

# BRIDGING THE PAST IN CORPUS CHRISTI

A TxDOT-led exhibit captures the history of neighborhoods affected by the new Harbor Bridge Replacement Project.



Northside History Project





**JAMES BASS**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

# IT'S TIME TO TAKE THE HIRE ROAD

When the Texas Legislature ended its regular session this past May, Texas had a new set of laws and TxDOT had a new budget.

All in all, this was a good session for us. We were appropriated more money to put to our core mission. About \$3.5 billion more than the previous 2016-2017 biennium.


And legislators gave us the green light to hire more employees, about 313 more. That is good news for all of you who've had to pull some extra duty or spend longer hours in the office or on the road because we simply didn't have the people power. I know that many of our districts and divisions have been stretched thin, but I appreciate your extra efforts and so does Texas.

While the extra personnel is welcomed news, the Administration had to be very strategic about how to allocate those FTEs among the department.

After a lot of discussion, we settled on a plan that would allocate most of the positions to our district operations. They will fill some critically needed vacancies for construction inspectors, engineering project managers, portfolio managers, utility coordinators, contract managers, construction record keepers and metropolitan planning organization coordinators.

We've already posted some of the job openings, with our first hirings expected Sept. 1.

That's where you can help. Take a look at the job postings at [txdot.gov](http://txdot.gov) under the careers tab on the home page. All our current openings are listed there. If you know some folks who are looking for a job, let them know that we're in the market for some good employees to join our family.

Thanks for helping us recruit for the best agency in the state. And as always, thanks for being a part of our family. 



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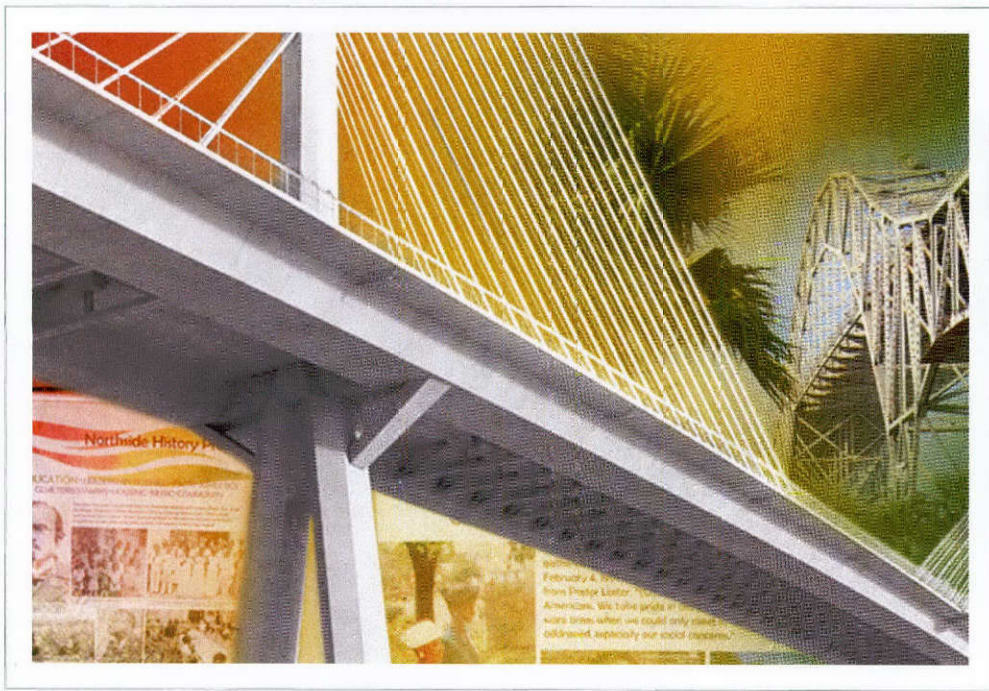
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# 10 ON THE COVER

TxDOT helps preserve the history of Corpus Christi's Northside neighborhood at an exhibit near the city's new Harbor Bridge.

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TxDOT photo

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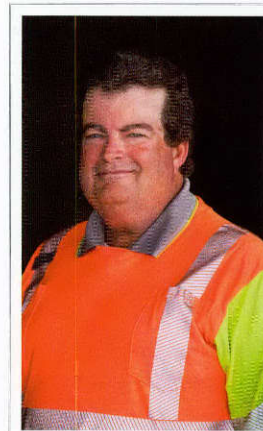
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# 5

## THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW RIGHT NOW

### 1 Alvarez named Pharr district engineer

Pedro “Pete” Alvarez was named district engineer for the Pharr District in July. In his new role, Alvarez will oversee the planning, designing, building, operation and maintenance of the state transportation system for the eight-county Pharr District. He officially began his career with TxDOT in 1995 but worked as a summer employee even before then. He spent his first two decades of service at the Pharr District, then was appointed district engineer for the Laredo District in 2015. He is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin.

### 2

### Johnson named Abilene district engineer

Carl L. Johnson was named the new Abilene district engineer, effective Aug. 1. In his new role, Carl will oversee the planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance of the state transportation system for the 13-county Abilene District. He comes to Abilene from the Brownwood District, where he has served as director of operations since 2012. He became part of the TxDOT family in 1995 when hired by the Brownwood District’s Lampasas Area Office, where he was involved in construction, design and survey.

### 3

### Thomason named director of Design Division

Camille Thomason was named the new director of the Design Division, effective Aug. 1. In her new role, Thomason will oversee the project development, roadway design, landscape design, photogrammetry, roadside design and hydraulics as the State Design Engineer. She comes to the Design Division from the Transportation Planning and Programming Division. Thomason started her TxDOT career in 1988 in the Austin District Special Design Group. She then spent several years in the private sector before rejoining TxDOT in 2002. She has managed the Field Operations Section of the Project Management Office since 2015.


### 4

### Intranet redesign rollout

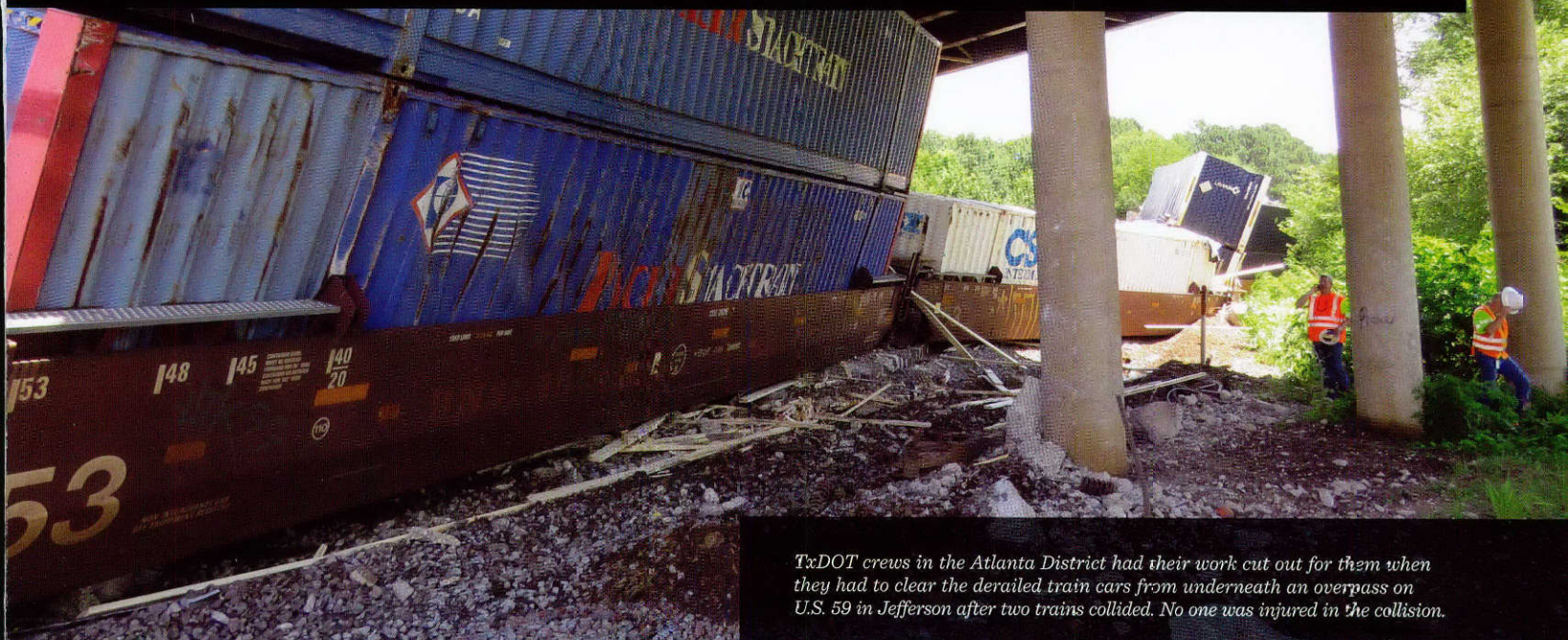
Crossroads is transitioning to TNtoday. The first two TNtoday sites for the Communications Division and El Paso District will launch soon as part of the pilot phase. Soon you will be able to visit these new pages from the District/Division drop-down list on the current Crossroads site. Look for the link “Feedback for TNtoday” on these new sites and give us your opinion! Over the next year, all Crossroads sites will be migrated to TNtoday. Please note that if you have bookmarks to old sites, they will not work. On the new sites just search for the information you’re looking for using the new improved search function and then create a new bookmark. Your new bookmarks will work throughout the migration of the entire site.

### 5

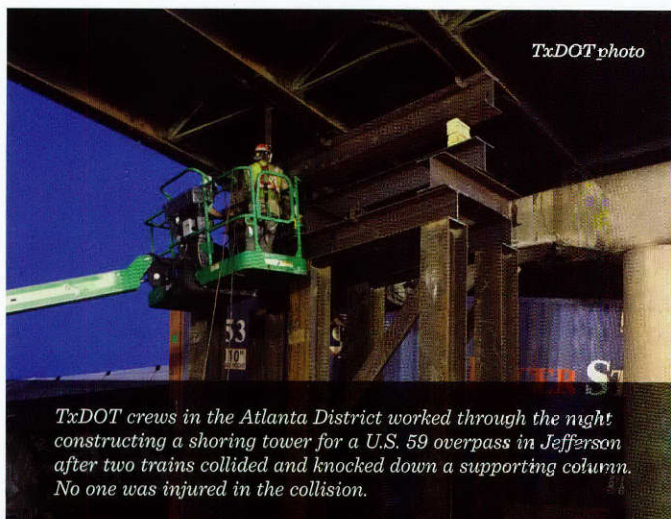
### TN Network expands to all districts

The TN Network will complete its expansion to all districts and some select divisions in September. This groundbreaking internal communications project debuted in October 2014 and expanded to 12 districts in 2015. Specially equipped TV monitors broadcast the TN Network, which includes a mix of video and still graphics and photos with the latest news and information from Administration, districts and divisions. 

# TRAIN COLLISION CAUSES CLOSURE IN ATLANTA DISTRICT



*TxDOT crews in the Atlanta District had their work cut out for them when they had to clear the derailed train cars from underneath an overpass on U.S. 59 in Jefferson after two trains collided. No one was injured in the collision.*



TxDOT photo

*TxDOT crews in the Atlanta District worked through the night constructing a shoring tower for a U.S. 59 overpass in Jefferson after two trains collided and knocked down a supporting column. No one was injured in the collision.*



The collision of two trains near the railroad overpass of U.S. 59 in Jefferson caused the closure of the highway in July and put TxDOT crews to work around the clock clearing the wreckage and keeping the public safe. The collision caused some of the rail cars to derail and knocked out one of the support columns on the west side of the overpass.

The collision occurred mid-morning on July 7 at a railroad interlocker, or crossroads, with Union Pacific and Kansas City Southern railroads. The UP train was traveling under the overpass and the KCS train backed into it. No injuries were reported and no hazardous materials were involved in the collision and derailment.

Bridge engineers flew in from Austin to inspect the bridge to determine the extent of the damage to the structure and if traffic could safely use the opposite side of the bridge.

Crews worked through the night to construct a shoring tower to support the area where the column had been knocked down and to clear the derailed cars from underneath the overpass. Though restricted to one lane in each direction, traffic was running over the bridge about 27 hours later. **TN**

# AROUND THE STATE

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

## LUFKIN



### Connecting with Louisiana on U.S. 84 in Lufkin District

The completion of a \$20.8 million construction project was celebrated in May with a ribbon-cutting on the newly constructed U.S. 84 bridges in the Lufkin District. The bridges span the Sabine River and join Texas and Louisiana.

The newly constructed twin bridges each include two 12-foot lanes with 10-foot outside shoulders and 4-foot inside shoulders.


The ribbon-cutting included stakeholders, elected officials and residents of Joaquin and Logansport in Louisiana, along with TxDOT and Louisiana transportation officials.

The two cities hosted the ribbon-cutting ceremony and luncheon that followed. Texas Transportation Commissioner Jeff Austin III and Dr. Shawn Wilson, chief of staff with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, were featured speakers. Lufkin District Engineer Cheryl P. Flood also offered comments.

