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The power of partnerships

On average, 100 people die and more than 2,000 are injured in about 3,400 alcohol-related crashes every year in Kansas. While we are seeing some improvement in those 10-year averages, make no mistake: we have a serious problem.

As the agency that builds and maintains the state’s primary road system, and places safety at the core of all we do, we owe it to our fellow travelers, our families, our friends and ourselves to do everything we can to provide a safe, efficient system. And that’s why I was so pleased when praise for one of our important safety efforts was forwarded to my e-mail.

Randy Bolin, regional program manager for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), sent a note of congratulations to Traffic Safety Bureau Chief Pete Bodyk for the state’s “excellent” Standardized Field Sobriety Testing program (SFST). At a recent gathering of law enforcement liaisons in Denver, Bolin wrote, national observers “stated more than once that the Kansas SFST program was the best in the country and is being used as a model for other states. . . I was extremely proud to say I was the NHTSA representative for Kansas! Keep up the great work!”

SFST is the legally-accepted field procedure officers use to determine whether a driver has been drinking. It is far more complicated and scientific than most of us would think. Over the past 20 years, it has helped law enforcement and prosecutors make big strides in the fight against impaired driving.

There are about seven different law enforcement training centers in Kansas that provide SFST training. In the past, not all of the training was being done in precisely the same manner. That presented defense attorneys, who have become familiar with the training, a potential opportunity to attack an officer’s credibility.

Several years ago, NHTSA suggested to KDOT that there be an outside assessment of the Kansas SFST program. We agreed and became one of the first states to have such an assessment. The experts who did the study made several recommendations for improving the program, including that KDOT hire an SFST coordinator to assure that the training is uniform. We have implemented that recommendation. We also implemented a recommendation that an advisory panel be formed to review current state SFST standards and suggest changes as necessary. A number of other recommendations have been implemented as well.

I’m proud of KDOT’s Bureau of Traffic Safety for wanting to improve the state’s SFST program, and grateful to law enforcement agencies who share that desire and embrace our efforts.

Many of our successes at KDOT emerge from strong partnerships and that is certainly the case with the SFST improvements. I’m pleased that we have been able to leverage our credibility and good work to form partnerships that can achieve greater things than we can accomplish on our own. We have engaged law enforcement and they have been enthusiastic about safety and enforcing the law.

In recent years, there have been some notable gains in traffic safety. Seat belt usage is up, fatalities have generally been decreasing and the number of 2007 alcohol-related fatalities and crashes are well below the 10-year averages. There’s no way to know with certainty why we’ve made these gains. But chances are the gains are due to our partnership with law enforcement.

Much more work remains to be done in traffic safety and it will probably always be that way. But I’m confident that the good, solid relationships we’ve built and maintained with our law enforcement partners will allow us to continue building on our success.
Schlinsog named new bureau chief

By Caroline Gencur

Anthony Schlinsog brings plenty of IT experience and knowledge to his position as KDOT’s new Bureau Chief of Computer Services.

Schlinsog assumed his new position as Chief Information Officer on Feb. 25. He comes to KDOT from Child Health Corporation of America (CHCA), a business alliance of some of the United States’ leading children’s hospitals. As the manager of Data Development for Informatics at CHCA, Schlinsog developed and implemented complex applications to manage massive amounts of diverse information utilized by the consortium of hospitals.

Schlinsog received his master’s de-

Family offers hope to others with premature babies

By Kim Stich

Eric Deitcher’s son, Mason, was born on June 7, 2005 - 11 weeks premature. And while he only weighed three pounds, five ounces, “he came out crying and breathing on his own, to everyone’s amazement,” said Eric, a Local Liaison in KDOT’s Local Projects.

He was tiny though. “His hand was so small that it would fit through my college ring,” Eric said.

On May 25, Tiffany, Eric’s wife, went to Stormont-Vail Regional Health Center in Topeka because she was losing amniotic fluid. They were able to delay his birth 13 days, allowing time for medicine to help develop his lungs, brain and stomach.

