

# TRANSPORTATION news

State Department of Highways and Public Transportation

April 1991



**New division head**

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## What's inside . . .

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The Great Texas Trash-Off has grown up — into the Great American Trash-Off. Two foreign countries and more than 40 states will participate in the June 1 trash bash.

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### On our cover:

*Edwin Sims was appointed director of the Occupational Safety Division on May 1, becoming the department's first black division head. See story on page 2. (Photo by Kevin Stillman, Travel and Information Division)*

# TRANSPORTATION news

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Associate Editors ..... Jeff Carmack  
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(Photo by Geoff Appold, Travel and Information Division)

Ivan Naranjo of the Lubbock District adjusts a detailed 1/1,200th-scale model of the proposed East-West Freeway in Lubbock. The 36-foot model has helped district personnel convince area residents that the project will be environmentally sensitive and aesthetically pleasing.

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From the  
Engineer-  
Director

I've never known anyone who offered to help someone else for what they would get out of it. Of course, I'm not talking about that person who is interested in helping herself by helping someone else. I mean the volunteer who offers assistance for no other reason than to help another person, or project or organization.

That's characteristic of the kind of people who make up the highway family. We help each other, and we help others.

You've read about some of them in this publication. It's common for their hometown papers to report on their good deeds as well.

The attention that kind of unselfish community involvement brings to an individual is one way of saying, "Thanks for your help." It also reflects well on the volunteer's employer.

Being in that spotlight, when identified as a department employee, may make the volunteer a target for some pointed questions. Questions that come from the public's disappointment in the department having to slow down or postpone some projects because of our funding shortage.

That creates an opportunity to explain the facts. Not to lobby, but to spread the correct information. It's vitally important for supervisors to be sure the employees who work for them are accurately informed.

Funding is such a sensitive issue that we all have to be sure what we say is accurate. It's just as important when you're talking to the checker at your neighborhood grocery store as it is when I'm talking to the senator who represents your district.

I appreciate the attitude of our employees that motivates them to give up leisure time, time with their families and, in some cases, the possibility of some extra income to help someone else. In some cases, it even means money out of their pockets.

It's the same attitude that makes them willing to help the public understand our funding situation. In the long run, that will help us all.

### Field Changes

The photos of J.R. Stone in the April 1991 edition of *Transportation News* were taken by Geoff Appold, Travel and Information Division.

## Sims named to head division

Edwin M. Sims has been named director of the Occupational Safety Division.

The appointment is effective May 1. Sims will replace Quinner F. Williams, who is retiring after 29 years. Williams has been division director since 1978.

"I am pleased that Ed Sims has accepted this challenge," said Arnold Oliver, engineer-director. "He has excellent qualifications and this appointment underscores this department's commitment to put minorities in top leadership positions. It's a new Texas and this appointment signals a new department."

"We also owe a debt of thanks to Quinner Williams for helping build the division's reputation as one of the best in the nation," Oliver said.

Sims began working at division

headquarters in 1980 after receiving a bachelor's degree in business administration from North Texas State University in 1979. He later transferred to the department's regional workers' compensation office serving the Fort Worth, Dallas and Paris districts.

In 1984, he was named assistant director of the division's Tort Claims Section. He became section director in April 1991.

The Occupational Safety Division provides safety training and guidance to prevent work-related injuries and handles workers' compensation claims.

The division also handles tort claims by people seeking reimbursement for losses, under prescribed circumstances, resulting from negligence.★

## Department adds 2 divisions

The State Department of Highways and Public Transportation publicly announced April 3 the creation of new divisions for civil rights and environmental affairs and the appointment of a statewide bicycle coordinator.

"We've listened to the Sunset Commission. We've heard the voice of Texas speak through elected representatives. We are excited about the new opportunities these changes open for the department," said Arnold Oliver, engineer-director.

"The additions of civil rights and environmental divisions are two very positive steps taken by the department. I am pleased to see that the department recognizes the need to take action in these vital areas," Gov. Ann Richards said.

