

AllCovered NEWS

HIGHLIGHTS TO HELP YOU THIS WEEK

- Weighing Low-Cost Health Options
- FMCSA Issues On-Board Recorder Regs
- Dems Push 100% Cargo Screening
- C-TPAT: Get It & Keep It

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Information to help you to manage and grow your logistics business.

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PDF FORMAT: <http://www.allcovered.net/AC-News-PDF.htm>

NOTE: All links to stories in PDF version work – just click them

>> SMALL BUSINESS SECTION <<

SMALL BIZ – WEIGHING LOW-COST HEALTH OPTIONS

--- Excerpted from an article by Erin Lawley – Link at end ---

As health care costs continue to rise, employers are searching for ways to ease the strain that providing those benefits places on their bottom lines.

"Probably the biggest thing employers are looking at as a way to save money versus traditional health plans are health savings accounts and health reimbursement accounts," says Bob Dugan, vice president of benefits for insurance brokerage Synaxis. These two types of health plans are often referred to as consumer-driven.

--- HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNT (HAS) ---

With health savings account plans, employers purchase lower-premium, high-deductible plans that are coupled with a savings account. Employees put pre-tax money into the account that goes toward out-of-pocket costs.

When an employee reaches an out-of-pocket threshold of around \$2,000 for an individual or about \$5,000 for a family, the insurer takes on 100% of costs. If the employee doesn't use all the money in the account, it can roll over to the next year, the next job, or eventually be used for retirement.

--- HEALTH REIMBURSEMENT ACCOUNT ---

With a health reimbursement account, the employer buys a high-deductible plan and pays some deductible costs before the insurer takes over.

"The employer gets a lower premium from the carrier with hopes that they'll save more money on premiums than they're paying out in deductibles," says Dugan.

--- CONSUMERS WILL SEE THE COSTS ---

Down the road, proponents of consumer driven plans think they'll make people more conscious of health care costs and more frugal in the care they choose. They believe this will lower overall costs in the long term.

--- PREVENTION FOCUS ---

Donald Taylor, executive vice president of sales and marketing at Healthways, says companies should be investing in health care through wellness and disease management programs to get people healthier and to lower costs.

MORE: http://nashville.bizjournals.com/nashville/stories/2007/01/01/story5.html?et=162&b=1167627600*1395303&hbx=e_vert

HEALTH BIZ – INSURERS BLEND CONSUMERISM & LIMITED ACCESS: Some health insurers have begun to combine aspects of consumer-driven care and a more limited network of health providers. These new products offer the prospect of lower premiums associated with HMO plans while making consumers more sensitive to cost through high deductibles.
MORE: <http://www.workforce.com/section/00/article/24/62/34.html>

Air Cargo Up
Airline Take-
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JUST FOR FUN:

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excerpts

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HEALTH BIZ – IRS SETS HEALTH PLAN RULES: The US Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has released Revenue Procedure 2006-53, which sets various inflation-adjusted amounts for 2007 for High-Deductible Health Plans (HDHPs), Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) and Archer Medical Savings Accounts (MSAs).
MORE: <http://www.segalco.com/publications/capitalcheckup/112906.html>
OVERVIEW OF LAW: <http://tinyurl.com/yk385f>

HEALTH BIZ – EMPLOYERS TURN TO “MINI-MED” PLANS: A growing number of employers are offering limited medical, or "mini-med," plans so employees can have access to basic medical benefits while waiting to become eligible for a major medical program.
MORE: <http://www.benefitnews.com/pfv.cfm?id=9843>

ECONOMY – SLOWER US GROWTH IN 2007?: Trucking is a leading indicator of economic productivity, and if the second half of 2006 is a reliable barometer, Americans should get ready for slower growth in 2007. The amount of freight hauled by motor carriers is down between 2% and 3% according to recent statistics from the American Trucking Associations.
MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=46300
MORE: <http://www.etrucker.com/apps/news/article.asp?id=57578>

