Whistler GranFondo 2012 — A Smooth Ride
Submitted by Holly Adems, Special Events Coordinator

It was a smooth ride on Sept. 8, as about 5,300 cyclists tackled the Third Annual RBC GranFondo Whistler Cycling Event.

Excitement and anticipation were in the air as the cyclists gathered behind the start ribbon, pumped for their 122-kilometre journey from Vancouver to Whistler. Officials at the start gate included GranFondo Canada President Kevin Thomson, Fraser River Discovery Centre Executive Director Catherine Ouelett-Martin, West Vancouver-Sea to Sky MP John Weston, Surrey-Cloverdale MLA Kevin Falcon, Whistler Mayor Nancy Wilhelm-Morden and RBC Regional President Graham MacLachlan.

The cyclists were blessed again this year with a super sunny Saturday and sparkling water views of Howe Sound, as they pedalled through the coastal mountains of the Sea-to-Sky Highway (Highway 99). “Over and over again, I heard the word, ‘magic’, ” said Kevin Thomson. And it stuck — as “magic” was the buzz-word coming from riders and organizers all day long.

This year, we saw 17 per cent of the cyclists come from out of province. “The event has become a bucket-list item for many people, who simply want to do it,” said GranFondo Canada Communications Director Lindsay Carswell.

The 2012 GranFondo traffic management plan was enhanced, with some key changes:

- Closure of two eastbound Highway 1 lanes, in West Vancouver, for cyclist use only.
- Re-routing eastbound ferry and highway traffic to Marine Drive, West Vancouver, in the early hours.
- One extra lane closure on Highway 99 at Tunnel Point, providing a wider lane for riders.
- Pavement placed by Miller Capilano Maintenance Corp., along the shoulder of Highway 99 at Murrin Lake, for extra width.

Continued on Page 3…
Editor’s Note

You might notice that some events happen annually, at the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. What’s fascinating is that in this issue of Road Runner, you can see how they get better and better along the way.

“The Western Toad Event” grew up this year, and became the Summit Lake Toadfest with 12,000 toadlets helped across Highway 6 by ministry staff and volunteers. About 500 visitors checked out educational talks, music, games, face painting and amphibian tanks for a fun, hands-on learning experience.

The Whistler GranFondo was also in its third year, with ministry staff working intensively with municipalities, maintenance contractors, traffic control companies and police to re-route motorists, and keep cyclists safe on their 122-kilometre ride. The team developed and executed an intricate, enhanced traffic plan, for what has been called a “bucket list” event.

Now its second year, the Race for Humanity, put on by Nic Seaton and his wife Shei, saw participation rise to 265 riders from 198 previously. The fundraising mountain bike competition was attended by Olympic bronze medallist Axcel Merckx, and now has its own cycling jersey.

As usual, this issue of Road Runner has some “goodbyes” and “hellos” to employees. Check out two retiring employees who proudly pose with ministry “completed” signs, after a combined total of 56 years with our organization. Meanwhile, Miranda Fattore, who started with the ministry this summer, is showing signs of excitement about her career, as she displays a construction sign.

It’s good to see that some things don’t change as time goes by.

Nancy McLeod, Editor
Whistler GranFondo 2012 – A Smooth Ride ... Continued from Page 3

Senior District Development Technician Graeme Schimpf and RCMP Officer Eric Rochette re-set cones on Highway 99 at Creekside Village, in Whistler.

- Increased communications by Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement, notifying the B.C. trucking industry of detours and restrictions.
- Driver wait times reduced at all Highway 99 lane closure areas.
- Re-opening Highway 99 in Whistler one hour earlier, at the end of the event.

A major cycling event like this requires ministry staff to work diligently for months on operational planning and traffic management. We meet monthly with stakeholders and worked in partnership with GranFondo Canada, Miller Capilano Maintenance Corp., Mainroad Contracting, Delcan Engineering, Cobra Electric, RCMP and police detachments, Ministry of Health, BC Ferries and five municipalities.

The ministry team did a stellar job in producing the complex 2012 traffic management plan. Team members included Liisa Hein, Henry Lew (see sidebar GrandFondo Video a Lew Family Affair), Banafsheh Rahmani, Holly Adems, Thomas Chhun, Jesse Morwood, Glenn Callander, Steve Haywood, Bruce Calbick, Debbie Derkson, Graeme Schimpf, Bill Crichton, Jackie Chambers, Ernst Boeder, Jim Hegan, Brett Wildeman, Kerstin Fagervik and Jing Du.

Of course, event success could only be fully achieved by our key maintenance contractor, Miller Capilano, working with clockwork precision. Corporation Traffic Manager Steve Donnelly focused long and hard to ensure there was sufficient staff and equipment for the GranFondo traffic requirements. This year, there were 135 traffic control persons, 31 police, about 6,000 cones, 543 signs and 185 barricades.

In the weeks prior to the event, organization goes at a high-energy pace, as contractors, police, traffic control companies and ministry staff all work to ensure everything is “ready, set, go!” In 2012, we saw it all come together as a superbly smooth ride! 

Outside the Mainroad Contracting office, at the north end of Lions Gate Bridge, at 6:15 a.m. – just before the cyclists started coming over the bridge: Holly Adems, Mainroad Contracting Communications Centre Operator Su Zhao and Jackie Chambers.

In the weeks prior to the event, organization goes at a high-energy pace, as contractors, police, traffic control companies and ministry staff all work to ensure everything is “ready, set, go!” In 2012, we saw it all come together as a superbly smooth ride! 

Robbie Lew waiting for the first cyclists at Marine Drive and Taylor Way, with the Lions Gate Bridge in the background.

Capturing the thrills of the third Whistler GranFondo was a family affair for Traffic Operations Engineer Henry Lew, his son Robbie, wife Margaret and son Justin.

Robbie helped his dad out at work the day of the event by volunteering his services, and took the opportunity to video record exciting scenes of super-competitive cyclists whooshing around corners in Vancouver and climbing hills on the Sea-to-Sky Highway. When Robbie got home, his mom and brother assisted with editing the footage and adding upbeat music, and then Robbie loaded the finished production onto YouTube. Check out the video.

GranFondo Video
a Lew Family Affair

Video filmed by Robbie Lew and edited with help from his family.
Canada’s Pacific Gateway Survey Draws UBCM Delegates
Submitted by Linda Harmon, Director, Strategic Outreach and Business Engagement, Pacific Gateway Branch

Former Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Blair Lekstrom was the first person to participate in Canada’s Pacific Gateway interactive survey, at the Union of B.C. Municipalities convention in Victoria, Sept. 24 to 28.

The Pacific Gateway Branch conducted the survey using a large touch-screen, to educate and inform municipal leaders about the importance of British Columbia’s trade corridors. Adam Todd and Brennan Neitz of the Information Management Branch configured a touch-screen laptop to serve as a second survey station, to keep the 310 people who visited our booth busy. Pacific Gateway’s Jim Stobie, Karina Kersten and Linda Harmon guided people through 14 questions which were developed by four of our Pacific Gateway Alliance partners: Vancouver Airport Authority, Port Metro Vancouver, Canadian Pacific and Prince Rupert Port Authority.

As the survey was intended to raise awareness of the Pacific Gateway and gather information, it was a mix of “did-you-know” and information-gathering questions. For example, the first was, “How did you travel to the UBCM convention?” which offered multiple choice answers. We also asked questions about whether goods moved through participants’ communities by rail, road or both. Were participants aware of an industrial land use plan for their community that connected to a highway or rail line?

