

# GEORGIA MILEPOST

Summer - Fall 2007

*Tribute to  
Commissioner  
Linnenkohl*



*Plus:  
Georgia DOT  
Launches 511  
Program*

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SUMMER - FALL 2007

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## Commissioner's Column

### Dear Friend:

It is with mixed emotions that I announce my upcoming retirement from Georgia DOT, effective November 30, 2007. For more than 39 years, serving this organization has been one of the greatest joys of my life.



I have been honored to serve as Commissioner for the past four years, but the real tribute is to the 5,800 employees of the Department with whom I've been privileged to work.

This issue of Milepost is another testament to the varied work our employees perform each day as dedicated public servants on behalf of our fellow Georgians and the traveling public. From the launch of the new 511 statewide travel information system, to the many hours volunteered to help extinguish the wildfires in south Georgia earlier this year, this Milepost is a snapshot of our employees' contribution to our state's innovative, fiscally sound and quality-driven transportation solutions.

If you are reading this, chances are you are in the Department's "family" of constituents, whether partner agency, government entity, industry association, employee, retiree or anyone who travels Georgia's roadways. I thank you for the support you've shown the Department and me as Commissioner. Together, we have moved this Department forward with new technologies and tools to provide an outstanding transportation system, and to become one of the very best DOTs in the nation. I encourage you to continue to support the Department's future initiatives.

Working at Georgia DOT has given me a storehouse of great experiences and memories. I'll always appreciate it, and I wish the very best for each and every one of you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Harold E. Linnenkohl". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Harold E. Linnenkohl  
Commissioner

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# Georgia DOT Launches 511 System

## Receive "real time" travel information 24/7

By Monica Luck

**511** is here! A new telephone-based service of the Georgia DOT, 511 provides traffic and travel information statewide 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Best of all, it's free!

Based on Georgia's NaviGator system, 511 is a "one stop" travel information number that works from any phone. Using the menu options, motorists traveling anywhere in the

state can quickly contact just about any mode of transportation in Georgia, including:

- Major airports
- Transit and rail agencies
- Rideshare programs
- Department of Economic Development (tourism)
- Neighboring states' 511 systems

We've all experienced traffic jams due to construction, major accidents or weather-related problems on the roadways. The 511 system helps motorists

avert congestion with real-time traffic information on any interstate or state route in Georgia. Using Option 2 on the main menu, motorists can say or press the road number, provide a start and end point, and hear:

- Real-time updates on traffic, incidents and road construction
- Road and lane closures
- Travel times, average speed, and distance
- Congestion levels



## Daffodils Dot Georgia Roadsides



By Carla Murphy

**F**rom Union to Glynn County, daffodils dotted interstate highways, bringing with them frames of bright colors and picturesque beauty as Georgia ushered in another season!

This spring marked the first time the Narcissus "Ice Follies", the Narcissus x odorus and Narcissus "Carlton" varieties appeared on state highways as part of the Wildflower Program. The daffodils — favorites in the South — joined the Black-eyed Susan, the Purple Coneflower, the Indian Blanket, and others blooming on Georgia roadsides during the spring and

summer months.

"Everybody loves daffodils," says Georgia DOT Landscape Architect Bill Wright. "They are proven Southern survivors that thrive year after year and can tolerate the harsh roadside environment."

Last year, Georgia DOT contractors planted more than 200,000 daffodil bulbs in more than 22 counties, stretching from the northeast corner down to South Georgia. The daffodils bloom from February to late March.

For more information on the Wildflower Program or the Wildflower Tag (available at your local county tag office for \$25), visit [www.dot.state.ga.us](http://www.dot.state.ga.us).

In addition to automated information, motorists can report an incident, request HERO assistance (in metro Atlanta), or speak to a live operator 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Under USDOT guidelines, 511 is expected to be nationwide by 2010. Georgia is the 29th state to deploy 511. With its "headquarters" at the Transportation Management Center in Atlanta, 511 will be the travel portal statewide. The three current TMC phone numbers (\*DOT, 404-635-6800 and 1-888-635-8287) will be phased out over a six-month period. 511 will be the official travel information number for Georgia by 2008.

So, for real-time traffic and travel information in Georgia - dial 511. We'll get you there! For more information, please contact Monica Luck, 511 Marketing Project Manager at 404.635.8035 or email [Monica.luck@dot.state.ga.us](mailto:Monica.luck@dot.state.ga.us).

# Russian Delegation Visits Georgia DOT

By David Jared

A delegation of high-ranking Russian officials visited Georgia DOT leadership in March, making the stop as part of their visit to the World of Asphalt Conference held in Atlanta. The officials met with Commissioner Harold Linnenkohl and visited the Office of Materials and Research for a brief tour and a discussion with Deputy Commissioner Buddy Gratton.

The delegation, led by Chief of Russia's Federal Administration of Highways (Ministry of Transport) Oleg Belozеров, included Alexander Afanasyev, General Manager of the Russian Association of Regional Road Administrations and Vladimir Shvetsov, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Tatarstan, a province within the Russian Federation.

"Georgia's reputation as a transportation leader continues to attract the attention of experts and government



(L-R) Roadtec, Inc. International Sales Manager Jim Walton, Georgia DOT Deputy Commissioner Buddy Gratton, Astec Industries Representative Nickolay Krupin, Minister of Transport and Road Facilities of the Republic of Tatarstan Vladimir Shvetsov, Georgia DOT Commissioner Harold Linnenkohl, Head of Highway Administration of the Russian Federation Oleg Belozеров, Head of RADOR Association Alexander Afanasyev, and Astec Industries Representative Alexander Myasnikov.

officials from around the world," says Linnenkohl. "We are always proud to share our experience and expertise with other governments and agencies."

