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It’s a Saturday in mid-December and a sense of urgency is in the air. Shoppers are clogging the roads and store aisles, scurrying to complete their errands. The first major snowstorm of the winter is bearing down on New Hampshire. For most, there’s still plenty of time to drive home and curl up with a good book or movie.

Let the snowfall begin. For snowplow drivers, it’s time to go to work.

Veteran Department of Transportation highway maintainers like Felix “Bub” Gardner, Jr. climb into their trucks and set out to take on Mother Nature. Bub has been plowing the same 18 mile route (NH 43 and NH 107) in Deerfield for the State of New Hampshire for 29 years, the last 23 as a NHDOT employee. He heads south towards the Deerfield Fairgrounds.

“I know every nook and cranny on that route,” Bub Gardner says. “There’s more traffic to deal with now than when I started, but I still enjoy it. I enjoy trying to help other people out.”

Snowstorms can go on for many hours. They’re a real test of a plow driver’s skills and endurance in maneuvering the plows, dispensing salt, and keeping a steady hand at the wheel. Bub is not a coffee drinker. His secret? “A Mountain Dew and a Snickers bar, that’s my combination that works.”

Blowing snow can limit visibility as the plow driver stays focused. “Snowflakes can look as big as oranges with the strobe on them,” Bub says. “It’s like a disco ball that you can’t turn off.”

After the movie ends or the book is set down, sleep is momentarily interrupted as one hears that comforting rumble of the snowplow passing by. “Once you get that first storm behind you, you get in the rhythm. It’s a piece of cake.”

Today’s plow drivers have more technology and better machines at their disposal than ever before to help them do their jobs, but it’s still their skills and experience that make the difference. They are dedicated and take their challenging jobs very seriously.

Bub Gardner speaks proudly of his co-workers at the District 6 Northwood #604 patrol shed. There’s a sense of camaraderie to help each other out if needed, and no shortage of experience. “It’s not their first rodeo.”

But Bub is also more than willing to point out the fine points of plowing and the trouble spots along the route to that new Highway Maintainer who is anxious to learn. “I’m not going to be here forever. We need people with experience to help out and guide those who don’t know.”

Those who plow for the State of New Hampshire are good at keeping the roads safe, so good in fact that they are often taken for granted. They have set the bar high over the years. Bub Gardner has this message for those who venture out when it’s snowing – “Don’t crowd the plow. Give us enough space to do our jobs. You’re just as safe behind a plow truck as in your mother’s arms.”

For them, it’s personal. They are plowing the same roads that their friends and family are travelling every day.

Commissioner Christopher D. Clement, Sr.
Those who have waited a long time for the opportunity to travel east-west in New Hampshire by bus need to wait no longer. East West Express began a new transit service on November 4th that features 20 hourly runs a day between Portsmouth and Manchester-Boston Regional Airport, with stops at the Epping Park and Ride and downtown Manchester.

Welcoming the new service at ribbon cuttings on each end of the corridor, NHDOT Commissioner Chris Clement said, “East West Express will cut emissions and congestion from commuters and airport travelers. It will reduce individuals’ trips and their emissions and fuel use, and will also make it easier for companies to recruit across a larger portion of New Hampshire.”

Interest in establishing east-west bus service dates back at least to 2004, when the City of Portsmouth asked the NH Department of Transportation for a feasibility study. That study was undertaken by regional planning agencies and completed in 2009. The NHDOT’s Rail and Transit Bureau followed up with a Request for Proposals, and worked to make the new transportation option a reality.

East West Express is operated by Flight Line, Inc., which purchased four ADA-accessible 10 passenger vans for the new service. The venture will initially be funded in part by a $2.5 million federal CMAQ grant over three years. Fares will be $19 per person between Manchester and Portsmouth, $9 between Epping and Manchester, and $10 between Epping and Portsmouth. There will also be discounts for seniors and frequent users. For more details, visit http://eastwestnh.com/
A major facelift has begun at the Hooksett Welcome Centers on both sides of Interstate 93. Under a 35-year lease with the state, the Common Man restaurant group, a New Hampshire-based company, is funding the $32 million redevelopment project that will provide residents and visitors a wide range of new and improved services, including multiple dining options, an interactive visitors center, a NH Liquor and Wine Outlet store, a country store, a bank, and fueling stations.

