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The Magazine of the Maine Better Transportation Association

MAINE TRAILS



STRAIGHT SHOOTER: Remembering Jim Sargent

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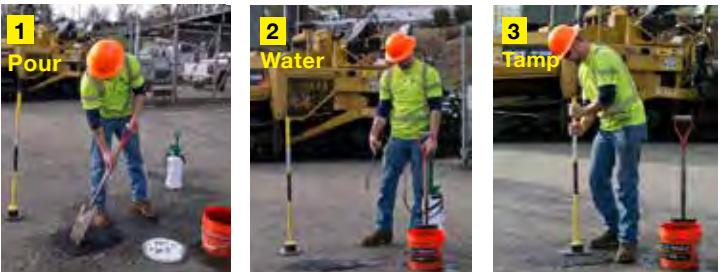
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MAINE TRAILS

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On the cover: Clockwise from top left: Jim Sargent served in the U.S. Army; Jim with his daughters and daughter-in-law; Jim with his dad and Ralph Leonard on a job site; Jim with his sons. *Sargent family photos*



Maine Better Transportation Association

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Irvin Smith, MBTA President



Rocking the vote

THE FALL election is coming up, and even though there's not a transportation bond on my absentee ballot, transportation will not be far from my thoughts, thanks to MBTA members Patrick Brady and Orion Breen.

You may know Patrick, as I do, from those great Transportation on Tap gatherings MBTA launched last year, until this spring when the coronavirus made casual meet-you-at-the-pub gatherings like that unwise. Patrick is chair of MBTA's Young Professionals group, and has been great about encouraging more of our young members to get involved with MBTA and take advantage of the networking opportunities MBTA offers.

Orion is one of our newest MBTA members. He works with Global Partners in South Portland and he has agreed to be the new chair of the MBTA Communications Committee.

Orion and Patrick have teamed up to interview as many Maine candidates as they can before the November election about transportation and other relevant issues. The resulting video series is called *Maine better: Discussions of community & connection*. Patrick and Orion ask challenging questions of the candidates and, at the same time, everyone seems to have a good time in the process. The interviews have turned out to be enormously fun to watch, while at the same time, revealing how serious an issue transportation is for many of the candidates. And I applaud them for their public service. (The videos are available online at <https://wp.me/panKWH-AH>.)

Currently, it also appears to be serving as an election platform. Representatives Chloe Maxmin and Trey Stewart, who are both young and sit on opposite sides of the aisle, are running for the Maine Senate. Here's a good opportunity to hear candidates on the issues, like transportation access in rural areas, road sustainability and the gas tax. Particularly of interest to our organization and also, thanks to Patrick and Orion's laid back manner, we get to know these people who want us to elect them

'The new MBTA video series, *Maine better*, is a good opportunity to hear candidates on the issues, like transportation access in rural areas, road sustainability and the gas tax.'

to public office. We get to learn a fair amount about who they are in real life, as they answer Patrick and Orion's questions like "What was your first car (or tractor)?"

Really, watching these videos has reminded

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Justin Clutter comes to The Rowley Agency after graduating from Assumption College and working in Finance & Auditing since graduating.



Matt Labbe is a graduate of UNH and has worked in Underwriting for UNUM, Liberty and Lincoln Financial.



Tim Truncellito is a graduate of St. Paul's School and Wesleyan University and has been a part of Truncellito & Davis for 10 years.

New Commercial Insurance Department team members:



Jonathan Watkins is a graduate of Kent State University and has been with Grange Mutual and more recently Cincinnati Insurance, performing several roles including Underwriting and Field Marketing.



Tyler Halstead is a graduate of Keene State College and was with AmTrust North America, with roles and experience in Loss Control and Underwriting.

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me just how important it is to reach out to my local candidates and let them know the issues that affect me and my family every day. Transportation, which is my livelihood and my business, is definitely one of those issues.

Transportation is also an issue that impacts so many areas of our lives. Investing in roads makes them safer and that makes life safer for my wife, my kids and my grandkids. Investing in our public transportation network makes getting around safer for all of us Mainers. It also makes my life feel especially worthwhile.

Better roads mean fewer repairs to the family vehicles, as well. TRIP, The Road Information Program, estimates that Mainers pay \$1,000 a year in extra maintenance costs due to rough roads.

Better roads make our cars more fuel efficient – did you know that every time you have to slow down to avoid a pothole, it chews up more gas? And they save my employer H.O. Bouchard, which operates a fleet of 102 trucks throughout New England, significantly.

Good transportation infrastructure is good for my family and good for my employer, and it improves the

quality of life in the communities where I work and live by keeping us all connected.

So true to the video series title, good transportation really does make *Maine better*. I encourage you to watch the *Maine better* video

interviews and take it upon yourself to talk to the candidates who want your vote. Let them know about how important transportation is to you, your families and your businesses.

Tell them that we need to take steps now to fully fund maintenance and upkeep on our transportation infrastructure to keep Maine open and connected.

And I urge all of you to vote this November 3. Thanks!

Finally, I want to say how sorry we are that the MBTA Fall Convention was cancelled. I want to thank everyone for being understanding.

As you know, this virus has really made life challenging for all of us, and the concern of the MBTA Board of Directors and the management of the Samoset Resort was to keep people safe and healthy. We are, however still planning on getting together online for a Virtual Auction & Scholarship Meeting on November 19 at 3 p.m. Please join us!

I want to thank members for their generous donations and for their generous bids as well. I feel so lucky to work with people who really believe in the MBTA mission to make Maine better for everyone by advocating for better transportation! ■

2020 MBTA CALENDAR

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 3 P.M.
Virtual Auction & Scholarship Meeting**

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1-3
Maine Transportation Conference**

A NOTE TO OUR MEMBERS:

Due to the coronavirus outbreak and meeting restrictions that are likely to continue for businesses and organizations in the state of Maine, the MBTA board of directors has changed our meeting schedule. We are so grateful that our members are so very supportive, and we hope to "see" you at our combined VIRTUAL AUCTION & SCHOLARSHIP MEETING on November 19 at 3 p.m.



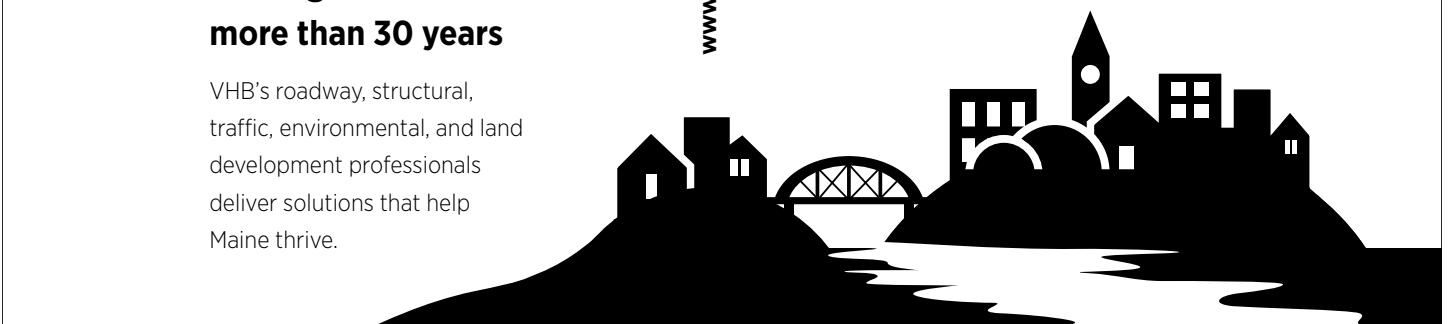
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JOHN DEERE

ONRAMP

Easy peasy, 1-2-3

THE OREGON DOT has launched a new state-wide asset survey initiative. The state is enlisting the help of everyday drivers to all of its federal aid roads, including local and county roads.

ODOT this summer released a video that explains how to determine if a road is a federal aid road, and a short primer on what makes a road good, fair or poor. In the video ODOT Communications Manager Tom Fuller offers simple descriptions accompanied by footage of Oregon roads in good, fair or poor condition. Here's what he says about "good roads": "The easiest road to grade is the good road. The good road doesn't have a lot of cracks, has some minor patching, doesn't have deep ruts, none of the road underneath has moved, and when you ride on it, the ride is good and smooth. See a road like that? It's good."

ODOT also has published a handbook to aid drivers in rating their roads. The initiative is a result of legislation known as Keep Oregon Moving (HB 2017) that was passed by the Oregon legislature in 2017. It required the Oregon Transportation Commission to work with cities and counties to develop uniform standards to describe and report the condition of pavement and bridges owned by ODOT, counties and cities. Each city and county must report to ODOT on the condition of their roads and bridges by February 1 of each odd-numbered year. ■

FMI: To learn about the ODOT asset survey, go to www.oregon.gov/odot/TAP/Pages/KOM-Local-Govt.aspx.



An autonomous delivery vehicle transports its cargo on the Milton Keynes Redway in Buckinghamshire, England.

The COVID effect

UP TO now, the car-buying public hasn't been crazy about vehicles that drive themselves. COVID-19 might be changing the way we think. That would make the automotive industry happy.

Kristin Kolodge, executive director of driver interaction and human machine interface research for J.D. Power, believes it's possible. She thinks, based on the changes we are compelled to make in light of the pandemic, autonomous vehicles could provide value in ways that weren't as obvious before.

The idea of contactless delivery – via automated vehicles – is creating an enhanced business case for certain categories of automated transportation. This is a major shot in the arm for companies like Nuro, which received federal safety approval this February for a self-driving vehicle, purpose-built for delivering groceries.

"It's really the delivery of goods and services that seems to have a great level of potential that consumers didn't foresee previously," she said.

The goal of keeping exchanges of goods "contactless" speaks to the value of autonomous delivery vehicles.

"I think all of us are getting packages now and wondering every time we pick up the package from the doorstep whether we are bringing disease into our homes?" she said. "And [automated non-human delivery] gives us a little bit more peace of mind about that if it's not coming with a human hand on it."

