

Connections

November 2011

Snowplow Training Begins

Program Piloted in Southeast Goes Statewide

by Christi Turkleson

As the daylight decreases and temperatures drop, employees across the state are preparing to keep Missouri roads safe for travelers this winter. Each region will be implementing a modified Snow Academy program that was developed and tested in the Southeast District last fall.

“We wanted to combine the Snow and Ice Removal Training we have always conducted for non-routine maintenance personnel with the Snow Academy,” said Darren Petrus, Southeast District senior safety officer. “Our goal was to ensure that all personnel have the practical knowledge and skills necessary to perform snow removal safely, effectively and efficiently.”

The training was held in November and was required attendance for maintenance employees (grades 6-14) with less than

five years of experience, those who had received a written or verbal warning in the previous year due to a winter operations incident, and non-maintenance employees who are required to plow snow. Maintenance employees (grades 6-14) with more than five years of experience are also required to retrain every four years.

“We heard from our employees that those with more than five years of experience did not feel they needed annual refreshers,” said Maintenance Superintendent Dan Sherbo. “Employees also told us that they wanted more time on the equipment and less travel time.” To incorporate this feedback, the Snow Academy was held at each regional maintenance building. This reduced travel time and expenses for the participants, and gave more time and flexibility for the employees that needed it.



Each region will be implementing a modified Snow Academy program that was developed and tested in the Southeast District last fall.



Employees attended the revised Snow Academy at the maintenance building they typically report to during a winter event, practiced on the equip-

Attendees trained at the building where they would typically respond during a winter event.

ment they would be using during an actual event, and trained on the routes they would be plowing. “The biggest difference in this training is that it more accurately reflected the winter conditions that our folks encounter,” said Petrus.

Employees were rated on a pass or fail basis on:

- Pre-trip inspections
- GL400 and ACS Calibration and Operation
- Loader and truck operation

- Tire chain and Cinder Bed installation
- Tow Plow and Wing Plow operation (for designated operators only)
- Written exam

The final portion of the training was a ride along during the first snow of the season for non-routine maintenance personnel and new employees.

Participants had the opportunity to fill out an evaluation rating the quality of the training, and results were overwhelmingly

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No Boundaries Pooled Fund

Best Practices Across State Lines

When you have a great idea, why keep it to yourself? In an era of tight budgets, states are looking for innovations that serve customers well and increase efficiency. Missouri is now a lead state for a newly-formed group that focuses on sharing those innovations for the greater good.

The No Boundaries Pooled Fund began in January 2011, and so far, eight states are participating to share innovations and best

practices. Missouri is the lead state, and Maintenance Liaison Engineer Mike Shea serves as MoDOT’s representative on the team.

“We’re looking for those can’t-miss solutions, to bring those to all of the states,” said Shea.

The group plans to meet twice a year, and met for the first time face-to-face in Kansas City in early October. Shea had the opportunity to present a MoDOT in-

novation, the contrast striper. Developed by Regional Maintenance Supervisor Paul Bryan and the striping crew in the Southwest District, the striper won Best in Show at MoDOT’s 2010-11 Innovations Challenge Showcase in March. The innovation is a modified striper paint gun carriage that places three lines simultaneously, allowing for two black stripes with white in the middle.

This innovation allows MoDOT to apply contrast markings in one pass along stretches of roadway where daytime visibility is a concern. It saves time and is much less expensive than any other way of producing a contrast stripe.



The contrast striper won Best in Show at MoDOT’s 2010-11 Innovations Challenge Showcase

The No Boundaries Pooled Fund is open to all states, and Shea hopes to see more

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Let it Snow

SW District is ready for what winter brings

Quite Frankly

By now, I've had the opportunity to meet with some of you as part of my fall employee tour. It's great to get out and about and visit with you – the folks who are doing the real work and making a difference. As I've been meeting with employees, we've been talking about whatever comes to their minds, but I've also been hitting home on two main topics – the Bolder Five Year Direction and our focus for 2012.



on doing your best, staying positive and keeping your eye on the long-term.

Our Focus for 2012

There are three key things we need to focus on in 2012: taking care of the system, keeping Missourians safe and providing excellent customer service. You've done a great job in these areas:

- 86 percent of major roads are in good condition.
- Over the past five years, traffic fatalities have decreased 35 percent and are the lowest they've been since 1949.
- Customer satisfaction is at 83 percent, and 90 percent of Missourians trust us to keep our commitments.

We need to continue this momentum. I know that's asking a lot during these trying times. But I know you are an innovative, hard-working and dedicated group of people. Will things be different? Yes, they will, but I believe that if we focus on customer service and continue to deliver projects on time and within budget and get people where they want to go quickly and safely, we'll be okay.

Kevin

The Bolder Five-Year Direction

I know the last few months have been very hard on you. I'll be honest – the coming months aren't likely to be any easier. We've seen good people – our co-workers – leave our organization, and everyone has to do more with less. I want you to know I recognize these are tough times for you. I wish it could be different, but the reality remains that we just don't have enough work for all the people we have. As we move forward, I want to thank you for hanging in there and remind you to stay focused

No Boundaries Pooled Fund

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involvement as time goes on.

"However we can get a good solution implemented, we want to do our part," said Shea.

For more information about the contrast striper, visit <http://wwwi/intranet/or/SolutionsAtWork/Innovations.htm>.

Current No Boundaries Pooled Fund States

Missouri (Lead State)
Iowa
California
Mississippi
Ohio
Pennsylvania
Georgia
Washington



The contrast striper paints three lines simultaneously, allowing for two black stripes with white in the middle. The innovation was presented to the No Boundaries Pooled Fund in October.

MoDOT Wins National Highway Safety Award

MoDOT was recognized by the Governor's Highway Safety Association for its work to save lives on Missouri highways.

