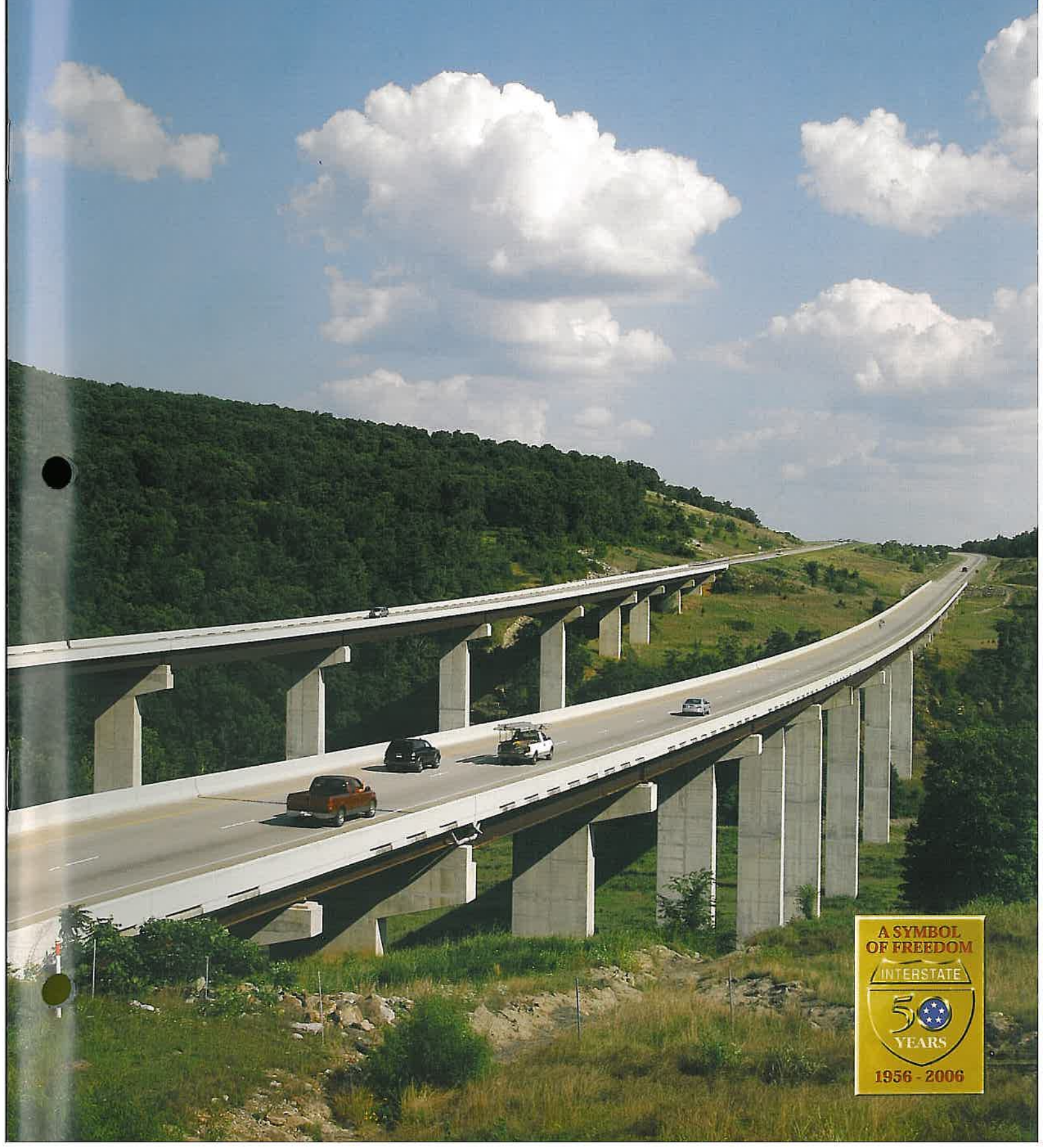


Arkansas Highways

SUMMER 2006



A SYMBOL
OF FREEDOM

INTERSTATE

50
YEARS

1956 - 2006

Director's Message



The first half of the year 2006 has proved to be a busy time for the Arkansas Highway Commission and the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD) staff. From massive projects such as new crossings for the Mississippi River in southeast Arkansas to local projects involving new traffic signals in suburban neighborhoods, we have all worked hard to meet our goal of providing the best transportation system possible for motorists traveling our state.

Once in a while it is appropriate to step back and examine our accomplishments, and to evaluate the progress we've made in reaching

our goals.

A perfect example of the commitment to our work can be seen in a video recently completed about our Environmental Division.

The ten-minute educational video entitled "Beyond the Pavement: The AHTD's Commitment to Environmental Excellence," tells the story of the success that has been experienced as we strive to protect our environment.

The video recently won a PRIDE award from the American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA). In addition, the Department sent the new video to public schools and libraries across the state in order to share our story with students and the general public. An article on the new video is included in this issue of *Arkansas Highways*.

In early June, the Department enjoyed success of another kind as employees from all ten AHTD Districts gathered in Little Rock to showcase their skills during the annual Equipment Operators Rodeo. Congratulations to all who participated and to the winners in each category. Let me wish you the best of luck as you travel to the upcoming regional competition.

Also in June, the Department joined the rest of the nation in celebrating the 50th anniversary of this country's Interstate Highway System. Together, with other transportation industry representatives and the news media, we shared the story of Arkansas' Interstates. Today, 72% of our state's Interstates are classified as being in good condition. We are extremely proud of that fact and look forward to meeting the needs of our state's motorists in the future.

Congratulations to everyone for your hard work in the first half of the year 2006. As you read this issue of *Arkansas Highways*, I think you will see that our efforts have paid off in a big way. Let's work together to make the second half of this year equally as successful.

John J. Flowers
 Director of Highways and Transportation

ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION



Prissy Hickerson
 Chairman



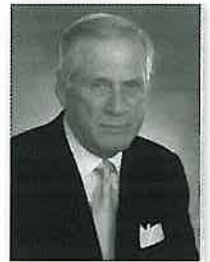
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Carl S. Rosenbaum
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John Ed Regenold
 Member

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Arkansas Highways

Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department - Summer 2006

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Front:

Interstate 540 looking south in Crawford County near the Bobby Hopper Tunnel

Back:

Interstate 40 looking west in Pope County near Lake Dardanelle



Department Commemorates 50 Years of the Interstate System

The Arkansas State Highway Commission and the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD) invited representatives from the transportation industry and the media together on June 29th to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the nation's Interstate Highway System.

A news conference was held at the AHTD Central Office in Little Rock for the occasion. Speakers included Prissy Hickerson, Chairman of the Highway Commission; AHTD Director Dan Flowers; Derrell Turner, Assistant Division Administrator for the Federal Highway Administration in Arkansas; Brad Fryar of the Associated General Contractors of Arkansas; Johnnie Bolin from the Arkansas Good Roads/Transportation Council; and Carolyn Bonifas of The Road Information Program, a Washington DC-based transportation research organization.

"We are so pleased that you have all come to join us as we remember the past and build toward the future of Arkansas' Interstates," Hickerson stated.

It was on June 29, 1956, that President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the Federal-Aid Highway Act, which funded the construction of this country's original 41,000-mile Interstate Highway System. Construction of the Interstate Highway System was one of the largest engineering projects ever undertaken. Today, the 46,870-mile Interstate system carries 24 percent of all vehicle travel in the nation.

