

# CROSSROADS

A newsletter for employees of the New Jersey Turnpike Authority



Volume 4, Issue 1 / November 2021

## A Face Familiar At NJTA Is Introduced as Incoming President of IBTTA

NJDOT Commissioner and NJTA Chair Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti was introduced as the next President of the International Bridge, Toll and Tunnel Association at the organization's annual meeting in Anaheim, California, on Oct. 12th. She will be the fourth New Jersey transportation official to hold the post, joining former New Jersey Turnpike Authority Executive Director William Flanagan (1974) and former New Jersey Highway Authority Executive Directors D. Louis Tonti (1958) and George Zilocchi (1991).

As most of you know, the Commissioner's ties to the New Jersey Turnpike Authority run much deeper than the four years she has served as chair of the board. She began her career in tolling and transportation here and spent 21 years in positions of increasing responsibility, culminating with a two-year stint as the agency's 10<sup>th</sup> executive director.

"I always refer to the New Jersey Turnpike as my career," she said. "I had a great job in Florida (as the head of the Florida Turnpike Enterprise). I have a great job at DOT.

But I had a great career at the New Jersey Turnpike Authority."

To mark the occasion of her appointment as President of

IBTTA, Commissioner Gutierrez-Scaccetti agreed to spend some time talking to Crossroads about her career here, about the proper role of tolling in the overall transportation system, and about the value of actively participating with IBTTA.

**CROSSROADS:** Were you expecting to spend most of your adult life in transportation when you came to work at the Turnpike Authority?

**COMMISSIONER:** "I thought I was going to be bored to tears. I didn't want to talk about concrete and pavement all the time. As soon as I opened my mind and was willing to see how much really gets done

there, I was able to understand the magnitude of the impact we have on people every day ... getting them to a wedding, a graduation, a funeral, or someone's sick bed, or a baseball game ... transportation really is at



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# A deserving honor for one of our own

**Colleagues –**

I hope you will join me in congratulating Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti on becoming President of the International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association. It's a big deal. She is only the fourth New Jersey tolling agency executive to fill the role in the 89-year history of IBTTA.

As you may know, Commissioner Gutierrez-Scaccetti has long been a part of the Turnpike Au-



**From John's Desk**

thority family. Her career in transportation started here. She worked her way through the ranks from Contract Administrator to Executive Director, and played a leadership role in many of the most im-

portant NJTA initiatives of the past three decades. She left for a few years to run the Florida Turnpike Enterprise, but returned to become NJDOT Commissioner after Gov. Murphy's election. She has served as chair of the NJTA board since she returned.

In her role as President, of the organization, Commissioner Gutierrez-Scaccetti will have a seat at the table for the important conversations about laws and policies

affecting the operation of toll roads and about the role tolling will play in the revitalization of America's transportation infrastructure. She will have an opportunity to talk about New Jersey's successes and challenges and to share her transportation vision with a wider audience.

We should all be proud that one of our own has stepped onto the international stage.

**- John**

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the foundation of so much that we do, and probably the most taken-for-granted service that government provides. People just expect it's always going to be available. We don't get up in the morning, getting ready for work and say, 'Geez, I hope I'm going to be able to use the Turnpike from 7A to 9.' We just assume it's wide open and ready and waiting for us. That isn't always true, I know. But we just take it for granted that it will be available. If we could ever win an Oscar in this business, it wouldn't be for best actor. It would be for best supporting actor. We're always in the background making sure that things work."

*She graduated from the university of Connecticut and worked in Mercer County and New Jersey state government. After she completed her master's degree at the Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations, she accepted a position with IBM and relocated to North Carolina. A few years later, in 1989, she was offered a job at*

*the Turnpike Authority and decided to return home. She was hired as a management specialist, but the job title was eventually changed to contract administrator.*

**CROSSROADS:** Can you tell us what you remember about your first day on the job?

**COMMISSIONER:** "One of the memories that will stay with me forever is [current Human Resources Director] Meg Garrity extending her hand in friendship. She said, 'Let me show you how to get around here.' She literally showed me how to get out of the old building on 18 north or south to get food or to get to the stores. It was not easy to figure out on your own. I always appreciated Meg extending herself that way. What I learned over the years is that's just who Meg is. She's a really good soul."

*Commissioner Gutierrez-Scaccetti spent 13 years in the front office at the Turnpike Authority serving as executive assistant, chief of staff, and deputy ED under five executive directors — Frank Holman, Donald Watson, Roger*

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## CHAIR from page 2

*Nutt, Edward Gross, and Michael Lapolla.*

*Her memories of those years run the gamut from the care-free days of employee picnics at Tall Cedars in Crosswicks and 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary antique car parades and the dark days when tragedy struck friends and valued colleagues. “Strong memories can be both good and sad. We had some very sad days as an organization. But what I remember most about them is the Turnpike pulling through as a family.”*

**CROSSROADS:** What accomplishments are you proudest of from your years at NJTA?

**COMMISSIONER:** “I think we did a lot of good work. We did a lot of charitable work. We did a lot of great transportation work. We raised an incredible amount of capital for an extraordinarily aggressive capital plan. There really are few places I go where someone doesn’t mention the difference the 6 to 9 widening made. To us, it’s like, ‘Hey no big deal,’ but to the person who uses it day in and day out we gave them three or four hours of their lives back every week, especially in the summer. It was a very big deal.”