“The new Welcome Centers will help spur economic growth and offer a uniquely New Hampshire experience that showcases what makes our state special.”

The redevelopment project initiated by the Turnpikes Bureau on what is also the Everett Turnpike will construct new buildings on both sides of the highway that will feature mill-building architectural style and house all Common Man food options in a food court setting. Both will feature a 1950s style diner, an Italian Farmhouse restaurant, a deli, and a breakfast shop. A 24-hour convenience store, two NH State Liquor & Wine Outlet stores, a bank branch, and an interactive and informative visitors center are also part of the redevelopment plan. Fueling stations will be added at each location, as well as a test run of plug-in stations for electric vehicles.

Pointing out that tourism is the second largest industry in the state, Jeff Rose, Commissioner of the Department of Resources and Economic Development, said the upgraded welcome centers “…will ensure that visitors have a positive impression of New Hampshire.”

NHDOT Commissioner Chris Clement agreed. “These will be model Welcome Centers for New Hampshire, and a “must stop” for commuters, tourists, and liquor store patrons.”

Under the terms of the lease, the NHDOT will receive a minimum of $23 million over 35 years, as well as a percentage of gross sales, which could raise total revenue to $39 million based upon forecasted sales.

Both rest areas will remain open throughout the construction project. The new Hooksett Welcome/Service Centers are scheduled to be completed in April 2015.

Governor Hassan used a shovel, while others grabbed very large kitchen utensils to break ground on the redevelopment of the Hooksett Welcome Centers. The new facilities on the Everett Turnpike (I-93), which will offer a wide range of services for motorists, are set to open in April 2015.
New Scenic Overlook Opens With a Tribute to Executive Councilor Ray Burton

Visitors to the White Mountains Region now have a new roomier and safer place to park along US Route 302 for the classic view of Mt. Washington and the Mt. Washington Hotel. With parking for 22 vehicles and six buses, the Carroll Scenic Overlook opened on November 1st with much fanfare. The occasion provided an opportunity for top New Hampshire elected officials, past and present, as well as hundreds of friends, to honor longtime Executive Councilor Ray Burton, who had been in declining health.

The land for the new overlook was donated by the owners of the Mt. Washington Resort. A private fundraising effort led to a stone marker in tribute to Councilor Burton, which was unveiled at the special ceremony.

“It is fitting that at this, one of the most beautiful scenic vistas in New Hampshire, we will have a marker, Ray, to recognize every day the difference that you have made for the North Country and New Hampshire,” said former governor and current U.S. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen. “We are so grateful. Thank you.”

Governor Maggie Hassan announced the efforts were already underway in the legislature to name the new scenic overlook after Councilor Burton.

Eleven days later, in the early morning hours of November 12, 2013, Ray Burton passed away.

Known for his constituent service, and a strong supporter of transportation during his 35 years of office representing the North Country, Ray Burton clearly relished the moment. “I’m very, very happy with what I’ve done with my public life. I regret no vote that I’ve had,” he told the assembled crowd. “The bottom line is, it’s for public service to the people of New Hampshire.”
“Everyone Wins With Research and Innovation.” Those words spoken by the Federal Highway Administration’s Patrick Bauer sum up why, according to NHDOT Commissioner Chris Clement, “those of us in transportation must never sit still when it comes to the way we do business.” Commissioner Clement joined the FHWA’s Administrator for New Hampshire in opening the “2013 NHDOT Research and Innovation Showcase.”

The four-hour event in Concord on November 13th was organized by the NHDOT’s Materials and Research Bureau. Highlighted research projects extended to nearly every major technical discipline in the Department, including: the NHDOT’s dramatic increase in the use and savings of recycled asphalt pavement (RAP), the latest tools in winter snow and ice control and removal, high performance bridge coatings and innovative bridge design applications, implemented construction and maintenance innovations, and low-cost initiatives for traffic safety.

“Perhaps the most valuable feature of the showcase for me was simply associating specific DOT people with various topics that I otherwise didn’t know about,” said Jerry Zoller, a project engineer in the Bridge Design Bureau. “It also impressed me with the variety of issues that the Department is involved with improving and solving. I appreciate more what is going on within the Department outside my world of steel bridges.”

