

# Arkansas HIGHWAYS

SEPTEMBER 2015

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



**HERMES**  
CREATIVE AWARDS

GOLD WINNER  
2016

## Repairing the Highway 23 Slide

BRINGING STABILITY TO A  
RAIN-SOAKED PIG TRAIL

Traveling the  
**TALIMENA**  
SCENIC BYWAY

**WILDLIFE CROSSINGS:**  
A Safer Solution for  
Animals & Motorists

Keeping Watch  
over the **BOBBY**  
HOPPER TUNNEL

# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



## Investing in Our Employees

**T**HE SUMMER MONTHS HAVE BEEN FILLED WITH CONVERSATIONS ABOUT THE BUDGET CHALLENGES FACING THE TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRY TODAY. Departments of transportation across the country are focusing on ways to stretch every dollar in the budget as far as it will go.

At the AHTD, we've answered that challenge by focusing our priorities on managing what we already have. That not only applies to maintaining our existing highway system and keeping it in the best shape possible, but includes our Department workforce as well. We are taking great strides to make sure our employees are able to continue working through these current budget challenges. Reducing our workforce is not part of the equation. We are determined to keep all of our employees working until solutions to the present funding problems are reached in Washington, D.C. and right here at home in Arkansas.

And speaking of our workforce, as summer comes to a close, many of us are coming back to work after a summer vacation. Whether for a few days or a couple of weeks, time off recharges our batteries and helps us perform our jobs better when we return to work.

At the AHTD, we recognize that our employees are our most important asset. We strive to create an environment that helps us all come to work feeling motivated and enthusiastic about our job each day. Our employees are true workhorses so great morale, productivity and a sense of accomplishment are vital to what we do. That applies to everyone from our newest employees on up to our supervisors.

To help accomplish that, we are introducing several new programs. Our Human Resources Division is now offering a class for supervisors titled "Hire to Retire." The class focuses on ways to become better, more effective supervisors and provides ways to work with employees in every stage of their career, from those on their first day of work to those that are nearing retirement. The goal is to have our supervisors helping employees be their best and reaching their goals. That, as a result, improves performance.

The Department also plans to introduce employee surveys soon. They will be designed to give staff members an opportunity to share their feelings about the Department, their job responsibilities and suggest ways to improve employee satisfaction. The surveys will be a tool for better communication and better ways to accomplish our Department goals.

More improvements are also being planned for the near future. Opportunities that will allow us to meet our responsibilities in an even more conducive environment. You will hear more about those plans in the months ahead.

In the meantime, thank you for your hard work this summer and for representing the AHTD in such a positive manner.



Scott E. Bennett, P.E.  
Director of Highways and Transportation

**FRONT COVER:**  
Talimena National Scenic Byway  
Mena, AR • Polk County

**BACK COVER:**  
Cossatot River  
Wickes, AR • Polk County

### EDITOR

David Nilles  
[David.Nilles@ArkansasHighways.com](mailto:David.Nilles@ArkansasHighways.com)

### GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Paula Cigainero  
[Paula.Cigainero@ArkansasHighways.com](mailto:Paula.Cigainero@ArkansasHighways.com)

### CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

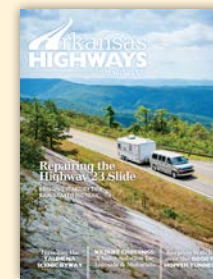
Glenn Bolick  
[Glenn.Bolick@ArkansasHighways.com](mailto:Glenn.Bolick@ArkansasHighways.com)

### PHOTOGRAPHER

Rusty Hubbard  
[Russell.Hubbard@ArkansasHighways.com](mailto:Russell.Hubbard@ArkansasHighways.com)

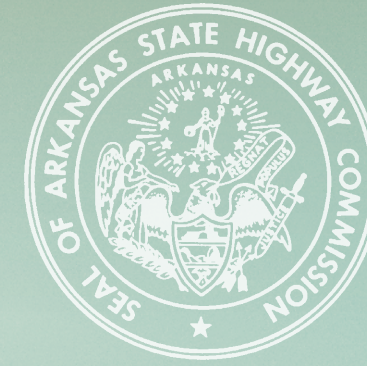
### Correspondence should be directed to:

ARKANSAS HIGHWAYS  
Public Information Office  
P.O. Box 2261, Room 1002  
Little Rock, AR 72203-2261



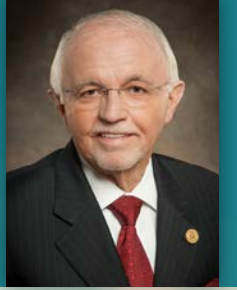
**Arkansas Highways** is published by and for employees of the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department as a medium of departmental news and other information. It is also distributed free of charge to the public upon request.

The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (Department) complies with all civil rights provisions of federal statutes and related authorities that prohibit discrimination in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. Therefore, the Department does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, age, national origin, religion or disability, in the admission, access to and treatment in the Department's programs and activities, as well as the Department's hiring or employment practices. Complaints of alleged discrimination and inquiries regarding the Department's nondiscrimination policies may be directed to Joanna P. McFadden Section Head – EEO/DBE (ADA/504/Title VI Coordinator), P. O. Box 2261, Little Rock, AR 72203, (501) 569-2298, (Voice/TTY 711), or the following email address: [Joanna.McFadden@ArkansasHighways.com](mailto:Joanna.McFadden@ArkansasHighways.com). This notice is available from the ADA/504/Title VI Coordinator in large print, on audiotape and in Braille.



## ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION

DICK TRAMMEL  
Chairman



TOM SCHUECK  
Vice Chairman



ROBERT S. MOORE, JR.  
Member



FRANK D. SCOTT, JR.  
Member



DALTON A. FARMER, JR.  
Member



SEPTEMBER 2015

# CONTENTS

## FEATURES

- 5 ..... Wildlife Crossings: A Safer Solution for Animals & Motorists
- 9 ..... The Highway 23 Slide
- 12 ..... Unique Bridges Across Arkansas
- 14 ..... Mapping the State of Arkansas
- 19 ..... AHTD Hosts AASHTO Construction Conference
- 20 ..... Ribbon Cut on Little Rock's Big Rock Interchange
- 22 ..... 2015 Roadcheck: Making Our Highways A Safer Place
- 24 ..... Weekend Road Trip: Talimena Scenic Byway
- 29 ..... Highway 549 Opens at Chaffee Crossing
- 30 ..... Keeping Watch Over the Bobby Hopper Tunnel
- 34 ..... Assessing the Future: A New Long Range Plan Gets Underway
- 38 ..... America's Transportation Awards Recognize AHTD

9



24



## DEPARTMENTS

- Director's Message ..... 2
- Out & About ..... 21
- On the Map ..... 28
- AHTD Events ..... 40
- Construction Corner ..... 41
- Dear AHTD: Letters ..... 42
- AHTD People ..... 43

IN THE  
**NEXT** issue

- A Look at the 30 Crossing Project
- Turning Back the Pages of *Arkansas Highways* 80 Years
- Funding for Commercial Truck Safety & Education Program

# Wildlife CROSSINGS

## A Safer Solution for Animals & Motorists

BY DAVID NILLES

**W**hile attending the AHTD's Transportation Research Committee Meeting and Engineering Conference held recently, I noticed a session on the agenda that piqued my interest. It had to do with a subject I had never put much thought into... wildlife crossings on our highways and Interstates.

When you think about it, once a highway is constructed, it does leave an impact on the wildlife in the area. Suddenly there are vehicles traveling through their habitat range at high speeds.

The conference session I attended was presented by Susan Staffeld, Environmental Analyst III in the Environmental Division, and it revealed that the AHTD and other Departments of Transportation across the country are beginning to take great strides to address the impact of highways on area wildlife.

(continued on page 6)



Susan Staffeld  
Environmental Analyst III

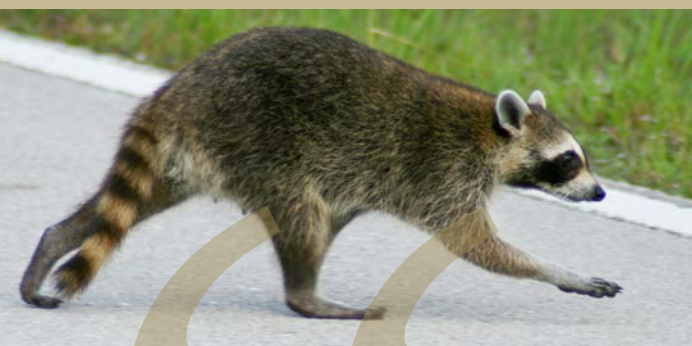
Wildlife crossing "shelf" under Interstate 40 in Faulkner County.



A wildlife "bench" providing safe passage under Interstate 40.



Susan Staffeld inspects the wildlife shelf at Interstate 40.



**J**UST BECAUSE A HIGHWAY IS THERE, WE CAN'T EXPECT WILDLIFE TO STAY ON ONE SIDE OF THE ROAD OR THE OTHER, Staffeld states.

"We are trying to make sure that wildlife can safely get across the highway. It makes it safer for animals and for motor vehicle users as well."

Highways impact wildlife in many ways. Animals large and small have to cross our highways every day. Among the impacts are motorist-animal collisions. Millions of animals are killed by vehicles each year as they attempt to cross busy highways, and according to The Wildlife Society, approximately 200 motorists lose their lives in motorist-animal collisions each year.

A second impact on wildlife is construction of the highway itself. Clearing land for a new highway and its right-of-way leads to loss of habitat.

Once in place, that highway leads to a third problem, habitat fragmentation. Many species of animals don't stay in one specific area year round, they roam from one area to another as seasons change or migration occurs. Highways act as barriers inside those habitat ranges or belts.

To help solve the problem scientists, engineers and transportation authorities have begun considering a number of mitigation tools for reducing the conflict between roads and wildlife. Of the currently available options, wildlife crossings have been the most successful at reducing both habitat fragmentation and wildlife-vehicle collisions.

"The Federal Highway Administration has been encouraging this type work," Staffeld comments. "The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century specifically provided funds for wildlife crossings. More and more states are getting involved."

Wildlife crossings include various structures that allow animals to cross highways safely. They may include overpasses, underpass tunnels, viaducts, tunnels and culverts.

The work is very location specific and varies depending on the area and the animals found there. What the AHTD does in the Ozarks is going to be different than what we do in the Delta and much different than what is being done in states like Florida or Montana.

"In Montana and Michigan they are looking at elk overpasses. Down in Florida they are looking at moving aquatic species across a roadway. It's very localized," Staffeld comments.

Focusing on Arkansas, there are three locations on Interstate 40 between North Little Rock and Conway that the Department has been concentrating on.

"Crossings came up in the design discussions for the Interstate 40 widening we are doing now as we were cutting through Grassy Lake, Camp Robinson and Lake Conway," Staffeld stated. "The Fish & Wildlife Service said that we needed to make sure we were accommodating wildlife passage.

Near Palarm Creek and south of there we already have bridges and culverts so wildlife can pass through those. We weren't worried about that. Up near Lake Conway and further down near Mayflower, Grassy Lake and the Bell Slough area we were worried about smaller animals there such as turtles and raccoons."

Staffeld went on to discuss what is being done.

"We found a system that was developed by the University of Montana. It's prefabricated shelving that bolts to the side and the top of a culvert allowing animals to use it as a walkway. The University of Montana has a system

and was excited about working with us on our crossings. They couldn't issue us a license to do our system so we had to come up with ours. It's similar but it doesn't infringe upon their patent."

The AHTD now has several shelves in place. In addition to the walkways inside culverts, the Department has been working on "benches" or dirt and rock pathways crossing under bridges.

"For the benches, we are targeting the larger animals such as deer and bobcats. Deer aren't going to use a culvert," Staffeld states.

The Interstate 40 area now contains four culverts and two benches. The same type of work is expected to be included in the Connecting Arkansas Program construction job planned on Highway 67 just north of Jacksonville.

And once the crossings are in place, how do you attract the animals to them as opposed to crossing the highway?

*(continued on page 8)*

“We are looking at placing specific plants at the openings. It’s not something we’ve done yet but we may in order to attract the animals. Especially for deer, we know what plants deer like,” Staffeld explains. “We’ve tried to make the end of the shelves and benches something that animals will naturally go to. It won’t be anything too startling for them. Ideally, we would love to have fencing to guide them, but the length is so long it’s a lot of maintenance. We will use it if it’s not going to work otherwise.”

