ROAD RUNNER
SPRING 1993 Volume 1 Issue 5

“So you think you’re tied up?”

A Newsmagazine for the Employees of the Ministry of Transportation and Highways
Index

Webster and Webster .......... p 4
Enviro News and Views ..... p 5
In the Field ...................... p 6
Bridge Contractor
Prequalifications ........... p 10
Your Fan Mail ................. p 11
Colour Deficient
Drivers Study ............... p 12
A Day in the Work life ...
Fifth Floor Ambassador .. p 13
New Marine Branch
and More .................. p 13
The Reflector
Daring Young Man Without
Flying Trapeze ............ p 14
Multi-Modal Bridge,
Circa 1904 .................... p 15
It's Your Serve ............... p 16
Personnel Connection .... p 20
In the Spotlight ............ p 24
In the News ................ p 25
All Around Health .......... p 26
On the Road . . .
Do You Know the
Way to San Jose? ........... p 27

Intro...

We have a winner for the
"Take Your Best Shot" contest—

Steve Heggie for his "Buffalo Gun" shots on the adjacent page. Steve's pictures were black and white (they produce better) and showed a ministry employee in action. That's what we're looking for. Keep the stories coming and the pictures too.

This edition of the Road Runner was produced on different paper as a cost-saving measure. It can be recycled too.

International Year of the Indigenous Peoples

by Nicola Wade, Aboriginal Research Officer, Aboriginal Issues Office

The year 1993 has been declared by the United Nations as the International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples (IYWIP), with the theme: "Indigenous People: A New Partnership." As this theme embodies the new relationship B.C. is building with First Nations peoples, the province has joined with the federal government and the UN to formally recognize 1993 as IYWIP.

The goal of this year is to strengthen international co-operation in solving problems faced by indigenous communities in the areas of human rights, the environment, development, education and health. Provincially, an inter-ministry working group is in place to plan and implement activities to advance Aboriginal issues. Tony Beckett, Special Advisor, Aboriginal Issues, of MoTH's Aboriginal Issues Project, will be co-ordinating the ministry response and initiatives with the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs.

If you have suggestions, comments or would like to be involved in possible projects for IYWIP, please contact Tony in Victoria at 387-5925.

To All Shannon's Friends

To all of Shannon's friends at the Ministry of Transportation and Highways, a sincere thank you for caring and for the trust fund you contributed to for Jason's education.

Bev, Chuck and Jason

Correction: Long service award winner for twenty-five years with the ministry—Dave St. Thomas, Region 5 not Dave Thomas.

Deadline for the next Road Runner May 19, 1993
The Seismic "Buffalo Gun"
or Have Gun, Will Travel

By Steve Heggie, Engineering Asst., Geotechnical Operations, Burnaby

Before we build roads, we need to know what's under them. I know many of you are sitting back right now wondering, "How does highways find out what's under the ground when building roads?" or "Hey Bob, how deep was rock on the Coquihalla?" Although there are other methods, let me say one word "seismic."

First, we need a location, any place in the province will do, from the snow belt of Prince George to the rugged coastal forests of Vancouver Island. We're prepared to pack anything: snowshoes, rain gear, suntan-screen. We also need: an energy source (traditionally, it's been explosives), a seismic line, 12 to 24 geophones (receivers), a seismograph and, most importantly, the crew—featuring Paul, Evan, Glenn, Steve, Al, Neil, Vince and Mike.

Here's what we do. We induce energy into the ground whereby it travels down to something hard (like rock), bounces off (refracts) and travels back to the surface where our geophones capture the subsurface data and send it down the seismic line to the seismograph. Here the travel time or velocity of the seismic waves in the ground is measured, monitored, stored and eventually interpreted.

Now, before we do anything, our paramount concern is safety. Even though all precautions are double-checked to avoid flying debris, there is always a chance a tiny pebble could escape. Enter our buddy the buffalo gun.

Where rock is shallow or at a reasonable depth, highways has employed an 8-gauge buffalo gun (no we don't hunt buffalo). This powerful piece of geophysical equipment has effectively removed all safety hazards associated with explosives and blasting. (By the way, the Geological Survey of Canada rates the 8-gauge shell 100 times more powerful than the traditional 12-gauge shell.)

Here's how the buffalo gun works: Small holes are dug at preset locations along the seismic line. A crew member lowers the gun into the holes ("barrel down"). A plate (attached to the gun) is secured over the hole for safety purposes. The firing rod is dropped into the barrel initiating the shell into the ground.

The resulting impact replaces the energy previously derived from the explosives. Safety is enhanced, production increased, costs drastically decreased, and we're environmentally friendly to boot! All this from firing a gun into the ground. Amazing!

Obtaining 8-gauge shells is another matter. Outside of industrial purposes not too many people go hunting with 8-gauge shells.

Thus, locating and ordering the shells is, at times, a trying process. "You want what?" "No we carry nothing like that." "Elephant hunting are we?" These are common responses we've endured.

The buffalo gun is an effective tool that has proven its worth time and again, and we're getting quite used to the pointed fingers and puzzled expressions when working in proximity to the public.

In closing, the crews would like to thank all ministry personnel, consultants and management who have sent projects to us and assisted us in completing those projects, making our job a little easier.
Webster and Webster

By Tom Parkin, Public Information Officer, Vancouver Island

Ted and Miles Webster are one of the two-generation examples of public service in MoTH.

Ted Webster

"Life on the road" started when Ted Webster, now 81, quit school at age 17. He got a job with the Department of Public Works (our predecessor agency) in 1929. He was chainman, and later rodman with the survey crew relocating Old Yale Road between Abbotsford and Langley and worked steadily through most of '31 before encountering the first of many layoffs due to the Depression.

"Construction costs were about $15,000 per mile in those days," Ted recalled. "The contractor had a P&H gas shovel and two trucks with hard tires. We still used a hand-guided, horse-drawn scraper in Fresniet."

Ted worked a variety of southwestern locations before getting hired as draftsman on the Hope-Princeton Highway in 1933. It was there he met engineer OJ. (Pat) Wilke. It was a fortuitous meeting; they worked together many times over the following years, the older man passing knowledge to the younger, as was the training of the time.

By 1939, Ted obtained his first residency (being in charge of a project) on the Trans-Provincial Highway (now Highway 1) between Jones and Hunter Creek, west of Hope.

On New Year's Day, 1941, he and his bride Lola exchanged vows. Number one son, Miles, was born later that year, first of three children.

"I tried to take the family around with me, but it wasn't satisfactory. No sooner had I settled them in Abbotsford, where I returned each winter, than the buggers sent me further away." During these years, he went as far afield as Kamloops, Fernie and Pine Pass.

In 1950, he was again made assistant to OJ. Wilke, who had become construction engineer at HQ. "There had never been a construction branch as such prior to this, so there was lots of work setting it up and providing continuity."

When his mentor retired in 1956, Ted became director. The following years were the glory era of highway construction in B.C., ministered by the flamboyant Phil Gaglardi.

"My most fulfilling job was building the new highway between Revelstoke and Golden (Roger's Pass)," said Ted. "We went 'over the top' and survived, where the CPR couldn't. The railway built the longest tunnels on the continent to avoid extreme winter conditions.

By 1939, Ted obtained his first residency (being in charge of a project) on the Trans-Provincial Highway (now Highway 1) between Jones and Hunter Creek, west of Hope.

The last six years of his career were spent with Willis Cunliffe Tait & Co. Ltd., where he retired in 1978. "I never regretted it."

Miles Webster

When they were boys, Miles and his brother used to travel with their father. "Today, the smell of freshly-turned soil and diesel are a sign of spring to me. They are part of the perfume of my life."

Now regional manager of professional services and planning in Prince George, Miles' route to MoTH has more "mileage" than his father's. While in high school he worked one summer washing gravel in our geotechnical lab in Victoria, but went to UVic without planning to follow his parent's wheel tracks. He quit during Christmas exams in second year.

"He stuck around for two or three months doing nothing," said Ted. "I kicked him out and said not to come home until he had a job."

Miles got on with Willis Cunliffe Tait that year (1960) and went north on an Alaska Highway paving crew. Various construction jobs occupied him over the next five years, including time with MoTH in the Fraser Valley and private industry in Terrace.

"He called me from Terrace to say he didn't like it," said Ted. "I told him not to quit until he had another job offer. You're
Enviro News and Views

Working with Weevils

In September, the ministry attacked an infestation of knapweed on Stonewall Road. Rather than use cutters or herbicides, both of which are ineffective on this species, the ministry is working in collaboration with the ministries of forest and agriculture on a bio-release of weevil which eats knapweed roots.

This initial release was initiated by Bruce Nixon of our ministry and Dave Ralph from the agriculture ministry. In the Kootenays, weevils have also be introduced by Tony Bodnarchuk and Jerry Leblanc of MoTH working with Val Miller of the Nelson forest region.

