



## **Trucking company sends all-American message - again**

Wednesday, August 16, 2006

**JEANNINE OTTO, [jotto@agrinenews-pubs.com](mailto:jotto@agrinenews-pubs.com)**

PERU, Ill. - When Double D Express Inc., a trucking, warehousing and logistics company based in Peru, Ill., wants to send a message, they do it in a big way.

The company has used its trailers to spread the gospel of biodiesel, the company's fuel of choice for its 103 power units. Two of the company's 190 trailers bear the message "This truck runs on biodiesel from Illinois soybeans" and soybean graphics. So when Double D Express President Josh Francque and company founder State Sen. Gary Dahl, R-Peru, were offered the opportunity to support America's men and women in uniform, they said yes.

"It was an honor for us to be chosen here in the Midwest," Francque said.

The company was chosen through a friend of a friend connection.

"Carriers like ourselves network with partners throughout the country," Francque said. "We've got a partner carrier in St. Louis. That partner carrier had gotten a call from Y3K Grafix in St. Louis. Y3K was looking for a Midwest carrier to display the America Supports You graphics on their trailer. We talked to the folks at Y3K and it's sort of history from there."

America Supports You is a Department of Defense program that links troop support efforts and organizations throughout the country with men and women in the military. The program and Web site was started in November 2004 as a way to gauge public support for the troops. It includes a listing of troop-support groups and events as well as a section where the public can leave messages of support for the troops and where soldiers can send thank-you messages back to the public. The site also has downloadable graphics that can be used on items ranging from key chains to T-shirts.

"It's a connector campaign," Allison Barber, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Internal Communications and Public Liaison, who heads up the program, said in a telephone interview. "Two hundred and twenty-five grassroots groups are highlighted on the Web site. It's a way to connect these groups with the troops. It's a nonpartisan, nonpolitical way to support the men and women in the military. The bottom line of America Supports You is helping people who support our troops have ways to support them."

The truck wrap program was developed by Y3K Grafix, a Department of Defense private contractor. Three years ago, the company worked with the U.S. Marine Corps recruiting command to develop a truck wrap program, in which Double D Express participated. After that program, the America Supports You program was next. The graphics for the America Supports You truck wrap program were developed by Y3K president Tom Flynn, who also thought up a program to have corporations sponsor the cost of wrapping the trailers. Each trailer costs \$8,500 to wrap and maintain and that cost is borne by the sponsors, not the carriers. The goal of the program is to have 1,000 wrapped trailers by 2007 and that goal seems to be in reach, according to Flynn.

"I have 50 trucking companies that are on the waiting list wanting to wrap their trailers," he said. Currently the program has five wrapped trailers including the Double D Express trailer. Notes

Transportation in Nashville, Ill., is the other Illinois carrier that is involved in the truck wrap program. Companies in Virginia and Los Angeles also are participating.

At Double D, Francque and safety director Alan Detmers said the response has been fantastic. Even with its fancy clothing, the wrapped trailer still has work to do. It is part of the company's interstate fleet and travels through 28 states, from Denver, Colo., to the East Coast.

"It gets a lot of attention out on the road. There's always a real buzz on the CB channels with the drivers," Francque said. "The drivers love it. They like to pull that trailer down the road. They're kind of participating in their own one-person parade when they do that. It's fun for them too."  
"We're proud to be able to do it. It seems like anyone you talk to, they know somebody who's been over there in Iraq or Afghanistan," Detmers said. "The drivers get a lot of compliments, they all want to pull it. They come up and say 'the trailer would look good with my truck.'"

The company also works with the Department of Defense and Y3K to have the trailer at various events throughout the state.

"We've had several calls on it," Detmers said. "One of our drivers goes to a truck show in Wisconsin every year. He wanted to take it up there so we said sure."

The trailer also is slated to be in the Lovejoy Homestead Festival Parade in Princeton on Sept. 9.

The 3M graphics panels are applied by teams hired by Y3K. It took about 15 hours for the team to apply the graphics to the 53-foot Double D trailer. The graphics, on 48" wide by 103" tall panels with trailer-specific 3M adhesive, have to be left on the trailer for at least a year and are warranted for seven years. The trailers can be pressure washed as usual since a UV clearcoat is applied over the panels. The carrier's name and the sponsor company's name are both featured on the graphic. The turnaround time, from the company getting the nod to the application of the graphics, was fast. Francque received the call from Y3K on July 13.

"Within 24 hours after we received the call from Y3K, the team was out here applying the graphics," Francque said. Dahl was enthusiastic in his support of the idea. "He's very passionate about supporting the troops. I called Gary and ran the idea by him. He was very honored to be chosen to carry that America Supports You message."

Barber's husband is in the Army and recently returned from a deployment in Iraq. She knows firsthand what the sight of the message making its way down the road can mean.

"When that truck drives down the road, it's a powerful message to people like me," she said. "It is reassuring to know that the American people support the troops. We're so grateful that people want to support the troops."

For more information on the America Supports You Trailer Wrap Program, call (877) 935-4723 or go to [www.asytrailerwrpas.com](http://www.asytrailerwrpas.com).

For information on the America Supports You program, go to [www.americasupportsyoud.com](http://www.americasupportsyoud.com).