

TRANSPORTATION news

State Department of Highways and Public Transportation

November 1990



Highway Beautification Awards

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What's inside . . .

Most maintenance workers will be subject to drug testing under revised rules approved by the highway commission in October that define "safety-sensitive" positions and procedures for the testing program.

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Find out about fellow employees who have quit smoking or lost weight — or both. It's a roundup of responses to our "success-story" coupons in the August issue.

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The "70/90 Buckle Up Odessa!" campaign means to raise safety-belt usage 70 percent during 1990, and it just might make it. Richard Phillips, former Odessa public affairs officer, rated the Public Affairs Award of Excellence for his part in the campaign.

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Hey! Wake up! That's the message the Odessa District is trying to send to sleepy drivers on the long West Texas highways, using "jiggle bars" and other methods to alert motorists who veer off the road. The experiments are explained in this month's Tech Trade.

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On our cover

James McNeill, right, maintenance construction supervisor for Nueces County, responds to his selection as winner of the 1990 Highway Beautification Award. Former highway commission chairman Robert Lanier, left, presented the award for the first time as sponsor of the annual program, which was initiated by Lady Bird Johnson in 1970. (Photo by Geoff Appold, Travel and Information Division)



Photo by Geoff Appold, Travel and Information Division

Gene Christian, left, garnered the runner-up honor in the 1990 Highway Beautification Awards. The award was presented to the Coleman County maintenance supervisor by Elyse and Robert Lanier on Oct. 19 at their home in Houston.

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TRANSPORTATION news

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A newsletter published monthly by the Travel and Information Division of the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation, at 11th and Brazos Streets, Austin, Texas 78701-2483.

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Associate Editors Jeff Carmack
Gina McAskill

From the Engineer- Director



The cover and center spread of this November issue of *Transportation News* look a lot like previous Novembers — coverage of the winners and finalists of the beautification awards given each October. But this year, for the first time since 1970, Lady Bird Johnson is missing from the name of the awards program.

But not from the spirit. When Mrs. Johnson passed on the torch last May after 20 years of giving her prestige and support, we were fortunate that Bob and Elyse Lanier were willing to take it up and continue this valuable program of recognizing maintenance supervisors and a district for success in preserving and beautifying their roadsides.

The Laniers, great friends of transportation, realized what a

tremendous boost these awards give, not only to our employees, but to the image of our department and even the state as a whole. I hope you all realize how well known these beautification awards are across the country, in the transportation and political communities.

Every year, Mrs. Johnson would invite government officials from across the country to the awards. Many were so impressed with the results they saw along the roads, and how dedicated the finalists were to improving the roadsides in their care that they praised us to many more people when they got home.

For this high-profile awards program, for our long-standing commitment to roadside landscaping, and for our excellent current vegetation management programs, Texas is the first source people think of in this country when they need an example of a success or ideas on how to make their programs better.

Although sometimes we are criticized for insensitivity to the environment on our rights-of-way, I take heart in the fact that people of all backgrounds, from all areas of the country, admire our programs. They're impressed by our fight against erosion, against

encroachment of introduced species to the detriment of native vegetation, against boredom and ugliness along the Texas roads people drive 104 billion miles on each year.

Though we have good programs and dedicated people putting them into practice, I must again credit Mrs. Johnson for the widespread admiration we enjoy. The limelight she turned on for our employees has not only inspired them to earn recognition and a small reward, but bathes our department as a whole and Texas as a state. This light shows everyone that we care.

The awards are reminders, too, that we *should* care. Our caring must find new outlets in increased sensitivity to environmental concerns, now that we see that our world needs more protection than ever from the ravages that uncaring human beings can inflict. For their caring, I congratulate this year's finalists and winners. And I thank the Laniers for continuing Mrs. Johnson's illuminating work.

Commission gives nod to drug-test rules

By JEFF CARMACK
Travel and Information Division

Drug testing of some department employees could begin as early as March, following highway commission approval of amendments of final rules for the department's substance-abuse program.

Also approved during the Oct. 25 meeting were criteria for determining "safety-sensitive" maintenance positions, said Steve Katz, manager of the substance abuse and employee assistance program in the Human Resources Division.

Katz said his staff has assessed all jobs in the maintenance field and has identified the

Preventive maintenance to continue

Work to protect Texans' investment in their transportation system will continue under a \$115.5 million program authorized by the highway commission at its Sept. 26 meeting.

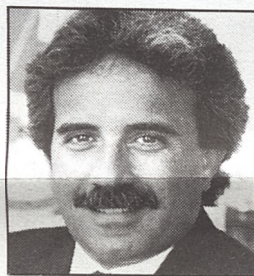
The 1991 Preventive Maintenance Program "will prevent major deterioration of roadways and bridges through a planned cycle of repairs," said Arnold Oliver, engineer-director.

Work includes resurfacing, cleaning and sealing pavement and bridge joints, painting bridges and related work.

The money will be distributed among the districts based on the number of miles of highway and the number of miles traveled in each district.

"Preventive maintenance remains our highest priority," said Oliver. "We realize that we either pay now or pay later — and when you pay later, you always pay more."

If the entire state roadway system had to be rebuilt today, he added, the cost would exceed \$100 billion. *Rosemary Neff, Travel and Information Division



Steve Katz

ones that are safety-sensitive. The criteria defining safety-sensitive positions will make most maintenance workers subject to drug testing.

Katz said the drug tests fall into four categories: reasonable cause, post-accident, pre-employment and random.

In the first, an employee's supervisor must document instances of impaired job performance. This documentation would then be submitted to a division or district substance control officer, who determines if the employee must submit to drug screening.

If the screening shows evidence of illicit drug use, the employee will be evaluated by a Employee Assistance Program counselor, who assesses the degree of dependency and makes a referral for treatment if necessary.

Post-accident screening will be based on results of any investigations conducted by law enforcement officials or department personnel. It will not necessarily be required after every accident, Katz said.

Under the third category, those applying for safety-sensitive positions will be tested for illegal drug use, Katz said.

Random testing will be the final phase of the department's substance-abuse program, and will begin in 1992, Katz said.

Katz said criteria for the drug testing program were drawn from applicable court

rulings with the assistance of the department's general counsel.

Most substance control officers have been appointed for all districts and divisions, Katz said, and will have three days of intensive training in January before they assume their new duties.

The revised rules were published in the Texas Register. A comment period, during which interested parties may submit written responses to Katz and his staff, will run until Dec. 3.

A public hearing on the rules will be held at 10 a.m. Nov. 30 in the department's main office in Austin.

Each employee will receive a copy of the administrative announcement and a copy of the amended substance abuse program rules, LeFevre said.★

Work on EAP continues

More than 90 specifications have been written for the contract to administer the department's Employee Assistance Program, manager Steve Katz said.

Katz said the Equipment and Procurement Division will assist in drafting the contract, which he said should be rewarded by mid-December.

After a vendor is chosen to administer the program, the EAP should be fully operational 60 days after a purchase order is signed.

In addition to assisting employees referred by their supervisors or voluntarily seeking assistance with substance abuse problems, the EAP will also help employees with marital or family problems, family eldercare, pre-retirement counseling, psychological or emotional concerns and literacy program referrals, Katz said.★By Jeff Carmack, Travel and Information Division

Recycling a sensible choice

By CAROL VINTON
Highway Design Division

All over the country, people are thinking, worrying, talking and arguing about the health of our planet.

Recent eco-alarms such as the discovery of a hole the size of the United States in the earth's protective ozone layer, the continuing loss of 27 million acres of rain forest a year, acid rain, global warming and a hundred varieties of toxic waste have made us realize that our everyday decisions affect the planet's fate.

This growing realization is filtering through all levels of society, causing us to re-evaluate our actions and the choices we make.

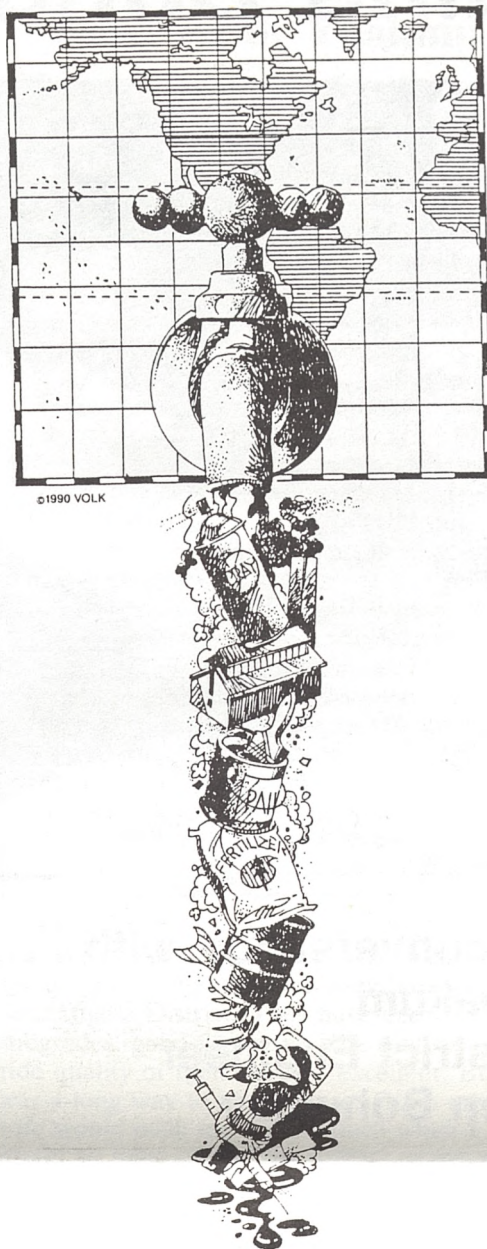
Recycling is one way that people are changing their habits in order to protect the environment. While many of us have only just begun to recycle, the highway department has been recycling waste products for more than 15 years. Most of the department's recycling efforts have been concentrated at the Austin offices, but many districts are now beginning recycling programs.

Wastepaper, such as computer paper and letterhead, is gathered in special collection boxes and collected daily. This paper is then bundled and sold. In 1989 alone, more than 73 tons of paper was sold for recycling. The department also sells scrap metal, tires, batteries, paint barrels and other items for recycling.

Many of us are also beginning to recycle items from our homes. Aluminum cans, which never decompose, are being recycled at an ever-growing rate. Currently, 46 percent of all aluminum cans sold are recycled. However, of the 50 million tons of paper used in America each year, only 22 percent is recycled.

Glass containers, which can take up to a million years to decompose, are easily recyclable. Currently, only 20 percent of glass containers are recycled.

Though many solutions must come from government and industry, such as improved



mass transit and a market for recycled products, small acts really can make a difference. Skeptical? Here are the effects of one person's daily choices:

- Recycling one household's newspapers for one year can save four trees, 2,200 gallons of water, and prevent 15 pounds

of pollutants from entering the air. Every ton of recycled paper saves approximately 17 trees.

