*e*connections

A Look at November 2009

The electronic newsletter of MoDOT District 4, Kansas City Area

Meetings/Training

Tuesday, December 8
District Tracker Meeting
9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Room 136

Wednesday, December 9
Monthly Maintenance Meeting
12:30 to 3 p.m. Room 136

Thursday, December 17, Room 236
Job Status
Cass/Jackson, 8:30 – 10 a.m.
Interstates, 10 – 11:30 a.m.
Clay/Platte, Noon – 1:30 p.m.
Ray/Johnson/Lafayette/Henry,
1:30 – 3 p.m.

Tuesday, December 29
Northland Area Team Meeting
8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., Nashua

Events

Friday, December 4
Route 1 Sidewalk ARRA Project Ribbon Cutting, Gladstone 10 a.m.

Wednesday, December 9
Route 45 Bear Creek Bridge
Ribbon Cutting, Weston 10 a.m.

Wednesday, December 16
Holiday Potluck
11 a.m. to 1 p.m. District Office

Thursday, December 17
163rd Street Interchange Ribbon Cutting
Intersection of 163rd and Rte 71, 2 p.m.

Friday, December 25
Christmas
State Offices Closed

Friday, January 1
New Year's Day
State Offices Closed

Governor Nixon Attends Ribbon Cutting to Celebrate 100 Bridges Completed for Safe & Sound

by Kerri Lewis

MoDOT marked a milestone late October when the department completed the 100th bridge under the Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Program. To celebrate, Governor Jay Nixon, MoDOT, Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission, state, and county officials gathered for an official ribbon cutting ceremony on Tuesday, November 3 on the Route E Bridge over the Platte River, northeast of Platte City.

"Today we celebrate a milestone, having completed more than 100 bridges through the Safe and Sound program," said Gov. Jay Nixon. "This program is about investing in Missouri's infrastructure for the future by repairing and replacing bridges as quickly and cost-effectively as possible. MoDOT and the state's partner contractors have demonstrated that we can meet these critical goals."

The Route E Bridge over Platte River is a 283-foot, two-lane bridge built in 1966. Under the Safe & Sound program, R.A. Knapp and Sons, Inc. of Kansas City, Mo, replaced the bridge deck in just 41 days. This is D4's 12th bridge replaced under this aggressive program.

"We are pleased to announce that so far this year in the Kansas City district, MoDOT has completed 12 bridges. These bridges have been delivered on time and within budget. We are well underway to

Continued on next page

Governor Nixon, MoDOT and county and state officials cut the ribbon to commemorate 100 bridges complete under Safe & Sound.

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100 Bridges
continued

Construction and Materials personnel pose with the governor.

completing 145 bridges in the next four years for our district," said Beth Wright, District Engineer. "We thank the County Commission for their support during the closure of these bridges, to the contractor RA Knapp and Sons for the speedy work to get the road back open on time, and to our elected officials for supporting this great program. I would like to extend yet another thank you to the many motorists for their patience and cooperation during the road closure."

MoDOT's Kansas City Office Recognized for Sustainability Policies

Lee's Summit location continues to take steps to reduce, reuse and recycle

by Michele Compton

The Kansas City District was honored by the Mid-America Regional Council on Nov. 23 for supporting and furthering an environmentally sustainable community.

MARC annually highlights and promotes exemplary sustainability-related policies, programs, practices or projects in the Kansas City region. Project honorees exemplify the great progress that has been made in the area for creating a more sustainable community.

"MoDOT is committed to preserving resources, including financial, environmental and human resources," said Sharon Taegel, Assistant to the District Engineer. "The Kansas City District has undertaken a series of activities and modifications intended to not only reduce costs to but also improve the environment, as well as the health of employees and public."

Employees actively participated in the effort, many volunteering to be part of a "Green Team" that championed improvements such as installing energy efficient doors, windows and siding. The office also added motion sensor lights, set automated temperature systems, planted natural grasses on the campus to reduce mowing, implemented a "No Idling" Policy and requested that employees always shut down the computers every night.

