

# Translines EXPRESS

Oct. 9, 2019

## U.S. 169 preservation project



Workers with Cornejo & Sons of Wichita place an asphalt patch on U.S. 169 in Montgomery County, prior to a mill and overlay on 17 miles of the highway. The resurfacing project starts five miles north of Coffeyville and ends at the Labette County line. The road work is among several highway preservation projects underway in southeast Kansas this autumn. Photo by Priscilla Petersen

## New to KDOT

By Kim Stich, Headquarters

**New to KDOT:** Maribel Manos has been named KDOT's Deputy Director of Administration and the Bureau Chief of Personnel Services. These dual roles work together to support and serve the agency, she said, in an effort to "be the best, we need to identify gaps and optimize our strengths so we can build on them with time."

Manos grew up in Greenville, S.C., and graduated from the College of Charleston, the oldest university in that state and the 15th oldest in America. She is passionate about Human Resources and has spent the past 18 years increasing engagement in organizations by applying Human Resources' best practices. A job at Security Benefit brought her to Kansas where she



Maribel Manos

spent 10 years. Most recently, she worked for four years at the Federal Home Loan Bank.

Improving the culture at the agency so all employees can benefit is one of her many goals.

"If we keep doing the same things, we get the same results," Manos said. "If we do different things, we get different results - but we don't really start doing different things until we start seeing things differently."

She is eager to support Secretary Julie Lorenz's vision for KDOT – "to continue to move us forward, be as proactive as possible and get everyone engaged," Manos said. "Individuals want to work at a place where they feel empowered to make a difference and there are a lot of opportunities to do that here at KDOT."

Manos and her husband, Shawn, a native of Topeka, have two children.

## Trivia!

### Columbus Day

1. Where was Christopher Columbus originally traveling to?
2. Why was he making the trip?
3. Where did he land on Oct. 12, 1492?
4. When did Columbus realize that he had not reached his original destination?
5. What year was the first Columbus Day celebration?
6. Who proclaimed it to be a national holiday, and what year did that take place?

## Fall maintenance activities

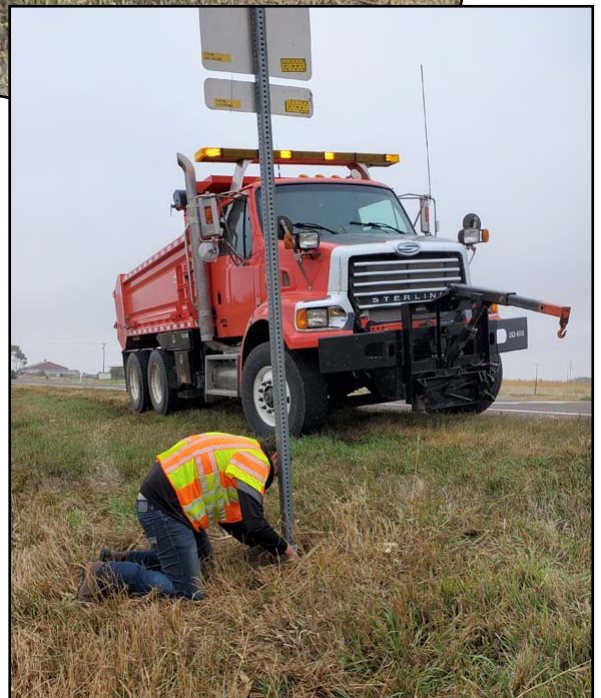
By Lisa Knoll, District Six

**Fall maintenance activities:** As the fall wind breezes blow and the leaves begin to fall, the District Six crews are almost winter ready. Most crews are wrapping up with weed eating and the final mowing.

According to Galen Ludlow, Dodge City Area Superintendent, when crews do the final mowing of the year, they mow the 15 feet of right of way from the highway edge and they may mow the next 15 feet of right of way or they mow the entire right of way depending on what is needed. This clears the path for the snow so that it will blow across the road instead of drifting over the road during the winter months.

