

TRANSPORTATION news

State Department of Highways and Public Transportation

October 1990



What's inside . . .

Don't wreck your life: That's what the department's new safety campaign aims to tell drivers through vignettes featuring "guys next door" whose carelessness causes fatal accidents.

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As chief of the district with the highest construction volume and largest population, Milton Dietert shares his experiences and goals in this month's "Conversation."

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To promote environmental awareness, a regular column by the Highway Design Division makes its debut this month.

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The folks in Materials and Tests have some short, new friends — courtesy of Austin's Adopt-a-School program. D-9ers have "adopted" Lucy Read Elementary School, a fifth-grade center.

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A letter in *Texas Highways* 12 years ago sparked a correspondence that culminated in a meeting last summer between Randy Beck of the Maintenance and Operations Division and Adam Kopera of Warsaw, Poland.

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On our cover:

A camera crew films "Dave Careless" in one of the first TV spots for the department's new traffic safety campaign: "Don't wreck your life." Three spots premiered over the Labor Day weekend, historically the deadliest holiday period. (Photo courtesy of GSD&M Advertising)



What has four legs, four wheels and a determination to contribute to a cure for diabetes? Ask Bart Kolodziejczak and Ken Forrest of the San Angelo District. See story, page 10. (Photo by Gene Hirschfelt, San Angelo District)

TRANSPORTATION news

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Editor Rosemary Neff
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Gina McAskil

From the Engineer- Director



Probably no issue has affected our society as strongly as the question of equal opportunity. Whether approached in financial, emotional or spiritual terms, it's a powerful problem with the potential to divide and embitter, or to heal and make whole.

In recent weeks, you've probably seen a number of news stories that have questioned the department's commitment to equal opportunity.

It's important for you to know the whole story, to be aware of the progress we're making and the efforts we're taking. I urge you not to become discouraged about the long road ahead.

And there is a long road ahead — no denying it. When I accepted this position a year ago, I believed I could make a difference in improving the department's record in the hiring and promotion of minorities and women. I still believe it. But I've learned that it doesn't happen overnight.

This department has a long tradition of promoting from within its own ranks. That policy, quite logically, gives the advantage to people with experience in our procedures and knowledge of our policies. It also allows us to reward dedication and hard work.

For a long time, there weren't many women or minorities available for in-house promotion. But their numbers are growing, and they're moving up in the system as they've gained experience and earned leadership opportunities.

We're making conscious efforts to improve our current standing and to provide for cultural diversity in our future, too.

These efforts will take a sincere commitment by all managers. It's not enough to take an interest just because of political pressure. If we are to succeed in

our affirmative action goals, we must — each of us — truly believe it's the right thing to do.

If we don't take advantage of talent, wherever we find it, we're cheating not only those talented people but also the department, and, of course, the taxpaying public. We will not lower our performance standards — but we don't have to. We simply need to be sure that we give all our people the same advantages in training and experience.

We have many types of jobs in this department that require a variety of backgrounds. We should be diligent in seeing that minorities and women have equal access to all jobs for which they're qualified, whether in engineering or non-engineering disciplines.

Yet, it's important to point out, as I told the legislative committee in Sunset hearings last month, that engineering and science have not traditionally been the curricula of choice for women and minorities.

In 1988, nationwide, there were 270 black graduates with civil engineering or technology degrees ranging from associate to doctoral levels. There were 378 Hispanics. And we have to compete nationally for this pool.

One way we're seeking to expand the pool is through our involvement with the Texas Alliance for Minorities in Engineering. In every district, our engineers are encouraged to get involved with students in junior high and high school, to introduce them to careers that may open new worlds for them. Even if they don't come to work for us, we may encourage a young woman or man to enter a field that will be personally rewarding and contribute to the public good.

We're looking well into the future when we work with these teen-agers, but it's an investment that may pay off both for us and for society as it struggles toward justice in the work force.

I'm proud that our department is a part of forging that future.

New travel centers on tap

Nine Texas Travel Information Centers will be built or rehabilitated over the next 10 years. Highway commission members approved the construction program at their August meeting.

At the top of the list on the capital improvement plan is replacement of the Denison Travel Information Center. The center closed when highway reconstruction on US 75/69 required the land on which the center sat. The Travel and Information Division (D-16) looked for a temporary location from which to offer travel counseling and hospitality activities, but no suitable site was available. The new center will be near the Red River bridge.

Other centers to be replaced are at Anthony, on Interstate 10 at the New Mexico border; Orange, on I-10 at the Louisiana border; and Waskom, on I-20 at the Louisiana border.

Scheduled for rehabilitation are the centers at Texarkana, Wichita Falls, Amarillo, Laredo and Langtry.

"Texas created the idea of information centers in 1936, when we were preparing to greet visitors to Texas' Centennial celebration," said Milton Meharg, director of D-16's Travel Services Section. "Now, many states have surpassed Texas in the construction of ultramodern, functionally designed information centers."

Five of the Texas centers are 30 years old and their design is obsolete, Meharg said. Three are 22 years old and can't adequately serve the daily traffic volume.

Meharg said that all nine of the centers scheduled for improvement lack facilities for disabled visitors. **Rosemary Neff, Travel and Information Division**

Short Course approaches

An old tradition has some new twists this year.

When hordes of department personnel descend on College Station Oct. 16-18 for the 64th Annual Highway and Transportation Short Course, a few changes will greet them.

Parking at Texas A&M University, increasingly scarce the last few years, will be even scarcer this time around because of construction. Parking will be available at the conference center lot for 50 cents an hour or \$4 a day. The university encourages those who drive to take passengers. Buses also will run between hotels and campus in the morning and afternoon Monday through Thursday.

Because of limits on transportation, special arrangements have been made for lunch at Duncan Dining Hall. A buffet-style meal will be available for \$5, paid at the door.

Advance registration also was adopted this year, to streamline the wait upon arrival at the Rudder Conference Center.

Another new feature will be presentation of the first Raymond E. Stotzer Jr. Award, named in honor of the late engineer-director. That award, to be presented at the general session Oct. 16, joins the Dewitt C. Greer, Gibb Gilchrist, Luther DeBerry and Russell H. Perry awards in recognizing individuals who have contributed to transportation.

Also at the general session, Extra Mile Awards will be presented to five department employees who risked their own safety in heroic efforts to save others' lives.

Frank Francois, executive director of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, will be the keynote speaker at the general session.

Twenty-six half-day sessions will be offered between 1:30 p.m. on Oct. 16 and noon on Oct. 18. Topics include the Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1992, special topics for young engineers and for young professionals, state and federal funding issues, roadway design, environmental considerations, pavement management, traffic safety and construction quality. **Rosemary Neff, Travel and Information Division**

Traffic safety program approved

A \$5 million statewide highway safety program was approved by the highway commission in its August meeting.

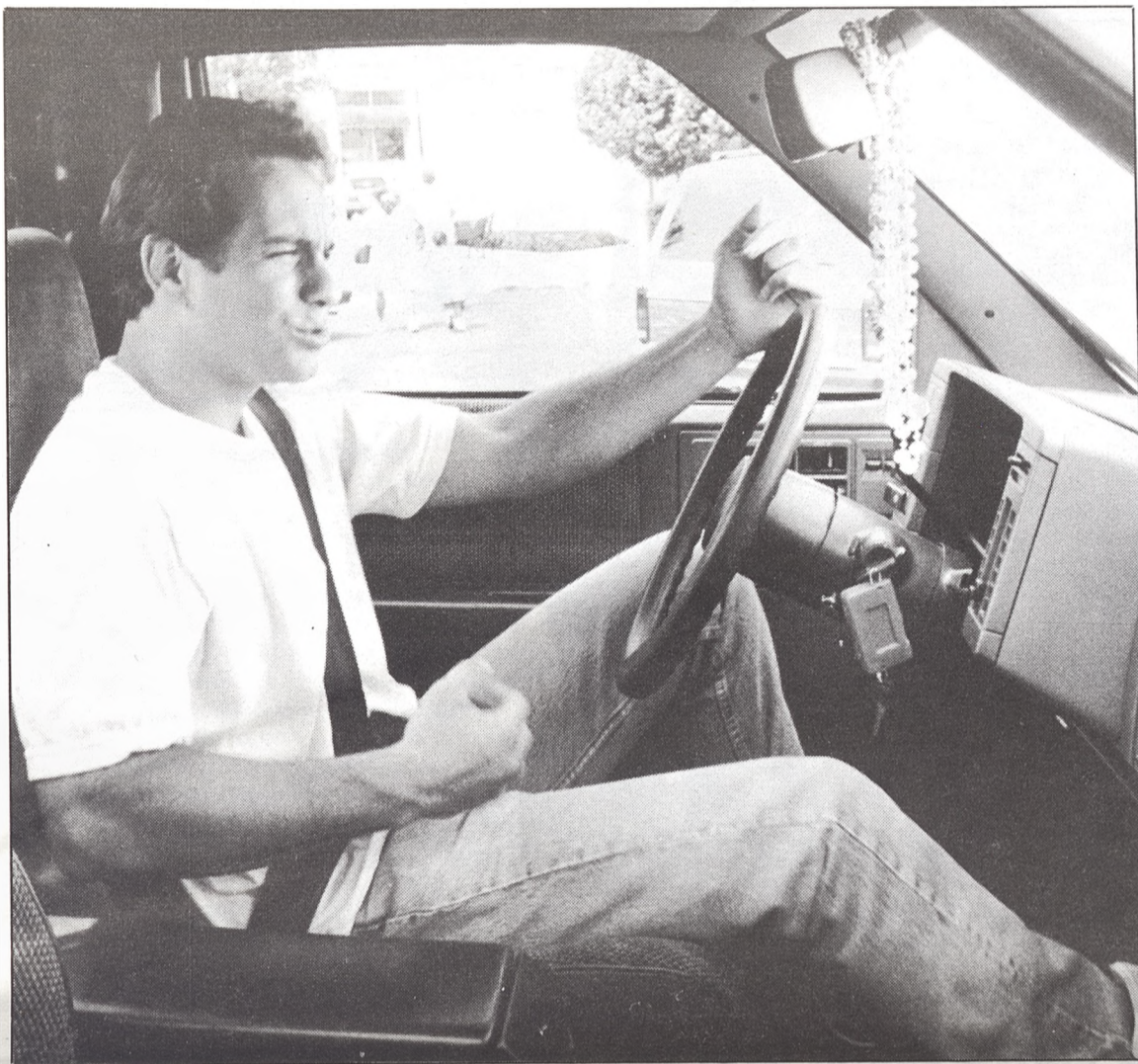
The program allows for the funding of small projects generally costing less than \$250,000 and complements a federally funded hazard-elimination program.

