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TEXAS STATE  
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NON-CIRCULATING



## Maintenance pride takes team spirit

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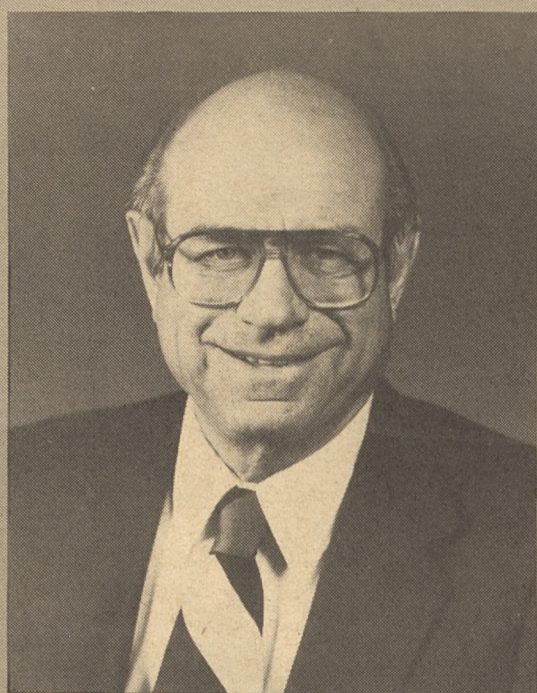
Photo by Kevin Stillman

# TRANSPORTATION news



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*April 1989*



## Houston man named to commission

Wayne B. Duddlesten, a Houston developer, has been appointed by Gov. Bill Clements to a six-year term on the highway commission.

"Our Texas highway network is second to none," Clements said. "Wayne Duddlesten's vision, leadership and dedication can help build upon that legacy to further enhance our transportation system and strengthen our economic development."

Duddlesten, 59, will replace John Butler, also of Houston, whose term on the commission has expired. Duddlesten's appointment is subject to Senate confirmation.

## \$400 million OK'd for rehabilitation

A massive program to restore and improve about 2,500 miles of Texas roadways was approved at the March meeting of the highway commission. The ambitious plan will pump \$400 million into 497 projects throughout the state.

"We are targeting three basic categories of projects," said Engineer-Director Raymond Stotzer. "About \$300 million will be distributed among our 24 districts for general rehabilitation of highway surfaces. These projects are needed to protect our investment in the roadways."

Stotzer said an additional \$50 million is slated to improve "trunkline highways" around the state — roads that furnish regional service, support commerce, and provide significant economic benefits. "Generally, these are Interstate highways or primary routes that have deteriorated to the extent that they need major reconstruction," said Stotzer.

The remaining \$50 million will be used to add shoulders to narrow, two-lane highways. "When we add shoulders, we also widen culverts and bridges, and strengthen the roadway," Stotzer said. "That makes them safer. On roads that carry at least 1,500 vehicles a day, there are 36 percent fewer accidents when those roads have adequate shoulders."

Work will begin immediately and continue for one to two years. ★**Marcy Goodfleisch**

Duddlesten is chairman of the Duddlesten Cos. and Wayne Duddlesten Inc. During the past 33 years, he has developed more than \$1 billion worth of office buildings, apartment complexes, hotels, and shopping centers. A graduate of the University of Houston, Duddlesten is a trustee on the school's foundation. ★

## Texans celebrate 2 new highways

San Antonio and Lake Jackson were the sites of celebrations in February marking the openings of two new state highways.

Approximately 200 politicians, civic leaders and others gathered atop Lake Jackson's Oyster Bay Bridge Feb. 17 to mark the unofficial opening of the long-awaited Brazoria Parkway.

State Sen. J.E. "Buster" Brown snipped a red, white and blue ribbon signaling completion of the roadway that southern Brazoria County had awaited for more than 25 years.

Brown was careful throughout the event to refer to the leg of Texas 288 as the Brazoria Parkway, a name he and others pushed to have adopted by law in 1985. The \$13 million leg completes the freeway from Houston to Lake Jackson.

Highway officials began planning as early as 1950 to build such a freeway from US 59 near downtown Houston to Texas 332 in Lake Jackson. The 55.3 miles of four-lane roadway eventually cost the state \$219 million and took more than 20 years of construction time to complete.

In San Antonio Feb. 28, public and private partners responsible for the development of Texas 151 celebrated the completion of that highway.

The ribbon-tying ceremony commemorated the completion of Texas 151 frontage roads for the future West Side Expressway.

The highway commission has approved construction within five years of the estimated \$75 million, six-lane expressway which will be built between the pair of frontage roads from US 90 to Loop 1604.

Texas 151 holds a statewide record for highway development. Only 22 months elapsed between the time a delegation of city, county and business representatives met with the highway commission in 1984, and the letting of the first contract in December 1985. ★

**H**ow many things can you say you've accomplished completely alone? Not many, I'd venture to say.

Certainly that's true of our work in the department. We all rely on an intricate network of information and relationships as we try to provide the best service we can for the citizens of Texas. Over a period of time, we learn who has the know-how to help us do our jobs, and, more importantly, who will work with us in a team effort.

Fortunately, that's the majority of our coworkers. This department has long been blessed with a work force of dedicated, competent, and hard-working people. My travels around this state have only reinforced this knowledge for me.

Within every district and division, our organization's leadership is made up of long-time employees who have worked their way up through the ranks by mastering a variety of assignments, always recognizing that the department's success takes a team effort.

A person who cannot work in harmony and cooperation with fellow workers and supervisors, on the other hand, does not have a bright future in this department.

In any organization, there are always a few folks who just don't get into the swing of things. Whether it's a military assignment, a basketball game, a school project, or a community venture, we can all think of someone who didn't quite get with the program.

These are folks who simply cannot fit into a team effort. Never content, these naysayers usually aim to spread their sour outlook among their colleagues.

There's a place for such people in this great country — but it's not with this department. Some folks just need a job where they can do their own thing, without the complications of coworkers or supervisors.

No one is drafted into this department. If those who are chronically unhappy here will find other work that better suits their personality, then they, their highway coworkers, and our department will be better off.

We have a great challenge before us, and it is only with a true team effort that we can meet it.

*Raymond Stotzer*  
Engineer-Director



## Dirty Darrel adopted

When he introduces himself, he won't say, "I'm Darrel. Here's my brother Larry and my other brother Larry."

He'll just give you "The Dirt — According to Darrel." That's the name of the Adopt-a-Highway newsletter that made its debut in March, just in time for the fourth Great Texas Trash-Off on April 1.

Darrel the Barrel, mascot and "spokesman" for the program, was created by GSD&M, the advertising firm responsible for the "Don't Mess with Texas" campaign. ★**Karen LeFevre**

# Girl Scouts build for the future

By Juliana Fernandez

If you thought Girl Scouting was all Thin Mints and Hoedowns, think again.

Girl Scouts in the Austin-Travis County area are learning a few engineering skills in addition to the sales techniques they acquire through annual cookie sales.

Scout troops have State Department of Highways and Public Transportation employees to thank for enlightening them about the different disciplines of engineering. In the process, many area Girl Scouts earn a special patch to display on their sash, too.

The colorful patch displays an award-winning department project — the Loop 360 bridge spanning Lake Austin. The "Exploring Engineering" patch was designed by engineer Carolyn Reynolds of Austin, with the assistance of Deborah W. Morris, an engineer with the Buildings and Real Estate Section of the Maintenance and Operations Division. Morris has been instrumental in organizing the annual Exploring Engineering Workshop in Austin for the local Lone Star Girl Scout Council.

Begun in 1986 by the Southwest Texas Section of the Society of Women Engineers, the event gives participants an opportunity to earn the Girl Scout "Putting Things Together" merit badge. It includes engineering activities, touch-and-see displays, demonstrations, and interaction with numerous local area engineers, companies, and engineering students.

"We thought we would be host to a few young girls, but the number of those attending really surprised us," said Morris. Approximately 100 girls, in grades four through eight, attend the workshop in Austin each fall.

