

The Connector

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VOLUME XXI NO. 1

SC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

SPRING 2008

Walkway over Lake Murray Dam is popular with public

By Bob Kudelka

Mary Lou Stinson enjoyed the morning lake breeze as she pushed a stroller carrying her 4-year-old son, James, along the new pedestrian walkway across SC 6 at the Lake Murray Dam in Lexington County.

"It's just fantastic," Stinson said, looking out across the lake. "It reminds of whenever we go to Charleston, we walk over the bridge. Just to have a safe place to walk with scenery is great."

The walkway is part of the SCDOT's project that widened portions of SC 6 and SC 60, completed this spring.

While motorists were enjoying the added lanes and smoother travel, the 1.5-mile, 8-foot-wide walkway along the lake was an instant hit with pedestrians.

"If you ride out there in the morning, there will be easily 20 people scattered about," District 1 DEA Thad Brunson said, two weeks after it opened in April. "No one envisioned the number of people that would be out there walking. It's turned out to be the Ravenel Bridge of Columbia."

The pedestrian walkway on the Arthur Ravenel Jr. Bridge over the Cooper River in Charleston has been extremely popular since the bridge opened in 2005.

The SC 6/SC 60 project began in January 2005 to widen a 7.5 mile-portion from two to five lanes, with the segment across the dam widened from two to four. Intersection improvements, including a challenging one at SC 6/60, were also included.

The widening project was needed to handle high-growth

areas on both the Irmo and Lexington sides of the dam.

"I've had nothing but positive comments from the public on the benefit of the road and how well traffic moves now," Brunson said. "Now it's like, 'Where did all the cars go?' They're still there, it's just that five lanes can move them a lot quicker than two lanes."

Robert Dickinson, who was project manager and now is District 1 Maintenance Engineer, said the project overcame many utility conflicts that come with widening a project in an urban area. Engineers needed to relocate water, gas and sewer mains.

"We're very pleased with the final product," Dickinson said. "To me, I was more excited about this project being completed than any other project. I think the whole corridor is a really good addition to the area. I just think it's great."

There were some delicate aspects of the project: the relocation of a pair of 75-ton stone monuments built in 1930. The two monuments had to be hooked to a crane and moved from the path of the SC 6 widening.

Due to their historical significance and potential adverse effects that the widening project would have on the gates, SCDOT coordinated with the South Carolina Department of Archives and History and historical groups.

Both monuments were moved successfully and continue to be historical landmarks at both sides of the dam.

Another difficult part of the project was the intersection at SC 6/60, which had to be raised 3 feet.

"That was complicated, and we worked very close with the contractor to keep traffic going as best we could," Dickinson



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

The SC 6 and SC 60 project included widening the roadway over the Lake Murray dam to four lanes.

See DAM on page 4



Frank and Kim Koenig of Chapin enjoy a run across the Lake Murray Dam. The pedestrian walkway over the dam has been popular with the public.

SCDOT

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Bobby T. Jones honored at Commission meeting

By Bob Kudelka

Bobby T. Jones, who served three terms on the SCDOT Commission, was honored for his service during the May 14 Commission meeting in Columbia.

"We do congratulate you, Bobby, and thank you for your service," Chairman F. Hugh Atkins said. "I have the utmost respect for you."

Secretary of Transportation H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr. presented Jones with a box filled with mementos, including his signature stamp.

"I appreciate your leadership during a very dark period of time with the Department of Transportation," Limehouse said. "You came in here, pulled it together and rebuilt the trust and respect for the citizens of South Carolina. For that, we all owe you a debt of gratitude which cannot be repaid."

Jones, who retired as Chairman earlier this year, was accom-

panied to the meeting by his wife, Mary, and daughter, Susan.

Former Commissioners John N. Hardee and Joe Jefferson also attended.

Commissioner Sarah B. Nuckles, Jones' successor representing the 5th Congressional District, read aloud the Commission's resolution honoring Jones.

"I'm honored to try and fill a portion of the shoes that Commissioner Jones filled for us for so many years," Nuckles said.

Born in Bethune to the late Edna and Cramer Jones on April 17, 1933, Jones graduated from Bethune High School, Jones attended Wingate Junior College, the University of South Carolina, and received a B.S. degree from Campbell University and an M.A. degree from Western Carolina University. Jones is a member of the First Baptist Church Camden.

In May of 2000, the Bobby T. Jones Bridge was dedicated in Kershaw County in his honor. The bridge crosses the Wateree River on US 1/601 between

Camden and Lugoff. The naming of the Bobby T. Jones Bridge was requested by a concurrent resolution of the South Carolina Senate and House of Representatives. The resolution cited his "many contributions made to the cities of the state and Kershaw County."

Jones is retired educator. For a period of time in the 1970s, he and his wife were the only husband and wife elementary principals in South Carolina.

An avid University of South Carolina football fan, Jones once showed then Coach Lou Holtz his Gamecock Club card indicating he had been a member since the 1950s. Holtz shot back, "All I can say is you've seen a lot of awful football."

At the Commission meeting, many of the commissioners spoke

of how they already missed Jones, known for his efficient way of handling meetings as chairman.

"Bobby Jones is one of the few men I've ever had the pleasure of meeting who I could take total stock in what he tells me," Stevenson said. "I never had to worry about whether he was leveling with me...I could rely on him."

Commissioner Henry H. Taylor told a story about how he and Jones were sometimes on opposite sides of issues. After a "fairly acrimonious" meeting in Myrtle Beach with controversial items, the commissioners and their spouses took a tour of Sandy Island.

Later, Taylor and his wife received a photograph Jones had taken of them during the tour. The Taylors had the photo framed and

it now hangs in their kitchen.

"That's the kind of person he is," Taylor said. "He goes the extra mile to bridge gaps."

Commissioner Tee Hooper joked that "Bobby and I disagreed once or twice."

"I always knew in the end, and I still know, that Bobby's heart was always in the right place," Hooper said. "He always believed what he was doing, and I appreciate that."

After posing for photographs, the man synonymous with DOT for years shook hands with well-wishers and said his final good-byes.

"Thank you so much for the opportunity and God bless you," Jones said. "I'm going to take my pretty wife and go home."



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

LEFT: Former Commission Chairman Bobby T. Jones and his wife, Dr. Mary Jones, listen as the Commission thanks him for his years of service during the May 14 Commission meeting. ABOVE: Jones says a few parting words to the SCDOT Commission after he was honored.

Citizen's Remembrance Day is fourth Saturday in April

By Bob Kudelka

South Carolina State Representative Heyward G. Hutson, who introduced legislation designating an annual day to honor victims of fatal motor vehicle crashes, presented a copy of the passed resolution Tuesday, May 20, to a safety committee supporting the event.

Hutson made the presenta-

tion on the Statehouse floor to the Ad Hoc Committee for Citizen's Memorial. The Committee includes members of the SC Department of Transportation, SC Department of Public Safety, SC Mothers Against Drunk Driving, SC Coroner's Association, SC Sheriff's Association, Federal Highway Administration, SC Insurance News Network and a victims' representative.

Hutson, of Summerville, is the

state Representative for District 94 (Charleston and Dorchester counties).

The legislation, which was co-sponsored by all members of the House of Representatives and passed by the House and Senate, designates an annual "Citizen's Remembrance Day" to honor victims of fatal motor vehicle crashes in South Carolina.

The fourth Saturday in every April will be designated as "Citizen's Remembrance Day."

"This legislation ensures that this important day not only has an official designation but that the victims are never, ever forgotten," Hutson said. "I am very

proud our state has made this effort to memorialize the victims of highway tragedies and acknowledge and support the grief of their loved ones."

"By designating Citizen's Remembrance Day, our state can focus much needed public attention on safe driving," Hutson said. "This effort goes hand-in-hand with legislation approved by the General Assembly and Governor Sanford to reduce drunken driving on our highways."

As of May 19, 2008, 361 people have died on South Carolina highways, compared to 393 in 2007.

The mileage death rate on

South Carolina highways exceeds the national average by 47 percent, with more than 2 people killed for every 100 million miles of travel.

One traffic fatality is reported on South Carolina's highways approximately every 8 hours, 20 minutes, with 1,044 traffic fatalities reported in the Palmetto state during 2006.

During the past 10 years, more than 10,000 people have died in traffic crashes on South Carolina highways. The economic cost of traffic fatalities exceeds \$2 billion per year, not to mention the intangible costs of grief and suffering borne by the families involved.

The Connector

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H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr. is Secretary of Transportation.

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ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Representative Heyward G. Hutson, fourth from left, introduced legislation to set aside a day to honor victims of fatal motor vehicle crashes in South Carolina. Hutson and Representative H.B. "Chip" Limehouse III, right, presented the resolutions to SCDOT and SCDPS. Shown, from left, are: SCDOT Director of Communications Pete Poore, Jeff Moore of the SC Sheriff's Association, SC Secretary of Transportation H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr., Representative Hutson, SCDOT Director of Safety Terecia Wilson, Phil Riley of SCDPS and Representative Limehouse.

AAH turns 20

Adopt-A-Highway celebrates 20 years of keeping South Carolina roads clean

By Bob Kudelka

In 1987, Nancy Schaaf was approached by SCDOT about setting up a pilot program consisting of volunteers picking up roadside trash in Beaufort County.

As the county's Keep America Beautiful coordinator, Schaaf remembers the reaction she got when trying to get the program started.

"I can remember going around and talking to other organizations and they thought I was crazy," she said.

People kept asking her, "Why should we pick up other people's trash?"

Schaaf could only laugh at those memories as she considered how the Adopt-A-Highway program has grown since then. In South Carolina, 33 million pounds of trash have been picked up during the 20 years of Adopt-A-Highway.

"It is so exciting to see how this has caught on and kept on and spread," Schaaf said. "It just feels so good to be part of something so sustained and to see those green and white signs and know that you had something to do with it."

To honor the 20th anniversary of the program, SCDOT gave special "Trailblazer" awards to Schaaf; Frank Glover, the first RME in the program at Beaufort County; and Vivian Patterson, the first SCDOT Statewide AAH Coordinator.

The awards were given at the annual AAH presentation of 2007 Outstanding Adopt-A-Highway

Awards held April 10 in Columbia.

Secretary of Transportation H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr. was the featured speaker. Pete Poore, Director of Communications, was master of ceremonies.

Limehouse called AAH "the finest program of its kind in the country."

"It's not possible without you, our DOT Commission and our sponsors," Limehouse said. "It's a true cooperative effort."

"Not only do you help with the quality of life, you help us economically because it encourages tourists and other visitors to come here and spend their dollars, which helps all of us. Not only is the Department appreciative of what you do, but I also speak for Governor Sanford, and he strongly supports your efforts."

Viola Covington, SCDOT's AAH Coordinator, said that statewide last year, 29,700 volunteers from 2,114 groups picked up 1.4 million pounds of litter.

"We had a great year in 2007," Covington said.

Covington said it's important that AAH volunteers, SCDOT employees and the Department's litter partners all work together to pick up trash.

"We have to continue to spread the message that littering is not acceptable," Covington said. "We want you to go back to your communities and talk to your friends and neighbors, and challenge businesses in your area and continue to adopt sections of highways. The more people we get on our side, the better off we'll be."



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

SCDOT Commission Chairman F. Hugh Atkins, SCDOT Commissioner Sarah Nuckles and SCDOT Deputy Secretary For Finance and Administration Debra Rountree present the Champs/Sigma Nu Adopt-A-Highway (AAH) Group of Laurens County with the award for 2007 Outstanding AAH Group of the Year. From left are: Atkins, Nuckles, Rountree and AAH group members Jerman Disasa, Brice Taylor and District 2 Engineering Administrator Phillip Brooks.

The 2007 Outstanding Group of the Year was Champs/Sigma Nu, a Laurens County organization that uses litter pickup as part of a larger community involvement program linking Presbyterian College and the community, with college students mentoring public school students from 7th to 12th grades.

"It's a way of motivating kids on how to give back to their communities and also learning about environmental awareness...and developing pride in our own communities," said Jerman Disasa, director of Special Projects at Presbyterian College.

Disasa said he has noticed changing attitudes of youngsters involved in the program.

"They used to despise collecting trash," he said. "Now, they look at it as a treasure, cleaning up and finding pride from that. It's amazing. We no longer look at orange vests as a negative. It's a very positive instrument for us."

SCDOT employees recognized at the ceremony included:

- 2007 Outstanding AAH Achievement Awards: Sandra Arrington, Spartanburg; Denise Brown, Anderson; Debbie Sams, Pickens; Erin Slaugh, Sumter. They all increased their AAH programs by adding 10 or more new groups.

- Coordinator Service Awards: Amy Caldwell, Dillon – 5 Years; Donna Whitlock, Laurens – 15 Years

- Trail Blazer Award: Vivian Patterson, Headquarters – 20 Years of Service

- 2007 Outstanding Coordinator of the Year: 2nd place – Donna Whitlock, Laurens; 1st place – Sandra Arrington, Spartanburg, Coordinator of the Year.

- 2007 Outstanding Engineer of the Year: 3rd place – Jerry Wayman, Oconee; 2nd place – Mike Popielarz, Dorchester; 1st place – Tammy Hodge, Sumter, Engineer of the Year.

To commemorate the 20th Anniversary Celebration and to say thank you to the AAH volunteers SCDOT has partnered with the South Carolina Alliance To Fix Our Roads to offer two one time scholarships at this year's program. High School seniors who are accepted to attend College in SC this fall and have participated, or whose family is involved with the Adopt-A-Highway Program, wrote a 500 word essay entitled "The Benefits of the Adopt-A-Highway Program to South Carolina and the Environment." The winners, Loresa Starks of Calhoun County and Josiah Roupe of Lexington County, were presented scholarship awards at the ceremony.