Another question was, “In B.C.’s Lower Mainland, approximately how many jobs are directly or indirectly related to Port Metro Vancouver’s business?” Only 53 per cent of the survey participants guessed the correct answer of 80,000, which appeared on the screen after they chose their answer. Further details revealed that this means about one in 12 Lower Mainland workers earns a living due to port-related business, and across Canada, Port Metro Vancouver generates an estimated 129,500 jobs and $6.1 million in wages.

The survey concluded with a video vignette about Mario’s Gelati, one of the companies that benefits from B.C.’s port facilities, by exporting 40-foot refrigerated containers full of gelati from Deltaport to Shanghai, four or five times a year. The video was filmed by Neil Judson and edited by James Penner of the social media team.

UBCM survey participants were then rewarded with a Mario’s Gelati bar — dark chocolate and espresso, hazelnut and milk chocolate or strawberry kiwi — courtesy of Port Metro Vancouver. In case you were wondering what happened to the gelati bars that remained at the end of the convention, they were donated to the Burnside Gorge Community Centre for its free family dinners.

Thanks to Events Coordinator Deb Brendeland and Public Affairs Officer Robert Adams at Government Communications and Public Engagement for their help in coordinating Pacific Gateway’s participation at UBCM.

Pacific Gateway Branch’s Manager of Economic Analysis Jim Stobie (far right) guided UBCM delegates through the survey to expand their knowledge and earn a gelati bar.
Coq Weather Station a Challenging Site for Snow Experiment
Submitted by Simon Walker, Avalanche and Maintenance Weather Specialist

The Solid Precipitation InterComparison Experiment (SPICE), is a large-scale field experiment being conducted at various locations in 11 countries around the world, and is coordinated by the World Meteorological Organization, in Geneva. Environment Canada’s Meteorological Service will be performing the Canadian portion of the study at eight different locations across the country, in Newfoundland, Quebec, Nunavut, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

In B.C., our ministry’s Coquihalla Summit Remote Avalanche Weather Station will be the study site to measure “solid precipitation” – also known as snow, hail or sleet.

When it comes to measuring snowfall, the precipitation amounts are the “water equivalent” of the snowfall. In other words, if you melted the newly fallen snow, how much water would you get? This is a surprisingly difficult measurement to make accurately with automated electronic sensors, and this problem has plagued scientists and instrumentation specialists around the world since the first electronic weather monitoring systems were developed.

Wind blows low density snow across the top of precipitation gauges without it falling into the gauge, prolonged heavy snowfall can cap over the gauge so that nothing can fall into it, and instruments can freeze solid and be damaged during prolonged cold spells.

Why does accurate precipitation data matter? Weather forecasters need good quality data to verify their forecasts, and improve the accuracy of those forecasts over time. Highway maintenance personnel and avalanche forecasters use precipitation data for decision making day in and day out during the winter months, and both rely on accurate weather forecasts. So there’s a direct link to the work we do, and the safety of the travelling public as our focus. Flood forecasting also relies on accurate precipitation data, both in the form of individual snow storm accumulations and the water content of the entire season’s snowpack, during spring freshet (snowmelt).

The instrumentation to be used at the Coquihalla Summit will be owned, installed and operated by Environment Canada. It will include:

- eight precipitation gauges employing different measurement principles and various combinations of heaters and wind shielding devices
- snow video analyzer (classifies snow crystal types)
- micro rain radar (vertical profiler that can identify the elevation at which snow turns to rain)
- snowpack analyzer (measures and reports the snow water equivalent of the entire season’s snowpack as it sits on the ground)

The Coquihalla Summit is an ideal “challenging environment” for the international experiment, as this capped-over precipitation gauge shows.

The main objective of the SPICE program is to determine and validate reference instrumentation (i.e. what are the best, most accurate instruments for measuring snow, and how should they be installed?). The next step is to establish correlations between the reference instrumentation used in the experiment, and the more affordable equipment that is widely used in “the real world.” One of the most valuable outcomes will be a set of “best practice” guidelines for precipitation monitoring in challenging environments. What works best in the Arctic may be quite different from what works best in a West Coast environment, or on the Prairies.

The Coquihalla Summit is an ideal “challenging environment” to conduct such a study – copious winter precipitation, deep snowpack, snow density that ranges from dry fluffy powder to wet and heavy, and a number of freeze-thaw cycles every winter that can coat the instruments with thick layers of frozen slush.

The Coquihalla Summit will be accessible hourly, in near real time, via an Environment Canada website.

It will take some time for the results of the experiment to become available, but the benefits of this program will be tangible for ministry employees involved in operational decision making related to weather – and in one way or another that’s a good portion of us!
The District of Barriere Benefits from Band Shell Paver Project
Submitted by Harvey Nelson, Operations Manager and Megan Cullinane, Development Approvals Technician

The District of Barriere was the recipient of an impressive Maintenance Contractor Community Service Program joint volunteer effort put on this year again, by Argo Road Maintenance (Thompson) Inc. and the Thompson Nicola District staff.

The District of Barriere recently built a community band shell but the sandy grounds in front of the stage were incomplete and difficult for spectators (particularly elderly people) to manoeuvre around in. The district had the funds to purchase the paver stones but not to complete the work to lay them in place. So this was the cue for the Service Area #15 group of Argo and ministry employees to step in and lend a hand.

The weather was fantastic — sunny and hot — and a ton of prep work was completed on Sept. 19 to get the site ready for the next day, where we had 19 eager volunteers jump in to help. Early on Sept. 20, the volunteers headed out to Barriere for some hard work in the sunshine. Under Bart Chenuz’s direction, the volunteers took turns levelling the ground, moving, cutting, and finally laying the stones for the band shell. Volunteers alternated between these tasks, which made the job exciting and kept morale high among the team.

By noon, temperatures reached the mid-twenties and the workers were hot and hungry. The District of Barriere graciously provided a barbecue lunch complete with burgers, salads and drinks to satiate everyone. District of Barriere Chief Administrative Officer Colleen Hannigan warmly thanked the volunteers during lunch and held a prize draw, which was won by District Services Manager Tina Kulchyski.

After lunch, it was back to the grind. Visits from District of Barriere staff, including Mayor Bill Humphreys, re-affirmed the importance of this effort to the town. Volunteers worked until almost 6 p.m. to get the project done.

When all was said and done, we had placed 15 pallets (about 7,200 paver stones) which is equal to roughly 20,000 kilograms of pavers that were measured, cut, then placed into position by people on their hands and knees. The next day, there were many sore but satisfied bodies in the office.

Thank you to Argo General Manager Tom Bone and Argo staff (Don Lentz, Dale Schneider, Justin van Iterson, Derek Power, Rick Nelson and Duke Piquette) who put aside numerous other tasks and all dug in, doing great work while putting in a couple of long, hard but productive days. Thanks as well for all the equipment Argo brought to the site to ensure the job was done right. It was an awesome effort and a great opportunity for Argo and ministry staff to work alongside one another, making new acquaintances or building on strong relationships already in place.

Continued on Page 7…
Looking Into Lean
Submitted by Jason Pallan, Operational Business Manager and Josh Rossiter, Senior Project Management Analyst

Lack of time and resources are challenges confronted by every employee across the ministry. How do I complete “x” when I have to spend so much time doing “y”? How do I do my field inspection when I have to spend so much time in the office?

For those who are not yet familiar with Lean, its goal is to make daily work more efficient, by reducing the steps we take to deliver services to the public. The outcome helps us and those we serve. A good example of an accelerated Lean project is the television show Extreme Makeover – Home Edition. On the show, they accomplish in one week what normally takes months, by bringing the right resources together in an especially organized and well thought-out way. The same can be said for a Lean project, where the people who do the work on a daily basis come together to make improvements that achieve results in a reduced timeframe.

