**Legislature**

Legislative session heating up: This is week six of the 2013 legislative session and debate on myriad issues is heating up. The bill introduction deadline has passed and with few exceptions, no new legislation can be introduced. Debate on a bill that would place the Kansas Turnpike Authority under the KDOT umbrella began last week in the House Transportation Committee. Debates have also been conducted on sales tax proposals and the KDOT budget. Proposals must be out of committees (with some exceptions) and debated by next week to meet the first turnaround deadline. Turnaround is the midway point of the legislative session and all bills must be passed by the chamber of origin or they are considered dead for the remainder of the session. Again, there are some exceptions to that rule. KDOT leaders expect decisions on the agency’s budget, taxes and other policy proposals in the coming weeks.

**Winter Storm**

KDOT crews are prepared: As of this morning, roads in the western and central parts of Kansas have many highways partly or completely snow packed as a winter storm is expected to cover most of the state in the next two days. KDOT crews have prepared for the event and pretreated highways where possible. “Our guys are eager to get out there,” said Peter Carttar, Assistant Bureau Chief in Construction and Maintenance. “And they’ll do what they can to keep the roads clear.” KDOT provides motorists information so they can be prepared in inclement weather as well. Call 511 in Kansas (1-866-511-KDOT (5368) outside the state), check travel information on KDOT’s website at www.kandrive.org or visit http://511mm.ksdot.org on your mobile device.

Travelers may now subscribe to free text or e-mail message alerts about current conditions on the routes they travel. Subscribers to My Kansas 511 select the route, the time of the day and the type of information they want, such as road closures or National Weather Service warnings. To subscribe, visit www.kandrive.org, KDOT’s traveler information portal, and select “Plan Your Drive” or “Get More Travel Info.”

**KDOT crew’s rescue effort featured:** Oakley Superintendent Jerry Glassman recently shared the details on Eagle Community TV of a rescue effort by KDOT employees in December 2011 during blizzard conditions. Heart attack patient Chad Griffith needed to be transferred to Hays Medical Center for cardiac surgery quickly. With air ambulance down and 12 to 15 inches of snow, KDOT was called to assist and successfully got him there. Griffith was home by Christmas. Over the course of any winter, these KDOT crews perform much-needed services and at times they are dramatic, the Hays Post stated.

**In Memory**

Condolences to friends and family of KDOT retiree James Otis “J.O.” Adams who died on Feb. 8 in Topeka. He served in District Four, District One and Headquarters for 34 years, retiring as the Director of Operations. His son, Clay Adams, is the District One Engineer.
Scherschligt retiring: Another member of the KDOT family is moving on to the Kansas Asphalt Pavement Association. Director of Engineering and Design Dan Scherschligt’s last day at KDOT is March 5. He’ll then work briefly with current Executive Director of KAPA and KDOT retiree Mike Crow, who is stepping down as he and his wife are moving to Colorado this summer to be closer to family.

“I love the people at KDOT and I will miss them big time,” Scherschligt said. He started his career at the agency in 1979 as a Project Engineer in Independence, but a stint in Bridge Design during the Rotational Training Program enticed him to come to Topeka. He served in several positions in Bridge Design as well as the Topeka Metro Engineer and District One Engineer before being selected for his current position in 2007.

One bridge inspection during the late 1980s stands out. He was called to Kansas City on a Sunday when a tanker carry diesel crashed and blew up on the I-70 Interctiy Viaduct. He got there quickly as flames were still going down the gutters.

“I’m on this bridge and there was a big kaboom explosion and for a hundredth of a second I thought I was dead because I figured the bridge blew up,” he said. “What it was, a guy was inflating a big tire at the old KDOT Sub-area office and it blew up.” The bridge was shut down for months as the heat melted the girders and damaged the steel piers.

Scherschligt’s retirement reception is from 2-4 p.m. on March 5 at the Eisenhower State Office Building in Topeka.

Improving skills: During the past few months, District Three Safety Specialist Gary Schilowsky has been teaching “Back-ing Using a Spotter/Ground Guide Training” classes. In all, 164 KDOT employees took part in the ‘team’ backing exercises, which fostered effective communication skills between the driver and the ground spotter. Participants backed a dump truck with a snow plow attached through a 200-foot long/16-foot wide serpentine course.

