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SCDOT

ARRA puts highway workers back to work



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

An American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) sign is posted along SC-267 where contractors, SCDOT Construction and SCDOT Maintenance employees are working on a repaving project. Holly Hill Maintenance employees working on the project are Jeff Ashby and Holman Bookhar and Orangeburg Construction inspectors Michelle Lambright and Tiffany Gray.

By Pete Poore
and Bob Kudelka

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act signed into law on Feb. 17, 2009, by President Obama allocated \$463 million for highways and bridges in South Carolina and \$41 million for mass transit programs.

The law requires that each state must sub-allocate 30 percent of its highway funding for local programs, and 3 percent for enhancements.

The SCDOT Commission approved the staff recommendation of using ARRA funds in four categories; Resurfacing,

Interstate Maintenance, Bridge Replacements, and Safety and Traffic Projects. The Commission approved using the required funding for enhancements for sidewalk projects in all seven SCDOT Engineering Districts.

The Commission completed the approval of all projects covered by the \$463 million in ARRA funds at its June 2009 meeting. In addition, SCDOT staff met the deadline of obligating the percentage of funds mandated by the law for projects that were "shovel-ready" within 120 days.

The highway stimulus program in South Carolina reached a key milestone at 10 a.m. on April 14.

In a small conference room on the first floor of Headquarters, Roberta Mack, Contracts Administrator at SCDOT, read aloud the apparent low bids in the first bid letting made up of stimulus money.

This was what job-hungry contractors had been waiting for.

"It went smoothly, as expected," said Construction Engineer Charles Eleazer after all the winning bids were read. "We're eager to get started."

According to preliminary results, the apparent winning bids for the initial 11 contracts totaled \$51.3 million. This was 21 percent below estimates from SCDOT engineers.

After beginning on that April morning, bid lettings for stimulus projects continued throughout the spring and were to continue through late summer or early fall.

They ushered in a wave of bridges to be built, pavement markers and signal heads to be installed, intersections to be made safer and resurfacings to smooth over rough rides.

The contracts were the result of hard work of several areas of SCDOT, from Districts to Headquarters.

Bid packages were prepared by Preconstruction, Traffic Engi-

See ARRA page 3

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Eddie Adams selected as new Commissioner for 3rd Congressional District



Eddie Adams

Eddie Adams, the newly elected South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) Commissioner representing the 3rd Congressional District, attended his first SCDOT Commission meeting on June 18 in Columbia. Adams succeeds Charles Dalton.

Adams' district covers 668,000 people in 10 counties.

He was elected by lawmakers to represent the 3rd Congressional District after four other qualified candidates dropped out of the race, he said. He is the president of Lowry

Oil Company and an Oconee County Republican Party official.

State senators and representatives from Abbeville, Aiken, Anderson, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Oconee, Pickens and Saluda counties voted for Adams on June 16.

Rep. Brian White, R-Anderson, said the vote was unanimous.

"Adams, with his background, will do a great job for us throughout the 3rd Congressional District," White said.

The Transportation Commission includes

seven members, one from each of the state's six congressional districts and an at-large member appointed by the governor. The commission handles mass transit and highway issues such as the already-approved East/West Connector and the possible expansion of U.S. 29, both in Anderson.

Adams said he has a lot of things to do to secure better transportation throughout the 3rd District and the state.

The term that Adams, who is also the husband of 10th Judicial Circuit Solicitor Chrissy Adams, will fill ends Feb. 15, 2012.

Reduced travel, training expenditures provide significant agency savings

The continued emphasis on cost savings begun by Secretary Limehouse in 2007 has resulted in significant savings in SCDOT's travel and training

expenses. The spending in this category has decreased by more than half during a four-year period between March 2005 and March 2009. The majority of the savings

were realized in the period between March 2007 and March 2009.

Travel and training costs for the nine-month period between July 1, 2004 and March 2005 totaled \$779,000. The expenses for the nine-month period between July 1, 2008 and March 2009 have dropped to \$279,000. A slight uptick occurred between July 1, 2007 and March 2008, however that 8.8 percent increase was due to the training and certification requirements for engineers and inspectors. Certification made up 84 percent of the costs. The over-

all savings for the five-year period ending in March 2009 is 54 percent.

Secretary Limehouse said cost savings puts SCDOT's dollars to better use.

"Our goal in reducing expenses is to put more of our resources into highways and bridges which will better serve the people of South Carolina. We are working hard to get our highway system back on schedule for regular maintenance, and the more funding we can create internally will help us get there," said Limehouse.

The Connector

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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H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr. is the South Carolina Secretary of Transportation.



South Carolina Department of Transportation Commission



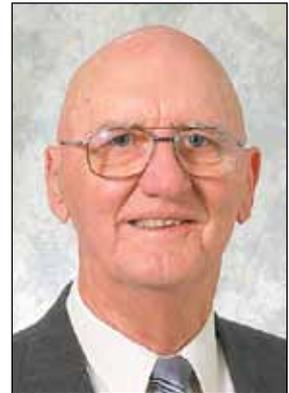
Daniel H. Isaac Jr.
1st Congressional District



Henry H. Taylor
2nd Congressional District



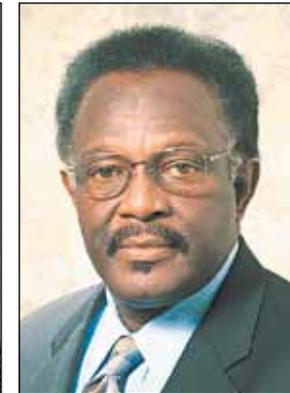
Eddie Adams
3rd Congressional District



F. Hugh Atkins
4th Congressional District



Sarah B. Nuckles
5th Congressional District



Marvin Stevenson
6th Congressional District



Tee Hooper
Commissioner At-Large

Stimulus Showing Early Results

By Bob Kudelka

Richard Koski, a road foreman with Rea Contracting, has seen good times and bad in his 36 years in the highway construction business.

But the last few years have been about as lean as he can remember.

"It's been challenging, especially in the last couple of years with DOT not having a lot of work and we had to lay off a bunch of good people," Koski said.

Thanks to the early stimulus projects put out for bid by SCDOT in the spring, the ripple effects were already beginning to show on job sites in South Carolina.

For example, by mid-July Rea Contracting's SC Division had hired 55 employees, including those laid off in 2007 and 2008, as well as new hires, said Superintendent Lee Barrack.

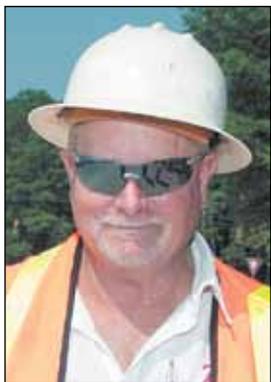
"Just now because of the stimulus we have been hiring back," Barrack said before a preconstruction meeting at SCDOT's District 1 office. "It's creating more work for us and more jobs."

Lean times due to the recession have meant deep cuts in many segments of the transportation industry.

At Rea Contracting, job losses hit skilled workers and unskilled workers; recent hires and even workers with up to 15 years experience.

"That's kind of tough when you lay off somebody that you worked off that long

and became friends and you have to tell them, 'We're sorry but we don't have any work and we have to lay you off,'" Koski said. "A lot of them were very good workers. It was no fault of theirs that they lost their jobs but the work just wasn't there. We're glad to be able to put them back to work."



Richard Koski

Without the stimulus, Barrack said "we would probably still be at the workload at the beginning of the year. We were working four maybe five days a week to get the work done but now we're having to work six and seven."

Barrack said employees who had been let go were eager to come back.

"They were ecstatic," Barrack said. "They were ready to come back to work. They had been calling us anyway and we told them as soon as we get the workload back we would call them back. They were all happy."

"I'm just glad to be back working," said Ray Robinson, who first joined Rea Contracting in the early 1990s and had been laid off for six months. "It's good to be working."

Robinson said he spent the six months "looking for work and nobody was hiring."

Koski was optimistic as he oversaw a job applying roller-compacted concrete on West Beltline Boulevard, about a mile away from Williams-Brice Stadium in Columbia.

"It's looking a lot better than it has been in the last couple of years," Koski said. "Believe me, I've been working real hard lately. And I'd rather be working hard than not working at all."



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Ray Robinson uses the sweeper on a project on West Beltline Boulevard. Robinson is one of 55 new or rehired Rea Contracting employees.

ARRA from page 1

engineering and the District offices, and were then handed off to employees at the SCDOT Construction office, said Director Danny Shealy.

"Once the bid package is together, we group them together for our lettings," Shealy said.

Shealy said the lettings were deliberately spread out to get the best bids possible.

"If we put them all in one letting, let's say we had 50 projects in a letting, and they bid on a half-dozen of them, they may get more work than they can handle in one time," Shealy said. "On the other hand, if they don't get any projects then they missed out on that opportunity for all 50 projects."

"If we break them up into 25 projects this week and two weeks later we have 25 other projects, if they don't get any at the first letting maybe they can sharpen their pencils and go after some in the next letting. We split them up and it gives the contractor a little more opportunity to give us a better bid."

Once the letting is held and the bids are opened, the Construction office reviews the bids and makes recommendations to the Deputy Secretary for Engineering and the Secretary of Transportation

Normally, the next step is to send the recommendations to the Commission to execute the projects. However, to save valuable time, the Commission granted authority to the Secretary of Transportation to execute the ARRA projects, Shealy said.

"We want these projects under way and people working on them," Shealy said. "This saves about three to four weeks."

Shealy said the ARRA program has doubled the workload handled by his staff of 39 in Headquarters and 100 at



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Contracts Administrator Roberta Mack reads the apparent low bids during a bid letting at SCDOT.

the Office of Materials and Research on Shop Road. The additional projects not only mean more bid lettings, but more materials to be sampled and tested.

"Normally our construction program is \$450 million to \$500 million a year," Shealy said. "The stimulus is \$469 million."

On top of that, there are several counties with sales tax programs that are being managed by SCDOT. These include York, Horry, Beaufort, Florence, Charleston, Jasper and Berkeley counties.

"With that addition, we are probably going to be about the same as the peak of the 27 in 7 program, which was over \$1 billion worth of work under contract," Shealy said.

The Construction office sends detailed monthly reports to FHWA for oversight of the ARRA program. A few temporary employees have been hired to help with the reports, Shealy said.

On the Maintenance side, Director Jim Feda said about \$180 million in ARRA funds has been allocated by the Commission for pavement improvement.

"We've been pretty much non-stop since last fall in preparing projects. I see that continuing the rest of this year," Feda said. "Normally we're looking at \$80 million in federal aid resurfacing, \$50 million in non-federal aid, and \$25 million in preservation (chip seal, full depth patching)."

"We have all that plus another \$180 million (in stimulus)," Feda said.

Maintenance and Construction employees in the Districts have been busy assessing roads in preparation for bidding.

"They look at pavement design, how much asphalt is needed, how much full depth patching - someone has to count up the number of driveways, interchanges," Feda said. "There's a lot of work that goes into putting it into the contract bid estimating system. It prints out documents necessary for a contractor to bid on and complete the project."

"I know a lot of hard work was done by the field and by my staff in a short time period in order to get these projects put together, and I appreciate that," Feda said.

With the added work to the state's roads, Feda said he ideally would like to see the level of pavement service rise from an "F" to a "C," but he realistically expects it to increase to a "D."

"We're still not where we want to be," Feda said. "We have been able to make improvements in the level of service provided in other areas, such as pavement markings and signs."

"Hopefully with the stimulus projects, we should be seeing an improvement in the condition of our pavement," Feda said. "People should be driving over better roads. We still need a lot more money for our pavements, but this should start to slow or stop the decline in the next year or two."

Tee Hooper, Charles E. Dalton honored for service on the SCDOT Commission

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) Commission on May 21 honored two outgoing Commission members, **Tee Hooper** and **Charles E. Dalton**, for their service to the state of South Carolina.

Hooper, of Greenville, has served as a member of the SCDOT Commission since April 2003, appointed by Governor

Mark Sanford. He served as Commission Chairman from May 2003 until July 2007.

Governor Sanford attended the Commission meeting, surprising Hooper and awarding him the Order of the Palmetto, the state's highest civilian honor.

Sanford noted Hooper's efforts to help make SCDOT a more accountable state agency and described him as a person of

integrity with "incredible intensity and competitiveness."

Hooper is the chief executive officer of General Wholesale Distributors, LLC, a Trane HVAC distributor in the state of South Carolina, and is also chairman of the board of FGP International Inc., an executive and temporary placement service company, headquartered in Greenville.

Hooper serves on the Greenville First Bank Board, and was formerly a director of Peregrine Energy, Inc., an energy management company. Hooper was the president of Modern Office Machines/ IKON Office Solutions in Greenville, from 1982 through 2001.

Hooper graduated from The Citadel in 1969 with a degree in business administration, and received a master in business administration from the University of South Carolina in 1971. He was elected to The Citadel Athletic Hall of Fame in 1982 for his achievements in basketball and tennis.

Dalton has served on the Commission and represented the 3rd Congressional District since elected by the Legislative Delegation in March 2008.

"You have been a gentleman in every sense of the word," Commission Chairman F. Hugh Atkins said to Dalton, thanking him for his service.

Dalton stepped down after a change in residency from Easley to Greenville County, which is in the 4th Congressional District. He is President and CEO of Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative, Inc., a position he has held since 1982. He is a graduate of Clemson Uni-



SCDOT Commission Chairman F. Hugh Atkins, right, presents a resolution to Commissioner Charles E. Dalton, left, for his service on the SCDOT Commission. Dalton was given the award on May 21 during Dalton's last meeting as an SCDOT Commissioner.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

SCDOT Commissioner Tee Hooper, left, is presented the state's highest honor, the Order of the Palmetto, for his service to South Carolina by Governor Mark Sanford. The award was presented during the May 21 SCDOT Commission Meeting. From left are: Commissioner Hooper, his wife, Sherry, and Governor Sanford.

versity with a BS in Industrial Management.

