



May 2023 Connecting the DOTs SDSU Drone Days

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

SECRETARY'S CORNER:
PAGE 2

FY23 YEAR END DEADLINES/
E-TICKETING INNOVATION:
PAGE 3

AVIATION ART CONTEST
WINNERS: PAGE 4

MAY MENTORING MINUTE:
PAGE 5

2023 NATIONAL SUMMER
TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE:
PAGE 6

PROJECT/PUBLIC
ENGAGEMENT: PAGE 7

BHR UPDATES/NEW EMPLOYEE
ORIENTATION: PAGE 8

TRAINING UPDATES: PAGE 9

EMPLOYEE NEWS/UPDATES:
PAGES 10-13

WINTER 2022-23 SPECIAL
SECTION: PAGES 14-30



Josh Olson, Senior Region Bridge Engineer, Jon Nelson, Chief Land Surveyor, and Larry Dean, Planning Data Manager gave a SDDOT drone development and usage presentation at Drone Days hosted by SDSU. Cody Asher (Pierre Area Survey Crew Chief) participated in SDSU Drone Days by networking with students and other drone professionals.

This first-ever SDSU event was designed for college students, researchers, and in-field specialists (all with varying drone experience). Event goals were:

1. **Raise awareness** about the different fields that use the application of drone operations,
2. **Provide hands-on experiences** for those that have not previously flown, and
3. **Facilitate networking** with other field experts and drone enthusiasts.



Click to watch the 2023 SDDOT staff graduation video. Congrats to all!



<https://dot.sd.gov/2023-graduates>



The Secretary's Corner



In this May edition of the newsletter; we honor our winter maintenance staff across the state. I want to personally thank each of you for your dedicated work, especially during this past winter season. As important members of our team, you excelled in providing great customer service with your contributions as we all worked together to provide a safe and effective public transportation system for the public we proudly serve! **With your due diligence and pride in serving our travelers, you again played a vital role in advancing the mission and vision of our organization.**

I know the winter was a harsh one. Please know that we were cognizant of the toll it took on you and your families, and we are very grateful for your dedicated service. At times you risked your own safety to help those in need, many of who should have never been out traveling in the first place. But, as true stewards of SD, you did your job and showed the entire state how truly impactful you are to our transportation system in moving people and freight. **I am proud of all of you, and proud to be one of your team members.**

Thank you for continuously striving to enhance the quality of services, for being great stewards as you continue to serve the public and for making better lives through better transportation!



L-R: Chris Voelker, John Villbrandt, Doug Sherman, Richard Jahn, David Fischer, Zac Heller, Shayne Hagen, Jared Fosheim, Les Winsell, and Tim Blow.

Our SDDOT team prepares for winter maintenance year-round! The SDDOT employees pictured above recently attended the **2023 APWA (American Public Works Association) North American Snow Conference**. Attendees come from communities across the United States, as well as from countries like Canada and Norway. The conference is a chance to learn more about the latest innovations and discuss best practices for fighting snow and ice. A huge highlight each year is the Exhibit Hall where hundreds of vendors showcase the most innovative equipment and tools on the market. Our team attended multiple educational breakout sessions on a variety of topics.

Thanks to the SDDOT team members who attended this conference. **I appreciate your dedication to enhancing our winter maintenance knowledge and technique! Because of you, the SDDOT can provide the best customer service possible!**



PROCESSES

Reminder - FY23 Year End Deadlines

By Tracy Boom - Budget Analyst | Finance Office

All Vouchers (direct, contract, and purchase order payments) must be entered by **Tues., June 20, 2023, by 4 p.m. (CST)** and must be received by the State Auditor's office by **Mon., June 26, 2023, by 12 noon (CST)**. The June 20th deadline allows time for approval process and/or correction before the June 26th deadline. If you have any rush or emergency payments, please send to **Central Finance Office - Attn: Brandy Hansen**.

All Employee Reimbursements must be entered by **Thurs., June 15, 2023, by 4 p.m. (CST)** and must be received by the State Auditor's office by **Wed., June 21, 2023 by 12 noon (CST)**. The travel voucher deadline allows time for approval process and/or correction prior to reimbursement runs. After the deadline, the travel import portion of batch load will be shut down, but you will still be able to fill out employee templates, to begin processing on Mon., July 3, 2023. **For travel questions, please contact Brandy Hansen at 773-5615 or Patricia DeVitt at 773-5102 or via email.**

All CMP (Pay Estimates) need to be approved by area engineers and supervisors by **Thursday, June 15, 2023**. For questions, please contact **Blayne Humann (773-2897) or via email**.

(Tracy shared additional deadlines and Finance team contacts via email on May 3, 2023.)



May 2023 FHWA Feature:

Innovation In Project Delivery

SDDOT: Improving safety and efficiency with e-Ticketing



When the SDDOT approached the contracting community to consider the adoption of e-Ticketing, a partnership began that piloted and evolved the innovation on projects in 2020-2021. Working together, they proved the concept that a wireless fleet management system and electronic ticket capture software system could work together to generate and transmit weight tickets, with the side benefit of tracking trucks during transport and recording the point of placement of the hot-mix asphalt (HMA) on the project.

With the development and adoption of a new e-Ticketing Supplemental Specification, the SD contractors have an option of providing printed tickets or e-Tickets at no additional cost to the contract. The system uses a wireless fleet management system or global navigation satellite system management system and ticket capture software. These tools help to capture computer-generated weight tickets into a digital format and track trucks during transit for the recording of truck delivery of material at the point of placement on the project.

SDDOT piloted three e-Ticketing hot mix asphalt (HMA) projects in 2021 for HMA. In 2022, SDDOT contracted three additional HMA projects with e-Ticketing and then optioned three additional e-Ticketing projects. **Identified e-Ticketing benefits include improved work zone safety, since the person collecting tickets does not have to be on the road, and time savings by personnel tracking and totaling tonnage electronically.**

2023 Aviation Art Contest - Air Sports & The Environment

Each year the Federation Aeronautique Internationale (FAI) Association creates a theme for an art contest in an effort to motivate and encourage young people to become more familiar with and participate in aeronautics, engineering and science. The FAI then invites its member nations to submit their best artwork for international recognition. In the United States, the National Association of State Aviation Officials (NASAO) is the main organizer of the contest. Every Fall, South Dakota schools receive an invitation to participate in the contest.

The South Dakota winners are announced and displayed every spring at the SD Airports Conference, in the South Dakota Pilots Association newsletter, and on our SDDOT website.

Every child receives a certificate of participation and the winners receive prizes with an aviation or art theme and a laminated copy of their work.



May Mentoring Minute

By Kellie Beck & Wyatt Reis

The Mentoring Committee met on May 3, 2023, to get the matching process underway. One of the critical components to a successful mentoring pair is getting matched with someone who you feel can provide you the guidance and direction that you are seeking in your mentoring program. Each mentee, and mentor, have the ability to go into the mentoring software and identify their top five selections in regard to who they think would be a good match for them. The best case scenario is a mentee and a mentor who each pick each other as one of their top picks and that results in a **one to one match**. In essence this is the ideal pairing.