“I am very proud of the surrounding communities, and although TxDOT took the lead on this project, Texas and Louisiana worked together to see it through to a successful completion,” Austin said.

Wilson emphasized the importance of the new bridges.

“We are truly joined by the Sabine River and our histories come together to form this unique opportunity for growth and expansion in both Logansport and Joaquin,” said Wilson.

The project began with the groundbreaking in 2014, but the planning went back many more years. After public hearings dating back to the 1980s, environmental studies uncovered the ruins of sunken steamships near the project. Efforts were successful to leave the ships intact as the project moved forward. 

*Texas Transportation Commissioner Jeff Austin III (12th from right) and Dr. Shawn Wilson (holding scissors), chief of staff with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, cut the ribbon on the new twin U.S. 84 bridges that cross the Sabine River between Texas and Louisiana.*



## CHILDRESS



### Childress District selected for Chamber of Commerce award

The Childress District’s main office was chosen as the Large Business of the Month by the Childress Chamber of Commerce for May.

As a winner in this category, TxDOT was recognized for its outstanding partnership with the city of Childress. The chamber also expressed appreciation to the many TxDOT employees for providing leadership and having a positive impact on the community.

Congratulations to the Childress District! 

*The Childress Chamber of Commerce recognized the main office of the Childress District as its Large Business of the Month in May.*



## Waco unveils new I-14 sign

The first signs for I-14, the state's newest interstate highway, were unveiled recently in the Waco District. A 25-mile stretch of U.S. 190 from Copperas Cove in Coryell County to I-35 near Belton is the first segment to be designated I-14.

In April, U.S. Reps. John Carter and Roger Williams joined state, local and military officials on the Central Texas College campus in Killeen for the event.

"The addition of this segment to the Eisenhower Interstate and Defense Highway Network reflects our ongoing effort to serve the stakeholders of Central Texas and the Fort Hood community," said TxDOT Deputy Executive Director Marc Williams.

When completed, the interstate will connect Fort Bliss, Fort Hood and Fort Polk to the Port of Corpus Christi and the Port of Beaumont and is considered essential to strategic deployment. **TN**



## WACO



U.S. Reps. John Carter (left) and Roger Williams (right) hold the new I-14 route designation sign. They are joined by (from left to right) former Waco District Engineer Bobby Littlefield Jr., TxDOT Deputy Executive Director Marc Williams, State Rep. Hugh Shine, State Sen. Dawn Buckingham, State Rep. Scott Cosper, Fort Hood Garrison Commander Col. Todd Fox and former Polk County Judge John Thompson.

## Artist celebrated for contribution to time capsule

The Tyler District recently celebrated the winning artwork of one of its employees featured on TxDOT's centennial time capsule. Travis Singleton, an engineering assistant in the Tyler District's Mineola Area Office, submitted a design depicting the department's core functions — roads and bridges. The design includes a 100 representing a cloverleaf-style interchange with exit ramps and a bridge loosely modeled after the Fred Hartman Bridge in Houston.

Singleton's artwork, along with submissions from employees in the Abilene, Austin, Houston and Laredo districts, now adorns the time capsule built by the Fleet Operations Division.

Singleton unveiled the time capsule to his Tyler District co-workers and family during a reception held in his honor. The time capsule toured the districts of each of the winners before returning to Austin. **TN**




## TYLER

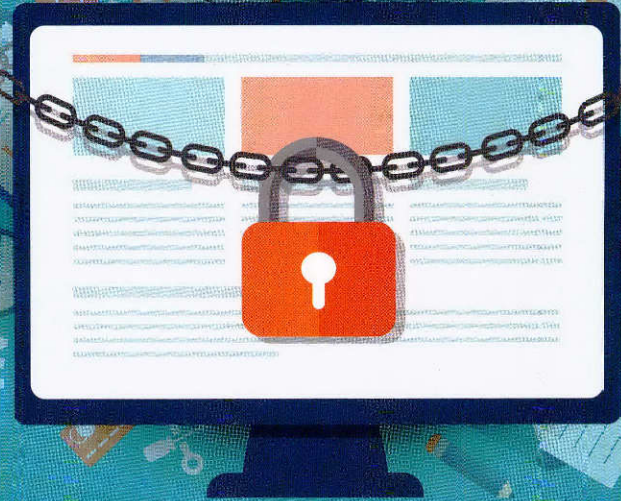


The Tyler District recently celebrated the artwork of Travis Singleton, an engineering assistant at the Mineola Area Office, which now adorns the TxDOT centennial time capsule.

# SECURITY MATTERS



**SAFE  
WEB  
BROWSING**



***By protecting your browser and using it wisely, you can protect yourself and safely use the internet for your daily activities.***

**A** web browser is our primary tool for using the internet. It is also the number one target for cyberattackers. TxDOT's most commonly used web browsers include Internet Explorer and Chrome.

Cyberattackers have developed specialized hacking tools and built malicious websites designed to silently hack into your browser. Once hacked, attackers quickly gain total control of your computer and all your information without you knowing.

By protecting your browser and using it wisely, you can protect yourself against these threats and safely use the internet for your daily activities. Follow the steps below to protect both your TxDOT and personal devices.


**1. Always use the latest version of your browser** – By using the latest version, you ensure you have the latest security mechanisms in place. The Information Management Division automatically pushes updates to all TxDOT devices as soon as they become available.

**2. Avoid plug-ins** – *Install only authorized plug-ins you*

absolutely need and always be sure you have the latest version installed. Plug-ins or add-ons are additional programs you install in your browser to give you more functionality. Adobe Flash, Java and Apple QuickTime are a few well-known plug-ins

**3. Scan all downloads** – Scan any files you download from the internet with updated anti-virus. Downloads could silently infect your computer. This is very common, especially with free files, such as free screensavers, video players or games.

**4. Avoid websites that look suspicious** – Avoid websites you've never heard of. If the URL looks incorrect or if the site has dubious information, do not download any software or submit any information to it.

***For more information about web browsing or plug-ins, please contact the IT Service Desk at 512.302.HELP (4357) or <http://ITHELP>.*** 



# TxDOT 101



## THE STATE HIGHWAY FUND AND TxDOT FUNDING

*EDITOR'S NOTE: TxDOT101 is a new feature that focuses on explaining a common topic for the agency.*

**B**uilding and maintaining a transportation system that spans 195,000 lane miles takes lots of money. Considering TxDOT has other responsibilities, like upkeep of more than 53,000 bridges, support of some 300 general aviation airports and public transportation assistance for selected populations, the department's "to do" list can be very expensive.

So where does the money come from? If you drive a car and buy gasoline, you are making transportation in Texas possible.

Motor fuels tax revenue is one of the largest sources of funding for TxDOT. About three-quarters of the tax revenue from gasoline, diesel, liquefied and compressed natural gas goes into the State Highway Fund. According to the Comptroller's State of Texas Sources of Revenue, in 2016, Texas collected more than \$3.51 billion in motor fuels taxes, the highest annual amount ever collected, of which \$2.58 billion was deposited in the SHF.

The SHF also receives other funding, including vehicle registration fees, lubricant sales taxes, permit fees for special vehicles and federal funds.

For decades, Texas has relied on traditional funding to build highways and bridges. But because of inflation, better vehicle fuel efficiency and population growth (Texas has grown by 7 million people since 2000) old-school funding hasn't kept pace with new-school transportation needs.

Limited funding opened the door for other financing methods, including borrowing money to pay for projects, using public-private partnerships and tapping into other state revenue sources.

### ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOURCES


- Proposition 1: directs a portion of tax revenue paid by oil and gas producers to the SHF for non-tolled transportation projects. To date, TxDOT has received more than \$3.3 billion.
- Proposition 7: dedicates a portion of general sales and use tax revenue, motor vehicle sales and rental tax revenue to transportation.

### BORROWING PROGRAMS

- Texas Mobility Fund: allows bonds to be issued that are backed by certain revenues into the fund. In 2015, the Legislature limited the issuance of additional debt.
- Proposition 14: in 2003, the Texas Transportation Commission was allowed to issue up to \$6 billion in bonds, capped at \$1.5 billion a year, to finance highway improvement and safety projects. All \$6 billion has been issued.
- Proposition 12: authorized the Commission to issue up to \$5 billion of general obligation bonds for highway projects. The full \$5 billion has been issued.

### COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS

- CDAs are partnerships between the state and private entities to finance, develop, build, maintain and/or operate large, regional projects. Project specifics determine the scope of private involvement. CDAs allow for private entities to be innovative in project design and construction, but once projects are completed, they remain state-owned facilities. Mega-projects like the DFW Connector in the Metroplex and portions of the Grand Parkway in Houston were developed as CDAs.

More information about TxDOT funding is available at [txdot.gov](http://txdot.gov) in the department's online Educational Series or Funding Brochure. 

# OUT OF THE SHADOWS

## PRESERVING THE HISTORY OF CORPUS CHRISTI NEIGHBORHOODS IN THE AREA OF NEW HARBOR BRIDGE

The new Harbor Bridge in Corpus Christi, which had a groundbreaking ceremony a year ago, is a much-needed replacement for the current bridge that was built in the 1950s.

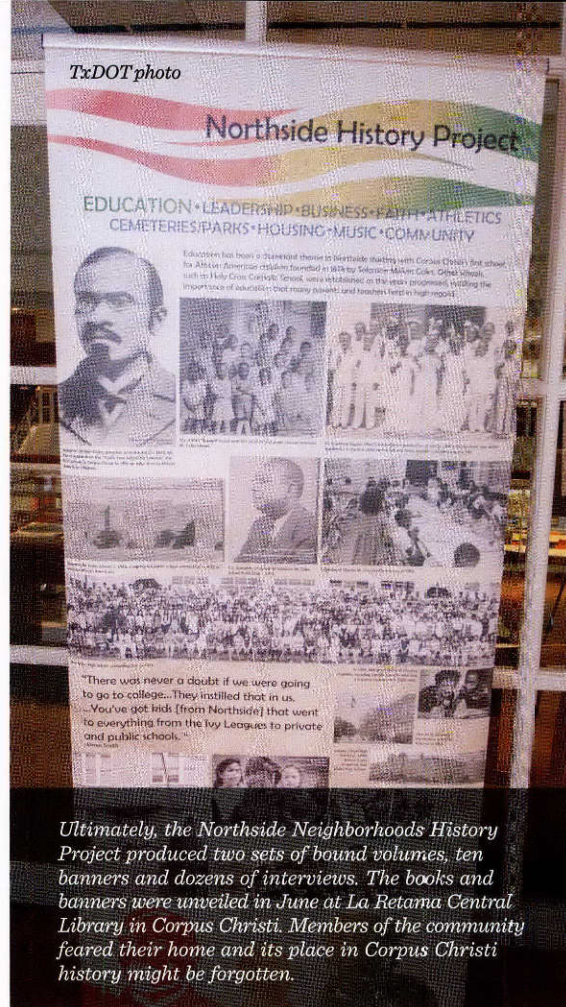
However, residents of the Hillcrest and Washington Coles neighborhoods on the north side of the city and in the path of the new construction feared it would mean the end of their neighborhoods' history. In response, TxDOT began a nearly two-year effort to document and preserve the community's history called the Northside Neighborhoods History Project. The project has resulted in a wealth of original material and resources for the city of Corpus Christi and has helped to ease worries in the community as the Harbor Bridge Replacement Project moves forward.

### LEAVING A LEGACY

During the more than seven years the Harbor Bridge Replacement Project has been in development, the Corpus Christi District and the Environmental Affairs Division have worked with a citizens advisory committee made up of residents from the areas who would be most affected by the project.

"A few members of the committee expressed to me that while they supported the project, they feared the neighborhood they grew up in would not be remembered and nobody would know they were ever there," said Christopher Amy, special project environmental coordinator with the Corpus Christi District. "They didn't want the neighborhood or its history to be forgotten. The Northside Neighborhoods are an important chapter in the history of Corpus Christi and worth celebrating."

The community concern spurred Amy and co-project



manager Victor Vourcos to include a documented neighborhood history as part of the larger mitigation efforts on the Harbor Bridge Project being done for the Environmental Affairs Division. Mitigation efforts are steps that TxDOT implements to help alleviate the environmental impact of a project on an area, in this case a low-income, mostly minority community.

Amy worked with Carolyn Nelson, historic preservation specialist with Environmental Affairs, and Historian Lynn Smith with consultant HNTB to bring the project to life. For almost two years, Smith worked with neighborhood residents, community churches and local groups to gather photographs and oral histories. TxDOT used television, radio, newspapers and the local community center to promote the effort.

"At first people were a little unsure," said Amy. "But once Lynn broke the ice with homemade cookies, they became very receptive and were great about sharing their family stories. We took this project very seriously because the information we were being entrusted with was extremely personal. As memories fade, the documented historical record will speak to future generations to preserve the heritage of the city."

Ultimately, the Northside Neighborhoods History Project produced two sets of four bound volumes, including the oral histories, and 10 banners. The books and banners were unveiled in June at La Retama Central Library and the Oveal Williams Senior Center in Corpus Christi. They will later be displayed at each of the branch libraries before becoming part of a permanent historic exhibit at the central library.