"We learned to make the best use of our resources, including human resources and employee passions," said Taegel. "Many individuals want to move forward with green or sustainable ideas. They will volunteer time, ideas and make things happen rather than having tasks assigned because it is someone's job."

MoDOT was one of only 11 honorees to receive the award, and only one of three focused on transportation and infrastructure.

The award committee is composed of local planning and design professions that support sustainability throughout the Kansas City region.

MoDOT created an interactive display to show at the MARC presentation, which included a two-minute video highlighting our various energy and environmental successes. You can watch the video on our youtube channel at www.youtube.com/modotkc

Sharon Taegel, Assistant to the District Engineer, received the award and presented a 5-minute overview of our sustainability success story.

kcICON Update

Recently, Paseo Corridor Constructors (PCC) installed the second of three temporary struts on the new Christopher S. Bond Bridge.

These temporary struts will brace the legs of the Bond Bridge's center pylon as construction continues upward. The pylon is now 215 feet above the river's surface and will be topped off at 316 feet in spring 2010.

The kcICON Project team seized upon cost-effective opportunities to deliver two important messages. The first strut reads, "Building Up Kansas City" and is flanked by PCC's logos. It is both a literal and symbolic daily reminder that transportation projects provide critical infrastructure and generate good-paying jobs for hard-working people -- an important message as our economy recovers. The second strut reads, "www.kcicon.com" and is flanked by MoDOT logos. We have created our own "billboard" space for the next 6 months by promoting the kcICON Web site to the 80,000 plus people who travel the corridor daily, and the thousands more who will see the Web site during television news traffic reports. Our objective is to encourage even more customers to visit our project Web site for the information they'll need to manage their travels -- especially as we 1) prepare to shift all Interstate 29/35 traffic to temporary ramps at Front Street to accommodate construction of the new single point urban interchange; and 2) reroute traffic head-to-head on the southbound lanes of Interstate 29/35 from a quarter-mile north of Independence Avenue to just south of Front Street to accommodate construction of the new Paseo Boulevard bridge and right-hand entrance ramp.

Big traffic changes are coming to the Interstate 29/35 corridor, and www.kcicon.com is a helpful resource for those seeking the latest project, traffic management, and transit choice information.

Commission Tours kcICON Project

Members of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission, accompanied by greater Kansas City area transportation partners and kcICON Project team members, boarded a barge to tour the new, cable-stay Christopher S. Bond Missouri River Bridge under construction in Kansas City, Mo. November 3. The group circled the bridge's center pylon which is two-thirds complete (231 feet tall) and is scheduled to top off at 316 feet in spring 2010. The kcICON Project is about 65 percent complete, and the bridge will likely carry some traffic as early as December 2010. The tour was made possible by the Missouri Department of Transportation, Paseo Corridor Constructors and the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce.

(l-r) Springfield Area District Engineer Kirk Juranas, Commissioner Grace Nichols, Commissioner Duane Michie and MoDOT Chief Counsel Rich Tiemeyer tour the kcICON Project November 3, 2009.

Members of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission, accompanied by greater Kansas City area transportation partners and kcICON team members tour the new, cable-stay Christopher S. Bond Missouri River Bridge under construction in Kansas City, Mo. by barge on November 3.

MoDOT Crew Saves Diabetic Driver's Life

By Michele Compton

Pictured left to right: MoDOT Director Pete Rahn; Ryan Martens, Maintenance worker; Tim Arnold, Maintenance Crew Leader; David Winship, Maintenance worker and Chris Divine, Maintenance worker.

On August 12, the Chouteau office crew workers at the Davidson Road Bridge on I-29 found themselves face-to-face with a life or death situation. Their actions went above and beyond the call of duty and saved a Missouri driver.

Maintenance worker David Winship, along with crewmembers Chris Divine, Ryan Martens and Crew Leader Tim Arnold heard an accident on the highway and were startled to see a car hurtling in their direction.