As the committee members worked their way through these one to one matches and on down the list of pairings, they were successful in pairing 31 mentees with mentors. **Of these 31 pairings, 71% were one to one matches.** This high percentage match rate shows that going through the speed dating process really does allow you to get to know specifically what the mentors can offer to you. This is an extremely high percentage for one to one pairings this year. The committee is looking forward to another fun and exciting year.

Below are pictures from the Mentoring Program Kick-off held on May 18, 2023, in Fort Pierre.



Mentoring Upcoming Events:

June 21, 2023 -- Workplace Motivators Webinar (1:30pm – 3:30 CT via Microsoft TEAMS)

Make time for Mentoring!



Prepared by: Joyce Gottlieb, FY17 National NSTI Program Manager

2023 National Summer Transportation Institute (NSTI)

The summer camp that takes you places!

Open to students entering grades 9-12!

The application deadline is May 31, 2023.

SDDOT participates in the National Summer Transportation Institute (NSTI) in partnership with SDSU and South Dakota Mines. Students explore engineering careers in transportation during these week-long residential camps, which are sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration and administered by SDDOT.

The program is fully funded by FHWA. All selected students receive scholarships to attend the NSTI camp! The scholarship covers the cost of registration, on-campus housing, food, and workshops. **The camps are completely free to the participants!**

During the one-week-long summer camp, students are introduced to different aspects of transportation engineering, such as planning, materials, and transportation modes among other topics. Students participate in hands-on lab activities in workshops, and learn from experts about the transportation sector and the problems transportation engineers solve!

The NSTI emphasizes how math is used to design transportation systems for land, air, and water. Students will get a behind-the-scenes look at how transportation systems work, along with classroom instruction, and hands-on activities in labs.

With one-on-one attention from faculty and staff, students come away understanding the career opportunities in the transportation sector and will be encouraged to pursue college degrees that prepare them for transportation-related degree programs, such as civil, environmental, and industrial engineering.

Please share this amazing opportunity with children, grandchildren, and friends!



July 9-15, 2023 or July 23-29, 2023

For more information:

<https://www.sdstate.edu/civil-environmental-engineering/national-summer-transportation-institute>



June 26-30, 2023

For more information:

<https://www.sdsmt.edu/Academics/Events-and-Outreach/Summer-Camps/Camp-NSTI/>

Public Engagement on Construction Projects:

On Wednesday, May 31, 2023, the SDDOT will hold an informational open house to answer questions and share information about the Interstate 90 and LaCrosse Street (exit 59) project in Rapid City.

The reconstructed interchange features a Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI), which is the first DDI in the state of South Dakota.

The open house provides the public and various stakeholder groups with the opportunity to learn more about the DDI, which will become fully operational this summer. Find more information about the DDI project in Rapid City at <https://www.i90lacrosseddi.com>.

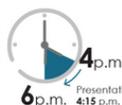
INFORMATIONAL OPEN HOUSE



You have been identified as a project stakeholder and are invited to attend a meeting to learn about the project prior to the Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI) being fully operational in early summer. Members of the project team will be available to answer questions.



May 31
WEDNESDAY



4 p.m.
6 p.m.

Washington Room
Best Western Ramkota Hotel
2111 N. LaCrosse St.
Rapid City, SD 57701

Diverging Diamond Interchange Fully Operational in Early Summer
The South Dakota Department of Transportation (SDDOT), in coordination with the City of Rapid City, is nearing the final stages of reconstruction of the LaCrosse Street and Interstate 90 (Exit 59) Interchange project. The reconstructed interchange will feature a Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI), which is the first DDI in the state of South Dakota.

PROJECT CONTACTS

<p>Dustin Hamilton Consultant Project Manager, HDR dustin.hamilton@hdrinc.com</p>	<p>Brenda Flottmeyer Project Engineer, SDDOT brenda.flottmeyer@state.sd.us</p>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<https://www.i90lacrosseddi.com>



SD
DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION



The diverging diamond interchange (DDI) is underway on 41st Street in Sioux Falls; one of the most heavily traveled streets in the state.

The website <https://www.41stddi.com> offers the latest project information including traffic alerts, FAQs, live cam footage, photos, and video tutorials. A hotline number is also provided on the website to answer questions!

New service for commuters:

Local commuters have a new option to receive information. They can subscribe to a **FREE text-in service** to get live updates on major traffic changes. (Subscribers can unsubscribe at any time!)

TEXT

41stDDI to

605-566-4041

FOR PROJECT UPDATES

Get the most recent updates on the 41st Street DDI project in Sioux Falls, right on your phone!



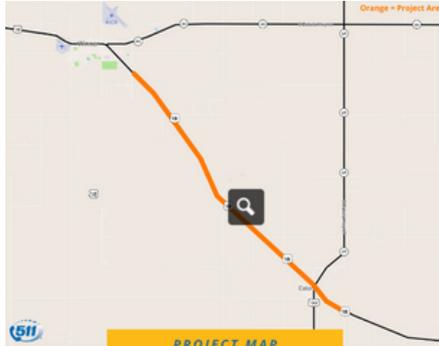



Project Videos:

Project videos used on featured project pages and social media help provide an update on project timelines/ construction activities; and also help provide education to the traveling public.

Watch this [video](#) on a Winner Area project; as filmed by **Brad Norrid, Winner Area Engineering supervisor**.

For more information about this project see the featured project page at <https://dot.sd.gov/highway18-pcn-089q>



PROJECT MAP

U.S. Highway 18

Between Winner and Colome





Biometric Screening Reminder



Maintaining a relationship with your primary care provider leads to better health outcomes. Rather than offering on-site screening events across the state, biometric screenings are now available solely through an annual wellness preventive exam with your primary care provider (PCP). This exam is covered at no cost once per plan year under preventive care, regardless of which health plan you choose.

For this screening to count towards your well-being rewards, you must complete the biometric screening form with your provider, sign, and submit it to Total Wellness by April 1, 2024.

<https://bhr.sd.gov/benefits/LiveWellSD/BiometricScreeningForm.pdf>

Resources and reward qualifications are available at <https://bhr.sd.gov/benefits/livewellsd/>.

New Employee Orientation

**Information/photos provided by June Hansen,
Civil Rights Compliance Officer/ADA Coordinator**



Approximately 50 new employees from across the state gathered on May 10-11, 2023, for New Employee Orientation at the Casey Tibbs Rodeo Center in Ft. Pierre.

Secretary Joel Jundt kicked off the event with an official welcome; and shared information about his personal and professional life. There was an opportunity to meet and greet with Secretary Jundt, Division Directors and Region Engineers. Each Division Director gave a brief overview of their divisions.

The Region Engineers provided helpful tips for success and shared things they have learned working at the SDDOT.

The orientation included presentations on conflict of interest, ethics, public service, and BHR provided an overview about various personnel topics.

The event concludes with the very popular tour of the Materials Lab and region/area maintenance equipment.