>>>> TRUCKING SECTION <<<<

TRUCKING – FMCSA ISSUES ON-BOARD RECORDERS REGS

Out of compliance?
Expect to be forced to install Electronic On Board Recorders (EOBR) or shut down.
Federal regulations proposed by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) will require the use of recorders -- tracking drivers' duty status, identity, date, time and location -- for carriers who've demonstrated a 10% or greater violation rate, for any of the hours regulations, in two compliance reviews within a two-year period.
The proposed rule also would encourage industry-wide use of recorders -- commonly referred to by drivers as "black boxes" -- by providing incentives for voluntary use, says FMCSA chief John Hill.
The rule also would mandate that recorders' performance standards be updated to record hours-of-service data and location-tracking information such as GPS data. Current performance standards for the recorders date back to 1988 -- long before widespread use of GPS, wireless communications or technologies for rapidly and reliably downloading data.
The American Trucking Associations announced its support of the proposed rule.
Public Citizen, a "public interest group," terms the proposal "a weak standard" for EOBRs.
The full Notice of Proposed Rulemaking will be published today (18 January) in the Federal Register. To download the document, go to <http://dms.dot.gov/search> and search Docket No. 18940. Then select "Reverse Order." The NPRM is 18940-357.
Comments from the public on the proposed rule are invited through April 18. To comment, visit the DOT website, <http://dms.dot.gov>, and reference Docket Number FMCSA-2004-18940.
MORE: <http://www.etrucker.com/apps/news/article.asp?id=57577>
MORE: <http://www.thetrucker.com/News/Stories/2007/1/11/ProposedEOBRrulewouldmakedevicemandatoryforonlyseriousHOSviolators.aspx>
MORE: http://www.truckinginfo.com/news/news-detail.asp?news_id=57808

TRUCKING – VOLVO SHOWS DIESEL-ELECTRIC HYBRID TRUCK: Volvo unveiled its diesel-electric hybrid technology for heavy-duty applications -- from stop-and-go refuse collecting to regional tractor-trailer hauling -- at the Swedish Embassy in Washington. Volvo plans the first serial rollout of its kind among manufacturers of Class 8 trucks in 2009. Fuel savings of up to 35% are possible, and the electric motor is capable of full torque at start-up, a potential boon for stop-and-go applications.
MORE: <http://www.etrucker.com/apps/news/article.asp?id=57591>
MORE: <http://www.thetrucker.com/News/Stories/2007/1/11/VolvoGrouppresentshybridtechnologyintheUS.aspx>

TRUCKING – WAL-MART EYES DIESEL-ELECTRIC TRUCK DRIVETRAIN:
MORE: http://www.truckinginfo.com/news/news-detail.asp?news_id=57804



TRUCKING – VOLVO’S “BEEVAN” TRUCK CONCEPT

A truck this ugly better be good.

Volvo is showing a one-quarter-scale design study of a new Class 8 over-the-road truck at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit. The Volvo concept is part of the Michelin Challenge Design competition.

The “BeeVan” concept truck from Volvo puts the driver front and center in the truck’s cab, instead of the traditional left-side position, in what Volvo’s designers call the Full View Driver Position (FVDP). The huge windshield arcs around the driver, improving visibility, aerodynamics, and forcing air into twin radiators to aid engine cooling.

Remote vision cameras eliminate blind spots. The door slides back, not out into traffic. Opening the door causes the driver’s seat to move rearward and rotate toward the driver for easy access.

The cab includes sleeper berths, a dinette table and other versatile components to combine office, relaxation, dining, personal storage and sleeping functions.