The delegation's visit was arranged by Roadtec, a major manufacturer of road-building equipment based in

Chattanooga, Tennessee, which has offices in Russia. The Russian officials were interested in learning more about how Georgia DOT funds, contracts, and builds its high-quality roads and bridges.

## Evans Re-Elected as Board Chairman

By Kimberly Spear

The State Transportation Board re-elected Mike Evans as Chairman at the June Board Meeting. Evans represents the 9th Congressional District on the 13-member Board and will serve his second consecutive term as Chairman; the chairmanship is limited to two consecutive terms.

Additionally, the Board re-elected Garland Pinholster of Ball Ground as Vice Chair.

Evans was a member of the Georgia House of Representatives from 1993 to 2001. He was also the Republican Caucus Leader from 1995 until 2001. Evans is an Ellijay native and attended Georgia State University.

He currently resides in Cumming.

For the past year Evans has served as Chairman, he has continued on his mission to make the Department more effective in keeping with the Governor's initiative to make Georgia one of the best-run states. In addition, Evans is credited with calling much-needed public attention to the funding shortfall in Georgia and its implications, as detailed on his Web site [www.whatsthebigidea.com](http://www.whatsthebigidea.com).

"I am glad to have Mr. Evans continue as Chairman. He has been an untiring public servant, and I am looking forward to continuing our work together," said Commissioner Harold Linnenkohl.

"I have learned a lot from the Georgia DOT staff and Board over the

past year as Chairman. I appreciate the honor to serve you again," Evans said.

Pinholster will also be serving his second consecutive term. Representing the 6th Congressional District, he is a businessman, former educator and legislator and chairs the Board's legislative committee.

Elected to five-year terms, Board members have general control and supervision of the Department of Transportation.



Mike Evans



Garland Pinholster

# Georgia DOT Opens First "Green Building"

By Carla Murphy

**G**eorgia DOT has officially gone green — opening the first district office to meet the nationally-accepted standards of a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) "green building."

Commissioner Harold Linnenkohl and District 3 District Engineer Thomas Howell recently welcomed guests to the 63,000-square-foot District 3 Office — underscoring the Department's commitment to efficient and environmentally-friendly construction of new facilities.

"We are extremely proud of this new facility and what it means for the future of building construction for the Department," says Commissioner Linnenkohl. "Our facilities team and the District 3 staff did an excellent job of making certain we completed the project on time and within budget. By doing so, they demonstrated that providing an environmentally-friendly building doesn't have to add costs. Rather, it reduces costs over time."

## The Green Team

### Georgia DOT Staff

Gordon Jett  
David Millen  
Lewis Walker

### Architects

Rosser International  
Bill Simpson  
Steve Poulos

### Contractors

Choate Construction  
Dan Donatelli

### Project Managers

Georgia State Finance and  
Investment Commission  
Bob Johns  
Andrew Morton  
Chris Cowell  
Larry Gauldin



*District 3 District Engineer Thomas Howell; Commissioner Linnenkohl; House Transportation Committee Chair Vance Smith, Jr. (R-Pine Mountain); State Facilities Manager Gordon Jett; and District Preconstruction Engineer David Millen cut ribbon at new district office.*

To qualify as a LEED "green building," the District 3 project was required to meet specific benchmarks and performance standards in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality." The result is an energy-efficient building and a healthy work environment for our employees," says State Facilities Manager Gordon Jett.

The \$10 million facility houses 100 Georgia DOT employees who are responsible for human resources, preconstruction, construction, maintenance, traffic operations and utility coordination in a 31-county district. The building is unique in the materials and techniques used to construct and operate it. For instance, all rain water will be collected in bio-swales which will filter the water for use in the sprinkler system.

Additionally, the structure is equipped with efficient, state-of-the-art heating, cooling and lighting systems that will reduce operating costs throughout the life of the building, notes Jett.

Located at 115 Transportation Boulevard in Thomaston, the site of

the new facility also houses a gas station, construction area office, district administration building, traffic signal shop, district maintenance shop and district asphalt shop, which have been completed. Yet to be completed are a district lab and an office for field surveyors, a sign shop and carpenter shop.

The new District office replaces a significantly smaller facility built in the 1950s on Andrews Drive. The previous building had 23,000 square feet and the same number of employees, says District Preconstruction Engineer David Millen.

The new space is the first newly-constructed district office built by the Georgia DOT since the 1960s, says Millen.



*New District 3 office in Thomaston.*

# Georgia DOT and Camp Twin Lakes Partner on Archaeology Program

By Crystal Paulk-Buchanan

The Georgia Department of Transportation and Camp Twin Lakes in Rutledge are giving children a chance to get dirty exploring Georgia's history.

As part of its public education mission, Georgia DOT's archaeology staff designed a program to teach campers about the state's prehistoric and historic past and the basic techniques of archaeology. A hands-on display case containing objects found during excavation for road projects was presented to the camp's library by Georgia DOT Commissioner Harold Linnenkohl in June.

Camp Twin Lakes is a not-for-profit organization that provides camping programs for children with serious illnesses and life challenges. Founded in 1991, Camp Twin Lakes' operations began in 1993, welcoming groups of more than 1,400 campers and volunteers each year. To date, Camp Twin Lakes has served more than 30,000 children and volunteers.