Hampton County AAH volunteers honored by County Coordinator

By Rob Thompson



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

ABOVE: The Hampton County Adopt-A-Highway volunteers met at Hampton County AAH Coordinator Peggy Parker's house for a evening of recognition and barbecue.

Hampton County Adopt-A-Highway (AAH) Coordinator Peggy Parker invited all AAH volunteers from Hampton County to her home for a barbecue dinner April 18.

Parker holds the event annually to thank the groups for the outstanding job they do.

In 2007, Hampton County had 173 volunteers divided into 78 groups that have adopted 165 miles in the county. Last year they picked up more than 18 tons of litter.

During the event, Parker also thanked the local media for the role they play in publicizing the program which helps bring in more volunteers.

State Adopt-A-Highway Coordinator Viola Covington presented every group with a certificate of appreciation.



RIGHT: Each group was recognized with a Certificate of Appreciation by State AAH Coordinator Viola Covington, right. The SCDOT group award was picked up by Hampton Resident Maintenance Engineer Jack Priester, left, and Joyce Wier, center.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

The project included improvements to the intersection of SC 6 and SC 60. The interchange had to be raised 3 feet.



Mary Moore, right, and her husband, Don, enjoy a walk across the dam. They are two of many local residents who are frequently enjoy the stroll alongside Lake Murray.

DAM from page 1

"There was no away around the delays, but for the most part people were understanding and relatively patient."

The contractor on the SC 6 portion was C. Ray Miles Construction Co., of Lugoff. US Group Inc. of Columbia handled SC 60.

As part of the collaborative efforts between the South Carolina State Infrastructure Bank, SCDOT and SCANA Corporation, the project to stabilize the Saluda River Dam by SCEG established the roadway location that now makes up the northbound lanes, building it up with a stone base. Then, the SCDOT's road contractor took over, bring it to final grade and paved it, Dickinson said.

The idea to include a walkway across the dam came in part from the Department's directive, approved by the Commission, to include bicycle/pedestrian accommodations in the Department's planning, design, construction and operating activities. The route was identified by COATS (Columbia Area Long Range Transportation Plan) as an area where such facilities could have high usage.

"How much we could fit on the top of dam was what we wrestled with, but it fit the criteria and we felt like it was a great opportunity," said Brian Keys, former program manager early in the project's development and now Assistant Chief Engineer for Planning, Location and Design.

Sidewalk and bicycle accommodations were built throughout the project.

Keys said the SC 6/SC 60 project's goal was to better link

two communities: the town of Lexington and the town of Irmo.

"We've connected the two communities with these facilities," Keys said.

On a Friday morning in May, the walkway was being enjoyed by joggers and walkers of all ages.

"I love it," said Don Moore, who walked with his wife, Mary. "For years, I've said we ought to have a way to walk across the dam safely. I'm glad they took the time to make it part of the project."

"It's wonderful," Mary Moore said. "You all did a great job."

Carol Bruce, of Columbia, uses the walkway five times a week.

"I was walking, off and on, a little bit but this really inspired me because it's a great place to walk," Bruce said. "The atmosphere is great and you get a little fresh air."

N.A. Patterson of Irmo said it was her first time on the walkway.

"I'm flabbergasted," she said. "It's so tranquil – it's very nice."

"I love going across it," said jogger Joanne Wactor of Columbia. "It's like being down in Charleston."

Michael Young of Irmo said the relatively flat walkway is much easier for walking than in his hilly neighborhood.

George Fagan, of nearby Coldstream, likes the "ambiance," noting that he had just spotted an eagle. He also appreciates the 3-foot high jersey barrier that separates vehicles from walkers.

"You feel safe," Fagan said. "This is the best thing Columbia has done in a number of years. It's everything you want to have to be encouraged to exercise."



The project also includes accommodations for bicyclists. Bicyclists can use the bike lane on the right shoulder of the road or share the walkway with pedestrians.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF USR CORPORATION

The new US 90 Biloxi Bay Bridge was the first design-build project in the state of Mississippi. The old bridge was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Secretary Limehouse visits award winning bridge in Mississippi

By Pete Poore

Secretary Buck Limehouse took a vacation to the Mississippi Gulf Coast earlier this spring where a side trip allowed him to visit the new Biloxi Bay Bridge.

This bridge, which connects the cities of Biloxi and Ocean Springs, replaces one which was destroyed along with other bridges in the area by Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

The Biloxi Bay Bridge is over 1.6 miles long. The work

included a bridge over the CSX railroad on the Ocean Springs side. The Bay Bridge required 70 spans, including a main span over the navigation channel of 250 feet.

Construction included over 1,200 piles, 140 footings, columns and pier caps, 781 beams, 44 finger joints, and more than one million square feet of deck.

The loss of the bridge was a tremendous blow to the local economy. Mississippi DOT declared this replacement an emergency project with signifi-

cant incentives/disincentives for the scheduled performance.

A \$5 million bonus was awarded for completing the first deadline, which included opening the bridge to one lane of traffic in each direction.

Disincentives included a \$100,000 per day liquidated damage for missing that deadline and a \$50,000 per day liquidated damage for missing the final completion and opening the bridge to the full three lanes in each direction.

The contractors who had the

job of replacing this bridge were working on the first "design-build" project ever attempted in the state of Mississippi. The bridge was opened to traffic in fewer than 17 months after the work started. The entire project was completed in fewer than 22 months.

The new bridge includes a pedestrian walkway and artist's plaques that symbolize the spirit of the Gulf Coast. A local sculptor is creating plaques from bronze that was recovered from the bridge that was destroyed,

creating a connection between the past and the present.

Lighting was added to the bridge while the project was in the design phase. The final construction cost is expected to be \$343 million.

The Mississippi Department of Transportation in April 2008 was named the Design-Build Owner of the Year in emergency operations for their reconstruction of the Biloxi Bay Bridge and the St. Louis Bay Bridge which links the city of Bay St. Louis and the town of Pass Christian.

The Flower Man



Ernest Jones of Building Maintenance is in charge of landscaping at SCDOT Headquarters.

Not all garden insects are pests

By Ernest Jones

Insect pests can wreak havoc on the landscape around your home, chewing holes in flowers and leaves, boring tunnels in wood, and stripping rings of bark around trunks.

The damage they do can weaken, even kill, your plants.

Although many homeowners are quick to pull out the chemical warfare and spray the little pests to death,



ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

Insects can be beneficial to your garden. Everyone knows that the butterfly helps with pollination, but did you realize that there are other insects that can help your garden grow?

pesticides can upset the balance in the environment of the landscape.

Most people aren't too keen on handling these dusts and sprays either. Who knows what they're doing to our health?

Of course, many of the pest problems you face in the landscape can be prevented by following good gardening practices and giving your plants the care they need.

REMEMBER: Your plants don't want to be eaten. The healthier they are, the better they will be to fend off intruders themselves.

Remember, too, that you don't have to eradicate insects. Some are beneficial to your yard. You don't even have to kill off the last pest insect. The good and bad insects tend to keep each other under control.

Three insects that can help you do this are ladybugs, lacewing and praying mantis. These three ferocious hunters are some of the most beneficial insects around.

Ladybugs consume up to 40 aphids per hour. They also

eat beetle grubs, spider mites, white flies, and other soft-bodied insects.

The larvae of lacewing can eat up to 60 aphids an hour. They also devour mites, white flies, the eggs of caterpillars, and other small pests.

Praying mantis are fierce predators that will eat a wide variety of pests. They also are a lot of fun to watch.

You can buy these beneficial insects from garden supply houses for a few dollars. However, without food, shelter, water and access to prey, these beneficial insects will quickly fly away. The easiest way to give them everything they need is to grow many kinds of plants in your garden.

Plants of the parsley or carrot family (umbelliferae) for example, whose flowers are borne in slightly curved or flat-topped clusters, attract beneficial insects to a garden.

The flowers of carrots, celery, parsley, dill, caraway, fennel and Queen Ann's lace, all umbels, attract tiny braconio, chalcio, and ichneumon wasps and tachinid flies.

2008 Construction Career Days elevates students' awareness

By Bob Kudelka

Nearly 1,000 high school students attended the Lowcountry's first "Construction Career Days" event in March sponsored by SCDOT and partners.

The "2008 Construction Career Days" event was held at Exchange Park in Ladson on March 11-13.

The event allows students to talk with technical college representatives, commercial contractors, federal representatives, and SCDOT personnel about employment opportunities in the construction industry. Events in 2006 and 2007 were held in Spartanburg and Columbia.

James Salmon, of the Pennsylvania-based utility company Henkels and McCoy Inc., showed students the basics of how to operate a truck used to install poles in the ground or hang transformers on poles.

He also used the opportunity to pitch utility jobs to the students. The utility industry needs new workers these days, he said.

"We need more people to come in and start and learn how to do everything before our experience leaves," Salmon said. "It's cyclical. In the energy crunch if the '70s, a lot of people didn't hire. The youth then are the senior people now, and we've got to have more people come in and take their place."

"We have a need for youth to get into our industry so we have people to take the place of people who are senior and retiring now."

That kind of talk sounded good to Herschell Hamilton, a senior at Lincoln High School in McClellanville.

Hamilton was enjoying the morning of checking out the many pieces of heavy equipment on display.

"It's been a good experience, and it looks like a good field that you could make a good bit of money in," Hamilton said.

Melissa Gillion, career counselor at Lincoln High School, said Hamilton was one of 10 students from her school attending the event. They came from carpentry and housing/interiors classes, she said.

"This has been benefiting them in more ways than we even realize," Gillion said, "being from McClellanville,

which is a rural area and exposure is limited."

June Todd, career development specialist at Berkeley High School, said her only regret was not being able to bring more students to the event. Her school sent 35.

"It's probably the best event I've ever been to," Todd said. "It's hands-on, and they never get this opportunity. They don't know that this is available to them - it's always something that somebody else can do. I've just never seen as much interest."

Aaron Brinson, a junior at Berkeley High School, said he wants to be either a welder or a heavy equipment operator.

"The highlight of the day was

hands-on training," Brinson said. "There's definitely more out there than I thought."

Barbara Beagles, SCDOT Program Manager, said she was encouraged by the large turnout - 993 students - and praised participation by vendors and work by the partners involved.

"I think it's gone very well and we're very pleased," Beagles said. "We're grateful for the partnerships we have. Some construction companies even donated money to school districts for fuel."

The event is sponsored by the SCDOT; Federal Highway Administration (SC Division); SC Department of Education; Lowcountry Workforce Investment Board; Trident Workforce Investment Board; Upstate Workforce Development Board; Noisette Company, LLC; Henkels & McCoy; Charleston County RoadWise; Charleston County; and the South Carolina Department of Commerce.



Darien Jones, left, takes a ride on a 40-ft manlift being maneuvered by Derek Eager of Sunbelt Rentals. Jones, a junior at Summerville High School, was one of many students taking part in the 2008 Construction Career Days held March 11-13 at the Coastal Carolina Fairgrounds in Ladson.



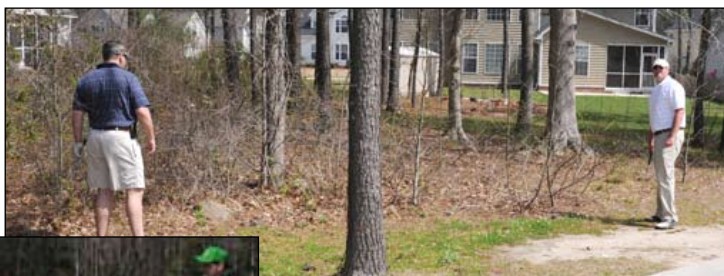
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/ THE CONNECTOR
Robert Ruddy, left, and Douglas Buckheister, right, show a 'total station' to Baptist Hill High School senior Jerret Cochran of Hollywood. Ruddy and Buckheister are SCDOT employees from the Charleston Construction Office.



Students from Orangeburg-Wilkinson High School check out the South Carolina State University booth's First Tech Robotics display during their visit.

Trip Page Classic

The first Trip Page Classic Golf Tournament was held March 22 at Wescott Plantation in Charleston.



Above, Chris Gossett of RPG-2 and former SCDOT employee Russ Touchberry search the rough for their golf balls.



LEFT: More than 160 golfers participated in the tournament. The event raised nearly \$35,000 for a scholarship to the Citadel in memory of Trip Page, a Citadel graduate who died last year. Page was an SCDOT employee in Charleston.



Friends, family and co-workers came out to enjoy the weather as well as golf. Dennis Anderson, Frances Anderson, Ken Page and Christi Page pose before the teams teed off.

Mass Transit celebrates 25 years of public transportation coordination in South Carolina

By Bob Kudelka

SCDOT held a ceremony May 14, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Mass Transit Division and its service to South Carolina. The Division of Mass Transit coordinates both public and private mass transit programs around the state.

The Mass Transit staff currently monitors and evaluates 24 general public transit providers and approximately 120 human service transportation systems that provide service to the elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities.

Speakers included Secretary of Transportation H.B. "Buck" Limehouse Jr., SCDOT Commissioner Tee Hooper, Glennith Johnson, Deputy Secretary for Mass Transit and House District 40 Representative Walt McLeod, whose district includes Lexington and Newberry counties.

"We understand the importance of public transportation," Limehouse said. "With the recent world events, with respect to the cost of gasoline, I think that we are going to be on the cutting edge on what we need to be doing in this state with respect to Mass Transit."

