

10-4 Teddy Bear seeks support

By Jared Lindzon

TORONTO, Ont. – Music is a source of comfort and entertainment within the trucking community, just as teddy bears are a source of comfort and entertainment to children. Many people would fail to see the connection between music, trucking, children and teddy bears, but not Richard Masys, founder of the 10-4 Teddy Bear Wheelchair Foundation.

Masys was inspired to begin the charity program after hearing Red Sovine's '10-4 Teddy Bear.' The song narrates the tale of a trucker coming into contact with a young boy in a wheelchair over the CB. After talking with the lonely boy for some time, the trucker discovers the boy's father was a trucker as well. The boy explained that before he died, his father would take his son out for rides in his truck. Shortly after his conversation, the warm-hearted truck driver decided to go to the boy's house with the intention of giving him a ride. He arrives only to discover a line of trucks down the road with the same intention, having heard the boy on the radio as well.

The spirit of generosity present in these lyrics found its way to Masys. After being inspired by the song, he and his beloved companion Mary Hyjek considered creating a charitable organization. They began conjuring a program that sold teddy bears

to raise funds for wheelchairs for children. It wasn't until Hyjek's tragic passing that their vision came to fruition.

"I was talking about the project two years before Mary passed away, but I kept putting it off," Masys said. "She said that if I keep talking about it I'll never do it." About a year before she passed away they began production, but she never saw the finished product.

As a retired member of the trucking industry, Masys has often looked to his former industry for support.

"I'm hoping to get the truckers to back me on this, but I guess they're hitting hard times," Masys said. "It's hard. I've received a lot of phone calls and a lot of rejections."

Though it's been a shaky road, there have still been many individual acts of generosity within the trucking community towards the organization.

"I got some help from GT Express and Schulman," Masys said. "They bought a box of 24 each, and then they asked me to re-donate it to Montreal Children's Hospital."

More information as well as order forms are available at www.10-4teddybear.com. Teddy Bears cost \$24 each (plus shipping and taxes), and all proceeds go towards providing underprivileged children with wheelchairs. □

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CVSA: Don't manually adjust auto slack adjusters

TORONTO, Ont. – A surprise brake blitz by the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) in May has led inspectors to believe there's a big problem with drivers manually adjusting self-adjusting slack adjusters.

"A significant problem we are noticing in recent years is the practice of manually adjusting self-adjusting brake adjusters," said Stephen Campbell, executive director of CVSA. "If you have a brake that is over-stroking and it has a self-adjusting (automatic) brake adjuster, you more than likely have a problem with the brake or the adjuster. If you re-adjust it, you aren't fixing the underlying problem."

There are concerns that truckers may have a false sense of security after manually adjusting automatic brake adjusters, which will likely fall back out of adjustment before long. □