- Planting one tree can remove as much as 48 pounds of carbon dioxide (a major cause of global warming and ozone-layer depletion) from the air.
- Starting a compost pile can reduce a household's garbage by as much as 30 percent per year, resulting in less trash in the local landfill.

Protecting our environment isn't always easy, however. Sometimes it's inconvenient, and it becomes even more difficult when the options aren't there. Additionally, many companies now claim that their products are "environmentally safe," "biodegradable" or "photodegradable," and consumers are having a difficult time separating fact from fiction.

Biodegradable and photodegradable plastics, such as disposable diapers and plastic bags, may break down into plastic pieces in a matter of months under laboratory conditions. But in landfills, it's a different story.

Below the first couple of inches in a landfill, there is no sunlight, insects or oxygen to help break these products down, and even "environmentally safe" plastics could take up to 500 years to decompose under these conditions. And some experts say there's no evidence that ordinary plastic will ever disintegrate.

Studies show that an increasing number of consumers are already basing some buying decisions on environmental concerns. People are getting into the habit of thinking: Where does this product come from? How is it made? How is it packaged? Where will it end up?

Gone are the days when shoppers based their decisions solely on price or brand. It's like learning to shop for bargains, all over again.

So before you throw out that garbage, spread those chemicals or purchase those plastic disposables, think about what your decisions mean and who these decisions will affect. The future of our planet begins with you.★

Supervisor's foresight corrects department handicap

By LONA REEVES
Travel and Information Division

Stanley can't hear, but that doesn't mean Stanley can't learn. Unfortunately, for a while this appeared to be true for employees with impaired hearing. Thanks to Stanley and his far-sighted supervisor, this is no longer a reality.

Stanley McFarland, a bright and ambitious employee of the Tarrant County Design section in the Fort Worth District, had taught himself how to use the shop's computers to perform his duties. Like any eager, enterprising employee, the more he learned, the more he wanted to learn. But because of his disability, McFarland seemed to have reached his zenith and would be unable to receive any further training.

He told supervisor Renee Lamb that he felt like a dinosaur. He had taught himself as much as he could and enough to qualify for more development in the classroom. But his hearing impairment presented challenges that the department's formal training was unable

to meet. Though the courses were first-rate, they were also geared for hearing students.

Lamb listened and then took a closer look at the design shop staff. She found two more employees who had not learned to use personal computers and were not receiving training for reasons similar to McFarland's.

Together with Delaine Maggied of the district's personnel office, and Frank Durda, assistant district engineer, Lamb came up with a plan that helps McFarland and his coworkers receive the training that increases their earning potential while it increases their value to the department.

The idea is one other similarly challenged organizations also utilize. So the department didn't have to go far to find the help they needed to open its training program to people with hearing impairments.

For \$25 each an hour, the department hires professionals to interpret trainers' instructions through sign language and lip reading.

For computer classes, the department uses interpreters knowledgeable in computers to translate the instructors' comments. The

Goodrich Center, a Fort Worth United Way organization, supplies the interpreters.

Because of the intense physical and mental activity required to change languages from audio to visual, it takes two interpreters to translate a training session. Chris Sparks, interpreting coordinator at the Goodrich Center, said, "We don't want to burden their [the interpreters'] brains. When a class lasts more than one or two hours, it takes two interpreters switching every 20 minutes."

She said switching translators also helps avoid carpal tunnel or "overuse" syndrome, an affliction that causes the arms and hands to fall asleep.

Sparks said knowledge of the subject matter being taught helps, but is not a requirement. When an interpreter spells out a word often used in the class, students show the interpreter the sign for it.

The program is paying off for the department. "Since training, Stanley's really taking off," said Lamb. "It's expensive but worth it. I believe the more training the employees receive, the more we'll all like it."★

Family sustains Bohuslav



Ben Bohuslav combined a major in civil engineering and a minor in meteorology for his bachelor of science degree from Texas A&M University. After graduation in 1958, he served in the Air Force until 1961, then joined the department. After rising through the ranks in Yoakum, he received the 1981 Gibb Gilchrist Award, presented to an outstanding engineer in the department. He was appointed district engineer in San Angelo in 1986, then returned to head the Yoakum operation in 1988. Bohuslav discussed his history, goals and attitudes with Ronda Baker of the Travel and Information Division.

A conversation with . . . Yoakum District Engineer Ben Bohuslav

What made you choose engineering as a career?

One of my brothers, an agricultural engineer, recommended civil engineering to me when I was in high school. He directed me and three of his sons into the field.

I didn't go to work as an engineer right out of college. I served a three-year hitch as a meteorologist in the Air Force. I was stationed in Lubbock. I didn't have the intestinal fortitude to fly, so I was glad to be a "ground-pounder."

How did you begin your career with the department?

I had a chance to go to work for the department in 1961 in San Antonio or Yoakum. Yoakum offered me \$15 a month more to go to work for them, and it was closer to my stomping ground, the little town of Moulton, 10 miles from Shiner. I worked there for about five years as an engineering assistant and engineer in the district design office. Then I decided to look for greener pastures. I guess I wanted to see what else there was.

I went to work for the City of Victoria for a little while, for the city water board in San Antonio for a while, then I came back here. I left the department in 1966 and came back in 1967. I decided after looking around a little bit that the department was a darn good place to work.

Plus I had the opportunity to come back as the first traffic engineer District 13 ever had. And I wanted to raise my three children in Yoakum. I had a new challenge and a place to raise my family.

I worked as a traffic engineer until 1981, when I became the district maintenance engineer. It's difficult to be specific as to what a traffic engineer does because there's such a variety of work. Most all the

engineering one does in the highway department is static. A bridge built supports the traffic — generally it stays there. Traffic engineering is not static. It deals with the movement of people and goods. It has to react and it is always changing. You get the chance to try things and see if they work — how well traffic understands and how well it responds to a traffic signal. It becomes a dynamic system as opposed to a static system.

I had to develop the field in my district. My immediate supervisor, Earl Wyatt, gave me a list of four or five things that I was supposed to do. I guess I worked on those for the next 14 years. One responsibility was making sure roadways were signed and striped according to standards. Another was developing safety programs to provide greater safety to our motorists.

One of those programs was a first, wasn't it?

Back in the '60s and '70s, US 90 was a major artery between San Antonio and Houston. Interstate 10 wasn't complete, and we had a lot of narrow bridges along US 90. People were always hitting those narrow bridges. We had many fatalities. With the Texas Transportation Institute, we developed a method of warning people driving on the shoulder that they were approaching a narrow bridge and of using jiggle bars, striping and guard rails. We even lowered the railings on the bridges.

School and pedestrian safety became a big issue. Over the years we developed the concept of programmed flashing signs for school zones, which basically got its start in the 1970s in the Yoakum District. We prepared a report on this subject. We studied every school in the district, saw how many children were crossing there, contacted all the principals and asked them at what times reduced speed limits should be in effect. We feel that this program has saved lives, and has prevented or reduced pedestrian injuries. It also builds very good public relations with the schools and with the parents. It let people know the highway department was responding to the needs of pedestrians as well as motorists.

You went from being the district's traffic engineer to maintenance engineer, then you became San Angelo district engineer in 1986. Isn't it unusual for a district engineer never to have served as a resident engineer?

There are a few of us district engineers who were not resident engineers. I feel fortunate to have become a district engineer without ever having been a resident engineer.

Did I ever think I'd become a district engineer? I don't believe I ever thought that's what my ultimate goal was. But I guess I felt I could do the job if I was offered the job. And now that I have it, I'm going to do the best job I can.

I couldn't think of a better place in the state of Texas to become a district engineer than San Angelo. They have wonderful highways, some really good people, and it's a beautiful district to work in. I always say if you have to live in West Texas, the most beautiful place you could live in would be San Angelo.

In 1982, my first wife died, and I married Lou in 1984. It was kind of good for us to get away (to San Angelo). When we moved to San Angelo in 1986, it gave us a chance to start our lives anew.

The year before, I lost my daughter, Wanda Hermansen, in a boating accident on Lake Conroe. She was 25 years old. Wanda was a civil engineer, having graduated from Texas A&M in 1982. She worked in private industry for a while, then went to work for the department, in design and then maintenance in the Houston District. She'd been there for about a year and a half, and she really loved it. Wanda's ambition was to become the first woman engineer-director for the department.

When we moved, it was a welcome change. It focused our attention on something else, gave us a lift. I think that helped me tremendously to overcome a lot of emotional things.

You've been known to say that your daughter taught you something very important, something that shapes your philosophy as district engineer.

For every joy that passes, something beautiful remains. One of the things she taught me was the value of the department's employees, about their attitude and how well they work together. She used to tell me how difficult it was for her as a woman civil engineer to work for private industry. She felt that she would never be accepted and it was very, very competitive. She had to get out and "do her thing," and if she couldn't do her thing, that was tough.

When she came to work for the highway department, she said there were always people wanting to help her learn, a "can-I-help-you" attitude. I never noticed it that much until I saw how it transformed her from having thought about changing careers into someone so excited about her job. There's a willingness among the old generation to help the new employees move up. There's not this great competition for advancement; we all want to do a good job. And we can only realize that we can't do it alone; we have to have the support of everyone around us. It really did open my eyes to a lot of things.

“I moved to Yoakum three times and moved out twice. I think I'm here to stay.”

What did you learn in San Angelo?

They were really advanced in automation up there, and I learned a lot about automation from that district. That gave me an awareness of what it can do to help you get your job done.

It's a huge district; it has 17 counties. My goal was to travel every highway in the district. I didn't make it, but I think I made about 75 percent of the 3,622 centerline miles. I wanted to see what kind of roads they had constructed and what it would take to maintain those kinds of roads. I felt like I wanted to know first-hand what the challenges were for constructing and maintaining those roads. I think I traveled all the U.S. and state highways, I just didn't get to travel some of the FMs or RMs in that area.

Maintenance is considerably different in that area than in Yoakum. I was aware of the good building materials they have in the San Angelo District. They have excellent subgrades, good limestone base material. The ride quality of their roads is excellent. But it was a long way to everywhere. Often my wife would pack me a sack lunch when I would go look around the district to see what the roads were like.

Just two years after being named San Angelo district engineer, you were moved to your stomping grounds, the Yoakum District.

When Mr. Stotzer [former engineer-director] asked me to come back, I was very surprised. I never thought I'd come back to work in District 13. Carl Ramert had retired, and his replacement decided he didn't want the job and was there for only eight or nine months.

Coming back to your home district is not always the easiest thing to do because you come back to preconceived ideas about what should be done. But you have to sit back and look at it in a different light. You have to earn the respect of the people that you work with. I believe that's the key to what I have to do.

