



A BETTER WAY OF DOING BUSINESS: CONTEXT SENSITIVE SOLUTIONS
The NHDOT is Partnering With Communities to Define Transportation Improvements

The old way worked pretty well for the New Hampshire Department of Transportation. Engineers developed a project by preparing a set of plans to show the solution to the public. They were plans weighted toward safety, mobility and uniformity. The problem was the solution did not take into account historical, environmental or community values. The solution did not always fit the context of the setting, and many times was met with opposition. Enter a new way of doing business called "Context Sensitive Solutions".

According to the Federal Highway Administration, "Context sensitive solutions (CSS) is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility. CSS is an approach that considers the total context within which a transportation improvement project will exist."

"We have been heading in this direction for some time," says Craig Green, Administrator of the NHDOT's Highway Design Bureau. "It's changing the process to some extent, getting to the stakeholders in a city or town early to get their input on transportation issues, thus enabling us to determine how solutions will fit within the context of their community."

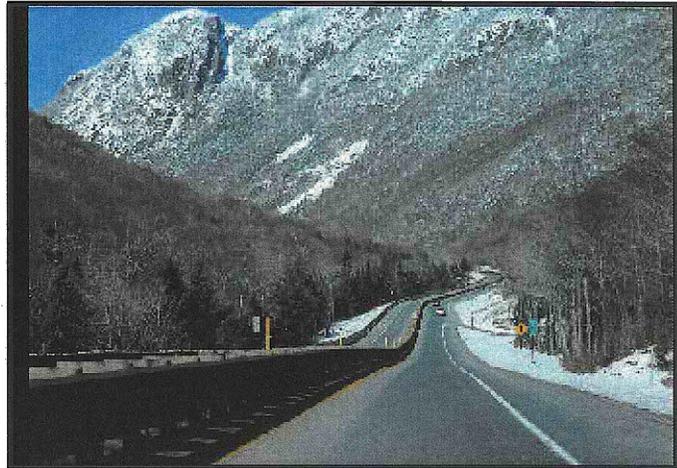
Since November 2005, four two-day CSS training sessions have been held, with about half of the attendees representing various NHDOT bureaus, and the other half representing "stakeholders" such as communities, resource agencies, regional planning commissions and the Environmental Protection Agency.

NHDOT Commissioner Carol Murray is a strong proponent of the CSS approach. "Much of the training is centering on communication. How do we understand what's important to the community, such as historic, environmental, cultural, economic, and human resources? How do we engage stakeholders, develop and communicate alternatives, employ design flexibility, and develop consensus around a solution that, once it's implemented, will be seen as a valued asset to the community? It's all about learning the techniques and tools which will help us do an even better job for our customers, the citizens and travelers to New Hampshire."

The CSS approach is currently being applied in three New Hampshire project locations, Meredith, Dublin (NH 101), and Bow-Concord (I-93), and the public response to the approach has been positive.

After a recent meeting in Dublin on the future of NH 101 through the town, Dublin Selectman Joseph Cavanaugh told the Keene Sentinel that the cooperative effort with the state is helping the town move forward with plans for the highway. "In getting our citizens in the process, there's a lot of open dialogue...rather than just trying to jam something down Dublin's throat," Cavanaugh said. "At the end of the day, the state has to buy into whatever we end up with because it is a state highway."

"It's a myth that CSS costs more and takes longer," Craig Green says. "What you put in at the beginning, pays off with savings later."



The Franconia Notch Parkway built in the 1980's was an example of the successful application of Context Sensitive Solutions. Significant compromise resulted in an improved roadway through an environmentally sensitive area.



Commissioner's Corner

by
Carol A. Murray

N.H. Takes New Approach to Transportation Planning

Editor's note: The following article was written by Neal Peirce and Curtis Johnson of the New England Futures Project, a collaboration of seven organizations with a commitment to regional solutions to New England's challenges. It was published in the February 5, 2006 Foster's Sunday Citizen of Dover and is reprinted with permission.

America's state highway departments historically have been overbearing Goliaths. They're usually run by technocrats, talk in hard-to-decipher jargon, and almost always prefer asphalt-first solutions.

Carol Murray, New Hampshire's reform minded Transportation Commissioner, notes the way they've often communicated with towns:

"Your Main Street is a state-numbered route, and we have to get traffic through more quickly. So you'll have to eliminate your on-street parking and narrow your sidewalks. We're going to make the road wide and straight, with 10-foot shoulders. And you're going to like it."

Recalling her growing up years in the charming up-country town of Littleton, Murray recites how she could walk to school or to Main Street. She worries New Hampshire has been losing its quality of life through thoughtless transportation decisions.

"Each community," she asserts, "should be able to shape its own future."

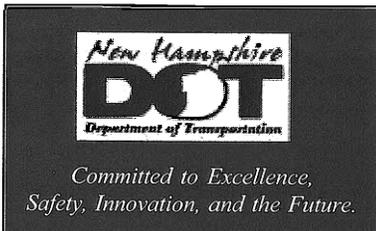
The town of Meredith on Lake Winnepesaukee was a case in point. Faced by congestion of two major roads converging and immense summertime traffic, the highway engineers were adamant for wider roadways and fast 24-hour "throughput." Townspeople saw their quaint town and its peaceful lake views imperiled.

To break the impasse, Murray promised a fresh start. She reached out to independent consultants, including Fred Kent of the Project for Public Spaces, to talk with townspeople about alternatives. For the town's major intersection with its traffic lights, the idea of a space-saving roundabout emerged. The new concept: it's impossible to design for fast Fourth of July-volume traffic, so at least offer motorists a pleasant view, not just more asphalt.

Similar discussions produced "softer" highway plans for Keene and Littleton. But they were rejected by citizens of Berlin, a hard-hit old lumber town that values its main highway strip boxes as a sign of economic strength; the townspeople nixed a remake into a tree-lined boulevard. No matter what outcomes, Murray and her allies want to move from pro forma highway briefings to earnest discussions, highlighting alternatives and engaging local citizens. Now they're trying even more.

Murray took the writing of the state transportation plan for the next 25 years — combined road, rail, bus, freight, aviation and more — out of the hands of transportation officials who'd normally handle it. Instead, she entrusted the task to a Citizens Advisory Committee, co-chaired by Lew Feldstein, president of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation and Executive Councilor Raymond Burton. The committee was a kaleidoscope of New Hampshire opinion, the truckers to the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire

(continued on next page)



Spring 2006

Governor.....John H. Lynch
Commissioner.....Carol Murray
On the Move Editor.....Bill Boynton

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(planning continued)

Forests, municipal officials to business leaders, legislators to children's and housing advocates.

Last month, the group produced its draft report — an eye-opening document claimed to be “the first and only effort nationwide to ‘put the customer in the driver’s seat’ of transportation planning.” The central message: barring some fiscal miracle, New Hampshire will fall hundreds of millions of dollars short yearly in the money it prospectively needs — from gas taxes or federal funds — to maintain its existing roads, rehab its already-aging interstates and add all the new highways its current sprawling form of development demands.

”Just building more roads isn’t the answer,” the committee concluded.

So what to do? The group’s objective: join transportation with land use planning in an effort to reduce travel distances, tamp down new highway demand and start considering needs of the state’s non-drivers — increasing numbers of elderly, children, the handicapped, bikers and pedestrians.

