

The background image shows Governor Asa Hutchinson in a dark blue suit and red tie, seated at a desk and signing a document. Behind him stand four other men in suits, smiling. To the left, the Arkansas state flag is visible. The setting appears to be a formal office or legislative chamber with wood-paneled walls.

# Arkansas HIGHWAYS

SPRING 2019

A PUBLICATION OF THE  
ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | MAGAZINE

## Road to the Future: GOVERNOR HUTCHINSON REVEALS HISTORIC HIGHWAY PLAN

**DICK TRAMMEL**  
Reflects on His Tenure

**GOVERNOR APPOINTS**  
Keith Gibson to  
Commission

**BRUCE STREET:**  
Military Vehicles



# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



**I**N APRIL OF THIS YEAR, ARDOT JOINED DEPARTMENTS OF TRANSPORTATION FROM ACROSS THE NATION IN CELEBRATING WORK ZONE AWARENESS WEEK. This annual spring campaign brings national attention to motorist and worker safety in work zones and addresses mobility issues associated with work zones.

The construction areas that motorists encounter play a key role in maintaining and upgrading our nation's highways. Unfortunately, daily changes in traffic patterns, narrowed rights-of-way and other construction activities often create a combination of factors resulting

in crashes, injuries and fatalities. These crashes also can cause excessive delays, especially given the constrained driving environment. In 2017, there were 17 fatalities, 83 serious injuries and 2,085 crashes in Arkansas work zones. Imagine a crash occurring on your residential street every 4.5 hours every single day for five years – that is the average for Arkansas work zones. At ARDOT, we want to do better.

In the weeks ahead, you will be seeing green roadside signs reading “Work With Us” springing up in major work zones on our highways. This is ARDOT’s call to action for drivers to move over and slow down when approaching work zones. These simple actions can make a world of difference to the men and women working in construction areas.

The warmer weather across the State means an increase in construction sites on Arkansas highways. Whether it is major construction on a busy Interstate or patching a pothole on a rural two-lane highway, it is important to be aware of the activities surrounding you. When you see a green “Work With Us” sign, let it be a reminder to be a safe and responsible driver as you pass through work zones.

Our Department welcomes opportunities to share work zone safety tips with motorists that use Arkansas’ highways. In doing so, we can all do our part to guarantee that our crew members make it home safely each night.

I am thankful for everything you all do every day to make this a great Department. Everyone stay safe, and have an enjoyable summer.

Scott E. Bennett, P.E., Director



**FRONT COVER:**  
Governor Hutchinson signs new highway bill for Arkansas.

**BACK COVER:**  
Arkansas State Capitol

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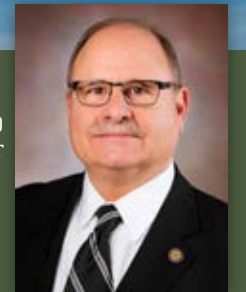
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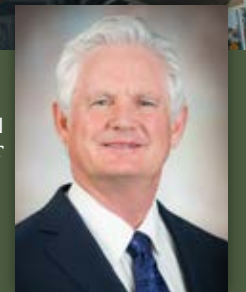
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# SERVICE BEFORE SELF

## Highway Commissioner Dick Trammel Reflects on His Tenure

BY BRITNI PADILLA-DUMAS

**I**'VE ONLY BEEN WRITING FOR ARDOT FOR A LITTLE OVER A YEAR, SO I HAVEN'T HAD MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO INTERACT WITH COMMISSIONER TRAMMEL; BUT IN SUCH A SHORT PERIOD, HE MADE A LASTING IMPACT. It's no surprise, then, to hear so many wonderful things from people from all walks of life who've known him longer.





Arkansas Highway Commission, 2009



2009

2018



Arkansas Highway Commission, 2018

How, then, do I capture a decade of service with the Arkansas Department of Transportation and a lifetime's work within his community? And what about his dedication to philanthropy?

Mr. Trammel will joke that while he may be small, his mouth is bigger than anybody's. I personally know this to be true—when Dickey Ray arrives, everyone knows. You hear him before you see him, and you can hear it in his voice: happiness...excitement. His positivity and smile are contagious and you can't help but grin when you see him come around the corner. If asked, "How are you, Mr. Trammel?" his answer will always be the same: "Every day is like Christmas."

**PHILANTHROPY AT ITS FINEST**

Many may not guess that a young man from humble beginnings in Pocahontas, Arkansas, would be known as Mr. Northwest Arkansas, but such is true for Highway Commissioner Dickey Ray Trammel. His short stature is juxtaposed with an energy that is larger than life. A former Razorback cheerleader and Chairman of the Board at the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, Trammel enjoyed his tenure with the Highway Commission.

"Governor Beebe announced that I was his appointment for the new Highway Commissioner and it was a total surprise," Trammel reflected. "Being on the Highway Commission is an experience I just never thought I'd have and I'm thankful."

At the time, Trammel was serving on the Board at Higher Education.

"I like education because you educate a young person and no one can take that away from them," Trammel explained. "The best thing you can do is help someone help themselves. That's why I've always been involved in the single-parent scholarship program."

Trammel, a 55-year Rotarian, has

surrounded himself with people who cared and were willing to serve. He recalled a quote from Helen Walton that inspired him throughout his life:

"It's not what you gather, but what you scatter, that tells the kind of life you have lived."

**OUR PEOPLE**

Trammel considers the past ten years with the Department a blessing.

"The highlight of my time on the Commission has been the people of ARDOT. I've been very fortunate to work with the Commissioners and the people all over the State. When you're out in the districts, you see the people

**IT'S NOT WHAT YOU GATHER, BUT WHAT YOU SCATTER, THAT TELLS THE KIND OF LIFE YOU HAVE LIVED.**

- Helen Walton



Jonesboro Mayor Harold Perrin presents Trammel with a key to the city.



Arkansas State Highway 265 was dedicated to Commissioner Trammel.



working on roads, mowing the grass, driving the trucks and doing overlays—they're great people and they care about their jobs. ARDOT is made up of the grass-roots people of Arkansas who work hard, have families, care about one another, and are the kind of people that I take pride in knowing and being associated with."

## HIGHWAY CHALLENGES

Over the course of Commissioner Trammel's service, he was educated on Arkansas' highway funding challenges.

"We're the 12th largest system in the country, but we're 42nd in funds per mile to take care of it," he explained. "The people of Arkansas want better highways and they proved that when they voted in favor of half-cent sales taxes. I'm hoping that proved to our legislature and our government leadership that we need better highways and the people are willing to step up and pay for it."

Trammel saw improvements across the state through the Connecting

Arkansas Program (CAP) and the Interstate Rehabilitation Program (IRP). He is very proud that, despite our available funds to maintain our system, Arkansas has proven to have the 3rd most efficient Highway Department in the nation.

## PASSING THE TORCH

Governor Asa Hutchinson named Keith Gibson of Fort Smith to replace Trammel on the Arkansas Highway Commission. When asked what advice he had to offer to a new commissioner, Trammel responded:

"It's important to be a good listener and to not make promises. I'm not an engineer and I'm not a construction guy. I've always said that I understand the problem and I'll share it with our people and leave it up to them. It was my job to look at what we're doing and guide the Department on what we think is best for the people."

Trammel also encouraged ARDOT to educate both the legislature and Arkansans on what exactly is required

to maintain the highway system we currently have, versus future capital expenses for new highways.

## "EVERY DAY IS LIKE..."

...Christmas! It feels like every day is like Christmas because it's another day of the gift of life from God to me. My dad used to tell me, 'Son, the harder you work, the more luck you seem to have.' I love people and I love making a difference."

Dickey Trammel was willing to do exactly that—work hard to help the people around him. He was willing to serve, willing to place the needs of the people before his own, willing to say, "yes," and willing to say, "no," all while equating each day to that of one of the most celebratory days of the year.

Your friends at ARDOT thank you for your service, Mr. Trammel, and congratulate you on your retirement.

