

# econnections



April 2008

The electronic newsletter of MoDOT District 4, Kansas City Area

## Meetings/Training

### Monday, April 7

Management Team,  
9 a.m. – 11 a.m., Room 136

### Tuesday, April 8

Spring Supervisor Meeting, Room 136  
8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

### Wednesday, April 9

Munck Area Team, Nashua  
8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

### Thursday, April 10, Room 236

Job Status, District 1, 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.  
Job Status, Group 1, 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.  
Job Status, Group 2, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.  
Job Status, Group 3, 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.  
Job Status, Group 4, 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

## Events

### Month of April Work Zone Awareness

#### Monday, April 7

Press Conference for Work Zone Awareness at the Noland Road Bridge  
8:00 a.m.

#### Thursday, April 10

I-470 Purpose and Need Study Public Meeting  
5 - 7 p.m. at the Lee's Summit North High School, 901 NE Douglas Street

#### Thursday, April 17

Route 45 Improvement Public Hearing  
4 - 7 p.m., Platte County Community Center, 8875 Clark Avenue in Parkville

## Work Zone Awareness Week

With spring comes another busy construction season. To ensure that motorists are prepared to watch out for highway workers, MoDOT has begun an aggressive Work Zone Awareness Campaign, with messages to watch out and Don't Barrel Through Work Zones!

April 7-11 is Work Zone Awareness Week and MoDOT has scheduled many activities to kick off the construction season. Operation Orange is under way for the second consecutive year. Buildings, monuments and other structures are being highlighted in orange to draw attention to the importance of driving safely through work zones.

Below are some of things happening in District 4:

- General Services has worked with many organizations to provide Orange lights to shine on MoDOT buildings. (thanks to Mark O'Dowd and crew for being the first to consider lighting their building.)

- The Ken Hoierman, Motorist Assist operator from St. Louis, public service message will be played on the new video board at Kauffman stadium during opening day April 8.

- Press conference Monday morning, April 7 to draw attention to our active work zones.

- Community Relations has worked with community sponsors to light their facilities Orange in support of our safety week. They include:

- Kauffman (Royals) Stadium
- Belton Water Tower
- Kansas City Parks and Recreation, Wornall Bridge over Brush Creek
- City of Lee's Summit, Police Station
- Downtown (Kansas City) Marri-

- ott Hotel
- Country Club Plaza, fountain
- Unity Village Tower
- City of Harrisonville, City Hall
- North Kansas City, City Hall



- Hampton Inn, Clinton
- Memorial Fountain, Grandview
- MoDOT District Office, Garage and maintenance buildings

Please use this time to discuss how we can continue to provide safe work zones for everyone. You may want to also take a moment in your staff meetings to have a moment of silence for the 21 District 4 employees who lost their lives in service to the Department and the State of Missouri.

On Monday, April 7 employees are encouraged to show support for Work Zone Awareness Week by wearing an orange shirt to remind others to slow down and not be distracted in work zones.

# News from Across the District

## Condolences:

Our thoughts and prayers go to Jim Templer, Transportation Project Designer, and his family on the loss of his mother, Marie Louise Templer on February 22nd.

Our condolences go to Monte Hilde, Maintenance Worker in the District Garage, and his family on the passing of his grandfather and MoDOT retiree, Bob Hilde on March 5th.

Our thoughts and prayers go to the family of George Edward "Hair" Ellett, retiree from the Excelsior Maintenance Building, on his passing March 14, 2008.

Our condolences go to Chris West, Senior Maintenance Worker in Odessa, and his family on the passing of his Grandmother, Betty M Cole on March 14th.

Our thoughts and prayers also go to Paul Herzig, Motorist Assist, and his family on the loss of his six-year-old niece, Haley True, on March 20 after a life-long history of heart illness. To help with funeral expenses, a donation can is located at the district office reception desk.

Condolences to Matt Kavanaugh, Maintenance Worker in Kearney, and his family on the loss of his grandmother, Elizabeth Jane Copple, on March 23.

Our thoughts and prayers to Larry Zeller, Senior Crew Worker in Richmond, and his family on the loss of his mother, Edith Zeller on March 25.

## Congratulations:

Congratulations to Heather Barrows, Senior Highway Design Engineer and her husband Will on the birth of their baby girl, Ella Jamison. The bouncing baby girl weighed in at 8 lbs., 1 oz. and was 18-1/2 inches in length.

