

The Connector

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VOLUME XXI NO. 1

SC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

WINTER 2008

Secretary delivers historic State of the SCDOT address

By Pete Poore

SCDOT Secretary H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr. had already made history when he was confirmed as the first Secretary of Transportation in South Carolina in August of 2007. In 2008, history was made again as he delivered the first "State of SCDOT" address to members of the Senate Transportation Committee on the morning of Wednesday Feb. 20. Limehouse had been invited to make the address by Committee Chairman Larry Grooms.

Limehouse opened his remarks with a "snapshot" look at SCDOT. He noted that the agency is responsible for the 4th largest state-maintained highway system in the nation, with 41,500 miles of state roads, including 8,337 bridges. Then Limehouse told lawmakers that SCDOT had turned in a new direction in the time since he has served as the head of the agency.

He told the gathering that as the first Secretary of Transportation appointed by Governor Mark Sanford, he has targeted all of his efforts at making SCDOT more accountable and responsive to the needs of South Carolina's citizens. "Since I became the agency head in May of 2007, I have worked with the SCDOT Commission to make us more efficient in the way we do business, particularly in the area of getting the most for the taxpayer's dollars. These efforts, coupled with the new law that reorganized SCDOT and made it a Cabinet agency continue to guide us in serving the state better," said Limehouse. He listed several changes that have taken place at SCDOT:

- Projects are prioritized based on engineering criteria. Several factors including pavement condition, volume of traffic, and safety factors such as crash/injury/fatality rates are considered. Every project, or requested project, is evaluated using the

engineering criteria and give a ranking.

- All requests for highway projects, no matter how large or small, must be documented in writing and submitted for evaluation and prioritization.

- Approved requests must be certified by a licensed Professional Engineer (PE).

Limehouse cited better financial management by the agency and better use of transportation dollars. "One of the first strategies I put into place was 'Fix it First!' which shifts the focus from new construction to preserving the large state highway system that we have in South Carolina," said Limehouse. The Commission agreed and supported the idea that new money should go toward protecting our investment," he added.

Limehouse noted that increases in federal funding are being used for pavement preservation, bridge replacements and projects that improve the safety of roads. He pointed to an additional \$26 million in federal funds awarded to SCDOT in the fall of 2007 because the agency was prepared with projects that were ready to move to construction within a short period of time. The \$26 million has provided additional funding for 13 projects all around the state.

Recent approval by the US Department of Transportation for SCDOT to investigate private investment in public highways was another innovative financing technique cited by Limehouse. "Public-Private Partnerships are no longer the wave of the future. They have become today's reality and a viable alternative. We are familiar with these partnerships in South Carolina, and we will continue to look at them. We will also have the advantage of having the most active State Transportation Infrastructure Bank in the country, and we'll continue to work closely with the Bank's Board," Limehouse said.



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

One of the projects on the priority list is the bridge replacement on Piney Grove Road over Kinley Creek in Richland County. The bridge is being widened to three lanes and realigned over the creek. Looking over the project plans are, from left, Assistant District 1 Construction Engineer Robbie Isgett, Richland B Resident Construction Engineer David Rogers and Assistant Geodetic Technician Andrew Gresham.

He told lawmakers he has worked closely with his deputies to pursue cost savings at every level within the agency.

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SCDOT

Daniel Isaac, Charles Dalton, Sarah Nuckles selected as new SCDOT Commissioners



Daniel H. Isaac Jr.
SCDOT Commissioner
1st Congressional District



Charles E. Dalton
SCDOT Commissioner
3rd Congressional District



Sarah B. Nuckles
SCDOT Commissioner
5th Congressional District

By Bob Kudelka

Three new Commissioners were sworn in and attended their first monthly meeting in March, replacing outgoing

members whose terms expired.

Sarah B. Nuckles succeeded Bobby T. Jones as the Commissioner representing the 5th Congressional District. Jones, of Camden, had served three terms on the Commission and

had been Chairman since August 2007.

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DIRECTIONS

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

On February 20th, I attended the Senate Transportation Committee meeting to deliver the first-ever "State of SCDOT" address. Members of the Committee wanted a report on how SCDOT was progressing since I was put into the leadership position of the agency in May of last year, and how the SCDOT Reorganization Bill, signed into law last year as Act 114, was affecting the way we do business.

Here's the short version of what I told the Committee: SCDOT is now doing things the right way. Not only have we stopped wasteful spending, we've taken steps to proactively save money that can free up more funds for maintenance of our state highway system. That's a short statement, but it could not have been made without lots of effort made by a lot of talented SCDOT employees.

I may have enacted the policies and initiatives to get the ball rolling, but the savings that have

occurred would not have happened without a lot of hard work, starting with the Deputies, and on down through every level of our agency.

I would be remiss if I did not give credit to our SCDOT Commissioners for the positive changes that have taken place. I'd like to thank our Chairman, Bobby T. Jones from the 5th Congressional District, Vice Chairman and 1st District Commissioner Joe Young, 2nd District Commissioner Henry Taylor, 3rd District Commissioner Marion P. Carnell, 4th District Commissioner Hugh Atkins, 6th District Commissioner Marvin Stevenson, and At-large Commissioner Tee Hooper.

The Commission had already resolved to get the agency back on the right track before last May when they asked me to serve in the position of what is now the Secretary of Transportation. However, the Commission left getting the job done to me, and they have supported me every step of the way, and I thank each of them for their confidence in me.

The "State of SCDOT" address also covered the impact Act 114 has had on us. When the bill was signed into law last June, this agency had to turn on a dime in terms of how our processes worked. From the day the bill was signed, all requests for projects now have to be recorded. All requests must be evaluated according to objective criteria and each request has to be ranked on a priority list.

Our Engineering staff had spent several months prior to Act 114 becoming law reviewing and finalizing all the criteria that should be considered when evaluating projects, but putting the process into practice almost overnight required a lot of work and a lot of record-keeping, but the job got done!!!

The final point I made in the State of SCDOT Address was that all of what I was reporting to the Committee was just a "snapshot look" at where SCDOT was in February 2008. We have made some changes and we've already saved significant amounts of mon-



H.B. 'Buck' Limehouse Jr.

ey, but we're just getting started. The job of using our limited funding wisely is one that goes on every day. For example, many of the savings that were initiated in District offices will provide savings for years to come.

I know that our 2009 State of SCDOT Address will be even

better. SCDOT has the advantage of having many smart and innovative employees. In less than a year, with all of us working together in the right way have done many good things for SCDOT and the state of South Carolina. I look forward to working with you as we make our state better.

SCDOT receives top honors for recycling, waste management



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Deputy Secretary for Finance and Administration Debra Rountree reads the plaque SCDOT received for its recycling and waste management policies.

By Bob Kudelka

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) received top honors among all South Carolina state agencies during the 13th annual Recycle Guys Awards Program, the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control announced March 4.

"The annual awards program recognizes the top recycling programs, people and projects, and allows us to recognize and thank those who make recycling work in the state," said Kent Coleman, director of DHEC's Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling. "Recycling works because of the local programs."

SCDOT won in the State Agency division for its "Outstanding Waste Reduction and Recycling Programs" at the state level.

During Fiscal Year 2007, SCDOT recycled a total of 640 tons of material.

"SCDOT employees are working hard to identify innovative methods to recycle materials and reduce waste," said South Carolina Secretary of Transportation H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr. "We have implemented waste reductions practices in the areas of leasing copiers, reuse of pallets, reuse of containers, reuse of cardboard boxes, reuse of envelopes, use of recapped tires, reuse of oil mats and parts

washer solvent. We also make extensive efforts to buy recycled materials, including furniture and office paper and products. In fiscal year 2007, we reported that 25 percent of our total purchases consisted of recycled materials."

- The demolition of the old bridges over the Cooper River provided SCDOT with the opportunity to use the old steel and concrete in an innovative fashion. These materials were used to create artificial reefs offshore to enhance the quality of sea life along the South Carolina coast. Approximately 84 acres of artificial reef were created. The reefs stretched from Little River to the Georgia state line.

- SCDOT partnered with the town of Mount Pleasant to recycle bridge pilings at a new park in the area of the former Cooper River bridge interchange. The highlight of the park is a 1,200-foot pier constructed upon the foundations of the old bridge.

- SCDOT found a company that will recycle 100 percent of the materials used by customers of the Cross Island Parkway on Hilton Head Island. All of our collected transponders are sent to this company to be recycled. "Although this represents a small segment of our total recycling efforts, it is yet another example of our commitment to recycling," Limehouse said.

The Connector

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H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr. is Secretary of Transportation.

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Titles change for deputy directors

Secretary H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr. announced a revision in the working titles of the three SCDOT Deputy Directors in early March. The titles of the Deputies have been changed to "Deputy Secretary."

Secretary Limehouse said, "These new

titles conform to the change that was created last summer when SCDOT became a Cabinet agency, and my title became Secretary of Transportation." The new titles became effective on March 4.



Tony Chapman
Deputy Secretary
for Engineering



Debra Rountree
Deputy Secretary
for Finance and
Administration



Glennith Johnson
Deputy Secretary
for Mass Transit

I-95 scheduled for improvements

Twenty-three mile portion in Florence, Dillon counties to be improved

SCDOT plans to improve the surface of a 23-mile portion of Interstate 95 in Florence and Dillon counties.

The improvements will be done on I-95 northbound and southbound from near SC 327 (in Florence County) to near SC 9 (in Dillon County).

In September 2007, the SCDOT Commission approved various sections of I-95 northbound and southbound between SC 327 in Florence County (mile marker 171) and SC 9 in Dillon County (mile marker 194) for improvements. The Commission

modified this approval on January 17 to include all sections of I-95 northbound and southbound from near SC 327 to near SC 9.

"This action was done based on the desire to bring to market a construction contract that avoids duplication of work, minimizes disruption of traffic and provides the most cost-effective construction management by SCDOT," said South Carolina Secretary of Transportation H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr.

SCDOT has already begun developing plans to patch, grind, seal, and

overlay I-95 from near SC 327 to near SC 9. Barring any unforeseen circumstances, SCDOT expects contractors to submit bids this summer or fall. Construction is expected to begin this fall.

"I am very pleased we are moving forward with this project to improve I-95," said SCDOT Commissioner Marvin Stevenson, who represents the 6th Congressional District. "I support the cost-saving strategy of rehabilitating this entire section as opposed to doing it piecemeal. This is a win-win for the Pee Dee area and the state of South Carolina."



Tennis anyone?

Third Annual SCDOT Tennis Tournament
Woodlands Country Club - April 11-12



By Herb Cooper and Bener Amado



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Clockwise from left: Cathy Cagney, John Walsh, Chetna Dixon, Herb Cooper, Bener Amado, Jackie Belcher and Marge Dorey.

B./Rayton F, 2nd place Ray Spence(WSA)/Roberto Ruiz; 3rd place John Caver/Philip Sandel

Women's 3.5 Doubles: Carmelina R./Coleen F., 2nd Place Conee H./Hilda F., 3rd Place Marge Dorey(SCDOT)/Colleen Donovan, 4th Place Robin Culver(LPA)/Joanne Hayton

Women's 4.0 Doubles: 1st place Lindsey Slice/Dina Brandon., 2nd Place Debbie Laney/Patty Snyder

Men's 4.0 Doubles: 1st place Bener Amado/Herb Cooper., 2nd Place Ray Spence(WSA)/Jeremy Pow

Mixed 6.5 Doubles: 1st Place Ann Salmonson/Alicia Amick, 2nd place Gil Pipes/Ruth Rayman, 3rd place Joe Mozingo/Sherri Wahdan(SCDOT), 4th place Ralph Rubeiz/Mona Hardin

Mixed 7.5 Doubles: 1st Place

Paul Raad (CECS)/ Renee Watson, 2nd Place Bener Amado/Cathey Reed, 3rd Place Herb Cooper/Cathey Cagney

The tennis tournament was open to all employees of SCDOT, FHWA, ACEC and AGC. Friends and family were invited to participate in the tournament as well. There were beginners and long-time tennis players creating a friendly competition at all levels. Many of the players brought their families to support them. Co-workers who came out had a great time heckling and also enjoyed the great weather.

The Tournament Committee consisted of John Walsh, Bener Amado, Herb Cooper, and Scott Armstrong. The committee would like to thank Bruce Reinecker (Tennis Pro at Woodlands Country Club) for making this event a great success.

Last year's SCDOT Tennis Tournament was held March 9-10 at the Woodlands Country Club in the northeast area of Columbia.

Eighty five tennis players participated in the tournament, which consisted of eight categories including Men's 3.0 Singles, Men's 3.0, 3.5 and 4.0 Doubles, Women's 3.5 and 4.0 Doubles and Mixed 6.5 and 7.5 Doubles. The tournament format was single elimination for doubles and round robin for singles events.

