



Getting to know you.....	3	Health & Wellness Corner.....	10
Common collision—uncommon response	6	Notes from the Transportation Nation.....	11
Motorist rescue anything but routine	8	County manager ... or cowboy?	12

'I can see clearly now...' the snow is gone

David Rose, Central Office/District 10



INNOVATE: A POWERFUL verb at the core of the world's most successful organizations. To innovate is to create a new way of doing something; to transform or invent. Simple or complex, innovation usually has a ripple effect across an organization's way of doing business.

Through a simple innovation, highway technicians at the Washington County Garage in District 10 changed

continued on page 5



A new time, a new hope, a new budget

Ron Poole, Central Office



IT IS NO SURPRISE TO ANYONE how a process for doing business can be affected by the winds of a changing economy. To continue delivering quality public services in times of economic stress, a modern organization must be lean, efficient, and willing to explore different ways to achieve the same high goals and standards.

ODOT answered this modern challenge with the successful passing of the department's \$5.6 billion, 2012-2013 biennium transportation budget by the Ohio House and Senate March 22.

While creating the proposal, the ODOT staff had to recognize how the hard economic times of the past several years have translated into a decrease in travel and the use of gasoline.

This, combined with advances in fuel efficient cars, has resulted in less revenue generated by the state gasoline tax. ODOT's latest budget reflects a commitment to get the best value for every dollar spent on transportation projects while helping Ohio's economic recovery.

"This administration's number one goal," testified Director Wray, at a Feb. 26 appearance before a state transportation house committee, "is to put Ohioans back to work and to keep and bring new business to our state. We plan to use this economic indicator to help determine our priorities for the next several years."

To help deliver projects faster and more efficiently, and to help build the infrastructure and generate jobs, the

continued on page 2

A new time . . . a new budget

latest budget includes the permanent use of Design-Build projects with a cap increase to \$1 billion per biennium. From start to finish, a single team of professionals will handle the design and the construction phases of a project under the supervision of the department. By overlapping the design and construction phases of a project under one team, projects can be delivered quickly, revisions can be addressed swiftly, and many miscommunication issues are eliminated. The process is expected to save more money and will help the department attract a wide range of qualified bidders for these special projects.

The department has successfully used the Design-Build selection process during the last budget cycle, and now would like to permanently make it an available tool for use on large-scale, complex projects such as the Cleveland Innerbelt Bridge. ODOT has already saved approximately \$100 million on the Innerbelt Bridge with this process.

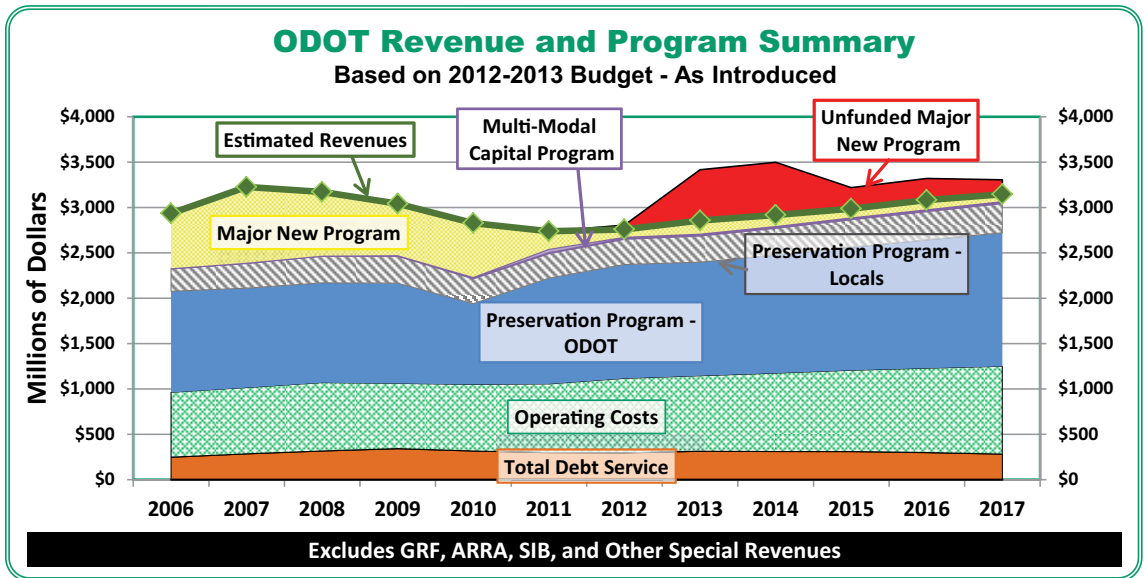
Language elsewhere in this budget will enable ODOT to enter into contractual agreements with private or public entities wishing to sponsor projects to help manage, grow, and sustain the transportation network. Projects undertaken under these agreements could be funded from a combination of public and private sources, saving the state in costs. Public Private Partnerships, have