The "Exploring Engineering" patch is



Deborah Morris of the Maintenance and Operations Division displays the Girl Scout patch and badge that help open new vistas to youngsters. (Photo by Juliana Fernandez)

available only to troops of the Austin-area council. "The Loop 360 bridge is a landmark in the Austin area," said Morris. "A Girl Scout has a chance to see the bridge, and can relate to the patch and what it means."

To earn the patch, the girls must do two of the following requirements: demonstrate to another Girl Scout troop or group two things learned at the annual workshop; ask an engineer to speak to the troop about his or her specialty; or take a friend to Discovery Hall science museum in Austin.

"We want the workshop to leave a lasting

impression on the girls, and earning the patch creates reinforcement," said Morris. "The event is an opportunity to expose the girls to engineering at an early age. Then they'll know that if engineering is something they have a liking for, well, it's out there for them."

A former Girl Scout, Morris became interested in architecture in high school technical drawing classes. She earned a degree in architectural engineering from the University of Texas. A recent project of Morris' is the new Paris maintenance and engineering building.

Earning the engineering patch is a motivator, as evidenced by the increasing number of troops that pay the \$4 workshop fee each year.

"It's a very popular event, well planned, and gives non-traditional information to those attending. Even the adult leaders find the workshop fascinating," said Alice Nofziger, community service specialist with the Lone Star Girl Scout Council. "Girls can go into any field today, and we're bringing them one step closer to realizing that."

The Girl Scouts are exposed to a cross section of engineering as they learn to work with computers, study hazardous wastes, discover how roads are made, and even try on an astronaut's suit.

"The Scouts and their leaders couldn't believe we had women engineers who did so many things," said Dawn Vose, engineering assistant with the Construction Division. Vose is among several department employees who have assisted with the workshop in recent years. Others include: Meg Moore, Joni Haugen, Paula Nichols, Dorcas Paden, and Sue Bryant with the Maintenance and Operations Division; and Katherine Hargett and Marian J. Thompson with the Austin District.★

## Don't hesitate to give blood

By Cynthia Gonzales

You're considering donating blood in the Employees Advisory Committee blood drive in Austin next month, right? But maybe you're not sure you want to bother.

It's worth a little inconvenience to give blood if it means you can save a life. Who knows when *your* life will depend on the generosity of those who donate blood?

So if you're still not sure, check out this list of the top 10 excuses for not giving blood:

**"I'm afraid to give blood."**

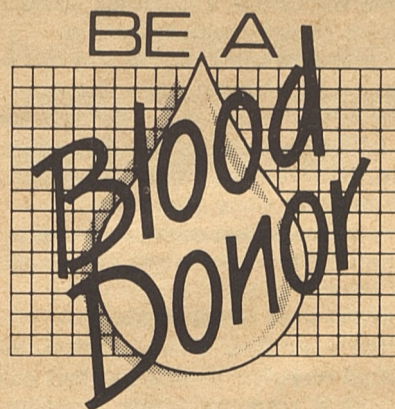
Everyone is apprehensive the first time, but if you just take the time (and courage) to make one donation, you'll wonder why you ever hesitated. There's really nothing to it.

**"Other people must be giving enough blood."**

You can gamble your life on that assumption, but please don't gamble other people's lives. What a tragic waste it would be if someone died because people did not care enough to donate blood — if they left it for someone else to do.

**"My blood isn't the right type."**

Every type is the "right" type. Both rare and common blood types are needed all the time.



**"They wouldn't want my blood because of the illness I've had."**

If the donor requests, the blood center staff will consult the donor's physician for approval.

**"I don't want to get infected with something."**

Blood center technicians use disposable equipment for each donor, so there is no way you can contract hepatitis, AIDS, or other diseases from giving blood.

**"My blood isn't rich enough."**

A sample of your blood is checked before you donate. If your blood is deficient in some way, at least you'll know and be able to take action to correct it.

**"I'm afraid of being turned down."**

If you are medically deferred, that's OK. At least you tried. It may be a temporary deferment, so try again later. The need for blood will never run out.

**"They'll take too much out — I don't have any blood to spare."**

The amount taken is less than a pint. If you are reasonably healthy, you have 10 to 12 pints in your body. And since your body makes new blood constantly, the donation will be replaced within hours. You should be able to give every two months without any problems.

**"My insurance covers blood I may need."**

The whole point of donating blood is to have it on hand when it's needed. All the insurance in the world is useless if no blood is available.

**"I'm too busy."**

This excuse is the most common, which is a shame. We can make the time if we want to.

If these explanations have put your apprehensions to rest, please give the "Gift of Life." Someone, somewhere, will deeply appreciate it.

The blood drive schedule is as follows:

**May 2:** La Costa, D-4 Conference Room;

**May 3:** Camp Hubbard, Building 5, Room 200;

**May 4:** Dewitt Greer Building, Main Hearing Room.

If you have any questions about the blood drive, contact Rudy Rivera (Highway Design) at 465-6118, or Cynthia Gonzales (Construction) at 463-8869.★

# Hodge: Division no longer 'other half'

A conversation with . . . Maintenance and Operations Engineer Bob Hodge

*Bob Hodge's career with the highway department began in 1958, when he joined the Fort Worth District, and led him through varied experiences culminating in his current position as head of the Maintenance and Operations Division (D-18). In May of 1987, Hodge became head of the Safety and Maintenance Operations Division, and oversaw its reorganization in October 1988 as the Maintenance and Operations Division. Hodge took time from his diverse duties last month to talk with Transportation News Jeff Carmack.*

**Your division just reorganized and changed its name; what prompted that?**

This is a very diverse and unique and very large division, and I consider all facets major. However, to keep some sense of direction, I reorganized the division and identified two major areas, maintenance and operations, as "super" functions and grouped all sections behind these two functions. Maintenance has to do with the care of the facility itself, and operations with the care of the driver.

**What are the division's chief responsibilities?**

Our major responsibility is to maintain and operate our highway system. Included in Maintenance and Operations are activities such as Buildings and Real Estate, Landscape, and of course, a Maintenance Section, D-18M. Also included are Safety and Traffic Operations, Central Permit Office, Pavement Management, Accounting and Personnel, and a new section called Planning and Administrative Support.

**Management Support is also included in your division; what exactly is its function?**

Management Support was designed primarily to relieve the various sections of many activities that fall into this category and to assist division managers.

**Could you give an overview of safety operations?**

The Texas Traffic Safety Program is an effort that encompasses most of the department's work activities. But in our division, we also administer the State and Community Highway Safety Grant Program. The program is statewide with special emphasis in high-risk areas. Assistance is provided in nine high-priority areas: police traffic services, alcohol countermeasures, emergency medical services, occupant protection, information services, safety and traffic engineering, motorcycle safety, community programs, and public education. The department provides the planning and administrative functions for the program. Expected results are reduced accidents and fatalities statewide and particularly in target areas.

**What is the role of traffic operations?**

Traffic management is an all-encompassing activity that includes all traditional traffic engineering and safety functions, plus the new technology and strategies for managing traffic. A subset of traffic management is freeway management and operations.

Freeway management is without a doubt the largest part of overall traffic management. Traffic congestion is restricting mobility on our freeways. We cannot build



Bob Hodge cites pride in performance as the key to the department's continuing efforts to improve the "presentation of our highway system."

freeway lanes fast enough to keep up with this demand, so we have to operate these freeways and manage the traffic in such a way as to get maximum efficiency.

It involves things like electronic detection on the freeways that is fed into a central computer where you can watch the traffic flow. If you see that flow breaking down, you will have closed-circuit television surveillance so you can zoom in and see what is causing that breakdown, then you can make some kind of response. That response might be feeding information to the driver, telling him the freeway's closed down and advising him to go some other way, by a changeable message sign or by highway advisory radio. Then you might also, from that same central control center, make adjustments to your signal system.

But at the same time a more critical thing is your actual response to that incident either through incident response teams, courtesy patrols, or police. The sooner you get to that incident and get it removed, the sooner you're going to free up that freeway; and the longer it stays there, the longer it's going to take to clear it. So that's a very critical issue. That very briefly is freeway management.

**You mentioned the Central Permit Office; what is its role?**

To issue overweight and oversize permits to truckers who are using our highway system. We now have all 24 districts on board as part of this central system and we're issuing permits for the whole state of Texas, which may be one of the first central locations like this in the country. I'm quite sure it's the biggest.

