FEBRUARY 2026 • 57th Year

hook & winch

FROM THE DESK OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SUE MILES

Building Momentum for the Year Ahead

As we move further into 2026, I want to take a moment to thank each of you for your continued support of the Indiana Towing & Wrecker Association. Your membership, participation, and feedback are what drive this organization forward.

This year, our focus is clear:

- Delivering meaningful, hands-on training
- Strengthening industry advocacy
- Elevate the professionalism of towing across Indiana
- Continue building a Tow Show that represents the best of our industry

The board has been reviewing recent survey responses, and your voices are shaping our direction. From training preferences to event feedback, member input is guiding our decisions.

ITWA exists to serve you – the operators, owners, and professionals who keep Indiana moving every day. Thank you for being part of the mission.

Let's make 2026 our strongest year yet!

Sue

2026 OFFICERS

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WORLDWIDE

ZIPS TRUCK EQUIPMENT

FROM THE DESK OF PRESIDENT BILL McCLANAHAN

Hello! Hope and pray everyone got through the cold and snow safely.

Things are looking great to start the new year. Let's pray it stays that way.

I am proud to say thank you for the progress we are making. Hats off to all, and let's keep making things better.

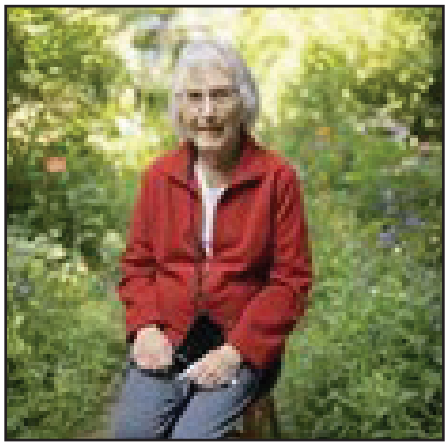
Sue, you are really doing a great job! Please everyone stay involved in our progress.

Cutting this short, plane is leaving. Hope to see you all at the Florida Tow Show in April.

Stay safe out here.

Bill McClanahan

ITWA REMEMBERS THELMA THEOBALD



Thelma Theobald

March 27, 1934 - January 31, 2026

In a small home west of Thorntown, the youngest of five daughters was born to William and Leona Sikes. Her name was Thelma and Thorntown would be her home for her entire life. She joined the Sugar Plain Friends Church at the age of 12 and remained a member her entire life. She enjoyed serving the church and her niece Karin often took her to Sunday services the past few years.

After graduating from Thorntown High School, Thelma married Albert Theobald in the summer of 1952. Together they raised their children; Julie, Kittie, Doug and Dan. They traveled when time allowed to visit family in Texas and hunt in Shirley mountains of Wyoming. Theobald Auto Repair was the business that they built and worked in for 30 years.

Thelma helped build her community by serving as the first female County Commissioner in Boone County having served for 13 years. She enjoyed serving the Sugar Creek Arts Center as treasurer. She and Albert shared many active years in the Indiana Towing and Wrecker Association. She enjoyed her membership in Thorntown American Legion Auxiliary, Order of the Eastern Star, Boone County Republican Women and Epsilon Sigma Alpha Sorority. Thelma owned and operated Action Advertising for several years.

Family was the most important part of Thelma's world. She welcomed the spouses of her children; Beth, Marsha and Greg as her own and loved her 13 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren. Genealogy was a passion that she shared with her niece, Carolyn, and they spent endless hours compiling the Sikes family history.

The HEART of ITWA

Celebrating Our Members

February is often associated with appreciation – and ITWA would not exist without its members. Across Indiana, family-owned and independent towing companies work around the clock in all conditions to serve motorists, law enforcement, and communities.

We encourage members to submit stories, milestone anniversaries, or employee recognition highlights to be featured in future newsletters.This association is built on professionalism, resilience, and dedication – and that starts with you.

Submit stories for newsletter to director@towingindiana.com

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ITWA WOMEN'S AUXILIARY

Last month I mentioned that the Women's Auxiliary promotes fundraising for the **Allen Hercamp Scholarship Fund** and the **Sonny Henline Survivor Fund**.

This month I would like to tell you a little bit about the Allen Hercamp Scholarship Fund. The ITWA Scholarship Fund was brought to life by Allen Hercamp with a dream for our Association to assist dependents of active members in advancing their education. When he started the Scholarship in 1996, his dream was that ITWA would continue to expand the Scholarship Fund. By doing so each year, our Association has provided young men and women of our Association assistance with their education by giving them the opportunity to learn, grow, and become pioneers for future generations.

