specifications or number of trailers we are building," Derek said. "For example, the 38-foot trailers we recently finished had all the parts cut and processed by a vendor. If they had not already been made, we could have simply changed over to pups for 129,000 pounds GVW equipment.

**See PRESS BRAKE, next page**

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# Manufacturing project moving, growing

**A**fter a decade spent crammed into a 6,700-square foot space in Twin Falls, Transystems manufacturing project is moving 45 minutes down the road to a 24,700-square foot building in Rupert.

With the recent addition of two welders to the staff of 11, the project was bursting at the seams in the small Twin Falls space. The space was even more crowded during the sugar beet campaign, when 2,000 square feet are dedicated to maintenance.

“We simply outgrew the space. We looked for another place in Twin Falls, but couldn’t find the right one,” Manufacturing Project Manager Derek Torix said.

“The new facility will be



**After renovation and remodeling, the new manufacturing facility in Rupert will begin production. The larger facility will allow the project to grow.**

better for building trailers,” Executive Vice President of Strategic Development Errol Rice said. “It should allow us higher volumes and better quality, as we will be able to handle the processing of materials ourselves. Additionally, the bigger space should help us avoid losses and manage a safer project.”

Local contractors and electricians are busy upgrading

and renovating the space to make it a good fit for the manufacturing team.

“We are hoping the shop side of things will be done by June. Then we will build an office in the front portion of the shop,” Derek said. “I hope we are up and running in the new facility by mid-summer.”

The move will allow the project to grow, Derek said.

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## Press brake

Continued from Page 6

“The parts that were already cut and bent for the 38-foot trailers wouldn’t work for the 129 pups.

When we do our own cutting and bending, we can simply change which parts are being made. When all the parts are cut and bent at once by a vendor, we are committed to building that particular trailer,” Derek explained. “With our own equipment

we can stay two or three trailers ahead on processing and adapt to changes more easily.”

That makes what the manufacturing project does even more valuable to Transystems.

“It also keeps our staff moving. There is little downtime caused by inventory discrepancies and people waiting for parts to be delivered,” Derek said. “It even helps maintenance projects because we can cut

and process new parts right away to send out to repair damage.”

As the team’s skill with the press brake and water jet increases, the team members will become more and more valuable, Derek added.

Terry Sieving runs the press brake. “Once we get all of the equipment hooked up in the new facility, we will send Terry and Manufacturing Design Coordinator Jordan Kisler for more training,” Derek said.

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# Leading by example in Sidney

## Project Manager hangs up cell phone for safety

“D o as I say, not as I do.” That is not the way Sidney Project

Manager John Hoadley sees things when it comes to safety. He recently received focused recognition from Division Manager Steve Torix and Vice President of Safety Rich Carl for going beyond the company’s safety policy involving the use of cell phones while driving.

Transystems safety policy allows the use of hands-free cell phones while driving. But in a perfect world, no phone would be used while driving.

John took steps toward that perfect world.

“I started off by using Bluetooth, like most people, and became, like most, reliant on it. I thought it fit the laws of the road regarding the use of cell phones, i.e. hands free,” John said. “No disagreement. Hands free is good. You still need to keep your hands on the wheel, but what about your eyes and the road?”

John spent some time thinking about that issue.



John

“What happens when you are driving and your phone beeps or makes a noise?” he asked.

“That’s right! You look!” he answered his own question.

Citing Pavlov’s study using bells to create a conditioned response in hungry dogs, John concluded that people program themselves to respond to their phones.

John summarized Pavlov’s work.

“Pavlov proved his theory with a dog. He would ring a bell every time he fed the dog. After several days, he would ring the bell and the dog would salivate even if there was no food,” John said. “Same exact theory applies to us. We hear the tones we have applied to our phones and we react instinctively. We look to the device no matter where it may be.”

John figured out a way to avoid that instinctive reaction.

“John uses the driving mode application in his cell phone,” Rich noted. “When he starts his company vehicle, the phone automatically announces it is in driving

mode. This means that the cell phone does not distract John from driving. As a manager, John sets a great example for his employees,” Rich added.

“The driving app is great in my opinion,” John said. “It removes temptation.”

The app John uses does not allow his phone to make a sound while he is driving. It notifies whoever is texting or calling him that he is driving and will get back to them later.

“The sounds that activate our immediate response are not heard,” John said. “Therefore, we don’t react.”

Going phone-free was not easy, knowing that people were trying to contact him.

“I tried ignoring my phone at first, saying that I would not answer calls or respond to the sounds of my phone. It didn’t work, so I switched to the driving app,” John said.

Where he leads, others are following.

