

Truckking industry always looking for skilled professionals

By Jolene Cleaver

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For many companies in the area, staffing is a top concern, especially in industries such as shipping and transportation where there is a need for continued growth.

But some statistics show there are shallow pools of workers for certain

types of skilled labor.

At least one local trucking company wants to remind people that the industry is nothing to balk at.

"It gets into your skin. It gets into your blood," said Teddy Pawelek, a trucking veteran of 40 years and current safety director at RB Humphreys in Westmoreland. "You're looking at the big rigs going

down the road. It just drives you to it.

"People seem to forget how important this job is," he added. "You're not going to have the necessities of life (without freight transportation)."

Leaving Pawelek's office and snaking through the shop, one ends up zipping past a busy dispatch office where staffers are

communicating load information to drivers.

Down a short hallway is Chief Financial Officer JoAnne Toth's office.

There, she talks about why she likes the job. "We are like any other company," she said. "We are lean. (But) we are 110 percent every day of the week." She said they hire some

younger drivers, but more often those with experience.

"We have a lot of long-term drivers, which is nice," she said. "They're the best ambassadors for the company."

Right now the company has hired three high school-age clerical workers for part-time office positions. Toth said that working

in a serious office environment is a good skill and responsibility for the teens to develop as they plan for their future. A confidence builder, too.

"An office environment is different," she said. "And I like mentoring."

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