

WV DOT Today!



One Lucky Pup

“Me and Rob, we were roughly 110 feet above the base of the bridge,” said Joey Linville, Equipment Operator. “I was operating the man lift and Rob was doing his inspection and I just happened to glance down and I saw something on the lower cord. I told Rob, ‘I believe that’s a dog down there.’ He looked, and said ‘that’s a dog.’ We definitely had to get out and get that little fellow.”

Rob Jefferies, QA/QC Bridge Inspector in the Operations Division, and Joey Linville ended up saving the pup from the Hi Carpenter Bridge in St. Mary’s that day. The dog, whom they referred to as Lucky, was lucky with the weather too—weather nearly delayed that bridge inspection for another day. The QA/QC bridge inspection teams have to visit five Districts one year, the other five the next, and compare their findings with those of the regular bridge inspection crews. They had to climb out of the manlift and onto the bridge structure to save Lucky’s life that day, but they save human lives every day and it often goes unnoticed.

“We tried to move the manlift into position to actually go below, over the parapet wall,” said Rob. “Everything was kind of in slow motion, it seemed to be. The puppy seemed like it had probably been there for a few days. Each time I peered over the parapet wall, the puppy seemed to get kind of excited. I was more concerned that he would fall off into the water.”

When Rob and Joey got Lucky back to their truck, they fed him a ham sandwich. Joey, who has a beagle at home, would gladly have kept him but he was reunited with his family later the same day. For the whole interview with Rob and Joey, listen to episode 11 of our “WV on the DOT” podcast at transportation.wv.gov



Photo compliments of Governor’s office.

District 3’s Paving Crew, led by Scott Kelly, recently received a visit from Governor Jim Justice, who stopped by WV Route 47 to help them pave over a slip repair. This repair, one of several along WV47, made use of the new pavers and WVDOH’s own crews.

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The Power of Pollinators!

By Traci Cummings, Sydney Burke, Sandra Mullins, Careasa Nichols & Marty Gibson

West Virginia is praised as being both wild and wonderful by visitors and residents. Also known as the Mountain State, WV is unique because of diverse topography and miles of beautiful country road and scenic drives. They may not draw as much attention as some of our other wildlife here in the Mountain State, but pollinators are very important. From bees to birds and butterflies, these small animals help keep plants reproducing by spreading pollen from one spot to another.

Globally, pollinators are in decline. In WV the rusty patched bumblebee was listed as Federally endangered in 2017. There are also several other pollinator species that are being considered for potential listing. Since these pollinator species are threatened and endangered,

the WVDOH will have to mitigate any potential impacts to their habitat cause by our projects.

Through the efforts of the Engineering Division, Environmental Unit, WVDOH has partnered with FHWA and United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) to develop a state-wide pollinator program that would qualify for Federal funding, as part of a section 7(a)(1) mitigation program. **This is the first section 7(a)(1) conservation program for pollinators in the United States.** All currently listed species, as well as pollinator species that are listed in the future, will be covered by this mitigation program.

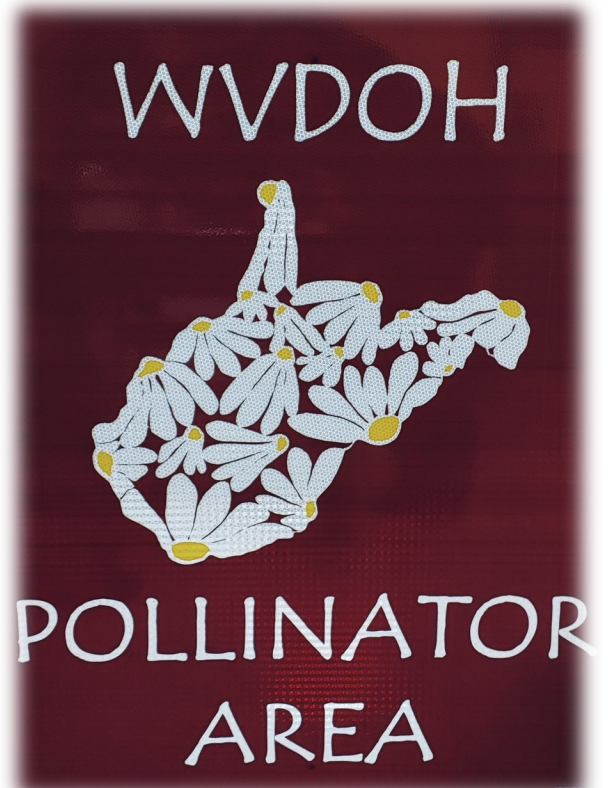


Some projects that this program will help to streamline are: Corridor H, Parsons to Davis (approx. 10 miles); Corridor H, Wardensville to VA line (approx. 7 miles); **(continued on p.3)**

