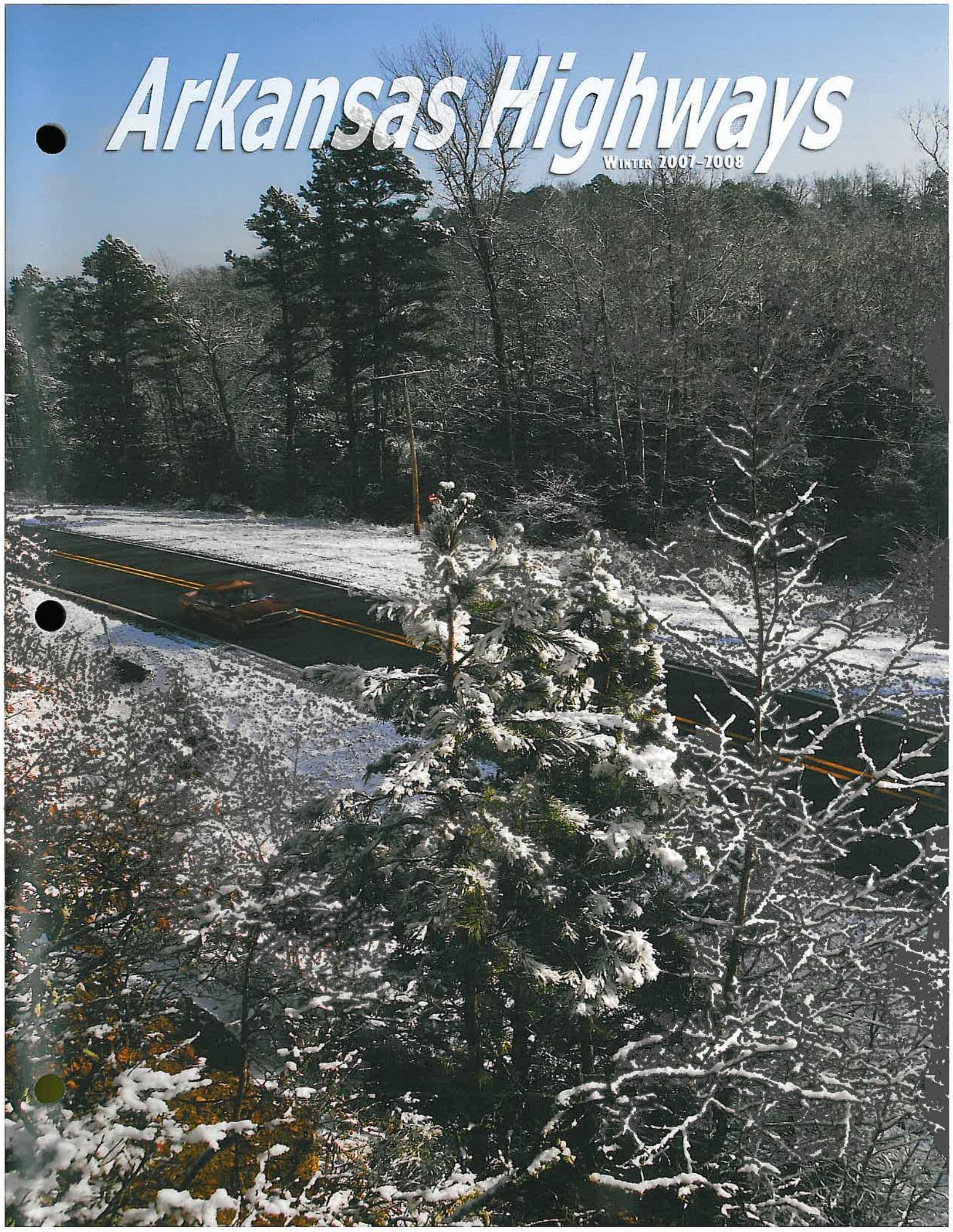


Arkansas Highways

WINTER 2007-2008



Director's Message

As we proceed through 2008 and go about the task of improving our highway system, officials in Arkansas continue to search for new methods of financing roadway improvements.

Inflation has dealt a blow to our transportation budget. Our present day buying power is not what it used to be. For example, in 1991, a \$10 million overlay program utilizing asphalt would have improved 167 miles of highways. Today, it will only improve 55 miles. With a \$25 million bridge replacement program, we could have replaced 78 bridges in 1991. Today, it would only replace 33 bridges. Those numbers represent nearly a 65% decrease in buying power over the last 16 years.

The combination of rising inflation and flat highway revenues has created problems for both state and local transportation agencies across the country. All are experiencing financially lean times and are working to find additional revenues for much needed highway improvements.

In Washington D.C., the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission has been looking for ways to reform the nation's transportation programs. Key recommendations include significantly increasing the monetary investment in surface transportation, shortening the time it takes to get projects built, reducing the number of federal transportation programs, and creating a new federal oversight commission to develop national strategic transportation plans.

To fund the recommendations and help fill the gap between rising inflation and flat revenues, the national study suggests:

- an increase in the federal motor fuels tax of up to 40 cents per gallon with the rate indexed and phased in over five years;
- creating a user fee based on vehicle miles traveled;
- increasing the use of toll roads;
- utilizing peak hour or "congestion pricing" on certain roadways;
- encouraging private investment in our highways; and
- increasing the freight fees charged at ports.

For rural states like Arkansas, some of these suggestions have limited application. Members of the Arkansas Highway Commission and the AHTD staff have looked into several of these methods in the past. The conclusion has been that we simply don't have the traffic volumes needed to make options, such as tolling, privatization and congestion pricing, viable. But we will continue to evaluate possible sources of new revenue for highway improvements.

In spite of national, state, and local funding concerns, AHTD employees continue to put forth great effort. In this issue of *Arkansas Highways*, we recognize the AHTD's Rodeo team that competed in the 2007 Southern Regional Equipment Rodeo in Asheville, North Carolina. This was the fifth year for the event, and, after winning the first four Regional Rodeos, our team came home with an impressive second place finish. Our overall record at the Regional Rodeo is a reflection of the tremendous job our employees do on a daily basis.

Challenges persist, but we will continue to explore all options for increasing the amount of money available for the work of the Department. History tells us that whatever we have available, the Commission and Department employees will put those resources to good use.



