

Robert J. St. Onge Jr. Named Secretary of Transportation

By Pete Poore

Governor Nikki R. Haley appointed retired U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Robert J. St. Onge Jr. as Secretary of Transportation on Jan. 14, 2011. The appointment of St. Onge was confirmed by the SC Senate on Feb. 10, 2011.

St. Onge earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point in 1969. Upon graduating from USMA, St. Onge began a 34-year career in the United States Army, retiring in 2003 as a major general.

For most of his military career, he served as an infantry officer in combat units, including one year as a platoon leader in Vietnam, and in a variety of command and staff positions including 11 years in Europe during the Cold War.

He spent two years (1995-1997) as the Commandant of Cadets at the U.S. Military Academy. Following that post, St. Onge was assigned to be the Director of Strategy, Plans and Policy on the Army staff at the Pentagon in Washington, DC.

In 2000, St. Onge took command of the 24th Infantry Division at Fort Riley, Kan. His primary responsibility was to prepare combat units for war and overseas deployments. One of those units was the 218th Brigade of the South Carolina Army National Guard. In addition to overseeing the training of combat units, his duties included management of the facilities and public works of the 100,000 acre fort.



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Governor Nikki R. Haley announces the appointment of retired Maj. Gen. Robert J. St. Onge Jr. as South Carolina's new Secretary of Transportation at a Jan. 14 news conference at the Statehouse. The SC Senate confirmed his appointment on Feb. 10.

During his military career, St. Onge also earned a Master of Science in Industrial Relations at Purdue University and a Master of Military Art and Science at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College located at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

Following his retirement from the United States Army in 2003, St. Onge spent seven years in two different divisions of the L-3 Communications Corporation in the Washington, DC, area. The

last three years he was President of L-3's linguist division.

St. Onge attended his first round of SCDOT Commission meetings as Secretary of Transportation on February 16 and 17. At those meetings, he stated that his approach to transportation is "holistic." "I take the holistic approach of transportation, not just highways. I believe this agency is about all forms of transportation that benefit our state," said St. Onge.

He added that his philosophy

about managing employees is to be a team-builder. He told Commissioners that he intends to be a teammate, and that he would set about meeting as many of SCDOT's teammates in and out of the agency as quickly as possible. During his first 30 days, St. Onge has met with many employees at Headquarters and has traveled to meet the employees at a number of District and County offices.

At the conclusion of the March Commission meetings

held in Columbia on March 16 and 17, Commission Chairman Danny Isaac and other members of the Commission complimented the Secretary as to how much effort and energy he had put into ramping up into the job in the first month. The Secretary said his plan is to bring SCDOT to the next level of efficiency.

St. Onge and his wife of 39 years, Joan, have lived in Leesville since 2004. They have three adult daughters and six grandchildren.

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Daniel H. Isaac Jr.
Commission Chairman
1st Congressional District

Danny Isaac, Eddie Adams re-elected chairman, vice-chairman of Commission

Danny Isaac was elected Thursday, Jan. 20, to serve a second term as Chairman of the South Carolina Department of Transportation Commission, and R. Eddie Adams was elected to serve a second term as Vice Chairman.

The Commission was unanimous in both votes, which took place during the Commission's monthly meeting in Columbia.

Isaac, who represents the 1st Congressional District, has served on the Commission since March of 2008. He is a resident of Myrtle

Beach, where he is President of A&I Corporation and its North Carolina sister company Alisco, Inc. Isaac serves on the boards of a number of professional and non-profit organizations. He is a 1974 graduate of The Citadel. He is married to Sally M. Isaac and has two children.

Adams, representing the 3rd Congressional District, has served on the Commission since June of 2009. He lives in Seneca where he is President of Lowry Oil Company. Adams graduated from The Citadel in 1989. He is married to Christina Theos Adams and has two sons.



Eddie Adams
Commission Vice-Chairman
3rd Congressional District

Letters we liked

To SCDOT:

I wanted to thank you for doing a great job clearing roads quickly after the storm! After the issues in New York with the last storm, it was a pleasant surprise to see how well we in the south responded! As a taxpayer, my family appreciates all of your hard work and extremely long hours!

Mrs. Dawn Newbry

tional sound barriers along I-20 near Clemson Road. This project was of special interest to my constituents who live along that stretch of I-20.

I greatly appreciate your acknowledgement of my constituents' concerns and written comments; I was glad we could reach a solution on this very important issue for the residents in my district.

Sincerely,

Rep. Joan Brady
District 78
Richland County

To Mr. Limehouse:

I wanted to thank you, your department and the commission for the recent decision on the sound barrier on the I-20 widening.

It will be great to be able to walk out in our backyard and hear the birds again.

The roar from the traffic has been so loud you could hardly carry on a conversation with the folks next door!

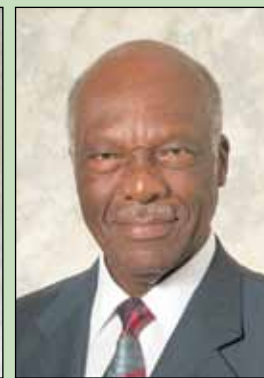
Thanks for doing the right thing!

Thomas E. Persons

To SC Secretary of Transportation Buck Limehouse:

Thank you so much for your assistance with the addi-

The South Carolina Department of Transportation Commission



Daniel H. Isaac Jr.
1st Congressional District

J. Craig Forrest
2nd Congressional District

Eddie Adams
3rd Congressional District

John P. Edwards
4th Congressional District

Sarah B. Nuckles
5th Congressional District

Harrison Rearden
6th Congressional District

Ken Willingham
Commissioner At-Large



Winner of awards from S.C. Division, Public Relations Society of America; Carolinas Association of Business Communicators; S.C. Press Association and AASHTO.

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Robert J. St. Onge Jr. is the South Carolina Secretary of Transportation.



South Carolina Press Association Associate Member

SC gets a charge out of Greenville's new buses

By Bob Kudelka

Fast-charging, battery-powered buses built in Greenville are generating jobs in South Carolina and interest around the world.

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood on Jan. 27 toured the floor of the Proterra, Inc. manufacturing facility in Greenville, South Carolina, where over 120 workers were recently hired to assemble a new generation of transit buses that can deliver a clean, quiet ride to cities and towns across America.

"Thanks to smart government investments and private sector creativity, the buses of the future are being conceived and built by skilled American workers and engineers," said LaHood, who was accompanied by Federal Transit Administrator Peter Rogoff.

On hand for the tour and a demonstration of the fast charging battery system were SCDOT Commissioner Sarah B. Nuckles, 5th Congressional District; Commissioner John P. Edwards, 4th Congressional District; and Doug Frate, SCDOT's Director of the Office of Public Transit.

"This is so exciting, not only for the state and jobs, but for what it's going to do to our surrounding states and region," Nuckles said. "Huge world-wide industries like BMW and Boeing are located in SC, and the floodgates are about to open. Certainly bus and rail are going to be moving to a much higher level of functionality and importance in the state of South Carolina."

"What I heard was very positive for Greenville and it's positive for the Proterra company," said Edwards, who was impressed by the 10 minutes it took to charge the bus battery. "That's some amazing technology there."

Frate said, "From SCDOT's perspective, the fact that we had the Secretary of Transportation and the Federal Transit Administration Administrator come down, says a lot for what's going on in South Carolina."

Frate said SCDOT helps transit providers with vehicle purchases by assisting with pro-

urement, contracting and bid specifications. SCDOT also acts as a conduit with federal funding passed along through statewide acquisition earmarks and formula funding.

"We do have opportunities within South Carolina in our vehicle acquisition program to take advantage of potential application (of battery-powered buses) and introduction of their vehicles within the state," Frate said.

Appealing qualities of battery-powered buses include the zero emissions and little noise produced.

"Using technology like elec-



ABOVE: US Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood speaks to the media during his Jan. 27 visit to the Proterra electric bus manufacturing plant in Greenville.

ABOVE RIGHT: Secretary LaHood and invited guests watch a demonstration of the electric bus' recharging station. The buses are able to recharge in 10 minutes.

tric buses or hybrid vehicles or fuel cell technology is going to go a long way toward helping us meet our air quality standards," Frate said.

As for the noise, Frate said, "I've ridden in an electric bus before and it's amazing. You can't hear it. That's appealing to neighborhoods, especially when the bus comes by in early morning hours."

The batteries on Proterra's buses uses innovative technology to re-charge in 5 to 10 minutes, Frate said, compared to older battery-powered buses that may require an overnight charge.

Each fast charge is good for 30 miles, Frate said.

"I'm excited for the potential of this technology," Frate said. "Once we see greater distances, I think you will see more applica-



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Secretary LaHood and others toured the Proterra manufacturing facility whose technology is generating interest across the country. Shown here, from left, are: FTA Administrator Peter Rogoff, SCDOT Commissioner Sarah Nuckles, SCDOT Office of Public Transit Director Doug Frate, US Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood and SCDOT Commissioner Johnny Edwards.

tion of these vehicles. And then you'll see the costs come down, just like anything else. To reduce our dependence on foreign fuel has an impact to the bottom line operational costs."

Proterra's biggest customer is Foothill Transit, which serves eastern San Gabriel Valley, Calif. The agency bought three Proterra buses in 2010 and was hoping to buy nine more this year.

Doran Barnes, executive director of Foothill Transit, said they have received visitors from around the world interested in seeing the battery-charges buses in action.

"There's incredible interest," Barnes said. "In our view, the future is electrified - let's charge ahead."

Jeff Granato, president and CEO of Proterra, said he expects his workforce in Greenville to grow from 130 to 250 by the end of 2011.

"We are working aggressively with the local and national support to break ground on a larger Phase II plant on the Clemson University International Center for Automotive Research campus this spring," Granato said.

According to USDOT, over the past five years, Congress and the Federal Transit Administration, with a boost from the American Recovery and Reinvestment

Act, have provided roughly \$93 million to fund research, development, and testing of fuel cells and other alternative energy sources to power clean, fuel-efficient transit vehicles. Because of Proterra's growth, suppliers in other states are also benefiting from these investments in cutting-edge technology. Proterra purchases propulsion systems manufactured by UQM in Frederick, Colorado; lithium batteries produced at Altairano in Reno, Nev.; and bus charging station components built at Aerovironment in Monrovia, Calif.

SCDOT transfers ownership of Sandy Island to Nature Conservancy

By Pete Poore

“The world will remember what we do here, not what we say,” former Transportation Secretary H. B. “Buck” Limehouse Jr. said as he opened the ceremonies Friday, Jan. 28, to commemorate the transfer of ownership of the natural areas on Sandy Island from the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) to The Nature Conservancy of South Carolina. The event took place at the Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge Visitor’s Center in Georgetown.

Sandy Island is in Georgetown County in the Pee Dee River Basin where it meets the Waccamaw River. The island has no bridges connecting it to the mainland. Measuring four miles wide and six miles long, the 12,000 acres of Sandy Island is the largest freshwater island in the eastern United States.

SCDOT Commission Chairman Danny Isaac told the gathering, “Sandy Island is proof that preservation and progress can work hand-in-hand.” SCDOT purchased the natural areas of the island in December 1996 as a wetlands mitigation bank to allow highway projects in the coastal areas of the state to begin construction. The Conway Bypass (SC 22) and the Carolina Bays Parkway (SC 31) were two of the largest projects.

When road projects disturb wetlands, anywhere from two to five acres of wetlands must be preserved for each acre that is impacted. The acquisition of Sandy Island permitted SCDOT to create a mitigation bank of more than 9,000 acres. That action allowed projects to move forward at an accelerated rate, saving taxpayers \$53 million. In addition, the purchase of the island prevented any future development from occurring, which the property owners were considering.

Limehouse served as Chairman of the SCDOT Commission when the proposal for SCDOT to purchase the island was being considered. “There was no question that Sandy Island needed to be saved, so the first task was to convince the developers who owned the property to sell to the state. Once they were convinced to do the right thing, we needed to forge a private-public partnership that was cutting-edge for that time,” said Limehouse. SCDOT was able to purchase the natural areas of the island for \$10 million, and the purchase included



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Speakers at the ceremony included, from left: Bob Lee, SC Division Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration; Lieutenant Colonel Jason A. Kirk, U.S. Army Commander and District Engineer; Arnold M. Nemirow, The Nature Conservancy - SC Chapter; Bob Perry, SC Department of Natural Resources; Daniel H. Isaac Jr., SCDOT Commission Chairman; H.B. Limehouse Jr., former SC Secretary of Transportation; Executive Director Mark L. Robertson, The Nature Conservancy - SC Chapter; SCDOT Commissioner Harrison Rearden, Sixth Congressional District; Craig Sasser, Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge.

legally binding protective covenants to preserve the land forever.

At the time SCDOT acquired Sandy Island’s natural areas, The Nature Conservancy contributed \$1 million towards the purchase, and agreed to manage the land at no cost to the state. SCDOT agreed to transfer ownership of the property to The Nature Conservancy in the future. Limehouse made the decision that the time had come in 2011. The Nature Conservancy has made the island accessible to the public and organizations, and has supported research and education on the island for the past 14 years.

Mark Robertson, Executive Director of The Nature Conservancy of South Carolina said, “We are excited and honored to receive title to this magnificent preserve. The tremendous environmental, historical and cultural significance of the island make it a valuable asset for the people of South Carolina.”

Sandy Island supports both wetland and upland natural areas and habitats for many species, including the endangered

red-cockaded woodpecker. The wetland portion of the island includes a large swath of bald cypress-tupelo swamp, and a longleaf pine forest dominates the north end of the island, including trees that are more than 200 years old.

Bob Lee, the Administrator for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in South Carolina noted that Sandy Island received an “Exemplary Ecosystem Award” in 2006. He said that FHWA had presented 60 more awards of this type since then, but Sandy Island is still the largest of those award-winning projects.

Private homeowners and other residents live in a community called “The Village” on the southern tip of the island. Many are descendants of slaves who worked the island’s rice plantations before the Civil War. The residents use boats to travel to and from their homes.

Commenting during the ceremonies on the transfer of the deed that will protect the island forever, Limehouse said, “The story of Sandy Island really begins today.”



Location Map

Craig Forrest: 43 years of public transportation experience

The Connector begins a series of conversations with members of the SCDOT Commission.

This edition features the newest members who began their terms in 2010.

By Pete Poore

Craig Forrest spent most of his life in Maryland where he earned his college degree and spent 43 years making a career in public transportation. When he retired in 2005, he and his wife, Peggy, made Bluffton, South Carolina their home. But moving to South Carolina was no snap decision. The move to Sun City ended a 10-year search-and-scouting mission of golfing communities from Virginia to Florida.

In the end, the appeal of the Lowcountry and the easy accessibility to Hilton Head, Beaufort, Savannah, Charleston and the beach put Bluffton on top of the list. After selling a snow blower and three snow shovels, the Forrests left Baltimore and moved south. "We're pleased with our move here," said Forrest. "Neighbors here are not just your neighbors, but good friends as well."

Following two years of retirement, a friend suggested he should pursue an opening on the Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), which is the governing board of the Palmetto Breeze RTA. Forrest was appointed to the Authority and eventually became Chairman. "I enjoyed serving and I never ex-

pected to do more than serve on that Board."

