

Celebrating employees



Director of Operations Larry Thompson and State Transportation Engineer Burt Morey, back center, joined KDOT employees celebrating 40 years of service. Those pictured and the towns they work in include, from left to right, Charles Baker, Erie; John Hrenak, Chanute; Dianne Parker, Topeka; Ray McIntosh, Pratt; Dan Blanchat, Anthony; Mark Becker (seated), Stockton; Ricky Gitchel, Phillipsburg; Thomas Weishapl, Oberlin; Wayne Marsch, Leavenworth; Randy West, Salina; and Gary Rutledge, Gardner. Those not pictured include Earl Bartlett, Wichita; and Bob Gudgen, Pittsburg; who achieved 50 years of service. Those celebrating 40 years and not pictured include Judith Tyner, Topeka; Wanda McLain, Topeka; Pamela Fleck, Topeka; Mark Taylor, Topeka; Delane Newkirk (retired), Lyons; and James Clary, Jr., (retired), Troy.

★ KDOT SALUTES ALL ITS VETERANS - SEE INSIDE FOR SEVERAL FEATURES ★

Bureau of Human Resources

Bureau changes name: The Bureau of Personnel Services will be changing its name to the Bureau of Human Resources to better reflect the role it plays in the agency's mission, according to Bureau Chief Maribel Manos.

Personnel historically has been viewed as an administrative function in nature dealing with employees, payroll and employment laws. Human resources is much broader in the sense that it works with developing its people to best support the business objectives.

"This change in bureau name is more aligned with what we are doing today and more aligned with how we want to continue to grow," she said.

Personnel management views people as a tool to meet

a current need whereas human resources management views people as an asset we want to grow and retain for current and future needs which is why training and development is an integral part of human resources management but not necessarily personnel management, Manos said. Instead of focusing on administering people, human resources focuses on building a productive and engaged work culture.

"Additionally, human resources management places more efforts on proactive strategies that are aligned with agency objectives to lessen the amount of time we spend being reactive to issues which is exactly where we are placing a lot of our efforts," Manos said.

Cost Share Program projects announced

Cost Share Program projects selected: Gov. Laura Kelly and Secretary Julie Lorenz announced on Nov. 5 the 22 projects selected across the state as part of KDOT's new Cost Share Program. These projects total nearly \$74 million in state, local, federal and private investment in transportation improvements statewide.

"These projects demonstrate communities' commitments to improve the quality of life for their citizens and to do so in a practical manner," said Gov. Kelly. "This program also demonstrates the great things that happen when communities and the state work together."

Nearly 100 applications were submitted in the first round of the program from across Kansas.

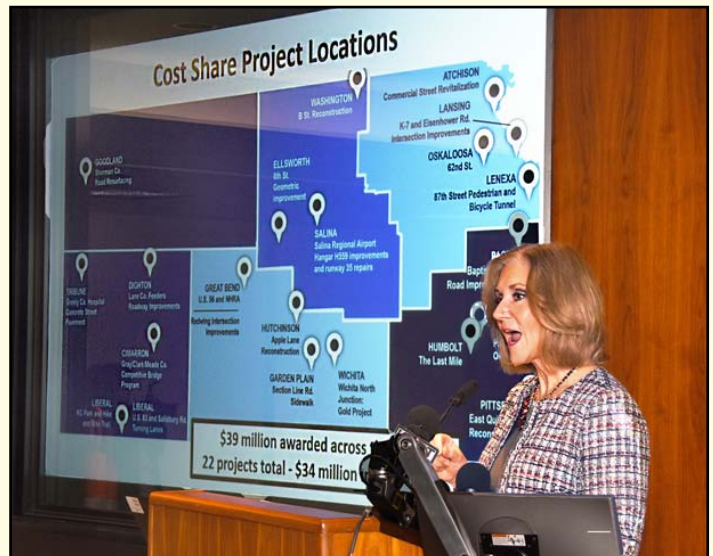
"There is pent up demand for transportation investments across our state," Secretary Lorenz said. "I am excited to provide resources to help build safer, healthier and livelier communities that Kansans – young and old – want to make their forever homes."

The program will provide funding to local entities for transportation projects that improve safety, support job retention and growth, improve access or mobility, relieve congestion and help areas across the state improve the transportation system.

