

THE ROADRUNNER

Nebraska Department of Transportation

Spring 2019

In response to historic spring flooding, the NDOT joined first responders from across the state to safeguard public safety and keep communities connected. Over the last three months, the NDOT and our many partners have come together to restore mobility and get Nebraska moving again. Efforts continue to open the final 11 bridges and 10 miles of roadway. #NebraskaStrong



Flood damage to Hwy. 281 near Spencer.

Photo by Jake Daniels

Updates on flood recovery efforts can be found at dot.nebraska.gov/news-media/nebraska-flood-2019

From the Director

Partners in Flood Recovery



Kyle Schneweis

Many of our fellow Nebraskans have been deeply and irrevocably impacted by the historic flooding that occurred in mid-March. It has challenged us as a state, with communities, neighbors, and volunteers coming together to pick up the pieces after the waters subsided.

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) has played a central role in this story of recovery, as we have been repairing and reopening our roadways and bridges in the impacted areas as quickly as possible.

During this time, I've heard dozens upon dozens of stories of NDOT employees giving herculean efforts, as they worked long hours in difficult circumstances. While each District and every shop has moving stories, they are not surprising, due to the consistent and continual dedication our NDOT team shows when it comes to serving others.

Immediately following the flooding, NDOT employees worked around the clock to ensure the safety of the traveling public, as we closed roadways and detoured traffic as highways were overtopped with water and bridge segments were washed away. This effort was on top of an already historic winter, which stretched our snow fighters to their limits with record snowfall, requiring countless hours of snow removal.

To provide perspective, at the peak of the extreme weather events that hit Nebraska on March 14, over 3,300 miles of roads were closed due to blizzard conditions or flooding-related issues. By March 23, after some of the floodwaters had receded allowing NDOT forces to begin assessments, clear debris, and make repairs, less than 200 miles remained closed and as of June 10, we are making significant progress on the 10 miles that remain closed.

What I have personally witnessed during my travels in flood-stricken areas of the state has been both heartbreaking and inspiring. The damage to homes, farmland and infrastructure has been painful to observe. In many cases, everything is gone in the wake of the floods. Yet, the fierce determination and "can do" spirit of our citizens has prevailed as everyone rolled up their sleeves and pitched in to help their neighbors.

While we have made great progress, there is much work ahead. Beyond the 11 miles of state highways that still need to be re-opened, we have 12 bridges that remain closed with significant damage and require either major repairs or complete replacement. The good news is that NDOT has been working with our consultant and contracting partners to expedite the design and construction process on these projects and restore mobility to the traveling public in the areas where damage remains.

I am thankful to the contracting and engineering firms who have contributed to this effort. I also appreciate the efforts of our first responders, including the State Patrol, police officers, firefighters, EMTs, and others who played crucial roles in the flooding aftermath. They have been there side-by-side with our NDOT employees, working tirelessly, committed to our travelers' safety.

It is that sense of community, care and concern that makes me proud to live in this great state. Thank you for all you do! #NebraskaStrong

the Roadrunner

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NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Journey.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BTSD Chief Technology Officer Focuses on IT/Business Partnerships

By Linda Wilson
Communication & Public Policy Division



Devin Townsend

As soon as Devin Townsend stepped into the newly created position of Chief Technology Officer (CTO) in NDOT's Business and Technology Support Division (BTSD), he leveraged his experience with the agency and began to work with stakeholders to identify their challenges,

processes and opportunities. He is confident this insight will be invaluable in developing strong partnerships to respond rapidly to future technological changes in meeting the needs of customers.

"The CTO position has much of the same responsibilities as the BTSD division head in the past," Townsend observed. "The differences come in where I'd like to take BTSD moving forward considering how technology management has changed over the last few years."

Townsend's background in both engineering and technology has prepared him well for his new position. He earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering and began his career at NDOT as a work-study employee while attending college. He worked in District 1 inspecting and managing projects; then in Materials and Research for six years, initially in materials administration management and technology implementations, later expanding to encompass managing all AASHTOWare Projects and leading the department's e-construction implementation activities.

Customer Support

Townsend leads the BTSD team with the core belief that customer support is key for everything they do, but acknowledges that this is not always easy, as knowing customers and what drives their needs is sometimes complicated to understand. He says it is important to go beyond the "solution" they want, to understand the underlying "problem" they are trying

to solve. "Without this understanding, it is difficult to develop a solution. Achieving this takes humility and trust on both IT and business sides of the relationship."