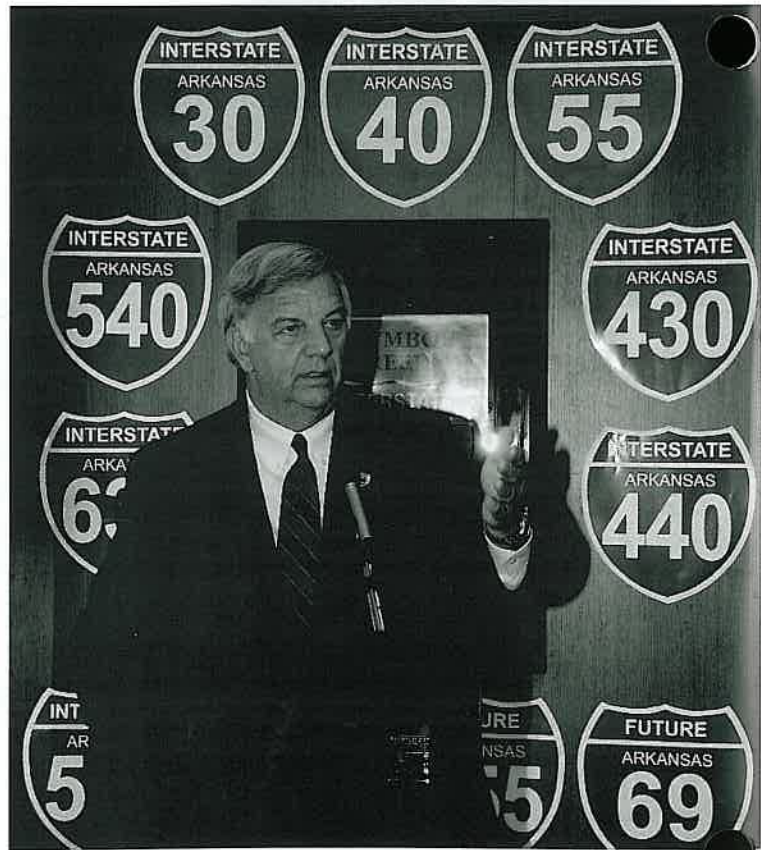
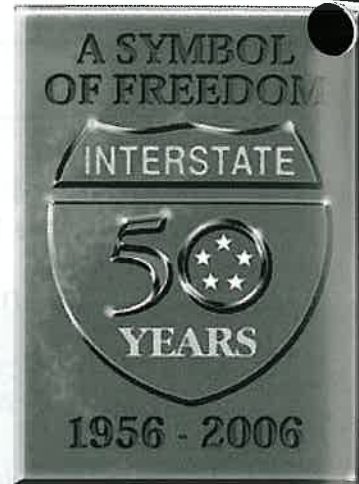


(l. to r.) Commission Chairman Prissy Hickerson; Johnnie Bolin, Executive Director of the Good Roads/Transportation Council; and Commissioners Carl Rosenbaum and John Ed Regenold.

"We are very proud of the history of Arkansas' Interstate System," stated AHTD Director Dan Flowers. "Arkansas can lay claim to the fact that, in 1975, we became the first state to complete our original allotment of Interstate highway miles. At that time, we had 525 miles of Interstate highway on Interstates 30, 40, 55, 430 and a small section of 540 in Fort Smith."

Today, there are 655 miles on eight Interstate Highways in Arkansas, including Interstates 30, 40, 55, 430, 440, 530, 540 and 630. Though the Interstates only comprise about two (2) percent of all lane miles of roads in Arkansas, they carry 26 percent of the traffic.

"Our Interstate system is vital in transporting goods not only in Arkansas, but around the entire region and country," said Prissy Hickerson. "The importance of this system to the public cannot be overemphasized – they truly do link us to the rest of the country and the world."



AHTD Director Dan Flowers addresses the crowd.



Media from several print and television outlets covered the event.

"As you may recall, in 1999, the people of Arkansas voted overwhelmingly in favor of rehabilitating our Interstate system," added Flowers.

The following year, the Highway and Transportation Department began a five-year Interstate Rehabilitation Program (IRP). Since that time, more than 350 miles of Arkansas Interstates have been reconstructed or rehabilitated.

"Arkansas has been showcased nationally for the IRP's innovative financing, design and implementation," added Hickerson. "Department officials are frequently asked to share their experiences with the IRP at transportation industry conferences around the country."

A recent ranking of the nation's interstates by *Overdrive* magazine, a national trucking publication, included Interstate 40 in Arkansas as the number one "most improved" highway in the country. Interstate 30 in Arkansas ranked third in the same category.



(l. to r.) Johnnie Bolin, Executive Director of the Arkansas Good Roads/Transportation Council; Dertell Turner, Assistant Division Administrator for FHWA in Arkansas; Commission Chairman Prissy Hickerson; and Director Dan Flowers.

The Department has been recognized with nine awards for excellence in communications and work zone safety for the Rehabilitation Program. It has also had a significant impact on the economy of the state as well. The amount of construction work involved with the program created approximately 47,000 jobs.

Today, 72% of Arkansas' interstates are classified as being in good condition. "We are extremely proud of that fact," added Flowers. "We still have needs that must be met so our roadways won't fall into disrepair. We've had a successful, but challenging, 50 years here in Arkansas, and we look forward to continuing that success in order to meet the transportation challenges in the future."

For more information on the country's Interstates and their 50th anniversary, go to www.interstate50th.org.

Equipment Operators Roadeo Brings Districts Together

Friendly competition was the order of the day on June 1st as AHTD teams from around the state gathered at Little Rock's Central Office for the 16th Annual Equipment Operators Roadeo.

Each year, the Roadeo provides an opportunity for the equipment operators in each of the ten Districts and Central Office to display their skills and compete for the honor of taking home the title of statewide "Team Champions."

This year's day-long competition included obstacle courses or skill challenges for tractor mowers, tractor/low-boys, single axle dump trucks, tandem axle dump trucks, motor patrols and backhoes.



AHTD Director Dan Flowers (l.) congratulates the day's competitors, and refers to the upcoming Regional Equipment Operators Roadeo. Commissioner Carl Rosenbaum also spoke to the crowd.



Lonnie Teague of District 7 competes in the Tandem Axle Dump Truck competition.



There were 70 competitors in this year's Roadeo.

Needless to say, everyone that competed displayed award-winning skills in front of a large crowd that included family and friends. Following the competition and an outdoor picnic of barbeque and catfish, AHTD Director Dan Flowers and Commissioner Carl Rosenbaum presented the winners in each category. After individual awards were presented, it was announced that District Eight had won the title of Team Champions for 2006. This is District Eight's second year in a row to capture the title. They also won in 2001 and 2003.

"It was with feelings of honor and pride that I listened as Mr. Flowers announced that the District Eight team had won the Roadeo," stated District Engineer Frank Russenberger. "This year is a special honor as this is the first time since the team trophy has been awarded that a District has won in back to back years. We are proud of our team and the way they are able to compete each year considering the excellent level of participants that all the Districts and the Central Office crews are sending to the Roadeo."

The top two winners in each category will move on to compete in the 2006 Regional Rodeo to be held in Savannah, Georgia, on October 3rd and 4th. Teams from Arkansas, Mississippi, South Carolina, North Carolina and Georgia will participate in the regional competition. The AHTD has won the regional competition the past three years in a row.

"I know the Highway Commission and Department wish the Arkansas team good luck at the Regionals," stated Highway Commissioner Carl Rosenbaum. "I know everyone is looking forward to it."

