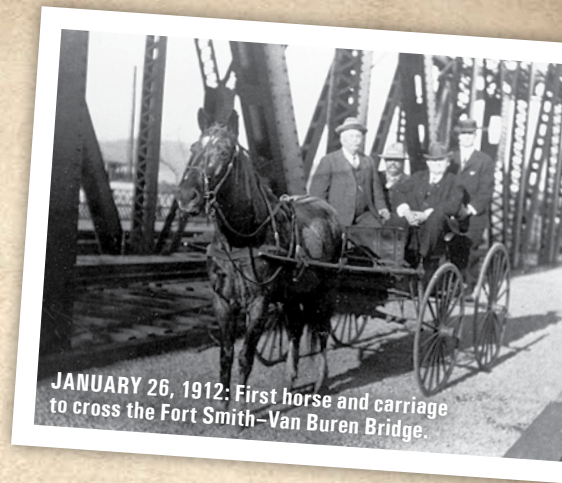


Arkansas HIGHWAYS

MARCH 2013

A PUBLICATION OF THE
ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY & TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT | **MAGAZINE**



JANUARY 26, 1912: First horse and carriage to cross the Fort Smith-Van Buren Bridge.

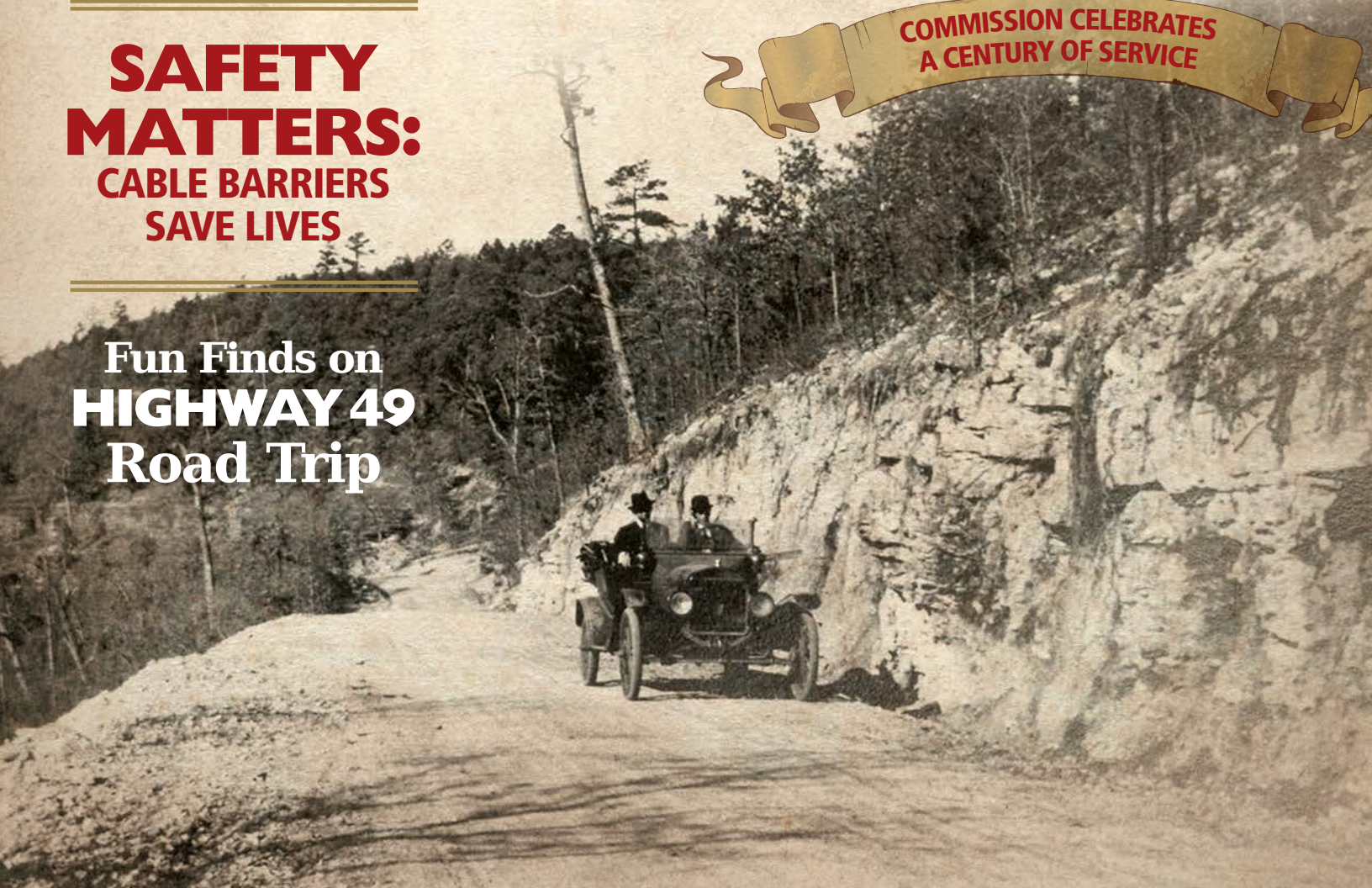
A HISTORY OF
BRIDGE
CONSTRUCTION
IN ARKANSAS

SAFETY
MATTERS:
CABLE BARRIERS
SAVE LIVES

Fun Finds on
HIGHWAY 49
Road Trip

100
Years IN THE
Making

COMMISSION CELEBRATES
A CENTURY OF SERVICE





DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The cold weather seems to always bring a round or two of snow and ice. This year has been no different. When any kind of frozen precipitation settles in on Arkansas' highways, many here at the Department have to answer the call.

Road crews in each of our Districts suddenly find themselves working overnight shifts as they treat bridges or plow highways making them passable for motorists. Others across the State must report to their office to assist with the extra responsibility this type of weather brings.

The winter storm we experienced beginning Christmas day brought high precipitation totals to many areas of the State. I want to say a big "thank you" to each employee that had to report for duty on a holiday due to the inclement weather. As always, all of you did a tremendous job, whether clearing the

highways for motorists or keeping the office running smoothly during the challenging time. Our employees always put forth an incredible effort and the holiday snowstorm was no exception. Congratulations on a job well done.

What an exciting time this is as we strive to make Arkansas' highway system the best it can possibly be. In just over a year's time, Arkansas voters have approved a new Interstate Rehabilitation Program and a temporary half-cent sales tax for better highways.

The Interstate Rehabilitation Program, approved in November of 2011, is already underway with the first three contracts awarded in November 2012 as part of the largest highway letting in Arkansas history. Many more projects will get underway this year. The program will rebuild over 450 miles of Arkansas' Interstates and was approved by an 81% margin at the polls.

The temporary half-cent sales tax was approved this past November with a 58% margin. Referred to as the "Connecting Arkansas Program" or CAP, it will fund a \$1.8 billion program to construct and improve four-lane highways over the next ten years. A new City Aid Program will also get underway as part of this package. All 75 counties in Arkansas stand to gain from the improvements that lie ahead.

As we step back and look at the bigger picture, I think back to the efforts of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Highway Finance in 2010. Their job was to find a more sustainable way for funding improvements to Arkansas' system of highways for the future. The committee presented numerous options for further consideration and the Department is moving forward on four of those specific recommendations at this time. Now it is fitting to assess where we are with the Committee's recommendations.

One was re-establishing the GARVEE Bonds for the Interstate Rehabilitation Program, which is now being successfully implemented. The second recommendation was the temporary half-cent sales tax which became the Connecting Arkansas Program (CAP) and was approved by voters in November of last year.

Included along with CAP was the creation of the City Aid Program, a third recommendation of the Committee. The Department has now allotted one penny of its existing motor fuels tax, which is about \$20 million a year, to fund a City Aid Program similar to the County Aid Program that has been in existence for many years.

So three of those four recommendations have now become a reality.

The fourth recommendation is the consideration of dedicating the existing sales tax on road user items to highway improvements. Under that category would be the tax on cars, trucks, batteries, tires, and auto accessories and repairs. As recommended by the Committee, the dedication of this road user revenue for highways could be phased in over a ten-year period. Further discussion of this recommendation is taking place during the current legislative session.

As the year 2013 continues to unfold, motorists will notice a number of construction projects springing up on our highways across the State. Each of these is an opportunity for us to put our best foot forward and continue to make Arkansas' highways some of the best in the nation.



Scott E. Bennett
Director of Highways and Transportation

FRONT COVER:
U.S. Highway 62
Carroll County, circa 1923

BACK COVER:
An early street paving project
draws a crowd of onlookers.

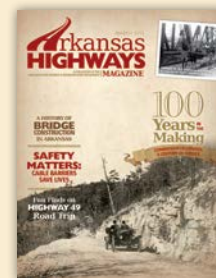
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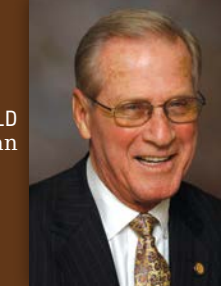
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ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION

JOHN ED REGENOLD
Chairman



JOHN BURKHALTER
Vice Chairman



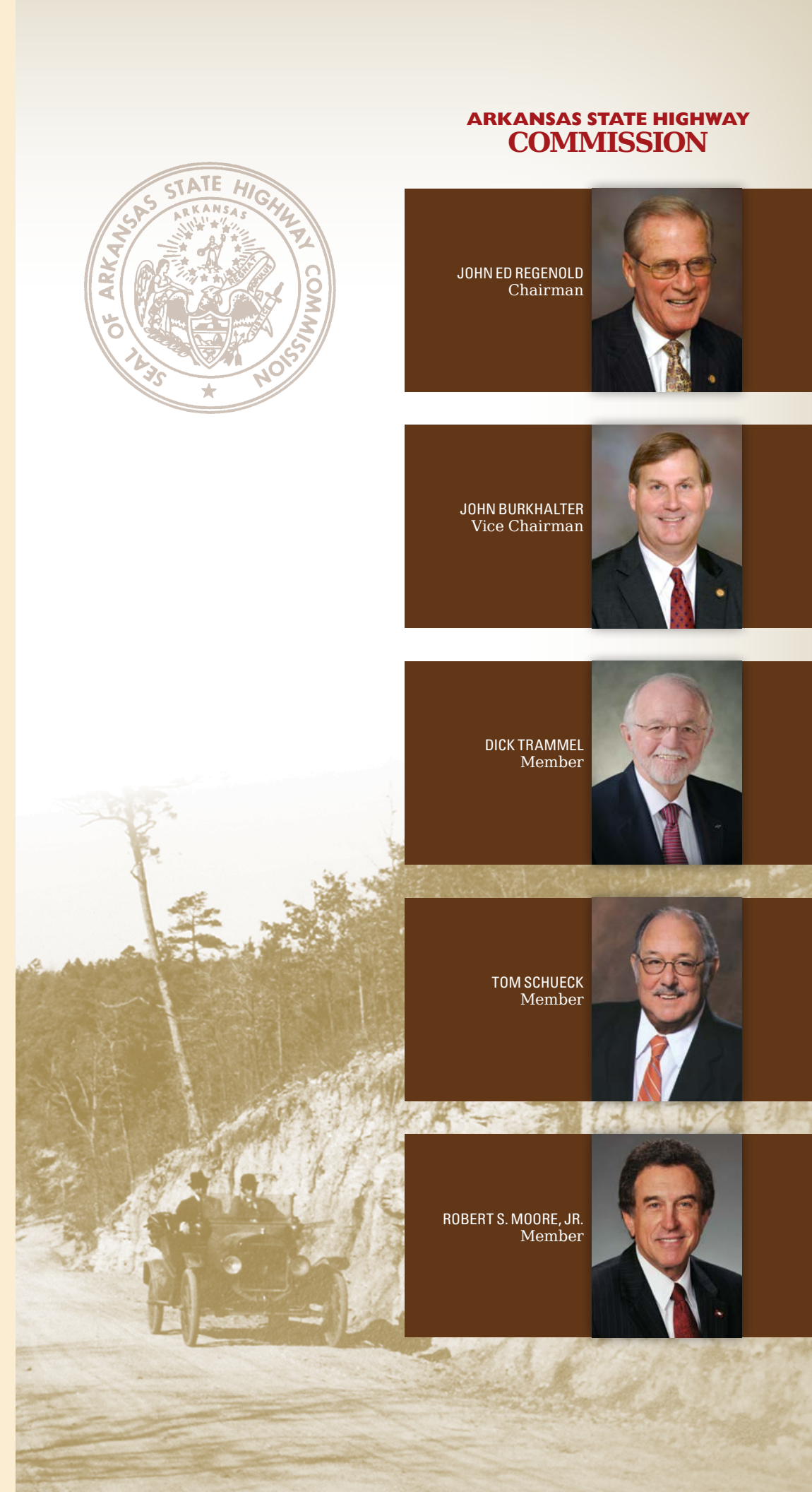
DICK TRAMMEL
Member



TOM SCHUECK
Member



ROBERT S. MOORE, JR.
Member



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100 YEARS **SERVING**
ARKANSAS
SINCE 1913
ARKANSAS STATE
HIGHWAY COMMISSION

CELEBRATING A

CENTURY *of the*

ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION

BY DANNY STRAESSLE

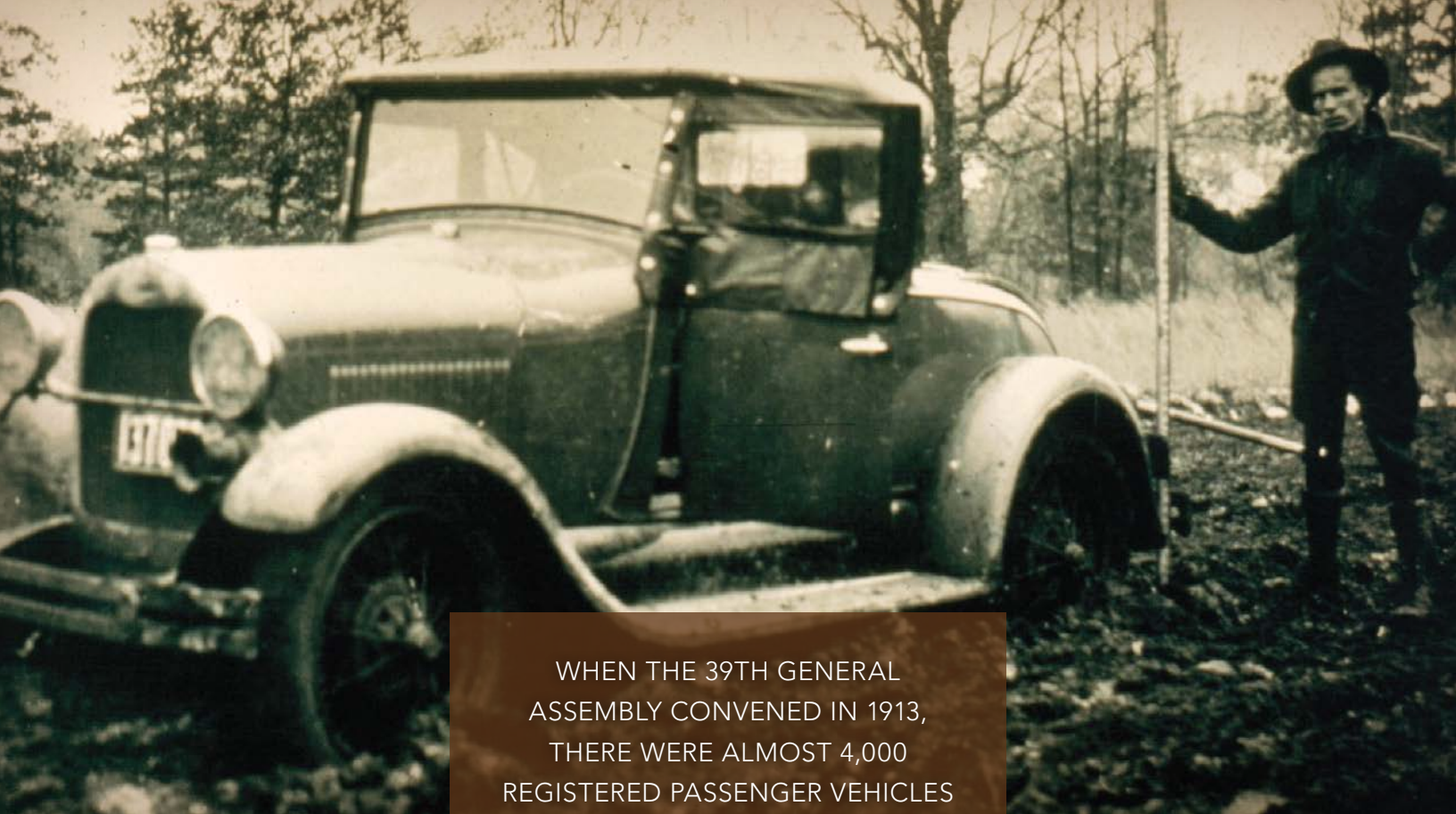
{ **THE EARLY YEARS**
(1913 - 1938) }

You could say it was a lot of trial and error. We all know that good roads in Arkansas during our lifetime didn't just happen. Although many of us have witnessed firsthand the dedication and diligence that has brought Arkansas highways where they are today, few of us realize the storied history that precedes these accomplishments.

