LPESA and LTAP Tap Talents for a Successful NACE Conference

The National Association of County Engineers’ NACE 2014 Annual Meeting and Management & Technical Conference in Baton Rouge was a resounding success! The conference was hosted by LTAP’s partner organization and NACE’s Louisiana affiliate, the Louisiana Parish Engineers and Supervisors Association (LPESA). Dennis Woodward, LPESA Past President, led our host state efforts. LPESA bid on the conference twice before landing it for 2014. NACE 2014 featured vendor displays, thought provoking technical and informational presentations, and a variety of entertaining social activities for over 400 visitors to the Capital City from April 13th to the 17th. Joined by expert staff of the Louisiana Transportation Research Center (LTRC) and LPESA membership, LTAP assisted with registration, meeting room arrangements, technical tours, and portions of the technical program. LTAP also provided some of the goodies for the attendee gift bags, including information on LTAP programs, digital copies of the MUTCD, as well as the LA LTAP Small Signs Handbook. The conference also hosted the National LTAP Association’s Executive Committee for two days of meetings during the conference. Geraldine Bordelon, Philipa Blair, and the staff at the Baton Rouge Convention and Visitors Bureau worked tirelessly in preparation for and throughout the meeting, ensuring a successful con-

NACE delegates enjoyed the tour of the John James Audubon Bridge during their conference in April.

The Local Technical Assistance Program of the Louisiana Transportation Research Center in cooperation with LADOTD, FHWA, and LSU.

www.louisianaltap.org
www.louisianalrsp.org
Carolyn Kramer of ARTBA provided information about the National LTAP/TTAP programs at the NACE Vendor exhibit in Baton Rouge.

LPESA President Tim Marks of St. Landry Parish recognizes Perry Holmes of Winn Parish for the contributions made by Perry and his wife, Phyllis, to the NACE guest program and the overall success of the NACE 2014 meeting in Baton Rouge.

Helping with registration at NACE 2014 were (from left) Mary Stringfellow of FHWA, Louisiana LTAP Director Dr. Marie Walsh, Ann Wills of LADOTD, and Dr. MaryLeah Coco, Allison Landry, and Melissa Lee of LTRC.

Dennis Woodward (Rapides Parish) of LPESA, NACE Local Arrangements Chair, goes over the Fais-Do-Do dinner menu at the NACE conference in Baton Rouge as NACE President Mark Servi of Barron County, Wisconsin, looks on.

Jenny Speights, center, Editor of LA LTAP’s Technology Exchange Newsletter, takes a turn at the LTAP/LTRC booth at NACE 2014.
The Louisiana Chapter of the American Public Works Association started off a busy season of activities February 25, hosting its first Mid-Winter Equipment and Technology Expo at the Lamar Dixon Expo Center in Gonzales. The show featured some of the latest heavy equipment innovations, as well as construction, municipal and highway products and services. More than 50 top vendors from across the south displayed their products and services. Among several hundred attendees at the free event were parish and municipal employees in the public works field; fleet managers and mechanics; government purchasers, employees in park and recreation services, DOTD engineers and technicians, landscape architects, engineering consultants, and general and specialty contractors. Lunch was offered free to attendees, and several technical sessions, including a session on Ethics in the Workplace, were presented.

The spacious Lamar Dixon Center proved to be an ideal venue, affording ample space for both indoor and outdoor displays of the variety of equipment being shown. Louisiana LTAP Center participated in the Expo by hosting a booth representing LTAP’s role in technology transfer for local public agencies its partnership with APWA and new joint DOTD/LTAP Local Public Agency training program. Bob Breaux and Steve Strength of LTAP distributed information to attendees on available training programs, the National Association of County Engineers (NACE) conference (hosted by LPESA in April in Baton Rouge), and the asset management and data collection efforts being offered to promote safety and reliability of local roads around the state.

In addition to the Expo, APWA Louisiana sponsored National Public Works Week May 18-24, 2014. Nationally, APWA has sponsored this celebration for more than 50 years in order to celebrate the contributions of public works employees, and to educate people across the nation about the impact that public works has in their own lives and in their local communities. This year’s theme was “Building for Today, Planning for Tomorrow,” which was meant to emphasize the importance of today’s work contributing to the prosperity and safety of our country’s public systems for years to come. Public works is crucial in developing today’s infrastructure projects in our communities that will stand the test of time for future generations. On May 22, the Baton Rouge Chapter of APWA and LTAP hosted a special seminar on Preventive Maintenance at TTEC. Co-hosted by LTAP, the seminar featured a presentation by equipment safety expert and trainer Steve Price. Steve will also be teaching a series of equipment safety classes for LTAP in the coming months, including Tractor/Mower Safety and Heavy Equipment Operator Safety. Stay tuned for these course announcements!
Tractor/Mower Safety: Not Just for the Birds

With the summer quickly approaching, it is a great idea to review Tractor/Mower operational safety. Remember that safety is in YOUR hands. It is your job to be aware of safety guidelines that are put in place to prevent yourself and others from injury! If possible, attend a training session on mower operator safety to increase your tractor safety awareness.

