



# *Arkansas Highways*

FALL 2010

# Director's Message

Looking back at the year 2010, this has been a very busy and productive time for the Highway and Transportation Department.

The year saw Arkansas' Economic Stimulus projects continue to move forward. We have funded 132 road projects using Stimulus funds. That translates into 296 miles of improvements on Arkansas highways. The projects have included a variety of things such as traffic signals, minor rehabilitation, roadway widening and Interstate rehabilitation. Stimulus spending even included a roundabout in North Little Rock, an Arkansas Welcome Center in West Memphis and the replacement of two tugboats for the Peel Ferry on Bull Shoals Lake.

The Department had the pleasure of hosting the 69th annual meeting of the Southeastern Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (SASHTO) at the close of the summer. Transportation leaders from across the country, and representing 13 states, came together in Little Rock to focus attention on the challenges our industry faces both today and in the future. Among the special guests who addressed our group were Governor Mike Beebe and former U.S. Secretary of Transportation Rodney Slater. Over 15 technical sessions were offered to participants over the four-day event. A "Trade Show and Equipment Expo" featured over 100 booths.

As hosts, we also had the opportunity to showcase two of Little Rock's finest attractions as we hosted events at Heifer International Headquarters and the William J. Clinton Presidential Library.

A conference such as the one we hosted wouldn't have been possible without the hard work and dedication of our AHTD staff. An executive committee, made up of Ralph Hall, Frank Vozel, Larry Dickerson and Crystal Woods began work months in advance of the event. A total of twenty committees worked on various assignments coordinating everything you could possibly imagine to make the event successful. Approximately 160 staff members worked on the event as it got underway at the Statehouse Convention Center. The Department has had numerous compliments on how successful the conference was and thanks go to everyone involved. The event wouldn't have been successful without your hard work.

Thanks also go to 55 corporations from across the country that helped make the SASHTO conference possible.

Department officials joined with the Mississippi Department of Transportation to cut the ribbon on the new Highway 82 Bridge over the Mississippi River near Lake Village this summer. It is the longest cable-stayed bridge on the Mississippi River and an impressive new landmark for southeast Arkansas. You can read more about the opening ceremony in this issue of Arkansas Highways.

And finally, this issue of our magazine features an interview with Highway Commission Chairman Carl Rosenbaum whose ten-year term on the Commission comes to an end in January. His hard work and dedication to improving Arkansas' highway system are greatly appreciated and we thank him for his work on the Commission during his term.



*Dan Flowers*  
Director of Highways and Transportation



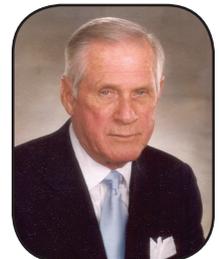
## ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION



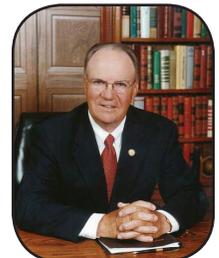
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Chairman



**R. Madison Murphy**  
Vice Chairman



**John Ed Regenold**  
Member



**Cliff Hoofman**  
Member



**Dick Trammel**  
Member

# Arkansas Highways

Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department - Fall 2010

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**Back Cover:** Scenic Highway 5, Stone County



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# An Interview With Carl S. Rosenbaum



Carl Rosenbaum's term on the Arkansas State Highway Commission ends in January of 2011. He was appointed to serve on the Commission by Governor Mike Huckabee on December 14, 2000, and was sworn in by Supreme Court Justice Ray Thornton on January 16, 2001. A native of Little Rock, Rosenbaum is chairman of Safe Foods Corporation in North Little Rock and Arkansas Glass Container Corporation of Jonesboro.

Rosenbaum recently visited with Public Information Specialist David Nilles to reflect on his role as a Highway Commissioner and the accomplishments of the Commission and Department over the past ten years.

**Nilles:** When you look back on your ten years serving on the Commission, was it what you expected it would be when you began your term?

**Commissioner Rosenbaum:** Well, I looked at my interview in Arkansas Highways that was conducted back in 2001 when I came onto the Commission. I took note of the expectations that I had and it is amazing how many things I said that were somewhat naïve but also somewhat prophetic. There were certain things that I wanted to do and we did them all except for the North Belt Freeway.

So, I don't know of anything that I did not anticipate when I came onboard. I had served on the Arkansas Economic Development Commission for four or five years so I knew how to work effectively with other Commissioners. One of the greatest things that I have experienced is the fact that the Commissioners I have served with have all been very mannerly and we have always worked together for the good of the state of Arkansas.

**Nilles:** What do you recall as being some of the highlights of your term on the Commission?



**Commissioner Rosenbaum:** That is like asking a person 75 years old what are some of the highlights in your life? Well, one of the highlights was being appointed as a Commissioner. I had no idea that the Governor wanted me to serve for ten years and when he asked me to serve I actually turned him down at the beginning. I told him.... "I don't know if I want to serve for ten years." And, as you know, God is very important in my life and I prayed..... "Lord, I need to know what you want me to do," and then I had peace. That is what it is all about, serving the people of Arkansas. Meeting the people around the state is a highlight I have enjoyed. There are some people I would never have met and some places I would never have gone if it had not been for the Highway Commission. I am grateful to the Governor and the people who have allowed me to serve them.

It has been interesting to see all of these highway projects develop. It all begins with an idea. You discover a need, and then you do the planning and the environmental work. It progresses through roadway design and then we apply the funding. That project is put out for bids and in two or three years, it is constructed and opened for traffic. You plan and you build and then you see results that will last for 50 to 75 years, that's really great.

**Nilles:** As you think over the past 10 years, have there been any projects that you have enjoyed seeing completed during your time on the Commission?

**Commissioner Rosenbaum:** Well, the Interstates were in terrible shape ten years ago. They were originally built in the late 1950s and 60s. People tell me now that the Interstates are in good shape. I feel good that the people of Arkansas allowed us to utilize the GARVEE bonds and we were able to rebuild a great deal of our Interstate system. When the bonds are all paid off in 2014, I hope we will be able to reissue them.

I always tell people that it is interesting to note that between Little Rock and Texarkana there are 150 miles and it cost \$150 million dollars to build that Interstate between those two cities. More recently, there are only about 17 miles of Interstate 30 between Benton and Little Rock. It is six lanes yet it cost almost \$200 million dollars to build. Similarly, it used to be that an overpass cost one million dollars to build and today that cost is between \$10 and \$15 million. People don't really understand that and they will call me and say why did you construct this project or that project? But once you explain the situation and the need to them, then they see and understand.

But back to projects I've enjoyed seeing completed, the Interstate 630/Interstate 430 Interchange is my baby and I really have enjoyed seeing that progress. That interchange has more vehicles per day than any other interchange in Arkansas so improvements to it are much needed.

Down in Texarkana, the Interstate 49 corridor work south of Texarkana and the Highway 245 Loop are moving along and I'm glad to see it coming to fruition. Improvements to Highway 67/167 leading up towards Walnut Ridge have been exciting to see. When I started going to Jonesboro in 1986, you would have to go the old Highway 67 route through Newport and it would take about three hours. Now I can drive to Jonesboro in two hours. And with Highway 226 coming on board, in a year or so it will be less than that. People in Jonesboro are really excited about that. The Greenville Bridge was dedicated recently and that is exciting. It's a beautiful structure and every Arkansan needs to go down and see it. It is a \$341 million project and is the longest

cable-stayed bridge on the Mississippi River and the third longest in the United States.

I will never forget the Highway 70 Bridge at DeValls Bluff. We went down there and razed that old bridge after the new one was built. The old bridge was built in the 1920s and had a history. One old fellow remembered going over it with his mule. I love Arkansas history and that was part of history right there.

When you look back over the past ten years, we have completed a lot of projects.



**Nilles:** Have there been any highway projects not completed that you would have liked to have seen done during your time on the Commission?

**Commissioner Rosenbaum:** Yes, the North Belt Freeway. I remember the Department was invited to a luncheon out at Woody's Sherwood Forest in Sherwood and I asked those attending if they wanted the North Belt. The vote was pretty unanimous against it. They said... "no, we don't want it." When we opened the eastern part of the North Belt there were 20,300 cars using it and that number has increased today. There are anywhere from 60,000 to 70,000 cars coming down from Jacksonville every day. I am told by Metroplan that it will increase 50% by 2025. That would be close to 100,000 cars and I wish we could have gotten more done. That was a disappointment. But, another project over in that area is going well. The Highway 67/167 widening from North Little Rock to Jacksonville is a beautiful job.

The other thing that I wish we would have done was the Bella Vista Bypass. We've worked hard on that, especially Commissioner Barnett and Commissioner Trammel. The population has built up and now we are behind. It may take some time but we will eventually have that Bella Vista Bypass for those motorists in northwest Arkansas.



**Nilles:** Ten years can be considered a long time to serve on any Commission. Do you feel that ten years is about the right amount of time to serve, or should a term be longer or shorter?

**Commissioner Rosenbaum:** Ten years is perfect. Now that I am 75-years-old, I think that ten years is too long, and, if I were 45 years old, I would think that ten years is too short. When you look at the timing of a particular project, it takes several years to try to get things squared away including the environmental work, the planning and the design work. You have to get the funding in place and then consider the construction time. It takes years to get a project completed. So, if you look at it by projects, it seems that time goes by very fast. But you can get a lot accomplished in ten years. I think ten years is adequate.



**Nilles:** As the Blue Ribbon Committee continues its work, how important is it that the Department finds new sources of revenue?

**Commissioner Rosenbaum:** The public, in general, does not think about our highways except for the time they spend riding on them every day. The typical Arkansan gets up in the morning and travel on the highway. If he is in traffic he does not like, he complains. But, other than that, it's not at the front of their minds. So, it is important that the Blue Ribbon Committee keeps the public informed about what the transportation needs are and how important it is to adequately fund the highways. I think they have done that. Funding the highways should not be political. It is a basic need that people have and if you neglect the transportation system, it affects everything else. So, the Blue Ribbon Committee's work is very important.

