

# Transportation News

MAY 1979

FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF THE TEXAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

## NTW 1979 Ceremonies Successful



Many transportation representatives were on hand when Gov. Bill Clements signed the National Transportation Week proclamation.

□Texans, more than most Americans, have a big stake in transportation, noted Gov. Bill Clements in proclaiming May 13-19 as National Transportation Week in Texas.

District Offices and highway tourist bureaus joined with counterparts from the private sector to add to the observance of NTW 1979.

Administration members and Commissioners filled speaking requests at ceremonies across the state, starting with a Waco dinner honoring former Commissioner Jack Kultgen.

The Wacoan, noted for his concern for Texas transportation before and after his Commission tenure, heard Commissioners Dewitt Greer and A. Sam Waldrop laud his efforts. Also attending were State Engineer-Director Luther DeBerry, former State Highway Engineer J. C. Dingwall, Assistant State Engineer-Directors Mark Goode and Mark Yancey.

DHT tourist bureaus figured strongly in the 1979 NTW observance with participation ranging from special ceremonies at Waskom and Orange to displays and open houses at other bureaus. Although tourist bureau supervisors said "open house" activities as a special event was a misnomer since the bureaus provide that service throughout the year. But at the "special" open house events, area citizens took advantage of the opportunity to visit the facilities and view the operations.

New Commissioner Ray Barnhart

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Texas travel counselors have to know a whole lot more about their state than most people would care to ask. .... pg. 10

and his wife joined Commissioner Waldrop to dedicate the refurbished and expanded bureau at Waskom. Waldrop told the crowd which included area officials as well as interested citizens that, perhaps, the success of modern transportation has led to public apathy about it.

Waldrop said: "No one gets excited much until traffic starts to stack up, the plane is late and the bus doesn't run on time."

Referring to tourism as an industry without a smokestack, the Commissioner said: "As the energy situation worsens our tourist bureaus will play an even greater role in assisting motorists."

The Commissioners and Administration members also attended

(Continued on pg. 9)

Transportation affects the life of every Texan every day. All raw materials, all industrial output, all the agricultural bounty of Texas must be moved from producer to processor to consumer. Likewise, Texans travel millions of miles every day to work, to school, to worship and to recreational opportunities.

Texans more than most other Americans have a big stake in good transportation since Texas is a land of diverse and dispersed economies and populations.

All five modes — highway, rail, air, water and pipeline — loom large in the lives of all Texans. And transportation is vital in sustaining the large and important defense establishments within the borders of our state.

Truly, transportation is America's lifelines.

Therefore, I, as Governor of Texas, do hereby designate the period of May 13-19 as Transportation Week in Texas and call on all Texans to observe the period with appropriate observances.

William P. Clements Jr.  
Governor of Texas

## Drew DeBerry to Retire

□Drew DeBerry, who began his career with the Department as a summertime member of a survey party in 1934, will close 42 years' service when he retires June 1.

DeBerry has been the Department's Personnel and Wage Administrator since 1966, but also has served in a number of other assignments, primarily in the right of way and legal fields.

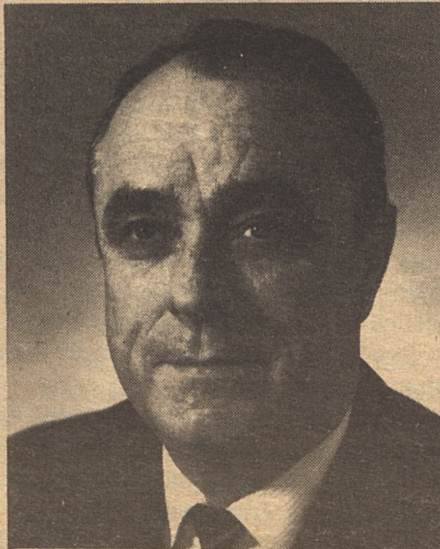
A native of Bogata in Red River County, he attended the University of Texas in Austin where he studied engineering and business administration.

In 1934, he signed on as a chairman on a summer survey party. DeBerry joined the Department full time in 1936 as a road life clerk in the Planning and Research Division.

In his career, he worked in the Road Design Division, the Administrative Division and as Personnel and Wage Administrator.

In addition, he has served as coordinator of legal matters with the Attorney General's office and has assisted with Legislative liaison.

He coordinated the first Interstate Highway needs estimate at the beginning of the Interstate program



Drew DeBerry  
NON-CIRCULATING  
NTSU LIBRARY

in the mid-1950s.

He has been involved in equal employment opportunity coordination, has served on the contractor review and right of way relocation committees.

DeBerry also served two 6-year terms on the board of the State Employees Retirement system.

DeBerry and his wife Mary Lee have a son Nick, an attorney in Dallas.

Effective June 1, Andrew H. Ging will assume the duties of acting administrator of the Personnel Division and Personnel and Wage Director.

Some of DeBerry's other duties in the Department will be reassigned to General Counsel James D. Frasier and State Administrative Engineer Farland Bundy.

Ging is a native of Coupland and a graduate of the University of Texas. He joined the Department in 1948 in the Old Land Service Road Division and transferred to the Personnel Division in 1951.

He is a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps and has two sons. ■

Waldrop says the conveyance of people is a mark of greatness

## Transportation: Society's Need

□ It is a pleasure to be in Marshall today to assist in the celebration of National Transportation Week. As a new member of the Texas Highway and Public Transportation Commission, I can without qualification tell you how proud I am to be a part of this fine Department.

This is one of the best organized, well-managed and efficiently operated departments in the state I have ever seen. It is staffed with talented and dedicated personnel and the esprit de corps is without parallel.

The people of Texas can be proud to have a Department like this that obtains the most for their tax dollars.

Four hundred years ago, Queen Elizabeth asked the most renowned man of her day, Sir Francis Bacon, to identify the most significant factor bearing on the greatness of a nation.

His answer: "Easy conveyance of men and goods from place to place." In other words,

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**"Sir Francis would applaud the many modes (of transportation) available to today's shipper and traveler."**

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Bacon appreciated the role of transportation in every human endeavor.

If Bacon lived here in America today, surely he would support the idea that transportation is America's lifelines.

But he might be puzzled at the necessity of having a National Transportation Week designated. After all, he appreciated transportation. Four centuries ago, he understood that nothing happens until something or someone is transported from one place to another.

He would understand that most agricultural produce is just so much potential garbage until it is moved speedily from producer to consumer.

Sir Francis would applaud the many modes available to today's shipper and traveler. He would marvel at the highways, the railroads, the sophisticated water transportation, plus airplanes and pipelines, both undreamed of in his time.

Perhaps it is the success of transportation that has led to public apathy. No one gets excited much until the traffic starts to stack up, the plane is late and the bus doesn't run on time.

The importance of good transportation to Texas and Texans hardly can be overstated.

With its diverse and dispersed population, good highways perhaps are more important to Texas than to many of her sister states.

For example, almost two-thirds (62.9 percent) of all Texas communities have no other means of transportation than the highway-motor vehicle mode.

On the other hand, Texas is one of the most urbanized states in the nation with three of the 10 largest cities within its borders.

While efforts are being made to improve public transportation in the large metropolitan areas, the street and urban highway networks remain the basic means of bringing necessities and niceties to the consumer.

The urban highway system serves as the conduits by which services are delivered. Even if public transportation supplanted the use of private automobiles — hardly a likely prospect in the foreseeable future — street and highway grids in our large metropolitan areas would be needed for police and fire protection vehicles, ambulances,

garbage pickup and other services.

Despite all the urban growth in Texas, it remains in the rural areas where the impact of good roads is most easily seen.

Texas has the most sophisticated and far-reaching system of secondary highways of any state in the nation. Indeed the Texas Farm to Market Road system serves as a model for the rest of the nation.

One key example of the impact of good, all-weather FM roads is in the field of education. One can be nostalgic about the one-room school. But quaint as it may have been, even at its best it could not provide the educational opportunities that are abundant today in modern consolidated schools.

Each school morning, more than 10,000 school buses statewide move out over the highway network to bring about three-quarters of a million youngsters to school. Altogether, school buses travel almost 125 million miles a year in Texas, much of that over FM roads.