MoDOT received the Peter K. O'Rourke Special Achievement Award for spearheading a statewide safety coalition that has helped the state realize a decrease in traffic fatalities and disabling injuries for the past five years. The award also recognized the state for reaching its goal of 850 or fewer roadway fatalities two years early.

In presenting the award, the association noted that under MoDOT's leadership, the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety successfully combined engineering, enforcement and education to help the state achieve traffic fatality levels

not seen in more than six decades.

Traffic fatalities in Missouri have decreased by 35 percent since 2005, and the trend is continuing downward. For 2011, traffic fatalities are down by 11 percent.

"We have shown what can be accomplished when we all work together toward a common goal," said Highway Safety Director Leanna Depue. "We are grateful for this recognition, but we're even more thankful for the fact that more Missourians are making it home safely to their loved ones."

For more information about MoDOT's efforts to improve highway safety in Missouri, visit www.savemolives.com.



Cathy Morrison

Missouri has achieved traffic fatality decreases to a level not seen in more than six decades.



Cathy Morrison

MoDOT was recognized by the Governor's Highway Safety Association for its work to save lives on Missouri highways.

Snowplow Training

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positive. "We had very positive comments overall," said Petrus. "Employees rated the piloted program higher than the traditional Snow Academy for increasing their knowledge, effectiveness, and providing overall favorable conditions for learning. Many employees said that they felt the training was more realistic and they appreciated training

on the actual equipment and routes they would be using during winter events."

The updated Snow Academy will provide all employees with the practical training they need to complete the job safely and efficiently this winter season. Visit the Maintenance page on SharePoint to find additional information on Winter Operations.

For Your Benefit

Flex Your Dollars

It's that time of year again to take a look at how pre-tax benefits through the Missouri State Employee's Cafeteria Plan may benefit you.

The annual open enrollment for the MOCafe program runs from Oct. 1 through Dec. 1, 2011. Participating employees can save approximately 25 percent or more on qualified expenses by allowing users to set aside tax-free money to pay for health, dental and vision premiums and eligible out-of-pocket expenses for health care and/or dependent care.

Starting Jan. 1, 2013, the Health Care Flexible Spending Account Maximum will be reduced from \$5,000 to \$2,500 due to provisions in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. So please plan accordingly in 2012 for those large

expenses like orthodontia, LASIK eye surgery and/or major dental work, etc.

You may also submit claim forms online at www.mocafe.com. It makes the process even easier and may speed up your reimbursement.

A 'use it or lose it' principal applies to the program, so it's important to carefully estimate your family's annual out-of-pocket health care or day care expenses upfront. ASIFlex provides an online calculator to help you estimate your FSA tax savings.

If you have questions about the Missouri Cafeteria Plan, contact ASIFlex toll free at 1-800-659-3035, by e-mail at asi@asiflex.com or on the Internet at www.mocafe.com.

Open Enrollment for Active MoDOT Employees

October 17 – November 14, 2011



For more information, visit www.modot.org/newsandinfo/benefits.htm

MoDOT and Patrol Employees' Retirement System Board of Trustee Special Election

Sue Cox retired recently, creating a vacancy on the MPERS Board of Trustees. Cox served as the Active MoDOT Employee representative on the board.

At the Sept. 29 board meeting, the board authorized a special election to fill her position. The elected representative will complete the remainder of Cox's term, which runs through June 30, 2014.

The MPERS Board of Trustees approved delaying the election process

until March 1, 2012. The delay is premised on allowing employees, who may be potential board candidates, some additional time for the resolution of staffing changes associated with the Bolder Five-Year Direction.

Below is a schedule for the 2012 special election. Find more information at www.mpers.org, or contact Susie Dahl at (573) 298-6020 or Susie.Dahl@modot.mo.gov.

Special Election Schedule

March 1, 2012	E-mail to active MoDOT employees announcing the election
April 2, 2012	Completed Nomination Form(s) due at MPERS by 4 p.m.
April 5, 2012	MPERS will notify candidates of successful nomination
April 13, 2012	Candidate statements due from nominees
April 27, 2012	Ballots mailed to eligible active MoDOT employees
May 24, 2012	Election Day – completed ballots must be received at MPERS by 4 p.m.
May 25, 2012 – June 3, 2012	Open and tally ballots. Executive Director will make a preliminary announcement of election results and notify successful candidate.
June 21, 2012 (Tentative date)	Board Meeting – Executive Director will certify the results of the election to the Board and introduce the successful candidate.

November Service Anniversaries

35 Years		10 Years	
James A. Brocksmith	CO	Richard A. McClain	NW
30 Years		Charles A. Ramsbottom	NW
Dale D. Kurrelmeyer	CD	Carey D. Beverlin	NW
25 Years		Gregory A. Page	NW
Robert T. Lynch	CD	Mark D. Sisson	NE
Carmella E. Green	SE	Donald G. Weber	CD
Danny L. Pruet	SE	Darlene M. Braswell	SW
20 Years		Brian P. Lambert	SW
John C. Parmenter	NW	Janice C. Murr	SE
Gina R. Orozco	NW	5 Years	
Eric E. Foster	KC	Dewayne H. Ireland	NW
Alan D. Kliethermes	CD	Lisa M. Kellison	NW
Emery D. Reese	CD	Samuel S. Vaughn	NW
Gail V. Thoma	SL	Rusty R. Reed	NE
Frank W. Tidd	SL	Jimmie D. Osgood	KC
Andrew T. Mueller	SW	Andrew M. Gates	SL
Jay L. Smith	CO	Dustin A. Kertz	SL
15 Years		Kara M. Shannon	SL
Hal D. Moore	NE	Darren M. Wilken	SL
Rochelle A. Martens	NE	Ron W. Chadd	SW
Maria L. Stuck	KC	Donna W. Anderson	SW
Randy K. Skaggs	KC	David A. Pugh	SE
Andrew Strong	KC	Cody L. Rogers	SE
James V. Beattie	CD	Nicholas L. Schatzer	CO
James E. Alter	SL	Denise Fennewald	CO
Cindy K. Bader-Herman	SE	Bruce M. Heerboth	CO
Bryce D. Gamblin	CO	Christina L. Dudenhoeffer	CO
Donna S. Wallach	CO	Rhonette C. Andrews	CO
Carolyn S. Harmon	CO	Katherine L. Morton	CO
Judy A. Bray	CO	Victoria Franklin	CO

