

# The Connection

Fall 2024 **NEWSLETTER**

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Greetings to all ARDOT retirees. Wow! This year is really going by fast. It’s been a really busy time for my family watching and helping grandchildren grow up (by spoiling them) and dealing with family issues.

As you are well aware, the last few years have been hard on the World, our Country, and our Association. The District chapters are meeting again, and we will have our third Statewide meeting since the pandemic at the Bishop Park Recreation Center in Bryant on Thursday October 17, 2024, beginning at 11:30 a.m. Our speaker this year is Lorrie Trogen, President/CEO of the Arkansas Bankers Association. Further details are included in this newsletter.

Membership and participation in the Association allows us to continue the fellowships developed over our years of service. But there are other reasons for joining and participating. Among them are:

- To stay informed on what’s happening at ARDOT. This includes getting updates about retirement benefits, health insurance and financials.
- To promote or oppose legislation which affects retirees. Although the Association is not a registered lobbying organization, informing retirees about proposed changes to laws and regulations allows retirees to let their local representatives know about their informed opinions of the changes.
- To persuade all retired employees to act as goodwill ambassadors to promote the activities and traditions of ARDOT.

I was reading some of the messages from the past presidents and found this “Message from the President” by Mike Limbird in 2019:

“There is always some news that we would like to ensure retirees know and the best way to get that information to all retirees is through the local retiree chapter meetings. Each District has a Retiree Chapter with set meeting dates, times, and locations. The northwest corner of the state has a Chapter made up of retirees who worked in that corner of the state for District 4 or District 9. This Newsletter has that information in the Chapter Reports section of the Newsletter; this information is also found on the Department’s website (ardot.gov). Once on the website, the information can be found at Division/ Retirement/Retirees. The website also has the four latest Newsletters, the By-Laws, and Membership Application. Please visit the site; if we can get additional useful information on the site, let one of the officers know and we’ll see if it can be done. The Department has been very supportive in making this information available. The basis of the Retiree Association is the District Chapters; the officers of those District Chapters often struggle to keep the individual Chapters viable. Statewide, we have more dues paying members than we have meeting attending members. Several of the

Chapters have gone from monthly or bimonthly meetings to quarterly meetings and still may have low attendance at the meetings. The District 10 Chapter is struggling with this now. A Chapter is not very effective for the members if no one attends the Chapter meetings. Items will be brought to the attention of the Retirement Board through the Retirees' Representative more effectively if the concerns come through the Chapter/Chapters. Check with your Chapter officers to see what you can do to help maintain the attendance at Chapter meetings. This could include carpooling with a friend/s or starting a call around to remind folks of upcoming meetings."

The article is still relevant today. The District 10 Chapter has made a recovery, but Districts 4 and 9 Chapters are struggling. Information about the Association is on ARDOT's website under the Benefits and Compensation Divisions tab. <http://www.ardot.gov/divisions/benefits/association-of-retired-ardot-employees/>

After over 2 years serving as the President of the Association, I will be handing over the Presidency to Senior Vice President Patty Anthony.

**We are still in need of members to serve as the Senior Vice President and Vice President for the coming new terms. Also, our Secretary/Treasurer combo of Ronnie and Kit Smith will be retiring after the next term. We are in need of a replacement for the Secretary/Treasurer position. Please contact me or Patty if you are interested, or be ready to nominate someone for these positions at our business meeting in October.**

David Mayo, President



## STATEWIDE ANNUAL MEETING

Come and join your fellow retirees at the ARDOT Association of Retired Employees Annual Statewide luncheon and meeting beginning at 11:30 a.m. on October 17, 2024, at the Bishop Park Community Center, 6401 Boone Rd, Bryant, AR. King Kat of Lonoke is catering the event with fish, chicken, and all trimmings.

Our guest speaker this year is Lorrie Trogden, President/CEO of the Arkansas Bankers Association. Come and enjoy her comments.

