

Arkansas Highways

WINTER 2006-2007



Director's Message

The close of calendar year 2006 brought the end of our celebration of the 50th anniversary of our Interstate highway system in the United States. Motorists in our country travel over 650 billion miles on our Interstate system each year. Add to that the fact that vehicle travel is expected to increase over 40 percent by the year 2025 and you can see that transportation departments all over the country have their work cut out for them in the years ahead. I'm confident that all on



our staff at the AHTD will, as usual, give their best effort to insure that we address the increased demand on Arkansas' Interstate system.

We want to welcome former State Senator Cliff Hoofman to the Highway Commission. A native of Judsonia, Arkansas, Cliff served in the State Senate for 20 years and in the House of Representatives for eight years. He also served in the Attorney General's Office as Director of Legislative Affairs for four years. I'm sure I speak for the entire Commission when I say that we look forward to working with him.

We also want to say thank you to our friend and former member of the Arkansas State Highway Commission Prissy Hickerson of Texarkana. Ms. Hickerson's term on the Commission ended in January. During her ten-year term on the Commission, the Department saw the successful implementation of the Interstate Rehabilitation Program, cut the ribbon on a number of new highways, began new programs such as the Litter Hotline, and opened four new Arkansas Welcome Centers. I want to personally thank her for her hard work, the direction she provided and her support of Department employees.

Congratulations are in order for the AHTD's Rodeo team that traveled to Savannah, Georgia, this past fall to compete in the 2006 Southern Regional Equipment Operators Rodeo. For the 4th consecutive year, the AHTD team came back to Arkansas as Rodeo Champions. You can read more about the Rodeo in this issue of Arkansas Highways.

The accomplishments of this past year are a direct reflection of the hard work and dedication of our Highway Commission members and the employees of the AHTD across the state. I am confident that we will have many successes in 2007 as we work hard to address the many needs on our highway system.


Director of Highways and Transportation

ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION



Jonathan Barnett
Chairman



Carl S. Rosenbaum
Vice Chairman



R. Madison Murphy
Member



John Ed Regenold
Member



Cliff Hoofman
Member

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Front: Scenic U.S. Highway 65 in Searcy County.

Back: Scenic Byway 23 in Franklin County.

New Commissioner Appointed By Beebe

Governor Mike Beebe has named former State Senator Cliff Hoofman of North Little Rock to the Arkansas State Highway Commission. He replaces Prissy Hickerson of Texarkana, whose term expired in January.

A native of Judsonia, Arkansas, Hoofman served in the State Senate for 20 years and in the House of Representatives for eight years. While in the Senate, he was chairman of the Budget Committee and chair of the Legislative Council. After his tenure in the legislature, Hoofman served four years in the Attorney General's office as Director of Legislative Affairs. Before serving at the Capitol, Hoofman worked two years as City Attorney for North Little Rock.

"Cliff is the one individual in my 20 years in the Senate who's the most committed to highways and their needs, more than anyone else I served with," Governor Beebe said. "It was a pretty logical choice, really."



New Highway Commissioner Cliff Hoofman (3rd from left) with (l. to r.) Commissioner John Ed Regenold, former Commissioner Prissy Hickerson, Governor Mike Beebe, Commission Chairman Jonathan Barnett, AHTD Director Dan Flowers and Commissioner Carl Rosenbaum.

"We look forward to working with Cliff. We're excited about the expertise he brings to the table when it comes to providing Arkansans with a good highway system," stated AHTD Director Dan Flowers.

While serving in the Senate and House, Hoofman was known for his expertise regarding highway funding issues.

"One of my major interests throughout my legislative career was the highways,"

Hoofman stated. "I'm excited to now be able to participate more fully in what's going on with the roadways of the state."

"Hoofman's knowledge of State Government and its inner workings will be a real asset to the Commission," added Commission Chairman Jonathan Barnett.

Hoofman will serve on the Highway Commission until January of 2017.

Chief Engineer Bob Walters Retires

Bob Walters, Chief Engineer, retired from the AHTD December 20th, 2006. Walters was with the Department since 1972 and was Chief Engineer since July of 1998.

He began as a Civil Engineer II in the Roadway Design Division. He became Assistant Section Head of the General Design Section in 1975, and Section Head of the Freeway Design Section in 1977. Walters was promoted to Division Head of Roadway Design in 1979 where he remained until being named Assistant Chief Engineer for Design in 1987. He obtained his position of Chief Engineer in 1998.

Walters distinguished himself in the highway engineering community, both locally and nationally. He received numerous awards for his work on geometric design standards. Walters was named recipient of the American Association of

State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Region II Design Award in 1989 and received the AASHTO Highway Subcommittee on Design's National Award for Outstanding Service in 1993 and 2000.

He is active in AASHTO and most recently served as Vice Chairman of the Subcommittee on Design and Chairman of the Technical Committee on Geometric Design.

He was recently appointed by the Governor to the Arkansas State Board of Registration for Engineers & Land Surveyors.

Walters is also a member of the Arkansas Academy of Civil Engineers.

"I congratulate Bob on an outstanding transportation career and his contribution to, not only our state, but also our country," stated AHTD Director Dan Flowers.

A resident of Little Rock, Walters and his



wife Trudy have a daughter, Amy, a son, Aaron, and three grandchildren.

"I have enjoyed my career at the Highway and Transportation Department a great deal," stated Walters. "I have had the privilege to work with many talented professionals through the years, all of whom are dedicated to the Department and the work that they do."

An Interview with Commissioner Prissy Hickerson



Mary P. "Prissy" Hickerson's ten-year term on the Arkansas State Highway Commission expired in January of 2007. She was appointed to serve on the Commission by Governor Mike Huckabee on January 14, 1997. A native and current resident of Texarkana, she serves as Business Manager for her husband's dental practice and H & H Enterprises.

Hickerson recently visited with Public Information Specialist Ellen Hill to reflect on her role as a Highway Commissioner and the accomplishments of the Commission and the Department over the past ten years.

Hill: Congratulations on a memorable ten years serving on the Highway Commission. Are there any highlights that stand out?

Hickerson: Yes, there are many highlights. I think back to when I was first appointed and I recall the dedications, new programs and those types of things. It has been a great ten years. I have enjoyed it and there are a lot of good memories.

Hill: What do you consider to be some of the major accomplishments during the last 10 years?

