

MAY 2013

Arkansas HIGHWAYS

A PUBLICATION OF THE ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY & TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT | **MAGAZINE**

Robert S. Moore, Jr. Talks Connectivity

INCOMING HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER
DISCUSSES FUTURE GOALS AND PLANS

Rehabilitating
INTERSTATE
540

3 **HIGHWAYS**
to Explore
IN
SOUTHWEST ARKANSAS

History Lesson:
25 YEARS
THAT CHANGED
THE COMMISSION



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Spring has finally arrived and with it, warmer weather. That is good news for all of our Department crews that are out on the highways working on new projects or performing maintenance to our roadways. And with the arrival of spring also comes good news for all of our Department employees across the State.

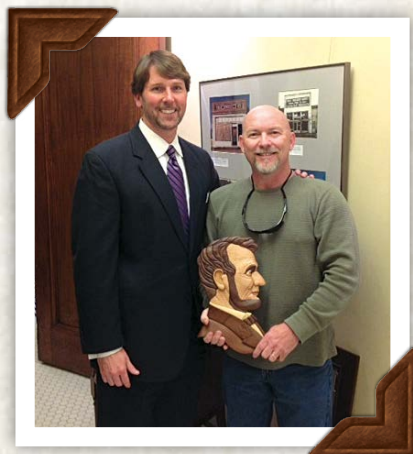
I am happy to announce that raises have been included in our budget. With final approval from the Highway Commission at their upcoming June 5th meeting, we will be able to issue cost of living salary adjustments in the near future. That is something we haven't been able to do in the last couple of years but are certainly excited to be able to do now!

I want to say how much I appreciate the hard work of everyone over the last few months. We've had several things that have come our way that weren't expected. Crews are still cleaning up debris on some rights-of-way that was left behind by the winter snowstorm. A tragic accident on Interstate 40 in Pulaski County had crews hustling to make repairs to an overpass to insure the safety of motorists passing below. And, an inspection of the White River Bridge on Interstate 40 in Prairie County led to necessary improvements that required diversion of traffic off of the Interstate and around-the-clock work to get repairs made. In each case, our men and women did a great job and did the work required in a timely, professional manner.

During the recent legislative session at the Capitol in Little Rock, I was fortunate enough to meet one of our AHTD family members. T.J. Brown, an Assistant Bridge Inspector for Heavy Bridge, does beautiful woodwork and had work on display outside one of our State Senator's office. I happened to be there when T.J. picked up his work that was on exhibit. (See the photo below, right.) His work was featured in the September 2009 issue of *The CenterLine Newsletter*.

Another sign of spring is that Rodeo competitions have been underway within the Districts. The State finals will be held in Little Rock on June 12th. The event is always a good opportunity for some friendly competition, for staffers to show off their skills, and to develop friendships and camaraderie within our AHTD family. I wish everyone good luck at this year's statewide event.

Just a reminder, with the warmer weather and summer approaching, more motorists will be hitting the highways. Whether you are working on the road or are traveling, everyone be safe and have a wonderful spring!



Director Scott E. Bennett with Assistant Bridge Inspector T.J. Brown.

Scott E. Bennett
Director of Highways and Transportation



FRONT COVER:
U.S. Highway 65
Searcy County

BACK COVER:
U.S. Highway 270
Montgomery County

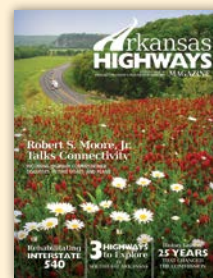
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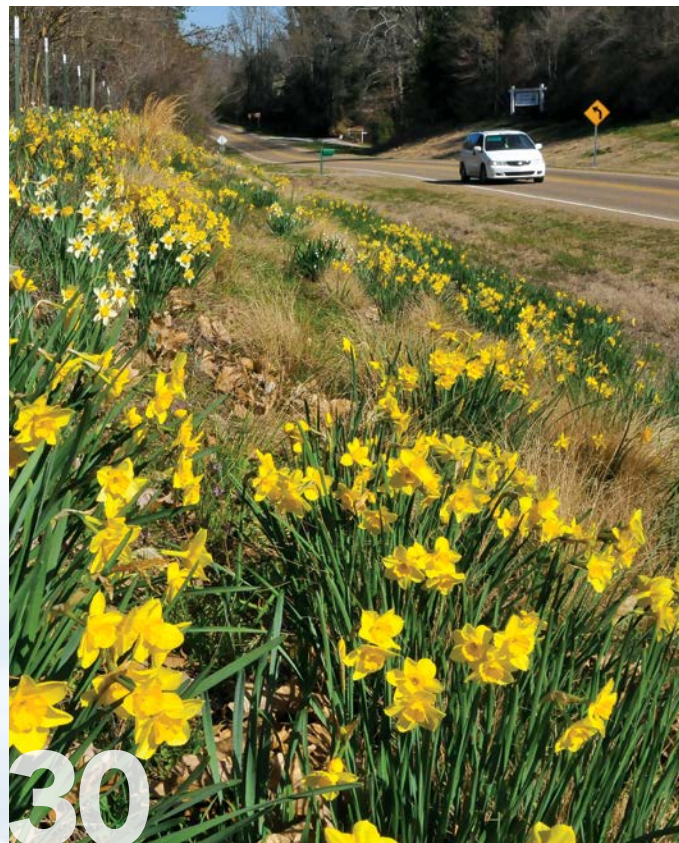


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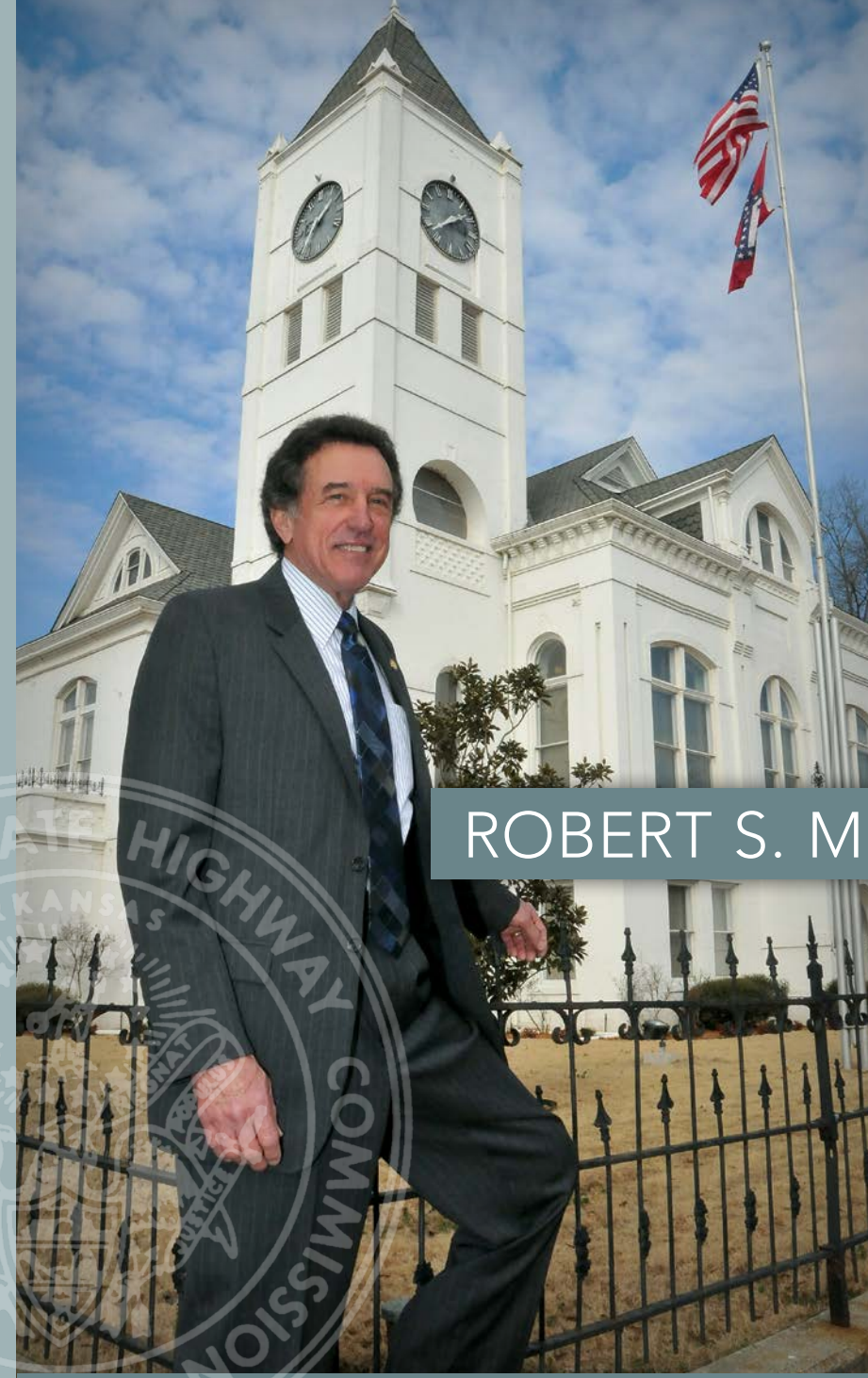
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ROBERT S. MOORE, JR.

NEW COMMISSIONER BEGINS TERM WITH AHTD

In January of this year, Robert S. Moore, Jr. was appointed to a ten-year term on the Arkansas State Highway Commission by Governor Mike Beebe. Moore is a resident of Arkansas City and is owner/operator of Moore Farms. He is a former three-term member of the Arkansas House of Representatives representing District 12 which includes Chicot County and parts of Desha, Arkansas and Ashley Counties. He served as Speaker of the House for the 88th General Assembly which convened in January of 2011. Moore sat down recently with Internal Communications Coordinator David Nilles to discuss his appointment to the Commission and the future of Arkansas' highway system.

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“WHILE CONGESTION RELIEF AND FOUR LANE CONNECTORS ARE EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO FUTURE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT... SAFE, GOOD TWO LANE ROADS IN RURAL ARKANSAS ARE CERTAINLY OF EQUAL IMPORTANCE.”



(Right) Commissioner Moore at a bid letting in February 2013.

(Below L. to R.) Robert S. Moore, Jr. being interviewed by David Nilles, Editor of Arkansas Highways Magazine.



during his time on the Commission. All areas of the State will benefit from a part of the One-Half Cent Sales Tax Program and that will mean substantial progress. That is probably the most consistent issue that I have heard about when coming in contact with mayors and county judges.

Interestingly, I have had communications from people in places like Desha and Chicot counties that just want to talk about two-lane roads and getting them improved. Overlay programs are needed on two-lane roads in that area. Those roads weren't built to carry the weight loads from logging trucks or agriculture trucks or trucks traveling to and from the paper mill. They don't have the base to carry that type of heavy traffic. As a result, people in that area are interested in smoother roads. I've even heard from a few people that just want something as simple as good striping on particular roadways.

It's been a very diverse range of subjects with the people I have come in contact with. Folks know that I am a new voice on the Commission and they have wanted to make sure that I am aware of the status of roadways in their areas. Coming from a legislative background, it makes it very helpful to hear from them. I definitely understand the importance of having constituent contact and working to deal with their needs.

NILLES: I'm sure you are already aware of the gap that exists between the amount of funding the Department needs to meet our highway needs and the amount of funding that is actually available for those needs. What do you think the answer may be when it comes to closing that gap?

(continued on page 8)

NILLES: What were your feelings when Governor Beebe approached you about a position on the Highway Commission?

COMMISSIONER MOORE: Well actually, the approaching came from the other way. I approached the Governor about a year ago. I asked him to consider me when a position on the Commission became available. I was interested primarily because of my work on the One-Half Cent Sales Tax Amendment and the renewal of the GARVEE Bonds in the last legislative session.

I have a deep and abiding interest in tourism in Arkansas as well. It is our number two industry. We are a very diverse State and there are a lot of things to see and places to go. It's very apparent that the great connector to success in tourism is having good roads for people to travel on. So I became interested on the basis of economic development.

I come from rural Arkansas so I understand the importance of safe, good roads. People in rural areas of the State must have access to urban market areas. Urban businesses know the importance of having rural Arkansans having easy access to those market places. It is all tied around economic growth and safety of our citizens. I was very fortunate to have the favor of Governor Beebe's consideration to make the appointment. I'm very happy to be aboard.

NILLES: You have been involved with Arkansas' transportation industry for quite some time. How do you think your past experience in transportation will help you on the Commission?

COMMISSIONER MOORE: Funding for highways was my number one priority when I was sworn in as Speaker of the House in January of 2011. I stated that to my colleagues when I addressed them in my speech. This past year, when we went to work on the ballot issues, I had the opportunity to work with the Commissioners and all of the stakeholders that have an interest in promoting good roads in Arkansas. That

experience was beneficial for me and deepened my knowledge of our highway system. I learned more about how the Department operates, what our needs are and how the Department is funded.

In the near term, I think I have a good background that will help me make an early contribution as a member of the Commission. Years ago when Governor David Pryor was in office, I was appointed the chairman of, what was at that time, the Arkansas Transportation Commission. Its role was to regulate intrastate commerce. I received a different perspective of the use of our highways and regulating the trucking industry. That was in the late seventies and early eighties. In the late eighties I worked on the staff of Governor Bill Clinton. In addition to other duties, I was his transportation liaison. That position gave me the opportunity to come to the Highway and Transportation Department and actually sit in on some of the Highway Commission business meetings. So I have been very interested from many perspectives and have had the opportunity to be involved for a number of years. I think that will be to my benefit as I take on this challenge.

NILLES: What do you feel are the State's most pressing needs when you look at the highway system and consider the future?

