

**BMTS Article Digest
November - December 2020**



BMTS Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee Members:

The following is a compilation of articles that may be of interest to BMTS Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee members. This and past digests can also be accessed in the Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee page of www.bmtsonline.com.

Scott

Pedestrian & Bicycle Information Center (PBIC) Messenger e-Newsletter

Go to <http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/newsroom/newsletters.cfm>.

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November 2020 Bike/Ped Counts

BMTS

BABY BLUES / Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman



Waving crossing guards are ‘a ray of sunshine’ in Irondequoit

Marcia Greenwood

Rochester Democrat and Chronicle

Mary Beth Egeling met Christopher and Rochelle Harris in August 2019 at the Irondequoit Farmers Market on the Town Hall campus.

Egeling, crossing guard coordinator for the Irondequoit Police Department, was there directing traffic.

The Harrises stopped to ask her a question about the Irondequoit Public Library. Egeling didn't have an answer, but they got to chatting and she learned that Christopher, 64 and a retiree, was looking for a part-time job.

Egeling had positions to fill.

Something about his manner struck her. “Call it intuition,” she said, so she asked Harris whether he might be interested in applying for work as a crossing guard. He said he would.

“And his wife, Rochelle, said ‘Well what about me? I want to be a crossing guard, too,’” Egeling recalled.

“I just really felt good about their vibe when I talked to them for the few minutes that I did,” she said of the Rochester couple.

After successful tryouts, in October 2019 the two were assigned to posts; Christopher Harris' crosswalk is on St. Paul Boulevard at Leland Road, and Rochelle's is on Seneca Avenue at Rawlinson Road.

In a relatively short time, they've made big impressions.

“They are dedicated, they're attentive, they're really concerned about student safety,” Egeling said. “But they also really care about the human condition, and they really want to do something to make a difference in everybody's day.”

By all accounts, they do.

Christopher Harris has distinguished himself for waving at every single motorist who drives by him on weekday mornings and afternoons.

During training, Egeling pointed out that crossing guards often wave at motorists. Harris “pretty much politely but strongly stated he would not be *that* guy,” Egeling said. “I told him being ‘a waver’ was not mandatory, and we left it at that.”

But then it just sort of happened. After accompanying his very first student across St. Paul, Harris instinctively waved at a passing car, “and people started responding,” he said.

So he kept doing it. And people kept responding. Before he knew it, he had started a wave — and Egeling started “hearing tales of the waving crossing guard,” she said.



About a mile and a half away at her post, Rochelle Harris has become known for waving enthusiastically, too.

“If I can bring a smile to someone’s face with a simple wave, it’s worth it,” said the 43-year-old, just as a school bus turned onto Rawlinson, at which point she

stopped to ask, “Is that my bus driver? Yup. This is my honking bus driver.” She waves at him every single day. He honks in return. “So, yeah, he’s pretty awesome,” she said.

People recognizing each other in small ways, friendly human interactions, have always mattered. But perhaps never more than now.

Because of the coronavirus pandemic, “Everybody is stressed beyond some of our capabilities,” Egeling said, “and I really believe that that consistent person, that friendly person, that person who’s there just because they want to be” makes a big difference, she said. “They do their job — and it’s important.” But secondarily, by waving, they offer “that little ray of sunshine,” she said, conveying the idea that “I care, and everything’s going to be OK.”

Everybody who drives by Christopher Harris waves back, he said. Some people toot their horns. Some even pull over to thank him.

“I had one lady stop me the other day,” he said. “She said, ‘You know what? By you just waving, it makes my day.’ And I said, ‘I’m so happy to make your day.’”



Fans of the Harrises and other Irondequoit crossing guards also post words of appreciation to Facebook, and they reach out to Egeling to say, for instance, “The crossing guard at (Genrich’s Garden Center) and Cooper is amazing,” she said.

Crossing guards also send Egeling pictures of the gifts they get from motorists — cups of coffee, flowers, tins of cookies.

“But I also get feedback when they’re not there,” she said. “For example, if Chris needs a day off, I will get a phone call, multiple phone calls — ‘Where’s the crossing guard at Leland and St. Paul?’ or ‘Where’s the crossing guard at Pattonwood and St. Paul?’ So it’s not just when they’re there that I get feedback, but it’s also in their absence, they’re recognized as not being there. And that tells me that they are very important to the community at large, not just the students.”