Congratulations also go to Mark Fisher, Project Manager, and his wife on the birth of their daughter, Julia Ann Fisher. She weighed in at 7 lbs., 9 oz. and is 19.25 inches long.

## Awards Update: And the winner is...

Congratulations to MoDOT's design-build teams! The New I-64, kcICON, and Safe and Sound projects were nominated and awarded the "Owner's Award" for excellence in utilizing the innovative design-

build process by the Design Build Institute of America (DBIA). kcICON Project Director Brian Kidwell will accept this prestigious award on behalf of District 4 April 16 in Louisville, Ky.

The Above and Beyond Award was presented to Matt Sperry and Roy Vogel for being open and honest. They found a woman's purse and made sure it was returned to her with all valuables in tact.

Above and Beyond Award was also presented to Tim McClaran for his exemplary efforts in performing his job tasks in a way that helps to achieve our tangible results and values. This means always striving to do your job better, faster, and cheaper to ensure we meet more of Missouri's needs.

The High Achiever award was presented to Johnnie Johnston for working with neighboring areas on different operations beyond his normal scope of work, thus, promoting a teamwork environment.

Kevin Manning receive the High Achiever award for his efforts and success in getting the traffic signals removed from the downtown Richmond area, replacing them with 4-way stops. This required attending numerous meetings with the public and city officials, several safety studies and evaluating traffic counts.

The High Achiever was also given to Robert Ruffini for his excellent job in managing the Riverside Project Office, assisting the Truman Road Project Office by inspecting the bridge rehabilitation work on Route 69 and assisting with the new ADA requirements for Construction. Sonya Henson received the High Achiever award for her role in providing Advanced Work Zone Training. She organized most of the training materials, keeping her schedule flexible to assure compliance for all departments.

Mike Debrot was presented with the High Achiever award for troubleshooting and developing custom software to test the field traffic controller functionality, being innovative in field communications, and proposing solutions that reduce cost for Scout field infrastructure communication methods.

The High Achiever was also given to Donald Spencer for implementing travel-ways statewide application into the TMS, assisting in 24/7 Customer Service and statewide driving edge initiative, and developing various access databases to automate reporting functions in Scout.

The One-Team MoDOT Award was presented to the D4 Customer Service department for stepping up and working outside normal hours to accomplish 24/7 customer service for Districts 1,2,3,4, and 5.

Daryl Lamson, Lisa Stupps, Mike Jones, Brian Iles, Darrell Webb, Kevin Manning and Jim Burgess all received the One-Team Award for recommendations and implementation to provide cost effective median barrier protection at the Route 13 Bridge over the Missouri River.

One-Team MoDOT Award was presented to Kevin Pitts, Steve Phillips, and Eric Nold for their hard work and innovation of an attachment to an old chip spreader for building and leveling shoulders. This improved the time and use of materials in the operation.

Jeff Dehghani, Eric Deschamp, and Marcus Boulton received the One-Team Award in recognition for assisting Rich Shipley by conducting minor road evaluations for maintenance needs.

Congratulations to the following supervisors and their staff for achieving Performance Plus: **Wes Murray, Ron Faulkenberry, Antonio Bryant, and Rusty James.**