COMMISSIONER MOORE: We are very fortunate to have a voting populace in the State that underscored my beliefs and the beliefs of the Commissioners and many of my legislative colleagues by approving the One-Half Cent Sales Tax Amendment. That people recognize the importance of good roads and are willing to pay for them is a vote of confidence. The half-cent election results spoke very loudly for the voice of the people of Arkansas. They recognized the need. With this program, we are going to see a great deal of headway in the next five or six years. We are going to address something that is immensely important, that being congestion relief. This will be a substantial beginning to our four-lane connector

highways, connecting medium-sized cities to the urban market areas. We are certainly going to make some great strides in that important area.

The other item that I am really interested in is something that was introduced in the recent legislative session, the revenue transfer bill. It would transfer revenue from the sales tax on automobiles and auto parts to the Highway and Transportation Department. We have to consider long term funding for the maintenance of our highways. I think people understand that we have a systemic problem in the way that we fund our highways utilizing our motor fuel tax. We have motorists driving more efficient vehicles. As a result, we are losing the battle of having enough funding to maintain our highways. It was important that we set the stage with the revenue transfer bill during the legislative session. Whether it passes one day or it doesn't, we must find a means to insure proper maintenance of our highways in the future. Because while congestion relief and four lane connectors are extremely important to future economic growth and development... safe, good two lane roads in rural Arkansas are certainly of equal importance. Being able to maintain those with a good overlay program could mean all the difference in the world to future economic growth and safety in this State.

NILLES: You've been involved in transportation for years. Now as a member of the Commission, are you hearing from people across the State about what they feel their needs are?

COMMISSIONER MOORE: Yes. As an example, down in south Arkansas where I am from, I have had people come to me to talk about Highway 82, the east-west corridor across the southern half of Arkansas. It's extremely important to small communities and larger cities in that area of the State. Cities like Crossett, Magnolia, El Dorado and Texarkana need connectivity.

Then you look over to southeast Arkansas to Lake Village where we have widened recently to four lanes leading to the bridge at Greenville. There have been pleas from people in that area for many years. Now, there is a lot of work going on down there.

So I certainly feel like we have made some substantial headway in that area and others under the direction of Madison Murphy



(L. to R.) Governor Mike Beebe introducing newly appointed Commissioner Moore.

COMMISSIONER MOORE: I immediately think of the revenue transfer bill that was introduced by Representative Jonathan Barnett in the recent session. It represents one of many recommendations that came from the Blue Ribbon Committee on Highway Financing. The Department is focusing on four specific recommendations of the Committee. Several of those have been successfully implemented including the GARVEE Bond reauthorization for the new Interstate Rehabilitation Program, and the One-Half Cent Sales Tax that will allow us to begin a City Aid program and do some four-laning. As we look to the future, the revenue transfer of vehicle-related items over to highway funding would help tremendously. If we are successful in doing that, I think the future is extremely bright for being able to close that gap. When we talk about the gap between what we would like to do and what our ability is, there are some critical areas that must be addressed. If not, we are going to have real problems the further we go down the line because our revenue is decreasing and our costs are increasing. Sometimes it just seems like a no-win battle. But I am optimistic and hoping that we are going to arrive at a successful way to meet our needs. The Department, our stakeholders and legislators all know what our problems are going to be for the future. We know we must do something. So we will work hard to try and find a means of achieving a successful funding stream.

NILLES: As you look beyond the immediate future and on toward the next ten years, what will be some of your priorities in meeting the goal of providing a good highway system for Arkansas?

COMMISSIONER MOORE: A good highway system is a big priority for all of Arkansas. As I come on the Commission, I understand it is fundamental. Roads connect people to each other and the market places. We on the Commission recognize that the needs in urban areas are greater because you have congestion that you don't have in rural areas. We are all Arkansans, and all Arkansans deserve to travel on good, smooth, safe roads whether they are two-lane rural roads with good surfaces and good shoulders or

I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT WE AS COMMISSIONERS WILL COME TOGETHER IN THE END AND FIND THE BEST WAY TO GET THE BEST ROADS WE CAN FOR THE PEOPLE OF OUR STATE.



six- or eight-lane roads in urban areas. That connectivity and having a stable funding base are vital so that people traveling in Arkansas or businesses that are looking to locate in Arkansas know we have a good highway system and the funding to maintain that system. I think it is extremely important for both new businesses and tourism.

I'm specifically interested in the Highway 82 project in south Arkansas. That's a perfect example of what we need all across the State. I certainly approach this as a Commissioner for the entire State of Arkansas. I recognize that if we are not properly connected we are losing our primary objective of having a good highway system, one that requires connectivity everywhere.

I use my wife and myself as a good example. We enjoy vacations where we go on road trips. It is what we call a tour of "small town America." We literally have been to every state in this country just enjoying the ride.

It's a great vacation because everywhere we go we are seeing something we've never seen before. Over the years, one of the things that determines what states we return to is which ones have good roads. Motorists want to feel safe and comfortable. If it's a pretty state with good highways, you want to go back and travel it. I have traveled all over this State during my lifetime. I can say that Arkansas is as beautiful as any state in the country. It is absolutely gorgeous. So we must have safe highways to go with our scenery.

But not just safe highways, lets go a step further. We must have clean highways as well. That's another thing that my wife and I always observe, and that is how the highways and roadsides are maintained. If you travel through a state where you see litter everywhere, you just don't have as good a feeling when you ride through. So I hope that we can continue to emphasize the importance of clean highways. Let's continue to support litter programs and efforts to educate people about littering. We must do everything we can to not only have safe, smooth highways, but beautiful clean highways. Clean highways contribute to the beautiful scenery we look at when we travel. We can tie that in with some agencies I have worked with in the past like the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, the Department of Arkansas Heritage and our Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. All of us can work together to coordinate our efforts to maintain the resources of our State.

NILLES: You've talked about the two big programs that were approved at the ballot box recently, the new Interstate Rehabilitation Program and the One-Half Cent Sales Tax. Are we headed in the right direction?

COMMISSIONER MOORE: Absolutely. The legislation that created the Blue Ribbon Committee on Highway Finance was sponsored by one of my colleagues in southern Arkansas. That was a great piece of legislation that brought together a nonpartisan group of people. It included legislators and other elected officials as well as stakeholders from various chambers and construction industries. To come together as a diverse group and come up with a plan for better highways was of great importance.



As you look at their report, it is a well thought out plan. I'm excited to be on the Commission now as we look at implementing the next piece of it. We're off to a good start and if we can keep the momentum rolling, I think we are going to be in pretty good shape for the future. I am really optimistic. I'm certainly fortunate to be a member of the Commission and am looking forward to my involvement. And, I'm very fortunate to be coming onto the Commission at a time when, hopefully, we are going to be able to do some really good things in the future.

NILLES: Do you think you are going to enjoy being part of a team that is working toward a common goal?

COMMISSIONER MOORE: I was fortunate in my legislative time to be working on the two pieces of legislation that passed recently. I got to work with the Commissioners and Chairman Murphy. Madison Murphy became a good friend and an inspiration. I always like the idea of coming into a challenge feeling like I have big shoes to fill. It makes me work harder and this is certainly the case.

I think Madison did a great job of leading the Commission. Prior to joining the Commission, I had a lot of contact with Commissioners Regenold, Burkhalter, Schueck and Trammel through the legislative work we did. Each of them are wonderful individuals. I'm proud to be here and looking forward to working with them. Coming from that legislative background, I enjoy working with people. I enjoy the work of giving and taking and coming to a common, reasonable conclusion. I know we will have an opportunity to butt heads and explore different ideas, but I have no doubt that we as Commissioners will come together in the end and find the best way to get the best roads we can for the people of our State.

I also want to say I am looking forward to meeting the AHTD staff. I want to get to know the people that make everything happen and learn as much as I can. In my capacity as a Commissioner, I want to be ready to assist and be a part of the team. And that means knowing all the players. I learned many years ago in the military that if you surround yourself with good people that know what they are doing, and if you trust them and have good

communication, you get the job done. I've enjoyed working with Scott Bennett. He does an exceptional job and I know he has a great staff here at the Department. I'm looking forward to getting to know everybody and the opportunity to continue that good work.

On a larger scale, I'm really looking forward to getting to know and working with the elected officials, the county judges and mayors across the State. I look forward to visiting them because these are the individuals that local communities have elected to deal with a good many issues. One of the most important of those issues in their local cities and counties is highways. I want to be edified as much as I can to what their needs are. As we go through the process I want to try to recognize their needs and help these communities take care of their highways. I'm really looking forward to that part of the job and understand the importance of it.

As you may gather, I'm very much looking forward to my time on the Commission and honored to be able to serve the people of our great State in this new role. ■

SAFETY MATTERS

THE AHTD AND THE STRATEGIC HIGHWAY SAFETY PLAN

BY ANDY BREWER AND DAVID NILLES

On June 1, 1999, Flight 1420 crashed at the Little Rock National Airport with 145 people on board. Ten of those people were killed. Can you imagine if three or four of those planes crashed every year in Arkansas, killing everyone on board? There would be a national outcry. However, that's how many people are killed every year on Arkansas' roadways.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, unintentional injury is the leading cause of death in Arkansas between the ages of one and 44. And, the leading cause of unintentional injury deaths in Arkansas is motor vehicle crashes. In 2012, 554 people lost their lives on Arkansas roadways. Arkansas had the second highest fatality rate in the nation in 2010, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Despite the number of lives lost on our roadways, there has been significant recent progress. The number of people killed on our roadways is at the lowest level in almost 30 years. The most recent fatality rate in 2011 is 1.67 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles, the lowest it has ever been in Arkansas going back to at least 1970.

Many of the reasons for this reduction are due to efforts within Arkansas. Dedicated funding for a statewide trauma system, passing of a graduated driver's license law and

passing of a primary seat belt law in 2009 have had a major impact. Installation of rumble strips and cable median barriers in recent years have also had a significant affect. However, more work is needed to be done if we want to save more lives of Arkansans on our roadways. This can be done through Arkansas' Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP).

The SHSP is aimed at improving safety on the State's roadways by identifying strategies to reduce the number of fatal and serious injury crashes. The 2013 plan, which was adopted by the Arkansas Highway Commission at its February meeting, was developed in cooperation with various organizations that play a part in roadway safety in Arkansas.

Arkansas' first Safety Plan was adopted in 2007 as a Federal requirement from SAFETEA-LU in order for the Department to receive safety funds. The Safety Plan is a data-driven, comprehensive plan that establishes statewide goals, objectives, and key emphasis areas. It integrates each of what are called the four "E's" — engineering, enforcement, education and emergency medical services — and was developed in coordination with local, State and Federal stakeholders. In 2011, the Department formed a Safety Steering Committee with representatives from the 4 "E's" industries to assist with updating the State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan. (See sidebar on page 11.)

A Safety Summit was also convened in July of 2012 that brought experts and local professionals together to help shape the new Safety Plan.

It was decided that the focus of the 2013 plan should be Toward Zero Deaths, or TZD. Since 2001, approximately 30 states have shared that vision and adopted a national mission or goal to reduce fatal traffic crashes to zero. The key areas of the national strategy framework are as follows: safer drivers and passengers, safer vehicles, safer infrastructure, enhanced emergency medical services, improved safety management and data processes, and an improved safety culture.

Arkansas' ultimate goal, reflected in the updated plan, is to strive toward zero fatalities on our roadways. To turn the vision of zero fatalities on Arkansas roadways into reality, it is recognized that interim goals should be established in the near term. The primary goal of

the revised Safety Plan is to reduce the annual number of roadway fatalities in Arkansas to 400 or less by 2017.

To reach that goal, the SHSP identified key safety areas and high payoff strategies with interim goals. These can be found on the Department's website at www.arkansashighways.com where the entire plan is available for viewing.

The Safety Plan is the culmination of joint efforts of various organizations in Arkansas working to set the direction of our future collective safety efforts. It does not focus on one organization or one area of concern. It is applicable to all organizations that play a part on addressing road safety in Arkansas.

Nationally, the Federal Highway Administration has empowered state Departments of Transportation to address roadway safety needs by shifting more Federal-aid funds to the Highway Safety Improvement Program as part of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act.

In 2011, the AHTD formed a Safety Steering Committee with representatives from the 4 "E's" industries — engineering, enforcement, education and emergency medical services — to assist with updating the State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan. Members of the committee are:

- Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD)
- Arkansas Highway Police (AHP), a Division of the AHTD
- Arkansas State Police (ASP)
- Arkansas Highway Safety Office (HSO), a Division of the ASP
- Arkansas Department of Health (ADH)
- Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration (DFA)
- Arkansas Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)
- Little Rock Police Department
- Metroplan
- Pulaski County
- West Memphis Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)

SAFETY IN WORK ZONES

IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

Each year in April, National Work Zone Awareness Week is held across the nation to bring attention to the importance of driving carefully through work zones on our highways.

This year's theme, "Work Zone Safety: We're All In This Together," highlights the complexities of work zones, especially in urban areas, and the need for awareness and planning on the part of everyone affected by work zones. That would include Departments of Transportation, road workers, motorists, bicyclists, motorcycles, pedestrians, emergency response teams, law enforcement and utility workers.

The national kickoff event was held April 16th in Washington, D.C. In Arkansas, the kickoff of Work Zone Awareness Week was on April 11th in Fort Smith.

Fort Smith was chosen for the event due to the fact that the Department has begun construction on the rehabilitation

of Interstate 540 through the area. The \$78.8 million project represents the Department's largest contract ever let in its 100-year history. The project includes resurfacing the seven miles of main travel lanes, rebuilding nine bridges and making improvements to four others. It stretches seven miles through Crawford and Sebastian counties. Construction will continue through the summer of 2014. *(An article on the project can be read on page 22 of this issue of Arkansas Highways.)*

"Interstate 540 through Fort Smith is one of the most highly traveled areas in the State," commented Emanuel Banks, Assistant Chief Engineer for Operations.

"Add hundreds of construction workers and suppliers to the work area and the potential for conflict exists everyday — for motorists and for workers. That's why each year we emphasize the need for safety in our work zones. It takes everyone to make these construction areas a safe place."

Joining Department representatives were Fort Smith Mayor Sandy Sanders, Van Buren Mayor Bob Freeman, representatives of the Arkansas Highway Police and Arkansas State Police, Associated General Contractors and the American Traffic Safety Services Association.

