



Gov. Sam Brownback met with motorcyclists at a Statehouse event Friday to proclaim May as Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month. Photo by KDOT Photographic Services.

## Traffic Safety

**Be Aware:** May is Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month – a time to remind all motorists to safely share the road and to be extra alert to help keep both motorcyclists and others safe. Motorcyclists have the same rights and privileges as any motor vehicle driver on the roadway. KDOT's new safety message encourages motorcyclists to wear brightly-colored protective gear so they can be easily seen in addition to helmets and eye protection. In Kansas last year, 44 people were killed and 953 were injured riding motorcycles. Learn more about motorcycle safety and Kansas laws [here](#).

**Go Orange a Hit:** KDOT's Go Orange work zone safety information was seen many times by lots of people. The web page received more than 80,000 hits from April 20 to yesterday. The most hits were on April 25. The two Flickr pages of photos had nearly 5,000 views. Each of the construction videos and the safety blogs were also very popular. And these numbers don't include all the Facebook posts and Tweets that were sent. Even though the work zone safety week is finished, let's all continue to spread the word – work zone safety is a top priority.

## Under the Dome

The Legislature's veto session began last Wednesday and things are picking up as they progress to the end of the Kansas 2012 session. Below is a summary of several major issues that Governmental Affairs is tracking:

### Taxes

The House and Senate Conference Committee on Taxation is closing in on an agreement on tax reform. At this time, there are no provisions that will directly impact the State Highway Fund.

### Budget

Due to the lack of agreement on the base budget before the end of the "regular" session, the House and the Senate will have to re-debate the

budgets in both chambers, and the conference committee will have to meet again next week to reach an agreement on the budget. There are several provisions impacting KDOT that have not been agreed upon, including the transfer of \$24.6 million from the SHF to education needs.

### Secretary Confirmation

Secretary Mike King is a step closer to being confirmed by the Kansas Senate. Tuesday, the Secretary was questioned by the Senate Transportation Committee, which recommended his appointment and sent it on for consideration in the full Senate. It is unclear when the Senate will take up the confirmation, but a vote may happen before the end of the week.



The Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center in Hutchinson, one of the most comprehensive space museums in the world, is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Send us a photo of your favorite local attraction — nature, museums, restaurants, arts, etc. to [translines@ksdot.org](mailto:translines@ksdot.org)

## Local Attraction

**Out of this World:** The dream of Patricia Brooks Carey started in the Poultry Building on the Kansas State Fairgrounds in Hutchinson with a used star projector and rented folding chairs. Now the Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It is one of the most comprehensive space museums in the world and one of the leading educational tourist attractions in the United States. The center is home to nearly 15,000 U.S. and Russian space artifacts such as the Apollo 13 command module Odyssey, Sputnik 1 and Sputnik 2, Liberty Bell 7 Mercury spacecraft and the Gemini X spacecraft. Learn more about the cosmosphere [here](#). (Information from the Kansas Cosmosphere)

## By The Numbers

**Kansas Turnpike Speed Limits**  
75 mph – 2011-current  
70 mph – 1996-2011  
65 mph – 1987-1996  
55 mph – 1974-1987  
75 mph – 1970-1974  
80 mph – 1957-1970  
Reasonable and prudent – 1956-1957



## District News

**Blown Away:** A tornado in central Kansas on April 14 took one of KDOT's highway signs for quite a ride. A directional sign located at the junction of K-4 and K-141 in Ellsworth County was blown 27 miles landing at the Salina Municipal Golf Course. A representative with Wichita's



Exploration Place science and discovery center saw a picture posted of the sign on a weather website and wanted to include it in the museum's exhibit. KDOT gave permission for the sign to be part of the Exploration Place's exhibit. Just one problem. The sign never made it to the museum because it was unwittingly disposed of by the golf course staff.

