

Operations Connection

Message from the Director

Scott A. Rogers

Sometimes, when it comes time to write a short article for our quarterly newsletter, I have a hard time figuring out what to say. As most of you know, I'm an engineer by training (and by personality type) and sitting down to compose something in writing does not come easily to me, and trying to make it fun to read is even tougher. Sometimes I'm inspired by current events at the Agency, the time of year and sometimes I just write about what pops into my mind.

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Today, what popped into my mind was baseball. Ever since I can remember, I have loved the game of baseball. I love to watch it, play it, analyze it, and of course, talk about it. I am always shocked when somebody thinks baseball is boring. They clearly don't understand the game. So much is happening on every single pitch, you could say that the game of baseball is always in motion. In fact, there is so much going on that you almost can't take it all in. That is, if you know what to look for.

One of the great things about baseball is the reliance on the rest of the team to succeed. Everybody has a job to do on every single pitch of every game, and if one person fails to be where they are supposed to be, or fails to do what they are supposed to do, it can lead to a loss for the team. So many times, a game is won or lost on a single pitch; a single play; a single mistake and teams that are successful are often the teams that understand the need to work together, support each other and cover for each other. Those types of teams are made up of individuals who realize the importance of working together. Teams that are successful often have a spirit of comradery that supersedes the talent of any one player. There are a lot of great players who have never won a World Series because they have never been on a great team.

In fact, when you hear about some of the greatest teams in the history of the game, they are often talked about as having good clubhouse chemistry. They work together; train together; play together, and certain players stand out, not just because they can hit the ball a country mile, or because they can throw a 100 mph fastball, but because they are leaders in the clubhouse. They set the tone for the rest of the team to follow. They speak up when somebody crosses the line; they pick up their teammates when they are down; and most of all they lead by example and exhibit the type of behavior they want the rest of the team to exhibit. They know they are the face of the ball club and want to be proud of the club and the team they represent.

So I challenge each of you to decide what type of teammate you want to be and what type of clubhouse leader you want to be. Our team here in the MOB may never play for a World Series title, but we have a pretty important job to do and we can do it best as a highly functional team where we support each other; respect each other; and work hard together. If anybody out there has a 100 mph fastball, please let me know... ☺



“Kudos!” from your fans

From: Paul Kendall [<mailto:pkendallb@gmail.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, January 27, 2016 8:58 AM
To: Gadapee, Kevin <Kevin.Gadapee@vermont.gov>
Cc: Rogers, Scott <Scott.Rogers@vermont.gov>; Eaton, Todd <Todd.Eaton@vermont.gov>; Sue Minter <sue@sueminter.com>
Subject: Re: Vermont Local Roads Assistance

Kevin,
 Thanks again for taking the time to help me interpret the hardness and sieve test results for the material taken from the alternative sites currently under consideration as Braintree's new gravel pit.

As a member of the local Select board, your practical experience in constructing and maintaining town roads has answered many of my questions, and I have forwarded a summary to all my colleagues.

Again, thank you.

Paul L. Kendall, member
 Braintree Select board

On Thu, Jan 21, 2016 at 8:40 AM, Gadapee, Kevin <Kevin.Gadapee@vermont.gov> wrote:

Good Morning Paul,

The Vermont Local Roads Program (VLR) works with municipal highway departments by providing trainings, outreach/communication and technical service assistance. We offer these services throughout Vermont to all municipalities. I have attached a brief informational document on the VLR program for your review. Please feel free to give us a call anytime with questions regarding highway maintenance issues. We are also always willing to travel to your town and view any particular issues and meet and talk face to face. Thank you for considering Vermont Local Roads to help you with your municipal roads questions.

-Kevin
 Kevin Gadapee
 Branch Manager
 Vermont Local Roads Program

From: May, Toni
Sent: Friday, January 22, 2016 8:25 AM
To: McCool, George <George.McCool@vermont.gov>;
 Rogers, Scott <Scott.Rogers@vermont.gov>
Cc: Devins, William <William.Devins@vermont.gov>; Burke, Sam <Sam.Burke@vermont.gov>; Cleveland, Richard <Richard.Cleveland@vermont.gov>
Subject: Berlin sign crew

Good morning George & Scott

Yesterday I received 17 work orders that the Berlin sign crew completed between Jan. 11th & Jan. 19th. One was just issued last week and the rest were issued in December. They covered areas from Hartford to Derby and many towns in between. The work was a combination of removals & replacements and the installation of new signs; both on existing posts and new assemblies.

Hats off to this sign crew for always being so efficient and completing our work orders in such a timely fashion! They make us look good ☺!

Thanks
 Toni

Toni May





“Kudos!” from your fans ... Continued

From: <Trevor.j.walker@ice.dhs.gov>
Date: January 28, 2016 at 9:34:54 PM EST
To: <erik.filkorn@vermont.gov>, <eileen.blake-sayers@vermont.gov>
Subject: [General Questions and Comments] Thank you

Trevor Walker sent a message using the contact form at <http://vtrans.vermont.gov/contact>.

I would just like to say thank you particularly to the State road crew members that plow route 242 from Montgomery Village to the Jay Peak parking lot. I travel approximately 30,000 miles per year mostly in the Northeast Kingdom of Vt for work. Regardless of the fact that this year has not been a banner year for snow plowing, I have noticed in years past that Route 242 from Jay Peak to Montgomery village, despite being one of the roughest roads to plow in years past due to the pavement, is one of the clearest roads in the State. This is almost always the case, regardless of what time I travel the road. I travel 242 at least twice per day and regardless of snow conditions, I feel a sense of relief when I hit the Jay Peak parking lot where the Montgomery crew usually turns around, and the road is clear. Again, thank you it is very much appreciated, keep up the good work.