Also at the podium were representatives from the contractors on the project, Kiewit Infrastructure South Company of Little Rock.

Statistics show that the national event is having a positive effect on safety. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Fatality Analysis Reporting System, the number of work zone fatalities has decreased in the United States every year since 2002. Data show that crashes in work zones caused 720 fatalities in 2008. That figure represents a 39 percent decrease from 2002, when 1,186 work zone fatalities occurred. ■



(L. to R.)
District Engineer
Joe Shipman
and Assistant
Chief Engineer
for Operations
Emanuel Banks
onsite at the
Interstate 540
work zone.



CELEBRATING A CENTURY of the

ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION

BY DANNY STRAESSLE

{ ON THE ROAD TO STABILITY }
(1938 - 1963)

April 2013 marked the 100th anniversary of the Arkansas State Highway Commission. In this issue of *Arkansas Highways* we continue with part two of a four-part series on the history of the Commission – its struggles and its triumphs – as we look back over the last century of road building in Arkansas.

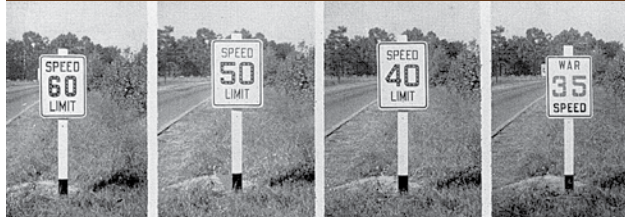
With at least 25 years of road building under its belt, the Arkansas Highway Commission became its own state agency (having been separated from the Department of State Lands), assumed almost \$100 million in debt from defunct improvement districts, began an ambitious \$52 million road construction program, and wound up subject to a vote of the people when it sought to issue bonds as a result of Amendment 20.

While the Commission did what it thought was necessary to preserve progress, the State landed in a lot of debt. A State highway system was finally in place, but at a significant cost – both financially and in time spent organizing the Commission over and over again.

(continued on page 14)



ESCALATING TENSIONS OVERSEAS PROMPTED THE COMMISSION TO PASS A RESOLUTION LOWERING THE SPEED LIMIT ON STATE ROADS SEVERAL TIMES.



THE WAR YEARS

As luck would have it, just about the same time revenues were on the rise due to an increase in travel, escalating tensions overseas prompted the Commission to pass a resolution lowering the speed limit on State roads from 60 mph to 50 mph for passenger vehicles and 40 mph for trucks. These new speed limits were only to stay in effect for 90 days, but following the United States' entry into World War II, the Commission in February of 1942 set those limits for an indefinite period of time.

War efforts that included a federal request to conserve rubber and gasoline prompted the Commission to lower the speed limit two more times that year. It was lowered to 40 mph in June and in September a Commission resolution dropped it to 35 mph.

By 1944, approximately 150 Highway Department employees were in the military. Although the war severely restricted the Department's functions, other activities relating to the war effort were expanded. The Department supplied other governmental agencies with maps, road and bridge data, traffic figures, and bus and truck inventory information.

The Commission did an excellent job of keeping finances in line during the war. Department expenditures were less than revenues, which created a cash balance despite the decline of motor user revenues by more than \$3.8 million. Construction had been suspended except for projects considered critical to national defense. Attention was focused on emergency maintenance on the main highways. The deplorable conditions of Arkansas highways again prompted the Commission to institute

a policy whereby no new roads would be added to the highway system until existing mileage had been improved.

Arkansas had a new governor in 1945, which meant it was time for yet another Highway Commission to be appointed. Before this could happen, the legislature passed Act 42 of 1945, which enlarged the Commission to 10 members — one to represent each

of the 10 highway districts. Terms of office were still to coincide with the appointing governor. The director of the Highway Department was also appointed by the governor and considered an ex-officio member of the Commission allowed to vote only to break a tie.

In 1946 Governor Ben Laney appointed a 34-member Highway Advisory Committee to determine needs of the State, counties and municipalities; and to recommend ways and means for providing necessary funds. Among the recommendations included:

- Adoption of a highway plan on a pay-as-you-go basis with a requirement that expenditure of highway revenues be planned for a 10-year period;
- Drafting of a new law that would provide for staggered terms for the Commissioners;
- Establishment of efficiency and training requirements for technical employees of the Department;
- Raise an additional \$12 million annually through a number of potential sources.

Although no legislative action was taken regarding the committee's findings, many of their recommendations were given new life several years later.

THE MCMATH EQUATION

During fiscal year 1945-1946, the Department spent an average of \$307 per mile on maintenance of the State highway system. It was less than half the national average of \$631 per mile. Conditions on Arkansas' roads were not improving fast enough to suit the public. So when the election year of 1948 rolled around, highways were by far the most significant issue. All of the candidates for governor advocated better roads as part of their campaigns.

Everyone in the State seemed to be in agreement that Arkansas needed an improved highway system, so the campaign centered on which candidate had the best plan of action. Most spoke of pay-as-you-go plans, but none of the candidates discussed the higher taxes that would be needed for such a plan. Except for one.

Candidate Sid McMath took a calculated risk by pushing a bond issue to finance road construction. He proposed an \$80 million construction program — \$20 million each year for four years beginning in 1949. His opponents claimed it was bond financing that put the State in trouble in the first place, but McMath reminded folks that Amendment 20 required a majority vote of the people to issue bonds for his program. McMath pushed his plan by taking it straight to the voters. A calculated risk at best, but one that worked in his favor.

As governor, McMath wasted no time implementing his programs. Act 239 of 1949 expanded the Highway Commission to 12 members — one from each of the 10 highway districts, plus a chairman and vice chairman selected by the governor from the State at large. The entire group would serve terms concurrent with the governor. The director of highways was to be appointed by the governor to serve as the Department's chief executive officer. The director would exercise direct control over all highway measures, subject only to the Commission's powers.

McMath's plan for improvements was based on a bond issue for a portion of the needed funds. Act 5 of 1949 established a revised allocation schedule for the State Highway Fund and authorized the issuance

of \$7 million in construction bonds for each of the four years (1949-1952). McMath was ready to take it to the people. The governor called a special election in February of 1949 — less than six weeks after he took office. The measure passed by a four-to-one margin. It was the first time Arkansans had an opportunity to vote for better roads in Arkansas.

THE MACK-BLACKWELL COMPROMISE

1950 brought another term for McMath in office; however, it also heralded a time when politics and highways were becoming connected. Allegations surfaced that roads were being built for political favors, and questions were raised about purchasing procedures and hiring practices at the Department.

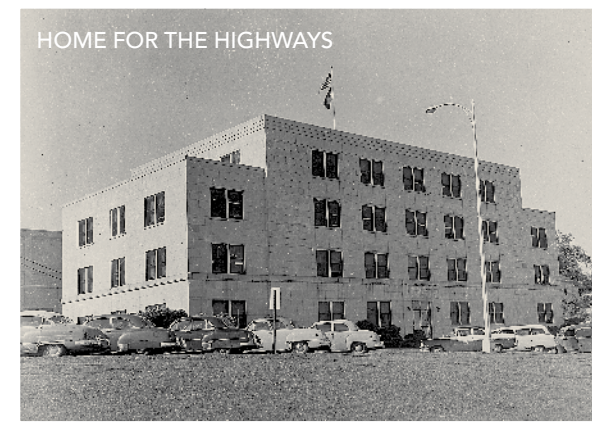
In his 1951 inaugural address, McMath recognized that the Highway Department might need to be reorganized. He suggested having a highway commission with fewer than 12 members and staggered terms. He specified that any such reorganization should be done through a constitutional amendment to prevent future legislative changes.

As a result, numerous Highway Department reorganization proposals were developed. One of the first to gain attention was submitted by Senator Y.M. Mack of Moorefield. He proposed taking the privilege of appointing highway commissioners away from the governor's office and giving it to the legislature.

Senator Lawrence Blackwell of Pine Bluff agreed that a change was needed, but disagreed with Mack's proposal of letting the legislature select commissioners. He feared that future legislatures would tamper with the Commission just as previous legislatures had done.

Rather than push for differing proposals, Senators Mack and Blackwell decided to compromise and work together toward an agreement. They co-sponsored a constitutional amendment with the following provisions:

- Appointment of a five-member Highway Commission by the governor for staggered ten-year terms, with each commissioner selected from a different congressional district;
- Selection of a director of highways by the Commission to oversee the daily operations of the Highway Department.



A new building was completed in 1939 on the State Capitol grounds to house all divisions of the Highway Department under one roof. Completed at a cost of \$100,000, funds from the Federal Public Works Administration covered 45 percent of the modern four-story stone veneer office building and adjacent three-story fireproof vault.

(continued on page 16)

DID you Know?

Earlier in 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower appointed members of The Highway Advisory Committee for a National Highway Program to work with members of the Special Highway Committee of the Governor's Conference. Their studies provided much of the basis for the 1956 Federal Aid Act that enlarged the 40,000-mile Interstate System into the 41,000-mile National System of Interstate and Defense Highways.

Arkansas Highway Department Chief Engineer Alfred E. Johnson was very involved in the planning process for the Interstates and is considered a major architect of the Interstate highway system in America. Johnson also served as president — and later as executive director — of the American Association of State Highway Officials.

The original Interstate routes in Arkansas included:

- **I-30:** Texas state line north of Texarkana to Little Rock
- **I-40:** Oklahoma state line north of Fort Smith, through Little Rock, and continuing to the Tennessee state line at Memphis
- **I-55:** Tennessee state line at Memphis (south of I-40) routing north via West Memphis to the Missouri state line northeast of Blytheville
- **I-540:** A connection from I-40 to Fort Smith
- **I-430:** A loop to the west of Little Rock, including a new fourth bridge across the Arkansas River

The 1951 General Assembly decided to put the compromise — known by then as the Mack-Blackwell Amendment — to a vote of the people at the next election. This gave the people of Arkansas a year and a half to make up their minds about what would become proposed Constitutional Amendment 42.

But they didn't stop there. Act 102 created the Highway Audit Commission and gave them broad powers to investigate the Highway Department for the period of July 1, 1947, to June 30, 1951. An interim report was issued in August suggesting that evidence of inefficiency, dishonesty and mistakes had been uncovered. The report went on to say that Arkansas' participation in the Federal Aid Highway Program was honest and efficient, but that the same was not true on State-financed projects.

The Audit Commission held public hearings in early 1952. The hearings brought to the forefront many instances of alleged mismanagement at the Highway Department. Many of these instances involved members of McMath's administration. Sworn testimony included cases where low bids were rejected and higher bids accepted for unspecified reasons; cases where no bids were taken as required by law; and discrepancies in material and equipment purchases.

On March 8, 1952, the Highway Audit Commission issued its final report with a summary that described findings that the Highway Department had acted inefficiently, extravagantly, and with a great waste of highway revenues. The report was also critical of members of the Highway Commission and concluded

with an unfavorable scathe of the McMath administration.

Despite the criticism, McMath opted to run for a third term and was defeated

On May 3, 1962, the national administrator for the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads announced that
ARKANSAS WAS LEADING THE NATION
in the construction of its Interstate system.

by Francis Cherry of Jonesboro. On the same ballot was another item — proposed Constitutional Amendment 42. The people of Arkansas had decided that it was time for a change in the way the Highway Department and Highway Commission operated. By a vote of 231,529 to 78,291, the Mack-Blackwell Amendment passed and established the beginning of a new era for highways in Arkansas.

(See *Mack-Blackwell Amendment* on page 18.)

ARCHITECTS OF THE INTERSTATE

Governor Cherry wasted no time in appointing the first Highway Commission under Mack-Blackwell. On January 1, 1953, he appointed Miss Willie Lawson of Little Rock, Cecil Lynch of Pine Bluff, Raymond Orr of Ft. Smith, Dan Portis of Lepanto, and Glenn Wallace of Nashville. The first meeting of this Commission was held on January 19, 1953. Chief Justice Griffin Smith of the Arkansas Supreme Court administered the oath of office. The Commission elected Raymond Orr as chairman.

The Commission accepted the resignation of Orval Faubus, who had been serving as



Director of Highways since September 1952. Faubus resigned to accept the job of Postmaster in his hometown of Huntsville. A.E. Johnson, the Department's chief engineer, was selected to serve as Acting Director until a suitable replacement could be found.

On April 10, 1953, the Commission selected Herbert Eldridge, who was the Chief Engineer for Planning for the Texas Highway Commission, as the new director of highways for Arkansas at an annual salary of \$15,000.

The Federal Aid Act of 1956 was passed by Congress in June establishing the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways. Huge amounts of federal funds were to be apportioned to the states for the construction of this system.

(See *Did You Know?* sidebar.)

About 91 percent of these routes were to be built on new locations. The Arkansas routes were approved in 1958. Construction on Arkansas' Interstates got underway in 1962. The U.S. Highway 61 Bypass in West Memphis is considered the first Interstate project in Arkansas.

While the Interstate system was laid out on a national level, the Commission had to make sure that the State's other highway needs were being met. A critical inventory of the State highway system was developed in the late 1950s. The critical inventory

was used as the basis for development of the State's first comprehensive long-range program for highway improvements in Arkansas. This program was adopted by the Commission in January 1960.

But before the 1950s ended, tragedy brought about the first controversy involving the first independent Highway Commission. On May 26, 1958, Commissioner Cecil Lynch was killed in an automobile accident. Orval Faubus, who was now governor, would have to appoint someone to fill the unexpired term. This would be Faubus' third appointment to the five-member Commission, giving him a majority of the Commission appointments.

Setting up 10-year terms for Commissioners at two-year intervals was supposed to alleviate this type of situation, because it was believed that no governor would ever serve more than two terms. Faubus sidestepped the potential controversy by appointing former State Senator Lawrence Blackwell to the Commission. He was considered honest and well-respected and was from Pine Bluff, the same city as Lynch. Most importantly, Blackwell was the co-author of the Mack-Blackwell Amendment which gave the Commission its independence.