Oliver said the department will add a Civil Rights Division (D-14) to assure equal opportunities are afforded in employment, promotions and training, participation in business opportunities, and services to the public. The division's new director has not been named, but a comprehensive search for

the best-qualified person is under way. The division will receive the employees from the recently established Employment Opportunities Section of the Human Resources Division and from the Equal Employment Opportunity and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises Section of the Construction and Contract Administration Division.

The new Environmental Affairs Division (D-17) will coordinate environmental rules, policies and procedures at the headquarters and district levels. The director of this division, who has also not yet been named, will serve as chairman of the Environmental Coordinating Committee.

"Commission chairman Ray Stoker and I have reviewed these organizational changes with Gov. Richards. The governor endorsed and applauded these changes," Oliver said.

A statewide bicycle coordinator has also been appointed. Paul Douglas, formerly public affairs officer and traffic safety coordinator for the Paris District, will work with bicycle groups across the state.★

## Billboard permit study extended

In its March meeting, the State Highway and Public Transportation Commission extended by 60 days any decision on whether to accept changes for outdoor advertising permits.

The commission had until April 28 to study the department's administrative expenses, costs and fee structures for compliance with the mandates of the Litter Abatement Act. Outdoor advertising fees must be reasonable and be used for costs of administering the act.

"The extended adjustment period allows

the commission time to complete a study to ensure the fees are proper," said Arnold Oliver, engineer-director of the department.

Originally, Section 21.50 of the Texas Litter Abatement Act provided that permits issued by the department before Sept. 6, 1985, would be renewed by Sept. 5, 1990. In December, the commission extended on an emergency basis the renewal deadline to Sept. 5, 1991.

The commission now has until June 27 to make changes before this section of the law becomes effective.

## Funds ease public transit access

Handicapped and elderly Texans may find 1991 a better year for getting around.

In its March meeting, the highway commission authorized the distribution of \$308,552 in matching funds to public transportation systems serving the elderly and the handicapped. The commission also authorized eligible transportation systems in rural areas to receive a total of \$1 million in matching funds.

The funding, made available as a result of oil overcharge revenues, is part of the Local Match for Transit Providers program.

Under the program, the department provides 20 percent of the funds, and the federal Urban Mass Transit Administration provides the other 80 percent.

Nearly 130 applicants responded to the request for proposals issued by the highway department in November. Ninety-three were private, non-profit organizations serving the elderly and handicapped. The remaining proposals came from non-urbanized areas seeking new vehicles or facilities.

Projects include replacement of vans with wheelchair lifts, purchase of new vehicles for elderly and handicapped transportation, and building passenger shelters and terminals.

Eligible proposals fall into the categories of vehicle replacement, new or expansion projects and radio equipment. An advisory panel consisting of industry representatives detailed the criteria for project acceptance.

## Austin youth 'Scouting' state's oldest road

By **ROGER POLSON**  
Travel and Information Division

The Old San Antonio Road (OSR) was Texas' premiere road in the past. Now, Scout leaders are using its 300th anniversary to build a path to the future.

A program developed by the Capitol Area Council of Boy Scouts, the Lone Star Girl Scout Council and the highway department encourages Scouts of all age groups to learn about the role of Texas' oldest road and earn a special patch in the process.

The idea for an OSR patch program came to Robert Chappell, an assistant Boy Scout troop leader in Austin, when he read a newspaper article about plans to celebrate the road's anniversary.

He got in touch with archaeologists and historians in the Highway Design Division studying the history of the OSR. John Clark, a historical archaeologist with the department, was particularly interested since he is a Girl Scout troop leader and his wife, Gloria, leads a Brownie troop. Clark assisted in developing the program and created the colorful design for the patch.

The program evolved along the lines of the Historic Trails Patch that scouts have had for about 10 years. It is also patterned after a program developed with the Girl Scouts last year around the "Don't Mess with Texas" campaign. There are currently more than 3,000 Girl Scouts involved in that program.

"Our impetus is to create opportunities to develop self-esteem and good values," Girl Scouts of America representative Kerry Mosier said. "We are training tomorrow's leaders, and in order to know where they are going, they have to know where they've been. The Old San Antonio Road can help them learn that."