Trevor Walker
Montgomery, VT

From: Cleveland, Richard
Sent: Monday, February 01, 2016 10:05 AM
To: Rogers, Scott <Scott.Rogers@vermont.gov>;
Faley, Robert <Robert.Faley@vermont.gov>
Cc: Nichols, Bruce
<Bruce.Nichols@vermont.gov>; Bride, Michael
<Michael.Bride@vermont.gov>; Trombley, Robert
<Robert.Trombley@vermont.gov>; May, Toni
<Toni.May@vermont.gov>
Subject: Cavendish business signs

Good morning. I wanted to pass along my thanks to the Mendon sign crew (and their helper for the day, Chris Butkin) for their promptness in replacing five business signs on VT 103 in Cavendish. Five local businesses were affected when the Town closed the Depot Street bridge, which required replacing those signs with new ones. The Town closed the bridge December 23, we learned of the closure January 11, VCI expedited the fabrication of the signs, and the replacements were installed January 29. I really appreciate the sign crew's willingness to drop whatever they had planned to meet me at the site and accomplish the work.

Richard Cleveland
Vermont Agency of Transportation
Business Sign Program
1 National Life Drive
Montpelier VT 05633-5001
Phone: 802-793-7020

From: Aaron Thurston [<mailto:amthurston@gmail.com>]
Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2016 11:48 AM
To: Marshia, Kevin; Richard Westman; Golden, Michael
Subject: Re: Rte 100 road sign for safety

Thank you! The signs are up! I am hoping drivers will now pay more caution when approaching our road!

I really appreciate the quick response to this issue. Again and again, I am impressed by our state government's response to concerns from its community members... just another reason Vermont is a great place to live!

Many thanks and have a great spring!
Aaron Thurston





"Kudos!" from your fans ... Continued

Good Afternoon Everyone,

I wanted to make it a point to say how much of a help the State Wide Bridge Crew were to the Rail Section and Environmental Section these last few months. There were many long days in the field all over the state at various project locations that required their expertise.

Not one day did a single State Wide Bridge Crew member complain about the work required and were always more than willing to help out. They also mobilized at early hours of the day and were available with short notice. I was very impressed with their safety throughout project work.

The tree clearing services needed for the Northern Long Eared Bat Federal listing was the main concern for these site visits. Without their help, many rail projects may have not been able to be constructed due to the federal listing.

This was great VTrans teamwork between the Environmental Section, State Wide Bridge Crew, and Rail Section. Having the resources "in-house" makes the process very successful and efficient. I look forward to working with everyone in the future on more projects. Good work everyone.

Here is a list of the State Wide Bridge Crew Members that participated in the rail tree clearing:

South West
Craig Bottesi
Rob Hamilton
Jeremy Harrington
Bill Tubbs

South East
David F. Lynch
Paul Meoli

North East
Michael Labounty
Daniel Whitehead
Zachary Willey
Acacia Knight

Thank you all,

Kyle Mathieu Wells

Rail Project Manager

PPAID - Rail Section
Agency of Transportation



Phone: (802) 505-1707
Email: Kyle.Wells@Vermont.Gov
One National Life Drive
Davis Building, 3rd Floor
Montpelier, VT 05633-5001

From: Mark Youngstrom
[mailto:marky@ottercrk.com]

Sent: Thursday, February 11, 2016 2:01 PM

To: Faley, Robert
<Robert.Faley@vermont.gov>

Cc: Mark Goodwin
(shrewsburyclerk@vermontel.net)

<shrewsburyclerk@vermontel.net>; Jamie Carrara <freemanbrookroad@yahoo.com>

Subject: Shrewsbury - Upper Cold River Road Landslide

Good afternoon Rob:

I want to thank you for your letter of support regarding the stone buttress ballasted slope solution for the Upper Cold River landslide. I believe your letter made a big difference in getting FEMA to rule that they could finance work outside the Town road ROW for this location, an issue that had been holding up the project for 2 years. Perhaps other factors were that VTrans just funded reconstruction of the Brown Covered Bridge and the bridge can't be used because of the landslide, and that the bridge was recently declared a National Historic Landmark (one of just a few in VT). However, FEMA specifically mentioned, in their recent approval to move ahead, that VTrans' opinion that this was the practical solution made an impact in their decision.

The Town wholeheartedly thanks you !!!!

Mark P. Youngstrom, P.E.

