

Connections

January 2006

New Year Brings Opportunity To Reflect and Look Ahead

by Sally Oxenhandler



technology to Missouri highways. When data starts arriving in February, we'll become the nation's leading provider of real-time traffic information on the state's 5,500 busiest miles of roads – generally interstates and numbered routes.

Partnering for Progress

We continue to use our nationally recognized planning framework to give local officials and the general public a greater role in making transportation decisions for Missouri. This process has proved highly successful, especially when we worked

with our planning partners to select new construction projects to be financed with Amendment 3 funds.

Staying on Track

We're using a results-based system to monitor our progress and show we're accountable. The findings - warts and all - are published quarterly in the Tracker, which is distributed to legislators and posted on our Web site.

Auld lang syne.

While the words may sound like your grandpa's latest ailment or the new dish your spouse concocted last weekend, they're really the lyrics to an old Scottish song that many folks sing when ringing in the traditional American New Year. When translated, they mean "times gone by."

A new year brings the opportunity to reflect on times gone by and look forward to the 365 days looming ahead. For MoDOT, 2005 was a very good year.

"The past year has been incredible for MoDOT and transportation in Missouri, and we're happy to have a lot of positive news to report," Director Pete Rahn told members of the Joint Committee on Transportation Oversight in November.

We thought we'd take a look back at the top MoDOT stories and accomplishments of 2005. Some brought national attention, while others were primarily important to MoDOT employees. Here, in no real particular order, are the year's top highlights:

Smoother, Safer, Sooner

Thanks to Amendment 3, we're providing smoother, safer roads sooner. This progressive concept funded by Amendment 3 will:

- deliver 2,200 miles of smooth road by December 2007;
- speed existing work; and
- build new, major projects.

Federal Transportation Bill

Thanks to the hard work and commitment of Missouri's congressional delegation, the new federal transportation bill means additional funding for critical transportation projects.

Construction Boom!

MoDOT's five-year construction program is the largest in Missouri's history – 866 projects totaling \$7.3 billion.

Minimizing Delays

With more than 1,000 work zones active in 2005, we created an informative, easy-to-understand work zone map that motorists can access at www.modot.org. Other aids: electronic signs to communicate with motorists, incident and work zone management teams to coordinate work along our busiest highways and night and off-peak hours work.

Better Visibility

We're working to make our roads safer with a new, more visible pavement marking system that uses brighter, wider stripes. Plus, we're installing larger signs, adding miles of guard cable and installing rumble strips.

Practical Design

We've begun using a new concept for highway design that will save nearly \$400 million over the next five years. "Practical Design" allows us to customize projects to fit specific needs, rather than apply generic standards across the board.

Cell Phone Technology

By using cell phone signals to monitor traffic flow, we're bringing state-of-the-art

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Cathy Morrison

A Dec. 8 snow brought out MoDOT crews throughout most of the state. Here a plow clears Route 54 near the AE exit in Callaway County.

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Looking Ahead

A new initiative called Missouri Advance Planning will develop a state-wide, long-range transportation plan to determine what our transportation system can and should do for Missourians.

Reorganization

We reorganized the department to be more efficient and effective. The new structure is organized into three teams: System Delivery, System Facilitation and Organizational Support. The three teams are organized around our tangible results, which are at the heart of everything we do.

Design-Build

The Missouri Highways and Transportation commission gave the go-ahead for two of three design-build pilot projects: reconstructing Interstate 64 in St. Louis and improving the Interstate 29/Interstate 35 corridor in Kansas City, including a new Missouri River bridge. Design-build is a project delivery method that combines both the design and construction phases into one contract, saving time and resources while encouraging innovation.

Advancing Economic Development

MoDOT and the Department of Economic Development are teaming up to study 20 projects a year to determine the impact they have on the state's economy, revenue and demographics. The information will be used to help the departments plan and invest funds, as well as show what type of return the state is getting on its transportation investments.

So here's to 2006, which promises to bring more of the same positive progress. With the Smoother, Safer, Sooner work solidly on its way, we'll be turning toward the challenge of life after Amendment 3. For the next five years, we'll average more than \$1.4 billion a year in construction. However, beginning in 2011 that figure will drop to about \$800 million a year given current revenues. Finding a way to generate the revenue we need to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri is the major challenge for the years to come.

Rahn Responds to Car and Driver Article

When an article in the November issue of Car and Driver magazine suggested that promoting work zone safety was nothing more than an opportunity for government to raise and spend money,

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Dear Editor,

As a long time reader of C&D and Patrick Bedard, I was very disappointed by his "Give 'em a brake" column in the November issue.

DOT's care about workers and drivers within a work zone. Increased law enforcement and fines are intended to cause drivers to be especially attentive for our workers' benefit and their own. Work zones frequently have long-term traffic detours and obstructions that create additional hazards for the careless driver whether workers are present or not.

I'll admit that my view might differ from Mr. Bedard's since I have attend-

ed the funerals of several good people killed due to senseless crashes in work zones.

Pete K. Rahn
Director
Missouri Department of
Transportation

To read the complete Car and Driver article, type the following link into your Web address: http://www.caranddriver.com/article.asp?section_id=27&article_id=10120



Getting The Word Out About Winter Weather

by Rachel Van Tuyl

If you work for MoDOT, you probably have a keener than average awareness for winter weather driving conditions. For a lot of MoDOT staff, winter means all hands on deck when snow and ice trigger dangerous driving conditions.

While maintenance crews are out clearing roads, MoDOT customer service and Community Relations staff are busy keeping the public informed of driving conditions. For most districts, the process of gathering road condition information and getting it to the public is very similar. Maintenance

Districts 4 and 6 have a few extra tools for monitoring road conditions at their disposal.

The Kansas City Scout intelligent transportation system uses closed circuit cameras and traffic sensors to provide real-time information about road conditions and weather-related traffic issues along the 75-mile Scout network in metropolitan Kansas City. This information is immediately available to the public via the Scout Web site.

Another way District 4 gets information to the public is by keeping in close



Cathy Morrison

District 4 bridge crew worker Howard Donahue radios in road information to the district headquarters.

personnel who are busy clearing the roads call, fax, or e-mail information about road conditions to the district headquarters several times a day.

"We will receive information such as dry, wet, partly covered or covered weather conditions, as well as current air and road temperatures and how much precipitation has been received. That information is then recorded for the appropriate routes," said Tana Akright, customer service representative for District 3.

This information is then used to update the road conditions page on our Web site, which the public can access at www.modot.org. The districts also publicize the toll-free numbers the public can call to receive more detailed information.

"If people want information on specific roads that are not primary roads, we contact the maintenance personnel to get them the specific information," said Danny Bradley, customer service representative for District 9.

contact with the local media, providing regular updates to metropolitan area traffic reporters and live feeds from Scout cameras to all local television stations.

"Scout's perspective has been such an eye-opener that a maintenance supervisor is now stationed in the traffic operations center during snow fights to enhance coordination," said Joel Blobaum, District 4 Community Relations manager.

St. Louis's Gateway Guide offers similar advantages to District 6. Real-time road condition information gathered from closed circuit cameras and other sources such as police or eyewitnesses is available at Gatewayguide.com. The same information is available on the 24-hour automated traffic hotline and message boards placed on highways.

So as winter bears down upon us, we tip our hats to those MoDOT employees who keep the public informed of road conditions during bad weather and work to reduce the risk of accidents for motorists across the state.

Cell Phone Story Clarification

We apologize if you had trouble reading some of the copy in the story on MoDOT's use of cell phone technology that ran on the front page of the December issue of Connections. A printer's error caused the graphic to cover the text. Here's what that paragraph had to say:

Vehicle speeds are calculated by using the time it takes a cell phone signal to bounce from one tower to the next. Cell phones need not even be in use. Data can be obtained just by having them turned on. Differences in speeds can indicate congestion, incidents, delays and other problems on the system.

Commission Approves Paseo Bridge As Second Design-Build Project

by Steve Porter

Improvements to the Interstate 29/Interstate 35 corridor in Kansas City, including a new Missouri River bridge, will be completed through the design-build process.

The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission approved the project-delivery method during its Dec. 2 meeting in Kansas City.

The Kansas City project marks the second design-build authority approved by the commission this year. District 6 will be tackling the reconstruction of Interstate 64 as a design-build project.

Design-build is a project delivery method that combines both the design

and construction phases into one contract. This one-contract team completes the design and construction at the same time, instead of in succession, which saves time and resources. In 2002, the Missouri legislature approved the use of design-build on three MoDOT projects.

The District 4 project authorizes MoDOT to select and hire a design and construction team that can complete a bridge replacement project by Oct. 31, 2011, years sooner than if the project

had followed a conventional design and construction path. The \$245 million project includes adding capacity to cross the Missouri River and improvements to four miles of roadway.

The design-build team, led by engineers Brian Kidwell and Jim Shipley, told the commission they are committed to a participatory process that encourages public and stakeholder involvement in the project's use and look. The goal is to build a noteworthy structure that will deliver a century of useful service, and maximize safety, mobility and capacity.