In 1996 the very first Scholarship was presented to Stacie Bell, daughter of Loyal Bell (Froedge's Towing). She attended Ball State University. In 1997 Jena Nye, daughter of Jeff Nye (Nye Wrecker Service) was the Scholarship recipient. She attended Ball State University. Then in 1998 ITWA was very pleased to be able to present both Stacie and Jena with Scholarships along with Kyle Norman, stepson of Peggy Norman (31 Wrecker Service). He attended Indiana University Southeast. In 1999, ITWA presented 7 young men and women of our association with Scholarships. And every year since then there has been Scholarships awarded. To date,194 scholarships have been awarded, totally $95,450.00.

This year marks 30 years since Allen's dream of starting the Scholarship Fund. By continuing the Allen Hercamp Scholarship Fund, we the members of the Indiana Towing & Wrecker Association honor the memory of Allen for his dedication and devotion to the dream that he had to assist with the education of the young men and women of our association.

Application for the Scholarship Fund is on the ITWA Website. Check that out for more information. There is also an option to donate to the Fund.

The Women's Auxiliary will be hosting Fundraisers for both the Allen Hercamp Scholarship Fund and the Sonny Henline Survivor Fund. Thank you in advance for your support of both of these Fundraisers.

Until Next Time Stay Safe,

Crystal

DRIVER LICENSE BASICS

By Brian J. Riker

Brian J. Riker is the President and Chief Compliance Specialists at Fleet Compliance Solutions, a nationwide motor carrier safety and compliance consulting firm that specializes in non-traditional fleets such as towing and auto transport companies. With more than 30 years' experience as a tower and auto transport company owner, Brian blends real world experience with professional knowledge of the regulations and best practices to help towers stay safe, stay compliant and thrive in business.

Often, I am asked questions about driver licenses, the differences between what happens in your private vehicle vs. work trucks and who is legally qualified to drive what type of vehicles. I would like to clear up a few myths, especially for drivers with a commercial driver license (CDL).

Perhaps the biggest fallacy I hear is that what you do in your car doesn't affect your CDL. This is completely false! You only have one driver license, even if you are a CDL qualified driver it is still all one license and one record. When a prospective employer asks about any accidents, citations or convictions on your driving record they are asking about ANY on your record not just the ones that occurred in a commercial vehicle. This is true for both CDL and non-CDL drivers.

When insurance companies look at a driver to determine if they are insurable, and what the rate will be to provide coverage, they look at all the information on their driving record. This means that what happens to you at work can also affect your personal car insurance rates and vice versa so protect your driving record at all costs or you will find yourself uninsurable and unemployable!

The next most common myth I hear is that tow truck drivers don't need a CDL to tow a truck. This is also false. While there is a limited exception from the CDL requirements for emergency moves of wrecked or disabled motor vehicles by tow truck, it does not relieve a tow operator from having a base CDL of the correct class for the tow truck and the vehicle in tow. The exception, recognized by most states, simply relieves a tow operator on a primary (first) move of the requirements to have the proper endorsements such as tank or hazardous materials. For secondary moves all endorsements must be correct on the tow operators' CDL.

SIDEBAR NOTE SPECIFIC TO INDIANA – Indiana requires a for-hire endorsement for all commercial activities that require operation of a motor vehicle with a gross weight rating of 16,000, and up to 26,000 pounds. This is applicable to Indiana licensed drivers that are using a vehicle to transport property they do not own, meaning in "for-hire" use. This includes tow trucks used for repossession, road service trucks and other business use of these size vehicles.

Keep in mind it is very easy to jump straight from no CDL required, basic driver's license, right up to a class A CDL requirement simply by hooking up a vehicle that has a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) in excess of 10,000 pounds. A simple example of this is using a class 5 or 6 truck, typical of light duty wreckers, with a GVWR of 19,500 pounds and hooking up to a ¾ ton pickup truck that most likely will have a GVWR of 11,000 pounds. Separately a non-CDL driver can operate either vehicle in every state (NY will require a tow truck endorsement), but once combined in tow, the GVWR together is in excess of 26,000 pounds and the towed vehicle is in excess of 10,000 pounds making this a class A CDL combination in every state.

Further complicating the issue, and another myth to bust, is that not every state uses the same definition of CDL class A, B and C. While most states use the Federal definition based strictly on the gross vehicle weight ratings and excluding the actual or registered weights for these class distinctions a few are more restrictive and will require a class A CDL whenever the towed vehicle is over 10,000 pounds GVWR, registered weight or actual weight.