I think the questions in their minds at first probably were: "What's he going to do? What's he going to change? When is he going to do it, and how is it going to impact me?" And I can understand that. Yes, there were changes, but I wanted to assure them that the change would be positive and would be challenging them to do a better job.

One of the things I guess I enjoy about our district is the quality of the people. We have about 460 employees. I think we have some of the strongest work ethic of any district. Our people really like to work hard. Maybe it's their culture, maybe it's because they're a mixture of many cultures. I admire their pride in their work.

Some people might think yours is a very rural district and doesn't have any of the problems urban areas do. How do you respond to that?

I always think of our district as kind of a hub between metropolitan areas. If you go

from Houston to San Antonio, you have to go through our district. If you go from Austin to Houston, or from Corpus Christi to Houston, or from the Valley to Houston, you have to go through our district. So we get a lot of traffic through our district from the metropolitan areas, and much of that is truck traffic. We have 3,387 centerline miles and about 8,000 lane miles in our district. That's about the same as you have in San Angelo. Over half of our mileage is farm-to-market roads.

Share with us your management philosophies.

I visualize the district engineer's job not as one of day-to-day management of people and things. I visualize a manager as one who tries to give direction. That's always been my belief, to set goals and give direction.

I think morale is always better when people are challenged. That's the beautiful part of it, to see them respond to a tough challenge. One of the big challenges for our maintenance people is not only to maintain our farm-to-market system but to try to improve it. In our district we will never have enough money to really improve the farm-to-market road system.

Keeping the employees informed. That's important to me. We try to do that through safety meetings, employee forums, our monthly *Traveler* newsletter. I wish we could somehow make our newsletter available to our employees by sending it to their homes, because we are a highway family and it doesn't stop with just the employee. Maybe the expense of sending it to homes is more than we could justify, but I feel that would be a much better way of getting out the information. If our families knew as much about the highway department, then they could be our proponents. An informed, challenged employee is the best you can have.

"Off the road," what are your goals? And how do you relax?

I guess the thing that has driven me all through my life is my value of family. I think that's number one with me and always has been, always will be.

My ancestors came from Czechoslovakia. The English translation of Bohuslav is "honor God." I'm bilingual to some degree, but I understand better than I can speak.

I live about two miles out of town on about 50 acres. It's a great place for our families to get together. I have two children — a son, Steve, and daughter, Sarah. Lou has two sons, Hollis and Lane, and a daughter, Sarah; and between us, we have two grandsons and three granddaughters. It is great to have them visit and we certainly enjoy the grandchildren during the summer.

We have a pond stocked with channel catfish and they enjoy fishing. I raise a few head of cattle right now and I plan to increase that. I lease out most of my land right now. It's very quiet — you can see the lights of the city. You get to see the deer and other wildlife out there and enjoy the solitude. I guess at the end of the day sometimes if I have problems, I get on my tractor and I go out there and do some shredding or other work. It really does give you time to think things through. It's relaxing; it's a form of therapy.

I moved to Yoakum three times and moved out twice. I think I'm here to stay.★

Being a quitter not always bad news

By **ROGER POLSON**
Travel and Information Division
(and former 210-pounder)

In the August "health" issue of *Transportation News*, we asked for personal testimonials from readers who have quit smoking or lost weight.

The results are in. We heard from 17 ex-smokers, three successful dieters, and three who have quit smoking and lost weight.

First off, congratulations to Celso Rubio, Patrick Bachman, Norbert Mueller, Earlene Delaney, Naida Yarbrough, Lou Von Woglon, Bob Snead, Jose Ramirez, James Sassin, Weldon Thornton, William Coleman, Carl Myers, Anne Polk, Gary Herzik and Rex English for putting away the smokes. Michael Copeland, Connie Huntzis and Tom Judson are proud of their weight loss. Jack Carter, Merita Graddy and Stephen Cloud reported success at both.

Motivation and reward are two factors that figured in their success.

Many of the ex-smokers reported health problems as their original motivation. Of the 20 ex-smokers, 13 quit "cold turkey," without a support group, clinic or other program. Acupuncture, the American Cancer Society's "Fresh Start" program, a stop smoking clinic, a computer and Jesus Christ were the inspiration for others.

Amarillo's Jack Carter smoked his last cigarette traveling from the doctor's office to the intensive care unit for treatment for a heart attack. "The heart specialist said, 'If you want to live, you'll give those up.' I said, 'I just did.'" That was seven years ago. Carter also lost 40 pounds.

Ann Polk, from the Lubbock District, reported, "My 7-year-old daughter asked me to not smoke before taking her to school because she didn't want to stink — like me." After 13 years of smoking, she quit that day, almost 10 years ago.

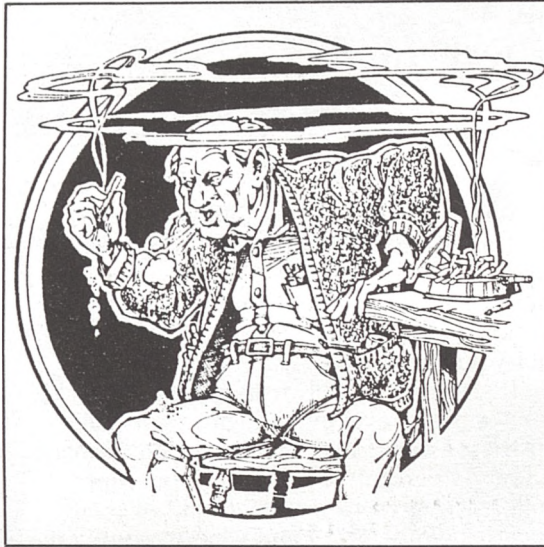
4R Conference set for San Antonio

The roads to San Antonio will be bustling in December as highway engineers, designers, contractors and government public works professionals flock to the fourth annual 4R Conference and ROAD SHOW Dec. 5-7.

The Alamo City will host up to 2,500 delegates from every state and from countries around the world. They'll be treated to three days of seminars, exhibits and demonstrations of the newest technology, construction equipment and ideas associated with pavement maintenance, management, construction, drainage, surface treatments and work zone safety.

Texas highway department expertise will be well represented during the conference. The Maintenance and Operations Division's Robert Briggs will moderate three sessions on pavement management. Briggs is charged with the development and implementation of pavement management in the state. Clark Titus, a bridge maintenance specialist in the Maintenance and Operations Division, is on a panel discussing the maintenance of bridge joints. Waco District Engineer Kirby Pickett will discuss surface treatments, and Planning and Policy Division head Tom Griebel will moderate the general session discussion on "Megatrends for 4R Maintenance."

Readers share success stories



While some quitters reported chewing gum or eating to compensate, the majority have replaced smokes with exercise.

To the question, "What difference has quitting made in your life?," most responses cited better health, money savings and an improved self-image.

The automation division's Norbert Mueller reported, "I have more energy, especially for dancing."

Celso Rubio, from the El Paso District, said, "It made my wife and family happier."

The Design Division's James Sassin said, "My self-esteem increased. I accepted my athletic ability more, and I can taste food better." But Sassin confessed, "I still miss smoking very much at times."

Lou Von Woglon, Houston District, quit 20 years ago. He said, "Most important health decision I ever made. Smoking is truly addictive and is not only a life-shortening habit, but it is detrimental to the quality of

day-to-day life. I'll never regret quitting!"

Stephen Cloud, Equipment and Procurement Division, started smoking when he was 14 years old. By the time he was 40, he smoked three packs a day and weighed 255 pounds. That was two years ago. Cloud joined a stop-smoking program and a health club. Within six months he was a non-smoker and had lost 43 pounds.

A car accident sidetracked Cloud's exercise program and he regained some of the lost weight. Now, walking 35 minutes a day, he's down to 219 pounds and still losing. The most important lesson Cloud has learned is "now that I've quit smoking, there's not anything I can't do."

When Merita Graddy, Dallas District, graduated from high school 15 years ago, she weighed 210 pounds. Shortly after graduation, she began smoking. In 1987, she bought a new vehicle, decided she liked the new smell and quit smoking. She carried one cigarette for more than six months knowing "if I smoked it I would buy another pack. It just hit me one day that I was going to quit and I stopped cold turkey."

Graddy knew she would have to change her eating habits and decided "to kill two birds with one stone." She lost 20 pounds on her own, then sought medical help. She lost another 20 pounds with the help of medication and then began walking around the maintenance yard at lunch. Now Graddy has dropped 65 pounds and has maintained her weight for more than seven months. She attended her class reunion this summer and said, "Many of my classmates didn't recognize me. I was voted the one who changed the most."

The Brownwood District's Tom Judson included a photo with his story. In it he is pedaling his bike with his family in the mountains of West Texas. Judson lost 35 pounds in 1978 and has maintained his weight since. He credits bicycling with his success.

Connie Huntzis, with the Construction Division in Austin, lost 54 pounds 17 years ago. She now enjoys lower blood pressure and lower cholesterol and being "able to run, climb stairs, ride a bike and keep up with my family."

One weight-loss story in progress came from Michael Copeland working in the regional planning office in Arlington. Copeland has lost 50 pounds in about four months by combining counseling from a weight loss center, exercise and good food.

"This has made an incredible difference in my life," said Copeland. "Everday, three or four people comment on how I look. That is a marvelous feeling. I know that I am a lot healthier."

Everyone who shared their experiences deserves congratulations and encouragement. There must be others who are thinking about quitting smoking or losing weight. Do it. You'll like yourself a lot better for it and will live longer to enjoy it.★

Brown County honored for tidy 'yard'

By JEAN SPARKS
Brownwood District

Motorists passing the "Yard of the Month" sign at the intersection of US 67/84 and US 183 may think pranksters are responsible for the sign's unusual location. Brown County Maintenance of District 23 may be the only highway department section in the state to receive a "Yard of the Month" tribute, but this sign at the Cisco "Y" is authentic.

George Hine, president of the Early Chamber of Commerce, said it's no mistake. The sign has been placed in the area many people refer to as the Cisco Y to honor the landscaping efforts of the Brownwood District, not only at the Cisco Y, but at the Early Y as well. "We couldn't put it both places, so we chose the Cisco Y where it will have more exposure," Hine said.

Early Mayor Jack Ferguson said he concurs with the chamber's selection. "We appreciate the better quality of life the highway department has helped make in Early by improving the environment," he said.

Landscaping the intersections largely with native plants was completed in the spring of 1989. The \$44,000 project consisted of building earthen berms to give visual definition at the interchange, installing a sprinkler system, planting live oaks, sumac and two varieties of elm. The entire area was seeded with Bermuda grass as well.

Under the supervision of James Hair, who



Maintenance employees Jerry Lobstein, left, Jerry Cupps, Jim Sharp, Jimmy Doud and Ben Mackey at the manicured "Cisco Y" they helped maintain to "Yard of the Month" status. (Photo by Jean Sparks, Brownwood District)

recently retired from the highway department, large boulders were added in August of this year to add another touch of Texas to the landscaped areas.