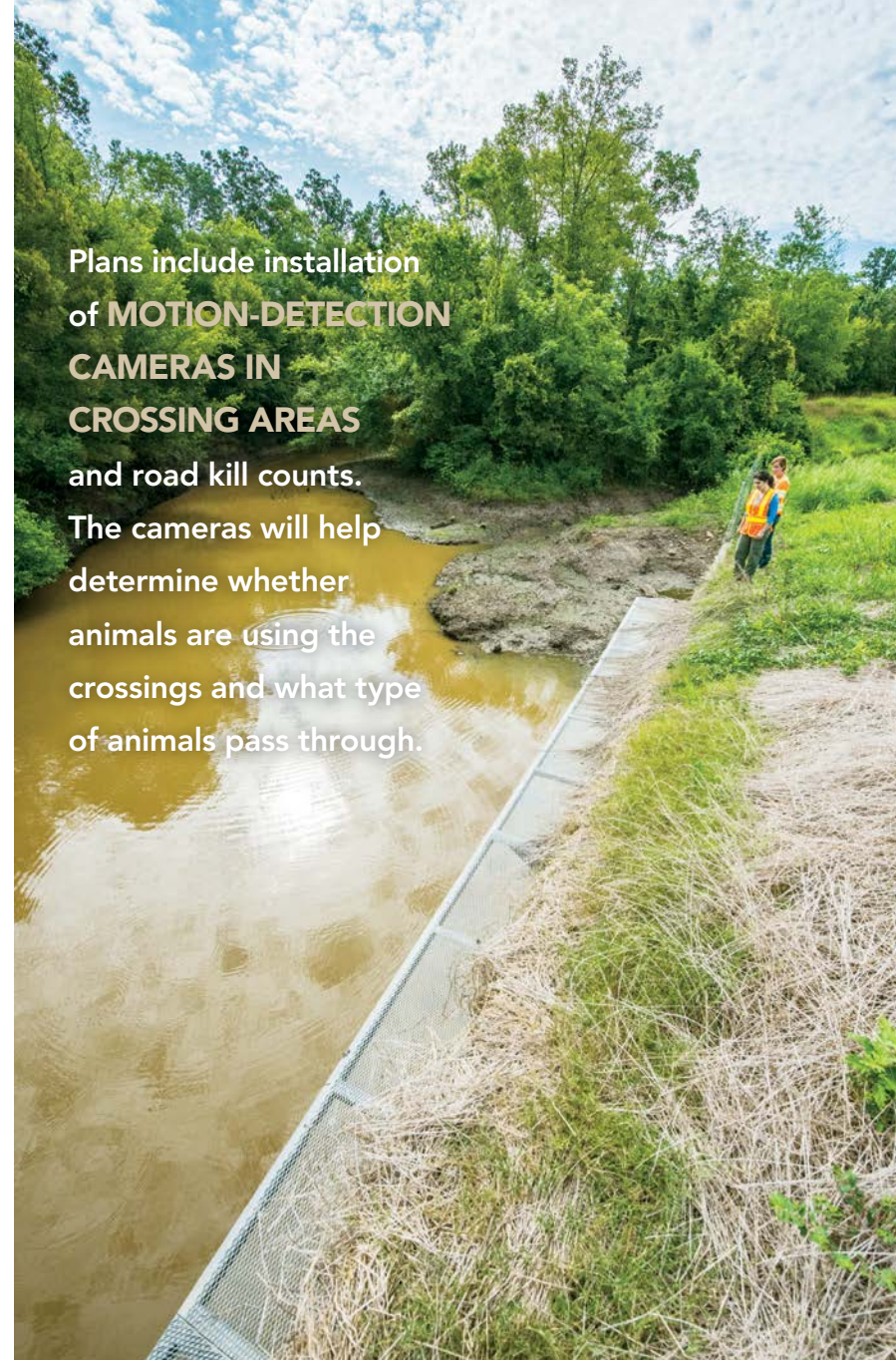
Not only is the AHTD putting the wildlife crossings in, plans are in place to determine how effective they are as well.

“We started a research study in July,” Staffeld shared. “We are doing all of the work in house. We want to make sure we are putting the right equipment in the right place. Although the cost is relatively minimal, we want it to be money well spent. We are going to look at ‘before and after’ results to make sure the crossings are effective and animals are using them.”

Plans include installation of motion-detection cameras in crossing areas and road kill counts. The cameras will help determine whether animals are using the crossings and what type of animals pass through.

“We are pretty proud of what we have accomplished,” she adds. “We are just glad the crossings are up. Wildlife may not use it right away but they just have to get used to it and will hopefully use it down the road. Once we see the results of our research project we will have a better idea whether they are successful and what is using them.”

The results of the research study will set the course for future crossings as the Department continues its efforts to make our highways safer for both motorists and wildlife. ■



Plans include installation of **MOTION-DETECTION CAMERAS IN CROSSING AREAS**

and road kill counts. The cameras will help determine whether animals are using the crossings and what type of animals pass through.

# THE Highway 23 Slide

BY DAVID NILLES

BRINGING STABILITY TO A RAIN-SOAKED PIG TRAIL



**IN LATE SPRING OF THIS YEAR,** repeated heavy rainfall caused a hill slide on one of north Arkansas’ most famous scenic routes. “The Pig Trail,” a favorite roadway of game-going Razorback fans, is now an engineering challenge for the AHTD.

*(continued on page 10)*



**IT** IS EXPECTED TO TAKE **45,000 TONS OF ROCK** TO SHORE UP THE SLIDE AREA.

**A** DRIVE ON HIGHWAY 23 IN FRANKLIN COUNTY CAN BE AN ENJOYABLE TRIP ON MOST DAYS.

The traffic is minimal, the road leads through the woods in the Ozark National Forest, and as the road rises into the Ozark Mountains, the views across the valleys below can be gorgeous. In the fall, the route becomes a favorite of football fans headed to see the Razorbacks play in Fayetteville. Appropriately, for years the route on Highways 23 and 16 between Ozark and Fayetteville has been known as “The Pig Trail.”

The same steep mountain sides that provide such spectacular views for motorists can also provide challenges for AHTD engineers and crews. Such was the case in May and June when repeated heavy rainfalls saturated the ground and prompted a hill slide on Highway 23 north of the community of Cass. A slope supporting the roadbed on the east side of the highway began sliding and caused large cracks to form in the northbound and southbound travel lanes. The slide made travel on the highway impossible as 700 feet of roadway was at risk of sliding.

“We had ten inches of rain the week of May 7th and the highway began showing signs of some sliding and separating,” said Chad Adams, District Four Engineer. “An additional four inches of rain fell the next week causing continued sliding and the cracks in the pavement widened. We decided to close the highway on May 20th due to continual movement and worsening pavement conditions.”

The Department closed three miles of the roadway between Mulberry Mountain Lodge and Fly Gap Road. A detour route using Highway 21 to the east was immediately put into place.

Once closed, AHTD geotechnical engineers arrived on location to assess the damage to the roadway and the potential for further sliding. Crews immediately went to work to stabilize the southbound lane so that traffic could be put back on the route.

“We replaced a cross drain, filled

cracks in with premix, widened the road on the high side and felt the highway was passable by May 23rd,” Adams added.

Unfortunately, the next two days saw four more inches of rain fall causing the highway to settle and shift substantially leading to wide cracks. Crews went back to work in the area. Asphalt millings were used to plate the cracks and drop offs making the road passable on May 29th but not yet opened to traffic.

Again, more rains came through in the days that followed moving the slide significantly once more. By June 1st a typical car couldn’t pass through. Trees on either side of the road began the early stages of falling over.

“We had received an initial bid for repair from Geostabilization International but the changing conditions required them to work up a different proposal,” Adams added. “I contacted the Forest Service and obtained permission to remove the leaning trees on the uphill

side so that we could work safely in the area.”

With the approaching Wakarusa music festival bringing heavy traffic to the area, a rough passageway for emergency vehicles was made. The first week of June, crews began repairs that would allow the highway to open. Work to stabilize the southbound lane was completed on June 11th and one lane of the highway opened to traffic the next day. Portable traffic signals were installed on each end of the slide area to govern use of the one available lane.

Unbelievably, another five inches of

rain fell one week later wreaking havoc on the repair area and forcing the Department to close the roadway once again.

“We closed the roadway again on June 16th. Once the rains finally ended, we were able to examine the site and begin making plans for permanent repairs,” Adams added. “We developed extensive repair plans and worked with the Right of Way and Environmental Divisions to finalize aspects of those plans.”

The repair job was included in the AHTD’s July 21st bid letting. The low

bid was \$1.8 million submitted by Kesser International, Inc. of North Little Rock. It is expected to take 45,000 tons of rock to shore up the slide area.

The permanent fix is now underway and crews are working on improvements that will allow both lanes of the roadway to open to traffic by fall.

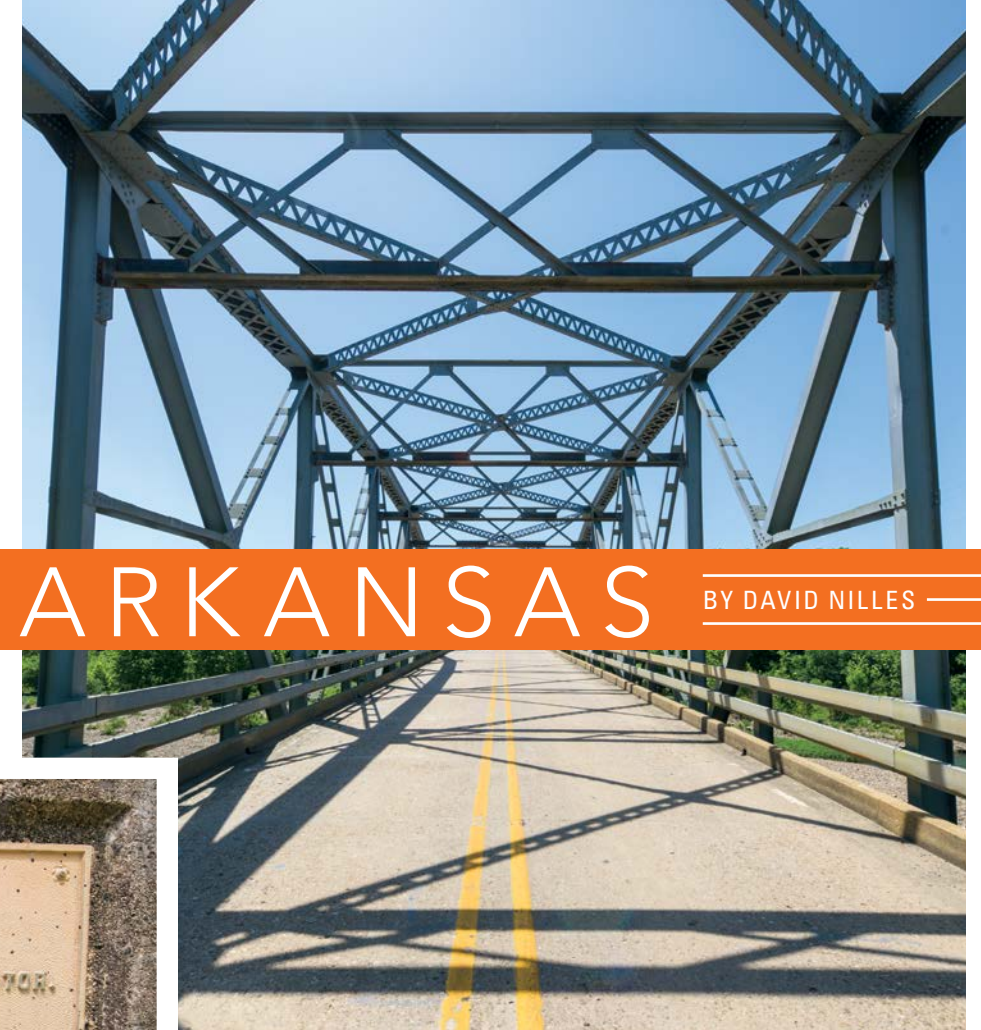
“I believe that the earliest the highway could be opened is mid- to late October,” Adams estimates.

With a little cooperation from Mother Nature allowing for drier weather, traffic will soon be able to enjoy the scenic drive on Highway 23 once again. ■

Highway 59 Bridge over Lee Creek

# UNIQUE BRIDGES ACROSS ARKANSAS

BY DAVID NILLES



*This is the fifth in a series of articles featuring unique bridges found across Arkansas. Some of them are historic, some feature unique construction and some still stand though they haven't seen traffic in ages. During 2015, we will take a look at many of those bridges in the pages of Arkansas Highways.*

**N**ORTH OF VAN BUREN, IN THE COMMUNITY OF NATURAL DAM, IS ONE OF ONLY THREE HISTORIC PENNSYLVANIA 'THROUGH STEEL TRUSS BRIDGES' REMAINING IN ARKANSAS. THE BRIDGE CARRIES TRAFFIC OVER LEE CREEK ON HIGHWAY 59 AS IT WINDS ITS WAY UP THE WESTERN BORDER OF THE STATE.

**THE LEE CREEK BRIDGE** was designed by the AHTD Bridge Engineering Division in the early 1930s under the general supervision of N.B. Garver. The construction contract was awarded to M.E. Gillioz Company of Monett, Missouri. It was completed in 1934. It is an excellent example of a through steel truss bridge and is indicative of the advancements the AHTD made in steel truss bridge design by the 1930s.

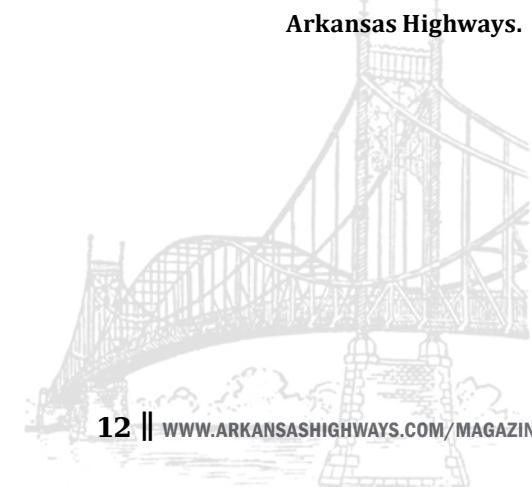
The bridge is 587 feet long with two main spans, each 140 feet in length. It still carries traffic today but because it is rated "functionally obsolete," there are plans to replace the bridge with a new one in late 2016.

Though being replaced, the historic bridge may find new life at Chaffee Crossing in Fort Smith. In November of last year, the Fort Chaffee Redevelopment Authority (FCRA) Board of Trustees voted to accept the bridge as a donation from the AHTD. The plan is to turn the bridge

into the centerpiece of the Chaffee Crossing Historic District and use it as a pedestrian bridge in and out of the Chaffee historic area.

"It will be unique," stated FCRA Executive Director Ivy Owen to the local media. "There will be nothing else like it that I've seen in the base redevelopment program."

After carrying traffic for over 80 years, the Lee Creek Bridge appears destined to have a promising future in a new capacity at Fort Chaffee. ■





(L. to R. Front Row) Jordan Bittle, Sharon Hawkins, Lydell Harris, Greg Cullum, Andrea Zekis and Doug Beaty.  
(L. to R. Back Row) Kathy Gunderman, Terry Vittitow, Ashley Kupillas, Tim Mahan and Don Dailey.

## It's All In the Details

# Mapping

# THE STATE OF ARKANSAS

BY DAVID NILLES

**T**HE SPRING AND EARLY SUMMER MONTHS ARE A BUSY TIME FOR SHARON HAWKINS, SECTION HEAD OF GIS & MAPPING, AND HER STAFF. That's the time of year she and her coworkers are hard at work at the AHTD Central Office putting the final touches on the annual Arkansas Highway Map. But there is much more to the GIS & Mapping Section than just the State Highway Map. While it is the most widely known map they produce, it is probably not the most important function that the section performs for the Department. It's a good starting point for this article as we learn more about the role of GIS & Mapping.