Our ministry’s Lean projects – the processes for subdivision approval and commercial vehicle extraordinary load permitting – are among 17 Lean projects in progress, and a further 30 that will be conducted within the provincial government. Lean projects were selected for their potential to raise customer satisfaction, increase staff engagement and improve business performance.

Lean brings employees together to make process changes that achieve results in less time.

For information on Lean projects, and to get a deeper understanding of Lean, take the Lean 101 course, visit our ministry’s Lean page on TRAnnet, or check our Lean – the Next Step in Innovation on the @Work website for announcements, articles and videos. If you have questions or would like to share your ideas, please contact ministry Lean Leader Jason Pallan. Stay tuned for an update on our ministry’s two Lean projects in the next Road Runner!

Barriere Benefits from Band Shell Paver Project… Continued from Page 7

Thank you to Acting District Manager Shawn Grant for also taking the time and helping out while juggling several other commitments. To ministry employees Bart Chenuz, Tina Kulchyski, Stew Miller, Cheryl Newton, Jeff Saby, Kim Brown, Bill Glen, Megan Cullinane, Alan Schmidt and Amanda Aldrich, a big thanks to each of you for your hard work and making time in your busy schedules to be a part of this volunteer project.

A special thanks goes out to Tom and Bart for doing all the work coordinating things behind the scenes to make this project a huge success.

To all the guys, you did an incredible job! To all the ladies, you rocked!

The project to enhance Barriere’s new band shell put locals on solid footing.
Congratulations Graduates of the Financial Management Certificate Program
Submitted by Gail Silvestrini, Director Reporting and Analysis

Congratulations to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure’s recent Financial Management Certificate Program graduates: Fritz Christo, Sara Clark, Nicole Folk, Susan Nagy and Anjit Haymes.

Managing a demanding course load while working full-time is a tough challenge, but for these graduates, the reward was well worth the struggle.

The program, which is operated by the Office of the Comptroller General, trains employees in government financial operations. In order to earn their certification, these employees completed nine courses from the Certified General Accountant or Certified Management Accountant Program of professional studies, plus seven government financial learning programs.

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure is fortunate to have such dedicated individuals as part of our team, and the accomplishments of Fritz, Sara, Nicole, Susan and Anjit are a valuable asset to our organization and the B.C. public service. Please join me in congratulating our recent graduates.

Sara Clark, Nicole Folk, Fritz Christo and Susan Nagy display their certificates. (Missing from photo: Anjit Haymes.)

Winter sunset Hwy52E near Tumbler Ridge
How to be a Great Supervisor
Submitted by Richard de Vos, EAF member

Supervisors can leave a lasting impression on people as they have a huge influence on our work environment. This article is my attempt at making that impression a good one.

Managing people is not so much about controlling but more about coaching and motivating them to achieve desired results. The Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement Branch (CVSE) has many supervisors who actively listen to their employees and treat the people they manage as equals. On numerous occasions, my supervisor has asked me for my opinion and input on projects and ideas. I have also been recognized publicly in front of my co-workers for doing good work.

I dedicate this article to Commercial Transport Enforcement Officer Supervisor Stacy McCrae, who takes time to hear people’s opinions and make them feel important.

I have compiled a few tips to share because in my experience supervising people can be stressful and unrewarding... until now! The changes that supervisors make can go a long way to creating a positive, fulfilling work environment for everyone.

Here are four simple ways to improve your supervisory skills:

- Establish a work schedule as a guideline, but one that still allows for flexibility.
- Refrain from shooting from the hip when asked a question. (Look it up to be sure and then show the employee where you found the answer.)
- Remain approachable and listen actively to concerns and opinions.
- Take the time to see things from all perspectives (see “Changing Perspectives” box).

For more thoughts on supervisory skills see:

1. TRAN Supervisor Driving Engagement Guide: Check out this guide that has tried and true ideas for making a difference in your workplace: http://gww.th.gov.bc.ca/hr/Content/driving_engagement.aspx
2. Supervising and Leading People: Supervisors and managers play a special role in the development and morale of their team members. Create your own “dream team” by using these effective approaches to leadership: http://www2.gov.bc.ca/myhr/topic_hub.page?ContentID=5c430541-543d-bcfe-8528-110397030fb1
4. I also recommend: http://suite101.com/article/how-to-supervise-people-a288593

**CHANGING PERSPECTIVES**

A simple lesson from a public school principal has stuck with me since Grade 6. (Yes, I was in the principal’s office!) The principal held up a small red circular disk about the size of a quarter, and asked, “What colour is this disk?”

I naturally responded with the obvious, “It’s red.”

“Are you sure?”

Now I’m thinking there’s some kind of trick here but I stand firm with my decision, “Yes.”

He then quickly flipped the disc between his fingers and the “red” disk became “green.”

There are many sides to a situation or story, sometimes flipping it around can give you a whole new perspective.
Did You Know?

FACTS ABOUT PAY AND BENEFITS – ORTHOTICS AND ORTHOPEDIC SHOES

Submitted by Daniela Pricope, EAF Member

One of the many benefits of working for the provincial government is coverage for orthotics and orthopedic shoes.

The plan will reimburse employees for custom-fit orthopedic shoes, including repairs, orthotic devices and modifications to stock item footwear, when prescribed by a physician or podiatrist for the management of congenital or post-traumatic foot problems.

The maximum coverage is $400 per person per calendar year, subject to benefit plan restrictions (Note: Arch supports/inserts are not covered).

Prior to obtaining services for these items, review the Pacific Blue Cross website at www.pac.bluecross.ca/Corp/howbenefitswork/faq/ehcfaq.aspx and scroll down to #27 (“Are orthotics covered under my plan?”) for important information and checklists for claiming for orthotics and orthopedic shoes.

Kim Brown, who works as a district clerk in the Southern Interior Region is someone who has used this benefit.

“Recently, I had to take my eight-year-old daughter to an orthopedic specialist to have an analysis done on her ankles, and later she was fitted for orthotics. I figured it was going to be a slightly costly venture, but it was of course very much needed. So, I checked into our benefits guide to see if any of the costs could possibly be recovered. To my surprise, my daughter’s bill will be almost fully covered (all but $17). Now that I’ve found out this information, my husband will be getting a much-needed pair of specialized work shoes (I guess my daughter gets those genes from him!).

So if you haven’t looked at the benefits guide lately, or ever, it’s well worth the time and could even save you some money! It certainly took away some of my stress about my daughter’s condition.”

Sometimes You Have to Stop to Move Forward

Submitted by Stu Johnson, EAF member

“Pal Jolson” and “Flo-Anne McLow” provide inspiring ideas for healthy breaks, on the @Work website.

Productivity is a funny thing, and it boils down to a lot more than one’s ability to focus on work for a long period of time. Conventional thinking is to work more when there’s more work. However, our goal shouldn’t be to work more, but to accomplish more.

A recent study in the journal of Cognition found that taking short breaks can help to maintain focus on important tasks. The researchers claim that our attention span is likely to deteriorate over as small a time as 40 minutes unless we “switch off,” if only for a brief time, and “switch on” again.

What does this information mean for the workplace?

Purposefully creating even small distractions from time to time can improve productivity. A brief visit with a co-worker, a glance at the TranBC Facebook page, a quick stretch on the way to the photocopier, or even a brisk lap of the office can increase your overall ability to focus.

Get more ideas for taking healthy breaks during the work day by checking out the Health-bent Blog and “Take a Healthy Break” videos on @Work.

“Pal Jolson” and “Flo-Anne McLow” provide inspiring ideas for healthy breaks, on the @Work website.