2006 AHTD Equipment Operators' ROADEO Finals Winners

Tractor / Lowboy

1st Place	Darrell Barnes ¹	District 8
2nd Place	Jimmy Eldridge	District 5
3rd Place	Reginald Easter ⁴	District 3

Tandem Axle Dump Truck

1st Place	Gary Fendley	District 1
2nd Place	David Pruitt	District 8
3rd Place	Tony Ruhl	District 10

Single Axle Dump Truck

1st Place	Yvonne Blair	District 4
2nd Place	Todd Clifford	District 10
3rd Place	Jay Rankin	District 8

Tractor Mower

1st Place	John Harness	District 5
2nd Place	Fred Ridenhour ²	District 4
3rd Place	Johnny Carte	Central Office

Backhoe

1st Place	Larry Brazil	District 8
2nd Place	David Morton ³	District 3
3rd Place	Donald Crawford	District 7

Motor Patrol

1st Place	William "Hickey" Hickman ⁴	District 7
2nd Place	Jerry Mitchell	District 1
3rd Place	Dennis Langston ⁵	District 8

Team Champion

District 8:
Darrell Barnes, David Pruitt, Jay Rankin, John Crawford, Randy White,
Larry Brazil, Dennis Langston & Frank Russenberger, District Engineer

1-Darrell Barnes (2005 Regional Champion)

2-Fred Ridenhour (1999, 2000, 2001, 2004 and 2005 State Champion; 3rd Place in 2004 Regional Roadeo and 1st Place in 2005 Regional Roadeo)

3-David Morton (1999 State Champion)

4-William "Hickey" Hickman (1995, 1998 and 1999 State Champion)

5-Dennis Langston (2nd Place in 2005 Regional Roadeo)



Team Champions, District 8: (l. to r.) John Crawford, Darrell Barnes, Randy White, Dennis Langston, Director Dan Flowers, District Engineer Frank Russenberger, Commissioner Carl Rosenbaum, Larry Brazil, David Pruitt and Jay Rankin.



Tractor / Lowboy: (l. to r.) **1st Place**, Darrell Barnes, District 8; **2nd Place**, Jimmy Eldridge, District 5; **3rd Place**, Reginald Easter, District 3.



Tandem Axle Dump Truck: (l. to r.) **1st Place**, Gary Fendley, District 1; **2nd Place**, David Pruitt, District 8; **3rd Place**, Tony Ruhl, District 10.



Single Axle Dump Truck: (l. to r.) **1st Place**, Yvonne Blair, District 4; **2nd Place**, Todd Clifford, District 10; **3rd Place**, Jay Rankin, District 8.



Tractor Mower: (l. to r.) **1st Place**, John Harness, District 5; **2nd Place**, Fred Ridenhour, District 4; **3rd Place**, Johnny Carte, Central Office.



Backhoe: (l. to r.) **1st Place**, Larry Brazil, District 8; **2nd Place**, David Morton, District 3; **3rd Place**, Donald Crawford, District 7.



Motor Patrol: (l. to r.) **1st Place** William "Hickey" Hickman, District 7; **2nd Place**, Jerry Mitchell, District 1; **3rd Place**, Dennis Langston, District 8.

Flowers Is Recipient of Leadership Award

Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department Director Dan Flowers was presented with the prestigious 2005 Jack Evans Regional Leadership Award by the Metroplan Board of Directors at a meeting in Little Rock in January of this year.

Flowers was presented the award for his efforts to promote intergovernmental planning and cooperation through new legislation. Flowers provided leadership in the passage of Act 2275 of 2005, known as the Regional Mobility Act. The act allows an individual county, or a group of contiguous counties, to form a public corporation to address regional transportation

problems. The regional mobility authorities would have limited power to implement local taxes and issue bonds to build and operate improvements to surface transportation systems.

"Only a few states have anything like this, and the main reason Arkansas has it is because of the foresight and leadership of Dan Flowers," stated Jim McKenzie, Executive Director of Metroplan. "The act has the potential to hold the key to metropolitan regions meeting their transportation needs in the future."

After receiving the award from Maumelle Mayor Burch Johnson, Flowers said,

"I am pleased to have been part of the legislative effort to pass the Regional Mobility Act and am honored to receive this award. Many people worked hard to pass this important legislation and I accept on behalf of all who helped in the process. My knowledge of Metroplan's efforts and how we work together on many issues make this a special award."

The Jack Evans Regional Leadership Award was established by the Metroplan Board in 1993 to honor the late Mayor Jack Evans of Sherwood. It is given to an individual, group, company or institution for providing outstanding public service.



AHTD Director Dan Flowers (l.) accepts the Jack Evans Regional Leadership Award presented to him by Maumelle Mayor Burch Johnson.

New Video Focuses on the AHTD's Commitment to the Environment

In addition to the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department's responsibilities to design, construct and maintain Arkansas' network of highways, another one of its goals is to work towards the preservation and enhancement of our state's natural and cultural resources.

Throughout its history, the Department has had an excellent record of being aware of these concerns and has been committed to remaining in compliance with environmental regulations. In fact, AHTD has moved far beyond a regulation-driven policy and strives for excellence when it comes to the environment.

To embrace this principle of environmental stewardship, the Department has created one of the most progressive Environmental Divisions of any transportation department in the country.

To share the story of this dedication to the environment and success that has been experienced, the AHTD recently teamed with Jones Film and Video of Little Rock to produce a ten-minute video titled *Beyond the Pavement: The AHTD's Commitment to Environmental Excellence*.

"We believe we have a success story worth telling," says AHTD Director Dan Flowers.

Viewers of the video will learn that to protect the physical and social environment surrounding any roadway or bridge project, the Department conducts thorough environmental surveys and assessments. Department experts evaluate each potential environmental concern — such as wetlands, endangered species, historic structures, archeological artifacts, hazardous materials, increased noise levels and community displacements — and work toward solutions to eliminate or minimize impacts of construction activities.

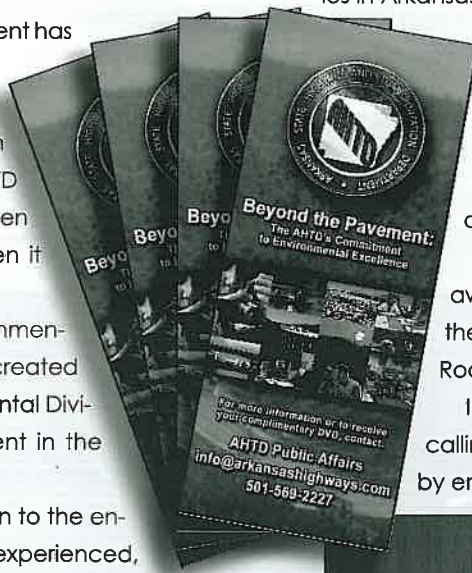
"This video will educate and give greater insight into the day-to-day activities of our Environmental Division staff as they assess all environmental impacts of a highway project before any plans are made or land is altered," stated Lynn Malbrough, Environmental Division Head.

The Department received a federal grant for production of the video. Film crews were invited into AHTD offices and accompanied staff members out in the field.

The video has been distributed to all schools and public libraries in Arkansas. It will also be shown in each Arkansas Welcome Center in order for travelers to see the impact the Department has on the environment. An advertising flyer was sent to other agencies as well as to local officials and educational centers around the state. Interested organizations may request a complimentary copy of the video.

Since its release, the video has received a national award. On May 17th of this year, the Department was the recipient of a PRIDE Award from the American Road & Transportation Builders Association.