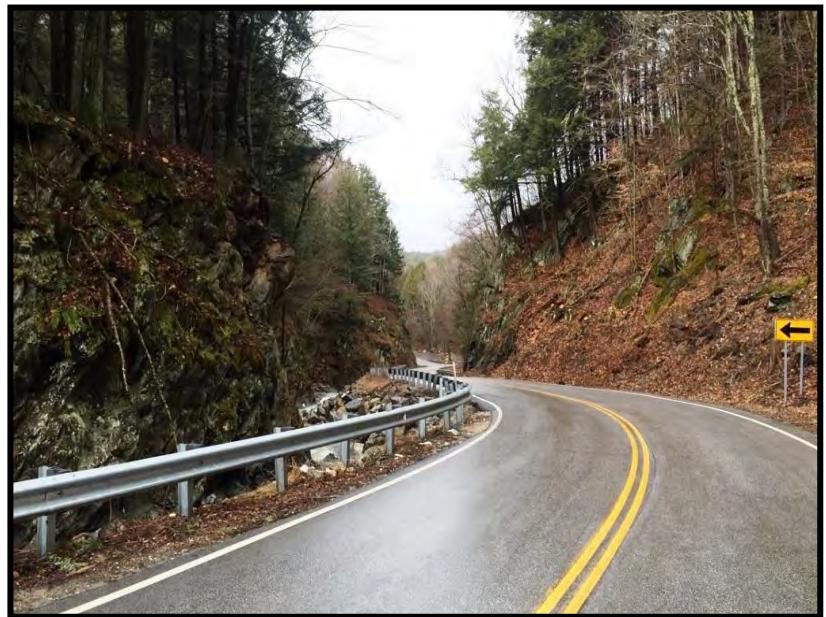
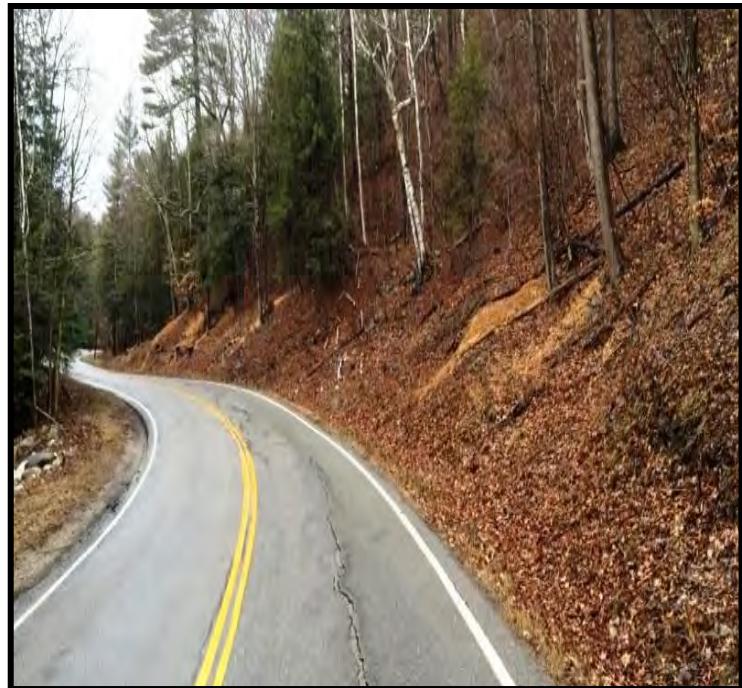
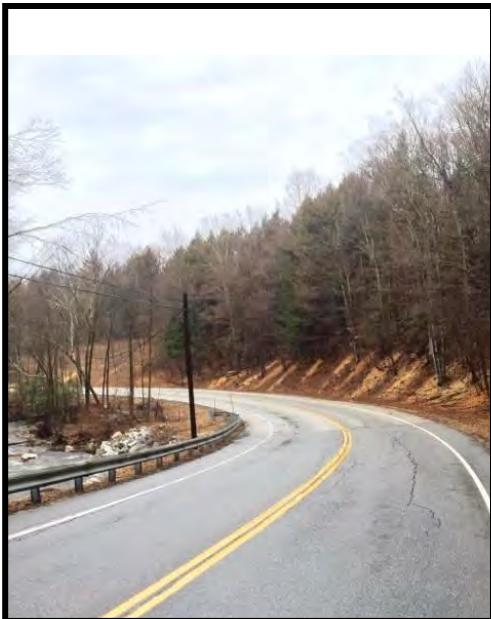


Otter Creek Engineering
110 Merchants Row
Rutland, VT 05738

Projects

District 3

The Clarendon/Brandon Garages did an excellent job cutting trees and brush on Route 140, Wallingford ahead of the upcoming paving project.



~ Postables ~

US 5 St. Johnsbury near Passumpsic Bank closed due to flooding and ice jams - District 7 - February 2016



~ Postables ~



Supported by the manufacturer, two local Freightliner dealers have provided us a demo plow/dump truck so we can familiarize ourselves with their product before the next round of bidding. In the hope of providing as close to an “apples-to-apples” comparison as possible, they have (mostly) matched our chassis spec and are have had Tenco build it up as close as possible to our newest International trucks. They are doing this on their dime, so it is a good deal for us (although we have to give it back mid-summer). It is a tandem-axle truck, with an Allison transmission and a big Detroit engine.

The plan is to rotate it through each District for a roughly two weeks each. The vendor will take a little time in each District to introduce the product as we move it around.

The goal is to see how it works for us in real-world conditions, so put it through its paces!

It is important to the vendors that they get some formal feedback from operators, so there will be some evaluation forms and maybe some follow-up conversations. Please do provide constructive feedback, since that is among the primary goals of those who have given us this great opportunity.

Please give it a try, and let us know what you think!

Ken Valentine
Central Garage Superintendent
Vermont Agency of Transportation
ken.valentine@state.vt.us



~ Postables ~



Rob Sylvester and Clayton Butler judging the Skills USA competition for HS students...

Camp Johnson

Robert Sylvester not pictured as photographer also



Clayton Butler (L) Judging High School Student (R) in Sensor Identification & Diagnostics

Clayton Butler (L) with Milton Cat Representative (R) and High School Student Bottom Right



Camp Johnson



Rewards & Recognition



Congratulations Bernadette Vermette (L) - 17 Years! & Jerry Comstock (R) - 32 Years! - Central Garage. Also a special thank you to Wanda Knapp (center) for her beautiful granite etchings.

Retirements!!



Congratulations Larry Blacklock (L) - 21 Years! & Russell Bishop (R) - 29 Years! - District 5



Ken Hathaway - 11 Years!
L-R Tammy Ellis SE Region DTA, Ken Hathaway D2 Master Worker & Ben Moffitt D2 Londonderry TAMS



Michael Labounty (L), NE Region Bridge Maintenance Supervisor presents a merit award to Daniel Whitehead (R), BMW III

Awards!!

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 January is Jim Pritchard, the Storekeeper from District 3 in the Southwest Region.