Each display at the showcase highlighted cost-savings or efficiencies combined with technological improvements, safety enhancements or environmental stewardship. In addition to in-house participants from across the Department, presenters included five professors and students from the University of New Hampshire, on hand to share their findings from NHDOT-sponsored research on pavements, structures, and geotechnical issues. Patrick Bauer cited the NHDOT as “a leader in the country in the use of warm mix asphalt,” which allows us to place pavement at lower temperatures and thus save energy while lowering emissions and extending the paving season. He called it “astounding” that the NHDOT uses recycled asphalt in 99% of its paving projects.

Those attending also heard expert presentations about bridge scour countermeasures (Bridge Design), I-93 storm water treatment systems (Highway Design), and permissive left turn movements (Traffic Bureau).

In addition to more than 30 posters focusing on recent research and innovations, several past winners at previous NHDOT Plow Rallies were on hand to demonstrate their safety innovations that have been implemented in the Operations Division. Highway maintainers are constantly thinking about ways to make their jobs safer and more efficient. As evidenced by the 2013 Research and Innovation Showcase, the NHDOT remains committed to using its resources wisely, with the goal of better, faster, and cheaper for long-lasting transportation.

“I think it came off very well,” said Materials and Research Bureau administrator Alan Rawson. “I had several people say to me the showcase made them proud to be a part of the DOT.”
What’s the story?

A “One of a Kind” Granite Hut for a Diesel Pump in District 6

Only in the Granite State! This unique granite enclosure for a diesel gas pump at District 6’s Stratham #602 Patrol Shed is destined for demolition as part of an upcoming fuel facility upgrade. This structure was built over 20 years ago. According to current District 6 Engineer Doug DePorter, “The story is that at the time this fuel site was constructed the foreman was Donny Yeaton (retired). He was a very talented stone mason and would find any and every opportunity to build beautiful stone walls and headers. Mr. Yeaton said that he was forced to build it out of stone as the District office would not give him money to buy the wood to make a conventional pump enclosure.”

A New Rail Trail in Keene and Sidewalks in Brookline

Pedestrians and bicyclists have two new options in Keene and Brookline. A newly opened 1.7 mile rail trail in Keene extends from a new pedestrian bridge over NH Route 9. It links the largest residential area in Keene with the downtown. This trail provides a transportation alternative for commuters, shoppers, and Keene State College students. The $270,000 project was competed in the fall of 2013.

The other Transportation Enhancement project involves the construction of sidewalks along NH Route 130 in Brookline. The southern segment creates a new pedestrian connection between South Main Street and the downtown area. The northern segment will fill in a gap between Austin Road and NH Route 13, providing a safe transportation corridor along busy NH 130. The southern segment is complete and the northern segment will be completed in the summer of 2014.
The Best of the Best

The Top Five Photos from “A Day in the Life of the NHDOT”

More than 600 photos taken on October 8, 2013 were submitted by NHDOT employees as part of the “A Day in the Life of the NHDOT” project. From there, over 90 of those photos were selected by a panel of judges for inclusion in a unique hardcover book. The judges also chose the “Top Five Superior Photos” that are featured on these pages.

**Photo by Joe DeAngelis**  
Submitted by Brian Lombard  
(Rail and Transit)

Brian Lombard, NHDOT Railroad Operations Engineer, inspects the spiking of the rail on new cross ties by DeAngelis Railroad Contractors of Worcester, Mass. The track work on the Concord-Lincoln Railroad Line entailed removing an old damaged track section in the driveway to Bridgewater Power Company in Bridgewater, New Hampshire and replacing it with new ballast stone, cross ties, rail, and pavement. This photo was taken as work progressed in the mid-afternoon.