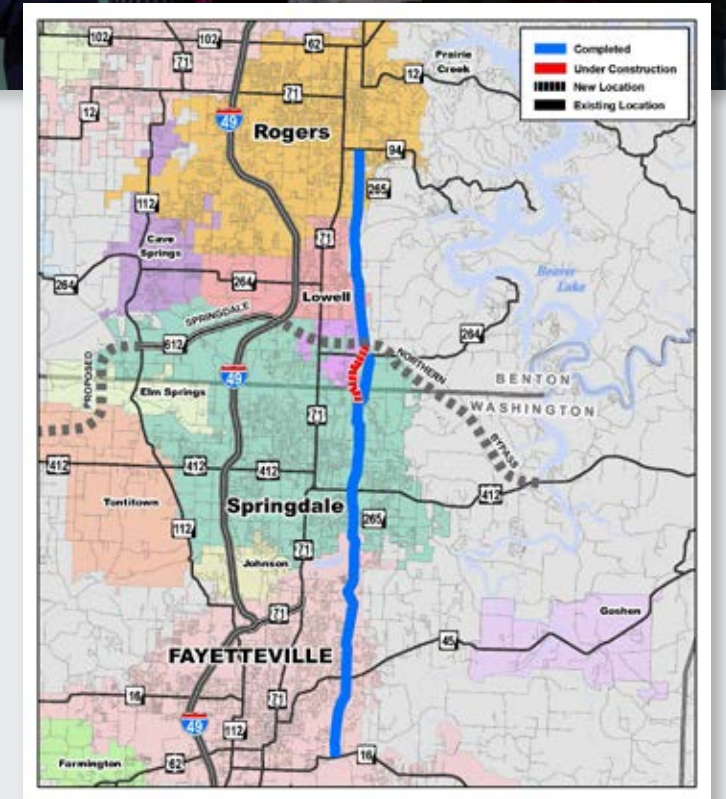
*"I will honor Christmas in my heart and try and keep it all the year."* – Charles Dickens ■



# NEW NORTH-SOUTH CORRIDOR WILL IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY

## Officials Cut Ribbon on State Highway 265 in Northwest Arkansas

BY DAVID NILLES



**G**OVERNOR ASA HUTCHINSON JOINED ALL FIVE MEMBERS OF THE ARKANSAS HIGHWAY COMMISSION AND LOCAL DIGNITARIES ON JANUARY 4 TO OPEN A NEW SECTION OF STATE HIGHWAY 265 IN NORTHWEST ARKANSAS.

The project is one of eight construction jobs that comprise the new North-South Corridor for northwest Arkansas.

Officials gathered at The Jones Center in Springdale to cut a ribbon on a four-mile section of the highway that extends from State Highway 264, in Fayetteville, northward to Pleasant Grove Road, in Lowell.

"This corridor began as a vision to provide an alternate choice for north-south connectivity east of Interstate 49 and U.S. Highway 71B," ARDOT Director

Scott Bennett told the crowd.

"Once the final section is completed, we will have an effective connection for north-south traffic that will take six- to eight-thousand vehicles off of Interstate 49 and Highway 71B every day. It will be good for mobility, safety and economic development."

Governor Hutchinson spoke to the crowd of what new highway corridors mean for the future.

"I live here, I understand this route, I understand the importance of it," Hutchinson stated. "We have to continue to invest in the growth of our State. New highways are part of that investment in growth. Infrastructure investments are necessary in order to attract new industry and to sustain the industry that we have. Soon, I will be asking our general assembly to develop a new highway

funding formula so that Arkansas can continue to invest in our highways and keep up with growth. Congratulations to ARDOT for this completion and to Crossland Construction for the job that they have done."

ARDOT has worked with local communities up and down the length of the new corridor.

"We appreciate the partnerships we have had with the local governments in northwest Arkansas," Bennett added. "Fayetteville and Springdale contributed close to \$15 million combined in partnership funding for this corridor."

Of the eight construction projects that make up the corridor, seven are now completed. The final project, extending from State Highway 264 southward to Randall Wobbe Lane, is substantially complete. ■



ARDOT Director Scott Bennett (right) presents Commissioner Trammel with a service plaque at his final meeting, January 2019.





Governor Hutchinson prepares to sign a new highway bill.

# ROAD TO THE FUTURE

## Governor Hutchinson Reveals Long-Term Highway Plan

BY DAVID NILLES

**W**ITH THE 92<sup>ND</sup> SESSION OF THE ARKANSAS STATE LEGISLATURE UNDERWAY IN LITTLE ROCK, A QUESTION ON MANY LEGISLATORS' MINDS WAS HOW TO FUND ARKANSAS' HIGHWAYS.

### LEADING THE WAY

Governor Asa Hutchinson provided some potential answers to that question on February 11 when he introduced a new long-term highway plan at the State Capitol.

"Ever since the legislative session began, everybody has been asking me what my plan is for a new long-term highway funding program for the State," Hutchinson told the crowd gathered in the Governor's conference room.

"The more important question is what kind of plan we can agree upon together. That is what we have been working hard to do over the last several months. Based upon our hard work, I am pleased to announce a \$300 million dollar highway funding plan for the State of Arkansas."

The plan represents the largest single highway plan in Arkansas history and will allow ARDOT to maintain the States' highways but also provide additional funding for capacity and capital improvement projects.

The Governor's plan consists of two parts. The first part of the plan would provide funding totaling \$95 million derived from a new index on gas and diesel fuel, additional registration fees for hybrid and electric vehicles and dedicated casino tax revenues. The second is an extension of the half-cent sales tax of 2012. The extension would total \$205 million a year for highways (see chart on page 11).

### WHAT IS IN IT FOR MOTORISTS?

How will the new highway plan benefit Arkansas' highway system? According to Governor Hutchinson, the first ten years of the program would allow the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) to:

- Maintain Arkansas' Interstates in good condition
- Improve most highways on the Arkansas Primary Highway Network (APHN)
- Improve highways not on the APHN
- Allow more maintenance on lesser traveled routes
- Replacement of all structurally deficient and posted bridges in Arkansas
- Provide a second Connecting Arkansas Program to address capital and capacity needs
- Allow additional funding for safety improvements

Counties and cities also would receive approximately \$114 million a year for their roadways.

"This is what a new highway program means to the people of Arkansas," Hutchinson stated. "This \$300 million level is significant because it is the top dollar amount that, in my judgment, the people of Arkansas can afford. What guides me is the worker in a rural part of Arkansas that must drive 30 miles every day to work and back and must put gas in the car. What guides my thinking is that farmer that has to get his product to market and is driving on a difficult road that is not properly maintained. So, this plan achieves the right balance. It is affordable, it is prudent for our budget and it is reasonable."

### APPROVAL AT THE VOTING BOOTH

The \$205 million obtained by the extension of the half-cent sales tax has been referred to the voters of Arkansas by an amendment through this year's current legislative session and will be voted on in November of 2020. That would allow time to set it in motion before the existing program expires.

A new index on gasoline and diesel would be equivalent to a 3-cent raise in the gasoline tax to 24.5 cents a gallon and a 6-cent increase in the diesel tax to 28.5 cents a gallon and would net \$58 million. The indexing would be limited to one tenth of one cent per year.

"This indexing is such a small amount that it should not have an adverse effect on motorists," Hutchinson commented.

### THE TIMING IS RIGHT

"This is a historic highway plan," Hutchinson added. "It is the largest in our State's history. It is designed so as not to jeopardize the general revenue funds critical for education and the other needs of our State. It is a balanced plan utilizing a new revenue source. It provides ARDOT multiple and growing revenue streams that have been deficient in the past."

According to ARDOT Director Scott Bennett, the timing is right for a new program for Arkansas' highways.

"We spent the last year and a half traveling the State talking to civic organizations, chambers of commerce and other groups. We came away from those meetings with the impression that people simply want better highways, and they understand if they are going to get better highways then we have to pay for them. Polling has shown that the people are in favor of a new program."