Eight-year-old Tori and her mother, Kim Brown, received coverage for orthotics.
Bringing Help and Hope to Overseas Schools
Submitted by Kerry Hegedus, Commercial Transport Enforcement Officer, for the EAF

EAF Team Appreciation member Lori Alexander asked her co-worker, Kerry Hegedus, to share his experiences volunteering in Kenya. The EAF is committed to creating a culture of recognition in the ministry. Sharing stories of employees who make a difference in their work and personal lives is one of the ways EAF members strive to make this happen.

Over the past couple of years I have had the privilege of being involved with the International Humanitarian Hope Society (IHHS).

IHHS is a non-profit organization that works with schools and orphanages in China, India, Thailand, Vietnam and Kenya, just to name a few countries. As a non-profit organization; all travel expenses are paid personally by each participating member and 100 per cent of any fund-raising efforts go directly to IHHS projects.

Thus far, I have been fortunate to work with a school and orphanage in Kenya, and I hope to get involved with projects planned in other nations. I would like to share with you a little of what we have been doing on our recent trips to Nairobi, the capital of Kenya. Nairobi is the most populous city in East Africa, with an estimated three million inhabitants (based on the 2009 census), and here IHHS works with Grace Academy and Lighthouse Grace Academy. The school and school/orphanage are located within two slums of Nairobi which have a population of around 500,000 people.

Grace Academy provides education and a daily meal program to about 150 students who attend from the surrounding area. The food provided is extremely important – lack of employment or the inability of parents to work often means the school meal is the children’s only meal of the day. There is no government funding, so this school that teaches kindergarten to Grade 12, must rely on the local church and other organizations.

IHHS was grateful to partner with Okanagan Gleaners, a group of Christians that provided about 6,000 meals. Okanagan Gleaners uses vegetables that would have normally been wasted and turns them into soup mixes. This organization, like IHHS, is run solely on volunteer power and donations.

During our visit in March, the students were writing government exams, which are also used to assess schools. Grace Academy places somewhere in the middle of the country’s overall rankings. During our first visit to the school, we learned that although the education was quite good, there was a desperate need for classroom supplies. On average, the ratio of books to children is one to five. That is, five children usually are required to share one book. IHHS has since provided enough books so that each child now has their own. The school still requires other learning aids, like instructional wall charts, as many have been handmade and need to be replaced.

The second school, Lighthouse Grace Academy, is combined with an orphanage. Of the approximately 200 students, 62 are orphans. Lighthouse Grace Academy is where the need is greatest. On our visit last year, we were struck with the desperate need for food, water, beds, mosquito netting and books. Since then, we have been able to supply the academy with the means to put in a well, which has changed everything. With the new water source, IHHS was also able to upgrade the restrooms to a clean, sanitary septic tank system. They do not have showers, but now have flush toilets. IHHS was also able to provide more bunk beds and mattresses, and mosquito netting for each bed. And just like Grace Academy, each child was given their own books, with a commitment by IHHS to supply additional books each year.

IHHS projects are not just about the now, but are really about building for the future. Mosquito netting may seem like a minor thing, but not only does it provide protection against diseases like malaria, the health care costs for treating the diseases can be directed to other school and orphanage programs. These seemingly small changes greatly improve the overall financial picture of the schools and orphanage. The investments will pay dividends for years to come.

We are currently involved in the construction of a new building that will create some extra space for the teachers, and will double as a health clinic for use by visiting health care workers. You can check us out at www.humanitarianhope.com or contact me if you would like any further information about our work. Volunteers are always welcome.

Headmaster (Principal) Lawrence Odhiambo and Kerry Hegedus at Lighthouse Grace Academy in Nairobi.
EAF Colouring Contest: 
Surely, Your Child Can Do Better Than This!
Submitted by Lyndsay Molcan, EAF Team Member

This drawing took a highly-trained ministry employee two minutes, two wax crayons, a PhD in physics and a NASA group achievement award to complete.

The unnamed individual was tasked with drawing a picture that represents one of the five ministry goals. This is what he came up with. Can your child do better? If so, please encourage them to enter the colouring contest outlined below.

Contest Details
Have your child draw a picture that they feel represents one of the five ministry goals below. You may have to explain as best you can what these goals mean. Please have them draw on standard white 8 ½” x 11” paper. The EAF Walk the Talk team will judge the entries and select the lucky winner in each of three categories. The winning drawings will be featured in the next Road Runner and these lucky contestants will receive a ministry road cone signed by Deputy Minister Grant Main, with a prize and certificate inside.

Please scan and email submissions to Lyndsay Molcan (lyndsay.molcan@gov.bc.ca) with the subject heading “EAF Colouring Contest” and include the first and last name of your child, along with their age and which ministry goal they are representing. We would appreciate receiving submissions no later than Dec. 11.

Categories
• 0-5 years
• 5-10 years
• 10-15 years

Ministry Goals
• Improved infrastructure drives economic growth and trade;
• British Columbia’s transportation industries are globally competitive;
• Greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector are reduced;
• British Columbia’s highway system is safe and reliable; and
• Excellent customer service.

Brayden Bowers works on his colouring, with oversight from his mom, Junior Correspondent Megan Schiarizza.
Kim Bedell – Commercial Transport Program Officer

Submitted By Michael Aldred, EAF Member

Kim Bedell has worked for the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure at the Provincial Permit Centre, in downtown Dawson Creek, since 2006.

Before that, she was in an administration job for 17 years, at Dawson Creek’s Friendship Centre. While there, she also helped with the food bank, the soup kitchen, organizing events and even with the addictions part of the centre. To help supplement her income, Kim applied for a permit clerk position that she thought was part-time, auxiliary, nights and weekends. When she won the position, it turned out to be a full-time job.

Kim was a permit clerk for about a year and a half, where her work included issuing commercial vehicle permits for highway crossings, non-residents and overweight or oversize loads. Then she had the opportunity to take an acting role as a commercial transport program officer (CTPO). In July 2009, she won the position permanently.

Kim says she loves her job and enjoys helping people. As a CTPO, she provides supervision and guidance to the permit clerks and ensures that permit approvals, forms, routing and documentation are in place for complex load configurations. Kim is also jointly responsible for training staff in all aspects of the permit clerk role, and she provides ongoing coaching and mentoring to her team. Team members work five days on and five days off in the permit centre, which is open seven days a week from 6 a.m. until 10 p.m., every day except New Years Day, Christmas and Boxing Day.

Kim Bedell – Commercial Transport Program Officer

Kim graduated from high school in Grand Forks and then attended Okanagan College, but did not have formal education for this position. She was able to train and learn on the job, and she is where she is today because of great technical and people skills. She is also grateful to a supervisor who saw her potential and was a knowledgeable mentor. Kim explains that the best way to get experience and become a CTPO is to start as or work with portable and scale staff, or as a permit clerk, and to take an interest in commercial transport and industry.

Kim is happy living in the North. She likes that the region is not as populated as the southern part of the province, and she explained she would not mind going even further north for work. She describes the people around Dawson Creek as laidback, helpful and caring.

Kim chose this career path because she likes that she helps move large inventory and goods, like oil and gas rigs and even houses, around the province. She provides a great public service to the people who live and travel in B.C. and is a genuine asset to the ministry. She is helping to keep our highways safe.

Visit the Career Development Profiles website for more profiles plus ministry career outlooks and statistics.

Digital Health Coach

Digital Health Coach is an online tool that provides personalized health coaching through convenient, 24-hour online access. The application helps you set goals, track your progress and stay motivated for these health or lifestyle conditions:

- Depression
- Diabetes
- Managing stress
- Improving sleep health
- Healthy eating
- Getting active

The Digital Health Coach delivers tips and tools to your inbox on your health issue. You can even sign up for automatic email reminders to encourage you in your journey to better health. Scheduling how often your digital coach connects with you is your decision.