The next call for applications for the second round of projects will be announced next year. To see the news release and list of projects, click [here](#). To watch the Nov. 5 announcement, click [here](#).



Above, Gov. Laura Kelly talks about the benefits of the 22 projects selected as part of KDOT's new Cost Share Program at a news conference on Nov. 5 in Topeka. **Below,** Secretary Julie Lorenz highlights the various projects selected from the nearly 100 applications that were received. Photos by Support Services



Kudos

Here is an email KDOT recently received -
We travel regularly between Denver and SE Tennessee and use your rest stops for overnight stays. We want to thank you for maintaining them so meticulously. We feel much safer staying overnight in these than in a retail parking lot. Again, thank you very much.

Retirees

The following employees retired from KDOT on Nov. 1.

Headquarters

Dana Coffman, Engineering Technician, Transportation Planning

District Two

Gregory Laflen, Highway Maintenance Supervisor, Washington

District Three

Billy Lee, Highway Maintenance Supervisor, St. Francis

District Four

Patrick Weldon, Equipment Operator Senior, Altamont



Numerous veterans work for KDOT, and this edition of Translines features several from across the state. Veterans Day is Nov. 11, and this holiday honors all of those who have served our country in war or peace. On behalf of the agency, we are proud of our veterans and want to thank you for your service.



By Tim Potter, District Five

Tracy Barragan: One reason to honor military veterans is their sacrifice.

For KDOT's Tracy Barragan, a Kansas National Guard veteran, sacrifice meant not getting to watch his young daughter learn to ride a bicycle because he was deployed to Iraq.

At the time, he was serving in one of his two deployments to the war-torn nation. Adding up the service in Iraq in 2005 and 2008, plus a deployment to Africa in 2011, the husband and father of five was away from his family for three years.

What makes the service worth it is a high purpose, Barragan says. "I think we all do it because of patriotism, not just for the love of your country but for all Americans."

Barragan, now 52, has nearly 30 years of service to KDOT. He is an Equipment Operator Senior working out of District Five's Hutchinson Sub Shop.

As a soldier, he logged hour after hour in an armored Humvee in Iraq.



By Kelly Kultala, District One

Mark Wiedmer: Mark Wiedmer has been with KDOT for seven and a half years as an Equipment Operator Senior at the Troy Subarea.

He retired from the Army National Guard in November 2005 after 25 years of full-time service as a truck driver, personnel clerk, logistics sergeant and overseeing the operations of the armory in Troy. Wiedmer served in the Second 130th Field Artillery Battalion Command out of Hiawatha. He has won numerous awards for the large number of people he has recruited to join the military.

Wiedmer has been deployed twice after major floods. He was sent first to Severance and White Cloud in 1984, and the second time he went to Elwood in 1993 to help with logistics and personnel.

Three generations of Wiedmers have served in the National Guard - his son has served for 18 years and his grandson recently enlisted.

In August 2018 Wiedmer had open heart surgery and appreciates the benefits he receives from KDOT and the National Guard.



By Priscilla Petersen, District Four

Mark Suddock: "It took me a long time to learn how to drive again over here" after spending a portion of 2004-2005 in Iraq, according to Mark Suddock.

"We always drove right down the center line of the highway in Iraq," he explained, to avoid bombs hidden in the driving lanes. Back home in Mound Valley, whenever he steered toward the center his wife would "bop me in the head and tell me to get back over."

Suddock, an Equipment Operator Senior at the KDOT Altamont Subarea, enlisted in the U.S. Army while still a senior at Labette County High School. He is now Sergeant of the First Platoon, Bravo Company, of the 891st Engineer Battalion. A 30-year decorated veteran, he has completed numerous tours in Central America and Iraq.

During Suddock's first tour in Iraq the company laid a 250-mile fuel line, the longest in military history. "We made Time magazine" for that achievement, he said.

Suddock expressed pride and satisfaction in serving his country. But he knows only too well the costs of conflict. "I would go back to keep your son or daughter from having to do it," he said.



By Lisa Mussman, District Three

Toby Griffith: Military and state service run in the family for KDOT's Toby Griffith. Griffith, his father and two of his uncles all have served in the military and worked for KDOT.

Growing up in a military family, Griffith said joining the Army was the thing to do. His father Raymond served as a Marine in the Korean War and worked as a Supervisor at the Phillipsburg Subarea office. Uncles Bud Moore and Eldon Shellito were both in World War II and worked as Equipment Operators at the Smith Center and Osborne Subareas.