District Engineer Wes Heald of Brownwood said the project was financed entirely by state funds under the Construction Landscape Program, which

amounts to approximately 1 percent of the district's construction costs from the previous year.

This program will also fund landscaping for the new T-intersection constructed at the site of the old traffic circle in Brownwood, Heald said.

The Early Chamber of Commerce has been presenting Yard of the Month awards for about three years, said Taronna Sewalt, who chairs the yard selection committee.

"We have had many good comments about how nice the intersections look," she said. "We are expanding the award to include commercial areas and are hoping it will give some of the businesses along Early Boulevard an incentive to join our beautification effort."

Sewalt said this is the first time the award has been presented outside the residential areas of the city.

Maintenance technicians Jerry Lobstein, Jerry Cupps, Jimmy Doud and Ben Mackey, maintainers of the intersections, said they are proud their "lawn" was chosen as September Yard of the Month.

"We're just doing our job," Mackey said.

Keeping the intersection watered and mowed represents a small portion of their job, said Jim Sharp, maintenance construction supervisor. "Our first priority is the pavement surface and all that goes into making it safe and smooth."

The Yard of the Month sign was erected on the day of James Hair's retirement as a tribute to his beautification efforts.★

Briefs

Rosemary Neff



Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da, Neff goes on

Rosemary Neff, editor of *Transportation News* since December 1986, left the department Oct. 1 to move with her family to Washington, D.C.

Neff presided over design and personnel changes to improve the publication. For the past year and a half, she has also served as manager of the Travel and Information Division's editorial services branch, taking the lead in editing and speechwriting for the division.

A new editor will not be named until early next year because of possible reorganization of the Information Services Section. Associate editors Jeff Carmack and Gina McAskill will function until then as co-editors, and any news tips, stories, photos or comments can be forwarded to them at D-16 at the Austin Main Office. The *Transportation News* phone number is 512/463-8588, TexAN 255-8588.

Believe it or not

A "Ripley's Believe It or Not" item that ran in some Texas newspapers this summer reported a grave in the middle of Farm-to-Market Road 576 in Necessity, a hamlet in Stephens County.

Believe it, or not?

Believe it. Sort of. The Brownwood District reports that there is indeed a grave in the midst of a road in Necessity, but it's actually 100 feet east of the end of FM 576 on the continuing county road. Last September, area residents erected a new concrete vault, headstone and metal fence around the grave. The highway department installed a "Dead End" sign on the road to discourage unnecessary traffic.

Mrs. I. Williams died in 1884 and was buried where her party was encamped, a place then known as Cotton Plant. The road was built by her grave, then encompassed it when the road was widened.

Scouters honored

Jim Sawey, district auditor in Fort Worth, was awarded the Silver Beaver by the Longhorn Council of the Boy Scouts of America Feb. 25. Sawey started as a Scout leader in 1962. Leonard Albus of Littlefield, an employee of the Lubbock District, received the Silver Beaver Feb. 9 from the South Plains Council of Boy Scouts.

The award is the highest given by local Boy Scout councils to their volunteers.

Urban planners funded again

Twenty-five metropolitan planning organizations in Texas have been allocated a total of \$2.8 million by the state highway commission to fund urban transportation planning.

"We work with these organizations to develop comprehensive plans for each urban area," said Arnold Oliver, engineer-director. "The allocations are part of our federal highway dollars and may not exceed one-half percent of those funds."

These transportation planning groups represent 9.1 million people.

Oliver said each organization receives a minimum of \$25,000. The department distributes the rest of the funds based on population. The organizations also receive professional planning services through the department.

"By initiating planning at the local level, we are able to project long-run state highway needs," Oliver said. "As populations and travel patterns change, planning models are updated to reflect new trends."

"The state's road-planning efforts are based on cooperative work at every level," Oliver said. "By involving communities at early stages, we ensure that our department meets the needs of the people it serves."★
Al Zucha, Travel and Information Division

Corpus Christi takes home two beautification honors

Laniers present awards for first time in Houston

By GINA McASKILL
Travel and Information Division

Nueces County maintenance construction supervisor James McNeill received the first-place honor Oct. 19 in the Highway Beautification Awards, a continuation of the awards program started by Lady Bird Johnson in 1970.

McNeill received a plaque and \$1,000 for having done the best job of beautifying roadsides under his care of any maintenance supervisor in the state.

The Corpus Christi District also took home a second honor, the Environmental Achievement Award, given to one of the department's 24 districts for enhancement of natural beauty and exceptional environmental sensitivity.

The ceremony took place at the home of Robert and Elyse Lanier of Houston, who are now supporting the program. Lanier, a former highway commission chairman, and his wife offered in May to continue the awards after Mrs. Johnson announced she would retire her support to spend more time with family.

After a barbecue buffet and live music for the hundreds of attendees in the Lanier's spacious backyard, Robert Lanier began the awards program by reading a letter from Mrs. Johnson sending her regrets at not being able to attend.

Engineer-Director Arnold Oliver thanked the Laniers for their hospitality and support of the awards, and spoke about the boost they give to employees and to the whole state. He presented certificates to all the district nominees in attendance.

The Environmental Achievement and Twelve Months of Color awards were presented, and then each of the six finalists received a special certificate. The last award to be announced was McNeill's, who, visibly moved, pronounced it a "shock" to have been chosen. He thanked District Engineer Nino Gutierrez of Corpus Christi, his crew of 30, and his wife, Margaret.

In his closing remarks, Lanier said he was proud to be able to honor employees of "the finest state department in Texas, the finest highway department in the country, and the finest group of people to work with I've ever known."



James McNeill, left, his wife, Margaret, and Corpus Christi District Engineer Nino Gutierrez show off the awards they garnered Oct. 19 — the Highway Beautification Award, a nomination certificate and the district Environmental Achievement Award. (Photo by Geoff Appold, Travel and Information Division)

James McNeill — Winner

One of McNeill's foremost recent achievements was the creation of a bougainvillea-adorned welcome to the city at the intersection of Interstate 37 and US 181. The colorful planting thrives in the subtropical climate, requires minimal maintenance and is safe for the busy site.

McNeill was also instrumental in making an oasis among sand dunes at the entrance to Padre and Mustang Islands on Park Road 22. McNeill, who is dedicated to perpetuating native vegetation, has nearly 30 years of service to the department.

Gene C. Christian — Runner-up

Christian is Coleman County maintenance supervisor in the Brownwood District. He won the Lady Bird Johnson Award in 1982, and tries to use native plants in his work. "They look as though they belong to the land and are so much easier to care for because they don't need watering and can survive the dry season and freezing weather," Christian said.

Recently, Christian and his crew created a rock garden with native vegetation at the intersection of US 84/283 and Texas 153 east of Coleman. He has established similar gardens in the area that have also received public acclaim.

Corpus Christi District — Environmental Achievement

An outstanding project completed in District 16 this year was the creation of 40,000 square feet of bay-bottom habitat next to Park Road 22 in Nueces County. Crews transplanted sea grasses in the shallow-water area to compensate for bay-bottom habitat lost as a result of another highway project.

John Stephens — Twelve Months of Color

Stephens, Coke County maintenance supervisor in the San Angelo District, was cited for excellence in beautification, keeping his section's roadsides interesting and lovely even when the bountiful spring wildflower season passes.

Stephens won the Lady Bird Johnson Award in 1980 and has continued his superlative efforts. In the spring, US 277 is brilliant with Indian paintbrush, daisies, bluebonnets, and many other native wildflowers. Other roadsides under his jurisdiction bloom profusely due to his care in propagating flowers that can thrive in the sparse rainfall of the area.

Stephens discovered Maximilian sunflowers growing wild along a ranch road and harvested their seeds. He saw they would be an excellent addition to the US 277 roadside south of Bronte because of their long, flower-covered stems and because they bloom profusely in September and October when most other flowers have long since faded.

Charles Burks — Finalist

Burks is maintenance supervisor for northeastern Harris County in the Houston District. His section is industrial and urban, with few green areas. But he uses these areas to their maximum potential to break up the dreary industrial look, especially for visitors to Houston arriving through his area.

During 1990, Burks sowed wildflowers and established more than 400 crape myrtles and 160 sweet gums along Interstate 10. Earth forms, trees, plantings and retaining walls have made the interchange of I-45 an US 59 like a park. Burks also makes sure the rest area near Baytown on I-10 is kept inviting and attractive.

Edward Higginbotham — Finalist

One of the highlights of Higginbotham's Orange County maintenance section is the Orange traffic circle, where Texas 87 and Loop 358 come together. Carefully nurtured orange-yellow coreopsis greet many thousands of motorists each day during wildflower season.

Another gem for the Beaumont District is the median of I-10, where Higginbotham and his crew have propagated extensive fields of native flowers that also aid in erosion control.

Higginbotham, an Orange County native, has more than 27 years of service to the highway department and has been maintenance foreman for Orange County since 1982.

Randall Ralson — Finalist

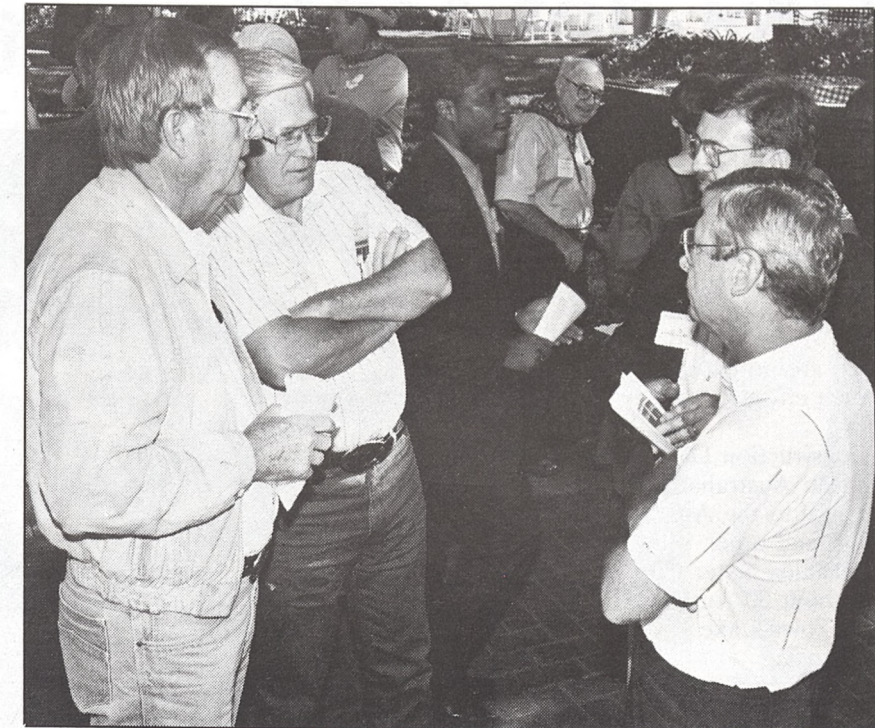
Ralson is the South Tyler maintenance supervisor in Smith County, Tyler District. Erosion in hilly East Texas is common, but due to Ralson's aggressive control methods, eroded hillsides are now covered with pampas grass or native ground cover. "A lot of erosion is manmade, and it only seems fair that we try to restore the land back to as natural a state as possible," said Ralson.