Hickerson: Well, of course, the very first thing that springs to mind is the recent Interstate Rehabilitation Program. It came about in 1999 after I had only been on the Commission for two years. I enjoyed working with the other Commissioners to help facilitate the program and see it actually get under way. I appreciate the fact that I was on the Commission the entire time that program was in progress and had the opportunity to see it completed during my term. It was one of the major accomplishments of the last 10 years. It has had a great impact on our state - it was a wonderful program.

Another accomplishment that I would include is the new Arkansas Welcome Centers. I am so proud of those new Welcome Centers! They really put a great face on our state as motorists drive into Arkansas and, looking back, I don't think we realized what condition our old Centers were in until we got the new ones. The planning process was a lot of fun and they are wonderful. I am glad that I had the opportunity to be part of that.

There are a number of other projects around the state including future Interstate 49 and the work that has been done on Highway 71 in southwest Arkansas. Another major project I was deeply involved in is the segment of the Northbelt Freeway in Central Arkansas from Interstate 40 up to Highway 67 that was completed during my term. Central Arkansas was part of my District when I first came on the Highway Commission. As a result, I was very involved in helping get that project up and running.

I also remember all of the many bypasses and overpasses and other similar projects that I have been a part of around the state. So, yes, I think a great deal has been accomplished in the last 10 years. We have been very fortunate to be able to fund a major highway program and I think that is kind of unusual. I don't know how many Commissioners get to be involved in that. Looking back, I have enjoyed a good tenure.

Hill: Were there any projects there were not completed that you would like to have seen done?

Hickerson: Oh yes. However, it really is amazing to see how many projects are underway at one time across the state. Many more are on the drawing board awaiting funding and new needs will arise as well. It would be great to see them all completed all at once, but with the many professionals the Department has on staff, and with the vision of the Commission I am confident they will all get done.

Hill: In your initial interview after being appointed, you talked about the need to look at new ways to finance highway improvements other than the traditional "pay as you go" method? Since that time Arkansas has issued bonds to help finance the Interstate Rehabilitation Program which you talked about earlier. How significant was that program to Arkansas considering that it improved over half the state's interstate miles?

Hickerson: Our Interstates were some of the worst in the country when I came on the Commission in 1997 and the Interstate Rehabilitation Program has made them some of the best in the country. The program had a great impact on our state. We got such good rates on the bonds we were able to leverage the highway dollars and do almost a billion dollars worth of highway construction. That is just unheard of to have that massive of a project in the state of Arkansas.

The Program also took care of a major problem for the Highway Department. The amount of money that was available under the Interstate Maintenance category just could not keep up with the amount of repairs that needed to be done. The rehabilitation program enabled us to address the Interstates separately. The successful issuance of the bonds and the success of the entire program is a good example of what the Highway Department can do with additional funding. When you talk about issuing bonds people have a natural hesitancy...because it is debt. That is understandable and probably very prudent. But I think



Hickerson is sworn in as an Arkansas State Highway Commissioner at the State Capitol building in Little Rock on January 14, 1997.

the Highway Department now has a wonderful track record on bond issues and that is something that can be referenced in the future indicating the Department knows how to get this done. We will be careful, cautious and prudent and we will use this funding wisely. We can refer to the Interstate Rehabilitation Program to prove that.

Hill: Do you see bonds as a viable alternative for funding future highway improvements?

Hickerson: I think bonding has a place in highway funding. It will always have a place in highway funding. Certainly you cannot issue bonds for everything, that would be acquiring too much debt. It is just an avenue that the Highway Department has shown it can handle efficiently and do a good job of.

Hill: Do you see a need to continue to search for other forms of innovative financing?

Hickerson: Absolutely, we are always going to need more funding. We are never going to have all the funding that we need. That will never happen. It probably doesn't happen with any state agency. It doesn't happen in our personal lives either so that is just the way it is. We are going to have to consider some type of revenue that grows. The fuel tax and the few other small sources of revenue that we receive are just not going to be able to keep up. They are all flat. One potential source could be the sales tax that is collected on road user items such as tires or other auto parts and services. There may be other ways, but I think that this one makes the most sense. We looked at it in the last legislative session, as did the legislators, but it was just not the right time. It may not be the right time during the 2007 Session but at some point in time that's what is going to have to happen to fund projects in the future.

Hill: Ten years can be considered a long time to serve on a Commission but highway improvement projects take a long time to develop. After serving a full 10 years, do you think the term is the appropriate length of time?



Cutting the ribbon on a new Arkansas Welcome Center in Van Buren.

Hickerson: Well, it is definitely not too long. It takes about two years to get over the learning curve and be comfortable working in the realm of highway funding. Even if you had longer terms, let's say 15 or 20 years, you would still have projects that are not completed. Every year there are new projects that begin so you can't possibly go out and get everything done that you want to have done. I would like to have had a few more years to see a few more things through but ten years is probably just about right. I don't see the terms being any shorter than that. I think the framers of the Mack-Blackwell Amendment were pretty wise.

Hill: In ten years you have had the opportunity to get to know many AHTD employees. What has been your impression of them and the responsibilities that they have?

Hickerson: The Department's employees are absolutely wonderful. We have the best and the brightest here at this agency and I truly believe that. I go to Service Award ceremonies around the state and see employees that have served 25, 30, 35, 40 or 45 years and even longer and you just know that they enjoy their jobs. They must feel like the Highway Department is a good place to work or they wouldn't stay here that long. From the maintenance crews who get out and clear the roads when the weather is bad to the engineers that design the roadways and bridges it is just a great group of people. I have enjoyed working with them and I will miss them the most.



Hickerson and AHTD Director Dan Flowers at a 2003 Texarkana Chamber of Commerce event.

looking forward to having more time to do what I want to do and not feel like I have to spend the time that I am at home catching up from being gone. Overall, it was great fun.

Hill: If you had the opportunity to do it again would you?

Hickerson: Oh absolutely! I am so glad that I had the opportunity to serve. It was a pleasure to work with the other Commissioners, they are a great group of individuals and are dedicated to working hard to provide the best transportation system possible for our state. But, as one Commissioner's term ends, it allows a new Commissioner's term to begin resulting in fresh people and fresh ideas. It's been a great experience and one that I will always be grateful for.



Hill: As you have learned, being on the Highway Commission can be very time consuming. How has serving on the Commission affected your personal life?