The City of North Kansas City, the Downtown Council of Kansas City, the Northland Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce support the design-build route.

On a related note, the Downtown Council presented MoDOT Director Pete Rahn with a resolution praising MoDOT for speedy completion of the Paseo Bridge rehabilitation project this summer. Repainting, deck and structural repairs were completed nearly two months ahead of schedule, pleasing nearly 100,000 motorists who rely on the bridge each day.



A design-build project will construct a new Missouri River Bridge in Kansas City. The future of the recently refurbished Paseo Bridge, shown above, is still to be decided.

Tracker Cited As Government Model

For MoDOT, one of the most notable items in the Government Review Commission's final report was Recommendation #62.

That's the one that pointed to the Tracker as a model other government agencies should use. Specifically, the report instructs state government to: "Encourage objective, performance-based, results-driven service delivery systems in state government, similar to the Missouri Department of Transportation's 'Tracker' system."

The Tracker, MoDOT's performance-based system, documents the agency's progress in giving customers what they want, such as uninterrupted traffic flow, smooth and unrestricted roads and bridges and a safe transportation system.

"The Tracker is the method by which we meet customer expectations," said MoDOT Director Pete Rahn. "It tracks how well we're performing and gives us a way to share that information with the public so they can see we're accountable for our actions and decisions."

Gov. Matt Blunt created the 20-member Government Review Commission in January 2005 to review state functions and recommend ways state agencies and programs could be more effective and efficient. The commission issued its final report to the governor on Nov. 23.

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Pre-employment Tests Will Cut Down On Injuries, Claims

by Sally Oxenhandler

Your coworker goes to lift a snowplow blade. It proves to be too heavy, and he falls backward, injuring his back. You suddenly see your chances to take some time off to go deer hunting becoming slim to none.

A new policy that took effect Jan. 1 is designed to prevent scenarios such as this one – farfetched though it might be – from happening. The policy provides guidelines to help ensure we only hire people who are physically able to do the job. By asking people to pass work-related physical tests before we offer them employment, we'll be able to keep all employees safer and healthier – maybe even happier!

"One of our values says, 'MoDOT will not compromise safety because we believe in the well-being of employees and customers,'" said Beth Ring, Risk Management director. "The changes we've made will help us hire people who are physically capable of performing the tasks for which they are hired. That means we'll provide a safer, healthier work environment for our



Susan Marshall and Dawn Klinger take part in a discussion on the new work simulation policy.

employees and reduce the number and severity of job-related injuries."

Most Employees Not Affected

The new policy only affects a handful of current MoDOT employees, Ring said. In fact, the changes mainly impact people we hire or move into full-time and seasonal crew worker positions.

The Bottom Line

People applying for crew worker, intermediate crew worker and senior

crew worker jobs must pass work-related tests to become employed at MoDOT. The tests are similar to activities they would be asked to perform on the job. For example, they might have to show they can close the tailgate of a pickup truck, lift items such as a snowplow blade

or perform the movements it would take to fill a pothole. These tests, which were developed with the help of a registered physical therapist, are now part of our pre-employment screening process.

The new requirements, which were developed with input from the districts, Human Resources, Risk Management, Chief Counsel's Office, System Management and a registered physical therapist, are designed to be mindful of our diversity goals and minimize the impact on our hiring process.

Pilot Projects Proved Successful

Pilot projects using the new pre-employment screening in Districts 4 and 9 in 2004 showed a proven decrease in work-related injuries and claims. For example, in 2004 the average number of workers' compensation claims among seasonal maintenance workers was roughly 17 per district. However, District 9 reported only two such claims during that same time period.

"As with any program, we'll be evaluating it to make sure it's working and to decide whether it should continue or be modified," Ring said.

For More Information

If you have any questions about this policy change, please refer to Employment Policy #0600, which can be found under Medical Examination Programs in the MoDOT personnel policy manual on our Intranet site. For more information, you can also contact your employee safety and health representative or Jean Endsley, employee safety and health manager, at 573-751-4547.

Hurricane Wilma Volunteers Stay On

When seven MoDOT Traffic employees arrived in Florida Nov. 16 to help restore approximately 2,800 traffic signals that Hurricane Wilma took out of service, they thought they'd be finished before Thanksgiving. They were able to come home for a few days to spend Thanksgiving with their families. However Florida officials asked them to come back after the holiday to continue making progress. Two of the original crewmembers returned, along with five new volunteers from around the state.

"The people here are so grateful," said John Diggs, Central Office Traffic communications coordinator who has been

on both crews. "An elderly lady actually got out of her car and kissed me on the cheek. It's a great feeling."

The crew dispatched before Thanksgiving included Diggs; Chris Weikel and John Bickel, District 4; Miguel Noriega and Larry Layton, District 6; and Larry Dill and Patrick Turner, District 8. Noriega and Layton are assistant electricians, and Dill, Turner, Weikel and Bickel are senior electricians.

Diggs and Layton returned to Florida Nov. 28 with five other MoDOT workers: Kevin Eggemeyer, Traffic supervi-

sor and Doug Block, senior crew worker, both from District 4; Bill Arney, signal and lighting electrician, District 6; and Gary Vandergrift and Bob Barnes, both senior signal and lighting electricians from District 8.

The crewmembers worked about 80 hours per week. They repaired or rebuilt more than 280 signalized intersections, about 65 school crosswalks and more than 30 pedestrian crosswalk flashers, restoring them to normal operation. They finished their mission and returned to Missouri Dec. 17.



These seven MoDOT employees were in the first crew of volunteers to go to Florida to help restore traffic signals taken out of service by hurricane Wilma. From left to right are Larry Layton, John Bickel, Chris Weikel, Miguel Noriega, Patrick Turner, Larry Dill and John Diggs.

Tracker Cited

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Here are some of the commission's other recommendations that pertain to MoDOT. Some of them require legislative action and could be pursued by the governor during the next session. We're looking at the fiscal and operational impacts these recommendations might have and the best approach to acting on them.

- Expand the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission by two positions from six to eight. The commissioners would not be assigned a specific geographic area or transportation mode. Commissioners would continue to serve six-year, staggered terms. This would require a change in the law.
- Transfer the Breath Alcohol Program from the Department of Health and Senior Services to MoDOT's Highway

Safety Division. This would require a change in the law, as well as regulatory changes.

- Transfer the Missouri Automated Road Report Telephone System (MARTS) from the Missouri Highway Patrol to MoDOT.
- Explore ways to contract with county road departments for the maintenance of certain state highways that are primarily used as local or county roads. This change would be up to the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission.
- Increase the dollar threshold for public advertising of all state construction projects from \$25,000 to \$100,000 and remove the requirement to include two daily newspapers in the state that do not have less than 50,000 daily circulation. This would require a change in the law.

November Retirements

Name	Location	Years of Service
Henry Assel	D4	30
Jorge Bermudez	D4	20
Kenneth Brazzell	D1	23
Robert Brinkworth	CO	30
Larry Cole	CO	6
Rufus Cooley	D6	29
Donald Fraser	D6	7
Edwin Fox	D3	23
Richard James	D6	29
Raymond McKelvy	D4	20
Robert Netterville	D4	5
Dennis Norman	D4	24
Steven Powell	D6	21
Ronnie Rouse	D3	29
Donald Strathman	D4	21

January Service Anniversaries

35 Years		Timothy A. Waters	D1
Brenda S. Martin	CO	Nicole A. Kolb Hood	D5
30 Years		Travis L. Riggs	D5
Ted E. Collier	D8	Rebecca D. Allmeroth	D6
Chester L. Horn	D8	Phillip A. Krull	D6
25 Years		Thomas J. Miller	D6
Albert C. Roberts	D9	James W. Tubaugh	D7
Roger A. Lamb	CO	Billy L. Dodd	D8
20 Years		Jennifer L. Russell	D9
Billy D. Bledsoe	D1	Stephen A. Bubanovich	D10
Charles E. Langewisch	D2	Troy E. Hughes	CO
Vickie L. Ray	D2	Christine D. Sublette	CO
Randal L. Saylor	D2	5 Years	
Harry C. Elder	D3	Jeffrey P. Abplanalp	D1
Norman C. Hellebusch	D3	Scott E. Clark	D1
Larry G. Wehrman	D3	Donald H. Luke	D1
Allen E. Hale	D4	Timothy G. McGaughey	D1
Thomas O. Yates	D4	Jose A. Rodriguez	D1
Edmund T. Moody	D5	Ryan D. Brobst	D2
Scott W. Boyer	D6	Amy B. Crawford	D2
Davar Divanbeigi	D6	Preston L. Kramer	D2
Randall S. Glaser	D6	Jennifer S. Dunkeson	D4
John V. Grana	D6	Tad W. Eddleman	D4
Dennis P. Krenning	D8	Richard D. Parks	D4
Willie R. May	D8	Dale J. Hoellering	D5
William J. Barred	D9	James D. Connell	D6
Kristin M. Ryan	D9	John P. Dixon	D6
Thomas S. Braden	D10	Roger T. Estopare	D6
Noble Nelson	D10	Harry A. Madlem	D6
Kenneth R. Kell	CO	Gary D. Schlater	D6
15 Years		Gerald W. Sharp	D6
Michael E. Teel	D3	Jason F. Snelson	D8
Kevin E. Williams	D3	William W. Johnson	D9
Dennis E. Cummings	D4	Glen C. Miller	D9
Jerry D. Kliethermes	D5	Travis C. Reese	D9
Kenneth G. Hoierman	D6	Melanie D. Rickard-Elmore	D9
James M. Murawski	D6	Paul Vanbibber	D9
Connie S. Morrison	D9	Beverly J. Barnes	D10
Kyle L. Brown	CO	Kyle B. Johnson	D10
Bobette E. Hoover	CO	Melissa A. Anderson	CO
Matthew B. McMichael	CO	Robert C. Brendel	CO
Alan D. Miller	CO	Jack O. Dayton	CO
Scott B. Stotlemeyer	CO	Richard A. Gabelsberger	CO
Danny A. Woods	CO	Charles M. Hiebert	CO
10 Years		Gary J. Holtmeyer	CO
Kenneth W. Henley	D1	Aaron P. Larimore	CO
Jason E. Shafer	D1	Jay W. Moore	CO
		Al Shawn	CO
		Connie J. Stottlemeyer	CO

