

econnections



March 2008

The electronic newsletter of MoDOT District 4, Kansas City Area

Meetings/Training

Tuesday, March 11

Stock Area Team Meeting
8 – 10 a.m. 87th Street Project Office

Thursday, March 13, 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.

Monday, March 17

Management Team,
9 a.m. – 11 a.m., Boardroom

Wednesday, March 26

Lamson Area Team (location TBD)
9:30 a.m.

Events

Monday, March 17

St. Patrick's Day

Wednesday, March 19

Darryl Lamson's Retirement Dinner
6:30 p.m. at the Johnson County Fairgrounds in Warrensburg

Tuesday, March 25

Route 13 East Loop Public Hearing
5 - 7 p.m. at the Warrensburg Community Center, 445 East Gay Street

Wednesday, March 26

Traffic Reporter's Luncheon (Heavy Constructors Assn.)

-AND-

Destination: Safe (MARC offices)
9:00 a.m.

Thursday, March 27

Gene "Ponch" Graham Retirement Luncheon, 11:30 a.m. at the Richmond Maintenance Shed

Noland Road Prepares for New Bridge

by Kerri Lewis

MoDOT is committed to quickly deliver projects of great value, and to working with community partners to meet their expectations. Replacing the Noland Road Bridge by early spring is the latest example of our commitment.

After months of collaboration and planning among MoDOT, the Chamber of Commerce and area businesses, one of the Independence area's most significant bridges is being rebuilt. The Noland Road Bridge, a main north-south artery for the city of Independence, carries more than 28,000 vehicles per day. At more than 40 years old, the bridge's advanced deterioration required bridge replacement.

Deciding what course of action to take to build the new structure took a little time and cooperation with city officials and business owners. MoDOT met regularly with the city of Independence and businesses over the past year to come to an agreement. Thanks to cooperation among city officials and business owners, MoDOT was given the support to close Noland Road at I-70 to remove and replace the bridge. Many were concerned

about the affects replacing the bridge would have on the area, since Noland Road is flanked by retail shops, car dealerships, restaurants and a high school.

MoDOT proposed two options for the reconstruction of the bridge to the interested parties. The first option required partial closure of the bridge, or staged construction. This would require limiting traffic to single lanes across the bridge and partial ramp closures, causing significant congestion and traffic delays along Noland Road. Also, Interstate 70 would be affected with reduced lane widths and some possible lane closures. Construction would take up to 20 months to complete, creating a cost of more than \$12 million.

The second option, MoDOT's preferred option, would close the bridge com-

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I-70 is buried beneath the rubble as crews bring down the bridge piece by piece.

Lyon Arthur

News from Across the District

Congratulations:

Congratulations to Amy Weeks, legal secretary in Regional Counsel Office, on the birth of her daughter, Claire McKenzie, on February 6. She weighed 7 lbs., 1 oz. and was 19 inches long.

Congratulations to Wyatt and Amanda Ingram, the proud parents to their baby girl, Victoria Anne Ingram. She weighed 6.5 lbs and is 19 inches long.

Condolences:

Our thoughts and prayers go to Darryl Lamson, Area Engineer for Johnson, Henry and Pettis Counties, and his family on the loss of his mother, Sylvia Lamson on February 12, 2008.

Condolences go to Jeff Wolfe, Information Systems, and his family on the loss of his grandfather in February.

Our thoughts and prayers also go to Steve Hackett, Regional Maintenance Supervisor for Belton, and his family on

the loss of his mother, Louise Hackett on March 1st.

Condolences to Chuck Smith, Higginsville Maintenance Supervisor, and his family on the loss of his mother-in-law, Betty Ellison on February 27.

Awards Update: And the winner is...

Ron Temme received the Above and Beyond Award for his hard work on the bridges on the south leg of the loop downtown.

The Above and Beyond Award was also presented to Jim Sharp and Dwayne Severs for working through the changes and completing the Route 13 project in time for the ribbon cutting ceremony.

The High Achiever Award was presented to Jody Jones for always completing tasks ahead of schedule and the willingness to always help out everyone.

The High Achiever Award was also presented to Chris Zurn and Doug Parsons for volunteering without being asked to work in the evenings and on weekends trying to help complete the general inspection.

James Reavis received the High Achiever award for taking notice of the bridge piling and bringing it to his supervisor's attention.

Bret Cox and Lyndon Leicher received the High Achiever Award in recognition of their willingness to do what it takes to get the job done through hard work and dedication.

The High Achiever Award was presented to Ronnie Faulkenberry for assisting general services with a stranded mechanic in Warrensburg, picking up parts and being an excellent team player.

Ike Roberts, Motorist Assist, Retires

Ike Roberts, Supervisor for Motorist Assist and Emergency Response, retired recently after 30 years of service to MoDOT. Ike started his career with MoDOT as a custodian in Jefferson City. After several months in that position, Ike transferred to D4 as a surveyor. Ike slos worked as a computer draftsman, on a bridge crew, in maintenance, and in landscaping before being assigned to Motorist Assist.