Griffith joined the army in 1985 and served until 1993. During his service, he was stationed in several places including Germany, where he assisted with border security prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall. He also was deployed to the Sinai Desert during Operation Desert Storm.

Griffith joined KDOT in 1997 and is an Equipment Operator Senior at the Phillipsburg Subarea. The family's military tradition has carried on through his daughter, who recently completed her service in the Army.

In the photo, Raymond and Toby Griffith, right, were at the Korean War Memorial in Washington, D.C.



By Ashley Perez, District Two

Mark Bowser: No letter or call back home can make up for the memories missed by our veterans.

Several veterans who now work for KDOT in north central Kansas, including retired veteran Mark Bowser, have made many sacrifices of being away from their family and loved ones to serve our country.

During Bowser's service from 1985 to 2011 in the United States Army, First Sgt. Bowser served in Germany and Iraq as a crew chief mechanic for the Apache attack helicopter. The amount of sacrifice made by Bowser and his family during this time was nothing short of incredible as his family uprooted their lives to move to Germany where he was stationed.

From Germany, he then made several deployments to Iraq. Bowser said during his time away he missed several family milestones such as his children's birthdays.

After serving, Bowser proudly retired from the Army and chose to come work for KDOT in Clay Center as an Equipment Operator so he could drive a snowplow. KDOT is proud to have all veterans on our team.



By Kim Stich, Headquarters

Jennifer Meyer: Jennifer Meyer didn't know what she wanted to do after high school. Her father, who had retired from the Navy, suggested the military.

"It turned out to be a good experience and it helped me grow up – I was a shy kid," Meyer said.

After Army basic training in fall 1987, she went into tactical and strategic communications where her unit would deploy in the field and set up equipment so that all the units were connected and could communicate, either by radio or telephone.

Throughout the years, she was stationed in Germany, Korea and several locations in the U.S. Meyer served in other areas such as setting up training and working with the Color Guard. She wasn't deployed in Desert Storm as she was pregnant at that time. She finished her career as a Sergeant in 1996 and has been at KDOT for the past eight years.

"I liked serving – there's a real sense of family, camaraderie and teamwork," Meyer said. "I also got to meet lots of different people."



Thank you KDOT Veterans



By Lisa Knoll, District Six

Tyler Cooley: After almost four years in the U.S. Marine Corps, Tyler Cooley had completed Boot Camp, Marine Combat Training and was serving as the Senior Machinist at MACS in Beaufort, S.C. He was honored when asked to go to Camp Leatherneck in Afghanistan to serve as one of two machinists for eight squadrons.

While there, they each worked 12-hour shifts. When the other machinist was transferred out, Cooley found himself working 18-48 hours at a time in extreme heat, with mortars whizzing by, and forced to take cover when under attack. As Cooley puts it, "In that environment when an aircraft is grounded, it has to be fixed and back up in the air as quickly as possible. Someone's life depends on it."

What was the hardest part? "All of it," Cooley says. "The fatigue. The heat. All of it." But Cooley adds, "It was the hardest, most stressful thing I've done in my life. But I will never regret going over or being there."

Cooley served from 2009 to 2014 in the Marine Corps. He joined the Scott City Subarea crew in 2016 as an Equipment Operator Trainee and was promoted to Equipment Operator that same year.

At right is Cooley with one of the aircraft he worked on.

HOME OF THE
FREE
BECAUSE OF THE
BRAVE



Numerous veterans work in District One, Area Four including, from left to right; first row: Mike Degand, Gage Construction; Willard Trout, Gage Construction; second row: Mike Hare, Area Office; Andy Hewett, Oakland Subarea; Steve Unruh, Gage Construction; David Vantuyl, Emporia Subarea; Jacob Woerner, Gage Subarea; and Chris Trundle, Oakland Subarea.

Do you know of a KDOT retiree not receiving the electronic KDOT newsletter Translines?

Please let them know that if they are interested in receiving it, send an email to Kim.Stich@ks.gov

Have a safe and happy Veterans Day.

All state offices will be closed on Monday, Nov. 11.