In June 1960, Commission member Jim Crain of Wilson resigned from the Commission due to health reasons.

Governor Faubus selected John Crain, Jim's son, to fill his father's unexpired term. Less than three years later, John Crain died unexpectedly and his brother-in-law Bill Joe Denton, also of Wilson, was Faubus' choice as successor.

The following March, Bill Joe Denton died. This time, Faubus let the members of the Highway Commission choose a successor. They selected Chauncey Denton, brother of Bill Joe Denton, to serve the remaining eight months of Jim Crain's original eight-year term. Thus, Chauncey Denton became the fourth family member to hold that seat on the Highway Commission in a four-year period.

Arkansas' Interstate System was right on schedule, which was good because the State legislature passed Act 150 of 1961 that required the Highway Commission to spend at least \$100,000 in each county on unpaved Federal-aid secondary roads during calendar years 1961 and 1962.

The Highway Commission accomplished this task with six months to spare and during this time, the Interstate program received somewhat less emphasis in Arkansas. Still, on May 3, 1962, the national administrator for the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads announced that Arkansas was leading the nation in the construction of its Interstate system.

The 1963 legislative session brought about more changes to the Department. Act 78 of 1973 transferred the Weights and Standards Division of the State Police to the Highway Department where it originally began as the State Road Patrol. This would become the Arkansas Highway Police Division in 1979.

It was a good way to end the next 25 (50 total) years. By December 1963, Interstate 55 was open from West Memphis to Blytheville. Interstate 30 was complete through the downtown Little Rock area to the north terminal interchange in North Little Rock, and Interstate 40 was complete through the north terminal area. Arkansas was still among the leaders nationwide in the construction of its Interstates. ■

EDITOR'S NOTE: The next issue of Arkansas Highways Magazine will continue to look at the history of the Commission and the Department as we celebrate 100 years.



Constitutional Amendment No. 42 THE MACK-BLACKWELL AMENDMENT

SECTION I.

COMMISSION CREATED: Members – Powers

There is hereby created a State Highway Commission which shall be vested with all the powers and duties now or hereafter imposed by law for the administration of the State Highway Department, together with all powers necessary or proper to enable the Commission or any of its officers or employees to carry out fully and effectively the regulations and laws relating to the State Highway Department.

SECTION II.

QUALIFICATIONS AND APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS:

Terms of Office of First Commission

Within ten days after the convening of the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas in the year 1953, the Governor, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint five persons who are qualified electors of the State to constitute the State Highway Commission for terms of two, four, six, eight and ten years respectively. The terms of the persons so appointed shall be determined by lot. The Commissioners to be appointed from the State at large; provided, however, that no two Commissioners shall be appointed from any single Congressional District.

In the event of rejection by the Senate of a person whose name has been so submitted, the Governor shall within five days after receipt of written notice from the Secretary of the Senate of such rejection submit the name of another appointee to fill such vacancy. In the event the Governor should within five days thereafter fail to appoint or fail to submit to the Senate for confirmation the name of any person to be appointed, the Senate shall proceed to make the appointment of its own choice.

SECTION III. TERMS OF OFFICE OF MEMBERS

Upon the expiration of the foregoing terms of said Commissioners, a successor shall be appointed by the Governor in the manner provided for in Section II for a term of ten years, which term of ten years shall thereafter be for each member of the Commission.

SECTION IV. REMOVAL OF MEMBERS: Hearing – Review and Appeal

A Commissioner may be removed by the Governor only for the same causes as apply to other constitutional officers after a hearing which may be reviewed by the Chancery Court for the First District with right of appeal therefrom to the Supreme Court, such review and appeal to be without presumption in favor of any finding by the Governor or the trial court, and provided further, in addition to the right of confirmation herein above reserved to the Senate, the Senate may upon the written request of at least five (5) of its members that a member or members of the Commission should be removed therefrom, proceed, when in session, to hear any and all evidence pertinent to the reasons for removal. The member or members whose removal is so requested shall be entitled to be heard in the matter and to be represented before the Senate by legal counsel. These proceedings conducted by the Senate shall be public and a transcript of the testimony so heard shall be prepared and preserved in the journal of the Senate. The taking of evidence either orally or by deposition shall not be bound by the formal rules of evidence. Upon the conclusion of the hearing, the Senate, sitting as a body in executive session, may remove said member or members of the Commission by a majority vote by secret ballot.

SECTION V. VACANCIES: Filling

Vacancies on the Commission due to resignations, death or removal shall be filled by appointment of the Governor for the unexpired term within thirty days from the date of such vacancy. Upon failure of the Governor to fill the vacancy within thirty days, the remaining Commissioners shall make the appointment for the unexpired term.

SECTION VI.

The Commission shall appoint a Director of Highways who shall have such duties as may be prescribed by the Commission or by statute.



Y.M. "MILTON" MACK
Senator, District 18



LAWRENCE BLACKWELL
Senator, District 20

ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSIONS 1939 – 1962



THE 21ST
STATE HIGHWAY
COMMISSION WAS
THE FIRST UNDER
MACK-BLACKWELL

L to R: Cecil Lynch, Glenn Wallace, Director Herbert Eldridge, Raymond Orr, Willie Lawson and Dan Portis.

FOURTEENTH COMMISSION (1939 AND 1940)

Paul W. Sheridan Fort Smith Chairman
A.G. Patterson Jonesboro Commissioner
James F. King Pocahontas Commissioner
J. Meyers Black Rock Commissioner
George Appleby Fayetteville Commissioner
Dr. H.E. Mobley Morrilton Commissioner
Hugh B. Benton Fordyce Commissioner
John H. Vogel El Dorado Commissioner

FIFTEENTH COMMISSION (1941 AND 1942)

James H. Crain Wilson Chairman
Lawrence C. Sloan Strawberry Commissioner
R.D. Bogart Prairie Grove Commissioner
Claude C. Ward Fort Smith Commissioner
Donald Barger Plainview Commissioner
M.L. Sigman Monticello Commissioner
Sam J. Wilson Montrose Commissioner

SIXTEENTH COMMISSION (1943 AND 1944)

James H. Crain Wilson Chairman
Lawrence C. Sloan Strawberry Vice Chairman
R.D. Bogart Prairie Grove Commissioner
Claude C. Ward Fort Smith Commissioner
Donald Barger Russellville Commissioner
M.L. Sigman Monticello Commissioner
Sam J. Wilson Montrose Commissioner

SEVENTEENTH COMMISSION (1945 AND 1946)

W.H. Sadler Little Rock Chairman
M.E. Peace Magnolia Vice Chairman
Dan Felton Marianna Commissioner
W.E. Thompson McGehee Commissioner
Emmett Williams Garland Commissioner
C.T. Crager Grannis Commissioner
L.P. Mann¹ Newport Commissioner
E.C. Rider Batesville Commissioner
H.E. Van Dalsen Perryville Commissioner
Byron B. Brogdon Springdale Commissioner
Dan F. Portis Lepanto Commissioner

1. Resigned

EIGHTEENTH COMMISSION (1947 AND 1948)

W.H. Sadler Little Rock Chairman
M.E. Peace Magnolia Vice Chairman
Dan Felton Marianna Commissioner
W.E. Thompson² McGehee Commissioner
Felix Pugh Portland Commissioner
Emmett Williams Garland Commissioner
C.T. Crager Grannis Commissioner
E.C. Rider Batesville Commissioner
H.E. Van Dalsen Perryville Commissioner
Byron B. Brogdon Springdale Commissioner
Dan F. Portis Lepanto Commissioner

2. Died before term expired.

NINETEENTH COMMISSION (1949 AND 1950)

J.B. Lambert, Sr. Helena Chairman
James H. Crain Wilson Vice Chairman
Charles Adams, Sr. Hughes Commissioner
R.S. Barnett, Jr. Altheimer Commissioner
Lawrence Honeycut³ Nashville Commissioner
Barney Smith Nashville Commissioner
Olen Hendrix Antoine Commissioner
Roy Martin Fort Smith Commissioner
Truman Baker Searcy Commissioner
Wm. L. Humphries⁴ Little Rock Commissioner
A.D. Mason Camden Commissioner
Olen Fullerton Morrilton Commissioner
Orval Faubus Huntsville Commissioner
Fred Carter Lake City Commissioner

3. Resigned.

4. Died before term expired.

TWENTIETH COMMISSION (1951 AND 1952)

J.B. Lambert, Sr. Helena Chairman
James H. Crain Wilson Vice Chairman
Charles Adams, Sr. Hughes Commissioner
R.S. Barnett, Jr. Altheimer Commissioner
Olen Hendrix Antoine Commissioner
Roy Martin Fort Smith Commissioner
Truman Baker Searcy Commissioner
J.D. Wood Cabot Commissioner
A.D. Mason Camden Commissioner
Olen Fullerton Morrilton Commissioner
Orval Faubus Huntsville Commissioner
Fred Carter Lake City Commissioner
Dr. A.S. Buchanan Prescott Commissioner
Loid Sadler Morrilton Commissioner
A.C. Mowery, Jr. Huntsville Commissioner

TWENTY-FIRST COMMISSION (1953 AND 1954)

Raymond F. Orr Fort Smith Chairman
Cecil S. Lynch Pine Bluff Vice Chairman
Willie Lawson Little Rock Commissioner
Glenn F. Wallace Nashville Commissioner
Dan F. Portis Lepanto Commissioner

TWENTY-SECOND COMMISSION (1955 AND 1956)

Cecil S. Lynch Pine Bluff Chairman
Raymond F. Orr Fort Smith Vice Chairman
Willie Lawson Little Rock Commissioner
Glenn F. Wallace Nashville Commissioner
James H. Crain Wilson Commissioner

TWENTY-THIRD COMMISSION (1957 AND 1958)

Glenn F. Wallace Nashville Chairman
Cecil S. Lynch⁵ Pine Bluff Vice Chairman
Raymond F. Orr Fort Smith Commissioner
James H. Crain Wilson Commissioner
Harry W. Parkin⁶ Little Rock Commissioner
Lawrence Blackwell⁷ Pine Bluff Commissioner

5. Died from injuries received in an automobile accident.

6. Elected by Commission on June 11, 1958 to fill the unexpired vice chairmanship of Cecil Lynch.

7. Appointed to fill the unexpired term of Cecil Lynch.

TWENTY-FOURTH COMMISSION (1959 AND 1960)

Lawrence Blackwell Pine Bluff Chairman
Harry W. Parkin Little Rock Vice Chairman
Glenn F. Wallace Nashville Commissioner
James H. Crain⁸ Wilson Commissioner
Arnil Taylor Clarksville Commissioner
John E. Crain⁹ Wilson Commissioner

8. Resigned due to ill health.

9. Appointed to fill the unexpired term of James H. Crain.

TWENTY-FIFTH COMMISSION (1961 AND 1962)

Harry W. Parkin¹⁰ Little Rock Chairman
John E. Crain Wilson Vice Chair/Chairman
Glenn F. Wallace Nashville Comm/Vice Chairman
Truman Baker Searcy Commissioner
Arnil Taylor Clarksville Commissioner
Wayne Hampton¹¹ Stuttgart Commissioner

10. Resigned March 29, 1962 for business reasons.

11. Selected by Highway Commission to fill the unexpired term of Harry Parkin under Minute Order 4608.



fast Fact

Upon the resignation of Harry Parkin from the Commission in 1962, Governor Faubus chose not to make an appointment in the specified time period. The Highway Commission met on May 8 and selected Wayne Hampton of Stuttgart to fill the vacancy. In 1963, Bill Joe Denton was also chosen by the Commission itself to fill the unexpired term of John E. Crain. To this date, Hampton and Denton are the only two Highway Commission members not appointed by a governor.



BLUE STAR MEMORIAL HIGHWAYS RECOGNIZING OUR ARMED FORCES

They can be found scattered across Arkansas as well as the other 49 states that make up the United States. They are Blue Star Memorial Markers and quite often, they stand in parks, in national cemeteries or other civic locations. Most importantly, they stand alongside many highways across the country designating those roads as Blue Star Memorial Highways.

As we celebrate Memorial Day this year, there are more than 70,000 miles of highway designated as Blue Star Memorial Highways. The highway designation pays tribute to the men and women in the Armed Forces who have served, are serving, or will serve the United States.

The National Council of State Garden Clubs, now known as National Garden Clubs, Inc., started the program in 1945, after World War II. The blue star became an icon during World War II and was seen on flags and banners for sons and daughters away at war. The Council made a study of the inter-regional highways of the United States. A Blue Star Highway system was outlined which consisted of one east-west and seven north-south highways. Today we have many more.

The program has grown in other ways too. There are now three types of Memorial Markers. The large Blue Star Highway Memorial Markers are placed only on dedicated highways. A second large Memorial Marker, minus the word "highway", was approved in 1996 for dedication at National Cemeteries or V.A. Medical Facilities. And finally, the Blue Star Memorial By-Way Marker, approved in 1994, for placement in parks, historic sites and civic areas.

In Arkansas, the markers are can be found in numerous places. Those include, but are not limited to: Vandenberg Boulevard, in Jacksonville, leading to the Little Rock Air Force Base; on Interstate 55 near the Missouri border; on Interstate 40 in West Memphis; and on Highway 71 in Bentonville. There are numerous others within the borders of the state.

The Blue Star program and other programs of the National Garden Clubs, Inc. can be found on the Internet at www.gardenclub.org.



DEPARTMENT PRESENTS

LIFESAVING AWARD

The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department has a little known award called the Lifesaving Award. The special recognition goes to employees who go above and beyond what is expected to help others that are faced with a possible life or death situation. The award has only been presented seven times to AHTD employees over the Department's history.

Marcus Standridge, a Maintenance Aide II in District 4, became the eighth employee to receive the award on December 14th of last year in recognition of his efforts to assist fellow AHTD employee Steven Kuakahela.