LTAP is offering a half day class in Tractor/Mower safety this summer at locations around the State. Times and locations will be announced soon on our website, www.ltrc.lsu.edu/ltap.

Think Safety before, during, and after operating!

Pre-Operational Safety Procedures
You must be fully aware of any rules outlined by your supervisor before operating a tractor. It is your responsibility to read through the tractor’s operational and safety manuals in order to understand all of the mower’s capabilities. Proper use of attachments is a key to tractor and mower safety. Only attach the drawbar and hitch points as advised in the operational manual, and only use attachments that are made specifically for your tractor.

Before starting the engine, inspect the tractor and all of its equipment to ensure that it is in good operational condition. Check the tractors tires, engine oil, and the Power Takeoff (PTO) drive locking device. You should also do an overview of the machine to make sure that nothing is falling apart, broken, missing, or damaged.

In order to avoid potential tractor throwing dangers, it is important that the operator walk around and inspect tall grassy areas. Remove anything that may be potentially hazardous. (Note that in these tall grassy sections, operators should mow the grass for the first time of the season at an intermediate height, do another walk around inspection, and then mow the grass a second time on a lower setting.

Locate where the agency’s fire extinguishers and first-aid kits are stowed for possible emergencies. If the tractor has a Roll Over Protective Structure (ROPS), it is imperative that you wear your seatbelt!

During Operations
It is essential that you shield yourself with protective clothing! This might include a hard hat, safety shoes or goggles, heavy gloves, ear plugs to protect your hearing, and reflective apparel. Remove any jewelry or name tags that are loose and could potentially catch on the mower’s controls.

Do not allow other people to ride on the tractor. Never attempt to get on or off of a moving tractor. Only start the tractor with the key while sitting in the driver’s seat.

Mowing on uneven ground can be dangerous. If the ground is thought to be unsafe, opt to use either a push mower or weed eater. Even if the tractor has a ROPS (not all tractors do), operators must be careful when working on uneven ground. To help with the tractor’s stability, steering, and traction, install wheel weights on the machine’s front and rear wheels. Due to the high center of gravity of most tractors, it is imperative that drivers slow down when turning or when driving on uneven or muddy surfaces. Fast driving greatly increases the chances of overturns. A slower speed also allows you to react to dangers along the pathway, such as hidden holes or ditches. Never drive diagonally across a hill; only drive up or down. If when you are driving up/down a hill and the mower stops working, turn off the Power Take Off (PTO) and glide back down cautiously.

When working close to roadways, follow established work zone rules to warn traffic of the presence of slow moving vehicles. These may require the slow moving vehicle safety triangle, flashing lights on the tractor or mower, warning signs on the approach roadways, or in very tight situations, flaggers to direct traffic around the machines.

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Chainsaw Safety

With Hurricane Season on the horizon, chainsaw operators may quickly become high in demand. While a time-saving efficient tool, the chainsaw can be challenging and can lead to serious injury. It is important to review chainsaw safety procedures and practices. Below are a few quick tips for chainsaw usage:

- Develop a felling plan to ensure a safe operation. This includes identifying hazards, evaluating the lean, organizing an escape route, developing a hinge plan, and planning the back cut.
- Personal Protective Equipment is imperative for the chainsaw operator. This includes leg protection (chaps, wrap-chaps, chainsaw pants, or bib style pants), hard hats, hearing protection (muffs or ear plugs), eye protection (goggles or glasses), hand protection (gloves or mitts), and footwear.
- The safest way to start up a chainsaw is with the chainsaw on the ground.
- Keep the area clear of objects or obstructions in front of you and to the sides, especially spectators!
- Keep both of your hands on the chainsaw, thumbs wrapped around the handles, while operating in order to keep stronger control over the power tool. Also, stand with your feet firmly planted to maintain balance and do not reach with the chainsaw or operate it above the level of the chest. Know the proper bracing techniques to help you maintain balance and control of the chainsaw.
- Perform a daily inspection of the chainsaw’s engine and of all of its working mechanisms, including: the starting system, the drive system, sprocket, car, and fuel mix.
- It is important to be fully aware of all the capabilities of your chainsaw and all of its safety features. These can be found in the owner’s manual or online on the manufacturer’s website.

