

# The INSIDE

# LANE

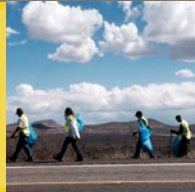
*A newsletter for employees of the Arizona Department of Transportation*

SEPTEMBER 2016

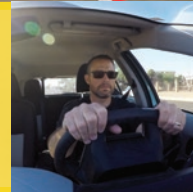
VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3



◀ Lights, camera, action  
PAGE 3



◀ Adopt a Highway  
volunteers help ADOT  
PAGE 5



◀ Forecasting the future  
PAGE 6

**ADOT**

**M**Y NAME IS SCOTT OMER, and Director Halikowski appointed me as the deputy director for operations in March 2015. I am humbled every day to have the opportunity to help lead ADOT along our Continuous Improvement journey.

I started my ADOT career Feb. 4, 1993, as a traffic signal and lighting technician 1 in Yuma. I was a young Marine who wanted to stay in Yuma, and fate lead me to ADOT. I left ADOT for about four years and worked for the city of Yuma and as a consultant, so I have experience working for federal, state, local and private employers. ADOT is my passion, and when given the opportunity to return in 2010, my wife, Maria, and I took very little time to decide for me to return. ADOT is a place we both love.

My approach to Continuous Improvement is “this isn’t something new, it’s what we do.” We as a department have never been satisfied with just doing what has always been done. We have always been trend setters and developers of best practices. We design new transportation systems, continuously improve our customers’ experience in MVD offices and support our department in the delivery of our mission.

The Arizona Management System is a resource, or tool box, to assist in this effort. I personally use many of the tools in the Arizona Management System, including huddleboards, leader standard work and Gemba Walks. I firmly believe in not just talking about these tools, but personally using them as well.

**Gemba literally means “the real place,” and a Gemba Walk means to “go to the place where the value is created, or in other words the work is done.”** To me Gemba gets me out of the office and to the place where people are doing the real work.

I will be the first to admit that as a leader in the department, I am responsible for many areas and functions where I am not the expert. By going to the work, I can learn how things occur from the individuals who actually do the work. I can humbly ask our team members how things work, what problems are they encountering and how do they believe we can make things better.

I am humbled to serve ADOT and hope to see many of you on my Gemba Walks in the future.



Scott Omer

## The INSIDE LANE

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The Inside Lane is published monthly for the employees of the Arizona Department of Transportation by ADOT Communications.

Address all comments and suggestions to [InsideLane@azdot.gov](mailto:InsideLane@azdot.gov).

A web version of this newsletter can be found on ADOTNet or at [azdot.gov/InsideLane](http://azdot.gov/InsideLane).

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### Share your best cover shot

Do you snap shots that show off the scenic side of transportation in Arizona? Share them with us and we might put your photograph on the next cover of The Inside Lane.

It can be a great picture of an MVD office, a beautiful highway shot or even an artsy photo of construction materials. Whatever the subject, the photo should highlight some aspect of the work happening here at ADOT.

Submit your original, digital photographs to [InsideLane@azdot.gov](mailto:InsideLane@azdot.gov) in JPEG format (no larger than 10MB). Along with the photo, please provide a brief description and your name/title.



*This photo was taken by Casey Miller, a video production specialist with ADOT Communications. He snapped the photo during a video shoot at the ADOT Sign Factory. Read more about the video on page 3.*





Photos by Kim Katchur, ADOT Communications

## New ADOT video series puts Director Halikowski on the job

**PITCHED** as a cross between “Dirty Jobs” and “Undercover Boss,” with a little bit of “Mythbusters” thrown into the mix, ADOT’s newest video series follows Director John Halikowski as he goes on the job with employees around the state.

In the first “Direct Connect” episode, viewers are taken to the ADOT Sign Factory in Phoenix, where Director Halikowski receives pointers from the signing team as he assists in the fabrication of a wrong-way sign. Cameras continue to follow along as the director and crews install the new sign on the freeway.

The video, which premiered during last month’s Leaders Connection Conference, is now available to [view online](#).

For his part, Director Halikowski said he enjoyed working with the team and meeting everyone on the sign crew. He admits the work left him physically tired at the end of the day and forced him to use his brain in a different way.

