



Pennsylvania Family Showcases the Beauty in Reliability

Oct 13, 2004

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Kevin Fessler's 2004 Western Star LowMax is Attractive, Yet Practical

For Kevin Fessler of Spring Grove, Pa., displaying his new 2004 Western Star 4900 EX LowMax at truck beauty competitions is a family affair.

Kevin and his wife, Jodee, joined by their son Ryan, daughter Stephanie, sister and brother-in-law Doug and Donna Cummings, and friends Brent and Billi Neal, often spend up to three days preparing for a show. They work together to detail Kevin's Western Star LowMax 62-inch Ultra Low Roof Sleeper inside and out. Kevin, Brent, and Ryan take care of the biggest jobs, which include degreasing the engine compartment and polishing the parts. Doug uses a special wax to make the exterior paint shine; Jodee and Stephanie handle decorating and cleaning the interior; and Donna and Billi take special care of the tire lettering, polishing the custom stainless steel parts, and other odds and ends.

The crew's elbow grease helped the Fesslers place in two categories at the 2004 Paul K. Young Memorial Truck Beauty Championship at the Mid-America Trucking Show in Louisville, Ky. In its first showing, the garnet red tractor claimed first place in the Bobtail New Truck (less than 50,000 miles) category, and second place in the Interior OEM Sleeper category.

"It's a big job getting ready for a show, so I need all the help I can get!" said Kevin. "Everyone enjoys working on trucks, so it's fun to travel to competitions together. Jodee and I really appreciate their help and support."

Options Abound

Kevin's crew is so close that they not only prepare for truck beauty competitions together, but some also work together. As the owner of R.S. Fessler, Inc., Kevin hauls products such as firebrick, aluminum, and steel for a variety of manufacturing customers throughout the Northeastern U.S. His sister, Dianne, works for him by hauling similar products in a 1996 Western Star 4900 FX with a 66-inch sleeper. Kevin's friend Billi Neal also is part of the R.S. Fessler, Inc. family as the company's secretary.

"By working together and getting ready for competitions together, we have become very close," added Kevin. "We all think we have a special truck and take great pride in working with it and showing it off at competitions."

Kevin's LowMax is a showstopper. Supremely outfitted, it boasts a 475 horsepower Cat® C15 engine, 270-inch wheelbase, custom chrome, and a decked-out OEM sleeper with burl elm detail. Taking great pride in his truck's low profile, Kevin added, "I really like the custom stainless steel skirting along the bottom of the fuel tank – it makes it look much lower!"

Kevin also enjoys his factory-installed six CD changer and Bostrom Wide Ride seat, both of which were top priority when spec'ing his new truck. "I spend so much time in my seat, it was important to get a top-of-the-line model," he said. "Everyone that sits in it mentions how comfortable it is."

On the Road Again

In the trucking business for 14 years, Kevin chose Western Star not only for its beauty and wide range of options, but because it keeps his business on the road.

"My dealer, Midway Truck Service in Bethel, Pa., offers great personalized service," Kevin said. "The trucks rarely have any problems, but if they do, Midway repairs them quickly. I am proud of the fact that I never have to miss a day of work."

However, Kevin hopes that he will be able to take some time off of his grueling schedule in the coming months to participate in more truck beauty competitions. In May, his 2004 Western Star LowMax won its first Best in Show award at the 15th annual Big Rig Truck Nationals at the Maryland International Raceway in Mechanicsville, Md. His previous show truck, a 2001 Western Star 4900 EX, also won a number of awards including First Place in the Western Star Division for four years in a row at the annual Big Rig Jamboree at Buck Motorsports Park in Lancaster, Pa.

Along the way, Kevin also hopes that his son Ryan, 17, and daughter Stephanie, 15, are catching his love for trucks. "Stephanie might be a little young to start getting into it, but Ryan seems to really enjoy being involved in these competitions – he's already an important part of our crew."

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