This philosophy dovetails with Townsend's primary goal: to make business more successful by using technology. "Through the State's IT consolidation effort, technology management at NDOT needs to undergo a transformation from 'traditional' IT management to more of a technology integration effort with the different business areas in the department. While the NDOT has obviously had

success with integrating technology in the past, there is much opportunity to apply these practices consistently throughout the department."

According to Townsend, these practices will help reinforce how IT and business

roles can work together to achieve a level of common understanding and cooperation that will allow for many improvements and efficiencies using technology.

Emerging Technology

He adds that a strong partnership between IT and business can expedite the adoption of emerging technology. "Many advancements coming in the future will require NDOT to respond rapidly to technological changes. Cooperation between software managers and business managers will be critical in achieving this," Townsend noted.

"By strengthening these partnerships throughout the department, technology will help break down any 'silos' that may exist, creating an environment where IT is a 'partner' with the divisions/business areas. This will result in greater engagement in integrating technology, leading to increased opportunities for improvements and efficiencies."

Townsend and his wife, Melissa, have two children, Braeden, 9 and Brynn, 6. His interests outside of work include the outdoors and adventure sports, cars and mountain climbing. He has climbed 27 of Colorado's peaks. ■

"Many advancements coming in the future will require NDOT to respond rapidly to technological changes."

- Devin Townsend



Ann Richart

Richart Joins NDOT as Aeronautics Division Director

Ann B. Richart began her duties as NDOT’s Aeronautics Division Director on May 13. She succeeds Ronnie Mitchell, who retired December 2018 after serving in the new role with the

merger of NDOT and the Department of Aeronautics on July 1, 2017. Mitchell retired with over 50 years in the aviation industry.

Richart comes to NDOT from Martha’s Vineyard Airport, in Massachusetts, where she served as Airport Manager. She has extensive experience in both the public and private sector, including Director of the Oregon Department of Aviation and State Airports Manager at the Oregon Department of Transportation, as well as Director of Aviation at Elmira Corning Regional Airport

in Horseheads, New York. Richart has also managed airports in Klamath Falls, Oregon and Hutchinson, Kansas.

“We are excited that Ann has joined NDOT as our Aeronautics Division Director,” said NDOT Director Kyle Schneweis. “She has decades of experience leading airports and supporting aviation through state government positions. Ann’s background in planning for and implementing airport development plans will complement our Aeronautics team’s experience well.”

Richart said she looks forward to helping aviation continue to grow and flourish in Nebraska.

“Aviation is an important tool in the economic development toolkit. It’s an honor for me to have the opportunity to work with Nebraska’s aviators, airports and communities to ensure a strong and vibrant aviation industry in our state,” said Richart. ■

Multi-State DOTs Flood Roundtable Meets

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) hosted a multi-state DOTs roundtable meeting with delegations from four states affected by the 2019 March flooding on April 11, 2019 at the Rowe Memorial Public Safety Complex in Nebraska City. NDOT Director Kyle Schneweis, Nebraska; KDOT Secretary Julie Lorenz; Iowa DOT Director Mark Lowe; and MoDOT Director Patrick McKenna

provided overviews of the damage to transportation infrastructure in their respective states and spoke to the cooperative recovery efforts taking place along with the need for regional coordination. The meeting also included senior DOT staff from the participating states, as well as stakeholders from the Federal Highway Administration, law enforcement, and agricultural interests. ■



Photo by Jake Daniels

The NDOT hosted small delegations from four states affected by the 2019 March flooding on April 11, 2019 in Nebraska City.

WASHTO Construction/Materials Conference Convenes in Lincoln

This year, NDOT hosted the annual conference for WASHTO's Committee on Construction/Materials, held April 14-17 at Embassy Suites in Lincoln. During the spring meeting, 72 registrants from 12 states gathered to exchange best practices, new technologies and ideas for both highway materials and highway construction and inspection activities.

The agenda included presentations from the various states on a broad range of topics. E-Construction was a popular topic, with Wyoming and Utah sharing their experiences and benefits realized from the integration of digital technologies and business/construction operations, followed by a Question and Answer session.

