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**RETIREE, 96,  
STILL GOING STRONG**  
STORY ON PAGE 4



Photo courtesy of The Ballinger Ledger.

*Felix Itz, right, receives a certificate of appreciation from Runnels County Judge Michael Murchison.*

# TRANSPORTATION **news**



**Bass named to commission p. 2**  
**Russian-trained engineer p. 5**

**April 1986**

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A few months ago, I wrote in this space about 10 "real world" maintenance supervisors who worked with Human Resources Division and Safety and Maintenance Operations Division people to develop the department's own maintenance management training program.

Eventually, every maintenance supervisor in the department will have the opportunity to participate in this training. A little further down the road, it may develop that graduates will return for refresher training regularly.

In the meantime, the department's first in-house first-level management program has also graduated three classes, its first class in February. This training supplements the first-line managers training program conducted for all state agencies by the Texas State Management Development Center. We soon will make additional opportunities available for our middle managers as well.

In a changing world, we cannot remain static. Nor can we rely solely on what we learned years ago to get the job done today. To our managers and supervisors we have entrusted our most valuable assets—the people with and through whom they work to achieve the department's objectives. The goal of our management training emphasis is to better equip them to handle their responsibilities.

*Mark Goode*



Tom Dunning, left, to head water agency board, Bob Bass, right, replaces him.

## Bass of Fort Worth named to commission

Governor Mark White April 11 appointed Commission Member Thomas M. Dunning chairman of the Texas Water Development Board. Replacing Dunning on the commission will be Robert M. (Bob) Bass of Fort Worth.

Bass, 38, is president of the Robert M. Bass Group, Inc., an oil and investment firm. Born March 19, 1948, he holds an undergraduate degree from Yale University and an MBA from Stanford University Graduate School of Business.

"Bob's acceptance of this appointment assures that this important policy and decision making body will continue to make choices that are right for Texas," the Governor said. "Bob Bass will represent the interests of the Dallas-Fort Worth area and, along with Commission Chairman Bob Lanier and Ray Stoker, those of the entire state."

The Governor said "Bass will make a great addition to the Lanier-Stoker team that has been working diligently to make the Texas highway system the finest in the country."

At the water agency, Dunning will replace Louis A. Beecherl Jr., of Dallas as chairman. This is not the first time I have called on Tom to serve on an important state board or commission," Governor White said.

The Governor cited as two recent examples of Dunning's efforts the resolution of the North Central Expressway impasse in Dallas and solving problems surrounding the construction of Texas 161, "a much-needed thoroughfare." In both cases, the governor said, Dunning was able to bring opposing sides together to ensure each project would be built. ★

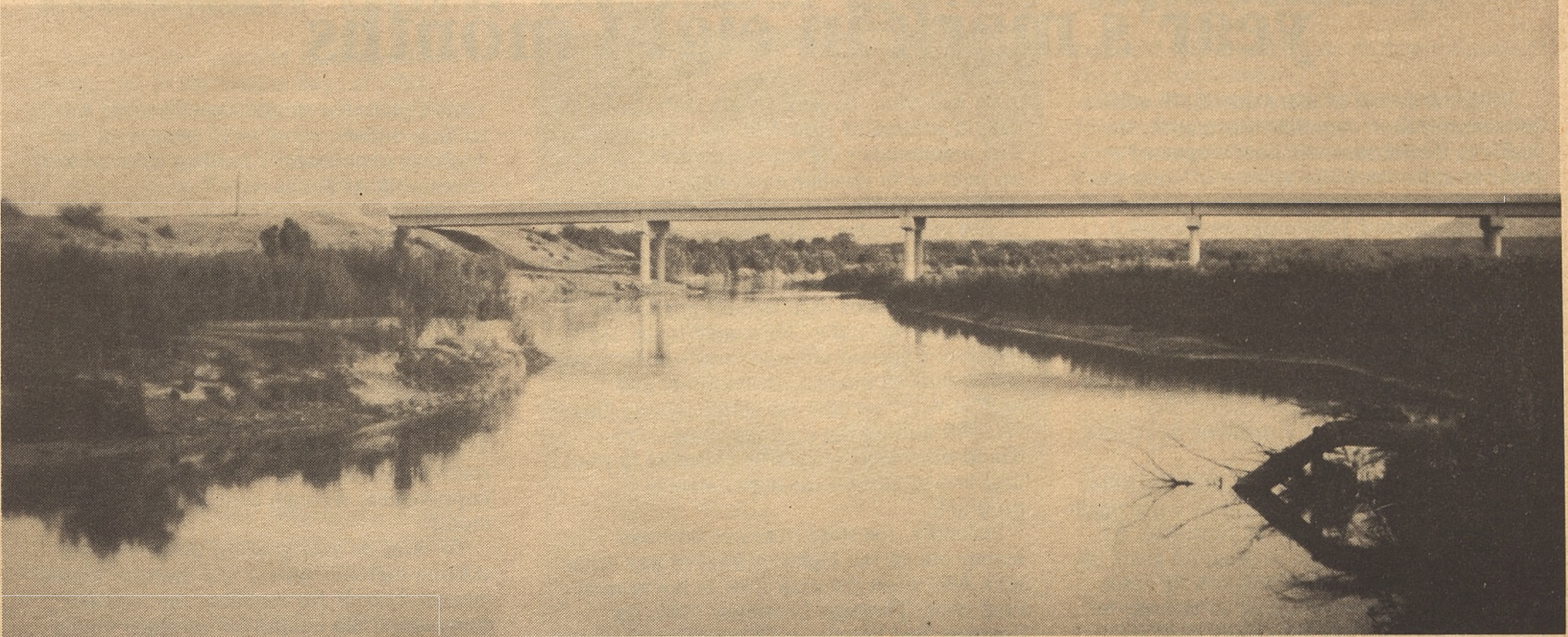


Joan Smelser retired at the end of March after having been Engineer-Director Mark Goode's secretary since he came to Austin in 1973. Joan also was J. C. Dingwall's right-hand person when he was chief administrative officer of the department. Goode and Joan are shown as her retirement coffee. Ruth Cox, formerly with the Finance Division and Deputy Director Al Castello's office, succeeded Joan.

Photo by Dave Clapp, Fort Worth district.



## New Presidio bridge to facilitate traffic



*The new bridge gracefully spans the Rio Grande between Presidio and Ojinaga.*

Commerce between the southwest area of Texas and the Chihuahua region of the Republic of Mexico will be strengthened with the opening of an international bridge between Presidio and Ojinaga.

The bridge offers a more direct route into the interior of Mexico. The US 67 route has evolved from a state road built in the 1930s to serve ranches and agriculture to a direct link between Dubuque, Iowa and an international border crossing at Presidio. With the completion of this bridge, commercial truck traffic and twin plant operations are expected to stimulate traffic and commerce in the area.

Presently, trucks must travel either to El Paso or Del Rio to gain entry into this portion of Mexico. Two-way commerce between Chihuahua and Texas should directly benefit this economically depressed area.

The bridge is a \$2 million joint project between Texas and Mexico. The two-lane, 791-foot bridge has seven spans of concrete beams. Texas built three spans and Mexico built four. Work on the bridge was begun in Oct. 1984.

To ensure a contractor would not have an unfair competitive advantage, bids were opened at the same time in both countries with officials from the department and the Mexican Highway Department present in each other's country.

Design of the bridge was completed in the El Paso district of the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation. DHT Engineer Luis Ybanez designed the complete structure. After the design was finished, Ybanez translated it into Spanish so that the Mexican engineers could ensure that the design conformed to Mexico's standards.

The agreement to build the structure was signed in English and Spanish by both Mexico and the State: Texas would build from the extreme north of the structure through bent number four and pay one-half of the span between bents four and five. Mexico would build from the extreme south of the bridge to bent number five. Texas' portion would be prestressed concrete structure while Mexico planned a post-tension beam design.