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## National News

**Mistakes in the "Dilemma Zone"** It's that area before a stoplight intersection where the traffic light turns yellow and the driver isn't sure whether to stop or go ahead. Unfortunately, it's the cause of hundreds of deaths every year. New research at Oregon State University will help improve yellow-light timing and address the issues, such as attempts to "beat the red light" and simple confusion by drivers who want to do the right thing but aren't sure what it is. For more information about the research, click [here](#).



*Evening primrose along I-70 near the east turnpike interchange at Topeka is in full bloom this week. Photo by KDOT Photographic Services.*

## Roadside Management

**Colorful Kansas:** All the color that's showing up along Kansas highways right now does more than just put a pretty face on state roads. It's making the maintenance of some 150,000 acres of state-owned right-of-way much more efficient. The planting of native wildflowers, such as evening primrose, butterfly milkweed and purple coneflower, and native grasses was just one of the practices that came out of a 2008 task force formed to develop a better way to manage roadsides. At the same time, it was decided to reduce mowing in the right of way, which saves fuel, time and spraying and allows native species to grow. District 1 Engineer Clay Adams, who led the task force of representatives from state agencies and conservation groups, said the new policies are a "wiser approach to roadside management. We've found a way to stretch KDOT's maintenance budget and we now have guidelines that will enhance the natural beauty of our state."

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## Secretary

**Secretary Mike King is being officially sworn in today as Secretary of Transportation.**

**Confirmed:** Secretary Mike King's family will be at this side this afternoon as he is officially sworn in as Kansas' new Secretary of Transportation. Kris Kobach, Secretary of State, will do the honors at the Secretary of State's office in Memorial Hall. The Secretary was confirmed last week by the Kansas Senate, so the swearing-in is the last step to make the appointment official. During his confirmation hearing, Secretary King indicated he intends to focus on three key issues during his tenure: safety, full implementation of T-WORKS and efficiency.



## Scenic Byways

**Historic Route 66:** You can get your kicks on the new Route 66 Historic Byway that was officially designated by Gov. Sam Brownback on May 5. The ceremony took place west of Riverton on the Marsh arch Rainbow bridge, the last remaining bridge of its kind on Route 66. Other highlights along the 13.2-mile byway include Nelson's Old Riverton Store, the Baxter Springs Heritage Center, Schermerhorn Park and 4 Women on the Route, which is home of "Tow Tater," the inspiration for Mater in the movie "Cars." Route 66 is Kansas' 11th byway to receive official designation by KDOT and extends from the Kansas-Missouri state line through Galena, Riverton and Baxter Springs to the Kansas-Oklahoma state line.



*Gov. Sam Brownback cuts the ribbon at the Rainbow Marsh arch bridge in Cherokee County during a ceremony to officially designate Route 66 as an historic byway. Photo by KDOT Photographic Services.*

## Freedom Ride

**Get Your Motor Running:** Gov. Sam Brownback invites motorcyclists to join him for the First Annual Governor's Flint Hills Freedom Ride on Saturday, June 16. The ride begins at 9:30 a.m. at the Capitol Building in Topeka, travels along the 48-mile Native Stone Scenic Byway through Dover, Eskridge and Alma and ends at Wamego City Park. A ceremony will then take place in which Gov. Brownback will honor veterans, Fort Riley soldiers and families for their dedication to freedom. The public is encouraged to attend the event to help recognize those who have sacrificed for our nation's freedom and to celebrate the 95th anniversary of the Big Red One (237th anniversary of the Army). The ride will benefit the Fort Riley's Hearts Apart program, Brothers in Blue Re-entry, and the Native Stone Scenic Byway. Click [here](#) for details and registration.