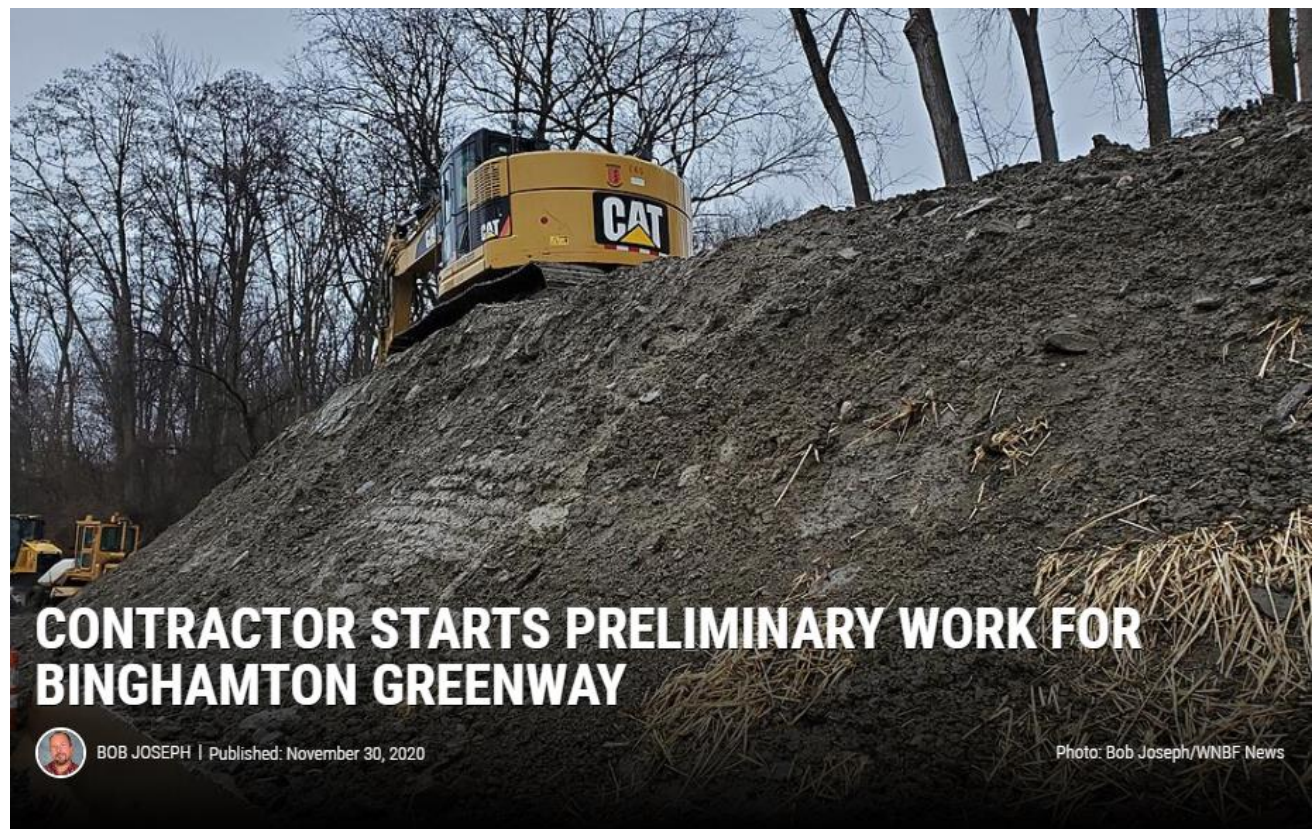
Christopher Harris is quick to point out that friendliness — it’s a two-way street.

“When I see other people, when they wave back at me, it makes *me* feel good,” he said.

So much so that at times lately he’s been inspired to do a little dance.

“I put more out there because I know this COVID thing is bad on people and people need cheer, they need to be cheered up,” he said. Waving or dancing is his way of telling them, “Hey, we can make it through this, we can do it together,” he said.

Said Egeling of all the Irondequoit crossing guards, “They’re very visual, and they’re a reminder for the community that there is that positive constant in the universe.”