Kuakahela, a Single Axle Truck Driver for District 4, was with the Polk County maintenance crew operating a mower on Highway 270 last October. Operating near the brush line, the mower's muffler caught a limb. The limb broke and fell back on Kuakahela's arm, cutting it severely.

Standridge happened to drive up to Kuakahela and saw that he was badly bleeding. He slipped a bandana from his pocket and tied it tightly around Steven's arm to slow the bleeding, then put Kuakahela in a vehicle and headed towards the hospital.

Once underway, Standridge called the Polk County Area Headquarters by radio to get an ambulance in their direction in order to meet them. As they were traveling, Kuakahela began to lose consciousness so Standridge kept a conversation going with Steven and told him to "stay with me."

The ambulance met Standridge and Kuakahela near the Highway 270 - Highway 71 junction. Attendees put pressure bandages on Steven to further slow the bleeding. Once in the ambulance, he was taken to a hospital emergency room in Mena where he was stabilized and then airlifted to Fort Smith for surgery.

"Overall, it was a humbling experience for me and the entire crew," stated Standridge. "We are all very safety

conscious. There isn't one member of my crew that wouldn't have done the same thing I did for Steven. We are just thankful how things turned out."

Standridge has been with the Department since 2003. Kuakahela joined the AHTD in 2009.

The other recipients of the AHTD Lifesaving Award are Dean Nichols, a retired Resident Engineer in District 4, and six members of the Arkansas Highway Police: Lynn Chaffin, Doyle Crouch, David Harris, Billy Smith, James "Buckie" Thomas and Charles Tripp. ■

“OVERALL, IT WAS A HUMBLING EXPERIENCE, FOR ME AND THE ENTIRE CREW.”



(L. to R.) Director Scott E. Bennett presents Marcus Standridge with the AHTD Lifesaving Award.

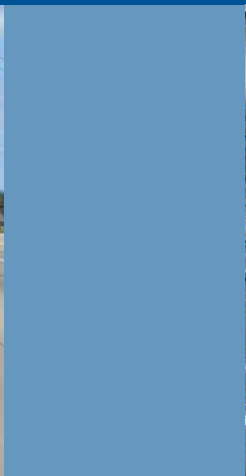


REHABILITATION

LARGEST CONTRACT ON RECORD FOR AHTD

BY DAVID NILLES

WORK IS UNDERWAY IN NORTHWEST ARKANSAS ON THE REHABILITATION OF INTERSTATE 540.



The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department has begun work on an Interstate rehabilitation project on Interstate 540 in Fort Smith that is the largest single contract ever awarded by the Highway Commission.

The \$78.8 million rehabilitation project stretches through Crawford and Sebastian counties and extends from Highway 22, in Fort Smith, northward to the interchange with Interstate 40 in Van Buren. The project includes rehabilitating seven miles of main travel lanes, rebuilding nine bridges and making improvements to four others.

“This project is a historic, monumental opportunity for us to make vast improvements to Interstate 540,” said Emanuel Banks Assistant Chief Engineer for Operations at a news conference held on January 7th in Fort Smith.

The project will improve safety and driving conditions for approximately

50,000 vehicles that travel the Interstate through the area every day.

The Interstate 540 project was awarded to Kiewit Infrastructure South Company of Little Rock. Work began on the project in late January. Crews will be utilizing a “rubbilization process” on the travel lanes that crushes the existing concrete pavement and uses that as a base for the new roadway.

In addition to the travel lanes, new bridges will be built in both directions of travel at Clayton Branch, Grand Avenue, Rogers Avenue, the Union Pacific Railroad Overpass in Crawford County and the Arkansas River Relief Bridge just south of the Arkansas River. Bridges over Highway 64 and Highway 162, in Crawford County, will have new decks constructed and will be raised in order to increase the clearance for the traffic that travels below the bridges. There will be no modifications to the bridge crossing the Arkansas River.

“We have worked with Kiewit on other projects,” says District Four Engineer Joe Shipman. “We know they will provide a safe work zone for their employees, safe driving for motorists and timely completion of a high-quality project.”

In order to assist the flow of vehicles traveling through the construction area, the Department will maintain 16 video cameras along the construction route to monitor traffic. In addition, a Motorist Assistance Patrol will work the construction zone to assist motorists who are having mechanical problems with stalled vehicles.

Completion of the project is expected in the summer of 2014.

The project is one of three that represent the first contracts to be let under the new Interstate Rehabilitation Program voters approved in late 2011. The other two projects are located on Interstate 530 south of Little Rock and Interstate 40 near Russellville. ■



Potholes and street damage can be costly for cities to repair. Thanks to the new State Aid Street Program, cities may now request funding through this program.

ARKANSAS' NEW CITY STREETS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GETS UNDERWAY

BY DAVID NILLES

ELEVEN CITIES IN ARKANSAS are soon to see local street improvements as the new State Aid Street Program becomes a reality.

Last November, voters gave their support to the One-Half Cent Sales Tax increase that appeared on the election ballot. Part of that amendment contained the provision to fund the State Aid Street Program with one cent per gallon from the proceeds derived from existing motor fuel and distillate fuel taxes.

Incorporated cities and towns in Arkansas may now request funding and utilize it to improve city streets that serve as major or minor arterial and collector routes feeding into local trade areas or into the State highway system.

For a municipality with a population in excess of 25,000 residents, the State Aid street project is funded at 90 percent from State Aid street funds to not less than ten percent municipal matching funds. For all

other municipalities, the State Aid street project is funded at 100 percent from State Aid street funds.

The new program is being coordinated through the AHTD's State Aid Division.

"There will be approximately \$18 million available each year for the program," stated State Aid Division Head David Mayo.

Funding for the new program began being transferred for use not long after the election in November. The Department and a newly established State Aid Street Committee composed of nine mayors of Arkansas cities received 14 proposals from 12 cities in the first round of applications. The State Aid Street Committee approved funding for eleven of those proposals for a total of \$3.2 million.

Cities approved to receive funding for street projects to this point include Bull Shoals, DeWitt, Diamond City, Gassville, Lamar, Little Rock, McGehee, Magnolia, Mountain Home, Walnut Ridge and Warren.

All of the approved projects were for street surfacing or overlays of city streets. A project in Little Rock will include resurfacing on Main Street from Roosevelt Road to Interstate 630. In addition, the City requested that the existing four lanes be restriped to three lanes with bicycle lanes on both sides and made a request to retain the on-street curbside parking. Since the population of Little Rock is over 25,000, the City will pay for 10 percent of the project's construction cost.

Members of the AHTD State Aid Division visit each of the applicant

cities to explain the program, answer questions, determine the scope of work needed and develop preliminary cost estimates.

"We have been successful with the city officials that we have visited," Mayo stated. "Cities that we have talked to across the State are very appreciative that this program has come about."

The AHTD has already received 50 additional applications that are waiting for review.

The State Aid Street Committee is required to meet quarterly to review proposed projects. The committee will meet again on June 13th and in September to consider those project requests and any additional incoming proposals. ■

“CITIES THAT WE HAVE TALKED TO ACROSS THE STATE ARE VERY APPRECIATIVE THAT THIS PROGRAM HAS COME ABOUT.”

LITTER HOTLINE

PASSES IMPORTANT MILESTONE

BY DAVID NILLES



Due to the efforts of ordinary citizens **CALLING** THE HOTLINE, over 50,000 letters of warning will have been mailed directly to offenders over the past eight years.



You never know who is watching you when you travel down the highway. That's the beauty of the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department's Litter Hotline. Toss a cup or cigarette butt out the window onto the roadway, and the next thing you know, you receive a letter of warning in the mail reminding you of the importance of not littering our roadways.

That's how the Department's Litter Reporting Hotline works. It's a 24-hour, toll-free hotline that any and all motorists can call when they spot a littering violation along any street, road or highway. Phone calls to 1-866-811-1222 to report littering are answered 24 hours a day by a call center of the Arkansas Highway Police. A record of the incident is kept and a letter is sent to the

registered owner of the vehicle regarding the litter violation.

The Litter Hotline was introduced to the public on December 14th of 2004, due to an escalating litter problem along Arkansas' highways. Over 60,000 cubic yards of litter are picked up each year. The response to the Hotline was immediate and enthusiastic. And now, eight years later, the program has reached a milestone.

This year, due to the efforts of ordinary citizens calling the Hotline, over 50,000 letters of warning will have been mailed directly to offenders over the past eight years.

Highway Police Chief Ron Burks states that "The goal of the program is not to castigate the reported violators but to educate and hopefully gain future compliance with the State's litter laws."

The Hotline is averaging over 600 calls a month. That number is evidence that the program is thriving.

"It gives ordinary citizens a feeling that they are doing something to fight the litter," adds Chief Burks. "In effect, everyone is an enforcer."

"As a result, we've been able to identify 80 percent of the offenders and single them out for direct contact."

The hope is that any person who receives a letter of violation will be more thoughtful of their littering habits in the future and will change their behavior.

Repeated violations originating from the same vehicle may eventually result in a visit by an Arkansas police officer to investigate the problem.

The exact number of calls received over the eight years of the program stood at 57,535 as of the week of February 3rd.

An interesting look at the type of litter that has been tossed from vehicles reveals that tobacco products are the number one category. A detailed look (at right) reveals a breakdown when it comes to types of litter reported.

Eight years into the Litter Hotline and results indicate that the program has been an effective tool in the fight against litter. And not just in Arkansas. Our neighboring states of Louisiana, Oklahoma and Tennessee also utilize litter hotlines.

The benefits of such a program have proved to be numerous. Not only does a reduction in roadside litter improve the enjoyment of traveling our highways to see Arkansas' scenery, like our lakes, rivers and mountains; it's a great preservation of our natural environment and saves taxpayer dollars that would otherwise be spent on picking up unsightly litter. ■

| CATEGORY | # OF CALLS |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| Tobacco Products | 58 |
| Paper | 6 |
| Food Wrappers | 5 |
| Cans | 2 |
| Cups | 2 |
| Bottles | 1 |
| Packaging | 1 |
| TOTAL CALLS | 75 |
| <i>(Week of Feb. 3-9, 2013)</i> | |



CONSTRUCTION

C O R N E R



Excavating and shaping a ditch for paving.



Shaping a stockpile of gravel to be used for the roadway base.



The crew at work on a bridge abutment.

Construction crews are busy in Benton County on the first project to build the Bella Vista Bypass near Highway 71. The project was awarded to APAC-Central, Inc. in February of 2011 for \$19.8 million.

This is the first of eleven projects that will complete the four-lane bypass. The bypass is originally being built as a two-lane roadway with two additional lanes planned as traffic volumes increase and funds become available.

The path for the bypass begins at Bentonville and extends westward to the area of Hiwasse. From that point, the bypass turns to the north where it extends to the Missouri border and connects to Highway 71 coming south out of Pineville, Missouri. Once completed, the Arkansas portion of the bypass will be approximately 14 and one-half miles in length.

The first project is constructing three miles of the bypass south of Loch Lomond in the Hiwasse area. Work also includes the interchanges at Highway 72 North and Highway 72 South. Frontage roads and county road connectors in the area are also being built. Construction is over halfway finished with completion projected for the spring of 2014.

A second project is now underway to the immediate west of the original project that is constructing two and one-half miles of roadway extending from Highway 72 North to County Road 34. ■

Visit Historic Washington State Park in March and you will find jonquils in bloom on the grounds of vintage homes and buildings.

WEEKEND ROAD TRIP:



BY DAVID NILLES

This month's Weekend Road Trip takes travelers to southwest Arkansas to follow not just one highway, but three... Highways 278, 27 and 19. The short trip will wind through Hempstead, Sevier and Pike counties in order to visit numerous sites along the way.

This southwest Arkansas adventure begins in Hempstead County where motorists will exit Interstate 30 at Hope.

A visit to Hope should begin at the **Hope Visitor Center & Museum**. The museum is housed in a restored 1912 railroad depot located at 100 E. Division Street. Inside, visitors will find railroad memorabilia, historic area photographs and exhibits on former U.S. President Bill Clinton, a Hope native. The depot also serves as an Amtrak stop.

Leaving the Visitor Center, a "must stop" in Hope is the **birthplace home of President Bill Clinton**. The two-story, white frame house at 117 S. Hervey Street

(Highway 278) was where Clinton lived from his birth, in 1946, until age four. The house is a National Historic Site. It was built in 1917 by Dr. H.S. Garrett. The home was owned by Clinton's grandparents, Edith Grisham and James Eldridge Cassidy, and it is here that he and his mother, Virginia, lived. Guided tours are offered every 30 minutes and a Visitors Center is located in an historic home located next to the birthplace home. Clinton continued to visit his grandparents at the home until his grandfather's death in 1956.

Watermelons have long been a calling card for the City of Hope and if you visit the city in the month of August, be sure to

attend the **Hope Watermelon Festival**. The festival features numerous activities including arts & crafts, food vendors, entertainment and other family-oriented attractions. Nearly 300 arts & crafts booths are on display at the festival grounds. The Watermelon Olympics are also part of the fun and feature a watermelon toss; a watermelon eating contest; and most fun of all, a seed spitting contest.

Leaving Hope on Highway 278, the journey heads northward for ten miles to the town of Washington.

A visit to **Historic Washington State Park** is a must. Here visitors travel back in time to the 19th century and stroll the plank board sidewalks as they tour the historic public buildings and former residences. Established on George Washington's birthday in 1824, the town of Washington today is one of America's



Historic Washington State Park features 19th century buildings and transportation.



Birthplace home of President Bill Clinton



1874 Hempstead County Courthouse



Hope Watermelon Festival

premier historic villages. This State Park is a National Historical Landmark and a National Register of Historic Places site.

Today over thirty carefully restored historic structures stand as a legacy to life in Washington from 1824 to 1900. See examples of classic architecture among the buildings including Southern Greek Revival, Federal, Gothic Revival and Italianate styles. In addition, there are buildings of hand-hewn timber framing or brace-frame cottage construction. Stepping inside the buildings you'll see remarkable collections of antiques, guns and knives; visit with the guides in period attire and then ride the surrey around town as you step back in time. The 1874 Hempstead County Courthouse serves as the park's Visitor Center. Lunch featuring Southern country fare is served daily in the circa 1832 Williams' Tavern Restaurant.