The banners and books tell the stories of those who made a difference in Hillcrest and Washington Coles. Most importantly, it tells a story about the resilience and honor of its residents.

“Staff members at the city library were very excited to get this material,” said Amy. “We also had requests for personal copies of the books. It’s been great to see the reaction to the final product. People have been very touched and appreciative. I think we organized and highlighted the information we collected in a way that captures the history of the neighborhood.”

## WORTHWHILE EFFORT

TxDOT staff members hope that this history project will be appreciated by the community. It provides a special, personal touch that is rare for a project as massive as the new Harbor Bridge.

“It really choked me up to see people’s reactions,” said Amy. “We don’t often have a chance to really connect with people on a project the way we did here. It’s important to show that at TxDOT, we are sensitive to the impact of what we do beyond solving a larger problem. It means so much to show that we understand and care about the people affected. It was really worthwhile.”

The new Harbor Bridge will be the longest main span cable-stayed bridge in the United States and its modern design will improve safety and congestion. It will have three travel lanes in each direction, full-width shoulders and a hike-and-bike path. Its higher vertical clearance will give modern ocean-going vessels access to the Port of Corpus Christi. Construction will last about five years. **TN**

*Christopher Amy (left), special project environmental coordinator, and Victor Vourcos, transportation engineering supervisor, both with the Corpus Christi District, spearheaded the idea of a history documentation project for the Hillcrest and Washington Coles neighborhoods that would be affected by the construction of the new Harbor Bridge.*



# 100

## THE ROAD TO

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

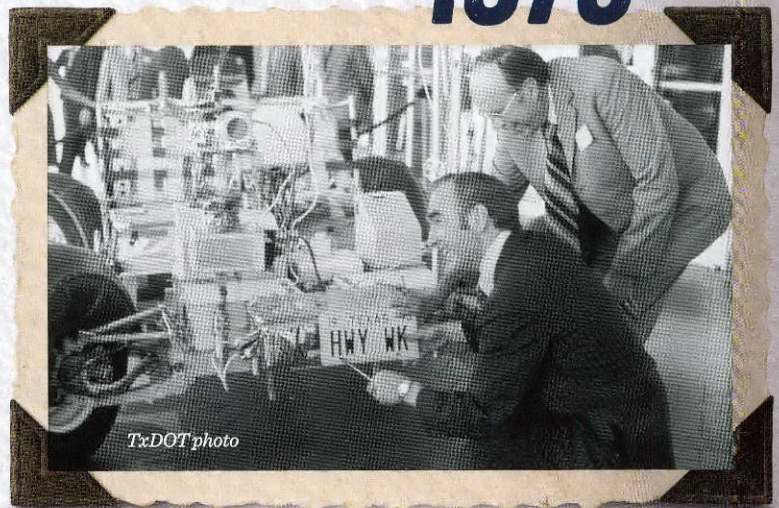
### 1966



4177 Dean Taff, Data Processing Supervisor in Automation

Data Processing Supervisor Dean Taff prepares to type commands in the CDC 3100 Computer. Commands are entered into the computer by typewriter, and the computer types out data at 1,000 lines per minute.

### 1973



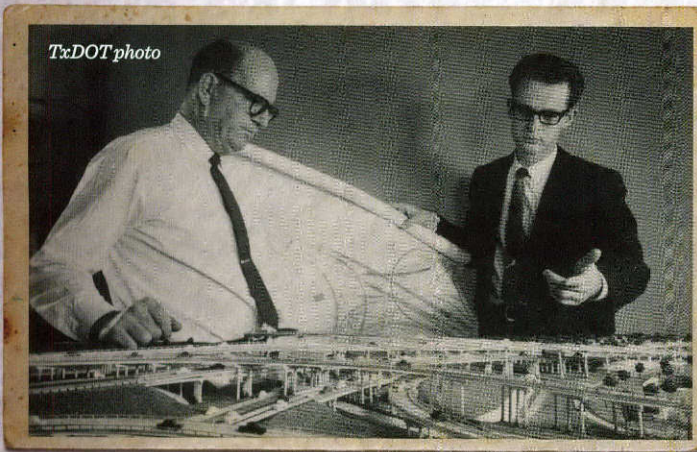
U.S. Congressman Jim Wright gets an assist from Highway Commission Chairman Reagan Houston as he adds a special Texas license plate to a lunar module.



### 1980

Construction begins on the Loop 360 bridge in Austin in January 1980. It was later named the Percy V. Pennybacker Bridge.

# 1950s



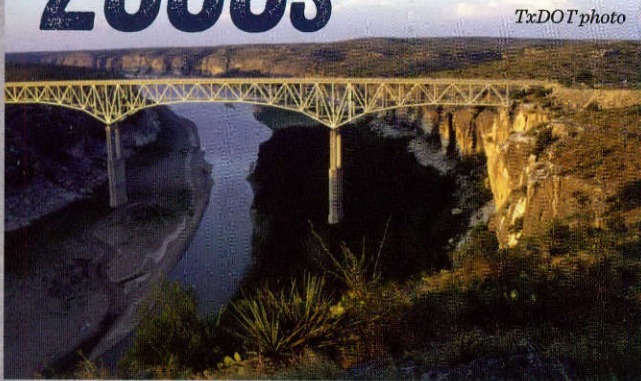
Engineering Tech Roy Winters (left) and photographer Dale Barnes inspect a large model of I-610 and the SH 225 interchange to be located in Houston.

# 1990



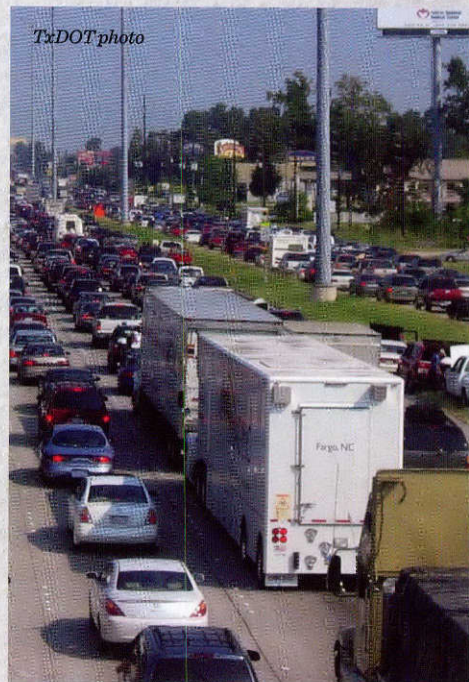
Aerial view during construction of the Hartman Bridge over the Houston Ship Channel.


# 2000s



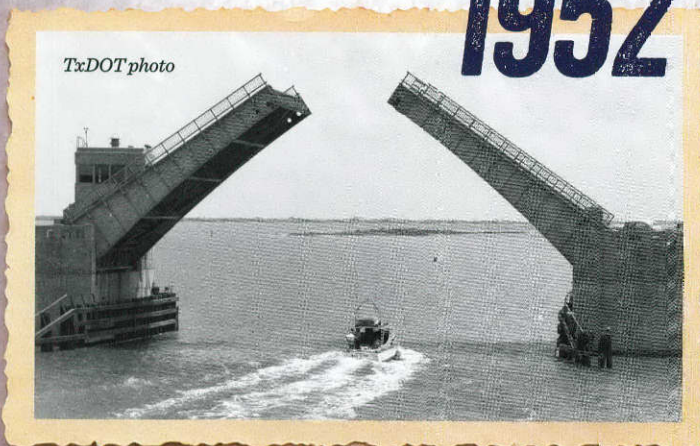
Pecos River Bridge on U.S. Highway 90.

# 2005



Contraflow was used during the evacuation for Hurricane Rita in 2005. 

# 1952



Shot of the Galveston Causeway circa 1952.

# WRONG-WAY SPOTTING TRANSGUIDE SAVES LIVES

**S**an Antonio District TransGuide employee Armando Rodriguez and his colleagues are on the front lines fighting against wrong-way driving deaths. When Rodriguez, an 18-year TransGuide veteran, gets word of a wrong-way driver on the state highway system, he scans the 193 cameras TransGuide has posted and alerts the San Antonio Police Department via a dispatcher stationed in his operations center.

Officers then apprehend the offender before he or she can cause tragedy.

The team also tracks wrong-way driver statistics. If the driver is discovered on TransGuide equipment and stopped by law enforcement as a result of communication from the TransGuide center, the team considers that a success. The team is interested in lives saved, not just detection.

That's how the events are noted in their record books, too — saved lives. Rodriguez has saved three lives just this

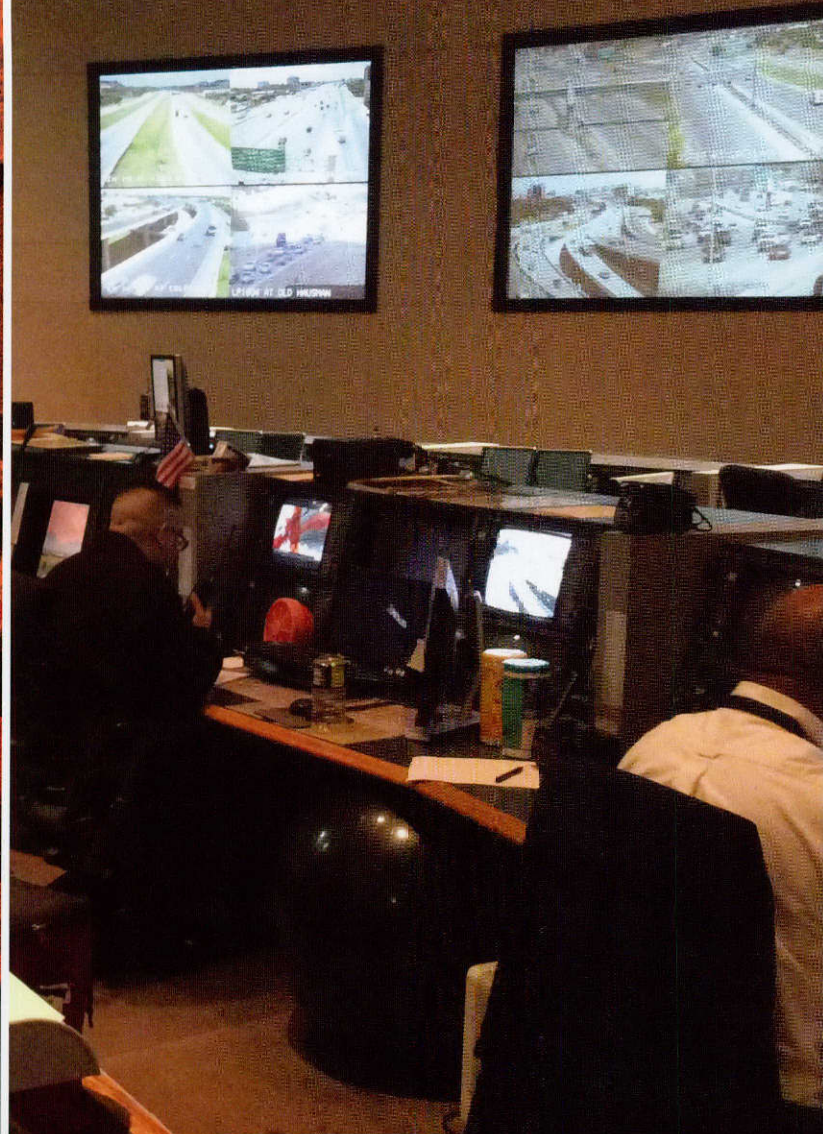
year. Since Jan. 1, TransGuide crews have saved six lives and are credited with 61 lives saved since 2011. Over that same span on the roads of San Antonio, 69 wrong-way drivers have caused crashes, killing 27 people and seriously hurting another 25.

In 2014, the team caught 11 wrong-way drivers and missed eight. Then there was 2012, when 13 wrong-way drivers were caught but nine got through.

TransGuide was established by TxDOT in 1995 with the primary goal to monitor traffic and provide live traffic updates to drivers through a system of digital message boards. TransGuide in San Antonio was the first Intelligent Transportation System in Texas - there are now 16 such systems statewide. The systems detect disruptions in traffic through a system of sensors and cameras which are then relayed to media and travelers through social and traditional media, as well as through our dynamic message boards. Over the years the mission of TransGuide has not changed, but it has embraced new technologies and agency partners.

Among the new technologies being embraced and employed is a radar detection system alerting TransGuide

TxDOT photo



*TransGuide in San Antonio was the first Intelligent Transportation System in Texas and its staff members are dedicated to the prevention of fatalities due to wrong-way driving. When they spot a driver going the wrong way on one of the roadways they monitor, they alert the police. Since Jan. 1, TransGuide crews have saved six lives and are credited with 61 lives saved since 2011.*

# TRANSGUIDE HEROES

**Ben Lopez:**  
20 lives saved

**Michael Barker (retired):**  
10 lives saved

**Mando Rodriguez:**  
7 lives saved

**Louis Ugarte:**  
5 lives saved

**Ishmael Trevino:**  
5 lives saved

**David Rodrigues:**  
4 lives saved

**John Paniagua (retired):**  
4 lives saved

**Derrick Burke (retired):**  
4 lives saved

**Christine Jauregui:**  
2 lives saved

staff and police of wrong-way driver problems early near the downtown area. Beacons surrounding wrong-way signs have also been added along freeway entrance ramps to catch the attention of those mistakenly using these ramps as on-ramps.

