

Operations Connection

Message from the Director

Scott A. Rogers

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Time flies. It seems like we were just enjoying a pretty decent summer, and then before we knew it fall came and went in the blink of an eye. Now everybody is gearing up for winter, and things will get busy. There will be snow storms, holidays, deer hunting, and all sorts of other things packed into the next 2 months. Most likely an ice storm or two mixed in somewhere, as has been the trend the last two Decembers. So I think it's important for us all to stop and take a breath before the craziness hits. Take stock of all that's been accomplished this year, and all of the good stuff that's happening as we move forward together.

It's been an unbelievably busy construction season. I can't believe how much work has been done on our highways this year. I'm hoping that trend will continue and that as an Agency we'll continue to put our best foot forward in taking care of the infrastructure we're responsible for. In Maintenance, that means continuing to get back to basics. There is no shortage of work when it comes to activities like ditching, cutting trees and brush, fixing guardrail, maintaining bridges, and patching potholes. And speaking of patching potholes, my hope and expectation is that the 4 new mobile asphalt recycling units will make a big impact this winter season and next spring. The regions each have one, and this will give you access to good hot mix year round so that patches will last longer.

There have also been some exciting developments on the recruitment front. The TMW reclassification will allow us to offer more competitive starting salaries to entry level maintenance workers, while still providing a great career ladder and lots of opportunities for advancement. This should help increase the number of applicants for open positions. At the same time, we're partnering with VSEA (via the Labor Management Committee) on a recruitment campaign (see page 16) which will run in numerous publications (including the Fish & Game Digest) to help raise awareness that this is a pretty good place to work.

So we've all been busy, and there's really quite a lot to be happy about. I hope you all have a safe holiday season, and as things start to get crazy in the coming weeks please remember to take a moment now and again to appreciate all the good stuff. And, as always, please be safe out there.



“Kudos!” from your fans

From: Levesque Pauline [<mailto:plevesque123@outlook.com>]
 Sent: Friday, August 08, 2014 4:33 PM
 To: AOT - OPS Webmaster
 Subject: Mike fixes bridges in St. Johnsbury-HELP

Dear Sir, It took me a long time to find you so I hope you can help me.

I would like to thank an employee of yours but can't seem to remember his last name. He said his name was Mike (Labounty) and he worked on bridges in St. Johnsbury, Vermont. I want to say that his last name started with L but I am not certain. The truck he had was green with a yellow light.

Up until his death, my husband and I have spent our anniversary in the Northeast Kingdom. We had 34 wonderful trips together. This year I took the trip alone for the first time. I decided to take my dog Maggie along with me. I was driving over route 2 in Cabot, Vermont when I lost the wheel to my van. I was stranded with no phone service and very little money. I have AAA but couldn't call them. My van wasn't moving. It was very hot out. I was very upset not knowing what to do and Mike pulled in behind me. He was so nice. He asked me if I was okay and if I had help coming. I explained to him my situation and he said he would be happy to help me. He said up the road there was service in one spot. We went up there and my phone still wouldn't work but his did. He called and handed me the phone. I couldn't explain where I was to them. I was so upset that I couldn't remember my garages name. They hung up and asked me to find out. We were upset because they were going to leave me there. Mike called AAA back and asked them to look for garages in my town on the computer. He said a lot of names until I remembered mine. He told them they had to help because if he moves a foot either way, he loses his phone. They told me that I would have to wait there for 3 to 4 hours before they could get there. Mike brought me back to my van. I felt better because someone was on the way and I could ride with the tow truck. Mike asked if I needed anything else. I kept him there for nearly two hours already and said I would be fine. He wished me good luck and left. About 20 minutes later Mike came back. He brought my dog water. He dumped his drink on the ground and cut the bottle into a bowl. He brought me a sandwich, a bottle of water and a word puzzle book. He laughed and said I could keep busy with that. He even gave me his pen. I gave Mike a big hug. He wouldn't take money for his drink. I waited for a life time for that tow truck. Many stopped and asked to help but I told them that Mike that fixes bridges helped me. I got home after midnight.

I would like to thank Mike for going way out of his way to help me. I can never say thank you enough. He cares about people and that is something this world is missing today.

Could you please either give me Mike's email or phone number. I would like to thank him. Maybe you can give him this letter. I hope he knows I will never forget how he went out of his way to help an old lady and her dog.

Thank you
 Pauline Levesque
 Champlain, New York



From: Carrier, Russell
 Sent: Friday, August 22, 2014 1:30 PM
 To: Gammell, Wayne; Rogers, Scott
 Subject: Working Hard

Thanks again for working with us and all the nice conversations.

