

# Translines EXPRESS

May 16, 2018

## Aviation

### **KDOT selected to drone test program:**

KDOT has been selected as one of 10 participants in the U.S.

Department of Transportation's Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Integration Pilot Program, an initiative aimed at shaping the future of drones in America.

The UAS Integration Pilot Program is an opportunity for state, local and tribal governments

to partner with private sector entities, such as UAS operators or manufacturers, to accelerate safe UAS integration.

"This is a terrific opportunity to explore new ways to use this technology to reduce the risks to our workers during infrastructure inspections, search and rescue and remote area assessments," said Secretary Richard Carlson. With about 140,000 miles of public roads, many in rural areas, Kansas is an ideal location to test the technology, which will benefit not only transportation but also agriculture and many other industries doing business in Kansas.

The program will partner with industry and local agencies to test the use of unmanned aircraft to help



***U.S. Department of Transportation Under Secretary for Policy Derek Kan, left, along with Kansas Lt. Gov. Tracey Mann, announce that KDOT is one of 10 participants in the Unmanned Aircraft Systems Integration Pilot Program.***

transportation departments operate more safely and efficiently, including assessing weather-affected roads, conducting bridge inspections with minimal impact to traffic and even locating and assisting stranded motorists more quickly.

"KDOT strives to be on the cutting edge of transportation technology," Carlson said. "We are always looking for better, more efficient ways to help make travel safer for Kansans, visitors and the commercial industries that depend on our roads."

More information on the UAS Integration Pilot program can be found at [https://www.faa.gov/uas/programs\\_partnerships/uas\\_integration\\_pilot\\_program/splash/](https://www.faa.gov/uas/programs_partnerships/uas_integration_pilot_program/splash/).

## Headquarters

**KDOT changes:** Bob Stacks, Bureau Chief of Support Services, has also been named interim Director of Administration. He is serving in place of Wade Wiebe who left KDOT on May 4 and has taken a position with the Kansas Department of Commerce. Wiebe had been at KDOT since 2012.

Laurie Arellano, District One Public Affairs Manager, has also been named interim Director of the Office of Public Affairs. She is serving in place of Nicole Randall who left KDOT on April 6 to go to People to People International as the Director of Public Affairs and Marketing. Randall joined KDOT in summer 2017.

## In Memory

Condolences to the family and friends of KDOT employee Carl Helsel, who passed away on May 13 in Hutchinson. Helsel worked for KDOT for nearly 33 years, serving as the District Shop Superintendent for the past 24 years. Funeral arrangements can be found on the website for Elliott Mortuary & Crematory in Hutchinson.



**Carl Helsel**

Condolences to the family and friends of retiree Lawrence D. Lehner, who passed away on May 6 in Abilene. Lehner worked at the Abilene Subarea for more than 20 years as an Equipment Operator II and retired in 1993.

Condolences to the family and friends of former KDOT employee Vernon J. "Vern" Basgall, who passed away on April 1 in Hays. Basgall worked as an Engineering Technician Senior at the Hays Construction office and retired from KDOT in 2003.

## District Two

**Basic training:** Basic Core Equipment Training for Equipment Operators in District Two took place May 7-10 in Salina. Besides the classroom work at the District complex, hands-on training was a big part of the week's event. Monday's topics included equipment inspections, gas line safety and electrical line safety with employees from DS&O Electric demonstrating what happens when an auger meets an electrical line. Tuesday was all about trucks and attachments, radios and how to load-lash and unload equipment. Employees were able to apply what they learned on front-end loaders, backhoes, motorgraders and dump trucks on Wednesday and Thursday.



*In the photos above, at left and below, new Equipment Operators received hands-on training last week in Salina on a variety of topics involving equipment, such as motor graders and trucks, as well as electrical line safety.*



## District Three



**A mill and overlay project is underway along a portion of K-383 in Decatur County. The project covers a 14-mile stretch from the Sheridan County line to the west city limits of Jennings. Venture Corporation is the primary contractor for the project with a total contract cost of approximately \$1.5 million. Work is expected to be completed by the beginning of June.**

### Scenic

**KDOT employee Neil Croxton spotted these two donkeys in Cherokee County south of Scammon.**



### Trivia!

#### Tornadoes

1. When did a tornado strike the town of Udall?
2. This town had a tornado with estimated wind speeds of up to 205 mph and was up to 1.7 miles in width.
3. An F5 tornado hit Topeka on this date.
4. How long and how far did the tornado that hit Andover travel on April 26, 1991?
5. What was unusual about the tornado that hit El Dorado on June 10, 1958?
6. What is the average number of tornadoes in Kansas per year?