The partnership was born in Fall 2006 when the archaeology staff was offered an empty display case that formerly held surveyor tools and had been



(L-R) Intermodal Programs Administrator Harvey Keeper; Archaeologists Sara Gale, Terri Lotti, and Pamela Johnson; District Engineer Mike Thomas and Commissioner Linnenkohl make presentation to campers.

collecting dust in storage in the Atlanta General Office.

"We immediately saw this as the perfect opportunity to expand our office's educational program," said Georgia DOT staff archaeologist Pam Johnson. "In particular, we wanted to provide an opportunity for disadvantaged youth to learn more about the history of their state and be introduced to the field of archaeology."



Johnson said that a key challenge was finding an organization to serve as a permanent home for the display case and its collection of arrowheads, pottery shards and other artifacts. Proximity to Atlanta was also an important consideration.

"The staff at Camp Twin Lakes was immediately receptive to the idea," Johnson said. "Everything just came together. For a small amount of effort on our part, the returns will be enormous."

Eventually the program will be expanded to include a mock dig site to further the children's understanding of how archaeologists find and protect delicate artifacts.

"Camp Twin Lakes is grateful to the Georgia DOT for choosing our facility as the home for this unique display," said Executive Director Eric Robbins. "Camp Twin Lakes provides a comprehensive camp experience through therapeutic, recreational and educational programs. Partnering with the DOT allows us to enhance our educational offering to our campers."



Campers are fascinated by historic finds from Georgia DOT.

# District 4 and 5 Staff Help Fight Wildfires

By Carla Murphy

As the largest wildfires in the state's history raged across South Georgia, Georgia DOT joined the effort to extinguish the blazes and relieve exhausted firefighters, contributing more than \$770,000 in emergency labor, equipment and other costs.

Georgia DOT employees from Districts 4 and 5, along with staff from the U.S. Forestry Commission, the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) and other state and local officials have logged thousands of hours assisting in containing the blaze.

"Firefighters working these massive fires, along with employees from federal, state and local agencies have done a phenomenal job under what are extreme conditions," said Georgia DOT Commissioner Harold Linnenkohl. "The resources we have devoted to this effort have contributed to getting the fires under control and relieving other employees of their responsibilities so that they may get much-needed rest."

As of late July, Georgia DOT had spent \$770,000 in labor, equipment, materials and other costs associated with fighting the fires. Employees have been called on to handle various responsibilities, including assisting with traffic control, transporting water and other supplies, cutting firebreaks and briefing the media.

The Southeast Georgia wildfires began in April, and by late July had charred nearly 500,000 acres, valued at more than \$50 million in Ware, Charlton and Clinch counties. Fire-fighting and other resources were used to extinguish hotspots and to handle emergency and temporary repairs to roads, culverts and other safety hazards, according to Georgia Forestry



Firefighters fight blaze in South Georgia.  
Photo credit: Georgia Forestry Commission.

officials. Georgia DOT also was forced to temporarily close roads, including portions of U.S. 1 and Interstate 75.

"This has been the largest fire in the state's history and Georgia DOT employees have gone over and above to assist in containing and putting out this huge fire," says State Maintenance Engineer David Crim. "We should all be proud of the work everyone is doing to save lives and property of our fellow Georgians."

## Three DOT Heroes Save Man from Burning Home

By Brittany Stewart

Three Georgia DOT employees have earned the title, "heroes," after rescuing a Taylor County man from his burning home in March.

Johnny Howell, Eddie Lindsey and Bobby



(L - R) Bobby Willis, Johnny Howell and Eddie Lindsey

Willis were striping edge lines on SR 90 in Taylor County when one of them spotted a man hanging from the window of a burning mobile home. The three men, along with other nearby workers, ran to the man's rescue, breaking down a door to the home and pulling him away from the burning structure.

"The entire building burned down because it was a small mobile home," says Howell, an Equipment Operator in Maintenance Activities. "And because of the smoke, he was unconscious by the time we were able to get him out."

The rescuers, who were uninjured during the blaze, were immediately recognized as heroes by their co-workers. "They were all congratulating and thanking us," Howell added. The unidentified man was airlifted to Grady Memorial Hospital and treated for his injuries, says Howell, noting that he and others have not had an opportunity to speak to the man since the rescue.

"I wasn't looking for recognition," he said. "I'm just glad we were there to help out."

# Moving to a New Location

By Laurie Scott and Carla Murphy

Georgia DOT's General Office is expected to move from its longtime downtown Atlanta location to One Georgia Center by the end of Spring 2008. The building is located at 600 West Peachtree Street.

Built in 1968, One Georgia Center is a 28-story building with 379,000 square feet of space with four levels of underground parking. Amenities include an on-site South Trust Bank, cafe, newsstand, fitness center, print shop, direct access to the Renaissance Hotel and the nearby North Avenue MARTA station.

Deciding factors in the move included the amount of office space, proximity to the MARTA Station and the types of amenities that are in place. "I hope everyone is as excited as I am about the move. It will be a modern facility that I believe will make everyone both pleased and proud," says Commissioner Harold Linnenkohl.

The original General Office facility — the north/east wing — has been a recognizable fixture on Capitol Avenue since the 1930s. The building is believed to have been constructed in three, possibly four phases, according to a Georgia Building Authority report. The south end of the north/east wing was constructed in the mid 1950s; while the remainder, the western two-thirds of the west wing, was reportedly built in 1966, according to the GBA report.

Perhaps what passersby may admire most about the four-story structure, in addition to its unique lowercase "e"-shaped frame, is the portion of the façade that is veneered with marble. The building also boasts a large amount of landscaping, another unique feature for an urban site.

Currently, the 2 Capitol Square building houses more than 750 employees.



The tall building in the center is One Georgia Center, the new location of the General Office.