Mason did have to spend two months in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, and they could not hold him for the first

Simmons receives government engineering honor

Freddie Simmons, KDOT Consultant in the Division of Engineering and Design, has been honored as the Government Engineer of the Year for 2007 by the Topeka Chapter of the Kansas Society of Professional Engineers (KSPE).

Simmons, who has worked

Continued on page 9

Kansas airports to get funds for improvements

Airports across the state will receive funding from KDOT in 2009 for airport improvement projects. A total of 38 projects at 34 airports were chosen to receive a total of $3.3 million in matching funds through the Kansas Airport Improvement Program (KAIP).

KDOT’s Division of Aviation, which manages the program, received a record 104 project applications totaling approximately $18 million.

Recognizing the importance of air service to the Kansas economy and emergency health care services, KDOT established KAIP in 1999 with funding authorized as part of the

Continued on page 11

Improving the Kinsley Airport runway is one of the projects selected for the Kansas Airport Improvement Program.
Fourteen Transportation officials from Argentina learned a lot about how KDOT addresses snow and ice removal during tours at the Seneca and Phillipsburg facilities Feb. 25 and 26.

“It was really rewarding for our Equipment Operators to be talking to these people from Argentina and find out they have similar issues as we do – blowing snow, poor visibility, getting materials out,” said District One Maintenance Engineer Jaci Vogel. “It’s a small world.”

The Argentineans were in the United States for three weeks learning about winter maintenance in areas with comparable geography and topography. Kansas has many similar features to portions of Argentina, so after spending one week at the University of Iowa learning best practices in North America, the group travelled to Kansas, Colorado, Nevada and California.

“They have predominately two-lane roads, so they were interested in how we address snow and ice removal on two-lane roads,” Vogel said. “But they also have heavy truck traffic because they have a lot of mining.”

This situation creates many challenges, Vogel said, because the trucks get stuck, then are abandoned on the roadways.

“They don’t have the authority to close any roads – it’s travel at your own risk and use chains when appropriate,” she said.

Employees in Seneca and Phillipsburg each spent about three hours with the group answering questions and discussing various maintenance procedures.

“The KDOT folks were very professional and patient with all the questions,” Vogel said. “It was so rewarding to see how proud they were to show their equipment and facilities and talk about what they do every day.”

The group was very impressed with the equipment and they had never seen a snow blower before, said Doug Driggs, Area One Superintendent in Phillipsburg. It was a little difficult to communicate, he said, since the interpreter could only talk with one person at a time.

“But during the tour we showed each other some storm and equipment pictures,” Driggs said. “I showed them pictures from a blizzard in 1986 with 10-foot drifts, and one gentleman said he sees that much snow every year.”

Vogel serves as the Vice Chairman of the AASHTO Subcommittee on Maintenance that was asked to set up the tour to help bring the winter maintenance program up to date in Argentina. -K.S.
Dear Editor,

I ran out of gas near the Mo/Kan Drag Strip on March 7. It was very cold and windy and as I have a pacemaker/defibrillator device my wife chose to start walking for gas. A station was about a mile away. (I was driving my son’s pickup and the gas gauge is very inaccurate!). My wife had walked about 50 yards when a super nice gentleman driving a State of Kansas Blazer pulled over and asked what the problem was. She told him of the situation and he said to go back to the truck and he would be back.

In just a few minutes this gentleman pulled up and got out of the vehicle carrying a gallon of gas. He and I visited a few minutes while he put the fuel in the truck. I learned he is with the DOT and I know his last name is Nelson and I hopefully recall the first name accurately as Wayne.

He refused to accept anything other than a handshake for his actions. What a pleasant, professional gentleman he is. If the whole world was full of “Waynes” this would be a much better place to live.

I want the powers that be to know of his actions and just how much that meant to my wife and I. We really appreciated the gesture and someone needs to know about it in the organization. He is a prince.

Thanks,
Fred Martino, Girard

(Editor’s Note: Wayne Nelson is the Area Superintendent at Pittsburg.)

Severe weather plagues Kansas in 2007

By Stan Whitley

Mother Nature was not kind to Kansas in 2007 with the state having the dubious distinction of receiving four presidential declarations due to severe weather.