Ralson keeps a close eye on mowing in his area, making sure none is done in the spring until wildflowers have reseeded. Other highlights of his maintenance section are two picnic areas that he keeps clean, well-maintained and blended into the roadside landscape.

Ralson is also very active in the Adopt-a-Highway program. His section has the largest number of adopting groups in the Tyler District, and he personally presents a plaque to each after their first year in the litter-control program.

José Rodriguez — Finalist

A key to Rodriguez's program in southwestern Reeves County, Odessa District, is his concern for native specimens. He transplants species from areas where they might be a hazard to locations where they will enhance erosion control and roadside beauty — but only if he can find more than one plant of a species.



Bob Lanier, Arnold Oliver, Lawrence Olsen of the Texas Good Roads/Transportation Association and highway commission member Ray Stoker Jr. converse before the awards ceremony. Below, attendees examine nominees' and district entries in the beautification competition. The photo-filled entry notebooks are used by the panel of four non-departmental judges to select the six finalists and the ultimate winners. (Photos by Geoff Appold, Travel and Information Division)



A desert "garden" under Rodriguez's care is an area east of Balmorhea in the median of Interstate 10 where desert willow seedlings grow naturally. As the seedlings mature, Rodriguez and his crew transplant them to prime places along the busy highway.

Rodriguez tries to waste nothing. When a storm broke apart a cottonwood, the limbs were not hauled away, but planted to propagate new trees. Waste material from old roads and topsoil from ditches were used in eye-pleasing earthworks to protect areas from erosion and provide a place for encouraging native plants.

Nominees

The other nominees for the Highway Beautification Award for 1990 are as follows: Donald Nolen, Fannin and Delta counties, Paris District; Ralph Apodaca, Tarrant County, Fort Worth District; Fred Hill,

Wichita County, Wichita Falls District; Bill Deuschendorf, Sherman County, Amarillo District; Sam Bullion, Lubbock County, Lubbock District; Marvin Rogers, Shackelford County, Abilene District; Billy Hilliard, Bell County, Waco District; Phillip Morgan, Angelina County, Lufkin District.

Leonard Mikesch Jr., Gonzalez County, Yoakum District; Jarvis Haverland, southwest Travis County, Austin District; Melvin Baker, Medina County, San Antonio District; James Brown, Madison County, Bryan District; Milton Gurecky, Denton County, Dallas District; Roy Sullivan, Titus County, Atlanta District; Manuel Colmenero, Hudspeth County, El Paso District; and Joe Hall, Wheeler County, Childress District. ★

Tree lady puts down roots in Austin

By ROSEMARY NEFF
Travel and Information Division

As many a woman can vouch, sisters thrive on trading clothing, jewelry and other finery — expanding both their wardrobes.

The sister cities of Austin, Texas, and Adelaide, South Australia, are no exception. Native vegetation from each city will soon adorn the other.

Kathleen Ellinger, a Construction Division employee who's a naturalized Australian citizen, has been instrumental in the Austin end of the project. Ellinger and other members of the Austin-Adelaide Sister City Committee hope to plant about 50 Australian trees and shrubs along the Town Lake hike-and-bike trail by next spring.

Austin Mayor Lee Cooke planted the first tree in Adelaide's Texan Garden — a *Quercus agrifolia* — during a visit last November, in a joint ceremony with Adelaide's Lord Mayor Steve Condous.

The Texan Garden part of the Mount Lofty Botanic Gardens, established in an old quarry, also includes vegetation of Mexico and California. Climatically, the Adelaide Hills are much like southwest Texas.

The Town Lake Australian garden is awaiting clearance from the parks board and the city council. "We're going to pull this off — we'll be out digging holes and planting by next May," Ellinger said.

The garden will be created without resorting to public funds — all money and labor needed will be donated or privately raised. "I strongly believe in supporting the local and state economy and made every effort to find a Texas nursery that could supply the trees," Ellinger said. However, no Texas supplier could be found, so the committee will have to turn to Washington and Oregon.

The committee will hold fundraisers after it receives certification of its nonprofit status from the state. "This garden will be an outright gift from our committee to the people of the city of Austin," Ellinger said. The garden will be experimental for this area, so the committee wants to "keep tax dollars out of the project," she said.

"I would be very proud if the highway department could lend us some moral support and professional advice," Ellinger added. "In essence, we are part of the statewide tree-planting effort, with the bonus of introducing exotic trees that may be found to be very well suited to drought and frost."



Kathleen Ellinger of the Construction Division has great plans for these two gum trees, or eucalypts, which she hopes will soon grace the shores of Austin's Town Lake. (Photo by Gay Shackelford, Travel and Information Division)

The garden is also meant to be an expression of the cultural and geographical ties between Austin and Adelaide.

The original idea for the garden belongs to Dr. Arthur Bell, a visiting professor in botany at the University of Texas and a former director of England's famous Kew Gardens. Ellinger consulted with Bell in 1989 and has worked with Tom Randall, landscape architect for the city of Austin, in deciding which of the hundreds of types of eucalypts would suit the climatic conditions of Central Texas. "The challenge was to fund eucalypts that will survive both our long, dry summers and our killer frosts," she said.

Ellinger grew up in St. Louis, then moved to Sydney, Australia, in 1968. After 18 years abroad, she returned to the United States in 1986 for an extended visit. "The Australian gum tree has a distinct beauty all its own, and it took me several years, since I was so used to the deciduous northern hemisphere trees, to appreciate them," she said.

The trees shed their bark, not their leaves, and blossom in the winter. "They will be a welcome change from the bare winter branches along Town Lake after the garden is established," Ellinger added. ★Gina McAskill, Travel and Information Division, contributed to this story

Rattlesnakes invited to Sweetwater rest area

By ANN WYATT
Abilene District

Every March for the past 33 years, the Sweetwater Jaycees have hosted a rattlesnake roundup. They've learned a lot about the reptiles over the years, even how to use them to calm people down.

About 30 Jaycees staffed both east- and westbound rest areas on Interstate 20 near Sweetwater during the 72-hour Labor Day weekend. They offered free coffee, soft drinks, doughnuts, cookies — and the spectacle of live rattlesnakes — to entice motorists off the road for a break, helping to reduce highway accidents and fatalities.

Waymon Sowell, the highway department's Nolan County maintenance supervisor, provided assistance in obtaining hundreds of travel maps, Texas Events Calendars, Texas Travel Guides, and "Don't Mess with Texas" bumper stickers and litter bags through the Travel and Information Division. The Jaycees' guest book lists some 6,000 names and destinations of out-of-state travelers who stopped for a break, some information and maybe a peek at a live rattler.

The refreshments were free, but donations to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association were taken. More than \$1,650 was given to the local telethon. The change filled a five-gallon bucket.

Texas Jaycees staff more than 35 rest areas during that long weekend each year. Texas Jaycees president Jim Murphy said, "The Texas Jaycees founded the program over 26 years ago and other states have copied it. We realize that tourists have come to depend on us to be there for them with coffee and other refreshments, not to mention good conversation. First-timers have told Jaycees that they wish they had stopped before, because now they plan to visit our rest stops as often as they can."

On the last weekend of the summer, many travelers remember the friendly people and good rest areas in Texas — and maybe what to do if they ever confront a rattlesnake.★

Odessa's Phillips takes top PAO honor

By HARVIE JORDAN, ABC
Travel and Information Division

His eyes opened wider.
His mouth dropped open.
Richard Phillips looked in shocked disbelief at Commissioner Wayne Duddleston when the commissioner announced that Phillips had won the third annual Public Affairs Award of Excellence.

"I really didn't expect it; I was surprised," Phillips said later.

The award was presented at the annual Public Affairs Conference awards banquet Sept. 20 in Galveston.

Phillips won this year's award for his part in the "70/90 Buckle Up Odessa!" campaign to increase use of safety belts.

Duddleston was so impressed with the campaign, and its results, that he cited it as an example of effective public affairs in his remarks to the general session at Short Course in October.

Phillips ended an almost five-year tenure as Odessa district public affairs officer last June to concentrate on his duties as chief accountant in the West Texas district. That was one month after he marked a milestone of working 30 years for the department.

"I started full-time in maintenance, picking up beer cans with all the other road hands in Monahans," Phillips said. He later spent about a year as clerk and dispatcher in the district shop.

He transferred to accounting in 1963 and has been there ever since, becoming chief accountant in 1982.

"I enjoyed public affairs very much," he said. "It's an ever-changing variety of situations that keeps you busy and on your toes."

In his remarks at the awards banquet, Duddleston noted some of the judges' comments about the public affairs aspects of Phillips' entry:



Wayne Duddleston presents the 1990 Public Affairs Award of Excellence to Richard Phillips. (Photo by Geoff Appold, Travel and Information Division)

- "Well executed with good use of many communications vehicles";
- "An exceptional program, especially the way they were able to quantify their results"; and
- "Excellent campaign. The combined efforts of city and state officials made this program a true success."

Duddleston said he also thought Helen Havelka, Waco district public affairs officer,

was due special recognition for coming in a close second to Phillips. Out of a possible total 600 points, only 39 points separated first and second place in this year's competition.

Other public affairs officers nominated by their district engineer for this year's competition were Betty Best, El Paso; Billy Black, Tyler; Randall Dillard, Austin; and Bill Page, Fort Worth.

'70/90' Campaign makes success a cinch

By EVELYN HUGHES
Odessa District

Odessa is not a big place. Its has a population of just 100,000. But Odessa had a big problem, one that was helping to decrease that number every year. Less than half of all Odessans buckled up in their vehicles.

Almost 7,000 people were killed or injured in Odessa in just four years. Many weren't wearing their safety belts when their accidents occurred. In 1990, the Odessa District set out to change those habits.

In conjunction with a national commitment by safety promoters to achieve a 70 percent compliance rate with safety-belt use, a goal was set to increase usage at two levels: the district and the city. The deadline to achieve this rate of compliance was set for the end of 1990. Thus, the theme of the campaign became "70/90 Buckle Up Odessa!"

To successfully launch the campaign, the efforts of both public affairs and traffic safety personnel were required. The program was implemented with five methods: special signs, news media coverage, support of the local police department, support of the city of

Odessa and direct mail.

Dee Phillips, district traffic safety specialist, knew that in order to motivate citizens to buckle up, he first had to capture their attention. Phillips designed a sign which read "70/90," followed by a large question mark. Copies of the sign were attached to sign posts around the city.