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In Memoriam

Active Employees

Larry Riley	CO	Nov. 1
Mary L. Henderson	D4	Nov. 12
John "Pat" Gibbons	D6	Nov. 25

Retirees

Harvey E. Emert	D8	Oct. 26
Helen Begemann	CO	Nov. 4
Ida M. Graham	D4	Nov. 8
Gladys E. Armstrong	CO	Nov. 9
Clarence M. Sikes	D10	Nov. 12
John R. Chappell	D4	Nov. 13
John H. Noble	D1	Nov. 17
Danny V. Conner	CO	Nov. 18
James T. Clarke	D4	Nov. 21
Paul E. Potter	D6	Nov. 22
William T. Powers, Jr.	D8	Nov. 22
Cletus B. Bode	CO	Nov. 27
Edwin A. Johnson	D8	Nov. 28
Rolland D. Jackson	D8	Nov. 29
Kenneth "Kenny" D. Darter	D10	Nov. 29
Archie R. Maidens	D5	Nov. 30
Donald Becker, Jr.	CO	Dec. 1



Central Office

Pool Cars, Travel Services Get New Home

The next time you go to check out a car for business travel, you'll have to go to a new location. Our Central Office pool cars, along with Travel Services employees, are moving to 830 MoDOT Drive (they may already

warehouse. The warehouse was consolidated with the distribution center, also located at 830 MoDOT Drive, which freed up space for the pool cars.

The IS division was able to consolidate about five employees from the ware-



The Central Office pool cars are moving to this former warehouse space at 830 MoDOT Drive.

be there by the time you read this). That's up the hill behind the District 5 headquarters building on Missouri Boulevard.

The cars, about 50, and Travel Services, including our shuttle drivers, will occupy the space that formerly housed the Information Systems Division

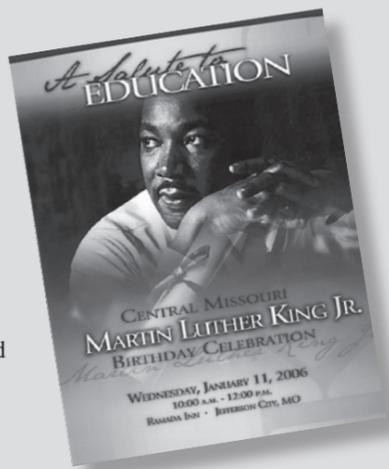
house to space they now occupy on the second floor of the annex. This move allowed us to consolidate an entire IS work group with the rest of IS at the annex. It also opened up office space at 830 MoDOT Drive for the Travel Services staff.

Birthday Celebration

The 2006 Central Missouri Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebration will be held from 10 a.m. to noon on Jan. 11, 2006, at the Ramada Inn in Jefferson City. This year's theme is "Salute to Education."

Special guest speakers include Gov. Matt Blunt and Lincoln University President Dr. Carolyn Mahoney. The Central Missouri Committee will also recognize the accomplishments of individuals, organizations and students from throughout Central Missouri that exemplify the late Dr. King's values and

have found unique ways to incorporate education as a means to carry out his dream of an inclusive, fair and just society.



for more info

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Transportation Trivia Is Sure To Impress

by DeAnne Bonnot

Want to win friends and influence people? Here are some interesting facts about MoDOT and Missouri transportation that might do the trick:



- We used 7.25 million tons of asphalt in fiscal year 2005 – enough to build a four-foot wide, four-inch thick sidewalk around the United States coastline AND between Los Angeles and New York City.
- We spread about 246,534 tons of salt every winter – that's more than 493 million pounds. If it were table salt, it would be enough to handle the yearly consumption of all Missourians, as well as our neighbors in Illinois, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Nebraska and Tennessee.



- Slowing from 70 mph to 50 mph for a one-mile work zone adds just 20 seconds to your trip.
- Missouri's first speed limit was set in 1903. It was 9 mph.

- Missouri's longest highway is Route 61. It's 393 miles long and runs from Iowa to Arkansas.

- MoDOT's crews and contractors mow about 440,000 acres in a typical year. That's the equivalent of mowing every Missouri high school football field every day . . . twice.

- In 2005, we used approximately 714,500 gallons of white paint and 837,600 gallons of yellow paint for highway striping – enough to paint the White House exterior every three hours for a year.

- If you recorded all the miles people drive in Missouri annually, your odometer would read 68,163,000,000. To match that amount of travel, we'd have to send two shuttle crews of eight people to the moon and back every hour of every day for a year.

True Samaritans

The coats, gloves and toys collected by the Controller's Division, Accounts Payable Section, and Employee Benefits were stacked high by the time they were delivered to the family the employees had adopted at the holiday season.

Each year the employees contact the local Samaritan Center for a family in need of help during the holidays. This year, a grandmother and her four

grandchildren were the lucky recipients of the gifts.

"This family had many misfortunes in 2005, including the unexpected loss of their grandfather, surgeries, broken bones, and a car accident that almost claimed the life of one of their grandkids," said Heather Downing, financial services specialist. This family was truly in need, and we were happy to help them."



Heather Downing, kneeling, and Charlotte Edwards sort through the donations the Controller's Division, Accounts Payable Section, and Employee Benefits collected for their adopted family.

D1

Northwest

New Answer, Old Question

Story and photos by Elaine Justus



Jason Shafer, traffic engineer for the Northwest District, has come up with an innovative suggestion for our aging sign situation.

Since 2003, the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Device (MUTCD) has offered five options in an effort to improve overall sign quality nationwide.

Four of those options: visual night inspections, measured retroreflectivity, expected sign life and control signs offer a lot of challenges to the Northwest



Rotting wooden posts and missing sign bolts will be replaced with metal posts and new, more reflective signs.

District because of the number of signs we have (47,560) and the man hours needed to implement them. For that reason, we have chosen to implement the fifth option: blanket replacement. By replacing all of the signs, it would allow us to “date” the signs more accurately, while also allowing us more control. In addition, with the likely transition to a statewide 10-year replacement program, we would be able to replace signs in a more orderly, methodical fashion.

Recent Tracker measurements have helped us to confirm our suspicions that our signs are old and in poor

condition. Like most districts, the Northwest District has been operating with a centralized sign and traffic shop, but that is soon to change. We will be reassigning existing FTEs to become “regional signers” in two of our three areas. Maintenance buildings will continue to handle routine sign replacements, while the newly assigned regional signers will pursue replacing all signs on routes in their areas. We will be testing this concept in the months to come.



Inadequate and incomplete sign logs keep us from knowing the exact age of this particular sign and others like it. With a blanket replacement, we will be able to start fresh and maintain more complete and accurate records.

Photographs from December



The second meeting of the northwest’s Regional Work Group for Missouri Advance Planning took place Dec. 7 in Cameron. Approximately 30 people braved the cold temperatures and forecast winter storm to meet and discuss the future of transportation in Missouri.



An informational meeting regarding the Route AC extension was held Dec. 8 in St. Joseph. Thirty property owners, interested citizens and impacted business owners were present. The informational meeting was necessary because of a change in the extension from an at grade railroad crossing to the construction of an overpass. The original design for the extension indicated that an at grade intersection would be more affordable, but after reviewing the amount of earth work that would be needed, the adjacent creek that would have to be spanned, and the cost of lighting and gates, it became clear that an overpass was, after all, an affordable alternative. Assistant District Engineer Tony McGaughey (featured at left above) explained the reasons for the change and the improved traffic flow and safety that would result.

for more info

Community Relations Manager Elaine Justus
 Phone 816.387.2353
 E-mail margaret.justus@modot.mo.gov

3602 N. Belt Highway
 P.O. Box 287
 St. Joseph, MO 64502

D2

North Central

D2 Gets Involved with Wildlife Safety Inspections

The Missouri Department of Conservation recently contacted District 2 Area Engineer Dennis Brucks requesting assistance with a planned wildlife and safety inspection.

