

eConnections

The electronic newsletter of MoDOT District 4, Kansas City Area



October 2010

In This Issue

Blue Ribbon Flying

Around the District

Above the Call of Duty

Being Social is Doing Business

Permits Web Page Intro

kcICON Dedication

...and more!

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

Two Feet, Two Wheels All it Takes To Cross the Wide Missouri in KC

by Steve Porter

Pedestrians and bicyclists in the Kansas City area now can cross the wide Missouri River, thanks to years of cooperation, collaboration and the timely arrival of funds through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The Heart of America Bridge, which connects Downtown Kansas City with North Kansas City via Route 9, is reconfigured to provide a 10-foot-wide, barrier-protected multi-use path for bicycles and pedestrians, including signage for bicyclists to share the road with motorized vehicles. Several hundred supporters gathered Oct. 1 to celebrate the completion with a ribbon cutting ceremony at the north end of the bridge in North Kansas City.

MoDOT retrofit the 25-year-old bridge this summer after the \$2.88 million project was selected to receive federal stimulus funding. Consulting engineers Burns & McDonnell designed the project, and Comanche Construction Co. was the general contractor for the bike/ped project, in conjunction with already scheduled bridgework.

The Heart of America Bridge project isn't the only bike/ped retrofit in the works. Later this year, MoDOT will complete a similar project on the Chouteau Bridge several miles downriver. Together, the crossings remove what has been a major barrier to non-motorized traffic in the Kansas City area.

These projects came about through a team effort among members of the com-



munity. In 2006, MoDOT conducted a bicycle and pedestrian feasibility study as part of the Interstate 29/35 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The study team included representatives from Kansas City, North Kansas City, Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA), Missouri Bicycle Federation, Bridging the Gap, Federal Highway Administration, Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) and MoDOT.

The study team identified the Heart of America Bridge (Route 9) as the preferred river crossing and the Chouteau Bridge (Route 269) as a strong alternate for bicycles and pedestrians based on several factors including safety, lowest environmental impact, construction cost, maintenance, and best use of land. The final design considers the needs of pedestrians, casual riders, the advanced cyclist, and motorists.

In addition, the cities of Kansas City and North Kansas City worked with MoDOT to ensure the crossing meets community needs and connects with each city's bicycle routes and walkways.

Continued on the next page

Two Feet, Two Wheels

Continued from first page

Safety and connectivity are primary concerns when adding more vulnerable travelers to a transportation corridor. MoDOT understands the unique needs of each type of bridge user.

Pedestrians need protection from vehicles that cross the bridge at high rates of speed. Casual cyclists are not always comfortable riding in motorist lanes that travel at a higher speed. Advanced cyclists will continue to ride in lanes following the rules of the road, but with greater exposure to traffic.



Many took the opportunity to be the first to walk/ride on the new path after the ribbon cutting ceremony.



A ground breaking ceremony in April signified the start of this wonderful enhancement. Now, the ribbon has flown signifying the completed project.

Motorist Assist Operator Goes Above and Beyond the Call of Duty

by Gina Myles

In July, Motorist Assist Operator, Cristi Polen was on patrol when she came upon two vehicles on the shoulder. A man and woman were working on a vehicle in front of what appeared to be an abandoned car. When she arrived, they stopped what they were doing and the man walked back to Cristi's Motorist Assist truck. He said he had changed a tire on the front vehicle. They got into that car and left the area, leaving the other vehicle on the shoulder. Cristi noted that the vehicle that was left on the shoulder was the same make, model and color as the one the subjects were driving. She thought the situation was somewhat strange, and the subjects would return later for the second vehicle.

A couple of hours later Cristi found the same two subjects back at the scene. When she stopped this time, the subjects began quickly throwing their tools into the trunk of the car they were driving and got into the vehicle quickly. As she approached the occupied car she could see that the back seat was full of aluminum wheels. The subjects left very quickly, nearly striking her in the getaway. It had appeared that the subjects were stripping the abandoned vehicle. Cristi notified the police to make a report, and to have the vehicle towed. When the officer arrived,

it was determined both the vehicle being stripped, and the vehicle driven by the subjects, were reported stolen. Cristi provided all of the information she had on the incident and the stripped vehicle was towed.

