

# WV DOT Today!

## Finding Fault: ~~And Finding it Good~~

Well.

CHARLESTON, W.Va.—You may have heard of Demeter, the Goddess of the Harvest or Aphrodite, the Goddess of Love, but have you ever heard of Peggy and Alanna, the Twin Goddesses of Proofreading?

Although each legend tells it a little differently, the common theme is that each month, before you read **WV DOT Today!** Alanna Keller has already scanned it with her laser-focused eye-beams and Peggy Armstrong has read it from the last word all the way back to the first.

“Proper grammar and spelling are a sign of **professionalism**,” said Armstrong, a 31-year veteran of DOH. Raised by an Executive Secretary, Armstrong is no stranger to a red ink pen. Professionalism is apparent in every aspect of how Armstrong conducts herself; as she reviews plans to find faults that do more than just annoy readers, faults that could prove much more costly.

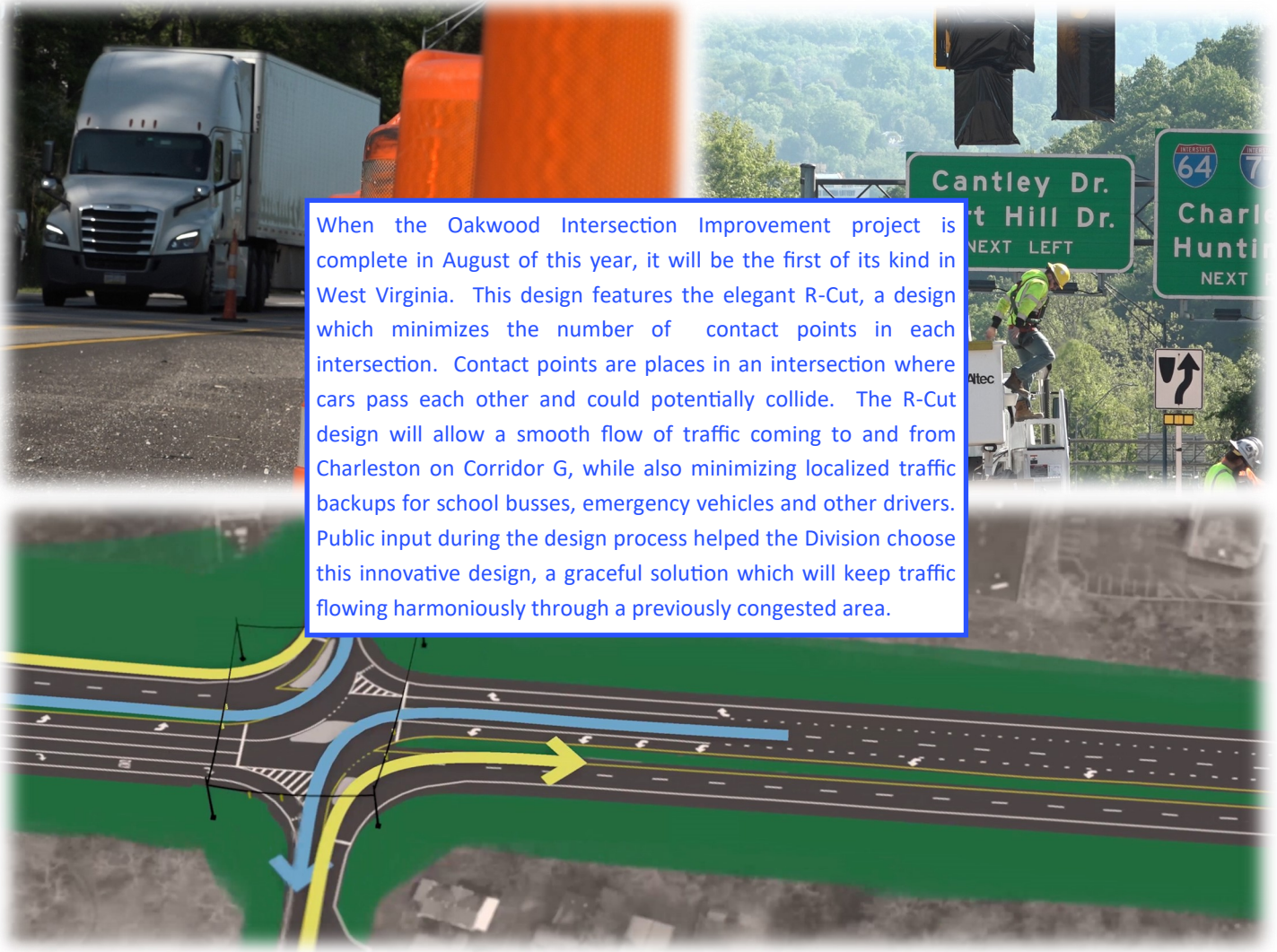
“My father-in-law was the grammar police,” said Keller, of her inspiration for proofreading. “I can’t abide errors the **public** could see.” Keller serves the state of West Virginia as the Special Projects Engineer, a job which requires her to solve problems other’s cannot.