Other topics of interest and their respective states: **Washington** – a process to replace approximately 500 culverts by the year 2030 that are barriers to fish passage; **Washington, Nevada and Nebraska** – best practices in hot-mixed asphalt (HMA); **Montana** – use of unmanned aerial systems; **Texas** – current practice in development of competent construction inspection personnel; **North Dakota** – stabilization of a large landslide in North Dakota; and **New Mexico** – the groundbreaking practice of performance-based prequalification. In addition, time was devoted to discussing topics of the day for both Construction and Materials.

Presenters from Nebraska included Mark Traynowicz, with an update on Nebraska's historic flooding in mid-March; Bob Rea, Reclaimed Asphalt Pavement (RAP) Incentive in HMA; and Miki Esposito, Director of Lincoln Transportation and Utilities, Redevelopment of the West Haymarket Area, including a tour of the Pinnacle Bank Arena. NDOT Director Kyle Schneweis provided the welcome and introductions, along with Joseph Werning, FHWA Nebraska Division Administrator. NDOT Construction Engineer Jim Knott, and Materials and Research Engineer Mick Syslo moderated panel discussions. ■



A wide variety of topics were presented during the annual WASHTO Conference. Pictured - (1) Joe Werning, FHWA, (2) Steven Lani, Nevada DOT, (3) Mark Traynowicz, NDOT Bridge Engineer, (4) Kris Peterson, Utah DOT, (5) Chris Christopher, Washington DOT, (6) Mick Syslo, NDOT Materials & Research Engineer.

RESPECT THE CONE ZONE



YOUR SAFE TRAVEL IS OUR BUSINESS.

NEBRASKA
DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION



AGC
NEBRASKA CHAPTER

NDOT Collaborates with AGC in Billboard Message: 'RESPECT THE **CONE ZONE**'

This year, in conjunction with Work Zone Awareness Week, April 8-12, NDOT joined their transportation partners, the Associated General Contractors Nebraska Chapter, to develop billboards for display in districts throughout Nebraska.

The billboards reflect NDOT employees out on the road, working to improve our roadways for motorists. The message on the billboards, "Respect the Cone Zone" helps to create awareness for our people and our contractor partners as construction season gets underway.

The week marked the kick-off of reminders that will continue throughout the year urging drivers to slow down, put the phone down and pay attention when they see the orange signs. Too often, many of our employees have encountered close calls by distracted or inattentive drivers. NDOT remains committed to educating the public about safe driving throughout the construction season. ***Your safe travel is our business.***

Five billboards were designed for display throughout the state, reminding motorists to "Respect the Cone Zone." NDOT partnered with the AGC Nebraska Chapter to develop the billboards. The billboard shown above was advertised near Valentine.

County Bridge Match Program Provides Long-Term Impacts on Infrastructure



Photo by Jake Daniels

By Linda Wilson

Communication & Public Policy Division

Over the past three years, the County Bridge Match Program (CBMP) has exemplified how partnerships can help build a program that will have a lasting impact on rural infrastructure. The benefits derived from these collaborative efforts will continue well beyond the life of the program.

Formed as a result of the Transportation Innovation Act (TIA) signed into law by Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts in April 2016, the program provides up to \$40 million in funds to counties for the innovative replacement and repair of deficient county bridges in Nebraska. The third round of projects were selected in the fall of 2018 and the program will continue until 2023.

According to NDOT Bridge Engineer Mark Traynowicz, since the program's inception, a total of \$12 million has been approved for 55 of 68 counties that submitted proposals and 65 proposals have been selected for funding to repair or replace around 200 bridges. The selected proposals will receive 55 percent of eligible bridge construction cost with counties providing a 45 percent match.

"The County Bridge Match Program is one that I remain excited about because of its ability to make a difference in our local counties by investing in their infrastructure," Traynowicz said. "In addition to the funding for these bridges, the program has also spurred and supported innovative best practices that have been used on some of the additional 163 bridges that have been replaced with county funds."

NDOT's partnership with the county working group has played a pivotal role in the program's success. Members include county officials, county engineers, and county highway superintendents.

"Through the CBMP, we are learning to do innovative things to improve the condition of Nebraska's rural bridges."

- NDOT Director Kyle Schneweis

They meet quarterly to discuss ways to improve the program. Funding to the counties is distributed in proportion to the structurally deficient bridges in the respective Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO) districts.

According to Kent Miller, an engineer in the NDOT Bridge Division who works with the program, several changes were made after the program's second year

to help the program function more smoothly, making it easier for the counties to manage the program and remove structurally deficient bridges.

