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UP AND COMING: MBTA's newest scholarship recipients

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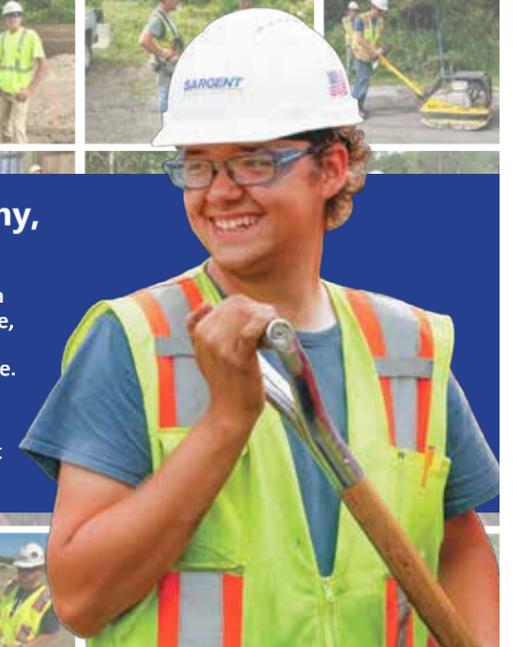


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MAINE TRAILS

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Maine Better Transportation Association

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Irvin Smith, MBTA President



What's on the horizon?

To understand what the future holds for transportation in Maine, we can look to our recent and not-so-recent past

WHAT DO we have to look forward to with the new year and a new administration?

It's that time of the year that everyone is looking out over the next 12 months and trying to figure out what kind of year it's going to be. After this past year, I would say just about anything is possible, but here are my best guesses as to what will be happening in Maine's world of transportation:

1) TRAFFIC IS GOING TO REBOUND TO PRE-VIRUS LEVELS.

I can't say precisely when, but let's face it, Mainers are itching to get back to work and back to play, and as soon as we get around to vaccinating everyone who wants a vaccine, people won't waste a minute getting back out there on the road. I would even venture to guess that tourism is going to see a big gain next summer. Nothing will seem better than a lobster roll with family and friends and a good mountain hike or a day on the rocky coast, especially after what we're all going through.

2) WE'RE STILL GOING TO HAVE PROBLEMS FINDING ENOUGH MONEY.

This should be no surprise to any MBTA member who's attended a meeting with us in the past decade. And once you add the effects of the coronavirus on public travel, we're not going to have nearly enough money for a while to pay to keep our roads, bridges, ports, rail and other transportation up to snuff. Let's face it, even if there is a big comeback

in traffic and tourists are lined up at the Piscataqua River Bridge, we're still not going to be making enough in state and federal gas tax to pay for all the things we need to do. I know that's cheating, because that's pretty much old news to most of you and something that's been going on for 25 years now. It was the early 1990s when Congress last raised the gas tax in Washington under President Clinton. There have been three presidents since then, and while most of them and Congress have claimed that transportation was a priority, no one has been able to get the Republicans and the Democrats together long enough to hash it out. For a long time, everyone's been scared of raising taxes. Seems like lately, they are simply scared of agreeing with the other side. Some hope that our new president Mr. Biden will be able to get the two sides talking -- and doing something -- about it. I might be willing to put myself on the hope side of things, and just to hurry things along, I'd be more than willing to take a Senator or two down a bumpy Maine highway to help make the case.

3) TO HELP PAY FOR THINGS, GOVERNOR MILLS IS GOING TO PROPOSE A BOND.

I'm not alone, I am sure, in hoping that bond will be a fairly big one. That also is something in the "old news is new news" category. In fact, since I first penned this column, the Governor has proposed a large bond issue. Since Governor LePage, a bond has been the go-to solution for the funding gap. The problem is that the funding gap is growing. . . it was growing even before the coronavirus came along and threw a wrench into our economy. Now, that gap has gotten so big -- it's \$70 million more this year than last year's \$230 million -- that the usual \$100 million bond is, as usual, not going to be enough.

4) MORE MAINERS AND MORE VISITORS ARE GOING TO BE LOOKING FOR OUTLETS.

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Dan Duhamel
1968 - 2020

cars. A Nissan Leaf battery can last between 150 and 226 miles. The newest models from Tesla can travel up to 400 miles on one charge. But they still need to recharge, and Maine doesn't have the infrastructure yet to make EV charging feasible for most drivers. So I bet MaineDOT is going to be working hard to set up electric vehicle charging stations wherever possible, and the Maine Turnpike Authority will continue to do so. That has a lot of ramifications for our economy. We should all keep in mind what that will mean for the Highway Fund, and make sure our leaders are ready when it's time to consider what kinds of user fees we will need for all those electric vehicles coming down the road.

5) WE'RE ALL GOING TO BE SO GLAD TO SEE EACH OTHER, IN PERSON.

And hopefully that will happen sooner rather than later.

I could keep on prognosticating, but it's time to get back to work. We all need to keep working on behalf of our membership, with the MaineDOT, as well as our representatives and senators, to keep the need for more funding on the front burner and work collaboratively on finding ways to increase funding for our infrastructure here in this great state we live in. Good infrastructure will attract more business and will allow our tourism industry to thrive.

I am so proud of our industry and how everyone has risen to the challenge over the past year. Thank you so much for volunteering to do the essential work of MBTA's committees and for your sponsorship of MBTA's events and scholarships. Our members are the lifeblood of this organization and we are so grateful to have you on our team.

Finally, I look forward to seeing you all live in 2021! ■

2021 MBTA CALENDAR

THURSDAY, MARCH 11
Cumberland County Meeting
Portland Sheraton,
South Portland

WEDNESDAY, MAY 5
Annual Meeting
Hilton Garden Inn,
Freeport

JUNE
Washington County Meeting
TBD

THURSDAY, JULY 15
Infrastructure Golf Tournament
Waterville Country Club,
Oakland, 9 am

THURSDAY, AUGUST 5
Aroostook County Meeting

SEPTEMBER 10 - 11
Fall Convention & Golf
Samoset Resort, Rockport

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1
PDH Tour

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2
Maine Transportation
Conference
Augusta Civic Center

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9
Bangor Area Meeting
Black Bear Inn, Orono

For information about MBTA
events, go to the Events tab at
MBTAonline.org

A NOTE TO OUR MEMBERS: Due to the coronavirus outbreak and meeting restrictions that are likely to continue in coming months, the MBTA board of directors may change the 2021 meeting schedule. Stay tuned!



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ONRAMP



Putting on the brakes

RAILROADS HAVE developed and installed a roughly \$15 billion automatic system on nearly 58,000 miles of track as required by a year-end deadline, according to federal regulators.

Federal Railroad Administration chief Ronald Batory said the long-awaited technology known as positive train control, or PTC, is aimed at reducing human error by automatically stopping trains in certain situations, such as when they're in danger of colliding, derailing because of excessive speed, entering track under maintenance or traveling the wrong direction because of switching mistakes.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has said more than 150 train crashes since 1969 could have been prevented by positive train control, which was required in 2008 after a commuter train collided head-on with a freight train near Los Angeles, killing 25 and injuring more than 100. That agency had recommended positive train control for years before Congress mandated it after that crash. Then Congress extended the original 2015 deadline twice and gave railroads until the end of this year to complete the system.

Bob Chipkevich, who oversaw railroad crash investigations for several years at the NTSB, told the Associated Press that positive train control is a significant achievement, particularly in areas where commuter trains operate and where hazardous gases are transported, but added that it could have been done years earlier and it is still not required on all tracks nationwide.

The braking system uses GPS, wireless radio and computers to monitor train position and speed, and it can give engineers commands. ■

Keep on truckin'?

THE U.S. trucking industry is preparing for a battle against the coronavirus, a worker shortage, driver restrictions and legislation, according to the American Transportation Research Institute.

The pandemic has slowed efforts to train, test and license truck drivers, adding to driver shortages. Because of pandemic shutdowns and restrictions at training schools and motor vehicle administrations clamping down on the flow of new entrants, one industry expert worries that even with vaccines, challenges will continue into 2021 as states try to make up for lost time.

"What I fear is that, even when you get people inoculated, you're still going to have the covid hangover, so to speak," Commercial Vehicle Training Association President Don Lefevre told *Transport Topics*. "You're going to have not only CDL transactions, but just normal motor vehicle transactions that have largely been put off because of covid. . . In many states, that's still going to lead to further backlogs."

Meanwhile, enhanced enforcement of drug and alcohol restrictions, which went into place in January 2020, is having another effect on the driver pool; by year's end, about 46,000 truck drivers had been issued drug violations, the majority testing positive for marijuana use. Only 4,400 of those truckers returned to work after completion of treatment and follow-up tests.

Abigail Potter, manager of safety and occupational health policy for the American Trucking Associations, attributes the large number of drug test failures to the legalization of marijuana in most states.

In 2021, ATA also plans to continue its legal battle over Rhode Island's trucks-only tolls, which the group has argued discriminates against interstate commerce. ■



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William Casey



Garrett Daniels



Tyler Field



Joshua Reed

Up and coming

Meet the talented new MBTA Educational Foundation scholarship recipients

IN 2020, the MBTA Educational Foundation awarded more than \$45,000 in scholarships to 39 students who promise to bring a wide range of experience and insight to transportation and business in Maine. MBTA members met many of these outstanding young students at the MBTA Virtual Cruise and Auction on November 19.

Finding and encouraging young talent who will work to improve transportation in Maine and elsewhere is the mission of the MBTA Educational Foundation, a tax-exempt, non-profit charitable organization that awards scholarships annually to deserving Maine students studying transportation-related fields of study. The MBTA hopes scholarship recipients will become future leaders in the industry.

Congratulations to all of this year's scholarship winners. The MBTA looks forward to hearing from you – and working with you – in the future! And many thanks to our members' generosity that made these scholarships possible.

Transportation Trailblazer Scholars

WILLIAM CASEY

William Casey is a senior at the University of Maine, studying civil engineering. Growing up in the rural town of Dover-Foxcroft instilled within him an appreciation for good roads. As a student at Foxcroft Academy, he gravitated toward drafting and design courses. Together, those have led him to select a concentration in transportation engineering, backed up by classes taken in structural and geotechnical engineering. In the past, he has worked as a logistics intern at a South Portland-based porous concrete company, where he focused on analyzing drawings, and creating takeoffs and shipping builds. Currently, William is a teaching assistant at UMaine, assisting the next rising cadre of engineering students, and spending his time

between classes, work, and capstone. Additionally, in his free time, he enjoys writing poetry and short stories, and has recently been working on getting his friends into online chess. Upon graduation, William hopes to join the ranks of Maine's engineers, and is planning on starting his career in Bangor.

GARRETT DANIELS

Garrett Daniels was born and raised in Falmouth. He graduated from Falmouth High School cum laude and is currently enrolled as a freshman at University of Maine as a computer engineering major. At Falmouth, Garrett played four years of soccer and basketball and was an active member of the service club. He has recently developed a passion for exploring the hiking and fishing opportunities that Maine has to offer. Garrett's academic strengths are those subjects that require analytical thinking and problem solving, such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). As he begins his college career as an engineering student, he has taken a serious interest in the transportation industry. He sees opportunities in this industry that will play to his strengths, and provide pathways for career growth and development. More specifically, he is eager to explore transportation-related applications for his computer engineering degree including automated vehicles, logistics optimization, and intelligent transportation systems. Garrett is very grateful for this MBTA Trailblazer scholarship and thankful he is able to further pursue his career-related endeavors.

TYLER FIELD

Tyler Field was born and raised in Hampden. After graduating from Hampden Academy, he enlisted with the Maine Air National Guard as an engineering specialist. He is a full-time project manager for the Guard, and is responsible for designing and managing construction projects of all disciplines at the air base in Bangor. Tyler focuses heavily on repairing

ABOUT THE MBTA EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

The MBTA Educational Foundation is a tax-exempt, non-profit charitable organization that awards scholarships annually to deserving Maine students studying transportation-related fields of study. To learn more about the MBTA Educational Foundation and its scholarship programs, please visit MBTAonline.org.

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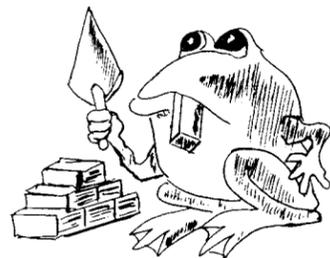
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Jaeden Folster



Brenden Goss



Brenden Goulet

base roads and pavements, ensuring transportation needs are met for the 101st Air Refueling Wing. He recently was honored with the Outstanding Airman of the Year for the State of Maine award. Tyler is also enrolled in the civil and environmental engineering program at UMaine. After graduation, he hopes to commission with the Maine Air National Guard as an engineering officer. He hopes to work in Maine and abroad, fulfilling transportation engineering needs for the military. Living and working in his home state, close to family and friends, is of utmost importance to Tyler, and he hopes to provide the state of Maine with the best professional and quality results possible throughout his career and service.