been in existence in other states for several years and have helped reduce the public's overall cost of many transportation facilities and networks.

"We want to be clear," states Wray, "these projects must still adhere to and follow all existing local, state and federal regulations."

One of the most noteworthy parts of the budget is the purchasing of salt for ODOT's snow removal operations. It has come to light in recent months the department has paid significantly more for this necessary commodity than neighboring states. Along with recommendations made by the Inspector General to eliminate collusion and price fixing, the department will wait until late summer to fill up on salt supplies. By delaying purchasing normally done earlier in the year, the department will be able to get salt at a better, more competitive rate.

"It takes a great deal of work to maintain our system, and just like every other agency and local government, we are feeling the impact of a sluggish economy and the uncertainty of future federal funding," summed up Wray. "The Ohio Department of Transportation is committing to be as lean, efficient and effective as possible." ☺



Getting to know you . . .

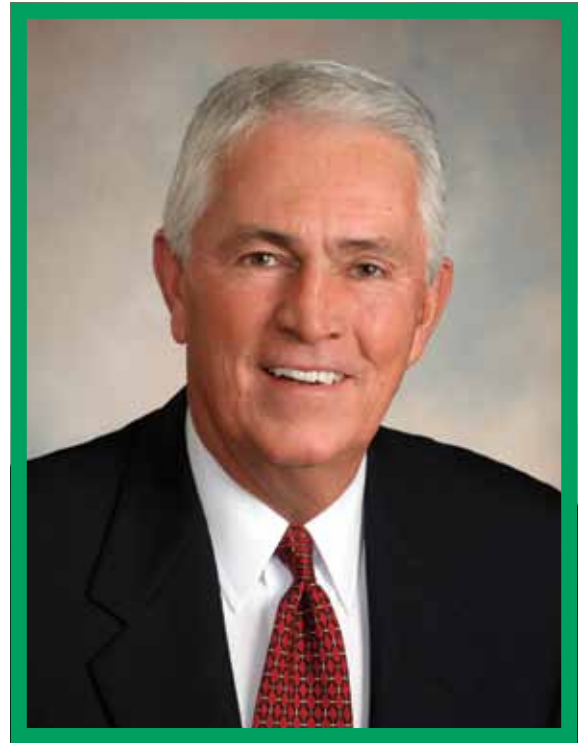
ODOT Director Jerry Wray



WITH HIS RECENT APPOINTMENT, JERRY WRAY became the first person in Ohio history to be named head of ODOT twice. Wray previously served at the post under Governor Voinovich from 1991 to 1998. He was elected Licking County Engineer three times during the 1980s, and prior to his present posting served as vice president of Flexible Pavements of Ohio.

Under Director Wray's leadership, ODOT increased its annual construction program to \$300 million from its output in the 1980s, while simultaneously reducing its operating costs by \$200 million. He was instrumental in helping the Department become more efficient and productive by encouraging employee input on how to best improve ODOT.

Wray began his career in 1969 with the Ohio Department of Highways—renamed the Ohio Department of Transportation in 1972—as an Engineer-in-Training after completing his civil engineering degree at the University of Akron. He resides in Newark, Ohio with wife Eva. They have four grandchildren.



James A. Barna

JAMES BARNA, P.E., IS THE assistant director of Transportation Policy, overseeing the divisions of planning, engineering, and construction. He directs all aspects, “cradle to grave,” of ODOT's \$1.3 to \$1.5 billion dollar capital program. He also serves as the Department's chief engineer.