## econnections sources

**Construction** Bev Chrisco, 6341

**Design** Flo Noear, 0455

**Regional Counsel** LeAnn Francis, 6382

**Administration** Judy Magruder, 6309

**General Services** Toni Terry, 0050

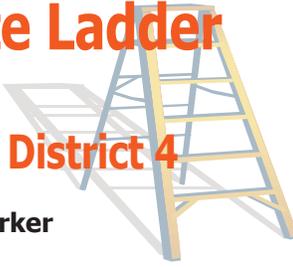
**Human Resources** Belinda Fite, 6321

**Right of Way** Melbra Taylor, 6351

**Traffic** Melanie Lanigan, 041

**Editor** Kerri Lewis, 6328

# Corporate Ladder



## Welcome to District 4

**Maintenance Worker**  
Christopher Divine

**Maintenance Worker**  
Russell Hicks

**Equipment Technician**  
Timothy Schroeder

**Senior Construction Technician**  
Travis Richardson

**Intermediate Maintenance Worker**  
Damon Rinehart

**Intermediate Maintenance Worker**  
Fred Scott

**Intermediate Maintenance Worker**  
Matthew Sperry

**Intermediate Maintenance Worker**  
Brett Wahn

## Retired

**Maintenance Worker**  
Elmer Graham

**Area Engineer**  
Darryl Lamson

**Transportation Project Manager**  
Susan McCubbins

**Regional Maintenance Supervisor**  
Charles Nyberg

## Promoted

**Senior Construction Inspector**  
John Casey

**Maintenance Superintendent**  
Ronald Cordes

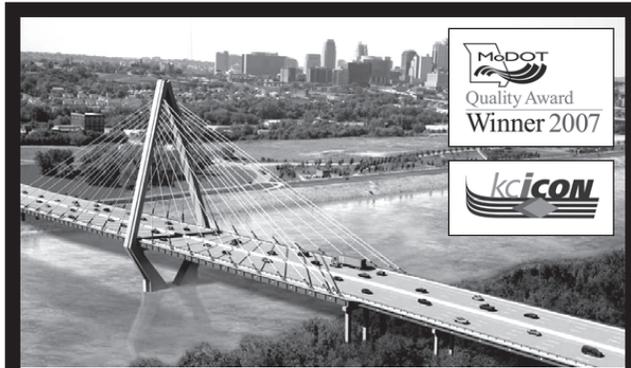
**Intermediate Maintenance Worker**  
Andrew Dobnikar

**Intermediate Maintenance Worker**  
Randall Forde

**Maintenance Crew Leader**  
Carl King



Susan McCubbins, middle, stands next to her husband, Claude as Linda Clark presents an award recognizing her many years of service to MoDOT during a recent retirement celebration. Susan retired in April after 31 years with MoDOT and thanks everyone for their help with various projects over the years.



MoDOT'S PROJECT TO REPLACE THE  
**PASEO BRIDGE AND  
REBUILD THE I-29/35 CORRIDOR  
STARTS APRIL 2008**

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*Be prepared for major construction until 2011.*  
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For construction details or to learn more about the new Christopher S. Bond Bridge, visit [www.kcicon.com](http://www.kcicon.com) or call the information hotline at 816.841.8888.

Herbert(Herb)Byrum retired in March from MODOT after 36 years of service.

A luncheon, attended by family and co-workers, was held in his honor at the Golden Corral in Clinton. Sharon Taelgel, Assistant to the District Engineer, presented him with a plaque in appreciation for his service.

Herb began working as a maintenance crew member in Clinton for MoDOT in 1972. He later became a crew leader and was subsequently promoted to maintenance supervisor for the Windsor Maintenance area in 1994.

Herb plans to enjoy his retirement by spending more time with family, traveling, and doing some fishing.



# MoDOT Continues Its Workforce Development Initiative

## Additional \$1.25 Million for Pilot Program

by Jennifer Benefield

The Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) kicked-off its \$1.25 million Kansas City initiative to increase the number of socially and economically disadvantaged individuals working in heavy highway construction at a celebration event Friday, March 21, 2008.

"We are extremely pleased to award a contract to the Full Employment Council to continue MoDOT's workforce development pilot program here in Kansas City," said MoDOT EEO Contract Compliance Specialist Charryse Berry. "Individuals who complete the required training may have the opportunity to work on the kcl-CON project or other bridge and highway construction projects in Missouri."

Berry works closely with a community-based Workforce Utilization Advisory Committee and will monitor Paseo Corridor Constructors' efforts to meet or exceed the kclCON project's workforce development and on-the-job training goals.

MoDOT first launched a \$2.5 million workforce development initiative as part of The New I-64 project to reconstruct

I-64/US 40 in St. Louis, Mo. in 2006.

The \$245 million kcl-CON project will reconstruct/rehabilitate about four miles of Interstate 29/35 from just north of Route 210/Armour Road in North Kansas City into the northeast corner of the downtown Kansas City, Mo. freeway loop. The project includes improving outdated interchanges and the construction of the Christopher S. Bond Bridge – a new landmark, cable-stayed Missouri River bridge.

Additional information is available on the project's website: [www.kcicon.com](http://www.kcicon.com).



The Builder's Association

Left to right: Don Greenwell, President, The Builders' Association; Charryse Berry, EEO Contract Compliance Specialist, Missouri Department of Transportation; Bridgette Williams, President, Greater Kansas City AFL-CIO; and Clyde McQueen, President/CEO, Full Employment Council.