Johnson said the Commission had adopted a proclamation declaring May 14, 2008, "Public Transportation Day."

Johnson read the proclamation, which in part said the purpose of the day was to "encourage all South Carolinians to recognize the critical role public transportation plays in safety, economic competitiveness and the quality of life of the residents of the Palmetto state and to honor the public transportation professionals for their expertise in designing, building and operating our public transportation systems."

Mass transit plays a role in so many ways including the growth of the economy, employment, education, health-care, recreation and quality of life, Johnson said.

Johnson acknowledged the public transportation partners in attendance at the ceremony.

"I would like to let them know we appreciate what they do each and every day to provide public transportation to our citizens here in South Carolina and our visitors," Johnson said.

Past directors of the Mass Transit Division including Roy Tucker and Dr. Arlene Prince were on hand for the ceremony.

Commissioner Tee Hooper, who chairs the Mass Transit Committee, said mass transit is a key to the state's future.

"If we think into the future, we cannot move forward and have a prosperous future without consideration of mass transit," Hooper said. "We cannot get away

from the fact that mass transit will continue to play a bigger and bigger part in the needs and resources of South Carolina.

"Mass transit is so important," Hooper said. "It cannot be ignored, even though its piece of the pie is only about 3 percent of the total budget."

McLeod provided some history about the Mass Transit Division, which was created in 1983.

"In 1986, Senator Isadore Lourie of Richland County was a leader responsible for securing passage of legislation which earmarks, for public transportation, one-fourth of one cent of the state gasoline tax," McLeod said.

With the rising cost of gasoline, the public will rely more and more on mass transit, McLeod said.

"South Carolina must create a much expanded transportation system in the name of improved access to jobs, predictable improvement to safety on our highways...self-sufficiency for our elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities, energy conservation...financial security for families and visitor mobility," McLeod said. "Clearly, we must have a far more extensive and available public transportation system for the citizens of South Carolina."



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

SCDOT Deputy Director of Mass Transit Glennith Johnson, left, poses around the SCDOT Commissioner's Proclamation with two former Mass Transit directors. Roy Tucker, right, was Mass Transit Director from 1995 to 1999, and Dr. Arlene Prince, center, was Mass Transit Director from 2000 to 2002.



From left, State Representatives Dennis Carroll Moss, Walt McLeod, Heyward G. Hutson and Patsy G. Knight attended the May 14 event recognizing the 25th Anniversary of the Division of Mass Transit.

Commission shifts budget savings to road, bridge maintenance

The South Carolina Department of Transportation Commission voted Wednesday May 14 to approve using funds from a reduction in the agency's administrative budget for the maintenance of highways and bridges. These savings total \$18.7 million and represent a 16.3% reduction in administrative expenses.

The funds became available due to a year-long effort by Transportation Secretary H.B. Limehouse Jr. to find cost savings throughout the agency.

"We have spent the last year looking at every aspect of SCDOT's operations.

We've found many opportunities to save the taxpayers dollars, particularly in the administrative costs of the agency, and now those dollars will go into preserving and fixing our state highway system," Limehouse said.

SCDOT Commissioner Tee Hooper, Governor Mark Sanford's appointee on the Commission, congratulated Limehouse for this accounting of the agency's funds. The Commissioner from Greenville made the motion to put the cost savings into the maintenance program.

"I have been working for several years to get a true picture of our costs in dollars

and cents. Now that Secretary Limehouse has gotten a handle on our spending picture, we can put more dollars where they need to go and that's out on the highways," Hooper said.

During the budget discussions, Limehouse used his own office as an example of how SCDOT is saving money. He noted that the operating budget for the Secretary's Office has been reduced from \$54,896 to \$28,520 for FY 2008-09. The reductions include cutting the travel, cell phone and freight & delivery budgets in half and reducing the budget for supplies and materials from \$13,000 to \$6,900.

Limehouse also reported to the Commission that the efforts to find cost savings have not stopped. He said, "This \$18.7 million represents where we are now, but we will continue on with the business of saving dollars for the taxpayers that should be used properly by preserving and maintaining our state's roads and bridges."

"Our needs are too great, so we have to be resourceful in finding funds wherever we can," he added.

The action on SCDOT's 2008-09 budget was taken at the Commission's monthly meeting in Columbia.

To all SCDOT Employees:

The entire membership of South Carolina Department of Transportation Commission would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your year-long efforts to cut costs and conserve resources, which have resulted in a savings of \$18.7 million for the upcoming 2008-09 budget year. These savings have come about because of your response to the challenge made by Secretary Limehouse to make SCDOT an efficient and accountable agency.

The members of the Commission realize that times were not

so good for SCDOT employees in 2006 and early 2007. The agency was under constant scrutiny by the media, the legislature and the public. Upon the arrival of Secretary Limehouse in the leadership position in May of last year, he knew that SCDOT had to "reprove" itself to win back the trust of the public, which was also the number one priority of the Commission.

The role played by SCDOT employees in reducing costs,

stepping up recycling efforts, and using our resources more wisely than ever before has been absolutely tremendous. The \$18.7 million in savings did not just happen overnight. That kind of money is the result of SCDOT employees thinking about saving in small ways and large ones each and every day on the job. For many of you, looking for ways to save the taxpayers dollars has become part of how you do your jobs, and that's why we've been

successful in cutting our costs.

You have done the people of South Carolina a great service over the past year in two ways. The first was the cost savings that we have just described. The second way is equally important. The Commission has voted to use the \$18.7 million that you have provided by adding it to the Maintenance budget for 2008-09. Therefore, your cost savings will translate into making our state highway system a little safer and

more efficient for our citizens. That's the mission of SCDOT.

During the last year, you have put a great deal of time and thought into how this agency can serve the state better. You have done a tremendous job on a task that was not easy. We know that you will continue the work that makes South Carolina a better place in which to live. We are proud to work with you, and we hope that you would accept our very sincere congratulations from every member of the SCDOT Commission.

Sincerely,
The SCDOT Commission

Commission letter to all employees



Daniel H. Isaac Jr.
1st Congressional District



Henry H. Taylor
2nd Congressional District



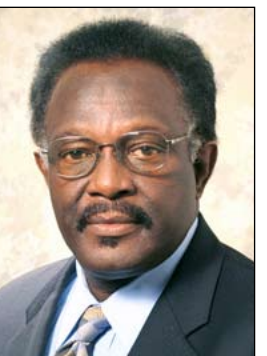
Charles E. Dalton
3rd Congressional District



F. Hugh Atkins
4th Congressional District



Sarah B. Nuckles
5th Congressional District



Marvin Stevenson
6th Congressional District



Tee Hooper
Commissioner At-Large

One Nation On The Move

SC students win first, second in national transportation-themed poster contest

Two South Carolina fifth-grade students won first and second place in a national poster contest as part of National Transportation Week.

The first place national winner was Sean Connor of Whittaker Elementary School in Orangeburg. Mitch Garrett, of Fork Shoals School in Greenville, was national second place winner.

There were only three national winners in the contest sponsored by the US Department of Transportation, the Institute of Transportation Engineers and the Engineering Society of Detroit. Local sponsors included the SC Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Division Administration South Carolina Division and the South Carolina Alliance to Fix Our Roads (SC FOR).

Across South Carolina, there were more than 1,100 entries from students

participating in the poster contest. (Note to Media: information on county winners and photographs are being compiled and will be released next week).

In a ceremony held in Columbia on May 15, the first prize winner received a \$200 savings bond to the student and \$500 award to the student's school. The second prize winner received a \$100 savings bond to the student and \$200 award to the student's school.

The theme of this year's poster contest was, "One Nation On The Move."

Held on May 11-17, 2008, National Transportation Week provides an opportunity for the transportation community to join together for greater awareness about the importance of transportation. National Transportation Week also focuses on making youth aware of transportation-related careers.



The First Place National Winner in the Transportation Week 'One Nation On The Move' poster contest is 5th grader Sean Connor (front, center holding plaque) of Whittaker Elementary School in Orangeburg. Shown from left are: John Connor (his father), Harolyn Conner (his mother), Ashton Conner (his brother), Jae Mattox of the South Carolina section of the Institute of Transportation Engineers, Sean Connor, SCDOT Deputy Secretary of Finance and Administration Debra Rountree, SC Division Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration Bob Lee, SC Alliance to Fix Our Roads Executive Director Debbie Bass, SCDOT Deputy Secretary For Engineering Tony Chapman and FHWA Office of Professional and Corporate Development Associate Administrator Joe Toole.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

On April 3, a team of judges view the hundreds of posters that came in at the state level to select county- and district-level winners. Judging the posters, from left, are Ed Eargle, Thad Brunson, Keith Melvin, David Cook and Angela Feaster.



First Place - Sean Connor of Whittaker Elementary School in Orangeburg



Second Place - Mitch Garrett of Fork Shoals School in Granville



The Second Place National Winner in the Transportation Week 'One Nation On The Move' poster contest is 5th grader Mitch Garrett, center, of Fork Shoals School in Greenville. Mattox, left, and Toole, right, presented the award to him.

Briefly



April 19 The new home for the Central Midlands RTA, the Lowell C. Spires Regional Transit Facility, was dedicated on April 9. The \$16 million facility was funded through 80% federal funds with the local match coming from the City of Columbia. It replaces the old facility on Huger Street.



CODY CROUCH/THE CONNECTOR

May 14 Five SCDOT employees completed the Certified Public Manager program on May 14. The 2008 CPM Credential Award Ceremony was held at the Department of Archives and History. The graduates are, from left: Darren Player, Roberta Mack, Suzette Porter, Leland Colvin and (not pictured) Michael Black.



April 17 The SCDOT Commission meeting in Bluffton 'went to the dogs' on April 17. In the middle of Beaufort County Council Chairman Weston Newton's talk, two dogs just walked into the meeting, sniffed around and stole the show. John Walsh helped lead the dogs out of the meeting. Later after an executive session, one of the dogs returned again. The Bluffton Library, where the meeting was held, has motion-sensored doors that let the dogs wander into the building.



April 18 SCDOT Headquarters held a Health Fair on April 18. Health service personnel from state, local and private companies were on hand to screen employees and give out information. Above, Brunell Rawlinson of Accounting talks to vision screeners before getting her eyes checked.



Keeping in STEP
with the STEP21 Alumni Chapter

Each year the STEP-21 Alumni Chapter Special Projects Committee partners with the American Heart Association in an effort to collect donations for cardiovascular disease research.

This year the idea of cardiovascular disease, especially in a young person, was something more personal as we chose to honor a fellow co-worker and STEP-21 class of 2008 classmate, Johnny Williamson. Williamson worked in Aiken Maintenance – Wagner Section Shed and passed away Nov. 18, 2007, from a heart attack.

SAC received contributions from headquarters as well as from many field offices. We sold red paper hearts which were displayed not only on the first floor of headquarters but also in various SCDOT offices around the state. Because of everyone’s contributions we received \$586.00.

The SAC- Special Projects Committee appreciates your generosity in honoring Williamson. Your donations will be used to help the Heart Association’s efforts to reduce cardiovascular disease.

STEPPING to keep off the pounds

Several of the headquarters SAC members along with other headquarters co-workers have been busy working to

keep off the pounds. A Weight Watchers at Work group was formed in January of this year. To date these employees have worked to lose over 121 pounds. Congratulations to them and good luck losing even more.

Annual SAC meeting – Save the Date!

The Step 21 Alumni Chapter will also be hosting its Annual Training Meeting on Sept. 25 at the Brookland Conference Center in Columbia. More information will be forthcoming from the Annual Meeting Committee. Please mark your calendars to reserve this date. We look forward to all see all of our Alumni members at the annual training meeting.

Need more info?

Need more information on the STEP-21 Alumni Chapter? Contact Steven Perry at 803-737-2081 or email him at PerrySR@SCDOT.org

2008 SCDOT Softball Tournament

April 28 - Oak Grove Park - Lexington



Employee appreciation week



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR
The 'Ditch Diggers' perform during the barbecue luncheon for employees on May 7.



Employees shared their arts and crafts skills during the luncheon. Marion Carman shows off the 1967 Camaro that he has restored.



Cody Crouch knows how to fill a plate.

Beautiful babies . . .



Photo Layout By Derrell Rice of Planning

As part of this year's Employee Appreciation Week, a contest was held to identify baby photos of Headquarters employees. Who do you recognize? The answer is on page 15. Pull out the center pages and you can see the 'before' and 'after' photos side by side.

Moving Up

Jennifer V. Abney, of Irmo, from Administrative Coordinator I to Procurement Manager I, Procurement.

Jeremiah R. Harmon, of Lexington, from Engineer/Associate Engineer I to Engineer/Associate Engineer II, RPG 1 - Lowcountry.

Tong Li, of Columbia, from Engineer/Associate Engineer I to Engineer/Associate Engineer II, RPG 4 - Upstate.

Mary C. Moore, of Ridge Springs, from Trades Specialist II to Associate Geodetic Technician, Research & Materials Engineering.

Tucker S. Creed, of Columbia, from Engineer/Associate

Engineer I to Engineer/Associate Engineer II, Traffic Engineering.

William E. Johnson, of Marion, from Trades Specialist II to Associate Geodetic Technician, Road Data Services.

Michelle L. Davis, of Columbia, from Administrative Specialist II to Human Resources Specialist, District 1 Office.

Ronald M. Miller, of Gray Court, from Associate Geodetic Technician to Engineer/Associate Engineer I, District 3 Office.

Michael P. Hogan, of Moncks Corner, from Trades Specialist II to Trades Specialist IV, District 6 Office.