The Winners of the tournament are as follow: Men's 3.0 Doubles: 1st place Ray C./Hoppy S., 2nd place Jeff Sizemore/Mark Pleasant (SCDOT), 3rd place Milton Fletcher(SCDOT)/Frank Skinner, 4th place Van Delacruz (SCDOT)/Thai Trinh(Collins)

Women's 3.0 Doubles: 1st place Tara G./Patricia B., Finalist:Wanda P./Jennifer L., 3rd place Jackie Belcher(SCDOT)/Lynne Houser

Men's 3.5 Doubles: 1st place Chris

For additional information on the third annual tennis tournament, which will take place on April 11-12 at the Woodlands Country Club, please contact Bruce Reinecker at (803) 629-6326 or go to woodland-scc.com and click tennis and SCDOT tournament.

April 11-12, 2008 - Want to join us?

Contact Bruce Reinecker at 803-629-6326 or go to www.Woodlandscc.com

Interstate 73

Record of Decision signing moves new route closer to reality

"The Record of Decision represents a major milestone for the I-73 South project."

Thomas Barrett
Deputy Secretary of Transportation
of the US Department of Transportation

By Bob Kudelka

Leaders from the SCDOT and the US Department of Transportation (USDOT) gathered along side a busy stretch of US 501 in Myrtle Beach Feb. 8 to announce important developments in the I-73 project.

"This is a great day," said Congressman Henry Brown, who participated in the news conference for the signing of the Record of Decision for the southern segment of I-73. Commission Chairman Bobby T. Jones and Commissioners Marvin Stevenson and Joe Young also attended the event.

The Record of Decision (ROD) completes the environmental review process for the I-73 South project.

The ROD, approved by the Federal Highway Administration, determines the selected alternative and the preliminary design of the new interstate. FHWA approval of the ROD also allows SCDOT to move forward to acquire the necessary Rights-of-way for I-73.

"The Record of Decision represents a major milestone for the I-73 South project," said Thomas Barrett, Deputy Secretary of Transportation of the US Department of Transportation. "This important step was reached in a little over three years, far ahead of the national average of closer to six years for projects similar to I-73.

"It's a significant step for Myrtle Beach and South Carolina...With the stroke of a pen here in a few minutes, we're going to start to cut the traffic you see over here to my right."

South Carolina Secretary of Transportation H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr. said the SCDOT will be requesting proposals (RFP) for public/private partnerships to facilitate financing of the I-73 project.

"As emphasized by Governor Sanford, the public-private partnership method of innovative financing may be the method to deliver the entire I-73 project in South Carolina," Limehouse said. "I am interested to see the ideas from the private sector to further this important transportation project."

Limehouse lauded the impact of the State Infrastructure Bank use of innovative financing on South Carolina's transportation system.

"Back in '94 when I came to the Department of Transportation, we were given a list of six major projects and no money," Limehouse said. "We decided to not stop there but to move ahead with innovative financing. Bobby Jones, who's now the chairman of the Commission, was one of the Commissioners, and we came up with innova-



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

State, federal and local dignitaries watch as Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation Thomas J. Barrett, seated left, and SC Secretary of Transportation H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr, seated right, approve the Record of Decision for the southern section of I-73 in South Carolina. The signing ceremony took place Feb. 8 along US 501 near Myrtle Beach.



Speakers at the event pose with SCDOT Commission Chairman Bobby T. Jones, second right, with the Record of Decision after the ceremony. Shown from left are: SC Secretary of Transportation H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr., U.S. Congressman Henry Brown, Chairman Jones and Deputy Secretary of the US Department of Transportation Thomas Barrett.

tive financing, which is what's going to make this project work...The State Infrastructure Bank was one of the key components.

"I gave the bill to my son, Chip, who is in the House, and it passed the House overwhelmingly and it stalled in

the Senate. The chairman of Ways and Means came up and said, 'Chip let me help you with that bill. I think I can get it through.' And he did get it through. Because of Henry Brown, most of the major projects in this state are now a reality. All six of those projects are completed plus several more that weren't envisioned...All without raising taxes and all with a partnership of federal, state and local governments."

SCDOT will also need to secure the necessary permits from the US Army Corps of Engineers and other agencies before construction could begin.

"What lies ahead next is financing," Barrett said. "Fortunately, South Carolina is joining the growing list of states that are embracing new and innovative approaches to financing transportation development that we so badly need. South Carolina leadership understands that with high speed electronic tolling, travelers can have the power to finance this important road."

The Southern I-73 Project is from I-95 in Dillon County through Marion County to SC 22 (Veterans Highway) in Horry County, a distance of 43.5 miles.

The Northern I-73 Project extends from I-95 in Dillon County to US 74 in Richmond County, NC, a distance of approximately 35 miles. A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was approved on July 29, 2007 and work on the Final EIS is underway. It is anticipated to be completed by late spring 2008 with the Record of Decision to come early this summer.

For more information on the I-73 project, visit the Web site:

www.i73insc.com



Project Manager Mitchell Metts gives a project update on I-73 to Myrtle Beach area leaders.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

The US 76 Bridge over the Chattooga River was constructed through a joint effort with both the South Carolina and Georgia DOT's and Federal Highway Administration Division Offices.

Chattooga Bridge replacement project receives environmental award

By Bob Kudelka

SCDOT received a federal award Friday, Jan. 18, for its exemplary work in replacing the US Highway 76 bridge over the scenic Chattooga River in Oconee County.

Bob Thomas, South Carolina Assistant Division Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration, presented the award to South Carolina Secretary of Transportation H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr. during the monthly SCDOT Commission meeting held in Summerville. SCDOT was one of eight award winners nationwide.

SCDOT won the award as part of the Exemplary Human Environment Initiatives program for 2007 of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The Exem-

plary Human Environment Initiatives (EHEI) program is a new program designed to support and measure FHWA's environmental stewardship responsibilities.

"Protecting South Carolina's natural beauty has been a top priority for this administration, and I want to thank DOT for focusing on that goal in the completion of this project," Governor Mark Sanford said.

The EHEI program promotes environmental stewardship by giving recognition to transportation projects and activities that are particularly effective and innovative in how they adapt and enhance the human environment. SCDOT was one of 8 award winners from 38 applicants.

"I was very pleased to nominate SCDOT for this award, based on the significant interagency



Alan Creasy, left, and Ben Heaslip, campers from Georgia, use the pedestrian walkway on the US 76 Bridge over the Chattooga River on Tuesday, Dec. 11. The two were crossing the bridge from the parking area to the hiking and camping area on the other side of the river. Creasy said the new bridge's pedestrian walkway was great. "Crossing the old bridge was a mad dash dodging cars to get to the trail," he said.

and community partnering effort which resulted in the extensive use of Context Sensitive Solutions to improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities," said Bob Lee, South Carolina Division Administrator of FHWA. "These measures were also implemented to preserve the natural scenic qualities of the area as well as the recreational activities on the Chattooga River."

A significant interstate partnering effort resulted in a new bridge over the Chattooga River that connects US 76 between South Carolina and Georgia and is within National forests. The team used a Context Sensitive Solutions approach to improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities, ensure that the bridge did not interfere with the scenery, and did not disrupt recreational river use.

"It was very important that this sensitive, scenic stretch of water was not impacted by building this much needed bridge," said Marion P. Carnell, SCDOT Commissioner representing the 3rd Congressional District. "I am

pleased with the efforts made to protect the environment. It was a win-win for all involved."

In 2003, SCDOT announced that the US 76 bridge over the Chattooga River would be replaced in 2006. Because the river forms the state line between Georgia and South Carolina, the planning and development required partnership involving two state Departments of Transportation, two National Forests, two office of FHWA, two county governments, two Corps of Engineers offices and two state Historic Preservation Officers.

The Chattooga River's scenery, trout fishing, whitewater boating, hiking, camping and backpacking make it a popular site. As a result of the excellent partnerships and communication with the public, solutions were found to ensure the river's outstanding features would be protected and enhanced. For example, the project included a protected pedestrian walkway across the bridge, a handicap-accessible viewing platform and

the use of a vegetated slope on the Georgia side rather than a large retaining wall.

Limehouse said the US 76 project is an example of "the way we do business at SCDOT."

"Good things happen when successful partnerships are forged on many levels and the public is involved in the planning and implementation," Limehouse said. "I am proud of the efforts that led to this national award and I would like to thank the Federal Highway Administration for this honor."

Limehouse said the US 76 project is another notable project in SCDOT's history, which includes the preservation of Sandy Island. Sandy Island is a four-mile wide, six-mile long area of wetlands and natural area in Georgetown County. SCDOT took the lead in protecting the 12,000 acres by purchasing Sandy Island in 1997.

Recently, SCDOT also received a US Forest Service's Partnership Award for its exemplary work on the US Highway 76 bridge project.



BOB KUDELKA/THE CONNECTOR

Assistant FHWA SC Division Administrator Bob Thomas, right, presents an award for the US Highway 76 bridge replacement project to SC Secretary of Transportation H.B. 'Buck' Limehouse Jr. The award was presented during the Feb. 18 Commission meeting in Summerville.

Community Health Charities

Employees volunteer to raise money for local charities

The Community Health Charities of South Carolina is a federation of 23 respected national health agencies providing research, public and professional education, patient, family and community services across the nation and in your community.

Statewide CHC Coordinator Lisa Vining coordinated SCDOT's fundraising efforts at Headquarters.

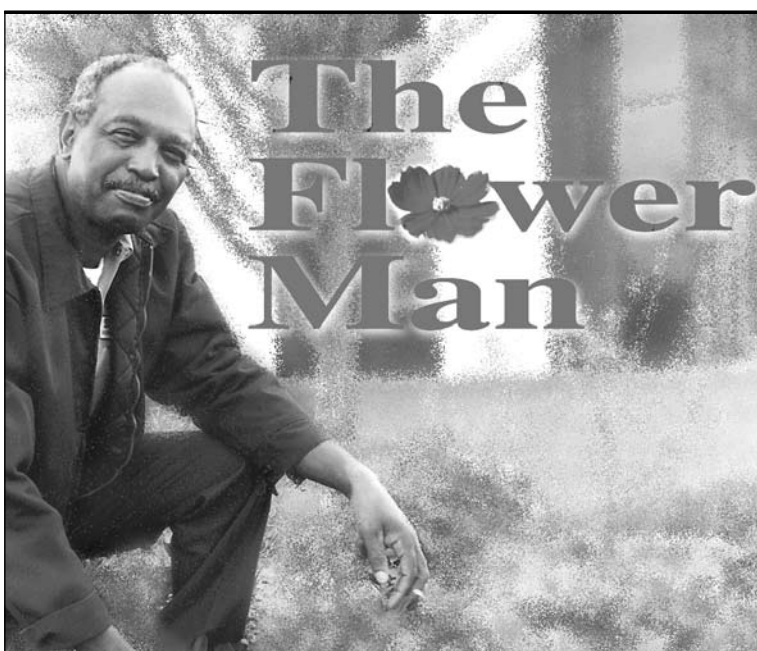
"This year we raised money through our two lunch-time events," Vining said.

On Feb. 13, the effort sold 30 pizzas. On Feb. 28, the volunteers sold 140 hamburger lunches.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Two lunch fundraisers were held in February for the Community Health Charities. On Feb. 13, SCDOT employee volunteers sold slices of pizza to employees during their lunch hour. On Feb. 28, hamburger lunches consisting of burgers, chips and sodas were sold to employees.



Shear fun

Pruning tips that will reward your plants

By Ernest Jones

It's not enough to put plants in the soil and expect them to grow unattended. Garden

plants need care to help them achieve their ultimate potential.

You may think of pruning only in terms of trees, but many plants grow better when pruned.

Evergreen hedges and foundation plants, woody vines, conifers, and flowering shrubs, all need pruning from time to time. Herbaceous perennials do, too.

Deadheading faded flowers is a form of pruning. Plants being trained to unnatural shapes, such as espaliered trees and topiaries, need frequent pruning and training to maintain their shape.

Prune woody plants to remove damaged and weak growth, to get rid of waterspouts and suckers, to improve overall shape, or to enhance flowering to fruiting.

You also may need to remove branches growing into utility wires, against a building, or elsewhere you don't want them, or to thin out growth to let more light get to plants growing below the trees.

Pruning can eliminate crowded or crossed branches, or you can prune to shorten branches or shoots, or to encourage growth in a particular direction.

For denser, more compact growth, prune to an inward-facing bud; for an open shape, prune to an outward-facing bud.

WHEN TO PRUNE?

When is the proper time to prune? If you were to ask this question at a gathering of gardeners, whether professional nurserymen or weekend green thumb gardeners, you'd be assured a stimulating conversation. Each person has a definite idea on the subject – some even maintain that the best time to prune is whenever you feel like it.

The best time depends on several variables – the condition of the plant, the length of its growing season, when it blooms, and whether it buds from new growth or only on older wood.

SPRING PRUNING

Inspect your plant each spring and remove any branches damaged by ice, snow or wind. Repair any wounds that may have been inflicted by roving animals or winter sportsmen.

A few gardeners hold out for regular spring pruning for some plants, but since the greatest sap movement takes place in spring, it seems to me that this is a bad

time to do almost any pruning except for repair work.

Spring is the time to pinch off buds that may be starting branches or tops in the wrong place. Remove new suckers, water sprouts, or any other branches that are beginning to grow in the wrong direction.

