

WV DOT Today!



June 2023—Volume 5: Issue 6



Restoring What Was Lost to Flood and Fire
WV DOT Makes History. TWICE!



District 7 Bridge Crews Complete Carrollton Restoration Project

West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) bridge crews from District 7 have completed restoration of the historic Carrollton Covered Bridge in Barbour County.

The bridge, which spans the Buckhannon River, was badly damaged by a fire in 2017. The WVDOH had originally planned to hire contractors to restore the historic structure, but decided it would be cheaper and faster for WVDOH bridge specialists to do the work themselves.

"I definitely knew our guys were capable of the work," said District 7 Bridge Engineer Chad Boram, P.E. So District 7 hired a consultant to come up with a plan and WVDOH bridge crews went to work restoring the span.

Restoration work on the bridge began in July 2022 with a complete cleaning and assessment of the bridge to see which of its wooden components could be salvaged and which would need replaced.

The bridge was built in 1856 by brothers Emmett and Daniel O'Brien. At 140 feet, it is one of the longest surviving covered bridges in West Virginia. The bridge was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1981.

West Virginia's covered bridges were largely built of hemlock and poplar cut on site. In the 1800s these trees were abundant in the state.

However, once they began assessing the damage to the bridge, WVDOH crews discovered that the charred timbers were in worse shape than they had expected.

"From the time it burnt down it sat out in the rain and snow for a couple of years," Boram said. "It's hard to tell how bad it is until you get into it."

In the end, WVDOH crews ended up replacing most of the bridge's truss work. "That definitely wasn't in the plan," Boram said.



But, at times using hammers and chisels, crews repaired the bridge top structure and hung new wooden siding. In May, crews installed a new steel roof, another first for the 10 to 12-person crew.

Contractors must still remove scaffolding erected to work on the bridge and keep debris out of the river, but the

Carrollton Covered Bridge is reopen to traffic. "It's something all the guys are proud of," Boram said. In fact, crews did such a good job that they'll be starting a restoration project on the Walkersville Covered Bridge next year.



WVDOT Today! is a monthly newsletter published by the West Virginia Department of Transportation's Public Relations Division. The purpose of this publication is to facilitate connection across the diverse worksites and professions represented among WVDOT employees to empower us to function as **one West Virginia Department of Transportation.**

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Trout Run Bridge Dedicated

Secretary of Transportation and Commissioner of Highways Jimmy Wriston, P.E., joined local dignitaries on the first official trip over the reopened Trout Run Bridge on Friday, May 12, 2023, when Shay 5, the locomotive, burst through a golden ribbon on the new span.

Completion of the bridge reopens the excursion line from Cass Scenic Railroad to the town of Durbin, which had been closed since the bridge washed out in 1985.

“Nothing was easy here,” said Wriston to the crowd on Friday. “Not one thing was easy, but you did it. You did it because you have will, you did it because you believe in the vision that we have, and you did this because you’re West Virginians and have West Virginia values.”

When floodwaters swept the tracks from the old hand-stacked stone railroad bridge in 1985, it shut down a rail line that had been open since the early 1900s, and was a regular run on Cass Scenic Railroad since the railroad opened in 1963. In cooperation with the West Virginia Department of Transportation’s (WVDOT) Division of Multimodal Transportation Facilities and the Durbin and Greenbrier Valley Railroad, which runs the Cass trains, the West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) piled on to build a new bridge and reopen the Cass to Durbin run for tourism.

“That’s what we do in this state. When we have a tough job to do, we roll up our sleeves and do it. That’s what happened and that’s what this bridge represents,” said Wriston.

Multimodal Transportation Facilities Commissioner Cindy Butler said, “Finally! The multi-year labor of love to restore the track from Durbin to Cass is finally complete. This 15-mile section of track was washed out during the 1985 flood and laid dormant ever since.”

