

# Translines EXPRESS

Oct. 10, 2012

## Career Day Expo



*Students at the Career Day Expo got a hands-on experience with the transportation industry. They set up work zone signs (above), operated an excavator (right), learned about railroads (below), used a camera (bottom left) and worked with small tools.*



**KDOT Hosts Career Day Expo:** About 1,200 middle and high school students attended KDOT's second annual Construction Career Day Expo for area youth in Topeka on Tuesday. The event showcases careers in design, construction, development and project management facets of the transportation industry. It also provides information, resources and interview opportunities for those students interested in a career in the construction and transportation industries.

"This is a great way to showcase careers at KDOT and in the construction industry, while providing a hands-on and fun experience at the same time," said Secretary Mike King.

KDOT not only sponsored the event, but provided more than 80 volunteers to guide students and work in booths that highlighted KDOT trades.





*More than 100 stakeholders attend a public meeting in Baxter Springs on Sept. 27 for the U.S.166/400 expansion project. KDOT has allocated \$38 million in construction funding toward the U.S. 166 expansion in Cherokee County. The project scope includes expanding several miles of the highway to four lanes, starting at the Missouri border, and building an interchange at the U.S.166/K-26 junction. Construction is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2017.*

## National Recognition



**KDOT's Division of Aviation staff includes from left Deputy Director George Laliberte, Director Ed Young and Program Manager Jesse Romo.**

**Flying High:** This has been a stellar year for KDOT's Division of Aviation, which has garnered national attention and awards. In November, the President's Award in Aviation will be bestowed upon the Division by the American Association of State Transportation and Highway Officials (AASHTO) for a body of work that includes several programs. Already this year, the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) gave both a state award and the national Honor Award for the Kansas Airspace Awareness Tool. The National Association of State Aviation Officials (NASAO) gave two Aviation Innovation Recognition honors to KDOT Aviation and one Best Practice Award. KDOT Aviation continues to provide innovative programs such as "Airport Ops for Cops," "Aeris Vigilis" and others.

**Driving Home Safety:** A KDOT safety campaign extolling motorists to "Put down the phone. JUST DRIVE" has received national recognition. Judges for the AASHTO Subcommittee on Transportation Communications skills contest named Kansas the winner in the category of "indoor or outdoor advertising" at its recent meeting in Raleigh, N.C. The stark message was featured on blue billboards for eight weeks (January - March, 2012) in the Kansas City area, Topeka, Wichita, Manhattan and Lawrence.



**Transportation Safety and Technology Bureau Chief Mike Floberg, Program Consultant Phyllis Marotta and Assistant Safety Program Manager show off the national award KDOT received for its safety efforts.**

## Example of Excellence



**Secretary Mike King, left, poses with members of the Lincoln Subarea team.**

**Above and Beyond:** The Lincoln Subarea team was recognized as an Example of Excellence for their outstanding efforts to keep K-181 projects on schedule. With the April construction letting approaching, the Lincoln Subarea was asked to step in and build two detours as part of two box replacements on K-181 in Lincoln and Mitchell counties in addition to their regularly assigned tasks. The crew got to work on what needed to be done, said Area Engineer Karlton Place, and Supervisor Lonnie Ehrlich immediately began contacting adjacent landowners, county road supervisors and the township boards to coordinate efforts. In the end, Place said, the detours were completed ahead of schedule and the final product was superior. Team members include: Ed Dohl, Kurt Dohe, Lonnie Ehrlich, Jason Hull, Trent Kobbeman, Larry Michael, Jonathan Nelson, Lance Wilton and Aaron Zier.

**Transportation Achievement: State Multimodal Planner Joel Skelley, center, accepts the Missouri Valley Section of the Institute of Transportation Engineers' (MOVITE) Transportation Achievement Award for**



**Operations at the MOVITE annual meeting last month in Lawrence. The award, which also went to consultant HNTB and Johnson County Transit, recognized the Bus on Shoulder on I-35 project. At left is HNTB's Joe Blasi and to the right is Cheryl Lambrecht, KDOT Senior Traffic Engineer and MOVITE president.**

## U.S. News

**LaHood discusses jobs:** U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood was part of an Oct. 1 panel discussion about transportation jobs training at Johnson County Community College in Overland Park. The discussion, which also included Secretary Mike King, BNSF Chair/CEO Matt Rose and others, focused on partnership opportunities aimed at designing job training to match skills with employer needs.

