

The INSIDE LANE

A newsletter for employees of the Arizona Department of Transportation

OCTOBER 2020

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 10

**Python helps ADOT spread
distracted-driving message**

**PAGE
3**



◀ **MVD customer service
evolves during pandemic**
PAGE 4



◀ **South Mountain Freeway
continues to break
ground**
PAGE 5



◀ **In the Driver's Seat with
Lori Teigh**
PAGE 6

ADOT

AFTER the publication's six-month hiatus, I'm thrilled to re-introduce you to The Inside Lane, our monthly employee newsletter. After the pandemic started, ADOT Communications made the strategic decision of putting The Inside Lane on hold, and instead launching the weekly ADOT Connection e-news bulletin. Don't worry, ADOT Connection will continue! Keep reading for the details.

As a new face at ADOT, I wanted to introduce myself. I started in May as Communications Deputy Director. Previously, I worked in a variety of positions at the city of Phoenix, after moving to Arizona to be a TV reporter in Tucson and Phoenix. It's a challenging time to switch jobs, but my first months at ADOT have been a pleasure — the department has an excellent culture and I've been heartened by the engaging stories about our talented and devoted statewide team. And my teenage sons are excited when I tell them what I've learned about our highways as we drive around the Valley and state!

Internal communications is a critical function for any organization. I recall a training I attended years ago with a speaker from Southwest Airlines. I remember her describing how informing employees is their top priority. When Southwest rebranded and repainted their planes, they took the time, effort and expense to mail a VHS tape (I'm dating myself!) announcing the new look to the home of every employee.

Our Internal Communications team, led superbly by Kathy Boyle, takes its role seriously. That's why we conducted a survey a few months ago on what you, our customers, want to read. Nearly 400 responses helped craft a revised strategy. You'll receive ADOT Connection every Wednesday, except the last week of the month, when The Inside Lane comes out. The Inside Lane Online stories are accessible all the time on [ADOTNet](#).

We know COVID-19 news is critical, and we work hard to update the [ADOTNet COVID-19 Resource Center](#). We also just launched [FastFacts](#) — key ADOT data at your fingertips — available for employees and the public, and we're always seeking enlightening stories about ADOT employees.

We want to hear from you! Please send your thoughts, feedback and ideas to InsideLane@azdot.gov. While we likely won't be mailing a VHS tape to your home, we do strive to bring you top-notch internal communications, so you're informed about our organization, whether you've worked here for five decades or five months! Enjoy the issue! ■

~ Jon Brodsky, Communications Deputy Director



Jon Brodsky,
*Communications
Deputy Director*

The INSIDE LANE

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ADDRESS ALL COMMENTS AND

SUGGESTIONS TO InsideLane@azdot.gov.

A WEB VERSION OF THIS NEWSLETTER CAN BE FOUND ON ADOTNET OR AT 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 in JPEG format (no larger than 10MB). Along with the photo, please provide a brief description and your name/title.



Cover photo: ADOT Video Team members **Russell Chase**, **John Dougherty** and **Joe Larger** hold Bear Hug, a Burmese Python at the Phoenix Zoo. The snake is part of the "Distracted Drivers Terrify Me" public service announcements produced by ADOT. (This cover photo was taken *before* mask requirements were put into place throughout ADOT.) Read about ADOT's new Distracted Driving campaign on **Page 3**.

ADOT Communications

TERRIFIED

BY DISTRACTED DRIVERS

FROM WRANGLING venomous snakes to bull fighting or rising 200 feet into the air to check an electrical transmission tower, courageous workers do jobs that many of us would be afraid to tackle.

But even these brave people are terrified while sharing the road with a distracted driver.

That's the premise behind ADOT's new "Distracted Drivers Terrify Me" public awareness campaign being launched in October as part of National Distracted Driving Awareness Month.

ADOT's video team is producing public service announcements featuring fearless individuals doing dangerous jobs to grab people's attention about how distracted driving-related crashes are killing and injuring people, and causing property damage.

"The theme of these PSAs involves juxtaposing someone doing a job that would be unsettling to most people with the

idea that only distracted drivers terrify them," said Video Services Producer/Videographer **Russell Chase**.

Consultant LaneTerral ever created the distracted driver campaign concept, and ADOT has brought it to life! Creative Services staff has been producing all the campaign materials, said Assistant Communication Director for Customer Outreach **Doug Pacey**, who is coordinating the campaign.