Mosier hopes that learning about the history of the road and understanding how Texas has developed around it will give them a better awareness of the state and world around them.

"Through this process, they will learn how to preserve their environment and how to protect it," she said.

Guidelines about the patch program have been sent out to all 20 Girl Scout councils in Texas and the eight Boy Scout councils along the OSR corridor that stretches from Eagle Pass northeastward to Hemphill, near the Louisiana border. The Boy Scout regional office is considering the program for



Department historian John Clark, his wife Gloria, and daughters Wendy, 11, and Ellen, 8, explore a creekbed near South Congress Avenue in South Austin. They are near a probable creek crossing of one of the routes of the Old San Antonio Road. (Photo by Gay Shackelford, Travel and Information Division)

the other 14 Texas councils.

To earn the patch, Scouts must take part in at least five activities from a list of 16. Everyone must identify a segment of the historic OSR corridor that they would like to explore and the roads and parks along it today. Optional activities include further explorations in the history of the road and the people who traveled it, camping expeditions, visiting museums and missions on the route, involvement in community-sponsored activities commemorating the anniversary, and adopting a segment of the road under the department's Adopt-a-Highway program.

Since the Old San Antonio Road has followed several routes through history, its corridor cuts a wide path across the state. The routes follow, intersect or run parallel to many present-day highways on the state system. Eligible roads will be identified along the corridor in hopes that Scout groups will adopt them, fulfilling one of the patch requirements and cleaning them up in the process.

All of the activities are designed to make

the youngsters more aware of their place in history and teach them about conserving historic and natural resources.

Robert Chappell said his Scouts have been intrigued by Texas history they've learned in school. Working to earn this patch will bring them in contact with a road that Davy Crockett and Santa Anna travelled.

"They are excited about these people," he said.

Chappell has already planned an outing for his troop along a part of the route through Bastrop State Park in April. John and Gloria Clark plan to take his Girl Scout and her Brownie group to San Antonio to visit the missions. He is also planning a cleanup along South Congress Avenue in Austin, along one of the historic routes.

There are plenty of activities to go around. And, for their efforts, the kids get a snappy patch to wear. Interested parents or children participating in Scouting programs at any age level should check with their local organizations to find out how to get involved.★

## Historical marker care labor of love

By **JAY KEMP**  
Dallas District

Motorists traveling in Texas often stop at historical markers along the road to rest from driving and to learn about an important piece of Texas and American history. But for Glenn Lloyd, a utility inspector in the Dallas District, taking care of a historical marker is a full-time hobby.

Several years ago, one probably would not have noticed the historical marker off of exit 397 on US 77 South, about two miles from Waxahachie. But thanks to Lloyd, a department employee for 22 years, motorists can't miss the historical marker dedicated to

World War II veterans of Ellis County.

For the past eight years, Lloyd has spent his spare time caring for the marker that is just across the street from his garden.

Caring for historical markers along the highway system falls within the responsibility of each district's maintenance section. But Lloyd wanted to do more to care for the marker than just mow around it. He has laid brick around the marker and planted flowers to make the surrounding area look good. Last year he bought and planted two elm trees on the site.

"It makes the neighborhood look nice," said Lloyd. "A lot of people stop now and read the marker. A few years ago you wouldn't have been able to see it from the