A retirement luncheon was held in Ike's honor. At the luncheon several of his co-workers over the years spoke about Ike. There was a great turnout for the event and it was obvious that Ike was highly respected by all those who knew him at MoDOT.

Donations were accepted as a going away gift for Ike and his family. It was to be a small token of appreciation for the years

of dedication and service Ike has given MoDOT. He was very thankful for the thought and the gift, however, he wanted this gift to go to someone who truly was in need.

Ike had heard on a local radio station about a family who was struggling. The

wife had terminal cancer and was not expected to make it through the holidays. Her husband and children were trying to take care of her while dealing with their inevitable loss. In all probability, the family car was to be repossessed and they did not have presents for the children. Ike decided to donate the gift given to him by his co-workers to this family.

"Ike Roberts is a real class act, as employee and a person, he is always giving 110 percent. He will be missed at Motorist Assist, he's the kind of person that can't be replaced" commented his supervisor, Rusty James, Incident Management Coordinator for Kansas City Scout.



Corporate Ladder

Welcome to District 4



Maintenance Worker
Johnny Appleberry

Maintenance Crew Leader
David Beasley

Maintenance Worker
Sally Butterworth

Assistant Construction Technician
Paul Celia

Transportation Project Manager
Jeffery Hardy

Assistant Construction Technician
Jerry Howard II

Intermediate Design Technician
Shahzad Jalili

Senior Construction Technician
Terrence McCanless

Assistant to the District Engineer
Teresa McGuff

Maintenance Worker
Allen Minnick

Intermediate Equipment Technician
Stephen Neumann

Maintenance Worker
David Schrage

District Design Engineer
Thomas Skinner

Resident Engineer
Bradley (Scott) Williams

Promoted

Intermediate Construction Technician David Campbell

Senior Maintenance Worker
Matthew Findley

Maintenance Supervisor
Perry Hannon

Construction Technician
Chad Hessenflow

Intermediate Maintenance Worker
Joe Kelsay

Intermediate Maintenance Worker
Lawrence Nevels

Intermediate Maintenance Worker
Daniel O'Doniel

Traffic Systems Operator
Dawn Phillips

Maintenance Crew Leader
Kevin Pitts

Intermediate Maintenance Worker
Travis Powell

Senior Highway Designer
Craig Skorseth

Maintenance Worker
Paul Tanck

Electrician Jay Ware

Intermediate Highway Designer
Juan Yin

Transportation Planning Coordinator
Hope Visconti

Retired

Maintenance Supervisor
Herbert Byrum Jr.

Maintenance Supervisor
Robert Hodgeman

Senior Maintenance Worker
Tommy Hyatt

MoDOT Travel Map Viewed 1.5 Million Times This Winter

Visitors have viewed MoDOT's Traveler Information Map nearly 1.5 million times since Dec. 1. The map, located at modot.org, gives up-to-the-minute road conditions when severe weather hits.

"We believe this is one of the most important services we offer to Missouri motorists, and we're glad to see they're taking advantage of it," said MoDOT Director Pete Rahn. "With another round of winter weather forecast for much of Missouri, visitors can click on the map to learn what to expect if they have to drive."

The map is updated every 30 minutes during severe weather and shows whether roads are dry, wet, partly covered, covered or closed.

In addition to the map, MoDOT offers a toll-free telephone number - 1-888-ASK MO-DOT (1-888-275-6636) - for motorists to call to learn more about road conditions.



econnections sources

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Noland Road Bridge

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An empty space remains where the bridge once stood. Even the wicked winter weather couldn't keep crews from completing demolition. I-70 re-opened as scheduled.

Lyron Arthur

pletely for demolition and construction. This method would be much safer and efficient. It would provide less impact to the 120,000 daily Interstate 70 motorists, creating less I-70 congestion and protection for construction crews. It would reduce the costs to \$9.5 million, increasing taxpayer value. Approximately 200 Kansas City-area bridges are in Condition 3 (serious) or Condition 4 (poor). For the safety of the traveling public, MoDOT closes bridges at Condition 2 levels. MoDOT could replace up to five Condition 3 rural bridges with the funds saved if construction is completed under full closure.

Traffic would be required to bypass the bridge completely, limiting access to Noland Road from the north and south of Interstate 70. However, during construction, the ramps would remain open for access to the interstate.

After reviewing all options, city officials and business owners came to an agreement with MoDOT. They found that bridge demolition and complete replacement would be the best alternative.

Demolition took place on Saturday and Sunday, February 16 and 17. Traffic along I-70 was rerouted to the exit and entrance ramps at Noland Road during removal to ensure the safety of those traveling along the interstate. Another closure of I-70 at Noland Road occurred during several hours between Friday, March 7, and Sunday, March 9, to place bridge girders. MoDOT's goal is to open the new Noland Road bridge by the third week of May or sooner.