By: Russell Carrier
 Area Supervisor D-1

(Wilmington "Work Day" patching potholes along the rumble stripes on Route 9 Scott Moore, D-1, Wayne Gammell & Scott Rogers)

From: Judy Herrington
 <judyherr@yahoo.com>
 Date: October 8, 2014, 6:11:24 PM EDT
 To: "Lewis, Tom"
 <Tom.Lewis@state.vt.us>
 Subject: Re: paint on our car
 Hi Tom,

Thank you so much for going to the trouble to check on this for me. As I said before, I was surprised to even get a response. I appreciate all you have done to try to help. You get an A+ for your customer service. Thanks again.

Cordially,
 Judy



“Kudos!” from your fans ... Continued

Floyd Cadwell
Whippoorwill Drive
Thetford Center
Thetford, VT 05075

Cooper Pierson

Oxbow High School
36 Oxbow Drive
Bradford, VT 05033
10/20/14

Dear Floyd,

As part of my Senior Semester class, we are all asked to write a thank you letter to someone who does something for the community. I'm lucky because last Christmas I was not lucky. If you hadn't been quick on your feet to call help for me, I might not be here today to be on the way to graduate high school.

You get up early while everyone else is sleeping. You go out in the cold to fix the roads so they're not all broken up. When the roads are icy and wet your the one who gets called at any time of day to go put sand and salt on them so they aren't slippery and slick. When people are careless and aren't caring about the ground we all walk on and throw their wrappers out their car windows, people like you have to clean them up. You and your crew go out to fix ditches when it rains hard and they wash out. Not to mention, these roads we all drive on, they get broken up, and there fixed by people like you.

There are many other things you do for helping this state but what I'm mostly glad for is how you let me be in a part of your life. Thank you for that. You're my hero. You helped save me so I can still be one of the people on this earth to walk on our land. I don't know a whole lot of what a state driver does besides what I said above. I hope to hear back from you, and I'm sure the rest of my class would like to know more about what it is you do to help protect us and how every time you get behind the wheel of your state truck, you're risking your life.

Sincerely,

Cooper Pierson
(CoopStrong)

Cooper Pierson Friday, October 17, 2014 at 1 :31 :43 PM Eastern Daylight Time 68:5b:35:b3:de:00

On December 26th, while Floyd was plowing his route a vehicle coming in the opposite direction was sliding sideways out of control. Floyd came to a complete stop in anticipation of the driver's side of the vehicle striking his plow. The young man was not wearing a seat belt and was thrown from the vehicle on impact, sustaining serious injuries. Floyd paid numerous visits to the young man during the course of his recovery, which obviously had a huge impact on his life.

From: Westmore Highway [<mailto:westmoreroadforeman@gmail.com>]

Sent: Friday, October 03, 2014 11:33 AM

To: Perron, Dale

Subject: Good News

Good afternoon Dale,

Just wanted to pass on a quick note regarding Shane Morin. I had an issue on a road last week and needed some assistance. I called Shane, he came down when he said would be here and we looked at the road. His knowledge and the time he took to answer all my questions was very refreshing. The issue was a land owner wanted the town to do something to the road and I did not think it was a good idea, Shane came up with a compromise that suited both parties.

I contacted him yesterday looking to get a hydraulic study done on one of my structures, he responded very quickly and its now in the process. I also worked with Shane on my last structure on Long Pond Rd. It was my first time doing a job like that for the town and Shane's attention to detail and ability to foresee details that could arise made this project go through flawlessly.

In this time when everyone is quick to blame the other guy and never a positive word is said I wanted to take the time to let you know Shane deserves an "atta boy" for his efforts. He is an asset to VTrans and your lucky to have him.

Thank you for your time,
Steve

Projects

Central Garage -

With a second round of 82 installs completed in September, progress continues towards the goal of having Automated Vehicle Location units in our plow trucks. Currently, 178 trucks are equipped, covering the state's higher priority (Orange, Blue, and Green) plow routes. The systems track truck location, material spreading rates, and plow up/down status live from a web-based interface. The systems should provide better transparency, accountability, and documentation of our good efforts to keep the roads clear, and have the potential to improve efficiency and safety.

Plow truck plow and body systems for the winter season are nearing completion. Feedback on Tenco's product has been positive to date.

The CG yard has been re-graded and paved with the generous and capable help of **D7**, our paving manager - **Ted Domey** and the **Bridge Crew**. We're very grateful for their efforts and want to again pass along our thanks!



Before Paving



After Paving

PHONES DOWN

HEADS UP

USING A HANDHELD CELL PHONE
WHILE DRIVING IN VERMONT
IS ILLEGAL.