EARLY SUMMER PRUNING

This is the season when every plant is making its greatest growth. For this reason, it is a good time to shear evergreens and hedges. It is also the best season for pruning shrubs that bloomed in the spring, such as lilac, bridal wreath, honeysuckle and spring-blossoming spireas.

These plants should be pruned just after they finish blooming so that they will have time to start developing a new set of buds which will bloom the following spring.

Early summer also is the best time to continue corrective pruning on young trees, such as pinching or cutting off any limbs that might form tops, bad crotches, or suckers.

Chamber of Commerce recognizes six SCDOT units for safety

By Bob Kudelka

If you can smell hamburgers or chicken cooking at Sumter Maintenance these days, chances are the employees' good safety record is continuing.

As part of an emphasis on safety, Resident Maintenance Engineer Tammy Hodge sponsors a quarterly lunch as a reward for no time loss due to injury. Sumter Maintenance reached 500 days on Feb. 14.

"I just personally think it's good team-building and an additional reward for them working safely," said Hodge, who uses her own money to feed the 86-member staff. "I do it because I want to do it, not because I have to do it."

Hodge was among the SCDOT employees honored by the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce for their outstanding 2007 safety records.

The Chamber recognized SCDOT Headquarters and five SCDOT Maintenance units, which qualified for the Chamber's "Commendation of Excellence" Safety award based on their accomplishments of zero lost workdays due to an injury or illness.

These units, which have proven themselves to be among the best in the prevention of injuries and reduction of lost workdays, were honored at an awards ceremony at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention



The South Carolina Chamber of Commerce recognized SCDOT Headquarters and five SCDOT Maintenance units for their outstanding 2007 Safety Records. Shown from left are: Cherokee RME Stephen Ellis, Lee RME Wayne Keeys, Sumter RME Tammy Hodge, Chester RME Mike Rector, Colleton RME Jim Johannemann and SCDOT Industrial Safety Coordinator Robert Wiggs.

Center in Columbia on March 6.

The following SCDOT units were recognized: Lee Maintenance, Sumter Maintenance, Cherokee Maintenance, Chester Maintenance, Colleton Maintenance and Headquarters.

Accepting the awards at the ceremony were ARME Jim Johannemann of Colleton Maintenance, RME Mike Rector of Chester Maintenance, RME Stephen Ellis of Cherokee Maintenance, Hodge of Sumter Maintenance, RME Wayne Keeys of Lee Maintenance and Industrial Safety Coordinator Robert Wiggs of Headquarters.

Director of Maintenance Jim Fedra commended the winners of the awards, saying their safety records are no accident.

"It's because the residents emphasize safety and continue to stress that," Fedra said. "It's a philosophy and becomes an attitude of every employee on the job. We work in a dangerous environment and things can happen in a blink of an eye. We must do our jobs safely."

At Sumter, Hodge said they have increased job inspections and expanded their safety meetings to encourage employees to share "near miss" experiences.

"We've encouraged employees to discuss that and be very open about it," she said.

And of course, the lunches are popular, she said.

Hodge said she uses her own money because there are no state funds available. She figures one injury alone would cost the unit more than a year's worth of lunches in lost work time.

"It's a celebratory event, and it promotes good fellowship and everybody looking out for each other," Hodge said. "It goes over extremely well...Everybody likes to eat."

Changes in Palmetto Parkway will save taxpayers' money

By Bob Kudelka

The SCDOT Commission has approved changes to the Palmetto Parkway construction project to benefit motorists and save money.

The changes involve items that had been originally proposed but were not included due to lack of funding. However, due to additional funding approved by the South Carolina Infrastructure Bank, as requested by Aiken County, and costs savings by SCDOT and the contractor, the SCDOT Commission approved the additional work as follows.

The changes include widening Clearwater Road from 3 to 5 lanes; widening US 25 to six lanes (three lanes in each direction); a complete reconstruction

of interchange at I-20 and US 25 to include a new US 25 bridge over I-20; and a bicycle and pedestrian path adjacent to I-520.

"This is great news for Aiken County and the state of South Carolina," said Secretary of Transportation H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr.

"By moving forward, the SCDOT anticipates a substantial savings by doing the work at this time as opposed to coming back at a later date. It also lessens the future burden on the motoring public by completing these items as one large project instead of piecemeal construction."

To come back and do the work at a later date would have required tearing up new curb and gutter, asphalt and bridge work, Limehouse said. By doing the

work now, Limehouse said Aiken County and the State also avoid future price escalation and inflation.

"I would like to thank the SCDOT Commission, the South Carolina Infrastructure Bank and Aiken County for their foresight and support," Limehouse said. "This is a win for all involved."

The Palmetto Parkway Phase II, along with Phase I (which opened to traffic on June 22, 2004) will join Georgia's Bobby Jones Expressway to complete a circumferential route around the City of North Augusta and Augusta, Georgia. More importantly, the Parkway will serve the expanding North Augusta area, as well as provide a direct connection to I-20.

The new roadway will be a



PHOTO COURTESY OF DE COMPRAETTA/AERIALPHOTOSELITE.COM

controlled access, four-lane divided interstate facility with 13 bridge structures that also includes three interchanges to local existing roads.

In November 2006, SCDOT entered into a construction contract with United Constructors,

Inc. The notice to proceed with work was issued January 2, 2007. The project is on schedule, under budget and approximately 45 percent completed.

The SCDOT Commission approved the contract changes at its January meeting in Summerville.

OMAR 2008

The Office of Materials and Research (OMAR) held its 23rd Annual Meeting on Jan. 25 at the "Zone" in Williams Brice Stadium.

OMAR offers numerous engineering services to various departments within the DOT as well as to contractors and consultants statewide.

OMAR has 92 employees working in engineering offices, an AASHTO accredited laboratory in Columbia and three satellite laboratories in Charleston, Florence and Greenville.

OMAR is dedicated to assuring that the best materials available are used in our state's roadway system.

The Research Unit tasks include managing the contracted research projects of the SPR program, managing the Department's New Products Program, and coordinating research activities involved with national research programs such as USDOT, FHWA, AASHTO, TRB, and NCHRP.



Office of Materials and Research
Annual Meeting 2008

ADDRESS from page 1

This has already provided results:

- One-time savings realized in 2007 - \$17,836,597
- Annualized savings realized - \$9,479,223
- Several initiatives designed to produce savings have been put into place

Among the highlights of the savings was a project on US 17 in Charleston County, a portion of which was handled by the engineering firm of Davis & Floyd. The project involved making improvements on US 17 between I-526 and the Isle of Palms Connector.

The pre-engineering work done by the firm to provide a solution for efficiently moving utility lines in the areas scheduled for widening while avoiding conflicts and delays saved the project nearly \$1 million. Part of the savings involved an estimated \$480,000 in construction costs for a six month delay that would have occurred had not a suitable plan been designed by engineers from Davis & Floyd.

SCDOT Commissioner Marion Carnell, who represents the 3rd Congressional District, commended the Greenwood-based firm. "Our resources are tighter

than ever as construction costs skyrocket almost daily. It's more critical now than ever for SCDOT to be able to depend on firms and contractors who can work with us to get the most out of our limited dollars. I thank Davis & Floyd for helping us serve the people of South Carolina better," Carnell said.

Other issues that Limehouse included in his presentation were highway safety, environmental concerns and serving the public. He pointed to the grim statistics that show South Carolina to be among the leading states in highway deaths. The death toll for 2007 stands at 1,074. Nearly half of those people killed were not wearing seat belts.

Limehouse listed some of the major safety initiatives including the Median Cable Barrier Program where cable barriers have been phased in on 420 miles of interstate highways beginning in 2001. The barriers have sustained over 13,000 "hits" during the last seven years.

A partnership between SCDOT and the SC Department of Public Safety (SCDPS) has created a team of state troopers who are funded by SCDOT to patrol work zones and high-speed corridors. The team has been in operation since June of 2006. Compared to the calendar year 2006, the

2007 crash, injury and death rates have declined considerably. Work zone crashes have dropped by 46% from 940 to 501; work zone injuries have dropped by 41%, from 410 to 239; and work zone fatalities have dropped by 53%, from 15 to 7.

Limehouse listed initiatives which have already paid dividends in terms of preservation of the environment and increasing the quality of life in South Carolina. Following Governor Sanford's leadership on this issue, SCDOT engineers devised a plan to save more "canopy trees" which will remain in the newly-created median in the project to widen US 17 in Beaufort County.

Also on this same project, SCDOT took measures to preserve boats that were used by Union soldiers in raids to free slaves on plantations near the Combahee River. The boats were discovered beneath the riverbed prior to the bridge replacement portion of the widening project.

Also in Beaufort County, SCDOT worked with local leadership and residents to preserve the historic "Emancipation Tree" which was near the path of the US 21 widening project on St. Helena Island. This tree is the location where a large number of slaves learned of their freedom when they heard the reading of

President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation.

In the Upstate, SCDOT won an environmental award for the replacement of a bridge on US 76 which crosses the Chattooga River, connecting South Carolina and Georgia. The award was for the extra public input efforts made by the agency and the design of the bridge to conform to the natural area.

SCDOT has also promoted the SmartRide commuter service in the Midlands of South Carolina. The two existing routes promote mass transit services, while providing commuters with alternative transportation aimed at reducing congestion and improving air quality.

Limehouse concluded his remarks with a list of upcoming projects that the agency plans to begin in 2008. Those projects include a 23-mile rehabilitation project on I-95 in Florence and Dillon Counties. He also told the lawmakers that "SCDOT has turned in a new direction where priorities are set objectively based on need, and our business is conducted in the sunshine."

The Secretary then fielded questions related to his address and other transportation issues, some particularly related to funding. Several members of the SCDOT Commission were

present for the event including 1st District Commissioner Joe Young, 2nd District Commissioner Henry Taylor, 3rd District Commissioner Marion P. Carnell, 4th District Commissioner Hugh Atkins, 6th District Commissioner Marvin Stevenson and Commission Chairman Bobby T. Jones from Camden.

"I am very pleased with the improvements aimed at making the Department of Transportation more efficient," said Jones, who represents the 5th Congressional District. "We must ensure the wise and efficient use of tax dollars as we seek to preserve and improve our highway transportation infrastructure," he added.

The proceedings closed with a final comment from Chairman Grooms who said to Secretary Limehouse, "You are the right man at the right time for this job."

The Charleston native was appointed as the Executive Director in May of 2007 by the SCDOT Commission. His appointment by Governor Sanford as the state's first Secretary of Transportation was confirmed by the SC State Senate on August 2, 2007. Limehouse previously served on the SCDOT Commission in the 1990s, including service as the Commission Chairman until 1999.

COMMISSION from page 1

"I'm really just very, very proud to be a South Carolinian and I'm very, very proud to be here today with just wonderful colleagues who have all dedicated their lives to public service," Nuckles said.

Daniel H. Isaac Jr. succeeded Joe Young as the Commissioner representing the 1st Congressional District. Young, of Georgetown County, had served on the Commission since March 2007 and had been Vice Chairman since August.

"I look forward to serving, and I think we'll have a good time," Isaac said.

Charles E. Dalton succeeded Marion P. Carnell as the Commissioner representing the 3rd Congressional District. Carnell, of Ware Shoals, had served on the Commission since March 2004.

The Legislative Delegation of the 1st Congressional District elected Dalton on March 6, 2008, to succeed Carnell, whose term was expiring.

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.

"I really have enjoyed my relationship with the Highway Department over the years," Dalton said. "I look forward to another term under the new setup."

Dalton, a 1964 Clemson University graduate, is President and CEO of Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative, Inc. 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. He is married to Olivia Davis Dalton and has three children.

Young, a Georgetown County businessman and a former State Legislator, has represented the 1st Congressional District on the

Commission since March 2007 and was elected Vice Chairman in August 2007.

Young is owner of Low Country Forest Products, Inc. of Georgetown. He has 45 years experience in the timber industry and, with his family, owns and manages a family forest in South Carolina.

Isaac, a 1974 graduate of The Citadel, is the President of A&I Corporation and its North Carolina sister company, Alisco, Inc. Isaac serves on the Board of Directors of Crescent Bank, the Board of Directors of Electric Services of South Carolina, and is the treasurer of Benchmark Management. He is married to Sally M. Isaac and has two children.

Nuckles, of Rock Hill, a 1989 graduate of Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, is owner of Pencilheads, LLC, a small business accounting, consulting and business development firm. Her career has included responsibilities as budget officer and internal auditor for a Florida municipal utility, and General Manager of a Volvo-GM, Thermo-King, and Daimler-Benz heavy truck dealership in the mid 80's. In 1993, Nuckles became Vice President of Nuckles Flooring Company, Inc., in West Palm Beach, before moving to York County in 1997 and continuing the flooring business until 2003.

Nuckles served on the Palm

Beach County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in the early 1990s in her official capacity as an elected city commissioner representing the City of West Palm Beach, Fla. She also served appointed positions on the West Palm Beach Zoning Board of Appeals and the District Historic Preservation Board.