Those disasters including a blizzard, devastating tornado, flood and an ice storm, paralyzed portions of the state. However, those declarations by President Bush did make disaster funding available through the federal government.

“It seems like we’d just get the paper work finished from one disaster and another one would strike,” said Mark Krentz, KDOT Emergency Coordinator. “It was a crazy year in the state for natural disasters.”

KDOT has received federal funding to assist with three of the emergencies and Krentz estimates KDOT should receive about $12.1 million when all the paperwork is finished.

The first storm in late December and early January slammed western Kansas with a perilous mix of heavy snow and ice. It proved historic with snowfall up to 32 inches in some locations, 10,500 power lines downed and 60,000 people left without power. During the height of the storm, 18 sections of roads were closed in western Kansas.

The second storm – a devastating F-5 tornado that leveled 95 percent of Greensburg - involved a massive effort by KDOT as the agency hauled away 17,168 dump loads of debris and remained in the city with clean-up efforts for 2 ½ months.

Krentz said the agency will be reimbursed $330,000 from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the first winter storm and $1.3 million for assistance in Greensburg.

In June, flooding impacted south-east Kansas and 20 counties were declared disaster areas and 20 highway routes were closed due to high water and related damage. An ice storm in December was the most widespread of the natural disasters with 60 counties declared federal disaster areas.

Krentz said assistance from FHWA emergency funds for the flooding was $7.5 million, while the agency expects to receive about $3 million from FEMA for the ice storm.

“KDOT field staff throughout the state and Fiscal Services at Headquarters have played an integral role helping with the reimbursement process,” said Krentz. “We wouldn’t be able to get it done without their help.”

KDOT will be benefitting from a pilot project that was signed with FEMA before the last storm hit. Under the pilot project, regular time salaries can be reimbursed as well as overtime salaries for debris-related activities. Under the previous program, regular salaries were not allowed for reimbursement.

Retirees

The following employees will officially retire from KDOT in April.

Headquarters
Richard R. Hamit, Engineering Technician Specialist, Design

District Two
Roland A. Bird Jr., Public Service Administrator I, Salina

District Three
John R. Cooper, Equipment Operator Specialist, Grainfield
Nadine I. Rather, Administrative Assistant, Atwood
Milton I Tokoi, Public Service Administrator I, Sharon Springs
A caravan hauling seven oversize loads left Lawrence on March 17 at the start of a 325-mile trip to Greensburg. The trucks carried the modular components of an art museum constructed by a University of Kansas architecture class. The components will be assembled in Greensburg in time for the one-year anniversary of the May 4 tornado that destroyed most of the town. Photo by David McKinney/KU Office of University Relations.

Oversized loads make long trip on Kansas roadways

Traveling 325 miles from Lawrence to Greensburg proved to be a challenge recently for the 22 students enrolled in Studio 804, a design/build program in the School of Architecture and Urban Planning at the University of Kansas.

Making sure their “baggage” arrived safely was the real chore. Working closely with KDOT and the Kansas Trucking Connection, their mission was accomplished.

Their baggage was definitely unique - seven “oversize load” semi-trailers hauling a prefabricated arts center. The 1,600-square-foot sustainable prototype arrived in tornado-ravaged Greensburg on March 17 following an eight-hour trip.

“KU worked through the Bureau of Design bridge office to determine the best route to take ensuring clearance of bridges and overpasses,” said John Culbertson, KDOT Bridge Evaluation Engineer. “The Kansas Trucking Connection then provided them the necessary oversize permits.”

Finding the correct route to take is important when you are transporting seven modular pieces of a big puzzle. Each weighed 85,500 pounds, was 65 feet long, 14 feet wide and 16 feet four inches high.

A route was devised that had the semi’s traveling on nine different U.S. and Kansas routes through 13 counties before reaching their destination.

The seven modular units will be assembled on a concrete foundation and finished in the near future. The students plan to have the building complete in time for an unveiling on May 4, one year to the day after the tornado tore the town apart. – S.W.

KDOT Computer Training
– from the KCTC

Increase your efficiency!

DID YOU KNOW?