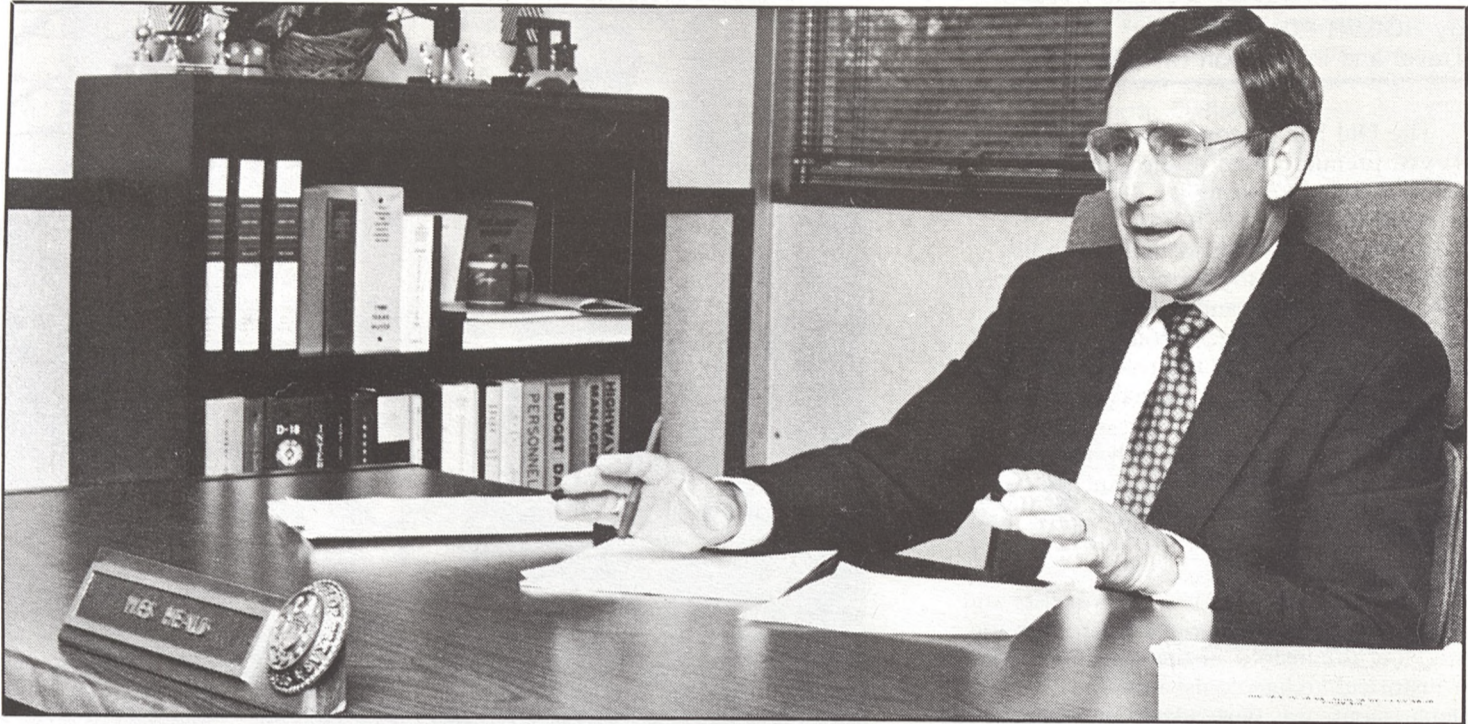
road." Lloyd is quick to point out that the marker usually looks its best in May and June because the trees and flowers are in full bloom.

His wife, Bonnie, said taking care of the marker and the area around it has become a true hobby for her husband.

"In the spring and summer he mows the area at least once a week," she said. "In the summer he hauls water there each day to water his flowers and his trees."

According to the Texas Historical Commission, approximately 4,000 historical markers dot the highway system in Texas.★

# Heald: Future bright for engineers



## A Conversation with Brownwood District Engineer Wes Heald

*Charles Wesley Heald started with the department in 1961 as a senior engineering assistant. He worked in the Houston urban area before moving to the Brownwood District, where he held increasingly responsible engineering and supervisory positions until his appointment as district engineer in 1987.*

*Heald is a 1960 graduate of Texas A&M University. He has served on the Brownwood Transportation Committee, and in 1970 received the Young Engineer of the Year award from the Abilene Chapter of the Texas Society of Professional Engineers.*

*In this Conversation with Transportation News staffer Emily Guinan, Heald talks about motivating workers, seeing young employees advance in the department, and Blue Bell ice cream.*

**One of the goals listed in your biography is to increase recognition of good employees. In what ways have you worked toward that goal?**

The service awards I give them show them they've done a good job and extend some personal appreciation from the district engineer to that employee. Once a year, we have a districtwide awards banquet. I'm convinced that a manager's job is to concentrate on the development and recognition of employees, and in my opinion, that's the single most important thing you can do.