September Retirements

Name	District	Years of Service
Clarence Lloyd	NW	37
Marcia Triplett	NW	21
Carol Devlin	NE	22
James Vogelsmeier	KC	7
Kevin Rose	KC	36
Allen Hale	KC	25
Roger Wolfe	CD	23
Franklin Earl	CD	18
Larry Taylor	CD	30
Kerry Thompson	CD	32
Kevin Trentmann	SL	26
Kris Johnson	SW	33
Henry Manes	SW	31
Gayle Davis	SW	38
Larry Lay	SW	34
Thomas Stehn	SE	28
Douglas Hampton	SE	27
Steven Mayberry	SE	16
John Cave	CO	20
Raymond Morgan	CO	20
Barbara Langston	CO	14
John Wiesenmeyer	CO	5
Sue Cox	CO	32

In Memoriam

Active	District	Retired From:	Date
Alvin Blackford	CD		Sept. 4
Rickey Forbes	KC		Sept.19
Retirees		Retired From:	
Warren Crewz	CO		Sept. 2
Willie Cash	Former D2		Sept. 3
David Beavers	Former D4		Sept. 3
Albert Hueste	Former D5		Sept. 4
Wilburn Hodo	Former D9		Sept. 6
Henry Horton, Jr.	Former D10		Sept. 8
Henry Haggard	Former D9		Sept. 9
James Harvey	Former D10		Sept. 16
Leo Olson	Former D1		Sept. 20
Arthur Carlson	Former D3		Sept. 20
Donald Crannick	Former D10		Sept. 23
William Bledsue	Former D5		Sept. 23
Leonard Dunning, Jr.	Former D10		Sept. 26

Central Office

Pestka Elected Chairman of NASAO

The Administrator of Aviation for the Missouri Department of Transportation, Joe Pestka, has been elected Chairman of the National Association of State Aviation Officials.

Founded in 1931, NASAO is one of the most senior aviation organizations in the United States, predating even the Federal Aviation Administration's predecessor, the Civil Aeronautics Authority. The states first established NASAO



Joe Pestka

to ensure uniformity of safety measures, to standardize airport regulations and develop a national air transportation system responsive to local, state, and regional needs.

Pestka has chaired various committees for NASAO including the State Block Grant Task Force Group, Finance committee and Navairs committee.

"I am excited and honored to lead such a great association. I look forward to working with state aviation directors across the country and the NASAO team this coming year in efforts to improve aviation at the local, state, and national level," Pestka said.

Pestka became the Administrator of Aviation for MoDOT in 2003, after having served as the department's Aviation Operations Manager. He has been with MoDOT for 10 years and has more than 20 years experience in the aviation industry.

Missouri State Charitable Campaign Central Office Kickoffs



Cathy Morrison

The Missouri State Charitable Campaign kicked off for the Central Office at 105 W. Capitol on Sept. 22 with visits from charitable organizations and a hotdog lunch.



Shaun Schmitz

Employees at 601 W. Main in Jefferson City participated in a similar campaign kickoff on Sept. 28.

Diversity Workshop Remembers Judaism and the Holocaust



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Central Office employees had the opportunity to glimpse into a gripping history through the powerful story of Aline Kultgen.

Kultgen visited MoDOT on Sept. 26 to talk about her experiences growing up

in France as part of a Jewish family during the German occupation of World War II. She shared the story of her life and the effects of the dramatic events during that time.

Kultgen's presentation was part of the First Monday's program offered

through the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Division. The program includes mini workshops on a variety of diversity-related topics and is held on a Monday of every month. Workshops are designed to improve and enhance knowledge and skills regarding diversity.

Nearly 30 Central Office employees were able to glimpse Kultgen's background growing up with her aunt and uncle in France after the deaths of her parents when she was young. She described the French people and their varying reactions to occupation, from those willing to resist to those who seemed to accept the events around them. She shared examples of anti-Semitism, such as posters and a photo of a playground sign warning that Jewish children were forbidden. Kultgen

brought some historical items with her, including a yellow cloth star that Jews were required to wear as part of the occupation.

While Kultgen did not have to experience labor or concentration camps firsthand, her father lost his life when given up as a spy in the resistance. She described the need to escape once with her family, missing the Gestapo by only a couple of hours. Her soft-spoken manner brought to life the horror of the times, but also the hope in the bravery of those who worked to help. Despite her hardships, Kultgen's focus is on sharing her story to help others.

"I do not consider myself a survivor," said Kultgen. "I didn't suffer like some people did."

Kultgen ended her presentation with a powerful message to remember these events from history, take time to notice the events around us and stand firm in our convictions. She encouraged attendees to both respect and honor differences.

"I really appreciated that she came," said Standards Specialist Keith Smith with MoDOT's Design division, who attended the workshop. "This is important information for people to know, and I truly enjoyed her presentation."

for more info

Connections Editor
Phone
E-mail

105 W. Capitol Avenue
P.O. Box 270
Jefferson City, MO 65109

Laura Holloway
573.751.5985
laura.holloway@modot.mo.gov

Northwest District

Big Bags Prove Successful in Fighting Floods



Maintenance crews work to install Big Bags last July to keep flood waters off Route 65.

