



# REGIONAL REVIEW

Volume 11, Issue 3

Brooke-Hancock-Jefferson  
Metropolitan Planning Commission

Summer 2010

## TRI-COUNTY AREA IS IN THE “EYE OF THE STORM”



*Within the next five years, “container on barge” freight, as illustrated by this recent photo on the New Orleans Freight channel, will be a common sight in the BHJ Region.*

**W**hen the international market is considered, our regional economy is clearly within the eye of the storm.

Competitive international markets drove the employment size of Weirton Steel from 14,000+ to less than 1,000 in a 15 year period. It’s the reason our regional steel mills have international names. It’s also a path to our regional economic future.

To put this in perspective and determine how the future of our regional economy is “in play,” consider several essential facts from the Federal Highway Administration (“Freight Facts and Figures 2009”).

- ◆ More freight is moving greater distances as part of supply chains among distant trading partners.
- ◆ China’s share of trade with the US more than doubled between 1998 and 2008.
- ◆ Trucks carry about 58 percent of the value of goods traded with Canada and Mexico, the US’s two most prominent trade partners. Rail is the second largest mover of freight for the US with Canada and Mexico.
- ◆ Between 1980 and 2007, new road construction increased by about 5 percent compared with a 98 percent increase in vehicle miles traveled.

and capture our fair share of the transportation freight market. Through programs like the 3-2-1 Initiative (Three counties, two states and one goal) and investment studies such as BHJ’s forthcoming freight study, we should be better able to legitimize our market value to investors.

At the most recent meeting of a five-state marine highway meeting in May, Pat Donovan, Executive Director for the West Virginia Public Port Authority, succinctly captured the task at hand. “We’re looking at an opportunity to establish intermodal marketplaces in Louisville, Cincinnati, Huntington and the Weirton-Wheeling area. The opportunity comes as federal transportation officials prepare for an anticipated 73 percent increase in commercial shipping by 2035.

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Our regional challenge is to recognize, prepare, compete

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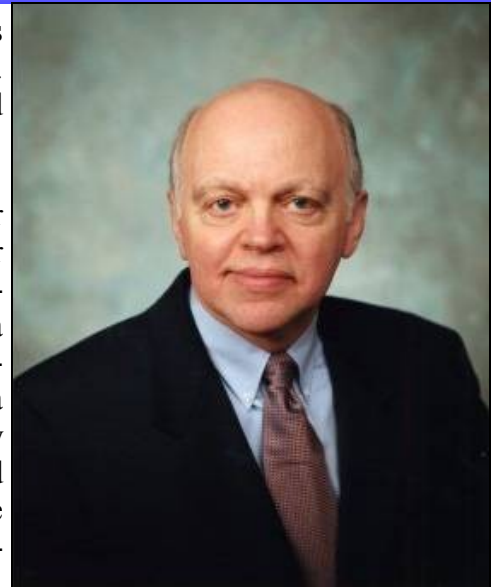
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**FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

A first reading of our newsletter seems simple enough. A problem is stated. Subsequent challenges are identified and typically a success story is told.

I frequently revisit these stories and wonder if our readers understand the understated or unsaid. Do they realize a \$7.5 million project like a Washington Street project has a ten year history with multiple parties working towards its success? Do they realize a \$15 million plus project like the recently initiated Mahans Lane-Eldersville Road project in Brooke County has a comparable history and ripples through a patient public-private partnership?



The response is a rhetorical “no?” BHJ’s *Regional Review* is a newsletter. The purpose of our newsletter is keep in contact, build a connection with our customers and announce upcoming programs/grants/events. In the translation, we may understate the role of our many parties. Hopefully, special acknowledgment events like the forthcoming 12<sup>th</sup> Annual BHJ Awards dinner (September 16<sup>th</sup> from 6-9 @ the EM Media Center in Steubenville) create a time and a moment for this partnership recognition.

As a regional customer, we encourage you to participate in this recognition program. Take a look at our awardees list. Nominate a group or person who’s advanced our region. If you haven’t attended our Awards dinner, you’ve missed a very humbling and inspiring event. Yes, we have a social hour to warm up the crowd. BHJ staff consistently creates nuances to surprise attendees. Our private sponsors provide give away items. However, the highlight event is always the volunteer, driven public leader or group who stepped forward and achieved what others defined as unachievable.

As always, we look forward to your partnership and support.

