

# D5

## Central

### Groundbreaking Officially Starts Route 5 Project

by Holly Dentner

How do we break ground on the largest grading project in MoDOT history? We opened the program with a 22-member jazz band from Camdenton High School. We featured not one, but two choirs from the Camdenton R-III



The crowd cheered as sky diver Gary Fletcher descended with the Missouri state flag trailing behind him.

School District, over 200 students, to entertain the crowd. We broke ground not just with our five-handled shovel, but with a 30-foot trackhoe operated by our director, Pete Rahn. And to

top it off, we looked to the sky as two men holding the U.S. and Missouri flags jumped from an airplane.

All this and more took place in Camden County on Monday, May 15, to celebrate the beginning of the \$44.3 million project. The ceremony officially started as members of the Camdenton High School Concert Choir sang the national anthem and the Mid County

Fire Department raised the U.S. flag on their fire truck's ladder. Eight speakers then congratulated the community and offered their thoughts on the necessity and value of the project.

Sky divers landed on the groundbreaking site just as the high school choir finished a medley of patriotic songs. The U.S. flag carried by sky diver Bryan Wolford had been flown on May 1, 2004, over the army base in Balad, Iraq.

About 150 people attended the ceremony to kick off construction for the project that will create almost seven miles of new highway from south of the



The Camdenton Chorale closed the ceremony by singing "Blue, Red and White."



Director Pete Rahn climbed aboard a trackhoe to officially break ground for the Camden County Route 5 construction project.

Niangua Bridge to near Route 7. When the new section of Route 5 is complete, it will intersect with Route 54 east of its current location, making travel through the area safer for both motorists and school buses that use Route 5 as the only entrance to the district complex.

More than seven million cubic yards of soil and rock will be excavated during construction. This is the first phase of the realignment of Route 5 in Camden County, and this portion will be complete in late 2008. McAninch Corporation will serve as contractor for the project.

### Bridge Completed in Hermann



On April 20, local dignitaries helped Hermann City Administrator Steve Mueller cut the ribbon for the rehabilitated bridge on Route 100 over Frene Creek. The project was inspected by District 3.



To celebrate Hermann's wine-making heritage, the bridge railing has a grape vine design. The city helped fund the enhancements.

### Students 'Dig' Missouri's Prehistoric Past

by Holly Dentner

Osage County students recently got the chance to see MoDOT at work. But it wasn't construction, traffic control, or any of our more commonly known activities. These students learned about Missouri's past while visiting a MoDOT archaeological dig.

Every time MoDOT prepares for a construction project, the area is examined for historic artifacts and structures. When cultural resources are discovered, we record and preserve as much as possible for archaeological study.

While surveying for a project in Osage County that would realign part of Route C, our archaeologists discovered the remains of a Late Woodland Period village. Typical sites from this prehistoric time period date from 650 to 900 A.D. Since starting the dig in

early May, our crew has recovered thousands of projectile points (arrow heads), pottery pieces, chip stone tools, and organic materials like animal bones and charred seeds from the site.

On Friday, May 5, almost 50 students from Fatima Middle School in Westphalia visited the site to learn more about local prehistory, archaeology, and MoDOT's project progress. It was a chance for the seventh graders to see the remnants of Missouri's native inhabitants right in their backyard.

The students asked lots of questions, from how someone trains to be an archaeologist to who gets to keep the artifacts after their recovery. Intermediate Historic Preservation Specialist Larry Grantham and Historic Preservation Specialist Ron Mayer encouraged the

students to get a well-rounded education with strong science, math, and writing skills, and to be prepared to earn an advanced degree in archaeology. They also explained that artifacts belong to the property owner. Since the Osage County dig is on MoDOT right of way, the artifacts will be studied and then stored at a state facility.

These digs are not usually open to the public, but we extended the invitation to several area schools because it provided an opportunity to students who normally wouldn't have access to this type of project so close to home. Although this dig is much smaller in scale, it's the third time in the last few years that MoDOT has opened a mid-Missouri dig to the public. In 1999

over 5,000 people toured a dig in Calaway County that revealed evidence of rare prehistoric homes approximately 3,000 years old. A 2002 dig in Miller County, the Panther Creek site, uncovered objects archaeologists believed dated back to 3,000 to 600 B.C.

The Osage County crew will finish the excavation in June and the construction project will be bid in July.



Historic Preservation Specialist Ron Mayer shows students how the color of the soil indicates the borders of the ancient housing unit.

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#### for more info

Community Relations Manager  
Phone  
E-mail

1511 Missouri Boulevard  
P.O. Box 718  
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Kristin Gerber  
573.522.3375  
kristin.gerber@modot.mo.gov