Crews also are cleaning out bridge ends and berms, which includes mowing, weed eating and cutting down any trees in these areas which can grow up and damage a bridge deck.

As crews finish up highway patching and winterizing summer equipment, they are also preparing for winter weather by checking equipment and supplies and repairing and replenishing salt domes. District Six Subarea crews will participate in SNICE training on Oct. 23 and 24 in order to be winter ready.



**Top right:** Perry Wilkinson and ER Redburn, Equipment Operators in Dighton, complete the final mowing on K-96 west of Dighton. **Above left:** Greg Anderson, Equipment Operator in Dighton, weed eats around a guardrail on K-23 south of Dighton. **Above right:** Matt Eickleberry, Equipment Operator in Dighton, repairs a sign approximately ½ mile north of Dighton on K-23. Photos by Jason Lawrence, District Six

## Safety First - Attenuators

### What is an attenuator?

Truck mounted attenuators, or attenuators, are devices attached to the back of KDOT trucks or pulled by trailers that reduce the damage and impact to vehicles if struck.

Attenuators are often positioned between traffic and the employees working in a work zone.

This improves safety for the workers, the motorists and the equipment. If an attenuator is struck, it absorbs the energy from the impact of the vehicle and crumples, saving lives and equipment.

The following is a recount of a KDOT employee incident that involved an attenuator while an operator was in the truck and hit by an oncoming vehicle.

"It was a cold, wet, dreary day as we worked our way back to the shop after doing some major patching. All seemed well and we had two more ramps to get done and we would be home free.

The southbound driving lane is not a good place to be especially on a Friday afternoon at 4 p.m.

"As we started on the south side on the ramp, I noticed that the traffic was really getting crazy and even hollered over the radio that we needed to get off of the road before there was an accident. Little did we know that our fate was already sealed. The only problem was that as we worked around the curve toward the on-ramp, the cars were really starting to swerve in and out of the lanes.

"At this point we were looking like ducks on a pond. I was in front of the work zone to keep my co-workers from getting hit by the traffic.

"Needless to say it wasn't but a few short minutes



*An example of an attenuator that absorbed the impact of a crash, protecting the workers, motorists and equipment. File photo*

later that a driver came barreling down the ramp and slammed into the back of the attenuator without even pushing on the brakes. I immediately pulled the

individual from the vehicle to safety and cleared the traffic that had stopped and we waited for the paramedics.

"I have had a few close calls in my time here at KDOT, but I truly think that if I hadn't pulled up to where I was, the driver may have gotten killed.

"Looking back on this day I don't think there is anything that I could have done to prevent that accident from occurring. The attenuator did

exactly what it was supposed to do and all of us working in the area jumped into action and diffused a situation very quickly and calmly. I would do everything exactly the same as we did it on that day and not change a single thing. Every job has its hazards, so stay focused, stay aware and stay safe."



### TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. Asia.
2. To chart a western sea route to China, India and the fabled gold and spice islands of Asia.

3. The Bahamas.
4. On his third trip back.
5. 1792 in New York, for the 300th anniversary.
6. Franklin D. Roosevelt, in 1937.

## Plow drivers needed

### Winter operations assistance:

Do you know a KDOT retiree or truck driver that has a CDL? Temporary plow drivers may be needed at times to assist with winter operations, and applications for these positions are now being taken at the District offices across the state.

According to Denise Schwab, Assistant Bureau Chief of Personnel, to be considered for one of these positions, a person must meet the following requirements:

- Will be offered employment based on Supervisors' assessment of abilities to perform the essential functions of the job and pass a pre-employment drug and alcohol screening. Pre-employment physical is not required.
- Training and/or experience operating a dump truck.
- Upon hire, must possess a Class B CDL with airbrake option at a minimum.
- Available to work 12-hour shifts based on agency need.