“A Truer example of a Public Private Partnership won’t be seen in a long time,” Butler said. “This 15-mile section of track with this beautiful ballast deck bridge, is a star for West Virginia and



should be a showpiece for our WVDOT employees and the DGVR employees for many years to come.

“To say I am proud of everyone that played a part in the completion of this line, is an understatement. It is a true testament of the talent we have within our state.”

Members of the work crew were part of WVDOH Central Forces, or Cenforce, a group of workers with specialized skills who are sent around the state to tackle projects requiring special expertise. All were presented with certificates of recognition from Gov. Jim Justice.

“You name it, we do it,” said Greg Pennington, a supervisor on the Cass project. “We step in and knock it out of the park.”

Originally intending to build only the bridge abutments in 2019 and 2020, Cenforce came back in 2022 to build the bridge itself. Conditions at the work site were harsh, with crews having to bring all materials by rail five miles up the rail line. Twelve or 14-hour work days were common as dedicated Central Forces work crews toiled in rain and snow.

For Pennington and other Cenforce workers who rebuilt the Trout Run Bridge, it was a labor of love.

Pennington felt personally responsible to help reopen the Cass to Durbin run.

“I think we owe it to the state and to the nation to open this back up so people can see the beauty of the river and this valley,” Pennington said.

A Shay locomotive from Cass made a test run over the new bridge in early February 2023. With warmer weather arriving, Cass is ready to start running excursion trains over the reopened rail line.

“This bridge is an amazing accomplishment,” said Wriston. “These guys in these yellow shirts, they have memories they’ll be telling their great grandchildren about.”



Paving Underway on Rural Putnam County Roads

Contractors have begun work on two highly anticipated paving projects in rural Putnam County.

The West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) recently executed a \$1.5 million purchase order to pave Heizer Creek Road and Manilla Creek Road

near the Putnam County town of Poca. Plans are to pave all 10.25 miles of Heizer Creek and all 8.36 miles of Manilla Creek.

Plans to repave the pair of rural roads have been in the works for some time. The WVDOH spent much of last year getting ready for the paving project.



WVDOH undertook 11 different projects on the two roads in preparation for paving, including installation and replacement of culverts, drainage upgrades, and soil nail and pile wall installation to correct slips in the road. This spring,

WVDOH road crews patched potholes along both roads so they would be ready for a fresh new coat of asphalt.

Crews began work Tuesday, May 30, 2023, by filling in low spots in the road. Once leveled out, contractors will return to complete resurfacing.

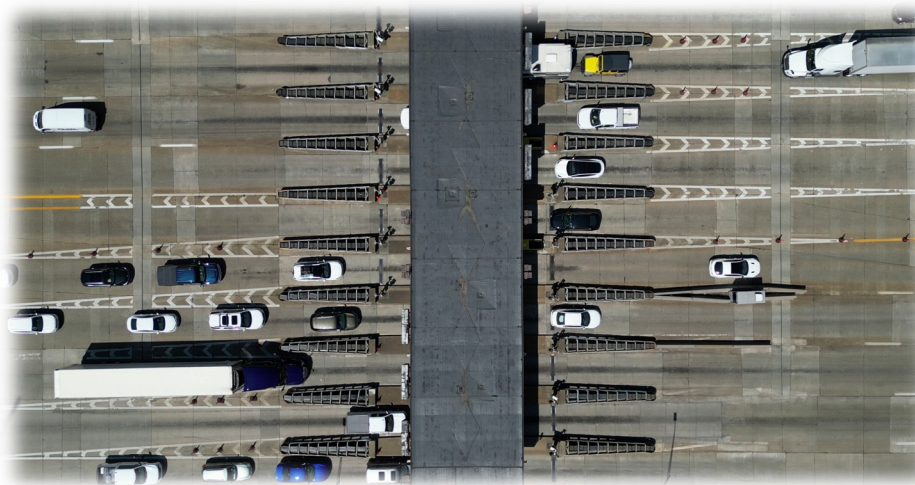
Memorial Day Traffic Nears 600,000

The West Virginia Turnpike saw an uptick in travelers over the Memorial Day holiday weekend compared to 2022.