Supervising engineers from both countries were authorized to inspect the entire project. Work zones were established for personnel and equipment, fenced, and documented.

Although minor differences exist in the seven spans both in design and construction, most people will not be able to differentiate

between the Texas-built side and the Mexico-built side because "the bridge-facing conforms to the same look overall, even if there are slight variations in design," Ybanez said. The facing provides an aesthetically uniform appearance.

Opening the bridge has been an arduous

task involving diverse federal, state, city, and private organizations. On the federal level, the General Services Administration, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and the State Department are the principal agencies involved in opening international border crossings. ★ Al Zucha

## Two cities expedite new highways with donations

Both the Texas treasury and local communities came away winners in two recent actions by the State Highway and Public Transportation Commission.

For taxpayers, the commission action saved \$40 million. For local cities and counties, the benefits will be more jobs, a faster resolution to traffic congestion and increased economic development.

The actions resulted from two separate presentations made before the commission on April 1 by Fort Worth and San Antonio delegations which included mayors, county commissioners, state representatives and landowners. Delegations from Tarrant and Johnson counties requested alignment of a certain portion of Texas 121, southwest of Fort Worth. The group had made an initial portion of Texas 121, southwest of Fort Worth. The group had made an initial presentation on the project last June. The San Antonio delegation asked for a new state highway to serve a planned high tech, biotechnology park northwest of the city.

Each delegation asked for quick action by the commission, but also brought something in return.

On behalf of San Antonio, Bexar County Judge Tom Vickers offered 925 acres of donated right-of-way estimated at \$18 million. The group requested an 18-mile roadway to extend from US 90 west of San Antonio northward to Texas 16. The state's construction cost will be \$8.2 million.

Fort Worth officials offered \$6.3 million worth of right-of-way and \$15 million in construction for all frontage roads for Texas 121, also referred to as the "Southwest Freeway."

The requests were tentatively approved by the commission, contingent on environmental

studies and public hearings on both projects. According to Commission Chairman Bob Lanier, "When a community comes to us with a plan in place that everyone agrees to, we can act much faster than when we have to spend years to study the matter and acquire right-of-way."

Notes San Antonio developer Marty Wender, "We showed them that the roadway is needed, that we have maximized the cooperation between the public and private sectors, and showed that it is of economic value to the city."

Mayor Bob Bolen of Fort Worth commented, "It's the same old story. You learn what they want, you do your homework, and you go down there and let them know how you can help them to help you."

San Antonio made a similar presentation two years ago, requesting the construction of Texas 151, or Northwest Freeway. Of the \$122.5 million estimated for the project, \$3.3 million is being provided by the private sector through local government.

Mayor Henry Cisneros of San Antonio observed in his presentation, "Today, as I'm talking to you, they're laying down blacktop for that roadway (Northwest Freeway). That's unprecedented to have a roadway built that quickly."

The first San Antonio group virtually set the tone for future delegations. Since September of 1984, over \$4.2 million worth of right-of-way alone has been donated to the department for new roadway development.

Said Lanier, "The two groups answered all the questions we might have about the projects. They really did their homework, and it's paid off for all of us." ★ John Cagle and Juliana Fernandez



## 1986 contracts pass last year's mark in eight months

With the award of more than \$177 million in transportation contracts this month, the highway department will have surpassed in eight months the dollar volume of contracts it awarded in the previous year.

The accelerated 1986 program follows a record \$1.43 billion in projects put under contract in the 1985 fiscal—double the 1984 figures. When the fiscal year ends August 31, the total is expected to exceed \$2.1 billion.

The increased construction activity stems from the 1985 legislative session in which the department received a \$1.67 billion net increase in funding and a mandate to restore the state's roadway system.

The increased funds flowing into the state treasury have enabled the highway department to award a record number of contracts. As the intensified construction program gears up, there is a temporary accumulation of funds because it takes an average of 33 months to complete and pay out a highway contract.

Meanwhile, the agency's end-of-month balance averages \$725 million—a sum obligated to pay contractors as work is completed. The total outstanding obligations are \$3.2 billion. If the department did not put any more projects under contract, the final payment made on current commitments would be in May 1984.

In August, the bank balance will begin to decline and will continue to shrink until September 1988. The highway department

then will either have to reduce the current \$2 billion volume of construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance contracts by a third or have an increase in revenue equivalent to \$500 million annually.

The department's \$725 billion average monthly bank balance, however, is not lying idle. It benefits the state in two ways.

First, the funds earn interest at the rate of 7.3 percent annually. Through August 1987, the state's general revenue fund will earn over \$30 million in interest, and another \$90 million will flow into the state highway fund. The \$90 million the highway fund earns would otherwise have to be collected in road user fees to sustain the department's programs.

Secondly, the state treasurer borrows money out of the highway fund to pay other state bills when the cash flow in the general fund ebbs. Through December 1985, the treasurer had borrowed \$680 million from the highway fund to meet other state obligations. The treasurer repays the highway fund when state revenue has a positive cash balance. However, the interest the department earns is computed on the entire highway fund balance, including the money the treasurer takes out to pay other state bills, and the integrity of the highway fund is protected.

Responding to Gov. Mark White's request that state agencies reduce expenditures, the highway department has begun a cash conser-

vation plan that should save the state \$60.5 million dollars, equal to 13 percent of the highway department's funding from general revenue. ★ **Al Zucha**

If all the miles covered by state highway construction and maintenance contracts could be connected, that road would stretch from Austin to Bangkok, with enough mileage left over for a side trip to Hong Kong.

But all 10,609 miles are in Texas, and part of a record-breaking year for the Texas Department of Highways and Public Transportation. And another 528 miles of roadway are scheduled for construction or improvement through contracts to be let this month.

To meet its dual goals of preserving the existing highway system and meeting Texans' increased needs for mobility, the highway commission has committed as much money for work in the eight months of this fiscal year as it did in all of fiscal 1985.

"We weren't able to keep up with the increased population and the age of the system," before the Legislature increased highway funding in 1984, said Engineer-Director Mark G. Goode.

To ease the gap between need and ability, the Legislature, in special session, increased the motor fuel tax by five cents and raised vehicle registration fees to provide additional highway revenue.

"There's an urgency to use the funds as soon as possible," Goode explained. "As you postpone the work, your system gets older and needs more maintenance, and your population continues to increase, creating congestion in urban areas," Goode said.

If the entire 73,000 miles of Texas highways had to be rebuilt at today's rates, it would cost taxpayers about \$100 billion—which is why maintaining the present system is a top priority, Goode said. "We're gaining on preserving the system through reconstruction, resurfacing and other maintenance work," Goode said.

"Our response to increasing capacity is not as apparent, but many projects are now in the design stage," Goode said, citing plans for the North Central Expressway in Dallas, expansion of US 59 in Harris County and work on US 183 in the Austin area as examples of projects under way that will take years to reach completion.

This month, the highway department will award contracts on 78 projects in 71 counties across the state, with an estimated total price tag of \$177 million. The contracts call for work ranging from bridge painting to resurfacing to major reconstruction. ★ **Rosemary Neff**

## Retiree, 96, may be oldest elected official

When Felix Itz retired from the highway department, it was the year before the Interstate Highway system was created by the U.S. Congress.

Now Itz is thinking retirement again—in about four years, sometime around his 100th birthday.

Itz, 96, is in his 28th year of service to Runnels County as the official county

worked for construction companies in Arizona and Kansas before coming back to Texas in 1938. He went to work then for the department, first at Junction, later transferring to Ballinger.

Itz worked for the department "until they said it was time to retire." But retirement didn't sit well with him. "I tried fishing for a while, but that didn't pay off—there were no fish," he told the Abilene Reporter-News recently.

Some title abstractors asked him to help out as county surveyor and "That's how I got into this thing.

"I like the engineering work, a lot of interesting things go into it," he said. Much of the work sounds easy, Itz said, but there are legal requirements to comply with and lots of paperwork to do.