- Available for paid pre-duty training to familiarize employee with equipment and snow and ice removal strategies used.

- Must read and sign the operations work agreement.

The hourly pay for these positions is \$19.65 and they are not eligible for benefits.

For more information, contact KDOT District offices in Topeka, Salina, Norton, Chanute, Hutchinson or Garden City.

## Fly Kansas

*Fly Kansas: Around 250 fifth-graders visited the Fly Kansas Air Tour at the Pittsburg stop on Sept. 26. The students happily roamed among over 40 aircraft, lining up to sit in the cockpits and then gathering to learn more about aviation over the lunch break. Photo by Priscilla Petersen*



## Roundabout construction



Grading continues on the project to construct a one-lane roundabout at the intersection of U.S. 59/U.S. 160 in Labette County. A roundabout is a circular intersection in which entering traffic yields to vehicles approaching from the left, and is considered a 'traffic-calming' device that reduces crash rates. KDOT awarded the \$3.1 million construction contract to LaForge & Budd Construction of Parsons. Aaron Frits' road squad designed the project.

## KTA



This month's Construction Spotlight features KTA Engineer Luke Coltrane and the current work being done along I-70/KTA to improve drainage, extend ramps and resurface the road as shown above. See the video [here](#).

KTA's State Farm Safety Assist program had a busy summer season recently as more than 1,400 travelers were assisted from the Oklahoma border to Wichita and Topeka to Kansas City. Read the full news release [here](#).

## Area Four highlighted

By Kelly Kultala, District One

**Area Four featured:** KDOT is responsible, alone or in partnership with local governments, for about 25,000 miles of Kansas roads across the state.

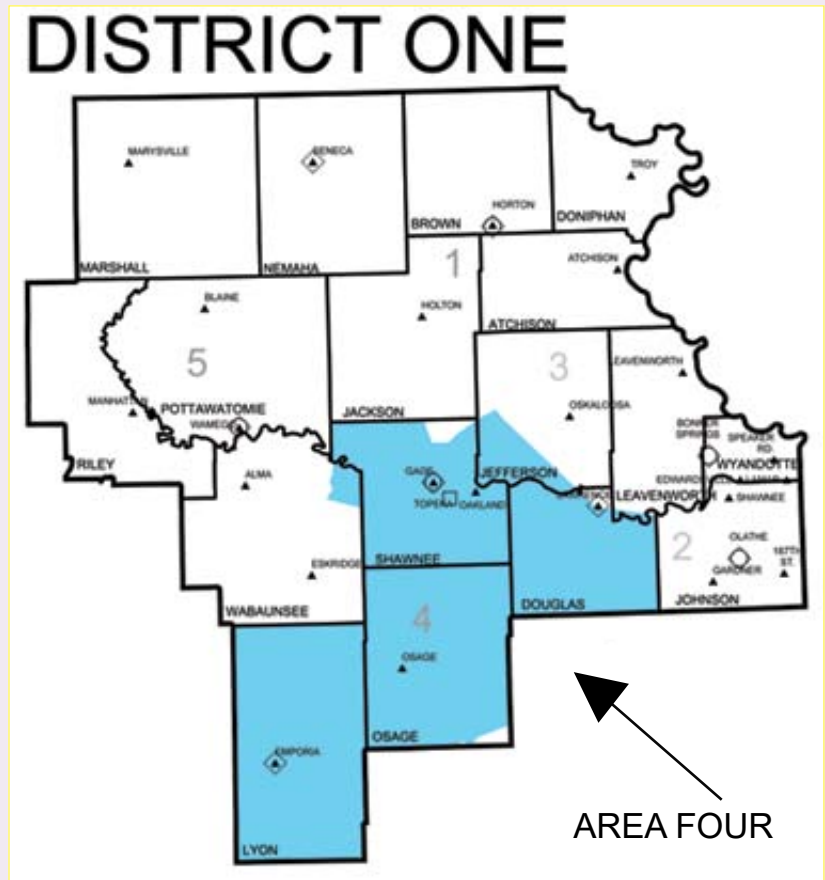
To better serve Kansans, KDOT has divided the state into six Districts. Each District is divided into Areas and Subareas where KDOT facilities are located to make it easier and more efficient for the road crews to repair roads and bridges, to mow shoulders and right-of-ways and to plow snow and ice.

