# **May 2022-Volume 48 1**000e 5



have been killed in work zones over the years. Last year, there were 889 crashes in West Virginia work zones, killing five people and injuring more than 300.

That's why drivers will see an increased police presence in West Police will be targeting work zones on Interstate 70, Interstate Virginia work zones this highway construction season.

"We are going to do everything that we can to meet our goal of zero lives lost on our highways and zero lives lost in our work "I speak for every member of law enforcement when I say that zones," said WVDOT Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E. "This is a we would much rather issue a traffic citation for speeding than united front with our partners in law enforcement. We're deliver a death message to the family of a driver, passenger, or serious about this. The days of talking your way out of these road worker killed in a construction zone, or anywhere on our tickets are over, and the fines you'll face in work zones are roadways," said Lt. Chris Zirkle of the West Virginia State Police. doubled."

the years.

Sixty-one West Virginia Department of Transportation workers "There is not one empty vest up there that is acceptable," Wriston said. "And we certainly cannot have any more."

> During the 2022 highway construction season, law enforcement will be issuing tickets in work zones throughout West Virginia. 68, Interstate 64, Interstate 77, Interstate 79, and Interstate 81 throughout the season.

"This year, you may see one law enforcement officer sitting out A display of 61 empty safety vests draped over orange traffic in a construction zone. But what you won't see are the other cones represents the WVDOT workers killed in work zones over three or four officers actively working that same construction zone, looking for infractions and writing citations."



### Remembering Those Who Gave All

April 11-15 was National Work Zone Awareness Week, a time to remind each and every one of us of the importance of paying attention in work zones to avoid potentially deadly accidents.

Sixty-one West Virginia Department of Transportation workers have been killed in work zone accidents over the years. Among the fallen: (Not all have been identified.)

Victor D. Abbington James A. Galloway Jr.

Bernard A. Beto John D. Greenwide

Wetzel L. Bias Morris Hansford

Randall W. Bland Benjamin Harris

Eli Blankenship Jr. Stephen A. Herold

Timothy R. Boothe Charles E. Mimelrick Jr.

Joseph Chetock Nelson E. Ingram

William D. Cook Robert Kanode

Arthur Coulter Paul B. Kile

Timothy A. Cox Robert Lilly

Susan J. Custer Edwin Logston

Okey Dean Glenn F. Lough

Chester Delong Oscar Maynard
Francis Doran John A. Moat
David Earliwine Dennis C. Neely Jr.
Robert E. Fleece Jr. Ellis Ogden



Steven L. Oldaker Frederick L. Sponaugle

John L. Poland Eugene Sullivan

Robert Pritt Ralph W. Swisher

Forest A. Raynes Roy Vanscoy

Okie Riser James H. Watts

Rickie H. Sanders Terry L. Webb



**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**.

**Jack Sharps** 

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### West Virginia Becoming I

West Virginia is improving its ranking for states considered friendly to bicyclists, according to data just published by a national bicycle advocacy group.

The League of American Bicyclists lists West Virginia as 28th of the 50 states for laws and policies designed to keep bicyclists safe and to promote bicy-

released rankings prior to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The League of American Bicyclists has been ranking states for bicycle friendliness since 2008.

"When this report first came out, we were 50th," said Dennis Strawn, a bicycling advocate who works for the West Virginia Division of Highways' Strategic Data Management and Technology Division. "It shows the strides West Virginia has made over the past 10 years or so."

Strawn, who rides his bicycle to his Charleston office every day, said the state's rise in the rankings is largely due to an increased emphasis on bicycles from the West Virginia Legislature and WVDOT.



In 2014, the West Virginia Legislature passed House Bill 4304, the Bicycle Safety Law. Among other provisions, the law requires drivers to give bicycles three feet of safe passing distance when overtaking them on the road. The WVDOT has also been providing funding to communities to better accommodate bicycles.

cling. West Virginia ranked 34th in 2019, the last time the league The League of American Bicyclists ranked states based on five criteria. West Virginia met three of them through its safe passing law, statewide plan for accommodating bicycles, and a complete streets policy - meaning that the state recognizes that, whenever possible, public thoroughfares should be designed to meet the needs of pedestrians, public transit, motorists, and bicycles.