**Photo by Jerry Zoller (Bridge Design)**

“Having worked on the Memorial Bridge for almost two years, I especially wanted to highlight Denis Switzer for a job well done. Denis is the Construction Bureau’s Contractor Administrator for the project. On October 8th, I was scheduled to visit an inspector at the bridge regarding repair work, and Denis was there when I arrived. I photographed Denis at different locations on the bridge. This photo was almost the last one taken, at the Portsmouth end with the bridge extending into the background. Late afternoon daylight was rapidly fading and shadows were encroaching, but the sunlight at that moment was just right.”
“It appears Assistant Highway Patrol Foreman Robert Rollins (Bedford #511) is looking the wrong way. But if you study the picture closely, you’ll see he’s watching oncoming traffic to protect his co-worker, Highway Maintainer Troy Campbell, as Troy paints yellow arrows on the pavement to identify catch basins soon to be covered by snow. Route 114 in Goffstown, like all roads, can flood if snow quickly turns to rain. The snow and snow banks can hide drainage outlets. Marking the basins helps plow drivers identify where they can release flooding water.”

“The Wentworth-Coolidge Mansion in Portsmouth was the home of New Hampshire’s first Royal Governor, who served from 1741 to 1767. Over the years, Roadside Development has been involved with the upkeep and maintenance of the lilacs, which are seen around the property. Some of the oldest lilacs are found at the site, as it’s believed to be the location where the first lilacs came to America. Roadside Development, in part with the Governor’s Lilac and Wildflower Commission, visits the site occasionally to check the progression of the Lilacs.”

“I’ve taken a few photos of vehicle light trails before and thought the traffic on I-93 could make an interesting scene. I tried to think of a relatively safe place where I could set the camera up to get the 93 traffic and came up with Delta Drive Bridge in Concord. This photo was taken from the bridge looking south towards the Capitol Dome at about 6:15 pm. I set up the tripod to the side of the fencing on the bridge for a clear view and set the shutter for a 20 second exposure to capture the light trails.”
As an Assistant Coach for the Concord High football team, Environment Bureau Administrator Kevin Nyhan played an important role in the Crimson Tide’s undefeated, record-setting state championship season in the fall of 2013. In another NHDOT connection, the starting left guard for Concord was Nick Carlson, son of Scott Carlson (Construction Bureau). Kevin was asked to reflect on what the Concord Monitor called “this most glorious of football seasons” and “a team in every sense of the word.”

What made this team so special?
This was a group of dedicated, hardworking, and selfless athletes. I can honestly say that in my 16 years on staff at Concord High School, there has never been a team that worked as hard and that got along as well together. As a developing program 4 years ago, our record was 0 wins and 10 losses. Here we are 4 years later sitting atop the Division at 12 wins and 0 losses. That takes a level of commitment on the kids’ part that goes beyond the four months in the fall. Moreover, these guys are just great kids. I have had a blast being part of their lives.

How do you look back on this state championship season?
To say you are the best at what you do is something to be proud of, but I cannot help but think almost more about not the one day, but the string of days. You start the year early in August with a group of kids who don’t know how to play football. They just want to play, and learn how to win. Four months later you really know the kids, and what they are capable of doing.

What will you remember most about this experience?
The thing I will remember most is the kids. I’m proud of them, and they should be proud of themselves for doing something that no other football team in the history of Concord High School has done.

Many expected a close championship game. What led to the lopsided 42 to 14 win over Pinkerton?
Dedication, preparation, and opportunity.

What were the practices like?
As a staff, we developed a practice plan over the last several years that we stuck to. What has changed is the intensity and the pace of practice. There is no walking on the field; we run wherever we go. Everyone is expected to practice at game speed.

How would you characterize the coaching staff’s contribution to this team’s success?
As a staff, our job is to put kids in the right place, and teach them the necessary skills to make plays and win games. But our seasons of losing made us keenly aware of the intangible things we need to do to win. As we’ve grown as a staff, we’ve made modifications to our offense and defense, which contributed to our success this year.

You’ve been an assistant coach for 16 seasons. What keeps you going back year after year?
That’s easy…the coaches and the kids. I get to hang out with my closest friends every day for four months, working toward a common goal. There is a bittersweet feeling I get each November though, even this year. I’m glad for another year with the program complete, but have a sense of loss because it’s generally another year before we all get back together again.