**Wrapping up:** Twenty days of Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day safety blogs wrap up today with United States Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood urging

motorists to take safety seriously. "All of our technological advances alone are not enough to move us toward zero highway fatalities. We need America's motorists to help. We need them to hear safety messages like the entries on this Kansas DOT blog page, and we need them to follow up by driving safely," said Secretary LaHood. Read Secretary LaHood's blog at <http://ksdotblog.blogspot.com>.



## In Memory

Condolences to friends and family of KDOT retiree John Leverenz who died Sept. 4 in Palatine, Illinois.

*Have an idea for a news brief or picture that could be featured in an upcoming edition of Translines Express? Please e-mail your suggestions to [translines@ksdot.org](mailto:translines@ksdot.org)*

## Around the State

**Local Consult Update:** As promised under T-WORKS, KDOT was back out around the state for local consult meetings the last couple weeks with meetings in each district and the metro areas. The eighth will wrap up tomorrow in Wichita. KDOT has heard from some 450 Kansans so far to help prioritize projects for their region or metro area. This has been an important process for planning additional projects for preliminary engineering work as T-WORKS projects move forward. Deputy Secretary Jerry Younger has said many times it is important to have projects on the shelf, ready to go, in case unexpected funding should become available. KDOT hopes to select projects for preliminary engineering work by the end of the year.



**Attendees at the Local Consult meeting in Topeka rank projects they see as important for the region in the future.**

## U.S. 54



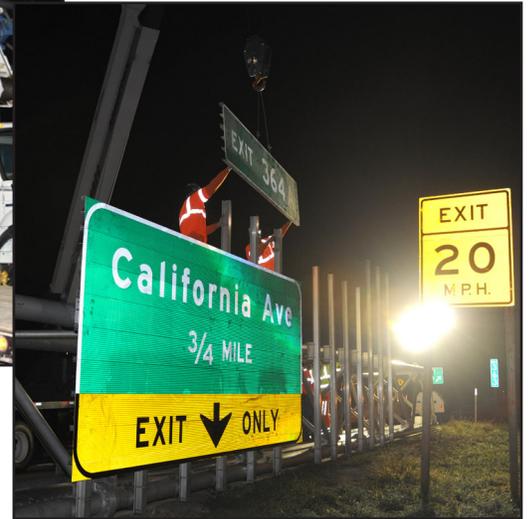
**Local citizens and public officials gather around displays of U.S. 54 at a public information open house in Liberal on Oct. 2.**

**Planning Ahead:** More than 100 people attended two events hosted by KDOT on consecutive nights for the purpose of discussing plans to upgrade a portion of U.S. 54 in Seward County to a four-lane expressway. In addition to the meeting in Liberal, KDOT had a meeting at Southwestern Heights High School at the eastern edge of the corridor study area. Expanding U.S. 54 to a four-lane divided highway has long been a priority of regional officials, citizens and highway improvement advocates. Under T-WORKS, KDOT plans to build a 9.5 mile four-lane expressway east of Liberal and develop preliminary engineering plans for a four-lane expressway that would extend to the Seward-Meade county line.

## I-70 Sign Replacement



*Eastbound I-70 in Topeka was closed to traffic on Sept. 28 to allow for a truss sign replacement. Scheduling and prep work helped keep the shutdown to only a few minutes.*



*A beautiful sunset photo was captured by Regional Geologist Neil Croxton of Salina.*

## Open Enrollment

**One Week:** There is only one week left for open enrollment in the State Employee Health Plan. The deadline is Oct. 31. This includes enrolling for insurance/adding dependents and the Flexible Spending Account (FSA) as well as applying for HealthyKids. Enroll online through the Employee Self Service Center [www.kansas.gov/employee](http://www.kansas.gov/employee). Make sure to complete and submit selections, then print the page that states at the top - "The changes you selected have been saved successfully." Also, a contract dispute with St. Francis Health Center of Topeka and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas has been resolved. This new agreement means St. Francis will be a network provider for the Blue Cross and Blue Shield network next year.

## 100 Years

**A Century of Service:** Koss Construction Company is celebrating its 100th anniversary, which has built many miles of the Kansas highway system. The company was founded in 1912 by George W. Koss in Des Moines, Iowa. As part of this commemoration, Koss has created an electronic library with various photographs, newspaper articles, newsletters and other items that have been archived by the company in the past 100 years, including their work on the first section on Interstate to be opened in the nation on I-70 just west of Topeka in 1956. Koss' electronic library can be seen at <http://www.kossconstruction.com/history/electronic-library>.