TRAINING UPDATE

Learn ~ Engage ~ Improve
June 2023

All SDDOT courses are loaded into the new system, we are working on adding the last 5 years of training to your transcripts and hope to be done by June.

You can now access [SDLearn](#) with the LMS icon on your desktop, do not enter a username or password. Simply click the “**State of South Dakota Single Sign-On**” button.



Welcome to SDLearn!

Admin Login

State of South Dakota Single Sign-On

[Forgot Username?](#) | [Forgot password?](#)

[Need help logging in? Contact us!](#)

Get an error? [SDLearn](#) will not allow you to log in unless you have a state email listed in your Employee Space. Please follow the directions below to update your account. Making this change is quite easy.

1. Log in to your [Employee Space](#)
2. Select Proceed to Employee Space.
3. Select Edit Profile > Personal Information
4. Double-click the email address to edit
5. Make sure your state email is listed as “YES” for Primary.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSES

[Welding Basics](#)

June 26-29 | 7:30 AM | Mitchell

REQUIRED SUPERVISORY COURSES

[Civil Treatment Workplace for Leaders](#)

June 14 | 9:00 am | Rapid City

June 14 | 1:00 pm | Sioux Falls

June 15 | 1:00 pm | Sioux Falls

June 22 | 8:00 am | Pierre

[CPC: Taking the Coach Approach](#)

May 31 | 9:00 am | Teams

NHI COURSES

[NHI 134049 Successfully Managing Construction Scheduling & Risk](#)

Self-Paced, Online Course, approx. 4 hours

[NHI 310110 Federal-Aid Highways 101](#)

June 6-7 | 8:00 am | Pierre



SDDOT Employee News and Updates . . .



Congrats to **James Bossert, Winner Area Highway Maintenance Worker**, on his retirement. James served the state for almost 24 years in various positions in the Pierre Region, and Mobridge/ Winner Areas. **Doug Sherman, Winner Area Engineer** noted, "James is someone who viewed serving the people of South Dakota as a great honor and he viewed each day as one where he owed those people an honest days work. He is a great role model." Pictured with James are two of his grandchildren, Adalyn and Gunner.



Congrats to Larry Podhradsky on his retirement. He retired on March 31, 2023, after 8 years with the SDDOT. Larry is pictured with **Ken Payne, Mitchell Area Highway Maintenance Supervisor.**



Thanks to everyone who participated in the 2023 SDDOT Bowling Tournament!

This tournament is open to any interested SDDOT current or past employee, and FHWA staff in Pierre.



Congratulations to the Tourney Champions: Andrew Mentele and Dave Voeltz

2023 Bowling Tourney Winners, pictured with the Champs:

- 2nd -Brad Richards/Tom Grannes**
- 3rd- Rip Ray/Stacy Bartlett**
- 4th-Hadly Eisenbeisz/Jacob Lincoln**



SDDOT Employee News and Updates

May 2023 Longevity:

Stephen Van Mullem, Water Resources Engineer – 25 years

(Central Office/Office of Bridge Design)

Gene Geffre, Transportation Analyst – 35 years

(Central Office/ Office of Road Design)

Clark Guthrie, Beautification/Billboard Technician – 35 years

(Pierre Region)



Gene Geffre, ROW Specialist in the Office of Road Design, celebrated 35 years of service with the SDDOT.

Neil Schochenmaier, PE LSIT Engineering Manager, recently presented Gene with his longevity pin.



Jared Bourdon, Aberdeen Region Parts Room Tech received his 10 year Pin from **Todd Hertel, Aberdeen Region Operations Engineer**.



Mike Welch, Aberdeen Region Design Engineer, recently celebrated 15 years of service with the SDDOT!

Scott Schneider, Aberdeen Region Design Engineer Manager, presented Mike with his longevity recognition!



Kari Kroll, Executive Assistant, Office of the Secretary, participated "on-stage" with presenter Tim Gabrielson at the **Administrative Professionals Event** held in Pierre!



Doug Kinniburgh, Local Government Engineer, attended the County Officials Spring Workshop held in Pierre.

This workshop is specifically designed for county auditors, treasurers, and register of deeds.





SDDOT Employee News and Updates

May New Hires:

Daryl Groenewold, Highway Maintenance Worker, Brookings

Michaela Collins, Transportation Technician, Rapid City

Matthew Glines, Road Design Engineer, Pierre

Cory Iwan, Journey Transportation Technician, Rapid City

Tyler Landwehr, Journey Transportation Technician, Belle Fourche

Trevor Carlin, Traffic Data Technician, Rapid City

Megan Stone, Transportation Planning Engineer, Sioux Falls

Justin Villmow, Highway Maintenance Worker, Armour

Sandra Koehler, Training Specialist, Pierre

Dwain Thomas, Highway Construction Project Engineer, Aberdeen

Alex Burkel, Highway Maintenance Worker, Woonsocket

Faith Kongslien, Accounting Assistant, Pierre

Anna Rywelski, Highway Construction Project Engineer, Mitchell

Robert Sonen, Highway Maintenance Worker, Salem

Todd Abbas, Highway Maintenance Worker, Salem

Zane Austin, Grading CAD Technician, Pierre

Jordan Young, Journey Transportation Technician, Pierre



May Promotions & Lateral Position Changes:

Sarah Moreno, Financial Program Accountant, Pierre

Neal Thomas, Highway Maintenance Worker, Rapid City

Timothy Pyle, Transportation Planning Engineer, Rapid City

Marcus Roth, Lead Highway Maintenance Worker, Rapid City

Kyle Watkins, DBE Program Coordinator, Pierre

Thomas Spisak, Highway Construction Project Engineer, Sioux Falls

Stacy DuChene, Senior Region Design Manager, Sioux Falls

Did you know? The SDDOT welcomed four new employees within the past few weeks who have SDDOT parents!

1. Megan Stone – Planning Engineer in the Project Development office in Sioux Falls. Megan’s dad, Matt Stone, is the Rapid City Region Materials Engineer.
2. Michaela Collins – Journey Transportation Technician in the Rapid City Area office. Michaela’s mom, Christal Collins, is a Project Technician in the Rapid City Region Materials Office.
3. Dylan Nelson – Journey Transportation Technician in the Rapid City Area office. Dylan’s dad, Jon Nelson, is a Land Surveyor in the Road Design Office in Pierre.
4. Cory Iwan – Journey Transportation Technician in the Rapid City Area office. Cory’s dad, Lanny Iwan, is the Rapid City Region Business Manager.



SDDOT Employee News and Updates



Meet Evan Andrew Sherman. Evan was born on April 26, 2023. He weighed 6 lbs. 7 oz. and was 19 inches long. Evan’s parents are Ryan and Crystal Sherman of Flandreau, SD.

Evan is the 9th grandchild for Doug Sherman, Winner Area Engineer and his wife, Val.



Meet Jace Jon Brusven. He was born on May 15, 2023, to **Communication Specialist, Taylor Brusven** and her husband Cole.

Jace is welcomed by his big sister Rory!

Jace weighed 7 lbs. 12 oz. and was 21 inches long.



