



OKLAHOMA
Corporation
Commission

OCCurences

Nov. 15, 2024

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Roger Whelan
Transportation
Enforcement
55 Years



LaDonna Thimmes
Public Utility
Division
30 Years



Trey Davis
Administrative, Judicial and
Legal Services
25 Years



Jason Harjo
Administrative, Judicial and
Legal Services
25 Years



April Long
Transportation
Enforcement
25 Years



Terin Morris
Petroleum Storage Tank
Administration
25 Years



Judi Taylor
Transportation
IFTA/IRP
25 Years



Sharon Burd
Transportation
Administration
10 Years



Maya Love
Transportation
Enforcement
10 Years



Teree Madrane
Transportation
Requirements
10 Years



Matt Mullins
Administrative, Judicial
and Legal Services
10 Years



Suzanne Green
Oil and Gas
Conservation Division
5 Years



Lee Hammons
Oil and Gas
Conservation Division
5 years



Jimmy Lilly
Oil and Gas
Conservation
Division
5 years



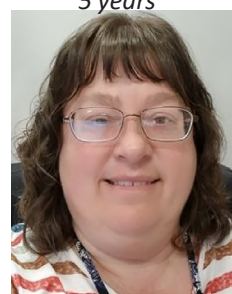
Robert Reynolds
Oil and Gas
Conservation
Division
5 Years



Skyler St. John
Oil and Gas Conservation
Division
5 Years



Tarah Stoddard
Administrative, Judicial
and Legal Services
5 Years



Sandra Sumaza
Administrative, Judicial
and Legal Services
5 Years

And, also ...

5 Years

- Steven Bibb, Transportation Pipeline Safety
- Jon Bozeman, Transportation Enforcement
- Landon Taylor, Transportation Enforcement
- Matthew Wilkowske, Oil and Gas Conservation Division
- Michael Willard, Oil and Gas Conservation Division

Milestones

20 Years

Jason Baker, Transportation IFTA/IRP

Robert Ramirez, Oil and Gas Conservation Division

10 Years

Ryan Hedrick, Public Utility Division



OKLAHOMA Corporation Commission

Safety matters

Watch Where You Drive



Earlier this year, an oil and gas inspector high-centered a pickup on uneven ground at a Creek County well location during a site check to investigate a complaint of overgrown vegetation and trash.

Before the inspector could free the vehicle, its heat ignited the location's brush, with the resulting fire burning off the overgrowth and destroying the pickup, too.

The inspector thankfully escaped without injury. But the event should remind us all to be cautious when rolling on to well locations.

Overgrown vegetation can hide various hazards besides just uneven ground, said Brad Ice, the Oil and Gas Conservation Division's Field Operations Manager.

Pits/holes, stacks of old tubing and rig anchor posts called deadmen also are potential traps drivers should avoid, Ice said.

While well locations are leveled and rocked initially, operators are not required to keep them that way, he also said.

"A lot of our locations are just grass, and you have to follow tire tracks just to get in there," said Ice.

"Driving slow is the best strategy.



Up in flames - A truck high-centered at a Creek County well location caused a fire earlier this year.

"And if it is dry, you don't want to let your vehicle to just sit still and idle," he said.

Transportation Enforcement rolls

OUR agency's Transportation division remained busy supporting Oklahoma's truckers this summer while working to keep all of us safe.

A group of enforcement officers working at El Reno's weigh station, for example, handed out snacks and sodas to drivers during a September trucker appreciation event, while more than a half dozen other officers at Oklahoma's Beckham County Port of Entry dropped everything about a month earlier to respond to a horrific accident on Interstate 40.

The Aug. 21 evening accident at Mile Marker 4 involved a disabled tractor trailer rearended by a second tractor trailer, leaving two individuals seriously hurt and forcing the temporary closure of eastbound Interstate 40.

Snacks, drinks provided to truckers

Officers working at El Reno's weigh stations handed out cold sodas, water and chips to drivers of every vehicle crossing their scales from 2 to 4 p.m. on Sept. 19 supporting the United States Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's National Truck Driver Appreciation Week.

Motor Carrier Enforcement Officers Robert Buswell and Joseph Bradley worked about two months to organize the event, Lt. Jamison McCollister said.