MoDOT Northwest maintenance crews used a new tool this summer to keep water off the roads during the flooding. Crews from the Kansas City District, the former North Central District and the Northwest District worked together to install a two-mile stretch of Big Bags in mid-July on the west side of Route 65 between Carrollton and Waverly to help keep flood waters at bay and the road open.

Big Bags are large sand bags that unfold like an accordion to create a 15-foot long, 3-foot high by 3-foot wide

storage compartment for sand. One system of Big Bags takes the place of 500 sand bags.

“Using the Big Bags in this case helped us keep the road open, which we know area residents really appreciated,” said Brad Gates, MoDOT Northwest District Maintenance Superintendent. “They might not work everywhere, but it’s a good tool to have on hand to use when needed.”

The Big Bags work much like Legos toys - a chain of dumpster-sized bags



Senior Maintenance Worker Fred Goetting helps remove two miles of Big Bags from Route 65 in September.

can be attached, filled with sand and built upon to create floodwalls quickly. The bags are made of tightly woven polypropylene with wooden frames that are screwed together. Each system weighs only 50 pounds when empty, but when deployed they are filled with 2,800 –3,500 pounds of sand, depending on its moisture content. The bags are filled with the help of a conveyor system created during their use in the Southeast area earlier in the year. After doing their job, the bags needed to be removed in September. Staff from three Northwest Maintenance build-

ings came up with and implemented a plan to get the bags off the road, which took only two days. All the sand was recovered and will be reused for winter operations.

“The removal time of less than two days was amazing,” Gates said. “Everyone came together as one group to work on this project and do an outstanding job. I am very proud to have such a group to work with.” Missouri was the first state in the area to purchase the Big Bags.

Employees Educate Students About Flood Damage

by Holly Hailey

On Oct. 5, 25 junior high students from Rock Port were given a first-hand look at the flood damage on U.S. Highway 136. Senior Construction Inspectors Joe Moore and Lance Murry led the group through the events that have

happened this summer which left four large gaps in the pavement. Three of the four gaps have been filled. The students were able to see the last gap prior to the start of work.



Holly Hailey

Area Engineers On the Move



Melissa Black



Holly Hailey

Helping the Northwest District focus more on customer service within its communities, Area Engineers Tonya Lohman and Mike Rinehart are on the move. Tonya Lohman, a professional engineer, is the area engineer for Caldwell, Carroll, Chariton, Daviess, Grundy, Harrison, Linn, Livingston, Mercer, Putnam, and Sullivan counties. Mike, also a professional engineer,

is the new area engineer for Andrew, Atchison, Buchanan, Clinton, DeKalb, Gentry, Holt, Nodaway, and Worth counties. They are both available for public speaking, media interviews, and attending city, county and Chamber of Commerce meetings. They can be reached through MoDOT’s toll-free customer service center at 1-888-275-6636 or on their cell phones available at modot.org/northwest.

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for more info

Customer Relations Manager Phone E-mail
Melissa Black 816.387.2481 melissa.black@modot.mo.gov

3602 N. Belt Highway St. Joseph, MO 64506-1399

Filling the Beast!

You can watch videos of the U.S. Highway 136 project at MoDOT’s Northwest District YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/user/MoDOTNWDistrict?feature=mhshn.

Northeast District

Big Picture Problem Solving

The melting pot of maintenance supervisors, some with decades of experience and others fairly new, spent an entire day creating the team environment that will help lead MoDOT through the Bolder Five-Year Direction.

Led by members of the management team, the workshop integrated knowledge, technology, experience, and new ideas that will influence the way MoDOT does business in northeast Missouri.

"It was an enjoyable meeting, because we got to meet and work with all the

new superintendents and supervisors; we hadn't done that since becoming a larger district," said Assistant Maintenance Supervisor Simon Begley.

Each of the five superintendents worked with the new supervisors in activities to help sharpen their skills on problem solving as it relates to MoDOT's five focus areas. "We would look at a problem on a highway, start at the centerline and go all the way out to help us focus on the 'big picture' of problem solving," Begley added.



Butch Mundle, maintenance superintendent, helps his team of supervisors focus on the big picture of problem solving during the maintenance supervisor workshop. Also pictured are Heath Otte, Brian Untiedt and Simon Begley.

Full Speed Ahead for Rail Input

The first round of community leader workshops and public meetings was held in Hannibal, and nearly 30 business leaders were represented from throughout northeast Missouri. "We received excellent input about the desire to have more passenger rail, especially in Hannibal," said Area Engineer Brian Haeffner. From major employees like the hospital and BASF to the Visitor's and Convention Bureau and Hannibal LaGrange College, comments were favorable about improving the rail system for both

passenger and freight. Administrator of Railroads Eric Curtit was pleased with the participation in the kickoff meeting and told participants he would be back next spring for an update.



Kristi Jamison visits with Kent Coleman, a former railroad employee and attendee at the first public meeting in the state for the rail plan.

for more info

Customer Relations Manager
Phone
E-mail
Route 61 South
P.O. Box 1067
Hannibal, MO 63401

Marisa Brown-Ellison
573.248.2502
marisa.ellison@modot.mo.gov

Around the District...



The Lancaster crew works on a bridge on U.S. 136 at Elm Creek. The crew put up baskets and placed rip rap. The damage was caused by recent heavy rains.



Senior Office Assistant Diane Nanneman and several other Coalition partners have spent time during "Arrive Alive Night" at area football games, inviting the students to thumbprint their pledge to not text and drive. Students who sign up were entered into a drawing for prizes donated by local merchants and Arrive Alive items.