**You also mentioned pavement management; what is that?**

It is an activity designed to collect

**"We've always had the best highway system as far as construction techniques . . . but now we probably have the best-kept system as well."**

pavement data, develop necessary models and analytical processes to meet design and decision-making needs of the districts, divisions, and the administration, as related to pavements.

**You're a native of Durant, Okla., but you also claim Bowie as a hometown?**

My wife is from Bowie, and I lived there many years ago and spent a lot of time there so it's a second home to me.

**You attended the Indiana Institute of Technology; when did you graduate?**

I graduated in '57.

**You served in the Army in the South Pacific; what kind of unit were you in?**

The Army Corps of Engineers, mapping the Philippines.

**Then you also worked in South America for a while.**

When I graduated from college, I elected to go with an oil company in South America — Venezuela and Colombia. Then we got caught in a revolution and I got out. This was in the latter part of '57, early '58.

**What was your role with the oil company?**

My role was to lead advance parties and do location work. We were trying to establish a field on the Venezuelan-Colombian border, in an area where there had never been any drilling done. There was not much of a way to get our equipment in, or anything else. It was strictly jungle. It was quite an interesting experience. The revolution was pretty far-reaching, and a lot of the oil companies lost a lot of their equipment; American companies lost their businesses.

**You joined the highway department in 1958, in Fort Worth. What were you doing?**

I did quite a few things. I started out in construction, did about four years there, then I worked a while on the new district office site; then I went into traffic engineering. I spent some time in the right-of-way section, then I spent about four years in transportation planning for the Dallas-Fort Worth Regional Area. That was an organization that was newly created because of the federal requirements that all urban areas over 50,000 population have an ongoing transportation planning process. It was quite a large undertaking.

**What evolved from that work?**

A plan that has been updated from time to time but is still being used by the regional transportation advisory committee.

**In '69 you returned to the Fort Worth traffic office as the district traffic engineer?**

Right, back to the district as traffic engineer. I had all the traditional traffic engineering responsibilities such as signs, signals, and markings; we did all the Interstate signs and markings. Then as time went on and traffic management became a factor, we moved into that area and developed a traffic management plan for the Fort Worth area. We did the design on the equipment we were installing in construction projects for traffic management, things that help control the freeway system. But in addition to that we also had public transportation as a part of our responsibility, and the district element of traffic safety.

**In May of '87 you became state safety and traffic operations engineer. What did that entail?**

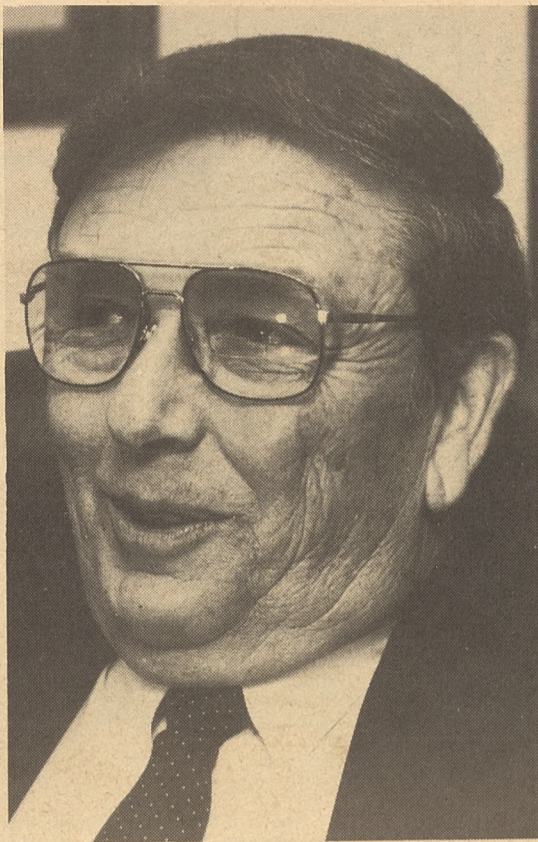
At that point in time there were two sections: traffic engineering section, which Dick Oliver ran for quite a few years, and the safety section. When Dick Oliver retired we combined those two sections into one section and called it safety and traffic operations.

**At one time you owned and operated an Arabian horse farm in Burleson. Do you still?**

When we moved down here we sold out; we're now out of the horse business. We were in it 20 years, I guess. It's quite an interesting activity. I was stable boy, groom, exercise boy, exhibitor, birthing attendant. All my weekends were taken up repairing fences and cleaning stalls and hauling hay. Actually, what happened to me in the beginning I had some daughters who thought they wanted to show horses. But sooner or later they got interested in boys and left me with the horses.

**What do you do with your spare time now that you don't raise horses?**

Well, we're still making some adjustments



Since becoming director of the Maintenance and Operations Division, Bob Hodge has enjoyed "being a part of the big picture."

**"That's actually one of my major objectives here: to tear down that wall between maintenance and the rest of the department . . . We're not the 'other half' of the department; we're a part of the department."**

in that area. After all of those years spent with all of our time taken up with horses we're still trying to adjust. I want to start playing golf again one of these days. I like to fish, do a little woodwork. But at this point in time we're just kind of enjoying ourselves, enjoying not having any responsibilities, getting acquainted with the Austin area.

**How do you like Austin compared to the Fort Worth area?**

I like it very well. It's very different. It was quite a decision to sell out completely and move to Austin, but it's one that I haven't regretted for one single minute. I like the idea of being a part of the big picture, being involved in a lot of things that are going on in the department right now. There are a lot of exciting things going on. In fact, I don't think I've ever worked as hard in my life, but I've enjoyed every minute.

**What sort of exciting things do you see going on in the department now?**

The department is changing very, very rapidly. Some of the traditional activities are

changing. We're doing new things, going new directions. The traffic operations concept is relatively new. Automation is a big factor in the department now. All of our resident engineers are moving into the area of automation, doing a lot of things different than they did in the past. In the maintenance and operations area, we're making every effort we can to develop better information than we've ever had in the past in order to make good decisions on fund allocations. There's a lot of things happening that haven't been part of our normal routine in the past.

We've combined in the districts maintenance and the resident engineers. This is a step in the right direction because here you've got people working together, helping each other, on the maintenance side and the construction and design side, where before they were separate. Sometimes they didn't even talk to each other. They even had separate buildings on the same site.

That's actually one of my major objectives here: to tear down that wall between maintenance and the rest of the department. We've been all these many years considered the "other half" of the department, but we're not the other half of the department; we're a part of the department. Until we tear that wall down completely and get to working as a team and quit trying to keep ourselves separate from everything else that goes on, we're not going to work as we should. We've had quite a lot of success at developing teamwork within the division or within the district in small groups. We still have a reluctance to work together as divisions, but we're gaining on that.

**What's the most exciting development you've seen during your years with the department?**

That's a tough one. I think probably the most interesting and most satisfying thing that I've seen is our emphasis on quality. Not only quality of our construction techniques, concrete and steel, but the quality of the roadsides, the rest areas, our litter programs, our mowing programs, all these things that are what you might call the presentation of our highway system. We've always had the best highway system as far as construction techniques and that kind of thing, but now we probably have the best-kept system as well. That overall quality in everything that we're doing is, I think, the thing that is most exciting for me: what our district office sites look like, what our maintenance locations look like.

**What do you think has prompted this emphasis on quality? It sounds as if it might be pride.**

I think that's probably the key word: pride. I don't think there's any doubt that a lot of that pride and a lot of that emphasis is coming from our engineer-director. That's a major objective for him.

We're seeing a lot of things happening in the districts now that have not happened in the past. We were talking about the resident engineers and the maintenance people working together; that's where it begins. Then you go on to the construction efforts, management of traffic through construction sites, the maintenance of the roadways, the way we keep our rest areas. It all boils down to the same thing: our pride in doing the best job we can for the people of Texas.

*Photos by Geoff Appold*

# Teamwork turns the trick in maintenance

By Marcy Goodfleisch

**R**icky Modisette spends most of each work day battling the outside elements while he guides a large vehicle, maneuvering several levers at once. He relies on a practiced eye to do his job right. But at the end of his shift, he can see tangible results of his efforts. And he has a sense of pride and accomplishment that many folks would envy.

