

Translines EXPRESS

March 21, 2018

District Five

Fire along the Turnpike:

Dry weather coupled with high winds caused grass fires that quickly spread out of control last week across the state. In south central Kansas, Butler, Reno, Barber and Kingman counties were affected. The Kansas Turnpike Authority said fires Friday afternoon jumped over the roadway in two places near El Dorado. KTA diverted traffic off the Turnpike between El Dorado and Cassoday. The El Dorado Subarea shop sent three trucks to help supply water, Highway Maintenance Supervisor Jim Gray said.

Emergency dispatch called the subarea about 4 p.m. Friday "and asked us to respond with water," Gray said. About six crew members helped out till about 8 p.m. One



This photo is from a video that Roger Greene of Park City took of the Turnpike in Butler County on Friday.

of the shop's mechanics even changed a tire on a fire truck.

The fires ran fast, Gray said.

"It came around both sides of us," he said.

Area Two closed northbound U.S. 77 north of El Dorado at the Turnpike and southbound U.S. 77 at Northwest 75th Street due to blowing smoke and dust.

Luckily, rain fell over the weekend and Monday, reducing the risk for more fires.

Emergency responders set up a command center at U.S. 77 and 60th Street north of El Dorado. KDOT sent out three trucks to supply water.



KTA

KTA Director of Finance Kent Olson was recognized as one of 22 honorees for the 2018 CFO Awards in Wichita.

Learn more: <http://bit.ly/2pcEUBY>



Kent Olson

Retirees

The following KDOT employees will retire in April.

Headquarters

Thad Fowler, Land Surveyor II, Right of Way

Daniel Mabry, Engineering Technician Specialist, Right of Way

District Two

Michael Strait, Equipment Operator Specialist, Belleville

In Memory

Condolences to the family and friends of retiree Mike Will who passed away on March 10 in Salina. Will started at the Salina office in 1978. He retired as an Equipment Operator in 2001.

District Two

During District Two's annual Construction and Materials meeting on March 1 in Salina, employees took a field trip to Kansas Erosion LLC, to see how hay and straw are processed and used to reduce erosion (top right photo). Several speakers also made presentations including State Transportation Engineer Catherine Patrick (bottom right photo). She discussed the forming of a task force made up of legislators, industry leaders and state agencies who will evaluate T-Works, the current condition of Kansas' highways, evaluate funding and make recommendations on future structures. The Task Force will present their plan to the Legislature in January 2019.



General

Musical highways: When we hear that motorists who use our highways obey the speed limit, it is music to our ears. But did you know that there are actually some locations around the world where if you obey the speed limit, the roads will literally sing?

Two of those locations exist right here in the United States. The first one was built in 2014 on Route 66 in New Mexico, between Albuquerque and Tijeras. According to an article from the Smithsonian Magazine, the New Mexico Department of Transportation created this to encourage drivers to slow down and bring a little excitement to the monotonous highway. The music is created by rumble strips in the road that are perfectly spaced far enough apart that when a car rolls over them at just the right speed, vibrations are created and the music

is produced. Music notes are essentially vibrations in the air. The closer the grooves are, the faster the vibrations and the higher the note.

Vehicles must drive 45 mph, or the music can't be heard. The song that drivers can hear is "America the Beautiful." Check out the video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rgizA_vDIzs

The next location where you can hear music by following the speed limit is just outside Lancaster, Calif. If you slow down to 55 mph, you can hear "William Tell's Overture." - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=znllKotogN8>

Japan has several musical roads, check out this one near Mt. Fuji - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qHhm0I3GLLw>

Trivia!

April Fools' Day is just around the corner. How much do you know about this celebration?

1. The first recorded association between April 1 and foolishness was recorded in 1392 in this collection of stories.
2. In what country is a "fool" is known by different names, including "noodle," "gob," "gobby" or "noddy."
3. British newspapers in 1957 had mixed opinions

about this famous hoax perpetrated by the BBC.

4. The warning of this impending disaster that actually happened on April 1, 1946, was initially mistaken as an April Fools' hoax.
5. A questionable April Fools' joke raised eyebrows in 1964 when 25,000 hens "walked off the job" (they were temporarily stolen) to protest crowded conditions at an egg production facility in this southwest Kansas town.

District Five

Rescued cat: Unless you've been living in a hole, you likely already have heard about the kitty the Wichita East Subarea crew rescued recently. But in case you haven't . . .

The crew was about to fill a hole with concrete earlier this month on the apron of a bridge at K-96 and Rock Road when Equipment Operator Senior Ron O'Neal heard a meow. A gray and white cat was down in the hole.

Equipment Operator Senior Ryan Hunter dug the cat out. "The hole was huge and required flowable fill," Supervisor Ted Coleman said. "Ryan reached down about three feet to retrieve the kitty cat."

