

WVDOH Today!

"I work with a bunch of good guys," says Lee Canfield, Transportation Worker 3, Equipment Operator in West Virginia Division of Highway's Equipment Division in Buckhannon. "We're all on the same page. If I go down there with a crane, I don't have to tell them how to hook it up. We've done it so many times. Our boss is the same way. I work with good guys."

The new DOH attitude is all about maintaining and taking care of what we have. First, we take care of our people; building career paths, and addressing training needs to make sure our people can develop and grow in their jobs. Second, the new equipment itself is part of maintaining our people. The end of a long day of working in properly functioning, air-conditioned equipment that is ready to go comes sooner than the end of a long day of dealing with the frustration of putting things back together. We maintain the equipment itself so it's ready to go for the third step, maintaining the roads. With the roads, it's the same; they need sunlight, not water, ice and yucky, slushy snow.

"So many new pieces of equipment roll in here and it's got time," said Canfield. "Get it ready. Get it out there."

Transportation workers in Buckhannon put striping and state road badges on each piece of equipment, clearly marking them as belonging to WVDOH. Then they check fluid levels to make sure nothing has been missed. Radios and antennas are added. After the equipment leaves Buckhannon, Canfield stresses the importance of employees doing daily checks to maintain it in the field. "If something starts leaking, fix it. Don't run it until it runs out of hydraulic oil and quits working, then it's too late." Supervisors also check on equipment to make sure it is in good working order.

"They're going around and checking, and looking," says Canfield. "The new equipment is great. Everybody seems to like it. It will last us a long time."

Maintaining Our Bright, Shiny, New Equipment



Also in this Issue:

State Highway Engineer

Sunshine

Bat Men

COVID-19 Task Force



Thank you for working to keep us safe. You're an excellent West Virginian and we're proud to serve our state with you.



Planning, Not Panicking

The WVDOT Approach to COVID-19

The situation with COVID-19 is more than we've seen before. Humans are working together, while staying apart, to defeat an ugly thing that would harm as many of us as it could, and diligence is required to protect each other from it. Our agency is doing what it can to care for our people and those we serve.

WVDOT began its preparation for COVID-19 before it was declared a pandemic. This sliver of time gave us a chance to think about the details we might not otherwise have considered; like gas pump handles. A task force was assembled to make plans we can swiftly implement if different scenarios unfold. There is never enough time to prepare for something like this, if there were unlimited time we would instead find a way to prevent it. The task force has acted expediently with the time they have, they have considered possible situations, and they have some recommendations to share with all of us.

"We want to continue to stress that employees keep their workstations clean," said Jeremy Casto, who leads the Task Force. "If you ride in crew trucks with others, wipe down the inside multiple times daily. If you have to share tools, use gloves and keep the tools cleaned between use. Most importantly, if you or someone in your household is sick, please inform your supervisor. We need to focus on making sure we keep each other safe."

Division Directors and District Engineers have purchased essential protective and cleaning supplies. Human Resources Division has responded proactively to concerns and helped adapt work settings to avoid crowds; with meetings conducted by phones and those working in large office settings staggering their numbers and working remotely. WVDOT has been open and transparent with the public in our effort to continue serving them while putting safety first; with rest areas restrooms remaining open and clean for those who must travel, and with adaptations to the way our Division of Motor Vehicles is interacting with the public (licenses and registrations which run out in March and April will be extended by 90 days, regional DMV's are closed but the Charleston headquarters is processing transactions received online and by mail.) These measures are temporary precautions to protect our communities.

"The DOT will continue to monitor our employees in the workplace and remain as flexible as possible to keep you, your families and the public safe," said Casto. "Many thanks to Jake Bumgarner, Shane Hudnall, Hussein Elkhansa, Kathy Bowe, Charlene Chandler, Jim Lambert, Matt Crum, Cindy Cramer, Ray Patrick, Lorrie Hodges, Lora Witt, and Katheryn Hill, for serving on this Task Force with me. Your above and beyond service to your co-workers is noteworthy."

WVDOH Today! is a monthly newsletter published by the West Virginia Division of Highways and distributed statewide via email to a network of the best employees on earth. All content is developed by the editor, unless otherwise credited. The purpose of this publication is to facilitate connection across the diverse worksites and professions represented among WVDOH employees to empower us to function as **one West Virginia Division of Highways**, and with our sister agencies, **one West Virginia Department of Transportation**. We encourage employees to write in and share thoughts.