**Do you have much personal contact with the employees? I know some people have what is called a "low-touch" management style. What kind of style do you have?**

I don't know that there's a single word or phrase that would describe my management style, but it's putting the right manager in the right job and getting him or her the equipment and the materials they need to work with, and standing at a relatively safe distance away from them while they do their job. Now, I'm not saying that things don't jump the track once in a while, but then you make corrections. But if you put the right managers in the right job, they'll do a good job for you. It's important to get them the right equipment to work with, and to train not only the managers, but the employees who work under that manager. In my opinion, the most important thing we can do to increase productivity is to have well-trained employees with good morale and good attitudes toward their jobs.

**How are the district's community relations?**

I think I can say they're at an all-time high. We have taken the Travel and Information Division's public opinion survey and modified it to give us feedback on how the citizens of this district feel we're doing. We are getting very positive feedback from that, and it's helping us have better relationships with the community, trying to get them involved in our doings more than in the past.

**How many of those surveys have you done?**

We've had it in effect for four months, and probably have done 20 or 25 surveys at social clubs, church-related events and so forth.

**Where do you think the public is asking for the most improvement?**

More public input in our business. That seems to be the most important feedback that I'm getting from those surveys, and we're trying to respond to that as much as we can. For example, if we have a construction job that's not completely rural, if there's an appreciable number of people living up and down the road, we set up meetings to advise the people exactly how this job is going to affect their businesses and their homes. And then, periodically, during the progress of the job, we continue to give them some kind of readout on how work is progressing and when the job will be complete and what it will look like when it is complete.

**Is the community responding positively?**

It seems to be working very well, and of course, in some of our cities, we're pretty much expected to do that. We set up initial meetings with all of the property owners, and after the contract is awarded and the superintendent for that job is designated, he or she attends the meetings as well and comes eyeball to eyeball with those citizens. This helps to make the contractors a little more responsive to trying to please the public.

**How does the new rule requiring you to contract out for 25 percent of your construction affect this district?**

We were contracting approximately 14 percent, and we've been mandated to do it 25 percent, so all we had to do was to increase it. We've had some problems with the administration of those contracts, trying to gear up contracting some items of work that we haven't been doing in the past, but for the most part, it's no problem.

**What was community reaction to the removal of the Brownwood traffic circle?**

The Brownwood traffic circle was built in the '50s, and at that time, it was probably considered state-of-the-art in handling traffic. Of course, since that time traffic has increased considerably. The circle got to be a kind of a stigma for Brownwood. The citizens here hated it, and we got feedback from people traveling through Brownwood about how dangerous it was and how distracting it was to the city of Brownwood.

So we finally decided to do something about it when we got some money, and we built it into a signalized T-intersection. Now, incidentally, it's referred to as the Brownwood T instead of the Brownwood Circle. It probably the only project that I've ever been involved in in the 30 years I've been with the highway department that I've had no negative reaction for doing a job, not any at all.

**What about the Waco traffic circle?**

Well, it's still there, and is one of the last ones in Texas as far as I know. I'm very familiar with the circle there because when I was in college at A&M, I used to hitchhike home, and truckers would always let you off at that circle because they did not want to travel the direction I was going.

**How are your daily duties in a rural district different from say, those of the Houston DE?**

I'm not familiar with how many problems Mr. (Milton) Dietert's got, but probably the main difference is that I have more time to get involved in details and visit with employees in the field. More time to get out and check what's going on. It allows for a closer relationship. In a smaller district, people expect a lot more of us, they expect a better level of service. We have a tremendous problem with people calling in, and not only do they ask or request, but they almost demand a traffic signal. We've got all kinds of stories — somebody's dog got run over, and somebody would call in and say they'd like to have a traffic signal put in front of their house as a result, so we're constantly involved on a kind of one-to-one relationship with the citizens of this district, and we try to appease them and keep them off the Austin administration.

**What made you decide to go into civil engineering, and what made you decide to go to A&M?**

Well, A&M was the only school, I thought, and as far as going into civil engineering, I was raised on a farm and ranch, and I was looking for a better quality of life.

