

Culture Wars

Blue improvement

Everybody wants to improve, or should. And improvement is essential if ITD is going to become the best transportation department in the country.

As most employees are aware, ITD hired Human Synergistics to conduct a study of ITD culture to identify behavior patterns. Results were mixed.

But through the process, ITD learned behaviors of employees in highly successful organizations.

Employees in such organizations do
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Whitehead praised

Gov. C.L. “Butch” Otter’s choice of Jerry Whitehead as chairman of the Idaho Transportation Board Jan. 9 received hearty approval from a past president of the Idaho Trucking Association (ITA):

“Having been president of ITA and having worked closely with Mr. Whitehead over a 25-year period, I can attest to his integrity, executive skill, fair-mindedness and unflagging concern for what is best for Idaho,” said Paul Sudmeier, past chairman and past president of ITA, Meridian – see *Idaho Statesman*, 1-25-12.

Whitehead has extensive background in transportation.



Jerry Whitehead

Serrano, May win; District 6 wins

Camilo Serrano, Dubois maintenance, won the District 6 Truck “Roadeo” in Ashton May 22, earning 2,103 points.

In second place was Stacey McCurdy, Arco maintenance, with the same number of points but a longer course time, and placing third was Cole Wagoner, Dubois, with 2,043 points. Donovan Shipton, Mud Lake, finished fourth, earning 2,030 points.

Taking fifth place was Craig Stewart, Arco, with 2,018 points, and placing sixth was Brad Rhodes, Ashton, with 2,017 points.

Davison, Alvarez fill new positions

Matt Davison is the new resident engineer for Residency B in District 6. He previously worked eight years as the district traffic engineer.



Before joining District 6 in May 2004, Matt worked for two years in District 4 as a project manager and a local roads engineer. Prior to joining ITD, he worked for Civil Science in Utah as a project manager and engineer.

David Alvarez is the new traffic engineer. He takes Matt’s place. He previously worked a year in the Traffic Section of District 5 in Pocatello.



Before joining ITD, David worked for the Utah and Virginia Departments of Transportation and for different consulting firms. In 2001, he worked for the Federal Highway Administration as an area engineer.

Darrin May, Dubois, won first place in the foreman category, with 1,905 points, and Don Gilstrap, Idaho Falls, finished second, with 1,833 points.

Camilo and Darrin went on to place third and fourth in the state truck roadeo June 12 in Orofino, which District 6 won overall.

Land acquisition

This is the seventh in a series of articles on how to complete a highway project.

Getting rich is everyone’s dream. But soaking the government is not the way, especially if Mark Layton has anything to say about it.

He is District 6’s property manager (formerly right-of-way supervisor), who buys land for road projects.

“We offered one fellow a fair price for his land, but he countered for more,” Mark recalls. “We then offered him a little more, but he countered for still more.

“We ended up filing for condemnation of his property, and the court awarded him only \$1,000 more than our original offer.