From a personal transportation perspective, Kolodge sees traditional automakers potentially hitting the pause button on some of their autonomous vehicle R&D, but she believes the technologies will nevertheless move forward, and the pandemic will foster that development. ■

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Appreciation

Straight shooter

If Jim Sargent said something, you could ‘take it to the bank’

By Glenn Adams

JIM SARGENT loved to sail, and he wanted to pass that joy along to his children. So, after showing his daughter Katrina the basics in his 16-foot Hobie Cat on Cold Stream Pond, he jumped overboard, leaving Katrina on her own. They both made out just fine.

“He knew I had it in me,” said Katrina Sargent Barnes.

The experience symbolized Sargent’s “tough love approach,” said his daughter. It also says a lot about Jim Sargent, who worked his way up to become president of an iconic Maine construction company that bears his family’s name.

A master of detail who knew every aspect of the construction trade, and well-respected by his employees as well as competitors, Sargent died July 12 at his family camp on Cold Stream Pond in Penobscot County.

His employees knew he was tough, but he was also a straight shooter who knew how to listen.

“He treated his employees very well,” said Bruce Hubbard, who started at H.E. Sargent Inc. in 1968 and worked in a variety of positions until he moved on in 1986. Sargent listened if an employee had a suggestion. “If you thought it out and backed it up with factual data, Jim respected that very much,” said Hubbard, now retired and living in Litchfield.

“If you made a mistake and owned up to it, Jim never came down on you. If you learned from it, he wouldn’t be hard on you,” said Hubbard,

adding that Sargent took an active interest in workers developing their skills.

“I will never forget how much Jim worked with me and made me a better loader operator,” said Hubbard.

Considering his family name, it’s little surprise James Gilman Sargent would find a career in Maine’s construction industry. He was born on December 28, 1936, in Bangor, the son of Herbert and Amber (Warren) Sargent. Jim’s father had started a business in 1926 cutting wood and plowing snow. The fleet, which started out with a used Reo dump truck, expanded in the 1930s, with a power shovel



Jim Sargent (middle) on a job site. Sargent, who took over the family business with Ralph Leonard in the 1970s, grew the business through the boom years of the interstate highway system expansion. He was known for being a tough competitor, a “master of detail” and a fair employer.

and bulldozer adding muscle to the mix.

As H.E. Sargent Inc. grew, so did young Jim Sargent. Growing up in Stillwater, Jim attended local schools and graduated from Old Town High School in 1955 as class president.

Then came military service. Jim’s service in the U.S. Army saw duty in New Jersey, Georgia and Germany. During that time, he competed as a sharpshooter on the national level.

Jim joined H.E. Sargent Inc. following his military service. His career saw major changes in the types of work and equipment used. The tradition of efficiency and high-quality work continued as Jim became entrenched in the company, and led to his stepping into the role as company president when his dad retired in 1975.



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"The Sargent family was very production-oriented – they knew the time frames. That was one of the big reasons for their success," said Hubbard.

Using stopwatches to time loading of dump trucks, Jim and his dad knew how much time to expect the task to take, and how lost minutes would add up over months.

Hubbard recalled a job in the St. Johnsbury, Vermont, area building a section of interstate highway. The work involved moving 1 million yards of rock and millions of yards of dirt, and Jim knew ahead of time how long it would take to do the job, said Hubbard.

Along with a handful of other companies, H.E. Sargent Inc. was heavily involved in construction of the interstate highway in Maine. Jim Sargent's obituary pointed to his extensive knowledge of not only his company's work, but that of other contractors. "Driving along I-95 he could recite the start and finish of every project, which contractor built it, and the particular advantage the contractor gained to win the project."

But Jim Sargent's action to pivot to other lines of construction and become more diverse after the big highway was done is one reason the company – now under the name Sargent Corporation – continues to be successful, said Jim's son, Herbert R., president of Sargent Corporation. Its work today includes landfills, environmental work, wind turbine site preparation, materials and more.

"I think Jim's positive impact on the company became very much obscured when he sold the company," said Herb Sargent.

In 1988 the company was sold to Razel, a larger firm from Paris, France. By then, Jim's son Herbert R. had been working for the company since 1983. In 1991, he left H.E. Sargent and started his own site-preparation company in Bangor, Sargent & Sargent, which in 2005 acquired the assets of H.E. Sargent Inc. The combined entities are now known as Sargent Corporation.

Through the years, Jim Sargent touched the lives of many people, and the condolences – "more than I can answer" – poured in after his passing, said son Herb. But the most common



Jim was born in Bangor and grew up in Stillwater. He graduated in 1955 from Old Town High School and was class president that year. He served in the U.S. Army and was a competitive sharpshooter (middle). After his service, Jim joined the family firm. (Below) Jim on a job site with his dad, Herbert E. Sargent, and Ralph Leonard. Jim and Ralph took over H.E. Sargent Inc. in the 1970s.



theme was "whatever he told you, you could take to the bank."

"He was definitely a straight shooter, very quiet, didn't have a whole lot to say, but when he did, you'd better be listening," said Dick Martin, former vice president of operations for the company. "Very good to work with, I can't say enough about that."

"If you made a mistake, like his father, (he was) very gracious about it, from that point on you didn't hear much more about it; it was behind you and you could move on," Martin said on a company podcast.

While direct with his employees, Jim was shy when it came to accepting praise, said Al Bancroft, the founder of Bancroft Contracting in South Paris. Bancroft recalled having lunch with Jim years ago in hopes of persuading him to be a candidate for an award from Associated General Contractors.

Sargent declined. He declined more than once when MBTA members tried to honor him with the organization's lifetime achievement award.

"He was kind of a bashful sort, didn't like to get up in front of crowds," recalled Bancroft, who sold his company to his son Mark in 2004; one time Sargent said he would

like the recognition to go to a younger member of the industry.

Sargent served as president of Associated General Contractors of Maine and as the National Highway Division Chair for AGC of America.

Jim retired from H.E. Sargent in 1989 and moved to Jupiter, Florida. But construction was still very much in his blood and his Maine roots were well-established.

Herb recalled his father sitting in a roadside cafe and, while enjoying a beer, watching with interest as a construction project on Route A1A in Florida unfolded. He remained drawn to his old love of sailing, and later motor boating in coastal waters.

In warmer months, Jim would return to Maine. There, he would visit gravel pits and construction sites and watch as younger workers rose through the ranks, said Herb. In Carmel, Jim bought a piece of land where he ran a dozer and excavator, building trails and just having

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fun.

"That became his hobby," said Herb. "It kind of tied him down to what he knew, (and) gave him a sense of satisfaction. He did what he loved."

But there was still more digging to be done, but now without the aid of a shovel or excavator. Jim's deep interest in genealogical research exposed the family's connection to sailing and the sea, and Jim set out to learn more about it. His search for information about the family tree took him to Milo and Searsport and beyond.

"He was quite a scholar and read every book he could about our family. We come from a sea captain's family – he transcribed the journal of a sea captain who sailed on the Henry B. Hyde," said daughter Katrina. "I think that's why my dad loved boating so much."

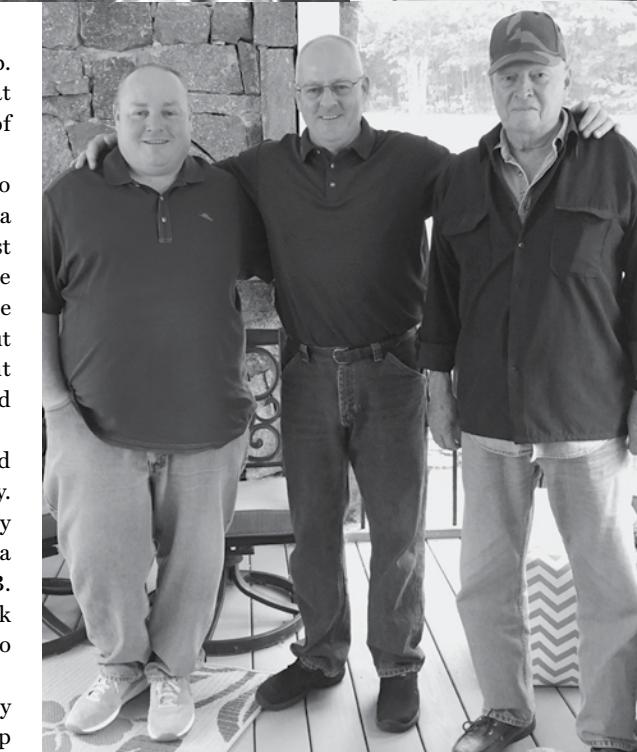
Launched in Bath in 1884, the Henry B. Hyde at the time was the largest ship to have been built in Maine. The 268-foot, three-masted Down Easter was engaged mostly in the West Coast trade, and was considered the finest American full-rigged ship of the post-clipper era. The Hyde sailed until 1904, when it was stranded in Virginia Beach and later abandoned, according to the Mariners Museum and Park in Newport News, Virginia.

The sea captain's life was part of Jim's research, which also turned up letters from the late 1800s and 1900s that helped fill gaps in the family's history, said Katrina. Brother Herb said their dad's interest in genealogy took root while he was in high school, and Jim traced the family ancestry back to the Mayflower.

"He really began to drill down into ancestry. He remembered dates. He could tell you about great aunts and great uncles . . . He really liked the tradition of all that."

Letters, research and boating aside, an honest day's work was really what Jim Sargent was about, said Katrina, who started working for her dad when she was 15. That meant she left at 5 or 5:30 in the morning to start an 8 a.m. shift and often stayed until 6 or 6:30 p.m.

He had "an extremely strong work ethic," she said. "Dad instilled in



Jim and H.E. Sargent (top left). Jim with his sister Calista Hannigan at the family's beloved camp on Cold Stream Pond (top right). Jim with sons Shane and Herb, two of several of Jim's kids and grandkids who have continued in the family tradition of construction (bottom).

me 'you go to work early, stay late and have lunch when you can.' He would say, 'You don't ask for less work, you ask for more.'