Meet Mylo Ann Gosch. She was born on May 15, 2023, to **Jesse Gosch (Selby Lead Highway Maintenance Worker)**, and his wife Kylie.

Mylo is welcomed by 4-year old brother Graysen!

She weighed 6 lbs. 4.5 oz. and was 19 inches long.



Greg Aalberg, Sioux Falls Area Engineering Supervisor, took some time to show his grandson, **Brayden Berkimier** just how big a snowplow really is!



Winter 2022-23 Operations Update

By Craig Smith, Director of Operations

**SPECIAL SECTION:
WINTER 2022-23**



Operations Update for Winter 2022-2023

Budget vs. Expenditures:

FY23 Original Budget **\$20.5 million**

FY23 Amended Budget (Increased \$12.9M) = Total **\$33.5 million**

FY23 Total Winter Expenditures = \$36.3 million

The total expenditures do not include costs to replenish inventory of salt, plow cutting edges, etc.

Usage Numbers FY23:

Plow Truck Miles = 3.2 million compared to average of 1.4 million the last two winters

Manhours = 178,000 compared to average of 77,000 last two winters

Salt (Tons) = 62,000 compared to average of 44,000 used last two winters

Diesel Fuel (Gallons) = 1 million gallons compared to average of 540,000 last two winters

Inflation:

Salt = 10%

Diesel = 220% increase over FY21

FY21=\$1.79/gal vs. FY23=\$3.94/gal

Communication:

Press releases – 48 issued for closing/re-opening Interstates (compared to six last winter)

Social Media – The SDDOT had nearly 7.8 million impressions on Interstate opening/closing posts

SD511 – 230,000 calls / 2 million phone app sessions / 4.4 million website sessions /

SD511 Email/Text Notification Sign-Up - Increased from 8,973 in December 2022 to 9,583 in April 2023

After Action Review:

As part of the end of winter appreciation events, there has been good discussion on what can be done better in the future. Additionally, meetings with external stakeholders, Highway Patrol, Office of Emergency Management, County Sheriffs, and County and Tribal Emergency Managers are being held to get input.

The recurring theme has been how to reduce the number of stranded motorists during winter events and how to coordinate rescue missions when needed. Some of the ideas being explored are the ability to close secondary state highways, improving 511 information to reflect the severity of the conditions, inclusion of local county and tribal travel advisories and closures on 511, working with the navigation apps to avoid directing traffic around interstate closures onto local roads, reviewing equipment available for rescue missions, and coordination of rescue missions.

Thank You:

I truly appreciate our DOT maintenance crews commitment and service provided. This past winter certainly highlighted the great work of our crews. The efforts of our dedicated employees to work long hours, work on weekends and holidays, volunteer to assist other areas and regions, rescue stranded motorists, and to diligently provide updated road condition information, no doubt improved highway safety and saved lives.

REALITY OF WINTER 2022-23

BY MELVIN MALSAM, ABERDEEN AREA HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE SUPERVISOR

Every good winter starts with a good ice storm, and this winter was no exception. In late November, over 1" of ice was on everything. Everywhere you looked, tree branches were down or broken, along with power lines. In some areas, some plow trucks had to stop traffic to ensure high loaded trucks didn't hit them. One power line was so low that the light bar on a sander hit it. There was a bright flash and a big boom that was seen and heard. The two operators, one being a newbie, were trying to figure out what happened. The newbie was thinking...what did I just sign up for?!?!? It definitely led to an interesting story to be told to his wife that night!

In December, winter came in like a lion. This entailed of a week with No Travel Advised. Some operators made it home, some went to a friend's house, some went to a hotel, and even one stayed in the shop. This was followed by a week of checking and repairing equipment and blowing snow. Then followed another week of hell with more No Travel Advised days.

With a total crew of 24, 8 of them needed snowplow training before they could be out on the road by themselves. That meant that roads normally having 2 or 3 trucks on them, now only had one. The newbies were on roads that they could barely see and normal people were told to not be out and here they are needing to be out, again wondering...is this what I signed up for?!?!?

A wrong step and a slip, and it's 9' to the ground, (when you fall from the top of a sander), and you land on your feet, standing up. Just like a cat with 9 lives right? Not right in this case...after taking one step you hit the ground because one foot has both bones broke above the ankle and can no way support walking. This was definitely more pain than one could imagine. Now, to call for help when your phone it is in your truck and you're on the back passenger's side. So you crawl to the passenger door and get up enough to find that it's locked. You realize, you will have to crawl around the front (which includes going around the plow) to get to the driver's side door. You take a break by warming your hands on the radiator hose and then you continue the trek. After 1 ½ hours, you finally make it to the driver's side door and get up in the truck to reach your phone to call for help. The thought arises again....is this what I signed up for?!?!?

A shock came to the crew in a different matter, not weather related ... Austin ... he always had a smile and was never short on a one-liner. We will miss you! RIP

March came in like a lion and went out like a lion. It seemed like winter would never end. We'd no sooner get the roads cleared up from one storm, then another one would come and be worse than the last one. This pattern continued right into the first week of April, then just like that, winter was over we had beautiful weather, then the next day we'd be back to a No Travel Advisory. A week later, about 80% of our snow is gone, and now we're having to watch for flooding.

NWS indicated the total snow for the year was Aberdeen 74.2" Britton 92.1" and Summit 95.4" sorry could not get a good report for Webster.

This winter has been very long and eventful. There have been many ups and downs. I want to say Thank You to everyone for your help in getting through this winter!

**IMPACT AWARD WINNERS - WINTER MAINTENANCE STAFF AND SUPPORT STAFF
(BY REGION)**

Central Office

Craig Smith
Christina Bennett
Danny Varilek
Dave Huft
Susan Geigle
Don Mentele
Rayleen Rageth
Taylor Brusven
Julie Stevenson
Bret Mattice

Pierre Region

Region Administration -

Jason Humphrey

Jim Hyde
Doug Gorham
Monica Ortbahn
Melody Maeschen

Region Repair Shop

Tim Blow
Nathan Brockel
Brian Nickelson
Kyle Currier
Kent Cross
Dustin Olson
Rick Campbell
Charles Trent
Amy Caldwell

Region Bridge Crew

Andrew Livermont
Kyle Meier

Region Traffic Crew

Mike Nold
Logan Gregg
James Wilson
Gary Olivier
Ed Kaelin
James Wilson

Pierre Area - Dean VanDeWiele

Barb Spelbring
Robert Carrico
Les Winsell
Mike Burrer
Justin (Sid) Green
Dirk Leiseth
Kyle Willis
Todd Madden
Merlin Bennett
Steve Withers
Cyle Phillips
John Tanner
Bruce Zebroski
Jaydon Wright
Joseph Scott
Jared Fosheim
Luke Neville
Randy Boyd
Trent Manecke
Justin Schofield
Larry Andersen
Arlen Prince
Donnie Ehlers

