

Traklines

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Kansas Department of Transportation

Office of Transportation Information



January 2001

KDOT, property owner share 'win-win' situation

By Stan Whitley

'This was a unique situation and a perfect example of cooperation that can exist between the state and a landowner.'

Rob Stork

In negotiating terms it's called a "win-win" situation - both parties working together to achieve a mutually beneficial agreement. KDOT and a property owner were fortunate to experience the "win-win" scenario recently during a roadway reconstruction project.

In 1997, KDOT was in the process of design and acquiring right-of-way necessary for a project to improve Interstate 70 just west of Topeka. The five-mile project

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New program recognizes extra efforts of coworkers

You see it everyday - various KDOT offices exemplifying what it means to go above and beyond the call of duty. Now here's a chance to show them you appreciate their extra efforts.

The Office of Transportation Information is implementing a new Employee Recognition program called "Example of Excellence." The honor will recognize groups of KDOT employees for their outstanding efforts. "I strongly support

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Print Shop coworkers Pete Domme, Gladys Schlotter, Greg Martinez, and Marty Martinez received national recognition for their work to develop printing standards.

Print Shop honored by AASHTO

By Kim Stich

Efforts to establish printing standards have paid off for the Printers-R-Us KQM team in the Bureau of Support Services. The team completed a project that will help smaller print shops determine better ways of standardizing procedures, production methods, and overall time to complete a job. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)

'We wanted to get feedback to improve our print shop and also give feedback so other print shops could use the standards in their own production.'

Pete Domme

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EMPLOYEE FORUM SUMMARY INFORMATION



From
Where
I Sit

by E. Dean Carlson

Improving pay for employees

The first of the year means the start of another legislative session and, as I told many of you during the recent employee forums, I am hoping that lawmakers will take a look at the issue of improving pay for state employees. Changes for most classifications have to be approved by the legislature, and I am hoping that they will take some action.

If they need proof of what they're getting for their money, I'll only have to point to the fine work done by the maintenance crews in December to keep the state highway system plowed, salted, and sanded. Tens of thousands of Kansans and other travelers were able to spend the holidays

safe and warm with loved ones because KDOT crews spent much of their holiday out on the road.

At one of the employee forums, an employee who was unhappy about the current pay levels suggested that KDOT crews might call in sick for the next snowstorm to emphasize their unhappiness. (This was before the winter blast that blanketed us with snow and then kept us in the deep freeze for three weeks!) I told him that I didn't think that was the way Kansans did things, and I'm glad to know that's true.

I know that those of you on the front lines in the battle against winter weather aren't out there hour after hour in bitter cold and howling wind because you're getting rich driving a snowplow or a sander. You're out there because you've chosen to serve your friends and neighbors and want to do your best to keep them and all of the other travelers safe. But that commitment also shouldn't mean that you have to sacrifice decent wages.

I may be focusing for the moment on the efforts of our maintenance crews, but workers across the agency demonstrate the same hard work and dedication daily. This is why I will continue to work with KDOT's Bureau of Personnel Services to make our case to legislators for improved pay for our employees.

Thank you for your continued efforts proving that you deserve it.



KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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NOTE: This information is available in alternative accessible formats. To obtain an alternative format, contact the KDOT Office of Transportation Information, Docking State Office Building, Room 754, Topeka, Kan., 66612-1568, or phone (785) 296-3585 (Voice)/(TTY).

Calendar of Events

February 4 - 1 p.m., Employees' Council annual Crazy Bowl, Gage Bowl (at Huntoon and Gage) in Topeka. All KDOT employees, friends, and family are invited. Cost is \$6 per person. For more information, contact Kim Stich at (785) 296-3585.

February 9 - 9 a.m. Highway Advisory Commission telephone conference call, 8th Floor Planning Conference Room, Docking State Office Building.

February 13 - 11 a.m. KDOT Employees' Council Meeting, Seventh Floor Conference Room, Docking State Office Building.

February 21 - 2 p.m. Construction Bid Letting at Topeka Capitol Plaza Hotel.

Road condition information just a click away

By Marty Matthews

The old saying "forewarned is forearmed" has never been truer than when you're talking about weather conditions and travel. Maybe that's why KDOT's newest way to keep travelers "forewarned" about road conditions is being welcomed with open arms by the public.

KDOT is using the Internet to provide customers with a map detailing existing road conditions across the state. The map is located at www.kanroad.org and it can also be accessed through KDOT's main web site www.ksdot.org under "Road Conditions." The color-coded maps indicate, for example, whether a road is closed, icy, snow packed, wet or normal for seasonal conditions. Users can view the primary routes in the state or choose a specific region.