“It was very different from what I normally do,” said the director, adding that he hopes those who watch the video take away a sense of just how big a role every single employee plays when it comes to making the agency successful every day. “Everybody’s job is important and has meaning. I don’t care where you sit at ADOT, you contribute.”

### About the production

When tasked with developing an informative and entertaining series that not only highlights the work being done by ADOT teams, but also gives employees a new avenue to better know the director, ADOT’s Video Team knew they wanted to try something a little different.

“We didn’t want this to be a ‘government video’ at all,” said Video Production Project Manager Kim Katchur.

The idea for an on-the-job series in the style of popular educational reality programs came from Video Production Specialist Casey Miller. Once the concept was decided, filming could begin. But even that involved some creative problem solving to make sure things were just right.

Wanting to limit the number of camera people on the shoot so that employees would feel more comfortable and natural, Miller devised a camera setup that allowed him to shoot two cameras at once — one for wide shots and one for close-ups. Katchur operated another Go-Pro camera, and a fourth camera was mounted up high in the sign shop.

Editing all the resulting footage down to a 10-minute video wasn’t easy. Katchur and Miller said a lot of great material ended up on the cutting room floor.

### Going to the work

Starring in the series gives the director a chance to talk directly with employees, something he tries to do often. Conversations with teams about what they experience are valuable and often inspire new ideas, he said.

Visiting work sites to get a better understanding of the success and problems

in work flow is an important concept in a Continuous Improvement culture. The term Gemba Walk is used to describe the act of “going to where the work is done” to not only understand the issues, but also increase the engagement of employees in problem solving.

The director says he hopes his Gemba Walks will instill the idea that there is no improvement too small to make.

“People think of Continuous Improvement as this big thing, but most of these important improvements are easy to do in the workplace,” he said.

To watch Direct Connect, along with other videos showcased during the Leaders

Connection Conference, visit <http://bit.ly/2duq9mS>. Be sure to stay tuned — another episode is planned for early 2017. ■

~Angela De Welles, Senior Communications Specialist



# ADOT completes US 89 improvement project through Cameron

**B**EING able to safely and conveniently cross the Little Colorado River is as much a necessity for drivers in northern Arizona today as it was back in 1911 when the first Cameron Bridge was built.

That structure, a 660-foot-long steel suspension bridge, was used by motorists until 1959, when the Arizona Highway Department constructed a new truss bridge, right next to the original.

Now, 57 years later, ADOT has completed a project that replaces the replacement with two new bridges that will better accommodate north and southbound traffic on US 89, through the Navajo Nation community of Cameron.

But that's not all. The two-year improvement project has also widened US 89 to two lanes in each direction between State Route 64 and the Little Colorado River (mileposts 464-467). A modern roundabout at the junction with SR 64 and pedestrian underpasses were also constructed. In addition, enhanced lighting and new sidewalks have improved safety and mobility in the area, said ADOT Senior Community Relations Officer Coralie Cole.

"The project has transformed the Cameron community in a positive way," Cole said. "For travelers in the area, it really speaks to what ADOT can do."

~Angela De Welles, Senior Communications Specialist



Kim Katchur, ADOT Communications

**New bridges:** An older truss bridge was replaced by separate bridges for traffic in each direction. The new bridges meet all current state and federal standards and can carry more traffic. You can still see that the original steel suspension bridge still stands, but instead of vehicles, it carries utility line across the river now.