There were 574,902 total transactions on the turnpike from Thursday, May 25, 2023, to Monday, May 29, 2023, up 0.93% from 2022's total of 569,579 transactions.

"As expected, Memorial Day weekend brought a large volume of traffic across the WV Turnpike," said Jeff Miller, Executive Director of the West Virginia Parkways Authority. "This kicks off our busy summer travel season. On Friday, we saw a 50% increase in travel over an average day and the total for the five-day period was nearly 600,000 vehicles."

On Friday, May 26, 2023, there were 150,233 transactions across



the turnpike's three plazas - the busiest travel day of the weekend. A total of 128,542 vehicles passed on Thursday while 108,622 cars passed on Monday. On Saturday, May 27, 2023, the Turnpike saw 103,212 vehicles. Sunday, May 28,

2023, was the least traveled day of the holiday weekend with 84,293 transactions.

"I'm very proud of the team as operations ran very smooth through the toll plazas, courtesy patrol, State Police, and dispatch center," said Miller.

There were minimal traffic delays on the turnpike during the five-day period. Five accidents occurred, several single vehicle accidents, during the holiday weekend on the turnpike.

Gov. Justice Dedicates Birdeye Bend With a Bang

On Friday, June 2, 2023, Gov. Jim Justice held an in the shadow of the famous Philippi Covered Bridge, the only covered bridge located on a federal highway in the U.S., to commemorate the newest route of the West Virginia Mountain Rides program, Birdeye Bend.



Rides program just in time for summer travels and adventures,” Ruby said. “Take this road trip to witness Almost Heaven’s natural beauty come alive with sunny skies, lush green landscapes and flowing falls. My continued thanks goes to Governor Justice for his

Birdeye Bend, a scenic loop that leads travelers throughout the northern region of the state, marks the fourth route of the West Virginia Mountain Rides program, a collaborative partnership between the West Virginia Department of Transportation and the West Virginia Department of Tourism to designate and promote the Mountain State’s most scenic country roads.

“The Mountain Rides program is such an important part of tourism in West Virginia,” Gov. Justice said. “These routes give folks the opportunity to experience our beautiful country roads for themselves. None of it would be possible without the hard work of both the Department of Transportation and Department of Tourism.”

Birdeye Bend takes travelers on a 173-mile journey throughout Mountaineer Country and can be completed in just over a 4-hour round trip via car or motorcycle. This scenic loop both begins and ends in Morgantown but is dotted with charming mountain towns along the way.

The towns of Clarksburg, Elkins, Kingwood, Parsons, Philippi, and Fairmont all make for heavenly places to stop and explore. Stroll crowd-free streets lined with quaint shops, dine on authentic Appalachian cuisine, take in sweeping vista views and meet wonderful locals, all of which will make you feel right at home.

Gov. Justice was joined by Tourism Secretary Chelsea Ruby and West Virginia Department of Transportation Spokesperson Randy Damron.

“We’re thrilled to be adding yet another route to our Mountain

partnership on this project as well as the Department of Transportation for their on-going work to ensure that our roads are in tip-top condition.”

“I want to once again thank Governor Justice for his vision of the Roads To Prosperity program,” Damron said. “Because of this initiative, we’ve had the opportunity to upgrade our road system to the point where we can now attract motorcycle and sports car enthusiasts to drive along our incredible, winding roads. Our DOH teams have been working hard on these roads for years to ensure they’re as close to flawless as they can be so that motorcyclists and sports car enthusiasts have a safe and enjoyable ride.”

At the conclusion of the event, Gov. Justice participated in a ceremonial firing of a replica Civil War cannon, commemorating Philippi's historical significance during the 1860s.

Every year on June 3rd, the town holds an event to commemorate the first land battle of the Civil War, fought in Philippi.