The map uses information gathered through the Road Condition Reporting System (RCRS) that was developed by the Cartography Section of the Bureau of Transportation Planning, the Bureau of Construction and Maintenance, and the Bureau of Computer Services. The map is familiar to many KDOT employees who have been helping to test it internally on KDOT's Intranet for about a year. It's gone through a number of improvements over that time thanks to input from employees.

No question that the public was ready for this site. In the month of December, the average daily number of visitors to the page was about 2,200 people, with a high of 8,555 visitors set on December 13 (closely followed by 7,848 on December 26). All in all, more than 68,000 visitors checked out the site in December.

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Below are some comments that the Office of Transportation Information has received via e-mail regarding the www.kanroad.org web site.

"Your map listing is a great asset to the citizens of Kansas and I thank you for it."

"I just signed on to your web page for the first time and you're to be commended for an excellent site. I will use it often for road conditions..."

"I have recently discovered and used the new KDOT highway conditions map and it is great. Last week I wanted to monitor the highways so I could inform my daughter who was planning on driving home from Sterling to Olathe when we had all the snow. Use of this web site provided me helpful information so I could tell her the best route to take based on highway conditions. Thank you for providing this valuable service."

"This is really a great new tool for when we have to get out on the road."

"I had the occasion (necessity) to review the road condition maps for Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri and Iowa. Your map and graphics are by far the best of those states."



Child Passenger Safety Week

The Four Steps for Kids will be the primary campaign message for the 2001 National Child Passenger Safety week February 11-17.

The message helps remind parents and other caregivers that there are four crucial steps in protecting children riding in automobiles. Steps that change as the child grows and ages are:

Use rear-facing child seats from birth to at least 20 pounds and at least one year old.

Use forward-facing seats for children at least one year old and over 30 to about 40 pounds.

Use belt-positioning booster seats for children from about 40 pounds to at least 80 pounds and four feet nine inches tall.

Use seat belts for older children who are large enough for the belt to fit them correctly, at least four feet nine inches tall and about 80 pounds.

Child Passenger Safety Week will be recognized in Kansas through KDOT's Bureau of Traffic Safety, which is in the process of organizing a media event at the Statehouse.

Coffee with Mike

By Ron Kaufman

The only vice I can outwardly claim is a fondness for a hot foamy cup of decaf Irish Cream Café Brevé. It's one of those fancy coffees they serve up at a local coffee bar. My friend Mike often joins me at the "bar," though he prefers a woefully plain mocha. The time we spend together isn't terribly exciting, but it's the only male bonding activity my wife will let me enjoy. We usually just sip our brews, enduring the hard-as-granite chairs and trading stories about our families, jobs, getting old, and loves long lost. Mike is planning an early retirement, though I've got several more years to go. I'm a little ashamed to admit that our conversations sound like "old guy" talk. We're standing on the crest of the mountain, so to speak, where it's easier to talk about the paths that got us there and to see the options that lie below.

Mike is a quiet, bearded fellow who is unmarried, though not for lack of trying. Our most recent conversation turned to the news that he had recently invited a woman on a "date." It's a courageous act for a man of his age who heretofore had planned his retirement free of a permanent relationship. He

vividly described his nervousness, fear, and sweating palms as he timidly made the call. Where would the effort take him? Would he be rejected, accepted, scorned, or approved? Worse yet, would his voice crack and leap to a higher octave? Thankfully, she accepted his overture, but then he was left wondering how the date would go, where would it lead, and what the future would bring.

To his relief and mine, the date went well; that is, it went well enough that another was promised. Sometimes, that's all you can ask for. They talked over coffee and got to know each other. They learned what was important in their lives, what the past was about, and shared a few things about their plans for the future. Not wanting to appear too eager, I wished him well in whatever his future might hold. Mike would agree that new relationships are a bit like buying an old mule. Sometimes you get along, and sometimes you don't. Sometimes all you can hope for is begrudging respect, while other times the relationship is a warmer one that could last considerably longer. The last thing you want is to tug and pull against each other or, worse yet, to trade kicks.

Communication: A Key to Success



Kansas Department
of Transportation

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Recognition

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recently honored the group's efforts with a 2000 Team Recognition award in the Trailblazer category for innovation in quality.

"We're very happy to receive the award, and we'd like to thank everyone who helped, from several KDOT coworkers to the vendors, the printing establishments, and other state agencies. We couldn't have done it without them," said Pete Domme, Team Leader.

Members of the team from the Support Services Print Shop included Domme, Greg Martinez, Marty Martinez, Linda Althof, Joe Duling, and Pete Hasty. Duling and Hasty now work at the State Printers. Gladys Schlodder was the team facilitator.