### THE ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY MAP

Imagine having to produce a map that includes all 16,416 miles of Arkansas' highways and 1,364 of the State's cities and towns. There are also county lines, national forests, State Parks, rivers and lakes to be pinpointed as well. The list of details is long.

"All 11 staff members in the GIS & Mapping Section work on the State Highway Map in some capacity," says Hawkins. "Those most involved include Lydell Harris, Jordan Bittle, Kathy Gunderman and me."

"Working on the map is an entire year's effort," says Harris. "All throughout the year I'm posting changes that come in on our highway system but it really starts getting hot and heavy around January."

This is the 86th year that the highway map has been produced. The first one appeared in 1929. Putting the map together in 2015 is done much differently than it was 86 years ago. The staff has the help of a computer program now.

"I'm using MicroStation and CAD script," states Harris. "When I started we were still drawing maps by hand. It has all changed so much with the new technology. It is not only faster, it is easier because you are not working with a number of layers. It's all right there on the screen. One day, I wonder if the computer will just start drawing the maps for us on its own!"

Putting last year's map beside the new 2015-2016 map and comparing the two, you can see there are changes. In fact, there are 63 of them.

"The look of the map has changed significantly this year," Harris adds. "We've taken off the yellow color that was used on the city limits and added different colors. All of the border states used to be the same color and we made those different colors this year."

Jordan Bittle adds, "We spent a great deal of time selecting all of the new colors that were added. For example, the national forests used to just have a border around them. This year those borders are filled in."

"Believe it or not, picking out the colors is probably one of the hardest parts of our jobs," Hawkins adds.

One of the newer changes in recent years has been the addition of QR codes on the map.

"We've been using those codes for about three years now," Harris states. "The one on the front side of the map goes directly to the AHTD's webpage."

One of the final changes is to decide what photograph to use on the front cover of the map.

"Administration makes suggestions to Rusty Hubbard, AHTD photographer, regarding certain areas. Especially areas of the State that haven't been represented on the cover in a long time," Hawkins adds.

Once this year's Highway Map was completed, it was sent to the printer where one million copies were produced for a cost of \$111,000. That supply will last the entire year until it is time to produce next year's map. If any maps are left over at year's end, Don Young, Section Head of Reprographics, makes every effort to contact schools, colleges, libraries, local governments to distribute the remainder.

*(continued on page 16)*





(L. to R.) Greg Cullum and Jordan Bittle print a map of the Interstate 69 Corridor.

IN ADDITION TO THE ARKANSAS HIGHWAY MAP, THE GIS & MAPPING SECTION IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PRODUCING DETAILED MAPS OF ALL **75 COUNTIES** AND **501 CITIES** IN ARKANSAS.

Many of the schools use the maps to teach students map-reading skills.

How have advancements in technology resulted in a change in the demand for a printed map?

“Requests have seen a dip especially with the ability to navigate a map with smart phones and GPS. However, there are many of those that still love to receive a paper map,” says Hawkins.

“Maps are distributed to Arkansas Welcome Centers, our District Offices, hospitals, schools and libraries. There are some that don’t know that the State Highway Map comes from the Highway Department each year and they don’t know that it’s free. When people call needing directions, we ask them if they have one and tell them how to get it so they can have that resource with them all the time.”

**COUNTY AND CITY MAPS**

In addition to the Arkansas Highway Map, the GIS & Mapping section is responsible for producing detailed maps of

all 75 counties and 501 cities in Arkansas. The county and city maps are much more detailed than the State map and show such things as local roads, gravel roads, railroad tracks, creeks, schools, churches and hospitals. The list goes on as to what is included. Currently, those maps are produced in Microstation.

“The county and city maps offer the level of detail that is needed for planning purposes around the Department, says Hawkins.

In addition, the county and city maps are used throughout the Department so that other Divisions and Districts can have base maps to show their data on. Average Daily Traffic Count maps produced by the System Information and Research Division are a good example.

“That division uses our county route and section base maps to produce their Traffic Count maps,” states Hawkins. “We make sure our base maps are up to date and they are able to overlay their traffic count information on top of that for the maps they use in their office.”

“The city maps show much more details than the county maps including street names so there is that much more work going into them,” states Kathy Gunderman.

“Small city maps may only take a day to update, whereas a larger city map, such as Little Rock, needs our attention for a few weeks to make sure everything is correct.”

“We might just need to add a fire station to one map and then turn around and have a map that needs a whole new subdivision added,” states Jordan Bittle. “Or, you never know when a city will expand its area beyond the current map it’s on so we often have to make more room as the cities get bigger.”

Arkansas Highway Maps, County and City Maps are all available to the public by contacting the AHTD Map Sales Office at 501-569-2444, or by ordering online at [IDriveArkansas.com](http://IDriveArkansas.com).

**MAPS THAT TELL A STORY**

The GIS & Mapping Section also produces maps in other formats besides Microstation for use in the Department’s two GIS platforms, GeoMedia and ArcGIS. Many of those maps begin as tabular data that is transformed into a map format so that by looking at that particular map, staff can analyze different aspects of transportation on our highways.

“A good example of taking data and representing it visually is when we were asked to produce maps that showed vehicle crashes before and after a high friction surface treatment was laid down,” Douglas Beaty comments. “We receive the crash location data from the Traffic Safety office in a spreadsheet. Then we map out the crash locations based on their county, route, section and log mile information. The crashes are normally styled according to their crash type and severity. The data had more of an impact when it was presented visually



“I’M USING MICROSTATION AND CAD SCRIPT. WHEN I STARTED WE WERE STILL **DRAWING MAPS BY HAND**. IT HAS ALL CHANGED SO MUCH WITH THE NEW TECHNOLOGY.”

— Lydell Harris, Cartographer Supervisor

on a map and easily displayed the difference in the number of crashes.”

“There are many situations where that comes in handy,” adds Don Dailey. “We’ve worked on maps for Multimodal and Project Planning and for Traffic Safety. They do a lot of studies and use maps to help tell their story or display their information. They’ll use those maps for various presentations to communicate visually to other Departments what the studies recommendations are.

“We’re not the only ones at the Department that make these types of maps,” says Hawkins. “We have many counterparts around the Department that range from experts to beginners when it comes to presenting their data on a map. Environmental, Program Management, State Aid, System Information and Research, and Maintenance are a few examples of other Divisions/Districts that display their data on maps on a regular basis.”

**IDRIVE ARKANSAS**

Look to the Internet and the **IDrive Arkansas.com** site, and you will find GIS & Mapping’s involvement there as well. Maps on the IDrive site are constantly changing and that requires constant updating by and attention from Greg Cullum, Don Dailey and Sharon Hawkins.



“We’ve been working with the IDrive system since October of 2013,” says Cullum. “Right now, it is built using Google Maps. We develop a lot of the data that goes on the site. For example, we will receive an email from the Construction Division regarding a road project and Don will plot or remove construction zones displayed on the IDrive map accordingly.”

The section works closely with the Public Information Office to make sure that IDrive continues to run smoothly and helps to develop new layers and methods so that Arkansas’ travelers have a good source to know before they go!

**MAINTAINING CITY LIMITS**

It’s the role of the GIS & Mapping Section to also be the official keeper of information when it comes to maintaining city limits across the State as well.

Terry Vittitow is the city limit expert. “We get updates from the Secretary of State’s Office about annexing new

(continued on page 18)

areas to different cities across the State, Vittitow says. "We take a copy of the legal description of an annexation and I will plot it into our mapping system. I make sure we have the most up to date information of all annexations from the legal descriptions we have. We will receive calls from communities needing to find out when a particular area of their city was annexed. We are lucky to have filing cabinets full of all of those historic legal descriptions so we have that resource to fall back on."

Thankfully, the Section doesn't have to handle all the cities. The cities in Benton, Washington, Faulkner, Pulaski and Saline Counties are plotted and sent to the Department from those areas. In addition, individual cities such as Batesville, Hope, Harrison, Fort Smith, Conway and Texarkana also send their plotted city limits to the Department on a regular basis.

### ALL PUBLIC ROADS LINEAR REFERENCING SYSTEM

A new Federal requirement is about to change the way DOTs across the country do things when it comes to referencing locations on a map.

"We are coming up on a big change for the GIS & Mapping Section," Hawkins says about the new All Public Roads Linear Referencing System. "A Federal requirement now states that all DOTs across the country have to keep up with all public roads. It's a system FHWA calls ARNOLD. It's very much like an addressing system and it is a very important tool that will be used for pinpointing locations not just on the Highway System but on all roads in Arkansas. Nobody realizes it yet, but ARNOLD will be driving many of our processes. It will be our official record of where everything is along Arkansas' roadways. We will be overseeing the process here at the AHTD but we are involving all of our local governments to

Sharon Hawkins,  
GIS & Mapping  
Section Head



update their information for us for this big system.

We have teamed up with the Arkansas GIS Office and local county offices to accomplish this goal. The hope is that all roads will be up to date all the time and everyone will use this referencing system to locate specific locations. We will no longer have to keep up with data ourselves for our maps, we will have the Arkansas GIS Office and all these local governments behind us and helping us throughout the year. The entire State will have one file for referencing. For example, it is going to be used by emergency vehicles for 911 purposes. We are already utilizing it in our State highway system and throughout the AHTD to identify where crashes happen and for any kind of maintenance that needs to be done out on the highway. Everything lives by that county, route, section and log mile.

It is in the works and we are scheduled to be completed with the State highway system by the end of the year. The all public roads part will be done by January

2017. We already have 20 counties that have been completed."

The new system will include dual carriage way (or two lines for log direction and anti-log direction on divided highways) as well as paved and unpaved attributes for all local roads in the State.

### CHANGING WITH THE TIMES

From paper maps with QR codes, to monitoring live traffic flow with IDrive maps, to the new ARNOLD system, the art of mapping is definitely changing with the times and technology.

"One of the best things about GIS & Mapping is, you can't ever get bored working in here," Hawkins concludes. "There is something different happening every day. You come in and you think you are going to be doing one thing, and usually it winds up being an entirely different thing that needs to be done."

It's all part of the Section's role to give the AHTD staff, those they work with and the driving public an accurate look at Arkansas' transportation system. ■



# AHTD Hosts AASHTO Construction Conference

BY DAVID NILLES

AHTD Director Scott Bennett welcomes conference attendees.



Transportation officials from across the country converged on Little Rock, August 9th – 14th, to attend the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Official's (AASHTO) Subcommittee on Construction Conference.

The Subcommittee on Construction (SOC) is the national voice and leading source of guidance for transportation construction.

Approximately 165 attendees representing 40 states spent the week participating in panel discussions, presentations and on-site tours during the event.

AHTD Director Scott Bennett welcomed the group to the Natural State and noted many of the national corporations, retail products and nationally-known celebrities that call Arkansas home. Also welcoming the group on the first day was AHTD Deputy Director and Chief Engineer Emanuel Banks. The opening session featured comments from SOC Chairman Malcolm Dougherty of CalTrans; King Gee, Director of Engineering

and Technical Services for AASHTO; and Angel Correa, Acting Division Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration, Arkansas Division.

Several AHTD staff members made presentations during the week including Keli Wylie, Connecting Arkansas Program (CAP) Administrator, who provided an overview of the CAP Program; Mark Headley, District Six Engineer, who did a presentation on the construction of the Big Rock Interchange; Emanuel Banks, who moderated a Computers and Technology session; Steven Thomas, Assistant Division Head of Program Management, who participated on a panel discussion on E-Construction; and Josh Seagraves, Section Head of Environmental Studies, who did a presentation on Arkansas T & E Species and Project Compliance.

Technical Tours were taken to the Caterpillar Motor Grader Assembly plant in North Little Rock and the Murray Lock and Dam Hydroelectric Power Plant on the Arkansas River.

Next year's SOC Conference will be held in Big Sky, Montana. ■



AHTD Deputy Director and Chief Engineer Emanuel Banks speaks at the opening session.



# Ribbon Cut On Little Rock's BIG ROCK Interchange

BY DAVID NILLES

**T**he Interstate 430-630 "Big Rock" Interchange in west Little Rock is now completed and open to traffic. A ribbon cutting was held on July 8th and traffic flowed through the entire interchange just a few days later.

It took three contract phases to complete the project, the first phase beginning in January of 2009. Plans for the modifications were announced in 2004.

"It's amazing to see what has transpired at this interchange over the past six years," stated Little Rock Mayor Mark Stodola. "I am proud to be standing at one of the most remarkable construction projects ever in this city."

Including construction and other related items, the total cost of the modifications to the Big Rock Interchange was approximately \$150 million. All of the work done while approximately 100,000 vehicles went through the project area on Interstates 430 and 630 each day.

"This project created thousands of jobs and has been a tremendous boost to our city's economy," Stodola added. "It's critical to have connectivity of citizens to our capital city. It's good for our city, our citizens and, most importantly, it allows us to be safe."

"A lot of work went into this interchange," stated AHTD Director Scott Bennett. "Thanks to everyone involved in its planning, design, construction and inspection. We are very happy to see its completion."

Bennett thanked Highway Department officials as well as community and business leaders for their support of the project during its planning and throughout the construction phase. ■



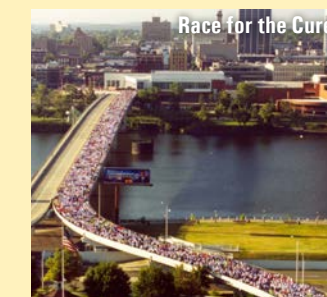
The Museum of Automobiles on Petit Jean Mountain  
Photo Courtesy: AR Parks & Tourism

## OUT & ABOUT CALENDAR OF EVENTS AROUND THE STATE

As you travel Arkansas over the next two months, consider checking out some of the listed events. Our State is full of interesting things to do, no matter which highway you find yourself driving. For additional event listings, check [Arkansas.com/events](http://Arkansas.com/events).