MORE: <http://www.thetrucker.com/News/Stories/2007/1/9/VolvoTrucksdesignconceptmodelputsdriverinmiddleofcab.aspx>

TRUCKING – TRUCK-ONLY TOLL LANES FOR I-285 IN ATLANTA?: The Georgia Department of Transportation has received four competing proposals to develop truck-only toll lanes on the western side of Interstate 285 around Atlanta. The state has yet to determine whether the toll lanes will be voluntary or mandatory. The I-285 project calls for two truck-only toll lanes in each direction along the northwest quadrant of the bypass. This section is traveled by 20,000 heavy trucks per weekday. If approved the project would be completed in 2014. MORE: <http://www.etrucker.com/apps/news/article.asp?id=57513>

TRUCKING – DIESEL DROPS 4.3-CENTS: The average US weekly retail on-highway price of a gallon of diesel fell to \$2.537, only 5.2 cents higher than the same time one year ago. MORE: <http://www.thetrucker.com/News/Stories/2007/1/8/Averagedieselpriecedrops43centsagallon.aspx>

TWIC MEANS ANOTHER COSTLY BACKGROUND CHECK: See “Security” section

DRIVING SCHOOL STUDENT WITH TERROR LINKS?: See “Security” section

>>>> SECURITY SECTION <<<<

SECURITY - DEMS PUSH 100% US CARGO SCREENING

--- Excerpted from several stories – Links at end ---

The Democratic party now runs the US House of Representatives and US Senate following election wins in November. House Democrats say they will push broad new antiterrorism legislation, but some Senate Democrats and the Bush administration object to security mandates in the plan, citing concerns about their cost and practicality.

The House measure, known as the “Sept. 11 Commission Bill,” is intended to write into law recommendations by the group that investigated the 2001 terror attacks. But the proposed legislation goes beyond what the commission recommended, taking up measures previously favored by Democratic lawmakers but opposed by the Department of Homeland Security.

The bill requires that within three years, all cargo on passenger jets be inspected for explosives, as checked baggage is now.

The House bill also requires that within five years all ship cargo containers headed to the US be scanned overseas for components of a nuclear bomb.

--- SCREENING TECH DOES NOT EXIST ---

Homeland Security Department officials say there is no proven technology for 100% cargo screening, at least at a reasonable cost or without causing bottlenecks in trade.

DHS officials say they are researching ways to inspect more air and sea cargo. The agency has tests planned this year at three ports in Pakistan, Honduras and England,

DEMOCRATIC PLAN WOULD

- Require scanning all air cargo on passenger jets within three years
- Require all ocean cargo destined for US to be inspected or scanned at foreign ports within five years

where all ship containers headed for the United States will be checked for radioactive substances or dense objects that might be hiding a bomb.

Until then, the department intends to follow its existing security procedures, which include mandatory inspections of the small fraction of cargo containers deemed suspicious because of the sender, the destination or the contents, among other factors.

Part of the skepticism about the mandate for 100% screening is that even if the equipment is installed, it is not clear it would do much to prevent an attack, some security experts said.

The radiation detection equipment now in use, for example, probably would not pick up a crucial radioactive substance for a nuclear weapon if the material was shielded. And even if all cargo containers were checked, terrorists could find other ways to smuggle weapons into the United States, including on private boats or ships that carry cars, which would not be covered by the inspection mandates.

Currently, about 30% of air cargo on passenger planes is inspected by dogs or screening devices, while about 5% of all incoming ship containers are sent through a device like an X-ray machine.

MORE: http://www.judges.com/2007/01/09/shipinspect02news.html?_r=1&_u=504&_e=05410e34e02993b7c&_f=118311800&_id=001&_prof=000&_e=000&_b=000&_c=118311800&_d=000&_e=000&_f=000&_g=000&_h=000&_i=000&_j=000&_k=000&_l=000&_m=000&_n=000&_o=000&_p=000&_q=000&_r=000&_s=000&_t=000&_u=000&_v=000&_w=000&_x=000&_y=000&_z=000

MORE: <http://www.govexec.com/dailyfed/0107/010507cdam1.htm>

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=46084

MORE: <http://www.aircargonews.com/070110/ussecuritybill.html>

SECURITY – RETAILERS ASK LAWMAKERS TO BE REALISTIC ON SCREENING: The Retail Industry Leaders Association said it sent a letter to all members of the US House of Representatives encouraging them to stick to the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission when considering any port security legislation. House Democrats introduced legislation to force scanning of all cargo. RILA argued that the bill does not dovetail the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, which did not specifically call for scanning all containers as a means of improving port and cargo security.

