



County Highway Report

January, 2005 A Newsletter for the Indiana Association of County Highway Engineers and Supervisors

A Message from the President

By **Darin Duncan,**

Harrison County Highway Engineer

Greetings to all and welcome to 2005. By now most of us have experienced the pleasures of winter in Indiana for another season. Some of you have even been lucky enough to get the Federal approved FEMA version of winter. Regardless, my hat goes off to all of you who put it on the line for your communities during challenging weather conditions. I think we all try to review and improve our responses after major events, but I encourage you to take a few minutes and say "Thanks" to all of your employees that make good things happen for your area.

It is my pleasure to be serving as your Association's President for 2005. The President of any organization has many responsibilities. One of the most important is to help set the goals and objectives of the organization, then to lead it in those directions. However, this organization is more than one person's goals and objectives. It is the collective goals and objectives of all of its members, both regular and associates in this case. That is why I encourage each of you to provide your feedback on charting the course. You can do that by contacting any of the executive officers, district directors, or by simply attending regular members meetings and voicing your concerns. Collectively, we can accomplish much more than individually.

This year I hope that we can make progress on a number of issues. Legislatively, your Association is involved with several issues that are important to our members. The new changes in the capital will be interesting to watch. It presents us with the challenge of making our voice heard both in the General Assembly and at the Governor's office. We are actively working on and watching several pieces of potential legislation, including House Bill 1713, which relates to the funding for County Engineers, Road Superintendents, City Engineers and Street Superintendents. This bill would tie increases in salary reimbursement to the LTAP Road Scholars program. We are also watching for a proposed gas tax increase that may be introduced for discussion in the General Assembly.

Your association works with others throughout Indiana toward common goals. Coordinating with the Indiana Association of County Commissioners (IACC), the Association of Indiana Counties (AIC), the Build Indiana Council (BIC) and the Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) are just some examples. In that spirit of cooperation, I must remind you all that the AIC County Government Day will be held at the Hilton (formerly Adam's Mark) in downtown Indianapolis on February 22nd. I encourage you to attend this outing if possible to help lobby our State leaders on behalf of our Association. Remember, the strength in numbers only grows stronger with a wide base of support.

Other items to look forward to this year are the annual Purdue Road School, the IACHES Summer Conference, the AIC fall annual meeting, and the

IACC annual meeting in December. We have regular members meetings at all of these events, and I hope that you can join us in working together to strengthen our membership.

Your Board of Directors and I continuously strive to make this association a more valuable resource for its members. There are many ways to do this, whether it is by continued training and educational opportunities, or simply by networking with your peers and vendors. Hopefully, you all have had the opportunity to view the IACHES website at www.iaches.org. If you haven't, please take a few minutes and check it out. I hope that we can not only continue but advance the information that we make available to you on this site. If you have any thoughts or comments on other ways that we can enhance our service to you, please let us know.

In closing, I wish each and everyone a prosperous new year. We may not always know what lay in store, but wouldn't it be a boring ride if we did? Take each day as it comes, and work together with your team to make this the brightest year it can be. It is only then that we can rest and say that we did the best that we can do. I challenge you not to settle for anything else!

Update on 2005 IACHES Directory

By: Brett A. Cating, Vice President
Montgomery County Director

This is just a reminder for everyone that the 2005 IACHES directory is being put together. If you have any updated information please contact Cheryl Mencsik at iaches@skynet.net before the February 15th deadline. The directory is only as good as the information the members supply Cheryl with. Please take the time to update your information. If you are an associate member or would like to contact one to help support our directory a ½ page ad is \$250.00 and a full page ad is \$400.00. Please put it in electronic form and send along with your payment to

Cheryl Mencsik, IACHES, P.O. Box 55, LaGrange, IN 46761. We updated photographs at the Commissioners' conference and Cheryl will be at road school to update other photos if needed.

A Letter of Introduction

Jodi M. Coblentz, P.E., IACHES

Secretary/Treasurer

Cass County Engineer

I first wanted to thank the members and friends of IACHES for entrusting me to be your 2005 secretary/treasurer. It truly is an honor and I look forward to serving this organization in the coming years. I believe that this is a great group that has done, and will continue to do, great things for the roads, bridges and counties of Indiana!