On Aug. 19, Cristi received a phone call from Detective Wisdom of the Kansas City Police Department East Property Crimes Unit. Cristi spoke with Detective Wisdom and was able to identify both subjects from a photo line-up. Both subjects were subsequently arrested and charged. It was later determined the pair was responsible for at least four auto thefts and other crimes.

According to Rusty James, Incident Management Coordinator for KC Scout, the information provided by Cristi Polin was essential in bringing charges against the two subjects. James said, "In my experience I have seen many times when witnesses, some of whom it is their responsibility, have not done as good a job as Cristi did of documenting this incident and providing identifying information. This is above and beyond what we would normally expect of the Motorist Assist and Emergency Response operators."

Cristi is to be commended for her actions and her dedication to duty.



Mailbag

I want to express our heartfelt appreciation for the sympathy expressed to me and my family on the passing of my father Sept. 22. We really have

been touched by all your cards, emails and comments in passing. In times like these, it hits home that MoDOT is family too and we gather 'round. When you are on the receiving end of such good thoughts and prayers, it means a lot.

Thank you so much.
-- Bob Edwards

Dear MoDOT Family,
Thank you for the gracious send off. Thank you for your support and friendships. I miss you all but look forward to working with you again.

Sincerely,
Jackie Davis

Dear MoDOT Family,

Thank you so much for the flower arrangement and all your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time for our family. Because of the gestures we have been uplifted and able to focus on the good memories and the precious time we have with each other.

The Family of Merrill Daffron
Belinda Fite

Blue Ribbon Continues to Fly

D4 Celebrates More Completed Projects

Orange cones are quickly being replaced by blue ribbon across D4 as more and more projects are being completed. This construction season has brought a large number of projects thanks to the Safe & Sound Program, the Minor Roads Initiative, and ARRA jobs to name a few. The challenge is not completing these jobs' aggressive schedules on time, but keeping enough blue ribbon in stock to celebrate each project completion.

Route 13 in Lafayette County

The most recent event to bring out the scissors was held in early October, as more than 30 people gathered to celebrate completion for the Lexington "Gap" job on Route 13. Lafayette County travelers now have a new section of Route 13 to lessen drive time. MoDOT and contractor Chester Bross Construc-



New lanes on Route 13 opened on Oct. 18.

tion Co. has completed the project giving many a reason to celebrate.

This project ties the northern four-lane divided section, which ended just south of Route 24, with the existing two-lane Route 13 to the south. This 3.1-mile extension unites the gap between the two sections and will improve safety, increase mobility, decrease travel time, provide for efficient movement of traffic, and offer a convenient and economical north/south route.

Strother Road Interchange

Another big project for the district celebrated completion of a new interchange



Strother Road Ribbon Cutting

at Strother Road and I-470 in Lee's Summit. More than 50 people stopped by to participate in the ribbon cutting event. MoDOT, city and state officials spoke highly about the project and completed the event by cutting the ribbon.

This new interchange, just minutes from the district office, has provided new access for the more than 82,000 vehicles that use I-470 daily. Construction began in 2008 and was awarded to Emery Sapp & Sons, Inc. for \$15 million.

The Strother Road Interchange was built in a cooperative effort between the City of Lee's Summit and the Missouri Department of Transportation. This project is on the list of Regionally Significant projects maintained by the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Kansas City region.

Route DD Roundabout

Johnson County, a rural area of D4 also had reason to celebrate recently. Construction, currently under way on the first leg of a new Route 13 east of Warrensburg, celebrated a milestone in late August. A new roundabout opened along the new section of Route 13 at the intersection of Route DD for the more than 5000 vehicles driving through this area daily. Thirty people came by to celebrate this newest addition to the new lanes of Route 13. Senator Pearce and Warrens-

burg city officials applauded the efforts of MoDOT to enhance the transportation system through Johnson County.