The car slammed to a halt, driver slumped over the wheel, tires burning. That's when these guys went into action.

Winship, a former patrolmen for the City of Parkville, grabbed a fire extinguisher and he and his coworkers ran to the aid of the unconscious driver.

After finding his way into the car, and checking the driver's vital signs, he noticed a medical kit on the floorboard.

"I opened the bag and found the driver's identification along with medical supplies that indicated the driver to be a diabetic," Winship said.

Diabetics rarely slip into a comma, although it does happen. People with diabetes mellitus type 1 are especially prone to diabetic coma, which is a result of blood sugars that are on the extreme low or high.

Knowing that a quick infusion of sugar could save the drivers life, Winship unwrapped some suckers and put them in his mouth trying to get as much sugar as possible into his system before paramedics arrived.

To recognize their quick thinking and life-saving decisions, MoDOT awarded the Meritorious Service Award to Winship, and Certificates of Appreciation for Divine, Martens and Arnold. Director Pete Rahn personally presented the crew with awards on Nov. 3.

"I can't imagine anything more rewarding than knowing you saved someone's life," Rahn said. "Every one of you did the right thing that day."

To watch a video of the service award presentation, log onto www.youtube.com/modotkc

News from Across the District

Condolences:

Our thoughts and prayers go to Josh Scott, Senior Highway Designer, and his family on the loss of his grandmother, Ida (Sandy) Scott on Wednesday, October 28.

Our condolences go to David Bower, Senior Information Systems Tech, and his family on the loss of his father in November.

Our thoughts and prayers also go to Perry Allen, District Construction and Materials Engineer, and his family on the loss of his father-in-law, Thad William Corder on November 23.

Congratulations:

Congratulations to Chris Mills, Construction Inspector for Nashua, and his wife Amanda on the arrival of their new baby girl, Lilly Lee on November 11. Lily was born at 7 lbs, 15.06 oz.

econnections sources

Construction Bev Chrisco, 6341

Design Flo Noear, 0455

Regional Counsel LeAnn Francis, 6382

Administration Judy Magruder, 6309

General Services Toni Terry, 0056

Human Resources Belinda Fite, 6321

Right of Way Melbra Taylor, 6351

Traffic Melanie Lanigan, 0419

Editor Kerri Lewis, 6328

Corporate Ladder

October Promotions

Wayne Casto, Maintenance Worker
Scott Cockrum, Intermediate Maintenance Worker
Darrell Daugherty, Maintenance Superintendent
J. Deon Grigsby, Maintenance Superintendent
Kody Johnson, Maintenance Worker
Michael Podornik, Intermediate Materials Technician
Christopher Spears, District Land Survey Manager
Delores Taylor, Maintenance Worker

October Retirements

Gary Butterworth, Senior Materials Inspector
Patrick Calhoun, Maintenance Superintendent

Cone Moving Celebrates Route 13 Progress

by Steve Porter

More than 40 people gathered on the new westbound Route 50 bridge east of Warrensburg November 9 to do some light lifting. It wasn't just for exercise. They were moving orange cones and opening traffic on two new bridges, celebrating progress of the new Route 13 East Loop, which began just 10 months earlier

The event marked the halfway point in construction of the first leg of a new Route 13 East Loop east of Warrensburg that will conclude by late 2010. Sen. William Stouffer, Rep. Denny Hoskins, Johnson County Commissioners Bill Brenner, Destry Hough and Scott Sader joined representatives from the Highway 13 Corridor Committee, city officials from Higginsville and Warrensburg, the president of the University of Central Missouri, the superintendent of the Warrensburg schools and officers from nearby Whiteman Air Force Base to herald progress.

Construction continues southward as earth is moved and a new, more free flowing corridor begins to take shape through the countryside. Once completed in late 2010, the East Loop will move through-traffic away from stop-and-go congestion in downtown Warrensburg, improving safety on the university campus and throughout Warrensburg neighborhoods.

