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**NEW HOME FOR THE
 ARKANSAS HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATORS
 TRAINING ACADEMY (AHEOTA)**

The Arkansas Heavy Equipment Operators Training Academy in Warren has a new sponsor. Effective July 1, 2003, the training academy joined forces with SouthArk Community College in El Dorado and has become a satellite campus for the college. The academy has enjoyed a long association with the Southeast Arkansas Community Based Education Center (SEACBEC) in Warren. However, the uncertainty of Capital Improvement funding over the next several years and the long-term stability of vocational technical institutions prompted the merger. The merger will enable the academy to broaden their student base by providing potential students the opportunity to qualify for state and federal tuition grants.

The training academy operation will remain at its present location in Warren and will continue to provide the quality and essential heavy equipment operators training that is so vital to the construction and timber industries in our State and surrounding areas. The goal of their one-year, fast track certification program will continue to be the development of a work force that will be safe, skilled, ethical and focused.

The "Operator Upgrade Program" will continue to be provided by the academy. This training is designed to meet the needs of current operators with opportunities for upgrade in specific areas or machines in the fast-growing, high tech world of heavy equipment operation. These classes may be set up as short-term training sessions by the employer at their respective facility or at a training site of their choice. The "Operator Upgrade Program" will remain a very important part of the Arkansas Technology Transfer (T²) Training Program for cities and counties. If your city or county desires to participate in this program or has need for additional information, please contact the Arkansas Technology Transfer (T²) office. Representatives from this office can be reached by telephoning (501) 569-2380 or (800) 344-1285 or by faxing (501) 569-2070. E-mail inquiries can be sent to danny.moore@ahtd.state.ar.us. The training expense is paid by the Technology Transfer (T²) Program.

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RAILROAD FLATCAR BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION CONTINUES

Construction continues on the new railroad flatcar bridge at the Palarm Creek crossing on Grassy Lake Road (Pulaski County Road 663) near Mayflower. The existing low water bridge crossing has been a problem for residents in the area for several years. Numerous incidents of high water in the area have required closure of the county road, thus preventing local residents from being able to get into or out of the area. This also means that emergency needs such as fire and ambulance services are unavailable at times.

An agreement was reached in 2002 to replace the bridge structure and approaches on County Road 663 at the Palarm Creek crossing. The proposed design consists of a new bridge composed of six railroad flatcars and a higher approach embankment. The project has been made possible through the cooperative effort and joint endeavors of Pulaski County, Faulkner County, the Property Owners Group, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, the Arkansas Military Department and the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department. Once the railroad flatcars are in place and made ready, Faulkner County will place an asphalt leveling course on the bridge deck and install the proper bridge and approach delineation. Subsequent to the project's completion, Faulkner County will accept the new road and bridge into their system for maintenance.



One piling driven, plenty more to go.



Pilings have all been driven, caps are being formed.

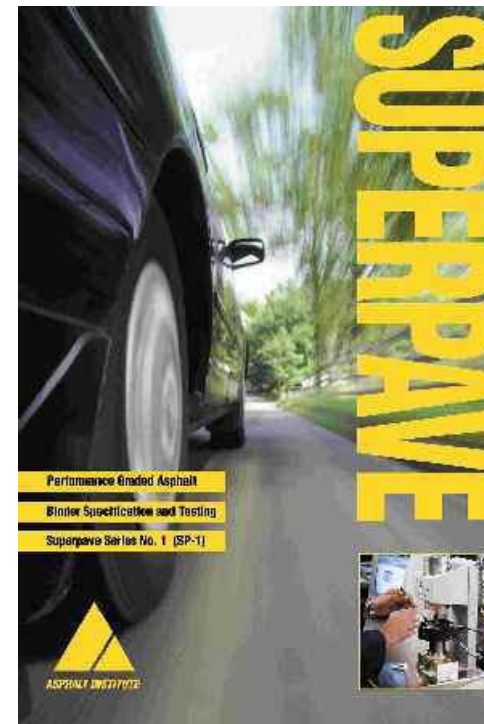


Caps have been poured and are curing before railroad car placement



Railroad cars in place and welded together.

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SHORT SPAN BRIDGE SEMINARS COMPLETED

The Technology Transfer (T²) Program had the privilege of sponsoring a series of six Short Span Bridge Seminars around the State this summer. The seminar presentations were coordinated, as well as advertised, through the State's eight Planning/Economic and Development Districts. Dr. Thomas Parsons, Director of Civil Engineering at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, conducted the seminars. The consensus of the feedback from those attending has been overwhelmingly positive. A great majority of comments made by seminar participants reflected an interest in the development of a course that directly addresses daily maintenance and construction issues faced by the city and county road departments. Therefore, consideration is being given to the development of such a presentation. Dr. Parsons has agreed to present the modified training course after development and will tentatively have the training seminars ready for presentation in the summer of 2004.

The Technology Transfer (T²) office welcomes any additional comments concerning this issue. Please contact Danny Moore, instate, at (800) 344-1285 or locally at (501) 569-2380.

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