> "Through surveys, data collection, and analysis, the Bicycle Friendly States report and ranking demonstrates how states are or are not — contributing to making biking safer, more comfortable, and an easier option for everyone," said Bill Nesper, executive director of the League of American Bicyclists.

### District 6 Goes Orang

National Go Orange Day, designated to help raise work zone safety awareness, celebrated its seventh year on Wednesday, April 13, 2022. Participants express their support for work zone safety by wearing orange.

District 6 showed its support by turning out in appropriate attire.

"Work zone safety is the most important thing we do in Highways," said District 6 Engineer Tony Clark, P.E.

"The ultimate goal is for our employees, our contractors, and members of the traveling public to travel safely through our work zones and to get home safely every night."





#### Website Goes Live for N

A website is now live to track a massive reconstruction project MacCorkle Avenue Kanawha City, the West Virginia Department of Transportation announced.

Contractors have established the webiste for the public to monitor the ongoing project. The website will include construction schedules links to cameras along the route that will allow motorists to

monitor traffic flow on MacCorkle Avenue in real time.

The web address is kanawhacityreconstruction.com.

The portion of MacCorkle Avenue, from 33rd Street to 40th Street, is part of a massive project to revamp MacCorkle Avenue all the way to 58th Street, part of Gov. Jim Justice's Roads to Prosperity program. The project will rebuild the aging stretch of roadway from the ground up.



October 2021, Mountaineer Contractors Inc. was awarded a contract for \$10,036,333.91 to completely rebuild MacCorkle Avenue curb to curb between 33rd and 40th streets. The project will also ensure proper drainage, and is intended to keep MacCorkle Avenue safe and smooth for years.

During the fall of 2021, contractor SQP Construction

Group completed a \$570,000 project to install 105 ADA-compliant curb cuts on MacCorkle Avenue intersections between 35th Street and 58th Street. Completion of the curb cuts was necessary before work could begin on the roadway.

One final project will completely repave MacCorkle Avenue from 40th Street to 56th Street. That contract is expected to go out for bid in the coming months.

#### Peal People W

After 11 years with the West Virginia Division of Highways, Craig Howell has learned to jump out of the way. Fast.

"I've been nicked by mirrors, and I had my toe run over once," he said. "No one pays attention to these signs out here. They're in too much of a hurry."

On Thursday, April 28, 2022, Howell was working at the intersection of US 119/US 33 and Court Avenue in Weston when the driver of a black pickup truck ran a flashing red warning signal and struck Howell. Howell felt the truck hit his back and safety.

The driver stopped briefly to say he was sorry before leaving the With work zones in all 55 counties this summer, law scene of the accident.

A supervisor took Howell to the hospital, where he was treated and released for scrapes and bruises. But the accident puts a human face on the importance of paying attention in work Howell believes he has identified the driver of the truck that hit zones.

The work zone where Howell was working was well-marked with We wish Howell the best and hope his story drives home the a flashing signal. Howell was wearing fluorescent yellow.

The driver hit him anyway.

"This is a perfect example as to why it is imperative to pay attention in work zones," said Shane Hudnall, WVDOH State Safety Officer. "Road work can be performed at any time day or night. Thanks to the quick reaction of our employee, he wasn't severely injured.

"Don't be distracted," Hudnall said. "Stay off your phone, pay attention to the signs, lights, and our employees."

Sixty-one WVDOH workers have been killed in work zone accidents over the years. Last year, there were 889 crashes in West felt the tire scraping against his leg before he was able to leap to Virginia work zones, killing five people and injuring more than 300.

> enforcement agencies across the state are committed to not only stopping speeding and distracted drivers in work zones, but to ticketing them.

him. Weston Police are investigating.

importance of work zone safety. Pay attention and stay alert.