She worked as a special projects intern on the Rock Hill-Fort Mill Area Transportation Study (RFATS) MPO in Rock Hill from 2004-2005, as a transportation planning and grants coordinator working with the Federal Highway Administration, SCDOT, and local government entities. She co-authored the Public Involvement Plan for the MPO.

Nuckles also worked with Capital Management and Engineering, P.C., a management consulting firm, from 2005-2008. The firm represented York County in its management of transportation projects following passage of a local option sales tax levied for road projects. She has two children and three grandchildren, and is a fourth-generation South Carolinian.

Jones, a longtime Commissioner who noted that he's served with several Executive Directors and State Highway Engineers over the years, gave each outgoing Commissioner a chance to speak and also recognized former commissioners in attendance



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Commission Chairman Bobby T. Jones poses by the portraits of SCDOT's executive directors. He noted that he has worked with half of the agency's executive directors — the six on the bottom row.

John N. Hardee and William C. "Bud" Turner.

"It's been a pleasure, most of the time," Carnell said, joking about "rough times" early in his term.

Young joked that it was the most relaxed Commission meeting he's attended.

"I'm more than happy to turn it over to you, Danny. I know you'll do us a good job," Young

said. "I didn't lose any sleep last night, and I wasn't up all night reading that thick notebook like I usually do before coming to the meeting."

"It's been a good year, I thoroughly enjoyed it. You have an excellent staff, Mr. Secretary, and South Carolina is blessed to have the people we do...Congratulations all the new Commission members."



Joe Young, standing, shakes hands with his replacement for the 1st Congressional District on the SCDOT Commission, Daniel Isaac. Also in the photo, from right is John Walsh, Bill DuBose and Deputy Secretary for Engineering Tony Chapman.



Marion Carnell during the March 20 meeting says a few words about his term representing the 3rd Congressional District on the SCDOT Commission. At left is former Commissioner Bud Turner who also served the 3rd Congressional District.

Transportation Association of South Carolina Roadeo

Annual Mass Transit event gives drivers, mechanics important training to do their jobs safely

By Rob Thompson

When most of us think of the Transportation Association of South Carolina (TASC) Roadeo, we think of public transportation drivers maneuvering their buses through tricky obstacle courses. But the TASC Roadeo is much more than that.

Each year, in addition to the driving skills event, public transportation employees take refresher courses to keep them up-to-date on necessary training. Whether it's learning about new engine specifications or how to safely tie-down a wheelchair, the training ensures that mass transit customers across the state are transported safely.

This year's Roadeo was held Feb. 8 on the campus of Horry-Georgetown Technical College in Conway.



Marion Carman talks with drivers and mechanics about safety requirements and new issues that face public transportation employees.



Instructors discuss the proper ways to tie-down wheelchairs on buses during one of the training sessions.



During the training, drivers are encouraged to ask the instructors questions. State Transport Police officers were among the instructors helping with any legal issues.



Drivers and mechanics also are given tests during the roadeo.



A team of mechanics work together on one of the tests.



Mechanics worked as a team to solve problems on the written test.



It's impressive to watch the drivers back a 40-foot bus into a tight parking spot during the driving skills event.



Drivers demonstrate loading and securing a handicapped rider in compliance with ADA rules. Providing safe and efficient public transportation is a primary goal of Mass Transit providers.



Do not try this maneuver if you can't parallel park! Tight turns are also a part of the maneuvers necessary to handle a bus safely.

2008 TASC ROADEO WINNERS

MECHANICS THREE-MAN TEAM COMPETITION

- 1st place – Pee Dee Regional Transportation Authority
- 2nd place – Williamsburg County Transit Authority
- 3rd place – Berkeley Charleston Dorchester RTMA

40-FOOT COACH CATEGORY

- 1st place – Willie McKay of Pee Dee Regional Transportation Authority (PDRTA)
- 2nd place – Karl Nell of VEOLIA Transportation
- 3rd place – Jausha McCrea of Williamsburg County Transit Authority

35-FOOT COACH CATEGORY

- 1st place – Phillip Patterson of VEOLIA Transportation
- 2nd place – Berry Grey of Clemson Area Transit
- 3rd place – Ronnie Parker of Coast Regional Transportation Authority (Coast RTA)

CUTAWAY CATEGORY

- 1st place – William Stinson of Senior Services of Chester
- 2nd place – Cynthia Footman of Berkeley Charleston Dorchester Rural Transportation Management Association (BCDRTMA)
- 3rd place – Brenda Benjamin of PDRTA

VAN CATEGORY

- 1st place – Keosha Parker of Coast RTA
- 2nd place – William Daughtry of PDRTA
- 3rd place – Betty Huell of Williamsburg County Transit Authority

Business Development Academy: FHWA pilot project kicks off at SCDOT

By Bob Kudelka

South Carolina was selected as one of 12 states to participate in the Federal Highway Administration's national pilot project for Business Opportunities and Workforce Development.

As part of this project, SCDOT held its kick-off celebration for its Business Development Academy on Jan. 17. About 50 people attended the event in the auditorium at Headquarters.

"Our vision for a Business Development Academy was one of the initiatives within the pilot project," said Dr. Arlene Prince, Director for Business Development and Special Programs. "We know we are making our vision a reality."

"We believe this Academy offers a wonderful opportunity to learn, to grow, to network and to build partnerships."

The Business Development Academy is designed to provide



BOB KUDELKA/THE CONNECTOR

Director of Business Development and Special Projects Dr. Arlene Prince, left, thanks Curtis Wilson for participating in the program.

various aspects of educational and training courses that are considered most relevant to the operation of a company. These courses are structured to empower DBEs certified under the South Carolina

Unified Certification Program (UCP) and provides them with the tools to establish and maintain successful companies, Prince said.

"We realize that there are many

challenges that small businesses face today," Prince said. "We also know that competition is strong and success does not come easy. But with faith, we know that there is hope for the future."

"We want each of our participants to know that we are here to help you by providing you with the tools and resources to be in a better position to grow and be successful."

The Business Development Academy is a joint effort by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and SCDOT with an instructional curriculum customized to meet the needs of selected firms, said Bob Thomas, Assistant Division Administrator with FHWA.

"The ultimate goal is to increase DBE participation by improving the skills and business capabilities of firms ready to move forward," Thomas told the audience. "Your selection to this program indicates not only the outstanding potential that your

firm has demonstrated, but also the commitment that you have made to improve your future."

Thomas thanked participants and staff for their work in making the program possible.

"We feel very confident that transportation stakeholders, including the traveling public, will benefit from your efforts," said Thomas.

Guests of the event were introduced by Martha Monjo, training director of Business Development Assistance, and Program Manager Paula Hollis.

Curtis Wilson, a news anchor at WLTX-TV, introduced the BDA participants. Motivational speaker was Wayne Branch, president of LSG, LLC, from Durham, NC.

Curtis Sims Jr., coordinator of the Business Development Academy, provided an overview of the Academy. Carolyn Gratic-Burton, program manager of the DBE Program Development Unit, gave closing remarks.

Eight-week class teaches bidding, estimating to certified DBE personnel

By Curtis Sims
Office of
Business Development

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) Office of Business Development and Special Programs in conjunction with the Carolinas Association of General Contractors (CAGCs) hosted an eight-week Construction Bidding and Estimating course for firms certified through the South Carolina Unified Certification Program as disadvantaged business enterprises.

The class was structured to provide an overview of the bid process and demonstrate how to

develop an estimate for highway bids. Danny Shealy, Director of Construction, presented information about the bid process, and Wanda Webb of the Construction Office simulated a "mock bid" exercise in which participants prepared and submitted an electronic bid through Bid Express.

Dr. Arlene Prince, Director of Business Development and Special Programs, gave closing remarks along with Carolyn Milliron of the Carolinas AGC who presented certificates of completion.

The next Construction Bidding and Estimating class will begin April 3 in Charleston.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

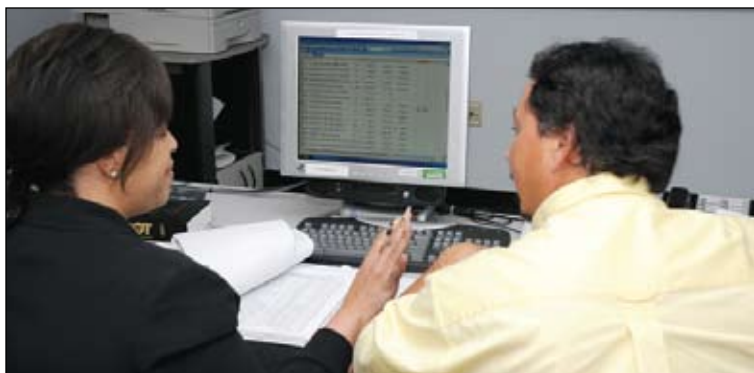
ABOVE: Curtis Sims, left, Wanda Webb, seated, and Director of Construction Danny Shealy, right, watch as class participants prepare their bids at the end of the eight-week course.

RIGHT: Sims goes through specifics on preparing a bid with the class

BELOW: Students work together to prepare their bids.



- The following people successfully completed the course and graduated from the class:*
- | | |
|---|---|
| Kenneth Clark
Clear Ways Inc. | Ken Quiller
Q & Q Contracting |
| Melvin Gordon
Gordon Hauling | Nancy Underwood
Underwood Hauling |
| Paris McDuffie
McDuffie Contracting | Deborah Geddings
Clear Ways Inc. |
| Sharla Savage
S2 Engineering & Consulting | Lila Leon
The Geomech Group |
| Carla Donaldson
Imperial Concreting | Paul Quiller
Q & Q Contracting |
| Pat Healy
Step Up to Perfection LLC | Anthony Washington
DESA, Inc. |
| Walter McDuffie
McDuffie Contracting | George Geddings
Clear Ways Inc. |
| Joe Smith, Jr.
Right Way, Inc. | Johnny Lloyd
DESA, Inc. |
| Clarence Dupree
Associated Contractor | Johnny Salters
J & G Contracting |
| Jacqueline Jackson
Jackson Trucking | Cliff Wilson
DESA, Inc. |



Participants work together estimating costs while preparing their mock bids.



ABOVE: Danny Shealy explains the electronic bidding program Bid Express.

Students learn about transportation during Job Shadow Day



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Students from 14 schools attended the Job Shadowing Day on Feb. 1. The half-day event was sponsored by SCDOT and FHWA.

Patrick Tyndall of the FHWA speaks to the students about the dangers of using a cell phone while driving.



Chris Zeigler and Artemus Hill of Employee Development lead a session on team building.

David Law of the FHWA asks students if they know the ingredients in asphalt.

By Bob Kudelka

A record turnout of students from 14 schools, six breakout sessions led by SCDOT and FHWA employees and the roar of monster trucks warming up for show at the Colonial Center highlighted the 2008 Job Shadowing Day.

One of the goals of the event is to make students aware of the importance of the transportation industry, as well as to encourage them to consider transportation as a career option, said SCDOT Program Manager Barbara Beagles.

"We had a very large number of students, and from their interaction during the presentations they seemed to have enjoyed the program," Beagles said.

In the past, the event averaged 40 students. This year, 147 students attended, including 17 children of SCDOT employees, Beagles said.

One reason for the large increase was several fifth-graders from Bethel-Hanberry Elementary School of Blythewood. SCDOT attended a career day there last year, and it "was such a success that we decided to partner with

the school on Job Shadow Day," Beagles said.

Kristie Krause, principal at Bethel Hanberry, said her students learned a lot of different facets about DOT.

"Not only did it capture their attention, there was some hands-on learning and they got to see the technology aspects and the incorporation of math in everything they were doing," Krause said. "They learned how what goes on in the classroom really does apply to real-world situations, and that was what was evident today."

"It was an excellent experience, and they really got to enjoy different types of learning while they were here."

In addition to Bethel-Hanberry, students attending were from Felton Laboratory School, Dutch Fork Middle School, Carolina Springs Middle School, Summit Parkway Middle School, Camden Middle School, Lake Murray Elementary School, Sumter High School, Alice Drive Middle School, Hollywood Elementary School, Lexington Middle School, Southeast Middle School, White Knoll Middle School and

E.L.Wright Middle School.

Before the breakout sessions, students attended speeches at the Colonial Center's Frank McGuire room. The program was held there instead of the Headquarters auditorium to accommodate the large crowd.

Welcoming messages were given by Dr. Arlene Prince and FHWA's Patrick Tyndall. Susan Jones, Director of Leadership Development, was the guest speaker.

Each speaker had to compete for attention with the sounds of Monster Trucks preparing for a weekend of shows on the dirt-covered floor of the Colonial Center.

"Monster Trucks are also part of transportation," quipped Tyndall, after promising the students they would get a glimpse of "Grave Digger" on the other side of the black curtains if they promise to listen to their teachers.

The students roared back, nearly as loud as the trucks.

Breakout sessions were led by Randy Young (Engineering Challenge), Henderson Jeffreys (Traffic Management Center), Catherine

Blackwell (Transportation Trivia: Leadership and Safety), Stephen Meetze (3D Computer Animation), Chris Zeigler and Artemus Hill (Team Building) and Dave Law (Our Roads and Pavement Smoothness).

The sessions got high marks from students and teachers.