"This campaign comes at distracted driving from a different angle and we're excited to get it in front of the public," Pacey said.

ADOT's video team is handling the video and radio PSA production, including writing the script, planning shot selections, shooting and editing.

The campaign's first PSA focuses on James Hall, a Phoenix Zoo snake handler. Producing the 30-second video was an all-hands on-deck team effort at the zoo. Chase directed and other ADOT video team members **John Dougherty**, **Joe Larger** and **Charles Cull** filled multiple roles, including filming, moving gear, setting lights and cameras, and running power and sound.

"The PSA's goal is to give the viewers the sense that they are watching a promo for a reality show then hit them with the messaging at the end. We also wanted to give viewers a reason to rewatch it or share it on social media, by making it as visually interesting as possible and hopefully spread the distracted driving message," Chase said.



ADOT Communications

Clockwise from right:

Salt River Project Lineman Josh Coon rises up 200 feet to access electrical towers.

Phoenix Zoo Herpetologist James Hall (left) helps ADOT video team member Russell Chase film Bear Hug, a Burmese Python.

Bullfighter Clifford Maxwell performed at the Payson Rodeo in August.

Don't text, Just Drive!

Texting takes a driver's eyes off the road and that lack of attention makes it unsafe for everyone around that driver. To remind motorists, "Don't Text, Just Drive" signs have been installed along highways at Arizona borders.

It is illegal in Arizona to talk or text on a cellphone or other stand-alone electronic devices while driving unless the devices are in a hands-free mode. Fines will be imposed starting on Jan. 1. For more information about the hands-free law, please visit the Department of Public Safety's "Hands Off" page, azdps.gov/handsoff.

Another PSA features Clifford Maxwell, a bullfighter at the Payson Rodeo. For the third PSA, a drone was used to shoot footage of Salt River Project lineman Josh Koon in one of the tallest bucket trucks in North America near an electrical transmission tower in Gold Canyon.

The PSAs will air on TV and radio stations throughout Arizona and be shared on ADOT's social media channels: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

A new web page, azdot.gov/terrify, was designed by ADOT web team members — Creative Services Project Manager **Carrie Mueller**, Web /UX Developer **Marlo Crandall** and Web Designer/Developer **Rebeca Hensler**. It features the PSA videos and other distracted driving information. Check azdot.gov for press releases and ADOT Blog posts about the campaign. ■

~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist

KAIZEN KORNER

KAIZEN 2021 CHALLENGE

The Office of Continuous Improvement announces the Kaizen 2021 Challenge goal of 7,200 kaizens. Every employee is being asked to complete one kaizen on their own. A kaizen can be big or small, eliminates waste in our processes and is documented through standard work. Team or collaborative kaizens are also encouraged. Last year, only 61% of employees individually documented a completed kaizen.

KAIZEN COUNT

The number of kaizens submitted by ADOT employees so far this fiscal year is

918

For a complete breakdown by division, visit the [Office of Continuous Improvement page on ADOTNet](#).

MVD customer service evolves during pandemic

IN A MATTER of days after in-person service was curtailed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Motor Vehicle Division developed a new call center system enabling office-based customer service representatives to take calls when they weren't serving in-office customers. The system grew from answering 5,000 calls a day in July to handling about 13,000 calls in August.

To facilitate social distancing, appointments have been required for in-person assistance. Only first-time services like driver licenses, road tests and initial vehicle registration are handled in offices. MVD quickly evolved from having 90% of office operations in person to a hybrid model where many transactions could be handled over the phone.

MVD has been making continuous improvements to provide alternative ways to serve customers. Because the new phone system had long wait times, MVD has been working diligently to improve customer service. For example, headphones were purchased for CSRs to make it easier to handle calls, and technological improvements were made to more efficiently route calls to various offices. Software also was purchased to forward calls to mobile devices allowing more than 110 CSRs, who are able to work but need to be home for various reasons, to help with customer service calls.

In addition, MVD staff created a kaizen that permits customers to upload documents to a CSR during a phone transaction without requiring the customer to activate their [AZ MVD Now](#) account.

"While MVD wants customers to join AZ MVD Now, some people would need help signing up and that resulted in much longer phone calls, reducing the overall number of people who could call into an already-stressed system. With the simple document upload, call transaction times went down significantly," said **Doug Nick**, assistant communication director for the Public Information Office.