Moving forward, plans are to continue to look for ways to improve and administer the program. According to Miller, another request for proposals will go out in October, with proposals due in December and an announcement of proposals selected for funding in January 2020. The process will continue until funds are spent or until the program ends in June 2023.

Additional information about the program is available on the NDOT website, dot.nebraska.gov/projects/tia/, including an interactive map, showing locations and snapshots of each of the bridges “Before and after” photos are included for bridges that are completed.

Miller noted that the impact of the devastating March floods in Nebraska resulted in significant damage to county bridges, and many of these bridges have been closed. It is uncertain at this point

how this will affect the program. Assessment of the damage is ongoing.

Additional information regarding closed bridges is available on the Weight Restricted Bridge (WRB) map on the NDOT Bridge Division web page. While the 511 map is the most current for information on state highways, the WRB map shows local closures that are not on the 511 map.

Regardless of recent impacts of flooding to county bridges, the CBMP will continue to play an important role in the future of Nebraska’s infrastructure, with the replacement and repair of deficient bridges.

NDOT Director Kyle Schneweis sees the impact of the program reaching beyond the dollar amount of the investment. “Through the CBMP, we as a state are getting smarter and learning to do innovative things to improve the condition of Nebraska’s rural bridges. Our partnerships with the counties, and groups like NACO and NACE, have helped us build a program that will have a lasting impact on rural infrastructure.” ■

NDOT Earns “FHWA Excellence in Teamwork” Award

Joe Werning, Nebraska Division Administrator for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), presented the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) with the FHWA Administrator’s Award for Excellence in Teamwork on January 11. The award was given in recognition of NDOT staff efforts to assume National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) approval responsibilities.



Pictured (l to r): Jon Barber, Hwy. Environmental Program Manager, Kyle Schneweis, NDOT Director; Joe Werning, FHWA; Brandie Neemann, Project Development Engineer; Khalil Jaber, Deputy Director-Engineering; Dillon Dittmer, Hwy. Environmental Program Manager; Jason Jurgens, Hwy. Environmental Section Manager; Jennifer Huxoll, Legal Counsel, Attorney General’s Office; and Kyle Liebig, Hwy. Environmental Program Manager.



Simon Contractors' employees and NDOT inspector Nick Britzell (center) gather for the placement of the last piece of deck panel at the Accelerated Bridge Construction (ABC) project built during 2018 on US-20 between Belden and Laurel.

Photo by Dale Burkhead, Simon Construction

NDOT's Accelerated Bridge Construction Project Recognized in FHWA Newsletter

NDOT's Accelerated Bridge Construction (ABC) project, built during 2018 on US-20 between Belden and Laurel, received national recognition in the February FHWA EDC newsletter as one of the top innovations of the month. The project involved constructing most bridge components in one location and assembling the pieces in another.

Ultra-High Performance Concrete (UHPC), Self-Consolidating Concrete (SCC) and High Early Concrete were used as connections for prefabricated bridge elements (PBEs) to speed construction on the Middle Logan Creek

Bridge, part of a project to improve a 7-mile-long section of US-20. Concrete Industries of Lincoln created the prefabricated parts, including abutments, girders, approach slabs and bridge deck panels. Simon Contractors then assembled these parts on site.

The FHWA newsletter article highlighted these innovations, which enabled NDOT to limit the road closure to 58 calendar days when use of traditional construction practices would have closed the highway for 6 months or more. This resulted in significant savings of time and money for motorists. ■

Omaha Transportation Study Envisions the Future

The Metro Travel Improvement Study (MTIS) identifies asset preservation needs and then integrates congestion reduction needs. The goal is to have a transparent plan that all metro area agencies can use as a base for developing future programs.

By Linda Wilson
Communication & Public Policy Division

Imagine the year 2040... What will transportation look like? Will autonomous vehicles be passé and automated aerial vehicles the norm? Will we be flying to our destinations, like the Jetsons?

According to the latest road map charting the course for Omaha's transportation system that is not the case. What is envisioned is increased use of driverless cars, autonomous semis, an expanded bus rapid transit system and streetcars. Traditionalists will be happy to know that roads will not be dead-ended, but will continue to play a major role, with significant funding for streets and freeways.

NDOT District 2 Engineer Tim Weander said the Metro Travel Improvement Study (MTIS) was developed to determine the needs of the interstate, freeway and highway system in the Omaha metro, along with the needs of the Omaha arterial system and transit system to the year 2040. The goal is to set a new "system-wide vision to guide improvements in the decades to come." The last similar study was completed in 1985 and established the expansion of the interstate and freeway system in the Omaha metro over the next two decades.