*After Commissioner Gutierrez-Scaccetti retired from the NJTA in 2010, she took a job as executive director of Florida’s Turnpike Enterprise.*

**CROSSROADS:** When you left the New Jersey Turnpike in 2010 and took the job in Florida, were you expecting to come back here one day?

**COMMISSIONER:** “There was never a day in my life when I would have told you I’d be coming back to New Jersey. But when I got the call to come up to New Jersey and meet with the Governor about the job -- and when I got the call from the Governor offering me the job – I was open to the possibility. As much the job was phenomenal, it was really about having the opportunity to come home and help take care of my mom, having a job that would allow me to continue to support my children, to see them through school, to see them get settled and on their own. It happened to be I got to do a job

I loved while taking care of the people I loved.”

*She had been involved with IBTTA when she worked here but her involvement became much deeper when she was in Florida. That’s when she joined the IBTTA board of directors.*

**CROSSROADS:** What inspired your involvement?

**COMMISSIONER:** “If you want the opportunity to have a voice, you have to be willing to invest some of your own time. You do the IBTTA job because you want to be part of a process that guides the industry. You will not always be successful, but you know you will have your voice heard.

“IBTTA is a phenomenal place for leaders at all levels in tolls to get together. There’s a huge networking component – not networking for a new job, but networking with your peers to learn how they do things in different parts of the country. Why does California have this series of express lanes? Do they really work? Or why is Texas set up the way it is – why does TexDOT run basically the tolling operation and tag distribution. How are they set up and why? What can we learn from that? It’s great to be able to interact with other agencies across the country, to know people so when you have a question you can pick up the phone and you can talk something through with a peer, whether it be from Maine or California. “

*The IBTTA president serves a one-year term. Commissioner Gutierrez-Scaccetti’s term begins in January 2022.*

**CROSSROADS:** What do you see as the important issues facing the tolling industry as you begin your term as IBTTA president?

**COMMISSIONER:** “Certainly, the issue of being at the table on infrastructure is important. We need to make sure people understand the power the toll roads have to support the overall transportation infrastructure. We have a great opportunity to do that now as they continue to debate transportation funding at the federal level. It’s important that we help the federal gov-

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ernment understand the phenomenally strong impact toll roads can have on our transportation system generally. You see that here in New Jersey with the power of the toll roads to help us stand up better transit.”

**CROSSROADS:** In what way is transit linked to the highway system?

**COMMISSIONER:** “At the end of the day, we don’t have a lot of room left to build roads. We don’t have a lot of room left to make them bigger. So we need people to find other modes, and we need to support other modes basically for our own success. We can make sure trains and buses are running the way they should, and we can make sure transit has a capital planning process that is predictable, and that people develop confidence in. That certainly makes a lot more room for our commercial customers, who are a key to our economy. It helps us reduce congestion. It’s better for the environment. “

**CROSSROADS:** Do you believe we’re at a point in our history when we will never build or expand a highway again?

**COMMISSIONER:** We are going to be some laying pavement. I say that to every environmentalist who tells me we should never pave another lane —we’re going to do that from time to time. The 1 to 4 widening (on the Turnpike) is a good example. They argue with me about that, and my response always is it will

## What is IBTTA?

*The International Bridge, Tunnel & Turnpike Association, or IBTTA, is the “worldwide association for the owners and operators of toll facilities and the businesses that serve them,” according to the organization’s mission statement.*

*The IBTTA was founded in 1932 and has members in 23 countries on six continents. “Through advocacy, thought leadership and education, members are implementing state-of-the-art, innovative user-based transportation financing solutions to address the critical infrastructure challenges of the 21st Century. “*

*Executive Director John Keller is active with the organization, serving as a member of the Board of Directors.*

*For more information about IBTTA, visit [ibtta.org](http://ibtta.org).*

take one jackknifed tractor trailer to shut that part of the road down for five or six hours with people stuck behind it and not being able to get out. Sadly, because it’s so narrow and the tractor trailers are so big, a crash down there can straddle both sides of the road, so the impact is on traffic in both directions. That widening is needed. We need to get trucks out of the left lane, and we need to create that capacity. But it probably will be the last major widening we do.”

## “She takes the helm...at an extraordinary time of both uncertainty and great promise.”

We asked IBTTA CEO Patrick D. Jones to share his thoughts on the task facing Commissioner Gutierrez-Scaccetti. This is what he wrote:

*“Like most CEOs, Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti has risen to the top of her profession through hard work and sacrifice. Along the way, she has been a*

*mentor to countless women and men about whom she would say that she has learned more from her interactions with them than the other way around. She takes the helm of [IBTTA] at an extraordinary time of both uncertainty and great promise — almost two years into a global pandemic that has changed so many things about the*

*transportation industry. The place where Diane has excelled is in the human element of work, continually striving to get the most out of people by encouraging them to see the most in themselves and to release that talent. I’m very excited to work alongside Diane and to learn from her during the exciting days ahead.”*



## *A Boy, His Dogs, and the Trooper who Kept Them Out of Harm's Way*

If not for Trooper Jamarr Morris, this might have been a tragic story about a boy and the run-away dogs he loved enough to chase into traffic on the Garden State Parkway.