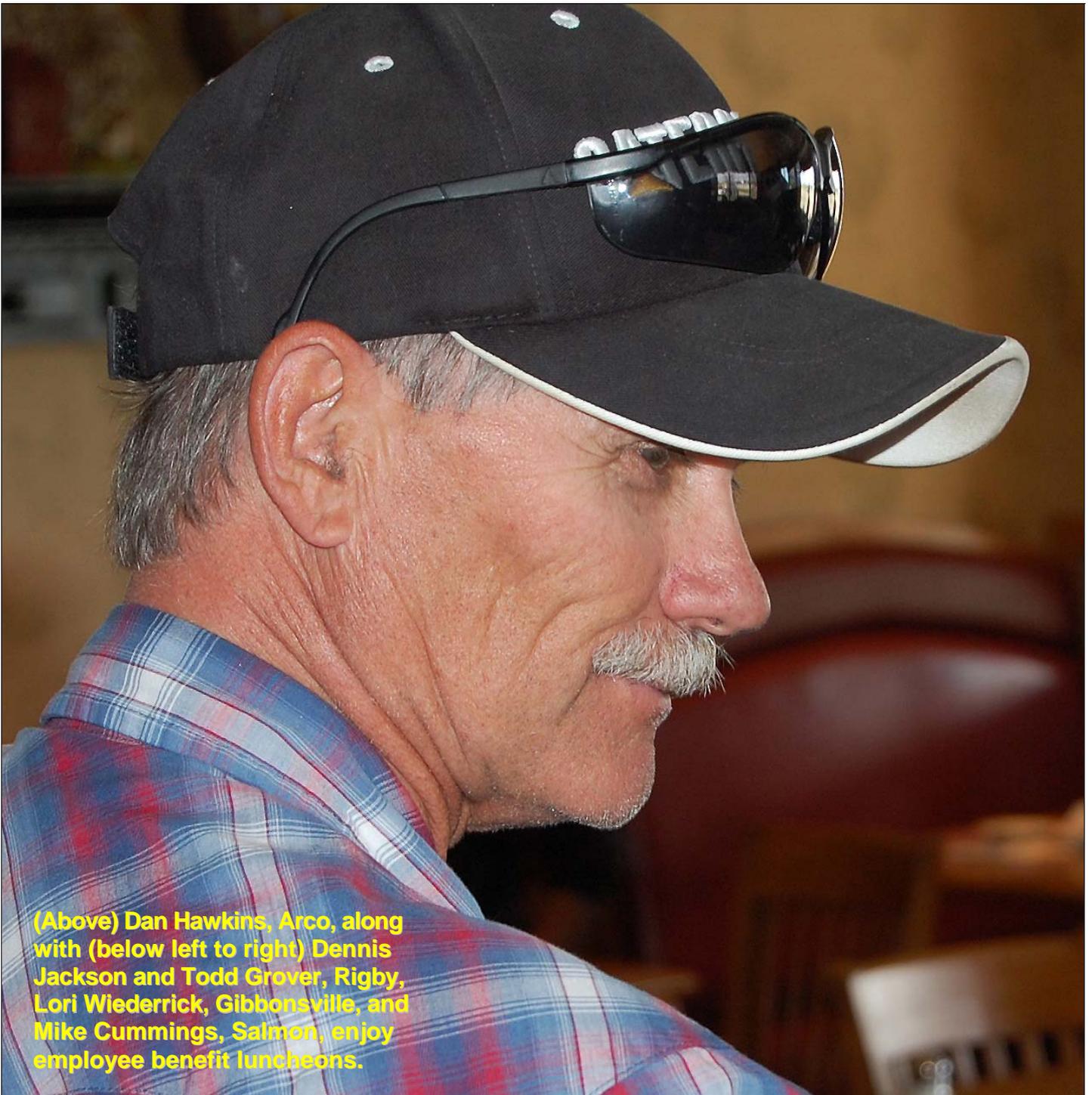
“After court costs, he likely received less money than ITD first offered.”

Negotiation

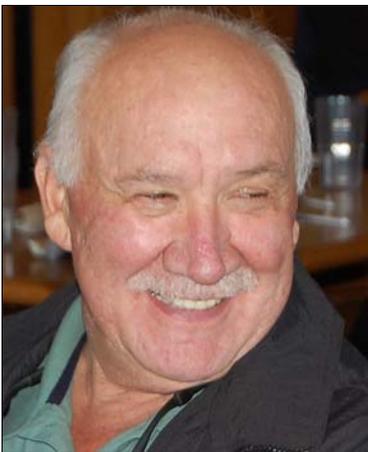
In company with a Project Development Section representative from District 6, Mark visits landowners in their homes.

“I explain what the project entails and how it will affect them,” he says.

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(Above) Dan Hawkins, Arco, along with (below left to right) Dennis Jackson and Todd Grover, Rigby, Lori Wiederrick, Gibbonsville, and Mike Cummings, Salmon, enjoy employee benefit luncheons.



District 6 honors employees for years of service

District 6 Engineer Blake Rindlisbacher and Engineering Manager Karen Hiatt presented service awards to employees at recent employee benefit luncheons.

5 Years

Paul Bennett, Vegetation
 Randy Edie, Shop
 Bruce King, Public Information
 Travis Sorenson, Project Development

10 Years

Ron Burnside, Driggs
 Rick Carpenter, Irwin
 Gary Clark, Irwin
 Mike Cummings, Salmon
 Corey Finn, Sign Crew
 Korby Hansen, Materials
 Dave Nickel, Port of Entry
 Alan Rainsdon, Dubois
 Robert Taylor, Challis
 Derk Williams, Traffic

15 Years

Karen Hiatt, Engineering Manager
 Stacey McCurdy, Arco

20 years

Bob Jackson, Port of Entry
 Troy Monk, Residency B
 Sandy Holder, Personnel
 Dave Holmberg, Residency B