He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Electric Cooperatives of S.C., the Board of Directors of the Peoples Bancorporation and the Board of Directors of the Bank of Anderson. Dalton is also a member of the Greenville Rotary Club, the Better Business Bureau of the Foothills, and the Greater Greenville Chamber of Commerce. He is Secretary of Clemson University's IPTAY

Board of Directors.

Dalton is a member of the Board of Directors of Cannon Memorial Hospital and is on the Greenville American Red Cross board. He also serves or has served on numerous other economic development and charitable boards. A former member of Pickens City Council, Dalton served on the S.C. Highway Commission from 1979-1983, and again from 1987-1991. He was chairman in 1983 and 1991.

Commission approves Papermill Road bridge to help industry in Florence County

Acting on a motion from Commissioner Marvin Stevenson, the SCDOT Commission approved replacing the bridge on Papermill Road over Jefferies Creek in Florence County.

Stevenson, who represents the 6th Congressional District, made the motion during the June 18, 2009, Commission meeting in Columbia.

"This bridge replacement is an economic development project that will help businesses and jobs in this area of

Florence County," Stevenson said. "I am very thankful to my colleagues on the Commission for seeing the urgency in this project, making it a priority and giving unanimous approval to my motion."

Stevenson said the bridge on S-21-24 (Papermill Road) over Jefferies Creek has been a significant concern in the past few months. The bridge serves local industry but was load restricted in the fall of 2008. This has forced trucks exceeding the load restriction to detour nearly 11 miles,

causing increased costs for the company and consumers.

In addition to more than 200 trucks servicing the Smurfit-Stone Paper Co., another company is planning a battery recycling center just north of this area with reportedly 250 new jobs. This is expected to add to the daily traffic on the Papermill Road bridge.

The bridge was originally built in 1962 and is classified as "structurally deficient." Estimates for the project are in excess of \$1 million.

It's back to nature for old Welcome Center property in Allendale County

By Bob Kudelka

Allendale County has begun initial steps to convert an old Welcome Center and surrounding land into a scenic walking trail to lead to the nearby Savannah River.

The SCDOT Commission voted in March to convey to Allendale County the abandoned Welcome Center on US 301 including approximately 15 acres for use as an educational greenway.

"I think the County Council and community were just delighted that they gave it to us," said Allendale County Council Chairman Bill Robinson. "It's a good gift and we will make good use of it, not only for Allendale County but for any citizen in the state or tourists to have a place to be part of nature."

Robinson said in late June that designers had begun developing plans for the trail and were expected to come back with ideas within the next two months.

"It's going to be pretty neat to see what our designers come up with in terms of trying to fully develop the trail," Robinson said. "We see the trail, along with the welcome center, as becoming an educational tool for the community."

Robinson envisions the trail as a place for birdwatchers and anyone wishing to explore nature. The trail would offer a great view of the river, which is about 3 miles through swampland from the Welcome Center.

Located near the South Carolina/Georgia state line, the Welcome Center has been closed since 2001.

Built in 1969, the facility's use declined significantly over the years after Interstate 95 replaced US 301 as a main route of travel through South Carolina.

At the time of its closure, the Welcome Center was the least visited Welcome Center in the state with 25,620 annual visitors (compared to an average of 181,311 visitors at the other centers).

The conveyance was free in exchange for the county assuming all liability and maintenance



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

The old Welcome Center on US 301 in Allendale County was closed in 2001. SCDOT has given the facility to Allendale County for the development of an educational greenway.

of the old right of way of US Route 301 and the improvements.

"I am very pleased that SCDOT has taken this action to encourage educational and economic development in Allendale County," said SCDOT Commissioner Henry Taylor, representing the 2nd Congressional District. "This is another opportunity to provide alternative transportation through walking and biking trails, which can attract tourism to the state and improve the quality of life for South Carolinians."

Jim Feda, SCDOT Director of Maintenance, said the conveyance is a "win-win" situation for all involved.

"We had no longer had a need for it," Feda said. "At least now, it will hopefully get some good use. U.S. 301 is no longer this busy gateway into South Carolina and there was no need to have a Welcome Center there. I'm glad they have plans for it and they'll be able to put it to good use. I think it's a win-win situation for everybody."



Picnic facilities and parking are available on the 15-acre site. Plans for the site also include trails to the nearby Savannah River.

Robinson said the serene setting has already attracted people such as a judge from Upstate New York.

"It was amazing to hear him

say that he and his wife had stopped on their way from Florida to explore the area," Robinson said. "He wants to come back and help, and we envision volunteers

like that to help keep costs down.

"We're excited," he said. "We don't have a state park in Allendale County. This would be like our state park."

Transportation Secretary outlines critical issues for SC delegation

Limehouse highlights areas of concern related to the Authorization bill

Transportation Secretary H.B. “Buck” Limehouse Jr. sent a letter during the last week of June to all members of the South Carolina Congressional delegation concerning the highway Authorization bill that is being drafted by the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee.

Secretary Limehouse discussed South Carolina’s role as a “donor state” whereby the state receives less than the actual revenue collected from federal fuel taxes generated in the state, as well as a host of other issues in the legislation that could impact South Carolina.

Secretary Limehouse’s complete letter to the delegation follows:

June 26, 2009

The Honorable James E. Clyburn
United States House of Representatives
2135 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Transportation Reauthorization Issues

Dear Congressman Clyburn:

America has many transportation challenges. I am pleased that you represent our state and are helping with reauthorization. It is vital that the South Carolina Congressional Delegation be fully informed of the issues we consider most important to the future of transportation in the Palmetto State. The purpose of this letter is to outline the major issues that are important to our state and to suggest that we schedule a meeting in DC in July to review these items and other issues in person.

Minimum Guarantee/Equity Bonus:

This is commonly referred to as the “Donor State” issue. We must preserve or enhance the 92% minimum rate of return in the highway account of the Highway Trust Fund. Under current law (SAFETEA-LU), the “Equity Bonus” is intended to ensure that all states get at least 92% back in highway funds from the motor fuel taxes sent to Washington. The real number is about 88% because this rate of return is not guaranteed on all highway programs. We are now subsidizing the rest of the country at the rate of about \$100,000,000 per year. We believe that a minimum guaranteed rate of return should apply to all highway programs and the rate should be increased above the current 92% floor.

For Mass Transit programs, there is no “Equity Bonus.” In fact, South Carolina receives less than fifty cents on the dollar for revenues collected here and sent to Washington. If an additional fifteen percent of the nation’s highway funds are shifted to the Mass Transit account, as provided in the Oberstar/Mica Transportation Reauthorization bill, our state will become a greater donor than it is now. This means that we will subsidize the recipient states to the tune of \$635,000,000 over the next six years under the current formula. We believe that this shift of 15% (an additional 2.2¢ per gallon) is not in the best interest of South Carolina where most of our surface transportation needs to continue to be with highway capacity and system preservation. We also believe that a minimum guarantee is needed in the Mass Transit funding formula.

“It is vital that the South Carolina Congressional Delegation be fully informed of the issues we consider most important to the future of transportation in the Palmetto State.”

Earmarks

Much progress has been made in the selection process. Unlike past years, the earmarks we are seeing now are based on established priorities. This allows us to leverage formula dollars and put funding where it is needed. But, in the big scheme of things, earmarks have been a losing proposition for South Carolina. They are exempt from the Equity Bonus and we historically have not gotten a fair share. In fact, the SAFETEA-LU earmarks resulted in a \$180,000,000 loss between what we would have received by formula and what we actually received in earmarks. We believe that there should be a minimum guaranteed rate of return on earmarks and that the overall amount of funds earmarked should not exceed 5% of the total dollars authorized under the new bill.

Solvency of the Highway Trust Fund

It is my understanding that the Administration has suggested an 18-month interim transportation bill funded with current revenue sources. According to our calculations, the current revenues are about 20% below the authorized spending levels. This means that South Carolina would experience a decrease of about \$150,000,000 during the proposed 18-month period. To help put this in perspective, it is important to point out that the Construction Cost Index in South Carolina has grown nearly 60% in the last decade. We are fighting a losing battle and the sooner the federal

program is made solvent, the better off the country will be. We urge the delegation to work to protect the solvency of the Highway Trust Fund.

Size of the Program

The Oberstar/Mica bill calls for a 57% increase in transportation funding, plus the creation of a national transportation infrastructure bank. This sounds like a big increase, but it is actually less than the amount needed to account for inflation since the enactment of TEA-21 in 1996. We agree that the overall funding level needs to grow substantially to meet the nation’s pressing surface transportation needs, but we would urge you to support this growth only if South Carolina is ensured to get a fair rate of return from the tax revenues we send to Washington.

High Speed Rail (HSR)

There are two congressionally designated HSR corridors in South Carolina. These corridors are nationally significant and, while helpful for intra-state transportation in a limited sense, would be used primarily for the inter-state movement of passengers. We cannot move forward without substantial federal assistance. The Oberstar/Mica bill creates HSR funding through the infrastructure bank. We urge you to seek equity in the distribution of federal HSR funds.

Budgetary Firewalls

Most people consider motor fuel taxes to be “user fees.” Hence, federal budgetary firewalls have been created to protect those fees from being diverted. The Administration’s proposed 2010 Appropriations would have placed a portion of the highway funding under “budget authority” rather than “contract authority.” This would create a “use it or lose it” approach to highway funding that does not work well with multi-year planning as in the case of transportation programs. Transportation funding must be predictable and dependable. We urge you to protect the firewalls and support the continued “contract authority” approach to highway funding.

Interstate Construction Toll Pilot Program

The Oberstar/Mica bill eliminates several pilot programs, including the Interstate

System Construction Toll Pilot Program. Under SAFETEA-LU, South Carolina was one of three states authorized to establish a pilot program to use tolls as a source of funding for a new Interstate (federal law typically does not allow the tolling of Interstates). This pilot program is integral to the planning of I-73. In fact, it may be considered the cornerstone of the eventual financing of that project. It is important that the authority to toll I-73 be preserved under the authorization act.

Corridors of National Significance; Interstate Construction

Congress has designated fifteen new Interstate Highways across America in the last 25 years. Unfortunately, these federal projects have been stymied by a lack of federal funding. Two of these projects are located in South Carolina (I-73 and I-74). The Oberstar/Mica bill substantially increases funding for Projects of National Significance program, but there is no guarantee that our projects will receive funding. As it should be, these dollars are outside the regular funding formula. We would welcome this funding even if it required a higher match than the traditional 90/10 formula created in 1956. We encourage our delegation to work to secure Interstate funding for South Carolina.

Flexibility

All state highway systems and Mass Transit programs are not created equally. We encourage you to promote greater flexibility within each of these two programs.

There are several other items of interest or concern that I would like to discuss with you in person. For example, we are supportive of the Oberstar/Mica proposal for toll interoperability if it is done in a cost effective manner. Another concern we have is with the administrative requirements placed on local public agencies when administering small federal-aid projects such as Transportation Enhancements and Scenic Byway grants. Perhaps all projects under \$1,000,000 should be allowed to follow local procurement and construction standards rather than Title 23 requirements.

Please let me know if you have any questions or comments, or if you need any clarifications. You may contact me directly at (803) 737-1302. Otherwise, my office will be contacting you in the near future to set up a meeting to discuss the items outlined above.

Sincerely,

H. B. Limehouse Jr.
Secretary of Transportation

More than \$1 million

SCDOT settles claim against Marinex for McTeer Bridge damage

By Pete Poore

Transportation Secretary H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr. announced on April 22 that SCDOT had resolved its claim against Savannah Marine Service, Inc. and Marinex Construction Co. for the costs of repairing the J.E. McTeer Bridge on US 21 in downtown Beaufort.

The fixed span was damaged on April 26, 2007, when a Marinex crane being towed by a Savannah Marine Services tugboat hit the structure. SCDOT filed a claim of \$1.4 million to recover the repair costs. All parties involved agreed to a settlement of \$1,030,000.

SCDOT reacted quickly to the emergency situation when the incident occurred. SCDOT engineers in Columbia and the Lowcountry field offices rapidly determined the extent of the damage, which required replacement of all five of the large beams in the bridge deck. An emergency contract was issued in short order

that allowed the work to begin.

Two factors spurred the quick action. The McTeer Bridge is a vital transportation link between the mainland and the sea islands on a daily basis, but also serves as a vital connection in hurricane evacuation, and the 2007 hurricane season was approaching.

The contract called for the repairs to be completed by July 31, 2007.

Despite the extensive damage, SCDOT engineers determined that one lane of the bridge could be opened to traffic during peak periods while repairs were being made. Repair work was accelerated as much as possible. SCDOT traffic engineers worked with local law enforcement officials to reduce congestion.

The result was that SCDOT was able to reopen the bridge on June 19, which was five weeks ahead of schedule. The early opening also prevented traffic disruptions during the July 4th holiday, followed by the Water Festival, both of which are major



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Construction workers are lowered into place to remove a damaged beam as part of the repairs to the McTeer Bridge on May 18, 2007.

events in the Beaufort area.

Secretary Limehouse said SCDOT's rapid response to this emergency situation was simply a demonstration of the agency's commitment to the public. "It's our job to provide a safe highway

system for the people of South Carolina, and it's doubly important for us to respond as quickly as possible when bridges or highways are damaged and traffic is disrupted. When lives depended on SCDOT to get this bridge back

in service, we didn't take that responsibility lightly," he added.

Limehouse also noted that aggressively pursuing the costs of the repairs is also part of the agency's responsibility to the taxpayers.

SC Secretary of Transportation attends infrastructure meeting in Washington

Secretary Limehouse accepts invitation from White House Chief of Staff

Transportation Secretary H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr. attended a transportation forum in Washington, DC, on Feb. 11.

Limehouse was invited to the meeting by White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emmanuel.

All 50 state transportation agency heads were invited to meet with U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Secretary Ray LaHood and members of the White House staff to discuss critical issues related to transportation.

RIGHT: H.B. Limehouse and John Walsh (back row, center) pose with other state transportation agency leaders.





