

# Tracklines

Monthly Employee Publication

Kansas Department of Transportation

Office of Transportation Information



OCTOBER 2000

## Special events help boost United Way donations

By Stan Whitley

The combination of food and fun provided the impetus to help KDOT Headquarters area employees increase contributions to the United Way during the 2000 fund-raising drive.

"We had an excellent drive, increasing our financial support to this worthy cause by 12.5 percent," said KDOT campaign chairman Al Cathcart. "The volunteers that participated on our United Way team are to be commended for helping organize the drive and involving many employees in fun special events."

Cathcart said total funds collected during the two-week drive were \$28,328.83. Pledges saw an increase of 7.5 percent, but the



*Lots of KDOT employees bought tickets to the steak dinner where Division Directors and Bureau Chiefs served food to help raise money for the United Way.*

big gainer was in special events contributions. Cathcart said \$3,685.53 was raised in special events, which was a 63 percent

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## Area Three employees settle into new Bonner Springs home



*The new Area Three office in Bonner Springs has more conference rooms, work bays, and storage for employees.*

KDOT's Area Three office in the Kansas City area officially now has a new home. An Open House on September 15 at the new facility, located at 650 N. K-7 highway in Bonner Springs, marked the occasion.

KDOT employees from Headquarters, employees from other District One offices as well as local employees and family members were on hand to celebrate. Members of the Kansas Highway Patrol and local external customers also attended.

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- ◆ SAFETY AWARDS ANNOUNCED AT OPERATIONS MEETING
- ◆ CHECK OUT KDOT'S FIRST PROJECT SPECIFIC WEB SITE



From  
Where  
I Sit

by *E. Dean Carlson*

## Forums offer chance to meet employees

As you've hopefully already read in this issue of Translines, I will be visiting the Districts next month for a round of Employee Forums. I have always enjoyed these events but this year I am looking forward to it more than ever. The reason is simple: I prefer face-to-face communication whenever possible. I have spoken with many of you over the phone, or answered letters and emails, but that is not the same thing as being able to look people in the eye and give them a re-

sponse to their question. The forums give me a chance to do that and I relish the opportunity.

I hope you will take advantage of this opportunity as well. I need to know what's on your mind, and what the key issues are that affect your day-to-day life at KDOT. I can guess at some of the big ones - pay structures and benefits, for example - but I'm sure there are many more issues that I may not know about. I can't take action on an issue unless I know what it is. This is your chance to make sure that I do know. I look forward to seeing those of you who are invited at these forums next month.

I'd also like to take a moment to thank all of you in the Topeka area for your hard work on behalf of the United Way Campaign. Those efforts resulted in a very successful campaign that raised a total of \$28,328. The special events are responsible for \$3,685 of that, and the other \$24,643 comes from Pledges. Co-chairs Al Cathcart and Dan Carter did a great job and will be the first to tell you that they didn't do it alone. It took the time and talents of dozens of KDOT employees, and the willing generosity of hundreds of others. You should all be proud of your accomplishment. It shows once again that KDOT does care about the community.



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### Calendar of Events

**November 10** — State employees off for Veteran's Day holiday.

**November 14** - 11 a.m. KDOT Employees' Council Meeting, Seventh Floor Conference Room, Docking State Office Building.

**November 15** - 2 p.m. Construction Bid Letting at the Airport Hilton in Wichita.

**November 17** — 9 a.m. Highway Advisory Commission teleconference meeting.

**November 23-24** - State employees off for Thanksgiving Day holiday.

## 40 years of service



*Leroy Jackson, Highway Maintenance Superintendent at Wamego, was honored by Governor Bill Graves recently during a 40-year service award ceremony at the State Capitol.*

## KUDOS to KDOT employees

**David Church** and **Cheryl Lambrecht**, Senior Traffic Engineers in Traffic Engineering, received certificates of appreciation from Santa Fe Trail High School on September 25 for a project to improve safety on US-56 at the high school's entrance.

## New web site gives details on Westgate project

Updated traffic information, overall project details and numerous ways for students to learn about bridge construction and engineering are just some of the features of KDOT's first project-specific project involving the new Westgate bridge on US-75 in Topeka.

The new web site was unveiled to the public on September 13. The address is <http://Westgate.ksdot.org>.

The web site is divided into two main sections - one with information geared primarily for people who drive on US-75 and one for students to learn more about bridge construction in general.

"Our web site will provide detailed information on the Westgate project about its progress and how it's affecting traffic as well as offer students a unique learning tool," said Public Information Officer Marty Matthews. "The construction is vital to maintain safety for the traveling public and the web site will help illustrate this point."