Previously, Barna served as senior project manager with ODOT District 5, where he was responsible for delivering the \$158 million-dollar Lancaster Bypass Project. He was also production

administrator for the same district, directing all aspects of design and right of way acquisition.

Mr. Barna returns to ODOT after six years with E.L. Robinson, a firm for whom he served as the Columbus office manager. He was responsible for directing the marketing, budget and engineering facets of transportation for the organization.

He received his bachelor's degree in civil engineering in 1990 from The Ohio State University.

continued on page 4

Michael C. Flynn

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR FIELD OPERATIONS
Michael C. Flynn, P.E., P.S., has a track record of proven leadership within the Department.

Previously, Flynn was twice named a deputy director with ODOT: first at District 6 from 1991 to 1997 and then for District 8 from 1997 to 2007. In these positions he was responsible for maintaining approximately 9,000 lane miles of highway and 3,000 bridges. Flynn increased productivity and project delivery, and initiated the first Public-Private joint venture in the nation.

Prior to his ODOT service, Flynn served as the city of Delaware engineer, as deputy director with the Warren County Engineer's office, and was appointed vice president of transportation for Resource International (RI). He managed RI's engineering office in Orlando, Florida.

Before his return to ODOT, Flynn managed the

Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati office for HNTB, an architectural, engineering, planning and construction firm.

Flynn is a graduate of the University of Cincinnati with a bachelor of science degree in civil engineering. He is a licensed professional engineer and professional surveyor in the state of Ohio.



Mike Cope

MIKE COPE WAS APPOINTED ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF Business and Human Resources in January of 2011, but he is no stranger to the Department,



having started in the public information office with District 11 in the 1970s. He later became deputy director for District 5 and District 11 in the 1990s and was then appointed Deputy Director of

Finance and Forecasting in 2000.

Now in his third stint with ODOT, Cope's career has encompassed a broad range of experiences, including service in elected positions at the state, county, city and township levels of Ohio government. He has also owned and operated his own retail and consulting businesses in the private sector.

Cope attended Ohio University, where he received both a bachelors degree in business administration and a masters in political science and public administration.

"I am honored to be serving with Director Wray and with an extremely dedicated and qualified group of professionals at ODOT," he said. "I look forward to helping to improve the services and functions of the Department, as we move forward into these challenging and exciting times."

Cope and his wife, Darlene, reside in Hilliard. They have three grown children: Angela, Lisa, and Nathan.

continued from page 1

'I can see clearly now ...'

the experience of clearing snow off the highways.

"One of the hardest things about plowing is the blow-back of snow onto the windshield caused by gaps in the rubber shielding," explained Washington County Transportation Manager Jeff Perry. "During a night of plowing I would have to stop several times to clear the ice from my windshield."

Then, during a heavy snow event, highway technicians Van Anderson and Scott Perry made a change: They bolted an L-shaped piece of steel onto the top of the plow blade, securing the rubber shield more tightly against the plow.

"We tried a few other techniques to reduce blow-back,

but we knew we had something special with this new design," said Scott.

After a season of ice and snow, the rubber shield, often called a snow deflector, would contract and expand, creating a gap between the shield and the plow. The gaps allowed ice and snow easy access to the driver's windshield, limiting visibility and increasing ice formation. Anderson and Perry believed the new L-shaped shield would redirect snow behind the plow blade, instead of onto the windshield.

With the newly enhanced plow ready for operation, it was time to test it in the field.

"There was clearly a remark-

difference in visibility, like day and night," explained Scott. "Thanks to Van's innovation, our snowplow operators can work safely and more efficiently."

Suddenly, with just a simple innovation, everything changed.

The success of the two plows set off a chain reaction: The garage is gearing up to equip all plows in Washington County with the enhanced steel snow-deflector.

"The focus on innovation always starts with great leadership," said Jeff Perry. "County Manager Doug Clifton is the catalyst for innovation; he always encourages us to find new and better ways to improve our operations." ☺

continued from page 4

Getting to know you ...