But because Trooper Morris was on the Parkway on his way to the Holmdel Station on the August day when the boy chased his dogs into the road, and because Trooper Morris acted decisively and bravely, that tragedy was averted, the wandering dogs were reunited with the panicked boy, and the panicked boy was reunited with his grateful parents.

The saga of Trooper Morris's heroics that day was picked up by the news media. If you haven't seen it already, we highly recommend you watch the story Brian Thompson of Channel 4 did on the incident. You can find it by [clicking this link](#) or searching for it at the station's website, [www.nbcnewyork.com](http://www.nbcnewyork.com).

We also recommend you keep reading. The **Crossroads** staff asked Trooper Morris to tell us what happened that day. This is his account:

"I was headed to the State Police barracks and saw out of the corner of my eye in the grass area in the shoulder a child chasing after two dogs," the Trooper said. "The boy was coming up to where the guardrail was ending and very close to the road.

"It happened so abruptly. In law enforcement, it's about being that helping hand, especially when you see a child in that situation. My first thought was to preserve life. There were a few cars that were passing me, but most of the cars had stopped by that point.



*"I did hear one motorist yell 'You're a Hero'. I didn't think of it like that. I was just doing my job. I did the same thing any New Jersey State Trooper would do in that moment."*

**- Trooper Jamarr Morris**

"It was clear for me to reverse safely as far as I could and I was able to get close to the boy. As I approached him, he was still struggling to hold onto the two dogs – one by a leash and the other by its collar.

"It was a very difficult situation as the dogs were barking a lot and trying to get away from the boy and get into the express lanes. I was trying to grab one of the dogs as best as possible. The dog was barking loudly at me and all I could think was I'm either going to grab this dog and get bit or it's going to run into traffic. We were finally

able to get both dogs into my car with the boy.

"It was such a great moment with motorists stopping. It was the first situation in my career where there were so many regular civilians jumping out to help. Just to see everybody come together at that moment, it was a really spectacular event to witness and be a part of.

"I did hear one motorist yell 'You're a Hero'. I didn't think of it like that. I was just doing my job. I did the

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## JOB WELL DONE



*Trooper Jamarr Morris loading the boy and his pups into the trooper vehicle for the ride home to the boy's worried family. This photo was taken by a motorist and posted online at Ocean County Scanner News (<https://OCScanner.news>)*

### TROOPER from page 5

same thing any New Jersey State Trooper would do in that moment.

"On my way back to the boy's house to drop him off with his parents, I saw a couple people walking around the woods near the Parkway looking for the boy. By that time, there was a whole group of people from his father and mother and neighbors looking for the boy and his dogs. When I spoke with the father he was appreciative, scared and had no clue that the boy made it all the way to the Parkway with his dogs."

Trooper Morris joined Troop D just this year. He's a seven-year veteran of the NJSP. He previously served with Troop C in Hamilton, Bordentown, and at the New Jersey State House.

We're glad Trooper Morris has received some recognition for his actions that day — it is well deserved — but we take him at his word when he says any other New Jersey State Trooper would have done the same. Our partners at the New Jersey State Police are the best at what they do. We see them do extraordinary things on our roadways nearly every day.

## OPPORTUNITIES

### *What does the new NJTA mentoring program need? You!*

Are you willing to share your knowledge, expertise and life experiences with colleagues? The new Coaching and Mentoring Program might be for you.

The program was the vision of **Executive Director John Keller**, who after the COVID-19 pandemic sought to bring together staff members to build morale and relationships, increase the professional and personal life experiences of staff, and develop talent

within the Authority.

**Brenda Coleman, Assistant Director of Human Resources Policy and Training**, said the program will bring together staff members from different departments so they can bring different personal and professional experiences together. Ultimately, each mentor will be placed with one or two different mentees. They will meet for an hour at least once a month. Mentors will provide

mentees guidance on how they can achieve success and add value to the organization. During the program, mentees will create a career development plan and work toward the career goals outlined in the plan.

The program is expected to begin in early 2022 and last six months. There is still time to sign up. If you're interested, contact Brenda Coleman at extension 8341 or at [bcoleman@njta.com](mailto:bcoleman@njta.com).

## GOING THE EXTRA MILE

### *Once again, the NJTA will join with our transportation partners to collect food and money for NJ food banks*

The 2021 Food Drive will be held on Saturday, Nov. 13th, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the NJTA headquarters parking lot.

If you want to go the extra mile and help us help those in need and people impacted by the pandemic, please bring canned food, dry cereal, personal care items, fruit cups or powdered milk. If you would prefer, you can also write a check to the Troopers United Foundation (the information is in the flyer below). Every item and every

penny collected will be donated to food banks in New Jersey.