For the past several years, the Department of Conservation and the Missouri State Highway Patrol have teamed up to perform roadside safety inspections during the deer hunting season. The purpose of the inspections is to monitor compliance with Missouri's wildlife code.

This year the Conservation Department chose State Highway 63 in Macon County to perform the inspections. To assist the Conservation department and the Patrol with their task, Senior Crew Worker Bill White from the Macon maintenance facility set up a lighted message board at the location. The message board helped to alert motorists and direct traffic off the roadway.

As in past years, the random inspec-

tions proved successful. The 276 vehicles directed off Highway 63 into the inspection site provided 481 hunters' documentation for review. Conservation agents noted 155 violations of Missouri's wildlife code, resulting in 15 arrests and 11 written warnings.

In a letter to Brucks, Conservation Protection District Supervisor Benny Pryor said, "Please forward my thanks to Bill White for providing and setting up a message board. MoDOT's cooperation on this project helped to ensure that the inspection was conducted in a safe and efficient manner. I look forward to opportunities in the future where our agencies may work together."

The inspections also proved successful for the Highway Patrol, which reported making 10 arrests, two of which were felony possessions of methamphetamine.

"We were pleased to assist fellow state agencies while continuing to maintain motorists' safety, which is always a top priority," said Brucks.

Route 36 Paving Job Receives National Award

The American Concrete Pavement Association and Concrete Magazine have chosen a reconstruction project on Route 36 as a finalist in the State Roads Category of the National Pavement Awards Program for Excellence in Concrete Pavement.

The awards program was established in 1982 to formally recognize contractors, engineers and owners for quality in concrete pavement design, construction and rehabilitation. This year's awards honor projects completed in 2004.

The category of "State Roads," applies to undivided two-lane and multilane rural facilities and is applicable to projects on state and U.S. routes.

Here are specific details about the award: Finalist: State Roads – Presented to (contractor) Loch Sand and Construction Co.; (owner) Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT);

and (engineer) Burns & McDonnell for the Route 36 Reconstruction Project No. J2P0476D from Rt. C to 0.9 miles west of Route 65 in Livingston County.

The project was chosen on a number of factors including difficult traffic switches and environmental challenges, to open a two-lane highway with head-to-head traffic into a four-lane, divided highway.

The end result despite these challenges: a six-mile stretch of roadway, completed on time, that will allow increased economic growth and opportunity for its travelers.

This year, 64 projects were submitted for consideration. The Route 36 project was one of 23 candidates honored by the award's sponsors.

Congratulations!

for more info

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John Blancett, HNTB Morrison

Eroding stream banks were threatening the Thompson River Bridge

Blanket of Rocks for Thompson River Bridge

This fall District 2 teamed with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to complete a stream bank stabilization project in Grundy County.

In 2001, the Thompson River Bridge on Route 6 was being threatened by continued erosion on the stream banks. A failure would require drivers to detour 45 miles to the next bridge. District 2 contacted USACE, an agency known for its expertise in river hydraulics and bank stabilization, to partner on the project.

USACE began the process to get this project on the books when it realized that the bridge would be compromised if the erosion was not stopped. USACE Project Manager Brian T. Rast, who worked with District 2 Project Manager Brian Haeffner, gave an overview of the process.

For the Thompson River project, USACE hired HNTB, an engineering consulting firm, to develop a plan to stabilize the erosion. When the plans were completed, Rast presented the project first to its division in Portland, Ore., for approval, then to the main headquarters in Washington, for approval and funding.

"The project falls under the authority of Section 14 - Emergency Stream Bank Protection Program, part of the Flood



John Blancett, HNTB Morrison

District 2 teamed up with the U S Army Corps of Engineers to stabilize the Thompson River Bridge

Control Act of 1946," said Rast. "Each year the federal government can set aside up to \$15 million for Section 14 projects. Funding is never guaranteed, particularly in this day and age. This project faced tough odds considering the war, and other funding priorities. However, noticing the urgency of the project, headquarters approved fund-

ing, considering it a perfect example of the type of emergency projects in this program, and the country's aging water resources infrastructure."

Like MoDOT, USACE is always looking for ways to improve its process. For this project, a new technology called Groove Software was used to manage the project team. With five team members external to USACE, Groove was specially suited to improve communication, make design plans and specifications available electronically, provide virtual calendars, and enable one-line meetings, to enhance the team's collaboration.

McKenzie Construction, contracted by USACE, began the work on Oct. 17. The project included dirt work, constructing rock dikes and placing rip rap along the east bank just upstream and downstream of the bridge. Approximately 11,500 tons of rock was used. Native trees and shrubs were also planted to help insure the integrity of the stabilization work.

"The project utilized 65 percent federal funding and 35 percent state funding," said Haeffner. "Costs, including engineering fees, right of way acquisition and construction, totaled \$662,000, making MoDOT's share to fund the improvements \$201,110."

When weather conditions permit, seeding and mulching will give the project its finishing touches.

Thanks to all of those involved, the Thompson River Bridge is no longer threatened by eroding stream banks, and will be supporting vehicle traffic for many years to come.

D3

Northeast

Hot Spots in the Middle of Winter

For those who travel with laptops, pocket PCs, or other wireless technology, now there are “hot spots” throughout northeast Missouri to make it easier to stay connected to the office.

“A MoDOT user with wireless capabilities on their laptops and pocket PCs can now access the network without having inside access to our facilities,” explained Northeast District Information System Manager Gregory Lay.

“This has definitely been a team effort,” Gregory said. His staff worked closely with operations to identify locations for

the technology to be installed within our district. All regional buildings in the Northeast District now have the hot spots. “The need was identified at a state level to give construction inspectors the flexibility to do work at the sites,” Gregory commented. The benefits, however, will include more connectivity for any employee who uses a “traveling office.”

If you’re wondering where these “hot spots” are, the IS Department has listed all of them on their Intranet page, which includes maps of hot spot coverage.

Local School Recognized for Seat Belt Video

Scotland County High School was awarded Special Recognition at the statewide Blueprint for Safer Roadways Coalition meeting last month for their concept of a seat belt video. They entered the contest “Restrain Yourself,” and although they were not able to attend the awards ceremony, a special assembly is being planned for January at their high school. Their video storyboard was titled High School Memories - How Will You Be Remembered.

The Northeast Regional Blueprint Committee has supported additional law enforcement, which has resulted in more than 1,000 additional warnings and violations since the program began in June. Members have been actively sharing the Arrive Alive, Buckle Up message at various speaking engagements. The Marion County Health Department has been performing car seat checks, and the committee will participate in the Teen Health Fair in Hannibal in February. The new Web site for the Blueprint was unveiled at the statewide meeting last month, featuring the “Pick Ups Rock, They Also Roll” video on www.savemolives.com.



The SAFE Kids group teamed up with area emergency and health providers to offer car seat checks in Hannibal.



Cpl. Julie Scerine of the Missouri State Highway Patrol and a member of the Northeast Regional Blueprint Committee, demonstrates the rollover simulator.

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Randy Aulbur, construction inspector, takes advantage of the wireless access at the new bridge construction site in Hermann. It is hoped that inspectors will be able to input much of their data at the site so there will be less need to work after hours in the office.

The Best Christmas Ever!

Kalen is only four years old and a foster child who was just adopted. Now, he’s losing his father to Lou Gehrig’s disease. For a few hours, however, Kalen’s sadness was replaced with a smile. Imagine his excitement when he opened a brand new bike given to him by MoDOT employees. He turned to Santa and said, “I’m so glad you bought tiss for me, Santa!”

“This is probably the best Christmas he will ever have,” said Diane Addison, Early Childhood Director of the Hannibal program. Kalen is one of 12 children who were given special holiday surprises during the annual



Children’s Christmas Party held in the district office. To add to their enjoyment, Santa and Mrs. Claus, retiree Dean Ehert and his wife, Donna, arrived with lots of love and hugs for the kids.



Donning new MoDOT sweatshirts and their reindeer ears, the children thanked Santa, Mrs. Claus and the MoDOT employees for their special day.



Gerald Hanlin and Jimmy Dixon, Troy maintenance, remove and replace a hydraulic hose that came off one of the snow plows during the first snow event in the district.

D4

Kansas City Area

Route H Named for Harriman

by Jennifer Benefield

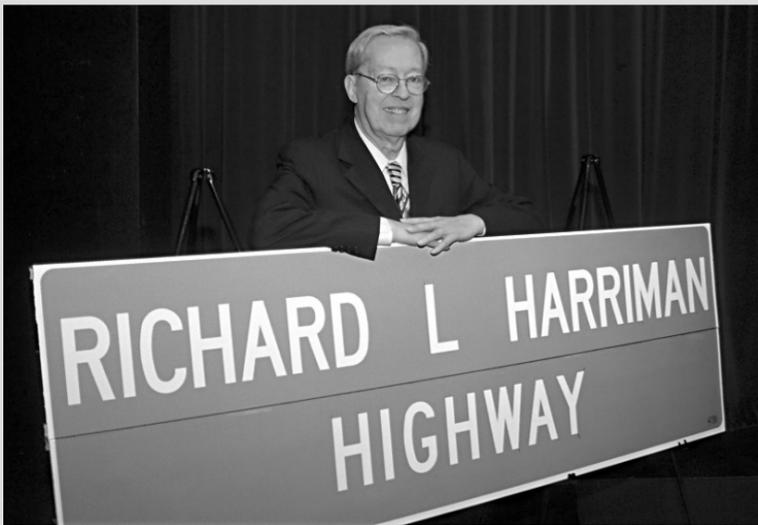
A ceremony to rename a portion of Highway H in Clay County for Dr. Richard Harriman, co-founder of the Harriman Arts Program of William Jewell College, was held Dec. 9 in Peters Theater on the campus.