Charles F. Marshall III, of Camden, from Trades Specialist

II to Associate Geodetic Technician, Sumter Maintenance.

Robert J. Vanrynn, of West Columbia, from Assistant Geodetic Technician to Associate Geodetic Technician, Richland Construction.

Robert G. Byrd, of Gray Court, from Trades Specialist II to Trades Specialist III, Laurens Maintenance.

Terrell A. Johnson, of Calhoun Falls, from Trades Specialist II to Trades Specialist III, McCormick Maintenance.

Jason S. Cisson, of Evans, from Associate Geodetic Technician to Engineer/Associate Engineer I, Greenville Maintenance.

Chinmay P. Thakore, of

Greenville, from Trades Specialist II to Associate Geodetic Technician, Greenville Construction.

Roger H. Orr, of Chester, from Trades Specialist II to Trades Specialist III, Chester Maintenance.

Todd C. Huggins, of Wadesboro, from Associate Geodetic Technician to Senior Geodetic Technician, Chesterfield Maintenance.

Lauren H. Jackson, of Rock Hill, from Trades Specialist II to Assistant Geodetic Technician, York Maintenance.

Harvey Sanders, of Latta, from Trades Specialist II to Trades Specialist III, Florence Maintenance.

Dominique A. Graham, of Lake City, from Mechanic III to Mechanic III, Florence Maintenance.

Tommy L. Lilly, of Mullins, from Trades Specialist II to Mechanic III, Marion Maintenance.

Bennie R. Gamble Jr., of Cottageville, from Mechanic II to Trades Specialist IV, D6-Traffic Signals.

Reginald A. Kelly, of Vass, from Trades Specialist II to Assistant Geodetic Technician, D6-Bridge Inspection.

Kevin L. Mitchell, of Charleston, from Associate Geodetic Technician to Engineer/Associate Engineer I, Charleston Construction.

Retirements

Charles E. Northcutt, of Hartsville, trades specialist II at Darlington Maintenance, retired Feb. 5, after seven years of service.

Robin S. Tucker, of Spartanburg, associate geodetic technician at Spartanburg Construction, retired Feb. 8, after nine years of service.

Johnny R. Miles, of Manning, mechanic III at Clarendon Maintenance, retired Feb. 8, after 22 years of service.

Richard C. Aiken, of Laurens, trades specialist IV at Laurens Maintenance, retired Feb. 11, after 29 years of state service.

Ronnie P. James, of McBee, engineer/associate engineer, Darlington Maintenance, retired Feb. 12, after 13 years of service.

Leroy Kelly, of St. George, mechanic I at Dorchester Maintenance, retired Feb. 12, after 24 years of service.

Jimmy Rodgers, of Gaston, trades specialist IV at Richland Maintenance, retired Feb. 14, after 27 years of service.

Bessie L. Davis, of Florence, administrative specialist at Florence Construction, retired Feb. 20, after 29 years of service.

James E. Wright, of Summerville, trades specialist III at Lower Sign Shop, retired Feb. 25 after 12 years of service.

Broadus J. Hood, of Inman, trades specialist II at Spartanburg Maintenance, retired Feb. 25, after 31 years of service.

Samuel J. Yant, of Lexington, trades specialist II at Lexington Maintenance, retired Feb. 29, after 12 years of service.

Jacob H. Campbell Jr., of Moncks Corner, engineer/associate engineer at Dorchester Surveys, retired Feb. 29, after 33 years of state service.

Bruce D. Barnado, of Jonesville, associate geodetic technician at Cherokee Construction, retired March 3, after 20 years of service.

Ronnie B. Washington, of Due West, trades specialist III at Abbeville Maintenance, retired March 7, after 18 years of service.

William Gourdine, of St. Stephen, trades specialist III at Berkeley Maintenance, retired March 14, after six years of service.

Rosevelt J. Boyd, of Hodges, trades specialist III at Abbeville Maintenance, retired March 15, after 28 years of service.

James King Jr., of Ridgeland, trades specialist III at Jasper Maintenance, retired March 28, after 22 years of service.

Ronald C. Bowers, of Kershaw, mechanic III at Kershaw Maintenance, retired March 28, after 11 years of service.

Dennis L. Hardwick, of Greenville, program manager I in Right of Way - Greenville District, retired March 31, after 34 years of service.

Michael C. Gilchrist, of Elgin, environmental health manager District 1, retired April 1, after 10 years of service.

Robert J. Bean, of Florence, engineer/associate engineer District 5, retired April 1, after 36 years of service.

Tommy G. Adams, of Elgin, engineer/associate engineer Reg. Prod. Group 3-Midlands, retired April 1, after 40 years of service.

Robert G. Honeycutt, of Lancaster, trades specialist III at Lancaster Maintenance, retired April 1, after 29 years of state service.

William H. Lancaster, of Gaffney, incident responder I at District 4 Office, retired April 1, after 19 years of service.

James L. Stewart, of York, trades specialist IV at York Maintenance, retired April 1, after 18 years of service.

Dick E. Thomas, of Anderson, trades specialist II at Anderson Maintenance, retired April 1, after nine years of service.

Kenny L. Fleming, of Ware Shoals, engineer/associate engineer, Laurens Construction, retired April 2, after 36 years of service.

David D. Pierce, of Seneca, trades specialist IV at Oconee Maintenance, retired April 9, after 30 years of service.

Roy W. Smith, of Saluda,

trades specialist V at Edgefield Maintenance, retired April 16, after 18 years of service.

William D. Hascall, of Walterboro, trades specialist IV at Colleton Maintenance, retired April 16, after 34 years of state service.

Nancy H. Johnson, of Bishopville, trades specialist II at Lee Maintenance, retired April 18, after 11 years of service.

Larry T. Hopkins, of Columbia, supply manager I at Supply Depot, retired April 24 after 13 years of service.

Calvin D. Hall, of Cassatt, trades specialist III at Lee Maintenance, retired April 24, after 14 years of service.

Michael A. Hayes, of Sumter, trades specialist II at Sumter Maintenance, retired April 24, after seven years of service.

Daisy B. Macon, of Eastover, trades specialist II at Richland Maintenance, retired April 28, after 12 years of service.

Major T. Davis, of Bishopville, trades specialist IV at Lee Maintenance, retired April 30, after 35 years of service.

John H. Bell III, of Galivants Ferry, senior geodetic technician at Horry Construction, retired April 30, after 35 years of service.

Ronnie L. Roberts, of Pageland, engineer/associate engineer at Chesterfield Construction, retired May 1, after 34 years of service.

Stanley P. Albergottie, of Columbia, operations manager II in Information Technology Services, retired May 1, after 31 years of service.

Russell H. Smith, of Lexington, engineer/associate engineer, Director of Maintenance, retired May 1, after 29 years of service.

Kenneth O. Moore, of Charleston, trades specialist III at Charleston Maintenance, retired May 1, after seven years of service.

Douglas B. MacFarlane, of Newberry, program manager III in Contract Program Resource Services, retired May 16, after 30 years of service.

Robert W. Wilkes Jr. named Chief Internal Auditor



Robert W. 'Robin' Wilkes Jr.

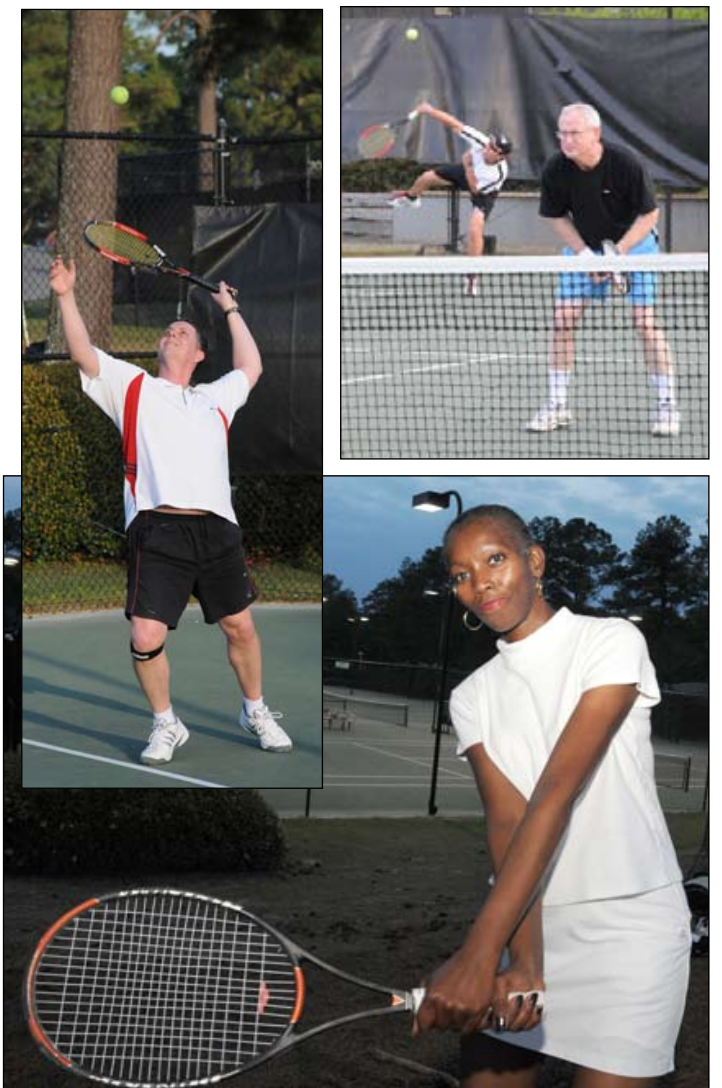
Robert W. "Robin" Wilkes Jr., of Lexington, has been named Chief Internal Auditor. He reports directly to the SCDOT Commission, generating the highest level of independence and objectivity possible.

The position was created by Legislative Act 114, which requires that "the chief internal auditor and his staff will conduct audits and studies of internal control systems, operating systems and any other function or process that the commission identifies."

Wilkes is a native of Columbia, a graduate of Dreher High School and the University of South Carolina. He was previously employed by SCDOT two years ago as Director of Financial Management.

He is a member of Saxe Gotha Presbyterian Church. He is married to the former Arlene Karn of New Jersey, and they have three adult children, Beth, Dustin and Erin.

2008 SCDOT Tennis Tournament



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

John Walsh, Herb Cooper and Jackie Belcher were three of the SCDOT participants in the 2008 SCDOT Tennis Tournament in Columbia on April 12-13. To join in the fun next year, contact Bener Amado by email at AmadoB@SCDOT.org.

Deaths

Jason E. Davis, of Williamston, engineer/associate engineer in District 3 office, died March 15.

Henry Cunningham, of Columbia, trades specialist III

at Richland Maintenance, died March 29.

Edward "Snowball" Livingston, 60, of Pomaria, was employed by LPA Group, and was an SCDOT retiree, died

March 29.

Rev. Amos Nathaniel Rogers, of Cross, a retired SCDOT employee, died April 30.

Twister cleanup

SCDOT units get to work right after tornadoes hit

By Bob Kudelka

Lorraine Williams got to the Allendale Maintenance office after the first wave of tornadoes cut a path of destruction through her county.

With another set of storms on its way, the Allendale Resident Maintenance Engineer figured she had little time to get as many employees in to work as possible. It was a Saturday night.

"I was on the phone calling everybody," Williams said. "Phone lines and cell towers were going down. I told them to wait until it gets safe, but to come in. We got as many people in here as we could."

Williams describes those first hours of the March 15 storms as "chaos." She called DEA Jo Ann Woodrum to let her know her maintenance force of 40 – one of the smallest in the state – would need help.

Woodrum got Allendale help fast. That night, in a scene repeated throughout the hardest hit areas of the state, SCDOT crews from other counties began helping the affected counties recover from more than 15 tornadoes.

"I got a call from the District Maintenance Engineer requesting two crews, and by 11:30 p.m. my two crews were here," Barnwell County RME Stan Holladay said, standing outside the command center set up at the Allendale fire station. "We basically came in and whatever they needed us to do, that's what we were going to do."

Williams, whose county suffered damage to more than 100 homes, lauded not only the work of her employees – including many who had damage to their own homes – but the assistance from Barnwell, Dorchester, Beaufort, Jasper, Orangeburg, Bamberg, Charleston and Hampton counties.

"The team effort that we have been striving for at DOT is being demonstrated right now," Williams said during the cleanup. "We appreciate all the efforts that have been given to us."

Woodrum said, "The amount of cooperation was wonderful among the counties and the Districts and with outside agencies. I think we rose to the challenge. We had nearly 1,800 truckloads of debris, and most areas were cleared within two weeks."

Allendale County officials said it was the worst storm damage in several years.

"It's pretty bad," said Allendale County Fire Chief Rodney Stanley. "There's a lot of damage. This is a poor county, and the ones who can afford insurance have it. But there's a lot who cannot afford it. It's just a mess."

"The DOT has done a wonderful job. They have been working as hard as they can," Stanley said, as truckloads of debris rumbled toward a burn pit.

Among those who had come to Allendale was Bea Kimmerlin, of Orangeburg Maintenance. She was driving her eighth truckload of debris of the day as of lunchtime.

"It's been steady," Kimmerlin said. "I'm trying to clear these roads and get the trees out of the roadway. There's a lot of damage."

The cleanup in Allendale meant long hours for employees.

Robert Brown, of Allendale Maintenance, was working on clearing US 278. Like other employees, he had been working steadily since the night of the storm.

"We get as much sleep as we can, and then we're right back on the job the next morning," Brown said. "We're pretty tired but we've got to get it done. This is my first time seeing anything like this. Lots of times you only see it on television."