Completion of the two new bridges carrying Route 50 over the East Loop comes at about the halfway point in the $27 million transportation improvement project. The south portion of the East Loop, from Veterans Road one-half mile north of Route 50, south to existing Route 13 near Route Y, will be a two-lane roadway within the right of way for a future four-lane highway. Ideker Inc. of St. Joseph is the general contractor for the project.

The north leg of the Route 13 East Loop is in the design stage. It will extend the two-lane on four-lane right of way north from the Route 50 interchange to connect with existing Route 13 three miles north of Warrensburg. Construction on that portion is not expected to begin for several more years.

Your Health Headquarters

Healthy Eating Tips for the Holidays:

- **Don't go to a party hungry**: we often eat faster and more when we are hungry.
- **Watch your portion**: treat yourself to a nice drink, dessert, chocolate or sweets without guilt, but always watch your portion.
- **Make a conscious choice to limit high fat items:** high fat food items can be found in fried food, cream-based soup, cheese-filled casseroles, pies, processed meats such as salami and sausages, some pastries and baked goods.
- **Drink plenty of water:** alcohol and coffee can dehydrate your body.
- **Physical activity:** take nice brisk walks with your loved ones and enjoy their company in the holiday season.

Some Great Holiday Recipe Substitutions

Recipe Calls For	*Substitution*
1 Whole Egg	2 Egg Whites
Sour Cream	low fat plain yogurt or low fat sour cream
Ice Cream	Frozen Yogurt
Heavy Cream (Not for Whipping)	2 tablespoons flour whisked into 2 cups non fat milk
Milk	skim or 1 percent
Whipped cream	Chilled evaporated skim milk or other low fat whipped products such as Nutriwhip
Cheese	Low-fat cheese (non-fat cheese does not melt well if use in cooking or baking)

**** Many other products such as mayonnaise, cheese, cream soup, sour cream have lower-fat versions so experiment with them in your cooking.***

Mailbag

I wanted to comment on improvements to F Hwy. Thank you so much for the wonderful improvements to Hwy F between Oak Grove and 50 Hwy. By widening the road, adding rumble strips and repaving the surface, we now have a much safer road to drive on. You did the work on the whole 9 miles in just a few days and we did not mind the inconvenience.

Thanks again.

Julia Seck

I want to thank MODOT for the overlay work being done on 69 Hwy from the northern boundary of Clay County, south to Hwy 92. I travel from Lawson to Excelsior Springs for work each day, and I am very grateful for the work being done. It will feel so much safer to drive the highway once the work is completed. I hope you do not receive complaints about the lane closures, as this work has been needed for some time. Thank you again for all of your hard work.

Chrissy Craig

We ARRA Moving Right Along

D4 is moving right along with several American Recovery and Reinvestment Act projects. Even with a very wet, rainy season crews have been able to fulfill the promise of completing these projects on time and within budget. Here is a recap of the ARRA projects for our district and the current status:

Cass County

- Recently, crews completed the thin lift overlay on Route 2 in combination with work on Route 52 in Henry County.

Clay County

- Route 169 sidewalk improvements between Route 92 and Route KK are underway. Crews should be wrapping up work by the end of the year.
- Route 1 sidewalk improvements between Vivion Road and 72nd Street are also underway. Crews should be wrapping up work by the end of the year.
- The thin lift overlay on Route 69 between the Clinton County Line and Route 92 is complete. This project was done in combination with the overlay projects for Route M and C in Ray and Route FF in Lafayette.
- Rehabilitation work for the Heart of American Bridge over the Missouri River including the addition of a bicycle and pedestrian facility is expected to begin in early 2010.

Henry County

- The thin lift overlay for Route 52 between the St. Clair County Line and Route 13 is complete.