**Nilles:** In ten years you have had the opportunity to get to know many Department employees. What's been your impression of them and the responsibilities they have?

**Commissioner Rosenbaum:** I consider the employees of the Highway and Transportation Department to be the best employees in state government, and I have made that statement before. They are appreciated and I always try to convey that at Christmas time during the annual service awards programs. The Department has a very dedicated staff. Yes, they could perhaps make more money someplace else but there is a dedication and our employees do a good job. I make it a point to say publicly that we have professional employees.

The other Commissioners appreciate the staff as well. It is interesting the way it is set up. Commissioners don't intervene in the everyday workings of the Department. Director Flowers is the one we work through and he allows us to consult with the top engineers on specific problems when necessary. The staff members are our professionals. They know what is going on and we, as Commissioners, rely on that. I believe you delegate authority and when you delegate authority then people do what they are trained to be doing. We have people who are in executive positions that have been with the Department for 35 or 40 years. If you have been someplace for 40 years, you are not going to make too many mistakes.

One interesting fact is that we have about 600 fewer employees now than we had in 1979. As a result, we are doing more work with fewer people today. When you do more work with fewer people, then an organization has to have good employees in place because each person has more responsibility. I am going to try to go to all of the Districts this year and tell everyone how



much we appreciate all of them. As Commissioners, we have a lot of responsibility but we have a lot of good people to guide us along the way.

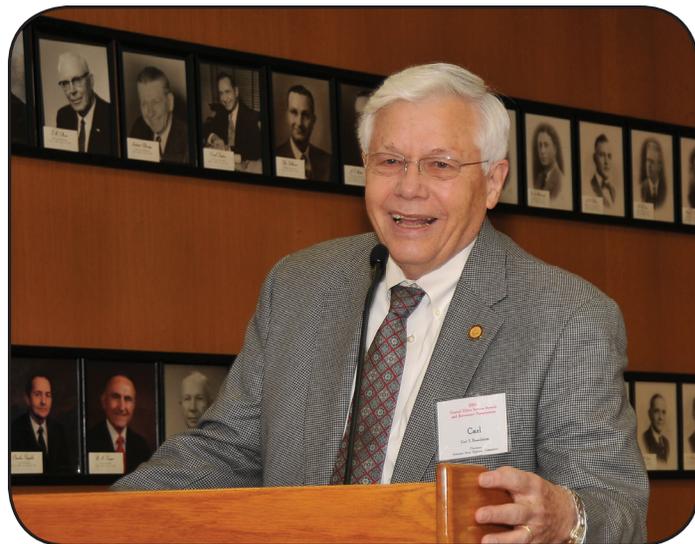
**Nilles:** As you have learned, being a Highway Commissioner can be very time consuming. How has serving on the Commission affected your personal life?

**Commissioner Rosenbaum:** It has made my life better. It makes me get up in the morning and it makes me do things that I ought to be doing and it makes me a more disciplined person. I have good people that run my businesses so I have plenty of time to do Commission work. I really don't get many phone calls about our highways. That can be for one of two reasons. It is either because they don't think they need to bother me or they want to put what they have to say in writing. Another thing is, if it is important enough for them to write down then I feel like it is important to answer that person.

**Nilles:** What advice would you have for a new incoming Commissioner?

**Commissioner Rosenbaum:** The first thing I would tell them is thank you for the commitment they have made. Second, I would tell them to listen to Dan Flowers and to their fellow Commissioners. They are experienced and know exactly where our highway needs are and how much funding is available for this project or that. Commissioners have recommendations on some jobs and a new Commissioner would do right to listen and take it all in so they can get up to speed.

That is one of the things that I told Dan Flowers when I first came on the Commission... "If you ever see me do anything that's not right, you tell me and I will do the same for you." I would also

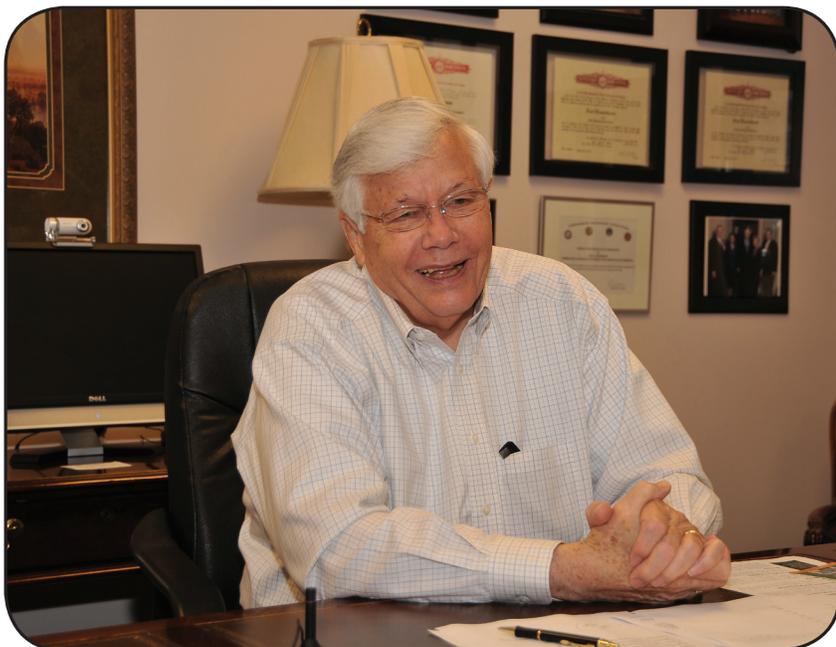


tell the new Commissioner it is important that they get to know the other Commissioners and get to know their families. Get to know what they like and what they dislike. That makes the task at hand that much easier and more gets accomplished.

**Nilles:** Are there any areas that we haven't discussed that you would like to share?

**Commissioner Rosenbaum:** It is important that we promote our Department and let the public know what we are doing. The front line of our promotion efforts are the men and women that are out there working on the roadways on a regular basis. We need to promote the Department because people come in contact with us and are involved with us every day. People have no idea of the sacrifice that our staff makes. For example, when we have ice and snow on the highways or when we have storms that cause flooding we have to spring into action. Staff are called out 24-hours-a-day to keep the traffic flowing. Or, when there are traffic accidents we have our Highway Police there and our staff will take care of those involved. So, we need to strive to do a better job of letting the people know what role we play and how important it is.

In addition, I want to say we have some wonderful advocates across the state. I also want to mention Governor Beebe, Governor Huckabee and the Legislature. All have been very supportive of our highway program and have helped us when it comes to our budget. These are people who understand the importance of a strong transportation system for Arkansas and the many benefits that it can bring.



# AHTD Hosts SASHTO Conference in Little Rock

The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department played host to the 69th Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Association of State Highway Officials (SASHTO) at the end of August.

The four-day conference was headquartered at the Peabody Hotel in Little Rock and boasted attendance from transportation leaders from across the country. A total of 931 attended the event. Member states of SASHTO include Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi,

North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

Director Dan Flowers welcomed the group to Little Rock during the opening session and got the conference underway with comments from Little Rock Mayor Mark Stodola, Governor Mike Beebe, Executive Director John Horsley of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and former United States Secretary of Transportation and Arkansas native Rodney Slater.

*Alabama • Arkansas • Florida • Georgia • Kentucky • Louisiana • Mississippi •*



AHTD Director Dan Flowers (standing) visits with (l. to r.) Bishop Steven Arnold, Rodney Slater, former Secretary of Transportation and Federal Highway Administrator, Governor Mike Beebe and John Horsley, Executive Director of AASHTO, before the Opening Session.



Director Flowers (r.) presents the SASHTO gavel to Mike Hancock (l.) of the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet.



Fifteen sessions were presented during the conference focusing attention on the challenges the transportation industry faces today and in the future. Among the many discussion topics were federal funding issues, the future of rail transportation in the southeast, new technology in highway planning and bridge construction innovations, to name a few. Numerous AHTD employees participated on the panels.

"Now more than ever we must deal with challenges in the areas of funding, construction, technology and safety," stated Director Flowers. "We discussed all of these issues during our time together."

In addition to the technical sessions, a Trade Show and Equipment Expo held on location featured approximately 100 booths.

Guest activities for spouses and families included a trolley tour of downtown Little Rock, a day trip to Hot Springs, a trip to Marlsgate Plantation and antique shopping in Keo.

Approximately 160 AHTD employees volunteered time to work at the conference.

"Our staff worked very hard to make SASHTO 2010 a memorable and professionally rewarding event for everyone," Flowers added. "I can't thank them enough for the wonderful job they did."

A total of 55 corporations from across the country helped to sponsor the event. Next year's SASHTO conference will be held in Louisville, Kentucky.

*North Carolina • Puerto Rico • South Carolina • Tennessee • Virginia • West Virginia*



*Paul Scott leads a session on Solutions for Utility Conflicts.*



*The Garver Engineering booth at the SASHTO Trade Show.*



# Highway 82 Bridge Opens With Large AR-MS Ceremony

The crowd counted to three and dignitaries cut the ribbon to officially dedicate the new \$341 million Highway 82 Mississippi River Bridge on Monday, July 26, 2010. An estimated gathering of 1,000 attended the rite as temperatures neared 100 degrees on the sunny summer morning. The bridge connects Lake Village, Arkansas, to Greenville, Mississippi.





Speakers for the occasion included Arkansas Highway Commission Vice Chairman Madison Murphy, Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department Director Dan Flowers, Lake Village Mayor JoAnne Bush, Greenville Mayor Heather McTeer Hudson, Mississippi Department of Transportation Executive Director Larry "Butch" Brown, U.S. Senator Roger Wicker of Mississippi and former U.S. Senator Trent Lott. Also attending were members of the Arkansas and Mississippi Highway Commissions.

The original "Greenville Bridge" was constructed in just over two years for \$4.5 million and was dedicated on October 4, 1940. The new structure took nine years and \$341 million to build.

