



**Keep on
Truckin'...**



Vol. 38, No. 11

Mid-West Truckers Association, 2727 North Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, Illinois 62702

November, 2011

TRUCKER OF THE MONTH

**Schnitker
Truck Lines
Arenzville, Illinois**



**FEATURED
THIS
MONTH**

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**CDL Medical
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February 3 & 4, 2012
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COVER STORY

Trucker of the Month

Schnitker Truck Lines, Inc. Arenzville, Illinois

Mid-West Truckers Association's November Trucker of the Month is Schnitker Truck Lines of Arenzville, Illinois.

In 1924, at the age of 19, E.A. "Earl" Schnitker bought a Model T truck with \$500 he borrowed and launched himself into the trucking business. It is believed he actually started with a wheel barrow and then a horse drawn wagon some time before the "official" 1924 start.



E.A. Schnitker working on the trucks in the 1940's photo.



E.A. also operated a gas station in Arenzville. Standing with him from L to R: Carroll Woods, Ray Schnitker, E.A., Bob Beard, "Dutch" Glen Lovekamp and Fritz Carls. Photo is dated 1952.

He hauled coal to the villagers of Arenzville as well as gathering livestock from farms to take to market in St. Louis. Earl had said, "I'd rather have 1,000 people at my funeral than \$1,000 in the bank." When he passed away in 1953, the second running of his obituary in the local paper made note of that, stating that they had no idea about his

bank account, but they did know there were 1,000 or more at his funeral.

Grace Schnitker (Earl's widow) had help with the business from Earl's bother Ray Schnitker and brother-in-law Robert Brasel through the 1950's, as current owner-president - Grace's son Mike Schnitker - began working on trucks at the age of 19 in 1959. Mike became a partner in the business in 1966 with Grace until purchasing her interest in the company in 1974.



Mike Schnitker with his new 1969 International cabover. On the left Eric and his brother Doug on the right.

The company moved from downtown Arenzville to its current site in 1976. A fire on Labor Day of 2004 destroyed the shop and office, but both were quickly rebuilt.

At times, the company has had as many as 8 trucks and 17 trailers to as few as 2 trucks and 6 trailers. They currently have 2 full-time drivers and 2 part-time. One driver, Alan Hardwick, has been with the company since 1975. They operate 2 Freightliners and 2 Internationals, pulling 10 trailers, including dumps, hoppers, vans, livestock pots and a removable goose neck. They haul mostly grain, limestone, rock, machinery and livestock.

Today, Mike's wife Dorothy is secretary-treasurer and son Eric is vice-president, with Eric doing most of the maintenance and repairs.

Schnitker Truck Lines first joined the Association in 1973, and except for a brief hiatus, has used most every service offered during the past 38 years, including workers' comp, stormwater permits, drug & alcohol testing, as well as being a frequent contributor to TRK PAC.

The Board of Directors of Mid-West Truckers Association expresses it's gratitude to Schnitker Truck Lines for their many years of membership and salute them as our November Trucker of the Month!

Congratulations!