The first section contains pages on:



*Westy, the Westgate web site mascot*

- ◆ Construction Highlights
- ◆ Why Tear it Down?
- ◆ Safety Tips
- ◆ Map

The second section includes pages on:

- ◆ Term Definitions
- ◆ History
- ◆ Stats, Facts and More
- ◆ Life of a Project
- ◆ Safety and Maintenance
- ◆ KDOT Team
- ◆ Links for more Information
- ◆ Teacher Information
- ◆ Map

There's also a special notice on the first page of the web site giving people the latest information on recent or upcoming changes to traffic.

Removal of the existing Westgate bridge and construction of the new structure will reduce US-75 traffic to one lane in each direction north of I-70 beginning in late November. The work is scheduled to be finished in November 2001.



*Above, lots of cakes were entered in the contest and at right, the grill is full of steaks for the luncheon.*



*Engineering and Design Director David Comstock gets into the spirit at the steak dinner.*

## United Way

Continued from page 1

increase over the previous year.

“Special events provided the opportunity for everyone to be involved from buying a cookie at one of the bake sales to participating in the barbecue steak luncheon,” said Cathcart.

The steak luncheon was the final special event held and generated strong support from employees with 160 attendees helping raise \$1,318.25.

Funds collected from the Greater Topeka United Way drive will help support 32 programs in a seven county area. Donations to meet pressing health and human service needs will be distributed in Shawnee, Jackson, Osage, Pottawatomie, Wabaunsee, Jefferson and Douglas coun-

ties.

The following is a breakdown of funds collected from the drive:

<b>Pledges</b>	\$24,643.30
<b>BBQ steak luncheon</b>	\$1,318.25
<b>DSOB potato bar</b>	\$708.23
<b>DSOB chili dogs</b>	\$449.20
<b>Cake decorating contest</b>	\$302.49
<b>Thacher chili dogs</b>	\$250.26
<b>Thacher bake sale</b>	\$231.45
<b>Ice cream wagon</b>	\$217.00
<b>DSOB bake sale</b>	\$207.55
<b>Thacher candy bars</b>	\$11.00

The winner of the day off was David Schwartz in Transportation Planning and the winner of Scarecrow tickets was Diane Flanders in Computer Services. These two winners were drawn from the names of individuals donating \$26 or more to the United Way drive.



*At left, the ice cream wagon visited Docking and above, lots of goodies were available at the bake sale.*

## Public Involvement grows, changes

By Christy Cain

As you may have already heard, things are changing in the Public Involvement section. Carolyn Jordan has recently joined the ranks as a Public Involvement Liaison for Headquarters. Carolyn will assist the Bureau of Design with the project-specific public involvement efforts. She has an extensive background in meeting facilitation and training, which will be very beneficial in this capacity.

In another development, I will be leaving my position as Public Involvement Administrator (PIA) in mid-November. I'm getting married and will be moving out of state with my future husband. Ron Kaufman, who is currently a Public Involvement Liaison for Headquarters, will take over the PIA duties.

I have thoroughly enjoyed serving the agency over the last year and a half. The support, open-mindedness, and "can-do" attitude that have been displayed over and over again are appreciated more than you'll ever know. With your help, I've watched KDOT's public involvement program grow from its infancy.

We've enjoyed a lot of successes! Public Involvement Liaisons have been hired for each district, and they've initiated a number of grassroots public involvement efforts. Public Involvement training has been provided to nearly all KDOT employees. Project-specific public involvement has also taken flight with more and more projects taking shape with public involvement at the core. And the customer service toll-free line, the KDOT Connection, has been implemented.

And these are just the highlights! It would take many pages to list all of the agency's accomplishments.

The infancy of the program was very productive. A solid foundation has been laid. Now the agency is at a crossroads of sorts and it's time to take the program a step further. We are on the threshold of the toddler stage, a time of great maturation and development.

Just as growing pains can be uncomfortable, so might this phase of development. KDOT needs to push the comfort levels and



begin critically examining how public involvement processes can be more wholly integrated into all aspects of KDOT business practices.

I have every confidence in the ability of the public involvement staff to continue to lead the charge. But don't ever forget your important role. The program will continue to succeed or fail because of the support that you provide. I plan to keep in touch, and I'm looking forward to hearing reports about the healthy, vibrant, program that I know will continue to grow at KDOT. Thanks for supporting me in the small role that I played in the Public Involvement Program development.

### Deaths

Condolences to the family and friends of former KDOT employee **Don Chalmers**, who died Sept. 23 in Topeka.