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=46173

SECURITY – US CHAMBER TO LAWMAKERS: “NO 100% INSPECTIONS”:

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=46296

SECURITY – ANALYSTS TO LAWMAKERS: “Are the trade-offs worth it?”:

MORE: <http://www.mercurynews.com/mld/mercurynews/news/opinion/16425189.htm>

SECURITY - DRIVING SCHOOL STUDENT WITH TERROR LINKS?: A Highway Watch participant's suspicions about a driving student seeking a hazmat endorsement has prompted the arrest of and widening investigation into a 28-year-old East Indian national named Mohammed Yousuf Mullawala.

MORE: <http://www.thetrucker.com/News/Stories/2007/1/9/Manexhibiting%E2%80%98suspicious%E2%80%99behavioratdrivingschoolmayhaveterroristlinks.aspx>

SECURITY – SCARE AT PORT OF MIAMI “MISCOMMUNICATION”

Early Sunday the 7th of January an Iraqi national pulled up in his tractor-trailer truck for a routine delivery at the Port of Miami-Dade. It was anything but routine.

Port security guards stopped the driver, who lacked the proper identification to enter the port. He said he was alone. Miami-Dade police found an Iraqi relative and a Lebanese man in the cab -- one without any ID at all. Two of the three men had a criminal history.

In the back of the truck was a 40-foot cargo container holding auto wire parts.

Within minutes, the port was on high security alert. And as the story leaked out on cable news networks, the media mobbed the port as local, state and federal authorities began investigating what seemed like a possible national security threat.

It was not. By mid-afternoon, authorities found no explosive, hazardous or dangerous materials on the truck. The driver's manifest matched the contents in the cargo hold.

Ultimately, law enforcement officials concluded that the alert stemmed from "miscommunication" between the driver and security at the port's check point. "Apparently there was a language barrier," according to a Miami-Dade police spokesman.

MORE: <http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/16406046.htm>

MORE: <http://abcnews.go.com/US/Terrorism/wireStory?id=2777358>

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=46085

SECURITY – C-TPAT – GET IT & KEEP IT

--- Excerpted from an in-depth article by Barry Brandman – Link at end ---

--- HOW C-TPAT BEGAN ---

The Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) was conceived in the wake of the catastrophic events of 9-11. As US officials scrambled to plug holes in national security in the days following the attacks, they quickly homed in on the commercial supply chain as an area of vulnerability.

US businesses bring approximately 20 million trailers, railcars, air containers and ocean containers into the country each year, each one a target for terrorists. It would be almost impossible to inspect every container.

The US Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) came up with a plan that could significantly increase the effectiveness of the small percentage of inspections taking place if it could focus its resources on the high-risk shipments.

We know that program as C-TPAT.

--- GETTING & KEEPING C-TPAT CERTIFICATION ---

Getting (and keeping) C-TPAT certification means applicants must be able to confirm that foreign suppliers, vendors and contractors are performing seven-point container inspections, documenting their procedures for issuing keys, changing passwords, and an array of other best security practices.

As part of the program, CBP requires C-TPAT members to prepare a Security Profile that outlines the steps they're taking and to conduct ongoing internal audits to ensure that their employees, vendors, suppliers and trading partners actually follow enhanced policies and procedures.

CBP supply chain security specialists meet with company representatives, and visit foreign and domestic sites to verify that everyone in a company's supply chain is following the practices outlined in the member's Security Profile. If the inspections reveal significant problems, CBP can suspend or even revoke the importer's benefits.