To use the Digital Health Coach, register with My Good Health and complete your My Health Profile.
Cecil Lake Hall – A Nice Place to Picnic!
Submitted by Heidi Postnikoff, Assistant Area Manager, Roads (TELP)

On the morning of July 3, an enthusiastic group of Peace District employees partnered with volunteers from the local road and bridge maintenance contractor, Yellowhead Road & Bridge, for the annual Community Service Program.

This year, our contractor generously donated specialized skills, equipment and supplies to upgrade a public picnic site at Cecil Lake Hall. Ministry employees contributed their labour to the project, and the result was a pleasant picnic area, with three concrete picnic tables on concrete and a fire pit.

The province-wide Community Service Program brings together ministry employees and service area maintenance companies to initiate volunteer projects for the benefit of residents. Projects like these rely on the goodwill of local resources, and might not otherwise happen in small communities.

If you’re in the North Peace area, plan a visit to Cecil Lake Hall, about 31 kilometres east of Fort St. John. And if it’s nice out, stay for a picnic.

FOI Trainers Visit Kamloops
Submitted by Miranda Fattore, Supervisor, Information and Records Services

Senior Information Project Analyst Gislene Guenard and I were in Kamloops to deliver Freedom of Information (FOI) training, Sept. 12 to 14.

The event at the Southern Interior Regional Office was organized by Regional Management Administrator Maree Johnston. More than 50 people from around the region attended, to learn more about FOI and how the process works.

When Gislene and I began providing FOI training, we noted that people in the regions seemed discouraged by the FOI process, especially around the fee estimate section and what constitutes a “reasonable search” for records. So, Gislene and I presented some examples of FOI requests, and took participants through the life cycle of the FOI process. We also gave each employee a copy of our ministry’s customized Guide to the FOI Process: Timelines, Roles and Responsibilities, to use as a future reference. Our desire was to equip folks with the knowledge they need to make decisions and successfully carry out their day-to-day FOI responsibilities.

While in the area, Gislene and I were interested in seeing a project up close and personal, and we hoped we might take a quick side trip to a highway construction site. We were extremely fortunate that Maree was able to coordinate time with Project Manager Maurice LeFrancois to give us a tour of the Monte Creek project.

Thanks to Maree, Maurice and everyone in the Southern Interior Region for your hospitality.
CVSE Staff Come Together for Safety
Submitted by Karen Coverett, Business Application Administrator

What do you get when you add together at least 16 carrier safety inspectors (CSI), 25 area vehicle inspectors (AVI), five headquarters staff, a dozen managers/directors and a handful of guest speakers?

Hours of discussion, dozens of networking opportunities, lots of learning and more than a little laughter.

On Sept. 26 and 27, the vehicle inspection and National Safety Code programs hosted a joint conference for the province’s AVIs and CSIs. The two days featured program-specific sessions discussing recent changes and introducing future plans.

Both programs used the occasion to demonstrate the new online systems that are in development, to replace the mainframe computer databases that are currently central to both areas.

Among a wide variety of other topics covered, the AVIs received training on the new structural integrity inspection process for rebuilt vehicles, learned about plans to provide additional education to the operators of designated inspection facilities and discussed recent updates to the vehicle inspection manual.

The AVIs also heard from Earl Galavan of the Trucking Safety Council of BC.

The CSIs discussed action items from a recent joint task force with the trucking industry and learned about a new carrier compliance review planned to start in January. Philip Davies, a transportation economist, presented the CSIs with results from the first part of his research on how the National Safety Code identifies carriers with the highest safety risk.

As it was a rare opportunity to have both groups of inspectors together, the conference included two joint sessions. Wednesday morning began with updates from CVSE Manager of Compliance, Education and Policy Phil Easton, who is leading the process to update the branch’s best practices manual.

Thursday morning featured an informative session on administrative fairness by Diane Roberts, CVSE’s new legal counsel from the Ministry of Justice, Legal Services Branch.

When you add in program-specific roundtables, coffee and lunch break discussions and informal after-hours hanging out, the gathering was an invaluable opportunity to get to know the people behind the emails and phone calls, to understand the concerns of staff from around the province and to learn together.

Area Vehicle Inspectors David Sabyan, Don McKimmie and Collin Nemeth connect at the conference, during the coffee break.

TranBC. You might have seen the logo or heard the term, but how much do you know about the ministry’s own blog site? TranBC is the flagship of our social media platforms, where the work that the ministry does is discussed in a conversational, plain-language way – great for sharing with anyone. www.tranbc.ca
Enhancing Avalanche Control at Kootenay Pass

Robb Andersen, District Avalanche Technician

The system is fired remotely from a computer in our office at the summit of the pass. The computer has a special avalanche shoot program, which connects to the desired control shelter via radio modem. Once we have connected to the shelter, we can then choose an exploder to fire.

After the shoot code is entered into the system, valves in the shelter open up sending the gas down a pipeline to the exploder. During a Gazex shoot, one of the avalanche technicians is in the office running the computer, and the other avalanche technician is on the road confirming that the exploder detonated and observing the results from the avalanche control. A typical Gazex explosion is equivalent to about 20 to 30 kilograms of dynamite.

Investing in Avalanche Control Improvements

There are 22 extremely active avalanche paths within eight kilometers of Kootenay Pass Summit, and another 20 within the rest of our avalanche area. Starting in 1994, the Provincial Snow Avalanche and Weather Programs and West Kootenay District have been investing in improving and enhancing the Gazex avalanche control system in Kootenay Pass. Since the first Gazex system installation there, highway closures for avalanche control have been reduced from as long as eight hours (in the old days when avalanche control devices were less effective) to one hour today.

Upgrades to the Gazex system have occurred in phases, with the two most significant installations taking place in 1997 and 2000. Since then, we have been slowly adding to the system, and over the last three years, we've replaced five older exploders. The Kootenay Pass now has 23 exploders and six control shelters covering three separate mountains.

The goal of the ministry's Snow Avalanche and Weather Programs is to ensure the safety of highway users and minimize avalanche-related road closures. The continued investment and support of the Kootenay Pass Gazex system will allow us to continue to provide a high reliability service during the snowy winter months.

What Gazex is and How it Works

The Gazex avalanche control system works by sending a mixture of oxygen and propane through a pipeline system to the exploder, which is permanently mounted in the starting zone of the avalanche path. The gas enters the gun where a pair of “spark plugs” delivers a 13,000-volt spark that ignites the gas, causing an explosion. The air pressure wave caused by the explosion destabilizes the snowpack, producing “controlled” avalanches. (The road is closed to traffic during this time). This reduces the avalanche hazard to the highway traveller.

The gas is stored on the mountain in “control shelters” which are supplied with enough gas for a typical winter. Each shelter can supply gas for up to five exploders. The shelters also house solar panels, batteries and a computer.

A new exploder, installed by the ministry’s Robb Andersen and John Buffery; Ninco Construction’s Rudy (seated), Cody and Dean; the ministry’s Mark Talbot, and Gazex distributor Avatec’s Jim Bay.
CVSE Ride Along
Submitted by Lenora Fillion, Regional Manager Business Services

On occasion we get to experience a day in the life of another person. Early in July, I was able to ride along with Commercial Transport Enforcement Officer Supervisor Eric Ruotsalainen, who works in the Fort George District.

Due to the high volume of commercial traffic west of Prince George, Eric advised me that we were spending his shift at the Vanderhoof Inspection Station.

Scanning for Safety Concerns
Our trip from Prince George to Vanderhoof was uneventful, though educational. Eric took the time to explain equipment, processes and procedures. As we chatted while arriving in Vanderhoof, Eric mentioned that a machine had crossed the road. When I said that I hadn’t seen it, he said it was behind us. We turned around and located the machine and Eric did a compliance check. I watched him more closely as we drove back toward the scale, and realized he was constantly scanning the road in all four directions.