Improvements include safety lighting, intersection improvement and the installation or upgrade of traffic signals.

"These projects are considered small only by their cost," said Engineer-Director Arnold Oliver. "When it comes to providing greater safety for motorists or a reduction in property damage, there are no small projects."

Oliver said that projects will be submitted by highway districts based on accident data. **Roger Polson, Travel and Information Division**

New ad campaign aims at careless driver



"Dave Careless," is one of the boy-next-door types who are the target of a new traffic safety campaign. (Photo courtesy of GSD&M)

By **KAREN LeFEVRE**
Travel and Information Division

"Dave didn't like the song on the radio. So he killed a little girl."

Only a monster would kill a child because he and some disc jockey didn't share the same taste in music. Right? Wrong. The death could come in a traffic accident, and Dave could be the boy next door.

That's what the highway department and GSD&M Advertising found out while conducting research for the new traffic safety campaign, "Don't Wreck Your Life," which features "Dave" and two other clean-cut young Texans.

The contract for the \$3 million ad campaign, which was approved by the highway commission in October 1989, was awarded to GSD&M last May after the proposal and bidding process was completed. The team that created the successful "Don't Mess with Texas" campaign began working on its greatest challenge ever — reducing traffic accidents and fatalities in Texas by 5 percent and achieving two "deathless days" during the next year.

Records indicate that 390,249 traffic accidents occurred last year in Texas. Almost half of them resulted in injuries, and 3,361 people were killed. The leading causes of traffic fatalities are driving while intoxicated, driving at unsafe speeds and not wearing safety belts. Statistics show that the group most frequently responsible for these fatalities is composed of males from 16 to 30 years old.

As valuable as these data are in defining the target audience, they were just the beginning. Finding the right approach was the tough part. "As we discovered with the antilitter campaign, these young men cannot

or will not be persuaded by niceness and 'do-good' messages. To reach them, you must tap into their lifestyle, their way of thinking and doing," said J. Don Clark, director of the Travel and Information Division.

This led to primary research to find out what young men in Texas are doing right or wrong on the road, what they think about their driving and what specific message about traffic safety they might watch and listen to. Twenty-two focus groups in five cities, each led by a professional researcher, were made up of four or five 16- to 34-year-old male licensed drivers. There were black, white and Hispanic participants, from both urban and rural backgrounds; some had a history of traffic citations and others didn't.

The only good news from the focus groups was that most of these young men say they wear their safety belts. They freely admit to speeding and to driving while under the influence of alcohol. When asked how they knew they'd had too much to drink, some of the participants answered, "When I can't get the key in the door."

The groups indicated that the target audience characteristically thinks that, whatever the conditions, they are in control. They believed that they could handle any situation and rated themselves good drivers. They talked as if they were not afraid of losing their licenses, their cars or even their lives.

When questioned further, many said they had known a friend or relative who had been injured or killed in a traffic accident. The impact of such news was apparently short-lived, and they returned to their dangerous habits almost immediately.

A few of the men said that having children of their own slowed them down, especially when the child was with them.

And many said they drove more cautiously in school zones or neighborhoods where children might be playing.

This led to a breakthrough in understanding the target group: They did not want to be responsible for hurting or, even worse, for killing someone else — particularly a child.

This became the key to the campaign developed by GSD&M's creative team — radio and television spots with guys like Dave in mind. It fully exploits the one area of vulnerability revealed by the high-risk drivers in the focus groups: fear of the lifelong consequences of losing control for just a fraction of a second.

Three television commercials, two radio spots and three posters were produced in time for a news media blitz over Labor Day weekend, one of the deadliest holidays of the year. The ads clearly depict Dave's worst nightmare — and Steve's and Matt's, the characters in the other two spots. They are average young men, likable, and probably pretty good drivers. They all wear safety belts. But what happens to them is unexpected, and what results is disaster.

Steve gets up a little later than usual and scurries around his apartment getting ready. We laugh, identifying with his awkward attempts to comb his hair and brush his teeth at the same time. He jumps impatiently into his car, then speeds toward a light changing to yellow, hoping it will stay that way. He sails under it just as it turns red and careens into another car. Our last image of Steve is his face twisting to the side, eyes closed tightly in dread. As we hear the crash, the screen goes stark white and black lettering, reads: "Steve was late for work. So he killed three people."

In the second television spot, Matt's playing softball with his friends on a weekend afternoon. He makes a winning home run, and the team crowds around in triumph. The guys toast each other with beer. Later, after sunset, Matt is driving along a highway lined with white poles. He and his buddy are laughing. Suddenly the headlights illuminate a pole they're rushing toward as they swerve off the road, and Matt's friend raises his arms in a futile attempt to protect himself. The screen goes white and the words appear: "It was a time to celebrate. So Matt killed his best friend."

Then there's Dave. He's out cruising on a sunny afternoon in his shiny pickup, listening to the radio and checking out the pretty girls. Dave frowns as a new song begins. He looks down, picks up a cassette tape and plugs it in. Then he looks back up: A little girl is eating an ice cream cone in the middle of the street. On a white screen appears the message: "Dave didn't like the song on the radio. So he killed a little girl."

By rushing to work, having a couple of victory beers or hunting a cassette, these Texas boys-next-door have crossed the threshold to nightmares. And they'll forever be haunted by them ★

Dietert: Happy to be in Houston



Milton Dietert, a 1962 University of Texas civil engineering graduate, began his career with the department in the San Antonio District, where he progressed to supervising resident engineer of the South Bexar County Residency. He was named assistant division head of the Maintenance and Operations Division (then Safety and Maintenance Operations) in 1982 and promoted to chief engineer of the division in 1984. He assumed his current position in 1986. In 1989, Dietert received the Luther DeBerry Award for outstanding contributions in the field of transportation. He shares his experiences and his goals in this conversation with Marcy Goodfleisch of the Travel and Information Division.

A conversation with . . . Houston District Engineer Milton Dietert

How long have you been with the department?

I started full time in 1962. That would be 28 years; and of course, I worked for four summers.

You've been around, then, for a lot of changes in the department.

Quite a few. When I first started, computers were just coming in. We had to take the cross sections, then color all these computer cards and run them through the computer. Lots of things have changed.

Did you ever imagine when you started out, or even 10 or 15 years ago, that you would be a division head or district engineer?

No. That was my goal, but I never imagined fulfilling it.

What would you say in your career helped you to be the right person to become district engineer?

I've been very fortunate in getting a wide base of experience at the district: resident engineer, traffic engineer, working in the maintenance division, district maintenance office, then with D-18.

Talk a little bit about what it's like managing the biggest single district in the state.

Really, in the Houston District, even though we have so much work going on, we have the same function as other districts, and that is design and construction and

maintenance of highways; there is no difference there. The only difference is the quantity of work, and we have a lot more work on the way. Of course, we have a lot more staff, too, to handle it.

A lot of times the larger district is a lot easier because you do have more resources to draw from, whereas in the small district, one person wears so many hats that it makes it a little difficult.

One thing that's been a pleasant surprise for me is the quality of people we have out here. You look at the work they're putting out, a tremendous amount of work, and I couldn't be more pleased with the personnel we've got. They're doing a super job.

You're also managing the state's biggest construction budget, and you talked a little about that. But what's it like dealing with that magnitude of construction activity?

Currently, we have \$1.3 billion under construction in 164 contracts. As district engineer, you do not get into the detail. I rely on our district construction engineer and resident engineers.

If you were going to give advice to anybody in engineering who might aspire to be a district engineer in 10 years or so, how would you tell them to prepare themselves?

Get as broad a base of experience as you possibly can, in design, construction and maintenance operations. Maintenance is important in our department; a lot of times, it's overlooked. Maintenance is probably not as glamorous as design or construction, but it's as vital to the department as our equipment operators; without it, we could not survive.

Would there be any differences for someone who wanted to prepare to become a division head?

It's essentially the same thing. But the

point I'd like to make is that my experiences as a division head have helped me as a district engineer because I know the people, I know where the buttons are and where to push to get things accomplished.

Since you are one of the few managers in the department who's been both a district engineer and a division head, how would you compare the two jobs?

There are a lot of differences. In the Austin office, as a division head, you have to look at the statewide picture. With anything that you do, you have to look at how it's going to affect the entire state between the Childress District and the Houston District. In the district, you're looking at how it involves some smaller area. That's the primary difference.

Which is the bigger challenge?

Well, it's a hard question to answer because they are so different. In the Austin office, to come up with something that will help all the districts is very difficult because there are 24 different opinions across the state, but the Austin divisions are there for a support role and to advise the administration. It's entirely a different type job. Of course, with the district you've got the feeling of accomplishment, to see a highway that you built. There is a lot more feeling of accomplishment when you can see something that you built.

Have you been able to see some differences in mobility in Houston in the years that you've been here?

Yes. I think there's a definite improvement; some of the data that we've studied in the last year show that the average speed on the freeway has increased 20 percent, so that makes about five minutes difference in trip time. Take the average trip and increase the speed by 20 percent, and that saves us five minutes, right now. Of course, we have the most traffic that we've ever had, too.

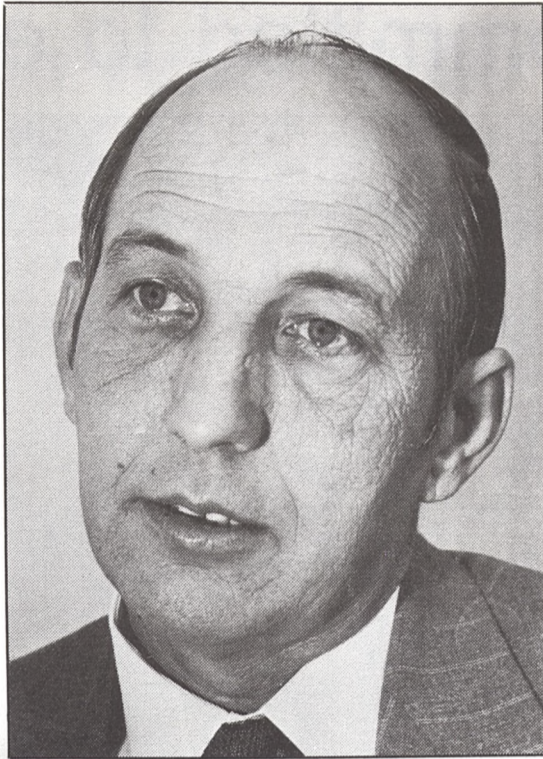
What are your personal favorites, or what projects in the Houston area give you the most sense of accomplishment and pride?