Hickerson: Overall, I really think that I have grown personally from the experience. As far as time involved goes, you lose time with your family and your friends and in my case time with some community efforts that I was involved in prior to serving. I probably have missed some things that my grandchildren were involved in that I would like to have participated in. But overall, I have been able to juggle it, as have the other Highway Commissioners. I am



Department Promotions



Vozel Named Deputy Director and Chief Engineer

Frank Vozel, former Assistant to the Director, was promoted to Deputy Director and Chief Engineer on December 21st.

Vozel has been with the Department for 36 years. In that time, he has served as Section Head of the Traffic Safety Section, Section Head of the Traffic Engineering Section, Assistant Division Head

of Traffic, Division Head of Programs & Contracts, Assistant Chief Engineer of Planning and Assistant to the Director.

Vozel has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Arkansas. He is a Registered Professional Engineer.



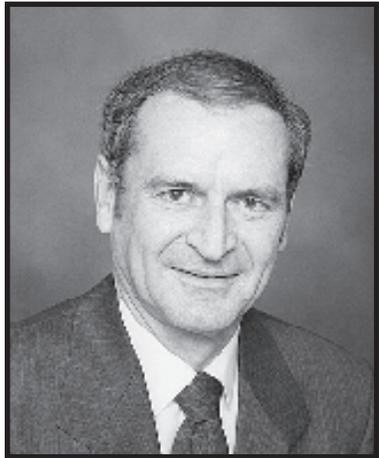
Hall Named Assistant to the Director

Ralph Hall, former Assistant Chief Engineer for Operations, was promoted to the position of Assistant to the Director on December 21st.

Hall has been with the Department since 1972. In that time, he has served as Assistant Resident Engineer in West Memphis, Resident Engineer in Forrest City and North Little Rock, Assistant District 6

Engineer, Staff Construction Engineer, Engineer of Materials & Research, District Engineer of District 6 and his most recent position as Assistant Chief Engineer for Operations.

Hall has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Arkansas. He is a Registered Professional Engineer.

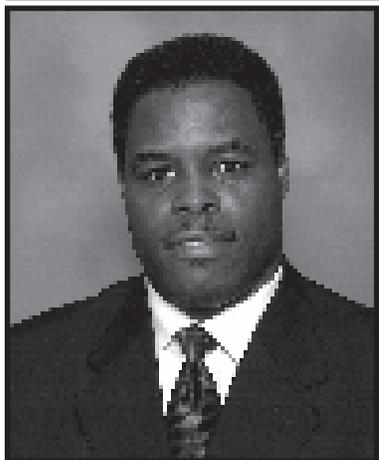


Holmes Named Assistant Chief Engineer for Operations

Allan Holmes, former State Construction Engineer, was promoted to the position of Assistant Chief Engineer for Operations on December 21st.

Holmes has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering and a Master of Science Degree in Engineering from the University of Arkansas. He is a Registered Professional Engineer.

Holmes was first employed with the Department in 1961. During his career with the Department, Holmes has served as Division Assistant in Materials, Materials Area Engineer, Assistant Division Head in Construction, Staff Construction Engineer, District 4 Engineer, State Maintenance Engineer and State Construction Engineer.



Banks Named State Construction Engineer

Emanuel Banks, former District 6 Engineer, was promoted to the position of State Construction Engineer on December 21st.

Banks has been with the Department since 1987. He began as a Civil Engineer I in the Roadway Design Division. A year later, he advanced to Design Engineer and was promoted to Advanced Design Engineer in 1990. Banks transferred to the Resident Engineer Office in North Little Rock as an

Advanced Construction Field Engineer in 1990 and became Resident Engineer in Little Rock in 1997. He became a Staff Construction Engineer in 2002. He was promoted to District 6 Engineer in November of 2005.

Banks has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Arkansas and is a Registered Professional Engineer.

AHTD Wins 4th Consecutive Regional Roadeo



The AHTD Team won 1st Place for the fourth consecutive year at the Annual Southern Regional Equipment Operators Roadeo. Team members were (l. to r.) Johnny Carte, Jerry Mitchell, Darrell Barnes, David Morton, Todd Clifford, Gary Fendley, William "Hickey" Hickman, Yvonne Blair, Fred Ridenhour, Jimmy Eldridge, Larry Brazil, David Pruitt and Bob Walters.

The AHTD had seven competitors who placed this year, four placing first. Glenn Durrence, District 5 Engineer of the Georgia DOT, presented the awards.

The locale for the Southern Regional Equipment Operators Roadeo may change from year to year, but the outcome has always remained the same. That's good news for the AHTD as they won the 2006 Roadeo held October 3rd and 4th, making four consecutive years the Department has come away as champions. That also happens to be the number of years the regional competition has taken place.

The temperatures were on the warm side in Savannah, Georgia, as the competition got underway. This year's Roadeo saw teams from Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee competing.

The AHTD team included Johnny Carte of Subiaco representing the Maintenance Division in the Tractor Mower event; Jerry Mitchell of Wynne representing District 1 in the Motor Patrol event; Darrell Barnes of Atkins representing District 8 in the Tractor/Lowboy event; David Morton of Lewisville representing District 3 in the Backhoe event; Todd Clifford of Paragould representing District 10 in the Single Axle Dump Truck event; Gary Fendley of Cherry Valley repre-

(continued next page)



Fred Ridenhour, District 4,
1st Place, Tractor Mower



David Morton, District 3,
1st Place, Backhoe



Yvonne Blair, District 4,
1st Place, Single Axle Dump Truck



Jimmy Eldridge, District 5,
1st Place, Lowboy



Johnny Carte, Maintenance,
3rd Place, Mower



Larry Brazil, District 8,
3rd Place, Backhoe



David Pruitt, District 8,
2nd Place, Tandem Axle Dump Truck



The AHTD has enjoyed keeping this championship trophy since the inaugural Southern Regional Equipment Operators Roadeo in 2003.

EVENT	1ST PLACE	2ND PLACE	3RD PLACE
MOTOR GRADER	Mississippi	Mississippi	South Carolina
TRACTOR MOWER	Arkansas (Fred Ridenhour)	Mississippi	Arkansas (Johnny Carte)
BACKHOE	Arkansas (David Morton)	Mississippi	Arkansas (Larry Brazil)
SINGLE AXLE DUMP TRUCK	Arkansas (Yvonne Blair)	Mississippi	Georgia
TANDEM AXLE DUMP TRUCK	Georgia	Arkansas (David Pruitt)	North Carolina
LOWBOY	Arkansas (Jimmy Eldridge)	Mississippi	Tennessee

PAST AHTD REGIONAL ROADEO CHAMPIONSHIP TEAMS



(continued from page 9)

representing District 1 in the Tandem Axle Dump Truck event; William "Hickey" Hickman of Camden representing District 7 in the Motor Patrol event; Yvonne Blair of Waldron representing District 4 in the Single Axle Dump Truck event; Fred Ridenhour of Waldron representing District 4 in the Tractor Mower event; Jimmy Eldridge of Des Arc representing District 5 in the Tractor/Lowboy event; Larry Brazil of Houston representing District 8 in the Backhoe event; and David Pruitt of Atkins representing District 8 in the Tandem Axle Dump Truck event.