He stopped several vehicles before we got to the scale and reviewed their paperwork. One had a plate but appeared to have no decal and one operator did not have his driver’s licence with him. Both of these issues were resolved in a quick, effective and efficient manner.

Five Inspection Types
For me, the highlights of the shift were learning about the different types of commercial vehicles that Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement (CVSE) inspectors work with, and the five types of inspections they perform.

A Level 1 inspection includes a front-to-back assessment of 13 critical items:

1. brake systems, coupling devices
2. exhaust systems
3. frame
4. fuel system
5. lighting devices
6. safe loading/tie downs
7. steering mechanism, suspension
8. tires
9. trailer structure
10. wheels, rims and hubs
11. driver and driver’s licence — check that they meet medical and physical requirements. Watch for signs of sickness, fatigue, impaired or evasive communication, drug or alcohol intoxication, alcohol or illegal drugs in the vehicle or on the driver, and driver disqualifications.
12. driver’s record (log book)
13. hazardous materials

The four other types of inspections are portions of the Level 1 inspection. For example, a Level 2 inspection is everything except going underneath the vehicle and Level 3 is just paperwork and documentation, not the vehicle itself. A Level 4 is a targeted inspection of one item or a combination of the 13 listed above — such as only brakes, only lights, or a combination of items like brakes and lights. A Level 5 inspection is a Level 1 without the driver.

These inspections are always performed by area vehicle inspectors and are usually done at a company’s place of business — generally a fleet of buses or taxis.

Scoping Out Scale Traffic
Part of the shift included monitoring the traffic going across the scale by looking for infractions. One vehicle bypassed the scale and was required to return. Actually two did, but Eric advised that the second one was empty and didn’t have to stop. I lost track of the number of vehicles that drove across the inspection station scale while we were there. It was extremely busy and the time flew by!

On our return trip to Prince George we were driving at highway speed and I was feeling quite relaxed and considerably more knowledgeable, when Eric suddenly pulled over. He was concerned about a flat tire on a low bed trailer travelling in the opposite direction. As soon as it was safe to do so, he turned around, and closed the distance. Thankfully, the truck driver had noticed the flat tire as well and pulled into an area that was safe. The end result was the driver dropping the trailer and arranging for a tire company to come and replace the flat. Eric explained that when a tire blows it could be detrimental for a motorcyclist travelling in the vicinity or even another vehicle because it blows up in chunks. Another learning moment!

I observed every interaction between Eric and the commercial drivers and noted that he was consistently firm, respectful and calm with them. Eric’s skill in implementing enforcement was amazing. The drivers were smiling and thanking him at the end of their interaction.

That evening, while reflecting on the day’s events, I realized that the ride along not only provided me with some time out of the office, it gave me a better understanding of and a tremendous amount of respect for the services that CVSE officers provide to the travelling public on a daily basis. If you are offered an opportunity like this, I highly recommend taking advantage of experiencing a day in the life of a CVSE officer. It will be a day well spent!
Test of Humanity Rides Again
Submitted by Nic Seaton, Snow Avalanche Technician

Following last year’s successful Test of Humanity mountain bike race (See November 2011 Road Runner), which raised nearly $40,000 for Canadian Humanitarian’s work in Ethiopia, another race was held in Summerland, on Sept. 23.

As organizers of the Test of Humanity race, there are three things my wife Shei and I came to realize when preparing for year two. The first was that everything just seems easier the second time around. The second, thing was no matter how much easier it appears to be, there is still a massive amount of preparation and organization to do for an event of this magnitude. And the third thing we realized was that any inhibitions we once had about approaching sponsors and volunteers, or asking for pledges, were long gone.

In respect to the latter, when you truly believe in the cause it’s much easier to just come out and ask for help. Simply put, that is what we did and a large number of people from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and our local maintenance contractor, Argo Road Maintenance, once again stepped forward to help. For those of you who either volunteered, sponsored us by providing equipment, sent in pledges or actually raced in the event, please know that every one of you have played a major role in helping to break the cycle of poverty in Ethiopia, and both Shei and I can’t thank you enough!

Racing Highlights
Race day was a fun-filled event with races for all ages and capabilities, and we had 265 competitors, compared to last year’s tally of 198. Again, the three to 10-year-old tally of 198. Again, the three to 10-year-old category provided great entertainment for all, as hyper-energetic kids on all types of bikes threw caution to wind and careened around the one-
kilometre course, with some parents frantically trying to keep up on foot. In many cases, parents found themselves picking up, dusting off and sending the overly enthusiastic on their way again. There were team events for the 11 to 15 year olds and a one-lap, 10-kilometre race for beginners over 16 years of age.

The main event was an endurance race where competitors cycle as many 10-kilometre laps as possible in the four-hour period. Racers either compete solo, or in teams of two. The course is moderately technical and climbs 1,000 feet per lap. Some of the athletes in the elite categories were able to pull off seven laps (7,000 feet of climbing!) in less than four hours, which is a superb accomplishment. Special recognition goes to Argo Road Maintenance’s Tim Daechsel for not only playing a major role as a volunteer, but raising $730 in pledges and winning the Elite Male 40+ category with seven laps in 3:49:41. This was good enough for third place over all age categories which was a phenomenal achievement!

Improving Life in Gindo Town

Once the dust had settled on a perfect bluebird day, the Test of Humanity had raised approximately $33,000 (as pledges are still coming in, the actual figure is yet to be determined). This money will be used to support Canadian Humanitarian, a non-religious, non-profit organization that provides orphaned and vulnerable children in Ethiopia with access to health care, education, vocational training and the basic necessities of life such as nutrition and shelter. Proceeds from last year’s race played a major role in building a new school in Gindo Town (a small town in southwestern Ethiopia) and a communal garden to provide a sustainable food source for the students of the new school and their guardians (when enrolled in the Canadian Humanitarian educational program, all orphaned children are assigned a guardian in the town). The classrooms are now being used, there is running water (an absolute novelty for the kids) and the electricity is also hooked up. The garden’s soil has never been farmed so the 100 metre x 100 metre nutrient-rich plot is yielding an amazing amount of vegetables.

The 2013 Test of Humanity will be held on Sept. 22, and if you would like to be a part of this lively event, please see our website at www.testofhumanity.com or email us at testofhumanity@gmail.com. In the spring, Shei and I will be returning to Ethiopia with Canadian Humanitarian and look forward to providing all of you with an up-to-date report on Canadian Humanitarian’s projects.

As raising money to support Canadian Humanitarian’s projects in Ethiopia is our main goal, thanks to all of you who donated so generously to the Test of Humanity. In addition, special thanks to these volunteers who played a major role in making the 2012 Test of Humanity a great success.

Ministry of Transportation:
Joe Peterson, John Buffery, Ron Domanko, Rob Bitte, Scott Aitken, Steve Portman and Tim Clements.

Argo Road Maintenance:
Daryl Hayter, Rick Taggart, Rob Wiens, Sandi Paulson and Tim Daechsel.

Olympic bronze medallist Axcel Merckx in role reversal, providing race support for his daughter Athina.
Annual Toadfest a Huge Success
Submitted by Katie Ward, District Operations Technician (TELp)

Summit Lake, located south of Nakusp, was host to the third annual Summit Lake Toadfest on Aug. 22 and 23. The event was hosted by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Board, Ministry of Environment, Columbia Basin Trust and maintenance contractor Kootenay Head Road and Bridge’s Kootenay division. The western toad, federally listed as a species of concern, crosses Highway 6 as part of its annual migration. This year, the timing of the event was just right. A large rainfall the night prior had the toads on the move and sunny skies brought out an estimated 500 visitors over the two-day event. An amazing 12,000 toadlets were safely moved across the highway by volunteers. Traffic control by Yellow Head Road and Bridge was in place to ensure safe passage across the highway for the toadlets and visitors.