JOSHUA REED

Josh Reed has been interested in the construction and transportation industry since he was a young child. A graduate of Foxcroft Academy, he is currently a third year construction engineering technology major with a minor in surveying. Josh knew this was the right career choice because of his love of the outdoors and working on construction projects. He has interned two seasons with Sargent in Old Town where he learned valuable skills including how job sites work, how to oversee small crews, site layout, pipe laying, and more. Josh has tremendous respect for the company, and finds great value in learning from members of the Sargent team. Upon graduation, Josh hopes to work in the transportation and construction industry in Central Maine. He is happy with his career choice and upon graduation, looks forward to working to restore Maine's roads and helping the economy grow.

Kenneth Burrill Scholar

MADELINE BLAIR

Madeline Blair grew up in Nazareth, Pennsylvania, and is a currently a junior civil engineering major at UMaine. Her younger brother, Drew, also in the CE program, is the primary reason she transferred to UMaine from the University of Connecticut. Madeline already has a bachelor of science in pharmacy studies; however, her career path changed after working at UConn's Transportation Safety Research Center in their Advanced Pavement Lab. At the lab, she fell in love with the world of engineering. She also enjoyed working for MaineDOT last summer as a field inspector and felt fortunate she was able to work in-person despite the pandemic. She loved the work, the people, and the knowledge she gained about what goes into successfully building and maintaining highways. At UMaine, Madeline is the fundraising chair of the Society of Women Engineers (SWE) as well as a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). Outside of engineering, she is the president of the swim club and the

risk management chair for her sorority, Delta Zeta.

Timothy M. Folster Scholars

JAEDEN FOLSTER

Jaeden Folster is from Enfield, where he attended Penobscot Valley High School. He will graduate from UMaine in May of 2021 with a degree in civil engineering, and a concentration in transportation engineering. After graduation he plans to stay in Maine and work in the transportation engineering field. During the past two summers Jaeden worked for the MaineDOT working in the concrete and structures testing lab. He chose the transportation concentration because it lets him be creative as far as roadway design and the classes "clicked" with him easier than some other civil engineering categories. Jaeden believes the transportation field will allow him to travel and get to know the areas where the work is done. Outside of school, Jaeden enjoys sports and being outside. He has helped his local high school baseball team and Motor City legion baseball for the past few years. During the winter he enjoys snowmobiling with family. In the fall he likes to relax at hunting camp.

BRENDEN GOSS

Brenden Goss is a second-year mechanical engineering student at the University of Maine. He graduated from Cape Elizabeth High School in 2019. For his senior transition project, Brenden was able to shadow at a Maine manufacturing company, D&G Machine Products for two weeks, which served as his first introduction to the engineering industry. After talking to the chief engineer, who had also attended UMaine, he was offered work on the shop floor to gain hands-on experience in the manufacturing world. During Brenden's first year of college, he developed a passion for engineering and confirmed that the engineering industry was one that he wanted to pursue a career in. Over the late spring and summer, Brenden returned to D&G Machine and worked in assembly, putting together, and finishing weldment frames. He intends to return over college breaks and gain experience running a machine and working in the office. In the future, Brenden wishes to work in southern Maine in the manufacturing or power industry.

BRENDEN GOULET

Brenden Riley Goulet grew up in Dayton until his family moved to Presque Isle - his mom's hometown. School has never come easy to Brenden, but he has always been successful with experiential learning and using his hands. He started taking classes at NMCC in agriculture, and then had the opportunity to work summers in Southwest Harbor, first at Beal's Lobster Pier Restaurant, then he transitioned to the dock, and as a stern man on a lobster boat, where he learned a lot about

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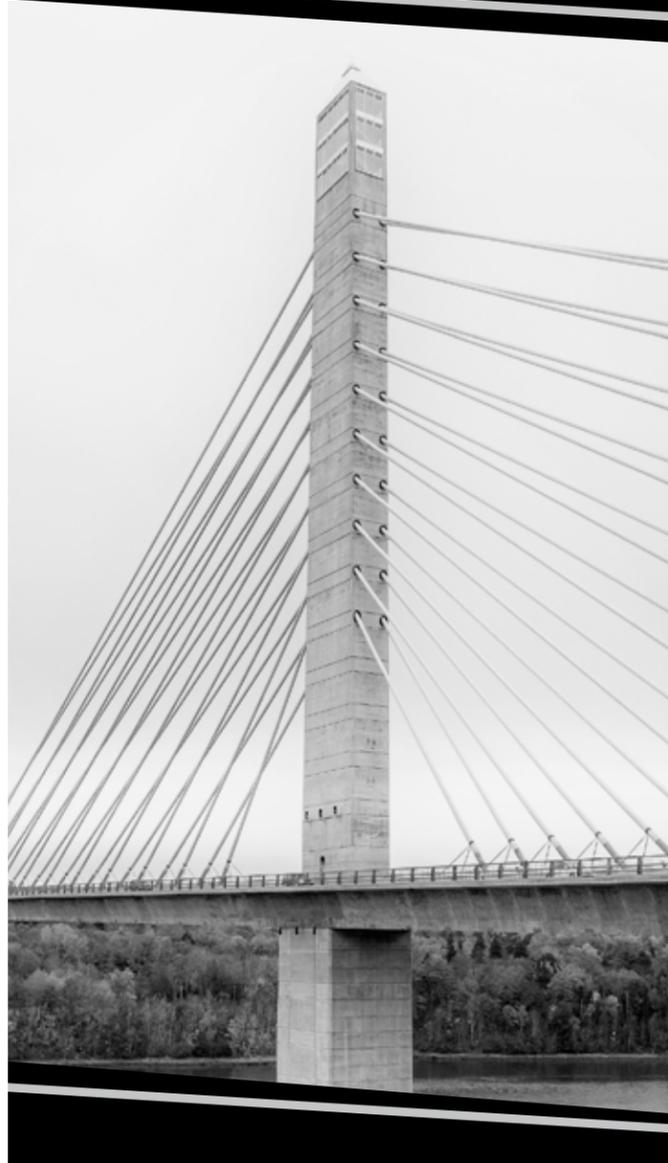
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Austin Sheehan

working vessels. The dock had a simple welding system to repair boat rigging and the dock's forklift, and he would sometimes help the captain fix the boat. He knew he could learn to do satisfactory welds, but to be certified, he would need the proper education, so he enrolled at Beals College in their welding program. After graduation, he hopes to utilize his welding skills, perhaps in aquatic transportation, or as part of the "Green Movement," helping to improve the use and transference of fossil fuels to other parts of the great state of Maine.

AUSTIN SHEEHAN

Austin Sheehan grew up in Old Town and graduated from Old Town High School. He is currently in his senior year at the University of Maine majoring in mechanical engineering technology. He chose this major because he loves math, problem solving and seeing the results of his



Frank Schweizer



Kaleb Barrett

hands-on hard work come to life. He interned with JSI Store Fixtures for the past two summers and it reinforced the fact that he loves designing and working on hands-on projects. Austin is a member of the UMaine student chapter of ASHRAE. Austin is hoping to find a rewarding job in the engineering field in the greater Bangor area when he graduates in May 2021. He loves the different seasons, people, and environment in Maine. In his free time, he loves to spend time fishing, hunting and just being outside.

Frank A. Healy Scholar

FRANK SCHWEIZER

Frank Schweizer is a senior in the University of Maine's construction



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Emerald Boisselle-Byers

engineering technology program. He is from Blue Hill and attended George Stevens Academy. Since the age of 16, he has been working for O&F Construction of Blue Hill, where he found his passion for building. After attending the University of Maine, he branched out of residential construction and into the realm of heavy civil construction. He has held an internship for T.Y. Lin International during the summer of 2018, CPM Constructors over the summer of 2019, and most recently worked with Northeast Paving over the summer of 2020. Frank enjoys every component of building a road or bridge. He appreciates the satisfaction of knowing that one's work impacts hundreds of thousands of people positively each year without them even knowing it, and notes that every day of work in transportation helps make a positive change in the community. After graduation, Frank will enter the work force to improve Maine's infrastructure and hopefully make everyone's drive a bit smoother with a new piece of road.

Millard Pray Scholars

KALEB BARRETT

Kaleb Barrett attended Freeport High School where he was a three-season athlete and where he discovered his passion for engineering. He is in his second year at UMaine, majoring in construction engineering with a minor in business management. Kaleb recently completed an internship at CPM Constructors as part of a team working on the Jonesport-Beals Bridge. He learned a great deal about the industry during this time and developed skills that will serve him well in the future. Kaleb would like to continue building on his knowledge to prepare for a career in the transportation field. He is looking forward to a second internship this summer with additional responsibilities. With the combination of his construction engineering classes and business courses, Kaleb hopes to own and operate a Maine-based construction business one day. In his spare time, he enjoys playing on the UMaine lacrosse team, fishing, and golf.

GILBERT BASABINKA

Gilbert Basabinka was born in Kigali, Rwanda. His childhood was challenging after the civil unrest that destroyed the country's infrastructures. There were no roads and bridges, and many houses were burnt at that time. In his elementary studies, he went to a school on a different hill than the one his family lived on, so during rainy seasons he was unable to attend school since the river between his home and school would overflow, and the bridge was too unstable. The bridge was comprised of three pieces of wood and bags of soil in empty spaces in between. Growing up in that environment has created



Mackenzie Clement



Abigail Morrison-Ouellette

in him a sense of responsibility and the courage to work hard so that one day he will be the one solving engineering problems. Gilbert thought civil engineering would be the perfect path towards that life goal. Upon his arrival in the U.S., he went to Southern Maine Community College, then transferred to University of Maine, majoring in civil engineering, with a concentration in transportation engineering. After graduation, he will look for a job in Maine unless a better offer from somewhere else comes his way.

EMERALD BOISSELLE-BYERS

Growing up in Montclair, New Jersey, Emerald Boisselle-Byers worked for his father's residential construction company, primarily remodeling kitchens and bathrooms, and developed a niche for designed tile work. Obtaining a love for construction and pursuing a higher education, Emerald came to Maine to study construction engineering technology at the University of Maine. Working through the program, he found himself enjoying the curriculum and lab studies. While taking soil mechanics, he found his passion and explored becoming a learning assistant, where he now helps teach the class to other students. Working for CPM Constructors on the Jonesport-Beals Island Bridge was his first taste of transportation engineering, and he developed skills in project management and quality assurance. Looking forward, Emerald hopes to stay in Maine and become a professional engineer to help with the inspecting and design of structures around Maine and, perhaps, the globe. The boundaries are endless in the eyes of this young individual.

MACKENZIE CLEMENT

Mackenzie graduated from Skowhegan Area High School in the spring of 2017 and has been a personal banker for Skowhegan Savings Bank since April of 2016. She is currently a senior attending the University of Maine at Farmington, working to achieve a bachelor's in psychology with a minor in creative writing. Next year, she hopes to be accepted into UMF's master's in counseling psychology with an emphasis in the creative arts program and become a licensed clinical professional counselor in Maine. Soon after her father graduated from Skowhegan Area High School, he began his dedicated career in Maine's transportation infrastructure field. Mackenzie has always admired the importance of his work - a career path that her father has proved over the years to be as fulfilling as it is imperative for Maine citizens. Although she does not plan on pursuing a career in transportation, she continues to respect the rewarding and essential work done in this field.

ABIGAIL MORRISON-OUELLETTE

Abigail Morrison-Ouellette grew up in Scarborough with her parents and older sister. Her family has always been involved in the transportation



Jacob Pray



Peter Cogley

and construction industry in Maine, and she feels fortunate to have met many people in the industry through the years. She first became interested in engineering and transportation after attending the Consider Engineering summer program for high school students at UMaine. Abigail is currently a sophomore at the University of Maine majoring in civil engineering, along with participating in the Honors College. She feels the department at UMaine is excellent and likes the environment where the engineering students work together to help each other solve problems. Abigail is interested in a career in transportation because she has seen the importance of reliable roads and bridges to everyone's daily life, whether commuting, visiting family, or going to school. She understands the value that these activities bring to the community and economy of Maine, and she looks forward to contributing to the transportation industry. Abigail enjoys reading, doing crafts, hiking, and spending time with her family.

JACOB PRAY

Jacob Pray was raised on the shores of New Jersey and regularly visited his grandparents in Cumberland County. Here he would see his grandfather often at his workplace at CPM Constructors, where he was introduced to construction, and infrastructure. Both his father and his grandfather had worked in construction, and it is important to Jacob that he spend time in this sector of the work force. He has seen his father and grandfather reap the rewards of their work in their everyday lives. Their work ethic has been passed down and gets put to good use, as he currently studies at the University of New Haven, majoring in psychology, with a double minor in biology and music. While his academic interests do not reflect those used in construction, he hopes to spend time working in the same field as his family to gain hands-on experience while helping build essential infrastructure for the community. With the pairing of education and hands-on experience, Jacob hopes to be a well-rounded individual who can contribute to all aspects of his community.

Lucius Barrow Scholars

PETER COGLEY

Peter Cogley is a senior civil engineering student at the University of Maine. He graduated from Mountain Valley High School where he played football, tennis, and wrestled, and was a member of the math team. His interest in engineering was sparked in high school by his love of math, and after taking AutoCAD classes. Peter became a member of the UMaine Steel Bridge Team for his first two years at UMaine. He worked for FGS/CMT one summer where he tested soils and concrete both in the lab and in the field; this experience grew his interest in the transportation/construction industry. Last summer, he worked



Lauren Labbay



Timothy Doyle

at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard for Cianbro as an engineer intern. He learned a great deal about the behind-the-scenes work that make construction projects possible. Upon graduation he anticipates returning to work with Cianbro, and hopes to remain in Maine for his career, but is also willing to consider other opportunities. Over time, he hopes to work his way to a project manager position.