Tips on Cycling Safely

The U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is joining the Governor's Highway Safety Program (GHSP) to encourage more people to bike, ride safely, and wear helmets during National Bicycle Safety Month. NHTSA is urging communities to create safe spaces for bicyclists, and for drivers to be on the lookout for people bicycling nearby.

Bicycling is a great means of transportation and recreation. Everyone, in every community, deserves the freedom to ride to their destination safely. U.S. Census reports have shown that people in low-income, marginalized communities and communities of color often rely on walking and biking as their primary means of transportation, making safer bicycling critical to address transportation inequities.

Fewer motor vehicles on the road equals less congestion and lower emissions. Unlike an average motor vehicle weighing nearly 4,300 pounds with 252 horsepower and a carbon footprint of 51.4 square feet, a bicycle produces 0 carbon footprint.

The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Roadway Safety Strategy has outlined the comprehensive approach our nation needs to create a safe system for everyone, including people who bike. A safe system focuses on safer people, safer roads, safer vehicles, safer speeds, and post-crash care.

Safer People. Studies show drivers expect and are likely to see bicyclists better when more people ride bikes and ride them together. When more people bike, the risk of crashes with motor vehicles decreases. Studies of the Safety In Numbers effect show motorists drive more cautiously and bicyclists are safer on roads with higher volumes of bicyclists. Studies also show that helmets

save lives. Bicyclists should protect their heads with a correctly fitted helmet.

Safer Roads. Communities should seek to accommodate all road users, including bicyclists. The safest spaces for bicyclists are where they are separated from motor vehicles, such as dedicated bike lanes and paths.

Safer Vehicles. A bike is a vehicle when operated on the roadways. Just as drivers of motor vehicles, people riding bikes should take care to do pre-ride bicycle inspections and maintain their bikes in good working order.

Safer Speeds. Roadway safety is a shared responsibility. People biking don't have the protection provided by the frame of a vehicle. Bicyclists are most often killed by drivers who strike them with the front of their vehicle in a single-vehicle crash, often at a high rate of speed. Driving a vehicle is a tremendous responsibility, and cautious and responsible driving can save lives. Paying attention while driving, every trip, every mile, is critical. Drivers should look out, slow down, and yield for bicyclists.

Post-Crash Care. In the event of a crash, the most critical times are the minutes and hours after an injury. A person on a bike does not have the same protections as drivers in vehicles. The likelihood of injury to bicyclists is immanent when involved in a crash. Improving post-crash survival is highly dependent on getting them to care. Bystanders can be the "care before the care arrives" by stopping, calling for help, and staying until help arrives.

Let's work together to help our community protect our bicyclists. For more information about bicycle safety, visit [nhtsa.gov/road-safety/bicycle-safety](https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/bicycle-safety).

Stay Sober this June 20

This West Virginia Day, let's celebrate our state's creation and freedom by being responsible drivers. The Governor's Highway Safety Program (GHSP) is conducting a statewide impaired driving prevention enforcement period surrounding the West Virginia Day Holiday, Tuesday, June 20, 2023.

Just one alcoholic beverage could be one too many for some drivers. If you plan to drive, refrain from alcohol or drugs during your holiday festivities. If you do plan to imbibe, arrange a sober ride home in advance. Mountaineers are always free, but we're not free from consequences. Stay free by driving sober.



Col Ruby Bradley Bridge: A Celebration

Transportation Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E., joined community members on Monday June 5 in Spencer to officially dedicate the new four-lane Col. Ruby Bradley Memorial Bridge. Construction on the new bridge was made possible with funding from Gov. Jim Justice's Roads to Prosperity program.

"This is West Virginia," Wriston said. "A town like Spencer could be anywhere in the state. It has the same values."

The bridge is named for Spencer native Ruby Bradley, one of the most highly decorated women in the history of the United States military. An Army nurse, Bradley was captured in the Philippines in the early days of World War II, Bradley cared for fellow prisoners and came to be known as one of the "Angels in Fatigues." Bradley went on to lead nurses during the Korean War and retired from the army as a colonel in 1963.