On leaving Washington, continue traveling up Highway 278 for about

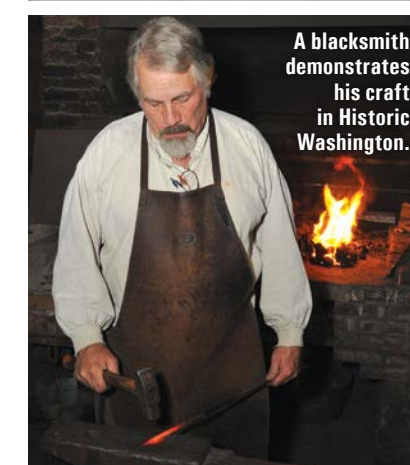
twenty miles to the town of Nashville.

Nashville is home to the very first store operated by William Dillard.

He opened his first store in 1938 in a building on Main Street. It is here that the successful Dillard's chain got its start.

The largest find of dinosaur trackways in the world is also here in Nashville. It was discovered by SMU archeology graduate student Brad Pittman in a quarry north of town in 1983. A field of **Sauropod footprints** was found in a mudstone layer covering a layer of gypsum. Casts 65 feet long and 7 feet wide were made and put on permanent display, first at the courthouse and finally at the **Nashville City Park** where one can be seen today. The park is located at 1301 W. Johnson Street. Many of the original tracks were given to local museums such as the Mid-America Museum in Hot Springs and the Arkansas Museum of Discovery in Little Rock. The full extent of the trackway has never been excavated.

(continued on page 32)



A blacksmith demonstrates his craft in Historic Washington.



Leaving Nashville, take Highway 27 eastward to Murfreesboro. It is home to the **Crater of Diamonds State Park**, the only diamond-producing site in the world open to the public. Here you can experience a one-of-a-kind adventure hunting for real diamonds. The search for the gems takes place in a 37-acre plowed field, the eroded surface of an ancient volcanic crater that 100 million years ago brought diamonds to the surface. Lucky visitors have found diamonds in three colors including white, brown and yellow, in that order. And remember, any diamonds, semi-precious stones, rocks, or minerals you unearth are yours to keep, regardless of their value. Also within the park boundaries, many remnants of old mining ventures remain including the Mine Shaft Building, the Guard House, mining plant foundations, old mining equipment and smaller artifacts.

Crater of Diamonds State Park is a rock hound's delight since, along with diamonds, more than 40 types of rocks and minerals can be found here, too. These rocks and minerals include lamproite, amethyst, banded agate, jasper, peridot, garnet, quartz, calcite, barite, and hematite. Spend an hour or an entire day searching for the hidden gems. It's fun and could pay off in a big way! Visitors will also enjoy a water park located on the grounds, perfect for cooling off after a day of diamond hunting.

Just a few minutes from downtown Murfreesboro is the **Kadoha Indian Village** located on Kadoha Road. Just follow the signs leading west out of downtown. The village was inhabited by mound builders approximately 1,000 years ago. The on-site museum features decorative pottery, pipes and flints left behind by those that lived here. A highlight of a visit is touring the excavated mounds found on the grounds. A designated area of the village is open for tourists to spend time surface hunting for arrow heads, pottery or other artifacts.

A diamond in the rough from the Crater of Diamonds State Park.



At Kadoha Indian Village you can hunt for arrow heads.



Mining for Diamonds



Fly Fishing on the Little Missouri River



After spending time in Murfreesboro, a trip to **Lake Greeson** may sound inviting. Take Highway 19 northward out of Murfreesboro for a short seven-mile drive. The lake is twelve miles long and features clear waters and steep, rocky ridges that form numerous islands and long peninsulas extending into the lake. Anglers flock to Lake Greeson for the abundant channel catfish and rainbow trout fishing. Camping and picnicking are available on the lake at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' parks and at **Daisy State Park** located on the north side of the lake. Two private resorts are also located on the lake. Below the Narrows Dam, on the south side of the lake, is the **Little Missouri River** where fisherman enjoy fly fishing for trout.

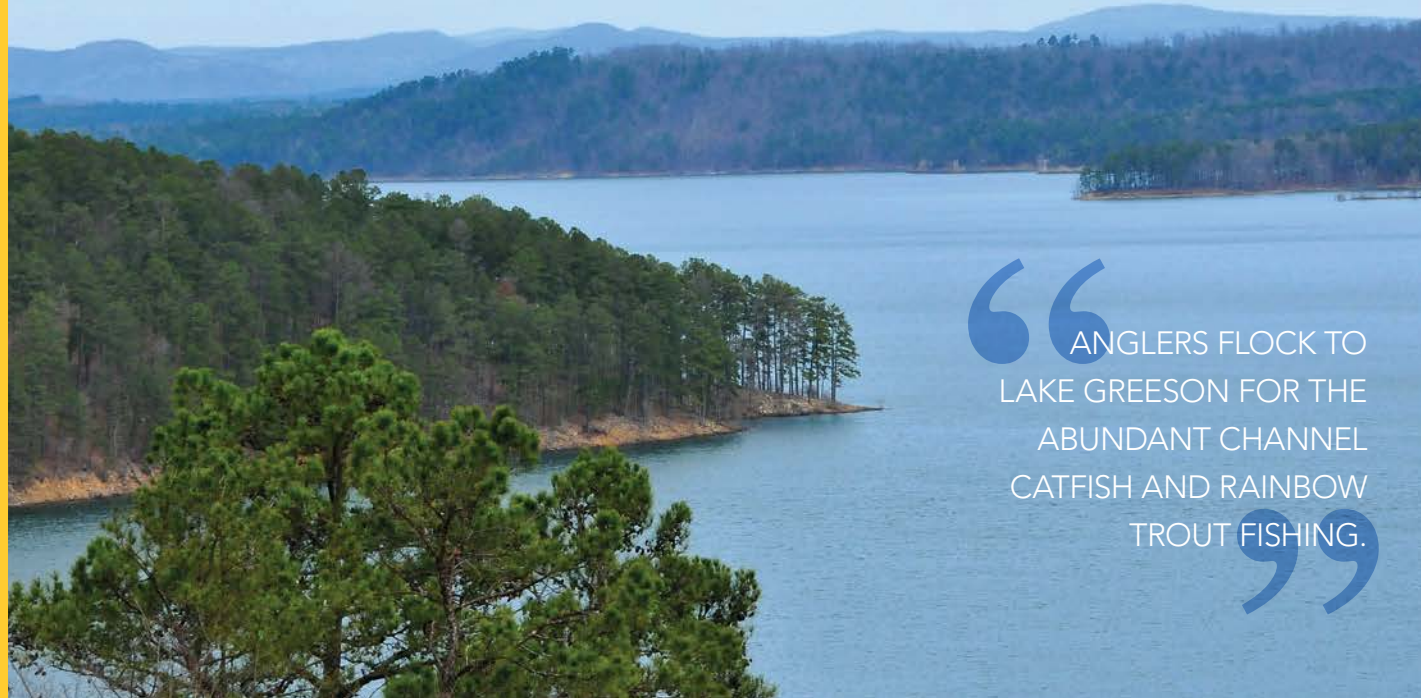
In addition to fishing, boating and swimming, a total of 45 miles of walking, nature and cycle trails can be enjoyed in the area surrounding the lake. All terrain vehicle (ATV) enthusiasts can enjoy the challenging 31-



Fishermen near the Self Creek/Lake Greeson Bridge

mile Bear Creek Motorcycle Trail on Lake Greeson. ATVs, mountain bikes, dirt bikes and hikers can utilize this multi-use trail that is open throughout the year. The trail begins at Daisy State Park.

This weekend road trip ends on the shores of Lake Greeson. Though there are more sights to be found in almost any direction near here, those will be adventures to be discovered in future issues of *Arkansas Highways Magazine*. □



“ ANGLERS FLOCK TO LAKE GREESON FOR THE ABUNDANT CHANNEL CATFISH AND RAINBOW TROUT FISHING.”

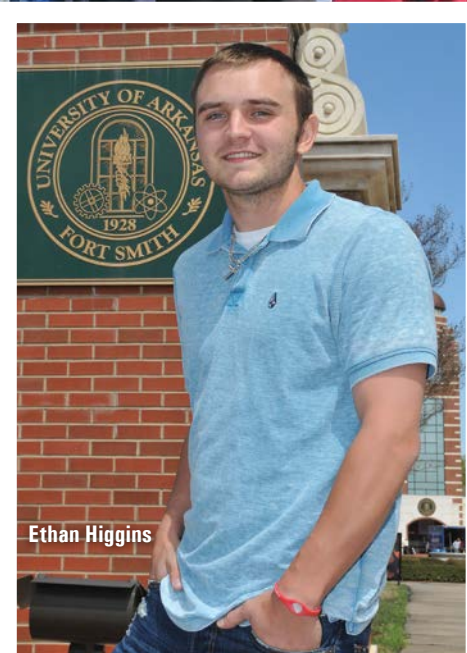
DISTRICT NINE, BENTON I, AREA MAINTENANCE CREW (Top, L. to R.): Darin Henson, Doug Fletcher, Terry Eidson, Stan Bates, Paul Thornhill, Eric Bridges, Darrell Nichols, Wade Lyall. (Bottom, L. to R.): Jeff Thompson, Terry Emerson, Joe Arnold, Marilyn Hemby, John Johnson, James Branstetter, Jeff Shimko, Mark Corliss.



A SUMMER WITH THE AHTD: The Job I Hated to Love

BY ETHAN HIGGINS
AHTD SUMMER INTERN

Ethan Higgins of Fort Smith worked as a summer intern in 2012 at District Nine's Benton I Area Maintenance Shop in Garfield. He is back in school now at the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith. As an English class assignment, Ethan wrote the following essay that takes a look back at his work as an AHTD intern. We thank Ethan for allowing us to share his essay with all of you.



Ethan Higgins

I can't think of many 18-year-old kids that enjoy getting out of bed at six o'clock during the summer, especially if work was involved, and I was no different. Nonetheless, I rolled out of bed on a cool May morning, ready to start my first day at the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department. The idea of working for the Highway Department didn't exactly thrill me, but I packed up my lunch, slipped on my boots and headed for the door, not knowing what I might encounter.

Every single person in that room was older than I was. Not only that, they all had me beat by at least 25 years. I found a seat close to the corner and sat in silence as they sipped on their morning coffee, waiting to see what was on the list of things to do for the day. I would soon find out that you never knew what you were going to be doing on any given day, unless we were "hot-mixing," but I'll get to that later. I was informed when Johnny, our supervisor, arrived that I would be making a trip to Harrison to sign some paperwork and get some training before I started working in the field.

In all honesty, I hated the idea of working with these "old" people. None of them were actually older than 60 but to me, they were old. How was I supposed to relate to these people? There was no way that I could ever be friends with them, and I was going to spend this summer working with strangers, just struggling to survive the day, only to wake up and do it all over again the next day. It was going to be a long summer, to say the least.

On my second day, I got my first real taste of working at the Highway Department and the spontaneity of this line of work. Darin and I were on our way to get the grade-all when we got a call from Paul, our crew leader. A chicken gut truck had spilled on the road and it was our job to clean it up. I have a fairly strong stomach and it came in handy that day. I can still smell the potent, rotting chicken burning in my nostrils. A scent that putrid doesn't just leave your memory and I will never forget that day as long as I live. The smell was only the beginning. When we were finishing up the job, Terry and I were shoveling this goopy mess into the backhoe bucket when all of the sudden I hear a loud clank and I feel the guts splash onto

my face and hat. I was horrified. This nasty concoction was all over me and I was frozen in disgust. Terry had turned to get another shovel full of guts when his shovel hit the side of the bucket, sending a load of guts through the air and onto my face. Needless to say, I had been initiated into the Highway Department family and I gained a little more respect from the guys in the shop. I was still "the new guy," but they knew that I was not afraid to get in there and get my hands dirty.

In the following weeks, I was bombarded with terminology that I had no idea how to make sense of. It was like they were speaking a completely different language. There were codes for every function we did, specific names for certain operations, and everyone there had their own role and purpose. Everything we did had a 3-digit number that was used to identify what we would be doing. For example, if we were mowing that day, the function sheet would have the number 444 printed on it. Each day, everyone was assigned a piece of equipment that would be used in completing the mission we were told to complete. All of our trucks had numbers too. My truck was usually 7864, a 2003 Chevy Silverado. Even though I didn't drive the dump trucks, I knew all of their numbers as well. Every backhoe, street sweeper and tractor had a number to identify it. I soon learned all of these numbers and before long, I was referring to these machines by their number instead of their name just like everyone else. I was part of the team and as bad as I hate to admit it, I kind of liked it.

When it came time to lay "hot mix", or asphalt, each person was responsible for one job and one job only, but that job was vital to the operation running smoothly. Since I was new on the job, I got stuck flagging. If you are unfamiliar with the term "flagging," it is about as fun as it sounds. Flaggers are responsible for directing traffic through the work zone. The job seems simple enough, and it is to an extent, but you run across some crazy, road-raged people that think their nail appointment just cannot wait. I spent countless hours in the summer

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EMPLOYEES AT THE
ARKANSAS STATE
HIGHWAY AND
TRANSPORTATION
DEPARTMENT TREATED
ME LIKE I HAD BEEN
THERE FOR 20 YEARS
WHEN I WAS NOTHING
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18-YEAR OLD KID
LOOKING TO MAKE
A BUCK FOR
THE SUMMER.”



Asphalt comes out of the hot mix machine at 300° F.

heat, supporting myself with my flagging paddle struggling to stand up as the sun beat down on me with no sign of letting up. I learned to love breaks and appreciate the air conditioner a whole lot more than I did before.