PHOTOGRAPHS BY CODY CROUCH/THE CONNECTOR
DILLON MAINTENANCE – FIRST PLACE



CHARLESTON MAINTENANCE



DORCHESTER MAINTENANCE



TRAFFIC ENGINEERING – SECOND PLACE



PATROL



RICHLAND MAINTENANCE – THIRD PLACE



ROAD DESIGN



2009 SCDOT SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT

SCDOT's annual softball tournament was held at Lexington County Recreation and Aging's new Pelion Sports Complex. If your office would like to participate next year, contact Michael Dennis at (803) 737-1445 or email him at Dennisma@scdot.org.

Spring Wellness Walk



Sisters Katie Spradley and Faye Shehan were among the group of SCDOT employees who participated in the annual Spring Wellness Walk at Riverfront Park on April 3. Free fruit, bagels and popcorn were given to those who used their lunch hour to exercise.



Susan Douglas, Debra Thompson and Christene Wright know that hydration is important during exercise. Free water was provided to participants in the walk.



Chad Rawls has made walking part of his exercise regime. Over the past three years, he has lost 125 pounds.



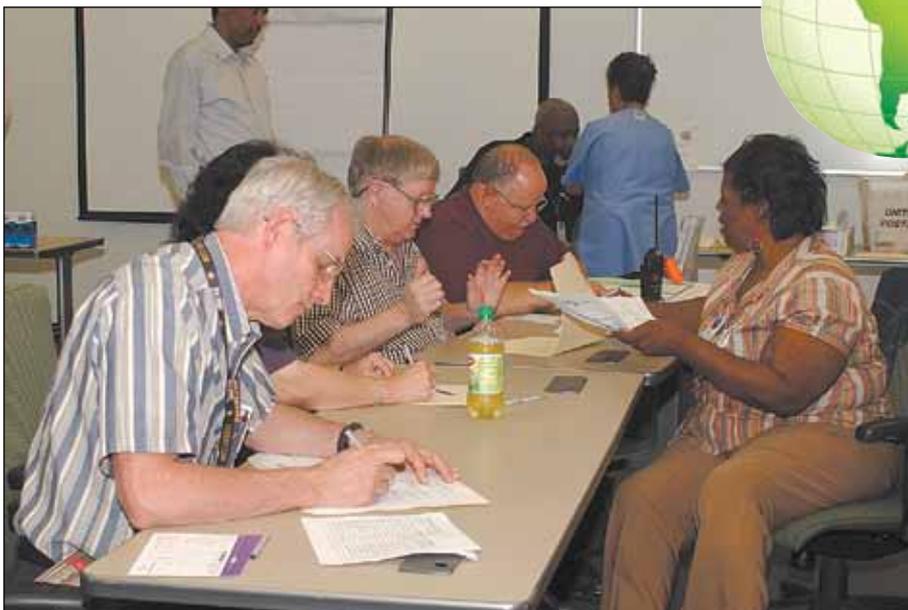
Robert Wiggs and Dale Thomas feel safe along the walk as they demonstrate what to do in an emergency.



Stephanie Aull enjoys tunes on her iPod during her walk.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Going green?



PHOTOGRAPHS BY CODY CROUCH/THE CONNECTOR

An Earth Fare exhibit was set up at SCDOT Headquarters on May 14. Employees learned ways to help save the environment and what companies are doing to be more eco-friendly.



Employees learn ways to make a difference

SCDOT awarded federal grant for innovative bridge project

Funds will help accelerate project in Horry County

By Pete Poore

Transportation Secretary H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr. has announced that the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) has received a grant from the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Innovative Bridge Research & Deployment program.

The \$300,000 grant will assist in the design phase for the replacement of five bridges on Red Bluff Road, a highway that crosses the Waccamaw River Swamp in Horry County. Local drivers typically use this road as a connector between SC 905 and SC 90. The funds will be used for preliminary engineering, the testing of pre-stressed piles and precast caps and the construction of the caps.

FHWA has made \$4.125 million available each year in this program involving bridge projects. South Carolina was one of 15 states that successfully applied for the

grants.

The replacement of these bridges will require a complete closing of Red Bluff Road, with three detours being employed. However, the technology being funded by the FHWA grant will allow SCDOT to accelerate the construction of the new bridges which will reduce the amount of time the road will be closed and the detours will be in place.

Secretary Limehouse said the amount of the grant may appear to be small, but it will significantly benefit the public. "Any grant that will save our tax-paying citizens any amount of money is worth pursuing. In the case of this project, the \$300,000 will also reduce the inconvenience that drivers in that area will experience and make new and safer bridges available to them much faster," said Limehouse.

Following the design and preliminary engineering process, this project is scheduled to go out for bids in the spring of 2011.



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

A series of bridges along Red Bluff Road in Horry County has received a grant from the Federal Highway Administration's Innovative Bridge Research and Deployment program. The \$300,000 grant will be used for preliminary engineering, pre-stressed pile testing, precast caps and the construction of the caps. Shown here is one of the five bridges that will be replaced.

ARRA funding to benefit urban, rural Mass Transit projects

By Pete Poore

South Carolina received approximately \$41 million under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) for mass transit projects, in addition to \$463 million in ARRA funds for highways. Forty percent of the mass transit funds, \$16.6 million, was

obligated for rural transit projects administered through SCDOT's Division of Mass Transit.

Some of the noteworthy projects that will be funded under the rural stimulus funds will include a \$2.5 million transit facility center in Clemson and a \$3.5 million transit facility in Orangeburg. The environmental studies and appraisals for these two

projects have been completed.

Thirty-eight percent, \$15.5 million, was allocated for transit projects in the large urbanized areas including Charleston, Columbia and Greenville.

Twenty-two percent, \$8.9 million, was allocated for transit projects in the small urbanized areas which include City of Anderson, City of Spartanburg,

City of Maudlin/Simpsonville, City of Florence, City Sumter and City of Myrtle Beach.

About 75 percent of the transit funds have been obligated, however, no disbursements of funds have been made. For additional information, please visit www.scdot.org and click the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act link.

Recruiting future engineers



CODY CROUCH/THE CONNECTOR

Matthew Kelly of Traffic Engineering, left, and Donna Price of Human Resources represented SCDOT at the June 5 'Girls in Science' career fair at the State Museum.

Bridge replacement contract saves 25 local jobs in Florence

By Pete Poore

The SCDOT Commission approved a bridge replacement contract with Florence Concrete Products, Inc. of Florence, SC, at its monthly meeting in Columbia June 18.

The contract valued at just over \$2 million calls for Florence Concrete Products to provide SCDOT maintenance units with 18 pre-stressed concrete replacement bridges that can be installed at locations in ten counties.

Florence Concrete Products is only one of four companies in the country that produces off-site concrete bridge replacements. Company President Sherry M. Jones said the SCDOT contract will allow the company to bring back some em-

ployees and work at full strength. "This contract will allow us to re-hire 25 workers who had been laid off. We will now be operating with a full shift of 100 employees who will be earning paychecks and benefits," said Jones.

Secretary Limehouse said this contract is a perfect scenario. "We have an ideal situation anytime we can award a contract to a company in our state that will improve our roads and bridges, and provide jobs for South Carolinians at the same time. This is a complete win," said Limehouse.

Florence Concrete Products will provide bridges that will be used in Abbeville, Colleton, Georgetown, Horry, Jasper, Laurens, Pickens, Spartanburg, Union and York Counties.

The Flower Man

Right plants can survive summer heat

By Ernest Jones

No matter where you live, everyone complains about the heat. But the truth is, summer heat is distinctly different around the country. The plants you grow must be able to cope with the conditions in your region. On those dog days of summer, can't you just imagine the flowers in your garden asking each other, "Hot enough for you?"

Of course, we don't need to ask. You can see our plants shriveling up and dying. But then, some annuals and perennials look as fresh as starched white linen, no matter how sweltering it gets.

Like us humans, plants cope not only with heat, but also with energy-draining drought, wind and humidity. Drought eventually kills plants, but at first they may merely grow more slowly, or their leaves might fade, or turn gray and soften. Heat makes things even worse, and in hot, arid areas, plants must have special physiology to survive.

Wind batters leaves, tearing and scarring them. Plants with better able to take it. But wind also desiccates (dries out) plants. Their roots can pull water from the soil fast enough to replace what's evaporating from their leaves.

Plants re-hydrate when wind dies down. But eventually their leaf edges turn brown. In windy areas, then, plants also need ways to handle water loss.

High humidity is particularly hard on plants because it fosters insects and diseases. Temperatures don't drop at night in areas where it's humid, so plants never recover from the stress of the heat.

In hot, humid areas, flower and foliage colors can fade. Plants may grow tall and lanky, and fall over. Southern gardeners wish there was a standard rating system for heat tolerance like there is for cold hardiness. But actually, it's the combination of heat and humidity that gets to plants.

In hot places, look for tough plants – ones that bloom all summer, need little care and don't succumb to pests. The following are a few you may have good luck with:

Coreopsis, butterfly weed, purple cone flower, globe amaranth, common yarrow, lantana, spider flower, California poppy, lavender cotton, cocks comb, Blackfoot daisy, golden fleece.

It's always possible that some of these plants may be right for your garden. To know for sure, call you county extension office. The agent should have plants. Your favorite nursery should be able to help too.



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

OTHER HOT SPOT FLOWERS

ANNUALS: Vince or periwinkle, redbeckia, cosmos, gay feather, gazania, cupflower, rose moss, creeping zinnia, pincushion flower, Mexican sunflower, wishbone, narrow-leaf zinnia.

PERENNIALS: Globe thistle, blanket flower, day lilies, rose mallow, blue fax, sun drops, Russian sage, balloon flower, Mexican hat, and stonecrop.



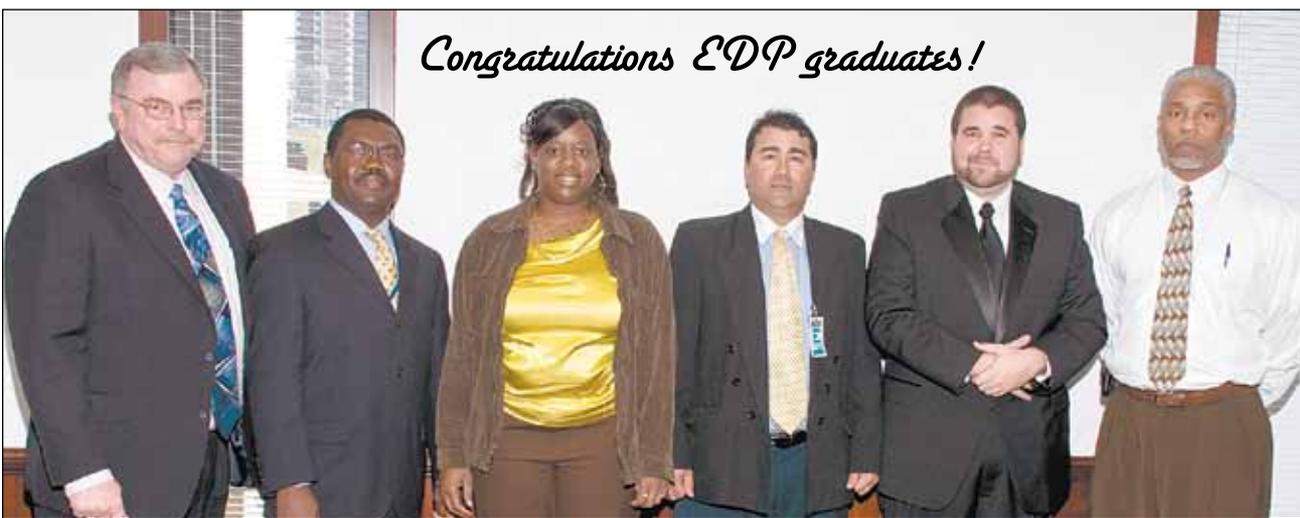
Holland completes leadership program

Katie Holland, P.E. an Assistant Program Manager in the Midlands Regional Production Group, was one of 33 promising leaders completing the 2009 Class of Leadership Lexington.

Leadership Lexington County (LLC) is a non-profit educational organization that offers a stimulating program which examines issues that face Lexington County. LLC is designed to serve the needs of the citizens by enhancing county-wide leadership and energizing community development.

LLC builds teams, provides leadership skills, and facilitates strategic planning and implementation tactics. By identifying community-wide issues, LLC alumni are armed with the knowledge to direct the future growth of this fast-growing county. This program is directed by a volunteer base advisory board composed of LLC alumni and community representatives.

The program is supported by Clemson University's Palmetto Leadership Program and Lexington County Planning for the Future. It brings together leadership disciplines from a range of local organizations, agencies and the private sector.



Congratulations EDP graduates!

ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

The latest Engineering Development Program graduates at SCDOT were recognized during the March 5 Engineering Directors' meeting. State Highway Engineer Tony Chapman, left, and EDP Program Administrator James Cassidy, right, congratulate the four graduates, from second left, John K. Kinloch, Kelly N. Bryant, Fouad M. Bouani and Casey H. McGrady.

Cutting grass

Interstate mowing frequency reduced to save \$1.3 million

By Bob Kudelka

In an effort to reduce costs, SCDOT is limiting the amount of mowing along interstate highways across South Carolina.

By reducing mowing on interstates, SCDOT will save up to \$1.3 million this year based on current contract prices.

Grass along shoulders and medians on interstate highways will be mowed three times this year. Historically, there has been an average of five mowing cycles from April 1 through December,

depending on conditions such as rainfall. Each mowing cycle costs \$684,000 statewide, according to current contracts.

This year's mowing season will run from April 1 to Oct. 31. The three cuttings will occur in early, mid- and late-season.

"The motoring public may notice the effects of reduced mowing, but there will be no adverse impact to highway safety," said Secretary of Transportation H.B. Limehouse Jr. "This is being done strictly to save money and stretch our dollars further."



A contractor mows along Interstate 77 on June 11 in Chester County. This summer's mowing schedule has changed to three cuts instead of five.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

State saves money through use of inmate labor

SCDOT has taken many innovative steps in recent years to reduce costs wherever possible. One of the older programs still in practice at the agency is the use of inmate labor. Minimum security inmates (SCDOT also employs minimum security inmates from medium-security prisons) have been employed at SCDOT units in 13 counties. These counties are able to supplement the workforce because S.C. Department of Corrections facilities are nearby.