Coleman called Wichita Animal Control and took the cat home for the weekend, introducing him to his two dogs. It wasn't the first time Coleman has gone above and beyond for animals. He once crossed four lanes of I-135 to rescue a dog that had been lost for several days.

Workers at the Wichita Animal Shelter, which is situated next to the Kansas Humane Society, successfully scanned the cat for a microchip. Turns out the kitty had been missing for a month and lived 12 miles away in Andover.

"The family was thrilled and excited to hear the good news," Coleman said of the reunion. The story not only was featured on District Five's social media and in the KDOT blog but on TV and in The Wichita Eagle.



This gray and white cat had been missing for a month when members of the Wichita East Subarea shop found it in a hole while working at K-96 and Rock Road. After a successful microchip scan, the cat was back home – some 12 miles away in Andover.



Equipment Operator Seniors Jorge Alvarado, Ryan Hunter and Ron O'Neal, shown left to right, helped get this cat out of a hole they were going to fill with concrete while working on the apron of a bridge at K-96 and Rock Road. They work out of the Wichita East Subarea shop.

Kansas Transportation

Monday, March 21

#IAMKDOT - Sherri Hildebrandt

For many employees, the sense of service extends beyond the workplace. Sherri Hildebrandt, Administrative Specialist at the Bonner Springs office, is an example of that commitment to make her community better.

“It makes me grateful to be part of something that makes someone’s life a little better,” Hildebrandt said.

Hildebrandt, a five-year KDOT veteran, serves at the Leavenworth Interfaith Shelter of Hope homeless shelter, where since 2014 she has been regularly working the night shift managing intake, supervising the floor, doing laundry or “whatever is needed” for the 15-20 people who sleep at the shelter each night.

She said she’s always felt called to serve.

Prior to working at KDOT, Hildebrandt worked with the Department of Children and Families, and was keenly aware of the needs of the unhoused in the community.

“When I saw the need here, I knew I had to be part of the solution.”

In 2014, the shelter came together through donations and the leadership of several church and community organizations.

Hildebrandt says since beginning to serve as a volunteer at the shelter in 2014 and now in her part-time paid capacity, she’s met some incredibly resilient people and been part of several uplifting moments. But it’s not always easy.

“It’s hard when you hear their stories sometimes,” she said. “But the people who really need these services, they are the ones who help keep me going.”

At the same time, she said, serving in that sector makes her grateful.

“These are people living day to day,” she said. “It’s easy to walk by them. But you never know what



tomorrow could bring, it could easily be you or your family.”

Hildebrandt has seen some of the success stories during her time serving at the shelter. She’s seen people work through extremely difficult struggles to finish their education, get housing and get jobs to support their family. For her, these are why she says it’s important for her to serve.

“I love seeing people whose lives are a little better because of what we’re doing there.”

Hildebrandt encourages everyone to consider getting involved locally in any capacity they feel able to serve. She would describe herself as a volunteer and professional. She is a mother and her grandchildren call her Noni. She is a sister and a friend, she loves to shop and she is dedicated and compassionate.

Do you know a KDOT worker that deserves recognition? Nominations are open - email Mallory.Goeke@ks.gov today to get started.

To see more stories on transportation topics, check out the regular posts on the Kansas Transportation blog at <http://kansastransportation.blogspot.com/>

District Three



Many areas of Kansas received rain on Monday, but parts of western Kansas, like along U.S. 183 south of I-70, received snow as shown in this photo by KHP Trooper Tod Hileman.

General

Time-lapse captures reconstruction of 225-year-old bridge:

According to a Better Roads article, a Work Zone Cam time-lapse video shows the reconstruction and reopening of the oldest stone arch bridge in Princeton, New Jersey, the 225-year-old Stony Brook Bridge on Route 206. The video can be seen [here](#).

The bridge partially collapsed after heavy rains in February 2016 and was closed, NJ.com reports. Emergency repairs allowed it to open temporarily, but the damage proved to be extensive. So, in July 2017, the bridge was closed again and the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) completely reconstructed the historic bridge and the adjacent Flood Channel Bridge. "We stripped down the old arch bridge, redesigned the inside of the arch bridge with 21st century technology," said David Lambert III, NJDOT assistant commissioner and engineer, according to the news agency. "We then covered the outside with this beautiful stone work



This photo from the New Jersey Department of Transportation shows reconstruction work taking place last year.

(using the) 18th century bridge building techniques from the original construction."

"I have tremendous respect for everyone on the team for approaching the challenge (of rebuilding) with sensitivity and humility and a sense of cooperation," said Princeton Historic Preservation Officer Elizabeth Kim, according to the news agency.

The reconstruction project was completed in November 2017, on time and on budget.