I think the biggest is the Baytown Bridge. That is going to be a beautiful cable-stayed bridge. I just can't wait till it's finished. It's probably going to be another year before it's finished, but I think it's going to be an attraction to the Houston area.

That is just the one outstanding example, in addition to all the freeway construction we're doing.

Now that you've done it all — as a division head and a district engineer — what are your future career goals? Do you want to go back to Austin?

I don't think I have any specific goals. I love the job I'm doing. The fact is that in my last two jobs, I've been satisfied in my career. If something comes up, if an opportunity presents itself, then I'll take advantage of it. But I'm quite happy where I am.



“
I couldn't be more pleased with the personnel we've got. They're doing a super job.
”

What are your plans for the district in the future?

Of course, you know, we are striving to improve the district. We are now the youngest district. Look at our design people — 70 percent of our design people have less than six years' experience, and our construction force is even younger than that. One thing we've got to do is concentrate on cross-training our people. And we've got to train them in an area and get them familiar in an area before we can cross-train them.

What do you like most about being a D.E.?

The challenge.

What do you like least?

The frustration of seeing too many things that need to be done and not having enough time to do them.

What are your hobbies? What do you do in your spare time?

Go up to the lake — Lake LBJ. At Lake LBJ, they sit on the dock with a fishing pole and a bobber and no bait on the hook and just watch the bobber go up and down.

Do you have a place on the lake?

Yes, we've had it since 1971.

What are your other interests?

Golf, when I have time, but now I play maybe twice a year.

As for reading, I do enough of that with office work and paperwork. You end up spending all day either on the telephone or in meetings, so you do your paperwork at night and on weekends, or you can't get it done.

Some of the things that you've done in the district you've received a lot of recognition for. You seem to have a handle on dealing with the public in operating a public agency. Can you talk about that a little?

Well, we are serving the public and we've got to respond to the public and keep the public informed. I think this is one of the most critical areas that we need to really develop. If the public is informed of what's happening out there in construction, they're less likely to complain, because they understand.

To what else do you attribute the district's success?

The main thing I want to get across is the high caliber of the job that these people are doing here. We're handling a construction work load that involves getting to contract over \$500 million a year.

You have a different management style than many department administrators. Can you talk a little bit about the management changes you've made?

I think I delegate more of the responsibility. In the past, there were so many people that communication had to go through to get down to where it was needed. I've changed the organizational chart so that more people answer to me and I talk directly to them without having to go through somebody else to get the information to where it belongs, to where it's needed, and I think that's the biggest difference in operations. I think I rely more on my people to make the decisions and have the responsibility.

How do you like living in Houston, after San Antonio and Austin?

Once you live in a big city, the size doesn't really make any difference because you end up really living in a small part of the town or the city. You don't go all over the city.

Houston is really pretty. It's got a beautiful downtown skyline, beautiful parks, beautiful trees — I love pine trees. It doesn't get as hot down here. It's about 95 degrees when it's 100 degrees in Austin.

Department committed to environment

This is the debut of a regular column on environmental issues. The State Department of Highways and Public Transportation has a long-standing commitment to preserving the quality of the environment while fulfilling its mission to build and maintain roadways. In response to the growing awareness of environmental issues, the staff of the Highway Design Division's Environmental Section will offer in this column information on current issues, projects and trends, plus tips on how individuals can help protect the environment.

By **CAROL VINTON**
Highway Design Division

Did you know . . . ?

- The department performs environmental studies for most highway projects. The Environmental Section of the Highway Design Division is set up to provide consultation to districts and coordination with agencies on the potential environmental effects of highway projects. Professionals in this section come from a variety of fields, including engineering, forestry, urban planning, sociology, air and noise analysis, wildlife biology, geology, history, historic architecture, archaeology, historic preservation planning and geography.
- The department is actively involved in wetlands mitigation, to replace wetlands taken by highway construction activities.
- The department is involved in the construction of soundwalls. These soundwalls, representing expenditures of \$31 million over the next three years, lower highway noise to acceptable levels at homes and businesses adjacent to highways.
- The department has received national recognition for environmentally sensitive designs on several projects.
- The department has performed archaeological surveys over thousands of miles of highways, and has made a number of significant contributions to the study of history and pre-history in Texas.



An archaeologist with the Highway Design Division measures elevations during a dig. Surveys like this are part of the department's commitment to preserving the environment while fulfilling its mission. (Photo courtesy of Highway Design Division)

- The department has issued more than 30 book-length reports in its *Publications in Archaeology* series. These reports form a valuable data base for archaeologists and historians throughout the country. The department has recently completed a statewide inventory of 1,300 historic metal bridges, and is in the process of analyzing these bridges in conjunction with the State Historic Preservation Office.

The department's primary responsibility is the construction and maintenance of a safe and efficient transportation system for the state of Texas. As environmental regulations and laws have developed, and as public awareness and concern for the environment have grown, "environmental sensitivity" has been added to safety and efficiency as a third responsibility. The manner in which the department approaches this obligation, and other environmental issues, will be discussed in future columns.★

Environmental task force is named

A 16-member task force has been appointed by the administration to develop a policy statement regarding the department's position on environmental issues.

An administrative announcement in August outlined the task force's charges. They include:

- study and develop a proactive environmental policy statement to cover issues internal and external to the department including the protection of the natural environment, of employees in the work place and of the public using the highway and highway right-of-way;
- define the relationship and the assignment of responsibility within the department concerning hazardous materials, toxic sites and environmental concerns;
- recommend environmental programs and related procedures necessary to implement the policy statement;
- ensure that the recommended policy statement, programs and procedures are consistent and in compliance with state and federal statutes, regulations and orders for environmental concerns.

Deputy Engineer-Director Byron Blaschke said the department has historically been concerned with environmental protection.

"A key element of the policy statement is a recognition that the environment is an important aspect of all the department's activities and efforts, and that we need to bring it up higher on the list of department priorities," Blaschke said.

The task force includes Deputy Director Marcus Yancey, nine division heads and six district engineers.

A final report and recommendations are due from the task force Dec. 1, Blaschke said.★**Jeff Carmack, Travel and Information Division**

Earth tip

Make two-sided copies whenever possible to save paper — and trees.

Old San Antonio Road to be preserved

El Camino Real, Old San Antonio Road, the King's Highway, OSR: The road that runs right through the heart of Texas history is known by many names. Now, a study conducted by the highway department in preparation for the observance of the road's 300th anniversary shows that the "road" actually consists of multiple routes that encompass many of Texas' most important historic sites and events.

Findings of the yearlong study were presented to the Old San Antonio Road Preservation Commission Aug. 24 in Austin. The study recommends two phases of activity to ensure the preservation and recognition of the OSR and associated *caminos reales* as important and unique to the state's historical heritage.

"The first phase recognizes the commemoration of the 300th anniversary of this route in 1991," says Al McGraw, a Highway Design Division archaeologist who headed the study. "We are developing special signs to be placed on highways along the

route, and information panels will be installed at rest areas identifying important events that occurred along the route."

McGraw said the department will also publish a complete historical review of the route and a separate volume that details a comprehensive preservation plan for the *caminos reales* and associated historic trails.

Execution of the preservation plan is a five-year program that makes up Phase 2 of the department's study.

Next year's observance marks Domingo Teran de los Rios' 1691 exploration of the route connecting Mexico with the Spanish missions of East Texas. De los Rios was the first provisional governor of Texas. He crossed the Rio Grande near present-day Eagle Pass and headed east. Following ancient Indian trails, he identified suitable river and stream crossings that would eventually serve Spanish and Mexican missionaries, French traders traveling from the east, early American settlers following Stephen F. and Moses Austin into the new

frontier, and Santa Anna's army on its march toward San Antonio and the insurgent Texians holed up at the Alamo.

The state Legislature had the road surveyed by V.N. Zivley in 1915. The survey identified much of present-day Texas 21 as the route followed by one of the original trails. In 1929, a 50-mile stretch of the road between Madison and Midway was designated the OSR. It remains the only highway in Texas designated by letters. The town of Midway was so named because it was halfway between Natchitoches, La., and San Antonio.

McGraw said that the department's inspections of the original routes have already uncovered some important historic and archaeological sites. "We've found the probable location of several townsites, including San Marcos de Neve in Hays County, Pilar de Bucareli in Leon County and Trinidad de Salcedo in Houston County, plus several of the campsites used by Santa Anna on his way to San Antonio." **Roger Polson, Travel and Information Division**

Computers: help and hazard

By GINA McASKILL
Travel and Information Division

Although some days they may not admit it, department employees who use computers know that they make their work go faster. A lot of employees, in fact, would love to have computers on their desks.

But working at a computer brings its own problems — and not just mental (resulting from multiple cryptic error messages) or cosmetic (when the frustrated user tears out large tufts of hair).

The Occupational Safety Division (D-20) has identified four areas of problems associated with sustained use of video display terminals: visual, ergonomic, biomechanical, and administrative.