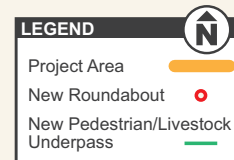
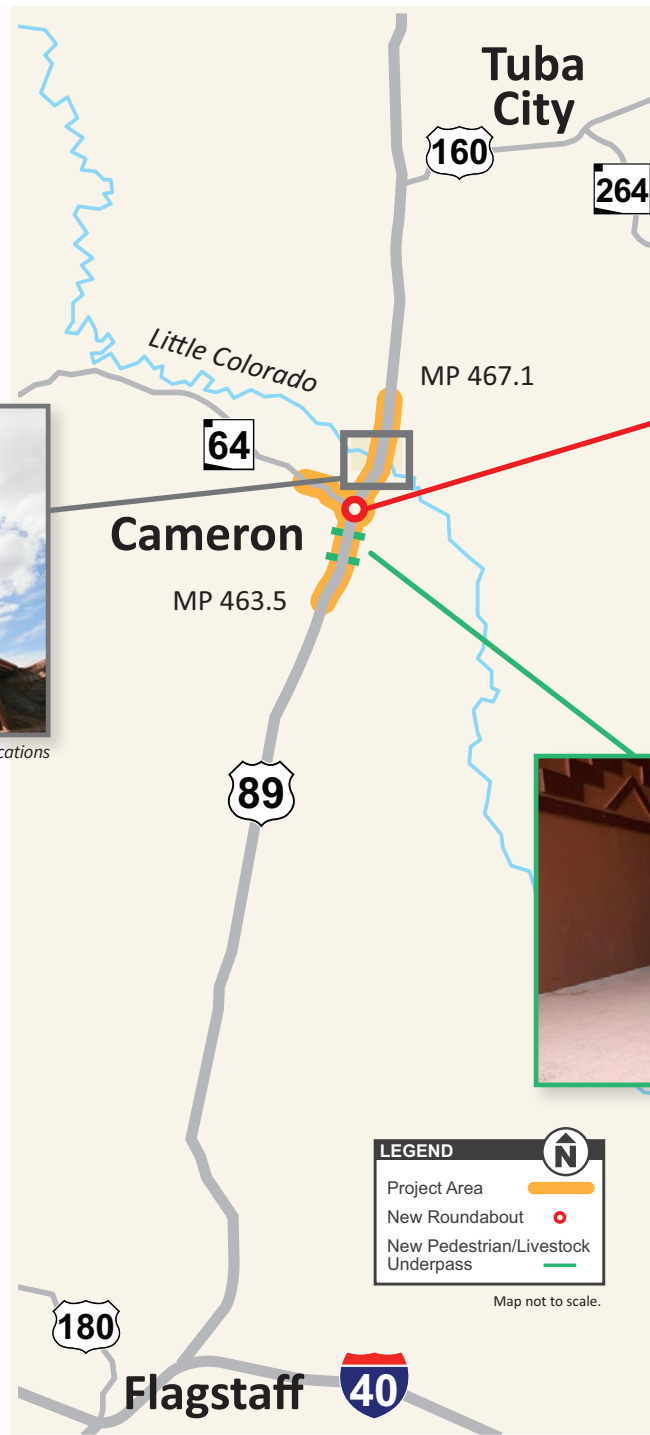


Photo submitted by Luis Colón

**Roundabout:** A modern roundabout was built to accommodate large vehicles at the US 89/SR 64 interchange. It improves access for those using SR 64 to or from the eastern entrance to Grand Canyon National Park or taking US 89 as the gateway to or from the Page/Lake Powell region, Arizona Strip, southern Utah, Four Corners area and other points of interest.



Kim Katchur, ADOT Communications

**Pedestrian Underpass:** Pedestrian access was identified as an issue early on in the design process. The new underpasses, along with new sidewalks and improved lighting, allow for the safe travel of people and livestock.



# Adopt a Highway volunteers help ADOT keep the state's roads clean, save money

**T**HE spirit of volunteerism is alive and well, and one way Arizona residents have chosen to show it is through picking up litter alongside the state highway with the Adopt a Highway volunteer program.

The late Governor Rose Mofford started the Adopt a Highway program in 1988, making Arizona one of the first to adopt a program that now runs in 49 states. To start, the program had 100 permittees and covered 200 miles of state highway right of way. Since then, it has grown to its current size of 1,500 permittees and over 11,000 people, with an average of seven or eight people per permit who maintain almost 2,000 miles of highway. Permittees apply for a two-year permit to adopt a section along available roadways and include families and civic and community members.



Thanks to the efforts of thousands of volunteers, Adopt a Highway saves the agency \$2.5 million annually. They remove 57 tons of trash every year in their effort to keep the state's highways clean. According to Patricia Powers-Zermeño, who manages the program, none of it would be possible without the continuous efforts of permit techs and district engineers.



"This program could not work without permit techs and district engineers," said Powers-Zermeño. "These are people who love their state and know their areas. These people and their communities make this program work."