Chalmers, 88, was an Assistant Engineer of Design for the State Highway Commission before he retired in 1977.

He is survived by his wife, Leona,, one son, one grandson and one great-grandson.

Memorial contributions may be made to Heart of America Hospice in Topeka.

**SAFETY AWARD WINNERS**



*The District Headquarters/District Crews at Topeka won the District One safety award. Accepting the award from Safety and Health Inspector Allen Vinyard are District Materials Engineer Jeff Frantzen, District One Engineer Roy Rissky, and District Maintenance Engineer Clay Adams.*



*Area Four at Pittsburg won the District Four safety award. Accepting the award from Safety and Health Inspector Allen Vinyard are Area Engineer George Dockery, Area Construction Engineer Bob Gudgen, and Area Maintenance Superintendent Butch Mills.*



*The District Headquarters/District Crews at Salina won the District Two safety award. Accepting the award from Safety and Health Inspector Allen Vinyard are District Shop Superintendent Mack Villalpando, District Maintenance Engineer Roger Alexander, District Engineer Don Drickey, and District Superintendent Howard Reece.*



*Area Four at Great Bend won the District Five safety award. Accepting the award from Safety and Health Inspector Allen Vinyard are Area Maintenance Superintendent John Clayton, Area Construction Engineer Scott Mullen, and Area Engineer Barry McManaman.*



*Area One at Phillipsburg won the District Three safety award. Accepting the award from Safety and Health Inspector Allen Vinyard are Area Engineer Harold Schleicher, and Area Superintendent Doug Driggs.*



*The District Headquarters/District Crews at Garden City won the District Six safety award. Accepting the award from Safety and Health Inspector Allen Vinyard are District Shop Superintendent Victor Michel, District Maintenance Engineer Ron Hall, and District Engineer Larry Thompson.*

# Process works for KQM team

Three years ago, Flint Warda, Equipment Operator II, from the Ellsworth Subarea took a trip to St. Joseph, Mo., to attend the Tri-State Equipment show. Excited by what he saw, he shared his enthusiasm with his Area Engineer, Randy West. The idea of creating a KQM team to identify areas for improvement was discussed and led to the creation of "The People's Edge," and the rest, as they say, is history.

"The People's Edge" is made up of front line workers from across Area Four in District Two. The members are; Warda; George Edmondson, Equipment Operator II (Lindsborg); Craig Garrison,



*The Blade Hand is a device create by "The People's Edge" KQM team to help increase efficiency and safety when attaching blades.*

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# 2000 Operations Meeting

*KDOT's annual Operations Meeting in Great Bend is a good place to exchange ideas whether it's at the evening social event or at the different display areas at the meeting.*



## Blade Hand

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Equipment Operator II (Lincoln); Steve Hull, Equipment Operator II (Minneapolis); Don Kempke, Equipment Mechanic II (Ellsworth); Barbara Kohls, Office Assistant III (Ellsworth); and Paul Munchler, Equipment Operator III (Salina).

On October 4, three members of the KQM team took the stage at the annual Operations Meeting to present the fruits of their labors: a blade changing device they call the “Blade Hand.” Employees from across the state were introduced to a new piece of equipment designed to increase the level of safety and reduce man-hours needed when changing blades on a plow. The presentation outlined the history behind the device and detailed the steps necessary to identify and implement improvements.

The Blade Hand is a compact, lightweight device using a scissors action to lift a tray into which the blade can be lowered and hauled away. By using the Blade Hand properly, operators minimize the opportunity for injury to feet, hands, and backs and blades need not be dropped to the floor potentially cutting hoses or chipping floors. New blades can be loaded into the tray at the storage location then transported to the plow in the Blade Hand reducing the requirement of lifting and carrying blades on slick surfaces during inclement weather.

Once the new blades are raised to the plow and aligned with the attachment holes, bolts and nuts can be installed with the Blade Hand supporting the blades thereby freeing the operator’s hands during installation. With the Blade Hand, tests indicate that down time spent waiting for assistance and man-hours needed to change blades can be significantly reduced.

This testing phase was conducted by presenting a prototype to each Subarea crew and asking the crew members to use the device to change a set of blades. Suggestions about user friendliness and



*Employees look at the Blade Hand to see how it operates.*

potential limitations of the Blade Hand were used to identify improvements made to the second prototype. These changes improved maneuverability, increased versatility, and reinforced the safety advantages found when using the Blade Hand.

During the presentation and demonstration at the Operations Meeting, a great deal of interest was shown. Several KDOT employees expressed interest in having a Blade Hand to try in their corners of the state. Some Bureaus were also excited by what they saw. One Bureau chief has gone so far as to request pictures and product information he wants to present at an upcoming conference of municipalities.