KNOW THE LAW

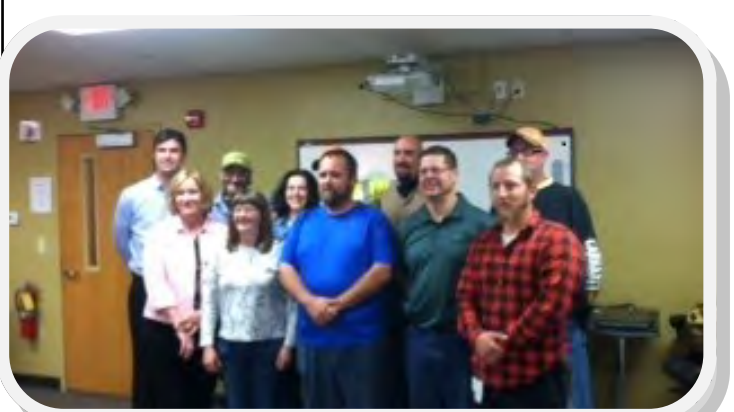
VERMONT

Rewards & Recognition

Fundamentals of Supervision Training Graduates



Front Row L-R Paul Mychack, Brian Hawley, Rick Knight
Back Row L-R - Darby Merrihew, Tiffanie Fortier, Sandy Balzanelli, Terri O'Shea (Consultant) and Allen Brown.



Front Row L-R Terri O'Shea (Consultant), Mandy Peters, Chad Carey, Rob Sylvester, Evan Brasseur
Back Row L-R Carl Parton, Ricky Hayes, Diane Decoteau, Tim Bortell, Travis Bolte and Peter Coonrad



Leon Higgins, TMW VI, retired on 9/20 after 25+ years managing the D4 Tunbridge satellite garage. Leon was a temp prior to being hired as a TMW-A on a permanent basis on 11/20/88 and was responsible for maintaining Tunbridge VT Route 110 and well as being responsible for the District stenciling program for over a decade. In May 2010, he was the first in State to be promoted to TMW VI. A gathering was held at the Royalton garage on September 18th to wish Leon good luck and fair well. Above (L-R) **Leon Higgins**, TMW VI and **Trevor Starr**, General Manager - District 4.

CG mechanic **Larry Chadderton** retired at the end of October. Larry has very capably served as a mechanic in Berlin since 1990. He is looking forward to spending more time with his grandchildren. We thank him for his service and wish him the best!

Tammy Ellis received her 25 year service pin at SE regional snow plow training day in Dummerston

Operations Employees of the Month

Maintenance and Operations Bureau,

I'm very pleased to announce that the Maintenance and Operations Bureau's Employee of the Month for August is Richard Wimble an AOT Vehicle Equipment Technician II out of the Northwest Region.

Richard's nomination (from a group of coworkers) said, in part: "For the past two weeks, (7/18-8-1) Richard has been serving in the role as the Northwest Regional Supervisor. During that time he has stepped into the role with an outstanding professional attitude, as well as top notch work performance and leadership skills. He has also implemented new tactics to our everyday work that has improved our efficiency and success. We hope that you will recognize him as he has improved our workplace in multiple ways in a short period of time." Another nomination – also for Richard – talked about how he is always respectful of co-workers and others, and just gets things done.

Please join me in congratulating Richard. His daily attitude, work ethic, and efforts to make our workplace better have clearly been noticed by his co-workers.

Scott

Maintenance and Operations Bureau,

We did not receive any nominations from staff for Employee of the Month over this past period. As such, the MOB will not have an employee of the month for September.

Please remember that nominations for this award come solely from the employees. Although it's unfortunate that we got no nominations this month, we would welcome nominations for next month's award.

Scott

Maintenance and Operations Bureau,

I'm very pleased to announce that the Maintenance and Operations Bureau's Employee of the Month for October is Marge Skinner the District 1 Technician out of the Bennington Office.

Marge's nomination (signed by the entire D1 staff) said, in part: "Marge is one of the most well respected and admired employees in District 1. She has a work ethic second to none and is very dedicated to her job. Marge has worked for the State for over 30 years, working her way up through the Transportation Maintenance Worker series to a Tech VI. Marge is the first point of contact for the towns; she deals with right of way issues and illegal signs. She has always been courteous and professional with complaints from any caller she is dealing with, regardless of the mood of the individual. We love having Marge as a co-worker; we know Marge will help with anything we ask and will always take care of it professionally and efficiently. Marge is also the kind of person that you can go to with any kind of problem or issue and she always is willing to take the time to listen and give any advice she feels might be helpful. No matter whether it is personal or professional, Marge always has an ear to listen and a shoulder to lean on if needed. We would like to show our appreciation and admiration for her. District one is very lucky to have her."