**Rubbermaid Expansion:** A move that will boost economic development in South Central Kansas took center stage Thursday at groundbreaking for a new 500,000-square-foot Rubbermaid distribution center in Winfield. The distribution facility, which is expected to be completed in October, will sit on 40 acres and contain 50 dock positions, 71 trailer positions and a 1,200-square-foot shipping office. Rubbermaid will also be expanding its manufacturing facility as part of its overall enhancement package. In March, KDOT awarded Winfield \$2 million in economic development funding to help facilitate the project. The funds will be used to provide roadway access improvements to U.S. 160 and make significant rail improvements. The Rubbermaid Corporation is closing a facility in Texas and will transfer manufacturing operations to its facility and distribution center in Winfield. KDOT estimates a total of 417 jobs will be created and a capital investment of \$26 million will be realized through the Rubbermaid expansion.

## Drought Relief

**Drought Order Extended:** Gov. Brownback last week extended his executive order temporarily suspending certain motor carrier rules and regulations to expedite efforts to transport hay to livestock in drought-stricken areas of Kansas, Texas and Oklahoma. The order temporarily suspends requirements to obtain over-dimensional permits from KDOT, registration and fuel tax permits from the Kansas Department of Revenue and permits from the Kansas Corporation Commission. Ninety-one of Kansas 105 counties are in either a drought warning or watch.



**Construction on the Amelia Earhart bridge will soon reach a milestone when girders coming from both the Kansas and Missouri sides will be connected. Photo by KDOT Photographic Services.**

## Bridges

**Girders to Connect:** A milestone is about to be reached in construction of the Amelia Earhart bridge at Atchison. By the end of the week girders that will support the bridge deck will meet in the middle of the Missouri River. Construction Engineer Michelle Anschutz said another milestone in the bridge construction is expected next month when the double steel arches on the main river span will also be connected from each side. The new bridge, a four-lane, tied arch structure will stretch nearly 2,500 feet. The bridge replacement is a cooperative project funded by KDOT and the Missouri Department of Transportation. Of the \$59.4 million construction cost, Kansas will contribute \$30.6 million and MoDOT will contribute \$28.8 million. Construction of the new bridge began in June 2009 and has a scheduled completion date of fall 2012. Check out the photo album on recent bridge construction [here](#).

## Good News

**Congratulations:** Director of Operations Catherine Patrick was honored today at the 24th Annual YWCA Leadership Luncheon in Topeka as a “Woman of Excellence.” Catherine’s recognition places her with a select group of women who have made significant contributions in their chosen fields and whose success is an inspiration to others. Catherine was one of 38 women nominated in the categories of Non-Profit, Profit, Government and Education.



**Catherine Patrick**



*KDOT is studying innovative ways to address needs for heavily traveled Interstate 35 in the metropolitan Kansas City area. Photo by KDOT Photographic Services.*

## Interstate 35

**Moving Forward Study:** The Kansas Department of Transportation hosted “A Symposium on Strategies to Manage and Improve I-35 Traffic Flow” Monday as part of the I-35 Moving Forward Study. The symposium brought together regional stakeholders, transportation leaders and KDOT staff to examine innovative and practical strategies from around the country and abroad to keep traffic moving safely and reliably today and in the future. Recognizing that I-35 is both critical and congested, KDOT is studying ways to address immediate, mid-term and longer-term needs for I-35 over the next 30 years. The event featured Nick Thompson, Director of Policy, Safety and Strategic Initiatives for the Minnesota Department of Transportation, whose keynote address included innovative work that is being done to improve capacity and flow in the Twin Cities Metro area.

**KDOT Program Honored:** KDOT’s Federal Funds Exchange Program received the Excellence in Program Operations award last Thursday at the 2012 American Public Works Association (APWA) and Kansas County Highway Association joint conference in Newton. The innovative program, developed by the Bureau of Local Projects, allows local governments to swap their federal funds at a discount for state funds that have fewer requirements. “The Federal Fund Exchange Program has definitely benefited city and county agencies that are members of the Kansas Chapter of APWA,” said Suzanne Loomis, conference co-chair. “Most importantly, it gives them flexibility in local project management.” Because federal funding comes with specific standards and requirements, projects built with federal funds cost more than projects built with local money. KDOT created the fund exchange program in response to those concerns giving locals the flexibility to design and build projects.