Even though flagging was a tedious job, and required little to no intelligence other than common sense, I learned to appreciate it more, also. One day, they let me work on the hot mix machine and I'm here to tell you, it is hot! The asphalt comes out of the truck

at about 300 degrees Fahrenheit and you are only about three feet from it. When it's 100 degrees outside already and you're standing beside a machine spitting out hot mix, you can be sure that it's going to be a long, hot day. I liked the change of pace, even though it was only for a day. However, I had my taste of working on the machine and I was ready to start flagging again. I guess I didn't realize how easy I had it until I worked on the machine for a day.

Flagging and cleaning up guts were not the only jobs that I had to do this summer. If there was a dead animal on the side of the road, we had to pick it up. They liked to call this job "Road-kill Patrol." We also were in charge of making sure drivers could see the signs on the side of the highway which meant cutting brush and clearing trees to improve visibility. Some jobs were better than others, and I learned to appreciate the days that I got jobs like fixing signs or mowing because I could work at my own pace without having a set quota to meet. When we hot-mixed, we had to get a certain amount done in a day which can lead to some stressful situations.

Yes, the sun was unbearably hot for most of the summer, and rainy days were few and far between, but the people I worked with made it all worthwhile. I wouldn't trade the experiences I had or the memories I made this summer for anything in the world. I'll always remember the times we would sit and talk after work in the break room about what had happened that day or stories they shared about the men that had worked there before me. They made me feel at home. The employees at the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department treated me like I had been there for 20 years when I was nothing more than an 18-year old kid looking to make a buck for the summer. I hated to love that job because I had told myself in the beginning that I wouldn't like it, but looking back I understand how much I enjoyed not only the people there, but the knowledge I gained about handling money, responsibility and the value of hard work. As much as I hated to admit, I loved my job. ■

EVERY DROP COUNTS

BY SARAH DEVRIES
ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYST I

Wow it sure is hot outside! Well, maybe not yet but summer is right around the corner and so are the high temperatures we experience each year. On hot summer days you might relax with a glass of ice cold lemonade, watch your kids play in the sprinkler or splash around in the neighborhood pool. We often forget these experiences are water luxuries and water conservation is a forgotten necessity.

The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department promotes water conservation and recharge as part of its stormwater training and educational outreach program. This program includes such things as preservation of green space when constructing new facilities, the use of vegetative buffers in maintenance yards to control and capture stormwater run-off, as well as protecting vegetated areas along our construction zones. The vegetative buffers provide an all-natural way to capture and treat stormwater runoff and slow the flow of pollutants from our construction sites and roadways throughout the State. These buffer zones assist our State with stormwater control, preserve wildlife habitat, assist with groundwater recharge, and can provide noise control as well. These things are made possible because of dedicated employees applying their skills and knowledge.

There are approximately 3,600 AHTD employees and each one of us impacts our State outside of the workplace. Individually we use an average of 178 gallons of water or more each day.* We can reduce this amount by 40 gallons by changing behaviors around our homes and businesses. If we did this, 144,000 gallons of water would be saved in one day equaling over 52 million gallons per year. This water conservation effort is better known as the "40-Gallon Challenge" which was promoted in 2012 by the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service. If all Arkansas residents (Census 2012 estimate 2,949,131) reduced their water consumption by 40 gallons each day, then roughly 43 billion gallons of water each year would be available for other uses.*



Fix leaky faucets.

This amount makes a big difference when you realize that only 4% or two inches out of the 49 inches of Arkansas' annual rainfall actually becomes groundwater.*

The best place to start our water savings and the amount of money we spend in water bills is in the bathroom, since this is where more than 50% of the water in an average home is used.* Reducing usage begins with identifying and stopping leaks. Typical leaks are found when sink faucets are over tightened, washers have worn out, or when the flapper joint inside the toilet does not seal properly. The average family could save close to 36 gallons per day or 13,000 gallons per year by replacing leaking toilets.* This is one example of how reaching your goal of reducing water use by 40 gallons a day is a possibility.



Another ten easy ways to save water and accomplish the 40-gallon challenge are:

1. Water your lawn only when needed and avoid the heat of the day when 30% is lost to evaporation. (Saves 25-50 gals/day.)
2. Fix leaky faucets and plumbing joints. (Saves 15-20 gals/day/leak.)
3. Don't let the hose run constantly when car washing. (Saves 150 gals/wash.)
4. Install water-saving shower heads and restrictors. (Saves 16-27 gals/day.)
5. Run only full loads in the washing machine and dishwasher or replace with a more water efficient model. (Saves 2-10 gals/day.)
6. Shorten shower time. (even a one or two minute reduction can save up to 23 gals/day.)
7. Use a broom to clean driveways and sidewalks. (Saves 20 gals/day.)
8. Don't use the toilet as an ashtray or wastebasket. (Saves 2 gals/day.)
9. Capture tap water while you wait for hot water-this is great to use for indoor plants. (Saves 3-10 gals/day.)
10. Don't water the sidewalks, driveway, or gutter. Adjust sprinklers to water only lawn and garden surfaces. (Saves 20 gals/day.)*



Install water-saving aerators.

The old adage "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure", could be slightly altered to say "water conservation equals dollars in your pocket." Some of you may already be implementing these water saving practices and have reaped the benefits of money saved. Being water conscious all year long will allow us to have plenty of water for all our important needs: drinking, industrial, hydroelectric, irrigation, recreation and wildlife. We are grateful for an abundance of good, clean and potable water in Arkansas, so let's not waste it.

To learn more about water conservation visit EPA WaterSense at <http://www.epa.gov/watersense/> and/or the 40-gallon challenge visit <http://watersustainability.wordpress.com/40-gallon-challenge/>. ■

*REFERENCES

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(L. to R.) Tom Schueck, Highway Commissioner; former Senator Bobby Glover; John Garner, Executive Director of the Lonoke Chamber of Commerce; Wayne McGee, Lonoke Mayor; and Scott E. Bennett, AHTD Director.

HIGHWAY 89/INTERSTATE 40 INTERCHANGE BREAKS GROUND IN LONOKE

It may have been April 1, but it was no joke when a large crowd of Lonoke area officials gathered to officially break ground on the \$7.9 million Highway 89/Interstate 40 Interchange project.

The new interchange will give direct access to Lonoke's nearly 400-acre industrial development zone. Local officials have noted that poor access to the area has been a key factor in discouraging businesses from locating there.

"This is the future of Lonoke," said former State Senator Bobby Glover. "There have been times we didn't think we would ever pull this together, but with former U.S. Representative Marion Berry and the Highway Department on our side it became a reality."

Redstone Construction was awarded the contract to replace the Highway 89 overpass and to construct a new Interstate 40 Interchange. The project is estimated to be completed in mid-2014. ■

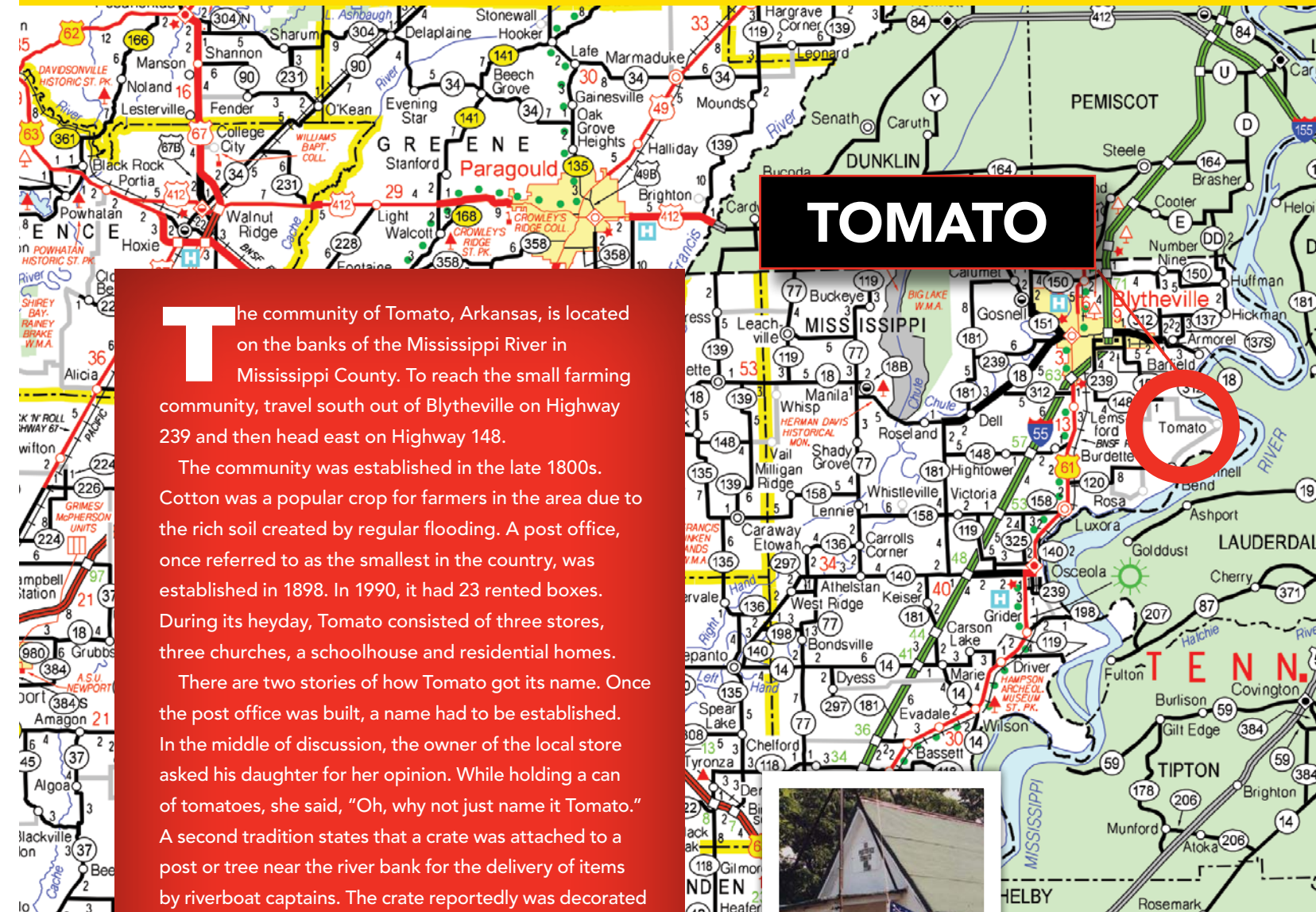
(TOP, L. to R.) State Representative Walls McCrary; Commissioner Tom Schueck; and AHTD Director Scott E. Bennett.

(BOTTOM) Lonoke area residents gather for the ground breaking ceremony.



ON THE MAP

SPENDING TIME WITH AN ARKANSAS HIGHWAY MAP CAN BE INTERESTING. THE FOLLOWING IS THE NAME OF AN ACTUAL TOWN IN ARKANSAS! HAVE YOU EVER VISITED HERE?



The community of Tomato, Arkansas, is located on the banks of the Mississippi River in Mississippi County. To reach the small farming community, travel south out of Blytheville on Highway 239 and then head east on Highway 148.

The community was established in the late 1800s. Cotton was a popular crop for farmers in the area due to the rich soil created by regular flooding. A post office, once referred to as the smallest in the country, was established in 1898. In 1990, it had 23 rented boxes. During its heyday, Tomato consisted of three stores, three churches, a schoolhouse and residential homes.

There are two stories of how Tomato got its name. Once the post office was built, a name had to be established. In the middle of discussion, the owner of the local store asked his daughter for her opinion. While holding a can of tomatoes, she said, "Oh, why not just name it Tomato." A second tradition states that a crate was attached to a post or tree near the river bank for the delivery of items by riverboat captains. The crate reportedly was decorated with a colorful picture of a tomato. Riverboat captains began to refer to the stop as Tomato.

Being located on the river, the community was prone to major flooding. As a result, buildings in town were put on log rollers and moved away from the flood waters on occasion. After several moves, Tomato became known as a "portable town." One of the last stores in town was moved three times before disappearing into the Mississippi River. Though the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers did stabilization work on the river bank, the town slowly declined. As of 2010, the town of 350 citizens had all but disappeared. ■

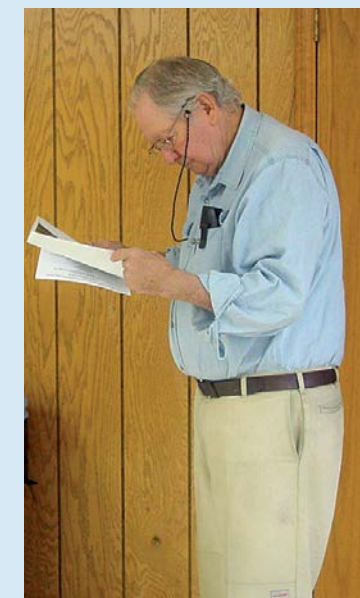


The Tomato Arkansas Post Office was once referred to as the smallest in the country.



CONSTRUCTION PLANS AROUND THE STATE

Throughout the year, public meetings are held around the State in communities where roadwork is being planned. These meetings are an opportunity for citizens to hear about and respond to future highway construction happening in their area.



HIGHWAY 167 *Cave City*

A Public Involvement Meeting was held in Cave City on January 24th to discuss plans for improvements to Highway 167 in the area. A total of just over 100 people attended the meeting at Cave City High School. Participants reviewed plans to widen 4.5 miles of the highway to five lanes, extending from Antioch Road to just south of the city limits of Cave City. AHTD staff were on hand to answer questions and to gather written surveys from the public featuring comments about the proposed improvements.

HIGHWAY 16 *Elkins*

The AHTD presented a Public Involvement Meeting on January 31st in Elkins to share information about plans to replace a bridge on Highway 16 in the area. The bridge, over the Middle Fork of the White River, is scheduled to be replaced in 2016. The meeting was held at Harris Baptist Church and was attended by approximately 25 area residents.