There are eleven different bio-control agents used to control knapweed. The weevils, which are raised in Kamloops, are only one of the agents currently being introduced throughout the province. They are an indigenous insect to Europe, and they feed on knapweed, a Eurasian plant, brought to this country in the early 1900s.

In its native land, knapweed has many biological agents (usually insects) that rely on knapweed as a food source. In B.C. there are no native insects or animals which utilize it as a food source, so it quickly takes over native roadside vegetation.

One hundred adult Cyphochilus weevils were released onto plants along Stonewall Road in September last year. Other bio-control agents were released on the same site earlier in the season. They included a combination of seed head insects.

Bruce Nixon, roadside development technician, Region 6, releasing the weevils near a knapweed.

Photo: Tom Parkin

It is a fact that a single species of weevil will not eradicate an entire plant species. They will help to suppress growth; however, allowing native vegetation to grow back resulting in a better balance between species in nature.

How to identify Knapweed

There are two varieties of concern to B.C.: Diffuse Knapweed is more common. It has a single upright stem 20-100 cm (8-40 inches) tall and numerous spreading branches. It blooms in July and August with white, sometimes pinkish, flowers erupting from what appear to be small cones with spikes.

Spotted Knapweed grows 20-120 cm tall (8-48 inches). Branching occurs in the upper half of the plant and these end in purple, and occasionally white, flowers which bloom July to October.

What can you do?

People help spread knapweed. They can help control knapweed too if they:
1. Learn to recognize the species (the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food has a brochure on the subject)
2. Stay on established roads—do not drive across grasslands—when travelling B.C.'s rangelands
3. Ensure that, when you disturb the top soil layer doing activities such as roadbuilding, you reseed immediately
4. Check your vehicle and remove attached knapweed before leaving an infested area
5. Report knapweed sightings in remote areas to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food or the Ministry of Forests district office
6. Pull up isolated knapweed plants and remove from the area for burial
7. Don't purchase knapweed-infested hay, or dried flower arrangements with knapweed in them
IN THE FIELD

This section is presented by the Public Information Officers and their support staff. To learn more about what's happening in the regions, each has their own unique newsletter. These are available through the ministry library or by calling your region public information office. (Headquarters has one too.)

REGION 1

from the photo above PIO

Lions' Gate Bridge Served Us Well

For the past 55 years, the Lions' Gate Bridge, a Vancouver landmark, has served the travelling public exceptionally well. The bridge, which had a 50-year design life, is nearing the end of its structural service and the time has come, as the minister announced February 9th, to either rebuild or replace the bridge.

A ministry team, headed by ADM Planning and Major Projects Bruce McKeown is about to embark on a series of consultations with local municipalities and the general public on the future of the bridge. The public consultation process promises to be a real challenge because of the number of issues which are involved in deciding the future of the bridge—a major structure which handles 65,000 cars each and every day.

Green Wave Comes to King George

South Coast traffic department working with our Electrical District and the municipality of Surrey, has installed a green wave on the King George Highway between 96th Avenue and 108th Avenue in the Surrey Town Centre area.

The "wave" is controlled by a computer which times the signals to enable drivers who are obeying the speed limit to drive uninterruptedly through this corridor. The aim is to improve traffic flows and safety in the corridor.

Our traffic experts are currently working with Burnaby and Richmond on identification of future green wave corridors.

Installation of "waves" on our highways means we can improve lane efficiency and capacity at a relatively small cost—an important consideration at this time of fiscal restraint.

Chinese Smorgasbord

This one came from David Prince, Operations Assistant, Electrical District. Forty Electrical District employees (both operations and administrative support staff) recently got together for a Chinese smorgasbord lunch in Coquitlam. Because of shift requirements (electricians are working on a 24-hour basis) such gatherings are relatively few and far between.

April in Paris: We've Got a Champion

April in Paris: We've Got a Champion

Catherine Worley, Communications Centre operator is representing Canada at the international trampoline championships in April in France. Regional office staff have shown their support for Catherine's bid by generously participating in a fund raising drive to help defray the great expense she faces to get to the tournament. Trampoline is not, as yet, an officially recognized sport by Sports Canada or Sport B.C., so participants in provincial, national and international competitions have to raise the necessary funds to compete themselves.

To Catherine, our best wishes for every success. We're all proud of you.
REGION 2

from Rae-Anne Kurucz, PIO

Ninth Annual Mixed Slo-Pitch

Due to the Summer Games, we've had to begin planning early. The tournament will be held July 21 and 22 at Charles Anderson Stadium. A dinner and dance will be held at the new Riverside Coliseum. Dinner will be a nine course Chinese affair. There should be a beer garden at the stadium Saturday. We hope to get sixteen teams this year. But, if more show up we won't turn them away if we can fit them into a schedule. Entry fees will be going up this year to offset insurance requirements, inflation, etc.—no more than two dollars per person. Call Paul Imada at 828-4931.

SNOW AVALANCHE

In the Spotlight

It may have been a slow year in avalanche control for the Nicola District avalanche crew but it was a busy year for community and media relations. A new video sparked a lot of interest from the local media. Several interviews and media tours were conducted: Kamloops Daily News, Merritt Herald and CHBC TV. Global TV was the crew's biggest adventure.

This TV crew was whisked by helicopter (February 16th) to the top of a mountain where the avalanche crew undertook a snow profile. The excitement didn't end there. Three rounds of artillery were shot and the ropeway was set to carry imaginary explosives up the slope.

Only two days later, the crew took the time to show a group of twenty students on a field trip, the scientific aspects of avalanche control. Some great community and media relations work was done by the avalanche crew. Thanks on behalf of the ministry.

Simon Walker, District Avalanche Tech showing media visitor Robert Osborne the ropes.

REGION 3

from Katherine Kearnns, PIO Assistant

New Geotech Environment

Geotechnical and Materials Services staff have moved into their new working environment. For the first time in the history of the region's Geotechnical services, staff is working together in one facility—11,000 square feet in size and located along Nelson's Kootenay Lake. According to Roy Ludgreen, Regional Geotechnical and Materials Engineer, "This facility gives us a renewed sense of teamwork and the opportunity to share innovative ideas."

Community Liaison Committee

The first meeting of the Castlegar-Robson Bridge Community Liaison Committee took place February 18, 1993. Comprised of members from local business, government and community organizations, the committee serves to keep the public informed of construction activities and to focus on issues which require co-ordination and cooperation with the community's interests. Project Manager Rocky Vanlerberg led a discussion on the timing of construction activities and answered questions concerning pedestrian access, traffic delays and the Brilliant Interchange.

In the meantime, work has begun on the 478-metre Castlegar-Robson Bridge, which will span the Columbia River and link the communities of Robson and Castlegar. According to Rocky, "The contractor, SCI Engineers and Constructors, is clearing and grubbing the project site. Pile driving has also begun." The ministry has established a site office in a house which had been acquired for project right-of-way. The six-pier steel bridge is scheduled to be completed in June 1994.

Salt Alternate Tested

Staff is working with Bel Maintenance to test alternate de-icing method. Magnesium chloride is being added to the salt-sand mixture. This reduces the quantity of salt required to achieve a safe driving surface during snow storms by as much as 50 per cent. "If we can achieve results similar to those found in other provinces, we may be able to reduce the effects of salt on the environment," said the region's roadside development supervisor Tony Bodnarchuk.
IN THE FIELD

A Stitch in Time

Larry Struck and Terry Walton, marine engineers of the DEV Galena were applauded for outstanding job performance when they discovered a fault in the ferry's recently installed radar equipment. When the radar screen began showing unidentifiable images, or "swash plates," Larry and Terry put their technical skills to work and discovered that the problem was related to the distances between the components of the radar equipment. Their perseverance saved the ministry expensive repair costs and contributed to the protection of public safety.

Terry and Larry received a letter and a plaque of commendation from Vince Collins as well as membership in the 200,000 Club.

REGION 4

from Ron Wiebe, PIO

Snow-Bound

Anyone planning on travelling in a pool vehicle this past winter had to consider adding about half an hour of "digging out" time to their itinerary. Throughout most of the Central North East, there had been no shortage of the white stuff. While moisture levels have been far below normal of late, snow accumulation in the Prince George area during December was definitely above normal.

Doc on the Move

When the Central North East lost its Regional Manager of Planning to South Coast late last year, few realized that they also lost a Doctor!! Dennis Davis had just got word that he would be receiving his Doctorate degree in Transportation Engineering when South Coast Region whisked him away to a new planning assignment.

Admin Support Staff Conference

The second Admin Support Staff Conference was held last fall, with participants from Regional office and all seven Districts joining together for two days of fun and professional development. Workshops covered topics such as personality styles, team building, assertiveness training, self defense and public speaking. Over lunch hour on the final day, staff models staged a fashion show to show an array of office, casual and evening attire to an appreciative audience.

REGION 5

from Jane W. Sparkes, PIO

Ice Jam

The Nass Road into Greenville was closed for several days at the beginning of February due to ice being pushed across the road. Five kilometres of road just west of Canyon Gap (in the Nass Valley) were under ice and water because an ice jam on the main channel of the Nass River caused another jam on a side channel parallel to the road. It wasn't safe for crews for several days, but they finally managed to get at it with a loader and open the road.