Winner Area - Doug Sherman

Kim Nagel
Brad Norrid
Grady Myers
Jay Lovejoy
Austin Berry
Carl Brown
Kathy Brown
Gabriel Ellendorf
Clayton Fosheim
Joshua Gullickson
Spencer Hansen
Trent Hanson
Andrew Hatheway
Justice Jennings
Joe Kukal
Jacob Lolley
Jim Lolley
Dan McManigal
Cameron Meinzer
Damien Robol
Sam Spence
Beau Walker

Cody Allen
Collin Bartlett
James Bossert
Rian Edwards
Alfred Grass
Tre' lyotte
Doug Johnson
Mike Johnson
Phillip Kahler
David Lolley
Alvin Ray Olson
Greg Ulmer
Brent Valandra
Matt Vobr
Mike Weathermon
Robert Week
Shannon White Buffalo
Brad Whitley
Todd Gullickson

Mobridge Area - John Villbrandt

Jason Kraft
Bill Dunbar
Neil Filler
Chris Byre
Mark Bates
Steve Deibert
Dale Weisbeck
Jesse Gosch
Shane Thorstenson
Tate Merchant
Jim Brooks
Andrew Schuler
David "Tiny" Martin
Raymond "RJ" Joens
Jack Veit
Jay Boldt
Chet Collins
Loren Miller
Ross Kraft
Arlen Halverson
Keith Gall
Kyle Maier
Wanda Fuhrer
Brady Dunbar
Kelly Armfield
Brian Hintz

Aberdeen Region

Region Administration - Mark Peterson

Scott Eisenbeisz
Alicia Bauley
Patty Raugutt

Region Operation

Todd Hertel
Brian Wacholz

Region Repair Shop

Mark Preszler
Stephen Crane
Anthony Hoffman
Jason Hammrich
Bernidette Weinman
Myron Haar
Shane Brick

Region Partsroom

Jeffrey Walz
Jared Bourdon

Region Bridge

Quentin Berger
Shawn Patton
John Heidenreich

Region Traffic

Bob Woolridge
John Weigel
Josh Haar

Aberdeen Area - Bruce Schroeder

JoAnn Kayser
Melvin Malsam
Brian Versluys
Jacob Lunders
Daryl Johnson
Brad Reecy
Chaz Shuff
Kevin Pavlicek

Britton

Lyle Lenius
Mike Hastings
Aaron Wade
Dominic Drake

Leola

Alan Wimer
Jesse Spitzer
Brett Schaible
Brent Weig

Webster

Mike Johnson
John Premus
Jon Anderson
Matthew Grajczyk
Donald Bawek
Mark Besaw

Faulkton

Cody Wangsness
Clyde Baker
Steve Bau
Kent Hall

Ipswich

Dominique Anglin
David Shoultz
Jesse Knittel
Bryan Owens

Watertown Area - Matt Brey

Darla Brandlee
Lance White
Craig Christeson
Larry Schanbeck
Brian Burke
Mike Lauritsen
Justin Toering

Clear Lake
Calvin Esche
Bruce Thiewes
Jayson Hall
Van Schiefelbein
Stacy Deboer
Stacey Hinders

Hayti

Michael Voelsch
Keith Palo
Alan Salo

Brookings

Michael Thielen
Jeremy Hexem
Trevor Lambert
Kevin Swartos
Mike Olson

Milbank

Darin Ofarrell
Jonathan Liebe
Donald Weber
Kevin Pies

Sisseton

Brian Chase
Travis Bergeson
Tim Meland
Frank Hoss
Levi Bartz
Cody Loup
Scott Syverson

Huron Area - Brad Letcher

Bonnie Palmer
Myron Simons
Kevin Soward
David Jennings
Terence Peck
Travis Roberts
Cody Ulmer
Roger Flint

Clark

LeRay Swedeen
Terrance Reitz
Eric Bush
Jeffrey Winfrey

DeSmet

Justin Smith
Justin Purintun
Jared Tolzin

Highmore

James Stephenson
Michael Roberts
Brad Parmely

Miller

Gregory Droz
Taylor Droz
Theodore Schaff
Cory Breland

Redfield

Rodney Schweitzer
Wesley Jatton
Darwin Fliehe
Daniel Evans

Mitchell Region

Region Administration

Travis Dressen

Region Operations

Ruth Wittenhagen
John Raschke
Steven Rhoades
Ryan Degen
Corey Weerheim
Nicholas Lemke
Andrew Prickett
Levi Balcom
Mark Engle
Bryan Toman
Douglas O'Neill
Alan Zens
Steven Weisz
Travis Schnabel
Benjamin Kary
Brandon Shores
Bradley Golay
Dalton Soulek
Michael Benson
Doug Amundson
Cameron Sprecher
Andrew Domeyer
Brian Gengler
Brian McPhail
Tanner Bartscher
Keith Lunstra
Kent Lowe

Mitchell Area - Jay Peppel

Armour

Allen Brown
Terry Vogt
Travis Sparks
Jerry Leonard

Bonesteel

Jacob Bentz
Wyatt Reis
Tucker Dummer
Brian Simpson

Chamberlain

Bruce Robison
David Priebe
Thomas Ascher
Marty Waugh
Robert Hosek

Mitchell Area continued

Mitchell

Aaron Climer
Joey Puetz
William Metzger
Austin Tietz
Cory Lowrie
Charles Goldammer
Bradley Huffman
Michael Hayes
Kevin Tietz
Bruce Holmquist
Dalton Warren
Matthew Trabing
Jordan Lipp

Plankington

Austin Taylor
Mathew Lewis
Bruce Van Zee
Dale Kunkel
Kenneth Payne
Roger Konechne

Platte

Robert Dyk
Robert Roth
Christopher Olson

Salem

Dennis Kobernusz
Rob Hansen
Jesse Muth

Woonsocket

Jay Schriever
Michael Kogel
Larry Podhradsky

Sioux Falls Area -

Harry Johnston

Flandreau

Chad Urban
William Burshiem
Thomas Paradeis
Joshua Weber

Sioux Falls Area continued

Lennox

Cole McCormick
Kevin Wiebers
Brad Cox
Timothy Dannen
Michael Sherwood

Madison

Christopher Voelker
Jess Doblal
Bruce Cramer
Matthew Wochnick

Sioux Falls

Caleb Van Zee
Steven Schneider
Curtis Theisen
Thomas Spisak
Adrian McClarty
Joshua Bethke
Adam Feistner
Jared Lahr
Keith Voegeli
Douglas Boyden
Christopher Peters
David Polcari
Thomas Polzien
Mark Burger
Joseph Nagorniuk
Joshua Timmerman
Joshua Anderson
Ty Scofield
Daniel Trost

Yankton Area - Gregory Rothschild

Beresford

Stacy Rasmussen
Travis Dominisse
John Sackett
Lyle Norling

Menno

Scott Simonsen
Cody Herrboldt
David Fischer

Tyndall

Andrew Kessler
Jedidiah Whittington
Matthew Souhrada

Vermillion

Gene Ericson
John Gustad
Richard Jahn
Christian Anderson
Jeffrey Protzman
Gerald Hansen
Bradley Steeneck
Tyler Small
Glenn Groethe