--- AVOID THE TRAPS ---

- **Make sure nothing gets lost in translation.** When working with partners in foreign countries, there's always the danger that cultural differences and language barriers will lead to miscommunication. Foreign suppliers tend to be one of the most vulnerable links in the supply chain today; it's imperative that nothing gets lost in translation.
- **Emphasize the need for candor.** It's not only foreign partners who may provide misleading information. Domestic partners and even personnel at your own facilities may be reluctant to expose and document inadequacies in their security practices and programs.
- **Provide in-depth, focused training.** The new C-TPAT criteria require that importers establish a threat awareness and security training program. This isn't a quick overview of the basics; this should be exceedingly specialized instruction.

--- ONE EXAMPLE ---

During a C-TPAT training seminar we asked attendees whether they thought bolt seals could be circumvented. 90% said no, bolt seals were tamperproof; the remaining 10% told us they suspected that bolt seals could be compromised, but they had no idea how. Bolt seals can, in fact, be circumvented. But if the people responsible for seal integrity don't know that (or don't know how), they're unlikely to detect a breach.

--- SEE FOR YOURSELF ---

If you want to keep your certification, you will need to have an ongoing security auditing program in place for your facilities as well as those of your supply chain partners around the world.

It's a C-TPAT requirement. It's also a very sound practice.

If your company is a C-TPAT-certified company, it's your responsibility to make sure your security safeguards are as good in reality as they appear to be on paper.

--- THE THREAT TO YOU ---

It's no secret that shipments to certified companies stand a much lower chance of being opened and inspected by CBP inspectors. That makes shipments to C-TPAT certified companies precisely the ones terrorist cells are most likely to target... underscoring the importance of identifying loopholes in your supply chain safeguards before others have the opportunity to exploit them.

Doing anything less could jeopardize your C-TPAT certification and expose your company to the catastrophic ramifications of having a weapon of mass destruction smuggled into your supply chain.

PART ONE: http://www.dcvelocity.com/viewpoints/?article_id=434

PART TWO: http://www.dcvelocity.com/viewpoints/?article_id=344

SECURITY – TWIC MEANS ANOTHER COSTLY BACKGROUND CHECK

Truck drivers and others who move freight must pay for a federal background check to get the license they need to haul hazardous cargo. They must pay for a federal background check to move freight for the Department of Defense and another for the Department of Energy. And if they want to take freight into Canada? That's one more they'll need.

Now they must pay for the new Transportation Workers Identification Credential (TWIC).

About 750,000 air-freight, truck freight and port workers across the country, including longshoremen, truck drivers and mariners, will need to apply for the cards.

The IDs, valid for five years, will cost between \$107 and \$159 each. That's a price some truckers say is too high, considering what they already pay for other background checks and credentials.

"How many times do you have to pay for a background check?" asks Todd Spencer, executive vice president of the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association. "We think it's ridiculous that you have to pay for more than one."

To lower costs for truckers, the TSA said it will charge less for drivers who have already undergone a federal background check. Drivers who have already been cleared by such a check will pay between \$107 and \$127 because there's no need for another, TSA spokesman Darrin Kayser said. Those without current checks will pay between \$139 and \$159.

MORE: <http://content.hamptonroads.com/story.cfm?story=117147&ran=228516>

SECURITY – DELHI AIRPORT ON HIGH ALERT: Security at Indira Ghandi International Airport is on high alert following a threat by a terrorist organization that it could hijack aircraft in and around Delhi airport.

MORE: http://www.dailypioneer.com/indexn12.asp?main_variable=CITY&file_name=city2%2Etxt&counter_img=2

SECURITY - SAUDI ARABIA BOOSTS CARGO SECURITY: X-ray and security tapes of shipments will become mandatory in Saudi Arabia from May as per a new cargo and freight security initiative. The Saudi Arabian Civil Aviation Authority (Saca) has said the new program of 'appointed freighter to all air cargo agencies and offices' will apply. The system makes mandatory for air cargo agencies and offices to obtain a new license, which authorizes them to ship parcels, substances, consignments and goods on commercial and civil aircraft in the country without subjecting them to dual complicated procedures at the airports.