Modisette is one of that rare breed known in maintenance shops as "a good blade man." He and his peers around the state are known for their skill on the maintainer — the piece of equipment that blades and shapes the roadway's surface and shoulders to achieve the slope ratio needed for good drainage. And he loves his job.

"It's satisfying to start out with a piece of road that's all chewed up, and when you're through it looks good. And you know you had a part in it," said Modisette, who has been with the Lufkin District for nine years.

**U**nlike highway employees who are office-bound, Modisette and the thousands of other maintenance employees in the department begin each day by rallying briefly at one of the 288 or so section offices around the state. After about 30 minutes of assignments, announcements, and equipment issues, they break into crews for the day's work. In most cases, they won't return until late in the afternoon, after spending eight or more hours in the sun, rain, ice, or snow.

Every person on a crew has a role to play, and they rely on teamwork to get the job done.

"It takes more than one person to get a road done," Modisette said. While he is guiding the blade, other crew members will be hauling materials, flagging traffic, or operating another piece of equipment.

"Each person has a duty," said Modisette. "If one person is not performing, it throws a kink in it. You rely on everyone else to be able to do your job."

Modisette's supervisor, Phillip Morgan, agrees that teamwork is critical. He has taken pains to see that crew members are cross-trained on various pieces of equipment. "Our people are not jealous of each other," he said. "They teach each other about specific jobs so they can fill in if someone is out."

**H**aving a repertoire of skills comes in handy, said Morgan, because on any given day, the job can be a new experience.

"We call it routine maintenance, but it's not really routine," he laughs. In his 26 years, the "average" work day has included ice storms, damaged roads, emergency maintenance, and assorted other "routine" situations.

"I like it all," he said. "It's like having a new job every day."

Morgan said people in his section, as well as in the maintenance forces across the state, have a "family" rapport that translates to team spirit on the job, allowing them to meet their daily challenges.

**T**eamwork helped smooth the transition when maintenance and residency offices were combined a few years ago.

"It's working great for us," said Morgan of the change. "Two heads are better than one. We've been able to help (construction) out with personnel from time to time."



Office manager Dorothy Sharron and Kountze maintenance section chief O. B. Grissom say family spirit gets them through the tough times. (Photo by Ted East)

Some of Morgan's employees have spent a month or more serving as inspectors or in other capacities with Lufkin's resident engineer Joe Ben Vaughan.

"They learned a lot," said Morgan. "And they were able to bring the knowledge back to the rest of us." And residency employees also gained new knowledge from working more closely with maintenance crews, he noted.

"There are details about installing culverts, for example, that they didn't realize," said Morgan. "I think the new arrangement has helped both groups."

Morgan's attitude toward variety is echoed among other maintenance employees around the state. In the Beaumont District, maintenance office manager Dorothy Sharron says she has had to learn virtually every type of office work there is in order to run a smooth shop in the Kountze section.

"You have to have an overall knowledge of the entire department," said Sharron. "We deal with the public, local officials, and other agencies. We handle the telephone, the CRT, the radio, material issues, payroll, supplies . . ."

**O**ffice managers' duties are so diverse, and maintenance sections are often so remote from district operations, said Sharron, that the highway department developed a specialized training program a few years ago.

"The maintenance office manager works by herself 80 percent of the time," said Sharron. "There is minimum supervision, and you must be able to work independently."

Sharron's 24 years with the department, and her talent in her job, led to her involvement in creating the curriculum for training other managers. She was part of a team that developed the course content, and went on to become an instructor. About 300 people went through the course, Sharron said.

Through her teaching experience, she met dozens of her counterparts around the state and heard many first-hand stories about the role office managers play in maintenance.

"They (the maintenance crews) depend on us to take care of them," said Sharron.

While her coworkers are in the field all day, the office manager handles insurance, personnel, and the myriad other details that keep their home base in order.

And the family spirit surfaces as they field calls for the crews.

Sharron recalls taking a message from a young wife whose husband was out with a crew battling an ice storm. The woman was near tears. The pipes had frozen at her home, and she had no water for their baby. Sharron managed to calm the woman and helped her find a solution.

"I asked her if there was any cold water in the refrigerator," said Sharron. "There was, so she was able to boil it and use it for the baby."

**T**he ice storms that hit Texas, when a legendary norther blows in, are some of the busiest times for maintenance crews. The minute ice begins forming on bridges and overpasses, the crews are called out. They work 16-hour shifts, with eight hours off to sleep, until the roads are again dry and safe.

"Everybody takes care of each other," said Sharron. "The people in the office can't get out, so the crews bring back doughnuts."

And in return, many office managers "take care" of their crews by bringing in hearty pots of homemade stew to warm them during their brief breaks.

"They have to rock the structures (spread gravel and aggregate) at about three-hour intervals," said Sharron. "When they return to the section, we have somebody loading the truck and refueling it while they come in and eat. They get warmed up a little and go right back out. That way there is no lost time."

While the crews are limited to 16 hours at a time of such strenuous duty, Sharron said the office staff frequently stays for days at a time. They work for hours at a time coordinating operations and scheduling crews, grabbing a few minutes of sleep when they can.

**T**he section's efforts don't go unobserved by neighbors, said Sharron. During a week-long ice storm a few years ago, the Top Half restaurant in town brought the tired crew a pot of homemade chili. "They saw that our men were out working in it, and wanted to thank them," said Sharron.

Wind storms, hurricanes, and other disasters constantly put maintenance crews to the test around the state. Over the years, the maintenance forces have become known for their heroic efforts, whether during a tornado

in Saragosa, a blizzard in Childress, floods in the Hill Country, or in priming for storms that, fortunately, blow in a bit softer than forecasted.

"We worked in preparation for Hurricane Gilbert," said Sharron of the storm that mobilized the entire highway department last year. "We were lucky we didn't have to put it to use."

O. B. Grissom, who manages the section where Sharron works, said the visibility of maintenance crews at such times puts them in the department's front line. In addition to the dedication and skill needed to perform their duties, Grissom is proud of his crew's attitude toward public image.

"I coach them constantly on their behavior on the highway," he said, "both for safety reasons and to remind them not to irritate the public." He focuses on basics such as courtesy to motorists and attention to the appearance of the maintenance yard.

"People drive by and see our area constantly," said Grissom. "To them, that's their tax dollars."

In Lufkin, Morgan agrees that maintenance is often in the public eye. "We're sometimes the first to catch any flak," said Morgan.

Sharron said that phone calls from the public and walk-in traffic are regular occurrences at most maintenance offices. Whether the request is for directions or for repair of a pothole, people don't hesitate to approach maintenance offices.

Grissom said he has worked to develop and maintain positive relations in his community as a way to increase



**Ricky Modisette, Lufkin District "blade man," takes pride in doing his job as part of a team, and says he learns something new every day. (Photo by Barry Walker)**

communication. Now, if there is a problem, it can be ironed out quickly at the local level. And to him, part of successful community relations is doing the job right to begin with. He can relate to Ricky Modisette's sense of satisfaction in handling a blade.

"A blade man is essential to the operation," said Grissom. "You need three-to four-tenths of a foot fall in a road surface in a 12-foot lane. That lets the water drain properly. Then there won't be hydroplaning."

Grissom and Modisette both say the precision and skill needed to create a smooth, safe road surface leave a sense of accomplishment and pride at the end of a job.

But success is not lost on the public. One reason Texas roads have gained national recognition is for their high quality and safety standards.

"That's why they call us maintenance," said Modisette. "We try to keep them as safe and smooth as possible."

For Modisette, it is a work tradition passed down from generation to generation. He grew up hearing about highway work from his father, Kinnon Modisette. The elder Modisette, who just celebrated 30 years with the department, is assistant foreman for the special job crew in Lufkin.

"I heard him talk about it, and what he did there," said Modisette. "He raised our family on it."

So when the younger Modisette signed on at the age of 19, he knew what to expect. The calls at 2 a.m. for ice storms, the long hours, the heat and the rain all go with the territory. But so, he says, does growth. He considers maintenance and the highway department his career.