Jackson County

- Widening for Route 150 from 2 lanes to four lanes from Horridge Road to Route 291 is under way.
- Construction for the half diamond interchange at I-435 and I-70, including additional lanes on I-70 and the modification of some ramps in the area is expected to be underway in February.
- In March, crews will begin work on the diamond interchange at Route 50 and Bynum Road in Lone Jack.
- In early 2010, rehabilitation work will begin on several bridges along I-70 between Troost and Route 40.

Johnson County

- Resurfacing work is complete on Route 131 between Route 50 and Route 2, which includes rumble stripes for motorists' safety.

Lafayette County

- I-70 received some pavement improvements between the Jackson County Line and Odessa. Crews resurfaced both east and westbound lanes and finished all work in September.
- The thin lift overlay for Route FF is underway, and expected to wrap up in December.

Platte County

- I-29 between Route 273 and Vivion Road received resurfacing for both north and southbound lanes. Crews used an innovative form of resurfacing called hot-in-place recycling.
- The thin lift overlay for Route 45 between Route 273 and Route 45 Spur and Route 273 between Route JJ and I-29 was completed in mid November.
- Crews will begin replacing the Route 9 Bridge over White Aloe Branch in Parkville in May or June 2010.

Ray County

- The thin lift overlay for Route M between Route U and Route 10 is complete.

And don't forget, you can always check out the status by looking on our website at http://www.modot.org/kansascity/arra_kc.htm.

MoDOT and Jackson County Communities Commit to a "Community Beautiful"

by Kerri Lewis

Communities across Jackson County have joined MoDOT and the Jackson County Sheriff's Department in an effort to provide a more beautiful and cleaner county for all to enjoy through education, participation and prevention efforts.

"Community Beautiful" is an outreach program through the Jackson County Cleanup Coalition (JCCC), a collaborative effort of MoDOT and Jackson County communities working together to prevent and cleanup litter within our county. The JCCC has been formed to address the growing need for litter control across the area. This includes preventing litter from accumulating along the city and state roadways, while educating the public and changing the perception about litter.

The JCCC will not only provide education about the effects litter has on the community, but has also received a commitment through a partnership with the Jackson County Sheriff's Department and each community's police department to increase enforcement across the county. The message is clear; it is NOT acceptable to litter.

The JCCC is currently working with local community cleanup groups such as Adopt-A-Highway, Bridging The Gap, and Adopt-A-Street to begin a yearlong campaign called Community Beautiful to address the litter problem and increase awareness. The kick-off began in November.

The Coalition, as part of Community Beautiful hosted a countywide litter collection effort during the month of November in support of America Recycles Day, which falls on November 15 of each year. This effort has reduced the amount of litter found in each community in hopes to keep litter off of the streets and put in its place.

For more information or to become involved, please visit the webpage at http://www.modot.org/kansascity/major_projects/cleanup_coalition.htm.

Community Beautiful
Jackson County Cleanup Coalition

Realty to Roads Blitz

by Michele Compton

From Turf to Rumble Stripes

Local residents are used to the familiar sign buried in the ground, "Auction this week." In recession, sometimes the signs are a little more prevalent. In good times, they are a little less.

On Nov. 20, the auction in question was somewhat of a rarity: a boon for both the buyer and the seller.

MoDOT is in the business of a lot of things, from building roads to plowing snow. But many people don't know that buying and selling land is one of them.

With the recent auction, the department tried a new tactic to sell property no longer needed. The agency is calling the effort a blitz – an all-out effort to sell multiple properties across the state in a short period of time.

The difference between a MoDOT auction and others is that funds go back into roadway projects that benefit Missouri drivers.

Grass to Greenbacks

Occasionally, after right of way is purchased for a project, the land exceeds need. In the past few years, the department has begun an aggressive campaign to sell excess property.

In fiscal year 2008, MoDOT sold 112 properties at a value of more than $4.4 million. In D4, eight properties generated more than $628,000 -- funds which were immediately put back into projects that serve the driving public.