Yankton

Martin Schievelbein
Nathan Loecker
Matthew Munkvold
John Huber
Ray Haenfler
David Lane
Brian Huber
Austin Huckins

Rapid City Region Impact Award List

Region Administration - Todd Seaman

Krystl Vermundson
Lanny Iwan

Region Operations Staff

Michele Gabert
Tom Horan
Steve Kamarainen
Broc Swanson
Leland Douglas
Tel Saucerman
Lloyd Nickels
Ryon Schimke
Jeremie Mackie
Gary Price
Dan Lemme
Colin Karley
Brad Patterson
Andrew Hatch
Martin Harre
Joel Finney
Bradley Tisdall
Donald Curtis
Carter Gravatt
Vance Valloff
Al Traversie
Kevin Meyers
Landon Treftz
Dean Kirschenmann
Neal Thomas Region
Lee Lindsley Region

Rapid City Area - Mike Carlson

John Gerlach
Steve Palmer
Darrel Henrichsen
Michael Rogers
Kelly Boland
Kayla Hernandez
Tom Beetem
Jeff Gillam
Joel Klewicki
Justin Smith

Rapid City Area Continued

Kevin Bergman
Brenda Flottmeyer
Jason Baker
Jana Morris
Andrew Harvey
Kevin Ellis
Dylan Nelson
Tate Cullers
Riley Finck
Robert Smith
Chad Shull
Kevin Nilson
Steven Theunissen
Robert Nolan
Marcus Roth
Dustin Hackens
Christopher Novak
Christopher Cline
Andrew Ferris
Gary Vernon
Colin Eisenbraun
Jared Denke
Shaun McKay
Kyle Ford
Andrew Motzko
Mike Klamm
Chris Waterland
John Pearson
Jeff Sampson
Zac Heller
Tatum Anderson
Michael Sanders
Colonel Brist
Craig Whitford
Robert Kobes
Jeffrey Edwardson
Scott Hymans
Dale Johnson

Belle Fourche Area - John Matthesen

Jim Dorfschmidt
Bob Murray
Tige Thorman
Joel Flesner
Rick Walton
Richard Bartels
Greg Dvorak
Kyle Lewis
Joshua Herman

Belle Fourche Area Continued

Karl Hulin
Brenda Butler
Justin Till
Jerry Janvrin
Russell Cramer
James Blaha
Randy Jaukkuri
Billy Heidrich
Thomas Barrera
Eric Adams
Joel Larson
Shane Ingles
Julie Englehart
Seth Tenold
Richard Smith
Carlyle Ellison
Jarvis Palmer
Jesse King
Glenn Palmer

Custer Area - Rich Zacher

Ron Lauritsen
Scott Olson
Jon Robb
Connie Zeimet
Greg Boness
David Pannel
Patrick Gednalske
Tyler Ray
Doyle Boisen
Dan Ray
Thomas Mahar
Tucker Pankowski
Hannah Zastrow
Clarence Bowman
Shane Stewart
Todd Benzel
Lon Waltman
Tony March
Matt Dunn
Matt Hughes
Gene Plant
Ryan Hannah
Don Gerard
Richard (Shayne) Hagen
Rick Matsamas
Kerry Jost
Greg Segar

A PICTURE IS WORTH 1,000 WORDS!

This winter over 200 photos were taken by snow plow operators (and from our road side cameras) and placed onto our special Winter Storm web site page. The page was developed to provide the latest information to travelers, and the photos were used by media and local officials to share our safety messages during the multiple storms!

View all the photos (saved by month; with geographic location noted) at <https://dot.sd.gov/travelers/travelers/winter-storm-information>



California Dreamin'

Pictured is **Jeff Winfrey, Winter Highway Maintenance worker**, from Clark plowing on S.D. Highway 20. Jeff is from California and started working for the DOT in January! Who would have thought a person from sunny California would be out in the middle of the frozen tundra plowing snow in beautiful South Dakota?

Roger Flint, Highway Maintenance Supervisor (Unit 192), took this picture of Jeff in action!

Photo submitted by **David Jennings, Highway Maintenance Supervisor – Huron Unit 191**.

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

Roger Flint, Huron Highway Maintenance Supervisor, sent this photo and noted this winter was definitely about perspective.

"These are not drifts, but beautiful waves of snow on a bridge on S.D. Highway 26."



Brian Chase, Highway Maintenance Supervisor (Sisseton) provided pictures from efforts to bulldoze and blow "truck high" snow on S.D. Highway 10.



A PICTURE IS WORTH 1,000 WORDS!

Bruce Schroeder, Aberdeen Area Engineer, provided photos from Aberdeen, Britton, and Leola below:



COUNTLESS RESCUE MISSIONS

During our first December blizzard, I received a call at approximately 4:30 p.m. on a Friday about a disabled plow truck located 15 miles west of Pierre. A retrieval crew comprised of **Nathan Brockel** and **Edward Kaelin** took our semi-tractor to load the truck and bring the truck/driver home. High winds and 25 below windchill made working conditions difficult. While working to secure the truck one employee received minor frostbite on his fingers, but the equipment was safely brought to the repair shop, so repairs could be done the following Saturday.

During all the blizzard events, my staff were involved in long hours during the week and weekends to keep equipment on the roads. From repairing equipment, securing parts, or cleaning the snow from the Region parking lot so maintenance staff or emergency personnel like Highway Patrol or Pierre PD were able to access the fuel islands, the Pierre repair shop staff exceeded expectations.

Submitted by: Tim Blow, Pierre Region Equipment Shop Forman



Bruce Robison (HMW, Chamberlain) and Matt Wranek (Winter Reserve, Chamberlain) went to the S.D. Highway 47 and S.D. Highway 49 junction south of Reliance and took several stranded motorists back to Chamberlain. When they got back to Chamberlain, they then led the **Sheriff Manger's family back to Reliance** (they had been in Chamberlain with his father for a few days and he had passed away and the family just wanted to go home) and picked up another motorist to take back to Chamberlain. **(You can read the kind letter from Sheriff Manger on the next page!)**

Matt Wranek went to S.D. Highway 47 and then Cooper School Road to try to get to a motorist. When he could not reach the motorist from the west, **Marty Waugh (HWM, Chamberlain) and Tom Ascher (HMW, Chamberlain)** started east from Oacoma to try to get to the motorist, but the motorist got out on their own.

Bruce Robison, Marty Waugh, Bob Hosek (HMW, Chamberlain), and Matt Wranek all went on rescues one afternoon. Bob and Marty went north of Chamberlain on S.D. Highway 50 and then east on S.D. Highway 34 to get to stranded vehicles while Matt and Bruce went north on S.D. Highway 45 into Miller's area north of Highway 34 to get stranded motorists. After they got everyone out on Highway 34, loaded up some of the motorists on Highway 45, and led others, they were all on their way back to Chamberlain when Buffalo County Sheriff Willman called that he had got stuck himself. Bruce then sent his passengers with Matt and went back and got Sheriff Willman before heading home.