"My favorite part was the 3-dimensional computer game," said 5th-grade student Sean Burris.

"I liked the video cams in the transportation rooms," said Caroline Armstrong, also a 5th-grader.

Teacher Kim Ryan said, "We cover force and motion, and I think they learned something about building the roads, and I think they had a blast."

Chaperones and group leaders were James Cassidy, Kelvin Washington, Gail Dia, Gwen Goodwin, Hongfen Li, Awanda Livingston, Mike James, Charlene Cornwell, Clint Scoville, Katie Holland and Ernest Williams.

Ushers were Thelma Bush, Gloria Thomas. Rob Hoyle and Steven Perry handled registration.



Henderson Jeffreys, left, of SCDOT's Traffic Management Center explains how SCDOT monitors highway conditions and helps ease traffic congestion.



Catherine Blackwell of the FHWA gives the students a quiz on transportation.



Derrell Rice and Stephen Meetze talk about 3-D Computer Animation to the students during one of the breakout sessions.

US 17 Update

Project on schedule for 2010 completion

By Bob Kudelka

A visit to the US 17 widening project in January revealed that work is 25 percent completed. "We're right on schedule," Hernandez said, adding that the completion is on schedule for 2010. "The project's going very well."

Construction was under way at the first of four bridges. The ground shook as a pile driving hammer pounded vertical concrete piles into the ground. When finished, the bridge will span 720 feet over wetlands.

Since land was cleared in the summer, crews graded the sub base and added fill dirt from borrow pits in Beaufort and Colleton counties.

Dirt also has been trucked in to create embankments with recoverable slopes, which will be important safety measures. Nearly one out of four accidents on US 17 from 1997-2003 involved drivers who ran off the road. Adding embankments is a priority to give drivers the ability to slow down and return to the roadway.

Hernandez was impressed at how quickly the embankment was formed.

"The contractor was running up to 55 trucks a day of embankment, each truck making 8-10 loads, and they pretty much constructed the entire phase I southbound in 2½ months," he said. "That was certainly a tremendous feat."

Environmental protection efforts are clearly visible throughout the project.

Silt fencing, which protects the marshland by providing erosion control, has been installed in double rows and, in some places, four rows deep for added protection. More than 7 miles of silt fencing has been installed.

"The contractor's responsive to maintaining and up keeping erosion control," Hernandez said. "They have a team committed to protecting the environment, with daily inspections and maintenance. To watch it happen daily is quite impressive."

During a recent inspection by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, the project received a top rating. An environmental consultant described the effort as the "tightest and cleanest project" he had ever seen.

Tree preservation remains a key goal of the project. White ribbons tied around trunks of live oaks signify the trees are being preserved.

"We had to do some innovative designing and we put up guardrail to preserve some of the specimen trees," Hernandez said.

An additional 4,000 feet of guardrail, both northbound and southbound, has been installed to protect the tree canopy on the south end.

In later phases of the project, crews will build "critter crossings" which will be used by wildlife including snakes, deer, armadillos and alligators. These two flat slab bridges will allow the animals to continue to migrate through the wetlands.

Another feature of the project will be a paved jogging, walking and bike path to meander around preserved trees to provide a quality of life benefit for area residents. The path will allow enjoyment of the scenic area.

Meanwhile, safety of workers and motorists in the work zone has been helped by law enforcement patrols resulting in as many as 50 traffic violations a day, Hernandez said.

"We're getting tremendous support from the Colleton County Sheriff's Office, the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office and the SC Highway Patrol," Hernandez said.

The speed limit in the work zone is 45 mph.

Looking ahead in the next few months, work will continue on the southbound bridges and preparations will begin for paving. Clearing and embankment work will begin on the northbound phase 2, and the Gardens Corner interchange will be designed.

Hernandez said the project will be the first SCDOT highway project to use earthquake drains. These are piping devices that provide a place for water to move during a seismic event. Unlike traditional ground improvement installations, earthquake drains are installed by vibration to virtually eliminate any impact to the surrounding wetlands, he said.

See a related story on page 14.



Workers drive pilings for a new bridge that will cross a wetlands area as part of the project.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR



SCDOT Project Manager Chris Hernandez and HDR Project Manager Dennis Meder inspect the pile driving on the project.



Workers make adjustments to the pile driver as it drives a piling 40 feet into the ground.



Even as pilings are driven into the river bed, ducks swim past the project.

Trees marked with ribbon are being saved to protect the 'canopy' that covers the existing US 17.



The widening of US 17 included the construction of a new bridge over the Combahee River.

SCDOT Commission approves extension of US 17 widening project

Extending current contract to save time, money and improve safety

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) Commission on February 21 approved using federally matched funds to extend the US 17 widening project from the Combahee River northerly for 1.7 miles in Colleton County.

The SCDOT Commission approved using up to \$25 million in federally matched funds to extend the contract with Phillips and Jordan, Inc., to extend the widening to the existing four-lane passing section at Lightsey Plantation Drive.

"By extending the current contract, a time and cost savings of 15 months and at least \$2.1 million in avoided escalation costs, along with the additional safety benefits will be realized," Secretary of Transportation H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr. said.

The US 17 widening project designed to improve safety is already under way along a 6-mile stretch from Gardens Corner to the Combahee River. The project became a priority for the SCDOT Commission after a series of fatal crashes.

Due to the uncertainty of available future funding, tying the newly completed multilane section of US 17 and the Combahee River bridge into the previously constructed passing lanes will provide a more seamless and much safer, longer term transition between these two projects, Limehouse said.

SCDOT Commissioner Marvin Stevenson, representing the 6th Congressional District, said extending the contract will minimize disruption in traffic and allow the Department to take advantage of current wetland permitting.

"This is excellent news for motorists who use US 17 because it means the safety improvements are being extended in the most cost-efficient manner possible," Stevenson said.

SCDOT engineers estimate that without extending the current contract, a traditional method of design/bid/build approach would result in a 15-month delay. This would result in an estimated \$605,700 in motor user costs (related to the delay motorists experience traveling through a construction zone) and \$2,139,941 in construction inflation. (National average highway construction inflation over the past three years is 47 percent.)

SCDOT plans to use the same type of comprehensive environmental protection efforts on the extended segment as is being done on the portion of US 17 under construction. These include silt fencing for erosion control, guardrails for tree preservation and rigorous daily environmental inspections.

"We will continue our efforts to ensure the protection of one of the largest undeveloped estuaries on the East Coast, the ACE Basin," Limehouse said.



Silt fences are used along the widening project to protect the wetlands and natural habitat of wildlife throughout the ACE Basin area.



A 70-foot path is being cleared through the area for two 12-foot lanes and 10-foot shoulders.



Workers pave the bridge deck of the new bridge being built on US 17 over the Combahee River.

US 17 project employees give back to community

By Bob Kudelka

The employees working on the US 17 widening project in Beaufort County pitched in to help local families in need during Thanksgiving and Christmas.

They donated canned goods, turkeys, and grocery store gift cards to three families at Thanksgiving and four families at Christmas. The families were recommended by Beaufort County Councilmember Gerald Dawson, Deacon Charlie Williams of the Christian Society Hall, and Brenda Powell with the Advocates for Change on Highway 17.

Adopting families for the holidays was the latest examples of community involvement efforts that began years ago with

meetings to plan the widening project, SCDOT Project Manager Chris Hernandez said.

"I think it's important, coming into their community, to show that we're aware of their needs and opinions, and that their support is appreciated," Hernandez said. "The community has been fantastic."

The US 17 ACE Basin Segment 1 Widening Project team includes employees of the South Carolina Department of Transportation and contractors Phillips & Jordan, Davis & Floyd, Cape Romain Contractors, HDR and Civic Communication.

The community keeps up with the progress of the project through quarterly newsletters, distributed to residents and businesses, and the web site, www.usroute17.org.



The US 17 Community Office collected items at Thanksgiving and Christmas for families in need in the community. Shown above, from left, are: Kim Langdale, Melissa Ratledge, Leon Alston, Barbara Reed, Cleo Fryar, Chris Hernandez, Dennis Meder, Dan McInnis, Pete Adams, Crawford Moore, Jim Roe and Crete Opyd. At right is a thank you note from one of the 'adopted' families.



News Briefs



F. Hugh Atkins
elected Vice Chairman
of SCDOT Commission

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) Commission on Monday, March 10, 2008, elected Commissioner F. Hugh Atkins as Vice Chairman of the Commission.

Atkins, of Spartanburg, has represented the 4th Congressional District as an SCDOT Commissioner since 2006. He previously served on the Commission from 1998 to 2002.

Atkins fills the Vice Chairman post held by 1st District Commissioner Joe Young, whose term on the Commission expired last month.

A graduate of Clemson University, Atkins has in the past 40 years served in leadership positions in the Real Estate industry, including as President of Spartanburg and South Carolina Homebuilders Associations, president of the Spartanburg Board of Realtors and Director of the Spartanburg Area Chamber of Commerce, where he served as chairman of the Chamber's Transportation Committee.

In 1995, he received the state's highest honor, the Order of the Palmetto, recognizing his many years of service on various boards and commissions, including as chairman of the Spartanburg County Planning and Development Commission, chairman of the Permanent Advisory Council, State Development Board, Clemson University Board of Visitors, Spartanburg Technical Education Commission, and others.

In 2002, Atkins received the South Carolina Homebuilder's Keystone Award for lifetime dedication to the homebuilding industry.

Atkins is married to the former Nettie Allgood, and they have two daughters, Lanette and Melody.

Blacksburg bridge to be repaired

The South Carolina Department of Transportation Maintenance Division plans to repair the bridge over Buffalo Creek on SC-5 (Carolina Street), approximately 1.8 miles northwest of the Town of Blacksburg in Cherokee County.

As part of SCDOT's routine Bridge Inspection Program, this bridge was rated as structurally deficient. To minimize the impact to property owners in the area, the road will be closed during this repair. The road will be closed from March 3 to approximately March 28.

Seven commercial motor vehicle rest areas to open

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) plans to open seven commercial motor vehicle rest areas to provide locations for truck drivers to rest in an effort to improve highway safety.

These seven non-facility rest areas will be for use by commercial motor vehicles, defined as vehicles that require commercial vehicle licensed drivers.

The locations are:

- I-20 in Aiken County (eastbound and westbound). To be opened in early April. These rest areas are located approximately twenty miles east of North Augusta at mile marker 20.

- I-20 in Darlington County (eastbound and westbound). To be opened in early April. These rest areas are located approximately twelve miles west of Florence at mile marker 129.

- I-95 in Jasper County (northbound and southbound). To be opened in mid-March. These rest areas are located approximately four miles south of Ridgeland at mile marker 17.

- I-95 in Dorchester County (southbound only). Opened February 25. This rest area is approximately three miles south of St. George at mile marker 74.

These areas are some of the non-facility rest areas that were closed in 2001. The 2007-08 South Carolina Budget appropriated \$723,000 from the General Fund and designated this money for "Commercial Motor Vehicle Rest Areas."

The funding includes \$637,400

for a one-time allocation for site preparation and \$85,600 annually reoccurring money for electricity for lights and vegetation maintenance. Site preparation includes installation of lighting and fencing; pavement marking; guardrail repair; asphalt aprons; catch basin repair; crack sealing; vegetation clean-up; and signing.

Federal regulations require truck drivers to have 10 hours off between each driving/on-duty shift, and drivers must remain in the sleeper berth for a minimum of eight hours. These regulations have placed an increasing demand on available parking facilities.

Commercial vehicle operators have begun using the shoulder of interstate interchange ramps. However, this results in a hazardous environment for members of the traveling public as well as damage to SCDOT-maintained paved shoulders.

Bridge on Rainbow Drive in Lexington County to be temporarily closed, repaired

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) plans to temporarily close and repair the bridge on Rainbow Drive in Lexington County.

Repair of the bridge is necessary due to damaged beams. Two out of five beams are being replaced on the westbound side of I-26 due to damage caused by a truck striking the bridge. The bridge will be closed on March 10 for approximately eight weeks.

Due to the relatively low traffic volumes, and to minimize replacement time, cost and impact to property owners in the area, the road will be closed and traffic detoured during replacement. The plan is for traffic to use S-365 (Rainbow Road) and SC 602 (Platt Springs Road).

Dedication ceremony held in Sumter County for "Bill Pinkney of the Original Drifters Memorial Highway"

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) had a dedication ceremony Sunday, January 20, for the "Bill Pinkney of the Original Drifters Memorial Highway" in Sumter County.

The ceremony was held at Bill Pinkney Park in Dalzell.

Scheduled speakers were Representative Grady Brown, Senator Phil Leventis, SCDOT Commission Chairman Bobby Jones, and Maxine Porter, President, Original Drifters, Inc.

Acting on a request by the South Carolina General Assembly, the SCDOT Commission agreed to designate the portion of old US Highway 521 (S-43-1342) from its intersection with SC Highway 441 to its intersection with Charles Jackson Road as "Bill Pinkney of the Original Drifters Memorial Highway" in honor of Bill Pinkney.