John C. Brown, AICP  
[jbrown@bhjmpc.org](mailto:jbrown@bhjmpc.org)

## EYE OF THE STORM (CONTINUED)



The U.S. Department of Transportation's idea is to identify and invest in "Marine Highway Corridors" that will conduct much of that traffic. The positives: improved highway safety, reduced freight emissions and increased national security.

We've showed up with 22 signators, five states, calling ourselves 'Marine Highway One.'

The proposal from Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia anticipates two big changes in freight transport.

One change is not only an overall increase in shipping, but a particular increase in container traffic from the Pacific to the ports of New Orleans and Mobile, Ala., when a third Panama Canal shipping lane opens in 2014.

What would move that product out of these coastal ports are traditionally tractor-trailers. None of this works without our truck drivers, but at the end of the day we need to be able to effectively and efficiently move containers out of these coastal ports into inland markets. And that suggests the other big change: inland container-by-barge shipping, a practice that is common in Europe and Asia but has not yet been developed in the U.S.

Shipping containers entering Gulf ports and destined for points far north would be loaded onto barges and pushed up the Mississippi River to newly created intermodal marketplaces in the Ohio River valley.

This includes Home Depot, Wal-Mart, and Target -- the big regional distribution centers. They're all driven by the

movement of 20- and 40-foot containers. Some low-hanging fruit is gas grills, lawnmowers, Christmas decorations -- things that have a long lead time in the logistics chain. They're low cost, and they can move container-by-barge even though it moves slower."

Louisville and Cincinnati already have container-by-rail, or "intermodal" rail facilities, and some associated warehousing and distribution; such facilities would be developed at Huntington and Weirton-Wheeling and all of the river ports would be reconfigured to handle containers.

There is a particular role for Weirton. When a tow leaves Weirton, it's a day and a half to Pittsburgh. The locks between Weirton and Pittsburgh are too small to take the standard 15-barge tow at one time, resulting in inefficiencies as operators have to split their tows, lock them through separately and reattach them on the other side. It's a trip that could be accomplished faster by rail from Weirton.

Container transport on the Ohio River would complement the intermodal facility proposed for Prichard, W.Va., on Norfolk Southern's Heartland railway corridor under construction from Norfolk, Va., to Chicago, and could encourage CSX to consider the Weirton area for an intermodal facility on its National Gateway from eastern ports to the midwest.

Planning for the intermodal marketplaces would be undertaken using money flowing from a Marine Highway Corridor designation and private investment would take over from there.

## NOMINATIONS WANTED FOR 12TH ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER

For the 12th consecutive year, BHJ is making plans for the Annual Awards Dinner. This year the event will be on Thursday, September 16 at the EM Media building on Sunset Boulevard in Steubenville, OH. The BHJ staff is currently seeking nominations for this years' awards in the following categories:

- ♦ Public Service – This award recognizes public leaders who have furthered regional and community development.
- ♦ Volunteer – This award recognizes volunteers who have willingly given their time to the cause of regional planning and whose contribution has expanded community and regional opportunities.
- ♦ Special Recognition – This award recognizes outstanding contributions which have advanced the advanced regional planning.

Past award recipients include:

	<b>Public Service</b>	<b>Special Recognition</b>	<b>Volunteer</b>
<b>1999</b>	<b>Dan Gilchrist</b>	<b>Suzann Gad</b>	<b>Ruth Eddy</b>
<b>2000</b>	<b>Jerry Kruprinski</b>	<b>Bob Wirgau</b>	<b>No Award</b>
<b>2001</b>	<b>Ed Bowman</b>	<b>Dom Mucci</b>	<b>Ruby Greathouse</b>
<b>2002</b>	<b>Bob Cutri</b>	<b>Brian Linkesh</b>	<b>W. Duane Heck</b>
<b>2003</b>	<b>Roy Givens</b>	<b>John Sorrenti</b>	<b>George Cattrell</b>
<b>2004</b>	<b>Greg DiDonato</b>	<b>Dewey Provenzano</b>	<b>Norm Schwertfeger</b>
<b>2005</b>	<b>Paul Phillips</b>	<b>Dr. Laura Meeks</b>	<b>Chuck Svokas</b>
<b>2006</b>	<b>Mark Vignovic</b>	<b>H. Schiappa Siciliano and Teresa Schiappa</b>	<b>Mike O'Brien</b>
<b>2007</b>	<b>Dave France</b>	<b>Richard Ferguson</b>	<b>George Hines</b>
<b>2008</b>	<b>Bernie Kazienko</b>	<b>Geary Bates</b>	<b>Susan Badgley</b>
<b>2009</b>	<b>Danny Greathouse</b>	<b>Jerry Barilla</b>	<b>Walter Ferguson</b>

Over the past 11 years, two special awards have been given. In 2008, Mr. Don Bailey, WVDOT, received a Lifetime Achievement award; and last year a Media Award was presented to the Steubenville Herald Star and Weirton Daily Times.