Although he quietly admits he hopes to advance in the department, he modestly defers to the future. And then he focuses on his daily education on the job.

"Everybody wants to move up, I guess," he says. "Maybe when I'm ready. Right now, I enjoy learning. Every day on my blade, I learn something new. When you've quit learning, you've quit trying."★

## Supervisors' skills refined in training

By Juliana Fernandez

A new training course for maintenance supervisors and their assistants will kick off this summer, featuring the finest teachers in the field — other maintenance supervisors.

About 45 department employees, representing various districts and divisions, make up a task force that is now developing a curriculum for the course. An eight-member steering committee oversees the task force.

"This department can offer state-of-the-art training for maintenance supervisors and their assistants," said Bill Klipple, administrative manager of the Maintenance and Operations Division and steering committee chairman.

"Our main objective is to instruct maintenance supervisors and their assistants in managing, problem-solving, and monitoring their sections by utilizing state-of-the-art resources offered by this department," said Klipple.

The proposed three-day course in Austin will target operations more than management, said Klipple. For example, participants will be taught how to better utilize automated reports to make their operations more efficient. They will also be schooled in techniques for dealing with the public.

"The relationship they establish with the public will reflect not only on them, but on the department as a whole," said Klipple.

About 600 students are expected to go through the course in a year's time. Classes will consist of about 25 students, and two classes will be held each month.

Instructors will be maintenance supervisors talking to other maintenance supervisors and their assistants, said Klipple. "This lends credibility to the program. Who better to teach it than those people out in the districts?"

The training will cover seven major topics: Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), contract management, utilization of automated programs, Bridge Inspection and Appraisal (BRINSAP), pavement evaluation, highway risk management, and

public image-public relations.

In addition to Klipple, members of the steering committee are: Yoakum District Engineer Ben Bohuslav; Joe Graff, engineer of maintenance, Maintenance and Operations Division; Terry Keener, district administrative engineer, Childress; Amarillo District Engineer Bill Lancaster; District Dennis Mlcak, maintenance engineer, Houston; Lubbock District Engineer Mel Pope; and Bill Presson, district roadway maintenance supervisor, Wichita Falls.★

## Flower bulletins direct devotees

By Gina McAskill

Wildflower enthusiasts will find the objects of their affections much more easily through the department's Wildflower Reporting Service, which started up this year on March 20, the first day of spring.

Each week, designated wildflower reporters in each district gather information on the location of the best blooms. On Wednesday afternoon, they enter the information on ROSCOE so all districts and the Travel and Information Division (D-16) can have access to it. The public can call their local district office, D-16 in Austin, or any tourist bureau to discover where the wild things are.

The program is now in its third year, and soon a new computer format will make it even more useful to tourists and easier for employees to use. A "fill-in-the-blank" input screen and the ability to sort reports by roadway, location, or flower type should be

implemented sometime this season.

The public is being informed about the program through releases to newspapers and broadcast outlets and via periodic bulletins reporting the lushest flower stands in the state.★



# Weather or not, maintenance carries on

By Ronda Baker

Through rain, snow or dark of night: such is the motto of the U.S. mail carrier. But few people stop to consider the plight of the highway maintenance worker, to whom those challenges might seem easy before ice, 12-hour shifts, and sometimes even gunshots enter the picture.

Add a jackknifed 18-wheeler, 169 semi-trailer rigs, and hundreds of cars stranded at once on ice more than a foot thick — all on just a single lane north or south, through a construction zone, no less. What you had was a maintenance nightmare on Interstate 35 between Gainesville and Denton. For much of the time March 4 to 7, the rain was frozen, the snow blew in drifts, and it was dark indeed.

Maintenance people are used to difficult working conditions, but even the veterans knew the situation was unusually tough. "I've never seen anything like it — I sure haven't — and I hope I never see another one," said Merl Branch, a highway department employee for 23 years. "It just makes you want to retire."

Though much of the northern and northeastern parts of the state suffered under the same ice and snow storm, the Gainesville-Denton route was particularly hard hit because the snow and ice amassed against the construction barrier and because the roadway was concrete rather than asphalt, which warms up faster. To make matters worse, the Interstate's heavy traffic quickly compacted the ice.

The result: a 23-mile-long traffic snarl between Sanger and Gainesville, which moved slowly over the weekend but by Monday afternoon had come to a standstill.

## Volunteer your time for special athletes

Austin-area highway department employees have until May Day to sign up as volunteers at the 1989 Texas Special Olympics Summer Games.

The event for children and adults with mental retardation will be held at Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos May 24-26. Training sessions will be held before the games for volunteers, who are needed both before and during the Olympics.

A five-member committee of headquarters employees is recruiting department personnel for the games. The committee also will be selling T-shirts featuring the event, which is expected to draw more than 4,000 athletes, 1,000 family members, 2,000 coaches, and 1,000 volunteers.

About 50 volunteers already are registered to work at the "Legends of Golf" tournament at Austin's Onion Creek Country Club on April 27. Part of the money raised will go to Special Olympics, and volunteer slots are open for that event, also. To sign up for the May events, return the coupon below. For more information, contact committee members: Jean Johnson, Bobby Killebrew, and Joan Lee, all of the Finance division; Mike O'Toole of the Bridge Division; and Diane Williams of the Division of Automation. ★

### The ice bill cometh

**During a four-day period in early February, ice covered parts of Central Texas from the Red River to Houston. Maintenance forces met the challenge in big way:**

- 4,312 employees worked overtime.
- 100,444 overtime hours were clocked.
- 77,756 cubic yards of sand and aggregate were used.
- 12,622 sacks of salt were used
- \$14.3 million (estimated) in structural damage to roads and bridges was sustained.

**Statewide figures for the March storm were not available.**

By Monday night, motorists' tempers were flaring. Someone fired shots in the direction of maintenance workers putting down crushed rock on the roadway just north of Valley View. No one was hurt, and the gunman got away.

"Sitting there for 14 hours, you have a lot of time to get a mad-on," said Bill Presson, maintenance engineer in the Wichita Falls district.

Not much of a thanks for devoted workers who braved 12-hour shifts round-the-clock in temperatures as low as 14 degrees.

How did they get the traffic moving again? Only with the help of a large portion of the 270 truckloads of chat (crushed rock), 1,675 bags of salt, and more than \$40,000 of worker overtime that Wichita Falls district used that long weekend.

The ice was too thick — 14 inches in many places — to be removed with plowing

or blading trucks. Until the ice thawed, the maintenance workers' only weapons were dump trucks loaded with the limestone chat.

"I don't care if you are in New York City or what, there's nothing that will cut ice that thick off," Presson said.

Because the stranded travelers didn't see any snow plows until the bitter end, many of them thought the highway department wasn't doing enough and complained to legislators, department officials, and even the Federal Highway Administration.

But the truth is, Presson explained, that the workers were going so far as to carry five-gallon buckets of chat from their trucks on the frontage road to cars and trucks stranded on the highway. The chat was dumped under wheels a bucket at a time.

Other chat dump trucks entered the highway at some of the scarce entrance ramps in the construction zone and backed up as far as a half mile to reach vehicles in need.

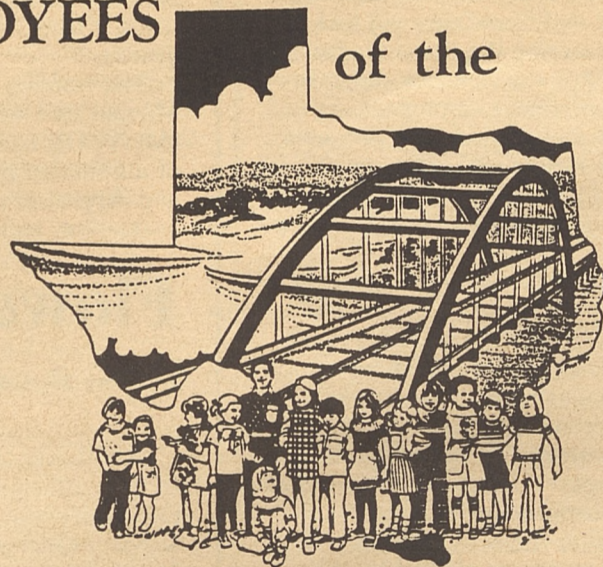
And the crew also was busy ferrying motorists to motels and a Red Cross center overnight that Monday.