Pinkney was born in Dalzell on August 15, 1925. He volunteered for the United States Army at age 17 and took part in the Normandy invasion, fighting his way across Europe, earning a Presidential Citation with five Bronze Stars, the General Assembly's resolution noted. "After the war, Bill Pinkney became an outstanding player with the New York Blue Sox of the Negro Baseball League."

While in New York, Pinkney and others performed as "The Southern Knights" gospel quartet. Shortly thereafter, he met and became friends with well-known vocalist, the late Clyde McPhatter, and together they founded "The Drifters" vocal group, according to the resolution.

"The Drifters," beginning with the song "Money Honey" on the Atlantic label in 1953 became one of the most beloved, durable, prolific, and popular rhythm and blues groups the world has ever known," according to the resolution.

Pinkney, who passed away in July 2007, was awarded The Order of the Palmetto - the highest civilian award bestowed by the State of South Carolina, and has been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and the South Carolina Music and Entertainment Hall of Fame.

Pinkney "led an exemplary life of dedication as a soldier, patriot, gospel vocalist, athlete, and popular music superstar and legend," the resolution noted.

Porter said Pinkney "blazed one of the deepest and most unique trails in music history with his groundbreaking work and as an advocate for artists' rights and fair business practices."

2007 SC Transportation Partnering Conference



Tim Suber, left, and Lee Raines of the Spartanburg Public Safety Department attended the conference. Part of the conference focused on designing roads and lanes friendly to bicycles. The two officers ride bicycles on their patrol in Spartanburg.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR



Representative Scott F. Talley from House District 34 speaks at the closing session of the conference. Senator John Hawkins spoke during the opening session.



SC Secretary of Transportation H.B. 'Buck' Limehouse Jr., right, talks with Spartanburg Mayor William Barnet III, left, and Deputy Secretary for Engineering Tony Chapman at the closing session of the conference Dec. 5.



Mike Sullivan and John Walsh discuss one of the partnering sessions during the conference which was held Dec. 3-5 in Spartanburg.



SCDOT's Safe Routes to Schools Coordinator Patricia Sistrunk moves out of the way as Charles Dwyer demonstrates his Segway personal transporter.



Catherine Graham of the USC School of Medicine Office of Disability and Health talks to engineers and traffic planners about how sidewalks, curbs, overpasses and pedestrian signals affect people in wheelchairs.



SCDOT Commissioner F. Hugh Atkins stops by the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals booth to talk with SCDOT's Pedestrian and Bicycle Engineer Tom Dodds.



Ty Houck of Greenville County Recreation packs up his bicycle after the conference. Conference attendees were encouraged to bring their bicycles to experience some of the bike routes in Spartanburg.

District 1 News



Teresa Harley

Aiken, Kershaw, Lee, Lexington, Richland and Sumter counties

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

Got news?

Contact Teresa Harley at:
803-737-6715 or email
her at HarleyTL@scdot.org

District 1 Information Technology Department

IT is here to help!

What did we all do before computers and the network? Remember typewriters? Computers are great when everything is working fine. They make for almost instantaneous distribution of information. What happens when your computer is having problems?

Meet the District 1 Information Technology Department

Mike Masi and his staff of Cliff Prince and Christal Jones Realmuto are here to keep our computers up to date and help with problems that may arise. When computer users in District



Mike Masi

One encounter problems with their computer or printers, help from one of these IT professionals is just an email or phone call away.

Mike Masi has a Master's Degree in Electrical Engineering and Computer Control Systems. After 20 years in the Air Force,



Cliff Prince

he retired from the military and now heads the District One IT department. He has always been a computer geek and enjoys helping others. He has been with SCDOT for over 11 years. Away from the job, Masi is married with four children and one grandchild. His current hobby is a new



Christal Jones Realmuto

grandson and working on cars when he can get the time.

Cliff Prince had many years experience as a computer technician and network administrator before joining SCDOT. He is A+ certified. He has been with SCDOT since May 2005. He is married to Tabitha and they have

a dog named Dixie. He enjoys remote controlled cars, planes, and helicopters. He is a member of The Jackson Flyers where he is learning to fly his wide variety of remote controlled "toys." He enjoys working on computers and getting his hands on the latest computer hardware and software to learn more about his passion for computers.

Christal Jones Realmuto is new to SCDOT and District One. She has been with us since Dec. 17. With a degree in Computer Technology and Networking, Her experience and knowledge has been a welcome addition to District One. She has been a quick learner to what we do in SCDOT and has jumped right into helping others. Away from the job, she is married with four children and one grandchild. She just finished school for an Associate in Computer Technology with a 4.0! She enjoys things like camping and hiking with her children when she has spare time.

Aiken Maintenance, Construction commit to regular blood drives

Approximately 25 employees from DOT Aiken participate in our bi-monthly blood drive.

They are committed to this cause for other people in our community. 99 percent of these donors work outside in the weather every day, hot or cold and 95 percent of them give every

time we have a drive. Shepard Community Blood employees are easy to work with and provide excellent care of our DOT employees – from start to finish.

Our employees are treated very professionally by their staff and always enjoy their delicious snacks and receiving their new tee shirt.



"I am proud of our employees and I know I can count on them. I just want you to know that I know I work with the best there is!"

Kathleen Gerrald

Aiken employees to participate in CSRA American Heart Walk

Kevin Oglesby, RME, has given the go-ahead to participate in the CSRA American Heart Walk.

We have several activities planned for employees to participate in. The final activity will be a group walk at a local Aiken hospital May 10. Family, friends, and friendly dogs are invited to walk for this cause.

Heart Walk is a huge activity in CSRA, with the emphasis on healthy eating and lifestyles. Other government facilities are participating in this fund raiser event.

When Oglesby was approached by the City of Aiken to participate in this program, he was more than happy to appoint a chairman to encourage staff involvement. Each month until May Aiken will have a different activity in which



Kevin Oglesby

any employee can choose to participate.

All proceeds will go to The American Heart Association, CSRA division.

Meet Lonnie Willis

Name: Lonnie Willis
Title: Senior Geodetic Technician
Unit: Aiken Construction

Lonnie Willis is a Senior Geodetic Tech with Aiken Construction. He was born and raised in Aiken and has lived here all his life. Willis has over 37 years with SCDOT.

One of the first jobs that he was assigned to was the original Interstate 20 construction in Aiken County between Aiken and North Augusta.

Since then he has worked on a multitude of projects throughout Aiken County. Willis is a member of Redd's Branch Baptist Church.

His favorite past time away from work is photography. His many years of experience and high level of expertise make him a highly valued and integral part of the Aiken Construction team.



Lonnie Willis

District 2 News

Abbeville, 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

American Red Cross Training

District 2 employees learn first aid, CPR, defibrillator training

District Two recently certified 17 employees to conduct American Red Cross first aid, CPR and automated external defibrillator (AED) training.

This program will prepare our employees for virtually any life-threatening situation and give them the confidence to respond in an emergency situation with skills that can save a life.

Training courses combine lecture, demonstrations, and video with hands-on training in a practice-while-you-watch format. Through training, employees will learn the skills necessary to prevent, recognize, and provide basic care for injuries and sudden illnesses until advanced medical personnel arrive and take over.



Certified First Aid Responders in District 2

Abbeville Maintenance and Construction
 Ronnie Myers
 Thomas Longshore
 Darren Hughes

Greenwood Maintenance and Construction
 Patrick Sinnott
 Richard Roberts

McCormick Maintenance
 James Sharpe
 Jeffrey Brown

Saluda Maintenance and Construction
 Butch Bedenbaugh
 Chad Robertson

Edgefield Maintenance
 Jesse Cleveland Thomas
 April Meetze

Laurens Maintenance and Construction
 Laura Geddings
 Melissa Thomason

Newberry Maintenance and Construction
 Michael Brunson
 Tina Laymon

District Two Office
 Sarah McKinney
 Karen Kesler Long

Meet Stephanie Stevens

Name: Stephanie Stevens
Job Title: IRC
Unit: District 2

District two's new IRC is Stephanie Stevens. She worked at Piedmont Technical College for over 19 years before joining the District 2 IT staff at the DOT.

Stevens graduated from Lander with a dual B.S. degree in Computer Science and Math. She recently completed her Master's in Public Administration.

Stevens resides in Greenwood with her husband, Mike Rodgers, and two children.

She enjoys reading, working out and hanging out with friends.



District 3 News

Anderson, Greenville, Oconee, Pickens and Spartanburg counties

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

Employees plow through first snow of season

On January 16, 2008, the upstate and surrounding counties received their first snow of the year. These photos were taken the day after snow fell throughout the night and into the morning hours.

District 3 employees worked 24 hours a day keeping the roadways open for motorists.

The interstates were a high priority and even the "back two lane roads" like shown here, were cleared.

The maintenance crews have great challenges when it hits like this, but all of the hard work pays off, as the motorist are able to travel to their destinations.



Both photos are taken at the North Carolina / South Carolina State Line on Old US 25 North in Greenville County.

Tractor trailer hits, flips SCDOT dump truck



Mark Gymer

On Jan. 21, 2008 a second threat of snow and ice hit the upstate area.

Mark Gymer of Anderson Maintenance was working on a skeleton crew around 12:45 am pre-treating I-85 with salt. Gymer was in the far right lane with lights flashing when a tractor trailer approached in the middle lane.

According to the SCHP, the driver of the tractor trailer was traveling too fast for conditions and collided with the rear of

Gymer's dump truck. The tractor trailer flipped the DOT truck over and into a ditch. Gymer's truck landed on the roof and it caved in, with him still in the seat. The tractor trailer burned up after the collision.

Both drivers were able to escape major injuries. Gymer was pinned in the truck, but still managed to radio for help. Gymer suffered a mild concussion and was taken to the emergency room, but *never* missed a day of work.

Got news?

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



Joyce Gardner



Anderson RME Bobby Patterson, Chris Wiley (son of Kelvin Wiley) and Kelvin Wiley of Anderson Maintenance are all smiles just moments after Wiley's son signed a scholarship to play football for Furman University. Last year Chris Wiley shadowed Bobby Patterson for his school project. Kelvin Wiley stated that he has never been more proud of his son and the future he holds.



Terry Bragg, Melvin Merck and Steve Gwinn reminisce about the days when they worked together in construction. Both Bragg and Merck have retired, but still are invited to the Christmas lunch hosted by DEA Gwinn.

Meet Mark Gymer



Mark Gymer and his family

Name: Mark Gymer
Assigned to: Anderson Maintenance
Position: T 2 Operator
Years with SCDOT: 5

who rarely takes a day off. He enjoys what he does and the people he works with in Anderson.

Mark Gymer has gained to utmost respect from his peers and supervisors. His co-workers praise him for his dedication to his family and the SCDOT.

Gymer is married to his high school sweetheart, Jennifer. They have three daughters Meagan (oldest), Emily (middle) and Hannah (youngest). His greatest achievement in life is his family! Every bit of his spare time is dedicated to the girls.

He loves the department and is known as someone

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

Talking Transportation

York Maintenance employees teach Kinard Elementary students about SCDOT

On Friday, Jan. 25., five York Maintenance employees visited Kinard Elementary School in Clover to talk to the children about transportation issues.

Trades Specialist II **Joel Wallace** explained the importance of a snow plow and sander.

Trades Specialist II **Melvin Brown** demonstrated the use of a backhoe.

Trades Specialist III **George Johnson** demonstrated the use of a motor grader.

Trades Specialists IV **Jeremy Shrewsberry** and York Resident Maintenance Engineer **Brad Trout** explained what work zones are and stressed how motorists should drive safely through work zones.

Trout and Shrewsberry also told the children about what SCDOT does for the Clover community and York County.



SCDOT employees show the equipment they use to maintain roads in York County to Kinard Elementary School students during a special demonstration Jan. 25.

Ted Barnes recognized for 30 years of service



District 4 Bridge Inspection Team Leader Todd McNinch, right, presents District 4 Bridge Team Leader Ted Barnes with a certificate for 30 years of service. In the middle is SCDOT State Bridge Maintenance Engineer Lee Floyd.

Thanks!

*Joel Wallace, Melvin Brown,
George Johnson, Jeremy Shrewsberry
and Brad Trout
for representing SCDOT!*



Union Resident Maintenance Engineer Jerry Brannon, right, talks with Wilson Bates before cutting the cake. Approximately 80 co-workers, friends and family joined in the retirement celebration.

Wilson Bates retires

Honored for 28 years with Union Maintenance

On Wednesday, Jan. 23, Wilson Bates was honored with a retirement party.

The party was attended by approximately 80 people, including co-workers, former co-workers, family and friends.

Wilson retired after 28 years with Union Maintenance. He began his career on Jan. 7, 1980.

During his SCDOT

career, he worked with various operations and has seen many changes through the years.

Wilson is well known throughout District 4 for his work on the District Surface Treating Crew. He was the operator of the asphalt distributor during surface treating operations.

Several friends from other counties he had worked with attended the celebration.



Wilson Bates, left, holds a plaque as District 4 Maintenance Engineer Todd Cook congratulates him.

District 5 News

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

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

S. C. File Nos.: 21.144A - 21.144A.1

Final phase of US 301 Bypass opens

The final phase of road and bridge construction connecting US 301 east of Florence to US 301 south of Florence was opened to traffic on Nov. 30.