Visual

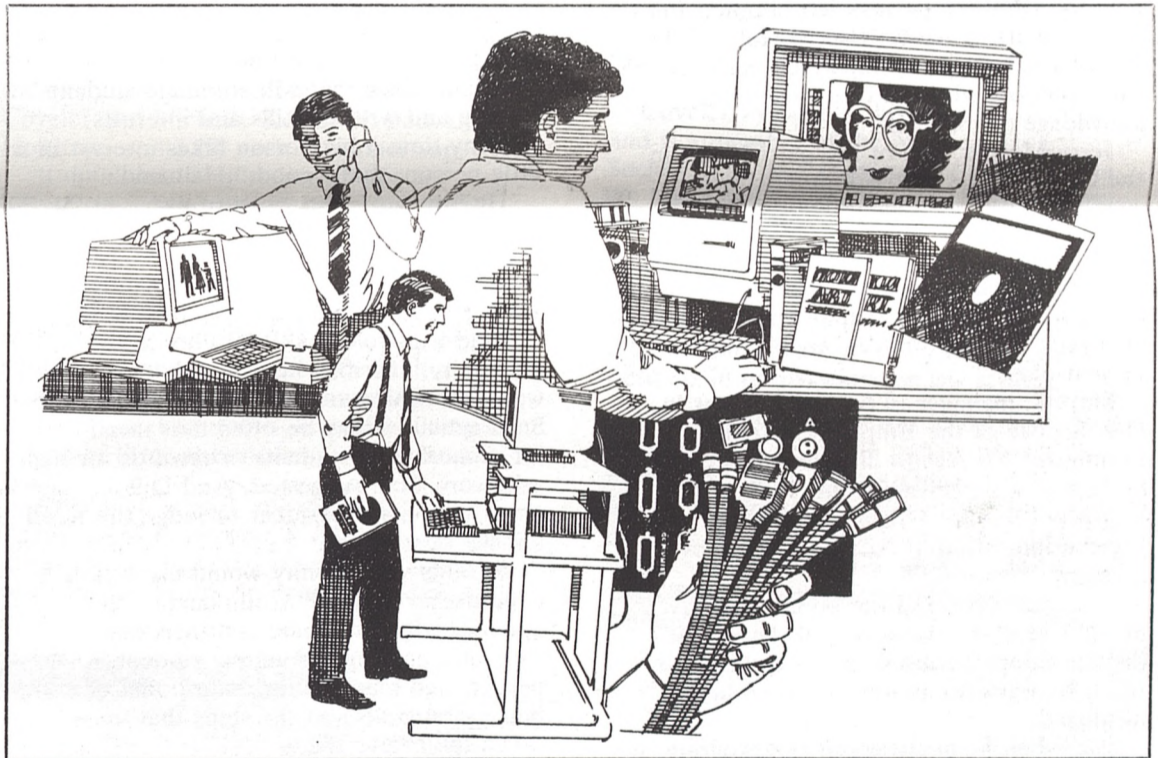
Focusing on a computer screen for long periods can cause strain in the muscles that focus the eye. Ways to combat these problems include arranging lighting and using screen filters to reduce glare and increase contrast. When your eyes get tired, take a break to exercise and rest them: Cover your eyes from the light for a minute, then focus on objects at least 20 feet away, and roll your eyeballs around. Have eye exams regularly.

Ergonomic

To lessen backaches and tension caused by long sessions at the computer, sit up straight, as your mother always told you. This means keep your ears, shoulders, and hips lined up, even if it takes the use of a lumbar support pillow (a rolled-up towel will do). Sit with your feet flat on the floor, or use a foot rest, and line up the top of your screen with your forehead.

Biomechanical

"Repetitive motion disorder" is a term used in many recent news reports. It describes chronic pain and debilitation caused by performing the same motions for hours, day after day. It afflicts people in assembly-line industries, and also some who use VDTs heavily. The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration plans to issue guidelines this summer on repetitive motion disorders.



Meanwhile, doing simple, frequent exercises to relieve tension — especially in the hands, wrists, arms, and neck — can help you avoid those problems. Such exercises include holding your arms out straight and rotating them slowly forward and back; using your hand to gently bend the other hand back toward the forearm; and gliding your head back as far as it will go, then pushing it forward.

Administrative

D-20 recommends that VDT operators take short breaks at least hourly and spend no more than six hours per day at the terminal, for the reasons discussed previously. In the long run, these measures increase productivity by reducing tension, stress, and pain.

Electromagnetism questions

Another concern that has received attention in the past year is the possibility that low-frequency electromagnetic emissions from VDTs can be harmful to health. D-20 says most sources it has reviewed indicate

that radiation is of such a low level that no one is at risk, and the division is continuing to track new research into the matter.

Computer display monitors operate on much the same principle as television sets. The high-energy electron beam that causes the phosphor on the screen to glow has a vertical-scan frequency between 60 hertz (or cycles per second) and 75 hertz, generating a magnetic field that may have a strength of 2 milligauss or more at a distance of one foot from the screen.

Although shielding technology to attenuate the strength of the radiation exists, it of course makes monitors more costly. But users who wish to take a defensive posture toward the possible problem can easily reduce their exposure. Since the electromagnetic field drops off rapidly in strength from the source, users who sit at least an arm's length from the front and 4 feet from the back or sides of VDTs are probably outside the range of elevated radiation levels, experts say.★

D-9 group 'adopts' Austin elementary school

Making plans for Adopt-a-School activities are Emma Lee Mayton, Austin Independent School District Adopt-a-School coordinator; Jerry Meyers, D-9; Doug Hall, principal of Lucy Read Elementary School; a group of Read Raccoons; Jerome Collins, Read Adopt-a-School coordinator; Bunny Neible, D-9; and Lori Reubush, Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce Adopt-a-School coordinator. (Photo by Gay Shackelford)

By ROSEMARY NEFF
Travel and Information Division

A flurry of fifth-graders gathered around a picnic table in the courtyard of their Austin school one day in early September.

"What business are they in?" one child asked about the visitors who had come to "adopt" their school. Then the students vied with one another to perfect the pronunciation of "State Department of Highways and Public Transportation."

They were learning the name of a new friend — the first adopter that Lucy Read Elementary School has in its new incarnation as a fifth-grade center.

A group of about 20 Materials and Tests Division (D-9) employees has adopted Lucy Read as part of Austin's successful Adopt-a-School program, which pairs schools with sponsors who can contribute time, knowledge or materials.

Jerry Meyers, one of the participants in the department's first Adopt-a-School venture, answered the student's question about D-9's "business."

"Every time you drive over a bridge, every time you see a highway sign, every time you see a yellow stripe, we're involved," he told the curious 10- and 11-year-olds.

Meyers, manager of field operations in D-9, is head of the Employees Advisory Committee for Austin divisions. In that role, he fielded a suggestion from Deputy Engineer-Director Byron Blaschke, who became interested in Adopt-a-School by accident.

Blaschke answered the phone one day about a year ago when one of the school district Adopt-a-School staff was trying to reach someone in another agency and misdialed.

But when he heard about the program, he decided it was something department employees would embrace.

While D-9 is the first division to take the plunge, people in the Motor Vehicles, Maintenance and Operations, and Transportation Planning divisions are right behind.

One reason the team chose Lucy Read is its proximity to D-9's offices, said Bunny Neible, assistant general services manager, who's coordinating the division's Adopt-a-School efforts. Travel time is important, since all activities must be on employees' personal time.

"People are excited and want to do something now," Neible told principal Doug Hall over a get-acquainted lunch of school cafeteria fare Sept. 7.

A pen-pal program will start right away,



the group decided. D-9 volunteers will meet their partners for lunch and then begin a correspondence that will stimulate students' reading and writing skills and interests.

"Any time a big person takes interest in a little person, that's good," Hall said.

He also proposed "mentoring" — one-on-one relationships with students who need a buddy's special attention — and Neible said at least five of the 20 volunteers are prepared to make such a commitment.

Field trips to the D-9 labs are also a possibility, and may involve either walk-through tours or hands-on experiments. Such activities may be offered as incentives for unmotivated students or rewards for high achievers, Hall suggested. And D-9 employees may volunteer to judge the Read science fair.

Another opportunity would use Neible's expertise in contract writing and administration to create contracts that formalize agreements among students, parents and teachers for educational or behavioral goals and the steps that must be taken to achieve them.

Other needs will be presented when the school creates its "wish list," a tool often used in the Adopt-a-School process for matching donations to the demands of a particular campus.

While the D-9 group expects to provide needed services to their young friends, their motives are not completely altruistic, Meyers said. "It will help us down the road in meeting some of our affirmative action plans," if young people become interested in highway department careers, he said. "It's a good public relations thing for the department."

And, Hall added, "I want us to have some fun with this." He said the Read students, who come from overcrowded North Austin schools, are typical fifth-graders in many ways. "They will be in middle school next year. They're growing up fast. They want to be treated as grown-up, capable people. And they want to be pushed and stretched and challenged."

The partnership between D-9 and the Read Raccoons joins a long line of success

stories in Austin's Adopt-a-School program. At last count, there were 1,092 partnerships involving 130 schools or special educational programs, said Emma Lee Mayton, coordinator of the program for the Austin Independent School District.

Last school year, she said, the program attracted 9,356 volunteers who donated 96,000 hours. Partners donated \$416,000 in cash donations for specific needs, and provided another \$852,000 in goods or services such as landscaping or playscape construction.

Now in its eighth year, Adopt-a-School has amassed impressive totals: 27,500 volunteers have participated, giving more than 260,000 hours of their time, and a total of \$7.5 million has been contributed in both cash and in-kind services and goods.

Adopt-a-School, a joint program of AISD and the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce, began in 1983 to "promote greater business and community involvement in a cooperative effort with our public schools to strengthen and enhance the quality of education," said Mayton. The program doesn't benefit just schools, she said, but raises the quality of life in the city as a whole.

For its success, Austin Adopt-a-School was recognized June 13 as the 168th daily "point of light" in President Bush's effort to encourage volunteerism. ★

There's plenty of room for more volunteers in Adopt-a-School. Interested department groups may contact Jerry Meyers at 465-7624 or Emma Lee Mayton at 451-8411.

After 12 years, pen pals' meeting letter-perfect

By BETH LAMM
Maintenance and Operations Division

Randy Beck, an engineering technician in the Maintenance and Operations Division (D-18), has received more than just 12 years of enjoyable reading from *Texas Highways* magazine. Beck and his wife Cecilia (formerly of D-18) also gained a lasting friendship with Adam Kopera, a 38-year-old microbiologist from Warsaw, Poland.

In 1978, Kopera wrote to the magazine seeking a second pen pal in the United States. He had been given a subscription to *Texas Highways* by another pen pal, from Brownwood. The Becks thought that by corresponding with Kopera, they might be able to help him out and, at the same time, learn more about Cecilia's Polish ancestors.

Their first letter to Poland went unanswered for more than three months.

About the time they had given up on hearing from Kopera, a letter from him arrived. Thus began their 12-year, long-distance relationship with Kopera.

Over the years the Becks wrote to Kopera and sent him things such as newspaper clippings, magazine articles on current affairs, Western wear, even money. Randy said he once sent Kopera \$5, which he exchanged on the black market and kept his family in bread and potatoes for a week.

The Becks didn't get a chance to meet their Polish friend until this year, when Kopera was asked to present a paper at the International Congress on Education of the Deaf (ICED) in Rochester, NY, in July. It was at this time that the Becks discovered what an extraordinary person Kopera is. Not only was he learning English, he also spoke German and Russian, could read lips in those two languages, and also knew sign language. Kopera, who is hearing-impaired,

is a member of the International Federation of the Hard of Hearing (IFHOH), and occasionally traveled Europe speaking for that organization.

When the Becks found out Kopera could not afford to attend the conference, and that ICED could not sponsor him, they contributed \$600 to help finance his trip.