Jim's nomination from his coworkers said in part: "Jim is always willing to help out in any aspect of the District and CG daily work flow. In addition to his willingness to help out with daily work flow, Jim has been known on numerous occasions to extend himself if someone experiences a hardship and needs a ride into work; he is always the first one to do what he can to get them a ride. He has even been known to offer his own personal vehicle to help out a co-worker. Jim goes above and beyond his daily job duties and offers to cook during district functions to help save state funds. With great pride he does everything he can to provide the best meal possible for his co-workers. He puts in extra effort in planning and preparing for these events. In addition to doing this for his own district and region, Jim has offered his talents in many other districts around the state. There are many people whom are grateful for the extra you put in Jim, we thank you and appreciate your efforts!" Jim's nomination was signed by more than 40 co-workers.

Please join me in congratulating Jim. His daily attitude, work ethic, and efforts to make our workplace better have clearly been noticed by those around him.

Scott

Maintenance and Operations Bureau,

I'm very pleased to announce that the Maintenance and Operations Bureau's Employee of the Month for February is Theresa Donovan, the Executive Office Manager from District 9 in the Northeast Region.

Terri's nomination from a coworker said in part: "A few key words come to mind when the name Terri Donovan is mentioned in our district: dedication, professionalism, organized, hardworking, and reliable. Terri is often referred to as the "Glue in the district". She is always willing to listen, and assist difficult situations throughout a work passion, strong communication tremendous culture of our her typical work takes the time to making and delicious baked earned her the office. It has been these qualities office walls to positively affect others, including our maintenance supervisors who frequently express great appreciation for the support that Terri provides. My sincerest gratitude goes out to Terri, "Mom", for all that she has done and continues to do."



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

Scott

Maintenance and Operations Bureau,

I'm very pleased to announce that the Maintenance and Operations Bureau's Employee of the Month for March is Joey Vantine, a Parts Specialist from Central Garage.

Joey's nomination from a coworker said in part: "I would like to nominate Joey Vantine for employee of the month. She is always hard working and eager to help anyone that has a problem. She has been very diligent and thorough in the tracking of all the International warranty work being done by AOT mechanics. She oversees the notes, pictures and all of the parts to make sure everything is accurate and properly documented so that the state will receive the highest amount from international for all the work being done. This one job being done as well as she is doing, means more state funds being refunded to fix trucks that are under warranty. This is only one parts of what she does. She also makes sure to place orders to the plow manufacturers for a large supply of winter plow parts to cover a large portion of the state. Without her efforts some of the trucks that break would be down for repairs much longer than they are. She is always hard working and eager to help anyone that has a problem."

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

Scott

Announcements

Good morning all,

It gives me great pleasure to announce that that Kevin Gadapee has been selected to be the new General Maintenance Manager in District 7 in the Northeast Region. Kevin actually worked in District 7 previously as a Senior Maintenance worker before going to work for the Town of Danville. Most recently, many of you have worked with Kevin as the Vermont Local Roads Program Manager, a role in which he excelled. Kevin brings a wealth of maintenance experience with him to District 7, and they are looking forward to having him join the team. Kevin will start his new duties on February 22nd. Please join me in congratulating Kevin on this fantastic opportunity!

I would also like to announce that effective immediately State Maintenance Engineer Todd Law will be reassigned to run the Vermont Local Roads program until the position can be recruited and filled. Todd and Kevin have already met and will be working together during this transition. Many thanks to Todd for agreeing to step into this important role.

And last but not least, MOB Deputy Director Wayne Gammell will be shifting to cover the Maintenance Section of the MOB during this transition while Todd is at VLR. Thanks Wayne!

Scott



We would like to thank Kevin for his dedication to the Vermont Local Roads Program! We will miss the day-to-day interaction with Kevin; he's been an indispensable part of our team. Through this last year Kevin made sure the program provided the training needed and wanted by the municipal employees. He left Vermont Local Roads on February 22nd and we know he will continue to do well and achieve major milestones! Congratulations on your promotion to VTrans District 7 General Manager!

The VLR Team!!

Hello All,

As some of you know, VTTC Employee Development Branch Manager Kim Persons has accepted a position with DHR's training center (CAPS) and will be starting there next week. Kim has been a valued member of the OPS / MOB team for many years, and we are very thankful for all she's done for us. We're also excited that she will continue to be a great partner in training and employee development. Please join me in wishing Kim all the best in her new role with DHR.

I would also like to announce that effective February 22nd, Colleen Montague will join the VTTC as our new Employee Development Branch Manager. Colleen has worked at VTrans for more than 15 years, and she brings with her a wealth of knowledge about Employee Development and Agency career pathways. In her current position as the Agency's EEO Program Manager (since 2009) Colleen has worked with VTrans leaders, managers, supervisors, and employees across all Agency divisions and DMV, to provide career counseling, guidance, and training designed to meet individual and Agency goals. Colleen currently teaches in the VTTC classrooms, has been instrumental in the development of curriculum, a strong partner in piloting the supervisory training at DHR, and a strategic partner in the discussions of internships. In Colleen's new position, she will assist supervisors and managers in completing their training mandates, focus on the development of new curriculum for supervisor and managers attending CAPS training, develop leadership training, refresh and implement a mentoring program as well as focus on the development and execution of succession planning.

Please join me in welcoming Colleen to her new role. Congratulations Colleen!

Scott

D4 would like to congratulate Nathan Castellini of the WR garage on his promotion to TJMW. We would also like to welcome Daryl Benson, TJMW, to our Tunbridge/Thetford garage and Nicole Pierpont, TAMW, to our WR garage.

