

# The Transporter



ISSUE 57 - December/January 2006  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NEWSLETTER



## CELEBRATING *Us*

### 2005 in Review...

**January** - Announcement of \$90 million for improvements to NWT highway infrastructure.



**May** - DOT observes North American Occupational Safety and Health Week with events throughout the territory.

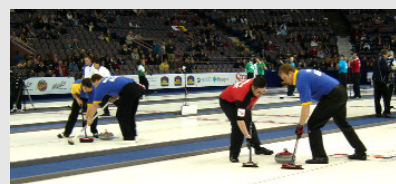
**June** - The STRID team at Road Licensing & Safety Division wins Premier's Award of Excellence for its impaired driving campaign.



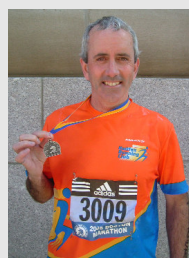
**September** - YK Airport fire department hands out long service awards, and Captain Greg Irvine receives an Exemplary Service Medal.



**October** - Crew from the MV Lafferty join the ranks of the GNWT



**March** - Yellowknife DOT employees Gail Daniels and Mark Whitehead go to national curling championships; Gail to Senior's in Winnipeg, and Mark to the Brier in Edmonton



**April** - Robert Carroll, Assistant Director, Highway Ops in Hay River, finishes in the top 10 per cent at the Boston Marathon.

**August** - The third annual Yellowknife Corporate Challenge kicks off, with Team DOT placing third at the end of the competition.



**November** - A group of teens with interests in transportation visited the Yellowknife Airport as part of the annual Take Your Kids to Work Day.



**February** - Traffic Management System implemented for Mackenzie Valley Winter Road, including a speed limit, signs and more enforcement.

**December** - MV Merv Hardie crew become GNWT employees.

## Meet Jim Martin, New Director of Corporate Services

On January 30, Jim Martin joined the Department of Transportation as the new Director of Corporate Services in Yellowknife.

Jim has been working in various management positions with government since he first came to the North from Stellarton, NS, in 1997, attracted by new and exciting prospects of the North.

Jim worked for the NWT Housing Corporation in the Baffin region before the creation of Nunavut. When the new territory was formed, Jim worked for the Nunavut government in both the Department of Finance and Administration and the Department of Sustainable Development.

Most recently, Jim has been working for the

federal government in Yellowknife at the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, where he held various manager roles.

Jim says he was attracted to the Department of Transportation because he saw "a great opportunity to apply the education and experience I've gained to date."

Jim also says he is looking forward to "supporting the DOT team during this challenging and equally exciting time in the North."

Jim and his wife, Marissa, have a 10-month-old baby girl, Teresa Ann.



Jim Martin in his new office

### SAFETY Tip

Safety Tip is brought to you by Occupational Health & Safety

## Snowmobile Safety

**A snowmobile is only as safe as the driver.**

**The key to safe operation is knowing the machine, using good judgement, and being courteous.**

- Be prepared: adequate fuel supply, parts and tools in case of a breakdown, first aid kit, axe, waterproof matches and proper clothing.
- Check the weather conditions before heading out and let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return.
- Keep your snowmobile in top mechanical condition.
- Ice conditions are never guaranteed; educate yourself on self rescue in case you break through. Remember the rule of thumb, "If you don't know, don't go."
- At night make sure your lights work properly, wear reflective clothing, never travel alone and slow down as darkness reduces visibility.







# Department Welcomes New Employees



In recent months, the Department of Transportation welcomed 14 new employees to its ranks when it took over operation of two ferry services, at Liard River and at Fort Providence.

The department assumed direct responsibility for operating MV Lafferty near Fort Simpson in October 2005. The contractor who had been operating the MV Merv Hardie at Fort Providence agreed to turn the service back to the department this past December.

Crewing the MV Merv Hardie are captains John Mikula and Jim Smith, engineers Asif Hamad, Zakaria Ahmad and Marvin Burden, along with deckhands Audie Elleze, Manuel Constant and Gilbert Matto.

On board the MV Lafferty are Shaun Cli

and Brad Okrainec, both captains, engineers Alex Pelley and Blair Barrie, and deckhands Andrew Pelley and Antoine Tsetso.



# Quick Decisions Require Teamwork on Northern Rivers

Michel Lafrance, manager of Yellowknife Airport, and Daniel Auger, Assistant Deputy Minister, have been friends and colleagues for many years. Every summer, they take a canoe trip on one of the rivers in the North. The following story, submitted by Michel, recaps some of the highlights and learning experiences from trips they took in 2004 and 2005:

"Go to the right!" I yelled as the strong current pushed us towards the cliff wall in canyon four of the Nahanni River. Daniel Auger turned around and looked at me with an interrogative look in his eyes, then I yelled, "The other right!", meaning go left instead. I had given a wrong command and Daniel had instinctively realized my error, which saved us from a long swim down a five-kilometre canyon. This section of the river has some standing waves 8-10 feet



high and it was the first time Daniel and I paddled through a set of Class 3 rapids together.

Just after we put in our canoe below Virginia Falls, the park warden closed the park from the falls all the way to Nahanni Butte because of forest fires. We had the river all to ourselves, though this meant no one could help us if we got into trouble.

Daniel and I had decided early in 2004 to canoe the Nahanni during that summer, and we canoed the Thelon this past summer. You find a lot about yourself on these wilderness trips, especially if you get in trouble. I found out a lot about Daniel, thanks to my natural ability for getting both of us into trouble.

I found that Daniel and I make a good team, because we don't compete with each other and we both respect each other's decisions. Daniel does not shy away from

hard work on a river and I saw him try to carry more weight on a portage than me. I guess he figured that because I am in my 60's he has to help me along, so I made him feel good by giving him the heaviest packs for the portages.

I also found that Daniel shares the same passions as I do, which are the people of the North and the adventure of being on the land.



Michel Lafrance, left, and Daniel Auger



**Marvin Ringham,** Manager of Buildings & Planning with Airports Division in YK, retired recently. Marvin received the department's 2004 Award of Excellence, and oversaw the current \$11.2 million YK Airport renovation and expansion project.



**This brightly coloured float** was put together by the Fort Smith Airport Maintenance team and featured in the Town of Fort Smith's Santa Claus Parade, which took place on December 18.

## HUMAN RESOURCE Updates

### Farewell

- Highways, YK** - John Hopf
- Highway Ops YK** - Michael Crapeau
- Airports YK** - Marvin Ringham
- Casual** - (NSR DV&L) Vivan Silverio



Know of any new and exciting story ideas?  
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### Welcome

- Corporate Services** - James Martin
- Airports** - Delia Chesworth, Kathleen Henderson
- YK Airport** - Allen Digness
- Marine Services Ft. Providence** - John Mikula, Jim Smith, Asif Hamad, Zakaria Ahmad, Marvin Burden, Audie Elleze, Manuel Constant, Gilbert Matto
- Marine Services Ft. Simpson** - Shaun Cli, Brad Okrainec, Alex Pelley, Blair Barrie, Andrew Pelley, Antoine Tsetso
- Casual** - (Airports) Elizabeth Chatwood, (Hwys YK) Chelsey Digness, John Galipeau, James Bonnetrouge, (RL&S) Kelly Billan, (NSR DV&L) Kevin Brandvold, Daryle Foster