AZ MVD Now usage skyrockets

The new [AZ MVD Now customer portal](#) has nearly 1.3 million accounts, growing from about 200,000 accounts when it launched in April.

Every current MVD customer already has an AZ MVD Now account with their driver and vehicle information that's waiting to be activated. The process is free and is protected by several security protocols. Customers can easily access their information whenever they'd like. More than two-thirds of MVD services are available through [AZ MVD Now](#). A how-to video is available on [AZ MVD Now](#) with instructions on setting up an AZ MVD Now account.



Doug Nick, ADOT Communications

Customer Service Representative **Nicki Eudave** in the Southeast Regional MVD Office in Mesa assists a customer behind a plexiglass divider.

During the public-health emergency, front-line staff throughout Arizona have been creating kaizens to install safety features and improve customer service at MVD offices including:

Bullhead City: Plexiglass partitions are on stands so they can be easily moved from station to station depending on which CSRs are taking care of appointments on a given day.

Cottonwood: After customers disregarded yellow lines on the floor for social distancing, chairs were set out so customers are aware they need to be a chair distance from the counter.

Phoenix Northwest: Training computers were moved from a small room to a larger room to allow 6-feet social distancing between employees.

Show Low: A greeter area was set up with a desk and chair so greeters had a place to wait for customers with appointments and stay organized with their clipboard, sanitizing wipes and paperwork.

Surprise: Ropes closely separating the camera area from the kiosk area were removed, and yellow lines were applied to the floor to keep customers 6 feet apart while waiting to have their photo taken.

Winslow: Auto Test Examiner computers were separated to permit social distancing for customers. ■

~ **Lori Baker**, Senior Communications Specialist



South Mountain Freeway continues to break ground

John Dougherty, ADOT Communications

THE GROUNDBREAKING Loop 202 South Mountain Freeway — ADOT's [largest single highway project](#) — is among the Top 12 finalists in America's Transportation Awards competition, and in the running for two top national awards.

The \$2 billion project is competing in the Best Use of Innovation and Technology, large project category, and it's clear that this was an innovative endeavor. It's the agency's first highway public-private partnership (P3).

"This project was unlike any other for ADOT," explained [Carmelo Acevedo](#), project manager. "Instead of building the 22-mile South Mountain Freeway project as five distinct design-bid-build projects, built by five separate contractors, the selected contractor built it as a single project."

That meant that the construction could be completed three years earlier than originally planned, saving taxpayers an estimated \$100 million. Further innovation came into play as the selected contractor, Connect 202 Partners, would not only build, but also maintain the project for 30 years.

The private sector contributed its own innovation for the

South Mountain Freeway, which broke ground in 2016, explained Acevedo.

"Through the P3 procurement process, each short-listed contractor had to propose their plans to meet the contractual technical provisions. Each bid proposed how to purchase the required right of way, resolve more than 300 utility conflicts and mitigate ongoing environmental issues. In a typical project, ADOT would handle those elements."

Of the Top 12 award finalists, two projects will be selected: one Grand Prize awarded by a panel of transportation experts, and the second, a People's Choice award in which the public will choose a winner. If the South Mountain Freeway wins the award, ADOT

will use the \$10,000 prize to fund 10 \$1,000-scholarships for members of the Gila River Indian Community attending a college, university or trade school.

For more information on the South Mountain Freeway project, read our [previous The Inside Lane coverage](#). ■

~ Kim Larson, Senior Communications

The Loop 202 South Mountain Freeway opened to traffic in December 2019.

AMERICA'S transportation awards

Help ADOT bring home this award! [Vote daily](#) through Oct. 25. Winners will be announced in November.

Specialist

ADOT Communications receives national accolades

ADOT COMMUNICATIONS received two top awards in August from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.

The association's TransComm committee, made up of transportation communications departments nationally, recognizes organizations annually for communications accomplishments. Competition was tough this year with 132 entries from 27 states in 30 categories.

ADOT was awarded "Best Internal Publication," for The Inside Lane monthly employee newsletter's coverage of [ADOT's 45th Anniversary](#) in 2019. The Internal Communications team conducted extensive research to create about 30 compelling articles and historical photos spanning seven issues. Coverage included the agency's first female engineer in 1974, technological advancements, the Motor Vehicles Division's evolution, sharing employee memories and ADOT historical trivia games among others. Check out 45th anniversary articles and other ADOT

historical features in the [Look Back section](#) of ADOTNet.