Paul Flowers
Director of Highways and Transportation

ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION



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Chairman



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Vice Chairman



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Arkansas Highways



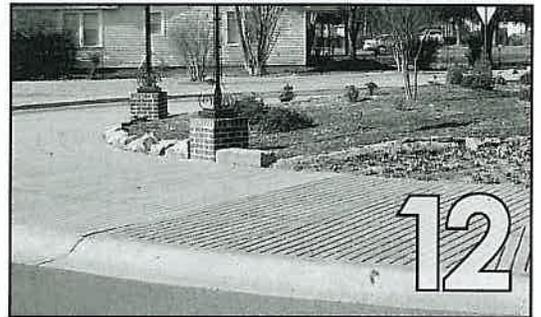
Arkansas Highways

Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department - Winter 2007 - 2008

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Back Cover: Scenic State Highway 16, Cleburne County



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One Person's Fight Against Litter: A 300-mile Walk Across Arkansas



Teresa Pelliccio

Most Arkansans are aware of the litter problem that exists, not just in Arkansas, but across the entire country. Discarded items can be found in parking lots, along streets and highways, and even in our lakes and streams.

The Arkansas State Highway & Transportation Department spent approximately \$5.6 million in 2007 cleaning up litter from our roadsides. We are helped in that battle by volunteers in the Department's "Adopt-A-Highway" program and by the Department's Litter Hotline.

One Fayetteville woman's solution to littering was more personal and quite ambitious. Teresa Pelliccio came up with an idea that would allow her to do her part to clean up our state and raise public awareness of roadside pollution at the same time. Her idea became a 300-mile trek across Arkansas picking up litter every step along the way.

Pelliccio's journey began on October 1st, 2007, in the town of St. Francis, located in the extreme northeast corner of the state. She walked Highways 412 and 62 westward picking up litter along the way for 300 miles until she arrived in Siloam Springs, located on the Oklahoma border, two weeks later.

David Nilles, AHTD Public Affairs Specialist, spoke with Pelliccio.

What inspired you to make this walk?

About five years ago, as I was driving along a beautiful Arkansas highway, I was taken aback by how much litter was on the shoulder. It was such an odd contrast. I couldn't understand how anyone could be driving along with this beauty surrounding them, roll down their window and discard their garbage. I thought, maybe they were just doing what they had always done. Maybe they'd never even thought about doing anything different. Maybe if they heard a different message, perhaps they would become more conscientious. At that moment, a desire sprung up inside of me. I wanted to walk across the state and send that message out, hopefully reaching those individuals.

This summer, after attending a workshop entitled "What Is Mine to Do?" my desire was re-awakened and I could no longer ignore it. Little did I know what was involved in such an undertaking.

What did you hope to accomplish?

I hoped to raise public awareness of roadside pollution, pollution in general, and encourage people to recycle in an effort to reduce the amount of waste that is going into our landfills. With so many overwhelming environmental issues staring us in the face this is one area in which everyone can easily do their part and make an enormous difference. My message is simple: What can one person do? Everyone can put litter in its proper place and recycle.



Did you have help as you crossed the state?

One of the things I learned from the trek is what it takes to do something like this. It takes a lot of committed people willing to give of their time and/or resources. Ideally, eight walking volunteers per day, plus me, would have been incredible. Some days it was just me and one volunteer. We just did our best. Thank goodness for Greg Butts, Director of Arkansas State Parks. He provided many of my volunteers and they were all such incredible people. I hesitate

to now call this project "mine." It was my dream, but as I started knocking on doors, many were closed, but so many more people opened their doors and shared my vision and this was certainly "our" project.

How many miles did you walk each day?

My goal was to cover 20 miles each day bagging litter and recyclables separately along the way. Some days there just weren't enough volunteers to cover this many miles and most days, there was no support vehicle so we just did our best. I soon realized that I had to detach from the "number of miles" I covered each day. The walk was really the vehicle which allowed the opportunities for press, public awareness and education.

Where did you stay each evening?

I spent the nights in various hotels along the way. Keep Arkansas Beautiful made most of the arrangements through the Arkansas Hospitality Association and other contacts.

Were the local communities supportive as you passed through each town on your route?

The cities were very supportive and thankful for our clean up efforts. We had press every day in the form of television, radio and/or newspapers. Some local restaurants provided a meal for me and sometimes my volunteers. Judge Jansen of Randolph



Volunteers gear up.



Pellicio received coverage in local newspapers.

County was incredible. He provided additional manpower and personally took time to have lunch with us. I met some really wonderful people.

Were you able to measure how much trash you collected once your trek was complete?

We picked up a total of 5,880 lbs of garbage. We recycled 406 lbs of plastic, 296 lbs of aluminum and 297 lbs of glass. The total weight of litter cleaned up was almost 3 tons, 999 lbs. of which was recycled.



Much of what was collected was recycled.

What did you accomplish personally?

If nothing else, this has had an impact on me personally. It is something I've needed to do for quite sometime. The importance of listening to my intuition has been re-enforced. I often tell people, your intuition is your inner genius. It is the voice of your inner most true self. We must stay connected to it. Many times I had thought

about acting upon this idea. Sometimes I wondered if I would ever jump out there and do it. Shortly after meeting my best friend and life partner, James, I told him about it and he simply said, "So, do it." Sometimes we just need one trusting voice to support us, to reassure us that we are not insane. I mean, walking across the state picking up litter isn't exactly normal....relatively speaking! I believe that in executing and completing this project, I have put myself in a position to be ready for what lies ahead. Again, I'm not certain about what that may be, but I feel that I am ready and well equipped.

How did it feel to arrive at your final destination in Siloam Springs?

As we approached the Visitor's Center in Siloam Springs, I saw some familiar faces. My excitement level rose and I felt a burst of energy and elation. I started running towards the green ribbon, letting out a loud whoooooowww! As I crossed the line I had tears well up but I fought them back. I was overwhelmed at the sight of all of those folks who believed in my project, supported me and were there to share the grand finale with me. Inside the Visitors Center was a bulletin board reflecting all of the sorts of litter we had dealt with as well as a map charting my trek. There were balloons, a beautiful cake with our team icon, punch and snacks and beautiful smiling faces. I am not big on public speaking but aside from the tears, it was easy to express my feelings for the people who stood beside me and made this project come together.

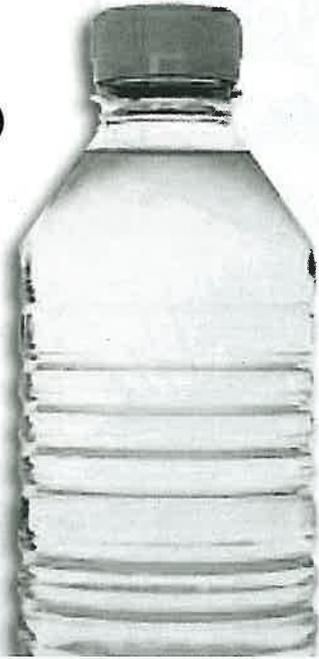
What have you learned from this adventure?