When three vacancies opened on the SCDOT Commission in 2010, including one in the 2nd Congressional District, the same friend who suggested he serve on the RTA Board encouraged him to throw his hat in the ring for the Commission seat. "I had no idea of what the SCDOT Commission was all about, its purpose, or its role in transportation," said Forrest. But he obliged and sent a letter-of-intent to Columbia.

What came back in the mail almost ended his candidacy right there. Forrest said "I got a huge packet that had to be filled out and returned, and I said no way." But his persistent friend pleaded with him to complete the application, which he did, even though he didn't think he would make the cut.

The screening process was intense and extensive but the former Maryland transportation official said he enjoyed it. "I have always been comfortable in the political arena and I feel right at home and confident when dealing with lawmakers," he said. That confidence coupled with his experience captured and overwhelming majority when his nomination was put to a vote. Craig Forrest became the 2nd Congressional District Commissioner in the spring of 2010.

Commissioner Forrest has served just about one year of his four-year term. He believes that he brings to the table the perspective of someone who knows the



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Commissioner Craig Forrest believes a commissioner's job takes a full-time commitment to be done right.

DOT processes, and how they relate to the financial picture and how the huge size of the SC highway system in particular is impacted by funding.

Forrest is also a supporter of term limits. "Trying to accomplish my vision for SCDOT is probably unattainable in four years, but I can plant the seeds that I hope will come to fruition." Among his goals is a review of Act 114. The law has been on the books since 2007 and the 2nd District Commissioner thinks it's time to ask the question, is Act 114 doing what it needs to do? Is it time to tweak and adjust the processes dictated by the law?

A second goal is to look at the agency as a whole and determine what does SCDOT want to be? Should the focus be on highways, or on all modes of transportation? Should South Carolina have a true Transportation Trust Fund with no separate pockets for highways, transit, etc. and funds dispersed for whatever purpose is needed?

Forrest also wants to ask the General Assembly some questions. He said, "It's important to know how SCDOT is viewed by the legislature. What value do the lawmakers place on the agency? If the answer to the question of, did you deliver what you planned to do six years ago is yes, then that's how trust is built," he said.

The Commissioner said he places a high value on SCDOT. "There are talented people on the Commission, and there are good and talented people working at this place. I have to be the best that I can be to support what they



do for South Carolina."

Forrest said the investment of his time is more than he expected, but he believes the job of being a Commissioner is full-time if it's to be done correctly. He says he still has fire and passion for transportation issues or else he would not have taken the post. "This was the most significant life-changing decision I have ever made," Forrest said. When he receives compliments for the job he's doing on the Commission, his response is always the same. "Let's wait another three years to evaluate my performance."



Commissioner Harrison Rearden believes in public service

By Bob Kudelka

Walking two miles each day to his elementary school in segregated Edgefield County in the 1940s, Harrison Rearden remembers the school bus passing him on the way filled with white children who threw spit balls out the window at him. Black children were not allowed to ride.

As a young adult, a Greenville restaurant owner rushed out with a meat cleaver in his hand, yelling at him and his three friends to leave because of the color of their skin.

Fast forward to 2011, and Rearden is one of seven members of the SCDOT Commission. And despite his early experiences, Rearden says he is proud to have many white friends as well as black.

"People are just people to me," he said. "I do not see people by race."

Rearden takes pride in saying, "I crossed the racial divide in the 1960s, in spite of racial turmoil. The only way one can make this kind of transition is spiritual. Above it all, I was faith-based and anchored in my church."

Retired after 29 years in state government and an earlier career in the insurance industry, Rearden has not slowed down. He is a deacon in his church and serves on several boards and commissions.

"I have a passion for rendering public service and I enjoy what I do," Rearden said. "I particularly like people no matter the economic status, race color"

Rearden was elected in 2010 to represent the 6th Congressional District on the Commission.

"I am still a newbie and am enjoying it," he said.

Rearden said SCDOT touches the lives of citizens perhaps more than any other state agency, citing the more than 41,000 miles of state roads and 8,300 bridges the department maintains.

"I gained so many friends in the first two months – everybody wanted a pothole filled or a road paved," Rearden said and laughed. "Seriously, we do have grave responsibilities. I plan give it my best in order to do a good job and serve the public."

Rearden said he worked well with former Secretary

of Transportation H.B. Limehouse Jr. and he looks forward to working with Secretary of Transportation Robert J. St. Onge Jr. in taking SCDOT to the next level. Specifically, he wants to see the agency become more "user friendly and more accountable to the citizenry whom it serves."

He also wants to see more racial equity particularly in levels of leadership/policymaking, employment and contracts to reflect the population of the state. "I do not see challenges as problems; rather I see them as opportunities. In spite of fiscal austerity, we have the opportunity to render basic services and do it in grand style," he said.

Rearden attributes his success to the core values instilled by his parents, whom he references daily.

"We were never allowed to talk about not going to college," Rearden said. "It was not if you go to college, it was always when you go to college. The preposition, 'if,' was not part of the conversation."

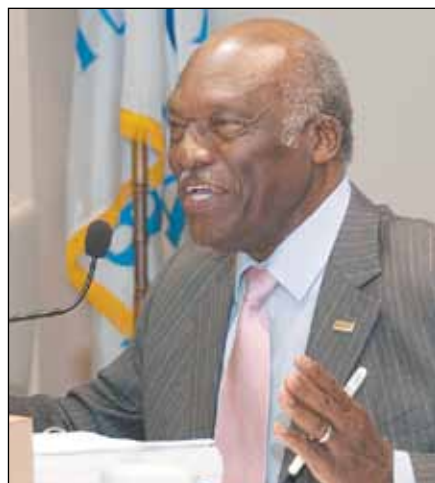
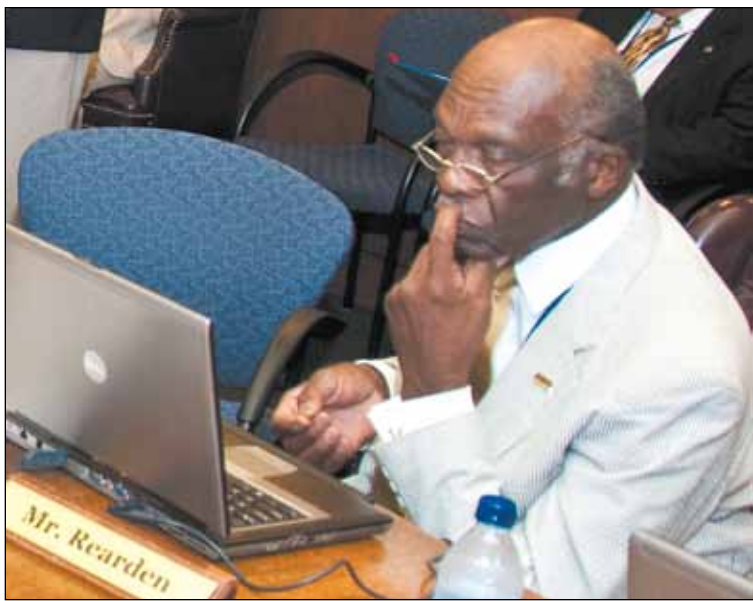
Rearden earned a Bachelor of Science degree in biology from SC State University in 1958. He served in the US Army Reserve from 1959-1969.

He was a district manager for Pilgrim Health and Life Insurance Company from 1959-1974. He was Chief of Staff and Deputy State Director of the SC Department of Social Services, where he worked for 29 years. He is former chairman of the Columbia Metropolitan Airport Commission. He is a member of the United Baptist Deacons of Columbia; Deacon in the First Nazareth Baptist Church; regional board member of the American Lung Association and the Blue Ridge Institute; board member of the Babcock Center; board member of the Action Council of South Carolina; board member of the SC State Employees Association; advisory board member of the Salvation Army; and Chairman of the Meadowlake Voting Precinct.

"I'm 74 years old and proud," Rearden said. "Many people don't want to reveal their age. But when I consider the alternative, I am happy to do so."

In 1961, he married Hazel Arnold of Greenville. She passed away in 1999.

In 2004, he married Alethia Parr of Sumter, and the couple lives in Columbia. In his spare time, Rearden loves to play golf and travel.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

SCDOT Commissioner Harrison Rearden has seen a lot of changes in his life and has a passion for public service. Whether he's at a meeting in Columbia (left), Aiken (center) or Anderson (above) he's serious about SCDOT's responsibilities to the public.

Commissioner Johnny Edwards: Funding is the bottom line

By Pete Poore

“I have always been interested in government and public service,” said SCDOT Commissioner Johnny Edwards, who represents the 4th Congressional District. Edwards has spent the past 50 years in the mechanical contracting business, but he has served on the SC Insurance Commission and he was Chairman of DHEC’s Ocean & Coastal Resource Management (O C R M) Coastal Zone Management Appellate Board prior to becoming a member of the SCDOT Commission in 2010.

Edwards said he sought the SCDOT Commission seat because he wanted to stay involved in the public arena. He believes that everyone should participate in public service to some degree. “Everyone in some way should work for the good of the state to move South Carolina forward,” he said.

The 4th District Commissioner said the opportunity to serve on the SCDOT Commission appealed to him because he is a “roads and bridges man. I’m interested in having a safe highway system that has good roads for us to travel,” said Edwards.

When he joined the Commission in 2010, Edwards was amazed at the massive amount of work that has to be done because of the size of the state’s huge system of 41,000 miles of roads and more than 8,300



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

SCDOT Commissioner Johnny Edwards would like to see SCDOT get caught up on the maintenance of our highway system.

bridges.

He pointed to the recent snow and ice removal operations earlier this year in Greenville County as just one example. “I had no idea how many people and how much equipment and supplies were needed just for Greenville County alone. But I was impressed with the preparedness and planning that went into keeping the main roads open during and after the storm,” he said. Commissioner Edwards is proud of the job SCDOT employees do in emergency situations and every day on routine jobs.

Edwards has served nearly a year on the Commission. He enjoys working with the six other members. “The leadership all around the table consists of good people with their hearts and minds in the right place. We may disagree from time to time, but the leadership is good,” said Edwards. He believes one of the strengths he brings to the table is his experience in the construction business. “I understand the process of bidding, designing and building projects and all the details that have to be in order to complete a job,” he said.

Edwards echoes the sentiments of present and past members of the Commission who say serving on this body is not a ceremonial or part-time situation. “We may only gather as a Commission once a

month, but I can tell you that I participate in one or two meetings every day related to DOT business,” said Edwards.

The Commissioner from Greenville has barely served one year of his term, but he has goals and accomplishments to achieve before his time on the Commission is done. “I hope the economy gets better so that we can get our funding increased to get caught up on the maintenance of our highway system as much as we can. In my district I would like to see I-85 widened to six lanes all the way to the North Carolina border. I would

like to see the I-85 & I-385 interchange project completed, and I would continue to make sure that our funding is used fairly and equitably across the state,” said Edwards.

Commissioner Edwards sees no major changes to make at SCDOT beyond the on-going job of improving efficiency and spending the agency’s limited resources wisely. Edwards said, “funding is the bottom line. We have a good staff that stretches our dollars as much as they can to do as much work as we can, but limited funding can only go so far.”



Weigh-in-Motion

New technology comes to I-95

By Bob Kudelka

SCDOT is partnering with the South Carolina Department of Public Safety (SCDPS) in the construction of an SCDPS weigh-in-motion station on Interstate 95 in Dorchester County.

The existing site, located near mile marker 74 on northbound I-95, is currently an unused truck parking area owned by SCDOT.

The project will include weigh-in-motion scales on the mainline of the interstate, improvements to the entrance and exit ramps and inspection facilities including an

inspection shed and scale house.

Weigh-in-motion facilities are designed to capture and record weights as vehicles drive over a measurement site. These systems are capable of measuring at normal traffic speeds and do not require the vehicle to stop or drive at low speed, making them much more efficient.

SCDPS has provided design services, has put the project out for bids and will provide construction inspection services. SCDOT has provided project design oversight and coordination with state and federal officials.

The station will be operated and maintained by SCDPS.



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Dignitaries broke ground on the new I-95 North Weigh Station near St. George on Jan. 14. Shown, from left, are: St. George Mayor Anne Johnston, Rep. Patsy Knight, former SC Secretary of Transportation H.B. 'Buck' Limehouse Jr., SC Dept. of Public Safety Director Mark Keel, State Transport Police Col. Napoleon 'Nick' Moore and SC Trucking Association President Rick Todd.

Beaufort County celebrates completion of US 17/ACE Basin Parkway project

By Bob Kudelka

State and county leaders gathered near protected live oak trees along the US 17/ACE Basin Parkway in Beaufort County on Feb. 10 to celebrate the completion of the widening and improvement project.

An 8-mile stretch of US 17 was widened from Gardens Corner over the Combahee River to the

Lightsey Plantation in Colleton County. A two-directional roundabout, with a flyover of US 17 over US 21, replaced a T-intersection that had been plagued by collisions. The new interchange will be safer and aid in hurricane evacuations.

"From our perspective, we thought it was very successful project," said District Engineering Administrator Robert Clark of District 6. "Probably the big-



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

SCDOT employees involved with the project posed near the new roundabout at the intersection of US 17 and US 21 in Beaufort County.



Dignitaries cut the ribbon on the US 17 project held near Sheldon in Beaufort County. From left, Senator Clementa Pinckney, Representative Kenneth Hodges, Beaufort County Councilman Gerald Dawson, former SC Secretary of Transportation H.B. 'Buck' Limehouse Jr., community representative Emily Stewart and Beaufort County Council Chairman Weston Newton.

gest thing is there were so many people concerned with safety of the road and we were finally able to address the concerns in a manner that really pleased the community. We got a lot more out of it than just a road widening."

Prior to its widening, the stretch of road was a two-lane ditch section with narrow to no outside shoulders and miles of marshland on both sides. According to SCDOT's September 2005 Environmental Assessment, 983 crashes occurred between 1997 and 2005 with fatality rates 2.3 times

higher than that of the multi-lane portions of US 17 and 1.5 times that of other US primary routes in South Carolina.

Former Secretary of Transportation H.B. Limehouse Jr., who spoke at the ceremony, said safety was the "overriding issue" and that improvements were done in a manner sensitive to the environment.

"The vision we had that we had for this project a long time ago was pushed forward by previous DOT commissioners and then finished by the present DOT

Commission," Limehouse said. "Our two Commissioners who represent this project are here today, Craig Forrest and Harrison Rearden. They had the vision, foresight and courage to provide the funding."

Limehouse thanked other partners including the State Infrastructure Bank Board, FHWA, legislators and taxpayers.

"The most important two players were the Beaufort County tax-

511 System has successful launch

By Bob Kudelka

South Carolina's new 511 Traveler Information System received more than 80,000 calls during the first four months in operation.

"We have had a pretty successful launch of this program and we only expect it to continue to increase," Director of Traffic Engineering Tony Sheppard said.

The 511 Traveler Information System is a free telephone and internet resource to help motorists save fuel, navigate South Carolina's roadways, reduce commuting times and minimize the impact of traffic incidents.

It provides real-time traffic information on all South Carolina Interstate highways and some of the highways along the coast. The statewide system provides information on construction, lane closures, crashes, congestion and severe weather affecting traffic.