- \* **2ND ANNUAL LITTLE ROCK BACONFEST:** Bacon Fest features a 5K run with Bacon Stations, live music, bacon-themed cooking contests, bacon eating contest, beer garden, merchant booths, a kids' zone with inflatables and lots of tasty bacon concessions. Supports the Arkansas State Fair Scholarship Program. • SEPTEMBER 19
- \* **PETIT JEAN 18TH ANNUAL FALL SWAP MEET & CAR SHOW:** Petit Jean Mountain comes alive with vintage cars, auto parts, antiques, arts & crafts and a little something for everyone. Open Car Show held on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. • SEPTEMBER 23 -26
- \* **MUSICFEST EL DORADO:** The six-time Arkansas Festival of the Year returns to Union Square. Over thirty acts perform including 3 Doors Down, Dwight Yoakam, Kid N Play, Jason D. Williams, Will Hoge, Sleepy La Beef, Whiskey Myers, New Cupid, Barrett Baber and more. The festival also includes a Kids World, arts & crafts and food vendors along with an array of boutiques and dining establishments that make Union Square so unique. • OCTOBER 2 - 3
- \* **SUSAN G. KOMEN RACE FOR THE CURE:** The Race for the Cure is a chance to come together to honor those who are surviving breast cancer and remember those who have lost the fight. Participation in this event helps provide significant funds to find the cure for breast cancer and bring awareness to the local community. • OCTOBER 10

<b>SEPTEMBER 19</b> *	2 <sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL LITTLE ROCK BACONFEST State Fairgrounds Little Rock, AR
<b>SEPTEMBER 19 - 20</b>	HOT SPRINGS BLUES & BBQ FESTIVAL Oaklawn Hot Springs, AR
<b>SEPTEMBER 23 - 26</b> *	PETIT JEAN 18 <sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL FALL SWAP MEET & OPEN CAR SHOW Museum of Automobiles Morrilton, AR
<b>SEPTEMBER 26</b>	FALL OZARK DEMOLITION DERBY Parsons Stadium Springdale, AR
<b>OCTOBER 2 - 3</b> *	MUSICFEST EL DORADO Union Square El Dorado, AR
<b>OCTOBER 7 - 10</b>	30 <sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL KING BISQUIT BLUES FESTIVAL Cherry Street Helena-West Helena, AR
<b>OCTOBER 10</b> *	22 <sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL SUSAN G. KOMEN ARKANSAS RACE FOR THE CURE Downtown Little Rock, AR
<b>OCTOBER 25</b>	VIENNA BOYS' CHOIR IN CONCERT Wildwood Park for the Arts Little Rock, AR



# 2015 ROADCHECK:

## Making Our Highways a Safer Place

BY DAVID NILLES



Corporal Chad Heath reviews a driver's paperwork.



<https://vimeo.com/ahtd/roadcheck>  
**CLICK HERE**  
 FOR VIDEO CONTENT



Corporal Fidel Caballero scrutinizes the tires of a commercial vehicle.

Bickerstaff noted “The most common violation we see on the vehicles is a brake problem or lighting. Our driver violations usually have to do with hours of service and the amount of time these drivers are spending on the road.”

There’s a limit to how many hours they can drive without pulling off the road for rest.

A North American Standard Level 1 inspection takes just over an hour if there are no defects. With defects, it can take two or three hours. Drivers are required to provide items such as their license, endorsements, medical card and hours-of-service documentation, and are checked for seat belt usage and the use of alcohol and/or drugs. The vehicle inspection includes checking items such

as the braking system, coupling devices, exhaust system, frame, fuel system, lights, safe loading, steering mechanism, drive line, suspension, tires, van and open-top trailer bodies, wheels and rims, windshield wipers, and emergency exits on buses. Defects must be corrected before a vehicle is allowed back on the highway.

Each year, International Roadcheck places special emphasis on a category of violations. The special emphasis for International Roadcheck 2015 was cargo securement. The proper loading and securing of cargo on vehicles is a matter of public safety.

This is the 28th year that the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) has coordinated the event across

North America. It is the largest targeted enforcement program on commercial motor vehicles in the world. A total of 10,000 CVSA-certified local, State, provincial and federal inspectors in jurisdictions across North America participated in the event.

In addition to the Roadcheck location on Interstate 30 in Hope, inspectors were also stationed on Highway 65/82 just outside of Lake Village.

As the three-day event came to a close, a total of 619 inspections had been done in Arkansas.

“Just by looking at the number of inspections and violations, I would say that Roadcheck has been a success this year in making our roads safer,” Bickerstaff concluded. ■

**T**hey came rolling off of Interstate 30 and into the Weigh Station at Hope, one right after another. Eighteen-wheelers and other commercial vehicles of every kind, ready to participate in the 2015 International Roadcheck.

Lieutenant Jeff Bickerstaff of the Arkansas Highway Police has been participating in Roadcheck for ten years, five as an inspector and five as a supervisor.

“This program is extremely effective,” he states. “It allows us to put all of our resources into one area... motor carrier inspections on these vehicles traveling up and down our highways.”

Though all commercial vehicles are required to roll through the checkpoint at Hope, only random vehicles were selected for inspection.

“We are averaging 220 truck inspections a day, so over the entire period we will inspect between 600 and 650 vehicles,” Bickerstaff adds.

When inspectors find a problem with a vehicle, it has to be addressed. Forty-eight hours into the event, 114 trucks had been placed out of service at Hope due to violations, as had 27 drivers.



Corporal Raunona Clemons inspects the underside of an 18-wheeler.



The scene from Grand View Vista on Highway 88.



Kansas City Southern Historic Depot



Mena Art Gallery



# WEEKEND ROAD TRIP:

# TALIMENA BYWAY

BY DAVID NILLES

**T**HIS MONTH'S WEEKEND ROAD TRIP TAKES US TO WESTERN ARKANSAS AND THE OUACHITA MOUNTAINS. WE'RE TRAVELING TO ONE OF OUR NATION'S NEWEST NATIONAL SCENIC HIGHWAYS, THE TALIMENA NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY, AND SEEING ALL THERE IS TO DO ALONG THE WAY.

First stop heading into Polk County is the town of **Mena**<sup>1</sup>. Mena serves as the eastern gateway to the Byway.

A trip into Mena should begin at the **Kansas City Southern Historic Depot**<sup>2</sup>. Completely restored in 1987, the depot serves as a museum with an exhibition of the local area's history inside. There is also a room showcasing memorabilia from the popular radio series Lum n' Abner which aired from the 1930s to the 1950s. The Depot is located at 524 Sherwood Avenue and is an excellent

place to get information about the area. Don't miss the shops across the street when you leave.

For a look at the works of art of local artists in the area, visit the **Mena Art Gallery**<sup>3</sup>. The gallery has recently been remodeled and presents over a dozen exhibitions each year by local and regional artists. Exhibitions this fall will include a photography exhibit by Greg Disch as well as a juried competition. The gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday at 607 Mena Street.

More works by regional and national artists can be found just down the street at **American Artisans Eatery & Gallery**<sup>4</sup>. In addition to impressive works of art in the gallery, visitors can eat lunch in their restaurant. Select from excellent homemade soups, salads and sandwiches. They're open Wednesday through Saturday at 615 Mena Street.

For a touch of nostalgia, drive by **Mike's Place**<sup>5</sup>. Locally owned by car enthusiasts, this 1928 restored Esso station houses a wide variety of Petroleum memorabilia, neon dealer signs, gas pumps and has classic automobiles ranging from modern Corvettes to old Cadillacs. It's worth swinging by the station at 423 Mena

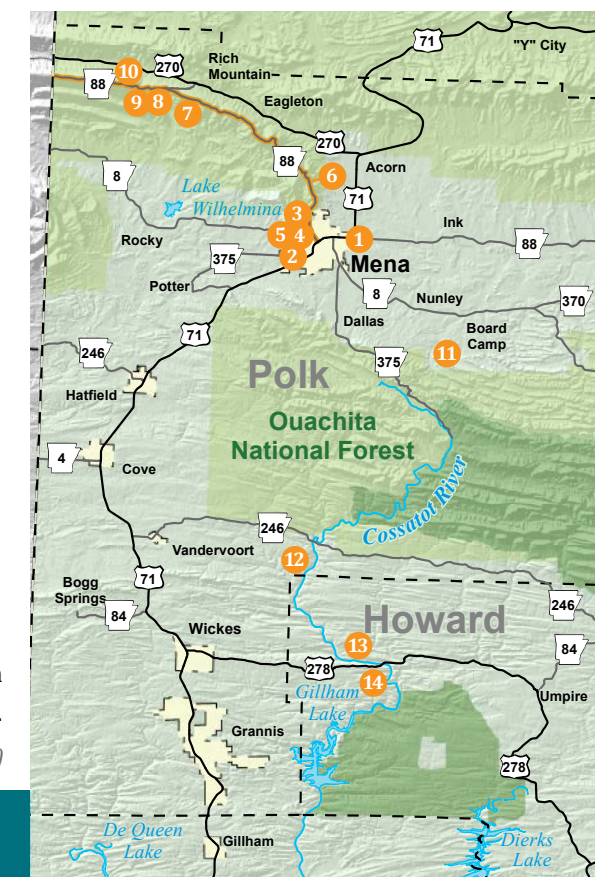
Street to peek in the windows. A vintage Studebaker dealership sits right behind the Esso station and has more road history from the past.

After seeing the sights of Mena, it's time to head west. **The Talimena National Scenic Byway**<sup>6</sup> follows Highway 88 west out of town. The 54-mile Byway travels the crest of Rich Mountain and Winding Stair Mountain in the Ouachita National Forest and the views are spectacular! The Byway follows one of the highest mountain ranges between the Appalachians and the Rockies and along the way there is lodging, picnicking, camping and hiking trails. Vistas are strategically located along the Byway to give travelers

a place to pull over and enjoy the many panoramic views of the Ouachita Mountains. Keep your eyes open for the **Grand View Vista**<sup>7</sup>, a favorite to travelers. The Byway begins in Arkansas and continues westward into Oklahoma and can take anywhere from an hour to all day, depending on how long you stop at each of the vistas.

Sitting atop Rich Mountain on the Byway is **Queen Wilhelmina State Park**<sup>8</sup>, 13 miles west of Mena. The park is a great place to spend some time taking in the spectacular views on top of the second tallest mountain in Arkansas. A must see at the park is the Queen Wilhelmina Lodge. The lodge reopened in July after a \$9.6 million major renovation.

*(continued on page 26)*



It offers 40 guest rooms and the Queen's Restaurant. Park campsites, picnic tables, hiking trails and overlooks are just a short walk from the lodge. Next to the lodge is **Mountain Glory Station**<sup>9</sup>. Hop aboard their seasonal mini-train for a trip around the park and play some mini-golf. Be sure to visit their ice cream parlor for a treat while you enjoy the views in the area.

A few miles beyond the State Park, the Scenic Byway crosses into Oklahoma and continues as Highway 1. The Byway comes to its western end just north of Talimena State Park. For more detailed information about the Scenic Byway, visit [www.TalimenaScenicDrive.com](http://www.TalimenaScenicDrive.com).

If hiking is part of the agenda, the **Ouachita National Recreation Trail**<sup>10</sup> winds its way through this area. This is the longest trail in the Ouachita National Forest spanning 192 miles across its entire length. The trail begins at Talimena State Park in Oklahoma and continues

eastward all the way to near Perryville, Arkansas. A section of the trail crosses over Rich Mountain. There is a trailhead on the Talimena Scenic Drive just past the west end of the Queen Wilhelmina State Park campground.

For those that prefer to do their wilderness exploring on an ATV, the **Wolf Pen Gap Trail Complex**<sup>11</sup> is your destination. Fun and adventure wait for all-terrain vehicle riders on this network of trails that explore the national forest around Mena. There are 35 miles of loop trails leading through woods, creeks, mud and high mountain vistas and four different trailheads. The closest one to Mena is the western trailhead just nine miles from town. Take Highway 8 south out of town and then turn onto Highway 375 and watch for the sign.

Coming down from the mountains, just 40 miles south of Mena is the **Cossatot River State Park Conservation Area**<sup>12</sup>.

The 5,401-acre area is a haven for white water rapids enthusiasts. The park stretches for 12 miles along the wild and scenic Cossatot River, Arkansas' premier whitewater experience known as the best whitewater float stream in mid-America. In fact, the Native American name Cossatot means "skull crusher." The Cossatot forms **Cossatot Falls**<sup>13</sup>, a rugged and rocky canyon that challenges the most experienced canoeists and kayakers with its Class IV and V rapids. When the water level is normal, the river's rapids are usually considered Class II-III whitewater. Outdoor lovers can swim, fish and float through small rapids, from pool to pool, as they relax and enjoy the Cossatot. It's a favorite place for kayakers, canoeists and rafters.