Information on obtaining the video is available by calling the AHTD Public Affairs Office at 501-569-2227 or by emailing info@arkansashighways.com.



(l. to r.) Ellen Hill, Public Affairs Specialist for the AHTD, accepts the PRIDE Award from Bud Wright, executive director of the Federal Highway Administration, and 2006 ARTBA Chairman Gene McCormick.

Department Receives National Award

The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD) received a national award from Keep America Beautiful, Inc. in December of 2005.

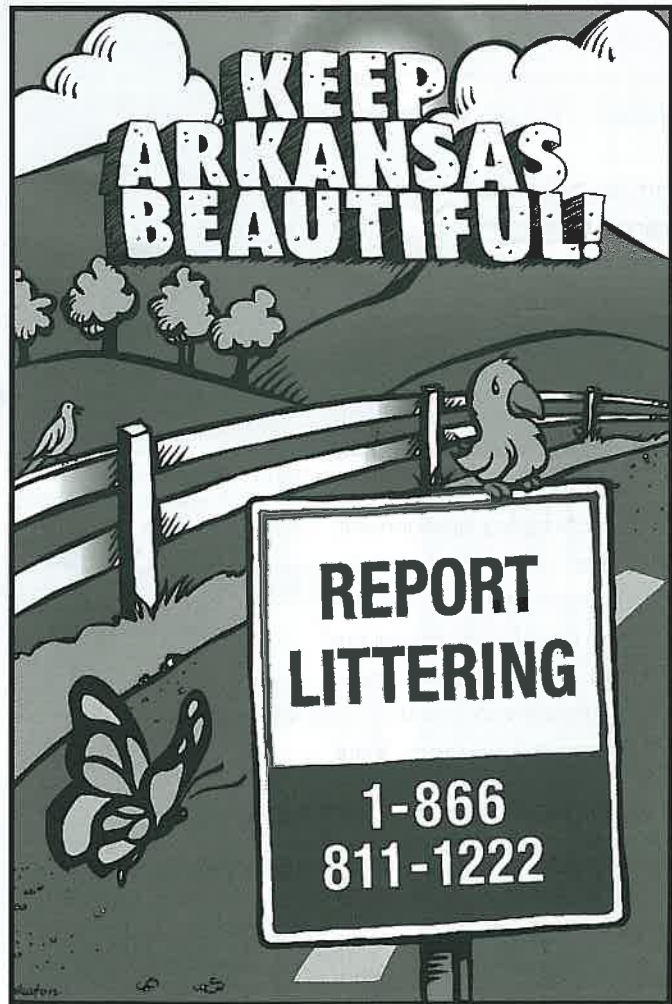
The "U.S. State Departments of Transportation 2005 Partnership Award" was presented to the AHTD for exemplary contributions to and support of Keep Arkansas Beautiful (KAB) and recognizes the success of the AHTD's "Litter Hotline" program. The program celebrated its first anniversary last December. The Litter Hotline is the nation's eighth litter-reporting program. The 24-hour hotline makes reporting a litter violation quick, simple and anonymous.

Upon the launch of the Litter Hotline, AHTD approached KAB to assume the advertising and marketing responsibilities for the toll-free number. KAB eagerly agreed to assist in raising awareness for the program and developed a campaign of both traditional and nontraditional communications strategies. Included were a television commercial, radio spots, counter displays and billboards.

The AHTD and the Keep Arkansas Beautiful Commission, a division of the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, have always held a common interest in keeping the state's roadsides free of litter. Because AHTD spends nearly \$4 million a year removing litter from the state's roadways, it has, both independently and in partnership with KAB, created and collaborated on several programs to address the problem of litter. Through effective interdepartmental communications and sharing of resources, AHTD and KAB have become steadfast partners to impact litter in Arkansas and ultimately improve the cleanliness of our state.



(r. to l.) Ray Empsen, President, Keep America Beautiful, presented the 2005 Departments of Transportation Partnership Award to Ellen Hill, AHTD Public Information Specialist. Robert Phelps, left, Executive Director of Keep Arkansas Beautiful, also attended the award ceremony.



Program Studies Pavement Performance

One of the key elements in building and maintaining a cost-effective, dependable highway system is understanding why some pavement materials perform better than others. In 1987, a program called the Long-term Pavement Performance Program (LTPP) was initiated to study the structural factors for concrete pavement. The goal of the federally-sponsored program is to determine how and why pavements perform as they do and make decisions that will lead to a better performing highway surface.

The pavement performance program is managed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and is a 20-year study that monitors actual pavement sections on highways across North America. In the United States and Canada, there are 2,500 in-service test sections of asphalt and concrete.

"The AHTD has supported this program since its inception in the mid-1980s," states Mark Greenwood, Engineering Research Tech II for the Department. "The program is going well."

Greenwood has been working with the LTPP program since he began work for the AHTD in 1987. He performed most of the pavement coring and soil/base sampling during the construction of the test sections.

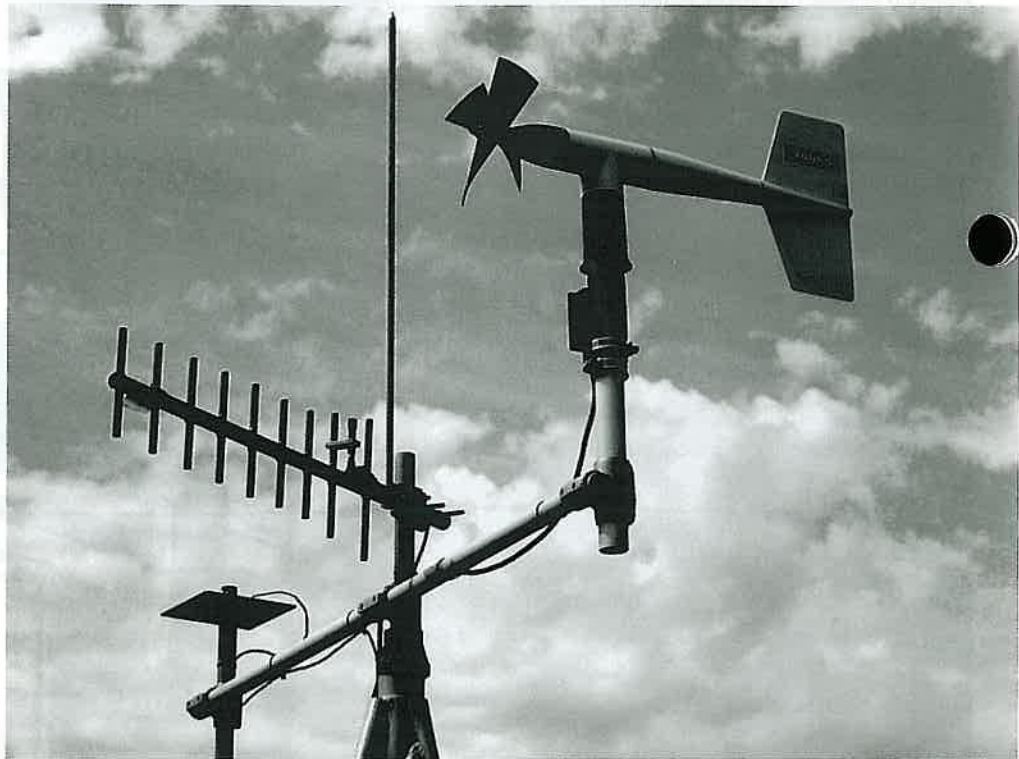
The AHTD has 11 active sites that it monitors in the state. Most of the test sections are 500 feet in length though a few measure a thousand feet. The sections are monitored to determine the effects of loading, environment, materials, construction quality and maintenance levels on pavement performance. The end result is improved design methods for our highways and a national database to meet the future needs of the highway industry.

