

The INSIDE

LANE

A newsletter for employees of the Arizona Department of Transportation

DECEMBER 2021

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*Rodeo focuses on
safety, skills*

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ADOT

LEADERSHIP MATTERS

I'VE BEEN WITH ADOT for almost 15 years. I'm privileged to serve as the editor of Arizona Highways.

Provide an example of standard work:

No one knows for sure how many photographs we've published in our 96-year history. Conservatively, we estimate it to be more than 100,000. The number of photos we've considered for publication is exponentially higher — in the millions. It can be overwhelming, which is why our publisher, **Kelly Mero**, suggested we apply the principles of standard work to the process — something we'd never done before. Although it's sometimes difficult to apply quantitative measures to the creative world of making magazines, we were able to develop a seven-step process that begins with a review of low-resolution images and ends with a permanent archive. I'm pleased to report that the process works.

How do you use the huddle process?

I think it surprises people to learn that our editorial staff can fit in a Chevy Tahoe. It's a small group that produces a tremendous amount of work that goes well beyond the mothership. Although there are challenges that come with that, the smaller number allows us to huddle on a regular basis with almost 100% participation. In addition to our weekly huddle, we eat lunch together every Tuesday and Thursday (Monday to Friday in non-COVID times) in a place where we're surrounded by white boards that prioritize our projects and measure a range of variables. Like a football team, we're able to huddle before almost every play.

Read about Arizona Highways magazine winning several awards on Page 4. 📖



Robert Stieve
Arizona Highways Editor

ADOT employees get holiday shopping discount on Arizona Highways merchandise

A 35% discount is being extended to ADOT team members for purchases made on ShopArizonaHighways.com through Dec. 31. To receive the discount, orders must be placed online and use promo code PBSTATE at checkout.

ADOT team members also may purchase annual subscriptions to Arizona Highways magazine at a reduced rate of \$16 each (\$36 if shipped outside of the USA). Subscribe at ArizonaHighways.com/subscribe.



The INSIDE LANE

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BE FOUND ON ADOTNET OR AT
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Enter our Cover Photo Contest

Celebrate Arizona's splendor by
entering The Inside Lane's Fall
and Winter Cover Photo Contest.

By 5 p.m. Nov. 19, submit up
to five of your original, digital
fall and winter photographs to
InsideLane@azdot.gov in JPEG
format (no larger than 10MB).
Along with the photo, please
provide a brief description of
where, when and how your
photo was taken and your name/
title/division.

The Grand Prize winner's photo
will be used on a future cover
of The Inside Lane and the
photographer will receive an
Inside Lane goodie bag.



On the cover

ADOT Videographer **Joe Langer** took this
cover photo of Happy Valley Maintenance
Unit Leadman **Ty Freeman** driving a Volvo
loader in the first-ever Central District Roadoe
competition. Read more and see more photos,
Page 5.

MEET THE TEAM:

ADOT Research Center

THE ADOT Research Center has seven employees: Research Center Manager **Dianne Kresich**, Senior Research Project Managers **Bernadette Phelan**, **Bill Stone** and **Julie McIlwain**; Technical Editor **Kami Sheppard**, Product Evaluation Program Supervisor **Shane Little** and Product Evaluation Engineer **Paul Sullivan**.

DIANNE KRESICH DESCRIBES THE RESEARCH CENTER IN THE Q & A BELOW:

In a nutshell, explain what your unit does.

The Research Center comprises two distinct units whose work does not overlap. The research unit manages applied research studies to help ADOT improve its products, processes and decision-making. The product evaluation unit creates and maintains the ADOT Approved Products List, which includes products approved, although not required, for construction use.

What is unique about your team?

Every research study is unique, and the staff who manage the studies must enjoy variety, be sharp, be attentive to detail, and be able to think logically as well as find gaps in logic. People who enjoy and succeed at this kind of work demonstrate these traits and skills.

What is an interesting fact or funny story you'd like to share?

For many years, when we worked in a physical office, the Research Center celebrated Halloween in a big way. Staff wore costumes and shared a potluck lunch. One year we held a mini-research study at the party: a taste test to determine the best brand of whipped cream. (See the 2019 Halloween team photo on the right.)



Explain a recent success for your team.

The Research Center was asked to lead a pooled fund study on the in-service evaluation of roadway safety hardware, which means while in use rather than in a lab or test track setting. Several states are joining ADOT in this major undertaking.

How does your team embody AKA — The ADOT Way?