Users can call 511 or access www.511SC.org 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Users should be aware that cell phone minutes and text message charges may apply.

By dialing 511 in South Carolina, users through voice prompts will be able to access current information concerning conditions on Business I-85, I-20, I-26, I-77, I-85, I-95, I-126, I-385, I-526, I-585, SC-277, SC-22, and SC-31. In addition to these areas limited coverage will be provided on SC-170, US-21 US-278, in Beaufort and US-501 in Myrtle Beach.

Sheppard said an attractive feature of the system is that it is designed to give each user personalized service, available by setting up a free account on www.511SC.org.

"Web users can go to the "My SC511" tab on www.511SC.org and create a free account, then set up custom routes and register to receive alerts," Sheppard said. "Signing up for alerts allows users to automatically receive important traffic information via a phone call, text message or e-mail."

Users can program alerts for certain roadways in South Carolina, their own custom routes or receive messages that announce important incidents such as wildfires and hurricanes or AMBER and Law Enforcement Officer alerts. Once an alert is programmed, the user chooses the method (phone call, text or e-mail), days of the week and times they would like to receive the alert.

To stay safe on our highways, SCDOT advises users to make 511 calls before getting on the road, have a non-driver in the vehicle make the calls or pull over in a safe place before making calls.

SCDOT has secured agreements with several wireless/landline providers to be part of the 511 system including AT&T Wireless and landline, Verizon wireless, T-Mobile Sprint/Nextel, Comporium, Farmers Telephone Cooperatives, Horry Telephone Cooperative, Sandhill Telephone Cooperative, West Carolina, Time Warner and Spirit Telecom. SCDOT is working to secure agreements with other carriers.

For people with a phone service that has not yet agreed to be included, the system can still be accessed by dialing 1-877-511-4672.

511 traveler information is collected and continually updated by SCDOT Traffic Management Centers throughout the state. The data comes from traffic cameras, reports from South Carolina Highway Patrol, local law enforcement and SCDOT's SHEP crews.

What is the public saying about 511?

Tisha Dickerson, 511 Travel Information Coordinator, said the motorists she has heard from are much more understanding of heavy traffic when they know ahead of time through the new system.

"The feedback has been very positive," Dickerson said. "When you're stuck in traffic five minutes it can seem like a half-hour." The public has left messages on the new 511 system to provide feedback on the service. Here is a sampling of calls received:

"Thank you so much for the very helpful information. It is very enlightening to call and get the road conditions before leaving home. Thank you again."

"Thank you for having this service it's been long overdue. Georgia has had it for quite a while and I've used it when I've traveled their state. I'm really glad that South Carolina is providing this for the citizens and visitors."

"Thank you so much for the very good service. I've been on the internet all morning trying to find the conditions on I-95. You've helped me a whole lot. Thank you."

"This is an excellent service it has been needed for a long time. And I really appreciate it. It helps a lot of people making a decision which way to go home after a hard day and we thank you very much for having this service."

Disc jockey Jackie Dixon is 'the voice' of 511

By Bob Kudelka

When Tisha Dickerson needed a professional-sounding voice to record an emergency message on the new 511 system, she did not

Jackie Dixon records the 511 messages that announce AMBER alerts or weather-related road conditions.

have to look far.

Jackie Dixon, a communications specialist who works in the Traffic Management Center, the same building where 511 is based, was glad to oblige.

Using her voice was nothing new for Dixon, who also is a radio announcer and producer at WFMV-95.3 FM, a Columbia radio station.

"It was exciting to help out," Dixon said.

Dickerson, coordinator of the 511 program, said: "When we recorded her first message, everyone was floored. She does a great job."

The 511 system is automated with a pre-recorded, female voice that speaks the text entered by SCDOT employees. Sometimes, however, circumstances arise

when Dickerson needs to record a message beyond the normal traffic reports. These include AMBER alerts or weather-related road conditions.

Not only does Dixon have a velvety smooth voice, it also matches well with the automated voice as well, Dickerson said. "If you didn't know it, you wouldn't realize it's two different people," Dickerson said.

Dixon said she stumbled into a radio career 21 years ago by landing a job at WPUB/WCAM a mile from her house in Lugoff.

"It was intimidating," Dixon said, describing her first stint as a late-night announcer. "But my mother told me I have to speak from the heart. Once I did that, I could per-

severe."

Dixon now can be heard on the show, "Middays with Jackie," which airs 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Mondays through Fridays on WFMV.

"The format is gospel/inspirational," Dixon said. "I inspire people; that's what I love most."

Dixon joined SCDOT in 2007 and works Thursdays through Sundays monitoring traffic cameras at the Traffic Management Center. When incidents arise on the highways, she notifies SHEP crews and authorities such as the Highway Patrol.

And sometimes, she's the voice of 511.

"It's a different role, but at the same time it's communication and what I do is serve people," Dixon said.

BRIEFLY

Weight limit raised to 100,000 pounds

SCDOT, working with the South Carolina State Ports Authority (SCSPA), has announced all international shipping containers with a gross vehicle weight (GVW) up to 100,000 pounds are eligible for permitting for transporting by truck in South Carolina. This new policy went into effect Nov. 1, 2010.

The previous overweight permit allowed up to 90,000 pounds GVW for shipping containers. The new permit allowing the weight increase will improve the state's competitiveness, enhance transportation efficiency and serve a number of key South Carolina industries. The decision was based on the results of a pilot program launched earlier in 2010 that allowed refrigerated containers up to 100,000 pounds to be permitted and shipped by truck. The pilot program was undertaken because neighboring states offered a greater permitting capability.

Business sectors benefiting from the new permit include those that export heavy products, such as forestry and agricultural industries. The expansion of the Panama Canal in 2014 will allow even larger cargo ships capable of carrying more than 8,000 containers to move goods from Asia to the Eastern seaboard of the United States. The upgraded container weight policy in South Carolina will put the Port of Charleston in a better position to compete for the significant increase in cargo moving through the Southeast.

Maintenance crews clear roads after Mother Nature storms through SC

SCDOT's Maintenance forces found extra work waiting for them courtesy of Mother Nature on the morning of April 5, 2011. A line of storms passed through the state overnight knocking down trees and power lines. Many roads all across the state were blocked or made hazardous by fallen trees and other debris. SCDOT crews in all 46 counties worked on clearing roads and removing debris. As of April 8, crews had removed 2,759 trees from the highways.

Crews in Newberry County took some preventive action on the morning of April 4. Newberry RME Alan

Kozusko received a report from an employee who was inspecting cable guard rail on I-26 that some dead trees just behind the guard rail on the shoulder were leaning toward the interstate at mile marker 79 west bound. Kozusko pulled two crews from pothole patching duties that morning to remove the potential hazard before the storms struck. He reported that the high winds that came overnight caused no trees to fall on I-26 in Newberry County.

Public can request maintenance work online

SCDOT put an internet-based work request system on-line in early January of 2011. This system provides the public with the ability to enter work requests 24 hours a day, seven days per week from the convenience of their internet capable computer or mobile device.

This system allows the entry of many common requests such as pothole repair, cleaning drainage ditches or cutting vegetation. SCDOT Maintenance staff will process the requests during normal business hours on regular work days. This on-line system will benefit those who have difficulty contacting SCDOT during normal business hours.

The on-line maintenance work request program can be accessed by visiting the SCDOT web site: www.scdot.org. A link to the program can be found on the left side of the home page under "Quick Links."

2010 ends with 770 SC highway deaths

South Carolina ended 2010 with the second lowest level of highway fatalities since 1962. Figures show that traffic fatalities stood at 770 when 2010 ended. Records show that annual highway deaths have been less than 800 only twice in the last 47 years in 1963 and 1987. The death toll in 1962 was 730 and 757 in 1987. 2010 marked the third consecutive year that highway fatalities declined in South Carolina.

One contributing factor in the dropping death rate is the number of drivers in the state using seatbelts. The percentage of drivers using restraints has increased since the mandatory use of seatbelts became law in 2006 from 72 percent to 85 percent.

Celebrating the holiday season



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Carolers share the Christmas spirit

The SCDOT Ensemble performed for employees in the headquarters lobby and canteen on Dec. 17, 2010. The ensemble is composed of: Michael Covington, Aliza Bolton, Deloris Gilmore, Lee Foster, Myron Singleton, Daniel Machado, Sandra Castor, Maceo Morris, Delicia Wingard, Susan Douglas, Brunell Rawlinson and Robert Johnson.



CODY CROUCH/THE CONNECTOR

SCDOT collects food for Harvest Hope Food Bank

Midlands RPG Administrative Assistant Paulette Morphy fills out paperwork on Dec. 3 detailing SCDOT's donation to Harvest Hope Food Bank while Harvest Hope Supervisor Calvin Archie loads the food into a Harvest Hope truck. The Midlands Regional Production Group (RPG-3) at Headquarters sponsored the food drive and collected 251 pounds of canned goods, dry foods, household goods and a \$60 monetary donation.

2012 SASHTO Conference coming to Charleston

By Bob Kudelka

Planning is well under way for the 2012 Southeastern Association of Highway Transportation Officials (SASHTO) conference to be held in Charleston.

The conference is expected to bring as many as 1,000 visitors to Charleston, generating more than \$1 million for the area's economy.

SASHTO is a transportation organization consisting of state Departments of Transportation in 12 southeastern states and Puerto Rico. Its purpose is to exchange ideas and maintain a balanced transportation system within the southeastern United States.

The annual conference is rotated among the 13 members each year. SCDOT last hosted the event in 1999. SASHTO members include: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

"There is a lot of good information exchanged among employees and their counterparts and peers from other states," said Andy Leaphart, SCDOT's Assistant Chief Engineer for Operations and conference coordinator. "There are technical sessions for our

engineers to earn professional development hours."

And it is not just for engineers. Transportation financing, administration and intermodal and freight programs will be represented on the agenda, Leaphart said.

During the conference, secretaries of transportation and commissioners from the SASHTO states get a rare opportunity to interact as well, Leaphart said.

"It's also a chance for us to showcase some of the success stories we've had in South Carolina," Leaphart said, noting the Cooper River Bridges replacement project will most likely be a topic for study.

The conference is by far the largest SCDOT is involved in during any 10-year period, said Tina Kennedy, SCDOT's agency events coordinator.

"This is a SASHTO event. We are the host state but DOT funds are not spent on hosting the conference," said Kennedy, noting that the budget comes from attendees and sponsors. "We have not been taking on conferences

like this but it is on a rotation basis."

Charleston was selected in part because of its ability to host a working conference and its walkability, which will lessen costs otherwise spent on rental cars, Kennedy said.

The 2012 Southeastern Association of Highway Transportation Officials will be held in Charleston. The location provides many attractions including the historic battery shown here.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Betha, Carroll awarded Cagney scholarships

By Catie Cagney

The 5th Annual Jim Cagney Memorial Golf Tournament was held at the Lexington Country Club on Nov. 8, 2010.

Approximately 120 golfers participated in November to support and raise money for scholarships for the children of SCDOT employees and SCDOT employees who are continuing their education. Applicants must be enrolled in accredited Engineering Programs in order to qualify.

Two scholarships of \$2,500 were given for the tournament. One was awarded to Philip J. Betha, son of Michael Eugene Betha. Philip Betha attends Clemson University and is a Civil Engineering Major.

The other recipient was Christopher Eric Carroll Jr. He is a full time employee of SCDOT and attends the University of South Car-



Philip J. Betha



Christopher Eric Carroll Jr.

olina as a graduate student in Civil Engineering.

The scholarship committee would like to thank all of the spon-

sors, especially the SCDOT employees who volunteer their time and energy in preparing this tournament every year.

US 17 from page 8

payers and the taxpayers of South Carolina," Limehouse said.

Representatives of SCDOT at the ceremony included Deputy Secretary for Engineering John Walsh; Clem Watson, Chief Engineer for Operations; Clark; and project manager Chris Hernandez.

Speakers in addition to Limehouse included Beaufort County Chairman Weston Newton; South Carolina State Senator Clementa Pickney; South Carolina State Representative Kenneth Hodges; Beaufort County Councilman Gerald Dawson; and Emily Stewart of Advocates for Change on Hwy 17. Music was provided by the B.J. Scott Choir of Huspah Baptist Church.

The completed roadway is now four lanes with two northbound lanes, two southbound lanes, safer shoulders, high visibility street signage and enhanced drainage.

The improved US 17/ACE Basin Parkway includes approximately three miles of roadway with a 100-foot-wide natural median and two new bridges south of the Combahee River. Big Estate Road has been re-aligned with Jacob White Road and provided a new traffic signal.

To accommodate the increase of left turns within the more populated section of roadway between Big Estate Road and Gardens Corner, there is a new center turning lane and intermittent planted medians. A 10-foot-wide multi-purpose pathway has also been added along this stretch of roadway. Reworking the Gardens Corner Interchange enables US 17 through traffic to cross over US 21, while a new traffic circle connects US 17 southbound traffic with US 21 and rows of preserved oak trees line the US 21 ramps with US 17 northbound.

RETIREMENTS

Gregory O. McBride, of Timmons-ville, trades specialist III at Florence Maintenance, retired Nov. 2, after six years of service.

Johnnie H. Stokes, of Fountain Inn, trades specialist II at Greenville Maintenance, retired Nov. 15, after 14 years of service.

Calvin J. Price, of Gilbert, associate geodetic technician at D1-Bridge Inspection, retired Nov. 16, after 29 years of state service.

James R. McCullough, of Great Falls, trades specialist II at Chester Maintenance, retired Nov. 17, after 28 years of service.

Larry J. Blackwell, of Chesnee, trades specialist II at Spartanburg Maintenance, retired Nov. 23, after 24 years of state service.

George W. Boykin Jr., of Sumter, mechanic III at Sumter Maintenance, retired Nov. 29, after 21 years of service.

Jimmy C. Dorsey, of Liberty, trades specialist II at Pickens Maintenance, retired Nov. 30, after three years of service.

Rebecca L. McHenry, of Darlington, administrative assistant at Florence Maintenance, retired Nov. 30, after 16 years of service.

Jake J. McDonald, of Timmons-ville, trades specialist II at Darlington Maintenance, retired Nov. 30, after 18 years of service.

Julia A. Slater, of Columbia, building/grounds spec. I, in Building Maintenance, retired Dec. 1, after 33 years of service.

Harlee Goins, of Ridgeway, trades specialist II at Fairfield Maintenance, retired Dec. 7, after 25 years of state service.

Johnny D. Sammons, of Anderson, trades specialist II at Anderson Maintenance, retired Dec. 10, after six years of service.

Jeannie M. Ervin, of Honea Path, trades specialist II at Abbeville Maintenance, retired Dec. 13, after six years of service.

Shirley J. Collins, of Florence, assistant geodetic technician at Florence Maintenance, retired Dec. 14, after 23 years of service.

Harriet L. Nelson, of North Charleston, equipment operator II at D6-Bridge Inspection, retired Dec. 16, after 28 years of service.

John S. Smoak, of Dorchester, mechanic III at Dorchester Maintenance, retired Dec. 17, after 23 years of service.

Willie Francis Jr., of Walterboro, trades specialist II at Colleton Maintenance, retired Dec. 17, after 15 years of service.