## Noland Road Bridge Update

Crews are working to replace the Noland Road Bridge as quickly as possible, and time is ticking, literally. Electronic message boards have been placed on eastbound and westbound I-70 by MoDOT to show travelers just how soon the bridge will reopen. As work progresses, time remaining on the countdown calendar may jump by several days depending on anticipated progress.

To help move this project along quicker than anticipated, crews closed I-70 the weekend of March 7 to place girders for the bridge. Although a little disruptive, traffic was diverted from the interstate, allowing MoDOT to quickly complete a project of great value to the Independence community and to I-70 travelers. MoDOT appreciates the patience travelers showed during the detours, as well as the cooperation from the Independence community.

MoDOT's dedication to completing this project as fast and safely as possible has been noticed by many motorists and community members. Thanks to the efforts made by MoDOT and all others involved with the bridge replacement, the new Noland Road Bridge will prove to be a project of great value, and show MoDOT's commitment to deliver it earlier than expected.

## A Word of Thanks

Our congratulations on the excellent work being done on the Noland Road Bridge in Independence. We have watched with amazement at the work at taking the bridge down and the work in progress. It's truly a modern day engineering marvel. Please give our congratulations to all the engineers and workers involved. The signage has also been very readable and understandable. The speed zone in the work zone is a proper length as well. (If it is too long, people won't slow down and it becomes dangerous - as on I-435 in Kansas.)

*Doris and Herb Foley*

I am very impressed with the work on the Noland Road Bridge over I-70 in Independence. I travel I-70 almost every day and have marveled at the ease of traffic through this zone. I was worried for no need! Just wanted to send a compliment! Thanks for the hard work!

*Jill Josepher  
Blue Springs, MO*

## KC Scout Hosts Incident Management Seminar

by Gina Myles

MoDOT's Kansas City Scout looks for innovative ways to help maintain a safe and efficient highway system throughout the KC metro area. Reacting to MoDOT's first priority, safety, Scout hosted its first Incident Management Seminar for all area agencies involved in incident response and traffic incident management to address the concern for the safety of first response personnel.

The greatest impact of traffic incidents is for the safety of incident responders and the motoring public. In 2001, 28 law enforcement officers and 6 firefighters and emergency medical technicians died after being struck outside their emergency vehicle by another vehicle. From 1997 through 2001, there were 26 firefighter and emergency medical technician fatalities from vehicle strikes, a figure 2.6 times greater than the total number of fatalities from the previous 5-year period. This information was reported in the NCHRP Synthesis 318 report on safe and quick clearance of traffic incidents.

Realizing the impact that traffic incidents have on traffic and safety, Kansas City Scout hired Rusty James, a former law enforcement officer with an extensive background in traffic management, as Incident Management Coordinator. Kansas City Scout is now working to improve on its Incident Management Program. Traffic Incident Management is the process of coordinating resources of different partnering agencies and private sector companies to identify, respond to

and clear traffic incidents as quickly as possible while protecting the safety of on-scene responders and the traveling public.

On March 11th, Kansas City Scout hosted its first Incident Management Seminar. The



**Rusty James speaks to the emergency responders during the seminar held at district office.**

event was very well received, with more than 60 attendees from various agencies involved in incident response and traffic incident management on Kansas City Metro area highways. Participants included representatives from both the Missouri and Kansas Departments' of Transportation, the Missouri and Kansas Highway Patrol, law enforcement

agencies, fire and rescue agencies, towing and recovery companies and traffic information providers.

The meeting gave first responders the opportunity to voice views and con-

cerns specific to their individual agencies. Representatives from both Missouri and Kansas Departments of Transportation spoke to the group to provide detailed information of resources available from the departments to assist first responders in quick clearance of incidents. The highlight of the meeting was a video "The Many Hats of Highway Incident Management." The video humorously addressed the different agencies and the roles they play in incident management.

One of the goals of the Incident Management program is to create a world-class Incident Management Consortium to unite the diverse agencies and create

an environment of teamwork, coordination and cooperation between the varying agencies. Rusty James commented, "During this meeting, we were able to open lines of communication between responders that previously were not open. This was a major breakthrough for the incident management in the Kansas City region."

## MOre MoDOT News

**Median guard cable on Missouri's** busiest interstate highways has nearly eliminated highway crossover deaths, according to new numbers released today by the Missouri Department of Transportation. Statistics for 2007 show only two crossover fatalities at cable locations, compared to 55 the year before cable was installed.