Herb, when reminded of the sailing story his sister told, said, "That was his way. It was a little bit of sink or swim."

"The only way he could communicate and deal with people was to push them away for a little bit and give them some rope to experience things." In the end, his approach paid off.

Among the messages of condolences that came in after his death were some highlighting Jim's leadership in the company. "He will be forever remembered for his contributions to the legacy that is Sargent Corporation,"

wrote Justin Embrey of Mechanicsville, Virginia. Michael R. Crowley of Millinocket wrote, "He carried the family tradition successfully and with enormous pride. Thank you for generously thinking about others..."

Donna Adams remembered joyful days on Cold Stream Pond, where there were rides on the party boat. "He loved to give, whether it was good wine, fascinating stories about his youth, or ancestors. An interesting and brilliant man!"

Jim is survived by his six children: Karen Littlefield and her husband, Bob; Susan Gallant and her husband, Greg; Dixie Redmond and her husband, Rick; Herb Sargent and his wife Tristine; Katrina Barnes and her husband, Doug; Shane Sargent and his wife, Lee; sisters Virginia Gowen, Calista Hannigan, and Marvia Meagher, 11 grandchildren and many great grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be sent to the Old Town Public Library, 46 Middle Street, Old Town, Maine 04468. ■

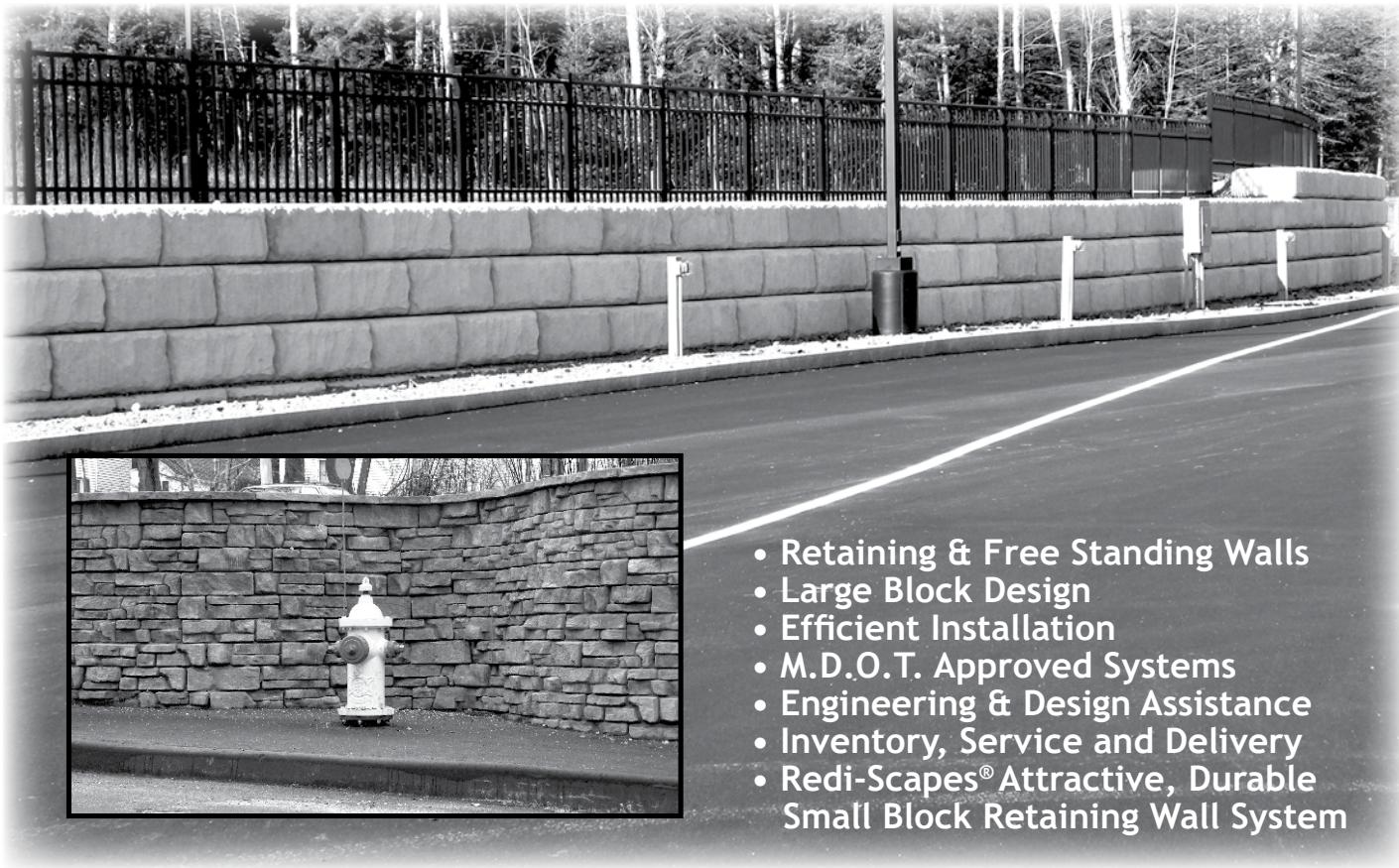
ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Glenn Adams is a freelance writer based in Augusta. He is the former Maine State House correspondent for the Associated Press.

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On the campaign trail

MBTA members launch virtual interview series with Maine candidates

By Ian Ward

SINCE MARCH, the coronavirus pandemic has disrupted the rhythm of Maine's election season, forcing candidates to forgo in-person rallies and large town hall meetings in favor of virtual Q&A sessions and socially distanced meet-and-greets.

Two members of the Maine Better Transportation Association have teamed up to make sure that, even in the absence of traditional campaigning, voters still have the opportunity to hear directly from local candidates.

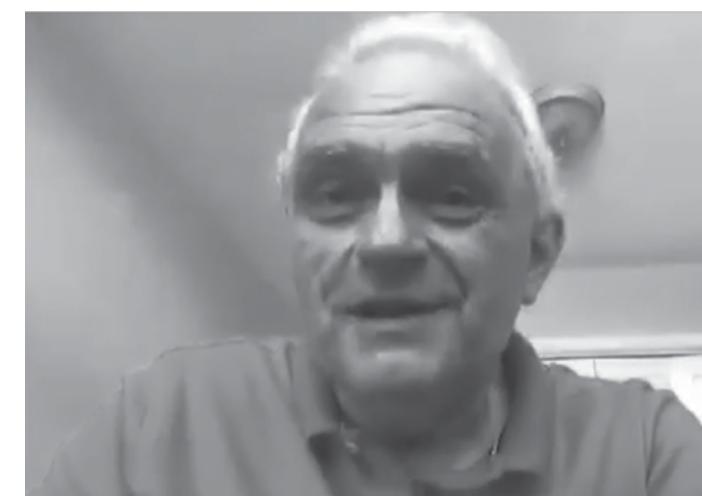
In August, MBTA members Orion Breen and Patrick Brady joined forces to launch *Maine better*, a series of virtual interviews with candidates on the Maine ballot. The interviews, which can be found on the MBTA's web site and Facebook page, are designed to give candidates a chance to share their positions on transportation and infrastructure issues in a casual and lighthearted forum. Breen is chair of MBTA's Communications Committee, and Brady heads the MBTA Young Professionals.

"We're in the middle of this pandemic, and people aren't knocking on doors and shaking hands and kissing the proverbial baby like they used to," said Breen, a public affairs liaison at the adaptive distribution energy company, Global Partners. "I think this year, even more than previous years, you're going to have people just write 'R, R, R,' and 'D, D, D' and not really get to know the local candidates."

When crafting their questions, Breen and Brady don't just stick to politics. Instead, they ask candidates what they do when they're



U.S. Representative Jared Golden



District 2 Congressional candidate Dale Crafts

not campaigning, what type of car they learned to drive in, and, most importantly, which road they deem the worst in their district.

"Just asking these sort of lighthearted transportation questions, you actually do get to learn a lot about who these people are as individuals," said Brady, an attorney at the Pittsfield-based construction company Cianbro. "For example, Trey Stewart – we asked him what the worst road in his district was, and it came out that he drives three hours one way to get to Augusta... You get the sense that these people are putting their heart and soul and time into serving their constituents, and that they do care."

So far, the duo has conducted six interviews: four with candidates for the Maine Senate – Chloe Maxmin and Dana Dow from Lincoln County, David Miramant from Knox County, and Trey Stewart from Aroostook County – and, most recently, with United States Congressman Jared Golden and his Republican challenger in the second district, Dale Crafts. Before November, they're hoping to sit down with Senator Susan Collins and her Democratic challenger, Sara Gideon, as well as Congresswoman Chellie Pingree

of the first district and her Republican challenger Jay Allen.

Asked about their dream interviewees, Brady chose current Senator Angus King, while Breen reached further into Maine history to select former governor and environmental philanthropist Percival Baxter.

"Baxter would be cool because he can really talk about how to get big things done and I think the parks are a key piece of Maine's infrastructure," said Breen, whose parents raised him and his brother,



Pike crew on Main Street in Rutland, Vermont in 1885.

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Yellow Light, in rural Maine as participants of the "back-to-the-land" movement that swept through the state in the 1970s.

Breen knows it might sound strange that the son of self-proclaimed hippie environmentalists would choose a career in energy infrastructure, but he says his position as a public affairs liaison allows him to do the work he values most: building a sense of connection and engagement among Maine's local communities. Since 2017, Breen has hosted "Maine Quality," a talk-radio show on WMPG that features non-profit, business, and community leaders sharing their visions for Maine's future. Soon after the pandemic brought an end to in-person campaign events, Breen saw an opportunity to develop a similar concept to connect local candidates with voters. He later pitched the idea for *Maine better* to Brady, whom he had connected with through the MBTA.

Though Breen and Brady have never met in person—Breen lives in Pownal and Brady lives in South Portland—both say they are learning from their virtual partnership.