Heavy equipment and materials are being staged for the construction of a \$19 million link for pedestrians between downtown Binghamton and Vestal.

One element of the [434 Greenway project](#) has generated controversy in a neighborhood on the city's South Side.

Some residents have been trying to prevent the state Department of Transportation from providing a path to the greenway from Vestal Avenue near Ivanhoe Road.



A sign protesting the 434 Greenway project in front of a Vestal Avenue residence on November 30, 2020. (Photo: Bob Joseph/WNBF News)

City councilman Joe Burns has said he doesn't believe the opponents will succeed in changing the plans for the connector.

Burns said he's noticed activity along the Greenway route south of the Vestal Parkway over the past couple of weeks.

A DOT spokesman said a project contractor is "stockpiling equipment and materials" for the project. He said tree cutting is scheduled for January. No other construction work is planned before next spring.

For roundabout fans...though they should have added bicycle infrastructure.

Incredible Underwater Roundabout Set to Open

The Eysturoyar tunnel network is almost 7 miles long

By [James Rogers | Fox News](#)

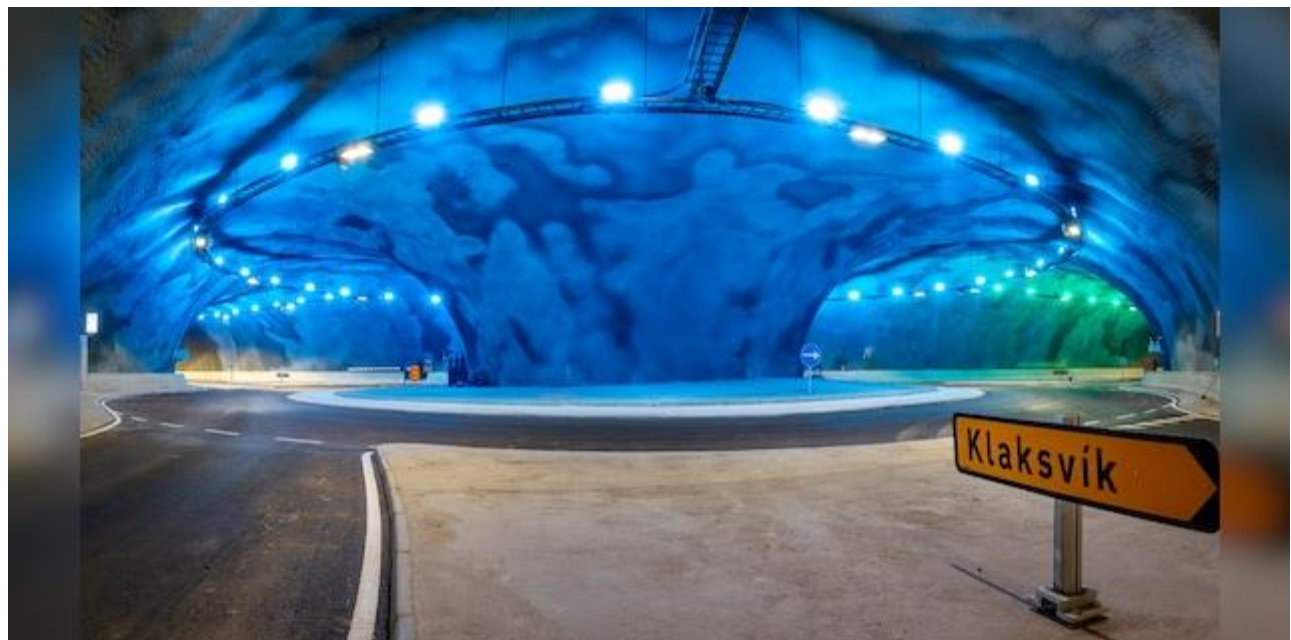
An incredible underwater roundabout is set to open in the remote Faroe Islands.

The Eysturoyar tunnel network is almost 7 miles long and runs beneath Skálafjørður fjord, connecting the islands of Streymoy and Eysturoy, the BBC [reports](#). The tunnel network and its undersea roundabout will significantly cut journey times to the Faroe Islands' capital Torshavn from many locations, according to contractor NCC.

The tunnel, for example, will shorten the journey time from Torshavn and the village of Runavik from just over 34 miles to 10.5 miles, according to [Estunlar](#), which is overseeing the project. The lowest point of the tunnel is 613.5 feet below sea level.