## Traffic Safety

### Teens learn about traffic safety:

KHP Trooper Ben Gardner and surprise guest, actor Eric Stonestreet, who is a Kansas native, welcomed a group of more than 200 high school students through a video greeting to the first Kansas Teen Transportation Safety Conference. The event took place in Topeka on May 8 and 9. Students who attended the event are leaders of traffic safety programs at their schools. Laykn Leigh, a sophomore from Ellsworth High School, said the sessions were interesting.

“The conference was really eye-opening,” Leigh said. “We plan on bringing a lot of information back to our school.”

The conference, which was sponsored by KDOT and AAA, was designed to focus on topics of interest to the transportation community. Once the students returned home, they will now have the opportunity to educate their peers and communities about the importance of improving traffic safety behaviors. Students also developed leadership, communication and teamwork skills. Traffic safety professionals and Kansas safety advocates were able to share with the students during interactive sessions. Scholarship opportunities from Stonestreet were also awarded during the conference.

To see the video greeting on the KDOT blog, click [here](#).



**Top: Students from Ellsworth High School snapped a selfie with KHP Trooper Ben Gardner while attending the Kansas Teen Transportation Safety Conference in Topeka. (Courtesy photo) Above, law enforcement from around the state spoke to teens about ways to improve safety on the roadways. At left, students had the opportunity to attempt to drive through an area without hitting the cones in a miniature vehicle while wearing impaired vision goggles.**

## Kansas Transportation

Wednesday, May 16

### #IAMKDOT: Agustin “Augie” Carrillo

On his way home after working all day at a project, Agustin “Augie” Carrillo, an Engineering Technician Senior for District 5 in Winfield, encountered a family stranded on the road. Instead of driving by, he stopped to make sure their flat tire was changed safely. That’s the kind of person Augie is, co-workers say.

The family was so impressed that they took a photo with him. Augie was still wearing his safety vest.

“He gives 100 percent – there’s no doubt,” Engineering Technician Specialist Robin Gregory said. Diligent beyond measure, Augie is known as an expert about asphalt labs, Gregory said.

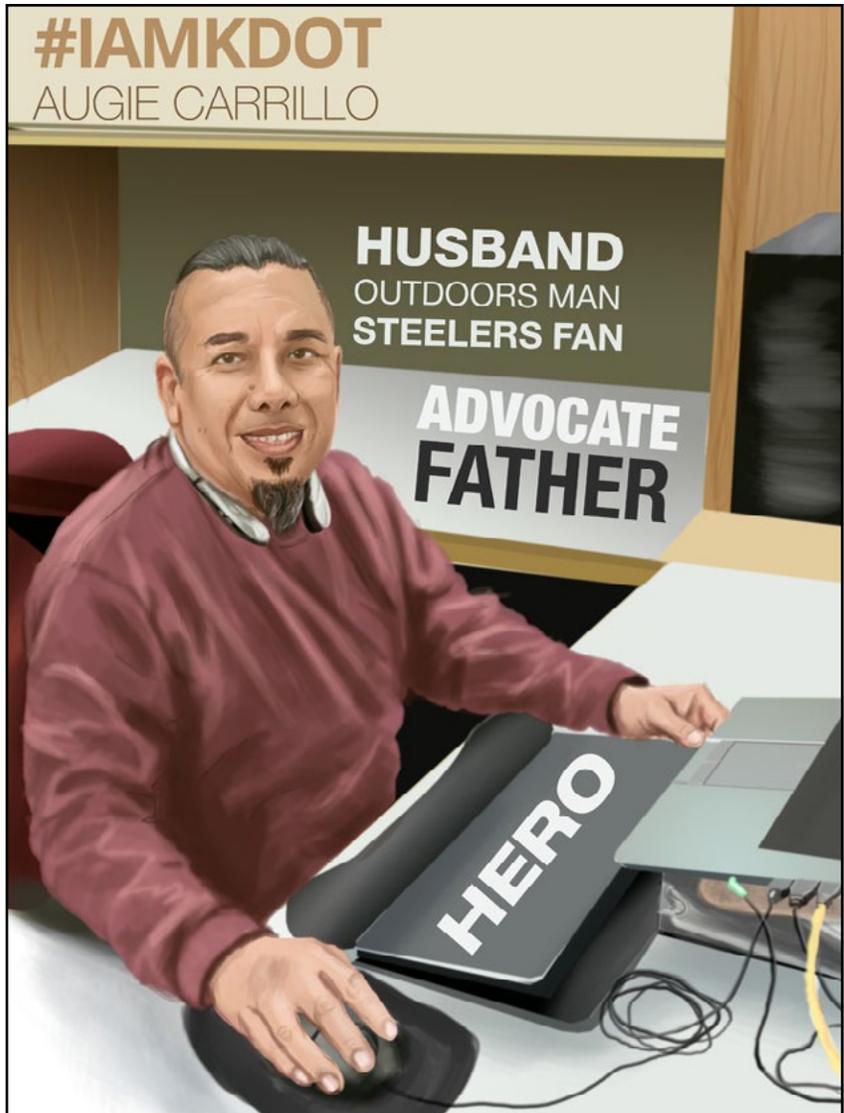
He works well with contractors and “always keeps the project manager informed,” she said.