“I read it forward to see if it makes sense, then I read it backwards to look for spelling errors,” said Armstrong.

“In all things, we should lead by example,” said Keller.



# R-Cut: A First for West Virginia



When the Oakwood Intersection Improvement project is complete in August of this year, it will be the first of its kind in West Virginia. This design features the elegant R-Cut, a design which minimizes the number of contact points in each intersection. Contact points are places in an intersection where cars pass each other and could potentially collide. The R-Cut design will allow a smooth flow of traffic coming to and from Charleston on Corridor G, while also minimizing localized traffic backups for school busses, emergency vehicles and other drivers. Public input during the design process helped the Division choose this innovative design, a graceful solution which will keep traffic flowing harmoniously through a previously congested area.

• **WVDOT Today!** is a monthly newsletter published by the West Virginia Department of Transportation. 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.

West Virginia Department of Transportation  
Attn: WVDOT Public Relations  
1900 Kanawha Boulevard East  
Building 5, Room A-137  
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

Editors: Jennifer Dooley and Randy Damron  
Copy Editor and Staff Writer: Rusty Marks  
Proofreaders: Peggy Armstrong and Alanna Keller  
Submit content to: [Jennifer.J.Dooley@wv.gov](mailto:Jennifer.J.Dooley@wv.gov)



# Patching in Traffic Comes With Challenges



When you're millin' and fillin' like a villain, you need someone to watch your back. This is especially true if you're working in traffic.

That's why traffic control is an important part of just about any WVDOH work site.

"We've had people come through the work zone and not see the flaggers and hit the back of a roller or truck broom," said Fayette County Administrator John Dixon from District 9.

District 9 work crews were recently patching along WV 61 in the heart of the town of Oak Hill.

Dixon said traffic control in town can have its own special challenges. City drivers tend to be more impatient, he said, and traffic control crews have to worry about motorists coming from several different intersections and going several different directions at once.

With work zones in all shapes and sizes in all 55 counties around the state, WVDOH appreciates its flaggers.



## *Deputy State Highway Engineer; Todd Rumbaugh*



Todd Rumbaugh, 51, is Deputy State Highway Engineer of Construction for the WVDOH. He oversees both the Contract Administration Division and Materials Control, Soils and Testing Division. In all, he supervises about 130 employees.

Rumbaugh said Contract Administration is responsible for putting out state highway and bridge contracts to bid, then handing them out to their respective highway districts. The division also helps close out projects once they're completed.

During construction, Contract Administration also sends people into the field to oversee how the districts are administering the projects. This ensures consistency.

"You don't want one district doing things differently than another district," he explained.

A 26-year employee of DOH, Rumbaugh grew up and still lives in Winifrede, Kanawha County. He has a wife, three children and several grandchildren.

"I'm what you call a jack of all trades and master of none," he said, spending much of his time working on his own home or on the homes of friends or neighbors. In his free time he enjoys raising Great Danes, traveling and playing with his grandchildren.

**\*Check back each month for Rusty's next featured executive.**

## *Push for Engineers is Paying Off*

CHARLESTON, West Virginia – The West Virginia Department of Transportation just hired 50 new engineers following an aggressive recruiting and hiring campaign.

When Gov. Jim Justice announced his \$2.8 billion Roads to Prosperity highways program, DOT knew they would need to hire hundreds of new employees, including up and coming engineers. The West Virginia Legislature passed a law allowing DOT to hire their own employees without going through the state Division of Personnel, and DOT streamlined the hiring process to find and hire workers as quickly as possible.