Known as the East Loop, the new Route 13 will move through-traffic away from stop-and-go congestion in downtown Warrensburg. The new roundabout intersection will move traffic smoothly, safely and more quickly than a signal-controlled or signed intersection. This is the first of four that are included in the Route 13 East Loop project, which is scheduled for completion this fall.

Safe & Sound

To top off the list of completed projects across the district, Safe & Sound Bridges are being done at a very quick pace. Motorists are reaping the benefit across the district with new bridges providing a smoother, safer drive. Although most of these bridges are rural, elected and MoDOT officials show support by cutting a ribbon to celebrate the importance of this statewide initiative.

Keep an eye out as the construction season continues. More ribbon will fly, orange cones will be replaced, and Missourians will reap the benefits these completed projects provide.



Perry Allen led the event for the new roundabout at Route 13 and Route DD.

Corporate Ladder

Retirees

Kim Branson, Maintenance Supervisor

Jimmie Rader, Senior Electrician

Welcome to D4

J Tyrell Colbert, Maintenance Worker

Marvin Kitchen, Maintenance Worker

Promotion

Clem Anderson III

Intermediate Pavement Specialist

David Atkins-Hubbard

Intermediate Maintenance Worker

Robert Boessen

Intermediate Materials Technician

Marcus Boulton

Senior Materials Technician

Amy Gagne

Intermediate Human Resources Specialist

Mark Green

Intermediate Traffic Studies Specialist

Matthew Kelley

Senior Maintenance Worker

Jeremy Morken

Intermediate Highway Designer

David Odom

Intermediate Maintenance Worker

Kyle Warren

Intermediate Maintenance Worker

News from Across the District

New Arrivals

Congratulations to Nathan Juliana, Traffic Specialist, and his wife Dawn on the birth of their new baby boy, Ethan in September. Ethan was born at 6 pounds and 19 inches long.

Congratulations also go to Lindy Stuerke, Roadside Manager, and her family on the birth of her baby girl, Esther Ora. Esther was born at 7 pounds and 15 ounces.

Condolences

Our thoughts and prayers go to Belinda Fite, Human Resources Worklife Center Manager, and her family on the loss of her father, Merril Daffron in September.

A Generous Performance

When employees perform above and beyond and are considered the top performers in the district, they have an opportunity to receive Performance Based Pay. Not only did Roy Vogel and Stephen Phillips receive this honor but also gave a generous performance when both donated it to the D4 Employee Assistance Fund, a fund used to help

MoDOT D4 employees in time of great need. Such a generous gift for a great cause. Both deserve a standing ovation for this generous performance.



Roy Vogel and Stephen Phillips



MoDOT, Children's Trust Fund Team Up to Help Protect Children

New Posters Remind Drivers of the Dangers of a Hot Car

The Missouri Department of Transportation (MODOT) and the Children's Trust Fund (CTF), Missouri's Foundation for Child Abuse Prevention, have joined forces to remind parents and caregivers that children should never be left alone in a car – not even for a minute.

MODOT has placed posters supporting CTF's Not Even for a Minute public-awareness campaign in its 28 rest area locations in Missouri. The campaign encourages parents and caregivers not to leave children alone in or around vehicles. Left alone in a vehicle, even for a short time, a child is in danger of dehydration, injury, abduction or death. This important message will also scroll across approximately 66 electronic message boards along Interstates 70, 44, 55, 29 and 35 and on U.S. Route 60, through the end of August.

"We all know how hot Missouri summers can be," said Kirk Schreiber, CTF executive director. "The inside of a car can heat up to extreme and dangerous temperatures very quickly and result in tragedy for children within minutes. CTF is very appreciative of MODOT helping us reach more people with this safety message."

According to Safe Kids USA (www.safekids.org), from 1998 to 2009, 443 children died from heat stroke while unattended in a car, and 88 percent of children who die from heat stroke are ages three and younger. On days when the temperature exceeds 86°F, the internal temperature of a car can quickly reach upwards of 130°F.