The ministry’s environmental services staff lent their expertise giving “toad tours” to eager visitors of all ages, and the West Kootenay District TELPs helped keep traffic and people moving.

Toadfest had tons of entertainment such as music, games, face painting and amphibian tanks. The goal of the event however, is to raise awareness about the importance of this breeding site for the western toad.

The toad migration typically lasts between four and six weeks, starting in mid-August. Every year, tens of thousands of toadlets make the migration. Although their numbers have declined significantly across the province, the population is still healthy at Summit Lake. Employees from our ministry and the Ministry of Environment installed two special “toad” culverts and toad fencing to encourage toadlets to cross below the highway.

All in all, the third annual Summit Lake Toadfest was a success — a record number of people and toadlets. If you are in the area in late August, this is a must-see event.
Q: What do you get when you cross a busy metropolitan city, rugged mountain ranges and tranquil coastal islands?

A: The Lower Mainland District and one magnificent training ground!

Hint: Just make sure that when you leave for the field in the Lower Mainland District, you have your umbrella, snow gear and sun block (you never know what Mother Nature will throw at you).

Since June 2011, I’ve had the pleasure of working as a Technician Entry Level Program (TELP) employee in the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure’s Lower Mainland District. Having been hired fresh out of school in the civil engineering technology discipline, I had no idea what to expect for pace, expectations and responsibilities at the ministry, when I arrived. I was immediately put into the Howe Sound Area, as an assistant roads area manager, so I could receive mentorship. Since I am avidly into outdoor recreational sports, I was extremely enthusiastic about getting to work among the world-famous slopes of Whistler/Blackcomb, the roaring Cheakamus and Green Rivers and the fast and furious fishing lakes near Pemberton.

The Howe Sound Area was a great welcome into the technologist world. One of my first tasks was working with a parcel of land in North Vancouver, taking traffic measurements and comparing the as-built geometrics to today’s standards, using the design drawings. I then had the opportunity to consider possible changes to the parcel’s roads, to enhance commuter safety. It was very similar to a problem I would have worked on in school, right out of a text book!

The assistant road area manager assignment allowed me to exercise the basic knowledge and logistics I had been taught in school. Something I gained from the experience was learning the practicality of the discipline. For example, the product in the field is never going to match exactly what was designed in the office.

My next assignment was helping as an assistant bridge area manager in greater Vancouver. I was ready to step into the challenging and demanding atmosphere that B.C.’s busiest area had to offer. The bridge area manager role had me working – hands-on – with the bridges, culverts and retaining walls that are part of a road system that hundreds of thousands of people drive every day.

I was tasked with inspecting the structures around the area. The inspection reports that I filled out could then be used to track the condition of the 309 structures. This assignment had me putting in lots of field time and called upon my knowledge of materials and structural intuition. The opportunity to work alongside the district’s bridge team was an engaging experience and really quenched my thirst for working in a technical environment.

After working at the ministry, I’m proud to know that I’ve made a tangible difference to our highways. From developing new signage plans, to ensuring the structural capacity of the Lions Gate Bridge, these are things that will benefit motorists for a long time, which – for lack of better words – is really cool!

Marcus Saari hands the ministry truck keys to Susan Cunningham, at the end of his TELP assignment.
Holly Adems – Bringing a Little Hollywood to the Lower Mainland District

Submitted by Graeme Schimpf, Senior District Development Technician

The Lower Mainland District is lucky to have several employees who have spent their entire careers with what it now called the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. As the years have passed and the ministry’s name has changed, these employees have stayed committed to their careers serving the people of British Columbia. One of them is Holly Adems.

Holly was hired by the Department of Highways in August 1974, as an auxiliary clerk in the North Vancouver District. Within two months, she had permanent status and started work as the secretary assistant to the district highways manager. Her work there continued over 25 years, during which she was the secretary for seven district managers. She kept the district running by performing a wide array of tasks including organizing district operational meetings, completing public notices for newspapers, record keeping, serving as file historian, preparing public correspondence and minister’s letters and coordinating the human resources function—just to name a few.

Human resources work became one of Holly’s keen interests, so she enrolled at BCIT in the Business Administration and Human Resources Management Programs. These paved the way for Holly to qualify for temporary appointments in Kamloops, Terrace and Burnaby as a human resources officer, which she held for varying times in the early 1990s.

Holly transitioned from human resources to regional communications in 1995. She held a regional communications officer position, working with Brenda Jones on media relations, issues management, newspaper advertising, project opening ceremonies, briefing notes and news releases. She even wrote a speech that the Premier used while officiating at a ribbon cutting event for a project!

After a term in communications, Holly returned to the district work she loved, in North Vancouver. There she moved into the special events coordinator position for the district (and later, an amalgamation of districts). Holly plays an integral role in facilitating many of the special events and filming that are carried out on ministry roads across the province.

Some of Holly’s efforts support large and glamorous Hollywood feature films, although as Holly will tell you, much of the time she is involved with a vast array of special events, small-scale film projects and commercial shoots. Holly’s work has included the Whistler GranFondo cycling events (see front cover), Cops for Cancer, various triathlons, the BC Bike Race, Hands across the Border, Bike to Work Week, holiday parades and many fund-raising running and cycling events.

Holly has served on the Women’s Committee (renamed the Employment Equity Committee), the Opportunities 90s committee (which was extremely gratifying for Holly, as it helped...
Technician Joseph Kwan Also District Liaison
Submitted by Kellen Truant, Area Manager Roads/Bridges

Joseph Kwan recently joined the Lower Mainland District as an operations, maintenance and rehabilitation technician. He is the district liaison for the Port Mann/Highway 1 and South Fraser Perimeter Road projects.

Joseph started with the B.C. government in 2002 as a case manager with the Ministry of Social Development. He enjoyed several roles within that ministry, becoming a staff trainer, auditor and HQ analyst managing issues for the deputy minister’s office. Joseph also worked as a program manager for the Ministry of Health, and team lead for the Ministry of Labour and Citizens’ Services prior to joining the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

On Feb. 2, Joseph and his wife Joyce welcomed a new addition to their family, Jayden John Sing-Hymn Kwan! Joseph is thankful to be back with his family in the Lower Mainland, and excited in his role as operations, maintenance and rehabilitation technician for two major projects.

Joseph enjoys working with people from the ministry and the Port Mann/Highway 1 and South Fraser Perimeter Road projects. He believes this is an exciting and important time for the ministry and our province.

In his spare time, Joseph volunteers for a children’s club on Saturday evenings. He leads a group of volunteers in organizing games, stories, songs and camp activities for the children. Joseph also has an MBA (University of Phoenix) and Master of Education (UVic).

5Ws
– Lorraine Turns 50
Submitted by Crystal Chenier, Secretary

Who: Lorraine Thomas and Southern Interior Region’s Corporate Services and Operations staff
What: got together to celebrate Lorraine’s 50-year milestone
When: Sept. 24
Where: Southern Interior Region Offices, in Kamloops
Why: Any excuse to have cake... Hahahahaha!

Lorraine Thomas celebrates her 50th birthday with colleagues and a big cake.

Holly Adems – Bringing a Little Hollywood to the Lower Mainland District … Continued from Page 22

In 1993, Holly Adems was secretary to the district highways manager and featured in the Road Runner.

women in clerical areas move into technical roles in the ministry) and the Employee Advisory Forum.

Holly’s commitment to the ministry is second to none; she takes pride in the work she does and she thoroughly loves her job.