"I'm not a transportation expert at all, and frankly, I've learned something from every interview we've done and every time I talk to Patrick," said Breen. "He knows all these different funding models, and all these different things like what's an orphan road, and I'm just learning along the way."

Beyond the current election cycle, Breen and Brady hope their interviews will serve as a model for a more cooperative and less partisan style of local politics.

"In Maine, we have this tradition of caring about ideas more than parties, and I think it's important to preserve that tradition," said

Breen. "...Even if you don't agree with some of the people [or] some of what their ideas are, there's other things you can agree on, and I think it's valuable just showing that these people are human beings."

As one of the few issues that consistently enjoys bipartisan support, infrastructure could serve as a rallying point for bipartisan cooperation, said Breen.

"Everybody hates potholes, right? ... It doesn't matter who you are. Everybody supports infrastructure and fixing the roads, if you're Republican or Democrat. It's this bipartisan issue that we all agree on."

Yet both Brady and Breen agreed that their interviews have demonstrated how much work there is left to do to improve the quality and accessibility of Maine's transportation infrastructure.

"We still haven't really figured out a way to work together to come up with some better ways of funding fixing the roads right now," said Breen. "As Bruce Van Note, the commissioner of transportation, has noted, we aren't really investing in our infrastructure – we're merely managing decline. We're putting the bare minimum on top to just make it as barely passable as possible because we don't have the funding."

For Brady, the pandemic has further exposed the limitations of Maine's infrastructure funding.

"Infrastructure in general relies so much on the gas tax as well as tolls, and when people aren't driving, they're not collecting as much tax and they're not paying the tolls," he said. "The maintenance is still there, [and] we still need to be making the investments, but the revenue's not coming in, and you start to look at how many large projects are getting pushed now way out into the future."

"You realize how thin the line truly is between having enough money and not," he added.

Despite creating new setbacks, the pandemic has also created new opportunities for progress, Breen said.

"The pandemic is an opportunity to work together, I think," he said.

"When the pandemic first hit, the legislature did come together, and they did pass a transportation bond, they did pass a broadband bond, and those things weren't guaranteed to happen. People just realize [that] we need to do these things now... because next year, we do want the tourists to come back, and we want there to be roads they can drive on when they do."

Just as important as investing in roads, said Breen, is investing in



Maine Senate District 13 Candidate Chloe Maxmin



Maine Senator Dana Dow, District 13



Maine Senator David Miramont, District 12

the people who offer up their time and expertise as public servants.

"It takes a lot of guts, and it takes a tremendous amount of time. . . so they have got to pay [them] more," he said. "The young folks who have families or who are starting off in their career trying to juggle all that – it really helps to be established and to be retired or have this cushion of capital in order to do it. I think you do need to pay people in government in order to get the best people in there."

And as for the worst road in Maine? For Brady, it's the



Maine Senate District 2 candidate Trey Stewart

Route 1 spur onto 295 in South Portland. For Breen, it's a matter of perspective. He misses the dirt road he grew up on that has long since been paved. "I still love to find a dirt road I can kick up some dust on, but I can't say I would want to live on one right now." ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: MBTA's media intern Ian Ward is a 2020 graduate of Bowdoin College and has written about sports and business for publications including the Press Herald, the Lewiston Sun Journal, and the Kennebec Journal. He is the former managing editor of the Bowdoin Orient.

TWO GUYS ASKING CANDIDATES THE BIG QUESTIONS



Orion Breen

For the *Maine better* video series, MBTA members Orion Breen and Patrick Brady are racing to interview candidates in key Maine races before Election Day, Tuesday, November 3. They are asking some serious (and fun) questions about the candidates and their views on transportation in Maine.

BE INFORMED

- To view the *Maine better* candidate interviews, visit <https://wp.me/paKwH-AH>.

GET YOUR BALLOT

- Don't forget to vote! For voter information or to request your absentee ballot, go to bit.ly/VoteME-2020.

LEARN MORE

- Listen to the full interview with *Maine better*'s Patrick Brady and Orion Breen at bit.ly/Behind-Maine-better.



Patrick Brady

FTA announces \$10.2 million in grants for Maine transit providers

THREE MAINE transit providers have been awarded grants from the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) totaling \$10.2 million. The three providers are the city of Bangor, the Greater Portland Transit District and MaineDOT, which will build a new multimodal hub on Mount Desert Island.

The three Maine grants are part of a total 96 projects that received \$464 million in funding across the country "to improve the safety and reliability of America's bus systems and enhance mobility for transit riders," according to the FTA. A total of 96 projects in 49 states and territories received funding from FTA's Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Program.

The Maine projects receiving funding varied greatly in scope and purpose.

The Greater Portland Transit District will receive \$821,526 to replace aging buses that have exceeded their useful life. The bus replacements will be ADA-compliant and improve safety and efficiency for the fleet, which serves a growing ridership in the city of Portland.

The city of Bangor will receive \$396,800 to add passenger shelters and bus boarding areas for its Community Connector service, that has used a "flag stop" hailing model with no designated bus stops. The project will produce a bus stop location plan considering ridership, connectivity, transfer points, accessibility, safety, streetscapes and rider amenities, creating more efficient, better connections to jobs, schools and community services.

MaineDOT received the largest of

the three grants, \$9 million, to build an intermodal welcome center at the Acadia Gateway Center in Trenton, Maine, near the entrance to Acadia National Park. The center will serve as the headquarters for Downeast Transportation, Inc.'s Island Explorer bus system that serves the National Park and surrounding communities.

"Millions of Americans rely on public transportation to access healthcare, jobs, and other vital services," said FTA Deputy Administrator K. Jane Williams. "During this unprecedented time, we need to ensure access and mobility for the riders who depend on our nation's bus systems." ■

FMI: To see a full list of the FTA grants, visit <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/fiscal-year-2020-buses-and-bus-facilities-projects>.

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Ginger Kieffer and Matt Bouchard from Momentum Aroostook were the evening's speakers (left). MBTA President Irv Smith was the event's emcee (right).



Getting younger

At Aroostook County Meeting, Momentum Aroostook talks about putting down roots in northern Maine

According to the U.S. Census, the median age in Maine is 44.7 years old, giving the state the dubious distinction of being the "oldest state in the nation." That fact has spurred a group of young professionals in Aroostook County – Momentum Aroostook – to work with business leaders and state officials to tackle the challenge of making the state and The County younger.

The MBTA Aroostook County Meeting, held August 6 at the Caribou Inn and Conference Center, was the MBTA's first in-person regional meeting since MBTA events had been postponed or delayed due to the coronavirus. Everyone present seemed genuinely pleased to catch up with old friends and acquaintances after such a long time. MBTA President Irv Smith served as the evening's emcee, and before he introduced the evening's speakers, he welcomed special guests to the gathering: MaineDOT Deputy Commissioner Nina Fisher; Trisha House from U.S. Senator Susan Collins' office; and Maine Assistant House Republican Leader Trey Stewart (R-Presque Isle). Representative Stewart welcomed the group to The County, saying he was happy to see MBTA members from across the state in Caribou.

President Smith also made sure to thank the meeting's sponsors for their generosity: Innovators Northeast Paving, Sargent Corporation and Sewall; and Pathfinders Soderberg Construction and Anderson

Equipment Company. He then introduced Ginger Kieffer and Matt Bouchard from Momentum Aroostook's steering committee to share the story of their group's efforts to convince young professionals to set down roots in The County. Fifty MBTA members and friends in attendance learned ideas for recruiting and retaining young and experienced talent. Their message was timely for many of the business leaders in the room who face the challenge of managing growth and retaining young professionals as older, more established workers are aging out of the workplace.

First Kieffer and Bouchard offered some context that showed the critical importance of their work. Since 2016, Aroostook County has experienced an "out-migration" of 614 per year, at the same time the average age of the remaining workers is fast approaching 50 years. The goal of Momentum Aroostook is to reverse that curve and create opportunities for young professionals to "network, build their careers and communities and thrive."

Kieffer and Bouchard are part of the 12-member steering committee that organizes events including quarterly socials, partnerships with local businesses and with the University of Maine at Presque Isle (UMPI). They have hosted a professional development series inviting young business leaders to tell their stories and offer insights on how to build their careers. The group also presented awards last year to 15 Aroostook Achievers, rising professionals who are making a mark on Maine's northernmost county and its communities.

The group's events have been extremely popular and have helped create a sense of community and connection for young professionals in The County. Momentum Aroostook's Dodge Ball tournament netted 80 athletes from across Aroostook, and the group's socials regularly attract more than 60 participants.

During the pandemic, the group has kept up its work, hosting online trivia nights in lieu of in-person gatherings where social distancing would be difficult to ensure.

Most important, Momentum Aroostook has been participating in

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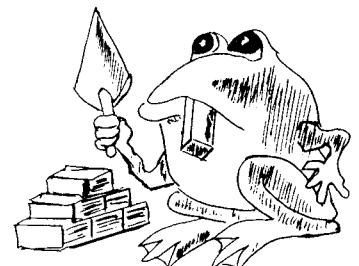
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Steve Perry, Carl Soderberg, Nina Fisher and Henry Fisher (left), Trisha House from U.S. Senator Susan Collins' office and Maine Representative Trey Stewart (right).

involvement in decision making; Equitable total compensation; and Team connectivity and success. Momentum Aroostook will be hosting Realize Maine's 2021 Magnetize Maine Summit.

MaineDOT Deputy Commissioner Nina Fisher, who grew up in Madawaska and attended the event with her son Henry, thanked attendees for their partnership with MaineDOT and said the department looks forward to working together with "so many transportation leaders." ■

FMI: MBTA traditionally holds regional issue meetings in Cumberland, Penobscot, Washington and Aroostook counties. For the schedule and more information, please visit www.MBTATonline.org.



Russ Bragg and Tim Folster (top left). Todd Saucier and Rod Lane (top right). MaineDOT Deputy Commissioner Nina Fisher addressed the group (bottom left). Anna Soderberg prepares to interview President Smith for WAGM-TV (bottom right).





