

## Corey Finn wins 'roadeo' title, Hawkins shines

The weather was warm and breezy. Spirits were jovial. And contestants were in good form.

It was June 5, the day of the 2007 District 6 Truck Roadeo at the ITD maintenance yard in Idaho Falls.

Eighteen equipment operators from the Arco, Dubois, Idaho Falls, Rigby and Ashton sheds and from the sign crew and shop at the Rigby complex assembled to demonstrate their skills and compete for prizes.

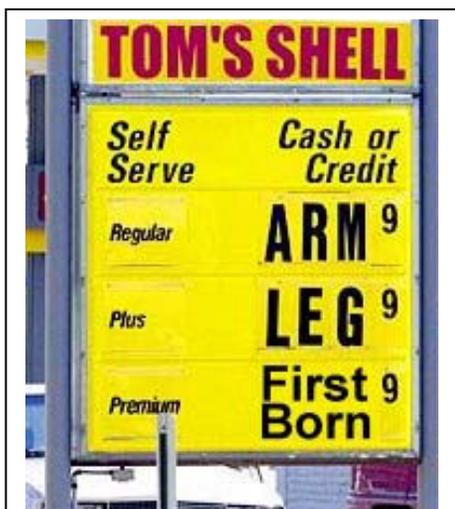
As the competition proceeded, all the participants displayed their expertise, ably maneuvering trucks and loaders.

But at the end of the day, Corey Finn of the sign crew was on top of the standings, with 2,948 points.

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*Inmate Brent Williams of the St. Anthony Work Camp and Project Manager Eric Verner of the Rigby office observe maneuvers of front-runner Corey Finn (top).*



### Fill 'er up?

*This service station captures the mood of the times, when motorists are paying record prices for fuel.*

## Medical plan slightly better this year

Medical plan benefits this fiscal year are as good as last year's, even a little better, according to the Department of Administration.

State officials decided not raise costs to employees. The only changes are a lower co-payment on generic drugs and no co-payment on generic statins.

Starting July 1, the cost to employees of generic drugs is \$2 less per 30-day supply, while the cost of generic statin drugs is zero.

Out-of-pocket costs for name-brand prescription drugs stay the same.

The Department of Administration announced the final plan on May 31.

"After evaluating the impact on employees and dependents and further discussions with the governor's office, the department will not implement the proposed [cost increases] to the medical plans," according to an announcement from the administration department.

The pharmacy benefit for the FY08 plan year will be:

- Generic drugs – \$10 co-payment.
- Brand name drugs with no generic equivalent – \$18 co-payment.
- Brand name drug with a generic equivalent – \$40 co-payment plus cost differential.

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# How our overtime budget is determined; July board tour



## By Nancy Luthy Business Operations Manager

I was made aware at the recent management retreat that all employees may not know how our overtime budget is determined.

Each year, headquarters allots the district an amount to cover GROUP costs. Group costs include dollars associated with hourly, shift and overtime. The district must take that total and allocate funds to the three areas.

Below are the District 6 funding levels for the past seven fiscal years:

- FY02 – \$659,111
- FY03 – \$489,400
- FY04 – \$461,900
- FY05 – \$449,900
- FY06 – \$454,600
- FY07 – \$263,500
- FY08 – \$275,000

As these figures show, funding has dropped considerably. Thus, we have had to lower the number of paid

overtime hours available for employees. Wages have increased the last two years using more money per person, but funding has declined, causing the hours to decrease.

FY08's paid overtime is approved at 60 hours, up from 40 hours last fiscal year. Overtime, whether paid or converted to comp time, must be approved by the employee's supervisor as needed to accomplish district goals.

If any employee has additional questions concerning this issue, please feel free to stop by my office and we can discuss it.

## ITD BOARD VISIT

District 6 will host the ITD Board Meeting on July 18-19.

The board will tour parts of the district by bus on Wednesday, July 18, beginning in Island Park and traveling to Rexburg, Driggs, Swan Valley and Idaho Falls (see map below) to look at projects and meet with employees.



On Thursday, July 19, the board meeting will be held in the large conference room in Rigby. The board meeting is open to the public and will be available by video conference to the other districts and to headquarters. ■

## Medical Plan... (from p. 1)

- Zero co-payment for generic statins.
- A 90-day supply of certain maintenance medications can be obtained for two co-payments.