A raft of ways to get there, focused on more compact development, are suggested. Among them: stop segregating land uses (residences here, shopping there, offices somewhere else). Instead promote mixed use, including zoning overlays to promote traditional town centers. Site schools in towns, so more children can walk or bike there (simultaneously combating rising rates of obesity).

Develop corridor plans, multiple towns participating, with an enhanced role for regional planning commissions that also engage citizens. Gear in programs for energy efficiency and economic development. Demystify transportation language and information so ordinary citizens can grasp it.

The report’s less innovative on finances, though it does suggest developers pay more of access road costs. To get rail rolling in a state that’s resisted financing it, the committee endorses tax-increment financing, a device Nashua is now considering to pay for proposed train service to Lowell and Boston.

Is it certain such new, unconventional approaches will work? They do go against the grain of decades of practice. But the idea of citizen-oriented transportation planning is a fresh and reassuring breeze — all the more fitting in the region of America that invented the town meeting.



Commissioner Carol Murray checks out a t-shirt given to her by David Preece, Executive Director of Southern New Hampshire Regional Planning in appreciation of her leadership and vision at a long-range transportation plan meeting in Bedford on March 30. See the reprinted column by Lew Feldstein on page 6.

District 2 Works with New London to Limit Salt Impact on Little Lake Sunapee *Two Reduced Winter Maintenance Areas Designated on NH 114 and Little Sunapee Road*

Responding to residents' concerns and a formal request from the Town of New London, the New Hampshire Department of Transportation has approved two areas of Reduced Winter Maintenance as outlined in the NHDOT's Snow Removal and Ice Control Policy.

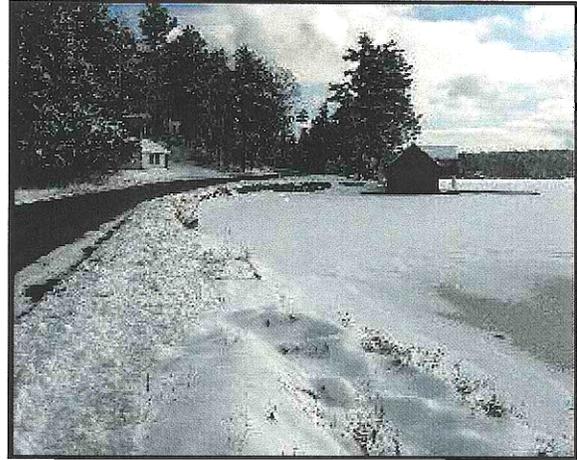
The Little Lake Sunapee Protective Association has been monitoring water quality levels for a number of years and is becoming increasingly concerned with the levels of certain readings, particularly conductivity.

Conductivity measures a water's ability to conduct electricity. The presence of road salt increases conductivity. Failing septic systems, urban runoff and agricultural activities also affect conductivity.

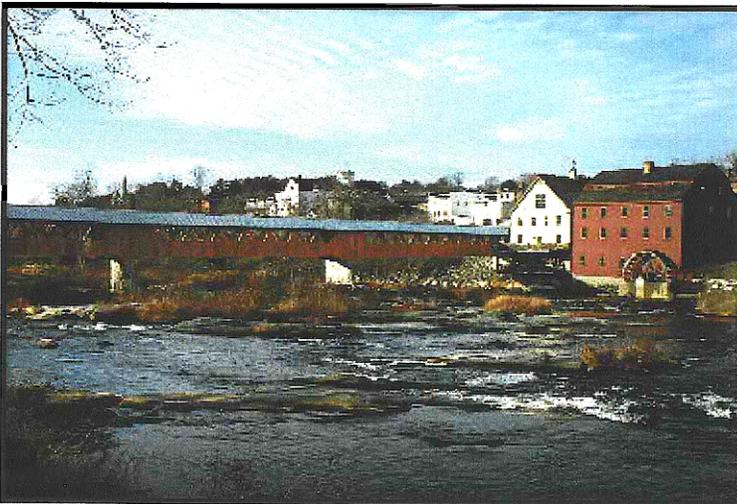
State roads encircle Little Lake Sunapee, with NH 114 and Little Sunapee Road often right on the shoreline, so the Department was a natural party to the water quality improvement effort. The 214 New London state maintenance facility is also immediately adjacent to one of the lake's tributaries.

"The Department has been working closely with the Lake Sunapee Protective Association for several years to help control runoff and sedimentation in big Lake Sunapee, so the request from Little Lake Sunapee's association was not unexpected," says District Two Engineer Alan Hanscom.

"We will adjust our winter maintenance practices around the lake to see what effect it may have. The Lake Association has agreed to increase its water testing frequency to help us evaluate our efforts."



NH Route 114 runs close to the shoreline of Little Lake Sunapee in some locations.



(photo credit Heidi Page - Littleton Area Chamber of Commerce)

Littleton Covered Bridge Wins National Timber Award

The only covered bridge in Littleton has been recognized with an "Award of Merit" in a national competition that cites superior design and construction of timber bridges. The Riverwalk Bridge is one of 14 bridges recognized in the 2004-2005 Timber Bridge Awards sponsored by the wood products industry.

Offering a convenient crossing over the Ammonosuc River to Littleton's downtown, the Riverwalk Bridge is a 352-foot Warren Truss pedestrian bridge that was completed in 2004.

The bridge was funded by a \$1.1 million Transportation Enhancement grant administered by the NHDOT.

Materials and Research

**Arthur Johnson Selected to Umpire at the Little League World Series
Center Harbor Resident Rewarded for 35 Years of Volunteerism To Youth Baseball**

He never made it to Williamsport as a player or a coach, but Arthur Johnson is headed to the Little League World Series - as an umpire.

In fact, the Data Collection Technician for the Bureau of Materials and Research may very well be the first umpire from New Hampshire to ever work the world's most prestigious event for 12-year olds who play baseball.

"It should be a good time," Johnson says. "I'm looking forward to it."

The road to Williamsport began for Art in the mid-1990's, when after 25 years of coaching and "getting pulled out of the stands" to ump in the Laconia Little League, he decided to get more training. He went to Little League umpiring schools in Connecticut and Williamsport. Soon he was getting assignments to district, state and regional tournaments and he was hooked.

Art Johnson went national when he was chosen for the Senior (15-16 year old) Little League World Series in Kissimmee, Florida. In 2000, he became the first non-spanish speaking umpire to work the Latin American Little League regional tournament in Aruba. Since then his goal has been to work the granddaddy of them all, the highly publicized Little League World Series. He made it a habit to apply year after year.

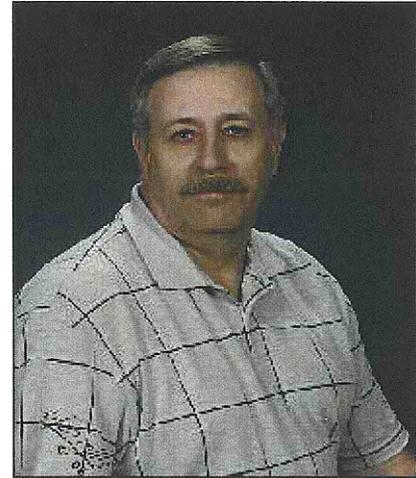
"I had to wait five years and the letter finally came in December," Johnson says. "Thousands of people apply for this opportunity every year and only a few are chosen."