After one week, the question mark was removed to reveal "Buckle Up Odessa." With the debut of the special signs, Dee enlisted Public Affairs Officer Richard Phillips to coordinate news coverage and answer inquiries. He organized broadcasts at all area television stations, as well as coverage in the newspaper.

Now that the secret was out, Dee and Richard received the support of other agencies. The Odessa Police Department was eager to join in, and provided public service announcements. During the highway department's Buckle Up for Love week in February, the PSAs were broadcast.

Dee once again used his design talent to create a hand-held sign for police officers that read "70/90 Buckle Up Odessa." Officers agreed to flash the sign at drivers who were not buckled up, instead of issuing a citation.

By February, the compliance rate had risen 4 percent, to 52 percent. Dee and Richard decided to reach the public in a way that had not been tried in District 6 before: direct mail. A leaflet was designed, and with the assistance of the city of Odessa, was distributed to 30,000 households with the monthly water bill. The leaflet was sent out in March, re-emphasizing the goal of the 70/90 Buckle Up campaign.

Following the direct mailing, a survey was taken by the highway department. In just five months, safety-belt usage was up to 62 percent.

In July, a second leaflet was mailed out showing the progress that had been made. And with each survey that is taken, the compliance rate has steadily risen. Each rate update is posted on the signs, below the message "70/90 Buckle Up Odessa."

District office personnel have also increased their use of the belts. In a survey taken in July, the district achieved better than 70 percent compliance in only six months, and was awarded a plaque from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The national award will recognize the district on the national "70% Honor Roll" in Washington, D.C. ★

Traffic safety plan strictly for the birds

By LONA REEVES
Travel and Information Division

Before introducing "Don't Wreck Your Life," the new statewide traffic safety campaign, the department designed a safe driving campaign strictly for the birds.

But this plan is not for just any birds. This one's for the purple martins roosting on Lake Livingston's JFK Causeway on US 190 over the Trinity River in the Lufkin District.

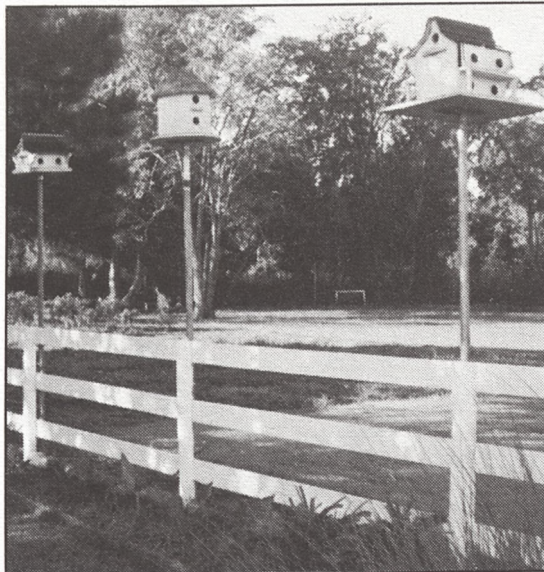
This species of swallow is particularly popular in East Texas and Louisiana. The winged celebrities are tourist attractions as travelers follow their migration to South America. The birds' annual flight plan calls for a summer layover in the region to hatch and raise their young.

Tourists marvel at the sight of red- and white martin houses dotting the fences and lining the roadways of the region. Hundreds of thousands of the purple martins summer there. And about 20,000 of the birds make the causeway their summer home.

But increasing traffic on the 25-year-old JFK Causeway has turned the structure into an eternal resting place for many of the birds. The birds' flight pattern as they alight or leave the roost has become a collision course. The birds fly in large, tight flocks and flap right over the guardrail and into vehicles.

It's only a problem during the 15 minutes of sunrise and sunset when the birds go out and return to the roost at the top of the morning and the end of the day. But that is enough time for an average of 20 birds to find themselves merging beak to fender with unforgiving vehicles with each changing of the sun.

To make their takeoffs and landings a bit smoother, James Blackburn, Lufkin public affairs officer, said the district has put up



Martins roost cozily in houses like these in East Texas, but sometimes the fate they meet on area roads is anything but cozy. (Photo by James Blackburn, Lufkin District)

"Watch out for birds" signs on the bridge. The signs are similar to "ice on bridge" signs in shape and size, but are used from June to August.

Speed also kills. An 18-wheeler can splatter as many as 100 birds in those dangerous twilight minutes. Drivers are asked to slow to 15 mph as they cross the bridge. Blackburn says that slowing motorists down saved quite a few birds this summer.

Slowing not only lessens the jeopardy for the purple martins but also eases the stress and potential hazard for motorists who pass through the martin roost zone.

Ken Bohuslav, Highway Design Division, says this isn't the first time a department structure proved challenging for birds. The

environmental engineer said the brown pelican experiences some trying times flying over the Queen Isabella Causeway in the Pharr District.

Like the purple martin, the brown pelican finds the going tough only at a certain time of the year. Strong winter winds make travel difficult for the big bird, according to Pat Reynolds, assistant public affairs officer. The pelican usually flies under the structure, except during a "norther."

When the north wind blows more than 35 mph, the bird changes its pattern and tries to fly over the bridge. Reynolds said it stops behind the concrete median barrier, using it as a shield from the wind. Fortunately, the strong wind is uncommon.

The pelican is on the endangered species list. In the winter, the department erects a yellow warning sign reading, "Watch out for pelicans." Reynolds said the district also proposes to mount a changeable message board to inform motorists if a pelican is on the bridge or if an accident occurs because motorists stop to aid or watch the bird.

In Austin, another flying creature has found a way to coexist with a bridge. Bats — the largest urban colony of bats in the world — roost in crevices of the Congress Avenue bridge on Loop 275 and have become a nightly spectacle in season. Tourists and residents assemble at sunset to see the bats fly out over Town Lake.

Bohuslav says every March up to 750,000 bats fly in to spend their summer days sleeping in the inch-wide openings under the structure. By September, when the Mexican freetail bats fly away, their number has doubled to 1.5 million. "That's the largest colony in a man-made structure, larger even than the colony at Carlsbad Caverns," explained Bohuslav. He also said that another colony of 250,000 stops off to summer under a Loop 306 bridge in San Angelo.

Resident engineer Teague a Waco first

By HELEN HAVELKA
Waco District

Sharlotte Teague was looking for an opportunity to return to a residency office when she transferred to the Waco District. But little did she know that eight months later she would be placed in charge of a residency.

Teague is the resident engineer for Coryell and Hamilton counties, overseeing the construction and maintenance operations of 613 miles of state highway. She is also the Waco District's first woman resident engineer.

"Ever since I started working in the residency, I have wanted to be a resident engineer. I am really happy to have this opportunity," said Teague, who replaced Mark Wooldridge after he was accepted into the department's master of civil engineering program at Texas A&M University.

Teague began her tenure with the department in the Abilene District in 1982, assigned to the residency office in Abilene. She received her engineering-in-training there and, after obtaining her engineering license in 1987, she was promoted to assistant resident engineer. Two and a half years later, she was assigned to serve as the assistant to the design manager in the Abilene District office.

Teague transferred to the Waco District in January, where she was the assistant resident engineer in Bell County before her recent appointment.

"Her experience in design, construction and overall residency operations has provided her with an excellent background," Waco District Engineer Kirby Pickett said.

Teague has also been involved in design training, teaching in Level I Design in the West Region and Level II Design in Austin.

"I enjoyed working in the residency because you can deal with all areas of roadway projects, from design to construction. In the district office, you specialize in a certain area," explained Teague. "I am not ready to settle for just design, and I don't mean that negatively, because I am not ready to settle for just construction, either."

Teague welcomes the opportunity to work with maintenance activities in Coryell and Hamilton counties. "I want to work with maintenance supervisors, because I think we need to be involved together," she said. "It would be a joint effort to design, construct and maintain the highways within our counties. And I feel we can eventually help each other out by keeping each other informed and getting involved."

Along with new job responsibilities, Teague must adjust to the difference between the Waco and Abilene districts. "I have

always been told that districts have differences, and they do. I really appreciate that the Waco District is willing to listen to the ideas or different approaches that I gained through my experience in Abilene," said Teague. "Sometimes we agree and sometimes we don't, but basically it comes down to the sharing of ideas and learning from each other. And that's what's important."

Teague's career with the department got off to an inauspicious start. "I was really never told where I was going to be working and, on my first day, I came to work in my business suit (heels, skirt and jacket). I was taken to the field where I met the other inspectors out on the projects," recalled Teague.

"During the day I kept remembering a picture I saw of this woman in a magazine article with a hard hat and plans tucked under her arm. She was calm, cool and smiling. But somehow, by the end of my tour that day, I didn't seem to quite measure up to that picture of the woman."

Teague said she feels little pressure being the first woman resident engineer in the Waco District. "I feel more pressure as an engineer because I want to be a good engineer," she said. "I know I am going to make mistakes, but I want to do the best possible job I can. I am not willing to quit learning yet."

TECH TRADE

Jiggle bars jolt jaded jalopy jockeys

By EVELYN HUGHES
Odessa District

Interstate 10 brings many things to West Texas. It brings tourists and commerce, and serves as a lifeline to Pecos County.

Unfortunately, many weary travelers make their *last* stop on this highway. These are the drivers who become fatigued and fall asleep at the wheel. When fatigue is coupled with monotonous desert scenery, the combination can be deadly.

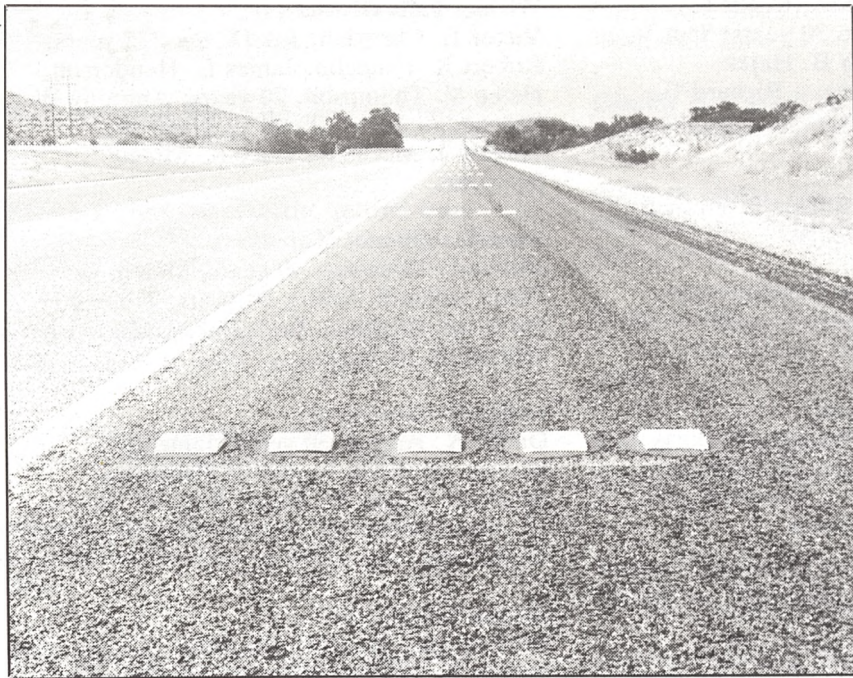
Between January and September of 1989, 84 accidents occurred on the 101 miles of Interstate through Pecos County, in the Odessa District. Seventy-six of these accidents involved only one car and were often caused by driver fatigue and inattention.