Greg Murphy

GREG MURPHY IS DIRECTOR WRAY'S CHIEF OF STAFF. MURPHY started his ODOT career in the Traffic/Safety Office in Central Office, where he helped reshape the Highway Safety Program. He became the production administrator in District 5, where he delivered more than \$40 million in highway projects annually, and the \$100 million state Route 161 realignment project from New Albany to Granville.

Murphy has a bachelor's degree in physics from Wittenberg University, a bachelor's in civil engineering from The Ohio State University, and a masters in business administration from Capital University.

He has spent the last four years working in the private sector. ☺



District 8
Transportation
Manager **Ron
Hibbard** helped law
enforcement track a
hit-skip driver.



A common collision—an uncommon response

Sharon Smigielski, District 8



IT HAPPENED THIS past November at the intersection of state Route 4 and Symmes Road in Butler County: An SUV struck a school bus, and then fled the scene to avoid the consequences. The driver made an illegal choice—one which can be successful only if no one can identify the fleeing vehicle.

In this case, though, there was a witness: Ron Hibbard, a transportation manager with construction in District 8 and a 25-year veteran of ODOT, was working on the nearby S.R. 4 bypass construction project when the collision occurred. When the SUV driver decided to flee the scene, Hibbard decided to follow the driver wherever he tried to flee.

In his truck, Hibbard followed the SUV through the city of Fairfield on northbound S.R. 4,

keeping the fleeing driver in sight at a safe distance.

“I did not want to make them run any faster than they already were,” recalled Hibbard, “maybe risking another accident or having them get away.”

Hibbard eventually followed the vehicle to a church parking lot, where he contacted 911. When the driver of the SUV took off, Hibbard followed again, maintaining contact with an emergency dispatcher.

“I was behind them, talking to dispatch,” he said.

The chase ended when Hibbard indicated to the dispatcher the SUV was preparing to turn right onto a side street. The dispatcher told him an officer preparing to intercept the SUV was stationed at the intersection. Hibbard watched as the officer, armed

with a description of the vehicle, pulled the motorist over.

Hibbard later returned to the scene of the accident. He discovered the school bus had been en route to a field trip to Jungle Jim’s, a Fairfield supermarket emporium. The bus was carrying about 20 youngsters with various disabilities. Fortunately, neither the driver nor the passengers on the bus were injured in the incident.

Hibbard said he had to immediately call his wife to tell her of the incident. “You would be so proud of me,” he told her. Not only does she work with those with disabilities, but her brother is also disabled.

Hibbard’s supervisor, Construction Resident Engineer Mark Wilson, summed up Hibbard’s actions simply:

“He’s a superstar.” 🌟

In Memoriam

Julie Donovan (Oct. 29, 1966 – March 21, 2011)

JULIE ANN DONOVAN, P.E., was not only a design-build coordinator with the Office of Production in the Division of Production Management in Central Office; she was also an excellent example of a dedicated state employee. The 21-year veteran with ODOT passed away unexpectedly this past March. She was 44 years old.

At the time of her passing, Julie was working extensively on the Columbus I-70/71 design-build project, the \$240 million reconstruction of the I-670/71 interchange and mainline I-71. Julie had recently completed extensive work on the Cleveland Innerbelt Project, a \$287 million design-build construction contract building a new westbound bridge over the Cuyahoga River Valley on I-90 in Cleveland. Julie was known as a quiet, reserved, but confident engineer, and was described as an integral part of the design-build process for both the I-90 bridge project and I-670/71 project:

“Julie was always making certain the project was on track,” stated Jeanne Braxton, value-engineering coordinator with Production Management. “She was the catalyst making the process work, and she was extremely knowledgeable about every facet of engineering. Julie was the epitome of organization, and this was the secret to her success.”

Born in Toledo, Julie was a 1989 graduate of The Ohio State University, where she earned a bachelors’ degree in Civil Engineering. She joined ODOT Central Office the next year with the Engineer-in-Training program.