Always.



#### Grant Applications Open for I ransportation Pro

The West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) is pleased to grant cycle. announce the opening of our online grant application system for FFY 2022 Transportation Alternatives (TA) and Recreational Trails Program (RTP) potential projects. A direct link to the page is http://dohgrants.wv.gov. The application process has two phases: An Intent-to-Apply (ITA) Phase and an Application Phase. All applicants must first be registered and then complete and submit an online ITA for the project for which funding is sought. When the ITA is approved by the WVDOH grant staff, then the applicant will be allowed to complete and submit an online Application. No paper ITA's or Applications will be accepted. Detailed instructions for the completion of the ITA and Application can be found at the website listed above.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) may be found at http:// dohgrants.wv.gov/Account/ViewFAQ. We encourage anyone applying for a TA or RTP award to closely examine the FAQ for clarification and detailed explanations of many aspects of the grant programs, including funding changes for the FFY 2022

The ITA Phase will be closed at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 23, 2022. The Application Phase will be closed at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 30, 2022. Please check your email and the online application system concerning your ITA or Application as it is the responsibility of the applicant to track the progress of the applicant's own submission(s). Also, please be sure to review any email notifications as there may be suggestions from the WVDOH grant staff regarding your project's ITA or Application. Please feel free to share this information with any interested, eligible parties.

If you have any technical questions regarding the online ITA, Application, accessing the system, getting registered or have any questions regarding the TA or RTP, please contact Mr. Mark Scoular at R.Mark.Scoular@wv.gov or by phone (304)414-6937 or Mr. Timothy B. Sedosky timothy.b.sedosky@wv.gov or by phone at (304) 414-6938.

### itical Upgrades Approved

system on the West Virginia Turnpike.

"This is probably the single biggest project Parkways has done in Full implementation of the new system is expected to take 18 20 years," said Jeff Miller, Executive Director of the Parkways months. Miller stressed that any changes to electronic toll Authority. "The ultimate goal is to enhance the overall patron collections will be thoroughly tested before going live. experience both on the roadside and with the customer service center on the West Virginia Turnpike."

The contract includes installation of state-of-the-art technology to expand E-ZPass and other forms of electronic payment to potentially allow cashless toll payments at all Turnpike toll booths if the Authority decides to pursue this in the future. The time fee of \$13 for a transponder. project will also include upgrades to the Turnpike customer service software to make it easier and more efficient for customers to apply for an E-ZPass or transact other business with the Parkways Authority.

The contract also calls for the installation of license plate cameras in every Turnpike toll booth to bill motorists who fail to pay their tolls.

On Wednesday, April 27, 2022, the West Virginia Parkways The new technology will also allow Turnpike tolls booths to Authority awarded a contract for \$24.8 million to technology accept payments from transponder systems other than E-ZPass company TransCore for critical upgrades to the toll collection as those systems are developed, further preparing for the future.

E-ZPass is an electronic toll collection system using a vehiclemounted transponder to allow drivers to proceed through toll booths without having to stop to pay tolls. West Virginia offers a single fee discount plan to drivers of passenger cars that allows unlimited use of the Turnpike for a year for \$26.25, plus a one-

The discount plan offers considerable savings compared with paying a toll each time a driver passes through a Turnpike toll booth. Miller said the E-ZPass can almost pay for itself with a single trip on the Turnpike.

Parkways has been working with TransCore since 1997.

"TransCore has worked in close partnership with the Parkways Authority for decades," said TransCore President Tracy Marks.



# Some Parting Thoughts From Randy Wade Best of Luck for Your Future!

#### My DOT Family:

After 35 years I have decided to retire as Director of Auditing for Department of Transportation. This has been a rewarding experience that I will treasure for the rest of my life. As an auditor and later Director of the Auditing Division I have been fortunate in that I have been able to travel to our many facilities throughout the state and meet many of you. I am proud to say that the employees of the West Virginia DOT are a tribute to this great State. I have also been privileged to travel the country and visit other DOH's and I can proudly say that the dedication of our workforce is among the best in the industry. I am proud to have worked with all of you and I will miss you all.