Jan Murchison and Erik Wiberg (left). Randy Mace, George Campbell and Paul Bradbury (right).



Anna, Emily and Carl Soderberg (left). Hunter Thomas and Deven Carter (right).

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In the swing of it

Under blue skies, the 24th annual MBTA Infrastructure Golf Classic plays through at Waterville Country Club

MBTA MEMBERS stepped up to make the MBTA Infrastructure Golf Classic on Thursday, July 30 in Oakland, a rousing success. One hundred and forty golfers donned surgical masks or their new MBTA logo face coverings and headed out onto the links.

The location and circumstances were unusual for the fundraiser, which is now in its 24th year, but the spirit of camaraderie and fun were nothing new for MBTA members. The tournament raises money for the MBTA's Infrastructure Fund, which supports MBTA's efforts to communicate some of the organization's most important messages: that transportation investment creates jobs, boosts the economy, makes our communities safer and improves Maine's position in the global marketplace.

This year, through the tireless efforts of Golf Fundraising Chair Rod Lane of Eurovia Atlantic Coast and his committee, the tournament raised more than \$27,000!

Golf Tournament Chair Joe Rollins of Northeast Paving acknowledge Rod's hard work and the generous contributions of tournament sponsors as golfers gathered before heading out onto the links for the day.

"This has been a challenging time for us all, and Rod really outdid himself reaching out to sponsors," said Rollins. "People worked really hard to have this tournament come together, and it goes to show just how much MBTAers



Golf Chair Joe Rollins makes announcements before the start of play. Joe also won Straightest Drive - Men. All that practice is paying off, Joe!

enjoy getting together and the high importance they place on MBTA's mission, despite the challenges we are all facing."

This year's tournament was extraordinary for many reasons. First, it was held later in the summer than in recent years, as the Golf Committee and MBTA board waited for the

state to partially lift restrictions on public gatherings put in place to inhibit the spread of the novel coronavirus. It also was held at a new venue, the Waterville Country Club in Oakland, a facility that was able to accommodate the tournament in a way that MBTA members could maintain proper physical distancing.

That meant more space for the golfers and lots of face coverings. It also meant that golfers played through the day with few stops, and they had lunch on the course to avoid bottlenecks that would compromise safety. The tournament also skipped the usual awards reception, and winners were announced via e-mail and on MBTA's Facebook page. MBTA staffers mailed prizes to the winning teams and individuals.

That didn't mean that the competition wasn't fierce.

The foursome from Gendron & Gendron – John Gendron, Josh White, Scott Cote and Matt Greenleaf – edged out the team from T.Y. Lin to take home Top Gross honors with a score of 57. Just one stroke off the lead with a 58, the T.Y. Lin team, led by Tom Errico and assisted by Heath Cowan, Steve Bodge and Ernie Martin of MaineDOT, took the Second Gross title.

The battle for Top Net was equally keen. Matthew Steele, Kyle Plossay, Ian Gervais and Kevin Gervais from Kleinfelder took top honors in that category with an impressive score of 48. They narrowly beat the team of Dave Dearden from Haley & Aldrich, Paul Pottle of Casco Bay



Low Net winners Matthew Steele, Kevin Gervais, Ian Gervais and Kyle Plossay. (left). The Top Gross team John Gendron, Scott Cote, Josh White and Matt Greenleaf (right). Josh won the Putting Contest, too!





The Whited team (top left) – Jon Whited, Melanie Whited, Michelle Cummings and Joel Cummings – won Top Mixed Team. Michelle won Straightest Drive – Women, too! The Second Gross Team (top right) included Tom Errico, Heath Cowan, Steve Bodge and Ernie Martin. Heath was also one of the Casino Hole winners,



The Second Low Net team: Dave Dearden, Barry Sheff, Paul Pottle and Ken Knauer. (left). Larry Hutchins, Greg Dore, John Fabbricatore and Tim Folster. (right).



Derek Davis (left) sunk the put and won the drawing to win the Putting Contest. Larry Hutchins (right) contemplates his next swing.



Golfers found lots of opportunities to social distance on the golf course.



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Lines, Barry Sheff of Woodard & Curran and Ken Knauer of Prock Marine which trailed by one point (net 49).

The team from Whited Ford took Top Mixed Team honors with a net score of 56. Playing for Whited were Jon Whited, Melanie Whited, Joel Cummings and Michelle Cummings from Auburn Concrete.

The Putting Contest was hotly contested. Three players – Derek Davis, Tony Grande and Josh White – all sunk the put. There was a drawing to determine the final winner and

Derek took home the prize. Heath Cowan took Casino Hole honors in a drawing in addition to being on the Second Gross team; and Michelle Cummings who played for the winning Mixed Team, also won Straightest Drive – Women.

Two others golfers won the Casino Hole drawing along with Heath Cowan: Brian Bouchard of H.O. Bouchard and Chris Kane of Northeast Paving. Two golfers shared the win at the Putting Contest with Derek Davis of Milton CAT: Josh White of Gendron & Gendron and Tony Grande of VHB. Joe

Rollins of Northeast Paving and Tim Walton of Walton External Affairs tied for Straightest Drive – Men. Chris McLaughlin of HD Supply won Closest to the Pin.

Before the tournament wrapped up, Joe Rollins drew the winning ticket for the 50/50 Raffle. Greg Dore had the lucky ticket. He took home \$930 in winnings. The other \$930 went to the MBTA Scholarship Fund. Congratulations to all the MBTA Golf Classic winners, and many thanks to the golfers and the event's generous sponsors for such a fun day on the links. ■



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Chris Kane, Joe Rollins, Rodney Lane, and Matt Carey (left). Golf volunteers Casey VanDenBossche, Shannon Walton and Bruce Hubbard helped out so the day ran smoothly.

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Melanie Whited, Whited Peterbilt
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Chris McLaughlin, HD Supply

STRAIGHTEST DRIVE – WOMEN (HOLE 10)

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STRAIGHTEST DRIVE – MEN (HOLE 10) (2-WAY TIE)

Joe Rollins, Northeast Paving
Tim Walton, Walton External Affairs

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Tony Grande, VHB
Josh White, Gendron & Gendron

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To Rod Lane from Eurovia Atlantic Coast LLC, and his fundraising committee who did an outstanding job!

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Crum & Forster's Surety team specializes in providing surety products to select domestic and international contractors. Our experienced, common sense underwriting specialists partner with highly qualified agents and brokers to provide unparalleled service and competitive rates. Each account is evaluated on its individual merits and surety programs are tailored to an account's specific needs. A Crum & Forster surety account is not one of thousands whose attention level depends on size and premium generation. We believe success depends on building lasting partnerships.

Dirigo Materials
953 Odlin Road
Bangor, ME 04401
Phone: 207-461-2087
Email: brian.raymond@eurovia.us

Contact: Brian Raymond
Recruited by: Brian Raymond
Dirigo Materials - a division of Eurovia Atlantic Coast has a long history of producing aggregates and recycling materials in Maine.

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Email: rruesch@verrill-law.com

Contact: Robert Ruesch

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Rob Ruesch's law practice focuses on construction, design, and surety law, and he counsels his clients through all aspects of the construction process.

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Be like Tim Introducing the Sargent Corporation-Timothy M. Folster Scholarship

FOR SOMEONE who is remarkably smart, Tim Folster doesn't like to talk about how much he knows. Instead, he has spent his professional career making sure that the bridges, roads and other infrastructure he helped build as an employee at H.E. Sargent, and later Sargent & Sargent and Sargent Corporation, were built in the best, most efficient way they could be built. Folster's intelligence and contributions to transportation in Maine will now inspire future generations through the new Sargent Corporation-Timothy M. Folster Scholarship that will be administered by the MBTA Educational Foundation. The scholarship is the fourth endowed named scholarship that has been established through the MBTA Educational Foundation.

The Timothy M. Folster Scholarship was announced this summer by Herb Sargent, president and CEO of Sargent Corp., who worked alongside Folster for nearly four decades. The scholarship has been endowed with \$51,000 in gifts from Herb Sargent, Sargent Corp. and the late Jim Sargent.

Even before having a scholarship named after him, Folster was a bit of a legend in the industry. Folster grew up in Maine and graduated from Old Town High School prior to earning a bachelor of science degree in mechanical engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). After graduation from MIT, he could have had his pick of jobs anywhere in the world. Instead he came home to work for H.E. Sargent.

"Competitive, tenacious, attentive, confident, worker, questioning, leader, genuine, observer, challenger, candid, pusher, winner, devil's advocate, passionate, brilliant visionary, almost... clairvoyant." Those were the words Herb Sargent used to describe his long-time friend in October 2019 when he presented Folster with the MBTA's Transportation Achievement Award, the highest transportation honor awarded by the association.

"Working with Tim is... well... interesting. He already has things built in his mind before the rest of us have even read the blueprint," said Sargent. "He synthesizes the front side of a position before the rest of us have it digested. And while we're digesting it, he does not rest. He's already on the back side of a position, grinding through that information and making a truly thoroughly informed evaluation of the situation."

At H.E. Sargent, Folster's smarts and talent were apparent early. He was just 25 and only out of college for a few years when, in 1983, he stepped into the role of project superintendent on the I-395 project in Brewer. At the time, that was the largest construction job ever put out by the state of Maine. Over the years, he managed just about everything that can be managed in construction: estimating, scheduling of resources, project planning and client relations. By the time he retired last year, Folster



Tim Folster

had held a variety of positions, from foreman, superintendent, general superintendent, division manager to vice president of operations. In 1994 he oversaw the establishment of Sargent's mid-Atlantic operations.

Folster, a registered professional engineer, also has served on the MBTA board of directors and is a past MBTA president.