Joe Quinn, Executive Director of the Good Roads Foundation summarized the importance of the new program.

"We appreciate the Governor's leadership and the leadership of the Senate and the House. This is a meaningful and robust plan that will affect every small town and city in the State. This affects quality of life; it affects our work force, our businesses and our schools. We are proud to stand here today and remind the people of our State why this matters so much. The list of things that can be accomplished will impact tens of thousands of Arkansans."

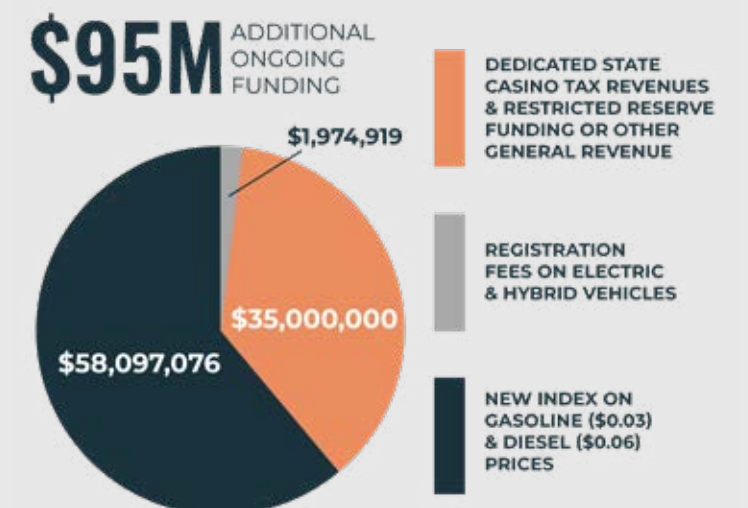
### GETTING APPROVAL AT THE CAPITOL

The new highway plan required a majority vote of the House and the Senate. After introducing the program to legislators and the public, the time arrived to get to work on the plan's approval.

So, this plan achieves the right balance. It is affordable, it is prudent for our budget and it is reasonable.

- GOVERNOR ASA HUTCHINSON

## LONG-TERM HIGHWAY PLAN





On February 20, the Senate Revenue and Taxation Committee recommended Senate approval of Senate Bill 336 by Senator Terry Rice of Waldron. Senate Bill 336 would raise \$95 million annually.

The following day, the Arkansas Senate approved the bill and sent it to the House.

"The Senate passage certainly gave us momentum as the House began consideration," Hutchinson said in a written statement.

On February 27, the House Revenue and Taxation Committee recommended House approval of Senate Bill 336.

"I am grateful for the bipartisan support that puts the good of the State first," Hutchinson added.

On March 4, the Arkansas House approved the plan.

"It is gratifying to work with members of the General Assembly who understand the dire need to fund the upkeep of our roads now and into the future," Hutchinson said in a written statement. "The passage of this historic bill is a solid and necessary measure to ensure we keep our roads in good repair, which is essential to commerce and quality of daily life."

On March 8, the Senate approved referring to voters in the 2020 general election a proposed constitutional amendment that would permanently extend the State's ½-cent sales tax for highways. Voters originally approved the tax in 2012 for just 10 years. House Joint Resolution 1018 by Representative Jeff Wardlaw, of Hermitage, will raise \$205 million a year more for ARDOT and \$43 million a year more for cities and counties.

"With the Senate's passage of HJR1018, and the legislature's passage of the \$95 million highway-funding bill earlier this week, the 92nd General Assembly has approved the largest and most comprehensive long-term highway funding plan in State history," said Governor Hutchinson. "Because of the passage of HJR1018, Arkansas voters will have the final word on funding for repairing and improving the roads they drive each and every day."

### ARKANSAS' HIGHWAY PLAN SIGNED INTO LEGISLATION

On March 12, Hutchinson came before the public and proudly signed the bill into legislation.

"This is an enormous lift," Hutchinson explained. "These highway funding bills got incredible support because the need is evident. This is historic in terms of both the program's size and what it will accomplish for the people. This is a balanced plan with new sources of revenue for our highways. It passed with the broadest bipartisan support that can be imagined in funding a highway program. That shows the level of need and support. We came together to get this job done. The voters will now make the decision on the largest part of the plan."

ARDOT Director Scott Bennett spoke of the future of the program.

"The majority of these new funds will be spent on taking care of what we have," Bennett commented. "There will also be a portion that will be spent on major capital and capacity projects. This is going to have a positive impact on every part of this State. Every corner of Arkansas is going to benefit." ■



This is going to have a positive impact on every part of this State. Every corner of Arkansas is going to benefit."

- ARDOT DIRECTOR SCOTT BENNETT

Local dignitaries ceremoniously break ground for the Maumelle interchange.



# Maumelle Interchange GROUNDBREAKING

BY BRITNI PADILLA-DUMAS

**M**ONDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2018, MARKED A MUCH-ANTICIPATED DAY FOR MANY IN CENTRAL ARKANSAS: THE DAY THAT THE FIRST SHOVEL BROKE GROUND FOR THE NEW MAUMELLE INTERCHANGE ON INTERSTATE 40.

"Today's groundbreaking signals the start of a project that's going to improve traffic operations in this area," ARDOT Director Scott Bennett told the crowd. "We hope this is going to help a growing area, make things safer, make things more efficient and provide better access."

The \$15 million project was awarded to the McGeorge Contracting Company of Little Rock. The new Interstate 40 interchange will be located approximately two miles west of Interstate 430. It will connect to Short Marche Road, which leads to Maumelle Boulevard (State Highway 100).

Maumelle Mayor Mike Watson spoke at the event: "I've been waiting on this day for 12 years and it's finally here. The citizens of Maumelle supported this project in a marked sales tax election. They chose to tax themselves to pay for the interchange."

Citizens of Maumelle contributed more than 75 percent of the estimated cost of the project.

Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson attended the ceremony. "This groundbreaking today reflects leadership and commitment by our local city leaders," Hutchinson said. "It reflects the demand of a growing state and community, and it reflects the local partnership that is so important to us. You cannot have growth without the successful development of infrastructure. I want to compliment Mayor Watson and the leadership of this City and all of those that worked hard to make sure the local funding was in place to make this interchange a reality." ■





# ARKANSAS HIGHWAY PROJECTS RECEIVE

# BUILD

BY DAVID NILLES

# GRANTS

**T**he U.S. Department of Transportation recently announced the recipients of \$1.5 billion in discretionary grant funding through the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation Grants program.

Arkansas was the recipient of two grants totaling \$45 million for ARDOT highway projects. The Hot Springs Bypass Extension was awarded \$20 million and the Interstate 49 Arkansas-Missouri Connector (Bella Vista Bypass) was awarded \$25 million.

Nationally, grant funding was provided for 91 projects in 49 states and the District of Columbia.

“BUILD transportation grants are major investments in road, rail, transit and port projects that serve as a down payment on this administration’s commitment to America’s infrastructure,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao.

The \$1.5 billion earmarked for this round of BUILD Transportation grants were appropriated by the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018.

The maximum grant award was \$25 million for a single project.

## HOT SPRINGS BYPASS EXTENSION

Plans for an extension of the U. S. Highway 270 Hot Springs Bypass received \$20 million from the program. ARDOT was the applicant for the grant. The bypass extension will begin at the interchange of U.S. Highway 70 on the east side of town and extend northward to the intersection of State Highways 5 and 7 near Fountain Lake. The existing bypass begins on the western side of Hot Springs and travels along the southern and eastern city limits to the intersection with U.S. Highway 70, east of the City.

The 5.5-mile bypass extension will consist of two 12-foot travel lanes and 8-foot shoulders and will be a fully controlled access facility. Total cost of the project is estimated at \$60 million. A contract is scheduled to be awarded in late 2019.