Kim L. Lewis
Administrative Services Coordinator I
AOT, District 4
221 Beswick Drive
White River Jct, VT 05001

Morning Folks,

Please join me in congratulating Dana Caron on his promotion to the Area Supervisor in Barton. Dana comes to Barton from the Lyndonville garage where he was a TSMW. Dana brings a wealth of knowledge and experience with him and great leadership skills. Dana had volunteered to fill in as the supervisor and has been doing so since December. I look forward to working closely with Dana again. Welcome to District# 9 Dana.

William A Jewell
General Maintenance Manager
AOT District# 9 Derby Office

Personnel Updates

New Hires, Promotions & Transfers

D2 - **Paul Anderson**, TAMW, Chester, **Douglas Densmore**, TJMW, Rockingham, **Arron Gilbeau**, TJMW, Rockingham

D3 - **Laura McCullough**, Journeyman, Mendon

D4 - **Daryl Benson**, TJMW, Tunbridge/Thetford, **Nathan Castellini**, TJMW, White River, **Nicole Pierpont**, TAMW, White River

D5 - **Tyler Bacon**, Apprentice, Chimney Corners, **Richard Brousseau**, Journeymen, Chimney Corners, **Jason Burt**, Journeyman, Chimney Corners, **Dan Corey**, Journeyman, Middlesex, **Duane Chase**, Journeymen, Middlesex, **Steve Cummings**, Journeyman, Chimney Corners, **Jordan Fleming**, Apprentice, New Haven, **Joey King**, Journeymen, Colchester, **Tyler Rhoades**, Journeyman, Chimney Corners, **Mark Vincellette**, Journeyman, Colchester

D7 - **Tom Camarra**, TJMW, North Montpelier, **Lance Duquette**, TAMS, North Montpelier, **Eric Foster**, TJMW, North Montpelier, **Kevin Gadapee**, TGMM, St. Johnsbury, **Lucas LaPerle**, TJMW, North Montpelier, **Curtis Morse**, TAMW, Orange, **Alex Nicholson**, Tech II, St. Johnsbury, **Charles Seip**, TJMW, North Montpelier, **Greg Smith**, TMMW, Bradford

D8 - **Dan Demers**, Transportation Maintenance Equipment Specialist, Eden, **Mark Manchester**, Journeymen, St. Albans, **Edward Morely**, Journeymen, Cambridge, **Courtney Salvas**, Journeymen, Cambridge

D9 - **Dana Caron**, Area Supervisor, Barton, **James Dearmin Jr.**, Journeyman, Barton, **Thomas Hardy**, Journeyman, Barton, **Jason Sevigny**, Tech IV, Derby

Bridge - **Bonnie Davis**, BMW I, Bennington, **Bill Franks**, BMW I, Royalton, **Acacia Knight**, BMW I, St. Johnsbury, **Dan LaRoche**, BMW I, Middlesex, **Jay Miner**, BMW I, St. Albans

CG - **Ashley Brown** - Financial Specialist I, Berlin

TECH SVC - **Jeremy Salvatori**, AOT Tech VII

Traffic Shop - **Jeremy Hook**, AOT Traffic Shop Sign Crew Supervisor, Berlin

TSMO - **Spencer Palmer**, AOT Tech VI, Montpelier

VTTC - **Colleen Montague**, Branch Manager, Berlin

Retirements

D2 - **Kenneth Hathaway**, 11 Years

D5 - **Russell Bishop** - 29 Years, **Larry Blacklock** - 21 Years, **Tim Sweeney** - 29 Years

Central Garage - **Jerry Comstock** - 32 Years, **Bernadette Vermette** - 17 Years

Years of Service

D1 - **Scott Moore** - 10 Years

D2 - **Charles Stromberg** - 5 Years

D3 - **Eric House** - 10 Years, **James Pritchard** - 10 Years

D5 - **Norma Blades** - 10 Years, **Scott Jarvis** - 30 Years, **Timothy Rich** - 30 Years, **Daniel Shepard** - 10 Years, **Randy Snelling** - 20 Years

D7 & D9 - **Dale Perron** - 25 Years

D8 - **Scott Garrow** - 15 Years, **Robert Walker** - 15 Years

D9 - **Eric Camber** - 15 Years

Bridge - **Michael Labounty** - 5 Years

CG - **Raymond Martin** - 15 Years, **Kenneth Owen** - 15 Years

TSMO - **Josh Schultz** - 15 Years

VTTC - **MaryAnn Borland** - 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 October 1st

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

Special Interests

Labor Management Committee Meeting Minutes

AOT (Operations) Labor Management Minutes

Winter/Spring 2016

Officially Adopted By Labor & Management on:

March 30th, 2016

Present For Labor: Jason Heath (Chair Georgia Garage D8), Shawn Ainsworth (Vice Chair North Montpelier Garage D7), Peter Boyed (Marlboro Garage D 1), Brian Labounty (Dummerston Garage D2), Allen Brown (WRJ Garage D4), Brad Carriere (Morrisville Garage D8), Alain Pion (Barton Garage D9), Dave Van Deusen (AOT-VSEA Senior Union Rep).

Absent From Labor: Nick Davis (The Fort D5), Justin Irish (Central Garage), Diane Dargie (Lyndon Garage D7 [filling in for D3/Bridge Crew seat]).

Present From Management: Scott Rogers (Director of Operations), Wayne Gammell (Deputy Director of Operations), Ken Valentine (Central Garage Superintendent), Heidi Dimick (AOT-DHR Manager).

Absent From Management: Todd Law (State Maintenance Engineer)

1. Review of the Winter Snow Season/

Labor would like to ask Management how they feel Snow Season went across the State. Did we end up filling all the positions? How effective were the Sign-On Bonuses and Retention Bonuses? A Conversation is also welcome between Labor and Management about what went well or could be better concerning winter work.