MORE: http://www.tradearabia.com/tanews/newsdetails_snSTN_article117146.html

MORE: <http://www.ameinfo.com/107000.html>

>>> AIR & OCEAN SECTION <<<

OCEAN – LABOR SHORTAGE SLOWS BALBOA PORT: APL says its Atlantic-Pacific Express and Panama Andean Express services are subject to delays as "severe labor shortages" at the port of Balboa, the major transshipment hub on Panama's West Coast, have resulted in congestion and delays to vessels being discharged.

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=46094

OCEAN – SHIPPERS EYE MEXICAN PORT FOR US WEST COAST CARGO: Importers in the United States are looking for gateways to supplement traditional West and East Coast ports. The Mexican port of Lazaro Cardenas is getting more attention as shippers look for alternatives to congestion at US ports.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/lede/20070110/sections/ocean/w89488.asp>

OCEAN – AMSTERDAM CARGO UP 20% IN 2006:

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/lede/20070108/sections/ocean/w20460.asp>

OCEAN – ANTWERP HITS 7-MILLION TEUS IN 2006:

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20070108/sections/ocean/w11413.asp>

OCEAN – US PACIFIC TERRITORIES TO SEE RATE HIKE: Matson will raise rates for the company's Guam service by \$125 per westbound container and \$65 per eastbound container beginning 4 February. The price of shipping privately owned vehicles will increase by \$50.

MORE: <http://www.guampdn.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=20070112/NEWS01/701120304/1002/NEWS01>

OCEAN – MAERSK PLANS BETTER ASIA-EU SERVICE: "Our new Asia-Europe network will offer exporters and importers more direct calls and enhanced transit times, especially between North/East China and Europe," says Peter Frederiksen, senior vice president of Maersk Line. "An example is Shanghai to Bremerhaven in 21 days, which will provide our customers with the best transit time in that market." Maersk expects market growth of 15% and will increase its capacity by 13% this year, mainly by deploying larger tonnage.

MORE: <http://today.reuters.com/news/articlebusiness.aspx?type=basicindustries&storyID=nL09923558&imageid=&cap=&from=business>

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20070110/sections/ocean/w30375.asp>

OCEAN – FASTSHIP PLANS 5-DAY TRANS-ATLANTIC: You can start booking freight today as FastShip begins space sales. The much-delayed FastShip Atlantic concept plans a high-speed transatlantic link between the ports of Philadelphia and Cherbourg in just five days port to port. This would allow New York to Paris delivery for full containers in just six days.

MORE: <http://www.fastshipatlantic.com/>

MORE: <http://www.flightglobal.com/Articles/2007/01/05/Navigation/177/211389/Cargo+airlines+to+get+competition+on+transatlantic+corridor+as+FastShip+certificates+high-speed.html>

AIR – CATHAY CARGO UP 7.2% IN 2006... CAPACITY UP 5.2%:

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=46302

AIR – LUFTHANSA CARGO UP 0.6% IN DECEMBER... UP 1.3% FOR 2006:

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=46301

AIR – AIR CHINA & CATHAY EYE CARGO JV: Air China is to set up a 50-50 cargo joint venture in Shanghai with Cathay Pacific in the first half of this year. Air China has also been in talks with China Eastern Airlines to create merge their cargo units.

MORE: http://www.aircargonews.net/article.asp?art_id=1436

AIR – US-AIR RAISES DELTA TAKE-OVER BID – DELTA BOARD WANTS SOLO: US

Airways raised its offer for Delta by 20% to \$10.2-Billion as it seeks to put pressure on the bankrupt carrier's creditors to agree to a deal that Delta's management opposes. Delta's Board of Directors prefers the stand-alone plan of Delta's management. US Air said the higher offer will expire on 1 February unless creditors indicate support for the start of the due diligence process, which would open up Delta's books to US Airways.