“ARDOT is excited about receiving this BUILD grant for the extension of the Hot Springs Bypass,” ARDOT Director Scott Bennett stated. “This extension will mean better access in and out of Hot Springs for motorists in the northern areas of Garland County. It will also reduce traffic on Highway 7 in the historic downtown area.”

## INTERSTATE 49 MISSOURI-ARKANSAS CONNECTOR

The Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission was the grant applicant for a project that will complete an approximately 4.8-mile, four-lane interstate facility in southwest Missouri.

The Commission has planning jurisdiction in Missouri’s neighboring McDonald County in addition to the northwest Arkansas region, which explains why an Arkansas entity could apply for a project in Missouri.

The new roadway will bypass U.S. Highway 71 in Missouri and connect to Interstate 49 at the Arkansas/Missouri border. The new facility will complete the last section of the Interstate 49 Arkansas/Missouri Connector. The BUILD grant award was for \$25 million. Total project cost is estimated at \$134.5 million. A contract for this project is scheduled to be awarded in 2022.

“This is exciting news for Northwest Arkansas and Southwest Missouri,” stated Arkansas Senator John Boozman. “Securing these funds for this project has taken years of vigorous and persistent advocating from my team. Our hard work has finally resulted in

funding for a project that will yield dividends when it comes to economic growth and quality of life in the region.”

Demand for BUILD grants far exceeded available funds, and the locally driven nature of the applications was clear in their volume and geographic diversity. The U.S. Department of Transportation received 851 eligible applications from all 50 states, as well as U.S. territories and the District of Columbia, nearly double the applications received in 2017. Overall, applicants in 2018 requested more than \$10.9 billion in funding.

Project applications were evaluated by a team of 222 staff members at the Department of Transportation and were selected based on established criteria. The criteria included safety, economic competitiveness, quality of life, environmental protection and state of good repair. Further criteria included innovation, such as projects supporting Autonomous Vehicles infrastructure, broadband service to underserved communities, as well as projects that demonstrate partnerships between the public and private sectors, and non-Federal revenue for transportation infrastructure investments. ■



## ARKANSAS' SCENIC BYWAYS:

# Taking the Scenic Route

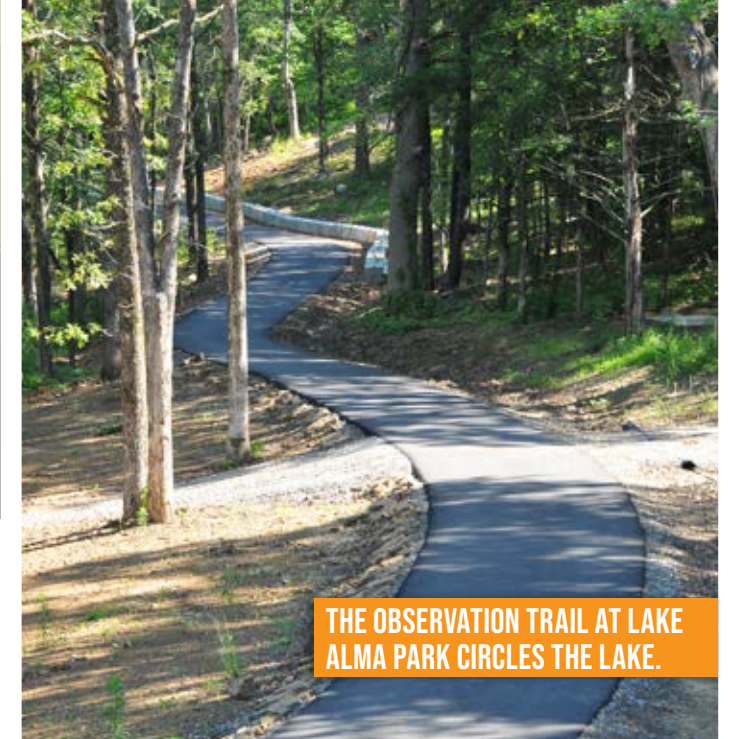
BY DAVID NILLES

Arkansas is the Natural State. Our highways provide incredible vistas that feature lakes, rivers, mountains, forests and much more. Within our borders are a select few highways that stand at the top of the list when it comes to great scenery and local flavor. They are Arkansas' Scenic Byways. This series looks at each one, allowing you to pick a favorite, chart a course and hit the open road.

**ROUTE:** Boston Mountain Scenic Loop

**POINTS:** Alma to Fayetteville

**LENGTH:** 96 miles roundtrip



THE OBSERVATION TRAIL AT LAKE ALMA PARK CIRCLES THE LAKE.

**T**WO VERY DIFFERENT HIGHWAYS MAKE UP THE BOSTON MOUNTAIN SCENIC LOOP IN NORTHWEST ARKANSAS. U.S. HIGHWAY 71 IS A TWO-LANE ROADWAY AND FORMER STAGECOACH ROUTE. INTERSTATE 49 IS A FOUR-LANE, DIVIDED HIGHWAY WITH CONTROLLED ACCESS. RUNNING PARALLEL TO EACH OTHER, THEY FORM ARKANSAS' ONLY SCENIC LOOP. THIS DRIVE TAKES MOTORISTS ACROSS THE HIGHEST REGION OF THE OZARK MOUNTAINS AND OFFERS UNENDING VIEWS OF THOSE MOUNTAINS AND AREA FARMLANDS LYING IN THE VALLEYS BELOW.



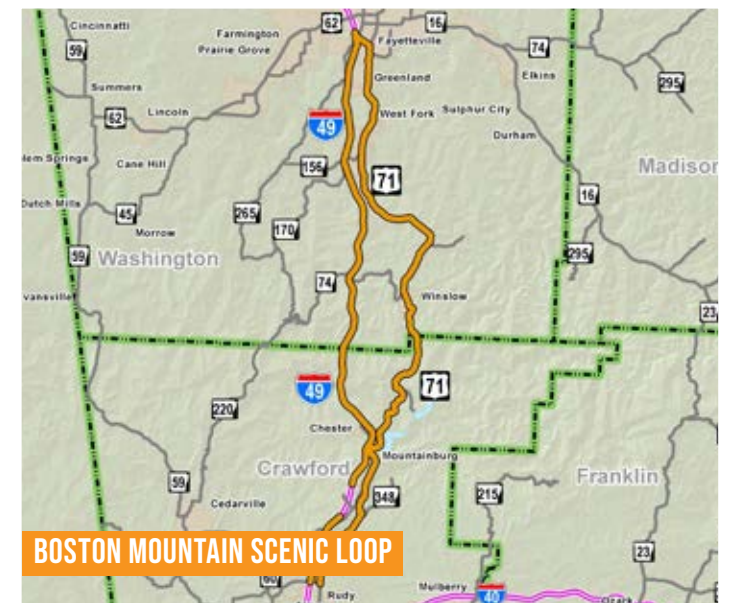
The loop begins on Highway 71 at Alma. First stop is **LAKE ALMA OBSERVATION TRAIL AND PARK** and the opportunity to take a leisurely walk through the woods. Hiking the entire 3.8-mile trail, you will enjoy beautiful views of the shoreline and loop back to the fishing dock from across the dam. A shorter, family-friendly hike is the forty-minute walk to the waterfall and back. As you enjoy the trail, keep your eyes open for wildlife such as rabbits, foxes or deer.

Leaving Alma and driving north, the next stop is the town of Mountainburg and the second lake on the Boston Scenic Loop. It is found at **LAKE FORT SMITH STATE PARK**. A beautiful multi-use area in the Boston Mountain Valley of the Ozarks, Lake Fort Smith offers camping, fishing, kayaking, hiking and mountain biking. For backpackers, it is the western terminus of the 240-mile Ozark Highlands Trail. The park has 30 campsites, 10 cabins, a swimming pool, marina with boat rentals, pavilion, picnic sites and group facilities including a dining hall and two group lodges. The visitor center houses a replica pioneer log cabin and covered wagon with exhibits and programs on the early history of the area. The park is a great place to settle in and spend a few days.