Finally, on Tuesday morning, the ice had melted enough to be slowly chipped away by the department's machines.

Presson said there was little else his men could have done to clear the road more quickly, except to bring in a few other chatting trucks, though those were in use in other parts of the district.

"But (the conditions) developed so quickly (they) caught us by surprise. It even surprised the foremen, it was so bad," Presson said. "It was probably a once-in-25-years or once-in-50-years situation." ★

## EMPLOYEES of the



## TEXAS HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

### SPECIAL OLYMPICS VOLUNTEER FORM

Employees who volunteer to work for Special Olympics will have a chance to order T-shirts with this custom design. To volunteer, return this form to the Special Olympics Committee, D-3, Main Office, by Monday, May 1, 1989.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Office Location \_\_\_\_\_

Office Telephone \_\_\_\_\_



# Tech Trade

## Innovative sign trailer lightens load in Longview

By Laura Rayburn-White

One of the toughest jobs of maintenance personnel just got easier.

In the wake of a highway accident, crews must quickly alert or reroute motorists, especially when Interstate traffic is involved. Setting up warning signs and barricades is time-consuming and sometimes dangerous. But it can be quicker and safer — thanks to Eddie Coffey.

As maintenance supervisor for the Longview section in the Tyler District, Coffey has had to contend with several major accidents on I-20. Searching for a better way to get warning devices set up, Coffey developed an idea that allows a crew to be en route to an accident scene within three minutes.

Coffey made several modifications to the sign trailer the section had been using. The special trailer now stays loaded with barricades, signs, and other devices so that all workers have to do is hook up and go.

Once the crew reaches the accident site, setting up doesn't take long. The traffic markers that approaching drivers will encounter first are loaded at the back of the trailer. As the trailer is pulled toward the accident, workers take out and set up the correct signs in order. When reloading the trailer, the order is reversed so the last ones loaded are the first to be set out next time.

A ramp at the rear of the trailer eliminates constant stepping up and down when loading and unloading. Signs are stored upright in modified holders and are much



Organization and efficiency dictate the arrangement of traffic control devices on Longview's loaded sign truck. (Photo by Laura Rayburn-White)

easier to get out than if they were lying flat. Cone holders are mounted over the fenders on each side of the sign trailer.

Coffey also had his barricades specially painted, with warning chevrons on either side, so they can be used to close either the right or left lanes. This reduces the number of barricades that have to be carried. The trailer transports no excess baggage; everything is used, and used efficiently.

The North Tyler and Canton maintenance sections, which also maintain part of I-20, have made trailers similar to the one used by Coffey's crew. Although designed primarily for Interstate work, these trailers are used whenever needed.

Coffey also is willing to share his experience with other maintenance personnel interested in constructing a special emergency sign trailer.★

### APRIL

- 4 Equal Employment Opportunity Training, Austin (CH), D-13EEO
- 5-7 National Electrical Manufacturers Association Traffic Signal Controller System, Wichita Falls, District 3
- 5 Equal Employment Opportunity Training, Austin (CH), D-13EEO
- 6 Equal Employment Opportunity Training, Austin (CH), D-13EEO
- 6-7 Area I Research Advisory Committee Meeting, Brownsville, D-10R
- 10-13 Texas Travel Counselors Conference, Houston, D-16
- 11-12 Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
- 11-12 Administration of FHWA Planning Funds Course, Austin, D-10R
- 11-13 Arterial Analysis Package Training, Austin, D-18STO
- 13 Urban Transportation Planning Workshop, Austin, D-10P
- 17-18 District Engineers/Division Heads Meeting, Austin, File BCB
- 18-20 Bid Monitoring and Collusion Detection, Austin, D-6



- 18-21 Techniques for Pavement Rehabilitation Course, Austin, D-13T&D
- 20 Equal Employment Opportunity Training, Austin (CH), D-13EEO
- 21 Holiday, San Jacinto Day
- 24 Equal Employment Opportunity Training, Austin (CH), D-13EEO
- 25 Equal Employment Opportunity Training, Austin (CH), D-13EEO
- 26 Commission Meeting, Austin
- 26-28 Internal Review Conference, El Paso, File MLY
- 26-28 Urban Storm Drain Design Training, Houston, D-5

### MAY

- 1-4 Small Urban Area Transportation Planning Workshop, Austin, D-10R
- 2 Equal Employment Opportunity Training, Lubbock, D-13EEO
- 2-3 Area III Research Advisory Committee Meeting, Texarkana, D-10R
- 2-3 Highway Beautification Personnel Training, Advanced, San Antonio, D-15
- 3-4 Radio Technicians Conference, El Paso, D-18STO
- 4 Equal Employment Opportunity Training, Dallas, D-13EEO
- 9-10 Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
- 9-10 Highway Beautification Personnel Training, Advanced, Lufkin, D-15
- 9-11 Using the Urban Transportation Planning Process for Project Development and Design, Austin, D-10R
- 15-19 Bridge load rating user training sessions, Austin, D-5
- 16-18 Bidding Environment Evaluation Techniques, Austin, D-6
- 17 Accident Prevention Management Meeting, Austin, D-20



(Feb. 28, 1989)

#### Automation

Joel F. Young, 20 years; Arthur S. Hubbard, Richard Torres, 10 years.

#### Bridge

Marvin C. Heleman, 35 years; Dacio Marin III, five years.

#### Equipment and Procurement

Bobbie E. Jackson, 15 years; Patricia L. Andrews, Thomas L. Nanyes, Calvin S. Townes Jr., 10 years; Ronald D. Eberhardt, Robert L. Simpson, five years.

#### Finance

Connie R. Schulze, five years.

#### Highway Design

Aurora Meza, five years.

#### Human Resources

Bernice S. Kissmann, 30 years; Linda S. Winfrey, 20 years; William S. Huston, Cynthia M. Mikeska, five years.

#### Maintenance and Operations

Damon D. Naumann, 35 years; Daniel Vera, 20 years; Paul E. Northcutt, 15 years; Janet L. Saucedo, five years.

#### Materials and Tests

Leonard A. Iselt, 30 years; Lloyd S. Eveland, 15 years; Manuel M. Mercado, 10 years.

#### Motor Vehicle

Dorothy J. Brown, 40 years; Nelba F. Law, Katherine S. Mansour, 25 years; Pamela M. Arnold, Ruth H. Howard, 15 years; Diane E. Counts, Shirley T. Kesler, 10 years; Sandra P. Gipson, five years.

#### Planning and Policy

James J. Bisson, 20 years.

#### Right of Way

Howard E. Knippa, 30 years.

#### Transportation Planning

Bobby R. Antilley, 30 years; Marilyn H. Markow, 15 years.

#### Paris District (1)

Sarah O. Barbee, 20 years; Fred D. Hunter, Michael L. Saunders, 15 years; Thomas N. Low, 10 years; Bobby G. Littlefield, Bruce A. Scott, Willie S. Toland, five years.

#### Fort Worth District (2)

Mildred D. Miller, Stephen E. Younger, 25 years; John E. Chase, Douglas W. Keesey, Max M. Sampley, 20 years; Johnny L. Busby, Antonio S. Castillo, 15 years; Otto M. Warenskold Jr., Timothy W. White, 10 years; Belinda N. Carter, Anthony E. Hoots, Monte W. Moore, five years.

#### Wichita Falls District (3)

Ronnie L. Montgomery, Jimmy C. Thomas, five years.

#### Amarillo District (4)

Lonnie D. Parr, 25 years; Larry D. Fitzpatrick, 20 years; Randy D. Caddell, Minnie C. Kingston, 10 years; Harvey D. Davis, five years.

#### Lubbock District (5)

Meguil Montemayor, Rodolfo V. Moreno, Ira S. Teeter, 15 years; Betsy T. McCasland, Jose L. Ramirez, Jerry L. Williams, five years.