In 1938, Greenville Mayor Milton S. Smith and City Attorney S.B. Thomas went to Washington seeking funds from the Works Progress

***Continued on page 12***



Administration (WPA) for a \$2 million shortfall for construction of the bridge. They convinced officials of the Depression-era agency that provided work for the unemployed, that construction of the Mississippi River span would furnish considerable employment for the area.

The two secured the funds and got credit for getting the bridge built.

The bridge was a steel through-truss design with a main span of 840 feet and was the longest span for a highway bridge anywhere on the Mississippi River until 1943, when an 845-foot bridge was completed in Dubuque, Iowa.

The original span was designed by Ash Howard Needles and Tammen of Kansas City. Subtract Ash and add Bergendoff and you get the firm of HNTB – the firm that designed the new structure.



In sixty-plus years, the Greenville Bridge bore the burden of many barge hits (more than any other on the Mississippi River) and was even the misguided target of an airplane in the 1950s.

With two 12-foot lanes with no shoulders, a sharp crest that reduces sight distance far below acceptable criteria and a location

highly prone to marine vessel collisions, the bridge rating made it eligible for replacement funding.

While the Greenville Bridge is still structurally sound, it has been considered functionally obsolete for many years for its failure to meet modern standards.

Located a half-mile downstream, the new Highway 82 bridge is a joint venture between the Arkansas and Mississippi Departments of Transportation. Mississippi oversaw construction of the project.

The main span is 1,378 feet long, making it the longest cable-stayed bridge on the Mississippi River and the fourth largest such span in North America. Total length of the project (approaches and spans) is 3.8 miles – 2.5 miles of that is bridge decking. The new structure features four, 12-foot travel lanes, with 12-foot outside shoulders and 8-foot inside shoulders.



While many believe the river to be the official division of the state line, approximately 80 percent of the bridge is located on the Arkansas side as the state line is actually east of the river at this location.

Four construction contracts worth approximately \$341 million were awarded for the project:

1) The first contract for \$110.8 million to Massman Construction

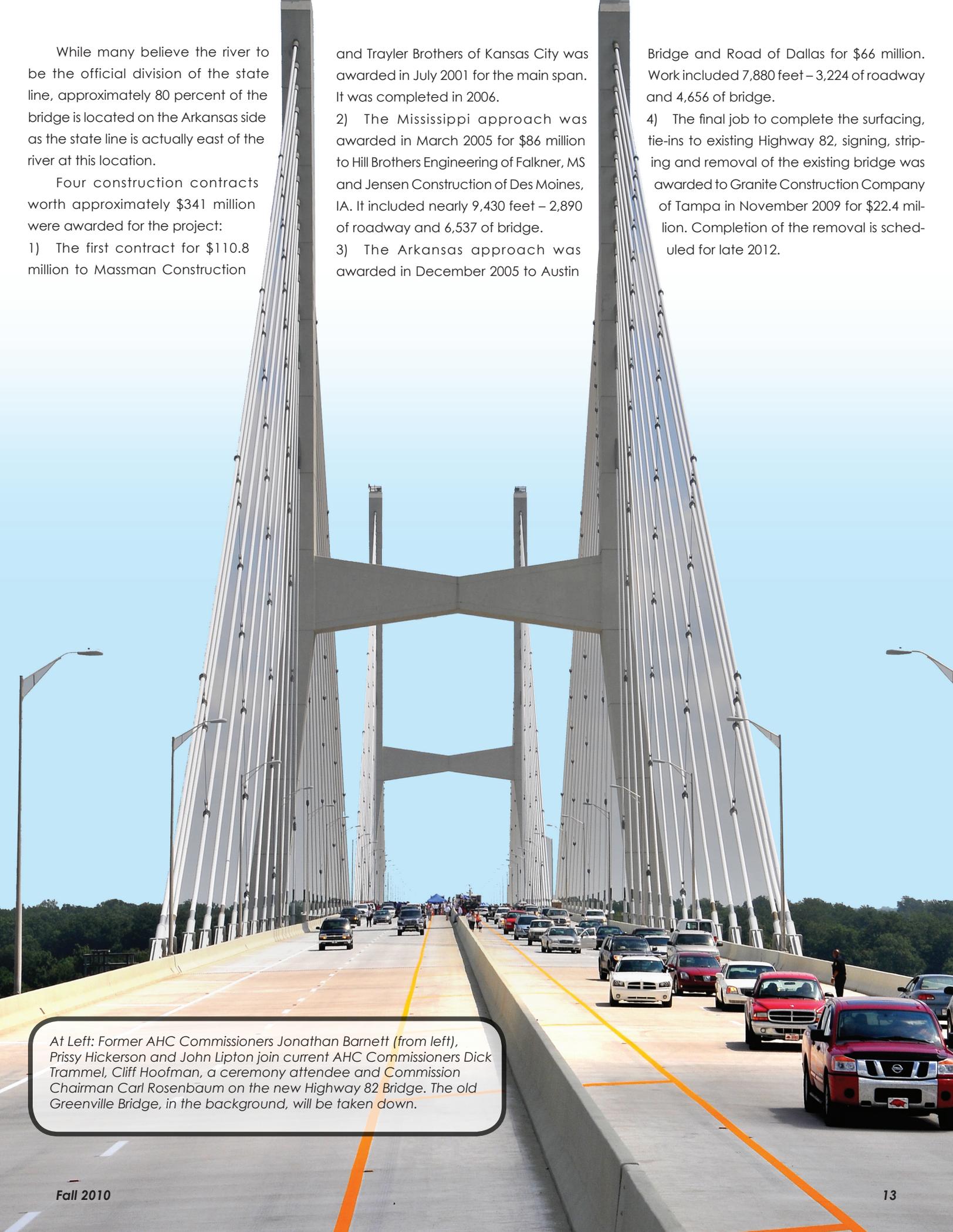
and Trayler Brothers of Kansas City was awarded in July 2001 for the main span. It was completed in 2006.

2) The Mississippi approach was awarded in March 2005 for \$86 million to Hill Brothers Engineering of Falkner, MS and Jensen Construction of Des Moines, IA. It included nearly 9,430 feet – 2,890 of roadway and 6,537 of bridge.

3) The Arkansas approach was awarded in December 2005 to Austin

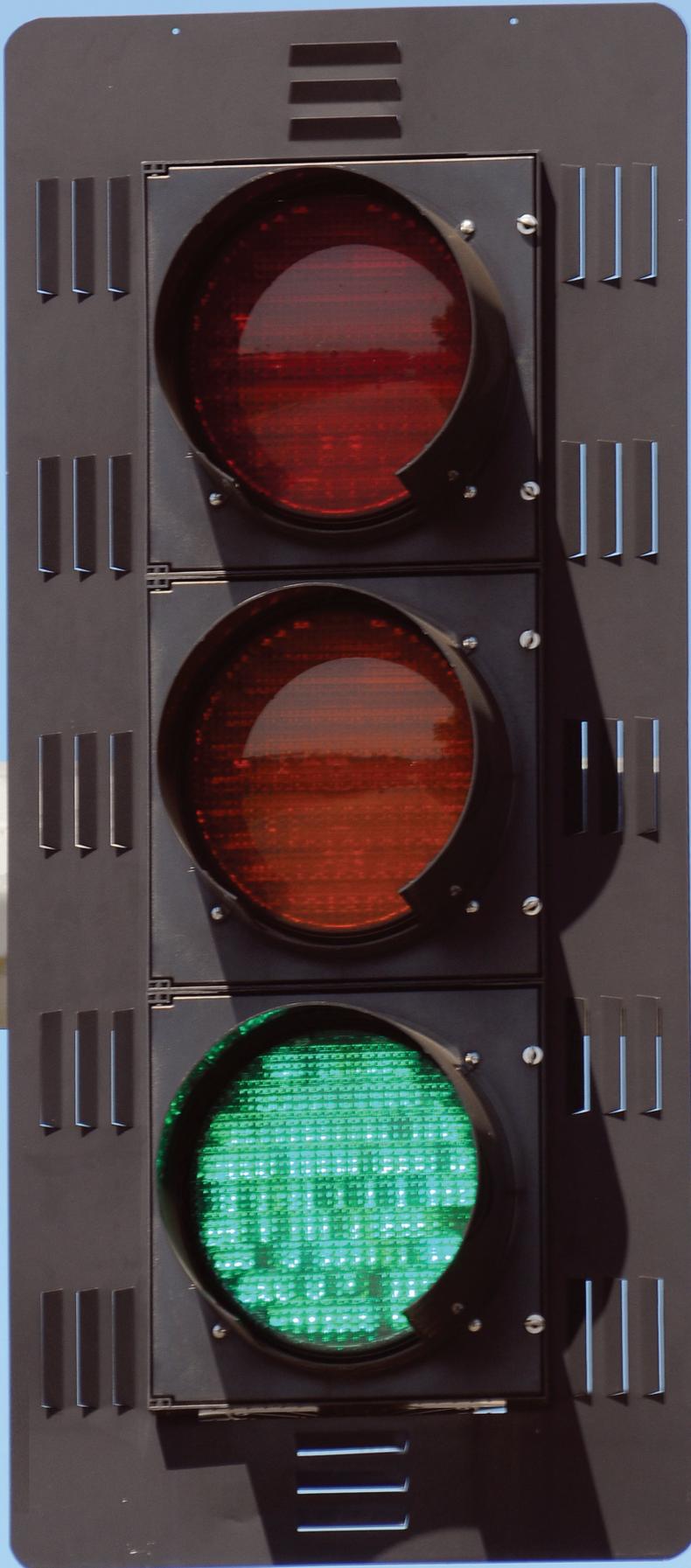
Bridge and Road of Dallas for \$66 million. Work included 7,880 feet – 3,224 of roadway and 4,656 of bridge.

4) The final job to complete the surfacing, tie-ins to existing Highway 82, signing, striping and removal of the existing bridge was awarded to Granite Construction Company of Tampa in November 2009 for \$22.4 million. Completion of the removal is scheduled for late 2012.