After 12 years of correspondence, the Becks were able to meet their Polish pen pal in New York. They spent a week with Kopera sightseeing and getting to know each other. Beck said they had taken vacation leave and wanted their friend to stay longer, but he was anxious to get home.

Beck said they have heard from Kopera since he returned to Warsaw on Aug. 5. He said Kopera enjoyed his stay but was glad to get home. **★Jeff Carmack, Travel and Information Division, contributed to this story**

Midlothian senior wins essay contest

Jason Stewart, a Midlothian High School senior, wrote the winning paper among Texas students in the second annual American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) essay contest. The accomplishment netted him \$500 and advancement into the national round of competition.

"Transportation — Key to America's Future" served as this year's topic. Stewart's essay, "On the Importance of American Transportation," beat 172 other essays submitted from across Texas. His essay is now being judged in Washington.

If chosen as national winner, Stewart would receive \$1,000 and round-trip transportation to Phoenix in December. He and his parents would be AASHTO's special guests at the awards presentation.

Stewart graduated third in his class of 160 this May. The Ovilla resident lists membership in the National Honor Society, service as vice president of the German Club, and selection as Mr. MHS among his

senior-year activities. He also played second base on the baseball team, served as captain of the football team, and earned first-team selection on the all-district football team.

Two more Texas students also received honors for their efforts in the state level of the essay competition. The youths, Ira Coveler and Michelle Kowalski, both of Houston, won \$250 each as runners-up.

"I didn't realize just how important transportation is," said Kowalski, a senior next year at Eisenhower High School. She found the contest challenging after choosing it from an assignment list for English class.

Kowalski likes to participate in ready-writing contests, timed writing on national topics. In academic decathlon, an activity that tests teams of nine students in 10 events at three levels, Kowalski competes as one of three teammates at the honors level.

After high school, she wants to attend Texas A&M to become a veterinarian, an interest she uncovered when she won first place in the Health Students of America contest.

Coveler also kept busy during his senior year at Mayde Creek High School. He served as president of the Spanish Club, vice president of Future Business Leaders of America, and representative on the Student Council.

Coveler worked on his school newspaper and is a member of the National Honor Society. The avid chess player graduated in the top 3 percent of his class. He also won the Hugh O'Brien Leadership Award.

Before embarking on studies at the University of Texas at Austin, Coveler is working this summer as a camp counselor. At college he plans to study history and business in preparation for law school.

The contest was open to all students in the 11th and 12th grades in public, private, and parochial schools. Texas Good Roads/Transportation Association provided the cash prizes for the Texas winners at the state level. **★Sharon Fox, Dallas District and Lona Reeves, Travel and Information Division**

Preserving trees pacifies public

For three months, the Yoakum District sought a way to preserve 27 live oak trees standing in the way of a project to widen Texas 71 near the community of Plum.

When the owners of the trees learned of the plans to remove the trees, their pleas for mercy inspired District Engineer Ben Bohuslav to seek an alternative that would satisfy everyone concerned.

Originally, the plans called for a four-lane divided highway with a wide grassy median. But after additional studies, a new design was adopted that will use a concrete median barrier to separate traffic. A retaining wall next to the trees will allow all but two trees to remain.

The additional studies included surveys by Texas Forest Service to determine the health of the trees and what effect the proposed design would have. Alternate routes were

also studied. Even though the design using the retaining wall increased the estimated cost of the project by almost \$1 million, the alternate routes would have cost even more and would have meant taking homes as well as trees.

The department also enlisted Texas Transportation Institute's landscape management section to develop video images of the proposed design. This let department engineers to show interested parties what the completed roadway would look like using the median barrier-retaining wall design. **★By Pearlle Bushong, Yoakum District**

'Good guys' hit road against diabetes

By GINA McASKILL
Travel and Information Division

What could persuade two otherwise reasonable highway employees to subject themselves to heat, thirst and numb posteriors in a 217-mile bicycle tour?

Diabetes.

"We decided to go on this ride because we're both related to people with diabetes," said Ken Forrest, an engineering technician working for the San Angelo District. He and Bart Kolodziejczak (roughly, ko-lo-JAY-zak), a maintenance technician with the San Angelo maintenance section, rode in the second annual American Diabetes Association bicycle ride from Austin to Dallas on Memorial Day weekend.

"Bart's mother died as result of diabetes, and my brother has had it for more than 30 years," explained Forrest. "Everybody's always asking for something [for charity], but this is something I personally relate to."

Kolodziejczak and Forrest had to raise a minimum of \$200 each in donations and pledges to go on the ride. "We started trying to raise the money in March," said Kolodziejczak, "and we had a tough time in this town. The economy is bad, and everybody in the world hits the businesses up for money." Most of their donations came from individuals.

"We're sure a lot better about giving donations now that we had to go out and try to get them. You see these poor people walk up to the door and you know what they've been through," Kolodziejczak said.

"Our Coke fund out here at the maintenance office makes a small profit. So I told everyone that if the fund would make a donation, I wouldn't hit each of them up. They did, and it was nice to know that we had support from our own people," he added.

Forrest, an experienced cyclist, wangled Kolodziejczak into going on the ride. "About six weeks before the ride, Ken talked to me about it. I kind of hemmed and hawed, because I hadn't been on a bike, other than riding up to the store and back, for 10 years. But we started working out, and got about 125 miles under our belts on weekends before the race. He supplied me with a nice, well-maintained bike and made it really easy for me," said Kolodziejczak.

Forrest added, "I don't think he would have done it for any other cause, but he's a lifer now."

The rigors of the ride didn't deter the novice cyclist. The first day's goal was 115 miles — from Austin to Waco. For those who didn't want to stay in a motel there, organizers arranged for gymnasium space for sleeping bags. "That first day, I got off that bike in that gym, and I was hurting real bad. The rump took the worst of it. It went numb. I think that was a blessing," Kolodziejczak said with a wince.

Both men complimented the organizers of the ride for plentiful refreshments and good facilities. The Hyatt Regency hotels in Austin and Dallas put the 500 riders up at bargain rates.

"The variety of people who rode was unreal," said Forrest. "The youngest was 8 and the oldest was 74. There were at least 75 people in the ride over 65. There were overweight people, disabled people. Being in halfway decent shape, you just couldn't believe what some of these people were



Bart Kolodziejczak, left, and Ken Forrest of the San Angelo District indulged their passion for cycling and raised money for the American Diabetes Association on Memorial Day when they rode from Austin to Dallas. (Photo by Gene Hirschfeld, San Angelo District)

doing."

"It was a testament that it's not so much your physical capability, it's your desire to do it," added Kolodziejczak. "We just rode it rest stop to rest stop. All we were really after was the next 15 or 20 miles or whatever. Our goal was really just to finish."

But the pair achieved a lot more than that by participating in the ride. Kolodziejczak and Forrest have been invited to serve on the board of the Texas affiliate of the American Diabetes Association, and plan to initiate the ride into the San Angelo chapter of the ADA.

They also want to "get something going within the department," to see if anyone is interested in the ride, Forrest added.

Forrest started riding eight years ago after an on-the-job accident almost cost him a leg. His doctor prescribed cycling as therapy, and he has stuck with it. "I ride to work about three days a week, weather permitting. It's about seven miles," said Forrest. He also frequently rides in charity tours and races.

Forrest and Kolodziejczak shared first place in San Angelo's Dog Days Bike Fest Aug. 4, another charity event. A highway department coworker they had coaxed into going along blew a tire after five miles. "We said, 'All right, he's gone, let's hit it.'"

related Kolodziejczak. "We weren't trying to prove anything . . . We were passing a lot of people, but we didn't realize we had passed everybody."

Forrest, 30, is a 10-year department employee. He works in pavement evaluation, runs the scales, and is permit coordinator for the district, among other duties. He grew up in Lubbock and has lived in San Angelo 11 years.

Kolodziejczak, 33, is an equipment operator, "everything from a loader to a backhoe to a roller to a shovel or pick, whatever it takes," he said. He has worked for the department two years.

Their volunteer work for the diabetes association is not the only service work they do. Forrest builds and refurbishes bicycles, giving many away to children who can't afford them. "The only thing I don't do is build frames, yet. I run ads occasionally in the local paper for old bicycles so I can fix them up for some of the needy kids for Christmas," said Forrest.

Kolodziejczak qualified for his commercial pilot's license in August, and already has his instrument rating. He made the effort to get the commercial rating so he can fly rented planes for the United Blood Bank of San Angelo. ★

Classification system delayed

The long-awaited functional classification system will be awaited a little longer as work continues to improve it and extend its reach before implementation.

The system originally was to be implemented Sept. 1 of this year, but the new target date is Sept. 1, 1991. The department's administration wanted to increase the percentage of positions covered under the system from 64 percent to 85 percent or more before completing the final step of reclassifying employees.

"Classifying remaining jobs will take more time, since those jobs are one- or two-of-a-kind jobs," said Bill Moore, director of the Classification and Plans Section of the Human Resources Division (D-13).

Luncheon series boosts business with department

The highway department has joined forces with partners large and small to sponsor a series of monthly luncheons for prospective contractors and suppliers to provide them with information about available contracts.

Business Opportunities for Texans, as the series is called, is a coalition of public and private organizations. At the luncheons, representatives from state and local government, as well as small businesses and major corporations, answer questions and provide information concerning available contracts.

The luncheons are sponsored by the department, the State Purchasing and General Services Commission, Austin Minority Business Development Center—Grant Thornton, the University of Texas at Austin, the National Federation of Independent Businesses—Texas, the U.S. General Services Administration and Southwestern Bell Telephone.

Dorothy Plowman of the Maintenance and Operations Division coordinates the luncheons. So far, they have been held on an alternating basis, with a luncheon in Austin one month, and outside Austin the following month.

Plowman said response to the luncheons has been "terrific; we've been booked solid every month, and it's just getting better and better."

Plowman said demand for seating at the luncheons is so great that D-18 has decided to hold an additional "away" meeting every third month. She said these meetings will be scheduled so they don't conflict with the meetings held in Austin those months.

For more information about the Business Opportunities for Texans luncheon series, call Dorothy Plowman at (512) 465-6274 or TexAN 258-8274. ***Jeff Carmack, Travel and Information Division**

The system's purpose is to make sure that every job across the department that includes a certain set of duties and responsibilities has the same title and corresponds to the same state pay grade. Once the titles are approved, reclassification of a person's job or adjustments in pay — usually upward, but in a few cases downward — might be necessary.

"Every effort will be made to see that no one loses money," said Debbie Westbrook, D-13 Classification Branch manager.