"Keeping Missourians safe is our top priority, and we are pleased to help the Children's Trust Fund remind folks never to leave children alone in or around cars," said MODOT Interim Director Kevin Keith. "We estimate almost 20 million people visit our rest areas every year so they are certainly prime locations to convey this important message."

"We're reaching them in the vehicles they're traveling in," added MoDOT Community Relations Manager Sally Oxenhandler. "A lot of them will probably

stop at our rest areas along the way, and those are prime locations, the message boards and the rest areas, where we can get out this important message not to leave children unattended in vehicles."

Tips...It's a car accident you can prevent:

Never leave children unattended in or around an automobile.

Teach your children the dangers of a car and let them know it is not a toy or playground.

Keep car doors and trunks locked so children cannot play in them. Keep keys and remote entry keyfobs out of children's reach. Kids may be able to use a remote entry keyfob to unlock a car from inside a house leaving an unlocked car for others to enter.

Make your child as visible as possible. Place rear-facing car seats in the middle of the back seat.

Establish a routine of checking the back seat every time you exit the car to ensure no one is left behind. Do not overlook sleeping infants.

Try to plan ahead when you have errands. Run errands when your spouse, trusted neighbor or friend can watch your child.

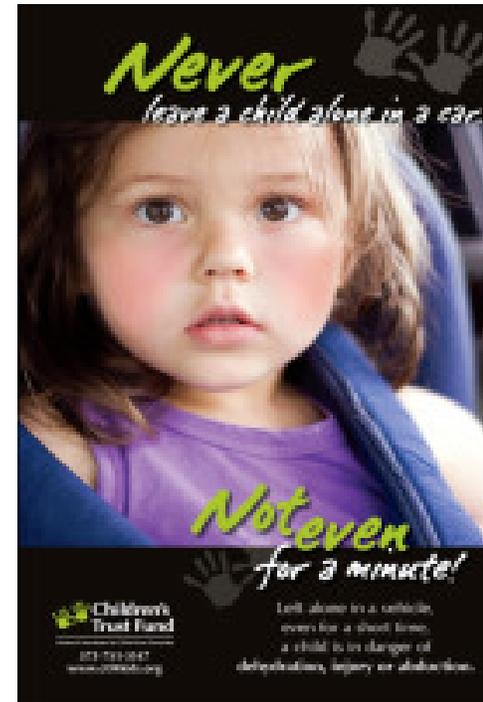
Remember to use the drive-through convenience provided by banks, dry cleaners, pharmacies, restaurants and other businesses.

Use your debit or credit card at the gas pump.

- Place your cell phone, PDA, purse, briefcase, gym bag, or lunch bag on the floor in front of your child's car seat to give you an additional reason to check the back seat. Be sure it is something that you always carry with you.

- Set your cell phone or your daily calendar in Outlook at the same time each day to remind you that the baby should have been dropped off at daycare. Many tragedies have happened as the caregiver drove on to work instead of stopping at daycare.

- Keep a special toy in your child's empty car seat when the child is not with you. Bring that toy to the front seat when



the child is in the car seat to serve as a constant, visible reminder of your child's presence in the car.

- Call 911 if you see children unattended in a car. The first responders tell us they would rather have those calls so they can determine if the child is at risk than have the emergency call later when a child is in deep trouble.

- When a child is missing, check vehicles and trunks immediately.

CTF serves as Missouri's foundation for child abuse prevention by providing grants, education and public awareness to community organizations across the state. CTF was established in 1983 by the Missouri General Assembly as a non-profit organization and has distributed over \$44 million dollars to support families and prevent child abuse.

In addition to keeping a watchful eye on your children, securing them properly in an appropriate child safety seat — in the back seat of your vehicle — is the most effective thing you can do to protect them in the event of a crash. In fact, in motor vehicle crashes, child safety seats reduce the risk of fatal injury by 71 percent for infants and by 54 percent for toddlers. Missouri law requires all children under eight to be in an appropriate child safety or booster seat unless they are 80 lbs or 4'9" tall.

For additional information visit www.ctf4kids.org.