At Left: Former AHC Commissioners Jonathan Barnett (from left), Prissy Hickerson and John Lipton join current AHC Commissioners Dick Trammel, Cliff Hoofman, a ceremony attendee and Commission Chairman Carl Rosenbaum on the new Highway 82 Bridge. The old Greenville Bridge, in the background, will be taken down.

# Traffic Signals Going Green Statewide



The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department and the Arkansas Energy Office are partnering in a program to upgrade the state's remaining incandescent traffic signals to light emitting diode (LED) signals.

"Upgrading traffic signals across the state has many benefits," stated AHTD Director Dan Flowers. "LED signals use less energy and have lower long-term maintenance costs."

Of the 1,600 traffic signals in the state highway system, over 1,200 utilize LED technology. The new program will replace the remaining incandescent signals.

Use of LED lamps instead of common incandescent bulbs in traffic signals cuts power consumption approximately 80%, potentially saving cities millions of dollars a year. LED traffic signals use between 6 to 25 watts while incandescent bulb signals use between 70 to 150 watts. The new lights also last at least 10 times as long as common bulbs.

"The longer lasting bulbs will reduce maintenance costs significantly and reduce the manpower hours needed to replace them," Flowers adds.

In addition to using less energy and having a longer life, the new lights are brighter, emitting light more evenly. That makes them more visible in foggy conditions.

"These new lights reduce our costs dramatically," says Mark Lyons, AHTD Staff Traffic Engineer. "On average, the cost of the new signals is one-tenth what it was with the older lights."

Lyons says the Department has been using LED signals for the past five years. The partnership with the Arkansas Energy Office will convert all remaining signals in the highway system to LED. Bids for the program were opened in April of this year. It will take just over a year to complete the work.

Once all traffic signals are upgraded in Arkansas, total energy savings are estimated at 4,682,000 kilowatt hours per year. Total savings in dollars is projected at \$468,200 per year over the 15-year life of the lenses.

# Roadcheck 2010 Puts Safety First

One way to make our highways safer is to make sure that commercial vehicles traveling on them are properly maintained. That is the role of Roadcheck each year, to perform roadside inspections of commercial vehicles to make sure they are operating properly and following proper regulations. The project is an annual program of the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA).



were put out of service for various violations. Among the items that are inspected are brakes, tires, lights, suspension and safe loading.

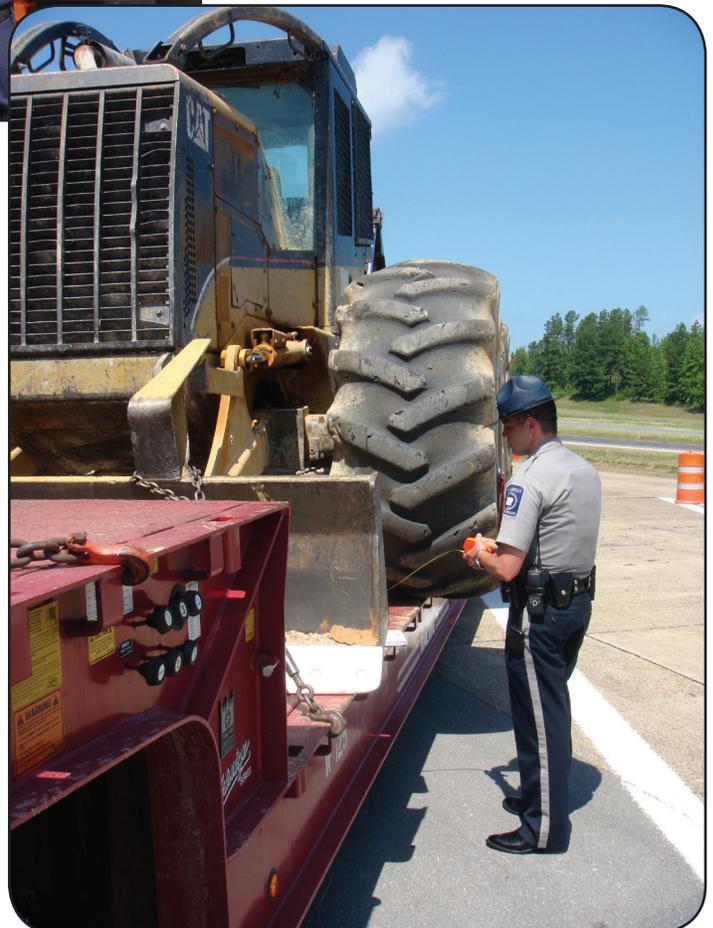
Since its inception in 1988, the roadside inspections conducted during Roadcheck have numbered over one million, resulting in more than 220 lives saved and 4,045 injuries avoided. It has also provided for the distribution of countless pieces of educational literature and safety events to educate industry and the general public about the importance of safe commercial vehicle operations and the roadside inspection program.

CVSA sponsors Roadcheck with participation by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators, Transport Canada, and the Secretariat of Communications and Transportation (Mexico).

(left) Staff from the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration check under the hood.

Roadcheck is the largest targeted enforcement program on commercial vehicles in the world, with approximately 14 trucks or buses being inspected, on average, every minute from Canada to Mexico during a 72-hour period. This year's event was held June 8th – 11th. Each year, approximately 10,000 CVSA-certified local, state, provincial and federal inspectors at 1,500 locations across North America perform the truck and bus inspections. The Arkansas Highway Police participate each year and, this year, had 91 officers on hand to perform inspections.

In Arkansas, inspection stations were set up on Interstate 40 near Benton, and on Highway 270 near Sheridan. During the 72-hour period, 316 inspections were performed. There were 235 vehicles that passed inspection. At the same time, 81 vehicles



(right) Lt. Jeff Bickerstaff measures the width of equipment loaded onto a commercial vehicle stopped for Roadcheck on Interstate 30.

# Departments of Transportation Using New Communication Channels

Results of a recent survey show that a growing number of state transportation departments (DOTs) are communicating critical news and information with travelers using Twitter, Facebook and other social media.

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' (AASHTO) survey of 32 state DOTs finds that 26 states (or 81% of those surveyed) are now using Twitter to communicate with travelers when major traffic incidents or severe weather such as snow storms, hurricanes and tornadoes force road closures or detours. Arkansas can be included in the group of DOTs using new methods of communication. The AHTD began using Twitter in 2009.



Almost half of the states surveyed (14) have an active Facebook page and 23 states report using video on their website.

In Arkansas, motorists can visit [www.arkansashighways.com](http://www.arkansashighways.com) to see live road conditions in work zones on Interstates 40 and 55 in the West Memphis area. Live camera feeds of both Interstates in

West Memphis, current travel speeds through the area, message sign information and highway advisory radio information are available.

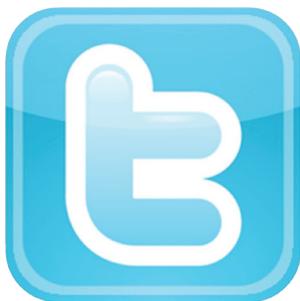
Eighteen states also report having an active YouTube Channel.

"Using social media, in addition to traditional new media, helps the Department keep motorists informed of up-to-the-minute road conditions such as lane closures, traffic accidents and weather delays," stated AHTD Director Dan Flowers. "It's another way to deliver information to a large audience quickly and efficiently."

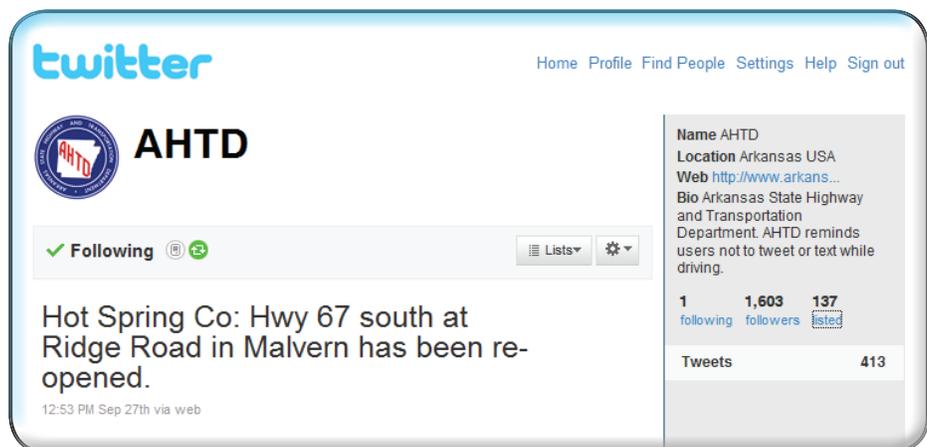
A number of states are even using multiple Twitter accounts to give travelers the ability to personalize their information based on specific highway routes or their geographic location.

Overall, state DOTs are finding that social media are decidedly more efficient in reaching the public with time-sensitive traffic and travel information, according to the survey. Among the various new social media tools, respondents found Twitter, RSS feeds, podcasts and Facebook to be the most effective methods to reach their primary audience.

To see the entire report and a list of state DOT Twitter addresses, go to [www.publicaffairs-ntpaw.transportation.org](http://www.publicaffairs-ntpaw.transportation.org).



Visit the Department's Twitter account at [www.twitter.com/ahtd](http://www.twitter.com/ahtd)



# Construction Hall of Fame Inducts Flowers

AHTD Director Dan Flowers was inducted into the Arkansas Construction Hall of Fame during a dinner at the Aerospace Education Center in Little Rock on April 28th.

The Arkansas Construction Hall of Fame was established in 1999 by the Arkansas Chapter of the Associated General Contractors of America to honor and recognize outstanding individuals in the construction industry. These individuals are held in high esteem by their peers and have demonstrated their professionalism through active support of the industry and through civic and community involvement. There have been 32 individuals inducted into the Hall of Fame since its founding.

"It is certainly an honor to be inducted into the Arkansas Construction Hall of Fame," stated Flowers.

"What we do in the construction industry, whether we are engineers, managers, technicians or equipment operators is important. The buildings, utilities, airports, roads and other public and private facilities that we build make peoples' lives better."

"To be included in this group of construction industry professionals is certainly more than I could have ever thought possible," Flowers added.

