

Translines EXPRESS

Sept. 25, 2019

Visit from the Governor

Gov. Laura Kelly visited with KDOT employees and stopped at a few offices on Sept. 23 to learn more about the design, planning and engineering processes used to meet the needs of Kansas. **At right**, Transportation Planning employees David Cronister and David Maynard show how a simulation tool helps meet future traffic needs. Photos by Support Services



Structures and Geotechnical Services Engineer Dominique Shannon shows an example of a superload and how they impact roadways and traffic.

Structures and Geotechnical Services staff, from left to right, Mike Orth, Caitlyn Spencer, Seth Weber and Jeff Ruby demonstrate the 3D structural model of the Cedar Bluff Reservoir tied arch bridge and discuss how flooding impacts bridges.



Road Design leaders Deb Tanking and Ben Ware discuss projects currently under design and give examples of solving problems during the overall process.



Road Design employee CJ Garwood greets Gov. Kelly along with others from the bureau.

Trivia!

“Wizard of Oz” - part two

1. Frank Morgan played the Wizard but he also played other roles in the movie. What were they?
2. Judy Garland was the second choice for Dorothy. What actress was the first?
3. What color were the original ruby slippers?
4. Who was the studio's original choice to play the Wizard?
5. How many people played the Munchkins?
6. How much of the movie was filmed outside?
7. What year was the film shown on television?

Fly Kansas Air Tour

Fly Kansas Air Tour:

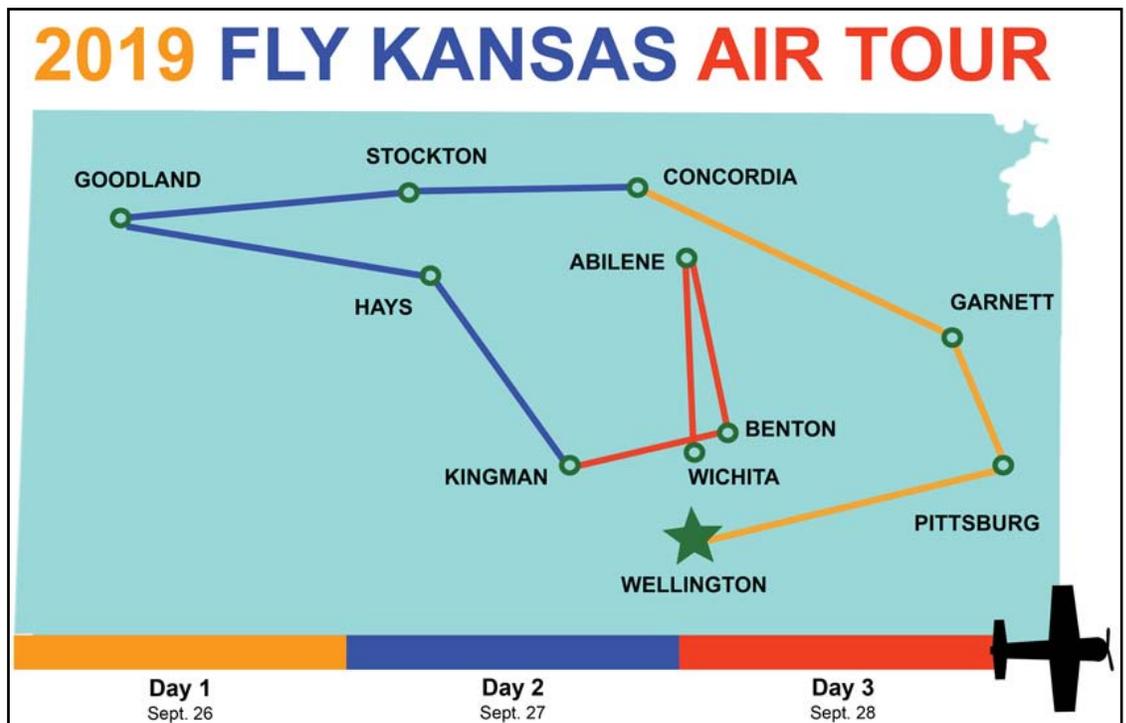
KDOT's Division of Aviation will host the sixth annual Fly Kansas Air Tour on Sept. 26 to 28.