Nominations should be mailed, hand-delivered, e-mailed ([ltaylor@bhjmpc.org](mailto:ltaylor@bhjmpc.org)), faxed (740-282-1821) or phoned (304-797-9666 or 740-282-3685) to Linda Taylor at the BHJ Office no later than **Friday, July 30<sup>th</sup>**

Nominations should include (1) the nominees name (2) your name and contact number (3) date of nomination (4) a one-page or less description of the candidate's contribution and how the contribution has positively affected a community/region.



## ROLL OUT THE BARRELS!

It's summer aka construction season. No matter where you travel, you are most likely going to see orange barrels, detour signs and even worse, flagmen making your lane of traffic come to a screeching halt for who knows how long.

In Steubenville, work began on Monday, June 21, on the \$7.5 million Washington Street project. This 40 year old highway, built in the late 1960s – early 1970s will for the first time be completely rehabilitated. The first phase of this federal stimulus-act project which includes the closure of road around the underpass, will last for approximately 60 days. Work will then move up the hill. Once the westbound lanes are complete, which is expected to be by the end of the year, work will begin early in 2011 on the eastbound lanes.

When finished, the road section from the Washington Street underpass to State Route 7 will be resurfaced. The funding will also cover the roadway, curbing, guardrail and the ramps at Adams and Market Streets. Street lights, catch basins, fencing and the retaining wall will also be replaced according to Mike Dolak.

The entire project is expected to be done by September, 2011.



Washington Street in Steubenville, known as Ohio State Route 43, exemplifies a state route in a city with demanding maintenance issues.

### A NEW VOICE: BHJ'S PHONE SYSTEM

In late June, for customer convenience and efficiency, BHJ upgraded its phone system to provide direct access to BHJ staff.

Call the office. Listen to the possible extension lines and contact your BHJ representative directly. The extensions are as follows:

Mary Moore	200
Joan Cresap	201
Linda Taylor	202
John Brown	203
Barb Zimnox	204
Dave Snelting	205
Mike Paprocki	209
Shawn Price	210

### WHAT IS A METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION?

The Federal Highway Administration has identified 384 Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). An MPO is an agency created by federal law to provide local input for urban transportation planning and allocating federal transportation funds to cities with populations of greater than 50,000. Nearly half of MPOs (178) operate as part of the Regional Council serving the same general geography. Under federal law emanating from the 1973 Highway Act and the Urban Mass Transit Act, organizations in urbanized areas are designated by their Governors to perform significant planning and programming of federally funded highways and transit projects. Through the Long Range Transportation Plan and its link to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), MPOs are responsible for approving significant expenditures of federal dollars.

## LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ARRA FUNDS

**B**arb Zimnox, BHJ senior community development specialists, is assisting local municipalities in Brooke and Hancock counties who are taking advantage of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds.

The U.S. Department of Energy, through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act has made available to West Virginia through the Division of Energy grant funds for energy saving improvements to public buildings. The program, known as the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program, will allow units of local governments to develop energy saving projects in their city buildings and county courthouses.

Region XI government officials made the decision to split the \$289,459.54 allotment to our region equally among all eligible entities, giving each \$32,162.17 in grant funds. BHJ will receive \$22,162.62 to administer the program. These funds are being used by our local governments for energy-saving lighting projects, new windows and doors, solar panels, insulation, and purchase of new HVAC systems.

Taking part in the program are Windsor Heights, Bethany, Beech Bottom, Wellsburg, Follansbee, New Cumberland, Chester, and the Brooke and Hancock County Commissions. Applications are being developed now, and must be submitted to the WV Division of Energy by July 30, 2010.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



**G**round was broken on April 12, 2010 for the long-awaited Mahan's Lane, Eldersville Road and Bruin Drive Sewer Extension Project. Actual construction began the beginning of June. Work is moving along smoothly. Currently three pump stations are complete. It is anticipated that by next month 8 to 9 crews will be on the job.

Barb Zimnox, BHJ senior community development specialist, says the project must be wrapped up by March, 2011.