"Mr. Itz sometimes still operates the surveying instruments," Hirschfeld said, "and he does some of his own drafting and typing." Hirschfeld said that, not long ago, he ran into Itz out in the country. "He was surveying someone's cotton patch they were getting ready to sell."

Recently the Runnels County Commissioners Court awarded Itz a certificate of appreciation for his long service. He's a candidate for reelection this year. As of early April, he was unopposed for the office. "Mr. Itz says that if he is reelected, he probably will retire at the end of his next term," County Judge Michael Murchison commented.

"He'll be 100 years old then, and he thinks that will be about the right time to retire," Murchison added.

### On the Cover

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surveyor. It's an elective position, and Itz may be the oldest candidate, not to mention perhaps, the oldest elected official in Texas.

Gene Hirschfeld, San Angelo District PAO, says he worked for Itz as a summer employee for the department in Ballinger during the early 1950s.

Born March 5, 1890 in Gillespie County, Itz is an Aggie, class of '11.

His first job was with the Frisco Railroad, surveying a new route that included what was then the only train tunnel in Texas. Later, he

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## Russian-born engineer gains citizenship

It took him two years of studying and waiting, but, in the closing days of 1985, Leonid Vishnevetsky became a United States citizen. Employed with the San Antonio district's bridge section, Vishnevetsky came to this country from Russia six years ago.

Born in Kiev, Leonid has two sisters and three brothers still in the U.S.S.R. He was trained as a mechanical engineer at the University of Kerovograd. While studying at the university, he met his future wife, Irina Gurevich, who was also majoring in mechanical engineering.

They were married in Russia in 1976 and had a daughter before leaving. Traveling via Austria, the Vishnevetskys flew to San Antonio, where Irina's relatives had moved several years earlier.

Before coming to the department, Leonid worked locally as a draftsman, a mechanical designer and a structural engineering technician.

The citizenship class Leonid attended consisted of 200 people from 37 countries. Most of them came from Europe, with only a few from behind the Iron Curtain or Latin America. In addition to his English and government classroom assignments, Leonid



*Leonid Vishnevetsky... College in U.S.S.R. is not exactly free.*

mastered 100 questions on different aspects of the U.S. Constitution.

Since the Russian curriculum includes a foreign language starting in the 5th grade, the English exam didn't pose much of a problem for Leonid. Until 1960, German was the most frequently studied second language in the U.S.S.R. Since then it has been English.

Commenting on education in Russia, Leonid noted that high school requires ten years to complete. In order to take a college entrance exam, a student must have graduated from high school with an average grade of 85.

Although there is no tuition or book expense, a college education isn't exactly free in the Soviet Union. After graduation, students must perform government work for five years before they actually receive their diploma. Leonid worked at an aircraft plant after finishing college.

Contrasting life in the two cultures, Leonid said in Russia there are no credit cards or checking accounts. Employees are paid in cash and all living expenses are handled the same way. All housing is government-owned and there is little sense of privacy.

Very early in life Leonid thought about coming to the U.S. He listened as often as possible to the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe.

In addition to the daughter born in Russia, the Vishnevetsky's have a four-year-old son. They are continuing to build a better life for themselves and their children. Leonid is working towards a master's degree in civil engineering at UTSA. Irina, who also received her citizenship, is employed by the City of San Antonio in the Waste Water Management Department.

Leonid expressed it very well. "When we landed in the United States, I felt as if a great weight had been taken off my shoulders." ★

## Austin's Dulie Bell is "friend of transit"

H.C. "Dulie" Bell was the recipient of the Friend of Texas Transit Award presented March 21 at the 14th Annual Texas Public Transportation Conference in Galveston.

Bell, past board chairman of Austin's Capital Area Metropolitan Transit Authority, was cited for having assisted in preserving right-of-way for possible future transit use in the improvement of US 183. He was also credited for having initiated the movement to secure the Southern Pacific right-of-way and MoKan Boulevard right-of-way for future transit use.

In presenting the award, DHT Deputy Director Byron Blaschke also noted Bell's efforts to conduct a campaign to adequately budget Capital Metro and for his work on the Austin Transportation Study.

This year's transit conference was well-attended and included among its participants the managers and directors of all the states' transit properties and authorities, non-urbanized/elderly and handicapped operations, intercity bus, taxi companies, legislators, and national, state and local officials.

Manufacturers and suppliers were represented through 20 vendor display booths and 17 public transportation vehicles were exhibited. A total of 16 states were represented, as well as representatives from Canada.

Speakers on the program included State



*Bell and "friend of transit" plaque*

Senator Grant Jones; W. David Lee, AASHTO, and Jack Gilstrap, APTA. The conference was held at Galveston's Hotel Galvez March 19, 20 and 21.

The annual conference is sponsored by the Texas Public Transportation Industry in cooperation with DHT. ★ **Bo McCarver**



*Regional Federal Highway Administrator Wesley S. Mendenhall, Jr., of Fort Worth, presents a special commendation by FHWA to former Construction Engineer Ted Ziller. Ziller was honored for his work in helping set up disadvantaged and minority business enterprise programs in bidding on highway work. In addition to his work in Texas, Ziller also served on national panels dealing with the subject.*



## Fourth of state economy related to transportation

**B**ack when the first enthusiasts of the horseless carriage were filling their gas tanks and trying out their amazing machines, motorists began realizing that mobility required more money than just the expense and maintenance of the vehicle. Today, funding roadways is an issue vital to the entire economy of the state and nation.

At a recent transportation funding seminar held at The Woodlands, near Conroe, Gene Robbins of the Texas Good Roads/Transportation Association discussed the impact transportation has on the state's economy.

"Twenty-five percent of the Texas Gross State Product is related to transportation," Robbins told the 70 or so people who attended the conference.

Recent figures from the state's Comptroller of Public Accounts show an overall gross product of \$265.2 billion for Texas for the calendar year 1985. By Robbins' calculations, the portion related to transportation is a whopping \$66.3 billion related to transportation, an amount that Robbins says needs to be protected by an investment in our state's highways.

The South Montgomery County/Woodlands Chamber of Commerce of Commerce and TGR/TA, co-hosts of the event, assembled two panels of experts on various transportation funding sources to present information to the group. Panelists included Billy McAdams, an attorney with the highway department's Right of Way Division, and a number of persons from around the state who have experience in various funding mechanisms.

**C**ounty road districts, a topic presented by attorney Ed Wendler of Austin, drew attention from the audience. Wendler, who worked with legislators to help pass county road laws during the last two legislative sessions, expressed concern that limitations should be set to protect the method.

"I hope we don't kill the goose that laid the golden egg," he said. County

districts, which are funded through bond sales, should be used for building arterial systems in advance of development, Wendler said, not for residential and collector streets.

"Unless we restrain the use of it (county districting), we may kill it," Wendler said.

Barry Goodman, of Goodman & Associates, gave some history on the recent increase of involvement between public and private entities to fund roadways. This "entrepreneurial" approach, he said, had opened some new doors for both sides.

Goodman pointed out how, in Montgomery County, a 1983 Minute Order by the highway department not only allowed local businesses and residents to share the expense and push for faster action for work on Interstate 45 at the Woodlands, but resulted in a savings of state dollars. The percentages of participation for each side were re-negotiated by highway commission chairman Bob Lanier. The outcome was an increase in local funding and a decrease in state expense.

"Lanier cut a good deal," Goodman said.

Park-and-ride transit agreements, he said, are also examples of funding cooperation efforts.

Roger Hord, manager of Urban Transportation for the Houston Chamber of Commerce, shared information on impact fees and enterprise zones. Both ideas are new, he said, but could provide some solutions if used properly.

**E**nterprise zones, Hord said, would not be of great value in relieving existing congestion. The mechanism, which would be limited to no more than five local zones per state in a 12-month period, is designed to help in renewal efforts and to address a small area.

The function of transportation corporations, another new concept in roadway development, was discussed by McAdams and touched on by Lanier during a luncheon address.

