

# TRANSEND

November, 2008

A magazine for employees, retirees and stakeholders of the Arizona Department of Transportation

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Using technology  
to tell our message

**ADOT  
MERGES  
ON THE  
SOCIAL  
MEDIA  
FREEWAY**

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Victor M. Mendez  
Director

## Saying 'thank you' to employees

Often in the daily pursuit of our duties, we get caught up in the immediacy of what we are doing – meetings, rush assignments, and challenging workload made even more demanding by shortage of personnel.

It's important that we take time to show our appreciation to our employees who give so much to make the Arizona Department of Transportation a successful agency.

In recent weeks around the state, our workers have participated in employee celebration events. On Nov. 13, ADOT employees in Maricopa County will come together at the main ADOT campus for such an occasion. The "employee celebration" is not so much a time for employees themselves to celebrate; rather it is a time for ADOT leaders to celebrate the employees – to honor the workers for their contributions, and for managers to demonstrate their gratitude for employee loyalty and dedication.

Employee celebrations usually involve picnics or luncheons, games and activities. In many cases, leaders use these events to award employees for their accomplishments in areas of innovation, service, and safety in the past

year. The celebration at the ADOT campus in Phoenix always includes booths and displays that educate and promote the work of various offices within the agency.

Behind the scenes of this annual celebration is Sarah Wuertz, administrator of Employee Awards and Recognition. Her office is also responsible for Service Awards, Retirement Certificates, Going the Extra Mile Awards, and Employee Suggestion Awards. To fund recognition activities, her office utilizes volunteers to conduct fund raising events throughout the year. Without the tireless efforts of these volunteers, such recognition events would not be possible.

I encourage managers in all areas of ADOT to take advantage of these employee recognition events to reward the dedication and hard work of ADOT employees; especially at this time when economic and fiscal restraints place even more responsibility on such a dedicated staff.

This is also an opportunity for employees to recognize their peers for contributions made to teamwork. It is the sharing of workloads that builds trust and character and strengthens the work unit.

I appreciate the loyalty and devotion to duty that our employees demonstrate. For all their hard efforts, I offer my gratitude.

Sincerely,

Victor M. Mendez,

Director



TRANSEND is published monthly for the employees and retirees of the Arizona Department of Transportation, by the Creative Services Group of the Communication and Community Partnerships Division.

**Victor M. Mendez**  
ADOT Director

**Matt Burdick**  
Communication & Community Partnerships Director

**Ronald Loar**  
Editor

**John Tucker**  
Associate Editor

### Editorial Board

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**Cydney DeModica**  
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Multimodal Planning Division

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**Rob Waddell**  
Transportation Services Group

Address comments, suggestions, articles and photo submissions to **TRANSEND** Editors  
1130 N. 22nd Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85009 MD 069R  
or e-mail [Transendeditors@azdot.gov](mailto:Transendeditors@azdot.gov)

*All submissions for publication are subject to editing for spelling, grammar, and technical accuracy; and may be rewritten for clarity, continuity, length and journalistic style.*



# MERGING ON THE SOCIAL MEDIA FREEWAY

By John Tucker  
Associate Editor

**P**odcasts, Blogs, Twitter, YouTube. These are just a few of the web-based ‘social media’ tools that some have hailed as the greatest communication inventions since the printing press. While that bold claim is up for debate, you can’t deny the popularity of social media.

A recent Forrester Research report shows that social technology use grew dramatically in 2008: Three in four adults in the United States now use social media tools to connect online with each other, up from 56 percent in 2007.

Traditional communication tools such as phone calls, face-to-face meetings and written information are alive and well within ADOT, but the agency is steadily expanding its communication toolbox to include social media methods.



## On the cover

*Lars Jacoby, a public information officer for CCP records weekly Podcasts to inform commuters of projects on I-10 and I-17 in the Phoenix Metro area.*

Tim Tait, a director of Community Relations in ADOT’s Communications and Community Partnerships (CCP) Division, dipped a toe in the social media waters two years ago when he launched a web-based audio podcast to inform commuters about progress on I-17 improvements in Phoenix. Since then, Tait and other ADOT leaders have waded deeper into the social media sea, employing everything from blogs to YouTube to connect with the public.

“Traditional media tends to be more one-way communication, Tait said. “Social media is much more conversational and interactive.” Another factor that makes social media attractive is that nearly all of the technologies are free.

Here are some of the ways agency leaders are using social media tools to connect with the public.