"When we began the program, there were approximately 20 sites in Arkansas," states Greenwood. "There are sites that have been removed from the study where the pavement was in very poor condition. When an LTPP test section is overlaid and re-opened to traffic, then the site is excluded from further study."

"Each site may have up to 12 individual test sections within one study area. For ex-



Each LTPP test section is identified with a sign such as this one on Interstate 630 in Little Rock.



Weather equipment is used to monitor conditions at various test sites across the state.

ample, the 12 sections on Interstate 30, just west of Benton, are within one study," adds Greenwood.

Other locations can be found on Interstate 530 near Redfield, Highway 65 in Pine Bluff, Highway 63 near Bay, and in the areas of Little Rock, Cabot and Bald Knob.

A great deal of teamwork is involved in monitoring the test sights.

"The FHWA contracts the collection of the physical pavement distress data," Greenwood explains. "Fugro Consultants out of Austin, Texas, perform the data collection using a crew of 3 to 4 people. They will contact us and I will coordinate their visit with District personnel. The AHTD's responsibility is to provide traffic control, equipment and personnel for sampling. We also collect, process and

(See "Pavement" page 20)

Arkansas Highways

Recreational Trail Opens On Lake Ouachita

OTHA

An excited group of hikers and bikers joined dignitaries on Lake Ouachita on March 10th to cut the ribbon on a new recreational trail.

The first leg of the Lake Ouachita Vista Trail is located in the Denby Bay area on the southwest corner of the lake and is 4.7 miles in length.

"This trail will attract people of all ages to exercise and take advantage of the opportunity to be outdoors," stated Highway Commission Chairman Prissy Hickerson. "And this is just the beginning. We all know that tourism plays a large role in the economy of Montgomery County and this trail will help insure that tourists enjoy their stay and continue to come to this area."

"This trail is a dream put together about three years ago," stated Jerry Shields, a member of the Lake Ouachita Citizens Focus Committee.

"Projects such as this one take the efforts of everyone working together to get them done," added AHTD Director Dan Flowers.

The trail, indeed, took the work of many groups to become a reality. In addition to the AHTD, the Vista Trail coalition members include the Lake Ouachita Citizens Focus Committee, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, Arkansas Parks & Tourism Commission, Arkansas Game & Fish Commission, Montgomery County, the Mt. Ida Chamber of Commerce, the Montgomery County Health Education Advisory Board and the Lake Ouachita Resort Owners Association.

The AHTD provided \$57,700 of Federal Recreational Trail funds for the project. In addition, the Department donated an old concrete bridge for use as part of a future trail in the area. A handicapped trail will be completed in the next few months, as will a "Watchable Wildlife" trail.

The Vista Trail is one of several trail projects that are part of a multiphase trail development to link Forest Service and Corps of Engineer recreation areas along the southern shore of the lake. The next five miles of the Vista Trail leading up to Mountain Harbor are already marked. The coalition plans that the Vista Trail will hook up with the Charlton Trail creating a trail that will eventually extend over 30 miles around the lake.

The Lake Ouachita Vista Trail is located on Highway 270 approximately ten miles east of Mt. Ida. From Highway 270, take Shangri La Road and travel one block to Trail's End Road. Turn left on Trail's End Road and follow the signs to the lake and the trailhead.



Commission Chairman Prissy Hickerson (third from right) helps cut the ribbon on the Lake Ouachita Vista Trail.



Traveling representatives of the International Mountain Biking Association were on hand to enjoy the opening of the new trail.



John and Corrine Reich of Hot Springs check out a map of the new trail.



Nat Lopes, a traveling representative of the International Mountain Biking Association, wears a helmet camera to record his trek down the trail.

AHTD Promotions



Danny Keene, Division Head, Equipment & Procurement Division



Mark Headley, Maintenance Section Head, Facilities Management



Al Collins, Environmental Section Head, Beautification



Brenda Price, Environmental Section Head, Assessments



Kevin White, Resident Engineer, North Little Rock



Teresa Wright, Resident Engineer, Osceola



Glenn Cheatham, Heavy Bridge Maintenance Engineer

Danny Keene, former Section Head of Facilities Management in the Central Office, assumed the duties and title of Division Head of Equipment and Procurement with the retirement of Doug Nielsen in June of this year.

Keene has a Bachelor's Degree in Engineering from the University of Arkansas.

Keene's career with the Highway and Transportation Department began in 1986 as a Civil Engineer I in the Maintenance Division. A year later, he was promoted to Mechanical Engineer and, in 1990, transferred to the Facilities Management Section. He then advanced to Civil Engineer III and was promoted to Section Head of Facilities Management in 1996.

Mark Headley replaces Danny Keene as Section Head of Facilities Management. Headley has a bachelor's degree in engineering with an emphasis in civil engineering from Princeton University and is a Registered Professional Engineer. His career with the AHTD began in 1991. He was a Quality Assurance Engineer in the Materials Division prior to his promotion.

Al Collins was named Section Head of Beautification in the Environmental Division effective May 25, 2006. Collins has a bachelor's degree in social science from Arkansas Baptist College. Collins worked two summers for the Department before his full-time employment began in 1976. He was a Beautification Coordinator III prior to being promoted.

Brenda Price, formerly Section Head – NPDES, has been named Section Head of Assessments in the Environmental Division. Price obtained a bachelor's degree in biology in 1977 and a bachelor's degree in chemistry in 1982 from Henderson State University. She began her career with the Department in 1983 as a Chemist I in the Materials Division.

Kevin White was promoted to Resident Engineer in North Little Rock in July. White has a master's degree in transportation and a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of Arkansas. He is a Registered Professional Engineer. His career with AHTD began in 1992. Prior to his promotion, he was Assistant Resident Engineer in North Little Rock.

Teresa Wright has been named the Resident Engineer in Osceola. She has a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of Arkansas and is a Registered Professional Engineer. Wright's career with the Department began in 1995 as a Seasonal Employee in the Alma Resident Engineer office. She resigned in August of that year to complete her engineering degree. Wright was employed by several engineering firms before returning to the Department in December of 2004. She was formerly the Assistant Resident Engineer in Wynne.

Glenn Cheatham has been named Heavy Bridge Maintenance Engineer in the Maintenance Division. Cheatham has a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Memphis State University. He is a Registered Professional Engineer. Cheatham began with the Department in 1980 as a Civil Engineer I. He became a Senior Bridge Design Engineer in 1988 and transferred to the Maintenance Division in 1997.

New Highway 82 Bridge An Engineering Marvel

As defined by the dictionary, a landmark is described as a "prominent identifying feature of a landscape". As such, the southeastern area of Arkansas is soon to be celebrating a new landmark, the new Highway 82 Bridge spanning the Mississippi River near Lake Village, Arkansas, and Greenville, Mississippi.

Not only will the new bridge leave a lasting impression on those who see it rising in the distance as they travel towards it on the highway, the bridge is the first of its kind in Arkansas.



The new Greenville Bridge is a joint project of the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD) and the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) with MDOT being the lead agency.

"The new bridge will be what is referred to as a "cable-stayed" span and will be the longest one on the Mississippi River when completed," stated AHTD Director Dan Flowers.