The myth part is that a driver licensed in a state that complies with the Federal definition can't operate in the more restrictive states. That simply is not true, every state has a reciprocity agreement that allows a properly licensed driver to operate any class of vehicle in every state if they are in compliance with their home state's licensing regulations. Always double check the restriction and endorsement codes on all driver licenses before you allow them to operate your equipment. Every state has this information available on their driver licensing agencies website and the codes should be detailed on the back side of every driver license if there is a restriction or endorsement on the license.

The last myth is that a driver under 18 can operate a non-CDL required commercial vehicle if they stay within their home state. This is not always true and depends on a few things.

First, interstate commerce and the requirement for the driver to be at least 21 years old, does not always require the driver or truck to leave the state. It is possible to never even leave your home city and still engage in interstate commerce subject to the Federal regulations.

Next, state laws vary regarding qualifications of commercial drivers, with some restricting drivers under 21 from hauling hazardous materials, passengers or even obtaining a class A CDL while other states may only restrict hazardous materials as required by Federal regulations.

Most states do not allow drivers under age 18 to operate any commercial vehicle in business use except for farm vehicles. Check your state's definition of a commercial vehicle as well as their qualifications of commercial drivers before allowing anyone under 21 to operate your equipment.

Further, most insurance policies have age exclusions so always double check with your insurance agent to make sure your driver(s) are qualified and covered.

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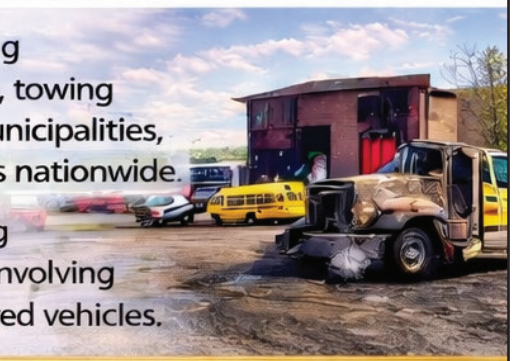
ABOUT THE AMERICAN TOWING & RECOVERY INSTITUTE (ATRI)

The American Towing & Recovery Institute (ATRI), based in Missouri, is dedicated to advancing the towing and recovery industry through hands-on training, real-world experience, and forward-thinking education.

- ATRI delivers industry-leading programs for towing and recovery companies, equipment distributors, towing associations, Departments of Transportation, municipalities, fire and rescue agencies, and military installations nationwide.
- ATRI develops specialized awareness-level training to help first responders safely manage incidents involving electric, hybrid, natural gas, and hydrogen-powered vehicles.



register online at https://towingindiana.com

QUESTIONS? CALL 765-393-6012

DOT UPDATE FROM ISP MASTER TROOPER BRENT HOOVER

My name is **Brent Hoover**. *I am a Master Trooper with the Indiana State Police. October marked my 21st year with the ISP. I am assigned to the Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division or CVED for short. My primary daily duty is to enforce the State and Federal Regulations as well as Size and Weight enforcement for CMVs in the State of Indiana.*

I am certified to complete Part A and B Inspections as well as General Haz-mat and Cargo Tank inspections, Passenger Vehicle Inspections, Performance Base Brake Test and Portable Scale Service Tech.

I am also a Part B Instructor for the National Training Center, which means I teach new inspectors how to inspect and Document Level 1 inspections. I am a Certified Master Instructor through the National Training Center. I have competed twice in the North American Inspectors Championships. I am the current administrator of the CVED Facebook page where I post about tips and tricks to improve your pre-trip inspections and to avoid common roadside violations.

This month I would like to take the time to talk a little bit about Annual Inspections that are required on CMV's. Most tow companies in my area are also repair facilities and conduct annual inspections. So, are you following the proper guidelines?

396.17 Periodic inspection:

(a) Every commercial motor vehicle must be inspected as required by this section. The inspection must include, at a minimum, the parts and accessories set forth in appendix A of this part. The term commercial motor vehicle includes each vehicle in a combination vehicle. For example, for a tractor semitrailer, full trailer combination, the tractor, semitrailer, and the full trailer (including the converter dolly if so equipped) must each be inspected.

Question:

May the due date for the next inspection satisfy the requirements for the inspection date on the sticker or decal?

Guidance:

No. The rule requires that the date of the inspection be included on the report and sticker or decal. This date may consist of a month and a year.

Make sure that you are using the most up to date form dated 2022. Rear Impact guards have been added to the criteria to inspect.