Most of the new Texans have settled in the major metropolitan areas of Texas. It's hard for us old-timers to really think of Texas as one of the most urbanized states in the nation. But it is.

Texas has more urbanized areas — places with more than 50,000 population — than any other state, and it has three of the 10 largest cities in the nation.

But it's the sheer size of Texas that puts an extra burden on the transportation system. No matter how many people live in Houston or how fast Amarillo is growing, it still is 608 miles from the one place to the other.

This combination of growing metropolitan areas and long distances makes Texas transportation problems different from most other states.

One need only look at the freeways in our cities to recognize the nature of these problems. Mobility has been declining from the sheer weight of numbers of vehicles on the road in the urban areas.

Houston gains about 400 new vehicles on the

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**"Mobility has been declining from the sheer weight of numbers of vehicles on the road in the urban areas."**

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road every week. They join hundreds of thousands of other vehicles already on the streets and freeways and the problem just gets that much worse.

The average commuter probably sees it worse than it really is. He drives the freeway, chances are, during peak times. There is no way we can build freeways that will allow rush-hour traffic to move as freely and speedily as at other times.

For one thing it would take an unlimited supply of money — which the Department and the Commission do not have — and secondly, even if we had a money tree, the wisdom of spending it on such massive facilities as would be required for unlimited free-flowing traffic would be doubtful indeed.

There are better ways to restore urban mobility.

There are simpler ways of dealing with freeway congestion. The average occupancy of cars on freeways is about 1.2 persons. If that occupancy could be doubled by the use of carpools or public transportation, a great improvement in mobility

would be readily attained.

Since 1975, state assistance has been available to municipalities for the improvement of public transportation in the form of State funds to help meet local matching requirements.

Under the federally assisted program a city can receive up to 80 percent of the cost of the improvement. The State, through the State Highway and Public Transportation Commission, may put up 65 percent of the one-fifth required for matching by local governments, or 13 percent of the total cost of the project.

There are programs for both large and small cities and provisions for using State and local monies only. Also, there are means where by distinctly rural public transportation can be improved.

There has been progress in the public transportation field. Ridership is rising, although there has not been a great rush by commuters from their own cars to the bus yet.

Still, the success of park-and-ride efforts in the largest metropolitan centers point the way toward growth in the use of public transportation.

The important thing is that we have the basic systems in place that can help us deal with future declines in urban mobility. And adequate transit systems would be a big plus factor in the case of another oil embargo.

Some of the detractors of public transportation

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**"Everyone benefits from good transportation. Everyone loses when the transportation is poor."**

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have described it as a solution looking for a problem. Rather, it may be that — for once — we are developing solutions before the inevitable problems impact us.

But good transportation calls for constant attention. Nothing lasts forever, especially systems that are used as much as our transportation systems are.

We can stop the decline in mobility. We can use our transportation resources better. Public transportation, carpooling and van pooling, for example, would help relieve peak-hour congestion in our cities.

A little simple mathematics will show how this is possible. As previously mentioned, occupancy of the average vehicle on major urban freeways in one area of our state is 1.2 persons, at that rate, a modern transit bus can take the place of 35 cars. That's 34 fewer vehicles out there vying for the available freeway lane. And it's a smarter use of transportation facilities.

We can take other steps. We can stop thinking about just roads or routes and start thinking about networks and systems. And we can take an interest in what the various levels of government are doing to protect our mobility.

Let's look at the interdependence of transportation from another aspect. People who live and work in Houston have just as much stake in a highway or a rail line in the Panhandle as those who live in, say, Dalhart.

That seems like a rather far-fetched, sweeping statement on first blush. But when you consider that the highway and the railroad bring the agricultural production of the plains to the port, then the notion isn't quite as hard to understand.

Turn the situation around and a sheep rancher in the Edwards Plateau Country is affected by traffic congestion in, say, San Antonio, whether he knows it or not. The extra time and fuel consumed by traffic snarls in the city by a truck bringing supplies he needs on his ranch ultimately will be added to the cost of those goods.

Put it another way, everyone benefits from good transportation. Everyone loses when the transportation is poor. Sir Francis Bacon was right. ■

## What Kind Of Person Reads TH?

□ Most of them are over 50 years old, most of them are men, most of them make more than \$15,000 a year — and all of them read *Texas Highways*.

Those are a few of the facts that a microcosm of the 146,284 who receive *Texas Highways* recently revealed when asked their likes and dislikes of the official State travel magazine as well as their personal background.

Proportionately distributed in Texas, the 2,000 were asked a series of revealing questions through a mail questionnaire by Dr. John Murphy and four students in his advertising research class at the University of Texas at Austin.

Dr. Murphy, in announcing the results of the readership survey, said, "We sought to understand the success of *Texas Highways* and to determine facts about the readers."

The consensus of the readers who answered the survey questions is that *Texas Highways* is good or excellent in their opinion, 97 percent; that stories about Big Bend National Park, San Antonio missions, Del Rio and the buffalo returning were the easiest recalled, and 45 percent thought the photography was the best thing about *Texas Highways*.

Extremely interesting to Editor Frank Lively and his staff was the fact that each issue is read by 3.25 people. Applied only to the paid subscribers, who number exactly 122,800, Lively said that survey figure meant *Texas Highways* was reaching nearly 400,000 Texans. The readership figure, when applied to all who receive the magazine including DHT employees and retirees, nears the 500,000 mark.

The questionnaire, prepared under accepted survey guidelines, disclosed that 60 percent of the subscribers are men, 37 percent are aged 50 to 64 years and another 22 percent are over 65. Other facts the accommodating readers revealed (56 percent returned the questionnaires promptly and "another couple of hundred" were received after the deadline) revealed include their education (39 percent were college graduates or higher) and income (only 25 percent had a 1978 income of less than \$15,000).

The August issue of *Texas Highways* magazine will carry an in-depth look at the readership survey. ■

## Transportation News Volume 4, Number 8

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Editor: Mike McClellan  
Art Editor: Ernest Jordan

Manuscripts and news tips invited.

# For a Hobby, He Turned to Graft

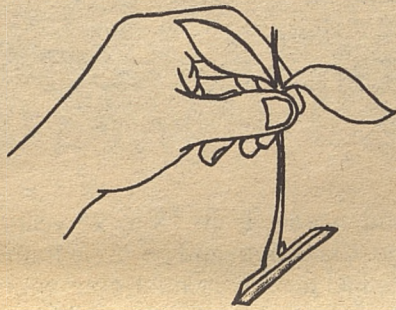
by Bob Warner

□ His name is Darwin, but he is not related to the great English naturalist, Charles R. Darwin, whose theory of evolution rocked the scientific world 100 years ago.

Our Darwin is Darwin Karkoska, an employee of the Motor Vehicle Division's accounting section. He has become deeply interested in the propagation of pecans, and has become a semi-expert on their growth and development even though he classes himself somewhat of a novice.

He first became interested in growing pecans in 1966, when he planted the first of what was to become a dozen trees on his small lot northeast of Austin.

His interest probably was stimulated in the 1950s when he completed four years of agricultural classes in high school. In his fresh-

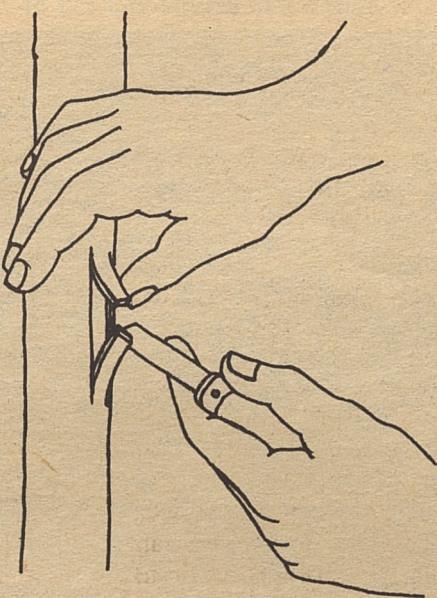


man year the small class planted an orchard including peaches, plums and apricots on a country tract.

