



PERFECTING THE PROCESS

TxDOT takes steps to keep improving processes, performance and delivery across the state.





JAMES BASS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Last year in Texas, 3,775 people lost their lives on Texas roads. The year before, 3,578 people didn't make it home after a traffic crash. I mention the specific numbers as each life is precious and we should not allow ourselves to get numb to the statistics and what they truly represent.

The numbers would be disheartening enough, if they were isolated years, but they aren't. Texas hasn't had a deathless day on our roadways for nearly 17 years.

We know the usual culprits of traffic crashes: distracted driving, speeding and driving under the influence, to name a few.

We know how to defeat them. We expend time and money on campaigns to implore Texans to be safe on the roads. We engineer every road for safety, every appurtenance, every bridge and every sign.

But Texans continue to die in traffic crashes.

The cynic would argue that traffic deaths are inevitable because as long as there are roads, there

STRIVING FOR SAFER ROADS

will be crashes, and as long as there are crashes, there will be deaths.

I think the cynic is wrong. Every day that we work to reduce crashes, we get closer to the day when traffic deaths will be a thing of the past.

And those efforts are occurring. The automotive industry is producing safer cars. We're engineering safer roads. We're influencing driver behavior.


Now is not the time for the cynic's voice to be the loudest. Now is the time for us to keep up our efforts.

And we are.

Last August, the Texas Transportation Commission allocated more than \$3 billion over the next 10 years to projects that will widen roads, improve safety on higher-speed rural roads and improve mobility for pedestrians. That funding will also go toward projects that have the potential to reduce fatalities, injuries and crashes at public grade railroad crossings.

And our 2017 Highway Safety Plan will allot more than \$105 million on programs to curb the incidence of driving under the influence and speeding, and increase the use of seatbelts and child safety seats, among others.

We know the funding will pay in fewer traffic deaths and injuries. That's the goal because delivering a safe transportation system isn't just our mission at TxDOT, it's our responsibility to the people we serve.

Thank you for everything you do to help us prove the cynic wrong. 



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8 ON THE COVER

Training begins soon for vital new project delivery processes that will ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of TxDOT's 10-year transportation plan.

FEATURED STORIES

12 Restoring the Liberty Truck

20 Road To 100

16 2017
TRANSPORTATION
FORUM



NEWS AND NOTES

5 GED Program Has 1st Graduate

10 Centennial Launch

14 Security Matters: Mobile Devices

15 New Trucks in Record Time

15 U.S. 281 Groundbreaking

18 Public Involvement
for Public Transportation

19 Prepping Utility Partners

22 Hot Chocolate in Abilene

22 Surveillance Robot Helps with Safety

23 Impaired Driving Campaign
Wins Award

TN TRADITIONS

4 5 Things You Need To Know Right Now

6 Talk Around the State

11 TxDOT 101

26 Employee Q&A

24 I AM A...
DISTRICT MAINTENANCE
ADMINISTRATOR



27 Where Am I?

27 TxDOT Calendar

28 Milestones
and Memoriam

31 TxDOT Chimes In

31 Bright Lights

32 Journey to
Wellness

5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW RIGHT NOW

1 Transportation Commission approves updated UTP

In March, the Texas Transportation Commission approved \$2.5 billion in funding for 19 projects that will aid congestion in the state's five largest metropolitan areas. As part of the Texas Clear Lanes initiative, the \$2.5 billion will be allocated to projects in the areas of Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston and San Antonio. The Texas Clear Lanes initiative funding is part of an update to the state's 2017 Unified Transportation Program that guides state transportation project development.

2

Barth named Transportation Program Officer

Brian Barth has taken on a temporary assignment as transportation program officer, moving from his place as district engineer in Fort Worth. In his new role, Barth will be responsible for blending all functions in transportation programming and delivery, including strategic and operational performances, governance, business process oversight, resource management and IT functions within the department's unified structure. He will report to Chief Engineer Bill Hale. Barth is a 29-year veteran of TxDOT and has been district engineer in Fort Worth since 2013. Loyl Bussell will temporarily assume management responsibility in Fort Worth.

3

State hiring freeze through August

Gov. Greg Abbott announced a hiring freeze for state agencies and institutions of higher education in February. The freeze prevents these agencies from posting job openings and filling vacant positions until the end of August. However, the freeze did include some exceptions and agencies may obtain a waiver from the governor's office on a case-by-case basis. Watch Executive Director James Bass's May video on the TxDOT Family YouTube Channel for more information.


4

Public Transportation Coordinator receives statewide award

The Public Transportation Division's Eric Garcia was selected by the Texas Transit Association as Outstanding Public Transportation Coordinator for 2017 at the association's annual conference in March. The award honors a public transportation coordinator who has made outstanding contributions to the public transportation industry. Garcia joined TxDOT in 2014 and works with transit agencies, state/local officials, and transit users in the Odessa, Lubbock and Childress districts to "smooth the ride" for Texans using public transportation.

5

Keep networks safe from cyberattack

Every TxDOT employee has an important role to play in keeping our computer network, and our personal information, safe from cyberattacks. Remember that hackers will try to trick you into providing personal information such as passwords. You are the first line of defense for your data, both at home and at work. Check out this issue's Security Matters article on page 14 and the video messages from Information Management Division Director Dana Glover on the TxDOT Family YouTube channel. 

TxDOT'S GED PROGRAM CELEBRATES FIRST GRADUATE

Although he tried several times, Joseph Ingracia, a sign technician in the Austin District, never completed the General Education Development (GED) studies, a group of tests that provide certification that the test taker has high school-level academic skills. But thanks to TxDOT's GED Completion Program, Ingracia can now check the GED box on any job application.

This spring, he was the first graduate of the TxDOT program which provides test preparation materials for employees.

Ingracia quit high school shortly after turning 17. Now 50, he can't remember why he quit, but he's regretted the decision ever since.

"My little girl just went off to college and my son's in the Navy. While they were growing up, I couldn't really help them with school," he said.

The program allows people to take a pretest on a subject, such as math or social studies. If the score on the pretest is high enough, the program allows you to take the actual test.

Ingracia, who works in the Mason County Maintenance Office, says the math test was the most challenging for him; it stood between him and his diploma. To take the test, he had to drive 112 miles each way. On his way home, he stopped to get gas and received an email letting him know he had passed the final test.

"I shouted out 'I just got my GED!' and probably scared the woman next to me at the gas station," he said.

He tried not to show his excitement as he worked to earn his GED, but once he got it, he called everyone he knew.

Ingracia applied himself and did what the program required to prepare for the test.

"I did a lot of studying. I found out I was smarter than I thought," he said.


The GED Completion Program is directly related to TxDOT's Career Development Program (see article in the March/April issue of TN). TxDOT has about 200 employees



Joseph Ingracia, a sign technician in the Austin District, is the first graduate of TxDOT's GED Completion Program, a free course of test preparation materials that help employees get their high school equivalency certification.

who don't have a high school diploma or its equivalent, which is less than 2 percent of the total workforce. Hiring managers throughout TxDOT are allowed to substitute experience for education but some positions require high school equivalency. Some specific career paths, like engineering, eventually require a college degree. A GED certification gives employees the opportunity to pursue these positions and further their education.

TxDOT partners with GEDWorks to provide the free program to any employee who is interested. The program is a series of online and self-paced test preparation modules. It takes most people about six months to study and pass the four GED tests — all of which are taken locally — before receiving a diploma.

To enroll, fill out the GED Program Agreement with your supervisor and submit it to Human Resources. Then visit ged.com/gedworks/txdot to register online. 

AROUND THE STATE

From the Panhandle to the Valley and all points in between, TN brings you transportation highlights happening throughout our great state.

DALLAS




Murals brighten I-35E in Dallas District

As the 35Express project nears completion, drivers will notice more artwork along portions of I-35E in the Dallas District.

TxDOT, AGL Constructors and local municipalities have worked together to create custom designs on retaining walls throughout the corridor.

One of the decorative murals can be found just south of the Lewisville Lake Bridge. Images of ducks and boats have been fabricated into the wall to simulate a lake scene. In Hickory Creek, the murals illustrate a wooded area. Carrollton will have a replica of a landmark gazebo from its old downtown.

The walls often serve as gateways to cities so TxDOT has been working to ensure visually interesting designs. Each city pays for any additional artwork beyond the project limits. 



TxDOT photo

Images of ducks and boats have been fabricated into the wall to simulate a lake scene on a retaining wall along I-35E.


BROWNWOOD



SH 6 reopens after repairs to flood damage from 2016

After nearly a nine-month closure, SH 6 north of Cisco in Eastland County in the Brownwood District opened for traffic again in February.

In June of last year, historic rainfall resulted in massive amounts of water overflowing the top of nearby Lake Cisco Dam. The rushing water washed away the earthen embankment carrying the four-lane highway, leaving a gap more than 200 feet wide. Residents living north of the washed out area, as well as motorists traveling between Cisco and the Shackelford County towns of Moran and Albany, were forced to take lengthy detours.

Instead of rebuilding SH 6 in its previous form, TxDOT engineers determined that a bridge was needed to reduce the risk of future highway damage in the event of similar flooding. TxDOT staff quickly designed a modern concrete bridge spanning 255 feet. In July, an emergency construction contract in the amount of \$3,539,010.50 was awarded to Flatiron Constructors, Inc. of Austin to build the new bridge. 