Tickets (\$15.00) can be purchased by mailing the form attached to this newsletter with your payment to Ronnie/Kit Smith, 6396 Bernice Ave., Springdale, AR 72762 or at the door. Please let us know if you are planning to attend.

This will be a great time of fun and fellowship.

Lorrie Trogden serves as the President/CEO of the Arkansas Bankers Association. She leads the Association's strategic initiatives, including planning, member services, governance, and legislative affairs at the state and federal level.

Trogden has a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, a Master's of Science in Operations Management and is an American Society of Association Executives Certified Association Executive.

She serves as the Immediate Past Chairman of the Board for the Graduate School of Banking at Madison, Wisconsin, a trustee for the Graduate School of Banking at LSU, Economics Arkansas Executive Committee, Arkansas Capital Corporation Executive Committee, State Alliance of Banking Associations Executive Committee, American BankPac Board of Directors, and the American Society of Association Executives Government Relations Committee.



# Address and Beneficiary Changes

Attention all retirees, if you move, please notify RoShunda Watson at the Arkansas State Highway Employees' Retirement System (ASHERS) office at (501) 569-2532. Besides keeping your address and phone number current, you also need to keep your beneficiaries current. You should contact the Group Insurance Office at (501) 569-2417 for beneficiary updates on your life insurance. Since 2001, the Retirement System provides an additional lump-sum benefit of \$7,500 payable to your beneficiary at the retiree's death. If you have any questions about this benefit or the beneficiary for this benefit, please call (501) 569-2532.



Photos from the 2023 Annual Meeting- Guest speaker was Rex Nelson, Senior Editor of the AR Democrat Gazette

## Frank Russenberger (January 8, 1949 - April 11, 2024)

We were saddened to hear of the death of Frank Russenberger on April 11, 2024. Frank was an active member of the Retirees Association. Frank served as the President of the Association of Retired Employees in 2016 and was one of the signers of the latest approved By-Laws of the Association.

Frank was a man of many talents. Here are some highlights from his obituary:

After graduating from the U of A with a Master's Degree in Civil Engineering, he served eight years in the U.S. Army (inactive Reserves) Corps of Engineers and was honorably discharged as a Captain.

Frank spent 34 years working at the Arkansas Highway & Transportation Dept. and retired in 2008 as the District 8 Engineer in Russellville. In his career the AHTD sent Frank to work in Osceola, Paragould, Little Rock, and Russellville. Frank was a career-long member of the National Society of Professional Engineers.

Frank was also a square dancer, motorcyclist, Advanced Master Gardener, and woodworker.

Frank is survived by his wife of 53 years, Linda, and several children and grandchildren.

# We are excited to announce that ASHERS has a new logo!!!



ASHERS will begin phasing in the use of this new branding beginning in July 2024. Although all letters will have this logo incorporated as part of the stationary, we will continue to use the old envelopes until we have used up our current inventory.

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## **Direct Deposit:**

The ASHERS staff would like to encourage those receiving paper checks/warrants for their annuity payments and DROP withdrawals to consider enrolling in direct deposit.

## **Benefits:**

**Convenience and speed** are the most important benefits of direct deposit. Your annuity payment is digitally placed directly into your account and alleviates the need of driving to the bank to deposit your check. Direct deposit is quicker than using a mobile banking app to make your deposit, as you are not relying on the US Postal Service for delivery of the physical check. In addition, you have immediate access to your funds.

Other benefits of this method are **safety and security**. Because you do not receive a paper document, there is no worry of forgery or losing, misplacing, or damaging the check. If by chance your paper check is lost or stolen, it could take up to a month for the payment to be reissued by the State.

## **How to enroll:**

To enroll in direct deposit, please contact the ASHERS Office at (501) 569-2411. We will send you the appropriate form by mail. Once our office receives the completed original form, we will contact you once again to validate your identity before processing your request.