**What projects are you currently working on, and what kind of environmental concerns are you faced with?**

Well, first of all, in a rural district, you're mostly operating on rehabilitation-type funds. In other words, we're trying to preserve the highway system we already have. So we don't have anything particularly glamorous going on at this time. It's base jobs, resurfacing jobs, that sort of work. In District 23, we don't have problems with endangered species and wetlands. Our concerns are mostly archaeological sites and historical buildings and bridges.



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**The most important thing we can do to increase productivity is to have well-trained employees with good morale and good attitudes.**

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**What kind of troubles do you have around here archaeologically?**

There are known sites, and when we do our investigations we find additional sites, and we occasionally have to have archaeological investigations. Historically, I believe that anything that's over 50 years old is considered a historical site. We have a lot of bridges, old buildings, things of that nature that seem to always be in our way.

**When an archaeological dig is finished, can you go on with your work, or do they sometimes put you on hold?**

We've never had any particular problems. They do their digging, they do their collection, they do their investigation, they take their findings and go back and write their reports and let us do the job.

**What's the most interesting aspect of your job?**

Working with people. I enjoy managing, I enjoy people, I consider myself people-oriented. I like to work one-on-one or with groups.

**What's your least favorite thing about this job?**

I don't think I could say I have anything connected with this job that I don't enjoy. Unless it would be dealing with some of the citizen complaints that we have.

**Your favorite thing to do?**

Well, I have two favorite things to do. One is bass fishing, the other's golf. I have a private lake that I mostly fish on. I built it and stock it myself. Unfortunately, golf doesn't think too much of me.

**What's your handicap?**

My handicap? Eighteen.

**Do you have any other hobbies?**

I like to dove hunt. I like to travel some and I do some gardening, and I do some yard work, but I don't want you to put it down as my most favorite thing.

**Do you have a lot of extra time to do these things you enjoy outside of the job?**

No, and I'm not sure I understand why. I thought that when our children were grown and on their own that my wife and I would have some time to enjoy each other and go places, and it seems like we stay busier than ever.

**Why are you called Wes instead of Charles?**

Well, my father was Charles, and my mother had trouble when she'd call us, so they started calling me Wesley, and then that evolved into Wes.

**Was Brownwood your hometown as a child?**

No, my father worked on construction work, and when I started to school, I was five years old, and we moved to a place called Friona, which is about 70 miles west of Amarillo. I went to school at Friona and another little country school there the first eight years, and then my dad bought a ranch at Gatesville. Then, I graduated from high school, and from there I went to A&M.

**If you had any advice for young civil engineers starting out today, what would it be?**

My advice for young civil engineers would be to be very people-oriented, to be concerned about their fellow citizens, to be concerned about the environment. I can't say that that comes before an education, but the educational process should teach you to be concerned about the environment and to be people-oriented. That's what civil engineering is all about: improving the quality of life for people.

I don't think the future has ever been brighter for advancement for young engineers. There are all kinds of opportunities for upward movement, for lateral movement. Find something you enjoy doing, increase your responsibilities. I would say it is kind of a golden age for engineers. Certainly, I would recommend that they not only seek different kinds of responsibility, but that they be prepared to move around, even if it means moving to another district.

There are a lot of people that get sort of complacent about their work because they say they can't move up. Well, that's not right. They may have to move right or left before they move up. I think we are beginning to see that more and more people are looking at these job vacancy notices and trying to figure out how they can jockey positions to enhance their careers.

**The last question I have is kind of silly. What is your favorite ice cream?**

That's the easiest question you've asked me all day. It's Blue Bell White Chocolate, the high-calorie kind.

# La Costa crew brings joy to jobs

By LONA L. REEVES  
Travel and Information Division

"Take this job and shove it!"

How many times have you wanted to say that and mean it? Probably more often than the folks in the Maintenance and Operations Division who work at the LaCosta Annex in Austin. They've gone the other way with the expression. They take their jobs and love 'em.