New cameras with updated equipment (fiber optics and wireless systems) are replacing older connectivity methods wherever new projects are being built.

With expanded coverage comes improved capabilities — about half the crashes occurring since 2011 are outside the TransGuide coverage area. Two-thirds of the fatalities were outside the watch area.

Many of the wrong-way drivers apprehended are under the influence of drugs or alcohol. And through its traffic safety campaigns, TxDOT educates drivers about the dangers of this behavior.” **TN**

# IN TRANSIT

## TIGER TEAM BRINGS IN GRANT FUNDS

**T**he Public Transportation Division helps Texans get where they need to go by administering the federal and state funds used by transit providers across the state.

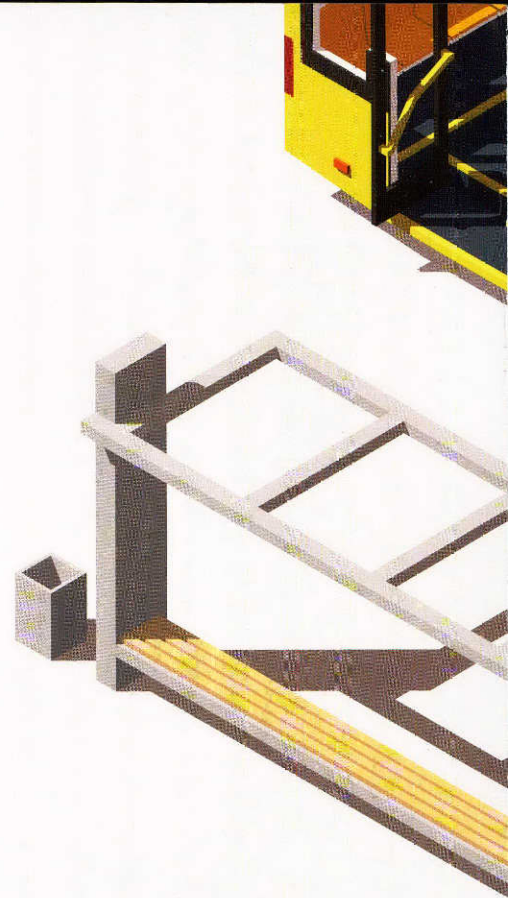
Recently, a focused effort within the division paid off for Texas in a big way, securing an unprecedented \$20.8 million in federal funding from the highly competitive, nationwide Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery, or TIGER, grant program. Combined with \$10 million in other federal funds and \$5.2 million in state funds, the money is already being used to help build transit facilities in Bastrop, Early, Weatherford and South Padre Island, and to replace nearly 300 road-worn vehicles serving rural transit districts.

“Transit districts are using the money to purchase vehicles like buses and accessible vans, and to complete the construction of the four transit facilities,” said Kelly Kirkland, business operations project manager for the Public Transportation Division. “Before TIGER, these projects were years from completion.”

Public Transportation’s Team TIGER built TxDOT’s proposal by evaluating wear and tear on the vehicles serving Texas rural areas. Each vehicle has an anticipated useful life, eventually reaching a point where maintenance costs exceed the cost of replacement.

“The vast majority of the vehicles in the Texas rural public transportation fleet go far beyond their expected mileage,” said Kirkland.

The team then analyzed what it would cost to replace the vehicles and construct the new facilities. The total



*Transit districts are using the money to purchase vehicles like buses and accessible vans, and to complete the construction of four transit facilities.*



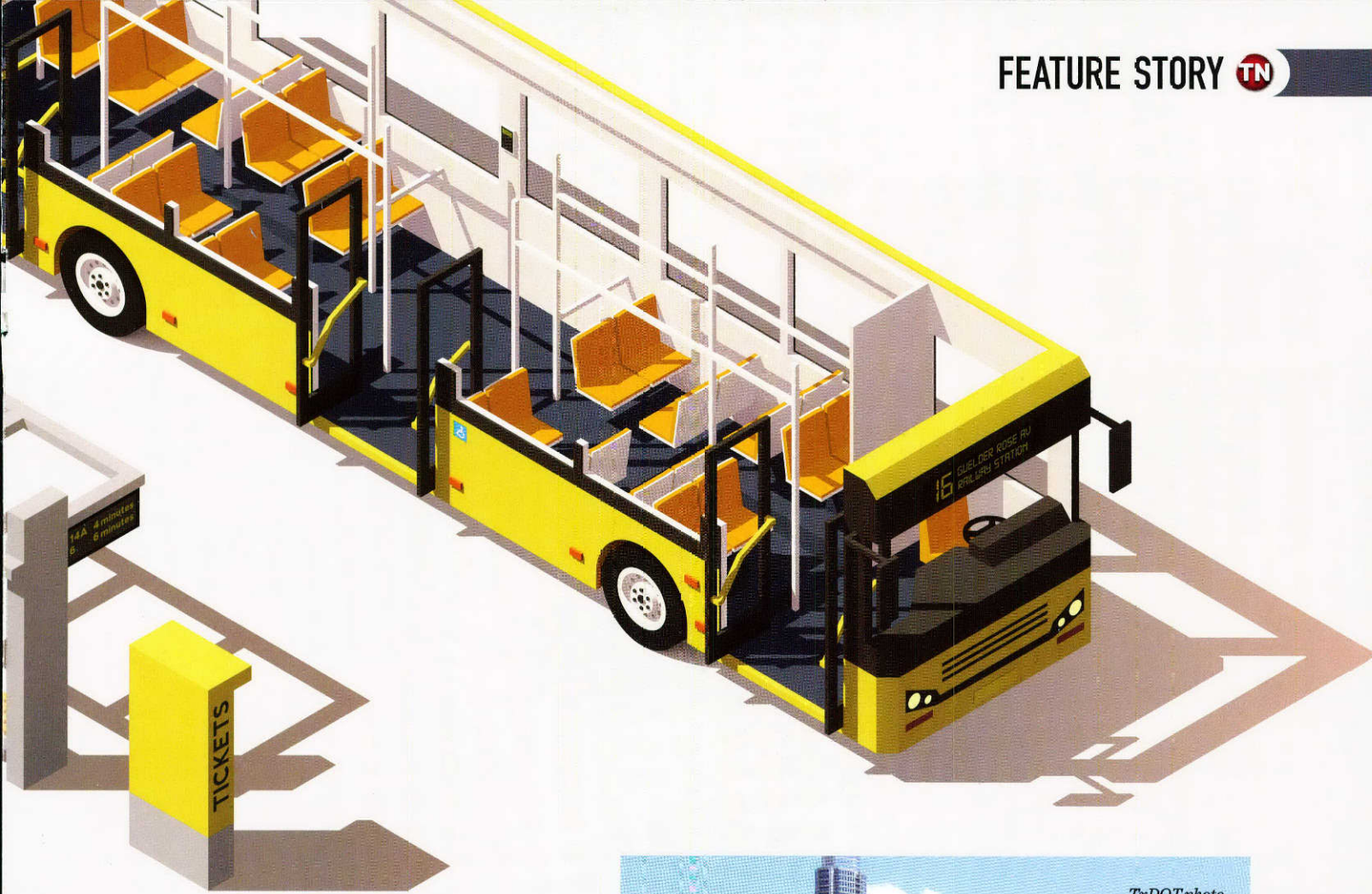
**Kelly Kirkland, business operations project**

*The Public Transportation Division secured more than \$36 million in federal and state funds for the construction of four transit facilities across the state, including this one in Cedar Creek.*

*TxDOT photo*







estimated cost for the projects the team hoped to fund was slightly more than \$36 million dollars. The award brought the rural areas of Texas all \$36 million.

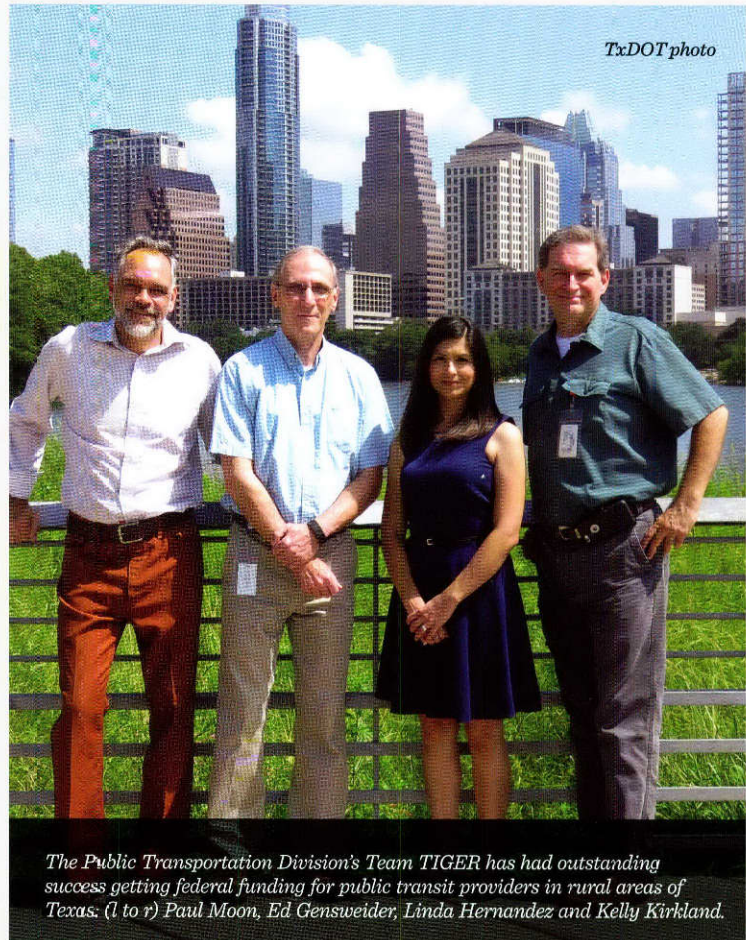
“This was very surprising,” said Kirkland. “Usually with proposals this large we expect to get only a portion of the funding.”

In fact, it’s more than surprising, especially when you consider that the full TIGER amount for the entire country was \$500 million.

Division staff members believe that Texas received the full amount of federal funding it requested partly because the proposal made it clear the state was ready to support the effort by allocating additional funds.

“Allocating previously uncommitted state funds showed commitment to the effort,” said Kirkland.

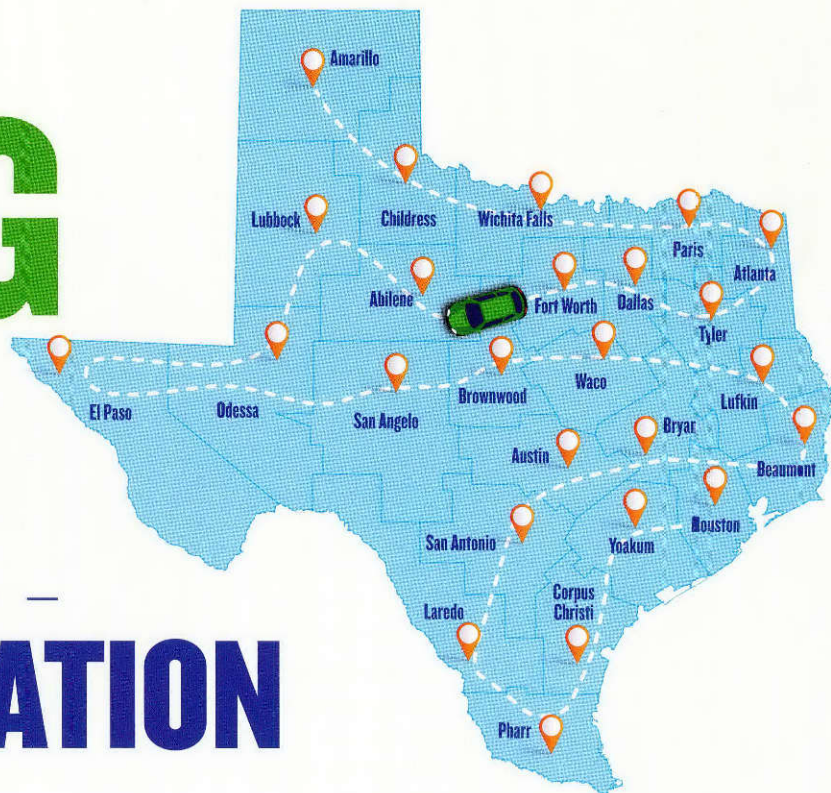
As a small part of a statewide organization whose main focus must be on roadways, the Public Transportation Division continues to quietly and effectively work with others to provide a network of mobility options for people who use alternatives to driving. **TN**



*TxDOT photo*

*The Public Transportation Division's Team TIGER has had outstanding success getting federal funding for public transit providers in rural areas of Texas. (l to r) Paul Moon, Ed Gensweider, Linda Hernandez and Kelly Kirkland.*

# HITTING THE ROAD



## WITH AUTOMATION

The Modernize Portfolio and Project Management initiative has moved into its next phase, known as MPPM II, and employees can learn more as the project team travels to each district in the coming months.