Thank you KDOT Veterans



Some of the KDOT veterans who work at the Eisenhower State Office Building include, first row, left to right: Roberta Bradbury, U.S. Navy Reserve; Jennifer Meyer, U.S. Army; Joe Behzadi, U.S. Kansas Army National Guard; Ron Feldkamp, U.S. Army; second row: Brian Briggs, U.S. Army; Gary Schwilling, U.S. Air Force; Joe McEvoy, U.S. Army; third row: Mike Shaver, U.S. Army; Scott Lein, U.S. Navy; and Jim Frye, U.S. Navy.

Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day



Top left: Harper Frasier poses with Trooper Rick Wingate at Riverton Elementary School in Riverton after being presented his prizes for being a District Four regional winner in the Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day contest. **Above:** Cade Brown, center, is with his mother and sister and Trooper Chad Crittenden at Andale Elementary School for District Five. **At left:** At Spearville Middle School, Teaghen Elledge, second from left, receives her prizes from Trooper Michael Racy for District Six and also is pictured with her parents, Amanda Bittel and Scheon Elledge, and brother, Byrum Bittel. Photos by Priscilla Petersen, Tim Potter and Lisa Knoll, respectively

In Memory

Condolences to the family, friends and co-workers of employee Tony Worek who passed away on Oct. 27. Worek worked as an Equipment Operator at the Oakley Subarea office and also served as a CDL Trainer. He had been with KDOT since December 2011.



Tony Worek

Condolences to the family and friends of retiree Jim Sanchez who passed away on Oct. 26 in Wichita. Sanchez worked at KDOT for 35 years and retired as the District Storekeeper Specialist in Chanute in 2007.

KDOT project presented award

Structures and Geotechnical Services Chief Calvin Reed recognizes the Bridge Evaluation team – Dominique Shannon, John Culbertson and Luke Metheny, pictured left to right, on Nov. 4 at the Materials and Research Lab for their role in the K-TRAN research project and the related



software that they routinely use. “The bridge evaluation group as a whole has been instrumental in guiding and implementing the results of this research,” Reed said at the event. Photo by Jeanny Sharp, Headquarters

By Mallory Aye, Headquarters

Project presented award: A KDOT project was presented with a “Sweet Sixteen” High Value Research award at the 2019 National Research Advisory Committee and TRB State Representatives Meeting, which took place July 22–25 in Santa Fe, N.M.

The research project K-TRAN: KU-16-5, Software for Load Distribution on Low-Fill Box Culverts: User’s Manual, was conducted by University of Kansas Professors Jie Han and Robert Parsons with graduate students Seyed Mustapha Rahmaninezhad and Fei Wang in the Department of Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering.

The project team was successful in developing a stress distribution program to better test the various forms of stress that may affect shallowly buried culverts. The program was designed to compute the Equivalent Live Load Distribution Factor (ELLDF) for distributed loads, distributed area and distributed stress on buried box

structures. This data is compatible to be input into current AASHTO design software to better determine how pavement affects load distribution onto buried box culverts.

The “Sweet Sixteen” award exists as part of an initiative by the AASHTO Research Advisory Committee to identify and document recently completed “High Value Research” projects. Every year, states are asked to submit research projects of recognizable qualitative or quantitative benefit for consideration. The Sweet Sixteen award recipients are selected from the qualifying high value projects, with four projects being chosen from each of the four AASHTO regions.

This is the first Sweet Sixteen award won by a KDOT project since 2014, when K-TRAN: KU-09-5, Evaluation of Innovative Traffic Safety Devices at Short-Term Work Zones, was selected. Prior to that, K-TRAN: KSU-10-5, The Economics of Potential Reduction of the Rural Road System in Kansas, received the award in 2012.

K-105 slide repair project

By Priscilla Petersen

Crews repair slide: KDOT crews from Yates Center, Iowa and Eureka are spending these late autumn days repairing a major slide of highway embankment and pavement on the west side of K-105 in Woodson County. The slide, located north of the entrance to Cross Timbers State Park, is approximately 175 feet long and runs 80 feet west from the K-105 center line. The highway is closed to traffic at the work zone until repairs are finished and the asphalt pavement is restored in the driving lane.

Scott Slater, supervisor at the Yates Center Subarea, said the repairs involve removing the dirt and replacing it with rock and concrete. "We're making a big drain with a lot of rock," he explained. "It's a long process to put this back ... it's not fun." Thirteen dump trucks are hauling away dirt and bringing in rock from Severy and Toronto. In the work zone the operators of three track hoes, a skid steer and a track loader are putting in four 10-hour days each week.