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*KDOT employees in District Three participate in a training session on using the Automatic Flagger Assistance Device in work zones.*

## District News

**Automatic Flagging:** District Three is now using an Automatic Flagger Assistance Device (AFAD) in selected work zones to help keep workers safe. The machines are placed on each end of a work zone to control traffic, which allows the flagger to be in a safe zone nearby controlling the device. KDOT first tested an AFAD in District One in 2005, then has been slowly buying more as funds allow, with District Three just receiving two sets. In addition to the safety benefit, the device can reduce the number of people needed to control traffic in short work zones where the flagger has an unobstructed view of both machines. One person can do the work that traditionally took two people, allowing more people to do actual roadway work.

**U.S. 24 Plan On Hold:** KDOT has decided to suspend work on the U.S. 24 Corridor Management Plan in north Topeka. The planning process has been under way for nearly four years and consensus has yet to be reached regarding the future overall vision for the highway corridor. KDOT has therefore determined it would be prudent to step back from the planning process for a period of time, as opposed to moving forward without a clear vision.

## National News

**Distracted Driving Kills:** U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood has released the latest video in the U.S. Department of Transportation's "Faces of Distracted Driving" series, featuring the story of Calli Ann Murray from Rohnert Park, California. On Dec. 1, 2010, 2-year-old Calli Ann Murray and her mother Ling were walking home from a park just blocks from their home. As they crossed the street, a young driver texting on her cell phone struck Calli and Ling with her car. Calli was killed instantly, and Ling was critically injured. "I hope all drivers who hear her story will remember to keep their eyes on the road, their hands on the wheel and their cell phones in the glove compartment," said Secretary LaHood. "Faces of Distracted Driving" is a video series that raises awareness about the potentially tragic consequences of texting and using cell phones while driving by sharing the stories of families who have been affected by this deadly epidemic. In 2010, more than 3,000 people died in crashes related to distracted driving. See Calli's story and watch the "Faces of Distracted Driving" – [here](#)



*Left, Megan Reed performs in Pittsburg High School's spring musical in a motorized wheelchair. She was involved in a crash and didn't have her seatbelt on. Right, an x-ray provides a vivid image of her femur that was snapped in half during an automobile crash earlier this year.*



## Traffic Safety

**Megan's Story:** "It takes one time of forgetting – or even choosing – not to wear your seatbelt to change your life, or even end it. I was lucky," said Megan Reed, a 17-year-old who spent time in a motorized wheelchair after a car crash where she wasn't wearing a seatbelt. Reed told her story last Thursday at the Click It or Ticket event in Wichita. "I remember thinking that this was it, and that my life would end within the branches of the trees ahead," she said in describing her crash. As it happened, "the biggest bone in my body was snapped in half." Further information about Kansas seat belt enforcement can be found at <http://www.facebook.com/DriveSafeKansas> or <http://twitter.com/#!/drivesafekansas>.

**Hear That Click:** In 2009, seat belts saved an estimated 12,713 lives nationwide. And saving lives is what Click It or Ticket is all about. KDOT is participating in the national enforcement mobilization that starts next Monday, May 21. The two-week awareness effort highlights the fact that officers enforce seat belt laws year-round. Of the more than 22,000 passengers who were killed in motor vehicle crashes in 2010, 51 percent were not wearing seat belts. And motorists are 75 percent less likely to be killed in a rollover crash if they are buckled up. These are just a few statistics that show why everyone in a motor vehicle should buckle up every time.