Take time & be safe!

For a more in-depth review, LTAP has the ArborMaster “Chainsaw Safety, Maintenance and Cutting Techniques” Training Videos as well as these accompanying guides available at TTEC. LTAP also has an ArborMaster Training Video entitled “The Art and Science of Practical Rigging.” Call (225) 767-9117 to borrow the videos and obtain copies of the guide.

For safety tips from an LSU AgCenter forest safety specialist, visit: www.lsuagcenter.com/en/family_home/hazards_and_threats/recovery_assistance/cleaning_up/landscaping/storm+cleanup+think+safety+before+you+use+chainsaw.htm

Check out the OSHA Chainsaw Fact Sheet at: www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_Hurricane_Facts/chainsaws.pdf

Tractor/Mower Safety, cont. from page 4

Post-Operation Procedures

Before exiting the mower, turn off the PTO and lower any attachments to the ground. When the tractor has come to a complete stop, make sure that you engage the brakes and park lock. Before dismounting, be sure that the engine is turned off. Avoid parking within the clear zone of a street, highway or where the equipment blocks the view of motorists exiting driveways or cross streets.

After all of these things are complete, you may begin cleaning the tractor. This includes: the engine compartments, windshields, windows, lights, wipers, doors, steps, pedals, and floor. Do not leave any loose items in the tractor, especially on the cab.

Before refueling the gas tank, be sure to allow ample time for the engine to cool down. If the fuel spills over, clean it up immediately.
Creating a Safe Work Environment Course

This March, Louisiana LTAP launched a newly developed and overwhelmingly popular training course as part of its “Roads Scholar” series. The course, “Creating a Safe Work Environment,” provides public agency supervisors with the tools to plan, conduct, evaluate, and communicate safe work practices to their employees.

Retired Brigadier General Roger Shields of the Army National Guard conducted seven full day classes around the State on behalf of LTAP. For the past six years General Shields has worked for Neel-Schaffer Engineering as their Training/Safety Coordinator and has over 40 years of safety management and instructional experience in both military and civilian fields.

In this course, public agency supervisors and crew leaders are taught to recognize safety hazards as part of planning their work. General Shields led the participants in identifying ways to exercise leadership and utilize management techniques to ensure a safe worksite through training, tailgate safety meetings, jobsite briefings, and on the job coaching. He also discussed topics including: managing and matching personnel and their activities onsite with the goal of avoiding accidents; action steps to take if an unsafe incident should occur in order to mitigate injury or damage; and debriefing to contribute to safer worksites in the future. With numerous practical examples and interaction with the class, he helped participants gain an understanding of the issues related to liability of supervisors on the worksite, as well as the responsibilities of supervisors and crew leaders for the safety of the public around their worksites. The class included discussion, practical exercises and entertaining thought provoking videos. Class participants were provided with a variety of additional information that can be taken back to the jobsite and adapted to their particular work situation.

General Shields’ primary objective is for an organization to foster a safe work environment because of its culture, not just because of compliance. He says that you know you are there “when safety is not a program, it is a way of doing business.” This concept of Safety Culture is a growing trend in industry and in the public sector, where employees and supervisors encourage safety as a primary theme in every activity that takes place on the job. Discussion items include:

learning from near-miss situations, encouraging employee input, differences between traditional industrial or construction jobsites; and conditions encountered by public works supervisors, where the safety of the public must always be considered, along with that of the workers.

General Shields and his course have received excellent reviews. Participants say that Shields is “very informative, interesting, and well organized.” They noted he gave “real world information” and “real-life examples” which cemented the objectives of the course. After taking the class, supervisors said they were committed to managing safety differently. Our evaluations demonstrate they intend to “make Job
Hazard Analysis reports routine, “keep in mind the value of communication in the work place,” “set in motion new practices to enhance safety in our Parish,” and to “have more discussion of the job with employees and keep them involved in making decisions.” One participant noted that this course was “absolutely necessary to help train supervisors and managers. This course helped us go the extra step toward making a good team.”