They don't do it for the money. Umpiring in Little League is all volunteer, and even the trips

to the national tournaments only pay for room and board. But from August 18-27, Art Johnson will be living a dream. He expects to work at least five games on the biggest stage of all for volunteer umps - a once in a lifetime opportunity.

"You're in it because you enjoy what you're doing," Art says.

"I coached for 25 years and still like being on the baseball field. It's the best seat in the house and I have the only opinion that counts."



Art Johnson will have the best seat in the house at the Little League World Series this August as an umpire.



December 1, 2006

Arthur C. Johnson
P O Box 145
Manchester NH 03103

Dear Art:
Congratulations! Your Regional Director, Don Swamy, has recommended you to umpire the 2006 Little League Baseball World Series. This World Series will be played in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, August 18 - 27, 2006.

It is a distinct pleasure to recognize your commitment and service to Little League and having you as a member of our World Series team. It is also a pleasure to recognize the hard job dedication which you have consistently given as yourself in support of your District, Section, State and Region. Details of your assignments will be forthcoming.

Again, it is an honor to recognize your service to Little League with this prestigious honor.

Respectfully yours,

Art Johnson
Umpire in Chief
Little League International

Cc: Don Swamy, 1st Region Director
Manchester, NH 03103



This Town Meeting, Think Transportation

By Lewis Feldstein

Editor's note: Lewis Feldstein is President of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation. This commentary recently appeared in the Manchester Union Leader.

Transportation Commissioner Carol Murray caught me totally unprepared when she asked me to co-chair a citizen's commission to write a new transportation plan for the state. I knew nothing about designing roads, bike trails or transit systems. My gig was building communities.

"Don't worry," the Commissioner replied. "Transportation is all about communities."

As we enter Town Meeting season, we would do well to reflect on Commissioner Murray's insight. Transportation affects almost every element on the Town Warrant, from the cost of our town roads, trails and sidewalks to the human services that help our seniors and shut-ins get to religious services and medical appointments. Police, fire and rescue services depend on good transportation.

- Is a new school on the warrant? Think about the cost of school bus service if sited outside of town.
- Are town health care service costs going up? Researchers have now linked community walkability and personal health.
- Our increased time driving to work directly affects social capital that is fundamental to New Hampshire communities: every additional 10 minutes spent driving reduces by 10% virtually every form of participation in civic life - from voting to volunteering to giving to charity to attending church to hanging out with family and friends.

Almost every budgetary decision we make in town meetings has transportation cost consequences. But the transportation issues facing local governments are not just about the budget. They are about land use - the decisions that shape what our towns will look like. Look at your Town's Master Plan and zoning ordinance.

- Does the Master Plan have a transportation element?
- Does it promote the connection of streets and sidewalks so we can walk through our neighborhoods, or does it create cul de sacs?
- How about our main streets and town centers? Does it encourage locating retail shops, residences, and offices close together to reduce the need to drive? Can families live over their retail stores or rent out apartments to make downtown businesses more profitable?
- What about new developments at the fringe of town: Yes, they may add to the property tax base but have we costed out road maintenance, snowplowing, utilities and other costs of sprawl?
- Do our land use rules encourage alternatives to reliance on cars?
- Over the past two decades, New Hampshire has gobbled up undeveloped land at twice the rate of our population growth. Are we protecting our forests, views and meadows? Are we intruding on our aquifers but jeopardizing our drinking water?
- Do we communicate with our neighboring towns about the roads that connect us? Or about impending regional developments?

These are important questions. Believe me, the Citizens Advisory Commission does not have all the answers. That is why we ask you to wade in. We have developed draft findings and recommendations (www.nhtranplan.com). We have nine public hearings around the state to get your reactions to this, the first "citizens' transportation plan" in the nation.

This plan that we have put before you does not represent consensus within the citizens committee. Indeed, some members think it goes too far in trying to address societal problems and should focus more directly on keeping traffic moving and the roads and bridges in good repair. Others think it places too much of a burden on local governments to address transportation problems that are the state's responsibility. Others question the tone as too alarmist, that traditional solutions have worked in the past and we should basically steer the same course into the future.

Now we need your views. Wade in. Transportation is too important to be left to the transportation planners. Visit the website and take a look at the draft plan. You can comment on-line. Join us at one of the meetings. This is your plan, so put yourself in the driver's seat (or walk if you are close by) and participate. It may be labeled "transportation," but it's really about community.



Lew Feldstein and Commissioner Carol Murray discussed efforts to create a state Transportation Business Plan on NH Public Radio.

“Can Do Kids” From North Hampton Tackle a Sidewalk Project for NH 111 *Middle School Students Push for a Transportation Grant for Safety Improvements*

This is not your average school project. And these are not kids who easily take “no” for an answer.

It began in the fall of 2004 when a group of 7th grade students at the North Hampton School organized the “Can Do Sidewalk Kids” with the mission of ensuring the safety of their town’s citizens and students by getting a sidewalk built along busy NH Route 111 between their school and the town library.

Along the way the Can Do Kids have collected petition signatures or letters of support from more than 200 town residents, received the endorsement of the North Hampton Selectmen and Planning Board, and conducted fundraising to help pay for the town’s share of the project.

A sidewalk “would make the town a liveable place,” group member Meghan Durant told the Selectmen in November of 2004. The effort won editorial support from The Hampton Union, who said the students “had done their homework.” The selectmen liked the idea, but told the students the town could not afford the project. The Can Do Kids didn’t stop there. They wrote local companies asking for



The “Can Do Kids” from North Hampton brought their 18-month mission for a sidewalk to their school to Concord in March and made their pitch to a special committee looking at proposals. Their project was recommended.

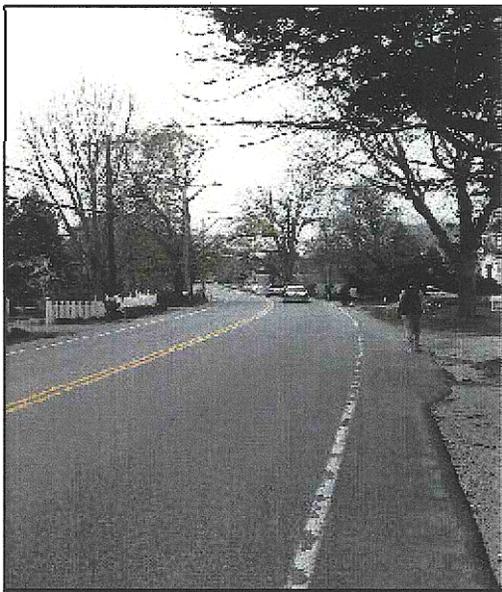
donations, and prepared an impressive presentation for a Transportation Enhancement grant application. Eighteen months after they began their effort they came to the NHDOT in Concord on March 7 to make their case for the \$148,000 project. Their proposal calls for the construction of a two-tenths of a mile sidewalk with granite curbing along NH Route 111 to connect North Hampton School with the Public Library, Town Hall and Offices, general store and residential areas.

In addition to cited safety, health and environmental benefits, the Can Do Kids say the sidewalk “will create a greater sense of community by allowing residents to walk and visit, instead of driving this short distance.”

