



Working precariously over the Missouri River, ironworkers prepare to secure the last arch span on the Amelia Earhart Bridge at Atchison. Below, workers prepare to lift the final span to the top of the bridge. Photos by KDOT Photographic Services.

Christmas in June

Amelia Milestone: Seen any Christmas trees on bridges lately? If you were traveling in the vicinity of Atchison recently you did. No it's not an early Christmas, but an ironworkers "topping out" tradition to celebrate the last arch span of the Amelia Earhart Bridge being set in place. Last Wednesday the first of double steel arches on the bridge connecting Kansas and Missouri was installed and Friday the final arch was set. On top of the final arch was a Christmas tree representing pride of workmanship and the fact that no injuries or fatalities have occurred on the project. Workers then began the process of securing the arch in place with 800 bolts. The new bridge, a four-lane, tied arch structure will stretch nearly 2,500 feet and is distinguished by the double steel arches on the main river span and special aesthetic lighting. It will replace the existing two-lane structure, which was completed in 1938 and is too narrow to handle some of today's traffic. The replacement is a cooperative project funded by KDOT and the Missouri Department of Transportation. The new structure is scheduled to open to traffic in September 2012. Check out the photo album on recent bridge construction [here](#).



District News

Wind Towers Across The Plains:

It's become a common sight across southwest Kansas and much of the rest of the state as well. Pilot cars leading trucks pulling long trailers carrying components for wind towers have been crossing the state in seemingly greater numbers every day. The District Six office in southwest Kansas grants dozens of permits every week for the transporting of these components, which can be as long as 175 feet when carrying the blades for a wind tower. The hundreds of permits the district offices have granted in recent months don't even include the heaviest tower components, which are classified as super loads. As long as the current wind farm construction boom continues, these loads will remain a common sight.



An increasingly common sight across southwest Kansas, a long trailer carrying components for a wind tower, heads east out of Garden City en route to a wind farm. Photo by Kirk Hutchinson, District Six Public Affairs Manager.

Five Stars from MADD

Targeting Repeat Offenders: Beginning July 1, Kansas will become one of a handful of states that mandates jail time for repeat offenders who refuse breath or blood tests after being stopped for suspicion of driving drunk. The law was designed to correct a common scenario involving test refusals by motorists who knew their way around the legal system and thus refused the tests, leaving prosecutors little evidence for convictions. Currently in Kansas, refusing the tests can result in a driver's license being suspended. But that fails to deter many chronic offenders who continue to drive with or without a license. The new law carries the same penalties as a DUI conviction — up to a year in jail for those with multiple convictions — and takes away the incentive to refuse the tests. Even before this law, Kansas was one of the top states in the country in implementing laws to counter drunken driving, according to data compiled by Mothers Against Drunk Driving. Under MADD's rating system, Kansas received five stars, its top mark. Only four other states rated that highly. Missouri, which considered but did not pass a similar refusal law in 2010, rated three stars from MADD.

Partnering a Fort Fix

Partnering among KDOT, Fort Riley, Geary County and the consulting firm of Parsons Brinkerhoff has developed a solution to traffic congestion at a busy fort exit. With the return of the Big Red 1, up to 1,800 vehicles were entering the fort between 5 and 7 each morning using I-70 exit 301 on to Henry Drive. This has led to traffic backing up on the I-70 exit ramps. In January, Traffic Engineering conducted a traffic study and developed a temporary plan to alleviate the traffic backup. The plan called for both lanes on Henry Drive to be northbound during peak hours controlled by troops directing traffic. Doubling the number of inbound lanes was the starting point for a permanent fix. Plans now call for a total of three northbound lanes on Henry Drive. A new outside lane will carry traffic entering from the westbound I-70 exit ramp north, while a new inside lane will carry the traffic entering from eastbound Cannon View Drive; and the existing center lane will handle traffic from eastbound I-70. The new configuration allows the Henry Drive southbound lane to remain open.

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 translines@ksdot.org



Danielle Brunin, Right of Way, watches as her seven-year-old son Noah makes a cardboard canoe during KDOT's Bring Your Child to Work Day. Photo by KDOT Photographic Services.

Bring Your Child to Work Day

A KDOT Lesson: Nearly 60 KDOT children had a great time this morning learning about different areas of the agency during Bring Your Child to Work Day. During the morning event, children and adults saw how highway signs are made at the Sign Shop, climbed on equipment at the Area Four complex, created images on computers and built cardboard canoes as part of a road design learning project. Afterward, KDOT's Employees' Council hosted an ice cream social – a nice way to cool off after participating in the activities.

No Way KKK: The Georgia Department of Transportation rejected a Ku Klux Klan group application that was submitted to adopt a one-mile section of highway as part of the state's Adopt-a-Highway program, according to the Atlanta Journal-Constitution (AJC). The International Keystone Knights of the KKK applied last month to adopt a stretch of Route 515 in the Appalachian Mountains. One of the reasons the state DOT rejected the application, said the AJC, seeing signs with the group's name and coming across group members along a roadway "would create a definite distraction to motorists." State officials reached their decision after consulting with Gov. Nathan Deal and the chairman of the state transportation board, the AJC said.

KDOT Kudos

Note: The following e-mail was received by Amy Smith, Office of Chief Counsel, from Kirk Lowell, Executive Director of CloudCorp, the economic development unit for Cloud County and Concordia.

Hi Amy:

Thank you for your professional and prompt help with this important project. I have always found it very refreshing to work with KDOT because of the professional, prompt and caring assistance that our community receives from a governmental agency. Have a GREAT day!

Kirk



Bales of wheat straw landscape a field off K-140 and Burma Road in Saline County following a recent wheat harvest. Photo by KDOT Photographic Services.