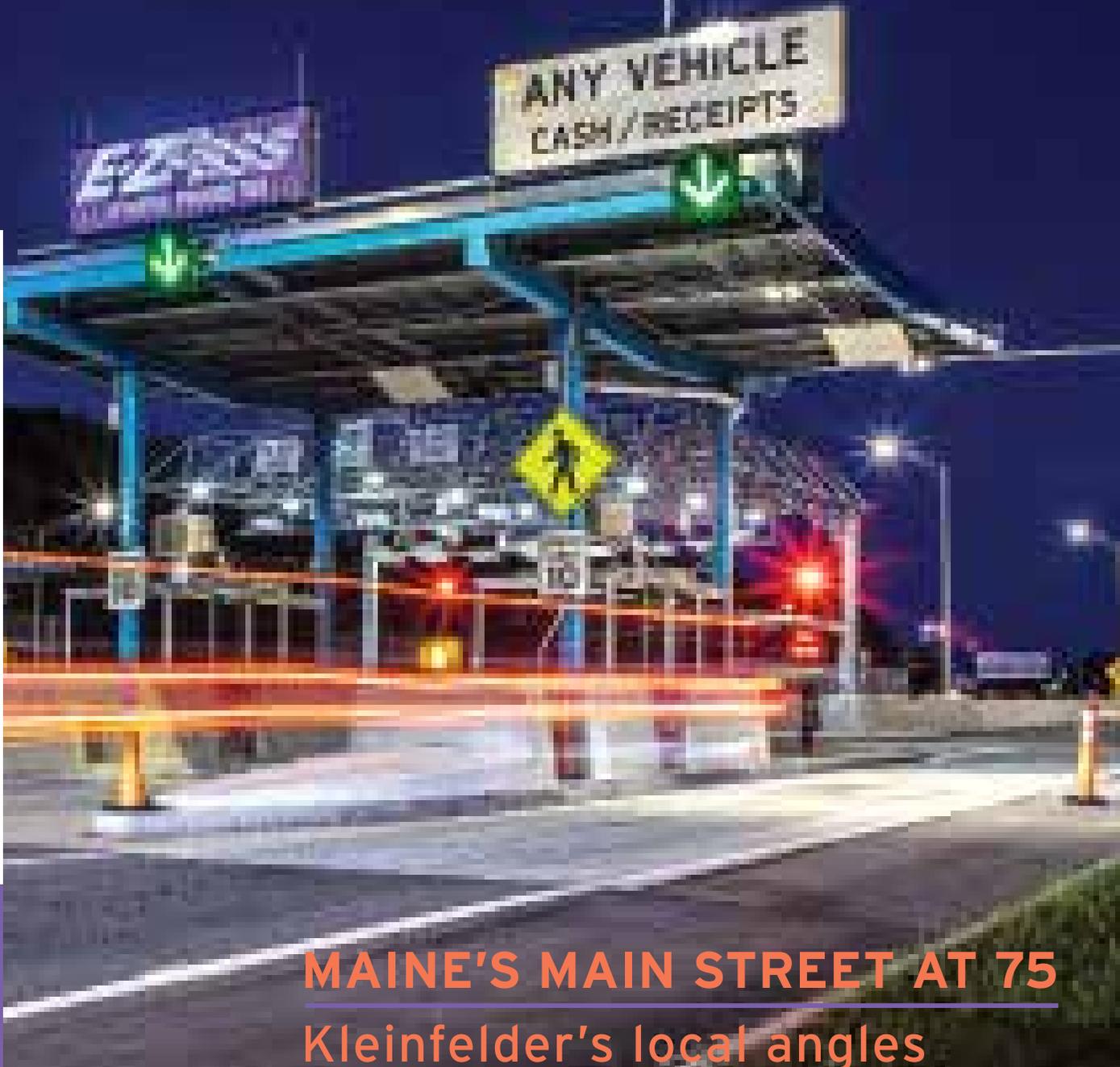


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MAINE TRAILS



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The Magazine of the Maine Better Transportation Association

MAINE TRAILS

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 "Maine Trails" (ISSN-0047-5548 8) is published bi-monthly, for \$20 by the Maine Better Transportation Association, 146 State Street, Augusta, ME 04330. Periodicals postage paid at Augusta, Maine. Printed by J.S. McCarthy, Augusta, Maine. Postmaster: Send address change to: Maine Trails ■ 146 State Street, Augusta, ME 04330



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Irvin Smith, MBTA President



Finally! ... But wait...

ON AUGUST 10, the U.S. Senate passed the Infrastructure and Jobs Act, a \$1 trillion infrastructure plan. The bill is now being considered in the House. The hope is the House passes it quickly.

Maine Senators Susan Collins and Angus King were part of a bipartisan group of 10 senators who negotiated the language of the legislation.

"... nothing short of historic, Senator King said in a statement announcing the passage in the Senate, adding the Act promises to "bring immense benefits to the people of Maine and Americans across the country."

Senator Collins, an early and primary negotiator, also was pleased the package, a product of bipartisan negotiation, would make "historic investments in our roads, bridges, airports, seaports, rail, water treatment systems and broadband, and would be good for America."

GAME CHANGER

The bill has been described as a game changer. Here in Maine, depending on the final product, we expect that increases to core federal funding programs will at least cover inflationary pressures, which is important. The more exciting news is that there are myriad new discretionary programs that could provide opportunities for significant investment to highways and bridges, transit and other modes in the state. There are also programs that may provide grant money for climate resiliency, and Maine's EV charging network, too. (Beyond transportation, we may see more infrastructure spending in the state for water, wastewater and broadband infrastructure . . . providing the U.S. House passes the Infrastructure and Jobs Act.)

Depending on federal guidance, the discretionary funding is especially good news for Maine because we know that with Senator Collins' leadership on the Transportation Infrastructure and HUD Subcommittee, and

"I am proud to say that our Senators Collins and King were instrumental in keeping the discussion going. . . So thank you, senators, for your hard work and for making history!"

the support of the rest of the Congressional delegation, Maine fares exceptionally well with similar competitive programs.

ABOUT TIME

It's about time we had a big chunk of funding like this come down from Congress. There has been talk of a major federal infrastructure bill for years now. The last several presidents have all promised to be 100 percent behind investing in the nation's infrastructure, but the realities of partisanship have made those promises the cause for cynicism and laughs. We all came to recognize hyped events like Infrastructure Week, as "a catchall joke symbolizing

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any substantive — if pie-in-the-sky — policy objective destined to go nowhere,” as the *New York Times* wrote.

TOPIC OF AGREEMENT

Last May, when leaders in Washington got together on the one topic that everyone used to be able to agree on, it looked like Infrastructure Week again would be going nowhere by general agreement. But that’s not what happened.

What we now know is that it takes more than words. It takes a lot of negotiating — or what our senators have described as “intensive negotiations and lengthy bipartisan discussions.” And that’s what happened.

Those negotiations started just about the minute the new Biden administration took office eight months ago and included leaders from both sides of the aisle. I am proud to say that our Senators Collins and King were instrumental in keeping the discussion going. Even as late as July, there were some that said it wasn’t going to pass, and not a lot of people would have been surprised.

So thank you senators for your hard work and for making history!

What does this mean for Maine? MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note believes that the final bill could result in Maine being able to access new pots of money for discretionary programs, possibly for all modes. He knows there are opportunities to improve rural transportation, which is so badly needed in the state.

While the Commissioner doesn’t yet know how much additional money will be coming in, it will be none too soon, as anyone who has been watching the cost of labor and materials climb over the past few months or considered the current condition of our infrastructure knows.

The *ASCE Maine Infrastructure Report Card* during the last few years has made it clear we need to be investing more in our transportation networks: in 2020, civil engineers graded aviation (B), rail (C+) roads (D), bridges (C-) and transit (D+). Earlier this year, TRIP (The Road Information Program) found that pavement conditions on more than 20 percent of Maine roads was “poor” or “mediocre” and 59 percent of Maine bridges are 50 years or older.

As we all know, Maine has a lot of highway needs. So I say to our House members, please finish your negotiating and get this bill passed! ■

2021 MBTA CALENDAR

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A switch in time

WHILE THE ATTENTION OF LATE has been on the announced CSX/PanAm acquisition deal, on a smaller scale was the launching of Maine Switching Services (MSS) headed by Joe Feero in 2020. (See maineswitching.com.) Vital to growing Maine's economic fortunes are industries that can produce or receive rail carload quantities. The more the merrier to reduce high-way traffic and grow jobs.

Where the larger eastern Class 1s (CSX,CP,NSC) or Class 2 region-als (PanAm) do not want to allocate dedicated resources to switch certain industrial plant complexes due to eco-nomics, companies like MSS can step in and provide custom customer switching to keep the industries running. Often, these are large indus-trial complexes with numerous rail sidings handling several commodi-ties requiring around-the-clock or specialized servicing. For the larger railroad, they can drop and go from a support yard and let MSS do all the customized spotting of cars with dedicated crews that work with the rail customer. Currently, MSS serves the ND Paper complexes at Rumford and Old Town.



Maine Switching Services at the ND Paper complex in Rumford.

While a small part of the overall line haul, companies like MSS play a very strategic role in the often complex first and last mile of a move in the world of rail logistics. The goal is to reduce overall rail costs and make Maine products more competitive.

This type of service helps protect Maine's important rail right of ways which are vital for Maine's future. With the above stated, the recent Shawmut dam debacle points out the critical need to maintain our paper mills. Sappi probably generates a half-train of carloads per day. The loss of this critical mass could lead to an ero-

sion of rail service. We do not need another dying branch line. I do not think CSX would be happy to acquire a dwindling traffic base. This issue needs to be put to rest immediately in concrete terms so that there is no issue about maintaining the dam.

As a retired railroader, I am glad to see the innovated use of this type of service to promote the continued and hopefully increased use of Maine's rail assets. We need car load industries!

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ONRAMP

Look, ma, no plug!

THE INDIANA Department of Transportation (INDOT) plans to build a quarter-mile stretch of road with magnetic cement which would allow vehicles to charge while driving or parked, according to *thedrive.com*. It's the first time a U.S. department of transportation has gone ahead with a confirmed project of this nature.

Assuming it goes smoothly, a quarter-mile section of highway somewhere in the state will get the first official rollout of the new technology.

There'll be three phases to the project. The first two will happen before the tech hits the streets, literally. Not a lot of detail has been

given yet, aside from who's working on it, which is INDOT, Purdue University, and a German company called Magment, which produces the magnetic cement.

Magment's technology works via coils embedded in slabs made of magnetized cement. Vehicles that want to charge from the system will also need a similar coil fitted in their base, which will then connect to whatever their onboard charging system is. In theory, that allows a charge to transfer between the ground coil and the onboard coil rapidly whether the vehicle is stationary over a Magment pad or not.

Indiana plans to install the magnetic cement pads both as wireless charging

options in car parking spaces and as part of the highway, so drivers can thoroughly top up their vehicle charge when parking or either pick up a quick burst of charge by running through the quarter-mile section of highway. This will work provided, of course, they install the Magment under-car coil.