Last year the food drive raised about 100,000 pounds of food/personal care products and \$20,000 in donations. If you cannot attend on Saturday, you can drop off donations at headquarters on Friday, Nov. 12th.

Come help us and our sister agencies give back to those who truly need it.



The flyer features a central graphic with the words "food drive" in a stylized font, surrounded by illustrations of a milk carton, a tomato, a carrot, and a bunch of grapes. Below this is the title "NEW JERSEY TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRY 2021 FOOD DRIVE". The text explains the purpose of the drive due to the COVID-19 pandemic and lists the most needed items: Canned Food, Peanut Butter, Fruit Cups, Dry Cereal, Powdered Milk, and Personal Care Items. It provides details on where and when to drop off items (NJTA Headquarters, Nov 13, 2021, 9AM-1PM) and a rain date (Nov 14, 2021). It also offers an option for monetary donations to the Troopers United Foundation. Contact information for questions is provided, and the flyer lists several partner organizations at the bottom.

**NEW JERSEY TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRY  
2021 FOOD DRIVE**

By now, we have all seen the devastating effects that have occurred as a result of COVID-19. Our family, friends and neighbors have been greatly impacted by the effects of the pandemic. So, like we have done in the past, **Let's Go The Extra Mile** to assist those in need.

**MOST NEEDED ITEMS:**

- Canned Food
- Peanut Butter
- Fruit Cups
- Dry Cereal
- Powdered Milk
- Personal Care Items

**ALL ITEMS NEED TO BE DROPPED OFF AT NJTA HEADQUARTERS  
LOCATED AT: 1 TURNPIKE PLAZA, WOODBRIDGE, NJ 07095  
IN PERSON ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2021  
FROM 9AM-1PM IN THE HEADQUARTERS PARKING LOT.  
RAIN DATE SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2021**

**IF YOU PREFER TO MAKE A MONETARY DONATION, 100% OF ALL  
MONETARY CONTRIBUTIONS COLLECTED WILL BE DONATED TO THE  
VARIOUS FOOD BANKS. PLEASE MAKE ANY CHECKS PAYABLE TO THE  
"TROOPERS UNITED FOUNDATION"<sup>501(c)(3)</sup> PO BOX 1236, HAMMONTON, NJ 08037**

**QUESTIONS?**  
NJTA Human Resources | 732-750-5300 ext. 8300  
Trp. I Reinaldo Cruz | 732-690-6959

**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:**





# Wild About Those Wildflowers



Wildflowers on the Parkway and the Turnpike always draw a lot of praise from patrons. Here's an email from a Parkway driver who wanted us to know how much she appreciated them this year:

*From: Gerri Wasserman  
Sent: Thursday, September 30, 2021 2:28 PM  
To: NJ Turnpike Authority  
Subject: Beautiful wildflowers on GSP*

*I want to applaud you for the beautiful wildflowers that you have planted and maintained on the GSP. I am so grateful that you have devoted the time to beautify the median strips for all of us driving on the GSP, as well as to provide much needed food for pollinators, who are in decline. I wish we could walk through the flowers to get a closer look at what I am sure must be filled with bees and butterflies. But it gladdens my heart to simply know they are there. Please consider expanding these plantings.*

*With sincere appreciation.  
Gerri Wasserman*

# Getting to Know The Employees Of The Month

## Anusha Palivela, ITS

July 2021

**JOB TITLE:** ASP Programmer

**YEARS AT THE AUTHORITY:** 4 years

**WHERE DID YOU WORK BEFORE?** – “I worked as a software engineer at Mindbody in New York.”

**TELL US SOMETHING WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU:** “I am detail-oriented and love to get people together.”

**WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT WORKING HERE:** “It gave me an opportunity to learn new skills and helped me in my career growth.”

**THE LAST WORD:** From Jose Dios, Chief Information Officer. “Ms. Anusha Palivela maintains and develops several critical systems which support the operations of our roadways. She is instrumental in the timely delivery of the business objective and the smooth operations of these systems. ...Her dedication, productivity and good reputation among her peers are the reasons she is being nominated as NJTA Employee of the Month.”



August 2021

## GINA COLLINS, OPERATIONS



**JOB TITLE:** Administrative Assistant

**YEARS AT THE AUTHORITY:** 29 years, 9 months

**WHERE DID YOU WORK BEFORE?** – “I started at the Authority right out of college (I even worked my 4 summers during college at the Authority) so this is the only place I have ever worked.”

**TELL US SOMETHING WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU:** “Some people know, but most don't know that I graduated from Penn State University with a Bachelor's degree in Finance.”

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT WORKING HERE:** “My co-workers. I've made lifelong friendships with some of the people that I have worked with here. We've gone on vacations together, some attended my wedding in Disney, and some my husband and I just hang out with on a Saturday night. They have become my extended family. That is the greatest gift the Authority has given me.”