For instance, would you believe that a group of Little Rock bicyclists took the lead in promoting the good roads movement in Arkansas in the early and mid-1890s? How about the almost whimsical manner in which the Highway Commission in its early years was disbanded and re-appointed? Not once. Not twice. But so often that at times it did seem like trial and error as Arkansas struggled to find its place among the emerging highway system in America.

April of this year marks the 100th anniversary of the Arkansas State Highway Commission. In this issue of *Arkansas Highways*, we begin a four-part series on the history of the Commission – its struggles and its triumphs – as we look back over the last century of road building in Arkansas.

(continued on page 6)



WHEN THE 39TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONVENED IN 1913, THERE WERE ALMOST 4,000 REGISTERED PASSENGER VEHICLES IN THE STATE. ARKANSAS' ROADS WERE CLEARLY NOT IN SHAPE FOR THE ARRIVAL OF THE AUTOMOBILE.

PRE-COMMISSION YEARS

As Arkansas entered the 20th Century, a statewide movement for good roads was already in progress.

Everyone from bankers and lawyers to bicyclists and farmers knew that good roads were the cornerstone upon which a prosperous state could be built, but nobody knew how to adequately fund the effort.

It wasn't long before road financing proposals began to emerge and in 1907 the State legislature approved the Arnold Road Bill (Act 144), which basically gave counties the authority to establish road improvement districts at the request of a majority of landowners along any given road. By 1911, Act 234 provided for the appointment of a county highway engineer to directly supervise all public roads in that county.

Road building of the time was sporadic. Often roads were constructed to serve a specific neighborhood or even a specific individual. The improvement districts were taking on debt in order to accomplish their needs, some of which resulted in roads that went absolutely nowhere. At the time, there was no coordinated effort among improvement districts.

When the 39th Arkansas General Assembly convened in 1913, there were almost 4,000 registered passenger vehicles in the State. Arkansas' roads were clearly not in shape for the arrival of the automobile, which is why the subject topped the list during the session and resulted in the legislature creating the first highway administrative agency in Arkansas.

Act 302 established the State Highway Commission and the

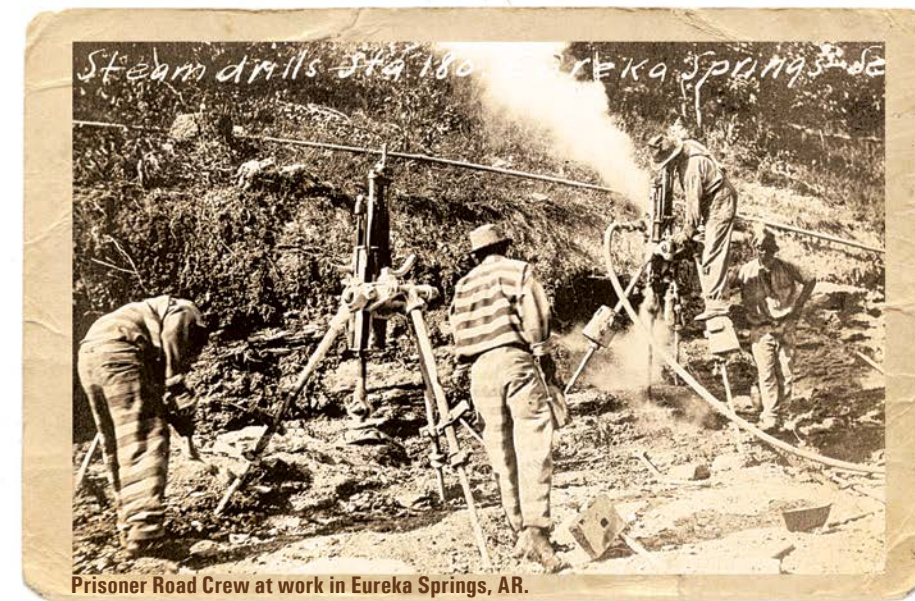
State Highway Department as an affiliate of the Department of State Lands. The new agency was named the Department of State Lands, Highways and Improvements. The

act also established a three-member Highway Commission that included the Commissioner of State Lands, Highways and Improvements (who served as chairman), and two others appointed by the Governor to serve staggered two-year terms. The Commissioners were authorized to select a commission secretary to assist with administrative duties.

As State Land Commissioner, Reuben Dye of Forrest City became the first chairman of the Highway Commission. Governor J. Marion Futrell appointed C.W. Highfill of Jonesboro to serve the first original two-year term, and A.S. Kilgore of Magnolia to serve a one-year term. The Commission was required to meet quarterly with a primary responsibility of establishing policy as well as outlining work to be undertaken by the Department of State Lands, Highways and Improvements.

The new Department was provided working space at the State capitol that included an office, workrooms and a meeting room for the Commission. The Department was divided into three divisions: the state land division, the automobile license division, and the highway division.

Among the responsibilities specifically defined for the Department included general supervision over road construction and maintenance, providing advice and assistance to improvement districts, preparation and distribution of information relative to roads, bridges, drainage levees and



other public improvements, distribution of funds for the construction of public roads, and promotion of a greater interest in the improvements of Arkansas' highways.

The Commission's first priority was to hire a qualified State Highway Engineer to oversee road construction and maintenance activities. E.A. Kingsley was named the first State Highway Engineer. Although Act 302 had established the first highway improvement fund through the collection of a \$10 annual license fee on motor vehicles (and with a budget of only \$72,000 to work with), no system of State highways, and limited legislative powers, the Commission quickly realized that an effort to educate the general public was needed. A campaign to familiarize Arkansans with highway laws and the legal responsibilities of the Department was begun.

In order to qualify for the Federal Aid Act of 1916, the legislature in 1917 passed Act 105 and designated certain roads in Arkansas as "State roads." These roads met qualifications that made them eligible for Federal funds. Although it wasn't the system of State highways that the Highway Commission had been advocating since its creation, it did ensure that Federal funds could be used on these roads.

Act 105 also created an advisory board as a branch of the Highway Commission. The advisory board consisted of the State Highway Engineer, the professor of civil engineering at the University of Arkansas, and one member appointed by the Governor. Their function was to examine

all preliminary plans, specifications and cost estimates and to recommend to the Highway Commission whether or not State or Federal aid funds should be used on a particular project.

IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT BAILOUT

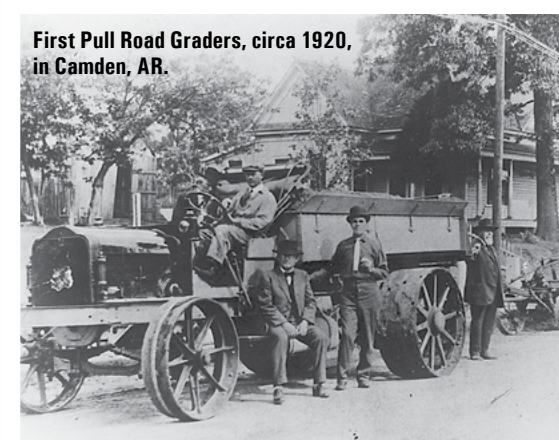
The economic outlook following World War I was bright – everyone had money and everyone was on the move. The demand for more roads and better roads was so high that the legislature in 1919 and 1920 passed 457 special acts creating more than 300 road improvement districts. There was so much road work that experienced engineers, surveyors and draftsmen were in great demand. Yet no connected system of roads was planned.

Prosperity of the time also brought inflated prices. The increased demand for labor, materials and equipment stretched available resources. Many projects began when prices were at an all-time high. Some should never have been allowed to proceed. People started to complain, fearing the poor planning would cost the State several hundreds of thousands of dollars. In the 1920 political campaign, candidates attacked the road improvement district plan and the Department's general program.

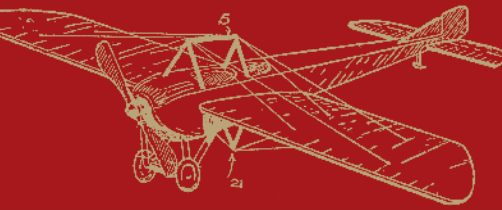
In 1921, the Commission reorganized the Department in an effort to better assist the road improvement districts and counties. For the first time the State was divided into five highway districts, each headed

(continued on page 8)

First Pull Road Graders, circa 1920, in Camden, AR.



Everyone knew that GOOD ROADS were the cornerstone upon which a prosperous state could be built.



FLIRTATION with Flight

In 1927, the Highway Commission briefly became involved in the development of air travel. Act 96 named the Highway Commission chairman as a member of the State aircraft board. The Highway Commission was authorized to cooperate with other public agencies in constructing and improving airports as long as this activity did not interfere with the highway program.

In 1931, Act 9 created the State Department of Aeronautics and levied a five-cent per gallon tax on aircraft fuel to be deposited in the State highway fund. Act 110 gave the Highway Department the authority to purchase and maintain a "four-place cabin airplane" and necessary photographic equipment for use in aerial photography. Use of the plane was also expected to decrease the Department's expense of laying-out and locating construction sites.

The aircraft board and the State Department of Aeronautics were dismantled in 1933 by Act 136. The State Highway Commission returned its full attention back to ground travel.

by an engineer. These districts were headquartered in Forrest City, Fayetteville, Hope, Pine Bluff and Little Rock.

As the Great Depression got even greater, many of the road improvement districts could not complete their projects with the funds they had raised. The Highway Department was forced to use all of its resources to assist the nearly bankrupt districts. The Highway Commission established a policy of using all available funds to help complete unfinished projects.

Then during the regular session in 1923, a small group of legislators successfully blocked all constructive highway legislation proposed by the Highway Commission. Defeated measures included one to establish a system of State highways and a new appropriations bill for the Department. At midnight on June 30, 1923, existing appropriations for the Highway Department ended and the agency closed down.

But all it took was one summer without federal funds or construction activity on the State's roads to get everyone's attention. Governor Thomas McRae called a special session in September to resolve the highway crisis. Necessary appropriations bills were proposed and resulted in the enactment of Act 5 of the Special Session of 1923 – known as the Harrelson Road Law.

Credited to Representative Fred Harrelson of St. Francis County, the new law expanded the Highway Commission to five members – four appointed by the Governor, plus the Commissioner of the Department of State Lands, Highways and Improvements who served as Chairman. The four appointees were to be selected on the basis of one from each of the State's four agricultural districts. The terms of the Commissioners were to remain staggered but were extended to four years each.

The most important aspect of the Harrelson Road Law was the creation of the first official State highway system under which all construction and maintenance activities on this system were to fall under the jurisdiction of the

Highway Commission. The Commission was granted authority under the Harrelson Road Law to expand the State highway system as it deemed necessary, however the Commission refrained from doing so at first, directing its attention instead to existing roads.

Uniform standards did not exist among the improvement districts so the Commission followed a course of action to get these neglected and worn out roads and bridges in the best condition possible with available funds. The Harrelson Road Law helped increase the Highway Department staff and the Commission saw fit to divide the State into six highway districts instead of five as had been the case. Following the

The Commission was granted authority under the HARRELSON ROAD LAW to expand the State highway system as it deemed necessary.

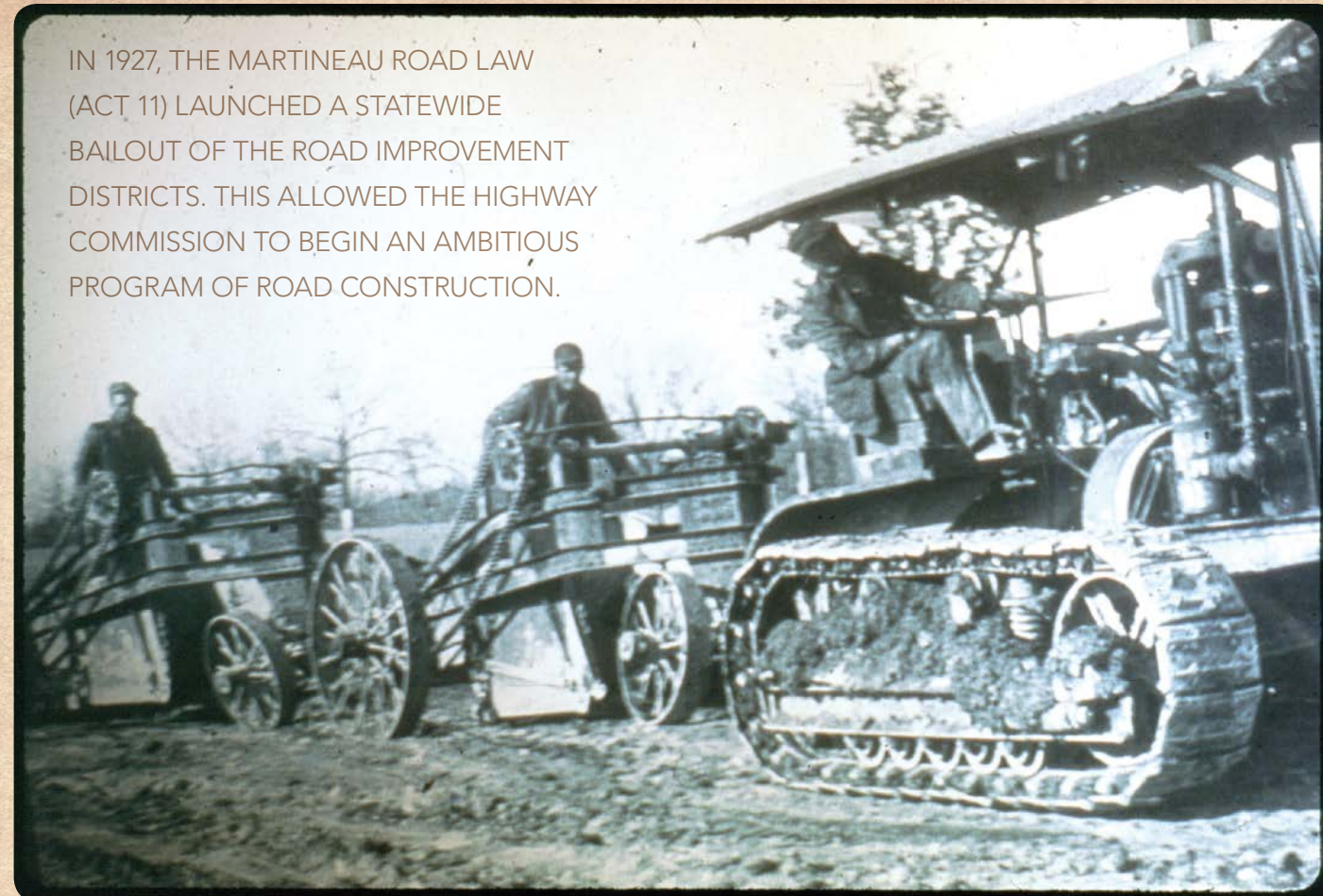
expansion of the State highway system in 1925, the Commission divided the State again, this time into 10 highway districts, each of which was headed by an engineer.

In 1927 the Martineau Road Law (Act 11) launched a statewide improvement district re-funding in addition to a State highway construction program financed by the sale of direct highway bonds. Under this act, the State assumed debt of the road improvement districts as well as \$7.5 million in toll bridge revenue bonds. The principal and interest totaled more than \$99 million. New construction financed by bond sales was authorized up to \$13 million per year for four years (a total of \$52 million). This allowed the Highway Commission to begin an ambitious program of road construction. (See *Flirtation With Flight* sidebar.)

A COMMISSION FINDS ITS FOOTING

With construction in full swing, the Commission was beginning to feel the strain of trying to shoulder a huge debt from the past while trying to manage the

IN 1927, THE MARTINEAU ROAD LAW (ACT 11) LAUNCHED A STATEWIDE BAILOUT OF THE ROAD IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS. THIS ALLOWED THE HIGHWAY COMMISSION TO BEGIN AN AMBITIOUS PROGRAM OF ROAD CONSTRUCTION.



largest construction program in the State's history. The efficiency of the Department was beginning to be questioned.

The 1929 General Assembly looked into problems relative to the administration of the Department. In doing so, it was decided to separate highways and the Highway Commission from the Department of State Lands, Highways and Improvements. Act 65 was the enabling legislation for these changes. It changed the makeup of the Commission to five members – all appointed by the Governor for staggered 10-year terms. One Commissioner was to be appointed from each of the State's four agricultural districts and one from the State at-large. The chairman of the Commission was to be selected by the Commissioners themselves.

Fiscal affairs were also considered disastrous and questions went unanswered regarding authority and control of the Highway Department. The Commission requested authority to hire certified public accountants to continuously audit books and records. In 1931, Act 166 created the

Highway Audit Commission to supplement the CPA audits and to continue the audits through 1933.

With the creation of a separate Highway Department, an independent Highway Commission to oversee it, a better system of checks and balances in place, and a record-setting construction program underway, the outlook for the future of transportation in Arkansas was favorable.

But matters beyond the realm of control of the Commission soon surfaced. The stock market crash of 1929 triggered a nationwide economic collapse. State revenues began a spectacular decline at a time when debt service payments became due. When the legislature convened in 1933, the first item on its agenda was the financial situation at the Highway Department.

It wasn't pretty. After reviewing a Highway Audit Commission report covering the years 1927 to 1932, the legislature passed Act 3 which abruptly ended the term of the five Highway Commissioners in office at the time.

Although the Audit Commission report uncovered some poor business decisions, no corruption was noted. Act 3 is generally thought to be the result of frustration brought about by the economic situation of the time.