Other industry leaders inducted into the Hall of Fame on April 28th were the late Howard S. Eichenbaum, FAIA (Little Rock) of Erhart and Eichenbaum and continued today as Gaskin Hill Norcross; the late Harold J. Engstrom, PE (Little Rock) of AFCO Steel and later of Engstrom Engineers; the late Clark McClinton (Fayetteville) of McClinton Brothers Company and later of McClinton-Anchor Construction Company; and Mike Shupe, PE (Bentonville) of CEI Engineering Associates.



AHTD Director Dan Flowers (l.) is inducted into the Arkansas Construction Hall of Fame with Don Weaver, President of Weaver-Bailey Contractors presenting.



# Future Mobility of Arkansas Studied in TRIP Report

The condition of Arkansas' highways was the subject of a report released by TRIP, a Washington D.C. based national transportation organization, in June.

At a news conference at the Interstate 430/Interstate 630 interchange in Little Rock, TRIP representative Carolyn Bonifas stated that increased investment in the state's transportation infrastructure could improve road and bridge conditions, enhance safety and support long-term economic growth in the state.



*A group of representatives from the local media attended the TRIP news conference to learn more about future mobility on Arkansas' highways.*

The report, "Future Mobility in Arkansas: Meeting the State's Need for Safe and Efficient Mobility" found that nine percent of major roadways are in poor condition and an additional 25 percent are in mediocre condition. In addition to road conditions, the report found that seven percent of Arkansas' bridges are structurally deficient and an additional 15 percent are functionally obsolete. The TRIP report includes a list of sections of roadway throughout the state that are in need of reconstruction or pavement preservation work, but that cannot be completed due to lack of transportation funds.

Commuting and commerce are constrained by growing traffic congestion in the state's major urban areas. In 2008, 39 percent of the state's urban highways were congested during peak travel times. Three of Arkansas' five most significant highway chokepoints are located in the Little Rock area, including the Interstate 430/630 Interchange and a five-mile segment of Interstate 30.

Over the past decade, Arkansas has used a combination of federal and state funding to improve its surface transportation network, but many sorely needed transportation projects still remain unfunded. According to the TRIP report, without a significant boost in funding, numerous needed transportation projects will not proceed.

"We appreciate TRIP conducting this study," stated AHTD Director Dan Flowers. "It confirms the needs we have in Arkansas when it comes to mobility, capacity and safety. We have almost five times more needs than funding to meet them and those needs are growing."

"Increased funding at the state and federal level is essential in addressing the concerns identified by the TRIP report," said D.B. Hill, vice president of the Arkansas Good Roads Transportation Council, at the news conference.

"While we work continuously with our congressional delegation on the need to reauthorize the federal surface transportation program, the Arkansas Legislature created the Blue Ribbon Committee on Highway Finance to address ways of providing modern, fair and adequate funding for Arkansas' highways, streets and bridges. Arkansans must support the Blue Ribbon Committee's recommendations in order to protect our infrastructure investment and ensure the continued safety of our citizens."

The report states that the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides approximately \$352 million in stimulus funding for highway and bridge improvements and \$28 million for public transit improvements in Arkansas. This funding has served as an important down payment on needed road, highway, bridge and transit improvements but is not sufficient to allow the state to proceed with numerous projects needed to modernize its surface transportation system. The federal surface transportation program, which expires December 31st of this year, remains a critical source of funding for improvements in Arkansas and across the country.

"While the state has put a combination of federal and state funds to good use in the past, in the coming years, many additional needed projects will remain stranded on the drawing board because of insufficient funding," said Will Wilkins, executive director of TRIP. "It is critical that the state adequately funds its transportation system and that Congress produces a timely and adequately funded federal surface transportation program. Thousands of jobs and the state's economy are riding on it."

*TRIP representative Carolyn Bonifas addresses the media at a news conference regarding future mobility on Arkansas' highways.*



# AHTD Receives Award for Highway 79 in Camden

The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department has received a Perpetual Pavement Award from the Asphalt Pavement Alliance (APA). The award was presented during a special ceremony at the International Conference on Perpetual Pavements in Columbus, Ohio, in the fall of 2009.

The award was given to recognize a 1.19 mile section of Highway 79 in Camden. The section extends from Highway 7 northward to Bradley Ferry Road.

To qualify for the prestigious Perpetual Pavement award, a pavement must be at least 35 years old and meet strict quality criteria. It must demonstrate the qualities expected from long-life asphalt pavements: excellence in design, quality in construction and value to the traveling public. Engineers at the National Center for Asphalt Technology (NCAT) evaluated the nominations and a panel of industry experts validated the winners.

Arkansas' award-winning road was built in two sections. The R. H. Davis Construction Company built the first .21-mile section in 1966; Reynolds & Williams built the remainder in 1973. It was resurfaced only once, in 2003, with a two-inch overlay. There have been no other repairs on the pavement.

The four, 12-foot wide lanes in the 1966 roadway included 6 inches of asphalt-treated gravel base course, 2 inches of asphalt binder course and 1.5 inches of an asphalt surface course. In 1973, the pavement included 7 inches of asphalt-treated gravel base, 2 inches of asphalt binder and 1.5 inches of HMA surface course. Using the asphalt-treated base instead of a stone base allowed the state to

reduce the thickness of the base by 9 inches.

The current average daily traffic on Highway 79 is 10,500 vehicles. In 1973, the percentage of truck traffic was 8.8 percent; the current percentage is 15 percent, a 70 percent increase. The road reached its design capacity in 1984, 19 years before the 2003 rehabilitation. Even with the infrequency of the maintenance work, the roadway maintains a good ride quality.

According to Dan Flowers, AHTD Director, "the full-depth asphalt design of this section of roadway has shown that a high-quality asphalt pavement will serve the traveling public successfully for many years."

"With the attitude of the highway customer today to 'get in, get out and stay out,' long-lasting pavement goes a long way towards creating better customer satisfaction."

"Even though this pavement has been punished by more than 40 years of use, motorists are still using the original pavement structure," said Mike O'Leary, APA Co-Chairman. "The extraordinary performance of this pavement is worthy of attention."

The AHTD received an engraved crystal obelisk and a plaque and will have its name added to a permanent plaque that is kept at NCAT in Auburn, Alabama.

The Asphalt Pavement Alliance is a coalition of the National Asphalt Pavement Association, the Asphalt Institute and the State Asphalt Pavement Association. The Alliance's mission is to further the use and quality of asphalt pavements. The Alliance accomplishes this through research technology transfer, engineering, education and innovation.



# AHTD Team Takes 2nd Place at Regional Roadeo

The AHTD Regional Roadeo team, comprised of winners from the Department's Annual Equipment Operators Roadeo, traveled to Tunica, Mississippi, in September to compete in the 8th Annual Southeastern Regional Equipment Operators Roadeo.

Five teams representing Arkansas, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee and West Virginia participated in the event which was held at the Paul Battle Arena. The competition is open to member states of the Southeastern Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (SASHTO).

Top competitors from each state's local Roadeo displayed their skills in six categories of competition including Tractor/Low-boy, Motor Grader, Tandem Axle Dump Truck, Tractor/Mower, Single Axle Dump Truck and Backhoe.

After a full day of competition, Tennessee came out on top. Arkansas' team came in second place and Mississippi took third place. This is the eighth year that the AHTD team has come out with a top-three finish.

"It's always impressive to see the Department's team do so well each year at the regional competition," stated Dan Flowers, AHTD Director.

"Placing among the top teams every year just shows you the level of skill and professionalism our staff puts forth not just at these competitions, but, everyday in the field as well. It was another job well done."

An Awards Banquet was held the final night at the Convention Center in the Veranda Hotel. Arkansas' own Odis Barker was a Roadeo Official and was awarded a plaque in appreciation of his service to the Regional Roadeo. Barker is retiring in February. AHTD staff that participated as judges included Howard Kitchens, Joe Davidson, Crystal Woods, Ken Jordan, Tara Robinson and Eddie Tanner. Lynn Caple represented the Department in the scorekeeping booth.

Members of the AHTD team that went to Tunica can be seen in the accompanying photo.



**2010 Southeastern Regional ROADEO Arkansas Team:** (front, l. to r.) Jeff Upton, Mark Standridge, Larry Otwell, Keith Carpenter, Chad Foster and Lance Baker. (rear, l. to r.) Bucky Sawyer, Eugene Farrell, Ricky Cummings, Todd Clifford, Tony Ruhl, Jerry Mitchell, Odis Barker and Howard Kitchens.

# Motorcycle Fatalities Down Dramatically in 2009

Motorcycle fatalities declined last year for the first time in 11 years. A report released in April by the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) reveals that motorcycle fatalities declined in 2009 by at least ten percent. Based on preliminary data, GHSA is projecting that motorcycle fatalities declined from 5,290 in 2008 to 4,762 or less in 2009. The projection is based on data from 50 states and the District of Columbia. The declines come on the heels of 11 straight years of dramatic increases in motorcyclist deaths.

GHSA is projecting declines in approximately three-fourths of U. S. states. The declines are notable in many states and in every region of the country. Unfortunately, in Arkansas, motorcycle fatalities increased, rising from 57 in 2008 to 66 in 2009.

As part of the report, GHSA members were asked to suggest reasons for the decline. States offered several reasons, including: less motorcycle travel due to the economy, fewer beginning motorcyclists, increased state attention to motorcycle safety programs and poor cycling weather in some areas.

According to GHSA Chairman Vernon Betkey, "Clearly the economy played a large role in motorcycle deaths declining in 2009. Less disposable income translates into fewer leisure riders, and we suspect that the trend of inexperienced baby boomers buying bikes may have subsided."

GHSA cautions that the declines in 2009, while significant and noteworthy after 11 years of increases, represent only one year of data, and much more work needs to be done to continue to achieve declines. According to Chairman Betkey, "We will need to see three to five years of decline before we are ready to say that a positive trend has developed." The new report notes that motorcycle fatalities have significantly decreased in the past, only to rise again. For example, from 1980-1997, motorcyclist deaths dropped almost 60 percent. Sadly, those gains were wiped out during the period of 1997-2008.