I have been the highway engineer in Cass County for over five years now. I have gathered an incredible amount of information about so many things and hopefully I've managed to even put some of it to good use. Cass County is medium sized with its biggest city being Logansport and a population of less than 45,000. We have over 800 miles of roadway and 120 bridges. We are a community in the balance between encouraging growth and keeping it within a standard that works.

I am a graduate from Virginia Tech and I moved to Indiana in 1996 where I took a job with an Indianapolis consulting firm. There I worked on many different projects specializing in traffic engineering. In 1999 I took the position with Cass County as their first highway engineer. Wow, I didn't know what I was in for! I had no idea that county highway departments faced some of the "unique" challenges that are presented to us. One of my favorite things about IACHES is getting to share with other counties how they have overcome some of the most interesting problems.

Since joining the forces in Cass County I have worked in many areas. For me, I try not to use the words, "It's not my job." From drainage to potholes, we have to be a "jack-of-all-trades." I have had a great



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opportunity to work on the Hoosier Heartland as it is constructed from Logansport to Lafayette. We recently reached a huge milestone with a completed ROD! Through this process I have come to understand the great need for Environmental Streamlining. I have also learned more than I ever wanted about federal funding and the importance of Reauthorization. I have traveled to D.C. twice working on a better rate of return for Indiana and obtaining funding for the Heartland. Some of my other projects include implementing a GIS, the rehabilitation of an historic arch bridge using an innovative method of funding, culvert inspections, sign policies, speed limit policies, planning issues, federal aid road improvement projects, drainage improvements and many other "interesting" things.

I look forward to the next years in working with this group and learning more, doing more, and solving more!

www.iaches.org

By Mike Beasey, Webmaster
Elkhart County Supervisor

Welcome to 2005! I'm sure everyone has that statement filed away as yesterday's news, but I threw it in for anyone who may just now be awakening from a very...very long nap.

Our web site has yet to become as productive as it should be, in terms of exchanging information for members to share across the state. Some of the difficulty has been on my end. In some cases I had difficulty opening a file or photo that was to be posted. To facilitate a smoother transfer from your desk to the web I would like to make a couple of suggestions that would enhance the process of posting your information on our web site.

- When possible, please submit the information being placed on the web as a Microsoft Word (.doc) file.
- If you don't use Word, consider converting your file to a (pdf) format before forwarding it.

- Save and forward your photos as (gif) files.

A cornerstone of IACHES should be the free flow of information from the organization to its members. I'm sure that everyone understands this concept. What may be a bit fuzzy, however, is that this premise necessarily means a free flow of information from member to member as well. You are IACHES.

Our web site is one of the vehicles that can be used to exercise that flow of information. We're interested in hearing your stories about new concepts and processes you might be experimenting with, or new equipment you have discovered. We'd like to welcome new members of your staff (and hopefully new IACHES members) to our chosen profession. We'd like to recognize you or other members of your agency for any recognition or achievement bestowed upon you/them. The more you participate, the stronger we are.

Don't forget to make a difference, and be safe.



IACHES
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NACE UPDATE

**By Steven A. Sherwood, P.E., L.S.:
Warrick County Highway Engineer
And NACE State Director for IACHES**

IACHES renewal notices have been sent out. Please remember to submit the renewal with payment as soon as possible. Also, please take this time to consider joining the National Association of County Engineers (NACE). NACE is for County Superintendents/Supervisors as well as Engineers. NACE represents all that IACHES stands for and provides much support, information and lobbying efforts both state and nationally. I will have a NACE booth at the 2005 Road School Breakroom and will have additional information on NACE. Please plan to stop and visit and help yourself to the free information or contact me directly. There is space on the IACHES renewal notice for applying/renewing your NACE membership. Counties will generally reimburse you for your association membership fees.

Future NACE Conferences will be held at the following locations and dates:

- 2005 Bismarck, North Dakota, April 17 -21
- 2006 Grand Rapids, Michigan, April 9 -13

Please consider joining NACE. Applications are available through the IACHES website and through NACE at www.countyengineers.org.