LAUREN LABBAY

Lauren Labbay is a senior at the University of Maine majoring in civil engineering and minoring in economics. She graduated from Mt. Ararat High School in 2017. At UMaine, Lauren has enjoyed participating in ASCE, sustainable solutions, and intramural soccer. She enjoys being part of a team and working towards a common goal. Last summer she worked for MaineDOT as a transportation aide on multiple sites where sidewalks were being built. Her favorite part of the job was experiencing construction during the day and night. She gained a lot of knowledge of how designs are built in the field. Lauren is pursuing transportation because she has enjoyed the classes, but also the work experience. The past two summers working for MaineDOT and the Greater Augusta Utility District have taught her a lot. She wants to have a positive impact in the world and believes helping improve how people travel is a great way to achieve this. After graduation in May, Lauren hopes to find a job in Maine where she can contribute to the field.

Maine Transportation Scholarships

TIMOTHY DOYLE

Timothy Doyle grew up in the small town of West Gardiner and attended Gardiner Area High School where he was a soccer goalie and the Maine State Youth of the Year for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Maine. He is currently a second year mechanical engineering major in the honors program with a minor in finance at Western New England University in Springfield, Massachusetts. At the university, he works as a student ambassador, referees youth soccer games and plays intramural volleyball. Last summer, he had the opportunity to work as a transportation aide for MaineDOT where he was able to see highway projects on Route 1 and Route 95. He is looking forward to returning to Maine next summer to learn more about transportation projects in Maine. After graduation, he is hoping to work in the transportation industry in New England to make a difference in the lives of the traveling public.

CASEY VANDENBOSSCHE

Casey VanDenBossche is a junior studying civil engineering at Western New England University. Casey is a third-year player on their tennis team and a member of the student chapter of ASCE. He enjoys his free



Lucas Bentley



Harald "Scott" Christiansen

time at college by hanging out with his roommates and friends around campus. Casey grew up in West Gardiner and plans to return to Maine after graduating from college. He has worked as a transportation aide for the past two summers for MaineDOT, working on projects at the Portland International Marine Terminal, located on the Fore River underneath the Casco Bay Bridge in Portland, and on a bridge replacement project in Chesterville. At home, he enjoys spending time with his pets and catching up with friends and family that he does not get to see while away at college.

LUCAS BENTLEY

Lucas grew up in the towns of West Gardiner and Gardiner with an interest in counting random things and how everything was built. Lucas worked with his grandfather in masonry for two summers, learning how to build chimneys and more. From his interest in how things were built and building them, you might think he liked masonry, but he did not. Instead, he majored in civil engineering so he can build and design infrastructure and roads, as well as crunch some numbers. After he graduates with a degree in civil engineering from UMaine in May 2023, Lucas hopes to become a transportation engineer and eventually a professional engineer. Lucas wants to thank the MBTA Educational Foundation board for selecting him to receive a scholarship this year. He said it was "extremely helpful in paying for my semester."

HARALD "SCOTT" CHRISTIANSEN

Harald "Scott" Christiansen grew up in Palermo until high school, when he moved one town over to China, and attended Erskine Academy. The University of Maine was his first and only choice of colleges. From the beginning, he found the aspect of civil engineering that interested him the most was transportation and structures. Bridge design and analysis was specifically what he enjoyed doing and found that it was fun to solve problems through classes or the Steel Bridge Team, which he joined during his second semester. He found it very entertaining and educational and now, during his junior year, he is the president of the team. COVID has presented a new set of challenges that he has had to solve for the benefit of his team. After graduation, he knows that he will be staying in Maine. Scott plans on getting his FE during his senior year so that when he goes out into the field, he can start working towards getting his PE license.

KETTIE CORMIER

Kettie is a junior civil and environmental engineer at the University of Maine. She was born and raised in Tolland, Connecticut, and went to Tolland High School, where she knew she wanted to become an



Kettie Cormier



Logan Doucette

engineer that would help make a difference in today's environment. Since attending University of Maine in 2018, she has fallen in love with the curriculum and transportation and environmental engineering. She believes that environmentally friendly transportation is an important and vital field to help improve the well-being of the planet. She plans to look for a job on either the east or west coast after graduating in May of 2022. She is very thankful to the Maine Better Transportation Association Educational Foundation for its contribution to her education.

LOGAN DOUCETTE

Logan is from Bradley where he can either be found with a fishing rod in his hand or at the engineering office. His love for engineering and the transportation industry was sparked at a young age when he discovered the complexity of roadways and the industry in general. Logan is currently a junior in the Construction Engineering Technology Department at UMaine and works as an engineering intern on campus. Once he was introduced to AutoCAD and other similar programs during his freshman year, Logan was amazed by the endless possibilities these programs possess when designing roadways. Logan truly found his niche by combining his love for engineering and his infatuation for the transportation industry. When looking to his future, Logan aims to use his experience and education to engineer and design roadways. He is also interested in seeing different parts of the world; therefore, he would not mind traveling or moving for work. Either way, he knows he wants to make a difference with his hard work and dedication towards engineering and the transportation industry.

GRETCHEN FAVREAU

Gretchen Favreau grew up in Falmouth. She has two older brothers who graduated from UMaine with degrees in mechanical engineering and business marketing. From a young age, she realized the importance of community service. As she progressed through school, she developed a strong passion for math and art. She considered majoring in architecture but realized that civil engineering would allow her to delve deeper into her interest in math. She is currently a sophomore studying civil engineering at the University of Maine, interested in home remodels, home repairs, building and refinishing furniture. Gretchen loves being outdoors whether by the ocean or hiking in the mountains. She is also teaching herself about photography and different techniques to use to achieve various visual effects. After college, she hopes to work at a civil engineering firm as a practicing structural engineer or to attend the University of Maine at Augusta to get a degree in architecture. Eventually, she hopes to be involved in a project building shelters for those without a home.



Gretchen Favreau



Sam Foglio

SAMUEL FOGLIO

Samuel Foglio, from Shapleigh, is a junior in the civil engineering program at the University of Maine with a concentration in transportation. He enjoys spending time on the lake and mountain biking in the summer, and skiing and snowmobiling in the winter. He will be entering his third year as an intern at the Maine Turnpike Authority this summer, where he has seen first-hand what goes on behind the scenes to keep the turnpike running smoothly. His first summer was spent assisting engineers while he obtained a general understanding for the industry. He worked performing calculations and analyses, organizing data, attending meetings, and visiting project sites. This past summer, he was assigned to the Kennebunk Travel Plaza expansion project. He learned how to inspect construction items, including asphalt paving, drainage, earthwork, surveying, and traffic maintenance. As he has progressed in this position, he has learned the importance of and skills necessary to interpret project documents, including MaineDOT specification books, MTA contracts, and plan sets. After graduation, he hopes to get a position in the transportation design or construction management field in Maine, with plans to obtain his professional engineer license in the future.

CHRISTOPHER FRENCH

Chris French is originally from Belgrade and attended Messalonskee High School. He is a fourth year civil and environmental engineering student at UMaine. He has a concentration in structural engineering and is also pursuing a minor in construction engineering technology. He has really enjoyed the program, and he could not imagine doing anything else. Chris has appreciated learning all the basics of each branch of civil engineering. For the past two summers, Chris has interned at Pike Industries. While there, he was able to see every step of the road construction process from estimating and bidding, to doing the layout for final striping on a newly paved road. Chris also has gained experience operating different equipment used in the process of road construction. Chris worked with a variety of different parties on a road construction project, including MaineDOT, various subcontractors, and local business/homeowners. He cherished the summer that he had at Pike Industries, and he feels fortunate to have accepted a full-time job offer where he will continue to pursue a career in road construction and transportation.

DUNCAN GRAHAM

Duncan grew up in Franklin, Massachusetts, and has always had a love for construction and working with his hands. After he graduated from Tri-County Regional Vocational High School with a focus on carpentry, he applied to the University of Maine's construction engineering program with the original goal of one day working on commercial buildings. When



Christopher French



Duncan Graham

he first arrived at UMaine, he had no experience with civil engineering and transportation work and did not really understand that aspect of construction. Sophomore year, he applied for a job with Sargent Corporation, hoping to learn about a different side of the construction world. He started the internship knowing nothing about the work he was doing and slowly began to learn what actually goes into a roadwork job. The more he learned about the work the more he began to enjoy it, and he now plans to continue his career with Sargent in the heavy civil industry.

KATIE LUCE

Katie Luce is currently a freshman civil engineering major at the University of Maine. She grew up in Sidney and gravitated towards engineering because of its combination of math and creativity. Katie always liked to be doing things or solving problems and enjoyed multiple engineering camps and job shadow opportunities prior to college. After one semester at the University of Maine, she has decided to minor in business administration or management to keep a wide range of options open. Katie would eventually like to work in Maine within the construction or transportation industry and manage projects with other engineers to make Maine's infrastructure safer and more efficient. Until then, Katie intends to be involved with internships and get real-world experience. In Katie's free time away from academics, she likes to participate in music groups, play lacrosse, and work on building her small business. She would like to say thank you to the MBTA for receiving the scholarship and for hosting a virtual awards ceremony even during times like these.

CHRISTOPHER SHEPLEY

Chris Shepley grew up in Winchester, Virginia, along the I-81 corridor. He has always had an interest in roadways, vehicles, and transportation in general. He was one of the little kids playing with LEGO cars and Tonka trucks, but now he is studying the effects of weather on pavement and roadway safety. Chris selected UMaine due to its community atmosphere. The four years he has spent studying civil engineering have taught him why Maine is "the way life should be." He enjoys being on the road, while improving safety and roadway design have also always been important to him. Chris is interested in making communities safer, more walkable, and bicycle friendly. As a cyclist, Chris has seen the perspective of the cycling community and hopes to incorporate their concerns into urban planning. Chris has been inspired by his transportation professor, Per Garder, to think critically about issues from several perspectives and consider as many angles as possible before coming to a conclusion. Chris hopes to become a project engineer in the private sector of transportation or infrastructure management in Maine upon graduation in 2021.



Katie Luce



Christopher Shepley



Amber Card



Patrick Cloud

Maine Maritime Academy

AMBER CARD

Amber Card grew up in Bowdoin, and her family runs a small earthworks business. She is currently in her second year at Maine Maritime Academy where she is studying marine engineering technology. She writes: "I always found the shipping/oil field industry very interesting because without these huge boats transporting goods, we would not have half the products we do. Besides being intrigued with the industry, I want to pursue transportation, because I love going to new places and seeing the world. Shipping out, I get to do exactly that." When she graduates from the academy, she will receive her bachelor of science degree in science and USCG third assistant engineer license. She also plans on sitting for the FE exam and once she obtains her third assistant engineers' license, she plans on shipping out through one of the unions in the industry. Eventually she hopes to transfer her experience at sea to work on the land and imagines one day working at a water treatment facility or a power plant.

PATRICK CLOUD

Patrick Cloud originally grew up outside of Washington, D.C., and is currently a senior marine transportation operations major at Maine Maritime Academy. Since he was a child, with the encouragement

of his uncle who is a boat captain, he wanted to make a career as a professional mariner. Currently maintaining a 3.95 GPA, Patrick has further added to his major by adding a minor in international business and logistics, as well as additional professional development courses. Patrick has enjoyed the rich learning experiences of the training cruise aboard the *T.S. State of Maine* and a summer internship aboard the *M/T Polar Discovery*, sailing from Alaska to the West Coast of the United States engaged in commercial petroleum transport. After graduating MMA, Patrick plans to enter the professional maritime industry. Patrick was thrilled to have received the generous support of the Maine Better Transportation Association's scholarship, which will help to make his dreams of becoming a top maritime deck officer a reality upon graduating in 2021.

JACOB ROUTON

Jacob Routon is from the small town of Church Point, Louisiana. He has sought to pursue a career in the transportation industry since his childhood, where he dreamed of becoming a ship captain. Upon graduation from Maine Maritime Academy, Jacob intends to work in the maritime industry as a ship's officer while living in Maine, which he has grown to love during his years at Maine Maritime.

Eastern Maine Community College



Jacob Routon



Andrew Toothacker

ANDREW TOOTHACKER

Andrew Toothacker was born in Portland, Oregon, and his journey across the country was motivated by a love for food. At 17 he began an apprenticeship to be a chef at a Portland restaurant which was named by *Bon Appetit* magazine the "4th Best New Restaurant in America." His relationship with food also took him to France where he was introduced to regenerative agriculture. As the barrier between great cooking and great farming became more transparent, Andrew worked across the United States to learn about commercial scale food production. In Maine, Andrew feels incredibly lucky to call 160 acres of abandoned dairy land his home. In the wake of COVID-19, Andrew has begun a completely new leg of his journey: finding occupational stability by translating his abilities into a new field. His passion for production agriculture pushed him towards Eastern Maine Community College's diesel engines and heavy equipment technology program, where he can develop essential skills working with agricultural equipment in the Downeast region. Andrew is extremely grateful for the support provided by the MBTA. This scholarship award will allow him to purchase tools that will serve him for many years to come.