TxDOT photo

After being washed away during heavy flooding last year, SH 6 in Eastland County in the Brownwood District opened for traffic again in February.

Project to widen U.S. 69 in Tyler District breaks ground

TxDOT and its partners broke ground in March on an \$18.1 million construction project to widen U.S. 69 in Wells in the Tyler District, which officials said will alleviate congestion and improve safety. The project will widen the existing two-lane roadway through Wells to a four-lane divided curb and gutter section with a continuous left turn lane.

Construction will begin two miles north of FM 1247 and extend south nearly 3 miles to the Angelina County line.

Texas Transportation Commissioner Jeff Austin III said improvements will help alleviate a bottleneck along this hurricane evacuation route. 



TxDOT photo

TYLER



Officials from TxDOT, Smith County and the City of Wells join Texas Transportation Commissioner Jeff Austin III (seventh from left) at the groundbreaking to widen U.S. 69 in Wells.


71 Toll Project opens to traffic near Austin airport

Getting to the airport in Austin just got faster. The 71 Toll Project near the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport in the Austin District opened to traffic on the last day of February. The construction is part of the SH 71 Express Project that includes two new toll lanes and other enhancements. The improvements should cut commute times for thousands of drivers and make getting to the airport easier.

Texas Transportation Commissioner Jeff Austin III, Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority Chairman Ray Wilkerson, ABIA Director of Aviation Jim Smith and McCarthy Building Companies Executive Vice President Kurt Knebel made remarks at the ceremony, followed by the cutting of the ribbon.

“Improving safety and mobility are the most important transportation needs for the region,” said Austin. “With the 71 Toll Project, we are able to accomplish both of these objectives, making it easier for traffic to move through the area and ensuring safety prevails for all users and modes of travel.”

Drivers will have a choice whether or not to use the tolled lanes. The toll lanes use all-electronic, cashless technology.

The opening of the 71 toll lanes is a significant milestone for the SH 71 Express Project. Keep up-to-date on the entire project at sh71express.com. 



TxDOT photo

AUSTIN



Texas Transportation Commissioner Jeff Austin III (center holding scissors) joined local officials for the ribbon-cutting of the 71 Toll Project in the Austin District in February.

DOING IT RIGHT



NEW PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY PROCESSES COMING SOON

TxDOT is working to develop new processes to help plan, develop and deliver the right projects to improve our state's transportation system. As these processes take shape, the department will roll out training later this year for the involved employees.

Texas' population continues to grow and with that there are more and more cars on the road. To address this challenge, the Texas Legislature and the citizens of Texas approved additional funding for transportation through the passage of Proposition 1 in 2014 and Proposition 7 in 2015. With this increased funding comes the expectation that mobility will improve.

To succeed in delivering on these expectations, the department has developed more rigorous processes to help deliver the right transportation projects. The three areas addressed are project delivery and governance, performance-based planning and quarterly reviews.

"These processes ensure our resources are aligned for successful

delivery of projects producing reliable lettings for our customers, elected officials and the transportation industry," said Randy Hopmann, director of District Operations. "The voters of Texas placed a lot of trust in TxDOT when they voted for Propositions 1 and 7. By implementing these processes, we will reward the voters' trust by ensuring we spend the taxpayers' money wisely, we deliver the right projects and we improve mobility for the citizens of Texas."

For project delivery and governance, the department has refined and formally documented the project process to make it more effective. This includes standardizing the deliverables in each of the project development and delivery phases and documenting clear roles and responsibilities for all project stakeholders.

In performance-based planning, proposed projects are methodically evaluated, scored and ranked during the development of the 10-year transportation plan, called the


Unified Transportation Program. The projects are measured for how well each accomplishes the department's strategic objectives.

During the quarterly review process, each project's progress is monitored. This ensures that there is an adequate pipeline of projects ready for letting based on the amount of available funding during each year.

"These processes will have a significant positive impact on the department, allowing us to deliver our projects more effectively and efficiently," said Lauren Garduno, director of Project Planning and Development. "Collectively, these processes will strengthen our ability to deliver our 10-year transportation plan with integrity, give visibility into the individual projects and the portfolio of all our projects and provide more flexibility to adjust project priorities whenever funding availability shifts."

Later this year, training will be available for the employees who will be implementing these new processes and tools.

It will include an introduction to the new processes and their benefits to TxDOT, an overview course on the project development process and how the new processes fit within it, plus an individual course for each of the three new processes. The training will include key milestones and decisions, defined roles and responsibilities and the expected outcomes. Implementation of these three new processes should make day-to-day project development and delivery efforts more consistent and efficient throughout the state.

More details about the training will be coming soon to appropriate employees. 

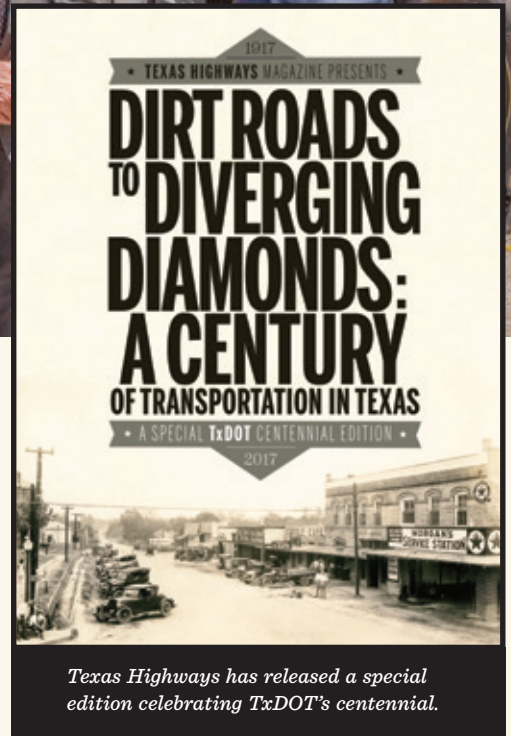
A CELEBRATION

TxDOT photo



TxDOT photo

On April 4, the very day of the signing of the legislation to create the Texas Highway Department, TxDOT held a special Centennial event at the Greer Building in Austin. From left: Texas Transportation Commission Chairman Tryon D. Lewis, Sen. Robert Nichols, Texas Transportation Commissioner J. Bruce Bugg Jr., Rep. Geanie Morrison, Leonard Iselt (TxDOT's longest-tenured employee), Executive Director James Bass and Deputy Executive Director Marc Williams.



Texas Highways has released a special edition celebrating TxDOT's centennial.

LIKE NO OTHER

The Texas Department of Transportation is pulling out all the stops when it comes to celebrating our 100th anniversary. There are centennial events happening around the state all year.

A focal point of those events is a refurbished 1918 Liberty Truck, a result of surplus equipment from World War I.

On April 4, TxDOT marked the signing of legislation to create the Texas Highway Department with an event at the Greer Building in Austin. Guest speakers at the event included Sen. Robert Nichols, who serves as chairman for the Transportation Committee in the Texas State Senate; Rep. Geanie Morrison, chair of the House Committee on Transportation; Texas Transportation Commission Chairman Tryon D. Lewis; Texas Transportation Commissioner J. Bruce Bugg Jr.; TxDOT Executive Director James Bass and Deputy Executive Director Marc Williams.


Leonard Iselt, material/process inspector with the Construction Division and TxDOT's longest-tenured employee, helped unveil a time capsule made for the Centennial.

Also on April 4, the Texas House and Senate both recognized the agency with a resolution honoring its centennial.

Texas Highways magazine is part of the celebration, too. The official travel magazine of Texas has released a special edition celebrating TxDOT's centennial. The issue contains a letter from Governor Abbott, historical photographs, and pieces by TxDOT staffers Anne Cook, Julie Stratton,

Elizabeth Small, Emily Roberts Stone, Laura Cruzada and Marisol Espino.

The public and TxDOT employees can find more information about TxDOT's centennial at www.txdot.gov/txdot100. This special section of our website contains many photos documenting our 100-year history, an illustrated timeline, an event schedule and a link to our "Track the Truck" application. The site is updated regularly, so be sure to check for new photos and information throughout the year. You can also follow along on social media at #txdot100.

And look for the next issue of TN, which will be entirely dedicated to celebrating 100 years of TxDOT. 

TxDOT 101



THE TEXAS TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

TxDOT 101 introduces employees to some common topics related to the agency.

The push for a state highway commission and department began as early as 1903 and continued for years, without success.

It wasn't until 1916, when Washington, D.C. promised money to states with an organized state highway department that the idea gained traction in Texas. While counties had become accustomed to building their own roads, the lure of some of the \$75 million in federal cache was not something Texas was going to pass on.

So in 1917, the State Highway Department was born with the passage of HB 2. It also established the office of the state highway engineer and vested administrative control of the department in a three-member State Highway Commission. The bill outlined the board's specific duties, requiring them to "formulate plans and policies for the location, construction and maintenance, in cooperation with the counties of the state ... of a comprehensive system of state highways and public roads ..."