The project began as a priority outcome by Raúl Guevara, Chief of Support

Services, to Bill Crooks, Print Shop Manager, who assigned the Print Shop to develop printing standards since none previously existed for smaller print shops similar to KDOT's. The goal was to increase quality and customer satisfaction while reducing turnaround time, material, and labor costs.

"The team was asked to review people, processes, and technology," Guevara said. "They had the courage, tenacity, and vision to develop the appropriate KQM skills to achieve their goal."

The group surveyed several DOTs in the Midwest as well as other print shops with similar equipment. "We wanted to get feedback to improve our print shop and also give feedback so other print shops could use the standards in their own production," Domme said.

From information received, the group created a set of standards that helped im-

prove productivity and organize all the work in a more efficient manner but yet still be flexible. Marty said the standards also increased customer satisfaction by helping to formulate more accurate estimates of turnaround times and costs.

In addition, the standards help evaluate overall job performance for each employee in the Print Shop, Marty said. With the new standards there are now base measurements for job performance and productivity in all facets of the printing industry. The standards are available in the KQM report in several charts developed for the team by Donn Logsdon, Office Assistant in Support Services.

The project turned into quite an experience for the group. "We did everything from scratch and learned as we went along in the process," Domme said. "We accomplished more than we ever thought possible."

KDOT employees involved in TRB presentations

Secretary Carlson and State Transportation Engineer Warren Sick were among 16 KDOT employees involved in presentations at the 80th annual Transportation Research Board meeting, January 8-11 in Washington.

The Secretary served as a panel member in the session entitled "Progress Toward a Future Strategic Highway Research Program," while Sick made a presentation titled, "What I Need In a Lawyer, They Don't Teach In Law School: The Engineer's Perspective."

A contingency of six Materials and Research engineers were involved in presentations at the annual meeting. The engineers and their topics included:

John Wojakowski - "Application and Performance-Based Specifications in Kansas," and "Bonded Concrete Overlays With Synthetic Fiber Using Task Force 36 Guidelines."

Richard McReynolds - "Including Policy Issues in The State Department of Transportation Research Agenda."

David Meggers - "Influence of Rapid Chloride Permeability Test Parameters on the Results of Silica Fume and Non Silica Fume Concrete."

Safwat Bishara, Donna Mahoney and McReynolds -

"Modification of Binder with Acid: Advantages and Disadvantages."

Barbara Smith - "Beyond ASR and D-Cracking; Another Source Of Concrete Pavement Deterioration?"

Other agency employees were involved in presiding or serving as panel members. The employees and their topics included:

Dean Testa - "Contractor and Government Agency Perspectives on Total Contract Maintenance."

Jim Brewer - "Context Sensitive Design, Part 2."

Leslie Spencer-Fowler, Mike Rees and Matt Volz - "Shared Resources/Fiber Optics, Streamlining Emerging Technology Procurements and Acquisitions."

Leslie Spencer-Fowler - "Construction In The Electronic Age: Electronic Bidding, Electronic Signatures, and Beyond - New Trends In Computerization."

Vickie Johnson - "Survival of the Fittest! The True Story

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Win-win

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included roadway, ramp and bridge reconstruction activities. Two reinforced concrete tunnel box culverts just west of Auburn Road were scheduled for reconstruction as part of the project.

"These two large box culverts were built during the original construction more than 40 years ago," said Jim Brewer, State Road Office Engineering Manager. "They were each 14 feet wide and 12 feet high and were used to provide property owners access both north and south of I-70."

Brewer said the culvert work was necessary because it's KDOT's practice to replace original structures during reconstruction. Both were scheduled for replacement and would be increased by two feet in height to better accommodate traffic.

Rob Stork, KDOT Right-of-Way Agent, said improvement work on the project also required the acquisition of additional acreage both north and south of I-70. Topekan Don Barry was an affected landowner whom KDOT worked with during negotiations.

"The original construction plans

included two 14x14 box culverts to provide access to the Barry property, but through continued negotiations a better plan was developed," said Stork.

Initially, Barry agreed to donate his property and he also offered to pay additional expenses associated with increasing the size of the box culverts. Larger culverts would provide improved access, but would be very costly to Barry.

KDOT considered Barry's proposal, but then KDOT engineers offered a proposal even more beneficial to Barry and the state. The plan included increasing the size of one culvert to 28x14 and building a frontage road at the northwest corner of the I-70 and Auburn Road interchange in lieu of the second culvert.