WVDOH job listings available on [transportation.wv.gov](http://transportation.wv.gov) are immediate job openings, currently vacant and ready to hire. Streamlining the process of hiring has cut down on the time it takes to get a new employee in the door, and the new Classification and Compensation Career Plan has made it possible to keep them once they're here.

Interviews were conducted in January and March. Of 70

engineers interviewed, 50 were hired. Some were recent graduates; graduating one week and starting work the next.

"We have a workforce, the majority of whom are able to retire at any time and take all that knowledge with them," said Leslie Adkins, job recruiter for the West Virginia Division of Highways. "We need to look out for our future."

**Want to know more  
about what's happening  
at your WVDOT?**

Visit the WVDOT Online Newsroom at:  
[Transportation.wv.gov/communications/pressrelease](http://Transportation.wv.gov/communications/pressrelease)



# Reporters Go To New Heights (Literally) to Help



WV DOT recently hosted a series of events for our media partners to join us in seeing the work we do, up close. We thank them for showing up. Not every work zone is a row of barrels on the interstate and you are saving lives when you show the varied types of work zones we have. You are helping drivers understand that our workers are West Virginians trying to help our state shine, too. We recognize your effort — whether you're going to the same heights as our bridge inspectors (literally) or trying your hand at paving a road — there's a lot of time and effort involved in properly telling a story, and we appreciate you.



# Employee of the Year



In each District and Division around the state, employees are receiving their Employee of the Year recognition, a new tradition this year. Following a year of adaptations — needing to work around things and then work around the things you have to work around and then work around the things you have to work around to work around those things — and still get the job done, this recognition is especially meaningful and downright triumphant for the folks who have shone through it all. Pictured above, Arlie Matney shakes hands with State Highway Engineer Alan Reed and Deputy Secretary of Transportation Jimmy Wriston upon receiving his award. Pictured below, Mike Witherow receives his award from District 6 Engineer Tony Clark. At press time, there are still employees who have not received their certificates, so look for a full listening of the winners in next month's issue.



## VISION AWARDS

Congratulations to the following individuals being recognized this month by Secretary Byrd White and Deputy Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E., for their dedication to The Vision.

**Robert Arnold — District 8**

**Brandon Cook — District 9**

**Marty Gibson — Operations Division**

**J.B. Heflin — District 4**

**Robin Helmick — District 9**

**Chesley Koerner — State Rail Authority**

**Brandon Martin — District 10**

**Jeff Miller — Parkways Authority**

**Greg Pennington — District 8**

**Ben Proudfoot — District 10**

**Kevin Waugh — District 8**

The Vision is simple; to be the best DOH 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 DOH 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.



# WV on the DOT

## Join the Podcast fun!

Transportation.wv.gov \*click on Podcast



# 2020 Best Maintenance Organizations

## Congratulations to the 2020 Best Core Maintenance Organization's:

District	Organization	County	Supervisor
District 1	0103	Boone	Keither Baisden
District 2	0230	Mingo	Ray Messer, Jr.
District 3	0353	Wirt	Lillian Shaffer
District 4	0409	Doddridge	Mike Daley in 2020 (Now Vacant)
District 5	0512	Grant	Terry Bennett
District 6	0635	Ohio	Doug Nickerson
District 7	0711	Gilmer	Rodney Pettit
District 8	0847	Tucker	Dennis Roth
District 9	0934	Nicholas	Charles Reel
District 10	1055	Wyoming	Thomas Ellis

## Proud of My Own: Public Relations Division



**Editor's Note:** *If any supervisor wants to write in about why you're proud of your crew, I'll print that as quickly as I'm printing my own. I'm just here to publicly say that I'm beyond proud of my folks and this Employee Appreciation Week was more than just spaghetti, it was victory! These are people who never give up! This crew is unstoppable! -jjd*

- Charlene and Lisa— with Central Correspondence, they keep WVDOT looking good by making sure our letter's are consistent.
- Randy—Public Relations Division's Employee of the Year—the truest professional I've worked with, diligence in all things, that's Randy.
- Lori—"We'll that's really tedious; alrighty then, Lori can untangle it!" If she can fix parking in Building 5, she can fix anything.
- Sharonnia—with SWAT, all citizens will receive answers in 7 days, and that's not easy but she's a superstar and she makes it happen.
- Rusty—two press releases on diverse topics, in an hour, no problem! Need photos too?
- Jesse—The Undefeated Champion of the Excel Spreadsheet.