Recent action by the highway commission has helped iron out details concerning membership on transportation corporation boards. But the potential benefit to state taxpayers remains, both said.

Donated right-of-way land can save millions of dollars in highway construction costs, Lanier said, dollars that were previously needed to purchase the land. Transportation corporations allow local participants to coordinate the donation of such land.

McAdams credited the state with pioneering the idea. "We're out in the forefront in this type of corporation," he said. "We are going to realize many hundreds of millions of dollars in donated right-of-way and engineering costs."

Other panel topics included tax increment financing, presented by Larry Vetter of Kerrville, and toll financing, discussed by Charles Purnell, an attorney with the Texas Turnpike Authority.

Vetter said that, with tax increment financing, all new taxes in a district were reserved for improvements in that district. But the improvements generally include more than streets, he said.

Purnell referred to the turnpike authority as an endangered species. Toll roads, he said, must be built in addition to free roads, not in their place. A 1950s law restricts them from receiving state tax dollars, he said.

"The Interstate system has rendered long-distance tollways needless," Purnell said. Urban areas, where the need for roadways exceeds the means, are a better target for such funding he said.

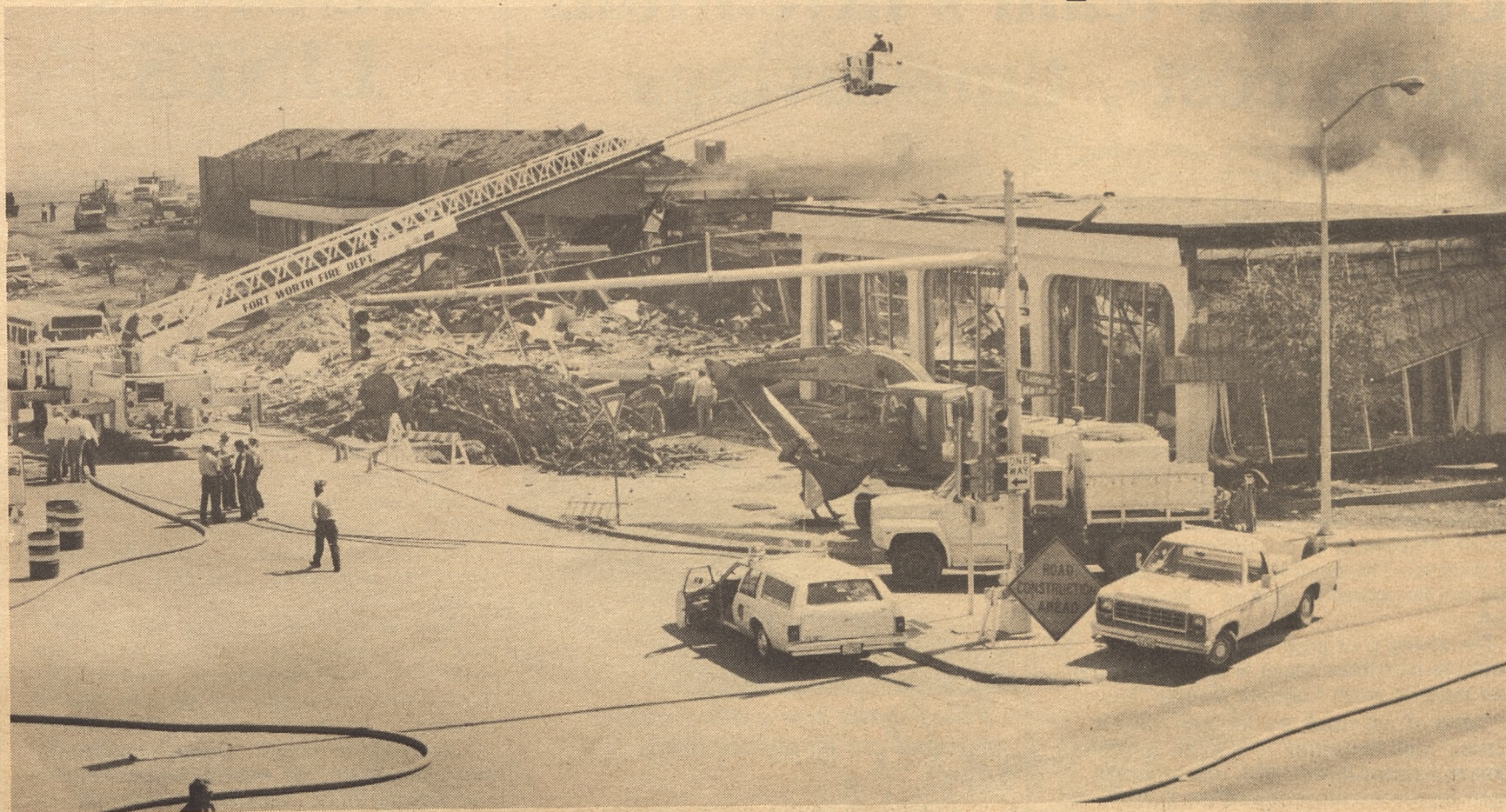
Robbins addressed the group about the 1984 increase in highway revenue. With the highway department's budget increased by about \$1 billion a year, Robbins said, maintenance and new construction are beginning to keep pace with the state's highway needs.

Several area legislators who helped promote the increase were honored by TGR/TA at a luncheon following the seminar. The program was part of a series of such seminars being presented around the state. ★ Marcy Goodfleisch





## Blast in relocated car dealership closes I-30



*Photo from elevated freeway shows firefighters battling blaze in former car dealership.*

A contractor for the Fort Worth Water Department was removing water lines in front of the Frank Kent Building on East Lancaster adjacent to the I-30 elevated section in downtown Fort Worth on March 12, 1986.

Around 10 a.m. the contractor's backhoe ruptured a Lone Star Gas Company gas line. Lone Star personnel were called to turn the gas off. Before the gas flow could be stopped, the Frank Kent Building blew up.

Debris from the exploded building, the huge fire and concern for possible additional explosions required the closing of the adjacent elevated section. This roadway facility carries over 100,000 vehicles per day.

Ralph Apodaca, maintenance foreman for that section of roadway, was onsite within five minutes of the explosion. Ralph said, "I had just crossed the elevated when the building blew up."

Howard Hill, district safety coordinator was in his office at the District Headquarters. Howard said, "on the police radio, a policeman on Lancaster reported to the dispatcher that he had just felt a large explosion."

Howard immediately headed toward the downtown area. In route to the area he was monitoring the police reports. This informed him about what had happened and enabled him to start requesting the needed assistance.

Howard said, "the ability to monitor the police department calls and my ability to communicate with them, helps me to get things moving while I'm in route to a location. Our response time is so much greater because of our instant communication system." Hill said, "highway department and police vehicles were used to reroute the I-30 traffic to local streets."

While the fire was still burning, traffic was detoured and maintenance crews started cleanup activities on the elevated westbound lanes. The fire department became concerned about the possibility of another explosion, and asked maintenance crews to leave the

elevated section until the danger passed. The maintenance crews then returned to the elevated structure to finish cleaning it and then moved to the city street below to clear it of debris.

During the cleanup activities the district's bridge inspection team was making a visual inspection of the bridge structure to see if the explosion had caused damage to the structure which would endanger the traveling public. This team determined that the structure would be safe for traffic to be placed back on the structure.

The fire was extinguished, debris cleared and traffic was returned to the I-30 structure at approximately 2 p.m.

On Thursday, March 13, due to the severity of the explosion and proximity of the structure to the explosion site, the district office and Austin headquarters decided that a more in depth structural analysis should be conducted by a special team including district and Austin personnel.

On Friday, March 14 at 9 a.m., the I-30 elevated structure was closed to traffic for a second time as a precaution for the safety of the traveling public.

