



# Behind the Wheel

Newsletter of the Maine Professional Drivers Association

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*“Committed to Safety, Courtesy, and Professionalism”*

April / May 2007

## 2007 TRUCK DRIVING CHAMPIONSHIPS

The season for driving competitions is fast coming upon us. Already, **Hannaford**, **Shaw’s**, and **Sysco** have scheduled their company competitions as they prepare their drivers for the Maine State Truck Driving Championships on May 19th and for the Nationals in August.

For the 14th consecutive year, the State Truck Driving Championships will be held at **Dysart’s** Truck Terminal in Hermon, Maine (just south of Bangor) right off I-95. MPDA assists the Maine Motor Transport Association with this great event that promotes safety and professionalism. Drivers get to demonstrate their skills in driving the competition course, inspecting bugged vehicles, taking a knowledge test and being interviewed to determine their attitude and knowledge of safe driving practices. Trophies are awarded at a huge banquet at the end of the day and the winners go on to the national competition.

The eight classes of competition are: 3-Axle Van, 4-Axle Van, 5-Axle Van, 5-Axle Flatbed, 5-Axle Sleeper, 5-Axle Tank, Straight Truck and Twin-Trailers (pups).

“Facts for Drivers”, the booklet used by drivers who want to compete in the State Truck Driving Championships, is now available by calling **Cliff Gray** at MMTA at 623-4128. You can also order your registration material at the same time. If you drive for a company or are an owner-operator leased to a company, your company should handle the registration.

The evening before the competition, MPDA will host a hospitality room at the Bangor Motor Inn for anyone involved in the competition. Stop by room 230 and say hi and get to know some of your fellow contestants and company officials.

MPDA provides equipment for company driving competitions as well as the State Truck Driving Championships. If your company wants to put a competition together, contact us and we can help set it up and pro-

vide course equipment.

As with any activity we get involved in, we need help with planning, setting up and judging the competition at these events. If you are not competing, please lend a hand with any aspect of the competitions that you are able. The more hands we have, the smoother the events run for the drivers competing. The food booth at the State Competition (one of our major fundraisers) can always use a hand, too!

## MAINE TRUCKING 4 KIDS CONVOY

While it is early to get talking about an event that will take place in October, its not too early to start fundraising for this event. All the forms necessary to register for the 9th Annual Trucking 4 Kids Convoy and sheets to tally sponsors are available on the MPDA website. You can go to [www.mpda.org](http://www.mpda.org) and click on Charity Events, then on the Trucking4Kids Convoy icon and then the “needed forms” icon or you go directly to [www.maineppda.org/trucking4kids/forms.htm](http://www.maineppda.org/trucking4kids/forms.htm). It’s never too early to gather sponsorships and go for those awards for the top fundraisers. Many positive signs are already pointing to this being the biggest and best event yet.

Any corporate sponsorships should be sent to Denis Litalien, treasurer for the event, so they can be properly recognized in the event booklet.

## 2007 BIKE TREK

MPDA will again provide truck drivers to haul bikes on June 14 and 17 to and from the event. The Bike Trek is a fundraising event where bicycle riders ride from Sunday River to the Owl’s Head Transportation Museum in Rockland to raise funds for the American Lung Association of Maine. The Association fights lung disease through research, legislation, and education. If you are planning to help out and have not registered yet, please contact Denis Litalien at [den-truck@hotmail.com](mailto:den-truck@hotmail.com) or 468-7373.

# SYSCO COMPETITION RESULTS

Sysco of Northern New England held their annual driving competition in two parts this year. One part was held in Westbrook on April 14 while the other part was held in Bangor on April 18. This was to accommodate all 22 drivers who wanted to participate. The weather was great and the course was just challenging enough to keep the drivers on their toes. A straight line problem started the course, followed by a left and right turn around barrels with an alley dock, parallel park and front and rear stop lines ended the driving portion. A written test and pre-trip inspection was also put together for the drivers.

David Dolley, Director of Transportation says "I would like to thank MPDA for the use of the equipment and will be looking forward to working with you in the future". **Dick Brown, Denis Litalien, Dave and Terry Stuart and Cliff Gray** were on hand from MPDA to help set up and judge the driving course. **Andy Reed** and other Ryder personnel were also on hand to help out. Sysco will be sending 6 drivers to the State Truck Driving Championships in Bangor on May 19.

Sysco Winners:

- 1<sup>st</sup> - Hayri Berberoglu                      2<sup>nd</sup> - Bill Butland
- 3<sup>rd</sup> - Adrien Doyon                              4<sup>th</sup> - **Eric Berry**
- 5<sup>th</sup> - Mike Hawes                              6<sup>th</sup> - Dave Booker

Top Pre-Trip Inspection - John Dionne

Top Written Test - Hayri Berberoglu

## OTHER NEWS OF INTEREST LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

Looking for a chance to have some input into the future? Here's your chance. The Maine Department of Transportation is looking for public input on its 20 year plan, called -- *Connecting Maine: Planning our Transportation Future* -- by providing your comments on the on-line survey. The draft of Connecting Maine and the survey can be found at [www.mainedot.gov](http://www.mainedot.gov). Click on "online comments" near the top of the page to fill out the survey. They ask that the survey be done by

May 30.