The Governor was instructed to appoint five new members of the Commission selected from throughout the State at-large to serve staggered four-year terms. Almost immediately the Commission began to establish the principles that would support the development of a network of highways.

Act 3 also created the position of Director of Highways. This person was to be selected by the Highway Commission to actively administer and supervise the affairs of the Department, thus relieving the State Highway Engineer of those fiscal and administrative duties. Also, the number of highway districts was reduced from 10 to 7, and maintenance was made each district engineer's only function. All construction activities were now coordinated through the central office in Little Rock.

(continued on page 10)



Downtown - Bentonville, AR



Highway 65 - Leslie, AR



Main Street - Stuttgart, AR

AMENDMENT 20

While the legislative activities of 1933 may have helped streamline the operation of the Department and Commission, they did nothing to alleviate the real problem of finding a way to service bond debt to the satisfaction of the bondholders, the State and the citizens.

Act 11 of the special session of 1934 reclassified all outstanding obligations, setting interest rates, and establishing maturity schedules. After Act 11, the legislature took additional measures to prevent the State from being caught in this type of financial situation again. Constitutional Amendment 20 was up for a vote in the general election on November 6, 1934. The passage of this Amendment meant that bonds could only be issued by being approved by a vote of the people of Arkansas. But the great highway construction boom and bond assumption of the late 1920s was now costing the State dearly.

Once Amendment 20 was adopted, the most serious discussion taking place regarding the Highway Commission involved whether or not the existing five-member Commission, appointed by the Governor from the State at-large, was equally representing all areas of

the State. Act 318 of 1935 settled that discussion.

Under Act 318, the Governor was to appoint seven Highway Commissioners, one to represent each of the State's seven congressional districts of the time. The Commissioner's terms were to coincide with that of the appointing Governor. Also in 1935, Act 328 established that the Governor would appoint the Director of the Highway Department. This person was given full and direct control of the Department and was given powers equal to those of the Chairman of the Highway Commission. This Act also set the number of highway districts at 10.

The money situation at the Department was tight and with the amount of debt on the books, it would be tight for years to come. Construction and maintenance activities needed to be well planned in order to achieve the highest level of service at the lowest cost. The relatively quiet period of 1935 to 1936 allowed for an extensive study of existing conditions to aid in this planning process.

In the 1938 special session and the regular session of 1939, legislation was enacted to transfer debt from bridge improvement districts (which had survived the road improvement district

fiasco) to the State. Those bridges that were on State highways were added to the State highway system.

It was quite a situation... a federal report in 1939 showed that Arkansas' highway income per capita, per motor vehicle, and per mile of State highway compared favorably with the national average, but that Arkansas had a level of debt service 4.5 times the national average. Because of this, Arkansas expended barely over one-half the national average on administration, construction, and maintenance. The Department ranked last in expenditures per mile for highway construction, and seventh in debt service expenditures per mile.

From the standpoint of revenue raised, the State was meeting its responsibility. But from the standpoint of highway expenditures for capital outlay and maintenance, the State was failing to meet the requirements for highway service.

Truly the first 25 years did seem like a lot of trial and error, and yet progress was eventually made. Most of the road improvement districts were gone, however their legacy of debt would be with the Department for years to come. But the highway system was in place. And growing. ■

EDITOR'S NOTE: The next issue of Arkansas Highways Magazine will continue to look at the history of the Commission and the Department as we celebrate 100 years.

ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSIONS

The First 25 Years

FIRST COMMISSION (1913 AND 1914)

Reuben G. Dye¹..... Forrest City..... Chairman
 W.B. Owen²..... Texarkana..... Chairman
 C.W. Highfill..... Jonesboro..... Commissioner
 A.S. Killgore..... Magnolia..... Commissioner
 1 Term as Commissioner of State Lands, Highways and Improvements expired.
 2 Appointed as Commissioner of State Lands, Highways and Improvements.

SECOND COMMISSION (1915 AND 1916)

W.B. Owen..... Texarkana..... Chairman
 C.W. Highfill..... Jonesboro..... Commissioner
 Thomas Burress..... Jonesboro..... Commissioner
 A.S. Killgore..... Magnolia..... Commissioner
 Guy B. Tucker..... Little Rock..... Commissioner

THIRD COMMISSION (1917 AND 1918)

W.B. Owen..... Texarkana..... Chairman
 Thomas Burress..... Jonesboro..... Commissioner
 R.R. Thompson..... Eureka Springs..... Commissioner
 Guy B. Tucker..... Little Rock..... Commissioner
 J.S. Turner..... Ozark..... Commissioner

FOURTH COMMISSION (1919 AND 1920)

W.B. Owen..... Texarkana..... Chairman
 R.R. Thompson..... Eureka Springs..... Commissioner
 J.S. Turner..... Ozark..... Commissioner

FIFTH COMMISSION (1921 AND 1922)

H.R. Wilson..... Little Rock..... Chairman
 R.R. Thompson..... Eureka Springs..... Commissioner
 W.A. Falconer..... Fort Smith..... Commissioner
 J.R. Fordyce..... Hot Springs..... Commissioner
 J.S. Turner..... Ozark..... Commissioner

SIXTH COMMISSION (1923 AND 1924)

H.R. Wilson..... Little Rock..... Chairman
 J.S. Turner..... Ozark..... Commissioner
 J.R. Fordyce..... Hot Springs..... Commissioner
 R.H. Wolfe..... Tillar..... Commissioner
 W.Y. Foster..... Hope..... Commissioner
 T. Maxfield..... Batesville..... Commissioner

SEVENTH COMMISSION (1925 AND 1926)

H.R. Wilson..... Little Rock..... Chairman
 Ed Kendall..... Berryville..... Commissioner
 R.H. Wolfe..... Tillar..... Commissioner
 C.H. Moyer..... Little Rock..... Commissioner
 T. Maxfield..... Batesville..... Commissioner
 J.L. Williams..... Osceola..... Commissioner

EIGHTH COMMISSION (1927 AND 1928)

D.H. Blackwood..... Little Rock..... Chairman
 S.J. Wilson..... Montrose..... Commissioner
 J.S. Parks..... Fort Smith..... Commissioner
 Justin Matthews..... Little Rock..... Commissioner
 J.L. Williams..... Osceola..... Commissioner

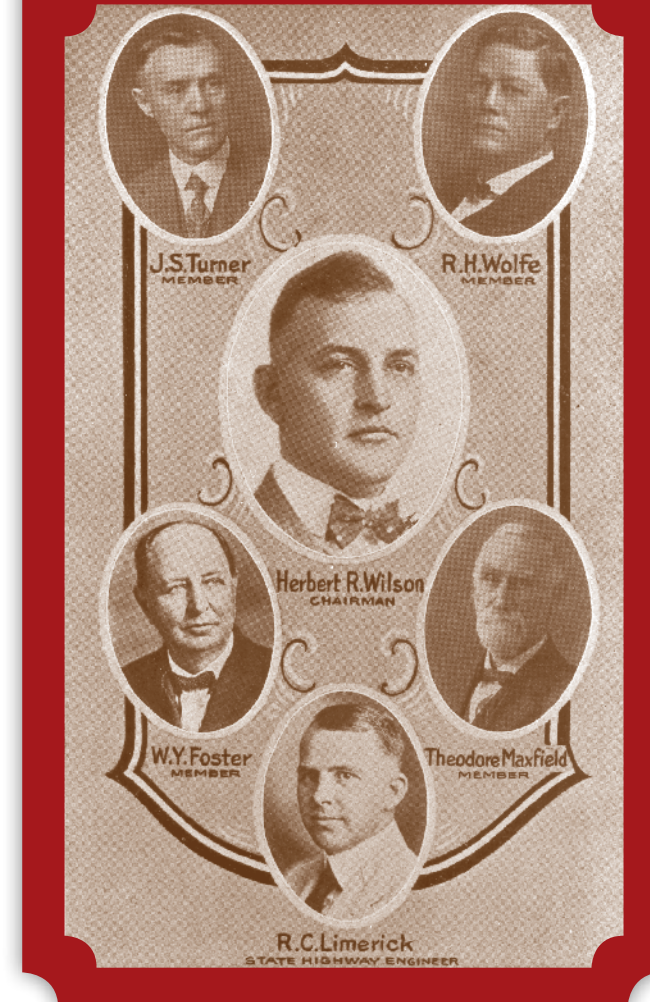
NINTH COMMISSION (1929 AND 1930)

D.H. Blackwood..... Little Rock..... Chairman
 Justin Matthews..... Little Rock..... Commissioner
 J.S. Parks..... Fort Smith..... Commissioner
 J.L. Williams..... Osceola..... Commissioner
 S.J. Wilson..... Montrose..... Commissioner

TENTH COMMISSION (1931 AND 1932)

D.H. Blackwood..... Little Rock..... Chairman
 Justin Matthews..... Little Rock..... Commissioner
 John T. Burkett..... Camden..... Commissioner
 J.S. Parks..... Fort Smith..... Commissioner
 J.L. Williams..... Osceola..... Commissioner
 S.J. Wilson..... Montrose..... Commissioner

THE SIXTH HIGHWAY COMMISSION - 1923 AND 1924



ELEVENTH COMMISSION (1933 AND 1934)

J.S. Cargile..... Arkadelphia..... Chairman
 Dave Block..... Wynne..... Commissioner
 L.A. Black..... DeWitt..... Commissioner
 B.B. Johnston..... Fort Smith..... Commissioner
 Charles H. Murphy..... El Dorado..... Commissioner

TWELFTH COMMISSION (1935 AND 1936)

J.S. Cargile..... Arkadelphia..... Chairman
 Dave Block..... Wynne..... Commissioner
 L.A. Black..... DeWitt..... Commissioner
 B.B. Johnston..... Fort Smith..... Commissioner
 Charles H. Murphy..... El Dorado..... Commissioner
 Dr. F.W. Cox..... Pocahontas..... Commissioner
 E.C. Porter..... Clarksville..... Commissioner
 A.L. Smith..... Siloam Springs..... Commissioner

THIRTEENTH COMMISSION (1937 AND 1938)

J.H. Alphin..... El Dorado..... Chairman
 Paul W. Sheridan..... Fort Smith..... Commissioner
 A.G. Patterson..... Jonesboro..... Commissioner
 James F. King..... Pocahontas..... Commissioner
 George Appleby..... Fayetteville..... Commissioner
 Dr. H.E. Mobley..... Morrilton..... Commissioner
 Hugh B. Benton..... Fordyce..... Commissioner
 John H. Vogel..... El Dorado..... Commissioner

The Early Years
**SIGNIFICANT
MILESTONES**

- ▶ **1907** The **ARNOLD ROAD BILL** is passed, giving counties the authority to establish road improvement districts.
- ▶ **1911** **ACT 234** allows the appointment of county highway engineers to directly supervise all public roads in that county.
- ▶ **1913** **ACT 302** establishes the State Highway Commission and the State Highway Department as an affiliate of the Department of State Lands. As State Land Commissioner, Rueben Dye of Forrest City becomes the first chairman of the Highway Commission. E.A. Kingsley is named the first State Highway Engineer.
- ▶ **1913** **ACT 302** establishes the first Highway Improvement Fund through the collection of a \$10 annual license fee on motor vehicles.
- ▶ **1917** **ACT 105** designates certain roads in Arkansas as "state roads" and creates an advisory board as a branch of the Highway Commission consisting of the State Highway Engineer, the professor of civil engineering at the University of Arkansas, and one member appointed by the Governor.
- ▶ **1921** The Highway Commission divides the State into **FIVE HIGHWAY DISTRICTS**, each headed by an engineer. Districts are headquartered in Forrest City, Fayetteville, Hope, Pine Bluff and Little Rock.
- ▶ **1923** A small group of legislators successfully blocks all constructive highway legislation proposed by the Highway Commission, including a new appropriations bill for the Department. At midnight on June 30, existing appropriations for the Highway Department ended and **THE AGENCY CLOSED DOWN**.
- ▶ **1923** The **HARRELSON ROAD LAW** (Act 5 of a special session) provides necessary appropriations and expands the Highway Commission to five members – four appointed by the governor, plus the Commissioner of the Department (who served as chairman). The four appointees were to be selected on the basis of one from each of the State's four agricultural districts. Terms remained staggered but extended to four years each.

- ▶ **1923** The **HARRELSON ROAD LAW** creates the first official State highway system under which all construction and maintenance activities fall under the jurisdiction of the Highway Commission.
- ▶ **1927** The **MARTINEAU ROAD LAW** (Act 11) launches a statewide bailout of the road improvement districts as the State assumed debt of nearly \$100 million while authorizing an additional \$52 million in bond sales over the next four years.
- ▶ **1929** **ACT 65** separates the Highway Commission and the Highway Department from the Department of State Lands and changes the makeup of the Commission to five members, all of which are appointed by the Governor for staggered 10-year terms. One Commissioner was to be appointed from each of the State's four agricultural districts and one from the State at-large. The Chairman was to be selected by the Commissioners themselves.
- ▶ **1931** **ACT 166** creates the Highway Audit Commission
- ▶ **1933** **ACT 3** abruptly ends the term of the five Highway Commissioners in office at the time and instructs the Governor to appoint five new members selected from throughout the State at-large to serve staggered four-year terms.
- ▶ **1933** **ACT 3** creates the position of Director of Highways to be selected by the Highway Commission and reduces the number of highway districts from 10 to 7.
- ▶ **1934** **CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT 20** is passed by a vote in the general election that requires voter approval for bond issues.
- ▶ **1935** **ACT 318** instructs the Governor to appoint seven Highway Commissioners, one to represent each of the State's seven congressional districts of the time. The Commissioner's terms were to coincide with that of the appointing Governor.
- ▶ **1935** **ACT 328** establishes that the Governor would appoint the Director of the Highway Department, who was given full and direct control of the Department, and was given powers equal to those of the chairman of the Highway Commission. The number of highway districts is increased to 10.



100 YEARS
SERVING ARKANSAS
SINCE 1913
ARKANSAS STATE
HIGHWAY COMMISSION

ROBERT S. MOORE, JR. NAMED NEW HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER

Robert S. Moore, Jr. speaks at the press conference announcing his appointment to the Commission.



L to R: Commission Chairman John Ed Regenold, Commissioner Tom Schueck, Commissioner Robert S. Moore, Jr., Commission Vice Chairman John Burkhalter, Director Scott E. Bennett, and Commissioner Dick Trammel

Robert S. Moore, Jr., a former three-term member of the Arkansas House of Representatives, has been named a new member of the Arkansas State Highway Commission. Moore, of Arkansas City, was selected for the Commission by Governor Mike Beebe. Governor Beebe made the announcement at the State Capitol in Little Rock on January 17th.

Moore has represented the 12th District since 2007 and recently served as Speaker of the House.

Moore currently works as Owner/Operator of Moore Farms. He had his own private law practice from 1981-1985.

"As Speaker of the House of Representatives, Robert was an outspoken and successful advocate for improving Arkansas highways and our State as a whole," Beebe said. "He will continue that work on the Commission while providing a strong voice to represent South Arkansas."

In his remarks, Beebe mentioned

Moore's support of Issue #1, the constitutional amendment that established a ten-year half-cent increase in the sales tax that voters approved in November that will help finance a \$1.8 billion highway improvement program.

"He has always been an infrastructure, transportation person," Governor Beebe added.

Moore said his philosophy is bringing good roads to rural areas and more roads to congested areas.

"Everybody should have reasonable access to having good, safe roads to travel on," Moore commented.

"With the increasing efficiency of our vehicles, fewer miles traveled and our excise tax based on consumption which is going down, our revenues are naturally coming down," Moore added. "Our biggest challenge is going to be to look for those innovative ways to meet our future funding needs."

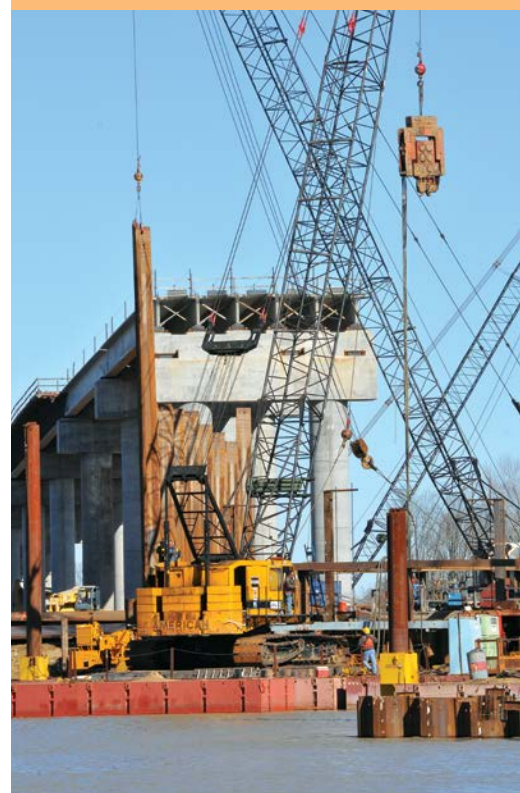
Moore grew up in southeast Arkansas

and graduated from Ouachita Baptist University. After joining the U.S. Army and serving in Vietnam, Moore returned home to earn his law degree and went to work for Attorney General Jim Guy Tucker. In 1977, Governor David Pryor appointed him as Chairman of the Arkansas Transportation Commission. He would serve on the staff of Governor Bill Clinton and served two decades as Director of the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board. Moore was elected to the Arkansas House of Representatives in 2006.