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We are recognizing our people.

Now hiring qualified applicants all across the state!

To: Jeremy, Jake, Jim, Shane,
Lora, Katheryn, Ray, Hussein,
Matt, Cindy, Kathy, Charlene,
and Lorrie

Thank you for working hard
to keep us safe. You're
excellent West Virginian's
and we're proud to serve our
state with you.

Sincerely,

Your WVDOT



Meet Alan Reed, P.E., the New State Highway Engineer

Alan Reed, P.E., newly appointed to the State Highway Engineer position by Secretary Byrd White on March 14, 2020, is already immersed in his new role. Reed most recently held the District Engineer position in District 10. He has also worked as the District 10 Maintenance Engineer. Reed brings this strong boots on the ground focus to Central Office, to revitalize the State Highway Engineer's Office and empower Districts across the state by helping them proactively work together using the strengths of each District to overcome the challenges.

"I welcome Alan Reed as our new State Highway Engineer," said White. "There were a number of qualified candidates, but in the end the decision was an easy one. Alan's direction of District 10 was exceptional. He demonstrated leadership and the ability to accomplish the tasks needed to run an efficient organization, traits that will serve him well in his new role."

"Most of my career has been in operations on the ground," said Alan Reed. "I believe in building a team; using a team effort to accomplish what we do. It's an exciting time for me because I've worked on different projects throughout the state. We have some really good people who will work their heart out to get the job done. We've illustrated that bringing those people together and working together as a team, we can accomplish great things for the Division of Highways and the people of West Virginia."

Joe Pack, P.E., was appointed Acting District 10 Engineer to fill Reed's vacated position. "I am confident that Joe will continue the District's great work," said White.

"As State Highway Engineer, I'm going to concentrate on the team, to make sure we all have the same vision and the same plan," said Reed. "I want to get the vision to all of our people that we are a team. Pulling together will enable us to reach our destination."

"We have a lot of large projects, but we are also focusing on taking care of our secondary roads that people travel on every day," said Reed. "We have a plan that's uniform throughout the state, to take care of the small things; the potholes, the ditches, the drainage problems, the things that affect everyday drivers. Those are very important. New roads are nice when they're built, and those don't require a lot of effort to maintain. Some of our roads have a lot of age. Our drainage systems are in need of repair. We have two focuses. We have the focus of doing some large projects, and replacing some bridges that are in dire need of replacement. But we also have a focus



toward maintaining the roads people drive everyday. My focus is on trying to make all of that better."

"I'm a firm believer that people who enjoy their work and have some ambition to do a good job will do a better job," said Reed. "I will promote a workplace where people enjoy getting work done, and have a sense of accomplishment. It's really great to be able to stand back and see that you've done something that has made a difference to people."

"I would like to be involved in helping our people all across the state accomplish what they do," said Reed. "I want to be accessible. I know the challenges they're facing because I've been there. The District Engineers are each responsible for 400+ employees and all aspects of operations in their Districts. I can help them because I've been there, I understand. I'm excited about this opportunity. It's going to be great to see what we can accomplish."

"I ask that everyone give Alan and Joe your support as we move the Division of Highways forward," said Secretary White. "I'm confident they can keep the momentum going in their new roles, and that the year ahead will be even more successful than the year we just completed."



District 7 Partners With Pint-Sized Heros

By Cynthia Palagino

Photo collage by Melissa Jordan

The West Virginia Division of Highways, District Seven, partnered with Saint Patrick's Catholic Elementary School in Weston on Tuesday, March 2, 2020, in hosting a Blood Drive through the American Red Cross. District Seven employees organized, publicized, and recruited donors for the event, along with officials from Saint Patrick's School, which was held in the school's gymnasium. District Seven employee volunteers were also on hand the day of the blood drive to welcome donors as they arrived and check them in to assist Red Cross personnel.

This blood drive event, called "The Pint-Size Hero" program, kicked off one week prior at Saint Patrick's School with an all-school assembly where spokespersons from the American Red Cross and District Seven WVDOH were on hand to discuss this "learning-in-action" opportunity. Saint Patrick's students were taught about blood components, the function of blood and the need for blood donors by the Red Cross spokesperson, and District Seven employees discussed some of the many important functions the Division of Highways performs for the citizens and travelers across the State of West Virginia. In addition, students would be recognized for their involvement by recruiting their parents, family members and other adults to donate blood at the blood drive, becoming "Pint-Size Heroes."