Whether the Blade Hand is eventually added to the inventory list and is incorporated into Subarea inventories is yet to be decided, but the “People’s Edge” KQM team is now looking forward to future projects. *Story/photo by David Greiser, Public Involvement Liaison*



### *Step Back in Time*



*Workers pave new roadway on K-177 east of Manhattan during this construction photograph taken in September of 1957.*



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**Dear Kansas Department of Transportation:**

Thank you so much for the maps to use with our fifth grade students. I am sure we will not even be able to count the times that they will be the best reference for our students to use. The Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson is a wonderful resource for our small school with a crunched budget. I thank you for your timely and kind response to my request for the maps!

Respectfully yours,  
Janice Romeiser, Topeka

**Dear Kansas Department of Transportation:**

My husband and I took a bicycle tour from our home in El Paso, Texas, to Des Moines, Iowa, this summer during June and July. We traveled through Kansas twice, on our way to Iowa and then on our way back.

We thank Kansas so much for having the BEST maps, both the bicycle map and the road map, of all the states!

Kansas also wins, hands down, as the friendliest state! That is a big statement especially since all the people in all the states were very friendly.

Kansas also had the best roads and shoulders to travel on bicycle. It was a joy to travel through your state.

Charles and Kamala Land,  
El Paso, Texas

**Dear Kansas Department of Transportation:**

I live in Sapulpa, Okla. Sometimes my job takes me to Kansas City and the surrounding area.

Most of the time I go by the way of US-169. You have put in a new rest stop. I don't know the name of it, but it has a sign that tells about the Bloody Benders. I stop there most of the time just to get out and walk around. It's a good place. So thanks, Kansas Department of Transportation.

Jim Hurst,  
Sapulpa, Okla.



*Wes Moore, Assistant District Three Engineer, was one of the speakers at the annual QuadState Maintainers meeting on September 20 in Sidney, Neb. Maintainers from Wyoming, Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, and South Dakota attend to learn new ways to communicate the latest inclement weather conditions during the winter.*



*The increased space in the maintenance area at the new Area Three office in Bonner Springs is one of the many improvements.*

## Area Three

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The facility is located just north and east of the Bonner Springs/I-70 exit. Many years ago the land used to be a Christmas tree farm and many trees surround the building today.

“We began planning for the building project almost 12 years ago and purchased the property in 1992. The Legislature helped make the dream of a new facility come true when the budget was approved in Fiscal Year 1999,” said Mick Halter, Kansas City Metro Engineer. “It’s a great benefit to our KDOT employees who in turn can provide even better and faster service to the traveling public. We’re very pleased to have such a nice facility.”

The new building has much more space and features large and small conference rooms to be used for a variety of activities such as pre-construction meetings with contractors. The maintenance area has more drive-through work bays that allow trailers to pull in without unhooking as well as its own wash bay. In the back storage building there is enough space to store all the maintenance vehicles. The Kansas Highway Patrol will also share a part of the building with KDOT.

The Metro office is still located at I-35 and Lamar in Kansas City. Paul Gripka is the Field Engineering Administrator at the new facility and Oscar Hamilton is the Area Maintenance Superintendent.

# BROWN BAG LUNCH

**Topic:** Traffic Engineering  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 1  
**Time:** Noon to 1 p.m.  
**Place:** Room 481, Docking  
*All KDOT employees are encouraged to attend.*

Welcome  
new KDOT  
employees!

### Headquarters

**David Howard**, Right of Way Agent I, Right of Way

**Dennis Keegan**, Right of Way Agent I, Right of Way

**Mitchell McGee**, Applications Programmer Analyst III, Materials and Research

**Melanie Murphy**, Office Assistant II, Fiscal Services

**Anje Parsons**, Secretary I, Design

**Joe Williams**, Engineering Technician, Traffic Engineering

### District One

**Stephanie Clements**, Office Assistant II, Emporia

**Willard L. Trout Jr.**, Engineering Technician, Lawrence

### District Two

**Cynthia Riechers**, Engineering Technician, Salina

### District Three

**Bruce Colip**, Storekeeper II, Norton

*The Bureau of Personnel Services supplies information for new employees to Translines.*

## Constitutional amendment question will be on November 7 ballot

A constitutional amendment question will be on the November 7 statewide general election ballot that will allow KPERS the opportunity to invest in banking institutions.

The public will be asked to vote on a question to remove an investment restriction in the Kansas Constitution that dates back to 1859. The law currently says the state can not be a stockholder in any banking institution.