Any interest in being a head coach?
None. My role as the offensive line and the outside linebackers coach allows me to do exactly what I love to do….coach.
Awards

NHDOT Recognized for National Excellence in Pavement Preservation

Recipient of 2013 James B. Sorenson Award

“The right treatment, on the right road, at the right time.” That’s the theme of the Foundation for Pavement Preservation (FP2), which has recognized the New Hampshire Department of Transportation as a national leader in applying cost-effective treatments for protecting and preserving New Hampshire’s roads.

The NHDOT is only the third state Department of Transportation to receive the James B. Sorenson Award, which recognizes efforts used to promote the benefits of pavement preservation as well as its implementation. Commissioner Chris Clement has espoused the benefits of pavement management, specifically the philosophy of keeping New Hampshire’s “good roads, good.” The idea is to make sure roads currently in good condition stay that way instead of waiting until their state of repair requires more expensive rehabilitation or reconstruction treatments.

“Pavement Preservation addresses minor deficiencies early, before the defects become major problems, and extends the life at a relatively low cost,” says NHDOT Pavement Management Chief Eric Thibodeau (Materials & Research). “The NHDOT is increasingly using preservation treatments such as micro-surfacing, chip seals, and bonded wearing course to increase pavement surface life. The benefits of implementing a pavement preservation program are not immediate and dramatic but accrue over time.”

The Sorenson Award is named for the late Jim Sorenson, a Federal Highway Administration engineer who traveled the country promoting pavement preservation at the state and local agency levels, while leading the charge to fund pavement preservation at the national level. The award was presented to Commissioner Clement at a regional pavement preservation meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana.

NHDOT Chosen For National Communications Awards

“New Hampshire!” was read three times at a national awards ceremony for the “2013 Skills Contest” held by the AASHTO Subcommittee on Transportation Communication. The New Hampshire Department of Transportation received First Place Awards for “Best Blog” and “Best Published Article with a DOT Byline”. The awards were announced at the “Transcomm 2013” annual workshop in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The winning blog is “New Hampshire Moves” by Commissioner Chris Clement. The published article, “Remembering Public Works Employees Who Died Doing Their Jobs,” appeared in several publications, including the Portsmouth Herald and NH Highways Magazine. The NHDOT also received an “Honorable Mention” for its Department newsletter “On the Move.”
Awards

NHDOT Certified Public Managers Team Wins National Award

They work in distinctly different parts of the NHDOT – the Environment Bureau (Matt Urban), the Transportation Management Center (Eric Scott), and Highway Maintenance District One (John Paul Hilliard). But together, as a Certified Public Managers (CPM) team, they proved to be on the same page. Matt, Eric, John were recognized at the November major staff meeting for receiving the George A. Askew Award for “demonstrating exemplary work in the completion of their project while pursuing their certification.” Their project, entitled “Transportation Solutions for Road Maintenance Operations,” detailed several of the technology improvements being used by NHDOT maintenance forces to keep New Hampshire’s highways safe for motorists. The Askew Award from the American Academy of Certified Public Managers recognizes projects that are “innovative, result in cost savings, and demonstrate an improvement in quality within the work unit.”

Memorial Bridge Named a “Top Ten Bridge of 2013” in North America

The new Memorial Bridge in Portsmouth, which opened to traffic on August 8th, has already been recognized twice for its design, innovations, and construction, once by a national magazine and again by the Design-Build Institute of America.

Roads and Bridges Magazine has cited the Memorial Bridge as one of the “Top 10 Bridges of 2013” in North America based upon project challenges, impact to the region, and scope of the work. The magazine wrote in its November issue, “A gussetless steel-truss bridge may sound like pie in the sky, but the first of its kind will soon be completed joining Portsmouth, N.H., and Kittery, Maine. As notable for its schedule as for its lack of gussets, the new Memorial Bridge is being designed and constructed in just 18 months, including the time to demolish the old bridge. Other innovations include a metalized zinc coating, using a consistent profile of three spans and cold blending of steel.”

The Memorial Bridge project has also received the “2013 Gold Award for Highway/Infrastructure,” a New England Region Project Award from Design-Build Institute of America that recognizes outstanding design-build projects completed within the region. The project team honored at a December 11 awards ceremony in Framingham, Massachusetts included the New Hampshire and Maine Departments of Transportation, Archer Western Contractors, and HNTB Corp.
NHDOT People

Retiring
District 4
Engineer
Doug Graham was presented with a “Traffic Bureau alumni” jacket by Traffic Bureau Administrator Bill Lambert at a surprise event in Doug’s honor held October 30th at the Antrim Bridge Maintenance facility. As part of Doug’s 35 years of State service, he spent 10 years at the Traffic Bureau before moving to District 4 in 1999.