"It's kind of the like a spring at that [slide] location," according to District Geologist Denny Martin. The soil consisted of clay and weather shale, with a sandstone formation to the south. Surface water runoff saturated the embankment soils and led to infiltration by deeper water.

A fabric mat has been laid on the stair-stepped 'benches' dug at the site. The mat "will keep the rock clear so the water can drain through it," Martin said.

The slide and pavement repairs could be completed by early December, said Slater. Any winter weather in the area will halt work on the project until crews are done clearing the highways.



*Stair-stepping 'benches' are formed at the slide as dirt is removed.
Photo by Denny Martin*



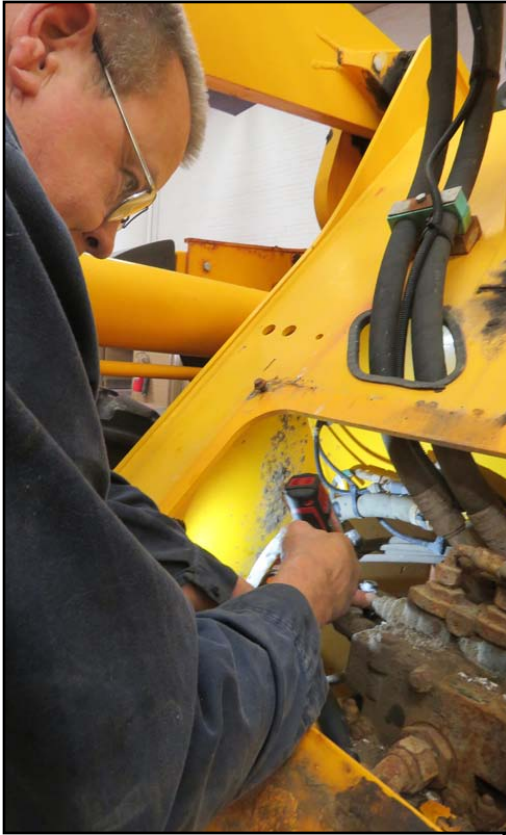
Above, Geologist Denny Martin inspects a fabric mat placed on the ground at the slide. Rock and concrete will be placed on top of the mat, which will act as a filter. **At left,** Crews work to repair a major slide along K-105 north of Cross Timbers State Park. Photos by Denton Decker and Priscilla Petersen, District Four



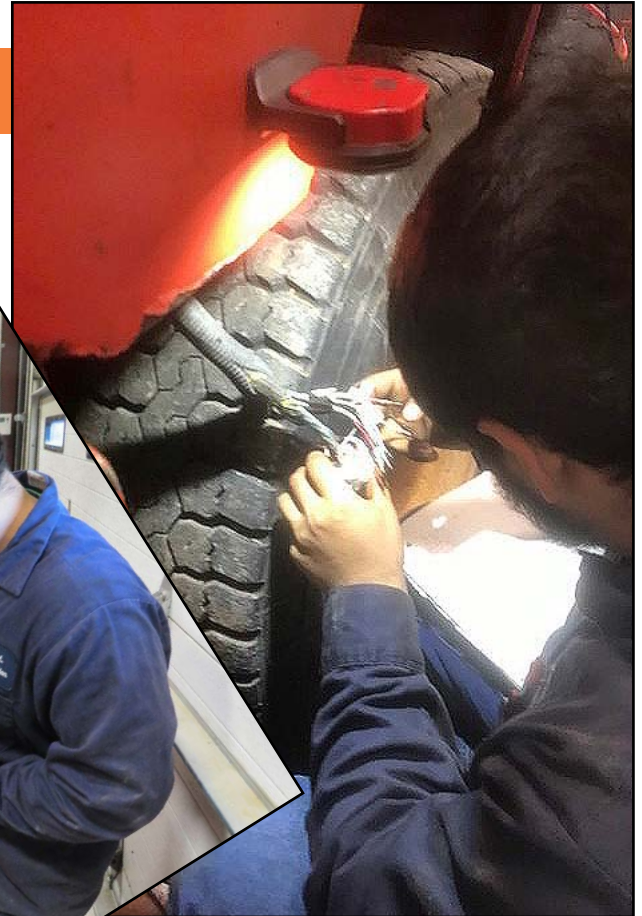
Trivia!