Although there are no plan design changes for the current year, these changes could be considered again next year as medical costs continue to rise, and the state could be faced with even greater premium increases in the future, the administration department said.

Among the changes initially considered and then dropped for state employee health insurance in the new fiscal year were:

- Changing from a co-payment type of plan to a co-insurance plan.
- Implementing a formulary for prescription drugs.
- Implementing a pilot program for generic statin drugs that would require no co-payment.
- Changing the co-payment/co-insurance requirement to a single payment for each 30-day supply.
- Implementing a preauthorization requirement for elective high-cost imaging.
- Re-implementing a \$100 co-payment for emergency room visits.

For complete information about changes to state health insurance for FY08, please visit the department site: <http://adm.idaho.gov/insurance/>. ■

## Letter of Appreciation

From: Weadick, Christopher [<mailto:chris.weadick@isp.idaho.gov>]  
Sent: Tuesday, June 19, 2007 4:35 PM  
To: Tom Cole; Karen Hiatt  
Cc: Matt Davison; Mike Poole; Wade Allen  
Subject: Letter of Appreciation

Tom and Karen,

I wanted to take a minute to recognize a few of your employees for their positive working relationship with the Idaho State Police. Recently our agency provided extra patrol coverage on U.S. 20 during the Twin Grove paving project. Wade Allen and I were in contact via cell phone during the project, assessing the traffic patterns to help promote traffic safety.

Captain Bunderson and I pulled up the portable radar trailer and placed it in the construction zone. After a day or two, the batteries went dead and Mike Poole called to let me know it was not working. He took the time to have an ITD worker drive to the trailer to see if it was an electrical problem.

It was eventually determined that the trailer needed to be taken to the ITD shop in Rigby for a closer inspection. Mike hauled the trailer to the shop and, after charging the batteries, took it back to the construction zone. This gesture was done without complaint and would have taken a trooper off the road to complete the task. Because of the willingness of your employees to help with the radar trailer and other aspects of the construction project, to my knowledge there were no traffic crashes during this period.

Matt Davison is another person I would like to recognize for his efforts. ISP recently provided patrol coverage in Rexburg for an air show. Every year this creates a traffic problem, with motorists parking on the shoulder of the road. Matt ensured that two DMS signs were in place and operating a full day before the event started. Everything went smoothly and again, there were no crashes.

I know that there are many more ITD employees who support ISP and our continuing effort to promote traffic safety. The few mentioned in this e-mail were some whom I personally have dealt with in the past few weeks who have made a difference. Please pass this letter on to their respective supervisors.

Thanks again,

Lt. Chris Weadick  
Idaho State Police

# Finn, Osteraas, Stone, Hawkins win top honors,

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In second place was Ed Osteraas of the shop, with 2,910 points, and in third place was Troy Stone of Dubois maintenance, with 2,858 points.

Alan Rainsdon of Dubois maintenance also received 2,858 points, but his truck time was slightly slower than Troy's, so Troy clinched the third-place spot.

In the foreman category, Dan Hawkins of Arco maintenance won first place, racking up more points than anyone with 3,043.

Corey and Dan each received a \$90 gift certificate to the Sportsman Warehouse in Idaho Falls.

Ed and Troy received a \$70 and a \$50 gift certificate to this sports store, respectively.

As in previous years, the competition included a written test, a snowplow and front-end loader obstacle course, and a truck inspection.

In the truck inspection, contestants must identify five "planted" mechanical/electrical defects.

Joining the participants for the heavy equipment maneuvers was District 6 Assistant Engineer Karen Hiatt, who again tested her driving proficiency.

"This year's obstacle course was slightly more challenging than previous ones," Rodeo Coordinator Kirk Finn says. "In certain events, we moved the cones closer together, and at the basketball-drop station we piled bigger mounds of dirt for operators to negotiate."

To compete, operators must hold an A or B commercial driver's license (CDL).

Corey, Troy, Alan and Dan went on to represent the district at the state rodeo competition in Mountain Home on June 12. (Alan took Ed's place, who could not attend.) They did not place but competed well.



