

Translines EXPRESS

Dec. 16, 2015

Happy
Holidays!

The Topeka Community Christmas Tree decorates the north side of the Capitol building and is lit up for the holidays.



Headquarters

State offices are closed for the holidays on Thursday and Friday, Dec. 24 and 25. State offices will also be closed on Friday, Jan. 1, 2016 for New Year's Day.

Have a safe and Merry Christmas!

Tommer retires from KDOT: Construction and Materials Bureau Chief Sandra Tommer is retiring from KDOT after 40 years of service.

Tommer graduated from Kansas State University and started with KDOT in 1976 in the Engineer-in-Training program. She became a Project Engineer at the Topeka Construction Office, and in 1982, was promoted to the Construction Engineer. She was named the Area Engineer in Wamego in 1988, was promoted in 2000 to the District One Construction Engineer in Topeka and has been in her current position at Headquarters since 2011.

"It was a challenge because there were no women in the field when I started - I was one of the first," Tommer said. "But I had a lot of good people to learn from and have enjoyed working with all of them. That's what I'm going to miss the most, the people."

Tommer's husband, Bill, retired from the District One office in 2011 after a 43-year KDOT career.

A retirement party for Tommer will take place tomorrow, Dec. 17, from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the fourth floor auditorium at the Eisenhower Building.



Sandra Tommer

District Two



The Abilene Subarea crew was called out to flag K-4 highway traffic following flooding caused by the three-plus-inch rains in south Saline County on Dec. 13 and 14. Flooding occurring over both lanes of K-4 from Gypsum east and south for about three miles is shown above. At right, Equipment Operator Layne Schiffner looks at the conditions on K-4 near Gypsum. K-4 was reopened to traffic mid-day on Dec. 15.



General

Drunk driver wrecks into Oregon construction zone: According to a story in Better Roads, a drunk driver in Oregon barely avoided a potential disaster after he crashed into a construction site and found himself teetering on the edge of a pit with an active gas line below.

According to the Beaverton Police Department, an intoxicated man was driving his car in Beaverton recently when he crashed into a construction zone he didn't notice - despite the flaggers and construction vehicles. The man's car ended up almost halfway into a very large hole that had an exposed, active gas line. If the driver had gone a foot further, the car would likely have fallen into the pit and atop the gas line.

Luckily, in the process of the crash, the driver avoided hitting any construction workers or causing injuries to anyone on the site.

The man's car balanced on the edge of the pit until workers from NW Natural Gas helped remove the vehicle. The driver was then arrested and charged with driving under the influence.

"This is a prime example of why driving while impaired is so dangerous. This driver could have stuck a flagger, construction worker or ruptured the gas line causing many more injuries or deaths," the Beaverton Police Department said on its Facebook page.

Trivia!

Chocolate

1. How many Hershey's kisses are produced every day?
2. About how many cacao beans does it take to make one pound of chocolate?
3. What year were M&Ms created? What was the main purpose?
4. Who was German chocolate cake named after?
5. About what temperature does chocolate melt?

District Five

The I-235/U.S. 54 interchange rebuild has begun - after only one month, seven work zones (and counting) are in place. At one of the project sites, welders connect H-pile in the footing of pier one of the first bridge of six on the northbound I-235 ramp to eastbound and westbound U.S. 54. Traffic



disruption in the project area has been minimal so far but that will change in January when ramps from nearby West Street to both eastbound and westbound U.S. 54 are closed for six months. Mark Hurt's bridge squad and Kelly Keele's road squad designed the project. A website to keep commuters, media and other project watchers informed is at www.235red.org.

Railroad Crossing Inventory

Rail inventory: There are thousands of railroad crossings in Kansas and KDOT Rail Crossing Coordinator Darlene Osterhaus needs to know a lot about each one of them. So, over the past two years, she has trained 160 KDOT staffers to help inventory and record some 100 attributes of each crossing. Osterhaus needs the information, which includes photos, number of sets of tracks, latitude/longitude, signage, crossing surface, name of street, type of roadway, and much more, to update KDOT data bases and meet reporting requirements of the Federal Railroad Administration.