Economic Engine

Weander said the time is right for a new study. "The interstate and freeway system is getting older and traffic volumes are increasing. If the entire transportation system is studied and incremental improvements completed as needed, the system can remain viable and allow the Omaha metro economic engine to continue to thrive."

A working group, stakeholder group and an executive committee were formed to oversee the study process and provide input. Those involved in the process have included NDOT, the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA), Omaha, Bellevue, Papillion, Gretna, Ralston, La Vista, Sarpy and Douglas counties, and the Iowa DOT. The final report is being prepared for distribution.

According to Mike Owen, Roadway Design Engineer, the study is nearing completion and will be a great tool for establishing future programs for the metro area freeway and interstate system. The study identifies asset preservation needs and then integrates congestion reduction needs. The goal is to have a transparent plan that all metro area agencies can use as a base for developing their future programs. The estimated cost of the planned improvements, over the next 20 years in today's dollars, is just under \$1 billion.

Focus Areas

Transportation planners envision updated and modern interchange configurations, critical movement fixes, expansion of the interstate system through Omaha, and at the same time are looking to improved and smarter corridors. The key focus areas of the study include rebuilding the interstate through the metro area and widening Interstates 80, 480 and 680. The study proposes widening Interstate 80 mainline from I-680 to 42nd Street from a 4-lane to 6-lane basic and including auxiliary lanes between the service interchanges.

According to Owen, there have been opportunities for public input on the study. However, the NDOT is looking at modern ways to communicate the study to best reach the public and gather meaningful comments on congestion, mobility and safety priorities. The study will need to evolve and be updated periodically as improvements are made and as priorities change in the metro community.

The desired outcome is to have a plan to carry forward and to guide program decisions for improvements to the freeway and interstate system. The MTIS is an important step in that direction, providing a roadmap for MAPA and the communities to achieve the desired outcomes by 2040. ■

Lean Leader Graduates Recognized

**LEAN
LEADER**

**TRAINING &
CERTIFICATION**

The Lean Six Sigma recently recognized two NDOT team members who became certified Lean Leaders. Roger Kalkwarf, District 1 Highway Operations & Maintenance Manager and Tom Sawyer, BTSD IT Business Systems Analyst/Supervisor participated in this level of Lean Leader training in late 2018.

Certified Lean Leader is an advanced level of learning about process improvement for the State of Nebraska. It focuses on the use of basics of Lean in an applied setting such as transactional office spaces, administrative environments, truck yards, print shops, and all front-line functional work areas. The application of topics such as Just-In-Time (JIT), Kanban, Cellular Flow, and Fish-Bone Diagrams empower team members to use their QDIP boards from Yellow Belt Training to make daily improvements to their work areas.

"This is a very exciting opportunity for our team members as this level of training will help grow the knowledge base of Lean Six Sigma," said Linsey Sousek, NDOT Process Improvement Supervisor. "Having more team members familiar with the LSS tools will be a benefit if other resources are needed to solve problems and improve business processes. The Lean Leader certification provides team members tools to use their QDIP boards more effectively, along with using the 5 Why's and Fishbone tools to help daily problem solving in their work areas." ■



(left to right) Tom Goodbarn, District Engineer; Roger Kalkwarf, District Operations Manager; Ryan Huff, Chief Strategy Officer.



(left to right) Jon Starr, IT Supervisor; Ryan Huff, Chief Strategy Officer; Tom Sawyer, IT Business Systems Analyst/Supervisor; Steve Ingracia, Deputy Director of Strategic Planning & Business Technology.

Events Highlight Nebraska Public Transit Week

By Kari Ruse
NDOT Transit Manager

During the second week of April, transit professionals and passengers across the state celebrated the fifth annual Nebraska Public Transit Week. Twenty transit agencies organized "stuff the bus" events for local charities, celebrated drivers with employee appreciation lunches, offered free rides to veterans, and invited community members to open houses.

In Nebraska, public transportation is available in 84 counties. In 2018, transit vehicles in rural and urban areas traveled nearly 10 million miles and

provided over 6.7 million trips. Transit service is critical, especially in the rural areas of the state.