As the loop continues north a few miles, the next stop is at **ARTIST POINT** and a great view of Saddle Canyon. Lake Fort Smith is visible in the distance. This is one of the most scenic views on the loop, so, have your camera ready. Be sure to step into the gift shop for jams, jellies, interesting geodes, crafts and more. Discover the many hummingbirds that come to the feeders in the back windows of the store.

Continue northward to Winslow and make mealtime at **GRANDMA'S HOUSE CAFÉ**. The southern cooking is some of the best to be found in the area, but the real highlight here is the homemade pie buffet. Pick from half a dozen pie flavors. No one leaves here hungry!

Next stop on the two-lane segment of the scenic loop is the town of West Fork and **RIVERSIDE PARK**. There isn't a more scenic park in this area. Walk one of three trails along the bluffs of the White River. There is swimming, fishing and plenty of open space



BOSTON MOUNTAIN SCENIC LOOP

for picnics.

Leaving the scenic hills and valleys, Highway 71 leads into Fayetteville where there is always plenty to see and do. First stop should be the **ARKANSAS AIR & MILITARY MUSEUM** just as you enter town. Follow the colorful history of aviation in Arkansas and American military conflicts through numerous displays of original artifacts and aviation memorabilia! The historic aircraft found in the museum are unusual among museum exhibits because many of them still fly. Static displays at the museum range from the golden age of aviation to the jet age and include Vietnam-era Army helicopters and a Navy carrier fighter jet.

The campus of the **UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS** is a highlight of any visit to Fayetteville. Founded in 1871, the first class that attended graduated eight students. More than 145 years later, the school's enrollment is 27,500 with students representing all 50

(continued on page 18)



Lake Fort Smith State Park



Riverside Park at West Fork





Devil's Den State Park

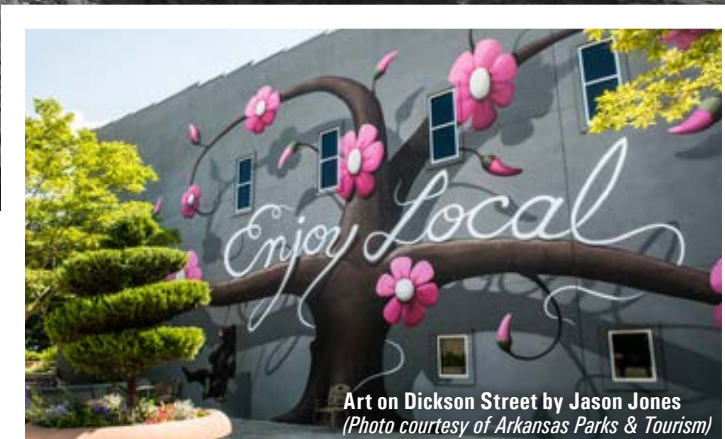
states and 120 countries. The university offers 84 undergraduate majors, 88 Master's degree programs and 54 doctoral and specialist programs. Be sure to take in Old Main and the outdoor amphitheater. For sports fans, step inside Bud Walton Arena as well as Reynolds Razorback Stadium and Baum Stadium.

For history buffs, plan a visit to the **CLINTON HOUSE MUSEUM**, the first home of Bill and Hillary Clinton. The Clinton House Museum and its collections interpret the lives of President Clinton and Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton during the time they lived in Fayetteville and occupied the home at 930 W. Clinton Drive. Visitors will experience a well-preserved, 1931 Tudor-revival style home. The various exhibits include memorabilia from Clinton's early political career, including his campaigns for U.S. House of Representatives and Arkansas Attorney General, and a faithful replica of Hillary's wedding dress. On the grounds is the First Ladies Garden, where the favorite flowers of all 47 First Ladies are planted.

While in Fayetteville, be sure to take a stroll along **DICKSON STREET** for the many popular sights and sounds to be found there. For one of the best burgers around, stop in at **HUGO'S** on Block Avenue. It is a local favorite at mealtime.

Leaving town, the Boston Scenic Loop makes its way west to Interstate 49 and begins its return southward towards Alma.

The west side of the loop offers additional impressive mountain vistas and several bridges with views into the valleys below.



Art on Dickson Street by Jason Jones  
(Photo courtesy of Arkansas Parks & Tourism)

Just off Interstate 49 near Winslow is **DEVIL'S DEN STATE PARK**. The park is one of the most intact Civilian Conservation Corps sites in the United States featuring wood and stone structures built in the 1930s. There is plenty to do here with hiking, camping, fishing, horseback riding trails, a swimming pool and more. Devil's Den has cabins and campsites available for those who want to stay a while and enjoy the slow pace the park offers.

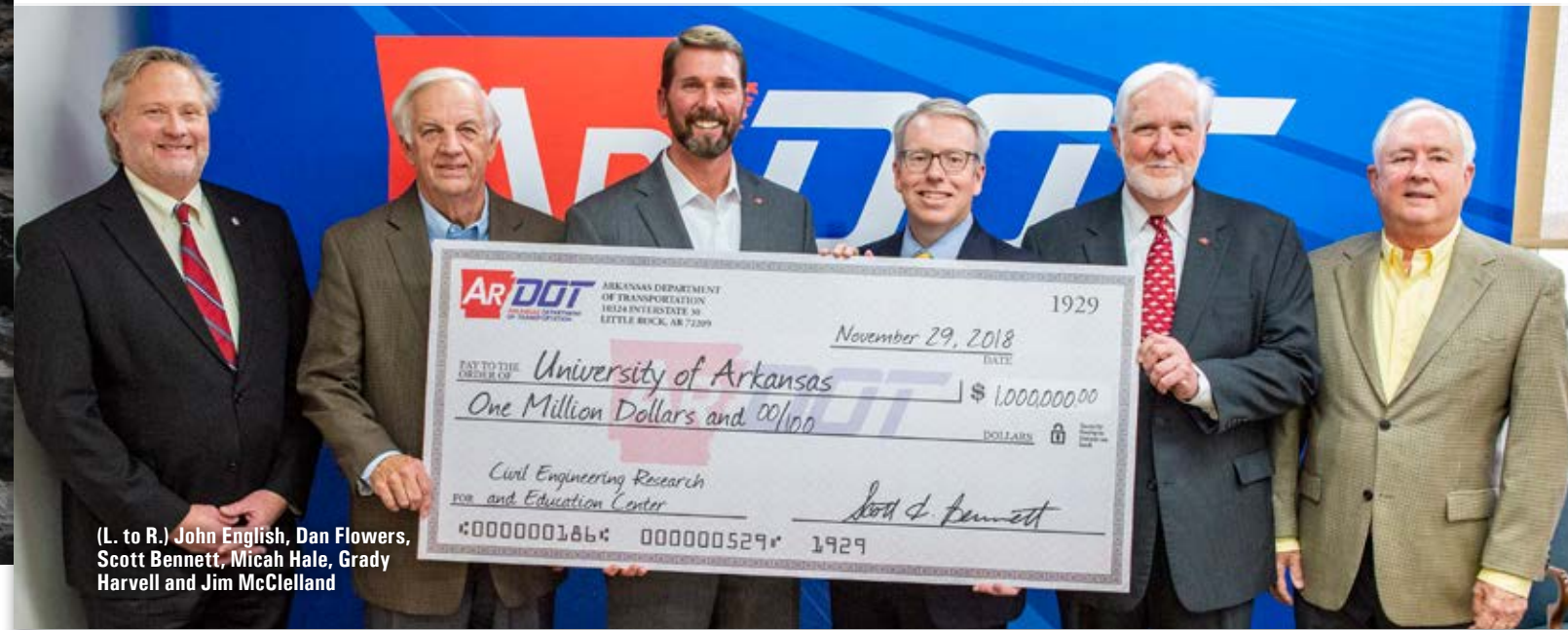
Returning to Interstate 49, be sure to notice the twin Interstate bridges that cross over Hess Creek. These are the tallest bridges in Arkansas standing at 210 feet above the ground.