Then-Gov. Jim Ferguson selected three gentlemen to lead the charge. Curtis Hancock, a lawyer from Dallas and a former state representative, was selected as chairman. He was joined by T.R. McLean, a Mount Pleasant farmer and banker, and H.C. Odle from the central Texas town of Meridian.


HB 2 also set up a \$10 a day compensation plan for each of the new commissioners, with their salary capped at \$1,000 a year.

The first duty of the commission was important, one that could make or break the state's attempt to funnel federal dollars to the state: the selection of the first state highway engineer. And while Ferguson shied away from the universities for his first picks, the commission wasn't so inclined.

When the commission met for the first time on June 4, 1917, the only item on their agenda was the appointment of George Duren as highway engineer, a former engineer for the city of Corsicana who also held a civil engineering degree from the University of Texas.

Later that month, the commission got down to serious highway work. They invited county delegations to a public hearing to designate a state highway system. By meeting's end, that network was an interconnected system of 8,865 miles of "improved roadways" for the state.

Over the years, the commission has changed. In 2003, SB 409 increased the commission from three to five members, and allowed the commission to provide recommendations to the Legislature that could improve department operations.

And while the Commission's role today is still as the department's policy board, it now manages a system of 195,000 lane miles, and must tackle issues more complicated and farther reaching like massive congestion in the state's metro areas, growing maintenance needs, safety on our roadways and planning for the next generation of Texans — and commission leaders. 



GLORY DAYS

FLEET OPERATIONS RESTORES LIBERTY TRUCK FOR CENTENNIAL

TxDOT's 1918 Liberty Truck is almost as old as the department. Yet, after 99 years, she's still on the move. For the past few months, she has been showing off her recent makeover as she travels across the state for TxDOT's centennial celebration.

The Liberty Truck was part of the department's early fleet of hand-me-downs from the U.S. Army. Originally manufactured for WWI operations, these surplus trucks helped build the state's post-war infrastructure. The department was still using some of them into the 1950s.

Eventually, all but one of the trucks were retired and removed from the department's fleet.

Over time, the aging truck became difficult to maintain and was kept in storage. As TxDOT's centennial approached, the Fleet Operations Division made plans to refurbish the truck to resemble the Liberty Trucks as many of them looked in the department's

early days. The San Antonio Fleet Operations shop did some preliminary restoration, while the Waco shop got it running. The production shop at Camp Hubbard in Austin painted the truck, refurbished the interior and worked with the Support Services Division wood shop to replace the bed panels.

Although the truck is operational, its odometer is not logging many miles due to the vehicle's age and antiquated operating procedures. Several pages of operating instructions were developed to help the uninitiated fire up Ms. Liberty. The original hand crank still starts the truck, but an external electric starter travels with the truck and is the recommended (and easier) method for starting the engine — although there's not much that's easy about operating the truck. It doesn't have an automatic anything, it's hard to steer and just as hard to brake.

TxDOT RETIREES — VISIT — LIBERTY TRUCK



TxDOT photo


The Liberty Truck — seen here before its restoration — was the last remnant of a fleet of more than 1,400 vehicles that the Texas State Highway Department received from the federal government following World War I. Despite their antiquated operating procedures, some of these trucks were still in use into the 1950s.



TxDOT photo


The Waco, San Antonio and Production Shops with the Fleet Operations Division all helped refurbish the Liberty Truck.

“We had to have two guys steer it to get it down the road a couple of blocks for a photo shoot,” said Fleet Operations Division Director Dalton Pratt. “This was an interesting project for our shops, and they were meticulous with every detail. They made the Liberty Truck the star of TxDOT’s fleet.”

The truck has been featured prominently in a traveling centennial display visiting every TxDOT district, and it attracts attention everywhere it goes. Most of the events will conclude in June, and the Fleet Operations Division will continue maintaining the truck for future events. 

As it tours the state making stops in the districts, the restored Liberty Truck had some interesting visitors.

Roger Hanks worked for the Texas Highway Department back in 1946. He stopped by the TxDOT Centennial Liberty Truck tour display in Beaumont for a little blast from the past. Hanks says when he was an employee, he used a truck that was very similar. He even showed one of our mechanics how it works.

General Joe G. Hanover served as the Bryan District Engineer from 1966 to 1977. He recently stopped by the Liberty Truck display in Bryan. General Hanover and the Liberty Truck have something in common - both were born in 1918. 



TxDOT photo

General Joe G. Hanover

The Liberty Truck has had some interesting visitors as it makes its way around the state. Former TxDOT employees Roger Hanks and General Joe G. Hanover came out to take a look. Hanks said he drove a similar truck when he worked for the department.



TxDOT photo

Roger Hanks

SECURITY MATTERS

PROTECTING MOBILE DEVICES



Mobile devices, such as smartphones and tablets, have become very powerful means of communicating. However, these devices are at great risk from cyberattacks.

Whether you use a TxDOT-issued device or a personal device, please follow these steps to protect yourself:

- **Update the operating system:** Cyberattackers can more easily exploit devices running outdated software.
- **Be careful when using Wi-Fi and Bluetooth:** Many mobile devices will automatically connect to Wi-Fi networks, even if they are unsecured. Disable Wi-Fi and Bluetooth if you are not using it.
- **Beware of phishing through texts:** Many of the attacks you find in email can also happen via texting. Texts can link to malicious websites, download infected apps or ask for your private information just as easily as emails. If a text message seems suspicious or too good to be true, simply delete it.

If a text message seems suspicious or too good to be true, simply delete it.

- **Backup your device:** Just like with your computer, backup your mobile device on a regular basis. This way, if something happens to the device, your information is not lost. If you lose a mobile device, anyone who finds it can access all of your information — including your emails, pictures or contact lists — unless it is protected. Protect your devices with a hard-to-guess password or PIN. Encrypt your phone if you can. Also, consider enabling remote wiping if it's available. This feature allows you to erase all your information remotely if your mobile device is lost or stolen.

If you lose your TxDOT-issued device, call 512-302-HELP (4357) or visit <http://ITHELP>. 

NEW TRUCKS ROLL INTO DISTRICTS IN RECORD TIME



A new shipment of pickup trucks arrives in Austin earlier this year. Districts received their trucks much faster for fiscal year 2017 thanks to streamlined acquisition and upfitting processes.


TxDOT photo

Pickup trucks from the fiscal year 2017 equipment buy began arriving in the field faster than ever this year, thanks to several process improvements.

To shorten the wait for new equipment, the Fleet Operations Division worked with the Procurement Division to streamline the acquisition process.

Fleet also contracted with a vendor for make-ready services to install light bars, chevrons and other specialized items. The vendor is able to up-fit large numbers of vehicles in an assembly-line process, making them available to the districts more quickly than has been possible in the past. In turn, Fleet shops can spend more time on their core duties of equipment maintenance and repairs.

As a result of these efforts, districts began receiving their new pickup trucks months earlier than in years past. The streamlined process required lots of teamwork to plan and coordinate the arrival of the equipment and parts needed for up-fitting.

“New trucks used to trickle into the field a few at a time because our shops are not set up to work on them in large numbers,” said Fleet Operations Division Director Dalton Pratt. “Now the turnaround time from ordering to delivery is much shorter. We are very excited about this improvement in customer service.” 

U.S. 281 IMPROVEMENTS BREAK GROUND



TxDOT photo


State and local officials including Texas Transportation Commissioner J. Bruce Bugg Jr. (fifth from left), Gov. Greg Abbott (sixth from left) and TxDOT Executive Director James Bass (eighth from left) were on hand to break ground on an expansion of U.S. 281 in San Antonio.

Gov. Greg Abbott and Texas Transportation Commissioner J. Bruce Bugg Jr. hosted members of the State Legislature and officials from Bexar County, the city of San Antonio and VIA Metropolitan Transit to break ground on an expansion of U.S. 281 that will help reduce congestion for motorists in the northern reaches of the city.

The goal of the project is to address congestion in one of the top 100 Most Congested roadways in the state. The first of two phases stretches 8 miles and will cost \$192.3 million. It will get underway in May and will add non-tolled expressway lanes as well as high-occupancy-vehicle lanes from Loop 1604 to Stone Oak Parkway.

The project is part of the statewide congestion initiative known as Texas Clear Lanes, an effort to address choke points in some of the state’s most congested metropolitan areas.

“For 100 years, the Texas Department of Transportation has built and maintained our roads and highways, providing a safe transportation system that has helped the Texas economy grow,” said Gov. Abbott. “It is because of the success we have had in bringing jobs and new business to Texas that unprecedented growth has caused unprecedented congestion, making the expansion of U.S. 281 so important. The voters made clear this is their priority, and I am confident that TxDOT will deliver results in the form of reduced congestion.”

Webber Construction, based in The Woodlands, Texas, will be constructing the first phase of the U.S. 281 project. It is scheduled to be completed in 2020. 

A LEGACY FOR THE FUTURE: 2017 TEXAS TRANSPORTATION FORUM



TxDOT photo

Former Disney “imagineers” Marty Sklar (far left) and Bob Gurr discussed the early days of developing Disneyland and Walt Disney World with Deputy Executive Director Marc Williams (far right) at the Texas Transportation Forum.



TxDOT celebrates 100 years of service to Texans this year but the future was the focus at the 12th Annual Texas Transportation Forum in February. Smart cars, drones and data security were just a few of the topics covered.