"This was a win-win situation," said Steve King, KDOT Road Design Leader who worked on the project. "KDOT eliminated the substantial cost (about \$225,000) to reconstruct one of the culverts and the cost of continual state maintenance on the structure. KDOT used the savings from the box construction to build a frontage road for Mr. Barry which improved access to his property."

Securing the agreement required a significant contribution by Barry. He offered

to pay engineering and design costs, right-of-way costs, donate 9 1/2 acres of right-of-way needed for the project and pay the cost associated with increasing the size of the culvert.

Changes were made to the original project design to construct the frontage road. The changes didn't delay the project, with letting and construction completed on time. The deal was secured with a letter of credit from a local bank for \$200,000 assuring Barry's performance to cover expenses upon demand. Thus, KDOT had a guarantee before construction work began.

The I-70 reconstruction is now complete and Stork recently received three checks from the bank to cover Barry's costs. When the value of the donated land is added, Stork estimated Barry's financial contribution to the state at about \$220,000.

"This was a unique situation and a perfect example of cooperation that can exist between the state and a landowner," said Stork. "Mr. Barry worked diligently with the state during negotiations and he made a significant financial commitment. It's very rewarding to be involved with a project where everyone comes out a winner."

Coffee

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You won't be surprised to learn that Mike's date jitters remind me of public involvement. You know by now that lots of things remind me of public involvement. It's an occupational hazard. Public involvement is about making relationships with our customers. It's all about learning things about people you might not know. It's about having the courage to make the first overture, to get past the nervousness, fear, and sweating palms. It's a lot like a first date. Sometimes, even after you get to know each other, all you can hope for is a little begrudging respect. Sometimes, things are better. And sometimes, you hit a home run.

In public involvement, there's no such thing as retiring alone. If a relationship falters, it's important to have the nerve to "get back in the saddle." Both parties often grow from the relationship, whatever the future might hold. We can grow from the relationships we make with our customers. We can learn what's important to them and what they envisioned for the future. We can also learn about their past and how it could affect the relationship. These are good things to know, since they could impact the outcome of our relationship and have some bearing on the decisions we make on their behalf.

Public involvement is as much about learning from each other as it is about actively involving our customers in our processes. When it comes to relationships, ignorance is not bliss. It can spoil both a good cup of coffee and a promising future.

Deaths

The following employee will officially retire from KDOT on February 1.

District Five

Ross E. Lietzke, Equipment Operator II at El Dorado - 11 1/2 years of state service.

Step Back in Time



The substructure for the US-75 Westgate bridge in Topeka is shown under construction during the spring of 1954. The bridge is currently being replaced with a new, wider structure to accommodate increasing traffic demands.

TRB

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of Why Engineers and Lawyers Must Work Together."

John Strahan - "Settlement Techniques for Land Use and Eminent Domain Litigation: Beyond Mere Money."

Ben Nelson and John Strahan - "Perils with the Use of E-mail Within a Public Agency."

The Transportation Research Board (TRB) is a unit of the National Research Council, a private, nonprofit institution that is the principal operating agency of the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Engineering.

The Board's mission is to promote innovation and progress in transportation by stimulating and conducting research, facilitating the dissemination of information, and encouraging the implementation of research results. The TRB program consists of more than 400 committees and research groups and more than 4,000 volunteer members.

Road Conditions

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We've also received some great feedback from the public. For a sampling, see page 3.

Visitors to KDOT's Road Conditions page can also check out the Road Weather Information System (RWIS) site. This provides information from sensors located at various bridges around the state.

Travelers will have even more options in the months ahead. Improvements are planned to the RCRS map to give customers some "interactive" options and the text-based Construction and Maintenance Detour Information System (CMDIS) will be available by the start of construction season. A map will replace the text-based info when the Construction Detour Reporting System (CDRS) goes on line later this year.

If information is power, then KDOT's customers are going to be some of the most powerful folks around when it comes to travel!



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(Via e-mail)

After spending a few days in Oklahoma in adverse weather conditions...I have to comment.

I was never so glad to get back to Kansas where the roads actually had been treated.

KDOT crews do a outstanding job maintaining roads and they never seem to get enough credit for their dedication!

Please keep up the good work!

Kevin Block

(Via e-mail)

I could not decide what department to contact. I just want to say thank you for helping me get home safely.

I work near MCI Airport in Kansas City, Mo. When it started snowing about 3 p.m., I didn't think it was going to be a problem. In Missouri, I was wrong - it took over an hour to get down I-29/I-635 to a safe road (I-635) in Kansas. I-29 had snow ruts on all three lanes. When I got over the river, I-635 looked like a spring shower had just passed. The roads were wet but clear. The difference is usually noticeable but today it was amazing.