On any given work

day, as many as 130 inmates could be working to pick up litter, mowing and trimming vegetation and performing clean up jobs at maintenance facilities. Each inmate is paid at a rate of \$15 per day. An SCDOT employee doing the same type of work averages \$120 per day. Based on these figures, the inmate labor program saves the taxpayers approximately \$1.9 million each year.

The Department of Corrections provides training for SCDOT employees before they begin supervising inmate work crews. In addition, all local law enforcement agencies are notified in writing in the counties where the work is being done by an inmate labor crew.

SCDOT and other government agencies that put inmates to work help the Corrections Department fulfill its mission to prepare inmates for their return to society with a good work ethic and willingness to give back to the community.

In the month of January 2009 alone, government agencies employed 551 inmates across the state, who worked 10,339 days. These agencies saved \$348,800, based on the \$15 per day, per inmate fee and associated transportation costs versus paying minimum wage for the labor.

2009 AASHTO scholarships assist engineering students

By Bob Kudelka

Secretary of Transportation H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr. approved the award of five engineering scholarships worth \$3,000 each to students interested in a career in the transportation field.

Funding for the scholarships originated from the Southeastern Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (SASHTO) to provide scholarships for students currently enrolled or accepted to attend a school of civil engineering.

Eligible students submitted an application, a copy of their transcript and a 500-word essay entitled "How I will use my engineering degree to impact transportation in America." The judges rated the essays on: quality and merit of ideas; details and practicality; and essay neatness and grammar.

Winners were:

- Matthew T. Kelly of Batesburg-Leesville is senior at the University of South Carolina. His plans are to pursue a civil engineering career in the transportation field. He is a son of Janet K. Feaster and stepson

of Larry Feaster. Janet Feaster works in the Planning Office at Headquarters.

- Stanley K. Dorn Jr. of Saluda will be a sophomore at the University of South Carolina. He plans to improve roads in South Carolina in a cost efficient way. He is a son of Debra and Stanley Dorn, Sr., who works in Greenwood County as a State Planner.

- Amanda Woodrum attends Clemson University and will be a junior in the fall. She plans to use her degree to make a difference and hopes to go as far as she can doing what she loves while helping someone. She is a daughter of Jo Ann and Walter G. Woodrum, III. Jo Ann Woodrum is Highway District 7's Engineering Administrator in Orangeburg.

- Philip Bethea of Latta will be a freshman in the fall at Clemson University. He is a son of Michael Eugene Bethea, who works in Traffic Engineering in Florence County. He plans to pursue a career related to transportation engineering.

- Richard Corley of Irmo will be a freshman in the fall at Clemson University. He is a son of Wayne Corley, who is a Hydraulic Design Manager and



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

SCDOT Commission Chairman F. Hugh Atkins, left, presents \$3000 SCDOT Scholarship checks to, from second left, Amanda Woodrum, Matthew Kelly, Stanley K. Dorn Jr., Richard Corley and Philip Bethea during the May 21, 2009, SCDOT Commission Meeting. Funding for the scholarships was provided by the Southeastern Association of State Transportation Officials, of which South Carolina is a member.

works at SCDOT headquarters. He plans to put practical design into practice.

The students attended the May Commission meeting in Colum-

bia.

"SCDOT has a history of supporting employees with a scholarship program for their children attending college," said Commis-

sion Chairman F. Hugh Atkins.

Scholarship winners were presented with large-sized checks and posed for photos with the Commission.

Annual Fishing Tournament



1st David Settle (Retired SCDOT)

Travis Parrish
Batesburg - 20.83 Lbs.
Also had Big Bass @ 5.01 lbs

2nd Ashley Lindler
Johnny Lindler
20.14 lbs

3rd Jackie Dorn of Saluda Maintenance
Sean Anderson of Batesburg
19.81 lbs

Small Bass
Lucas Robertson of Saluda Maintenance
Charles "Chuck" Long
0.98 lbs

13 Teams
45 Bass Weighed in
133 lbs. Total

SCDOT intern Patrick Holstad studies abroad with scholarship

The University of South Carolina awarded a Critical Language Scholarship to Patrick Holstad for intensive language study this summer.

The scholarship allows him to study abroad through a program sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and is administered by the Council of American Overseas Research Centers.

The scholarships are part of the U.S. government interagency effort to expand the number of Americans studying and mastering critical need foreign languages.

Holstad, an International Studies major who will graduate from USC in 2010, will be studying Russian at Astrakhan State University in Astrakhan, Russia.

He is a member of Army ROTC. He will commission as Second Lieutenant in the US Army upon graduation in 2010.

He hopes that this scholarship will enable him to further his study of the Russian language and pursue a career in Eastern European affairs and Slavic linguistics.

Holstad worked in the Contract Program Services office as an intern from May 2006 to May



Patrick Holstad

2009.

He is the son of Cheryl D. Patrick of Procurement.

Adopt-A-Highway Annual Awards Ceremony

Recycling Initiative Award



Carlton Bridges
Cherokee County



Barbara Clinton
York County



Heidi Johnson
Richland/Lexington
Counties



Sandra Langley
Aiken County

2008 Service Awards



Delia Caskey
Jasper County
5 Years



Melissa Rowell
Allendale County
5 Years



Thomas E. Fore III
Florence County
15 Years



Billy Nowlen
Kershaw County
Longevity Award

2008 Achievement Awards

**Carlton
Bridges**

**Barbara
Clinton**

**Heidi
Johnson**

**Sandra
Langley**



Sandra Arrington
Spartanburg County



Denise Brown
Anderson County



J.P. Catoe
Lancaster County



Angela Crouch
Charleston County

2008 AAH Group of the Year



SCDOT Commissioner Sarah Nuckles, left, and SCDOT Deputy Director of Finance and Administration Debra Rountree present the top honor for Statewide Outstanding Adopt-A-Highway Group to members of the Shady Grove United Methodist Men. From left are: Nuckles, Rountree, Willie Daniels, Edward Johnson, Edward Dawkins, James Smith, Walter Jones, James Jones, Joseph Mack, Thomas Johnson, Assistant Dorchester Resident Maintenance Engineer Michael Popielarz and Dorchester AAH Coordinator Jennifer Gruber.

COORDINATOR OF THE YEAR

Heidi Johnson
Lexington/Richland
First Place

Erin Slaugh
Sumter County
Second Place

Mary Prince
Orangeburg County
Third Place

ENGINEER OF THE YEAR

Bobby Patterson
Anderson County
First Place

Lorainne Williams
Allendale County
Second Place

Terry Tucker
Lexington County
Third Place

ALSO HONORED

Mike Jackson
Marion County
Recycling
Initiative Award

Bunny McKenzie
Williamsburg
County
Service Award
5 Years

2009 Community Health Charities Campaign

Employees raise money at two events

During the 2009 Community Health Charities, SCDOT raised \$9,547.00.

Volunteers, led by Lisa Vining, held two events to raise the money.

On April 2, SCDOT employees at headquarters enjoyed a Chic-Fil-A luncheon. During the lunch-time event, 250 chicken sandwiches, potato chips and sodas were sold.

Orders were also taken for insulated Tervis tumblers to raise money for the campaign. State

college and university logos were offered for sale. Tumblers with the South Carolina palmetto state logo were also available for purchase.

If you're interested in volunteering for next year's campaign, contact Lisa Vining at 803-737-1058 or email her at ViningLL@scdot.org.



Community Health Charities volunteers, from left, Margaret Oswald, Lisa Vining, Angela Hoyle, Gloria Thomas, Dale Wagoner and Viola Covington pose after serving the last Chick-Fil-A sandwich.

ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Assets Management

SCDOT energy plan

Using less energy to save our resources

By Carl Chase Jr., CPM
Assets Management Director

A major goal of the SCDOT Strategic Plan is RESOURCES and a key objective is “Identify and Implement twenty-five new areas where resources can be measured and streamlined to save costs agency-wide.”

We consume a lot of energy and spend a great amount of the taxpayers money in the performance of our mission.

The Department’s mission includes designing, constructing and maintaining the fourth largest state maintained road system in the country. SCDOT maintains over 42,000 miles of road including 900 miles of the interstate highway system.

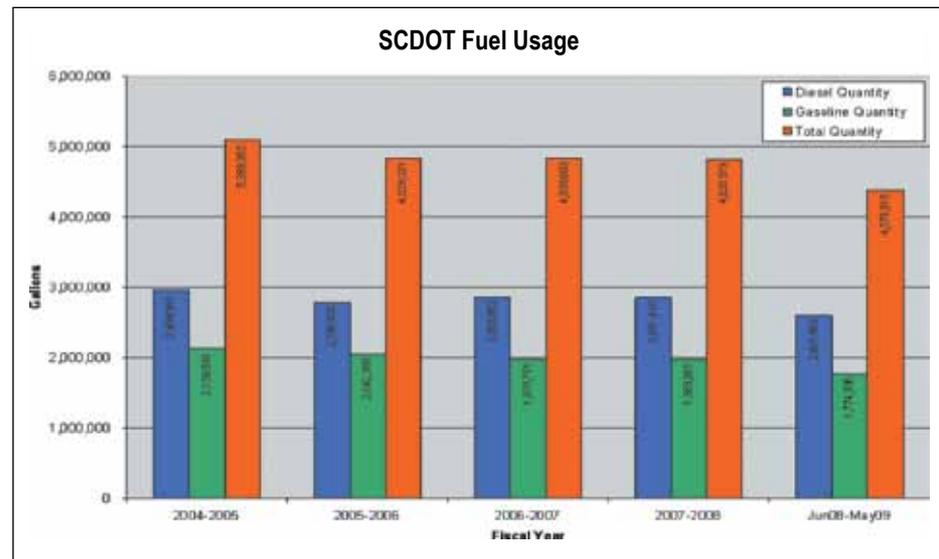
All major road projects currently under way and programmed for the future include 110 miles of new sidewalk and 64 miles of bicycle lanes.

The SCDOT Strategic Plan governs the use of resources that includes the consumption and conservation of all types of energy.

SCDOT has approximately 800 buildings of which 170 are occupied by people. Those not occupied include salt storage sheds, hub buildings, picnic shelters and vending facilities located at rest areas and welcome centers and some section sheds that are used only for storage.

SCDOT has a large computer network deployed statewide with its central server network located in Columbia, South Carolina. This server network includes the processing and storage of data and video from approximately 300 cameras across the state are part of the Intelligent Transportation System. The Department has over 4000 personal computers in use.

The Department operates approximately 4000 traffic signals across the state and 150 caution flashers. We also light signs and some interstate interchange ramps. SCDOT is in the process of converting traffic signals from incandescent light bulbs to LED which are easier for motorists to see and easier to maintain. LED technology is also energy efficient. Eighty percent have been converted to LED technology



with 20 percent pending conversion in FY 2010. The costs savings for LED technology is approximately \$15,000 a month or \$180,000 annually. SCDOT is in the process of converting caution flashers from electrical power to solar. Not only is there a costs savings for using solar, the installation is less expensive as the solar flashers do not require a separate pole and wiring to obtain electrical power. There is a potential cost avoidance of \$41,200 per month once all flashers are converted.

During FY 2008, SCDOT had Phase One Energy Audits conducted of its three largest buildings. Additionally in FY 2009 we made a solicitation for an Energy Performance Contract and received two proposals. Because of the economic climate we decided not select a contractor. We have trained one of our Building Project Managers to be a Certified Energy Manager and intend to have others receive this certification. In addition, in FY 2009 we conducted Energy Workshops in the 7 Engineering Districts and Headquarters designed to reduce consumption of energy.

The South Carolina Commission for the Blind (SCCB) operates vending facilities at Welcome Centers and Rest Areas across

South Carolina. The buildings are owned and maintained by SCDOT and the Department pays for the electricity. SCDOT encourages the use of energy efficient vending machines.

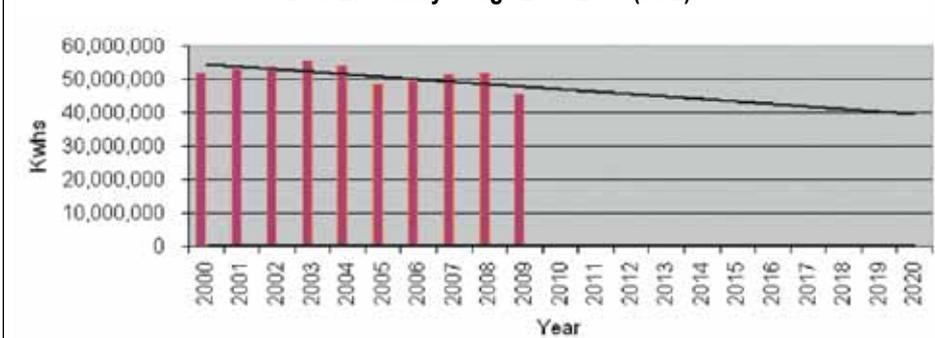
SCDOT has a fleet of approximately 3400 vehicles and road equipment. The Department has been reducing the size of the administrative fleet. Those remaining vehicles are replaced with flex fuel or alternative fuel vehicles based on a formula administered by the Office of State Fleet Management.

SCDOT has been reducing travel and the number of vehicles used for a project. Fuel usage has declined, however fuel costs continue to rise reaching its pinnacle in the summer of 2008.

The Department completed Energy Audits of the three largest buildings in the inventory and explored the use of an Energy Performance Contract in FY 2008.

SCDOT is committed to the conservation of energy and has engaged its employees and partners across South Carolina to create a “Green Working Environment” as we perform the mission of building and maintaining roads and bridges and funding mass transit services.

SCDOT Electricity Usage 2000-2009 (YTD)



Air quality tests ease building concerns

By Carl Chase
Director of Assets Management

The health and welfare of our employees are of paramount concern and the phenomenon of the “sick office” is something we do not take lightly.