Carolyn K. Wolfe, of Swansea, program coordinator II at Grants Accounting & Management, retired Dec. 30, after 26 years of service.

Jackie L. Owens, of Anderson, trades specialist II at Anderson Maintenance, retired Dec. 31, after 27 years of service.

Paul E. Capell, of Sumter, trades specialist II at Sumter Maintenance, retired Dec. 31, after 15 years of service.

John C. Kirk, of Blythewood, trades specialist V at Fairfield Maintenance, retired Dec. 31, after three years of service.

Bobby G. Kneece, of North Augusta, trades specialist III at Aiken Maintenance, retired Dec. 31, after 10 years of service.

Robert L. Phinney, of St. George, program manager I in Right of Way – St. George District, retired Dec. 31, after 27 years of service.

William D. Meetze, of Columbia, engineer/associate engineer in Reg. Prod. Group 4 – Upstate, retired Dec. 31, after 13 years of service.

Patricia A. Smith, of Richland, administrative assistant in Oconee Maintenance, retired Dec. 31, after 22 years of state service.

Priscilla T. Cannon, of Lexington, administrative specialist at Lexington Maintenance, retired Dec. 31 after 33 years of service.

Tommy D. Land, of Westminster, trades specialist III at Oconee Maintenance, retired Dec. 31, after 26 years of service.

Michael R. Johnson, of Greenwood, supply specialist III at Greenwood Maintenance, retired Jan. 3, after 22 years of state service.

Ronald Eaddy, of Mullins, trades specialist III at Marion Maintenance, retired Jan. 3, after 33 years of service.

Terry W. Williams, of Columbia, information resource coordinator in traffic engineering, retired Jan. 3, after 15 years of service.

Robert E. Brown, of Gadsden, mechanic III at Richland Maintenance, retired Jan. 4, after 25 years of service.

Michael K. Cobb, of Columbia, engineer/associate engineer in Reg. Prod. Group 2 Pee Dee, retired Jan. 7, after 31 years of state service.

Ronald W. Oddo, of Beaufort, right-of-way agent I in St. George District, retired Jan. 14, after 19 years of service.

Janie M. Washington, of Sumter, right-of-way agent II in Florence District, retired Jan. 14, after 21 years of service.

Doug MacFarlane retires after 33 years

By Bob Kudelka

The projects Doug MacFarlane has worked on over the past 33 years look like a highlight reel at SCDOT:

The Cooper River Bridges replacement project; new highways in Myrtle Beach; Interstate 85 relocation; Interstate 26 flyover. The list goes on, but each has a common thread - MacFarlane's role as a behind-the-scenes employee who helped make it a success.

"In NASCAR, it's the crew chiefs and mechanics who make the car run and put the driver in a position to win," said Clem Watson, Chief Engineer for Operations. "With Doug, he's not there accepting the trophy at the end of the day but rest assured, he's the one who made sure the driver was in a position to win. Doug's knowledge and experience have had many positive impacts at the Department and will be sorely missed in years to come."

In typical MacFarlane fashion, he refused his colleagues' request to hold a retirement party before he left in February. Such a fuss, he said, would be "inappropriate."

Instead, MacFarlane packed up his belongings, including a frame holding his first pay stub, showing earnings of \$92.65, and said he was "going home to my farm."

"I want to voice to everyone that it's been a good career, and I've been very much overwhelmed by the people who have stopped by," he said. "It's the right time to retire. We have a great group of young people who have come up through the ranks and I've watched them grow into the positions they're in now."

"DOT is a great place to work," MacFarlane said. "There are great opportunities. In state government, there are always ups and downs. You'll always have budgetary problems on the state level and you'll have good days and bad days. But SCDOT is a great team, a great family that will work hard and look out for each other."

MacFarlane joined SCDOT in 1978 as an external auditor. Over the years, he worked in various divisions including Finance, Legal, and Engineering. During different times, he was over Postal, Tolls, the Auditor's office, Contract Services and Procurement.

His last title was Director of Contracts and Special Projects. He helped develop consultant contracts and local project agreements with entities such as cities, counties and private companies.

Doug MacFarlane takes a look at his first pay stub from the SC State Highway Department.

"The talent is to be willing to read and comprehend various state and federal rules and regulations, and maintain a good working relationship with our partners at FHWA and internal staff that have greater expertise in various areas," MacFarlane said.

MacFarlane chuckles as he recalls his first task when joining SCDOT - to help prepare a traffic study for the Cooper River Bridges replacement. In coming years, he would write agreements for more than 100 studies relating to the bridges including a few based on building a tunnel instead of a bridge.

"It was certainly great to be here when the Ravenel Bridge was placed into service," MacFarlane said. "It was certainly a highlight. I think just about everyone in the DOT has some form of ownership in that project and can take great pride in that accomplishment."

MacFarlane was born in Monmouth County, NJ, and moved to Newberry when he was eight after his father passed away.

He is a graduate of Newberry High School and Newberry College, in 1971, receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration.

After college, he became a licensed undertaker at a Newberry funeral home. It's a job he has done part-time over the years and he said he may continue after retiring from SCDOT.

MacFarlane said much of his time, however, will be spent on his farm in the Hartford community, a remote part of Newberry County near the Saluda County line. He loves the quiet days and the nights, unaffected by city lights, that show a million stars in the sky.

He lives there with his wife, Sylvia, who is director of the Veterinary Technology program at Piedmont Technical College. Together, they have goats, donkeys, chickens, horses, dogs and cats.

"I really and truly enjoy it," MacFarlane said, adding that he will put away his computer for good - his version of going wireless. "Hopefully I will be able to go home and get stuff done. I've got fences I need to fix."



PROMOTIONS

Alison R. Phillips, of Lexington, from Program Assistant to Administrative Specialist II, Secretary of Transportation - Executive Office.

Elizabeth M. Floyd, of St. Matthews, from Accountant/Fiscal Analyst I to Accountant/Fiscal Analyst II, Accounting.

Steven Hayes, of Hopkins, from Accountant/Fiscal Analyst III to Accounting/Fiscal Manager I, Accounting.

N'Katha Simmons, of Columbia, from Accountant/Fiscal Analyst II to Accountant/Fiscal Analyst III, Accounting.

Henry C. Middleton, of Summerville, from Senior Geodetic Technician to Engr./Associate Engineer II, Office of Materials and Research.

Douglas J. Timmons, of Columbia, from Right of Way Agent III to Program Manager I, Director of Rights of Way Office.

Charles J. Johnston, of Rock Hill, from Engr./Associate Engineer III to Engr./Associate Engineer IV, District Four Office.

Curtis W. Alewine, of Chapin, from Associate Geodetic Technician to Chief Geodetic Technician, District One Bridge Inspection.

Tony N. Thompson, of Gaffney, from Engr./Associate Engineer II to Engr./Associate Engineer III, Spartanburg Construction.

Bobby M. Usry, of North Augusta, from Engr./Associate Engineer II to Engr./Associate Engineer III, Aiken Maintenance.



Assistant Human Resources Director: *Polly McCutcheon*

Pauline R. "Polly" McCutcheon, of Columbia, has been named Assistant Human Resources Director. She will supervise the Benefits office and the HR Development office and will supervise 14 people.

A native of Winneconne, Wis., she joined SCDOT in 2004 as training director.

She is a graduate of Lexington High School and holds a BS degree in Economics from the University of South Carolina, and is working on her MBA from the University of Phoenix.

She and her husband, Arthur, have two adult children, Rebecca and Michael.

Design-Build and Special Projects Engineer: *Claude Ipock*

Claude R. Ipock, of Lexington, has been named Design-Build and Special Projects Engineer in the Office of the Director of Construction. The position was formerly held by Leland D. Colvin. He was formerly on the Quality Management Team under the Director of Construction.

A native of New Bern, NC, Ipock joined SCDOT in January 2006 as an Engineer/Associate Engineer II.

He was project manager of the Palmetto Parkway Phase II project, prior to his promotion.

He holds a B.S. Degree in Civil Engineering from North Carolina State University. He is married to the former Gayle Haviland. They have three children, Rachel, 10; Hayley, 8, and Austin, 3. They are members of Corpus Christi Catholic Church in Lexington.



DEATHS

William "Bill" H. Bond, 83, of Seneca, a retired maintenance supervisor from Oconee Maintenance, died March 23.

Julius Gilbert Freeman, 81, of Columbia, an SCDOT retiree, died Dec. 8.

Joseph Lawrence King, 85, of Columbia, former SCDOT Director of Supply and Equipment, died Jan. 17.

Noah Lark, 60, a trades specialist II at Greenville Maintenance, died April 6.

BRIEFLY

SCDOT cookbook fund-raiser planned

SCDOT is planning to sell cookbooks for the annual Community Health Charities.

The cookbooks will be sold statewide for \$10.

Lisa Vining, SCDOT's Community Health Charities coordinator, is asking for all employees to submit their favorite recipe(s) for the cook book.

Please email your recipes to:

ViningLL@scdot.org. Recipes can be submitted until May 6.

SCDOT Procurement Office wins award

The Universal Public Procurement Certification Council (UPPCC) named the South Carolina Department of Transportation as a 2010 recipient of the UPPCC Agency Certification Award in the Mid Sized Agency category.

The award was created to formally

recognize an agency's commitment to the value of certification in the public sector. The accomplishment recognizes SCDOT's commitment and dedication to the profession, skills and expertise in the public procurement industry.

The office received a framed certificate to signify their increased credibility and recognition of their commitment to professionalism in public purchasing.

Congratulations to the South Carolina Department of Transportation Procurement Division team for a job well done.

Retiring?

Don't miss a single issue of **THE CONNECTOR** when you leave!

SCDOT retirees can continue to receive **THE CONNECTOR** by contacting the SCDOT Communications Office when you retire.

Send us an email with your Name, Mailing Address and Retirement Date. Please be sure to include your full address including zip code.

Send the info to: MayberryJE@SCDOT.org.

Alabama ferry may come to Sandy Island

The ferry boat secured in the summer of 2010 by SCDOT for the Coast Rural Transit Authority (RTA) to create a vehicle ferry service for the residents of Sandy Island in Georgetown County has run into some financial snags.

Last year Alabama DOT notified the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) that it could not use the vehicle ferry that was docked in Etowah County near Montgomery and turned the ownership back to FHWA. FHWA accepted applications for the rights to the ferry. SCDOT's application was accepted.

However, Coast RTA has determined that the cost of transporting the vessel to South Carolina would cost approximately \$40,000. In addition, refitting the ferry and upgrading the boat landings on the island and the mainland would cost over \$300,000. Improving the landings would also require approval from the Army Corps of Engineers.

The Coast RTA Board has given Coast Director Myers Rollins until June 1 to find the \$400,000 cost of transporting the ferry and upgrading the vessel and the landings.

From Dunkirk to South Carolina

British Prisoner of War shares connections with St. Onge

By Pete Poore
and Jane Mayberry

Journalist Tom Brokaw used the phrase “The Greatest Generation” as the title of his book published in 1998 to describe those Americans who lived through the deprivation of the Great Depression, and who went on to fight in World War II, or who supported the troops through their efforts on the home front. One member of the “Greatest Generation” who is now an American started making his mark in that special generation in the British Isles.

Victor Kenneth Tutte was born on July 4, 1919, in London, England. Shortly afterwards he moved to Dundee, Scotland. Later, his family moved back to London, and at age 16, he enlisted in the British Army. He made history at the time being promoted to the rank of Sergeant early in his military career. Tutte was assigned to an intelligence unit and put in charge of a unit of motorcycle dispatch riders.

When World War II got underway, Sgt. Tutte was a member of the British forces in France supporting the French Army against the German invasion. The British troops were cut off from the French and retreated to the port of Dunkirk, just across the English Channel from their homeland. England sent any and all boats (about 900) across the Channel to evacuate nearly 340,000 men. Sgt. Tutte was part of the rear guard protecting the evacuation. But the boats that were to evacuate the rear guard were destroyed by the German bombardment.

Taken prisoner, Tutte ended up in a prisoner-of-war camp, Stalag XXI D, in Poznan, Poland. It was there he quickly learned that cigarettes were just as good as money. So he kicked the habit (and never smoked again), deciding that the cash value of tobacco was more important than lighting up. When prisoners received packages from the Red Cross, Tutte traded cigarettes for a camera, film, photo paper and developing chemicals. Prisoners were allowed to send

one letter home and he would take photographs of them to put in their letters.

Stalag XXI D was a work camp. Sgt. Tutte was put in charge of a prisoner work detail. One day in 1943, his crew was loading horseshoes onto a train. After asking a guard where the train was going, he was told it was headed to the Russian Front so that horses could pull heavy guns out of the snow.

Tutte told his men to stop immediately. The guard said he would be shot if he didn't order the men back to work. Tutte replied that he would rather be shot than help the Germans fight the Allies. He was not executed, but sent to Stalag 383 known as “Hell Camp” in Hohenfels, Germany. The prisoners there were not put to work, they were simply warehoused. They were given little or no food. They ate what they could grow, scavenge or received in Red Cross packages.

Stalag 383 was liberated in 1945 by the American Army. Surviving prisoners credited Sgt. Tutte for maintaining discipline, keeping spirits up and making shrewd trades, exchanging Red Cross cigarettes with the guards for food and other items to keep his men as warm and fed as well as possible.

Jane Mayberry,
of SCDOT
Communications,
poses with her
father, Vic Tutte.

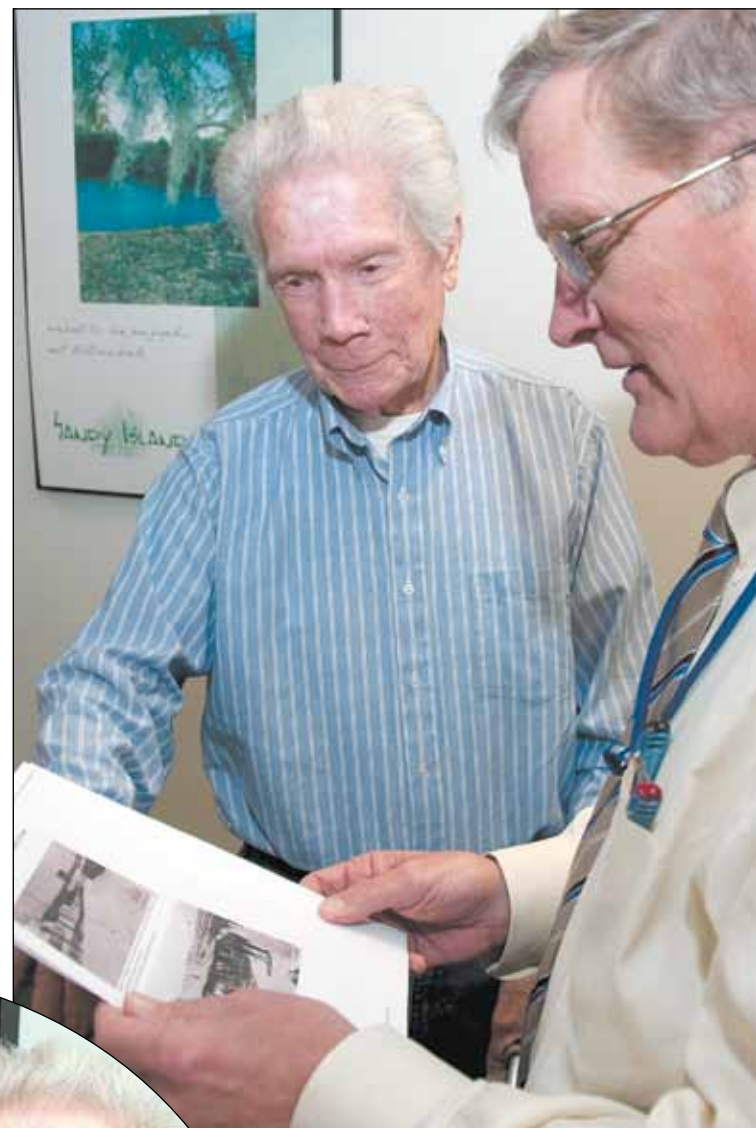
During his years in the prison camps, Tutte promised himself that he would travel the world if he survived the war. When he was a lad of 10 back in Scotland, he worked as a delivery boy for a “chemist's shop,” known as a pharmacy in the US. He fell in love with photography as he de-

livered the photos that were processed in the shop.