"Our goal is to sell a fairly large number of properties in a concentrated amount of time," said Gregory Wood, Realty to Roads Project Director in MoDOT's Right of Way Division. "We want to draw attention to the fact we have property for sale and get land we're no longer using in the hands of owners who can put it to good use. The money from the sales goes to fund needed road and bridge projects."

Brad Wise and Lori Wyrick from Right of Way, worked to prepare the Chilhowee property ready for the auction block.

The auction held in November included the maintenance facility in Johnson County at Chilhowee and the facility in Henry County, at Montrose. Both properties were sold for 75 percent of the current price value.

D4 is currently preparing for other properties to be sold to interested parties. Keep an eye on our website at http://www.modot.org/realtyforsale/R2RBlitz.htm.

D4 Is Ready to Take on Old Man Winter

With innovative plowing and salt solutions, the department is prepared to keep traffic moving

By Michele Compton

The first flakes of the winter were flying a few weeks ago, and MoDOT trucks were on the road before they settled.

Preparing for a winter event is a major priority for the department. Safety is always No. 1 and keeping the roads safe for drivers falls right in line with that goal. With more than 7,000 lane miles to clear, the department will have 195 trucks on the road during a weather event, and need more than 500 employees to work around the clock to keep the roads safe.

Ready, Salt, Plow

Each year, the team looks for the most effective and innovative tools to move the snow and ice as fast as possible.

This season, our office boasts 18 Tow Plows. With one swipe, this efficient machine clears more than 26 feet of pavement, which allows for quicker, cleaner streets with less plowing. And to our knowledge, this is the only plow of this type in the world.

Along with the traditional salt brine mixture, beet juice will be used even more this winter. Beet juice, a green solution, enhances salt brine's ability to work at lower temperatures. This reduces the frequency of reapplication of material, saving cost as well as time.

First Roads First

MoDOT understands that each road is a priority to drivers; however, there are not enough workers or trucks to clear all highways immediately. In order to do the most efficient job that impacts the most drivers, we have an established plowing order for which roads are cleared first. For example;

- Priority 1: Roads with the highest traffic volumes are cleared, or treated, first. These include interstates and other major routes, which receive continuous treatment throughout a storm.
- Priority 2: Lower-volume lettered and numbered routes are cleared next. Traffic on these routes may be impeded until higher-volume routes are open and clear.

Even after all the roadway surfaces are as clear as possible, MoDOT's work is not done. Workers clean up the accumulation on shoulders, bridge edges and at interchanges.

The Tow Plow at work.

Our goal is to return the Priority 1 routes to a wet or dry condition as soon as possible after the storm ends.

As always, the Kansas City Scout cameras monitor snowstorms, immediately relaying information on over 39 message boards located around the eight-county Kansas City district.

Remember: If you don't have to drive, stay home. But if you do, let MoDOT clear the way first!

Improvements on Route F Through Oak Grove Complete

by Kerri Lewis

MoDOT and the city of Oak Grove celebrated the completion of roadway improvements along Route F in Oak Grove with a ribbon cutting ceremony on Wednesday, Nov. 18 with state, county and city officials. Representative Pratt and Mayor Fulks were among the more than 40 people attending the celebration on the cold November morning.

"We are pleased to announce that all work is complete and greatly appreciate the patience and cooperation from Oak Grove residents and motorists as we have faced unexpected delays. With the enhancements through the area, many will have a safer drive with better mobility and access through the growing area," said Sharon Taegel, Assistant to the District Engineer.

"Thank you MoDOT for providing theses enhancements through our thriving area," said Mark Fulks, Mayor for Oak Grove.

In July 2008, MoDOT began improvements to Route F to improve access, increase mobility and improve safety. Crews widened the current route and added turn lanes from Tenth Street to Interstate 70. MoDOT also widened and resurfaced the exit and entrance ramps at I-70, and added sidewalks with traffic and pedestrian signals through the downtown area.

MoDOT, city and state officials replace the orange cones with blue ribbon.