Air quality in the Headquarters Building and Field Offices pose a significant concern to the well being of employees and visitors. In the past few years we have tested various offices in the Headquarters

Building based on concerns of employees.

To date the Environmental Air quality firm that we use has found nothing significant. Inspection of various offices does reveal odors emanating from colognes and perfumes, food, and unkempt work areas. Additionally many offices have refrigerators and microwave ovens that are not cleaned properly. This contributes to odors and attracts vermin.

We have tested for asbestos and determined that the only asbestos in the headquarters building is in outer office doors.

We cannot penetrate these doors or make repairs to the hardware on them. When we dispose of these doors, we use the services of an environmental contractor. They are replaced with doors not containing asbestos. We continue to test for mold especially when there is a water leak found anywhere in a building.

We consult with the Occupational Health Nurse on any reports of employees reporting illness because of the air quality in an office. We use approved cleaning materials and pay close attention to the cleanliness of common areas such as the restrooms and canteen.

Other issues leading to poor air qual-

ity particularly in the field offices is a lack of preventative maintenance in the HVAC System and in particular, the failure to timely change filters. Of special concern is the health of employees whose workspace is in trailers. When a trailer is moved the structure is affected and creates potential water leaks. Water leaks uncorrected become a source for mold.

If an employee has a concern about air quality they should contact Building Maintenance or in the case of Field Offices the person who maintains the building and, if the problem persists, the Director of Assets Management. I can assure you that there will be a rapid response.

Employee Appreciation Week • May 4-8, 2009

Activities

Monday

Office Costume Contest

Offices were encouraged to dress up as a group with a theme.

Tuesday

Dress in your favorite era

The 50s? 60s? 70s? 80s?

Wednesday

Hat Day

Employees were encouraged to wear their favorite hat, or an interesting hat. Employees enjoyed a barbecue buffet outside. Employees also brought in examples of crafts that they enjoy.

Thursday

Favorite Sports Team Attire

Clemson? USC? Sports fans wore shirts and hats to show their team pride.

Friday

Tacky Day

Employees were encouraged to wear leisure suits, Hawaiian shirts or anything else they deemed "tacky."

Other events

Parent/Child Guessing Contest

Employees submitted photographs of a parent or child. The photos were put in the basement display case and employees were given the chance to guess to whom the person in the photograph was related.

Scavenger Hunt

Human resources put together a map with clues for employees to search on their time away from work. The hunt included downtown areas of Columbia and encouraged employees to get to know their downtown neighborhood.

Photographs by Rob Thompson

Office Costume Contest

On Monday, offices were encouraged to dress up as a group with a theme.



The Human Resources Office came dressed as the Beverly Hillbillies. Can you spot the different characters?

BBQ Buffet

On Wednesday, employees were treated to an outdoor barbecue buffet.



Hat Day

On Wednesday, employees were encouraged to wear their favorite hat to work. How many of these employees can you name?

Movie Break

On Thursday, employees could use their break to watch a 20-minute episode of classic television shows in the auditorium.



Employees enjoy a quick break with bag of popcorn and classic TV comedy.

Door Decorating Contest

Congratulations to the top three doors decorated during Employee Appreciation Week.

Lowcountry RPG-1
Room 407

Postal Services
Room G16

Building Maintenance
Room G1

Other Participating Doors

- Human Resources Development 112
- Business Development 213
- Communications 338
- Local Program Administration Office 424
- Surveys Office 425
- Director of Preconstruction 425A
- Traffic Engineering 530

Crafty Employees

Employees displayed their crafts Wednesday at the employee lunch. Can you match the employee with the crafts they enjoy making? The answers are below.



1. Tina White
2. Dana Ammer
3. Carolyn Cobia
4. Betty Richardson



1D - 2A - 3C - 4B



Feeding the hungry

SCDOT collects food for Harvest Hope Food Bank

By Carl Chase
Assets Management Director

SCDOT Headquarters and Richland Maintenance family, thanks for your food and monetary contributions to Harvest Hope Food Bank.

We collected over 1250 pounds of food and \$325 in cash contributions during the recent and previous food drive. This was part of an overall effort that included 33 state agencies. This drive was especially important because of the growing need of less fortunate in our community. Additionally, some of our employees and their families volunteered their time working at Harvest Hope. A special thanks to the Supply Dept and Building Services for picking up and delivering the food.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

ABOVE: SCDOT collected food donations from 33 state agencies. The food was delivered to Harvest Hope Food Bank on June 22.



LEFT: From left, Cal Boland, Wayman Sweat and Carl Chase watch as Harvest Hope Food Bank employees take delivery of the barrels of food collected. The donations were weighed and distributed by the food bank.

Clean sweep



Tony Chapman, standing second from left, is presented with a broom during the April 16 Commission Meeting in Yemassee to represent the 'clean sweep' by the Citadel Bulldogs over the University of South Carolina Gamecocks (USC) in baseball. Commissioner Tee Hooper, Secretary of Transportation Buck Limehouse and Commissioner Danny Isaac are Citadel alumni, while Chapman is a graduate of USC. From left are, Hooper, Chapman, Limehouse and Isaac. Seated is Commission Chairman F. Hugh Atkins.

Letters we liked

To: SCDOT

I want to be sure you know of the outstanding work the Berkeley County Maintenance Crew does. This morning, around 7:00 a.m., I sent an email . . . requesting that two potholes in front of my home be repaired. By this evening, the repair had been completed! Thank you to the crew, the supervisory staff and the department. A department does good work because the people in the department, from the top to the bottom of the pay scale, are dedicated to the job. I truly appreciate it!

Alzina Preston

To: Secretary H.B. Limehouse

On behalf of the Carolinas Associated General Contractors and particularly the CAGC Highway/Heavy Division, I wish to express our gratitude to SCDOT for preparing to implement the distribution of electronic data files for the bidding of the department's road and bridge construction projects. By allowing the contractors access to the digital files during the bidding process, SCDOT is assuring that contractors have the most accurate

data concerning a project's design, layout and qualities. This process will also assure the SCDOT receives the most competitive bids as well as be advised of any constructability issues before the project is bid.

CAGC would also like to especially recognize Mr. Ed Eargle and his department for their foresight and hard work in implementing the release of the electronic data files in various formats to assure availability to all contractors. As always, CAGC greatly appreciates the dedication and leadership of Deputy Secretary Chapman and Director of Construction Shealy. Please forward our gratitude to all of those involved.

In conclusion, thank you Secretary Limehouse for your steady leadership of one of the most innovative DOTs in the nation. CAGC is appreciative of the open format of cooperation that we have with SCDOT as we both strive together to provide a safe, efficient, and cost effective infrastructure system for the citizens of South Carolina.

Stephen P. Gennett, President
Carolina AGC

Fantasy Harbour Bridge now a reality in Myrtle Beach

By Bob Kudelka

State and local dignitaries attended the opening ceremony of the Fantasy Harbour Bridge in Myrtle Beach on Wednesday, July 1, 2009.

The project was on budget and on schedule, and opened to traffic shortly after the ceremony. Myrtle Beach officials were thankful the bridge was open in time for the Fourth of July weekend.

The Fantasy Harbour bridge project is part of Horry County's Road Improvement Development Effort (RIDE) program and is a cooperative effort of Horry County, the South Carolina State Transportation Infrastructure Bank, the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) and the City of Myrtle Beach.

"This is just a prime example of what happens when everybody works together...It is a great day in Myrtle Beach, a great day in the independent Republic of Horry and a great day in the state of South Carolina," said SCDOT Commissioner Danny H. Isaac Jr., representing the 1st Congressional District.

Don Leonard, Chairman of the South Carolina State Transportation Infrastructure Bank, said there were many key people behind the scenes, such as the Legislative Delegation, and the leaders responsible for the RIDE program.

Leonard also thanked the construction workers.

"What we haven't seen are the



Project Manager Michael Barbee represented SCDOT at the opening ceremony.

real heroes - the hard hats, the men and women hanging over these rails 60 feet above the water risking their lives to build this bridge, really getting no credit," Leonard said. "What a great job they did. They're out here in 23-degree weather and 93-degree weather."

Speakers in addition to Isaac and Leonard included Liz Gilliland, Chairman of Horry County Council, Horry County Councilman Gary Loftus, Myrtle Beach Mayor John Rhodes and SCDOT Program Manager Mike Barbee.

Barbee thanked SCDOT Horry Resident Construction Engineer Travis Patrick and his staff.

"They have done a fantastic job," Barbee said. "They're out



SCDOT Commissioner Danny Isaac meets with some SCDOT employees who were involved with the construction of the Fantasy Harbour Bridge. From left are: Commissioner Isaac, Program Manager Mike Barbee, Michael Barnhill, Rudy Gerald, Travis Patrick and Debra Casaer.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Dignitaries cut the ribbon on the new Fantasy Harbour Bridge in Myrtle Beach on July 1. The 1,800-foot bridge crosses the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and will serve as a vital link by connecting US-17 Bypass and Harrelson Boulevard to George Bishop Parkway.

here at all hours of the day and night in all manner of weather conditions. These folks are a true asset to the Department."

The 1,800 foot-long Fantasy Harbour Bridge spans the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and serves as a vital link in the regional

transportation network by connecting the interchange at US-17 Bypass and Harrelson Boulevard to George Bishop Parkway and other local roads on the west side of the Waterway. The bridge also features a bicycle/pedestrian walkway.

"The bicycle and pedestrian lane is something we hope folks will get out and use to enjoy the view over the waterway," Barbee said.

Construction began in September 2007. Total cost of the project was \$46.5 million. The consulting engineer was STV/Ralph Whitehead Associates, and the contractor was R.R. Dawson, Inc.

Another bridge over the Intracoastal Waterway opens this summer.

The North Myrtle Beach Connector is four-lane, limited control access facility from SC 90 to US 17 at Main Street in North Myrtle Beach, including crossing of the Intracoastal Waterway and an interchange with the Carolina Bays Parkway.

It is expected to open in late August.

Project approved to alleviate flooding in Georgetown's High Market District

By Pete Poore

The SCDOT Commission has approved a project for a section of US 17 and US 521 in an area of the city of Georgetown that has been plagued for many years with flooding.

The affected area covers approximately 182 acres in the center of the city known as the High Market District. Georgetown's city hall, central fire station and a number of businesses and residences are located in this area. Also located in this district are US Highways 17 and 521, both of which are key hurricane evacuation routes in addition to serving as major transportation arteries.

Funding to assist the project that would

alleviate the flooding was recommended by SCDOT Commissioner Danny Isaac who represents the 1st Congressional District, and Commissioner Marvin Stevenson who represents the 6th Congressional District. Georgetown County is represented by both Districts.

Transportation Secretary H.B. Limehouse Jr. said the funds would come from the federal stimulus money allotted to South Carolina. "The stimulus funds we've received are working in concert with our policy of "Fix it First." Not only can we accelerate the work to maintain our existing highway system, we're able to start clearing a backlog of projects that have been needed for years such as this drainage basin for

Georgetown," said Limehouse.

Limehouse noted that the ARRA funds will serve an economically distressed area.

Commissioner Isaac committed \$1.363 million in federal stimulus funds available to the 1st Congressional District, and Commissioner Stevenson committed \$521,133 from the 6th District. Both funding commitments were unanimously approved by the SCDOT Commission at its June 18 meeting in Columbia.

Commissioner Isaac said funding this project is money well-spent. "The people who live and work in the High Market District, including the public servants in city hall and the fire department have been hampered long enough by the frequent flooding

that occurs. I thank Commissioner Stevenson for working with me to provide these funds," said Isaac.

"This action is an example of how a little cooperation can move important projects forward," said Stevenson. "I'm proud to work with Commissioner Isaac to help the people of Georgetown in a county that is represented by both of our Congressional Districts," he added.

The City of Georgetown and SCDOT will work together to move this project to construction. The \$18 million project has already received funding from the City of Georgetown, the Georgetown County Transportation Committee and other SCDOT funding sources.

Promotions

Roberto G. Ruiz, of Lexington, from Engineer/Associate Engineer II to Engineer/Associate Engineer III, RPG 1 Low-country.

Emily K. Woods, of Columbia, from Engineer/Associate Engineer I to Engineer/Associate Engineer II, RPG 4 Upstate.

Russell C. Hendrix, of Prosperity, from Associate Geodetic Technician to Senior Geodetic Technician, Materials & Research.

Chad W. McCormick, of Gaston, from Assistant Geodetic Technician to Associate Geodetic Technician, Materials & Research.

Raymond W. Billbrough III, of Branchville, from Associate Geodetic Technician to Engineer/Associate Engineer I, Dorchester Surveys.

Dee M. Michaelsen, of Camden, from Trades Specialist III to Trades Specialist IV, Kershaw Maintenance.

Larry V. Johnson, of Camden, from Mechanic III to Trades Specialist V, Lee Maintenance.

Bobby E. Randall Sr., of Columbia, from Trades Specialist III to Trades Specialist IV, Richland Maintenance.

Mitchell L. Snelgrove, of Lexington, from Mechanic II to Mechanic III, Richland Maintenance.

Dallen R. Jones, of Sumter, from Trades Specialist II to Trades Specialist III, Sumter Maintenance.

James Gibson Jr., of Columbia, from Supply Specialist III to Trades Specialist IV, Dist. 1 Traffic Signals.

Barbara A. Polatty, of Edgefield, from Supply Specialist II to Supply Specialist III, Edgefield Maintenance.

Maria R. Landron, of Greenwood, from Assistant Geodetic Technician to Associate Geodetic Technician, Greenwood Construction.

Lanny R. Ensley, of Greenville, from Trades Specialist II to Trades Specialist III, Greenville Maintenance.

Corey McCullough, of Greenville, from Trades Specialist II to Trades Specialist IV, Greenville Maintenance.

Robert C. Redding, of Marietta, from Trades Specialist II to Trades Specialist III, Greenville Maintenance.

Wilton L. Price, of Westminster, from Trades Specialist II to Trades Specialist III, Oconee maintenance.

Ronald D. Duncan, of Pickens, from Trades Specialist III to Trades Specialist IV, Pickens Maintenance.

