

(COPY OF LETTER RECEIVED FROM AGRTC MEMBER PARK ESTES, VICE PRESIDENT SALES, ARKHOLA SAND & GRAVEL COMPANY IN FORT SMITH, AND PUBLISHED IN AGRTC MAGAZINE 1ST QUARTER 2007)

On Sunday, December 10, 2006, the *Times Record* of Fort Smith dedicated considerable space reprinting stories from 1906, 100 years ago. In June of 1906, Fort Smith was hosting the fourth Good Roads Association Convention and ran two articles pertaining to this meeting of 300 delegates, one preceding and another as a summary of the convention.

At this time, Fort Smith had just completed "fourteen miles of superb macadam highways" over a two year period. As I read these articles, I was struck by the quotes of the day and how in my opinion they still ring true 100 years later. Following are a few excerpts from the articles I trust you will find as interesting as I did.

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From an article titled "All Good Roads Lead to Fort Smith", there were the following quotes. A Herbert Beck described how in the weeks leading up to the convention "men of prominence about town were encouraged to wear a certain badge. When a person puts on a 'Dog on Good Roads' badge, he comes a good roads dog and will howl until he gets them."

Dr. Hertzog stated that the "gospel of good roads" had converted the naysayers who had opposed the 1904 paving plan based on their fears of excessive taxation. "Good roads and progress are inseparable companions." Hertzog went on to say that the building of good roads is an evidence of public spirit, and where that spirit abounds, noble establishments will precede or follow a good road. M. O. Eldridge of the U. S. Public Roads made the following statement regarding convention. "We are frequently met with the question, 'Do you expect to build good roads in Arkansas through conventions?' My answer is that through conventions and agitation, we hope to secure a system of good roads.....for we will never secure them until the question is thoroughly understood by the people who pay the bills."

There were other notable quotes that showed the commitment and enthusiasm these forward thinking men of a hundred years ago had for roads and the improvement in quality of life they bring. Isn't it amazing that with all of the progress we have made, that observations from so long ago can still ring true and as important today. Like the 'Dog For Good Roads' campaign of 1906, let's keep howling until we get them, maybe even bringing back and wearing our own "Dog Badges."