

# Translines EXPRESS

June 7, 2017

## Headquarters

**Seitz honored:** Engineering and Design Director Ron Seitz was given the George Williams Award for Excellence in Public Works from the Kansas Chapter of the American Public Works Association.



**Ron Seitz**

The award was presented to him at the annual Mid-Am APWA conference in Overland Park on May 26. Seitz has worked for KDOT for 31 years and has served in his current position since June 2016. The award recognizes outstanding excellence and dedication in public service of an individual public works official.

## In Memory

Condolences to the family and friends of KDOT retiree Robert Jenkins who died May 19 in Chanute. He serviced radios and towers for KDOT for 34 years, retiring in 1995.

Condolences to the family and friends of KDOT retiree Tim Edwards who died on May 23 in Topeka. He retired from the KHP in 1975 and worked for KDOT as a Traffic Safety Specialist until 1988.

## Governor's Weight Loss Challenge

**KDOT winner at weight loss:** The first day the Governor's Weight Loss Challenge began in February, Eric Strait told his co-workers at the Salina KDOT office that he was going to win. And three months later, he was proven right as he was named the statewide winner on June 1 at the Capitol.

"Everybody always wants to go on a diet, and then two weeks later you're back to normal," Strait said. "So this time, I saw the prize and I decided I was going to do it." At first Strait just ate a lot less and it worked, but was also stressful, he said. "By midway through, I decided I was quitting," he said. "I quit for three weeks and gained 10 pounds back." He went from first to 17th place in the weekly standings. But he found motivation to start again. This time, however, he changed his eating habits and stayed healthier. He also began running and now runs up to five miles at one time. During the contest, Strait lost 69 pounds, or 32 percent of his body weight. The main benefits, he says, are that he has more energy and sleeps better.

Strait is an Engineering Technician and now works at the KDOT office in Belleville. He plans to spend the \$5,000 prize on kids and bills and will see what else comes up, he said.



**Engineering Technician Eric Strait was named the statewide winner of the 2017 Governor's Weight Loss Challenge on June 1. During the challenge that began Feb. 14, he lost 69 pounds, or 32 percent of his body weight.**

## Trivia!

### Actors, part two

1. This actress, who is from Goessel, appeared in more than 50 feature films such as "Endless Love," "As Good as It Gets" and "Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood."
2. Aneta Corsaut, who was born in Hutchinson in 1933, starred for five years on the "Andy Griffith Show." What was her character's name?
3. This actress, who was born in Kansas City, Kan. in

1948, was the mother in the movie, "E.T. the Extra Terrestrial."

4. This actress, who was born in Cherryvale in 1909, is best known for her role as Ethel Mertz on the show "I Love Lucy."

5. This actor, who was born in Pratt in 1952, is known for his role of voicing the Disney character Goofy since 1987.

## District Six



### ***Numerous improvements to drainage as well as the highway are planned along K-51 in Hugoton.***

**K-51 improvements:** KDOT began a pavement reconstruction project in April on K-51 in Hugoton. It's designed to address a long-term drainage issue in the area and improve and extend the pavement life of the roadway. The project includes replacing or upgrading 17 storm sewer inlets with drop inlets, installation of a new box, seven new pipes and a new submersible pump that will improve drainage and correct an existing long term issue with standing water in the area. Asphalt pavement is being removed and replaced

with eight-inch concrete pavement that will improve road conditions and extend pavement life. Curbing will be replaced as needed and ADA ramps will be installed to meet current standards. The project will also increase the turning radiuses at the intersection of U.S. 56 and U.S. 51 to better accommodate truck traffic. Work will be completed in four phases and is expected to be completed in October. Smoky Hill, LLC. of Salina is the primary contractor on the project with a construction cost of approximately \$3.9 million.

## District Three

**Happy tails:** Thanks to some watchful KDOT employees, a pair of dogs that went missing after a crash on I-70 have been reunited with their owners. Jay, a heeler mix, and Trin, a shepherd mix, were traveling home to Colorado with their owners on May 30 when they were involved in a crash approximately five miles east of Quinter. After seeing posts about the missing pair on social media, District Public Affairs Manager Lisa Mussman posted the information on the Northwest Kansas KDOT Facebook page and contacted KDOT crews in Grainfield and WaKeeney to be on the lookout. On June 2, Grainfield Subarea Supervisor Sid Ochs spotted the dogs near the crash site. After notifying the Quinter city administrator, who had been coordinating the search, Sid and his crew stayed to keep an eye on the pair until they could be picked up and taken into Quinter. Jay and Trin were able to catch a ride to Denver with a volunteer animal transporter the next day, where they were reunited with



***Trin and Jay, two dogs that went missing after their owners were in a crash, were found with the help of KDOT employees.***

their family.

To see a video of their reunion, check out the Northwest Kansas KDOT page at <https://www.facebook.com/NWKansasKDOT/>.