“One of the first major projects she designed was the S.H.R.P. pavement research project in Delaware County,” recalled Michael Cronebach, a transportation engineer who worked with

Donovan for more than two decades. “She was the lead designer on the project that placed multiple pavement designs for ODOT to study. We marveled at her efficiency in getting those plans done in such a short time frame. Afterward, she moved quickly into management, and was responsible for dozens of projects let by the department.”

Outside of her work, Julie was a member of The Ohio State University Alumni Association, a volunteer for Habitat for Humanity and a tutor for the ESQ program. She belonged to a soccer

“Julie was always eager to be challenged beyond expectations. Her accomplishments as a top highway designer and project manager were recognized by all who worked with her.”

—Bill Ujvari
Administrator
Office of Production

league in Dublin and was an avid runner. Julie also travelled extensively, visiting Australia, Europe and Central America.

She is survived by her parents, John and Sharon Donovan; brother, Steven, special nephew, Aidan in Carlsbad, California; and several aunts, uncles and many cousins. The Donovan family has lost a beloved member, but her absence is also felt by those who knew her as a capable and respected professional:

“Julie has left behind an imprint on this department, not of what ODOT can be, but what ODOT will be,” said Bill Ujvari, administrator of the Office of Production. “Julie would always be the first one I would call on if I needed to know something. Without Julie’s presence, ODOT’s lights just got a little dimmer.”

Motorist rescue anything but routine

Rhonda Pees, District 1



IN AN EMERGENCY situation, some people respond on impulse, doing whatever it takes to help someone in danger.

Such was the case for Highway Technician Chris Washam of the Allen County ODOT garage, and college interns Ashley Conkle and Abby Scalf.

In August, while performing routine maintenance along Interstate 75 southbound near Bluelick Road, the

three workers witnessed a crash: A full-size pickup left the roadway, struck the guardrail—taking out a section approximately 30-feet long—and hit a large interstate sign before disappearing into the ditch.

“I saw a blur and guardrail flying,” recalled Conkle.

Washam immediately called for help. “It was a steep ditch,” he said. “We were the only people who saw what happened.”

All three rushed to the

vehicle, which had come to rest on the driver’s side with the window down. The driver was unconscious, and jumper cables had become wrapped around her neck.

Scalf immediately turned off the truck’s engine for fear of fire, and began removing the jumper cables from the woman’s neck. It was then she saw a young boy strapped in a car seat in the back of the truck. She immediately unbuckled the boy and handed him to other motorists who had stopped to help, and then continued working to free the driver.

“I had to unbury her from all the stuff in the cab,” said Scalf.

The three remained at the scene until emergency responders arrived.

Both the woman and her son are now fine. They recently met the people who helped them through an event organized by the Ohio State Highway Patrol, Lima Post.

Washam was full of praise for his coworkers.

“These two are just college kids,” he said, “but they didn’t hesitate, question or anything. They jumped right in to help in spite of possible danger to themselves.” ☺



Photo by Rhonda Pees, District 1

Capt. D.L. Gillespie (left) of the Ohio State Highway Patrol district headquarters in Findlay; Shirley Jolliff and her son, Joseph Molina; college interns Abigail Scalf and Ashley Conkle; Allen County Highway Technician Chris Washam; Sgt. Rick Sanchez of the Ohio State Highway Patrol, Lima Post.

Workplace community helps one of its own

Sherry Haney, Sharon Smigielski, and Liz Lyons, District 8



AS GEORGE STRAIT SINGS, “Life is not the breaths you take, but the moments that take your breath away.”

Dale Wright, a mechanic in ODOT Hamilton County for 12 years, has known such moments: serving on the Harlan Township Fire Department for 18 years; marriage to his wife Carol for 38 years; the births of two children, Jason, 33 and Danielle, 37; and at 57 years old, becoming a grandparent for a third time.

But then there are moments in life a song can’t describe, like feeling the love and devotion of family, friends and co-workers in the face of devastating news. In May 2010, Wright was diagnosed with prostate cancer.

Since learning of his diagnosis, Wright has had to meet the daily challenges associated with combatting this disease. In addition to the injections he receives every four months, Wright struggles with anxiety, weakness and extreme fatigue as a result of the cancer and the eight daily medications necessary to keep the symptoms tolerable—medications that themselves have side effects that sometimes seem unbearable. Yet he tries to stay focused on the positive.