Like most divisions, the group participates in a full complement of quarterly social activities to keep the LaCosta Annex, Permit Office and Promontory Point employees in touch with each other. They have coffees, barbecues and Christmas parties. But the activities the LaCosta group dreams up extend beyond their Friday Munch Bunches with shared office goodies. This group of wacky professionals enthusiastically goes for the gusto in their after-work play with one another.

To call them "madcap engineers" is almost a contradiction in terms, says Barry Lovelace, the division's chief planner. "Review engineers work with plans, specifications and estimates, but these people get involved in wacky stuff and hijinks that you just don't expect from engineers," Lovelace explains. "This group happens to be pretty loose — more like college fraternity types than sober old registered engineers. You just don't expect this kind of almost-zaniness."

"We do so many different things," said Carlos Lopez. The traffic engineer explains how their hodgepodge assortment of extracurricular activities reflects the variety of disciplines found within the division. "It's like they figured out divisions for every discipline and whatever else couldn't be made into its own division, they made D-18. We have buildings, traffic, maintenance, pavement management, traffic management, permits and landscaping."

What activities give rise to the zaniness in the engineers' and their coworkers' natures? There are the chili cook-off, raft trip, Halloween costume party, Dallas Cowboys bus trip and participation in co-ed sports; all activities that provide an outlet for the less serious side of these department professionals.

The competitive spirit heats up in April, after the group receives an invitation to participate in a chili cook-off.

"We think we'll be invited again even though we win every year," said Lopez. His

section enters the event sponsored by the Highway Design Division. Competition is usually between the different sections of the bridge, design and maintenance divisions.

"The judges have the toughest jobs," said Lopez, "because there's no telling what they're eating." Among the entries submitted for judging by the top administration were "Dead on the Road" and "Road Patch." True to their name, the safety and traffic operations section walked away with top honors again in last year's competition with their "Safety First" chili.

When the temperatures start to match the fire in their chili, the group heads for the hills. "It's just a family time," said Lopez, describing the annual raft trip. He said that every May since 1983, the group goes to New Braunfels to have some "good clean fun" on the Guadalupe River. Last year the largest group ever participated. A group of 55 went to the river, including employees, their spouses and friends.

In the fall, the annual Halloween Costume Party allows employees in the design and maintenance divisions to see a different side of each other. Mark Thorp explains, "we all get in our costumes and meet at someone's house and try to lower the property values. People come in all kinds of costumes — cowboys, Indians, Arab sheiks, football players — just your usual costumes. It's a real good time."

For the past four years, the annual sojourn to Dallas to attend a Cowboys' game has provided an outlet for the group's zany nature and is another opportunity for misadventure. One year the bus caught fire, so smoking is no longer allowed on the partying expedition.

"A lot of the work is very repetitious and dry," explains Thorp. "Some of it requires very little imagination. These activities are designed to keep people's interest up. This is kind of our outlet for creativity." The traffic engineer is also known as the Entertainment and Morale Officer.

Landscape Architect Bill Kirwin is credited with putting together the DisAstros, the division's softball team.

"They had almost a perfect record last year," said Lovelace, "then something happened and they won a game." The morale officer smiles and laughs a lot when recounting the antics of the team he affectionately describes as "co-ed or co-wreck."

"I hadn't played any since 1983. Most of us had never played or hadn't played in at

least that long," explains Thorp. "We started out in the Austin city league and signed up in the very bottom, the novice league. We needed to be in a league below that one."

Thorp says they quickly found out playing softball in the city league is no church picnic. "These people play for blood," he said of their opponents.

"We always said we were doing pretty good, if we could just improve on three things — hitting, catching and throwing. Those were our major weaknesses," said Thorp. "But everything else we thought we had. We had uniforms. We'd show up on time and we always had fans in the stands."

He said the DisAstros and their fans managed to have a great time despite the frustration of losing many of their games. "To celebrate the end of the first half of the season, we had more than 50 people come to see if we were going to have a perfect season and lose all our games."

"We had door prizes, drawings and awards. The crowd would sing. The people voted for their favorite DisAstros players in the People's Choice Awards." Thorp said that along with their favorite player, the fans also selected the most valuable players (guy, gal and not sure), player most likely to be abused, player most deserving abuse, most improved player, player most representative of the DisAstros team name and the most dedicated fan.