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*The Statehouse dome is caged in scaffolding as workers prepare to replace the leaky copper exterior. The internal structure of the dome is sound and the Ad Astra statue on top can remain in place during the project.*

## Saving Lives

### Outstanding Efforts:

KDOT Abilene Subarea employees Steve Cox, Brandon Holt and Richard Martinitz were among nine Kansans presented Honorary Trooper Awards by the Kansas Highway Patrol at a ceremony in Salina on Oct. 12.

According to the KHP news release, the award recipients were recognized for coming to the aid of fellow citizens and for performing in a highly meritorious manner under conditions that jeopardized their own personal safety.

About 1 p.m. on April 26, an out-of-control eastbound semi-truck tractor struck a small motor home that was parked in the Solomon Rest Area. The motor home caught fire and burned, and the semi jack-knifed and came to rest in the parking area north of the motor



***KHP Superintendent Col. Ernest Garcia, center, and District Engineer Randy West, second from right, are pictured with Abilene Subarea employees (left right) Richard Martinitz, Brandon Holt and Steve Cox after the trio was honored for their efforts.***

home. Nine people (including Cox, Holt and Martinitz) were in the immediate area of the crash and helped remove three crash victims before the motor home was engulfed in flames.

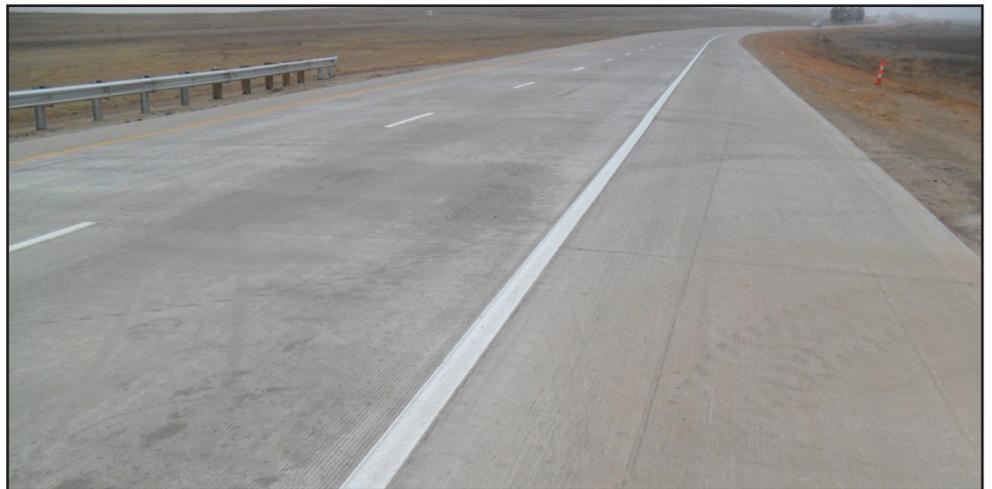
## I-70

**Big Improvements:** Both westbound lanes of I-70 in Sherman County are now open as construction wrapped up in mid October. The project stretched from the Colorado/Kansas state line to the Caruso Interchange (Exit 12) and involved removing and replacing the concrete.

“Although this year’s work on the roadway is complete, several operations adjacent to the interstate will continue into the winter months,” said KDOT Construction Engineer Travis Scott. “We re-built the westbound lanes and shoulders this construction season, and will do the very same scope of work to the eastbound lanes next year.” The port of entry/weigh station will be relocated to the eastbound rest area near Colby for about 75 days next year. Access to the Visitors’ Center near Ruleton will be maintained throughout the project. Koss Construction Co., Inc., of Topeka, is in charge of this \$48 million project.