The project consisted of 3.432 miles of roadway and 900 feet of bridge.

This section is the final link connecting US 76/301 from its intersection with SC 327 to the US 301 Bypass near Freedom Flor-

ence. Two earlier sections of this overall project were completed in September 1997 and September 2003.

The completed project provides improved access to Carolinas Hospital Systems, and also is beneficial for local students traveling to Francis Marion University. Many local employees are also enjoying the shortened drive to the Florence DOT office.



Kay Williams

Got news?

Contact Kay Williams at 843-661-4710 or by emailing her at WilliamsKH@scdot.org



Participating in the ribbons cutting are, from left: Mike Mussellwhite, Jason Thompson, James Poston, Senator Hugh Leatherman, Commissioner Marvin Stevenson, Mayor Frank Willis and District 5 Engineering Administrator Dennis Townsend.



Florence Mayor Frank Willis



Senator Hugh Leatherman

Florence Bridge Construction Crew



From left: Will Fulton, Jason Thompson, Tony Lee, Joseph Bryant and Tim McGee.

Florence Construction

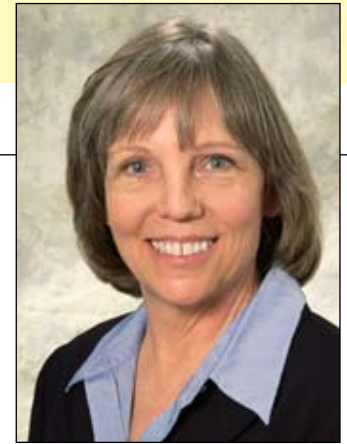


From left: Chris Coleman, Joshua Todd, Julie Douglas, Will Fulton, James Poston, Corey Johnson, Matthew Schulte and Bobby Morgan.

District 6 News

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

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



Janet Hendrix

Got news?

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

Meet the District 6 Office

The Fain Street complex is home to the District office, the District Signal shop, and the Lower State Sign shop. The Charleston Maintenance facility, which will be featured in our next issue, is adjacent to our complex.

Jasper, Beaufort, Colleton, Charleston, Dorchester and Berkeley are the six southeastern counties of South Carolina that make up District Six, also called the Lowcountry.

We have 4,954 center line miles in district six. From Lake Moultrie in Berkeley County to the beautiful beaches and many islands along our coastline, there are many opportunities for nature lovers to enjoy the great outdoors. Hilton Head Island in Beaufort County is a favorite vacation spot for people from all over the world, as is Historic Charleston. All of the counties in District Six have beautiful scenic roads to appreciate, even to the locals that travel them daily.

Our most noted landmark is the Arthur Ravenel Sr. Bridge which spans the Cooper River from Charleston to Mt. Pleasant — our largest project, finished ahead of schedule and under budget.



DISTRICT CONSTRUCTION

From Left: Henry Middleton of District Asphalt, District Construction Engineer Tim Henderson, Utilities Coordinator Yvette Oliver, District Construction Engineer David Glenn, Abi Rajabi of District Asphalt and Utilities Coordinator Jim Raines



DISTRICT MAINTENANCE

From left: Assistant District Maintenance Engineer Jim Johannemann, Assistant District Maintenance Engineer J.D. Wilcox and District Maintenance Engineer Michael Black



DISTRICT MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

From left: Robert Barfield of Capital Improvements, Mike Simpson, DME; Sheila Crouse of Outdoor Advertising, Richard McLaren of Safety and Ray Barnaby of Capital Improvements.



HUMAN RESOURCES

Margaret Rivers, left, and Ann Davis



DISTRICT TRAFFIC ENGINEERING

From left: J.B. Antley, Pat Smalls, Nick Rebovich, Assistant District Traffic Engineer JuLeigh Fleming, Mike Cribb, Cindy Ridgeway and District Traffic Engineer Mark Nesbit. Not Pictured Assistant District Traffic Engineer Terance Brooks and Charlie Fralix



CHARLESTON INCIDENT RESPONDERS

From left: Ted Wurthmann, Tim Walden, and Ronnie Grant. There are 17 Incident Responders in the Charleston area and five in the Beaufort/Hilton Head area. Hats off to all of you for your great public service! We receive cards and letters almost daily from the public expressing their gratitude for the service you provide.



DISTRICT INFORMATION RESOURCE CONSULTANTS

From left: Carla Prather, Justin Cook and Donna Cleland



DISTRICT 6 OFFICE

From left: Vickie Lindsey of District Asphalt, District 6 Engineering Administrator Robert Clark, District Vegetation Manager Jennifer Gruber, James Law of Customer Service and Administrative Coordinator Connie Lee



CHARLESTON INCIDENT RESPONDERS

Jim Tyner watches the traffic cameras.



LOWER STATE SIGN SHOP

From left: Melba Moskal, Gwen Barrera, Doris Breland, Kathryn Register, Debbie Vandermolen, Deloris Elsey.



DISTRICT 6 SIGNAL SHOP

From left: Kristi Johnson, Buddy Hart, Bennie Gamble, Herb Harrison, Chris Bernique, Myrikk Thomas and Mike Moultrie. Not pictured: Joe Maxwell and John Galloway

District 7 News

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

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

District Office welcomes new employees

Jeffrey B. Smith, Charles D. Jones, Jeffrey S. Ellison

Jeffrey B. Smith moved to District Office from Orangeburg Construction in December. Smith has worked as the District CPM Scheduler for the past two years and he is a member of STEP-21 2008. He is a 1995 graduate from the University of South Carolina, and he started his career with SCDOT at Orangeburg Construction in 2004.

Charles D. Jones is the new District Mechanical Engineer. Jones graduated from the University of South Carolina in 1994 and began his career with SCDOT at Darlington Construction. He was the Resident Construction Engineer of Bamberg for four years and Resident Maintenance Engineer at St. Matthews for seventeen years.

Jeffrey S. Ellison joined District 7 in September of 2007 as the new Assistant District Maintenance Engineer. Ellison was a Quality Maintenance Engineer for the Director of Maintenance's office for 6 years. He is currently acting as Resident Maintenance Engineer for Hampton Maintenance. He is a 1987 graduate of the Citadel.



New employees at the District 7 Office are, from left, Jeffrey Smith, Charles Jones and Jeffrey Ellison.

Got news?

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



Deborah Berry

Orangeburg employees take CPR recertification course



Employees perform CPR compressions and breaths on mannequins.



Employees use coworkers to practice abdominal thrusts in case of choking.

Meet Marie Allen

Name: Marie Allen
Title: Trade Specialist II
Location: Holly Hill Maintenance
Service: 5 years, 9 months

Marie Allen is responsible for the removal of litter and debris along 15 miles of I-26 and 15 miles of I-95 in Orangeburg County (the Holly Hill Maintenance area). Allen cleans up around interchanges, primary routes and secondary roads. She is a very hard working and dependable employee. Marie resides in Bowman, SC with her husband and three children. She enjoys playing softball, tailgating, and going to church where she sings in the mass choir. She states, she loves her job!



Marie Allen

District sends care packages to soldiers from Hampton Maintenance

District Seven employees sent care packages to our Hampton Maintenance servicemen during the holiday season.

The recipients of the care packages were Frankie Bennett and Dennis Smith stationed in Afghanistan, Starling Forrester at Fort Gordon and Timothy Morell at Fort Jackson.

A Note of Thanks:

I am in receipt of your goodwill package during my participation in Operation Enduring Freedom. I have started using many of the items. It is wonderful to know that I have the support of the many fine Americans from our company

(SCDOT).

My time spent in Afghanistan has been very productive in assisting the troops in support of training the Afghanistan National Army and the Afghanistan National Police to build a stronger more democratic country.

I'm pleased to work for such a generous company (SCDOT) and the greatest country.

Thank you and Happy Holidays! Sincerely,

**Frankie Bennett,
Citizen-Soldier**

A special thanks goes out to all who participated with the care packages for our servicemen!

Moving Up

Kathy S. Addy, of Batesburg, from Administrative Specialist II to Administrative Assistant at Saluda Maintenance.

Chad E. Amick, of Lexington, from Engineer/Assoc. Engineer II to Engineer/Associate Engineer III, Planning.

David W. Bland, of Columbia, from Information Resource Consult. II to Information Technology Manager I, Information Technology Services.

Daniel A. Booth, of Edgefield, from Trades Specialist II to Trades Specialist III, Edgefield Maintenance.

Michael A. Brown, of Newberry, from Engineer/Associate Engineer I to Engineer/Assoc. Engineer II, Fairfield Maintenance.

Stephen L. Brown, of Beaufort, from Equipment Operator II to Trades Specialist III, D6-Bridge Inspection.

Billy J. Brunson, of Saluda, from Trades Specialist III to Trades Specialist IV, Saluda Maintenance.

Charles D. Chapman, of Chesnee, from Trades Specialist III to Trades Specialist IV, Cherokee Maintenance.

Christopher T. Coleman, of Florence, from Engineer/Associate Engineer I to Engineer/Assoc. Engineer II, Florence Construction.

Sam E. Collins Jr., of Chester, from Trades Specialist III to Trades Specialist V, Chester Maintenance.

Patrick M. Connor, of Orangeburg, from Trades Specialist III to Mechanic III Holly Hill Maintenance.

Patricia T. Criscola, of Greer, from Administrative Specialist II to Communications Specialist III, District 3 Office.

Joseph A. Derby, of Lexington, from Engineer/Associate Engineer I to Engineer/Associate Engineer II, RPG 4 - Upstate.

Thomas E. Fowler, of Piedmont, from Assistant Geodetic Technician to Associate Geodetic Technician, Surveys - Greenville.

Ben Franklin Jr., of Georgetown, from Trades Specialist I to Equipment Operator III, Florence Maintenance.

Bennie R. Gamble Jr., of Cottageville, from Mechanic II to Trades Specialist IV, D6-Bridge Inspection.

Tommie L. Gordon Jr., of Mauldin, from Assistant Geodetic Technician to Associate Geodetic Technician, Spartanburg Construction.

Franklin J. Green, of Tamassee, from Trades Specialist IV to Trades Specialist V, Oconee Maintenance.

Sarah E. Hamrick, of Charleston, from Engineer/Associate Engineer I to Engineer/Associate Engineer II, Charleston Construction.

Gary D. Hart, of Belton, from Trades Specialist IV to Trades Specialist V, Anderson Maintenance.

Kyle K. Herringdine, of Hartsville, from Assistant Geodetic Technician to Associate Geodetic Technician, Surveys - Florence

Angela W. Hicks, of Timmonsville, from Associate Geodetic Technician to Engineer/Associate Engineer I, Florence Maintenance

Jerry A. Hill, of Summerville, from Trades Specialist II to Assistant Geodetic Technician, Central Sign Shop.

Katherine A. Holland, of Columbia, from Engineer/Associate Engineer II to Engineer/Associate Engineer III, RPG 3 - Midlands.

Ricky W. Horne, of Spartanburg, from Trades Specialist III to Trades Specialist IV, Spartanburg Maintenance.

Chris G. Hughes, of Cope, from Associate Geodetic Technician to Senior Geodetic

Technician, Road Data Services.

Christopher M. Humphrey, of Chapin, from Associate Geodetic Technician to GIS Analyst, Road Data Services.

Claude R. Ipock, of Lexington, from Engineer/Assoc. Engineer II to Engineer/Associate Engineer III, Lexington Construction.

Lauren H. Jackson, of Rock Hill, from Trades Specialist II to Assistant Geodetic Technician, York Maintenance.

Terrell A. Johnson, of Calhoun Falls, from Trades Specialist II to Trades Specialist III, McCormick Maintenance.

Christopher E. Jordan, of Cayce, from Engineer/Associate Engineer II to Engineer/Associate Engineer III, RPG 4 - Upstate.

Mark A. Kwayisi, of Elgin, from Engineer/Associate Engineer III to Engineer/Associate Engineer IV, Director of Maintenance.

Judy K. Lawson, of Pauline, from Trades Specialist II to Trades Specialist III, Spartanburg Maintenance.

Tommy L. Lilly, of Mullins, from Trades Specialist II to Mechanic III, Marion Maintenance.

Charles F. Marshall III, of Camden, from Trades Specialist II to Associate Geodetic Technician, Sumter Maintenance.

James H. Mattox III, of Winnsboro, from Engineer/Assoc. Engineer II to Engineer/Associate Engineer III, RPG 1 - Lowcountry.

Richard L. McClennen, of Spartanburg, from Trades Specialist III to Trades Specialist IV, Spartanburg Maintenance.

Korene A. McDow, of Westville, from Associate Geodetic Technician to Engineer/Associate Engineer I, Federal Program Administration.

Levi W. McLeod, of Sumter, from Associate Geodetic

Technician to Engineer/Associate Engineer I, RPG 3 - Midlands.

Willie Mealing, of Trenton, from Trades Specialist II to Trades Specialist III, Edgefield Maintenance.

Dennis O. Moore, of Chester, from Trades Specialist IV to Trades Specialist V, Chester Maintenance.