District 5 Maintenance Supervisor Kevin King was recognized for 25 years of State service at the November major staff meeting. Kevin has spent his entire NHDOT career in District 5, including positions as a Construction Foreman, Patrol Foreman in Henniker (#504), and Assistant Highway Patrol Foreman in Warner (#501).

Kevin Frew (Mechanical Services) had a Christmas Eve to remember. While visiting his stepdaughter, Kevin and his wife were wrapping gifts when they heard commotion from the room of a second floor tenant. They rushed upstairs to find the man had stopped breathing. Kevin’s wife called 911 and he began CPR. Kevin succeeded in bringing the man back to life and kept him breathing until paramedics arrived. He was transported to a hospital and released on Christmas Day.

Courtney Evans is the NHDOT’s new recruiter/trainer in the Human Resources Bureau. Courtney has previous experience as a job recruiter in both the medical field and for manufacturing firms. She also worked for several years in training and job retention for the Walt Disney Company.

John Kallfelz is the new District 4 Highway Maintenance Engineer. John has served as Assistant District 4 Engineer for the past six years. During his 23 year NHDOT career, the Brookline resident has also worked eight years in Highway Design and as a Contract Administrator in the Construction Bureau.

Guy Giunta (Highway Design) retired January 10th with 25+ years of State service. Guy spent his entire NHDOT career in the Roadside Development Section. As the Landscape Specialist Supervisor, he was the expert on all things planted along New Hampshire roadsides. “It was a great job for me,” the Sanbornton resident said.

Former Turnpikes Bureau Administrator Harvey Goodwin died on January 3, 2014 at the age of 64. Harvey’s 37-year career with the NHDOT included 13 years as a Construction Bureau engineer. He served as Administrator of the Bridge Maintenance Bureau from 1984 to 1997. From 1997 to 2009, Harvey headed the Turnpikes Bureau, and was instrumental in bringing electronic tolling to New Hampshire.
Service Awards (1st Quarter)

5 Years:
Bernard Kenney - Mechanical Services
Christopher Howe - District 2
Daniel Hotaling - Mechanical Services
David Cloutier - Office of Federal Compliance
Deirdre Nash - Materials & Research
Joshua Lafond - Highway Design
Joshua Mcgraw - District 2
Justin Smith - District 2
Kevin Belanger - District 4
Lucas Siik - Highway Design
Raymond Cornish - District 2
Richard Faul - Highway Design
Robert Bollinger - Traffic
Stephanie Micucci - Highway Design
Troy Power - District 5

10 Years:
David Proulx - Turnpikes
Jason Marro - District 1
Jennifer Martin - District 1

15 Years:
Ann Sargent - Turnpikes
Charles Lowe - Mechanical Services
Christopher Brown - District 1
Craig Levesque - District 6
Daniel Cloutier - District 4
David Almon - District 6
Debra Grinley - Turnpikes
Diane Weaver - Turnpikes
Donald White - District 3
Elbert Dickinson - District 2
Jeffrey Huckins - Mechanical Services
John Arsenault - Finance
Kevin Nyhan - Environment
Raymond Wilder - District 2
Valerie Labbe - Turnpikes

20 Years:
Carl Ouellette - Bridge Maintenance
Donald Hubbard - District 1
Dwayne Searles - District 4
Joseph Macdonald - District 3
Kenneth Mailhot - District 6
Leighton Greenwood - District 1
Richard Radwanski - District 5

25 Years:
Anita Miville - Turnpikes
Caleb Dobbins - Highway Maintenance
Christopher Girard - Highway Design
Craig Drouin - Highway Design
Eric Sargent - Right-Of-Way
Margaret Blacker - Turnpikes
Michelle Drouin - Finance
Paul Gelinas - Highway Design
Ronald Allaire - District 5