The Georgia Department of Transportation building dates back to the 1930s. It has a unique lowercase "e" shape, with portions of the exterior veneered with marble.

**2007**

**Georgia Partnership for  
Transportation Quality  
(GPTQ) Workshop**

Formerly the GQI Workshop

**December 5 - 7, 2007**

**Continuing Education Center  
at UGA  
Athens, Georgia**

# FAREWELL

## Commissioner Linnenkohl to Retire After 39 Years At Georgia DOT

By Lillian Jackson

Commissioner Harold Linnenkohl recently announced his retirement from the Georgia Department of Transportation, ending a 39-year career that saw the Department through what is arguably the most pivotal period in its history.

Linnenkohl's retirement is effective November 30, 2007.

As Commissioner, Linnenkohl directed a Department of 5,800 employees statewide and managed an annual budget of more than \$2 billion. He is credited with reorganizing Georgia DOT for maximum efficiency and implementing a strategic plan to guide, monitor and improve Department operations and transportation project delivery. Additionally, he served as past president of the American Association of State Highway and transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the Southern Association of State Highway Transportation Officials, focusing on safety, quality and innovation.

"I am proud to have worked with the wonderful employees of this Department — they are true public servants. It has been my privilege to work for quality transportation solutions during this exciting time in Georgia," Linnenkohl said in announcing his retirement. "I appreciate the guidance and help of Governor Perdue, the members of the State Transportation Board, the General Assembly and the traveling public toward our goal to provide a safe and efficient transportation system for our state."

Under his leadership, Georgia DOT has been recognized as one of the best in the nation; and Georgia's roadways consistently have been ranked among the nation's best. The Federal Highway

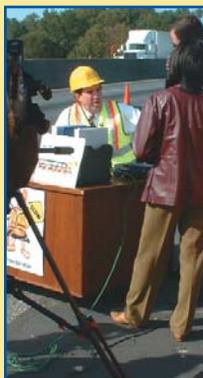
Administration (FHWA), the national partnership for Transportation Quality (NPHQ) and a host of other industry association have consistently recognized Georgia DOT for its use of innovative techniques and quality driven programs and processes.

Additionally, Georgia's State Quality Partnership called the Georgia Partnership for Transportation Quality (GPTQ), an initiative that encourages cooperation between public and private industry experts, received a Tier-Two accreditation from the NPHQ during Linnenkohl's tenure, becoming the first state in the nation to achieve such status.

Responding to the Commissioner's retirement announcement, Governor Sonny Perdue praised Linnenkohl's leadership, saying "Commissioner Linnenkohl has been a dedicated and effective leader of one of Georgia's largest state agencies, and by virtue of his position, has contributed tremendously to the continued growth and development of our state..."

Linnenkohl, who began his career at Georgia DOT in 1968, rose through the ranks after earning a degree in Civil Engineering Technology from Southern Technical Institute in Marietta. His first job was as a Civil Engineering Technologist, supervising asphalt construction. After serving two years in the U.S. Army, he returned to the Department, and served in various positions including Executive Assistant to Commissioner Wayne Shackelford. The state board named him Deputy Commissioner in May 2000 under Commissioner Tom Coleman and Commissioner in September 2003.

As Commissioner, Linnenkohl has been praised for improving operations and strengthening the Department's internal policies and processes in key performance areas,



(r-l) Commissioner Linnenkohl poses with his wife, Linda Linnenkohl, Governor Sonny Perdue, and his mother and father.



including roadway safety and traffic congestion. He also is credited with boosting the morale of employees, exemplifying the limitless possibilities of hard work and promotion through the ranks. He worked to achieve salary increases for the Department's professional and administrative staff, and put incentives in place for achievements of professional certifications.

In addition to overseeing the Department,

Commissioner Linnenkohl served the community in other capacities, including providing counsel as a member of several boards, including MARTA and GRTA.



## QUOTES

*"I have known Commissioner Linnenkohl since 1987 and certainly he has been dedicated to the citizens of our state in trying to fulfill their transportation needs."*

**Representative Vance Smith, Jr. (R-Pine Mountain)**  
House Transportation Committee Chairman

*"Commissioner Linnenkohl has been a key leader of Georgia's transportation department. He reached out to businesses and other organizations to foster partnerships. He had a unique appreciation for the economic impact of Georgia's transportation network and understood the transportation challenges that we face throughout the metro area and the state."*

**Sam A. Williams**  
President, Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce

*"The effects of Commissioner Linnenkohl's service to the Department will be felt for years to come — not only his time as Commissioner, but also for the inspiration he leaves for all employees of Georgia DOT to know that they, too, can rise through the ranks, and possibly become Commissioner one day. On a personal note, I have enjoyed our working relationship over the last 15 years, and particularly enjoyed the friendship we have developed during my tenure as Chairman."*

**Mike Evans**  
Chairman, State Transportation Board

*"Harold has served the people of our state and our nation with distinction for over 39 years. He certainly made my service dramatically better because of his dedication and wisdom during my service as his co-worker. His leadership during his years as Deputy Commissioner and Commissioner has been exceptional and the foundation is in place for an even greater Department. His influence in our state and in the nation will remain strong and I congratulate him for a great career and wish him well in retirement."*

**Wayne Shackelford**  
Former Commissioner, Georgia Department of Transportation

# Roadside Crews Help Keep Georgia's Interstates Clean

By Stan Smith

## Crew's Work Viewed by Motorists Daily

I arrive at District 7's Roadside Enhancement headquarters on Chester Avenue at 7:30 a.m. I meet Frank Leach, District Enhancement Coordinator, who gives me a brief overview of what their shop does. Frank's been with the Georgia DOT for 20 years and with Roadside Enhancement for one. He explains to me there are three human resource components involved with roadside maintenance. They are: Georgia DOT employees, contractors and prison details.