Richard M. Ellis, of Inman, from Trades Specialist II to Trades Specialist III, Spartanburg Maintenance.

Timothy B. Smith, of Gaffney, from Trades Specialist III to Trades Specialist IV, Cherokee Maintenance.

Richard B. Gore, of Chester, from Trades Specialist III to Trades Specialist IV, York Maintenance.

Kevin K. Williams, of Florence, from Associate Geodetic Technician to Engineer/Associate Engineer II, Darlington Maintenance.

Eric M. Minshew, of Latta, from Engineer/Associate Engineer II to Program Manager I, Florence Maintenance.

Fred T. Quick, of Bennettsville, from Trades Specialist II to Trades Specialist IV, Marlboro Maintenance.

Charles B. Gaskin, of Pamplico, from Assistant Geodetic Technician to Associate Geodetic Technician, Florence Construction.

Marvin J. Dagin, of Beaufort, from Trades Specialist III to Trades Specialist IV, Beaufort Maintenance.

Donovan C. Vedad, of Charleston, from Trades Specialist II to Assistant Geodetic Technician, Charleston Construction - Bridge Construction.

Christopher B. Smith, of Early Branch, from Engineer/Associate Engineer II to Engineer/Associate Engineer III, Jasper Construction.

James H. Evans, of Bowman, from Mechanic III to Trades Specialist V, Holly Hill Maintenance.

Gerald W. Bonnette, of Bowman, from Senior Geodetic Technician to Engineer/Associate Engineer II, Dist 7 Bridge Inspection.

Have your pets spayed or neutered



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

A trio of cute, but feral kittens made their home in the shrubbery around SCDOT headquarters in July. Unfortunately, their fate probably will be trapping and removal by animal control.

According to the City of Columbia Animal Shelter, approximately 11,000 stray and unwanted dogs and cats are euthanized yearly in Columbia. During the same period, only 2,300 animals were adopted. Do your part by having your pets spayed or neutered.



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

SCDOT secured several sources of federal replacement bridge funding to replace three overflow bridges on eastbound US 378 over the Wateree swamp in Sumter County. The original bridges were built in 1939 and widened/refurbished in 1976. The new bridges will have wider shoulders and are expected to be completed by Spring 2010.

SCDOT is charged with the responsibility of systematic planning, design, construction, maintenance and operation of the state highway system and coordinating mass transit services. SCDOT operates and maintains 41,430 miles of roads and bridges, which ranks as one of the largest state-owned highway systems in the nation according to the Federal Highway Administration.

Retirements

Dorothy E. Youmans, of Ruffin, trades specialist II at Colleton Maintenance, retired Feb. 11, after 13 years of service.

Homer E. Blackwell, of Chesnee, trades specialist III at Spartanburg Maintenance, retired Feb. 20, after 35 years of service.

Roosevelt Harkless, of Darlington, trades specialist III at Darlington Maintenance, retired Feb. 25, after 19 years of service.

Jerry L. Barnhill, of Marion, engineer/associate engineer at Marion Maintenance, retired Feb. 27, after 39 years of service.

Roger D. Owens, of Blacksburg, mechanic III at Cherokee Maintenance, retired Feb. 27, after 31 years of service.

Emmett D. Hannah, of Hodges, trades specialist V at Abbeville Maintenance, retired Feb. 27, after 33 years of service.

Brenda B. Bragg, of Simpsonville, right of way agent II in the Greenville District, retired Feb. 27, after 24 years of service.

David L. Miles, of Kingstree, trades specialist III at Williamsburg Maintenance, retired March 3, after 15 years of service.

Sherman O. Smith, of Kingstree, associate geodetic technician in Florence Surveys, retired March 10, after 23 years of state service.

Vernon L. Butterworth, of Walterboro, trades specialist V at Dorchester Maintenance, retired March 11, after 16 years of service.

Cynthia W. Davis, of Cayce, chemist II at the Office of Materials & Research, retired March 11, after 28 years of state service.

Donnie R. Shoemake, of Darlington, trades specialist II at Darlington Maintenance, retired March 13, after 18 years of service.

Starling Forester Jr., of Brunson, mechanic III at Hampton Maintenance, retired March 17, after 31 years of service.

Charles T. Walker, of Greenville, trades specialist II at Greenville Maintenance, retired March 19, after eight years of service.

Warren V. Culler IV, of Orangeburg, chief geodetic technician at Orangeburg

Construction, retired March 31, after 42 years of state service.

Myrtle L. Morrison, of Chester, trades specialist II at Chester Maintenance, retired March 31, after five years of service.

Jerry T. McKay, of Santee, trades specialist II at Orangeburg Maintenance, retired March 31, after 17 years of service.

Edison W. Darby, of Chester, trades specialist IV at Chester Maintenance, retired March 31 after 19 years of service.

Rosa B. Shuler, of Rowesville, trades specialist II at Orangeburg Maintenance, retired March 31, after 24 years of service.

Paul B. Boken, of Elgin, electronics technician II at District 1 Traffic Signals, retired March 31, after 20 years of service.

George Williams, of Sheldon, trades specialist IV at Colleton Maintenance, retired April 1, after 28 years of service.

Sharon M. Smith, of Piedmont, supply specialist III at Greenville Maintenance, retired April 1, after 28 years of service.

Jerry A. Brannon, of Union, engineer/associate engineer at Union Maintenance, retired April 3, after 17 years of state service.

Clifford A. Demeritt, of Gaston, information resource consultant, Information Technology Services, retired April 3, after 11 years of service.

Charlie R. Brown Sr., of Great Falls, trades specialist III at Chester Maintenance, retired April 3, after 29 years of service.

James E. McKnight, of Chesterfield, trades specialist III at Chesterfield Maintenance, retired April 8, after 11 years of service.

Terrance G. Huffman, of Greenville, engineer/associate engineer in Greenville Surveys, retired April 9, after 21 years of service.

Lindsay Purvis, of Bennettsville, trades specialist III at Marlboro Maintenance, retired April 10, after 18 years of service.

Franklin D. Burns, of Gaffney, trades specialist II at Cherokee Maintenance, retired April 16, after 23 years of service.

Oscar D. Pruitt, of Chesnee, trades specialist III at Spartanburg Maintenance, retired April 16,

after 15 years of service.

Leroy McLeod, of Mayesville, trades specialist III at Sumter Maintenance, retired April 27, after 13 years of service.

William F. Brown, of Williamston, mechanic I at Greenville Maintenance, retired May 1, after 19 years of service.

Dianne L. Graham, of Pomaria, insurance claims examiner, Deputy Secretary for Engineering, retired May 1, after 23 years of service.

Perez A. Thompson, of Heath Springs, trades specialist III at Lancaster Maintenance, retired May 5, after 17 years of service.

Annie E. Williams, of Bishopville, trades specialist II at Lee Maintenance, retired May 18, after 27 years of service.

Frankie L. Blackmon, of Seneca, trades specialist II at Oconee Maintenance, retired May 28, after 15 years of state service.

Thomas W. Quick, of Hamlet, trades specialist II at Marlboro Maintenance, retired May 29, after 35 years of state service.

Claude P. Owens, of Roebuck, associate geodetic technician at Laurens Maintenance, retired May 29, after 31 years of state service.

Woodrow Wilson, of Longs, equipment operator II at Horry 1 Maintenance, retired May 31, after 33 years of service.

Herman Alford, of Lake City, trades specialist III at Florence Maintenance, retired May 31, after 24 years of service.

Nathan Kirkland Jr., of Walterboro, trades specialist II at Colleton Maintenance, retired June 1, after 33 years of service.

Anthony D. Edwards, of Neeses, trades specialist II at Orangeburg Maintenance, retired June 1, after 17 years of service.

Edward A. McCall, of Dillon, trades specialist II at Dillon Maintenance, retired June 2, after 31 years of service.

James R. Bennett Jr., of Columbia, engineer/associate engineer in District 5 Office, retired June 2, after 33 years of service.

Ashawn T. Boyd, of St. George, trades specialist II at Dorchester Maintenance, retired June 5, after 11 years of service.

Deaths

John Daniel Anderson, 69, of Mount Carmel, SCDOT retiree, died April 4.

Martha Dianne Varner, 61, of Harleyville, an SCDOT retiree, died May 2.

William Gerald Inabinet, 67, of Orangeburg, a retired SCDOT employee, died April 23.

Terry Holtzclaw, of Waterloo, trades specialist III at Laurens Maintenance, who had been employed by SCDOT for 23 years, died May 19.

Sam Houston Gamble, 55, of Greeleyville, a backhoe and trackhoe operator with the South Carolina Department of Transportation, died June 20.



Connie S. Mello, 54, of Columbia, an SCDOT retiree, died April 23.



Sharon M. Smith, of Piedmont, an SCDOT retiree from Greenville Maintenance, died June 20.



Don Heyward Marshe, 61, of Columbia, an SCDOT retiree, died July 1.

BENEFITS TIP

WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR OUT-OF-POCKET HEALTH CARE COSTS

- Save on medications by using generics and mail-order services.
- Communicate with your doctor about your benefit plan
- Be knowledgeable of your benefit plan
- Use in-network doctors and other medical facilities
- Grab the phone before the car keys (save gas and time)
- Be better consumers of your health plan by using the most appropriate and cost-effective place for your condition
- Read your medical bills and explanation of benefits forms (EOBS)
- Use Flexible Spending Account to reduce your taxable income
- Having periodic health examinations and screenings are an important part of preventive care



SCDOT's Abbeville Maintenance facility received damage from a tornado on April 10. See more photos of the damage on page 25.

Wind, fire, rain keep SCDOT maintenance crews busy

By Pete Poore

SCDOT Maintenance crews were kept busy clearing roads as a result of storms in the spring and summer. A significant storm struck on April 10, 2009 that downed trees and spread debris on the highways in 26 counties.

The damage was particularly heavy in Abbeville County. In addition to road-clearing operations, an Abbeville Maintenance facility suffered severe damage (See story on page 25).

Aiken County was another area where much work needed to be done. Aiken County Maintenance conducted a second road-clearing operation on a 5.5 mile stretch of US 278 there. Crews spent part of May just on that one highway in Aiken County.

The result of the April storms included the removal of 645 trees and 6500 cubic yards of debris from roads in the 26 counties. The cost of these operations was slightly over \$359,000.

Also in April, SCDOT employees were called up to assist with traffic control when wildfires were raging

in Horry County, destroying several structures. Heavy smoked required some road closures until the fires were brought under control.

When June arrived, Mother Nature was not quite done providing work for some crews. Two heavy storms struck Laurens County during the week of June 15, 2009. Strong winds blew trees and debris into the roadways throughout the county. Maintenance units from Laurens County, supported by several neighboring county units removed 335 trees and over 828 cubic yards of debris.

Letters we liked

To SCDOT:

(Two letters thanking SCDOT employees for food donations to Harvest Hope Food Bank on April 20 and May 19, totaling 258 pounds)

Your support of our efforts to feed the hungry in 20 counties throughout central South Carolina is greatly appreciated.

A USDA study ranks South

Carolina sixth in the nation for food insecurity – not knowing that there will be enough food to meet nutritional needs. Harvest Hope Food Bank works diligently to help meet the needs of many people who deal with food insecurity every day.

I am so thankful for your support as our economic status declines. You are such a blessing to

Harvest Hope Food Bank and to hungry people. Again, my heartfelt thanks and God bless you.

Denise Holland
Chief Executive Officer
Harvest Hope Food Bank

To: SCDOT

On Monday, June 29, 2009, my wife, three children, and two nieces were traveling on I-95 headed to North Carolina to take my two nieces home who had been with us in South Carolina for a week. One of my nieces got

sick, and my wife was having to take them back a day early. While on I-95, our vehicle left my wife and the children stranded on the side of the road due to a flat tire. She called me, and I was unable to get to her at the moment due to circumstances at the office. I was trying to arrange for someone to help her; however, she called me back and said that Preston Rogers, a SCDOT worker had stopped by to help change the tire.

A mentor of mine often said, "When gratitude dies on the al-

tar of our heart, we are well nigh hopeless." Words cannot express my gratitude to Preston Rogers and the SCDOT for having this program of helping stranded drivers. We are grateful for your kindness. My wife commented on the kind help that she received from Preston. I am grateful for this help.

Todd Smith
Executive Secretary
South Carolina
State Association
of Free Will Baptists

State employees must certify whether they use tobacco or not

Effective January 1, 2010, a surcharge will be added to the health insurance premiums of tobacco users covered by the Employee Insurance Program (EIP).

If you — or anyone you cover under your health plan — smokes or uses tobacco, you will pay the surcharge of \$25 per month. You will be automatically charged the tobacco-user premium, unless you certify no one covered under your health insurance uses tobacco and no one has used tobacco within the past six months.

In August 2008, the Budget and Control Board voted

to require that tobacco users pay an extra \$25 a month. The charge applies to subscribers and their covered dependents, but is applied only once per household. Tobacco is considered the leading preventable risk factor for illness and disease. Such illnesses cost the state health plans an estimated \$75 million a year.

Subscribers must certify they have not used tobacco in the last six months to qualify for the lower rate. They can certify online or complete a paper form. This certification covers all members of the household who are insured by one of the health

plans offered through EIP. Certifications must be submitted by November 15, 2009. Those who quit tobacco later can complete the certification six months after quitting and then begin receiving the lower rate.