This site is also a tremendous resource for finding out what is going on around the State with major construction projects including the Maine Mall roads project and the new Penobscot Narrows Bridge and Observatory in Bucksport. Incidentally, the observatory opens on May 19.

As a bonus for filling out the survey, you can enter a raffle to win tickets on the Downeaster, the Maine State Ferry Service, or to Fort Knox and the Penobscot Narrows Bridge and Observatory. Three winners will be randomly chosen to win one of three prizes: a roundtrip for two on the Downeaster passenger rail service between Portland and Boston; a roundtrip for two on the Maine State Ferry Service; or a day-trip for two to Fort Knox and the Penobscot Narrows Bridge and Observatory.

### TURNPIKE SURVEY

Speaking of surveys, have you filled out the survey that was sent with your last newsletter? The Maine Turnpike is trying to determine the feasibility of installing truck plug ins and other facilities to help eliminate idling at its rest areas. The survey will help determine how they proceed, so here is your chance to get input into things that affect you on the highway!

## ANNUAL AWARDS

### DRIVER OF THE YEAR

**Randy DeVault**

In recognition of his achievements in the National Truck Driving Championships and his driving career, Randy has been named the Maine Professional Drivers Association's 2006 Driver of the Year.

In 2006 Randy was named the National Champion in the Straight Truck Class at the American Trucking Association's National Truck Driving Championships. Randy has been a perennial winner at the Maine State Championships, winning that competition 9 times. He has been employed as a local driver by Roadway Ex-

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press for the past 18 years out of their Auburn terminal. Randy has driven 31 years with no accidents, accumulating over 2 million miles of safe driving.

Randy lives in Canton, Maine with his wife Ginny.

**GOOD SAMARITAN AWARD**

Jill and Lee Littlefield

Jill and Lee Littlefield are being recognized by the Maine Professional Drivers Association for their efforts to be Good Samaritans when the need arose.

They were nominated for this annual award by Mrs. Charles Johnson of South Portland.

They were attending a funeral when a man had a heart attack, specifically, Charles Johnson, a retired Merrill Transport driver.

Jill immediately commenced performing CPR while Lee tended to the needs of his wife. Both were also helpful to the family in a number of ways during this crisis. Mrs. Johnson writes, "We feel lucky there were people such as the Littlefields and we would like to see them recognized for their action in a time of need.

These selfless actions are what our Association recognizes as an example of what a Good Samaritan is all about. Lee has been a member of MPDA since 1995 and has competed in the State Truck Championships in past years. He has volunteered his time to the Goodwins Mills Fire Dept. and was an assistant 4H Club Leader.

**RICHARD ESPONNETTE SCHOLARSHIP**

Chelsea Litalien

The recipient of this year's Richard Esponnette Memorial Scholarship is Chelsea Litalien. She is the daughter of member Denis Litalien and is attending the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

**LEGISLATION**

**MAINE BILLS PENDING**

Following are some of the bills that have been discussed in the Maine State Legislature in the past few weeks that might be of interest to some of our mem-

bers. If you want to check the status of these bills, go to <http://janus.state.me.us/legis/>. Here you can put in the LD# in the top right corner and check out what is happening with each bill.

L.D. 956 An Act To Increase Compliance with Truck Weight Limits

L.D. 1301 An Act To Require All Construction Vehicles To Have a Backup Sensor

L.D. 1304 An Act Relative to Motor Vehicles and Floats Operated in Parades

L.D. 1817 An Act To Strengthen and Clarify Maine's Motor Vehicle Laws

L.D. 963 An Act To Prohibit Construction Companies from Using Certain Heavy Equipment in Residential Neighborhoods

L.D. 534 Resolve, Directing the Maine Turnpike Authority To Study the Relocation of the York Toll Booth

L.D. 706 An Act To Support New Drivers

L.D. 401 An Act To Protect the Integrity of Funeral Processions

L.D. 1587 An Act To Strengthen Maine's Distracted-driving Penalties

L.D. 1330 An Act To Promote School Zone Safety

L.D. 1709 Resolve, To Establish a Pilot Project for the Enforcement of Laws Regarding Traffic Control Devices

L.D. 1748 An Act Regarding Street Rods and Custom Vehicles

**RHODE ISLAND BILL MEANS MOVE OVER**

Transport Topics Online reports that a common-sense practice that truckers have followed for decades would be mandated if a bill in the Rhode Island Senate becomes law.

The measure, dubbed the "Move Over" bill, is designed to protect police and other emergency personnel during roadside stops.

The bill would require motorists to maintain a safe distance and reduce speed when approaching stationary emergency vehicles that are alongside the road with their lights flashing.

On highways with two or more lanes in one direction, drivers would be required to merge into a lane further away from an emergency vehicle. Drivers also would be required to reduce speed to 10 mph below the posted limit before passing the emergency vehicle.