To continue progress, the report notes that states need to support efforts to increase helmet use, reduce alcohol impairment, reduce speeding and provide motorcycle operating training to all who need or seek it.

The Governors Highway Safety Association is a nonprofit association representing the highway safety offices of states, territories, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. GHSA provides leadership and representation for the states and territories to improve traffic safety, influence national policy and enhance program management. Its members are appointed by their Governors to administer federal and state highway safety funds and implement state highway safety plans.



# Environmental Project Receives Recognition

The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department, along with several other organizations, received an award from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) last spring for an environmental project in eastern Arkansas.

Sandra Otto and Randal Looney of the FHWA-Arkansas Division presented the award to Lynn Malbrough, Environmental Division Head, and John Harris, Assistant Division Head, for the Department's work in protecting the Fat Pocketbook Mussel in the Tyronza River drainage basin of northeastern Arkansas. Also receiving recognition for their involvement on the project were the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission, the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality and Arkansas State University.

The mussel was designated as "Endangered" in 1976 by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Freshwater mussel species are critical to maintaining healthy aquatic ecosystems. Mussels are a food source and act as a natural filtration system as they feed on algae, plankton and silts.

The research sought to provide more information regarding the likelihood of specific impacts to mussels attributed to sediment plumes downstream of highway construction activities.

Since 2002, the agencies have collaborated to construct and implement a local recovery strategy for the endangered fat pocketbook mussel that will eventually lead to stabilizing and restoring habitat, increasing the number of reproducing and recruiting populations and removing the species from the Federal Endangered Species List.

Research results will be incorporated into specific components of the local recovery strategy including: reintroduction of the fat pocketbook into formerly inhabited drainage ways across its historic range, formulation of maintenance plans for drainage ways to assure continued viable populations, formulation of a propagation protocol to ensure genetic diversity of the species and survivorship of both adult mussels and their offspring, and formulation of a conservation plan for the FHWA.



# Department Hosts Boys State Delegates

The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department welcomed twenty delegates from Arkansas Boys State on June 4th.

The group began their morning at the Central Office and heard a presentation from Public Affairs Specialist David Nilles. That was followed with a tour of the Materials Lab coordinated by Staff Materials Engineer Mike Limbird. Students were shown numerous lab tests including tests on soil strength, concrete compression limits and the effects of traffic on asphalt.

"The Arkansas Boys State program is an opportunity for high school students to learn more about careers available to them," stated AHTD Director Dan Flowers. "We always welcome the opportunity to provide an insight into careers at the Highway and Transportation Department."

The AHTD was just one of several state agencies the delegates visited during the week.

Boys State is a six-day program of experience and education for high school juniors. The experience gained by participating in the program can be invaluable to students in their senior year in school and in choosing a career. Each boy is sponsored by a Legion Post or by some other patriotic, civic, fraternal or religious organization for the week-long program.



Mike Limbird (l.), Staff Materials Engineer, takes Boys State delegates on a tour of the Materials Lab in Little Rock.

# Work Zone Safety Promoted At Gathering

Little Rock area construction officials gathered on April 19, 2010 to promote Work Zone Safety. The site for the news conference was the active construction zone at the intersection of Interstates 430 and 630. Improvements are underway to make the interchange safer to use each day.

AHTD Director Dan Flowers noted that the week of April 19 is National Work Zone Safety Awareness Week. AHTD has participated in a promotional event for several years.

Emanuel Banks, AHTD Assistant Chief Engineer for Operations, expressed the need for safety awareness to all people that go through a construction zone.

"With over 100,000 vehicles through this interchange and hundreds of construction workers present on the job, you have the potential for conflict every day."

Flowers added that everyone shares in the responsibility to make work zones as safe as possible.



Emanuel Banks, AHTD Assistant Director of Operations, stresses a point during a Work Zone Awareness news conference. To highlight the importance of safe work zones, the conference was held at the high traffic volume Interstate 430/630 Interchange construction site.

# PUBLIC HEARINGS

## Monticello Bypass Monticello

Residents of Monticello gathered at the Sadie Johnson Community Center on September 8, 2009, for a Public Hearing to learn more about plans for the Monticello Bypass.

A crowd of 93 gathered to discuss the future bypass that would be built on new location. Plans call for construction of two lanes of the future four lane, divided highway. This project is the first one on the main lane alignment of future Interstate 69 in Arkansas.

## Highway 65 Lake Village

The Department held a Design Public Hearing in Lake Village on October 8, 2009, to discuss plans for improvements to Highway 65.

Plans call for widening approximately four miles of the highway to five lanes extending from Fairview eastward to the new Mississippi River Bridge. Approximately 70 local residents attended the meeting held at the Lake Village Fire Station.

## East North Street Magnolia

A Public Involvement Meeting was held in Magnolia on October 15, 2009, at Magnolia Jr. High School to discuss plans for improvements to E. North Street in Magnolia.

Approximately 30 people attended and viewed plans for widening .7 miles of E. North to three lanes. The improvements would extend from Frederick Street eastward to Highway 82.

## Highway 18 Blytheville

Over 100 people gathered at Blytheville Middle School on February 25th of this year to learn more about plans to construct a railroad overpass on Highway 18. The new overpass will be located in the downtown area of Blytheville.

## Highway 7 Dover

A Public Involvement Meeting was held on April 8th in Dover, at the middle school, to share plans for improvements to Highway 7. A total of 86 people studied plans to build Highway 7 on new location or make improvements to the existing location. Four alternatives were displayed at the meeting.

## Highway 5 Hot Springs Village

Fountain Lake School was the location for a Public Involvement Meeting on April 27th. Approximately 50 people attended to learn more about safety improvements to Highway 5 in the Fountain Lake area. Installation of three turn lanes is planned between Highway 7 and the Lake Balboa entrance to Hot Springs Village.

## Highway 25 Quitman

A Public Involvement Meeting was held in Quitman on May 20th to share plans for passing lanes on Highway 25. A total of 46 residents attended the meeting at Howard General Baptist Church to learn more about the new lanes, to be located between Quitman and the intersection with Highway 107.

## Highway 167 Farindale

Sixty-four people attended a Public Involvement Meeting at Marks Memorial Church of God in Christ, in Farindale, on June 10th to see plans for the widening of Highway 167 to four lanes. The improvements will begin at the intersection with Highway 273, in Dallas County, continue northward into Cleveland County and extend to Highway 48 at Farindale.

## **Garland Avenue (Highway 112) Fayetteville**

Approximately 90 people gathered at Trinity United Methodist Church, in Fayetteville, on July 8th to see plans for improvements to Garland Avenue. Plans call for widening the street to five lanes, extending from Wedington Drive (Highway 112 Spur) northward to the intersection with N. Janice Avenue/Poplar Drive.

## **Interstate 40 North Little Rock, Mayflower, Conway**

A series of three Public Involvement Meetings were held in central Arkansas the first week of August (3rd – 5th) as part of a planning study to obtain public input into improving Interstate 40 between Little Rock and Conway. The study will identify improvements to address congestion issues on the roadway. The meetings were held in Conway (August 3rd), Mayflower (August 4th) and North Little Rock (August 5th) to gather public input. A total of 151 people attended the three meetings.

## **Eastern North-South Corridor Fayetteville- Springdale-Rogers**

The Jones Center in Springdale and Rogers Heritage High School were the locations for two Public Involvement Meetings as part of a planning study regarding a proposed north-south corridor from Fayetteville to Rogers, located on the eastern side of the cities. Residents gathered on August 10th, in Springdale, and August 11th, in Rogers, to learn more about the study. The focus will be on a north-south corridor extending from Highway 16, in southeast Fayetteville, to Highway 62, in northeast Rogers. The study addresses congestion issues on Highways 71B, 265 and 62. A total of 136 people attended the meetings.

## **Highway 67 Cabot**

Two Public Involvement Meetings were held in August as part of a planning study regarding proposed improvements to Highway 67. The study will identify improvements to address congestion issues on the route between Jacksonville and Cabot. Approximately 85 people attended the meetings which were held at the Jacksonville Community Center on August 17th and Veteran's Park Community Center in Cabot on August 18th.

## **Highway 225 Greers Ferry**

West Side High School, in Greers Ferry, was the site of a Public Involvement Meeting to discuss plans to replace a bridge on Highway 225 over Midway Branch at Greers Ferry Lake. The September 23rd meeting was attended by 41 area residents and AHTD staff members.

## **Highway 226 Cash**

Cash City Hall was the site for a Public Hearing on the widening of Highway 226 in Craighead County. Over 60 people attended the meeting on September 30th to see plans for widening the highway to four lanes and building a bypass of the City of Cash. Plans call for the project to extend from the west end of the planned Cash Bypass eastward to Gibson.



## AHTD Highlights Projects With Numerous Statewide Events

During the past year, the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department has held numerous events across the state to bring attention to various projects. From the dedication of the new Welcome Center in Lake Village to the completion of a new railroad overpass job in Benton and a "sign removal" ceremony in Paragould to mark the end of a project on Highway 412. AHTD officials are always warmly welcomed in the local areas as we highlight these projects.

Large crowds typically follow these events to show their appreciation for the work that we do in their communities.

### Governor Beebe Dedicates New Lake Village Welcome Center



Lake Village Mayor JoAnne Bush (flanked by Governor Mike Beebe and AHTD Director Dan Flowers) cuts the ribbon to officially open the new Lake Village Welcome Center. AHC Commissioner Madison Murphy (below) addresses the crowd.

The original Lake Village Tourist Information Center was opened in 1978 and cost \$420,000 to construct. On January 12, 2010, busloads of local students got a civics field trip as Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe dedicated the new \$2.8 million Welcome Center.

As typical with new Welcome Centers, lots of people attended the dedication of the new one in Lake Village. Commission Chairman Carl Rosenbaum, Commissioner Madison Murphy and AHTD Director Dan Flowers shared the podium with Governor Beebe and Richard Davies, Director of Arkansas Parks and Tourism, and Lake Village Mayor JoAnne Bush.