After his release at war's end, he indeed became an international photographer and took assignments all over the globe. One assignment was to return to England to cover the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II.

In February of 1957, he came to a place called Columbia, South Carolina to visit a sister who happened to be a patient in a local hospital. One of her caregivers was a young lady from Bob Jones University in Greenville. After spending five years as a POW, Sgt. Tutte was not inclined to wait around for what he wanted. He proposed to Ellen McKenzie on that day. After some “negotiating,” (Miss McKenzie was already engaged to another man), they were married on Aug. 7 of that year.

During his visit with his sister, he ap-



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Vic Tutte, left, shows some of his World War II photographs to SC Secretary of Transportation Robert J. St. Onge Jr. during a visit to SCDOT Headquarters. Tutte was a British prisoner of war and spent a couple of years in a prison camp that later became a US Army base where St. Onge was later trained.

plied for and got a job as a photographer for what was then known as the State/Record Newspapers. Within the year, he became chief photographer Vic Tutte. He spent 27 years recording news and history in pictures for The State and the Columbia Record. Along that journey, he became a naturalized citizen of the United States of America in 1974. Tutte retired in 1986. He said he wanted to get back the five years he had lost as a POW.

Vic and Ellen Tutte had two daughters, Cathy and Jane. He lives with Cathy in Florida, but makes occasional trips to Columbia to visit Jane E. T. Mayberry, an Administrative Coordinator at

SCDOT Headquarters. On a visit in February of this year, 91-year-old Sergeant (retired) Vic Tutte stopped in at Headquarters where he was introduced to retired Major Gen. and now Transportation Secretary Robert J. St. Onge Jr. The “Hell Camp” in Hohenfels, Germany where Tutte spent the last years of World War II is now a US Army base where Secretary St. Onge frequently trained during his tours of duty in Europe.

The two veterans spent a little time chatting and looking at pictures and papers from Tutte's POW days. Secretary St. Onge told Tutte that it was an honor and a privilege to meet him. Sgt. Tutte said the honor was all his.

SNOW & ICE

Have plow, will travel

Lowcountry employees help out Upstate counties

By Bob Kudelka

Claude Berry, a 26-year SCDOT veteran at Georgetown Maintenance, recalls when crews from other parts of the state have come to the Lowcountry to help out after hurricanes.

So Berry did not hesitate when the call came for volunteers to head to the Upstate to help battle a major snow and ice storm in January.

“Down here we have hurricanes, and when we have hurricanes we can’t do it all by ourselves,” said Berry, who found himself pushing snow in York County for 12-hour shifts in sometimes harrowing conditions. “It was an experience I can bring to Georgetown. In the Lowcountry when we have an ice storm I can tell them more about how to handle a situation like that.”

SCDOT employees have a long tradi-

tion of assisting other areas of the state in an emergency, and the January storm was no different.

While all employees did a great job pre-treating and clearing roads, the crews who traveled from their home counties played key roles by helping areas hit hard by snow and ice – especially during economic times when manpower is at a premium, said Director of Maintenance Jim Fedra.

“I’m real proud of the way our employees handled the storm,” Fedra said. “We were fortunate we were able to deploy crews from the Lowcountry to the Upstate – they really appreciate the help those individuals gave,” Fedra said. “They’re away from their families; they’re living out of motel rooms. To go to an area they’re not as familiar with and work, they did well.”

District Engineering Administrators in the Upstate said they were grateful that



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Volunteers from Georgetown Maintenance included, from left: Matthew Reed, Claude Berry and Mark Duncan. Not pictured: Timothy Barr.

Dennis Townsend, District 5 DEA, Robert Clark, District 6 DEA and Jo Ann Woodrum, District 7 DEA, sent employees to help.

“Those guys make a sacrifice above and beyond,” said John McCarter, District 4 DEA. “Our guys can go back home at the end of the day, even if it’s after 12 or 14 hours, and these guys go back to a motel room and wonder whether they’ve got

power at home. They become part of the team and mesh right in. They are a tremendous help to us.”

The storm began with heavy snows Jan. 10, with as much as nine inches in some Upstate counties. Snow was followed in many areas by freezing rain and then ice.

To make matters worse, temperatures stayed around freezing for nearly a week.

“This is the first storm I can remember in a long time where the majority of our secondary roads had to be plowed,” Fedra said. “Normally, by the time we finish up with the interstates and primaries, Mother Nature has cleared the secondary roads. That wasn’t the case with this storm.”

For Matthew Reed, an Assistant Supervisor at Georgetown Maintenance, the trip to York County was the first time he had traveled to assist during a winter storm.

“The main thing was the opportunity to help out someone in other counties,” Reed said. “I was glad to play a part of helping other people.”

Reed and his co-workers from George-



Williamsburg Maintenance’s snow patrol included, from left: Alton Miles, Ron Pressley, Josh Major, Alton Kennedy, Elliott Fulton and Mosel Willson. Not pictured: Raymond Tisdale.

See SNOW on next page

Employees who traveled to the Upstate during the ice, snow storms included:

Berkeley County: Craig Brown, Larry Jones, Rodney Gooding, David Swinton, Richard Singletary, Phillip Erickson, Trevor Thompson, Thomas Gillians, Genesis McDowell, Stephen Gaskins, Claude Sexton, James Weaver, Samuel Bayles and Kevin Hiers.

Charleston County: Ricky Stroble, Lawton Limehouse, Terry Grant, Jonathan Scarborough, Joseph “J.J.” Fields, Lamar Middleton, Dale Green, Timothy Bunton, Jason White, Rodney Gadsen, Thomas Dainels, Raymond Tumbleston, Daryle Bunton, Hebbie Barron, Bill Schwartz, Isaac Smalls and Terrance Logan.

Dorchester County: Joseph Gokey, Leonard Boyd, Huie Fulton III, Albert Johnson, Danny Nesbitt, Wilbert Walker and Daniel Mizell.

Jasper County: Reginald Strobhart, Thomas Dodd, Samuel Crews, Dominique Bright, John Williams, Gene Heyward, Joseph Rivers, Joseph Goethe, Durick Green, Rufus Nesbitt, Rayfield Singleton, Stanley Smoak, Alfred Heyward, Terry Smith and Kenneth Smith.

Beaufort County: Curtis Ferguson, Johnnie Wilson, Graig Alston, Leroy Morgan, Clayton Cevis, Curtis Freeman and Marvin Miller.

Orangeburg County: Alvin L. Thomas, Richard Gregory, Jim H. Christopher, Thomas Stoudemire, Charles B. Mount, Robert Smoak, David Bowman, James O’Connor, Herman Sellers and Paul Weatherford.

Clarendon County: Robert Smith, William Hodge, Joe Harvin and Thomas Johnson.

Bamberg County: Travis Jennings, Daniel Flake, Kenneth Carter, David Johnson and Larry Whisenhunt.

Hampton County: Larry D. Orr, William T. Smith, Christopher J. Lupton and Bryan W. Fox.

Georgetown County: Clyde Berry, Mark Duncan, Matthew Reed and Timothy Barr.

Williamsburg County: Raymond Tisdale, Alton Miles, Mosel Willson, Ron Pressley, Kennedy Alston, Josh Major and Elliott Fulton.

Colleton County: Robert Bryant, Charles “Chuck” Murdaugh, Marion “Bo” Shecut, Matt Sanford, Tommy Davis, Raymond Bulles, Willie “Joey” Gaskin, Sam “Mickey” Coleman, Kenneth Hickman, Charles Frantz, Darrell Ellison, Brent Nelson, Lance Langdale, Louis Jenkins and Charles Fishburne.



WINTER WEATHER DUTIES

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR



ABOVE: Richland Maintenance employees work in tandem to clear ice and snow from Highway 21.

LEFT: Crews worked the same roads multiple times because of the long period of freezing temperatures. Roadways froze, melted, and re-froze during the snow event.

RIGHT: After plowing, a sand and salt mixture is placed on the roadway to prevent freezing.



SNOW from page 15

town said the most challenging 12-hour shift came the day after the snow stopped and the hilly secondary roads they plowed turned to ice. "It was heart-pumping and no relaxation," Reed said. "You had to stay focused on what you're doing. Watch your surroundings, watch your brakes, watch your speed. To me, it reminded me of being on a rollercoaster. It was non-stop." At one point, Reed said his brakes froze while going down

a hill. He was not going fast and avoided losing control by putting his plow down onto the road to stop. When it was over and the crew was heading home, Reed said he was exhausted. "But I'd do it again with no problem," he said. Jackie Graham, Williamsburg County Resident Maintenance Engineer, sent seven employees once she heard York County needed help. "York County was in a lot worse trouble than we were," Graham said. "We were having it easy. If you're in need, we'll help - that's

my philosophy. There were no complaints. They know the York County roads now; it's just like clockwork." Alton Miles, of Williamsburg County Maintenance, has been to York County several times during his 21 years with the Department. "It was kind of rough pushing the snow, but that's what we do," Miles said. "We've been out there several times and we push the snow and come back the same day. This was the worst we've ever seen there. We've never seen it like that." Miles, whose crew spent three nights in York County, said em-

ployees there were very appreciative of their help. In Berkeley County, a designated snow and ice crew keeps kits ready, complete with spare parts and gloves, so they can travel quickly when called, said Craig Brown, Assistant RME. Brown was one of 14 employees from Berkeley Maintenance who assisted Greenville County. "Everybody was very energized going up and had a positive attitude," Brown said. "We've been before, but we never plowed that much snow before. Everything went well and the equipment held up."

Of his counterparts in Greenville County, Brown said: "They're glad we're there and we're glad to help out. Eventually we'll need them one day, maybe not for snow. If something like a (Hurricane) Hugo comes through, we'll be looking for help." Fedra said the Department received many compliments from the public following the weeklong storm. "It's good to know the public appreciates the work that our folks are doing," Fedra said. "When people are home in bed asleep, our folks are out there in the cold and working to keep the roads open."

Going the Extra Mile

Employees pitch in during the winter storm to help in emergency

By Bob Kudelka

As a permit technician for Kershaw County Maintenance, Billy Hinson normally has office duties during winter weather. But during January's snow and ice storm, Hinson did not mind helping out on the front lines. He drove a tractor trailer to haul precious salt and sand to areas in Kershaw and Lee counties to supply crews battling to keep roads open. "I was glad to come in and help out," Hinson said. "Everybody works together and gets along."

In what was repeated throughout many counties impacted by the storm, SCDOT employees at Kershaw County in District 1, under the direction of DEA Thad Brunson, did not mind taking on different roles to pitch in and provide the valuable public service of keeping roads safe. "During this snow storm, we had people doing things they don't normally do and working 12 or 13 hours a day, no questions asked," said Kershaw Assistant

Resident Maintenance Engineer Brian Motley, who coordinated coverage with RME Tom Hammond. "We got the interstate cleared first and then hit the secondaries. We were pulling people and needing them to stop what they were doing because we had ice, we had hot spots, we had wrecks," Motley said. "There were never any questions, no arguing; everybody was pulling together. They jumped all over everything we asked them to do."

Dewey Bass, a driveway and asphalt foreman, finished a long shift and then drove 20 miles in a rural part of the county to deliver medicine to a co-worker. The worker had fallen on the ice while on the job the night before, injuring his shoulder. With few places open due to the weather, the employee had gone home 18 hours after being injured and had given up waiting for his medicine. When the medicine was finally ready, Bass did not mind helping out. "The employees are really tight-knit and come together to help out," Motley said.



Dewey Bass, Brian Motley and Billy Hinson (shown left to right) pose in the Kershaw Maintenance salt shed. They are part of the Kershaw Maintenance team that worked around-the-clock, 12-hour shifts to keep salt and sand on the roadways in Kershaw County.

ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Storms damage South Carolina roads

By Bob Kudelka

The January snow and ice storm left its mark on South Carolina roads, causing an estimated \$112 million in damage to a road system already reeling from a brutal winter a year ago. "We're talking areas the size of cars where the pavement is just gone or it's just lying there all broken up like you tore a piece of bread into little pieces," said Director of Maintenance Jim Fedra. What was different about this storm that impacted the roads so greatly? Normally, winter storms hit the state and pass through in a day or so. This storm began with snow and freezing rain, which quickly turned to ice, and temperatures hovered around the freezing mark for the next week. Instead of melting away, slushy roads re-

froze during the night and would turn to ice. These freeze/thaw cycles caused cracks in the pavement for water to seep and turn to ice, expanding and damaging roadways. "The fact that it stayed on the pavement so long caused a lot of damage, especially to our secondary roads. They were the last ones to be plowed so you had the freeze/thaw cycles all week," Fedra said. "In a lot of secondary roads, entire sections were completely destroyed. Others had significant damage where we put 'Rough Road' signs up and used motorgraders to remove loose material. This is significant damage to our secondary system."

During the winter of 2009-10, unusually wet and cold weather led to freeze/thaw cycles that caused what was described as the "Year of the Pothole." Complaints about potholes were up 43 percent and several counties spent months repairing potholes from the winter. This winter was even worse, Fedra said, with base failures where pavement sections 6 feet by 20 feet are destroyed. "I wouldn't call them potholes - in some cases it looks like the roads exploded," Fedra said. "We've got roads out there where we've patched the patches," Fedra said. "It's the best we can do with the funding we have available. We're putting Band-Aids on top of Band-Aids."

In District 4, based in Chester, District Engineering Administrator John McCarter said his crews will be working "well into summer" to make repairs on damaged roads.

"We're putting Band-Aids on top of Band-Aids."

Jim Fedra, Director of Maintenance



Due to the freezing, thawing and refreezing during the recent winter storms, sections of pavement were cracked and damaged. The affected highways are patched using full-depth patching where pavement is removed to the base before being repaved with asphalt.

See STORM on page 18



Transportation Secretary, Commission thank employees for going the extra mile

To All Employees:

During the recent ice and snow storms, South Carolina Department of Transportation employees have again proven dedication to their jobs, and their willingness to go many extra miles to keep our roads and bridges safe for the motoring public. For this I am personally very grateful.

The Christmas storm affected 44 of the state's 46 counties and 1,876 of our maintenance employees left their families and homes on Christmas night to keep the roads open. The January storm, impacted every county, and we had 1,972 maintenance employees working at one time or another during the storm.