Ferry Workers' Idea Being Implemented

A contract was awarded to Lakes District Maintenance Ltd. to add steel wedges to decrease the slope between the deck and the ramp of the Omicron Princess at Francois Lake. "The idea for this improvement came from the crews themselves," said Ken Millar, Manager of Ferry Operations.

The decreased slope ensures that when vehicles are off loading there will not be any damage and that there will be a smoother transition for motorists.

Esker Overhead Project a Winner

The Esker Creek Overhead project on Highway 16 west of Terrace involved an overhead crossing of CNR tracks, 1.5 kilometres of highway realignment and reclamation of the Esker Creek gravel pit—the creation of coho rearing habitats.

Now this project has won an award from the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of the Province of B.C. It is their annually awarded Environmental Engineering Design Award. The Project Manager Kevin Higgins (now DHM for Robson District) accepted the award on behalf of the ministers March 9th at the Vancouver Board of Trade luncheon sponsored by the professional engineers as part
REGION 6

from Tom Parkein, PIO

Dinosaur Artist and Fossil Finder

Dinosaur artist Dan Bowen and fossil finder Mike Trask of North Island District have teamed up once again in the media. Both previously attracted province-wide attention with their paleontology efforts on behalf of the Courtenay and District Museum. Now Dan has profiled Mike’s field work in a children’s book.

The story, illustrated by Dan, tells how Mike and his daughter Heather found the fossilized skeleton of a 15-metre-long Elasmosaur. The book consists of 19 illustrations over 27 pages. Dan donated his talent; proceeds of sales raise funds for the museum. Dan also appears in the current issue of Nature Canada magazine.

IN THE FIELD

HEADQUARTERS

MoTH Ski Trips

Staff made three trips to Mt. Washington this year: in January, February and March. “We had forty seven for two trips and 92 for February’s run,” said Ann Adams, Public Affairs. “We had to get a second bus.” The success of the ski trips are due to the great “snow job” done by Ann and Leslie Freer, Major Projects. They said the trips were so successful they plan to do it again next year.

Family Day Tour

December 21, close to 300 people toured HQ to see first hand where their friends and family members worked. Most departments set up fun and informative displays and gave out cookies, candies, juices, colouring books, miniature recycling boxes and other goodies. From all reports our “guests” had a great time and came away with a better understanding of what we do. Staff has already begun to plan a Family Day for next year. This initiative was proposed by HQ Employment Equity Subcommittee last summer. They challenge all offices to do the same.
IN THE FIELD

Barb Goes to Ottawa

Executive Administrative Co-ordinator Barb Harrison is leaving to go to Ottawa for a secondment in the Prime Minister’s Conference Secretariate for up to two years. Ottawa’s no stranger to Barb. She worked in the House of Commons before she joined the ministry and has friends and family in the area. “We wish Barb the best,” said Sharon Varley, Correspondence Unit Supervisor, “but how are we going to fill those big shoes?” Among many other things too numerous to mention, Barb was responsible for getting the Correspondence Unit up and running.

Street Smart

About 90 employees learned “How to be Street Smart” in a presentation given in early January by Constable Lynn Rosvald of the Victoria City Police. “I thought it was really good. I learned that some of the self-defense things you can buy thinking they will protect you may end up being used against you,” said one participant. It taught you to be aware of your surroundings. I never knew before how vulnerable you are if you are not aware,” said another. HQ’s Wellness Committee sponsored the event and challenges other offices to do the same for their employees.

Thank You North Island District from the “SPY”

Veronica Walsh, Executive Secretary, Highways Operations Dept. spent two months in North Island District where she was dubbed “the spy.” She said: “I enjoyed the opportunity of working with the staff in the North Island District office. Time spent was very educational and informative (hard work but fun, thanks to Mike and his staff). I have come away with a good understanding of the role the district plays in the organization as well as the role and responsibilities of each position. The perspective this visit has given me will help me in the administrative role I play back at HQ. Already a number of issues such as ditching and expropriation have crossed my desk and I am able to deal more effectively with them. A personal thanks to all who made me a part of the team.”

Gary Wants Your Pins

Gary Stringer, FMIS Clerk in Finance and Admin Branch has collected 500 lapel pins over the years—“seriously for three,” he added “My favorite is a 1940s B.C police collar pin of a dog. It was given to my father; that’s what makes it so special.” The next time you get a pin, instead of throwing it into a drawer or the garbage, send it to Gary. “More than 70 per cent of my collection was given to me,” he said.

Bridge Contractor Prequalifications

February 26th, our Minister Art Charbonneau introduced a system to ensure all contractors bidding on major MoTH bridge works maintain acceptable safety standards. It is hoped that this system will prevent tragedies as occurred almost two years ago, when a young man fell while working on a ministry bridge project.

“After extensive consultation with contractors, workers and trade unions, we have come up with a program to ensure that only contractors with a proven commitment to safety will be approved to tender for the ministry’s major bridge work and painting projects,” Charbonneau said.

Under the new system, contractors must apply to register on the ministry’s prequalification list. Each application will be assessed to make sure the contractor has a work record and safety program acceptable to the ministry. Tenders from prequalified contractors only will be accepted.

Over the next three years, the ministry will also be moving to a requirement that bridge painting contractors be certified by the Steel Structures Painting Council.

Contractors whose applications are denied will have the right to appeal to a prequalification committee consisting of one member each from the ministry, the B.C. Construction Association and one independent member. The committee’s ruling will be final.
Your Fan Mail

Maintenance, Much Appreciated

(From the Ucluelet, Westerly News) I do recall that when (maintenance) was privatized a few years ago, there were gloomy prognostications about how private contractors were likely to do a poor job and cut corners to save money.

Well, it doesn't look like that to me. I made one trip out here in the middle of a blizzard before Christmas (in a rear-wheel drive car) and as fast as it fell, the trucks and graders were clearing it. Good job; well done.

(Another, from the Revelstoke Times Review) Revelstoke's weather station staff report that: snow levels in December increased five times from the same period last year.

However, Revelstoke RCMP reported few weather-related incidents saying: the highways people have been doing a great job clearing the roads and making them safer.

Thumbs Up

The Abbotsford News says, "Thumbs up to the highways ministry reader board signs on Highway 1. They proved their worth on Monday, as they warned drivers of blizzard conditions on Sumas Prairie, one of the more treacherous sections of freeway in the winter."

Exceptional Co-operation

(Addressed to Mike Proudfoot, DHM, North Island) On behalf of our town, thanks to you and your staff for a great job on the Campbell Way/McNeill Road Crosswalk. We appreciated the time you spent in meeting with our Safety Committee and for the information you were able to provide. We also appreciated the quick response of Doug Wright and his staff, even with your installation crew, who worked under very difficult conditions, with bad weather and heavy traffic, to get the job done so quickly. Our Council passed a unanimous vote of thanks to the Honourable Minister, at our last meeting.

Mayor Gerry Furney, Town of Port McNeill

A Credit to the Ministry

Some 11 months ago a blocked culvert caused a flood which washed out most of my garden and damaged the house. This week I received a cheque which covered most of the damage.

Despite the loss, the wasted time and frustration, it was not altogether a disagreeable experience. Peter Wightman, DHM, Central Island was my first contact and he was most helpful. Then my file was passed to Steve Swanston, Claims Adjuster in Victoria. He and I had many conversations over a period of four months trying to fix the cause and thus the responsibility. We were frustrated by (I believe) the intrusiveness of one of the parties, but always Swanston was there trying to produce a solution. At one time I told him that if kindness and courtesy could buy money I would be overcompensated.

These two gentlemen are a credit to your ministry.

John Hawkins, Nanoose Bay, Vancouver Island

Speedy Too

We felt that your staff (Alan Brasch and Lee Anne Laponder, Okanagan-Shuswap District Sub-Office) deserve a thank you for the great service, time and effort that they gave us when we asked. We wish that more businesses were as kind and efficient (speedy too).

Wendy and Morgan Brown, Lot #8 Cedar Heights

Concern for School Children

(Thank you Grant Lachmuth, DHM, Lakes District) for your efforts in widening the highway at Decker Lake to accommodate student pedestrian traffic between Wildwood Drive and the Decker Lake Elementary School. This enhancement should improve the safety margin for students walking to and from the school, a concern expressed by both the parents and the Board. The safety of our children must continue to be a major concern. Your reaction to the concern prior to any serious accident is greatly appreciated.

Wayne A. Brown, Secretary Treasurer, School District No. 55 (Burns Lake)

We spent Christmas with my mother in Burnaby. We were worried about our trip home, after hearing the news of recent snowfalls in the Williams Lake and Likely areas. After leaving 100 Mile House, we noticed the roads were much better and the (white and yellow) lines were visible all the way to Mile 150. Turning off Highway 97 at Mile 150 was the part we dreaded, but what a wonderful surprise to see the yellow centre line just about all the way to Likely with snow piled high on both sides of the road.