“The upside,” Wright said, “is that this has brought our family closer together. Carol is my rock and helps get me through each and every day.”

But Wright has learned he has the support of others in his life: In November, Hamilton County Garage Account Clerk Sherry Haney sent an email regarding Dale Wright to the District 8 employees. She announced she would be taking up a collection for him and his family during their difficult time. The response was

overwhelming: Blank *Get Well* greeting cards were sent to each county and the district office and each one was returned with donations, thoughts, prayers and lots of get well wishes, just in time for the holidays.

So many individuals came through for Wright and his family. District 8 employees, the deputy director, the union, retirees and other individuals heard about his situation and just wanted to help.

Acting Hamilton County Manager Justin Kemp has been friends with Wright long before their ODOT years:

“He’s a great neighbor and has been a great friend to me and my family,” said Kemp. “As his supervisor, I can say Dale has been an exceptional employee.”

The Wrights received bags of toys from a ‘secret Santa’ for granddaughter, Olivia. Turkeys were delivered to their home by a fellow co-worker who is also a cancer survivor. In all, over \$3,000 was raised. Wright and his wife both agree the stress has been overwhelming, and for a short time it allowed them to focus on quality time with their family; to forget about the worries of medical bills and an uncertain future. They would like to thank every ODOT employee who has helped during a difficult time.

“It saved us,” said Wright. ☺



Photo by Sharon Smigielski, District 8

Together, Carol and Dale Wright are meeting the challenges of Dale’s cancer.

Highway's guardian angel

Joyce Miller, District 3



DEAN MISHEY IS AN ODOT HIGHWAY technician in Ashland County. But to a 4-year-old boy who lost his way, he is also a guardian angel.

Last September, Mishey set out to pick up litter on state Route 96 in Ashland County. On the way, he came upon a small boy who was walking along the roadway, crying. Mishey quickly pulled over, and as soon

Ashland County
Highway
Technician

Dean Mishey
helped a lost
child get
home safely.



as he opened the door to his truck, the little boy jumped inside.

"He was only 4 years old," recalled Mishey. "He was barefoot, cold, and very hungry."

Mishey alerted Ashland County Timekeeper Pam Bright who called the local sheriff's office to report the situation. While waiting for help, Mishey shared part of his lunch with the little boy.

When the sheriff's deputy got to the scene, the little boy jumped in his car, excited about the fun ride he would have back to his home.

No other information was ever found on the case. The ODOT veteran was instrumental in protecting the young boy from possible harm, but he sees the reasons for his actions as being quite simple.

"Sometimes, I am just nosy but I knew something didn't seem right the way the boy was walking so closely to the road, so I wanted to check on him," Mishey explained. "He was a real neat little kid too, especially the way he just hopped right into my truck."

Ashland Timekeeper Bright, however, sees something larger at work in the day's events.

"I believe everything happens for a reason, and I think God put these two together," said Bright. "Dean wasn't even supposed to be on that route, but something came up that day, and he was reassigned to look at it. I was glad Dean cared enough to stop and check on the little boy. It was nice to know that we have employees here who care about the well-being of others." ☺

Health & Wellness Corner

Make Workplace Eye Safety Your Priority

Ron Poole, Central Office



Nationally, more than 2,000 people injure their eyes at work each day; of these injuries, between 10 and 20 percent cause temporary or permanent vision loss.

At ODOT, common causes for eye injuries can range from dust and dirt to harmful lights and hot or caustic liquids. But the right protection can lessen the severity of, or even prevent, most workplace eye injuries if used:

- During any over-head operations
- When welding or working with laser equipment: either employ the required eye protection, or don't look in the direction of the light source if you are working nearby
- During particularly eye-hazardous operations, like while operating a chain saw or working with powered cutting/landscape tools. Mesh visors attached to safety glasses, and eye protection with side shields may be needed.
- When transferring liquids between containers or when using caustic or acid cleaners: A full face shield may be required.

Eye protection that can be worn over prescription glasses is available in various sizes from safety product suppliers. ☺

Information supplied courtesy of the Prevent Blindness America Website and the ODOT office of Health, Safety and Claims.