Moore is a member of the American Legion, Arkansas City Baptist Church, the Arkansas City Chamber of Commerce, Vice Chairman of the Desha County Historic Preservation Society, and Vice Chairman of the John H. Johnson Cultural and Entrepreneurial Center Board.

Moore replaces Madison Murphy whose ten-year term on the Commission ended in January. Moore's appointment expires in January of 2023. ■

CONSTRUCTION



CORNER

Three projects are underway in Monroe County that are constructing a new White River Bridge on Highway 79 at Clarendon.

The first project is building one mile of roadway on the eastern side of the White River as well as the main river channel span. It was awarded to Jensen Construction Company of Des Moines, Iowa, for \$31.4 million in July of 2010. This portion of the new bridge should be completed in the summer of 2014.

Another project is constructing 1.3 miles of roadway for the new bridge on the west side of the river. It was awarded to Hill Brothers Construction Company, Inc. of Falkner, Mississippi, for \$29.3 million in November of 2010. This stage of construction is approximately 50 percent finished and should be completed in the spring of 2014.

A third project for the new bridge is constructing approximately two miles of roadway and two bridges on new location southwest of Clarendon. The project, awarded to Hill Brothers Construction Company, Inc. for \$34.8 million, should be completed this summer. ■

DEPARTMENT HOLDS LARGEST BID OPENING EVER

The Arkansas Highway Commission held a record-setting bid opening on November 28th of last year in Little Rock. Among the projects were three that signaled the beginning of the new Interstate Rehabilitation Program and an increase in road construction over the next several years.

Though bids were opened on just 14 projects, the magnitude of the new rehabilitation program was reflected in the total bids of \$230.5 million, a new record for the Department. The previous record of \$182.7 million was reached in February of 2002 during the Department's first Interstate Rehabilitation Program.

In addition to being the largest bid opening ever, included in the letting was the largest single contract ever awarded by the Commission, that being a bid of \$78.8 million for improvements to Interstate 540 in Fort Smith. The job was awarded to Kiewit Infrastructure South Company. The work will include resurfacing seven miles of Interstate, rebuilding nine bridges and making improvements to four others.

"This project is a historic, monumental opportunity for us to make some vast improvements to Interstate 540, from Highway 22 to the interchange with Interstate 40," stated Emanuel Banks, Assistant Chief Engineer for Operations at a news conference held January 7th in Fort Smith.

The Interstate 540 project is one of the first three contracts let under the 2011 Interstate Rehabilitation Program.

The other two are on Interstate 530 near Hensley and on Interstate 40 near Russellville.

Voters approved the new \$575 million rehabilitation program in November 2011. The three projects opened in November are the first of 75 that will improve 455 miles of Interstate miles across the State.

THOUGH BIDS WERE OPENED ON JUST 14 PROJECTS, THE MAGNITUDE OF THE NEW REHABILITATION PROGRAM WAS REFLECTED IN THE TOTAL BIDS OF **\$230.5 MILLION**, A NEW RECORD FOR THE DEPARTMENT.

In addition to the three Interstate jobs, bids were opened on construction of a new bridge on Highway 63 over the Black River in Lawrence County. The project is of particular interest to truckers traveling in northeast Arkansas. The Department lowered the weight limit on the existing bridge in early 2011 due to the bridge's structural rating. As a result, truck traffic through the area has been affected as truckers sought alternate routes. Completion of the bridge is scheduled for the summer of 2015. ■



SAFETY MATTERS

Our country's highways are busier now than they have ever been. A Federal Highway Administration study indicates that there are approximately 254 million passenger vehicles on our roadways. Yet at the same time, our highways are also safer than they have ever been. The traffic fatality rate in 2010 was 1.73 per 100 motor vehicle miles. Looking back 40 years to 1970 when the fatality rate was 5.45, the latest numbers and the downward trend are impressive.

The trend toward safer highways can be attributed to three things: driver awareness, vehicle technology, and roadway enhancements.

Driver awareness is better today due to promotional campaigns that educate drivers to the dangers of driving while texting or driving while on a cell phone. Campaigns also remind drivers to travel safely through construction zones. Audible GPS navigation systems help drivers keep their eyes on the road.

Advances in technology have also made our highways safer. Vehicle improvements such as anti-lock brakes, seat belts, airbags and blind spot detection systems have contributed to lowering both accident and fatality rates.

The third attribute is roadway enhancements. This is one area where the AHTD and other departments of transportation have had a major hand in making improvements. Today we see more safety enhancements such as guardrails, passing lanes, improved median barriers, and center and left-hand turn lanes.

Over the next year, *Arkansas Highways Magazine* is going to feature a series of articles on measures underway to improve safety on our highways. In this issue, we feature an article on the Department's new cable median barrier policy. Upcoming articles focusing on safety will spotlight the new Strategic Highway Safety Plan, eCrash and the Roadway Departure Implementation Plan. All are programs that will advance efforts to make our country's highways the safest they can be.





DEPARTMENT IMPLEMENTS POLICY FOR USE OF **CABLE MEDIAN BARRIERS**

BY DAVID NILLES

It is projected that cable median barriers, like the ones shown here, will save the lives of at least 10 people per year statewide once installed.



Dear AHTD,

My name is Jennifer Tucker. I want you to know that my 17-year-old son was involved in an accident on August 13, 2012, and if it would not have been for the cables in the median on Interstate 540, the outcome could have been tragic — not only for him but possibly others as well. The accident happened around 9:30 p.m. just South of the Wagon Wheel exit in the Northbound lanes. My son, Kanten, was driving a Chevy Silverado truck and all eyewitnesses watched an 18-wheeler driving erratically at a high rate of speed cut Kanten off. This forced him into the median flipping his truck. The cables in the median stopped him from crossing into oncoming traffic. Between his seatbelt and the cables the law enforcement said that not only his life but others lives were probably saved as well. The witnesses did not get a tag number of the semi that caused the accident, and despite the efforts of law enforcement they were unable to locate the driver. We carry liability insurance but his truck is a total loss. However, the most important issue is that his life was saved. I want to personally thank you and everyone that is involved in taking the time and effort to make our roads and community a safer place. My son is here today because of your efforts.

Our Sincere Thanks,
Jennifer Tucker and Kanten Pullen

The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department has adopted a new cable median barrier policy. Cable median barriers, designed to reduce the chances of vehicles crossing the median into oncoming traffic, will be installed on about 400 miles of Arkansas' freeways and expressways over the next three years, bringing our statewide total to over 500 miles.

"Motorists can expect to see considerably more cable median barriers being installed across the State beginning this year," stated AHTD Director Scott Bennett. "These projects are being funded with Federal-aid Safety funds at a cost of around \$75 million."

Bids to install the first 92 miles of cable barriers were received at the Department's letting in November of last year.

Cable median barriers have been identified in the Arkansas Strategic Highway Safety Plan as a strategy to address roadway departure crashes, which account for approximately

60 percent of all roadway fatalities in Arkansas. Head-on crashes account for approximately 40 percent of all roadway departure fatalities, or about 25 percent of all roadway fatalities. Addressing roadway departure crashes, particularly head-on collisions, is a high priority for the AHTD. It is projected that cable median barriers will save the lives of at least 10 people per year statewide once installed. Cable median barriers take us one step closer Toward Zero Deaths, a national strategy led by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO).

A before and after safety analysis of two projects that installed cable median barriers along Interstate 40 and Interstate 55 in Arkansas has revealed a significant reduction in fatal median crossover crashes. The Interstate 40 project location, located between Biscoe and Brinkley, had 10 fatal crashes in the 36 months before a cable median barrier was installed. In the 36 months after installation,

the number of fatal crashes at the location dropped to zero. On Interstate 55, the number of fatal crashes dropped from two to zero after installation of a cable barrier. This substantiates multiple studies nationwide that report similar results.

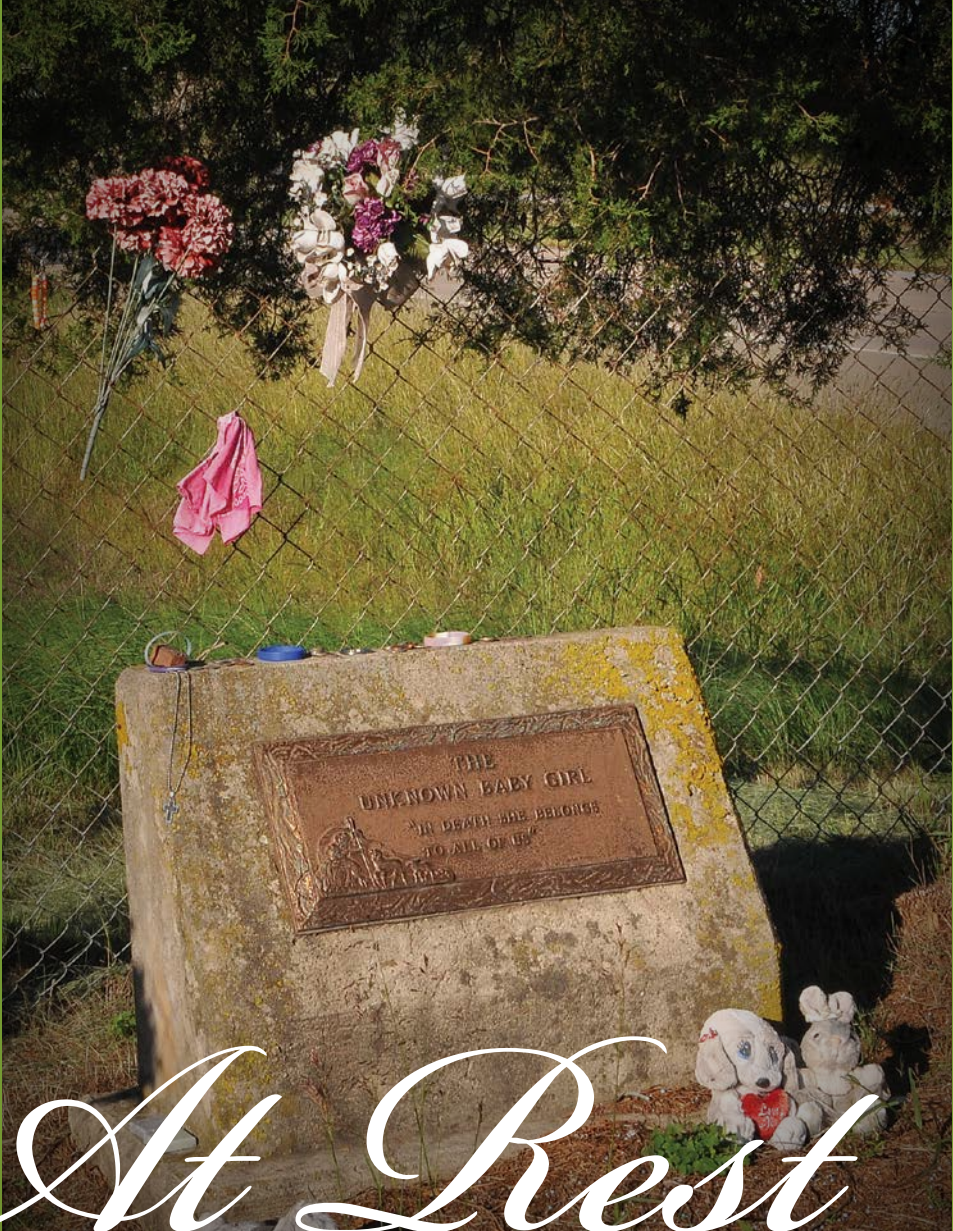
"Protecting motorists from a vehicle crossing the median is a high priority for the Department in our mission to provide safe highways," Bennett adds. "It has been determined that cable median barriers are a highly cost-effective way to reduce the number and severity of median crossover crashes. The objective of this new program is to enhance safety and provide additional protection on our highways

through the systematic use of cable median barriers on many Arkansas highways."

Cable median barriers are designed to redirect vehicles striking either side of the barrier. They also require relatively little maintenance to restore its integrity and performance once struck by a vehicle.

At the close of 2012, the AHTD had cable median barriers in place on 37 miles of Arkansas highways. An additional 68 miles were under construction. With the additional 400 miles planned, Arkansas will have over 500 miles of cable barrier in place by the end of 2016. ■

EDITOR'S NOTE: For a personal story on the effectiveness of cable median barriers, please see the sidebar on this page.



At Rest

ALONG HIGHWAY 67

BY DAVID NILLES

Over 20,000 vehicles pass by the area on Highway 67 every day, but only a small percentage know she is there. Nestled under a cedar tree between the northbound travel lanes and the Highway 157 northbound entrance ramp to Highway 67 at Judsonia lies a grave, the grave of “The Unknown Baby Girl.”

Her gravesite lies on AHTD right of way. It is surrounded by a chain link fence erected by the Department and AHTD crews maintain the grass around the site.

A visit to the site will reveal a grave monument, but there are no dates or names written on it. Just the inscription:

*“The Unknown Baby Girl.
In death she belongs to all of us.”*

Not very many people know the story of who she is. What is known, according to White County Historical Society Records, is the child was about two years old when she died around 1890 or 1891.



One story claims a wagon train went through the area with a very sick child. The little girl passed away and was buried on location along their way. Another story says a party of Native Americans came through with an ill child and buried the girl there when she passed away.

Neither of those stories, however, seems to be accurate. Local records and longtime residents who live in the area south of Judsonia indicate she was the daughter of a family of strawberry pickers that lived in an old house on the property in the early 1890s. The child died after a fall from her highchair. It is believed that she had a table knife or fork in her hand and landed on it when she fell to the floor. Too poor to bury the child in Evergreen Cemetery in Judsonia, neighbors and friends built a casket and buried her under a cedar tree on the family property. The tree still stands over the grave right alongside the Highway 67 entrance ramp.

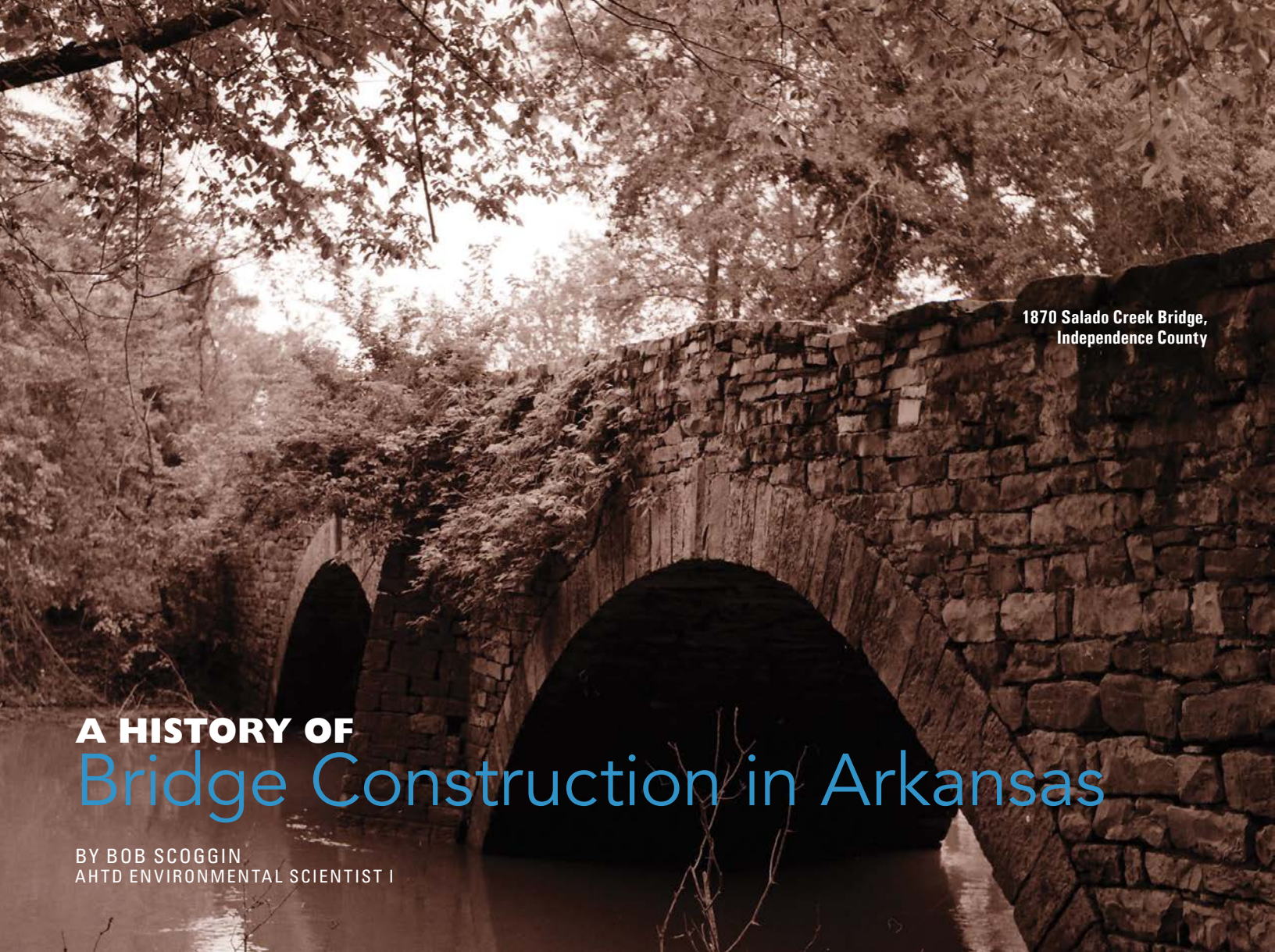
When survey plans began being made to construct Highway 67 in the area in 1965, local residents approached the AHTD with information about the grave. Department staff made the decision to leave the grave as it is and were careful to successfully design the roadway in the area around the girl’s resting place without disturbing the site.