After a full day of competition, participants enjoyed a banquet and an awards ceremony on a riverboat cruise down the Savannah River. The top three places went to Arkansas, Mississippi and Georgia.

"We are extremely proud of the team we sent to Georgia," stated AHTD Director Dan Flowers. "The level of skill each state's team displays at the regional competition is very impressive, and it is an honor for our team to come back to Arkansas as Roadeo Champions."

The 2007 Regional Roadeo will be hosted by the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

Big Dam Bridge Draws Outdoor Enthusiasts

The new pedestrian/bicycle bridge spanning the Arkansas River between Little Rock and North Little Rock opened to the public on September 30th.

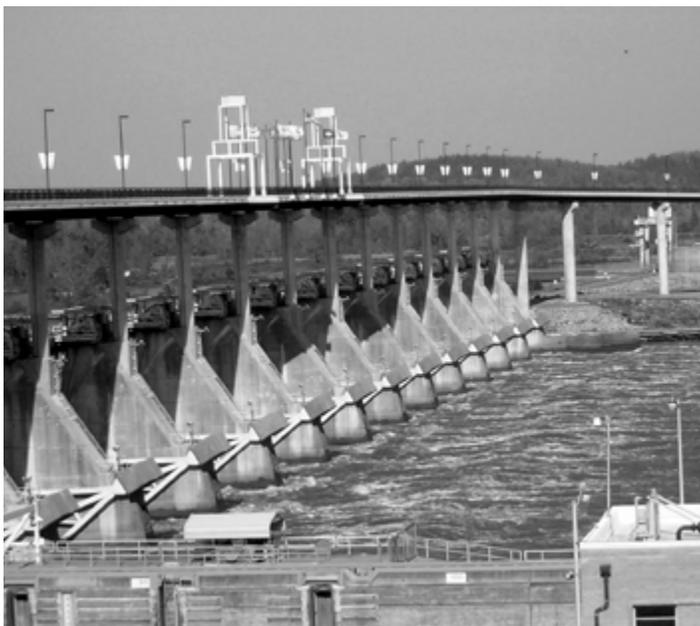
The 4,226-foot long bridge sits atop Murray Lock and Dam and is 65 feet above the river at its highest point. The bridge ties together more than 15 miles of trails on the Little Rock and North Little Rock shores of the river and has proven to be popular for bicyclists, joggers and anyone who enjoys the great outdoors.

Jensen Construction Company was awarded the contract to construct the bridge in August of 2004. The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department played a role in the construction by authorizing \$300,000 in Transportation Enhancement Funds for the project. Total cost of the bridge was approximately \$12.8 million.

"This impressive new structure will enhance the lifestyles of all Arkansans who come to enjoy it and will give us the opportunity to get out and become healthier while enjoying the great view," stated Highway Commissioner Carl Rosenbaum at the opening ceremony. "There are many to thank including Governor Mike Huckabee, Judge Buddy Villines, who spearheaded the project, and the Corp of Engineers, among others."

The grand opening of the bridge featured a 5K run and a 100-mile bike race across central Arkansas. Travelers from more than 20 states participated in the opening events.

The bridge can be reached by traveling west on Rebsamen Park Road on the Little Rock side or at Cook's Landing in the Crystal Hill area on the North Little Rock side.



Arkansas' Scenic Byways



Arkansas has many highways providing motorists with incredible views of our state's countryside. A checklist of what travelers may see as they drive across the Natural State would include dense forests, mountains, lakes, rivers, farmland, wetlands, river valleys, scenic vistas, historic sites and local attractions.

Of all the highways within our borders, there are a select few that stand at the top of the list when it comes to great scenery and local flavor. They are the Arkansas Scenic Byways.

The Arkansas Scenic Byway Program was established shortly after Congress passed the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991. This Federal legislation created the framework to develop a network of National Scenic Byways. The Act

also encouraged each state to develop its own state scenic byway program. In 1992, the Arkansas State Highway Commission adopted criteria by which routes in Arkansas could be designated as Arkansas Scenic Byways.

Among other requirements to become a scenic byway, a proposed route's corridor must contain abundant scenic, cultural, recreational, and/or historic qualities that would be of interest to tourists. Today, there are nine such highways or systems of highways that are included in the Arkansas Scenic Byway Program. Three of our nine scenic byways have been designated by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation as National Scenic Byways.

Scenic Highway 7

Highway 7, from Arkadelphia to Harrison, became Arkansas' first scenic byway in 1993. It was extended to include the portion of the route from Arkadelphia to the Louisiana State Line in 1999 and now totals 290 miles. In southern Arkansas, Scenic 7 travelers pass through rolling, forested hills and numerous river valleys dotted with lakes. The area has abundant wildlife, outdoor recreation and historical sites. South of Hot Springs, motorists encounter the Ouachita Mountains, the only mountain range in the U.S. whose ridges and valleys are oriented west to east. In the Hot Springs area, travelers can visit Hot Springs National Park, established in 1832. The park features several historic bathhouses. Each bathhouse is on the National Historic Register and the famous hot water from the springs is available to those who have containers and wish to take some with them. Continuing northward, motorists pass through the Ouachita National Forest and the Arkansas River Valley before entering the Ozark Mountains. The Ozark National Forest and the Buffalo National River in northwest Arkansas are ideal for hiking, camping and canoeing, for seeing Arkansas' fall foliage and visiting local craftsmen and artisans.



Crowley's Ridge Parkway National Scenic Byway

Crowley's Ridge Parkway was designated as an Arkansas Scenic Byway in 1997. In 1998, it was designated as Arkansas' first National Scenic Byway by the U.S. Department of Transportation. This 198-mile long byway follows the geologic formation known as Crowley's Ridge through northeast and east-central Arkansas. The route consists of segments of 17 highways, two county roads and several city streets.

