Internal survey gives employees chance to address needs in agency

By Cortney Finnesy

Have you ever wanted to express your opinion about the progress of KDOT? You will soon have your opportunity.

In September, an Internal Survey will be distributed to all employees of the Agency. This survey is a second in a series to help KDOT learn more about itself and identify “how we are doing” as an organization. The survey results from your responses will be used to identify areas where the Agency is doing well and where improvement is needed.

The Internal Survey results will also be compared with the information from the 1998 Internal Survey. This will help KDOT measure its progress toward becoming an organization that reflects the values outlined in the Strategic Management Plan.

Service Research Corporation of

Delegates tour KDOT facilities

Delegates from China visited KDOT’s 800 MHz conventional control building, the 800 MHz simulcast trunking equipment building and Headquarters in Topeka on July 11 to see firsthand the different methods and equipment used for internal and external transportation communication.

Motorola organized the trip which included stops in Topeka, Jackson, Miss., and Washington, D.C. “China likes to send its people out to see how other places do things and learn from that,” said Jack Murch, International Customer Relations representative for

H ere’s your chance!
The Employees’ Council is selling KDOT coasters. For more details and an order form, see page 10 of this edition.
Tax cut would hit KDOT hard

Like most Americans, summertime means driving time for me, and, like most people, I’ve been less than pleased at the price I’ve had to pay for gasoline this summer. So I understand why many people are demanding that something be done about the high prices. I even understand why some people think cutting the taxes on gasoline is a good way to bring those prices down. (Even if I do wonder whether removing the tax would actually bring prices down.) But what they need to understand is how detrimental those cuts would be to KDOT and their local communities.

The state’s Motor Fuels Tax (MFT) is 20 cents for gasoline (22 cents for diesel fuel). Every penny of the MFT goes toward transportation funding. The State Highway Fund receives 59.55 percent of the MFT revenues, and that money goes to KDOT. The Special City and County Highway Fund receives the other 40.45 percent, which is passed on to cities and counties to use on their projects. For FY 2001, those distributions are estimated to be about $219 million for KDOT and about $149 million for local governments.

When you consider that our annual budget is just about $1 billion, you realize that the MFT accounts for about 20 percent of our total budget. There is no way that KDOT could absorb that kind of hit, not even for one year. Let’s face it, even in this day and age, $219 million is a lot of money, and it’s money we’re counting on to give the traveling public the safe, modern highways they need.

Cutting or eliminating the federal tax on gasoline (18.4 cents a gallon) could hit just as hard. KDOT gets about $250 million a year from those tax proceeds. So far, all the talk in Washington on cutting this tax has at least included discussion about how to make up the lost revenue to the Highway Trust Fund. A skeptic might question any legislative payback that was based on the ephemeral federal budget “surplus.”

In crafting the 10-year CTP, we had to make some assumptions on what kind of money we’d have available. Those assumptions included anticipated receipts from both state and federal taxes on gasoline. The CTP is built on funding projections, and if you start chipping away at that foundation, the structure cannot stand.

KDOT is not the only organization at risk. As bad as it would be for us, it would be just as devastating to the cities and counties because many of them are already facing tight budgets for their public works programs. The money from the SCCHF and the federal funds we pass along to them pay for a lot of infrastructure improvements they could not otherwise afford.

Next time someone suggests cutting taxes as a good way to cut gas prices, remind them of where those gas tax dollars go, and then ask them if they’re willing to accept the trade-off.

Calendar of Events

August 2 - Summer 2000 Kansas Work Zone Signing Workshop in Topeka. Contact Rose Lichtenberg, (785) 864-2594

August 8 - 11 a.m. KDOT Employees’ Council Meeting, Seventh Floor Conference Room, Docking State Office Building.

August 11 - 9 a.m. Highway Advisory Commission telephone conference call from 8th Floor Planning conference room

August 16 - 2 p.m. Construction Bid Letting, Capitol Plaza Hotel, Topeka.
Brewer examines various European design practices

A five-country tour has given KDOT’s Jim Brewer first-hand insight into European design practices.