It is just a few miles south to the **BOBBY HOPPER TUNNEL**, the only tunnel on Arkansas' highway system. The tunnel was constructed in 1999 and was named after the chairman of the Arkansas Highway Commission at the time. Its twin bores measure approximately one-third mile in length. A prominent feature of the tunnel is its noticeable inclined gradient.

The scenic loop comes out of the mountains and back into the Arkansas River Valley as it makes its way back to Alma and Interstate 40. ■

# TRANSPORTATION GRANT PROVIDED FOR Future UA Engineering Research Center

BY DAVID NILLES



(L. to R.) John English, Dan Flowers, Scott Bennett, Micah Hale, Grady Harvell and Jim McClelland

**THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION RECENTLY AWARDED A GRANT OF ONE MILLION DOLLARS TO THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING THROUGH THE TRANSPORTATION-RELATED RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAM.**

The award brings construction of a new Civil Engineering Research and Education Center (CEREC) at the University one step closer.

The Center will be the first macro-scale structural engineering laboratory in the State and will be a living laboratory for students to gain practical experience in the areas of materials and structural engineering.

"In 2017, the Legislature passed Act 705 creating the Transportation Related Research Grant Program to make this type of contribution to Arkansas universities possible," stated ARDOT Director Scott Bennett. "ARDOT had six applications, and the University's new lab was selected for the grant."

The new Center will complement the technical knowledge students acquire in the classroom. It will also serve as a hub of innovation and research for the steel, timber and concrete industries in Arkansas and throughout the region, helping develop solutions to real-world challenges that civil engineers face.

"There are great doors that are going to open because of this new Center," stated John English, Dean of the College of Engineering at the University.

"Our hope is to have a groundbreaking for the new facility in late spring."

ARDOT has enjoyed a long history with the University of Arkansas School of Engineering. The Department has had over 200 research projects completed or ongoing with the school. In addition, ARDOT is the largest employer of civil engineers in the State.

"The impact that ARDOT has had on our research enterprise at the University has been dramatic. In turn, this Center will impact the State of Arkansas, ARDOT, the steel and timber industries and the quality of the education our engineering students will receive at the University of Arkansas."

The new Center will also be accessible to students in other engineering programs from across the State.

"The purpose of this Center is to educate all of Arkansas' engineers," stated Jim McClelland, Chairman Emeritus of McClelland Consulting Engineers, Inc. and a University of Arkansas graduate. "We are creating a legacy here that will last for years."

"It started with a dream, and soon the University will turn dirt to make CEREC a reality," Bennett shared. ■



# PROJECT FUNDING PROVIDES AN Alternative to the Automobile

BY DAVID NILLES



Big Dam Bridge River Trail



Hot Springs Greenway Trail



Delta Heritage Trail  
*(Photo courtesy of Arkansas Parks & Tourism)*



Indian Rock House Cave Trail in Fairfield Bay  
*(Photo courtesy of Arkansas Parks & Tourism)*

**W**HEN IT COMES TO GETTING FROM POINT A TO POINT B, MOST OF US RELY ON OUR AUTOMOBILES. ARDOT's Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and Recreational Trails Program (RTP) provide federal funding for projects that enable us to leave the car behind and enjoy the outdoors in ways that are more adventurous.

TAP provides federal funding for programs and projects defined by the Federal Highway Administration as "transportation alternatives" for pedestrians, bicyclists, safe routes to school projects and other non-motorized forms of transportation.

It is authorized by the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act and is a reimbursement-type grant program that provides for an 80 percent Federal share and a 20 percent local match from eligible applicants. Typically, applicants include cities, schools and some non-profit agencies.

Under the TAP program, eligible projects can include construction of on-road and off-road trail facilities that include sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle signals, lighting and other safety-related infrastructure. Conversion of abandoned railroad corridors for pedestrian and bicycle trails is also eligible.

"We had a total of 30 projects awarded in Arkansas for 2018," stated Kim Sanders, Program Management Specialist for ARDOT. "They totaled just over \$8 million."

Among the TAP projects awarded was the design of the Southwest Trail, a 65-mile paved, recreational trail extending from Little Rock to Hot Springs. Funding for the next phases of the Delta Heritage Trail in southeast Arkansas and the Craighead Forest Greenway Trail in Jonesboro was also awarded.

The Recreational Trails Program is funded through a portion of TAP funds set aside specifically for recreational trails. These funds are eligible for maintenance and restoration of existing trails, development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages and construction of new trails.

"Sixteen recreational trail projects were awarded for 2018 totaling \$1.6 million," Sanders added. "The City of Conway will begin Phase 1 of the Stone Dam Creek Trail. Also awarded were funds for a walking and biking trail at Arkansas State University at Mountain Home and for the Indian Rock House Cave Trail in Fairfield Bay."

A news release listing all of Arkansas' grant recipients can be found on the ARDOT website at [www.ardot.gov](http://www.ardot.gov) under the "Archived News" section of the homepage. The release is listed under "November 2018." ■

# GOVERNOR APPOINTS KEITH GIBSON TO HIGHWAY COMMISSION

BY DAVID NILLES



Historic downtown Fort Smith



Keith Gibson  
New Arkansas State Highway Commissioner

**G**overnor Asa Hutchinson joined approximately 100 business leaders, family and friends at the Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce on January 2 to introduce Keith Gibson of Fort Smith as the newest member of the Arkansas Highway Commission.

"This is a good way to kick off 2019," Governor Hutchinson told the crowd. "I spent a great deal of time on this because this is one of the most important appointments in the State of Arkansas. There has never been a more important time in our State's history than right now to have the





**"I understand that building and maintaining the highway infrastructure is critical to our growth and economic development." - Keith Gibson**



right highway Commissioners and leadership as we head into the future."

Gibson replaced Commission Chairman Dick Trammel of Rogers whose term on the Commission ended in January.

"I thank Mr. Trammel for his 10 years of service on the Commission and how he represented the entire State so well," the Governor stated.

Gibson is president and chairman of the board of Pinnacle Communications

and Pinnacle Telecom in Fort Smith. He served as president of both the Arkansas Telephone Association and the Oklahoma Telephone Association. He was an organizing member, stockholder and board member of Benefit Bank in Fort Smith, and he has served on boards of various civic, charitable and political organizations.

Before introducing Gibson, Governor Hutchinson addressed the future and the upcoming work with the Arkansas

legislature. "We are asking the General Assembly to make a recommendation on a new highway funding plan," Hutchinson stated. "The voice of our Commissioners is critical as we work with the General Assembly to shape a new plan for the State of Arkansas. "What I like about Keith is that he likes people, and he understands people. Keith understands rural Arkansas as well as the growing parts

of this State. He is a businessman and a thought leader. He is going to be a great Highway Commissioner." After his introduction, Gibson addressed the work that lies ahead. "I understand the importance of this appointment for the people of Arkansas that we all serve. I will represent the Arkansas River Valley and the State to the best of my ability. I am anxious to work with my fellow Commissioners over the coming

months and years. "I understand that building and maintaining the highway infrastructure is critical to our growth and economic development. I look forward to the challenge that we all face. I love Fort Smith, I love the state of Arkansas, and I thank Governor Hutchinson for the trust and confidence that he has shown in me. I am ready to get started." Gibson is the first person to be

appointed to the Commission from the Arkansas River Valley since Jake Patterson of Lavaca was appointed in 1969. Gibson graduated from the University of Arkansas with a bachelor's degree in Public Administration and a master's in Business Administration. He received his juris doctorate from the University of Arkansas School of Law in 1983. Gibson and his wife, Jill, live in Fort Smith. ■





Bruce Street with his RSOV, Ford GPW and M988 military vehicles.