**THE LAST WORD:** From Kevin Dunn, Director of Operations. “Through the entire COVID-19 Pandemic, Gina elected to physically work in the office five days a week. She became critical in maintaining the essential functions of the Operations Department during this time.”

*(EDITOR'S NOTE: If you're here for Gina Collins news, don't forget to check out the retirements page)*



september 2021

Regina Parker, PMM



**JOB TITLE:** Assistant Buyer

**YEARS AT THE AUTHORITY:** 15

**WHERE DID YOU WORK BEFORE?** "I worked in New York in the fashion industry at 501 Broadway for 20 years."

**TELL US SOMETHING WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU:** "I'm a mother of two and a grandmother of five boys and married for 32 years."

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT WORKING HERE:** "This is my family away from home. I enjoy my work and love my co-workers. This is my comfort zone, my peace of mind."

**THE LAST WORD:** From Dale Barnfield, Director of Procurement & Materials Management. "Regina Parker shows a true sense of team spirit and demonstrates this quality every day. Her rapport with vendors as well as colleagues here is always professional and courteous. Regina is always willing to help out and lend a hand anywhere she can within the Department."

Amit Jariwala, Finance

october 2021

**JOB TITLE:** Senior Financial Analyst

**YEARS AT THE AUTHORITY:** 2

**WHERE DID YOU WORK BEFORE?** I held various positions of increasing responsibility at investment and asset management firms. Most recently, I was employed at Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey as a Senior Investment Analyst responsible for Treasury and Investment operations for the Reserve and Pension portfolios.

**TELL US SOMETHING WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU:** "I love watching stand-up comedy and am a big fan of Russell Peters."

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT WORKING HERE:** The most important trait I like about working at the Authority is its leadership. Donna Manuelli and the management team strongly encourages and facilitates employee growth and development. Ongoing professional development is a key focus for me and I am excited to work for an organization that provides stimulating learning environment.

**THE LAST WORD:** From Donna Manuelli, CFO: "Since joining the Authority, Amit has wasted no time in familiarizing himself with our processes and continuing to push for improvements. We have been working together closely over the last year on multiple projects, and I have come away very impressed with his ideas and work ethic. He was instrumental in the development of the OPEB Investment Policy, Deferred Compensation Investment Policy, Treasury's key performance indicator dashboard, and scoring the Underwriter RFP."





## Overcoming rain & COVID, Arts Foundation has another successful season

This was a difficult year for the Garden State Arts Foundation as it got a late start on booking shows due to COVID-19.

The Arts Foundation provides free programs for senior citizens and families at the *PNC Bank Arts Center* in Holmdel, among other charitable endeavors.

Its board is made up of NJTA Commissioners.

The Executive Director is an NJTA reitree, **Cookie Santiago**. The other officers are NJTA employees **Mariann Zach (Law)** and **Karen Yeung (Finance)**.

The team was able to produce several very good shows despite the small window for planning.

**Commissioner Ron Gravino**, who is Vice President of the GSAF board, wanted to thank of the volunteers who made it possible, especially Rich and Wendy Kamin and Bob O'Brien.

The season started off with Cousin Brucie's Palisades Park Reunion. The foundation welcomed a new sponsor, WABC Musicradio 77, which was celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> year in radio. The foundation looks forward to working with them in 2022, Gravino said.

"We had several very good daytime shows with name acts," he said "But weather and COVID kept the attendance down this year for sure."

Here's to clear skies and no COVID in 2022!



*Pictured during performances at GSAF events at the Arts Center this fall are Cousin Brucie and Tony Orlando (above, top), Gary Puckett (above, center), Vinnie Medugno (above, bottom), and Jay Siegel and the Tokens (left). Photos are courtesy of All You Need Is Love Imagery and Sonny Maxon.*

# SOCIAL NJTA

Follow.  
Like.  
Share.  
Please!

If you're active on social media, you can help us out by following the Authority's accounts and liking or sharing our content. Come on ... give us a follow ... it's toll free! Here's where to find us:

Twitter: [@NJTurnpike](#) and [@GSParkway](#)

Facebook: Search [@TurnpikeAuthority](#)

Instagram: [nj\\_turnpike\\_authority](#)

LinkedIn: [New Jersey Turnpike Authority](#)

**Garden State Parkway** @GSPark... Aug 30

On this date in 1957, the Parkway was fully connected to the New York State Thruway. A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held to mark the completion of the last 2 1/2-mile gap between the two major highways.



**Garden State Parkway** @GSPark... Aug 27


Headed Down The Shore? As of 3 pm, these are the average travel times from the Raritan tolls to the exits for:

- Sandy Hook (8 miles) - 8 minutes
- Belmar (29 mi) - 26 min
- LBI (62 mi) - 73 min
- Atlantic City (90 mi) - 97 min
- Ocean City (98 mi) - 104 min
- Wildwood (122 mi) - 126 min



**New Jersey Turn...** 9/21/21

The clean up of the fire scene between interchanges 1 and 2 in Carneys Point, Salem County, continues. There are delays of about 2.5 miles. If you need to head south through this area during the next couple of hours, consider an alternate route.