The new structure will be held up by 112 cables containing 500 miles of steel strand reaching out from twin towers that rise to 425 feet above the surface of the water below. *(Continued on next page)*

An artist's rendering of the new Greenville Bridge with the old bridge upstream.



The final shipment of steel edge girders and floor beams arrives by barge from Florida.



Buckets of concrete are lifted onto the bridge structure from a barge on the river.

The two main benefits of a cable-stayed bridge are lower construction costs and safer navigation of the waterway below the bridge. Incidents of barges running into the piers supporting the existing Greenville Bridge upriver have been many. With the cable-stayed design, the network of cables stretching from the towers support the bridge deck, thus, the new bridge will require fewer piers in the water and its piers will stand farther apart.

The new bridge will also mean easier travel for motorists. The current bridge is a two-lane structure with no shoulders and carries 7,400 vehicles per day.

"The new bridge will have four 12-foot lanes and wide shoulders and will be better suited to handle future traffic volumes," added Flowers.

The current bridge crossing the Mississippi was constructed in 1940. Before it was built, the only way to get vehicular traffic and local freight across the river was by ferry. The bridge is a steel through-truss design with a main span of 840 feet. The new bridge's main span will be 1,378 feet and will be the longest cable-stayed span on the Mississippi River and the third longest cable-stayed



Stay cables radiate from the south tower leg of pier 37.



The superstructure reaches pier 36 on the Arkansas shore.



Work in progress on the Mississippi approach to the bridge.

span in North America, following closely on the heels of one in North Carolina and a span in British Columbia, Canada.

In sixty-plus years, the old bridge has endured increasing traffic volumes both going across the deck and traveling the waterway below. Since 1972, the old bridge has had more barge collisions than any other bridge on the Mississippi because of its location on the river. The bridge is located on a tight curve in the river. Navigating through this curve is further complicated by the presence of a strong cross current right at the bridge. The new bridge is being built in a straight section of the waterway 2,800 feet down river.

In the 1950s, an airplane from the nearby Greenville Air Force Base crashed into the old bridge. In spite of this, the bridge remains structurally sound yet is considered functionally obsolete by today's standards.

In 1994, the Mississippi Department of Transportation produced a study that explored the feasibility of constructing a new four-lane bridge. It was determined that a new bridge should be built almost half a mile downstream from the old bridge to decrease the likelihood of barge collisions. Further studies followed and in July of 2001, a contract was awarded for \$110.8 million to construct the main span.

"The main span contract was essentially completed within the allowed contract time and within four to five percent of the contract cost," stated AHTD Chief Engineer Bob Walters. "For a structure of this size and complexity, that in itself is a significant achievement."

Construction on the new bridge began in September of 2001. Since that time, an average of 150 workers have been on site working towards completion. The new bridge was designed by



The bridge superstructure is now substantially complete.



At the main span closure ceremony are (l. to r.) Mississippi Congressman Bennie Thompson, Director Dan Flowers, Commissioner Carl Rosenbaum, Commission Chairman Prissy Hickerson, U.S. Senator Trent Lott from Mississippi, Commissioner Jonathan Barnett and Commissioner R. Madison Murphy.

HNTB Corporation of Kansas City, Missouri, the same firm that designed the original Greenville Bridge. The contract to construct the main span was awarded to Massman Construction Company and Traylor Brothers, Inc. of Kansas City, Missouri. Total cost of the new bridge is estimated at \$260 million.

In April of this year, main span closure took place with four 30-ton concrete panels meaning the new bridge officially spanned the river from bank to bank. The AHTD's Commission members and Director Dan Flowers attended a ceremony to mark the event.

The construction of the new bridge is being documented in a one-hour television program titled "Second Crossing: The Mississippi Delta's Landmark Bridge."

"We hope the television documentary will inspire future generations of engineers and encourage people to learn more about the Mississippi Delta and its history," stated MDOT Deputy Executive Director Harry Lee James.

When completed, in 2008, the new U.S. 82 Bridge will stretch 3.8 miles and be a spectacular sight crossing over the mighty Mississippi River.

When the new structure is opened to traffic, the old bridge will be demolished.

Photos courtesy of the Mississippi Department of Transportation. For more information on the bridge project, visit www.greenvillebridge.com.

AHP Sergeant Recognized for Outstanding Service

Arkansas Highway Police Sergeant Timothy Gushing was recently recognized for his work on the Highway Police force by the Arkansas Chapter of the Society of Former Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The chapter named Gushing Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer for 2005.

The qualities for the award are based on valor and outstanding achievement. The chapter hopes that its recognition of officers who display these qualities will help promote professionalism in the field of law enforcement.

"Sergeant Gushing's outstanding work displays the commitment to principles we desire in today's law enforcement officers," stated program coordinator Gary McWhorter.

Sergeant Gushing came to the Arkansas Highway Police in 2001. Since completing his initial Highway Police training, he has been assigned to the Alma Weigh/Inspection Station located on Interstate

40 in Crawford County. He was promoted to the rank of sergeant in September of 2005. That same year, Gushing was directly responsible for two major drug seizures uncovered while conducting commercial motor vehicle inspections. He has filed numerous cases involving motor fuel tax violations as well.

From a community standpoint, Gushing is actively involved in Department-sponsored events such as the "World's Largest Truck Convoy", which raises funds for Special Olympics, and the "Reading with Children Program" sponsored by the Alma School District.

"Sergeant Gushing exhibits excellent qualities both on and off duty and works hard on a daily basis, all while maintaining a helpful and kind attitude," comments Arkansas Highway Police Chief Ron Burks. "We are proud that he is being honored by the Society of Former Special Agents of the FBI."



Sgt. Tim Gushing was honored as Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer by the Arkansas Chapter of the Society of Former Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Dedications Across the Natural State

Stuttgart Bypass

The Stuttgart Bypass was opened on December 21, 2005, as a large crowd of local dignitaries gathered for a formal ribbon cutting ceremony of the extension of Highway 165 around the north side of Stuttgart.

A \$3.3 million contract was awarded in July 2004 to D.B. Hill Construction of Little Rock. The project created almost three miles of new location to connect Highway 63 to Highway 79.

Heavy truck traffic that had to go through town can now easily go around the city, creating a much safer drive for everyone



Dignitaries cut the ribbon to allow traffic onto the new Stuttgart Bypass.

Corning Welcome Center

The new Corning Welcome Center was dedicated by Governor Mike Huckabee on Valentine's Day – February 14, 2006. The Governor joined AHTD Director Dan Flowers, Commissioners John Ed Regenold and Jonathan Barnett, and a host of local officials and community dignitaries for the ribbon cutting event.

Let to contract in October 2003, the \$2.2 million facility was the fourth new Welcome Center to open.

The Corning Welcome Center is a 3,100-square-foot building with a rock and log exterior. Sitting on five acres, the new facility features spacious tourism, multi-media and museum display areas.

Construction Network was the prime contractor. The Benham Companies was the architect for all four of the new centers.

Three additional new Welcome Centers have opened around the state. They are located in Texarkana, El Dorado and Van Buren. Each has rock and log exteriors, and features similar state-of-the-art display areas.

Future new Welcome Centers will be located at West Memphis, Blytheville and Lake Village.



Governor Mike Huckabee (3rd from left) and First Lady Janet Huckabee help cut the ribbon for the new Arkansas Welcome Center at Corning.