#### Odessa District (6)

William C. McAnally, 30 years; Thomas E. Vorhees, 25 years; Concepcion Fuentes, Billy K. Powell, 20 years; Teresa S. Aranda, Billy L. Cotton, Serapio Picaso, Demetrio Pineda, 10 years; Raymond S. Ortiz, Choc R. Phillips, five years.

#### San Angelo District (7)

Dennis R. Little, 30 years; Leroy P. Taylor, 25 years; Raoul M. Gutierrez, Guadalupe L. Reyes, 20 years; Juan R. Jimenez, Jesse L. Williams, 10 years; Roy M. Wooldridge, five years.

#### Abilene District (8)

Roger G. Hackney, 40 years; Tyree Jones, Patrick D. McKennon, Steve E. Morton, 15 years; Robert Almanza, Sharon N. Duncan, 10 years; Howard K. Middleton, five years.

#### Waco District (9)

Flora M. Lamay, 30 years; James W. Cowan II, Jessie V. Warrick, 25 years; Roland G. Casey, 20 years; William R. Miller Jr., 15 years; Darrell L. Jones, Bobby A. Pollard, Michael R. Sellers, Eddie W. Wright, 10 years; Douglas L. Fleming, Guy M. Wardlow, five years.

#### Tyler District (10)

James R. Monk, 40 years; Ronald A. Montgomery, Charles O. Richardson Jr., 30 years; Billy G. Jobe, 15 years; Donald E. Chitty, Dolores P. Villanueva, 10 years; Bernard H. Copeland, John C. Daugherty, Deborah J. Denton, John J. Kalalau, five years.

#### Lufkin District (11)

Annie L. Lout, 15 years; Garth A. Pillows, five years.

#### Houston District (12)

Alfred E. Filip, 35 years; John I. Tisdale, Thomas L. Whitaker Jr., 30 years; Henry J. Kure Jr., Joseph P. Moore, Jesse A. Robertson, 25 years; Robert W. Gray Jr., 20 years; Janelle H. Gbur, Albert M. McCarty, 15 years; Judy D. Brzymialkiewicz, John C. Cernoch, Michael A. Farrell, Nolan G. Terry, 10 years; Joseph L. Beasley, Carolyn A. Bednar-Wood, Deborah H. Chapa, Cecil R. Davis, Melvin M. Duhon, Ronald E. Fielder, Betty J. Graber, Emmett W. Hines, Douglas G. Stephens, five years.

# AWARDS

#### Yoakum District (13)

Nelson O. Muske, 35 years; Bobby M. Anderson, 25 years; James L. Ward, 20 years; Lawrence Harris, Jewel F. Pleasant, Stephen J. Werner, 10 years; Randall L. Bena, Rene Gomez, Frederick R. Lerma, five years.

#### Austin District (14)

Clyde T. Gant, 35 years; Walter M. Welch, Thomas W. Wilson, 20 years; Ysidro DeLeon, 15 years; Terri W. Jackson, Ricky L. Wilson, 10 years.

#### San Antonio District (15)

John A. Bellinger, 35 years; James W. Condry, Carrol D. Williams, Casper D. Zoeller, 30 years; Manuel P. Rodrigues Jr., Isabel De La Rosa, Joseph L. Grimes Jr., Thomas H. Jefferson, Arturo Ramirez, Frank E. Wolff, 20 years; Juan Billalobos Jr., Patrick L. Irwin, Raymond G. Koehler, Ruben Pompa, 15 Roberto Flores Jr., 10 years; Francis A. Almand, Elizabeth S. O'Neal, Raul Palacios, Clint P. Rodriguez, five years.

#### Corpus Christi District (16)

Tomas A. Garza, Cezar L. Lopez, Jose Zavala, 35 years; Bobby W. Ayers, Eddie R. Pospech, 25 years; Charles B. Freshcoln, Reynaldo M. Galvan, Jose P. Moreno, 10 years; Richard Barraza, Maria G. Hernandez, James C. Sutton, five years.

#### Bryan District (17)

Earl Smith, 40 years; Cecil Davenport, 30 years; Edward G. Gaas, Robert S. Leathers, Antone E. Pavlock, 20 years; James H. Delony, Charles F. Schoepf, five years.

#### Dallas District (18)

Willis V. Evans, James M. Huffman, 30 years; Bobby L. Stovall, 25 years; Lynn M. Davis, Ronnie S. Faulknor, 20 years; Buddy O. Cryer, 15 years; Mildred L. Fuchs, Fred W. Hall Jr., John A. McCormack Jr., Tommy J. Raymond, Billy J. Smith, five years.

#### Atlanta District (19)

Boyce H. Wells, 30 years; Ravinell N. Capps, Eugene H. Rudd, Jerry P. Sharp, 25 years; James R. Sinclair, Jimmy B. Turner, 20 years; Dorothy O. Williams, 10 years.

#### Beaumont District (20)

Francis K. Brady, 20 years; Emile Vanright, 10 years.

#### Pharr District (21)

Francisco H. Donovan, Jesus Montes, 25 years; Roberto P. Hernandez, Deborah S. Skelton, 10 years.

#### Brownwood District (23)

Arlen D. Auvenshine, 35 years; Jerry W. Godfrey, 25 years; Roy T. Speer, 20 years.

#### El Paso District (24)

Harold L. Surratt, 40 years; Leo R. Carrillo, Francisco H. Ruiz, 15 years.

#### Childress District (25)

Richard D. Mills, 10 years.

## In Memoriam

### Employees:

**Floyd M. Burk**, Paris District, 29 years service, died Feb. 18, 1989.

**Chester W. Dingler**, Tyler District, 20 years service, died Feb. 3, 1989.

**L.J. Sims**, Paris District, 25 years service, died Feb. 15, 1989.

### Retirees:

**Andrew J. Allen**, Houston, retired from Houston District in 1975, died Jan. 24, 1989.

**Joe Amstead Jr.**, Austin, retired from Equipment and Procurement Division in 1957, died Feb. 8, 1989.

**Roy L. Campbell**, Princeton, retired from Dallas District in 1979, died Jan. 2, 1989.

**Thurman B. Derryberry**, McKinney, retired from Dallas District in 1976, died Jan. 13, 1989.

**James D. Frasier**, Austin, retired from Administration in 1987, died Feb. 16, 1989.

**Horace D. Holley**, Dallas, retired from Dallas District in 1975, died Jan. 7, 1989.

**Jose E. Leal**, Alamo, retired from Pharr District in 1987, died Dec. 4, 1988.

**James H. McDermott**, Geary, Okla., retired from Pharr District in 1970, died Jan. 26, 1989.

**Lessie B. Nevill**, Bryan, retired from Bryan District in 1980, died Feb. 10, 1989.

**Virgil D. Schultz**, Dickinson, retired from Houston District in 1983, died Feb. 18, 1989.

**Daniel J. Strelczyk**, Yoakum, retired from Yoakum District in 1984, died Feb. 14, 1989.

**Carl A. Townsend**, Perryton, retired from Amarillo District in 1978, died Dec. 21, 1988.

## Retirements

(Dec. 31, 1988)

### Fort Worth District (2)

Lindell C. Bachhofer, Maintenance Technician III, 23 years service.

### Amarillo District (4)

William E. Corcoran, Maintenance Technician III, 19 years service.

### Lubbock District (5)

John P. Cox, Maintenance Technician III, 21 years service.

### San Angelo District (7)

Cecil R. Cunningham, Engineering Technician III, 11 years service.

### Tyler District (10)

Alton R. Beall, Engineering Technician V, 28 years service.

### Lufkin District (11)

Alfred L. Smith, Maintenance Technician III, 39 years service.

### Houston District (12)

Guadalupe S. Barboza, Maintenance Technician III, 18 years service; Dorsey O. Walker, Engineering Technician III, 10 years service.

### Austin District (14)

Curtis A. Hahne, Maintenance Technician III, 21 years service.

### San Antonio District (15)

Fred H. Pfeiffer, Roadway Maintenance Supervisor IV, 36 years service.

### Corpus Christi District (16)

William E. O'Donnell, Administrative Assistant, 28 years service.

### Bryan District (17)

Alton F. Hooper, Maintenance Technician III, 32 years service.