Discussion: Management stated that weather-wise it was not a difficult winter. This means from a budget point of view we used less salt, less fuel, less OT, etc.. Intent is to invest relative savings back into much needed equipment purchases, and to reallocate monies back into important Highway Division projects. Management further stated that the roads are looking great, that Garage workers did a solid job, and that existing equipment, such as trucks, are in good shape (much the same as it was at the start of winter).

Labor agreed with Management's positive assessment and asked how the Sign-On and Retention Bonuses worked in relation to the labor needs we were all concerned about in

Special Interests

Labor Management Committee Meeting Minutes

the fall. Management reported that the Sign-On Bonuses (up to \$1000) seemed to work well. Most positions were filled. Approximately 25 fulltime classified (Union) workers were hired. Labor reported that they have noticed a huge increase in applications (in the Garages) since the Bonus was announced. In North Montpelier, for example, they saw upwards of 30 applications come in for an open position where in the recent past the same position would elicit 0-2 applications. Barton Garage saw a similar increase in applications for an open position. DHR also reported that in general they saw a significant increase in qualified applicants for open positions. All parties agreed that the Sign-On Bonus worked well to address staffing issues.

Both Labor and Management discussed the \$250 Retention Bonus (to be paid to workers in May), but agreed that measuring retention is difficult to do with accuracy. But all also agreed that recognizing the hard winter work done by existing employees was the right thing to do, and was good for morale.

Agreed Upon Action: Labor & Management agreed that the winter went well, and that the Sign-On & Retention Bonus worked to address autumn staffing short comings in the Garages. If and when AOT faces similar staffing challenges, this action can potentially be looked at again as a means to address such future problems.

2. MOB Manifesto/

Management would like to invite Labor to discuss this Manifesto.

Discussion: Management passed around the MOB Manifesto and asked for feedback from Labor. Management also stated that part of the goal with the Manifesto is to have the mission of the Garages “go back to basics” and to also put emphasis on the methods of how we get core duties done.

The following is the language of the Manifesto:

The MOB Manifesto

The MOB will focus on keeping Vermont’s highways open and safe by:

Responding to weather events

Repairing damage

Performing preventive maintenance

Maximizing system functionality and predictability

Special Interests

Labor Management Committee Meeting Minutes

Communicating with the traveling public
Monitoring performance and setting targets

The MOB will perform our duties by:

Respecting each other
Working hard – together
Collaborating with others
Learning every day
Focusing on safety
Building commitment
Never giving up
Learning from mistakes
Celebrating success
Leading by example

The MOB leadership will create a positive and supportive work environment by:

Effectively managing conflict
Ensuring that all employees are treated fairly
Taking responsibility for outcomes of actions
Fostering good communication
Empowering Staff

A general discussion ensued during which Labor & Management jointly expressed that it would be good to increase communication between Plow Drivers and Project Designers. This is wise insofar as Plow Drivers (and Foremen) have an intimate and nuanced understanding of their routes, where problem areas exist in winter (ie places that often freeze up, etc.) and will therefore be able to better inform Project Designers as they contemplate new or ongoing projects.

Agreed Upon Action: Labor is supportive of the MOB Manifesto (especially the return to a core focus & the notion of team work and cooperation as the means to get the job done). Labor and Management further agree that an effort will be made to increase communication between Plow Drivers/Foremen & Project Designers in order to maximize the end quality of highway maintenance and improvement projects.

3. Respect in the Workplace - Secretary's Commitment/

Management would like to invite Labor to discuss this recent communication from the Secretary.

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Discussion: Management passed around a recent memo crafted by Agency of Transportation Secretary Chris Cole in regards to creating “respectful workplaces.” The communication, among other things, stressed the need for all AOT employees to treat each other with respect, to provide each other with positive feedback, and seeking constructive resolutions to conflicts which arise. Labor stated that in many Garages the Foreman read the communication. Labor also stated that they agree with the base message, and will seek to be active partners in building positive workplaces. This is in everyone’s collective interest. Management stated that as part of seeking constructive resolutions to conflicts, they encourage Labor (and Management under their supervision) to seek to address issues at the lowest level. Labor expressed agreement with this goal but pointed out that in some Districts this is hard to do with local Management. Management indicated that if and when that becomes the case in a specific District, that they should be informed so that they can encourage the DTA (GM, etc.) to act accordingly. Labor agreed.

Agreed Upon Action: **Labor And Management 100% agree that establishing and maintaining a positive and respectful workplace is a core and ongoing goal of all in AOT. As one aspect of this, all agree that conflict resolution is best achieved at the lowest possible level.**

4. Smoking / E-cigs / Smokeless Tobacco/

Management would like to discuss this issue in light of the announcement of National Life landlords that these activities will no longer be allowed on the property.

Discussion: Labor stated that they are aware of the intention to make the National Life complex (Montpelier), in essence, nicotine free [this is a result of a policy change being sought after by the private landlord at NL]. VSEA has filed a Grievance on this possible policy change. The outcome is uncertain. Management stated that they are interested in having a more general discussion about the smoking/nicotine policy. Labor stated that they are comfortable, in general, having smoking policies made at the local level (be that Garage or District), as long as any changes are in-line with the Contract. Management stated that a recent look at existing law seems to allow flexibility in regards to “e-cigarettes” and therefore would like to ask Labor what their thoughts are on this issue. Labor welcomed the opportunity to talk with their co-workers on this issue and will report their findings back to Management.

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Agreed Upon Action: Labor will discuss e-cigarettes with Garages workers and will report their findings back to Management. Management, in turn, will take these findings into account when/if they consider a reasonable policy change.

