

A Look of Wonder

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We lady drivers are in minority in the trucking industry and are rarely depicted in movies or on television as truckers, so people don't really realize that we are out here driving these big rigs down the road. One of the things that happens once in awhile that I enjoy most is seeing the look of wonder in a passerby's face when they look up in the truck and expect to see a male driver and instead see a lady driver. Often you can see them say..."Wow! There is a woman driving that truck!"

People often come up when they see me climb down out of the truck and ask, "You drive that big truck? I didn't know women drove trucks." Then they ask all sorts of questions about trucking and how the truck works. I sometimes think that being a woman, some people are less intimidated by us than our male counterparts and feel more comfortable talking to us.

Other women are most apt to come up to visit with me. They ask pertinent questions about how hard it is for a woman to drive truck, what the job entails and about pay. This trend has intensified in the last few years as more women have to support themselves and their kids and jobs that pay well are not as available as they once were. Furthermore, more women are looking to trucking as a second career after their kids are grown.

One thing I am finding less is when going in to check in with a shipper or receiver the statement, "Tell your husband to put it in door five." Most of them have come to the realization that we women actually do drive trucks and some do it solo. It is refreshing to be accepted as a driver by the people working within the industry.

A sense of pride fills me when I navigate a tight back, through a tight street or through a narrow entrance gate. Sometimes another driver might say, "good job" and that is rewarding, but not as much as my own knowledge that I did a good job. This sense of pride is there too when someone can't get over that a woman drives a truck or another driver calls me hand or driver on the cb, I feel a part of a larger picture, the picture of the trucking industry as a whole and the important job we do in keeping everyone fed, safe and secure.

As women drivers, we are aware of our uniqueness in the industry and take our jobs, for the most part of us, seriously. Being out on the road provides us with a chance to help change the public's perception of trucking and truckers specifically, adding the 'woman's touch' so to speak. Too many depictions of truckers show truckers as big burly bad guys that are rude, crude and socially incorrect and though we all know that that is not necessarily the case, the general public does not.

We have the opportunity to add frills to steel and rubber by taking pride in ourselves and our jobs and presenting the gentler side of trucking to those we meet. Thus, if you are approached by someone with a look of wonder in their eyes that you are a woman who drives truck, take a few minutes and visit. Share the glories and your pride in the industry you have chosen as a career, who knows, you may end up seeing that person passing you in a truck someday and instead of them having a look of wonder that there is a woman driving truck, they will have a look of wonder that they are actually driving that gleaming big rig, doing a job that they can take pride in.