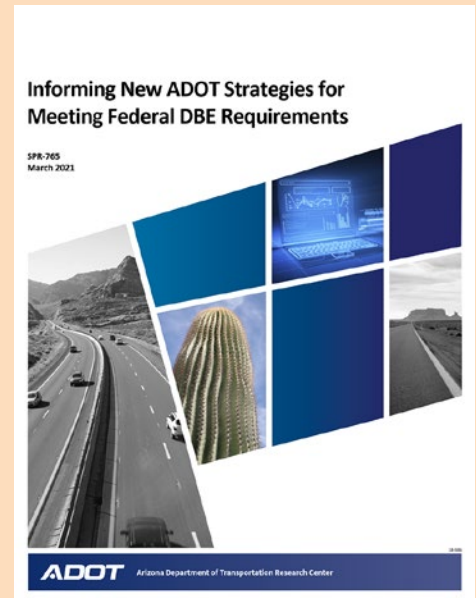
We were problem-solving before problem-solving was cool! It is essential to the research process and to the continuous improvement of the product evaluation program. We know that solving a problem starts with carefully defining that problem, which can be easier said than done. ■

~ Kim Larson, Senior Communications Specialist

Crafting more accessible reports

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT is the essence of the ADOT Research Center team's work. They help improve operations across the agency.

In order to improve ADOT's implementation of research findings, the team has focused on changing the report formats over the last several years. Looking to private sector research organizations like Gallup and Pew, they studied how they presented the information to the public, and came up with a template that was not as long, with clearer and more visual, digestible information.



"We believe our research could be more useful if it was more accessible, so we set out to target our reports to their main audience — practitioners and decision makers," said Research Center Manager **Dianne Kresich**. "That meant shorter, with a focus on key concepts and presenting information visually."

Now, there are two report formats at the conclusion of a study: a streamlined [final report](#), and a two-page [report brief](#), which offers a quick-take of the report findings.

Learn more about the [ADOT Research Center](#).

ARIZONA HIGHWAYS WINS TOP AWARDS, LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

ARIZONA HIGHWAYS, the world-renowned magazine published by ADOT, captured top awards for its extraordinary photos, articles, design and production.

The International Regional Magazine Association honored [Arizona Highways](#) with 22 awards in categories, including essay writing, illustration, photography and art direction.

"I'm very proud of the awards our team has won this year. Although it's the opinion of our subscribers that matters most, it's great to be recognized by our peers for the work we do," said Arizona Highways Magazine Editor **Robert Stieve**.

"The bar for this magazine was set extremely high many decades ago. That we're able to maintain that level of excellence month after month is because of the incredibly talented people listed on our masthead," he added.

The 96-year-old magazine, which has subscribers in all 50 states and more than 100 countries, also was recently named "Best Travel Magazine" by Phoenix New Times.

Meanwhile, Arizona Highways launched its new website, arizonahighways.com in October, sporting a more contemporary look.

"It features a streamlined approach that allows visitors easy access to the things they're most interested in,

including hikes, photography, restaurants and our online store," Stieve said.

The website also has a new space for Arizona Highways' growing archive of videos and new podcasts — "Arizona

Highways Podcast" featuring interviews with magazine contributors and "Eat My Words," focusing on Arizona's dining scene.

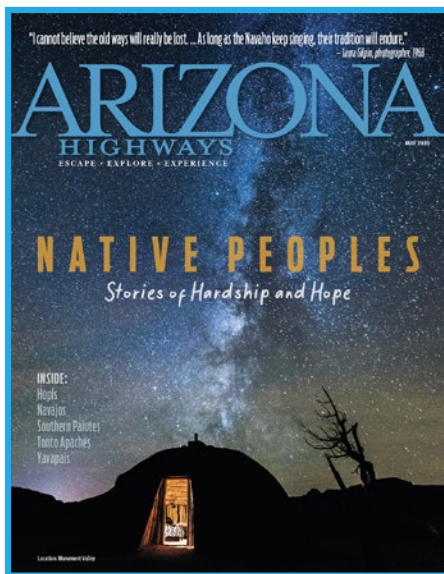
Arizona Highways e-newsletter also was recently redesigned.

"Like everything we do, the newsletter was a team effort. It's a wonderful way to reach our subscribers on a more personal level. It gives them insight into how things work behind the scenes, and what's coming up in the magazine, on the website, and through our social media channels," Stieve said.