The functional job descriptions already published will be used as guidelines before next September. Additional job descriptions will also be provided throughout the year.

The pilot implementations of the system in

the Dallas and Atlanta districts, which began last October, have yielded valuable information, Moore said. "The numbers of reclassifications required in those districts correspond well with the number of reclassifications we see will be needed throughout all the districts," he said.

The percentage of matches in divisions was much lower than in the districts. To improve this rate, new procedures to speed up the process are being developed for divisions.

A task force of district engineers and division heads, led by Corpus Christi District Engineer Nino Gutierrez, was formed in early July to advise D-13 on implementation. ***Gina McAskill, Travel and Information Division**

Beautification award finalists named

Six finalists have been chosen for the Highway Beautification Award, a continuation of an awards program started by Lady Bird Johnson in 1970.

As with previous awards, the winning employee will receive a plaque and \$1,000 for having done the best job of beautifying roadsides under his care. A runner-up will receive \$500.

This year's finalists are Charles Burks, northeastern Harris County maintenance supervisor, Houston District; Gene C. Christian, Coleman County maintenance supervisor, Brownwood District; Edward W. Higginbotham, Orange County maintenance supervisor, Beaumont District; James R. McNeill, Nueces County maintenance construction supervisor, Corpus Christi District; Randall C. Ralson, South Tyler (Smith County) maintenance supervisor, Tyler District; and José A. Rodriguez, southwestern Reeves County maintenance

supervisor, Odessa District.

Also presented will be the Environmental Achievement Award, given to a district for enhancement of natural beauty and exceptional environmental sensitivity. This award was given formerly as the Scenic Preservation Award. The Fall Color Award has been replaced by the Twelve Months of Color Award, given to an individual employee for fostering roadside color in summer, fall or winter wildflowers or fall foliage.

The awards ceremony will be held Oct. 19 at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Lanier in Houston. The Laniers offered in May to continue the award after Mrs. Johnson announced she would retire her support to spend more time with family. Robert Lanier is a former chairman of the State Highway and Public Transportation Commission. ***Gina McAskill, Travel and Information Division**

In Brief

D-6 name change

The Construction Division is dead. Long live the Construction and Contract Administration Division.

With a name change effective Sept. 1, D-6 became responsible for all department contracts. The division will develop standard contract formats in coordination with the general counsel, assist and advise divisions in the preparation of contracts, monitor the performance of all types of contracts, serve as the office of record for retention of each original signed contract, and develop reference manuals on contracting procedures.

The other divisions will continue to be responsible for the development and review of contracts up to the letting process or until they are signed.

When work space is available, people who work with contracts in 10 other divisions will transfer to the Construction and Contract Administration Division. Their automation equipment will go with them. ***Rosemary Neff, Travel and Information Division**

Golf results in

Eighty-seven players turned out for the sixth annual tri-district golf tournament at the Maxwell Golf Course in Abilene

June 19. The San Angelo, Abilene, and Brownwood districts sponsor the traditional event.

Cody Sanderson of Brownwood received a metal driver and 15 balls for the longest drive. Bill Warlick of Abilene, who got closest to the hole on the 166-yard par 3 with a distance of 9 feet, was awarded a putter and 15 balls. A dozen balls each went to Randy French, for closest to the line with a distance of 1 foot 5-1/2 inches; and Pete Krause, for closest to the hole with a distance of 58 inches.

Three teams tied for first place with scores of 61. ***James Grant, Abilene District**

Acting up for a good cause

Leslie Kistner, bookkeeper in the Channing maintenance office, has another "career" far removed from ledgers and paperwork.

In June, Kistner played the supporting role of Zamah Logan, an innkeeper, in the melodrama *Pure as the Driven Snow* presented by the Ninth Annual Channing Dinner Theater.

Kistner and the rest of the cast and crew, plus all the cooks, servers, and organizers, donated their time to raise money for the community's emergency equipment fund. So far, the theater has raised money for a fire truck, an ambulance, equipment for the vehicles, and a new water well.

TECH TRADE

Dallas models increase understanding

By BRENTEN SEAKS
Dallas District

Often, the best way to explain something is to show it. But how do you show someone a multimillion-dollar roadway and a complex five-level interchange before they are built? The Dallas District has found a solution.

For two of Dallas' complex highway projects, the department is using models to illustrate its intentions. To depict the result of the work on North Central Expressway, two models measuring 3 feet by 14 feet were built. To portray the interchange at Interstate 635 and North Central, a 10-by-13-foot model was built.

"The plans for the interchange were not received well by the public, but that is because they had a difficult time understanding the concept," said Mary May, assistant district planning engineer. "On a one-to-10 scale of comprehension, the public was at a zero, and that's why we decided to build a model."

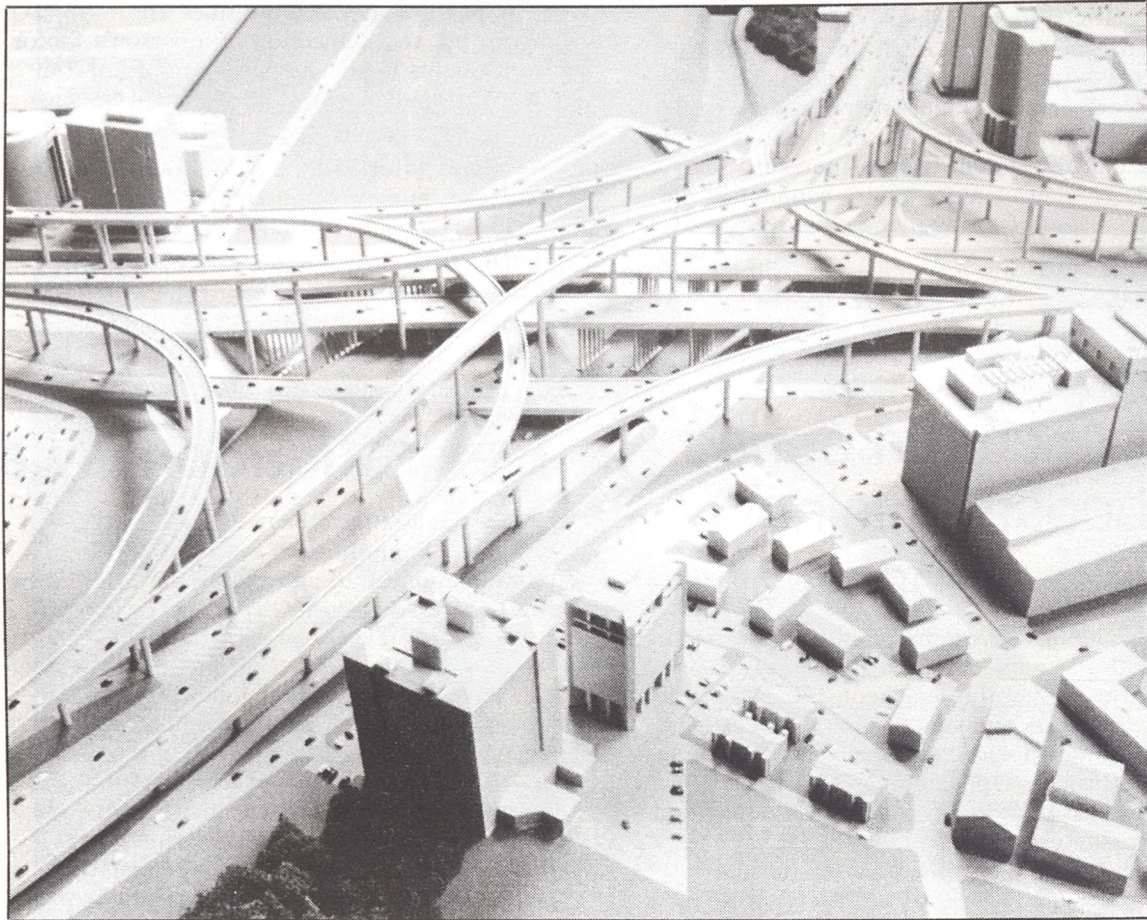
Since the models have been used to illustrate the project plans, citizens have been able to better visualize what will be done.

"Printed plans give people only a hazy indication of what will be done," said North Central Project Manager John Kelly. "The models provide a unified, concrete image of what the projects will look like."

Although the models share a common purpose, the one built to represent the interchange will play a different role initially. "Unlike the models of North Central, the interchange model is conceptual," said May. "While the North Central versions show how it is going to be now that the decisions have been made, the interchange model is really a possible solution for endorsement. It could change after the public hearing."

The interchange model debuted July 10 before 250 real estate agents, but the North Central models have been in use for two years.

They were first shown to officials from the highway department, Dallas Area Rapid Transit and the city of Dallas, and were used



The proposed Interstate 635/North Central Expressway interchange takes shape in a three-dimensional model to help show Dallas residents one possible design. (Photo by Geoff Appold, Travel and Information Division)

in video public service announcements describing the project. In addition, the models have been available for public viewing at places such as Dallas-area shopping malls. Recently, local businesses have borrowed the models to show clients and employees.

"Tens of thousand of people have seen the models so far," said Rick Robles, engineering assistant on the project.

While using models to illustrate complex plans is a relatively new concept for the Dallas District, they have been popular with

the public, and their success may warrant future use.

"People tend to expect models because they are easier to understand than drawings," said May. "Whether or not models are used in the future will depend on the project at hand."

The current models will be in use for 10 years while construction is under way. Once the projects are finished, May has a final use for the models.

"We could always start a museum," she said.★

CALENDAR

OCTOBER

- 3-4 West Texas Microcomputer Users Group Meeting, Amarillo, Dist. 4
- 10 Managing Materials Workshop, Austin, D-4
- 10-11 Regional Planning Meetings, Austin, D-19
- 11-12 Purchasing/Material and Equipment Conference, Austin, D-4
- 11-12 Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
- 15 District Engineers and Division Heads Meeting, College Station, BCB
- 16-18 Highway and Transportation Short Course, College Station, BCB
- 19 Highway Beautification Awards, Houston, D-18L
- 25 Commission Meeting, Austin

NOVEMBER

- 7-8 Construction Engineers' Meeting, Wichita Falls, D-6
- 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

SERVICE AWARDS

Administration

Diane L. Northam, 20 years.

Automation

Donald A. Drew, Donald L. Putnam Sr., 20 years; Michael E. Kieke, 10 years; Terry L. Marcus, Joseph A. Musil, five years.

Bridge

Malcolm R. Arnold, Daniel L. Stacks, five years.

Construction

John M. Finley, 35 years; Richard R. Flow, 25 years.