This closing allowed the bridge inspection team to inspect and analyze the structural integrity of the elevated section. A thorough analysis was conducted to make sure the explosion did not impair the strength of the bridge. The inspection team focused on the bridge's slabs, its joints, beams, welds, shoes, caps and columns. They excavated below ground, to a depth equal to the diameter of the column, around four columns in the area of the blast. The team found no cracks or deterioration in the column or drill shafts.

In the team's investigation of the deck and above, they found minor damage to lighting fixtures in the blast area.

The team's investigation of the substructure

beams and decks found that there were no broken welds. The team did find some paint distress due to flying debris on the outside beams near the blast site.

The report stated, "Other than previously stated damage, we found no damage to the structure caused by the explosion.

Needed routine maintenance to the bridge was performed while the roadway was closed to traffic for the inspection. This eliminated the need to close the facility again in the near future for this maintenance work.

The district's McCart Maintenance Section started repairing and replacing armor joints on Friday. Saturday, approximately 100 maintenance personnel from throughout the district's nine county area finished replacing the needed armor joints, pavement repairs, cleaning drains and other needed work.

Approximately 7 p.m. Saturday, the bridge inspection team and maintenance personnel had all finished their particular task. The 2,509 feet elevated structure with 32 spans and constructed in 1960 was placed back in service. This activity was completed 42 hours ahead of the planned schedule which was first announced as being closed approximately 1:00 p.m. Monday, March 17.

Traffic congestion was held to a minimum during the I-30 elevated closing due to the tremendous response and cooperation of area motorists. The City of Fort Worth and the Fort Worth Police Department did an outstanding job in helping to control the traffic flow along Lancaster and the downtown streets crossing Lancaster.

The news media did an outstanding job in providing the public with updated information. The communication of this information to the public was very valuable to the motorists in Fort Worth during this time and to the safety of our roadways. ★ **Bill Page**, Assistant Public Affairs Officer, Fort Worth district



## Lubbock team's inventions mean cost-, time-savings

In a time when state government is being asked to do more with less people, Maintenance Foreman Marvin Anderson, Assistant Foreman Angel Benavidez, and Claude Sanders of the Lubbock Northeast Maintenance Section fit right in.

With Anderson supervising, Benavidez brainstorming, and Sanders turning ideas into reality, the three have come up with several "inventions" that not only save manpower, but increase productivity as well.

The most recent, and possibly the best invention to come out of Lubbock Northeast is being referred to as "the box," a three-sided attachment to a dump truck that funnels material through a small door that can be adjusted to let out different amounts of material. The result is a strip of material that can be poured as thin as 1/8th of an inch.

The ability is of great importance to Lubbock Northeast which is in charge of 720 lane miles in north Lubbock County.

"Most of our roads are Farm-to-Market Roads," said Benavidez. "With all the wide farm equipment in this area, our pavement edges are a constant problem. As a result, the vast majority of patching work we do is edge paving."

"In the past, we would have to have three, maybe four men on an edge patching job," said Anderson. "At least one man would have to shovel the material from the truck, and two men would rake. Our other option was to use a blade to spread the material, but that tied up another man, and another piece of equipment."

And that's where the so-called "box" comes in.

"Now we can do the same job with just two men," said Benavidez. "In fact, we can use just two men and cover two or three miles a day, compared to using three men and covering a half-mile a day as we have done in the past."

According to Sanders, the finished product is better quality as well. "The less movement of the material when it is put out, the better result you get. It also reduces the amount of wasted material."

The device has so impressed district officials that they want to pass the idea along to other sections.

"I can see all kinds of ways this device can be used," said Clarence Rogers of the district maintenance office. "From edge patching to leveling up wheel tracks, this device is going to be a real benefit."

Rogers has his eye on a couple of other innovations developed by Lubbock Northeast. One is a method of putting a tarp over a truck bed.

After Benavidez talked with Sanders about the need to simplify spreading a tarp, Sanders came up with a method that will allow one man to cover a load without ever getting into the truck bed.

The tarp is attached to the front of the truck bed and rolled around a bar that can be pulled with a rope over the bed load.

"It may sound trivial, but being able to cover a load using just one man who can do it from the back of the truck is very important," said Rogers. "Especially in a West Texas wind."

One other innovation from Lubbock Northeast that has other maintenance employees excited is an easy hook-up for snow plows.



Photo shows how a thin swath of material can be applied using "the box."

"With the old system, which had long brackets that had to be attached under the truck, it could take up to an hour a truck to attach a snow plow," said Benavidez. "Now, we can hook up six trucks with just three men in under 45 minutes."

Benavidez said that Sanders changed the plow hook-up, eliminating the long brackets, and bolted it to the frame of the truck.

"It's a real timesaver, and the way the weather can change around here that's important."

The different innovations have allowed Lubbock Northeast to reduce manpower on certain jobs by one-third, and still get the job done faster.

"That's the bottom line," said District Engineer Mel Pope. "Lubbock Northeast is just an example of how our employees are looking to improve operations. We encourage them to see if they can find a way to do the job better, faster, and more efficiently."

★ Randall Dillard, Lubbock District PAO.

## Commission approves large safety program

A \$20,220,000 program to upgrade safety on Texas' highways was approved at the March meeting of the commission. The proposed 1986 Statewide Highway Safety Improvement Program, which will be federally funded, includes 58 projects in 25 counties in the state.

Installation of traffic signals and safety lighting, pavement markings, and treatment of fixed objects are among the projects included in the program, according to Shelly Lynch of the Traffic Safety Section.

Realignment of some highways and installation of left-turn lanes on several roadways in the state are also planned in the program, Lynch said.

The proposed program will be submitted to the Federal Highway Administration for approval and funding, Lynch said. ★

## COUNTY LINES

Each of the blanks in the following story is the name of a Texas county. Figure out which one fit, and you'll have the complete tale. Each dash represents one letter in the name.

One fine day, me and ---- went over by ---- place and got him to go with us out to see ol' ----. Well, as you know that's a ---- of a trip, so we got about as far as the ---- and decided to set up ----.

Actually, me and Jeff decided it, 'cause Jim, always the ---- guy, didn't want to stop.

"We ---- waste no time," he grumbled. "Look, there's a ---- (two counties) out past that ----. What if it ----?"

Jeff and me took the ---- of lookin' out where he was pointing. Sure 'nuff, the sky looked ---- bad.

"Jim, we nearly have to stop now," Jeff said. "If we keep goin' we'll have to ---- for cover if a ---- storm comes up. And what if it starts to ----? I'd hate to have to ---- for shelter."

"You want me to ---- you or something?" Jim complained. "So what if the weather ---- on us? If you wouldn't ---- along so bad, we'd be there by now."

"Look, we asked you if you wanted to ---- ride," Jeff said.

He was gettin' real mad by now. Bein' calm just ain't one of Jeff's ---- qualities. I figured I'd have to act fast to ---- off a big fight.

"How about we ---- in what's left of the sunlight and drink a ----?" I sort of smiled real ---- at both of them.

Jeff got quiet as a ---- and he and Jim looked at the ---- sky.

"I guess we can ---- something," Jim said, kinda' embarrassed-like. He and Jeff was always good buddies and I know he sure hated to ---- angry with him.

"There's a couple of ---- over beyond that ----," Jeff said, lookin' a little sheepish.

"And my jacket has a ----, so you can use my hat if it gets wet."

So there we was. A ---- crew if I ever saw one. We all relaxed and ate some ---- cheese I had in my pack. And ---- you believe, ol' Jim even apologized? Well, for him it was an apology.

"----, Jeff," he started laughin' real hard. "It's clear as a ---- that you and me ought to be able to ---- any breach in our friendship. We got a little ---- to rest on and some food to ---- over. And look, there's the first ----!" Answer on p. 12 ★

## Bryant in national program

Susan Bryant, the Traffic Safety Section's statewide safety belt program coordinator, has been selected to represent the department at a meeting with the National Safety Administration in Washington, D.C.

Bryant, active in traffic safety issues since joining the Office of Traffic Safety in September 1977, has been recognized as a leader in the Traffic Safety Occupant Restraint Programs and recently received an award for public service from NHTSA. Her innovative seat belt programs have served as models for other states.