Please join me in congratulating Marge. Her daily attitude, work ethic, and efforts to make our workplace better have clearly been noticed by her co-workers.

Scott



I am pleased to announce that Chris Bearor has accepted the position as the T.A.M.S. in our Middlebury garage. Chris will be starting his position on September 15, 2014. Chris brings with him years of knowledge from Municipalities and other areas that will make him a great asset to the Agency of Transportation. Please join me in congratulating Chris and welcoming him to the Agency of Transportation.

The Central Garage welcomes Nathan Gilbert as a new MEM II starting in the Berlin shop. Nathan lives in Morgan and most recently worked at St. Onge Transport in Newport.

I'm very happy to announce that Christine Hetzel has accepted the position of VTrans Training Center Program Manager in the Maintenance and Operations Bureau of the Highway Division. Christine comes to us from the Department of Human Resources where she served as the DHR Director of Operations. In that role she focused on workforce development, recruitment, health and wellness, strategic planning, change management, labor relations and HR IT. She has mentored and trained leaders throughout the state on project management and change management practices, and even spent some time as Interim DHR Commissioner. Prior to joining DHR, Christine worked in the private sector developing and delivering management training and business process improvement training, providing training support, and measuring training effectiveness.

Christine brings with her over 20 years of experience in training development and delivery, building and leading teams, performance management and process improvement, and we are very excited to have her join our team. She will begin her new duties at the VTTC on Monday November 3rd.

Please join me in congratulating her on this assignment, and welcoming her to VTrans and the VTTC.

Scott

I'm very pleased to announce that Todd Law has accepted the position of Maintenance Transportation Administrator (MTA) for the Maintenance and Operations Bureau of the Highway Division. As MTA, Todd will be responsible for overseeing statewide maintenance district operations.

Todd comes to us from the City of Montpelier, where he served as the Director of Public Works since 2006. Prior to that, Todd was the Assistant Public Works Director for the Town of Essex and the Public Works Director for the Village of Essex Junction. In those roles he oversaw the administration, maintenance, operations and management of water, storm water and sanitary sewer systems as well as the city highway and bridge networks, municipal facilities and fleet operations. He has also worked on multiple natural disaster projects with FHWA and FEMA. Todd is a licensed professional engineer, and has been involved in the design and construction of numerous civil engineering projects. Todd has also served in the Vermont Army National Guard where he was a platoon leader for a construction and maintenance platoon. In that role he was responsible for implementing training and tactical exercises for emergency preparedness, as well as execution of construction and maintenance projects.

Todd will begin his new duties on November 10th. Please join me in congratulating Todd and welcoming him to the Agency, to the Highway Division, and to the Maintenance and Operations Bureau.

Scott

I am pleased to announce that Shane Morin was selected to be the Project Manager in District 9. He will be taking the reins from Scott Keysar who is retiring on October 31st. Shane has a vast array of experience in the Agency and has shown his abilities in the District and I am confident in his abilities to perform at the Project Manager level.

Personnel Updates

New Hires

D4 - **Mark Waters**, TMW IV, Williamstown, **Leavitt Sayers**, TMW IV, Williamstown, **Tim Davis**, TMW IV, Williamstown, **Todd Stanley**, TMW IV, White River, **Jody Dow**, TMW I, White River, **Craig Keysar**, TMW IV, Thetford, **Henry Lefebvre**, TMW IV, Randolph, **Jeffrey DeGrasse**, TMW IV, White River

D8 - **Walter Ederly**, Aide I, D8 Enosburg

CG - **Nathan Gilbert**, MEM 11, Berlin

Promotions

D4 - **Chuck Page** to TSMW, Williamstown, **Paul Seaver** to TMW V, Windsor, **Robert Whyte** to TMW V, Windsor, **Eric Brown** to TMW V, Rochester and **Mike Young** to TMW V, Tunbridge, **Peter Lynds**, TMES, White River

D7 - **Ryan Hovey** to TMES, Lunenburg, **Joe Doucette**, TSMW, Bradford, **Gerald Griswold**, TAMS Newbury, **Charlie Lakin**, TMES Newbury.

Transfers

D7 - **Steve Mitchell** to TMW VI, West Danville, Tom Vivian to TMW III, Bradford

Retirements

D1 - **Margie Skinner**, retired on 10/31/14 with 30 years of service.

D4 - **Leon Higgins**, retired on 9/20/14 with 25 years of service.

D7 - **Leland Piper**, retired on 8/21/14 with 31 years of service.

D9- **Scott Keysar**, retired on 10/31/14 with 51+ years of service.

CG - **Larry Chadderton**, retired on 10/31/14 with 24 years of service.