"Having Ruby Bradley's name on this bridge and downtown is an honor to our community," said Spencer Mayor Terry Williams. "This here today shows how a project works right. Right in the middle of our downtown."

Built in 1932, the old Colonel Ruby Bradley Bridge carries US 33 across Spring Creek at the intersection of US 33 and US 119. It is one of the busiest intersections in Roane County. Replacing the



aging bridge had been in discussion for years. In September 2020, Gov. Justice awarded Rock Forge Bridge Company, of Amma, a contract for \$5.8 million to rebuild the Colonel Ruby Bradley Bridge.

The contractor, Rock Forge, first built a new bridge just upstream of the old span. When the new bridge was finished, traffic was shifted onto the new structure and the old bridge was torn down.

Then, in a two-day blitz beginning on the evening of Sunday, Jan. 22, 2023, Rock Forge began sliding the new bridge onto the abutments of the old bridge, a few

inches at a time. Rock Forge would slide the bridge a few inches, reopen the bridge to traffic, then move the bridge another few inches.

Dennis James, of Rock Forge, said the company faced a number of challenges in moving the bridge, including how to come up with a way to reduce the friction beneath the massive span to scoot it into place. They hit upon an environmentally-friendly lubricant, Dawn dishwashing liquid.

"We used dishwashing liquid, water and a mop," James said.

Work was done at night to minimize the impact on traffic.



WV DOT Recognizes Employees of the Year!

Secretary's Office: Alanna Keller, P.E.

State Highway Engineer: Greg Bailey, P.E.

Auditing: Robert W. Stewart

Budget: Kristy James

Civil Rights: Jaime T. Adkins

Contract Administration: Gulipiyee Abudukadier

Engineering: Kendra "Katie" Hastings, P.E.

Equipment: Ryan L. Canfield

Finance & Administration: Denise Palaimo-Miller

Human Resources: Don Estep

Information Technology: Bill W. Brogan

Legal: M Dirk Stemple

MCS&T: Adam Nester

Office Services: Kimberly Thompson

Operations: Lisa Hammonds

Performance Management: Patricia White

Planning: Adam Batty, P.E.

Programming: Sarah Taylor

Public Relations: Rusty Marks

Right-of-Way: Tim Ruppert

Technical Support: Jesse Bennett

Traffic Engineering: Missy Bentley

DMV Headquarters: Joshua "Harvey" Forinash

DMV Regional: Sarah Elizabeth Barker

Parkways Authority: Etta Keeney

State Rail: Craig Sherman

Public Transit: Tony O'Leary

D1: Stefen White

D2: Karen Saunders



D3: Scott Kelly

D4: Judith Van Pelt

D5: Troy Braithwaite

D6: Guy Frank Lewis

D7: Jeff Steele

D8: Loretta Currence

D9: Brandon J. Cook

D10: Kimberly Lilly

Secretary's Special Recognition Serving as Interim State Highway Engineer:

Greg Bailey, P.E.

Secretary's Outstanding Achievement:

Nate Tawney

Perry Keller

Jonathan Schaffer

Lori Suite

Joyce Dunlap

Scott Eplin

Lorrie Hodges

Marvin Murphy, P.E.

Rita Pauley

Secretary's Chief of the Year:

Hussein Elkhansa

Secretary's Outstanding Director Achievement:

Natasha White

Dawna Skaggs

William Hartwell

Jill Dunn

Jennifer Dooley



DMV Attends CDL License Coordinators/IT Managers' Conference



The week of May 15-19, 2023, the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) and Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Administration (FMCSA) hosted the annual CDL Coordinators/IT Managers' Conference in Houston. This conference provides jurisdictions with insight and updates on upcoming Federal programs and regulations relating to the testing, issuance, programming, and oversight of Commercial Driver's Licenses. It also provides an opportunity for those in attendance to ask questions about and get clarification on any number of topics related to a CDL, as well as network with fellow industry leaders. West Virginia was able to send five attendees from our CDL program. In attendance were Billy Lane, Harry Anderson, Adam Holley, Joel Holcomb, and Mike Griffin.