Approximately two million years ago, wind blown soils collected in this area. The wind blown soil, known as a loess, formed a ridge rising up to 200 feet in places above the surrounding flat delta region. Early settlers to this part of Arkansas gravitated to Crowley's Ridge because it was elevated above the dense bottomland hardwood forests that were subject to frequent flooding. The ridge is named for one of the earliest settlers in the area and is one of only two such formations in the world. The route provides glimpses of the top of the ridge and is characterized by hardwood forests, farmland, orchards and a wide variety of recreational and historical resources. As the route descends to the sides of the ridge, travelers experience the rich agricultural resources of eastern Arkansas.



(Continued on next page)

The Great River Road National Scenic Byway *(Continued)*

Paralleling the path of the Mississippi River on Arkansas' eastern border is Arkansas' segment of the Great River Road, running from Louisiana northward to Missouri. The Great River Road was established in 1938 as the national parkway of the Mississippi River. A traveler can follow the green Pilot's Wheel road signs that mark its route nearly 3,000 miles through the ten states that border the Mississippi River. This fertile region of the state, the Mississippi River Delta, is known for its agriculture. Major crops include rice, cotton, soybeans, wheat, corn, pecans and tomatoes. In addition to Delta farmlands, motorists will also find oxbow lakes, state parks, wildlife refuges, museums, art galleries, archeological sites, national heritage sites and a national forest along the way.



Scenic Highway 309

Motorists on this portion of Highway 309 travel over the top of Mount Magazine, the highest point in Arkansas at 2,753 feet. The byway begins at Highway 10 in Havana and proceeds northward up the mountain. On the way up, motorists are treated to vistas of scenic river valleys, deep canyons and distant mountains. At the top is Arkansas' newest state park, Mount Magazine State Park and the impressive Mount Magazine Lodge. The area surrounding Highway 309 is a unique habitat for rare plants and animals due to its altitude, geography and climate. Traveling down the mountain, motorists can visit Cove Lake, a great spot for camping, swimming and hiking. From Mount Magazine, travelers descend into the Arkansas River Valley to Highway 23 in Webb City, having driven 45 miles on this scenic route.



Scenic Highway 88 - Talimena Scenic Drive National Scenic Byway

Highway 88, from Mena to the Oklahoma State Line, was designated as an Arkansas Scenic Byway in 1998 and is now part of the Talimena Scenic Drive National Scenic Byway which extends from Mena to Talihina, Oklahoma. The 18-mile portion of this National Scenic Byway in Arkansas passes through Queen Wilhelmina State Park and close to Rich Mountain, elevation 2,681 feet. Along the Byway are several historic sites and numerous turnouts with incredible vistas.



Scenic Highway 21

Highway 21, from Clarksville northward to the Newton County Line, is Arkansas' newest scenic byway. Described as one of Arkansas' best-kept secrets, this drive provides outstanding views of the Ozark National Forest. The outstanding characteristics of this highway are panoramic views, colorful flora and rugged terrain. Wildlife is abundant and includes deer, black bear and occasional bald eagles. This route provides access to excellent orchards with seasonal access to a wide variety of peaches and apples.



Boston Mountains Scenic Loop (Highway 71 & Interstate 540)

Two very different roadways, one a two lane highway and the other a four lane divided Interstate with full control of access, make up the Highway 71/Interstate 540 Scenic Loop. Both are Scenic Byways and together they form the Boston Mountains Scenic Loop. The route was formally dedicated as Arkansas' first Scenic Loop in 2002. The drive takes motorists across the highest region of the Ozark Mountains. Along Highway 71 are craft and antique shops, mountain top lodging and numerous roadside overlooks where motorists can stop and enjoy the view. Not far to the west and paralleling Highway 71 is Interstate 540. The Interstate crosses through the mountains with numerous high-span bridges and the Bobby Hopper Tunnel, the only highway tunnel in Arkansas. Like neighboring Highway 71, the Interstate offers unending views of the mountains and area farmlands lying in the valleys below.



West Central Scenic Byway System

This Scenic Byway system includes several highways and connects the Fort Smith area to other Scenic Byways including the Talimena Scenic Drive at Mena, Scenic Highway 309 at Havana and Scenic Highway 7 at Ola. The Byway includes Highway 10 from Ola to the Oklahoma State Line, Highway 23 in Scott County and the city of Booneville, Highway 71 from Mena to Fort Smith and Highway 96 from Highway 71 to Hartford. In addition to the amenities offered by these other Scenic Byways, motorists on this Scenic Byway system pass through or near the Ouachita National Forest and Blue Mountain Lake.



Interstate 530

This Scenic Byway extends 15 miles from Highway 256, west of White Hall, to Highway 65 on the east side of Pine Bluff. The Scenic Byway generally follows Bayou Bartholomew around the southern edge of Pine Bluff and much of the Byway bridges a wetlands corridor. Waterfowl and wading birds can be seen in the backwaters and ponds and motorists can enjoy this relaxing 15-mile drive which still features several undeveloped areas within a metropolitan surrounding.



No matter which Scenic Byway you choose to explore, each one provides a great way to spend a day or an entire weekend seeing all that Arkansas has to offer.

Documentary on Historic Arkansas Bridges Nominated for an Emmy Award



Springfield-DesArc Bridge in Faulkner County



Fryers Ford Bridge in Conway County

A documentary the AHTD and the Arkansas Educational Television Network (AETN) partnered to produce was recently nominated for consideration to receive an Emmy Award from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences in New York City. The Emmy Awards recognize outstanding achievement in television programming.

The documentary, titled *Historic Bridges of Arkansas*, was produced by Casey Sanders and others on the staff at the Arkansas Educational Television Network (AETN) and is just under one hour in length.

Historic Bridges of Arkansas takes an in-depth look at some of our state's more notable bridges and the role each plays in its community. Each year several of the state's old bridges are replaced due to their age or the demands of higher traffic volumes. AETN and the AHTD produced the documentary in order to preserve the bridges' place in history. Also included in the show are interviews with local residents who have fond memories of the bridges from days past.

AHTD Environmental Scientist Robert Scoggin offers commentary on the bridges that appear in the program. He also discusses the importance of their preservation

and the historic significance of the engineering and materials that made them so dependable for many years.

"I appreciate the opportunity to have been part of this video which showcases many of Arkansas' best historic bridges and that has sparked the interest of so many people around the state," Scoggin stated.

The program has aired several times on AETN and was featured at the Hot Springs Film Festival in October of 2006.