Because of hundreds of volunteers and ADOT personnel who issue Adopt a Highway volunteer program permits, large portions of state highways are kept clean and beautiful. If you would like to participate in this program, you can do so by going to [azdot.gov/adoptahighway](http://azdot.gov/adoptahighway) for more information on how to apply for a permit. Even if you don't join the program, you can still help combat litter on the highways by calling 877.354.8837 if you see other motorists littering. 🇺🇸

*~Danelle Weber, Senior Communications Specialist*



*Photos by Patricia Powers-Zermeño, ADOT Communications*



## Volunteers have found some pretty strange things along the side of the road:

- Boxes of towels
- Air fresheners
- Wallets, both empty and full
- Dolls, shoes, a mailbox, and iPads and iPhones
- A chessboard with almost all the pieces
- Golf balls, basketballs, footballs, bowling balls and soccer balls
- Elvis Presley cassettes
- Lots of sunglasses
- Tools of all kinds
- Tutus and picture frames



# FORECASTING THE FUTURE

*Data from National Household Travel Survey to assist ADOT's planning efforts*

**EMPLOYEES WITH ADOT'S** Travel Demand Modeling Group can't tell you who will win the election, but they can predict the future when it comes to travel behavior in Arizona.

No crystal ball is involved. They make their forecasts using data—lots and lots of data.

Right now, the search for more of that valuable data continues as 125,000 households across the country are being invited to participate in the National Household Travel Survey (NHTS).

Conducted every five to seven years by the U.S. Department of Transportation, the survey asks participants to provide demographic information and details related to their travel activities. Households are sent a travel diary to document each school age or older family member's travel activity during one randomly assigned day.

Because the goal for this national effort is to get a representative sample of the entire country, questionnaires

are typically sought from just about 500 families in Arizona. However, there is the option to purchase "add-on samples," which gets the survey out to more households. This year, ADOT used a federal grant to commission nearly 2,500 extra survey responses.

## MORE ABOUT TRAVEL DEMAND MODELING

Travel demand models take data — information like how many people live and work in various communities — and forecast the number trips taken by drivers, transit passengers, pedestrians and cyclists, where they're going and what roads and transit services they will use. This tool gives planners a good idea of what future traffic patterns might look like and can even be used to project traffic's impact on air quality and the economy. Models can also run "what-if" scenarios to give planners a realistic idea of what certain changes will do to traffic.

Previous travel surveys from Maricopa and Pima counties have already provided an immense amount of data for those regions. That's why, according to ADOT's Director of Transportation Systems Analysis Keith Killough, about 80 percent of ADOT's add-on samples are being recruited from the rural parts of the state, where less is known about the day-to-day travel habits of residents.

"This will help us better understand the travel behavior of all our residents," Killough said.

The surveys started going out in April and will continue to be mailed into next year. ADOT will likely begin to see the survey results in late 2017.

The aim is to get a better idea of how residents are making their travel decisions in Arizona. Killough explained that all the information collected will be used to improve ADOT's travel demand model, a planning analysis tool that uses statistical and mathematical formulas to represent transportation system conditions and to predict future travel behavior responses to those conditions.

"The more information we can feed into it, the more reliable our estimates will be," said Killough, adding that the estimates are especially helpful when ADOT evaluates long-range planning scenarios five to 30 years into the future. The

forecasts can help ADOT make informed decisions on transportation system improvements without costly trial-and-error implementations. ■

~Angela De Welles, Senior Communications Specialist



**NHTS** National Household Travel Survey  
Our Nation's Travel

Households are randomly selected for the survey. But for those who aren't invited to participate in the National Household Travel Survey, ADOT has created an online survey available at [azdot.gov/NHTS](http://azdot.gov/NHTS). Information gathered through this survey will also help create a more valuable transportation system for all.



# Pay attention and share the road



Dallas Hammit

## It's that time of year

again—temperatures are beginning to cool, students have gone back to school and extra events are on schedule as we head toward the holidays. It's also when we start seeing more pedestrians and cyclists take to the streets.

That makes now the perfect time for all of us to review and improve our habits when it comes to sharing the road.

According to ADOT's Crash Facts Report, the number of pedestrians killed in Arizona crashes rose to 161 in 2015 from 155 the year before. In this state, 29 bicyclists died in crashes during 2015, and in total, there were 1,399 crashes involving pedestrians and 1,434 that involved bicycles.

The statistics show that all of us — motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists — need to take precautions and remember how vital it is to share the road with each other.