“Many of my co-workers have discovered the driving apps and are putting them to good use,” John said. “Transystems direction to provide a safe environment on the road for employees, friends and family speaks for itself. I commend all who are following these types of safe practices.”

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# Our goal is world-class maintenance

**O**nly four months into the job, Director of Maintenance Brian Gresens has already booked thousands of miles of travel. He spends a lot of time in the field and has visited every Transystems project at least once.

“I enjoy being out there with our team and want to help in any way I can,”



Brian

Brian said. “There is a lot of enthusiasm around maintenance and we are coming up with a lot of

great ideas to move our program forward.”

Brian is already making improvements, striving to integrate maintenance and safety improvements companywide.

“We implemented a tire and brake stroke inspection on every service. This has helped with our Safety Measurement System (SMS) score as well as made our vehicles safer,” he said. SMS is a program used by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration to measure how well a company does



**Technicians in Nampa use the proper tire tool when performing maintenance on Transystems fleet of trailers.**

with the safety of its equipment and drivers, Brian explained.

“We modified the Preventive Maintenance Inspection (PMI) to record brake stroke and tire tread depth measurements,” he said. “Not only will this improve our SMS score, but it also will help us predict tire replacement.”

That, in turn, will lower maintenance costs.

While Brian was visiting the projects, he came up with the idea of a checklist to ensure uniform compliance at each shop.

“We have implemented a checklist for project visits,” he said. “This will help us continuously monitor shops for compliance with Transystems processes and procedures.

One checklist led to another. The maintenance team

developed a checklist for the Lead Technicians, helping them run a safe and effective operation.

To improve safety and save money, the maintenance department consolidated the company’s tire vendors to a single vendor, with which Transystems has a national account.

“By doing this, we can use one system to monitor every single tire we send in for re-treading,” Brian said. “This tool helps predict when we will need to purchase new tires, by monitoring how well our tire casings are holding up through the re-tread process.”

Those improvements are just a start.

“We have several things to implement yet,” Brian said. “We are striving toward world-class maintenance.”

## Division Reports

# Sidney, Worland teams got the job done

**T**he Rocky Mountain Division wrapped up its winter work later than usual this year. That's good. We finished the beets in late

January at Worland and early in March at Sidney and celebrated with banquets in March.



Steve

We had a great year in Sidney, with new equipment working well. Everyone likes the new tractors. We put them through their paces. The fuel heaters worked well during the cold weather. With the oil fields slowing down, we have more people interested in working for us. We are already taking names and putting a schedule together for the next campaign.

A large crop of beets challenged the crew at Worland. We had a few issues with equipment that required lengthy repairs, but Sidney bailed us out and sent down some trucks.

With his first campaign behind him, Worland Manager Jim Swensgard weathered the storm and is set up for more training this summer.



### **Kenny Wunch and Shade Hale working on coal unloading equipment in Sidney.**

He is doing a good job of learning the ropes and understanding Transystems culture and ways.

The growers are almost finished with beet planting at both Worland and Sidney. Because of the increased yield per acre, Worland is planting fewer acres. It looks like a good year coming up. Everyone is positive about the beet industry and the growers are looking forward to another good crop.

We are keeping an eye out for summer work as we kick up our maintenance schedule. Our focus right now is on trailer repairs in Sidney. Then we will go right into our regular summer maintenance schedule, ensuring that our equipment is ready to roll for the next campaign.

The shop in Worland is scheduled for a thorough re-organization this summer.

Since Adolfo and Brian have joined the company, there has been increased focus on training for our technicians. That is working out well for us.

We continue our ongoing mine safety training in Sidney.

I am very proud of the crews in Worland and Sidney. When things got tough, they just gritted their teeth and hauled beets and coal. Employees and management at both projects are working as a team, sticking together through adversity.

I appreciate that team spirit and their hard work.