Italy has announced its own world-first wireless charging highway project. Norway, the country with the highest EV adoption in the world, and its neighbor Sweden are in on the act as well, having successfully run a trial of some wireless-charging roads using copper coil technology from Israeli company ElectrEon. ■

What's that?

ABIRD? A plane? Superman? No, it's the country's largest fleet of low-speed, self-driving electric shuttles that recently hit the road in sections of Golden, Colorado. The unveiling of the new shuttle, according to *thehill.com*, is "a major step forward for the electric vehicle sector." It has added momentum to an industry that is getting a significant boost as the nation looks to cleaner fuel vehicles to help fight climate change.

The fleet of nine driverless, zero-emission vehicles will shuttle Colorado School of Mines students and staff, as well as members of the public, from key spots in the city to various points on campus over the next year. The six-passenger miniature trolley-type vehicles from French company EasyMile are a sharp contrast to the large, diesel-burning buses known on many crowded college campuses. Each shuttle, called the Mines Rover, uses advanced sensors, cameras and LiDAR to navigate its route. Advocates say the advanced technology will limit the risk of human error to about



94 percent of vehicle-related fatalities. A Mines student trained to oversee operations will ride on each vehicle.

The shuttles are slated to operate along three fixed routes and stop every five to 10 minutes on weekdays. Autonomous vehicle proponents plan to roll out similar systems in Greenwood Village and Colorado Springs in the near future.

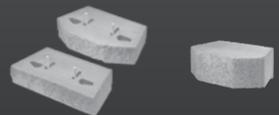
The shuttles are also rolling out at a time when the Biden administration is pushing for greater investment in electric vehicles and EV charging networks and urging automakers to make half of new vehicle sales electric by 2030 while proposing new greenhouse gas emissions standards for cars. ■

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Maine Turnpike Authority Executive
Director Peter Mills.

MAINE TURNPIKE AUTHORITY

Maine's Main Street, going on 75

Peter Mills, executive director of the Maine Turnpike Authority, discusses the proposed toll increase, Turnpike programs, MTA's upcoming 75th anniversary and the highway's financial status and future in a late August interview with *Maine Trails* writer Betty Adams.

MTA EXECUTIVE Director Peter Mills, of Portland and Cornville, is 78. "I have no plans to retire; I'd be bored stiff," he said in an extended interview with *Maine Trails* recently. Mills is a lawyer who has run twice for governor and spent 16 years in the Maine Legislature, prior to taking the helm of the Turnpike a decade ago. A few days following the interview, Mills wrote to Adams to update her about the status of the authority's bond rating. He told Adams: "Before the Turnpike issued bonds in February of 2012, Fitch had rated MTA at AA- and Moody's was at AA3 which is the same level. However, Standard & Poor's was A+ which was a grade below the others. After our visit and presentation to Standard & Poor's on January 31, 2012, S&P increased the rating to AA- which then matched the others. MTA has retained all three ratings ever since, one of the highest consistent rating levels among U.S. toll roads."

BETTY ADAMS: While the MTA is toll-supported, do you anticipate any benefit from the federal infrastructure bill?

PETER MILLS: No. With all the infrastructure money everybody else is getting, they'll be competing with us on contract dollars. We're looking very carefully at what will happen with our bidding with our capital programs. We're going to be very light this year. We stayed very heavy during 2020. We spent \$106 million on capital projects at the height of the pandemic and the low point of our revenue. We didn't support

those jobs with revenue; we supported those jobs by drawing down on the reserves that had been set aside for that work. It was a good thing to do for a variety of reasons: First of all, it kept southern Maine's labor force at work, because not everybody else was able to do that. Secondly, traffic was way down, so the contractors could get out there safely with daytime lane closures and not have to do night work. And thirdly, it's outdoor work. We had remarkably little transmission of COVID in the field. That's because our contractors and our own maintenance staff did not put two people into the same pickup truck. They were very conscious of distancing, and they did wear masks a lot of the time. We were pretty cautious, and it was pretty safe work, and it had a lot to do with keeping the southern Maine economy alive. So, we got a lot of work done during that period and we have other things we'd like to do that are in the nature of capacity projects, but they are not essential.

In some sense, I think it's our turn to get out of the way, so the DOT can have the market and get done what they may now have money to do because of the bills that are coming through Congress, and that money does not go to toll roads generally speaking. I think most other toll roads would say the same thing: They're not getting any of it. It's not money that's commonly given to toll roads. We've never had any federal subsidies, and we really never had any state money either.

ADAMS: There were few comments at the public sessions on the proposed



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toll hikes; were there many others provided elsewhere, and did they raise any new concerns?

MILLS: Almost all the reactions that we got were online. A lot of the questions that were posed online came from people who didn't seem to understand the toll system that we now have, and that we continue to have, including the discount system, including the high favorability for Maine E-ZPass holders. I don't blame them for getting a little confused. The system is complex. And unfortunately, because of the structure of our road, it cannot really be otherwise. The bottom line is that it greatly favors Maine people who use the road frequently. They get the best rate per mile of anybody by far and fairly large discounts for people who have to use the road every day. This was engendered in large measure because of our concern for people. This evolved out of the 2012 increase when we had hearings up in Lewiston-Auburn. I and others were concerned about people living in affordable housing in Androscoggin County and commuting to a \$10 or \$12 an hour job at the Maine Mall. We wanted the road to be freely used as a commuting path into Portland and for Maine people to use it affordably. That's where the discounting program developed.

At this point in time, we need to increase Turnpike revenue. This goes back to satisfying the parameters of the bond rating agencies. It's important that we raise our annual revenue target by about \$18 million and that's what this toll adjustment does. A large part of it is raised by raising the cash total at York from \$3 to \$4. Remarkably, that in and of itself doesn't affect Maine people very much, because if you've got an E-ZPass and even if you're commuting through the York toll, you're paying a rate per mile that is based on the E-ZPass system. It's not based on the cash rate that you're encountering when you go through there.

ADAMS: Does it matter if your E-ZPass comes from Maine or Massachusetts or Pennsylvania or another of the other states that use E-ZPass?

MILLS: It does indeed. The discounts in Maine are available to the 300,000 Maine-issued E-ZPass account holders. There are people living in New Hampshire that buy a Maine E-ZPass [even though] New Hampshire has its own discount system. The key is to sit on the one you're not using; otherwise, you might get double-tapped. The electronic system will not penetrate a human body. Everybody loses the [shielding] bag in time. So, you sit on the one you don't want to use and put the other one up on the windshield.

ADAMS: What about a new connector in Saco?

MILLS: The Saco interchange that's there now is the worst interchange on the turnpike in terms of being overloaded. I don't mean physically overloaded. It's just with the traffic congestion and the backups, the capacity challenge is greater now. The Saco interchange needs a capacity improvement. It needs a whole new approach. We've designed it to have basically two approaches coming into Saco. The townspeople are ecstatic about the idea of having an alternative to Industrial Park Drive. It's at a 60 percent design level and we'll be ready to go to contract with that



Cutting the ribbon opening the new toll highway in 1947.

maybe in a year or two.

The most recent capacity challenge is the road as it exists around Portland. We have a six-lane highway south of Scarborough. From Scarborough up through Falmouth, which is a busy section of road, it's the same old four-lane road we've had since 1955. And it's too busy at five o'clock in the afternoon, and it's to a point where it needs changing. But before you can widen the highway, you have to widen the bridges. Fortunately, the bridges are old and, in some instances, at least they're old enough that doing major capital work to the bridges is consistent with upgrading them, as well as simply making them bigger. We say, 'Well, we've got an aging bridge, but also it's too small,

so let's go ahead and change out the girders; let's go build a new one.'

The Cummings Road Bridge is a classic example. We greatly expanded that, and we completely took down the old one that had been there for many decades. This takes a lot of thought and a lot of planning. The widening around Portland is coming in three sections of about three miles each and the southern three miles essentially is going to be done sometime within the next year. It's been a lot of work going on, but in the meantime, we widened three of the bridges in the second three-mile tier. The one across the Stroudwater River, the one across the Maine Central Railroad and the Warren Avenue overpass.

Now that the bridges are widened, we're going to go out to contract this fall to see if we can get a good bid on widening the highway next year. We're looking at that contract very, very carefully. There is concern about prices going up; there's a labor shortage across the United States, and there are material supply back-ups. Steel and concrete and things like that are available but sometimes with great delay and very uncertain prices. So, we're all looking very carefully at prices. The Turnpike is in the catbird seat because we did a lot of capital work the last two or three years. When everybody else was shutting down, we stayed in that market, and we gave a lot of people work to do and (the contractors) had trouble even then finding the labor that they needed, but they did. Now that we're in a constrained market, I think our role is to be more cautious about the work that we undertake. The whole industry right now, even the contractors, everybody's looking at prices right now. It's a very challenging time, a very uncertain time.

ADAMS: Has the Maine Turnpike Authority ever given any money to the state? And would you explain how the Turnpike has given money to the DOT over the years?

MILLS: Hell, yes. We supported the state for 15 years.

The history is now three and four and five decades ago that we were supporting the DOT through the loss of the gas tax revenue. Joe Brennan ran for governor saying we weren't going to increase the price of gas with a new tax.

In 2011 when I took over this job in March, the law was that the Turnpike had an obligation derived from the (1991) Sensible Transportation Policy Act saying that the Turnpike had to turn over its surplus to the DOT every year.

MAINE TURNPIKE AUTHORITY

The new open road toll facility at York opened in mid-September of this year.

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Traffic moves through a section of highway being widened in Portland.

No one knew what a surplus was for the Turnpike. We had all kinds of bonds outstanding we were paying interest on; where the hell was the surplus? So, we [Mills and then Deputy DOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note] made a deal and it's been honored since 2011.

We said we would take five percent of the Turnpike's [rolling three-year average] gross revenue – which would right now be between \$7 million and \$8 million – and we will allocate that money to projects of mutual interest and concern between the Turnpike and the DOT. So in a sense, each of us has a say and essentially a veto over whether the money counts for a given project.

The classic example of the five-percent rule is when it came time to replace the Sarah Long Bridge which is the No. 2 bridge on the Piscataqua River. That is our backup bridge in case something happens

on the High Level bridge. My board and the Turnpike staff all agreed that, even though that is not our bridge, the Maine Turnpike kicked in \$30 million as part of the MaineDOT share and we did it under that five percent rule because we have an interest that's very strong in seeing that that bridge was rebuilt and done properly.

ADAMS: What about the financial arrangement with the Piscataqua River Bridge [aka the High Level Bridge] project?

MILLS: The bridge needed to be repaved and underneath the paving there are steel joints that link the elements of the bridge. Then there is the concrete deck that lives underneath the paving. The estimate was that about five percent of the deck probably needed to be patched. It was sitting there for 40, 50 years and that's too long to go without repaving, so it was basically a repaving job that also gave them the opportunity to

replace all the steel joints and they're there every 50 or 60 feet.