Brewer, Engineering Manager of the State Road Office, recently attended the Highway Geometric Design International Scanning tour in Sweden, Denmark, The Netherlands, The United Kingdom and Germany. One common practice in those countries is what is called Context Sensitive Design (CSD) in the United States.

“The CSD philosophy develops transportation projects that enhance the community while integrating roadways into the environment,” said Brewer. “The European countries we visited have used this approach, so we wanted to examine what concepts could be transferred to U.S. highway geometric design.”

Brewer was part of a delegation that spent two weeks touring the European countries that were selected because of their innovative methods related to highway design and project development. The delegation included AASHTO members of state Departments of Transportation, FHWA, the American Public Works Association, and academia. The tour included stops in Copenhagen, London, Amsterdam, Malmo, Sweden, and Mainz, Germany.

“These countries had design practices that considered mobility and safety issues while addressing physical and human environmental aspects,” said Brewer.

Brewer said safety is a high priority in project design. This objective is achieved by providing roadways that would self-enforce speed reductions, potentially increase levels of congestion, and promote alternate modes of transportation.

“This is a contrast to the U.S. where wider roads are considered safer, there is a heavy reliance on signs to communicate messages. High-speed mobility is expected and there is a lower tolerance of congestion by the user.”

Walking, bicycles and busses are relied upon heavily as means of transportation in the countries Brewer visited. He added that, with gasoline prices between $3-4 per gallon, most of the vehicles were small and fuel-efficient.

While we did not observe practices entirely new within the U.S., the form and extent of those practices were impressive. For example, speed reduction by roadway narrowing, tables, humps, and gates were reported to have gained public support.

Members of the tour delegation developed a list of practices that they felt could have potential in the U.S. to enhance highway design. Besides the CDS concept they include: project planning, roundabouts, the geometric design of self-explaining, self-enforcing roads, 2+1 roadways where the middle lane serves as a continuous passing lane for alternative directions of travel, and traffic calming through urban areas.

Members of the delegation each received a specific assignment to further investigate the practices. Brewer will be working on a committee to determine roundabout educational strategies. -S.W.

This narrow one-lane roadway in Denmark was designed to require self-enforced speed reductions. The reliance on bicycles as a means of transportation is evident by the wide bike paths on both sides of the roadway.
Local units of government have taken advantage of a partnership program over the last 10 years to enhance transportation in the state of Kansas.

KDOT’s Transportation Enhancement program has gained in popularity since it was developed through the Federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). Program Coordinator Gretchen Gleue said 65 projects have been completed and 11 more are either out for bids or under construction.

“We are seeing a better distribution of projects throughout Kansas,” said Gleue. “When the program initially began it was basically the metropolitan areas seeking funds. Now smaller communities in the state such as Phillipsburg, Elk County, and Sharon Springs have become involved and receive program funding.”

Gleue said ISTEA was for six years, but the Transportation Equity Act (TEA-21), continues program funding through 2003.

Transportation Enhancement projects under the initial federal program included facilities for pedestrians and bicycles; acquisition of scenic or historic easements and sites; scenic or historical highway programs; landscaping and scenic beautification; historic preservation; rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures or facilities; conversion of abandoned

‘When the program initially began it was basically the metropolitan areas seeking funds. Now smaller communities in the state such as Phillipsburg, Elk County, and Sharon Springs have become involved and receive program funding.’

Gretchen Gleue

Continued on page 9
The Kansas State Treasurer has begun a college savings program called the Kansas Postsecondary Education Savings Program. The college savings program offers savings accounts that allow the individual who opens the account to help pay education expenses for the beneficiary.

The program also provides the owner with tax advantages under both state and federal law. The Kansas Postsecondary Education Savings Program was approved by the 1999 Kansas Legislature.