I want to thank upper management for allowing me to serve as Audit Director and for their support of the audit function. I want to thank all of management throughout the department for their support of audit and their work ethic which has makes audit easy! And I want to thank the entire workforce for their support and acceptance as we have carried out the Audit function.

Thank you all for allowing me to serve you as Audit Director and thank you all for a very rewarding and happy career. I wish the best for all of you who continue to serve the State of WV.

I recently shared on social media my rationale for retirement in the form of a list.

#### HOW AND WHY I DECIDED TO RETIRE

- I have worked through three installations of "state of the art, super advanced" software in the office.
- Each time it was replaced that same software was referred to as "antiquated, obsolete, useless and behind the times."
- In meetings I started using this phrase a lot....."I remember when..."
- I am the only one still in my office who was here when we used adding machines, typewriters, Dictaphones, carbon paper and 35 mm cameras.
- I own ties that are considerably older than some of my staff.
   Many of the people below me on the org chart are younger than my children.
- Years ago I asked a retiree "What's the best thing about being retired?" He said "Sunday night"......I didn't get it then.....I get it now.

- My wife finally concurs with the decision. This is a big one.
   Earlier thoughts of retirement were immediately rebuffed at home. This time she completely agrees that it would be kind of nice to have meals prepared when she gets home, groceries stocked without her going to the store and outside work and laundry done through the week. I was just admiring her retirement gift to me.....a shiny new vacuum.
- I realized I'll be able to stay up late. As I grew older I found myself going to bed earlier and earlier. After I retire, I'm staying up late! I mean really late....like 11 PM!!!!
- I'll be able to wear whatever I want! Granted office attire has declined over the years and the dress in the office is increasingly casual. Frankly, I was never a fan of it and was one of the last to hang up my suits and ties. But I foresee a lot of shorts, t-shirts and flip flops in the coming months. Maybe just a robe as I break in my new vacuum.
- I had a meeting recently with an outside consultant who I hadn't seen in several years, instead of greeting we with "Good Morning", "good to see you" or "how's the family?"; his first words were "WOW! You're still here?"
- Vriston and said I was considering it and he immediately reminded me of the many accomplishments we had achieved together and the many more we were working on. He encouraged me to stay on and continue the mission and emphasized my value to the organization. Encouraged and inspired, I relented and stayed these last few years. So this time I went in to tell him I had again decided to retire. I expected and prepared to be asked to stay. I sat back in my chair prepared to defend my decision...... His response was "OK."

The decision was not one taken lightly. I feel during my tenure as Director of Audit we have accomplished a lot! I am proud of the service we provide to managers throughout the state. I am excited for the future of Auditing Division and the WVDOT.

WVDOT AUDIT



### OH Hires Two Throug

A partnership between the West Virginia Division of Highways and WorkForce West Virginia to put state residents to work in the highways industry is a win-win situation for those involved.

"The first two guys we got are being hired," said WVDOH District 2 Engineer Rob Pennington, P.E.

Under the program, WorkForce West Virginia pays potential job applicants to go to work with local WVDOH highway districts, where they receive training for highway maintenance work. WorkForce West Virginia will pay the temporary workers' salaries for up to a year. During that time, their performance is evaluated.

"This program changed my whole life," said Jason Neil, one of two participants in the program who landed a full-time job with the WVDOH.

Neil had been out of work for about three months when he signed up for the program through WorkForce West Virginia. Bernie Adkins, the other WorkForce participant to be hired in District 2, had been off work for about two years.



Pennington said he put WorkForce crews on the job helping cut tree branches over roadways and picking up litter in Lincoln and Cabell counties. So far, WorkForce crews have picked up more than 1,000 bags of trash along the highways. Crews have also been authorized to help with milling and filling potholes.