**New Jersey Turnpike Authority** Published by Tom Feeney July 15

QUIZ TIME: Can you identify this man? Is it:

1. Elwood Woodell, a paddock judge at Monmouth Park and the first man to ride a racehorse the length of the New Jersey Turnpike
2. Omero Catan, member of the shuffleboard hall of fame and the first person ever to pay a toll on the New Jersey Turnpike
3. Taylor Driscoll, father of the New Jersey pork roll industry and the man for whom the Driscoll Bridge is named

Answers in the comments, please.

**New Jersey Turnpike** @NJTurnpike

Gift idea #1 for National Truck Driver Appreciation Week: Give that trucker the gift of SPACE. Trucks take up to 3X as long to stop as cars. Make sure you can see the entire front end of the truck in your mirror before you merge in front of it.




Thank You, Truckers

NATIONAL TRUCK DRIVER APPRECIATION WEEK. SEPT. 12-18, 2021

Photo


**nj\_turnpike\_authority**



View Insights Boost Post

Liked by patjonesman and others

**nj\_turnpike\_authority** This is a drone shot of the spot in Woodbridge where the Parkway and Main Street cross over the Turpike




**WHO AM I?**



**Garden State Parkway** @GSParkway Jul 30

Make sure you honk for the birthday bridge today ... the Driscoll Bridge opened to traffic on this date 67 years ago. Yes, it looks good for its age, but -- we'll admit -- it has had some work done.






## THE HOME FRONT



This beautiful baby is Astra Rose Dyer at age 1 month. She is the daughter of **KC Dyer (Finance)**. Astra Rose was born on August 16, 2021. She was 7 lbs., 13 oz., and 19 inches long. Astra Rose, Mom and Dad (Patrick) are all doing well.



**Joe McCarthy (Finance)** was the guest of honor (above) at a shower his colleagues threw to help him prepare for the blessed event that occurred on Sept. 16th (right). Joe and Corina welcomed Joseph McCarthy V to the world at 4:36 p.m. that day. The extraordinarily handsome Joe V weighed in at 7 pounds.



**Dan Wenger (Engineering)** graduated with honors on September 25th from Thomas Edison State University with a BA in Natural Sciences (concentration in Geology and Environmental Sustainability). Dan graduated with a 3.78 GPA and is the recipient of the Arnold Fletcher Award for academic excellence. Dan is a veteran of 21 years as a federal law enforcement officer and environmental compliance inspector with the US Coast Guard (USCG). Dan retired in 2013 with an Honorable Discharge and was hired by the NJTA in 2014. Dan enrolled in Thomas Edison State University in October 2016 with 56 college level credits and his USCG training as a part-time online student utilizing the Montgomery GI Bill program. His family, friends, and coworkers are very proud of his 5-year commitment in earning his Degree.

Ryan Feeney married Sam Brenner of Boston on Oct. 23rd in a ceremony at Hardy Farm in Fryeburg, Maine. Here, the beautiful bride is escorted down the "aisle" by her father, **Tom (Media Relations & Public Information)**.

Ryan works as the manager of store planning for Pottery Barn.





# THE HOME FRONT



**Benadette Hammond (Maintenance)** poses with her family this spring on the occasion of her daughter's graduation from the University of Maryland. Benadette is a roadway crew supervisor in Whitehorse. Her daughter, **Carly Weinstein**, graduated with a degree in criminal justice. Carly is no stranger to the NJTA family—she has worked as a temporary clerk in Herbertsville. Also pictured are Carly's dad, **Steve Weinstein**, and her brother, **Jake**. Thanks to her mom and dad, Carly graduated without any student debt.



**Danielle Mammano (Finance)** and her husband, **Nick**, welcomed their first child, the adorable **Stella Elizabeth**, on July 8th at 12:50 a.m. Stella weighed 6 lbs, 15 oz, and was 20 inches long. Mom reports: Growing fast and already showing her personality, "Stella Bella" is independent & curious. She loves to sit up on her own, watch the world from daddy's shoulder, and laugh at all our silly faces.



That is **Melissa Roman (Operations)** being celebrated in the pages of the Fall 2021 issue of "Invention," the magazine of Thomas Edison State University. Melissa, a communication dispatcher at NJTA, earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Thomas Edison in 2020. She has since gotten married and had her first child. You can read the full article by visiting [tesu.edu](http://tesu.edu).



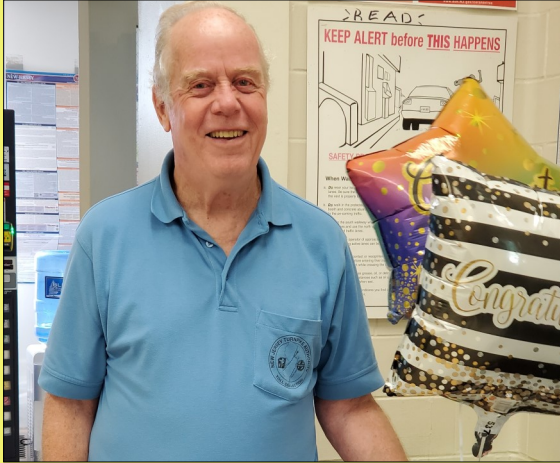
**Paula Mount (Finance)** tied the knot with the love of her life, **Eddie Galano**, on August 24, 2021. They had a small, intimate sunset ceremony surrounded by their family and friends and got their happily ever after. To celebrate the happy occasion they had a small reception at Taste of Portugal in Newark.