Focus: Excel

• To create a template: 1) Enter all data that will be the same each time you use the template, such as formulas, charts and other options and apply all formatting. 2) Save the template by choosing the Save As option (go to the Office Button) to open the Save As dialog box, click on the Save as type option to open the drop down list, scroll through the list to find Excel Template (*.xltx). (NOTE - if your template contains macros - choose the Macro Enabled Template (*.xltm) option. If you plan to use your template with older versions of Excel - choose the Excel 97 - 2003 Template (*.xlt) option.) 3) Once saved, your template is stored in the templates folder on your computer. To use the template, go to the Office Button and click on New followed by My Templates, a dialog box will pop up, double click the template you wish to use.

• To add a custom list to the auto fill handle: 1) Click Office Button followed by Excel Options to bring up the Excel Options dialog box; 2) Click the Popular tab in the left hand pane; 3) Click the Edit Custom List button in the right hand pane to open the Custom List dialog box; 4) Type the new list in the List entries window; and 5) Click OK. The new Auto Fill list appears in the Custom Lists window.

Check out the shared calendar: KCTC for on-going classes. Contact the KCTC at kctc@ksdot.org or call Ingrid Vandervort 785-296-8993.
Sharpening our focus on finance

At some point in our lives we’ve all been there. It’s a few days after payday and the euphoria of seeing the state’s direct deposit into our personal accounts quickly wanes as we write checks for our all our monthly bills. What happened to my balance? How am I going to stay afloat until the next paycheck comes!?

At the end of this arduous monthly exercise we’re left to wonder how we’re ever going to buy anything new for ourselves, other than groceries… groceries that only keep us sustained in life… but nothing like a new car or a new house… items that make us feel like we’re making progress.

But we persevere and find a way to get focused and manage our money so we can enjoy at least a few of the little things in life, whether it’s a night out on the town or a much needed vacation getaway with the family. It’s not always a lot, but the little rewards add up and we’re happy – for now.

Sound familiar? Well, this sums up the financial condition of KDOT as we come to the end of another very rewarding 10-year transportation program. As we all know, the Comprehensive Transportation Program (CTP) passed in 1999 comes to an end in 2009. Looking through today’s windshield, we are poised to deliver the entirety of the CTP as promised, which is a feat not without major hurdles along the way and a feat we should all be proud of.

However, as we look toward 2010-2012, in the absence of a new highway program, we’ll have to get over the euphoria of healthy agency cash balances. We’ll have to focus on managing our money so we can continue to deliver the “groceries” to the general public week to week. If we focus really well, we might even be able to deliver a few of the “little things” to the public in the form of well-planned and executed enhancements to the system. But, like the family getaways or evenings away from the house, these enhancements will be few and far between – for now.

As announced in last month’s Translines and agency-wide e-mail, we have begun to take steps to sharpen our agency’s focus on finance with the creation of the new Office of Financial and Investment Management. This office brings together talented, current KDOT staff from various bureaus and allows us to centralize the mission, strategy and accountability of our financial management in these tight times. This office will be responsible not only for the day-to-day financial management of KDOT’s cash, debt and revolving loan programs, but for the research and creation of the financial backbone of a new highway program.

In the meantime, again, it is time that we all join in the effort to sharpen our focus on finance. Whether it’s continuing to deliver our bread and butter projects on time and on budget or uncovering the creative strategies of a program for the future, we’re in this together. If you have ideas in this regard, I welcome your feedback.

Joe Erskine is Deputy Secretary for Finance and Administration.
Major project highlights in Districts One, Two and Five are featured with information from Public Affairs Managers Kim Qualls, David Greiser and Bob Grant.

DISTRICT ONE

K-7 and U.S. 24/U.S. 40 Interchange Improvements in Wyandotte County - KDOT and the Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City partnered on a project for improvements on U.S. 24/U.S. 40 (State Avenue) and K-7 in Wyandotte County. Construction is now in the second year of this $36 million construction project to enhance safety and improve the flow of traffic.

Anticipated 2008 traffic impacts include the closure of all on and off ramps at the interchange through the fall, and the closure of one lane each direction on K-7 and U.S. 24/U.S. 40 (State Avenue) from west of 134th to 142nd Street.