25 Years

Alan Boyack, Electrician
 Don Gilstrap, Idaho Falls
 Karl Martin, Administration
 Cleston Mason, Sign Crew
 Jerry Mastel, Administration
 Darrin May, Dubois
 Rayce Ruiz, Survey
 Craig Stewart, Arco
 Eric Verner, Project Management
 Tracy Whitmore, Driggs

30 Years

Richard Asbury, Residency A
 Lyle Holden, Sugar City

35 Years

Pete Demitropoulos, Residency B
 Kent Holden, Special Crew
 Casey Richardson, Traffic. ■



Dave Holmberg, Construction B, 20 years, and Blake Rindlisbacher April 11. District 6 held employee benefit luncheons at the Chuck-a-Rama Buffet restaurant in Idaho Falls. Below is Kim Kerr, Bob Jackson, Ron Burnside, Karen Hiatt and a cleanup lady.



Employees in successful cultures achieve goals,

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four things:

1. *Set and achieve goals.* Employees establish challenging but realistic goals, develop plans to reach the goals, and pursue them with enthusiasm, creating a culture of achievement.
2. *Value quality over quantity.* Employees find satisfaction and fulfillment delivering high-quality products and services, generating a culture of self-actualization.
3. *Encourage one another.* Employees support and learn from each other, promoting a culture of humanism.
4. *Prize interpersonal relationships.* Employees communicate, cooperate and coordinate in friendly, constructive ways, fostering a culture of affiliation.

None of these behaviors is earth-shaking. It's just that the employees in great organizations consistently practice them, producing a healthy culture.

The blue section of the nearby chart highlights these four organizational cultures, which further business/agency objectives. Red and green sections highlight other organizational cultures. Highly successful organizations have a balance of red, green and blue cultures.

Strategy

Changing organizational culture is challenging, requiring individual willingness and initiative, not to mention leadership, but ITD is ready.

“We aim to improve in each of these areas,” says District 6 Engineer Blake Rindlisbacher. “Real change occurs as each employee takes responsibility for his or her role and for steadily improving in that role.”

Organizational culture is important to ITD vitality, affecting individual

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value quality, support one another, prize friendship

attitude and fueling passion to do excellent work, says Chief Human Resource Officer Mary Harker at Headquarters. (“Building the blue,” <http://itdnet/Pages/Home.aspx>, June 14, 2012)

Improving is the way forward, a lifelong quest.

Go for the blue.

“I challenge each of you to identify ways to become even more efficient and effective.” (ITD Director Brian Ness, *Direct from the Director*, Aug. 20, 2010)

Fair enough.■

Tips for going blue

*By Mary Harker
Chief Human Resource Officer*

Start doing one thing differently that moves you toward the blue area of the chart.

Talk with coworkers about what you can do as a group of peers and then do it!

If it isn't immoral, illegal, unethical, or costs money, odds are you don't need to seek much approval from your boss.

I would bet that each of you already know things in your culture that need changing, so become the change you seek!

If you are a supervisor or manager, get your team together to talk. Don't wait for further direction from senior managers.

Talk about what is good in your group and how to make it better.

Identify one area that needs attention and determine ways to improve it.

Like attracts like. A positive culture attracts high performers.

It also produces happy employees, who further organizational goals.■

Layton acquires property for road, bridge projects

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Most folks readily accept ITD's offer to pay market value, although landowners sometimes counter with legitimate points.

Owners may show that buildings are of greater value than the appraisal suggested.

Mark carefully considers owner positions. "Even sentimental value is valid to a point," he says.

Owner input prompts District 6 to consider adjusting its offer.

"I never say our first offer is all we will pay," Mark says.

Condemnation

Using the power of "eminent domain," ITD sometimes takes property from obstinate owners.

"Condemning" property is a fundamental right of government (see the Fifth Amendment).

"I explain condemnation to landowners," Mark says, "who generally cooperate."

"Once they learn ITD will get their property in the end, they decide to accept fair value."

Mark initiates condemnation by contacting ITD's legal staff in Boise.

Salesmanship

Another big part of Mark's job is selling surplus property.

"Realigning roadway frees up land," Mark explains, "which we offer to adjoining landowners, to local and state agencies, and to the general public – in that order."

Mark arranges public or private auctions of property as needed. He also advertises surplus land from maintenance yards and gravel sources (pits), working with District 6 Source Manager Eric Larson.



Property Manager Mark Layton meets with landowners in their homes to explain projects and acquire property needed for construction. ITD pays fair market value.