Being Social is Doing Business

You may have heard the term “social media” tossed around lately. It’s basically being social online. Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, LinkedIn, Myspace are all examples of social media.

Many of these forums started as a way for people to express themselves, unfiltered. For example, you might post a video of your son playing his first soccer game so your mom – who lives across the country – can see him play. Or you can track down all your best high-school pals on Facebook and catch up on where they are in life.

As with many popular applications, once it took off, more and more businesses realized this was an untapped opportunity to talk directly to the customer.

Before social media, a nice website and witty press release were the only chances you had to get the public’s attention. But if a bigger story trumped your press release, suddenly you were on the last page of the paper, if at all.

In the past year, MoDOT has ventured into the realm of social media. In District 4, we have a Facebook page, Twitter feed, Flickr account, eUpdates system and Youtube channel. Through these amazingly powerful tools, we made more than 14,000 impressions on our customers just this year.

When a hole appeared in I-470 in July and we closed the road, it was our social media outlets that exploded with questions, comments and ideas. We responded to every one of them, and received much-deserved praise and recognition for the work on that project.

It’s also an opportunity for us to correct

misinformation. We regularly see posts about the gas tax paying for roads. In our billion dollar funding structure, the gas tax accounts for only about 20%. That’s something most people don’t realize!

Whether it is answering questions about projects, posting pictures or uploading videos of engineers sharing cool “insider” information, these outlets have helped us connect in all new ways and will be part of the MoDOT information stream for a long time.

Check us out! Be a fan, follower, groupie or a friend:

- Facebook: www.facebook.com/MoDOT.KansasCity
- Flickr: www.flickr.com/photos/modot_kc/
- Youtube: www.youtube.com/modotkc
- Twitter: http://twitter.com/MoDOT_KC

The screenshot shows the Facebook interface for MoDOT Kansas City. The top navigation bar includes 'facebook', a search bar, and a notification badge with the number '2'. The main content area features a post from MoDOT Kansas City with a photo of a road construction site. The post text reads: "It's Open!!! i-470 opened at 5:30 a.m. for traffic. Your morning commute just got a little shorter if you are one of the 60,000 who use this interstate everyday. 3 hours ago clear". Below the post are navigation tabs for 'Wall', 'Info', 'Photos', 'Boxes', 'Events', and 'Tweets'. A text input field for a status update is visible, along with an 'Attach' button and a 'Share' button. The post has received 7 likes and 4 comments. Comments include: "Ve Renée Lew Yeah!!!! 58 minutes ago", "Christopher Lee Church How soon before 150 gets done? 53 minutes ago", and "Justin Spencer So what is the bonus the contractor is getting paid 17 hours ago". A second post from MoDOT Kansas City is partially visible at the bottom, mentioning a road reopening after a collapse.

DOT_KC

D4 Launches Complete, Interactive Permit Web site

Innovative permit process takes cumbersome paperwork to easier, online solution

D4 issues a lot of permits. In fact, the district averages about 100 permits a month during the busy summer season. That's why the department completely renovated and ramped up the Permits to Work on Right of Way website.

What started as an idea to create an online application blossomed into a complete, interactive resource that includes everything from a new online form to a complete video vault. Anyone applying for a permit will also find information about multiple issues including:

- Permit Process
- Safety
- Traffic Control
- Traffic Impact Study Requirements
- Outdoor Advertising
- Overdimension Permits

“There are many reasons why someone needs to perform work on MoDOT’s Right of Way from constructing or reconstructing existing entrances to grading, landscaping or simply installing irrigation,” said Vernon Koch, Traffic Operations Supervisor. “It takes a lot of work to get to the permit stage. In fact, the staff regularly works with multiple outlets from



Permits to Work on Right of Way

Links:

- Permit Process
- Online Permit Application
- Notice of Intent to Work
- Traffic Control
- Access Management
- Pedestrian Facilities
- Utility Procedures
- Land Disturbance and Erosion Control
- Safety
- Traffic Impact Study Requirements
- Hay and Other Crops on Right of Way
- Helpful Links
- Document Corner
- Video Vault
- Microfilm Request
- Outdoor Advertising
- Overdimension Permits
- Frequently Asked Questions

Click map for more information:



Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.