"That orchard probably is about gone now," Darwin said, "although it produced a lot of good fruit under ag school care for a number of years."

Darwin's first pecan samples were of the Riverside variety, a lucky choice.

"I looked at some of the Riverside pecan samples and they were



real good pecans. When I planted them, I was satisfied. But now I know that Riversides are used principally as root stock by many nurseries."

A brother-in-law suggested that Darwin might be interested in grafting other varieties to his Riverside trees. But it was 1970 before he became sufficiently interested to take this step.

"I went to a grafting school put on

by the county agent. They had instructors to show you how to do it."

Darwin came in contact with two of the early specialists in pecan horticulture, Bill Harris and Charlie Goertz. He bought his first grafts from Harris who had won many awards. Goertz is one of the founders of the Travis County Pecan Association, an organization of growers.

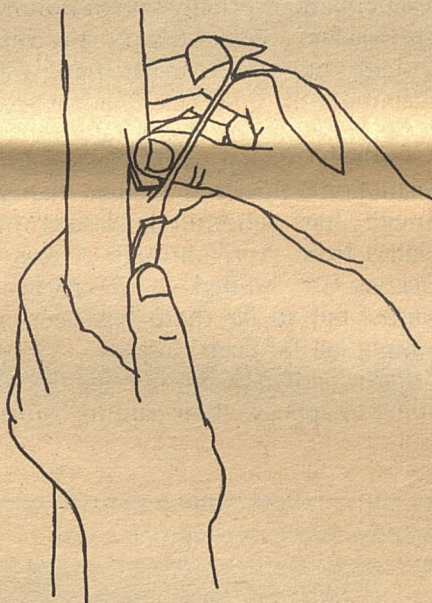
An interesting facet of pecan growing is the ability of a single tree stock, such as the Riverside, to produce as many as 20 different varieties if properly grafted.

Darwin ultimately settled on four varieties: Success, Mahan, Desirable and Choctaw. The Desirable is one of the primary pollinators, of which there are only a few varieties.

He makes no pretensions to being an expert in the botanical science of pollination. Most named pecan varieties are mutations which develop through pollination and crossbreeding as theorized by the English Darwin.

Darwin Karkoska continued propagating a few grafts each year until 1976.

"I didn't have the right pecans



and I didn't do too well that year. And in 1977 I didn't spray properly and I had only a few pecans, so I didn't enter the annual Travis County show.

"But in 1978 I decided I was going to take care of my pecan trees and would submit entries in several classes."

Which he did. And, for a novice, the results were sensational.

"I won first place with the Desirable, which is the largest class of all since there are more entries of this variety than any other class. I also won first place with the Success."

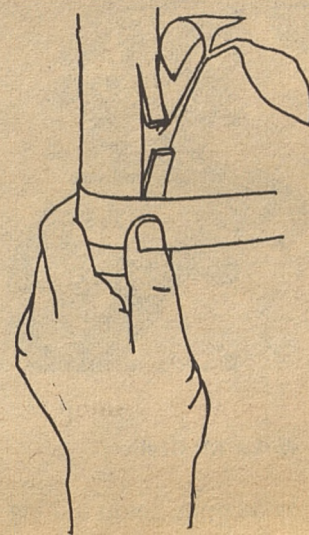
He also received a trophy for the best entry of pecans by a novice (first-time exhibitor) in the Travis County Pecan Show.

Each class has a single first, second and third place winner. Darwin didn't win either the reserve or grand champion competition, but he did pick up a third place with a collection of three varieties, Desirable, Success and Choctaw.

His winners in the Travis County show were entered in the South Texas Pecan Show, a regional competition. There he won another first place with his Desirables, but slipped to second on the Success, and captured another third place with his three varieties. The first place finisher will be entered in the state show in Waco in July.

Darwin points out the desirability of heavy yield per tree for commercial production, which offers a promise of income when he reaches retirement age.

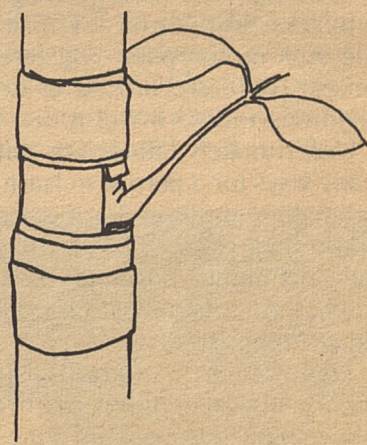
Unshelled pecans sell for about \$1.50 per pound, but shelled pecans bring about \$4 per pound. A heal-



thy, heavy-bearing tree will produce as many as 500 pounds of unshelled pecans per tree.

In the last year he spent about \$50 for fertilizer and insecticides for his 12 trees, but expects to increase that amount this year with some new products.

Darwin gives a great deal of credit to the Travis County agent and the county extension service for his early success in turning a hobby into



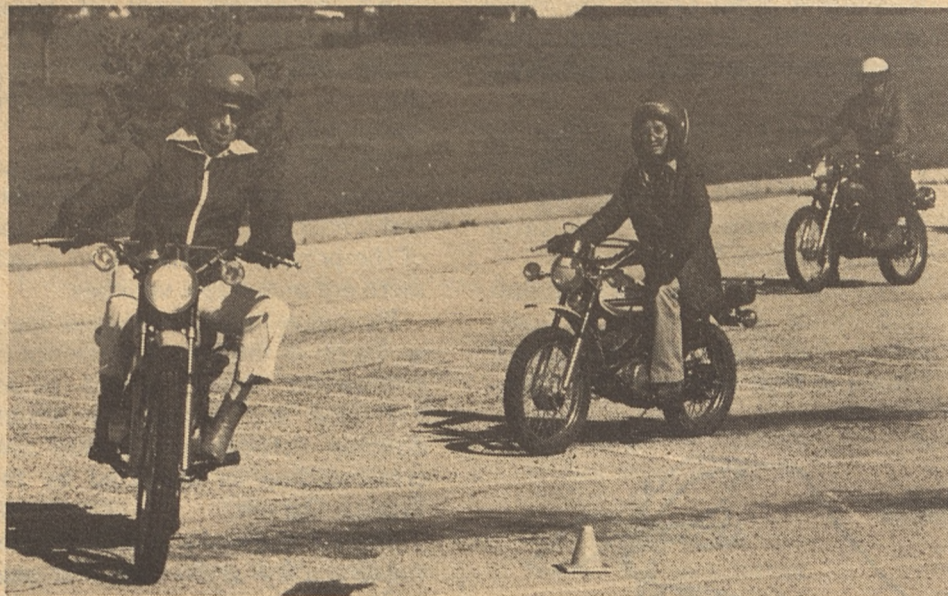
a potentially profitable retirement income.

He also attributes the interest and assistance of his wife Kay for her considerable support.

"She holds the ladder," he laughed.

"Actually, she has a few friends who have taken courses in pecan production, so she has gathered up quite a bit of information and really is very helpful," he explained.

And he has a couple of upcoming pecan shellers in his two daughters, Sheila, 16, and Paula, 13. ■



by Mike McClellen

□ As people begin taking the fuel crisis more seriously, many of them are looking at the benefits of motorcycles.

Motorcycles are cheaper than automobiles. They also are enticingly fuel-efficient. They can pass more gas stations than any automobile. They can be used to commute or commune. And they can park on a dime.

But they are about as stable as Mick Jagger, and in a tilt with any four-wheeled vehicle they become a battered ram.

Seemingly the pros outweigh the concrete abrasions. There are 304,000 motorcycles registered in Texas. There are droves of drivers beginning to two-wheel it.

Unfortunately, there are not too many ways for a person to learn how to handle a motorcycle. A salesman shows them how to work the gears and the accelerator and then the purchaser trusts his old bicycle-handling reactions.

The Office of Traffic Safety periodically has held motorcycle safety courses to help curb the high

accident and mortality rate of motorcycle riders. But OTS's most recent series of motorcycle safety training is meeting with a success that far exceeds previous efforts.

Using a federal grant, Public Information/Education Officer Nancy Snead has scheduled classes in Dallas from April through August. Classes are limited to 20 participants, and so far there has been a waiting list for each class.

