



North America Edition



to make it home tomorrow.

"We drive through North Dakota without any severe problems. The truck is constantly being battered by the wind which is slowing our progress down – I'd hate to be in the 101 here! Every 20 minutes or so we recalculate our times to Gary, Indiana, as well as home. At this point we are still on schedule for making an early Monday night arrival in Lexington, Va. where my wife is to pick me up.

"Our journey gets us to Gary around 7pm. We've been on the road for about 12 hours now and need to make a decision; stop, or press on. We decided to push forward to get below Indianapolis.

"As we cruise down the highway I call ahead to the hotel. At this point in the game, we are pros at making sure we get exactly what we want: first floor (so we do not have to drag our gear up an elevator or stairs), refrigerator (so we do not have to drag the cooler out of the truck to protect my insulin) and finally, continental breakfast (so we do not have to hunt for food in the morning). The well oiled machine...

"Driving through Indianapolis is not an issue with the water, as we are driving at a higher elevation on the highways than the surface streets, which were hit the hardest. Arriving at the hotel, over 14 hours and 800 miles later, we check in and promptly fall asleep.

"Now, all we can do is drive. And drive is what we do. We constantly pat 'Bessie' on the dashboard and give her praise for getting us this far. After all the problems Mike had experienced, we count our blessings and take all the luck we can get. We make it out of Indiana, through Tennessee and into

West Virginia without any difficulties.

"As we climb the big mountains however, we begin to have some concerns. We were starting to smell antifreeze at this point and feared the worst. The only reasonable answer we can come up with is that the outside temperatures are a rather pleasant 50° and the antifreeze/coolant we have in the system at this point is rated for cold weather; *really* cold weather. 'Bessie' makes it though and successfully gets us into Virginia. I call my wife when we are close to Lexington and let her know to leave soon. We are making great time and will be in Lexington by 3pm.

"22 days of driving is a long time – not only does it take a physical toll, but a mental one too. Both Eric and I handled this well without any incidents. I even managed to quit smoking, a habit I have had for over 20 years. I would like to thank Eric for his patience and support in helping me meet that goal.

"There was a lot of preparation for this trip made by Eric for his vehicle to make it through. Doing over 9,800 miles in 22 days is gruelling on any vehicle and add to that the temperatures ranging from +50°F to -44°F.



Above left: Fan fixed using J B Weld – don't leave home without it (or your Sat Phone).

Above right: Packing the 110 for shipment back to Edmonton – it's a bit dirtier now and has a few new holes in the windshield too.

Below: 101 is guided into the trailer, heading back to Connecticut to get ready for the next big trip...

I would like to thank Eric and all his friends that worked on 'Bessie' prior to the trip.

"I also made a lot of preparation and it was a three month process that was a bit unusual with me being diabetic. My wife, my doctors and I researched the cold weather effects on people with diabetes as well as the protection of my insulin. During this research I did find there was a pump club in Inuvik, 250 miles above the Arctic Circle (although I was unable to contact them prior to my visit). I ended up going with additional insulin, not only in vials, but also emergency pens.

"The cooler we used in the vehicle was a compressor type rather than a passive system – my research indicated that at the temperatures we were going to encounter, the passive system would be ineffective. I also carried additional insulin prescriptions."

So, with all the hardships, countless hours of preparations and all the stuff going out of control at times, you have to ask yourself the question, would I do it again? The answer, for me, is a resounding "Hell yes!"