Schilowsky offered a friendly competition - the team closest to the designated mark without touching the cone would win a “Precision Backing Champs” safety jacket.

“What started out as inches, was quickly reduced to fractions of an inch,” Schilowsky said. One-sixteenth of an inch separated the first, second and third place teams, so he awarded jackets to all three teams.

Kevin Lacy in Norton and Francis Wahrman in Atwood won first place with 1/32-inch; Bo Pfannenstiel in Norton and Curtis Glenn in Norton took second with 1/16-inch; Scott Eller in Phillipsburg and Tony Beckman in Phillipsburg with 3/32-inch placed third.
District One

Sharing ideas: After seeing the article in the last Translines Express edition, Rick Looper, Highway Supervisor at the Lamar Subarea office in Kansas City, was inspired to share improvements his staff have made regarding wing plow holders. Equipment Operator Seniors Jason Dlugopolski, Terry Johnson and Todd Moore created a holder made out of two by fours, a ratchet strap and plywood from the stock room. The only other items needed are wheel casters and wood screws. The wing plows are stored in the shop and rolled outside where the trucks drive up and the wing plow can be hooked on in less than five minutes and without any lifting. “My seniors do a good job coming up with stuff to make the job easier and more efficient,” Looper said.

Trivia!

1. Judy Garland starred in two movies with Kansas ties – name the other one.
2. One bushel of wheat weighs about:
   A. 17.5 pounds
   B. 34.4 pounds
   C. 48 pounds
   D. 60 pounds

   3. Where is the world’s largest spur?
   A. Dodge City
   B. Garden City
   C. Park City
   D. Abilene

   --Bonus – how big is it?

   Answers are below

Statewide announcements

PE only projects: Secretary Mike King and Gov. Sam Brownback traveled to three Kansas towns last week to announce preliminary engineering projects. They traveled to Overland Park, Pittsburg and Spearville on Feb. 12 to make the announcements of local projects. KDOT leaders reviewed about 100 projects and made their selections based on engineering factors and public recommendations received during local consultation meetings last October. The caravan also stopped in Greensburg for lunch in a local restaurant, a tour of the rebuilt Big Well Museum and conversations with KDOT employees. To see the release and list of new projects, click here.

Secretary Mike King speaks in Spearville about the preliminary engineering projects that were selected.

Terry Johnson, left, and Jason Dlugopolski show how easy it is to attach a wing plow with the holder they made.
District Five

**K-96/K-14 project planning:** Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Community Advisory Group (CAG), and local public officials met for the T-Works Modernization/Expansion project on K-96/K-14 in Rice and Reno counties Feb. 8 in Sterling. Barry McManaman and Jonathon Marburger from KDOT as well as consulting design engineers from Wilson and Company and Parsons Brinckerhoff facilitated the meetings. Initial construction for this project will be a two-lane freeway on four-lanes of right-of-way, which will accommodate future expansion to a four-lane freeway. The improvements will provide access to area communities, support potential development and accommodate local traffic crossings at several locations. A Corridor Location Study, completed in 2010, evaluated several alternatives for a new K-96/K-14 highway and arrived at a selected location that received environmental approval. Design work is currently under way and construction plans are expected to be finished in fall 2016.

At right, a contractor, a consultant and a KDOT inspector check 30 minutes of speed data gathered from a newly installed radar traffic detection device on K-96 in east Wichita. They are comparing it with similar recorded data using a lidar radar unit borrowed from the Kansas Highway Patrol. The latest ITS phase in Wichita includes seven new cameras and eight sensors on six miles of highway that averages over 65,000 vehicles per day. The camera views and traffic speeds will be available on www.WICHway.org in March.
TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. The Harvey Girls, which featured the song, “The Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe.”
2. D. 60 pounds
3. D. Abilene, it’s 27 feet high and weighs 2,000 pounds

Have an idea for a news brief or picture that could be featured in an upcoming edition of Translines Express? Please e-mail your suggestions to translines@ksdot.org

CRAZY BOWL

Sunday, March 3, at 1 p.m.
Deadline to sign up:
- NOON on Feb. 27 -
Cost: $7 per person
To sign up: Bring team fee ($28) to Kim Stich
Who: Teams of 4 people (KDOT employees, friends and family members are welcome)
Where: Gage Bowl - Huntoon Street, Topeka