## District Four

***Crews work on Streetscape Improvements in downtown Girard. The improvements include LED street lights, plantings, new sidewalks, and curb and gutter. Mission Construction of St. Paul is the contractor on the \$1.6 million Transportation Alternative project.***



## MAGIC Camp

**Career opportunities:** High school girls attending the MAGIC summer camp in Topeka this week are learning about career opportunities in numerous construction and transportation fields. MAGIC (Mentoring a Girl in Construction) introduces high school girls age 14 or older to trade skill occupations such as carpentry, safety, electrical and highway construction and gives them a chance to learn from women already succeeding in these jobs. The event runs until June 9, and is sponsored by KDOT. A similar camp for girls in Wichita will take place from June 19-23.

“It’s important to show young women who will soon be entering the workforce these job opportunities in previously non-traditional fields,” said KDOT Civil Rights Administrator Doria Watson. “This camp gives students self-confidence as they explore new career possibilities they may not have considered before.”



**Members of the 108th Aviation Regiment speak to the students participating in the MAGIC camp at Forbes Field on Monday while learning about various areas of aviation.**

Students will visit places such as Forbes Field, BNSF Railway, Topeka Metro, Home Depot, KDOT Materials and Research Center, Habitat for Humanity sites, and Victor L. Phillips Co. They will participate in hands-on training and basic construction as well as learn about various modes of transportation and safety.

**At left, KDOT EEO Officer Traci Ward speaks to the students Monday and encourages them to “Believe in Yourself.” Below left, KDOT Research Geologist Randy Billinger shows the students concrete cores that are analyzed to see if the concrete mix has any stresses. Below, students tour the BNSF Railway.**



## Biking Across Kansas

### Biking Across

**Kansas:** The 43rd annual Biking Across Kansas kicks off June 10 at the Kansas-Colorado line west of Tribune and makes overnight stops in Dighton, WaKeeney, Plainville, Lincoln, Chapman, Rossville and Tonganoxie during its eight-day tour.

BAK is also routed through Scott City, Ness City, Hill City, Lucas, Abilene, Junction City, Manhattan, Ozawkie, Oskaloosa and other Kansas towns.

Participants range in age from nine to 90 years old and represent multi-generational families. Many riders will be from Kansas, but entries will also represent 30 states, including Vermont, Pennsylvania, Florida, Arizona,



*Participants in last year's Biking Across Kansas are shown above. Photo provided by Roger Kenney*

Washington and California.

BAK started in 1975 with fewer than 100 hundred riders. The tour is now capped at 850 participants.

The event ends on June 17 as bicyclists will be greeted on Delaware Street in Leavenworth and make their way to the banks of the Missouri River.

For more information, visit [www.bak.org](http://www.bak.org).

## District Six



**A project took place last fall to replace the bridge over Gyp Creek on U.S. 160 in Meade County. The new bridge was opened on May 30 to traffic. L & M Contractors, Inc., of Great Bend is the primary contractor on the project at a cost of \$1.9 million. U.S. 160 was closed for the project with traffic detoured to U.S. 183 and U.S. 54. Steven Bass' road squad and Mark Hurt's bridge squad designed the project.**

## Kansas Transportation

Monday, June 5

### Motoring Monday: Kansas Landscape Arboretum

The Kansas Landscape Arboretum can be found just south of Wakefield on the west side of Milford Reservoir. The 193 wooded acres feature more than 1,000 species of native and exotic woody plants adapted to the state's environment. Although the area is managed for plant life, wildlife can also be seen

such as deer, eastern bluebirds, northern cardinals, blue jays and several species of woodpeckers. The pond on the Bird Sanctuary Trails often times has wood ducks and green herons.

The causeway at the north end of the reservoir is one of the best sites for wildlife viewing. In addition to numerous bald eagles, flocks of white pelicans, ducks, geese, grebes, gulls and shorebirds are abundant during migrations.



Four short trails around the arboretum are available to walk along. For more information, go to <https://www.travelks.com/listing/kansas-landscape-arboretum/462/>.

**To see more stories on other transportation topics, check out the regular posts on the Kansas Transportation blog at <http://kansastransportation.blogspot.com/>**

## General

A crane working on the construction of a viaduct in North Italy collapsed in May, and miraculously without any injuries, according to a Better Roads article. The crane was performing a lift on a large piece of the viaduct in Varese May 9 at the Arcisate Stabio railway yards when it suddenly overturned according to a report from crane site Vertikal. The crane is owned by a company called Vernazza

and was "rigged with a back mast and suspended superlift counterweight," Vertikal reports, adding that the operator managed to jump clear of the cab and suffered no injuries.

Two videos of the incident can be seen - the first video, seen [here](#), shows just the collapse itself while the second, seen [here](#), shows the moments leading up to the collapse.