Photo courtesy of Kirk Finn

Winners Troy Stone, Dan Hawkins, Corey Finn and Ed Osteraas after the rodeo competition in Idaho Falls on June 5. Eighteen equipment operators participated.

"Actually, we had an off day," Kirk says.

First- and second-place winners of the state competition are invited to the national competition in Colorado in September.

Thanks to shop foreman Leon Radford for arranging the trucks and loaders and to Randy Drake for overseeing the luncheon and obtaining hats, etc., Kirk says.

Thanks also to Lynn Horrocks, Reagan Hansen, Darwin Palmer, Troy Williams, Tony Black, Mark Layton, Myron Williams, Alec McClure, Randy Edie and Dennis Jackson for judging and setting up.

Inmates Bryan Jones, Randy Carroll, Steven Blunt, Daniel Sparks, Brent Williams, Ken Ledford, John Burnett and Jim Phillips from the St. Anthony Work Camp also deserve a nod, helping set up, judge and take down the course, Kirk says. Inmates from this camp help each year.

State rodeo coordinator Rex Hufford and his assistant Bob Williams helped plan and implement the competition. They help with each district's annual rodeo.

Kirk has coordinated District 6 rodeos since 1993. "All the good help has once again made the rodeo a success," he says. ■



Photo courtesy of Lynn Horrocks

Right of Way Apprentice Tony Black measures the distance to the stop line.

# demonstrate skill in operating trucks & loaders



Dan Hawkins scores at the basketball carry/drop event.



Knocking off the last tennis ball.



3rd-place Troy Stone and Jeremie Neville.



Lunch in the I.F. maintenance shed.

Rodeo Coordinator Kirk Finn.



Second-place winner Ed Ostersaas.



Photo courtesy of Lynn Horrocks

## District hosts ‘Environmental Streamside Chat 2007’ in June

ITD’s environmental professionals gathered at the District 6 office in Rigby on June 12 and 13 for the “Environmental Streamside Chat,” sponsored by ITD’s Environmental Section. It was District 6’s turn to plan and host this conference.

Because collisions with wildlife and the resulting cost in injury and property damage are increasing in Idaho and throughout the United States as motorists, speeds, highway widths and highway density increase, this year’s conference theme was “Integrating Wildlife Crossings into Transportation: Highways and



*D-6 Environmental Planner Tim Cramer*

Wildlife Connectivity, Crossings, Habitat Fragmentation and Linkages.”

The conference featured presentations by wildlife crossing researchers and a Wyoming Dept. of Transportation (DOT) district engineer, who has years of experience implementing wildlife crossings; group discussions; and a field trip to Yellowstone Park and the greater Yellowstone area. The field trip was to view (1) a wildlife crossing research project created by the Western Transportation Institute of Montana State University, and (2) the Idaho 87 fish passage projects sponsored by District 6.

Presenters at the conference were Jon Beckman, associate conservation  
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### Romance under the bridge

When spring runoff in the Snake River peaked at the end of May, Herb Drexler, Region 1 maintenance, went to the Lorenzo Bridge on U.S. 20 north of Rigby to check the piers. During his inspection, he discovered the above proposal of marriage, complete with the remains of a campfire in front of it. He quipped: “As part of our commitment to serving the public, we do what we can to provide opportunities for personal networking and romance.” Naturally, ITD hopes this sort of graffiti – however well intentioned – does not become commonplace.

## Comings & Goings

Employees who have left the district include Guy Rainey, Traffic; J. D. Schwartz, Arco maintenance, who took early retirement; and Jeremy Gough, Traffic. Ron Meyer, Challis, will be leaving at the end of August.

Joining the district is Bryan Kuck, Island Park maintenance.

## Vacant positions

Open positions in the district include two staff engineers; transportation technician apprentices (TTAs) in Island Park, Driggs, Arco, and Ashton maintenance sheds; a TTA in Location; and a transportation technician senior (TTS) both in Region 1, Region 2, and Traffic.

## STIP available

The State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) draft is now offered at [www.itd.idaho.gov/planning/reports/stip/stipfirst.htm](http://www.itd.idaho.gov/planning/reports/stip/stipfirst.htm) for input until Aug. 3.