*Steve Torix, Manager,  
Rocky Mountain Division*

## Division Reports

# Idaho crews tackle summer work

**O**n the heels of a successful sugar beet campaign, the Idaho Division is cruising into summer construction work.

The campaign wrapped up the end of March and the



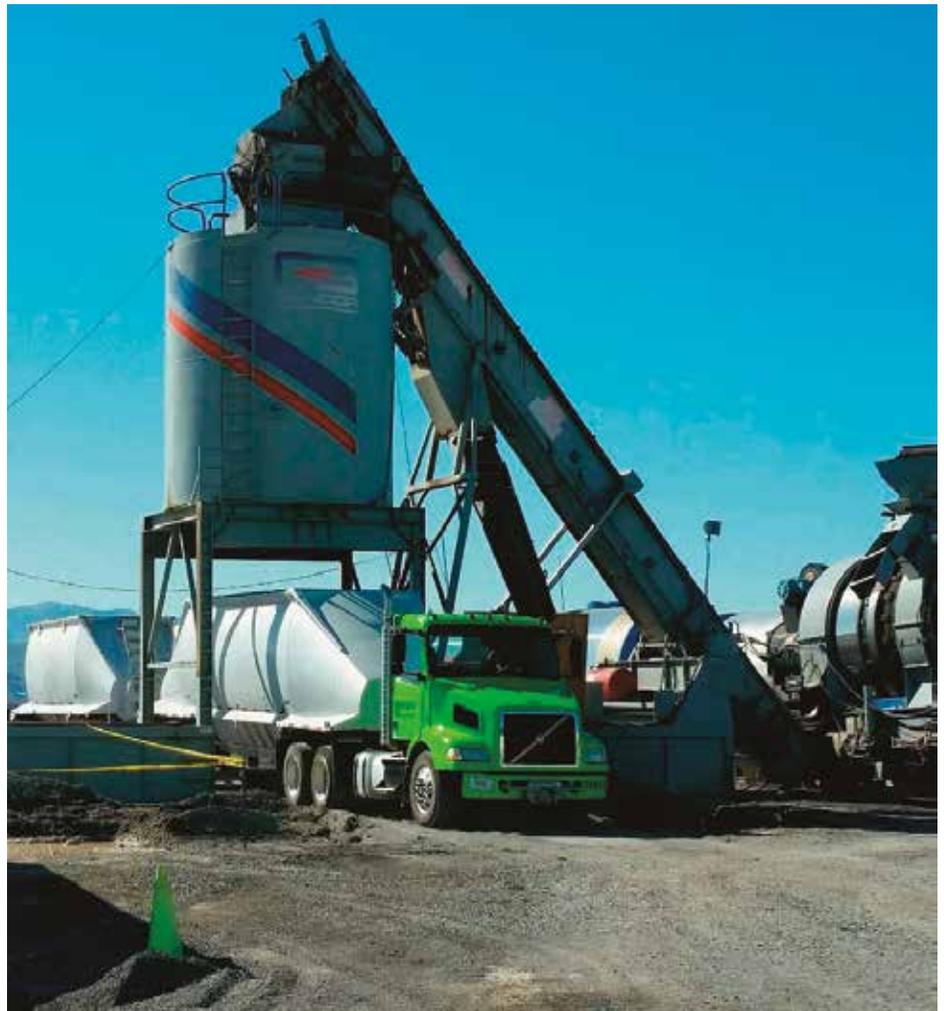
Kevin

trucks rolled into construction in April. More than a dozen units went to work near Wendover,

UT, hauling for Knife River Construction. Another asphalt project near Burley is planned, followed by a haul near Blackfoot, ID. In August, we will go to work near Hollister, ID.

With several summer projects right in our backyard, we look forward to keeping many of our employees on the payroll year round.

Muddy conditions caused some issues during the campaign, but we overcame the weather and got every beet to the factory. There were no discarded beets this year. Beets stored well over the winter and we got all the beets sliced.



**Transystems is already hard at work on seasonal jobs in Idaho. A combination of projects have the summer schedule busy for Idaho construction.**

We had a darn good crop, with near record yields, and look forward to another one for the next campaign. The fields are 100 percent planted and our water supply is good. Snowpack is above average and the reservoirs are full.

Crop loss at this stage is

hardly worth mentioning. So far, we've only lost 100 acres to weather.

Every member of the Idaho crew deserves a pat on the back for a job well done. Thanks!

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

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## Division Reports

# Minnesota wraps up long campaign

**T**he Minnesota Division got the last trucks off the road April 21 and turned its focus to yard beets. Yard operations will

run until mid-May.



Mike

There was plenty to celebrate at the division banquet on April 30. It was a huge

crop and a good, long campaign. With one of our earliest start dates and latest stop dates ever, we kept our employees working and bringing in paychecks. That helps retention. Many miles and lots of hours make everyone happy.

The fields are planted and some beets are poking their way through already. We are always happy to see planting complete in April. Half the battle is getting the crop planted with no frost or wind damage and getting some moisture on the fields. All is looking great.

A highlight of the campaign was seeing how well our newly trained drivers worked out through the win-



**Up comes the next crop of sugar beets. The fields are planted and thriving in Minnesota. Mike Rood photo**

ter. We had decent roads and good driving conditions and the novice drivers did a great job for us. Two new drivers from Puerto Rico adjusted well to the frigid Minnesota winter.