As the inscription on her grave marker says, the girl does “belong to all of us”. That is evident by the number of items visitors have placed around the grave. On the day reporter David Nilles and crew visited, there were stuffed animals, an angel figurine, a cross on a chain and a poem placed on the trunk of the cedar tree. On top of the grave monument were coins and several rubber wristbands.

Traditionally, coins are left on grave markers as a sign that the deceased was well-loved and respected. They are markers that this grave has been visited, that guests have been present to pay respects. Coins were seen on graves long before people began leaving flowers, which is a relatively recent practice (a few hundred years old).

Standing beside the grave site, one can glance around at the wooded area across from the entrance ramp and imagine what it was once like before the highway and the hustle and bustle of traffic came through the area. Though long gone, one can’t help but wonder where the house once stood. Now, over one hundred years later, AHTD crews in District Five and occasional visitors take time to remember the young girl that was laid to rest in the area long before Highway 67 came through. ■





1870 Salado Creek Bridge,
Independence County

A HISTORY OF Bridge Construction in Arkansas

BY BOB SCOGGIN
AHTD ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTIST I

At the time Arkansas became a territory many years ago, most water crossings in the State were 'fords'. In other words, when travelers came to a body of water such as a small river or stream, they would look for the shallowest place and cross there. Generally, these fords were adequate for the small number of early travelers in the territory. But as the population of the State slowly grew and a system of military roads was developed, it became necessary to bridge larger bodies of water to make travel faster and easier for the military as well as the local population.

The first attempts at bridge building in Arkansas were by private individuals. These individuals would apply for a franchise to build a toll bridge, which was then granted by the territorial legislature. These franchises allowed a private individual to construct a bridge on a road and charge a toll to cross for a specified number of years, generally twenty. The earliest franchise was granted in 1823 to Samuel McHenry to construct a toll bridge over White Oak Bayou in Pulaski County; although

a franchise was granted by the territorial legislature, there is no evidence to suggest the bridge was ever built.

A year after Arkansas became a state; the legislature passed Act 49 of 1837. It empowered the county courts to grant franchises to private individuals to build toll bridges over any body of water on a public road. A public road was defined as a road built under the authority of a county court. Although the legislature passed the responsibility of bridges on public roads to the county courts, it kept for itself the responsibility for granting bridge franchises on military and post roads. It is unknown how many bridges were built under county franchise, but at least twenty-three toll bridge franchises were granted on military and post roads by the State legislature from 1824 to 1868.

Although private individuals were granted the largest number of franchises, five bridge companies were granted franchises: the Little Rock Bridge Company and the Van Buren Bridge Company in 1844; the Belle Point Bridge and Ferry Company, Pulaski County Bridge Company, and a new Little Rock Bridge Company



Pontoon Bridge
Highway 7, Pope County



Old Covered Bridge - Route 79 - S.W. of Camden



Toll Bridge
Highway 82, Union County

in 1866. Of these bridge companies, only the Little Rock Bridge Company is known to have constructed a bridge.

The first documented franchise bridge was the Washita Bridge built over the Ouachita River at Rockport (Hot Spring County). The Washita Bridge was built by the Little Rock Bridge Company in 1846. The bridge was described as "a lattice type bridge built of wood." The description of the bridge indicates it was a covered bridge of the Town Lattice truss design. The Washita Bridge was one of the first documented covered bridges in the State. Unfortunately, it was washed away in a flood the year after its construction.

It is unknown how many covered bridges were built in Arkansas, but references to three others have been found in historic documents: the Spadra Creek Bridge in Clarksville (Johnson County), a covered bridge on Highway 10 west of Little Rock (Pulaski County), and the Two Bayou Bridge south of Camden (Ouachita County).

From the 1820s through the 1860s, only three types of bridges were known to have been constructed in Arkansas. The first is the wooden trestle bridge, which was proposed for the majority of the individual-franchise toll bridges. The second was the wooden covered bridge, and the third was the masonry arch bridge.

ALTHOUGH BRIDGES BUILT TODAY ARE TO NATIONAL STANDARDS, A LARGE NUMBER OF BRIDGES BUILT BEFORE THESE STANDARDS APPLIED STILL EXIST. ABOUT TWENTY BRIDGES STILL STAND IN ARKANSAS THAT WERE BUILT BEFORE 1913.

By 1863, the Civil War was in full swing, and road and bridge construction in Arkansas had come to a stop. The only road work being carried out was by the Union and Confederate armies, and this was by necessity.

During Reconstruction, Arkansas' leaders saw the need to rebuild the State's infrastructure, so as part of creating a new constitution, the laws governing the construction of roads and bridges were rewritten to clarify responsibilities. The new laws defined all roads in Arkansas, including military and post roads, as public highways, with county courts having responsibility over them. As part of this, in 1873, the county courts were given the authority to organize bridge improvement districts that could issue bonds to pay for the construction of a bridge and collect tolls to pay off the

bonds. A few years later, in 1875, Act 126 defined the responsibilities and processes of bridge construction for the county courts.

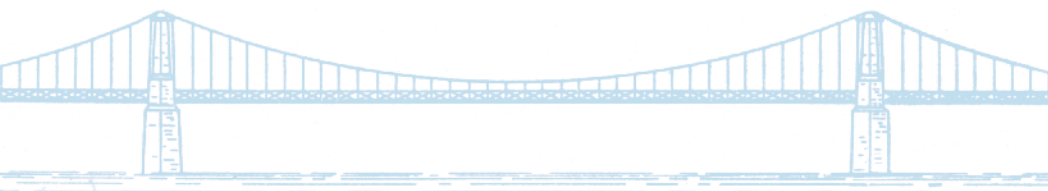
Act 126 divided bridges into three classes: bridges of the first class were those over sixty feet in length; bridges of the second class were those not less than thirty feet and not more than sixty feet; and bridges of the third class were all those less than thirty feet.

Bridges of the first class were to be built at the expense of the county, and their location and design were to be determined by a commission selected by the county judge. After the location and design of the bridge were adopted by the county court, bids to build the bridge would be received.

Bridges of the second class were to be built by the road district overseers in the counties. When such overseers had determined the appropriate location for a bridge, they warned the local men that they would have to help build the bridge or pay a stiff fine. The county court was to pay for the lumber for the floor and banisters. If the county court determined that a bridge of the second class must be built, they were to follow the laws regarding the construction of first class bridges.

Bridges of the third class were to be constructed by the overseer without

(continued on page 24)



expense to the county, except for lumber for the decks of bridges over ten feet in length.

Two important things came out of this legislation: county courts now had the authority to construct bridges on all public roads when necessary and bridge construction projects were to be put out for bid.

These acts coincided with the emergence of bridge salesmen across the country, who worked on behalf of the new bridge-building companies. Numerous regional and national bridge-building companies sent salesmen to Arkansas to ply their trade. These salesmen would display brochures that showed examples of bridge companies' prefabricated metal truss bridges that could be built to suit the water crossing. The bridge companies had recently realized that highway bridges were another market in addition to the railroads that could be exploited to sell the new metal truss bridges.

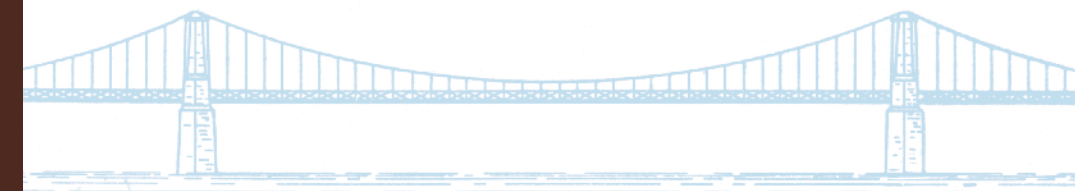
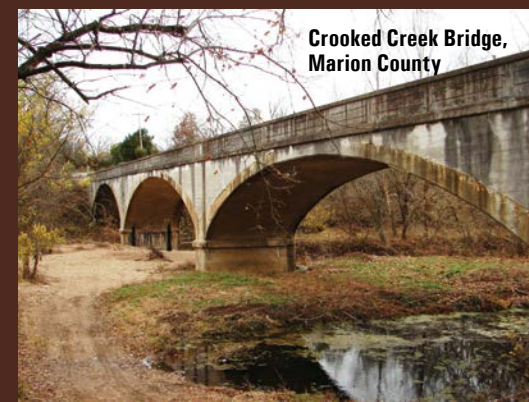
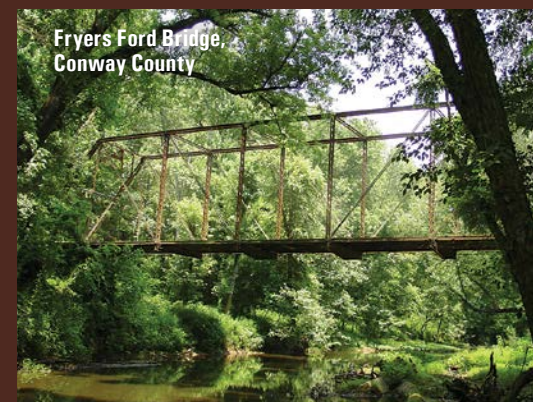
For the first time, counties were offered a choice of what type of bridge to build, who would build it, and at what price. Some of the bridges built in Arkansas were by companies from as far north as Wisconsin and as far east as Virginia, although the majority of the bridges were built by regional bridge companies from states such as Missouri, Illinois, and Ohio.

Some examples of the companies that built bridges during this period were the Stupp Brothers Bridge and Iron Company in St. Louis, Missouri, and the King Iron Bridge and Manufacturing Company in Cleveland, Ohio.

For the next fifty-one years, from 1873 to 1924, the counties contracted with the bridge-building companies to construct prefabricated bridges or bridges that the company designed specifically for their waterway. However, as early as 1916, these bridges were becoming obsolete because they could not handle the weight and number of automobiles crossing them.

From 1914 through 1935, many concrete arch bridges were built around the State by companies like the Luton Bridge Company. They were seen as alternatives to the willowy metal truss bridges produced in the days before automobile traffic. The rising cost of the concrete used to construct these bridges, some as large as the Broadway Bridge in Little Rock over the Arkansas River, quickly became too high, and other bridge designs were developed by the early Highway Department that were more cost effective.

In 1913, the Arkansas Highway Commission was created and, over the next ten years, became responsible for the creation of a State highway system, including the planning and design of all roads and bridges in the State. By 1919, the Commission had set standards for the types of bridges constructed in the State, and in 1924, when the State Highway Department was officially created; all design matters for bridge construction and contractor selection were placed in their hands. This was very helpful for the State after the Flood of 1927. During the flood, many miles of roads were washed away, along with many of the old metal bridges. In 1927,



the Commission was authorized by the legislature to issue State highway bridge bonds to raise funds to construct and operate toll bridges on the State highway system. Nine huge metal truss bridges were constructed across the State at towns like Newport, whose bridge was over the White River, and Fulton, whose bridge was over the Red River. These bridges were to be toll bridges until the bonds were paid off.

In 1929, the legislature authorized the State Highway Department to acquire all privately owned bridges in the State, and by 1938, when the legislature declared all debt-free bridges to be toll free, the State Highway Department was in control of the design and construction of all bridges in Arkansas. This change in bridge design oversight allowed the State to standardize all bridge construction. The counties were no longer able to select from the numerous bridge builders or their designs.

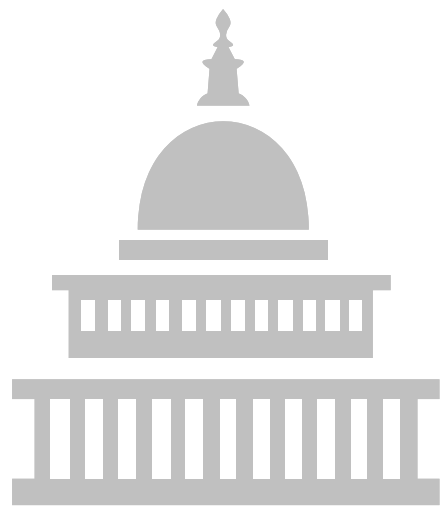
This change was happening all over the country due to the federal government's interest in the field of transportation planning and funding in 1916. These changes, along with financial factors, contributed to the decline of the old bridge-building companies that offered their own prefabricated bridges. But a new breed of bridge construction company was popping up that would take the standardized plans of the highway departments and cheaply construct the bridges. The change in control of design and the awarding of bridge construction contracts, along with the

proliferation of bridge construction companies created specifically to use standard designs, hastened the coming of national bridge construction standards in 1956 with the beginnings of the Interstate highway system.

From 1956 on, the federal government began to apply national standards for bridge design. This was an obvious necessity for Interstate bridges, which had to be able to carry the same loads across the entire country. By the early 1960s, most bridges constructed in Arkansas were built from national bridge standards. Today, all bridges in the United States are built from national bridge standards.

Although bridges built today are to national standards, a large number of bridges built before these standards applied still exist. About twenty bridges still stand in Arkansas that were built before 1913. Three of these bridges were built in the nineteenth century. The oldest bridge in the State is the Springfield-Des Arc Bridge over Cadron Creek on the Faulkner-Conway county line. The Springfield-Des Arc Bridge was built in 1874 and was in use until 1987. Another nineteenth-century bridge was the Fryer's Ford Bridge over Point Remove Creek in Conway County. The Fryer's Ford Bridge was built in 1890 and was still in use as a vehicular bridge until it collapsed in 2011.

Today, the AHTD is responsible for maintenance, inspections and load analyses for 7,263 State-owned bridges as well as inspections and load analyses of 4,297 county-owned bridges and 974 city-owned bridges. ■



FRESHMEN LEGISLATORS LEARN THE ROPES OF **THE ROAD**

The 89th General Assembly gathered at the State Capitol in January to begin another Legislative Session. Among those participating on the floor are 56 new freshman legislators.

Approximately 20 of those new faces gathered at the Arkansas State Highway & Transportation Department Central Office in Little Rock on January 8th for a Freshman Legislators Orientation. Those attending were given an inside look at the structure of the Department and how it operates.

"We invited them in to provide them with information that will prove useful in the years ahead as they consider the subject of highway funding," stated AHTD Director Scott Bennett.

The new legislators were greeted on arrival by members of the Arkansas Highway Commission, numerous members of the AHTD staff and Sandra Otto from the Arkansas Division of the Federal Highway Administration.

Commission Chairman John Ed Regenold welcomed the group and congratulated them on their recent election victories. He then introduced Director Bennett.

Bennett explained the structure of the Department and described many of the Department's programs before beginning a discussion of Department revenue sources and expenditures.

He shared one of the Department's largest challenges when it comes to new highway construction and improvements... allocating funding to where it is needed the most.



Representative David Kizzia

"We have \$23 billion in needs statewide, yet we only have \$4 billion to cover those needs," stated Bennett. "That leaves us with a \$19 billion shortfall.

Bennett pointed out that revenue coming to the Department has remained relatively flat over the years.

"The majority of funding to the Highway and Transportation Department comes from the tax on motor fuel," Bennett added. "Motorists today aren't driving as much as they did years ago and our cars have become more fuel efficient so we are consuming less and that translates into revenue shortages

relative to our construction needs. As a result of this funding equation, there has been little or no growth in current sources of State highway revenue."