RSOV (Ranger Special Operations Vehicle)



Buck (G503)



M998 (Humvee)

# BRUCE STREET MILITARY VEHICLES

BY BRITNI PADILLA-DUMAS

## THE KING OF BATTLE

In August of 1944, Sergeant Gene Street of the 14th Armored Division began his combat tour in Europe during World War II. Artillery missions took him through France and Germany, encountering and capturing Germans, and to The Berghof residence—Hitler’s mountain retreat in the Bavarian Alps in Obersalzberg.

Gene Street safely returned home in 1946 and later fathered Bruce Street, ARDOT’s District 5 Engineer.

“I grew up sitting on my dad’s knee and listening to his war stories, and that’s the bug that bit me,” Street recalled. “I’ve been interested in and collecting military surplus equipment since my pre-teen years. Back in the 60s, my mom would bring me to Batesville to shop. She would leave me at the old ‘Army-Navy

Store’ until she was ready to return home. I loved that place; I can still remember the old canvas smell that is indicative of military field gear.”

Street is a member of the Arkansas chapter of the Military Vehicle Preservation Association (MVPA), a non-profit organization with a mission to preserve United States’ military history and honor the veterans who have served. The MVPA participates in various parades, rallies, patriotic celebrations, and lectures.

## RANGERS LEAD THE WAY!

“My first vehicle was the RSOV—Ranger Special Operations Vehicle. It is Land Rover-based. The Rangers saw the British version in Desert Storm, and they out-performed the Hummers.”

After the Rangers of the 75th Ranger Regiment were deployed during the Persian Gulf War from 1990-1991, they ordered 60

RSOVs in 1992. Unlike the High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV, also known to civilians as Humvee or Hummer), the RSOV could be readily transported by helicopters and provided the Rangers rapid mobility. The RSOV was the vehicle of choice for the 75th as it could carry up to seven Rangers, a .50 Caliber machine gun or a MK19 40mm automatic grenade launcher, an M249 machine gun, ammunition, fuel and other battle gear. However, as the theatre changed after September 11 to more guerilla warfare, the rise of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) pushed for the necessary transition to armored HMMWVs. Street has one of only three known restored RSOVs.

## IT’S A HUMMER

Street’s next addition to his collection was a Humvee, or High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV), an M998 in military nomenclature. The Humvee is what many think of today



regarding military vehicles. AM General began preliminary design work of prototypes in 1979 and received a contract in 1983. The trucks began to see combat in Operation Just Cause in Panama in 1989. As the guerilla insurgency during the Global War on Terrorism increased, the Humvee designs changed to include armor to protect soldiers from improvised explosive devices.

“My HMMWV is one of the early models. Its year of production is 1988, and it was used by the Military Police. It is 100 percent original and required no restoration.”

## BUCK

Bruce’s most recent historic vehicle is a 1945 jeep the Army called a G503.

“This one is dedicated to my dad. He was a buck sergeant, so we named it Buck. This would have been exactly what my Dad traveled across Europe in. This example was built by Ford and is

stenciled to signify the Headquarters Battery of the 14th Armored Division, which is the unit my dad served in.”

During World War II, the Willys MB (Model B) and Ford GPW were known to the Army as the G503, commonly known as a jeep. Ford was given the rights to produce an exact copy of the MB, and most people cannot tell the difference between the two manufactures. However, the GPW has minor differences that can be identified by someone who has studied both models. Buck is one of about a quarter million jeeps produced by Ford during WWII.

“The neat thing about this particular vehicle is the serial number on the chassis and engine match, which is very rare. Not many of these vehicles survived in their original configuration, but this one did! This was a two-year restoration project. When I got the jeep, it was a rolling chassis and everything else was in boxes. It sat in my barn for two years.”

Street took Buck’s pieces to BJ Smith in

Marshall, one of the finest restorers in the industry.

“He’s an expert on jeeps. BJ knows what is correct for each specific year of production and, depending on your budget, can restore it to as close to original as you’d like. Everything he does will be according to the original manufacture specs,” Street said.

Smith had ensured every detail of the jeep was precise, down to the “F” (for “Ford”) stamp on bolts and seats. From the felt air deflector kit to the historically accurate electrical wiring, this jeep looks as if it arrived here from a time machine.

## A NEW MISSION FOR OLD TRUCKS

Bruce Street isn’t the only ARDOT affiliate with military vehicles. District Five has some de-militarized freightliners that have been converted into dump trucks (see the March/April 2017 issue of *Arkansas Highways*). The Department has also acquired Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Trucks, or HEMTTs. The HEMTTs are used in winter weather events, and the tanker, named Sully, can haul 2,000 gallons and is used to wash bridges.

## AN APPRECIATION FOR HISTORY

It’s clear that Street is passionate about his hobby:

“When I was in grade school, I thought that every flat fender jeep was a military jeep. That’s not the case—actually, most of them are not military. After the War, Willys marketed a civilian version of the military jeep known as the CJ2A. CJ stands for “Citizens Jeep,” and it was the model designation for their vehicles until the rights to build the Jeep were sold to Chrysler in 1987. They produced the first Wrangler. I enjoy learning the history and details about military equipment. I research, ask a lot of questions, talk to others and hunt for items I need constantly. There is always something new to learn. I make lists and look for parts and equipment to make them complete. I like them to appear as if they are ready for a mission. I’ve got another jeep in the barn waiting to be restored,” he grinned. “It’s a Willys MB with a date of delivery in June 1944.” ■



RSOV (Ranger Special Operations Vehicle)



# EYES IN THE SKY

BY BRITNI PADILLA-DUMAS



**A**RDOT has always employed radio dispatchers but recently was able to upgrade its Radio Room to a Traffic Management Center (TMC). TMCs often function as a “mission control” for urban areas, monitoring traffic and dispatching emergency vehicles when necessary.

Radio dispatchers, traffic management operators and public information personnel staff ARDOT’s TMC. The radio dispatchers communicate with Arkansas Highway Police while they’re conducting traffic stops and inspections. The traffic management operators watch several traffic cameras simultaneously, searching for incidents or stalled vehicles. The public information personnel monitor cameras and IDriveArkansas’ traffic flow and push information through Twitter for the traveling public.

“If we notice there’s an incident, like a wreck or a stalled vehicle, we can immediately dispatch services there to assist and get the road clear,” explained Tony Sullivan, recently retired Assistant Chief Engineer of Operations. “We can now respond quicker than we ever have before.”

A traffic management operator monitors our traffic cameras, also available to the public on IDriveArkansas.com, and studies current traffic flow. When they find an incident, they can collect information in a program that populates to IDriveArkansas and generates an informational tweet on Twitter for motorists’ awareness.

Public information personnel also monitor the incident, provide updates via Twitter when possible and are available to answer

questions via the Arkansas Road Conditions hotline.

The TMC is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Employees monitor 20 television screens mounted on the front wall from their stations, equipped with multiple computer screens. Two rows of desks fill the dimly-lit room; the front row hosts the radio dispatchers and their equipment, while the back row is home to the traffic management operators and the public information personnel.

Prior to the development of the TMC, the radio dispatchers were working with antiquated equipment that needed upgrading, even for exclusive dispatching purposes.

“Our old radio room was not equipped with the technology that our TMC provides,” reported Communications Coordinator Monica Saffle. “The additional work space allows us to better serve the public and continue our work with Highway Police.”

The Arkansas Highway Commission authorized ARDOT to conduct a study to determine the estimated cost for the facility. Sullivan personally visited TMCs in Tennessee and Alabama to get some ideas for the one in Arkansas.