I can't stress enough that I have truly learned the importance of volunteering. I am amazed by the volunteers that accompanied and supported me. There are no words to express my gratitude to these beautiful people. And this project would have been impossible without them all. Which brings me to another point, I have met some very interesting, caring, conscientious people through this experience. In addition to raising awareness of the pollution issue, this has been the best part.



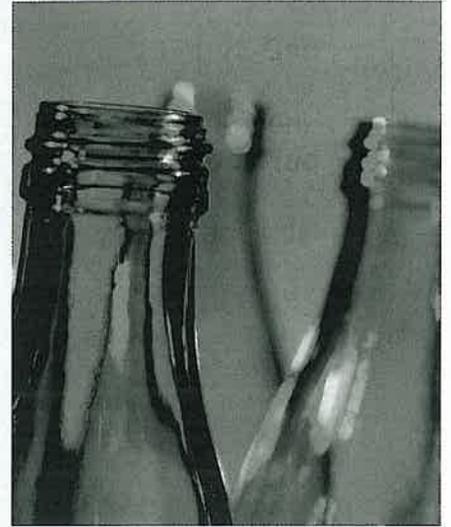
A cake and supporters awaited at the end of the final mile.

Litter & Recycling



- Cigarettes are the most abundant form of litter in Arkansas and can linger in our environment for up to 25 years.
- Plastic foam cups are not biodegradable.
- 10% of all litter is food wrappers.
- For every ton of paper that is recycled, 17 trees are saved.
- In this decade, Americans will throw away more than 11 million tons of glass bottles and jars.
- The energy saved from recycling one glass bottle can run a 100-watt light bulb for four hours.
- Americans throw away 25,000,000 plastic beverage bottles every hour!
- Five recycled plastic bottles make enough fiberfill to stuff a ski jacket.
- Twenty cans can be made from recycled material with the same amount of energy it takes to make one new can.
- A used aluminum can is recycled and back on the grocery shelf as a new can, in as little as 60 days.
- Because so many are recycled, aluminum cans account for less than 1% of the total U.S. waste stream.
- The United States throws away more trash than any other country.
- 3.6 million pounds of trash was collected during the 2004 Great Arkansas Cleanup.
- If every American recycled one-tenth of their newspapers, we would save about 25,000,000 trees a year.

Source: Keep Arkansas Beautiful

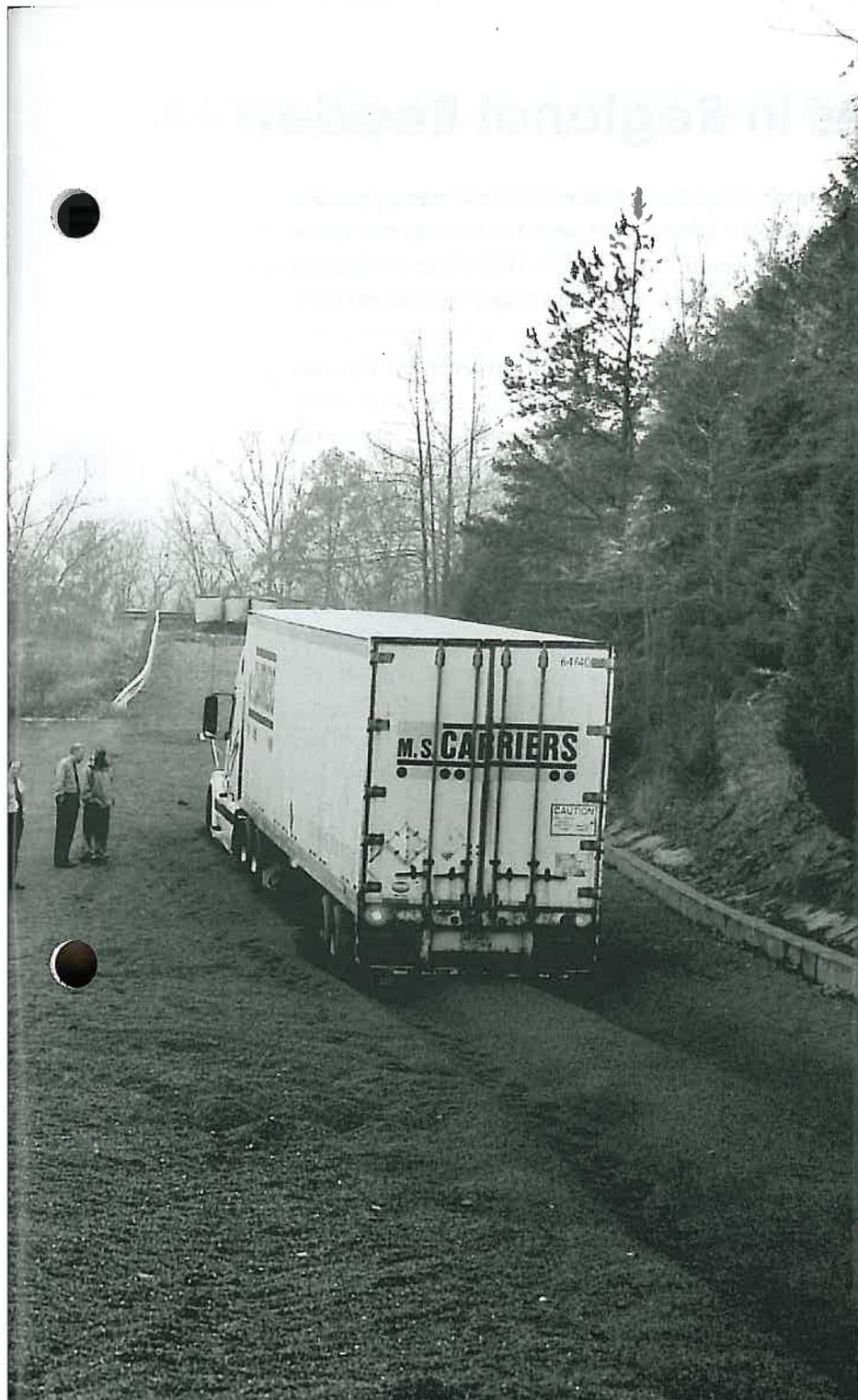


DON'T LITTER. RECYCLE.



Runaway Truck Ramps There When Needed





Motorists who don't travel Highway 65 or Highway 7 in Arkansas, may not be familiar with Arkansas' runaway truck ramps. For those who wonder, the ramps feature long, straight stretches of gravel and can be found veering off of steep downhill stretches of roadway in northern Arkansas.

The purpose of a runaway ramp is to slow down and stop commercial trucks, or other vehicles, that may experience brake failure while coming down one of the steep hills. The gravel, which varies in depth from a few inches at the entrance to around three or four feet near the end, slows the vehicle down and eventually brings it to a stop. The ramps, without a doubt, serve as a safer alternative for drivers than traveling downhill with no breaking ability.

