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COVER STORY: Tim Ridley-Marten Transport Ltd.

PRO TRUCKER MAGAZINE

Right out of college in the early 1980s, Tim Ridley found a good job doing engineering work for the Department of the Interior. He reviewed wiring diagrams for pumping plants that were an integral part of the Central Arizona Project, an ambitious effort to deliver water to arid regions of the state. There was just one problem—Tim had dreamed of driving a big rig since he was a young boy, and poring over electrical schematics was a far cry from rolling down the highway.

“My father drove professionally, and I learned to love trucks through him,” says Tim. “As I got older and talked about following in my dad’s footsteps, my mom put down her foot and told me that I’d have to get an education first. If I still wanted to drive after college, well, that would be OK. And that is exactly what happened.”

Tim decided to pursue his dream in 1984, years before a CDL was required. He started out hauling flatbed freight but soon moved to refrigerated loads, a niche that would suit him well for many years to come.

It was in 1989 that Tim hooked up with Mondovi, WI-based Marten Transport, Inc. “I was impressed with the respect that Marten received from the drivers and shippers I spoke with,” he says. “They were in a class all of their own, and I wanted to be a part of that elite group.” Ready to run with an industry leader, Tim made the decision to get on board.

Five years later, Tim took a few years off to devote himself to his ministry, work that often took him far from home. The trucking veteran could not stay away from the industry he loved, however, and soon he was self-employed as a small fleet owner with a stable of eight trucks. When he bought his ninth truck, a beautiful new Freightliner Classic, he knew that he, himself, would be driving it for Marten.

“I leased on to Marten for over six years, and then they asked me to come off the road and help them in the office,” says Tim. “I still loved the trucking life, but I had achieved everything I had set out to achieve, and it was time to begin a new chapter in my life. During my time behind the wheel, I had been named Driver of the Month, Driver of the Year and I had driven one million miles, accident-free. My mom had instilled in me a desire to do the very best.”

Tim now works with Marten as a driver recruiter and driver development coordinator. He sees a bright future with the company, one that gives him an exciting opportunity to give back to the industry that has given so much to him.

In discussing his professional life, Tim attributes many of his successes to the unwavering support of his wife, Maricel. “She stood by me through the years, and I’ll forever be grateful for that.”