Augie is in his 19th year at KDOT. His wife, Gianna, nominated him for #IAMKDOT, saying he is a “very hard worker and a wonderful husband and father.”

They have two children in their 20s, including a daughter who has Down Syndrome. Because of her, Augie “is an advocate for NOT using the R-word in a negative way,” Gianna said.

One of his biggest accomplishments involved the rebuilding of six bridges in two years. Augie was the inspector on site and also helped other employees with their senior progressions during that time. During the bridge projects, Augie guarded over two killdeer nests until the eggs hatched and they left the nests.

Augie loves the Pittsburgh Steelers, fishing, hiking, camping and yard work – basically anything outdoors – and his 1964 Chevy truck.



Do you know a KDOT worker that deserves recognition? Nominations are open - email [Mallory.goeke@ks.gov](mailto:Mallory.goeke@ks.gov) today to get started.

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

*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 [Kim.Stich@ks.gov](mailto:Kim.Stich@ks.gov)*

## District Six



*The Sampson of the Cimarron is a bridge that stands tall in Seward County.*

**A look back in time:** Built in 1888, the Rock Island Railway put Seward County and Liberal on the map. The railroad stretched over the plains, providing Kansas with a gateway to the rest of the world and transporting goods in and out of southwest Kansas. In stark contrast to the drought ridden plains and dry river beds common in southwest Kansas today, the Cimarron River, located between Kismet and Liberal, presented a problem for the railroad when it was built. The sand-choked, low lying creek was prone to flooding during heavy rainfalls. The initial crossing was built near the town of Arkalon, where trains slowed to 30 mph to navigate the 3.5 miles of curves and trestles crossing the river.

In 1937, floods washed out the first of three bridges built to cross the river. The bridge was rebuilt in the same place, but on Aug. 18, 1938, the "Gold Ball" freight train proceeded across the bridge following a heavy rainfall. Halfway across, the bridge, weakened by heavy rainfall and turbulent waters, disappeared and dropped the train and crew into the river.

John Farrington, Chief Operating Officer for Rock Island, made the radical decision to reroute the railroad. He also decided to build a state-of-the-art bridge at a cost of \$1.5 million, an unthinkable amount in 1938.

In late September 1938, work began on the new bridge. Over the next 10 months, crews moved five million cubic yards of earth to build the approaches for the new crossing. Caisson-sunk concrete piers, built in the art deco style of the period, were placed on



**Floods washed out bridges in 1937 and the Gold Ball freight train attempted to cross the river but fell into the waters killing two and injuring four men. Thirty train cars sank to the bottom of the river. Courtesy photo from the Kansas Historical Society.**

foundation 65 feet below the riverbed. By the summer of 1939, steelwork was being built and the actual bridge spans began taking shape some 92 feet above the river bed.