Robyn Smith  
ASHERS Executive Secretary

# Upcoming District Chapter Meetings

At these meetings, representatives from the Association, Benefits and Compensation Division, and the Insurance Section will give a presentation and be available for questions.



**District 1**- Roy Morris, President  
Thursday, September 5, 2024: Catfish Island, Colt

**District 2**- Kelly Slater, President  
Met Thursday, June 20, 2024, at Cane Creek State Park  
Thursday, September 26, 2024: Leons Catfish and Shrimp, Pine Bluff

**District 3**- Jim Blackwell, President  
Wednesday, September 11, 2024: Catfish at Doddridge

**District 4**- No contact information

**District 5**- "Shorty" Coles, Vice-President  
Tuesday, September 10, 2024: H&H Café, Moorefield

**Central Office/District 6**- Mike Selig, President  
Met August 5, 2024: Whole Hog on Markham  
Meets first Monday of every month.

**District 7**- Mike Nelson, President  
Met for a fish fry on Thursday, May 16, 2024: White Oak Lake State Park

**District 8**- Janet Boozer, President  
Thursday, October 8, 2024: Western Sizzlin, Russellville

**District 9**- No contact information

**District 10**- Alan Walter, President  
Thursday, September 19, 2024: Grecian Steak House, Paragould

**Northwest Chapter**- Sam Turner, President  
Tuesday, September 17, 2024 @ 1:00: Golden Corral, Fayetteville

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Open enrollment for the 2025 plan year will take place from November 1 to November 30, 2024. This year, we will not hold any in-person meetings. However, if you'd like the Insurance office to meet with your local Retiree Association, please reach out to Ronda Walthall at 501-569-2420.



There will be no major changes to the upcoming plan year, though there will be a minor rate increase. We will send out the updated rates once they are available.

For any questions, please contact Ronda or Lauren in the Insurance office at 501-569-2420.