The event was win-win for everyone. Not only did it bring all involved together in a spirit of teamwork and goodwill by working together to help others for a great cause, but also and helped those in need to receive the lifesaving blood they urgently need.

Going above and beyond for our communities is not unusual for West Virginia Division of Highways employees. Working with people who give their all, all the time, is one of the things that makes this a job worth having.

Sunshine on our *PAVEMENT* Makes Us Happy



Photo compliments of District 10.

John Denver is stuck in your head but that was only half the point. Now that you're singing the headline of this column, WVDOH Today! is taking a moment to remind you that on every winter day when it wasn't snowing or ice-covered (but often just as cold) Transportation Workers across the state were cutting tree canopies to protect our investment in the roadways. The sun reaches the roads, the roads dry, the roads last longer, we get that much farther ahead thanks to our network of TW co-workers and their persistent efforts to make our state shine.



Personal Narrative: What a Job with WVDOT Means to Me

By Jesse Ward

I applied to work for the West Virginia Department of Transportation as an Office Assistant because I was looking for a reliable job. What I found was that everyone I have met so far has been very welcoming. Coming into a new job can be very intimidating, but I have felt comfortable here.

The previous jobs I worked left me in a difficult financial situation. They either paid well per hour but didn't offer many hours or vice versa. I'm proud of being a reliable and steady employee, but I needed a reliable and steady job to match. I've

only been here a month, but it's making a difference for me by helping get me out of my old 1991 car that's been going downhill (either that or it's been an uphill battle to make it go!)

I work in the Employee Information section of Human Resources Division, the newsletter comes out of our section and we call ourselves WVDOT Information Corps. When I asked my boss if I could write an article for each issue, she said of course! I'm using my space this month to thank every person in all of the WVDOT agencies that I've spoken to in my time here, you have all been great. I wish I had applied here sooner. I'm proud to have this job.

ERP for DOT: DOT's Migration into WV Oasis

By Kelly McClanahan, Tressie Lopez and Carla Rotsch

"It's our boat, let's make it float!" is the mantra of the team working on Wave 2 of the DOT conversion into wvOASIS, the Enterprise Resource Planning system that includes all the administrative business processes of each state agency. DOT is the last state agency to join this system, basically due to the size of DOT and the complexity and number of different systems used.

DOH management decided in 2017 to move into the wvOASIS system in 2 waves. There were huge waves that had to be safely mastered, including a certification process by Federal Highway Administration (FHWA.) Their policy indicates when a state makes a change in their financial process, FHWA must certify that change prior to any federal dollar reimbursement resulting from that system. WVDOT had never been required to go through a certification processes before, and failure could result in the loss of approximately \$450 million dollars annually. Getting the wvOASIS system certified was the first step.

Wave 1 of this project took approximately 1 ½ years with Go Live being October 1, 2018. Some of the accomplishments included:

- Federal Bill produced and reported out of wvOASIS application titled Advantage Financial, Construction contractor payment process with direct interface from SiteManager to a Purchase Order and Payment Receipt in wvOASIS
- Consultant and Right of Way Payments continued to be recorded in REMIS as the point of entry and interfaced to wvOASIS in the form of a GAX (general accounting document), but with the Program, Phase and Activity included, which was needed for FHWA traceability.

- Equipment usage on projects tracked and billed through an interface from REMIS to wvOASIS, traceable through the DOT12 number (our current timekeeping sheet).
- Federal aid reporting completed out of wvOASIS application Business Intelligence.

Wave 1 implementation received provisional certification provided Wave 2 is completed in a timely fashion.

The Wave 2 team continues to meet weekly and has addressed many of the issues that attempt to sink the boat. While about 30% of the business activities have already been implemented, there are 28 groups currently working towards addressing the 70% still open. This includes 18 groups needing changes in their software or business processes. Not all groups are tied to certification as they don't all use federal funds, but these groups are still affected by the implementation of a new software system. The goal of this project is to have a state-of-the-art Transportation Management System; which includes asset management, project and program level tracking and management, and one system of record still for time, payroll, some financials and billing, and the retirement of the legacy Mainframe REMIS system.