"They've blended in real well with our WVDOH crews," Pennington said.

WorkForce crews are also doing work in Kanawha and other counties in WVDOH District 1. District 1 Manager Arlie Matney believes the program is an important tool that can not only find talented people to work for the WVDOH, but also provide an avenue for West Virginians to find work without having to leave the state.

"So far it's been really successful," Matney said. "I feel good about giving people the opportunity they deserve to show us what they can do for our state."

Matney also intends to hire some of the participants in the program.

### hen We Do a Good Jol

When West Virginia Division of Highways work crews do a good We also got this email from District 2: job, the public notices. Chief Engineer of Special Programs Alanna Keller, P.E., passed on this email to District 5:

I just wanted to take the opportunity to praise the road crew in D-5 that were working on 259 just outside of Capon Lake today. They had road signs in place indicating a lane closure ahead as well as had cones placed along the centerline, letting drivers know they are about to enter a work area, prior to coming upon the flagger. The cones were a nice, visual indicator that signaled drivers to slow down.

Thanks so much for repairing the potholes in our road. I know they have priorities and can't be everywhere at once.

Just a thank you again. The crew from Point Pleasant, in Mason County, did such a good job of cutting out potholes and packing in new asphalt.

**Ed Carson** 

West Columbia WV



### WVDOH Recognizes Excellence

On Thursday, April 28, 2022, James Monroe High School ninth-grader Will Boggess was recognized in front of his classmates and in the presence of none other than Gov. Jim Justice for his efforts in cleaning up two sections of roadway in his native Monroe County.

West Virginia Division of Highways Monroe County

Administrator Shannon Brim said Boggess initially got in contact with West Virginia Sen. Stephen Baldwin, whose district includes Monroe County. Boggess was writing concerning overgrown trees and brush on Back Creek Road and Baker Mountain Road near Greenville.



Baldwin then passed the information on to Brim.

Brim, who is from the area where Boggess lives, at first couldn't figure out who the eloquent high school student was.

"His letter was very well-written and very safety conscious," Brim said.

Brim said he was impressed with Boggess' persistence and concern for getting the sections of road cleaned up.

"I thought it was just great," Brim said.

The sections of roadway have since been cleared of brush.

### Campaign Signs Prohibited

The West Virginia Department of Transportation would like to remind the public that West Virginia law prohibits political campaign signs on all state rights-of-way.

WVDOT workers around the state have been instructed to remove any campaign signs found on state rights-of-way pursuant to state law. Confiscated signs will be temporarily stored at county highway offices for retrieval by candidates or their representatives.

Violation of the law prohibiting campaign signs on state rights-of-way is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of \$25 to \$100 per day. Violators are also subject to reimbursing the Department of Transportation for the cost of removing the signs.





### Work Progressing on App

It's been a year since the largest bridge ever floated into place in North America was hoisted onto its piers above the Ohio River in Wellsburg. The 830-foot main span of the Wellsburg Bridge was floated down the river on barges and lifted into place by massive jacks on Monday, April 26, 2021.



span in with WV2 on the West Virginia side of the bridge, and with Third Street in Brilliant on the Ohio side. On the West Virginia side, work is

attempted in North America. Now

work is progressing to tie the main

complete building a nearly mile-long retaining wall necessary

"The bridge float was the biggest news story around at the time, to add a third lane to WV 2. The third lane will allow access to

Steel work has also been finished and most of the concrete poured to connect the main span of the bridge with WV 2.

On the Ohio side, part of the bridge connecting the main span with the Ohio shoreline is complete. A section of the bridge passing over OH 7 must still be built to connect the Ohio side of the structure with Third Street in Brilliant.

Work is projected to be complete late this year.

"We're looking forward to seeing it open," Clark said.

but there has been a great deal of work since then," said West the bridge. Virginia Division of Highways District 6 Engineer Tony Clark, P.E.