Northern Maine Community College

KORY CROCKETT-HARRINGTON

Kory Crockett-Harrington grew up on an old chicken farm where his family grew hay. Even before Kory could walk he was riding around the field while the rest of his family was haying. Eventually he started to help his uncles and grandfather fix the tractors, equipment and vehicles. In his junior year of high school, he was in a program where students could choose somewhere to work for a week, to see what different careers entail. Kory chose an automotive shop and enjoyed it, but wasn't quite sold on that as a career. So his senior year, he completed the heavy equipment program at his local technical school, which led to his decision to enroll at Northern Maine Community College for diesel hydraulic technology. After graduating, he hopes to work at a well-established heavy equipment dealership that gives him competitive pay and ample opportunity to grow his experience and knowledge.

Southern Maine Community College

VANESSA BAMBE

Born and raised in Rwanda, Vanessa Bambe is a first-year college student in Maine. Growing up in a small village in Rwanda made it



Kory Crockett-Harrington



Vanessa Bambe

hard for her to major in engineering. The education system did not have adequate tools to assist in the learning process. Therefore, she wanted to pursue higher education in the United States in hopes of getting a better education. She is pursuing a degree in civil engineering and aiming to become a transportation engineer after earning an associate's degree at SMCC and then a bachelor's degree in civil engineering at UMaine. What inspired her dream was the lack of well-built transportation in her own country. She is aspiring to improve transportation in Rwanda. Vanessa plans to also earn her master's and Ph.D. at the University of Maine. After graduation, she hopes to work at Sebago Technics in Maine and improve her skills and knowledge in the transportation field.

ALEX GOODWIN

As someone who originally hailed from California, it was quite the change for Alex to find himself on the other side of the country in his parents' hometown of Portland. As a kid, one thing he found comforting was the fact that, despite the distance, he and his father continued to work on the family's cars like they always had. Once Alex was old enough to purchase his own car it was off to the races. Day and night all he could think of was, "The Car," and how he could improve it. As time went on, the idea of becoming a mechanic simply seemed like the next most logical step. Upon graduating, Alex's dream is to work at a performance shop, where the goal is to squeeze every ounce of power from the engines that come through. In addition to school, Alex works at a garage, and on weekends meets up with professionals in the industry to listen to their stories on how they make top of the line engines. "The more I learn the more I know this field was meant for me."

Washington County Community College

WENDY SMITH

Wendy Smith wears a lot of different hats. A student at WCCC, she has achieved her national certification for production technician, while pursuing her degree in production technology. She is on the student senate, and the second chance Pell implementation team for Washington County Community College. Wendy is a recovery and re-entry support coach, a community activist for criminal justice reform, and the president/founder of a non-profit organization called SOAR Gold, which empowers incarcerated women to pursue their educations. She has achieved all this while being incarcerated herself. Wendy found passion in production work, and knew she wanted to change her life from incarceration and addiction, which she has battled since 2001 when she was prescribed opiates for pain after suffering severe burns from a grease fire. Upon release from incarceration and graduation, Wendy plans to live in Milford with her partner Rachel, pursue a successful career in the

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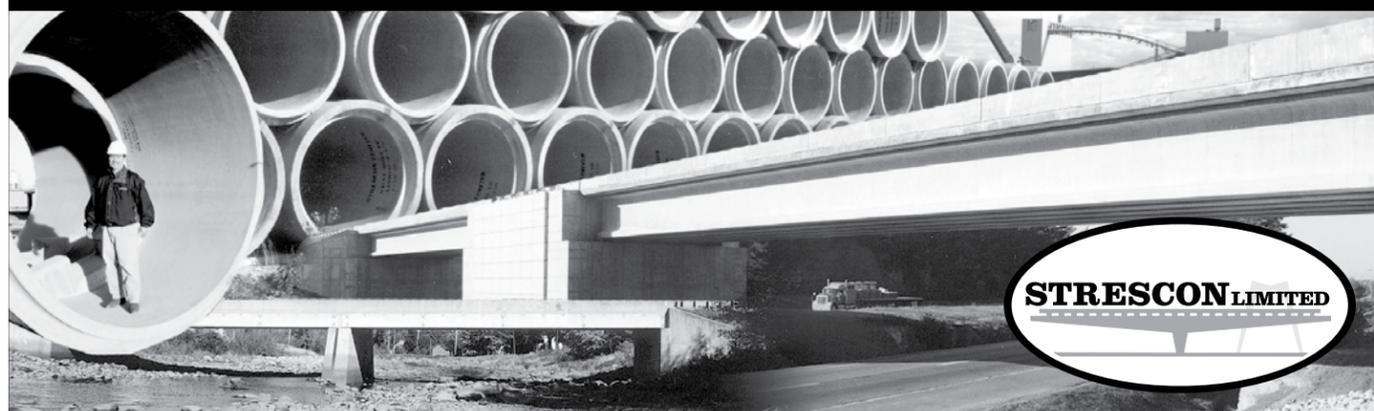
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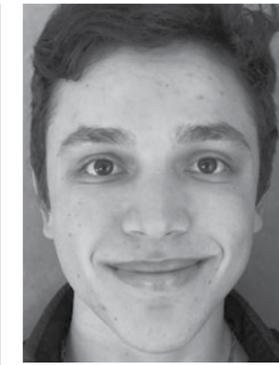
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Wendy Smith

production field, and spend quality time with her children and family. She will continue to assist incarcerated women with higher education and become a voice that helps reduce stigmas around incarceration and addiction. ■



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Making the grade

Transportation still shows room for improvement as Maine Section ASCE releases fourth infrastructure report card

By Ian Ward

FOR THE fourth time in a row, Maine's transportation infrastructure has received mediocre marks in an independent report by the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE).

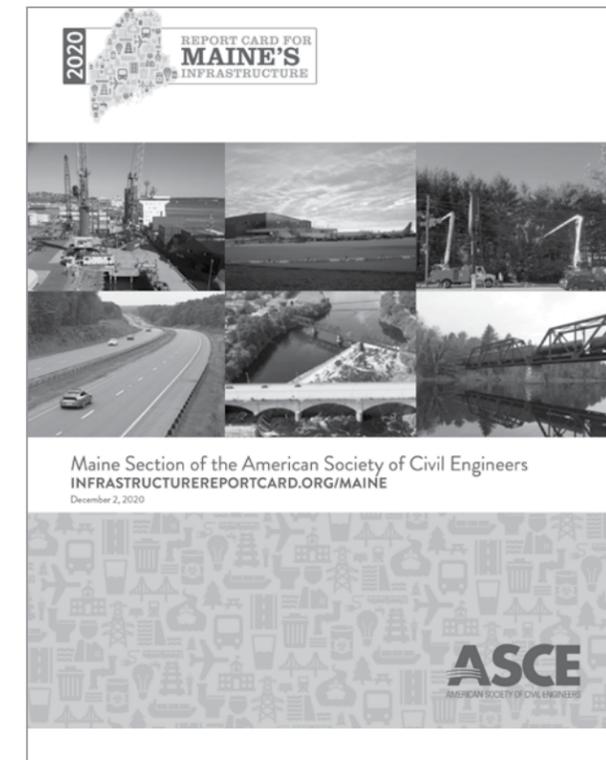
Maine infrastructure received an overall grade of C- in the ASCE's Report Card for Maine Infrastructure, a quadrennial evaluation of the state's transportation, water, sewer, and energy infrastructure, released on December 2. Maine has received four consecutive C- ratings dating back to the ASCE's inaugural report in 2008.

The 2020 report card, which analyzed data gathered before the onset of the coronavirus pandemic in March, reflected the uneven improvement of the state's transportation infrastructure across the past four years. Maine's aviation and rail infrastructure did show moderate improvement between 2016 and 2020, with the grade for rail infrastructure increasing from a C to a C+, and the grade for aviation, Maine's highest-ranked category, jumping from a C+ to a B. The grades for Maine's other transportation categories stayed steady, with ports receiving a B- rating, bridges a C-, transit a D+, and roads a D.

In a statement released in response to the report, MBTA President Irv Smith called on Maine's lawmakers to act on the report's findings. "The Maine Section ASCE's findings give us some bright spots in transportation, but there is still a lot of work we need to do," said Smith. "We hope that the new Maine Legislature is listening, that they read this report and that its members take its findings to heart and step up investment in transportation."



Maine Section ASCE President Dan Bouchard. The group issued its 2020 Report Card for Maine's Infrastructure in December and found several areas of transportation in need of investment.



The report comes as the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) faces a severe funding shortage in the wake of the economic crisis caused by the pandemic. Even before the pandemic, MaineDOT was facing a \$233 million shortfall in funding, a margin that is likely to grow as the state faces continued uncertainty about COVID-19's effect on revenues.

Nevertheless, said Dan Bouchard, the president of the Maine section of the ASCE, the lesson of the report is clear: more investment leads to higher ratings and better outcomes.

"When we invest significantly, it helps improve the grade. When we don't invest, the grades are going to decrease," said Bouchard. "It all comes down to dollars. Aviation and rail had major investments, and the grade reflected that, and the data reflected that."

Between 2008 and 2020, Maine's ports received close to \$104 million in state and federal funding, while the state's four major airports have benefited from \$121 million in federal Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funding since 2016 and \$731 million in Passenger Facility Charge revenue since the program took effect in 2000. By contrast, Maine's roads, transit infrastructure and bridges, all of which are funded primarily by the 30-cent gas tax, have not seen significant funding increases in recent years.

Bouchard said that despite Maine's stagnant ratings, the ASCE received encouraging feedback on the reports from interest groups and agencies around the state.

"The overall response we've received from agencies has been, kind of, 'Thank you, this is very helpful for us to be able to go to the legislature and go to our



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users and show that the data . . . is showing trend lines about how investment helps,” said Bouchard. “It’s not just money being thrown away.”

In a statement by the Maine Section ASCE accompanying the report, MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note commended the group for its frank appraisal of the state’s infrastructure.

“ASCE is a tough grader, but the report card is fair. The dedicated and hardworking men and women at MaineDOT do the best they can with limited resources,” said Van Note. “We look forward to future discussions about both short- and long-term funding solutions to help us continue to improve the safety, economic opportunity, and quality of life we cherish in Maine.”

The report also made recommendations to raise Maine’s grades across the next year four years. First and foremost among these recommendations, Bouchard said, are improvements to Maine’s asset management systems, which would allow MaineDOT to better analyze the condition of existing infrastructure and more efficiently prioritize short- and long-term capital improvements. In the long term, Bouchard said, giving MaineDOT the tools to proactively identify critical infrastructure needs would save the state both money and time.

“It really comes down to knowing what you have and knowing what’s out there and the condition of it,” said Bouchard. “If you know what you have and you know the condition of it, then you can create long-term

planning so you can have fewer surprises. A water main breaking in the middle of the night is going to cost a lot more to fix than replacing it based on a [predetermined] timeline.”

Aside from transportation infrastructure, the report highlighted the middling condition of Maine’s public infrastructure more broadly. Aside from aviation and rail, the state’s infrastructure showed no improvement in any of the 14 other categories that the report analyzed, with the rating for schools staying steady at a C, solid waste remaining at a C-, and wastewater holding at D+. Meanwhile, the grade for hazardous waste infrastructure slipped from a C- to a D+, drinking water and state parks declined from a C+ to a C, and energy dropping from a B- to a C+.

“To be honest with you, we should be very concerned with any of our infrastructure that is graded a C or lower, because that shows just how precarious the situation is,” said Smith in his statement. “A grade of C can easily become a C- or a D in four years if we aren’t vigilant and make the investments we need to make in our state’s infrastructure.” ■

FMI: To view the full report, visit infrastructurereportcard.org/maine.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Ian Ward has written about sports and business for publications including the *Press Herald*, the *Lewiston Sun Journal*, the *Kennebec Journal*, and *Politico*.

Delta returning to Bangor

ALMOST EIGHT months to the day it suspended service to Bangor International Airport, Delta Air Lines is set to resume flights at the airport. The airline has announced it will resume daily flights between Bangor and LaGuardia Airport in New York on March 2.

Delta had suspended flights to Bangor and 10 other airports on July 8, 2020, because of the drop off in passenger traffic due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Air travel worldwide has suffered during the pandemic, and Bangor International Airport has seen passenger travel drop by 71 percent since April 2020.

Bangor International Director Tony Caruso told the *Bangor Daily News* he was “thrilled” to see the airline return and hoped Delta would be adding more scheduled flights in the future. He said that he recognized that commercial air travel will continue to face hurdles as the country emerged from the health crisis, yet he is hopeful that air travel would rebound after a substantial portion of the American public is vaccinated against COVID-19.

“People will still want and need to travel but are going to be ready to do so on their own



Bangor International’s passenger terminal. Air travel has decreased worldwide due to the coronavirus, but shows signs of rebounding as airlines like Delta begin reinstating flights to their schedules.

time,” Caruso said. “We’ll be here whenever that is.”

In addition to its Bangor-New York service, Delta has previously had flights connecting Bangor to Detroit and to Washington, D.C.’s Reagan National Airport. Delta is not yet

resuming service to either of those airports, although American Airlines currently flies from Bangor to Reagan National. ■

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Unexpected detours

70th Maine Transportation Conference explores the unexpected and unprecedented



Among the conference speakers: MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note; keynote speaker Carol Martsof; and UMaine College of Engineering Dean Dr. Dana Humphrey.