Dedications (continued)

Chemin-A-Haut Bridge/Highway 133 Passing Lanes

Two major projects for Ashley County were officially dedicated on April 27, 2006. Rep. Johnnie Bolin, Ashley County Judge Emory Austin and other local officials were on hand to help AHTD Director Dan Flowers cut a ribbon to celebrate the completion of these two projects.

The Chemin-A-Haut Bridge and approaches on Highway 8, just east of Hamburg, were replaced by the Johnsville Company under a \$1.069 million contract that began in January 2005.

Highway 8 has a high volume of log truck traffic. The new bridge and approaches provide a safer, wider road to travel into Hamburg.

With a \$3.6 million contract also let in January 2005, R. Thompson, Inc. constructed two passing lanes (one northbound and one southbound) on Highway 133 just north of Crossett.

Highway 133 is the primary north-south route through Crossett. The passing lanes will help traffic flow through an area that has a high number of trucks going to and from local industries.



AHTD Director Dan Flowers (holding scissors) cuts the ribbon to open the new Chemin-A-Haut Bridge on Highway 8, east of Hamburg.



Passing lanes on Highway 133 north of Crossett are officially opened to traffic.

Pavement (continued)

transmit traffic data through Weigh-In-Motion devices. These are the silver or gray cabinets you see posted along the highways. They collect weight, class and volume data through sensors placed in the roadway.

There are also three weather stations that are monitored. They are strategically located in areas near the LTPP sites. One of the weather stations motorists may be familiar with is located at the intersection of Interstate 30 and Highway 70 West at the Hot Springs exit," Greenwood adds. All of the traffic data collected in the field is sent back to Fugro. This data is compiled, studied and stored in files that Fugro maintains.

Once information is recorded, the data is studied to evaluate existing pavement design methods and the effects of specific design features on the pavement's performance. The FHWA makes the findings available through workshops, publications, research reports and videos. The results are used by many of the program's partners which include state and provincial highway agencies, highway-related agencies such as the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), the Federal Highway Administration, the Canadian Strategic Highway Research Program and the Transportation Research Board (TRB). Information is also available for other organizations in the industry and to academia.

"The AHTD will continue to support this program," states Greenwood. "The weather, traffic, design, maintenance and distress data collected is going to provide us with enough information to design better and more efficient roadways for motorists."

PUBLIC HEARINGS

ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

Highway 71 Relocation & 19th Street Improvements Texarkana

An open forum design public hearing was held on December 15, 2005, at the Cathedral Heights Church of the Nazarene in Texarkana to discuss the proposed design of the Highway 71 relocation from Arkansas Boulevard to Interstate 30 in Texarkana, part of future Interstate 49. Also presented were the proposed improvements to the existing 19th Street intersection with Highway 245.

Plans call for relocating Highway 71 on new location beginning at Loop 245 near Arkansas Boulevard and extending northeastward to Interstate 30. The new roadway will be a four lane divided facility. Plans for improvements in the vicinity of the interchange at Loop 245 and Highway 82 include new ramps and an overpass on 19th Street. This will create a single interchange that will serve both Highway 82 and 19th Street.

Approximately 200 citizens attended the hearing. Representing the AHTD were staff from the Environmental, Human Resources and Right of Way Divisions, and the District Three office.

Highway 35 Benton

Approximately 100 people gathered at the Gene Moss Building in Benton on December 20, 2005, for an open forum public hearing to hear plans for a new railroad overpass on Highway 35 in Benton.

Plans call for constructing a four lane railroad overpass on Highway 35 (Edison Avenue) near the intersection with Highway 183. Improvements to Sidell Road will include two 19.5-foot travel lanes with curb and gutter. Highway 35 south of Highway 183 will be improved to two 12-foot travel lanes with eight-foot shoulders.

AHTD District Six personnel and staff members from the Environmental, Roadway Design, Human Resources and Right of Way Divisions participated in the meeting.

Highways 35/425 Connector Monticello

The Monticello Economic Development Center in Monticello was the scene of a location and design public hearing on January 12, 2006. Approximately 50 people attended to hear plans for a Highway 35 West to Highway 425 Connector.

Plans call for constructing 1.5 miles of Highway 35 as a two lane roadway on new location in the Rose Hill area to serve as a connector highway between Highway 35 West and Highway 425.

AHTD Environmental, Roadway Design and Right of Way staff, as well as District Two personnel, participated in the meeting.

Highway 65 Improvements Gould

An open forum public hearing was held on February 23, 2006, at the Gould Community Center to share plans for improvements to Highway 65. Approximately 115 people attended the meetings to hear about the two projects.

Plans call for widening approximately four miles of Highway 65 to four lanes, extending from south of the city of Grady to north of Gould. A second project discussed at the meeting will widen approximately 12 miles of Highway 65 to four lanes extending from north of Gould southward to Highway 159 at Mitchellville.

Participating from the AHTD were staff members from the Environmental, Roadway Design, Human Resources and Right of Way Divisions. District Two personnel were also in attendance.

Highway 79 Bridge Clarendon

An open forum design public hearing was held March 21, 2006, at the White River Radio Club in Clarendon to present plans for the replacement of the Highway 79 Bridge over the White River. Approximately 150 people attended.

Plans call for replacement of the existing bridge. The replacement structure will consist of two travel lanes with eight-foot shoulders. The bridge, and one additional one at the White River floodplain, will be built on new location. Lengthening the bridge that crosses Roc Roe Bayou is also planned. As part of the project, approximately five miles of Highway 79 will also be relocated.

AHTD Environmental, Roadway Design and Right of Way staff, as well as District One personnel, participated in the meeting.

Highway 187 Bridges Beaver

A location public hearing was held April 4, 2006, at the Beaver Fire Department and Community Building in Beaver. Approximately 50 people came together to hear a formal presentation regarding the Table Rock Structure and Approaches Environmental Assessment recently approved by the Federal Highway Administration.

Bridge replacement projects had been proposed for the Table Rock Reservoir Bridge at Beaver, the Leatherwood Creek Bridge and Butler Creek Bridge, all on Highway 187. The AHTD has recommended that the three bridges not be replaced at this time.

Attending the meeting from the AHTD were staff members from the Environmental, Public Affairs, Roadway Design and Right of Way Divisions, as well as District Nine personnel.

Letters to the Department

Arkansas Highway Police

Dear Sir or Madam:

Our FCT Maintenance Supervisor, Todd Feller, assures me the trailer air leak recently found will be repaired this afternoon. I am sending this letter to document that it is scheduled. Thank you for identifying these safety concerns.

I want to thank you for your officer's professionalism and respectful attitude toward my driver. I teach my drivers to always treat law enforcement officers with respect because you never know what their last call involved. When drivers get respect right back from the officer, it leads to a much more productive environment where safety is our shared goal. Officer Robin Samons, Badge #452, was described as a solid professional. It's a privilege to share the road with officers of that caliber.

William K. "Monk" Jones
First Class Transport, Inc.

Arkansas Highway Police
Chief Ron Burks

Dear Chief Burks:

I wanted to write and let you know one of your Highway Police officers helped me. I was traveling home to Memphis from San Antonio, Texas, after a family funeral when my tire blew out just west of Mile Marker 22 on I-30. I traveled slowly along the shoulder to the weigh station where Sgt. Jacky Simmons came to my rescue. I was just trying to find out an Arkansas emergency assistance number. Instead, Sgt. Simmons came out with me, took off the blown tire, put on my spare, and then called a tire store in Hope, Arkansas, to find someone to replace my tire. Sgt. Simmons was so helpful and kind to me. He went above and beyond what I ever expected and I commend you and the Arkansas Highway Police for having such outstanding officers.