Over 240 public agency supervisors participated in the training program. LTAP is currently offering a related course for front line employees entitled “Safety: A Common Sense Approach for the Public Works Employee,” which started in late May. The revised course features some of the same themes from the Safe Work Environment Class, oriented toward the employee’s role in safety. The course schedule can be found on page one of this newsletter!
Click it or Ticket/Buckle Up in Your Truck Hits Home at LSU

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration recently revealed that in the last five years, Click it or Ticket crackdown initiatives have resulted in over 3 million seatbelt citations over the last five years. Seat belt usage has increased to an average of 88% nationwide! Louisiana lags behind the national average but 2013 was an all-time high at 82%. This increase is no doubt due to the success of NHTSA’s ‘Click It or Ticket’ and ‘Buckle Up in Your Truck’ campaigns combined with more widespread enforcement activities.

The Louisiana Highway Safety Commission reports that 25% of vehicles on Louisiana roads are pick-up trucks. LHSC also reports that fatality data in Louisiana reveals that seat belt usage is significantly lower amongst pick-up truck drivers and their passengers than of other vehicles. The ‘Buckle Up in Your Truck’ high-visibility enforcement and awareness campaign hopes to reverse this trend, especially because the likelihood that pick-up trucks will rollover in fatal crashes is double that of other vehicles.

It is important to remember that rollover crashes can happen anywhere and traveling at any speed. A rollover crash even occurred recently in Baton Rouge on LSU’s campus, within sight of LTAP’s office, in broad daylight. On March 10, 2014, a car did not yield to oncoming traffic as it pulled out on to Nicholson Extension. The speed limit on this road is only 30 mph. The car slammed in to the driver’s side of an advancing SUV, causing the SUV to roll over. Passengers in both the SUV and in the car were all wearing their seatbelts and all occupants walked away unharmed. It is doubtful that any of the occupants in these vehicles anticipated having this crash, but because they were proactive and wore their seatbelts, a much more serious outcome was avoided.

The Capital Region Moves Ahead on Transportation Safety Plan

The Capital Region Transportation Safety Coalition (CRTSC), led enthusiastically by former Baton Rouge Mayor, Tom Ed McHugh, has met several times since the beginning of the year to consider the traffic safety situation in the nine parish area that claims over 130 lives annually. The CRTSC met in February to verify the selection of five key Emphasis areas and to brainstorm positive activities that the Coalition could support to save lives.

The five Emphasis Areas, as voted on by members after consideration of the crash data and statistics, and their leaders are:

**Impaired Driving**
Catherine Childers, Louisiana Highway Safety Commission
Cory Reech, Baton Rouge City Police

**Occupant Protection**
William Davis, Louisiana State Police
Lexlee Overton, Overton Law

**Young Drivers**
Crystal Pichon, Lexlee’s Kids

**Infrastructure and Operations**
Jamie Setze, Capital Region Planning Commission
Jackie Baumann, City of Gonzales

**Pedestrians and Bicyclists**
Bruce Wickert, Baton Rouge Bike Club
Patrick Mascarella, LA Rehabilitation Commission

An important step for the CRTSC was to consider the Vision and Mission for the work that will be accomplished. Recognizing that traffic related deaths are all preventable and that even one death is unacceptable, the CRTSC worked together to adopt an aggressive and optimistic Vision and Mission to guide the Coalition’s efforts:

**Vision:** Reach Destination Zero Deaths and zero life changing injuries for all road users in the Capital Region.

**Mission:** The Capital Region Transportation Safety Coalition will achieve the mission by improving the roadway environment and creating a safety culture of accountability and responsibility.

The May meeting included time for the individual Emphasis Area Teams to meet together, review data, and discuss their specific plans and activities. The Coalition planned to meet again in mid-June to further refine their individual Emphasis Areas proposed strategies and action steps.
Editor’s Note: In the Spring of 2011, a group of local agency representatives along with LTAP, DOTD, and FHWA embarked on an effort to study and evaluate Transportation Asset Management (TAM) in a local public agency setting. The group recommended a pilot project using TAM for pavement and sign systems, which resulted in a project funded by LTAP to help the parishes of Calcasieu and Tangipahoa, and the City of Sulphur, to implement and receive training on these systems. The Roadsoft software package was selected for the pilot effort and the Center for Technology and Training (CTT) at Michigan Technological University was selected to conduct training on the systems as the locals implemented Roadsoft and gathered the necessary data for managing their road systems.

What’s Next for Pilot Agencies
As the agencies completed their PASER (pavement inventory) data collection, CTT began conducting multi-day, advanced Roadsoft training under the pilot project. The training was conducted primarily by means of webinars, which proved to offer the right mix of personal attention and scheduling flexibility necessary to meet the agencies’ needs. Agencies learn how to set up pavement deterioration curves and develop pavement maintenance strategies and budget optimization projecting pavement performance ten years out. “The ability to estimate pavement conditions into the future and prepare for a variety of maintenance options is a big deal,” said Tim Conner, Calcasieu Parish Engineer. “We’ll be able to communicate future needs in a way that we have never been able to, and project budget needs.”