This year, the Forum featured speakers from government agencies and the private sector.

Texas Transportation Commission Chairman Tryon D. Lewis welcomed the 1,300 attendees and introduced a special video from Gov. Greg Abbott and a video celebrating TxDOT's centennial.

Sen. Robert Nichols took a break from the legislative session to reflect on the history of transportation in the state. He discussed the recent focus in the Legislature on stabilizing funding for Texas transportation and looked to future developments to keep Texans moving.

Texas State Demographer Dr. Lloyd Potter discussed the patterns of growth in Texas.

"In the 1950s and 1960s, natural increase, or population growth through births, accounted for most of the growth in Texas," Potter said. "Starting in the 1970s and 1980s, migration began to account for the majority of the growth."

Texas has some of the fastest growing areas in the U.S. — the state's population is projected to double by 2045. That growth puts demands on our transportation system and shows no signs of slowing down.

Attendees were also able to get a look at the restored TxDOT Liberty truck at the Forum. The 1918 truck is the only remaining one of a fleet of more than 1,400 that the Texas State Highway Department received from the federal government following World War I. The truck is touring the state this year with stops at all 25 districts.

Thomas Frey, senior futurist with the DaVinci Institute, gave a presentation on revolutionary technology and how it will transform industry in the near future.

"The driverless car will change our current transportation system from a just-in-case model of car ownership to a just-in-time model of summoning a car whenever it is needed," said Frey. "That change will affect current aspects of our society from parking lots to auto insurance."

Texas Transportation Commissioner J. Bruce Bugg Jr. gave an update on the Texas Clear Lanes project and Commissioners Jeff Austin III and Victor Vandergriff moderated sessions on freight mobility and the transportation system, respectively.

Attendees got a treat when they heard from former Walt Disney Company employees Marty Sklar and



TxDOT photo

TxDOT Executive Director James Bass at the 12th Annual Texas Transportation Forum in February.

Texas has some of the fastest growing areas in the U.S. That growth puts demands on our transportation system and shows no signs of slowing down.

Bob Gurr. Sklar and Gurr and other workers at the company were called "imagineers," a term Disney coined as a cross between imagination and engineer. The two men worked with Walt Disney as he moved a movie studio into the area of urban design with the launch of his visionary theme parks, Disneyland and Walt Disney World.


"Walt Disney was willing to let the people who worked for him be wrong," said Gurr. "He just insisted that we learn from our mistakes. Since we weren't afraid of bad ideas, it opened up a tremendous amount of creativity."

For Disney, Sklar and Gurr said, the important thing was what was going to come next, not what happened yesterday.

Drone technology was another area of discussion at the Forum. Jerry Hendrix, executive director of the Lone Star UAS Center of Excellence and Innovation, presented on the use of unmanned craft. Such devices can be instrumental in improving safety and increasing efficiency but they still face challenges in both design and regulation before they can reach their full potential.

On the second day of the Forum, Rep. Joe Pickett discussed recent transportation funding legislation in Texas and trends in transportation. He praised the Transportation Commission and TxDOT Executive Director James Bass for the good work they are doing.

The executive directors from the Utah and Michigan departments of transportation joined Deputy Executive Director Marc Williams in a discussion on customer service, teamwork and the importance of leveraging technology to improve transportation networks.

The growing trend of smart cars and the question of data security provided the final topic of discussion for the Forum as attention turned once again to the future. 



Staff from the Public Transportation, Transportation Planning and Programming and Communications divisions recently combined their efforts to present a series of 17 public workshops across the state to get public input for the federal Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities program.

TxDOT photo

STEP UP TAKING PUBLIC INPUT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

rather than carrying the bulk of those responsibilities.

Attendance rose dramatically from previous years, due to unprecedented outreach for each of the 17 regional and nine satellite stakeholder workshops. Tactics included: flyers in English and Spanish, meetings posted on TxDOT.gov's Hearings and Meetings Schedule, emails sent to key community stakeholders, and news releases and alerts from districts in advance of the meetings. Workshops held in satellite locations were new additions to the public involvement process, and all meetings were available via WebEx.

The Public Transportation, Communications, and Transportation Planning and Programming divisions recently combined their expertise and coordinated their efforts to prepare a program for public engagement for the federal Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities program (Federal Transit Administration §5310). Funding for this program is intended to assist the needs of elderly individuals and persons with disabilities in rural areas when current transportation service is unavailable.

Public transportation coordinators, public information officers, and regional analysts with the Public Involvement section worked together to present a series of 17 public workshops across the state. The workshops gathered input from riders (current and potential), and facilitated conversations among riders, ride providers, planners and TxDOT. The goal of this effort is to improve the quality of applications for funding so

they will better reflect the needs of the communities that the funds will serve.


Combined with established partnerships uniting rural transit providers, local governments and non-profit organizations, this stepped-up public involvement effort fostered deeper engagement and renewed relationships.

“We had several goals in mind with the public involvement effort this year,” said Kari Banta, TxDOT’s §5310 program manager. “We wanted increased participation from seniors and individuals with disabilities to help identify their challenges and issues.”

“Some of the greatest outcomes of these meetings were spontaneous conversations to brainstorm solutions and discuss possible future partnerships,” Banta said. “Federal §5310 funds are limited and these developing partnerships will go a long way in leveraging those funds.”

The program allowed the TxDOT public transportation coordinators to serve as partners in public involvement

The program allowed the TxDOT public transportation coordinators to serve as partners in public involvement

“These workshops provided an important opportunity for riders and the providers to articulate the issues they face,” Banta said. “It was equally important for the public to see TxDOT’s interest and open-mindedness as we listened. The cooperative spirit among the Public Transportation, Communications, and Transportation Planning and Programming divisions created this success.” 

ELECTRICITY IN THE AIR: TYLER DISTRICT HOSTS UTILITIES WORKSHOP

TxDOT photo



The Tyler District's Charon Williams and David Wicks at the 2017 Annual Utilities Workshop. The workshop is an opportunity for the district to meet with utility company representatives and exchange information.

For more than a decade, the Tyler District has hosted its Annual Utilities Workshop, but this year saw its biggest participation yet. That's something the Right of Way Division's new Utility Portfolio Section Director Charon Williams wants to take statewide.

The workshop is an opportunity for the district to talk with utility company representatives to provide them with information on projects and a better understanding of potential impacts to their facilities. This year's meeting was held in January, drawing 108 utility representatives and consultants, along with 22 TxDOT personnel.

David Wicks II, Tyler District utility coordinator, has organized the workshops since 2004.

"It started out with the purpose being to inform the utilities of the fiscal year letting projects," Wicks said. "Over the years, we expanded it to include the four-year letting schedule and long-range projects. This year I decided to include them in the initial invitations and it resulted in our best turnout yet."


It was perfect timing considering that Williams was now on board and was the guest speaker.

"The goal of my presentation was to provide the

audience with an overview of the progress we are making with the new direction of the statewide utilities program," Williams said. "We provide notification of future projects, which in turn, allows the utility companies to plan their resources accordingly and to provide input into ways that we can better collaborate with them on our transportation projects."

The meeting included a presentation from Tyler Deputy District Engineer Vernon Webb who shared the department's commitment to working with utility companies earlier in the project development process. Advance Planning Director Brooke Droptini and the district's area engineers also provided information on current projects and the four-year and 10-year plans for funded and identified projects.

Williams said she would like to see all districts host this type of workshop on a routine basis.

"This particular meeting was well-planned and flowed seamlessly, while providing a great amount of information to the local utility community," Williams said. "I would like to see all district meetings have the same level of success as the Tyler District." 

The workshop is an opportunity for the district to talk with utility company representatives to provide them with information on projects and a better understanding of potential impacts to their facilities.

100

THE ROAD TO

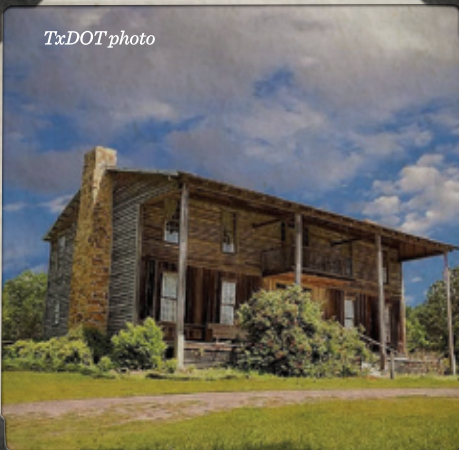
2017



TxDOT photo

On April 4, past and present executive directors and engineer directors of TxDOT got together to celebrate the very day of the signing of the legislation to create the Texas Highway Department 100 years ago. From left: Bill Burnett, Mike Behrens, Arnold Oliver, James Bass, Phil Wilson and Amadeo Saenz Jr.

TxDOT photo



2010s

The Stage Coach Inn is also known as the Old Half-Way Inn, located along Highway 21 just north of Chireno, near San Augustine and Nacogdoches in the Lufkin District. The Inn became a frequent stop for stagecoaches and for others, like Sam Houston, traveling along the main roadway known as Old San Antonio Road or El Camino Real. Today, SH 21 is still heavily traveled.