"Saving for college, actually saving money is what we hope to accomplish," said State Treasurer Tim Shallenburger. "The idea of compounding your earnings is valuable."

Shallenburger administers the education savings program. He is accountable for regulations governing the program. Shallenburger also selected the financial organization that will handle the accounts and make sure the program acts in accordance with all Internal Revenue Service guidelines. American Century Investments of Kansas City will be the financial organization managing the program for the next seven years.

Thirty other states have a program like the education savings program. Kansas is unique because of the tax break that it offers to individuals or businesses that open an account. There are no state or federal income taxes on the account until there is a withdrawal. In addition, the account owner may take an annual deduction of up to $2,000 from Kansas adjusted gross income for contributions into each beneficiary’s education savings account.

“We believe that we have better investment options, lower minimums, lower fees, so we think that we have one of the best plans in the country,” said Shallenburger.

State employees are offered yet another benefit. Although anyone can open an account, an employee of any state agency will have access to payroll deduction that will automatically go to the college savings fund. The payroll deduction will be available in late August of this year.

For more information on how to start an account in the Kansas Postsecondary Education Savings Program please call 1-800-579-2203 or visit the website at www.learningquestsavings.com. -C.F.

Step Back in Time

A group traveling the Golden Belt Highway stops for a break at the Kansas-Colorado border in this photograph circa 1910.
Public Involvement journey continues

By Christy Cain

Public involvement is really taking flight at KDOT, and we couldn’t be more proud. Many factors contribute to the success of the program: agency staff members have accepted the new section, the program has the support of the KDOT management team, and public involvement liaisons (PILs) have been hired for each district.

There was a public involvement meeting in Salina in June. It was a wonderful opportunity to open the lines of communication between group members. The meeting gave us the chance to share success stories and lessons learned about public involvement efforts across the state.

The PILs are relatively new to each district, and it’s been exciting to see each of them grow in this challenging role. It’s particularly interesting because while the goal is common for each - to build and sustain relationships with both internal and external customers - the methods that they use to obtain the goal are unique.

This is what is so fascinating, and yet sometimes challenging, about communication. Unlike road or bridge design there are no hard and fast rules. The same situation could be handled any number of ways, and none of them is necessarily wrong. Each situation must be evaluated on its unique circumstances. Furthermore, the individual who is managing the situation must tailor the response to his or her particular strengths and communication style.

For example, five of the six districts recently hosted System Enhancement hearings. In each of those districts, the same general information was presented about the hearings, the rules of the game, and the schedule of events. However, there were five different presentation approaches. Some districts chose to pass out fact sheets, others posted big signs with the schedule of events. Some districts crafted sign-in sheets on the computer. Others made the sign-in sheets using ledger paper.

The point is that each district approached the hearings differently, and each method brought the same result - increased public awareness. The same thing was illustrated during the public involvement meeting. One PIL would bring up a question or concern, and there would be five different suggestions about how to approach the issue.

The public involvement staff is here to help make your life easier. The PILs don’t just produce fact sheets and coordinate meetings. They use a host of methods to facilitate internal and external communication within the districts. District PILs encourage and assist with the KDOT ambassador role, open the lines of communication within the districts, develop presentation materials, communicate with local media outlets, and a multitude of other things. This public involvement journey has just begun. It’s an exciting adventure and we’re anxious to see where the road leads.
Test your knowledge of KDOT!

Here’s a great way to learn more about the agency. The puzzle is just for fun, there are no prizes. The answers will be printed next month. Good luck!

Across
1. Projects that substantially improve safety, relieve congestion, improve access or enhance economic development.
2. Acronym - M M.
3. To move a utility pole on a state highway, call this section.
4. Balancing access, traffic, and land use to protect public safety.
5. July 1 to June 30.
6. A roadway identified for its scenic, historic, natural, recreational, archeological, or cultural resources.
7. Mike Armour is in charge of this Division.
8. KDOT safety slogan.
9. Land or property used specifically for transportation purposes.