Besides Stieve, Arizona Highways staff includes **Lisa**

Altomare, art director; **Noah Austin**, managing editor; **Kathy Bailey**, fulfillment/product manager; **Matt Bailey**, director of finance; **Michael Bianchi**, production director; **Cindy Bormanis**, operations manager; **Mark Buss**, accountant III; **Karen Farugia**, sales and marketing director; **Lisa Karnatz**, corporate sales manager; **Jeff Kida**, photography editor; **Kelly Mero**, publisher; **Ameema Pace**, associate editor/video editor; **Annette Phares**, production coordinator; **Kelly Vaughn**, senior editor/books editor; **Victoria Snow**, webmaster; and **Keith Whitney**, creative director. ■

~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist



ADOT Video

Atop a downtown Phoenix skyscraper, Videographers **John Dougherty** (right) and **Russell Chase** get ready to start the shoot for the window washer PSA.

Terrifying PSA campaign wins Rocky Mountain Emmy

ADOT'S VIDEO series of "[Distracted Drivers Terrify Me](#)" public service announcements was awarded the agency's first Rocky Mountain Emmy.

The ADOT Communications and Public Involvement team created these PSA spots in-house, based on concepts developed by consultant firm LaneTerralever. Video Services Supervisor **John Dougherty**, Videographers **Russell Chase**, **Charles Cull** and **Joe Larger** produced the PSAs, which share important distracted drivers safety messages.

"This was an 'all-hands-on-deck' production," said Dougherty. "Each of the four video team members were crucial to making this campaign a success, bringing their unique skills to the table, including writing,

producing, directing, shooting, editing, sound design, motion graphics, drone footage and more."

In addition, **Doug Pacey**, assistant communications director for customer outreach, secured site locations and partnerships with a snake wrangler, a beekeeper, a high-flying electric line worker, a high-rise window washer and a rodeo clown featured in the PSAs. He also directed promotion of the campaign through paid and earned media.

The campaign, which launched a year ago, has been broadcast across Arizona on radio and television more than 32,000 times.

The Rocky Mountain Emmys are awarded by the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences' Rocky Mountain Southwest Chapter, which includes Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and Southeastern California.

View ADOT's award-winning PSAs at www.azdot.gov/terrify. ■

~ Kim Larson, Senior Communications Specialist



KAIZEN KORNER

KAIZEN 2021 CHALLENGE

We are all being challenged to embrace [AKA-The ADOT Way](#) and practice our skills of problem solving and process improvement. To do this, everyone needs to:

- Focus on improvement of core processes
- Reduce waste using (Plan-Do-Check-Act)
- Document and submit a kaizen via the [kaizen tracker](#) while in the ADOT network

To reach our goal of 7,200, everyone is expected to complete a kaizen on their own and do one additional kaizen.

KAIZEN COUNT

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

2,039

For more information on the Kaizen Challenge, visit the [Kaizen Challenge page on ADOTNet](#).

ADOT expands partnerships to recruit veterans for jobs

ADOT EMPLOYEES are boosting the agency's outreach efforts to attract veterans to its many employment opportunities.

Most recently, ADOT became an Arizona Veteran Supportive Employer through the Arizona Coalition of Military Families. ADOT Recruiters **Vanessa Paver** and **Anny Wedding** represented ADOT in the group's virtual training program on best practices for recruiting veterans in October. ADOT's profile is posted on [BeConnectedAZ.org](#).

"We see veterans leveraging the skills they learned in the military and converting them to our workforce," said Human Resources Operations Manager **Nina Makarenko**.

ADOT currently has more than 270 [veterans](#) working in a wide range of jobs throughout Arizona, including the Enforcement Compliance Division, technology, engineering, infrastructure, construction and the Motor Vehicle Division.

Paver, who started at ADOT last year, collaborates with community groups and participates in job fairs for veterans and the general public.

"I have been helping ADOT with recruiting and supporting veterans by forming partnerships," said Paver, whose husband is a veteran. "I assist candidates interested in job opportunities and/or information on ADOT."

ADOT has partnered with [Army PayS](#) for several years. Paver provides ADOT's job opportunity information for the Army PayS monthly newsletter and its portal.

She said ADOT will be expanding its veteran recruitment efforts by providing ADOT

job opportunities on various veteran portals and websites.

ADOT will be participating in a veterans and military spouses career event hosted by the State of Arizona on Feb. 1 at ADOT's Human Resources Development Center.

View veteran resources and videos of veterans sharing about their ADOT jobs on [azdot.gov](#). Learn about job opportunities for veterans at ADOT and other state agencies on [azstatejobs.gov](#). ■

~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist



CENTRAL DISTRICT HOSTS HEAVY EQUIPMENT ROADEO TO TEST SKILLS

HEAVY EQUIPMENT operators demonstrated their driving skills at the first-ever Central District Roadeo on Oct. 28.