This year TxDOT celebrates its centennial and such an important milestone cannot be celebrated on just one day. TN looks back at the Road to 100.

1986



TxDOT photo

Texas-born musician Stevie Ray Vaughan helped launch the now iconic Don't mess with Texas[®] anti-litter campaign in 1986.

A LOOK BACK WITH OUR RETIREES

M. G. Goode



M. G. Goode worked for TxDOT, or the State Highway Department as it was then called, from 1947 to 1986, when he retired after serving as engineer director starting in 1980. Communications staff with the Dallas District caught up with Mr. Goode, now in his 90s, a few months ago and he reflected on his long career. Below are excerpts from the interview. See the full interview on the TxDOT Family YouTube Channel.

What was your first job at TxDOT? I was hired right out of college. I was hired for a job on U.S. Highway 75. It was a section from Dallas to Hutchins. We were going to make a big highway. It was going to be four lanes with a four foot divider. An expressway, we called it. It started at the Trinity River and went to Hutchins. We changed that [highway] from two lanes to four lanes.

I worked out of the Dallas District. Mr. DeWitt C. Greer was [at that time] head of the Highway Department, it was called then. He was head of it for a long time and divided it into 25 districts. He said he tried to make each district have about 3,000 miles of highway.

Is there a job you are most proud of? The computer business had just come into being while I was there. People don't want to take on things they don't know about. So I formed some sections with people who knew what to do and trained them in Austin. We moved them out to the districts so they learned to use the computer equipment. I wanted to bring the entire department up-to-date on the technology that was available. We had to do a lot of training to be able to do that.

Do you miss TxDOT? I consider myself very fortunate to have been associated with people like DeWitt Greer and Luther DeBerry. I was [DeBerry's] assistant at two different locations. I couldn't have had nicer guys to work with. They helped me learn to do whatever needed to be done. I've tried as much as possible to make the learning process for all employees interesting, too. I enjoyed working for the Highway Department. It was a pleasant experience for me for all 40 years.

1961



Construction in 1961 of the new Lavaca Bay Causeway in the Yoakum District.

2000s



The Lanier ferry transports cars and passengers to and from Galveston in the mid-2000s. 🚢

ABILENE DISTRICT SHARES SWEET TREATS WITH ELEMENTARY KIDS




TxDOT photo

Kids from Mitchell County's Westbrook ISD got a special treat for taking top honors in the Abilene District's snow plow painting contest: a hot chocolate party and a visit from TxDOT's own crash test dummies, Vince and Larry. Pictured with the children are Troy Grimes (in the Vince costume), Cody Dykes, Gary Shelnett (in the Larry costume) and Jill Christie.

Mitchell County's Westbrook ISD took top honors in the Abilene District's snow plow painting contest. To congratulate them on a job well done, they received a hot chocolate party and a visit from TxDOT's own crash test dummies, Vince and Larry.

Jill Christie, the district's traffic safety specialist and Cody Dykes, the district's former safety officer, reminded the kids how important it is to always wear your seatbelt and to make sure they meet height requirements before graduating out of a child passenger safety seat. Vince and Larry served as good reminders of what can happen if seatbelts aren't worn in the car.

After everyone was on board with wearing their seatbelt, it was time for hot chocolate and cookies!

Many thanks to the Mitchell County office for helping out with this fun event, especially Kyla McGuffin, Eric Boone and Troy Grimes, who did a great job playing the role of Larry. Thanks also to Gary Shelnett, the district's vegetation specialist, who played Vince. These folks took time out of their day to help get kids excited about safety (and hot chocolate)! 


IT'S A DIRTY JOB. LET THE ROBOT DO IT.

Pipeline inspection can be a dirty job, but not for one crew in the Austin District. They use a robotic camera to inspect culverts and storm drains to determine their condition.

But that's not all this automaton can do! The robot investigates possible blockages or damages to pipes. It can also determine the direction that the pipes run. The TR3400 Pathfinder XL has a pan and tilt camera with a self-cleaning lens that provides clear images for accurate assessments.

"In the past, inspectors were physically limited in their culvert and storm drain inspections and often used crude cameras on poles, which restricted their ability to inspect these drainage features," said John Gordon, lab technician with the Austin District. "Now, we can quickly find issues and repair them before any further damage is done."

It has also helped to document existing conditions of frequently flooded culverts and drainage systems, which assists in the reimbursement process with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Federal Highway Administration.

The Austin District acquired the system in 2014 under the leadership of Maintenance Director Mike Arellano. Austin is the only district to employ the technology, but Gordon is willing to give a helping hand to others upon request. 



TxDOT photo

Pipeline inspection has gone robotic in the Austin District: The TR3400 Pathfinder XL, shown here with Lab Technician John Gordon, has a pan and tilt camera with a self-cleaning lens that provides clear images for accurate assessments.

TxDOT HONORED FOR INNOVATIVE ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS



TxDOT photo

Two interactive gaming trucks were developed as part of marketing campaigns that attempt to lower the number of people dying in preventable crashes on Texas roads by targeting driver behaviors. The trucks have traveled the state.



TxDOT photo

The American Advertising Awards and the Telly Awards recently honored TxDOT for the creation of innovative marketing events and broadcast advertising for its *Be Safe. Drive Smart.* and *Plan While You Can* campaigns.

National and regional advertising associations recently honored TxDOT for the creation of innovative marketing events and broadcast advertising for its *Be Safe. Drive Smart.* and *Plan While You Can* campaigns.

The work of TxDOT and its marketing partner, GDC Marketing & Ideation, on these two campaigns was recognized with the following awards from the American Advertising Awards:

- **Impaired Dodgeball Truck** – Gold Addy for Experiential Marketing
- **Texas Road Watchers Truck** – Gold Addy for Experiential Marketing

The American Advertising Awards, also known as the ADDY Awards, is the advertising industry's largest and most representative competition, attracting more than 40,000 entries every year in local American Advertising Federation Club (Ad Club) competitions.


The campaigns also received recognition from the Telly Awards, the premier awards honoring outstanding local, regional and cable TV commercials and programs, as well as the finest video and film.

- **This is the Moment (English)** – Silver Telly Award for Regional Television Commercial and Silver Addy for Regional Television Commercial

- **This is the Moment (Spanish)** – Silver Addy for Regional Television Commercial
- **I Didn't Plan** – Silver Telly Award for Regional Television Commercial and Silver Addy for Regional Television Commercial
- **Double Cross** – Telly Award for Regional Television Commercial
- **Reflectors** – Telly Award for Regional Television Commercial

Two interactive gaming trucks were developed as part of these marketing campaigns, which attempt to lower the number of people dying in preventable crashes on Texas roads by targeting driver behaviors like wearing a seatbelt. In 2015, crashes resulted in more than 3,500 fatalities and more than 17,000 serious injuries in Texas.

Since 2015, these gaming trucks have traveled the state, visiting community events, businesses and universities in an effort to alter driver behaviors. The games address many of the largest contributing factors to fatal crashes: impaired driving, speeding, distracted driving, failure to drive to conditions and drowsy driving.

In addition to the statewide grassroots tour, TxDOT and GDC employed an integrated marketing campaign including social media and broadcast and digital public relations, to reach the target audience for these campaigns where they live, work and play. 

I am a...

District Maintenance Administrator

Walter Hambrick, a district maintenance administrator for the Houston District, celebrated 11 years with TxDOT last March. Before joining TxDOT, he worked for a local landscape contractor primarily performing work for TxDOT and became really good friends with several TxDOT employees. When a vegetation manager position opened, he jumped at the opportunity. He has a bachelor of science in agriculture from Sam Houston State University. He and his high school sweetheart married 13 years ago. They have a 10-year-old son and an 8-year-old daughter. The family enjoys traveling, baseball, gymnastics and camping.

Describe a typical day as a district maintenance administrator.

A typical day begins by checking my iPhone for what events occurred overnight on the roadway. Once I arrive at the office, my day is filled with meetings that might involve the budget, special events planning, facilities, ferry operations, emergency management or personnel. Sometimes all in the same day! Depending on the day's events, many of these stretch into the evening carpool home.

What types of skills are required to be a successful district maintenance administrator?

A willingness and patience to tackle any task at hand is a key to success in this position.


What would you say to someone just hired for the position?

Buckle up! It's going to be a fun ride!

How would you describe a good day at the office?

It's a great day when you celebrate the outcome of hard work as a team. For example, Houston hosted Super Bowl LI this year. After planning for two years to get ready for the event and then working around the clock for 15 days during the event, there's no better feeling than knowing you have a dedicated team willing to go the extra mile.

What are the more challenging aspects of your job and how do you meet those challenges?

Working in the fourth largest city in the nation has its perks and challenges. Coordinating our roles and responsibilities can be quite a challenge with a vast overlapping local transportation system. The key to overcoming these challenges is communication and building a network of partners. 

A man with a beard and mustache, wearing a blue and yellow plaid button-down shirt and light-colored trousers, stands in a control room. He has his hands in his pockets and is smiling slightly. The background shows a large screen displaying a road view with the 'METRO TRANSIT' logo, and other computer monitors in the distance.