### Internet Forum

Hundreds of Anthem residents frequently turn to “AnthemStuff,” a community forum on the Internet, to share information and exchange views on local issues affecting their community.

The town, located 34 miles north of downtown Phoenix on I-17, sits at the northern terminus of a series of ADOT projects to widen and improve I-17 from Loop 101 to New River Road. Interstate 17 is the main road in and out of Anthem.

Tait began posting I-17 project information on “AnthemStuff” two years ago. Forum readers often ask questions or voice concerns and Tait, known as “ADOTtim” on the site, has succeeded in building trust by sharing the latest project information as well as responding promptly and honestly to inquiries.

The value of this connection came into sharp relief last March (2008) when ADOT removed the old Carefree Highway Bridge on I-17. This complex operation required completely closing I-17 in both directions and detouring traffic over a weekend.

“By giving them (“AnthemStuff” readers) the information in advance and seeking their ideas we were able to create a highly informed audience,” Tait said. “When people realized that ADOT heard them and acted on some of their  
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## MERGING ON THE SOCIAL MEDIA FREEWAY

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ideas, and when the project came off successfully (work crews finished the job ahead of schedule), it created a loyal following.”

“AnthemStuff” readers expressed their thanks with postings such as these: “For succeeding in a tough environment and finishing your tasks ahead of schedule, you and all of your people deserve more than you will ever receive in a posting.”

Another reader simply wrote: “Thanks for all you’ve done in keeping us informed. You are awesome!”

“AnthemStuff’s” Web address is  
[www.anthemstuff.com/portal/](http://www.anthemstuff.com/portal/)

### YouTube

Job seekers can learn about ADOT work opportunities and benefits through recruitment videos posted on YouTube. Currently, ADOT has six human resources-related videos posted on the wildly popular content-sharing site. The site includes recruitment videos for a Transportation Engineer I, Highway Operations Worker, Customer Service Associate position with the Motor Vehicle Division (MVD), and MVD Enforcement Officer positions, as well as a video that gives an overview of the agency and one that highlights job benefits.

“HR is always exploring new ways to recruit and attract quality candidates,” ADOT’s

Assistant Human Resources Manager Rob Waddell said, “and YouTube is definitely a new and exciting approach for us.”

Waddell credits Russell Chase and Dan Dudzik from CCP’s Creative Service’s area for producing the videos and getting them posted on YouTube.

People are watching the videos – a visit to the site shows numbers ranging from 15 to 45 views per video within the past eight weeks – and commenting on them. If viewers want more information, they can click on an e-mail link that takes them to an e-mail in-box at ADOT’s HR department.

“To do this kind of recruitment through career networks such as Monster.com or Jobing.com would cost five hundred to a thousand dollars per month,” Waddell said. “YouTube is a great alternative considering the budget situation because it is free. Plus, we have a wonderful opportunity to reach out to potential candidates throughout the world.”

The recruitment videos on YouTube are under the ADOTHR channel. The address is  
[www.youtube.com/user/ADOTHR](http://www.youtube.com/user/ADOTHR)

In addition, the Don’t Trash AZ campaign, a partnership between ADOT and the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), is holding a video contest for students at the University of Arizona. The challenge is to make and submit videos conveying an anti-litter message. Arizona Clean and Beautiful and ADOT teamed up to organize the contest. Videos will be posted

on YouTube for judging. Winning entries will receive prizes. For more information:

[www.dontrashazvideo.com/](http://www.dontrashazvideo.com/)

### Blogs

The CCP Division recently launched its own blog on “AZCentral,” the Arizona Republic’s web site, where anyone can launch a blog on the site’s Start Your Own Blog section. The site allows readers to send messages to ADOT or to sign up to receive notices when a new ADOT blog is posted. The blog has mostly been used to post news releases and weekend closure and restriction information for the Phoenix area, but readers are making comments on the blog and asking questions.

ADOT’s blog on AZCentral, called “ArizonaDOT Blog,” can be found at:

[www.azcentral.com/members/Blog/ArizonaDOT/](http://www.azcentral.com/members/Blog/ArizonaDOT/)

### Podcasts

Lars Jacoby could be called the “voice of I-10 in the west Valley and I-17 in north Phoenix.” That’s because the public information officer from CCP records weekly Podcasts, audio newscasts that are posted to ADOT’s website, to keep commuters up-to-date on the I-10 and I-17 projects in the Phoenix metropolitan area.

Currently, it’s not easy for listeners of these podcasts to comment or ask questions about the information, so the “conversation” is rather one-sided. However, Jacoby and other CCP staff are working to fix this problem.