The new Welcome Center is a 3,100 square-foot, state-of-the-art facility located on 1.6 acres. The most unique feature is the 3,700 square-foot, multi-level fishing and observation deck over Lake Chicot.

The Lake Village Center is the sixth new Welcome Center to be re-built since 2003 under a funding project using 20 percent



state money and 80 percent Federal Transportation Enhancement Funds. The other five new centers are located in El Dorado, Texarkana, Fort Smith/Van Buren, Corning and Blytheville. Construction on a seventh new center has begun in West Memphis.

## Benton Railroad Overpass Project Completed

Retiring Congressman Vic Snyder was the special guest at the ribbon cutting ceremony to mark the opening of the Highway 35 railroad overpass in Benton.



Benton Mayor Rick Holland (backseat) and AHTD Director Dan Flowers ride in the first car to celebrate the completion of the \$3.5 million project.

A \$21 million project to replace two at-grade railroad crossings with two new overpasses in Benton was dedicated with a ribbon cutting ceremony on May 3. Congressman Vic Snyder joined highway officials, local elected officials and a large crowd of Benton residents for the event.

The M.J. Lee Construction Company job was let in January 2008. The project included a new overpass on Highway 35 and one over Benton Parkway, improvements to Highway 35, and added a traffic signal at the Highway 35 and 183 interchange.

Identified as a priority crossing by the Central Arkansas Regional Transportation Study, an average of 12,000 vehicles per day travel through the area and an average of 36 trains pass there.

There are approximately 2,700 at-grade railroad crossings in Arkansas. About 33 percent have protection devices, such as arms, and the rest have only passive warning signs. Arkansas receives about \$3.5 million in annual federal funding for railroad protection devices. At least half must be spent on lights and gates, while the other half may be spent on overpass projects like this.

## Purple Heart Trail Sign Unveiled at Ceremony



Commission Chairman Carl Rosenbaum and AHTD officials joined a group of Purple Heart recipients to unveil a new Interstate 40 Purple Heart Trail sign on May 11.

Commissioner Rosenbaum noted how appropriate it was that a truck bearing the American flag down the sides drove by during the ceremony.

In 2003, the Arkansas Highway Commission authorized the installation of signs along Interstate 40 to recognize two significant designations – the Veteran's Memorial Highway and the Eisenhower Interstate System. Four of the Veteran's signs are located



Ralph Hall (above), AHTD Assistant to the Director, addresses the crowd for the unveiling of a new Purple Heart Trail sign on Interstate 40 east of Little Rock. Four Purple Heart recipients were recognized for their heroism during the ceremony.

across the state along Interstate 40. The Eisenhower signs are located in Interstate Rest Areas and at Welcome Centers.

In 2004, the Highway Commission approved installation of the Purple Heart Trail signs in the state. Two are located on Interstate 430 in Little Rock, four are located along Interstate 540 between Alma and the Missouri Stateline, and four share a pole with the Veteran's signs on Interstate 40.

The Purple Heart Trail was established in 1992 to create a symbolic and honorary system of roads, highways, bridges and other monuments that give tribute to the men and women who have been awarded the Purple Heart.

## Paragould Ceremony Removes Sign To Signify Project Completion



Retiring Congressman Marion Berry (with cane from left) helps AHC Commissioner John Ed Regenold and AHTD Director Dan Flowers to remove the road work sign to officially complete the \$11.7 million Highway 412 project in Paragould.

Five years ago, construction of an \$11.7 million widening project on Highway 412 east of Paragould began. To mark the beginning of construction, workers installed a "Road Work Next 4.2 Miles" to alert travelers to work ahead. On June 22, 2010, a large crowd gathered at the site to remove the sign – signifying completion of the project.

Highway Commissioner John Ed Regenold, AHTD Director Dan Flowers and other highway officials joined Congressman Marion Berry and Paragould officials for the ceremony.

Flowers told the crowd, "It's always good to complete a project of this nature. Safety is always a priority and this project provides great improvement for that."

"Transportation is important to any area for bringing in industry," said Commissioner Regenold. "Expansion of Highway 412 will open doors for Paragould."

## Harrison Street Widening Job Completed Batesville Officials Dedicate Project



AHTD Director Dan Flowers and Commissioners Cliff Hoofman and Carl Rosenbaum get plenty of help at the ribbon cutting ceremony in Batesville to signify completion of the Highway 69 widening project through town.

On August 6, 2010, the City of Batesville hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony to mark the completion of the Harrison Street (Highway 69) widening project through the heart of town.

Commission Chairman Carl Rosenbaum, Commissioner Cliff Hoofman, AHTD Director Dan Flowers and other highway officials joined the local crowd in front of White River Medical Center for the event.

The \$13 million project was let to contract in December 2007 to White River Materials. The job widened the existing roadway to five lanes for the three miles east from Highway 167 to Gap Road.

Director Flowers noted that in 1961, an estimated 1,700 vehicles per day traveled this section of highway. Since that time, development has continued along there and the latest counts are over 20,000 vehicles per day.

## New Highway 67/167 Exit Ramp Opens at Highway 5 in Cabot



Commission Chairman Carl Rosenbaum takes time to join Cabot Mayor Eddie Joe Williams (with scissors) and others to officially dedicate the opening of the new Highway 167 off ramp at Highway 5.

Commission Chairman Carl Rosenbaum joined the crowd to cut the ribbon to celebrate the opening of the newly modified Highway 67/167 southbound exit ramp at Highway 5 in Cabot on September 15.

Cabot area officials had expressed their interest in relocating the southbound off ramp so that it connects to Rockwood Road. The new design alleviates a congestion problem that existed for motorists wanting to turn left onto Highway 5. Now travelers are directed to a traffic signal on Highway 5. To the north, Highway 89 connects to Rockwood.

The \$414,000 project was let to James A. Rogers Excavating in July. Rosenbaum noted the quick turnaround on the job.

## Batesville: Highway 167 North Widening Extension Dedicated

AHTD Director Dan Flowers was front and center for another ribbon cutting ceremony in Batesville on September 23. The local community gathered to cut a ribbon for the completion of the \$9.5 million job.

The purpose of the project was to widen almost one mile of

Highway 167/69 from Highway 233 south to Highway 69.

The crowd was pleased to hear Flowers note that a project to continue widening of Highway 167 for 2.7 miles, from Highway 69 to Highway 394, is scheduled for early 2011 and another project from Highway 394 north for 5.1 miles is scheduled for 2014.



Local officials close Highway 167 north in Batesville to cut a ribbon and celebrate completion of the \$9.5 million widening project.



Director Dan Flowers (right) pulls the cover off the new Rock 'N' Roll Highway sign in Pocahontas. Five other signs are located along Highway 67 between Bradford and the Missouri Stateline.

## Rock 'N' Roll Highway Sign Unveiled at Pocahontas

Just in time for the Highway 67 Music Festival, Commissioner John Ed Regenold and AHTD Director Dan Flowers joined local officials to unveil another Rock 'N' Roll Highway sign on September 27 just south of Pocahontas.

Representative J.R. Rogers, of Walnut Ridge, sponsored the Rock 'N' Roll Highway bill during the 2009 Legislative Session. The bill was introduced to salute the history of "rockabilly" music with signs along a portion of Highway 67.

After Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe signed the bill into law, the AHTD installed five Rock 'N' Roll Highway signs. The first sign was unveiled in December 2009 at the King of Clubs just north of Swifton.

Four other signs are located near Bradford, Hoxie, Walnut Ridge and the Missouri Stateline.

During the 1950s, the area was alive with a Who's Who of artists – from Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash and Roy Orbison, to Jerry Lee Lewis and Conway Twitty.

## New Highway 267 Opens: Governor Beebe Attends Dedication

When partnerships are formed, projects just get done at a faster pace. The new Highway 267 connector road is the result of an AHTD partnership with the City of Newport and the Newport Economic Development Commission. Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe headlined a ribbon cutting ceremony to mark the end of construction on October 4 in Newport. He predicted economic growth to follow along the new highway.

The purpose of the project was to add a new location connector road between Highways 18 and 384 just east of Highway 167 in Newport. The new Newport High School is located on the road.

Commissioner Cliff Hoofman noted that a Highway Commission minute order was passed in June 2010 to officially add Highway 267 to the highway system and to remove two portions of area roadways on Highways 17 and 224.

According to AHTD Director Dan Flowers, the City of Newport agreed to provide engineering services, utility relocation, and construction of the roadway, embankments, drainage structures and erosion control. They also provided \$200,000 toward the project.

The AHTD provided the base and surfacing, signing, striping and incidentals related to the job.



*(From left) Director Dan Flowers, Commissioner Cliff Hoofman, Governor Mike Beebe, Newport Mayor David Stewart and Jackson County Judge-elect Jeff Phillips cut the ribbon to officially open Highway 267 in Newport. The new highway connects Highways 18 and 384 just east of Highway 167.*



# Letters to the Department

November 30, 2009

Arkansas State Highway  
& Transportation Department  
District 5  
Batesville, AR

On Wednesday, November 25, 2009, at approximately 11 a.m., my wife experienced a tire problem with her dark blue 2008 Lincoln MKZ bearing Texas temporary license tags. She was traveling on Highways 67/167 between Searcy and Batesville at near Exit 44.

Obviously, being Thanksgiving eve, traffic was heavy, and when she contacted me by cell phone, my obvious concern was for her safety. I contacted my office and requested they attempt to contact a local police agency or the Arkansas State Police to ascertain if they could possibly assist her.

Diana had been roadside for no more than five minutes when three AHTD employees pulled behind her vehicle, took care of the tire problem, got her on her way, and most importantly, out of harm's way.

From Diana and I, we wish to sincerely thank those employees for their assistance. They explained to Diana that they worked out of the Batesville office, and I hope this correspondence reaches those employees, who assisted her and are a credit to the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department.

Be assured if the Missouri State Highway Patrol can ever be of assistance to your agency, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,  
Billy E. Chadwick  
Captain, Troop G  
Missouri State Highway Patrol

June 25, 2010

Mr. Emanuel Banks:

Graves and Associates wants to thank you for your help on AHTD job number 060529. The following is Resolution 286 from the City of Carlisle.