Lakeam Toles removes litter on Interstate 75 South.

Georgia DOT's Roadside Enhancement crew is responsible for establishing and maintaining wildflowers, landscaping and litter management throughout the district. Inmate crews are used to assist in landscape and litter tasks; and the Department has various contractors who provide drain cleaning, shoulder sweeping, vegeta-

tion management, and wildflower plot maintenance.

Crews are called on to prune trees, thin out kudzu and, of course, remove litter. And litter is a major headache.

For instance, in May, Roadside Enhancement collected 5,994 bags of trash in District 7 alone; and contractor services picked up 500,000 pounds of roadway debris throughout the metro area in the same month. In 2006, Georgia DOT spent more than \$14 million on statewide litter removal.

## Cleaner Roadsides

Today, I am going out with Angela Holston, Roadside Enhancement and Herbicide Crew Foreman, and her six-person crew following closely in a Georgia DOT van. Angela has been with the Department for seven years.

As Foreman, it is Angela's job to look for things to be done and to address them. The weather determines how or when some jobs are completed.



Angela Holston assembles a litter pickup sign.

Rain can wash away vegetation growth management chemicals, and temperatures above 90 degrees can turn those same chemicals to gas.

We are now on the truck traveling west on Interstate-20 to the Connector toward our first site. Today, the focus is off-ramps. We are en route to the Henry Ford exit off Interstate-75. Part of the cleanup of I-75 is under contract; and Angela points out garbage bags, filled by the contract crew, awaiting pickup. Georgia DOT's Roadside Enhancement crew only assists if the job is too great for the contractor to handle. We get to our first stop and leap out of the vehicle wearing Georgia DOT safety vests and caps. We are probably about 50 yards away from the exit on the shoulder. Angela quickly assembles a sign that states "Litter Pickup in Progress." The van proceeds to the off ramp and the crew immediately gets out and begins to canvas the area. Within minutes each crew member's bright orange bag is filled. We are

### Georgia DOT Litter by the Numbers

The Roadside Enhancement unit is responsible for litter removal on interstates and state routes.

**Unit Responsible:** District Roadside Enhancement (Maintenance)

**Statewide Cost:** More than \$14 million annually

**Miles:** 5,000 interstate and 18,000 state highways

**Amount:** 2 million bags of trash picked up annually statewide

here approximately 30 minutes and the roadside is practically spotless! We all climb back into the two vehicles and head to the next pickup site.

## In Maintaining Georgia's Roadside, It's Safety First

On the way, Angela offers that she likes working for Georgia DOT because it allows the opportunity to get training, move up and learn new jobs within the Department. Angela moved to Roadside Enhancement from the Sign Shop, where her last major assignment was assisting in graffiti removal from interstate signs on the Connector. She says she is still learning this job, and the more she learns, the more she loves it.

We arrive at the Riverdale exit ramp, the next site on our route. After



*Angela Holston supervises Roadside Enhancement crew on I-75.*

looking at the Riverdale exit roadside, Angela decides that it is too narrow and dangerous to work. We bypass the site and the crew turns to the swath of roadside near the ramp. There is quite a bit of garbage here to collect. This is where I see how seriously the crew takes its job.

They do not waste time, working swiftly and thoroughly at about 11:30 a.m. in the heat. The crew wraps up minutes later and Angela surveys their work, as we wait for the dump truck to come retrieve the bags they collected. Angela informs me that had we stopped at the actual exit at Riverdale, someone may have been injured or worse. A car was exiting and realized he didn't want to get off. He turned at the last moment and wound up in the gore area where the crew would have been.

It is lunch time now, which is pretty much the only break these workers



*(L-R) Back Row: Darryl Davis, Quinton Stewart, Phillip Taylor, Clint Hunter, Deondray Johnson, and Lakeam Toles. Second Row: Frank Leach, Arthur Rouse, Latoya Scrutchins, Angela Holston, Margaret Powell, Tony Montgomery. Front: Paul Palmore.*

get. They take 30 minutes, so they usually all agree on a place to eat if they didn't bring lunch.

It is obvious to me this group is a family of sorts, in that they get along and seem to care for one another. Angela wants it to be known that she's got a good group and most have families of their own, as she does. She says, "I want my crew to go home every day like I want to go home every day...in one piece."

# Historic Bi-State Port Authority Moves a Step Forward

by Laurie Scott

A solution is finally in sight for a port in Jasper County, South Carolina. Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue and South Carolina's Gov. Mark Sanford struck a deal this spring that will enable the two states to jointly build and run a terminal on land currently owned by the Georgia DOT. The governors agreed that with the infrastructure, deep waters, location and new jobs, it is in both states best interest.

Experts say the land represents the best remaining spot in the Southeast to build a deep-water terminal. It is expected to bring tens of thousands of new jobs, and a big workload to the Coastal Empire and Low Country. "Gov. Sanford and I have proposed a plan that will benefit both Georgia and South Carolina," says Gov. Perdue in a press release dated in March. "Commerce doesn't begin or end at a line drawn on a map, so it was crucial for the two states to come together and ensure that prosperity continues."

Georgia DOT bought the 1800-acre property in Jasper County over 15 years ago, using it to store sediment dredged from the Savannah Harbor.