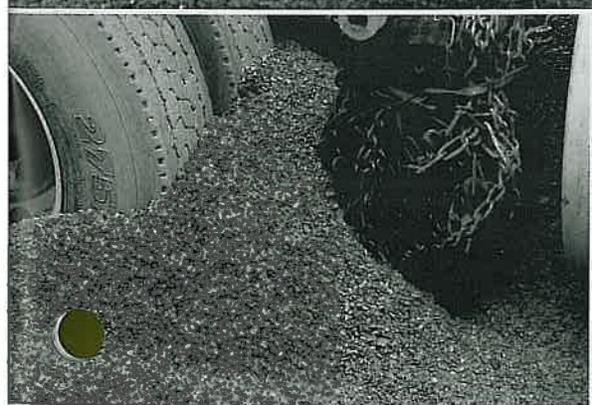
There are two runaway ramps in Arkansas. One is on Highway 65, in Van Buren County. The second ramp is located in Newton County on Highway 7, south of Jasper.

"The ramp on Highway 7 is around 1,000 feet in length," states District 9 Engineer Ralph Fulton. "It is used, on average, four times per year."

The ramp on Highway 65 is shorter at 400 feet. "This ramp is used two or three times each month," stated District 8 Engineer Frank Russenberger.

Once a vehicle has come to a stop and the truck is removed from a ramp, the Highway and Transportation Department rakes the gravel in the ramp into place once again.

The driver of the truck in these pictures commented that he "sure was glad that ramp was there."



AHTD Competes in Regional Roadeo

The fifth annual Southern Regional Equipment Operators Roadeo took place last fall in Asheville, North Carolina. The event is held for states in the Southeastern Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials and was hosted, this past year, by the North Carolina Department of Transportation. Seven states participated in the 2007 competition for equipment operators.

The team from the Mississippi Department of Transportation took top honors as Champions for 2007 but the AHTD came in a strong second overall in the event. It should be noted that the AHTD won first place the first four years of competition. Other teams competing included Tennessee (finishing third), South Carolina, Georgia, North Carolina and Virginia. It is the largest field for the event since the Regional Roadeo began five years ago.

The 2007 Roadeo featured competition in six categories: Single Axle Dump Truck, Tandem Axle Dump Truck, Lowboy, Motor Grader, Tractor/Mower and Backhoe.

Arkansas' strongest showing was in the Tandem Axle Dump Truck category where

Tony Ruhl of District Ten and Kenny Howard of District Eight won first and second place respectively. District Eight's Joe Villalobos finished third in the Single Axle Dump Truck category.

Roadeo events featured the top two finishers in each field from each state competition held earlier in the year. The AHTD team included Lance Baker of District Nine; Todd Clifford of District Ten; John Harvey of District Two; William Hickman of District Seven; Kenny Howard of District Eight; Lewis James of District Four; Larry Otwell of District Three; Dwain Rosenbaum of District Three; Tony Ruhl of District Ten; Keith Skelton of District Five; Joe Villalobos of District Eight; and Trent Wood of District Ten.

"Yet another impressive finish for our Roadeo team," stated AHTD Director Dan Flowers. "The professionalism of our staff really shines through at these Roadeos year in and year out."

The 2008 Regional Roadeo will be held on October 2nd in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee.



AHTD's 2007 Regional Equipment Operators Roadeo Team: (l. to r.) Lewis James, District 4; Howard Kitchens, Equipment & Procurement; Joe Davidson, District 9; Jimmy Smith, District 1 retiree; Odis Barker, Equipment & Procurement; William Hickman, District 7; Todd Clifford, District 10; Kenny Howard, District 8; Keith Skelton, District 5; Tony Ruhl, District 10; Larry Otwell, District 3; Joe Villalobos, District 8; Lance Baker, District 9; Trent Wood, District 10; John Harvey, District 2; David Lambert, Maintenance; and, not pictured, Dwain Rosenbaum, District 3.

AHTD Equipment Goes To Highest Bidders

Sunny weather greeted a crowd gathered for the AHTD's annual auction of equipment held on October 30th.

Equipment available for purchase ranged from the very large to the very small and included an asphalt milling machine, dozers,

backhoes, vehicles and mowers, among other things.

Blackmon Auctions, Inc. handled the event and by the end of the day, 526 lots had been sold. Final net proceeds to the Highway and Transportation Department totaled \$1,051,898.



Roundabouts: Old Idea - New Option

Although motorists in Arkansas have had limited exposure to roundabouts, motorists may see more of them in the future as they travel the country. The rise in their popularity has to do with safety and an improved flow of traffic.

So, what is a roundabout and how does one work? It is a one-way, circular intersection in which traffic flows around a center island. The circular flow eliminates the possibility of traffic meeting head-on or cars crossing the path of oncoming traffic. The Federal Highway Administration believes that building more well-designed roundabouts will result in fewer crashes and less traffic delay than regular, signal-controlled intersections.

Intersection safety is of utmost importance when it comes to roadway design. According to the Federal Highway Administration, in 2004, more than 2.7 million intersection-related crashes occurred. That accounts for 45 percent of all crashes on U.S. roadways. In addition, 45 percent of all injury crashes occurred at intersections.

Why are there so many intersection crashes? The numerous possible crossing movements by motorists and pedestrians create a complex traffic situation. Add the element of speeding motorists and disregard for traffic controls and the dangers increase.

Roundabouts are an option in addressing the problem, because they reduce the number of accidents and the severity of intersection crashes. A roundabout eliminates some of the conflicting traffic, such as left turns, which cause crashes at traditional intersections. Because the roundabout traffic enters or exits only through right turns, the chance of severe crashes goes down. In addition, speeds at a roundabout are lower than normal intersections. Depending on the area and the design, speeds can vary from 12 mph on residential roundabouts to 25 mph on rural roundabouts. Design speeds above that would create a higher crash rate.

A 2000 study by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety evaluated 24 intersections across the country after construction of roundabouts. The study revealed a 39 percent decrease in crashes, a 76 percent decrease in injury crashes and a 90 percent reduction in crashes involving fatal or incapacitating injuries.

In Arkansas, there are plans for the state's first roundabouts on a state highway to be constructed on Highway 65B (Harkrider Drive) in Conway. It will be located at the intersection of Highway 65B and Highway 266 (Seibenmorgen Road) and is being designed by the City of Conway. A second one is planned in the same vicinity, at Highway 65B and Winfield Street. In addition, Conway has three other roundabouts already in operation on city streets. They are all relatively new and are located at the intersections of Prince and Western, Winfield and Washington, and Siebenmorgen and Bob Courtway. The Conway City Council approved an additional roundabout in February at the intersection of Bruce Street and Farris Road.