“My career with the ministry so far has provided an adventurous and moving experience with opportunities to work around the province,” says Holly. “I’ve been very fortunate to work with great people and be part of many terrific teams. I love serving the public — so my jobs have given me many moments of fulfillment. So far, my path has been challenging, diverse, rewarding and a true blessing.”

If you have any events coming through your area that may affect provincial roads, and you aren’t sure where to start, a quick call to get some guidance from Holly will ensure road and traffic management for the event is a success!
The New Highways Fall Classic
Annual Golf Tournament
Submitted by Katie Ward, District Operations Technician (TELP)

For many years, retired employees who have worked on highway operations have been putting on an annual golf tournament at the Balfour Golf Course, 30 minutes north of Nelson.

This year, the reins to host the event were passed to West Kootenay District staff. Hoping to keep tradition alive, the event was held again in Balfour but moved to the third weekend in September. If you missed the emails, the tournament is open to anyone, tons of fun and “scramble style” (meaning you can rely on the talents of your team should you lack the golfing gene).

The tournament was a success. Golfers enjoyed a sunny day, a few good drives and some friendly but fierce competition.

This year’s winners included:
• Best Team Score – Ryan Oakley, Roger Mellor, Luke Dickieson and Matt Hawkins
• Ladies’ Closest to the Pin – Deb Rutherford
• Ladies’ Longest Drive – Heather Syfchuck
• Men’s Closest to the Pin – Roger Mellor
• Men’s Longest Drive – John Babineau

Prizes included Balfour Golf Course gift certificates, custom-made trophies and, of course and most importantly, bragging rights.

Watch for reminders next year to “save the date.” This tournament is not retiring any time soon.

Highway Number | Scrambled Letters | Your Answer
--- | --- | ---
1 | aaacdnarst | Trans-Canada
3 | cenorsssstw | Crowsnest
5 | aachilloqu | Coquihalla
19 | adilns | Island
7 | deeghiou | Lougheed
37 | aacirss | Cassiar
97 | aaakls | Alaska
15 | accflip | Pacific
1 | aaahlmt | Malahat
16 | adeehllowy | Yellowhead
99 | aekossty | Sea to Sky
1 | aacefnorssy | Fraser Canyon
26 | abeeilrrrv | Barkerville
17 | aabpty | Pat Bay
1 | aegoprrssss | Rogers Pass

Golfers display their winnings: Matt Hawkins, Roger Mellor (Ryan’s Oakley’s stepdad), Ryan Oakley, Deb Rutherford (”highways alumni”), Heather Syfchuck and John Babineau.

Highways Puzzler Solved

The first two employees to unscramble the popular highway names puzzle in August 2011 Road Runner were Ministerial Assistant Jay Denney and Regional Engineering Technician Paul Imada. Jay and Paul have each been sent a Cookin’ with Highways Volume 2 cookbook for their quick thinking.

Jay was working as assistant to Minister Blair Lekstrom when the puzzler was published. With cabinet changes that took place in September, he is now working with the Minister of Agriculture. When contacted about his win, Jay wanted to let the ministry know, “I was honoured to work with such a great team of people and was very impressed with the work done by all, from the executive team to district and regional staff to administration – a truly top-notch team!”

Paul says he enjoyed the brain exercise and he thinks he’s driven most of the highways featured in the puzzle. Kudos to Susan Pearson for pointing out that #1 (as it appeared in last issue) was short an “a” to spell Trans-Canada.

All contestants submitted answers that were 100 per cent correct.

Highway Number | Scrambled Letters | Your Answer
--- | --- | ---
1 | aaacdnarst | Trans-Canada
3 | cenorsssstw | Crowsnest
5 | aachilloqu | Coquihalla
19 | adilns | Island
7 | deeghiou | Lougheed
37 | aacirss | Cassiar
97 | aaakls | Alaska
15 | accflip | Pacific
1 | aaahlmt | Malahat
16 | adeehllowy | Yellowhead
99 | aekossty | Sea to Sky
1 | aacefnorssy | Fraser Canyon
26 | abeeilrrrv | Barkerville
17 | aabpty | Pat Bay
1 | aegoprrssss | Rogers Pass

Paul Imada, one of the prize winners, on an Alaskan cruise aboard the ms Veendam.

The Trans-Canada Highway, 50 years ago.
**Alpaca Surprise**
Submitted by Doug Wilson, Area Manager/Bridges

New Service Area 7 Operations Manager Mike Kelly and I were doing a regional audit in the Quesnel area, recently. From some distance away, we see this brown-looking animal on the shoulder of the road. We scramble to get the camera out, slow down and try to sneak up on it...and surprise...it’s an alpaca!

Who would have thought? Here we are 100 kilometres in the bush east of Quesnel expecting we might see wolves, grizzly bears, black bears, deer, moose, caribou, wolverine or badgers and we come around a corner in the middle of nowhere, and this is what’s there.

We were on a fairly isolated area of Highway 59, where it’s one or one and a half lanes of gravel road (well maintained I should add). Mike and I both thought that the alpaca was an escapee from a farm somewhere out there. It needed to be sheared badly so it must have been on the lam for some time.

Anybody lost an alpaca? ¶

**Laidlaw Staff Welcome New Addition**
Submitted by Ben Taylor, Commercial Transport Enforcement Officer

CVSE’s Mark Steberl (top) and Les Unrau (bottom) wave from the Laidlaw Commercial Vehicle Inspection Station, just before a new addition is attached to the building. The project was completed five days later, on Aug. 17. With 16 new feet of workspace, employees now enjoy an expanded change room and lunch room. The Laidlaw station is located 14 kilometres west of Hope. ¶
Celebrating a 32-Year Career with Matt Choquette
Submitted by Sarah Smith, Correspondence Coordinator

Friends and colleagues celebrated the retirement of South Coast Region Project Manager Matt Choquette, on Sept. 21.

The event was hosted by Matt’s colleague and long-time friend John McKenzie, at the Dockside Restaurant in Vancouver’s Granville Island Hotel. We played games and won prizes that related to Matt’s many pictures of drilling adventures around the province. The whole project management team put together a great event that was enjoyed by all.

Matt began his ministry career in January 1980, as a geotechnical driller working on the drill rigs on the Coquihalla. He worked all over the province, from Campbell River to the Nass Valley to Stanley Park. After his field career, Matt joined the project management team at the South Coast Regional Office in 2004. Matt worked on several large projects like the Capilano Bridge move and the Highway 1 Truck Climbing Lane. This year, he was presented with the Deputy Minister’s Award for commitment. Anyone who knows or has worked with Matt knows he is a wealth of information about our province and always has a great story to tell.

Matt was surprised with a gift from his project management team, a C-035 project sign designed in his honor and signed by ministry staff and friends. He will certainly be missed! Matt can be found spending his days at his family restaurant, Beatniks, in Fort Langley, serving up delicious meals and maybe telling a story or two.

Goodbye Penny Radies
Submitted by Crystal Chenier, Secretary

On July 27, Penny Radies retired from the ministry, after 24 years of service.

Penny spent most of her career in the properties section of the Southern Interior Region office. I have known Penny for 17 years and she is an inspiration to all. As well as being a valuable and knowledgeable employee, she was also involved in many office activities including being an active member of the coffee club – where she bought most of our supplies on her own time.

On Penny’s last day of work, we had cake and coffee for her, as that was all she wanted. However, Penny’s daughters planned a surprise party for Penny after work, where a limo picked her up outside the office and whisked her away to the party. Penny was so surprised and shocked, especially since her daughters are from out of town, and showed up just to surprise her.

Her positive attitude and smiling face are greatly missed. Good luck to Penny on her next adventure.