Thanks to the cooperative efforts made by the City of Independence, much of

the community was notified about the upcoming bridge closure. Several public meetings were held to answer questions and provide updates about the project. Collaboration and cooperation among the local community, businesses and city officials proved to be eminent during the design process and has provided a positive outcome for all involved.



Demolition begins on the more than 40-year-old Noland Road Bridge.

Lyron Arthur

National Study Gives Missouri's Transportation System High Marks

"Most states have seen their infrastructure and transportation problems get worse over the past few years; Missouri is one of the few that has managed to improve," according to the Pew Center on the States study featured in the March issue of *Governing* magazine.

The "Grading the States 2008" study pointed out that Missouri has made investments in its major highways so that now more than 80 percent of the vehicle miles traveled on them are in good condition, compared to only 52 percent being in good condition just five years ago.

"The Missouri Department of Transportation has worked extremely hard to restore public confidence by improving our roads, controlling costs, and delivering projects on time and within budget," said MoDOT Director Pete Rahn. "Through greater public involvement, we've demonstrated openness and transparency, resulting in sound decisions, a better transportation system and, even more importantly, lives saved."

Missouri received a B+ for its infrastructure performance. Its transportation-planning processes were touted as a model for the nation.

Missouri's infrastructure score beat all but four other states and the 50-state average grade of a B-. Missouri, which has less revenue per mile of highway than all of its neighboring states, scored better than Kansas, Iowa, Illinois, Tennessee, Arkansas and Oklahoma. Kentucky received an A- and Nebraska received the same grade as Missouri.

Missouri has also received accolades for improvement from other national sources. In June 2007, the California-based Reason Foundation showed Missouri jumping from 28th to 17th in state highway system performance from 2004 to 2005, and from 39th to 17th from 2000 to 2005. The report also found Missouri to have the nation's third lowest administrative costs per mile. MoDOT has gone from having the nation's third worst roads to an estimated ninth best.

In November, MoDOT received the 2007 Missouri Quality Award from the Excellence in Missouri Foundation for excellence in quality leadership and for its efforts to improve roads, reduce fatalities and bring proj-

ects in on time and within budget. In addition, U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Mary Peters has taken notice of Missouri's efforts, saying, "The Show Me State is showing America how to deliver highway projects on budget and on schedule, and even ahead of schedule."

"Grading the States 2008" is a partnership of Pew's Government Performance Project and *Governing* magazine. The study assesses and rates all 50 states on how efficiently and effectively they are managing information, people, money and infrastructure. In the area of infrastructure, the study assessed how well each state is managing its roads, bridges and buildings, as well as the degree to which a state has transparent and effective planning and project monitoring processes, maintains its assets and coordinates this work within the state and with other jurisdictions.

For more information about "Grading the States 2008," go to www.governing.com or www.pewcenteronthestates.org/gpp.

Battle of the Belt Conquered by Missouri High Schools

Oak Park High School and Platte County High School are not afraid of a challenge. They know the importance of students buckling up, and have the prize money to prove it. Buckle Up to Arrive Alive! is the message thousands of Missouri high school students have taken to heart as part of the statewide Battle of the Belt seat belt challenge.

Many schools participated in the statewide Battle of the Belt, an educational program where local high schools competed against each other to increase safety belt use and potentially save lives. The educational component of the challenge involved an initial surprise safety belt check of students, followed by a

peer-designed educational blitz and a final surprise safety belt check to determine if a change of behavior occurred.

More than 80 schools participated statewide from Sept. 6 – Dec. 31, 2007, with two winners chosen from each of ten regions for the educational component. Oak Park High School won the regional award for the highest safety belt usage overall, and Platte County High School won the regional award for the greatest percentage increase in safety belt use. They both received \$250 for winning these categories. Statewide winners receive and additional \$1,000 in prize money.

"Battle of the Belt is a fun challenge for students that can save lives," said Leanna Depue, chair of the executive committee for the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety. "It's vital to impress teens with the importance of wearing their seat belt so they don't become a tragic statistic."

Winners of the additional component of Battle of the Belt, where students submitted public service announcement concepts, will be announced at a banquet honoring all statewide winners.

The program is sponsored by the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety, American Family Insurance and the Missouri Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians.

Teens are an important audience for safety belt messages. The Missouri Department of Transportation, in conjunction with the Missouri Safety Center, recently conducted a study showing only 61 percent of Missouri teenagers wear safety belts. In the past three years, nearly 400 young drivers died in Missouri traffic crashes, and 72 percent were not buckled up.

For more information on the importance of safety belts and a list of all Battle of the Belt winners, visit www.saveMOLives.com or call 800-800-BELT.