Down
10. Another name for a group in Design.
11. Advertise and award a contract to the lowest responsible bidder.
12. An optional method employees can invest money.
13. To travel with an overwidth/overweight vehicle, you need a...
14. The town Public Involvement Liaison Kristen Brands is in.
15. 1-800-585-ROAD is the number for the...
16. City Connecting Link, Geometric Improvement, and Economic Development are part of this. (three words)
17. There are ___ Area offices and ___ District offices in KDOT.
18. This should always be on when in a vehicle.
20. Secretary of Transportation
21. County where the largest hand dug well in the world is.
22. Bituminous material.
Pete Collins spent 30 years as a Mississippi State Highway Patrolman and during that time he witnessed his share of heartbreak.

“I went into the patrol thinking I could save the world,” said Collins. “Nobody was going to die on my ‘run.’ Well, 30 years later 184 people had died on my run. I thought I wasn’t doing my job because people were still dying on the highways. I wanted to save everyone.”

Collins soon realized accidents were going to happen and people were going to die on the highway. After working several alcohol-related traffic fatalities involving youth he realized the importance of his job and the critical need to promote traffic safety.

“You never forget the expression when you tell a parent their child was killed in an automobile accident,” said Collins, the keynote speaker at the annual Transportation Safety Conference held recently in Topeka. “I remember the night a group of college freshmen were traveling 130 miles an hour and hit a utility pole. It took 12 hours to identify the young men. They all had fake ID’s so they could buy alcohol.”

“I never worked a fatality wreck in 30 years where alcohol was not a factor. Also, I never unbuckled a dead person.”

Pete Collins

“I never worked a fatality wreck in 30 years where alcohol was not a factor. Also, I never unbuckled a dead person.”

The outspoken former trooper said millions have been spent to improve traffic safety.

Welcome new KDOT employees!

Headquarters
Cara Anderson, Engineering Associate III, Planning
Richard Baker, Information Resource Specialist I, Computer Services
Brandon Espinosa, Engineering Technician Associate, Design
Trent Gay, Engineering Technician, Design
Anita Gorman, Accountant II, Fiscal Services
Paul Ham, Engineering Technician, Design
Vicki Harding, Human Resources Professional III, Personnel Services
Kellie Miller, Office Assistant II, Personnel Services
Paul Ham, Engineering Technician, Design
Shahir Safi, Engineering Associate I, Design
Susan Volz, Applications Programmer Analyst III, Computer Services

District One
Brian Cahill, Engineering Associate I, Design
David Freeland, Mechanic I, Topeka
Ted Knight, Engineering Technician Associate, Kansas City
Stephanie Hudson, Engineering Technician Associate, Horton
Patty Spain, Office Assistant II, Wamego

District Five
Chad Siemon, Engineering Associate I, Wichita

District Six
Richard Sears, Engineering Technician Associate, Liberal
Nicholas Withington, Engineering Technician Associate, Liberal

The Bureau of Personnel Services supplies information for new employees to Translines.
Following is a list of projects selected for 2001 funding.

**Historical Projects**
- Marion - Preservation of the 1912 Santa Fe Railroad Depot and reuse as the Marion City Library; Ellis County - Stone arch bridge and road repair 4.8 miles south of Walker over Big Creek; Elk County - Replank flooring of historic bridge over the Elk River; Franklin County - Improvements to the Midland Railway connecting with the Prairie Spirit Trail and Ottawa, Kansas and the former Santa Fe Depot; Marysville - Restore brick pavement along three blocks in downtown area; Linn County - Acquisition of right of way for Mine Creek Battlefield state historic site 2 miles south of Pleasanton.