District One is responsible for construction and maintenance activities for 17 counties in northeast Kansas. These responsibilities include improving and maintaining over 5,704 miles of state highways that are located within this district. This District is divided into five Areas.

Here are some little known facts about Area Four, located at 101 S.W. Gage Boulevard in Topeka, which covers Shawnee, Douglas and Osage counties, most of Lyon County and the southern part of Jefferson County.

According to Alan Spicer, Assistant Bureau Chief for KDOT's Bureau of Transportation Planning, Area Four is 2,486 square miles in size and is responsible for 1,430 lane miles.

Area Four Metro Area Engineer Steve Baalman states, "Area Four is also home to three Regents universities: University of Kansas, Washburn University and Emporia State University; has four United States Army



Corps of Engineers flood control reservoirs within its boundaries: Clinton Lake, Pomona Lake, Melvern Lake and part of Perry Lake; and also contains over 400 bridge structures.”

It's always interesting to learn more about the different areas of our state.

## Retirees

The following employees retired from KDOT on Oct. 1.

### Headquarters

**Stephen Halbett**, Program Consultant II, Transportation Safety

**Richard Hinderliter**, Engineering Technician Specialist, Structures & Geotechnology

**Steven King**, Professional Civil Engineer II, Road Design

**Mary Beth Pfrang**, IT Project Manager, Information Technology

**Mark Segelquist**, CADD Manager, Engineering & Design

### District Two

**Leonard Nicholson**, Equipment Mechanic Senior, Salina

### District Three

**Glenn Coker**, Equipment Operator Specialist, Sharon Springs

**Randall Hargitt**, Equipment Operator Senior, Grainfield

**Reginald Vrbas**, Equipment Operator Senior, Atwood

### District Four

**Leo Evans Jr.**, Equipment Operator Senior, Columbus

### District Five

**Leroy Lewis**, Highway Maintenance Supervisor, Pratt

### District Six

**James Armknecht**, Highway Maintenance Supervisor, Dighton

## Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day

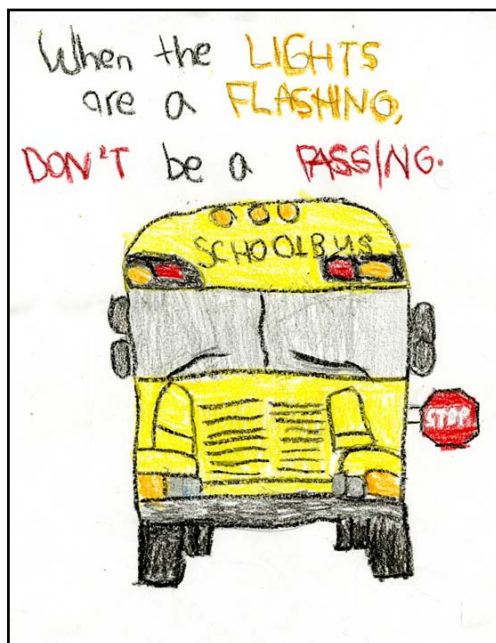
**Poster, video winners:** Statewide winners of two contests have been announced as part of Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day.

**For the poster contest** – Quincy Coup of Hope, Emma Kuhlman of Topeka and Von Woleslagel of Hutchinson are the statewide winners. Each student was selected as a regional winner and will receive a bicycle donated by the KTA and a helmet donated by Safe Kids Kansas at presentations at their schools. A total of 434 Kansas kids ages 5 to 13 participated.