WV DOT Today! is a monthly newsletter published by the West Virginia Department of Transportation and distributed statewide via email to a strong network of the best employees on earth. All content is developed by the editors, unless otherwise credited. The purpose of this publication is to facilitate connection across the diverse worksites and professions represented among WV DOT employees to empower us to function as **one West Virginia Department of Transportation**. Working together, we can give West Virginia the transportation systems it deserves and be a driving force in building the economy West Virginia should have. It's all connected. WV DOT Today! welcomes you to write in and share your thoughts.

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We are recognizing our people.



Don't Be Nosy: Mask Up!



Nose.

Nose.

Nose.

Nope!

(Pollinators, continued from p. 2) King Coal Highway (approx. 78 miles); Coalfields Expressway (approx. 56 miles); US 220 Corridor (approx. 20 miles); as well as Roadside maintenance activities statewide. Roadsides present a conservation opportunity to increase pollinator habitat. Roadsides managed with pollinators in mind can achieve multiple goals of stabilizing roadsides, reducing storm water pollution, supporting wildlife, and building public exposure and appreciation for the local landscape.

Twenty areas along the state interstate system will be seeded with a pollinator-specific native seed mix, and signs identifying these areas will be placed at each location. The signs will help District maintenance crews avoid the areas, allow the public to view environmental stewardship by WVDOH, and enable the USFWS to evaluate the locations for mitigation credit.

Rest areas along the state interstate system will have pollinator gardens with interpretive signs created through a collaboration with the WVDOH, the AmeriCorps program, and the USFWS. These signs will contain general information about pollinators and their role in WV's ecosystems. Rest area pollinator gardens will also include the roadside pollinator sign logo to help the public recognize the connection with these areas throughout the

state. The Environmental Section of the Engineering Division has been working on this project for several years. They have planned and designed the program to facilitate the mitigation that is

required for individual projects, but on a larger state-wide scale. They have designed signs, concocted special WV-specific native seed mixes, and chosen locations of these plots throughout the state. After two years of hard work, the Environmental Section is now working with the Planning Division and Operations Division to make this project a reality. The Planning Division has produced detailed maps of the plots that will assist in properly



locating and marking the plots. The Operations Division is assisting in obtaining soil samples of all the sites so that the proper seed mixture can be determined for planting. Then the Operations Division, Procurement Unit will develop the contract specifications so a solicitation can be issued to contract with a vendor to perform all the pollinator mitigation sites development and long-term maintenance. Since this is an on-going project, subsequent newsletter articles will provide periodic updates.

With some intra-agency collaboration, care and planning, WV native pollinators can flourish using simple practices to provide habitat for plants and nesting sites for pollinators. By reintroducing native plants to WV highway shoulders, we are on the right road to growing pollinator populations. We look forward to sharing our progress as this project moves forward.



Photos from Around the WVDOT



District 5 Disforce completed this 120' bank stabilization stacked rock project in Hampshire County on Croston Road (CR 45/5.) Planned as a contract piling wall, this FEMA project received no bids—that didn't stop District 5 from an innovative solution. Wow, just wow!

Around the WVDOH, many Medical Access Roads Projects are already complete. Bethel Road, in Monongalia County, is one such project. Medical Access Roads in all 55 counties will be complete by the end of 2020, allowing first responders quick access. It's good!



From shabby to spiffy! The Main Street Bridge in Oak Hill in Fayette County went through an extensive process with repairs to concrete, steel, handrails and expansion joints—then got a new coat of paint to match the high school colors. Finished project: stunning!

That's the way to get it done!