The project is scheduled to be completed by mid-November.

Focus435 Project in Johnson County - The Focus435 project in Johnson County is now in its third year, and progressing on schedule. This project includes improvements to the U.S. 69/I-435 and U.S. 69/103rd Street interchanges; a new interchange at I-435 and Antioch; additional lanes on I-435 between Metcalf and U.S. 69; and construction of noise walls in key locations along I-435 and U.S. 69.

Construction work scheduled for 2008 on the project includes:
• Completion of the southbound U.S. 69 to eastbound I-435 1,700-foot flyover ramp.
• Complete remaining ramp construction on the I-435 and U.S. 69 interchange.
• Finish noise walls along U.S. 69 between 95th and 103rd Streets.
• Complete paving operations on the eastbound Antioch exit ramp.

The Focus435 four-year construction project is the single largest project ever let by KDOT in terms of cost at $127.4 million. To learn more about this project, please visit www.focus435.com.

Fancy Creek Bridge Replacement Project in Riley County - A two-year $6.6 million bridge replacement project began last year on U.S. 77 in Riley County to replace the existing bridge spanning Fancy Creek in Riley County.

Currently, the project is fairly close to schedule. Once the bridge piers and abutments are completed, then crews will begin work on the bridge deck this May.

U.S. 77 will be closed throughout the duration of the project. The new five steel girder bridge is scheduled to be completed by late August.

DISTRICT TWO

I-70 in Saline County - The continuing I-70 project in Saline County starts at the Niles Road interchange (260) and moves east six miles. Last fall, the contractor reconstructed the westbound lanes, shoulders and associated ramps. This year the westbound lanes, shoulders and ramps will be reconstructed while traffic is carried head to head on the westbound lanes. The Niles interchange bridge has been removed from this project and was made a separate project to be constructed at a later date. This is the last section of the original I-70 construction between Salina and Topeka to be replaced. Construction should begin in March and be concluded in November, weather permitting. Total project cost is $36.7 million.

US-36 in Jewell County - This 8.7-mile project beginning at the east end of Mankato involves resurfacing, several culvert extensions and spot grading. The asphalt surface will receive a two-inch recycle followed by a four-inch base lift and a 2.5-inch surface lift. The project began in February and should be finished in November, weather permitting. Total cost of this project is $7.9 million.

The Junction City Area - With the rapid annexation by Junction City and growth of residential area west of U.S. 77, there have been locations suggested and studies made to determine where traffic meets current traffic warrants for
March of Dimes

Continued from page 3

week. But he was fortunate, Eric said, to have only minor issues.

“Mason was diagnosed with Acid Reflux, which would cause him to spit up most of what he consumed,” he said. “Once diagnosed and treated, he started gaining weight and began getting stronger and stronger each day.”

When he first came home, he was on a three-hour schedule. “Every three hours we had to either feed him, give him medicine or both,” he said. “It was quite a routine.”

Mason is doing great and is now a healthy two-year-old. “What I like about our story is that we have a happy ending,” Eric said. “He’s doing so well, and we give credit to the March of Dimes.”

Unfortunately, of the half a million premature births each year, more than 120,000 babies are born with serious birth defects. To help raise awareness and support, Mason, his big brother Zachary, and parents are serving as the 2008 March of Dimes Ambassador Family for the Topeka area. The Deitchers will spend time during the year talking to groups about their positive experience.

“We feel our story should be shared with others to give them hope and encouragement,” Eric said.

The family will also participate in the annual March for Babies (formerly called WalkAmerica), an event to raise money for March of Dimes research. The event is April 25 at the Topeka Zoological Park. Registration for one- or five-mile walks begins at 5 p.m. with the walks starting at 6 p.m.

Eric encourages individuals and families to participate. For more information, go to www.marchforbabies.org or contact Dawn Lassiter, the March for Babies coordinator for KDOT, at 785-296-3461. To specifically join Mason’s team, just add /teammason to the Web site address.

“It would be great if we could get lots of people on our team,” Eric said.