KDOT has partnered with the Kansas Commission on Aerospace Education (KCAE) to promote aviation and economic growth. Over 40 pilots have signed-up to fly the Kansas Air Tour this year. Participants will visit 11 communities across Kansas during the three-day tour.

“Every Air Tour brings heightened enthusiasm as we celebrate the heartbeat of innovation that is so obvious across the aviation industry of Kansas,” said Bob Brock, KDOT Director of Aviation.

The tour focuses on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education. Highlights for this year include opportunities for students to learn from pilots, tour through aviation museums and local business fairs and view historic aircraft participating in the tour and on static display.

“Aviation is a profession we will cherish for a lifetime and we believe there is no higher calling than to share the spark of excitement that inspires hope for a bright future in all our Kansas youth,” said Lindsey Dreiling, President of Kansas Commission on Aerospace Education.



This year's events take place in Wellington, Pittsburg, Garnett and Concordia on Thursday, Sept. 26; Rooks County, Goodland, Hays and Kingman on Sept. 27; and Benton, Abilene and Wichita on Sept. 28.

“Local airports improve the health of communities around the state of Kansas through vital emergency services and important economic development roles to residents,” said Secretary Julie Lorenz. “KDOT is pleased to work in tandem with its aviation partners to show the importance as well as the fun side of aviation with this annual air tour.”

For more information on the event, click [here](#).

TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. The Kansas professor, the Emerald City cabby driving the Horse-of-a-Different-Color, a guard at the Wizard's place and the doorkeeper there.
2. Shirley Temple.
3. Silver.
4. W.C. Fields.
5. 124 people.
6. The clouds in the opening and ending credits.
7. 1956.

Being prepared for fires

By Ashley Tammen, District Two

Being prepared for fires: When it comes to suppressing wildfires in Kansas communities, one can never be too prepared as fires can travel quickly over the grasslands. The Kansas National Guard showcased a demonstration of wildland firefighting capabilities in Saline County on Sept. 19.

Training on these capabilities is being conducted to build readiness to support local and state agencies during the wildland firefighting season, which takes place during the drier months of the year.

Lt. Col. Larry Leupold says they hope to take some relief off local fire departments that may need some help in the event of a wildland fire. The training allows them to increase their capabilities and capacity to help local communities. The showcase included demonstrations on brush support, ground support, water tender and aerial suppression capabilities.

To read the rest of this story on the Transportation Blog, click [here](#).



Below, the Bambi tank is filled in a large pool of water during the demonstration. Once filled, it can disperse up to 640 gallons of water to help suppress wildfires, as seen **above**. Photos by KDOT Support Services



Top left, many people attended the demonstration to learn more about fighting fires. **Above**, National Guard Chief Warrant Officer Jason Garr demonstrates how a helicopter and Bambi bucket can fight wildfires. Wildfire season takes place during the driest months of the year.

I-70



A mill and overlay project is underway on a 14-mile segment of I-70 in Trego County. The project area spans from the Gove County line to exit 127 at WaKeeney. Crews are working on a mill and overlay of both the driving lanes and shoulders, followed by new pavement markings.



Work is expected to be completed on the project in early to mid-December. Photos by Dean Jay, District Three

Rail Safety Week

By Lisa Mussman

Rail Safety Week: It happens almost every three hours in the United States: a person or vehicle is hit by a train. And while these incidents affect different families, communities and train crews, they share one thing in common – nearly all of them could have been prevented.

Nearly 2,100 people are killed each year in train-vehicle collisions or by illegally walking, playing or taking photos on or near train tracks. To help raise awareness about train and track safety, Kansas is joining state and local agencies in Rail Safety Week from Sept. 22-28.