Participants are not just teenagers trying to appease their parents. Most

students are from 18 to 25 years of age. Classroom and on-cycle training are included in each 23-hour course. Students learn defensive driving and how to handle hazards.

Helmets and motorcycles are furnished by local dealers. A \$10 fee covers the cost of gasoline, repair and insurance.

With proper training, furnished by OTS, and constant alertness, the motorcycle riders of the future should be less foolish as well as less fuelish. ■



Lubbock Resident Engineer Volney Chetty has been named Engineer of the Year by the South Plains Chapter of the Texas Society of Professional Engineers. Chetty has been actively involved in the work on IH 27 in Lubbock.



A tunnel can be dug only a little at a time. Using the lagging as a brace, the mole is driven forward five feet by hydraulic pistons. Then the crew sets the rings and puts the new oak lagging in place. The \$400,000 mole is then braced against the new lagging and cuts forward again.

□ They are getting ready to lay the asphalt on a project that will clear the way for the beginning of construction of IH 35 through Laredo.

No car will ever drive on the 1,800-foot facility. The asphalt is a protective liner for the 96-inch, 14-gauge galvanized pipes, each 20 feet in length.

Few people in Laredo will notice the asphalt pipe laying, just as very few of them noticed the tunneling work that lasted nearly four months.

A few people in the neighborhood noticed when Armco Steel of Middletown, OH, made an open cut in the street of about 170 feet down near the creek. But the remaining 1,673 feet of work was done completely underground beneath a street. The street stayed open to traffic, and most people living along the street were totally unaware that a tunnel 9½ feet in diameter was being dug right under their parked cars.

The tunnel will be used for drainage for the new IH 35 facility. There are three locations where the new highway will be cut below grade to allow overpasses of a railroad track and two city streets. Heavy rains would make water tanks of those subgrade cuts without a tremendous drainage system.

Any city dweller who has ever been detoured by utility company work knows that there are a lot of things under a city street besides subbase material. Water and gas

## Interstate 35 Project Gets the Shaft

lines as well as telephone cables tend to use city streets like a roof.

Tunnel digging requires excellent planning and extreme accuracy to avoid those utilities. Normally the Department would have had to have furnished a three-man survey crew to ensure that the tunnel was properly aligned and that the proper

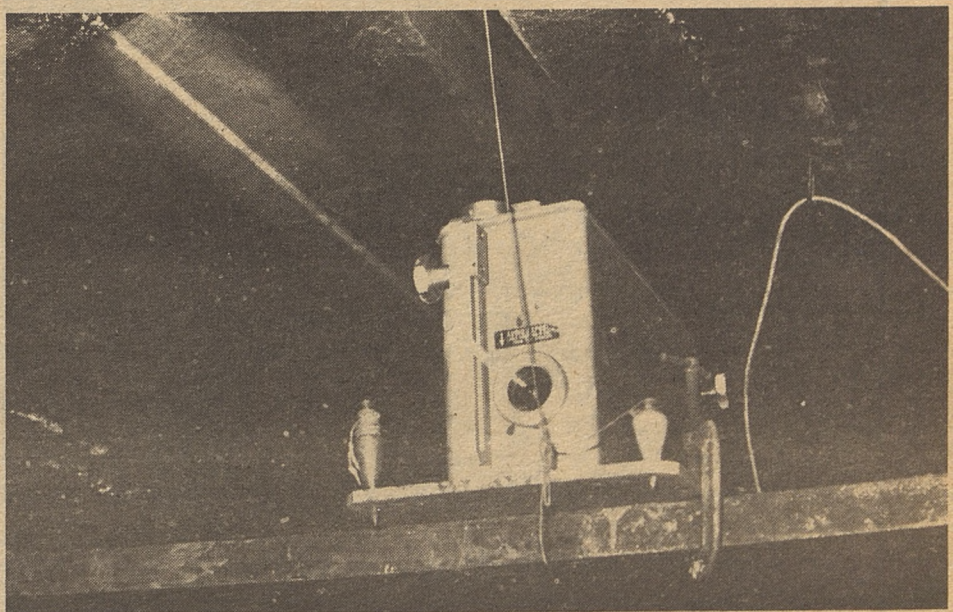
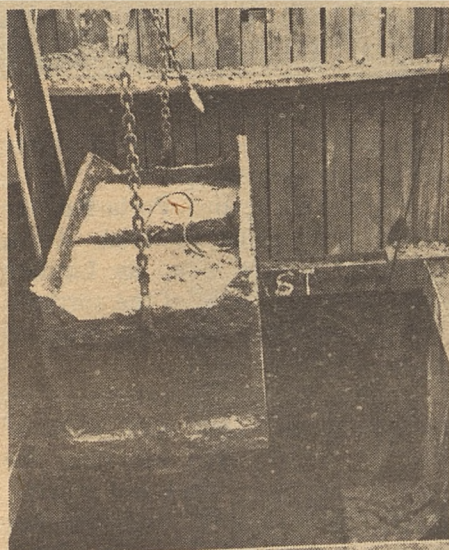
grade was maintained.

But a simple laser beam alleviated that situation and was so accurate that there was not one accident caused by the tunneling.

The tunneling work is finished. Now the 8-foot diameter pipe will be

pushed in and grout used to fill and support the tunnel and a \$1 million project will be complete.

Yet no motorists will see this unusual piece of highway work. But no motorist will be up to his radiator cap in water, either. ■



Coal shuttles deliver the mud to the open cut shaft where it can be taken out and dumped elsewhere. The laser beam is aimed at two targets on the mole to assure that the cut is aligned properly and that the proper grade is maintained.

# POTHOLE PATCHES TO GO

by Hilton Hagan

□ It looks a little bit like spare parts for an amusement park locomotive, or, perhaps, someone's dream of a really good-sized barbecue smoker.

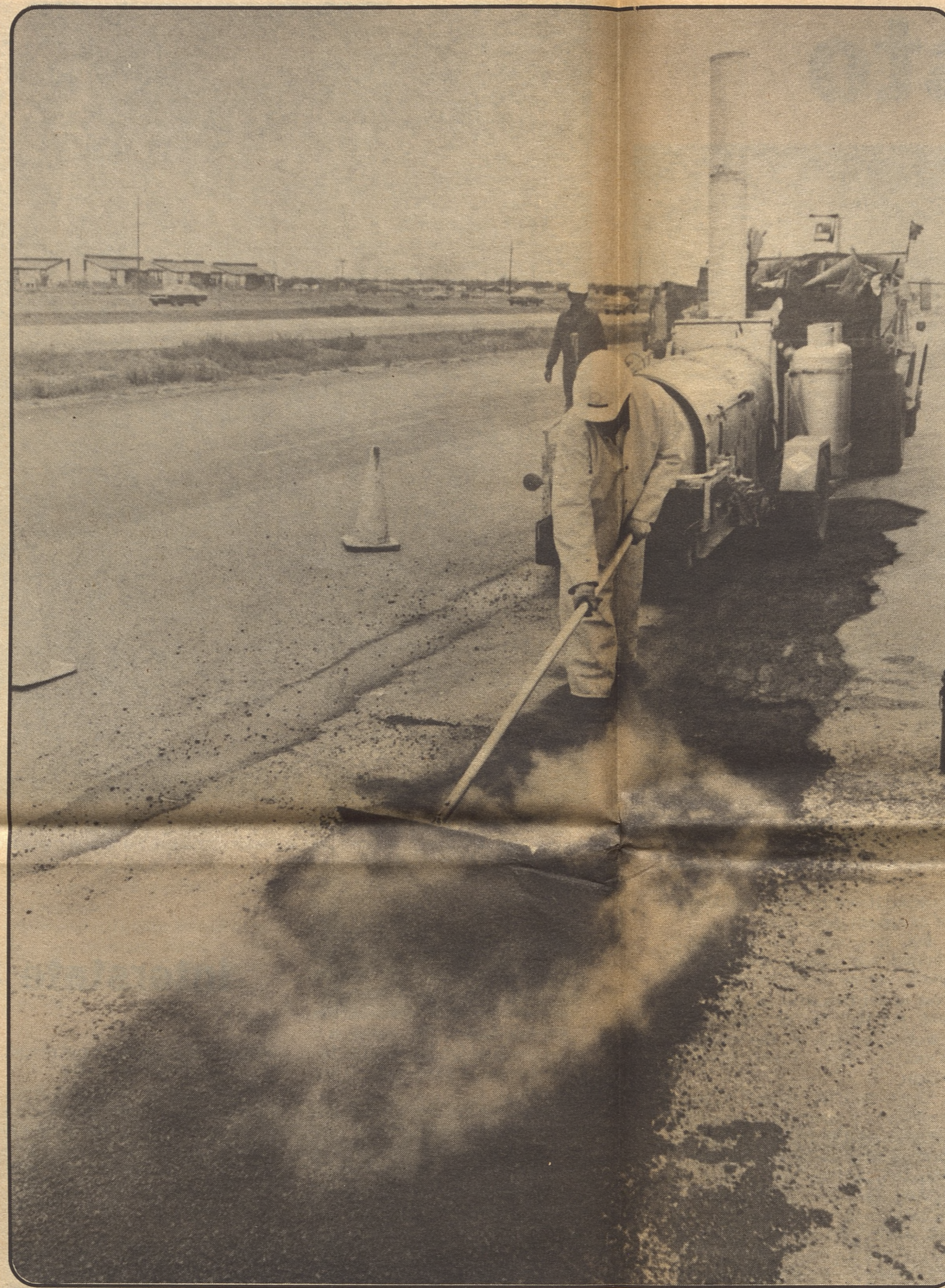
It's neither really, but it promises to help answer two major highway maintenance problems: material shortage and providing high-quality permanent pavement patches.