Lois McClintock, Johnson County Transit Manager, is passionate about her community and transit. Over the course of Public Transit Week, she organized events to involve the entire community. Events included a pre-school coloring contest and a friendly contest at the K-12 school to raise funds for the Johnson County Backpack Program.

Go NE Where
PUBLIC TRANSIT WEEK



The Technology Panel included Steve Ingracia, NDOT Technology/ Strategic Planning Deputy Director; Chip Duden, Werner Enterprises Vice President; Matt Selinger, HDR Transportation Program Manager; Deepak Khazanchi, UNO Associate Dean of Information Science and Technology; and Victor Huang, Assistant Professor at the UNO Aviation Institute.

Economic Impact of Transportation Discussed at Omaha Conference

By Kari Ruse
NDOT Transit Manager

On April 5th, the College of Public Affairs and Community Service (CPACS) hosted the Economic Impact of Transportation Conference at the University of Nebraska Omaha. Transportation professionals, university researchers and students were among the panelists and participants at the conference. Two panels discussed technology solutions and the economic impact of transportation.

Dr. Josie Gatti Schafer, Director at the Center for Public Affairs Research, organized the event after looking at ways that transportation is vital to the good life in Nebraska. “First, we have over 50,000 persons employed in the transportation sector with a median income over \$45,000. That means the transportation sector has a large, positive impact on the overall economy. Second, accessibility of multiple transportation modes creates opportunities for people to go to work, pursue education, and have a good quality of life. Both of these points drove the desire to convene transportation experts and champions for the economic impact of transportation conference at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.”

Dr. Shafer shared her belief that Nebraska is on the cusp of something special with regard to transportation, citing examples of the large amounts of energy and attention focused toward its importance, including the Statewide Mobility Management Plan, the Omaha Area Smart Cities Initiative and Heartland 2050. She noted, “The conference served as an opportunity to explore how these activities intersect and will help to solidify and strengthen the importance of transportation to Nebraska’s economy.”

The conference brought together professionals from aviation, highways, transit and pedestrian/bicycle advocates. Jonnie Kusek, Director of Panhandle Trails Intercity Public Transit, said, “The future of public transportation is always exciting. The importance of public transportation, whether it is planes, trains, buses, bikes, walking paths or autonomous vehicles, it affects the economic welfare of communities and those that reside there.” ■

Mobility Management Project Subject of Scholarly Article

By Kari Ruse
NDOT Transit Manager

Staff from the University of Nebraska Omaha, School of Public Administration recently published an article outlining Nebraska’s ongoing efforts to coordinate and improve transit through a Statewide Mobility Management Project. Robert Blair, Professor of Public Administration and Urban Studies, and Morgan Vogel, doctoral student in the School of Public Administration, wrote and published the article on the United States Politics and Policy blog.

The article outlines the Nebraska DOT’s efforts to leverage private organizations and the University of Nebraska to create a public-private partnership that enhances travel options across the state. With an emphasis on regional collaboration and local control, the mobility management project focuses on creating sustainable transportation options in nonmetropolitan areas of the state. [Click to view the article.](#)

NDOT Director Kyle Schneweis and Nebraska State Patrol Colonel John Bolduc join law enforcement partners during drugged driving prevention press conference, held outside the NDOT Headquarters on April 19.



Photos by Jake Daniels

NDOT and State Patrol Speak About Dangers of Drugged Driving

NDOT Director Kyle Schneweis and State Patrol Colonel John Bolduc, along with law enforcement partners, met outside the NDOT headquarters on Friday, April 19, to discuss the dangers of drugged driving. The press conference was held to draw attention to an enhanced enforcement campaign targeting impaired drivers on April 19 and 20.

The popular 4/20 holiday that celebrates marijuana coincides with stepped-up enforcement by officials in Nebraska and surrounding states. Bolduc said drugged driving is becoming a more common crime.



Nebraska State Patrol Trooper Brandon Wilkie and K-9 Police Service Dog Bane demonstrate narcotics detection.

