

BE THE DIFFERENCE



Florida Department of Transportation

HIGHLIGHTS

A Newsletter for the Employees of District 2

July 2019

Chattin' with Greg

Growing up, I had 5 very close friends: Kyle, Michael, Rusty, Rob and John. We were always together and usually into some type of mischief. We loved camping, hunting, riding motorcycles and driving anything with an engine into a nearby mud hole. We were members of Future Farmers of America (FFA) and took every Ag class available. We had a high school science teacher by the name of Mr. Tanner who had an unusual personality but was an excellent teacher. We were always in trouble with Mr. Tanner. Things like incomplete homework assignments, class disruptions, things one might expect from young men in high school in the early / mid 80's. Mr. Tanner drove a bright yellow Volkswagen with a small air cooled gas engine. One day we decided to play a trick on Mr. Tanner, we picked up his VW and placed it sideways in his parking space. With a vehicle parked on each side of his space, it was impossible for him to leave until someone else moved. Mr. Tanner, if you are still alive, please forgive us!



"Take time to enjoy friends while you both walk this earth and take time to reflect on the good times you experienced throughout life."

*- Greg Evans,
Secretary,
District Two*

So, where are my friends now? Michael was in a serious car crash shortly after high school. He had parts of his intestines removed and has paralysis in a leg from the knee down. He will wear a brace for the rest of his life. Kyle died of a heart condition a few years ago. Also, a few years ago, Rusty died of what appeared to be a drug overdose. John was deployed and served multiple tours of duty in Afghanistan and other parts of the Middle East. Rob was the only one of us that pursued farming as a career.

I guess my point in sharing this very personal story is, don't take friendships for granted. Take time to enjoy friends while you both walk this earth and take time to reflect on the good times you experienced throughout life. Kyle and Rusty, may you rest in peace.

Be the Difference!

- Greg



Works continues on SR200 (A1A) at Lofton Creek in Nassau County.

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Interdependence and one FDOT

On July 4th, we celebrate our independence from England. Independence, for us as individuals, is typically considered a positive trait. However, it is interdependence that really makes for a strong organization. While independence is the first, very important, step in defining who we are as individuals; it is interdependence that is the real display of maturity.

Now this is not about passing off your responsibilities to someone else, nor is it about letting others do for you what you can do for yourself. What I'm talking about is pooling our strengths so that we, as an organization, a community, a nation, are stronger and more productive. Steven Covey in his book 7 Habits of Highly Effective People says this,

"Dependent people need others to get what they want. Independent people can get what they want



through their own effort. Interdependent people combine their own efforts with the efforts of others to achieve their greatest success."

One of the values we hold here is "One FDOT". For us to accomplish our projects, from the simple to the monumental, it takes each of us doing our part. I have had people tell me that they aren't good at this or that. My reply to them is always, I would be terrible at building a bridge or managing the budget of an organization

this big. We all contribute in our own way, so be proud of what we do. Be proud of the things FDOT accomplishes. Be proud to be "One FDOT".

*- Emma Donestevez,
Organizational Development*

Be the Difference Battle Flag

The Communications Office was awarded the Be the Difference Battle Flag for the month of August!

The flag was awarded during the July district staff meeting in Lake City.



Be the Difference Awards



Elizabeth Brantley, Structures Maintenance
Attitude



Shelley Clayton, Structures Maintenance
Attitude



Kelvin Elam, Jacksonville Maintenance
Relationships



Leslie Gore, Jacksonville Maintenance
Accountability



Robert Miller, Jacksonville Maintenance
Attitude



Anitra Ott, District Final Estimates
Relationships

The Be the Difference is an employee motivation and recognition program the highlights the accomplishments within District 2. The intent is to recognize employees who exhibit seven different values: Attitude, Relationships, Recognition, Accountability, Flexibility, Innovation, and Excellence.

Rock of Ages

In July of 1969, Neil Armstrong stepped foot on the moon for the first time in history. Later that same year, the State Road Board and State Road Department were merged into the Department of Transportation and Ronald N. Cox began his career at FDOT.

Ron was born at Lake Shore Hospital in Lake City, Florida into a family of farmers. He and his wife of 44 years have three children and five grandchildren.