National Work Zone Awareness Week



Gov. Jeff Colyer signed a proclamation on March 19 designating April 9-13 as National Work Zone Awareness Week in Kansas. Those joining in the ceremony included, from left to right, KHP Trooper Jordan Plachecki; KHP Trooper Stephen LaRow; Tyrel Buchmeier, KDOT; KHP Trooper Adam Winters, David Studebaker, KDOT; David LaRoche, FHWA; Laurie Arellano, KDOT; Rex Fleming, KTA; Kim Stich, KDOT; and Jamie Lane, Kansas Contractors Association.

TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. Geoffrey Chaucer's The Canterbury Tales.
2. England.
3. The Swiss Spaghetti Harvest, a film that purported to show Swiss farmers picking freshly-grown spaghetti.
4. The tsunami that followed an Aleutian Islands earthquake, killing 165 people in Alaska and Hawaii.
5. Never happened. April fool!

District Five

District Five will have an open house from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. April 13 as part of National Work Zone Awareness Week.

The goal of the open house is for the public to meet some of the people they are urged to slow down for during construction and maintenance projects. The district will have refreshments, equipment on exhibit and crew members available to answer questions from the public. Everyone is invited. Volunteers from District Five are still welcome to sign up by emailing Public Affairs Manager Deb Gruver. National Work Zone Awareness Week is April 9 through 13.



KTA

KTA construction: 2018 is a peak construction year for the Kansas Turnpike, as identified in the KTA's Long Term Needs Study. Learn about several projects here:

- Reconstruction of the SW 85th Street Bridge and the SW 93rd Street Bridge in southwest Topeka: <http://bit.ly/2DeEkbf>
- A two-year project involving ten I-335/KTA bridges northeast of Emporia: <http://bit.ly/2FpWIJx>
- The second year of a two-year project to widen and re-deck the I-470/KTA bridge crossing over Topeka Boulevard: <http://bit.ly/2IczHC2>
- Construction to place a polymer overlay and provide expansion joint work to the Arkansas River Bridges, located in south Wichita: <http://bit.ly/2ttX0UL>

Florida Bridge

Engineer reported but 'not concerned' about cracking in Miami bridge before deadly collapse:

According to a March 20 article in Better Roads, two days before the deadly collapse of pedestrian bridge in Miami Thursday, the lead engineer on the project left a voicemail with state officials saying cracking had been seen on the north end of the span that had been earlier moved into place during accelerated construction.

The engineer, W. Denney Pate with FIGG Bridge Engineers, had said that the crack was not a safety concern, according to a recording and transcript of the call released by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Friday night. Safety issues had also been allayed during a meeting about the crack with the bridge design team and FDOT at the construction site just a few hours before the collapse. At least six people were killed and at least 10 more injured, including construction workers. The main span of the 174-foot-long pedestrian bridge was still under construction near the campus of Florida International University (FIU). Scheduled for completion in 2019, the 950-ton structure came down on cars stopping for a red light during what city officials say was "stress testing" on March 15.

While the designer is FIGG Bridge Engineers, the contractor who both built and installed the structure is MCM – Munilla Construction Management. Both firms are based in Florida.

FDOT had no knowledge of "stress testing"

City officials have said that stress testing was underway on the bridge when it collapsed about 1:30 p.m. Thursday, crushing cars below on a busy state road, SW 8th Street.

FDOT, in its statement Friday night, said state transportation employees were not made aware by the FIU design build team of any scheduled "stress testing" of the bridge following installation and has no knowledge or confirmation from FIU's design build

team of "stress testing" occurring since installation. "Per standard safety procedure, FDOT would issue a permit for partial or full road closure if deemed necessary and requested by the FIU design build team or FIU contracted construction inspector for structural testing," the department says.

At issue is why the road was not closed during any such testing, as well as why the cracking was not seen as a potential safety issue.

According to standard procedures, the department says, FDOT had issued a permit at the request of FIU's design build team to close SW 8th Street during the installation of the FIU pedestrian bridge on Saturday, March 10.

"While FDOT has issued, following a request from the FIU design build team, a blanket permit allowing for two-lane closures effective from January through April, at no time, from installation until the collapse of the bridge, did FDOT receive a request to close the entire road," the department says.

The FIU pedestrian bridge was a local agency project, not a Florida DOT project.

No life-safety issues raised by FIGG engineer at meeting shortly before collapse

Only three and a half hours before the catastrophic failure, a meeting about the cracking was held at the construction site. FIU released this statement regarding that:

"On Thursday morning (March 15, 2018), at 9:00 a.m., the Design Build Team of MCM and FIGG convened a meeting at the MCM trailer, located on the construction site, to discuss a crack that appeared on the structure. The FIGG engineer of record delivered a technical presentation regarding the crack and concluded that there were no safety concerns and the crack did not compromise the structural integrity of the bridge. This meeting lasted approximately two hours and included FIU and FDOT representatives."

To read the full story in Better Roads, click [here](#)