Years of Service

D1	Anson Mason, Jr. - 25 years Calvin Ulitsch - 15 years
D2	Benjamin Moffit - 5 years
D3	Gregory Webster - 10 years
D4	Luke Russ - 10 years
D5	Eric Austin - 10 years Richard Caron - 5 years
D6	Sal Balzanelli, Jr. - 30 years
D7	Sandra Balzanelli - 20 years Robert Heywood - 35 years
D8	Richard Hoburn - 20 years Mark Morin - 5 years
D9	Mark Ingalls - 15 years Pierre Lamarche - 10 years
HQ	Jennifer Callahan - 10 years
CG	Wanda Knapp, - 35 years David Thurber, - 15 years



Together
Working ^ to get you there!

Operations Connection is on the web:
[http://www.aot.state.vt.us/maint/
Operations.htm](http://www.aot.state.vt.us/maint/Operations.htm)
January 1st, April 1st, July 1st, and November 1st

Questions/ Comments/ Suggestions
Karen Brouillette, Admin. SVC. Coord.
Karen.brouillette@state.vt.us

~ Postables ~



(L-R) **Ad Taylor**, Town of Westmore and **Paul Keegan**, VT Local Roads

First workshop (Grader Operator) thru the recently transitioned Vermont Local Roads program was a total success. 86 year old Ad Taylor from Westmore was the chosen operator and as he drove the grader up and down the road most of the guys standing around commented that he handled that machine better than most handle a toothbrush....Great success story for our first workshop.

By: Paul Keegan

Above: L-R **Tiffany Fortier**, Tech Svcs; **Rich Tetreault**, Director of Highway Division; **Ashley Jonas**, Financial Administrator & **Amy Mercier**, Financial Manager

Saturday, September 13th 9:00AM
Champlain Valley Exposition, 105 Pearl Street
Essex Junction, Vermont 05453

The Chill Foundation is a youth development non-profit that provides opportunities for at-risk and underserved youth to build self-esteem and life skills through board sports. Each year Chill Burlington serves 100+ Vermont youth from across the state to provide them with life changing opportunities at zero cost. Chill Burlington currently operates annual Snowboard and Skateboard programs in the winter and spring respectively. To find out more about the Chill Foundation, visit <http://chill.org/burlington>.



Above: **Sue Minter**, Entry Level Equipment Specialist aka Deputy Secretary

Put the Director to Work Day - Richford Garage (L-R) **Walter Eagerly**, Aide I, **Mike Cutting**, TMW IV, **Dave Kennison**, TMW IV, **Ellen St. Marie**, TMW VI, **Leo Mills**, Equipment Specialist, Faith Brown, TMW I, aka Director of Finance & Administration, **Bob Walker**, TMW IV, **Artie Young**, Senior Maintenance Worker, **Scott Rogers**, TMW I aka Director of Maintenance & Operations Bureau and **Mike Derby**, Senior Maintenance Worker.



~ Postables ~



*Touch a Truck - September 6th
Brattleboro Memorial Hospital - By: Joe Ruzzo*



Snowplow Rodeo

CELEBRATE

Winners of the "Best Kept Truck"

District 1 - Brian Hawley
 District 2 - Gary Dix
 District 3 - John Loso
 District 4 - Mike Young
 District 5 - Kevin Lawrence
 District 7 - Lauren White
 District 8 - Scott Garrow
 District 9 - Perry Elie

Thank you to all who helped with the Rodeo being a success!!



Above: (L-R) Dave Boomer and Mike Pepin - District 9 - 1st place winners with Scott Rogers



Above: (L-R) Scott Rogers, with Alain Pion and Mike Sheltra - District 9 - 2nd place winners



Dave Boomer-D9, Bill Bishop-D3, John Rowe-D3, Bruce Nichols (Chaperone)D3, Mike Pepin-D9

The D3 team came in 15th and the D9 team came in 7th. There were 47 teams competing from all corners of the country.

The Vermont teams arrived in Loveland, Colorado on Tuesday afternoon after a long day of traveling. The weather was perfect, mid 80's and sunny. We stayed at a hotel about ten minutes from where the competition was being held. Wednesday, the day of the competition, we arrived at 7:30 and there was already a crowd gathered. We checked in and figured out where we needed to be. First was the line to sign up for the written test and the diagnostics; they split the two teams up, as one person had to take the written test and the other the diagnostics. The written test was a series of ten questions all about commercial vehicles. The diagnostics was a four minute timeframe to find at least four things wrong with a truck. After we waited for the guys to finish the written test we had some time before the competition so we walked around and looked at some of the displays and equipment on site, there was a lot of it there. We then proceeded over to an adjacent lot where they were going to compete. The diagnostics tent was there as well as the courses they were to compete on, one for the single and double axles, the loader, grader and skid steer courses were there as well.

