COASTAL-FMC CURRENTS

NEWS AND HAPPENINGS FOR COASTAL & FMC TRANSPORT

ISSUE 73

Katie Montgomery, Editor | May 2024 | www.coastal-fmc.com

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SPRING SHOWERS, MAY FLOWERS: ARE THEY BLOOMING

FROM ERIK MONTGOMERY | ERIK@COASTAL-FMC.COM

Welcome to Spring and I hope everyone is enjoying what seems to be warmer temperatures. Many of us recently had time to go on Spring Break as our kids were out of school or had some sort of break. My family was no exception. We traveled for Spring Break to warmer temperatures, only to find out we had spent too much time inside this winter.

My girls, unfortunately, received very bad sunburns on day two of our travels and this halted much of our activities for the Spring Break trip. However, although it didn't go as planned, everyone seemed to get some rest and relaxation. As we came right back to the grind, my wife had knee surgery to repair a torn ACL and my girls started school back up, along with daily chores and activities.



Chad Odle, Kent McAbee, Trey Oravec, Erik Montgomery, and Shane Lee attended the World of Asphalt conference in March and had the opportunity to celebrate Shane's birthday – complete with a large dessert.

Many of our co-workers have children close to the same age and many of them even had college visits during Spring Break as many of our lives are about to change, including our family. I am proud to say that my oldest, Sydney, has been accepted to Oregon State University and will proudly be wearing the colors of black, orange, and white – becoming a Beaver.

You soon will see me around the office supporting the cause. I believe, after visiting with several team members, you also will see their children committing to a college very soon and they too will be dressing to support the college of choice! We welcome the opportunity

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for each family and I know I am especially proud and excited, yet scared to see my daughter go on to her future.

March was, in my opinion, very slow and many of you recognized this fact. Although we had some work available, it seemed some just were willing to go and do some of it. We understand and appreciate this fact; however, please understand that we are trying to fill in the voids during these in-between seasons. Things change, and we appreciate those who stepped up and assisted the company during this time.



Sydney Montgomery has been accepted to Oregon State University.

Trucking currently is a hard and tough business. Many of you out there have heard and seen from other companies in the industry of rate changes (lowering) and other issues that trucking is more competitive than ever. Just in the past couple of weeks, we have let consistent lanes "go-away" due to companies wanting to lower rates to point that it's just not feasible to even run trucks down the road. This is hard for everyone to understand.

In late March, we had our Spring FMC Transport Safety Meeting. This year, our management team cooked for the FMC Transport drivers, and I have to say, I believe they did a good job and we had a very good breakfast. There were short presentations given by Gary, Shane, and myself. This last year was one of our best, although we didn't win the overall trucking award for the state – we were runner-up. It's still a great achievement! Great job, guys! Gary discussed PeopleNet, WorkFlow, Federal Scores, and the handling of asphalt. Although we show this every year, as the season approaches, it is very critical that we know what to do when handling asphalt safely. Shane discussed some new technology that came in April, as Dearman Technologies will be implemented in all the asphalt plants.

I discussed our health insurance and some possible changes as we hit our renewal period, our 401k, and our upcoming Annual Company Dinner in September. We believe there could be some upcoming changes in our health insurance plan this August, and we will work to communicate these with you as we know more. We have all seen our personal insurance premiums on the rise; this is no different than what our company is seeing on insurance rates.

Although this meeting has not been mandatory, this is now under review. This year was one of the worst attendances we have ever had, with only 20 drivers. It sad to see drivers who live in Willow and the surrounding area not attending while the outlying drivers make the attempt and participate. We started emailing our reminders over six weeks prior to this meeting.

To those who attended, we know who was there and we can't thank you enough for your effort, time, and consideration.

In late March, we had the opportunity to attend the World of Asphalt in Nashville, Tenn. This was two full days filled with meetings, lunches, dinners, and a full trade show. We enjoyed the time there, but it was great to get home. We got to see the latest equipment, supplies being used, and new products hitting the market in 2024.

Here are a few updates on dates we want you to have and please put in your phones and set reminders:

- June 11th and 12th: Ron Murray with BPJ, our health insurance representative will be here at the Willow Springs office to review your current plan and answer any questions you may have for the past year.

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We had a great breakfast and good information at our FMC safety meeting this spring.