Nearby, an elderly woman had gone next door to stay with her family during the storm. When the storm passed, she found

that her house was gone.

Similar cleanup efforts were going strong in other parts of the state. Damage was estimated at \$43 million statewide.

Counties with the most damage included Kershaw, Newberry, Aiken and Allendale, said Director of Maintenance Jim Feda.

"Every time we have a tornado or major winter storm, it seems to bring out the best in our employees," Feda said. "Everyone's willing to work and get the job done."

In District 1, hardest hit areas included the Kelly Mill area in Kershaw County and the Clearwater area in Aiken County.

"We will probably spend a good part of a month in each of those areas doing cleanup," District One Engineering Administrator Thad Brunson said. "We had a couple of roads closed temporarily. We worked closely with the counties and their emergency preparedness officials."

Brunson said Richland crews assisted Kershaw, where roads were closed due to tree damage.

"It was pretty significant," Brunson said. "Every house in Elgin in that area had tarps on their roofs, and there were a couple of houses destroyed."



Governor Mark Sanford talks with Allendale County officials working with SCDOT in the cleanup and removal of debris.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

SCDOT employees haul debris from the tornadoes to a burn pit in Allendale County.



James Allen, left, and Michael Brown, right, of Allendale Maintenance grind up debris from the storm in a wood chipper along US 278 in Allendale County.



Governor Sanford thanks SCDOT Allendale Maintenance employee Missy Rowell, right, and Town of Allendale employee Val Tarter, center, for their work in cleaning up the tornado debris.



SCDOT employees clear debris from US 278 in Allendale County. Maintenance workers from Allendale, Barnwell, Orangeburg, Bamberg, Hampton, Colleton, Dorchester and Jasper counties were mobilized immediately after the storm to help clear the roads in Allendale County.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

SCDOT Allendale Maintenance employee Christine Fields, left, with her son Tristan, center, and husband, Bob, stand beside her home that was totally destroyed by a tornado. The house lifted off of its foundation, shifted over six feet and dropped to the ground. Windows were smashed out, porches were sent hundreds of yards away across a field and the family car was also destroyed.

Disaster hits home for SCDOT family

By Bob Kudelka

Christine Fields returned from an out-of-town funeral on the night of March 15 to find that her house had been destroyed by a tornado.

The four-year veteran of Allendale Maintenance and her husband, Bob, drove up to find her son and a neighbor telling them not to go near her house.

"There was debris all over the yard," Fields said. "All my windows were broken, and the house had shifted over."

The tornado had lifted the house six feet off its foundation. Floors were ripped apart. Walls were cracked.

"It hurts so bad," Fields said, standing in her yard three days later. "It's totally gone."

Her son, Tristan, 23, had been in the house but fled to a neighbor's when the storm got bad.

"It sounded like a train," Tristan Fields said. "I wasn't sure what was going on. The front door was jammed so I went out the back door. I just ran and never looked back."

The Red Cross put the Fields family up temporarily at a motel. She has no insurance.

Later, the Fields stayed with relatives but had to travel an extra hour and a half each day to work.

Missy Rowell, a co-worker at Allendale Maintenance and a friend of Fields, rented a storage shed for Fields so she could store the few things they could salvage.

"When I went to see her house, it really hit home, and we both broke down and started crying," Rowell said. "It's just been awful, but thank goodness nobody got killed. That was a blessing."

Allendale Maintenance has held fundraisers for the Fields family. A church group, the SC UMVIM (United Methodist Volunteers In Mission) was making plans to help have a house built for the Fields. RME Loraine Williams is asking DOT employees to help in the building.

"How I cope is through the support of people - my family - and God," Fields said. "I lost everything, but then, we still have life."

That's material stuff. The first thing I looked for was my mother's picture; she passed away from cancer in 1999.

That was the first picture I looked for, and I found it."

Want to Help?

Donations to help tornado victim Christine Fields, of SCDOT's Allendale Maintenance office, can be sent to:

Allendale County Bank
Attn: Chrystie Blackwood
c/o Christine Fields Tornado Fund
P.O. Box 248
Fairfax, S.C. 29827

Anyone wishing to help in the rebuilding of the Fields family home, please contact Loraine Williams or Heather Brown at (803) 584-3465.



Fields goes through some of her belongings after a tornado destroyed her home. In addition to all the other damage, the storm ripped all the vinyl siding off of her home.

Engineering News



Andy Leaphart

Safety Office merges into Traffic Engineering

By Bob Kudelka

SCDOT's safety functions have been reorganized, with highway safety merging into the Director of Traffic Engineering Office, and Occupational Safety and Health now part of the Office of the Deputy Secretary for Engineering.

"This will allow for a more efficient and effective operation of both of these equally important areas," said Deputy Secretary for Engineering Tony Chapman.

Chapman said in addition to accident and injury prevention, a large part of the Occupational Safety's mission will be to reduce the number of lost work days.

"SCDOT employees are very valuable, and we want you to be as safe as possible as you perform your jobs," said Michele Paoleschi, Assistant to the Deputy Secretary for Engineering. "The mission of the Occupational Safety and Health Office is to provide a safe and healthy work environment for employees."

John Gaither will continue to be Director of Occupational Safety and Health and report to Paoleschi. SCDOT's nurse is now part of Occupational Safety as well, Paoleschi said.

Paoleschi said the 8-member office works with district and county representatives to develop and administer programs to reduce work-related accidents, injuries and deaths.

While SCDOT's injury rates have declined, the number of days employees are out of work due to injury continues to climb.

In 2007, SCDOT had 6,249 lost work days, the highest in 10 years. SCDOT's worker compensation insurance costs the Department double what it should, partly due to our number of lost work days, Paoleschi said.

"Instead of paying \$6 million in insurance premiums, we pay \$12 million," she said. "To give you an idea of what could be done with that extra \$6 million, we could buy 38 motor graders, 83 backhoes, 87 dump trucks, or we could resurface over 30 miles of two-lane roadway."

Brett Harrelson, Traffic Safety Engineer, super-

vises 9 new employees for a total of 25 employees making up the Highway Safety program.

"We had some functions of safety programs, related to engineering, already here," Harrelson said. "Now, the educational and engineering safety programs have merged."

The four main functions of the office are: Railroad and Research Program; Highway Safety Improvement Program; Strategic Highway Safety Program; and the Road Safety Program (this includes the Safety Improvement Team and Road Safety Audit program).

"The new strategic goal we'll be charged with is to reduce fatalities by 25 a year and total crashes by 3 percent," Harrelson said.

Harrelson said he is excited about some of the innovative safety applications his office is developing.

One application is an overlay of a resin binder and aggregate being tested in Columbia at Greystone Boulevard and I-26,

This high-friction surface is designed to help reduce wet crash problem areas, Harrelson said. Other test sites will be in Greenville and Horry counties

A new type of rumble strip being tested is called Profile Thermoplastic Edge Lines. These lines provide a tactile warning for motorists leaving the travel lanes in lieu of milled rumble strips. These markings consist of a thermoplastic line with small raised ribs of thermoplastic in the surface.

"This safety countermeasure provides both an edge line marking and an effective rumble strip," Harrelson said. "These markings have a far less impact on bicycles and produce less noise to nearby residences when traveled over."



New 'Profile Thermoplastic Edge Lines' are shown above and at right. The ribbed surface helps warn drivers if they wander out of travel lanes.

Got engineering news?

Contact Andy Leaphart at:
803-737-1994 or email
him at Leaphart@scdot.org



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROB THOMPSON/THE CONNECTOR

One of the innovative safety applications being used now is a high-friction surface designed to reduce wet crash problem areas. Above, the new surface is visible on the Greystone Boulevard ramp off Interstate 126.



What does the future of transportation look like in South Carolina?

To help answer the question, the Office of Planning has recently completed updating the South Carolina Statewide Comprehensive Multimodal Transportation Plan, a comprehensive evaluation of the state's transportation system.

The Plan is comprised of seven primary elements including: Bridge Needs and Maintenance, Interstate Plan, Public Transit Plan and Human Services Transportation Coordination Plans, Metropolitan Planning Organization and Councils of Governments Plans, Railroad Right-of-Way Preservation Inventory, Safety Plan, and the Statewide Strategic Corridor Plan.

Existing conditions and projected needs emphasize many significant challenges to come. South Carolina has one of the highest mileage death rates in the nation with over 1,000 people killed each year.

Based on current funding levels, the existing transportation system is maintained at a Level of Service (LOS) D on a scale of A-F, where A represents exemplary road conditions and LOS-F represents failure.

Over 1,100 miles of primary and secondary routes and over 400 miles of the interstate system are expected to be heavily congested translating into billions in economic loss. Lastly, as of 2005, current transit service statewide was only meeting 57 percent of estimated demand, which is pro-

jected to exceed 33 million trips annually by 2030.

The needs, shown in the box at right, outlined in the Plan over the next 20 years total over \$48 billion, falling short of existing levels of federal and state funding.

Demand for travel in South Carolina is growing about twice as fast as population, and has far outpaced the rate at which the highway system is being expanded. Although the state's population has grown by over 20 percent since the 1990s, Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT) in the state grew by nearly 40 percent, while lane miles on the highway system increased by less than one percent.

Increased travel demand in many corridors means more congestion and delay. Three percent of the primary and secondary road system and nearly 50 percent of the interstates are projected to be at capacity over the next 20 years. Even with increases in transportation funding, the rapid rate of growth in VMT makes it unlikely that capacity improvements will keep pace with traffic growth. Given the extent of the needs statewide, funding constraints will limit capacity expansions to select corridors with more emphasis on safety and intersection improvements to improve traffic flow.

Increased travel demand also means greater maintenance needs for the system and the gap between existing conditions and the desired condition will likely

Statewide Transportation Needs through 2030

	(\$ Billions)
Bridge Replacement	\$3.0
Highway Maintenance	\$17.0
System Upgrades	\$11.0
Interstate Upgrades	\$11.0
Mass Transit	\$3.9
Premium Transit and Passenger Rail	\$1.4
Safety	\$1.0
TOTAL NEEDS.....	\$48.3
Currently anticipated funding	\$19.0
SHORTFALL	\$29.3

grow further apart under current funding levels. Today, just to bring the state maintained system up to a Level of Service C would require approximately \$2.3 billion in funding, and then over \$800 million per year to maintain that level of service. One of the most visible elements of maintenance is the bridge system, of which 20% of bridges are presently categorized as deficient, obsolete, restricted, or closed.

The strain on system capacity due to increasing VMT requires a multimodal solution, of which public transit plays an integral role. However, an additional \$61.72 million in annual operating funding would be required just to meet current unmet transit demand. The estimated demand by 2030 would require an increase in

annual operating funding to \$203 million, and over \$700 million in cumulative capital expenses through 2030.

Totaling operating and capital expenses means that there are over \$3.9 billion in transit needs required through 2030, with only \$2.1 billion in anticipated funding. This represents a transit funding shortfall through 2030 of \$1.8 billion.

Public participation was important to the development of the Plan and included input from citizens, federal and state resource agencies, affected public agencies, an Indian tribal government, modal interest groups, and other interested parties. A seventy-five member resource committee provided direction and feedback throughout the process. Outreach efforts included various local meetings, surveys, interviews and focus groups, presentations, access to draft documents on the SCDOT website, and public meetings.

A total of 207 individuals participated in the twenty separate focus groups, and over 2,000 completed surveys were returned from a statewide distribution. Over 250 individuals attended the Public Meetings at which the draft Plan was presented.

The most effective and efficient transportation solutions involve different modes of transportation and policies that support those modes: upgrades of key regional highway corridors

and interchanges, improvements to intercity freight and passenger railroads, expanded public transit systems, better facilities for pedestrians and bicycles, and better coordination between transportation investments and local land use choices.

In terms of upgrading key regional corridors, the Plan's Interstate Element recommends several capacity projects that will be included in the 2007-2012 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for funding, such as:

- I-26 from I-526 to Ashley Phosphate Road
- I-20 from I-77 to Spears Creek Road in Richland County
- I-385 from North of West Georgia Road to I-85 in Greenville County

To meet the challenges of growth and sustain the quality of life that South Carolinians enjoy, the state must use its transportation system more efficiently, maximizing the benefit from all modes of transportation, and increase and diversify overall funding levels in support of maintaining and enhancing the existing system. The vision is to develop an interconnected transportation system that builds on the strengths of all modes to provide effective, efficient solutions to the state's transportation needs.

For more information on the South Carolina Statewide Comprehensive Multimodal Transportation Plan, go to:

www.scdot.org/inside/multimodal/multimodal_transplan.shtml

Governor's proclamation honors state employees for their hard work, dedication



Juanita Campbell, Betty Richardson, Carolyn Burton and Curtis Sims enjoy time together at the appreciation luncheon.



Beautiful Baby Contest Winners

Headquarters employees had a tough time identifying fellow employees from their baby photos. Here are the folks who had the best luck guessing:

1st place (tie):
Yulonda Settles
Marcy Strother

2nd place (tie):
Barbara Sharpe
Susan Johnson

3rd place:
Holly Comalander

Thank you to all who participated. Everyone really enjoyed trying to figure out who those beautiful children were, and there were quite a few surprises.



The weather was perfect for eating outdoors.

Special thanks goes to the Human Resources and Senior staff for organizing the event. Shown above are Glennith Johnson, Mary Gail Monts-Chamblee and Susan Jones.



The event isn't over until the sound man has packed up and left. Daniel 'behind-the-scenes' Machado packs up the sound system at the end of the Ditch Diggers' performance.