It's called the Porta-Patcher and

people in the Abilene District are impressed. In fact they just got their second unit.

"What it amounts to," says Abilene Assistant District Engineer Bob Lindley, "is a little dryer drum plant on wheels."

The Porta-Patcher can be towed to the pothole itself where it delivers — just a shovel-toss away from the



No, it's not the Chattanooga Choo-Choo. It's the Porta-Patcher at work. Because the material is delivered to the pothole smoking hot, most "expedient" patches stay put.

"A man named Ralph Brown had this thing on display out in a parking lot. He wasn't getting many lookers when I asked him to show me how it worked," Lindley says.

Lindley was impressed. But there was a hitch: Brown had concentrated his operations in the north and east. He had no dealers in the Sunbelt nor anywhere in the west for that matter.

Lindley returned to Abilene, still excited about the possibilities of the machine. He told District Engineer Roger Welsch about what he saw. Welsch was interested.

The John Deere dealer in Abilene got wind of the Porta-Patcher. He contacted Brown at his factory in Fort Wayne, IN, and, in time, became the first Porta-Patcher dealer outside the northeast.

The Abilene District arranged to lease a Porta-Patcher for an extensive test. Brown delivered the unit in person, towing it to Abilene from Indiana behind his own Mercury.

That was about a year ago. Abilene's Porta-Patcher was Serial Number 13. Brown is now expanding his factory and he recently told Lindley that the machines are selling like hotcakes.

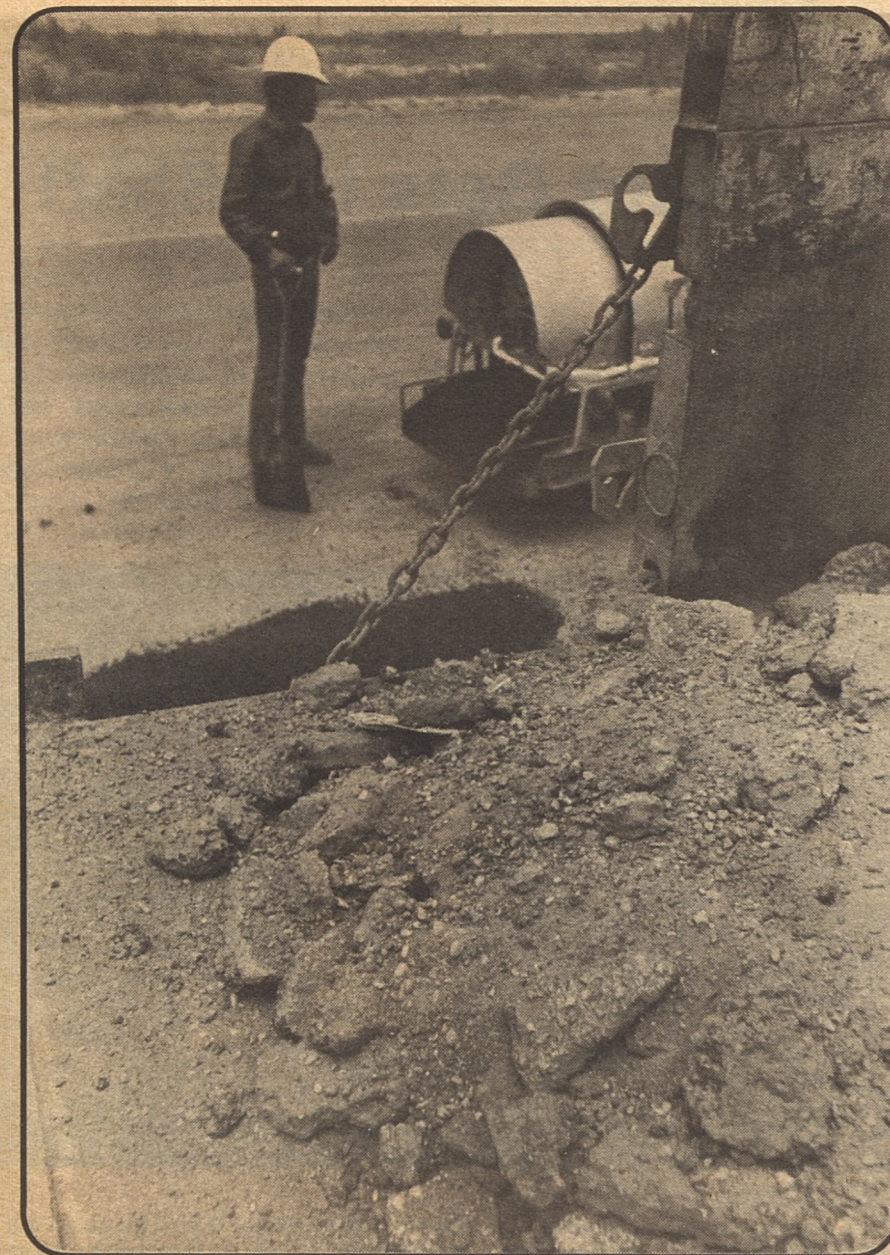
"It's a Cadillac of a machine," Lindley says. "It's well made and really does the job."

At least one thing hasn't changed so far with the success of the Porta-Patcher. Brown personally delivered Abilene's second machine -- again towing it behind his own car. ■



With the Porta-Patcher hitched to the dump truck, old salvage asphalt pavement material can be shoveled directly into the hopper.

The salvaged material goes through the Porta-Patcher where it is heated, mixed and recycled. The renewed hot mix is delivered at the other end of the machine just a shovel-toss away from the hole.



Ready for recycling, this load of salvaged material soon will become hot mix after receiving the Porta-Patcher treatment.

offending cavity — hot mix at a temperature of at least 300°F.

Furthermore, the Porta-Patcher feeds on recycled material. It's a recycling system that, as Lindley says "can take some of the sorriest-looking old material and bring it back to life."

Lindley says he continues to be amazed at how the application of heat to old material will turn the asphalt back to a "black and crawly" state. That's what the Porta-Patcher does.

"We are also using it to repair places where the pavement has sunk. We dig out the sunken spot and replace it with hot mix," he says.

Before, this kind of work often involved the use of a cement stabilized base and it took three or four days before it really was back to normal.

"Now we can do this kind of work with a simple one-step operation," Lindley says.

The operation is simple. The unit, which weighs 3,900 pounds, can be towed by the dump truck carrying the material to be recycled.