State Rep. Tim Flook introduced legislation into House Bill 487 that named Highway H from Richfield Road north to Route B as the "Richard L. Harriman Highway." The bill was signed into law by Lt. Gov. Peter Kinder in May 2005.

William Jewell College President Dr. David Sallee hosted the ceremony, which included guest speakers Robert Steinkamp, mayor of Liberty; State Rep. Tim Flook; the Honorable Larry

Harmon, Clay County Circuit Court judge; Roswitha Schaffer, chair of the Harriman Arts Council; and Dr. Dean Dunham, William Jewell College professor and Harriman Arts Program co-founder.

Entering its 41st season, the Harriman Arts Program of William Jewell College continues to carve out an enviable legacy as a performing arts presenter of international importance. More than 700 performances have come to Kansas City by way of the Harriman Arts Program, including 17 American recital debuts. Perhaps most notable was the 1973 professional recital debut of tenor Luciano Pavarotti.



Don Ippock

Dr. Richard L. Harriman poses by a highway sign which bears his name. A portion of Route H in Clay County is named for Harriman who co-founded the Harriman Arts Program of William Jewell College 41 years ago.

Roadway Achieves Scenic Byway Status

by Joel Blobaum

A section of Route 24 in eastern Lafayette County was designated a scenic byway by the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission at its November meeting in Kansas City.

The Route 24 Scenic Byway extends from the Saline/Lafayette County line westward to the Route 224 intersection at Lexington. The 15-mile stretch of Route 224 in Lafayette County, known as the Old Trails Road, is already designated as a scenic byway.

District 4 is now home to four of the state's six touring routes with the

designation. The Cliff Drive and Spirit of Kansas City roadways in historic sections of Kansas City are also scenic byways.

Scenic byways are special roads that offer travelers access to Missouri's beautiful scenery, cultural riches and natural areas. Any agency, group or individual can nominate a route for scenic byway designation, but there must be local governmental support and commitment for designating the route a scenic byway, since the purpose of the program is to preserve and improve the scenic value of the route.

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DDI a Clever New Wrinkle in Traffic Fabric

by Steve Porter

More than a year ago, District 4 highway designers were looking for the best way to improve a congested interchange in an industrial district east of downtown Kansas City. They weighed several options, but weren't satisfied that any of them substantially improved safety and capacity at the I-435/Front Street interchange.

So Senior Highway Designer Rob Curtin and Design Technician Craig Cogan explored a suggestion from a project manager. Turns out that a diverging diamond interchange, a seemingly illogical approach of crossing, then recrossing traffic beneath the interstate, provides solutions to many lingering challenges.

As the British comedy troupe Monty Python might say: And now for something completely different.

A diverging diamond interchange allows two-way traffic to cross, then cross again to best use available space and signal timing to improve traffic capacity. It looks odd, but functions more effectively than conventional designs.

Curtin and Cogan developed the geometrics. Senior Transportation Planner Joshua Scott composed the computerized traffic model to see if the design would work at I-435 and Front Street. The model indicated that Curtin and Cogan's design worked better than the best of all conventional options. Still, Scott knew there would be opportunities to fine-tune the concept.

Senior Traffic Studies Engineer Dave MacDonald joined in to provide perspective on signing, pavement marking and signal layout. Curtin worked with

Federal Highway Administration researchers to refine the design, and the federal agency agreed to fund testing of the design through computer simulation at the Turner-Fairbanks Research Center in McLean, Va.

In early November, Scott and MacDonald flew to Virginia and navigated the interchange in a driving simulator – a compact car that is hydraulically bumped, tilted and turned to mimic actual driving movements as a computer-generated environment is projected onto a 180-degree screen in front of the vehicle.

At first the novelty was interesting, but after hours of simulated driving, the engineers felt the same road weariness of actually driving. The simulator gave them valuable insight.

"After seeing how the DDI looks through the windshield, we redesigned one of our movements to minimize possibility of a head-on conflict," Scott said. Signs were also repositioned, and pavement markings and glare screens were added to help motorists make the safest decisions in driving the unique alignment.

MacDonald agreed that the simulator provided crucial perspective.

"We wouldn't have been able to identify potential problems if it hadn't been for the simulator," he said, adding that driving the DDI in simulation wasn't as complex as it seemed to be on the plans.

The DDI at I-435 and Front Street is in the hands of MoDOT's District 4 designers, and will be unveiled at a public meeting in 2006. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2007.



Joel Blobaum

Maintenance Supervisor Sam Love (left) visits with MoDOT Director of System Management Don Hillis at the American Traffic Safety Services Association - Heart of America Chapter's 2005 Conference in Kansas City. The National Work Zone Memorial, which now includes the name of Julie Love, was displayed during the conference at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center. Julie, Sam's wife and a Motorist Assist operator, died in the line of duty in July 2004.

D5

Central

Ready For A Snowfight

On Dec. 7 as MoDOT crews were preparing for mid-Missouri's first measurable snowfall of the season, motorists were being notified by local media about the need to prepare for winter travel conditions.

MoDOT's snow removal preparation led KOMU-TV's early evening newscast. "We'll work around the clock until either the snow stops or we get the roads clear – whichever comes first," Operations Engineer Eric Schroeter said on-air.

By the following day, mid-Missouri had received between 2-5 inches of snow. And, although it was the first official snowfight of the season, MoDOT crews had already been preparing for the event long before the cold weather arrived.

"During the summer months when most people aren't even thinking about snow, we are planning for our salt supplies," said Schroeter.

New and refresher training was provided this fall to all employees involved with snow removal efforts. And on Oct. 20, each maintenance building in the district took part in a drill requiring them to put together and test each piece of equipment used during a snow event.

Schroeter also performs quality assurance checks throughout the district during a snowfight to ensure consistency among areas and to look for ways to improve processes.

"Our district crews did a good job of snow removal," said Schroeter. "We'll continue to be ready throughout the winter."



Eric Schroeter

Sedalia maintenance crews load salt into the trucks during the early morning hours of Dec. 8 to make sure the roads were ready for the morning commute. The season's first measurable snowfall in mid-Missouri dropped 2-5 inches of snow across the middle portion of the state.

10



Eric Schroeter

Linn Maintenance took part in a district-wide drill earlier this fall to ensure that all equipment and personnel were prepared for winter snow removal operations.

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Inspections Ensure Bridge Safety

For most MoDOT employees, hip waders and a wetsuit are not considered normal work attire. However, for District Bridge Engineer Ed Moody, they are important items that are often needed in the course of everyday tasks.

Moody uses these and other underwater items to inspect the columns and foundation of the bridge, but he inspects the portion of the bridge above the water as well. By performing routine inspections, Moody helps MoDOT and county officials ensure that all bridges are functioning properly and are safe for the traveling public.

Federal statutes require every bridge over 20 feet in length to be inspected for defects at least every two years. MoDOT provides these inspections on county roads as a service, requiring only that a county official accompany Moody. Therefore, Moody inspects bridges in seven District 5 counties one year and the other six counties the following year. In addition, he assists with the inspection of state-maintained bridges each fall.

Moody performs two types of inspections: general inspections and underwater inspections. During the general inspection, Moody conducts a visual

examination of the bridge deck (driving surface), the superstructure (girders, trusses and beams that carry the deck), and the substructure (piers and abutments). He also examines stream erosion near the substructure and the stream alignment. If the water is too high during the routine inspection to see the bottom of the stream, Moody returns at a later date to conduct an underwater inspection. Then, he probes around the base of the piers or abutments to determine if any defects are present that would compromise the stability of the bridge.

If a problem does exist, Moody makes sure that MoDOT and county officials are aware of it. If necessary, he also makes recommendations for repairs or closings of defective bridges, and bridge replacement funding can be withheld if the county does not comply.

Moody enjoys the nature of his job, traveling around the state and the variety of tasks he is faced with.

"I tell people I am reliving my childhood," he says. "What other job do you know where you get to tromp through creeks, climb on things and get a hammer to pound on stuff?"



Caroline Pearson

District Bridge Engineer Ed Moody inspects the footings of a bridge in Miller County.

MAPping Missouri's Transportation Future



Sue Cox

Mid-Missouri community members met in Jefferson City on Dec. 6 to discuss transportation needs in the region. The group is a part of MoDOT's Missouri Advanced Planning (MAP) initiative.