In addition to the safety factors, roundabouts can also be more cost-effective than traditional intersections. There are no traffic signals or poles to be factored into the costs of building them. As a result, maintenance costs are much lower. In addition, the design keeps cars moving steadily in all directions which cuts down on fuel-wasting, stop-and-go traffic and reduces air pollution. There are also aesthetic benefits. The middle of the circular design can serve as a focal point and include plans for trees, statues or fountains.

Today's modern roundabouts are different than the old traffic circles of the early 1900s in that they are much smaller. The first modern roundabout arrived in the United States in 1990 in the Las Vegas subdivision of Summerlin. The first on a state highway was built in Montpelier, Vermont, around the year 2000.

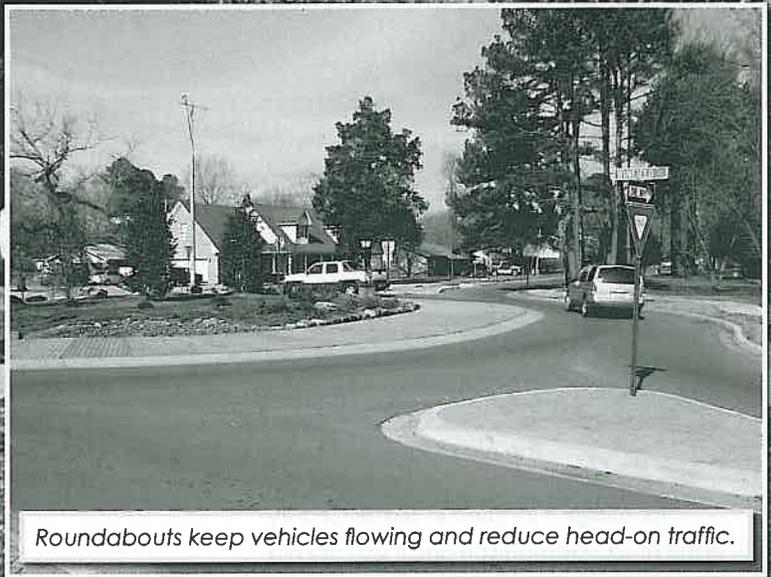
Nationwide, between 150 to 250 roundabouts are built each year. The FHWA would like to see as many as 1,000 built each year. The Institute for Highway Safety estimates that about 1,000 have been built so far and 23 states now have roundabout construction programs.

Though they are limited in number today, roundabouts represent a versatile and fast growing form of traffic control in the United States.

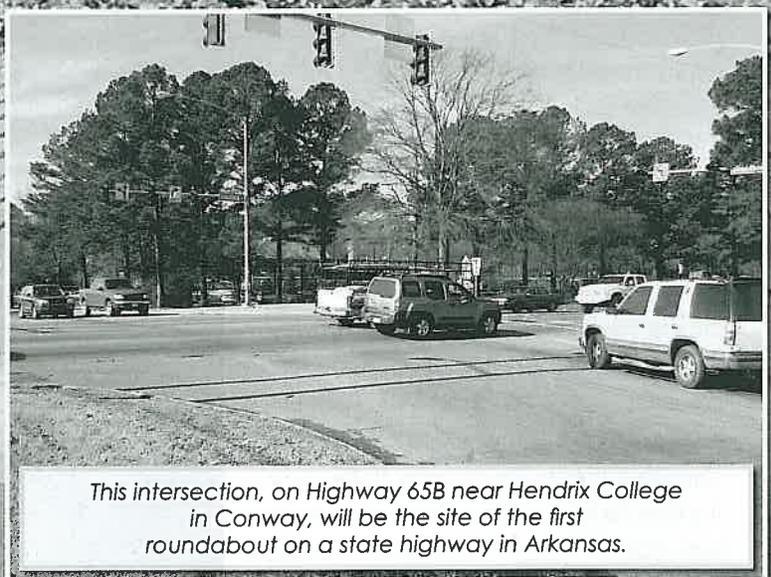




Vehicles enter a roundabout near Conway High School.



Roundabouts keep vehicles flowing and reduce head-on traffic.



This intersection, on Highway 65B near Hendrix College in Conway, will be the site of the first roundabout on a state highway in Arkansas.

The center of this roundabout in Conway features landscaping, decorative brickwork and lamp posts.

Standing Tall Below the Surface

Imagine a stately concrete bridge in the North Fork River valley, 888 feet long and 22 feet wide. The bridge surface is supported by five massive arches ranging between 155 and 175 feet wide. It was an impressive sight when it opened on New Year's Day in 1935, and today, it is just as impressive.



The old Highway 62 bridge in its heyday in the 1930s.

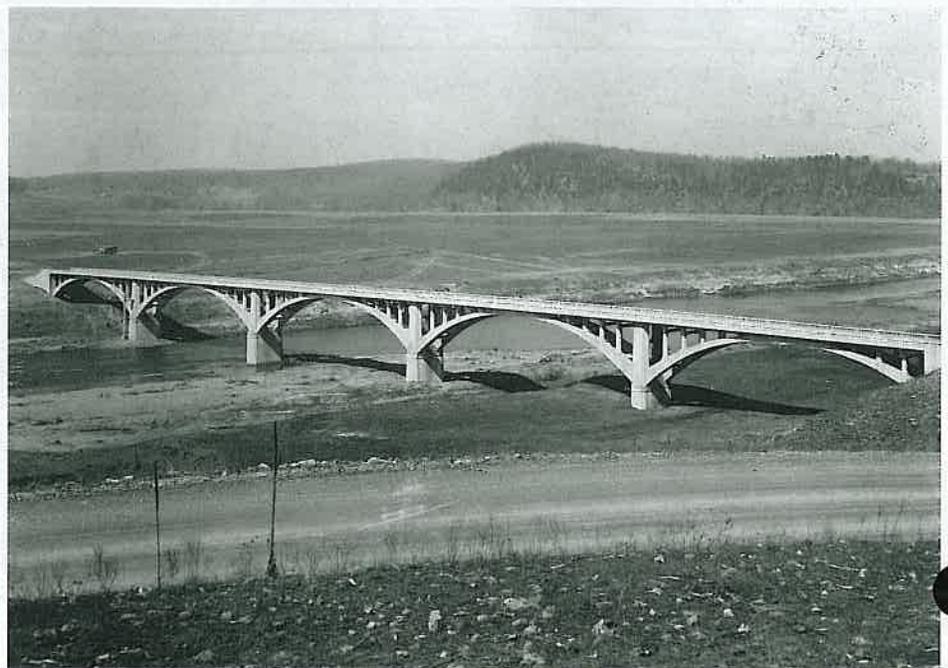
The bridge is located in Baxter County in the area of Henderson and if you are old enough, you may remember it. Those of a younger generation probably haven't seen it, but it is still there.