The other top award recognized Communications Director **Tim Tait** as PR Professional of the Year. Over Tait's 20-plus year career in public

relations, he has earned an excellent reputation and the respect of his peers, not to mention being a valued advisor to the ADOT leadership team. He oversees teams in community relations, creative services, customer outreach, digital communication, internal communications, major projects, public information, safety communications and the Adopt a Highway program.

"Tim is a trusted colleague who I've had the honor of working with for over 10 years at ADOT," said ADOT Deputy Director of Policy **Kevin Biesty**. "I can attest to the respect he receives from other state communications professionals and how he represents ADOT to our stakeholders statewide."

Read more about Tait's award and other award winners in the [AASHTO Journal](#).

Join us in celebrating these accolades. We could not be successful without you, so keep reading The Inside Lane and help us to tell ADOT's story! Send your story suggestions to InsideLane@azdot.gov. ■

~ Kim Larson, Senior Communications Specialist



Tim Tait

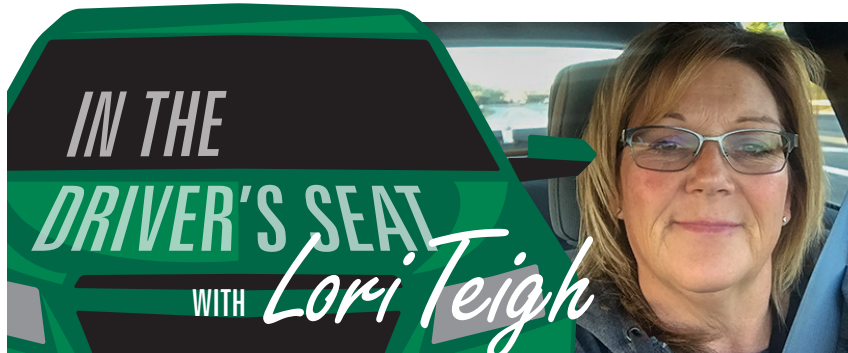


The INSIDE

LANE

OCTOBER 2020

5



AT ADOT, it's difficult to sum up anyone's job in just a few words. That's why we're devoting some space in this newsletter to give employees across the agency the chance to share a little bit about what they do every day. If you'd like to be featured in a future issue, please send an email to InsideLane@azdot.gov and we'll provide you with a questionnaire.

Lori Teigh has been with ADOT for 25 years and is believed to be one of the state's first female snowplow operators. She currently serves as a transportation traffic studies analyst.

How do you describe your job to someone outside the agency?

I evaluate a specified tenth of a mile from right-of-way fence to right-of-way fence and document any issues found. I enter what I find into a database, where it is used for maintenance budgeting purposes.

What's your typical work day like?

The views from my mobile office are spectacular! Within my work day, I may start out in the low desert region and travel our state's scenic highways and byways to the high country or even across our picturesque landscape of the Four Corners region. I've traveled this great state and seen it from state line to state line.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

The thing I enjoy the most about my job is being able to watch the sunrise.

If you won the lottery, what would you splurge on first?

A family vacation to Alaska.

What's on the top of your bucket list?

Retirement!

Which emoji is your favorite or most-used?



Leadership and Professional Development



NOW PLAYING What is #ADOTLeads?

A new video, [#ADOTLeads: Everyone is a Leader](#), spotlights leadership and professional development opportunities for everyone at ADOT.

#ADOTLeads is ADOT's Employee and Professional Development learning program and it was designed with everyone in mind. #ADOTLeads takes you on a learning journey that leads you to your personal and professional future. Watch the video to find out which learning series in #ADOTLeads is right for you. For more information, check out the [#ADOTLeads page](#) on ADOTNet or email LPD@azdot.gov.

ADOT JUMBLE

Directions: Unscramble each of the clue words, then arrange the circled letters to form the answer. Email your answers to InsideLane@azdot.gov by **Oct. 16**. Everyone who solves the puzzle will be entered into a drawing for a prize. We'll reveal the answers in next month's newsletter. Good luck!



- 1) MUEPOCRT _ _ _ _ _ O _
- 2) SIRUV _ O _ _ O
- 3) CHTAEATTMN O _ _ _ _ O O _ O _
- 4) GILCICKN _ O O _ _ O _ O
- 5) ROMARPG O _ _ _ _ _
- 6) HCAK O _ _ _

By jumping on the keyboard, this cyber-savvy cat saved his owner from a suspicious “ _ _ _ _ _ ”.