It is a comforting thought that we can depend on Caribou Road Services (C.R.S.). I know we speak for all of Likely. Stan Papaloski was manager for the Ministry of Highways, Williams Lake office for several years before forming Caribou Road Services. We, in Likely, think he should be commended for a job well done.

Henry and Rose Hicks of Likely, B.C.

A Credit to the Ministry

We spent Christmas with my mother in Burnaby. We were worried about our trip home, after hearing the news of recent snowfalls in the Williams Lake and Likely areas. After leaving 100 Mile House, we noticed the roads were much better and the (white and yellow) lines were visible all the way to Mile 150. Turning off Highway 97 at Mile 150 was the part we dreaded, but what a wonderful surprise to see the yellow centre line just about all the way to Likely with snow piled high on both sides of the road.

It is a comforting thought that we can depend on Caribou Road Services (C.R.S.). I know we speak for all of Likely. Stan Papaloski was manager for the Ministry of Highways, Williams Lake office for several years before forming Caribou Road Services. We, in Likely, think he should be commended for a job well done.

Henry and Rose Hicks of Likely, B.C.

Dependable Maintenance

We spent Christmas with my mother in Burnaby. We were worried about our trip home, after hearing the news of recent snowfalls in the Williams Lake and Likely areas. After leaving 100 Mile House, we noticed the roads were much better and the (white and yellow) lines were visible all the way to Mile 150. Turning off Highway 97 at Mile 150 was the part we dreaded, but what a wonderful surprise to see the yellow centre line just about all the way to Likely with snow piled high on both sides of the road.

It is a comforting thought that we can depend on Caribou Road Services (C.R.S.). I know we speak for all of Likely. Stan Papaloski was manager for the Ministry of Highways, Williams Lake office for several years before forming Caribou Road Services. We, in Likely, think he should be commended for a job well done.

Henry and Rose Hicks of Likely, B.C.

Dependable Maintenance

We spent Christmas with my mother in Burnaby. We were worried about our trip home, after hearing the news of recent snowfalls in the Williams Lake and Likely areas. After leaving 100 Mile House, we noticed the roads were much better and the (white and yellow) lines were visible all the way to Mile 150. Turning off Highway 97 at Mile 150 was the part we dreaded, but what a wonderful surprise to see the yellow centre line just about all the way to Likely with snow piled high on both sides of the road.

It is a comforting thought that we can depend on Caribou Road Services (C.R.S.). I know we speak for all of Likely. Stan Papaloski was manager for the Ministry of Highways, Williams Lake office for several years before forming Caribou Road Services. We, in Likely, think he should be commended for a job well done.

Henry and Rose Hicks of Likely, B.C.
Colour Deficient Drivers Study

Do colour deficient drivers have difficulties recognizing the colours of traffic-control signals? How does this influence their ability to react? Can something be done to alleviate these difficulties? These are the questions the Highway Safety Branch's Colour Deficient Drivers Study set out to answer.

The first preliminary study in 1991 identified that, yes, colour deficient drivers do experience difficulties. It was also found that there are increased difficulties with age, so the potential target group became larger than expected.

The next step was to find out how much different colour deficiencies and aging affected driver reaction times and to evaluate different signal-head designs to see which would help to improve reaction times.

To do this, the research team had a Photographic Intersection Traffic Signal Simulator (PITSS) built by the Psychology Department at the University of British Columbia. The PITSS tested response times of drivers in day and night conditions, using different signal designs and viewing distances. Altogether, seven designs were tested with physical differences in size of lens, with/without backboard and intensity of light.

Preliminary results from this study came in February. The principal researcher, Dr. Romuald Lakowski of the University of British Columbia recommended that further studies are needed to test under varying weather conditions and to better understand the interaction between the signal design variables. However, five general observations were made:

1. Individuals with colour deficiencies required longer reaction times (measured in milliseconds) to all traffic signal designs.
2. Reaction time requirement lengthens with age; this was more pronounced for individuals without than with colour deficiencies.
3. All subjects had the longest reaction times to the no backboard assembly with low watt bulb (69 watts).
4. The individuals with colour deficiencies had the fastest reaction times to the 300mm and shape coded signals with large lenses and the brightest luminance (150 watts).
5. Overall, the reaction times for all subjects were shortest for the same signal designs as above.

The next step is to come up with a signal head design combining the desirable variables in a cost-effective way and carry out field tests to evaluate its effectiveness in reducing traffic accidents.
Fifth Floor Ambassador

What's the difference between a receptionist and an ambassador? Not much, especially if that receptionist is Cecile Halsey.

"I like to provide good service and, to me, everybody is equal," said Cecile.

If you've ever phoned the executive office or Public Affairs, then you know Cecile—or at least you know her voice. Cecile intercepts all calls to the executive offices and Public Affairs Branch—over 300 a day. Her job description says she's a receptionist but that doesn't do her job justice.

Have you ever tried responding to a customer while juggling four "blinking" phone calls and signing off a hot courier receipt that can't wait?

What would you do if the phone was ringing off the hook, someone was calling you to fix the FAX (it's stuck), and then a member of the public phones in: "What's the weather like in Terrace?" or "Do chestnut trees grow well along Highway 57?"

Cecile uses humour and a quick wit to get her through the day and brings the rest of the executive office staff through laughing along with her.

A Day in the Work Life...

New Marine Branch and More

March 8th, Dan Doyle, ADM, Highways Operations announced the creation of a Marine Branch and that the ministry has implemented about 85 per cent of the recommendations made in the report of the Standards Review Committee headed by Admiral Robert Yanow.

"This has been accomplished with the tremendous support and co-operation of all staff who were connected with the inland ferry fleet," said Dan.

Recommendations were made in five areas: inspection issues; management; inspections and enforcement; certification and qualification of employees; and improved communications and labour relations.

INSPECTION ISSUES

Most of the recommended improvements for each vessel and its operation are now in place and the rest will be implemented as soon as possible. All safety issues have been addressed.

MANAGEMENT

The report recommended a marine organization under one marine professional chain of command. A new organizational structure has been created (Effective April 1, 1993) which reports to the new Marine Branch Director under the responsibility of the Chief Highway Engineer. Contracts will be undertaken between Marine Branch and each region to make sure the services the ferries provide complement the regional highway services. Also, a personnel advisor will assist the new branch as needed.

INSPECTIONS AND ENFORCEMENTS

To ensure that regular inspections of vessels are carried out, as recommended in the report, a new position will be posted March 26th—Inspection and Training Officer. In addition, annual inspections will be conducted by an outside authority.

CERTIFICATION AND QUALIFICATION

The report highlighted the need for ongoing training of all marine personnel. A major responsibility of the new Inspector and Training Officer will be the organization of necessary training. "I firmly believe that the strength of the marine organization will be its people," said Dan. "And, to support them, the ministry will provide training to assist employees in doing the best job possible."

COMMUNICATIONS AND LABOUR RELATIONS

The ministry supports and will implement the recommendations in the report regarding better communication within the Marine Branch and with the union through the marine service joint committee. The ministry is presently discussing the issue of providing uniforms for employees on cable and reaction ferries.

"Our objective is to make sure the public get the very best service and staff have a good place in which to work," said Dan.
In northwestern B.C., the Bulkley River has sliced a series of steep-walled canyons near its confluence with the Skeena River at Hazelton. About five kilometres upstream on the Bulkley, a suspension bridge spans Hagwilget Canyon at a height of 80 metres above the water.

Built in 1931, it was the highest highway suspension bridge in Canada at that time.

Central Vancouver Island District highways manager Peter Wightman recalls the Hagwilget Bridge from the late ‘50s: “I grew up in Terrace, and my family used to drive the Yellowhead Highway for a day’s outing. There wasn’t much traffic then, so Dad used to stop in the middle of the span so we kids could throw off paper airplanes.”

Peter doesn’t recall how long it took his gliders to descend, but the spectacular drop is enough to inspire any youthful pilot.

Hagwilget suspension bridge—Neill Gallagher fell from the right side.

Coincidentally, it was in Peter’s current highways district that Canada’s first strictly-recreational bridge was built in 1990. His Nanaimo staff were involved in shepherding the enormously-successful “Bungy Zone” span through the development approval process.

However, it was a former MoTH bridge worker who took the country’s first flying leaps—without a cord—off Hagwilget Bridge.

Neill Gallagher, now with Bulkley Valley Maintenance Ltd., was removing a damaged railing panel on March 26, 1988. “Somehow it must have been under tension, so when the last bolt came out, it sprung, and knocked me off the deck...”

“I remember reaching around to grab something, but there was only air. I had a moment of sheer panic, and then I hit, face-down, on rock 15 metres below. I was still conscious, and tried to stand up. I lost balance on the slope and tumbled another 50 metres down the cliff to the river, reminding myself to stay loose. Good thing I stopped on rocks near the water, because if I’d gone under the ice...”