Equipment and Procurement

Marie R. Cabello, Brenda R. Casmire, Rozelba H. Hazlett, Velma J. Polivka, Earline M. Stephens, five years.

Finance

Margaret I. Brown, five years.

Highway Design

Joe B. Davis, 35 years; William P. Byers, 20 years.

Maintenance and Operations

Robert B. Lovelace Jr., Elma M. Rodriguez, 10 years; Willis W. Odell, five years.

Materials and Tests

Timothy D. Stagg, 20 years; John M. Reedy, 10 years; Norman B. Norris, five years.

Motor Vehicles

Janis W. Norie, Janet V. Vorwerk, 20 years; Theresa W. Elliott, 15 years; Virginia V. Stuessy, 10 years; Patricia S. Biddle, Judy E. Gibson, Mark E. Slattey, five years.

Right of Way

Carol L. Damron, five years.

Transportation Planning

Billie R. Kaufman, 40 years; Rosemary A. Muzny, 25 years; Mark S. Hodges, 10 years.

Travel and Information

Lucia V. Fonseca, Samuel A. Martinez, 10 years; Jane M. James, five years.

Paris District (1)

William A. Sherrer, 30 years; Jerry W. Goldsmith, Gerald Washington, 25 years; Jon Briggie, Elvin E. Harry, 20 years; Ricky J. Mackey, Glen A. Williams, five years.

Fort Worth District (2)

Charles E. Ware, 35 years; Harold R. Taylor, 30 years; Ronnie T. Davis, James C. Sawey, 25 years; Lester B. Cummings, Baltazar T. Fierro, William E. Gartrell, 20 years; Lisa C. Ferguson, Robert M. Pennington, Richard L. White, five years.

Wichita Falls District (3)

Tommy L. Langston, 30 years; Jimmy A. Howry, Jerry C. Madden, 20 years; James A. Woods, 10 years; John A. Barton, Carl T. Sims, Russell A. Stafford, five years.

Amarillo District (4)

Venita W. Hickey, Raymond G. Weller, 10 years; Tommy G. Dougherty, Stephanie P. Hale, Bruce D. Nipp, David P. Roy, Patrick L. Trujillo, five years.

Lubbock District (5)

Bill C. King, 20 years; Gregory N. McNabb, 15 years; Taina Y. Barrett, 10 years; Ricky L. Nieman, five years.

San Angelo District (7)

Gilberto R. Hernandez, 25 years; Candelario M. Flores, 20 years; Kenneth E. Forrest, Farrell K. Hardiman, 10 years.

Abilene District (8)

Travis R. Smith, 35 years; Lester H. Shuler Jr., 25 years; Melvin L. Norris, 20 years; William L. Wells Jr., 15 years; Nancy W. Holland, 10 years; Michael L. Hardy, five years.

Waco District (9)

Bobby L. Woodard, 40 years; Charlie D. Herrell, Billy W. Hilliard, John F. Nors, Joe Q. Whitley, 35 years; Walter Sohns Jr., 30 years; Johnny R. Blakley, Dick Ford, 25 years; Leslie D. Cook, Jan E. Copeland, Wilburn R. Geltmeier, Rhuben K. Weeks, 20 years; Glenn D. Christian, 15 years; Leslie W. Campbell, Robert A. Chane, five years.

Tyler District (10)

James M. Norman, 30 years; Claudia H. Carroll, Hubert N. McGaughey, Daniel C. Wilbanks, 10 years; Larry O. Bass, Kenneth M. Jock, five years.

Lufkin District (11)

Carlisle D. Dickerson, 30 years; Herbert F. Daw, 20 years; Donald R. McBride, Barry E. Walker, 10 years.

Houston District (12)

Rodrick H. Neal, 30 years; Pedro Guerrero, Joanne K. Hemme, Yreneo A. Negrete, 25 years; Leo Bennett Jr., Miguel A. Garcia, Raymond A. Just, Miguel Rincon, 20 years; Leslie J. Davis, Alvin B. Scott Jr., 10 years; Theresa M. Ainsworth, Seyed M. Alavi, Kenneth W. Baird, Albert F. Brewster Jr., Melvin E. Crocker, James O. Dempsey Jr., Jesse M. Gutierrez, Elaine Hancock, Andrew Jackson, Stephen L. Kichtan, James M. Latimer, Iram W. Martin Jr., Rudy A. Mindieta, Ramon Padia, Mark D. Patterson, Carl T. Reilly, Anthony L. Sienkiewich, Arthur J. Stayton III, Edward C. Stelchek, Ronald D. Stewart, Billy R. Warren, Joyce J. Wu, five years.

Yoakum District (13)

John G. Roller, 35 years; Rita M. Pullin, Hugo H. Richter Jr., 25 years; James A. Otto, 20 years.

Austin District (14)

Harold R. Voight, 35 years; Jesus G. Munoz, 10 years; Dwayne A. Collins, Wanda S. Dickenson, Donald R. Morgan, Thomas R. Nelson, David E. Thomson, Charles R. Vaughn Sr., five years.

San Antonio District (15)

Gary G. Johnston, Sam J. Pennartz, 30 years; Charles H. Arnold, Gordon D. Kirkland, Jerome J. Lindig, Paul H. Neimeier, Reynaldo Ramirez, 20 years; Steven C. Cordell, Jerry W. Reavis, Fernando T. Santiago, 10 years; Scott D. Armstrong, Keith A. Braddock, James D. Chambers, Victor H. Gil, Robert J. Gutierrez, Marguerite S. Rodgers, Cheryl J. Waid, five years.

Corpus Christi District (16)

Ismael B. Galan, Arthur Garcia, Edwin R. Rothlisberger, 20 years.

Bryan District (17)

Joy C. Steck, 20 years; Rodney P. Klawinsky, 10 years; Paul A. Huddleston, five years.

Dallas District (18)

Charles D. Brooks, Roy R. King, Willie G. Pennington, 25 years; James E. Nash Jr., Richard T. Spear, 20 years; Linda C. Taylor, 15 years; Arthur R. Nance, 10 years; Nathan A. Eaton Jr., Robert D. Kluttz, Wesley G. McClure, Santiago S. Ortiz, Douglas J. Reiter, Sylvia K. Simpkins, Gary L. Swindle, Barbara S. Thomas, Michael D. Wellman, five years.

Atlanta District (19)

Montie G. Wade, 30 years; Doyle G. Nugent, 20 years; Vernon Moses, 10 years; Richard L. Allen, five years.

Beaumont District (20)

Henry M. Zorn, 30 years; Raymond L. Hatch, 20 years; Leo H. Barriere Jr., Doyle R. Caraway, Conrad Graffagnino, 10 years; Kimberly K. Butler, Gregory K. Casmire, Virginia A. Foley, five years.

Pharr District (21)

Jose A. Lopez, Oscar Segovia, 25 years; Baudelio R. Carreon, Luciano E. Leal, 10 years; Stephen P. Blake, Carlos Cantu, five years.

Brownwood District (23)

Gerald D. Benbow, 30 years; Jackie R. Arrowood, 20 years; Edward D. Jones Jr., five years.

El Paso District (24)

Celso Rubio, 25 years; Donald L. Denham, Mary L. Johnson, Rene A. Olivo, 20 years; Roberto Cardoza Jr., Antonio De Santos Jr., Edgardo R. Sanchez, five years.

Childress District (25)

Kenneth G. Rockholt, 35 years; Edwin L. Atchley, Mark A. Hightower, five years.

IN MEMORIAM

Employees:

Richard L. Wells, Maintenance and Operations Division, 19 years service, died Sept. 1, 1990.

James L. Urban, Wichita Falls District, 30 years service, died Sept. 5, 1990.

Billie Walker, Houston District, 31 years service, died Aug. 3, 1990.

Gerhard W. Boening, Yoakum District, 32 years service, died Aug. 28, 1990.

Retirees:

Victoriano M. Almendarez, Tilden, retired from San Antonio District in 1985, died May 11, 1990.

John L. Berkman, Austin, retired from Transportation Planning Division in 1969, died June 17, 1990.

John T. Bingham, Seminole, retired from Lubbock District in 1980, died June 26, 1990.

Harry E. Blatchford, McCamey, retired from Odessa District in 1975, died May 22, 1990.

Carl J. Boatright, San Angelo, retired from San Angelo District in 1977, died May 3, 1990.

Robert T. Bonham, Richardson, retired from Dallas District in 1968, died May 1, 1990.

Cecil O. Cotton, Henrietta, retired from Wichita Falls District in 1975, died June 24, 1990.

Cecil R. Cunningham, San Angelo, retired from San Angelo District in 1988, died May 7, 1990.

Wallace M. Ewell, Arlington, retired from Fort Worth District in 1971, died Feb. 25, 1990.

M.L. (Gus) Haney, Lufkin, retired from Lufkin District in 1981, died July 30, 1990.

Jose Hartnett Jr., Fort Davis, retired from El Paso District in 1971, died May 9, 1990.

Walter T. Herndon, El Paso, retired from El Paso District in 1981, died June 20, 1990.

Bobby Luck, Austin, retired from Equipment and Procurement Division in 1987, died July 4, 1990.

Lawrence P. Magee, Lubbock, retired from Lubbock District in 1975, died May 20, 1990.

Orville G. Marling Jr., New Braunfels, retired from Materials and Tests Division in 1986, died May 26, 1990.

Ernest H. Mendoza, El Paso, retired from El Paso District in 1974, died May 24, 1990.

Ansel L. Moore, Mineral Wells, retired from Bryan District in 1970, died June 13, 1990.

Owens G. Ross, Van Horn, retired from El Paso District in 1976, died June 16, 1990.

Willard H. Shaw, Abilene, retired from Abilene District in 1970, died March 15, 1990.

David C. Sierra, Sinton, retired from Beaumont District in 1990, died June 20, 1990.

Leonard Sims, Hamilton, retired from Waco District in 1977, died July 4, 1990.

Pete Sprayberry, Atlanta, retired from Waco District in 1978, died Aug. 12, 1990.

Oscar J. Woytek, Needville, retired from Houston District in 1980, died June 20, 1990.

*Compiled by **Glenda Wall**,
Human Resources Division

RETIREMENTS

Automation

William R. Wertz Jr., Systems Analyst II, 32 years.

Finance

Mildred H. Norment, Accounts Examiner II, 26 years.

Maintenance and Operations

Ingeborg W. Davis, Administrative Technician II, 22 years.

Materials and Tests

Gordon D. Greer, Engineering Technician IV, 28 years.