Since WVDOT is the last agency to join wvOASIS, we are under enormous pressure to finish integrating into the ERP project... but we have been given an opportunity to do it our way, to a certain extent. We are on our own in developing solutions, but the result will still be those solutions must tie into wvOASIS. Therefore, we consider this phase of the project "our boat" and wvOASIS is the dock we must tie up to at the end of the day. The boat is still floating, and the team is still crossing some tough waves, but all are preparing for an exciting ride to the end.



WV DOT Family Coloring Contest



This contest is open to all the sons, daughters, nieces, nephews, cousins, friends and neighbors of WV DOT employees across the state; from pre-K through 12th grade. Color this picture of our Fallen Worker Memorial statue with a picture of one of our flaggers. Scan and email it to DOHnewsletter@wv.gov. At least one picture will be featured in our April issue as we focus on **Work Zone Safety Awareness**.

**Unified—we're a noteworthy network of people
and we make a difference.**

Statewide, we're focused on staying safe and trying to keep everyone's spirits bright; so while we're at it, let's make sure we take care of each other as well as we can whether that's sharing groceries when someone needs food or sharing a skill with a student who is out of school.

Four Guys and a Lot of Plywood: District 5's Bat Condo

By Lisa Kisamore

The District Five Division of Highways recently constructed their first ever "Bat Condo." The bat house was constructed in order to give a large number of bats living inside an old church on District Five property, a new home. The old church has been deemed unsafe and will be demolished to make room for a new building to be erected on the property. Sydney Burke, WVDOH Endangered Species Biologist, inspected the bats and there were no endangered bats found in the church. However, Ms. Burke stated that this bat mitigation project is being done as a requirement by the US Fish & Wildlife Services for impacts by WVDOH projects to Federally threatened and endangered bats.



the state have bat houses as well. The District Five bat house took a total of two weeks to construct. The builders were Troy Braithwaite, Mark Leasure, Adam Stump, and DJ Streets; all employees of the District Five Disforce organization. This massive bat house is 8 feet wide, 8 feet in depth, and can house at least six thousand bats. The house will be placed at least 10 feet above the ground on concrete footers, to protect the bats against predators. The inside of the house contains roosting stations that are ¼ of an inch apart as bats prefer tight spaces. A total of eighty-six sheets of plywood were used to construct the roosting stations. Every inch of the plywood had to be hand scratched in order to replicate the texture of tree bark and make it easier for the bats to climb

This is the first bat house, of this magnitude, that the WVDOH has built. According to Ms. Burke, District One has built some bat houses for mitigation of RHL Boulevard and there are over sixty bat houses installed in the Monongahela National Forest for mitigation of Corridor H. Several other projects throughout

into. The bottom of the house includes trap doors that will allow for easy cleanout. The house was painted a dark color and will be set to face 160 degrees in the southeast direction, to provide the bats with as much warmth from the sun as possible.

Happy Anniversary: WVDOT and the White/Wriston Team

In March of 2019, Governor Jim Justice appointed Secretary Byrd White and Deputy Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E., to their leadership positions with WVDOT. Remember video cassettes? It was like pushing the fast forward button with the picture still on; we're moving in a blur and talking like cartoon chipmunks — this year has gone by so fast.

"It doesn't seem like 11 months, it seems like a month," said Secretary White. "We've done so much, but we've got so much left to do."

"We went from about 4,300 people, those are round numbers, a year ago" said Deputy Secretary Wriston. "To right around 5,000. So we've hired 700 people, put them out there on the ground and got them to work."

"In my past career, many times I had to go back and spend a lot of time motivating people and getting them to get on board with the plan and get done what we needed to

do," said White. "This group of people just seem to automatically want to do it. They want to do a good job, and they have done a good job. We've got some more things to get done, some more things to change, but right now I'm just over the top about the progress that's been made by the people of the Division of Highways."

"We've got people walking around with smiles and enjoying working hard, and it's a hard job," said Wriston. "We've got people caring about what they're doing. That's been the transformation in the Division of Highways."

"We're on our way to prosperity for the folks of this state, like we've never had an opportunity to have before," said Wriston. "We need to take advantage of every piece of it, and Highways plays a great part of that because we touch every life out there. Every time a guy climbs into a snow plow or gets into a grader and pulls a ditch, he's doing that for the people that live here."

