



100 Years of Oklahoma's Transportation Celebrated in Antlers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Oklahoma Department of Transportation opened its doors to the public in Antlers on Thursday, Sept. 22, to celebrate 100 years of transportation in our state. Hundreds of current and former employees of Division 2 joined citizens and dignitaries for an open house and to tour displays of equipment and historic memorabilia.

"As part of our centennial celebrations, we are showing our appreciation for the public's support of a better transportation system," ODOT Chief Engineer Gary Evans said. "We are hosting open houses across the state this year to share the story of 100 years of transportation, and to provide educational opportunities about our programs."

Division 2 includes Atoka, Bryan, Choctaw, Latimer, LeFlore, Marshal, McCurtain, Pittsburg and Pushmataha counties. This area has a long history of important transportation moments, including:

- In October 1926, the SH-10 Hugo-Paris bridge, the first free bridge built over the Red River was completed in Choctaw County.
- In April 1945, a tornado hit the Highway Department's Division 2 office in Antlers. A contract to rebuild the facilities was awarded later that year.
- In September 2005, U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta designated SH-1/Talimena Drive in southeastern Oklahoma as a National Scenic Byway.

A comprehensive look at the origins of transportation in our state can be found in the new coffee table book, *ODOT100: Celebrating the First 100 Years of Transportation in Oklahoma*. This limited edition book traces the origins of transportation in our state, the challenges faced throughout the decades and the current accomplishments on topics such as interstates, bridges, waterways and rail. It also includes many compelling stories and historic photos. Purchases can be made by check or credit card (no cash purchases) at the Div. 2 office in Antlers, located two miles south of the US-271/SH-3 junction, or by calling 580-298-3371.

The open house events are sponsored by the Association of Oklahoma General Contractors, the Oklahoma Employees Credit Union and the Association of County Commissioners of Oklahoma. Information on future open houses and on the ODOT centennial can be found at www.okladot.state.ok.us/odot100.

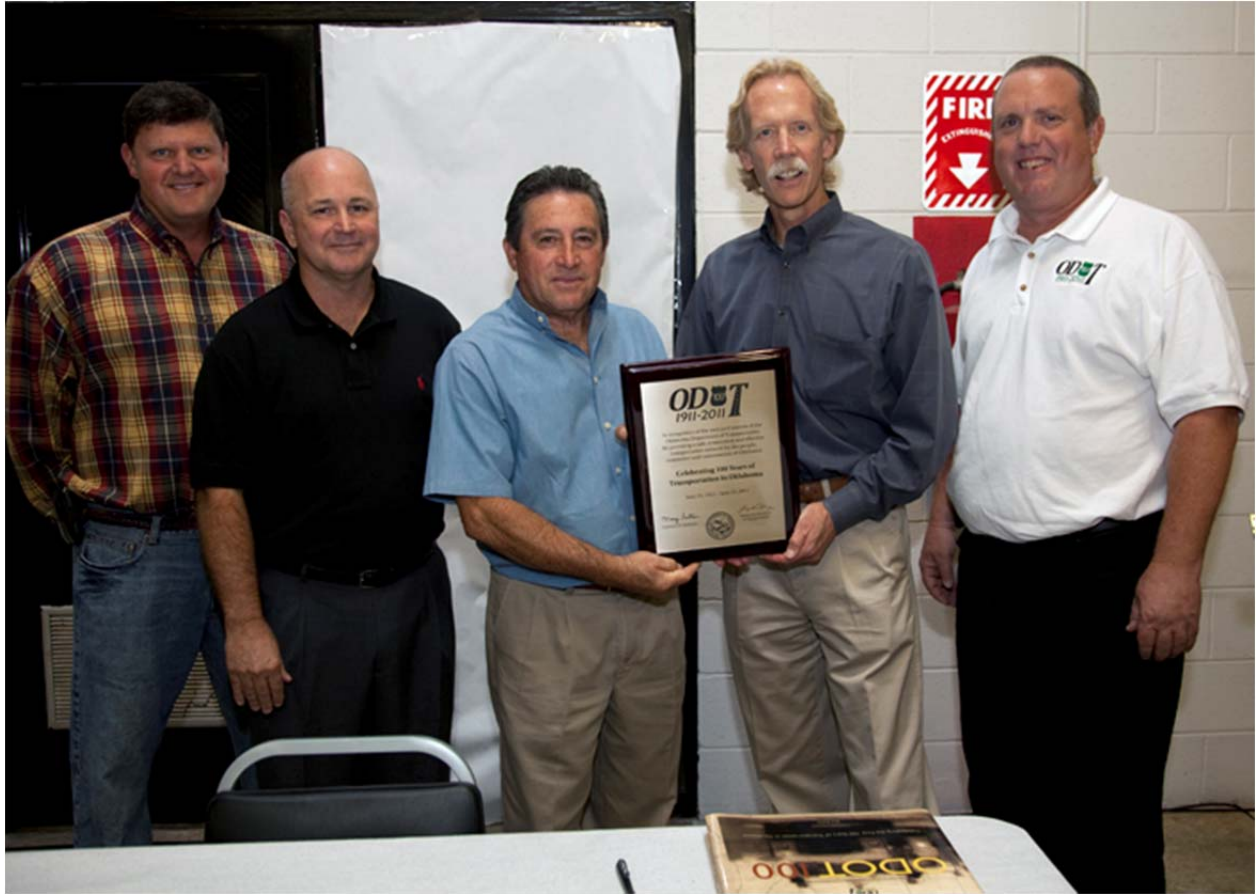
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(Editors and News Directors: For more information call the ODOT Media & Public Relations Division at 405-521-6000.)

INFORMATION RELEASE

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To help commemorate 100 years of transportation in Oklahoma, a plaque will be placed at each of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation division offices statewide. Dedicating the plaque at the Antlers office on Sept. 22 are (from left to right) ODOT Director of Operations Casey Shell, District 2 Commissioner David Burrage, Division 2 Manager Calvin Carney, ODOT Deputy Director/Chief Financial Officer Mike Patterson, ODOT Deputy Director/Chief Engineer Gary Evans.