Grow up to be . . .



Photo Layout By
Cody Crouch
of
Communications

1: Nancy Redmond. 2: Donna Price. 3: Cynthia Woods. 4: Pat Grice. 5: Holly Comalander. 6: Darrick Harrell. 7: Polly McCutcheon. 8: Louise Haggerty. 9: Katie Spradley. 10: Rose Marie Baird. 11: Dea Attaway. 12: Mark Attaway. 13: Betty Richardson. 14: Sandra Castor. 15: Myron Singleton. 16: Kathy Riddle. 17: Mary Gail Monts-Chamblee. 18: Jan Feaster. 19: Angie Padgett. 20: William Bloom. 21: Dana Ammer. 22: Tucker Creed. 23: Beach Brooker. 24: Susan Jones. 25: Wanda Webb. 26: Debra Rountree. 27: Michelle James.

District 1 News



Teresa Harley

Aiken, Kershaw, Lee, Lexington, Richland and Sumter counties

District Engineer: **Thad Brunson** (803) 737-6660
 FAX (803) 737-6401

Got news?

Contact Teresa Harley at:
 803-737-6715 or email
 her at HarleyTL@scdot.org

Employee Appreciation 2008

Thank you to all the employees of District One.
 Your hard work and dedication is greatly appreciated. Keep up the good work!



Aiken County



Lexington County



Kershaw County



Richland County



Lee County



Sumter County



Meet Keith Frick

Name: Keith Frick
Title: Civil Eng./Assoc. Eng. II
Unit: District Office

Frick is married to the former Lisa Shealy. They have two children, Cory Justin and Taylor Michelle and currently reside in Chapin, South Carolina.

Frick came to the District Office

Maintenance staff in September 2007 following a 20 year stint in Construction, working in the Richland "B" Construction Office.

His hobbies include coaching Cory in baseball and following Taylor's dance team as well as cheerleading team as they travel around participating in competitions. Frick loves any and all outdoor related activities such as hunt-

ing, fishing and gardening. He and his family are active members of St. Peter Lutheran Church where he currently is serving a second three-year term on church council. He is also Chairman of the St. Peter Social Ministry committee which, through donations and fund raising, helps those who are encountering financial hardships.

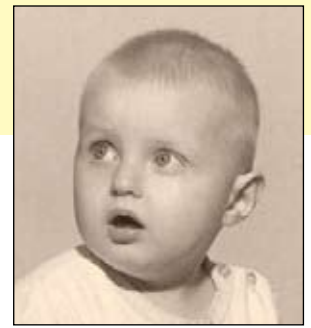
District 2 News

Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry and Saluda counties

District Engineer: Phillip M. Brooks (864) 227-6971
FAX (864) 227-6567

Got news?

Contact Dwayne Scott at 864-227-6222 or email him at ScottDE@scdot.org.



Dwayne Scott

Newberry Maintenance

Everywhere you look SCDOT is working for you



While the truck driver looks on, Newberry Multipurpose crew installs a long section of sidewalk in Whitmire. Pictured are (clockwise from left) Tina Laymon, Robert Icard, Leonard "Plug" Brown, truck driver, Ricky Smith, Jamie Glymph, and Hugh Pitts.



Johnny Lindler, Mike Lindler, Earl Smith, and Jeff Livingston prepare the road surface for a patch at Black's Bridge on the Newberry - Saluda county line.



Leroy Anderson and Ethan Hancock finish a concrete driveway for the only residence on a section of SC-66 without a driveway.



Jeff Livingston helps clear the right-of-way on SC-391 after a tornado on March 15. SC-391 closed and several crews worked 10-12 hour days to restore things back to normal.

Row . . . row . . . row your boat . . .



Mark DeZurik and Lee Neighbors inspect a culvert on I-385 Warrior Creek in Laurens Co. for possible rehab to the existing culvert. The inspection is part of the Interstate Rehabilitation Project for a section of I-385.

District 2 Employee Appreciation Day



District 2 employees enjoyed a fish fry for their appreciation lunch.



Greenwood Maintenance enjoys a meal during their Employee Appreciation Lunch.



Dusty Turner, Darrell Porterfield and Kevin McLaughlin did a great job cooking the meal.

A special thanks to Dusty Turner for catching and cleaning the fish and all who helped in preparing a wonderful meal.

Dusty's Motto:

Give a man a fish and he has food for a day.

Teach a man to fish and he has to buy bamboo rods, graphite reels, monofilament lines, neoprene waders, tackle boxes, lures, spinners, 20 pocket vests, fish finders, depth sounders, radar, boats, trailers, global positioning systems, coolers and six packs.

District 3 News

Anderson, Greenville, Oconee, Pickens and Spartanburg counties

District Engineer: Steve Gwinn (864) 241-1010
FAX (864) 241-1115

Reflections on a Character

By Craig Nelson
Assistant District 3
Traffic Engineer

If you've worked at SCDOT very long, then you've probably crossed paths with some characters. Some of them do more than their share of the work, and they let you know about it. Some of these characters keep the mood in the office light, cracking jokes at the appropriate times. Some of them seem to always be around and willing to help, whether the help is job-related or personal. And for many employees working with SCDOT District 3 and across the state, you know that some of the characters have all these qualities and more. These are the personalities that we will remember long after we go our separate ways.

Recently, I've had some time to reflect on one unique character that I'm sure many co-workers and friends have also had him on their minds. I think about the events that transpired and resulted in this reflection.

The person and the character that has inspired my reflection, Jason Davis, seemed liked he'd worked with SCDOT forever. He started out with Jeff Zettle in Anderson Maintenance, and (according to Jason) did just about everything, from painting lines to being "office boy." He "moved up" to the district office in 1999 to traffic engineering, where he quickly proved that he was still working on overcoming dyslexia, and he showed that he had great potential. It was during this time that I learned how Jason had a knack for finding himself in exciting situations.

"Hey boss," he would say to me on the phone in his best Cool Hand Luke-inspired mock southern accent. This was usually in the late afternoon rush hour when he was doing traffic counts. I knew something interesting was coming. "There's a guy out here at Heron Circle with a TV camera who says he wants to talk to me about the changes we're making. What should I do?" Or, "A Deputy Sheriff just got T-boned out here, should I keep counting?" Or, "Do we put up traffic signals based on how good the cookies and iced-tea are? I told the lady if she keeps bringin' that out here I'd come out every day until the numbers looked better!"

I knew of course, that Jason wasn't really calling me for answers to those questions, but to entertain. Everyone he met soon learned the same thing about Jason. He would never let you get too serious. It didn't matter who you were. Jason had a gift for saying borderline inappropriate things to most anybody and making them laugh. He once asked our former District Engineering Administrator Cyril B. Busbee Jr. if he and his wife had big

plans for the weekend. Busbee, not sure where he was going with it, replied, "Not really."

"Good," said Jason, "my wife and I were hopin' y'all could come keep the kids for us!"

Without fail, all the people that have shared their reflections on Jason's life have had similar stories. His family and extended family from Anderson to New York State; his coworkers from SCDOT; his friends from the place where he was raised, Ware ("Where?"), Massachusetts; all have a common experience through the spirit that is Jason. Their recollections are most probably without exception, relayed with a smile.

And I think that more than anything in life, Jason wanted those around him to smile and have a good time. This was a man who could make counting cars and answering phones during snow and ice duty seem like fun. Even though I am profoundly sad that we will only hear that high pitched New England accent that we'd hear when Jason got animated in our memories, it is hard not to smile when I think of Jason.

Even after Jason moved to Mechanical Engineering in 2002 to help oversee traffic signal construction, he still harassed us pretty much daily like he'd never left our office. I think he somehow kept in touch with most of the people that he met. So it was a fairly seamless transition when he came back to the traffic office last year.

I think he liked being the "office boy" again, answering phone calls with that professional sounding "Traffic Engineering, this is Jason, how may I help you?" Every once in a while I would hear, "Yes ma'am, I'm more than sure we can do something, No ma'am, we don't want anybody to die either...I can check with my supervisor...Have a nice day..." About this time I would walk in as he was hanging up to a "Hey boss..."

Jason truly did want to help the people who called in, and I think he went out of his way to help his friends and coworkers. It



Anderson Maintenance held a blood drive in Davis' honor on March 26. Greenville held a blood drive in his honor a few days before his death.

Got news?

Please contact
Joyce Gardner
at 864-241-1010
or by emailing her at
GardnerJR@scdot.org



Joyce Gardner



ABOVE: Jason Davis, an employee at the District 3 Office, celebrated his 40th birthday on Dec. 4, 2005. Davis worked at SCDOT for 18 years. He died due to complications from several strokes on March 15, 2008.

RIGHT: Davis poses with his wife, Cheryl, and their two daughters.



seemed like he was always there in the middle of everything that was going on at the district, from equipment rodeos to office dinners to helping rearrange office furniture. He was always coming up with grand schemes to make our jobs easier to do, and creative ways of using a label maker. I'm sure we will continue to see small reminders of Jason's contribution to SCDOT for many years to come.

These small reminders and each person's memories will combine to create that reflection of the unique character that was Jason. As I continue to reflect on his character, I am reminded of recent events.

I dialed his cell phone num-

ber as I pulled into the parking lot of Anderson Area Medical Center on February 15th. "Hey boss," he answered. "They found out what's wrong with me. My carotid artery is 95% blocked. They say I had a stroke."

In the hospital room, he was joking with the physical therapist. Walking with a slight limp, he was pretty much himself.

That next Thursday, he came by the office with his wife, Cheryl. They were giving him rat poison, he said, to keep his blood thin. In about six weeks, they'd do surgery on the carotid artery. He joked on the phone with our District Traffic Engineer, Eric Dillon, who was out sick that day, that he "came in to the office, boss, and I had a stroke!"

The following Monday, I went to the ICU at Anderson Area Medical Center, and met his Mom for the first time. It was easy to see where Jason's personality came from. It was not easy, though, to see this sweet

lady go through this difficult circumstance. But difficult circumstances sometimes bring out the best in those around you. I think about what I saw as these weeks went by.

I think about the support and well wishes supplied by employees and friends of District 3 that are a testament not only to the character of the person that we miss, but also a testament to the character of the good people that we are so fortunate to work with. I think about the wife and two young daughters that are left behind, how the pain of their loss probably dwarfs our feelings of missing a part of our work life. I also hope that, even though we feel that a part of us is missing, we can go about our everyday lives with a new sense of appreciation. We can honor the memory of someone who came into our imperfect lives, and through his imperfect character and spirit, made all of our lives a little brighter and friendlier.

District 4 News

Cherokee, Chester, Chesterfield, Fairfield, Lancaster, Union and York counties

District Engineer: Stan Bland
(803) 377-4155
FAX (803) 581-2088

Got news?

Contact Edward Moore with your ideas at 803-377-4155 or by emailing him at MooreEO@scdot.org



Edward Moore

District 4 proud of its Equipment Roadeo champs



The District 4 Equipment Roadeo champions are, from left, Cody McAbee, Bryan Baker, Ronnie Byars, Sonny Moore, J.W. Austin, Dennis Moore, Jeremy Shrewsbury, Lewis Brazell, Melvin Brown, Danny Moss and Tim Mullinax.

- Single Axle**
Melvin Brown of York Maintenance
Sonny Moore of Cherokee Maintenance
- Tandem Axle**
Danny Moss of York Maintenance
Bryan Baker of Lancaster Maintenance
- Lowboy**
J.W. Austin of York Maintenance
Ronnie Byars of Chester Maintenance
- Motorgrader**
Tim Mullinax of Cherokee Maintenance
Melvin Brown of York Maintenance
- Backhoe**
Cody McAbee of Chester Maintenance
Dennis Moore of Chester Maintenance
- Tractor/Mower**
Jeremy Shrewsbury of York Maintenance
Bryan Baker of Lancaster Maintenance
- State Wildcards**
Lewis Brazell of York Maintenance on the Backhoe
Melvin Brown of York Maintenance on the Tractor/Mower



CODY CROUCH/THE CONNECTOR

Brian Clack throws to Rusty Snider for the out during the 2008 SCDOT Softball Tournament.

Congratulations to the District 4 Softball Team who placed 3rd in the SCDOT Tournament in Lexington April 26.

Students visit York Maintenance for career day



LEFT: Richard Gore demonstrates how he uses the vacuum truck in his job to students at Rock Hill High.



RIGHT: Clint Beaver and Sherry Hayes discuss traffic signal and safety equipment to students at Oakdale Elementary.



Fairfield Maintenance installs new flagpole

Thanks to Winnsboro shop employees John Kirk, Larry Smith and George Pearson who were instrumental in the installation of the new flagpole located at maintenance office.

LEFT: Fairfield County Shop Foreman John Kirk stands beside new flagpole at the Fairfield Maintenance Office.

Meet Jason Childers



Name: Jason Childers
Work Unit: Union County
Started Working at SCDOT: September 3, 2006
Job: Trades Specialist IV in charge of Sign Crew
Family: Wife: Catherine, Sons: William age 4 and Warren age 2. Expecting daughter on June 3
Hobbies: Hunting deer and turkey and fishing
Church: Attends First Baptist Church in Lockhart where he serves as deacon
Quote: "I enjoy working at SCDOT because no job or day is the same."

Safety glasses prevent serious injury to operator

On May 25, Trades Specialist III Ken Jennings was operating ditching machine in Union County when ditcher struck at large rock sending it thru protective shield and striking Ken on his forehead. Jennings was wearing safety glasses and thankful only received on a minor scrape.