The video was submitted to the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences by AETN under the category "Documentaries-Historical."

Though the AHTD recently learned the documentary didn't receive the nod for the Emmy, it is certainly an honor that the documentary was nominated for such a prestigious award.

The Academy of Television Arts & Sciences was founded in 1946 just one month after network television was born. It is a non-profit organization devoted to the advancement of telecommunications arts and sciences and to fostering creative leadership in the telecommunications industry.



Illinois River Bridge in Washington County



Bob Scoggin, Environmental Scientist I, contributed to the Emmy-nominated documentary.

AHTD's Annual Auction A Success

The morning of October 31st dawned with showers falling but by the time the Department's annual auction of equipment began, skies had cleared.

Blackmon Auctions was on hand to start the bidding on an array of equipment that included everything from chainsaws to flat-bottom boats to motor graders. Vehicles ranging from SUVs to

pick up trucks were also on the auction block to the highest bidder.

At the end of the day, final net proceeds to the Highway and Transportation Department totaled \$914,558.



Dedications

Highway 412 Improvements Dedicated Near Paragould

Commissioner John Ed Regenold cut the ribbon to dedicate recent improvements to Highway 412 in the Paragould area. Replacement of the St. Francis River Relief and Big Slough Bridges with four-lane structures was a \$7.4 million project that was let to contract in July 2003.

Replacement of the St. Francis River Bridge was a joint \$12.4 million project between AHTD and the Missouri Department of Transportation. Arkansas' share was close to \$5 million. That bridge was opened in 2004.

In remarks at a Paragould Chamber reception following the ceremony, Commissioner Regenold informed the group that over the past ten years \$230 million in improvements have been completed along Highway 412. Another \$150 million in projects are currently under construction and another \$100 million are scheduled for the High Priority Corridor.



First Leg of I-530/I-69 Connector Opens

The first leg of Highway 530 was officially opened with a ribbon cutting ceremony on the morning of June 6. Commonly referred to as the I-69 Connector, this new roadway connects Highway 278 at its southern end near Wilmar with Highway 35 four miles to the north. Highway 530 will ultimately connect I-530 in Pine Bluff to I-69 near Wilmar.

Commissioner Madison Murphy spoke to local business leaders at a luncheon afterwards and updated the group on the progress of I-69 and the I-69 Connector.

The next section of Highway 530 to be constructed on new location is between the Highways 11/425 Connector and Highway 212 near Star City. This project was awarded in January. Another project to construct the section from Highway 212 to Pinebergen is scheduled for this year.



Highway 63B Dedicated In Jonesboro

A large crowd gathered on the morning of May 16 to dedicate improvements to Highway 63B in Jonesboro. The ribbon cutting took place on Johnson Avenue at Dean Street near the Arkansas State University campus.

The dedication recognized two projects – one to widen Highway 63B (Dan Avenue) from Highway 63 to Culberhouse and then Johnson Avenue from Culberhouse to Highway 49. Totalling \$15 million, these two projects have widened Highway 63B to five lanes with curb and gutter.

After the dedication, Commissioner John Ed Regenold spoke to an audience invited by the Jonesboro Chamber of Commerce to update the crowd on other local projects.



Highway 64

Vilonia

An open forum Design Public Hearing was held May 18, 2006, at the Vilonia High School. Approximately 190 people attended to hear plans for constructing approximately ten miles of Highway 64 as a four-lane, divided highway.

The work will begin where the current four-lane highway ends, just east of the Highway 63/Highway 36 intersection, and extend eastward on new location south of Vilonia before reconnecting with existing Highway 64 just east of town.

AHTD District Eight personnel and staff members from the Environmental, Roadway Design, Right of Way, Planning and Public Affairs Divisions participated in the meeting.

Highway 167

Sheridan

Approximately 170 people gathered at Sheridan High School on June 22, 2006, for an open forum Design Public Hearing to see plans for a proposed bypass of the city.

Plans call for constructing a western bypass of Sheridan. The proposed bypass will be 8.9 miles in length and will consist of four 12-foot travel lanes, separated by a 50-foot depressed grass median dividing the north and south corridors. Right-of-Way information and design elements of the selected alignment were shared at the meeting.

AHTD Environmental, Roadway Design and Right of Way staff, along with District Two personnel, participated in the meeting.

Bella Vista Bypass (Highway 71)

Gravette & Bella Vista

The Department held two open forum Public Hearings to share plans for improvements to the Bella Vista Bypass in northwest Arkansas.

On November 15th, approximately 175 people attended a hearing at Gravette High School. A second meeting was held on November 16th in Bella Vista at the Bella Vista Baptist Church. Over 300 residents attended that meeting.

Plans call for the relocation of Highway 71 in the Bella Vista area. When completed, the new four-lane, divided highway will serve as a bypass of Bella Vista and extend northward for 14.6 miles to the Missouri state line.

Attending the meetings from the AHTD were staff members from the Right of Way, Environmental, Roadway Design, Human Resources and Statewide Planning Divisions as well as AHTD personnel from District 9.

Letters to the Department

McGEORGE CONTRACTING Co., INC.

General Contractors  *Pine Bluff, Arkansas*
P. O. Box 7008 (870) 534-7120 71611-7008

July 28, 2006

Dan Flowers, Director
Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department
Dear Dan,

As you may have read, our company had its first job-related fatality since my employment over 35 years ago. I had hoped to make it to retirement without a tragedy like this during my work life here. The company had really trained and worked at providing a safe work place and this has been hard on us all. We just wanted you to know what an outstanding job the Department did in helping us get through this terrible event. Ms. Sammie Holton, your Area Maintenance Supervisor, and her crew, were steady, helpful, and showed good judgment when we needed the Department's assistance. It is comforting to know that such fine men and women choose to make their living serving the transportation needs of our state.