On July 8, 1939, at 2:35 p.m., Rock Island train #13 was the first to cross the new bridge. According to Lidia Gray-Hook with the Seward County Historical Society, the bridge was completed just in time to provide the U.S. with a safe transportation system for supplies during World War II. In fact, the bridge was so important to the U.S. that was closely guarded during the war to prevent sabotage.

Today, 80 years later, the Sampson of the Cimarron still stands, and is a majestic marvel that can be viewed by passersby on U.S. 54.

## District Five

**Quick work:** Anglers got a pleasant surprise when a project to place a four-inch asphalt overlay over the road around Cowley State Fishing Lake took considerably less time than planned.

Instead of the projected two weeks, contractor Cornejo & Sons LLC of Wichita needed just a few days to finish the \$76,444 project. In fact, Cornejo completed the project the day it was supposed to start - April 30.

The 84-acre Cowley State Fishing Lake is east of Arkansas City immediately adjacent to U.S. 166. The lake is home to bluegill, channel catfish, largemouth bass and redear sunfish.



*KDOT employee Nick Squires took this photo of the finished asphalt overlay project around Cowley State Fishing Lake.*

## KTA

### **Briefs:**

◆KTA is encouraging travelers to get out and explore local favorites along the Turnpike. A new web site highlights restaurants, local trails, shopping and more. Content will be updated each week. Take a small trip on the Turnpike to make big memories. Check it out at <https://explore.mykta.com>.

◆A project to improve acceleration and deceleration lanes to the South Wichita Interchange at mile marker 42 on I-35/KTA was awarded. Learn more at <http://bit.ly/2Kp1TTc>.



## District Five



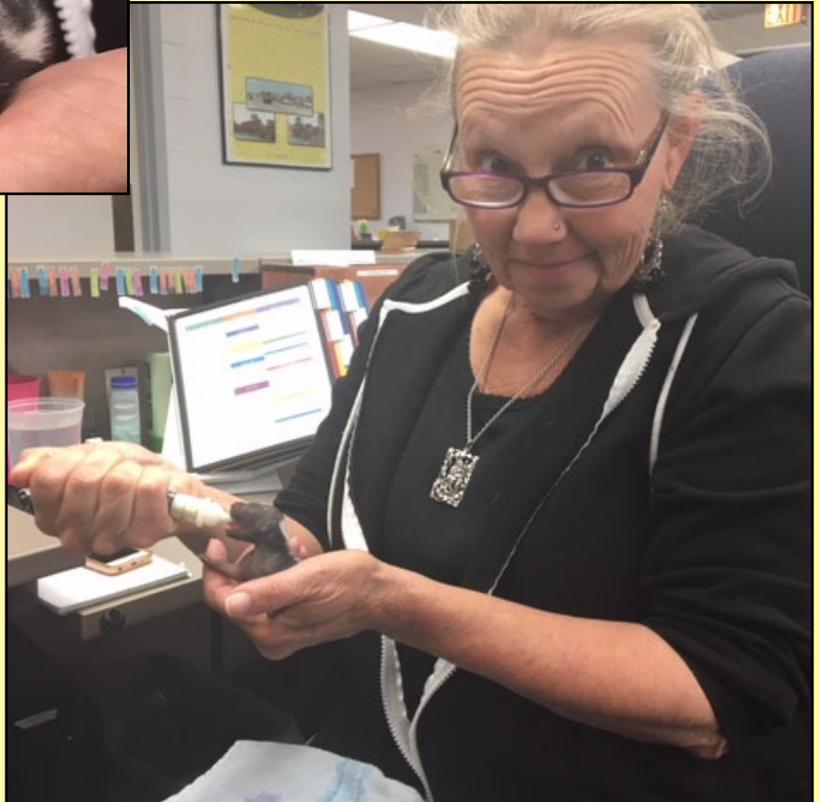
*In the photos at left and below, KDOT employee Abbie Wisdom-Williams bottle feeds one of three skunks that were three days old when she got them.*

**Helping animals:** District Five's resident wildlife rehabilitator and Senior Administrative Assistant Abbie Wisdom-Williams has been busy with baby animals this spring.