Reynaldo Cobarrubias Jr. was named to the spring 2021 Dean's List at the New Jersey Institute of Technology. He is the son of **Rey Cobarrubias (Engineering)**. Rey Jr. is studying computer engineering.





# RETIREMENTS



**Arthur Miller (Tolls)** called it quits after 23 years of service on the road. Mr. Miller, who worked at the Bergen Toll Plaza, was the last senior citizen part-time collector on the Parkway.



**Gina Collins (Operations)** retired after 30 years to a nice send off from her NJTA friends. She's pictured here with her husband, **Chuck Collins (Maintenance)**

## **July Retirements**

Carl Bodensieck, Toll Records Clerk

Charles Dupree, Janitor

Lawrence Gilyard, Carpenter

Gary Nehrbass, Tolls Investigation Mngr

Walter Pietruszewski, Technology Device Tech

Elliot Scheps, Accounts Receivable Mngr

Leo Weisheit, Project Change Mngr

## **August Retirements**

Michael Anstatt, Asst Foreman, Roadway

Donna Arnone, Senior Secretary

Lawrence Hudak, Technology Device Tech, Supervisor

Kenneth Kaplan, Toll Collector

Frank Matullo, Crew Supervisor, Roadway

## **September Retirements**

Frank Corso, Senior Supervising Engineer

Brian Bielak, Facility Craftsperson

Altagracia Guzman, Maintenance Person

John McMonigal, Assistant Foreman, Roadway

Frank Rapetti, Craftsperson, Field Supervisor

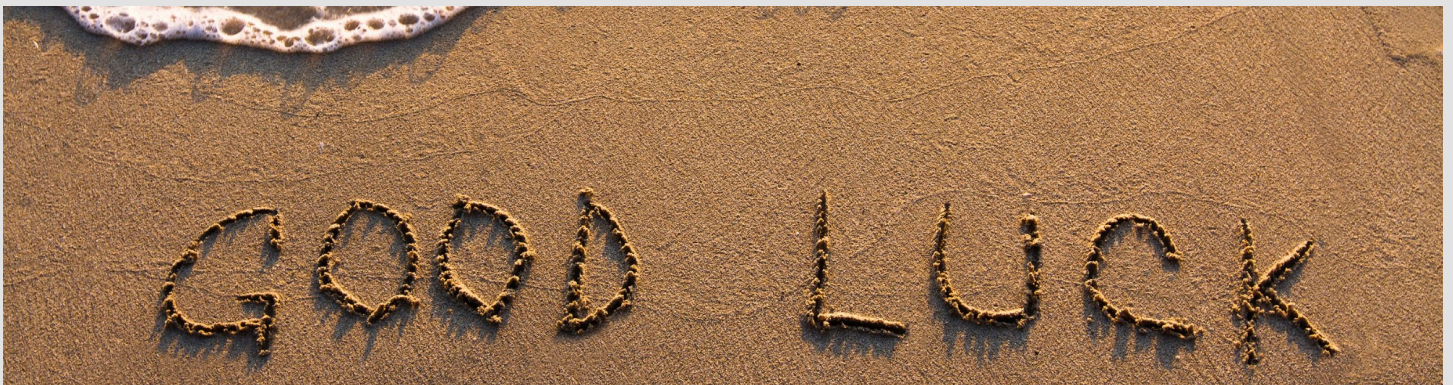
Raymond Taylor, Maintenance Person 1

Maria Warade, Executive Secretary 2

## **October Retirements**

Gary Black, Inventory & Materials Supervisor

Gina Collins, Administrative Assistant 2



### *An Archive Room Story ...*

In May 1991, the Turnpike Authority broke ground on a project that would widen the Turnpike by adding a lane to the outer roadway in each direction between Interchanges 11 and 14.

Ernest Cerino Sr., now 91 years old, was at the groundbreaking that day.

Ernest by then had spent 36 years at the Turnpike Authority, first as a master electrician, then as a superintendent of the Central building trades. He would retire later in 1991.

For the groundbreaking, the Central Trades Carpenter Shop in Hightstown had made ceremonial shovels. They were painted silver and outfitted with plaques to note the date and the occasion.

“Dignitaries broke ground and when the ceremony was over one of the bosses told a group of employees they could take the shovels home as souvenirs,” said Ernest’s son, Ernie Cerino Jr.

