

NEWS RELEASE

Kansas Department of Transportation News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Highway Signs Unveiled Commemorating Maisie Devore's Efforts in Eskridge

The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) unveiled new highway signing today commemorating Maisie Devore's 30 plus year efforts to raise money by collecting aluminum cans to help construct a swimming pool in Eskridge. The new highway signs commemorating her efforts were unveiled at 10 a.m. at the new Devore Community Swimming Pool located at 106 Maple in Eskridge. The new signs, titled Maisie Devore Highway, will be located on K-4 at Keene Road for view by westbound traffic and at the junction of K-4/K-99 for view by eastbound traffic.

Maisie DeVore crushed aluminum cans for nearly 30 years in an effort to raise enough money to construct a community pool in her hometown of Eskridge, Kansas in Wabaunsee County. She collected cans, scrap metals, car batteries and junk from around Wabaunsee County and hauled it to a scrap metal recycling center in Topeka where she sold it. Maisie raised more than \$73,000 on her own.

The signing event included remarks by the following speakers and the unveiling of the new signs. Event speakers included:

- Deann Williams, City of Eskridge (Event Emcee)
- Rod Allen, Wabaunsee County Commissioner
- Kansas Senator Laura Kelly
- Kansas Representative Mike Burgess
- Pastor Hal Jones, Eskridge Baptist Church
- ****Maisie Devore, Honored Guest****

Governor Bill Graves, State of Kansas, presented to Maisie, a matching check of \$73,000 from the Local Government Outdoor Recreational Grant program; and, private donations have since been given of \$1,000, \$5,000, \$11,500 and \$12,000 (included among the money Maisie raised was \$2,000

from actress Glenn Close, who starred in made-for-television movies based on the “Sarah, Plain and Tall” books).

Maisie said, “I won a part as an extra in all three productions, after reading a casting call in the newspaper for ‘weathered farm faces.’”

After the money was raised, the community formed the “*DeVore Community Swimming Pool Association*” with the purpose of creating and maintaining the greatest outreach and positive health effects for the community.

A Request for Proposal (RFP) was prepared and the bid for the swimming pool project was awarded. With funds in the account totaling approximately \$170,000 the plan for a pool totaling \$165,500 was accepted. This plan included a complete pool filtration and sanitation system and maintenance, safety and deck equipment for a class “A” municipal pool, high-strength concrete and steel construction, ceramic tile at the water line, special pool coping and an epoxy pool finish plus baby pool and bathhouse.

The pool, completed July 14, 2001, is located across the street from Maisie’s home. The CBS Sunday Morning TV crew filmed and featured this story July 22, 2001. A parade was held with over 1,000 people in attendance. After the ceremony the pool was opened as Maisie made the first step into the completed pool. Since that day, the summer attendance has averaged approximately 100 people a day.

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