IN LOVING  
*memory*

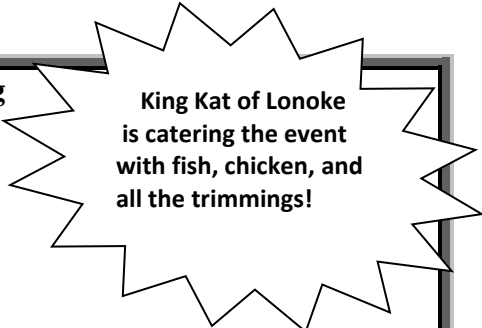
Adams, Robert	Durham, Billy	Jessup, Forest	Phillips, Shirley
Anderson, Bertha*	Eddy, Gregory	Johnson, Dennis	Pierce, James
Anderson, Gary	Elumbaugh, Orville	Jones, Francis	Rainwater, Jimmy
Bagley, Velma	Erwin, Esther*	Jones, Harbert	Ranson, Richard
Baird, George	Eubank, Richard	Jones, Jimmy	Riggs, Kenneth
Barham, Joe	Ficker, Billy	Jones, Steve	Roberts, John
Bartleston, Bonnie	Fields, Omel	Kitchens, Howard	Roy, Vershall
Bellott, Julie	Fife, Brickey	Kling, Dollie*	Russenberger, Charles
Berry, Snoda*	Fooks, Jimmy	Lee, Alfred	Schlaefli, Ernest
Blocker, Veatria*	Ford, Mastin	Lewis, Gary	Scroggins, Gary
Boykin, Earnest	French, Dennie	Lister, Daniel	Smith, Jimmy
Brannon, Calvin	Fullen, Joseph	Littleton, Shirley	Smith, Johnny
Brantley, Bobbie*	Galloway, Lucretia	Loyd, Imogene*	Steele, James
Brown, Elizabeth*	Gibson, Mary	Magee, Neal	Stuart, Marlin
Brown, Isle*	Glass, Patricia*	Mahan, James	Sudbury, Lonnie
Brown, Myrtle	Glenn, Mark	Malat, Laura	Taylor, Linda*
Brown, Rosemary*	Gold, Betty*	Mann, Mary	Taylor, Thomas
Callahan, Joseph	Gray, John	Marrs, Dan	Thomas, Donald
Callicott, Harold	Griffis, James	Marsh, Robert	Thompson, James
Cansler, Betty*	Griffith, Patsy*	Martin, Ross	Trotter, Thomas
Cardin, Robert	Griffith, Paul	McGraw, Simon	Tyler, Jeremy
Carr, John	Grimes, Gary	McHalfey, James	Varvil, Lula
Chandler, Debra	Hall, Gary	McIntyre, Hazel*	Wagner, Joan*
Chapman, Jarrell	Hamilton, Eddie	McKim, Alton	Waits, Lawrence
Clark, James	Harris, Linda*	McKinney, Bobby	Watkins, Brent
Clark, Ray	Harris, Steve	McMickle, Elizabeth	Watson, Rebecca*
Collins, Donald	Harrison, Ellen	McPherson, David	Weaver, Betty*
Cox, Addie*	Hatchett, James	Meyer, Kevin	Weaver, Jimmy
Curry, Marvin	Hays, Sarah*	Mize, Barbara	Westbrook, Donald
Daggs, James	Helms, Bobby	Moore, Loyal	White, Robert
Davidson, James	Hensley, Gary	Morgan, Deloris*	Whitney, Kenneth
Davies, Hedley	Herren, Dennis	Morgan, Donald	Whitson, Ruby*
Davis, Mildred	Hicklin, David	Murray, Lois*	Williams, Adelia*
Doughty, Billie*	Higgs, Arlene*	Muscalino, Joseph	Williams, Curtis
Draper, James	Hinton, James	Nickels, William	Williams, Ella*
Dumas, Catherine*	Holman, W.C.	Nugent, Donald	Willis, Brian
Dumeny, Gracie*	Hughes, Doyle	Parks, George	Womack, Paul
Dunigan, Ronald	Huneycutt, Linda*	Payton, Mary*	Wortham, H. A.
Dunlap, Billy	Hunter, David	Pellham, Delbert	Wright-Irvin, Margaret*
Dunn, Bettie*	Ingle, Carroll	Pense, Alvis	

Spouse\*

“We regret any omissions”



**Tickets for Statewide Annual Meeting**  
**11:30 a.m. October 17, 2024**  
**Bishop Park, Bryant Arkansas**  
**\$15.00 Per Person**  
**MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:**  
**AHTD Retirees Association**  
**PLEASE RSVP BY SEPTEMBER 26**



**King Kat of Lonoke**  
**is catering the event**  
**with fish, chicken, and**  
**all the trimmings!**

District / Central Office Division \_\_\_\_\_

Name _____	Member _____	Spouse _____
Name _____	Member _____	Spouse _____
Name _____	Member _____	Spouse _____
Name _____	Member _____	Spouse _____