Once the deck is exposed, you have the opportunity of patching whatever deficiencies you see in the concrete because you want to preserve that deck at all costs for as long as you possibly can. So you've got to do all of that and at the same time your access to the road is severely limited by the need to maintain traffic. It was a traffic management nightmare and the specifications for traffic management were elaborate. And then came COVID. [The contractors] are doing what they were paid to do, but they did it a lot easier than they ever dreamed it was going to be because there was no traffic on the bridge.

They're going to get done ahead of schedule. It's an extremely challenging, difficult piece of work. They were very brave to bid on it, but they did bid very high. It was a \$52 million bid; that was a lot higher than anybody thought it was going to be. There are three entities involved: New Hampshire DOT, MaineDOT and the Maine Turnpike. The Maine Turnpike's contribution to that work is really limited to the approaches on the Maine side.

We don't own that bridge. We have a huge insurance policy on it, because if ever some oil truck blows up on the middle of that bridge, all of a sudden, we have no toll revenue. So we have business interruption insurance on a bridge that we don't own. Out of that \$52 million, we're contributing \$9 million for all the work that has to be done north of the bridge.

There's a second contract, however, that we have since negotiated to create a part-time shoulder use on the bridge with an electronically controlled system of signs and lane closure devices. Let's take Sunday outbound traffic in Maine: we will open up the shoulder on the right side southbound and we will now have four lanes for use for hours when traffic wants to go to Boston. We have a reciprocal arrangement over on the northbound side for Friday afternoon and Saturday mornings to get people in on a four-lane bridge and four-lane approaches, both on the New Hampshire side and on the Maine side. This is being done to forestall the day when we need to build a twin bridge down there across the Piscataqua River for you-name-the-price. This is about a \$9.6 million contract to put in these electronic systems. We're each going to pay \$3.2 million.

ADAMS: Will anything be added to the turnpike for electric vehicles?

MILLS: We now have three places where electric vehicles are charged: the Kennebunk Service Plazas each have Tesla and Chargepoint. West Gardiner has Chargepoint. They're not crowded.

ADAM: How has the Maine Turnpike Authority changed since you began your tenure a decade ago?

MILLS: Next year is our 75th anniversary and it's causing us in our spare time to look at things retrospectively. Looking at the original [Maine

Turnpike] board minutes from 1946 when they were planning everything, they were condemning farmland by the hundreds of acres all the way through York and Wells and Kittery. They were paying \$100 an acre. They didn't raise enough money in the first year to make the first bond payment, and they had to raise tolls and they paid it late.

When we go to New York to the bond rating agencies, they ask, 'Have you ever missed a payment in your 74 years?' I say, 'We missed one in 1947 and that guy's no longer with us.' We have the highest bond rating possible to get for a turnpike of our size, age and stature. All three of the ratings now are parallel, and that was not true when I took over in spring 2011. We wound up with a uniform very favorable rating that we have held since 2012, and we protect it very carefully. It has helped with every bond we sold since.

The bond rating is my proudest thing. I didn't realize at the time how important it was to impress those rating agencies. I look back on it and getting that (rating) increase has probably saved us a great deal of money over the past 10-12 years in terms of improving our borrowing capacity.

When I got here, we probably had 700-800 employees. We now have 330-340. That's in large measure because cash collection has reduced. When I got here nearly half of our revenue, 40 or 45 percent, was collected in cash receipts; now it's down to under 10. We don't need nearly as many people standing in the lanes to collect the cash, but it's still an important component. One has the sense of greater efficiency here.

ADAMS: What do you like about your role as executive director?

MILLS: The pleasure of the job is that we're able to manage a huge public asset in the way it should be managed. I can't tell you how satisfying it is to have that freedom. You have to be very careful because it's a public resource and we don't want to be accused of abusing the discretion that we have, and I don't think that we do. Being able to fix, repair, expand or respond to the needs of the road based on what good engineering analysis dictates, that's not something everybody has the pleasure of doing. DOT has to fight for its money.

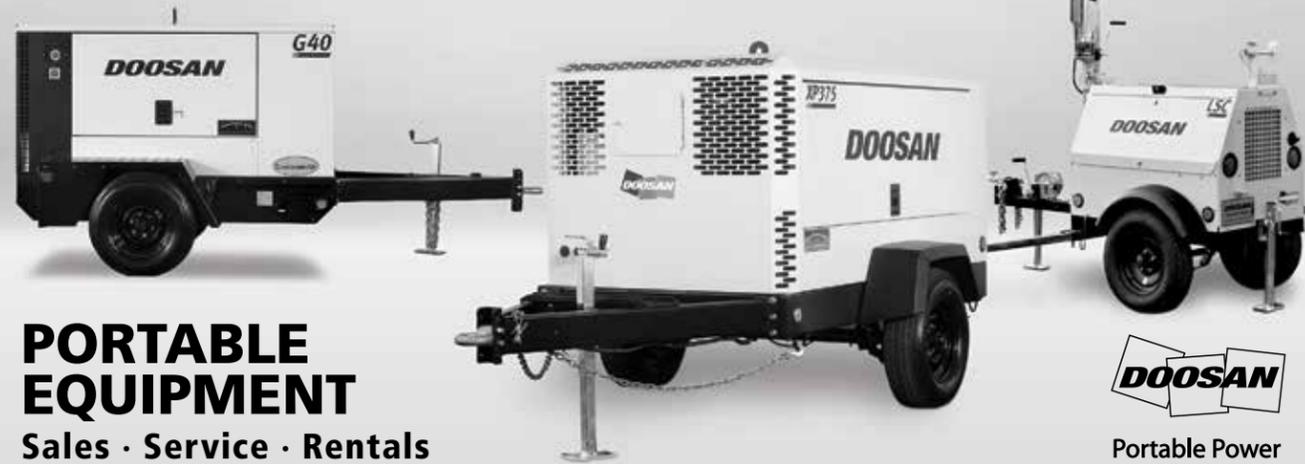
They're reaching a stage right now where they should have enough to do a lot of good work. But the federal government hasn't raised the federal gas tax since Clinton did it, and they've let everything go. Suddenly the public understands infrastructure because the politicians are talking about it constantly. Why shouldn't we have been doing something about it every year? When you're managing water systems, sewer systems, railway systems and road systems, they need attention every year; that's just the way they are. And it's a pleasure to work for an organization that is able to give the asset that kind of attention. ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Betty Adams is a freelance writer and journalism instructor. She lives in Augusta and can be reached at adamsbetty00@gmail.com.

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Maine bus, passenger vessel companies to receive COVID -19 relief funds

THIRTEEN HUNDRED transportation services companies – including 11 Maine bus and passenger vessel companies – are now eligible to receive \$1.6 billion in COVID-19 relief through the Coronavirus Economic Relief for Transportation Services (CERTS) grant program. The program is the result of legislation co-authored last year by Senators Susan Collins (R-Maine) and Jack Reed (D-Rhode Island).

“Bus and motorcoach companies, ferries, and tour boats sustain good-paying jobs and provide critical transportation services. The COVID-19 pandemic took an enormous toll on these businesses, many of which are small and family-owned,” said Senator Collins, the ranking member of the Senate Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee. The money is being delivered to 1,300 bus operators and passenger vessel companies to help them weather the lasting effects of the coronavirus on travel and transportation in the United States.

The Maine companies that will receive grants include: Monhegan Thomaston Boat Line; National Park Tours and Transport; Portland

Pilots; Isherwood Enterprises; Allen Associates; Downeast Windjammer Cruise Lines; John T. Cyr & Sons; Chebeague Transportation Company; Northeast Charter & Tour Company; VIP Tour & Charter Bus Company; and BayCycle.



In May 2020, several Maine bus companies drove in a convoy to Washington, D.C., to raise awareness of the impact of Covid-19 on privately operated transit companies.

For the more than 3,000 motorcoach companies across the U.S. – most of them family-owned – the cancellation of school field trips, tours and college sports seasons forced thousands of employees to be furloughed or laid off.

The pandemic also took a toll on the U.S. flag passenger vessel industry, grounding ferries and recreational tours, and leaving owners and operators without customers and revenue.

Finally, privately-owned school bus companies, which are responsible for transporting many of the more than 23 million school

children who take the bus to school each day, faced significant losses when states and localities moved to virtual learning and curtailed extracurricular and after-school programs.

The U.S. Treasury Department expects that these companies will receive approximately 23 percent of their annual lost revenue. ■

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NRBC awards \$5 million for Maine projects

THE NORTHERN Border Regional Commission's (NBRC) State Economic and Infrastructure Development Investment Program has awarded \$4,855,281 to 12 organizations and towns across Maine, including transportation-related projects in Vinalhaven, Mil-
linocket, Pittsfield and Guilford.



Northern Border Regional Commission

"The Northern Border Regional Commission serves as a critical resource for northern and central Maine, making investments to help increase job growth and boost local economies," said Senators Susan Collins (R) and Angus King (I) in a joint statement. "We welcome this investment, which will support important economic development projects, create and sustain quality jobs, and help grow Maine's rural economy."

The funding will be allocated as follows:

- Axiom Education & Training Center will receive \$150,000 to support digital literacy skills for approximately 10,000 adult learners throughout Maine, which will help strengthen their workforce skills and increase job placement rates.
- Loring Development Authority of Maine will receive \$500,000 to replace 20,000 feet of aging sewer pipes and manholes, resolving overflows of untreated wastewater

and benefitting 1,062 sewer users.

- Frenchville will receive \$758,000 to upgrade and replace parts of the existing pump station.
- Hermon will receive \$50,000 to modernize its pump station and increase wastewater capacity for both existing and new industrial properties.
- Eastern Maine Development Corporation will receive \$350,000 to provide technical assistance for climate resiliency planning, growth strategies for second stage businesses, and access to capital.
- Pittsfield will receive \$245,000 to reconstruct 4,100 feet of its sidewalk, replace an electrical control, and add 4,100 feet of broadband fiber, helping to increase and diversify business growth and jobs, retain and increase talent, and improve working wages by creating a safe and thriving downtown.
- Greater Augusta Utility District will receive \$1,000,000 to replace a utility crossing on the Kennebec River, provide water system looping resiliency with additional piping, and

increase the fiber optic system reliability with new fiber cable.

- Vinalhaven will receive \$1,000,000 to construct and improve infrastructure along Main Street, which will sustain 52 businesses and 200 jobs.

- Guilford will receive \$280,000 to enhance existing

green space and improve sidewalks, walking paths, and signage to develop a walkable downtown. The funding will also be used to create a robust walkable downtown WiFi network for residents.

- Millinocket will receive \$203,439 to create a new terminal for its municipal airport.
- Danforth will receive \$229,000 to revitalize its downtown, which will help to increase the town's economic development capacity, expand entrepreneurial opportunities, and support ecological restoration.
- Western Foothills Land Trust will receive \$89,842 to improve access to biking and Nordic ski trails, warming huts, and equipment at Roberts Farm Preserve in Norway. The funding will also create 72 parking spaces with four electric vehicle chargers for outdoor farmer's markets, classes, arts, and performance spaces. ■

FMI: To learn more, visit www.nbrbc.gov.