Rail Safety Week was created in 2017 by Operation Lifesaver Inc. (OLI) in partnership with the U.S. DOT and other groups. OLI will share stories of those affected by rail incidents from its #STOPTrackTragedies campaign.

In 2018, Kansas had 14 rail-related fatalities, with 11 of them being trespass casualties. While those numbers decreased from the previous year, the total number of rail crossing collisions remained the same at 34.

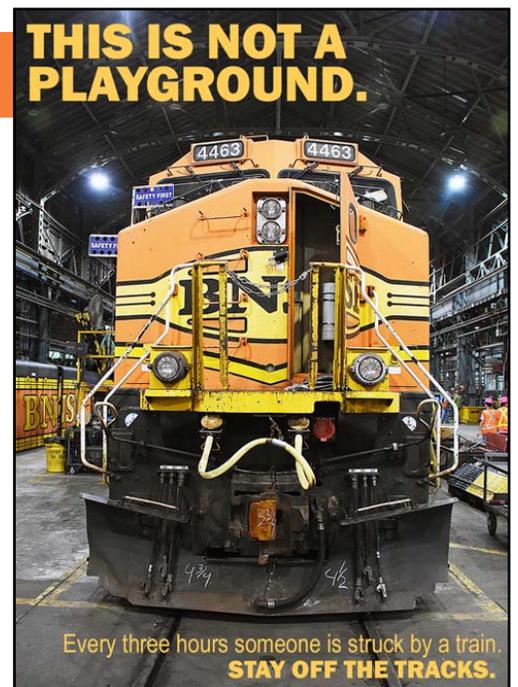
OLI offers rail safety tips for drivers and pedestrians:

- Look and listen for trains when approaching crossings – obey all signs, warning lights and gates.
- Trains are faster than you think – never try to beat a train.
- It can take up to a mile or more for trains to stop because of their size and weight.

• Rail property is private property – walking, playing and taking photos on tracks is illegal and dangerous.

For more details on Rail Safety Week, visit www.oli.org.

**THIS IS NOT A
PLAYGROUND.**



Every three hours someone is struck by a train.
STAY OFF THE TRACKS.

Innovative possible solution to icy problem

By Tim Potter, District Five

Innovative possible solution to icy problem:

You could call it a salty solution to a big challenge: A pilot project to possibly modify KDOT plow trucks – at low cost – to efficiently treat Sedgwick County roads with brine so traffic can move safely in snow and ice.

The request came from David Lechner, Maintenance Superintendent for Area Five/Wichita Metro.

The innovative potential solution came from a veteran KDOT mechanic, Curtis Watts.

He built it, with among other things, about \$30 worth of PVC pipe and less than \$8 in auto-parts-store exhaust clamps.

Lechner, one of Watts' supervisors, put it this way: "To be able to pre-treat the whole town (Wichita metro) in a few hours is the whole goal. ... Curtis put all this together."

Ask Watts how he designed it, he says, "Just in my head." The Equipment Mechanic Senior can draw on his 35 years of KDOT know-how.

KDOT gave him room to create. "We felt like we had the freedom to do whatever (was needed), and I just passed it on to Curtis," Lechner said.

The idea was to build something workable at a lower cost.

The goal is to have the option to spread brine and salt on one truck. "With the new brine bars, we can treat Sedgwick County roads with brine and/or salt in half the time without any new major equipment purchases," said Dave Bohnenblust, District Five Maintenance Engineer. "We also can switch from a brine treatment to a salt treatment or do both from the same truck."

As far as spreading brine, "Why not use PVC?" the thought went. It's inexpensive, easy to work with, easy to repair.

In a day, Watts crafted a brine spreader bar out of inch-and-a-half PVC, in a straight line that bends out at both capped ends to fully distribute the liquid. He drilled



Curtis Watts with the brine bar he crafted as part of a pilot project. Photos by Tim Potter



A close-up photo showing the nozzles attach/detach with simple clamps.

holes spaced for 12 nozzles. They spray down in a cone shape and angled out to the side, on the back of a truck. It treats two lanes in one pass. For nozzles, he used stainless steel ones used in agriculture and available online. The nozzles attach/detach with simple clamps. He picked standard auto exhaust pipe clamps to attach the bar.