We learned a lot about blending beets this winter. We had to jump around from beet pile to beet pile, chasing hot spots. But we did it and successfully kept the factory supplied with the right blend of beets.

Employees are looking forward to summer work and shared their thoughts and

concerns during the April 29 spring employee meeting. It is a high point of the year for them, knowing their voices will be heard.

Everyone here is excited about driver training opportunities. The new Professional Driver Development program will have a big, positive impact on all of our employees. They are eager to learn and grow. Training programs offer them that opportunity.

It was a great campaign.

*Mike Rood, Manager,  
Minnesota Division*

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## Division Reports

# Our customer in RRV is happy

All of our beet hauling now is in the factory yards. The last Red River Valley truck pulled off the road at 1:45 a.m. on April 22. The Reynolds pile in the Hillsboro project was the last one in. Work in the yards will continue through the first or second week of May.



Troy  
We had a fairly mild winter which was great for driving, but not the greatest for beet storage. American Crystal Sugar's ag department did a fantastic job of managing the beet piles. The beets came out of the ground dry, which can lead to storage issues. Early on, it looked like we would have a lot of discarded beets, but that was not the case.

The ag department kept a sharp eye on the piles, shutting down for heat, ventilating when necessary and making good decisions throughout the campaign. It turned out the best it possibly could.

Our customer was espe-

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great for driving, but not the greatest for beet storage. American Crystal Sugar's ag department did a fantastic job of managing the beet piles. The beets came out of the ground dry, which can lead to storage issues. Early on, it looked like we would have a lot of discarded beets, but that was not the case.

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**Technicians keep the wheels turning in the Red River Valley. Left, David Christopherson and Zach Terhaar out of the Moorhead project. Right, Nick Bowman and Trey Rubie from the Hillsboro shop work on the after treatment system from one of our tractors.**

cially pleased with our loader operators this year. They are the front line on delivering quality beets to the factory. We heard many times that the operators were doing a great job keeping the factories supplied with a good blend of beets.

We are looking forward to summer work and will be focusing on maintenance. We are working closely with Freightliner to increase up time on the power units for the next campaign.

The spring employee meetings were excellent this year, with lots of great feedback from our employees. We plan to celebrate our successful campaign at our banquets on May 12 and 18.

I thank Ben Purrington and the maintenance staff for the work they did to keep our trucks running this year. I appreciate their hard, smart work.

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

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# For more than 60 summers, we've celebrated with picnics

**T**he summer picnic is a longstanding tradition at Transsystems.

The first picnics were in the early 1950s in a park in Lewistown, MT. At the time, the company's largest terminals were located at Great Falls and Billings. Lewistown was about half way between the two terminals.

The location meant a long drive for everyone but in those days there was not much overlap in operations and the picnic often was the only time employees from other locations saw one another.

Employees gathered for an afternoon-long picnic. The event featured the usual picnic food and lots of games for kids. The games were old fashioned and included sack races, tug of war, marbles, jacks, and a treasure scramble in a hay stack loaded with coins.

By the end of the day everyone was exhausted, but parents probably welcomed the silence of kids asleep in the back seat of the car during the long drive home.

The picnic tradition spread throughout the company



**For decades, Transsystems employees have gathered for summer fun at project picnics. Taking a swing at a pinata, above, or dunking a division manager, left, are all part of the fun.**

over the years. The picnics in Alberta included local food specialties, such as pierogis, a favorite of the large Ukrainian community in the Edmonton area.

Summer of 1984 saw the first picnics in the Red River

Valley following Transsystems first campaign for American Crystal Sugar Company.

The picnic continues to be an opportunity for Transsystems people to gather for food and fun.

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## Safety Report

# New driver training program

### **PDD program effective, efficient for our drivers**

**T**ransystems is introducing a new Professional Driver Development (PDD) program.

The PDD program is better than the former training system because the new program:

1. Accelerates training;
2. Measures knowledge and skills; and
3. Eliminates redundant training.

Under the PDD program, Transystems tests each driver's knowledge and skills. The results of those tests determine the driver's unique development plan.

The former training program may have included training on knowledge and skills not necessary for every driver.

The PDD program eliminates repeat training unless driver evaluation indicates a need for repetition.

Evaluation under the PDD program includes testing, such as an initial ques-



Rich

tionnaire and road evaluation, check ride evaluations, and everyday observation of driver performance. Driver behaviors, including hard brakes, speeding, losses, productivity, and high idle time, also are part of the evaluation process.