Officers handed out the drinks and snacks for two and a half hours.

McCollister also thanked Transportation Director Paul Swigart, Deputy Director Brett Macy, Enforcement Chief Scott Baze and Maj. Corbi Wathor for their support. *event.*

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to support and celebrate truckers

"I would say this event was a huge success. Every driver was thankful and made sure to thank our officers for the work they do," McCollister said.

The Beckham County event, by contrast, offered no opportunities for advanced planning.

Transportation Enforcement Officers Chris Hopingardner and Miguelangel Gutierrez spotted a plume of smoke about a mile east of the port of entry and detoured to investigate as they were returning from lunch.

When they arrived, they learned a good Samaritan already had pulled a driver from one of the involved trucks clear of his burning vehicle and into a ditch, while a mechanic who had been working on the disabled truck when it was struck lay nearby.

Flames prompted Hopingardner and Gutierrez to move the injured mechanic away from approaching flames as Officer Bridge used a fire extinguisher to put them out.

Oklahoma's Transportation Department Enforcement Officers couldn't fulfill their mission of keeping all of us safe on our highways without a couple of dozen headquarters staffers tasked with keeping records for intrastate and interstate haulers up to date.

Many of the employees make sure intrastate human and cargo carrying companies are protected by insurance before licenses to operate are issued.

Some commercial and all private haulers (with gross vehicle weights of 26,000 pounds or more) are required to carry a minimum of \$350,000 in insurance. Most intrastate operators must carry a minimum of \$750,000.

"We actually do get into what they haul a little bit when considering issuing licenses to operate," said Crystal Stevens, a department Regulatory Programs Manager. "It makes a difference in what insurance is required."

Interstate haulers must provide insurance proof to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration to obtain a Department of Transportation number.

In Oklahoma, enforcement operators also use headquarters-created information to ensure the operators are using valid International Registration Plan plates and International Fuel Tax Agreement decals to ensure proper fuel taxes and other fees are collected for road maintenance needs.

Oklahoma's Transportation Department headquarters staff handles those requirements for about 8,000 intrastate operators and 4,000 interstate operators, said Stevens and Angie Dew, a department Customer Specialist Supervisor.

"We don't want any carrier running in this state without insurance on file," said Stevens.

Other enforcement officers assisted by Sgt. Dennis Hendrix set up an air ambulance landing zone while Officer Robert Clark took care of the other injured person and helped stabilize the injured mechanic before he was airlifted to a hospital.

Later, Hopingardner redeployed to the first eastbound I-40 exit where traffic was being diverted to assist Officer Joey Scott in safely keeping traffic away from the accident scene.

Transportation Enforcement Officer Trisha Bridge also responded, helping with traffic control while the interstate's eastbound lanes were closed.

"In emergency situations, seconds matter," Hopingardner noted in his after-action report.



Opposite page: The wreck on I-40 (Port of Entry officer photo) **Clockwise:** Officers Buswell, Bradley and Rod McKee greet truckers during the National Truck Driver Appreciation Day, and officers Bradley, Shola Sogunro, McKee and Lane Waters pause for a picture in front of a weigh station during the event. (Photos by McCollister and Sogunro).



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Grilling up supportive vibes!

OUR thoughts turned to football, the State Fair of Oklahoma and changing our wardrobes as we anticipated cooler weather in September.

We also were reminded we should consider supporting a myriad of organizations who aid those who need help.

Oklahoma's 2024 State Charitable Campaign launched its annual effort to support those organizations in September with music, food and swag-loaded events at Oklahoma's Cap-

itol Lawn and downtown at the Oklahoma Commons Pavillion.

This year's campaign offers state employees the opportunity to make tax-deductible contributions from their paychecks to more than 250 organizations they wish to support during the coming year.

State workers contributed \$323,332 to those organizations in 2023. Oklahoma Gov. Kevin Stitt, meanwhile, aims to beat that this year. The campaign has set a contribution goal of \$325,000 for the year.

"These organizations are on the front lines of meeting the health needs and human service challenges facing some of our most vulnerable Oklahomans. The SCC helps those in need by providing meals, educational programs, medical care and even disaster aid," he wrote as part of this year's invitation for employees to participate.