*(Continued on Page 5)*

## THE SOCIAL MEDIA FREEWAY

The podcasts are located on the Valley Freeways pages: [www.azdot.gov/Highways/Valley\\_Freeways/I10/Papago/closures\\_restrictions.asp](http://www.azdot.gov/Highways/Valley_Freeways/I10/Papago/closures_restrictions.asp)

### Twitter

One of the newer tools lighting up the communication world is Twitter, an online platform for instant messages. Messages are limited to 140 characters so brevity is a necessity. It lends itself well to portable devices like cell phones.

Tait recently created an ADOT page on Twitter to share information and elicit feedback. Almost 30 people or organizations have signed up to receive tweets (messages on Twitter) from ADOT. The Twitter platform works wells for sending instant updates, which could make it very useful in the event of a major event such as an emergency road closure.

Questions linger about social media, not the least of which is how to measure its results. Regardless of the challenges, CCP Division Director Matt Burdick has no doubt that social media tools are here to stay.

“Technology and growth in the use of the Internet has created diverse and direct ways to reach people,” said Burdick. “These tools offer a way to personally connect with customers beyond our traditional communication through the news media.”

## Tucson workers ‘Dunk the DE’ at district employee celebration

**T**ucson employees stood in line for the opportunity to dunk District Engineer Greg Gentsch at the employee celebration in October.

Good-natured Gentsch volunteered to take his turn in the dunk tank as employees paid to pitch softballs at the target and send their leader splashing into the tank of cold water. State Engineer Floyd Roehrich, Jr., and Deputy State Engineer Doug Forstie stood on the sidelines, cheering every time Gentsch took a dunk.

Other Tucson leaders who took turns in the dunk tank were Sylvia Hanna, Permits supervisor; Scott Moody, Equipment Services supervisor; Jerry James, resident engineer for Tucson Construction; Courtney Perrier-Bear, safety representative; Michelle High, Information Technology supervisor; and Todd Emery, maintenance engineer.

Leaders of the Tucson District hosted the party at the Tucson District Complex to thank the employees for their dedication and hard work.

Employees Art Velador, George Collaco, Phillip Cantura, Alvaro Monteverde, David Cruz, Louis Santa Cruz, and David Valasquez presided over the grills, serving steaks and chicken to nearly 200 employees.

Funds raised from the dunk tank and a cakewalk will go to help defray expenses for future employee activities.

Organizing the celebration were Artie Valenzuela, Diane Navarro, Carol Santa Cruz, and Diana Serrano.



*Tucson District Engineer Greg Gentsch takes a good-natured dunking as employees pay to sink their leader at the district celebration.*



# Two appointed to MVD leadership roles

By Larry Clark

*MVD Program Support Manager*

**Two Motor Vehicle Division executives were promoted recently to take charge of the programs that include the Customer Service field offices and ServiceArizona.com, the agency's popular online customer service Website.**

Holly Bowers was named Assistant Division Director for Customer Service and William "Randy" Raiford, Assistant Division Director for the Competitive Government Partnerships (CGP) program. Both had been serving in their capacities on an acting basis.

"Customer Service and CGP directly impact thousands of people everyday. I'm very pleased to have Holly's and Randy's experienced leadership to guide these programs as we work to provide our customers the quality service they deserve," said MVD Director Stacey Stanton.



*H. Bowers*

Bowers joined MVD in 1985 as a customer service representative in the Scottsdale office. She worked her way up, and in 2007, replacing Charlene Knapp, who retired.

Bowers is in charge of 61 field offices state-wide, as well the Driver License

Central Production, Title Production and the Abandoned Vehicle Unit.

Her primary focus recently has been to improve service in the field offices and enhance data collection methods. This has been accomplished with upgraded software in the queue management system, the introduction of wireless technology, and other initiatives. Bowers says that overall wait times have been decreasing, although the number of customers remains relatively steady.

"The scope of the MVD Customer Service Program is expanding," Bowers notes. "The driver license has evolved from permission to operate a vehicle to a vital and necessary document for daily life activities. Our goal is to serve customers promptly and efficiently with accuracy and security as top priorities."

A major reason field office efficiencies are improving is because Raiford's program, Competitive Government Partnerships (CGP), works with the private and public sectors to provide alternatives to MVD-operated locations.

