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New U.S. 77 Bridge Focus of Dual Celebration

(KMZA)--The nearly completed \$7.6 million U.S. 77 Big Blue River Bridge replacement project was unveiled Friday at a ribbon cutting event on the new bridge in Marshall County.

The Kansas Department of Transportation, along with Marshall County and the City of Blue Rapids, among others participated in the ribbon-cutting.

The new bridge provides added safety benefits as the 40-foot wide structure, with two 12-foot lanes and 8-foot shoulders, will provide more room for today's wider vehicles. Also, the addition of a deceleration lane for northbound drivers turning east onto K-9 and an acceleration lane for eastbound drivers on K-9 turning north onto U.S. 77 will provide added safety for turning movements from the highway.

Signs designating the new bridge as the 1st Lt. Michael Hugh Breeding Memorial Bridge were also unveiled at the ceremony.

First Lieutenant Breeding joined the Marines and trained to be a fighter pilot after graduating from college in 1967.

Breeding's plane was shot down in South Vietnam on Feb. 12th, 1970 and crashed into the sea. His remains were never recovered.

Rep. Sharon Schwartz presented legislation in 2010 and Gov. Mark Parkinson signed the bill that same year honoring the Blue Rapids native by naming the bridge in his honor.

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