**Scenic/Environmental Projects**
- Merriam - Construction of scenic enhancement on right of way at the corners of Shawnee Mission Parkway/ Eby Street/ Frontage Road; Franklin County - Visitors Information Center located 1/2 mile west of I-35 exit 187; Liberal - Streetscape and safety improvements along U.S. 83 from U.S. 54 to Sixth Street; Lawrence - Mitigation of environmental degradation created by runoff 1,000 feet south of East 23rd Street and 900 feet west of Haskell Avenue; Cottonwood Falls - Street improvements on Broadway Street from Pearl Street to Main Street and on K-177 from Pearl Street to Main Street; Phillipsburg - Landscape improvement of the City of Phillipsburg’s old water treatment plant at U.S. 36/U.S. 183; Olathe - Landscape improvements on K-7 from K-10 to 1/4 mile south of the 119th Street interchange.

**Pedestrian/Bicycle Projects**
- Shawnee - Construct pedestrian/bicycle path from the Charles J. Stump Memorial Park to the Mill Creek Streamway Trail; Hutchinson - Construct pedestrian/bicycle path connecting to the existing trail system around Carey Park; Derby - Construct pedestrian/bicycle path on Madison Avenue from east of Rock Road to High Park; Topeka - Construct pedestrian/bicycle path east from Topeka Boulevard along Shunganunga Creek to Kansas Avenue along the abandoned Missouri Pacific Railroad right of way; Pittsburg State University - Construct pedestrian/bicycle path starting at Pittsburg State University to M. Carmel Regional Medical Center; Wichita - Construct pedestrian/bicycle path along the Arkansas River from the Old Cowtown Museum to the First Street bridge; El Dorado - Construct pedestrian/bicycle path from Butler County Community College through East Park, Central Park to North Main Park; Lawrence - Bicycle education program.
Delegates

Continued from page 1

Motorola. “There’s always a lot of questions because of the difference in our decentralized government and how we divide responsibilities to various agencies and their centralized government. It’s a good learning experience for them as well as us.”

Ed Geer, Equipment Planning Technician in Construction and Maintenance, showed the delegates the central electronic banks equipment used for dispatch control, radios, controllers, and other types of communication equipment at the two 800 MHz buildings.

The group then visited with Secretary E. Dean Carlson, Senior Engineering Advisor Arland Hicks, and Transportation Planning Chief Jim Tobaben on data collection, Intelligent Transportation Systems, toll roads, and construction and maintenance responsibilities. –K.S.

Survey

Continued from page 1

Lincoln, Neb., (SRC) will conduct the survey with the assistance of KDOT’s Internal Survey Project Workgroup. In August, SRC will moderate several discussion groups with KDOT staff at all levels, in each District and at Headquarters to help identify relevant issues and concerns existing within the agency. The information from those discussion groups will be used to refine and finalize the Internal Survey questions.

As with the last survey, questions will be divided among the agency’s core values and leadership priorities. The questions will range from management inquiries to questions about work environments. For more information about the Internal Survey call the Office of Management and Budget at 296-3597 or watch your interoffice mail, e-mail, or bulletin boards.

Coasters

Kansas Department of Transportation

Coasters

The coaster is about 4 1/4 inches in diameter by 5/16 inch thick. It is made of clay material and is sandstone in color. It is etched with the KDOT logo in the middle. There are cork buttons on the bottom. It has a lacquer or polyurethane coating on the top.

Cost: $2.50 each or $10 for set of four.

Name __________________________________________

Headquarters (Office Name) ________________________________

District (Circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6 Town work in ________________

(If a retiree, please check here ______ and circle District currently living in.)

Work Phone __________________________

Amount enclosed $ _______

For more information, call Darlene at 785-296-7121.

Final Deadline to order is September 1.

To order: Send completed form and check (made payable to KDOT Employees’ Council) to:

Darlene Osterhaus-Transportation Planning

217 SE 4th St./Thacher Building

Topeka, KS 66603

Coasters will be ordered after the deadline. Please allow 6-8 weeks after the deadline for delivery. Multiple orders on one form are appreciated when possible. Thanks!

For those thinking ahead, what a great Christmas gift idea!!