Although not part of the pilot, Tangipahoa Parish plans to inventory culverts once pavement and signs are complete—here again, a huge asset that agencies know very little about.

A final report will document each pilot agency’s experience, good or bad, and staff time expenditures. Comparisons to existing inventory and management methods will be made, and agencies will provide an evaluation of the value of the effort in making their jobs more efficient and helping them

Tangipahoa Parish participates in the Introduction to Roadsoft webinar training. Left to right: Ryan Munchausen (Elos), Bill Moorman, Maurice Jordan.
to communicate their needs to decisionmakers. Lastly, a presentation will be prepared for delivery at regional and statewide meetings so the agencies can share their experiences.

What’s Next for Other Parishes and Cities?
That’s a good question. This pilot was intended to demonstrate that agencies in Louisiana of all shapes and sizes can implement an asset management program for pavements and signs. At this point it looks to be the case. Local agencies have a lot to gain from adopting the concepts of transportation asset management. It can take some of the politics out of the decision making process. It can improve the mix of fixes used on pavements and increase the use of preventive treatments—treatments that extend pavement life and give good bang for the buck. And, it can simplify compliance with the MUTCD Sign Retroreflectivity Requirements.

In the end, it’s up to the agencies to make things happen. The concepts of transportation asset management can help you manage your roadway infrastructure more efficiently and more cost effectively, contribute to better measurement of asset performance, and make your job easier in the long run.

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LTAP Note: Based on the results of the pilot project, LTAP is considering offering support for a similar pilot opportunity to other interested agencies. In addition to the pure TAM effort undertaken in this pilot, discussions are being held regarding possible use of other features in Roadsoft such as management of traffic and safety data. We are also interested in and local agencies’ experience with SimpleSigns as an alternative inventory vehicle. LTAP would also like to leverage some of the inventory support being received from DOTD under the current Fugro Roadware contract for the local roads, to determine how the data that can be gleaned from the Fugro project can assist in local agency TAM efforts. Information on the Fugro opportunity was also featured in our last issue of Technology Exchange.

If you have questions about the pilot project, or would like to know more about transportation asset management implementation possibilities in your local jurisdiction, contact Steve Strength, LTAP Program Manager, at 225-767-9118 or by email at Steve.Strength@la.gov.

Distracted Driving and Fatalities

More than two out of every five fatalities that occur during work are caused by motor vehicle crashes, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The US Department of Transportation has created National Distracted Driving Awareness Month, a new national advertising campaign focused on fighting all forms of distracted driving, including texting while driving. Employers must strive to protect their employees by preventing them from texting while driving.

For more on the National campaign:
www.distraction.gov/content/press-release/2014/04-03.html

For an OSHA brochure on Distracted Driving:
www.osha.gov/Publications/3416distracted-driving-flyer.pdf

For more on OSHA’s Distracted Driving Campaign:
www.osha.gov/distracted-driving/index.html

OSHA’s 2014 Campaign to Prevent Heat Illness in Outdoor Workers

May 22nd began OSHA’s fourth annual launch of its summer campaign, Campaign to Prevent Heat Illness in Outdoor Workers. This campaign is meant to raise awareness amongst employers and employees of the potentially fatal impacts hot weather can have on workers in outdoor industries. OSHA reports that in 2012, 31 worker deaths were heat-related, and 4,120 workers experienced heat-related illnesses. It is imperative that new and temporary workers are allowed to adjust to working in the heat since most cases of heat-related illnesses occurred in these employees.

For more on the National Campaign:
www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatillness/index.html

For free education materials in both English and Spanish:
www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatillness/edresources.html

To download a free heat app:
www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatillness/heat_index/heat_app.html
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The purpose of the Local Technical Assistance Center is to provide technical materials, information, and training to help local government agencies in Louisiana maintain and improve their roads and bridges in a cost-effective manner. To accomplish this purpose, we publish a quarterly newsletter; conduct seminars, workshops, and mini-workshops covering various aspects of road and transportation issues; provide a lending library service of audio/visual programs; provide technical assistance through phone and mail-in requests relating to transportation technology; and undertake special projects of interest to municipalities in Louisiana. LTAP also coordinates the Louisiana Local Road Safety Program.