“A co-worker scrambled up branches, on the seat of his pants. I told him ‘Okay, believe me that I’d fallen 60 or 70 metres, I had punctured lung, and my first thought was to find a bridge to see for myself if I was dead or alive.’

“Today, Neill is relatively routine—he and his family don’t bother me. It was just a very lucky young fellow who takes chances.”

In fact, Neill reckons, “You might say I broke my neck just to be a very lucky young fellow.”

If bridges have reputations of falling from them, Neill’s staff think him as high as the bridge. “Our ministry has no more workers than those on Hagwilget.”

B.C.’s First Bungy Zone

An excerpt from the Ministry of Transportation and Highways, Summer Freeway—a short, illustrative history of travel in British Columbia.

The original Hagwilget Bridge was built by an engineer named Colonel Bulkley in 1870 to build an overland telegraph line to the United States, Alaska, and Siberia. The line was named after the telegraph wire, which was laid across poles to tie poles together, where the Bulkley Bridge over the earliest known “bridge.”

Read about the original and more in the new “Fronts to Freeways” for your office. Call 1-800-387-3198.
In the water, I'd have slid down after him, hand over his pants. He asked how I got out. I didn't know! I was in hospital for 16 weeks. Skull, ruptured spleen, lacerated liver, and other injuries. When I got out, I went back to the hospital and back at work, and then what I'd done... “

Imagine young women in white petticoats skipping across the bridge and young men in ties and short pants, throwing stones over the railing as their parents listened to speeches from the Governor General and the Premier proclaiming the dawn of a new day.

The Westminster Bridge was constructed of steel. It had a swing span of 380 feet and seven fixed spans. This structure replaced a steam-driven ferry and was to carry pedestrians, horses and wagons on the top deck and two railways and the new "horseless" carriages on the lower deck. The clear roadway for both the railway and highway was 16 feet.

It was a technological marvel that helped to open up the Lower Mainland and its debut would be remembered for years.

The day's celebrations kicked off at 1:00 p.m. with a steam boat parade down the Fraser River, followed by the opening ceremonies, an official luncheon and Aboriginal canoe races. The day ended at 10:30 p.m. with a torchlight procession on the river and fireworks on the bridge.

Bridge construction started August 1902. It was completed July 1904 at a cost of $1 million.
Ann Adams—produced an alphabetical listing of who to call for ministry services in HQ.

With support from the Executive Co-ordinator, Barb Harrison and the Executive Secretaries, I was on my way.

Four months later ... the "baby" was born.

As part of the new directory there is a full alphabetical listing of all ministry staff and a subject listing of who to call for HQ services. The latter was produced by Ann Adams, Public Affairs.

I would like to express my special thanks to all those who provided assistance which enabled me to bring this directory together—much appreciated.

When I came to the ministry five months ago, I was impressed with the level of awareness staff here had of Service Excellence compared to other ministries. I've seen a real growth since then.

Some recent happenings: "Presentation Skills and Effective Meetings" training for all Service Excellence Reps around the province and HQ secretarial meetings headed by the three Executive Secretaries where admin/clerical staff are being asked for their input and ideas for change.

I am very excited to be a part of a ministry which is proving to be a "forerunner."

Tracy Musteca—developed more user-friendly yellow pages.

Kevin Rose, Survey Aide. Carrie Wilson, Survey Aide (new member to the team from the Kispiox Band) and Mark Savage, District Surveyor.

I had an idea to improve the ministry's "yellow pages," but was hesitant to pursue it. With support from Ray Mau, Service Excellence Project Manager, I went ahead and asked if I could take over the directory and my offer was accepted! With "yellow pages" in hand, I found myself on the agenda for the senior support staff meeting the next morning in Executive Branch.
A Better Way

"I was frustrated, not being able to keep timely and efficient record of activity defects for the quality assurance program," said Dan Keeler, Bridge Area Manager, North Cariboo District. "It was list on list with cross outs after cross outs. I thought, I've got to get this stuff on computer."

"Then I thought, I wonder if I can get the report forms on data base, and then the tracking and month end reports..."

Brad Moore, then a District Operations Assistant (now an area manager) did the programming. Dan did the testing. Working together over two years, sometimes late into the night on their own time, they created a Bridge Inspection Program that is now being used province wide.

The program saves time, paperwork and frustration. No more double or triple handling, no more lists to carry around and month end reports take ten minutes instead of two hours. The estimated annual cost savings is over $80,000 a year. (Yes, they've sent this idea to the government's "Suggestion Award" program.)

Dan thanks bridge area managers around the province for their support and region and headquarters managers too. "Without their support, it couldn't have flown."

Brad (right) and Dan—it’s two a.m. and they’re still smiling.

Experimental Markings

Experimental centreline markings will appear around the province this summer. This is only one of many initiatives being done in response to public concerns expressed in the highway-user survey conducted by the Service Excellence Unit last fall. Double-wide shoulder lines are to be installed on two sections of existing paved shoulders on Highway 97 and Highway 16. Larger glass bead is to be installed on two sections of highway centreline in dark, wet locations on Vancouver Island and in the North West Region.

Suggestion Award Winner

Leah Glick-Stal (Branch Manager, Administration, Highway Safety Branch) was recognized for her suggestion which had a modest cost-saving benefit but is a great frustration-saving tool. She recommended that all year end financial transactions (hard copies of budget reallocations, journal vouchers, invoices, etc.) be stamped with "old year" or "new year." This would start mid-March and end May 31 and would reduce the traditional high error rate and confusion that can happen at year end.

Kelly Dube—helping to stamp out frustration.

OA2-Plus Performance

In the absence of the area manager, Kelly Dube (part-time office assistant, Port Clements Sub-Office) will go out, even during severe storms, to evaluate road conditions and report road closures.

"It should be recognized that the contribution she frequently makes is far above and beyond that expected from someone in her postman," said David Byng, Area Manager in nominating her for 200% Club membership.

"The information she provides is critical to ensuring the safety of the travelling public and the efficient operation of the ministry."

Kelly's response is, "I don't think that I go above and beyond my job. I consider helping out as part of my work. I feel there are others who deserve more praise for what they do."

Kelly Dube—I consider helping out as part of my work.
200% Club Members

If you are a new 200% club member and your name is not on the list it may appear in the next Road Runner as the form may not have reached Public Affairs until after production cut off date. Please call the editor at 387-3198 if you are concerned.

Payroll Section, HQ: 19 staff, one secondment. Exceptional effort in preparing retro pay for new S.T.O. series, negotiated G.E.L. increases and management salary increases.

Jordan Alexander, Policy Branch, HQ: developed, organized and chaired the very successful 1992 provincial cycling conference.

Irene Bidnall, Vancouver Island Region: always willing and cheerful about lending a hand to anyone.

Jack Chiu, Systems, Vancouver Island Region: extremely hard working and knowledgeable, great individual.

Vivian Colarch and Sharon Rime, Selkirk District: volunteer work in decorating office lobby.

John Coombs, Planning Services, HQ: never says never, strives for improvement and progress.

Kelly Dube, Skeena District Sub-Office: goes beyond her O.A. job duties and risks her own safety to evaluate weather/road conditions.

Marilyn Foulston, Central/North East Region: promotes health and wellness.

Kerry Gordon, Central Kootenay District: initiated/developed a record of personnel training information.

Terri Graham, Thompson-Okanagan Region: in handling stationary requests, if she doesn't have it in stock, she finds it.

Dale Holmes, Kootenays Region: works on weekends and evenings to keep MCS program up-to-date and running smoothly and to run the wires for sharespool.

Max Johnstone and Nadine Cameron, Selkirk Region: for their combined time and effort promoting Service Excellence in the district.

Dan Keeler and Brad Moores, North Cariboo District: created a bridge and culvert inspection computer program which saves time, money and paperwork.

Audrey Kempin, Central Kootenay: increases teamwork through social initiatives.

Bob Kettner, North Peace Area Manager plus (receptionist, bookkeeper, whatever is needed), "neither sickness, snow or 40 below stops Bob from doing his job!"

Susan Lakeman, Kootenays Region: pleasant, cheerful and efficient—even under pressure.

Greg Lawrence, Central Kootenay: always available and willing to help public and staff.

Central Kootenay District 200% Club members: Kerry Gordon (left), Audrey Kempin and Greg Lawrence (sitting).

Kay Lee, Finance and Admin, HQ: highly efficient, doesn't just "type up" material, improves it.

Ken Mah, Systems, South Coast Region: "Wellness" plus in organizing region's slo-pitch league.

Leslie Manning, Finance and Admin, HQ: morale booster and "wellness" encourager extraordinaire.

Ian Matthews, Major Projects, HQ: drove the very successful 1992 HQ Provincial Employees Community Services fund campaign.

Doreen Meerman, South Peace: promotes good will for the ministry and team spirit amongst staff.

Bobbie Mitchell, HQ: a great worker who endeavors to fulfill requests, questions etc. in the kindest and fastest manner possible.