Don Graves, President  
Graves & Associates, Inc.  
Pine Bluff, Arkansas

## RESOLUTION COMMENDING GRAVES & ASSOCIATES FOR DOING AN OUTSTANDING JOB COMPLETING THE CONSTRUCTION ON NEW HIGHWAY 13

WHEREAS, the City of Carlisle along with the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department has worked together for the last several years to improve traffic through the City of Carlisle, and

WHEREAS, The Arkansas State Highway Department did an outstanding job in designing a plan whereby Highway 13 would be improved, and

WHEREAS, Graves & Associates was the successful bidder on the project to construct Highway 13 improvements, and

WHEREAS, the City of Carlisle would like to thank Graves & Associates and the AHTD for the professional manner in which Graves & Associates and the AHTD conducted themselves through their employees in constructing the improvements on time and with the minimum interference with businesses and residents of Carlisle. The City Council, along with its Mayor, hereby passes this Resolution thanking Graves & Associates and Arkansas State Highway & Transportation Department for the professional manner they exhibited.

This Resolution having passed on June 15, 2010.

July 21, 2010

Arkansas Highway & Transportation Department:

I would like to take a moment to express my appreciation of the AHTD in Madison County. Kenny Riley and his staff are doing a great job meeting the needs of this county. You can depend on them to take care of your concerns promptly.

Phil Thompson  
Thompson Ready Mix, Inc.  
Huntsville, Arkansas

July 22, 2010

Mr. Dan Flowers, AHTD Director:

I wish to personally tell you what a fine employee you have in Ms. Sharon Doss, MCS Safety Auditor, and how grateful I am to her for standing up for me when she believed I was right. My wife and I purchased a Class 8 truck a year ago for personal use. Trying to find our place in the system, fit into regulations and complete the paperwork written for commercial motor carriers has been a challenge to say the least. However, we have made a good faith effort to do so and hopefully this was reflected in the audit. I will first say the audit was very professionally conducted and very educational. It cleared up a lot of paper work questions that we had been unsure of.

However, in the process of conducting the audit, Sharon found a discrepancy in our drug consortium file, that if only one piece of paper was considered, it made it appear that I had committed a serious violation. When all of the paper work and phone logs were considered, it was obvious that indeed I had not. Sharon spent 4 extra hours at our office trying to resolve the issue at FMCSA to no avail and had no choice but to leave that afternoon with me under the bus. I was in a complete state of shock.

However, due to Kevin Breedlove at FMCSA ultimately being willing to listen, and asking Sharon to present all of the available information to him, the issue was resolved. She simply refused to let the bus run over me. She didn't have to do that. She could have just as easily walked away, believing she had done her job. Our truck has nothing to do with how we make our living. For me to have to take remedial steps to correct a problem, when I was not guilty, could have potentially been very damaging to my professional career. I am just thankful for Sharon's honesty and integrity, and being willing to stand up for me until "right" prevailed. I am also extremely grateful to Kevin Breedlove.

I also wish to thank Mr. Bucky Thomas, Mr. Ross Batson, and Mr. Jay Thompson for allowing Sharon to present all the available information on my behalf. When I think of a state employee, I will think of Sharon Doss. Thank you for allowing me to brag on a top-notch employee. It is the least I could do.

Ford Baldwin  
Practical Weed Consultants, LLC.  
Austin, AR

September 11, 2010

Arkansas Highway & Transportation Department  
To whom it may concern:

Perhaps you will remember, a few years ago, we lived on 284 East and I wrote a letter to the Department concerning the condition of the guard rails at the intersection of 64B and 284. I thought we would make a better impression on people going to the Village Creek State Park. All my friends laughed at me for doing this, but when the AHTD was out within two weeks, painting the guard rails, they were impressed!

We no longer live on 284 but live in Wynne and a few months ago, we were traveling 64B and I told my husband, "I guess I'm going to have to write the Highway Department again about these guard rails." Well, as you know, I never did. However, when I saw you putting up new guard rails, I wished I had written that letter. Then I could have felt a little responsible for getting new guard rails!

I think the employees of the AHTD feel unappreciated for the work they do, but I want to say I appreciate the work, whether it is putting up new guard rails, keeping the grass mowed on the side of the highways, or anything they do to make our city, county and state a better place to live. So, when they are out in the 100 degree heat or the freezing rain, I want to say thank you and I appreciate it.

Sincerely,  
Shirley Minton

February 8, 2010

To whom it may concern:

I would like to thank one of your field officers, Mark Willis, for taking the time out to assist me with a flat tire on Friday evening, February 5, 2010, an extremely cold day. I'm from a small city in Columbia County. I was traveling to Little Rock to visit my daughters and grandchildren when I had a flat tire and your officer fixed it for me. I was extremely grateful for his generosity and wanted to show my appreciation by sending this letter.

Thank you again,  
Lillie B. Dunn

June 25, 2010

Mr. Ralph Fulton,

Yesterday, I attended funeral services for a relative in Marshall, Arkansas. Following the service, the funeral procession traveled from Marshall to the Alco cemetery in western Stone County.

The funeral procession approached an AHTD work zone, and traffic was stopped on the top of the hill to allow us to proceed. As we approached the young man who was responsible for directing traffic at the bottom of the hill, my wife and I noticed he was holding the flag in his left hand. He had removed his cap with his right hand and was holding his cap over his heart as a sign of respect. At the top of the hill, the young man with the flag was doing exactly the same.

My wife and I were very impressed with this and discussed it on our way back to Russellville. I wanted to take this opportunity to let you know of our appreciation of the young men's actions. If you have the opportunity, please extend our heartfelt thanks to your employees for the respect shown to our family.

Benny Harris  
President/Central Region  
Liberty Bank of Arkansas  
Russellville, Arkansas

September 21, 2010

Director Dan Flowers,

We really enjoyed our visit to Arkansas to the SASHTO 2010 Conference. We appreciated your hospitality and hope that very soon we can reciprocate it. Give our special thanks to your staff, Lorie Tudor, Bethany Swindell and Daniel Eutsler for their support and professionalism during our stay. We are very grateful. Hopefully, we will participate next year, and we are looking forward to being at the SASHTO 2011 Kentucky Conference.

Sincerely yours,  
Evelyn S. Colón-Berlinger  
Deputy Executive Director  
Puerto Rico DOT

January 7, 2010

Ark. Highway & Transportation Dept.:

I think you've done a great job on the AHTD website. I'm a native of Arkansas, relocated to Texas two years ago for employment. I was very impressed with the content and ease of navigation for the site. I was planning a trip to see my grandkids and wanted to check the road conditions in north central Arkansas. You should consider selling the slide show on the opening page of the site! I would buy a copy, just to be reminded of Arkansas!

Dennis Mills  
San Antonio, Texas

June 16, 2010

Via email:

I have meant to send this email for over a month now and kept forgetting. I just have to let the AHTD know just how beautiful the medians and sides of most of the highways are. I frequently travel from Morrilton to Alma via I-40 and then go up I-540. I-40 was so beautiful in the spring that I wished I had been a passenger instead of the driver so I could take it all in. Congratulations on a marvelous job.

Ann Cox  
Hot Springs Village, Arkansas

Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department:

Thank you so very much for the wonderful wildflowers. Colors that thrill me every day. It's a delight to live on Highway 412 West. I miss my magnolia tree and others but I've been paid back with just bunches and bunches of yellow, white, pink, purple and little orange ones and red clover! I do appreciate this. My eyes just pop with flowers.

Martha Johns  
Paragould, Arkansas

Chief Ron Burks:

On behalf of the Criminal Justice Institute, I would like to thank you and the Arkansas Highway Police for your continued support of the DWI Detection and Standardized Field Sobriety Testing Program. This program, was presented to a group of law enforcement officers at the Southern Arkansas University Police Department. The presentations were well received by those in attendance. I would especially like to extend our appreciation and thanks to Sgt. Steve Atchley and Cpl. David Stovall, AHP, who contributed greatly to the quality and standard of the program as instructors. Thank you once again for your continued support for this valuable program.

Sincerely,  
Neil V. Pennick  
DWI/SFST/DRE Program Manager

October 29, 2010

Glenn Bolick, Ed Hoppe and David Mayo:

Thank you again for your fine presentation to LeadAR class 14 when we held our Community and Economic Development seminar in Newport on October 22. Your presentation is always full of new stuff and you personalize it to the class so well.

We are grateful for your time to educate this class about AHTD and how important it is to improving Arkansas' economy. Please holler if I can ever help you.

Joseph D. Waldrum, Ph.D.  
Professor - Leadership Development  
University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture

February 12, 2010

Tommy Littleton, District 8  
District Maintenance Engineer

The central Arkansas area has experienced two episodes of inclement winter weather since January. I wanted to take the time to let you know how much we appreciate the quick response and help provided by the crew of District 8 during these inclement weather events. With their assistance, the troopers of Faulkner County were able to assist the public in a safe and timely manner. Please pass on to the District 8 crew my appreciation for their continued assistance.

Sincerely,  
Keith G. Erema, Captain  
Troop A Commander  
Arkansas State Police

April 6, 2010

Ms. Laura DeBro Carter,

I would like to thank you and your staff for giving the employees of the City of Pine Bluff Street Department the opportunity to receive training courses through the AHTD and the University of Arkansas. All of the courses that our employees received, Defensive Driving, CPR/First Aid, Flagging and Forklift, will certainly be very beneficial to this department. Also, your instructors, Jan Cummings, David Carter, Terry Dial, and Cindy Williams, were very knowledgeable of the subject matter. They were very concerned as well as they knew how to keep the subject matter interesting.

So, on behalf of the employees of the City of Pine Bluff Street Department, I sincerely appreciate you and your staff for "a job well done." We look forward to a continued good working relationship with you and your staff in the near future.

John T. Golden,  
Interim Street Manager



Arkansas State Highway and  
Transportation Department  
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