Sincerely Yours,
Haskell Dickinson

September 2006

Dear Mr. Russenberger:

Hauling a horse down Highway 9 bound for Oklahoma on a perfect September morning should be a peaceful experience, but driving for me is stressful. I can get lost on a straight road with no turns, and it's a miracle when I get on the interstate heading in the right direction. I was paying close attention to the signs for Interstate 40 when I stole a quick glance of my horse trailer in the side mirror and what I saw was shocking. One of the trailer tires had disintegrated and I knew I had to stop immediately. The shoulder was narrow, the 18-wheelers were fast, and I was scared, but at least I was equipped with a spare tire and a jack. Even if I succeeded in changing the tire, I was worried because I had used my only spare. All I wanted to do was go back home, but that's when I noticed a white truck had parked behind my rig. The person walking toward me was no ordinary man; he worked for the AHTD, was adept at changing a tire, and knew of a nearby tire store. I am sure Neil Ford would rather have spent his day off work at the local fishing hole, or hunting for deer, but instead he chose to help a complete stranger. After changing my tire, he said I could follow him to the tire store so I wouldn't get lost. Then he consulted with the sales man to make sure that I got the right replacement tires, the ball bearings were greased, and the air pressure was correct. I offered to pay Neil for his time and trouble but he refused, saying that he only wanted to be a Good Samaritan. It seems inadequate, but all I want to say now is, "Thank you, Neil, thank you for being a good Samaritan." The Arkansas Highway Department is fortunate to have you and so are those of us who drive on Arkansas Highways.

Anne Doerge
Paron, Arkansas

August 24, 2006

Chief Burks
Arkansas Highway Police
Dear Sir,

I am writing this in sincere appreciation of one of your Officer's assistance to my daughter and me. My family and I live in south Texas (an hour south of Houston), and my 22 year old daughter and I left our home last Friday morning to drive to St. Louis, Missouri, for her to start college at Gateway College of Evangelism in Florissant. This trip is about 1,000 miles from our home. After traveling for almost 7 hours (400+ miles), our vehicle broke down on Interstate 30 at Hope, Arkansas. It was 2:45pm on a very hot afternoon. We could not get our vehicle to restart, so we called our Roadside Service and my husband back in Texas. We also prayed for the Lord to send us someone to help us, an "angel" if you will. And he did just that in the form of Officer Mark Willis. Officer Willis stayed with us until we were finally towed to a local hotel in Hope and he knew we were off the road and safe. He went above and beyond his duty to us, even to the extent of taking the battery out of our disabled vehicle (and us!) to the nearest Wal-Mart to have it exchanged, and bringing a new battery (and us!) and reinstalling it. Unfortunately, whilst the battery was in need of replacement, it was not the main reason for the vehicle breaking down. It was almost 6:00pm by the time we checked into the Days Inn Express in Hope, with Officer Willis being with us during almost the 3 hours of this ordeal. He was extremely courteous and very much a gentleman at all times. He made us feel secure and protected in a stressful situation, and his genuine concern for us was evident in his actions, in his manner toward us, and in the wise counsel he gave us in helping us to take the necessary steps to get off the road to safety and for our vehicle to attempt to be fixed. My husband and son arrived in Hope by 3:00am the next morning, and my daughter and I moved over to their vehicle to continue on to St. Louis whilst they stayed behind to have her vehicle worked on. Her vehicle was fixed that afternoon and they drove on to St. Louis to meet us there. Sir, in all honesty, I do not know what we would have done without Officer Willis. He was a resourceful and calming influence in the midst of our storm. Our sincere and humble thanks go out to him and to your Highway Police Dept., for everything that was done for us. We thank God for this young man. May God bless and keep Officer Willis and his family, and may the Lord also continue to protect you and your Officers as you strive to serve your community.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Shan R. McLendon
Angleton, TX 77515



STATE OF ARKANSAS

House of Representatives

July 17, 2006

Dear Mr. Flowers:

I am in receipt of the 2005 Annual Report and I thank you for including me by sending this valuable information. I am very impressed with the progress being made by the Arkansas State Highway Commission and I want to thank you for your efforts toward improving Arkansas' road system. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I am able to assist you in any way.

Cordially,
Steve Harrelson

June 22, 2006
Arkansas Highway Police
Little Rock, AR

Dear Commanding Officer:

On behalf of myself and my husband I would like to commend 2 officers in your command. They are PFC James Ludwig and PFC Mike Partain. On Tuesday June 20, I was leaving from work in Memphis, TN. This was at approximately 10:30pm. My car developed engine problems. I was afraid to abandon the car in Memphis on the side of the Interstate. I had no cell phone and this is an industrial area where there are no phones. I got the car across the "old bridge" and made it to the truck scales. I barely made it inside the lanes at the back. At that time, PFC Ludwig came out to offer assistance. He looked under my hood and told me that it appeared I had blown a hose. He and PFC Partain then pushed my car into a safe parking space. PFC Ludwig then offered me the use of his cell phone. I called my husband who could not get to me. PFC Ludwig then offered to call me a cab. I told him I was not sure if the car might not start. He asked for my registration and took the information and left it for the day crew. He said the car would be safe and not bothered. He then again used his cell phone to contact a cab for me. He asked me to have a seat in the cool. I finally went outside to wait. My husband said that he talked to PFC Ludwig twice and how considerate he was. The cab finally arrived and I left. But not before PFC Ludwig told me that if in the morning the car would not start, he would give me a list of tow trucks. I returned the next morning with my husband and the car was the same as I left it. Nothing had been bothered. All the time this was going on, the two officers were conducting business with speed and excellence. We eventually had the car towed away. I thought you should know what wonderful type of employees you have. I am 57 years old and truthfully was very afraid in my situation. I intend to tell everyone who will listen that when they need help they can always count on the employees of the Arkansas Highway Police. Once again, thank you and your employees for the kindness they showed to me.

Sincerely,
Patricia N. Fields
Memphis, TN



City of Hope



P.O. BOX 1346
HOPE, AR 71802-1346
PHONE: 777-3434

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief of Police
J.R. Wilson

August 7, 2006

Chief Ron Burks

I am happy to inform you that the 2006 Reserve/ Auxiliary Training Class in Hope, AR was recently completed. Thanks to a number of people, more specifically your Officer Daniel Morales, this class was a great success. This letter is offering my gratitude to you for allowing Officer Morales to train our students in Defensive Tactics and Pressure Point Control Tactics. Officer Morales's training and knowledge will be invaluable to these officers throughout their careers. Please accept our thanks and appreciation to both Officer Morales and to you for your dedication to the profession of law enforcement.

Cordially,
Kimberly Tomlin

From: Kenny Icenhower
Sent: Friday, September 01, 2006 9:29 AM
To: Donaldson, Don W.
Subject: Work crew in Nashville

Hello Mr. Donaldson, this is Kenny Icenhower of TxDOT. My grandfather passed away last Sunday night and the funeral was Wednesday in Nashville, AR. As we left the funeral home on our way to Dierks for the burial, we passed through a maintenance construction area. They were working on the West side of Nashville on US371/US278 as we were going out of town. The crew had one lane blocked having to work traffic with flaggers. As we approached, they made sure the funeral procession did not have to stop. Also, every man on the crew stopped what they were doing, removed their caps and placed their caps over their hearts. My family and I were very moved by the respect shown as we passed by. It is good to know that in today's world there are still GOOD people out there. From one highway dept to another, I think this shows the top notch organization that you work for and the people that it employs. Please pass this THANKS on to your maintenance section in Nashville. And, I look forward to working with you on the upcoming IH30 project. Thanks again.