By Kathryn Buxton

FROM THE moment MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note and UMaine College of Engineering Dean Dr. Dana Humphrey gave their welcome messages, it was clear this was going to be a gathering like none other in the history of the Maine Transportation Conference. First, the conference schedule stretched over three days rather than the typical one-day event in years past. There was the format — it was held as a virtual conference with more than 400 transportation professionals, many of them tuning in from laptops and home offices throughout the state and country.

The conference began on Tuesday, December 1, 2020, with Commissioner Van Note wishing

everyone a “good afternoon.”

“Just two words in, and this transportation conference is already different,” said Van Note, observing that not only was the conference being held virtually, it also had foregone its typical early morning start for an afternoon launch. The schedule was designed to encourage broader participation and fight “Zoom fatigue” — the heavy eyelids and restlessness that occur after too many back-to-back virtual meetings.

For his part, Dean Humphrey noted he was pleased to see so many UMaine graduates among the speakers and audience as the conference got underway. Humphrey also chronicled the strange times leading up to the conference, a time when the country saw a 35 percent increase in online shopping and a 75 percent jump in the sales of bicycles as

Americans worked from home and found workarounds for their daily errands.

He noted that throughout the pandemic, UMaine had seen some interesting trends of its own: its largest class of engineering students ever (1,922) and an impressive job placement rate of 100 percent for its 2020 graduating class.

Humphrey also gave conference participants a quick tour of the new \$78 million Ferland Engineering Education and Design Center under construction at UMaine’s flagship campus in Orono, a building that he promised would have lots of “Black Bear blue” and “truly is going to be awesome.”

RIISING TOGETHER

Conference keynote speaker Carol Martsof of Urban Engineers, spoke specifically about the



Senator Susan Collins delivered a special message to conference attendees. Tora Johnson of UMaine Machias spoke about GIS mapping applications for rural communities. Dan Bouchard from the Maine Section ASCE gave attendees a look at transportation grades from the organization’s 2020 Report Card on Maine’s Infrastructure.



AGC's Murphie Barrett and AASHTO's Jim Tymon led off the policy discussions in a session about developments on the federal level. Former White House Chief of Staff John Sununu discussed passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act during the presidency of George H.W. Bush.

current affairs and the effects they are having on the transportation industry in her speech titled *Navigating the Sea of Change: We all Rise Together*. And while the pandemic and the challenges it has posed for the industry were top of mind among those Zooming in, Martsolf urged those present to look beyond that crisis to the larger sea of political, technological and cultural shifts underway. She likened the landscape of change the world is experiencing today to that of the world as it recovered from the influenza pandemic of 1918.

"The pandemic will end," said Martsolf before making several optimistic predictions. "Our next decade will be like the Roaring 20s with a lot of great change and positivity."

She then made the case for her audience to make the most of that change by fully understanding the impact of their work in transportation. "Transportation touches everything," she said.

Martsolf spoke about the need to stay in front of the changing landscape by changing the industry from within. Through a series of survey questions she posed to the audience and illustrations, she talked about the need to strive for more diversity, equity, justice and inclusion in the transportation industry.

"I feel really proud to stand with you and I know that together, we can improve the quality of life," said Martsolf. And she finished the way she had started with words of comfort and hope: "Things will get better."

'GOOD NEWS'

As in past years, the conference was divided into two tracks that offered two views of the forces shaping transportation: the policy track looked at political and cultural trends in the industry; the technical track explored the innovations in research and design.

The first of the policy sessions was headlined by two Washington, D.C. insiders: Murphie Barrett, vice president of AGC of America

and Jim Tymon, executive director of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), who looked at the possibility of Congress passing pandemic relief that would provide funding to cash-strapped municipal and state governments, as well as the effect a Biden presidency and new Congress may have on what has become not only a perennial transportation deficit, but also a federal Highway Trust Fund shored up by a series of stopgap funding measures over the past decade and more.

Jennifer Brickett, MaineDOT's director of planning, moderated the panel and guided Barrett and Tymon in a dialogue on the issues.

Both speakers were guardedly optimistic about prospects for a long-term funding solution from Congress and the incoming administration, and Tymon ventured to say it was "good news" that the Biden administration was signaling that it planned to make infrastructure a "top priority."

"It's safe to say their priorities are going to look different than the current administration's priorities," said Tymon, noting that the transition team has spoken with AASHTO representatives as they began to outline their plans for the next four years. "I think you're going to see this administration is going to be a little more multimodal than the existing one. More focus on transit and rail, and I think you're going to see more focus on urban areas as opposed to rural areas."

He said the real factor to watch is how well Congress and the new administration work together. "Because Congress is still going to be in charge of providing those yearly appropriations bills and writing that surface transportation reauthorization bill. . . the administration certainly has a role to play, but to some extent it's going to have to be a partnership."

In response to a question from moderator

Brickett about permitting and regulation, Barrett said that her group was watching what might happen in terms of environmental legislation as the new administration early on stated that it planned to make climate change a focus of its efforts. She said that given slim majorities in the Senate and House, Congress was going to be less likely to use its review powers to roll back environmental regulations than it had been during the Trump administration.

"We'll be keeping an eye on those regulations and making sure they don't have a detrimental effect on our nation's ability to improve our infrastructure," said Barrett.

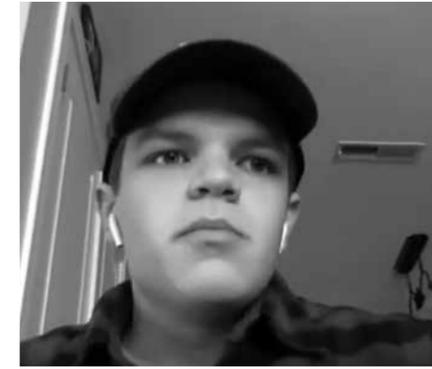
Tymon seemed less concerned, noting that indications were that the new administration seems primed to move ahead – and quickly.

"I think there's still going to be an effort to get projects done quicker," said Tymon. "They still want to build projects quickly, they just want better environmental results."

Other policy sessions included a look back at the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on its 30th anniversary.

For that session, MaineDOT's Paul Merrill held a question-and-answer session with former White House Chief of Staff and New Hampshire Governor John Sununu who served under President George H.W. Bush. Sununu, an engineer who became one of the most influential politicians of the era, coordinated the White House effort on the landmark legislation along with other political heavyweights, including Senator Ted Kennedy. The ADA has had a lasting impact, and Sununu said that was due to the measured approach the White House, Congress and advocates took to avoid unintended consequences as the bill was crafted.

"Great legislation is legislation that ends up being no more than it was intended to be and no less," said Sununu.



HNTB's Ariel Greenlaw offered an analysis of critical traffic data gathered during the pandemic. Student paper presenters Anthony Salafia (middle) and A.S.M. Mohaiminul Islam (right) won first and second place in the competition.

DATA, DATA AND MORE DATA

Moderated by HNTB's Paul Godfrey, the opening technical session was titled *Never Let a Good Crisis Go to Waste* and looked back at the early days of the pandemic and how data from traffic movements following the state's emergency declaration was used to adapt MaineDOT's work plan.

Ariel Greenlaw of HNTB looked at INRX traffic data to analyze the impact of the coronavirus on traffic in Maine and offered some surprising insights. She noted that after the initial decrease in traffic in March and April, traffic has been building to pre-pandemic levels, but has not quite fully recovered (commuter travel in the region is still at approximately 80 percent of 2019 levels, while morning travel no longer peaks at 8 a.m.). Tourism travel rebounded somewhat during the warm weather months with strong peaks over the July 4, summer weekends and Labor Day.

"Interestingly, there was no strong peak recorded on Columbus Day [known as Indigenous Peoples Day in Maine] in Portland while it was definitely seen to the south," said Greenlaw.

In his segment of the session, MaineDOT

Bridge Program Manager Wayne Frankhauser told how the department was able to use the precipitous decline in traffic during the early days of the pandemic to its advantage – accelerating planned work on bridge joints on a series of I-295 bridges in Portland and on the rehabilitation of the Piscataqua River Bridge on I-95 between Kittery, Maine, and Portsmouth, New Hampshire. "Both of these are extremely challenging traffic control projects," said Frankhauser. "There are really high volumes of traffic during normal times that really restrict the times that we can give contractors to do repairs."

Because of the drop in traffic, both project teams were able to avoid closing down lanes and nightwork, which meant considerable savings for MaineDOT.

In another technical session – *Have You Hugged Your Climatologist Today?* – Peter Slovinsky of the Maine Geological Survey demonstrated the most recent findings on sea level rise and storm trends in Maine. MaineDOT Chief Engineer Joyce Taylor offered participants a look at the findings of the Maine Climate Council, including the impact of rising water levels on essential transportation infrastructure in Maine.

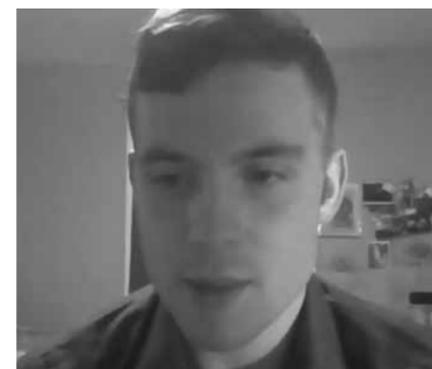
Another session – *Dashboard, Maps and Other Cool Stuff* – with Nate Kane of MaineDOT, Tora Johnson from UMaine Machias and Thea Youngs from the city of Portland, looked at how MaineDOT and Maine municipalities use digital data to plan for maintenance and other operational activities.

GETTING THE GRADES!

As in past conferences, a popular session was the Student Paper Competition. This year, four UMaine engineering students presented their work on a variety of transportation-related topics. At the end of the session, the audience chose the winners via virtual vote on Zoom.

One of the highlights of the conference was a press conference held on the second day when conference co-host, the Maine Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), released its 2020 Report Card for Maine's Infrastructure.

Maine ASCE President Dan Bouchard gave a short history of the report card and walked participants through the report card's six transportation categories: aviation (B), bridges (C-), ports (B-), rail (C+), roads (D) and transit (D+). The report card is a culmination



Student presenters Andrew Guimond (left) and Ethan Cates (right) were runners up. MaineDOT Chief Engineer Joyce Taylor discussed Maine Climate Council findings.

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of the work of more than 30 engineers who volunteered hundreds of hours to gather and analyze data regarding the function and condition of Maine's infrastructure.

"It's not financially feasible for every category to be an A," said Bouchard. "We would be happy to be in the B range, with additional attention turned as they slipped to a C. Unfortunately, not all the categories achieved this."

Bouchard also emceed the awards ceremony on the final day of the conference. MBTA President Irv Smith awarded the Student Paper Awards. "We heard four great presentations yesterday from some very impressive students from the University of Maine. There were over 150 people watching on Zoom yesterday. . . and in a sign of the times, one of the students presented remotely from Bangladesh," said Smith, acknowledging the extraordinary circumstances for this year's competition and conference.

First place winner (\$400) was Anthony Salafia for *Calming Traffic with Raised Crosswalks: Stevens Avenue in Portland, ME*. Second place winner (\$300) was A.S.M. Mohaiminul Islam for *Safety Study of Selected Sections of N1 & N5 Highway in Bangladesh Using iRAP Methodology*. Ethan Cates (*Bridge Safety: A Look at Structural Safety and Low*

Clearance in Maine) and Andrew Guimond (*Rollovers Involving Multitroop Carrier Vehicles*) were both runners up (\$150 each).

Smith also thanked Dr. Per Garder of UMaine's College of Engineering for organizing the contest, and for serving as "an inspiration for legions of students over the years."

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Division Administrator Todd Jorgensen presented the Paul L. Lariviere Transportation Excellence Award. FHWA staff nominate and select a MaineDOT employee "who has gone above and beyond the requirements of their position to make significant contribution or innovation in transportation," said Jorgensen, who announced that Ed Beckwith was this year's Lariviere Award recipient for his work in developing highway performance management systems (HPMS). Beckwith is HPMS coordinator in MaineDOT's Results and Information Office, and Jorgensen cited his "outstanding leadership, knowledge and partnership in the area of data quality."

In a pre-recorded announcement of the David H. Stevens Award, Commissioner Van Note told the story of Doreen Corum's more than 40-year career at the department, beginning as a clerk typist in her teens to the present day as director of financial processing, overseeing the

processing of \$15 million in payments every week. The award is named for Stevens, who served first as chairman of the Maine State Highway Commission, commissioner of the Maine Department of Transportation, and head of the Maine Turnpike Authority. Van Note also presented AASHTO 25-year pins to three MaineDOT employees: Assistant Bridge Program Manager Jeff Folsom; Office of Safety Director Bob Skehan; and Director of Human Resources Beth Getchell.

The conference closed out with a first of its kind, live question-and-answer session with almost all of the conference speakers logged into Zoom.