While we were waiting for things to start a lot of the other states walked up to us, saw our VT shirts and comment how glad they were to see us there, they all were very welcoming. The judges took us in a couple of groups to do the walk through and explain the scoring, it was basically the same course as here but a little of the scoring was different. They had an opportunity to look the truck over a little (it was the same type of International as we run, but an all angle plow that was a little wider than what we utilize). Then the competition began with no particular order other than how you lined up. Our guys decided to watch for a while and see what could be learned, as did most teams. Our team did very well; however, the plow width was a little bit of an issue.

The scores were tabulated from a combination of the test scores, diagnostics and the obstacle course. The District 3 team of Bill Bishop and John Rowe finished 15th and the District 9 team of Dave Boomer and Mike Pepin finished 7th from a total of over 50 teams. All in all, I think Vermont made a great showing in Colorado and we should all be very proud of their efforts!

By: Bruce Nichols

Special Interests

Labor Management Committee Meeting Minutes

AOT Labor Management
Meeting Minutes
For September 14, 2014

Present From Labor: Jason Heath, Chair, District 5; Art Aulis, Vice Chair, District 9; Jerry Comstock, Central Garage; Jonathan Leonard, District 7; Brian LaBounty, District 2, David Van Deusen, VSEA Senior Union Representative. Present From Management: Scott Rogers, Wayne Gammell, Ken Valentine.

Labor Supports Training Center

Labor to provide Management with a Letter of Support Concerning AOT Training Center;

VSEA-AOT Labor Team presented Management with a letter stating Labor's continuing support for the mission of the Training Center; to provide AOT workers with top notch training opportunities, to better prepare our road crews for any and all challenges they will face in months and years to come. By providing such high quality training, the public will also be better served as the quality of AOT work and safety precautions will consistently improve. This letter was signed by the AOT Labor Team.

Agreed Upon Action: Management thanked Labor for this letter.

New Employee Recruitment Effort

Management reported that new employee recruitment continues to be an issue. Presently there are 20 vacancies. Labor inquired why Management thought this continues to be a problem. Management stated that the fact is the pay is increasing not high enough to draw workers who otherwise apply for jobs in the private sector and with the Towns. [*Note: this discussion took place before the Reclassification and related pay increases were put into effect. Since this change in pay, both Labor and Management are optimistic that the situation will change for the better.]

Labor and Management then discussed their joint efforts to create a robust new employee recruitment drive. As part of this effort State experts on marketing were present, and submitted a draft of a joint print ad that both Labor and Management would partner on concerning recruitment. The ad pointed out the benefits received by AOT workers ("Under a Solid Union Contract"). All sides liked the ad.

Agreed Upon Action: Labor and Management will launch the ad in different publications, this fall. VSEA will pay for print ads in the Hemming Motor News, Buyers Digest, Green Mountain Trading Post, etc.. Management will pay for ads in other publications, possibly including the Fish & Wildlife Hunting Regulations magazine. Both sides will time their ads to the run at the same time, for maximum effect. Management will communicate details with VSEA Communications Director Doug Gibson. The Ad will include both the VTrans logo and the VSEA logo. Conversations will continue about possible radio and online ads.

Training Center Update

Labor would like an update from Management concerning the Training Center, specifically when new Management will be in place, and when rank and file rep can be expected to play a role on the related oversight committee.

Management reported that they are seeking to fill the Management position for the Training Center, as past Manager, Kari Minor, has left to become Deputy Commissioner of DHR. Thus far there are 35 applicants. Interviews are moving forward.

Labor expressed that once this new Manager was inserted into the position, they would like to see Labor's role in the Training Center oversight committee defined. Here Labor again stated that having a rank and file perspective concerning training needs, etc., would be of value to all. Management agreed.

Agreed Upon Action: Both sides agreed that after the new Training Center Manager is seated, we would define how this rank and file representative would serve. The present goal is to work out the details on the Winter meeting of AOT Labor Management.

Continued on page 13

Special Interests

Labor Management Committee Meeting Minutes

Continued from page 12

New Hires/Steward Introductions

-Labor would like to discuss with Management how this process would work.
Labor brought this issue up as a follow-up to the previous Labor Management meeting.

Agreed Upon Action: Management and Labor Agreed that when a new hire comes into one of the garages, the local Union Steward from within the District, *subject to the operating needs of the garages*, will be allowed to meet privately with the new hire, for 15 minutes, in order to explain the basics of the Union Contract, and the services provided to Union members.