**Progress on East Kellogg Improvements in Wichita**  
**Pumping concrete to new center pier of eastbound East Kellogg bridge crossing over the KTA. Stay informed about this multi-year project between the City of Wichita, KDOT and KTA by visiting [www.e54ict.com](http://www.e54ict.com) or following @E54ict on Twitter.**



State Farm summer program begins - Memorial Day launched the start of KTA's State Farm Safety Assist summer program. In addition to covering Topeka to Kansas City year-round, the Wichita to Oklahoma border is covered during the summer. Learn more at <https://youtu.be/gvzRA7238w8>. Roadside assistance on the Turnpike is available by calling \*KTA (\*582).



**New bridge girders were set on the southbound side of a KTA bridge in Osage county (I-335/ KTA MM 157) as part of a two-year bridge reconstruction project. The northbound side was completed earlier in 2017.**

## District Four

**Mike McKenna of the Affinis Corporation, right, presents Parsons Mayor Kevin Cruse, center, and District Four Engineer Wayne Gudmonson with the 2017 American Council of Engineering Companies Award. The ACEC award was given to the City of Parsons and KDOT for the design of the U.S. 59 Access Management Plan.**



## General



**Seven counties and eight communities along a stretch on K-96 from Colorado east 180 miles participated in the annual K-96 June Jaunt from June 2 - 4. Many activities took place along the route. In Tribune, events included a livestock show, a craft show and an antique car show.**

## Traffic Safety

**Be prepared:** Summer is a great time to travel and it's important to maintain safe tires. Here are a few tips for motorists on keeping tires in their best traveling condition:

### Check tire air pressure

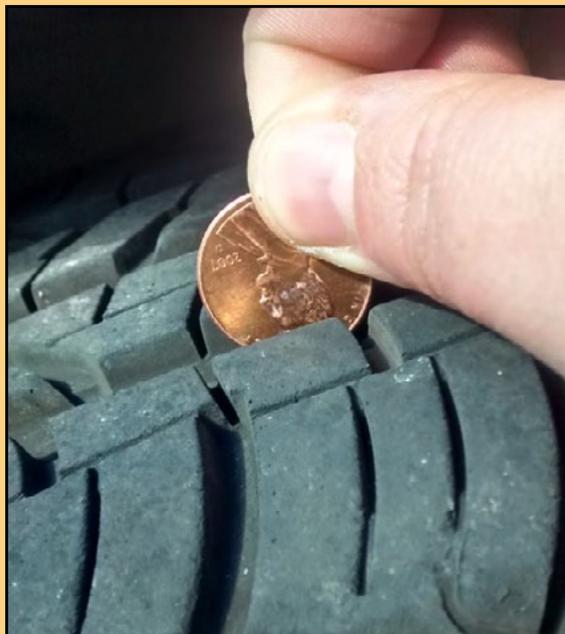
- Make sure all tires are properly inflated. The pressure of each tire should be checked at least once a month, depending on frequency of travel.
- To check the pressure, remove tire cap and press a tire gauge on it - there may be a slight puff of air. Read number and secure cap.

### Check the wear on tread

- Take an upside-down penny and place it between the tire grooves. If the top of Lincoln's head is showing, it means the tread is worn.

### Wheel rotation

- Rotating your tires regularly ensures that the tire rubber won't wear out as quickly.
- Keep a spare tire in your car
- Always keep a spare tire in your car and educate yourself on how-to properly change flat tires along roadside.
  - Things you'll need are, a spare tire, lug wrench, jack and bricks or rocks.
- For help along the highway, contact the Kansas



*An easy way to check on tread wear is by placing a penny upside down between the tire grooves.*

Highway Patrol at \*47. On the Kansas Turnpike, contact the KHP at \*KTA (582). Remember: always move over or slow down when you see flashing lights or sirens and give emergency vehicles and workers space to work.

## Employees' Council



*Above, KDOT employees Sean Kelsey, left, and Mike Gage enjoy some ice cream while looking at paintings at the Employees' Council annual ice cream social and artwalk that took place on June 1 in Topeka. At left, KDOT employee Sherry Petrie Fitzgerald tries to kiss the life-size sculpture of Wild Bill Hickok that was on display at the event.*

## District Four

*First graders from Park Elementary in Columbus had a hands-on experience with KDOT heavy equipment during an end-of-the-year field trip. The Columbus Subarea set up a front loader, dump truck, motor grader and track hoe across the street from the school. Each child had the opportunity to see each vehicle in action and then climb inside the cabs – and the majority of kids took special enjoyment in honking the various horns. The students also learned about work zone signage and safety. Kevin Rodriguez of the Subarea and his wife Amanda, a first grade teacher at Park, coordinated the experience.*



### TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. Shirley Knight
2. Helen Crump
3. Dee Wallace
4. Vivian Vance
5. Bill Farmer