Since the FRA now requires that the full inventory of crossings be updated every five years, Osterhaus has had to recruit and train more people from KDOT districts to meet the demand. In the past two years, 2,856 public crossings in 37 counties



Above, KDOT staff participate in the training class at a rail crossing in Hays. Left, an Emergency Notification Sign that helps to identify each crossing location.

have been inventoried and next year's plans include the inventory of 1,310 crossings in 24 counties.

Osterhaus says that additional information collected from this point forward will be verification that each crossing includes the blue Emergency Notification System (ENS) signs posted on both sides of the tracks. The blue signs, she said, bear a string of six digits followed by a letter that identify the precise location of a crossing, which can be crucial to those reporting a crash or other emergency situations at the crossing.



District Five

The Wichita Area Crew provided a bucket truck so project designers could finalize camera locations for the next phase of Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) deployment on Wichita highways. This location is on I-235 at K-42. Bid letting is scheduled for May 2016.

District Four

Pittsburg officials, along with Transportation Secretary Mike King and Mary Sullivan of Amino Brothers (second and third from right), cut the ribbon celebrating Quincy Street improvements during a Dec. 10 ceremony. The \$3.2 million project, on which Amino Brothers was the primary contractor, reconstructed Quincy from Broadway to Joplin streets. The work included storm sewer improvements, ADA updates, new sidewalks and a traffic signal at Quincy and Joplin. The project was funded by an 80/20 match of state and city funds.



District Three



Updated intersection: K-258 near Webster Lake in Rooks County is getting a new look thanks to a new, at-grade intersection at the U.S. 24 junction near the reservoir. The intersection is replacing the overpass that carried traffic over U.S. 24. Pavement on the new alignment has been completed and work will begin to remove the overpass in early 2016. Work on the \$1.8 million project is expected to be completed by the end of spring, weather permitting. Shawn Schwensen's bridge squad and Kris Norton's road squad designed the project.



Top photo: Striping and finishing touches take place on the new K-258 pavement. Above: Paving on the new alignment was under way earlier this year.

Employees' Council



A variety of art was on display (top) and employees enjoyed cookies and punch (right) at the Employees' Council Artwalk/Holiday reception on Dec. 3 in Topeka. Above, KDOT retirees Larry Emig, Harold Benoit and Nancy Bogina taste cookies entered in the Cookie contest with Coleen Weber being named the winner.

Kansas Transportation

Tuesday, Dec. 8

Thanksgiving week storm racks up impressive numbers

The winter storm that hit nearly every corner of Kansas over Thanksgiving week cost \$3.5 million. Much of that cost was due to the fact that the storm was stretched over most of the week, covered all but a few southeast counties and was a 'material heavy' storm due to the ice. KDOT trucks covered an impressive 300,000-plus miles due to the storm's duration and icy characteristics.

**\$3.5 million
cost of the storm**



1 million gallons of brine



37,000 tons of material



30,000 hours of labor



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

In Memory

Condolences to friends and family of KDOT retiree Tony Robertson who passed away on Dec. 8. Robertson had just retired last month after 15 years of service as an Equipment Operator on the Wichita Area Crew.

TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. More than 80 million
2. About 400 beans
3. 1941, as a means for soldiers to enjoy chocolate without it melting
4. Sam German, an American baker
5. Around 93 degrees

Have an idea for a news brief or picture for Translines Express?
Please e-mail to translines@ksdot.org



KDOT maintenance crews removed graffiti from overhead signs on the U.S.69/18th Street Expressway Bridge over the railroad tracks (pictured above left) in Kansas City on Dec. 10. They removed the catwalks, then cleaned the signs with a liquid treatment.



Retirees

The following employees will retire from KDOT on Jan. 1.

Headquarters

- Kathleen Deitering**, Senior Traffic Engineer, Transportation Safety and Technology
- Ellen Laird**, IT Project Manager, Operations
- Gary Matheny**, Engineering Technician Specialist, Construction and Materials
- Michael Stock**, Professional Civil Engineer II, Right of Way
- Delmar Thompson**, Regional Geologist, Structures & Geotechnical Services
- Sandra Tommer**, Bureau Chief, Construction and Materials