Last year the Kansas Legislature adopted a resolution to remove the restriction. To become law, a Constitutional Amendment must be approved by a simple majority of the Kansas voters.

A "yes" vote in the general election will approve the amendment and a "no" vote will disapprove of the change.

## Training Opportunities

◆ **Basic Effective Supervisory Training\***, November 14-17.

◆ **Leadership Basics**, October 31-November 2, Topeka; December 5-7, TBA; and January 23-25, TBA.\*\*\*

Turning Around Poor Performance\*, January 11, Topeka.

\*Meets the three-year management training requirement.

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

\*\*\*Supervisory Continuing Education Credits.

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.*

## KDOT surveyors elected to posts

Bill Haverkamp, Survey Coordinator in Design, and Wayne Blackburn, District Four Surveyor, were elected to office for the Kansas Society of Land Surveyors at its annual meeting in September. This year's meeting took place concurrently with the Missouri Professional Land Surveyors meeting in Kansas City, Mo.

Haverkamp will serve a one-year term as Vice President and Blackburn was elected to the Board of Directors for two years.

The group is composed of licensed professional land surveyors and land surveyors in training. It promotes professional land surveying standards, continuing education, and surveying careers to high school students.

# M I L E S T O N E S

KDOT salutes its employees celebrating anniversaries in October

### 10 YEARS

Howard Bibb Jr. .... Kansas City  
 Rance Biesecker ..... Topeka  
 Duane Clark ..... Lindsborg  
 Mary Deiter ..... Topeka  
 Charlotte Fitzgerald ..... Topeka  
 Brian Holdt ..... Medicine Lodge  
 Huey Long ..... Olathe  
 James McClung ..... Kingman  
 Cody Miller ..... Hutchinson  
 Annette Ratcliff ..... Wichita  
 John Rutledge ..... Chanute  
 Douglas Severt ..... Chanute

### 30 YEARS

Rita Bock ..... Topeka  
 Glen Huddleston ..... Larned  
 Bill Parcels Jr. .... Topeka

### 20 YEARS

Gary Farlow ..... Topeka  
 Michael Hays ..... Topeka  
 Scott McLendon ..... Horton  
 Rhonda Seitz ..... Topeka  
 Roger Wassenberg ..... Kansas City  
 Ronald Weyer ..... Lawrence

### 40 YEARS

Gerald Mai ..... Salina

*The following employee celebrated a service anniversary in September.*

### 30 YEARS

Larry Smatla ..... Topeka

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

## Promotions/Transfers

### Headquarters

**Julie Anderson**, Office Specialist, Traffic Safety  
**Margie Baum**, Applications Programmer Analyst IV, Computer Services  
**Rick Bruner**, Applications Programmer Analyst III, Planning  
**Jim Emery**, Engineering Technician Specialist, Right of Way  
**Robert Fuller**, Engineering Associate III, Materials and Research  
**Rex McCommon**, Management Systems Analyst II, Planning  
**Ron McMurry**, Public Service Executive II, Management and Budget  
**Mark Segelquist**, Applications Programmer Analyst III, Design  
**Randel Scarbrough**, Right of Way Agent I, Right of Way  
**Sue Swartzman**, Data Center Manager, Computer Services

### District One

**Jamie Gaddis**, Engineering Technician Associate, Lawrence  
**Donald Logsdon**, Engineering Technician Specialist, Lawrence  
**Vernon McClintock**, Engineering Technician Senior, Emporia  
**Tucker Porter**, Engineering Technician, Topeka

### District Two

**Tom Skucius**, Engineering Technician Senior, Belleville

### District Three

**Kegan Hemel**, Engineering Technician Senior, Atwood  
**Bradley Reeh**, Equipment Operator III, Colby

### District Four

**Daniel Poore**, Engineering Technician, Independence

**William Stahl**, Engineering Technician Senior, Garnett

### District Five

**Terry Allen**, Welder, Hutchinson  
**Michael Fairleigh**, Engineering Technician Senior, Pratt  
**Marvin Parvi**, Engineering Technician Senior, Great Bend  
**Calvin Showalter**, Engineering Technician Senior, Great Bend

### District Six

**Tim Deaver**, Equipment Operator III, Garden City  
**Jack Immroth**, Equipment Operator II, Garden City  
**David Ubel**, Engineering Technician Senior, Dodge City  
**Francis Younger**, Engineering Technician, Syracuse  
**Steve Zimmerman**, Equipment Operator II, Dodge City

*The Bureau of Personnel Services supplies information to Translines.*

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