I want each of you who worked or are still working during these two weather emergencies to know that we truly appreciate your hard work. I and the Deputy Secretaries appreciate your understanding that keeping the roads open for travel is what we do and is simply part of our job, and you do it until all work is completed with no complaints. The public does not always recognize it, but you are not just clearing roads, you are keeping vital routes open for EMS, firefighters, and law en-

forcement who also must continue doing their jobs despite the weather.

To those of you who worked 12-hour shifts, plowing snow, spreading salt and sand, and doing everything possible to clear our roadways, I thank you. To those of you who contributed to support this effort while working in the mechanical shops to supply needed equipment and supplies, or in administrative offices to direct the overall response, I thank you. Also, I would extend a special thanks to those in the Lowcountry counties who left their homes and families to assist in the recovery effort in upstate counties.

All of you have earned the appreciation of all South Carolinians for the outstanding job you did in dealing with these two winter storms and many of our citizens have already expressed their appreciation to me for your competence and extra efforts. The work you do day in and day out keep our roadways safe, and the extra effort you put forth in times like these, is proof positive that we have the best transportation employees in the nation.

Sincerely,

**H.B. Limehouse Jr.,
Former Secretary
of Transportation**



the approved roads were limited to the most severely damaged with an average daily traffic count of 250 and above.

The \$6.7 million approved by the Commission will fund the repair of over 60 miles of roadway in nine counties: Anderson, Edgefield, Laurens, Pickens, Spartanburg, Cherokee, Chester, Lancaster and York.

Funding for the repairs will come from sources including the state's resurfacing money.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the recent snow and ice storms had a tremendous impact on the Department of Transportation employees and the Department's budget; and

WHEREAS, the Christmas storm affected 44 of the state's 46 counties with 1,876 maintenance employees leaving their homes and families on Christmas night to maintain our highways; and

WHEREAS, the January storm impacted every county of the state which resulted in 1,972 maintenance employees working several days during and after the storm, maintaining our highways; and

WHEREAS, in both cases, our employees put forth great effort in making sure the highways were safe, clear and open for the motoring public; and

WHEREAS, the financial impact to the Department's budget for the January storm alone to date cost the department \$5,789,292, with additional costs yet to be determined; and

WHEREAS, in both storms the employees of the Department of Transportation demonstrated exceptional teamwork, attention to detail, and a personal interest in making sure that all tasks were done well, such as plowing snow, spreading salt and sand, and doing everything possible to keep our vital transportation routes open; and

WHEREAS, the employees of the Department of Transportation have earned the appreciation of all South Carolinians for an outstanding job during these two weather emergencies, with the Secretary of Transportation receiving notes of appreciation from the citizens of the state acknowledging the competence and dedication displayed by our employees; and

WHEREAS, the Department's emergency operating team worked countless hours updating and keeping the public informed of road conditions throughout the state;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the South Carolina Department of Transportation Commission, this 20th day of January, 2011, that the Commission and Secretary recognize, commend, and truly thank the employees of the South Carolina Department of Transportation for their untiring dedication in providing the motoring public with a safe highway system that is so critical to the citizens of our great State.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be provided to the Deputy Secretary for Engineering and the Director of Maintenance, and published in The Connector.



H. B. Limehouse Jr.
H. B. Limehouse
Secretary of Transportation

Daniel H. Isaac
Daniel H. Isaac
Chairman, First Congressional District

J. Craig Forrest
J. Craig Forrest
Second Congressional District

R. Eddie Adams
R. Eddie Adams
Third Congressional District

Johnny P. Edwards
Johnny P. Edwards
Fourth Congressional District

Sarah B. Nuckles
Sarah B. Nuckles
Fifth Congressional District

Harrison Rearden
Harrison Rearden
Sixth Congressional District

Ken R. Willingham
Ken R. Willingham
Commissioner At-Large

STORM from page 17

"We've got sections of road that are gone," McCarter said. "I haven't seen it like this before."

In March, the SCDOT Commission approved the immediate repair by contract of the most critical roads that were severely damaged by this year's winter storms. Because there were no federal emergency funds approved for the repairs,

The SCDOT Commission signed a resolution thanking employees for their work during the winter storms.

I-385 widening project starts up in Greenville County



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

A large crane is in place and ready to begin work on the I-385 widening project in Greenville County.

By Bob Kudelka

The Interstate 385 widening and rehabilitation project will provide much needed relief for motorists on this busy stretch of highway in Greenville County.

The project also comes after the highly successful rehabilitation of 15 miles of I-385 in neighboring Laurens County, which was completed in July after just 6½ months. In that project, six overpasses were raised to meet interstate standards; a new fly-over bridge was built connecting I-26; shoulders were widened; high-strength concrete was installed; and safety features such as median guardrails were added.

Now as the weather gets warmer, work on the I-385 widening and rehabilitation project in Greenville County will be heating up.

The work consists of widening to the median, with concrete median barrier wall, approximately 5.5 miles of I-385 to six-lanes between the Southern Connector and Woodruff Road. Approximately 5.5 miles of the existing mainline pavement will be reconstructed and an additional 2 miles will be rehabilitated.

“This project provides a substantial increase in capacity, which is very much needed along this stretch of interstate going into Downtown Greenville,” said Director of Construction Leland

Colvin. “This project widens the last remaining four lane section on I-385 from south of Simpsonville all the way to downtown Greenville.”

The project, which uses a design-build method aimed at saving time and money, is South Carolina’s largest American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) highway project and is being funded with \$36.9 million in federal stimulus money.

Project Engineer Dale Williams and Assistant Project Engineer Ben Olson are the SCDOT employees in charge of day-to-day supervision.

“The project is going well,” Olson said in February.

Despite a harsh winter, which challenged initial work, the project is on schedule and on budget.

“Now that it has a gotten little warmer we’re making good progress,” Olson said. “We’re going to start seeing things take off in the spring months and the summer.”

Early work included widening the northbound shoulders. From there, crews were to begin working on bridges and install a temporary barrier wall to shift traffic.

“Right now we only have night work,” Olson said. “One of the requirements of the project is we have to have two lanes open at all times. That way, we’re not shutting anything down and it’s not going to slow anything down. It will be very busy once we get up



Assistant Project Engineer Ben Olson points out the improvement plans on the I-385 widening project.

the temporary barrier walls.”

With the temporary barrier walls in place, crews will be able to work during daytime hours within the median and still keep two lanes open, Olson said.

The existing ramps at Old Stage Road and exits 31, 33 and 34 will be reconstructed to current design standards. The project also includes widening the existing dual bridges at Exit 30 (over NB I-185/US 276) and at SC 417 Exit 31 (over SC 417).

There are intelligent transportation system components that will include a permanent overhead message sign and 100 percent coverage with remote-controlled traffic cameras.



Olson explains that the project will have two lanes open at all times to avoid slowing down traffic.

2011 South Carolina Highway Engineers Conference:



The first general session topic was 'Every Day Counts' and was led by Ron Patton of SCDOT and Patrick Tyndall of the Federal Highway Administration.

By Bob Kudelka

SCDOT employees joined their counterparts in the private sector for Clemson University's 2011 South Carolina Highway Engineers Conference in March.

Held at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center, the two-day conference featured the latest technologies and best practices in topics ranging from erosion control and air quality to storm water and traffic signals.

"This is one of the best engineering conferences we have had," said attendee Kati Holland, an assistant program manager at SCDOT. "The topics and breakout sessions are excellent. It's hard to choose which ones to go to."

The annual conference is a great opportunity for employees to network and learn from other employees as well as from colleagues in the private sector, said Andy Leaphart, program chair and SCDOT's Assistant Chief Engineer for Operations.

"It's a chance for those people to interact in a professional environment and swap knowledge," Leaphart said. "We have a strong consulting and contracting industry in South Carolina, and this is a good chance for us to strengthen those relationships and see what we can improve upon."

Clemson University hosts the

conference and SCDOT provides the agenda and speakers.

The conference began with wel-

coming messages by Transportation Secretary Robert J. St. Onge Jr. and Deputy Secretary for Engineering John Walsh.

St. Onge told the audience that although he did not attend Clemson, he still went to an engineering school, the US Military Academy at West Point.

He recalled an early lesson in the field of engineering in which his classroom was the Vietnam War.

As a young lieutenant, St. Onge arrived in Vietnam and flew by helicopter to a field and his awaiting platoon. When he touched down, the lieutenant whose place St. Onge was taking simply handed him a map, patted him on the back and said, "Good luck."

His first duty was to re-assemble a bulldozer. Its shell had been placed incorrectly on its tracks, and St. Onge described how a private's suggestion

- to use a winch tied a tree to lift the bulldozer and right the tracks - saved the day.

"That was a humbling experience, and one I'll never forget," said St. Onge, who served in the US Army from 1969-2003 and retired as a Major General.

St. Onge called on the assembly to help meet the challenges of today and listed his goals including preserving our infrastructure, providing excellent customer service, partnering with other agencies and the private sector and finding new funding strategies to stretch the DOT dollar.

"We're about half-resourced for what we need to preserve - and that's the bridges and roads that define this state," St. Onge said.

Walsh mentioned some of the highlights at SCDOT in the past year, including the online maintenance re-



Engineers listen to one of the breakout sessions during the two-day conference. More than 30 different sessions offered a wide selection of transportation topics.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR



SCDOT engineers, private sector engineers gather for annual conference



Kevin Gantt, left, checks out new sign posts. Engineers were given the opportunity to check out the latest technology from vendors.

quest program and the 511 Traveler Information System, which he described as “the leading edge of proactive traffic management.”

Walsh gave special thanks to Clemson University for hosting the conference.

This year’s conference had about double the number of attendees com-

pared to last year’s, Leaphart said.

Of the 475 attendees, there were 256 SCDOT employees with the remainder from the private sector and other governments, said Tina Kennedy, agency events coordinator.

“We changed the format this year and instead of having all general sessions, we had breakout sessions as



Todd Cook puts the finishing touches on his presentation. The conference facility had plenty of space for attendees to get work done between sessions.

well,” Leaphart said. “They were broken down into construction, maintenance and pre-construction topics. The conference provided 12 hours of continuing education for registered engineers. We’ve had a successful conference.”

Guest speakers included Dick Burleson, a retired Major General and SEC football referee, who spoke about leadership; and Rob Turton of HDR, who gave a presentation on the Hoover Dam bypass project.

SCDOT presenters included Ron

Patton, Lee Floyd, Jay Hawkins, Mark Lester, Kevin Sheppard, Jennifer Gruber, Brian Bannister, Chris McCurry, Todd Cook, Rick Callahan, Arlene Prince, Gary Linn, Mark Attaway, Mike Sullivan, Stan Bland, Keith Frick, Mark Hunter, Ashleigh Sandel, Heather Robbins, Henry Phillips, Claude Ipock, Randy Williamson, Carol Jones, John McCarter, Bryan Jones, Wayne Roberts, Dan Campbell, Tisha Dickerson, Rob Perry and Nick Waites.

Moderators of sessions included Charles Eleazer, John Walsh, Andy Johnson, David Cook, Sean Connolly, Leland Colvin, Mark Hunter, Marcie Timmons, Jamie Kendall, Jim Feda, Randy Young, Milt Fletcher, Mark Lester, Mitchell Metts, Tony Sheppard and Clem Watson.

The conference committee chaired by Leaphart included Sean Connolly, David Cook, Charles Eleazer, Andy Johnson, Jamie Kendall and Mike Sawyer, with assistance by agency events coordinator Tina Kennedy.

Leaphart also thanked Marty McKee and Leslie Hope of Carolinas AGC; and Clemson University’s T3S staff of Sandi Priddy, Shaun Gaines and Jodi Redlinger.



Engineers, and married couple, Andy and Wei Johnson are expecting their first child in May.



District 3, Headquarters and engineering firms used the conference as a chance to meet face to face about an I-85 project.



TREES SC:

Always choose right tree for right place

By Timothy Edwards

Timothy Edwards has been the SCDOT Landscape Architect for more than 32 years. He works in Roadway Design Support in the Preconstruction Office.



WINTER KING HAWTHORN

Latin name: Crataegus viridis Winter King
Common name: Winter King Hawthorn
Zones: 4-7
Height and Width: 20'-30' x 20'-30'
Type: Deciduous woody plant
pH: Not particular as to pH; 6.1 to 7.6
Habit: Upright, smooth outline, rounded, vase-shape **Texture:** Fine to medium
Growth rate: Moderate **Light:** Full sun
Moisture: Dry to median
Soil: Well-drained, moist, fertile, humus rich, sandy, clay or loam soil; can tolerate occasionally wet soils
Origin: Eastern United States; cultivar of nursery origin

Features: Winter King Hawthorn is a native, small white-flowering tree with abundant shiny red fruit held in tight clusters. The fruit persist through winter offering food for birds and other wildlife. Thorns are a problem in high traffic areas, and low branches should be pruned to avoid hazards.

Sitting: Plant in an area with 100-200 square feet of total planting space; in a planting strip at least 4-7 feet wide; or place at least 6' from pavement or wall.

Care: Easily grown in average, dry to medium, well-drained soil in full sun. Drought tolerant. Moist, rich fertile soils may encourage unwanted succulent growth. Tolerant of urban pollution.

Uses: Specimen, borders, lawn areas, group plantings, screening and naturalizing.

Excellent spring flowering tree for lawns and streets. Good fall color and persistent fruit help provide year round interest.

Pests and Diseases: Problem pests are aphids, borers, caterpillars, and leaf miners. It is susceptible to cedar-hawthorn rust but is more resistant than the species.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY TIMOTHY EDWARDS

WILLOW OAK

Latin name: Quercus phellos
Common name: Willow Oak
Zones: 6-9 **Light:** Full sun
Height and Width: 60-75'h x 40-50'w

Type and Habit: Deciduous
Habit: Pyramidal and rounded
Texture: Fine **Growth rate:** Fast
Light: Full sun **Moisture:** High
Soil: Slightly acidic soils
Origin: Native to North America

Features: Willow Oak is widely used as a shade tree in parks and a street tree. The pyramidal shape in youth gives way to a rounded canopy in middle and old age, with lower branches drooping toward the ground. The long, light green willow-type leaves create dense shade and a graceful effect turning bright yellow before they fall.

Sitting: The tree is easy to transplant but reportedly transplants poorly in the fall. Plant in an area with more than 200 square feet of total planting area; in a planting strip at least 7' wide; or place at least 6' from pavement or wall.

Care: The Willow Oak is well adapted to urban conditions, but can develop chlorosis in high pH soils and root rot in confined planting areas. Avoid deep planting; plant so root flare is visible in loose soil. The tree must have several growing seasons to establish and adapt in stressed conditions.

Pests: None serious. Fall cankerworm and spring cankerworm have been a problem in some years. Mites or scale can become troublesome.

Contact Trees SC at www.trees.org for membership and more information.

THE FLOWER MAN

By Ernest Jones

Ernest Jones is in charge of landscaping and vegetation at SCDOT Headquarters.

COMPANION PLANTING

A long-standing gardening tradition is companion planting, in which plants are placed in the garden according to the ways they affect one another.