On location, one man can feed the old hot mix material into the hopper from the bed without unhitching the Porta-Patcher from the truck. It also will convert low-cost cold mix material into hot mix.

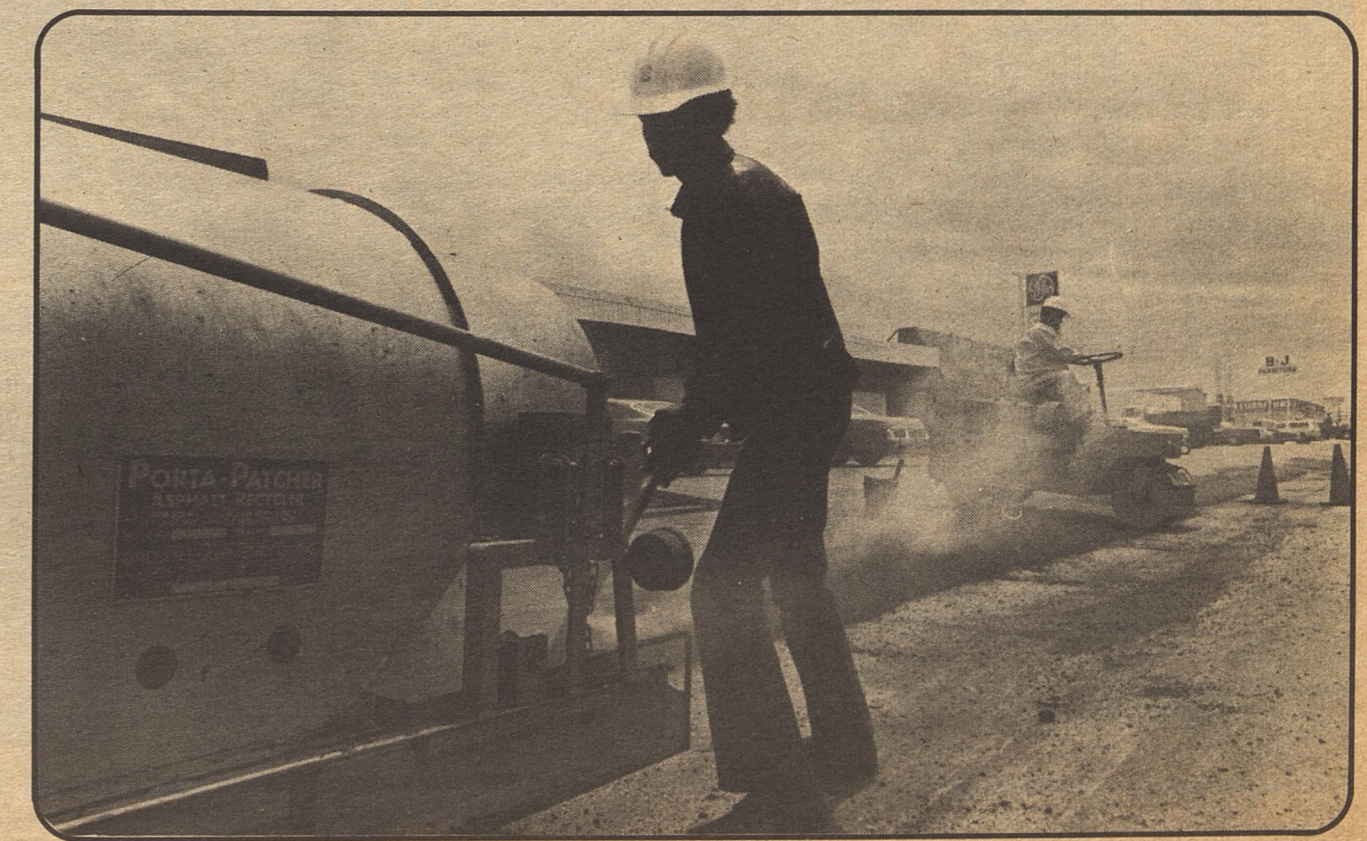
The two LP gas-fueled burners develop 376,000 btu each so the

burners and the moving parts for the 8-foot-by-28-inch drum mixer are enclosed to protect the crew.

The unit also has a 200,000-btu hand torch for drying moisture from potholes before patching begins.

The machine can deliver up to 400 pounds of hot mix material per minute. The manufacturer claims at least 90 percent of the "expedient" patches made by the Porta-Patcher process will stay in place indefinitely. Patch integrity is such that patches can later be paved over with no effect on the new surface.

Lindley spotted the Porta-Patcher while participating in a pavement recycling seminar in Syracuse, NY, sponsored by Cornell University.



# Grabbing for Gusto

by Bob Warner

□ Thinking of retirement? Maybe you're one of those who's interested in a cozy little nook in the Hill Country. Perhaps you've been eyeballing the possibilities of cutting out early after you've got 30 years in.

If so, there's a book you'll enjoy written by a DHT engineer, Howard M. Randall of Materials and Tests Division.

The book is entitled "*What Do You All Day Out There? or Retired in the Texas Hill Country at 49.*"

Howard was working for a Houston metallurgical firm one day — a hot, boring day — when he glanced down from his 12th-story office to get a bird's-eye view of a bikini-clad miss on the rim of a hotel swimming pool far below.

"I sighed about the girl and even more about the caged feeling, the lack of something in life that everyone feels at some time.

"Life was good and I was not unhappy. Yet I wanted a change — a big change from my 25 years of being an engineer trying to solve metallurgical and corrosion problems," Howard wrote.

The theme of the TV commercial spun through his mind. "You only go around once — so grab it now!"

It's only supposed to happen in fairy tales or fiction, at the very least, but it *did* happen right then. Let Howard tell it:

"As had happened many times before when I had been dreaming of breaking out of the mold, the jangling reality of the telephone broke the wishful thinking of how to chuck the job, flee to the country and make enough money to keep body and soul, as well the family together.

"But this time, this day, the phone call was different — and it was BIG!

"Cam's familiar voice asked if he had interrupted an important conference. I answered that I *did* have to put down the binoculars to pick up the phone.

"Well his next sentence over the phone was, 'Our negotiations have been concluded. The Big Outfit just bought us out for a hell of a pile of stock.'

"As I shouted, 'Hot damn!' into the room in general, he continued.

"'Yep, we'll get our stock certificates in about 10 days and can let our wives start figuring how to spend some of the proceeds!'"

So an investment in the stock of a building maintenance company organized from scratch by a long-time friend a dozen years earlier provided the financial impetus needed



In their rustic haven, the Randall's source of entertainment is their two dancing goats.



The Randalls set up housekeeping in a mobile home, nestled in a cedar stand with a beautiful view of the Texas Hill Country.

to make Howard's long-time dream of retirement come true.

But, first, there was one hitch. Howard was innately conservative and he simply couldn't rush to the boss to tell him what he could do with the job. He also had wife, Carolyn, to think of; she must be consulted. Her counsel carried weight.

Then, another miracle. Three weeks later a manpower cutback in the firm resulted in his involuntary termination since he was the junior engineer in that office.

When Howard responded with apparent glee to information that he had been "fired" his boss was surprised, even though the termination resulted in a favorable financial settlement.

"Mostly I was pleased that I didn't have to make that decision to quit. Wife and mother would not think I had used poor judgment and done something impulsive. Even better, I would never had to look back and say to myself, 'What a fool you were to quit.'"

That's how Howard and Carolyn happened to buy a 200-acre spread in Travis County about 30 miles northwest of Austin. And the book is a journal of their experiences in setting up housekeeping in a two-bedroom 65-foot mobile home on a site with a beautiful view of the hills, the cedar stands and the grotto, a lovely, sometimes water-filled, "tank" at the foot of their front yard.



Part of their front yard on the 200-acre property is a grotto, a sometimes-filled tank that adds to the tranquillity of their surroundings.

Howard writes with humor and candor of their experiences in getting the mobile home to the site, and of the two pet goats, Billy and Ginger, who entertain them by dancing on their hind legs. If you've read "Mr. Blanding Builds His Dream House," you'll recognize

some of the problems they encountered, most of which they conquered by hard work and common sense.