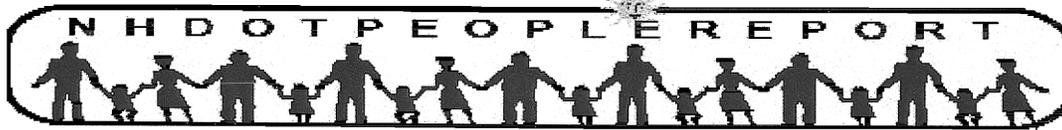
The Can Do Kids’ mission is still not complete. They must still win approval of the townspeople to help fund the \$28,000 local share of the project at the annual town meeting.

All the homework, legwork, and aggressive lobbying finally paid off. On March 20, a special committee approved the North Hampton sidewalk project as a transportation enhancement project for 2006. Given their track record so far, it would probably not be wise to bet against the Can Do Kids.

The Can Do Kids include Louise Breen, Jon Bassett, Meghan Durant, Holly McCay and Alex Seaton.



This photo shows the challenge of a pedestrian walking along NH 111 in North Hampton. This could soon change with a new sidewalk, thanks to the efforts of the “Can Do Kids”.



NEWHIRES

Jeffrey Abbe, Engineering Technician 2, Highway Design
Cory Austin, Highway Maintainer 2, District 2
Iulia Barbu, Civil Engineer 1, Highway Design
Wade Batchelder, Highway Maintainer 1, District 4
Cynthia Capodestria, Secretary 2, Bridge Design
Jason Corkins, Highway Maintainer 1, District 2
Susan Dearborn, Engineering Tech. 1, Highway Design
Travis Dickinson, Highway Maintainer 1, District 5
Michael Fifield, Geological Exploration Tech. Trainee, M&R
James Frangelli, Highway Maintainer 1, District 3
Michelle Fransen-Conroy, Clerk 3, Human Resources
Derek Fritz, Highway Maintainer 2, District 3
Michael Grant, Auto Service Tech., Mechanical Services
Joseph Jaynes, Highway Maintainer 1, District 1

Maurice Lambert, Highway Maintainer 2, District 5
Gerard Lamson, Highway Maintainer 1, District 3
Josiah Langevin, Highway Maintainer 2, District 4
Patrick Lefebvre, Highway Maintainer 2, Turnpikes
Scott Mills, Survey Team Tech. 1, Highway Design
Richard Moore, Civil Engineer 3, District 3
Timothy Oberlin, Highway Maintainer 1, Turnpikes
Zigmund Plifka, Highway Maintainer 2, District 5
Brian Searles, Highway Maintainer 1, District 3
Christopher Shambo, Highway Maintainer 1, District 2
Bruce Vanlandingham, Auto Body Tech., Mech. Services
Sean Wolters, Highway Maintainer 1, District 3
Danny Woodhams, Highway Maintainer 1, District 2
Charles Knowles, Highway Maintainer 1, District 6

PROMOTIONS

Joseph Adams, Civil Engineer 5, Bridge Design
Mark Avery, Highway Patrol Foreman, District 2
Thomas Balint, Engineering Tech. 5, Planning
Christopher Barnes, Highway Maintainer 3, District 5
Seth Beane, Bridge Maintainer 3, Bridge Maintenance
Joseph Blair, Civil Engineer 4, Materials & Research
Linda Bourgoin, Toll Attendant 2, Turnpikes
Dawn Clough, Toll Attendant 2, Turnpikes
Peter Crouch, Civil Engineer 4, Traffic
Dana Decormier, Highway Maintainer 3, District 3
Zachary Demers, Highway Maintainer 2, Turnpikes
Caleb Dobbins, Civil Engineer 7, Highway Maintenance
Paul England, Ass't Highway Patrol Foreman, District 2
Jonathan Evans, Environmentalist 2, Environment
Todd Ferland, Highway Maintainer 3, District 1
Raymond Grogan, Construction Foreman, Bridge Main.
Michael Joyce, Highway Maintainer 3, District 2
Glenn Lamper, Ass't Highway Patrol Foreman, District 3

Randy Linscott, Highway Patrol Foreman, District 6
Joseph MacDonald, Highway Patrol Foreman, District 3
Brian Mayo, Ass't Highway Patrol Foreman, District 6
Kurt Melendy, Survey Team Tech. 2, Highway Design
Paul Metcalf, Civil Engineer 6, Construction
Carol Niewola, Program Specialist 4, Aeronautics
David Rix, Highway Maintainer 3, District 4
Kurt Robbins, Engineering Tech. 3, Construction
David Scott, Civil Engineer 6, Bridge Design
David Silvia, Civil Engineer 2, Highway Design
Peter Stamnas, Civil Engineer 6, Highway Design
Kyle Surette, Ass't Highway Patrol Foreman, District 6
James Taylor, Engineering Technician 1, Planning
Jason Tremblay, Civil Engineer 4, Bridge Design
Peter Wilsie, Highway Maintainer 3, District 5
Tom Woitalewicz, Highway Maintainer 2, District 3
Michael Pillsbury, Assistant Director of Operations,
Commissioner's Office



SERVICE AWARDS



April through June 2006

35 YEARS

Gary McFarland, District 1
Hiram Morrill, District 5
Richard Mower, Bridge Maintenance
James Olmstead, District 4

20 YEARS

Michael Carey, Traffic
Maurice Cere, Turnpikes

30 YEARS

Carol Drew, Bridge Maintenance
Alan Garland, District 6
Charles Gibbs, District 3
Garry Kenyon, District 4
Philip Kohler, Construction
Keith Lemire, Right-of-Way
Alan Piroso, District 5
Jonathon Smith, Construction
David Szczublewski, Traffic
Alfred Szepan, District 5
William Taylor, Traffic
David Vezina, District 3
James Viar, District 5

15 YEARS

Christopher Hinds, District 1
William Jennison, Finance & Contracts
William Laflam, District 3
Michael Licciardi, Bridge Design
Dale O'Connell, Environment
Kurt Robbins, Construction
Kevin Russell, Highway Maintenance

25 YEARS

Spencer Noyes, District 2
Peter Poullos, Turnpikes
James Ray, District 4

10 YEARS

Steven Buchanan, Traffic
David Burrows, District 3
Earl Caddel, Bridge Maintenance
Gary Clifford, District 5
Charles Flanders, Construction
Edward Heatch, Turnpikes
John Johnson, Right-of-Way
Ernest Lock, District 1
Blair Moody, Construction
Eugene White, Print Shop
Alton Whittier, Mechanical Services

RETIREMENTS (years of service)

Michael Burlage, Commissioner's Office (32)
Carol Corriveau, Turnpikes (16)
Lynn Mayville, Construction (34)
Frederic Prior, Materials & Research (36)
Elmer St. John, District 4 (16)
Nancy Tkach, Materials & Research (10)

Report Issued on the State of Transportation in New Hampshire
Highlights the Need for Greater Investment in Roads and Bridges

Editor's note: The Road Information Program (TRIP), a national transportation research group, issued a report card on New Hampshire's transportation system at a Concord news conference in March. While the grades were a little harsh (D's for roads and bridges and C's for congestion and safety), TRIP's overall message is that more funding and investment is needed to help the New Hampshire Department of Transportation address the transportation needs of the state.