MaineDOT's Merrill moderated the session, posing questions from attendees leading to a lively exchange with topics ranging from traffic management during bridge reconstruction, the Maine Climate Council's recent report, who the Biden administration would be nominating for Transportation Secretary (the announcement came just days later that former presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg was Biden's nominee for that position), to what the next work plan will look like and what each of us can do to promote equity and equality in our work places. ■

UNEXPECTED DETOURS

70TH MAINE TRANSPORTATION CONFERENCE

STUDENT PAPER AWARDS

FIRST PLACE - \$400 AWARD
Anthony Salafia, UMaine, Calming Traffic with Raised Crosswalks: Stevens Avenue in Portland, ME

SECOND PLACE - \$300 AWARD
A.S.M. Mohaiminul Islam, UMaine, Safety Study of Selected Sections of N1 & N5 Highway in Bangladesh Using iRAP Methodology

RUNNERS UP - \$150 AWARD EACH
Ethan Cates, UMaine, Bridge Safety: A Look at Structural Safety and Low Clearance in Maine; and Andrew Guimond, Rollovers Involving Multi-troop Carrier Vehicles

PAUL L. LARIVIERE AWARD
Edward Beckwith, MaineDOT HPMS Coordinator

AASHTO 25-YEAR PINS

Jeff Folsom, MaineDOT Assistant Bridge Program Manager
Bob Skehan, MaineDOT Office of Safety Director
Beth Getchell, MaineDOT Director of Human Resources

DAVID H. STEVENS AWARD

Doreen Corum, MaineDOT Director of Financial Processing

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Maine Turnpike Authority Chair Joseph T. Sayward, seated at center, at a 1953 event marking the issue of bonds for the turnpike extension.

MAINE TURNPIKE PHOTOS

Breaking ground

The long-time association between the Maine Turnpike Authority and HNTB has had a lasting effect on transportation in Maine and beyond

By Kathryn Buxton

AS LEGEND has it, one of the most groundbreaking relationships in Maine transportation started among neighbors. The time was the mid-1940s, and the Maine Legislature had just a few years earlier established the Maine Turnpike Authority, a quasi-state agency to finance, build, manage and operate a toll highway from Kittery to Fort Kent, ultimately revised to end in Augusta. But how to do that? There was only one other modern toll highway in the country – the Pennsylvania Turnpike which opened in 1940 – and few people in Maine, much less the country, had any experience with building and operating a toll highway.

The idea to build a toll highway in Maine came from a York County state legislator, Representative Joseph T. Sayward, who later became chairman of the Maine Turnpike Authority. Sayward in 1941 urged passage of “An Act to Create The Maine Turnpike Authority.” The forward-looking idea was to build a modern highway that would connect Maine to a network of federal highways and usher the state into a prosperous post-war era. Still, Maine was a fiscally conservative state, and at the time, there were no regular sources of federal and state funds for major highway construction.

“That was when Maine Turnpike Authority then Chairman Joseph Sayward said, ‘You know, I have a neighbor who is an engineer. Maybe we should invite him in and see if he could help us,’” said HNTB’s Roland Lavallee, recounting the legend. “That summer neighbor was Colonel Enoch Needles, one of the founders of HNTB – Howard, Needles, Tammen & Bergendoff. And the rest is history.”

In early December of 2020, the two veterans of Maine transportation marked a platinum achievement in a characteristically measured and business-like celebration. HNTB’s Portland office and key HNTB and Maine Turnpike staff joined in a Zoom gathering to mark the firm’s 75-year history as the Maine Turnpike Authority’s general engineering

consultant, a working relationship that began in 1945 before the highway was even built.

CHICKEN-AND-EGG STORY

The challenge was how to pay for the new highway. By establishing the turnpike authority, the state was proposing an innovative financing method – to use revenue bonds that would be repaid entirely from toll revenues. With only few examples to look to, the challenge was how to make the case among bond buyers that the new highway would be a sound investment. It was a classic chicken-and-egg story. They needed money to hire engineers to design the project. But they also needed preliminary design and cost estimates to issue the bonds that would pay for the project. The latter was where the engineering firm founded in 1914 came in.

Because the newly formed agency had no budget to speak of, Howard Needles, as the firm was known in shorthand, agreed to work on a contingency basis, developing preliminary engineering and construction cost estimates for the massive project. The relationship was cemented on July 25, 1945, when the authority signed a contract with the firm. Howard Needles would furnish engineering services and would be compensated with six percent of the projected \$13 million construction costs. One of the first things the firm told the authority was that they would need another \$2 million to complete the construction. The December 1955 issue of *The Maine Trail*, the magazine of the Maine Good Roads Association (forerunner of MBTA’s *Maine Trails* magazine), details the months leading up to the construction and the bond issue: “. . . on February 15, 1946, almost exactly five years since Mr. Sayward’s Bill, An Act to Create the Maine Turnpike Authority, was presented to the Legislature, Mr. H. S. Parker, Vice President of The First National Bank of Boston, Trustee, issued a certificate of Delivery and Payment certifying that 15,000 Maine Turnpike Authority Turnpike Revenue Bonds of the denomination of \$1,000 each, dated February 1, 1946 and maturing



MAINE TURNPIKE PHOTOS

February 1, 1976, had been delivered to the purchasers upon the payment of \$14,302,083.33 which included the contract price of \$14,287,500 and accrued interest of \$14,583.33. And so the Authority was in business.”

LEADING THE WAY

The new toll highway that stretched from U.S. Route 1 in Kittery to Portland, the state’s largest city, opened to great fanfare in 1947. It was only the second of its kind in the nation, and it was a marvel of modern engineering with its wide straight lanes, limited access and unique funding model with all construction and operations supported entirely from user fees in the form of tolls collected.

The Maine Turnpike Authority and HNTB, as the agency’s chief consulting engineer, have continued to break ground and innovate. For more than seven and a half decades, HNTB has provided highway, tolling and transportation expertise to guide the engineering of the turnpike through major initiatives that have helped the MTA accommodate growing traffic safely and efficiently: construction of the second leg of the highway from Portland to Augusta in 1955; the 30-mile widening project that began in 2001; inauguration of New England’s first electronic toll collection (ETC) system in 1997; conversion to the multi-state E-ZPass system in 2005; the conversion to open road tolling; and the Portland

ABOUT THE MAINE TURNPIKE

The Maine Turnpike Authority is a quasi-state agency created by the Maine Legislature in 1941 to construct, manage and operate the 109-mile toll highway from Kittery to Fort Kent. When the first section of the tollway was completed linking Kittery and Portland in 1947, the Maine Turnpike became the second superhighway built in America—the Pennsylvania Turnpike was the first. Since its inception, the Maine Turnpike has set national standards for the way it is financed, maintained and continually improved.

Opening date: Dec. 13, 1947
 Length: 111 miles
 Number of toll plazas: 19
 Number of bridges: 183
 Number of interchanges: 22
 Number of toll transactions in 2019: 90,280,830
 Number of counties traversed: Four
 Net Revenue generated in 2019: \$140 million
 Executive Director: Peter Mills

The Maine Turnpike Extension broke ground in the spring of 1954 and was completed in December 1955 (upper left). Senator Edmund Muskie cuts the ribbon on the extension (upper right). At the Widening groundbreaking in 2000 – Governor Angus King is at the center (bottom left). “The Big Dig,” part of the Widening project (bottom right).

area widening project that is currently underway.

“Over the years, HNTB has helped the authority bring forward their vision of the future of transportation for Maine,” said Peter Mills, executive director at the Maine Turnpike Authority. “The Maine Turnpike has helped facilitate travel and boost vital economic development in our state, and HNTB’s expertise and professional excellence has been a critical driver of that success.”

STRATEGIC MINDSET

The relationship between HNTB and the Maine Turnpike goes deep. It predates the establishment of the Maine Department of Transportation by 27 years and the passage of the Federal-Aid Highway Act by eleven. It also coincided with Maine’s entry into the modern automobile era.

For HNTB, there is a sense of gratitude and appreciation for the work the two organizations have achieved over the years.

“We are thrilled to celebrate this milestone alongside the Maine

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Turnpike Authority,” said Lavallee. “We are proud of the great work we’ve been able to accomplish together, which without this partnership, simply would not be possible. Together, we have advanced the transportation possibilities for the state of Maine, its residents and the greater community.”

The fact that HNTB and the Maine Turnpike have maintained a working relationship as client and consulting engineer for 75 years is by any measure extraordinary, even for a company that was founded in 1914 and today numbers a staff of 5,000 at 77 offices across the country.

“It says something for a firm of our size that the Maine Turnpike Authority is our longest standing client,” said HNTB Vice President Paul Godfrey who heads the firm’s Maine and New Hampshire offices. “It’s not just about providing services, it’s also about the ability to be a trusted advisor.”

“I talk to somebody at HNTB every single day,” said Maine Turnpike Authority Treasurer Doug Davidson. Davidson, who is also an MBTA board member, said that there is a strategic mindset that the two organizations share. “The people I deal with at HNTB are also strategic thinkers which I find reassuring. When you are trying to plan something out 10 or 15 years, you need someone who has the vision of 10 or 15 years and also has the history of what’s gone on for the past 10 or 15 years.”

WHAT’S NEXT?

HNTB’s strategic mindset extends inward, as well. That means that the firm is always thinking long term and developing succession plans. So

ABOUT HNTB

HNTB Corporation is an employee-owned infrastructure firm serving public and private owners and contractors. With 106 years of service in the United States, HNTB understands the life cycle of infrastructure and addresses clients’ most complex technical, financial and operational challenges. Professionals nationwide deliver a full range of infrastructure-related services, including award-winning planning, design, and program and construction management.

Year founded: 1914
Number of employees: 6,000
Headquarters: Kansas City, Missouri
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer: Rob Slimp

An MTA crew replaces guardrail on the highway (top). HNTB’s Dale Mitchell, Ashley Stephens and Tim Cote at the 75th anniversary celebration (lower left). Maine Turnpike Executive Director Peter Mills discusses the Portland Widening at an MBTA event (bottom right).

when Lavallee, who had joined the firm 40 years ago and served for more than three decades as HNTB’s consulting engineer for the MTA, announced plans to scale back his work, the firm already had in place a plan for who would succeed him. Paul Godfrey, who has more than 30 years of engineering experience, assumed leadership of the Portland office, and Tim Cote, who joined HNTB 20 years ago and worked

on MTA projects for most of those years, took on the role of GEC project manager for the Authority.

Collaboration is the key to the GEC-client relationship, according to Cote. He said: “Throughout my career I have had the good fortune to work with the turnpike almost continuously and to me that’s been gratifying. It’s provided me with the opportunity to expand my horizons beyond the engineering I do day in and day out. To understand from Peter Merfeld [MTA chief of operations] about asset management. To learn from Doug Davidson the world of finance. And Erin Courtney [public outreach and marketing manager] about public relations and communications.”

“It has been really neat to see Tim take on the role and begin to make it his own,” said Godfrey. “Tim is the sixth turnpike GEC project manager at HNTB, but we’re already looking at who’s going to be number seven.” ■

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Tull joins VHB

KERRY ROBERT Tull has joined VHB as a senior project manager/senior geologist for the company's Massachusetts/Rhode Island Site Investigation & Remediation practice and the southern New England markets.



Kerry Tull

Tull has extensive experience characterizing properties impacted by releases of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), an emerging contaminant that has become a primary focus of state and federal regulators. Tull's experience includes developing cost-cap closure strategies for groundwater and soil clean-up programs, as well as nationwide multi-site assessment packages for corporate acquisition, Department of Defense

(DoD), and regulatory compliance.

"Kerry's wide-ranging skillset with PFAS and soil and groundwater clean-up programs will strengthen VHB's ability to continue to provide our clients with the best environmental clean-up and assessment services," said Katherine Kudzma, director of site investigation and remediation.

Tull previously served as a member of the board of directors for Massachusetts LSP Association and on several committees charged with rewriting sections of the Massachusetts Contingency Plan. Tull obtained his bachelor of science in geology from Northeastern University. ■

FMI: To learn more, visit VHB.com.

Ritchie new Sargent COO

ERIC RITCHIE has been promoted to chief operating officer at Sargent in Stillwater. Before taking on this new role, Ritchie was Sargent's vice president of operations for New England and previously served as general manager of Sargent Materials.



Eric Ritchie

"He has a proven track record in the industry, and our people and customers appreciate him for his innate alignment with our purpose and values," said Herb Sargent, president and CEO of the company. "He's a strong leader and has fit in well as vice president of operations for New England and has earned the privilege to lead Sargent's entire operations."

As chief operating officer, Ritchie will oversee all

field operations including the mid-Atlantic region and the estimating department.

Ritchie is second vice president of the board of Maine Better Transportation Association. He has chaired the MBTA's Membership Committee and won the annual member competition several times.

Ritchie and his family like to camp, hike, ride four-wheelers and fish. He has a dog named Chloe who is always at his side.

Sargent is a family of hundreds of employee-owners building infrastructure from wind farms to landfill cells in the northeast U.S. and mid-Atlantic regions. ■

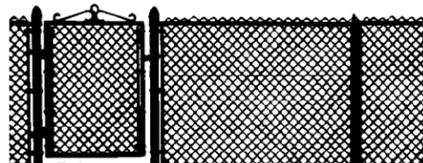
FMI: To learn more about Sargent, visit sargent-corp.com.