You'll get a few good belly laughs from the well-written book, especially as Howard plans to ship a mouse, which has invaded the motor home, to shock his city-

slicker brother-in-law.

Back in 1973 Leon Hale, the *Houston Post* columnist, wrote of Howard:

"He didn't have a lot to say but I remember liking the way he said it — sort of flat and low-key, with a little grin not quite hidden."

Howard likes hard physical labor and he got plenty of it grubbing stumps, building sheds, hauling rocks and other work that was needed to make the ranch habitable.

Carolyn is a pretty, petite black-haired grandmother whose open manner and delightful chuckle make her the obvious mate for a career professional who reverts to pioneer. She, too, has her story and we hope it will be part of the sequel to this book.

Unfortunately, their son, who now lives in California, was injured in an automobile accident and a court award forced the Randalls to seek some outside income temporarily.

"We found we were dipping pretty deeply into our reserve capital the last six months," Howard explained.

So he went to work for the Materials and Tests Division in Austin and Carolyn took a position as volunteer coordinator of the Blind and Physically Handicapped Services Division of the State Library and Historical Commission (Talking Books).

They still live on Randall's Ridge and commute 30 miles daily each way between their hilltop home and Austin. But they both are looking forward to returning to the leisure of full-time life in one of the few wilderness spots still available to "dudes". ■



Howard Randall likes hard physical work and he gets plenty of it as he clears the land and builds necessities. But there is enough leisure left to spend a few minutes playing with one of the goats.

(Cont'd from pg. 1) **NTW**

a luncheon in Marshall, where Commissioner Waldrop spoke, and a coffee in nearby Carthage.

Also at Carthage, LeRoy LaSalle was honored by being placed in the Hall of Honor of Texas Road Hands. LaSalle, an attorney and former county judge, is president of the Panola County Good Roads and Transportation Association and is chairman of the Panola County Chamber of Commerce Highway Committee.

DeBerry also addressed Lubbock Rotarians and Commissioner Waldrop spoke to Kiwanis Club members in Abilene during other NTW appearances.

The Brownwood District's open house activities featured a display emphasizing the amount of money expended by the District to repair and replace vandalized signs and to clean up litter along the highways. Other districts featured displays of specialized equipment at their respective open houses.

Visitors to the Fort Worth District's 1979 National Transportation Week open house arrived by ones, twos and threes on May 15 — until 67 students arrived from the Castlebury Christian School. The first through middle-graders displayed interest in all facets of the District operation in a hastily prepared tour of the facilities. The students departed with a chorus of goodbyes and hands pointing to the bus bumper where a sticker proclaimed "Transportation — America's Lifelines."

The Laredo tourist bureau's NTW displays portrayed transportation, past present and future — even one of a riverboat calling at Laredo wharves in the city's early days.

The Amarillo bureau attracted area attention and publicity for National Transportation Week with displays which included antique autos and a modern intercity bus and travel trailer.

Displays at the Texarkana bureau were prepared by the Texarkana Historical Museum and featured photographs from the area's rich transportation history.

The 1979 National Transportation Week observance across the nation received impetus from the Association of American Highway and Transportation Officials Public Information Subcommittee in coordination with Traffic Clubs International. Travel & Information Division Director Tom Taylor, NTW co-chairman for Texas, is secretary of the subcommittee.

Also entering strongly into the Texas NTW observance was the Texas Good Roads/Transportation Association. TGR/TA funded a 30-second public service announcement publicizing National Transportation Week.

Posters were supplied to all District Offices and tourist bureaus. They were prepared by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Bumper stickers, purchased previously by AASHTO, were supplied to Districts and bureaus as requested. ■



□Traveling Texans and visitors to the state alike will benefit from the annual Texas Travel Counselors Conference held Apr. 23-26 in Amarillo.

At that conference, 44 travel counselors from the Department joined 17 counselors for domestic travel from the American Automobile Association and two from the San Antonio city tourist staff. Factual data to serve tourists, and an update on the energy situation, were provided during four days of workshop sessions.

Bill Toohey from Washington, president of the Discover America Travel Organizations, brought the professional travel counselors up to date on the status of the tourist industry from the national standpoint. Michael Ingrisano, also from Washington, discussed the U.S. Customs Service with emphasis on its functions as related to states with international boundaries.

Texas Railroad Commissioner Mack Wallace presented an incisive view of the fuel situation, and George McKinney, president of the Beautify Texas Council, inspired the counselors to inspire others in the matter of statewide beautification.

A difficult and detailed 200-question exam tested the counselors on

Travel counselors learning to help tourists use less gas

## More Fun Per Gallon

by Dick Roberts



Travel Counselor Martha Shapiro, from the Orange Tourist Bureau, shows off her Roadrunner Award. Martha has assisted more than 800,000 travelers in her career, and she's still smiling.

The annual Roadrunner Awards were won by Martha Shapiro of the Orange Tourist Bureau and Iva Ibanez from the AAA Panhandle Plains Auto Club.

Martha was cited for her 22 years of service. It was noted that she had served more than 800,000 travelers in her career, and was still smiling!

Two afternoons at the conference were devoted to familiarization tours of the Amarillo area. So that counselors could speak authoritatively about the region, stops were made at such diverse attractions as the stockyards, the Square House Museum in Panhandle, a planetarium, a wind energy experiment, the Alibates Flint Quarry National Monument, and a light and sound show at Pioneer Amphitheater in Palo Duro Canyon State Park.

Meeting concurrently, but at a different location, was the Discover Texas Association. The association, which represents major municipal and commercial tourism interests from every corner of Texas, presented a travel fair. DTA participants had the opportunity to discuss, and answer questions about their attractions on a one-to-one basis with the travel counselors.

The exchange of ideas, the new information presented, and the opportunity to see Panhandle attractions combined to make the 24th Annual Texas Travel Counselors Conference one that was described by participants as "one of the best ever." ■

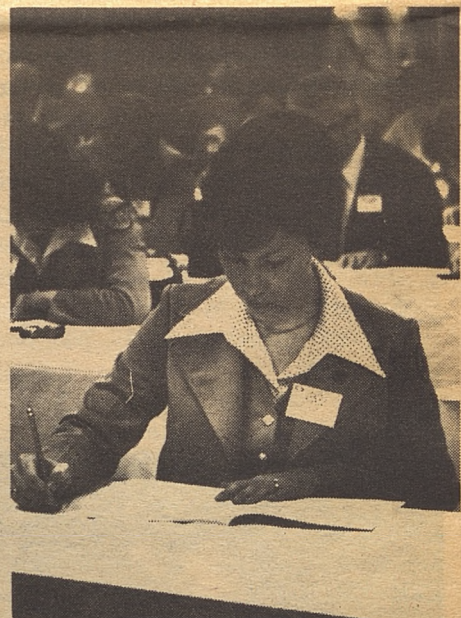


Bruce Neal (left), president of the Discover Texas Association, presents that organization's 1979 Tourism Award to Atlanta District Engineer Lawrence Jester.

the scope of their technical knowledge about travel and the myriad tourist attractions of the state. Verifying the adage that practice makes perfect, the average tenure of the 15 persons who passed the exam was more than 10 years. Each was awarded a "Certified Professional Travel Counselor" certificate. To maintain a high level of expertise, the testing and certification program will be continued in following years.

Described as an enthusiastic supporter of Texas tourism, District Engineer Lawrence L. Jester Jr. was honored with the Discover Texas Association's 1979 Tourism Award. It was the first award for an individual not actively involved in the commercial sector of Texas tourism.

As chief of the Atlanta District, Jester oversees both the Texarkana and Waskom bureaus. A wild flower trail and numerous rest areas have all benefited from his dedication to making travel more pleasant for all motorists.



A 200-question examination tested the travel counselors on a wide variety of travel-oriented subjects. Those who passed received a special certification.

## Gasoline Supplies Number 1 Inquiry

□Texas tourist bureaus, already serving the highest volume of travelers in their 43-year history, experienced a 14 percent jump in demand this April compared to the same month last year. Most of the surge results from inquiries about gasoline availability.