Debbie Moss, South Coast Region: captain "wellness" as editor of South Coast News and resurrector of social events in region.

David Robertson, HQ, Postal Services: rectified problems with distribution of Speak Out 92, streamlined courier service billing procedures, Equity Awareness Session facilitator.

Mark Savage and Kevin Rose, Bulkley Nass: produced more survey data in a season (all of it high stan-
Unauthorized Use of Government Vehicles
Don't Put Yourself At Risk

We read this in “At Risk,” published quarterly by the Risk Management Branch, Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations and thought it was a story that we should reprint so you don’t put yourself “at risk.”

A government employee took his government-owned vehicle home, as he was authorized to do. He then went out again, on a personal errand, using the vehicle, he was not authorized to do this. On the journey he was involved in an accident for which he was found 100% at fault. The occupants of the other vehicle were injured and both vehicles were wrecked.

Government-owned vehicles are insured for third party legal liability costs only. If the vehicle was being driven on government business, the third party liability would have covered the losses of the other driver, and the government would have absorbed the cost of repairs to the government vehicle.

This accident happened, however, when the employee was on personal business not authorized. While the third party legal liability insurance still responds to the losses of the other driver, the government refuses to absorb the costs of damage to the government vehicle. The employee driver must absorb these costs himself, in addition to facing disciplinary action by his ministry.

In this case, another factor made the situation even worse: the police found that the employee had a blood alcohol content above the legal limit. This employee, as well as facing charges, became personally liable for all costs resulting from this accident, including damage to both vehicles and personal injury costs.

(The above circumstances contributed to the employee leaving government service.)
Managers Vs Leaders: We need them both

A personal perspective
by Terry Power, South Coast Region

Managers strive on stability; leaders thrive on crisis. In the public sector there is a tendency to be security minded. We shy from the flood lights of public examination and prefer stability.

Craig R. Hickman, co-author of "Creating Excellence" remarks that, "managers, who by nature prefer a stable, orderly environment, feel most secure when their organizations attain a degree of uniformity. To their minds, uniformity, which suggests a rather well-oiled machine that hums along in a consistent, systematic and predictable fashion, creates a more easily managed environment. In the uniform organization, the manager can measure, compare and correct situations with engineering mentality."

On the other hand, Hickman observes of leaders: "... that they could care less about uniformity or orderliness, as long as everyone in the organization unites behind a common purpose, principle, idea, or vision. Unity of heart and minds, not managerial uniformity of actions or practices, pre-occupies the leader."

Managers tend to be more analytical, structured, controlled, deliberate, orderly, practiced, reasonable and decisive, while leaders tend to be more experimental, uncontrollable, creative, visionary, emphatic and flexible. Hickman describes the concepts as metaphors representing two ends of a continuum being "the mind" and "the soul."

There is a natural tension between managers and leaders but both are equally important to the organization's "culture." Our ministry can be both innovative and well managed; change oriented and conservative; and viable in the short term and far into the future.

This then is the opportunity of the ministry. To understand the competing philosophic positions of each other as we strive to bring our organization into the 21st century and accommodate the external changes being imposed on "how we do business."

It's especially important today, with all the changes we're experiencing, that we all work together.

Reasonable Accommodation: What is it and What Does It Cost?

Have you ever started and ended your work day an hour earlier in order to get the jump on a long weekend? Or juggled your work hours to make an important 11 a.m. appointment with your banker? These are examples of "reasonable accommodation," a term you probably heard during the employment equity awareness sessions held throughout the ministry recently. It usually refers to work place changes that allow persons with disabilities to do a job to the best of their ability. But reasonable accommodation can also benefit a large number of employees. Some common examples of reasonable accommodation are: on-site daycare, flexible work hours, telecommunications devices for a person with a hearing impairment, and technical aids (i.e., software programs that provide large print on screens.)

Similarly, reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities does not have to be expensive. In fact, the vast majority of accommodations cost little or nothing.

Sensitivity sessions for employees are probably the most effective form of reasonable accommodation where no cost is attached.

"Many people have never worked with a person with a disability," says Scott Heron of the BC Paraplegic Association. "The biggest accommodation anyone can make is to gain an understanding or sensitivity of various disabilities to make everyone feel comfortable in the workplace."

Other forms of reasonable accommodation can be costly, such as putting in a wheelchair lift or ramp. But the value of this kind of accommodation may be considerable.

First, the organization gains a valued and skilled employee. Second, the improved accessibility of the building opens the door for other employees and members of the public who may otherwise be excluded.

Before going ahead with what may be expensive measures, a manager should ask the employee directly. For example, if a work desk is too low to accommodate a wheelchair the impulse solution is to buy a new desk. But the employee might suggest that blocks be used to raise the desk, or that another desk be brought in from a different department.

The key to reasonable accommodation is common sense.
STO Review Committee Update

The special committee formed to review the ministry's S.T.O. positions has now completed its rounds of interviews of applicants who made submissions to the committee. The committee was struck in responses to concerns about the implementation of the Scientific Technical Officer Plan. The two primary issues reviewed were: to ensure that the plan had been properly applied and confirm accuracy of job description and reporting relationship information.

Over 300 submissions were made to the committee which conducted 86 interviews around the province involving some 120 applicants or their representatives.

The committee then met during the first week of March to deliberate, evaluate positions and formulate their recommendations. It is anticipated that the final report will be completed and the results will be communicated to all affected staff by the end of March.

Educational Partnerships

The ministry presented educational partnership financial awards to two high schools to develop engineering and technology info-based materials for our "Futures in Transportation Technology" (FITT) outreach career awareness program.

February 8th, Anita Hagen, Minister of Education joined our minister, Art Charbonneau and MLA Fred Jackson to present one award to students of Westsyde Secondary in Kamloops. One week later, on the 15th, our ADM of Highways Operations Dan Doyle joined Robin Blencoe, Victoria-Hillside MLA to present a second award to students of Lansdowne Junior Secondary in Victoria.

Students at Westsyde are designing a software program which will allow students and the public to explore transportation technologies and relate them to past and future developments in the field.

Lansdowne students will produce a career path map software program—a resource bank to locate all courses and programs in B.C. which offer engineering and technological career opportunities.

Personnel Services Branch, Staff Development Officer Virginia Clark was given the assignment to develop the program "Futures in Transportation Technology." (This program is more commonly known as "FITT for your Future.") She worked with the Ministry of Education and consultant Penny Hooper.

FITT was "tested" in five schools last fall. Student and teacher comments are now being used to fine-tune the program which is expected to go into action in fall 1993. Look for more on FITT in future Road Runner publications.

Equity Barriers

During the Equity Awareness Seminars presented last fall and winter, participants were asked to comment on "Employment Equity" barriers and to provide their solutions. Following are samples of these comments. Each is accompanied by a response reflecting the ministry's position. We will print more in the next Personnel Connection.

Barrier: If offices must reflect the population, this may cause hard feelings.

Minister in Charbonneau and Westsyde Secondary student

Solutions Suggested by Staff: Equity education at school level more effective; close monitoring of hiring practices; do not go overboard.

Ministry Position: To say that offices must reflect the population is misleading. It implies that numbers are all important. In aiming for a ministry staff that reflects the available work force in the community, we are talking about a gradual evolution in thought and attitude. It would follow, then, that the numbers of the identified "minority" groups would rise in certain areas because the barriers that blocked them will have been removed. The two biggest barriers are uncomfortable feelings and fear.

All of the above solutions have merit—equity should start with the young, hiring practices need to be monitored and the entire equity question cannot be answered overnight, it must evolve.

Barrier: Mobility restrictions; not enough flexibility to accommodate a physically challenged individual.

Solutions Suggested by Staff: Modifications to existing buildings and current thinking; new competition qualifications; making competitions open and including directive that ministry is an equal opportunity employer.

Ministry Position: Where possible, we are committed to removing mobility restrictions, being more flexible and ensuring the competition process is fair and equitable. Making our offices more accommodating to individuals who are physically challenged is not necessarily expensive. The real "barrier" is often in our own minds. This "barrier" is one the Employment Equity Program wants to break down. (See page 20, Reasonable Accommodation: What is it and What Does it Cost?)

To conclude, here's a number of "hit home" statements made by employees we all should think about:

"Not only must hiring be fair—it must be seen to be just."

"Under the Charter of Rights and Freedom there are no barriers. The government should ensure the charter is followed."

"We all talk 'nice' when we come together as a group, but one-on-one there's a lot of misinformation and prejudices."


Test Your Attitude

Words are a mirror of society's attitudes and perceptions. And attitudes can be the most difficult barrier persons with disabilities must face in gaining full integration, acceptance, and participation in society.

That's why language is changing as people with disabilities claim their right to participate fully in society.

Dated and disparaging words are being replaced with precise, descriptive terms which have specific meanings that are not interchangeable.

Here's a "Language and Behaviour Awareness Survey" to test your attitude. The correct answers are at the end.