MORE: <http://www.atwonline.com/news/story.html?storyID=7574>

AIR – DELTA AND NORTHWEST IN MERGER TALKS:

MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1168462938.html>

AIR – NWA FILES REORGANIZATION PLAN:

MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1168640138.html>

AIR – NORTHWEST TO BUY MESABA:

MORE: <http://www.atwonline.com/news/story.html?storyID=7529>

AIR – AIRTRAN HIKES BID FOR MIDWEST: Low-Cost carrier AirTran raised its bid for fellow Low-Cost Midwest to \$345-million in cash and stock.

MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1168513280.html>

AIR – AIRLINES GET BOOST FROM OIL PRICE DROP:

MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1168382731.html>

AIR – THAILAND MAY REOPEN DON MUANG FOR DOMESTIC FLIGHTS:

MORE: http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/afp_asiapacific_business/view/252134/1/html

AIR – DOT GRANTS UNITED IAD-PEK ROUTE:

MORE: <http://www.atwonline.com/news/story.html?storyID=7562>

MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1168381776.html>

TRADE – INDIAN TRUCKERS PLAN STRIKE NEXT WEEK: Truck drivers across India, upset with the government's refusal to review increases in insurance premiums, plan an indefinite strike beginning next Thursday, 25 January. Truckers are upset about increases of almost 150% on third party premiums announced by insurers that went into effect 1 January.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/lede/20070110/sections/logis/w77401.asp>

>>>>> JUST FOR FUN <<<<<

(These are shared by readers – Please share yours. Thanks. Mike)

A WINTER CHILDREN'S STORY

Did you hear about the school teacher who was helping one of her kindergarten students put on his snow boots?

He asked for help and she could see why. Even with her pulling and him pushing, the little boots still didn't want to go on. By the time they got the second boot on, she had worked up a sweat. She almost cried when the little boy said, "Teacher, They're on the wrong feet."

It wasn't any easier pulling the boots off than it was putting them on. She managed to keep her cool as together they worked to get the boots back on, this time on the right feet.

He then announced, "These aren't my boots." She bit her tongue, rather than get right in his face and scream, "Why didn't you say so?" like she wanted to.

Once again, she struggled to help him pull the ill-fitting boots off his little feet. No sooner had they gotten the boots off when he said, "They're my brother's boots. My Mom made me wear them."

Now she didn't know if she should laugh or cry. But, she mustered up what grace and courage she had left to wrestle the boots on his feet again.

Helping him into his coat, she asked, Now, where are your Mittens?" He said, "I stuffed them in the toes of my boots." She will be eligible for parole in three years.

OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES

The accidental wisdom of children could teach us adults a thing or two.

HOW CAN A STRANGER TELL IF TWO PEOPLE ARE MARRIED?

You might have to guess, based on whether they seem to be yelling at the same kids. -- Derrick, age 8

WHAT DO MOST PEOPLE DO ON A DATE?

Dates are for having fun, and people should use them to get to know each other. Even boys have something to say if you listen long enough. -- Lynnette, age 8

On the first date, they just tell each other lies and that usually gets them interested enough to go for a second date. -- Martin, age 10

WHEN IS IT OKAY TO KISS SOMEONE?

When they're rich. -- Pam, age 7

The law says you have to be eighteen, so I wouldn't want to mess with that. -- Curt, age 7

IS IT BETTER TO BE SINGLE OR MARRIED?

It's better for girls to be single but not boys. Boys need someone to clean up after them. -- Anita, age 9

HOW WOULD THE WORLD BE DIFFERENT IF PEOPLE DIDN'T GET MARRIED?

There sure would be a lot of kids to explain, wouldn't there? -- Kelvin, age 8

HOW WOULD YOU MAKE A MARRIAGE WORK?

Tell your wife that she looks pretty, even if she looks like a truck. -- Ricky, age 10

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