So far this year she's taken in newly-born raccoons, skunks, opossums, foxes and bunnies. Fawns will be next - they usually start needing help the first two weeks of June.

Abbie is licensed by the state as a wildlife rehabilitator and has also taken in and cared for squirrels, coyotes, badgers, bobcats and beavers - among other animals.

She's been helping save wildlife for 20 years. Her husband, David, built pens at their home where animals recuperate before being released back to the wild.



## Traffic Safety

**Kansas aims to save lives with "Click it. Or ticket.":** Kansas ranks towards the bottom one-third in seat belt usage among all 50 states. State and local law enforcement are working to improve this ranking by stepping up enforcement to crack down on motorists who aren't wearing their seat belts as part of the Click it. Or ticket. seat belt enforcement campaign. More than 150 law enforcement agencies across Kansas will be taking a no-excuses approach to seat belt enforcement as part of the national campaign that runs from May 21 through June 3.

"The Click it. Or ticket. campaign is about saving lives. We would be grateful if every occupant we observed was wearing their seat belt," said Ben Gardner, KHP Technical Trooper. "Our increased enforcement around Memorial Day serves as a reminder that wearing a seat belt is the easiest thing you can do to save your life."



In 2017, nearly half of the 359 deaths from crashes in Kansas were not buckled. Young adults are dying at disproportionate rates because they are not wearing their seat belts in Kansas. In Kansas, 56 percent of 18-to-34-year old occupants killed in crashes were not wearing their seat belts in 2017. Male pick-up truck drivers between the ages of 21-34, and drivers in rural areas are among the top unrestrained fatalities.

"Seat belts save lives every day. But they only save lives when they are used and there are still many people

in Kansas who don't buckle up," said Chris Bortz, KDOT Traffic Safety Program Manager.

In 2017, Kansas seat belt usage was 82 percent, below the national average of 90.1 percent, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. From 2014 to 2016, seat belts saved nearly 41,500 lives across the country.

## District Two

**I-70 bridge overlay repair:** Work will begin on Thursday, May 17, to repair the surface of the bridge deck on the eastbound lanes of the Clark's Creek Bridge on I-70 in Geary County. Lane closures will alternate beginning with the passing lane between mile markers 303 and 304, with a width restriction of 14 feet. The speed will be reduced to 60 mph through the construction zone and motorcycle riders should be aware the bridge will have a milled surface with an asphalt taper on and off the bridge.

It was necessary to close this I-70 bridge for several hours on April 10 as well as on May 4 as the asphalt overlay had deteriorated into several

loose pieces in different locations each time on the bridge. The bridge is structurally safe, but it was necessary to remove the broken pieces of asphalt so they did not create a traffic hazard.

KDOT crews came in both times to remove the loose pieces and place an overlay on those spots and the KHP took care of rerouting traffic during those closures.

Wildcat Concrete Services of Topeka is the prime contractor for this \$228,654 project with work expected to be completed by mid-August, weather permitting. Michael Ingalls' bridge squad designed the project.

## Translines

**Stay in the loop:** If you've missed a copy of Translines or want to refer back to a past edition, don't worry – they are on the KDOT website at [www.ksdot.org](http://www.ksdot.org) under Publications and Reports. If you're retiring soon, make sure to send your name and home e-mail address to [Kim.stich@ks.gov](mailto:Kim.stich@ks.gov) to be added to the distribution list. And if you know of any retirees not receiving this publication electronically who would like to, please forward this information as well.

## General

**Annual leave overages:** KDOT employees must use excess vacation leave by the pay period ending June 16. An employee unable to take his/her extra annual leave will have up to 40 hours of AL converted to sick leave at the end of the fiscal year. The hours accrued during the June 3-16, 2018, pay period will not be affected.

Below are the vacation leave accumulation limits:

- ♦ Less than five years - 144 hours
- ♦ Five years but less than 10 - 176 hours
- ♦ 10 years but less than 15 - 208 hours
- ♦ 15 years and over - 240 hours

## TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. May 25, 1955.
2. Greensburg.
3. June 8, 1966.
4. It was on the ground for more than an hour and traveled nearly 46 miles.
5. It traveled southeast instead of northeast.
6. 47.