Customers have been flocking to the popular Website, ServiceArizona.com, since it began in 1997. There are now more than 40 electronic services available for the public and commercial applications. CGP oversees more than 120 privately-owned Title and Registration Third Party offices and nearly 500 Third Party vehicle inspection locations.

The CGP program also administers the Driver Services and Dealer Licensing unit. This includes the Professional Driver Training and Traffic Survival School programs. In addition, CGP is responsible for authorizing and coordinating release of Motor Vehicle records to qualified public and private entities.



*W. Raiford*

Raiford has been with CGP since he began at MVD in 2000, working extensively in the past on privacy issues and the Driver's Privacy Protection Act. He replaces Penny Martucci who retired last year. She continues to work on special projects as a return retiree.

"With the current economic climate it's more important than ever to develop innovative yet convenient and cost-effective services for MVD and its customers," Raiford says. "These programs do that. I look forward to enhancing the programs that are in place and creating other services that produce efficiencies for the division and our stakeholders."

## Milestones in Service

The following employees recently marked significant employment anniversaries with the Arizona Department of Transportation, according to the Human Resources Office.

### 35 Years

**Emma R. Nadeau**, TSG, Southern Maintenance Section

### 30 Years

**Tommy Miranda**, ITD, Valley West Construction

**Joe Rodriguez**, ITD, Project Management Group

### 25 years

**Jeffrey L. Balk**, ITD, Indian Pine Maintenance

**Francis J. Bergen**, ITD, Quartzsite Maint.

**Ronald R. Curtis**, ITD, Ganado Maintenance

**Johnnie Honanears**, ITD, Phoenix District Survey

**William E. Lefevre**, TSG, Prescott Shop

**Karin L. Quick**, MVD, Third Party Management Support Unit

### 20 Years

**Virginia S. Chavez**, MVD, Tucson

**Jeffrey C. Knickrehm**, ITD, Prescott District Construction

**Dennis L. Lillie**, ITD, Casa Grande Maint.

**Alfred Rios**, ITD, Prescott Regional Signing and Striping

**Rodney A. Rivinius**, ITD, Right of Way, Urban Acquisition Section

### 15 Years

**Loretta Crimi**, MPD, Federal Transit Admin.

**Dolores E. Fregozo**, ITD, Yuma Construction

**Leitha B. Jones**, TSG, Audit and Analysis

**Henrietta Lackner**, MVD, Duncan Port of Entry

### 10 Years

**Deborah K. Aguirre**, MVD, Special Plates

**Barbara C. Alarcon**, MVD, Central Phoenix

**Andrea Brown**, TSG, Information Technology

**Christie Estrada**, MVD, Third Party-E-Government

**Dawn K. Farrell**, MVD, Training

**Mohtasim B. Khan**, ITD, Pre-design Team A

**David F. Mills**, MVD, Southeast Mesa

**Sandra K. Morelock**, ITD, MVD, Ehrenberg Port of Entry

**Devon Neisess**, MVD, Glendale

**Daryl Odom**, ITD, CADD Management and Support

**Connie J. Powell**, Yuma District

**Suzanne R. Rivera**, MVD, Motor Carrier Licensing

**Huong Spoerry**, MVD, Phoenix Northwest

**Maurice Thompson**, TSG, Risk Management

**Manuel V. Vasquez**, ITD, Tucson East Maint.

**Robert Waddell, Jr.**, TSG, Human Resources

**Anthony S. Ybarra**, ITD, Tucson Regional Traffic Operations-Maintenance

## Retirements from ADOT

These employees recently retired from ADOT service, according to Human Resources:

**Suzanne G. Corrales**, ITD, Right of Way-Administration, 34 years

**Noel Freer**, Director's Office, Office of Inspector General, 10 years

**Thomas W Gabbard**, ITD, Phoenix Pumphouse Maintenance, 7 years

**Azzam Sweis**, ITD, Traffic Operations Section, 18 years

**Kenneth Tighe**, ITD, Traffic Signals, Electrical Inspection, 11 years

## Comments and Kudos

### Game-day delay averted

Wildcat football games at the University of Arizona always provide plenty of traffic congestion for the City of Tucson, and this year, with the major widening projects along I-10, ADOT's Tucson District has gone to great measures to reduce impacts at the three major intersections around the stadium.

Just when the district office thought they had everything under control, a pick-up truck towing a loaded trailer, went out of control and crossed the median barrier at the St. Mary's bridge on the afternoon of the homecoming game (Saturday, October 25). The crash closed the highway to traffic in both directions.