**Baby geese and their mother enjoy a stroll at Lake Shawnee in Topeka. Photo by KDOT Photographic Services.**

## By the Numbers

### Information on the go:

- 90 - percent of Americans who live in a house with at least one cell phone
- 97 - percent of millennials (ages 18 - 34) own a cellphone
- 68 - percent of 66-74 year olds who own a cell phone
- 48 - percent of those over 75 who own a cell phone



***KDOT's new Secretary of Transportation Mike King was officially sworn last Wednesday by Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach. Holding the Bible is Secretary King's wife Peggy. Photo by Kansas Secretary of State's Office.***



## Photo of the week

*The Smoky Hills Wind Farm along I-70 in Lincoln and Ellsworth counties is the largest wind farm in Kansas. There are 10 active commercial wind farms in Kansas with a total of 785 turbines. Seven projects under construction will add another 646 turbines to the state. Photo by KDOT Photographic Services.*

## Example of Excellence

**Life-Saving Team:** KDOT's Life-Saving Relay Team was recognized as an Example of Excellence for their outstanding efforts to help transport heart attack patient Chad Griffith from Scott City to the Hays Medical Center during a snow storm in December 2011. With air ambulances down and 12 to 15 inches of snow, KDOT was called to assist. "KDOT's role in helping orchestrate this event was truly a team effort. It required crews to shift to different Subareas and coordinate across District lines," said District Three Engineer Jeff

Stewart. Doctors performed emergency surgery and Griffith was home before Christmas. "Without the dedication and cooperation of all the KDOT employees, this story could have had a much different ending," he said. Team members include Mark Davis, Max Dirks, Jason Gerstner, Jerry Glassman, Larry Kjellberg, Burke Koehn, Jason Lawrence, Brent Little, Dave Marsh, Ron Munyan, Tom Plummer and Tim Weigel. To see ceremony photos, click [here](#).

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**Secretary King, Lt. Gov. Jeff Colyer and Hays-area legislators joined the family of Army helicopter pilot Bryan J. Nichols to unveil a highway sign last week honoring the memory of the soldier. Photo by KDOT Photographic Services.**

## Memorial Interchange

**Hays Hero Honored:** Lt. Gov. Jeff Colyer and Hays-area legislators joined with the family of Army helicopter pilot Bryan J. Nichols to unveil a highway sign last week honoring the memory of the soldier. Nichols was killed Aug. 6, 2011, when the Chinook helicopter he was flying was shot down in eastern Afghanistan. The incident received world-wide media attention, in part, because 22 Navy SEALs were also on board the helicopter. In all, 30 Americans and eight Afghan soldiers were killed. The event at KDOT's Hays Area office and emceed by Sec. Mike King, also included Nichols' father and 11-year-old son, who unveiled the sign. Two signs, which read "CW2 Bryan J. Nichols Fallen Veterans Memorial Interchange", were placed on U.S. 183 at Interstate 70.

**Legislative Wrap:** The Kansas Legislature has wrapped up the work for the 2012 session. The budget agreed to by both the House and Senate does not include any transfers from the State Highway Fund. The Legislature passed several highway naming bills this session; including CW2 Bryan J. Nichols memorial interchange (I-70 and U.S. 183, Ellis County), David Mee Memorial Highway (K-9, Nemaha & Jackson County), Barnes Brothers Memorial Highway (K-79, Jackson County), Floyd Robinson Memorial Highway (U.S. 75, Coffey County), Frankfort Boys World War II Memorial Highway (K-99, Marshall County), SP4 Michael T. Martin Memorial Bridge (U.S. 77, Marshall County), and the SGT Joseph A. Zutterman Jr. Memorial Bridge (U.S. 36, Marshall County). Safety corridor legislation that was introduced at the request of the K-10 committee was not approved by the Legislature this session. The Legislature will return for the ceremonial end of the session on June 1st.



**Veterans of several wars attended a ceremony in Colby on Thursday to designate a 270-mile stretch of U.S. 24 as the World War II Veteran's Memorial Highway. Photo by KDOT Photographic Services.**

## Veteran's Memorial Highway

**Sign Honors WWII Vets:** It took three years to happen, but the World War II Veterans Memorial Highway now has a designation sign on its west end near Colby. A 270-mile stretch of U.S. 24 extending to Clay Center received its designation during the 2009 legislative session, but had never had a sign that informed eastbound travelers what the name of the highway was. At a special event Thursday at Colby Community College, Dale Deaver, a World War II veteran from Levant, unveiled the sign. Other World War II veterans attended and were recognized, as were a number of veterans of other U.S. wars.