She will attend a two-day session for the national "Lifesavers" conference in December.



# Antique snow blower still ready to roll

Remember Mike Mulligan and his steam shovel, Mary Ann? In the children's story, Mike remained devoted to his old, red steam shovel when her counterparts were being junked, to be replaced by gasoline- and diesel-powered models. Mike was rewarded when Mary Ann dug so fast and so well that she finished the basement for the new town hall just as Mike had promised.

The Childress district's Snogo ("snow-go") machine doesn't have a fanciful name, but it has served as faithfully as Mike Mulligan's mate.

When former District Engineer J. B. Nabers of Childress accepted the salvaged snow-clearing machine in 1950, he might not have known just what a bargain the highway department was getting.

The 1942 model Snogo had been left as "junk" at the Childress Army Air Field, which ceased operations in 1948. When the city was given the field and maintenance equipment, it turned the Ford-Marmon-Herrington Snogo over to the highway department to use. The deed was officially transferred in 1957, with the understanding that the city could use the Snogo whenever it needed to clear airport runways.

Before the highway department received the Snogo, the snow-blower had never had attached to the truck or used by either of its former owners.

So, the department spent \$282.18 in parts and labor for assembly, and got a workhorse that has more than earned its keep.

In today's world, the cost of a snow-blower alone is \$50,000, "and that's just the attachment that fits onto a loader," said Childress district shop foreman Bill Trosper. He estimated that complete, comparable equipment would cost \$75,000 in 1986.

Of course, the antique does have a few disadvantages. "You have to put both feet against the dash to turn the steering wheel. It doesn't have power steering," Trosper said. And, of no small significance (considering the type of weather that calls for Snogo service), "it doesn't have a heater in it."

Like an elder statesman who has served long and well, the Snogo maintains a distinguished retirement unless pressed to perform. With the mild winter that graced the state this year, its hibernation went uninterrupted. The last time it was called into action was in 1971, when Childress personnel lent a hand to the Amarillo district.

Most of the snow removal in District 25 is handled by 65 dump trucks, half as many salt and sand spreaders and 17 motor graders with snow wings. It is only during heavy snow and drifting that the Snogo is called on to churn through accumulations with its auger and blow the loosened snow aside, allowing other equipment to reach the area to spread sand and salt.

"But we get it up and running every winter," Trosper said, "in case we do have to use it." A newer model—circa 1958—is used when only one Snogo is needed.

"When we do run it—and we really worked it for two or three weeks in 1971—we really don't have to do much maintenance to it," Trosper noted.

In a northern state, where it would be "running heavy every winter," the Snogo might not have lasted even 10 years, Trosper said. But thanks to the relatively gentle climate of Texas, and the care of the Childress equipment corps, the Snogo has stood ready to perform for longer than many highway department employees have been alive. ★ Rosemary Neff



Childress district's Snogo sits quietly until the big blizzards hit.



APRIL		JUNE	
6-8	"PES Concepts for Pavement Managers" Seminar, Austin, D-18P	6-8	Resident Engineers Conference, Austin, File HAT
7-9	Advanced Course in Bridge Inspection, Austin, D-18M	7-8	New Concepts in Positive Guidance (course on signing, Austin, D-18T)
7-11	"Highway Capacity and Quality of Flow" Course, Austin, D-18T	13-15	Division of Motor Vehicles Supervisor In-service Training Conference, Austin, D-12-1
8	Surveying Procedures Workshop for Districts 4, 5, 24 & 25, Lubbock, D-19	13-15	Highway Construction Lettings, Austin
8-10	Highway Construction Lettings, Austin	19-21	Advanced Course in Bridge Inspection, Austin, D-18M
9-11	AASHTO Green Book Training Course, Dallas, D-8G	20-22	Internal Review Training (regional), File MLY
10	Surveying Procedures Workshop for Districts 6, 7, 8 & 23, San Angelo, D-19	26	Holiday, Memorial Day
14-18	Texas Travel Counselors Conference/Public Affairs Workshop, Austin, D-16	28	Commission Public Hearings, Austin
16-17	Annual District Laboratory-Engineering Personnel Meeting, Amarillo, D-9	29	Commission Meetings, Austin
21	Holiday, Texas Sesquicentennial Day	JUNE	
22-23	"Local Public Agency Real Estate Acquisition" Seminar, Austin, D-15	2-4	Advanced Course in Bridge Inspection, Austin, D-18M
22-24	Internal Review Training (regional), File MLY	3-5	FHWA-NHI Course on Hydrology, Austin, D-5
22-24	Resident Engineers Conference, Austin, File HAT	10-11	Highway Construction Lettings, Austin
29-30	Commission Meetings, Austin	12-13	Research Area IV (Structural Design), San Antonio, D-5
MAY		16-18	AASHTO Green Book Training Course, San Antonio, D-8G
6-7	Traffic Engineering Conference, Austin, D-18T	19	Holiday, Emancipation Day in Texas
6-8	Internal Review Training (regional), File MLY	23-25	Advanced Course in Bridge Inspection, Austin, D-18M
		25-26	Commission Meetings, Austin



# AWARDS & RETIREMENTS

## Service Awards

(April 1986)

### Administration

Richard Vander Straten III, 30 years.

### Automation Division

James R. Nelson, 30 years.

### Bridge Division

Richard L. Wilkison, 20 years; Mark P. McClelland, five years.

### Equipment and Procurement Division

David A. Brown, Bennie J. Crawley, Robert A. Pennybacker, Louise C. Rosen, Larry G. Williams, 20 years; Pascual N. Hernandez, Lee H. Stone, five years.

### Highway Design Division

Jerry L. Selby, 30 years; Wayne A. Dennis, Mark A. Marek, five years.

### Insurance Division

Janet S. Seaton, 15 years.

### Materials and Tests Division

William J. Astoria, 25 years; Mary M. Clark, 15 years.

### Division of Motor Vehicles

Maurice E. Dieterich, Wanda R. Puryear, 20 years; Debra R. Hachtel, five years.

### Right of Way Division

James R. Quick, 20 years.

### Safety and Maintenance Operations Division

Thomas A. Ohlendorf, 15 years; Marianne P. Wines, five years.

### Travel and Information Division

Ernest D. Sowder, 30 years; Moody E. Clinton, five years.

### District 1

Billy G. White, 40 years; Claud E. Lemon, 25 years; Charles O. Large, 20 years; Stephen E. Phifer, 15 years.

### District 2

Harless Rhine Jr., 30 years; Helen D. Koen, Robert W. Matthews Jr., Charles R. Tucker, 25 years; James E. Perkins, 20 years; Ronald F. Jones, Connielynn Manos, James H. Parker Jr., George W. Turner Jr., Johnette K. Williams, five years.

### District 3

William E. Daniel, 35 years; Milton G. Phillips, 25 years; Henry T. Hill, 20 years; Joe D. Buffaloe, five years.

### District 4

Kenneth R. Word, 20 years; Paul Alonzo, Barbara H. Brothers, Charlie L. Mullen, Charles E. Smith, 10 years; Carl H. Bittner, Alvis W. Clanton, Bryan N. McElroy, Eric L. Whitten, five years.

### District 5

Peggy B. Ray, 10 years; Louis Carr, Roy Crawford, Michael C. Payton, Robert C. Ray, five years.

### District 6

Camilo M. Celaya, Otilio H. Escudero, 30 years; Leopoldo U. Garcia, 25 years; Jose L. Leyva, Catarino M. Rubio, 20 years; Joel V. Baeza, Homer M. Flores, Jimmie Hernandez, Victor M. Rivas, Stovall E. Vasquez, five years.

### District 7

Charles M. Churchill, 20 years; James W. Clayton, Beverly J. McGuire, Alfred S. Schafer, five years.