Johnny Moses, of Bishopville, from Trades Specialist III to Trades Specialist IV, Lee Maintenance.

Christopher A. Muir, of Alcolu, from Associate Geodetic Technician to Environmental Health Manager I, Sumter Maintenance.

Julia B. Noffz, of Abbeville, from Administrative Specialist I to Administrative Assistant, Abbeville Maintenance.

Cecil E. Peake, of Elgin, from Trades Specialist III to Trades Specialist IV, Central Sign Shop.

Roger R. Pearson, of Winnsboro, from Trades Specialist III to Trades Specialist IV, Fairfield Maintenance.

William G. Phipps Jr., of Lexington, from Engineer/Associate Engineer III to Engineer/Associate Engineer IV, RPG 2 - Pee Dee.

James B. Powers, of Lancaster, from Assistant Geodetic Technician to Trades Specialist IV, Lancaster Maintenance.

Leah B. Quattlebaum, of Columbia, from Engineer/Associate Engineer II to Engineer/Associate Engineer III, RPG 2 - Pee Dee.

Cyle J. Rhoades, of Columbia, from Engineer/Associate Engineer I to Engineer/Associate Engineer II, Director of Traffic Engineering.

Stanley L. Roof Jr., of West Columbia, from Engineer/Associate Engineer III to Engineer/Associate Engineer IV, RPG 2 - Pee Dee

Ryan P. Ross, of Charleston, from Engineer/Associate Engineer I to Engineer/Associate Engineer II, Charleston Construction.

Danilo G. Santos, of Goose Creek, from Incident Responder I to Incident Responder II, District 6 Office.

Edward A. Sawyer, of West Columbia, from Engineer/Associate Engineer III to Engineer/Associate Engineer IV, District 1 Office

Timothy M. Seeby, of Lexington, from Assistant Geodetic Technician to Associate Geodetic Technician, Director of Traffic Engineering

Clifford B. Selkinghaus, of Irmo, from Engineer/Associate Engineer II to Engineer/Associate Engineer III, Research & Materials.

Jacquella L. Stevenson, of Columbia, from Administrative Specialist II to Associate Geodetic Technician, Research & Materials.

Daryl Strong, of Chester, from Associate Geodetic Technician to Engineer/Associate Engineer I, Surveys - York.

Robert N. Tobias, of Gilbert, from Trades Specialist II to Trades Specialist III, D1 - Bridge Maintenance.

Joshua G. Todd, of Pamplico, from Assistant Geodetic Technician to Associate Geodetic Technician, Florence Construction.

Kevin L. Washington, of Goose Creek, from Senior Geodetic Technician to Chief Geodetic Technician, Charleston Construction.

John E. Wessinger, of Lexington, from Right-of-Way Agent I to Right-of-Way Agent II, Director of Rights of Way Office.

Dale J. Williams, of Greenwood, from Engineer/Associate Engineer I to Engineer/Assoc. Engineer II, Oconee Construction.

Marcus L. Williamson, of Jenkinsville, from Associate Geodetic Technician to Engineer/Associate Engineer I, Surveys - Lexington.

Retirements

John S. Powell, of Anderson, trades specialist IV at Anderson Maintenance, retired Nov. 1, after 33 years of state service.

Daniel Smalls, of St. Helena Island, trades specialist III at Beaufort Maintenance, retired Nov. 7, after five years of service.

Eugene P. Dukes, of Greeleyville, trades specialist III at District 5 Bridge Inspection, retired Nov. 15, after 20 years of service.

Columbus Hunter, of Cowpens, trades specialist II at Cherokee Maintenance, retired Nov. 16, after 17 years of service.

Henrietta B. Drayton, of Edisto Island, equipment operator II at District 6 Bridge Inspection, retired Nov. 20, after 25 years of service.

Sonya M. Hurt, of Saluda, administrative assistant at Saluda Maintenance, retired Nov. 30, after 33 years of service.

James H. Frick Jr., of Columbia, engineer/associate engineer in Pre-Construction Support, retired Dec. 1, after 35 years of service.

Charles McHaney, of Cal-

houn Falls, trades specialist III at Abbeville Maintenance, retired Dec. 1, after 31 years of service.

James E. Parker, of New Zion, engineer/associate engineer in District 7, retired Dec. 1, after 34 years of state service.

Michael R. Bagley, of Chester, trades specialist V at Chester Maintenance, retired Dec. 1, after 35 years of service.

Catherine M. Monroe, of Abbeville, administrative assistant at Abbeville Maintenance, retired Dec. 1, after 33 years of service.

Lorine T. Frazier, of Bamberg, trades specialist II at Bamberg Maintenance, retired Dec. 3, after 22 years of state service.

William J. Crawley, of Florence, associate geodetic technician at Florence Maintenance, retired Dec. 4, after 24 years of service.

Kathleen S. Williamson, of Greenville, administrative specialist at Greenville Maintenance, retired Dec. 14, after 26 year of state service.

Vivian M. Gaddy, of Dillon, administrative assistant at Dillon Maintenance, retired Dec. 14, after 33 years of service.

Clinton T. Williams, of Wagener, trades specialist III at Aiken Maintenance, retired Dec. 16, after 28 years of service.

Vaughn B. Sanford, of Joanna, trades specialist II at Laurens Maintenance, retired Dec. 28, after 20 years of service.

Donald N. Smith, of Greenwood, trades specialist IV at Greenwood Maintenance, retired Dec. 31, after 21 years of service.

Wayne H. Campbell, of Anderson, trades specialist IV at Anderson Maintenance, retired Dec. 31, after 31 years of service.

Herbert R. Nelson, of Piedmont, assistant geodetic technician at Anderson Maintenance, retired Dec. 31, after 17 years of state service.

Cathy W. Franklin, of Pomaria, program coordinator I in Claims, retired Dec. 31, after 32 years of service.

Richmond McDuffie, of Manning, trades specialist II at Clarendon Maintenance, retired Dec. 31, after 10 years of service.

Luther M. Padgett, of John-

ston, engineer/associate engineer at Edgefield Maintenance, retired Jan. 1, after 34 years of service.

James E. Bessinger, of Bamberg, trades specialist III at Bamberg Maintenance, retired Jan. 1, after 35 years of service.

Aaron J. Fryson, of Marion, trades specialist III at Marion Maintenance, retired Jan. 2, after 34 years of service.

Roland W. Harris Jr., of Columbia, program manager I in Right of Way Central District, retired Jan. 2, after 32 years of service.

Kenneth Tindal, of Columbia, building and grounds specialist at the Equipment Service Depot, retired Jan. 2, after 14 years of service.

Leroy Davis Jr., of Marion, trades specialist II at Marion Maintenance, retired Jan. 2, after 31 years of service.

Wilson Bates, of Union, trades specialist III at Union Maintenance, retired Jan. 6, after 28 years of service.

Connie H. Finley, of Easley, administrative specialist in District 3 Office, retired Jan. 10, after 21 years of service.

Benjamin F. Byrd, of Colum-

bia, program manager I in Legal Services, retired Jan. 16, after 33 years of service.

Jessie F. Cochran, of Hemingway, trades specialist II at Georgetown Maintenance, retired Jan. 16, after 30 years of service.

Buddy K. White, of Arcadia, trades specialist IV at Spartanburg Maintenance, retired Jan. 17, after 26 years of service.

Peter P. Nixon, of Walterboro, trades specialist III at Colleton Maintenance, retired Jan. 18, after 12 years of service.

Joe M. Hazel, of Greenwood, engineer/associate engineer at Greenwood Maintenance, retired Jan. 31, after 37 years of service.

Frank M. Young Jr., of Woodruff, trades specialist II at Spartanburg Maintenance, retired Jan. 31, after 10 years of state service.

Calvin Robinson Jr., of Coward, trades specialist II at Florence Maintenance, retired Jan. 31, after 13 years of service.

Thomas H. Chappell, of Greenwood, mechanic III at Greenwood Maintenance, retired Feb. 1, after 34 years of service.

Assets Management

Security increased at headquarters

Badge readers go into effect at employee entrances



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Dawn Watkins demonstrates how to wave your ID badge in front of the card reader to gain access into the SCDOT headquarters building.

By Carl Chase Jr.
Director, Assets Management

In the near future, employees will enter the Headquarters Building at designated employee entrances. They are the Ground Floor entrance to the parking garage, the first floor rear lobby doors to the parking garage and the College Street entrance closest to Park Street.

At each of these entrances there will be card readers activated during normal business hours (6am-6pm daily). Should employees be in the building after 6pm they must exit through the ground floor exit to the parking garage.

All visitors and employees not having a badge will enter through the main entrance on Park Street and check in with the guard. Employees arriving at work before 6am will enter through the ground floor.

The loading dock entrance is limited to employees working in the Print Shop, Mail Room, and Building Services.

Visitors and non-badged employees using the Credit Union will enter through the College Street door closest to the Credit Union.

The photographs depict the correct method of using the badge reader.



Everyone who works or conducts business in 955 Park Street must wear a security badge. This includes all visitors. The badge should be worn above the waist. In the near future, employees will be using the badge at card readers installed at designated employee entrances. All visitors require an escort.

Looking for an office?



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

James Brown of Building Maintenance updates room numbers in the SCDOT Headquarters Directory on the first floor. Over the past year, some headquarters offices have moved since Department of Motor Vehicles employees left the Park Street building.

Human Resources

No increase in 2008 health premiums

The Employee Insurance Program (EIP) now estimates that 2008 contribution levels are sufficient to fund the State Health Plan (SHP) through Plan Year 2009. There will be no increase in employer contributions for EIP-sponsored health plans for 2009. Neither will there be an increase in premiums for SHP subscribers.

It will be the fourth year in a row SHP subscriber premiums have held steady. This

is, largely in part, due to the small steps subscribers have taken, such as selecting network providers, participating in our disease management programs, choosing tier 1 (generic) drugs over more expensive alternatives, and, in general, adopting better health habits and a healthier lifestyle.

EIP is committed to providing the best insurance benefits at the greatest value. Your help goes a long way in the fight against soaring healthcare costs.

EZ Reimburse claims due

Attention EZ REIMBURSE® MasterCard® users: Claims requiring documentation are listed in blue on your monthly statement. If you have any outstanding claims requiring documentation, do not use the Reimbursement Request Form. Instead, please submit the required documentation using the EZREIMBURSE® MasterCard® Receipt Transmittal Cover Sheet [http://www.eip.sc.gov/publications/MoneyPlu\\$_EZR_Fax_sheet.pdf](http://www.eip.sc.gov/publications/MoneyPlu$_EZR_Fax_sheet.pdf).

The run-out period applies also to card transactions. If any transactions are not documented by this deadline, your card will be suspended permanently.

To Get a Claim Form

To print a MoneyPlu\$ Flexible Spending Account Reimbursement Request Form or a EZ REIMBURSE® MasterCard® Receipt Transmittal Cover Sheet, go to the Employee Insurance Program Website: www.eip.sc.gov <<http://www.eip.sc.gov/>>, choose your category and then click on "Forms." Scroll down to the "MoneyPlu\$" section. Completed forms should be faxed to Fringe Benefits Management Company at 888-800-5217.

If you do not have Internet access, forms are available through your benefits office.

Keep HR up to date on your information

The Human Resources Office takes seriously its responsibility to accurately maintain confidential personal information on all employees.

The staff of the Human Resources Office relies on much of this information when conducting its daily work. To meet this

important responsibility, we must have your help.

Please make sure to immediately notify your management of any changes to David's Rule information (Employee Emergency Contact Form), name, address, marital status, education, or professional licensure.

Change in State Health Plan Coverage: Routine Mammogram

By Dale G. Thomas, R.N., B.S.N.

The new age guidelines are:

Mammography coverage has changed with the State Health Plan (SHP). Routine mammograms are covered under the SHP at 100 percent, as long as the employee uses a participating mammogram facility and the employee meets the eligibility requirements.

Routine mammograms will be available for women ages 40 through 49, on an annual basis. This became effective Jan. 1. Previously, women in this age range could only receive one routine mammogram every other year.

● **Ages 35-39:** one baseline mammogram will be covered

● **Ages 40-74:** one routine mammogram every year

On June 26, the mobile mammography van is scheduled for employees of District 1 at Richland Maintenance's Office. Other scheduled dates for the mobile mammography van will be in October.

Please watch for a mammogram survey in your area in order for Medical Services to assist in accommodating employees who wish to participate.



Watch for future notices of when the Mammography van will be in your district.

Deaths

Nancy J. Wood, of Lugoff, trades specialist II at Kershaw Maintenance, died Jan. 15.

James S. White, of Walhalla, trades specialist IV at Oconee Maintenance, died Jan. 31.

Frances "Fran" Elaine Gamble Gilliam, of Columbia, SCDOT retiree, died Feb. 14.

Geraldine Dare Gillam, 82, of Columbia, SCDOT retiree, died Feb. 14.

Virgil Eugene "Gene" Smith, 70, of Fairfax, retired SCDOT civil engineer, and public works director with Allendale County since 1993, died Jan. 6.

Henry Robert Escler Sr., 86, of Kingstree, retired SCDOT heavy equipment operator, died Dec. 24.