D-5 Utilizes 4-Phase Approach

By Travis Ray and D-5

District Five Division of Highways has recently provided the city of Martinsburg, Berkeley County, with many new improvements in downtown Martinsburg on US 11. The improvements began in 2019 with a statewide federally funded design/build program intended to comply with FHWA directives related to compliance of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). According to FHWA guidelines, pedestrian ramps should be in compliance prior to resurfacing. This program was used in the renovation of 129 sidewalk ramps in order to meet current ADA accessibility standards. Recently two new resurfacing projects were made possible through GO Bond and Medical Access Roads Program (MARP) funds. A meeting with District Five staff, Martinsburg city officials, city maintenance, and the police department was held about two weeks before the paving projects were scheduled to begin to coordinate operations. All manholes and water valves were adjusted by the City of Martinsburg maintenance crews as the projects progressed. In addition, the Martinsburg City Police Department provided two police cars and officers each night to assist with traffic control. These two paving projects included the milling and paving of US 11, Winchester Avenue, Queen Street, and King Street in Martinsburg. The Berkeley County DOH crew

assisted the contractor with milling operations by extending and squaring up milling at intersections to match up to the new ADA ramps, ensuring a good approach at intersections, and removing about 2 inches of pavement against the curbs left by the contractor milling machine. The District 5 Sign Shop added crosswalk and turn lane markings upon completion of the resurfacing projects. In addition, the Martinsburg Signal Project is nearing completion. This Traffic Engineering Division project consists of the renovation of traffic signals at 13 intersections in downtown Martinsburg and the addition of pedestrian push buttons and signal heads.

District 5 District Engineer, Lee Thorne, describes the project as a total team effort. "The funding mechanisms provided by WVDOH Administration has allowed District 5 to use different funding sources in the total completion of a much-needed priority project. The GO and MARP funds have accelerated the project completion allowing for the immediate beneficial use to pedestrians and emergency response vehicles. Thanks goes to the City of Martinsburg, Berkeley County DOH, District 5 Design, Maintenance,

Construction, Traffic and Sign Shop, and Traffic Engineering Division. Thank you to DOH Administration for having the confidence in District 5 to choose the priorities for additional funding so projects like this can be completed."



The Leader in You

By Byrd White

Leaders are called on everyday to decide things, large and small. Most things are easy, some are not.

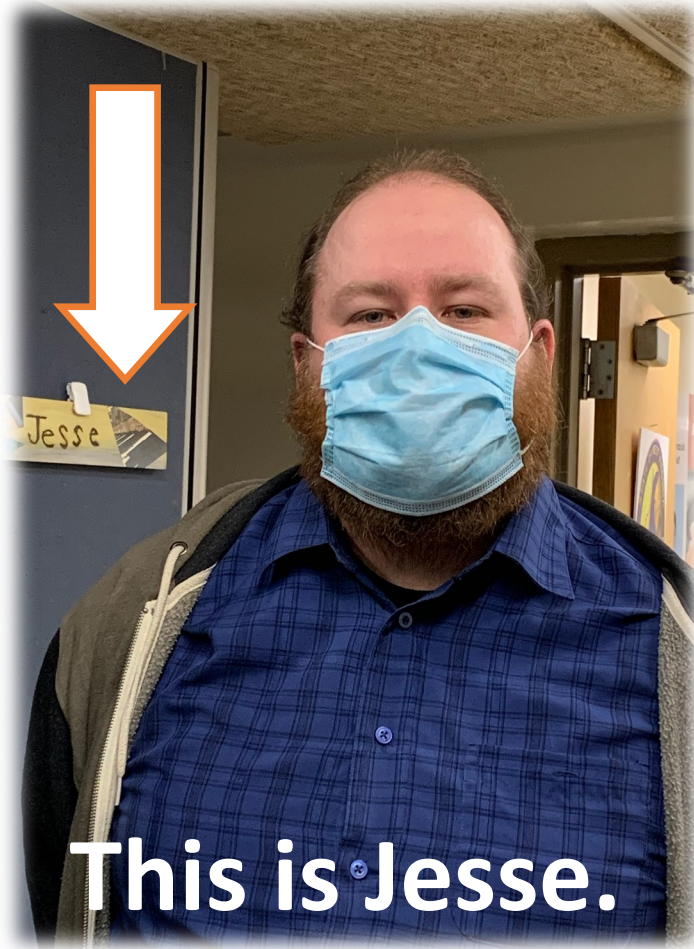
When faced with the hard decisions, ask yourself: Is it moral? If not, the decision becomes easy. Next, go through the decision tree: is it legal, is it logical, and importantly, does the decision further your objective? These questions are not interdependent. The possible answer may be legal but not ethical or it may be legal, ethical and logical but it does not further your objective.