Walter Hambrick

**District Maintenance
Administrator
Houston District**



Azia Tufts

Azia Tufts

Office Manager • Fort Worth District

A native Texan, Azia Tufts graduated high school in 2008 in Red Oak, located south of Dallas. She obtained her dental assistant license in 2008. She then pursued an associate degree in business in 2010. Tufts started at TxDOT in 2015 in a temporary position she found through Goodwill Temp Industries. The job was originally for five days at a maintenance office in the Fort Worth District. She gratefully took those five days and turned them into a long-term career opportunity. While working full time as an office manager, she is actively pursuing her Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology through the distance learning program at Southern New Hampshire University. Tufts's puppy Ace is her world and, she says, if dogs could talk, he would say she is his world, too.

What are the five words that best describe you?

Loyal, inquisitive, reverent, dependable and resourceful.

What's an ideal weekend for you?

The perfect weekend for me has lots of time for reflecting, reading and playing with my puppy, Ace. And, of course, it would include plenty of family time, too.

What motivates you to work hard?

My motivation is the realization that an unexamined life is not worth living.

What is the best gift you have ever received?

Tough question! Can I have two answers? First, a Bible. Second, a cellphone that I use to keep up with family, friends and news.

Are you an introvert or an extrovert?

Extrovert, 100 percent!

What color eyes do you like the most and why?

No preference; they're all beautiful.

Would you rather wear jeans or khakis?

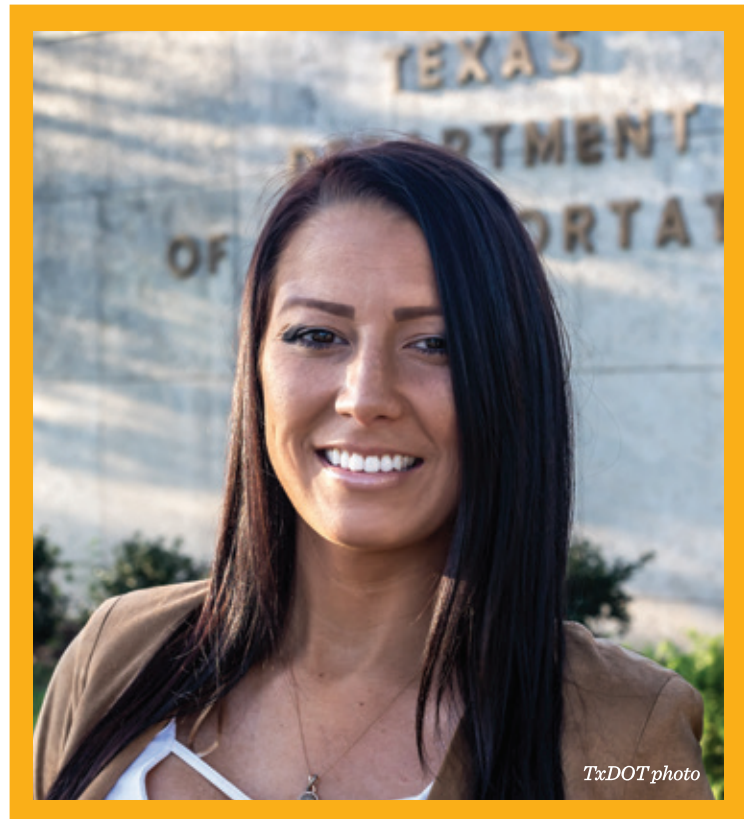
Jeans for sure! And I'd wear them to a good soccer game and then out to eat with family.

What is your favorite activity at the gym?

Running on the treadmill and then challenging myself with a really steep incline.

What do you do each day to ensure that you and your co-workers work in a safe environment?

When going to or from my car, I scan the parking lot to see if my peers are backing up or using the "pull-through method."



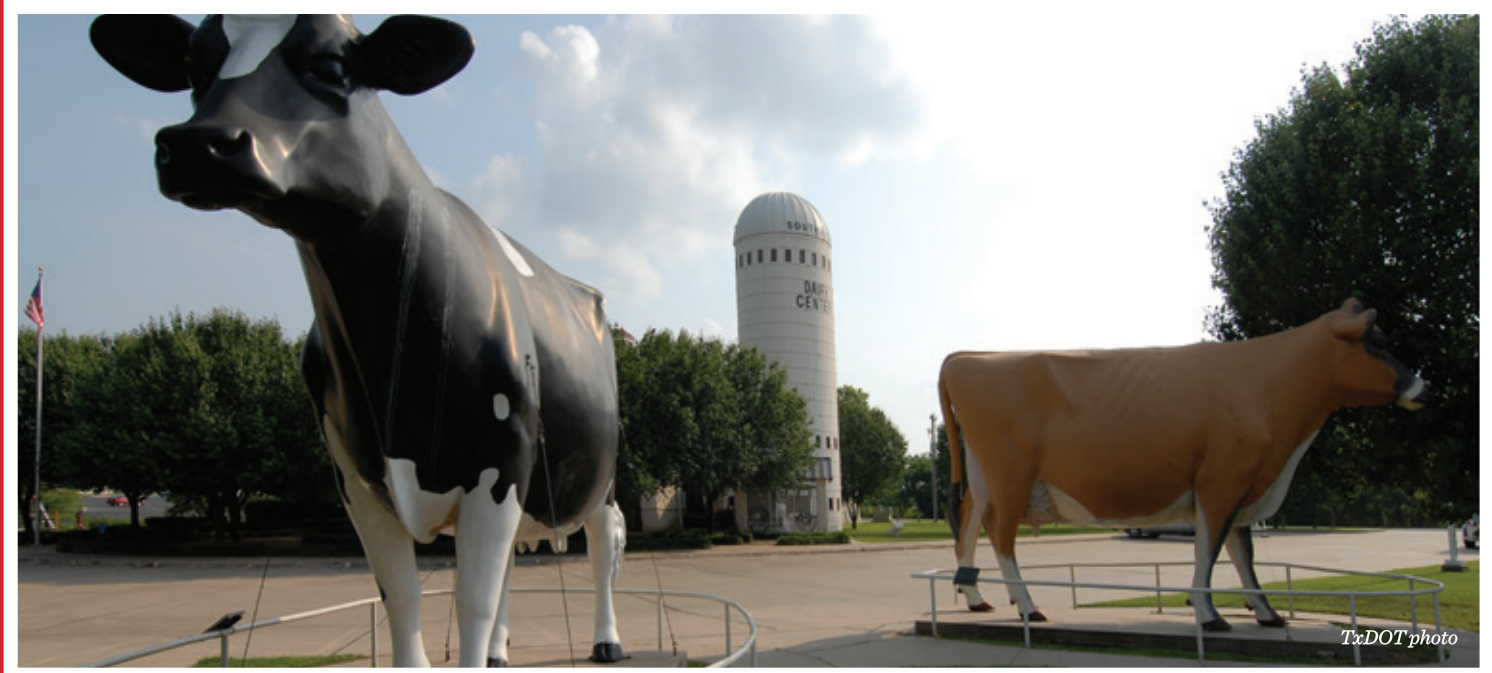
TxDOT photo

Why is the Fort Worth District the best district in TxDOT?

My opinion: the grass is not always greener on the other side. Here in Fort Worth we have some great women who are leaders and will take the time to train you if you ask. Also, we have very strong area engineers along with our district engineer. To top it all off, the first precast arch bridge was built on West 7th Street! 🇹🇽

Where Am I?

Here is a photo depicting an identifiable landmark you may have seen in your travels around Texas. If you think you know what this is a photo of or know where it was taken, send an email to TNideas@txdot.gov. Deadline for submissions is June 6.



Identified:

Congratulations to our first identifier Chris Cowen (BRY).

Last edition's photo featured a detail from the monument to the fallen heroes of the Dawson Massacre and the Mier Expedition at Monument Hill and Kreische Brewery State Park in La Grange.

Others correctly identifying the photo were Stephen Matula (MNT), Glenn Jaeger (YKM), Glenn Eilert (retired), Richard E. Sliva (retired), Van McElroy (retired) and Marcus Martinez (LBB). 🇺🇸



UPCOMING TxDOT EVENTS

May 25

Texas Transportation Commission Meeting
(Austin)

May 29

Memorial Day
(All agencies closed)

June 19

Emancipation Day
(Minimal staff required)

June 29

Texas Transportation Commission Meeting
(Austin)

MILESTONES

MARCH SERVICE AWARDS

DISTRICTS

AMARILLO

- 20 Manuel F. Melendez
- 10 Shan Phifer
- 5 Donald G. Whitt
Joe E. Tindall
Joshua W. Townsend
Kevin W. Wilcox

ATLANTA

- 30 Stacey G. Burns
- 20 Charles E. Anderson

AUSTIN

- 25 Lloyd L. Chance
- 20 Matt J. Massey
- 15 Gary K. Towns
- 10 Kenneth A. Brothers
- 5 Harsh V. Doshi

BEAUMONT

- 10 Jacob D. Will
Robert S. Guy Jr
- 5 Joseph R. Crone
Sampson L. Moore

BRYAN

- 30 Thomas G. Stevens
- 25 Terry G. Pope
- 15 Timothy A. Berlan
- 10 Ashley R. Hill
Eliga M. Barrett Jr
John E. Ackley
William S. Sandifer