Work on the tunnel began in 2016. "The Eysturoy tunnel is planned to open the 19 of December 2020," Teitur Samuelsen, CEO of Estunlar, told Fox News, via email. "It has a spectacular roundabout under the Atlantic Ocean. It will be decorated by the famous Faroese artist Trondur Patursson, with a ring of people dancing the traditional Faroese dance."

The stunning underwater traffic circle has been attracting plenty of attention on social media.



The roundabout is part of the Eysturoyar tunnel network, which is almost 7 miles long and runs beneath the Skálafjørður fjord. (Faroephoto@gmail.com/P/F Eyatur and Sandoyartunlar)

"The first roundabout under the Atlantic Ocean is a reality," tweeted Kristina Hafoss, a member of the Faroe Islands Parliament. "This is part of our new 11 km sub-sea tunnel connecting 2 of our 18 #FaroeIslands in a new & innovative way."

"Not a new lair for Dr Evil but a new 6.8 mile underwater tunnel network with roundabout connecting two of the Faroe Islands, Streymoy & Eysturoy!" tweeted Wallasey Yacht Club in the U.K.

In another project, construction is also underway on the [Sandoyar tunnel](#), which will be almost as long as the Eysturoyar tunnel when it is completed in 2023. The two tunnels are the largest infrastructure investment in Faroe Islands history, according to [NCC](#).



Map showing the Eysturoyar tunnel. (Estunlar)

Located in the North Atlantic, the Faroe Islands are a [self-governing nation](#) within the kingdom of Denmark.



Johnson City police seized illicit drugs and an illegal weapon from a man who was spotted riding a bicycle on a sidewalk in the downtown business district of the village.

Authorities say 20-year-old Haven Strong of Johnson City was charged with felony counts of criminal possession of a

controlled substance and criminal possession of a weapon. He also faces a count of resisting arrest.

Investigators say police officers stopped Strong around 7:20 p.m. December 2 for violating a village code that prohibits bike-riding on downtown sidewalks.

Officers heard a "clinking" sound when Strong put his hands in the pockets of a hoodie. When they inquired about the noise, he is said to have pulled out a set of metal brass knuckles.

Strong allegedly became agitated and struggled with officers as they tried to take him into custody.

Police later found Strong possessed more than two dozen packages containing methamphetamine.

Man fined for violating coronavirus lockdown rules during 280-mile walk, following fight with wife

The anonymous husband has reportedly become a social media sensation

By [Janine Puhak](#) | [Fox News](#)

Unhappy wife, unhappy life.

A man in Italy probably has some explaining to do at home after being fined almost \$500 for breaking [coronavirus](#) lockdown rules during a 280-mile walk, following a fight with his spouse.

The anonymous husband has reportedly become a social media sensation in Italy after walking 280 miles from northern Como (near Switzerland) to southern Fano, on the Adriatic coast, [The Independent](#) reports. For example, that's like walking New York City to Boston – and continuing on for 64 more miles.



The anonymous husband has reportedly become a social media sensation in Italy after walking 280 miles from northern Como (near Switzerland) to southern Fano, on the Adriatic coast. (iStock)

The stressed spouse was picked up by police at 2 a.m. on Dec. 1, telling authorities he had averaged about 40 miles a day in the week since he left home, Italian newspaper [Il Resto del Carlino](#) said.

Authorities said the man was lucid, tired and cold, but couldn't believe how far he had truly wandered, according to [The Independent](#).

"I came here on foot, I didn't use any transport," the man allegedly said, explaining that he was able to hoof it because "along the way I met people who offered me food and drink."

"I'm OK, just a bit tired," the 48-year-old insisted.

Police were able to confirm the man's identity after reviewing his ID in their database, discovering that his wife had indeed reported him as missing a week prior, after he stormed out following a feud and never came back. Then, the man spent the night at a local hotel, and his wife picked him up in Fano the next day.

It remains unclear if the couple has since made up, however; the Independent reports that the wife was asked to pay her hubby's hotel bill and \$485 fine for breaking the COVID-19 curfew on the spot.

Italy has mandated a national curfew from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. to stop the spread of the viral disease, amid a new surge of coronavirus cases.