Nearly 500 miles of guard cable was installed from 2004 to 2006 in medians of the state's busiest highways, where congested, high-speed traffic some-

times resulted in vehicles crossing medians and colliding head-on with vehicles going in the other direction. Median guard cable, composed of three strands of steel cable, is designed to "catch" a vehicle before it crosses into the opposing traffic lanes, bringing it to a stop before it collides with other vehicles. It's generally used where medians are less than 60 feet wide.

**Duane Michie, Hayti**, has taken over as the chairman of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission for a one-year

term. The former chairman, Jim Anderson, Springfield, will serve as vice-chairman. Both Michie and Anderson, whose terms expire next March, have served on the commission since 2001.

The six-member bipartisan commission governs the Missouri Department of Transportation. MoDOT builds and maintains the nation's seventh-largest state highway system and supports other transportation modes in Missouri. The agency has about 6,300 employees and an annual budget of more than \$2 billion.

Continued on next page

By pinching pennies, estimating construction work to the dime and encouraging innovation, the Missouri Department of Transportation has saved nearly \$50 million that will be used to tackle 36 new highway projects this year.

Located throughout the state, the projects include resurfacing, bridge approach repairs, and new signals, lights and signs. Nineteen of the projects were scheduled to be built in the next two years, but now will begin this year. Another 17 projects that will now begin this year were not yet listed on MoDOT's five-year construction program, which runs through 2012. The new project list can be found at [www.modot.org](http://www.modot.org).

No MORE Trash Bash kicked off April 1, 2008. Since April 2007, more than 10,000 volunteers took time to remove more than 72,000 bags of trash along Missouri's highways. Each year, MoDOT alone spends approximately \$5.7 million to clear litter along our highways. Join the No MORE Trash Bash 2008.

## One Close Call; One Chance Survival

by Kerri Lewis

Work Zone Awareness Week kicks-off another busy construction season. Safety is MoDOT's first priority, and we remind all motorists to watch out for the construction crews, and drive safely through all work zones. Messages urge motorists to stay alert, obey the signs and watch for workers and equipment, not just in posted work zones, but wherever MoDOT workers set up.

Whether they are helping a stranded motorist, assisting emergency responders at an accident or removing a piece of highway debris from on coming traffic, Motorist Assist Operators are on hand to help maintain uninterrupted traffic flow throughout the Kansas City metropolitan area. They risk their lives daily to ensure motorists reach their destination in a safe and timely manner. They do not always have orange cones, construction barrels, or signs warning drivers to slow down, making the job they do a little riskier than some. Sometimes the risk is a little too close for comfort; just ask Derike Pitchford, a KC area Motorist Assist Operator.

On a warm August evening, armed with a flashing yellow strobe light atop the F-150 pick-up truck, Derike was dispatched to help police control traffic at an accident scene on I-435 near Truman Road. A woman, six months pregnant, lost control of her car and became entangled in the median cable, thus saving her from crossing into oncoming traffic. When emergency responders arrived, they were faced with removing the driver as safely as possible.

Derike placed cones and parked his vehicle, with strobe light flashing, safely in

front of emergency personnel and equipment to slow traffic and direct motorists to safely maneuver around the accident scene. As responders worked the accident, Derike kept an eye on oncoming traffic. He noticed an SUV approaching quickly and did his best to gain the motorist's attention, urging him to slow and go around. At the last minute, Derike realized that the vehicle was not slowing.

"I saw a car coming up way too fast, it was gonna hit me so I moved forward to give him as much time as I could to allow him time to react," Pitchford said.

Still, the vehicle kept coming, veered to the left to miss the motorist assist vehicle, and struck three firefighters and the pregnant woman. Fortunately, all survived.

"Every day there is no promise that I'm coming home," Pitchford said. "Everyone

is in their own little world, they're just worried about themselves. Nobody exists but them and they need to understand we are all out here, we all have families and loved ones and significant others and we all want to go home every day."

One close call resulted in a chance survival for everyone on that August evening. Even though Motorist Assist created a safer environment while assisting in the accident, a driver's distraction and excessive speeds played a key role in turning a safe scenario into a perilous situation. Derike was lucky. Unfortunately, not all incidents result in the same outcome. All motorists need to be aware of everyone on the highways. Safety precautions are utilized for everyone's safety, workers and motorists alike. Let's make this construction season, and all year, the safest yet.



Derike stands proudly next to his Motorist Assist Vehicle.

Kerri Lewis