5. Legislative Update/

Management would like to report how AOT is faring this year in the Statehouse.

Discussion: Management stated that Transportation funding is going well this year in the Statehouse. The Transportation Bill is well underway in the VT House, and will soon go to the VT Senate, then to a Conference Committee. It is anticipated that Districts may end up with \$200,000 for equipment in 2016 (which is good). But if so, it should be expected that significant money will not be available for equipment in 2017. Labor was pleased to hear this positive assessment, and offered to assist in any lobbying efforts in regards to funding as may become desirable.

Agreed Upon Action: Management will continue to shepherd the Transportation Bill through the Statehouse. Labor will keep an eye on this bill as well, and will be happy to lend support if such support becomes necessary.

6. AOT Workers and Insurance/DMV Liability/

Labor brought this issue up at our Fall LM Meeting, and Management stated they would look into this and get back to us. Do we have any new info?

Discussion: Management stated that from what they understand AOT/The State does not and cannot control how private insurance companies take information into account when setting insurance rates for individuals. In addition, AOT is required to report accidents. Labor expressed concern that if a worker is involved with a reported accident, especially when said accident is no fault of their own, it is possible that their personal insurance company can up their rates and that this (legal or not) is not fair. Further discussion ensued, during which labor expressed that antidotal reports that in some cases a letter from AOT Management stating that the accident was not the fault of the worker resulted in their rates not increasing. Management stated that they are happy to provide such letters where appropriate. It was also discussed that the only way to guarantee that workers are protected from unfair insurance increases may be through a change in existing law.

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Agreed upon Action: Management stated that if and when an AOT worker is involved in an accident that is no fault of their own, Management can provide said worker a letter, if requested, stating as much. The worker, in turn, can provide this letter to their insurance provider. Labor will also look into this issue to see if there is a legislative fix for this problem. If Labor finds that there is, they will report this information back to Management to explore if Labor & Management can jointly support a change in the law for 2017.

7. New Employees and Paperwork/

Labor is concerned that sometimes new employees have so much paperwork to do (much now online) that important documents are over looked (or can be overlooked) and new workers may fail to sign on to Life Insurance/etc. Is it possible that all essential paperwork can be given to the new worker all at once?

Discussion: Labor stated that so much is now done online when a person is hired, that there are concerns that some things may be accidentally forgotten. In addition, much of the online forms require an employee ID number and the like, and sometimes these ID numbers are not provided by DHR for some weeks after the worker starts in the position. So this lag time can contribute, perhaps, to certain forms being overlooked. Management/DHR asserted that the forms, be they online or otherwise and the assignment of an employee ID number should occur on the first day or two of employment. If this is not occurring avenues for improvement should be looked into.

Agreed Upon Action: Management will reach out to the Districts to see exactly how new hire paperwork is being done and will explore ways of streamlining the process as is possible and desirable. DHR will look into the assignment of employee ID numbers and how long this is typically taking.

8. AOT Training Center/

Labor would like to briefly provide management with the results of the recent online survey regarding training needs/interests from the rank and file.

Discussion: Labor (on behalf of Labor Liaison to the AOT Training Center –Nick Davis) provided Management with the results of an online survey they conducted with Garage workers about the AOT Training Center and AOT training needs. Of the +/- two dozen survey takers, the big majority asserted that the AOT Training Center is

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doing a good job. The topics that garnered the highest interests (for additional training opportunities) were: 1. Safety (64% had this in their top three), 2. Winter Maintenance (60% had this in their top three), and 3. First Aid/CPR (17% had this in their top three). Labor stated that they did not heavily push the survey, and did not provide paper copies. They conducted the survey as a conversation starter concerning training.

Agreed Upon Action: Labor and Management agree that more detailed surveys should be conducted in the future in order to best reflect the interests and needs of AOT workers concerning training needs.

9. Overcoming Any Vestiges of Discrimination In The Garages/

Labor will provide Management with a written proposal concerning possible mandatory trainings on this issue that would be provided by the Union. Labor intends to play a complimentary role in this effort. Whereas present trainings from AOT Civil Rights focusses on individual responsibility, VSEA would focus more on collective (Garage) responsibility.

Discussion: Labor provided Management with a more detailed outline of a training which they would like the Union to provide concerning discrimination. Brian Labounty (Dummerston Garage) started off this conversation pointing out that he is Irish, French Canadian, and Native American in heritage (all groups who have historically suffered from discrimination in Vermont and beyond). Labor stated that it has a clear and unmitigated interest in building unity in the Garages, within their membership, etc.. Labor also recognized that discrimination, racism, ethnic chauvinism, sexism, etc., has historically been used as a means to keep workers divided. In the 1920s (and before) much discrimination in Vermont was aimed against the French Canadians, Irish (Catholic in general), etc.. From a Labor point of view artificial divisions, manifest through discrimination, is bad for workers and needs to continue to be opposed by Unions/workers/etc.. Management agreed that discrimination is absolutely something that needs to be abolished in order to achieve and maintain healthy workplaces. Both Labor and Management expressed that they intend to be partners, to every extent possible, in the struggle to overcome any and all vestiges of discrimination in the Garages and beyond. Labor, therefore, expressed its desire to organize trainings on this subject which would be pier to pier in nature (with Stewards & Labor Team members rotating as facilitators), would be a safe place for non-management workers to have frank discussions, and to build more upon the notion

of collective (Garage) responsibility in addressing this issue. Labor expressed that these trainings would complement the anti-discrimination trainings already being provided by DHR/AOT Civil Rights (which tend to focus on individual responsibility). Labor requested that these Union lead trainings be made mandatory for all AOT workers in Operations and/or for Union/Classified new hires. Management expressed support for these common goals, and asked if Labor could provide a draft syllabus for these trainings, and if Labor could do a ‘dry run’ of the training for Management before they decide to agree with Labor’s proposal. Labor stated that they would certainly provide more details, and would discuss the ‘dry run’ with the VSEA Labor Education, but do not foresee any problems with that. Labor also expressed that they would imagine these all to be 3 hours long, and would prefer to do them in District. Labor finally expressed firm optimism that through this program we can help build more solidarity and unified cooperation within the Garages and within the Districts. *A OT Union Leaders unequivocally oppose discrimination based racism, sexism, ethnicity, age, disability, homophobia, and/or religion. Labor is absolutely dedicated to strengthening the culture within the Garages, and beyond, whereby working people hold a common solidarity and are not divided by artificial divisions.*