The park extends from the Ouachita National Forest, near the Highway 246 Bridge on the north edge, to the Corps of Engineer property on Gillham Lake,

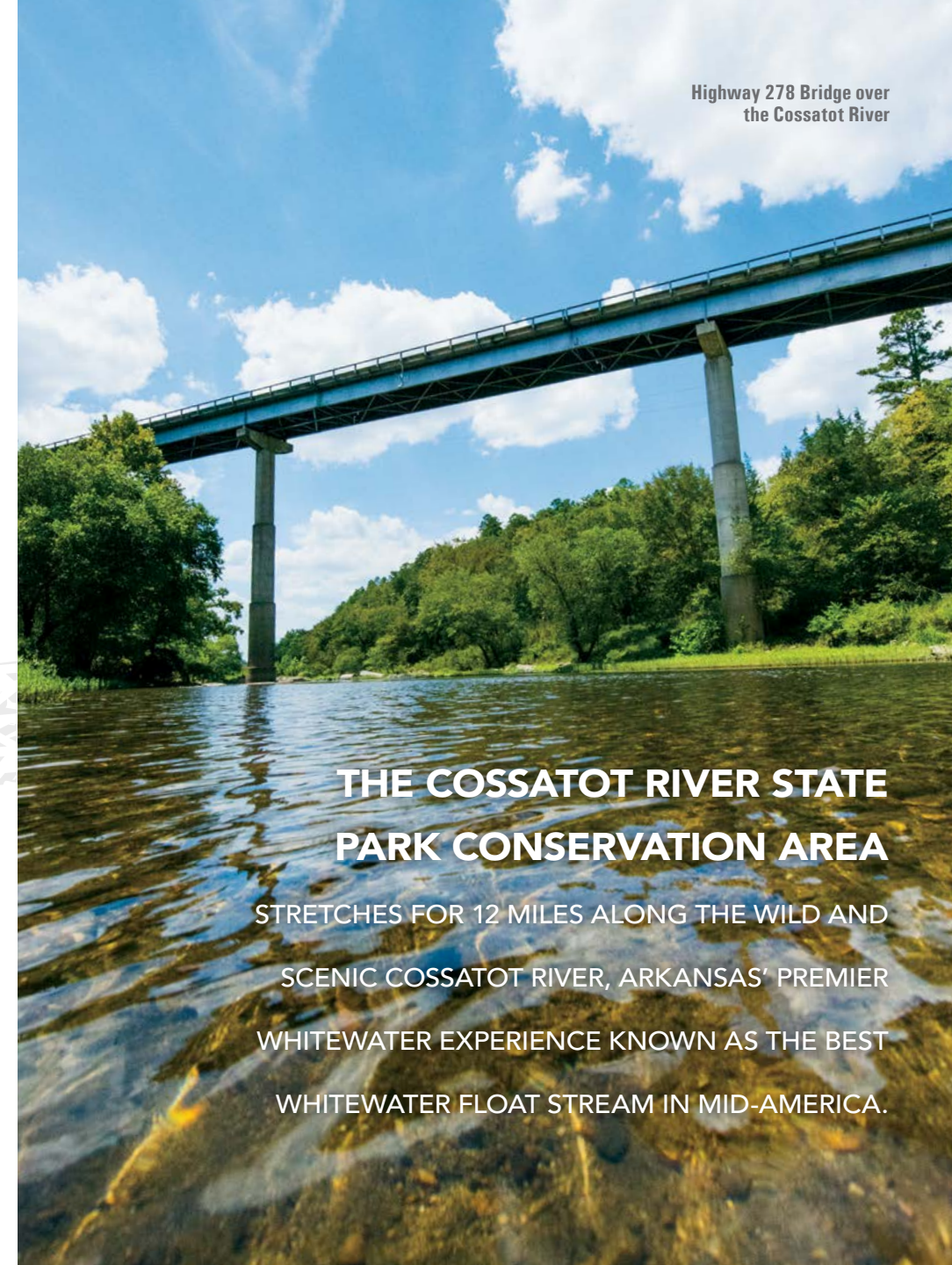
south of Highway 278. The area is most accessible at the two highway bridges and at Cossatot Falls. The park's Brushy Creek Recreation Area at the Highway 246 Bridge offers day-use facilities including picnic sites, a nature trail, restrooms and river access.

Be sure to visit the impressive **Visitor Information/Education Center**<sup>14</sup> on Highway 278, east of Wickes, where the highway crosses the river. The center features an exhibit area, a wildlife viewing area and information kiosks.

Camping is available at several sites and four hiking trails wait for those who want to explore the impressive wilderness in the area.

From mountain tops high above sea level to canyons featuring whitewater rapids, this area of western Arkansas is a place full of adventure and wonder, and a place you will likely return to after you make your first visit. ■

Highway 278 Bridge over the Cossatot River



## THE COSSATOT RIVER STATE PARK CONSERVATION AREA

STRETCHES FOR 12 MILES ALONG THE WILD AND SCENIC COSSATOT RIVER, ARKANSAS' PREMIER WHITEWATER EXPERIENCE KNOWN AS THE BEST WHITEWATER FLOAT STREAM IN MID-AMERICA.



The Glory Train



Queen Wilhelmina Lodge



Cossatot Falls during low water is a great time to use this area for a refreshing swim.



Cossatot Falls during high water is the perfect time for experienced kayakers to test their skills on the rapids. Photo Courtesy AR Parks & Tourism



Wolf Pen Gap Trail Complex Photo Courtesy AR Parks & Tourism

# ON THE MAP

SPENDING TIME WITH AN ARKANSAS HIGHWAY MAP CAN BE INTERESTING. THE FOLLOWING IS THE NAME OF A HISTORIC LOCATION IN ARKANSAS. HAVE YOU EVER VISITED HERE?

**U.S. POST OFFICE AND COURTHOUSE, TEXARKANA**

**M**OST PEOPLE KNOW THAT TEXARKANA IS "TWICE AS NICE." THAT'S BECAUSE IT STRADDLES THE STATE LINE BETWEEN TEXAS AND ARKANSAS. Highway 71 (State Line Avenue) divides the city into two separate municipalities. In fact, the highway follows the border between the two states for approximately 11 miles. Whether you are in Texas or Arkansas depends on which side of the highway you are traveling on.

Follow Highway 71 into downtown Texarkana and you'll find the highway and its path run straight into the U.S. Post Office and Courthouse. The building interrupts the typical street grid because, like the highway itself, the courthouse sits right on the State line. No other Federal building in the country occupies two states.

Witt, Seibert & Halsey of Texarkana, in association with Perkins, Chatten & Hammond of Chicago, were responsible for the building's design, with James A. Wetmore serving as the acting supervising architect. The structure was built in the Beaux Arts architectural style. Its base features Texas pink granite and its walls Arkansas gray limestone. Construction was completed in 1933.

The building sits symmetrical with the State line and is the most prominent structure in the downtown area. Because it sits on the State line, the building features two different zip codes, one for Arkansas and the other for Texas. ■



## Highway 549 Opens at CHAFFEE CROSSING

Governor Asa Hutchinson



**A** ribbon was cut in Barling on July 14th on a segment of future Interstate 49. Governor Asa Hutchinson joined local dignitaries, Highway Commissioners and AHTD Director Scott Bennett to open six miles of what will be called Highway 549 for now, but will be a part of Interstate 49 in the future.

"This is an exclamation point for economic development not only for the Fort Smith region, but also for the State of Arkansas and the entire country," Governor Hutchinson stated.

The new segment of highway stretches through Chaffee Crossing from Highway 22 in Barling westward to Highway 71 on the south side of Fort Smith.

Scott Bennett credited the Fort Chaffee Redevelopment Authority (FCRA) for being able to move quickly on the construction of the roadway because it provided 45 acres of right-of-way for the project. He pointed out the new development in the area.

"This really shows you the role of transportation in economic development, but it's only a small part of it," he commented. "There's more to be done."

Future construction on Interstate 49 in the area will include a section from Highway 22 northward over the Arkansas River to Interstate 40.

"Every step going forward is progress, and it's what we need here in Arkansas and in the nation," Governor Hutchinson added.

FCRA Executive Director Ivy Owen stated, "This day is a hugely historic one, this region will benefit from this project's completion for years to come."

Construction began on the \$130 million project in 2006. Once completed, Interstate 49 will extend 1,700 miles between New Orleans, Louisiana, and Winnipeg, Canada. That includes the section of highway opened on the 14th that is part of that future roadway. ■



The ribbon is cut, opening Highway 549 to traffic in July.



<https://vimeo.com/ahtd/chaffeecrossing>

**CLICK HERE**  
FOR VIDEO CONTENT

BY DAVID NILLES

## KEEPING WATCH OVER THE

# BOBBY HOPPER TUNNEL

**T**

HE  
BOBBY  
HOPPER TUNNEL,

on Interstate 49 in northwest Arkansas, has the distinction of being the only tunnel on Arkansas' highway system.

The twin-bore, four-lane tunnel, named after former Highway Commissioner Bobby Hopper, opened to traffic in 1999. It carries 20,000 vehicles per day through 1,600 feet of the Boston Mountains in Washington County. Supervising the tunnel and keeping it in top condition is the job of AHTD personnel at the District Four Headquarters in Fort Smith. It's here that staff keeps a watchful eye on activity at the tunnel using an extensive video system. As needed, District Four dispatches "tunnel expert" Gary Dewitt or personnel from the Area Maintenance Crew in Mountainburg when something needs attention on site.



District Four Engineer Chad Adams and Dewitt, an AHTD Electrical, Plumbing & Mechanical Repairer, sat down with Arkansas Highways editor David Nilles recently to give an insight into what is involved in keeping the Natural State's tunnel open to traffic.

**NILLES:** *Is it safe to say that the District Four Headquarters serves as the command post when it comes to overseeing the tunnel?*

**ADAMS:** Yes, we monitor the tunnel from here using dual, independent computer systems and a wall of monitors on our own independent fiber network. In having independent systems, we are much less likely to lose total monitoring of the tunnel. We are able to see live video of the tunnel using twelve different cameras. Eight of those are located inside the tunnel and four are outside, two on each end. We can rotate, tilt and zoom those cameras to see in any direction. It's an effective way to see if there are any incidents occurring. All of the cameras are recording on a continuous cycle and we are able to review video for up to ten days if necessary.

Our front office staff keeps watch on the video monitors during the day, and at night, we have several guards who monitor activity.

**NILLES:** *Whose role is it to be on site at the tunnel when something needs attention?*

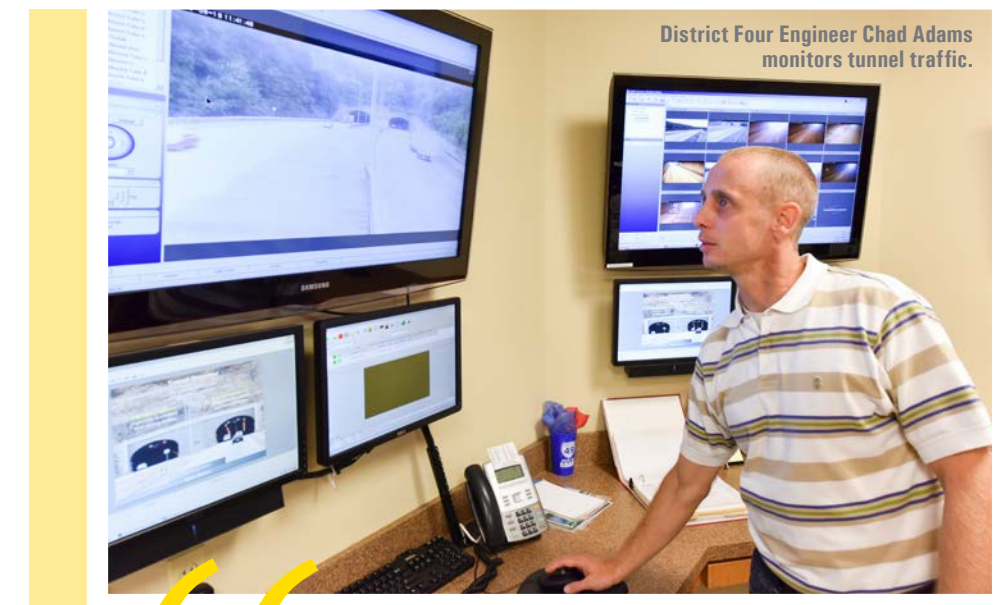
**ADAMS:** Gary Dewitt really is our tunnel expert. He has monitored the tunnel for several years and does the job very well. He checks it in the morning when he arrives at the office and in the evening before he goes home. He's looking for any alarms that have been set off or anything that has been triggered that we might need to check on. In addition to Gary, the personnel at the Area Maintenance Headquarters in Mountainburg are called upon to take care of typical, routine highway maintenance through the tunnel. They are also the ones

that monitor the system on site when communications between the tunnel and the District Headquarters are interrupted.

**DEWITT:** When I'm on site at the tunnel, I do a walk through and check to see that everything is running properly. We also do a more extensive monthly check on the entire system.

**ADAMS:** There's a list of items that Gary checks weekly. Other items are checked monthly. In addition, we have inspectors that do a thorough inspection of the structural elements of the tunnel every two years. They make a report of any deficiencies that they observe.

There are a lot of computer components that are communicating with one another. There are sensors in the tunnel that are communicating back to the control system. Those sensors control when the fans go on, when the lights go up, they even detect when a door is opened. On a day to day basis, the system is self-monitoring. If everything is functioning the way it is supposed to, we don't have to be too involved. The fans will kick on, the lights will do what they're supposed to do. We have to make sure that everything is operating the way it is supposed to though. When those things don't work properly, Gary has to investigate and determine if



District Four Engineer Chad Adams monitors tunnel traffic.

We are able to see **LIVE VIDEO OF THE TUNNEL** using twelve different cameras. We can rotate, tilt and zoom those cameras to see in any direction.

**NILLES:** *What kind of routine maintenance is involved in keeping the tunnel in top shape?*

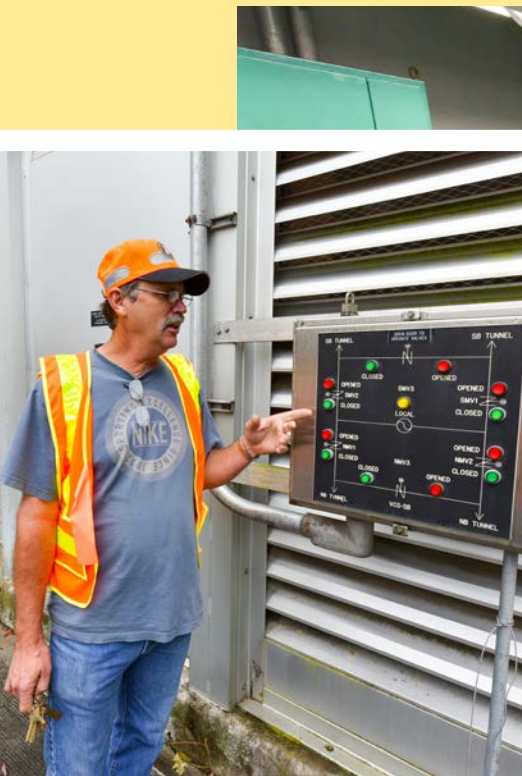
**ADAMS:** There are a number of things we watch, but the biggest issue is corrosion inside the tunnel due to the chemicals used to treat the highways during inclement weather. We also deal with electrical components. Those involve keeping the computers operational and in top shape.

the electronic components can be repaired or if they have to be replaced.

**DEWITT:** The lighting system in the tunnel is extensive and requires maintenance. We have 1,400 light fixtures in the tunnel. You also have the lights on the outside as you approach the tunnel. The lighting system is run by a controller. There are light sensors at each end of the tunnel. As the intensity of daylight coming in changes throughout

(continued on page 32)





Gary DeWitt, Electrical, Plumbing & Mechanical Repairer, explains the role of generators deep inside the tunnel.