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Tee for 25

MBTA Golf Classic celebrates a quarter century raising funds for infrastructure development



Top Mixed Foursome (left): Deborah Dunlap Avasthi, Bill Ferdinand, John Danello and Mike Cormier. Top Gross team (right): Nate Jones, Parker Brown and Trevor Kraus.

THE FOG burned off early to reveal a sunny midsummer Maine day as golfers arrived at the Waterville Country Club in Oakland on July 15. The occasion was the 25th MBTA Golf Classic, and 144 golfers lined up for the shotgun start – but first MBTA Golf Planning Committee Chair Joe Rollins greeted the crowd and thanked them for coming out to support the event which is the primary fundraiser for the MBTA Infrastructure Development Fund.

The tournament was the brainchild of Earle Cianchette when he was president of the MBTA Board. He and his committee got together in 1996 to find a way to fund MBTA's community outreach and advocacy programs. Since that first tournament, MBTA members have raised more than \$500,000 for the MBTA Infrastructure Development Fund, money used to raise public awareness of the critical need for investing in the state's roads, bridges, airports, ports, rail, trails, and bikeways.

Joe also thanked the event's sponsors for their "consistent generosity" for the event, one of the most popular events on the MBTA's annual calendar. The day on the links gives MBTA members a rare chance to see

friends, network and relax during the height of the construction season. Rollins also made sure to thank the volunteers who would be helping out throughout the day: Rocco Fabbriatore; Bruce Hubbard; Michelle Iburguen and Pam Rogers of Cross Insurance; Casey VanDenBossche, an MBTA scholarship recipient and engineering student at Western New England University; and Shannon Walton of Clark Insurance.

At the end of play, MBTA Vice President Tony Grande greeted the sun-burnished golfers and thanked everyone who had made the tournament possible – the Golf Planning Committee, the tournament volunteers, the Waterville Country Club and, of course, the tournament sponsors for their generosity. He also announced a surprise guest: "I would be remiss if I didn't recognize one of our retired members, someone who chaired the Golf Planning Committee for many, many years. He is as dedicated as anyone I know, and we are thrilled he is up here in Maine visiting from Florida and was able to make our tournament. . . Joe 'Bananas' Rollins!"

Then, the other Joe Rollins, the current committee chair, took the podium and announced the winners.



Top Low Net winners (left): Ian Gervais, Tyler Camick, Kyle Plossay and Matt Steele. Putting Contest winner (middle) Shane Giles. (Right) Golf Planning Committee Chair Joe Rollins (right) congratulates Straightest Drive winner Erik Wiberg.

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Second Low Net team (left): Casey Tuttle, Matt Carey, Wayne Berry and Joe B. Rollins (the event chair). Second Low Gross team (right): Jeff McGown, Jeff Bouchard, Brian Bouchard and Jamie Robinson. Jeff McGown was the lucky winner of the 50/50 Raffle, too!

Taking Top Low Net honors was the team from Kleinfelder with a score of 50: Matt Steele, Kyle Plossay, Ian Gervais and Tyler Camick. Second Low Net team with a score of 52 was the team from Northeast Paving: Joe B. Rollins, Matt Carey, Casey Tuttle and Wayne Berry. ■

Top Low Gross title went to the Irving Oil team with a score of 59: Nate Jones, Trevor Kraus and Parker Brown (Shaw Bros. Construction). Just one point separated them from the Second Low Gross team: Brian Bouchard and Jeff Bouchard (H.O. Bouchard), Jeff McGown (Waste Management) and Jamie Robinson (A.E. Robinson). The Top Mixed team of Debbie Dunlap Avasthi of Androscoggin Savings Bank, John Danello of BLS Enterprises, Bill Ferdinand of Eaton Peabody, and Mike Cormier of UBS won with a score of 66. In the individual competitions, Doug Morrison of Sargent won Closest to the Pin (10' 10" at Hole No. 13), and Erik Wiberg of R.W. Gillespie & Associates won Straightest Drive (on Hole No. 1).

In the Putting Contest, there was one obvious winner, Shane Giles of N.S. Giles, who managed to place two of his three putts in the hole. Pat Dubay of Sargent, Chris Snow of GZA GeoEnvironmental and Jill Cahoon of AECOM were winners of the consolation prize drawing.

Twenty-one golfers got on the green for the Casino Hole Contest at Hole No. 6, with a \$720 prize pot at stake. Three winning names were drawn – Mike Reilly, Joel Cummings (Auburn Concrete) and Doug Morrison each took home \$240 in winnings. Mike Reilly of All States Materials Group donated his share back to the fund! Rollins also presided over the drawing for the 50/50 raffle. A total of \$2,000 was raised, with \$1,000 going to the winner Jeff McGown from Waste Management.

Rollins closed out a fun day on the links by thanking the tournament sponsors, as well as members who donated swag for the event: Whited Peterbilt (golf balls) and Steve Wolf and Contech (T-shirts). Thanks! ■

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MBTA President Irv Smith, Bruce Manzer, Michael Ford and Robert Madore.



Pat Dubay, Doug Morrison, Joshua Shaw and Tim LePage. Pat was a Putting Contest runner-up and Doug was one of three Casino Hole winners.

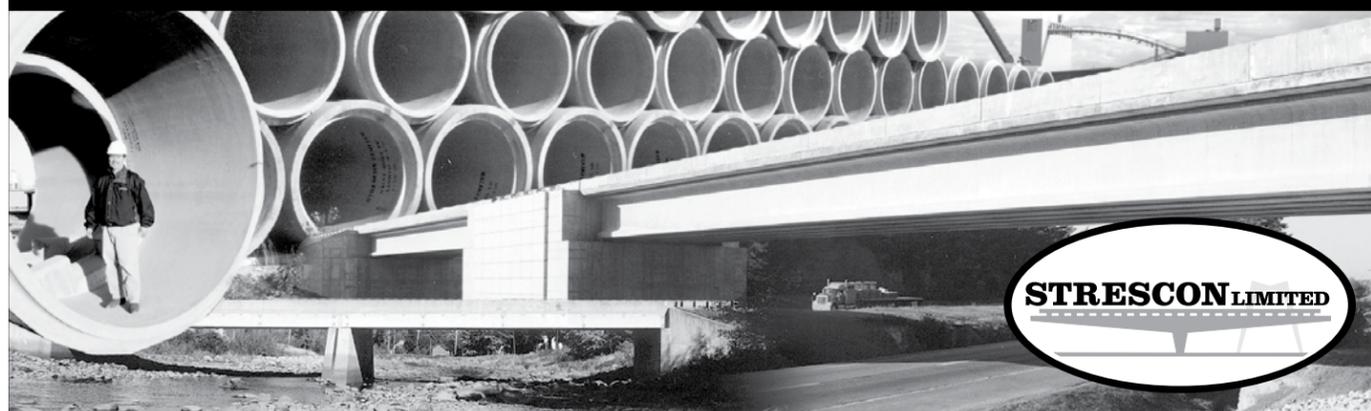
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(Left) Volunteers Casey VanDenBossche, Shannon Walton and Bruce Hubbard. (Right) Joel Cummings, Michelle Cummings, Jon Whited and Melanie Whited.



Jill Cahoon (left) and Chris Snow (right) were runners-up in the highly competitive Putting Contest.



Don McFadden, Heather Grondin, Larry Grondin and Don Norris.



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Aroostook County Meeting

Taking initiative

Addressing the skilled worker shortage in northern Maine

ATTRACTING AND retaining skilled workers in Maine has rarely been more challenging than during current times. In northern Maine, the problem has been a long-standing one. At the MBTA 2021 Aroostook County Meeting at the Northeastland Hotel in Presque Isle, 50 MBTA members and friends heard about the latest efforts by the Maine Community College System (MCCS) to identify unemployed and underemployed workers and train them for well-paying, skilled jobs in the state's industries. The evening's guest speakers were Leah Buck and Christopher Winstead, two educators who are leading the way through the Maine Workforce Development Compact.

Buck is the assistant dean of continuing education at Northern Maine Community College (NMCC) in Presque Isle, and for many years she has administered the Commercial Driving Academy at NMCC, which trains students to become professional drivers. Buck has created and administered various professional workforce programs and courses, including the Mechanized Logging Program currently offered across the state of Maine to help train the next generation of loggers. She has deep roots in the northern Maine community and serves on the Aroostook Public Health District steering committee and regional EMS Council, as well as being a board member for Northeastern Workforce

Development.

Winstead joined the Maine Community College System in May and is the deputy executive director for Workforce Training and Development. He previously was on staff at Eastern Maine Community College (EMCC), where he oversaw the Business and Industry division and served on the President's Cabinet. He has also served as executive director for the Piscataquis County Economic Development Council (PCEDC), where he worked with partners to stimulate long-term sustainable economic development and growth in that region. Additionally, Chris was district representative for former U.S. Representative Michael Michaud, where he focused on



Educators Leah Buck and Chris Winstead (left) were guest speakers at the meeting. MBTA President Irv Smith (right) was the evening's emcee.



Adam Theriault, Lance Morin and Greg Landeen (left). Todd Saucier and Brian Raymond (right).



Jasmine Strout and Eric Ritchie (left). Kim Rohn from U.S. Representative Golden's office and Trisha House from U.S. Senator Susan Collins' office (right).

business and economic development within the rural communities of Maine. He is very involved with the community through various entities including the Penobscot Community Health Center where he serves as board chair and economic development and tourism groups around Moosehead Lake Region.

The two are acutely aware of the challenges to businesses in the region, and they spoke of MCCS's efforts to support employers by identifying workers with potential and helping them to hone their skills for those jobs that aren't being filled.

MBTA President Irv Smith presided over the meeting. He introduced several special guests in the audience: Representative Joseph Underwood (R-Presque Isle); Trisha House from U.S. Senator Susan Collins' office; and Kim Rohn from U.S. Representative Jared Golden's office.

Smith also made sure to give a plug to one of the newest members of the MBTA Membership Committee, Lance Morin from Chadwick-BaRoss. Morin had brought a guest with him from TNT to introduce him to the organization.

"Lance is working hard to bring more County folks into our membership. . . So if anyone has a company or organization they would like to see join MBTA, please talk to Lance," said Smith. "It would be great if someone from up here won the Membership Campaign this year, which ends in December."

Smith also updated members on the MBTA Board of Directors meeting held that afternoon where the topics of discussion included the upcoming vote in November on the transportation bond, and efforts in Congress to pass two key pieces of legislation that had the



Tom Deschenes, Scott Gove and Karen Ouellette (left). Timothy Crowley (right).

potential to boost the Highway Trust Fund – the Jobs and Infrastructure Act and the federal surface transportation reauthorization.

He spoke of the critical need to get out the vote for the \$100 million bond referendum, and how the Mills Administration had supported an additional \$100 million transfer from the General Fund to the state Highway Fund that has been hard hit by the decrease in gas tax revenues during the pandemic.