More than 100 people of all ages came out for the Family Spree on the new Route 63 in Kirksville, including Assistant District Engineer/Area Engineer Kevin James and his family, and Customer Relations Manager Marisa Ellison. The event, which was sponsored by the City of Kirksville, offered bicyclists, runners and walkers the opportunity to get a feel for the new highway, which opened two weeks later.



Liberty Wide Awake 4-H Club assisted MODOT with Adopt a Highway on Highway 1 Route P by Liberty Community Center at their April club meeting. The group picks

The Northeast District website has been featuring adopters from the Adopt-A-Highway program in the past year. While looking through some of the files, a photo was found from the first pickup the Bellflower Boosters did in 1968; it was also featured on the website along with a recent photo of the group. The NE District has more than 600 miles adopted for litter pick up.

Kansas City District

Three Bridges, One Grand Partnership

by Kerri Lewis

Outstanding customer service is a top priority for MoDOT, and recently the Kansas City District had an opportunity to put this commitment into action.

Imagine the consequence of closing the only road in and out of a flood-stricken town if levees had failed this past summer. Or, once the waters receded, closing that same road -- the main thoroughfare for hundreds of farmers -- during the height of harvest season. This fall, the Kansas City District was faced with this very scenario, and the response was outstanding customer service.

This unique situation could have been detrimental for MoDOT's reputation, but turned into the opportunity to prove just how serious the KC District is about collaboration and great partnerships proved to be the keys to success.

Three bridges on Route 10 west of Hardin, a farming community in Ray County, were scheduled to be replaced under the Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Program this past spring. Although each closure was anticipated to last for no more than 38 days, the length for the Route 10 closure was nearly three months. Not an ideal situation, but needed to provide three new, safer structures for motorists. But the schedule changed.

The City of Hardin is no stranger to flooding. When the Missouri River threatened to overtop levees, MoDOT took the initiative to evaluate the threat. The potential for landlocking the community was enough to

postpone the work until the road could safely close.

After several weeks of delay, the flooding potential subsided. Plans had changed to close the bridges along Route 10 in early September. Phone calls to the local Grain Growers Association announcing the closures prompted another change of plan. Harvest season was just around the corner, and hundreds of farmers rely on this portion of Route 10 to move their product. The district immediately put on the brakes to find the best possible solution.

Collaborating with the Grain Growers Association, the local communities and elected officials, we identified a solution -- postpone the closures until a majority of the season was complete. At the same time, the Grain Growers communicated with local farmers the importance of completing harvest before the new Oct. 17 closure date. This partnership allowed the best case scenario; the community could move its product, the City of Hardin did not have to face road closure during potential flooding, and Ray County still receives three new bridges on Route 10 this year.

Listening to our customers' concerns and strong two-way communication was key to a successful outcome. Working together to find the best solution for all affected by this year's flooding is just one more way we were able to provide a world-class transportation experience that continues to delight our customers.



Harvest season and flooding in the area caused the district to reevaluate the schedule to close three bridges in the Hardin area. Through collaboration and communication, an updated closure date was agreed upon that satisfied the community and still allows MoDOT to finish the bridges on Route 10 before the end of the year.



Farmland surrounds the bridges on Route 10. MoDOT listened to the concerns, and after much communication, was able to accommodate both the farming community and the Safe & Sound schedule.



Above, the profile of one of the three bridges along Route 10 scheduled for replacement shows the need for a new bridge. To the right, motorists will see this completed sign by the end of the year, thanks to the flexible schedule of MoDOT and KTU Constructors.

for more info

Customer Relations Manager
Phone
E-mail

Jennifer Benefield
816.607.2153
jennifer.benefield@modot.mo.gov

600 NE Colbern Road
Lee's Summit, MO 64086



Central District

District's First J-Turn Opens on U.S. 54 in Cole County

Motorists on U.S. 54 in Cole County are now using the new "j-turn" at Route E, an engineering solution new to mid-Missouri that is designed to improve safety and traffic flow. The j-turn and other intersection improvements at Route E opened on Oct. 7.



Transportation Project Manager Trent Brooks appeared on several local news outlets when the Route E j-turn opened to traffic.

The "j-turn" is an alternative to traditional roadway intersections on a four-lane highway. Instead of motorists crossing fast-moving lanes of traffic to get to the opposing lanes, drivers at a j-turn intersection turn right in the same direction of traffic, merge into the left lane, and then make a left turn in the direction they intend to travel.

Although drivers will have to travel slightly further to get where they want to go, using J-turns can take the same or less time than trying to wait for an appropriate gap to cross traffic.

Crews built the new j-turn for motorists on Route E that need to head west on U.S. 54. There are also acceleration and deceleration lanes, offset left turn

lanes, and other modifications in the area.

The new j-turn is part of a larger project to improve safety and traffic flow at 12 intersections along 8.5 miles of U.S. 54 between Route CC and Old Bass Road. The \$3.7 million project is scheduled for completion in fall 2012.



Motorists on Route E must turn right onto the eastbound U.S. 54 acceleration lane, merge into traffic, and then merge across the eastbound lanes to make the j-turn.

Detailed information about the U.S. 54 corridor improvements can be viewed at www.modot.org/central.

The j-turn will also be introduced in Boone County as part of the U.S. 63 and Route H interchange project.

Area Engineer Teams Formed to Better Serve Customers

As part of MoDOT's Bolder Five-Year Direction, area engineers across the state were tasked with making the department more accessible to the public.

Their role has been restructured to include direct communication with the communities they serve. To do so, the lines of communication between the area engineer and the rest of the district staff must remain open so the engineers have the information they need.

That is why area engineers in the Central District are now meeting regularly with designated area teams.

