

# Translines EXPRESS

Jan. 23, 2013

## Legislature

**2013 session under way:** KDOT was the focus of a lot of discussion and news stories last week as the 2013 legislative session got under way. In his State of the State speech, Gov. Brownback suggested that now is the time to consider placing KDOT and the Kansas Turnpike Authority under the same umbrella. And, the Governor's 2014-15 budget proposal included millions of dollars of transfers from the State Highway Fund to other state funds. Agency leaders said in news reports that the transfers are possible because of savings KDOT has seen from low bid prices, low inflation and bond refinancing. The Governor also offered important support for T-WORKS, which, Secretary King said in e-mail letters to KDOT and stakeholders, "That's good news for us, Kansas taxpayers and travelers." As these and other proposals that affect transportation move through the legislative process over the next few months, KDOT leadership will keep staff and stakeholders informed of the progress through updates in Translines Express and occasional e-mails.



## Remembering Martin Luther King Jr.



*A march from the Kansas Judicial Center to the State Capitol last Thursday was a prominent part of the Governor's Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Day celebration.*

## Annual Report

**KDOT posts 2013 annual report:** KDOT's 2013 annual report, which details the agency's progress, accomplishments and challenges of the past year, has been posted on the agency website. In 2012, KDOT continued transportation progress across the state through the T-WORKS program, strengthened the commitment to reducing traffic fatalities, worked to improve efficiencies throughout the agency, increased economic development opportunities and strived to take care of state resources. In the process, the agency received awards and reached milestones. The report also includes an appendix that has details of project selection, a description of all projects scheduled for the T-WORKS program, financial information and more. The report and appendix can be viewed at [www.ksdot.org/publications.asp](http://www.ksdot.org/publications.asp).

## T-Express

**Stay in the loop:** If you've missed a copy of Translines or want to refer back to a past edition, don't worry – they are on the KDOT website at [www.ksdot.org](http://www.ksdot.org) under Publications and Reports. If you're retiring soon, make sure to send your name and home e-mail address to [translines@ksdot.org](mailto:translines@ksdot.org) to be added to the distribution list. And if you know of any retirees not receiving this publication electronically who would like to, please forward this information as well. Thanks for helping to keep employees and retirees informed.

# Amtrak



**All aboard:** KDOT officials traveled the South-west Chief rail route that transverses the state from Topeka to LaJunta, Colo. The trip gave those on the caravan a chance to get first-hand knowledge along the way. The team learned of improvements that are necessary, in addition to hearing of the importance of the route to the communities in which they traveled.

At each stop the train made, including Newton, Hutchinson, Dodge City and Garden City, local officials boarded the train and talked with KDOT about the issues in their areas and how train travel is important to their citizens. KDOT and impacted stakeholders will continue their discussions about the significant investment needed to keep the SouthWest Chief on the current route.



**Hutchinson City Manager John Deardoff (left front) and Hutchinson Mayor Dave Razo (left back), ride on the Amtrak train traveling from Topeka to La Junta, Colo., to view rail conditions with Secretary Mike King (right front) and Deputy Secretary Jerry Younger (right back) on Jan. 10.**

## KDOT using new socia media tool

For the first time, KDOT has used the social media tool Storify to tell one of its stories.

Storify pulls together primarily social media postings from platforms such as Twitter, YouTube and Facebook to create a timeline or story. In this case the story was a train trip from Topeka to La

Junta, Colo., by a team of four KDOT leaders.

The team and local officials who were picked up along the route were briefed by BNSF and Amtrak representatives on the issues and challenges of operating the Southwest Chief line. Check it out at <http://bit.ly/UVXV8L>.

## Trivia!

1. What famous lawman was a policeman in Wichita from 1875-1876?
2. This notorious outlaw survived 23 gunshot wounds after a bank robbery in Coffeyville in 1892.
3. Dodge City physician Samuel Crumbine invented the flyswatter and encouraged the public to “swat the fly” to combat the insect’s spread of disease. He is also said to be the model for this television character.

*Answers are below*

***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](mailto:translines@ksdot.org)***

## Biking/Pedestrian

**Survey to examine Biking, pedestrian needs:** KDOT is seeking public input to help identify statewide bicycling and pedestrian needs.

Becky Pepper, KDOT bicycle pedestrian coordinator, said an online survey has been posted on KDOT's website, [www.ksdot.org](http://www.ksdot.org), to collect the opinions and comments of Kansans. The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete.

"The survey will help us better understand how to use limited resources for bicycling and pedestrian facilities in Kansas," Pepper said.

Survey respondents will be asked how they use and



value bicycling and walking facilities and policies and whether changes are needed. KDOT employees and retirees are encouraged to take the survey and to forward the link to family and friends.