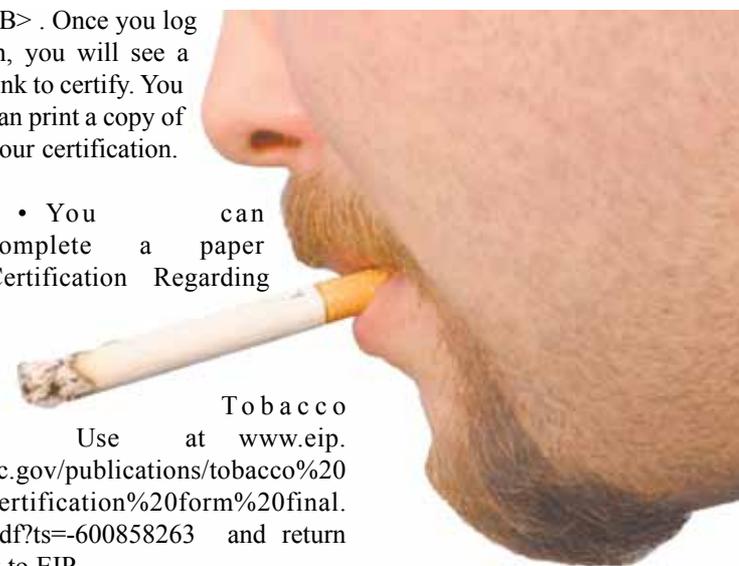
All subscribers must submit certification concerning their tobacco use to EIP as soon as possible. You may submit your certification one of two ways:

- You can certify online at MyBenefits at <https://mybenefits.sc.gov/authentication/check-browser.do?jsessionid=59414CC3B0F2603A09D095FB16F68A>

9B> . Once you log in, you will see a link to certify. You can print a copy of your certification.

- You can complete a paper Certification Regarding

Tobacco Use at www.eip.sc.gov/publications/tobacco%20certification%20form%20final.pdf?ts=-600858263 and return it to EIP.



Engineering News

Local Public Agency Administration Office SCDOT office manages projects with local government entities

By Herb Cooper
Local Program Administrator

So far 2009 has been a year of big changes in the administration of Local Public Agency (LPA) projects. Here's a close look at the new Local Public Agency Administration (LPAA) office and its functions.

In early 2009 the LPAA Office was formed as a unit within the Preconstruction Resource Management Division. This undertaking changed the basic structure and the manner in which Local Public Agencies (LPAs) administer and manage projects and was a result of a cooperative effort between the FHWA and SCDOT to ensure local governmental entities remain compliant with state and federal guidelines.

"The organization, process improvements, and decision making responsibility in the LPAA Office has been executed exceedingly well by those involved," said Herb Cooper, Local Program Administrator. "This would not have been possible without the hard work by the LPAA staff and others throughout SCDOT. To all, a huge thanks and congratulations for a job well done are in order."

During the past few months, the LPAA staff has accomplished a number of objectives aimed towards providing high levels of service to internal and external customers, streamlining processes, and making efficient use of resources.

This was done to further the primary mission of the Preconstruction Resource Management Division and in accordance with the policies and priorities set by the Secretary of Transportation and the SCDOT Commission.

Here are a few of the process improvements that have been accomplished recently along with some of the ongoing activities within the office:

A new website has been developed and is located on the in-

tranet under departments/preconstruction resource management with forms, procedures, and other useful information for SCDOT staff's use working in conjunction with LPAs. A similar site is also active on the internet under "Doing Business with SCDOT."

Also, a new documentation management software system called Falcon is now being utilized to manage the scanned documents for the LPA projects. Falcon will allow all SCDOT personnel around the state to access the LPA documents such as applications, forms, bid tabs, contract agreements, ROW documents and encroachment permits to more effectively manage projects. The new process will eliminate unnecessary delays in accessing needed information. The software is similar to what is currently being used for Plan Library.

The procedures for local public agency project administration have been approved and are currently being implemented throughout the state.

Before a town, city, or county can administer and manage a project using state or federal funds, they must be deemed to be "adequately staffed and suitably equipped" to undertake and satisfactorily complete the work. Otherwise, SCDOT will manage the project for these governmental entities. LPA projects can include Transportation Enhancements, Congestion Mitigation, Congressional Earmarks, "C" Projects or any form of project in which federal and/or state funds may be used to finance or supplement the development of the project. This process was implemented to ensure LPAs will be compliant with state and federal guidelines and not risk the possibility of losing potential federal reimbursements.

A few months ago, SCDOT records indicated there were close to 550 active LPA projects. Since the formation of the LPAA Office earlier this year, this number has been reduced to under 400. This

has been achieved in part because of the actions of the seven District Coordinators assisting in the effort of aggressively working with the local governments to finalize their projects. Thanks goes to not only those District Coordinators but also to the many other SCDOT staff who have worked arduously while still having to maintain other work duties.

In March, representatives of more than 50 local governments with approved projects attended a workshop at Headquarters to help them understand the new procedures and find out if they wanted to pursue the management of their endeavor or let SCDOT administer the work. At this point, it appears the majority of governmental entities are making it known that they feel SCDOT can do a better job managing their project due in part to their limited staff. However, there are still those who plan to administer their own and are completing a qualifications evaluation form. If they are found not qualified by staff, SCDOT will by default perform the management.

In April, over 70 SCDOT staff members throughout the state attended a specialized procurement training seminar held at SCDOT's Headquarters building. The training was taught by the State Engineer for South Carolina, John White, and was customized for Department personnel who work with LPAs.

The course presented an overview of the SC Consolidated Procurement Code and regulations governing construction procurement and the selection process for professional services in South Carolina. Having an adequate understanding of the State Procurement Code, along with its requirements and processes, is necessary in steering LPAs in the right direction and avoidance of possible procurement violations before they occur. In addition to hosting this training, the LPAA Office notified LPAs throughout South Carolina of additional

Got news?

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

Andy
Leaphart



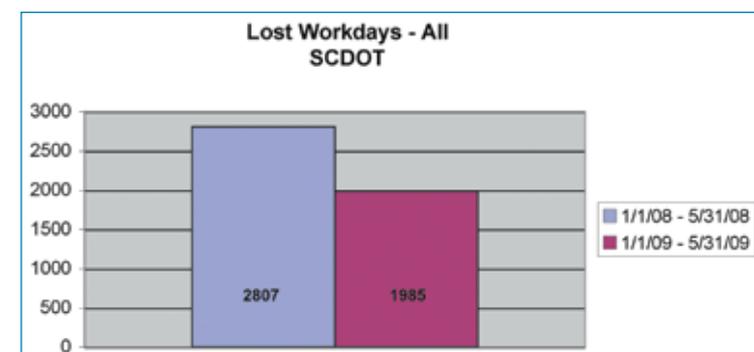
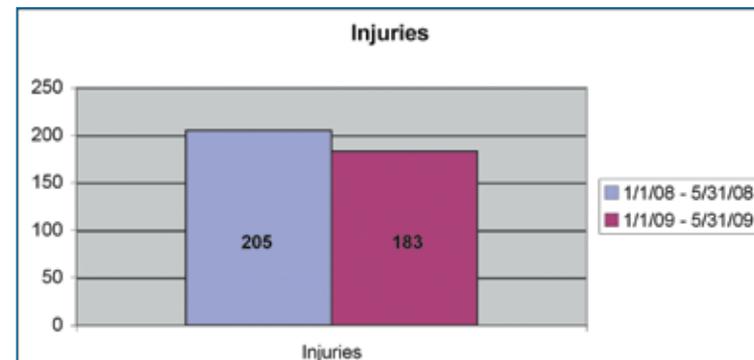
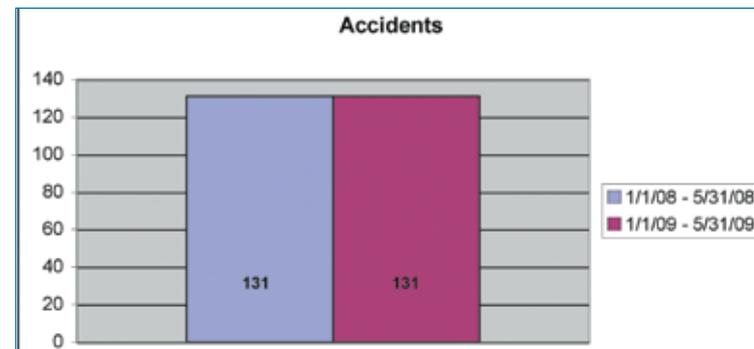
construction procurement training seminars being taught by the State Engineer and encouraged them to attend. The training sessions are offered in various regions of the state and designed to assist governmental entities with understanding procurement laws and procedures.

"This office remains committed to the Department's goal of advancing customer service through the ability to manage for

results and promote transportation solutions that enhance communities and protect the natural and built environment," Cooper said.

The LPAA staff includes Local Public Agency Administrator Machael Peterson, Local Public Agency Assistant Ralph Pearson, Program Coordinators Janice Redd and Yolanda Simons and Administrative Assistant Shirley Johnson and Tami Whitmire.

Injuries and Lost Workdays Statistics



District 1 News

Kershaw, Lee, Lexington, Richland and Sumter counties

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

Engineering District Realignment *District 1 thanks, says goodbye to Aiken County*

District 1 Engineering organized a going away luncheon for Aiken County on June 30.

The light-hearted event thanked the employees for their years of hard work for the citizens of Aiken County and for their years of service in District 1.

On July 1, Aiken County became part of District 7 after a realignment of SCDOT Engineering Districts.

District 1 Engineering Administrator Thad Brunson roasted Aiken Resident Construction Engineer Jeff Terry and Aiken Maintenance Engineer Kevin Oglesby during the luncheon.

Also in the realignment, Anderson County was moved from District 3 to District 2.



District 1 Engineering Administrator Thad Brunson, left, and District Construction Engineer Bryan Jones, right, thanked the employees for the work they do at SCDOT.



Got news?

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

Teresa Rast



For the celebration, two cakes were decorated with highway equipment and joined together with a bridge.



During the roasting of Aiken Resident Construction Engineer Jeff Terry, left, and Aiken Resident Maintenance Engineer Kevin Oglesby, they were given crowns for being a 'royal pain.' They were given signs stating 'We're #7' since being moved from the '#1 District.'



The employees enjoyed a luncheon together with some of the District 1 personnel with whom they've worked over the years.



District 2 News

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

*District Engineer: Phillip M. Brooks (864) 227-6971
FAX (864) 227-6567*

Got news?

Contact Dwayne
Scott at
864-227-6222
or email him at
ScottDE@scdot.org.



Dwayne Scott

F2 tornado strikes Abbeville Maintenance

**By Carl Chase
Assets Management Director**

On the evening of April 10, 2009, an F2 Tornado with extremely high wind gusts wreaked havoc for the SCDOT Abbeville County Maintenance Office.

Major damage was incurred by buildings in the maintenance complex. The Truck Shed, Engineering Office, and Training/break room sustained water damage. The middle portion of the roof had to be removed to include beams, roof joist, sheathing, and metal roofing along with the lighting and conduits.

Tarps were placed over gaps in the roofs to protect the facilities from water damage. Several vehicles sustained damage from loose material and roof-

ing dislodged during the storm. Much of the roofing landed in the yards of residential property along McGowan Street. Assistant District Maintenance Engineer Dusty Turner assessed the damage and called the Capital Improvements Office for assistance.

Capital Improvements Manager Suzette Porter responded from her home and immediately began calling contractors to make temporary repairs. She began the process of an emergency procurement to repair the damage.

It is estimated that it will cost approximately \$200,000 to repair the facility.

Porter was praised by District 2 officials for the prompt response that allowed them to continue their mission of clearing roads blocked by storm debris.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY DUSTY TURNER/ABBEVILLE MAINTENANCE

An EF2 tornado struck Abbeville on April 10 at approximately 8:35 p.m. The photograph above shows damage done to the Abbeville Maintenance facility, and, at right, the roof was torn off the truck shed. The National Weather Service says that the damage was consistent with 120-130 mph winds. No employees were in the building at the time and there were no injuries.



District 3 News

Greenville, Oconee, Pickens and Spartanburg counties

District Engineer: Steve Gwinn (864) 241-1010

FAX (864) 241-1115

Behind the scenes



It is not surprising to see Eulis Norris working in the flower bed behind such beautiful irises. He is the green thumb behind the personal touches at the District Office.

Retirement



Greenville Sign Shop Foreman Howard Harden, left, and William 'Tub' Brown Jr., center, stand with William Brown, right, during Brown's last day of work for SCDOT. Brown retired in April after 19 years of service at the shop. Harden said the shop will truly miss his smiling face, and his son said he will miss seeing his dad every day.

Got news?

Please contact
Joyce Gardner
at 864-241-1010
or by emailing her at
GardnerJR@scdot.org

Joyce
Gardner



Service Awards



LEFT: Gary Elliott of Anderson Maintenance celebrated 30 years with SCDOT on March 7 and received his 30 year service pin and certificate during an April 15 meeting. He serves as the Contracts person for Anderson.

BELOW: District Traffic Engineer Eric Dillon recently celebrated his 20 years of service with SCDOT. During his time in District 3, he has worked in construction, maintenance and traffic.



In Memory



Sharon Smith of Greenville Maintenance retired with 28 years of service on April 1. Unfortunately District 3 was saddened with the news that she passed away on June 20. She always had a smile on her face and brought life to her co-workers. We will miss you!

District 4 News

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

*District Engineer: Stan Bland
(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



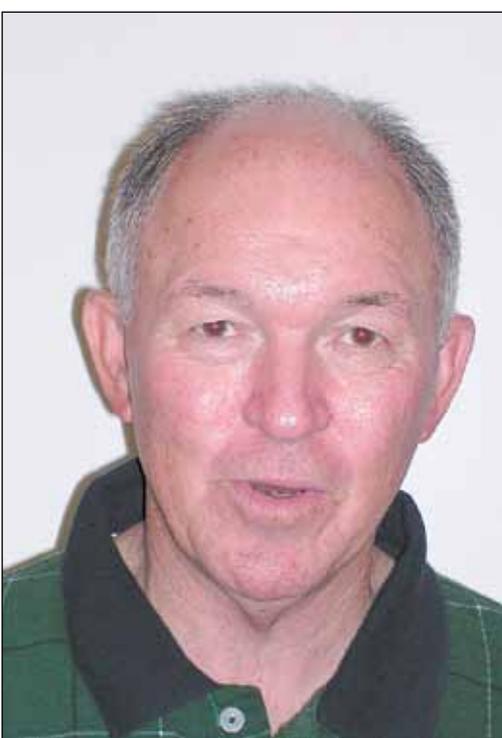
Edward Moore

Retirements

Trades Specialist Stanley Hodge, left, of Union Maintenance retired on June 30 after 21 years of service. Above, Assistant District Maintenance Engineer Perry Crocker presents him with a plaque honoring his service to SCDOT.