"[The board] discussed how we need to get the word out on the Transportation Bond, which is Question 2 on the ballot, and we will be voting on November 2," said Smith. "We are grateful the Maine Legislature acted to send this to the voters, and we are also grateful that another nearly \$100 million from the General Fund is slated to go over to the Highway Fund. Without this General Fund money, MaineDOT wouldn't be able to fund some of this year's construction projects – and the \$100 million bond will fund projects in next year's (2022) Work Plan."

Smith also discussed the promise of new federal funding under discussion in Congress, the Jobs and Infrastructure bill and the role that Maine Senators Susan Collins and Angus King and Representatives Jared Golden and Chellie Pingree have played in the negotiations.

"We are grateful to U.S. Senator Susan Collins for being a chief negotiator on



Tony Grande, Kyle O'Connell and Alan Gould.

the Infrastructure Bill being debated in Washington," said Smith. "We are also grateful for the hundreds of millions of grant funds she has brought into the state through her position on the Senate Appropriations, Transportation and HUD Subcommittee. She has been an incredible advocate, and Senator Angus King has also signed on to the infrastructure compromise. We still have a way to go on this bill as the House is going to have to take up a bill, and we know that Congressman Jared Golden, who served with distinction on the Maine Legislature's Transportation Committee, is also fighting hard to make sure Maine gets increased funding for transportation, as is Chellie Pingree."

There were more thanks to go around for

the evening's sponsors: Innovators Northeast Paving and Sargent; and Pathfinders The Rowley Agency and VHB.

Smith invited members to participate in several events on MBTA's fall calendar: the Fall Convention and Golf Tournament September 10-11; the PDH Tour on October 1; and to join the MBTA Road Warriors, the MBTA's team in the Dempsey Challenge September 25-26, who are riding, walking and running to raise money for the Dempsey Center's work with families fighting cancer.

Smith also urged members to stay tuned for an announcement of the next Transportation on Tap event, hosted by the MBTA Young Professionals. ■



Former MBTA President Tim Folster and current President Smith (left). Steve Theriault, Ryan Pelletier and Philip Sirois (right).

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So good to see you, my friends!

MORE THAN 40 MBTA members and friends were on hand to celebrate the return of Transportation on Tap on July 21 at Rising Tide Brewery in Portland. The MBTA Young Professionals group had suspended the casual industry get togethers typically held at brew pubs and tasting rooms across the state last spring when the coronavirus first made its appearance in Maine.

By the large turnout, and the enthusiastic conversations witnessed during the evening, everyone was glad for a taste of normalcy, even if just for a couple of hours on a Thursday evening. Many thanks to MBTA Young Professionals Chair Patrick Brady (lower right photo) for pulling everyone together to enjoy a cold brew on a warm night in Portland!

Watch your e-mail and the MBTA web site, Instagram and Facebook page for information about future Transportation on Tap events. ■

FMI: To learn more about MBTA and Transportation on Tap, visit www.mbtaonline.org.





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The LIDAR scan captures in detail structural elements of the steel truss bridge built in 1932.

Local angles

Kleinfelder celebrates 60th year – and expands its Maine footprint

By Kathryn Buxton

AMANDA TAYLOR and Kate Willis know one small section of the Androscoggin River like the back of their hands. Working for consulting company Kleinfelder, they are architectural historians who, for several years now, have been documenting the history of the Frank J. Wood Bridge connecting the towns of Topsham and Brunswick. They know who lived in the row of historic homes near the river's bank on the Brunswick side. They know about the local industries that grew up around the river and employed citizens from the two towns. They can talk at length about how the current bridge, built during the Great Depression in 1932, is just one of a succession of bridges built over that stretch of the river. The bridge which



Kleinfelder's Mark Franklin and Erin Ware use LIDAR to scan the Frank J. Wood Bridge.

has stood for 90 years was traversed by workers and vehicles on their way to the Pejepscot Paper Company mill on the Topsham side of the river and to the Cabot Mill on the Brunswick side. At one time, the bridge also carried rail cars over the river. "You can trace the evolution of bridge building at that one location," said Amanda Taylor, who is based in Kleinfelder's Augusta office. She noted that they had found historical records of river crossings at that location dating back to 1796, and there have been at least 10 bridges at the site. The early bridges were wooden; some of them were covered structures. They were privately owned and particularly susceptible to fires and "freshets" or floods that often occurred during the spring thaw. Travelers paid tolls to cross the bridge until the city bought the bridge in 1870. The first of two iron

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bridges at the site was built in 1877.

Most recently Taylor and Willis's team of historians worked with Mark Franklin from Kleinfelder's Edmonton office in Alberta, Canada, to perform a LIDAR scan of the current bridge, which is on the National Register of Historic Places and is turning 90 next year. The result, they say, adds a new and valuable perspective of the site to the historical record they have been compiling as MaineDOT and the towns decide what structure will take the place of the existing bridge, which is weight-limited and has been in service well beyond its anticipated lifespan.



Amanda Taylor

The LIDAR scan is really a series of 100 different scans utilizing 2 million data points and enhanced with a color scan that, in the end, has created a 3-D model of the three-span steel truss bridge.

Willis, project manager and cultural services team leader at the Augusta office, marvels that the 21st century technology has the ability to inform and provide a new perspective on an early 20th century structure that they couldn't have created with the tools of the day – a piece of paper and a slide rule. The final scans will become part of a historic recordation package that will be stored at the Library of Congress in the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) collection.

Even for two experienced historians, it is a thrill knowing that they contributed to "something unique," said Willis. "This is the first time someone has completed scaled, measured drawings of the bridge."

EMBRACING CHANGE

As a company, Kleinfelder's ability to drill down into a project on a local level. The Maine team's ability to solve challenges by tapping into the latest technology and calling on the expertise of any of 2,400 professionals at 85 offices in 19 states, Australia and Canada is impressive. The company has two offices in Maine – Augusta and Portland, which opened in 2020 – and one in Manchester, New Hampshire, that work as a team for clients throughout the region.

Founded 60 years ago by Jim Kleinfelder in Stockton, California, the company, originally called Stockton Testing and Controls, tested construction materials. The firm expanded quickly during the following decades as the western United States saw a boom in population and business.

Kleinfelder first gained a foothold in Maine in 2009 when the company acquired SEA Consultants, Inc., a Cambridge, Massachusetts-based, full-service engineering firm with an office in Augusta. The company operated under the name Kleinfelder-SEA until 2012. It is now known simply as "Kleinfelder," and is a full-service architecture, engineering, and science consulting company. The Maine-New Hampshire team is led by Matt Steele, a 33-year veteran senior project manager who earned his engineering degree from the University of Maine. Steele worked for MaineDOT before joining the private practice 11 years ago. He leads a team of 52 professionals – 41 at the Augusta office, three at the new Portland office and eight at the Manchester office.



Kate Willis

Steele said that the company's growth and continued success comes from a culture that accepts change as the constant in life and in business. He said Kleinfelder's corporate leadership has "embraced change, and has added the right people into our organization to promote, support and lead this change in the local areas across the country and beyond."

That willingness to accept change and adapt for the better, informs all of the work that Kleinfelder does.

"We apply perseverance, nimbleness, and dedication of hard work and an unremitting devotion to solutions to support the projects we work on with our partners," said Steele.

Kleinfelder's northern New England team consults on a wide range of projects for state, federal, municipal and private clients: civil site engineering; transportation engineering; structural engineering, building architecture; structural inspections, geotechnical services; environmental permitting; and construction management, inspection and materials testing.

The firm has seen considerable growth in projects calling for construction management, inspection and testing in the past few years. Project Manager Kyle Plossay, who oversees a regional team of between 35 and 40 professionals in the construction management program, has seen that sector grow steadily over the past three years thanks to Kleinfelder's ability to attract who he calls "high-caliber talent." His team has worked as resident inspectors on projects for MaineDOT, including the High Level Bridge rehabilitation between Kittery and Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and for the Maine Turnpike Authority on the Portland area widening project. Plossay's team also has provided construction management resident inspector and clerk of the works services for phases two and three of the Casco Bay Ferry Terminal project in Portland.

It is work that he and his team relish. "It certainly is rewarding work," said Plossay. "No day is ever the same and you know you have a team working with you trying to put out a quality project for our clients and taxpayers." Plossay's team also has provided construction management, inspection and clerk of the works services for a growing number of municipal projects, including on new fire station projects in Lewiston and Brunswick.

RIGHT WHERE NEEDED

Kleinfelder is expanding its Maine footprint, too. Last August, the company opened its Portland office with a key new hire, Michael Hudson, serving as operations manager of the firm's southern Maine projects.

Maine-New Hampshire team leader Steele said: "The new office was an investment in our ongoing growth to serve our clients and partners more fully with all of the services that Kleinfelder has to offer, as well as providing a location in Maine that is a very desirable place to live that balances life – for work and for family."

Hudson, who had recently retired from a career in the U.S. Coast Guard, is an engineer by training with a master's degree in public administration. He had spent much of his career in management, most

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recently overseeing 200 employees as commanding officer at the U.S. Coast Guard base in Cape Cod.

Having previously served a tour of duty as commander of a ship based in Kittery in 2013, Hudson jumped at the opportunity to return to Maine, a place his family found to be the most welcoming of all the places they had lived during his Coast Guard career.

“It’s a beautiful state and the people are wonderful,”



Mike Hudson



Peggy Duval

said Hudson, who added that it didn’t take his family long to rekindle friendships they had forged during their first time in Maine.

Having an office in Portland has been important, he said, because “we realize where you are in Maine matters when it comes down to client relationships.” It builds stronger connections to have someone who can be on site with a client as needed. Hudson and a Portland-based staff of two

have spearheaded work on a number of projects since the office opened last year, including work for the Portland Water District on its East End Wastewater Treatment Plant, bringing in engineers as needed from the firm’s Maine, New Hampshire, Connecticut and Boston offices.

SOLIDLY INNOVATIVE

Kleinfelder’s national reputation is one of innovation and excellence, and the company has earned many awards from its peers in the engineering and design fields. The company consistently ranks among the top firms in the industry. *Engineering News-Record* has included Kleinfelder in its annual firm surveys including: No. 24 of Top 50 Program Management Firms; No. 27 of Top 100 CM-For-Fee; No. 32 of Top 100 Pure Designers; No. 46 of Top 500 Design Firms; No. 74 of Top 200 Environmental Firms; No. 123 – Top 150 Global Design Firms; and No. 171 – Top 225 International Design Firms.

Kleinfelder encourages active involvement with industry organizations and trade groups, including MBTA, WTS Maine, ASCE and ACEC of Maine. Area Manager Matt Steele attends many industry events and has served on ACEC and MaineDOT sub-committees and supports the involvement of the Maine-New Hampshire area staff. Senior Client Account Manager Peggy Duval, who joined Kleinfelder in 2012 after 32 years at MaineDOT, is a founding member and past president of WTS-Maine, has served on Maine Better Transportation Association’s Legislative Committee, and currently serves as an ACEC of Maine state director, Program Committee chair and Transportation Taskforce co-chair.

“Kleinfelder’s involvement with these organizations helps build strong relationships within the industry,” said Duval. “And that, in



Kyle Plossay



Matt Steele

many cases, has led to new partnering opportunities.” Most important, added Duval, “involvement gives us opportunities to share ideas and innovations, and enables us to support and provide feedback on local, state and federal initiatives that have an impact on our professions, our communities and the industry.”