Agreed Upon Action: **Labor will provide Management with a draft syllabus, and will seek to arrange a dry run of the training for AOT Management between now and the summer of 2016. Management will consider all of this, and will make a determination as to whether or not they will support such mandatory Labor-run trainings later this year after reviewing this additional information.**

LMC: “Column”

As we came together to stand up for our rights in bargaining, we persevered and won to keep our overtime rights. Great job everyone. This goes to show when we rally together, we can accomplish great things. We will strive to make this the best place to work, as long as we all work together and treat everyone with respect.

We are currently looking to fill seats for Districts 3 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

Safety & Health

Winter is over and Safety was able to get a lot of planning, creating and scheduling of training classes completed. Hold onto your hat, here is what has been happening.

At a recent General Managers' Meeting, I learned that DMV has a trainer available for Reasonable Suspicion training for Supervisors of CDL holders. The feedback from D3's Bruce Nichols was intriguing. As the illegal drug market proliferates and develops new products, our supervisors need to learn how to spot the potential physical and behavioral effects of these drugs on drivers. We have an excellent history of following the regulations and protocols established in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations throughout VTrans. I want to continue that strength and reinforce it. DMV's Genevieve Paul will be conducting training throughout May 2016 at 5 locations around the state. Ms. Paul and her supervisors at DMV have been very accommodating to meet our training needs.

The Lockout / Tagout (aka Control of Hazardous Energy) training is just about to start this month, wrapping up in April. This training is sponsored by Vermont Local Roads and will be conducted around the state. In fact, we had to add a class in Milton because the first filled up so fast and many more needed it. That's what I love to hear! Lockout/Tagout injuries are generally horrific and far too common an occurrence around the country. If this training prevents even one near miss, let alone an incident at VTrans, we can all be happy.

The Flagger Training updates are still evolving. Once completed we will offer this to the trainers in the Districts to replace the old training module that has become too routine and frankly boring. As planned, we are opening up the Statewide Safety Task Force (STF) with the April meeting. Nate Robinson, the brand new Construction Safety Technician, Rail's Erin Charbonneau, and George Whitlock from Materials and Research Lab have been invited to this meeting. We've been fortunate to have the current team to question safer techniques and established task approaches. With a new team, we will all have the opportunity to learn more, communicate more effectively and establish better ties within the AOT family.

The retraining modules are on computers throughout the districts to provide opportunities to tune up old habits or learn to avoid repeating exposures to recognizable hazards. Now supervisors and district management teams can readily have employees take these short modules and hopefully reduce future preventable injuries or incidents.

Litter Picking Season is upon us too. The Bloodborne Pathogen training is going on throughout the districts at the capable hands of the local Safety Specialists. Also important this time of year is the Clandestine Lab Training offered generously to us by the Vermont State Police. I recently learned that Lt Fred Cornell retired. Luckily, Lt Reg Trayah (802-773-9101, Reg.Trayah@vermont.gov) is already set to take over this training and continue to meet our needs throughout the Districts. Learning to recognize and avoid this hazardous drug-making paraphernalia is critical to our employees' safety each litter picking season.

Roller training will be conducted again this year. It was well received last year, uncovering equipment issues and inspection gaps with this often shared equipment. I am currently starting to nag our contracted trainer to start scheduling these classes.

We had a snafu with the Hearing and Respirator contract. Luckily it seems to be back on track, but please keep your fingers crossed anyway. It goes haywire too readily from the Safety Team's perspective.

Safety & Health

We're hoping to get these scheduled for September/October 2016. This is later than usual, but we expect to will catch more people not on vacation than last year's schedule of July and August. I've assumed a few Technical side responsibilities with the recent staff changes here at VTTC.

The Lean Training is scheduled out through November (stay tuned for more on this soon). The Central Garage Training Focus Group is scheduling a variety of needed training for CG staff as well as the Equipment Specialists (AOT and Municipality folks), such as air brakes and A/C training. Also our own Robert Whitcomb (D8, I believe) and DMV's Pat McManamon are conducting CDL Class B Permit training, starting this month.

Despite staff changes at VTTC, we're working hard to keep the classes you need and/or want scheduled and continued without interruption. This is one heck of a team with Colleen Montague and Todd Law hitting the ground running and assimilating smoothly into our sometimes hectic training world. Considering the gracious cooperation of DMV folks (Reasonable Suspicion Training, CDL Class B Permit Training), VSP folks (Clandestine Lab Training), the dynamic STF group (including new members), Lean Training, CG Training Focus Group, and our own new VTTC folks (as well as the "old" staff), we can all be proud of what we are accomplishing on a daily basis for a safer, productive workplace.

So, did I forget anything?

Oh, the Mugged by the MOB program is still growing and recognizing those that make safety-oriented contributions. I'll include the current list of names next time. It's growing so steadily I may need a separate page just for that – now that's a predicament I can truly enjoy!

Take care, keep your eyes open, and keep moving forward.

Camille and the Safety Team