- June 19th Ron Murray with BPJ, our health insurance representative will be at the Miller office to review your current plan and answer any questions you may have for this past year.
- September 28th is the Annual Company Dinner at Pine Meadows.
- October 26th is the FMC Transport Fall Safety Meeting.

There is a lot of travel upcoming for many of us in the next weeks. Hope to see many of you around as we pass through areas.

Just some side notes:

- The Montgomery girls have lots of chicken and duck eggs for sale. Please contact them if you have any interest. They will deliver to the office or truck wash for you to pick up. 417-252-4290 is Katie's number; please text or call for your orders. We are delivering daily.
- The truck wash is now selling ammunition and we have lots of different items in stock. We have some pretty good prices and work to keep up the inventory. Stop by and tell your friends about us.



OPERATIONS UPDATE: WORKING WELL TOGETHER

FROM SHANE LEE | SHANE@COASTAL-FMC.COM

Winter is behind us finally! The spring rains are here, grass is growing, and flowers are blooming. As with every year in this industry, the winters are dark, cold, and slower than most any other time of year. This is no surprise to anyone who has been around our industries in the past, whether here or elsewhere.

For anyone who is new to this, you now have seen the way winters work. Now, don't get me wrong; there are some that are better than others and some can be even worse. There are way too many variables to forecast around to make things even and perfectly balanced all the time in this business. We are influenced by weather, supply, commodity trading markets, and many other factors.

Over the past two or three months coming out of winter, I have had an inordinate number of requests from other carriers about hauling freight for us. It has been some time since that has happened, and I am not seeing it end anytime soon. The freight business is slowing and although there are certain pockets that are "reasonably" stable, there are many that are showing signs of stress. When we are seeing more applications, more carriers asking us to haul our work, and more industry contraction than we have seen in many years, it causes concern. Believe me, I understand the concern, as I share the same ones most days – as well as others that many of you never see to keep business moving here.

I believe many of us strive every day toward better work, better conditions, and more work for everyone to provide stability, longevity, and dependability to all employees system wide. Yesterday was an example of one of those days. I had more to do than there were hours in the day. I arrived at the office a couple minutes before seven in the morning and it was a little after seven in the evening when I pulled back out of the office lot to go home to my family. When I got there, the day persisted and I was in my home office for another hour and a half working. Why do I do this, one might ask.

It's not for a title or riches. It's not for some great reward at the end of the day, week, month, or year. It's because I have an obligation to every member of this company to make sure that we are doing all we can to make it work daily and be better at all opportunities. I hope this is a feeling we all share, but honestly there are some days I go home and wonder about that.

The work we do is as diverse as the people who are employed. It covers many areas of industry. We have many personalities and individual needs that we are trying to mesh together to make it all work on all fronts. What I see is an alarming trend for which it's hard to find solutions. There is work out there but it's not always what everyone wants, so we hear "no" or "I'll just sit out tomorrow" way more than I think we should.

Now, I know everyone has personal needs, a life outside of work, and things they like to do and things they don't. I am no different. However, I have made a lifetime choice that as long as I work for someone, I will do what is asked of me, so long as it's not unethical, immoral, illegal, or unsafe. When I am home on my own time and dime, I am free to make different choices. But even there, more times than not, I am doing things that are in the best interest of my family simply because they need done, not because they are necessarily what I want to do.

So, I ask everyone who reads this to think about these things. The benefits and compensation we all receive are not free. Their cost requires the fruits of our combined labor. When we are making decisions to turn away loads, refuse to do a job task, or just call in or take PTO because we don't like the work that is offered, how is that helping maintain a strong company with a forward-looking approach? The company is made up of all of us, and we all must collectively pull on the rope if we are to continue to be successful. No one is exempt from this, regardless of work location, position, or seniority.

There is a tipping point where too many "no's" or too many wanting to "slow down" or too much cherry picking what we do means we are not accomplishing the work needed for the benefits and compensation to be possible. When you hit that point, there are two options. One is to roll up the carpets, close the shades, and do something different. The other is to bring in people who are ready and prepared to do what is needed and there for the taking.

