

econnections



June 2009

The electronic newsletter of MoDOT District 4, Kansas City Area

Meetings/Training

Tuesday, July 7

Northland Area Team Meeting
8:30 to 11:30 a.m., Nashua

Tuesday, July 14

Jackson and Cass Area Team Meeting
8 to 10 a.m., Room 255

Thursday, July 16, Room 236

Job Status, Cass/Jackson, 8:30 – 10 a.m.
Job Status, Interstates, 10 – 11:30 a.m.
Job Status, Clay/Platte, Noon – 1:30 p.m.
Job Status, Ray/Johnson/Lafayette/
Hnery, 1:30 – 3 p.m.

Events

Sunday, June 21

Father's Day

Thursday, June 25

Briarcliff Interchange Improvements Public Meeting, 4 to 6 p.m.
Riverside City Hall

Saturday, July 4

Independence Day
State Offices Closed on Friday, July 3



Let's Celebrate!

D4 Employees Receive Recognition

D4 celebrated its employees, taking the time to say "Thank You" to all on Wednesday, May 13 during the annual Employee Appreciation Luncheon. Employees district wide enjoyed lunch and music as they basked in the spotlight to celebrate another year of hard work and dedication to MoDOT.

"Each year we accomplish even more. I cannot say 'thank you' often enough. The work you do everyday makes people safer," said Beth Wright, District Engineer. "Roads are something most people take for granted, yet good roads get drivers where they are going quickly, conveniently -- and most importantly -- safely.

"I also want to thank you for keeping an eye on your fellow coworkers while working, so that we are safe when working on our roads. In the last few months, we have seen a decrease in the number of injuries on the job. And I encourage you to

keep that number going down because even one injury is too many."

D4 employees can take pride in the work that is done daily. From office to the field, creating a safe and efficient transportation system is a common goal that D4 works toward each and every day.

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Celebration continued...

Management team worked to provide a great celebration for all employees during the luncheon. From grilling to cheese, and baked beans to chips and soda, everyone was able to enjoy a BBQ lunch.



Corporate Ladder

Welcome to District 4



Ryan Hale
Highway Designer

Christopher Mills
Construction Inspector

Nicole Oneyear
Construction Inspector

Griffin Smith
Materials Inspector

Retired

Dale Durham
Intermediate Maintenance Worker

Regan Magee
Intermediate Maintenance Worker

Promoted

Randall Carrier
Senior Electrician

Sandra Dubroc
Regional Bridge Maint. Worker

Cheryl Grimes
Construction Inspector

Duane Hartwig
Intermediate Maintenance Worker

Michael Maynard
Intermediate Maintenance Worker

Susan Nelson
Transportation Project Manager

Respect Honor and Remember



MoDOT Fallen Workers Memorial

To help raise money for the Fallen Workers Memorial, the Design Division is offering a T-shirt for purchase. Cost for the T-shirt is \$10 and \$12 for larger sizes. More than \$6 of the price will go to the memorial. In addition to the graphic, the T-shirt includes the names of the 127 workers lost in the line of duty.

To order a T-shirt go to wwwwi.intranet/hs/fallenworker-shirtinfo.htm or contact Jessica Keathley at 573-526-8485 or Mary Ann Jacobs at 573-751-0760.

Orders str placed on a weekly basis depending on the number received.

Thank you for helping us raise money to "Honor Our Own."



Beth Wright, District Engineer presents Bill Mingee with a plaque, thanking him for his years of service to MoDOT during his retirement luncheon in May.

New MoDOT Division To Help Minorities Gain Construction Jobs

MoDOT has created a new division to enhance efforts to involve minority-owned, women-owned and disadvantaged businesses in state construction projects. The new division - External Civil Rights - oversees the department's affirmative action, equal opportunity and nondiscrimination programs, which were previously housed within another MoDOT division. The move will expand these important outreach and partnership programs.

"Creating this new division allows us to place an even greater emphasis on increasing the number of minority, female, and economically disadvantaged individuals working on state transportation projects," said Lester Woods, Jr., the division's director. "This will help us deliver better results when it comes to ensuring a diverse work force on our projects."

One of the division's goals is to build on the progress made in developing pre-apprentice and on-the-job training programs for socially and economically disadvan-

taged individuals on two of MoDOT's largest projects: the I-64 reconstruction in St. Louis and the reconstruction of almost five miles of Interstate 29/35 and construction of a new Missouri River bridge near downtown Kansas City, Mo. These programs are helping individuals acquire trades that will provide long-term career opportunities.