Sometimes you will run into a true dilemma where you have equally unattractive choices. I have found that if you choose the harder path, the one that you really don't like, it will be the right one. Intuitively you know the right answer, you just do not like it.

All decisions do not rely on the same type of knowledge. For instance, knowing how to solve a differential equation will not help you know who you should put in charge of a project or repair your car. A leader must know what kind of thinking is required to take advantage of a particular opportunity.

A couple of thousand years ago Aristotle explained that there were three basic forms of knowledge: Craft knowledge, Scientific knowledge and Ethical Judgement. Someone who has Craft Knowledge may run a grader to build a road while someone with Scientific Knowledge will size the drainage pipe and someone with Ethical Knowledge will decide if the road should be built. Many times, these forms of knowledge overlap. A good leader must know what type of knowledge is required to take maximum advantage of a particular opportunity.

Decisions are not generally black or white, yes or no. Many times, the obvious answer has unintended consequences. Take time to give your decisions a critical look.



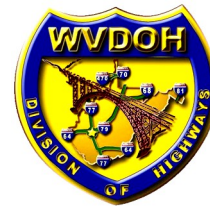
This is Jesse.

**He wants you to know
who he is, but he's
wearing a mask because
he also wants you to
stay alive.**

I ~~JUST~~ WORK HERE.



Photo Feature: Lucky



To WVDOH, and especially to Joey and Rob, his name will always be Lucky.

We're glad he found his way home from his adventure, but we hope he comes to visit sometime (at a reasonable location.)



New HR Unit Makes Hiring Fast!

By Tonya Harrison and Natasha White

In August 2020, the West Virginia Division of Highways was approved to establish its own pay plan and classification system. As such, all WVDOH positions, both internal postings and postings open for the public, will now be handled through the new, separate NeoGov portal. The Human Resources Division has created a new Career Services Unit that will be able to give guidance (at every level) of the hiring process, as well as aiding current employees in their career growth. This new unit is being led by Tonya Harrison. Though Tonya is new to Highways, she is not new to West Virginia state government, as she comes to us with 23 years of both private and public experience. Her team (currently) is made up of six experienced professionals that represent over 100 years of hiring experience. They include Jennifer Sharp, Margaret "Maggie" Ryder, Leslie Adkins, Pamela Carter, Jeff Long, and their newest employee Cameron Moore. Having the ability to list and rank our own registers and track our applicants will provide several benefits to our Agency.

Of all the benefits of having a dedicated system, perhaps most exciting for our Human Resources Division is the ability to follow an applicant through the entire hiring process. As an example, WVDOH job recruiter Leslie Adkins, in her day-to-day interactions, has the opportunity to meet many talented

applicants that would benefit from being part of the WVDOH. Under the old system she would often lose contact with them because they had to apply through the Division of Personnel before we had the opportunity to interview them. It was the equivalent of collecting applicants and putting them into a big funnel, with the hope they came out through the bottom.

Ultimately the goal is to make the hiring process more efficient, by eliminating many of the unnecessary steps and the cumbersome burden of having our register process handled by a separate agency. It only makes sense that our own employees would be the best qualified to understand the needs of the Division by working with our hiring managers to build the best possible register with the most qualified applicants.

The careers page is active on the West Virginia Department of Transportation's website <https://transportation.wv.gov>. You can easily navigate to the internal and external job postings from the WVDOT Careers Link. A "How to Apply Online" information sheet has been added to the DOT Careers page. We realize there will be questions (as well as a few concerns) regarding this new process. Please know, our staff is here to assist you as we navigate through this new and exciting change. If you have any questions, please contact us, either by phone (304-558-3111) or email (DOHCareers@wv.gov). We look forward to assisting you.