District Engineer Greg Gentsch, was quick to praise his crew for expedient efforts to clear the intersection in plenty of time for game traffic. Gentsch wrote in an e-mail to the State Engineer's office:

*It was only through the efforts of Senior Resident Engineer Rod Lane who went out to the crash site [on his day off] that the freeway reopened by 3 p.m., leaving plenty of time for everyone to arrive at this very special game. The Tucson District is proud to have employees that rise to these challenges without any expectation of recognition or compensation.*

Gentsch said in an interview that Lane was able to divert backed-up traffic onto a frontage road during the DPS investigation and debris clean up – a process that took about three hours to complete.

Lane complimented employees of Kiweit/Sundt Joint Venture Team, contractors on the highway widening job, for their assistance. "The contractor had operators and equipment on the scene to assist with the clearing of debris. Particular thanks should be given to the project manager, Jody Schott, who was personally operating equipment during the critical work, and providing anything that was necessary to get the job done."

### Safford District Project

Completion of a three-lane widening project along US Route 70 from Lone Star Road to the San Simon River in Graham County received praise from residents of the Safford Ranch mobile home park in that area.

Val Gibbs, writing to Safford District Engineer, Bill Harmon on behalf of the residents, said:

*We really appreciate the new turn lanes. Everyone seems pleased. From all of us living at Safford Ranch, thank you and all who helped this to happen!*

Harmon added, "I too want to add my thanks to the many people who made it possible to accomplish this safety improvement. The effort did not go unnoticed by the public, and so I want to share with you their measure of gratitude."

### Biker praises Arizona highways

Eileen Colleran, of the Government Relations Office, shares this e-mail received from an avid motorcyclist:

*"I just finished a trip from Norfolk to San Diego, and back again, on a 24-year-old Harley-Davidson Sportster. These are not the most comfortable bikes for this kind of trip. I want to let you know that Arizona has by far the best highways in the 10 states that I went through.*

*If other states would follow your lead, the nation's highways would be a pleasure to ride. Please thank all the crews that work on your highways on my behalf.*

*Lon D. Ross*

## DEADLINE for December issue

Articles and photographs for publication in the November issue should be sent to [transendeditors@azdot.gov](mailto:transendeditors@azdot.gov) no later than

**Nov. 20, 2008 at 4 p.m.**

To discuss submission ideas, phone the editor

**602-712-4041**



## Practical Ethics

The ADOT Way

By Karen Mills and Dian Work

### Choice not always determined by rules, statutes and policies

Answers to ethical dilemmas aren't always found in rules, statutes or policies. While these are usually helpful, sometimes we are faced with making decisions based on practical reasoning. Consider the following scenario:

Meg works in the IT department of a grocery chain. A large project she is working on is being let out to bid. The selection panel, which includes Meg, interviews the responsive vendors. During the interview process, Meg learns that the vendor's representative is a former employee that she worked closely with. Should Meg remain on the panel or should she recuse herself?

Or, in another scenario, what should Meg do if she didn't know this individual representing the vendor personally, but had heard many other employee opinions of him?

Here's what senior managers in the ADOT Information Technology Group, have to say:

*In the first scenario, Meg could be thinking that she is fully capable of maintaining her objectivity and contributing to the selection process in an unbiased manner.*

*Meg may very well be right. However, this wouldn't be the best option. We believe she*

*should inform the selection panel chairman of the situation and then seek advice from a company procurement official. It's possible that other members of the selection panel also know the ex-employee and are faced with the same dilemma.*

*If Meg said or did nothing, her lack of action could later raise the appearance of impropriety or conflict of interest, even if the circumstances and situation are not explicitly prohibited by law or policy.*

*The company needs to make a decision that is in the best interest of their organization and this may include asking the vendor to replace the ex-employee as their representative or disqualifying Meg as a selection panel member.*

*As to the second question, Meg has heard things (hearsay) about the ex-employee. Meg should discuss the situation with the selection panel chairman and seek advice from a company procurement official. If the rumors Meg heard about the ex-employee influences her to the extent that she cannot maintain her independence and impartiality, she should make this known and ask to withdraw from the panel. Again, the organization must make a decision that is in its best interest.*

The ADOT Code of Conduct and Personnel Policy PER-6.02 provide good insights into our obligations as officers and employees. If you find yourself in a situation that doesn't seem right, don't be reluctant to ask for assistance - there could be a lot at stake.