Over the last two years, more than 70 on-the-job trainees have worked on I-64 and five of them have achieved journeyman status, with many more eligible by next year. At 19 percent, the total work force diversity on the I-64 project is exceeding the federal minority goal of 14.7 percent.

In its thirteenth month of construction, Kansas City's kcICON project is on the path to achieving its overall project diversity goal of 12.7 percent. There are 42 on-the-job trainees working now - three in professional services and 39 in

construction. More trainees will be added as construction continues to ramp up for the summer.

"We have committed up to \$1.25 million to developing a work force that better reflects the diverse makeup of our community," said kcICON Project Director Brian Kidwell. "We want all of our on-the-job trainees to be successful on this project and acquire the training and skills necessary to sustain long-term careers in heavy highway construction."

A sister division, MoDOT's Equal Opportunity and Diversity Division, works to recruit and retain women and minorities as part of the agency's workforce. David Williams was recently named the interim director of that division.

For more information on the External Civil Rights Division, visit www.modot.org/ecr.

kcICON Receives Award

The kcICON Project design-build team received the American Road and Transportation Builders Association-Transportation Development Foundation's (ARTBA-TDF) PRIDE Award for its outstanding community relations work. MoDOT Community Relations Manager Jennifer Benefield accepted the award from ARTBA Senior Vice Chairman Larry Tate May 19, 2009 in Washington, DC.

Ten transportation design and construction firms and public agencies from across the country were recognized for excellence in community relations and public education. The award submittal described the kcICON Project team's collaboration with a 12-member community advisory group (CAG). The CAG received 20 of the 100 total project points to evaluate the architectural style and bridge

design aesthetics proposed by competing design-build teams. ARTBA's primary goal is to aggressively grow and protect transportation infrastructure investment to meet the public and business demand for safe and efficient travel. It provides programs and services designed to give its 5,000+ public and private sector members a global competitive edge.



Mailbag



To my MoDOT Family,

I'd just like to thank everyone from the bottom of my heart for the words of comfort, cards, food, flowers and monetary gifts received by so many. But most of all I'd like to thank so many of you for the prayers you've had for me and Chuck over the years. I believe that's why he was with us eight years longer than anticipated.

In spite of everything Chuck has gone through over the years, he remained to hold on to the "quality of life". Through God's grace, he was feeling great, then all at once passed out and never regained consciousness. It makes it easier to let him go because of that rather than later down the road watch him deteriorate.

With God's hand, the love of my family and friends and most of all, the beautiful memories of my 33 year marriage, I'm going to be O.K. Again, thank you so much for caring.

Love, Debi Skaggs

From the Director



Pete Rahn
MoDOT Director

Dear Team MoDOT:

Earlier this year, I sent an e-mail advising you that MoDOT would be seeking to strengthen Missouri's seat belt law during the legislative session, and as a way to show support during the session, declared each Wednesday between January 7 through May 15 as ARRIVE ALIVE WEDNESDAYS where employees would wear an ARRIVE ALIVE, Primary Seat Belt in '09 t-shirt to work.

Unfortunately, the primary seat belt proposal did not pass this session.

I want to sincerely thank you for your energetic support.

Remember, always Buckle Up and ARRIVE ALIVE

Pete
Pete

Across the District

Condolences:

Our thoughts and prayers go to Dave Blundell, Crew Leader in Kearney Maintenance, and his family on the loss of his Father in law, Jack Baumli on May 6.

Condolences go to Chuck Smith, Higginsville Supervisor, and his family on the loss of his mother, Velma Smith on May 11.

Our thoughts and prayers also go to Shirley Landsman, Maintenance Worker at Stadium, and her family on the passing of her mother on May 11.

Our condolences also go to the family of MoDOT retiree, Robert E Cameron, on his passing Wednesday, May 13. Robert retired from MoDOT in 1986 as a crew worker and dedicated 19 years of service to MoDOT.

Our thoughts and prayers also go to the family of MoDOT Retiree, Poley Howard, on his passing Saturday, May 16. Poley retired from MoDOT in 1998 after 40 years of service.

Condolences go to Jeff Taylor, Senior Maintenance Worker at the Northmoor Maintenance Building and his family on the loss of his father-in-law, Robert D. Rinehart on May 20.

Our prayers go out to Jackie Davis, Traffic System Supervisor, and her family on the loss of her mother, Stella May Henderson on May 26.

Our condolences go to Debi Skaggs, Customer Service, and her family on the loss of her husband and best friend, Chuck Skaggs on May 31.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to Mike Church, Maintenance Crew Leader in Lee's Summit, and his family on the loss of his mother, Evelyn Church on June 1.