That fierce sense of community and the drive to do well by its employees and clients has driven the company to undertake

several company-wide initiatives. Kleinfelder recently completed an annual week of safety awareness events and activities. The firm bases its safety training on the Loss Prevention System, a rigorous program that has been essential for a firm that works in so many high-risk disciplines including energy, utility and transportation construction.

Kleinfelder also has wholeheartedly committed to addressing the issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Kate Willis serves on a company-wide committee looking at what the firm can do on a corporate level to advocate for a more diverse and inclusive workplace with more opportunity for advancement and career development.

“It’s also about diversity of thought and creating a balanced work space,” said Willis. She said it has been an “employee-driven” effort that has had the full support of company management, and said she believes that willingness to change and be open to innovation is what makes Kleinfelder such a positive place to work.

“Kleinfelder is a really wonderful place to work,” said Willis. “You can do anything you want, if you are willing to put in the work.”

“I would second that,” said Amanda Taylor. “They really support you, and that makes coming to work here every day rewarding.” ■

FMI: To learn more about Kleinfelder, visit www.kleinfelder.com or [LinkedIn/Kleinfelder](https://www.linkedin.com/company/kleinfelder).



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Reflections at 10

Three former WTS-Maine chapter presidents and the current president reflect on the impact the organization has had on raising the profile and participation of women in Maine's transportation industry



Joyce Taylor



Katy Hews



Theresa McAuliffe



Erin Courtney

SINCE A group of transportation leaders – women and men – got together 10 years ago to form the Maine chapter of WTS International (the Women's Transportation Seminar), the group has achieved a great deal.

WTS-Maine officially became a chapter on November 3, 2011. The formation of the chapter represented several years of effort by a group of professionals from the public and private sector committed to cultivating the role of women in transportation. Their dedication to the advancement of women in the Maine transportation industry set the stage for a renewed effort in the summer of 2010 to become an official WTS International chapter.

The drivers behind the 2010 effort were a group of key managers from MaineDOT, FHWA, the Maine Better Transportation Association and firms from the private sector, including Katy Hews of Hews Company, who is the group's informal historian. Their effort was bolstered by strong support from representatives of WTS International. After several pre-organizational meetings, the planning group launched a kick-off reception in March 2011. More than 50 people attended this reception, which featured a keynote address by then CEO and president of WTS International, Marcia Ferranto, who spoke to potential new members about

the organization and answered questions. Other WTS International representatives in attendance were Dorri Giles Raposa, WTS International director, and Margaret O'Meara, a member of the WTS International Advisory Board, both of whom had been very active in the Boston WTS chapter as well. After a series of organizational meetings and firm commitments by more than 20 potential members, a decision was made to become an official chapter, and in September 2011 the group submitted its final documentation.

According to Hews, WTS-Maine membership reflects the diverse nature of the transportation industry in Maine. The state features a robust interstate highway system, a growing airport network, an award-winning passenger rail service between Portland, Maine and Boston, Massachusetts, deep water ports in Portland, Searsport and Eastport, a successful intra-state and interstate charter bus system, and access to some of the nation's most beautiful parks, lakes, forests, and ocean beaches through its extensive state, county and local highway and bridge system.

Today, the chapter numbers 55 members from all corners of the state and includes professionals from public agencies, non-profits and private corporations that are leaders in the transportation field.

Now, on the eve of its 10th anniversary, three

former WTS-Maine presidents – Chartering President and MaineDOT Chief Engineer Joyce Taylor, 2011-2012; Katy Hews of Hews Company, 2014-2015; Theresa McAuliffe of McFarland Johnson, Inc., 2018-2019 – and the current president, Erin Courtney of the Maine Turnpike Authority, 2020-2021, discuss what the organization has achieved and has yet to achieve for women working in transportation in Maine. Peggy Duval also served as president from 2013-2014.

MAINE TRAILS: What do you consider a success for the chapter during its first decade?

JOYCE TAYLOR: Raising money for the scholarships has been a huge achievement for such a small chapter. Additionally raising awareness on the importance of diversity in the transportation sector and how it's a benefit to include everyone in our industry.

KATY HEWS: There are so many successes that we can celebrate! Our programs have been diverse and educational, and our networking events have helped to build strong relationships within the chapter. But, if I were to highlight two successes, I would look to our thriving Transportation YOU program and our scholarships awarded to Maine high school seniors. We were able to launch our scholarship program early on in our existence, and it has now grown to three individual scholarships, including our first BIPOC (Black, Indigenous,

Person of Color) recipient.

THERESA MCAULIFFE: Noteworthy accomplishments include awarding multi-thousand dollar scholarships each year to female high school seniors. This is right in line with our mission to advance women in the industry by supporting the education they need to pursue careers in transportation. Another accomplishment is that WTS International has recognized our chapter execution with the “Gold” level of performance each year. WTS International has actually used our chapter as an example for other small chapters to use. It wasn’t until I attended the international conference and met women from other chapters that I could get perspective on how well we were actually doing.

ERIN COURTNEY: The growth of our chapter – in so many ways! Our membership has more than doubled, our corporate sponsorship has increased by more than 200 percent (\$5,400 in 2014 vs. \$15,000 in 2020-2021), we started out providing one female student with a scholarship before jumping to two and just in 2021 we provided three high school seniors with a scholarship (all more than \$1,500). We’ve added a Transportation YOU committee to focus on attracting middle school and high school girls to careers in transportation. For a small chapter, I think we have accomplished so much in just one decade and everyone involved should be proud.

MAINE TRAILS: If you were recruiting a transportation professional to join the Maine chapter, what would be the No. 1 selling point?

JOYCE TAYLOR: The supportive friendships people have formed, the professional trust that has occurred and the ability to have some fun with your peers.

KATY HEWS: The Maine Chapter of WTS provides direct access to the top women transportation professionals in the state of Maine, in both the public and private sectors, and in all facets of the field of transportation. These women are passionate about sharing their experiences and helping other women navigate their professional careers.

THERESA MCAULIFFE: Building connections. This is an effective and efficient way to build connections across the transportation sector in Maine. Most of our members are active in multiple organizations making it a great way to get “in the know.”

ERIN COURTNEY: For me it has to be the close personal relationships I’ve developed with so many amazing women. As a board member, I have really gotten to know many of these women for years now. It has been so rewarding, and I value each and every one of the friendships it has allowed me to cultivate with people I would probably not know otherwise.

MAINE TRAILS: What was a highlight for you personally while you were president?

JOYCE TAYLOR: The highlight for me was to look around the room at the first annual meeting and see all the wonderful people who joined and offered so much support. It was rewarding to see how our sponsors jumped in immediately in such a supportive manner. The reason I was intent on getting a chapter formed was to help young women who were more isolated from their peers and those in leadership positions to find support and mentoring. It was clear from the beginning people embraced the chapter.

KATY HEWS: I think that launching the Transportation YOU (TU) program and being one

of five recipients of a \$1,000 grant to support our TU initiative. [Note: Transportation YOU is a hands-on, interactive, mentoring program that offers young girls ages 13-18 an introduction to a wide variety of transportation careers. Through the program, WTS chapters work to make a difference in the lives of young girls by offering programs and activities that will spark their interest in all modes of transportation and encourage them to take courses in math, science, and technology, which are the stepping stones to exciting careers that can change the face of the transportation industry. Transportation YOU is a joint initiative of WTS International and the U.S. Department of Transportation.] WTS-Maine used our TU grant to help promote the program at the Maine Engineering Promotional Council (MEPC) EXPO, with a booth, engineering activities materials, and TU brochures.

I think what surprised me the most was the level of enthusiasm of our members to become involved in Chapter activities from the very beginning. As an example, our TU initiative was kicked off in January 2014, and within two months our committee had grown to two co-chairs and eight members, who worked together to make our first event at the MEPC Expo a huge success. The same level of enthusiasm was found in a number of other committees, including programs and our scholarship committee.

The biggest challenge I experienced was to create programs and events that would generate interest from all over the state of Maine. Maine is a large state geographically, and it is hard to design programs that meet the needs of women transportation professionals outside of our urban areas. We had limited



WTS Maine has mentored girls and provided scholarships for young women pursuing careers in transportation.

success in attracting attendees at events north of Augusta.

THERESA MCAULIFFE: A major highlight was eating breakfast with the Hon. Jane Garvey, the first female administrator of the U. S. Federal Aviation Administration, before she spoke at one of our events. It’s easy to get starry-eyed around accomplished individuals, but in reality, they are everyday folks like you and me. What sets them apart is their vision and drive.

ERIN COURTNEY: So far, I would have to say the Bus Shelter Art Tour. It was great because it was the only in-person event we had last fall and we got to walk, view impressive art and there was the transit/transportation element to it as well. I thought it was an excellent idea for a program. Our programs committee has fantastic ideas!

The most surprising thing to me was how hard it is to make royal icing! Because we couldn’t have our usual Holiday Party, we

decided to send our virtual party guests some holiday cheer and I thought “how hard can it be to make cookies that say WTS?” Well, much harder than I thought. Challenging? That is pretty easy for me: COVID. It has been going on throughout almost my entire presidency. We have had very few opportunities to meet in person because of it, so I have found it very hard to conduct all of our board meetings virtually – only because I really miss meeting in person with these women. When you take the in-person element out, all that is left is the work that needs to be done. I’m happy to do that part of it, but I just wish we had more opportunities to talk to one another (and maybe have a glass of wine or two).

MAINE TRAILS: What would you like to see the Maine chapter accomplish in its next 10 years?

JOYCE TAYLOR: I think we need to have more focus on diversity in the Transportation sector. I truly believe once we get people involved in

WTS they consider staying in the Transportation sector because they so enjoy the professionals they interact with in the chapter. I think ongoing efforts to reach girls so they see transportation as an industry that’s attractive.

KATY HEWS: I would like to see active student chapters. I would like to see the TU program continue to grow, and I would like to see our scholarships continue to provide opportunities for high school women graduates in the

state of Maine.

THERESA MCAULIFFE: One aspect of the WTS mission that our chapter is working on is to make women in the industry more visible by recognizing their contributions and accomplishments. We took the first step last year by nominating Katy Hews to start up an Awards and Recognition Committee. In the next 10 years, I’d like to see our chapter have a robust awards and recognition program; and to have our chapter-level winners be contenders for the WTS International awards. (Although, to be transparent, we already kind of met that goal when our nomination of Senator Susan Collins was successful, and she was awarded the Woman of the Year award by WTS International in 2017!)

ERIN COURTNEY: I would like to see WTS-Maine producing a majority of the future leaders for Maine’s transportation industry. I think in order to make this happen we need the



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current leaders – women and men – to become more involved in the conversation about gender equity.

MAINE TRAILS: Any advice for future chapter presidents?

JOYCE TAYLOR: Let people help when they offer so you make it a team effort. The more WTS members that can interact the stronger the Chapter becomes. Make sure there's some fun involved! I've been told a number of times by people they enjoy our events because we're a fun chapter. We all work hard, it's nice to have space to enjoy our conversations.