Mark weighs offers, closes deals and arranges legal descriptions, engaging District 6 Land Surveyor Rayce Ruiz.

Advertising

Mark also handles billboard advertising.

In the mid-1960s, Mark says, "Lady Bird" Johnson complained about highway advertising on small, sequential, billboards – the kind containing one word each.

She and others lobbied Congress, which passed the Highway Beautification Act of 1965 that regulates outdoor advertising.

Mark enforces that act, plus chapter 39.03.60, "Rules Governing Outdoor Advertising," of the Idaho Administrative Procedures Act (IDAPA).

Implementing the regulations requires that he inventory billboards twice a year.

Working with cities, counties and sign companies, he ensures the billboards are placed and maintained according to federal and state statute.

State-furnished housing

Another of his duties is ensuring that ITD charges market rates for trailer pads at maintenance yards in Island Park, Driggs and Gibbonsville.

District 6 offers these pads to employees because trailer space in these areas is limited.

Mark also fields calls from surveyors, title companies, assessors, recorders, and federal and state agencies about right-of-way widths, property boundaries and legal descriptions.

Before joining District 6 more than 10 years ago, Mark worked eight years for the Twin Falls County Assessor's Office learning how to value property for taxation and to read legal descriptions.

He also has taken professional development courses in negotiation, communication and appraisal to hone his skills.

Managing property is enjoyable, especially when people are reasonable, he says. ■



Alan Boyack



Richard Johnson



Ron Lindsay

Three seasoned employees ride into the sunset

Alan Boyack, traffic signal electrician with almost 27 years of service; Richard Johnson, Sugar City maintenance lead worker with 25 years of service; and Ron Lindsay, Port of Entry inspector with 19 years of service, left Dodge never to return. Each is enjoying retirement. *6 Bits* caught up with them to get their reflections.

Alan Boyack

Things generally were good, Alan says. “I don’t miss the 2 a.m. and holiday calls to fix traffic signals.”

He reports that since leaving ITD, he has lost 40 pounds. “The doctor said the stress of the job made me eat.”

“I almost got ran over three times.”

Once, a tractor-trailer rig flew by so close that the wind nearly knocked him down.

Another time, a truck almost hit the bucket in which he stood.

“I heard screeching and immediately elevated the bucket in time for a braking truck to pass inches beneath my feet,” he says.

Alan worked alone the first several years before the Legislature required that there be another employee on the ground.

His biggest shock?

“Someone miswired a junction box so that when I grabbed a green ground wire I got zapped with 480 volts.”

He had to lie in the cab; his heart was palpitating so fast. The next morning, he was so stiff he could hardly get up.

Alan was first to install LED (light-emitting diodes) in traffic signals. “When Boise found out, I got in trouble,” he says, “but the Traffic Signal Section eventually came around.”

He also led with pedestrian countdown signals, video detection cameras and uniform power supplies (battery packs), which are now standard equipment in Idaho signals. “We took heat for our innovations at District 6, but they proved economical and effective,” he says.

Alan camped a lot this summer and remodeled his garage.

He is looking up friends on Facebook, especially buddies from Vietnam. Of his four years of “shore duty” in the U.S. Navy, he spent the last year in Da Nang, where he saw action.

“We took rocket and mortar fire every night,” he says. Some friends never came home.

“I’d like to go back to see how things have changed.” Things do change.

Richard Johnson

“The people were fantastic,” Richard says. He particularly liked the Sugar City crew, with whom he worked the full 25 years, and the Driggs crew.

The first winter on the job, he escaped serious injury in a bad accident on Idaho 33 east of Newdale.

A westbound logging truck collided with two eastbound cars just after they passed Richard as he followed a rotary (gigantic snow blower) in a plow truck.

After hitting the first car, the logging truck jackknifed and slid sideways into the second car, pushing it into Richard.

The impact of the last collision released logs onto Richard’s cab, totaling his truck. Amazingly, the only injury he received was bruised legs when the steering wheel collapsed. The microphone of state radio dislodged, also knocking off his glasses.

Since that rude welcome, work was enjoyable, especially mowing roadsides and patching beautiful Idaho 31.

This summer, Richard constructed a rock garden and designed a shop for his 1962 Oldsmobile F-85 Coupe, ordained to become a “street rod.”

“I’m glad I worked for ITD,” he says. “I wish everyone the best.”