There are a number of resources online that'll give you guidelines and safety tips for sharing the road safely and legally. Two good ones are

both on ADOT's website. "[Sharing the Road with Pedestrians](#)" and "[Share the Road](#)" each cover a number of different situations and show actions to help us avoid a collision.

While there's not enough room here in this newsletter to cover every safety scenario, I do want to highlight one safety tip that, when followed, serves drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists:

**Pay attention and be aware of your surroundings.**

All travelers are better off when drivers put down their cell phone and pay attention to the road. Using your phone for texting or talking while driving takes your focus off the job at hand, which is

to safely operate your vehicle. Bicyclists and pedestrians also need to be aware of their surroundings — headphones and cell phones cause distractions and can reduce your ability to hear traffic.

As always, I hope you'll think about your own habits and take the opportunity to talk with your loved ones — especially any students in your household — about this topic. Encourage them to make safe decisions. ■

~Dallas Hammit, Deputy Director for Transportation



# SECC campaign kicks off Oct. 4

**T**HE State Employee Charitable Campaign (SECC) raises funds that support more than 400 charities. In the past 23 years, state employees have raised over \$25 million that support charities all over the state, country and world. If you're able, the SECC is a great chance to give back to the community.

The SECC is an excellent way to show you care, and it's about to kick off its 2016 campaign with a bang on Oct. 4. There will be music, food trucks, giveaways and prizes for employees who make a pledge of at least \$2 per pay period the day of the event. Dozens of Arizona-based charities will be in attendance to explain how they help the community and answer any questions state employees might have before making their pledge.

"Our ADOT SECC agency's goal for this year is \$90,000," said Jamila Sifuentes, who chairs the ADOT SECC program.

"The SECC campaign has a wide variety of charities that will resonate with their individual passion. Everyone cares about something, and you have the ability to donate any denomination of money. It doesn't matter how big or small, it all helps to make a difference."

The event will take place from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Wesley Bolin Plaza, 1700 W. Washington St. in Phoenix. ■

~Danelle Weber, Senior Communications Specialist



**secc**  
State Employees  
Charitable Campaign

LOOK

BACK

*For as long as there have been roads in Arizona, there have been people who plan, build and maintain them. It's those skilled women and men who have made this state's transportation history a remarkable one. From 1912 when the Arizona Highway Department was first established, to right now, right here at ADOT, state employees have continuously done the work necessary to keep Arizona moving. Take a look back at some of their stories.*



**WHEN ATTENDING** the Arizona State Fair, your biggest decision might be whether to eat something that's deep-fried, wrapped in bacon or both.

Choose wisely and when you're done eating, don't forget to stop by ADOT's booth.

The agency will be at the fair this year Oct. 29-30 as part of the Governor's Office of Highway Safety's "Public Safety Days." A

number of statewide safety organizations, including law-enforcement agencies and fire departments, are also expected to participate. The goal is to share information that will help keep people safe. ADOT employees will be handing out toy construction hats for kids, souvenir cones and plenty of information.

As you can see from these photos, ADOT has been going to the State Fair for decades.



Taken in the 1970s, the pictures show some fairly elaborate setups. Can you spot the movie projector? How about the coffin

that's staged in the Traffic Safety Division section of the booth in the photo at left? It likely intrigued fairgoers back in 1973 — traffic safety was, and still is, a serious matter. In case you can't make it out, the sign on the coffin reads: "Please Drive Carefully. Don't End Up in Here."

Do you have any ADOT memories from the Arizona State Fair? Let us know by sending an email to [InsideLane@azdot.gov](mailto:InsideLane@azdot.gov).



# THIS IS *only* A DRILL

*Coordination, teamwork on display during realistic exercise at ADOT's airport*



*Photos by Michael Thomas, Administrative Services Division*

**E**VERY THREE YEARS, when crews at the Grand Canyon National Park Airport train for a disaster, the goal is to make the exercise as realistic as possible.

That means staging a worst-case scenario complete with smoke grenades and volunteers who act as though they're either injured or deceased.

"We basically pretend that a plane has crashed," explains Airport Manager Michael Thomas.

Operated by ADOT and owned by the state, the Grand Canyon National Park Airport is located in Tusayan, about two miles from the National Park entrance. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requires these triannual drills for the airport to maintain its certification.

The most recent exercise took place Aug. 3 and included a plane crash scenario with a fire, 19 fatalities and nearly two dozen injured passengers.