Maintenance and construction employees operated different types of heavy equipment on driving courses at the Happy Valley Maintenance Yard.

"The competition equipment was based on skilled use in a safe manner," said Central District Management Analyst **Maria Garcia**. "We teamed up with our training team to help with the equipment competition and skill evaluations."

For example, the front-end loader competition focused on gathering a full bucket of material, traveling without spilling and handling a ball for accuracy.

Roadeo first-place winners are:

- **Jesus Alvarez** (Happy Valley Maintenance): John Deere skid steer
- **Mark Amaya** (Mesa Maintenance): Komatsu grader
- **Steve Collins** (Mesa Maintenance): Sweeper
- **Erik Furlong** (Hydrovac): Cone truck
- **Daniel Lee** (Durango Maintenance): Bobcat skid steer and attenuator
- **Robert Samora** (Tempe Maintenance): Volvo loader
- **Kyle Smith** (Avondale Maintenance): CAT grader
- **Joselyn Valero** (Central Construction) and **Mohamed Elomeri** (Central Maintenance); **Rhonda Cronin** and **Ricardo De Leon** (Happy Valley Maintenance): Kubota Race

Employees, who had previously completed the classroom portion of their on-the-job training, performed their skills portion at the Roadeo. About 150 employees from throughout the Central District participated in the event. ■

~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist



Joe Larger, ADOT Video

Steve Collins of Mesa Maintenance won the sweeper competition in the Roadeo.



CLIFTON "CHIEF" CLARK has been with ADOT for 12 years. He is the construction chief surveyor for the Infrastructure Delivery and Operations Division's Roadway/Engineer Survey Services. A retired U.S. Navy chief operations specialist, Clark began surveying in 1990 and obtained his Arizona Professional Land Surveyor registration in 2006.

How do you describe your job to people outside of ADOT?

I'm the guy with the "camera" on a yellow tripod on the side of the road. It isn't really a camera but most people assume it's a camera. We are the group of professionals and technicians who ensure that the selected contractor is constructing the project per design plan spatially by verifying the position of all the structures, such as roads, bridges, storm water, public utilities and buildings.

What is your favorite part of your job and why?

Watching and assisting staff learn and develop, not just surveyors. My hope is to one day help an employee take over my position when the opportunity arises for me to advance to a position of greater responsibilities and challenges.

What do you want other ADOT employees to know about your job?

The equipment we use is not a magic stick or a magic box. A lot of technical and professional knowledge, skill, abilities and competence have to be applied to use this equipment within every task assigned. The surrounding environmental elements have more to do with the equipment chosen to do the job than the equipment functionality.

Where is your favorite vacation spot in Arizona?

Pinetop-Lakeside

How do you enjoy spending your free time?

Photography, offroading and spending time with my wife, Debbie, and our dogs, Marshall and Tucker.

What interests do you have outside of work?

Photography. This has turned into a great adventure for myself and my best friend, John, as we travel across Arizona doing various shoots, such as nitro dragsters, horses, people and street photography. The one that gets most of my attention is the boat race venues with the Arizona Drag Boat Association. Races are held February through November at Hidden Lake in Buckeye, with down times in June and July for a summer heat relief. 🇺🇸

~ Compiled by Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist



Clifton "Chief" Clark took this photo of race boats on Hidden Lake in Buckeye.

WINNER,

WINNER!

THERE WAS AN awesome response to [October's AKA quiz challenge](#), but we could only choose three winners! Congratulations to Strategic Initiatives Manager **Rebecca Cruz**, Enforcement and Compliance Division Sergeant **Kathleen Copeland**, and LTAP and Operations Manager **Rebecca Mayher**, who were each selected from a random draw of entries. They all received a special prize bag from Internal Communications.

Here are the answers — how well did you do?

What does AKA stand for?

AIR, Kaizen and AMS

Describe a recent kaizen success story in which you (or your team) were able to identify waste, make improvements and measure results.

We received a variety of answers to this quiz question, including a kaizen about kaizens — one ADOT team created a Google Sheet to track their kaizen ideas so none are forgotten. The improvement allows the team to count ideas and track when they're implemented.

Which of the scenarios below is an example of Total Systems?

By studying the problem, along with its impact on others in the agency, one ADOT team found a solution that benefitted multiple work groups.

Which of the following is an example of performance management?

All of the above (A scorecard showing weekly performance measurements. A graph charting customer survey results. A problem-solving register identifying problems and problem-solving steps).

Which is NOT a Kaizen principle?

Plan-Do-Check-Act