District One

- Mary Beavers**, Administrative Specialist, Topeka/Gage
- Larry Burdick**, Equipment Operator Senior, Seneca
- Gale Hunninghake**, Highway Maintenance Supervisor, Seneca
- Donald Koehler**, Highway Maintenance Superintendent, Wamego
- Edwin Kreutzer**, Engineering Technician, Topeka
- Richard Olmsted**, Equipment Operator Senior, Marysville
- James Roth**, Equipment Operator Senior, Alma
- Scott Schau**, Equipment Operator Midpoint, Shawnee
- Terry Smith**, Equipment Operator Senior, Seneca
- Terry West**, Equipment Operator Senior, Blaine

District Two

- Phillip Christenson**, Equipment Operator Senior, Belleville

- David Funke**, Equipment Operator Specialist, Washington
- Cris Hayes**, Highway Maintenance Supervisor, Clay Center
- Keith Unruh**, Equipment Operator, Lindsborg

District Four

- William Nading**, Equipment Mechanic, Chanute
- Terry Smith**, Equipment Operator Specialist, Erie
- Raymond Zellner**, Equipment Operator Senior, Fort Scott

District Five

- Jerry Beasley**, Equipment Mechanic Senior, Hutchinson
- Candace Conwell**, Administrative Specialist, Great Bend
- Dan Finnesy**, Equipment Operator Senior, Newton
- Jack Hensley**, Highway Maintenance Supervisor, Wichita
- Lloyd Mullins Jr.**, Engineering Technician Senior, Wichita
- Greg Schultz**, Equipment Operator Senior, Coldwater
- Jon Sharp**, Highway Maintenance Supervisor, Kingman
- Mark Shumway**, Highway Maintenance Supervisor, Pratt

District Six

- Carl Ghan**, Equipment Operator, Ulysses
- Rodney Nix**, Engineering Technician Specialist, Garden City



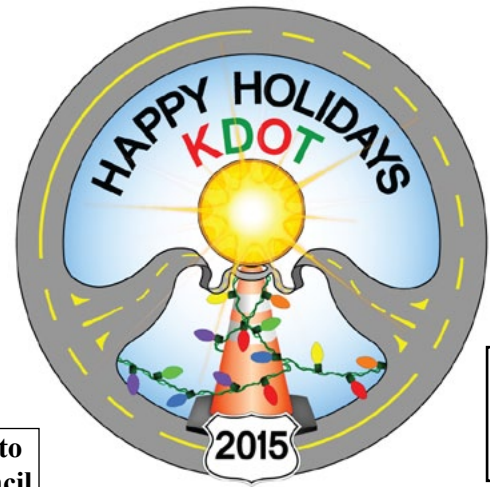
Join the KTA on Dec. 18 for a groundbreaking of the cattle pens ramp improvements and scenic outlook project located at mile marker 111 on the Kansas Turnpike (I-35.) The festivities will begin at 3 p.m. with remarks by Gov. Sam Brownback, KDOT Secretary/KTA Director Mike King and KTA CEO Steve Hewitt. Can't make it to the event that afternoon? Photos will be posted on the KTA's Flickr page at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/ksturnpike>.

Order Form for Past Year's Holiday Ornaments

<p>2010</p>	<p>2012</p>
<p>2013</p>	<p>2014</p>

★ **Great Gift Item - Don't Miss Out!** ★
Celebrate with a 2015 KDOT holiday ornament!

★ **KDOT Ceramic** ★
Holiday Ornament



An Employees' Council fundraiser

To order:

Headquarters: Contact your Employees' Council representative
Districts/Retirees: Mail completed form and check to -
 Ruby Hilton, KDOT, 700 SW Harrison,
 13th Floor/Bridge Design, Topeka, KS, 66603.

Checks payable to Employees' Council

Please Print - Name: _____
 Address: _____
 (Retirees only - home address)
 Work phone: _____

For more details, call Ruby at (785) 296-0603

Only \$5 each

- ♦ 3" diameter/flat ceramic
- ♦ Quantity _____
- ♦ Amount enclosed _____

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 13th Floor/Bridge Design
 Topeka, KS, 66603

Ornament	Quantity	Cost Each	Total
2010		\$5.00	
2011	----- SOLD OUT -----		
2012		\$5.00	
2013		\$5.00	
2014		\$5.00	
Total Paid:			

Please Print - Name: _____
 Address: _____
 _____ (Retirees only - home address)
 Work phone: _____

Checks payable to Employees' Council

For more details, call Ruby at (785) 291-3980

Supply is limited on ornaments from previous years - first come, first serve