Watts and his team also found a bigger pump to bring brine from 400-gallon saddle tanks on either side of the truck. A button in the cab activates it all.

KDOT's Bureau of Maintenance has reviewed the brine bar pilot project, and with revisions it could be part of an improved system for treating roadways.

Bringing down a bridge

By Tom Hein, Wichita Metro

Bringing down a bridge:

Have you ever wondered what goes into demolishing a bridge?

Using machinery that resembles Jurassic Period predators, a deconstruction crew removed a 1960s era bridge over I-235 in north Wichita earlier this summer, which required a weekend shut down of a three-mile section.

The removal of the bridge makes way for continuous auxiliary lanes between North Meridian Avenue and Broadway.

The section of I-235 under construction is also part of K-96.

To protect I-235 from the heavy equipment used for the demolition, a dirt cushion was placed over the concrete lanes. After the bridge was down, removing the debris took several hours as concrete and steel were separated and hauled away.

Dirt was also removed from the bridge abutments and will be used to construct the new ramps at the I-235 and Broadway interchange.

The average daily traffic for this area is between 45,000 and 52,000 vehicles per day.

The Green Project is the first phase of the Wichita North Junction reconstruction.

To find out more about the project, see the Green Project fact sheet [here](#).

A fact sheet for the North Junction phases can be found [here](#).



A 1960s era bridge was demolished over I-235 in north Wichita earlier this summer.



To protect the road surface from the heavy equipment, a dirt cushion was placed over the concrete lanes. Photos by Tom Hein



To construct new ramps at the I-235/Broadway interchange, dirt had to be removed.

Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day

The Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day safety blog series begins today and will feature stories from 10 people. They can be seen [here](#).

By John Groves

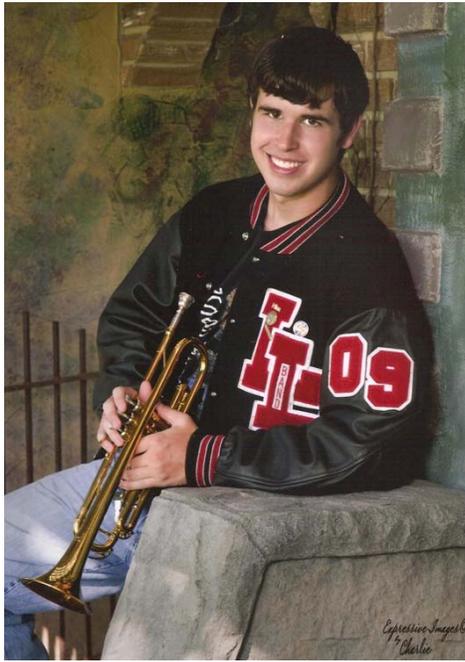
Law enforcement visit is a parent's worst nightmare: A call late at night or in the early morning hours most of the time is not good news. Anytime a law enforcement officer visits your home unexpectedly, it's normally not good news either.

On March 11, 2011, at 10:30 p.m. at night, we got one of those visits. When I invited the officers in, I asked them, "This isn't good, is it?" They were there to inform us our son, Matt Groves, had just been killed by a drunk driver.

There is no way to prepare yourself for news like this. This is a parent's worst nightmare. Matt was only 21 years old, he just had his birthday three weeks before he was killed. Matt was a kind, fun loving young man who was always willing to help anyone that needed it. The night he was killed, the officers told us that Matt and his friend, Teddy Martin, were helping someone in need. A young woman, Alicia Allen, was on her way home from work. Her car had run out of gas, and they were trying to help her get it off the road and to a safe place.

While they were pushing the car, a drunk driver hit them from behind. The impact killed Matt and severely injured Teddy. If Teddy had been just one step further to the left, he very well could have joined Matt as a fatality.