VISION AWARDS

Congratulations to the following individuals being recognized this month by Secretary Wriston for their dedication to The Vision.

Brenda Hill—DMV

Tina Tryon—DMV

Angela Chaney—DMV

Gabrielle Selbe—District 2

Ray McDougal—Engineering

Robert Kelly—District 8

Bonnie Fike—District 8

Gregory Silvester—District 8

William Garretson—District 9

Alfred Nutter—District 9

Timothy Sexton—District 10

The Vision is simple; to be the best DOT in the country, for the purpose of giving our West Virginia the chance it should have — a place of prosperity and joy, where citizens have the best chance to build the lives they hope for. To be the best DOT in the country based on the quality of our work and motivation. To be the safest place for our employees to work. To be the best trained, and most educated.

To go Above and Beyond, every day.



There's Good Things in Berkeley Springs

Transportation Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E., recently received the following correspondence from the town recorder for the town of Bath:

Dear Secretary Wriston,

My name is Susan Webster and I am the Recorder of the Town of Bath in Berkeley Springs. I've been in office with Bath for 30 years and a lifelong resident and business owner in Morgan County. I am writing this letter to express my gratitude for the recent paving of the northern end of Wilkes Street that the Morgan County DOH under the direction of Superintendent Hutchinson accomplished on May 19.

Wilkes Street is distinctive for several reasons and smiles abound due to its improvement! Wilkes Street is one of the original streets surveyed by President George Washington when he was 16 years old. We were later established as a municipality by the Virginia Assembly in 1776. Wilkes Street is unique in its variety of historic residential and business properties along with churches and public buildings.

The importance of the Wilkes Street improvement does not only lift the quality of life for the residents and businesses there, but is also a major asset in our Revitalization of the North End of Bath. This Revitalization includes other valuable WVDOH Projects including:

1. North Berkeley Rail Trail Project
2. Berkeley Springs State Park Project
3. Town of Bath Streetscape Projects
4. Berkeley Springs Depot Project

Secretary Wriston, the significance of your continuing role and support in the advancement of the Town of Bath can hardly be measured. My appreciation extends to your organization and staffing 'can do' spirit. I want to recognize the efforts of District 5 Engineer Lee Thorne and Morgan County Superintendent Todd Hutchinson. They have been attentive, respectful and responsive to me and are worthy of compliments!

I hope that I can meet you some day and I thank you for all you do for West Virginians!

With respect and regards,

Susan J. Webster

Recorder, Town of Bath

Resident and business owner, Morgan County, WV

Spencer Mayor Lauds Bradley Bridge

Good morning Secretary Wriston. First I wanted to thank you for posting the video about Ruby Bradley bridge- it was an excellent piece of work and I finally started telling people I paid you to say nice things about Spencer. I've been Mayor since I was 24 and will be 71 in March. I have loved what I do and like to see projects get done. I was fortunate to know - meet and talk several times to Ruby Bradley and she was a great lady. I'm also excited about the Scott/Miller hill project and keep an eye on it. I know you and highways have the toughest job of all and none of us are ever happy with road conditions and always want more. You and your folks have done a good job and getting better. Spencer is a great small town of West Virginia and it's not easy to keep it going. Never enough money to do all that needs done. If I can ever help you just call my office or me. I have lived here all my life and know just about everyone. Again thanks for all you do. My best to you. Terry Williams - Spencer, WV.



Summer Forecast: Sunny Days and Gold Ribbon



This Summer:

- Sunny Days
- Ribbon Cuttings
- Smooth Roads
- Babydog Sightings
- Fresh Pavement
- Not a Cloud in Sight

**Look Twice for
Motorcycles!**