DOT Business Manager: "Did You Know?"

Here are a few interesting facts regarding the WVDOT P-Card Program

Divisions participating in the P-Card Program under the Department of Transportation are:

- Division of Highways
- Division of Motor Vehicles
- State Rail Authority
- Public Transit
- Aeronautics
- Office of Administrative Hearings

For Fiscal Year 2020 (which covers the time period of July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020)

- The DOT makes on average 11,000 transactions a month
- The DOT had 133,409 total transactions for Fiscal Year 2020 on P-Card
- The DOT's average monthly P-Card payment is around \$28,000,000

The DOT spent a total of \$344,020,129 on P-Card for Fiscal Year 2020



IAR Program

By Dave Cramer

Did you ever notice a large factory or manufacturing facility and think to yourself, "Wow, that's really nice. I wonder what role the Division of Highways might have played in that company's decision to locate in West Virginia?" In many cases, the Division provides funding for the access to industrial facilities, through our Industrial Access Road (IAR) Program. What is the IAR Program, you ask? Well, let's take a tour...

The IAR Program was enacted in 1989 by the WV Legislature to provide a dedicated funding source the State could utilize to enhance selection by private industries of sites within West Virginia. The Division sets aside from the State Road Fund each fiscal year a total of \$3 million and those funds are made available Statewide for use in implementing access to new industries or for providing new or improved access for existing industries that are expanding. The funds are requested by either a County Commission (or the County's Development Authority) or by a municipality, through an application that is submitted to the WV Development Office. The private company that is to be served by the IAR project cannot be the applicant. If the Development Office recommends funding be approved, the Division then obligates IAR funds for the requested project, on a first-come/first-served basis throughout the fiscal year until the entire \$3 million has been obligated. Sounds simple enough, right? Since the funds are administered by the Government, there are, of course, a few restrictions.

First and foremost, IAR funds are to be used, as the name implies, for industrial facilities. Commercial development, shopping centers, apartment complexes and other residential development, hotels, schools, libraries, armories, and government installations are ineligible for IAR funding. Of the \$3 million available each fiscal year, the Division may approve Unmatched and Matched IAR funds for a project. Each dollar of Unmatched IAR funds requested requires a corresponding \$10

of qualified industrial investment associated with the project, and no County may be approved for more than \$400,000 in Unmatched or \$150,000 in Matched IAR funds in any fiscal year. Each dollar of Matched IAR funds requires not only a \$5 industrial investment, but also requires the applicant to provide a like amount to match the IAR funds approved. While IAR funds can be used to pay costs of design, right-of-way and construction, the funds cannot be used for utility adjustment, relocation, or installation. For most IAR projects, the applicant donates to the Division, or coordinates the donation to the Division of the right-of-way, so that the maximum amount of IAR funds is available for construction. Any new IAR becomes a part of the State Highway System and the project may be administered either by the applicant or by the Division. At the end of the fiscal year, any unobligated balance of the \$3 million made available for the IAR Program then is "returned" to the State Road Fund.

The Division works closely with the Development Office and the County or municipality to determine the transportation needs associated with a potential industrial project. The IAR Program has been utilized for more than 30 years as a tool to promote economic development opportunities in the State, and is expected to continue to do so for years to come.

On October 6, Governor Justice proclaimed October as General Aviation Appreciation Month. WVDOT Today! appreciates Sean Hill and everyone at the Aeronautics Commission for everything you do for us each day.



Now on the
Soundcloud
App!

New Shows: Thursday
4:00 p.m.

Transportation.wv.gov

Click on the Podcast link.



District 7 Bridge

By Rob Ware

On December 15, 1967, West Virginia was the site for one of the worst transportation disasters in history. In Point Pleasant, the “Silver Bridge” carrying U.S. Route 35 over the Ohio River suffered a catastrophic failure of a fracture critical member and plunged into the frigid waters below. Forty-six people lost their lives.