## Photo Contest

**Click!** Get those cameras out and start snapping away as the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) is opening its Faces of Transportation photo contest to the general public, including employees of state departments of transportation. Digital photos can be entered in three categories – Building the Future, On the Road and Taking a Ride. Photos should include people's faces and show positive effects of transportation. Hint - let the color orange be your friend in these transportation-related photos. The deadline to enter is July 31. For contest rules and details on how to enter, go to <http://facesoftransportation.org/>.

## Archeology Dig Planned

**Indian Site Near Project:** A former Kansa Indian village near a planned T-WORKS project will be the site of a Kansas Archeology Training Program Field School, June 2-17. The school will be held at Fool Chief's Village located northwest of U.S. 24 and Menoken Road in Topeka. The site is a historically documented Kansa Indian habitation that has been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The Kansas Historical Society, under contract with KDOT and under the direction of the Federal Highway Administration, will carry out a data recovery program to mitigate adverse effects to the site. The \$41 million project, which is scheduled to be let in 2013, will involve the construction of a four-lane expressway, an interchange at U.S. 24 and Menoken Road and twin bridges over the Union Pacific Railroad. Around 1830 the Kansa were leaving their villages in the Manhattan vicinity and moving eastward. Fool Chief established his village between the Kansas River and Soldier Creek in Shawnee County. Fool Chief's was the Kansa village that sheltered a population of 700-800 people. These villages were among the last that the Kansa occupied in the tribe's ancestral homeland before they were relocated by the U.S. Government to a reservation near Council Grove.



*Kansa Indians circa 1800s*

## By the Numbers

### Memorial Day Stats

- 2011** – 420 crashes and 7 fatalities
- 2010** – 472 crashes and 4 fatalities
- 2009** – 468 crashes and 2 fatalities
- 2008** – 465 crashes and 4 fatalities
- 2007** – 516 crashes and 6 fatalities
- 2006** – 522 crashes and 7 fatalities



*With several snips of a ribbon, the “tunnel to nowhere” officially became the “tunnel to somewhere” May 23 at an event overlooking I-35 in Overland Park. The original tunnel (foreground) was built as part of the I-35/87th Street project in 2005, awaiting a tie-in with a new tunnel (in background) planned in the U.S. 69 reconstruction project. The tunnels will handle northbound I-35 traffic exiting to 75th Street, reducing congestion and improving traffic flow on one of the busiest stretches of highway in the state. The just-completed U.S. 69 expansion was funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.*

## ARRA Ribbon-Cutting

**\$83.8 Million Project:** City, state and federal officials officially opened the nearly-completed U.S. 69 reconstruction project in Johnson County during a ribbon-cutting ceremony May 23. The \$83.8 million U.S. 69 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) project is scheduled to be completed in early June. The project includes widening of northbound and southbound U.S. 69 from two lanes to three lanes with all new pavement from north of 103rd Street to I-35, interchange improvements at 95th Street and 103rd Street and the complete rebuild of Lenexa Drive from 84th Terrace to Farley Street. The signature component of the

project is the opening of the well-known “Tunnel to Nowhere” that was constructed in 2005 as part of the 87th Street and I-35 interchange project in Lenexa. The tunnel was constructed in anticipation of the U.S. 69 project. The “Tunnel to Nowhere” has now joined the newly-constructed “Tunnel to Somewhere” to become the “75th Street Tunnels.” These tunnels are part of the new 75th Street collector-distributor exit ramp lanes that will now move exiting 75th Street traffic off northbound I-35 just before 87th Street. See pictures from the ribbon-cutting ceremony [here](#).