### REPLACING SYSTEMS

MPPM II's goal is to replace up to 40 legacy engineering operations systems, including DCIS, a 30-year-old mainframe system. This strategic initiative will help TxDOT deliver a transportation program with up to \$70 billion in projects over the next ten years.

"MPPM II will move us from a 30-year-old legacy system that is little more than a project database to a modern, robust, enterprise-wide program management system that, in the simplest of terms, will be the single source of project delivery truth for TxDOT," said Brian Barth, TxDOT transportation program officer and MPPM II business sponsor.

Recognizing the complexity of transitioning from multiple legacy systems to one platform for portfolio and project management, TxDOT will implement MPPM II in phases over the next two years. The MPPM II system will help TxDOT to better deliver transportation projects for Texans by creating a one-stop shop of information such as project selection and delivery timeline, budgets, contract management and more.

### MPPM II WILL HAVE MULTIPLE BENEFITS, INCLUDING:

- One system to manage project and portfolio data
- A simple, easy-to-use interface
- Easy report production
- No data double entry
- Less paperwork
- Earlier collaboration with supporting functions
- More data-driven decision making

"I feel that the MPPM II effort will give our agency the best opportunity for efficient portfolio and project management. What a great tool to communicate across the life of the project," said Bill Reed, accounting specialist with the Finance Management Division.


### CHAMPIONING CHANGE

The project affects about half of TxDOT's employees and a large number of external partners and consultants. A variety of new processes supported by system automation will be introduced in phases over the next two years. Some employees may be affected by several phases, while others will be affected by one phase.

To ensure employees receive information and support during this implementation, the MPPM II project team has created a network of more than 300 Champions across all divisions and districts. These Champions will play a critical role in testing, training and sharing reliable and up-to-date information about the MPPM II project with their teams.

The project team will also be traveling to each district in the coming months for the MPPM II Roadshows. Roadshows are an excellent opportunity to learn more about the system. They will offer more detailed information about the solution and provide a hands-on demonstration.

Finally, employees who will be using the new system will receive training. Training schedules and requirements will be finalized in the coming months.

Find out more about our Champion Program, including the designated Champion(s) in your district or division at the MPPM II website on Crossroads, under Contact Us. You are encouraged to reach out to your Champion to learn more. Also, you can contact the project team at [MPPM\\_Project@txdot.gov](mailto:MPPM_Project@txdot.gov). 

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

# TRAFFIC OPERATIONS



# BRINGS SAFETY TO HIGHWAYS

**I**t's difficult to imagine a time when there were no speed limits on roadways and no traffic signals at intersections. The transportation system has changed dramatically in the 100 years since the Texas Highway Department was created. At that time, young transportation engineers began to establish order and traffic control to what essentially was the Wild West on Texas roads.

The Traffic Operations Division leads the TxDOT effort to ensure that traffic control devices such as pavement markings and signage help motorists safely reach their destinations. Traffic Operations also manages rail safety inspections and rail crossing projects, oversees crash data and analysis, and develops traffic safety initiatives aimed at reducing fatalities and serious injuries from motor vehicle crashes.

TxDOT traffic operations engineers in the brand-new Texas Highway Department got right to work and established the first maximum statewide speed limit in Texas at 25 miles an hour in 1917.

***In the past 50 years, safer roads, safer vehicles and better-educated drivers have resulted in a 35 percent reduction in traffic fatalities***


Transportation engineers began incorporating innovations in traffic control devices as they developed across the nation. According to the Federal Highway Administration, the first centerline was painted on a roadway in 1911 and traffic engineers installed the first electric traffic signal in 1914 in Ohio.

Dynamic Message Signs were first deployed in the 1960s to provide timely information to drivers about congestion, upcoming crashes or work zones. These signs, along with closed-circuit television cameras, and traffic management centers all work together as Intelligent

Transportation Systems, which alleviate congestion and increase safety.

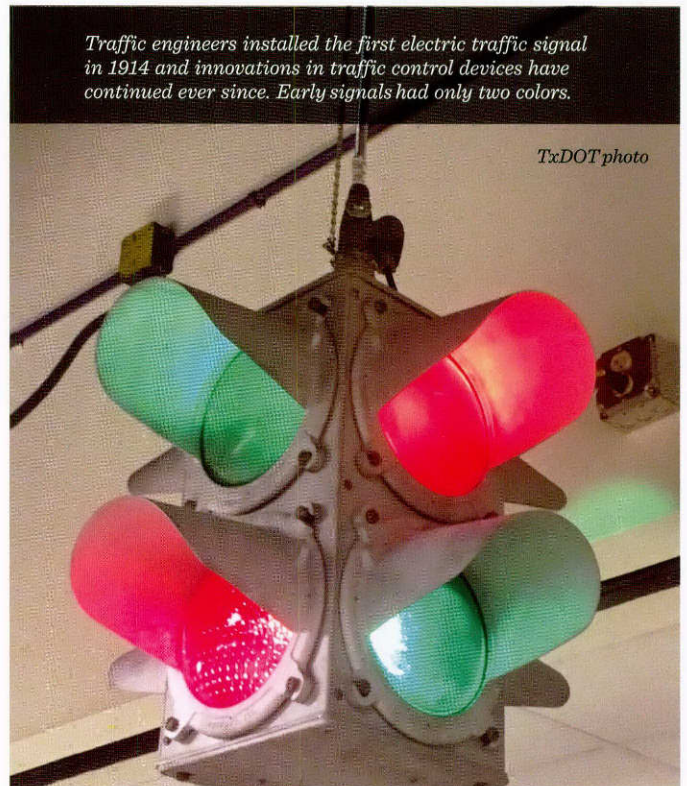
Advanced technology also allows the collection of timely, accurate crash data through the Crash Records Information System, or CRIS.

The Traffic Operations Division's Traffic Safety Section oversees driver safety programs and campaigns geared toward teen drivers, child safety, sober driving, texting and driving, motorcycle safety and many other issues.

In the past 50 years, safer roads, safer vehicles and better-educated drivers have resulted in a 35 percent reduction in traffic fatalities, even with an exponential increase in the number of vehicles on the road. However, preventing the loss of life on our roadways is a constant challenge. 

*Traffic engineers installed the first electric traffic signal in 1914 and innovations in traffic control devices have continued ever since. Early signals had only two colors.*

*TxDOT photo*



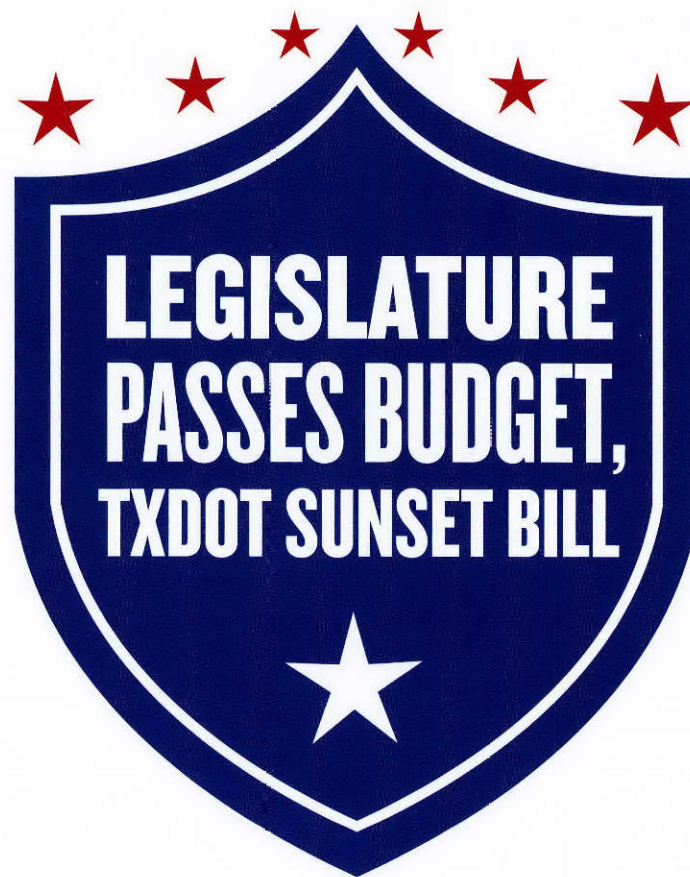
**T**his past May, state legislators wrapped up the regular session of the 85th Legislature. And while they tackled some heady non-transportation issues, lawmakers also passed two bills that were of paramount importance to TxDOT: the state budget and the department's Sunset bill.

In the biennial state budget, which covers fiscal years 2018-2019, TxDOT was appropriated more than \$26 billion over the two years to develop, build and maintain projects across the state. That is \$3.5 billion more than was provided to the agency last biennium. Of that \$26 billion, the largest share — nearly \$10 billion — has been earmarked to address the state's growing maintenance needs and nearly \$4 billion will go toward planning, designing and managing projects.

TxDOT also received \$2.5 billion in appropriations from Proposition 1, an amendment that was approved by voters in 2014 that provides some oil and gas production tax revenues to be used on transportation projects.

This session also saw the first issuance of Proposition 7 monies. That constitutional amendment, which passed in 2015, transfers a portion of state sales and use tax revenue to the State Highway Fund.

Before the start of the session, Comptroller Glenn Hegar estimated that



\$4.7 billion in Proposition 7 monies would be available for transportation over the course of the FY 2018-2019 biennium, but statewide budget challenges led

writers suggested that the 86th Legislature provide the balance — about \$1.8 billion — to TxDOT in FY 20," said Brian Ragland, TxDOT's chief financial

***TxDOT was appropriated more than \$26 billion over the next two years to develop, build and maintain projects across the state.***

the Legislature to reduce TxDOT's appropriation to \$2.9 billion. The Legislature also directed TxDOT to use \$613 million of the funding to pay debt service on previously issued bonds.


"While our Proposition 7 appropriation was less than we expected, budget

officer. If next session's legislators agree, another provision of Proposition 7 takes effect that fiscal year. That condition transfers a portion of the state's vehicle sales and vehicle rental tax revenue to the State Highway Fund.

The budget also included

some other highlights for TxDOT, including up to \$20 million to buy replacement aircraft, \$33.5 million for a new information management system to replace about 40 legacy engineering systems and another \$30 million to prepare and develop the site of the new Austin Campus. In May, the Transportation Commission approved the purchase of a 49-acre tract in southeast Austin. The campus will house the current Austin offices at Riverside, Camp Hubbard and Centimeter Circle, and possibly the Cedar Park lab. A future legislative appropriation of about \$100 million will be needed for construction.

Then, the second-most important legislation for TxDOT that passed during the session was the department's Sunset bill.

SB 312, TxDOT's Sunset bill, requires TxDOT to continue developing a performance-based funding and project selection process, and to make some improvements to Project Tracker. Under the bill, the department must apply additional penalties when construction contractors fail to meet project deadlines, limit toll violation penalties and allow toll customers to opt-in to receive electronic invoices for pay by mail. The bill also set TxDOT's next legislative review in 2029. 

# REDISCOVERING A PIONEER CEMETERY


**D**id you know TxDOT has archeologists and historians on staff? The history along and beneath Texas roads is vast, and TxDOT's historians and archeologists look at what's there before constructing roads.

The Mitchell Cemetery in Tarrant County in the Fort Worth District was all but abandoned when TxDOT found it. The cemetery is in a rare undeveloped area in the urban setting of Fort Worth. Almost daily, trains that crisscross this nearly forgotten section of the city shake the graves of Tarrant County's founders.

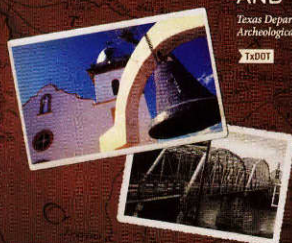
Except for the presence of two gravestones, vandalism, theft and railroad construction activities erased almost every visible trace of the cemetery. Before TxDOT began planning the expansion of a nearby road, archeologists worked with the community to investigate Mitchell Cemetery and learn who is buried there.

The cemetery began with the burial of the 11-month-old William York in the mid-1800s. His father, John B. York of Missouri, was one of this area's earliest pioneers as Texas welcomed settlers in the years after achieving statehood in 1845. After settling in the state, York successfully ran for Tarrant County sheriff. He died trying to keep law and order on the frontier and was buried next to his son in 1861. His father-in-law, Seaborne Gilmore, was a Mexican War veteran who served as Tarrant County's first elected judge. Judge Gilmore joined his wife in the family plot in December 1867. The land was sold and bought many times before Eli M. Mitchell purchased it in 1868, officially naming it Mitchell Cemetery.

TxDOT is doing more to share stories like this one in the spirit and interest of federal preservation laws. Today, more than 600,000 miles of highway span the state — more than anywhere else in the nation — which provides the agency with new opportunities to continue connecting folks to unique histories about people or bridges and buildings.

You can read more stories from the road in "A Journey Through Texas and Time" at [txdot.gov](http://txdot.gov). 

Check out the 2016 annual report on TxDOT's Archeological and Historical Discoveries for stories from our state's past as uncovered by the Cultural Resources Management program.