Some plant partners are believed to repel pests or disease-causing organisms, and thus have a protective effect. Some plants are thought to enhance the growth of certain other plants. Other plants hinder growth by secreting irritating or even toxic substances into the soil. (This effect is known as "allelopath.")

Some plants are good companions because they have different but complementary rooting patterns that make efficient use of garden space; a shallow-rooted plant can be placed next to a deep-rooted one, and the two can compete for room, water or nutrients.

Plants can be good neighbors

when their light requirements are different; a shade-loving plant will thrive in the shadows cast by a taller sun-lover.

The successful companions help neighboring plants in one of five ways -- by providing nutrients to neighboring plants, protecting other plants against disease, repelling pest insects, attracting beneficial insects or enticing bug-eating birds.

PLANTS THAT PROVIDE NUTRIENTS

Certain plants can improve the health of their neighbors by providing nutrients. Plants with deep-delving roots, like comfrey, bring to the surface nutrients and trace minerals -- potassium and phosphorus, as well as calcium, magnesium, silica and iron, for instance -- making them more available to the roots of neighboring plants.

Other plants have the capability to actually pull nitrogen from the air we breathe. Nitrogen-fixers, such as lupines, sweet peas and clovers, release this nitrogen

into the soil, where bacteria can then convert it into a nitrogen boost that benefits surrounding plants.

It's easy to put these nourishing companions to use in your own garden. Just think of pairing those plants that give with those that take. For example, lupines provide nitrogen for heavy feeders like foxglove, delphiniums and roses.

Having trouble getting enough phosphorus to your cannas, dahlias, iris, cockscomb or tulips? Plant lemon balm, marigolds or valerian next to them. These plants have plenty of phosphorus to share.

PLANTS THAT PROTECT AGAINST DISEASE

How would you like to prevent disease in your garden simply by growing the right plants? There are some plants to do just that. Two defenders against disease include chives and garlic, commonly known compatibles that protect roses against black spot, a fungal disease.

In fact, most members of the allium family can be good choices for growing next to plants

prone to fungal disease, such as roses and impatiens, Allium help phlox fight off fungus.

Companion plants are most effective when you grow a good-sized clump, at least one square foot for each neighboring plant. You can use companion plants to surround neighbors, such as a circle of chives surrounding a rose bush

Plants rich in silica help susceptible plants resist waterborne diseases like rust and mildew. Silica-rich borage makes perfect partners for mildew-prone plants like honeysuckle, and rust-susceptible hollyhocks and snapdragons.

PLANTS THAT REPEL PEST INSECTS

When you're concentrating on a project at home, it's harder to focus when the phone is ringing, the television is blaring or the dog is barking. Distractions work the same way in the garden, only instead of noises, you use sights and smells to confuse pest insects from honing in on target plants.

A diversified garden makes it harder for them to locate their favorite meals. Think how easy it would be for a Japanese beetle

to find gardens full of perfumed roses. Yet intermingle roses with lavender, salvia and stock, and odds are that flustered beetles will fly off in search of easier eats.

Other plants repel with phytochemicals, plant-produced chemicals that poison certain plant-eating insects. White geraniums, four o'clock, larkspur and castor bean leaves lure in, then poison, Japanese beetles. African and French marigolds have similar effects on soil-welling nematodes.

One of my favorite companions for keeping bad bugs at bay is nasturtiums, which hinder cucumber beetles from feeding on cannas. Mints, marigolds, petunias, southernwood and garlic act as repellents for aphids.

That's why I combine them with plants like columbines, dahlias, delphiniums and geraniums. Petunias help the geraniums ward off aphids.

If you're having trouble with flea beetles, grow hyssop next to annual asters, petunias or phlox. Good repellent plants in any flower garden include other aromatic herbs, like catnip, rue and scented geraniums.

Engineering News

Why Design Build?

By Mike Sawyer

In the fall 2010 Edition of The Connector, readers were introduced to what the Design-Build delivery process entailed. Design Build is a project delivery process by which the Department executes a single contract for both design and construction.

Design-Bid-Build is the most commonly used method of project delivery. This option requires the most involvement of the project owner (SCDOT). The project owner works with the designer to develop plans that are sent out to builders for bid.

The Traffic Engineering Safety Office uses both processes to administer the Highway Safety Improvement Program. The purpose of this federally funded program is to achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads through infrastructure-related improvements. In fiscal year 2006, fourteen Intersection Safety Projects were let using the Design-Bid-Build delivery process. The funding made available to improve safety in South Carolina has increased such that, in fiscal year 2009 as many as 34 Intersection Safety Projects were proposed to be constructed. This increased demand to implement intersection safety projects prompted the Traffic Engineering Safety Office to begin investigating the Design-Build delivery process as an alternative to the traditional Design-Bid-Build process.

The Florida Department of Transportation evaluated the projects they let using the Design-Build delivery process over a period seven years, from July 1996 – June 2003, and provided the following guidance for Design-Build project selection:

Design Build should be considered for the following types of projects:

- Projects that demand an expedited schedule and can be completed earlier.

• Projects that require minimum right of way acquisition and utility relocation.

• Projects that can have a well defined scope for all parties (design & construction)

• Projects that have room for innovation in the design and/or construction effort.

• Projects with low risk of unforeseen conditions.

• Projects with low possibility for significant change during all phases of work.

• Projects with well-defined, non-complex environmental permitting requirements.

Examples of projects that may be good Design-Build contracting candidates:

- Major Bridges
- Minor Bridges
- ITS (computer signalized traffic)
- Intersection improvements
- Buildings, office buildings, rest areas, welcome stations, pedestrian overpasses (minor bridge), etc.
- Interstate widening
- Rural Widening
- Fencing
- Landscaping
- Lighting
- Sidewalks
- Signage
- Signalization
- Guardrail
- Ease of Project Management

One of the benefits of using the Design-Build method is an expedited schedule which will allow safety infrastructure-related improvements to be realized by the public sooner. In the fall of 2009 the Traffic Engineering Safety Office selected 13 intersection safety projects located in Districts 1 and 7 that fit the Design-Build considerations described above and began the multi-step process of executing a Design-Build contract. The 13 intersections that will receive improvements under this contract were approved by the Commission between April and September of 2009 and are listed above right:

As described in the fall 2010 edition of the Connector, the two-step process which involves a

Request for Qualifications and a Request for Proposers was used to select a Proposer with which to execute a contract for this project.

On Dec. 4, 2009, a multi-disciplinary team of Department and FHWA staff reviewed the qualifications of all interested firms and selected the teams that would be invited to submit proposals. Proposals were received on Jan. 14, 2011, and reviewed once again by a multi-disciplinary team of Department and FHWA staff. A Proposer has been selected and contract negotiations are under way.

Got news?

Contact Andy Leaphart at: 803-737-1994 or email him at Leaphart@scdot.org

Andy Leaphart



13 DESIGN BUILD PROJECTS APPROVED APRIL-DECEMBER 2009

County	Intersection	Improvement
Aiken	S-45 @ S-901	Realign to form T-Intersection
Aiken	SC 118 @ S-895	Left turn lanes and signalize
Clarendon	S-63 @ S-79	Round About
Lexington	SC 302 @ S-625	Left turn lanes, signalize, 3 lane
Lexington	S-77 @ S-278	Left turn lanes, signalize
Lexington	S-34 @ S-1910/1848	Left turn lanes, signalize
Lexington	S-70 @ S-921	Round About
Orangeburg	SC 45 @ SC 310	Round About
Richland	S-674 @ S-1280	Round About
Richland	S-83 @ S-1050	Install 3 lane section and turn lanes on minor routes
Richland	S-49 @ S-50	Realignment
Sumter	US 76 Bus. @ US 521	Median and pavement marking improvements
Sumter	SC 120 @ S-251	Realignment and left turn lanes



ILLUSTRATION BY INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS/TRAFFIC ENGINEERING

At roundabouts, vehicles travel in the same direction, eliminating the right-angle and left-turn conflicts associated with traditional intersections. Good roundabout design places a high priority on speed control and provides numerous safety benefits including fewer and less severe traffic accidents.

District 1 News

Kershaw, Lee, Lexington, Richland and Sumter counties

*District Engineer: Thad Brunson (803) 737-6660
FAX (803) 737-6401*

Bridge Repair 101

Kershaw Bridge Maintenance makes it look easy



The Kershaw Bridge Maintenance Crew has been doing repair work on a bridge on S-549, Mt. Zion Rd. The bridge is a 45' long H-10 bridge. They had to replace 24 piles underneath the bridge and pour in place one bridge panel. The piles were rotten and many had split over the years. The first things done were to have an asbestos study done to make sure there was no asbestos on the bridge and then have the utilities located. There was a water line attached to the existing bridge which took nearly two weeks to have relocated and then the work began.

In order to perform the work, the existing guardrail had to be removed and then the old asphalt was pulled off of the existing

bridge deck. Carefully, the panels were numbered and removed one by one to be re-used after new piles were driven. The crew removed as much of the existing rip-rap as possible to use it after the bridge was completed and then began tearing out the old structure.

They were working in water 8–10 feet deep at times which required extra care with tools and equipment and made the work slower. After the new piles were driven, the headwalls were built and rip-rap was put on the slope to prevent erosion. The original bridge had only one headwall but the new structure now has two. All new cross bracing was installed under the bridge and then the crew was ready to install the original bridge deck. They

patched some minor spalls and then placed the deck panels back in the order they were removed. One panel was cracked badly and it was decided to pour a new panel in place. The crew formed the panel up and poured it with Class 5000 concrete. The last tie rod was installed and tightened down and then the remaining clip angles were put in place. The guard rail and asphalt is all that's left to be done now. We plan to have this work completed as soon as weather permits.

The Kershaw Bridge Maintenance Crew consists of 5 employees, two of which are Certified Crane Operators. The crew consists of **Chris Team**, Foreman; **Benji Catoe**, Crane Operator; and crew members **Jessie Jordan**, **Russell Alston** and **Robert**

Got news?

Contact Teresa Rast at: 803-737-6715 or email her at RastTL@scdot.org

Teresa Rast



Chris Team uses a core drill on the bridge deck. The drill cuts through concrete and rebar.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRIAN MOTLEY/KERSHAW MAINTENANCE

From left to right: Robert Branham, Jessie Jordan and Chris Team pose in front of a crane used on the project.

Branham.

They are a very qualified and diverse crew using various pieces of machinery from cranes to backhoes and dump trucks. They use lots of hand tools and have to be very conscious of working over, around and in the water

many times while using electrical tools. Catoe is also a certified welder. They work very closely together and have to watch out for one another while being in tight job sites and using large equipment to move very heavy parts of the bridge.

District 2 News

Abbeville, Anderson, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry and Saluda counties

*District Engineer: Christy Hall (864) 227-6971
FAX (864) 227-6567*

D2 employees mentor kids on Job Shadow Day

SCDOT employees in District 2 participated in the annual Feb. 2 Job Shadowing Day by bringing a child to work to learn more about the jobs they perform. The students learned about the wide variety of jobs at SCDOT.



Justin Scott is the son of Dwayne Scott, District 2 Information Resource Consultant.



Rhondi Hackett is the son of Wright Austin, Mechanic III, at Greenwood Maintenance.



Brittany King followed her brother, Clifton White, Resident Maintenance Foreman for McCormick Maintenance.



Magen Brown, is the daughter of Denise Brown, OSHA/Safety Officer at Anderson Maintenance.



Ryan Hart is the son of Gary Hart, Resident Maintenance Foreman at Anderson Maintenance.



Alex Roberts is the son of Richard Roberts, Trades Spec. III at Greenwood Maintenance.

Crews clear snow, ice

A special THANKS to all SCDOT employees that worked extra hours in freezing weather to get South Carolina's roadways clear of snow and ice during the winter season!



Got news?

Contact Sarah McKinney at 864-227-6222 or email her at McKinneySB@scdot.org.



Sarah McKinney

Material Safety Data Sheets training



Employees responsible for MSDS books within District 2 attended a computer class instructed by Kelley Donkle. The purpose of this training was to assist District 2 in maintaining their MSDS sheets more effectively in a computer-based program.

Engineering Orientation Program

Participants from the Engineering Orientation Program, Toby Wickenhoefer and Jeremy Hodges, recently visited the District 2 Office for three days. During their visit, Toby and Jeremy were introduced to the basic functions of construction, traffic, mechanical, maintenance, safety, Information Technology, Human Resource, and the District Engineering Administrator. Wickenhoefer and Hodges assisted the District 2 Maintenance Office work up quantities for an upcoming project.



District 3 News

Greenville, Oconee, Pickens and Spartanburg counties

*District Engineer: Steve Gwinn (864) 241-1010
FAX (864) 241-1115*

District 3 celebrates snowy Christmas

While many of the other State government offices were closed, SCDOT's District 3 Office and field offices were open for the first white Christmas since 1963.

The White Christmas of 1963 was actually snow left over from a few days before. Record keeping began in 1894 and Dec. 25, 2010, is actually the first time snow has fallen on Christmas Day in the area.

Greenville-Spartanburg Airport measured at 2.3 inches of snow. The District Office measured about one and a half inches.

Greenville Maintenance staff would like to send a big THANKS to Eric Bikas of Bikas Drive-In on SC Hwy 253 in Greenville County. Bikas was scheduled to be closed but decided to open his restaurant on Christmas Day and the day after in order to accommodate the Greenville Maintenance office staff that had to work.

"Mr. Bikas told us he would be closed Dec. 24-27 for the holidays, but if we had to work, he would open up long enough to cook for our people. He gave his personal cell number to Ryan and myself and told us to call him if we needed him for anything. He did indeed open up on Christmas Day and the day after for our meals," said C. Liz Collins.

"I took these pictures along US Hwy 276 on Ceasar's Head. We had gone up to check how the brine pretreatment was holding on the roadway when we came upon an ambulance, an 18-wheeler, and about a dozen other vehicles stuck on the shoulder of the roadway. David McCall sent 2 trucks from the North Greenville Shed – Carl Bell and Johnnie Sellers – up with a load of sand/salt. No one could get through due to the severe icing; but these guys turned their trucks around and backed up the mountain dispersing material as they went!"

C. Liz Collins
Greenville Maintenance



PHOTOGRAPHS BY C. LIZ COLLINS



PHOTO BY ERIC DILLON

Got news?

Please contact
Tameki Watts
at 864-241-1010
or by emailing her at
WattsTL@scdot.org



**Tameki
Watts**

I-385 Design-Build Preconstruction Conference



The I-385 Design Build Preconstruction Conference was held Nov. 18 in the fourth floor conference room.

The much anticipated I-385 Design Build Project will soon begin. The project is an Interstate Widening project that will provide for six lanes of interstate on I-385 from north of West Georgia Road to Woodruff Road. This Design-Build project is the largest

ARRA project in South Carolina.

Don Freeman organized the Preconstruction Conference. It was held at the District 3 Office in Greenville. It was an all day meeting set up with break-out sessions held in other conference rooms throughout the District Office.



Breakout sessions were held in conference rooms throughout the District 3 office.

District 4 News

*Cherokee, Chester, Chesterfield,
Fairfield, Lancaster, Union and
York counties*

*District Engineer: John McCarter
(803) 377-4155
FAX (803) 581-2088*

Got news?

