

The big event for us this past month was the Medicine Park fire. Road Foreman Kenny Kinder and a number of the guys responded on the Thursday evening the fire jumped State Highway 49 off Ft. Sill. They worked until 7:00 a.m. the next morning. At 8:30 a.m., the Medicine Park Mayor called for our grader again and the crew went back to provide support after little or no sleep and worked until 5:00 p.m. when they were released.



In addition to the grader, we had our 8,000 gallon water tanker and a fuel truck to provide water and fuel to the firefighters. The Volunteer Fire Departments and other Fire Departments did an outstanding job in containing the fire and preventing it from doing more damage than it did.

Earlier in the month, Medicine Park asked us to reopen a road, Merry Circle Rd, which was established when the town was platted in the early 1900's. Mark Barefoot spent over a week on the dozer working on the road. During the fire it became a fire break, and the newly opened road was credited in saving downtown Medicine Park.

We also sprayed herbicide on major intersections and bridges to improve visibility and make them safer. Steve Ronio had the State Department of Corrections guys weed-whack the dead weeds.

The old blacktop on 67<sup>th</sup> Street was broken up and the road base worked. Bar ditches had been reshaped earlier in the year. We are putting down two layers of oil and chip on SW 67<sup>th</sup>

St. from Bishop Rd to Baseline Rd. After we finish 67<sup>th</sup>, the guys will move to Deyo Mission Rd and resurface it, from Woodlawn Rd. to Baseline Rd. Then we will oil-and-chip others which we have started to redo.

Lawton City Manager, Larry Mitchell, and I met again regarding 112<sup>th</sup> Street from Old Cache Rd to Lee Blvd. Since a portion of the street is in the County and the other part within the city limits, we have agreed to work together to seek funding for the 2-mile stretch of road. Because of the heavy truck traffic from Goodyear, and the other Industries that use it, the street will require 6 or 8 inches of asphalt, which will cost nearly a million dollars.

The heat is tough on roads, especially blacktop. This long period of 100 degree plus days has caused some blacktop roads to “bleed”. This is a condition in which oil comes up through the layers of gravel and will stick to vehicle tires. These places are fixed by putting sand or small gravel on these spots to coat the area that has bled through. So if you see sand or small gravel on roads which you are not accustomed to seeing it on, please know it is to protect your vehicle.

We are continuing to work on cleaning up the yard at the barn. There were three large fuel tanks which had not been used for several years that had to be “decommissioned” and decontaminated so they could be moved. These tanks will be sold at a future date. We also plan to gather up the scrap metal and unusable equipment which we will also sell. We have gotten rid of a lot of used truck tires which had accumulated throughout the years. The bigger, old grader and loader tires have proven to be a problem to get cleared out without costing us a lot of money.

In an effort to upgrade our equipment, we have purchased a 2005 track hoe to replace our 24 year old one. Also, we have received bids to replace three graders – two of which are 11 years old. The third is a leased grader and its' lease is about up.

**Lee Blvd Status:** The Company, Smith-Roberts Land Services, Inc., with whom we have contracted, is still working to acquire the needed right-of-way. They have about 30 days to complete the contract. Kenny & I have begun to work with them to see if we can speed the right-of-way acquisition along.

We restarted an old tradition for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July break by having a BBQ and potluck lunch for all of the Dist. 3 employees. We also invited former employees and Commissioners. There was good food and we had a good time visiting.



A couple of weeks ago, Kenny Kinder reminded me that we had been in office for 6 months. We started reflecting back and noted we have had a snow storm, flooding, two fires and a drought. Throw in the mix three encounters with FEMA and I can say for sure, “This job ain’t boring!” The other thing I have been impressed with during my short tenure are the skills and dedication of the folks who work in District 3. Vince Lombardi, former coach of the Green Bay Packers, once said, “Individual commitment to a group effort – that is what makes a team work.”

That is certainly exemplified in our bunch (Dist 3)!

You can contact me at [don.hawthorne@comanchecounty.us](mailto:don.hawthorne@comanchecounty.us) with any questions or comments.