Simmons

Continued from page 3

for the agency since September 2005, received his award during a luncheon Feb. 20 at the Topeka Country Club. Simmons is now in the running for the Government Engineer of the Year at the state level.

The Topeka Chapter is a member of the KSPE, a professional organization offering a tri-level membership at the national, state, and local levels to approximately 1,000 engineers practicing in Kansas. Members of the KSPE work in a variety of capacities and are a diversified group with backgrounds in all engineering disciplines.

The KSPE goal is to promote, recognize, and enhance the engineering profession by delivering professional development products and services, encouraging licensure, and advocating legislation and public policy for the betterment of human welfare and the profession. – S.W.

Freddie Simmons

Brett Summers, Equipment Operator Trainee, Holton
Gregorio Torrez, Equipment Operator Trainee, Lawrence
Eugene Vaught, Equipment Operator Trainee, Topeka

District Three
Lacey Hansen, Accountant I, Norton

District Four
Brandon Brown, Equipment Operator Trainee, Pittsburg
Andrew S. Patterson, Engineering Technician Associate, Iola
David Peterson, Equipment Operator Trainee, Louisburg
Cody Zook, Equipment Operator Trainee, Pittsburg

District Six
Kenneth Baker, Jr., Equipment Operator Trainee, Liberal
Craig Brownlee, Engineering Technician Associate, Syracuse

Welcome new KDOT employees!

Headquarters
Carla Anderson, Engineering Associate III, Traffic Engineering
Evelyn Piper, Senior Administrative Assistant, Right of Way
Scott Shackleford, Applications Developer III, Computer Services
Coleen Smith, Management Systems Analyst I, Construction and Maintenance

District One
Jason Isabell, Equipment Operator Trainee, Edwardsville
Scott Kincade, Equipment Operator Trainee, Topeka

Calendar of Events

April 11 – 7 a.m.-Noon – HealthQuest screening, Fourth Floor, Eisenhower State Office Building.
April 11 – 9:30 a.m. - Highway Advisory Commission meeting.
April 15-16 – Kansas Transportation Engineering Conference, KSU Union in Manhattan
April 16 – 1 p.m. Construction bid letting, Fourth Floor, West Wing, Eisenhower State Office Building.
April 29-30 – KDOT Transportation Safety Conference, Topeka Capitol Plaza Hotel.
The demand for freight rail service has grown steadily over the last decades and is projected to increase 69 percent by tonnage and 84 percent by ton-miles between 2005 and 2035.

In 2002, trucks hauled about 64 percent of the value, 58 percent of the tonnage, and 32 percent of the ton-miles of total shipments. Measured by ton-miles, trucking was followed by rail at 28 percent and water and pipeline with 16 percent each.

From 1993 to 2002, mixed freight shipments grew the fastest in value, increasing from $207 billion to $858 billion, at 17 percent annually.

On a typical day, about 43 million tons of goods, valued at about $29 billion, move nearly 12 billion ton-miles on the nation’s interconnected transportation network.

One of the highest honors in scouting has been bestowed upon a KDOT employee for his hard work and devotion to the program.

Michael ‘Doc’ Lyhane, Highway Maintenance Supervisor at Marysville, was the recipient of the Silver Beaver Award during a ceremony held in February. Lyhane has spent more than 25 years as a scouting volunteer serving as a Scoutmaster, chairing camporees, serving on district committees and helping with numerous scouting events.

He has also helped serve youth by being active in youth wrestling as a coach and advisor and serving as a Kansas hunter safety instructor.

Recipients of the scouting distinguished service award are adult leaders who have made an impact on the lives of youth through service given to the Boy Scouts. The Silver Beaver award is given to leaders who implement the Scouting program and perform community service through hard work, self-sacrifice, dedication and years of service to scouting.

Lyhane was nominated for the Silver Beaver by the Jayhawk Area Council, which serves 11 counties in eastern Kansas. – S.W.
Improving safety

State transportation departments are intensifying efforts to improve work-zone safety and mobility. In Illinois, the state DOT is implementing photo speed-limit enforcement in work-zones utilizing three photo radar units around the state. A series of signs warns drivers that photo enforcement is in place. One sign posts the first-time fine of $375 and a radar unit shows oncoming drivers their speed.