The most important difference between the PDD program and the former training program is that evaluation under the PDD program drives the individual driver's development plan. One example of evaluation driving the development plan is the check ride. Under the PDD program the check ride form includes areas for special attention and the results of the check ride evaluation change the driver's development plan.

Many measures of driver performance will affect the driver's development plan. Those measures include changes in MVR rating, ob-

served behavior, and time and mileage in service with Transystems.

For example, observation of the driver's proper performance of a procedure, such as turning, could indicate that the driver does not need more development on that driving technique. This would change the driver's development plan.

In some instances, the driver's development plan may cover issues identified in overall operations. One example might be a new intersection that merits special attention of all drivers at the location.

Development continues to include classroom sessions, reading material, videos, one-on-one work with mentors, and driving simulator training.

Each check ride includes evaluation and coaching on procedures in the driver's development plan.

I am convinced that the PPD program will be both effective and an efficient use of each driver's time.

*Rich Carl,  
Vice President of Safety*

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## Good news

# Spreading happiness one pie at a time

“E veryone has something they are very good at. I’m pretty good at making

pies,” Ron Ruona of Renville said.

That turns out to be an understatement. Ron has been making apple pies and giving them away for more than two decades. In a good year, he makes and gives away more than 160 pies. In a lean year, it drops to a mere 40. He estimates his total pie output at more than 1,000.

The pies are given to friends, relatives and charities for fundraisers. The top price a charity ever got for a pie was more than \$100.

He has only sold one pie and that was when a co-worker tricked him into it.

“Giving away pies doesn’t cost me much,” he said. “When I get free apples and use a new pie tin, the sweetener and crust, my total cost is \$1.70 to \$1.80. There is no labor charge. I sometimes get a hug or kiss on the cheek out of it.”

Ron came by his kitchen prowess early on. “Growing up in Hector, there were three boys in our family. If



**Renville driver Ron Ruona has given away more than 1,000 apple pies in the last 20 years. Scott Lind photo**

we were hungry, my mom would say, ‘Start cooking.’ So I did, from the time I was big enough to help with the dishes.”

Ron has pie making down to an art. He uses his mother’s bread maker to make crust for 30 or 35 pies at once. That dough is made into balls and stored in the freezer until he’s ready to make a pie or three.

“If I’m doing it by myself, watching TV and having a beverage, I can make three

pies in an hour,” he said. Good apples and good lard are key ingredients to his success.

Ron’s favorite apples for pie are Granny Smith or Macintosh. “Any apple that is tart and on the list for baking, is good,” he said. “A good eating apple doesn’t make the best pie.”

Ron’s secret recipe has deep roots.

“I used to live in Northern Minnesota. The church ladies there would make 1,200 pies a year to raise money. When the older church ladies could not talk the younger church ladies into taking over the pie making, they quit.

“It took some doing, but I finally got their sweetener recipe.”

He makes a batch of sweetener big enough for 30 pies and saves it.

“Of all things, I found my favorite pie crust recipe in the Minneapolis paper years ago,” he said.

Ron has been a driver for Transystems in Renville for two years.

Before that, he farmed, built grain bins and poured cement. “I was a jack of all trades,” he said. And a master of pies.

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## Good news

# Three babies and a bride

**S**idney technician Gary Schreckengost and his wife, Robin, welcomed their first son Jan. 26. Corey Robert was greeted by his four big sisters: Kayelee, Bridget, Elizabeth and Annaliese.

The family, pictured at right, left their Texas home behind to move to Sidney.

“It was a big move for Gary and his family and I am very glad they made it,” Project Manager John Hoadley said.



Harold Enerson of Drayton chalked up another grandbaby this spring. His sixth grandchild, Lydia Victoria, was born Feb. 1. She was welcomed by parents, Josh and Missy Enerson, and two big brothers.

Spring was truly celebration season for the Rood family. March 19, Nick Rood and Laken Berends welcomed their first child. Blaide Michael Rood was 21 inches long and weighed in at 8 pounds, 1 ounce.

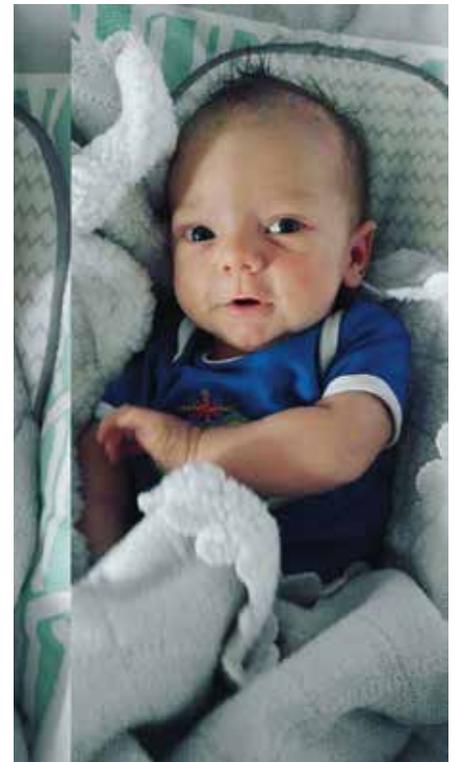
On April 2, the Rood family celebrated some more in Nisswa, MN, at the early evening wedding of Mike and Lucia.