Ron Lindsay

“I thoroughly enjoyed my years at ITD,” Ron says. On his first performance evaluation form, he wrote, “I love what I’m doing and the people I work with.” That feeling never changed.

He had his life threatened, was called a variety of body parts, received sincere thanks and was called a “guardian angel.”

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New employees Dave Grende, Julie Thompson, Drew Meppen, Melissa Moyer, David Alvarez, Jackie Cole and Joshua Harris.

Comings and Goings at District 6.....

New employees are Dave Grende, storekeeper; Julie Thompson, designer; Drew Meppen, engineer in training; Melissa Moyer, transportation technician apprentice (TTA), Ashton; David Alvarez, traffic engineer (see **Davison, Alvarez...**, page 1); Jackie Cole, technical records specialist; and Joshua Harris, utility craftsman senior.

Departing employees: Merlin Wilding, transportation technician (TT), Idaho Falls; Richard Draper, TT, Island Park; Ben Burke, engineer manager 1, Project Development; and Lenny Coleman, utility craftsman, Bridge and Building.

Promotions: Ryan Wright to transportation technician principal (TTP), Ashton; Mike Cummings to transportation technician senior (TTS), Salmon; Gary Wirkus to utility craftsman senior; Scott Robinson to TTS, Ashton; Lynn Horrocks to TTS, Rigby Maintenance and Vegetation; Trent Maupin to TTS, Sugar City; and Darrin Johnson to transportation staff engineer assistant (TSEA), Engineering. Dusty Orgill, TT, lateralled from Rigby to the Special Crew.

Retirees: Alan Boyack, traffic signal electrician, 26 years (see **Alan Boyack...**, page 7); Richard Johnson, Sugar City, 25 years (see **Richard Johnson...**, page 7); Ron Lindsay, Port of Entry, 19 years (see **Ron Lindsay...**, page 7); and Linda Monk, Front Office, 19 years. Linda summed up her career at ITD by saying that she liked the people with whom she worked and learned a lot from the experience. She added: "I am really enjoying retirement. R.G.

[her husband] and I have done a lot of fishing and camping. In fact, we're headed back up to our trailer at Henry's Lake Thursday."

In Memoriam

– TT Rick Davis, 47, died in a farm accident Nov. 28, 2011. A 23-year veteran at District 6, he transferred from Sugar City to the Special Crew in 2008.

– Mark Weaver, 46, husband of POE Inspector Sherril Weaver, died in a boating accident April 5, 2012.

– Patrick Bowman, 69, who worked 27 years for Idaho Falls maintenance before retiring in 2004, died Dec. 29, 2011.

– Howard Rutledge, 91, who worked in maintenance before retiring in 1995, died April 23, 2012.

– Rex Holden, 68, who worked 33 years for Dubois maintenance before retiring as Dubois maintenance senior in 2001, died July 5, 2012. He is Lyle and Kent Holden's brother and Darren May's father in law.

– Carl "Dutch" Levant Doschades, 74, who worked for ITD, died Sept. 16, 2012.

District 6 expresses condolences to family and friends.



New arrivals: Kellen Ty Carpenter, new son of Tyson Carpenter, engineer in training. Both son and mother

Dara are fine. Tyson and his family make their home in Idaho Falls.



Brandon, new son of Drew Meppen, engineer in training. Baby and mother Kelly are doing fine. Drew and his

family also live in Idaho Falls.



Jaxxyn Darren Hunting, new son of Jeremy Hunting, designer. Infant and mom are doing well. Jeremy and his family

live in the country between Rigby and Ririe. ■

DeLorenzo, Kempton

Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter appointed Julie DeLorenzo, a noted Boise Realtor, to the District 3 vacancy on the Idaho Transportation Board March 12. She succeeded Jerry Whitehead, who was elevated to chairman of the seven-member board in January.



Gov. Otter appointed Jim Kempton of Albion, a former legislator, to succeed Gary Blick as the ITD District 4 board member Feb 23.



Three seasoned... (from p. 7)

Ron made roads a little safer, which was gratifying.

He started in Inkom in 1993, later transferring to Sage Junction and then to Idaho Falls. He roved mostly with Mike Akers.

Ron now raises emus, carves wood and polishes rock. "Life is good." ■

McKee, Carpenter pass exam

Mike McKee, of Project Development, and Tyson Carpenter, engineer in training, have passed the national civil professional engineering exam. Mike applied for and received his Idaho professional engineer license, and Tyson will apply next year. Congrats!