The United States Corps of Engineers hold long-term and perpetual easements of the land. The Corps is responsible for dredging the Savannah River and pumping the material (a mixture of sand, water and mud from the bottom of the river) within the nine upland diked areas. Once the area has received its dredged material, a two-year, drying out process begins. This becomes an environmental asset that harbors vegetation and wildlife. Over 250 species of birds make their home in the diked areas or nearby bird island.

It has been a long legal battle. Jasper County and the South Carolina State Ports Authority (SCSPA) have been embroiled in court proceedings for years over the right to build a multi-million dollar cargo container



Site of the proposed maritime terminal.

terminal on the South Carolina side of the Savannah River. Jasper County was the first to file its condemnation suit against Georgia DOT in January 2005, when it signed a contract with a Seattle-based shipping company to construct and operate the terminal. Meanwhile, the SCSPA filed its condemnation suit later that month and filed a separate suit challenging Jasper

County's right to build on the property. The South Carolina Supreme Court ruled that the Ports Authority's condemnation effort supercedes the county's. Although Georgia fought all condemnation attempts, the State



Gov. Sonny Perdue and Gov. Mark Sanford shake hands at Jasper Site.

## TIMELINE

- Early 1980s: Georgia DOT purchases tracts of land in Jasper County, S.C. The land is used by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a perpetual easement.
- Early 1990s: Jasper County officials are interested in building a port on the Savannah River. The favorite site is owned by the Georgia DOT.
- 8/00: Jasper County and Stevedoring Services of America, one of the world's

largest terminal operators, signed an agreement to begin the process of building a privately run container terminal.

- 12/00: Jasper County, with interest from private shipping company SSA Marine, files motion to condemn 1,800 acres of riverfront.
- 4/02: S.C. Circuit Court upholds Jasper County's condemnation. Georgia appeals.
- 9/03: S.C. Supreme Court, in a 5-0 decision, overturns the Circuit Court

ruling. The court ruled against Jasper County.

- 5/04: Jasper County votes to create its own port authority.
- 1/05: The SCSPA announced that it wanted to build a public terminal on the same site. Jasper County files a new motion for condemnation of land against Georgia DOT in the Jasper County Court of Common Pleas. Also, the SCSPA files a suit against Jasper County in S.C.

Supreme Court was on SCSPA's side. News that South Carolina was aiming to build a new seaport along the Savannah River left southeast Georgia lawmakers worried about how such a development could affect Georgia's existing port system.

The governors' proposal could end the legal fight if adopted by both state legislatures. The agreement calls for Georgia DOT to sell the site to a bi-state agency that would run and own the terminal. The Corps would release the easement when a suitable alternate place for the disposal of dredged material is determined.

"It is important for everyone to understand that this is a federal project," explained John Phillips, Georgia DOT's Waterways Program Manager. The Corps is in charge of all navigable waterways. Harbor maintenance is a federal responsibility. The federal easements are part of the property's title and would require the Corps release before any development. In March, Georgia DOT made a formal application to the Corps for the easements release, removal or modification.

The Corps is now in the process of per-

forming an environmental study for deepening the Savannah Harbor.

The proposal begins with the appointment of a task force that will smooth out the terms of the proposed port authority within the next six months, before presenting the proposed compact to the governors, legislatures and Congress for approval. Each state will split the developmental costs and control half of the authority. It will be patterned after the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey which has been in operation for over 80 years. The authority will compete with each state's existing public port authority, which operate the ports of Charleston and Savannah.

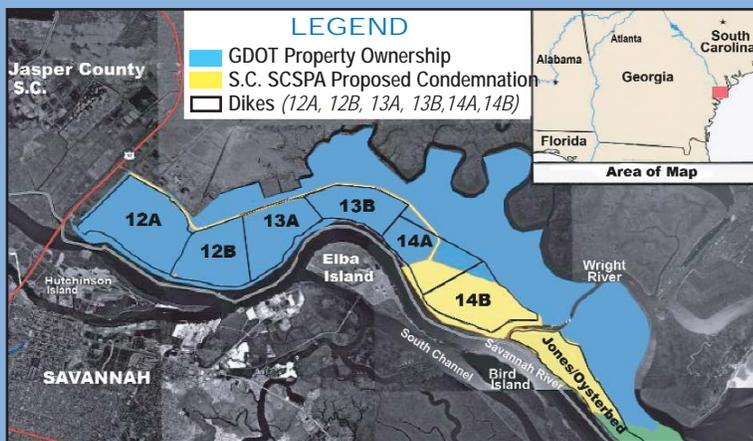
Although progress has been made, hurdles still remain. A Joint Congress and House Conference Committee



The Corps is in the process of dredging material from the river.

must approve the legislation before it can be signed into law by President Bush. Also, the SCSPA is still not ready to withdraw their lawsuit to condemn the property. The construction phase will not begin until the condemnation suit is finalized. In addition, any consideration of a Jasper facility must include a plan for harbor maintenance by the Corps.

There are still unanswered questions such as when the terminal would be built and who would cover the billions of dollars needed to pay for infrastructure, including roads, rail, warehouses and docks. Also, it may cost as much as \$500 million to get started. Regardless, the pact was billed as the first step in a process that would eventually give the bi-state partnership a sure winner over regional competitors for world maritime business.



*Supreme Court to gain control of the condemnation process. Meanwhile, Georgia DOT, filed two suits, in state and federal courts, to block the condemnation.*

- 3/05: Jasper County Council members voted unanimously to back a compromise agreement with the South Carolina Ports Authority. The proposal called for shared ownership between Jasper County and the SCSPA, with private developer SSA Marine as the facility's operator. SCSPA rejected the proposal.