Thank you again,
Amy Otey, Cordova, TN

AHTD Resident Engineer
Russellville, Arkansas

Dear Frank Russenberger:

Greetings in Jesus name! Please commend William Alvey [Area Maintenance Supervisor, Yell County] and Gary Long [Equipment Maintenance Supervisor, District Headquarters] for excellence. As a disabled veteran, I was helped by them when I broke down near Rover. They are very patient. It is a virtue, as it says in the Bible, "It comes by tribulation." You are blessed to have such fine employees.

Agape,
Richard Beckwith

Joe Barnett
District Engineer, Paragould

Dear Mr. Barnett,

I would like to commend Mr. Morise Phillips for delivering outstanding and courteous service to Arkansas highway commuters. My mother and I were traveling from Chicago, Illinois, to Houston, Texas, for her cancer treatment. I became weary and needed to rest at the next rest area. Upon waking up, our vehicle would not start. It was a discouraging effort to find some assistance, until Mr. Phillips arrived.

He courteously greeted us and introduced himself as an AHTD employee. He quickly set up both vehicles for a jump-start. When the initial jump-start did not work, he put on his technician jump suit, went under the hood, and went to work. After numerous efforts, our vehicle started.

With Mr. Phillips' knowledge and perseverance, we were able to make it to my mother's appointment with no problem. We thanked Mr. Phillips and offered rewards in all forms. He refused to accept and simply said, "It's my job to assist stranded motorists like yourself." Not only did he represent the AHTD with exceptional professionalism, but he displayed heartfelt compassion for my mother's purpose. As my mother states it, "He was our guardian angel."

Best Regards,
James P. Cordovez, West Covina, CA

AHP Chief Ron Burks

Dear Chief Burks:

I would like to send a big thank you to Officer Mark H. Willis. My family was traveling through Arkansas back to Houston. After stopping at a rest area, our car would not start since the battery was dead.

We asked Officer Willis for help, and with the help of the maintenance man at the rest area (and his tractor), they were able to get our car going again in just a few minutes. We were able to continue our trip without interruption thanks to the kindness of Officer Willis and the maintenance crew at the rest area. Thanks again for a job well done.

Katie Turley, Houston, Texas



Department of Justice
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Office of the Director

Arkansas Highway Police
SGT Timothy P. Gushing

Dear SGT Gushing:

I join my associates in Little Rock in congratulating you on receiving the Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer Award for 2005 from the Arkansas Chapter of the Society of Former Special Agents for your exceptional law enforcement efforts.

This Award recognizes your hard work and devotion to duty with the Arkansas Highway Police. I understand that while conducting commercial motor vehicle drug interdictions, you were directly responsible for two major drug seizures of Khat and cocaine. As a result of your efforts, the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Arkansas recently distributed over \$1.2 million in forfeited drug proceeds to local and state law enforcement officers. You have given selflessly to your job and to the community you serve. I am pleased to have this opportunity to congratulate you on this well-deserved tribute.

Sincerely yours,

Robert S. Mueller, III
Director

To whom it may concern:

Sunday, February 12th, I was driving to Little Rock to attend the first birthday of my great-grandson, Spencer. I had car trouble on I-40 just west of Mile Marker 108. Pulling off the road, I called 911 who put me in touch with the Highway Police. The nicest, most polite officer, Greg Toland, came to my rescue, called a wrecker, and stayed with me the whole time, even driving me to Conway, where I could meet my granddaughter's husband who took me to Little Rock.

I wish to thank the dispatcher, both the 911 operators, and the police dispatcher for helping me try to stay calm, but most of all to Officer Toland, who I think went beyond the call of duty, never leaving my side and assuring me things would be okay. He is truly an asset to your force. Please see that he gets the recognition he deserves.

I am 72 years old and was traveling alone with my little dog Maddie. Seniors like myself should feel safe and secure when traveling on the Interstate, knowing that officers like Greg Toland are patrolling the highway.

Sincerely yours,
Barbara L. Bearden, Fort Smith, Arkansas

AHTD Director Dan Flowers

Dear Mr. Flowers:

I would like to express my gratitude and a special thank you to Randy Ort, Emanuel Banks and James Pound for coming to my 90-year-old aunt's rescue Sunday. My aunt lives on Mabelvale Pike, which is in the process of being widened. The construction company forgot to close or protect her water pipes, which caused the pipes to freeze. I called Mr. Ort for help with this problem. He contacted Mr. Banks, who contacted Mr. Pound, who called me and said he would see about getting this problem resolved. With the help of these fine people, my aunt's water was restored by nightfall. It was an honest mistake by the construction company and they came out and fixed the problem very quickly. It's wonderful to have caring and compassionate people to go out of their way on a weekend to help others.

Thank you,
Bob Sweeten

Arkansas Highway Police
Chief Ron Burks

Dear Sir:

Recently, I began a search regarding littering in our state, and after attempting this with several calls to local and state offices, luckily, I was directed to your Captain Don Hastings. He could not have been nicer and more informative. A quick connection to your website, and I had everything I needed.

Nothing makes a senior citizen feel more secure than knowing we are in the hands of qualified and caring police. You are to be commended for such a staff.

Sincerely,
Wanda Frantz, Jonesboro, Arkansas



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**
Arkansas Division

Mr. Dan Flowers

Dear Mr. Flowers:

As you know I have announced my retirement from the Federal Highway Administration. I am fortunate to have worked about 25 of my 35 years with FHWA in the Arkansas Division Office and with your Department. I wanted to reaffirm what you already know: the Department is staffed with professional, capable, and dedicated employees who strive to achieve the best in all that they do. I've had the pleasure of working with hundreds of employees in the Central and District offices who plan, study the environment, survey land, design roadways and bridges, purchase rights-of-way, prepare and administer programs and contracts, construct and test materials, account for funding, maintain facilities, operate rest areas, enforce the vehicle laws, and inform the public about the Department's activities. I have been blessed to have worked with these people and have enjoyed many good friendships while working with them. I sincerely thank you and all of them and hope you will pass along my thanks.

Sincerely,
Carl O. Kraehmer
Field Operations Engineer

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District 8 Engineer

Dear Mr. Russenberger:

I am writing on behalf of Weyerhaeuser Company to thank you and the Arkansas State Highway Commission for your prompt assistance in reviewing and responding to our request to conduct a safety review of the Highway 356 and Highway 92 Junction in Van Buren County.

We appreciate the effort exhibited by your unit in handling this request in a timely manner. We believe the risk of future incidents at this intersection is significantly reduced as a result of your department's diligence and prompt action to erect warning signs at this intersection.

We appreciate the help and support of the Arkansas State Highway & Transportation Department.

Sincerely,
Matt Williams, Arkansas/Oklahoma Raw
Materials Manager

AHTD c/o Mr. James C. Owenby

Hello Mr. Owenby,

I am the guy out of gas on the side of Interstate Highway 549. I never thought I would ever be writing a letter to the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department. I want to thank you for stopping, and I cannot tell you how much I appreciate you allowing your Conrad to help me to get gas. I cannot say in words how I feel about that young man. He is about the same age as my son. Please be sure to tell him and let him read this letter. He knew Jerry, the owner of the store, so he took my check on his word.

You just don't meet people like your crew every day. If I see one of you on my way to northeast Arkansas Monday, I will wave you down and buy you and your partner lunch. So, as Gene Autry used to say, "So long, and may the good Lord take a liking to you all."

Thanks again,
Sonny Grubbs
(The Clay County country boy)



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