"If Tim were a basketball player, he'd be like Michael Jordan," said MBTA President Irv Smith, who also has served on the board with Folster for several years. "He's super smart, good at almost everything, and he really set a high bar during his career at Sargent. We are so pleased to be able to encourage a whole new generation of smart Maine kids like Tim to pursue a career in engineering." ■

FMI: The MBTA Educational Foundation is a separate 501(c)3 charitable foundation that has awarded 416 scholarships totaling \$430,000 to students pursuing transportation-related studies. To learn more, visit www.MBTAAonline.org. If you are interested in donating to the foundation or contributing to the Sargent Corporation – Timothy M. Folster Scholarship, please contact Maria Fuentes (Maria@MBTAonline.org).

SARGENT CORPORATION – TIMOTHY M. FOLSTER SCHOLARSHIP

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Doing durable good

By Kathryn Buxton

IT'S DEEP in the afternoon on a late summer day, and three key figures from the Transportation Infrastructure Durability Center (TIDC) at the University of Maine have arrived for an on-screen meeting to talk about the center's work and the upcoming announcement of a new round of research grants.

Dr. Habib Dagher, the center's director and institutional lead, is on the video call. So is James Bryce, TIDC program manager, and Dale Peabody, chair of the TIDC's advisory board, and the discussion quickly turns to the work the research lab is turning out.

The center is housed at the University of Maine's Advanced Structure and Composite Center (ASCC), which is the birthplace of some of the most talked about new construction technology in a century. An early project was the placement of carbon fiber strands in cables on the Penobscot Narrows Bridge in 2004. ASCC researchers are continuing to monitor the performance of those cables for durability and load today.

The much publicized "bridge in a backpack" – officially known as the Composite Arch Bridge – was designed at the center and first deployed in Maine in 2008. Now, more than two dozen of the lightweight, quick-to-build and extremely durable bridges are in place around the world.

Last August, the center announced its latest design, a composite tub

The Transportation Infrastructure Durability Center at the University of Maine is bringing innovators together across New England to solve infrastructure's most pressing problems

girder bridge design that has been dubbed the "72-hour bridge." The first bridge of this design is being constructed in Hampden, Maine.

Just two months after that announcement, ASCC unveiled the world's largest 3D printer with a grand sweep of showmanship. A crowd of more than a two hundred, including U.S. Senators Susan Collins and Angus King and U.S. Representative Jared Golden, were among the first to see the world's largest solid 3D object printed at the lab, a 25-foot, 5,000-pound polymer vessel that was christened the *3Dirigo*.

Just in case you were in doubt, the event was confirmed with three world records verified by none other than Guinness World Records: 1) the largest polymer 3D printer; 2) the largest solid 3D-printed object; and 3) the largest 3D-printed boat.

'GETTING THERE FIRST'

While the work of the lab has garnered big headlines, its work is dazzlingly serious. According to Dagher, the lab's work was born of necessity and a keen sense of place. Maine winters are long and the elements bear down hard on public infrastructure. In the early 2000s, the state was confronted with an inventory of structurally deficient bridges that were at or beyond their anticipated lifespans, as well as limited public funding to replace those bridges.



That set the stage for the lab's innovative bridge designs that have sought to bring new construction materials to the industry and designs that would have a longer life span than more traditionally designed bridges.

The trick, said Dagher with straightforward enthusiasm, "is to see where the future is and get there first."

Belying his modest and straightforward demeanor, Dagher is both



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a visionary and energetic competitor who has steered UMaine's composites lab into worldwide prominence. That has won him many awards along the way, including the 2011 Charles Pankow Award for Innovation by the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), the White House Champion of Change award in 2015 and MBTA's Maine Transportation Champion Award in 2019.

The composite arch bridges first designed at ASCC are now

manufactured at Advanced Infrastructure Technologies (AIT) in Brewer, a commercial offshoot of the lab. The design incorporates lightweight carbon fiber arches that are shipped to the site and filled with concrete. The result is a structure that does not corrode or rust and has practical applications for an estimated 10 percent of the bridges in the United States in need of replacement. It also is a fast build. Typically, it takes just 10 days to construct one of the arch bridges compared to months to construct a conventional bridge.

The tub girder bridge design to be debuted in Hampden this year is a new and more ambitious generation of composite bridge design that embodies the purposeful vision of Dagher and the TIDC. Like its predecessor, it is built from durable materials with a 100-year lifespan. It is lightweight: the fiber reinforced composite girders are 50 percent lighter than comparable steel girders and 75 percent lighter than concrete girders. It has a broad market application: thanks to its wider span, it is an ideal bridge replacement option for 80 percent of the bridges in America. And it doesn't require a special substructure. The composite girders are supported on standard foundations with precast concrete panels or a cast-in-place concrete bridge deck.

It also is inexpensive to ship. Four of the girders can be shipped on a single 70-foot trailer. AIT is also manufacturing and marketing this bridge design from its Brewer facility.

INNOVATION ACCELERATED

With the partnerships formed between the six New England universities (University of Maine, University of Connecticut, University of Vermont, University of Massachusetts at Lowell, University of Rhode Island and Western New England University) and an advisory board of DOT officials from the six states, the pace of innovation is set to accelerate. Collaboration will be key.

Currently, state departments of transportation are so busy patching roads that research and collaboration can take a back seat to more immediate concerns. By presenting those daily concerns about infrastructure performance and maintenance as challenges to the

center's research teams, the state departments of transportation are being enlisted as laboratories of sorts, where researchers are set to work solving real world problems, such as developing low-cost ways to evaluate the load capacity of aging bridges and creating molds for complex concrete bridge structures.

"We usually work in our respective silos," said MaineDOT Director of Transportation Research Dale Peabody who is chair of the TIDC's advisory board. "We want to break through that."

TIDC Program Manager Bryce puts it another way: "We don't do research for research's sake."

That practical, real world approach is written into the center's research guidelines outlining four "thrust areas": 1) monitoring and assessment, 2) new materials for longevity and constructability, 3) new systems for longevity and constructability, and 4) connectivity for enhanced asset and performance management.

The first research project completed for TIDC was a UMaine-MaineDOT collaboration to establish a protocol for live load testing of concrete T-beam bridges. Completed in 2018, the first year of the center's federal funding, the project devised a low-cost testing method that can save DOTs millions of dollars by keeping bridges in service that might otherwise be deemed obsolete.

This spring, 24 different proposals were submitted for the current round of TIDC funding and were reviewed by the TIDC Advisory Board. Each of the 18 projects that have been funded in this round comes with a 1:1 cost-share requirement. Collaboration was encouraged and the result has brought partnerships not only between state DOTs and universities, but also between universities and with private industry.

Partnerships with the private sector are encouraged, as well, and currently the center has joined forces with Maine companies to work on a broad range of projects with Maine companies, including VHB, Sebago Technics and American Concrete/Superior Concrete.

The center's current federal grant continues through 2023, and TIDC will issue another RFP (request for proposals) next year. The center plans to reapply to the U.S. DOT for the next round of funding that would extend its research for another five years.



Dr. Habib Dagher

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IN THE FIELD

The next big moment for the lab will be to deploy the composite tub girder system in Hampden. The MaineDOT project is the poster child for the lab, illuminating its approach that values innovation, collaboration, speed and practicality.

The new bridge is replacing a 70-year-old structurally deficient structure, the Grist Mill Bridge, which carries Routes 1A and 9 over Souadabscook Stream. The project will be the first bridge of its kind and features 76-foot carbon fiber tub girders built off site in Brewer

and trucked to the site. The deck will be constructed from replaceable concrete panels that are bolted to the girders. It will also be a fast build – the team expects the bridge to be built in just 72 hours.

"We think this new technology has great promise," MaineDOT Chief Engineer Joyce Taylor told the *Bangor Daily News* in early August. "Our engineers are excited to use it and sought it out for this project. We are looking for other opportunities to use this technology on upcoming projects, and we'll be sharing it with other departments of transportation around the nation." ■

About the TIDC

The Transportation Infrastructure Durability Center (TIDC) is the 2018 US DOT Region 1 (New England) University Transportation Center (UTC) located at the University of Maine Advanced Structures and Composites Center in Orono, Maine. In addition to UMaine, TIDC has five other member universities within the New England region: the University of Connecticut, University of Massachusetts at Lowell, Western New England University, University of Vermont and University of Rhode Island. The TIDC is overseen by an Advisory Board with members from the departments of transportation in Maine, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island.

In addition to developing next generation solutions to improve the durability of our transportation structures, a key mission of the center is to attract a talented pool of students to the science and engineering of developing the region's infrastructure and ultimately to building the region's transportation workforce.

By the completion of the research grant in 2023, the TIDC will disburse approximately \$14.3 million dollars in federal funding for research grants to extend the life and improve the durability of the region's transportation assets.

For more information, including grant guidelines and research results, visit www.tidc-utc.org.

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PURUS

Schooled in kool Jay Shorette's 'Kool Bus' gets a new driver

JAY SHORETTE, an MBTA member and owner of Dirigo Slipform in Old Town, recently gifted his son-in-law with an old school bus outfitted with a spoiler, huge horns, flames painted on the side and "Kool" written all over it for his 39th birthday.

Shorette built the bus with his crew as a way for them to blow off steam. It took two-and-a-half years. They then spent the next 12 years taking it to charity events and occasionally entering it in drag races, but eventually Shorette decided it was time to pass it on. So Happy Birthday, Frank Casella. May you be 39 forever!

In case you're wondering, Frank's wife supported the idea and so far no one has mentioned the word "regifting."

In fact, Frank says he looks forward to having it in the family and thinks their 18-month-old daughter, Carmen, will get a kick out of it.

The bus, known as the "Kool Bus," was presented together with a little box of "bus-related things" and the keys. The bus also doubles as a fully functional camper.

Most of the materials used to build the Kool Bus were recycled from other vehicles. The sunroof came from an old Subaru. The roof is made up of a bunch of old pick-up caps.

All the upholstery is from a customized Ford that had a broken frame.



Jay Shorette's Kool Bus has made appearances for local charity events. Now Jay's son-in-law Frank will be behind the wheel.

