

The Women In Trucking Association

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Women have been involved in transportation since before the invention of the wheel. Calamity Jane was a teamster hauling freight over the prairies in the 1800's. More recently there were Lillie Elizabeth Drennan, who received her commercial truck driver's license in 1929 and went on to run a trucking company until her death, and Rusty Dow, a mail hauler for the Alaska Defense Command during WWII, that are unsung heroines of the trucking industry.

Women have worked behind the scenes in trucking as dispatchers, brokers, safety personnel, shipping and receiving clerks, forklift operators and in the higher end as owners, vice presidents, operations managers, directors of different departments and other areas within the offices of trucking companies since the beginning of trucking. Then there are the wives, mothers and other family members that support truckers.

Outside of equal opportunity laws, we ladies have largely been without a voice to speak up for the thousands of us involved in all aspects of the trucking industry. Those days have now ended with the organization of the Women in Trucking Association, a non for profit organization found at www.womenintrucking.org.

The Women In Trucking Association mission statement is: "Women In Trucking was established to encourage the employment of women in the trucking industry, promote their accomplishments and minimize obstacles faced by women in trucking."

The Association is approaching these goals by forming partnerships with companies to address issues such as: more ergonomically designed trucks to better fit a woman's (or man's) shorter stature, more goods that women need and use to be included in truck stop inventories, advertise the fact that trucking is a good choice for women to consider and enter, encourage companies to hire more women, and letting women know that the transportation industry is one of the few industries without a glass ceiling for women drivers.

Membership is not limited to women alone, men too are encouraged to join the Association to promote better understanding between male and female drivers, trucking industry employees, owners and office suppliers. The Association is planning to present a "Woman of the Year" award in both the USA and Canada this year, also they hope to honor the companies that hire women or adjust their inventories to meet women's needs.

Women In Trucking Association Chairwoman Ellen Voie is not unfamiliar with the trucking industry, formerly the director of the Trucker Buddy Program and now national director of recruiting and retention for a large truck load carrier, she is joined by eleven other women involved in the industry on the board of the directors. These ladies are from areas of the industry such as: engineering, marketing, driving and fleet management.

The Women in Trucking Association website offers a forum, newsletter, store, calendar of events and job opportunities along with stories telling of the industry so women are well informed about the job opportunities and what driving itself entails before choosing trucking as a career. The website is clean, neat and easily navigated. Their forum is strictly moderated so is a safe place to visit and exchange experiences and knowledge.

There are dues to belong to the Women in Trucking Association, but they are minimal for drivers, just \$25 a year. There are corporate rates for corporate sponsor membership also.

If you are interested in joining the Women in Trucking Association go to www.womenintruck-ing.org there you will find an easy application to fill out or you can look for their booth at some trucking shows and events.

I joined this association recently and am impressed with the professional outlook, quality of the website and goals they have set. We ladies have waited a long time to be validated by having our own legitimate website and organization. We have come a long way from Miss Lillie's start in 1929...it is about time!