Lastly, in March I was working my way home from Chamberlain on Interstate 90 when I came upon a major accident near White Lake. This was the "big one" with 12 semis damaged and many other vehicles. I stayed and helped with getting injured people out, and was able to lead rescue and ambulances through the stopped vehicles. After we got all the vehicles turned around that could go back to get off the Interstate, I stayed and helped with the cleanup. **Bruce VanZee (LHMW, Plankinton)** came back out with his plow truck and as they cleared vehicles off the road, he plowed the drifts that resulted from the stranded vehicles. We stayed and helped with the cleanup until 11 p.m. that evening.

Submitted by: Ken Payne, Mitchell Area Highway Maintenance Supervisor

COUNTLESS RESCUE MISSIONS



Please find the below the letter that **Jason Humphrey and Doug Sherman** received from **Steve Manger, Lyman County Sheriff**. Sheriff Manger acknowledges the SDDOT kindness and compassion.

"I would like to start out by telling you that it is truly an honor to be able to work with the South Dakota Department of Transportation. The December blizzard of 2022 will be memorable for me for several reasons. Not only did your employees assist the Lyman County Sheriff's Office on several rescues over a couple-week span, but also were there to assist me personally.

On the evening of December 14, 2022, my father, retired Lyman County Sheriff Don Manger, passed away at Sanford Medical Center in Chamberlain, SD. I was sitting in the hospital with my mother, who had just lost her husband and partner of 63 years, as well as my siblings. To say the least, we were all extremely heartbroken at the loss of Dad. Due to the interstate closure and the incoming storm, Interstate 90 was closed, and rescue missions were currently being conducted by DOT Staff and Law Enforcement. We were extremely worried that we were going to have to stay in the hospital and mourn the loss of our father for the next several days. I asked my mother what she wanted to do, and she looked at me, cried, and said, "I just want to go home." That statement completely melted this old man's heart, so I did what any other person in my situation would do: I placed a phone call.

I learned that Chamberlain DOT personnel were gearing up to attempt a rescue mission on I-90 in the Reliance area and that Presho DOT personnel were heading to the same rescue. I asked if there was any possible way that we could tag along so that I could get my family home to Kennebec and we could begin the grieving process in the comfort of our own home. The courtesy was granted by the brave men that were working that evening, and they allowed us to follow behind. Once we made it to the Reliance exit, the Presho crew, along with one of my Deputies, escorted us the rest of the way home. The compassion and respect that your DOT workers showed to my family and me that night were extraordinary, and these gentlemen went above and beyond the call of duty. With that being said, once again, I truly appreciate your assistance and allowing these men to do what they did. On behalf of the Manger Family and me personally, we are truly grateful."

January 5th, 2023

South Dakota Highway Department
1200 E SD Hwy 44
Winner, SD 57580

Rotary



Dear South Dakota Highway Department;

On behalf of the Winner Rotary Club, we would like to take a moment to thank all the South Dakota Highway Department staff that have gone above and beyond during these stressful few weeks. We have noticed and appreciate the efforts of your staff.

The last 3 snow events in South Dakota have hit our area very hard. Your staff stepped up to the challenge! The entire county and state owes a debt of gratitude to the South Dakota Highway Department staff for working endless hours to keep our roads clean, our emergency routes open and our emergency transportation operational. The time spent away from your own families during the holidays so we could be with our families is appreciated.

Once again, thank you for your hard work and dedication to the people of Tripp County and South Dakota.

Sincerely;

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Schramm".

Jeff Schramm

Rotary Club – Winner Chapter - President

MISSION CREW TASKED WITH PERFORMING BACK TO BACK (TO BACK) RESCUE MISSIONS

The crew of the **Mission shop** was tasked with performing rescue missions for stranded motorists during the December Blizzards on three consecutive nights. All three missions were late at night with zero visibility conditions. The first mission involved two stranded motorists on a BIA Road in Todd County who were low on fuel and at risk of freezing to death. Mission Crew sent a team of three individuals (**Brent Valandra, Mike Weathermon, and Jay Lovejoy**) out on the rescue mission which involved a snow plow truck and a pickup to transport the rescued people in. This rescue mission which involved traveling **roughly 20 total miles lasted over eight hours** until roughly 2:30 a.m. before our crew was safe and sound back inside their shop where they all stayed the rest of the night.

The second mission the next evening began around 4:30 p.m. when the spouse of a stranded motorist called Pierre to voice concerns about her husband who was stranded inside a semi-truck near Carter, SD, roughly 25 miles east of Mission. The same three guys went on this rescue mission. Conditions were so bad that it took this group until nearly 12:30 a.m. to reach Carter. When they arrived they found several trucks present and asked around as to who needed to be rescued. Two people asked to be rescued and one of them was the spouse of the person who had called earlier. All others said they had plenty of fuel and opted to stay. Our crew loaded up the two who wished to be rescued and began heading back west to Mission. Immediately they encountered a semi which was one that said they were safe and thought they could follow our crew through. This semi was now stuck in the road and blocking the only path our guys had. Fortunately, the semi was hauling a large snow cat which the driver unloaded and used to help dig himself and our crew back out. This caused a delay of close to three hours though and by then conditions were beyond horrible. Our crew, with the people they had rescued, again began making their way west to Mission around 3:30 a.m. By 4:30 a.m. though they again found themselves stuck and unable to move. **Our crew who was on the rescue mission, now needed to be rescued themselves.** By 7:30 a.m. as the sun started rising, hopes of better visibility with daylight were dashed. We knew we had to get to this group. Rescue parties from both Winner and White River organized and mobilized quickly to try and get to the Mission crew. The Winner crew was stopped dead in their tracks near the S.D. Highway 53 junction as numerous vehicles had been abandoned and were left inside huge snowdrifts. By 4 p.m. the next day, the Winner crew had to give up their attempt. The White River crew which consisted of a motor grader with V-Plow, snowplow, and pickup were able to finally punch their way through and get to our guys by 5 p.m. on Friday night. Visibility had improved a little, so with the V-Plow, they pulled our crew out. All staff and private citizens arrived in Mission by 7 p.m. safely. The private citizens were taken to a nearby shelter. Our guys were finally able to rest.

Saturday arrived and conditions were still very bad. A food truck was trying to get from Gregory, SD to the Rosebud Reservation so our crew focused all efforts on U.S. Highway 18 to help get the food truck through. Late in the afternoon that Saturday, OEM received a call of a bad accident with multiple fatalities on U.S. Highway 83 south of Mission. Because of this call and knowing ambulances would be needed, we abandoned trying to get Highway 18 open and sent all trucks and equipment to Highway 83. Unfortunately, by 8:30 p.m. when we punched our way through Highway 83, we quickly learned there was no accident...and that someone deliberately deceived us. This was frustrating because we could have stayed on Highway 18 and helped get the food truck through, but could not do that because of this prank call. The food truck eventually did make its way through on S.D. Highway 44 as our White River and Winner crews were able to create an opening there, but that way is a considerably longer distance and cost valuable time in getting the food truck to Rosebud.