ADOT's airport employees — most are certified firefighters/EMTs — responded to the scene and immediately got to work putting out a fire simulated with smoke grenades.

After that, other responding agencies started to arrive, including the Tusayan Fire Department, Coconino County Sheriff's Office, the U.S. Forest Service, and FAA.

"We're not a very large fire department," Thomas said. "This simulated disaster was so big that other agencies would have had to get involved."



*Bruce Baker, above, was one of the ADOT firefighters to participate in the emergency drill.*



From triaging the volunteer patients and contacting the airline to notifying the National Transportation Safety Board and setting up a mobile morgue, everyone involved worked together as if the scenario was real, said Airport Operations Manager Michael Cockrum.

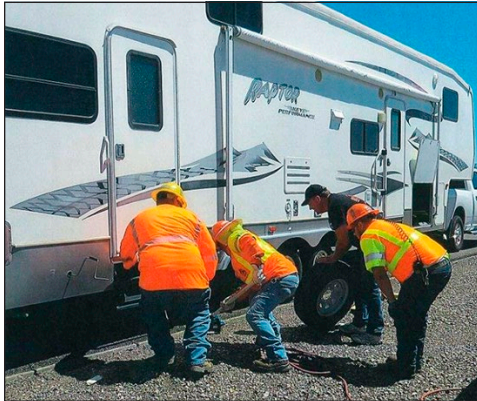
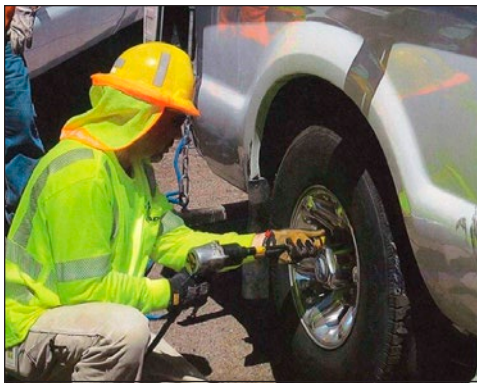
"We coordinate and iron out any issues, so we're good to go if an actual incident occurs," he said.

Thomas agreed and added that those involved learned many lessons throughout the drill.

"The whole purpose of these is to practice. They're never going to be perfect. After it was done, we looked at what happened and how it all worked." ■

*~Angela De Welles, Senior Communications Specialist*





Photos by Raymond Kavaliunas, IDO

## Making transportation personal

### ADOT crews assist motorists during Labor Day weekend

As most of ADOT enjoyed the holiday, several crews were out in full force doing whatever it took to assist motorists and minimize travel delays during the long Labor Day weekend.

Maintenance and landscape units worked the holiday as part of ADOT's effort to add extra

resources to three high-traffic zones. Along Interstate 17 between north Phoenix and Flagstaff, Interstate 10 between Phoenix and Tucson, and State Route 87 between Mesa and Payson, ADOT crews strategically staged equipment, such as loaders and utility trucks, for faster response times to crashes and stalled vehicles to decrease travel delays.

Crews also were on the lookout for any stranded motorists who needed help.

"There's nothing worse than being broken down and not knowing what to do," said Raymond Kavaliunas, lead tech with the Happy Valley maintenance unit.

Kavaliunas explained that he and several other ADOT employees did everything from changing tires and providing water to radioing in incidents so additional help could be dispatched. When crashes occurred, the ADOT crews also put out message boards to warn drivers of the incident ahead.

"It takes just a few minutes for traffic to back up," Kavaliunas said. "The message signs can help warn traffic and slow it down ahead of a wreck to avoid secondary crashes."

ADOT Maintenance Superintendent Craig Cornwell said everything was done in close conjunction with the Arizona Department of Public Safety.

"The effort helps a lot of people who are trying to get where they want to go during the three-day weekend," said Cornwell, adding that this kind of assistance from ADOT crews isn't just available during holidays. "They're great ambassadors and they're always helping motorists. That's part of our job." ■

~Angela De Welles, Senior Communications Specialist



## ADOT geologist receives special recognition

**T**HERE ARE approximately 95,000 people who serve as school board members across the United States, but not all of them get a school building named in their honor.

ADOT Geologist Jim Lemmon, who has served on the Tempe Elementary District No.3 Governing Board since 2003, was thanked by the community earlier this month, when the Laird School named its library/tech center the **James J. Lemmon Learning Commons**.