"Our area teams are made up of key people from each division," said Mike

Schupp, area engineer for Boone, Callaway, Cooper, Howard and Moniteau Counties. "When I meet with my team, we discuss everything from construction and maintenance work to safety, Tracker and customer service."

In between meetings, the area engineers use their teams for updates and other information as needed.

"If I need details about a project in my area, I know who to call," said Schupp. "The team is there to provide that support, and it has been very helpful."

To determine the area engineer where you live, visit www.modot.org.

Three Highway Projects Discussed at September Public Hearing

Almost 80 people turned out in Meta, Mo. in late September to learn more about several upcoming highway projects that may affect their commute and daily routine.

MoDOT held the public hearing to discuss plans to realign a portion of Route 133 in Osage County. The realignment would take place just south of Meta, and the work is being done to improve safety by reducing the grade of a steep hill at this location.

Work is scheduled to take place in mid-August 2012, and also includes resurfacing Route 133 between Route B and Route 52.

MoDOT also presented its plans to replace the Sugar Creek Bridge on Route 133, which is located in Meta, just north



Senior Construction Inspector Susan Ball talks with Meta residents about the Sugar Creek Bridge replacement on Route 133.

of the realignment project. The bridge replacement is part of the Safe & Sound Bridge Program and is scheduled to take place in late April 2012.

Residents were also made aware of a bridge rehabilitation project on Route B over the Osage River in Cole County.

The \$3.6 million project is scheduled for early 2013.



Area Engineer Mike Schupp consults with Resident Engineer Charles Sullivan on progress made at U.S. 63 and Route H in Boone County. The \$9.8 million construction project will add a diamond interchange and 3.5 miles of new southbound lanes between Route 163 and Route H.

for more info

Customer Relations Manager	Kristin Gerber
Phone	573.522.3375
E-mail	kristin.gerber@modot.mo.gov
1511 Missouri Boulevard	
P.O. Box 718	
Jefferson City, MO 65102	

Learning About Highway Construction



Transportation Project Manager Mike Dusenberg and Sr. Construction Inspector Chris Graham took local Cub Scouts on a tour of the Route 179 interchange project in Jefferson City.

St. Louis District

Feeneys Walk 104 Miles on Katy Trail for Third Year to Honor Fallen Workers

by Marie Elliott and Kara Price



Jim and Theo Feeny (pictured left and right) walked their last mile on the Katy Trail with Mark Fresen (middle), a St. Louis maintenance worker who was injured in a work zone.

Jim Feeny, maintenance crew leader at Weldon Springs and his wife, Theo, walked 104 miles on the Katy Trail for five days in October to raise money for the Fallen Workers Memorial in Jefferson City. This is the third time that Jim and Theo have made the memorial walk from St. Charles to Jefferson City.

This year, the Feeneys made the following stops:

- Oct. 7 in Matson
- Oct. 8 in Treloar
- Oct. 9 in Rhineland
- Oct. 10 in Mokane
- Oct. 11 in Jefferson City.

The 104-mile walk is sponsored by the Missouri Transportation Employees' Association. Jim and Theo welcomed

others to walk with them on their journey. A few employees from the St. Louis and Central districts escorted them along the start and finish line to honor our fellow workers who have given their lives to keep others safe. One of their biggest supporters, Mark Fresen, a St. Louis maintenance worker who was injured in a work zone in 2009, accompanied the Feeneys on the last mile of their walk. Fresen is still recovering from his injuries.

How can you help? Contributions can still be sent to the Fallen Workers Account at: Division #6 Highway Credit Union, 14392 South Outer Forty Road, Chesterfield, Mo., 63017 or call (314) 453-1780.



Family, friends and MoDOT employees came out to the walk's starting line in St. Charles to support the Feeneys.

for more info

Customer Relations Phone E-mail	Marie Elliott 314.453.1807 marie.elliott@modot.mo.gov
1590 Woodlake Drive Chesterfield, MO 63017	

I-270 and Dorsett/Page Team Receives National Recognition

by Kara Price

The Interstate 270 and Dorsett/Page project team recently received national recognition with a few awards for its successful work in constructing St. Louis' first diverging diamond interchange:

- Roads and Bridges magazine selected the I-270 and Dorsett interchange as a 2011 Top 10 Bridge Project.
- The team also received a 2011 Top 10 Road Project Award from the same magazine.
- This project was awarded the 2011 Missouri Waste Control Coalition's

Outstanding Achievement Award.

I-270 and Dorsett/Page work consisted of several projects. It included the construction of St. Louis' first diverging diamond interchange, a redesigned interchange at I-270 and Page, an auxiliary lane on northbound I-270 between Olive and Page, and bridge rehabilitation at I-270 and Marine Avenue.

Congratulations to the project team for all your hard work and dedication in making this interchange a success!



The I-270 and Dorsett/Page Team: From left, back row: Dan Sitorius, Niall Jansson, Carl Bennett, Jim Wright, Vince Kaimann. From left, front row: Jack Wang, Mindy Lawrence, Jason Aubuchon, Lee Hillner.

Missouri Approach Completed to Carry Traffic on New Mississippi River Bridge

by Andrew Gates

After 18 months of construction, one of the first contracts awarded for a major piece of the new Mississippi River Bridge project has been completed.

MoDOT, elected officials, community partners and the public participated in a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Oct. 14 to celebrate the completion of the new Missouri Approach.

The Missouri Approach will carry vehicles between the existing Interstate 70 and the cable stayed main span of the bridge.

MoDOT also reopened the new Cass Avenue Bridge over I-70 in early October. It has been closed since September 2007 after determining the bridge was no longer safe for travel. MoDOT needed to complete the Cass Avenue Bridge before starting major construction for the Missouri interchange and ramps between I-70 and the new Mississippi River Bridge.