Veterans Day

1. Why is Veterans Day on Nov. 11?
2. It was originally known as Armistice Day – who amended it to be known as Veterans Day to honor American veterans of all wars?
3. From 1971 to 1977, Veterans Day was celebrated on the last Monday in October. Why was it changed?
4. Why was it changed back to Nov. 11 in 1978?
5. When was the first Unknown Soldier reburied at Arlington National Cemetery?



SNICE efforts



By Lisa Knoll, District Six

The first snow and ice (SNICE) event of the year can always be a little challenging to make sure everything is running properly. So even though the first SNICE event of the year was actually very light in terms of snow fall and moisture, it still required a great team effort on everyone's part. With the SNICE event over, the District Six shop is now busy with repairs and getting ready for the next storm.

Left: Robin Walker smooths out the glands on the hydraulic valve on the front end loader. **Middle:** Lorenzo Ruiz-Hernandez and Osvaldo Erives work to remove the spinner on a salt spreader so they can replace the seal and check the motor. **Right:** Ruiz-Hernandez begins reconnecting a 32-pin connector on a brine unit as he works to repair an electrical problem. Photos by Lisa Knoll, District Six

TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. To honor when fighting ceased between the Allied nations and Germany in World War I. The armistice went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918.
2. President Dwight D. Eisenhower.
3. To ensure three-day weekends for Federal employees.
4. President Gerald Ford signed the law to change it to Nov. 11 because the day had historic and patriotic significance to a great number of citizens.
5. Nov. 11, 1921 (The United States lost approximately 77,000 killed during World War I. To commemorate the sacrifice, it was decided to select one of the many unidentified bodies buried in the American military cemeteries in France for reburial in Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C.)



The KTA had the privilege of providing a behind-the-scenes tour of the latest toll plaza converted to offer highway speed electronic lanes near the Oklahoma border at a news event on Oct. 23. KTA CEO Steve Hewitt and other KTA leaders provided an overview of the equipment and interchange design to legislators and local media. See photos of the tour [here](#). Photo provided by KTA

Local Bridge Improvement Program

By Jeanny Sharp, Headquarters

Bridge projects selected: Twenty-seven counties will receive a combined total of \$5 million under KDOT's Local Bridge Improvement Program. Requests for transportation funding outpaced available funds by nearly three times. The selection of the local bridge projects was announced today by KDOT Secretary Julie Lorenz.

"Improving the overall transportation system in our state is important and that includes those structures under local authority," said Secretary Lorenz. "It takes partnerships between the state, cities and counties to move people and goods as efficiently as possible across Kansas."

The bridge program was reinstated by the agency this summer to assist cities and counties by providing up to \$150,000 toward the replacement or rehabilitation of a bridge on the local roadway system. In the FY 2020 budget, \$166 million less will be transferred out of the State Highway Fund. This funding will allow KDOT to perform about \$400 million in preservation projects, deliver five more delayed T-WORKS projects



Bridges across Kansas have been selected as part of the Local Bridge Improvement Program.

and enabled KDOT to reactivate the Local Bridge Improvement Program.

A total of 86 applications from 70 local public agencies were received with requests for \$14.2 million in funds. Some agencies submitted more than one application for the program. The total value of the individual bridge request repairs ranged from \$150,000 to \$800,000.

To see the release and list of the counties, click [here](#).

KDOT Employee Council Holiday Ornament Order Form

2019

| Year | Quantity | Cost | Total |
|----------------|----------|------------|-------|
| 2019 | | \$5 | |
| 2018 | | \$3 | |
| 2017 | | \$3 | |
| 2016 | | \$3 | |
| 2015 | | \$3 | |
| 2013 | | \$3 | |
| Total enclosed | | | |



Please Print -

Name: _____

Address: _____

(Retirees only - home address)

Work phone: _____

How to Order:

Headquarters: Contact
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Districts/Retirees:

Mail form to -

Kristie Eakes,
ESOB - 14th Floor,
700 SW Harrison,
Topeka, KS 66603

Make checks
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Employee Council

For more details, call
Kristie at (785) 296-3501

----- Past Ornaments Still Available-----

2017



2016



2018



2013



2015