1. The following phrases/terms have been used to refer to people with disabilities. Indicate whether you consider each generally acceptable "A" or unacceptable "U".
   a) Confined to a wheelchair
   b) Sufferer of cerebral palsy
   c) Deaf and dumb
   d) Wheelchair bound
   e) Crippled children
   f) A profoundly deaf person
   g) Victim of cancer
   h) Dwarf
   i) The emotionally disturbed
   j) The mentally retarded
   k) A person who is deaf
   l) People who are retarded
   m) A person of short stature
   n) Midget
   o) The deaf
   p) The blind
   q) A little person
   r) A wheelchair user
   s) A person who uses a wheelchair
   t) A retard
   u) Afflicted with muscular dystrophy
   v) An invalid
   w) A deformed person
   x) A profoundly deaf
   y) A person who is blind
   z) A thinker
   AA) The mentally handicapped
   AB) ALL of the above
   AC) None of the above

2. Where does the word "handicapped" come from?
   A) Golf, where poorer players are given an advantage to allow them to compete
   B) Horse racing, where faster horses must carry heavy weights
   C) Beggars, who hold their caps in their hands
   D) None of the above

3. The terms "persons with disabilities" and "the disabled" are equally acceptable.
   True False

4. When speaking to a person who has a disability, it is rude to use words that reference their impairment.
   True False

5. When listening to a person who has speech that is difficult to understand, the average person will:
   A) Say he or she does not understand
   B) Pretend to understand
   C) Make an excuse to end the conversation
   D) Repeat the statement

6. It is impolite during a conversation with someone who is blind to look directly into their eyes as you would someone who is not blind.
   True False

7. When a hearing-impaired person asks to have a statement repeated?
   A) Repeat the statement
   B) Repeat the statement in a louder voice
   C) Repeat the statement more slowly and in a louder voice
   D) Rephrase the statement

8. When holding a face-to-face conversation with someone who is using a wheelchair, which should you do?
   A) Find a chair and sit down so you are both on the same level
   B) Step back so you may be seen more comfortably
   C) Avoid leaning on or touching the wheelchair
   D) All of the above
   E) None of the above

9. The only kinds of dogs that are legally allowed into hotels and restaurants to assist persons with disabilities are dog guides for the blind and visually impaired.
   True False

10. If someone is using a sign language interpreter, it is proper to address questions and responses to the interpreter so they may be relayed to the person who is deaf.
    True False

11. When meeting a person who is blind, it is proper etiquette to announce who you are even if the person has met you before.
    True False

12. When meeting a person who has an artificial right arm, it would be proper etiquette to:
    A) Reach out with your right hand to shake theirs as if there was no difference
    B) Reach out with your left hand
    C) Pause, wait for the person to initiate contact
    D) None of the above

13. When you are unsure of what to do in a situation with someone with a disability, it is good to admit that you are unsure and ask the person for advice and direction.
    True False

14. A disabling condition may or may not be handicapping.
    True False

15. The discomfort one feels in the presence of someone with a disability never really goes away.
    True False

Answers to the "Language and Behaviour Awareness Survey"  
BCGEU/ Ministry Joint Committee Formed

by Barry Wilton, Director, Personnel Services Branch

Article 29 of the BCGEU Master Agreement establishes a BCGEU/Ministry Joint Committee. The purpose of the committee is to provide a forum to meet and consult on issues affecting either party which will promote good relations, reduce grievances or generally improve the work environment. A change to this article at the last round of bargaining added the area of recycling to the mandate. The committee is not to deal with items which are a part of the collective bargaining process (e.g. wages, benefits).

The committee met for the first time on March 2, 1993 in Victoria. Vince Collins attended the first meeting to address the group and give his commitment and support to this process. Agenda items included the following: budget impact for 93/94, wellness, employment equity, component joint sub committees, Speak Out '92 and "Korbin Contractors" (conversion of long-term contractors to employee status).

If you would like any further information about the Joint Committee or have items that you would like discussed through this forum, please contact one of the members.

Co-chairs:
Gordon Hogg, ADM, Admin Services, 387-5062
Russ Leech, Standards Asst., Highway Engineering, 387-7751

Members:
Wayne Carr, Regional Director, Central/North East, 565-6478
Ken Read, EA3, Paving Branch, Penticton, 492-1312
Tim Stevens, Director, Planning Services, 387-5251
Barry Wilton, Director, Personnel Services, 387-5539
John Rourke, Deck Hand, Kootenay Lake Ferry, Nelson, 229-4613

Looking at Retiring?

If you are making plans to retire, the ministry has several services available to help you.

First, you need to complete a "Request for Pension Estimate" form which is available from your Personnel Office. It will take approximately 12 to 16 weeks to prepare the Pension Estimate which will be handed out at the Pre-Retirement Planning Seminar (see below) so be sure to submit it four months prior to the seminar.

Second, fill out the application form to attend a two day Pre-Retirement Planning Seminar (you must be age 55 or over). The seminar schedule for 1993 is shown below. Forms are available from your Personnel Office.

Third, call the Superannuation Commission at 387-1002 to book a two-hour appointment with a counselor. The focus of the interview is to provide personal counselling to employees who are contemplating retirement within the next year.

Pre-Retirement Planning Seminar Schedule for 1993
Prince George April 20 - 21, Tuesday and Wednesday
Vancouver May 11 - 12, Tuesday and Wednesday
Vancouver May 13 - 14, Thursday and Friday
Nelson June 15 - 16, Tuesday and Wednesday
Victoria September 14 - 15, Tuesday and Wednesday
Kamloops October 20 - 21, Wednesday and Thursday
Vancouver November 24 - 25, Tuesday and Wednesday
Vancouver November 25 - 26, Thursday and Friday

The one day "Financial Seminars" have been discontinued at the present time.

For more information, call your personnel office.

Barry Wilton (right), Director of Personnel Services Branch, accepts a University of Victoria co-op recognition award from Dr. Sam Scully, VP, Academic and Provost. This award was presented in recognition of MoTII's support of the university's co-op programs.
IN THE SPOTLIGHT

SOUTH OKANAGAN DISTRICT SUB-OFFICE

Orchestrated by:
Marjorie Sinclair, District Clerk

"Canada's Development Hot Spot"

Why is Kelowna B.C.'s fastest growing city? Could it be the climate with an average of 2,000 hours of sunshine and only 13 inches of annual precipitation? Could it be the natural facilities such as Okanagan Lake and Big White? Is it the boating, swimming, fishing, hunting, skiing, curling, etc.?

Perhaps it's the Okanagan College, a new $150 million waterfront hotel-conference centre and an expanding hospital and retirement industry.

Or is it because, in 1991, Chatelaine Magazine declared Kelowna to be the most enjoyable place to live in Canada?

Answer: All of the above.

Location: 97C/97 interchange to Oyama; Highway 33 to McCulloch junction including Big White
Office: Kelowna
Lane Kilometres of Road: 1,000
Number of Bridges: 10 (main bridge, Okanagan Lake Floating Bridge)
Number of Sub-Office Staff: 12 regular, 4 auxiliary and "a cast of thousands" (development approvals have had outside help on occasion and we've had working visits from staff from Penticton, Vernon, Merritt, Salmon Arm, McBride, New West, Burns Lake, Radium and Nelson)
Main Towns: Kelowna, Westbank, Winfield
Main Highways: Highways 97 and 33
Maintenance Contractor: OK Road Maintenance Inc.
Scenic Points: Big White, Mara Canyon
Kelowna Activities: Snowfest, Knox Mt. Hill Climb, Ski to Sea Race, great winery tours

Gerry Gobolos, Engineering Aide---in-house historian
Marjorie Sinclair, District Clerk---let's eat cake.
Peter Mublbergbuber, Engineering Aide—eager to help.
Tara Haggard, S.T.O. 2 and (right) Stan Warburton, S.T.O. 3—service excellence, how can we help you.

Robyn Clifford, District Development Tech---staff is all ears...and keep "hopping." The applications are prolific.

The "War Board"—(starting left)
Robyn Clifford, Development Tech; Lauradec Germain, Clerk; and Larry Heald and Glen Pedersen, Development Techs.
Richard Kooistra, Office Assistant—he’s as handy with the duster as with a computer.

Staff at Work & After Hours

The Kelowna staff represents over 200 years of service: two area managers, seven in development approvals, three in engineering, three clerks and one computer expert. Our District Highways Manager and supervisors for development approvals, engineering and finance and admin work out of District Office in Penticton and visit regularly during the week. We also get support from construction, electrical and paving branch staff.

Due to the tremendous workload, our office benefits from “a cast of thousands” from Vernon, Merritt, Salmon Arm, McBride, New Westminster, Burns Lake, Kamloops and Nelson to offer their assistance.

Our staff and their families take part in a variety of activities such as camping, fishing, hunting, curling and skiing. One staff member even competes (and wins!) in the Annual Snowfest Belly-Flopping contest. Our staff and their families take part in a variety of activities such as camping, fishing, hunting, curling and skiing. One staff member even competes in the Annual Snowfest Belly-Flopping contest.

