



Photo of the Week

Spring is in the air and this picturesque shot from Lake Shawnee in Topeka displays the beauty of tulips in full bloom and trees beginning to get their leaves. Photo by Sonya Scheuneman.

Secretary



Secretary Mike King

It's my first week as your Secretary, and I couldn't be happier to be here. KDOT is a premier organization, and it's truly an honor to be leading the team. You will find that I really do view this as a team effort and value the contributions of all. I am committed to doing the best job we can, and enjoying the work we do. Together, we'll keep KDOT on the road to success.

By The Numbers: How many T-WORKS projects are active in our road design squads? Here's a breakdown by squad/design leaders:

James Dietzel	35
Aaron Frits	36
Scott King	40
Robert Hirt	21
Steve King	55
Jonathan Marburger	15
James Richardson	29
Debbie Tanking	29
Kris Norton	33
Stephen Rockers	45
TOTAL	338

In his first official address since being named Interim Secretary, King spoke at an event in Garden City Tuesday celebrating the inaugural flight of American Eagle into Garden City Regional Airport. American Eagle will provide twice daily flights to Dallas/Ft. Worth. Travelers now have the option to fly to Denver through Dodge City, or to Dallas from Garden City, giving southwest Kansas its first regional air transportation system and opening the way to new economic development in the region. Sec. King said "the new air connections literally connect southwest Kansas residents to the world."



Secretary King, front row, second from right, was among the dignitaries in Garden City on Tuesday during a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the inaugural flight of American Eagle into Garden City Regional Airport. Photo by Kirk Hutchinson.



Kansas Highway Patrol commanders wait to have their new vehicles inspected Monday outside the fleet operations center in Topeka. The 14 new cars, Ford Crown Victorias painted the traditional blue and gray with a cherry beacon mounted on the roof, were issued by the patrol in honor of its 75th anniversary. Photo by KDOT Photographic Services.

KHP

Happy Birthday: Congratulations to the Kansas Highway Patrol for celebrating 75 years of service. While the Legislature officially organized the KHP in 1937, its beginning dates back to 1933 when it "enforced collection of ports of entry and motor carrier fees," according to KDOT's Milestones. Later that year, it was turned into a crime busting force, according to the publication, as "bank robberies spread like a minor epidemic through Kansas, Oklahoma and Arkansas, and Kansas bankers lost tens of thousands of dollars in over 60 bank robberies." Their efforts were successful as bank robberies dropped to six in 1935, so the KHP was reorganized to inspect vehicles and enforce the new traffic laws. Thanks to the KHP for its dedication to the state.

Federal Legislation

Federal Funding Extended: On Thursday, the Senate approved an extension of federal highway funding for 90 days by unanimous consent after the House approved the measure, 266-158. The measure, H.R. 4281, which extends the current funding for road and transit projects until June 30, was signed into law by President Obama Friday. Attention now turns to passing a long-term surface transportation bill in the House once lawmakers return from their Easter holiday. Last month the Senate passed a two-year surface transportation bill, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), with a 74-22 vote.

District News



Special precautions were needed in District Four on Friday to allow a 531,000-pound, 210.5-foot long superload to navigate the U.S. 400 and K-47 roundabout in Fredonia. See more photos of the superload traveling through the roundabout [here](#). Photo by KDOT Photographic Services.

Super Sized Load: Crews placed large mats of composite material on the east and west approaches to the single-lane roundabout at U.S. 400 and K-47 in Wilson County enabling a 531,000-pound superload to enter and exit the circular roadway with no damage to the concrete curbing and medians. The round abatement tower, which is 210.5 feet long and almost 19 feet high, was situated on dollies with steerable

axles to take it through tight twists and turns. Getting the superload through the southern section of the roundabout took almost two hours. The entire process, including preparations for the superload's arrival and restoration activities following its departure, began around 7 a.m. Friday and continued until noon. U.S. 400 was closed to through traffic at Fredonia, with traffic detoured on city streets.

National News

The Search for Amelia: This summer marks the 75th anniversary of the disappearance of Amelia Earhart during her attempt to fly around the world. New evidence from a re-enhanced photo has initiated a new search for Earhart and her plane. The search will take place this summer led by The International Group for Historic Aircraft Recovery (TIGHAR) using high tech underwater equipment. Read more about the upcoming search in U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood's blog [here](#).

Under The Dome

State Update: The Legislature adjourned Friday and will return on April 25 for its wrap-up session. There are several issues pertaining to KDOT that still need to be resolved. A budget conference committee agreement was not reached after the House identified a provision they were uncomfortable with, so the budget related items will be re-visited after the break. In addition, tax reform is still being discussed. The safety of legislation was agreed to by the transportation conference committee and the Senate. The conference committee report dealing with safety corridors will now go to the House for an up or down vote once the full Legislature returns.

ITS

Leaders Selected: ITS Heartland recently held its annual meeting and selected two new leaders for 2012-2013. Barb Blue, ATIS/511 Program Manager, will serve as the ITS Heartland President, and Tom Hein, Wichita Metro Public Affairs and WICHway Traffic Management Center Manager, will serve as the Kansas State Director for 2012-2013.

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