If a driver refuses to slow down, a camera takes photos of the vehicle’s license plate. A patrol officer mailing the unit then sends a ticket to the owner’s address, which is based on the license plate number.

In Washington, D.C., an automated system that would impose variable speed limits in a work zone is under consideration. Real-time surveillance and traveler information capabilities would reduce speed differentials as traffic approaches the work zone and, presumably, improve traffic flow and safety as well as restoring the credibility of speed limits. - Better Roads, February 2008

Upgrades a success

New tollway improvements have significantly decreased traffic congestion in the Chicago-area. In 2006, Open Road Tolling (ORT) lanes were introduced to all the mainline toll plazas in Northern Illinois. The tollway upgrade converted the traditional barrier-style toll plazas to barrier-free electronic toll collection allowing the 1.3 million daily customers to travel non-stop at highway speeds from Wisconsin to Indiana. The Illinois Tollway launched the $729 million ORT conversion in spring 2005 and incorporated 116 ORT lanes at 20 toll plazas by the end of 2006.

The Open Road Tolling program has eased highway congestion at plazas by separating the non-stop transponder users from the decelerating cash users. The conversion of the Tollway’s traditional toll plazas to a barrier-free system allows I-PASS users to travel at highway speeds while their tolls are collected electronically by a monotube overhead. - American City & County, February 2008

Bridge for Sale: $1

A defunct bridge over the Kickapoo River in Soldiers Grove, Wis., is up for sale for one dollar. Officials fear the nearly century-old bridge, which hasn’t carried traffic in 31 years, will collapse into the river and want to get rid of it quickly. It is hoped high scrap prices will help attract a buyer who may want to sell the bridge’s steel parts.

The overhead truss bridge was built in 1910 and was closed in 1976. - Better Roads, February 2008

Aviation

Continued from page 3

Comprehensive Transportation Program. Since that time, KDOT has contributed approximately $27 million for 207 projects at public use airports. These airports are classified as having fewer than 10,000 passenger boardings a year.

“KDOT is still seeing a big demand for this program, which has never had more than 100 applications in one year,” said Director of Aviation Ed Young.

“The condition of runways throughout the state has improved dramatically under this program,” he said. “Now, many of our projects involve enhancements to airport weather observations systems (AWOS) and self-sufficiency services, such as self-service fueling systems.”

Under guidelines of the program, project sponsors are required to pay a minimum of 10 percent of the total project costs, up to a maximum of 50 percent based on population.
signal lights and where those requirements may soon be met due to the changing traffic patterns.

Due to this rapid expansion, the current Corridor Management Agreement between KDOT, Junction City and Geary County is being revised and should be completed this spring. The area under review is on U.S. 77 from Lyon Creek Road north to the road into Milford Cemetery and on K-18 from U.S. 77 west to the Dickinson/Geary county line. This corridor agreement helps all units of government be consistent when discussing entrances or roads onto state highways.

DISTRICT FIVE

Construction continues on the 2.4-mile combined Major Modification and System Enhancement projects on U.S. 50/K-61 around the southeast part of Hutchinson and South Hutchinson. The new 4-lane divided highway, being constructed by Koss Construction of Topeka, is expected to be completed by next Thanksgiving.

The K-96/U.S. 50 interchange is being improved and a new diamond interchange at Blanchard Street is progressing. Four new bridge spans will be constructed and four existing bridges will be rehabilitated.

The right of way has been purchased and preliminary work is being done, on a project to be let later, that will extend U.S. 50 east to the Airport/Yoder Road. Traffic is being carried through construction on this $34 million project.

Work is under way on replacing and widening the deck of the bridge on U.S. 160, over Elm Creek. This bridge is just east of Medicine Lodge and the contractor is Bridges Inc., from Newton. This $2 million project is scheduled to be completed early next year. Bridge work is being constructed one half at a time with traffic reduced to one lane and controlled by traffic signals.

A new bridge over the Arkansas River is constructed as part of the System Enhancement project on U.S. 50/K-61.