Although it’s hard to fathom now, up to that point, no national bridge inventory had existed. In the aftermath of the collapse, a national bridge inspection program was born and ultimately led to the formation of our own District 7 Bridge Department. In our six-county district consisting of Barbour, Braxton, Gilmer, Lewis, Upshur, and Webster, we are responsible for roughly 700 structures over 20 feet long at any given time. The number does fluctuate due to structures being added to or taken out of service. We have 363 steel superstructures, 307 concrete superstructures, and 16 timber superstructures, as well as 20 unique types that don’t fall into the three main classes. Our bridges average daily traffic count is 1,665 vehicles per day which equates 1, 175, 000 users per day. End to end, the District’s bridges would measure 12.70 miles. 88.0% of our structures are used by mail carriers, 57.2% by commercial traffic, and 75.6% by school buses. We have a big responsibility in our slice of Almost Heaven!

Like other district bridge departments, our department is split into two main sections. We have the Inspection/Evaluation side which is responsible for inspecting and load rating these 700 structures as well as recommending emergency repairs to lift rating numbers. We have the Design/Construction side as well. This half is responsible for the design and construction of complete or partial replacement projects as well as repairs. New bridges become part of our inspection inventory and the process starts over as part of the circle of life for our bridges. It is undoubtedly a lot of responsibility and work for our department of around 24 folks. More importantly, we love what we do and take our jobs very seriously. We treat each of our almost 1.8 million customers per day like family.

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 .

Erika Schrader—Legal Division

Josh Sizemore—Strategic Management

Marshall Burgess—Strategic Management

Dustin Fezell—Strategic Management

Ryland Musick—Deputy State Highway Eng

Chad Robinson—Operations Division

Craig Iser—Operations Division

Rob Jefferies—Operations Division

Joey Linville—Operations Division

David Millhouse—District 6

Jeremiah Gorgon—District 6

Scott Eplin—District 2

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.



Photo Feature: State Rail Authority



© Walter-Scriptura



Photos compliments of
Cindy Butler.



Letter's From Around the WVDOT

Dear Editors,

If you're looking for a positive, feel good story, I've got one for you. Two of our employees are retiring at the end of October. Rick Wood (TRET 5, Construction) and Choskie Harmon (Crew Supervisor 2, I-77) were both hired on the same date in 1978 and will retire on the same date at the end of this month. Choskie has spent his entire career working for the same organization, which is extremely rare. Both are exceptional, reliable employees who will be severely missed as both employees and friends when they retire. Their commitment to the state is worthy of honor.

-Joe Pack, District 10 Engineer

Good Friday Morning Gentlemen (to Jimmy Wriston, Greg Bailey, Darby Clayton, Mike Cronin, and Aaron Stevens),

Mr. Tom Robinson called this morning and ask that I convey his sincere appreciation to you for your diligent work and efforts in addressing South Price Street in Kingwood, West Virginia and incorporating South Price Street into the Division of Highways inventory. Mr. Robinson also complimented the maintenance work that has been performed on South Price Street and said the road looks great. The efforts of the Division of Highways is certainly beneficial for Kingwood and is a great relief of concern for the Kingwood Fire Department. Mr. Robinson said he will personally contact Blain Bowmar, Preston County Administrator, for the great maintenance work on South Price Street, County Route 43/1. Thank you.

-Raymond Duke Tackett, District 4

Mr. Thorne,

Recently, I had reported guardrail repair request and some asphalt repair work at Route 50 and Sycamore Dr in Capon Bridge. I would like to personally thank you the quick response to both issues. More importantly, was how impressed we were with the rapid response and quality of repairs. Your work is so extremely important for all of us of West Virginia and kudos to you and your staff for a job well done.

Again, many thanks for taking such good care of our roads.

Respectfully,

Linda S. Blancato

Dear Editors,

Brenda Craig Ellis has worked for WVDOT for 26 1/2 years. She has worked in Legal, Right of Way, as the Hearings Examiner, and again in Legal. Happy retirement Brenda!

-Julia Vande Linde

***Editor's Note: Complete list of 2020 retirees to be printed at end of year.**



Happy Halloween from Stephanie McKinney, David Woods, Matt Ball and Virginia Tignor.

Dear Editors,

Finance Division's Karen Wickline retires this month with 33 years of service. It's been great working with her.

-Anonymous



A crew in District 1 captured this rainbow while ditching in Mason County.