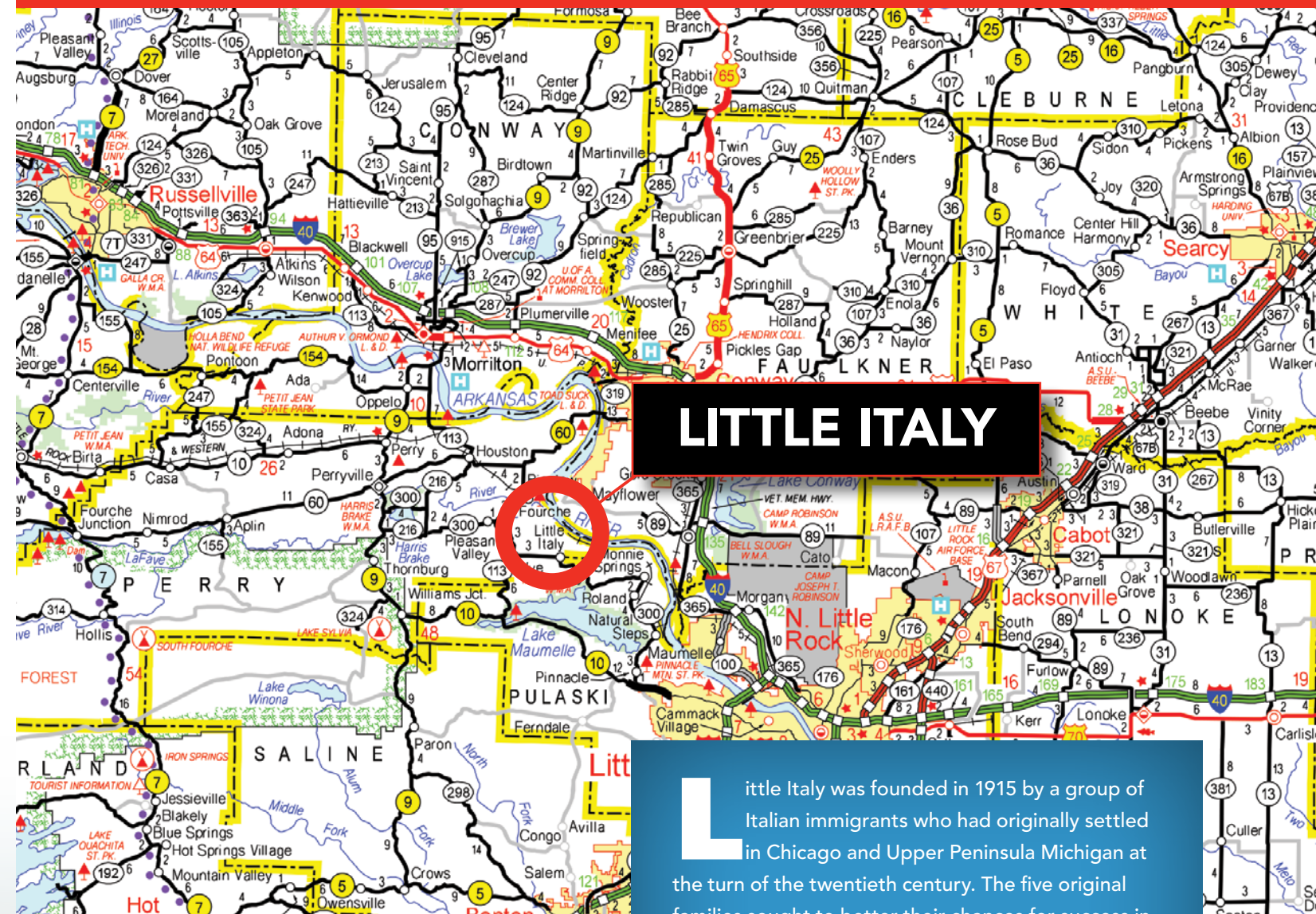
Bennett also addressed the Department's new State Aid City Streets program. He concluded with an assessment of the Department's progress in meeting the recommendations that were made to the AHTD by the Blue Ribbon Committee on Highway Finance.

Commissioner Madison Murphy closed the meeting wishing the new legislators well and asked them to keep in mind that there are four areas corporations consider when establishing themselves in a new community.

"Companies consider education, relative tax rates, the quality of life, and infrastructure," Murphy commented. "Success in those four areas translates into success for the entire community and State." ■

ON THE MAP

SPENDING TIME WITH AN ARKANSAS HIGHWAY MAP CAN BE INTERESTING. THE FOLLOWING IS THE NAME OF AN ACTUAL TOWN IN ARKANSAS! HAVE YOU EVER VISITED HERE?



LITTLE ITALY

Little Italy was founded in 1915 by a group of Italian immigrants who had originally settled in Chicago and Upper Peninsula Michigan at the turn of the twentieth century. The five original families sought to better their chances for success in America by moving from their cramped tenements and dangerous factory jobs to a more agricultural setting. The Italians established vineyards in the foothills of the Ouachita Mountains. They named the town Alta Villa and slowly began to clear the rocky soil to enable the establishment of the local wine industry. Within the next decade, ten more families joined the village, bringing the number of families to fifteen. It was around this time that the name was changed to Little Italy to accommodate the growing town as it strived to become more Americanized. ■

The Delta Cultural Center in Helena-West Helena features the "Delta Sounds" music exhibit. It is here you can learn about the blues music that is at the heart of this east Arkansas town.



WEEKEND ROAD TRIP:



BY DAVID NILLES

The arrival of spring means warmer weather and opportunities for weekend road trips abound. This month we're traveling down Highway 49 to the eastern border of Arkansas and the town of Helena-West Helena.

Half the fun of traveling to any destination is the journey getting there. And for a trip to Helena-West Helena, that means jumping off of Interstate 40 at Brinkley and rolling south on Highway 49. Before leaving Brinkley, the first stop on the trip agenda should be the **Central Delta Depot & Museum**. The museum is an initiative of the Central Delta Historical Society, which was organized in the 1990s to preserve the history and heritage of the central delta area. The museum's scope covers all of Monroe and parts of Woodruff, St. Francis, Lee, Phillips and Arkansas counties.

The museum is housed in Brinkley's Union Train Station, constructed in 1912.

The station is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Union Pacific Railroad deeded the train station to the City of Brinkley in 2001. After restoration, the museum opened to the public in 2003.

The Central Delta Depot Museum is a museum of general history, with an emphasis on the stories of the Rock Island and Cotton Belt rail lines that crossed at Brinkley. On the museum grounds is the approximately 100-year-old frame depot that at one time was located at Monroe (Monroe County) on the Missouri Pacific rail line that connected Brinkley to Helena-West Helena. A furnished sharecropper's house also sits on the grounds. Inside, the museum contains exhibits focusing on

the Louisiana Purchase survey of 1815, area railroad artifacts, military artifacts, wildlife displays and other facets of local history. The museum also features photographs and exhibits on Brinkley native and blues musician Louis Jordan as well as a collection of his early 78 r.p.m. records.

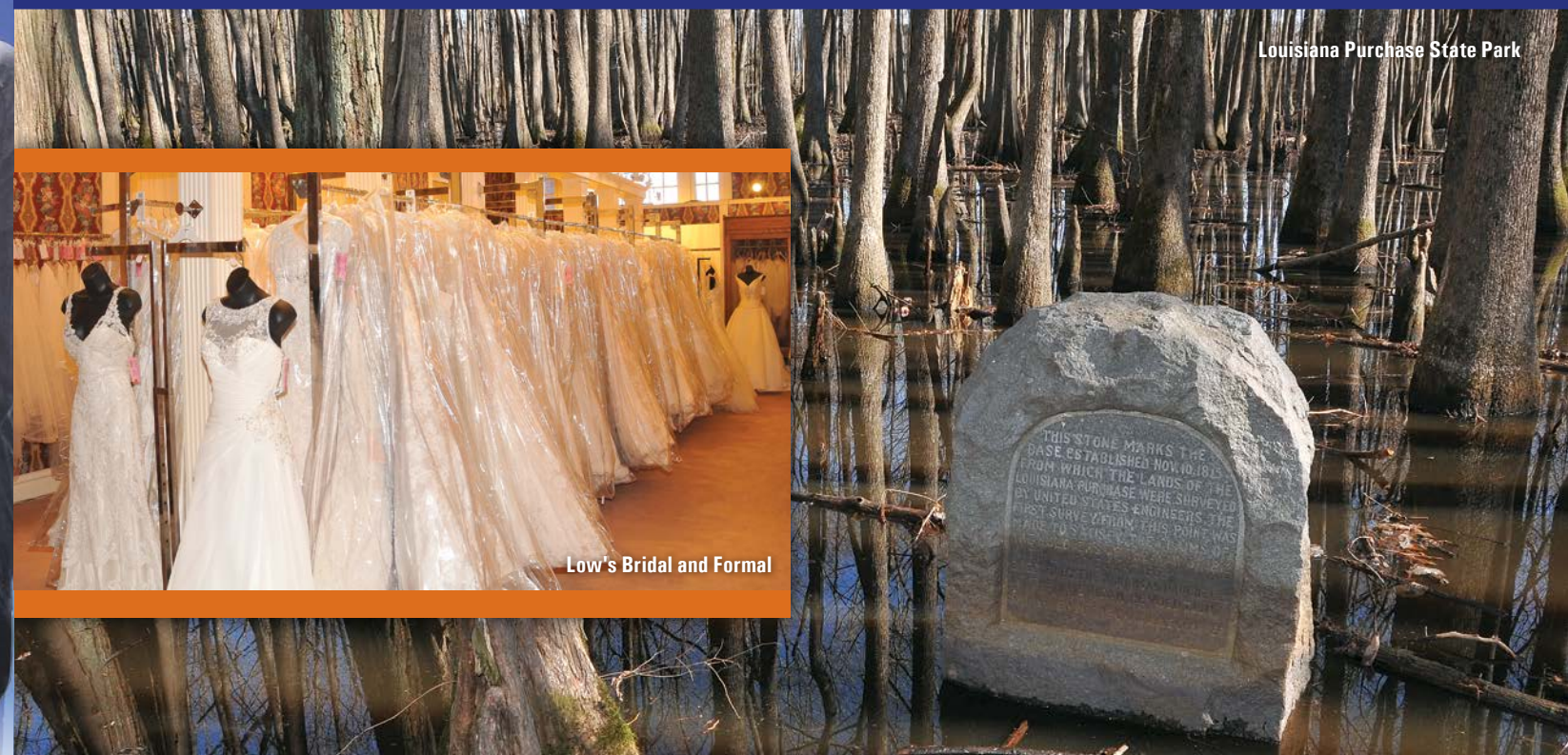
Another feature of the museum is a Southern Pacific caboose built in the 1980s, one of seventy-five ordered by the company, the last purchase they made of that car.

The Choo Choo Ch'Boogie Delta Music Festival is held on the grounds of the museum each spring. The museum is located at 100 W. Cypress Street.

Perhaps the most well known destination in Brinkley is right next door at Low's. Mention "Low's in Brinkley" to any bride or bride-to-be and they will have heard of it.



Low's Bridal and Formal



Louisiana Purchase State Park

Low's Bridal and Formal is one of the best known wedding gown stores in the south. It's worth driving by just to see the building that houses the store. It is located in the old Rusher Hotel which was completed in 1915 and featured 61 rooms. The hotel served as the social and recreational center for business men and travelers in Brinkley and eastern Arkansas. In those days, a total of 63 passenger trains stopped at the train station next door every day. The opening night banquet for the hotel was attended by over 300 businesses, social and political leaders from Little Rock, Memphis, St. Louis, Helena, Pine Bluff and Hot Springs. The event was lauded as the "largest social event ever held in Brinkley." Step inside for a glimpse of the 4,000 pound chandelier that hangs from the ceiling. The chandelier originally hung in the Marion Hotel in Little Rock before it was reassembled for Low's. The building still features the original tile floors and old wooden doors, among other things. The building is located at 127 W. Cedar Street.

The Central Delta Depot Museum serves as the visitors' center for the **Louisiana Purchase State Park**, the next destination down Highway 49. The State Park is located just off of Highway 49, about twenty miles south of Brinkley. This National Historic Landmark, at the junction of Lee, Monroe and Phillips counties, preserves the initial point from which all surveys of the property acquired through the Louisiana Purchase of 1803 initiated. That year, President Thomas Jefferson purchased the vast territory of Louisiana from France for \$15 million. The unmapped wilderness of approximately 900,000 square miles doubled the size of the fledgling nation and helped shape the destiny of the United States. Twelve years later, President James Madison ordered an official survey of the purchase area, a survey that began in what is now Arkansas and led to the settlement of the American West.

(continued on page 30)



Central Delta Depot & Museum

An elevated boardwalk takes visitors on a five-minute easy stroll through swampland to the granite marker. A walk along the boardwalk enables visitors to experience the captivating beauty and natural sounds of the surrounding swamp. Along the boardwalk, interpretive wayside exhibits tell about the Louisiana Purchase and describe the flora and fauna of the swamp. This headwater swamp is representative of the swamplands that were common in eastern Arkansas before the vast bottomlands were drained and cleared for farming and commercial purposes.

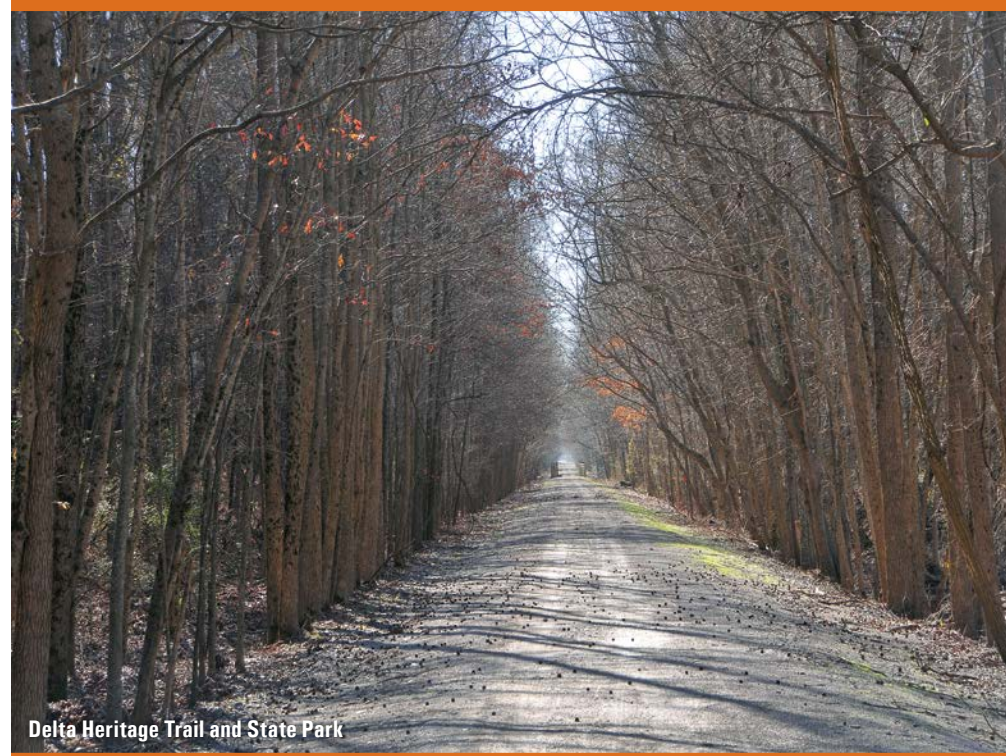
Leaving the swampland south of Brinkley, the next point of interest along Highway 49 is the **Delta Heritage Trail and State Park** at Barton, one of the country's newest "Rails to Trails" sites. In 1992, the Union Pacific Railroad Company donated a 73-mile right-of-way to the state of Arkansas. The trail is being developed in phases and stretches from one mile south of Lexa to Cypress Bend. The first 14 miles of trail have been completed, extending from Helena Junction to the Lakeview community. The trail is made of crushed rock offering a smooth bike ride, walk or jog through Delta farmland and fields. The trail stretches through a shaded canopy of native hardwoods, alongside agricultural fields and across many streams. Wildlife viewing and birding opportunities abound along the route. For geocaching enthusiasts, the trail is known as a "Power Trail" with caches hidden every 528 feet. Trailheads are located at Helena Junction, near Lexa, at Barton on Highway 49, at Lick Creek and in Lakeview.

The park's Visitors Center features trail maps, a gift shop, restrooms and picnic sites. Bicycles can be rented and camp sites are located at the trail head within the park. The State Park is located 5539 Highway 49, just before the overpass.

On leaving the Heritage Trail, Highway 49 leads visitors into the city of Helena-West Helena. Though not quite completed, the first stop for any visitor to the city



The new Arkansas Welcome Center under construction



Delta Heritage Trail and State Park



Pillow Thompson House

will soon be the new **Arkansas Welcome Center** located on Highway 49. The new Center is located about three-quarters of a mile east of the existing Center where visitors currently drop in at 1506 Martin Luther King Drive. Scheduled for completion in May of this year, the new Center will incorporate design elements that are architecturally compatible with the local area. It will feature a state-of-the-art computer kiosk, a multi-media room and a picnic area.

Continuing eastward on Highway 49 for just under a mile, travelers come to the

Highway 49 Bridge which crosses the mighty Mississippi River into the state of Mississippi. It is one of four bridges crossing the Mississippi River in Arkansas. The continuous steel truss bridge was built in 1961, has five spans and carries motorists 120 feet above the water. The sights and sounds of Tunica are just a short drive on up the road, but our road trip continues on the Helena-West Helena side of the river.

From the bridge, Highway 49B takes travelers into the historic downtown area of Helena-West Helena.

It's in the historic district that the **Pillow Thompson House** can be found. Located at 718 Perry Street, the house was built in 1896 by Jerome B. Pillow. The home is one of the finest examples of Queen Anne architecture to be found in the south and is open to the public for tours. It is one of several homes in town designed by architect George Barber. Five generations of Pillow descendants have lived in the house. It was donated to the Phillips Community College Foundation in 1992 by Josephine Thompson and her son George de Man. The house was restored through a

(continued on page 32)



The Highway 49 Bridge crosses the Mississippi River at Helena-West Helena.



Helena Museum of Phillips County

joint effort of the community and Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas and was opened to the public in 1997. Admission to the home is free.

Another fine example of Queen Anne architecture can be found at an old southern home just down the street at 608 Perry Street. This is home to the **Magnolia Hill Bed & Breakfast**. Like the Pillow Thompson House, Magnolia Hill was designed by George Barber and was completed in 1900. The home was built and owned by Charles Moore, Sr. a local Helena-West Helena businessman and former captain in the Confederate Army.