Today it stands underwater, 100 feet below the surface of Lake Norfork. Many have boated or water-skied right over it without even knowing it was there.

When it was built, the Henderson Bridge replaced Frank Smith's ferry service that he began in 1903. The Smith family ran a ferry across the North Fork River until 1935 when the Henderson Bridge was built on Highway 62. The ceremony to open the bridge was attended by 5,000 people from northern Arkansas and southern Missouri. People expected the bridge to carry traffic over the river for many years. Instead, it served its purpose for less than a decade as a result of the need for development and flood control in the area.

It was the 1930s and towns like Henderson and Mountain Home were desperate to find something to spark the economy and slow down the number of people abandoning their farms. The idea for a lake would bring the possibility of jobs, flood control, recreation and hydroelectric power to the area. As the idea became a reality, many people living in the proposed lake's basin were moved off of their land. The village of Henderson was moved eastward to higher ground. The June 1938 Flood Control Act authorized construction of the Norfork Dam and creation of Lake Norfork. Over 1,200 men worked on the project with construction carried out on a 24-hour-a-day basis. The dam was completed in 1944 and the new lake was formed. On February 19, 1944, the old Highway 62 Bridge was inundated by the rising water. Today, Lake Norfork has over 550 miles of uncommercialized shoreline. The bridge remains in place below the water's surface.

With the lake, and the loss of the bridge, came a new ferry system, this time operated by the AHTD. It served its purpose for more than 30 years but eco-



The area around the Highway 62 bridge is prepared for the new Lake Norfork.

conomic development and increased traffic dictated a more convenient way to cross the lake. Efforts to replace the ferries with a new bridge began in 1967 with Congressional authorization. Former President Richard Nixon signed a bill into law in 1973 and the Army Corps of Engineers opened bids in 1979 for the construction of two bridges, one on Highway 62 and one on Highway 101. Today, the two bridges carry traffic over Lake Norfolk.

The old Highway 62 Bridge still remains as a popular underwater attraction for scuba divers on Lake Norfolk. Divers from all over the central states come to experience the crystal clear waters and the amazing dive sites. The lake's clear waters make it ideal for exploring the bridge's massive old concrete spans. Though out of sight, the forgotten bridge remains one of the largest underwater structures in the United States.



Water begins to fill the reservoir and overtake the old bridge.

Dedications

Ground Broken for Highway 70 Project in North Little Rock

Officials gathered on November 19, 2007, to break ground for the Highway 70 (East Broadway) project in North Little Rock. The purpose of the project is to widen almost three miles of East Broadway from a narrow four-lane roadway to a five-lane roadway with curb and gutters. Under two contracts, the widening will extend from just east of Interstate 30 to Highway 165.

The first phase of this project was awarded to Weaver-Bailey Contractors in August at a cost of \$3.5 million. Under this contract, widening will extend from Locust Street eastward to Cornish Street. Also under this contract, the contractor improved the grade on East Broadway just west of Interstate 30 near Alltel Arena. The dip in the road had been the site of a previous railroad underpass.

The City of North Little Rock was responsible for moving all of the utilities. Daily traffic counts on East Broadway range between 17,000 and 20,000 vehicles per day.

Bids for the second phase of the project were opened in January of this year. That job will extend from Cornish Street to Highway 165 at a cost of approximately \$8.9 million, and construction should begin soon.



(l. to r.) AHTD Director Dan Flowers, Deputy Director and Chief Engineer Frank Vozel, Commissioner Cliff Hoofman, Mayor Patrick Henry Hays and Commissioner Carl Rosenbaum look over design plans for Broadway in North Little Rock.

Highway 371 Prescott

The Department held a Location Public Hearing on May 31st, 2007, at the Callom & Carney Clinic, in Prescott, to share plans for improvements to Highway 371.

The proposed improvements call for constructing a two-lane railroad overpass on Highway 371 in Prescott to connect Highway 371 to Highway 67.

In attendance from the AHTD were staff members from Roadway Design, Right of Way, Environmental, as well as District officials.

Highway 13 Carlisle

Approximately 60 people gathered at Carlisle Elementary School, in Carlisle, on July 24th, 2007, for a Design Public Hearing to discuss plans for improvements to Highway 13.

Plans call for improving approximately one mile of Highway 13, extending from Highway 70 in Carlisle northward to Interstate 40. The work will be on new location.

AHTD Departments attending the meeting included Roadway Design, Right of Way, Environmental and representatives from the District Office.

Highway 65 Gould

A Design Public Hearing was held at Gould High School, in Gould, on July 31, 2007, to share plans for improvements to Highway 65.

Those in attendance saw proposed improvements for two projects that will widen Highway 65 to four lanes. The work will begin at Highway 159, at Mitchellville, and extend northward for approximately ten miles, including a stretch through Gould.

A total of 101 people attended including AHTD staff from Roadway Design, Right of Way, Environmental and District officials.

Highway 88 (Higdon Ferry Road) Hot Springs

A total of 88 people attended a Design Public Hearing at St. Joseph's Mercy Health Center Building, in Hot Springs, on August 23, 2007, to hear about plans for improvements to Highway 88 (Higdon Ferry Road) in Hot Springs.

The proposed plans call for widening Higdon Ferry Road to five lanes, extending from Highway 270 northward to Highway 7 North.

Staff from the Roadway Design, Right of Way and Environmental Divisions, plus District officials, were in attendance at the meeting.

Highway 162 Alma

Approximately 160 people gathered at Alma High School, in Alma, on September 13th, 2007, for a Location Public Hearing on Highway 162.

The proposed highway project calls for making improvements to Highway 162 in order to reduce congestion through Alma and to provide a bridge over the Union Pacific railroad tracks. Presented at the meeting were three alternatives: improvements to existing Highway 162 through town, and, eastern and western alternatives on new location.

AHTD Roadway Design, Right of Way and Environmental staff, along with District officials, participated in the meeting.

Highway 412 Siloam Springs

The Department held a Design Public Hearing on October 30, 2007, at Southside West Elementary School, in Siloam Springs, to share plans for improvements to Highway 412 in Siloam Springs.

Plans call for widening 1.6 miles of Highway 412 to six lanes, extending from the Oklahoma State Line eastward to Washington Street.

AHTD Departments attending included Roadway Design, Right of Way and Environmental, as well as District officials.

Letters to the Department

November 15, 2007

I wanted to let you know what a fine officer you have in Officer Mark Willis. I live in Louisiana, but am called to work quite a bit in Arkansas. Recently, I was driving back from Pine Bluff on I-30 West when a fire blew out. I parked on the side of the road at Mile Marker 70. After looking at the tire, I called AAA and informed them of my situation and my location. They said they would send help in about an hour. I then saw an Arkansas Highway Police car turn around and go across the median.