Submitted by Doug Sherman, Winner Area Engineer

COUNTLESS RESCUE MISSIONS

I was plowing on U.S. Highway 14 west during the blizzard a week or two before Christmas. I was at the end of my route when I met a suburban with a car trailer pulling a sports car followed by a U-Haul box van. I turned around at my turning point and drove about a mile and at this point, visibility is nearly 100 feet. I come upon the U-Haul stopped halfway in the shoulder and driving lane. I pulled up behind him and thought about what to do.

Temperatures were near zero, the time was only a couple hours before dark and the wind was blowing 40 mph. He wasn't totally blocking the lane, so I went around him and continued plowing. As I went further, the suburban with the car trailer was just parked in the driving lane, so I went around them. I radioed **Les Winsell, Highway Maintenance Supervisor**, and asked him what he wanted me to do. He told me to turn around and park behind them and wait for **Kyle Willis, Lead Highway Maintenance Worker**, to bring a chain. It took me what felt like an hour to find a spot and turn around and creep back to them.

I parked behind the U-Haul. I didn't feel comfortable getting out at the moment to go talk to the guy, but this guy gets out of his vehicle and walks back to me on the zero-visibility highway in his penny loafers and spring coat. He begged me to just give him a push and he would be out. I told him I couldn't do that, and that I was waiting for a chain. I knew it would be a couple of hours before a chain arrived. Several people came by and I couldn't believe it but some pickup stopped in the middle of the highway to see if the car had help coming. I thought I was going to witness a rear-end collision.

The chain finally arrived, and we quickly hooked him up, pulled him out, and told him we were going to escort him to town. We had about a half hour of sunlight remaining. Things were going great for 15 miles or so until at one location the wind and snow were blowing so bad that I couldn't see the road for a good 8 seconds. I knew I couldn't stop because the Suburban was on my tail. It finally cleared and I hear on the radio, "Hold up Kyle, he went into the ditch again." So, I stopped and the kid in the suburban came running up to me and was relaying information on what happened.

He went on to thank me for everything we are doing and that he was just trying to move his family to a military base.

After pulling him out again we were on our way again and finally arrived in town.

Written by Kyle Meier, Highway Maintenance Worker - Region Bridge Crew

Submitted by: Jim Hyde, Pierre Region Operations Engineer

COUNTLESS RESCUE MISSIONS

I left Yankton at 3:30 a.m. and picked up **David Fischer from the Menno Shop**. We stopped in Sioux Falls to get a truck-mounted snow blower to escort me in the pickup. We then went to Mitchell and stopped to get the boxes of food and medical supplies. There were ten large boxes and they barely fit in the cab of the pickup. The roads and visibility were not too bad until we got to Plankinton. From Plankinton to Chamberlain the visibility was pretty bad and there were a couple of larger drifts the blower had to clean out so we could make it through.



At the exit east of Chamberlain, due to extensive drifting, we had to switch over to drive west in the eastbound lanes of I-90, and drove all the way to Wall in the eastbound lanes. Reliance is where the “wheels really fell off” as the visibility was zero. I led the way with the pickup because we figured if I went off the road or got stuck, the blower could pull me out. If the blower got stuck, we knew we were simply done. Kennebec to Presho was even worse, and neither David nor I thought we could go on. I was driving with my head out the window of the pickup to try to see any landmarks to stay on the road while pushing bumper-height snow. We traveled those 10 miles at about five miles per hour. It took us well over an hour to drive from Kennebec to Presho. Once I got stuck on top of the road, another time I drove off the road. David pulled me out each time.

When we made it to Presho, the road conditions started to improve a little. **Jim Lolley, Murdo Highway Maintenance Supervisor**, provided us with a snowplow escort for the rest of the trip! **Justice Jennings** led us from Presho to Murdo. It was still tough going, but much easier with Jim’s team guiding us. We fueled in Murdo, and from there, **Kathy Brown** led us to Wall. The conditions greatly improved somewhere between Kadoka and Wall as the storm was clearing in the west. When we arrived near Wall, we could see some sun and blue sky. We handed off the packages to **Joe Klewicki and Riley Finek**, who drove the packages from Wall to Rapid. We spent the next couple of days blowing snow with Jim’s crew around Murdo. I am both thankful and proud to have been a part of this mission. We had a lot of DOT help and support along the way.

Allan Miller, Response Branch Team Leader, Dept. of Public Safety | Office of Emergency Management provided this photo and a note of thanks from the recipients of the amazing services described above by Nathan. “The Bruers stopped by the Mitchell Office on their way to Sioux Falls and wanted to express their gratitude to OEM, DPS, and DOT for their efforts last week in getting medicine and food delivered for Miley and Kamden.”

Submitted by: Nathan Loecker, Yankton Area



Please view the **DakotaNewsNow** story that ran on Monday about the work of our team, led by **Les Winsell, Pierre Area Highway Maintenance Supervisor**, to escort a pregnant mom in labor to the hospital during the blizzard!

<https://www.dakotaneWSnow.com/2023/01/17/avera-medical-minute-snow-plows-escort-pregnant-mom-avera-st-marys/>

MITCHELL REGION: WINTER RECAP & CELEBRATION EVENT



Pictured (L to R): Mitchell Area (and Operations), Sioux Falls Area (and Operations), and Yankton Area.



Safety Awards:
Michael Hayes won for most truthful accident reports filed.



Safety Awards:
Keith Voegeli won for most accident reports filed.



Safety Awards:
 Travis Sparks accepted for **Unit 251** (the Safest Unit!)



Region Repair Units

Unit 251 (Award winners for safest unit)



Unit 292



Unit 252



Unit 271, Unit 289 (SF Traffic), & Unit 288 (Bridge)



Unit 253



Unit 291



Unit 272



PIERRE REGION: WINTER RECAP & CELEBRATION EVENT

The Pierre Region held their winter recap meeting and time of celebration at the newly completed Eagle Butte shop.



RAPID CITY REGION: WINTER MEETING RECAP & CELEBRATION EVENT

1. Group photo of Belle Fourche Area, Custer Area, and Rapid City Area Operations.
2. The Deadwood crew won the Region Cornhole Tournament in dramatic fashion.
3. Pictured is the Grand prize trophy for the winning team.
4. Brad Tisdall, Rapid City Equipment Technician, catered the event with his company Kayoss BBQ.
5. Cornhole Tournament semi-finals in action.
6. Operations staff watching safety lectures at the Sturgis Community Center.



ABERDEEN REGION: WINTER MEETING RECAP & CELEBRATION EVENT

The Aberdeen Region held their winter recap meeting and time of celebration at the Aberdeen Region DOT complex. Secretary Jundt and the division directors were in attendance to provide updates and thank the group for their efforts during the past winter season.



Secretary Jundt (left) and Director Smith (right) provided a winter 2022-23 winter maintenance season summary and fielded questions.



Todd Hertel gave a safety presentation.



Mark Peterson provided summary statistics; and hosted a question & answer session.

Aberdeen Region Staff



Jeff Walz provided equipment process updates.



Many thanks to Shagan PIT BBQ for catering lunch.