"New Hampshire residents enjoy modern lifestyles that rely on a high level of personal and commercial mobility. An increase in the state's population and a significant increase in the miles traveled by the state's residents and visitors have created an increased demand on New Hampshire's key highways and roads. It is critical that New Hampshire develops and maintains a modern transportation system that can accommodate future growth in population, tourism, vehicle travel and economic development."

-- from Making the Grade in New Hampshire March 28, 2006

√ New Hampshire's population reached approximately 1.1 million in 2003, an increase of approximately 17 percent since 1990. The State's population is projected to increase another 27 percent by 2025, climbing to 1.4 million residents.

√ Vehicle travel on New Hampshire's major highways increased by 34 percent from 1990 to 2004 – rising from 9.8 billion vehicle miles traveled in 1990 to 13.2 billion vehicle miles traveled in 2004. TRIP estimates that vehicle travel in New Hampshire will increase by approximately 40 percent by the year 2025 to 18.5 billion miles annually.

√ Nearly a quarter (24 percent) of New Hampshire's urban Interstates and other highways or freeways are considered congested, because they carry a level of traffic that is likely to result in delays during peak travel hours.

√ Eighty-nine percent of the \$31 billion worth of commodities delivered annually from sites in New Hampshire are transported on the state's highways. Commercial trucking is projected to increase 56 percent in New Hampshire by 2020.

√ Increasingly, companies are looking at the quality of a region's transportation system when deciding where to re-locate or expand. Regions with congested or poorly maintained roads may see businesses relocate to areas with a smoother, more efficient transportation system.

√ Every \$1.00 spent on street and highway improvements results in \$5.40 in benefits in improved traffic safety, reduced travel delays and reduced vehicle operating costs, according to the Federal Highway Administration.

√ In 2004, 47 percent of New Hampshire's roads were rated in poor or mediocre condition. Nationally, a total of 34 percent of roads are rated in poor or mediocre condition. A desirable goal for state and local organizations that are responsible for road maintenance is to have 75 percent of major roads in good condition. Only 36 percent of New Hampshire's state-maintained roads are in good condition.

√ Fourteen percent of New Hampshire's bridges were structurally deficient in 2005. Eighteen percent of New Hampshire's bridges were functionally obsolete in 2004. Nationally, 13 percent of bridges are structurally deficient and 14 percent are functionally obsolete.

√ Highway improvements such as adding turn lanes, removing or shielding obstacles, adding medians, widening lanes, widening and paving shoulders, improving intersection layouts, providing better road markings, and installing or upgrading traffic signals could reduce the severity of serious traffic crashes. The Federal Highway Administration has found that every \$100 million spent on needed highway safety improvements will result in 145 fewer traffic fatalities over a 10-year period.

√ With an increase in transportation funding, New Hampshire would be able to move forward with numerous transportation projects that would help relieve traffic congestion and improve traffic safety. These projects are crucial to the state's ability to provide more efficient traffic flow for motorists and commercial truckers, which would help improve economic productivity and boost economic growth.

The NHDOT Goes to the Fair for the Ninth Straight Year

Where else in New Hampshire can you promote your services to nearly a half million people and get vital feedback on the job you're doing?

Where else but New Hampshire State Fairs where people from across the state venture in search of candy apples, pig races, the ferris wheel, and maybe even throw in a comment about winter maintenance.

2005 marked the ninth straight year, the NHDOT has had a presence at the Cheshire, Lancaster, Deerfield, Hopkinton and North Haverhill Fairs. Visitors to the NHDOT booth can get up close to a fully equipped plow truck and interact with employees.

The fairs have also presented a great opportunity to get customer feedback. Customer satisfaction surveys filled out at the 2005 fairs revealed that just over 11% of those asked were unaware of all of the duties performed by the NHDOT. 97% of those responding had an overall favorable opinion of the agency, a percentage that has never dipped below 94% in the history of the survey.

Some other findings:

- 47% have dealt with the NHDOT on a personal level
- 84% felt the NHDOT responded to their personal needs
- 73% believe replacing or repairing deficient bridges is very important
- 30% believe highway beautification projects are very important
- 59% would stress reconstructing existing highways
- 37% see it as very important that new highways be constructed

Here's a sampling of some of the comments received:

- Need a marking paint that can be seen at night.*
- I like the new salt solution, it's better for the trees.*
- We need courteous drivers to go slower and obey the law.*
- We need more E-ZPass lanes at the Bedford Toll Plaza.*
- Let criminals pick up trash and mow the roadside.*
- Public transportation is needed.*
- Adding more lanes to I-93 only encourages flatlanders to commute.*
- Need more traffic signals, unsafe intersections.*
- I believe the NHDOT is doing well with the funds allocated.*
- Our state roads are similar to a war zone in Bosnia!*
- Allow bikes on the major highway. There is a wide paved shoulder.*
- Roundabouts for Keene not clover leaves!*
- You have forgotten about 101 between Manchester and Keene.*
- Restoring passenger rail service is very important.*
- With the price of gas, I have a hard time justifying how money is spent.*
- Move the Dover toll to the bridge and collect \$1.00 one way.*
- Please reconstruct 11A in Gilford and Alton.*
- More bike lanes will help with obesity problem.*
- Repave roadways.*



Workshop in Concord Attracts Nationwide Expertise for the I-93 Rebuilding Project

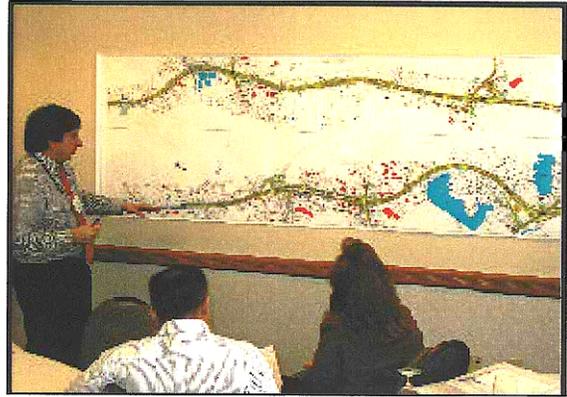
Recommendations to be Considered for 19.8 Mile Salem to Manchester Project

The timing was perfect for this case study. The final design is underway as planning continues for one of the largest highway projects in New Hampshire history, the \$480 million rebuilding and widening of Interstate 93 between Salem and Manchester.

Experts from across the country joined NHDOT personnel in Concord from February 21 through 23 for an ACCT (Accelerated Construction Technology Transfer) Workshop. The idea was to brainstorm and share expertise and experiences towards making a set of recommendations that would assist the project.

“It validated a lot of what we were thinking we needed to do,” says Bill Cass, Assistant Director of Project Development, who has also served as the I-93 project manager. “The networking and support we received from DOT contacts from across the country will serve us well with this project in the future.” Bill Cass says the underlying goal of an ACCT Workshop is to find ways to save valuable project time, an important element in achieving the NHDOT’s goal of building the I-93 project in six years.

The ACTT Workshop spawned a second one-day workshop with the Federal Highway Administration on the financial aspects of the I-93 project that was held on April 19.