Ken Jennings shows the rock that smashed through the protective shield on his ditching machine.

District 5 News

Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Georgetown, Horry, Marion, Marlboro and Williamsburg counties

*District Engineer: Dennis Townsend (843) 661-4710
FAX (843) 661-4704*

Got news?

Contact Michael Miller at 843-661-4710 or by emailing him at MillerMW@scdot.org



Michael Miller

Motorists take a safety rest break

Before Easter weekend, the SCDOT and Michelin teamed up to conduct a "Safety Rest Break" at the South Carolina Welcome Center in North Myrtle Beach. Michelin and the SCDOT conduct these breaks during major holidays to help promote safe driving. The tire experts from Michelin inspected the tires of road-wear motorists and insured the vehicles

were not traveling on unsafe or incorrectly inflated tires. The SCDOT employees discussed safe driving tips and gave directions to bewildered travelers during their break from driving. Hazards such as under inflated or damaged tires and even a tire with three nails in it were found. The public was enthusiastic about this service, and some even asked if it was done every week-end.



ABOVE: Even SCDOT employees took advantage of the tire professionals from Michelin. Roger Smith from Horry Maintenance gets his truck tires inspected by the experts.



LEFT: A visitor from North Carolina gets his tire pressure adjusted and discusses tire wear with the Michelin representatives.

Clean and green Florence Maintenance's new wash area keeps oil out of environment

Florence Maintenance has almost completed a new wash area for their equipment. This wash area is covered to reduce the amount of water that is collected during rainfall. It is designed

to collect all the runoff from the vehicle washing, which is then treated to prevent environmental contamination from greases and oils, as well as dirt cleaned from the equipment.



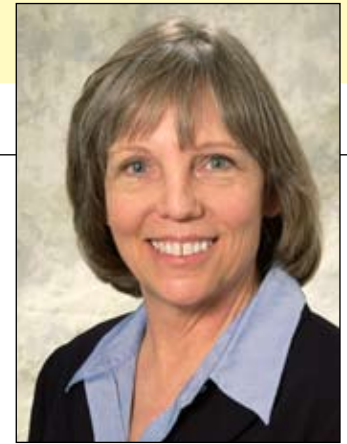
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL MILLER/DISTRICT 5



District 6 News

Beaufort, Berkeley, Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester and Jasper counties

District Engineer: Robert Clark (843) 740-1665
 FAX (843) 740-1663



Janet Hendrix

Got news?

Contact Janet Hendrix at :
 843-740-1667 ext. 128 or
 by emailing her at
 HendrixJL@scdot.org

Equipment Operators Rodeo

The Equipment Operators Rodeo is an annual SCDOT training event. The competition begins at the county level, with the two highest-scoring participants from each county, in each event, advancing to the district conference.

From there, the two highest-scoring participants in each event advance to the state conference.

The purpose of the Rodeo is:

- To promote skill advancement for employees whose jobs require the operation of heavy equipment

- To increase the safety awareness level of employees working in or around work zones

- To increase employee moral and value

- To strengthen presence of team spirit and teamwork

- To recognize the best equipment operators in a friendly competitive atmosphere



A driver makes his way through the serpentine event.



ANTHONY FOBBS



MATTHEW SANFORD



JAMES BRADLEY AND RICHARD STROBLE



PAT KANNEGIESER



SAMUEL COOPER



WENDY WILLIAMS



The straight line event was tricky for all drivers.



EVIN GREEN AND TREVOR THOMPSON

District 6 pulls together to clean up EF2 tornado damage

On the evening of May 11, 2008, an EF 2 tornado, winds between 111 – 135 mph, touched down in the John's Island and Wadmalaw Island areas of Charleston County.

Significant damage occurred to trees and roadway passages along SCDOT right-of-way on SC-700 (Maybank Highway), S-10-20

(Bohicket Road), S-10-316 (Bears Bluff Road), S-10-633 (Edenvale Road), S-10-54 (River Road), and S-10-1766 (Birds Nest Road).

Seven Charleston Maintenance road crews, with support of equipment and personnel from Berkeley, Dorchester and Colleton Maintenance continue with the clean-up effort.

Based on the number of grand and historic trees in this area, District 6 Vegetation Manager marked associated trees to help minimize the impact to these trees.

The roads in these areas were reopened to traffic as quickly as possible.



ABOVE: Resident Maintenance Foreman Joey Harris goes over with his crew the task before them.



LEFT: ADME JD Wilcox and Charleston ARME Adam Bishop survey one of the areas hit.



RIGHT and BELOW: Lethaniel Gathers, Elliott Fludd and Louis White of Charleston use chain saws to clean up after the tornado.



District 7 News

Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun, Clarendon, Hampton and Orangeburg counties

District Engineer: Jo Ann Woodrum (803) 531-6850
 FAX (803) 531-6854



Deborah Berry

Got news?

Contact Deborah Berry at:
 803-531-6850 or
 by emailing her at
 BerryDS@scdot.org

Forklift Training in Orangeburg

Shop Foreman Frank Easterlin conducts safety session



Forklift Safety Tips:

- Only trained/authorized employees will operate forklifts
 - Pre-inspect the forklift prior to every use
 - Use three points of contact upon entry and exiting the forklift
 - Always Wear Your Seatbelt! Do not jump off the forklift should it overturn!
 - Always sit in the operator's seat when starting the forklift
 - After starting the forklift raise the forks 2-4 inches for a safe travel height
 - Set truck brakes and chock wheels before a forklift enters a truck
 - Should the load block your view travel in reverse
 - Never raise/lower loads when the forklift is traveling
 - Never allow anyone to walk under a raised load
 - Never give anyone a ride
 - Pedestrians always have the right-of-way
 - Drive at a safe speed, watch for blind spots, make smooth/slow turns, blow your horn when rounding corners, and avoid sudden turns or braking.
- See the Employee Safety Manual for a more complete description of safety tips for Lift Truck (Forklift) operations. Remember, safety first while operating all machinery. Clip, save and routinely study these tips!

Moving Along



Jack Priester was promoted to Resident Maintenance Engineer of Hampton Maintenance on March 17.

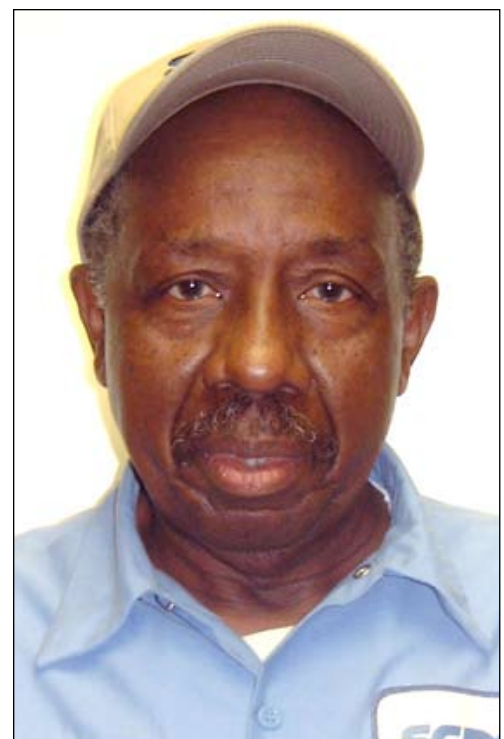


Lyle Davis was promoted to Resident Maintenance Engineer of Calhoun Maintenance on March 17.



Jerry Gosnell was promoted to Assistant Resident Maintenance Foreman of Hampton Maintenance on April 2.

In Memory



Cornelious Joe

June 25, 1939 – February 19, 2008

District 7 mourns the death of Cornelious Joe. He was the Building and Groundskeeper for Orangeburg District Office.

Joe retired September 2007 with 30 years of service. He leaves to mourn his passing, wife Sadie Joe of 40 years, two daughters, Pricilla Byrd and Sophia Joe, granddaughters, Keishay Byrd and Danyetta Rich, grandson, Blair Joe, and great-grandson, Darquan Joe. Joe will be remembered for his laughter, singing and good nature toward everyone he met.

Meet Nancy Brechlin

Name: Nancy Brechlin
 Title: Trade Specialist II
 Location: Orangeburg Maintenance

Nancy Brechlin has 10 years with SCDOT. Brechlin is responsible for picking up litter and debris along I-26 between mile markers 141 and 154 in Orangeburg County.

Brechlin enjoys spending time with her son, Corey.



VIEWPOINTS

We're making SC better one road at a time

By H.B. 'Buck' Limehouse Jr.
Secretary of Transportation

“Cost savings.” Those are two very important words at SCDOT right now. In fact, they are near the top of our priority list, and they should always remain there for two very good reasons.

Obviously the first reason is the state of the economy right now. Soaring gas prices make the cost of almost all goods and services go up. I don't need to tell you how the price of fuel has affected us. You see it every day when you fill up your personal vehicles, buy groceries and pay utility bills. Most of you know how the price

of oil has a significant impact on the work we do at SCDOT. Construction and maintenance costs have skyrocketed and continue to do so every day.

The second reason, as Governor Sanford has so rightly pointed out on many occasions, is that part of our responsibility to the citizens of this state is to spend their tax dollars wisely no matter what the state of the economy. We owe it to the state of South Carolina to control our costs, to use funds and other resources as wisely as possible so that we are putting most of our dollars out on the road in the form of safe and efficient highways and bridges.

Since my administration be-

gan just over a year ago, I have been looking for ways to cut administrative costs among others, and many of you have helped a great deal in making us a more efficient agency. Real results have occurred from the measures you have taken so far. In one year, cost savings found primarily in the administrative budget have totaled \$18.7 million. Last month, our Commission voted to use those dollars saved by adding them to the Highway Maintenance budget for 2008-09.

Since we have all worked together to cut costs, you've made it possible for us to preserve and improve more miles of highways and more bridges in the coming

fiscal year. You can find a story on page 7 with more detail on SCDOT's cost savings, including how we have cut the operating expenses in my own office virtually in half.

The important message in the cost savings process is that it's an on-going process.

We've done a pretty fair job in the past year, but we must continue to monitor expenses and look for savings in our operations, our offices and our projects. Cost savings have to be part of our everyday business.

On page 7, you'll find a letter of thanks from the Commission to all SCDOT employees for your hard work in paring down our costs. I



H.B. 'Buck' Limehouse Jr. is the South Carolina Secretary of Transportation.

would like to add my thanks once again for your conscious efforts to not only save dollars that can be used to improve our highways, but for making SCDOT the best and most efficient agency it can be.

Environmental stewardship

By Michael Covington
Director of Administration

Joni Mitchell's song, "Big Yellow Taxi" symbolizes the environmental movement as well as anything. The lyrics say a lot about our desire to preserve nature before we lose it. The message in those lyrics - "Pave paradise, put up a parking lot" and, "Took all the trees, put 'em in a tree museum, and charged the people a dollar and a half just to see 'em" - is both powerful and sad. As a nature lover and conservationist, I share Joni Mitchell's frustrations with the ever-expanding human footprint on our planet.

The human race is indeed expanding. Development is spreading. For too long, that development was insensitive to ecological and cultural factors. There seemed to be no concern about long-term sustainability of life. Many housing developments and shopping centers sprawled into the countryside with little concern for nature. Commercial clutter; litter; resource-intensive manufacturing processes; and, the "use it and toss it" mentality pervaded our culture for many years. But, today I think America is finally waking up to the fact that we live on a small planet with a growing population. We are finally beginning to realize that we are the stewards of this planet and we must act responsibly to preserve and restore the earth's resources before the relationship between man and nature becomes unbalanced.

SCDOT is trying to find that balance. We realize that change is unavoidable, but we are committed to making transportation planning and operations evolve in a way that promotes a sustainable planet and a healthy quality of life. Our new Environmental Stewardship website highlights some of the many ways we are working to protect resources and foster a good environment. When I started putting the website together, my thought was to highlight just a few major activities, but the more I explored the subject, the more I realized how committed the SCDOT team is to actually making a difference. I believe that SCDOT is part of a much bigger movement and I believe that movement is gaining strength.