My intent is to find a way to never be in either of those positions. I don't want us to be forced into those decisions, but each of us has a role in making sure that does not happen. Are you doing your part and all you can do, regardless of whether it's always your first choice of work for the day? The last few weeks and months have seen many opportunities opening up with freight choices and opportunities to bid lanes for Q3. That is a positive

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sign. The call to work is there, but the question is whether we will answer that call or let it go to voicemail when the time comes. When considering all this, know the doors are always open and I, as well as others, will make time to hear you, and to discuss concerns with you. Know that all views and ideas are considered but there are always differences, two or more opinions, or other obstacles. Sometimes things don't go our way or yours either. Compromise is key, and we try hard to do as much of that as possible.

Along with this, here's some other advice to consider. Talking is always welcomed, ranting not so much, but it does happen. While most of us have social media like Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, Snap Chat, or whatever other platforms are out there, that is never the place to air our dirty laundry, accusations, or rants. We are all adults and the differences we share will not go away; that's what makes us individuals. Let's settle our differences, discuss our situations, and handle it all as adults with real, face-to-face communications. We are all seeing a shift within society where it is now acceptable to put whatever we'd like out there for the world to see and read, oftentimes harming good relationships or friendships along the way. It's ok to have opinions. It's what we do with them and how we express them that makes the difference in the end. Let's keep it clean and above the belt, and we can all be better. Yes, I use social media, too, but I strive to use it for positivity, family and friend updates, and support of my friends and colleagues. Beyond that, my personal belief is any other use of it is going to result in an inevitable bad ending for society as a whole.

While I am sure some will read this and be offended, I honestly mean no offense to anyone. This is, simply put, my own perspective of what I am seeing and how things are going. We can and should be better, but it requires give and take on all sides. I want to see us go into the summer and Q3 with a strong position and fleet, shop, plants, and office personnel who are prepared to do what it takes with a positive attitude and approach. I say all of this in the hopes it rings true with some and sparks a renewed fire and drive in others. I want us to be better together as a team, which will ultimately make us better as individuals.

Until next time, please stay safe, stay healthy, and above all, find yourself some happy. We all need more of that in our lives.

"The dark side of social media is that, within seconds, anything can be blown out of proportion and taken out of context. And it's very difficult not to get swept up in it all." — Nicola Formichetti.



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1, 2 Enrich Behavioral Change Results, Enrich 2021 research summary. Your actual results may vary.

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NEW ENTRANCE AT FMC LOT



The entrance to the FMC yard got an upgrade at the end of April. The former chip-seal entrance was removed and replaced with a concrete entryway and curbing.





UPDATES AT MILLER PLANT

A few tanks at Miller look great with a fresh coat of paint they received in March and the boiler got an upgrade.



INSURANCE RENEWALS COMING SOON

FROM PHILIP CHAFIN | PHILIP@COASTAL-FMC.COM

Summer is coming and asphalt season is heating up! This is also the time of year we begin our renewal for all lines of health type coverages. This means health, dental, vision, short term, and life will all renew in August. Once again, we will begin meetings and sign up in July. If you need to make changes in your coverage (dropping/adding), this will be the time.

You will not have to worry if you have a qualifying event, and you can make any changes needed at this time. Please remember life insurance and short-term disability cannot be changed without filling out a health questionnaire, unless it is life insurance you only and only if you increase by $10,000.

A top item to keep in mind as we get ready for renewal is the price of coverage. We have one of the best plans in the state, if used as designed. Our deductibles, copays, and out-of-pocket costs are very low. If you have had coverage at another company, this fact would be very noticeable. With this in mind, our renewal may be very expensive. We have had the worst claims year in the five and a half years I have worked here.

One of the most expensive items we must purchase as a self-insured company is stop-loss coverage. This coverage keeps our loss to a minimum when we have a large claim (like an operation). For instance, if someone had a $500,000 operation, we may only have to pay for the first $50,000, and the insurance pays the rest. This type of coverage is expensive, and the carrier has a huge risk. This is why this is the biggest cost to our plan. This year, our stop-loss carrier has lost three times our premium and is still losing. Just like car or house insurance, if you have expensive claims, the cost of your coverage goes up or the insurance company will drop your coverage.

I'm not trying to scare anyone, but we all need to understand the type of renewal we are facing this year. Numbers should start coming in during the month of May, and we will know more then. This year's increase could be 50 percent, but hopefully will be lower. This is the information you need to understand, just in case we have a large increase, and the owners must change our plan.