**Mike and Lucia Rood were married April 2.**

“The honeymoon is delayed because we had beets to haul,” Mike said. “Lucia understands.”

The wedding party included Mike’s stepdaughter Taylor and sons Nick and Tanner.



**Blaide Michael Rood was born March 19.**

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# Happy Birthday

## May

1. Randy Leija, Matthew Moore, Robert Schjenken.

2. Thomas Gould, Mark Roemer, David Ruiz, Dwight Schwindt, Kenneth Whitney.

3. Brittany Calder, Quentin Hurtado, Baldemar Tellez-Olmos.

4. Mohamood Ahmed, Joseph Aslett, Meghan Baumgartner, Timothy Landsem, Leo Mousel, Paul Sherry, Tessa Svaleson, Dennis Young.

6. Alassane Keita, Mark Koller, James Wagner.

7. Estanislao Orihuela.

8. Henry Broner, Joseph Clark, Brian Hapka, Mark Holt, Thomas O'Connor, Eugene Powell, Robert Rogers, Dennis Speth.

9. John Brydon, Jairo Macias Quinones, Joseph Rathbun, Warren Tvedt.

10. Nicholas Bangle, Jason Roberts, Nicholas Rood, Gerald Severson, David Wright.

11. Leonardo Avila Ochoa, Curtis Bly, Richard Dumas, Charles Passa, Mathew Schaefer, Lloyd Terry.

14. Terrie Anderson, Carl Janachovsky, Rodney Larson, Kaysha Messick, Joel Pedraza Cant, Richard Riley.

15. Eric Hurd, Gary Jemison.

16. Daniel Anderson, Johnathon Clymens, Abel Nunex, Kevin Orton, James Schramm, Daniel Svir.

17. Harold Annis, Raymond Castle, Patrick Dickson.

18. Verlo Bush, Dion Carlson, Michael Rood, James Shirley, Krista Wickham.

19. Jesus Arteaga, Troy Carl, Hugo Castelan, Marcus Ellis, Jackie Goodsell, Dustin Gram, Andrew Munsee, Talisa Scott.

20. Gary Heins, Carl Holman, Ricardo Izaguirre Acuna, John Matera.

21. Betty Jacks, Michael Schindler, Maurice Stansbury.

22. Abel Gracia, Jeffrey Grochow, Ronald Toscano.

23. Rojelio Benavidez, Karen Gifford, Gerald Gillie, Richard Higgins, John Holmes, Daniel Nicoletto.

24. Kimberly Hunt.

25. Francisco Cazares Vale.

26. Eleuterio Colunga, Keith Crooks, Mitchell Hawk, Randall Marconi, Ross Pape.

27. Jeffrey Flaten, Veronica Jasso, Miguel Palacios, Christopher Weiner.

28. Colten Hoyt, Dwight Mulder, Arvid Ophaug, Dennis Qualley.

29. Judy Coates, Steven Gabica, Elton Hill, Darrell Waters, Ralph Weigel.

31. Jason Holm, David Morris.

## June

1. Michael Funk, Billy Holum, Tracey Koepplin.

2. Brogan Alexander, Thomas Brown, Scott

Weigel.

3. Eugene Brown, Dave Hohnhorst, Rexann Larocco, Richard Norris, David Springer.

4. Dustin Rendon.

5. Klain Christensen, Gerald Hasbrouck.

6. Gillian Beliles, Luis Del Real, David Elsing, Angela Leavitt, Robyn Schmett.

7. Jean Morris, Aric Olson, Steve Olson, Hugo Rodriguez Vaidez, Lane Wacek.

8. Barbara Albro, John Collins, Matthew Ebertowski, Gerald Navarro, Kevin Wohlman.

9. Curtis Dolter, Sheila Hoffland, Bradley Lund, Kevin Maddock, Hector Martinez, Teresa McElhinney, Tanner Rood, Christina Torix-Wood.