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MAINE TURNPIKE

**THINKING AHEAD**

For information and updates, call 1-877-682-9433, tune to Turnpike Radio at 1610AM, or visit [www.maineturnpike.com](http://www.maineturnpike.com).

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Failure to obey the law would result in a \$75 fine.

*From the March 23, 2007 edition of Landline Magazine*

### SPEED LIMITER PETITIONS DRAW HEAVY RESPONSE

The Department of Transportation received nearly 3,700 responses, many of them anonymous, to a pair of petitions seeking a federal regulation to limit truck engine speeds to 68 miles per hour. Following are excerpts from some of those responses:

“...wanted speed limiters retrofitted to all trucks, rather than only newly manufactured trucks.”

“..Electronic engines of today can be set to limit maximum speeds and give you a higher miles-per-gallon fuel efficiency,”

“.... limiting maximum truck speed makes these congested highways safer for everyone.”

‘ . . . that will ensure [trucks] do not operate on public roadways at speeds in excess of an established speed limit.”

“The government should be mandating a governor setting [a] much, much lower [speed] than this, and the mandate should apply to all motorized vehicles in the U.S., not just large trucks”.

“...limiting speed would make highways less safe and that a rule would unfairly single out truck drivers.”

“The 68-mph speed limit is an arbitrary figure akin to picking a lottery number based on money, not logic.”

“By imposing a maximum speed in which a vehicle can operate, the overall safety of that vehicle on the highway becomes compromised, as does the operator and other highway users.”

“...because it forces trucks to use the right lane,” making them vulnerable to “the majority of car drivers . . . flying around trucks at warp speed in packs only to jam on their brakes to make the exit they knew was coming up.”

“...Punish the handful of [car and truck] drivers out there that don’t, and leave us alone.”

“.....is a nationwide catch-all speed of 68 mph for

trucks really a wise safety measure?”

“would cause a dual speed limit in states where it has never existed before....This difference in speed will add to road rage in drivers of smaller vehicles and only add to the adverse attitudes many show toward the drivers of large trucks.”

DOT now must decide whether to proceed with either petition, but has not announced a time frame.

- This material appeared in an article by Sean McNally in the April 2 edition of Transport Topics

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# MPDA's 2007 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## May

### 13 Pennsylvania Convoy for Kids

**Convoy Committee Meeting** – Old Country Buffet Rest., Maine Mall - 6:00pm - contact

16 Kevin Battle at trucking4kids@aol.com or Terry Stuart at 727-3704 or <tstuart@mainepda.org>

18 **TDC Set-up Day** – Dysart's Truck Terminal, Hermon, Maine – Noon - contact Cliff Gray at 623-4128 or <grayc@mmta.com>

18 **MPDA Hospitality Get-together** (for everyone involved in competition) – Room 230, Bangor Motor Inn – Contact Everett MacMaster at 797-6330 or <emac@maine.rr.com>

19 **Maine State Truck Driving Championships** – Dysart's/Bangor Motor Inn – 5:30am - contact Cliff Gray at 623-4128 or <grayc@mmta.com>

## June

**New Hampshire State Truck Driving Championships** – Associated Grocers, Pembroke, NH - contact Vera Tucker at 603-224-7337 or <vera@nhmta.org> or Mickey Rafeal at <micrafeal@aol.com>

14 to 17 **Trek Across Maine / Lung Assn. Rally**, Sunday River – contact Denis Litalien at 468-7373 or <dentruck@hotmail.com>

24 **Mass. State Truck Driving Championships** – CCX Terminal, Chicopee, Mass. – contact Frank Anglin at 413-594-6162

## August

21 to 25 **ATA National Truck Driving Championships** – Minneapolis, Minn. - contact Cliff Gray at 623-4128 or <grayc@mmta.com>

## September

15 **2007 Charity FunDrive** Lehigh Travel Plaza, Lexington, VA (I-81, Exit 195) – contact Larry Davis at 336-924-1751 or <info@maptda.org>

16 **Wishes on Wheels Convoy** – Willington, CT. – contact Roland Bolduc at 413-626-0900 or <roadeo@charter.net>

22 **Charity Challenge Set-up Day** – Devens, Mass. – contact Denis Litalien at 468-7373 or <dentruck@hotmail.com>

23 **9th Annual Northeast Professional Truck Drivers Charity Challenge** – Devens, Mass.- contact Fred Schenk at 508-453-3632 or <charitychallenge@comcast.net>

29 **Trucking 4 Kids Convoy Set-up Day** – 8:00am – Location TBA – contact Kevin Battle at trucking4kids@aol.com or Terry Stuart at 727-3704 or <tstuart@mainepda.org>

30 **Maine Trucking 4 Kids Convoy**, 7:00am to 4:00pm – Scarborough Downs, Scarborough - contact Kevin Battle at trucking4kids@aol.com or Terry Stuart at 727-3704 or <tstuart@mainepda.org>

### MPDA Newsletter Staff, Contributors, Preparation & Mailing;

Denis Litalien    Dave Stuart    Terry Stuart

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**P.O. Box 5672 / Augusta, Maine / 04332-5672**  
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MPDA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting courtesy, safety and professionalism in the field of commercial driving.