- 5/05: Georgia forms the Jasper Port Study Committee.
- 4/06: S.C. Supreme Court sides with S.C. Port Authority (SCSPA). It rules that SCSPA's eminent domain powers supersede the county's right to condemn land.
- 3/07: Gov. Sonny Perdue and Gov. Mark Sanford announce Bi-State Port proposal in Jasper County, S.C.
- 3/07: Jasper County's court battle with SCSPA is temporarily over.

- 4/07: Governors' appoint joint Jasper Port Task Force.
- 4/07: State Senate passes port bill. This suspends Jasper County's right to condemn land for three years.
- 5/07: The Water Resources Development Act is expected to direct the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to study the establishment of a new marine terminal facility in Jasper County.

# U.S. Secretary of Transportation Discusses Funding with State Transportation Leaders

By *Carla Murphy*

**T**he chairman of Georgia's State Transportation Board and the state's leading transportation legislators met recently with U.S. Transportation Secretary Mary Peters to seek additional federal assistance to meet the state's \$7.7 billion transportation funding shortfall.

In a separate meeting, Commissioner Harold Linnenkohl also shared with Secretary Peters information about key projects the Department believes will bring relief to heavily-congested corridors.

"As we work with our partners to find a solution to our funding shortfall, we recognize that we must be innovative and creative in resolving some critical issues around traffic congestion in our state," says Linnenkohl. "We were pleased to have the opportunity to meet with Secretary Peters to share our story and to thank her Department for their support."

Board Chairman Mike Evans, Georgia Senate Transportation Committee Chairman Jeff Mullis, R-Chickamauga, and House Transportation Committee Chair Vance Smith, Jr., R-Pine Mountain, encouraged Secretary Peters to lobby the Bush administration and Congress for more federal monies for transportation infrastructure and to work to quicken required federal reviews of pending projects. They were encouraged by her response.

"Secretary Peters understands the very serious transportation crisis Georgia and other states are facing," Chairman Evans said. "She has been very candid in telling states not to expect the federal government to provide a cure-all. But states like Georgia, that are taking their own steps, such as

public-private partnerships, to address the funding issues have a strong ally in the Transportation Secretary."

Secretary Peters assumed the nation's top transportation job last September after having served as the head of the Federal Highway Administration since 2001. She was in Atlanta to meet with area aviation officials.



*U.S. DOT Transportation Secretary  
Mary Peters*

## Former Commissioner Harold Rives Dies

by *Carla Murphy*



**F**ormer Georgia DOT Commissioner Harold Rives died in May, after an extended illness. He was 81.

Rives, who led the Department between 1987-1991, began his career as a Project Engineer in 1953. He also served the Department as a Bridge Designer, State Road Design Engineer, Chief Engineer and Deputy Commissioner. Rives is credited with implementing former Joe Frank Harris' Governor Road Improvement Program (GRIP) and with completing the Georgia 400 extension.

"Hal worked tirelessly for the Department for 38 years. His level of dedication to ensuring that Georgians had a safe, sustainable transportation system is unmatched. He will be greatly missed," said Georgia DOT Commissioner Harold Linnenkohl.

Rives was president of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) in 1991 and received the prestigious Thomas MacDonald Memorial Award from the organization in 1992. The MacDonald Award is considered the highest honor awarded to persons "who have rendered continuous outstanding service over an extended period of time and who have made exceptional contributions to the art and science of highway engineering."

Rives is survived by his wife Barbara; son, Jack; daughters, Cathy and JoAnn; and four grandchildren.

# Making HEADLINES

## Chief Engineer Studstill Bids Farewell to Department

By Carla Murphy

After more than 30 years with the Georgia DOT, Chief Engineer David Studstill has retired.

Studstill, who served as Chief Engineer since April 2005, directed all engineering-related activities within the Department to ensure the effective and efficient planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance of transportation systems statewide. He also managed the Office of Engineering Services and the Environmental Compliance Bureau.

Previously, he held the position of Division Director of Planning, Data, and Intermodal and for three years served as



*Commissioner Linnenkohl presents resolution to retiring Chief Engineer David Studstill.*

the Director of the Operations Division. Additionally, he spent nine years as State Environmental Location Engineer, where he oversaw work for a portion of the GRIP System and for projects that were accelerated for the 1996 Summer Olympic Games.

“The Georgia DOT has been fortunate to have David as a member of our team,” says Commissioner Harold Linnenkohl. “He has been an enormous resource and a dedicated employee of the Department.”

Studstill, who is a registered Professional Engineer, represented the Department on AASHTO’s Standing Committee on Highways, and the Standing Committee on Research. He has a bachelor’s degree in Civil Engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology.

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## Graham Retires After More than 30 Years of Service

By Carla Murphy

The Director of the Construction Division, David Graham retired in June, after a distinguished 32-year career with Georgia DOT.

Graham, a Georgia Professional Engineer, served as division director for more than a year, overseeing construction of the transportation system throughout the state. He successfully managed the advertisement, letting, and awarding of projects; construction of projects; transportation research; testing of materials; contract payments; and contract claims. “David has been a valuable employee of the Department,”



*Retiree David Graham, (left) accepts resolution from Commissioner Linnenkohl.*

said Georgia DOT Commissioner Harold Linnenkohl. “We will miss his tireless commitment and dedication.”

After earning a bachelor’s degree in Civil Engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology, Graham joined the Department in 1975. Since 1984, he has worked in the Construction Office, serving as Bridge Liaison Engineer, Roadway Liaison Engineer, Assistant State Construction Engineer, and State Construction Engineer. He was named Director of the Construction Division in January 2006.