Lemmon received the honor because of his positive impact on students and for his role in rebuilding five of the district's 21 schools, including the Laird School, which underwent a major restoration over the past year due to the age of the facility.

"Jim is a strong advocate for Laird children," said Laird Principal Nancy Uxa in a school news release. "It's a privilege to recognize Jim for all that he has done for our community."

Lemmon has worked for ADOT since 2007, when he started as an environmental planner. Now he serves as a geologist for the agency's geotechnical design section.

Outside of work, it is clear he has been a strong advocate for public education and partnerships.

When the learning commons was dedicated on Sept. 1, Lemmon spoke and highlighted the collaborations necessary to make the Laird School a strong anchor in north Tempe. Lemmon also thanked ADOT for its "Safe Routes to Schools" program, which has provided funding for pathways near Tempe Elementary schools in collaboration with the city of Tempe.

The new learning commons is no ordinary library, with only books and computers. It's a state-of-the-art space that offers the community a place to meet to broaden their educational pursuits.

"My mother was a librarian and taught me the importance of compassion and equitable opportunities for all," Lemmon said. "I'm happy we are furthering that at Laird School." ■

~Kathy Boyle, Assistant Communications Director for Internal Communications

Photo by Kathy Boyle, ADOT Communications



YOU

GOT IT!



We received some good guesses to last month's Where in AZ?? challenge. There were some correct answers too, but there could only be one winner.



Tao Zi Fong was selected as this month's winner in a random drawing from all eligible entries. Fong, a landscape architectural/environmental designer with ADOT's Roadway Development Group, correctly guessed that the photo was of a pedestrian underpass on US 89 in Cameron. Earlier this month, Internal Communications Manager Kathy Boyle awarded him with a copy of the Arizona Highways publication, "The Grand Canyon."

GO AHEAD,

GET CREATIVE!



This cartoon, drawn by ADOT Graphic Designer John Waldradt, needs a caption and we want your help. Please submit your ideas to [InsideLane@azdot.gov](mailto:InsideLane@azdot.gov) by Oct. 17, 2016. Yes, there will be a (small) prize, so give us your best!

The winning caption will be selected by a team of ADOT employees who will look for creative, funny captions that best fit the cartoon. We'll announce the winning caption in the next issue of The Inside Lane. Good luck!

## IN CASE YOU'RE ASKED

## ABOUT IT . . .

*Working at ADOT doesn't automatically make you an expert on everything happening around the agency, but when friends and family want to know about the latest ADOT topic making news, they expect you to have all the answers. Here's what you can tell them when they ask you for details on*

# self-driving vehicles...

## Autonomous vehicles are already here

From cruise control and anti-lock brakes to parallel parking assist systems, every modern vehicle has some degree of automation, but the automobile industry and technology companies continue toward development of a completely self-driving vehicle, one that is totally autonomous, using artificial intelligence, vehicle sensors and GPS coordinates to drive itself without any help from a human behind the wheel. Work to advance technology that supports connected vehicles—cars or trucks that can send and receive messages with other vehicles, infrastructure and traffic signals—is also underway.

## The big reason for this push is SAFETY

In the U.S., more than **30,000** people are killed in motor vehicle crashes each year.

Human error factors in **95%** of all crashes.

Self-driving vehicles are designed to remove the human error factor by putting computers in control. It also is envisioned that these vehicles will improve traffic flow, decrease fuel consumption and emissions, and give mobility to those who are unable to drive themselves.



## ADOT's role

ADOT serves on the state's Self-Driving Vehicle Oversight Committee, created by Gov. Doug Ducey to support research and development of self-driving vehicle technology in Arizona. The committee, a team of transportation, public safety and policy experts, met for the first time last month in Phoenix, where ADOT Director John Halikowski delivered a presentation on autonomous vehicle technology. Moving

forward, the committee will advise ADOT, the Department of Public Safety, universities and other public agencies on how to best advance the testing and operation of self-driving vehicles on public roads. It'll likely be several years before the average motorist can purchase a self-driving vehicle, but our state is planning for that future. Right now, Arizona is among the leading states when it comes to self-driving research and several companies, including Google, Ford and General Motors, already have chosen to test their vehicles here.

Self Driving Car by Luis Prado from the Noun Project