Steve Poage, resident engineer in Fort Stockton, believes that there is a way to reduce the number of deaths that occur on I-10. "There are too many fatalities," Poage said. "The key to lowering that number is by increasing driver awareness."

District 6 set a goal of finding the most effective way to prevent these accidents. To reach this goal, four shoulder treatments are being tried.

On a six-mile stretch of I-10, traffic buttons have been placed on the lane edgelines. The yellow and white buttons are one-sixteenth of an inch thick and 4 inches in diameter. They are placed at 5-foot intervals on the shoulder. When a car drives over them, it creates a noise that should arouse any sleepy driver.

The second safety device already installed is jiggle-bar tile 1 inch thick. Five of these tiles are placed perpendicular to the white



To decrease single-vehicle accidents, the Odessa District is testing jiggle-bar tiles such as these to rouse drowsy drivers who drift onto the shoulder of the road. (Photo by Evelyn Hughes, Odessa District)

stripe, and three tiles are placed perpendicular to the yellow stripe at a spacing of 40 feet. The effect is the same as the traffic buttons: The noise keeps the driver awake and focuses his attention on the road.

The third method will be installed in December — two rows of yellow and white buttons five feet apart, a pattern repeated every 50 feet. On the right shoulder, the rows consist of seven buttons, while on the left shoulder there are five buttons on each row.

The last method to be tested uses a 4-inch-by-12-inch Carsonite rumble strip one-half inch thick. The profile is similar to a reflective pavement marker, which should minimize horizontal impact loads on the strip

and any effect it would have on steering. The rumble strips will be installed by maintenance personnel. The strips are placed on the right shoulder in rows of three, 40 feet apart.

Each of these methods uses a simple safety device to arouse a sleepy driver. By placing them at different intervals and in different patterns, the most effective method can be determined. Each of the projects will be evaluated to see which is most effective. That method will then be implemented in other rural areas where one-vehicle accidents are common.

Engineering students at Texas Tech University are studying shoulder treatments designed to prevent one-vehicle accidents. Five districts are also studying the problem in rural areas. ★

CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

- 1 Strategic Highway Research Program Data Collection "Refresher" Workshop, Lubbock, D-10R
- 7-8 Construction Engineers' Meeting, Wichita Falls, D-6
- 12-13 CIS Contact Individuals Meeting, Austin, D-9GS
- 13-14 Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
- 15-16 Rural Public Transportation Workshop, Austin, D-11
- 15-16 Traffic Safety Meeting, San Antonio, D-18STO
- 28 District Laboratory Supervisors Meeting, Austin, D-9
- 29 Commission Hearing and Meeting, Austin

DECEMBER

- 3 Division Heads Meeting, Austin, BCB
- 11-12 Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
- 20 Commission Meeting, Austin

JANUARY

- 8-9 Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
- 9-11 District Engineers/Division Heads Meeting, Austin, BCB

FEBRUARY

- 5-6 Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6

MARCH

- 5-6 Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6

APRIL

- 3-4 District Laboratory-Engineering Personnel Meeting, Wichita Falls, D-9
- 9-11 Maintenance Conference, Austin, D-18M
- 11-12 Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
- 22-26 National Conference on Transportation Planning Application, Dallas, D-10P
- 30-31 Traffic Safety Training, Lago Vista, D-18STO (continued through May 3)

For the most complete and up-to-date calendar listings, see PIC (Public Information Coordinator), available on computers throughout the department. For more information, see your automation administrator.

Earth tip

Keep a mug or glass at work for beverages instead of using paper or foam cups.

This month in department history

- 1955: In the fall, the per diem travel allowance was \$7 for overnight travel of less than 24 hours and more than 12. For an employee traveling more than 6 hours but not sleeping away from home, only costs of meals were allowed — not to exceed \$4.
- 1982: The award-winning Pennybacker Bridge carrying Loop 360 across Lake Austin opened Nov. 29.

SERVICE AWARDS

Administration

Henry A. Thomason Jr., 30 years;
Madison G. Strickland, 10 years.

Automation

Barbara A. Fannin, 35 years; Curtis L. Largent, Beverly P. Tonn, 30 years; Sam V. Jones Jr., 15 years; Judith B. Hajek, William E. Spooner, 10 years; Richard E. Herrington, Christopher K. Tsui, five years.

Bridge

Don D. Allen, 10 years; Robert F. Groleau, Andrew J. Jackson, five years.

Construction and Contract Administration

José L. Hernandez, 20 years; Jorge R. Besa, five years.

Equipment and Procurement

James E. Dye, 30 years; William A. Harty, 25 years; Elizabeth F. Jaime, 20 years; Sandra R. Bailey, Gerald L. Daughety, Robert H. Emerson, five years.

Finance

Roger B. Cramer, Bernice S. Tesmer, Lanny C. Wadle, 10 years; Susan D. McQueen, five years.

Highway Design

Robert A. Reed Jr., Charles R. Roessing, 25 years.

Human Resources

Hilton H. Hagan, 25 years; Leonard E. Caudle, Howard E. Houston, Jeanne E. Huston, Debra B. Westbrook, five years.

Maintenance and Operations

Patricia E. Fox, 10 years.

Materials and Tests

Darrell G. Collier, Bunny M. Neible, Rosalinda Z. Trevino, 10 years; Elma G. Carrillo, John B. Rhoades, five years.

Motor Vehicles

Jim L. Bradley, 30 years; Robert S. Henke, Zona B. Mason, Sherryn Y. Voight, 25 years; John G. Castello, Kathleen T. Seale, Mary M. Simpson, 20 years; Michael Cawfield, 15 years; Deborah A. Bartlett, Debbie R. Beckham, Candelaria J. Rayos, 10 years; Alma L. Almendarez, Olivia Calvo, five years.

Public Transportation

Karen M. Supak, five years.

Right of Way

James H. Raby Jr., 30 years.

Transportation Planning

Willard J. Peavy Jr., five years.

Travel and Information

Richard T. Roberts, 25 years; Alberto G. Rubio, five years.

Paris District (1)

Bobby D. Joyce, Anita H. Tippit, 30 years; Steve L. Brown, Lewis W. Clement, Daniel R. Posey, 25 years; Durwood L. Sheppard, 20 years.

Fort Worth District (2)

Edwin L. Chenault, David L. Johnston, 35 years; Ronald W. Womack, 30 years; Charles R. Burkett, Samuel C. Streun, 20 years; Wallace E. Ewell, Janice L.

Jennings, Timothy L. Robbins, Carl G. Young, 10 years; David A. Boone, John K. Hornback, Kirk A. Lee, Lillian D. Logan, Dianna F. Noble, five years.

Wichita Falls District (3)

Victor E. Christian, Joe D. Lee, 35 years; Robert K. Fenoglio, James E. Henderson, Helen V. Thompson, 20 years; Anthony W. Breyen, 10 years; David C. Galliton, Tammy J. McClung, Gary K. Miner, five years.

Amarillo District (4)

Melvin G. Fowlkes, 40 years; Melvin G. Grant, John R. Willis, 30 years; Tommy H. Hickman, 25 years; A. J. Baker, Marion E. Schroeder, 20 years.

Lubbock District (5)

David W. Abney, 30 years; James W. McCan, 25 years; Steven L. Ferguson, 20 years; Wayne E. Fagin, Jesse D. Wood, 10 years; Lehmon C. Jacobs, John T. Tatum, five years.

Odessa District (6)

Jesus Nunez, 35 years; Marshall D. Huffman, 30 years; Bernardo A. Magallanez, 25 years; Philip Corrales, Joyce A. Ramsey, 10 years; Elizabeth S. Crawford, five years.

San Angelo District (7)

Robert L. Nunley, Edgar R. Poehls, Charles J. Wearden, 20 years; Alfred E. King, Michael A. Sepeda, 10 years.

Abilene District (8)

Oleta C. Clifton, Marvin L. Rogers, 20 years; Johnny J. Arellano, Hespergild O. Munoz, 10 years.

Waco District (9)

Billy V. Gann, Bennett L. Glaser, Bobby J. McNairy, 35 years; Joe H. Ratliff, 25 years; Herbert Almanza, William J. Meyer, Edward Westerman, 20 years; Glenn E. Psencik, 15 years.

Tyler District (10)

Robert E. Ward, 30 years; George E. Kirkwood, Travis E. Miles, 25 years; James L. Beard, Brenda C. McClenny, 10 years; Thomas G. Edwards, James L. Hill, John W. Hill, Lucy F. Winn, five years.

Lufkin District (11)

James E. Holmes, 35 years; Tommie J. Steptoe, 30 years; John E. Brown, Jimmy C. Gresham, 25 years; James L. Athey Jr., Walter G. Fortune, Stephen W. Sublett, 20 years; William C. Johniken, Timothy A. Thompson, 10 years; Daron W. Webb, five years.

Houston District (12)

Lee De Fork, Joseph W. Lightsey Jr., Ronald J. Lindsay, 30 years; Vergie M. Meigs, Lloyd Robinson Jr., George A. Stowe Sr., Sylvia O. Warren, 25 years; Gilbert James, Charles M. Jones, Nicolas Saucedo Jr., 20 years; Michael C. Kennedy, 15 years; Greta F. Blankenship, Merrill G. Culver Jr., Helga H. Elder, John M. Gaynor, Alvaris Jackson Jr., Leroy C. Johnson Jr., Curtis A. Long, Cynthia G. Price, Chu K. Vu, 10 years; Linda A. Brown, Gary L. Buss, Douglas C. Day, Albert J. Farrell, Carolyn D. Huser, Robert W. Kluna Jr., Thaddeus S. Lott, Martha S. Miller, Daniel E. Norman, Dotun Ogundare, Forrest F. Perkins Jr.,

Khosrow E. Pourian, José M. Ramirez, Fred M. Reaves, Marvin E. Wheeler Jr., Donnie L. Woods Jr., five years.

Yoakum District (13)

Victor R. Kneifel, 30 years; Melba K. Bucek, Cornell W. Giese, Otto O. Kocian Jr., Dolores A. Prasek, 25 years; Morris, W. Bacon, Clifford L. Rugeley, 20 years; Daryl L. Honc, 10 years.