Photo courtesy of Dean Berggren

### Mountain Flying Clinic

*Port of Entry Inspector Mark Stroschein prepares to weigh an airplane on portable scales in Challis. ITD's Aeronautics group asks D-6 Port of Entry personnel to weigh small back-country airplanes at the Mountain Flying Clinic, which is held each year in Challis. Weighing the airplanes helps pilots determine how much gear they can carry when flying passengers into remote areas.*

## Environmental pros discuss wildlife crossings, accidents

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ecologist of the Wildlife Conservation Society; Patty Cramer, United States Geological Survey (USGS) Utah Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit of Utah State University; John Eddins, district engineer, Wyoming DOT, Rock Springs; and Greg Burak, Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG).

District 6 implemented ITD's first wildlife linkage data collection and analysis effort in 2005 as a pilot

*Collisions with wildlife are increasing throughout the United States.*

project. In the future, all ITD districts will participate in linkage analysis data collection. Greg is heading up the database and "geographic



*Environmental pros listen to presentation.*

information system (GIS)"-based statewide linkage analysis work for IDFG, which is funded by ITD and administered by IDFG. Greg presented information on the process IDFG is using and how the results can be used.

District 6 Environmental Planner Tim Cramer said that thanks to our maintenance personnel, District 6 has almost three years of road kill location

data, which are evaluated and analyzed using its GIS.

Also participating were Marc Munch, ITD transportation archaeologist; Nicholle Braspenickx, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers liaison for ITD; Kim Just, headquarters environmental planner; and Brent Ingrahm, environmental program manager, FHWA Idaho.

Dennis Clark, headquarters section manager, Environmental Section, delivered closing remarks at the conference. He said that the event provides ITD's environmental planners with insights and know-how from environmental professionals outside ITD and outside Idaho, as well as an opportunity for information exchange and discussion of internal processes and procedures. ■

## Confessions of a newcomer . . .

When I interviewed for the position of public information specialist, I didn't realize that District 6 covers nine counties or that its roads cross eight of the nine highest mountain passes in the state.



*Bruce King  
Public  
Information  
Specialist*

Nor did I appreciate the scope of District 6 operations in planning, design, construction, maintenance, and traffic control, or the extent of district facilities and grounds.

I certainly didn't grasp the breadth of the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) in aeronautic, rail, motor vehicle, port of entry, public transportation, bicycle/pedestrian path and grant oversight in addition to its main role of administering state highways.

What I did know is that the Idaho highway system is vital to the state and regional economy and to each of us as individuals. I am glad to be on the road with District 6 and am enjoying the journey into a new frontier.

Learning the lingo of the transportation industry has been interesting. *Shoe fly*, *waddle* and *CRABS* were unfamiliar.

Even *plant mix*, *fog lines*, and *rumble strips* took some meditation.

Then there's *PS&E package*, *clear and grub*, and *crack and seat* among the new terms that emerge.

I come from a backdrop of scientific research, nuclear energy, mining, oil and gas, manufacturing, academia and publishing.

My recent background is at the Idaho National Laboratory, where I was a technical editor. Before that, I worked in the public relations office of corporations in Idaho, Utah, and California.

With my wife and 17-year-old son – the last of our five children still at home – I reside in Sugar City, where I serve on the City Council.

Exploring this new industry has led to some fascinating discoveries.

For instance: Freeway exits take their numbers from the nearest milepost. I had always wondered about that.

Also, even-numbered highways mean the roads run primarily east and west. Enlightening.

Speaking of mileposts, I never realized that they occur on each side of the road opposite each other.

But then my wife never noticed that they occur every mile.

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*"I didn't realize that District 6 covers nine counties or that its roads cross eight of the nine highest mountain passes in the state."*

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I look forward to learning more each day – and always do.

And since my daughter recently married Troy Williams' son, I feel more at home at work. After all, now I am among family.

I am settling in.

— *Bruce King*



Photo courtesy of Don Gilstrap

### Teaching the Scouts

*Left to right: Lynn Horrocks, Logan Godfrey, Sullivan Tucker, Avery Clark, Arlo Coleman, Randy Williams and Enoch Jenson (Don Gilstrap took the picture). Members of Troop 64 in Rigby and their leaders met with District 6 employees Don Gilstrap and Lynn Horrocks, who showed the group the key equipment for road upkeep and discussed truck safety. The Scouts particularly liked the object lessons, including the two-way radios.*