KATY HEWS: Survey the members and find out what is important to them and then work with the board to respond to those survey results. I think communication is key and I think our WTS Presidents have done an excellent job of keeping our members engaged and informed for the past decade.

THERESA MCAULIFFE: My advice is to pick one or two things to advance the mission of WTS. The first year is getting your feet under you and keeping everything going that was set in motion by the previous president. The second year of your term is making progress on your own vision of how to advance the WTS mission. A key personal growth aspect in leadership is learning to trust your volunteers. Delegate, reinforce the vision, and let them take ownership. Remember that the goal of any successful non-profit is to always be succession planning; continuously develop the volunteers to be the next leaders.

ERIN COURTNEY: Before becoming an executive officer, spend time in a few different committee roles. It is really helpful to know how various aspects of the chapter work before you're responsible for running the entire chapter. Also, know what your strengths are and that of your board members – and don't be



A future engineer discovers bridge design at a WTS Maine booth during an MEPC Expo event.

afraid to delegate.

MAINE TRAILS: Are there any resources from WTS International that are particularly helpful, or any you would like to see added?

JOYCE TAYLOR: The annual meeting is amazing in terms of the presentations, interactions with other chapters and the ability to learn about diversity in our industry.

KATY HEWS: WTS International should do a more comprehensive job of providing chapter templates. This is just starting to occur, but it would have been helpful if we'd had more structure as we created our handbooks, bylaws, etc.

ERIN COURTNEY: International is just getting into the routine of offering an annual chapter orientation to help introduce new officers and

board members to their roles. I think this will be a huge help moving forward. In the future, I would love to see WTS International make it so that everyone's membership renews at the same time each year. It takes a lot of time to keep track of expiring members.

MAINE TRAILS: Anything else you would like to add?

JOYCE TAYLOR: I value the relationships I've formed with WTS members. I think we all work so much and get caught up in our everyday commitments that it's hard to take time for yourself. Every time I go to any WTS event, I'm always glad I participated because I love the energy of the group. Everyone is supportive of each other and it's always positive energy. It feels like a safe zone.

KATY HEWS: I am so grateful to have been part of WTS-Maine since its inception. I have made friendships and connections that I could not have imagined when I joined the initial planning group. As a non-engineer working in a non-traditional field, I always felt welcomed and appreciated by the members of WTS-Maine.

As a non-engineer working in a non-traditional field, I always felt welcomed and appreciated by the members of WTS-Maine.

THERESA MCAULIFFE: I am so proud of our chapter and am so appreciative of the time and energy our volunteers put into it. And I'm especially grateful for the generous support of our sponsors.

ERIN COURTNEY: WTS-Maine is a great organization for both women and men – both new and seasoned in their careers – to network and to learn from one another. The strength of our chapter comes from the amazing members we have, and I hope those who are not members will consider joining and becoming a part of the next decade for WTS-Maine. ■

FMI: To learn more, visit www.wtsinternational.org/chapters/maine.

Let's help Irv and Laurie!

Please support the GoFundMe campaign to help the Smiths

MBT A "FIRST Lady" Laurie Smith is recovering from a stroke. MBTA President Irv Smith is always the first to help, and the last to ask. His daughter-in-law Erin has put together a GoFundMe page to help with costs associated with her therapy and care (www.gofundme.com/f/laurie-smiths-family-medical-fund). MBTA hopes that members will help if they can, and to please keep Laurie in your prayers. The following story of the Smith family's challenges is excerpted from the GoFundMe page.

"On June 22, 2021, after a thoughtfully planned and eagerly anticipated camping trip on Father's Day weekend with her family, Laurie Smith - wife to Irv, loving mother to Brent and Tyler, grandmother to Kaitlyn and Taylor, great grandmother to Maverick and Everly and friend

to many - suffered a massive stroke. She had surgery and was intubated in the ICU at Northern Light Health in Bangor for a scary amount of



Irv and Laurie Smith

time [Laurie is off of the ventilator now and in rehab care at Orono Commons] . . . Anyone who has had the absolute pleasure of meeting Laurie already knows what a special woman she is. From her sense of humor to her contagious smile to her huge heart that could fill a room with so much love and kindness, she is one of a kind."

"We know there will be considerable medical bills and expenses for therapies and treatment, and home care. Her husband Irv is responsible for any costs not covered by insurance. He has been a wonderful advocate for Laurie - right by her side pushing her through the toughest obstacles during every step of this journey. Please lift up Laurie in your prayers. She needs strength and support from each of us to get her where she wants to be the most . . . Home." ■

FMI: To contribute to the Smiths' health care fundraiser, please visit www.gofundme.com/f/laurie-smiths-family-medical-fund.

Building on success

S.W. COLE Engineering, Inc. headquartered in Bangor recently celebrated their inaugural class of the Stephen W. Cole Emerging Leaders Program.

Emerging Leaders include Antonio "A.J." Santiago, Chris Raymond, Sarah Sylvia, Stephen Porter and Tyler Demers. Mentors include Paul Kohler, Evan Walker, Jason Richard, Andrew Michaud, Roger Domingo and company founder Steve Cole.

Emerging Leaders participated in a series of sessions to learn more about the different service areas of the company, and corporate functions including finance, accounting, human resources, and safety. They also learned about the board of directors' meetings, how the board operates, and the details of S.W. Cole's corporate structure. The board of directors also took part in celebrating the Emerging Leaders' accomplishments over



Paul Kohler, Antonio "A.J." Santiago, Chris Raymond, Sarah Sylvia (front row). Evan Walker, Jason Richard, company founder Steve Cole, Stephen Porter, Andrew Michaud, and Roger Domingo (back row). Also graduating, though unable to attend – Tyler Demers.

the past year.

Each Emerging Leader made a presentation on a leadership topic, and then completed a project of their choosing to benefit both themselves and the firm. Individual mentors helped guide the leaders throughout the process.

Founded in Hermon in 1979 by Steve

Cole and his wife, Wendy Cole, S.W. Cole is a geotechnical engineering, construction materials testing and special inspections firm with offices across New England. The firm employs approximately 110 people and works on more than 2,200 projects a year. ■

FMI: To learn more, visit www.swcole.com.

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Cote, 2021 Engineer of the Year

TIM COTE, vice president, structural department manager at HNTB's Westbrook office, was named Maine's 2021 Engineer of the Year at the ASCE's annual meeting in June.

The Maine Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) annually presents the award to an individual who is a P.E. in Maine and has demonstrated noteworthy engineering skills, and made a commendable contribution of their time to the betterment of society.

Cote has worked at HNTB's Westbrook, Maine, office since 2000, beginning as a structural engineer. He has held several positions at the engineering firm, from project manager and construction inspector to his current position, where he is responsible for overseeing the development of highway, pedestrian and rail bridge projects. Cote also recruits, supervises and develops professional staff and works with other HNTB management on developing and implementing business



Tim Cote

development strategies.

He recently took on the role of general engineering consultant (GEC) for the Maine Turnpike Authority, the latest HNTB engineer in the past 76 years to lead the team of outside consultants tasked with helping the MTA manage the design, construction and finance of the 109-mile toll highway.

Cote graduated from the University of Maine with a bachelor of science degree in civil engineering in 2000.

Founded in 1914, HNTB Corporation is an employee-owned infrastructure solutions firm serving public and private owners and contractors. With more than a century of service, HNTB understands the life cycle of infrastructure and addresses clients' most complex technical, financial and operational challenges. ■

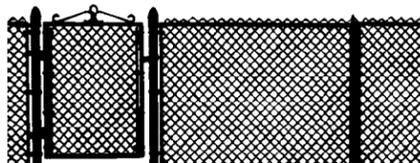
FMI: To learn more about HNTB, visit hntb.com. To learn more about the ASCE Maine Section, visit sections.asce.org/maine/.

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Chadwick-BaRoss announces acquisition of J.F. McDermott

CHADWICK-BAROSS INC. (CBR), announced in early September that the company has completed acquisition of J.F. McDermott Corp., a Whitman, Massachusetts-based distributor of equipment to the water and waste water industries.

Under the announced deal, all of McDermott's employees will be joining the company, under the leadership of Chadwick-BaRoss President Jim Maxwell. Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed.

"We are pleased to be able to welcome J. F. McDermott's staff and lines of business as they join the CBR team, becoming our ninth location in New England," stated Maxwell. "McDermott's business and expertise, as well as their long tradition of excellence

in customer service, will be an outstanding complement to CBR's existing operations and growth strategy as a leader in heavy equipment sales, leasing, renting, and servicing in the New England market. We're excited about the possibilities and relationships we can build upon for McDermott's customers, and look forward to continue serving them in an expanded fashion."

For more than 90 years, Chadwick-BaRoss has been a regional leader in the construction equipment sale and leasing industry across New England. The company sells and services more than a dozen of the top brands of heavy equipment through its 9 branches for customers across New England. ■

FMI: Visit www.chadwick-baross.com.

GOT NEWS?

Send story ideas to MaineTrails@MBTAonline.org or call 207-622-0526.

Haley Ward acquires Massachusetts firm

HALEY WARD, Inc., formerly CES, Inc. has acquired Whitman & Bingham Associates, LLC of Leominster and Chelmsford, Massachusetts, a surveying and civil engineering company serving clients throughout New England.

"We are excited to welcome Whitman & Bingham clients and employees to the Haley Ward team, which expands our presence in Massachusetts to three locations," said Haley Ward President and CEO Denis St. Peter.

This is the second Massachusetts acquisition

for Haley Ward. In 2020, the company, then CES, Inc., acquired Haley and Ward of Maynard, Massachusetts. CES changed its name to Haley Ward in late 2020 to better encompass the entirety of the services it offers and reduce brand confusion around similarly named companies.

WBA employs 10 staff consisting of registered professional engineers, land surveyors, CADD designers and administrative staff. Employee integration will be overseen by Executive Vice President and Engineering Division Director Travis Noyes and Executive Vice President and Surveying Division Director Jeff Teunisen.

Rheault and Brian Milisci will continue to serve clients as senior project managers and supervisors in the Leominster and Chelmsford locations. During the transition, WBA will be known as Whitman & Bingham, a division of Haley Ward, to their current clients. The acquisition also provides an opportunity for Haley Ward to provide surveying services in Massachusetts and complement the civil engineering work from the Maynard office. ■

FMI: Visit haleyward.com.

Larry Roberts, 1939 - 2021

LARRY LEWIS Roberts, a lifelong resident of Winthrop, died at his home on August 2, 2021, with his wife by his side, after several years battling complications from prostate cancer. He was born March 28, 1939, to Douglass M. and Eleanor H. Roberts. He graduated from Winthrop High School in 1957. A member of Lambda Chi Alpha, he graduated from the University of Maine at Orono in 1961 with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering. Shortly after graduation, he went to work for the Maine Department of Transportation as a bridge inspector and resident engineer. He was a registered professional engineer and a registered land surveyor. He retired after 37 years of service as an engineer in MaineDOT's Bureau of Project Development. After his retirement from MaineDOT, Roberts went on to work as a consultant in the private sector.