Motor Vehicles

Kennard L. Lawrence, Auditor II, 28 years.

Fort Worth District (2)

Wando H. Scarberry, Engineering Specialist II, 38 years.

Odessa District (6)

Silas Ussery, Engineering Specialist I, 42 years.

San Angelo District (7)

Armando D. Prieto, Assistant Foreman, 27 years.

Tyler District (10)

Willie L. Bobbitt, Maintenance Technician III, 16 years.

Houston District (12)

Levi McDonald, Maintenance Technician III, 10 years.

Corpus Christi District (16)

Alfred S. Houdmann, Maintenance Technician II, 31 years.

Bryan District (17)

Merron V. Washington, Maintenance Technician II, 10 years.

Dallas District (18)

Donald H. Walden, Director I, 32 years.

Atlanta District (19)

Herbert E. Snider, Roadway Maintenance Supervisor IV, 40 years; John P. Tiller, Engineering Specialist I.

Beaumont District (20)

Frank L. Gore, Maintenance Mechanic IV, 31 years.

Pharr District (21)

Tomas Benavides Jr., Maintenance Technician III, 37 years; Concepcion Flores, Maintenance Technician III, 32 years; Luis B. Salazar, Engineering Technician V, 41 years.

(May 31, 1990)

Correction

The photos of Jackie Barnes of the Wichita Falls District, in the September *Transportation News*, were taken by Geoff Appold, manager of the Audiovisual Branch of the Travel and Information Division.

BULLETIN BOARD

By **R.S. "BUBBA" WILLIAMSON**

In August, I attended the 13th annual meeting of the Retired State Employees Association.

The purpose of the association is to look after the needs of retired state employees of all state agencies and to represent retirees' interests in both state and federal legislation.

Highway retirees at the meeting included **Gordon Cooper**, **Phil Thomas** and **Paul Goertz** of the Transportation Planning Division; **Raymond Cotten** of the Waco District; **Wayne Henneberger**, Bridge Division; **Farland Bundy**, Administration; **Bernice Kissmann**, Human Resources Division; and **Bessie Klein**, Highway Design Division.

At a recent Texas Good Roads/Transportation Association meeting, I visited with the following retirees: **Ben Alley** of the Lubbock District; **Bill Ward** of the Houston District; **Bob Lewis** of the Highway Design Division; and former engineer-director **Luther DeBerry**.

Charles Summers, who retired a year ago after 29 years with the Materials and Tests Division, reports that he and his wife, Bonnie, have bought a retirement home in their hometown of Roscoe. Charles has kept busy helping two of his brothers with their farming and is also painting farm equipment.

And what have you been doing? I'll continue to produce this column as often as I have material for it. Write me at 3601 Vara Drive, Austin, Texas 78754, and let me know what you did this summer.

LETTERS

On June 1, my automobile died as I was going north over the Copano Bay bridge on Texas 35. With five minutes, two of your employees stopped to render invaluable assistance.

I hate to think what could have happened had they not helped out by radioing the police, setting out flags, and putting their own safety aside to assist me.

These two young people, **Mark Dennis** and **Sarilyn Taylor**, were so polite, friendly, and helpful that I want you to know how proud your department should be of having them as employees.

Mary Duncan McHabe
Rockport

Dennis and Taylor are maintenance technicians in the Aransas County maintenance section, Corpus Christi District.

On June 12, I was on my way home from vacationing in California, driving south on US 281. I was about 30 miles north of Alice when my right front tire blew out. I got the car stopped safely, and by the time my wife and I were out of the car, three of your men who were working nearby were there and proceeded to take over for me and put on the spare. Boy! I was glad to see them!

I am enclosing my check for \$30, and if it is not against your policy, I would like you to give each of those fellows \$10. We sincerely appreciated what they did, and think it is excellent public relations for your department! Congratulations on training your employees so well.

Harry Quin
Edinburg

Braulio Carvajal and James McCarley are engineering technicians and Robby Moody is a summer engineering aide in the Live Oak County residency. Mr. Quin's check was returned by the Corpus Christi District with thanks.

On June 26, I traveled to Galveston to speak to the Texas City Management Association. The car I rented at Hobby Airport broke down on Interstate 45. At the time, I was still 25 miles away and 30 minutes away from the time at which my comments were to be given.

Doug Boegler and **Steve Austin** were doing survey work along the Interstate and asked if they could assist. Once they discovered my predicament, they offered to drive me to the San Luis Hotel, and proceeded to do just that. Due to the thoughtful action, I made the trip in time to begin my speech only five minutes late. Not only were they very courteous and responsive, but I really enjoyed talking with them during our journey.

I wanted you to know of my appreciation for their help and my continuing respect for the work that the highway commission and your employees do to the benefit of all Texans.

Richard W. Douglas
Arlington

Boegler is an engineering technician in the Houston District's construction office, and Austin is an engineering technician with the district right-of-way office.

I would like to commend one of your employees, **Darrin Boykin**, for assisting the Collin County Sheriff's Office on June 5. Due to his alertness and willingness to be involved, four suspects in a residential burglary were apprehended.

Apparently, Mr. Boykin has a scanner and listens to the sheriff's office frequency. He heard the description of a vehicle that had just been involved in a burglary. After this broadcast, he observed the suspect vehicle eastbound on FM 3364 and stopped at a telephone and contacted the sheriff's office to let us know the vehicle's location. Subsequently, the vehicle was located by deputies and the four suspects and property taken in the burglary were seized.

The assistance of citizens like Mr. Boykin makes our job a lot easier. Please extend our appreciation to Mr. Boykin for his willingness to get involved.

Terry G. Box
Sheriff, Collin County

Boykin is a maintenance technician in the McKinney maintenance section, Dallas District.

I just want to thank three men who helped me and my family one day in June. They are **Larry Shorts**, **George Henry**, and **Clifford Walker**. We were going down FM 1960 when I had a blown-out tire. These three men came to our rescue. I thank God they came to help me and my children. These men were very nice and helpful. I pray God will bless them and keep them safe on the highways.

Deborah A. Westerman
Corsicana

Shorts, Henry, and Walker are maintenance technicians in the Humble maintenance section, Houston District.

On June 7, as I approached the intersection of US 69 and US 80 in Mineola, the highway department was working on the southbound lane of US 69. A funeral procession came through about the time I got to the signal light. The young man who was directing traffic, as well as all the other workers, removed his hard hat as the procession went by. I was very impressed by the workers' courtesy. A lot of these workers appeared to be in their 20s.

In this day and time when we hear so much bad news, I just felt the need to write and express my appreciation concerning these young men and their act of courtesy.

Judy Ann Goebel
Golden

This letter commending the Tyler District maintenance special jobs crew appeared in the Mineola Monitor.

I wish to express my appreciation to one of your workers. On May 23, I had a blowout on Interstate 45 near the La Marque exit. The worker stopped his truck and changed my tire. I had been standing in the hot sun for almost 30 minutes and he was the first Good Samaritan to come along.

The worker's name is **Butch Yeamans**. He is certainly a state employee who deserves special recognition. I am sure that his service record is like his concern for his fellow man — outstanding!

K. Sue Loffland
La Marque

Charles Yeamans is a maintenance technician with the La Marque maintenance section, Houston District.

While traveling on Interstate 20 between Colorado City and Big Spring on Feb. 6, I ran out of gas. **Steve Edwards** came to my rescue. He was most courteous and very professional (I also suspect he was on his lunch break). With his help I was on my way in short order, which was appreciated very much. I occasionally have contact with public service people, and most of them could take lessons from Mr. Edwards concerning attitude and deportment. If all the employees in your district are of his caliber, then you are to be commended and envied.

Ken Moose
Arp

Steven Edwards is a maintenance technician with the Colorado City maintenance section, Abilene District.

On my way to work April 10, I had the misfortune to stall in a traffic lane on Texas 249 near Interstate 45. After 10 minutes, a gentleman in a yellow pickup pulled up behind me and offered his assistance. That gentleman was **Earnest North**. I told him that I lived just a few blocks from where I was stalled, so I would call a wrecker. Earnest offered to push me home with his vehicle, and when I protested that I didn't want him to go to all that trouble he replied that he was just doing his job.

I am writing to let you know how much I appreciate your department and especially the people who are a part of it.

Bob Kelly
Houston

Earnest North Jr. is an engineering technician with the Central Houston residency.

In mid-April, I took a trip to Trinity County from Waco. I was very greatly impressed with the beautiful right-of-way on US 287 in Trinity County. The flowers are beautiful. In fact, I have never seen the right-of-way so lovely and clean. I know that this did not just happen, but took a great deal of hard work.

Thanks to all of you in District 11 for affording us this beauty and making it a pleasure to travel.

Jolene Taylor
Waco

LETTERS

On March 3, my wife and I were on our way to Abilene. Just outside Sweetwater a tire blew, causing me some anxious moments wondering what to do. But not for long. A pickup from the highway department came up and **Frank Leal** and **Dennis Brawley** changed our tire. Those boys were a blessing.

J.A. Moore
Retired SDHPT employee
Sweetwater

Leal and Brawley are maintenance technicians in the district striping crew, Abilene District.

I would like to express my appreciation to **Oliver J. Weishuhn** of the Bellville maintenance section in Austin County, in the Yoakum District.

On May 29, Mr. Weishuhn was kind enough to stop and render aid to my wife and me about five miles west of Sealy on Interstate 10. It is comforting to know that there are state employees who are willing to go out of their way to help in times of need. Since I am a retired Austin police officer, I understand the value of persons such as Mr. Weishuhn and commend him and his department.

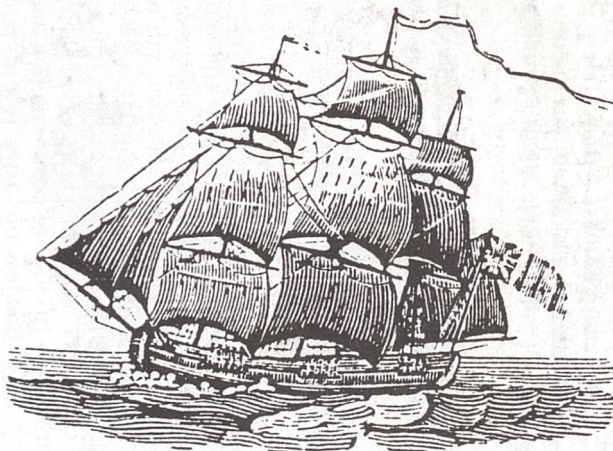
Howard Brownlow
Buda

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