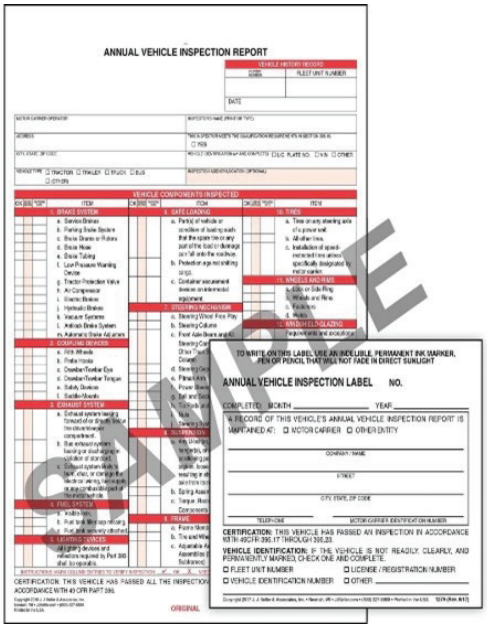
When conducting annual inspections just remember that every item on this form can be looked at in the regulations as far as a better definition of what is required.

*Are you certified to conduct inspections? If you would like a copy of the required certification form, please contact me at my email addres below and I will you a copy of the required form.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me.

Brent N. Hoover, Master Trooper

Cell: 812-631-8626
Email: bhoover@isp.in.gov



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Allen Hercamp, Indiana Towing and Wrecker Association Scholarship Fund

The ITWA Scholarship was brought to life by an active member with a dream for our association to assist dependents of active members in advancing their education. Allen Hercamp's dream for starting the Association's scholarship and to continually expand that scholarship fund has made the ITWA Scholarship what is has become today. By continuing this ITWA Scholarship, we the members of the Indiana Towing and Wrecker Association honor Allen Hercamp for his hard work and devotion. We also honor the memory of other ITWA Members who have passed before us. We believe by providing assistance to the young men and women of our association, they will have an opportunity to learn, grow and become pioneers for future generations.

ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS
***Applicants must meet all of the following criteria*:**

A dependent of an ITWA company member or ITWA employee member.

A grandchild of an ITWA company member.

An eligible company member or eligible employee member must be a member of ITWA for two or more years.

A dependent of an ITWA eligible employee member is exempt from this restriction if the employee has been employed for five or more consecutive years by a company which has also been a member for five or more consecutive years.

A dependent of an ITWA eligible owner member or eligible employee member must have a minimum grade point average of 2.0.

Interested students must compete the ITWA Scholarship Fund Application for the following academic year, a 300-word essay, "Who you are and why you deserve this scholarship"' as instructed in the application packet. You must also submit a current transcript of grades.

Applications must be submitted on or before July 31st 2026 for the next school year.

Applications can be submitted via the Indiana Towing and Wrecker Association website, or downloaded from the website and mailed.

ITWA WELCOMES NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBER – EVOLVE!

About Evolv

Based in Newburgh, Indiana and founded in 1998, Evolv partners with associations like ITWA to deliver practical business solutions that help towing companies grow and operate more efficiently. Recognized on the Inc. 5000 Fastest Growing Companies list for Payment Processing and Digital Marketing, Evolv focuses on three core goals: lowering costs, increasing sales, and reducing risk.

What Evolv Offers:

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Industry-built solutions including mobile readers for every truck, QuickBooks integrations, and text/email invoicing. Evolv's Buyer's Choice program can help eliminate up to 98% of credit card processing costs.