Kenny Icenhower, PE
Area Engineer
TxDOT (Texarkana)

TOWN of ROSE BUD

Patrol Lieutenant
Attention: AR HWY DEPT

I, Jimmy Porter, Street and Park Supervisor of Rose Bud, on behalf of the mayor and town council and citizens of Rose Bud would like to express a thank you to Dennis Nixon, Mickey [Satterwhite] and the employees of the Searcy office of Highway Maintenance for the great job they do for our community. I have never called with a question or problem that Dennis has not handled for us. The number of "thank yous" that are given can be counted on your fingers and complaints, well you know how that goes. Again this is a thank you from our town of Rose Bud for a job well done.

Sincerely,
Jimmy Porter
Street and Park Supervisor

October 23, 2006

Dear Mr. Flowers,

On Sunday, October 15, 2006, my wife and I experienced a tire blow out on Interstate 40 while returning to Little Rock. Within 5 minutes after getting our car to a stop, Mr. Watkins pulled up behind us in the AHTD truck and changed our tire and even offered us water to drink. Mr. Watkins was very professional and made us feel very comfortable and safe during this experience. We wanted you to know how appreciative we are to have this service and for the people who perform the service.

Sincerely yours,
Joe Wall

June 26, 2006

Arkansas State Highway Police:

Recently I was pulled over by one of your officers on 6-6-06, enforcement action #700221. I was a visitor in your state at the time. I know a little something about law enforcement as I am a retired officer of the California Highway Patrol and as such I am in a good position to judge proper and courteous conduct of other officers... as I always do. On more occasions than not, regardless of how the enforcement action came out... I find officers tending to be badge heavy, sarcastic, lacking in demeanor and/or unwilling to even attempt to consider applying common sense to their own training. I was sufficiently impressed with Officer Phillips to write in and tell you about it. From beginning to end Ofc. Phillips was highly efficient and effective in initiating the enforcement contact, he was extraordinarily cautious upon his approach to my vehicle, he was polite on contact... even after I listed my complaints, and he was patient as I searched my trunk for rental documents. I was badgeless and weaponless in Arkansas... just like the regular folks of the world, so I think the contact to be as typical for Officer Phillips as any other stop he might make... and that is a fabulous experience from my perspective. My kids learned something as well. I can assure you that, whether I was going too fast or not, I never exceeded the speed limit for another 1000 miles until we got to Des Moines, Iowa. Your officers action coupled with my new found cruise control function on my rental car ensured that we were safe for the duration of the visit... Missouri, Iowa, and Kansas all being indirect benefactors! Please enter my comments into Officer Phillips #595 personnel file as evidence of a job well done.

Leslie Flannery
State Traffic Officer, Ret # 13363
Livermore, CA

UNIVERSITY POLICE DEPARTMENT
A Division of Student Affairs



Little Rock, Arkansas
September 1, 2006
Dear Chief Burks,

I am writing to express my thanks and appreciation to a few members of your agency. On August 31 we found ourselves in a very difficult position in preparation for our football team's game against Army. We found out around noon that there were several Generals coming to the game and they needed an escort from the 1-55 Bridge to downtown Jonesboro. The Arkansas State Police were already spread too thin due to escorting the team busses and working the game. We were in the same situation here. I asked my Lieutenant to contact your department to see if they could assist us. He made contact with Lieutenant James Speer who quickly responded by sending Sgt. Terry Miller to our department to assist. Sgt. Miller took time to ride through our city with us and locate the destination for the military officers. On Saturday September 2nd, Officer Todd Turman conducted the escort in an exemplary manner and got the officers to their destination on time. This is the second or third opportunity in my career that I have called upon officers from your agency to assist in time of need and each and every time I am impressed by their willingness to step up and assist. I know these guys had better things to do than escorts that took up several hours of their time. Please express my gratitude to all these fine officers for their professionalism and willingness to assist a smaller agency when they needed it. These three officers were the consummate professionals and are a credit to you and your agency. Thanks again to you and your agency for this invaluable service they performed.

Sincerely,
James D. Chapman, Arkansas State University Police

121 East Thompson
P. O. Box 197
Amity, Arkansas 71921-0197
Telephone: (870) 342-5822
Facsimile: (870) 342-6284



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
Telephone: (870) 342-9293

September 12, 2006
Mr. Carl Bachelor, District Engineer

Dear Mr. Bachelor:

Just want you to know that the City of Amity appreciates the job done on the curbs, gutters and sidewalks recently completed on North and South Hill Streets along Hwy. 8. Also, I am impressed with the beautiful job nearly completed on the Phase II of Highway 8 between Alpine and Arkadelphia. It is such a safe and comfortable drive over the "mountain" now. I commend the Arkansas State Highway Department, Engineers and all, for the excellent results of wider lanes, better visibility and safe shoulders. Thank you for all you do in making our travel safer and more enjoyable in this part of Arkansas. We look forward to the completion of the upgrade all the way to Arkadelphia.

Gratefully Yours,
Chester V. Clark, Jr.
Mayor

September 15, 2006

Dear Lieutenant [Todd]Wetzel:

On Saturday, September 9, my wife and son were in route to Fayetteville and suddenly had a flat tire in their 2005 Expedition. My wife called Ford Warranty and Towing and they told her it would be at least 2-3 hours or longer before someone could come and change their flat tire. Fortunately within a few minutes, Sergeant Foust pulled up and changed the flat tire. There was a lot of traffic for the Razorback game, and my wife and son watched the traffic to make sure no one ran into their car while Sergeant Foust changed the tire. He would not let my son help for fear that he would be hit. He took great pains to ensure their safety while placing himself at risk. Our family very much appreciates the time, effort, and heroism that Sergeant Foust displayed that day. My wife and son think that he is a wonderful officer representing the State of Arkansas and feel fortunate and grateful that such a man represents us. We thank him for service above and beyond the call of duty.

Sincerely,
Robert Hudgins
Attorney at Law
Searcy, Arkansas



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

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FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