For history buffs, the historic district includes a reproduction of **Fort Curtis**, a fort built by Union soldiers during the Civil War. In August 1862 the Union forces occupying Helena erected a redoubt of earth and timbers to serve as the key to the city's defenses. Fort Curtis, named for the Union general in command, was one of five fortified positions which enabled Union soldiers to repulse a Confederate attack on July 4, 1863, designed to recapture the city and relieve the siege at Vicksburg. On the day of the attack a total of 4,129 Union officers and men, under General Benjamin Prentiss, were positioned in and around the fort against 7,646 Confederate troops under the command of General Theophilus Holmes. The fort is located at the corner of York and Columbia Streets.

The newest attraction in Helena-West Helena is **Freedom Park**. Opened in February of this year, the park uses five interpretive exhibits to follow the path of those who went from being fugitive slaves to free men and even part of the Union Army. Freedom Park is already a nationally designated site for the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom. The park is located at 750 Biscoe Street.

The next stop on a tour of the downtown area is the **Delta Cultural Center** at 141 Cherry Street. The museum is dedicated to the history of the Arkansas Delta. It

interprets the history of the Delta through exhibits, educational programs, annual events and guided tours. From its blues music to the mighty river that runs through town, the Delta story unfolds within this Helena landmark.

The Cultural Center is comprised of two museum locations, The Depot and the Visitors Center. The Depot features the exhibit "A Heritage Determination" which details the history of the Delta from its earliest inhabitants, into early settlement and through great Mississippi River floods. On the upper floor of the Depot, "Civil War in the Delta" gives visitors insight into Union occupation and the Battle of Helena. Ask to blow the steamboat whistle before you leave. The Visitors Center, located one block north of the Depot, features the "Delta Sounds" music exhibit, radio station KFFA, changing exhibit space and the Museum Store.

The radio station housed in the Visitors Center is home to the popular radio show "King Biscuit Time" with host "Sunshine" Sonny Payne. It is the longest running radio show ever. With more than 15,000 broadcasts, this show has influenced several generations of blues, rock and pop musicians. First broadcast in 1941, the show is still broadcast weekdays at 12:15 p.m.

The same blues music that is broadcast on KFFA is at the heart of this east Arkansas town. Each year, the city hosts the **King Biscuit Blues Festival**, one of the nation's foremost showcases of blues music. The festival attracts top-name blues musicians from around the country and blues fans from around the world. The main stage stands across the street from the Cultural Center. The blues festival is held every Columbus Day weekend in October and is reason enough for another trip to town.

Just outside the front door of the Depot is the **Helena Levee Walk**, a scenic three mile paved path that proceeds along the river.

The Levee Walk was funded, in part, by the Arkansas Transportation Enhancement Program of the AHTD.

Also in the historic district is the **Helena Museum of Phillips County** located in an historic building on the National Register of Historic Places at 623 Pecan Street. Inside visitors can see artifacts of Native American Indians and learn more about Civil War battles in the area. Displays about Thomas Edison and author Mark Twain are also presented.

If your road trip to Helena-West Helena lands on a Friday or Saturday and it is meal time, be sure to stop for some tamales at **Pasquale's Tamales**. Located in a concession stand at 1005 Highway 49, the famous tamales are a Delta tradition and are made of all-natural ingredients and are hand rolled.

It's in Helena-West Helena that a trip on Highway 49 ends, but on leaving town a side trip north of town on the Great River Road is recommended. **The Great River Road** is a collection of state, provincial, and local roads which follow the course of the Mississippi River through ten states of the United States. They are Arkansas, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Tennessee and Wisconsin.

As you leave town, the Great River Road north of Helena-West Helena leads to the St. Francis National Forest. Along the way, travelers will want to visit **Bear Creek Lake**. The area is being developed by Arkansas State Parks and will become the Mississippi River State Park. The area features camp sites, picnic areas, a swim beach, a boat ramp and a hiking trail.

It is at the crossroads of Highway 44 and Highway 79 in Marianna that this weekend road trip comes to an end. Travelers may continue eastward to Memphis on Highway 79 or choose to drive up Highway 1 to Forrest City for a trip back home on Interstate 40. □



Delta Cultural Center

The radio station housed in the Visitors Center is home to the popular radio show "KING BISCUIT TIME", with host "SUNSHINE" SONNY PAYNE. It is the longest running radio show ever.



Fort Curtis



"Sunshine" Sonny Payne hosts his radio show "King Biscuit Time".

WYLIE

named PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR for

CONNECTING ARKANSAS PROGRAM (CAP)

BY DAVID NILLES

Keli Wylie began work at the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department in March of 2002. Almost ten years later, in October of 2012, she was named Assistant Division Head of Roadway Design.

However, since October, the temporary one-half cent sales tax has been passed by Arkansas' voters. And as a result, duty calls and now Wylie has been re-assigned as Program Administrator to oversee the new construction program that the temporary tax will fund.

"My first reaction to this opportunity was shock because I had just been promoted to Assistant Division Head of Roadway Design," Wylie stated.

"Roadway Design is where I started my career and I also consider it home," she added.

"My feelings quickly changed to excitement and anticipation as I considered the new opportunity. The Department has never been involved in this type of project and I was humbled and honored that the Administration chose me to be a part of it."

Issue #1, as it appeared on the ballot, will temporarily increase the State sales tax by one-half cent to finance a 10-year, \$1.3 billion bond issue for four-lane highway construction and improvement designed to connect all parts of Arkansas. Revenue from the temporary

tax will support a \$1.8 billion program for four-lane projects.

To prepare for the program, the Department has selected Garver USA to function as Program Manager. The Program Manager will provide technical and professional expertise needed to meet the demands of the temporary program without increasing AHTD staff. Wylie will serve as the liaison between the Department and the Program Manager. The new position will be under the direct supervision of the Assistant Chief Engineers.



Keli Wylie, P.E.

"I will be responsible for the coordination of the program between the Department and the Program Manager, and will also be responsible for the overall success of the program," Wylie stated.

"If the Program Manager needs any guidance as to AHTD policy or procedure, I will assist them and get the information they need. Additionally, I will be responsible for keeping the projects on track and the timely delivery of completed projects."

In addition to selecting Garver USA as the Program Manager, the Department has selected Stephens Inc. as the Financial Advisor. The Department will also select a Bond Counsel and On-Call Design Consultants.

"Since Department staff will not be increased to meet the demands of this accelerated program, the Department will also contract On-Call Right of Way/Utility and Construction Inspection Consultants to perform the duties normally handled by those Divisions."

All together, there are 19 four-lane corridors scheduled to be funded, each with regional significance.

Regarding the routes, Wylie adds "The routes chosen are regionally significant in that many will continue or complete existing, ongoing construction projects in every corner of the State. Additionally, the projects will help tie together existing four-lane routes. Without the passage of the sales tax, the four-lane projects included in the program would take much longer, cost more and negatively impact other much-needed statewide maintenance and improvement programs."

Central Arkansas motorists will see the widening of Highway 70 to four lanes between Interstate 30 and Hot Springs and the widening of Interstate 40 to six lanes between Little Rock and Conway.

In northwest Arkansas, Interstate 540 will be widened to six lanes between Fayetteville and Bentonville and completion of the initial two lanes of the ultimate four lanes of the Bella Vista Bypass will be finished.

Highway 412 between Paragould and Walnut Ridge, in northeast Arkansas, will be widened to four lanes as will Highway 64 between Marion and Wynne.

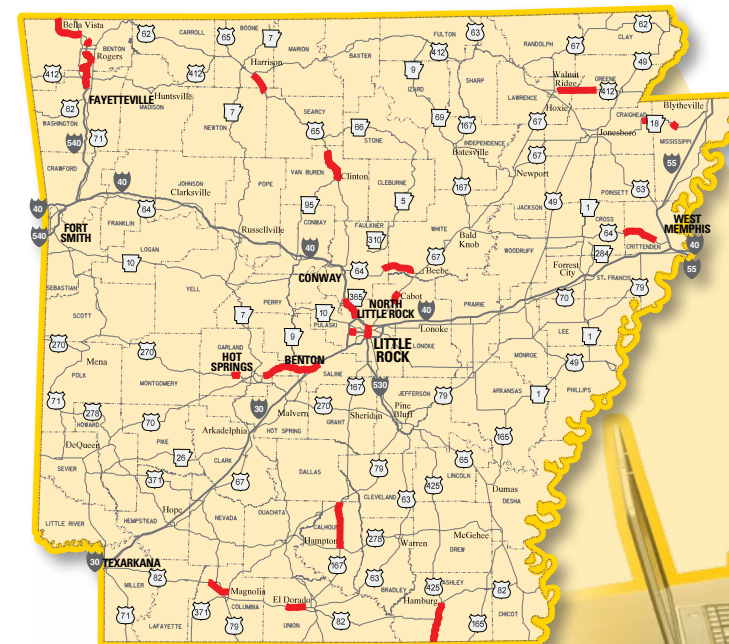
In southern Arkansas, among the work is the widening of Highway 425 between

Hamburg and the Louisiana state line, the widening of Highway 167 between Interstate 530 and El Dorado, and widening of Highway 82 from El Dorado to Magnolia to Texarkana.

"I look forward to the challenges ahead," Wylie says. "I have had the opportunity to work with some amazing people and have really gained a great deal of knowledge from working closely with them. I also enjoy having the opportunity to work closely with other Divisions and District offices. The next several years will be ground-breaking for the Department, it is the opportunity of a lifetime," Wylie added.

Wylie began work for the Department as a Civil Engineer for the Roadway Design Division in March of 2002. She advanced to Civil Engineer I a year later. In March of 2004, Wylie advanced to Design Engineer. She was promoted to Advanced Design Engineer in April of 2006. She became Senior Design Engineer in October of 2008. She obtained the title of Staff Design Engineer in April of 2011, and then was named Assistant Division Head of Roadway Design.

She has a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from Louisiana Tech University. She is a Registered Professional Engineer. ■



The Connecting Arkansas Program consists of 19 four-lane corridors scheduled to be funded, each with regional significance.





VEHICLE MONITORING SYSTEM

PROVES HELPFUL IN ICY WEATHER

BY DAVID NILLES

In October of 2012, the AHTD installed a new Vehicle Management System on its fleet of 2,400 on-road vehicles. The system provides the Department with information on vehicle diagnostics and allows GPS tracking of the vehicles. In icy conditions, the GPS tracking has proved to be very helpful in efforts to clear highways by monitoring AHTD trucks outfitted with plows and salt spreaders.

On normal days, the system increases driver awareness of the vehicle condition with continual automatic engine diagnostics. It monitors the speed of the vehicle for accountability, and records real-time location information for emergency response needs. In addition, the system performs a complete EPA-mandated emissions control system check every four hours.

However, it is the real-time location information the system provides that proved to be helpful during the icy weather the State experienced over the winter months.

A visit to District Six Headquarters allowed reporter David Nilles and photographer John Jackson a chance to see how the system was put to work.

"We have 260 vehicles in District Six

with the GPS system installed," says Tony Evans, District Six Maintenance Engineer.

With a computer program called "networkfleet," Evans and District Engineer Joe Sartini were able to use the computer and see the location of all snow equipment on the roadway. The real-time location information allowed them to direct AHTD drivers to where they were needed the most.

"The GPS is a great tool for monitoring icy road conditions," Sartini stated. "During the storm, we watched the weather radar so we could see the precipitation coming in and what areas were getting hit the most."

"We also used the Inrix Traffic app to monitor the flow of traffic on the roadways.



Then we used networkfleet to pinpoint exactly what highways our equipment was working on. We could actually reroute trucks from one location to another so they were sure to be where they were needed the most."

"What was critical was seeing how traffic was flowing through construction zones on the Interstates," Sartini added. "Clearing the Interstates was our primary concern. Then we concentrated on secondary roads and redirected trucks onto those."

Law enforcement officials were very helpful in making sure AHTD equipment got to its next destination.

"When we spotted a backup, we worked

with law enforcement officials on the police radio. Using the GPS equipment, we could tell Arkansas State Police and Arkansas Highway Police where our equipment was located and where it needed to go next. Based on the location information given, the police units were able to meet AHTD teams and escort our equipment into the icy areas where they were needed next. Law enforcement was very helpful during the entire process in telling us where road conditions were bad and sharing accident locations with us," Sartini stated.

The system sped up the process of clearing the roads and allowed the Department to use its equipment more efficiently.

"We are discovering more uses for the GPS system every day," Evans added. "We expect it to be very helpful and be a money saver at the same time."

In addition to assisting staff during icy weather, the Vehicle Management System is expected to result in savings on fuel, maintenance and fleet utilization. A pilot study conducted in 2012 provided a savings that reflected a complete payback expectation in less than 12 months.

Hardware and installation of the Vehicle Management System for the entire fleet was \$660,000. Expected financial return on that investment beginning in year two and in subsequent years is \$1.1 million per year. □



CACHE RIVER RELIEF BRIDGE DEDICATED IN GREENE COUNTY

AHTD Director Scott Bennett joined area officials near Hooker, in Greene County, on December 10, 2012, to celebrate the completion of the Cache River Relief project. Completed in less than two years, the job replaced two bridge structures and approaches on Highway 135 over the Cache River Relief area. Robertson Contractors was the prime contractor on the \$3.7 million project.

District 10 Engineer Walter McMillan and District Construction Engineer Brad Smithee joined Former Representative Mike Patterson, Representative Joe Jett and Senator Robert Thompson at the event. Other Greene County residents also were in attendance for the ribbon cutting ceremony. ■



(TOP, L. TO R.) Scott E. Bennett, Director; David Cooper, Area Maintenance Supervisor – Greene County; and Jerry Phillips, Area Maintenance Supervisor – Clay County.
(BOTTOM) Greene County residents gather for the ribbon-cutting ceremony.



FORDYCE DEDICATES PROJECT FOUR-LANE TO LR GETTING CLOSER

Another section of Highway 167 has been widened to four lanes and Fordyce area officials chose January 23, 2013, as the day to celebrate completion of the 4.5-mile section north of Fordyce.

District 7 Engineer Carl Bachelor thanked the area for their cooperation during construction of the \$22 million project. Ideal Construction was the prime contractor for the nearly three-year job.

Dallas County Judge Jimmie Jones suggested that completion of the project will make it easier to “get to Fordyce” now instead of going to Little Rock. The Highway 167 bypass in Sheridan is about a year away from completion, according to Bachelor. ■



A group from Fordyce celebrates the completion of a section of Highway 167.

LARGEST SINGLE CONTRACT ANNOUNCED IN FORT SMITH

Assistant Chief of Operations Emanuel Banks and District 4 Engineer Joe Shipman headed a January 7, 2013, news conference in Fort Smith to announce upcoming construction plans for the the single largest contract ever awarded in AHTD history — a \$78.8 million Interstate Rehabilitation Program job.

Awarded in November of 2012 to Kiewit Infrastructure South, the project will rehabilitate seven miles of Interstate 540 from Interstate 40 to Highway 22.

The news conference was held to inform the public that during the estimated year and a half to complete the job, only one lane will be maintained in each direction. Work will include replacing nine bridges.

The IRP was approved by public vote in 2011 and is expected to include 75+ projects on approximately 455 Interstate miles. ■

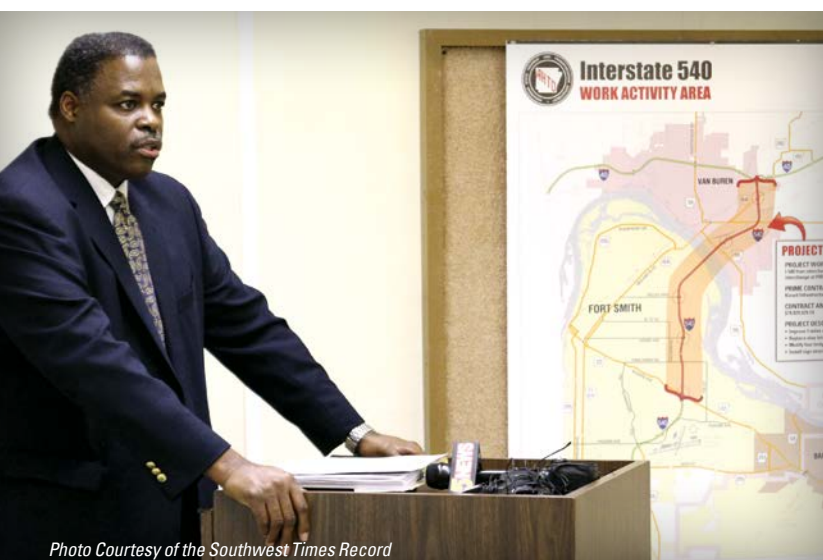


Photo Courtesy of the Southwest Times Record

Assistant Chief Engineer of Operations Emanuel Banks

NEW MAINTENANCE BUILDING GETS STUTTGART CEREMONY

Stuttgart area officials gathered on January 30, 2013, to help District 2 Engineer David Henning and his staff dedicate the new Stuttgart Area Maintenance building. The new \$620,000 facility is located on five acres along the Highway 165 Stuttgart Bypass.

The old building, located on old Highway 11 (Park Avenue), was built in 1967 for less than \$20,000. It suffered some major damage during a 2008 tornado. The first facility was located at 2nd and Burkle Streets in 1946.

District forces provided much of the work, including construction of the fuel pump island, base course prep work and moving existing storage structures. The McGehee Resident Office provided construction inspection.

Several retirees from the area, including former District Engineer James House, were on hand for the ribbon-cutting ceremony. ■



Area officials dedicating the new Stuttgart Area Maintenance building.