Some ACTT Workshop Recommendations for the I-93 Rebuilding Project

- Establish a dedicated right-of-way coordinator for the corridor.
- Utilize incentives to accelerate property acquisitions.
- Develop a risk management plan for environmental resource protection.
- Establish a corridor-wide Traffic Control Manager.
- Consider reimbursement for utility relocations and relaxing winter construction restrictions.
- Develop a detailed public relations plan and assign personnel to keep users informed.
- Reclaim pavements when possible and appropriate.
- Advertise early for fabrication of structural steel and pre-cast elements to expedite construction.
- Identify early utility relocations in the critical path and establish a dedicated utility coordinator.
- Establish corridor-wide monitors for environmental, water quality and erosion control efforts.
- Use prefabricated retaining walls.
- Minimize phased construction.
- Include joint cracking prevention in the pavement program.
- Utilize time-based contracting strategies that include incentives when appropriate.
- Assign a corridor-wide construction management team.
- Develop a multi-agency technical advisory team to address environmental issues.
- Utilize smart work zone technology.
- Establish a local operations center.
- Improve emergency access and institute a courtesy vehicle program.
- Consider acceptance of electronic shop drawings to expedite review time.
- Investigate a full-scale crossover from northbound to southbound or vice versa.
- Consider relocating utilities off of bridges.
- Consider total cost, schedule, traffic control and constructability issues with larger contracts.

District 2 Crew Recognized for Response to Grafton County Complex Barn Fire

Wayne Bigelow was driving home from some shopping in Littleton on the night of January 2 when he noticed the red glow in the sky.

“I thought the whole Grafton County farm was on fire,” the District 2 Foreman out of the Haverhill #202 Patrol Facility remembers.

It wasn’t the whole farm, but it was an old maintenance storage barn that was fully engulfed.

Wayne quickly filled his state truck with salt and sand and treated the nearby road and parking lot to keep ice from forming while firefighters

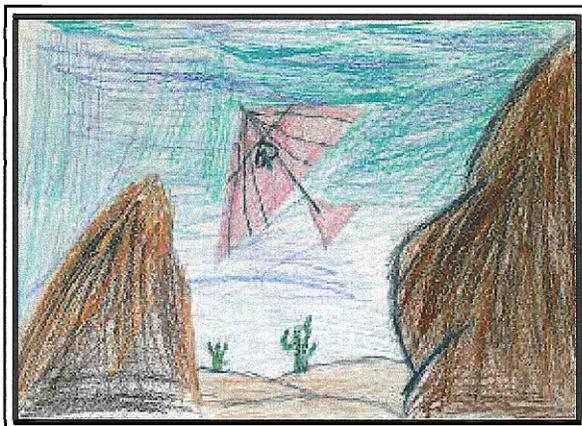


A tractor heater was found to be the cause of a blaze that destroyed a maintenance barn at the Grafton County farm on January 2. Grafton County Commissioners recognized the entire District 2 Haverhill #202 crew for their efforts and close working relationship with the county, including Wayne Bigelow, Gary White, Everett Sawyer III, Scott Derrington, Spencer Noyes, and Ray Shepardson. The patrol facility is located about half a mile south of the Grafton County Farm on NH Route 10.

battled the blaze. Then, going beyond the call of duty, Wayne volunteered the use of his own front end loader to help feed the 80-100 cows living at the farm. Three tractors normally used for that duty were lost in the fire. The loader stayed at the farm for three weeks.

“I grew up in Haverhill,” Wayne Bigelow says. My father was the Grafton County Farm manager for 44 years. This was personal.”

In recognition of Wayne Bigelow’s prompt response, and the close working relationship with the entire #202 crew, all six crew members were recognized for their public service by the Grafton County Commissioners at a brief ceremony on March 28.



Aeronautics Announces Winners of Annual Aviation Photo Contest

With the theme “Air, Sports and Nature in Harmony”, the Division of Aeronautics once again had to judge creative entries in the 2006 International Aviation Art Contest.

Among the winners was Adam Lamper, of the Milton Elementary School, who took top honors in the 6-9 year old category for his depiction of a hand glider in the desert (left).

Several aviation related organizations donated awards to the seven state winners.



LETTERS

Newfields Police Department

February 1, 2006

Dear Commissioner Murray,

Over the past 18 months, the Department of Transportation and E.D. Swett have been working hard to complete the new Route 85 Bridge located in downtown Newfields. During this time, I had the distinct pleasure to have worked with one of your top civil engineers, Adam Chestnut.

During the project, I found Adam to be a dedicated, hard-working professional. He always kept the town and its residents informed of the progress of the project during those months. He had the respect of those residents who were affected by the construction and the detour of the project. Residents always commented to me they felt included and informed along the way which made the project more bearable.

I would also like to commend the State on selecting bridge contractor E.D. Swett.

Art Reed
Chief of Police

January 2, 2006

I would like to thank all who were instrumental in my receiving permission in having a driveway constructed. It is a good feeling that after over fifty years I can enter my house without using the back entrance and climbing 13 stairs or walking around to the entrance.

Please extend my "THANKS" to David Merrill, contract administrator, Cary Wetherbee, Patrol Section 202, as well as Douglas King, assistant District Engineer.

Eudora M. Hibbard
NH Route 25
Warren, NH

Editor's note: The above letter was sent to District 2.

Hancock Highway Department

Commissioner Murray:

I am writing about a group of DOT employees who I believe went above and beyond the call of duty in helping out the Town of Hancock during the floods of October. During the night of October 8, the rising floodwaters of Ferguson Brook caused a municipally-owned bridge to collapse. This location is on a dead-end road with three homes beyond the bridge.

On October 10, 2005 I contacted Mr. Robert Barry, administrator of municipal highways for some guidance and assistance. Mr. Barry went right to work contacting the DOT's Bridge Maintenance Bureau to get an engineer out to help us evaluate the situation.

By Thursday of that week we had an inspection and a plan to construct a temporary bridge across Ferguson Brook. On Monday, October 17, Bridge Crew leader Dennis Marquis and his crew were on site and getting started at 6:30 am.

During the installation of the temporary bridge, Mr. Marquis and his crew worked from first light, until well after dark every night. When the work was completed, some members of the crew had to travel to the seacoast to get home. They were all back at work the next morning. The dedication these guys portrayed was exceptional. Never once did I hear a complaint about the work, the travel distance, or the hours worked.

By Thursday of that week, the three families that have been walking home were able to drive to their houses. Without the bridge crews dedication, the project would have taken several more days to complete.

The floods of October 2005 will be remembered for a long time. One of the memories I will have will be of the professional, dedicated staff of the NHDOT. Even though your department had situations they were handling all over the state, your department was still able to help us get our residents home. Mr. Barry, Mr. Marquis and all the other staff at NHDOT deserve a big thank you from the citizens of Hancock.

During an almost overwhelming situation, many agencies came together to work for the common good of its citizens. This is what I love about this state.

Please give my sincerest thanks to all the individuals involved. Their dedication, knowledge and commitment made a bad situation a little bit better for a small town in New Hampshire.

Kurtis J. Gasset
Hancock Road Agent

Wildly Popular Polar Express Expands to State-Owned Rail Line in Woodstock

For those who truly believe, there is now a second option for riding the Polar Express during the holiday season in the White Mountains.