## A JOURNEY THROUGH TEXAS AND TIME

Texas Department of Transportation's Archeological and Historical Discoveries

TxDOT

# BUCKLE UP CLICK IT OR TICKET CELEBRATES 15 YEARS OF SAVING LIVES




TxDOT photo

The Click It or Ticket campaign marks 15 years and more than 5,000 lives saved in 2017. The campaign has a simple message: buckle up because it can save your life and it's the law.

**T**he Click It or Ticket campaign recently marked its 15th anniversary of urging Texans to buckle up. Events kicked off in Austin at the Parmer Events Center. TxDOT Traffic Safety Division Director Terry Pence served as emcee and Austin District Engineer Terry McCoy was the keynote speaker. The audience also heard the personal testimony of Blanca Lara on how a seat belt saved her life. Lara is a resident of Dripping Springs but at the time of her accident was attending school in El Paso. She's alive today because she took the time to "click it."

Events followed throughout the state in Dallas, Houston, El Paso, San Antonio, Laredo, Harlingen, Odessa, Wichita Falls, Waco, Brownwood, Lubbock, Snyder, Amarillo, Bryan, Tyler, Beaumont and Paris. And the message was consistent: wearing a seat belt is the single most important step you can take to protect yourself in a crash. In Texas, it's also the law. And remember, every seat requires a buckle, even in the backseat.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, since the inception of the Click It or Ticket campaign 15 years ago, the life-saving effort has resulted in 5,068 fewer traffic fatalities. It has also prevented more than 86,000 serious injuries and saved Texas more than \$19.3 billion in related economic costs.

When the campaign launched in 2002, only 76 percent of Texans used their seat belts. Today, nearly 92 percent buckle up. However, from 2015 to 2016, deaths among people not wearing seat belts increased 9 percent. That upward trend can change. It only takes a few seconds to buckle up and it could mean the difference between life and death. 

# TEXpress LANES OPEN ON 35EXPRESS



TxDOT photo

Eighteen miles of new TEXpress Lanes opened for business in May on the I-35E corridor connecting Dallas and Denton counties in the Dallas District. Shown here is the I-35E and I-635 interchange with the TEXpress Lanes in the middle.

**E**ighteen miles of new TEXpress Lanes opened for business in May on the I-35E corridor connecting Dallas and Denton counties in the Dallas District. TEXpress Lanes are reversible managed lanes that feature dynamic pricing to keep traffic moving at 50 mph. As a part of the \$1.4 billion 35Express project, these toll lanes stretch from I-635 in Dallas north to Corinth. The lanes go south toward Dallas in the morning, and reverse to go north toward Denton in the afternoon.

After four years of construction, phase 1 of the project was substantially completed in August. It included a direct connection to the LBJ Express TEXpress Lanes, one additional mainlane in each direction in some areas, continuous frontage roads, a new southbound Lake Lewisville Bridge and a new elevated intersection at Belt Line in Carrollton.

The project also includes collector-distributor lanes connecting the President George Bush Turnpike to the Sam Rayburn Tollway, and ramps connecting the east and westbound lanes of the tollway to northbound I-35E.

Serving rapidly growing areas of southern and central Denton County and major Dallas suburbs, this corridor of I-35E is a major artery for hundreds of thousands of commuters and more than 12,000 trucks daily. As the only viable north-south commuting option across Lewisville Lake, it will improve mobility for 128,000 vehicles a day.

Ultimately, the \$4.8 billion project will rebuild the entire 30-mile corridor including TEXpress Lanes. Phase 2 of the project, which will cost approximately \$3.4 billion, will break ground when additional funding becomes available. **TN**

# SPECIAL CREWS ANSWER THE CALL TO KEEP PEOPLE SAFE



TxDOT photo

Austin District crews set up barricades at the Capitol before what promised to be a large gathering of people as two scheduled protests coincided with the ROT Rally, the largest biker rally in the state, in downtown Austin. From left to right: Tyler Saunders, Jose Caldera, Michael Caddell, Chance Roberts, Rudy Ohnos, Michael Salmela and Matthew Heinz.

**T**he Texas Capitol in Austin is a popular spot for rallies and events but when multiple groups converge on the same day, things can really heat up.

In June, the Austin District helped the Texas Department of Public Safety when the largest biker rally in the state coincided with two scheduled protests. DPS reached out five days before the event asking for help protecting the public.

Special Crews sprang into action. District Maintenance Administrator Jamie Witten took the lead and worked out a plan to get 27 concrete barriers to downtown and in place on the streets in front of the Capitol. Special Jobs Supervisor Matthew Heinze located a crane and picked a crew.

While planning continued throughout the week, things got busy in the early morning hours before the events. The crew arrived at the yard at 1 a.m. to hold a safety meeting, and then left for the Capitol. By 2 a.m., barriers were being placed. Later that morning, the events went on as scheduled with no serious altercations.

The long day was not over for the crew, though. At 4 p.m., they met at the yard, held a safety meeting and then went back to the Capitol to remove the barriers. Within a couple of hours, the streets were clear. Just another day in the life of a Special Crews team! **TN**



The award-winning documentary "Arc of Innovation" about the construction of the West 7th Street Bridge in Fort Worth premiered in April at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth; the team that built the bridge includes TxDOT, the city of Fort Worth, Sundt Construction and Burkhalter Rigging staff members.

# ARC DE TRIOMPHE

## AWARD-WINNING DOCUMENTARY TELLS STORY OF FORT WORTH BRIDGE

The Communication Division recently received several awards for its new documentary "Arc of Innovation" about the construction of the West 7th Street Bridge in Fort Worth. The film highlights the community involvement, partnerships and complex construction of the bridge that links the city's downtown to the Cultural District and Trinity Park. Produced by Communications Division Videographer Cyndi Griesser, the film won the WorldFest Houston International Film Festival Platinum Remi Award, the Bronze Telly Award and Bronze Communicator Award.

"Arc of Innovation" premiered on April 17 at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth. Fort Worth Mayor Betsy Price, the city of Fort Worth, Streams & Valleys and TxDOT presented the film.

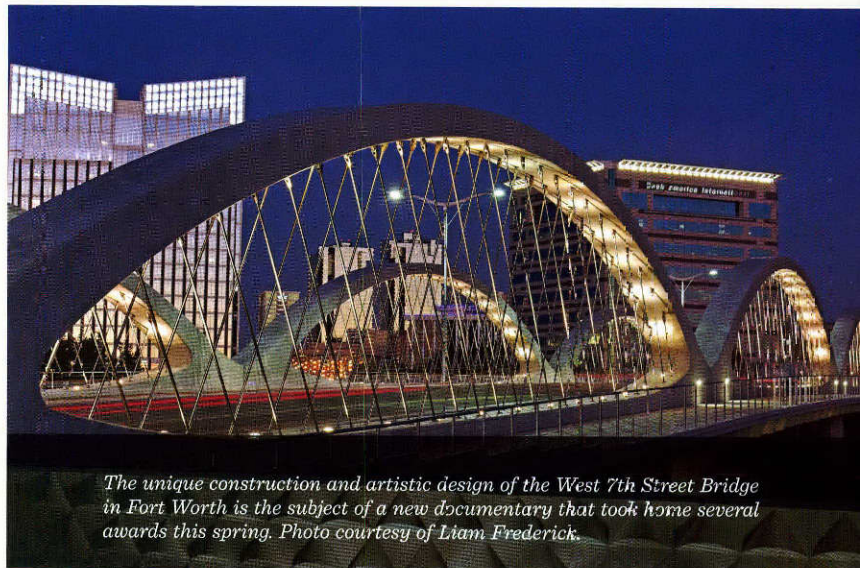
The bridge, designed by TxDOT, replaced a 100-year-old bridge that was beyond rehabilitation and provided limited pedestrian access over the Clear Fork Trinity River.

"TxDOT's outstanding media production team has done it again," said Bob Kaufman, director of Communications and Customer Service. "In addition to this film, they have produced award-winning videos on maintenance and construction and regularly shoot videos to support travel and tourism in Texas. Congratulations to Media

Production and our Fort Worth public information team!"

A breakthrough from an artistic standpoint and for technology, the bridge required a unique construction plan to produce the world's first pre-cast network arch bridge.

The Public Broadcasting Service premiered the documentary in April on its Austin affiliate. Check local listings for your area. After its PBS run, the film will be posted to TxDOT's YouTube channel. **TN**



The unique construction and artistic design of the West 7th Street Bridge in Fort Worth is the subject of a new documentary that took home several awards this spring. Photo courtesy of Liam Frederick.

# I am a...

## Maintenance Supervisor

**Mark Dorris**

**Maintenance Supervisor**

**Amarillo District**



**M**ark Dorris is a maintenance supervisor at the Pampa Maintenance Office in the Amarillo District. He supervises a crew of 13 responsible for 555 lane miles of highway in Gray and Roberts counties.

Dorris grew up in Borger, Texas and graduated from Borger High in 1980. After attending college at West Texas A&M University, he joined TxDOT in 1984 in the Borger Maintenance Section as a sign tech. In 1993 he was promoted to maintenance supervisor in the Canadian Maintenance Section where he served for 17 years. He then went back to Borger Maintenance in 2010 as a supervisor for two years before retiring in August 2012. Retirement turned out not to be for him and he returned to TxDOT about a year later in his current position.

Dorris has been married to his wife, Kristi, for 33 years. They have three sons, a daughter and two grandsons. He enjoys spending time with family and friends, playing golf, fishing, gardening and traveling.





### ***What do you enjoy most about your job?***

I enjoy the time I get to spend with my family. At TxDOT, we have a lot of time off during the holidays and being able to work a compressed week is great. We are able to get a lot more work done in a 10-hour day, especially if we are working several miles away from our office. We work hard and always have plenty to do. We never catch up! My youngest son, Chris, now works for TxDOT in the Childress District and we talk shop whenever we are together.

### ***Describe the type of work you do day to day.***

We always start our day with a morning tailgate meeting. We talk about the upcoming day, any potential issues and, most importantly, safety. After the meeting, we all stretch and flex. Everyone then prepares for the work specific to the job. We stay with the same routine each morning. The only thing that changes is the type of work we will be doing that day. We might be doing base work, sealing, mowing, sign work and herbicide all on the same day. Each day is different and presents a challenge for all of us.

After the crews leave for the day, I do office work, make phone calls and follow up on projects or issues from previous days. I try to drive parts of my roadways every day and have them all checked by the end of each week.

### ***What's the most challenging aspect of your job and how do you solve that challenge?***

Winter storm operations has to be the most challenging part of my job. Trying to be prepared for a storm is never easy. Each event is different. In 32 winter seasons, I've worked hundreds of storms and they have all been different. Dealing with temperature variations, gusting winds and equipment breakdowns while keeping traffic moving safely is difficult at times. The winter of 1992 was the worst; our office in Borger was open for 41 straight days. The first storm came in on Thanksgiving Day, and it snowed every few days until after Christmas. We had snow stacked higher than our maintainers on several roads.

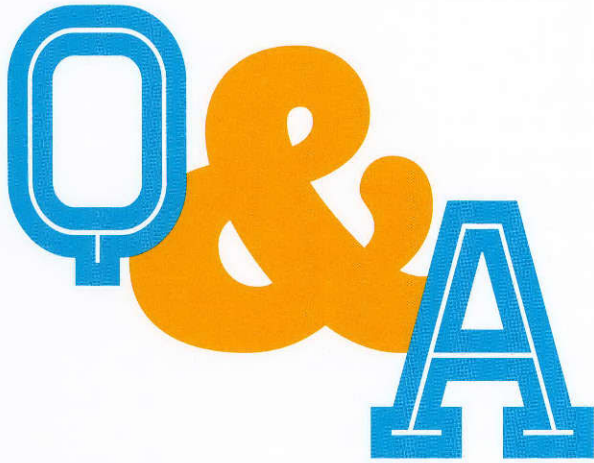
### ***A new hire just came to work for your team; what advice would you have about the work?***

Ask questions, don't get in a hurry, always help your team members, work smart and be safe. It's going to be very hot at times and very cold at times. Come prepared for both. My door is always open if you need anything. If I don't know what you need, I can't help you. Did I mention ask questions?

### ***How would your crewmembers describe your leadership?***

I think they would say I am fair. If there is a problem, I give them a chance to give me feedback and I listen to what they say. I let them have time off pretty much every time they ask. I have always told my employees that if they have kids or grandkids doing something at school or wherever, that I would like to see them attend. Family is very important to me and I try to pass that on to them.

I try to create an environment of team in our office. I want all my people to know they are all a part of what we do. I want my guys to improve themselves whenever they can. I am willing to help them with training and job experience to get them ready for promotions or advancement. I have had three assistants who worked for me become maintenance supervisors. I think that's awesome. **TN**



## Amanda Gierisch

**Office Manager • San Angelo Maintenance Section**

A native Texan, Amanda Gierisch, office manager in the San Angelo Maintenance Office, grew up in Eden. She attended Odessa College and Penn Foster College. Before coming to TxDOT, she was a supervisor and trainer at Sitel. She also worked at Blue Cross Blue Shield and was a boy care coordinator at West Texas Boys Ranch. She has been licensed in massage therapy since 2003 and in 2012 she earned a pharmacy technician certification. She enjoys baking and even has her own bakery business called Lovin' from the Oven. In her free time, she likes basketball and attends San Antonio Spurs games. She also enjoys hunting and fishing with her son, Austin.