CHILDRESS

- 15 James D. Harris

CORPUS CHRISTI

- 30 Esteban Guerra Jr
Laura Benavides
- 20 Charles R. Hafer
- 10 Charles C. Benavidez
Esmael Hernandez Jr
Omar M. Garcia

DALLAS

- 25 Barry D. Heard
William R. Fuller
- 15 Eric D. Lane
Forrest L. Huffman
- 10 Collin G. Rhodes
James G. Swistak
John A. Kelley
Kevin D. Sumrow
Miranda L. Adams

- 5 Cameron R. Faber
Gary V. Matthews
Kyle R. Trojacek
Teresa L. Harris

EL PASO

- 15 Carmen P. Sifuentes
- 10 Kurt J. Spier

FORT WORTH

- 35 Santos R. Chazarreta
- 30 Bryan D. Riggs
- 25 James W. Pollock
Mark D. Price
Richard A. Stacy
- 15 Arilyn J. Carter
Harry A. Blair Jr
- 10 James T. Scoggin
Mary K. Addison
Sab El-Hawi

HOUSTON

- 35 Severo Basquez Jr
- 25 Jim F. Teltchik
- 20 Martha I. Gallegos-Aaron
- 10 Ching H. Chiu
Kelly A. Lark
Robert R. Harrison

LUBBOCK

- 10 Isidro Sanchez Jr
Rodolfo J. Alvarado

LUFKIN

- 30 Coy D. Ditsworth
- 15 Phyllis D. Clark
- 10 Michael L. Hensarling
Robert F. Byley Jr
Vernon L. Pierce III

LAREDO

- 5 Juan M. Cervantez

ODESSA

- 15 Carlos A. Garcia
- 5 Michael C. Cordero
Raul Briceno

PARIS

- 30 Timothy W. Dorner
- 20 Trop L. Scholl
- 10 Daniel W. Womack
- 5 Mildred R. Litchfield

PHARR

- 30 Hector P. Gonzalez Jr
Ruben C. Gonzalez
- 20 Roberto L. Serna
- 10 Manuel Moreno Jr
- 5 Carlos Hernandez

SAN ANTONIO

- 20 Cecil E. Guinn
Ray Guzman
Richard J. Guillemette
- 15 Jacquelin N. Wheeler
- 10 Dale L. Picha
- 5 Antonio Ramirez Jr
Christopher B. Simmons
David F. Saucedo
Hector E. Siller II
Homer H. Burkett

SAN ANGELO

- 10 Kristan C. Hereford
- 5 Anthony Sanchez
Steven A. Olascuaga

TYLER

- 15 Rickey B. Gates
- 10 Steven A. Swinden
Waylon T. Brittain

WACO

- 15 Robert E. Spratt
- 10 Brian S. Dickinson
- 5 Brian D. Douglas
Thomas J. Stimmel

WICHITA FALLS

- 30 David D. Bates
- 5 Ronald L. Hays

YOAKUM

- 10 Mark N. Schiller
Randy C. Lange

DIVISIONS

ADMINISTRATION

- 5 Emily D. Clisby

BRIDGE

- 30 Michael S. O'Toole

CIVIL RIGHTS

- 15 Eli E. Lopez

COMPLIANCE

- 5 Anthony R. Thomas

DESIGN

- 10 Abderrahmane Maamar-Tayeb

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- 5 Stephen R. Stewart

FLEET OPERATIONS

- 5 Charles F. Williams
John D. Corbello

GENERAL COUNSEL

- 25 Pamela A. Mackenzie

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

- 5 Laura Kolstad

INTERNAL AUDIT

- 15 Jennifer M. Stanush

MAINTENANCE

- 15 Lauren R. Johnson
- 10 Zheng Li

PROCUREMENT

- 5 Cherie I. Southard

PEPS

- 10 Carl B. Reed
Jorge A. Millan

PROJECT FINANCE, DEBT & STRATEGIC CONTRACTS

- 5 Mildred R. Litchfield

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

- 5 Larry W. Stokes Jr

SUPPORT SERVICES

- 5 Anthony G. Perez Jr
Bradrick O. Hornbuckle
Eric H. Bayley
Loren A. Prye
Travis C. Florida

TOLL OPERATIONS

- 5 Brian K. Smallwood

TRAFFIC OPERATIONS

- 25 Brian A. Stanford
Irene M. Webster
- 20 Carol L. Campa
- 10 Joseph M. Hurley

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING & PROGRAMMING

- 30 Timothy G. Juarez
David M. Millikan
Julie Puckett
Lynn M. Isaak
Mary H. Aparicio



APRIL SERVICE AWARDS

DISTRICTS

ABILENE

- 30** Harold G. Cannon
Jimmy Marquez
- 5** Stuart G. Bell
Guy W. Glosson
Armando G. Moncibais
Michael J. Vasquez

AMARILLO

- 30** Gregory Welch
- 25** Kenneth S. Brewster
- 15** Stephen Garcia
Kenny J. Grant
- 5** Justin M. Carlton

ATLANTA

- 35** Everett J. Baker
- 20** William M. Burns
- 15** Molly C. Berridge
- 5** Kenneth L. Holyfield

AUSTIN

- 20** Jason H. Hudson
Kathleen D. Newton
Maria D. Ramos
- 10** Elia Lopez
Hector R. Tamez
- 5** Victoria D. Dobbins

BEAUMONT

- 20** Oran J. Sams
- 5** Keith S. Tinsley

BROWNWOOD

- 10** Calvin C. Milburn
Scott D. Sanderson
- 5** Verna F. Bearden
Paula K. King

BRYAN

- 30** Sammy Martinez
- 15** Robert L. Pavlas
- 5** Gary D. Rosenbaum

CHILDRESS

- 15** Daniel Castro
- 5** Rickey Anderson

CORPUS CHRISTI

- 15** Lester M. Lindley
Harold R. Reeves Jr
- 10** Timothy D. Fink
Alfred Perez
- 5** Fernando Barrera III

DALLAS

- 25** William H. Catchings Jr
- 20** Fredrick D. Jenkins
Kenny Krishnan
Alan P. McNeil
- 15** David Williams Jr
- 10** James C. Adkison
Michael W. Semtner
Eben C. Stover
- 5** Lisa H. Walsh

FORT WORTH

- 30** Gary W. Baird
Dicky J. White
- 15** William B. Palm III
Michael R. Speicher II
- 10** William A. Bourgeois
Antonio M. Garrett
Scott G. Salter
Maurielle W. Williams
- 5** Mildred J. Palangan
Lawrence V. Tittle

HOUSTON

- 30** Debra K. Smith
Thomas P. Smith
- 25** Anis A. Merchant
John C. Williams
- 20** Benamar Mebarkia
Steven W. Buckner
- 10** John S. McAllister III
Gaurang S. Pandit
Christopher A. Rust
Douglas L. White
- 5** Michael D. Mosley
Karen L. Suits
Nathan J. Wilson

LAREDO

- 15** Alejandro Alvarez
Armando Ramirez
- 5** Fernando Martinez

LUBBOCK

- 5** Michael L. Smith

LUFKIN

- 25** Louis C. Parten
- 5** Jeffrey E. Griffin

ODESSA

- 10** Austin L. Rubio

PARIS

- 10** Kevin R. Humphries
- 5** Sanford D. Belcher
Casey E. Berryhill

PHARR

- 30** Toribio Garza Jr
- 20** Rex A. Costley
- 10** Roland Ramirez
- 5** Juan E. Hernandez

SAN ANGELO

- 25** James A. Gilbert Jr
- 20** Ronald G. Blaylock
Ronald L. Nowlin
- 10** Kevin T. Clary

SAN ANTONIO

- 20** Linda G. Cox
Roy H. Mumme
- 15** Theresa A. Canales
Gregorio Martinez Jr
Mark A. Perez
- 5** Billy G. Cowart

TYLER

- 20** Lucinda K. Gruetzner
- 10** Michael A. Miller
- 5** Kevin L. Landrum
Jesus Reyes

WACO

- 25** Anthony J. Moran
- 15** Chris A. Perez
- 10** Greg Demaria
Eliseo F. Suarez

WICHITA FALLS

- 30** Peggy R. Royston
- 25** Hugo Flores
- 20** James S. Reaves
- 10** Carl P. Harrelson

YOAKUM

- 30** James G. Pustka
Mark E. Wendel
- 20** Joseph C. Kridler
David O. Robinson
- 15** Lisa A. Davidson
- 5** Joseph E. Krawitz

DIVISIONS

COMMUNICATIONS

- 25** Michael A. Amador
- 15** Michael L. Sledge

CONSTRUCTION

- 15** Shawn C. Gilbert
- 10** Gilberto Valdez

CONTRACT SERVICES

- 10** Anna L. Ramirez

DESIGN

- 15** Jonathan W. Martin
- 10** Randy L. Kahl

FLEET OPERATIONS

- 15** Rodney Ramirez
- 10** Matthew C. Foster
Jerry L. Glover
- 5** Donald B. Eldridge
Gerardo Sustaita