### District 8

Billy W. Davis, Garland G. Payne, 30 years; Walter C. Dunlap Jr., James H. Putnam, Joe H. Seaton, 25 years; Lorenza R. Dean, 20 years; Darla D. Aldridge, Troy H. Allen, Daniel P. Leonhard, Glenda F. Steddum, five years.

### District 9

Joe D. Rickard, 35 years; Walter R. Lenart, five years.

### District 10

Johnnie E. Bizzell, James R. Evans, 30 years; Louie J. Lambeth, Jimmy W. Stanger, 20 years; Ann C. Phillips, five years.

### District 11

Bill D. Basham, Gerald D. Fails, Jay M. Wingate, 30 years; Wilburn Flournoy, Elbert L. Mills, Gerald E. Pate, 20 years; Cheryl F. Hambrick, Robert W. Tatum, 15 years.

### District 12

Juan Arriaga, Ruben Bijarro, Inocente Contreras, Herbert A. Frank, Willie Roberson Jr., Ben C. Smith, 30 years; Tony E. Bocco, William L. Boy, Paul DeFoor, John A. Gale, Ivan I. Herzik, Tommy F. Lockhart, Austin G. Phillips, Charles H. Schiller, 25 years; Kay S. Derry, Ronnie E. Parker, 20 years; James M. Pierce, 15 years; Arunas Svarplaitis, 10 years; Sheryl J. Bookman, Mary V. Fuentez, Jose A. Garza, Clifford E. Knox Jr., William A. Long, James M. McFatter, Brenda E. McKinney, Terry D. Newton, Cleta R. Roberts, Manuel Serbantez, five years.

### District 13

Robert L. Hentschel, Kenneth W. Renger, 30 years; Edwin F. Kaiser, Clyde E. Schulz, 25 years; Lloyd G. Loehr, Leo Smiga, Joyce B. Storz, 20 years; Rhonda R. Kunetka, five years.

### District 14

William E. Barnard, 40 years; Calvin E. Hartmann, 25 years; Lorene J. Balzer, Marvin A. Fritsche, Norman L. Gourley, 20 years; Sixto Ojeda Jr., 10 years; Stacey H. Benningfield, Gary T. Humes, five years.

### District 15

Charles W. Broemer Jr., Arthur G. Heinen, Carey McClain Jr., Rudolph Monetz, Jim S. Shiller, Larry D. Wheeler, William A. Williams II, 20 years; James H. Bohlen, 15 years; Consuelo T. Flores, Marjorie D. Kitchens, Robert G. Pena, Jose G. Vidales, five years.

### District 16

Arthur R. Parr, 30 years; Edmundo L. Alvarez, Rebecca S. Kureska, Ramon Longoria, Lloyd E. Weise, 20 years; Ricardo A. Padilla, five years.

### District 17

Jimmy L. Crook, Harry D. Lemon, 30 years; Virgil Bruce, 25 years; Herman W. Homeyer Jr., 20 years; Evelyn W. Hemann, Brenda O. King, 15 years; Burtis R. Dockery, Sandra D. Perry, Eduardo Villalpando, five years.

### District 18

Paul W. Cathey, William F. Singleton Jr., 30 years; Robert A. Coburn, William E. Lane, George W. Parker, Edwin G. Shields, James L. Ward, 20 years.

### District 19

Harvey W. Kate, 35 years; James L. Fitts, 30 years; Roy F. Hosey, John W. Pinkerton Jr., 20 years.

### District 20

Arthur J. Reetz, 40 years; Daniel Jannise, 35 years; Donald G. Landry, 30 years; Thomas K. Brown, 20 years; Michael C. Graham, Charles J. McLellan, Stanley R. Schaefer, five years.

### District 21

Anastacio Luera, 30 years; Juan Guerra, 20 years; Maximo Mendiola Jr., 15 years; Jose L. Garcia, five years.

### District 23

Gil R. Gaeta, 30 years; Winston B. Baker, 25 years; Charles A. Reese, 20 years; Morris D. Goodnight, 15 years; Tamara E. Gilbert, L. C. Smith, Carl R. Tally, Bruce D. Wiggins, five years.

### District 24

Tom D. Negrette Jr., 30 years; Steven C. Sledge, Charles W. Veale, 20 years; Dennis J. Evans, David Olivas Jr., 15 years; Armando G. Sanchez, five years.

### District 25

Sherman J. Cospers, 30 years; Vernon D. Whatley, 25 years; Betty S. Cooper, Jack T. Leeper, 15 years.

## Retirements

January 31, 1986

### Administration

Richard Vander Straten III, Director I.

### Automation

Ralph M. Baxter, Engineer IV.



**Equipment and Procurement**

Joan Tomlinson, Reproduction Equipment Operator II.

**Materials and Tests**

Alonzo L. Hinojosa, Engineering Technician III.

**Motor Vehicles**

Warren H. Wolff, Director of Records Service.

**Right of Way**

Ocea D. Sherman Jr., Right of Way Agent III.

**District 1**

George I. Richardson, Engineering Technician V.

**District 2**

Arvel Edmonds, Maintenance Technician II.

**District 3**

Doris C. Gibson, Engineering Technician V.

**District 6**

Otilio H. Escudero, Maintenance Technician III.

**District 8**

Wilson Williams, Maintenance Technician III.

**District 9**

Maynard J. Wizig, Engineering Technician V.

**District 11**

Emmitt J. Garrett, Maintenance Technician III; Charles T. Skidmore, Maintenance Technician III

**District 12**

Cecil Hobbs, Engineering Technician V; Winona R. Horton, Accountant III.

**District 13**

Charles F. Fikac, Maintenance Technician III.

**District 14**

William E. DuBose, Maintenance Technician III; Theodore R. Krueger, Engineering Technician V.

**District 15**

Arthur J. Holden Jr., Maintenance Technician III; Daniel A. Neffendorf, Engineering Technician V; Santos R. Orosco, Maintenance Technician III.

**District 16**

Wilbert Geffert, Maintenance Technician III; Juvencio Perez Jr., Engineering Technician V; Levi M. Vickers, Engineering Technician V.

**District 18**

G. W. Bratcher, Maintenance Technician III; William B. Meador, Right of Way Agent III; Theron M. Stewart, Maintenance Technician III.

**District 21**

Pablo A. Lazo, Maintenance Technician III.

## 194 Odessa drivers receive awards for 1,881 safe years



*Conrado Ramirez receives a 35-year award from Mark Goode.*

In March, 194 drivers received safe-driving awards in the Odessa district, for a total of 1,881 safe driving years.

Thirty employees were honored for safe-driving records of more than 20 years aggregating a total of 782 safe years, or an average of 26.06 years.

Conrado Ramirez of the McCamey Maintenance Section received a 35-year safe-driving award.

Maintenance sections which have employees qualifying for a 25-year award also qualify for a safe-driving honor roll plaque to be displayed in the section's headquarters.

Four sections received the plaques this year. They were Fort Stockton for the record of Elias Rodriguez; Monahans, for Francisco Sanchez; Sanderson, for Jose Garcia and Augustin Maldonado, and Odessa Utility for Joseph Mount.

Engineer-Director Mark Goode was the keynote speaker. Other guests included former District Engineer Paul Coleman, Director of Insurance Quinner Williams and representatives of adjoining districts.

★ **Richard Phillips, Odessa, District Public Affairs Officer**

## Commission outlines rules covering corporation boards

Citing the need to assure public faith and confidence in transportation corporations, the commission has enacted new policies concerning the membership of the boards of directors of the organizations.

The commissioners passed measures that prohibit elected officials and persons with substantial financial interests from serving on the boards of directors of the transportation corporations. Donating landowners or their representatives may serve as non-voting advisory members only.

The commissioners further stipulated that all business of the transportation corporations will be conducted under the Open Meetings Law.

In a final policy statement, the commissioners said the transportation corporations are to be viewed as financing and advisory vehicles only. All decisions with respect to location, design, construction and related matters shall be made by the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation as though the transportation corporations did not exist.