All the plumbing for the rig came out of a wrecked camper.

On the back door are the words, "It's not what you buy. It's what you build!" And "CAUTION, NO Adult Supervision."

Happy Birthday, Frank, and welcome to the school bus of kool! ■

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Woodrow Cross, 103

Founder of Cross Insurance loved his family, planning for the future and a good merger

WOORDROW CROSS, founder of Cross Insurance, died peacefully at the end of July surrounded by his family in Bangor. He was 103.

Born on a small farm in Bradford, he early showed an aptitude for business, selling seeds farmhouse door to farmhouse door. Also, at six his father gave him a pony that he got to ride and play with and use to start his next business – making maple syrup deliveries, all while attending a one-room schoolhouse.

He remembered the world before electricity, the telephone or paved roads because that's the world he grew up in.

In 1929, when Cross was 12, his father opened a general store where all the Crosses worked long hours. Later, the young entrepreneur raised and sold chickens.

His grandfather had fought in the Civil War, and Cross proudly followed his example, enlisting in the United States Army at the start of World War II. He was deployed to the Pacific where he fought three years in campaigns in New Guinea and the Philippines and later served in Japan after the country's surrender. Throughout his life he marched in the Memorial Day Parade in Bangor, including in 2017, the year he turned 100-years-old.

During the war, he married his sweetheart, Janette Bean of East Corinth, in September 1943. After the war ended, they settled down in his hometown and ran the family's general store and started a family.

In 1954, the family moved to Bangor where Cross started a business at the family kitchen table selling insurance. He worked hard at home for nine years, at which point he hired his first employee and moved the office to downtown Bangor.

In the early days of Cross Insurance, he worked nights on the construction site of the "old" Bangor Auditorium. It was his job to keep the salamander heaters going so the new concrete set properly. When that building was torn down decades later, the new building that went up had his name on it. He loved his work and his family, and enjoyed going to work every day with his sons Royce and the



Woodrow Cross

late Brent Cross, as well as grandsons Jonathan and Woodrow II, who continue in the business currently. Today the family business includes 1,000 employees in more than forty locations across eight states.

"He really enjoyed the informal daily lunch with us and being around his family," said Woodrow's son and Cross Insurance CEO Royce Cross. "He would specifically mention to me being around younger people. He would say 'I like how younger people think. They think about the future.'"

"One time at 100, he had interviewers asking him all kinds of questions about the past," said Royce. "I remember one time he kind of flared up a little. He told the person 'I don't want to keep talking about what I did in the past. I want to talk about what I'm going to do in the future.'"

Today Cross Insurance is the largest independent insurance agency in New England and one of the largest in the nation, a feat achieved by bringing dozens of agencies into the Cross family fold.

"He really loved it when we would get involved in a merger... LOVED IT!" recalled Royce. "He would refer to it as 'something exciting,' and if things would get a little quiet, he'd say to me 'Let's find something exciting.'

What he meant was he wanted me to find an insurance agency we could merge into the office."

MBTA board member Michelle Ibarguen, a long-time employee, remembered how involved Cross was in the daily operations of the agency.

"When I began at Cross Insurance 17 years ago, I was unaware of how engaged Mr. Cross still was in the agency until I received my first handwritten message from him on one of our insurance company's monthly production and loss ratio statements a few months later," remembered Ibarguen. "It was at that moment I realized, even at age 87, he continued to take an active interest in each branch office and their employees."

Ibarguen said: "Employees speak very fondly of Mr. Cross because they knew he cared about them and our clients. They take great pride in sharing his inspirational story of hard work, perseverance and incredible vision to grow the agency, as he did over the years, to the organization it is today."

Woodrow Cross and Cross Insurance have supported many Maine charities and community organizations. Cross Insurance has been a long-time member of the MBTA and a generous sponsor of the organization's events, including the Annual Meeting, Infrastructure Golf Classic and Fall Convention. The company has donated tickets to various Boston sports events, hosted MBTA members at the company's V.I.P. seats at Fenway and donated signed team items to raise funds for MBTA scholarships and other fundraisers.

Woodrow was the recipient of several awards and special recognitions including an honorary doctorate of business administration from Husson University, Junior Achievement Maine Business Hall of Fame, the key to the City of Bangor, and the prestigious Norbert X. Dowd Award from the Bangor Chamber of Commerce.

Royce Cross said that the most important lessons his dad passed on were the importance of hard work, honesty and never to take a day for granted. "He worked until the work was done," said Royce Cross, who said honesty and

fun were equally important to his father, who continued to come into the agency's Bangor office into his 10th decade. "He said, 'Always do what you tell people you're going to do.' Not a matter of if the rabbit can climb the tree – the rabbit has to climb the tree.' That is, don't concern yourself with what you can do, do what you have to do. Enjoy yourself. From the time I came to work here at the office he always said enjoy what you're doing. Enjoy every day, they're sacred."

In addition to work and family, faith anchored him. At the time of his death he was

the oldest member of Calvary Baptist Church in Brewer where he was a member since 1954. Woodrow served his church as the treasurer and an usher, and for many years he enjoyed attending a weekly men's Bible class.

Cross's wife, Janette, died in 1992. He was also predeceased by his son Brent Cross in 2015, father Melvin Cross and mother Mabel Speed Cross, brother Leon Cross and sister Lula Cross Zinni.

Woodrow Cross's survivors include daughters Connie Cross Guelich (David) of Roanoke, Virginia; Judith Cross Olson (Greg)

of Lexington, Massachusetts; and sons Dennis Cross (Carol) of Orono; Royce Cross (Louise) of Brewer; and daughter-in law, Lori Cross of Bangor. Woodrow was blessed with 14 grandchildren and 16 great grandchildren and one great-great granddaughter.

The family suggests donations in Woodrow's memory be sent to: The Building Fund, Calvary Baptist Church, 61 State Street, Brewer, Maine 04412; or to The Brent Cross Scholarship Fund, c/o Husson University, 1 College Circle, Bangor, Maine 04401. ■

All for all VHB, Woodard & Curran promote industry-wide progress on diversity and inclusion in the workplace

THE DESIGN Professionals Working Group (DPC) of the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) earlier this year published *Diversity & Inclusion: Keys to Success & Lessons Learned*, a guide for design firms "to promote an inclusive environment with a diverse workforce." The publication is the result of two years of work by 22 leading engineering firms in the DPC's Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG).

That group, which includes VHB and Woodard & Curran, examined the hiring,

advancement and workplace cultures at member firms. An initial survey of members found some surprising disparities: while about 32 percent of entry-level employees were women and 26 percent were minorities, the C suites did not reflect that diversity. Across the 22 DPC member companies, just 18 percent of executives were women and fewer than four percent were minorities.

"It highlighted the missed opportunity we are having," said Mike Carragher of McKeown, one of DIWG's founding members, said in an article in Engineering Inc., the ACEC national publication. "Leaders are in a position to create change. It's about giving people a voice and listening, and making sure you hear them, so you can recognize where the hurdles are and put changes into practice based on their input. If you do not go and deliberately change anything, not much is going to be different."

Diversity & Inclusion, published in March 2020, is meant to be a guide for the entire industry. The report defines diversity as looking "at who we are, the differences in our people in

a wide variety of ways, much of which can be measured," including gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and religion. The report defines inclusion as being "about creating an environment that provides opportunities for all employees to realize their full potential to bring their full self to work."

There are benefits to businesses that shift to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace culture. Inclusive work cultures are two times more likely to meet or exceed financial targets. They are three times more high performing and six times more likely to be innovative and agile. They also are eight times more likely to achieve better business outcomes.

"We are not going to make drastic change overnight on this," VHB Chief People Officer Keri Kocur told the magazine. "The work the group has done, and those best practices and actionable suggestions will help move the needle and make improvements." ■

FMI: To download a copy of the report, go to www.dpcweb.org and click on Diversity & Inclusion Report.

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Rick McCarthy, 1964 - 2020

An ability to listen, a drive to do good

RICK McCARTHY was happiest when he was working alongside people to do good, and he was adept at helping people with a diverse set of voices find consensus on issues such as housing affordability and transportation investment – all in the name of progress. McCarthy, who was the managing director of Eaton Peabody Consulting Group, died on July 9 at the age of 56 after a short battle with cancer.

McCarthy was an experienced consultant specializing in economic development and transportation who worked for clients including Maine Better Transportation Association, the Maine Chapter of the American Council of Engineering Companies, the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition and several municipalities.

"We will miss Rick a lot," said MBTA President Irv Smith. "He has worked with MBTA on issues of transportation and infrastructure funding for more than a decade, and the board had come to count on his keen insights and his ability to bring diverse groups together and find compromises that could work for all of Maine."

McCarthy was born in Plainfield, New Jersey in 1964 to Philip and Carole McCarthy. He graduated from Houlton High School (his dad worked as Houlton's town manager) and earned his bachelor of arts in history from the University of Chicago and master of arts in education from the University of Illinois.

McCarthy's career started in 1986 as a litigation assistant for Jenner and Block, a law firm in Chicago. In 1990, he moved back east and was hired as a litigation assistant with the McLane Law Firm in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. In 1996, he took a job as the planning coordinator for South Berwick and one year later went to work at the Maine State House as special assistant to then Senate President Mark Lawrence where he first put his talents to work as a skilled researcher, analyst and negotiator.

Lawrence, who currently is serving his fifth non-consecutive term in the Maine Senate, had met McCarthy when he tried to recruit him to run for state office. He was unsuccessful in that effort – McCarthy and his wife Michele had just bought a home and they had a young family to support. Still, Lawrence had been impressed by McCarthy's intelligence and drive.

Wrote Lawrence: "Two years later, I was elected senate president. I called Rick and asked him to come work for me as a policy analyst. I don't think I have ever seen anyone happier to be able to work in an arena he loved. He joined a staff of 'young Turks' I had brought into the office. Though new to Augusta, Rick quickly earned a reputation for his research, intelligence and analytical mind. He became my chief policy analyst and budget analyst, one of the most important positions in the State House."