## ADOT Employee Celebration Day in Maricopa County

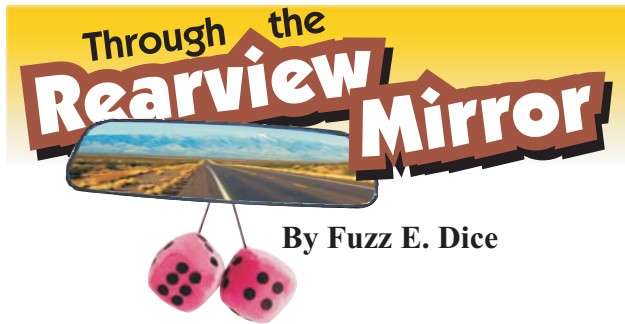
**November 13 10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

*Back to the 40s theme*

**Picnic Games Prizes Music  
Informational Booths**

Parking lot southwest of Administration Building  
206 S. 17th Avenue, Phoenix

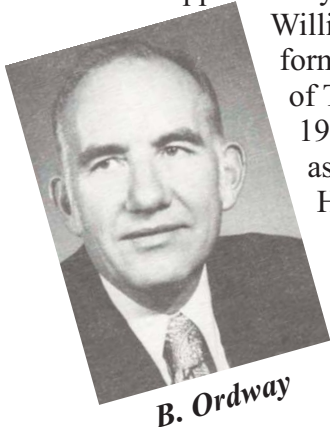




By Fuzz E. Dice

Browsing through boxes of past issues of ADOT newsletters, it became apparent that we were looking at a lot of Arizona transportation history. We're talking about nearly three years of *Mileposts*, the forerunner of **TRANSEND**, and before that, 25 years of *Newsbeat*. And, if that wasn't exciting enough, we found the great-granddaddy of 'em all, *Hi-way Drumbeats*, the very first employee newsletter!

Month-after-month of valuable articles and photographs tell the stories about the people who made the Arizona Department of Transportation what it is today. People like Justin Herman, director of the Arizona Highway Department when the first issue of *Drumbeats* was published in July, 1969; and Bill Ordway, who was appointed by then Governor Jack



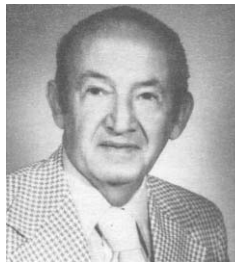
B. Ordway

Williams, to lead the newly formed Arizona Department of Transportation in July, 1974, after serving six years as deputy director under Herman.

The first issue of *Newsbeat*, published in July, 1974, was written and edited by Walt Gray, with graphic

design and photography support from Armand Celaya. Both men also produced many years of *Mileposts* before retiring.

We found an article about Angus L. Chadwick, who at the age of 19, started as a chainman on a survey crew in 1928. He recalls watching highway employees goad mules that were used to pull graders in the early days of road building in remote areas of the state.



A. Chadwick

Chadwick retired as Chief Deputy State Highway Engineer after 46 years with the agency.

Clearing out his desk in preparation for retirement in 1974, Chadwick hauled out the very first of eight hand-written ledger account books which recorded all payments made in Arizona on federal-aid highway construction jobs, according to the *Newsbeat* article. The first entry in the journal was for \$9,792.54 for a bridge at Florence. The final cost for the bridge was \$31,947.35.

**Construction of MVD Building**

Here's an interesting tidbit that ran in the July, 1974, issue of *Newsbeat*. "Steel is flowing once more, after a three-month delay, onto the construction site at 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue and West Jefferson Street in Phoenix, allowing workmen to proceed on the Motor Vehicle Division Building. Completion of the four-story structure has been pushed back to July, 1975."

More than 30 years later, MVD administration still uses that building.

Justin Herman knew the value of regularly communicating with employees. In the very first issue of *Hi-way Drumbeats*, he wrote in the Director's Corner, "This new employee publication, we believe, will establish more effective lines of communication with our Highway Department 'family,' whose members are represented in every section of Arizona."

**Marjorie is still around**

Marjorie Winjum is still with ADOT. She was featured in a July, 1990, issue of *Newsbeat* while in her 14<sup>th</sup> year with MVD. At that time, she was the only MVD employee in the Payson driver license office. After taking four years off to care for her ailing husband, she returned to ADOT in 1996 and is now investigating fraudulent driver licenses and documents for the Office of Inspector General in Phoenix.



M. Winjum

As we sift through other back issues of newsletters, and find more articles and photos from early publications, we will bring them to you. Until next month, I am, looking through the Rearview Mirror,

*Fuzz E. Dice*