The incredible growth Kelowna’s experienced in the last few years makes it challenging for staff with the increase in development approval applications, phone calls and front counter inquiries. To quote one staff member, “You need to keep a sense of humor!”

John Hallam (left), Area Manager-Kelowna and Clark Abel, Area Manager-Westbank—two guys outstanding in their field.

In the News

“Low” heed or “Law” heed

The Lougheed Highway in the Lower Mainland, is it pronounced “Low”heed or “Law”heed? CBC radio wanted to know. The answer was given: “Low” heed. That should have been the end of it, but it wasn’t. The issue became an on-air debate and came back to haunt us even a couple of days later. So be warned. If someone asks you, is it “Low”heed or “Law”heed, just say: “It’s Highway 7.”

Roadside Refrigerators!!?

That’s what the Times Colonist said they looked like—those metal cabinets on the side of the road which we call traffic controllers. The paper featured the latest and greatest of these which was initiated, designed and developed by our very own technicians at the Traffic Engineering Centre in Victoria. Their initiative created a new high-tech manufacturing firm in Victoria—James Thompson and Associates Inc.

In the past, our traffic engineering department purchased traffic controllers off the shelf and modified them—always with some compromises. “We had a lot of different types of controllers. We really wanted to standardize—we felt we could do the job here,” said Al Sadler, the senior electrical engineer who supervised the project.

The new controllers are “smart.” They can keep count of all the vehicles passing through their intersection. Plus, a highways electrician can “interrogate” a unit via computer modem to diagnose problems and specify a fix—all from his office.

James Thompson and Associates Inc. is now building 80 of the new units.

Congratulations to Patrick Livolsi, Electrical Operations Engineer and David Trodd, Supervisor, Traffic Engineering Centre and staff.

Highways Avalanche Video

In December, a 8-minute video—In The Mountain’s Shadow—starring our avalanche-control staff was featured in the news. The video was produced by the ministry to educate the public about the necessary evil of road closures due to avalanche control activities. It shows our “snowflakes” in action—in the office, on the slopes and in the air. Our avalanche program is among the best in the world and this video shows why. If you want to view a copy, contact your regional public information officer.

Crash Cushion Gets a Rough Ride

A “first of its kind in B.C.” highway divider installed in November on the Island Highway may have already prevented two head-on collisions. The specially designed crash cushion is made of vermiculite blocks embedded with spring wire. Ten blocks absorb the impact of a car crashing into the end of the divider. It worked so well the two vehicles which collided with the “cushion”—at an estimated 35 to 45 miles per hour—drived away. The Parksville RCMP is asking anyone with information on an either accident to contact their office.
All Around Health
De-Stress Your Life

Stress is a result of two factors: the events of our lives and our reactions to them. While we don't always control the former, we can learn to exercise some control over the ways we respond. By doing so, we can de-stress our lives. Here are five ways to cope:

1. Get plenty of rest. Maintain a consistent sleep schedule. Poor sleep habits increase your susceptibility to illness as well as make you more likely to react in a stressful manner.

2. Breathe deeply. When you find yourself feeling overwhelmed by work or disturbed by the actions of another, stop and take five deep breaths, exhaling slowly each time. Concentrate only on your breathing.

3. Maintain a “present” awareness. Much of the time, our minds are busy rehashing the past or worrying about the future. If you feel your stress level starting to rise at the office, for example, get up and take a walk... to another area of the building, perhaps, or even outside. A change of scenery, fresh air and a different focus may provide relief.

4. Exercise. It's a proven stress-reducer. Remember, you don't need to run a marathon to exercise. Try a walk around the block for coffee break.

5. Get rid of your “shoulds.” “I should be working harder”... “He shouldn't have treated me that way.” Try to stop thinking in terms of you “should” and “shouldn’t” and decide what you “will” and “will not do.”

Finally, realize that stress is not always a negative condition. Some people thrive on it. It keeps them alert, revved up and ready to do their best. It's up to you to decide how much stress you want in your life and how you deal with it.

Wellness In Action

Bowling Night in Terrace

“Taking up the “Participation Week” challenge to see what local business could get the most employees out for an aerobic class.

(left to right) Jeanne Sparkes, Marlene Audette, Marilyn Mattson, Joan Kirkwood, Pat Irving and Lisa Cappellucci.

Region 5: Serious About Wellness

Region 5 takes wellness seriously, thanks to Joan Kirkwood. Here's just some of the healthy events they've put on:

- nutrition tours
- Sneaker Day
- talks on topics ranging from work station ergonomics to financial planning
- noon-time skating
- purchased a water cooler through the employee beverage fund; the office has gone almost completely caffeine free with an effort to consume healthier beverages
- bi-weekly meetings for our weight nutrition groups
- smoking cessation
- local level committee developed an action plan

For information on these events or to see the region's action plan call Joan Kirkwood at 638-3330.

Wellness Commitment

“Wellness is an important issue in our workplace. The ministry is experiencing stress from the conflicting demands of increased expectations of services with a reduction of resources,” said David Robertson, an HQ employee seconded to co-ordinate an active wellness program for ministry employees.

What is wellness? “It’s more than just riding your bike to work or going running on your lunch break,” said David. “Physical activity is part of the concept, but wellness also includes stress management, improving the communication between employees, ensuring that Employee Assistance Program information is readily available, smoking cessation support and a host of other ways of looking at health as a total package.”
This is a partnership between employee and employer. The employer must be responsible for creating a "well" environment, but the employee must take charge of their own well being. The Wellness Committee's motto sums up our feeling on this: "Partners investing in Health and Well Being."

David was seconded from the administration department. He's an active supporter of "participation" having developed programs for the Victoria YMCA since 1984 including a triathlon training clinic, swim club and mountain bike club.

"The ministry committee has already done a great deal of work defining our needs. The members of the committee have also been very active in their regions with local level committees and groups," he said. "We've seen wellness fairs, family days, what-to-look-for-at-the-grocery-store information for nutrition month and many other wonderful ideas. These are the types of initiatives that we need to put into action."

Wellness Co-ordinator David Robertson rides his bike to work everyday. He challenges you to do the same or maybe try walking or snowshoeing. The benefits, he says: "Lower car costs in maintenance, gas and insurance; save on his fare; burns off some extra calories (65 calories a kilometre at a brisk walk); stress control and improve your fitness without paying for an exercise program."

**On the Road...**

**Do You Know the Way to San Jose?**

*by Lin Gallacher, Maintenance Branch, HQ*

Besides crazy, what do you call a 33 year old who has a teddy bear, loves CISV (a world-wide youth group), doesn't cook, doesn't know the meaning of co-ed, who's idea of excitement is playing bridge and who offered to take eight 13 and 14 year olds to Costa Rica for a month?

Give up? "Sergeant Beautiful," that's what they called me as the "fearless" leader for the 1992 CISV Victoria, B.C./San Jose, Costa Rica Interchange. The Costa Rican leader, Tatiana "Everything's Perfect" Quiros Astorga, and her eight charges came in July for a fun-filled and action-packed month. Water slides, Butchart Gardens, water skiing, camping... Our turn was to come in December.

It wasn't all fun and games. There was a lot of preparation—meetings galore, major fund raising, Spanish lessons, square dance lessons, speeches for National Day.

Finally, December 6th arrived. We were off to Costa Rica—white water rafting, shopping, paragliding, Isla de Tortuga, scuba diving, snowking, more shopping, partying... Here are the two highlights.

**National Day:** The map of Canada and posters were still at the airport??!! Our speeches on Canada (in Spanish) were understood, even complimented! We served pancakes with Canadian flags on top, maple syrup from Quebec, B.C. apple juice, Murchie's tea and mandarins. Unfortunately, Colin was injured during the soccer game at mini-camp (Canada vs. Costa Rica, including cheerleaders and TV coverage, but that's another story) and I square danced in his place—with little practice and two left feet!!

**Christmas Costa Rica Style:** Christmas was spent with "our" families. I went to Tatiana's mom's house at 10:30 p.m. on Christmas Eve. At midnight, we had Christmas dinner consisting of tamales, pork and potato salad. At 2:00 a.m., we woke the little ones to open presents and arrived home at 4:30 a.m. to crash. That night, we went to Zapote, a giant fair where it's party time 24 hours a day for a week (I swear there were more bars than rides set up) to watch the bullfights. But first the fireworks, which are literally thrown in the air. Two people got burned and guards threw water on them. During the bullfights there are no weapons used, just 140 pachacos (drunks) running around teasing the bull. When they get too close, the pachacos jump over the fence.

Send me a wang office if you'd like more information about CISV, Costa Rica or maybe taking my daughter for a month so I could do it all again.

In closing, a big thanks to my co-worker Sharron Collins for helping me sell all those chocolates (and everyone in headquarters who bought them)!!

Me (on the left) dancing to "Grandma Got Run Over By the Reindeer" at National Day.