### Dallas District (18)

Robert P. Hamm, Geologist Assistant II, 30 years service; R. C. Paysinger, Maintenance Technician III, 21 years service.

### Atlanta District (19)

Sawyer R. Wimberly Jr., Director III, 35 years service.

### Beaumont District (20)

Pate Callaway, Maintenance Technician III, 19 years service.

### Pharr District (21)

Adelio Gonzales Jr., Maintenance Technician III, 32 years service.



Myron Menzie, left, and Gerry Kowar check a disabled auto along Interstate 20 in southwest Fort Worth. Their uniforms, orange with a yellow reflective stripe, are standard for District 2 Courtesy Patrol members. The uniforms provide another measure of safety for patrol members and are becoming familiar to area residents as they see crews aid motorists along urban freeways. (Photo by Tai Nguyen)



By R. S. "Bubba" Williamson

A highway retiree recently joined a select group of Texas farm and ranch families. At a Capitol ceremony Nov. 15, **Vernon R. Wilkinson's** V Bar Ranch was accepted into the Texas Department of Agriculture's 1988 Family Land Heritage Program.

Wilkinson and his wife, Marguerite, received a certificate and official sign designating their Menard County property as a "Century Ranch." V Bar acreage has been kept in continuous productivity by the Wilkinson family for more than a century.

Wilkinson was supervising resident engineer in Odessa for many years. For five years before his retirement in December 1984, he and his wife traveled 427 miles, round trip, every weekend to work at their ranch and care for livestock. During that time, the ambitious pair built nine miles of fencing, remodeled and enlarged a tiny two-room house on the property, and brought in two water wells. They now point with pride to their thriving ranch complex where they raise red angus cattle, Angora goats, and Rambouillet sheep.

•••

News of several retirees comes from John Allen of the Tyler District:

**Sidney C. Cox**, former resident engineer in Mineola, is beginning his second term as county commissioner in Wood County.

•••

**Elton P. Myers**, former Henderson County resident engineer, lives in Athens. He is very active in the local chamber of commerce and is enjoying his retirement.

•••

**Edwin Campbell**, who served as resident engineer in Cherokee County, lives in Rush now.

•••

**Al McKee**, former district engineer in Amarillo, and his wife were recently in Austin, and joined me and my wife for supper. Al told me that District 4 retirees are meeting for lunch each month.

•••

I was in Abilene in mid-March and got to visit with former district engineer **Jake Roberts**. Jake is having some medical problems, as are we all as we get older. Al and Jake would like to hear from their old friends, so drop them a line. I can give you their addresses if you let me know.

Send your news of retired highway hands to R. S. "Bubba" Williamson, 3601 Vara Drive, Austin, Texas 78754.

# roadrunners



I would like to take this time to commend the Sierra Blanca maintenance department on the outstanding job they performed on Saturday, March 4, 1989.

At approximately 7 a.m., a snow storm passed through the Sierra Blanca and Van Horn area. Approximately 3 to 4 inches of snow fell in a period of about three hours.

I was planning to take my family to Van Horn but was apprehensive due to the weather and the road conditions. At approximately 10 a.m. I proceeded to I-10 from my residence which is located approximately one mile off of I-10 at mile marker 98. From mile marker 98 through mile marker 102, I-10 was in excellent condition. No ice or snow had been allowed to accumulate on the road surface and the bridges and overpasses were sanded and free of ice or snow.

At approximately 11 a.m. I departed my residence with my family in route to Van Horn. In the Sierra Blanca area, the road surface was in excellent condition and the bridges and overpasses were sanded, also observed several state highway department vehicles patrolling the area and checking for hazardous conditions.

Upon reaching the Allamore overpass, I noticed that the condition of the highway had

begun to deteriorate rapidly. The road was packed with snow and ice and had become treacherous. It appeared that no attempt to make the highway safe had been initiated in the Van Horn area.

The Sierra Blanca maintenance department has always done an outstanding job in keeping the area highways well maintained, clean and safe. Once again they responded to a snow storm with exceptional dedication. **Manuel Colmenero** and his crew are an outstanding division and perform their job with the utmost dedication.

Again, I would like to commend the Sierra Blanca maintenance department on making our highways safe and on another outstanding job well done.

**Joe L. Tammen**  
Sierra Blanca

*Colmenero is maintenance foreman in the Hudspeth County maintenance section.*

I would like to take the chance to thank you and all of your fine crew for the excellent work provided the citizens of Lavaca County during the past days of inclement weather. It is without a doubt that your personnel covered a major problem and

prevented the disaster that the event could have been.

My special thanks to the crew members who, when asked, ventured into the ice and bad weather to provide coverage of the overturned propane truck. Without that assistance Lavaca County could have experienced a tragic problem. These men are a credit to your organization as well as those who assisted.

Again, extend my deepest thanks to those men.

**Louis O. Schneider Jr.**  
Lavaca County  
Emergency Management  
Coordinator

*Lawrence Heinsohn is the maintenance supervisor for the Lavaca County maintenance section.*

I want to thank the man who found my billfold and returned it to me. I think this man's name is **David C. Gummelt**.

Nowadays it is hard to find anyone honest and who would return anything with money and other valuable things in it. Thank you again.

**Shorty Villanuev**  
Runge

*Gummelt is a Maintenance Tech III from the Hallettsville maintenance section.*

I recently was on vacation in your great state and traveled from one end of the state to the other and I can tell you that I have never been in a cleaner place and never enjoyed a trip more. My wife and I were absolutely fascinated with how well you keep the highways and welcome centers. I lived in Dallas for four years in the early 1960s but I do not recall that it was quite as nice as now.

**John P. Yates**  
Griffin, Ga.

From keeping the roads in shape to clearing them of snow and ice, maintenance forces are the "front line" of the highway department's team. Tom Kroese, operating a blader in the Austin District, is one of the 7,457 maintenance workers who keep Texas moving. (Photo by Kevin Stillman)

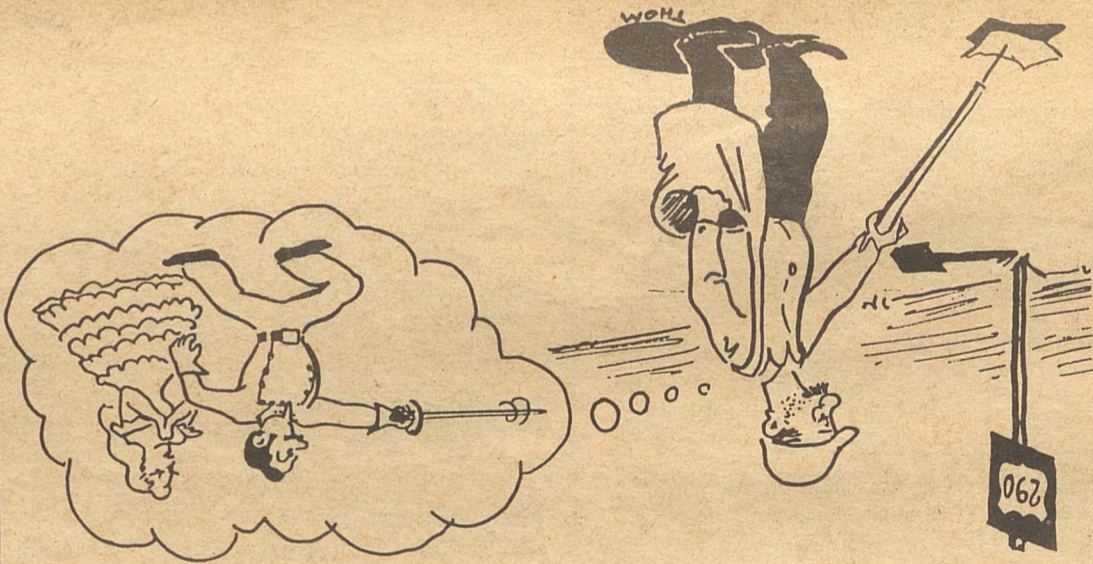
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# TRANSPORTATION NEWS

Cartoonist Carl Thomas Kelly works in traffic design in the Houston District.



## HIGHWAY HUMOR

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