## Amanda Gierisch

**You just got a free plane ticket to anywhere. You have to depart right now. Where would you go?**

As long as it's a round-trip ticket, Italy! There's such a wide array of things to do and see: museums, towers, vineyards, temples, beaches, art, ancient ruins, scenic views, opera and, of course, food.

**What are the five words that best describe you?**

Grateful, creative, determined, loyal and fun.

**What's the best part of being an office manager? What's the worst part?**

I work with a great group of people, so that makes everything easier. They're always willing to help and they try to keep the office atmosphere fun. The most frustrating part is finally learning how to do something and then having a change in the procedure.

**What's an ideal weekend for you?**

In the spring and summer, a perfect weekend would be at the river with my family soaking up the sun, followed by barbecue, music and card games. In fall and winter, it'd be waking up early to sit in the deer blind, or having coffee on the porch, then baking and cooking and enjoying comfort food with my favorite people.

**If you could change one law, what would it be?**

One that immediately comes to mind would be to provide free public education for 16 years, not just 12.

**What fad do you wish would come back? Which do you feel should stay gone forever?**

I'd love to see the bouffant hairdo come back! The mullet and platform shoes are on my stay-gone list.



**Who's your celebrity crush?**

Tom Selleck. Especially in "Quigley Down Under" when he says, "You sure are pretty in the mornin' sun."

**What's a saying you say a lot?**

"\_\_\_ is amazing!"

**What is your current desktop picture?**

The TxDOT Green July desktop calendar with the United States flag.


**Do you have a secret talent and what is it?**

It's not a secret anymore around my district, but I've become quite the talented baker. I've got my own bakery business called Lovin' from the Oven. I make everything from basic chocolate chip cookies to decorated sugar cookies, pies, breads, cupcakes, birthday and wedding cakes and more.

**What do you have handy at your bedside?**

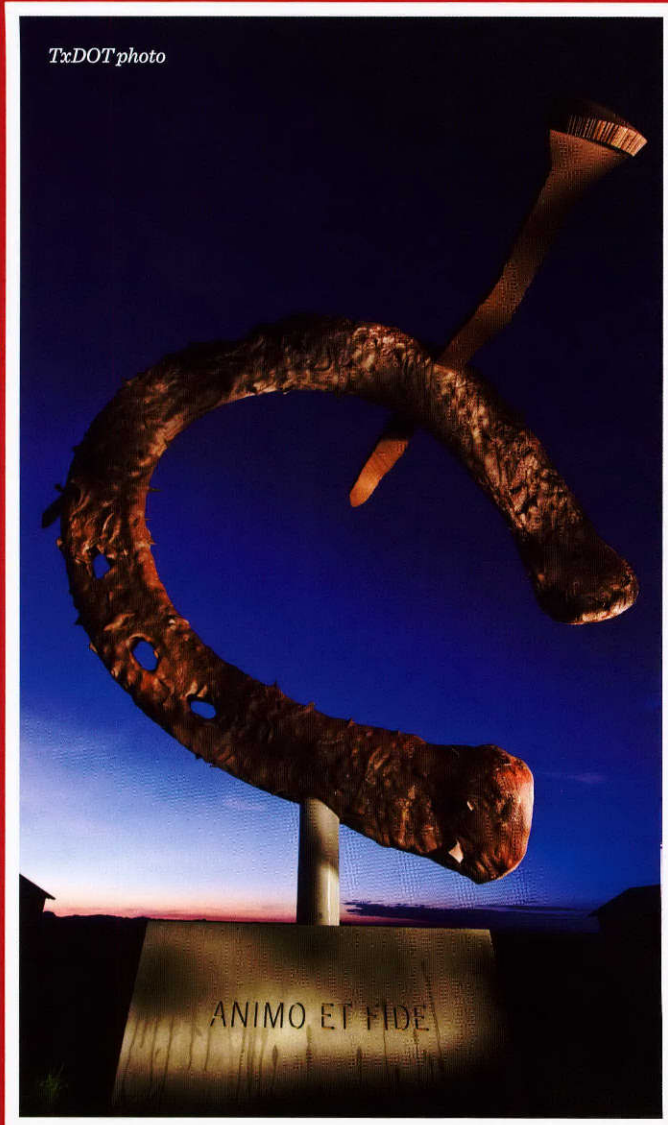
My Bible and a scalp massager.

**If you were a crayon, what color would you be and why?**

Red! It's so dynamic, bold yet warm. To many it symbolizes love and it reminds me of some of the things I love, like Christmas and my grandmothers. 

# Where Am I?

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



## Identified:

Congratulations to our first identifier Hector Siller (SAT) for the second issue in a row.

Last edition's photo featured a Baldwin wood-burning, narrow-gauge railroad locomotive on exhibit at the Historic Brownsville Museum in Brownsville. The museum is housed in a restored 1928 Southern Pacific depot.

Others correctly identifying the photo were Albert Garza (TRV), Szende Smith (CMP) and Oscar Gallegos (PHR). 



## UPCOMING TxDOT EVENTS

**Sept. 4**

Labor Day  
(Agency Closed)

**Sept. 21-22**

Rosh Hashanah  
(Optional Holiday)

**Sept. 28**

Texas Transportation  
Commission Meeting  
(Austin)

**Sept. 30**

Yom Kippur  
(Optional Holiday)

**Oct. 26**

Texas Transportation  
Commission Workshop  
(Austin)

# MILESTONES

## JULY SERVICE AWARDS

### DISTRICTS

#### ABILENE

- 30 Glover L. Miller III
- 5 Cody W. Andrews  
Jeanie L. Mueller  
Richard L. Rowden

#### AMARILLO

- 25 Randy J. Hochstein
- 5 Heath C. Hunt

#### ATLANTA

- 35 James D. McCall
- 30 Charles W. Montgomery  
Rodney E. Vandusen
- 20 Rosalin R. Jordan
- 10 Nicholas H. Hinton  
Sandy L. Peters
- 5 Russell D. McKnight  
Bryan M. Vaughan

#### AUSTIN

- 25 John M. Nevares
- 20 Kevin D. Kirchoff
- 5 Terry Issleib

#### BEAUMONT

- 15 Jason D. Waldrep
- 10 John E. Simon  
Kenneth J. Wiemers
- 5 Dennis J. Duplantis

#### BROWNWOOD

- 15 William E. Morris
- 5 Gary L. Driskill

#### BRYAN

- 30 James D. Riley
- 20 Timothy N. Moore  
Zyna L. Polansky
- 15 Henry M. Cool
- 10 Michael L. Estillette
- 5 Santwain J. Calhoun

#### CHILDRESS

- 20 Chris J. Reed
- 15 John D. Castor

#### CORPUS CHRISTI

- 10 Ricardo Flores

#### DALLAS

- 45 Julia F. Halford
- 15 Robert Z. Arteaga  
Rodney Skelly
- 10 James M. Glisson  
Natnael S. Haile

- 5 Jacob R. Barreiro  
Gary W. Farmer  
Cammon D. Granger  
Derrick J. Myers  
Marty W. Neely  
Wayne A. Tackett  
Bryan D. Watson  
Charles W. Wilson

#### EL PASO

- 30 Timothy F. Twomey
- 25 Jose E. Arzaga
- 15 Aldo Madrid
- 10 Jose L. Guillen  
Jason Herrera  
Salvador Yanez

#### FORT WORTH

- 25 Samuel S. Jones  
Michele M. Martinez
- 15 Jose M. Ibarra  
Eddy W. Shearman
- 5 Leila Sadeghian  
Dora K. Soto

#### HOUSTON

- 20 Jerry C. Longoria  
James A. Roscher  
Hassan Sadeghi
- 15 Thomas A. Johnston  
Reza Arjmand
- 10 Melody I. Galland
- 5 Weston H. Duffy  
Dominic M. Marullo

#### LAREDO

- 20 Ricardo E. De La Parra
- 15 Claudia A. Torres
- 10 Dennice L. Garza  
Servando Valadez

#### LUBBOCK

- 15 Francisco J. Ruiz
- 10 Pamela K. Redman

#### LUFKIN

- 25 Ronnie C. Releford

#### ODESSA

- 10 Rafael V. Dominguez
- 5 Aurora O. Duran  
Daniel M. Hernandez

#### PARIS

- 15 Adrain K. Jenkins  
John S. Kisc
- 5 John A. Jobe  
Tracy L. Overly

#### PHARR

- 25 Leticia Vela
- 10 Marco A. Gonzalez

#### SAN ANGELO

- 30 Paula D. Summerlin
- 10 Frank Z. Reyes Jr.  
Jayme G. Wooten

#### SAN ANTONIO

- 30 Christine C. Jauregui  
Timothy D. Lowak
- 20 Ryan J. Desjean  
Carlos J. Rodriguez
- 15 Inez Gonzales  
Juan J. Mendez  
Johnny S. Rogers
- 10 Ernest L. Sherrill
- 5 Adrian V. Hinojosa

#### TYLER

- 25 Johnston L. Warren
- 15 Gilbert Arteaga  
Floyd A. Dunlap  
Homer H. Heidle Jr.

#### WICHITA FALLS

- 30 Billy D. Taylor
- 20 Lance D. Burnett  
Lawrence R. Gulley
- 15 Aaron J. Williams
- 10 Melvin J. Kelsey Jr.

#### YOAKUM

- 30 Jon Adame
- 20 Andrew W. Robinson
- 5 Ronald J. Hermes

#### DIVISIONS

##### ADMINISTRATION

- 5 Dawn M. Parker

##### BRIDGE

- 5 Sarah J. Raines

##### COMMUNICATIONS

- 5 Cynthia M. Griesser  
Andrew A. Minnick  
William D. Van Overbeek

##### COMPLIANCE

- 5 Jack D. Kelley

##### CONSTRUCTION

- 15 Arturo J. Perez
- 5 Ruben A. Carrasco

##### CONTRACT SERVICES

- 20 Karen Y. Fitzpatrick

#### FLEET OPERATIONS

- 25 Norma Ruiz  
Fernando A. Sanchez
- 15 Michael E. Weakley
- 10 Fred A. McKenzie

#### GENERAL COUNSEL

- 5 Jeffrey M. Graham

#### HUMAN RESOURCES

- 20 Gabriela Rodriguez
- 15 Dawna R. Eckwall
- 10 Anthony N. Marelli
- 5 Ruth Poole

#### INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

- 10 James R. Huang
- 5 Diya Lalchandani

#### INTERNAL AUDIT

- 5 Craig L. Otto

#### MAINTENANCE

- 40 Gilbert Jordan
- 15 Lamar T. Copenhaver  
Phillip O. Hempel
- 10 Gretchen T. Wigham-Webb

#### PROCUREMENT

- 35 Robert A. Jones
- 20 Stacie S. Maldonado  
Karen E. Moore

#### RIGHT OF WAY

- 25 Oscar A. Hurtado

#### STRATEGIC PLANNING

- 5 Stacey B. Strittmatter

#### SUPPORT SERVICES

- 10 Michael R. Teran

#### TOLL OPERATIONS

- 10 Michael J. Tyler

#### TRAFFIC OPERATIONS

- 30 Adrian W. Madison
- 15 Mitchell D. Murrell Jr.

#### TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING

- 5 Roy H. Morris

#### TRAVEL INFORMATION

- 25 Sarah F. Rangel  
Cynthia M. Walker

# AUGUST SERVICE AWARDS



## DISTRICTS

### ABILENE

- 15 Kessa J. Compton  
Thomas R. Criswell  
Michael E. Hines
- 5 David Everett  
Rickey W. Jones

### AMARILLO

- 15 Chad L. Feemster  
Zeferino J. Villarreal
- 10 Derick San Miguel

### AUSTIN

- 35 Steven W. Schmidt
- 30 Charles C. Chance
- 25 Chuck A. Goertz
- 20 Sean P. Reardon
- 15 Seth Pennington  
Reed E. Smith

### BEAUMONT

- 30 Kenneth J. Deyoung
- 25 Brian L. Dodge
- 20 Cindy L. Maxedon
- 15 Richard L. McClelland
- 5 James J. Pellegrin

### BROWNWOOD

- 5 Jose F. Jaimes

### BRYAN

- 20 Jacob L. Petersen
- 15 Doris L. Crow
- 5 David A. Flessner  
Kevin W. Homeyer

### CHILDRESS

- 10 Valentin L. Gonzalez

### CORPUS CHRISTI

- 15 Noe Trevino

### DALLAS

- 25 Jerry M. Blakemore  
Jerome G. Waters
- 20 Byron E. Stephens
- 15 Johnny D. Walker
- 5 Gerald L. Daniel  
Lezlie M. Kirby  
Kenneth W. Powell  
Stacy B. Yarborough

### EL PASO

- 25 Hector C. Pulido  
Antonio Uribe Jr.  
Hector T. Zuniga

- 20 Victoria M. Armijo  
Robert Flores Jr.
- 15 Ray A. Guerra
- 5 David C. Luce  
Modesto Villalobos

### FORT WORTH

- 30 John G. Griffith  
Gary R. Meador
- 20 Nicholas S. Martin
- 15 David P. Holland  
Alfredo Luera
- 5 Iftekhhar M. Ali  
Robert R. Hayes  
Manuel Rodriguez  
Michael E. Tanner

### HOUSTON

- 25 Stephen N. Wainaina
- 20 Lane C. Kovar  
Theo Ughanze
- 10 Kristina M. Kasper  
Jerry Solis  
Brian R. Suayan  
Audie Wilson
- 5 Timothy J. Medrano

### LAREDO

- 30 Carlos G. Rodriguez
- 15 Diamantina Garcia
- 5 Armando C. Hernandez  
Ramon Gutierrez

### LUBBOCK

- 25 Christy T. Hernandez
- 20 Sherlann E. White
- 5 Konnie K. Washington

### LUFKIN

- 15 Michael W. Brister  
Shelley T. Reynolds

### ODESSA

- 20 Eduardo Benavidez
- 10 Homero J. Perez

### PARIS

- 5 Clint S. Tubb  
Ashley C. Woodson

### PHARR

- 30 Basilio R. Aguilar
- 5 Luis E. Gonzalez

### SAN ANGELO

- 15 Jason L. Hasty

## SAN ANTONIO

- 30 John L. Graf  
David A. Shedrock
- 25 Samuel C. Moss
- 20 Daniel Esquivel  
Benigno A. Lopez III
- 15 Diana C. Rogerio  
Vincent H. Tong  
Jules B. Zinsmeyer
- 10 Carl E. Walker

## TYLER

- 20 David M. Frick  
Kyle D. Kissinger
- 15 Scott A. Alexander  
Bradley M. Bassett

## WACO

- 15 Eric A. Hudson  
Todd A. Murphy
- 5 Kevin W. Dicks  
Christopher L. Niedorf  
Jennifer J. Page

## WICHITA FALLS

- 25 Michael D. Hallum
- 15 George B. Hall
- 10 Richard C. Haralson

## YOAKUM

- 30 Freddie M. Kile
- 10 Johnny V. Castro Jr.  
Patrick W. Motl

## DIVISIONS

### BRIDGE

- 25 Kevin R. Pruski
- 15 Robert E. King Jr.  
Paul A. Rollins
- 5 Kevin L. Moyer

### CIVIL RIGHTS

- 5 Michael D. Bryant

### COMMUNICATIONS

- 30 Karen D. Othon
- 5 Veronica R. Beyer

### CONSTRUCTION

- 10 Lisa A. Keith
- 5 Alan L. Huggins

### CONTRACT SERVICES

- 10 Richard H. Gray

## DESIGN

- 15 Charles C. Chambers  
Danny Santos Jr.
- 10 Harry N. Dawson

## ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

- 5 Jason R. Kord

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- 5 Tripti Bhandary  
Ashley E. Thurston

## FLEET OPERATIONS

- 15 Jason Shive  
Troy S. Wilcox
- 10 Jeffery G. Jones
- 5 Timmothy L. Mathis

## HUMAN RESOURCES

- 20 Robert B. De La Rosa  
Lucy A. Ross
- 5 Floyd L. Henson

## MAINTENANCE

- 10 Feng Hong

## PROCUREMENT

- 15 Cynthia F. Luna  
Jo B. Woten

## PROJECT FINANCE, DEBT & STRATEGIC CONTRACTS

- 15 Rudy P. Perales

## TRAFFIC OPERATIONS

- 30 Henry H. Wickes
- 15 John T. Benes
- 5 Mona Lisa Didelot-Page  
Robbi L. Smith

## TRANSPORTATION PLANNING & PROGRAMMING

- 10 Thomas R. Neville
- 5 Thomas R. Benz  
Samuel W. Lawrence

## TRAVEL INFORMATION

- 10 Deborah F. Jones
- 5 Brenda V. Escalera

# MILESTONES 2017

## MAY RETIREE REPORT

### DISTRICTS

#### AMARILLO

24 Otis W. Sanders

#### ATLANTA

12 Darrell T. Lagrone

#### CORPUS CHRISTI

19 Jimmie Blanco Beltran

#### DALLAS

32 James M. Dobbins

30 Greg P. Austin

29 Mark S. Harlan

16 David R. Gentle

10 Sandra D. Jones

#### EL PASO

31 Edgar E. Fino

#### FORT WORTH

32 Gregory L. Panzino

10 Jerold W. Andrews

#### HOUSTON

29 Raul F. Bartholomew

23 William D. Hallmark

#### LUFKIN

12 Nathan R. McKinzie

11 Janis L. Hillin

#### ODESSA

4 James R. Garlick

#### PARIS

36 Paul L. Helms

29 James B. Hutchison III

#### PHARR

23 Cruz E. Garcia

#### SAN ANGELO

29 Travis W. Murr

25 James A. Gilbert Jr.

#### TYLER

29 Daniel M. McClanahan

#### WACO

38 Dwaine H. Wolf

21 Robert P. White

#### YOAKUM

21 Johnny R. Hunt

### DIVISIONS

#### FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

23 Linda A. Hisbrook

#### RIGHT OF WAY

33 Charles G. Grote

16 Siamak Saeedi

## JUNE RETIREE REPORT

### DISTRICTS

#### ATLANTA

21 John M. Smith

#### AUSTIN

29 Michael H. McKissick

26 John C. Newnam

24 Jeffrey N. Ewing

#### BROWNWOOD

30 Mark A. Hale

30 Larry G. Smith

28 Michael G. Ray

18 Marcus L. Lindsay

#### CORPUS CHRISTI

19 Eusebio Galvan Jr.

#### DALLAS

33 David A. Hall

27 Charles U. Lankford

27 Gregory L. Perkins

25 Barry D. Heard

25 Jacqueline M. Weeks

21 Kevin J. Smith

#### FORT WORTH

30 William J. Padon

19 Robert B. Degarmo

11 Monte J. Jones

#### HOUSTON

34 Yimkei G. Cheung

31 Steve J. Calles

29 Jimmy C. Barger

#### LUFKIN

22 Charles D. Malone

20 Nancy A. Smith

#### ODESSA

32 Guadalupe A. Rede

#### SAN ANTONIO

30 Henry Felux Jr.

29 William L. Capeheart

#### TYLER

22 John E. Loflin

21 Rose M. Fletcher

#### YOAKUM

35 Justin C. Wostarek

28 Timothy R. Kalich

18 Elbert L. Green

### DIVISIONS

#### AVIATION

14 Gregory Allen

#### CONSTRUCTION

3 Cynthia J. Hurta

#### DESIGN

34 Thomas D. Beeman

23 Rene Garcia

#### FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

2 Debbie Ruth LaSalle

#### FLEET OPERATIONS

17 Joe Koite

#### PEPS

28 Keith W. Craig

## IN MEMORIAM

### DISTRICTS

#### ABILENE

Sharon N. Duncan

Retired: 1996

Date of Death: 7/26/2017

#### CORPUS CHRISTI

Bryan Chapman

Radio Communications Technician

Date of Death: 6/15/2017

Years of Service: 8

#### EL PASO

Oscar Arzaga

Transportation Engineer

Date of Death: 7/23/2017

Years of Service: 29

#### FORT WORTH

Larry Gilbreath

Engineering Specialist

Date of Death: 6/25/2017

Years of Service: 33

#### PARIS

Leland Cox

Safety Officer

Date of Death: 6/15/2017

Years of Service: 4

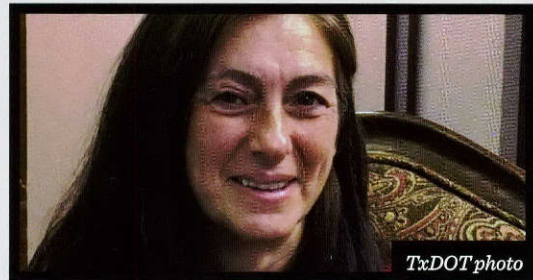
# TxDOT Family Members Chime In

Where's your favorite place to see fall leaves turning colors?



**JACQUELINE JAMES**  
CONSTRUCTION RECORD KEEPER, YOAKUM DISTRICT

"My favorite place to see fall leaves is Brown County State Park in Indiana. That's my home state and it's one of my family's favorite spots to visit."




**TAMMY NEAL**  
ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN, LUFKIN DISTRICT

"I think the most beautiful place in the world to see the leaves turn in the fall is Bull Shoals, Arkansas. The lake is beautiful and I love it there."

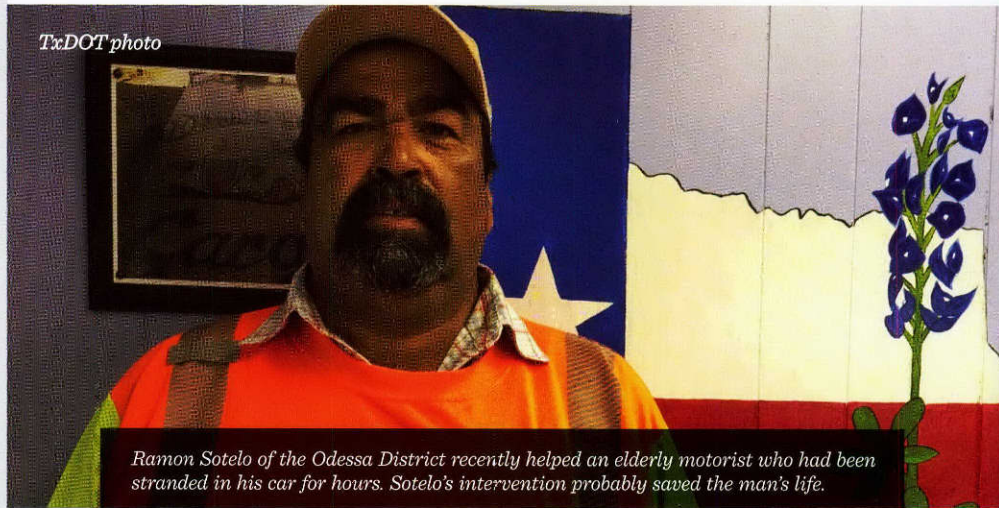


**SARAH HEATH**  
PLANNING ASSISTANT, ATLANTA DISTRICT

"Fall is my favorite time of year and my favorite place to see the changing colors is right here in the Atlanta District. Take any back road and you'll be blown away by the reds, oranges and golden yellows. It's absolutely gorgeous!" 

# Bright Lights

## CONFUSED MOTORIST GETS HELPING HAND IN ODESSA DISTRICT



**A** TxDOT employee's timely intervention possibly saved an elderly man's life when he was confused and stranded in his car for hours. Fort Stockton Maintenance Technician Ramon Sotelo of the Odessa District was traveling toward Balmorhea when he came across an elderly man in a car who looked to be stranded. Sotelo pulled up next to the man to ask if he needed assistance. The man said his car wouldn't start and that he had been stranded there for about five hours.

Sotelo gave him some water and asked where he was going. The motorist said he was traveling from Corpus Christi, but wasn't sure where he was going. He pointed in the direction of the mountains in the distance.

When Sotelo began checking the motorist's vehicle, he quickly realized it was out of gas. Sotelo immediately called the local police because the man appeared confused and disoriented. The police made contact with law enforcement in Corpus Christi and learned that the man's grandson had reported him missing earlier that day.

The man was then taken to the hospital for treatment of his diabetes and dementia. He was later happily reunited with his family at the hospital.

Sotelo's quick work probably saved this man's life, and his actions exemplify the attitude of unselfish service that makes us all proud to be part of the TxDOT family.

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



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Austin, Texas 78701

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

# The Good Life **NEW PROGRAM TAKES HOLISTIC APPROACH TO HEALTH**

*The journey to wellness is much more than eating broccoli or running a 10K. In fiscal year 2018, TxDOT's Wellness Program is broadening its focus to offer employees a more holistic path to achieving and maintaining their health goals.*


**T**he program is called The Good Life, and it's based on four pillars: purpose, happiness, physical and mental well-being. These pillars work together to create your overall well-being.

Purpose, the first pillar, is simply your reason for improving your wellness. What will motivate you to change and, most importantly, not to go back to old habits? Research has shown that when you are aware of your sense of purpose, your energy, willpower, health and happiness improve.

Happiness is about finding ways to manage stress and anger through a positive mindset. Choosing happiness can be easier with resilience skills such as recognizing good and harmful stress and being able to manage anger.

Physical wellness, which has been the focus of weight-loss and exercise programs for many years, is still important. Yet it is more than keeping your heart healthy and reaching a weight goal. This pillar also includes learning how to improve sleep and addressing other systems in the body such as musculoskeletal.

The fourth pillar is mental well-being. Employees can learn skills such as mindfulness, optimism, relaxation and creative problem-solving to improve effectiveness at work and home.

Educational materials and classes will be available to all employees in several formats. Be on the lookout for information at safety and tailgate meetings, on the TN Network and in small group learning sessions. Content for the program comes from a variety of sources including EAP, Blue Cross Blue Shield and the publication, Road to Wellness! 



thegoodlife

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