Shortly after attending Lake City Community College, Ronald joined the Department of Transportation in District Two working in the Location Survey department, moving into roles in Right of Way/ Mapping, Engineer Training, Roadway Design and finally in settling nicely into his leadership role of Drainage Engineer for 32 years. Ron has worked with every State Secretary from Secretary Michael O. O'neal in 1969 to our current Secretary, Kevin Thibault.



was nominated by his entire staff which commended Ron for his organizational skills and task assignments; always treating his employees equally and fairly. "He has made the Drainage Office a very good place to work in and if you ask him a question, he will give you an answer that is correct. That answer will be practical and buildable and the same today, tomorrow and the next day."

Secretary Tom Barry

On August 25, 2000, Ronald received the Department's highest award, the Secretary's Award for Sustained Superior Achievement for District Two. The 30-year FDOT employee

presented Ron with a check for \$1,000 and an engraved wall plaque in recognition of his outstanding contributions to District Two, the Department and the State of Florida.

Have something you'd like to submit for Highlights?

Send an e-mail to Troy Roberts at troy.roberts@dot.state.fl.us with your idea and we'll try to include it in future editions of Highlights!

Groves remembered, honored with Location award

Dan Groves has been named the Location Survey Employee of the Year. Clay Driggers explains it best on why Dan was the recipient of this award:

“Every year around the end of the Fiscal Year, we in Location Survey (CC259) vote for an Employee of the Year. This year it was unanimous. We decided Dan Groves was the most deserving for this recognition.

Dan has worked in our Department for 4 years, and was with us for approximately half of this past Fiscal Year. Dan showed strength beyond comparison during the time he was here with us. No matter how bad he was feeling, Dan would come in with a smile on his face. He would crack jokes with all of us when he was able, and he always had great stories to tell. Dan showed up to work when he did not really feel all that good. Even though he was feeling bad, he did not show it.

Dan fought Cancer for the last five years of his life, and he did not even show the struggles of fighting Cancer until the last year of his life. The last six months of his life, he could not even talk due to the disease. But, this did not prevent Dan from coming to work every day and remaining positive and upbeat. Dan showed up to work until he could not physically do it anymore. Dan lost his fight with Cancer in January, just a few days after his last day of being able to come to work.

Dan will always be an inspiration to our Location Survey Department, and we proudly recognize Dan Groves as our Employee of the Year.”



D2 celebrates a new class of CPM graduates

Congratulations to our 2019 CPM graduates! They are: Brandy Baxley, Michael Brock, Brian Brooker, Janice Charles, Vineesh Crawford, Emma Donestevez, Sandra Douglas, Jamie Driggers, Mystery Easter, Lisa Fields, Katrina Hammons, Stanley Henderson, Tracy Hisler-Pace, Matt Mitchell, Mandy Musgrove, Ian Pawn, Amanda Sharp, Dennis Shubert, Brandon Smith, Stacey Starling, Tom Swafford, and Patricia Yakaboski!



Something fun...Spot the Differences



Can you spot the differences?

Spot the Differences...Answers!



Work was recently completed on a joint FDOT/CSX project that included the replacement of the railroad crossing surface on Call Street in Starke.

Management Academy

Congratulations to the D2 employees who went through the recent Management Academy that took place June 24-28 and July 22-26 in Orlando.

They were (from left) Brian Kirts, Ruth Findley, Fae Ross, Laura Montauk, Paul Webb, and Dr. Zhihong Hu.

Congratulations!



Retirees



FDOT had two retirees during the month of July.

Carl Simmons (left), Lake City Maintenance, retired after 14 years of service with the district.

Donna Higgs, District Construction, retired after 31 years with the department

Congratulations on your retirement!



Congratulations Leadership Academy graduates!

A big congratulations to our 2019 graduates of Leadership Academy, which took place May 13-17 and June 17-21.

They were: Ruth Findley, Scott Lent, David Tyler, and Brandi Vittur.

If you see them, be sure to congratulate them on their achievement!

24th Maintenance Team Award

Congratulations to the State Road 13 Box Culvert Team out of St. Augustine Maintenance and the Bridge office for receiving the 24th Maintenance Team Award. Team members included:

St. Augustine Maintenance – Harvey Berry, Ray D’Agostino, Ken Dawson, Matt Evitt, Rich Frazier, Nate Gottschalk, Ian Middlemas, and Mike Pontani

Bridge Office – Jason Bordner, Grenville Castillo, Scott Hamilton, Roger Liu, Chad Nettles, and Dale Stone

Project Management Office – Ryan Asmus



Throwback



The early 2000s were a fascinating time in District 2.

In the photo to the left, you'll see some familiar faces. How many people can you identify?

Thanks to Jamie Driggers for this photo!