***Before and after photos of I-70 near the Kansas/ Colorado state line by Eric Oelschlager and Rob Percival show the newly-improved roadway.***





*Above, Major David Dunn, USMC; Rep. Sharon Schwartz; Marshall County Commissioner Thomas Holle; Blue Rapids Mayor John Nowak, KDOT Deputy Secretary Jerry Younger; and Patrick Breeding participated in the ribbon cutting and spoke at the dedication of the Big Blue River Bridge near Blue Rapids. Below, Breeding and Rep. Schwartz unveil the memorial bridge sign.*

**New Big Blue River Bridge Celebrated:**

The nearly-completed \$7.6 million U.S. 77 Big Blue River Bridge replacement project was unveiled Oct. 12 at a ribbon cutting event. The new 40-foot wide structure has two 12-foot lanes and 8-foot shoulders. Signs designating the bridge as the 1st Lt. Michael Hugh Breeding Memorial Bridge were also unveiled. First Lieutenant Breeding was a member of the Marine Attack Squadron 122, Marine Air Group 13, 1st Marine Air Wing. On Feb. 12, 1970, he was the pilot of a McDonnell Douglas Phantom II Fighter (F-4B) that crashed into the sea near Quang Tri Province, South Vietnam. His remains were never recovered.

Several local color guards, including the Marine Corps Reserve Unit (Topeka), Marine Corps League Detachment (Salina), Blue Rapids American Legion Post,



Marysville American Legion Post; Cub Scout troops and the Marysville American Legion Riders participated in the dual celebration.

The old U.S. 77 bridge, right, will be removed once traffic is switched.



**Letter to the Editor**

**Dear KDOT:**

I live north of Meriden and commute each day into Topeka via Highway 4, which was recently resurfaced. I want to THANK you for the GREAT

job your workers did and THANK you for timing the work to be done in order to NOT interfere with most of the commuters from this area! I'm sure that wasn't the easiest way for your staff to work, but that thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated!

*Sandy Marshall, Jefferson County resident*

## Trivia!

1. What's the largest blue catfish on record in Kansas?

- A. 74 pounds
- B. 94 pounds
- C. 114 pounds
- D. 134 pounds

2. More than 100 of these rumbled through Kansas between 1977 and 1989.

- A. Earthquakes
- B. Rain storms with hurricane-3 force winds

C. Herds of 25,000-plus cattle  
D. None of the above

3. Who was Barton County named after?

- A. A famous Civil War volunteer nurse named Clara Barton.
- B. The barton hat that was popular at that time.
- C. Outlaw named Barton Olsen
- D. The style of homes that were built at that time.

*Answers below*

## New Role

**Public Affairs Chief:** Steve Swartz has been named Chief of the Office of Public Affairs. He replaces Sally Lunsford, who left the agency to return to the Kansas Lottery where she worked for many years before moving to KDOT in summer 2011. Swartz joined the agency in 2004 as Public Information Officer. In his new job, he will help develop messaging for the agency; oversee Public Affairs, which has been expanded to include the photo/video staff; write news releases; work with reporter requests; internal communications and more.



*Representatives of the Wichita Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WAMPO) conduct traffic surveys on K-42 today near the Sedgwick/Sumner county line with traffic control assistance provided by KDOT Wichita Metro Area Crew. The surveys help determine travel patterns during a typical day. They are useful in assisting long-range traffic planning, especially in large urban areas where substantial changes in traffic flow can occur.*



## United Way

*KDOT employee Chrisundra Mitchell checks out one of the six baskets donated for the United Way's Basket and Bake Sale event on Oct. 18. Mitchell ended up winning a basket as did KDOT employees Rex Kraus, Marcella Larrabee, Marcia Chapman, Steve Rockers and Vicky Shanley. The event raised \$1,450.50.*

### ANSWERS TO TRIVIA -

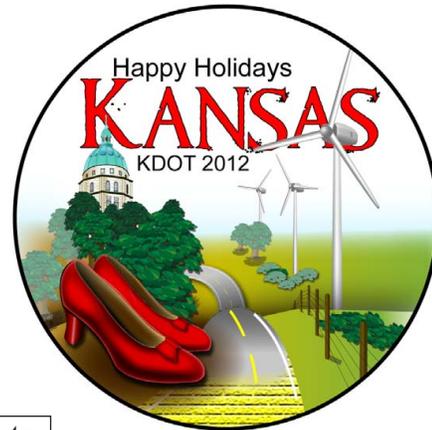
- 1. B. 94 pounds, in 2000
- 2. A. Earthquakes
- 3. A. A famous Civil War volunteer nurse named Clara Barton.



*KDOT employee Ramona Taylor of the Bureau of Materials and Research took this scenic photo in late September of the Lake Shawnee gazebo and flower gardens in Topeka.*

# Celebrate the holidays with a KDOT ornament!

## KDOT Ceramic Holiday Ornament



An Employees' Council fundraiser

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