Condolences go to Willie Stennis, Motorist Assistance Operator, and his family on the loss of his brother, Alfred Stennis on May 30.

Our thoughts and prayers go to Mark Smith, an Electrician in the Lighting Shop, and his family on the loss of his Father, Clifford A. Smith on June 2.

Our condolences also go to Dennis Pence, Regional Maintenance Supervisor for Traffic Striping, and his family on the loss of his mother, Betty Pence on June 2.

econnections sources

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Safe, Sound and Complete

by Michele Compton

When the Minneapolis bridge collapsed on Aug. 1, 2007, the reverberations were felt around the country. The fact that the seemingly sound structure failed so completely caused nation-wide worry about all the older bridges that spanned the country's rivers.

In Missouri, MoDOT reacted immediately and quickly inspected the oldest bridges with similar structure to the Minneapolis bridge. That inspection was only the beginning. In September, Governor Blunt signed the Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Project to improve 800 of Missouri's worst bridges in five years.

In D4, Safe & Sound will replace 145 bridges over the next three years. On March 16, MoDOT began work on its first Safe & Sound Bridge in D4 at the Route H Bridge over I-29 in Platte County. Crews closed the bridge on Thursday, March 19. MoDOT and the bridge crew hosted a Ribbon Cutting ceremony reopening the bridge May 14.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony May 7 marked the re-opening of Route OO Bridge over Honey Creek, the first of 18 Safe & Sound Bridge improved in John-



son County. The Route ZZ Bridge over Panther Creek

followed, signifying the completion of another bridge in Johnson County.

Ray County recently celebrated its first Safe & Sound Bridge with a ribbon cutting on Route H over Willow Creek. This bridge was closed on May 18 and ready to be reopened on June 17.

Cass County also celebrated the completion of its first Safe & Sound Bridge on the Route O Bridge over the Grand River on June 22.

With those first few projects, the Safe & Sound Improvement Project is in full swing in D4. Several more bridges will finish construction and open in July and August.

Each completed bridge is finished with



From top to bottom, Senator David Pearce stopped by to cut the ribbon at the Route ZZ Bridge in Johnson County. Representative

Bob Nance and others attended the Route H ribbon cutting in Ray County, and the Platte County Commissioners completed the ceremony at a ribbon cutting for the first Platte County Safe & Sound Bridge on Route H in Dearborn.

the flourish of a ribbon cutting. That simple ceremony is more than a signal to the public that a bridge is open -- it's the completion of a promise: to keep our roads safe, sound and smooth for as long as they are needed. It's a promise MoDOT is committed to keeping, one bridge, one road or one bike path at a time.

For complete details on the Safe and Sound Improvement Project in D4, review our Web site at www.modot.org/Kansas-city.

MoDOT Matters and Why That Matters to You

by Michele Compton

Last month we launched a new communication tool "MoDOT Matters" on the intranet. Included in this communication hub is a new broadcast or podcast message. We will also have members from MoDOT writing about the same topics on the intranet site or blogging, and we'll be giving supervisors additional information to discuss.

Each edition of MoDOT Matters covers a few topics such as new policies, projects, events, programs and other topics of interest. After you talk about MoDOT Matters in your work group, we want to hear from you. You can submit a comment, send an email, give supervisors your comments, or give us a call.

Why Communication Matters

In most companies, employee communications is one of the most undervalued tools. Statistically it can be one of the most powerful.

According to The Watson Wyatt Communication Return on Investment (ROI) Study:

- Firms that communicate effectively are 4.5 times more likely to report high levels of employee engagement.
- Companies that are highly effective communicators are 20 percent more likely to report lower turnover rates than their peers.

Roads are something most people take for granted, yet good roads get drivers where they are going quickly, conveniently -- and most importantly -- safely. The key to consistent safe roads lies squarely in consistent, safe employees. If employee engagement is high and turn over low, we are more effective as a transportation department. We, as a whole, provide much superior service for our customer.

Why "Matters" Matter

The issues covered in MoDOT Matters

are not randomly chosen quips meant to take five more minutes of your day. In fact, they are chosen among questions, submissions and suggestions from a variety of resources such as anonymous e-mail or submissions to the Employee Advisory Committee.

For example, safety is our No. 1 priority. Don't be surprised when that theme is repeated in the podcast. In fact, it's more than a priority, sometimes it's a life or death decision. That is pretty important.

Ultimately these communication tools are meant to serve as a forum. So please add your voice to the conversation in D4 and tell us what matters to you. Send us your suggestions, good ideas, and whatever is important to you. And I hope you will give us ideas of what we should cover in future broadcasts.

Check out the latest issue of MoDOT Matters on the D4 Intranet today!