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Shir joins Sewall

M. NASIR SHIR has been named director of geospatial services at Sewall in Portland. Shir will lead and work with Sewall's geospatial team to diversify its clientele and acquire new projects involving geospatial technology. He will also participate in the QA/QC of geospatial data with other members of the team.

With two decades of geographic information systems (GIS) experience, his most recent position was GIS manager for the city of Portland. He is a graduate of Clark University where he majored in geography and international development. He holds a master's degree in community planning and development from the Muskie School of Public Service at the University of Southern Maine.



M. Nasir Shir

Currently, Shir serves on the University of Southern Maine Board of Visitors and the Maine Community Foundation board. Previously, he assisted the Maine GIS User Group (MEGUG), GISCI Outreach Committee, Maine Civic Leadership, Waynflete, and the Cape Elizabeth Land Commission and School Board. His proven ability to communicate cross-culturally results in numerous requests for support by the immigrant community. ■

FMI: To learn more, visit sewall.com.

Rowley promotes Holman

CHRISTINE HOLMAN, CPUC, CIC, has been promoted to executive vice president at The Rowley Agency. First hired as a commercial line account manager in 1986, Holman has been with the agency for 34 years. The company says her promotion is in recognition of her dedication, commitment and abilities.



Christine Holman

The Rowley Agency is one of the largest independent insurance agencies in northern New England with offices in Concord, New Hampshire, Bennington, Vermont and Portland, Maine. ■

FMI: To learn more, visit rowleyagency.com.

Myrtle Denney Willey, 1918-2020

MYRTLE DENNEY Willey, 102, of Port Charlotte, Florida passed away at Tidewell Hospice in Port Charlotte on November 24, 2020, after a long illness. She was the first woman to ever serve as an officer for Maine Good Roads Association, forerunner of the Maine Better Transportation Association. She was also president and owner of the former T.W. Dick Steel Co., a fabricating company in Gardiner, and chartering president of the Maine Chapter No. 276 of the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC).

Willey was born on July 7, 1918 in Jacksonville, Illinois, to Benjamin H. and Lora E. (Burke) Denney. She was educated in Jacksonville schools and married George Corbett in 1945. She worked as a fashion buyer, photographer and retail manager before moving to Miami Beach with her husband. There she worked for People's Water and Gas for several years. In 1956, she and her husband settled in Gardiner, where she took a part-time job at T.W. Dick Steel Co. and gave birth to her son, Michael. After a divorce, she focused on giving her family a better life and by 1968 was executive vice-president of the company, eventually becoming president and owner. In 1972, Myrtle married Leland B. Willey.

She was a board member of The Gardiner Savings Institution, Gardiner General Hospital, and United Way of Kennebec Valley, where she was also president. She was a long-time patron and board member of Forum-A at UMA, supporter of the Portland Symphony



Myrtle Willey

Orchestra, president of the Augusta Music Jazz Society, and a member of the Small Business Association of New England.

An active member of Christ Church Episcopal in Gardiner, she served on the vestry and also as music director and senior choir director. She was director of the Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce, a board member of the Kennebec Valley Medical Center and president of the Kennebec Valley Medical Center Auxiliary.

Myrtle was also active in professional and service organizations including AGC Maine, Construction Expo of Maine, MBTA, Zonta International, and was a member of the Maine Development Foundation Technology Task Force for Governor Joseph Brennan and Governor

John McKernan's Maine Business Advisory Board.

Retiring to Port Charlotte, Florida, in 1996, she became involved with St. James Episcopal Church where she served many years as a vestry member, choir director and as senior warden.

She is survived by her son, Michael Corbett of Port Charlotte and extended family in Illinois and California.

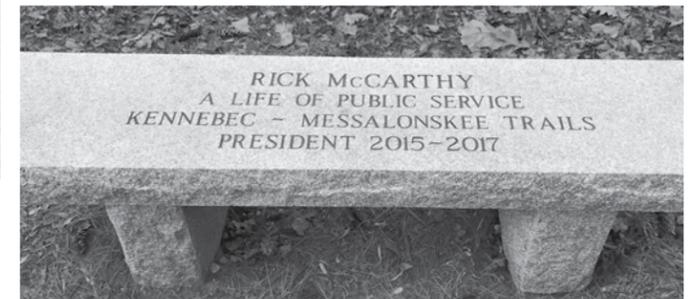
In lieu of flowers, the family asks to please consider a donation to the organizations that Myrtle so passionately served: St. James Episcopal Church at stjamespcf.org; Christ Church Episcopal at christchurchgardiner.org; Zonta International at zonta.org; United Way of Kennebec Valley at uwkv.org; or NAWIC at nawicmaine.org. ■

A bench with a view

Friends and colleagues remember Rick McCarthy



Rick McCarthy's family and friends gathered to dedicate the memorial on November 14, 2020, including his wife Michele McCarthy, son Sean McCarthy and his father Philip McCarthy (top). John Melrose and Peter Garrett (top right) worked together to place the bench on a site along the Kennebec River.



THE IDEA was a natural. John Melrose conceived of placing a granite bench on a quiet section of the East Kennebec Trail in Winslow which is part of Kennebec Messalonskee Trails network. Winslow is also where Rick McCarthy lived with his wife Michele on a farm and raised their two sons. The purpose was to create a memorial for Rick on the trail network he had worked so hard with others to develop, maintain, and preserve.

Melrose worked with Peter Garrett, founder of Kennebec Messalonskee Trails, and Maria Fuentes of MBTA, who helped with fundraising, to create a permanent reminder of Rick's passion for trails, the outdoors and transportation. He also consulted with the family, who provided input into the bench and site. John and Peter decided on the granite bench and scouted the trail for an appropriate location. Once the site was found, they got to work clearing the site which abuts the Kennebec River. The memorial was dedicated on November 14th, and quickly has become a popular vantage point where trail users can stop to enjoy birdsong, the glint of light on the water – and a moment of solitude. Both Melrose and Garrett spoke at the ceremony, as did Rick's wife Michele and son Sean.

Rick was born in Plainfield, New Jersey. He graduated from Houlton High School, earned a bachelor's degree at the University of Chicago and a master's degree in Education from the University of Illinois. Rick was an avid outdoorsman who enjoyed camping, playing guitar, fishing, hunting, canoeing, and working on his farm. He volunteered for Kennebec Messalonskee Trails, and served as president of the Board from 2015 to 2017.

McCarthy died in July after a courageous battle with cancer. He was well known in Maine for his deep knowledge of the state budget, the Maine Legislature, and government policy.

Widely respected in the statehouse, he first served as a policy analyst for Senate President Mark Lawrence. He eventually became chief of staff for three Senate presidents: Michael Michaud, Beverly Daggett and Betheda Edmonds.

He left the statehouse to work with John Melrose at Maine Tomorrow, where he could assist clients in both the private and public sectors on legislative issues. When Maine Tomorrow merged with a local law firm, McCarthy went as well. He became managing director of government relations for Eaton Peabody Consulting when Melrose retired.

At the time of this death, he did policy and advocacy work for several non-profits including MBTA, Maine Affordable House Coalition, Maine Mayors Coalition, Maine Transit Association, ACEC of Maine, and Maine Water Environment Association.

He is survived by his wife, Michele; two sons, Sean, and Noah; his parents Philip and Carole McCarthy; a brother, Greg McCarthy, and his wife Julie; two nephews, Connor, and Evan McCarthy; as well as several cousins and many friends.

The memorial bench faces the Kennebec River on the east Kennebec Trail. Walkers can access that part of the trail by going to the 752 Benton Avenue entrance.

Among the friends and colleagues donating to the memorial bench were: Bill Bridgeo; Maria Fuentes and Jeff Romano; Marcia Homstead; Marcia Larking; John and Molly Melrose; Susan Richards; Michael Saxl; Eaton Peabody; Maine Community Action; and Maine Council on Aging. Many other family members and donors made contributions to the trails organization. Memorial donations may be made to Kennebec Messalonskee Trails, P.O. Box 2388, Waterville ME 04903. ■



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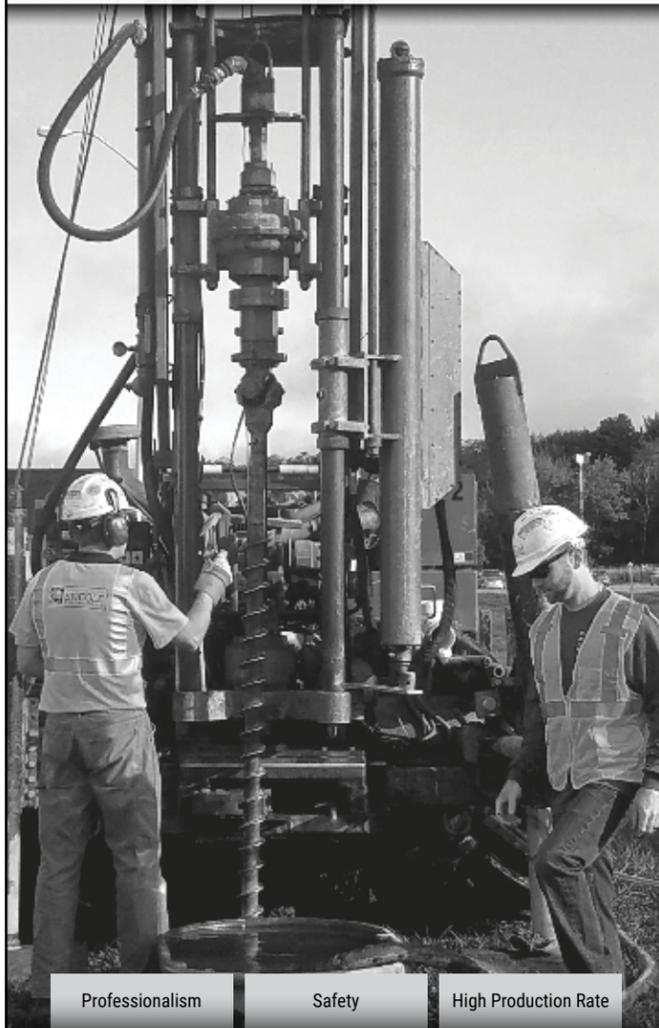
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Iver Winston Soderberg, 1927-2020

‘Forever a part of Aroostook County folklore’

IVER SODERBERG was an original. “Iver had a lot of stories,” remembered Tim Folster, who first met the Soderberg in 1984 when Folster was managing a construction project at Loring Air Force Base for his long-time employer H.E. Sargent, Inc. That doesn’t mean Soderberg would waste your time, added Folster. “He was a businessman, but you knew when you saw him, he would have a story for you. He was one of a kind.”

Iver Winston Soderberg, 93, died December 2, 2020, in Caribou after a brief illness. He was born in Woodland, Maine, on July 29, 1927, the son of the late Carl Adolph and Elsie (Nordstedt) Soderberg. Soderberg earned his stories over a long and adventurous life that took him from the family potato farm in The County to Japan during World War II and across the United States on a road trip with his best friend, Linwood Norton, in the late 1940s.

Soderberg, who was known as “Iver” to everyone he met, graduated from Caribou High School in 1945 and served in the United States Army as Technician 4th Grade in the 61st Field Artillery Battalion from 1945 to 1946. For 10 months while stationed in Japan, he performed duties as motor sergeant, responsible for drivers and equipment maintenance and inspection. There he honed his heavy equipment skills that would serve him well on the family potato farm – Soderberg Farms – and in the construction business he founded in the 1970s – Soderberg Construction Company.

In his late 20s, he operated a warehouse in Foxborough, Massachusetts, that was used to distribute potatoes from the family farm to outlets in the Boston region. That was where he met the love of his life through family friends. He married Monica Ulla Maria Ehrland of Stockholm, Sweden, on March 5, 1958. Monica was the founder of Monica’s Scandinavian Gift Shop in Caribou. They raised three children together: Kirk, Carl and Karen. Growing up in an entrepreneurial family, there was rarely an idle moment, and all three have become entrepreneurs themselves.

“Together they were a unique couple. They always brought us along. There was no sitting around,” said son Carl Soderberg, a past MBTA board member. While Iver and his sons Kirk and Carl operated separate companies, they often collaborated on many projects together for over 30 years.

“Iver was full of energy,” said Folster, who ended up working with



Iver Soderberg at the family potato farm.



Iver with his wife Monica Soderberg.

Soderberg on several Sargent projects over the years. “Iver was a mover and a shaker and he liked to make things happen.”

Herb Sargent, who first met Soderberg in the late 1980s, recalled: “Iver didn’t care a lot about appearances. In fact, when you met him, you might think that he didn’t have two nickels to rub together.” You would be wrong, of course, said Sargent, adding that Soderberg was as warm hearted as he was indefatigable and enjoyed solving problems and being in the thick of the action. “Iver wanted to be the guy you called on, whatever you needed,” said Sargent, who joked that was why Soderberg founded the Soderberg Construction Company, which he operated from offices on Sincock Street

in Caribou. “He seemed to do it as much for the connection as he did for the money,” said Sargent. Still, Soderberg was a shrewd businessman with a knack for making a good deal. Folster told the story of selling Soderberg one of H.E. Sargent’s used motor graders – which he turned around and rented back to Sargent on the next job they did at the base. “We ended up paying more to rent it back from him than we made in the sale,” said Folster.