Tom Taylor, director of the division that operates the tourist bureaus, said the bureaus have been swamped with inquiries about where to buy gasoline.

"Actually," he said, "there's been no real problem so far, and our bureaus are able to advise travelers about any number of operating service stations in each bureau locality.

However, there's no doubt that auto travelers are becoming more fuel conscious."

The bureaus' director noted a trend toward greater travel efficiency. He said motorists are seeking short-line routes and more detailed highway information. Saying those are the areas in which Texas Tourist Bureaus can be of greatest service, Taylor speculated that the pleasure-driving public may be ready to accept a concept the Department has been suggesting for years.

"We've been urging more of a vacation and less of a trip," Taylor said, "and I think the public may be catching on." The concept, while

especially useful for Texans, can be beneficial to visitors from out of state, too.

"The typical motorist visiting Texas from the Midwest," Taylor said, "can squander an enormous amount of fuel by aimless driving around Texas. With some trip planning from our tourist bureaus, we can save him time, money, fuel, and virtually guarantee a more pleasant visit to boot."

The state operates 11 tourist bureaus throughout Texas, with a twelfth to be built soon in the popular Lower Rio Grande Valley. ■



## New Bridge Costs Only A Fraction Of Statewide Litter Pickup Bill

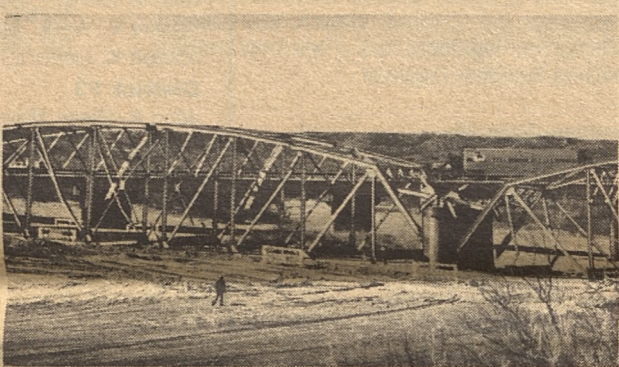
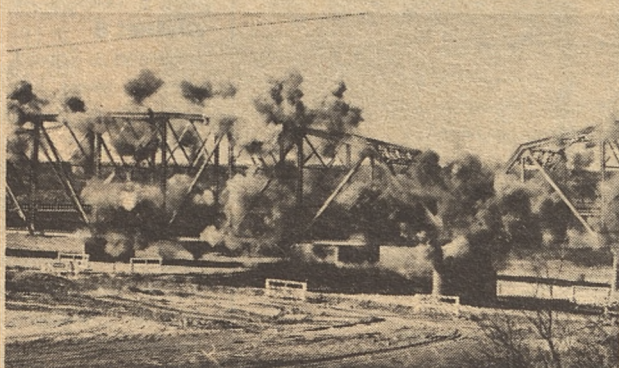
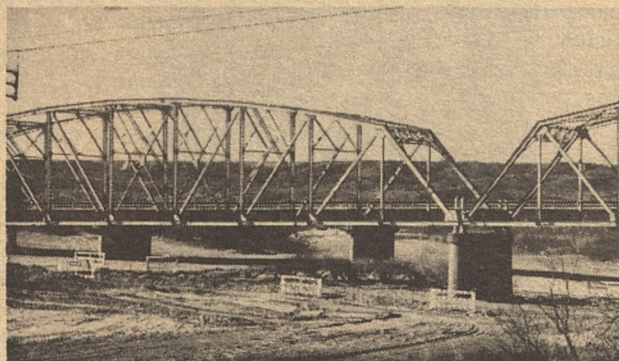
Litter is costing more every year. It is costing more money. It also is costing more lives.

The State Department of Highways and Public Transportation spent more than \$7 million last year on litter pick up. Preliminary figures indicate that the costs will be even greater this year.

This money could much better be used on safety projects such as replacing some of the obsolete bridges in the state, according to the department's engineer-director, Luther DeBerry.

"For instance we just contracted to replace a 44-year-old bridge near Amarillo for a little less than \$748,000," DeBerry said. "This is only about 10 per cent of what we spent on litter pick up last year."

DeBerry said that there are an estimated 5,300 bridges in the state that are considered obsolete because they were designed for much narrower lane widths than what is now considered the necessary lane widths for today's wider vehicles. The old Canadian River Bridge near Amarillo that was recently contracted had two lanes of traffic using a 24-foot wide road surface. The new bridge will have two



The Canadian River Bridge near Amarillo comes down in a puff of exploding smoke. The obsolete bridge will be replaced by a safe, modern bridge at a cost that represents only 10 per cent of what the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation spent on picking up litter last year.

lanes on a 38-foot wide roadway.

"We are replacing these bridges as fast as our funding allows," DeBerry said. "We would be very happy if we could use more of our litter pick up money towards safety projects like the Canadian River Bridge."

However, DeBerry says that the department cannot just quit picking up the litter.

"With over a million acres of right of way, we have more neighbors than anyone else in the state," DeBerry said. "And these neighbors are quick to let us know when our 'yard' gets messy."

There also is a safety aspect to collecting the litter. Broken bottles, nail-spiked boards and other such objects cause blowouts and present a direct safety threat on the fast-paced highways. Also, vehicles tend to swerve to avoid sacks, bags and boxes on the highway and this swerving action can cause accidents.

"As long as the litter is there, we have to pick it up," DeBerry said. "The only chance we would have of using any of that money for more effective safety projects would be if there were less litter to be picked up."



Ray Barnhart

## Commissioner Takes Office

Ray Barnhart of Pasadena was sworn in May 2 as a member of the State Highway and Public Transportation Commission.

Governor Bill Clements held the Bible as the oath of office was administered to Barnhart by Secretary of State George W. Strake Jr. The ceremony was held in the Governor's Reception Room in the Capitol.

Barnhart will replace Reagan Houston on the commission. Houston's term expired this spring.

Barnhart resigned his position as state chairman of the Republican Party immediately after the Senate approved his nomination.

He served as a State Representative in the 63rd Session of the Legislature and was one of the three co-chairmen of the Texas Citizens for Reagan Committee during the 1976 Republican primary.

The new commissioner holds a bachelor of arts degree from Marietta College of Ohio and a master's degree from the University of Houston.

He and his wife Jacqueline have two daughters. He is a member of the First United Methodist Church in Pasadena and the Pasadena Rotary Club. ■

## Transit Fund Called For

Richard S. Page, who recently resigned as administrator of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration, called for a transit trust fund funded by an excess profits tax on oil in an address to the Seventh Annual Texas Public Transportation Conference in Austin Apr. 26.

Page was echoing support for the transit funding as supporters of President Carter's energy security program.

He left the top UMTA administrative post May 7 to become general manager of Washington Metro. Page was general manager of the Seattle transit system before assuming the UMTA post.

"The federal transit program is now large enough and important enough to require its own trust fund, and stable, predictable funding lies at the heart of the transit program," he said.

He also suggested a "merger of highway and transit funding."

"This could be disruptive during the first year or two, but five years

from now it will seem to have been a very good thing to have done. It will eliminate some of the fighting between these two agencies and supporters of their programs."

However, he gave low priority to home-to-destination alternative transportation, saying: "Section 504 says nothing about providing 'mobility'. The law describes such transit opportunities by use of the term 'accessibility', and that means low-floor buses," he declared.

Robert Farris, president of Valley Transit Lines, Harlingen, was named 1978 Friend of Texas Transit at the conference.

Other speakers included:

Ellis Watkins, Wayne Cook and Barry Goodman, general managers of the Dallas, San Antonio and Houston transit systems, respectively; State Representatives Herman Lauhoff of Houston and Ed Emmett of Kingswood, chairman and member of the House Transportation Committee; and a marketing panel consisting of Claudia Goad,

public information director, Dallas Transit; Janie Manning, marketing director, CITRAN, Fort Worth, and Linda A. Valdez, manager of marketing, VIA Metropolitan Transit, San Antonio.

Problems of both large and small transit operations were discussed by other speakers during the three-day conference. ■

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