“We hired a consultant and asked them to tell us the most efficient way to build and staff a TMC. We were able to be more fiscally responsible by using a general design on our current campus,” he said. “It’s a matter of getting as much information out there that we can to help people navigate our highways. We need to see what’s going on, monitor traffic flow and detect incidents as quickly as we can so that we can divert traffic. The more devices we have in the field, the more capabilities we have of managing traffic.” ■





# SIMULATOR RE-ENFORCES GOOD DRIVING HABITS

BY DAVID NILLES

**IT ONLY TAKES A COUPLE OF SECONDS TO REACH DOWN FOR YOUR PHONE OR FOR A COFFEE CUP WHEN YOU ARE BEHIND THE WHEEL.**

Two driver simulators from L3 Technologies recently stationed at District 6 can show you what might happen when you do just that. You may swerve off the road, or someone may dart across the highway in front of you. For ARDOT employees who operate machinery out on the highways, better for it to happen in a traffic simulator than in real life.

More than 70 crewmembers from Districts 1, 5 and 6 recently spent time in the traffic simulators from L3 Technologies of Salt Lake City.

The simulators provide hands-on training for drivers, offering experience without risks to people or equipment.

“Our simulators put drivers in any number of scenarios with the main goal of seeing how they are going to react to situations on our highways,” stated Steve Tatum with L3. “It’s a good tool to reinforce good driving habits.”

In the simulator, drivers sit in front of three video screens in a replica of a truck cab that features everything that one would find in an actual cab.

“Our simulators can recreate anything that may happen out on the road,” Tatum shared. “That may include failing brakes, snow, rain, low fuel or sliding on a slippery surface. With the simulators, we can program in hazards to see how the drivers will react.”

The test observes speed management, space management and start up procedures. It all begins as soon as the seat belt is fastened. The day of our visit, drivers were operating simulated snowplows.

Immediately following the driving test, L3 has drivers participate in a classroom presentation where they learn best driving practices.

“This isn’t a pass or fail course,” Tatum added. “What is important is what you learn from it. The situations we simulate here target skill development and increase the driver’s situational awareness, self-awareness and critical thinking skills.”

Ideally, what is learned from the simulator course will make ARDOT crewmembers more alert and aware of potential situations they may encounter while operating equipment on the highways. Additional simulator classes are scheduled for crews around the State, and that translates into increased safety for crewmembers and Arkansas’ motorists. ■

## Dear ARDOT

**On** December 3, 2018, at approximately 2:40AM, a Charter Bus crash occurred on Interstate 30 at Exit 111 in Saline County, Arkansas. The bus contained 46 passengers, the majority of them children from an all-star football team out of Memphis, Tennessee. The bus left the roadway, travelled down an embankment, rolled over on its side and struck several trees.

This mass casualty event resulted in one fatality and a significant number of injuries. Numerous law enforcement agencies, fire/rescue agencies, medical agencies and hospitals worked as a team to provide assistance and medical aid to these crash victims. The Arkansas State Police were assisted by your agency in this mass casualty event, and we are grateful to the Arkansas Highway Police.

I had the opportunity to meet with the accident victims and family members the morning of the accident. These families were very complimentary of all the agencies involved in helping the accident victims and were very appreciative of the hospitality of the people of Arkansas.

The men and women of the Arkansas State Police want to thank you and your agency for your participation and assistance in this tragic event. In this type of situation, no one agency can handle such an event without the mutual aid from other agencies.

If the Arkansas State Police can ever be of any assistance, please don't hesitate to call.

Sincerely,  
**William J. Bryant**  
Colonel, Arkansas State Police

### LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT ISSUE

I am a fairly new resident of Arkansas, having only lived here a little less than 10 years.

I picked up a copy of your *Arkansas Highways* magazine at the Bella Vista Welcome Center recently. If your “distribution to the public” includes mailing to my home, please start with the next issue after the Nov/Dec issue, 2018.

I have enjoyed living here in Arkansas very much. I moved here after marrying one of your ladies – whom I had known for many years before she moved here from Oklahoma. I was born and raised there and, for me, can truthfully say, “Oklahoma is a nice place to be FROM!”

I have been a volunteer with the Lowell Historical Museum and have really enjoyed learning about the history of Arkansas. I especially liked your most recent issue talking about the Scenic Byways. I have recently traveled two scenic highways, one on Fed 412 in Oklahoma and State Highway 16 in western Arkansas. That one is especially scenic through the Ozark National Forest. I want to go back and meander around some more in the forest.

None of my native ancestors were involved in The Trail of Tears because my Great Great Grandfather moved to Tennessee from Georgia in 1828—then on to SW Missouri before 1855. I have always shied away from reading about The Trail of Tears because of how politicians in Washington mistreated the [Native Americans].

I am looking forward to the next issue of your magazine!

Leon Estes

### LOCAL BRIDGE INSPECTORS

I wanted to say that the local ARDOT bridge inspectors in Madison County are doing an outstanding job of inspecting the bridges. They are always out, even if it rains outside. That, to me, is dedication. I do not know their names, but I believe they deserve a raise or something. Especially inspecting the bridges on Highway 412. Thank you for your time. Have a wonderful day.

Chad Parker



# TIPS FOR DRIVING AWARENESS

BY GABRIELLE DAVIS



**W**ITH A MINIMUM LENGTH OF 48 FEET AND MAXIMUM WIDTH OF 8.5 FEET, SEMI-TRUCKS ARE EASILY SOME OF THE MOST INTIMIDATING VEHICLES ON THE ROAD.

It is no surprise, then, that many Arkansans fear having an unfortunate run-in with one of these large trucks. While fatal crashes with commercial motor vehicles (CMV) are less frequent than those caused by inattention or drunk driving, accidents involving semi-trucks can be more lethal due to their large sizes. For those who would like some extra assurance when it comes to semis, here are some safety tips:

**1 Pay attention to the road.** Distracted driving is one of the number one causes of car accidents in Arkansas. Attentive driving will allow you to see and respond quickly to any incidents that may arise.

**2 Pay attention to other drivers.** Even if you are a safe driver, other drivers on the road may not be. Swerving, inconsistent speeds and other unsafe driving practices could put you in even more danger when around semi-trucks.

**3 Use your signal lights.** Using your signal lights, along with other safe driving practices, will notify truck drivers of your intentions to turn or change lanes. This simple action could prevent confusion on the roadways.

**4 Know and avoid a CMV's blind spots when possible.** Large trucks have blind spots just like any other vehicle. However, due to their length, it is much easier to get caught in one of these blind spots for long amounts of time. When in one of these "no-zones," the driver cannot see you and may put you in danger

while stopping, turning or changing lanes. Blind spots are located 20 feet in front of and 30 feet behind the semi. On the left and the right, these blind spots extend one traffic lane and two traffic lanes respectively.

**5 Avoid passing a turning semi, on the right side especially.** Passing a semi-truck while it is turning is extremely dangerous because it has such a wide turn. However, attempting to pass on the right side is particularly dangerous. Regardless of whether or not the truck is turning, the right-side blind spot runs the length of the entire truck, excluding the small area visible in the mirror.

**6 Keep a safe distance between your vehicle and the semi.** Due to their large size, semi-trucks have difficulty stopping or turning quickly. Minimize your chances of an accident by giving them adequate space to maneuver. Also, avoid cutting directly in front of a semi; should you misjudge speed or distance, the driver may not have enough time to react.

**7 Look for the truck's mirrors.** If you are unsure of whether or not your vehicle is in a truck's blind spot, look for the truck's side mirrors. If you can see them, then the driver can also see you.

**8 Make note of weather conditions.** Just like smaller vehicles, semi-trucks have to adapt to certain weather conditions like rain, ice or snow, which could make the ground slick. In order to avoid an accident, give these trucks more space or drive slower.

DISTRICT 10

## CONSTRUCTION

## CORNER



**C**onstruction continues in Greene County on the U.S. Highway 412 bypass of Paragould.

The project was awarded to Dumey Contracting, Inc. of Benton, Missouri, for \$12.8 million in January 2017. Crews began work in the spring of that year.

The five-mile, two-lane roadway is being constructed on a new location. This project is completing the southwest section of the bypass. Improvements extend from Highway 412 on the west side of the city southward to U.S. Highway 49 on the south edge of town.

Crews expect to have this section of the bypass completed in late summer of this year. ■







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