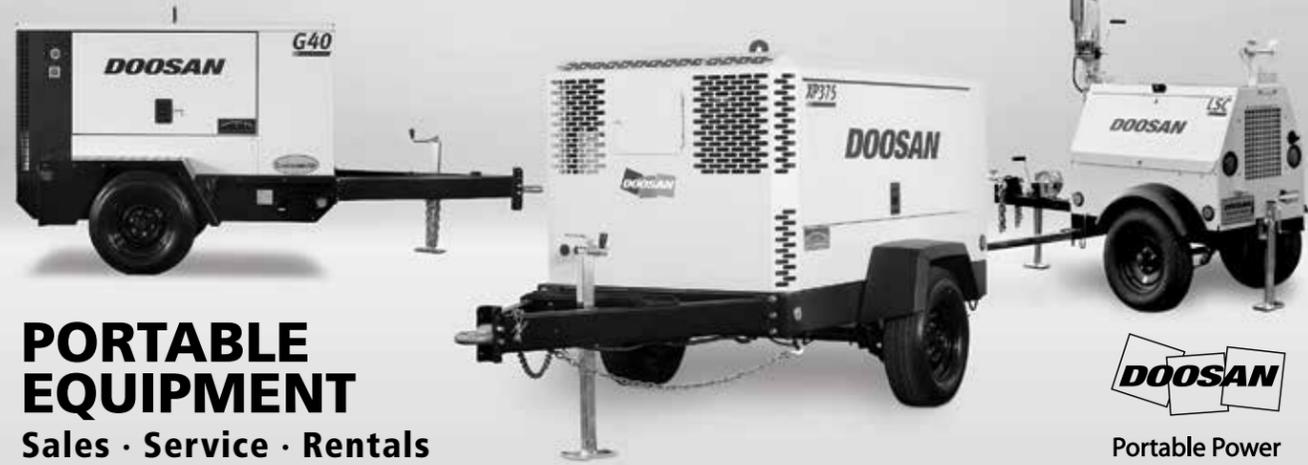
Iver was a frequent volunteer at the town-owned ski slope, Prestile Hill in Caribou, using his mechanical skills to keep the temperamental generator, lift and rope tow operating. He was a member of Caribou Lodge 170 and the

New Sweden Covenant Church, where his grandfather had been a member before him. There is a window in the church that bears his grandfather’s (C.J. Soderberg) name. He was predeceased by his wife, Monica; his elder sister, Sylvia Beal of Potomac, Maryland; and a brother, Carl Richard Soderberg, of Caribou. He is survived by his three children and their spouses; his younger sister, Sonja Soderberg; his beloved grandchildren: Emily Soderberg, Holly Hinchliffe, Anna Soderberg and Dana Iver Hinchliffe; and his constant companion, his dog Moxie.

“Everybody knew dad as big, strong and hardworking, and he wasn’t afraid to say his piece,” said Carl. “But he also was kind of like a gentle giant. He had a big heart. He was a great father and a mentor to us all.”

Sam Collins’ family had a summer camp next door to Monica and Iver on Madawaska Lake for three decades. He said: “The legendary stories of Iver equate to the fictional Paul Bunyan accounts of strength and endurance. I had the pleasure of witnessing at our retail lumber and building material store [S.W. Collins] back in the mid-1980s Iver’s display of strength and humor. My desk at the store was located on an

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open balcony that overlooked the sales floor. On a busy summer day I heard a commotion on the sales floor with Iver at the center of attention with a few of our associates gathered around. Iver caught my attention as he raised his voice and proclaimed that the 12-inch spikes we had sold him were bent, and they were too soft. I trotted downstairs to see what the problem was with the spikes that we had sold. Iver, a man in his mid 50s, held up the spike which was bent at a 90-degree angle and asked me if that is how the spikes come these days. I responded that I did not have any other reports of the spikes coming in the carton pre-bent. Iver then proceeded to take me over the bin of spikes and offered an explanation, 'maybe the spikes are a lot softer these days and do not have enough metal.' As he gave his explanation, his powerful paws picked up a spike and he proceeded to bend the spike, much to everyone's amazement. Iver was a tough, strong Swede but also not known to many Iver was a voracious reader and could recall more facts and trivia than the best of players on *Jeopardy*. The legend of Iver Soderberg will be forever a part of the folklore of Aroostook County."

The MBTA board and membership wishes to extend our sincere



Iver Soderberg (far right) with (left to right) son Kirk Soderberg, daughter Karen Soderberg Hinchliffe and son Carl Soderberg.

condolences to the Soderberg family. The family has requested that those wishing to contribute in his memory may do so through the MBTA Educational Foundation, 146 State Street, Augusta, Maine 04330. ■

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The year ahead at MaineDOT

ON THE first business day of 2021, the Maine Department of Transportation updated its Construction Advertisement Schedule with all projects currently slated for bids this year. This schedule helps our contracting partners see the construction work we have planned for the year ahead. It also allows the public to learn more about exactly how and where MaineDOT is investing in Maine's infrastructure.

MaineDOT's 2021 Advertisement Schedule was put together based upon revenue and funding assumptions during a time of particularly unusual challenges and unknowns. The department's ability to deliver these improvements to the public is contingent upon receiving estimated levels of federal funding, state revenues, and bonding – all of which are inherently unpredictable. That said, the 2021 Advertisement Schedule includes significant investments in Maine's transportation network. It consists of 200 projects with a total value of more than \$480 million. That bottom line is lower than last year's but significantly higher than historic levels.

DIVERSE IN GEOGRAPHY AND MODE

The projects MaineDOT plans to advertise this year are diverse in terms of both geography and transportation mode. The list includes paving work, bridge replacements, culvert improvements, road striping, new pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and replacing public docks. No matter the size or scope, each of these projects is important, because it will impact our customers – the people who rely on Maine's vast infrastructure network. Here are some of the biggest projects MaineDOT plans to advertise in 2021:

- Construction of the I-395/Route 9 Connector in Brewer/Eddington (estimated cost - \$90.8 million)
- Replacement of two bridges that carry I-295 in Yarmouth and two that cross I-295 in Freeport (estimated cost of all four projects - \$38.8 million)
- Replacement of the Station 46 Bridge in Woolwich (estimated cost - \$32.5 million)
- Replacement of the Frank J. Wood Bridge in Brunswick/Topsham (estimated cost - \$21.8 million)
- Construction of a new, hybrid propulsion system ferry for Swan's Island (estimated cost - \$12.1 million)

FEDERAL GRANTS

This year's schedule continues to be bolstered by projects made possible by federal discretionary grants. The first three projects listed above are among those benefiting from this significant influx of grant money.

The cost shown for each project is the total cost, including all design, permitting, property, and construction oversight costs in addition to the cost of construction. While the Construction Advertisement Schedule is subject to change, MaineDOT has a very good track record of delivering as planned. In 2020, MaineDOT employees overcame the unprecedented

“The department's ability to deliver these improvements to the public is contingent upon receiving estimated levels of federal funding, state revenues, and bonding – all of which are inherently unpredictable. That said, the 2021 Advertisement Schedule includes significant investments in Maine's transportation network. It consists of 200 projects with a total value of more than \$480 million. That bottom line is lower than last year's but significantly higher than historic levels.”

challenges presented by the coronavirus pandemic and delivered 94 percent of projects within 30 days of their schedule target. While some projects will inevitably be delayed, keep in mind that there are usually several projects that are added to the schedule as the year progresses.

MORE LIGHT CAPITAL PAVING

Assuming required levels of state, federal, and bond funding materialize, the most significant allocation changes for 2021 are an increase in more 100 miles of Light Capital Paving (LCP) and a reduction in miles of other paving treatments. This shift was prompted by escalating prices for more traditional preservation paving scopes over the last couple of years. Although LCP is the lightest paving treatment, this adjustment will allow the number of miles paved in 2021 to be fairly consistent with numbers from previous years.

Here are some general observations for other types of work included in the 2021 schedule:

- The total value of bridge work is down slightly from 2020 with more replacement projects and fewer preservation/rehabilitation projects.

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- There are fewer miles of highway rehabilitation work than last year and, thus, less money being spent on highway rehabilitation. Highway reconstruction value is up because of the I-395/Route 9 Connector project.
- The number and value of highway spot improvements (culverts, intersections, etc.) are down to more traditional levels. The 2020 levels were skewed higher by MaineDOT's large traffic signal grant project.
- There continues to be considerable investment in multimodal-type projects, with 2021 numbers being significantly higher than those from recent years.

MORE 'MACGYVER'

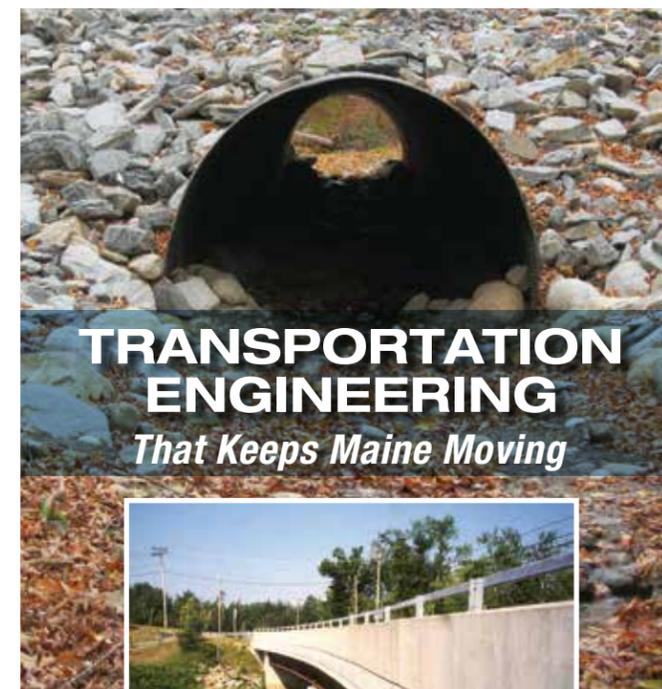
The Construction Advertisement Schedule, while significant, is just part of what MaineDOT has planned for 2021. Commissioner Van Note has asked us to continue to look for ways to prudently "MacGyver" in order to stretch available resources as far as they will go. This includes

reevaluating the Highway Corridor Priority (HCP) system. MaineDOT is also planning to put a new focus on partnering with municipalities to tackle projects that will help revitalize villages and downtowns across Maine.

We believe smart, targeted investments can provide a shot in the arm to local economies. The coming year will also continue to involve discussions about our changing climate and its effects on Maine's transportation assets and operations. Among other initiatives, we must focus on decreasing the vulnerability and increasing the resiliency of our infrastructure.

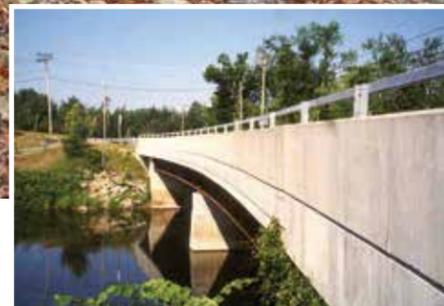
MaineDOT updates the Construction Advertisement Schedule every Monday. You can view it here: www.maine.gov/mdot/projects/advertise/schedule/.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Bill Pulver is MaineDOT's chief operating officer. In 37 years at the department, he has served in various capacities, including director of project development and deputy chief engineer.



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MEN IN OVERCOATS: The opening of the Augusta-Fairfield section of I-95 was a big deal. At the time, it was the longest section of interstate highway in New England. Here, Executive Council member Frank Wood of Webster cut the ribbon on the new highway with State Highway Commission Chair David H. Stevens by his side.

And so it began

ON NOVEMBER 19, 1960, the longest single section of I-95 or of any single stretch of interstate in New England (at that time) opened to traffic. The Augusta-to-Waterville-and-Fairfield section of Maine's 313-mile portion of the "National System of Interstate and Defense Highways," as we referred to in the December 1960 issue of *The Maine Trail*, was big news.

A 100-odd motor vehicle caravan marked the opening of the Brian M. Jewett Memorial Highway, and David H. Stevens, chairman of the Maine State Highway Commission, was among the many speakers. He paid tribute to the planners, engineers and contractors who took part in the construction of the 24-mile expressway. The first contracts were awarded by the Maine State Highway Commission and called

for the grading and shaping of the roadbeds and building of the structures. Construction included several massive cuts and fills, including for a four-span at Bond Brook, at Mount Vernon Avenue Bridge in Augusta, and at approaches to the big Messalonskee Stream Bridge in Waterville. Thirty-three projects later, the \$21 million four-lane divided highway stretched from the northerly terminus of the Maine Turnpike in Augusta, through Sidney, Oakland, Waterville and onto U.S. Route 201 in Fairfield – a distance of 24.3 miles.

Francis McCabe, executive secretary of the Waterville Area Chamber of Commerce, also present, said, "Such modern highways tend to bring new or expanded business and industry, more jobs and tax revenues and general prosperity to the communities and regions they serve and that this stretch would be no exception." ■



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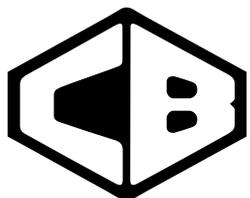


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