(Left) A control panel is used to direct the tunnel water system.

the day, the controller raises or lowers the light level in each tube accordingly. We've had to replace some of that equipment on occasion. And when light bulbs burn out, they have to be replaced.

**NILLES:** *What is the ventilation like in the tunnel?*

**ADAMS:** The tunnel stays pretty well ventilated during the day. Generally, cars are moving through the tunnel and that creates a slight breeze bringing fresh air in. There are carbon monoxide sensors in the tunnel along the top of the tubes. If the carbon monoxide level rises and the levels get too high, those sensors send a message to the system to kick on the jet fans. The fans keep the air flowing in one direction, blowing the bad air out one end while pulling in fresh air on the other end. We have a once-a-month exercise that we perform to make sure the fans are operating when they are needed. As far as I know, the only official time the carbon monoxide sensors have detected a high enough level to kick on the fans was the day the tunnel had its grand opening and traffic was lined up inside idling. Really, the only time those fans should kick on

would be for an accident or when Gary is testing them.

**DEWITT:** Those are pretty sizeable fans too. They measure about 15-feet long and are 5-feet across.

**NILLES:** *Is drainage a problem inside the tunnel?*

**ADAMS:** It's not much of a problem. The gradient of the highway in the tunnel has a slight incline to it so for the most part, everything drains out. Nothing gets inside except when cars drive through the rain and bring moisture in. Outside, there is water from above the tunnel entrance that comes down from the mountainsides. It drains near the tunnel faces. Once there, it enters a drainage system to keep the water directed around to the sides to keep it from infiltrating the tunnel itself.

**DEWITT:** Any drainage inside is directed to oil and water separators at the end of each tube. If there were to be an accident inside the tunnel that involves a fuel spill, then it all drains to those separators. The water is released and the pollutants are trapped and kept from becoming an environmental hazard.

**NILLES:** *Are there ever any leaks from the ceilings?*

**ADAMS:** Not often. We've had times when icicles have formed inside the tubes, especially one particular cold winter. As far as anything else leaking through the concrete liner, you have chlorides that build up. They appear as a white powdery substance along the concrete. That's pretty standard.

**DEWITT:** We wash down everything that affects visibility for our motorists. We wash the doors and the signs down, as well as our Motorist Assistance Call boxes. These metal boxes are mounted on the walls along the tubes. If there is someone with car trouble, they can just open the door to the box. Inside there is a phone, a fire extinguisher and a fire alarm. They can pick up the phone and it will ring at our District Headquarters. We can call tow trucks for them, and call police or family members if they need assistance. Those aren't used as much anymore because everybody has a cell phone, but initially, they were used quite often.

**NILLES:** *Do we ever have traffic accidents in the tunnel?*

**ADAMS:** Yes, we have had a few. One particular accident that I recall was a vehicle pulling a camper trailer that got turned sideways and hit the wall. Fortunately, we've never had any major accidents. We've also never had a fire. We have a water line inside the tunnel that is fed from two 40,000 gallon water tanks on the top of the mountain. If a fire were to happen inside, we can turn the valves and fill those water lines and then the firefighters can connect to that water in order to battle any blazes inside. Most of the accidents have been contained to vehicles running into the wall.

**NILLES:** *Do you ever have any problems with wildlife getting into the tunnel?*

**DEWITT:** I've never noticed any major wildlife. I have seen a bat in the bores on occasion, but no large animals.

**ADAMS:** Gary finds a lot of trinkets. People lose license plates or they lose the flags that people put on their cars when they're on their way to a football game. When it first opened, people would throw their spare change inside.

**NILLES:** *What's our budget look like for tunnel maintenance?*

**ADAMS:** It comes out of our District maintenance budget. Our expenses last

year were about \$125,000 and the year before that it was \$150,000. A majority of that is from utility bills for things such as the lights.

**NILLES:** *I've noticed there are passage doors between the bores. Where do they lead?*

**DEWITT:** Yes, there are five cross passages allowing access between the two tubes. They're mainly a safety feature. The hope is that they are never needed, but should someone have a major accident in the tunnel and it starts to fill with fire and smoke, then motorists are able to cross over to the other tube through those passages to escape the trouble.

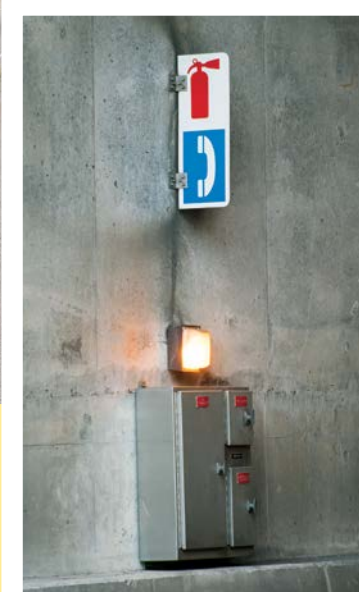
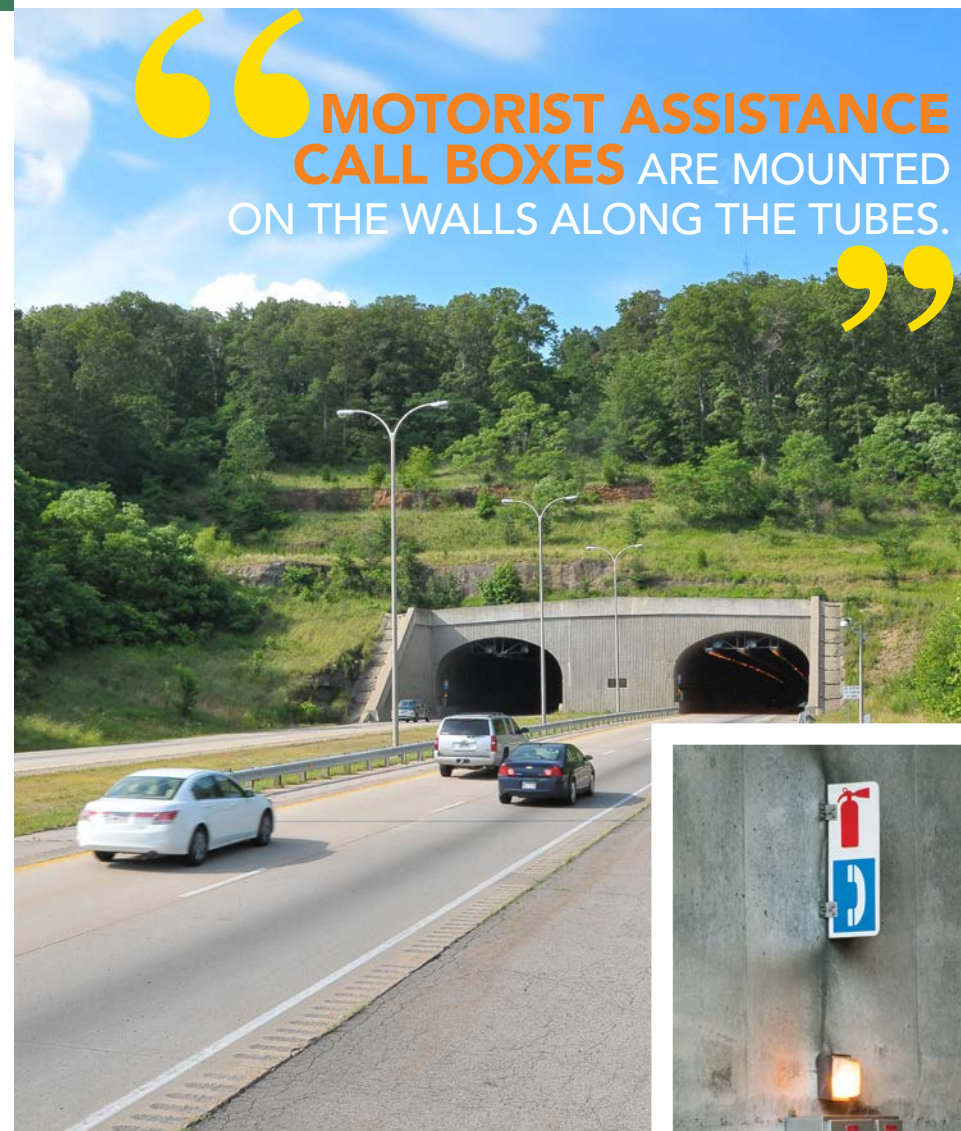
**NILLES:** *Has anything unusual ever occurred at the tunnel?*

**ADAMS:** We've had people hang banners above the tunnel entrances. One guy put up a banner to propose to his girlfriend. We noticed it on the video system and had it taken down. A large commercial truck stopped on the side of the road once and they began shooting video of the tunnel. That raised our suspicions. Our staff zoomed in on the license plate of the truck and had it run through our Highway Police. They eventually traced it back to a rental company, which was also concerning. But they traced that rental back to The Food Network. Their production crews were coming to the area to shoot a program. They just wanted to shoot video as their truck passed through the tunnel.

The Food Network probably isn't alone in finding the tunnel to be a unique sight. There's no question that when motorists approach the tunnel they may shout "Here comes the tunnel!"

After all, it's the only one in Arkansas. But, what they don't see and aren't aware of are the many people involved in keeping the Bobby Hopper tunnel in good shape from day to day as they pass through. ■

**MOTORIST ASSISTANCE CALL BOXES ARE MOUNTED ON THE WALLS ALONG THE TUBES.**



# ASSESSING THE FUTURE



## A NEW LONG RANGE PLAN GETS UNDERWAY



Jessie Jones, Division Head of Transportation Planning & Policy, at the Arkansas Transportation Planning Conference.

LONG RANGE PLANNING IS A PROCESS WHICH HELPS US TAKE A COMPREHENSIVE LOOK AT WHAT OUR **TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM NEEDS** ARE GOING TO BE, SAY 20 PLUS YEARS OUT.

**T**HINK BACK. Think farther back. Think all the way to 1990. Do you remember much about that year? The cold war was coming to an end, computer engineers were designing a massive search engine, and there was talk about this thing called the World Wide Web. Do you think you could have predicted today's status of world affairs or technology then? Well, that's exactly what is going on in the Transportation Planning and Policy Division this summer.

Since April, AHTD staff in the Transportation Planning and Policy Division have been hard at work getting the wheels turning on a new Statewide *Long-Range Intermodal Transportation Plan* (LRITP) for the AHTD.

When we plan for what our transportation needs will be 20 years into the future, we don't have a crystal ball. We know things beyond our control will change how our transportation system is used—what if extreme weather events are more prevalent? What if technology advances lead to more connected and autonomous vehicles? What if the younger demographic drives less and baby boomers need more transit options to get around? There is always a risk that our long-term transportation investments are based on inaccurate assumptions of the future—whether that is our assumed 100-year flood elevation, future traffic or smartphone use. This plan will attempt to consider various scenarios in an attempt to manage that risk in a structured manner.



**THE AHTD'S MISSION:**  
To provide a safe, efficient aesthetically pleasing and environmentally sound intermodal transportation system for the user.

### WHAT THE PLAN IS AND WHAT IT IS NOT

Let's start with what the plan is not: It's not a wish list of projects with no consideration of the budget. It's not a check for a federal regulation. It's not a philosophical or academic exercise to just decisions.

### WHAT IS LONG RANGE PLANNING?

"Long Range Planning is a process which helps us take a comprehensive look at what our transportation system needs are going to be, say 20 plus years out," says Jessie Jones, Division Head of Transportation Planning & Policy. "The plan we are working on now will be a performance-based plan. Through an extensive public and stakeholder involvement process, the plan will set strategic directions on the

future of our transportation system and the level of transportation investments required. We will also look at the funding constraints in place. Resource allocation at the programmatic level will be made to maximize our ability to meet the needs."

The plan, which was last prepared in 2007, will be used as a guide when considering future Statewide Transportation Improvement Plans (STIP). The STIP identifies transportation projects to be implemented within a four-year period.

### AIR, LAND AND WATERWAYS

Just as the title suggests, the plan isn't limited to just the highway system in Arkansas. It also covers other modes of travel in the State including air, rail, water, public transportation and even

biking and walking. All of these modes transport people and freight to and from destinations and contribute to the State's transportation network.

### REQUIRED BY LAW

While the Long Range Plan is required by the Federal Aid Highway Act, it is an excellent opportunity to take a big-picture look at multiple goal areas with a long term horizon. In accordance with 23 U.S.C. 135, each State "shall develop a long-range statewide transportation plan, with a minimum 20-year forecast period for all areas of the State, that provides for the development and implementation of the intermodal transportation system of the State" as part of an effort that includes a statewide transportation planning process which provides for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that meet the following eight goals:

1. Support the economic vitality of the United States, the States, metropolitan areas and non-metropolitan areas, especially by enabling competitiveness, productivity and efficiency;
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
3. Increase the security of that transportation system;
4. Increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight;
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;

(continued on page 36)

6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes throughout the State, for people and freight;
7. Promote efficient system management and operation;
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

### PERFORMANCE-BASED PLANNING

The current Federal transportation legislation, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), funds surface transportation programs.

"MAP 21 requires performance management," Jones adds. "It's mandated by law that states' plans should be performance-based."

Performance-based planning attempts to ensure that transportation investment decisions are made based on their ability to meet established goals for improving the overall transportation system. It also involves measuring progress toward meeting those goals.

"This plan will be the first performance-based long range plan the AHTD has undertaken," Jones adds.

"We will establish goals and objectives for the plan. For example, what do we want to accomplish, what overall goals do we want to reach 25 years from now? Once we establish goals and objectives, we'll have performance measures. How can we measure ourselves to see if we meet those goals? That's why we are calling it a performance-based plan."

### PUTTING THE PLAN TOGETHER

Work on the plan began this summer. In addition to Jessie Jones, AHTD staff working on the project include Virginia Porta, Senior Transportation Planning Engineer, who is serving as Project Manager; and Michael Henry, Transportation Engineer IV, working as Deputy Project Manager.