Attitudes are changing. There are two major changes underway in America that will help us build support for environmental stewardship. One is the move toward recycling and the purchase and use of more durable goods instead of disposable items. Whether it be shopping bags, diapers, or kitchenwares, people are beginning to "get it." In some circles, it has become socially



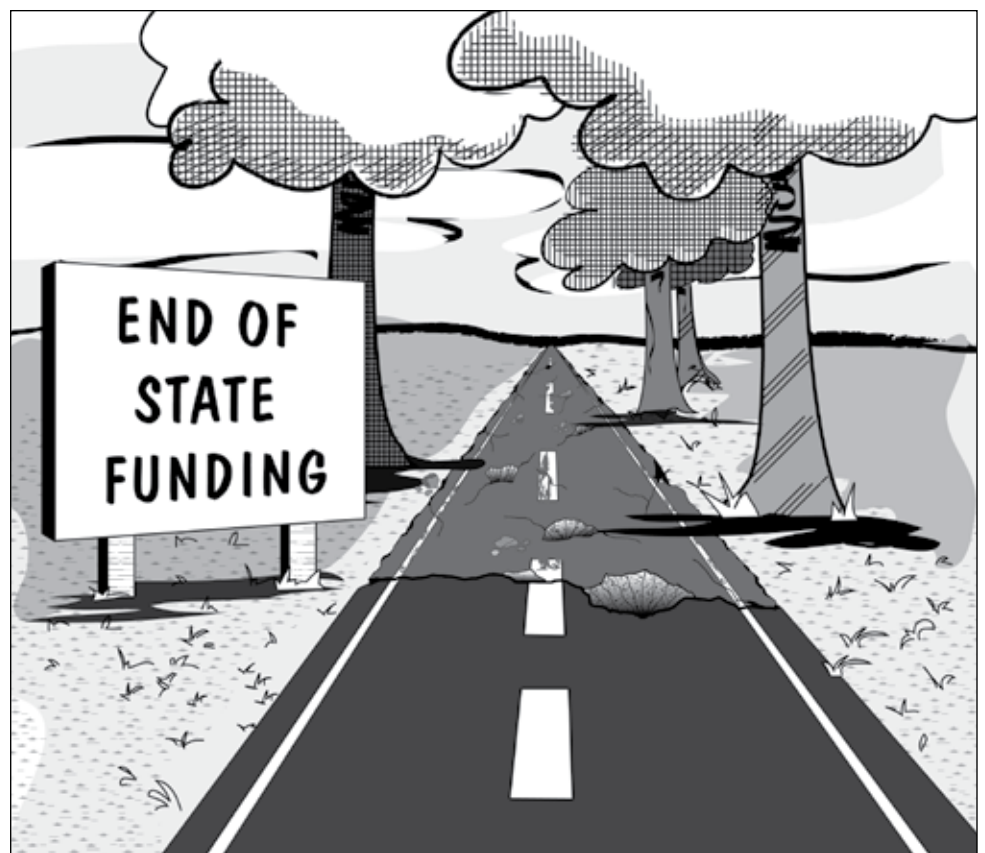
Michael Covington specializes in public policy issues at SCDOT.

unacceptable to use disposable items when durable items are available. This change in attitudes was first discussed in the 1984 book "The Next Economy" by Paul Hawken. In the book, Mr. Hawken writes that economic pressures will eventually force consumers to purchase durable goods instead of disposable items. If you took a snapshot of 1970 and compared it with 2008, you would see that this is truly happening.

The other change taking place in America is the new awareness of the importance of emotional well-being to our overall health and happiness. This is part of the holistic approach to living. People are gaining an understanding of emotional intelligence, or "EQ" as opposed to "IQ." The journalist Norman Cousins published a book in 1976 entitled "Anatomy of an Illness" which focused on the biochemistry of human emotions. Since then, the role of human emotions in everyday life has been studied by Daniel Goleman, Norman Rosenthal and others. We have learned that our environment impacts our emotions and, in turn, our emotions affect our health and happiness. So, it makes sense to promote a wholesome, nurturing environment.

For 500 years, western civilization has been driven by one scientific revolution after another. Manufacturing, transportation and medicine have leaped forward due to scientific research. Because of the magnificent technological advances made in the 19th and 20th centuries, and because of the appreciation our parents and grandparents had for its benefits, our society has come to place a heavy reliance on science and technology. If a project could be scientifically supported with factual data, then it made sense to go forward with the project. But, today we, as a people, are realizing that the right decision is not always the one that looks best on paper. It must also be considered in terms of the thousands of outside factors that contribute toward our quality of life. That is why transportation planning must be done holistically, not in an engineering vacuum.

The shortest distance between two points may not always be the best location for a new highway. Instead, the location that has less environmental impact may be the better location. Doing the right thing for the environment is doing the right thing for people. Through careful and considerate planning, we can move South Carolina and the nation forward while enhancing livability for generations to come.



ZOE COOK/SCDOT COMMUNICATIONS

Letters we liked

The following letter, dated May 20, 2008, is in regards to saving palmetto trees that were being removed along the ACE Basin due to the widening of US 17.

Dear Buck,

The palmetto trees look great! Thank you so much for making things happen. Chris Hernandez, Billy McMahan and Crawford Moore were outstanding in their efforts to save these trees.

Thanks again for the Buck Limehouse Palmetto Trees at Swinton Hall Plantation.

Your friend,
Thomas Middleton Lemacks

The following letter ran in The (Charleston) Post and Courier newspaper on Thursday, May 15, 2008.

Tornado response

The tornado that hit properties along Maybank Highway on Wadmalaw Island on Mother's Day was sudden and powerful. So, too, was the excellent emergency services response.

With the extensive damage to the main power lines, it is remarkable that Berkeley Electric Cooperative restored power to the area by early Monday afternoon. But when we saw the army of utility vehicles, equipment and new power poles marching down Maybank at 9:30 p.m. on Sunday, we knew we were in good hands.

Thank you, Berkeley Electric, Johns Island Supervisor Richard Frank and the dedicated employees and subcontractors who serve us so well.

The response from other agencies was also superb. On behalf of my family, I would like to thank Santee Cooper, the St. John's Fire Department, the S.C. Department of Transportation, Charleston County Transportation and Maintenance employees, the Charleston County Sheriff's Office and the American Red Cross for their rapid assistance.

Appreciation is also due to Bill Frehse of State Farm Insurance who surveyed the damage to our property. And finally, a special thank you to Richard LaRoche and the employees of LaRoche Grading and Paving Co. for tackling the mammoth job of debris cleanup and tree removal at our residence.

Dave, Lisa and Zack Kynoski
Maybank Highway
Wadmalaw Island

VIEWPOINTS

Editorial Board consists of:

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SC Secretary of Transportation

Wendy Walton
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Michael Covington
Pete Poore

Assets Management

Visitor parking at headquarters

By Carl Chase Jr., Assets Manager

Visitor parking is now available at the new USC Parking Garage on the corner of Park and College Street.

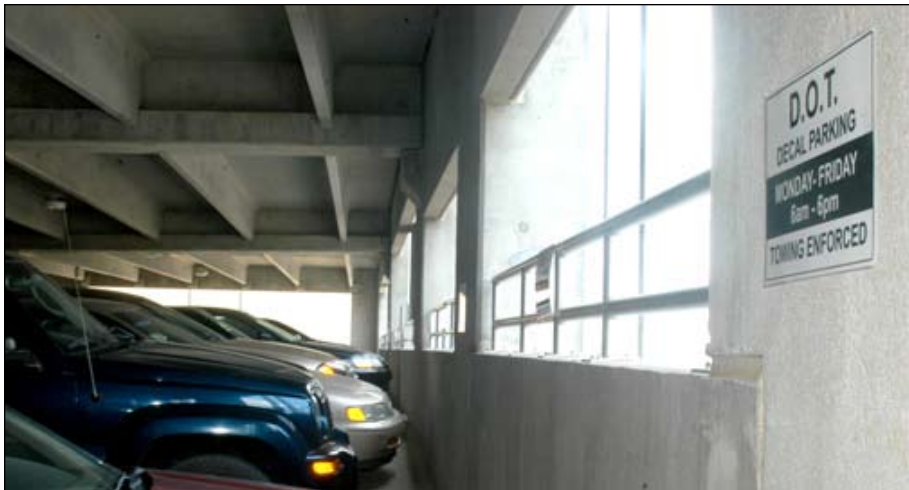
Visitors must enter and exit through the Park Street gate to the parking garage. The Visitor will obtain a parking validation pass from the machine and may park at any space not marked as reserved. Do not park in spaces marked DOT as they are being paid for by employees assigned to the Headquarters Building.

When the visit is concluded at the SCDOT Headquarters building, the parking pass can be validated by the guard or receptionist. If the pass is not validated, payment will be required upon exiting the garage.

If the ticket dispenser is not working, proceed to the nearest non-reserved parking space.

Visitors using this Parking Garage must exit through the Park Street exit.

If you have questions or concerns regarding visitor parking contact the parking custodian at 737-1771 or 530-5258.



CODY CROUCH/THE CONNECTOR

Visitors to SCDOT headquarters are now able to park in the new garage at Park and College Street. Visitors will receive a parking validation pass from the machine and have it validated by the SCDOT security guard at the front desk. SCDOT employees are also able to pay for reserved spots in the garage.



Briefly

Pinnacle awards announced

Two Carolina contractors received the 2007 Pinnacle Award in the Best Highway-Heavy Project category at Carolinas AGC Annual Convention in January.

Sloan Construction Company (Duncan, SC) received the award for the improvements to the interchange of US 176 and Interstate-585 at Spartanburg, South Carolina. Sloan's project involved:

- Over 7 miles of urban road widening
- Replacing the Valley Falls Road overpass over US 176
- Replacing the I-585 bridges over Business I-85
- Building two new I-585 bridges over East Campus Blvd. and
- Two ramp fly-over bridges for the new East Campus Blvd exchange.

Crowder Construction Company (Charlotte, NC) received the award for the US 76 bridge replacement over the Chattooga River in Oconee County. Crowder's project involved replacing the

US 76 bridge and demolishing a 100-year-old abandoned steel truss bridge over the world's most famous whitewater river. Not to mention the numerous and stringent special environmental provisions which blended the finished product into the natural environment.

The mission of the Pinnacle Awards competition is: to pay tribute to excellence in the industry, reinforce standards of construction excellence to the greater community, and raise the profile of the Association and its member firms.

In the "best project" category, any employee of a member firm can nominate a project – even someone who worked on the project. All projects must be located in the Carolinas, and built by a Carolinas AGC member firm. Nominations for the next competition will open in June. Judging of the nominations is done by a volunteer panel (12-14 judges) representing a cross-section of the Carolinas AGC membership.

Access and Roadside Management Standards updated

SCDOT's Access and Roadside Management Standards has been revised, and the revisions will become effective on July 1, 2008. The revisions update many design criteria to current standards and place more emphasis on the need for a proper traffic impact study to determine the appropriate access design.

To view the revised standards please go to our website <http://www.scdot.org/>

doing/trafficengineering.shtml. An errata sheet has been established for the 2008 ARMS publication and will be updated when corrections are necessary. A link to the errata sheet will be maintained below the 2008 ARMS link.

Users of the Guidelines for School Transportation Design should note that these guidelines have been updated and are included in the 2008 Access and Roadside Management Standards.

Human Resources

Do you have beneficiary question?

Did you know that employees can change their beneficiary at any time throughout the year. To ensure proper processing of beneficiary changes, please list all beneficiary information without altering text or using whiteout on these forms.

Life insurance payments, as intended to designated beneficiaries on the Notice of Election (NOE) and the Beneficiary Attachment Form, must be listed in full percentages (as shown below).

For example, Optional Life and Basic Life Insurances			
123-45-6789	Mary Doe	05/20/1958	34%
123-78-0000	Patsy Doe	05/20/1958	33%
123-45-2323	Gary Doe	05/20/1958	33%

Avoid using dollar amounts (\$5000.00), rounded percentages (33.3), or fractions (33 1/3).

The beneficiary form (form 1102) for the S. C. Retirement Systems does not allow for specific amount designation...benefits will

be divided equally among the designated beneficiaries.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Benefits Office at (803) 737-1729.

MyBenefits: Insurance information is online

Retiree, COBRA* and survivor subscribers are now able to get a copy of their benefits statement and update their contact information by using MyBenefits, the online enrollment system from the Employee Insurance Program (EIP).

If you find you do not have access to MyBenefits, check with your benefits administrator.

* Note: If you are a new COBRA subscriber, you will not be able to access MyBenefits until you have paid your initial COBRA premiums.

How to Register

To begin, just click on the MyBenefits button on the Employee Insurance Program (EIP) Web site, www.eip.sc.gov. The first time you use the system, you must register.

- You will be given a security code and asked to enter it. Enter it exactly, capitalizing the same letters that are capitalized in the box on the screen.

- Then you will be asked to enter your first name, your last name, your Social Security Number, your 8-digit Benefits Identification Number (BIN) and your date of birth.

- If you are enrolled in the State Health Plan, BlueChoice HealthPlan, MUSC Options or Dental Plus, your BIN is under your name on your identification card.

- Other subscribers received a letter giving them their BIN. If you do not remember your BIN, click on "Forgot BIN" on the first screen. You will be given your BIN after you provide your name, Social Security Number and date of birth. Write down your BIN, because you will need it later.

Next you will be asked to create a password for MyBenefits. To protect your privacy, it is not as simple as it typically is to create a password. Click on the question mark to learn how to do it.

- The password must have eight characters. At least one must be a number and one must be one of these special characters: ! : # \$ % * { } [] @ .

- After you create your password, ver-

ify it.

- You will be asked four questions that will help identify you if you forget your password.

A summary of your registration information, including the answers to the four questions, will appear. This is the only time it will be displayed. You may want to print this screen and keep the information in a safe place.

You're Ready to Go

After you register, log in by entering your BIN, the last four digits of your Social Security Number and your password. This will take you to the main menu.

If you enter your password incorrectly three times, you will be locked out of the system. You may try again in 24 hours.

To Review Your Benefits

To see the insurance programs in which you are enrolled, choose "Review Benefits." This is similar to the benefits statement you receive in the mail each September. You may print it.

To Update Your Contact Information

To update your address, phone number or e-mail address, choose "Contact Information" and then click on "Submit."

- Make the changes, including the change of county, if any, and then click on "Submit."

- A "Summary of Changes" will appear that shows the new information under "New Value."

Now you must approve the changes in Your Contact Information. To accept the changes in your contact information, click on "Approve."

- This will produce a subscriber authorization window.

- To authorize the changes, you must "sign" the authorization by entering the last four digits of your Social Security Number.

- Then click on "Sign."

After you sign your subscriber authorization, it will be sent to EIP, and your information will be updated within minutes.

'The Connector' wins first place in SC Press Association competition

The Connector won first place for "Best Newspaper Publication" in the South Carolina Press Association's 2007 awards competition in the Associate/Individual Winners category.

The Connector has previously received first place honors in SC Press Association competition in 1996, 2002, and 2003; placed second in 2004 and 2006 and third in 2001.