The new bridge is expected to be completed in early 2014.



MoDOT, several state legislators and community partners participated in the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Southwest District

Snow Removal: District Will 'Step Up to the Plate'

by Bob Edwards

By now, all personnel training is completed, trucks inspected, computerized spreaders calibrated and materials in place. The Southwest District is ready to plow snow.

The goal of snow removal is simple and hits close to home, District Maintenance Engineer Mike Middleton said.

"At the end of the day, we've got to make sure all of our families and our neighbors get home safely," he said.

Office Maintenance Superintendent Dan Ream said it has been a challenge to prepare for winter while MoDOT has been going through downsizing and reorganization, but the district will "step up to the plate."

"We're constantly looking at our processes to improve them and make sure we use our resources effectively and efficiently. We're looking to minimize problems and inconsistencies with our efforts," Ream said. "Input from operators in the field is very important to solving these problems."

While management will be involved in planning and coordinating snow removal as a storm comes in and passes through, success "has everything to do" with the judgment and skill of every plow operator, Middleton said.

Key Points

■ The Southwest District has 303 plows and is starting the winter with 27,700 tons of salt. The tonnage represents a practical inventory for the district, based on the 10-year average use minus 10 percent. The district should be able to get through the winter with that amount, Middleton said. However, if the winter is a bad one, more salt can be purchased. The cost for one ton of salt is equal to that of one ton of asphalt, so more salt use over the winter means less money for summer road repairs.

More than ever, Middleton said, the district will have to accurately analyze weather forecasts and respond accordingly to avoid a too-little response or treatment overkill.

• More than 450 maintenance employees and 100 employees from other departments are available to operate plows. Up to 50 emergency workers

may be hired. No bids were accepted statewide for contract plowing. Crews will run day and night when needed. Shift changes are scheduled at 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. for most locations, although those times could be adjusted as needed.

■ Maintenance workers on the job for less than five years, a random selection of more experienced maintenance workers and non-maintenance employees have gone through snow operations training. Training includes a written test and practice with a loader and driving the route each worker will plow.

■ More roads will be included on the Traveler Information Map on MoDOT's website, www.modot.org.

■ Again this year, more plowing effort will be concentrated on the heavier volume roads. Still, Middleton said, "We'll be on every route."

■ Separate plans are in place to plow snow on the new six-lane section of Route 65 in Springfield and in the Route 60/65 work zone.

Activating the EOC

The Emergency Operations Center during snowstorms will be run out of the new Transportation Management Center of the Ozarks in Springfield, taking advantage of the many cameras that show views of Interstate 44 across the district and major roads in Springfield and several in Joplin.

Customer Service will be moved to the TMC during snow emergencies.

The TMC has ample space for those coordinating the area's response to a snowstorm. The Highway Patrol, National Weather Service and other agencies plan to participate.

Leading the district's emergency operations will be Middleton, Assistant District Maintenance Engineers Bob Becker and Kristi Bachman and Bridge Engineer Dave O'Connor. Becker will be based primarily in the Joplin area.

Field maintenance superintendents during the day and other supervisors at night will provide regular updates on how snow removal is going. Area Engineers and Resident Engineers will drive roads to look for problem areas and to ensure treatment consistency.



Bob Edwards



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Angela Eden



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Southwest District at Work

1. After sealing the deck of the southbound Route 71 bridge over Buck Branch north of Carthage, Joplin Bridge/Concrete Crew Leader Skip Bailey peels off tape that protected the pavement striping.

2. At a district employee fair, Springfield area Incident Response Maintenance Crew Leader Chase Wagner listens to a medical insurance update presented by Senior Financial Services Specialist Todd Tyler.

3. Talking with visitors at the district's booth at the annual Farm Fest in Springfield is Assistant District Maintenance Engineer Bob Becker.

4. Carthage Senior Maintenance Worker Robert Anderson drives a distributor to seal the pavement on a Route 171 outer road at Brooklyn Heights near Webb City.

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for more info

Customer Relations Manager
Phone
E-mail

3025 E. Kearney
P.O. Box 868
Springfield, MO 65801

Bob Edwards
417.895.7713
robert.edwards@modot.mo.gov

Southeast District

SE Memorial Highway Dedications

With the support of family, friends, local community members and the legislature, four SE District public figures were recently honored with memorial highway designations. Videos and photos from the dedication ceremonies are available online at: http://www.modot.org/southeast/news_and_information/special_events/index.htm.

Staff Sgt. Michael L. Deason

The dedication ceremony honoring Staff Sgt. Michael L. Deason was held Sept. 3. Deason, of the 3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division from Fort Campbell, Ky., was killed on Aug. 31, 2006, in Ad War, Iraq.

The Heroes Way Interstate Interchange Program legislation, passed in 2009, allows interstate interchanges to be designated for Missouri residents, who were in the armed forces, and were killed in action on or after Sept. 11, 2001, in either Afghanistan or Iraq. In 2011, Rep. Linda Black sponsored legislation, which expands the original law to include state numbered highways. Signed by Governor Jay Nixon, the law became effective on Aug. 28.

Deason was the first soldier honored under the new law, naming the interchange at U.S. 67 at Desloge Drive in Desloge, Mo., the SSG Michael L. Deason interchange.

Mr. Ferlin Husky

Ferlin Husky, singer, songwriter, actor and Country Music Hall of Fame inductee, was honored with a memorial highway. The dedication ceremony was held Sept. 24.

Representatives Linda Black and

Steve Hodges sponsored the legislation, naming Route 8 in St. Francois County from Route M to Hunt Street in the city of Leadwood the Ferlin Husky Highway.

Husky, born near Flat River, Mo., began his career in the late 1940's and sold over 20 million records.