CONSTRUCTION PLANS AROUND THE STATE

Throughout the year, public meetings are held around the State in communities where roadwork is being planned. These meetings are an opportunity for citizens to hear about and respond to future highway construction happening in their area.

HIGHWAY 27 – Dardanelle

A Public Information Meeting was held at the Chickalah Community Center in Dardanelle on November 1st to share plans for two new northbound passing lanes on Highway 27. The new passing lanes will be located between Danville and Dardanelle. Approximately 70 people attended the meeting to learn more about the project, see plans and to share their comments. AHTD staff members from the Roadway Design, Right of Way, Environmental and Public Information offices were on hand to answer questions about the plans for the new lanes.

NEW NORTH-SOUTH CORRIDOR – Rogers

A new North-South corridor planned between Fayetteville and Rogers was the subject of a Public Hearing held November 8th at The Annex in Rogers. Over 150 people attended the meeting to learn more about the proposed highway to be located on the eastern side of the metropolitan areas. The section of the North-South corridor discussed at the meeting would begin at Highway 264 in Springdale and extend northward to Highway 94 in Rogers. Participants learned more about the corridor from AHTD staff and shared their comments regarding proposed roadway plans.

HIGHWAY 201 – Mountain Home

Highway 201 in the Mountain Home area was the subject of a Public Information Meeting held November 13th. The Donald W. Reynolds Library in Mountain Home was the site for the meeting which drew a crowd of approximately 50 interested citizens. Participants came to learn more about plans for widening 1.5 miles of the highway to three lanes. The improvements will extend from Highway 62 to Highway 5.



HIGHWAY 5 – Benton/Bryant

A Public Information Hearing was held in Bryant on December 4th to discuss plans for improving the flow of traffic on Highway 5 between Benton and the Pulaski County line. The meeting was a part of a planning study that focuses on widening seven miles of the highway to four or five lanes to alleviate congestion in Saline County. Approximately 100 people attended the meeting which was held at the First Pentecostal Church in Bryant.

HIGHWAY 7 – Hot Springs

A crowd of approximately 100 people gathered at the Tower of Strength Ministries in Hot Springs on December 13th to discuss a study of potential improvements to Park Avenue. The Department solicited input from the public to help identify the greatest needs for improvements on a six-mile section of the highway that extends from Whittington Avenue northward to Highway 5. Written comments on the study location were collected at the meeting.

AHTD PEOPLE

The AHTD employs approximately 3,600 people. We welcome our new employees, congratulate others on promotions and service, and say goodbye to those retiring.



NEW EMPLOYEES

CONSTRUCTION • Alex Roofo, Engineer; Charles Epps, Construction Helper; Ronald Ashley II, Engineer
PLANNING & RESEARCH • Kenneth Bon Banga, Engineer
PUBLIC INFORMATION • Danny Straessle, Assistant Public Information Officer; Jeff Whatley, Presentation & Writing Specialist
ROADWAY DESIGN • David Cook, Engineer
SURVEYS • Robert Blakeley III, Surveys Aide II
DISTRICT ONE • Waverly Barnes Jr., Single Axle Truck Driver; Corey Cross, General Laborer
DISTRICT TWO • Waylon Power, Single Axle Truck Driver; Kenneth Vestal, Single Axle Truck Driver
DISTRICT THREE • Jason Bassett, Mechanic; Becky Needham, Single Axle Truck Driver; Kent Webb, Single Axle Truck Driver; Scott Flournoy, General Laborer
DISTRICT SIX • Leonard Stokes, Single Axle Truck Driver; Tony Burkett, Single Axle Truck Driver; Courtney Zachery, Single Axle Truck Driver
DISTRICT TEN • Timothy Bohannon, General Laborer; Calvin Crenshaw, General Laborer

PROMOTIONS

BRIDGE • Amanda Pinto, Bridge Design Engineer
FISCAL SERVICES • Lanecia Weston, Administrative Assistant III
MAINTENANCE • Ronald Porter, Signing Superintendent
MATERIALS • Andrea White, Administrative Aide IV
PLANNING & RESEARCH • Kristie Keene, Highway Performance & Needs Analyst II; Minghua Qiu, Engineer II
PUBLIC INFORMATION • India Clark, Administrative Aide IV
RIGHT OF WAY • Donald Bearden, Reviewing Appraiser
ROADWAY DESIGN • Christopher Allen, Engineer I; Charles Martin, Assistant Division Head
SURVEYS • Eric Benson, Surveys Aide II; Michael Castleberry, Surveys Aide II; Zachary Powell, Surveys Aide I; David Rorex, Surveys Aide I; Spencer Thomas, Surveys Technician II; Andrew Waits, Surveys Technician II; Caleb Whitmire, Surveys Aide I
DISTRICT ONE • Larry Barnes Jr., Bridge Repairer I; Joe Boykin, Single Axle Truck Driver; Austin Case, Single Axle Truck Driver; Wallace Flie, Backhoe/Front End Loader Operator; Jeremy Nelson, Bridge Repairer I; Samuel Sisk, Single Axle Truck Driver; Aaron Vowell, Assistant Resident Engineer
DISTRICT TWO • Joseph Hargrave, Inspector; Alex Roofo, Engineer; William Rowland, Construction Aide II; Todd Tooke, Inspector
DISTRICT THREE • Mindy Simmons, Resident Office Technician

DISTRICT FOUR • Rodger Frost, Construction Aide III; Joe Green, Maintenance Job Superintendent; Micah Green, Single Axle Truck Driver; Stephen Nickell, Construction Field Engineer I; Jerad Owens, Crew Leader

DISTRICT FIVE • Michael Foster, Construction Aide I; Sherman Rucker, Maintenance Aide II

DISTRICT SIX • Lori Covert, Single Axle Truck Driver; Roger Hambrick, Multi-Axle Truck Driver; Jeffrey Schoff, Multi-Axle Truck Driver; Greg Tenison, Motor Patrol Operator

DISTRICT SEVEN • Kathy Daniel, District Bookkeeper; Duel Fendley, Motor Patrol Operator-Finish; Dewayne Torrence, Maintenance Aide II

DISTRICT EIGHT • Timothy Cotton, Construction Aide II; David Duvall, Sign Erector

DISTRICT NINE • Jarrod Brightwell, Engineer I; Allan Carmichael, Backhoe/Front End Loader Operator; Elmer Clark, Multi-Axle Truck Driver; Ronald Collins, Maintenance Aide II; Dallas Hill, Sign Erector; Brandon Witt, Maintenance Aide I

SERVICE

ARKANSAS HIGHWAY POLICE • William Smith, Arkansas Highway Police Patrol Officer - First Class, 5 yrs.; John Lamb, Arkansas Highway Police Patrol Officer - First Class, 5 yrs.

CONSTRUCTION • John Sharum, Resident Engineer, 35 yrs.; Bart Wray Jr., Senior Inspector, 35 yrs.; Ken Wilson, Assistant Resident Engineer, 20 yrs.; Roger Spence Jr., Senior Construction Materials Inspector, 10 yrs.; Matthew Emberton, Assistant Resident Engineer, 5 yrs.; Joey Parker, Construction Field Engineer II, 5 yrs.; Kathy Johnson, Field Clerk II, 5 yrs.

PERMITS • Charles Keck, Permit Technician, 5 yrs.

PLANNING & RESEARCH • Donny McMillen, Public Transportation Administrator, 25 yrs.; Kathy Gunderman, Cartographer III, 20 yrs.; David Laumer, Transportation Specialist, 5 yrs.

PUBLIC INFORMATION • Randy Ort, Public Information Coordinator, 25 yrs.

RIGHT OF WAY • Jack Brooks, Design Technician I, 15 yrs.

SURVEYS • Jeffrey Lenard, Surveys Technical Coordinator, 20 yrs.

DISTRICT ONE • Elmer Calahan, Maintenance Aide II, 25 yrs.; Michael Howard, Hydraulic Excavator Operator-Finish, 15 yrs.; Steve Pierce, Bridge Repairer II, 10 yrs.; Judy Freeman, Single Axle Truck Driver, 10 yrs.; Waymon Weeams Sr., Backhoe/Front End Loader Operator, 5 yrs.

DISTRICT TWO • Donald Green, Motor Patrol Operator, 10 yrs.; Stephen Green, Roller Operator, 5 yrs.

DISTRICT THREE • Anthony Teague, Crew Leader, 10 yrs.; Glen Semmler, Multi-Axle Truck Driver, 10 yrs.; William Mays, Area Headquarters Attendant, 10 yrs.

DISTRICT FIVE • Brian Stone, Maintenance Aide II, 15 yrs.; Billy Calkin, Backhoe/Front End Loader Operator, 5 yrs.

DISTRICT SIX • Joseph Jones, Roller Operator, 5 yrs.; Charles Wilson, Multi-Axle Truck Driver, 5 yrs.

DISTRICT SEVEN • Johnny O'Neal, Assistant Bridge Inspector, 20 yrs.; Jimmy Ryan, Guard, 15 yrs.

DISTRICT EIGHT • Jimmy Black, Backhoe/Front End Loader Operator, 30 yrs.; Lloyd Sheets, District Permit Officer, 30 yrs.; Nancy Keeling, District Office Manager, 25 yrs.

DISTRICT NINE • Elmer Clark, Single Axle Truck Driver, 5 yrs.

DISTRICT TEN • Donnie McKinney, Multi-Axle Truck Driver, 30 yrs.

RETIREMENT

RIGHT OF WAY • Robert Pooler, Property Manager, 5+ yrs.

DISTRICT ONE • Joe Dewitt, Area Maintenance Supervisor, 36+ yrs.

DISTRICT TWO • Debra Pruitt, Area Maintenance Supervisor, 35+ yrs.

DISTRICT SIX • Richard Collie, Multi-Axle Truck Driver, 16+ yrs.

DISTRICT SEVEN • Noah Welch, Distributor/Roller Operator, 13+ yrs.

DISTRICT EIGHT • Hurlan Muncy, Guard, 15+ yrs.; Jerry Williams, Area Maintenance Supervisor, 41+ yrs.; Mickey Hill, Maintenance Aide I, 10+ yrs.; James Roy, Construction Project Coordinator, 28+ yrs.

DISTRICT NINE • Ricky Dodson, Sealing Job Superintendent, 35+ yrs.

MEMORIALS

ARKANSAS HIGHWAY POLICE • Marion C. Showalter, 1/24/13, retired

MAINTENANCE • Robert John Baker, 12/13/2012, retired

DISTRICT ONE • Curtis A. Baker, 2/6/2013, retired

DISTRICT TWO • Troy L. Adams, 1/27/2013, retired; David Wayne Alverson, 1/29/2013, retired

DISTRICT THREE • Curtis Ray Anderson, 2/4/2013, retired

DISTRICT FOUR • Donald Ray Jennings, 1/14/2013, retired; James A. Golden, 2/7/2013, retired

DISTRICT FIVE • William Thomas Jernigan, 1/24/2013, retired

DISTRICT SIX • Roberto Velazquez, 1/25/2013, retired; Hosea R. Taylor, 2/1/2013, retired; Tommy L. Lacy, 2/4/2013, retired

DISTRICT NINE • William D. Milam, 1/26/2013, retired

ACTIVE DUTY

As of 2/15/13, the AHTD has one employee serving active duty in the United States military. Deployment date is noted.

DISTRICT SEVEN • Abel Ayala, Maintenance Aide I, 3/13/12



Dear AHTD,

I wanted to take a few minutes to say "Thank You"!

On January 15, my husband and I drove from Camden to Little Rock for a surgery at UAMS. The closer we got to Little Rock the worse the weather became. However because of your efforts and some slow-going on our part, we made it.

While inside UAMS, both the weather and my husband got worse. I had checked into a local hotel room which I didn't use, but my belongings were already there — so at 12:30 a.m.

I drove to get my things. I was worried about the roads, but when I got out I was pleasantly surprised at the roads. You would have never known they were covered in ice hours before.

So I wanted to say thank you to everyone for their hard work. On those days when they think their job is not important, I hope they will know they made my day a little safer and took some worry away.

*Thank you,
Lisa Taylor*

Louann, Arkansas

DEER CROSSING SIGN

I want to thank Brian Berthiaume and the District 8 office for their efforts in getting a deer crossing sign placed on Highway 225 in the Horseshoe Mountain area. This area has seen an increase in the number of deer crossing the road, particularly in the early morning hours. This sign will help drivers be aware that this is a crossing area and will hopefully prevent someone from hitting a deer.

Carolyn Baker
Greenbrier, Arkansas

CRIMINAL JUSTICE CAREERS

While by day I work for the Arkansas State Police, most evenings find me serving as Lead Faculty/Area Chair in the College of Criminal Justice and Security at the Northwest Arkansas Campus of the University of Phoenix.

Last evening, from 6 to 8 p.m., Arkansas Highway Police Cpl. Jerry Brian Harwood participated in the first ever criminal justice career night hosted by the university. During my time with the university, a number of criminal justice students have expressed interest in the area of policing so I am thankful that Cpl. Harwood was able to come and share information about your department's employment opportunities with these students. I appreciated his time and efforts in helping make the criminal justice career night a success.

Sincerely,
Lt. Steven A. Coppinger, M.S.
Commander – Company D
Criminal Investigation Division
Arkansas State Police

ICY ROADS

I would like to take this time to applaud the outstanding work done by the City of Sheridan and the AHTD located in Grant County during the recent winter storm. I am a long-time resident of Sheridan and usually do not venture out during periods of iciness in Sheridan and out of town. When I left the house yesterday morning to go into work, I noticed that the greatest majority of Sheridan streets and roads were passable. I also noticed that Hwy 167 up to Hwy 365 in Saline county were very well passable with minor icy patches. Once I passed the turn off to East End, the highway (167) from the 365 Junction up to I-530 was an almost complete sheet of ice. I was on pins and needles from that point until I arrived at work. I was amazed at the difference between the condition of Highway 167 up to Highway 365 junction and the condition of Highway 167 past the junction. I am pleased that the AHTD located in Grant County did such an outstanding job of preparing and treating that portion of the Highway and with the way the City of Sheridan prepared and treated the roads and streets in town.

Sincerely,
Melissa Jones
Grant County Resident
Highway 46 North

THE WAY HOME

I know the snow yesterday, January 15, caught most of Central Arkansas flat-footed, as it did myself and coworkers.

We were all, however, able to make it home last evening, thanks to the hard work of the Highway Department employees getting out there and doing the work — hard work — to keep the roads passable, in my case driving from Clinton to Conway.

I appreciate it (we appreciate it) and thank you.

Thanks,
Alex Kienlen
Conway, Arkansas

SINCERE THANKS

On behalf of the citizens of Huttig, I would like to express our appreciation for the overlay of Highway 129B. The improvement to the roadway is an asset to the City not only in appearance but functionality as well.

Once again, our sincere thanks to the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department.

Sincerely,
Tony Cole
Mayor
Huttig, Arkansas

A-1 JOB

I live atop Wye Mountain, just off of Highway 113 which runs north off of Highway 10, just past Maumelle Lake.

For the 20 years I have lived out there, the Highway Department employees have done an A-1 job of clearing Highway 113 after a snow or ice storm. Thanks!

Cordially,
Billy R. Wilson
Rasputin Mule Farm

POSITIVE WORK ETHIC

I wanted to write a short email to express my appreciation for all the hard work that Woody Adams has done for us in the past. I called him again this morning to get the warning signs to help us notify the public about the ice on the I-440 bridge. He had it done right away, and my troopers could see significantly less traffic minutes after the signs were changed.

This is not the only time I have called Woody. I called him when we had the semi truck in lake Conway for 14 hours and he helped with the signs and getting us other signage out there. Whenever I have called him, I get a very positive "can do" response and that is so rare and refreshing. I wish he worked for us, but since he works for you I wanted to compliment you about his work ethic.

Many Thanks,
Captain Keith Eremea
Troop Commander – Troop A
Arkansas State Police

STORM DEBRIS REMOVAL

This letter is to bring something positive to your attention, that I am sure you are already aware of, but rarely hear about. Which is that you have some good people doing a good job out there and this letter is just a small way of saying thank you for a job well done.

The recent snow storm had Highway 300 in Roland impassible, blocked with fallen trees and power lines, as was the case throughout Central Arkansas. Your crews got the roadways cleared enough to traverse and as with other areas there is still the debris to be cleaned up. I realize that will take a while to accomplish.

However, on my drive back and forth between Roland and Little Rock, I kept seeing a very large limb broken over and hanging from high up in a tree over the west bound lane in Natural Steps. It was hanging by very little and I could see that when it fell, if it fell onto a vehicle it could possibly cause serious injury or death to anyone passing under it.

I called the State Highway Department and was transferred to Mr. Jerry Stovall and told him of the situation. He said he would assess the situation and get the limb removed as soon as possible. The very next day, Mr. Stovall called me back to say he had a crew check the area for the limb, and that the limb in question had been located and cut loose. I thanked him personally for the prompt service.

I realize the odds were that even when the limb had fallen on its own, it is likely it would have been a non-event. However, we are never exempt from a small thing becoming a tragedy for someone. As a kid, I remember my Dad called such limbs potential "widow makers" — and they are.

Again, thank you and your employees, for helping us citizens out here. We do appreciate your work and sometimes we need to take time to tell you.

Sincerly Yours,
Duane Chapman
Roland, Arkansas



Arkansas State Highway and
Transportation Department
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