I can't figure that Kansas has more money than Missouri, but I do know our crews are better and really know how to do their jobs.

Please pass my thank you to the proper Department and all the crews throughout Kansas, especially those in Wyandotte and Johnson counties.

Michael Dowd
Overland Park

New program

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this new program and encourage you to take advantage of it to help recognize the efforts of our agency's most valuable resource - our employees," said Secretary E. Dean Carlson.

Division Directors, Bureau/Office Chiefs, District Engineers, Area Engineers, and Subarea Supervisors must submit the nominations. All employees are encouraged to make suggestions to these supervisors about possible nominees.

Entire offices are eligible to be

nominated, whether it's a District office, Area office, Subarea office, Materials and Research field office, Headquarters office/bureau, etc.; or a section such as the Sign Shop, a road/bridge squad, a construction office, etc. Individuals can't be nominated. It also can't be an entire division and all its bureaus or an entire District. Remember, the goal of the award is to focus on office/bureau efforts and recognize a specific group.

Members of the Employees' Council will vote on all nominations submitted. Secretary Carlson will travel to the central workplace of the chosen

KDOT work group for a special presentation to honor all the employees. The award will be given quarterly. March 31 is the first deadline for nominations.

So if you know a KDOT work group striving to give top-notch quality service, and there are plenty of them, take a moment to notice. Nomination forms can be obtained from the Office of Transportation Information or on the Intranet under Employee Info. If you have any questions about the program, please call Transportation Information at (785) 296-3585. -K.S.

M I L E S T O N E S

KDOT salutes its employees celebrating anniversaries in January

10 YEARS

James Antrim Norton
Randall Billinger Lawrence
Terry Hood Topeka
Jamie Klenklen Topeka
Sherry Martin Garden City
Donald Ummel WaKeeney
Ginger Richter Marion
Aaron Schartz Oakley
Larry Schroeder Topeka
Dean Teal Topeka
Thomas Ware Sedan

20 YEARS

Michael Hollis Rolla
Michael Popp Kansas City
Noel Simpson Garden City

30 YEARS

Rodney French Minneapolis
Patricia Meyers Topeka

This information is compiled
by each Office, Bureau,
Division, and District.

BROWN BAG

LUNCH

Topic: PS&E (Plans, Specifications and Estimates)

Date: Wednesday, February 7

Time: Noon to 1 p.m.

Place: Room 481, Docking

All KDOT employees are invited to attend.

Promotions/Transfers

Headquarters

Shanna Anderson, Secretary II, Transportation Information
Brandy Badenoch, Systems Software Programmer Analyst III, Computer Services
Stephen Herrick, Applications Programmer Analyst III, Design
Kellie Miller, Engineering Technician Associate, Design
Mike Smith, Information Resource Specialist III, Computer Services
Kerry Streit, Engineering Technician, Right-of-Way
Mike Wilkerson, Management Systems Analyst II, Administration

District One

James Bell, Highway Maintenance Superintendent, Olathe
Richard Deeds, Highway Maintenance Supervisor, Emporia
Dustin Harding, Engineering Technician Associate, Emporia
Bruce Miller, Engineering Technician Specialist, Horton

Richard Wiggins, Engineering Technician Associate, Topeka

District Three

Kevin Lacy, Highway Maintenance Supervisor, Norton

District Four

Michael Jacobs, Engineering Associate III, Iola
Luther Prather, Engineering Technician, Iola

District Five

Kurt Brown, Engineering Technician, Hutchinson
Eric Hernandez, Engineering Technician, Hutchinson
Curtis Nairn, Engineering Technician, Great Bend
Wesley Rhodes, Equipment Mechanic I, Wichita
Larry Rose, Equipment Operator III, El Dorado
The Bureau of Personnel Services supplies information for promotions/transfers to Translines.

Training Opportunities

Basic Effective Supervisory Training*, February 20-23 and March 20-23, Topeka; June 19-22 and July 17-20, Salina/Topeka.

Leadership Basics, February 6-8, Topeka; March 13-15, Hays; April 10-12, Salina; May 8-10, Hutchinson.

Turning Around Poor Performance**, February 27, Topeka; March 8, Hutchinson.

Listening and Emotional Intelligence**, March 20 and April 20, Hays.
*Meets the three-year management training requirement.

Who Moved My Cheese?**, May 31, Topeka.

**Applies to the three-year management training requirement.

***Supervisory Continuing Education Credits.

All classes, except BEST, are available to non-supervisors with supervisory permission and where space is available. A comprehensive training calendar is on the KDOT Intranet.

KDOT
Office of Transportation Information
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