One last item to cover: Our pharmacy benefit manager (Southern Scripts) has changed its name to Liviniti. Some of you may have received a new 90 Degrees health card and noticed the change. This is nothing to be alarmed about; it is the same company, doing the same job, but just with a new name.

I know this is a lot to follow, so if you have any questions, please let me know.

Confucius says: He who speaks without modesty will find it difficult to make his words good.

Stay Healthy, Philip

FMC TRANSPORT PREFERRED FUEL STOPS

Each month, we will feature a list of preferred fueling location as we work to negotiate better fuel savings with various fuel stops. We are workin on additional fuel stops that can better suit some of the drivers in KS and AR. More updates in 2024.

1. Sapp Brothers – Harrisonville, MO
2. Loves Travel Center – Willow Springs, MO
3. Loves Travel Centers – all other locations
4. FMC Transport Fuel Island – Miller, MO: This location has DEF and Winter Treatment. If you have questions, call Joe or Allen.
5. Lamar Travel Center
6. Casey's Locations: This is not our best option, but we do have some discounts offered.
7. FMC Transport Fuel Island – Willow Springs, MO: Please only use if you are unable to use the Loves across the street.



FMC REPRESENTED AT SUPER TECH







FMC Transport was well represented at Missouri Trucking Association's SuperTech Competition on April 10 at the Ozark Empire Fairgrounds. Allen Eggert and Zach Wick took part in the competition, with Gary Picard and Bruce Blankenship assisting. Joe Blankenship chaired the event, with 39 technicians from all over Missouri. The competition featured 13 stations including auxiliary power unit, pretrip inspections, engine, after-treatment, written text, air system, brakes, steering, tires, electrical, starting and charging, fifth wheel, and wheel end. Pictured at top, Picard, Eggert, Wick, and Joe Blankenship. At left, Eggert during the competition. Above, Joe and Bruce Blankenship.

NEW DOOR, SPECIAL VISITOR AT TRUCK WASH



The wash bay at Bear Crossing Truck Wash and Tire Center lightened up with a new garage door in April.

The crew at Bear Crossing Truck Wash and Tire Center was honored to wash a vehicle for veteran and motivational speaker Dave Roever at the end of April. Roever had been the guest speaker at Westside Family Life Center in Willow Springs. Rover was injured by a grenade explosion while serving in the U.S. Navy as a riverboat gunner in the Black Water Beret in Vietnam. Since that time, he has served veterans, helping physically and emotionally injured servicemen and women "find their way home."



Mason Owens and Peyton Clinton, both recent graduates from Willow Springs High School and employees at Bear Crossing Truck Wash, participated in the annual Senior Project Night at the school on April 25. Required for graduation, senior projects include a product of the senior's choosing, along with a research paper and presentation.





Pictured at left is the newest grandson of Philip and Gayla Chafin, Dawson Lee Schwenk. He was born on April 1, 2024, weighing 10 pounds, 5 ounces, and he was 22 inches long. Dakota and Chloe Schwenk are the proud parents. Philip says since this grandson "was born half grown, we both plan to hunt/fish in the fall. Gayla and I are crazy about this handsome grandson, and he, too, is our pride and joy!"



MAY BIRTHDAYS

May 3 – Chris Thomas
May 4 – Doug Gimpel
May 11 – Michael Johnson, Trey Oravec, Kent McAbee
May 13 – Randall Perry
May 17 – Dustin Miller, Billy Vanderbilt
May 19 – Lisa Sanders
May 21 – Brady Walton
May 23 – Ray Brotherton, Jackson Lee
May 29 – Larry Thompson

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

June 4 – Preston Curl, Gavin Ferguson
June 5 – Jeanetta Brooks
June 6 – Gary Picard, Ashton Bell
June 7 – Robert Cline
June 14 – Chandler McColgin
June 16 – Brandon Roberts, Billie Sivils
June 24 – Chris Pekarek
June 25 – Daniel L'Heureux, Rick Loman, Charles Pottberg
June 28 – Carl Roberts

JULY BIRTHDAYS

July 2 – Jerry Smith, Brynna Barnes
July 5 – Bobby Lee
July 14 – Sarah Roughton
July 16 – Katie Montgomery, Chad Odle
July 19 – James Carter
July 21 – Rodney Wade
July 27 – David Walker
July 31 – Bryan Holycross, Lowell Keeler