Place your order now!
KDOT salutes its employees celebrating anniversaries in July

**10 YEARS**
- William C. Adams .................. Topeka
- Billy Bell ............................... Ulysses
- Richard Cunningham ........... Emporia
- Albert Davis ........................... Topeka
- Richard Hamlin .................... Emporia
- John Hochard .............................. Horton
- John Iman ................................ Phillipsburg
- James Langley ................................. Hugoton
- Stanley Robb ..................... Phillipsburg
- Rebecca Rochelle ..................... Topeka
- Richard Roberger ................ Belleville
- Tammy Snyder ....................... Kansas City

**20 YEARS**
- Bradley Howard ................ Grainfield
- Janice K leinschmidt ................. Topeka
- Randy Schimmel ...................... Lawrence
- James Wetterberg .................. Kansas City
- Dee Jay Estes ............................ Topeka

**30 YEARS**
- Dee Jay Estes ............................ Topeka

**40 YEARS**
- Jay Klint ................................. Horton

The following employees celebrated service anniversaries in April.

**10 YEARS**
- Valerian Ochs .................... Grainfield
- Gale Taylor .......................... Hill City

The following employees celebrated service anniversaries in June.

**20 YEARS**
- Robert Armstrong .................. Norton
- Harold Schleicher ................ Phillipsburg

**40 YEARS**
- Frankie Rabas .......................... Norton

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

 TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Humor and Emotional Intelligence,* August 17, Topeka.
Turning Around Poor Performance,* September 6, Topeka.
Basic Effective Supervisory Training*, July 11-14 (week two); October 17-20 and November 14-17.
*Meets the three-year management training requirement.
** Applies to the three-year management training requirement.
All classes, except for BEST, are available to non-supervisors with supervisory permission and where space is available. A comprehensive training calendar can be viewed on the KDOT Intranet.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Promotions/Transfers</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Headquarters</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Eisenbarth, Engineering Technician Specialist, Engineering Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shawn Findley, Information Technology Consultant II, Computer Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Guzman, Engineering Technician, Materials and Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffrey Horton, Professional Civil Engineer I, Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Kritikos, Information Resource Specialist III, Computer Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martha Lyle, Office Assistant III, Personnel Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harold Mayer, Engineering Technician Senior, Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colene McConnell, Office Specialist, Fiscal Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeanne Moore, Secretary I, Materials and Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benito Ortiz, Engineering Technician, Materials and Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brenda Perry, Engineering Technician Specialist, Construction and Maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>District One</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earl Bosak, Engineering Associate II, Topeka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward Clark, Engineering Technician, Olathe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilbert Gonzales, Storekeeper II, Topeka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pat Laha, Engineering Technician Specialist, Topeka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Morrison, Engineering Technician Specialist, Olathe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>District Two</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Kaempfe, Engineering Technician Specialist, Salina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myron Kornmeyer, Equipment Mechanic I, Ellsworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Rausch, Equipment Operator III, Strong City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greg Rietcheck, Engineering Technician Specialist, Salina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>District Three</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gayle Dible, Engineering Technician Specialist, Oakley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaron Schartz, Highway Maintenance Supervisor, Oakley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheryl Smith, Office Assistant III, Norton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>District Four</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Randall Hutchinson, Engineering Technician, Chanute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>District Five</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earl Bartlett, Engineering Technician Specialist, Wichita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Barton, Equipment Operator III, Wichita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Clayton, Highway Maintenance Superintendent, Great Bend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Demoret, Engineering Technician Specialist, Hutchinson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leslie Gregory, Engineering Technician Specialist, Winfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen Hammersmit, Engineering Technician Specialist, Great Bend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darryl Horst, Engineering Technician Specialist, Pratt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Jarke, Engineering Technician Specialist, Wichita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chester Wilson, Highway Maintenance Supervisor, Wichita</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Bureau of Personnel Services supplies information for promotions/transfers to Translines.