Address to send tickets to: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

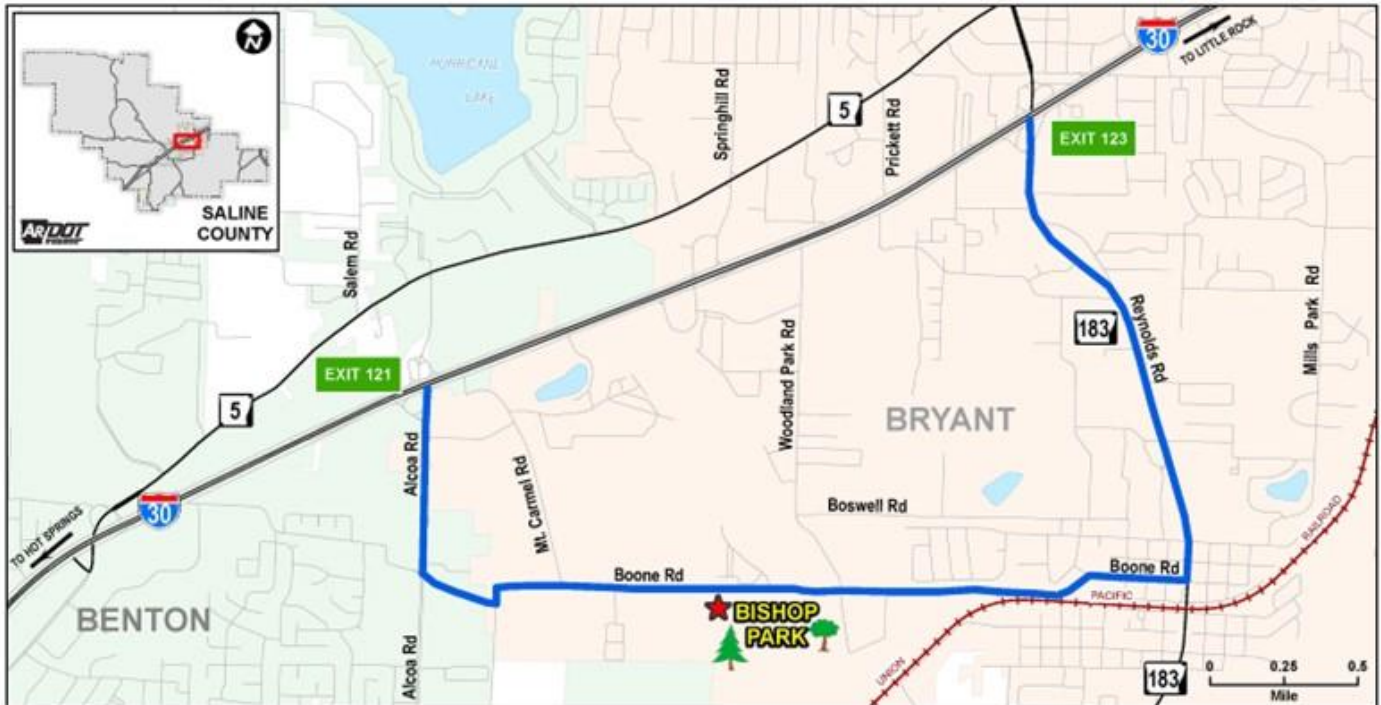
Mail this form with your check to: Ronnie and Kit Smith, 6396 Bernice Ave., Springdale, AR 72762



**Our guest speaker this year is Lorrie Trogden, President/CEO of the Arkansas Bankers Association.**

**Do not miss out on food, fun, fellowship, door prizes and valuable information!!!**

**BRYANT COMMUNITY CENTER AT BISHOP PARK**



ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED  
ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF  
TRANSPORTATION EMPLOYEES  
INC.



Ronnie and Kit Smith  
Secretary/Treasurer  
6396 Bernice Ave  
Springdale, AR 72762

Return Service Requested

Presort Standard  
U. S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit # 645  
NLR, AR  
72114

We urge you to fill out the Membership Application Form below. You can turn it in to your local Chapter Secretary/Treasurer or mail application and \$15.00 annual membership dues or \$10 annual spouse dues to: **Ronnie and Kit Smith, Secretary/Treasurer, 6396 Bernice Ave., Springdale, AR 72762.** Make your check payable to: **AHTD Retirees Association.**

**2025 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM**

Retiree Name \_\_\_\_\_  \$15 Fee Enclosed  
Spouse Name \_\_\_\_\_  \$10 Fee Enclosed  
Phone Number (optional) \_\_\_\_\_ Year You Retired \_\_\_\_\_ Central Office Division/  
District No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Street or Route & Box No. City State

Check this box and add your email address below if you want the newsletter emailed next year

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_