NOTES from the *Transportation Nation*

Conaway Conferences concluded

ODOT and the Ohio Contractor's Association hosted the annual Conaway Conference, an informal gathering for those involved in the construction industry, this past March and April.

Following this year's theme, "In the Spirit of Cooperation," the conference meetings were a chance for professionals to analyze the previous construction season and prepare for the challenges of the upcoming year. Guests learned about industry innovations and best practices from planned presentations, many performed by ODOT staff members.

The conference was named in honor of the late Don R. Conaway, who served as an ODOT deputy director of construction. ODOT Director Jerry Wray recognized the presence of Conaway's spirit with his opening remarks for the first conference session held March 17 at Hueston Woods:

"Although it has been a little more than 10 years since Don's passing," said Wray, "he still remains a part of ODOT and a part of all of us."

HCAT Conference coming in May

In May, ODOT is joining federal, state and local partners in sponsoring Ohio's second Healthy Communities Active Transportation (HCAT) Conference on how to build healthy communities and encourage biking, walking and transit activities. The two-day event will feature local and national experts and speakers discussing how changes in the modern environment can have a positive effect on community health, including fiscal sustainability.

"The ultimate goal of the conference is to change behaviors, and move public and private projects toward sustainable investments that make Ohio more competitive in the 21st Century," said Heather Bowden, ODOT's Bike and Pedestrian Planner.



In addition to Hueston Woods, the Conaway Conference included three other regional meetings: Maumee Bay, March 25; Salt Fork, March 29; and Mohican, April 13. All together, the meetings attracted 450 attendees. 📍

This year's program will cover many areas, including the Safe Routes to School and Safety Program efforts which encourage safe walking and biking travel. The HCAT gathering will include instruction on how to organize walking school buses: groups of children traveling to school under their own power with adult supervision. The second day of the conference will include several opportunities on bike safety bicycle outings and walking audits throughout downtown Cleveland and the Near West side. 📍

To register for the HCAT conference, visit:
www.transportation.ohio.gov/HCAT

County manager ... or cowboy?

Amanda Lee, *District 12*



WHEN GEauga County Manager Jim Mlinar

set out to attend a training program in Columbus, he had no idea his quick-thinking would help protect lives along the way.

Mlinar was southbound on Interstate 71 in the right lane near the Richland and Morrow county line when he noticed a cow galloping along the shoulder.

"I had visions of massive pileups on a busy interstate with all those tractor trailers barreling down the road," he said.

Mlinar turned on his warning lights and pulled onto the shoulder, attempting to block the cow from entering the road. He was relieved at this point, since there was now guardrail and right of way fence trapping the cow.

"The only way out was to go back the way she came in," said Mlinar.

Meanwhile, the cow watched her ODOT guardian for a while before wandering into the underbrush bordering her field. The cow continued to move through the underbrush, with Mlinar following up the shoulder. Mlinar lost sight of her for some time, but when the



Photo by Jim Mlinar, District 12

cow stuck its head out of the underbrush, the ODOT employee raced to her location.

At one point the cow began to get angry and walked right up to Mlinar's truck window to get a look.

"I yelled at her to get back, so she started running towards the back of my truck," said Mlinar.

Mlinar was able to keep the cow from running onto the interstate again by blocking her with the truck. Eventually, the Highway Patrol located Mlinar and his new friend.

Mlinar didn't stick around to see them capture the cow, but he does know she made it back home safely. ☺

The elusive bovine he kept off the interstate. District 12's Geauga County Manager Jim Mlinar snapped this picture using his cell phone.



OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
1980 W. BROAD ST. • COLUMBUS, OHIO 43223
Phone: 614-466-7170 • Fax: 614-644-8662

www.transportation.ohio.gov
www.BuckeyeTraffic.org

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS
Melissa Ayers, *Deputy Director*
Ron Poole, *Managing Editor*
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Joel Hunt
David Rose
Michael Stout, *Design/Layout*



OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
John Kasich, *Governor* Jerry Wray, *Director*
ODOT IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER and PROVIDER OF SERVICES