Great Falls Section Shed Foreman Mack Young, left, and District 4 DEA Stan Bland, right, present Trades Specialist III Charlie Ray Brown with his 28 years of service plaque. More than 90 employees, friends and family attended a retirement party at Chester Maintenance honoring Brown for his dedicated years of service to SCDOT.



Union RME Jerry Brannon retired on April 3 after 15 years of service.



Administrative Specialist Arlene Conklin, left, poses with her husband, Jimmy, at her retirement party June 25 after 12 years of service.

Chester Maintenance Retirements

The following retired from Chesterfield Maintenance with a combined total of 86 years of service.

Jimmie Teal	32 years
Tammus Smith	12 years
James McKnight	11 years
Robert Atkinson	11 years
Joel Skipper	10 years
Don Curtis	10 years

District 5 News

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

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

Got news?

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

**Michael
Miller**



Meet some of District 5's hard working crews



DARLINGTON CREW 1620

Left to Right: William Gee, Phillip Hill, Ollie Jackson, Cathy Hickson, Ronnie Zimmerman, Jerome McElveen, Jimmy Quillen, Wilshawn Commander. Not pictured: Maurice Close, Willie Ham and Quincy Taylor



DARLINGTON CREW 1660

Left to Right: Don Welch, Sylvester Rush, Rosena Fling, Mary Mitchell, Larry Eaddy, Terry Bishop, Jake McDonald



DARLINGTON COUNTY SECTION SHED

Left to Right: Lorenzo Scipio, Gene Copeland, Melvin Gale, Gonzie Hudson, Charles Phillips, Lawrence Coe, Greg Rivers, Perry James, Randy Small. Not pictured: Leola Rakestraw, Johnny Tucker and Steve Waiters



HORRY COUNTY SECTION SHED

Left to Right: Archie Simmons, Auther Wilson, Brian Thompson, Donnie Davis, James Harris, Joseph Royals, Lynn Cox, Wesley Richardson, Doug Gause. Not pictured: Ford Van Wert and Ed Higley

Meet Gloria Carter



Gloria Carter is the grounds and building specialist in Darlington County. She has recently assumed responsibility of managing the Adopt-A-Highway program for Darlington.

The most enjoyable part of her job is meeting and interacting with different people.

Carter is seen here with the 15 year employment certificate that was recently presented to her.

District 6 News

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

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

Meet Dorchester Maintenance

Dorchester County is located in the northern portion of District Six. The county is comprised of both rural and urban areas, making it very versatile. It is home to the famous "Grits Festival" which is held every April.

The maintenance unit is located in St. George and has 54 employees. Their areas of responsibility consist of maintaining 762

miles of state roads including portions of I-26 and I-95, two of South Carolina's major interstates.

Adopt-A-Highway is well established in this county with monthly pickups averaging 15,000 pounds. The 2008 Outstanding AAH group of the year, Shady Grove United Methodist Men, hails from Dorchester County.

Got news?

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



Janet Hendrix



HERBICIDE/SIGNS
Jamie Herndon



Patching Crew
James Bradley-Foreman, Edward Williams, Albert Johnson, Wilbert Walker, Manning Bair, (center) Samuel Cooper and Bill Brown

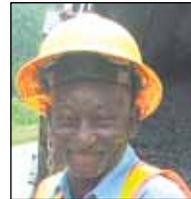


OFFICE

Cal Murray, Melissa Behie, Sandy Kizer, RME David Pilch, ARME Mike Popielarz, Melissa Herndon, (seated) Kathy Wagers



OFFICE
Jerome Jones



HOT CREW
James Green and Leonard Boyd



VEGETATION

Cleven Grant, Keith Kenney, Danny Nesbitt, Lamont Green, Gerome Haynes and Clay Green-Foreman



AUTO SHOP

David Syphett, Jennie Britt, Johnny Robinson, Daniel L. Mizell, John S. Smoak and James McAlhany



SIGN CREW

Thomas Skinner, Henry Greene and Floyd Schurknight (Not pictured Allen Colson)



DRAINAGE CREW
Donnell Johnson, Timmy Fulton, Jeff Collins and Ron Grooms (Driveways)



DRAINAGE CREW
Joe Berry



DRIVEWAY CREW
Harry Kennedy and Dan Yagman (Not pictured Rudy Schouten)



HOT CREW

Huie Fulton, Osmond Bowman and Richard Crook



Levi Mizell-Drainage, Ricky Kizer-Drainage Foreman, Howard Zeigler-Drainage, James Bradley-Patching Foreman, Clay Green-Vegetation Foreman, Stephen Simpson-Driveway Foreman, center Joey Gokey-Hot Crew Foreman

District 7 News

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

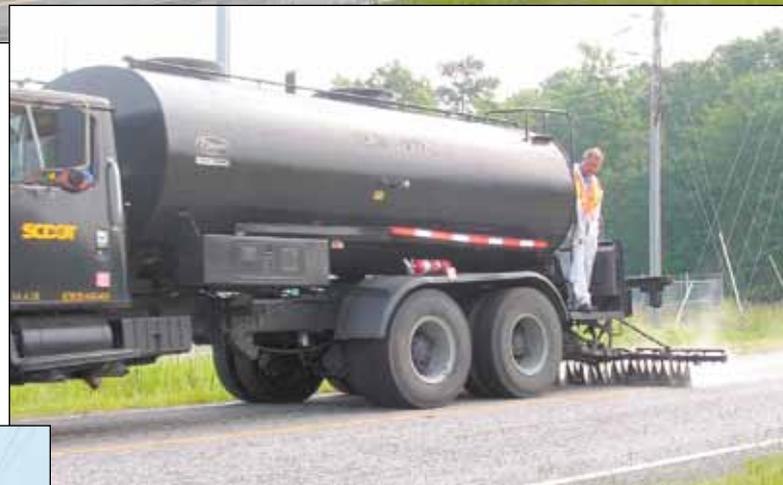
District Engineer: Jo Ann Woodrum (803) 531-6850
FAX (803) 531-6854

Surface seal operations run through October 15

Got news?

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

Deborah
Berry



PHOTOGRAPHS BY DEBORAH BERRY/DISTRICT 7

Orangeburg and Holly Hill Maintenance employees work together to apply surface seal to secondary roads in Orangeburg County.



The 2009 Surface Seal Operations are under way in District 7 and will run through Oct. 15, weather permitting. Orangeburg and Calhoun counties have completed surface seal. The operation is currently in the Holly Hill Maintenance area and will finish up in Clarendon County.

2008 SCOSC Safety Awards Recipients

The Orangeburg and Holly Hill Maintenance Units were awarded Safety Performance Certificates for having OSHA recordable incidence rates that were below the state average for companies in the Highway, Street, and Bridge Construction category.

District 7 Office and Bamberg Construction were awarded Safety Achievement Plan

Awards, Category A for accumulating five years (January 2004 through December 2008) without an OSHA recordable injury or illness.

Orangeburg Construction was awarded the Safety Achievement Plan Award, Category B for accumulating at least 50,000 work hours since the last OSHA recordable injury or illness and has maintained a zero incidence rate for the 2008 calendar year.

VIEWPOINTS

ARRA funding doubles annual federal funds

By H.B. 'Buck' Limehouse Jr.
Secretary of Transportation

A key word for SCDOT this summer and beyond is "double." The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) is providing our state with \$463 million in highway funds. These ARRA funds roughly double our yearly allotment of federal funds. The ARRA funding will allow us to resurface highways in every county. We will be replacing bridges, upgrading safety features and performing interstate maintenance all over the state of South Carolina.

Since April we have been in the process of letting ARRA-funded projects that have to be obligated within 120 days. We have doubled the number of lettings to two per month in an effort to get this work out on the streets. The ARRA lettings should continue at the rate of two per month into August.

The news from the lettings so far has been very good. The winning bids have been anywhere from seven percent to as much as 29 percent under our budget estimates. All indications are that we'll be able to add projects to our ARRA list, thereby increasing the value of our \$463 million allotment by as much as 10%.

The importance of meeting our 120-day deadline and the 360-day deadline on the remaining projects is not just about complying with the law. The intent of the legislation is twofold. The goals are to get people back to work while also improving the highway infrastructure in the state and our nation. Later this summer, we'll see the proof of perfor-



H.B. 'Buck' Limehouse Jr.

mance when contractors report how many people they've hired to handle the increased workload. However, we've seen some evidence already.

Remember that ARRA funds not only get work started on the projects that are qualified, but they are making room at the top of the priority lists for projects that are funded in our regular highway program.

In June, Florence Concrete Products, Inc. located in the Pee Dee received a contract to provide over \$2 million worth of pre-cast concrete bridges for our Maintenance units. Florence Concrete will produce 18 such bridges that will be used in ten counties. This contract allowed the company to recall 25 workers who had been laid off. The company is now fully staffed at 100 employees with no layoffs in the foreseeable future.

This example may be an indirect result of the ARRA, but it's a clear indication as to what the Act was designed to do, and it's happening here in South Carolina.



ZOE COOK/SCDOT COMMUNICATIONS

There is another factor that has been doubled due to the increased funding and that's the need for safety. The projects that are under way or will soon be started will double the number of work zones on our highways. Greater numbers of SCDOT employees and contractors' employees will be in these work zones. We're already in the period known as the "100 Deadliest Days of Summer." The danger for highway workers and motorists increases significantly between Memorial Day and Labor Day when more people are traveling.

Our 2009 highway fatality

rate is trending well below the totals for 2008 and dramatically below the 2007 figures. My hope is that workers and motorists alike will focus on

safety and keep the fatality rate as low as possible. Let me close by extending my wishes to all of you for a happy and safe summer.

SCDOT

SAFETY FIRST

ON THE ROAD • ON THE JOB

SCDOT, SCDPS spread message of 'Move Over' law

By Bob Kudelka

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) is installing signs across the state to educate motorists about the law requiring motorists to “move over” into an adjacent lane whenever possible as they encounter an emergency scene or a temporary work zone.

The signs read, “Move Over Or Reduce Speed For Stopped Emergency Vehicles.”

SCDOT is installing approximately 30 signs on various locations along I-20, I-26, I-77, I-85, I-95, I-385 and I-526.

SCDOT has also partnered with SCDPS to produce a television public service announcement about the Move Over law. It will be used in educational presentations by the SC Highway Patrol and will be distributed to driver education teachers across the state for use in their classrooms.

SCDOT joined the South Carolina Department of Public Safety (SCDPS) at news conferences at locations across the state on June 17 to announce these efforts.

“SCDOT personnel face danger every day in temporary work zones that are covered by the Move Over law,” said South Carolina Secretary of Transportation H.B. “Buck” Limehouse during the news conference at the State Fairgrounds. “We have literally thousands of maintenance and construction employees and personnel, not only of the DOT but of our subcontractors, who are out working on our highways every day and during nighttime hours as well. They are working to make your ride smoother and safer.”

Limehouse said stimulus funds this year, which have “essentially doubled” the state highway program, mean more work zones will be encountered across the state.

“We’re going to have a lot more people working on the highways to give you a better and safer transportation system, but we need your cooperation,”

Limehouse said.

“Anytime you see stopped emergency vehicles, orange work zone signs or equipment with flashing lights, and workers on the scene – move over. Give these dedicated men and women

“Anytime you see stopped emergency vehicles, orange work zone signs or equipment with flashing lights, and workers on the scene – move over. Give these dedicated men and women room to work and room to live.”

H. B. ‘Buck’ Limehouse Jr.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

ABOVE: SCDOT Video Producer Peter Tarpley, center, shoots a public service announcement on April 7 about the ‘Move Over’ law.



LEFT: SC Secretary of Transportation H.B. ‘Buck’ Limehouse speaks during the June 17 news conference. Also speaking at the event were: (left of Limehouse) SC Department of Public Safety Director Mark Keel and (right of Limehouse) SC Highway Patrol Colonel Kenny Lancaster. Holding the sign are, from left: Ada Gardner of SCDOT’s Richland Maintenance office, Roger Roscoe of the Camden Fire Department, Micah Norman of Lexington County EMS and Corporal M. B. Coffin of the SC Highway Patrol.

room to work and room to live,” Limehouse said.

The “Move Over” law requires motorists to “move over” into an adjacent lane whenever possible if they encounter an emergency scene. Section 56-5-1538 defines an emergency scene as “a location designated by the potential need to provide emergency medical care.” It is identified by emergency vehicles with flashing lights, rescue equipment, or emergency personnel on scene.

“The safety of first responders and highway workers continues to be an issue – both in South Carolina and nationwide,”

said Director of the South Carolina Department of Public Safety Mark Keel. “That is why this effort was undertaken by our agencies. I want to thank the many state and local law enforcement, fire fighters, EMS and others who have joined us in this important effort.”

State Senator Jake Knotts joined the news conference and thanked the leaders of SCDOT and SCDPS for their efforts to bring attention to the issue.

“It’s sad whenever the state of South Carolina has to pass laws to get common sense enforced,” Knotts said.

South Carolina’s “Move Over”

law also provides protection for highway workers. Section 56-5-1536 also requires motorists to “move over” into an adjacent lane whenever possible when passing temporary work zones. A temporary work zone is defined as “an area on a roadway identified by orange work zone signs or equipment with flashing lights, and the presence of workers on the scene.”

Drivers approaching a temporary work zone or an emergency scene are required by law to:

- Keep their vehicle under control
- Proceed with due caution
- Significantly reduce their ve-

hicle speed

- Yield the right of way by making a lane change into a lane not adjacent to the temporary work vehicle or equipment if on a highway with at least four lanes, with at least two lanes proceeding in the same direction

- Maintain the safe speed for road conditions if changing lanes is impossible or unsafe.

Endangering temporary work zone or emergency personnel is considered a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not less than \$300 nor more than \$500. Obeying this little-known law can save a life and prevent injury.