Matt was always willing to help anyone who needed it. Matt was a true Christian - he attended The First Christian Church in Leavenworth and he was the sound board operator for the late service at our church. Matt was also a deacon in our church. He was one of the



Matt Groves

youngest deacons ever elected. He not only helped with the services and music at his home church, he helped at another church down the street, New Hope Assembly of God, where he had made friends. They had a group of young people that formed a very close relationship. Matt played bass guitar there and helped with the youth services on Wednesday night. This church was also devastated about Matt's death. The youth minister and one other member of that church visited us the day after the crash and volunteered to be pallbearers at his funeral.

We always knew that Matt had friends, however the day of his visitation and funeral we found out that Matt had hundreds of friends. It was standing room only in the church the day of his funeral. Matt loved life

and enjoyed it fully in the time he was on this Earth. He was becoming quite a man, loved by everyone. Matt had no enemies. We WILL go forward, but with heavy hearts because a piece of our family has been taken from us.

There isn't a day that goes by that I don't think about my son Matt. I think, "Where would he be today if he was still here?" Would he be a 911 Dispatcher? He had taken the test but only missed passing by a few points. The people told him not to give up, to come back and take the test again in three months, because he scored higher than half the applicants. Would he be a father, would he be a minister, a member of the military, who knows, he always wanted to lend a helping hand to people.

I'll close with this - the person who is going to jail for a DUI eventually gets to come home. The victim's family is the one who serves the LIFE sentence.

John Groves and his wife, Teresa, advocate for strict DUI enforcement and are from Leavenworth.

KTA

KTA briefs:

- ♦Earlier this month KTA held a special event to celebrate our new [Truck Parking Information Management System](#) in conjunction with National Truck Driver Appreciation Week. Read the news release [here](#) to learn more and see photos from the event [here](#).
- ♦KTA and BancPass, Inc. have partnered to offer travelers a cash reloadable, pre-paid toll sticker program. Read the full news release [here](#) to learn more.



Kansas Transportation

Monday, Sept. 16

Bird watching across Kansas

By Kim Stich

Bird watching is a big pastime in Kansas. The state has two important stopover sites for migrating birds and has recorded more than 460 bird species, making it the 16th most popular bird state in the country, according to the Audubon website.

The top two places to see birds includes the Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife

Area and the Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. The spring and fall migration times are especially good for seeing a variety of birds pass through the state.

The Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area is a central flyaway for millions of birds. This Kansas wetland area is the largest in the interior U.S. with 41,000 acres. Some 320 species of birds frequent Cheyenne Bottoms, including the Bald Eagle, Whooping Crane, Peregrine Falcon, Least Tern and Piping Plover.

The Quivira National Wildlife Refuge includes more than 22,000 acres and is managed primarily to provide migratory birds with food, water and shelter. More than 300 species of birds have been seen on the refuge at different times of the year.

According to the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, there are lots of great spots to watch birds. The top 10 locations are:

- 1 - Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area
- 2 - Quivira National Wildlife Refuge
- 3 - Cimarron National Grassland
- 4 - Baker Wetlands Research and Natural Area
- 5 - Gypsum Hills Scenic Byway
- 6 - Historic Lake Scott State Park and Wildlife Area



The Wetlands & Wildlife National Scenic Byway in Barton, Stafford and Reno counties in central Kansas has lots of areas to watch birds.



The Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area is the largest wetland in the interior U.S.

- 7 - Marais des Cygnes Wildlife Area
- 8 - Konza Prairie Biological Station
- 9 - Toronto Reservoir, Cross Timbers State Park and Toronto Wildlife Area
- 10 - Wilson Reservoir, State Park and Wildlife Area

State parks are also great places to see birds. According to KDWPT, in the late winter, Lovewell Reservoir, State Park and Wildlife Area can host up to one million snow geese in flocks large enough to be seen on weather radar.

See more stories on the Kansas Transportation blog at <http://kansastransportation.blogspot.com/>