Contact Edward Moore with your ideas at 803-377-4155 or by emailing him at MooreEO@scdot.org



Edward Moore

Golden Hard Hat awarded at York Maintenance

York Maintenance started a new safety program during 2010 aimed at lowering vehicle accidents and injuries. OSHA Officer Ken Collins and RME Brad Trout designed the Golden Hard Hat program to promote safety and job quality among crews in York Maintenance. OSHA Officer Collins states "the program encourages employees to communicate safety procedures and guidelines

on a daily basis.

The initial Golden Hard Hat award was presented to three crews at York Maintenance who had no reported vehicle accidents or injuries during 2010. Employees of each crew were given a steak dinner provided by all supervisors at York Maintenance.



LEWIS BRAZELL'S CREW, from left: District Maintenance Engineer Todd Cook, District Engineer John McCarter, Carl Smith, Charles Ramsey, Billy White, Lewis Brazell, Laurence Bass, RME Brad Trout, District Mechanical Engineer Rusty Snider.



YORK SHOP, from left, Dee Totherow, Danny Moss, Claude Lawson, Mac Mobley, Eddie Boatwright, Todd McAbee, Allen Love.



RANDY MCDANIEL'S CREW, from left, Randy McDaniel, Michael Franklin, Arthur Collins, Chuck Petty.

Meet Brian Scott

- Name:** Brian Scott
- Age:** 44
- Location:** District 4 Office in Chester
- Started at SCDOT:** July 2009
- Job Title:** Information Resource Consultant, District 4
- Family:** Wife, Kelly; Sons, Samuel and Reid; Daughter, Grace.
- Hobbies:** Kids, Biking, Golf
- Quote:** "I am thankful to be employed at SCDOT...It's a job that I enjoy."



Brian Scott is a District 4 Information Resource Consultant.

District 5 News

Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Georgetown, Horry, Marion, Marlboro and Williamsburg counties

*District Engineer: Dennis Townsend (843) 661-4710
FAX (843) 661-4704*

Pre-Trip inspections: Important safety measure

Darlington OSHA Officer II Ken Cogley has been assisting the Darlington Maintenance employees with mastering the Pretrip Inspection of their equipment. Once a week, he selects a crew and goes through the entire pretrip process, and answers questions afterwards.

- 1 Cogley discusses the purpose of the pretrip inspection with the crew.
- 2 Cogley inspects the pintle hook, safety latches, brake wiring, and air connections on the rear of the truck.
- 3 Part of the inspection process involves checking the tires, brakes, and axles for any damage or wear.
- 4 Once the inspection has been completed, Cogley reviews the process with the crew and makes sure all questions have been answered.



Got news?

Contact Michael Miller at 843-661-4710 or by emailing him at MillerMW@scdot.org

**Michael
Miller**



Snow Storm

District 5 ready for storm, clears roads for public

South Carolina was surprised by multiple snowfalls this year, and SCDOT employees responded to keep the roadways safe for traffic to continue. Everyone worked together to make sure that the roads were clear of snow and ice as soon as possible.



District Office personnel inspect secondary roads to ensure the snow and ice have not accumulated and the public can travel safely.

Looking out from the District Office, the snow has covered the lawn but the roads are clear for traffic.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY LORENA PATE/DISTRICT 5



Florence Maintenance employees load a dump truck with salt to spread on the roadway. Parked beside it is a smaller truck used to spread brine solution to help melt the snow and ice.

District 6 News

Beaufort, Berkeley, Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester and Jasper counties

*District Engineer: Robert Clark (843) 740-1665
FAX (843) 740-1663*

Meet some of our Construction Offices

Got news?

Contact Janet Hendrix at :
843-740-1667 ext. 128 or by emailing her at HendrixJL@scdot.org



Janet Hendrix



DORCHESTER CONSTRUCTION - Left, top to bottom: David Briggs, John Daniels, Willis Dobison, Linda Shaw, Trenton Gruber. Center, top to bottom: Terry Bradley, Sophia Bradford, Thomas Traverse, Alex Geiger. Right, top to bottom: Roger Bowers, Nathan Umberger, Behling Guess, Edwin Lindsey, Katie Durham, Joe Utley.



BEAUFORT and JASPER CONSTRUCTION - Front row: Linda Weichbrodt, William Risher, ARCE Jared Fralix, Don Hilton. Middle row: Sonnie Torrey, RCE Chris Smith. Top row: Tommie Chisolm, Keith Smith, Arthur Washington, Jr., Rhett Christensen. Not Pictured: Garvin Moeller from Special Projects Beaufort/Jasper.

Beaufort Construction currently has projects in Beaufort, Colleton and Jasper Counties.

In Beaufort they have widening projects on SC-46 and S-7-474, Simmonsville.

They also have a resurfacing project on US-278 on Hilton Head Island that will be closed out soon after the placing of thermo. This construction unit has two resurfacing projects about to get started, one on SC-64 Bypass and the other on US-17 Alt. that runs through the town of Walterboro in Colleton County.

The intersection improvement project on SC-315 in Jasper County should be finished in the next few weeks.

Dorchester Construction has the Murray Drive/Hanahan Road Intersection Improvement project. This contract will relocate a portion of Murray Drive to line up with Hanahan Road where it connects back to US-52. This project also includes a traffic signal.

On the letting schedule they also have the Central Ave and Butternut Road intersection improvement, which will improve the intersection in Summerville and hopefully improve safety.

They also have a major rec-

lamation project to reclaim and resurface 7.25 miles of Mudville Road in Berkeley County near the Town of Cross. Work should begin on this project in the next few weeks. In addition to the normal state lettings, Dorchester Construction also helps oversee the Dorchester County Sales Tax project which right now include an improvement project on US-78 from Dorchester to St. George, paving of Summers Road, and soon-to-be let major widening of Dorchester Road (SC-642) from Trolley Road to US-17A.



COLLETON BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION - Back Row: Keith Green, Alejandro Varelo, Kelcey Bradley, Durwood Kennedy. Front Row: Tony Ragos, Kathy Nelson, Michele Reece, Fouad Bouani.

Colleton Bridge Construction has recently completed one bridge replacement project in Jasper County and is currently working to close three additional bridge

replacement projects in Colleton, Dorchester and Jasper Counties.

In addition to serving as a liaison for the bridge replacements along Summers Drive in Dorchester County, the office was also

selected to serve as a liaison for Beaufort County over the McTeer Bridge Project in Port Royal. Once completed, this project will serve the east bound traffic going to Lady's Island.



Daniel Burton is the Special Projects Manager of the ACE Basin Segment II project.

ACE Basin Segment II is a Design-Build project located in Colleton County. The primary objective is improved safety and the project includes the widening of US 17 from two lanes to four lanes from Lightsey Plantation to SC-64 in Jacksonboro.

The project includes the replacement of bridges over the Ashpoo River and CSX railroad along with a new bridge to be constructed in place of an existing box culvert at the Tupeloo Swamp.

The first part of the ACE Basin project included a new roundabout at US 17 and US 21.



District 7 News

Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun, Clarendon, Hampton and Orangeburg counties

*District Engineer: Jo Ann Woodrum (803) 531-6850
FAX (803) 531-6854*

QMT Excellence: Bamberg Maintenance



On Jan. 26, Bamberg County Maintenance had its Quality Maintenance Review that resulted in an Excellent score of 94.68 percent. All employees at Bamberg Maintenance are commended for their dedication and hard work toward maintenance excellence. Congratulations on a job well done!

Got news?

Contact Deborah Berry at:
803-531-6850 or
by emailing her at
BerryDS@scdot.org



Deborah
Berry

Aiken blood donors honored



Shepard Community Blood Center Blood Program Coordinator Emily Sturkie honored the 2010 100 percent blood donors in Aiken County with a luncheon. Congratulations to honorees Gary Armstrong, Arthur Sanders and Sugar Sugar of the Aiken facility and Tomel O'Neal, Daniel Argo and Dorothy Hutto of the Wagener facility. Thank you to all SCDOT employees who give selflessly to our surrounding communities in need of blood. Shown above, from left, are: Gary Armstrong, Tomel O'Neal, Arthur Sanders and Daniel Argo.

Meet Janet R. Crosby



Name: Janet R. Crosby
Title: Trades Specialist II
Location: Hampton Maintenance
Service: 3½ years

Janet Crosby works as a Trades Specialist II on the mowing crew and has recently obtained her Third Party Tester certification. Crosby and husband, Harold, of 5 years, have two daughters and one son. They are members of Hopewell Baptist Church in Hampton. Crosby enjoys the outdoors, helping people and spending time with her family.

Two retire from Orangeburg Maintenance



A retirement dinner was held in honor of Robert Harrington (above, left) and Thomas "Striker" Troutman (above, right) by fellow Orangeburg Maintenance employees and Resident Maintenance Engineer David Brandyburg on March 4.

After retiring with 20 years of service from the New York

Department of Corrections, Harrington came to SCDOT in 1990. He operated the pipe truck district-wide. Harrington will retire March 31 with 20 years of service.

Troutman came to SCDOT in 1983. He dedicated his 28 years to the district paving crew. Troutman will retire April 31.

VIEWPOINTS

By Robert J. St. Onge Jr.
Secretary of Transportation

By the time you read this addition of the "Connector" I will have been in position as your Secretary of Transportation for about 60 days. I have focused my time on getting to know SCDOT and our many teammates.

I have visited with leaders in other state agencies, with our friends in USDOT, with legislators, with our congressional delegation in Washington, with county and city leaders and with many others.

Most importantly, I have been fully engaged with getting to know YOU. I have visited most of the offices in SCDOT headquarters here in Columbia, and by the time you read this I will have visited five of our district offices and about half of our county teams. By the end of June I hope to have visited with all of you.

These visits are key to my developing a clear understanding of your mission and the challenges we face together.

My first impressions are very positive! We have a professional cadre of dedicated public servants in SCDOT and that observation is reinforced with every visit I make. The condition of our roads and bridges is tremendously important to the citizens of South Carolina. Our roads "define the neighborhood!" I was told when first appointed and it is true. Our transportation infrastructure also defines South Carolina to our current employers and to prospective businesses considering moving into our



Richland Maintenance Engineer Tony Magwood, left, shows 'before' photos of a drainage project on Millwood Avenue to Transportation Secretary Robert J. St. Onge Jr. during his visit to Richland Maintenance.

state. Commerce of all types and job creation are thus linked to the condition of our highways.

My top priority is the preservation of our highway system. Despite our modest size of population (25th) and land mass (29th), South Carolina has the fourth largest state highway system in America. We must work hard in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration and our teammates at city and county levels to keep our roads and bridges in the best possible condition.

Our task is daunting but not impossible.

It is my job to fight for the resources you need to accomplish your important tasks. That includes working to ensure we have the people, equipment, and facilities necessary for success. I want to give the citizens of our state the best value for their transportation tax dollar, thus I am open to your suggestions for process improvements, efficiencies, and economies.

My vision for SCDOT includes these principles which address our organization's character. SCDOT must:

- Be an organization recognized for following the laws and policies that direct our efforts. We will have a well-earned reputation for adhering to the highest ethical standards with emphasis on fairness and civility, and for exercising sound environmental stewardship and good judgment.

- Be an organization known for prompt and courteous service and response to our customers: the people of SC and the elected officials and public employees who serve them. We will treat all employees and citizens of this state with dignity and respect.

- Be an organization recognized for careful and prudent stewardship of the taxpayer dollars that are provided to us for construction and maintenance of our highways and bridges.

Lastly, we must have an uncompromising commitment to SAFETY in everything we do. On April 6, tragedy struck in Greenville as our maintenance crewman, Noah Lark, was killed by a motorist while on a roadside job. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and co-workers. May he rest in peace. **One death is too many. Safety first!**

I look forward to meeting you and working with you on SCDOT's critical mission.

SAFETY ALERT FOR SCDOT EMPLOYEES

April 7, 2011

Re: Work Zone Crash Claims
the Life of SCDOT
Employee Noah Lark

It is with deep sadness that we report to you an employee fatality due to a motor vehicle crash. Noah Lark, age 60, was injured on foot as he was struck by a vehicle while in a work zone repairing pot holes on Laurens Road in the city of Greenville on the morning of April 6, 2011. Mr. Lark died later that afternoon at Greenville Memorial Hospital. He came to work for SCDOT in July of 2008. He was assigned to Greenville Maintenance. His supervisors indicated that he was an employee who always made safety a priority while on the job. Mr. Lark leaves behind his wife Kathy, two daughters and five grandchildren.

The Greenville Police have charged a 29-year-old Greenville woman with Felony DUI. Police say the driver was impaired by a substance other than alcohol.

We ask that all supervisors please inform your employees of this loss of an outstanding and dedicated co-worker. Please review safety procedures for working on or near the roadway with your employees. Please be certain that your employees are wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment at all times. Remind employees to look out for one another and to work facing traffic. With the tremendous increase in traffic on South Carolina's highways over the last few years and the increasing number of aggressive and inattentive drivers, our employees face some highly dangerous working conditions, as is evident by this tragedy. We must take every possible means to protect our employees. This includes following sound safety practices and further strengthening our efforts to improve driver attitudes and behaviors.

You can make a difference, and working together we can prevent another tragic loss to our SCDOT family. Stay alert on the job; look out for yourself and for other co-workers. Please keep Mr. Lark's family and his co-workers in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

Robert J. St. Onge, Jr.
Secretary of Transportation

John V. Walsh
Deputy Secretary for Engineering



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

St. Onge, center, talks with Richland Resident Construction Engineer Alan Thompson, left, and Assistant Richland Resident Construction Engineer Chris Kelly, right, at the Broad River Road bridge replacement project in Columbia.

THE CONNECTOR

VOLUME XXIV NO. I

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

WINTER 2011

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A letter we liked

Dear District 6 Engineering Administrator
Robert T. Clark:

This letter is to recognize the heroic performance of both Lethaniel Gathers and Julius Washington on Jan. 19, 2011. Please make sure this letter gets to the correct person who can recognize these gentlemen in a special way.

On the afternoon of Jan. 19, 2011, Mr.

Gathers and Mr. Washington pulled me from my wrecked car on Toogoodoo Road. My car was flipped upside down in the marsh (mud). The door was jammed, the car would not unlock and I was hung in my seatbelt. They arrived at the scene immediately after the accident; after much effort they finally got the door unlocked and released my seatbelt. After getting the jammed doors open, they helped

me from my car to safety. During all this, they kept their cool and encouraged me not to panic. All this occurred in the marsh mud!

What WONDERFUL and KIND gentlemen. Thank you for recognizing these brave rescuers! I am forever appreciative of their efforts.

Mary Kelley
Edisto Beach, SC

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SCDOT films public transportation video

The SCDOT Office of Intermodal and Freight Programs partnered with the Transportation Association of South Carolina (TASC) to shoot a video promoting the use of public transportation. Part of the 'Public Transportation Takes Us There' video was shot on March 5 by SCDOT Videographer Peter Tarpley and a hired crew. Shots were staged on buses as well as from different angles around moving buses at the SC Criminal Justice Academy's driving range. Shown here, Tarpley (black hat, right) watches as a bus passes under his camera as the crew watches.

CODY CROUCH/THE CONNECTOR

SCDOT