Austin District (14)

Erven Heiligmann, Weldon R. Johnson, 35 years; William J. McCoy, 30 years; Ruben Lang Jr., Patsy K. Warren, John H. Washington, 20 years; Ronald T. Bailey, Shelly W. Easley, Higinio S. Rodriguez, 10 years; Joe D. Brett, Sherman M. Coots III, Donald E. Nyland, five years.

San Antonio District (15)

James L. Huble, 35 years; Elias H. Jimenez Jr., Harold Ott, Wilbert W. Schimcek, 25 years; Robert L. Fink, Fabian L. Jarzombek, Charlie Payne Jr., Billy J. Truelove, 20 years; George W. Gorman, Michael R. Maloch, Lazaro J. Placencia, 10 years; Robert C. Boyte, Terry G. Gentry, Cheryl L. Ives, Paul Kieke, Edward W. Martinez, Troy D. Pierce, Cheryl A. Tanner, five years.

Corpus Christi District (16)

Carl W. Eller, 25 years; Clifford C. Word, 20 years; Rudy L. Gomez, 10 years; Donald R. Wisian, Jesus A. Yzaguirre, five years.

Bryan District (17)

Raymond W. Kurtz, 35 years; Pat Bruce, 30 years; Willie J. Jackson, Bernard A. Pivonka, Steve M. Simecek, 10 years; Horace Nelms Jr., Brent A. Templeton, five years.

Dallas District (18)

Margie R. Edwards, 35 years; Alford R. Eubanks, 30 years; Timothy B. Cabaniss, Johnny F. Hollifield, 25 years; Betty B. Bullard, Charles T. Hervey, Charles E. Massay, Terry L. May, Van C. Page, Alfredo Rodriguez, 10 years; Kevin R. Bartley, Johnnie Burr, Johnny L. Caldwell, Edward L. Chisenhall, Robert W. Echols, William J. Owen, five years.

Atlanta District (19)

Michael C. Hamilton, 10 years; Darlene M. Baker, five years.

Beaumont District (20)

Royce E. Brannen, Carlton, R. Miller, Littlejohn C. Rhymes, 30 years; Lawrence McCartney, Hubert L. Whalen, Thomas H. Wray, 20 years; Richard L. Clow, John C. Sims Jr., Phillip W. Young, 10 years; Robert B. Hulgán, Grady O. Simmons II, five years.

Pharr District (21)

Dionicio Caro, 30 years; Ted A. Falls, Robert J. Miller, 25 years; Reynaldo Llanes, 10 years.

Brownwood District (23)

Fredric H. Greer, 25 years; Avery B. McLaughlin, David T. Newbern, 20 years; Tommie R. Jones, 10 years.

El Paso District (24)

Genovevo L. Castro, 30 years; Ben E. Sanders, 25 years; Robert D. Phelps, 10 years; Jessica N. Rodriguez, Edmundo Valencia Jr., five years.

Childress District (25)

Wayne C. Proffitt, 30 years; Russell G. Schaefer, Bobby G. Williams, 20 years; James L. Bettis, Gregory C. Cheyne, five years.

IN MEMORIAM

Smith L. Barrett, Cameron, retired from Bryan District in 1972, died Sept. 11, 1990.

Olen A. Birdsong, Kaufman, retired from Dallas District in 1977, died Sept. 4, 1990.

Berthold C. Borchert, Lockhart, retired from Austin District in 1976, died Aug. 2, 1990.

T. Brady, New Braunfels, retired from San Antonio District in 1972, died July 26, 1990.

Murse Brown, Dallas, retired from Dallas District in 1965, died Sept. 3, 1990.

James E. Carter, Jasper, retired from Beaumont District in 1988, died Aug. 23, 1990.

Ralph L. Daugherty, Littleton, Colo., retired from Abilene District in 1974, died May 30, 1990.

Helen E. Davis, Austin, retired from Transportation Planning Division in 1982, died July 18, 1990.

Kennith D. Deaver, Abilene, retired from Abilene District in 1976, died Aug. 24, 1990.

John R. Edwards, May, retired from Wichita Falls District in 1963, died July 20, 1990.

Scott W. Gifford, Freeport, retired from Houston District in 1958, died July 15, 1990.

Clem M. Gordon, San Antonio, retired from San Antonio District in 1971, died July 17, 1990.

John B. Hager, Panhandle, retired from Amarillo District in 1980, died Sept. 3, 1990.

Clifton J. Haynes, Van, retired from Tyler District in 1973, died Aug. 3, 1990.

Ira L. Houston, Mesquite, retired from Dallas District in 1973, died June 12, 1990.

Darleen P. Jackson, Austin, retired from Equipment & Procurement Division in 1973, died Aug. 25, 1990.

Nathan E. Jacobs, Garland, retired from Dallas District in 1974, died May 16, 1990.

O.B. Johnson, Abilene, retired from Abilene District in 1979, died Sept. 7, 1990.

Robert G. Keyser, Austin, retired from Construction Division in 1978, died Aug. 14, 1990.

Calvin Knippel, La Grange, retired from Yoakum District in 1987, died Sept. 14, 1990.

Howard Moneysmith, Austin, retired from Transportation Planning Division in 1983, died June 7, 1990.

Gordon L. Moore, Longview, retired from Paris District in 1962, died May 18, 1990.

J. J. Morgensen, Austin, retired from Odessa District in 1976, died May 29, 1990.

Douglas A. Nettleton, Dallas, retired from Dallas District in 1963, died Aug. 29, 1990.

Cleveland E. Overton, Austin, retired from Equipment and Procurement Division in 1980, died June 22, 1990.

Claudis D. Payne, El Paso, retired from El Paso District in 1981, died June 19, 1990.

Stella D. Rider, Gorman, retired from Materials and Tests Division in 1987, died July 2, 1990.

Orlin E. Riggs, Stephenville, retired from Fort Worth District in 1974, died Aug. 1, 1990.

Florian A. Rutkowski, Converse, retired from San Antonio District in 1978, died July 23, 1990.

Ralph V. Skinner, Gilmer, retired from Tyler District in 1981, died July 1, 1990.

John B. Townley, Walnut Springs, retired from Waco District in 1987, died June 12, 1990.

Randolph O. Wall, Fredericksburg, retired from El Paso District in 1975, died Aug. 1, 1990.

Carl E. Wilkinson, Abilene, retired from Abilene District in 1984, died June 17, 1990.

Felix York, Olney, retired from Wichita Falls District in 1970, died June 15, 1990.

RETIREMENTS

Equipment and Procurement

John J. Anguiano, Jr., Reprographics Equipment Supervisor III, 30 years; Ester M. Anderson, Building Custodian I, 15 years.

Materials and Tests

Zepha C. Kugle, Key Entry Operator IV, 25 years.

Transportation Planning

Bobby R. Antilley, Engineer IV, 31 years.

Maintenance and Operations

Damon D. Naumann, Staff Services Officer I, 36 years; John H. Gerling, Engineer V, 35 years; Herman E. Haenel, Engineer V, 34 years.

Paris District (1)

Wanda G. Vaughan, Administrative Technician IV, 33 years.

Fort Worth District (2)

Lloyd E. Slawson, Engineering Technician IV, 28 years.

Wichita Falls District (3)

Arnold D. Winn, Assistant Foreman, 42 years.

Amarillo District (4)

Johnny C. Stepp, District Roadway Maintenance Superintendent II, 32 years.

Lubbock District (5)

Edgar A. Smith, Engineering Technician V, 42 years; Chester H. Haney, Maintenance Technician III, 23 years.

Odessa District (6)

John W. Allen, Maintenance Construction Superintendent II, 39 years; Julian G. Ybarra, Maintenance Technician III, 12 years; Olive B. Farmer, Administrative Technician II, 10 years.

Abilene District (8)

Dorothy L. Whisenhunt, Administrative Technician IV, 36 years; Lonnie K. Taylor Jr., Planner I, 33 years; Thomas J. Miller, Maintenance Technician III, 10 years.

Tyler District (10)

Harland E. Cannon, Maintenance Technician III, 26 years.

Lufkin District (11)

Bennie R. Merchant, Maintenance Technician III, 23 years.

Yoakum District (13)

Frederick L. Eilert, Engineering Technician IV, 35 years.

San Antonio District (15)

Robert W. Zook, Maintenance Technician III, 31 years; Robert Gonzales Jr., Drafter II, 26 years.

Bryan District (17)

Daniel T. Ayers, Maintenance Construction Supervisor I, 36 years; Horace H. Mathews, Engineering Technician V, 36 years.

Dallas District (18)

John W. Hawkins, District Roadway Maintenance Superintendent II, 25 years.

Beaumont District (20)

Billy J. Worden, Engineering Technician V, 41 years.

El Paso District (24)

Rosendo J. Hernandez, Assistant Foreman, 30 years.

Drive safely. Don't wreck your life.

State Department of Highways and Public Transportation.

LETTERS

On June 29, my son-in-law had an accident. We were both pulling trailers at the time about 13 miles north of Lampasas. Immediately **Winston B. Baker** came to our aid. He called Lampasas and summoned a wrecker for us. Thanks to Mr. Baker for making an accident more bearable. He is an asset to your department and we are pleased we met this nice man.

Mrs. Jack Stanley
Poolville

Baker is a maintenance construction supervisor in the Lampasas County Maintenance Section.

On April 19, I witnessed the most beautiful road scene and wanted everyone to become aware of it.

Interstate Highway 45 between Conroe and Huntsville has roadsides covered with gorgeous flowers. Surely, this is the highway department's contribution to Earth Day.

The naturally-wooded esplanade between Conroe and Willis is also nice, featuring shades of green from many different trees. And while you're looking, observe the everyday Earth Day work done over the years by us foresters. Mile upon mile of forests, both pine and hardwood line the roads. The only detraction is the occasional trash that we citizens throw out.

Thank you people of the Texas highway department for a fine highway, the beautiful scenery, and a job well done.

Henry E. Steitz
Conroe

I want to tell you how much we appreciated **Juan Carlos Reynoso's** help in changing the flat tire we had. He would not take any pay. I was having a bad time of it. I am 82 years of age and not familiar with the tools of our new car.

Please thank Mr. Reynoso for his courtesy.

W. B. Wylie
Dallas

Reynoso is the photographer for the Dallas District.

*This July 20 letter was addressed to **Manuel Morales**, assistant maintenance section supervisor at the Pine Springs Maintenance Site, El Paso District.*

Thanks to you and your staff for your excellent work and cooperation on the Frijole Fire. Your willingness to assist us with highway traffic and signing was greatly appreciated. This was the largest fire in the history of the Guadalupe Mountains National Park, and brought over 750 people to Pine Springs.

Because of dedicated people like yourself, the fire was successfully suppressed and the damage to the unique cultural and natural resources of the park were kept at a minimum.

Please accept our sincere appreciation for going the extra mile.

Larry Henderson
Superintendent,
Guadalupe Mountains
National Park

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