AVL-Appropriate uses and inappropriate uses

-Labor would like to discuss this tool and gain clarity concerning how it is utilized by Management.

Labor asked who presently has access to this tool: the public? Management reported that currently the public does not have a log-in account, and therefore cannot monitor where various trucks are. However, Management also stated that looking forward they will consider giving the public access. Management's Scott Rogers further reiterated that tracking and monitoring of trucks through AVL is not presently intended as a disciplinary tool. Even so, Scott continues to state that 'if we see a truck has gone out of state, for example, we would have to consider that fact.' Labor asked if there is an official policy on the AVL and its uses. Management stated that there is not, and that they are still learning about this tool and what it can do, etc.. Labor discussed their concerns that the data provided by AVL could be misleading, and therefore wrong conclusions could be reached. The example given was a truck that AVL shows pulled into a side road, and remained in one location for a period of time. Here, someone monitoring the AVL could think that the driver was not working (while on the clock). But in truth, it could be that the driver was shoveling the trucks contents, or engaged in a necessary activity. Management's Wayne Gammell said that he understands what goes into being a driver, as he came up through the ranks, and he (and Management) do not intend to use AVL to micro-manage or hold workers to unreasonable standards. He state that if workers feel that local Management is using AVL unfairly, or as a means of unduly harassing workers, those concerns should be reported to him and that he will look into it. [*Of course any concerns about harassment should also be reported to one's Steward or Union Rep.]

Agreed Upon Action: Management will continue to contemplate AVL and what is should and should not be used for. Management will also continue to understand that it is reasonable, at times, for drivers to stop for coffee, and to pull onto side roads to perform various tasks, etc..

Ticks-Workers Comp

-Labor would like to have a general discussion on the Tick Issue which is an increasing problem and concern for AOT workers.

Labor reiterated that this is an increasing concern for AOT workers. Jerry Comstock [Labor] and Wayne Gammell [Management] both serve on the statewide Health & Safety Committee, and both reported that this is an issue that has been discussed at this committee. Presently anti-tick spray is available to workers in the garages. Management also stated it will make sure that Tyvek Suits are also available to workers at the Garages. Labor and Management also encourage all workers to report tick bites (in the form of an incident report) to their Supervisors (as this can help down the road if there is need for a workers comp claim relating to Lyme disease). Management also suggested that they look at what other States are doing to address the tick issue.

Agreed Upon Action: Anti-tick spray will continue to be available in the garages. Tyvek suits will be available in the garages for optional use during specific tasks which may be deemed as high risk. Management will open a conversation with Camille (from the Training Center, and former VOSHA worker) in order to learn what other States (like Maine) are doing to address the tick issue. All sides strongly encourage workers to report any and all tick bites to their Supervisors (as this will help if a Workers Comp claim becomes necessary).

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Sweeper/Vac Truck Suggestion

-Labor would like to provide Management new figures on this previous proposal.

Labor's Jason Heath reported that he further investigated cost for these trucks and found that they cost \$600,000 (more than initially estimated). Management's Ken Valentine reported that these trucks cost \$14,000 a month to lease, or \$3600 a week to rent. Current price is at \$1400 a day (with an operator). Management states that they will continue to look into and consider options.

Agreed Upon Action: Management will continue to look into the options concerning Sweeper/Vac Trucks.

Excavators

-Labor has heard rumors that AOT will phase out direct ownership of excavators. If true, Labor has concerns about AOT ability to quickly react to Irene like events.

Management reported that they are looking at options here, including renting excavators as opposed to owning them. Management stated that District 3 is already renting, as part of a pilot project. Labor expressed concerns that not owning excavators could be a problem during an Irene like event. Management stated that by-enlarge AOT rented most of their excavators immediately after Irene, and this was not a problem. Management stated that they have first dibs agreements with a number of equipment rental companies, and that this contractor list is now centralized. Therefore Management does not foresee a problem if they want to renting excavators.

Agreed Upon Action: District 3 will (who are presently renting excavators) will be looked at, and the issue will be judged, moving forward, based on the needs of AOT and facts as they are presented.

Bridge Crew Update

-Labor would like to hear an update from Management on what (if any) the immediate plans are concerning the Bridge Crew returning to the Districts.

Management Stated in no uncertain terms that this is a rumor, and is not happening.

Agreed Upon Action: Not Happening.

Topics for Future Meetings

-Labor would briefly like to discuss/propose that future LM meetings tackle;

- A. The 16 hours of consecutive work issue/adequate rest/safety for drivers;
- B. AOT Efforts to become more environmentally sensitive (i.e. energy efficient light bulbs, energy conservation, etc.).

These topics were brought up by Labor as future issues that may be brought up in Labor Management.