D6

St. Louis Area



Smoother, Safer, Sooner Amendment 3

The Smooth Roads Initiative has kept District 6 very busy this year. A total of 54 projects were let in 2005 for \$93 million. These projects encompass 402 centerline miles of roadway. Construction has completed 24 projects with a total of 133 centerline miles this year. Maintenance prepared the roads for SRI projects by replacing signs, repairing pavement and shoulders and removing raised pavement markings. Maintenance's workload increased by 25 percent because of SRI projects.

Four pavement repair and resurfacing projects were the first to be funded by Amendment 3 in February: Route N from Route 364 to west of Route K and from Spring Orchard Road to Motherhead Road; Route 21 from Old Route 21 to Schenk Road; Route 30 from Interstate 270 to south of Route B/NN; and Route 67 from Interstate 55 to the St. Francois County line.

District 6 has accelerated 21 projects. Projects originally scheduled for 2006, 2007 and 2008 have been moved to 2005. A project to resurface Route 30 from the St. Louis City limits to Grand Avenue was accelerated. The entire 30-mile project from Route B/NN in Jefferson County to the

city of St. Louis was the longest resurfacing project in District 6's history. Interstate 55 from Lindbergh Boulevard to 4500 South Broadway, a project to resurface and rehabilitate the bridges, was also moved up.

There are 11 major projects in the St. Louis area funded by Amendment 3. Some examples are widening Route 100 from Route 47 to Interstate 44 to four lanes and relocating and widening Route 21 to four lanes from Lake Lorraine Road to Route A. The first major project, Route 40 from Route K to Route DD, was let in December.

The Smoother, Safer, Sooner program is financed with \$1.7 billion in bonds that will be repaid with Amendment 3 revenue. This program includes smooth roads initiative, accelerated projects and new high priority projects.

Statewide, SRI will provide 2,200 miles of smoother pavement on the state's most heavily traveled roads by December 2007. Improvements include new driving surfaces, brighter stripes and signs, reflective pavement markers to separate lanes, improved shoulders with rumble strips and safer guardrails.

New Route 40 Exit Opens To Public



Megan McEntee

Crews opened the westbound Route 40 exit ramp to Meadows Parkway/Technology Drive on Nov. 22. The roundabout had been partially open for some time. With both the new ramp and roundabout open to traffic, motorists on westbound Route 40 have direct access to the Missouri Research Park. The Route 40 and Missouri Research Park ramp and roundabout (with adjacent tie-in projects) was a \$1.7 million project. This project's funding was made possible through the public-private partnership of the businesses at the Missouri Research Park, St. Charles County and the state of Missouri. The O'Fallon Project Office managed this project. The St. Charles Area Team and the Design Team led by Barry Bergman also worked on the project.

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Roadways Dedicated To Fallen Public Servants



Thomas Miller

The Officer Scott H. Armstrong Memorial Highway, Route 370 from Interstate 270 to the Discovery Bridge, was dedicated on Nov. 16. Armstrong was a Bridgeton police officer who was killed by a drunk driver on Route 370 as he was responding to a call. Missouri State Rep. Clint Zweifel sponsored the bill. Once the bill becomes law, MoDOT traffic engineers and sign crews are responsible for putting the sign up. Traffic Engineering Specialist Grahm Zieba, Senior Traffic Engineering Specialist Steven Lockett and Signing and Striping Supervisor Charlie Cox coordinated efforts to get the sign installed.



Megan McEntee

Route 30 from MacKenzie Road to River Des Peres Boulevard was dedicated to Affton Fire Chief Jerry Buehne on Oct. 21. Buehne had 42 years of service with the Affton Fire District and was instrumental in getting a new fire house. He was killed while driving to work in a head-on collision. The other vehicle was traveling at an estimated speed of 100 mph. Missouri State Representative Michael Vogt from Affton sponsored the bill. Traffic Operations Assistant Becky Allmeroth, Maintenance Superintendent Vince Reel and employees at the Sunset Hills Maintenance Building were responsible for putting the sign up.

New "Move Over" Highway Signs Urge Caution

by Christopher Sutton

In November, District 6 installed new signs along highways in the St. Louis area that urge drivers to use caution when approaching or passing stopped emergency vehicles. A total of five "Move Over or Slow Down" signs are along several interstates in the St. Louis Metro area. The black on white signs read "STATE LAW: Move over or slow down for stopped emergency vehicles." The signs were installed at the Missouri State Highway Patrol's request.

The law, which has been in place since 2002, requires motorists to drive with caution when approaching a stopped emergency vehicle. Motorists who approach an emergency vehicle that is stopped with its lights activated must change lanes away from the emergency vehicle if they are on a multi-lane highway and can do so safely. If drivers can't change lanes safely, or they are on a two-lane highway, they must slow down while maintaining a safe speed.

"When you see an emergency vehicle, please slow down and move over if it is safe to do so," said Corporal Al Nothum of the Missouri State Highway Patrol. "The workers on our highways – be they troopers, police officers, fire fighters, EMTs, or construction workers – depend upon all drivers to be attentive to their presence."

Since 2002, four members of the Missouri State Highway Patrol have been killed while performing traffic duties. In each incident, the Patrol vehicles were fully illuminated with emergency lights activated.

A total of 17 signs will be installed across Missouri interstates. Five "Move Over or Slow Down" signs have been installed in the St. Louis region:

- Northbound I-255 north of Route 231 (Telegraph Road);
- Southbound I-270 south of Riveview Drive;
- Westbound I-70 west of Pine;
- Southbound I-55 at the 7th Street exit; and
- Westbound I-64 at Market Street.

D7

Southwest

Richard Walter Bids MoDOT Farewell

by Kent Boyd

The new year will be markedly different for MoDOT, and District 7 in particular. We go into 2006 without the enthusiasm, energy and—do we dare say it—the orneriness of District Engineer Richard Walter. He's retiring after 35-and-a-half-years of service.

Richard jumped on board the MoDOT ship in June 1969 as an engineer trainee in District 7. Part of 1969 and 1970 were spent in the military and then it was back to District 7 where he worked in design and maintenance for the next 17 years.

After a brief stint in Jefferson City as a liaison engineer, he moved on to District 2 for six years in maintenance and traffic. The early 1990s found him back in Jefferson City as the state bridge maintenance engineer.

In September 1994 he went back to District 7 as district engineer—a title

he has held ever since. His 11 years at the District 7 helm make him the ranking DE statewide.

As several people noted at Richard's Dec. 6 retirement party, his long tenure, plus his willingness to speak his mind, sometimes riled people. But it was a voice that needed to be heard, particularly in those days when MoDOT's reputation and standing were at rock bottom.

During the party, Ed Hassinger, district engineer for District 6, told the story of a district engineers' meeting where Richard got fed up.

"And Richard suddenly stood up. And he said, 'You know guys, we have to get our act together. We have got to speak as one so we can move this department forward.' And that is just another example of Richard's leadership."



District Engineer Richard Walter discusses concerns with employees at meetings earlier this summer

In District 7 we'll miss his ornery, yet gentle way. We'll miss that hard head with the soft heart. We'll miss the stinging critiques of those he considers wrong, yet we'll remember his

reluctance to pass judgement on those working for him. In short, we'll miss a good friend, yet we're sure he'll give us an occasional call to share his thoughts.

Life After MoDOT...D7 Retirees' Corner Peggy Spooner: Two-Time MoDOT Employee and Retiree

by Lita Cambers

Peggy Spooner started with MoDOT as a secretary in March 1989. When she retired in July 1994 she was a senior district payroll clerk. Peggy returned to MoDOT three years later as a temporary clerk, and when her job

Joplin that she enjoyed redecorating. She works for St. John's Hospital Auxiliary as a volunteer, belongs to an exercise group that meets three times a week and is a member of the "women-over-50" Red Hat Society, which goes to lunch or dinner once a month. She has also taken line-dancing lessons.

She enjoys traveling with friends and family. In 2005 she took trips to southern California; Ruidoso, New Mexico; the Mexican Riviera and Hawaii.

Peggy has two grown children, one granddaughter, two great-grandchildren and her "best friend," Ginger, Peggy's 14-year-old dog.



Peggy Spooner celebrates her great-granddaughter Alice's birthday

was completed three months later, she returned to retirement.

Peggy is a very busy retiree. She recently moved to a different home in

Six-Foot Rotograder Saves Time and Money

by Wendy Brunner-Lewis

A new rotograder has found a home in District 7. The piece of equipment that adds texture to the road surface—either by roughing up the pavement to add traction or smoothing humps on the surface—is so new it hadn't been used as of press time, but employees expect great things of it once they do use it.

"We'll use it on concrete and asphalt to repair humps or ruts in the road, smooth out railroad track and bridge approaches, and rough up the road to make the surface less slick," said Maintenance Superintendent II Tim Houdyshell.

counterparts that can't always miss those bumps.

The rotomill machines District 7 used in the past were mounted on Bobcats and powered by the Bobcats. The new machine is mounted on a grader and has its own six-cylinder engine, said Shop Mechanic Dennis Heidlage.