Officer Mark Willis came to my rescue and expediently replaced my flat tire with my spare, placing his life in danger while the big tractor trailers passed by. He also was very instructional and hopefully, I'll remember his instruction! I must say God was certainly watching out for me and sent me an angel of mercy! I was quickly back on the road and home in Shreveport only 30 minutes later than normal! I can't tell you how much I appreciate his compassion, professionalism and courage

help me. I just wanted to let you know. We need more people like Officer Mark Willis in this world!

Sarah Goeders
Shreveport, LA

November 12, 2007

In our "hurry up" world, it's not every day that someone is willing to go out of the way to lend a helping hand. That's exactly what Sgt. J. Driver and PFC. G. Taylor did in October for my cousin and me. We had a screw in our tire and stopped at the weigh station where they were working. They were very kind and changed our tire. They were polite, respectful, and helped us with some directions to get the tire repaired the next day. Because of their help, we found a safe hotel for the night and the shop to have the tire repaired the next day. Please share this letter with those officers and say thank you from the two of us

Pam Elliot
Alvarado, TX

September 26, 2007

I wanted to send a note of appreciation and thanks about a situation involving one of your officers. My daughter and a friend were recently driving to Little Rock from Arkadelphia when they had a blowout after only minutes on the Interstate. They spent 30 minutes trying unsuccessfully to remove the tire and rim, even with help from a truck driver. The tire was rusted to the hub. Officer Mark Willis arrived and also tried the tire. He stayed with my daughter and friend until I arrived from Little Rock. He and I finally were able to break the tire free and repair the tire. Both myself and the two young ladies were very impressed with Officer Willis. As a man, and a father, I so appreciated his time and concern for their safety. I believe Officer Mark Willis went above and beyond the norm, and displayed great character and integrity. Our family will not forget him and his good will.

Sincerely,
Tom Tull

December 14, 2007

The Arkansas State Police would like to thank the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department for participating with us in two national highway safety campaigns this year. Results from our "Click It or Ticket" campaign showed an increase in seat belt usage by seven percentage points. The "Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest" campaign showed that Arkansas' law enforcement officers made over 700 DWI and DUI arrests.

Next year's national "Click it or Ticket" campaign has been set for May 19 - June 1, 2008. Likewise, the national impaired driving campaign has been set for the dates of August 15 - September 1, 2008. We look forward to working with your agency in this life-saving endeavor.

Sincerely,
Colonel Winford E. Phillips
Arkansas State Police

October 15, 2007

I am writing to compliment an AHTD employee, Mr. Tim Henry. On both occasions I have come in contact with him, he represented the AHTD in an exceptional manner. His professionalism and common sense prevailed in both instances.

I live on Highway 107 South in Vilonia. My driveway is the center line in the plans for the new U.S. Highway 64 bypass. It would require at least four moves of my drive and a water line during the construction of the bypass. I suggested to Mr. Henry an alternate route connecting with Bison Cove to the West of my property. Mr. Henry agreed but said it might be too late for the changes. Within a week Mr. Henry contacted me with the necessary changes.

On the second occasion, contractors had buried fiber optic cable but failed to compact the soil. The cable crossed my driveway, but is part of the AHTD's right of way. Contractors would not correct the situation. With the first rain after contractors had left, it was impossible to get a car through the muddy trench. I contacted an AHTD employee at the construction area of the 64 bypass. He said he would make some calls. After three days of no results and my filling of the trench three different times I contacted Mr. Henry. He told me he would take care of it. The following day a crew from the fiber optic installers was on the scene and had the problem corrected in less than 30 minutes. Once again Mr. Henry's integrity and dedication to getting the job done right made a lasting impression on me.

Serving as a USAF Officer for over 23 years I have directly supervised hundreds of Air Force officers and enlisted men. Typically all USAF personnel are loyal, dedicated, professional, hard working people who set the standard for the rest of our society. Now that I have made this brag about the USAF let me say this. Mr. Henry would stand tall beside any USAF Officer I have ever worked with. You need to be proud to have people of his caliber working for you. In closing: I salute you Mr. Henry!

William T. Matthews,
USAF (Retired)
Vilonia, AR

December 18, 2007

While working the Bridgeport Station today, a driver named Michael J. Smith of West Memphis, AR, came inside. He was looking for Officer Jamie Jordan. When I informed him that Officer Jordan was off tonight, he said he had been stopped by Jordan for a weight violation, and wanted someone to know what happened.

While Jordan was conducting business, Mr. Smith received a call from his family that his son had been taken to the hospital. Mr. Smith said Officer Jordan went above and beyond his regular call of duty to see him to the hospital to check on his son as soon as possible.

Mr. Smith wanted Jordan's supervisor to be informed of the officer actions, that he realized Jordan did not have to be so helpful, and to tell Officer Jordan his actions did not go unnoticed. He said he had come into contact with other officers before and that few would have been so helpful.

1 CL Nick Phillips
Arkansas Highway Police

January 25, 2008

I was recently taking my wife to the Little Rock Airport to arrive there by noon. As we approached Little Rock on I-40, there was an object in the right lane, about the length of a railroad crosstie. I hit it and felt quite a jolt, but I kept going since I-40 is no place to stop.

A couple of miles later, I felt a slight vibration on the left side. Then as I started the curve to the overpass, the left rear tire went to shreds. We called 911 and were told they would try to send someone to help.

Just a few minutes later, a white pick-up appeared. Help had arrived! Your employees, Jim Watkins and Kim Staton, graciously got my wife to the airport on time and then came back to help me.

Then Mr. Jim Watkins and Mr. Kevin Lingard returned and went to work as true professionals. In short order, they changed the tire and told me that I was ready to go. I said, "Good, I'm ready to pay." Jim said, "Sir, we will not accept payment. Our work is courtesy of the Arkansas State Highway & Transportation Department. It was our pleasure to help you when you needed help."

I got back on the road and headed for home. Being an old soldier, I am well aware of noting a job well done and understanding it takes good personnel selection and good training to produce outstanding results.

In this case, it was an exceptionally well-done job, complete with courtesy, understanding and professionalism.

I suggest, sir, that Jim, Kevin and Kim are recognized and commended for their performance of duty.

Respectfully,
Charles M. Bolen, Jr.
Lieutenant Colonel, USA, Retired
Clarksdale, MS

September 14, 2007

Thank you for your letter regarding the railroad crossing at Armstrong Lane and Highway 70, East of Brinkley. I thank you for the extensive efforts made by you and your staff to provide me the facts. Rest assured that your answers will be used to attain best results.