The project consultant is Alex E. Paris of Atlasburg.

(Right) Congressman Alan Mollohan, responsible for the funding of the Mahan's Lane, Eldersville Road and Bruin Drive Sewer Extension Project, is flanked by the Brooke County Commissioners, consultants and other interested parties on April 12 when ground was broken to begin the long-awaited project. (Below) Brooke County Commission President Bernie Kazienko listens to Congressman Mollohan speak at the groundbreaking.





## WE'RE FROGGIN' & SHARING' THE RIDE!



In early May, BHJ and FROGGY Radio, 103.5, teamed together to do a live broadcast at Krogers on Three Springs Drive in Weirton to promote Rideshare Month. BHJ was joined by several representatives from its partner agencies: Lisa Kay Schweyer from CommuteInfo and Amy Mathieson and Lynn Manion from ACTA (Airport Corridor Transportation Association). Frank Bovina, transit manager for Steel Valley Regional Transit Authority, and Becky Stout, former transit manager for the Weirton Transit Corporation, were also on hand.



Becky Stout (WTC), Frank Bovina (SVRTA) and Mike Paprocki (BHJ)

It was a very successful event with approximately 160 people stopping by the broadcast booth to talk about rideshare, receive gift bags, spin the birthday wheel with a chance to win money if it landed on your birthday—and perhaps the most popular thing to do was to meet Mr. Froggy.

The BHJ staff would like to thank the crew from Froggy Radio, and especially Billy Ni-



Even Mr. Froggy knows how to “share the Ride!”

esslein for all his hard work in bringing everything together as well as Wendy Green and Mr. Froggy. Thanks also go to Kroger's for allowing the use of their parking lot for the broadcast and for donating prizes.

We would like to thank Steel Valley, Weirton Transit, CommuteInfo, ACTA and FROGGY for donating prizes as well.

(right) Mr. Froggy sets the example and gets behind the wheel of the CommuteInfo van.

(below) Mr. Froggy and Dr. John Brown, BHJ executive director, encourage you to “Share the Ride.”



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## SUMMER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

	<b>HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY SUMMER!</b>	
<b>August 9</b>	<b>Executive Committee</b>	<b>Noon</b>
<b>September 6</b>	<b>Labor Day—BHJ Office Closed</b>	
<b>September 13</b>	<b>Executive Committee</b>	<b>Noon</b>
<b>September 15</b>	<b>Technical Advisory Committee Full Commission</b>	<b>10:30 Noon</b>
<b>September 16</b>	<b>BHJ Annual Awards Dinner @ EM Media Building</b>	<b>6-9:00</b>



## Related Web Sites

**Appalachian Regional Commission**  
[www.arc.gov](http://www.arc.gov)

**Brooke County Economic Development Authority**  
[www.brookewv.org](http://www.brookewv.org)

**Brooke Pioneer Trail Assoc. Inc**  
[www.brookepioneertrail.org](http://www.brookepioneertrail.org)

**Business Development Corporation of the  
Northern Panhandle**  
[www.bhbdc.org](http://www.bhbdc.org)

**CHANGE, Inc.**  
[www.changeinc.org](http://www.changeinc.org)

**City of Steubenville**  
[www.cityofsteubenville.us](http://www.cityofsteubenville.us)

**Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce**  
[www.jeffersoncountychamber.com](http://www.jeffersoncountychamber.com)

**Ohio Department of Transportation**  
[www.dot.state.oh.us](http://www.dot.state.oh.us)

**Progress Alliance**  
[www.progressalliance.com](http://www.progressalliance.com)

**State of Ohio Government Information**  
[www.ohio.gov](http://www.ohio.gov)

**State of West Virginia Government Info.**  
[www.wv.gov](http://www.wv.gov)

**Top of WV Convention and Visitors Bureau**  
[www.topofwv.com](http://www.topofwv.com)

**U.S. Census Bureau**  
[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

**U.S. Department of Transportation**  
[www.dot.gov](http://www.dot.gov)

**U.S. Economic Development Administration**  
[www.commerce.gov](http://www.commerce.gov)

**Village of Wintersville**  
[www.wintersville.net](http://www.wintersville.net)

**Weirton Chamber of Commerce**  
[www.weirtonchamber.com](http://www.weirtonchamber.com)

**West Virginia Department of Transportation**  
[www.transportation.wv.gov](http://www.transportation.wv.gov)

**West Virginia Development Office**  
[www.wvdo.org](http://www.wvdo.org)

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