10. Daniel Dailey, Steffen Falter, Sean Scott.

11. Alex Kasprovicz, Darrell Kvernen, John Nelson, Michael Swang.

12. Manuel Araiza Reyes, Matthew McCracken, James Peters, Patrick Rice, Jeff Steer.

13. Jeffery Barnhill, John Jones, Phillip Martin, Victor Parra Aguirri, Thomas Stanley.

14. Dene Demoss, Oscar Flores, Scott Lynch, Lynn Masterson, Daniel Watson.

15. Jennie Williams.

16. Lavonn Bjornson, Daniel Bruely, Bruce Bullock, Momir Simic, Joshua Taft, Alexander Torkelson, Gary Tvedt.

17. Christopher Bannon, Suzanne Batt, Kendrick Carbary, John Hoolsema, John Kinney, Bryan Klopp.

18. Gary Hansen, Larry Hoffland, Alberto Melendez Ortiz, Roger Sharrai.

19. Julian Garza Hernan, Gary Hurlbert, Aaron Nelson, Justin Robertson, Robert Rounds.

20. Curt Ellingson, Kenneth Goodsell, Thomas Voight.

21. Kerry Dilworth, Andrew Finsaas.

22. Ryan Davis, Cynthia Derijk, Aaron Dickinson, Wayne Kling, Daniel Murray.

23. Robert Folstrom, Gary Golemon, Tracy Magnus, Ralph Perreault, Robert Piersol, Jessica Redman, Roger Walker.

24. Case DeJong, Leroy Faunce, Donald Hiatt, Thomas Nothnagel.

25. Robert Clark, Nicholas Gardner, Stacy Radovich.

27. Jason Bachmeier, Devin Christenson, Duane Ebertowski, Jeremy Ekman, Jeff Thomas.

28. Dean Hartwig, Debra Kendell, Gary Nicklaus, Thomas Quinn, Paul Swenson.

29. Michael Boulduc, Kenneth Wunch.

30. Terry Bergman, Roberto Cano, Nicholas Lorenson, Dale Marriott, Travis Patton, Luke Weidemann.

**See HAPPY BIRTHDAY, next page**

# Happy Birthday

## July

1. Vincent Galarza, Anes-Sani, Robert Wickham.
2. Steven Gewerth, Julian Jolley, Herbert Kleinsasser, Michael Sharp.
3. Larry Christensen, Shane Leiser, Steven Morales, Virgil Mudersbach, Rex Munro.
4. Curtis Andersen, Shaun Andreasen, Thomas Bartley, Michael Watson.
5. Preston Frasure, Ayanle Jama, Marcos Villarreal.
6. Jerald Anderson, Gregory Howard, Marc Paschke.
7. Edward Dennis, Rodrigo Flores, Austin Lindstrom, Ahmed Mohamud, Bradley Walker.
8. Robert Fish, Jason Holt, Terrence Sieving.
9. Cindy Wang Anderson, Robert Wraith.
10. Dirk Gaebe, Thomas Harper, Anthony Lietzau, Robert Ortega, Valentin Osiychuk, Candy Woods.
11. Julio Bueno, Earl Ryan, Houston Scarborough, Gregory Simmons, Jessica White.
12. Steven Coleman, Olaf Grindahl, Joseph Salsgiver.
13. Sean Nesvold, Edward Reynolds.
14. Steven Holyoak, Richard Larson, Blas Martinex-Gardea, Douglas Stack, Todd Winmill.
15. Jesse Comacho, Charles Hunt, Edward Mata, Joseph Rush.