General Services plans to buy a semi and trailer to load and haul the rotograder, putting the total cost of the rotograder, semi and trailer at around \$300,000.

Will the cost be worth it? Houdyshell thinks so.

"We spend thousands of dollars for contractors or commercial companies to do milling for us," Houdyshell said. "There were a lot of things we couldn't do with the roto-



The new rotograder was just recently delivered to District 7

The rotograder has a 6-foot head, which means the front wheels are wide enough apart that the driver can straddle bumps in the road, making the cut more level than its 2- to 3-foot-head

mill machines, but now we can with the rotograder. The money spent on this piece of equipment will be worth it."

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D8

Springfield Area



Bob Edwards

D8 at Work

Gainesville area Field Mechanic Chris Miller (top right photo) checks a malfunctioning control head for a GL400 spreader.

Marshfield Maintenance Specialist Doug Cron (top left photo) clears snow and ice from I-44 between Strafford and Marshfield during the area's first snowfall Dec. 8.

Operations Engineer-Construction/Materials Andy Mueller, left, meets in mid-December with District 9 Operations Engineer Ed Hess, center, and Rolla Area Engineer Randy Mayo in Rolla (bottom left photo). Joined by District 9 Project Manager Robbie Rakestraw and District 8 Community Relations Manager Bob Edwards, the five worked to develop possible alternate routes to help I-44 drivers keep moving during the busy 2006 construction season. Districts 7, 8, 9 and 6 are joining forces to manage work zones and respond to roadway emergencies along I-44.

Projects for 2006 Include West Bypass, I-44 Rebuild

by Bob Edwards

The busy West Bypass industrial and commuter corridor on Springfield's northwest side will be even more hectic in 2006 when the last in a series of four-laning projects begins.

The Interstate 44 traffic stream east of Lebanon will be constricted to two-way traffic in the westbound lanes for up to two and a half months in 2006 during a pavement rehabilitation project for the eastbound lanes. It will be one of many traffic-disrupting projects along I-44 in District 8 and across the state in 2006.

Contracts for the West Bypass expansion and I-44 reconstruction near Lebanon were approved in early December.

The two projects join several other major projects scheduled in 2006, including startup of the I-44/Route 65 interchange reconstruction in Springfield and continuation of the four-laning of Route 13 north of Humansville and Route 65 south of Branson.

Widening and extending of the West Bypass, which carries Route 160, began in the mid-1990s. The last phase of the improvements in 2006-2007 involves adding lanes and building designated left-turn lanes at intersections and other locations between Chestnut Expressway and Kearney Street.

"It's going to be a major benefit to western Greene County," District Engineer Dale Ricks said. The expansion will aid business development and improve traffic flow while enhancing safety, Ricks said.

APAC-Missouri of Columbia will build the West Bypass project for a bid amount of \$12.8 million.

APAC won the bidding for the I-44 reconstruction east of Lebanon for \$15 million. Traffic will be head-to-head along 10.5 miles between Route F near Sleeper and Route 133 at the Laclede-Pulaski county line.

The project includes resurfacing 3.5 miles of the eastbound lanes between Route MM at Lebanon and Route F near Sleeper (after the reconstruction portion is completed).

Once the eastbound side is closed for reconstruction, the contractor must complete the work and reopen the lanes within 75 days, said Project Manager

Don Saiko.

"It's going to be tight," Saiko said. But such a timetable is do-able, he said.

December Retirees

by Angela Eden



Dora Maintenance Supervisor, Don Crites

Service: 27.5 years (Hired Aug. 1, 1978)

Career: Started as maintenanceman, Dora; promoted to supervisor, 2000

Memorable Work: Rebuilding Route 181 at Hodgson Mill after April 2004 washout

Changes: More vehicles, more people in Dora area

Quote: "Early on, you knew everybody. Today, there's a lot more tourists and more traffic."

Post-MoDOT Plans: Wife, Sharlene, is number one priority; spending time with granddaughters

Halfway Senior Crew Worker Larry Kroutil

Service: 29 years (Hired June 1, 1977)

Career: Started as maintenanceman, Halfway; one year as a crew leader, Bo-

Crites

Kroutil

Tooley

livar; promoted in 1985 to senior crew worker, Halfway

Job Specialty: Running motograder

Memorable Work: Resurfacing roads in Halfway/Bolivar areas in early days of career

Post-MoDOT Plans: Spend more time with family

Drury Senior Crew Worker Alvin Tooley

Service: 28 years (hired June 1, 1978)

Career: Started as maintenanceman, Drury; promoted to crew leader, 1988

Changes: Improvements in equipment

Memorable Work: Resurfacing Drury area roads in early days of career

Quote: "I was always proud of our winter storm work."

Post-MoDOT Plans: Working his dairy farm, milking 100 head

"Talkin' Transportation" Call-In Radio Show
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D9

South Central

MoDOT Responds to Dam Reservoir Failure

by Ann Marie Newberry

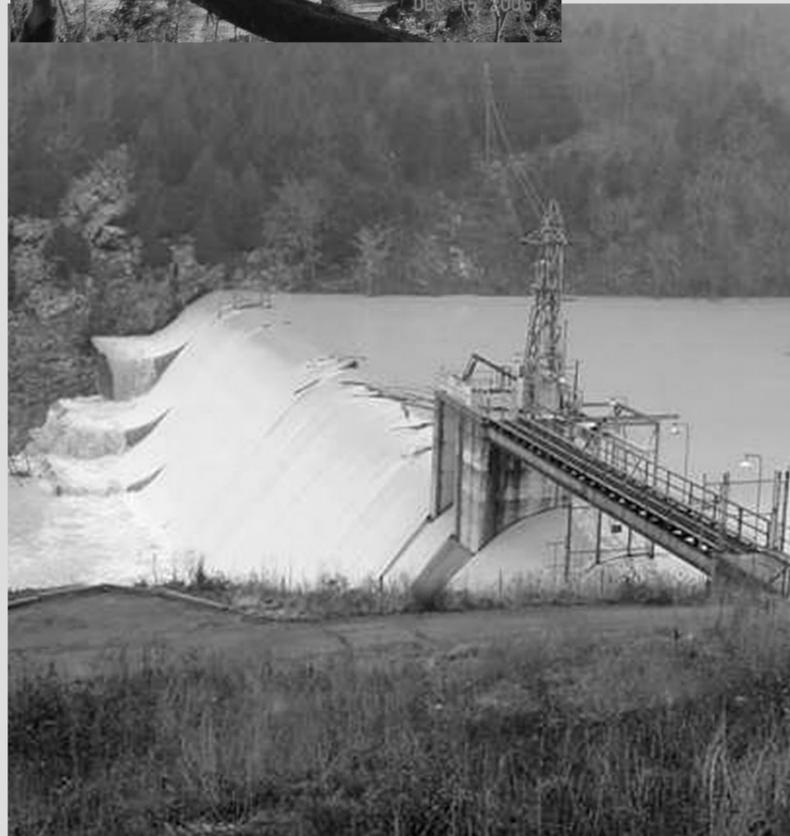
As a testament to how a typical day at MoDOT can quickly shift gears, District 9 could not have predicted it would be responding to the Taum Sauk Reservoir failure in the early morning hours of Dec. 14. Reynolds County is a quiet, serene setting where events of this degree rarely occur. Fortunately, those responding knew what had to be done and quickly went to work.

Just before 5:30 a.m., the reservoir failure resulted in water moving up the east fork of the Black River, then rushing back down the hill bringing with it

trees, mud and debris. In a single pass, it cleared the home of the Johnson's Shut Ins State Park superintendent from its foundation. The family, still

inside the house, was swept away. They were later rescued.

Within minutes of the failure, District 9 Operations Engineer Henry Haggard was on the scene and began coordinating maintenance crews.



Inset photo: The valley below Taum Sauk had been stripped to bedrock following the rush of water. **Larger photo:** The lower dam overflowed as the water traveled down the valley from the upper reservoir.



This photo was taken from inside the reservoir. The northeast corner, where the failure occurred, is visible at left.

Haggard said crews from Centerville, Belleview and Bunker maintenance sheds, including incarcerated crews, were dispatched to the scene. In addition, a bridge crew from Jefferson City traveled to Belleview where they stood ready to respond if their services were needed.

The fear quickly turned toward the lower dam and its ability to receive the water that was rushing toward it. The water cleared a 1.5-mile long and 300- to 400-yard-wide path from the top of Taum Sauk Mountain to the lower reservoir as it rushed down the valley. Officials felt Clearwater Lake, the eventual destination of the water, could handle the additional rise. Everything seemed to hinge on the performance of the lower dam. As a precaution, the town of Lesterville was evacuated by 6:30 a.m. Fortunately, the lower dam held and the town was cleared of any danger.

"I was so proud of our crews," Haggard said.

"The mud was up to a foot deep in places along Route N. They worked quickly using belly plows and graders to clear the roadway. Our goal was to open the road so those responding to the scene could make it into the park."

The Missouri State Highway Patrol had command of the scene. MoDOT worked closely with the troopers and the Department of Natural Resources throughout the day of the failure and the day following. In addition to these agencies, Gov. Matt Blunt flew in to assess the scene, and the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) was on site to coordinate response efforts.