HIGHWAY 124 *Russellville*

Center Valley Elementary School in Russellville was the location for a Public Involvement Meeting held to discuss plans for widening Highway 124. The February 7th meeting was attended by 75 residents from the area. Plans call for widening approximately two miles of the highway to five lanes. The improvements will extend from Crow Mountain Road northward to Center Valley Road. AHTD staff shared displays of the improvements and answered questions about the project.

HIGHWAY 1 *Lexa*

The widening of seven miles of Highway 1 to five lanes, in Lee and Phillips counties, was the subject of a Public Involvement Meeting on February 21st. The meeting was held in Lexa. The planned improvements will widen Highway 1 from Walnut Corner northward to Cypress Corner. A total of approximately 30 people attended the meeting which was held at the Kirkland Multi-Purpose Facility. Participants viewed displays and asked questions of the AHTD staff.

INTERSTATE 30/ 430 INTERCHANGE *Little Rock*

A total of 113 people gathered at the AHTD Central Office in Little Rock on February 28th to learn more about plans for improvements to the Interstate 30/430 Interchange in southwest Little Rock. In an effort to improve the flow of traffic through the Interchange area, plans include an additional lane for the Interstate 430 Southbound to Interstate 30 Westbound ramp, new ramps between the Interstate 30 frontage road and Interstate 430, and additional travel lanes on Interstate 430 between Stagecoach Road and the Interchange.

HIGHWAY 62 *Berryville*

The AHTD presented a Public Involvement Meeting in Berryville on March 7th to share plans for improvements to Highway 62 between Berryville and Green Forest. A total of 3.5 miles of the highway will be widened to five lanes, extending from Highway 103 westward towards Berryville. The meeting, held at St. Anne's Catholic Church, was attended by 76 area residents.

HIGHWAY 70 BRIDGE (BROADWAY) *North Little Rock*

A Design Public Hearing was held in North Little Rock on March 28th regarding the replacement of the Broadway Bridge over the Arkansas River between Little Rock and North Little Rock. A total of 100 people gathered at the Arkansas Transit Association Building to ask questions and provide comments about the latest design plans and possible color options to be featured on the bridge.



Dear AHTD,

We wanted to thank you for the many rest area/information stops that you provide to travelers of your state. On our way to and back from Texas, we took advantage of the maps and travel brochures.

The rest stops were very clean and we appreciate the quality and quantity of them.

Have a good day,
Nancy & Brian Stoney

NICE ARROWS

To Whom it May Concern — The “merge” arrows look nice at mile marker 277 in West Memphis. Please tell your crew they did an excellent job.

Very Nice Job,
Carolyn Dhority

BEAUTIFUL HIGHWAYS

Just wanted to let y’all know how very much I appreciate the mowing, weed eating, and litter pickup on the Interstates and highways. People at the Highway and Transportation Department are doing a very good job. It’s noticeable and beautiful. Please let these people know that I, for one, think they are tops!

Susan Conley
Bryant, Arkansas

AHTD IS THE BEST

I believe we have the best Highway Department in the whole, entire, spankin’ world.

During this (recent) snow storm, the highway was kept clean and dry. Thank you for your hard work in the nasty weather.

Your hard work is really appreciated. Thanks again!

In Christian Love,
Bertha Marie Evans
Harrison, Arkansas

NOTE: This letter was submitted to the editor of the Harrison Daily Times. March 27, 2013.

TWICE THE BLESSING

My name is Teresa Cowart. I work for the Department of Parks and Tourism at the Welcome Center at Red River.

It has been my pleasure to work for AHTD from 2003 to 2008 in the Little River County Crew. I know how great these people are to work with and how generous they are with helping the traveling public. Since 2008 I have been working inside the Welcome Center and have seen many times when AHTD employees assisted the public in many different ways.

I recently have been the recipient of help twice, from two different groups of AHTD employees. A few months back when it was really hot, I had a flat at work and three AHTD employees that were passing through saw my plight and stopped and changed the tire for me. Then just this past week I had a blow out very near the headquarters in Ashdown and again I was rescued by three AHTD employees from that crew. They were very courteous and had me on my way quickly.

I just wanted to say a big “Thank You” to AHTD for being there for the traveling public.

Sincerely,
Teresa Cowart

AHTD PEOPLE

The AHTD employs approximately 3,600 people. We welcome our new employees, congratulate others on promotions and service, and say goodbye to those retiring.



NEW EMPLOYEES

CONSTRUCTION • Karlisha Porter, Field Clerk I; Kerin Burrell, Construction Aide I; Anita Parker, Construction Aide I; Jacob Smith, Construction Helper

DISTRICT ONE • Jeremy Gates, Station Attendant

DISTRICT THREE • Shane Rothenberger, General Laborer; Aaron Martin, General Laborer; Jayson Stoffle, General Laborer; Robert Crawford, General Laborer

DISTRICT FIVE • Sammy Edwards, Mechanic

DISTRICT SIX • Grady Carter, Senior Mechanic; Brian Mizer, Single Axle Truck Driver

DISTRICT SEVEN • Larry Proctor, Single Axle Truck Driver

DISTRICT EIGHT • Clay Chronister, Single Axle Truck Driver; Lloyd Davis, Single Axle Truck Driver; Larry Harmon, Single Axle Truck Driver

DISTRICT NINE • Cody Nelson, Single Axle Truck Driver; Coty Campbell, Single Axle Truck Driver

PROMOTIONS

FISCAL SERVICES • Stephanie Howard, Office Administrative Assistant V; Robbie Howlett, Insurance Account Coordinator

RIGHT OF WAY • Kati Martin, Office Administrative Assistant II; Ashley Reeder, Right of Way Plans Designer III

SURVEYS • Ronnie Hall Jr., Staff Surveys Engineer

DISTRICT ONE • Ryan Blankenship, Construction Field Engineer II; Curtis Burnett, Area Maintenance Supervisor; Dennis Carter, Senior Mechanic; Deandre Dawson, Multi-Axle Truck Driver; Joey Henson, Crew Leader; Donnie Peeler, Motor Patrol Operator

DISTRICT TWO • Sharon Hooks, District Bridge Inspector; Felecia Kimble, Area Maintenance Supervisor; Eldridge Miller, Single Axle Truck Driver; Brandon Webster, Motor Patrol Operator-Finish; Tyler Wells, Backhoe/Front End Loader Operator

DISTRICT THREE • David Lewis, Senior Inspector; Mack Scott, Construction Aide III

DISTRICT FOUR • Leatrice Knight, Senior Inspector; Robin Linn, Senior Inspector; Jeffery Maze, Construction Aide I; Brian Miles, Construction Aide I

DISTRICT FIVE • Joshua Fick, Distributor/Roller Operator; Amanda Smith, Single Axle Truck Driver

DISTRICT SIX • David Allen, Multi-Axle Truck Driver; Benjamin Blade Jr., Multi-Axle Truck Driver; Mark Harper, Single Axle Truck Driver; Fredrick Livingston, Multi-Axle Truck Driver; James Ranson, Spreader Operator; Elijah Smith, Multi-Axle Truck Driver; Roger Taylor, Distributor/Roller Operator

DISTRICT SEVEN • Jesse Bailey, Single Axle Truck Driver; Angie Jarvis, Single Axle Truck Driver; Clyde Lambert Jr., Single Axle Truck Driver; Scott Ross, Single Axle Truck Driver

DISTRICT EIGHT • Brian Biehler, Construction Aide I; Hershell Cotton, Construction Aide I; Angela Dunn, Construction Aide I

DISTRICT NINE • Bryan Duncan, Construction Aide I; John Holyfield, Construction Aide I

DISTRICT TEN • Dennis Burgess, Asphalt Tank Truck Driver; Pamela Cook, Distributor Operator; David Danaho, Lowboy/Float Truck Driver; Gerald Ellis, Shop Supervisor; Lenny Fulco, Motor Patrol Operator-Finish; Travis Henderson, Backhoe/Front End Loader Operator; Jack Wolf, Shop Supervisor

SERVICE

ARKANSAS HIGHWAY POLICE • William Person, Arkansas Highway Police Corporal, 25 yrs.; Jeffrey Holmes, Arkansas Highway Police Captain, 20 yrs.; Ronnie Burks, Division Head/Arkansas Highway Police Chief, 15 yrs.

BRIDGE • Tandra Herman, Advanced Structures Engineer, 5 yrs.

CONSTRUCTION • Donny Parish, Inspector, 35 yrs.; Joseph Tomboli, Senior Construction Materials Inspector, 35 yrs.; Larry Lay, Construction Helper, 25 yrs.; Timothy Eaker, Construction Project Coordinator, 25 yrs.; Russell Moore, Senior Inspector, 25 yrs.; Samantha Knight, Field Clerk I, 5 yrs.

CHIEF ENGINEER'S OFFICE • Jennifer Williams, Engineer VI, 20 yrs.

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE • Linda Price, Administrative Assistant I, 35 yrs.

ENVIRONMENTAL • John Fleming, Section Head – Special Studies, 25 yrs.

EQUIPMENT & PROCUREMENT • Larry Golden, Shop Supervisor, 30 yrs.

HEAVY BRIDGE • Michael Jones, Bridge Management Engineer, 30 yrs.

HUMAN RESOURCES • Ron Kimsey, Electrical, Plumbing & Mechanical Repairer, 10 yrs.

MATERIALS • Lakisha Rice, Chemist II, 5 yrs.

PROGRAMS & CONTRACTS • Larry Lanes, Administrative Assistant III, 25 yrs.

RIGHT OF WAY • Betty Hunt, Administrative Aide IV, 5 yrs.

ROADWAY • Gary English, Senior Designer, 30 yrs.; Julia Coffman, Senior Designer, 25 yrs.

DISTRICT ONE • Ronnie Reel, Backhoe/Front End Loader Operator, 10 yrs.; Benny Melton, Backhoe/Front End Loader Operator, 5 yrs.; Derl Futrell, Assistant Bridge Inspector, 5 yrs.

DISTRICT TWO • John Harvey, Single Axle Truck Driver, 10 yrs.; Lawrence Crift, Area Headquarters Attendant, 5 yrs.; Ricky Martin, Maintenance Aide I, 5 yrs.

DISTRICT THREE • Ala Mae Flenory, Office Administrative Assistant V, 35 yrs.; Ricky Branham, Backhoe/Front End Loader Operator, 10 yrs.

DISTRICT FOUR • Steve Hunt, Senior Body Repair & Painter, 10 yrs.; Marion Rouell, Backhoe/Front End Loader Operator, 5 yrs.

DISTRICT FIVE • Rickie Sharp, Area Maintenance Supervisor, 35 yrs.; Thomas Smith, Multi-Axle Truck Driver, 25 yrs.; Ricky Milligan, Motor Patrol Operator-Finish, 15 yrs.; Johnny Jason, Multi-Axle Truck Driver, 5 yrs.; George Taylor, Welder, 5 yrs.; Dennis Perry, Multi-Axle Truck Driver, 5 yrs.

DISTRICT SIX • Jerry Campbell, Sign Crew Supervisor, 25 yrs.; William Williams, Maintenance Aide II, 20 yrs.

DISTRICT SEVEN • Bobby Helms, Maintenance Aide II, 25 yrs.

DISTRICT EIGHT • John Hayes, Area Headquarters Attendant, 35 yrs.; Paul Athey, Senior Mechanic, 25 yrs.; Frankie Holman, Multi-Axle Truck Driver, 15 yrs.

DISTRICT NINE • Jackie Villines, Crew Leader, 25 yrs.; Brian Willis, Maintenance Aide II, 10 yrs.

DISTRICT TEN • Clarence Ward, Maintenance Aide I, 5 yrs.

RETIREMENT

ARKANSAS HIGHWAY POLICE • Terry Stobaugh, Arkansas Highway Police Corporal, 22+ yrs.

COMPUTER SERVICES • Larry Lewers, Applications Analyst/Programmer IV, 21+ yrs.

FISCAL SERVICES • Toni Barnes, Administrative Assistant III, 34+ yrs.

MATERIALS • Gary Brown, Geotechnical Drill Party Chief, 31+ yrs.

DISTRICT ONE • Danny Glenn, Electrical, Plumbing & Mechanical Repairer, 28+ yrs.

DISTRICT THREE • Ala Mae Flenory, Office Administrative Assistant V, 34+ yrs.; Danny Jones, Storeroom Assistant I, 20+ yrs.

DISTRICT FOUR • Ronnie Patillo, Backhoe/Front End Loader Operator, 28+ yrs.

DISTRICT FIVE • Roosevelt Brandon, General Laborer, 9+ yrs.

DISTRICT SIX • John Redwine, Backhoe/Front End Loader Operator, 32+ yrs.; Donny Parish, Inspector, 34+ yrs.; Romosha Bridges, Resident Office Technician, 36+ yrs.; Joseph Fullen, Inspector, 18+ yrs.; James Watkins, Parts Runner, 9+ yrs.

DISTRICT EIGHT • Melvin Campbell, Maintenance Aide II, 12+ yrs.

MEMORIALS

ARKANSAS HIGHWAY POLICE • Bob M. Massingill, 4/10/2013, retired

CONSTRUCTION • Steven J. Anselmi, 3/26/2013, retired

MAINTENANCE • Steve Baxter Davidson, 3/25/2013, active

PROGRAMS & CONTRACTS • Mary J. Lanham, 4/15/2013, retired

SURVEYS • Billy J. Milholen, 4/13/2013, retired

DISTRICT TWO • William R. Kendall, 3/18/2013, retired

DISTRICT FIVE • Billy D. Luster, 4/10/2013, retired

DISTRICT EIGHT • James R. Nail, 3/24/2013, retired

DISTRICT NINE • Glen Edward Akins, 4/2/2013, retired

ACTIVE DUTY

As of 4/15/13, the AHTD has two employees serving active duty in the United States military. Deployment date is noted.

ARKANSAS HIGHWAY POLICE • Ruddy Gene Short, Arkansas Highway Police Patrol Officer, 3/22/13

DISTRICT SEVEN • Abel Ayala, Maintenance Aide I, 3/13/12



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