# Hal Wilson Retires as Intermodal Programs Administrator

**H**al Wilson has retired as Administrator of Intermodal Programs after more than 30 years with Georgia DOT.

Wilson, who began his career with the Department in 1977, held various positions throughout his career, including Rail Program Manager in Intermodal Programs and Planner in the Bureau of Public Transportation. As project manager for several studies relating to the state's passenger rail program, Wilson is credited with ensuring rail transportation continued in many parts of Georgia after private companies were prepared to abandon service to industries that needed rail service.



As Administrator of Intermodal Programs, he remained involved in the rail program and expanded his duties to include the transit, aviation and harbor programs.

"It was through Hal's leadership that the non-highway modes of Georgia's transportation system continued to grow and prosper to meet the needs of the public," says Commissioner Harold

Linnenkohl.

Wilson is a graduate of Georgia State University, where he received a bachelor of science degree in Community Development and a master's degree in Public Administration.

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# Kepler Appointed Administrator of Intermodal Programs

*By Carla Murphy*

**F**ormer State Environment/Location Engineer Harvey Kepler has become the new Administrator of Intermodal Programs.

In his new assignment, Kepler will manage the state's planning and operations programs in support of transit, rail, ports, waterways and aviation systems.

Kepler began his career with Georgia DOT in 1982, working in Urban Design. He moved to the Office of Environment/Location in 1984, and held several positions



there, including Transportation Environmental Planner Associate, Transportation Environmental Planner, Transportation Environmental Planner Manager and Assistant Administrator.

Key projects on which Kepler worked were the Harry S. Truman Parkway in Savannah, the implementation of the GRIP system throughout the state and the first High Occupancy Vehicle lanes in Atlanta.

Kepler is a graduate of the University of New Mexico, where he received a Bachelor of Architecture degree.

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# Bowman to Lead Office of Environment/Location

*By Carla Murphy*

**G**lenn Bowman has been appointed State Environment/Location Engineer, replacing Harvey Kepler.

He oversees the unit responsible for the environmental analysis and permitting of all projects let to construction by Georgia DOT. The unit also is responsible for other critical areas of preconstruction, including location and feasibility studies for new projects, traffic projections, aerial photography, surveys and mapping.

Bowman, the former Executive Assistant to the Chief Engineer, has almost 20 years of experience with Georgia DOT. Additionally, he has been a registered Professional



Engineer since 1993.

Since joining the Department in 1988, he has been promoted to Executive Assistant to the Chief Engineer; Assistant State Urban Design Engineer; Design Group Manager; Assistant Design Group Manager; and Transportation Engineer 2.

Among the projects he has worked on are the roadway components of the Atlantic Station/17th Street Bridge redevelopment; the concept for the reconstruction of the Georgia 400/Interstate 285 Interchange in Atlanta; and the widening of State Route 138 in Conyers prior to Atlanta's hosting of the 1996 Olympic Games.

Bowman received a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology.

## Gerald Ross Named Chief Engineer

By Carla Murphy

**F**ormer Director of Planning, Data and Intermodal Development Gerald Ross has been appointed Chief Engineer, effective September 1.

Ross, who began his career with the Georgia DOT 25 years ago, spent almost two years as Division Director before his appointment to the Chief Engineer's position.

He began his career at the Department as a Junior Engineer in the Office of Traffic Operations. In 1986, he accepted a position in the Office of Urban Design as a Design Engineer II and later was promoted to Assistant



State Urban Engineer. He spent a total of 13 years in the Office of Urban Design before accepting the position of Assistant to the Chief Highway Engineer in 1999.

Among the projects on which Ross has worked are the I-75/I-95/I-85 rural interstates (statewide); the Kennedy Interchange in Cobb County; Lithonia Industrial Boulevard and I-20 in DeKalb County; South Fulton Parkway and I-85 at State Route 316 in Gwinnett.

Ross, who is a registered Professional Engineer, served on the AASHTO Sub-Committee on Design and is currently on the AASHTO Standing Committee on Planning. He is a graduate of Tennessee Tech University.

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## Mayo Replaces Graham as Division Director for Construction

By Carla Murphy

**G**reg Mayo has been tapped to replace David Graham, retired Division Director for Construction.

Mayo, formerly the State Construction Engineer, has 25 years of experience with Georgia DOT, joining the Office of Urban Design as a Transportation Engineer in 1982. He also has worked as an assistant office head in Road and Airport Design and as State Transportation



Office Engineer in Contract Administration.

Key projects on which he has worked include the Interstate 20 Interchange at U.S. 278 in Newton County; U.S. 27 in Carroll, Heard and Troup counties; Interstate 75 from Cordele to Valdosta and numerous other projects.

Mayo, a registered Professional Engineer, serves on the Georgia Partnership for Transportation Quality (GPTQ) Steering Committee. He is a graduate of Southern Polytechnic State University.

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## Hart Named State Construction Engineer

By Carla Murphy

**R**andall Hart has been named State Construction Engineer, replacing Greg Mayo. As State Construction Engineer, Hart is responsible for reviewing and approving contract modifications, investigating and resolving citizen concerns and communicating with the construction industry.



as Construction Liaison Engineer, where he was responsible for overseeing construction projects in the Gainesville District and in DeKalb and Rockdale counties.

Hart, who began his career with Georgia DOT in 1979, has held various positions with the Department, including Resident Engineer and District Construction Engineer. His educational background includes a degree in Civil Engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology.

Prior to being tapped for his new position, Hart served

Additionally, he is a registered Professional Engineer.

# ROADTRIP

## COUNTY TAG OFFICE