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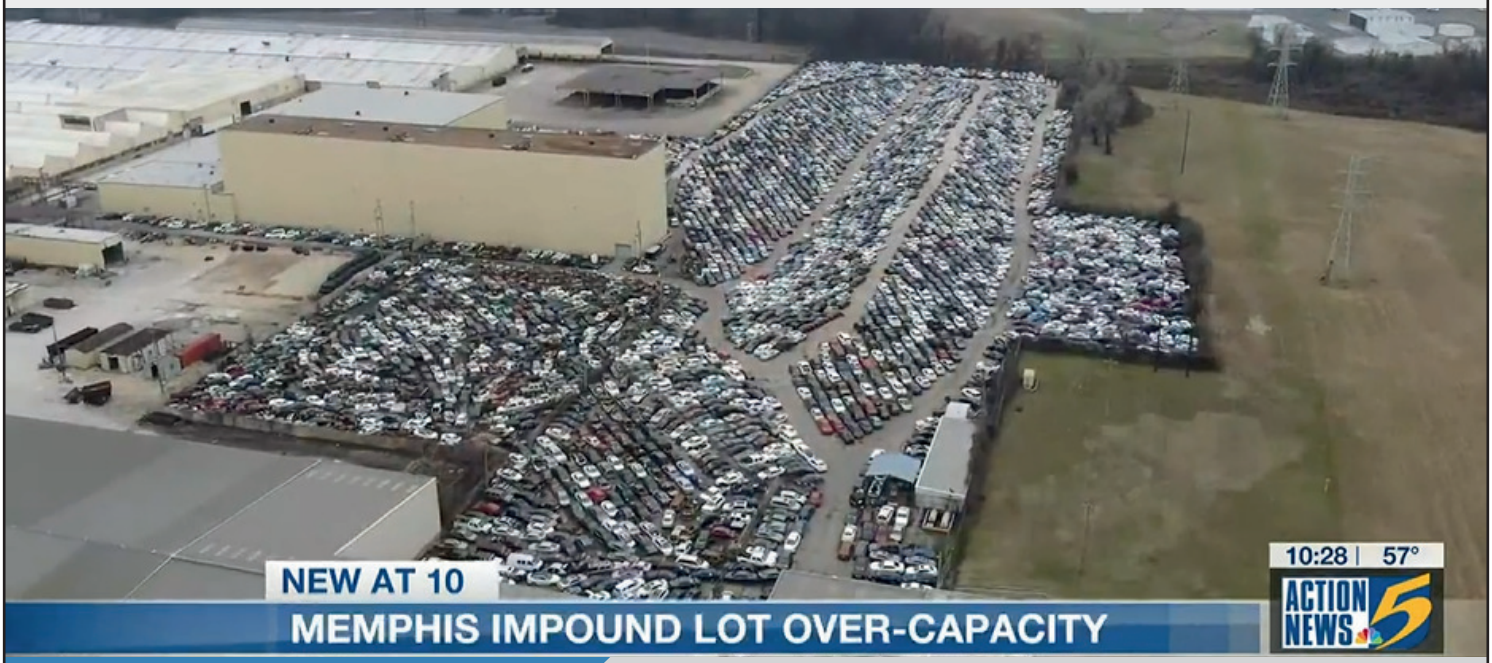

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2026 TOW SHOW UPDATE

July 31- August 1st • Fair Oaks Farm

Save the date!

Planning is actively underway for the 2026 ITWA Tow Show.

Strong vendor participation
- Quality networking opportunities
- Educational sessions
- Equipment Displays
- A professional and welcoming atmosphere

Additional details, announcements, and confirmed information will be shared soon.

If you are interested in volunteering or sponsoring, we encourage you to reach out to get involved. **Contact Sue Miles,** director@towingindiana.com

Thank You for Supporting ITWA in 2026

As membership renewals continue, we want to sincerely thank those who have already renewed for 2026.

Your dues directly support:

- Training and education development
- Industry advocacy efforts with full time lobbyist
- Event Planning and execution
- Member communication and outreach
- Growth of the Indiana towing community

If you have not yet renewed, we encourage you to do so and remain part of the statewide network representing Indiana's towing professionals. Together, we elevate the industry!

Indiana Towing and Wrecker Association

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ATRI Invites Motor Carriers to Participate in 2026 Operational Costs Data Collection

Washington, DC – The American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI) today called on for-hire motor carriers to participate in its annual Operational Costs of Trucking report.

ATRI's Operational Costs of Trucking is trusted by thousands of industry decisionmakers every year as a key barometer of freight market conditions and is the leading public benchmarking tool for motor carriers of all sectors, from owner-operators to 10,000+ truck fleets.

The report tracks cost metrics such as driver pay, equipment expenditures, and insurance premiums as well as key performance indicators such as non-revenue mileage, driver utilization, mileage between breakdowns, and revenue per truck per week.

All participating motor carriers receive a customized report that compares their costs and operations to an anonymized peer group of the same sector and size. New in 2026, customized reports for multi-year participants will also include year-over-year comparisons to more directly evaluate trends over time.

"There are signs of growing opportunities for trucking in 2026, but only if fleets can maintain disciplined, nimble operations," said **Hirschbach Motor Lines Chief Financial Officer Andrew Hadland**. "ATRI's *Operational Costs of Trucking* and the customized report we receive as participants are important inputs for ensuring healthy performance in our costs and operations despite economic headwinds."

For-hire motor carriers are invited to participate by **Friday, April 24, 2026**. Data for the year 2025 can be submitted **online or by PDF: both forms are available on ATRI's website** along with a sample customized report and other helpful information for participants. All confidential data is protected and published only in anonymized averages.

ATRI is the trucking industry's 501c3 not-for-profit research organization. It is engaged in critical research relating to freight transportation's essential role in maintaining a safe, secure and efficient transportation system.

Contact: Alex Leslie
(651) 641-6162
ALeslie@trucking.org

Atlanta, GA • Minneapolis, MN • Washington, DC

TruckingResearch.org