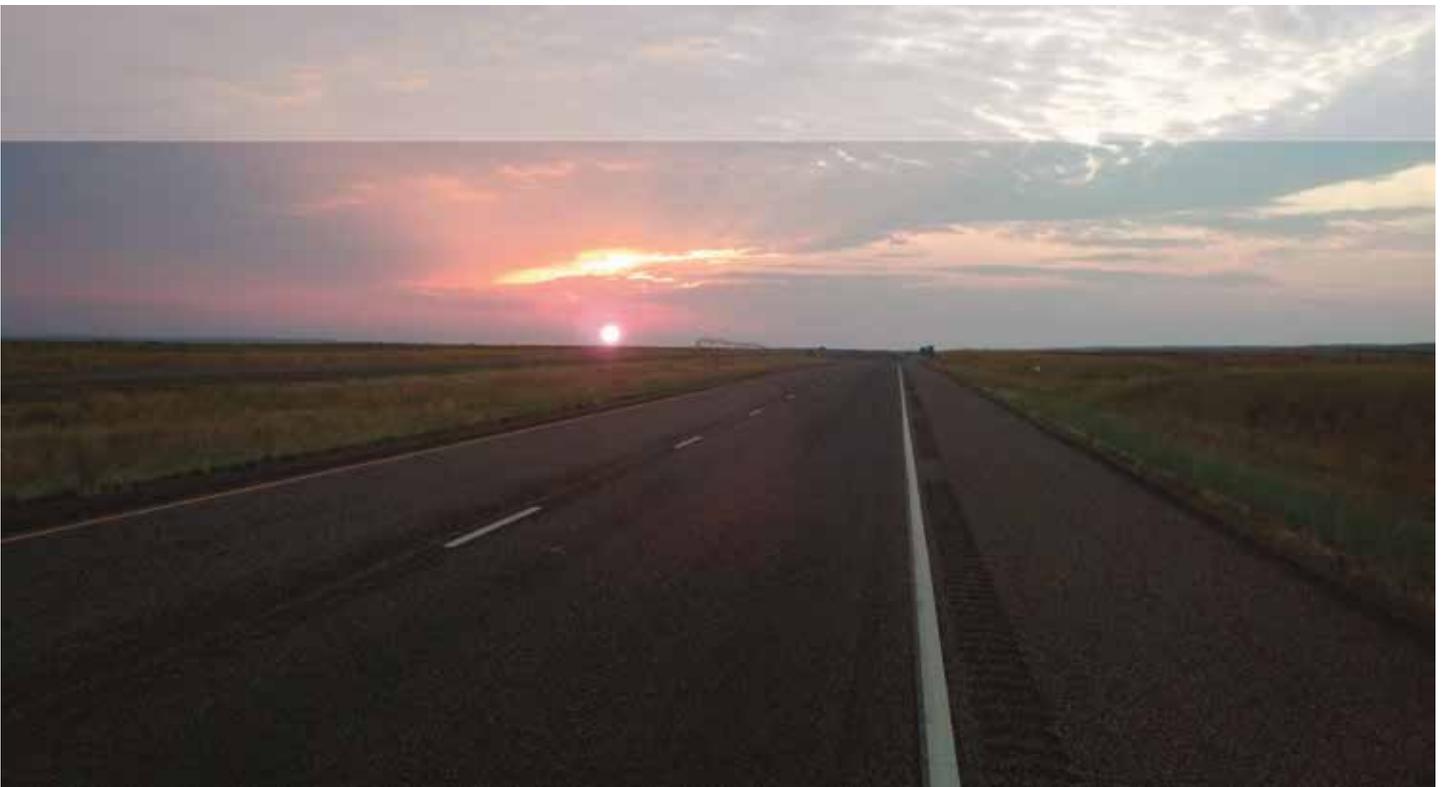
**Happy Birthday! Shade Hale turned 20 on April 20th and the occasion did not pass without notice. Kenny Wunch and his wife showed up with a cake for Shade.**

**“Shade is a great kid,” supervisor Scott Wilson said. “I’ve never seen him without a smile and an attitude to match. It’s a pleasure to have him with us out of Worland.”**

16. Edward Anderson, William Lerud.
17. Clayton Brame, Michael Carr, William Felts, Robert Petty, Joel Rudnik.
18. Teri Berg, Eddie Jor-

- gensen, Matthew Keating.
19. Donald Bertsch, Miciel Gonzalez, Roger Huntington, Fredrick Straub.
20. Spencer Schroeder, Matthew Wiltse.
21. Travis Marshall, James Rutherford, Luke Volz.
22. Ryan Gilk, Wade Hamby, Robert Miller, Anthony Ruiz, Randy Saint, James Swensgard, Michael Wang.
23. Bradley Larson, Karissa Widme.
24. Dennis Bekkerus, Gary Cook, Kari Franks, Antonio Guadarrama, Joseph Marchiorlatti.
25. Harvey Bell, Miguel Gomez, Dale Grindahl, Rafael Rodriguez.
26. Jay Knowlton, Larry Nelson, Marcus Newton, Karla Shepherd, Jeromy Spence James Stroud.
27. Julio Gonzalez, Gary Goodwin, Christopher Lefors, Johnnie Mai, Thomas Massman, Robin McGhee, Rockie Miles, Billy Smith.
28. Jaime Lorta, Kevin Martinez, Duane Rasmussen, Tyler Tebben, Gerald Wahlen.
29. Daniel Balfour, Wallace Barney, Jesus Nunez Marquez, John Peterson, Adolfo Siqueiros.
30. Geoffrey Glenn, Joshua Kayl, Clyde Miller, Treyton Rubie.

## **Parting shot**



**A summer sunrise over I 94 North Dakota is a thing of beauty. Jim Woodward photo.**