All new transportation corporations and those already created must immediately comply with the policy. ★ **Bo McCarver**

## In Memoriam

**Retired Employees:**

**Charlie A. Atchison**, Perryton, retired from District 4, died January 29, 1986.

**Wilburn C. Beyer**, retired from Division of Motor Vehicles, died March 6, 1986.

**B. P. Burtner**, retired from District 1, died March 24, 1986.

**Roberto C. Cordova**, San Benito, retired from District 21, died February 26, 1986.

**Jasper H. Douglas**, McCamey, retired from District 6, died February 28, 1986.

**William C. Elkins**, Temple, retired from District 9, died February 15, 1986.

**Augustin Garcia**, Beeville, retired from District 16, died March 1, 1986.

**Glenn E. Gerron**, Ennis, retired from District 18, died January 23, 1986.

**Eula M. Hicks**, Waco, retired from District 9, died March 12, 1986.

**Richard C. Hughes**, San Antonio, retired from District 15, died February 13, 1986.

**Jack Kultgen**, Waco, former member and chairman of the Commission, died March 9, 1986

**Benjamin L. Mitchell**, Houston, retired from District 21, died February 13, 1986.

**Olan D. Pafford**, Burnet, retired from District 14, died February 2, 1986.

**Edith H. Roberts**, Alpine, retired from District 12, died January 24, 1986.

**Wayne L. Schuchardt**, Boerne, retired from District 15, died March 1986.

**Thomas P. Thompson**, Angleton, retired from District 12, died February 22, 1986.

**John H. Wenzel**, retired from District 13, died March 20, 1986.

**Fredda S. Wheeler**, Shawnee, OK, retired from District 3, died February 13, 1986. ★ **Compiled by Bernice Kissmann, Human Resources Division**

## J. H. Kultgen, former commission member, dies

J. H. Kultgen of Waco, who served on the commission in the 1960s, died March 9.

Kultgen was a native of Chicago. He was sent to Texas in World War I to train as an aviator. After the war he came back to Texas, went into business and became a successful car dealer and civic leader in the Waco area. He served as president of the Texas Good Roads Association from 1951 to 1955.

In 1963, he was appointed to the highway commission. He became chairman in 1968. ★





The "Don't Mess With Texas" slogan has inspired some negative comments. Here's an exchange of letters between a Fort Worth resident and the department:

I thought 1986 would be a wonderful year to visit historic Texas sites, and this past weekend I made my first Sesquicentennial trip. I visited Goliad and Fannin to see the historic monuments in those cities and enjoyed going back into Texas history very much.

However, one jarring note almost spoiled my trip. Very early on in my automobile voyage, I began to notice signs along the road which said, "Don't mess with Texas." At first I dismissed the signs from my mind as the work of some inane creature, much the same way as I dismiss objectional bumper stickers from my mind when I see them in daily traffic. But then as I began to see the sign over and over again, it finally registered with me that this was a deliberate advertising campaign, and that these signs were probably put there by the Texas Highway Department.

Then I became very angry, because to me that sign is offensive and threatening. If it was intended to help prevent littering, then of course the sign should read, "don't mess up Texas." But as it is written now, all I can think of is some bully making this statement because it implies an "or else" at the end. The sign is much worse than roadside littering, I think.

During this year when we hope to have many visitors to the State, please tell me that these signs are just some sort of a test—and that they will be removed immediately before anyone else sees them and is offended by them.

**Jo Alice Darden  
Fort Worth**

To which D-16 replied:

Thanks for your letter regarding the "Don't Mess With Texas" slogan. We regret that you found it offensive. We also regret that this or any other public awareness campaign against littering is necessary. But it is.

Litter is a major problem in Texas. The cost of removing it from the state-maintained highway system alone exceeded \$24 million in 1985, and that was \$4 million more than the year before. If we didn't have to deal with litter, this money could be used for the rehabilitation and improvement of the highways themselves.

Alarmed not only by rising costs but also by the worsening appearances of the roadsides, the State Highway and Public Transportation Commission sought help from experts in modifying public attitudes.

A respected agency was employed. The first step they took was to conduct a research

study identifying groups most responsible for the mess. It was found that more than 70 percent of the littering is done by males between the ages of 18 and 34, with pickup trucks also being prominent in the problem. The agency then devised a campaign aimed directly at this group with the theme, "Don't Mess With Texas."

Although still in the early stages, it has received a great deal of free media time and space as well as positive editorial comments from all sections of the state. Incidentally, this campaign, plus a program offering incentives to localities to launch their own cleanup



efforts, plus a drive to tighten antilitter law enforcement, will cost about \$4 million, about equal to the annual increase in the cost of cleaning up the roadsides.

We hope this letter explains why this campaign has more of an "edge" than previous efforts have had. We felt it required a bold slogan to reach the primary litterers. If you have additional comments or questions, Mr. Don Clark of this office, at (512) 463-8588, will be glad to discuss the campaign with you. Thanks for your interest in the highways of Texas.

**Tom H. Taylor,  
Director, Travel and  
Information Division**

To which Ms. Darden replied:

Thanks very much for your letter of March 10, 1986 replying to my inquiry about the "Don't Mess With Texas" campaign.

I appreciate your taking the time to give the detailed answer about why this campaign slogan was chosen. Although it's not my style, I do understand now why it was chosen, and I certainly hope it has good success in cutting down on the litter in Texas.

Again, thank you for replying to my letter.

**Jo Alice Darden  
Fort Worth**

We are writing to express our appreciation for the service rendered to us by Tracy Cumby and Skipper Watson of the Texas Highway Department.

On Tuesday, March 6, we had a blowout on our van six miles east of Tulia on the Silverton highway. They stopped and changed the tire for us.

This is very good example of West Texas hospitality and was a great help to us.

**Don Dover,  
George Davis  
Lubbock**

## COUNTY LINES

One fine day, me and **Jeff Davis** went over by **Jim Wells** place and got him to go with us out to see ol' **Tom Green**. Well, as you know that's a **dickens** of a trip, so we got about as far as the **falls** and decided to set up **camp**.

Actually, me and Jeff decided it, 'cause Jim, always the **wise** guy, didn't want to stop.

"We **kent** waste no time," he grumbled. "Look, there's a **gray hays** (two counties) out past that **rockwall**. What if it rains?"

Jeff and me took the **liberty** of lookin' out where he was pointing. Sure 'nuff, the sky looked **real** bad.

"Jim, we nearly have to stop now," Jeff said. "If we **keep goin'** we'll have to **scurry** for cover if a **sutton** storm comes up. And what if it starts to **hale**? I'd hate to have to **hunt** for shelter."

"You want me to **cottle** you or something?" Jim complained. "So what if the weather **gaines** on us? If you wouldn't **polk** along so bad, we'd be there by now."

"Look, we asked you if you wanted to **walker ride**," Jeff said.

He was **gettin'** real mad by now. **Bein'** calm just ain't one of **Jeff's** sterling qualities. I figured I'd have to act fast to **ward** off a big fight.

"How about we **bosque** in what's left of the sunlight and drink a **coke**?" I sort of smiled real **loving** at both of them.

Jeff got quiet as a **lamb** and he and Jim looked at the **orange** sky.

"I guess we can **fisher** something," Jim said, kinda' embarrassed-like. He and Jeff was always good buddies and I know he sure hated to **bee** angry with him.

"There's a couple of **brooks** over beyond that **hill**," Jeff said, lookin' a little sheepish. "And my jacket has a **hood**, so you can use my hat if it gets wet."

So there we was. A **motley** crew if I ever saw one. We all relaxed and ate some **jack** cheese I had in my pack. And **wood** you believe, ol' Jim even apologized? Well, for him it was an apology.

"**Dimmit**, Jeff," he started laughin' real hard. "It's clear as a **bell** that you and me ought to be able to **foard** any breach in our friendship. We got a little **clay** to rest on and some food to **titus** over. And look, there's the first **starr!**" **Marcy Goodfleisch**

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