30 Years:
Arthur Breault - District 2
Dix Bailey - Turnpikes
Joseph Ingerson - Bridge Maintenance
Michael Eldridge - District 3
Patrick Herlihy - Aeronautics
Timothy Blake - Mechanical Services

35 Years:
Dana Parker - Mechanical Services
David Bennett - Mechanical Services
Ellison Welch - Construction/Engineering Audit
Eric Keskinen - Highway Design
James Kuntz - Turnpikes
Jeffrey Lorden - Bridge Design
Robert Foster - Traffic
Tonight my seven-year-old daughter and I met three guardian angels...a Police Dispatcher, a State Trooper and a gentleman from the Department of Transportation. At 5:54 pm I placed a frantic call to 911. I was immediately connected to the State Police Dispatcher. My minivan lost all power in the middle lane of 93 North just south of Exit 1 in rush hour traffic. With the loss of power, we lost the ability to alert other drivers of our presence with our hazard lights.

The dispatcher immediately sent a police cruiser our way. He also had a DOT truck with flashing lights sent to us. While we waited what felt like hours (but was really minutes), the dispatcher talked calmly to me as my hysteria rose. I was so frightened that we would be rear-ended. Somehow this very sensitive man realized I needed him to help me so that I would not further panic my young daughter. He told me he could see my van and he told me when he could see cars lined up behind us which helped alert other drivers of our presence.

When the DOT and police car were near, he let me know he could see them on his camera. In those minutes, he continued to ask me questions to keep me focused. He remained on the line until we were safely in the hands of our next guardian angels. The State Trooper and DOT worker were fantastic. They immediately took control of the situation, getting our vehicle off the highway as the first order of business. As the warm gentleman from the DOT convinced my daughter to tell him about our dog, the kind state trooper called AAA for me and had a tow truck sent. Both gentlemen were calm, reassuring, organized, and professional. They even helped come up with a plan to get my daughter home in time for trick-or-treating.

I did not have time to ask any of these three angels their names. I am very sorry I didn’t think of that. However, I am truly hoping someone will know who these three gentlemen are and let them know how very much I appreciate everything they did for me and my daughter. It is not every day that people do their jobs with such sensitivity and kindness. I am very lucky they all came to our rescue. We are ALL lucky to have these gentlemen in our state. Please, please let these men know what good work they are doing. Thank you, gentlemen, from the bottom of my heart. This evening could have turned out very differently for us without your dedication and professionalism. We will never forget that...

With so much gratitude,
Karen and Kira Collins

Editor’s note: The three “guardian angels” cited by Ms. Collins were: from the NHDOT - John Robinson (District 5) who was the I-93 service patrol operator that night, and from NH State Police - Trooper Sean Harrington and Dispatcher Phil Walsh.
New Law Changes Speed Limit on Section of I-93

A new State law kept Traffic Bureau sign crews busy making and installing new speed limit signs on Interstate 93 north of Concord. The new law, which took effect January 1, 2014, increased the speed limit from 65 MPH to 70 MPH from mile marker 45 in Canterbury north to the Vermont state line in Littleton. The speed limits on the Franconia Notch Parkway remained unchanged. The NHDOT estimated the cost of the sign change effort at $36,000, although State Transportation Engineer Bill Lambert says several of the signs needed to be replaced anyway so the added cost was negligible. Some were replaced through projects. “We are storing the 65 mph panels that we removed in the event we may need them for other locations in the near future.” The photo shows the Traffic Bureau’s Dave Malloy removing a panel to reveal the higher speed limit.

TO ALL THE "CASH ONLY ATTENDANTS"

I JUST WANTED TO SAY THANK YOU TO EVERYONE FOR ALWAYS BEING SO SWEET AND PLEASANT. I WISH I KNEW ALL YOUR NAMES BUT I DON’T.

IT’S A GREAT WAY TO END A LONG DAY AT WORK AND COMMUTE. YOU ALL GO HOME AND BEYOND, AND THAT IS WHY I REFUSE TO GET THE EZ PASS!!

Happy Holidays!

“White BMW”

Cover photo: Highway Maintainer Ed Estefan (Patrol Shed #316 Loudon) does some cleanup work after a storm on Baptist Hill Road in Canterbury.