Rick McCarthy

When Lawrence left his post as senate president, McCarthy stayed on for the next 11 years working for Senate presidents Beverly Daggett and Beth Edmonds. He also worked as a special assistant to Senate President Mike Michaud and later became Michaud's chief of staff.

In 2008, McCarthy joined the staff of Maine Tomorrow, a consulting group based in Hallowell that had been founded by former MaineDOT Commissioner John Melrose.

"I would characterize Rick as particularly skilled in listening to a wide range of views on public policy and figuring out where consensus could be found," said Melrose. "He was able to set aside his own views to focus on helping others find common ground. I suspect this is why he was successful helping several senate presidents craft legislation that was enacted."

Melrose was quick to note that McCarthy was more than a political wonk who thrived on

making the deal, he had a true calling for the profession he had chosen. "Rick was compassionate, and he enjoyed working for organizations focused on improving the wellbeing of Maine people," said Melrose, noting that the majority of McCarthy's clients were not corporate, but worked in housing, transportation, social services and local government.

When Maine Tomorrow merged with Eaton Peabody in 2011, McCarthy joined Melrose at the new firm, the Eaton Peabody Consulting Group. There, McCarthy continued to do what he did best – bringing people together from diverse points of view to find consensus and make life better for the people of Maine.

Jessica Mauer, the executive director of the Maine Council of Aging, wasn't his client but she did benefit from his generosity and friendship over the years. She met McCarthy when she first started working on the issue of senior housing. "We were at a meeting about the whole brokerage piece, and he said, 'These are the five things you need to know,'" recalled Mauer. "He showed me how it worked and that helped me jump into advocacy."

"He was the consummate teacher," said Mauer, who said that McCarthy also showed the role that transportation played for Maine's elder population. "He was a pretty unique person in his ability to always be supporting forward progress."

"Rick was smart and dedicated and he liked working for people who were trying to help people," said Bill Ferdinand, chair of Eaton Peabody's legislative and government relations practice group. "Those were all his clients... the mayors, early education, Head Start, transportation. That's what he liked to do."

Ferdinand noted that McCarthy was a "strong Democrat," but that he



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'Business unusual'

How MaineDOT is navigating the pandemic

WE ARE now about six months removed from those few memorable days in mid-March when the COVID-19 pandemic quickly tightened its grip on our nation. Initially, we wondered whether we'd have to shut down Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) job sites – something some other states did. Within a day, we watched our office teammates pile their desktop computers and monitors onto office chairs and push them out of the building as they went home to prepare for teleworking assignments that had no end dates. Anxiety hung in the air.

Fortunately, MaineDOT loves a challenge. New information about the virus helped quell some fears. At MaineDOT, we have implemented new safety protocols that allow us to continue the important work that is necessary to ensure the safety and mobility of the traveling public. I instituted nearly daily communication. Virtual meetings have become the norm. Recognizing that our current situation is far from "business as usual," we coined the phrase "business unusual" to describe the way we continue producing work under these strange circumstances.

Face coverings, social distancing, and new maximum capacities for vehicles and offices have become ubiquitous. The nature of outdoor work helps mitigate potential exposure. Our contracting partners play a crucial role in helping us make sure job sites stay safe. Early in the pandemic, we included new guidance in our contracts, requiring each contractor to submit and adhere to a safety plan pertaining to COVID-19.

These safety protocols have allowed our project development team to continue delivering work for bidding at an exceptional rate: 97 percent on-time delivery – likely to be a new record for us. From January to June, MaineDOT advertised 150 projects with a total construction value of \$250 million.

In April alone, we opened 58 contracts – more than we have in any one month in the last three years. At a time of extreme economic uncertainty, continued production at MaineDOT is supporting thousands of good-paying private sector jobs.

Traffic volumes plummeted in mid-March. Statewide vehicle counts initially dropped by about 50 percent. While volume has steadily rebounded over time, the year-over-year drop in late August was still a little less than ten percent – a decrease that would have been alarming during normal times.

The silver lining on that cloud is this: having fewer vehicles on Maine roads has allowed us to do more construction activities during the day when operations are safer and costs are lower.

Given this environment and the need to maintain the right balance between public and economic health, Governor Mills approved our recommendation to keep our foot on the gas pedal of Maine's economy. In May, we took a calculated

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MaineDOT

MaineDOT has kept working through the pandemic, and the agency even has updated its normally tongue-in-cheek message boards with reminders to keep Mainers and visitors to the state safe.

risk and accelerated 10 capital projects worth an estimated \$33 million, when some other states were delaying work.

Given the outdoor nature of our work, reduced traffic volumes, and moderating construction prices, this looked like the right thing to do for Maine travelers, workers and taxpayers. In one instance of this, we worked with our contracting partners to accelerate bridge joint work on I-295 in Portland. This work would have been significantly more expensive, more disruptive and more time-consuming under pre-pandemic circumstances.

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To pay for maintaining and adding capital work, we were banking on the fact that Maine voters would once again approve our annual transportation bond, and they did in July. In fact, voters approved the \$105-million bond by a margin of 78 percent – the highest approval rate of a transportation bond since 1965 – validating our efforts in a big way. We remain constantly humbled and grateful for their support.

Of course, the dramatic drop in traffic volume is having a direct impact on Maine's Highway Fund. MaineDOT gets most of its funding from the Highway Fund, which is primarily funded by our state's gas and diesel taxes. Fewer people driving translates to less money coming into transportation coffers. July 2020 Highway Fund revenues were down \$2.5 million (8.1 percent). The Revenue Forecasting Committee estimates a drop of approximately \$30 million in the current fiscal year followed by a drop of another \$30 million in the next biennium.

Unfortunately, funding challenges are nothing new at MaineDOT. In early March, just days before the pandemic drastically changed our lives, a nonpartisan group of lawmakers and industry experts put a dollar amount on Maine's annual chronic unmet transportation funding need: \$232 million.

That unmet need estimate also assumes \$100 million of annual bonding. The revenue reduction resulting from the pandemic makes the climb ahead even steeper. We will continue to look for ways to stretch the funding we have even farther, seek every available federal dollar, and we may need to rely on bonding even more in the near term while interest rates are the lowest in modern history. In the long-term, however, we all know that the infrastructure funding situation in Maine is unsustainable.

Moving forward, the only certainty regarding the COVID-19 pandemic is uncertainty. No matter what changes have occurred by the time these words reach you, we know the need for long-term transportation funding solutions is more urgent than ever.

People across the political spectrum agree that investments in infrastructure pay off in the short and long terms and that a safe and reliable transportation system is fundamental to a vibrant economy. MaineDOT has proven to be an efficient and reliable engine that supports safety, the economy, and quality of life; it's just running out of gas. ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Bruce Van Note is Commissioner of the Maine Department of Transportation and an enthusiastic Green Bay Packers fan.

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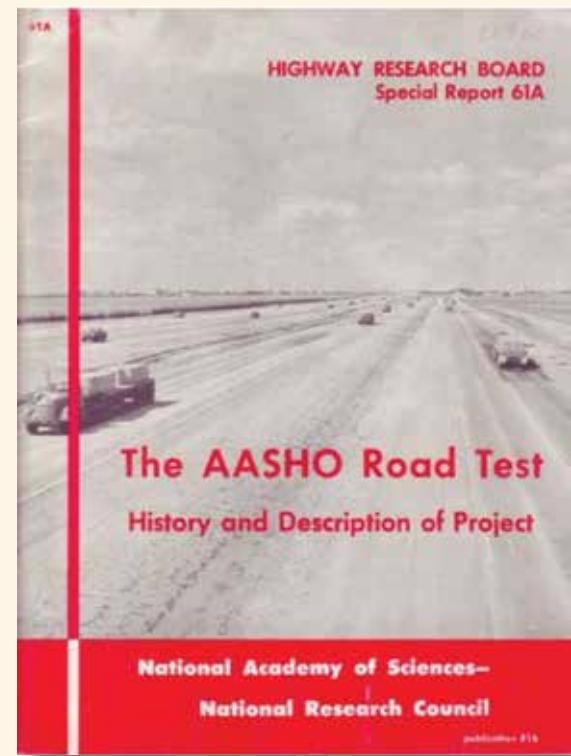



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11 million miles

IN THE August 1960 edition of *The Maine Trail*, the editors ran a short story telling readers that the AASHO (American Association of State Highway Officials) Road Test had been extended five months by the Highway Research Board of the National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council (NAS-NRC). The extra time enabled the test project to meet its original goal of a million applications of specific axle loads on selected pavement test sections in order to determine how traffic contributed to the deterioration of highway pavements.

Officially, the Road Test was "... to study the performance of pavement structures of known thickness under moving loads of known magnitude and frequency." The Federal Highway Administration has called the Road Test "a landmark in highway and bridge design that has never been equaled."

Located in Ottawa, Illinois, the Road Test was the largest, most comprehensive highway research project ever undertaken. From

the data collected, a pavement design guide was issued in 1961 and called the *AASHO Interim Guide for the Design of Rigid and Flexible Pavements*. Major updates were issued in 1972 and 1993.

At the time of our story, the project's test vehicle fleet had accumulated nearly 11 million miles between launch of the project in October 1958 and summer 1960, traveling on seven miles of two-lane pavement organized in six loops, half concrete, half asphalt. The course was designed with 836 distinct sections to test different surface, base and subbase thicknesses. The course also included 16 short-span bridges.

The AASHO Road Test introduced many concepts in pavement engineering, and the data gave rise to the Generalized Fourth Power Law which states that damage caused by vehicles is "related to the 4th power of their axle weight." The Road Test also established a quality assurance standard for road construction that is still in use today by departments of transportation and local governments. ■



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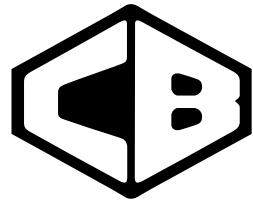
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