Maine Chamber President and CEO Dana Connors, a former MaineDOT commissioner, remembered Roberts: "Larry was a tried-and-true bridge engineer. He really knew his craft and as commissioner, I knew I could depend on him. He was a thoroughly dedicated public servant and contributed so much during his career, including mentoring many who came after him. It was a privilege to work with him."

Roberts joined the Maine Air National Guard in 1962 attaining the rank of captain before leaving the service in 1971. Roberts was a member of the Augusta Country Club for 35 years and a 25-year member of the Winthrop Lions Club. He also served for 10 years on the MBTA Board of Directors, and was an active member of the MBTA Golf Planning Committee.

"Larry was a wonderful asset to MBTA and instrumental in some of our events, especially for our July golf tournament," said Joe Rollins, former long-time chair of MBTA Infrastructure Development Fund Golf Classic. "I really enjoyed him on our committee; he was a great golfer and a lot of fun. He was also a hard worker and was responsible for originally getting us into the Augusta Country Club, because as a member, he invited us to play as a guest of his."

Roberts also came up with the idea for the MBTA's Big Buck Contest, a 50/50 fundraiser for the MBTA Infrastructure Development Fund.

He is survived by his wife, Carol O'Connor Roberts, whom he married



Larry and Carol met during high school and were "steadies" until they married in 1961.



Larry (far left) was an avid golfer and active member of the MBTA's Golf Planning Committee.

in December 1961. They met in high school and immediately fell in love. They remained "steadies" throughout high school and at UMaine where they both studied. They built their home on Annabessacook Lake in Winthrop in 1969. It remained their "castle" from then on where they enjoyed what they believed was Maine life at its best, surrounded by their flower gardens and sightings of blue herons, loons and wild life. They traveled extensively to America's national parks, Hawaii, Ireland, and other places. They took their last trip, a Viking Cruise down the Rhine, a trip they considered the best travel experience of all.

Larry was predeceased by his parents and sister, Judith Roberts Even. He is survived by his nephews and several cousins, long-time friends Alan Sachs of Las Vegas, Nevada, Jim Chandler of Hallowell and his Winthrop coffee group buddies Brian, Al, Joe, George and Terry.

Roberts was always active

in sports and was a three-sport letterman in high school – that was all that was available then. He participated in college and fraternity sports and in local baseball, softball and basketball into the early 1990s. He realized that he needed a sport he could enjoy in his retirement years and that became the game of golf, "The Greatest Game Ever Played," as he called it. He often played through rain and snow as long as he could. He also looked forward to weekly poker games at the Augusta Country Club and those with his Winthrop area friends, as well the occasional trips to Foxwood, Oxford and Las Vegas.

He enjoyed fishing with his father while his father was alive and with friends on Lake Albanel in Quebec. He also liked to hunt and fish the Allagash and Aziscohos at his father's camps and with friends at Northeast Carry on Moosehead Lake, most notably, in the later years with Ralph Burnham at his camp.

In keeping with his wishes, there will be no services. Arrangements are in the care of Roberts Funeral Home, 62 Bowdoin Street, Winthrop, where memories, condolences and photos may be shared with the family at www.familyfirstfh.com.

Any memorial donations in his name may be made to: Winthrop Food Pantry, P.O. Box 82, Winthrop, Maine 04364; Winthrop Public Library Foundation, 39 Bowdoin Street, Winthrop, Maine 04364; or Jackson Laboratory, P.O. Box 254, Bar Harbor, Maine 04609. ■

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Legislative recap

THE 130TH Legislature wrapped up its first-session work in July. Even though it was an unusual session with Zoom meetings replacing in-person hearings and work sessions, it was a productive one from a transportation standpoint. The team at the Maine Department of Transportation tracked approximately 60 bills and testified on more than half of those proposals. Overall, the Committee on Transportation heard 78 bills, produced unanimous committee reports on 61 of them, and carried over three bills to the second regular session.

As has been the case in past legislative sessions, this session saw many proposals pertaining to the future of non-active rail corridors across the state. MaineDOT's omnibus bill, L.D. 1133: *An Act To Amend the Transportation Laws*, proposed a new mechanism to examine potential future uses of these corridors, including trail and rail expansion, through the creation of a rail corridor use advisory council. This council will be comprised of both rail and trail advocates, municipal representatives, members of the economic development community, and members of pertinent state agencies. Council members will deliberate the future of a particular corridor before making a recommendation to MaineDOT.

State lawmakers passed two pieces of legislation aimed at reviewing expanded transit needs to Lewiston/Auburn and Bangor. L.D. 991: *Resolve, Directing the Department of Transportation To Complete a Feasibility Analysis To Initiate a Commuter and Passenger Train Service Between Portland and the Lewiston and Auburn Area*, directs MaineDOT to evaluate the economic feasibility of such an expansion. The purpose of this study is to see if the potential economic benefits to the municipalities along a potential rail line would outweigh the low ridership numbers projected during a 2019 study. Similarly, L.D. 227: *Resolve, To Conduct a Feasibility Study for Extending Passenger Rail Service from Brunswick through Augusta and Waterville to Bangor*, directs MaineDOT to conduct a transit propensity study. This study will assess the demand and viability for new or enhanced transit service, including passenger rail, between the communities of Portland and Bangor.

L.D. 1027: *An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Local Bridges*, gives MaineDOT the authority to post or close a bridge or minor span owned by a county or municipality if no action is taken following a department recommendation. The bill also addresses potential changes to a culvert or minor span that could affect the ownership of the structure, resulting in MaineDOT acquiring responsibility for the structure. This legislation requires that changes to an existing culvert or construction of a new bridge must be engineered and inspected by MaineDOT specifications. These new requirements will improve public safety and save taxpayers money.

The funding of Maine's transportation system once again was a key topic of discussion this legislative session. L.D. 161: *An Act Making Unified Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, Highway Fund and Other Funds and Changing Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2021, June 30, 2022 and June 30, 2023*, garnered unanimous support in committee and in



“Overall, the Committee on Transportation heard 78 bills, produced unanimous committee reports on 61 of them, and carried over three bills to the second regular session.”

both the House and Senate. This budget allocates approximately \$670 million in Highway Fund dollars to the departments of Administrative and Financial Services, Environmental Protection, Public Safety, Secretary of State, and Transportation over the biennium.

Of equal importance to MaineDOT's ability to deliver its annual three-year Work Plan was passage of L.D. 1702: *An Act To Authorize*



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a General Fund Bond Issue To Improve Transportation and National Guard Infrastructure and To Promote the Conservation of Land, Working Waterfronts, Water Access and Outdoor Recreation. This \$100-million bond consists of \$85 million for highways and bridges statewide and \$15 million for multimodal transportation including port, rail, transit, aviation, and ferry investments. These bond funds will be used to match up to \$253 million in federal, local, and other funds. Voters will consider this bond in November.

With the support from Governor Mills and the Maine Legislature, the Highway Fund received a much-needed infusion of cash from the General Fund. Budget language was included in the General Fund that assures that MaineDOT will have the \$50 million we need to support our capital projects being constructed this year. In addition to this \$50 million, this language stipulates that MaineDOT will also receive 20 percent of unappropriated GF surplus – after our \$50 million and other items are taken off the top. This amounts to \$55.9 million this year. Overall, this legislative session saw continued collaboration between

“With the support from Governor Mills and the Maine Legislature, the Highway Fund received a much-needed infusion of cash from the General Fund. Budget language was included in the General Fund (GF) that assures that MaineDOT will have the \$50 million we need to support our capital projects being constructed this year.”

the Maine Legislature’s Transportation Committee and MaineDOT. We have been continuously fortunate to have legislative members appointed to the committee who have set politics aside and voted on bills based on the merits of each proposal. The work that has happened under the dome (and in Zoom squares) this year has helped MaineDOT ensure the safety and mobility of the millions of people who use our state’s vast transportation system. ■



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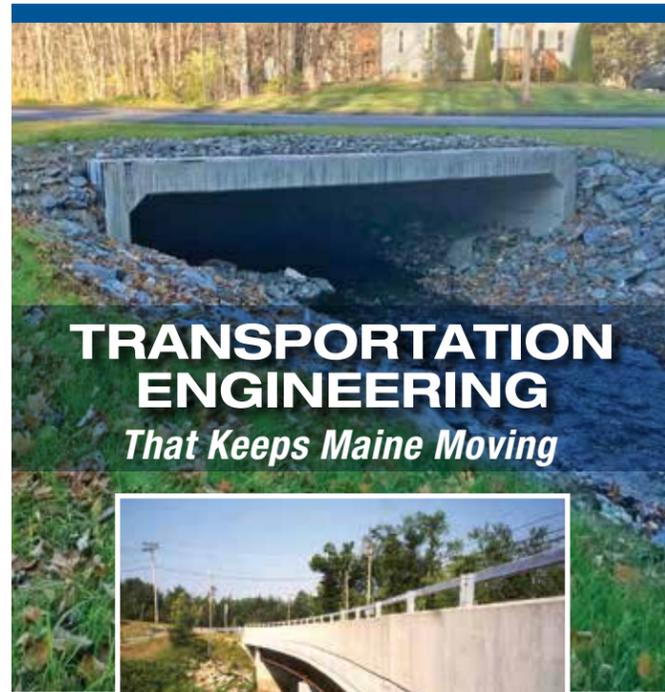


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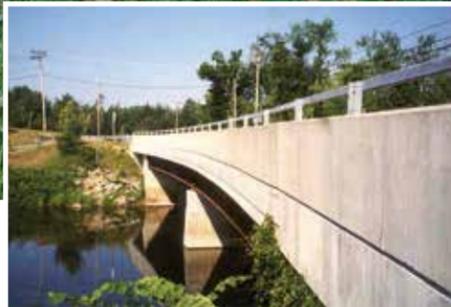
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Home on the rails

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John J. Lyden, assistant superintendent for the Portland Division.



Dennis Bowker, age 5, with three-pound brook trout.

To keep their crews connected, the company published the *Maine Central Railroad Magazine*, a chatty monthly publication that told of life on the rail line. In September 1955, the talk was about how operator Clarence Bowker of Eastport got a nasty knock on his head during a local softball game. Readers also got to see young Dennis Bowker proudly displaying a three-pound brook trout. There was also a short feature on "Batch" Batchelder, train station announcer, whose job was to relay news of arrivals, departures and delays.

John J. Lyden waxed philosophical in his cover story, *The Train Dispatcher*: "Just as a catcher on a baseball team is the only player who has the entire field of operation in view, so the dispatcher is the only railroad official with a clear and constantly up to the minute picture of train operations in his territory."



Lyden's prose had a homey feel and offered a general look at railroad life that he knew well. Lyden's own career started when he landed a job as a yard clerk. He eventually advanced to assistant superintendent of the Portland Division. ■

FMI: Rail aficionados can read this magazine, learn about New England's rail history and tune into the *High Green* podcast at the Boston & Maine Railroad Historical Society web site: www.bmrrhs.org.



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