Thanks to agreements crafted by the NHDOT's Right-of-Way and Rail and Transit Bureaus, the Polar Express this year made its way to Woodstock as well as its traditional stop in Bartlett.

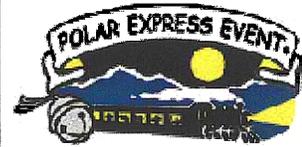
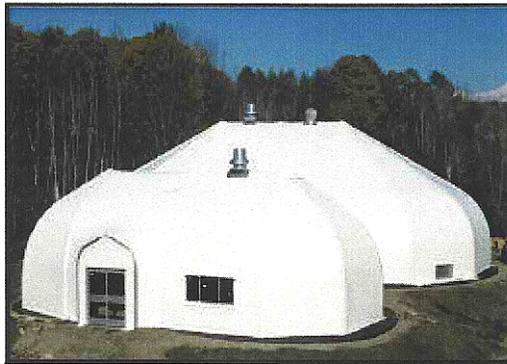
The Polar Express Event is a magical journey to the North Pole as depicted in the book by Chris Van Allsburg. This holiday favorite is a wonderful story which families live by traveling on a real train, where they are greeted by a "sea of elves", served "hot cocoa, as thick and rich as melted chocolate bars", and treated to a visit by Santa.

This event has become so popular over the years that you can only get tickets through a lottery system, or combined with a local lodging package.

The Polar Express Event is a holiday family event which involves many volunteers from the region, helping this adventure come to life. During a few short weeks in

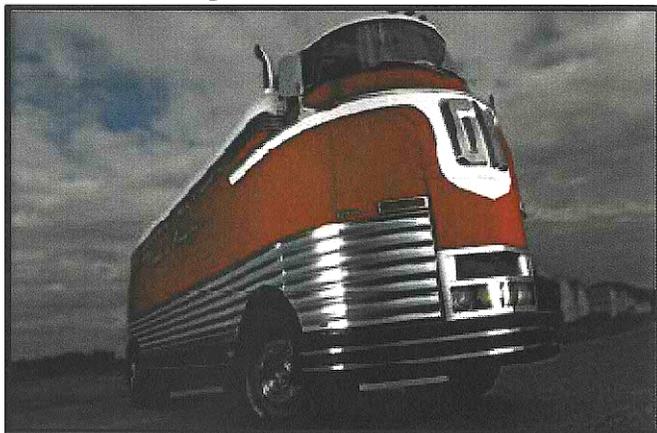
December, over 11,000 visitors came for this event, bringing 2.5 to 3 million dollars to the region through the money spent on lodging, shopping, dining, and other activities. Proceeds from The Polar Express in Woodstock are being used to begin new literacy programs in the North Country to benefit these same communities.

Both the new Woodstock location and the existing Bartlett one use the state-owned rail lines and property, and are operating on the Hobo Railroad and the Conway Scenic Railroad.



The new venue for The Polar Express in Woodstock (above left) is proving every bit as popular as its counterpart in Bartlett.

A Glimpse of a Bus in the Future?



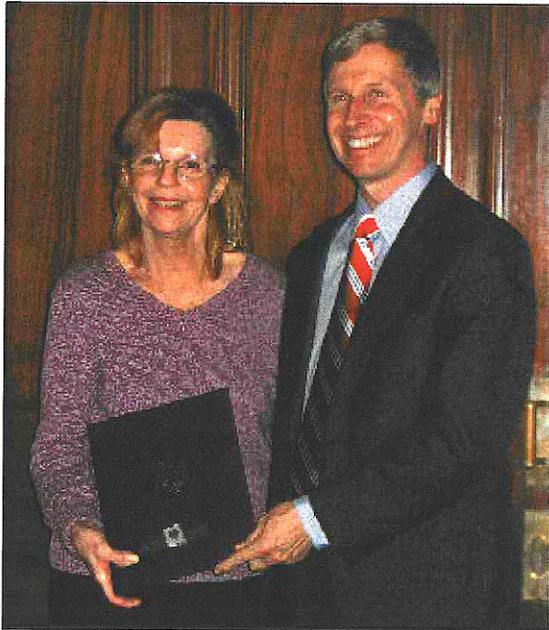
Actually it's a bus from the past. Built in 1950, this General Motors Futurliner was one of only 12 such vehicles ever built. This model sold at auction in January for \$4.3 million.

The Futurliners had self-contained, fully-lighted exhibits and displays that allowed large crowds to tour them. Their sides opened up to animated displays that showed such features as the evolution of communities, auto assembly lines and household appliances.

The Futurliners were 33-feet long, 8-feet wide and 11-feet 7 inches tall at the top of the driver's canopy.

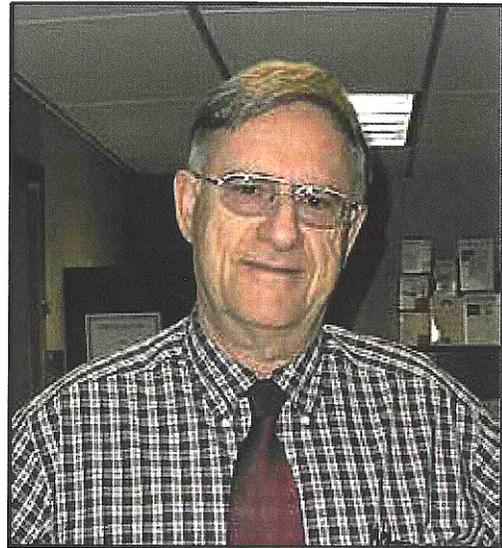


NHDOT People



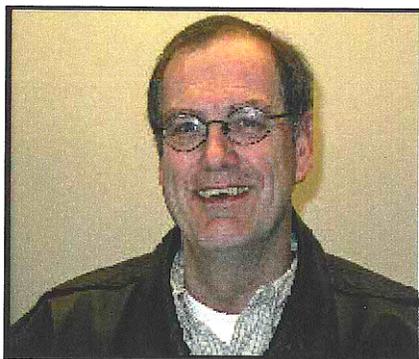
Carol Drew, an Account Clerk 3 with the Bureau of Bridge Maintenance, was recognized by Governor Lynch in January for her 30 years of service to the State of New Hampshire. Carol works at the Portsmouth Office.

Lynn Mayville Retires From 34 Year Career



After 34+ years in the NHDOT's Bureau of Construction, Lynn Mayville called it a career on February 28. Lynn retired as a District Engineer, a position he assumed in 1993. The Alton resident was one of the first CE 5's in Construction during the Turnpike Expansion Program. Lynn's wife Nancy is a Project Manager in the Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance.

Leadership Promotions in the Operations Division



The retirement of Mike Burlage as Assistant Director of Operations has led to two promotions in the Operations Division. State Maintenance Engineer Mike Pillsbury (above left) has been named Assistant Director of Operations, and Assistant Engineer Caleb Dobbins (right) has been promoted to State Maintenance Engineer. Mike Pillsbury has worked for the NHDOT for 12 years, including as the District 4 Assistant Engineer and as a Project Manager. Caleb Dobbins has 17 years of NHDOT service and has been Assistant Maintenance Engineer for three years. He previously spent 12 years in the Construction Bureau.