## District Three



**Administrative Assistant Amanda Hoover, from the KDOT office in Phillipsburg, took this photo of an oversized load hauling a generator turbine to the Mica Power Dam in British Columbia, Canada, as it traveled through western Kansas on U.S. 183. It weighed about 566,000 pounds, was 213 feet long and had 20 axles. There was a semi in front pulling it and one behind pushing it.**

**Alerting the public:** The permanent Variable Message Boards (VMB) located along the I-70 corridor in District Three remain a vital tool in the agency's communication arsenal to help alert motorists of pertinent road conditions and road closures.

During the pre-Christmas blizzard, the boards were lit up as far east as possible to alert the traveling public that I-70 was closing in Colorado. "The sooner the traveling public sees those road closures, the sooner they can secure a place to stay while the road is closed," said District Three Maintenance Engineer Joe Finley.

"We know we are reaching 100 percent of the people who are driving by these signs" said ITS Program Manager Leslie Spencer Fowler. "They provide a huge



**Messages like the one above help keep motorists informed.**

safety benefit for the public."

Messages alerting travelers of "High Winds, Blowing Dust, Use Headlights" (in a series of three flashing displays) were used on Jan. 11 from WaKeeney to Goodland when a dust storm reduced visibility to less than ¼-mile on many routes in northwest Kansas.

## District Five



**Bob Cook, District Five District Engineer (left) and Partnering Relations Director Wade Wiebe (above) present T-WORKS project and agency information at the South Central Kansas State Legislature Delegation meeting in Wichita at the Wichita State University Hughes Metroplex Jan. 10.**



**Work has begun on a two-year, \$23 million project that will add two new access ramps to I-235 in south central Kansas. Addressing continuous growth on Wichita's west side and few commuter crossings over the Wichita—Valley Center Floodway, this project will feature a ramp to southbound I-235 from eastbound 13th Street and a ramp from northbound I-235 to westbound 13th Street – both featuring long bridges over the floodway. The project was designed and is financed by the City of Wichita but the Wichita West Construction Office is handling administration and inspection duties.**

## Weight Challenge



**State employees wait in line in the Eisenhower State Office Building lobby to weigh in as part of the Governor's Weight Loss Challenge.**

**Taking the weight loss commitment:** Think that you are Mostly Motivated? Don't you want to Drop It Like It's Hot? Maybe become a Diminishing State Employee? More than 49 teams (including those in capital letters above) from KDOT and 1,001 teams statewide decided to take the plunge and join the Governor's Weight

Loss Challenge. The teams will track their success at weigh ins until May, and the competitors range from The Flab Five to the The Big Aroundabouts. Think you've have what it takes to have a Sunday Without the Buffet? Orange You Glad We Joined? The deadline to weigh in and register has been extended until Jan. 24 at [www.weightloss.ks.gov](http://www.weightloss.ks.gov).

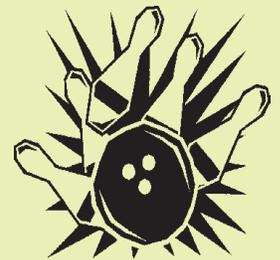
## Employees' Council

How many Mardi Gras coins and how many Jolly Joes purple candy pieces are in the 17-inch jar? That's the question KDOT's Employees' Council is asking all KDOT employees across the state to guess as part of a contest to see who can guess closest without going over. Check out the photos and dimensions of the jar that were emailed to KDOT employees last Friday morning by Ruby Hilton. Then make sure to reply to that email by this Friday for a chance to win the jar (one guess per employee). Good luck!



# CRAZY BOWL

- When: **Sunday, March 3, at 1 p.m.**
- Cost: **\$7 per person, free shoe rental**
- Deadline to sign up: NOON, Feb. 27**



- To sign up: **Bring team money (\$28) to Kim Stich in Public Affairs**
- Who: **Teams consisting of 4 people** (KDOT employees, friends and family members are welcome to participate - it is just for fun)
  - Where: **Gage Bowl** (On Huntoon Street just west of Gage Boulevard in Topeka)

**For more details or to sign up, contact Kim Stich at 296-3585 or your Employees' Council representative.**

## District Two



***District Two Engineer Randy West, right, talks with Abilene Subarea crew members during a recent visit about various issues.***

**Improving communication efforts:** District Engineer Randy West is on the road starting this week visiting each of the Area and Subarea offices in District Two. In addition to updating staff on the latest news, crew members are sharing ideas and concerns as well. Topics include changes in equipment retainment, staffing vacancies, rest areas, the possibility of returning small spur routes to counties, the value of temporary employ-

ees, computerizing supply orders and recent highway seal projects. They have also discussed employee retirement eligibility issues and how wearing seat belts can impact workman compensation. The tour is proving to be a success in that it is facilitating direct communication between field staff and senior management and allows Equipment Operators to be engaged in how they can make KDOT a more effective agency.

### TRIVIA ANSWERS -

1. Wyatt Earp
2. Emmett Dalton – he died July 13, 1937
3. “Doc Adams” of Gunsmoke