Agreed Upon Action: Labor may bring these issues up at future Labor Management meetings.

LMC: "Column"

As we wind down 2014, AOT labor has done well. The new contract with an increase in snow season stipend, 2.5% raise for everyone, and the successful upgrading of the TMW series, be proud of the work you do as you deserve it. We will continue to make the Agency of Transportation the employer of choice.

We are currently still looking to fill seats for Districts 1, 3, 6, and Bridge Crew. If you work in one of these districts and you would like more information about this committee or have issues you would like to have discussed, please e-mail us. If you have suggestions for bargaining you may also contact us and we can pass those ideas along to the bargaining team.

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By: Jason Heath, Chair, District 5

Safety & Health

We have made some substantial progress for Safety training at VTTC. Our Boat Launch was approved on Sept 30, 2014. This will be built next summer (permit allows building at or on water's edge from July to October). Those AOT employees that might be launching rescue boats during any "Working on or near Water" (WOW) projects will have a practice site. I want to thank Jeff Ramsey (Environmental Specialist with VTrans Environmental Section), Mike Wichrowski (Fish & Wildlife Administrator), Tom Anderson and Ralf Bullock of D6, George McCool and Wayne Gammell, Rob Gentle, Chad Poston of SE Region, and many others that helped make this a reality either by pointing me in the right direction, handing me a design, or wrestling with poison ivy to take measurements and photos. It was a great collaboration.

The next bonus is the Mabey Bridge site. This training will encompass loading the bridge parts, transporting them to VTTC, unloading, assembling the bridge over water, then disassembling the bridge, loading and transporting bridge off VTTC grounds. Each phase of this training involves work that has safety hazards inherent to the task. By participating in this training with an actual water hazard present, we tie in so many different previous trainings and become better able to face future needs of our State. Presently, there are a limited number of VTrans employees trained to assemble these bridges. In times of flooding, this skill can be critical. Municipalities as well as VTrans employees will be able to learn these skills in preparation for wash-outs or storms like you-know-who. Again there is a list of people that stepped up to make this possible – Wayne Gammell (his idea, I don't know a Mabey bridge from a step stool!), George McCool and Ralf Bullock, Jeff Ramsey, Rich Kern (Biologist with Fish & Wildlife), John Lepore, Bill Sargent, Bernie Hagan and Sven Scribner. This was another great collaboration!

The CSA (Construction Safety Awareness) training is going very well. This is now a 3 day class that Rob Gentle teaches with help from HazMat guys (Andy or Mike), the District Safety Specialists or the Ops Safety Technicians. New employees are meeting resources available in their own District as well as at VTTC. We have them scheduled on a monthly basis around the state. The evaluations have been consistently positive, thanks to Rob's training techniques.

We are working on a slightly updated (changing headers only) JSA form. First, I would like training to be conducted on a garage-by-garage basis on filling out a JSA. Hazard Assessment is required by OSHA and leads to reduced accidents and injuries. Right now, the JSA use is not where it needs to be in some areas. This needs to change. Having on-site training by Rob will add to consistency as well as compliance.

We are starting our Chainsaw Training the week of Oct 21. There are 2 teams of instructors. In the North, we have Scott Harvey and Greg Sargent from D8. In the South, we have Anthony Solari (D3) and Tom O'Connell (D2). These four have the expertise and safety focus that we want and need to instill for chainsaw use throughout AOT. As other groups have heard about this training, they have been asking where they can sign up. I am also recruiting for another set of 2 teams of chainsaw trainers. The demand for this class is snowballing!

*** Announcement ***

A new incentive program is starting. I'm calling it "Get Mugged by the MOB". As I learn of employees that are working safely – really focusing on performing a task safely, taking steps to ensure the safety of themselves and coworkers, etc. – they can expect a card of thanks. After a few cards, they will get a personalized mug. I'm not revealing the criteria. This is not a competitive sport. I want to see or hear of people that are taking pride in working safely within AOT. Just know that I am watching and listening...

The first card has gone to Tim Bortell of D1, Bennington. Tim stepped up and covered site audits in D1 while the Southern Territory Safety Tech was in training for 2 weeks. Tim did a great job of checking on 3 sites for safety, JSA's, work zones in place, etc. He was my eyes and ears for that time period. He wrote up thorough reports and sent them out to all concerned. Thank you, Tim; I definitely see a mug in your future. Mug shots of those getting "mugged" will be supplied for future issues of this newsletter.

The other branches of VTTC are looking at ways to hop on this band wagon. Please stay tuned for more on this "mugging"! Take care, stay safe and stay healthy.

By: Camille Erwin, Safety & Health Branch Manager



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