Rep. Todd Richardson presents Ms. Lynda May Anderson with a signed copy of the bill that established the Missouri State Highway Patrol Sergeant David May Memorial Highway.

MSHP Sgt. David C. May

Missouri State Highway Patrol Sergeant David C. May, who tragically



Family and friends join to honor Staff Sgt. Michael L. Deason.

lost his life in the line of duty during a helicopter crash in 1999, was honored with a dedication ceremony on Sept. 29. House Bill 798 established the "Missouri State Highway Patrol Sergeant

Rep. Otto Bean, Jr.

A dedication ceremony for the Rep. Otto Bean Jr. Memorial Highway was held Sept. 29.

Rep. Kent Hampton sponsored the legislation, naming Route 25 in Dunklin and Stoddard Counties from U.S. 412 to Routes U and Z the Rep. Otto Bean Jr. Memorial Highway.

Bean, a two-term Representative for Missouri's 163 District, made history in 2002 when he was elected the first Republican to represent the district in the Missouri House of Representatives in recorded history.



Mr. Ferlin Husky's family and friends gather around the memorial highway sign following the dedication ceremony.

for more info

Customer Relations Manager
Phone
E-mail
2675 N. Main Street
P.O. Box 160
Sikeston, MO 63801

Nicole Thieret
573.472.6632
nicole.thieret@modot.mo.gov



State Sen. Rob Mayer speaks with Ms. Alma Coffey, Representative Bean's sister, at the memorial highway dedication.

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.

Community Relations
Missouri Department of Transportation
P. O. Box 270
Jefferson City, MO 65102
573.751.2840
www.modot.org
1-888 ASK MODOT

Editor
Laura Holloway

Design Coordinator
Dennis Forbis

Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Laura Holloway, editor
573.751.5985
Laura.Holloway@modot.mo.gov

Additional copies are available upon request. Suggestions, questions and comments are always welcome.



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Missouri Department of Transportation
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Waterway Tours Make a Big Splash

by DeAnne Rickabaugh

Spending sunny days by the river. It certainly sounds like nice work if you can get it, and for a few days late this summer, several Multimodal employees had that duty.

While visiting Mississippi River ports, team members Michelle Teel, Multimodal Operations director, Cheryl Ball, administrator of freight development and Sherrie Turley, longtime head of MoDOT's water programs, chatted with local stakeholders and learned more about port operations and the role ports play in economic development. They toured the New Bourbon Regional Port Authority under construction near Ste. Genevieve. Teel even launched a new barge on its first dip into the water near Caruthersville.

"In the Upper Mississippi River, in the lock system, barges like the one Michelle launched can be loaded with 1,500 tons of freight," explained Turley. "It will become part of a 15 barge tow group. That group can haul freight roughly equal to 225 rail hopper cars or 865 semi-trailers."

Cheryl Ball, administrator of freight development and Sherrie Turley, head of Multimodal's water programs joined Michelle to visit ports from St. Louis to the Bootheel. At Dorena, Mo., a ferry ride to the Kentucky shore and back helped Michelle understand the service.

"Between Interstate 57 and I-155, there is not an operational bridge over the Mississippi," said Teel. "The Dorena-Hickman ferry is a vital link. It helps folks save time and money versus



Michelle Teel, Multimodal Operations director, launches a newly built barge into the Mississippi River.

driving to one of the interstates. Soon, a newer, larger ferry barge and a new engine for the tow will make the ferry even more attractive."

The visits also included tour of the New Madrid Floodway, where the group saw one of the levees breached by the US

Army Corps of Engineers during this spring's flood.

"That was a good reminder," said Teel. "The Mississippi River can help us move amazing amounts of freight, but its power must always be respected."

On the Road Again

by Melissa Black



Crews are making quick progress to open roads after extensive summer flooding in the Northwest District.

Getting all flood-damaged roads in Northwest Missouri back open to traffic is the district's goal, and now that flood waters have receded, crews are making quick progress.

Interstate 29 from Rock Port, Mo., (exit 110) to U.S. Highway 34 (exit 32) near Pacific Junction, Iowa, opened Oct. 8 to traffic after almost four months of closure due to flooding. The 15 miles of Missouri interstate closed on June 15 when flood waters forced Iowa to close I-29 near the border.

U.S. Highway 136 in Atchison County had work that began Oct. 7 for a 2.8-mile emergency repair and resurfacing project on a section of roadway that runs east of the Brownville Bridge to just west of Interstate 29. This is the second of two projects that will be necessary to restore access across U.S. Highway 136 where four large gaps in the pavement were created due to the summer flooding. The first emergency repair project filled three of the four gaps, as well as repaired shoulders. This second project will fill the largest of the four gaps in the pavement – at 480 feet long and 65 feet deep, the "Beast" is longer than the Statue of Liberty at 305 feet tall, longer than a foot-

ball field at 360 feet, but not quite as big as the St. Louis Arch which is 630 feet tall. All four gaps will also be overlaid with a temporary pavement to make the surface easier to drive on through the winter. The target completion for this project is Nov. 28. You can watch coverage of the U.S. 136 project at MoDOT's Northwest District YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/user/MoDOTNWDistrict?feature=mhnsn.

U.S. Highway 159 in Holt County is also getting much-needed repairs. A 2.2-mile repair and temporary resurfacing project for a section of roadway that runs from the Missouri River Bridge to east of Route 111 began Oct. 3. The target completion date is Dec. 15.

U.S. Highway 59 opened to traffic Thursday, Sept. 29. An emergency repair contract was awarded Sept. 15 for 3.078 mile repair and resurfacing project. Those initial repairs were completed within three days. However, the reopening of the road had been halted due to water that remained over several sections of the road. This section of roadway has been closed due to this summer's flooding since June 27.