Sincerely,
Fairy Armstrong
Armstrong Family Farm

November 27, 2007

On November 21, at approximately 1:30 pm, a subject entered the First National Bank in Cove, about 15 miles south of Mena, and carried out an armed robbery. The dye pack exploded as he exited and he dropped the bag. The subject fled south on Highway 71 and the law was called. Officer Anthony Lewis, of the Arkansas Highway Police, was there to assist the Polk County Sheriffs Department in the search for the subject. Each officer was sent to a different location on a county road. At approximately 7pm, as Officer Lewis was traveling with his window down, he heard the subject yell. At this time he stopped, exited his patrol car and began to talk to the subject, who was up on a bank out of sight. The subject asked Officer Lewis to "Just shoot me." Officer Lewis replied he could do no such thing, and the subject was taken into custody without incident. Officer Lewis transported the subject to the Polk County Jail and released him to the Sheriff at that time.

I and the people of this community would like to express our gratitude for the work that Officer Lewis does in our area to make sure it remains a safe place to live - especially for his professionalism in a situation that could have turned out much differently.

Sincerely,
Ray B. Stanley
Polk County Judge

September 27, 2007

I am writing this letter to recognize Inspector Jay Thompson. After attending a General Hazardous Material Class in Little Rock, I feel better prepared for situations that may arise. This is due to the excellent teachings and direction of the instructors that led the class. They took extra steps in preparing us and making sure we would be able to understand and handle the materials which were given to us throughout the class. Through the experience in teaching they were able to keep the class very interested and attentive so the learning environment would be very effective for every student.

Thank you,
Sgt. Mark D. Fulco B-38
Mississippi Department of Transportation
- Office of Enforcement

November 15, 2007

Recently my husband and I were traveling through your beautiful state on Highway 71. We pulled into a rest area. We noticed that the parking lot and the grounds around the picnic area were very well maintained and the restrooms were very clean. Back at our car, the battery was dead and our cell phone wasn't working. A young man approached us and introduced himself as a state employee who takes care of the park. He offered to help and we gladly accepted. He soon found the problem - the terminals on the battery were loose. He tightened them and gave our car a jump. We were back on the road again and made it safely home without any problems. There must have been twenty people that walked by us at the rest area and never stopped to help. You should be very proud of that young man. He made our whole trip worthwhile. That rest stop is between a town called Waldron and Fort Smith. It was on a Sunday in October.

Yours truly,
Gary and Martha Hayes
Santa Barbara, CA

August 20, 2007

I am writing to commend one of your highway police officers, Clyde Crookham.

We were traveling from Branson to Arkansas, making our way home to the Houston area because of Hurricane Dean's possible impact on the Texas coast.

Just north of Exit 129 on I-30 westbound, we had a blowout on one of the tires of the travel trailer we were pulling. We pulled over as far as we could and put on our flashers. The traffic was extremely heavy.

My husband is 76 and has had a knee replacement and a hernia operation, so he did not feel able to change the tire. We called AAA and had waited two hours for their arrival. My husband was calling State Farm, with whom we also have road service insurance, when Officer Crookham arrived.

Officer Crookham immediately volunteered to change the tire. After positioning his cruiser with lights flashing behind our trailer to alert oncoming traffic, he proceeded to change the tire for us. He then directed us to a store to purchase a new spare and followed us for about a to make sure we were heading in the right direction. He could not have been more helpful or gracious.

My husband and I both feel that such helpfulness is worthy of recognition and commendation. We so much appreciate his help and rescue from what was a potentially dangerous situation. Our thanks also to the Arkansas Highway Police for training such a fine officer.

Yours truly,
June Milligan
(Mrs. William E. Milligan)
Seabrook, TX

November 8, 2007

I'd like to express my appreciation for the hard work and efforts of your officer, Cpl. Randy Harrison. He participated in a large safety event in Bentonville this fall. He obtained brochures from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and made arrangements for a "No Zone" exhibit to demonstrate the blind spots around large commercial vehicles. This event was attended by a large number of people who were each given the opportunity to experience the blind spots around a tractor trailer combination. These type of events have immeasurable benefits in improving highway safety. Please extend my appreciation to Corporal Harrison for a job well done.

Sincerely yours,
Fredrick L. McGraw
Division Administrator
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Admin.

December 12, 2007

This letter is to compliment two of your officers, Cpl. Andy Sain and Cpl. Jeff Yates. A few weeks ago, my truck broke down on Hwy 49 South. I could not get completely off the highway and I was very concerned that I might cause an accident. Corporals Sain and Yates came by and asked if they could help. They parked their patrol vehicle behind mine with their warning lights flashing. This was very comforting to me as it may have prevented a very serious accident.

The professionalism, attitude, and help that these officers displayed that day reflects favorably on your organization and makes me proud that we have such fine personnel doing a very necessary and tough job for our state. I request that you recognize each one of them for me.

Joe A. Taylor
Owner JT Motorsports
Jonesboro, Ar

January 7, 2008

We thank you for the exceptionally prompt action and excellent work on the highway right-of-way erosion off Highway 22 West onto Durvin Lane in Dardanelle.

Your employees brought the equipment on Friday, and completed the job on Monday. They were a very professional group of workers. They eliminated the erosion and packed gravel to keep the sloped area maintained. Thank you again!

Sincerely,
Don and Betty Johnson
Dardanelle AR

October 11, 2007

Thank you for going above and beyond to ensure that our 270 conference attendees had reliable and comfortable transportation for our annual conference in Little Rock this year. Your staff was punctual, flexible, and very professional throughout our conference, even as plans changed at the last minute. The individuals who were particularly accommodating were Steve Alexander, Alan Meadors, James Newcomb, Charles Brewer, Danny Chidester, Rick Cranford, and Tim Mahan. Thank you.

Sincerely,
DeLania Hardy
Executive Director

August 6, 2007

I wanted to thank Ralph Fulton for taking time to come to Eureka Springs. Thanks for having the elected official meeting and the public involvement meeting regarding the change order for the landslide. I am appreciative for the endeavor to provide an opportunity for our citizens and surrounding residents to convey any apprehension that they may have regarding this project.

Sincerely,
Dani D. Wilson
Mayor of Eureka Springs

August 16, 2007

I want to express my appreciation for the timely manner in which your maintenance crew removed a dead animal from the side of Highway 70, near my mailbox, August 14th. It was only about twenty minutes after I reported it when they were disposing of the animal. The AHTD has some efficient employees. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
Laura H.
Benton, AR

October 11, 2007

I would like to thank the AHTD for the left turn lane on State Hwy. 8 East and County Road 54. The employees of the Mena maintenance area did an excellent job in laying out and completing the project. If I can be of any assistance to you or your personnel please do not hesitate to me. Thank you again for your help.

Sincerely,
Ray B. Stanley
Polk County Judge



Arkansas State Highway and
Transportation Department
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