“Stormwater Jeopardy” Takes to the Stage at Construction School

The subjects weren't as diverse, but the format and competition were very similar to one of the most successful game shows in television history.

“Stormwater Jeopardy” was developed by Ron Crickard (Environment Bureau) to provide as much information as possible to NHDOT construction school participants on the agency's storm water program.

“It's a great way for people to learn something about a program that might otherwise be overwhelming,” Crickard says.

“Under the EPA's national Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), the NHDOT is required to educate its employee's about the storm water program.

There is a lot of information in the two general permits that apply to the DOT. The Construction General Permit (CGP) and Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) General Permit. While the game itself had only six contestants, the audience was encouraged to play along and try to come up with the correct responses.”

It took Final Jeopardy to decide the winning team - Bill Hauser (Environment) and Jeff Albright (Construction). Other contestants included: Jim Marshall and Denise Markow from Highway Design, and Jonathon Pitre and Denis Switzer from Construction.

Also assisting with the project were Kevin Nyhan, Jonathon Evans, Cathy Goodmen, and Amy Weinberger from the Bureau of Environment; Deb Loiselle and Ridge Mauck from the Department of Environmental Services; from IT Services Brian Armstrong; Bill Boynton (Public Information); Thelma Murphy from the Environmental Protection Agency; and Jake Tinus from the consulting firm VHB. Governor John Lynch also provided a video clue for the game.



Those participating in the production of Stormwater Jeopardy at the NHDOT construction school posed for a photo after the game on January 26.

Daffodil Days Raises Record Total of NHDOT Contributions

One of the first flowers of Spring, the daffodil is a symbol of hope. To the American Cancer Society, the flower represents the hope of a world free from cancer. Daffodil Days is the annual campaign by the American Cancer Society to raise valuable funding to support programs for research, education, advocacy, and service. Thanks to all of you who placed orders for daffodils this year. The NHDOT ordered 375 bunches of flowers and 24 Gifts of Hope which support the fight against cancer by giving bouquets to cancer patients in need in our community. 36 Bear lovers ordered the Bear and a Bunch.

Our biggest contributors were District One with a grand total of \$882.

Great job everyone!!! Altogether, we collected \$4,038, which will go a long way to further the fight against cancer. This is \$25 more than our all time high, which was our 2004 contribution. Together we will make a difference in fighting cancer! Thanks again, and enjoy the arrival of spring!



Linda Wescott (Human Resources)
NHDOT Daffodil Days Coordinator

E-ZPass Use and Interest Continues to Climb on the NH Turnpike System

Nine months after electronic tolling was introduced on the New Hampshire Turnpike System, the number of motorists using E-ZPass continues to climb. Currently, the average E-ZPass market share across the Turnpike System is 53%. Some toll plazas, during commuter times see a 60-65% market share!

According to NHDOT, E-ZPass Project Manager Al Almasi, "E-ZPass can now be described as the most successful technology change that has come to toll collection in New Hampshire in the past 25 or more years. It has made a significant improvement to traffic throughput volumes at our toll plazas, thereby reducing congestion and wait time for the motoring public. Yes, we did have some bumps in the road along the path to full deployment, but the benefits far outweigh the hurdles that had to be overcome throughout the deployment phase."

Working with the Traffic Bureau, the Turnpikes Bureau continues to make improvements in signage and pavement markings to make it that much easier for motorists to distinguish the E-ZPass lanes at each plaza.

According to a survey by *Toll Roads News*, out of 15.4 daily toll transactions in the United States, 9.1 million are done by electronic tolling. At least 22.5 million American vehicles have transponders on their windshields, about one in every ten vehicles. In E-ZPass alone, there are more than 8.6 million accounts.



New pavement markings at the Bedford Toll Plaza give motorists one more indicator that they are heading for the "E-ZPass only" lanes. New advanced overhead signing at all of the mainline plazas has been well received by those traveling on the NH Turnpike System. Less than a year after E-ZPass was introduced in New Hampshire, the weekly share of motorists utilizing the electronic tolling option regularly tops 50%. The result has been smoother traffic flow and few backups at any of the plazas.

Now that's an air conditioner!



Two massive heating and air conditioning units for the new Materials and Research Building arrived by truck from Virginia on March 23.

The two units, weighing approximately 15,000 pounds each, were then lifted into place by crane to their permanent rooftop location.

The building is expected to be occupied in May.

What's So Important About Roads? Just Ask the Folks in Afghanistan

Editor's note: The following excerpt published in the Miami Herald on February 26, 2006 was written by Dexter Lehtinen, an attorney who joined four U.S. Congressmen on a bipartisan fact-finding tour of Afghanistan, Iraq and Kuwait.

In Afghanistan, the answer is "roads". Now, what's the question? It doesn't matter. The answer is always "roads".

That's what a delegation of American congressmen last month heard from Afghans at all levels - from President Hamid Karzai and the new speaker of the parliament in Kabul to a

local Islamic mullah and village elders from outside of Jalalabad - as they tried to understand the problems of war and peace in Afghanistan.

How can we improve agriculture? Roads.

What's needed for commerce, wage labor job creation and general economic development? Roads.

How can the poppy crop (producing opium) be reduced? Roads.

What's the biggest factor in public health? Roads.

The key to creating and maintaining a functioning democracy? Roads.

The prerequisite to security and law enforcement? Roads.

Defeating the terrorist insurgents? Roads.

You might think that in the 21st century, there would be some more complex answers. But Afghanistan is not in the 21st century, except on a calendar. Americans take roads, like democracy, for granted. Afghans don't.

We're not talking about limited-access super-highways, or traffic lights or even multi-lane roads. Afghans are talking about just a single-lane, graded road that can be identified on the ground, one that doesn't just disappear.

As an Afghan interpreter translates, the elders of a small village near the Pakistani border gesture to illustrate how a farmer needs roads to get his crops to market and how roads are essential to all forms of commerce. They say straight out that a drug lord will pick up a poppy crop right at the farm, so a lack of roads makes it very hard to substitute a crop that must be taken to market. The situation also makes it hard to follow the dictates of Islam, which prohibit drug trade.

Women die in high numbers in childbirth because there are no decent roads to get them to a hospital. Thus, a democratic government that could provide roads would be embraced enthusiastically. Roads are essential to security because law enforcement and the military must be mobile to assert its presence effectively.

How about winning the war against terrorist insurgents? "We have fighters in our village," the elders say. "They (the terrorists) cannot dictate to us, but we can't get out to help others who are threatened." That's the village elders view from below.

President Karzai's view from above is similar. Isolated insurgent safe-havens can be eliminated, and isolated villages protected, with roads.

The new Afghan National Army undergoing U.S. training has more than enough tough, committed recruits, but its effectiveness will be limited if it can't spread out and re-concentrate rapidly. It can't fight if it can't get there.



Roads Once Traveled...



There was no big fanfare on October 6, 1976 when the first carpool parking lot was opened in New Hampshire. This was on Newport Road in New London, a short distance east from Exit 12. Doing the honors was Senate President Alf E. Jacobson of New London and Richard Fleming of the state's Energy Office. This small lot, essentially a wide spot on the old NH Route 11 roadbed, was replaced by the existing 42-space Park and Ride on NH 103A a short distance away, which opened December 8, 1995. New Hampshire currently has 25 Park and Ride lots across the state.

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