# Rain Doesn't Put Damper on DOH Road Crews

MIDDLEBOURNE, W.Va. – With the arrival of warmer temperatures and asphalt plants open all over West Virginia, May is the perfect time for paving and milling and filling potholes. But what can West Virginia Division of Highways road crews do when rainy weather precludes paving?

Plenty.

"There's ALWAYS something to do," said Tony Clark, District Engineer for WVDOH District 6, which includes Brooke, Hancock, Marshall, Ohio, Tyler and Wetzel counties.

Every WVDOH highway district has a core maintenance plan that includes mowing, patching, ditching, and snow removal and ice control. The plan lays out how each district will take care of each and every road throughout the year.

While patching potholes usually starts just as soon as asphalt plants begin to open, Clark said road crews can't mill and fill in the rain. When rain threatens, county work crews fall back on other needed maintenance projects that CAN be done in the rain.

On a recent stormy day in Tyler County, road crews who might otherwise be tending to potholes were out mowing, cleaning up a mudslide that recently closed WV 23 and tending to other tasks.

"We've got guys out doing gravel roads right now and making sure the culverts are cleared out," said Allen Lewis, a five-year DOH employee who was operating a mowing machine on a stretch of WV 18 just outside of Middlebourne.



Lewis was driving a big green tractor with a big extendable arm, fitted with what looks like the biggest brush hog you've ever seen. He was using it to clear brush and trees from the side of the road in a blind turn leading into town.

Tyler County Administrator Jeff McKinney said District 6 doesn't usually cut roadside brush this late in the season, but crews

hadn't gotten to the bad stretch of road earlier in the year. A rainy day gave them an opportunity to clean up the stretch.

Lewis said he doesn't mind mowing in the rain.

"It doesn't matter to me," he said. "I can mow in the rain. I've even mowed when it was snowing."

Elsewhere in Tyler County, crews with a similar mowing machine were doing more conventional mowing on both sides of WV 2 near the Pleasants County line.

On the other side of Middlebourne, DOH dump trucks and a large excavator were clearing mud from a hillside where a mudslide had closed WV 23 the previous weekend. Although Tyler County road crews had gotten the road reopened, mud and debris continued to tumble down the hillside, exacerbated by continued rain.

Dump trucks had already carried away about 300 loads of mud and rock from the hillside. Clark said it was better to keep digging out mud from the slide than to wait for another slide to close the road again.

"The material is still coming down, so we'll keep digging it out," Clark said.



You're milling and filling potholes with pride in every detail of your work.

It's getting noticed.

THANK YOU.





# WE ROCK!



**2020 was a hard year for WVDOT, but we have much to be proud of. Here are just a few of the things accomplished during the past year:**

- During calendar year 2020, completed 270 highways projects through Gov. Jim Justice's \$2.8 billion Roads to Prosperity roads program.
- During calendar year 2020, completed 399.44 miles of roads that were part of the Roads to Prosperity program.
- During calendar year 2020, completed Roads to Prosperity projects totaling \$136.7 million.
- Established aggressive COVID-19 response plan that included remote work, staggered shifts and strict mask requirements and quarantining guidelines, resulting in zero layoffs among WVDOT's 6,200 employees.
- Purchased more than \$45 million in new maintenance and construction equipment, including 140 snowplows, 20 Gradalls, 11 cranes, eight paving machines and eight rollers.
- Purchased two drills, at a unit cost of \$690,000, to allow the Department of Transportation to set its own pilings, lessening the reliance on contractors and saving time and taxpayer money.
- Purchase of eight pavers has allowed the West Virginia Division of Highways to pave 240 miles and lay down 164,500 tons of asphalt on smaller paving projects that would have taken years to get to if contracted.
- Implemented the Classification and Compensation Career Plan; which creates a path forward from date of hire to retirement — a chance for real West Virginian's to build a career working for West Virginia and to build a good life concurrently.
- Hosted the West Virginia Bridge Design and Build Contest for middle and high school students — virtually — and gave the students an opportunity to smile, laugh, work and win.
- Kept everyone working! Kept learning! Kept moving!
- Changed our organizational structure to be more efficient, to work better together.
- Collaborated with other state agencies for the good of all West Virginians.
- Gave up. No wait; we didn't.