AmerenUE, the St. Louis-based owner and operator of the dam system, an-

nounced shortly after noon 20 feet of water still remaining in the reservoir would have to be drained. MoDOT and others still in the park had to be evacuated. They returned later in the day to finish their work, and Route N was reopened to traffic by 5:30 p.m., only 12 hours after the failure.

District Engineer Tom Stehn expressed his appreciation for the teamwork displayed within MoDOT. "We had offers of help from neighboring districts, a bridge crew responding from Jefferson City and a rally among District 9 employees," he said. "Everyone was ready to assist in the cleanup effort. We were committed to improving access to the area so emergency personnel and others responding to the incident could



make their way into the park. I am so proud of our team. The response went very smoothly."

The Taum Sauk Reservoir is part of a dam system that supplies supplemental power to the city of St. Louis. The system is remotely controlled from St. Louis. Water is drawn into the 55-acre reservoir by turbine engines and as it is released, the resulting energy is captured. When at full capacity, the reservoir holds 1.5 billion gallons of water and measures 90 feet deep.

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Southeast

Regional Group Meets to Discuss Future of Transportation in Missouri



Regional Working Group members involved in the Missouri Advance Planning process discuss issues significant to Southeast Missouri during a recent meeting.

Southeast Missouri citizens are taking a lead role in planning Missouri's future transportation system through the new Missouri Advance Planning initiative (MAP).

As part of the MAP process, the Department recently hosted the first in a series of regional working group meetings around the state to discuss statewide needs, transportation trends and conditions, and opportunities for improvements to Missouri's transportation policies and strategies.

The 19-member Southeast Regional Working Group met Dec. 6 at the district office. The Southeast Region includes 25 counties in southern Missouri. All of MoDOT's Southeast and South Central districts are included as well as a small portion of the Springfield Area District.

MAP is the beginning of a statewide dialogue on what the state's transportation system could and should do for its citizens and how best to fulfill those expectations and potential.

The 18-month MAP initiative will not produce a list of specific future projects. Rather, it will document the current state of the system and project where that system is going under

different scenarios. It will discuss the trends that will influence our transportation needs in the years ahead as well as document the expectations that Missouri's citizens have for their transportation system. And, finally, it will articulate a shared vision for Missouri's transportation system. All of this will guide future transportation investment decisions.

MAP is a way to get people throughout the state talking about their expectations for future transportation modes, from vehicle and bicycles to aviation and water.

Regional working group members from the Southeast District include Barbara Crayne, Malden Airport and Industrial Park; Steve Gerard, Velo Girardeau Bicycle Club; Timmie Lynn Hunter, New Madrid Port Authority; Wayne Johnson, Bollinger County Commission; Dennis Kime, Piedmont Board of Alderman; Judy Luye, MADD Bootheel Chapter; Bill Osborne, SMTS; Tommy Petzoldt, East Perry Lumber Company; Jere Robbins, Noranda Aluminum; Charles Rorex, City of Farmington; Dr. David Scala, Cape Girardeau School District; Bryan Siddle, Crown Valley Winery and the Rev. Ron Webb, Mount Calvary Power House Church of God.

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Fifty-Mile Route 67 Improvement Set to Begin



Local officials break ground on four-lane Route 67 improvements.

The Highway 67 Corporation and the Southeast District held a groundbreaking ceremony Dec. 12 to officially begin the Route 67 upgrade to four lanes in Butler, Wayne and Madison counties.

Funding for the project was secured after Poplar Bluff voters passed a sales tax during the April election, and Missourians passed Amendment 3 in 2004.

The \$180 million improvement is made possible through the partnership of the Highway 67 Corporation, MoDOT and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The 67 Corporation is contributing \$60 million from the Poplar Bluff tax, MoDOT is providing \$92 million and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is adding \$28 million.

The expressway project includes constructing two additional lanes with

paved shoulders as well as median crossovers to provide access.

"I am so proud of our employees," District Engineer Mark Shelton said. "This project is moving at such an accelerated rate and from survey to right-of-way to design and construction, these folks have jumped in to do what it takes to perform the outstanding job they do on a daily basis on a much quicker time frame."

The groundbreaking officially began construction of the first \$2.3 million phase in the project which includes four miles of clearing and grading from where the current four-lane section of Route 67 ends just north of Poplar Bluff to Route O near the Wayne County line. Completion of the first phase is anticipated in the summer of 2007.

Santa Gets Help From Southeast District

by Tonya Wells

Southeast District employees played Santa again this year, buying Christmas gifts through the Department of Family Services and US Bank's Christmas Angels program.

Each year MoDOT employees use vacation time to cook and deliver chili dinners in the Sikeston area. Proceeds from the event are used to buy gifts for more than 100 area children who otherwise wouldn't receive anything.

Volunteers started cooking at 5 a.m. and as a result, the community event raised more than \$4,000 for the program.

True to the spirit of the season, area businesses did more to support the Southeast District employees than just buy chili. Vanity Fair and Kaybee Toys opened their doors early and offered a discount so that funds could go as far as possible.

"This is such a great event," said Senior Design Clerk Karen Williams. "Each year, we've been very fortunate that the people and businesses in Sikeston have supported us. We wouldn't be able to make more than 100 kid's Christmas dreams come true without them."



District employees pose with the Christmas gifts they collected for more than 100 area children.

Connections

The mission of *Connections* is to be a monthly source of Missouri Department of Transportation news and feature articles that connect employees statewide. It is distributed to MoDOT employees and retirees.

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Rail Inspectors Know Safety Is Demanding

by Sue Cox / photos by Cathy Morrison

When the phone rings at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, Chris Noblett knows it's bad news. Often it's because there's been a train accident and someone's been hurt or even killed. As rail safety inspectors, Noblett and his coworkers never really get used to what they feel when arriving at an accident scene and seeing a vehicle slammed by a train like a stomped on aluminum soda can.

Sometimes the driver has skirted around the warning devices at the crossings and meets death.

"You can't beat a train," Noblett said, "and it's only a matter of waiting a min-

right in your town and at your crossings," Noblett said, "so they seldom stop and look. Our job is to keep the rail crossings in good enough condition to keep the train on it and to make sure

Cory Reynolds makes site visits to enforce federal and state safety procedures. This includes checking railroad engineers' certifications and making sure trains operate within the appropriate speed limits and blow whistles properly for railroad crossings.

Richard Allsbury monitors traffic counts, using a formula that includes the number of cars and trains and the train speeds to determine if a crossing is eligible for electronic warning devices, such as gates or signals. Bruce Chinn negotiates the deals with the railroads. Federal money that MoDOT manages pays for the new warning devices.

The inspectors are also on guard for visual obstructions that would keep motorists from passing safely through the crossing. They're on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, all year long.

"We help each other," Noblett said. "The guys I work with make my job what it is. They're a good bunch."



Don Schwartz measures a railroad track's width to make sure the rails are not too close or far apart.

Sometimes the public complains to MoDOT about the rough road conditions around a crossing, so MoDOT inspectors check it out. If there's a problem, a citation is given, and the railroad is required to fix it. MoDOT maintenance then issues a permit to temporarily close the road and makes sure the improvements meet the specifications and standards for the road.

"In order to provide good customer service to motorists, it's important we coordinate with maintenance and take care of the situation," Noblett said.

Noblett believes MoDOT is on track, so to speak. But he and the other inspectors want to see motorists do their part.

"I felt goose bumps one time when I found a four-year-old little girl's shoes beside the tracks while I was taking a measurement after an accident. I have a four-year-old daughter," Noblett said.

Noblett had left her at home asleep that time. Safe. He knows, though, that somewhere there's pain and hurt for someone else.



Inspectors Chris Noblett and Garry Viebrock test the lamp voltage and timing of the signals' flash rates to help ensure a safe rail crossing.

ute or two when the warning signals tell a driver to hold up until the train passes. I've never been to an accident where the signals and warning devices weren't working as intended."

The safety of Missouri citizens, the traveling public and railroad employees is the focus of MoDOT's railroad group at the Jefferson City Central Office, said Matt Cowell, railroad operations manager in MoDOT's Multimodal Operations Division.

"It's all about safety – trying to help Missourians stay safe," he said. By early December 2005, Missouri had experienced 48 grade crossing collisions, 12 fatalities and 28 derailments.

"People assume everything is working

everything is working properly for the traveling public."

When it comes to passenger and freight service volume across the nation, Kansas City is ranked second and St. Louis third, so plenty of oversight is necessary.

Noblett and Garry Viebrock are the two rail inspectors who check the signals at all the crossings in the state. There are more than 3,900 public crossing and more than 1,600 with warning devices, such as signal flashers or crossing arms.

Two others, Todd Hogg and Don Schwartze, keep an eye on the railroad tracks, watching for anything that could derail a train. They inspect every piece of track in the state – about 6,095 miles – once a year.



Railroad Safety Inspector Richard Allsbury of Central Office's Multimodal Operations Division measures pavement markings for a rail crossing.