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*Workers construct a temporary bridge to carry traffic on U.S. 166 in Montgomery County when an 81-year-old Marsh Arch bridge is replaced over Bee Creek. Below, the narrow Bee Creek bridge constructed in 1931. Photos by Robert Miller, Engineering Technician at Independence.*



## T-WORKS

**Bee Creek Bridge:** Workers are nearing completion of a shoo-fly bridge being constructed in Montgomery County to handle traffic when an 81-year-old Marsh Arch bridge is replaced in June. The T-WORKS project will replace the Bee Creek Bridge on U.S. 166, approximately two miles west of the north U.S. 75/U.S. 166 junction. A two-lane detour with a temporary bridge is being constructed on the south side of the existing bridge to carry traffic around the work zone. The new bridge will have a 40-foot roadway, replacing the existing 25-foot roadway on the Marsh Arch structure. B&B Bridge, LLC, St. Paul, is in charge of the \$1.5 million project. Construction work is expected to be completed this fall.

## Retirements

**AASHTO Retirements:** AASHTO Executive Director John Horsley and Director of Program Finance and Management Jack Basso have notified the AASHTO Board of Directors that they intend to retire effective Feb. 1, 2013. Horsley has led AASHTO since 1999 and Basso joined AASHTO in 2001.

## Caught on Tape

**Brewskies On The Job:** It may be 5 o'clock somewhere, but unfortunately it wasn't at the KGM project office. Consultants for the \$586 million 520 Bridge replacement in Seattle were caught on a hidden camera having a few beers during working hours, according to a KOMO-TV story. KGM is a joint venture firm of Kiewit, General and Manson contractors that won the bid to design and build the bridge. The source who worked there for two months said some of the people drank one to six beers every day of the week. The project office houses both consultants and Washington State

Department of Transportation (WSDOT) employees. The videos did not show any state workers drinking, but both WSDOT and KGM are launching investigations. To see the news story, click [here](#). As a reminder, according to SOM 2.6.3, KDOT supports the Governor's policy on maintaining a drug-free workplace by prohibiting the abuse or use of alcohol, controlled substances or illegal substances that threaten the agency's service to the public or imperils the health and well-being of the agency's employees or members of the public.

**Diverging Diamonds:** Missouri highway officials on Thursday cut the ribbon in east Kansas City on a new \$8.1 million diverging diamond interchange to be built at I-435 and Front Street. The design represents the Kansas City area's first use of the concept, which engineers believe will increase vehicle flow and efficiency at an especially busy intersection. The design routes both directions of traffic to opposite sides of the road just before the interchange. The crossover permits drivers to turn left without stopping at another light or turning in front of traffic. Seven more diverging diamond interchanges are being built or planned across the Kansas City area, including four in Kansas. The interchanges in Kansas will be at I-35 and Homestead Lane in southwest Johnson County, I-435 and Roe Avenue in Overland Park, K-7 and 130th Street in Wyandotte County and K-10 and Ridgeview Road at the Olathe-Lenexa border.

## 'Pike Peafowl

**Savvy Peafowl:** Since early this month, a peacock (technically, a peafowl since it hasn't been ID'd as a male or female yet) has been seen strutting along the Kansas Turnpike near the Tonganoxie/Eudora exit. Efforts to catch the bird have failed, but "following" the fowl is proving easier now that the critter has a Twitter account - @Percyl70Peafowl. Proving that it is definitely proud as a peacock, the peafowl has engaged a reporter hoping for a profile piece in the Lawrence Journal-World. And, this is a picky peafowl. In a tweet last Thursday, Percy wrote, "Kansas drivers, stop throwing crackers at me. I prefer snakes or cat food." More as this story continues to develop...



*Class has been out for many years at the May Day School located on Fancy Creek Road about one mile east of the May Day Township in northwest Riley County. Photo by KDOT Regional Geologist Neil Croxton.*