As statewide winners in their age categories, they will also receive a Kindle Fire tablet from the KTA, a \$50 gift card from the Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association of Kansas and movie passes from AAA Kansas along with a \$200 donation to the school, class or booster club.

**For the video contest** – Students from Lansing High School won first place. They will receive first choice of an iPad, GoPro or DJI Osmo Pocket along with a \$500 donation to the school, class or booster club, donated by the KTA.

Students from Eudora captured second place, and students from Shawnee Mission West High School placed third. Each will receive one of the remaining prizes listed above. There were 35 entries across the state. To see the winning videos, click [here](#).



**Top right:** Artwork by Emma Kuhlman of Topeka. **Above:** Artwork by Von Woleslagel of Hutchinson. **At left:** Artwork by Quincy Coup of Hope

## Change in federally-funded highway projects

### **Change in federally-funded highway projects:**

The Federal Highway Administration recently published an updated federal rule to give states more flexibility and choice in which products or services can be used on federally-funded highway projects. The change is intended to improve safety and increase efficiency while saving taxpayer dollars.

"This much-needed update of a century-old, obsolete rule will benefit state transportation infrastructure projects and save millions of taxpayer dollars," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao.

The rule updates an outdated federal requirement that restricts the ability of states to use patented or

proprietary technology in their Federal-aid highway projects.

"This final rule promotes innovation by empowering states to choose which state-of-the-art materials, tools, and products best meet their needs for the construction and upkeep of America's transportation infrastructure," said Federal Highway Administrator Nicole R. Nason.

Prior to this change, federal regulations prohibited state contracting agencies from using federal funds to acquire patented or proprietary materials, products, or services, except under certain limited circumstances.

The rule takes effect Oct. 28. It can be viewed [here](#).

## In Memory

Condolences to friends and family of retiree James Clowers who passed away on Sept. 24 in Topeka. Clowers was a Professional Civil Engineer II at the Materials and Research Center. He retired in 2000 after 13 years of service.

Condolences to friends and family of retiree Jake Saubers who passed away on Sept. 27 in Yates Center. Saubers was the Highway Maintenance Supervisor at the Yates Center Subarea office. He retired in 2005 after 32 years of service.

## KDOT Blog

### Kansas Transportation

Tuesday, Oct. 1

#### Texting/driving and no seat belt – a deadly combination



By Linda Isaac

Always a happy guy! My son, Chad Stacy, had a smile that never faded and the joy for life that he carried went with him everywhere he went. Chad was a father of two beautiful girls. He was a wonderful big brother and the most loving son that a mother could ask for.

Chad was also a Marine, having done two tours in Iraq. He loved the outdoors, especially fishing with his dad and brother. He loved all sports and was always outside with the kids whenever family got together. He loved people - everyone was his buddy!

On January 5, 2017, Chad made the bad choice to text and drive. It was dark outside, and he was living in a new area when he ran a stop sign. He hit another truck and caused both of them to flip over. The other driver got out of his car without any injuries.

Chad's car was pretty smashed up, except for the driver's seat. The officers said Chad probably could have survived the accident, but he did not have his seat belt on. He was thrown from his vehicle and died at the scene.

We miss Chad so much every day. I can't stress enough how dangerous texting and driving is and the huge importance of wearing a seat belt. It would have saved Chad's life.

Please always drive safe and buckle up so that your family never has to see a patrol car pull up in their driveway and officers get out of the car, remove their hats and walk to your door. News like this is such a shock and so hard on the families, but it's also very difficult for the first responders and police officers.

I like to end on a positive note and tell people that one of the great choices Chad made years before this was to be an organ, eye and tissue donor. In his death, many others have been helped.

PLEASE put your phone down while driving, buckle up and register to be an organ donor. #MidwestTransplant

*Linda Isaac is the mother of Chad and lives in Olathe.*

See more stories on the Kansas Transportation blog at <http://kansastransportation.blogspot.com/>