When finished, the bridge will connect the community of Wellsburg, West Virginia, with Brilliant, Ohio. The bridge will drastically reduce travel time between the two communities, provide a new river crossing for commerce, and provide another way across the river if work needs to be done on neighboring spans.

It took more than 13 hours to float the bridge into place in 2021. At the time it was the largest bridge floating project ever

### Greenbrier River

Some members of the West Virginia Department of Transportation's Human Resources Division have been busy.

Courtney Crabtree, Jenny Tignor, Jennifer Ballard, Kandy McKinney and Ronie Hall all took part in the annual Great Greenbrier River Race Marlinton on Saturday, April 30, 2022. (Though not all on the same team.)



competition involving a Sprint Run along the Greenbrier River Trail and 8th Street in Marlinton, West Virginia, second leg a paddle down The Greenbrier River by canoe or kayak and a bicycle finish in downtown. In all the competition includes a three-mile race, four-mile paddle and 10-mile bike ride.

Ballard and Hall took part in all three

races, while the others took part in portions of the competition. Next year's race will be on April 29.

The race, always run on the last Saturday in April, is a triathalon



### VDOH's Annual War on Potholes is Quickly Gaining Ground

The West Virginia Division of Highways' annual war on That's enough asphalt to fill about 188 railroad cars. potholes is well underway. Since asphalt plants began opening in March, the WVDOH has patched 4,712 miles of roadway as of April 15, 2022. WVDOH road crews have used more than 18,851 tons of asphalt. Pothole patching is about 20 percent complete this season.

"Our crews are working daily to properly repair potholes, with the end goal of having a smooth roadway surface and to maintain the highway until the roadway can receive resurfacing," said Joe Pack, P.E., WVDOH Chief of District Operations.











## DOH's Best Maintenance Recognized

During the 2022 Operations/Equipment Conference on Certificates were given to the county in each district with the the year.

Wednesday, May 4, 2022, State Transportation Secretary best results in completing their 2021 core maintenance plans, Jimmy Wriston, P.E., recognized the hard-working men and with some counties completing 100 percent of their entire women who serve as the boots on the ground, carrying out plans. Special awards were also given to the Interstate core maintenance functions day in and day out, every day of organization with the best performance and the district with the best core maintenance performance.



D1 — Kanawha County



D2 - Mingo County



D3 — Wood County



D4 — Doddridge County



D5 — Hardy County



D6 — Ohio County



D7 —Gilmer County



D8 — Pocahontas County



D9 — Nicholas County



D10 — Wyoming County



Expressway — I-79 Lost Creek



Best Overall — D8



### Let's Get Walking!

Starting Sunday, May 1st, 2022, the West Virginia Department of Transportation is starting a DOT Step Challenge that will continue through Sunday, May 29th.

The nice weather is hopefully here to stay, so get outside and start walking! There are several health benefits to walking and it is always nice to get some fresh air. You can also count steps throughout the day, inside walking, at home, etc. Try walking meetings throughout the work week! Even a quick 15-minute walking meeting can add to that total step count.

Use an app to count steps, a fitness watch or tracker, a pedometer, etc.

To track steps efficiently, we will be using a website called Challenge Runner. Try to log your steps every day. The Challenge Runner website will also allow you to backdate steps up to 3 days. You will have to sign up to make an account, but this will keep everyone on track! The signup is simple and requires only an email and password.

Take pictures along the way and at the end of the challenge the top walkers will be posted on the Leaderboard! These will be added to the Wellness Activity Page.

I hope all of you participate as much as you can! Let's see how many steps we can get for all of WVDOT!

To sign up go to https://www.ChallengeRunner.com/enroll/cd39a8-3iyf

### VISION AWARDS

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

Lisa Dunlap —Public Relations Division

Ruth Bissell—District 3

Pamela Bays—District 1

Robert Cornell—District 4

**Rodney Pettit—District 7** 

Tammy Dowdy—District 9

Joshua "Harvey" Forinash—DMV

Craig Sherman—State Rail Authority

Allen Phares—State Rail Authority

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.