"We are just starting the process," Jones states. "We had an internal kickoff meeting in June with the consultant team who met with our Director and senior management. Then we met with our Division Heads and District Engineers to get their input on what our goals should be. We asked: What should this plan address? What should be the focus? That was just one piece of the puzzle. The next step is to have our Transportation Plan Advisory Group (T-PAG) meetings and public meetings across the State. The T-PAG, consisting of industry representatives, various State agencies, agency representatives and our planning partners, will help guide the plan development."

### SCENARIO PLANNING

Scenario Planning is a new tool that will be used as work begins on the LRITP. Through its Foresight Report 750 Series, the National Cooperative Highway Research Program developed innovative research to examine long-range issues and their implications for Departments of Transportation. The reports addressed categories of major impact including freight, climate change, technology, sustainability, energy and fuels, and demographics.

In other words, what will the future look like in 25 years? Autonomous vehicles?



More on-line transactions with delivery to individual addresses instead of stores? What type of fuels will be used? Will there even be the traditional workplace where people drive to work, park and then return home?

Using the Foresight Report and asking these kinds of questions, the AHTD held a first-of-its-kind scenario planning workshop in late April for planning partners from across the State to support the LRITP. The workshop encouraged big thinking by asking thoughtful questions. For example, how might technology change driving habits and transportation needs in the future? How do changes in population and demographics impact the future?

"Scenario planning helps us develop a blueprint for an ever-evolving future," says AHTD Director Scott Bennett.

"By thinking strategically about what transportation might look like in 50 years, we can develop a long range plan and then dial back for smart decisions today."

Various meetings are planned for this fall and next spring as work continues on the plan.

"We are getting the conversation started and talking to people about what is important to them," Bennett adds.

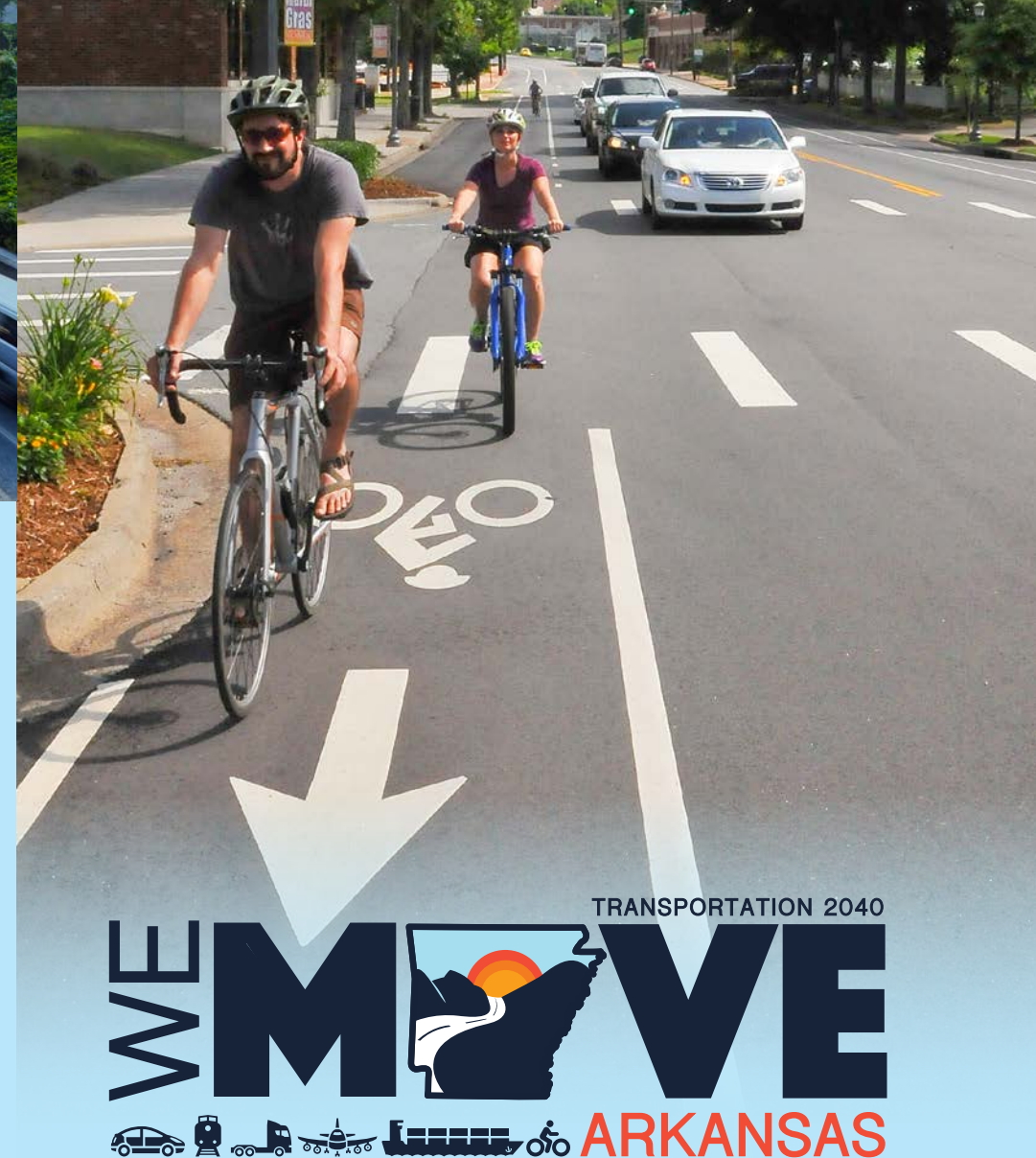
### PUBLIC INPUT PLAYS A ROLE

Another key partner in the development of the LRITP is the general public. What are some top transportation priorities in the minds of people outside of the AHTD and the industry? For example, some people may be

concerned about congestion needs, while others may prefer emphasizing complete streets and livability. The Department is employing public involvement software called Metro-Quest to get answers to that and other questions. It's an online interactive opinion tool. Using a webpage, the public can provide their own opinion regarding the importance of safety, congestion relief, reliable travel time, etc. Participants can see the impact of their choices in real time and learn about the alternatives and tradeoffs based on their own priorities and scenario choices.

"We can engage the public and collect information from them at the beginning of the process," Jones comments. "That will help us develop the transportation scenarios to be analyzed. We will ask for opinions on how much should be spent on safety, on building new roads, or maintaining existing roadways. Different scenarios might include an expanded system with new roads and new bypasses; focusing our resources on preservation or maintaining what we have, or concentrating on multi-modal connections."

"Close to the end of the planning process, we will present the scenarios that the public said they would like to see with the associated costs," Jones continues. "The public, our advisory committee and our planning partners will be asked to weigh in on the hard questions. If there is this much funding, how will you allocate your resources? They can see the scenarios and the funding needed for it. It gets people thinking in a realistic manner about transportation investments."



### ISSUES COMING TO THE FOREFRONT

When completed, the LRITP will provide specific guidance and a range of options for the next 25 years based on the scenarios evaluated.

"The plan will identify emerging issues," Jones adds. "As we get underway, our advisory groups may already have ideas in their mind what those issues might be. On the front end we will know some of them, and then through public involvement we will know more."

### COMING TO A CONCLUSION

When considering Arkansas' network of highways, air, rail, transit and water facilities, each plays a significant role in our transporting system. It is a must that each

of these remains efficient while meeting anticipated growth in our State's economy and population.

"This plan will be different compared to the previous plans," Jones concludes. "We are very proud of this. We are the first state in the nation to use the Foresight Report. Scenario planning is new in this plan and is an innovative way to engage the public. This long range plan sets strategic direction for our programming activity, which guides our STIP development. The scenarios will provide us flexibility to adapt to an ever-evolving future."

With a new Long Range Plan in place, the AHTD will have a blueprint for meeting the challenges of providing a safe and efficient transportation system for Arkansas in the future. ■



(L.) Michael Henry, Transportation Engineer IV, and (R.) Virginia Porta, Senior Transportation Planning Engineer, are both currently working with Jessie Jones to put together the new long range plan.



# AMERICA'S Transportation Awards

## RECOGNIZE THE AHTD

**T**he AHTD was one of eight Departments of Transportation recognized in this year's southeastern regional contest for the America's Transportation Awards competition.

The America's Transportation Awards competition recognizes the greatest transportation projects accomplished each year by State Departments of Transportation. From building new bridges, bike and pedestrian paths, and highways, to easing congestion and improving safety and metropolitan mobility through transit, these projects instill an appreciation of transportation as a key element of our quality of life.

Awards for Departments of Transportation in Arkansas, Florida, Kentucky, North Carolina and South Carolina were announced at the 2015

Southeastern Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (SASHTO) annual meeting held in Nashville in August. Eight projects won in each of the competition's three categories: Best Use of Innovation, Under Budget and Quality of Life/Community Development.

The AHTD received recognition in the **"Best Use of Innovation"** category for the **Don Tyson Parkway Interchange Project**.

This award celebrates excellence in innovative management techniques and use of technology. The award recognizes new policies or procedures and creative

transportation solutions that enhance the effective movement of people, goods, and services; increase transportation efficiency and choices; improve safety, accessibility, and aid traffic management; and enhance community life.

The Don Tyson Parkway interchange is a \$13.3 million project located in Springdale. It opened to traffic on July 7th of 2014, more than six months ahead of schedule.

The interchange project provides a connection from the Don Tyson Parkway to Interstate 49. It gives motorists an alternative to Highway 412 and has created a new east-west corridor through the city of Springdale.

"Crews had to build a new bridge over the highly traveled Interstate 49 and try

Don Tyson Parkway Interchange

to stabilize existing fill material over an old landfill," comments Chad Adams, District Four Engineer.

"Parts of the ramps on the southwest quadrant of the bridge were constructed over the landfill. To stabilize the area, the consultant recommended a dynamic compaction technique that involved dropping a heavy weight from a given height above the ground

"Construction of the bridge required shutting down the Interstate at times to install bridge beams and construct forms over the main lanes. The forms were to make sure no motorists were hit by any objects that could have fallen from the overhead construction activity."

The Department was also a winner in the **"Quality of Life/Community Development"** category for its \$25.2 million **State Aid City Street Program**.

The new "Quality of Life/Community Development" category recognizes a transportation project that has contributed to the general quality of life and economic development of local communities. These innovative projects better connect people to businesses, jobs, health care facilities and recreational activities while encouraging a mix of transportation modes.

The State Aid City Street Program provides municipalities with necessary funding to preserve, update and maintain vital roads in their respective communities.

On November 6, 2012, Arkansas voters approved Issue #1, a constitutional amendment, which temporarily increased the State sales tax to fund surface transportation improvements and permanently dedicated one cent per

gallon of the existing motor fuel tax to the State Aid City Street Fund.

More than 250 projects have received funds, with 64 projects completed in 2014.

"I am amazed and proud of the impact this program has made in the communities in Arkansas," stated David Mayo, State Aid Division Head.

"I have revisited several of the cities that simply were unable to afford much more than the repair of the potholes over the past several decades. Now through the program, they have newly paved streets that contribute to a higher quality of life and increased pride in their communities. The staff of the State Aid Division, program management personnel, District Construction Engineers and Resident Engineers have contributed greatly to the success of the program."

Of note, under the direction of the State Aid Street Committee, a website has been created to provide information about the program and to summarize and showcase the progress made. Visit the Arkansas State Aid Street Committee website at [www.citystreet.ar.gov](http://www.citystreet.ar.gov).

"Ultimately, it's the American people who are the big winners," said John Cox, President of AASHTO and Director of the Wyoming Department of Transportation, about the awards.

"These projects are a small example of how State DOTs are saving taxpayer dollars while building innovative projects to meet community needs."

The winners are first selected in four regions and then the Top 10 vie for two awards: the Grand Prize and the People's Choice Award. The winners of those two top prizes will be announced at the AASHTO Annual Meeting, held in September of 2015 in Chicago. A panel of judges representing various transportation organizations makes the regional and grand prize selections. ■



## SPECIAL EVENTS

## AROUND THE STATE

BY GLENN BOLICK

## PARAGOULD BYPASS Officially Dedicated

**H**ighway Commissioner Alec Farmer, AHTD Director Scott Bennett and District Ten personnel joined a crowd of Paragould area leaders on July 29th to officially dedicate the recently opened first section of the new Paragould Bypass by “signing” a replica Highway 412 Bypass sign.



(L. to R) Rusty McMillon, Greene County Judge; Walter McMillan, District Ten Engineer; Scott Bennett, AHTD Director; Alec Farmer, Highway Commissioner; Mary Broadaway, State Representative District 57; Tom Kirk, Chairman of Transportation Committee Paragould Regional Chamber of Commerce; and Mike Gaskill, Mayor of Paragould.


<https://vimeo.com/ahtd/paragouldbypass>

CLICK HERE  
FOR VIDEO CONTENT



The new southern bypass will be a two-lane, 10-mile roadway constructed in two phases. The first phase was for the five miles between Highway 49 South and Highway 412 East. A \$21 million grading and structures contract was awarded to Robertson Contractors in early 2012 and was followed by a \$7 million contract with Delta Asphalt for the base and surfacing.

A grading and structures job for the second phase is scheduled for late 2016. That project will connect the final five miles from Highway 49 South to Highway 412 West. ■

## NEW BELLA VISTA BYPASS Section Opens

**H**ighway Commission Chairman Dick Trammel expressed “This is not a road to nowhere” just before he cut a ribbon to signify completion of another section of the Bella Vista Bypass on August 21st.

“The significance of opening this section is we’re standing on a highway that’s being built and not just talking about it,” he said.

Dignitaries and leaders from the area gathered on the new two-mile section of Highway 549 below the new Highway 72 overpass near Gravette. Kolb Grading began work on this \$14 million project in mid-2012. It completes the future Interstate 49 roadway between Highway 72 South and Highway 72 North.

Gravette Mayor Kurt Maddox thanked Trammel and the AHTD for the bypass project. He said local people are already using the road to save time traveling through the area.

State Representative Dan Douglas added the bypass will make travel faster and safer than the winding Highway 72, and he expects it will spur economic development in the area. ■



Commission Chair Dick Trammel joins a celebratory crowd to cut the ribbon on the new section of the Bella Vista Bypass.

## DISTRICT 8

## CONSTRUCTION



## CORNER

**J**ust south of Conway, motorists on Interstate 40 will find construction crews working on the new Conway South Interchange Project. The improvements are located at the intersection of Interstate 40 and Highway 365.