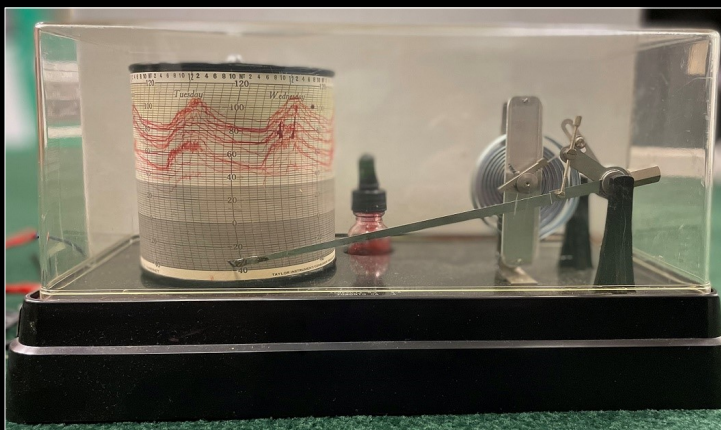
Thus one of the shovels has been hanging ever since in the Cerino family garage. Ernie Jr. contacted the Authority this summer and offered to give it back.

“It is time the shovel found its way back home,” he said. “The shovel does not belong to us - it belongs to the Turnpike organization and its rich history. Our father, and the entire family are so happy it found its way back to where it belongs!”

The shovel has joined other ceremonial shovels from over the years in the archive room on the 4th floor of the headquarters building.



### *... and an Archive Room Mystery*



We were going to post a picture of this doohick-ey on our social media accounts and invite our followers to guess what it is. The problem is, we don’t know.

We checked with some very smart people with a few collective centuries of experience in Operations and Maintenance for the Authority, but they didn’t know either.

So we’re crowd-sourcing it. Please email us at [Crossroads@njta.com](mailto:Crossroads@njta.com) if you know what this is. A right answer—or at least an answer we believe — gets you acclaim in our next issue.



# NJTA TOASTMASTERS

## MORE THAN JUST PUBLIC SPEAKING!

Did you know... Toastmasters ALSO helps with:

- Professional Development
- Management Skills
- Becoming a Mentor
- Building Confidence
- Promoting Leadership Qualities
- Running Effective Meetings
- Fostering Creativity
- ... and MUCH MORE!

Join us at one of our upcoming virtual meetings to find out more.

**ALL are welcome to attend!**

### Our Summer TopGolf Outing was a HIT!

On June 26th, we enjoyed a beautiful Summer day after work with great food and fun at TopGolf.

We look forward to organizing more events like this in the future for Toastmasters members AND guests alike!



*Left to right: Rosemary Nivar, Tracey Walters, David Siegler, Oleem O'Garro, Sheri Malloy, Joe Sheedy*

Wishing you all stay healthy and safe,  
- NJTA Toastmasters Board

**ALL NJTA EMPLOYEES are invited to  
join us at our upcoming meetings:  
2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the Month  
4:30PM - 5:30PM  
on WEBEX**

Contact Ruth Rodriguez (rodriguez@njta.com) or Tracey Walters (twalters@njta.com)  
for a WEBEX invitation and additional info.

## PARTING SHOTS



### *The team at work*

*We aren't going to lie to you ... this picture from last year's food drive is here because there was an empty space on the page and nothing to fill it with. That's **Shawn Taylor (Community & Government Relations)** at the car, **Michael Pacheco (Media Relations and Public Information)** with the case of peanut butter, and Mike's brother, Kevin, at the front-end loader. While we have your attention, can we tell you what a good time it was working at last year's drive? A beautiful day with colleagues doing a good turn .. there are worse ways to spend a Saturday morning. If you're free on the 13th, you should join us!*

#### **Some thank yous for the folks who made this issue of Crossroads possible ...**

**Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti.** She has a thing or two demanding her attention these days, we understand, but still she took the time to talk to us about the years she spent working here and the challenge of taking on the IBTTA role.

**Commissioner Ron Gravino.** For the update on a challenging but successful season for the Garden State Arts Foundation.

**Nick Berezansky,** an NJTA landscape specialist. He provided us with the wildflower pictures on page 8.

**Denise DeSante and John Lowy (Customer Service) and Jody Bottone (Print Shop).** They get career achievement thank yous for the great work they've done on Crossroads over the past several years.

**Trooper Jamarr Morris.** For taking time out of his day to talk to us. After all that attention he received from media operations bigger than Crossroads, a lesser gentleman might have big-timed us.

**Shawn Taylor, Director of Community and Government Relations,** for suggesting the story about Commissioner Gutierrez-Scaccetti's IBTTA presidency.

**Drew Rucinski (ITS).** Drew takes a lot of photos and videos for the Authority. His photos from last year's food drive include the one posted above.

**Bernadette Hammond (Maintenance), Valerie Lockett (Tolls), Edna Brown (Finance), David Siegler (Engineering), Lia Hecht (HR), Paula Mount (Finance), Danielle Mammano (Finance), Michele Cano (Finance), Dan Wegner (Engineering), Reynaldo Cobarrubias (Engineering), and Gloria Alba (Operations)** for sending us news. We need news like we need oxygen. Send yours to us at [Crossroads@njta.com](mailto:Crossroads@njta.com). There will be another Crossroads coming out soon.