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

- 5** Carlos A. Calle
Lauren P. Freriks
Trent W. Thomas

HUMAN RESOURCES

- 5** Tresha M. Jordan

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

- 5** Cassandra Jordan

MAINTENANCE

- 10** Stephen Binder

PROCUREMENT

- 25** Maria R. Awad
Barbara E. Brooks

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

- 5** Elba P. Martinez

RIGHT OF WAY

- 15** Steven B. Taylor

SUPPORT SERVICES

- 10** Samuel Gonzales Jr
- 5** Kishor M. Muzumdar

TOLL OPERATIONS

- 15** Alejandro A. Juarez
Yolanda A. Turk

TRAFFIC OPERATIONS

- 30** Brian Fariello
- 15** Michael D. Schulze

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING

- 25** Dione N. Albert
- 5** Casey M. Dusza

TRAVEL INFORMATION

- 5** Garland M. Wiggins

MILESTONES 2017

JANUARY RETIREE REPORT

DISTRICTS

AUSTIN

- 19 Rosalinda Gamez
- 18 Mark W. Mohr

BEAUMONT

- 15 Cleveland D. Rogers

BROWNWOOD

- 10 Malcolm D. Williamson

CHILDRESS

- 25 Rickey L. Gonzales

CORPUS CHRISTI

- 29 Rudolph A. Leos
- 23 Paula Ditzenberger
- 12 Bonnie L. Schmolbach

DALLAS

- 28 Rodney Douglas
- 27 John H. West
- 25 Paul E. Cooper
- Charles A. May
- 13 Wayne D. McHam

FORT WORTH

- 30 Bryan D. Riggs
- 29 Gordon C. Abbott

HOUSTON

- 35 Juan L. Embil
- 30 Paul R. Bartholomew
- Wayne L. Welsh
- 29 Greg W. Lehde

LAREDO

- 16 Lee James Canty

LUBBOCK

- 10 Christopher P. Farrell

PARIS

- 27 Richard G. Harper
- 15 Ricky D. Daniels

SAN ANTONIO

- 27 Teresa G. Tschirhart

TYLER

- 21 Daniel E. Fisher
- 10 Roy T. Burgess

WACO

- 29 Bruce E. Johnson

WICHITA FALLS

- 16 Larry Woods

DIVISIONS

INTERNAL AUDIT

- 3 Anneliese Geis

PROCUREMENT

- 12 Vicky P. Raper

PROJECT FINANCE, DEBT AND STRATEGIC CONTRACTS DIVISION

- 5 Grace Gonzales

TOLL OPERATIONS

- 20 Dena R. Rush

TRAFFIC OPERATIONS

- 9 Walter Leon Scott
- Lorella Jane Wagoner

FEBRUARY RETIREE REPORT

DISTRICTS

ABILENE

- 19 Kristine K. Means

AMARILLO

- 28 Ty Ducheneaux
- 21 Raymond D. Martinez Jr
- 11 Jerry W. Ray

ATLANTA

- 31 Rickie L. Shields
- 10 Suzanne Skidmore

AUSTIN

- 30 James T. Bishop

BEAUMONT

- 19 Ruby A. Behannon

BRYAN

- 15 Davey J. Meschwitz

CORPUS CHRISTI

- 20 Alventor F. Rodriguez
- 17 Roy A. Payne

DALLAS

- 19 Willie J. McKinney

FORT WORTH

- 26 Edward L. Henderson
- 25 Andrew V. Kissig
- 23 Cynthia G. Baldrige
- 19 Phyllis E. Sticher
- 5 Kevin B. Seaton

LAREDO

- 25 Daniel De Luna

LUBBOCK

- 30 Leslie H. Blackstock
- Darral H. Bryant

ODESSA

- 27 Richard C. Walbrick
- 21 Rodger D. McKenzie
- 19 Kelley W. Stewart

TYLER

- 21 Manuel Ortiz

WACO

- 24 Stephen S. Mitchell
- 33 Bobby G. Littlefield Jr
- 17 Monica B. Marek
- 10 Jimmy R. Cantu

WICHITA FALLS

- 31 Christopher C. Ulbig

YOAKUM

- 10 Cindy S. Kendrick

DIVISIONS

AVIATION

- 14 Megan E. Caffall

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- 31 Deeann Burns Morales

HUMAN RESOURCES

- 24 Nelson Rios Gonzalez

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

- 29 Lydia A. Ramirez

INTERNAL AUDIT

- 17 Timothy R. Owen

RIGHT OF WAY

- 10 Kathleen W. Potts

IN MEMORIAM

DISTRICTS

BROWNWOOD

Efrain Almodova
Maintenance
Section Supervisor
Date of Death: 9/23/2016
Years of Service: 26

DALLAS

Patricia A. Lewis
Retired: 1999
Date of Death: 4/2/2017

LAREDO

Cody Babineau
Transportation
Maintenance Chief
Date of Death: 3/30/2017
Years of Service: 18

LUBBOCK

Jerry R. Moore
Retired: 2000
Date of Death: 3/7/2017

PARIS

Eva N. Flenniken
Retired: 2006
Date of Death: 3/7/2017

PHARR

Lloyd D. Varnell
Retired: 1993
Date of Death: 2/27/2017

Refugio T. "Cuco" Castillo

Retired: 1986
Date of Death: 6/2016

SAN ANTONIO

Marlin Grona
Equipment Operator
Date of Death: 3/11/2017
Years of Service: 16

WACO

Meredith Ray Massingill
Retired: 1993
Date of Death: 3/5/2017

DIVISIONS

CONSTRUCTION

Terry L. Personett
Retired: 2012
Date of Death: 2/28/2017

TxDOT Family Members Chime In

What's your favorite swimming hole for hot summer days?



TxDOT photo

JANICE ROBERTSON
HUMAN RESOURCES SPECIALIST, BRYAN DISTRICT

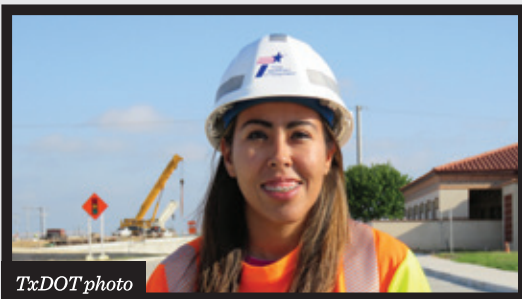
“My favorite place to go swimming is Lake Somerville with my family.”



TxDOT photo


AGATA LARUE
TRANSPORTATION ENGINEER, BRIDGE DIVISION

“My favorite place to swim this time of year, hands down, is Barton Springs Pool. It's natural, spring-fed, beautiful and large enough for swimming laps. I love the fish and enjoy looking for the evasive Barton Springs salamander.”



TxDOT photo

ARLENE CALDERON
GENERAL ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN
LAREDO AREA OFFICE

“My favorite swimming hole is the Frio River at Garner State Park in Concan during May or early June. I enjoy swimming in the river, the beautiful scenery, hiking trails, camping areas and spending time with family.” 

Bright Lights

CAR SEATS FOR CHRISTMAS

Gifts at Christmas can come from where you least expect it.

On the Thursday before last Christmas, the TxDOT Yoakum District office received a call from a daycare owner who was very concerned that a father didn't have child safety seats in his car. The owner asked if there was anything TxDOT could do. The daycare owner did not want the father driving around over the holidays without his children in car seats. It turned out that due to some family issues the mother had recently left.

Later that day, a trained child safety seat technician, along with several other employees, got permission to assist this father in need. They did a car seat check in front of the office to determine which car seats would be appropriate for the family. He returned the next day with the paperwork for the car seats and a thank-you note signed by the children.

What an amazing gift from TxDOT employees to a family in need! It's always great to see the TxDOT family making a difference in the community.



TxDOT photo

Just days before Christmas, employees with the Yoakum District helped a family obtain car seats for the children.

Read more about the good work employees are doing in Bright Lights on Crossroads: <http://crossroads/brightlights/>. Send information on any thank-you emails, letters or calls you or your co-workers receive to AskTxDOT so we can continue to shine Bright Lights on TxDOT employee achievements. 



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Austin, Texas 78701

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TN Online (TxDOT computers only):
<http://crossroads/>

Division Wellness

coordinators can help you on your journey

TxDOT's Wellness program recently expanded to include wellness coordinators for each division within the department. This move gives divisions a way to communicate their wellness program needs and to engage more employees with the program.


For years, TxDOT's Wellness program has had coordinators in each of TxDOT's 25 districts. They provide programs such as flu shot clinics and biometric screenings. They also provide employees with information about health-related topics such as maintaining a healthy diet. District wellness coordinators also plan and oversee the Wellness Fair at their districts.

The division wellness coordinator role is in the planning stages and will evolve as time goes on, said TxDOT's Statewide Wellness Program Coordinator Audrey Thompson. The division wellness

coordinators meet via WebEx and in person to review program activities and programs. Each division will also have a wellness budget for purchasing wellness-related items. How each division will spend its allotment has not been determined.

The divisions have taken an interest in developing programs that would address stress management.

"Having division wellness coordinators is simply another way to increase engagement and participation in wellness and get information to more employees," Thompson said.

If you have an idea or want to get involved with TxDOT's Wellness program, contact your division or district wellness coordinator. For a list of coordinators, see the Wellness page on Crossroads. 

Contact your local Wellness Program Coordinator to learn about the wellness program and start your journey today!