The project anchors what will be the southern end of a western loop around Conway. Once completed, the loop will take motorists from the construction location to an interchange on the northwest side of town near Highway 64 and Hogan Lane.

The current project is constructing the embankment and overpass bridge structures. The work was awarded to Moble Contractors, Inc. in late 2013 for \$13.2 million.

In addition to the work being done by the AHTD, the City of Conway is performing work in the area on a Sturgis Road overpass and some grading for the first phase of the western loop.

The loop was approved by the Federal Highway Administration in 2010. The cost is being split 50/50 between the AHTD and the City of Conway.

Estimated completion of this first phase of the loop is expected in the fall of this year. ■

# Dear AHTD,

**I** want to thank you for the pavement markings as discussed below. You responded swiftly to correct this safety hazard, and your crews did an outstanding job. I really appreciate your service to our State and to Hot Springs in particular.

Sincerely,  
**Terry Thompson**  
Hot Springs, Arkansas

*NOTE: The letter below was sent by Terry Thompson to AHTD State Maintenance Engineer Joe Sartini. The quick attention given to this problem by the AHTD crews, inspired Mr. Thompson to send the thank-you note above.*

I am a Garland County resident and am in Hot Springs almost every day. Since the 270 Bypass has no lighting, the reflective paint stripes are critical to safe driving. Those stripes are woefully worn and faded in many areas of the bypass especially on entry and exit ramps. Particularly, in the dark, or in poor weather visibility, drivers can easily get completely disoriented due to the lack of stripes to orient themselves. Please have someone look at all of the on-and-off ramps to the bypass regarding paint striping. I sincerely believe it is a safety hazard.

Sincerely,  
**Terry Thompson**

## ENJOYING ARKANSAS HIGHWAYS

Thank you for visiting with us at Mountain Glory Station and The Glory Train while at the Queen Wilhelmina State Park.

I have enjoyed reading the July issue of *Arkansas Highways Magazine* that you gave me when you stopped in on us a couple of weeks ago. The articles are informative and detailed, and the pictures glide right along the story line.

Our customers are always asking about different places to go in Arkansas while they are in State. Your magazine would answer some of those questions in an informative and beautiful way; thus my purpose for this letter.

If possible would you send us a monthly supply of *Arkansas Highways Magazine*. I would love to provide copies for our customers to enjoy (and me too).

Sincerely,  
**Allison Waggoner**  
Mountain Glory Station & The Glory Train  
Mena, Arkansas

## HELPFUL HIGHWAY POLICE

On Thursday, July 23, 2015, Arkansas Highway Police Officer Greg Massey assisted Arkansas State Police Corporal Sammy Koons in an attempt to catch a fleeing suspect.

Corporal Koons stated he was attempting to stop a motorcycle, endangering the public's life, when the driver attempted to elude officers. Officer Massey was nearby and responded. Not only did Officer Massey respond, he actually obtained transportation to where the bad guy was hiding and apprehended him.

We want you to know that this type of endeavor does not go unnoticed and we applaud him and your agency for assisting.

Sincerely,  
**Jackie E. Clark, Captain & Troop Commander**  
Arkansas State Police  
Forrest City, Arkansas

## NEIGHBORLY EMPLOYEE

I want to personally recognize and thank an AHTD employee by the name of Jimmy Gray. He was working at the Social Hill rest area located on Interstate 30 last Friday, August 21st.

My son and I made a rest stop, and due to circumstances beyond our control, my son's foot was injured when another patron suddenly kicked the door of the men's rest room from inside.

Jimmy helped me administer first aid to my son, then directed me to the nearest hospital where my son received further treatment. Jimmy's quick thinking and patient, easy going manner helped calm an otherwise stressful situation for two out-of-staters.

My son is doing fine now and we are ready to continue our journey. It's people like Jimmy who give Arkansas a reputation for being a neighborly State. I am eternally grateful for Jimmy's assistance in our time of need.

Best Regards,  
**William P. Tyree, LtCol. USAF Retired**  
Downers Grove, Illinois

# 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** • Jeremy Waits, Engineer; Tony Horton, Construction Helper; Benjamin Kerwood, Construction Helper  
**FACILITIES MANAGEMENT** • Jonathan Carruth, General Laborer; Cameron Parsons, Facilities Management Project Coordinator; Menelaos Porfiris, General Laborer  
**HEAVY BRIDGE MAINTENANCE** • Fowler McIntire, Bridge Repairer I  
**DISTRICT ONE** • Carl Johnson, Storeroom Assistant I; Rhonda Phillips, Storeroom Assistant I; Bobby Stephens, Maintenance Aide I; Marty Walker, Maintenance Aide I  
**DISTRICT TWO** • Jerald Baylark, Maintenance Aide II; David Henderson, Maintenance Aide I; Colten Walker, Maintenance Aide I  
**DISTRICT THREE** • Robert Moore, Maintenance Aide I; Austin Reed, Maintenance Aide I; Forrest Cagle, Maintenance Aide I; Jeff Preskitt, Maintenance Aide I  
**DISTRICT FOUR** • Cynthia Thompson, Maintenance Aide I; Michael Williamson, Maintenance Aide I  
**DISTRICT FIVE** • Jason Rentz, Maintenance Aide I; Mark Jones, Maintenance Aide I; Marty King, Maintenance Aide I; Elmer James, Maintenance Aide I  
**DISTRICT SIX** • Tracy Birt, Maintenance Aide I; Gregory Gaines, Maintenance Aide I; La'Quan Gardner, Maintenance Aide I  
**DISTRICT SEVEN** • Wesley Boulden, Maintenance Aide I; Christopher Cox, Maintenance Aide I; Michael Francis, Maintenance Aide I; Stephen Franklin, Maintenance Aide I; Christophe Reed, Maintenance Aide I; Calvin Cooper, Maintenance Aide I; Joshua Faucett, Maintenance Aide I; Lemitri Holman, Maintenance Aide I  
**DISTRICT EIGHT** • Buddy Heck, Maintenance Aide I; Troy Proctor, Maintenance Aide I  
**DISTRICT NINE** • Brandon Clayborn, Storeroom Assistant I  
**DISTRICT TEN** • William Swint, Maintenance Aide I; Dylan Nelson, Maintenance Aide I

## PROMOTIONS

**ARKANSAS HIGHWAY POLICE** • John Clark, Jr., AHP Corporal; Kyle Evelt, AHP Corporal; Juril Henson, Jr., AHP Corporal; Donald Hilliker, AHP Corporal; Ebony Lewis, AHP Corporal; Michael Meeks, AHP Corporal; James Stevens, AHP Second Lieutenant; Charles Tolliver, Jr., AHP Corporal; Leonard Turner, AHP Corporal  
**BRIDGE** • Chris Lenard, Office Administrative Assistant V  
**ENVIRONMENTAL** • Clinton Hutchenson, Environmental Scientist  
**MAINTENANCE** • John Brown, Paint Transport Truck Driver; Cliff Pleasant, Jr., Paint Transport Truck Driver; Jimmy Skinner, Maintenance Aide III; Jacob Trotter, Sign Crew Leader  
**MATERIALS** • Sharelle Brown, Office Administrative Assistant III  
**SURVEYS** • Lyndsey High, Administrative Aide III  
**SYSTEM INFORMATION & RESEARCH** • Michael Weidman, Research Assistant  
**DISTRICT ONE** • Matthew Emberton, District Maintenance Engineer; Howard Gracey, Maintenance Aide III; Don Moore, Area Maintenance Supervisor  
**DISTRICT TWO** • Bryant Cain, Area Maintenance Supervisor; Jeremy Waits, Engineer  
**DISTRICT FOUR** • Terry Bartlett, Maintenance Aide II; Shawn Bennett, Construction Aide I; Joseph Cloos, Maintenance Aide II; Kenneth Freeman, Maintenance Aide II; Justin Leding, Assistant Bridge Inspector; Joseph McNeely, Construction Aide II; Robert Reeves, Assistant Maintenance Superintendent

**DISTRICT FIVE** • Michael Calendar, Maintenance Aide II; Kerry Little, District Bridge Inspector; Steven Shrable, Maintenance Aide II

**DISTRICT SIX** • Justin Jones, Maintenance Aide II; Karlisha Porter, Field Clerk II

**DISTRICT SEVEN** • Sam Biggers, Senior Mechanic; Cameron Forbush, Maintenance Job Superintendent; Robert Hughes, Rest Area Attendant; David Hunter, Maintenance Aide II; Jeremy Lanuius, Maintenance Aide II; Jamieson Miller, Maintenance Aide II; Charlie Ryder, Sealing Job Superintendent; Stephen Smith, Maintenance Aide II

**DISTRICT EIGHT** • Nancy Keeling, Assistant Maintenance Superintendent

**DISTRICT NINE** • Britney Burns, Assistant Resident Engineer; Tom Dotson, Maintenance Aide II; Rowan Dunn, Crew Leader; Clark Smith, Maintenance Aide II

**DISTRICT TEN** • Wesley Beckman, Maintenance Aide II; Timothy Bohannon, Maintenance Aide III; Gerald Gramling, Area Headquarters Attendant; Ricky Hale, Area Maintenance Supervisor; Mitchell Holcomb, Maintenance Aide II

## SERVICE

**BRIDGE** • Jeffrey Covay, Staff Bridge Design Engineer, 20 yrs  
**CONSTRUCTION** • Angela Cantu, Resident Office Technician, 30 yrs; Joe Richmond, Senior Inspector, 25 yrs; Christopher Stanfield, Senior Construction Materials Inspector, 25 yrs; Karen Davis, Field Clerk II, 20 yrs; Timothy Wilson, Senior Construction Materials Inspector, 15 yrs; Cynthia Green, Resident Office Technician, 10 yrs; Hermanie Pierre-Guerrero, Construction Field Engineer I, 5 yrs; Simon Wiley, Resident Office Technician, 5 yrs

**ENVIRONMENTAL** • Thomas Nichols, Assessments Section Head, 15 yrs

**FISCAL** • Glenda Langham, Account Analyst, 5 yrs

**INTERNAL AUDIT** • Judy Robertson, Chief Auditor, 10 yrs

**MAINTENANCE** • Kevin Shorter, Paint Transport Truck Driver, 5 yrs

**MATERIALS** • Brian Casto, Geotechnical Specialist, 30 yrs; James Mitchell, Laboratory Coordinator, 15 yrs

**REPROGRAPHICS** • Mark Green, Reprographics Technician, 15 yrs

**RIGHT OF WAY** • Dorothy Coburn, Right of Way Acquisition Agent II, 25 yrs

**SURVEYS** • Paul Howard, Engineer IV, 20 yrs

**SYSTEM INFORMATION & RESEARCH** • Gregory Wallis, Administrative Officer II, 20 yrs

**DISTRICT ONE** • Hobert McKnight, Sr., Single Axle Truck Driver, 5 yrs

**DISTRICT TWO** • Bobby West, Area Maintenance Supervisor, 35 yrs

**DISTRICT THREE** • Theresa Mack, Area Headquarters Attendant, 15 yrs; Christopher Eachers, Multi-Axle Truck Driver, 10 yrs

**DISTRICT FOUR** • Orvil Meyer, Backhoe/Front End Loader Operator, 10 yrs; Bruce Carte, Multi-Axle Truck Driver, 5 yrs

**DISTRICT FIVE** • Kerry Little, Assistant Bridge Inspector, 20 yrs; Johnny Kimbriel, Crew Leader, 15 yrs; James Bradley, Area Headquarters Attendant, 5 yrs

**DISTRICT SIX** • Rebecca Lamey, Crew Leader, 20 yrs; Michelle Bradley, District Office Manager, 15 yrs; Jared Shinn, Maintenance Aide II, 10 yrs; Jimmy Gray, Rest Area Attendant, 5 yrs; Brent Jenkins, Motor Patrol Operator/Finish, 5 yrs; Nicklaus Angel, Maintenance Aide II, 5 yrs; Ross Reeves, Crew Leader, 5 yrs; Brett Johnson, Mechanic, 5 yrs

**DISTRICT SEVEN** • Donald Hudson, Crew Leader, 25 yrs; Bobby Hall, Area Maintenance Supervisor, 20 yrs; Jeremy Evans, Motor Patrol Operator/Finish, 15 yrs

**DISTRICT EIGHT** • Cleo Webb, Crew Leader, 30 yrs; Bryan Mills, Hydraulic Excavator Operator/Finish, 5 yrs; Josh Hernandez, Bridge Repairer II, 5 yrs

**DISTRICT NINE** • David Green, Shop Supervisor, 10 yrs; Michael Carlton, Hydraulic Excavator Operator/Finish, 10 yrs

**DISTRICT TEN** • Billy Huey, Maintenance Aide II, 5 yrs

## RETIREMENT

**ARKANSAS HIGHWAY POLICE** • Anthony Sain, AHP Corporal, 29+ yrs; Stanley Griffin, AHP Sergeant, 30+ yrs

**RIGHT OF WAY** • Marilyn Book, Relocation Coordinator II, 7+ yrs

**DISTRICT FIVE** • Terry Stewart, Crew Leader, 29+ yrs

**DISTRICT EIGHT** • Franklin Williford, Maintenance Aide II, 7+ yrs; Melvin Mabry, Motor Patrol Operator/Finish, 20+ yrs

## MEMORIALS

**ARKANSAS HIGHWAY POLICE** • Robert E. Scott, 8/17/15, retired

**CONSTRUCTION** • Delois V. Davis, 7/25/15, retired; Wayne P. Hay, 8/4/15, retired

**EQUIPMENT & PROCUREMENT** • Melvin L. Jones, 8/19/15, retired

**DISTRICT ONE** • Charlie Tittle, 8/10/15, retired

**DISTRICT FOUR** • Thomas W. Goodson, 8/19/15, retired

**DISTRICT SIX** • James L. Gage, 8/6/15, retired

**DISTRICT EIGHT** • Jimmy H. Hill, 7/15/15, retired





Arkansas State Highway and  
Transportation Department  
Post Office Box 2261  
Little Rock, AR 72203-2261

PRSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Little Rock, AR 72203  
Permit No. 2556

FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