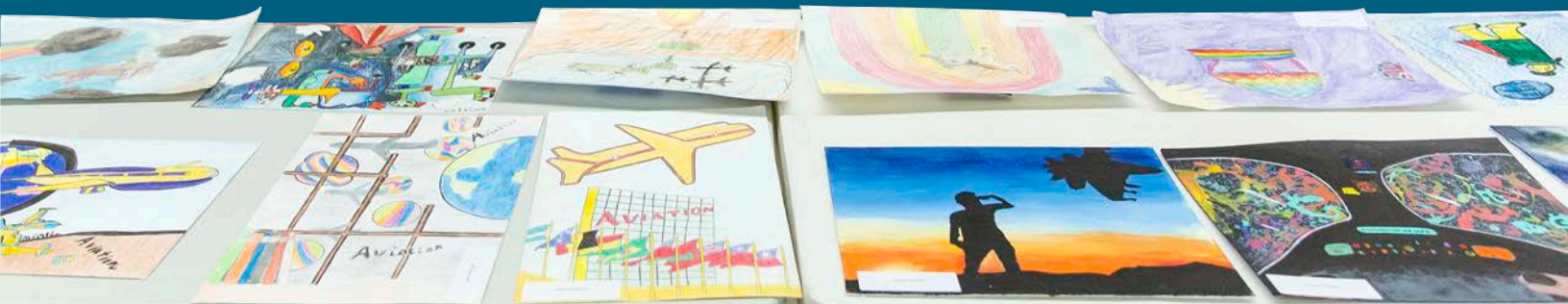
“Last year, 10% of all arrests made by our troopers for driving under the influence were drug-related DUIs, as opposed to alcohol-related DUIs,” said Bolduc. That’s more than 100 drugged drivers who were arrested last year by our diligent troopers.”

Bolduc emphasized that these tragic deaths are preventable, adding, “This is a team effort with the public, with our partners at the Department of Transportation, with our partners in other law enforcement agencies across the state and with our partnership with our great communities.”

Schneweis noted that in 2017, 20% of fatal accidents in Nebraska involved someone under the influence of drugs, which amounts to 46 deaths.

“Forty-six people in 2017 are not with us because somebody made the choice to get behind the wheel when they were impaired,” said Schneweis, adding, “You can be impaired by any type of drug, not just illegal ones. What we ask is that people don’t get behind the wheel until you know how your medications are going to affect your ability to drive, like your judgment or reaction time.”

By increasing awareness, everyone can help hold others accountable to prevent drugged driving. Instead of driving impaired, use ride-sharing apps, or ask a friend to drive you home. ■



Photos by Jake Daniels

Winners Announced for 2019 Aviation Art Contest

By David Morris

Division of Aeronautics Manager of Flight Operations

Inside many of us, a dream to fly is just waiting for the chance to come to life. Those dreams were embodied in the theme for this year's Division of Aeronautics Aviation Art Contest, "My Dream to Fly." The Lincoln Airport Authority Operations and Maintenance, located at the Lincoln Airport, was host to the 2019 contest awards ceremony on April 6.

First on the program was Nebraska State Patrol Trooper Brandon Wilkie and his K-9 Police Service Dog (PSD) Bane. PSD Bane, a 4-year-old Belgian Malinois, is a dual-purpose canine trained in narcotic detection, tracking, evidence recovery and patrol. We learned of numerous drug seizures and apprehension of multiple criminals credited to K-9 Bane.

Next was presentation of awards. The first-, second-, and third-place winners from each art category were as follows: Category I Junior (age 6-9): **First** - Nithin Paul Mehta of Lincoln; **Second** - Madeleine Charlsen of Omaha; **Third** - Luigi Forgione, Lincoln. Category II Intermediate (age 10-13): **First** -

Jingyi Wang of Omaha; **Second** - Sicily Manganaro of Omaha; **Third** - Ben Spencer of Gibbon. Completing the awards ceremony were the Category III Senior (age 14-17) winners: **First** - Macey Wahl of Omaha; **Second** - Sofia Pantano of Bennington; **Third** - Stevin Hasler of Osmond. There were also Honorable Mention winners in each category.

In addition to receiving trophies, the first-, second-, and third-place winners from each age category won cash prizes of \$150, \$100, and \$75, respectively.

Congratulations to all the contestants. Your work was outstanding and made tough decisions for the judging committee. Thank you to the parents, teachers and mentors for all the time, hard work and support you have put into this program. A special "thank you" to our friends at the Lincoln Airport Authority Operations and Maintenance, along with all our sponsors. Without your continued generous support, this program would not exist.

The International Aviation Art Contest encourages engagement with aeronautics through art. The annual contest has been hosted by the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale since 1989. ■



Category I third-place winner Luigi Forgione receives a trophy from David Morris.



Category II first-place winner Jingyi Wang receives award from Diane Bartels.



Category II second-place winner Sicily Manganaro receives award from Diane Bartels.