"I hope you will join me in supporting this worthy effort. Together, I am confident we can have our most successful year yet," he wrote.



Opposite page: Employees from various state agencies pick up information about organizations seeking support as part of this year's State Charitable Campaign.

Top Left: Oklahoma Natural Gas volunteers grilled up hot dogs and bratwursts for employees to enjoy at this year's SCC event on the Capitol Lawn.

Top Right: The Salvation Army kept plenty of water on ice for event participants.

Center: Kerry Wayne's Rockstar Band entertained guests at the lawn event on Sept. 10.

Right: State employees were treated to grilled hot dogs and bratwursts, chips, cookies at the event on the Capitol Lawn.

For more information, visit:
oklahoma.gov/omes/divisions/human-capital-management/employee-benefits/state-employee-charitable-campaign.html



NextGen Under 30 selects two from OCC

OUR agency has reason to be proud after an Oklahoma foundation created to recognize outstanding young Oklahomans unveiled its winners list for 2024.

NextGen Under 30 assembled a panel of respected business and civic leaders who recognized 484 outstanding young men and women nominated for the honor by peers this year. The award recognizes their innovative, creative and inspiring efforts to push boundaries in their professional and personal lives.

Out of those 484, 46 individuals working in the policy and public service field were selected as part of this year's class. Two of those 46 – Brayden Love and Brock Stuber – work for Oklahoma's Corporation Commission.

Young adults from the educational, health care, hospitality, legal, trade and agriculture, media, public relations, advertising and marketing, nonprofit, real estate, retail, science engineering and technology, sports and outdoors and tourism fields also were honored. Visit <https://nextgenunder30.com/award-winners/> to see the entire list.



Love

Management and Enterprise Services' Civil Services division as a mediation specialist in the agency's administrative law court, helping to settle disciplinary actions involving employees and supervisors from multiple agencies.

"I've always had a passion about serving in government," said Love.

"The cool thing about my job (at OMES) was that I was the mediation program manager. No two days were the same for me. I had a fantastic opportunity to mediate cases to (work with) two parties on different sides of an issue to help them find common ground and come up with a mutually successful resolution."

During his time at OMES, Love also trained mediation volunteers from other agencies.

Love wants to recruit more of our commission employees to serve as volunteer mediators for OMES' civil services division – something Brandy Wreath, the agency's administrator, actively encourages.

Love, a Woodward native, joined our agency's Human Resources division as a programs manager earlier this year.

He credits his interest in the position to experiences he had dealing with the commission's employees and supervisors at OMES.

"They didn't recruit me, but how they conducted themselves, their work ethic and who they were as people did," Love said.

LOVE, 23, began pursuing a career in public service while still attending classes at the University of Oklahoma, serving as a mediation intern at the Administrative Office of the Courts, Oklahoma Supreme Court.

There, he learned about how to help litigants resolve their disputes through mediation.

After completing his junior year at the university, Love went to work for Oklahoma's Office of

STUBER, 30, is a Piedmont native passionate about the outdoors who joined our agency's Petroleum Storage Tank division as an environmental compliance analyst in 2017.

He spent a lot of time outdoors hunting, hiking, fishing and camping growing up, noting the environment provided him a place where he could find peace.

"Once I got older and realized there are jobs out there you could do to protect what we have and could never bring back once it is destroyed, that appealed to me," Stuber said.

Stuber graduated from the University of Central Oklahoma with an industrial safety degree.

Today, he is an environmental compliance supervisor for our agency.

He spends a considerable amount of time in that role working with tank owners to help them achieve compliance with state regulations protecting human health, safety and the environment.

"I have always just enjoyed having an impact on the environment, and this job specifically appealed to me because it gives me a chance to really make a difference – help the Earth during my time on it," he said.

"Humans have a real tendency to destroy, take away and not think about the future. What I am doing now will not only help today's Oklahomans, but also the next generation and those who follow."

Stuber said he is proud to work for PST, noting it is the first in the nation to have obtained the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's state program approval.

"That was big for us – there are some states still awaiting approval.

"We all have a common goal of doing the best we can, and that really resonates with me," Stuber said.



Stuber