Location:
600 NE Colbern Road
Lee's Summit MO 64086

Contact Us:
Traffic Operations Supervisor
Sherita Koch
816-607-2190

Senior Office Assistant:
Sherita White
816-607-2179

Administrative Technician:
Melanie Lanigan
816-607-2171

Welcome to MoDOT's Permits To Work on Right of Way Resource Site

Take a video tour of the NEW Permits Web Site!

city and county planning and zoning officials, to contractors, property owners, and utility companies just to make sure the permit work is acceptable.”

For more information or to peruse the site, please visit www.modot.mo.gov/kc, and click on “News and Information.”

New Sign Honors Victim, Raises Awareness of Drunk Driving

The family of 16-year-old Laura Reynolds honored her memory this month by a simple yet powerful statement: A sign installed along eastbound Route 24 between Davis Road and Blue Mills Road in Independence near where a drunk driver took her life last Halloween night.

Laura was the front seat passenger in a car struck head-on by a 19-year-old drunk driver. The sign is the first of its kind in MoDOT's Kansas City District, and is placed as close as safely possible to the site of the collision.

The new signs authorized by the Missouri General Assembly to help memorialize drunk-driving victims urge drivers to think about their choices this fall and in the months ahead.

"Drinking and then choosing to drive is a decision that tragically takes lives," said Beth Wright, MoDOT District Engineer. "This new sign recalls the loss of a vibrant Fort Osage High School junior, while raising awareness of the dangers of impaired driving."

The signs are part David's Law, which went into effect more than a year ago. The law is named after David Poenicke, a victim of impaired driving. Poenicke's sister, Gail Rehme, was a leading force in getting the legislation passed.

The blue memorial signs read "Drunk Driving Victim!" and include the person's initials and the month and year they were killed. At the bottom it reads "Think About It!" The signs can be requested and paid

for by the family of a drunk driving victim.

Impaired driving continues to be a problem among motorists, many of whom don't realize how little of a substance it actually takes to affect driving skills and put themselves and others at risk.

Last year Laura Reynolds was among 280 killed and 1,140 seriously injured in Missouri crashes involving an impaired driver.

To learn more, visit saveMOlives.com and click on Impaired Driving. For more information about other MoDOT projects, please visit MoDOT's Website at www.modot.mo.gov/kansascity. For instant updates, follow MoDOT_KC on Twitter or send questions and comments to kccommunityrelations@modot.mo.gov.

All kclCON Project I-29/35 Lanes, Ramps to Open by Year's End

Bond Bridge is dedicated as project is six months ahead of schedule

Under a bright blue sky and canopy of gleaming white cables radiating from the new, Christopher S. Bond Bridge, U.S. Sen. Kit Bond and Missouri Department of Transportation Interim Director Kevin Keith announced Sept. 27, 2010 that all Interstate 29/35 lanes and ramps on the kclCON Project will be open by the end of the year – six months ahead of schedule.

Thanking the nearly 700 dedication event attendees, Keith said MoDOT's design-build method of project delivery is a great way to accelerate large construc-

tion projects. "Our fixed-cost, best-value approach gives taxpayers the biggest bang for their buck while maximizing the innovation and creativity of the private sector."

Prior to kicking off Kansas City's largest "deck party," Bond took a 316-foot basket ride to the top of the landmark structure with Missouri Highways and Transportation Chairman Rudy Farber, Bill Clarkson, Jr. of Clarkson Construction Company and Henry Massman of Massman Construction Co. All signed their names

on the center pylon.

"This is magnificent," said Bond. "The speed (of the project) is truly remarkable.



We congratulate MoDOT, the contractor, the designers and everybody who made this come together and the community support of it...a perfect operation and a fitting celebration of the great work by everyone involved."

The bridge was opened to its first lane of northbound traffic a few hours following the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The contractor, Paseo Corridor Constructors, will complete cross street work, incidental construction and the removal of the existing Paseo Bridge in 2011.