"We lost two games by one point in extra innings. We just couldn't get it all together," said Thorp about the DisAstros first eight losses. But the team did sample the sweet taste of victory. They won two games in the second half of the season.

They also spiced the season up with a friendly intradivision rivalry. Thorp explained that a group of men had been watching the DisAstros and giving them a hard time about how good they were. They said they could do better explains Thorp.

"When they put together the Armadillos team, we challenged 'em," said Thorp. "We didn't have anything to lose. We were already winless. If we got beat by these guys, what would we care? Anyway, it didn't turn out that way, the DisAstros beat 'em. That was our first win of the season. I think the score was 14-12. No, we never played the Bad News Bears," admits Thorp, "but we beat the Armadillos."

Take this job and love it. Many of the folks in the traffic sections of the Maintenance and Operations Division will tell you, "It ain't all work!"★

# New brides get 'pounded' in Tyler

By LAURA RAYBURN  
Tyler District

Ah, springtime. Love is in the air. Wedding plans start materializing. Engagement rings are given. And with the wedding of each Tyler District office employee, the bride-to-be gets what's known as a "pounding."

No, fellow employees don't line up and take turns beating the poor girl. A "pounding" is like a bridal shower, only instead of can openers, toasters, and turkey basters, food is bestowed upon the lucky girl.

When I came to work for the department and was invited to a pounding, I didn't quite know how to take it. Not wanting to appear ignorant, I accepted. What could be the

harm? As long as I wasn't going to be the "poundee," I might as well participate. But why was I invited? Did I look like the sadistic type?

I revealed my ignorance to a friend at work who was knowledgeable in these things. She had been working here a little more than a year and had attended many such poundings. Boy, was I relieved when she told me all I had to do was bring a covered dish and some kind of food gift. I was instructed not to mention any of this to the poundee. Apparently, surprise poundings are the best.

The day of the pounding arrived. There was electricity in the air at the district office. The poundee still hadn't been clued in to what was going on at lunch. At a quarter 'til noon, people started arriving in the lunchroom with homemade covered dishes.

Finally the bride-to-be arrived and was appropriately surprised as well as obviously delighted with her cache of goodies. How many young couples are so lucky to start out their lives with 10 boxes of macaroni and cheese, five cans of refried beans, and various other delectable culinary delights, not to mention a can of anchovy paste?

It was a fun time for all, and I learned how poundings originated. Apparently, back in the pioneer days, when a couple was starting out in their marriage, neighbors would get together and give the newlyweds a pound of sugar, a pound of flour, pound of whatever. This was a "pounding." Obviously, this was much more needed and appreciated than what I had originally envisioned. Who knows, maybe one day I'll get pounded, if I'm lucky.★

# Highway project model proves priceless

By HARVIE JORDAN, ABC  
Travel and Information Division

If a picture is worth 1,000 words, what's the value of a highway project model?

Ask anyone who has used one as a public information tool, and they may tell you it's priceless.

People in the Lubbock District have found that to be so in selling the design for an east-west freeway in the Hub City.

And because district personnel built the model, it cost a fraction of what a consulting firm would have charged.

Ivan Naranjo, an engineering technician who works in computer graphics, has been project engineer, chief inspector and maintenance supervisor for the model for almost two years.

Naranjo had constructed models when he was an architecture student at Texas Tech University and later as an urban planner for the city of Lubbock.

"But none of them were on the scale of this," Naranjo said.

Last summer, he had help from Tech engineering and architecture student Dan Dacus in carving museum board to sculpt a 1/1,200th scale representation of what the corridor will look like when construction is completed.

Few residents would disagree that the freeway is needed, but because it skirts the northern edge of the Texas Tech campus, the university's board of regents had to be convinced that the design was environmentally sensitive and aesthetically pleasing.

"We tried to be sensitive to their needs and to their suggestions," Naranjo said. "We took a lot of their suggestions and used them."

"It was very difficult to use the drawings we had to convince Tech officials that we were concerned about the effect on the campus," said John Rantz, resident engineer. "The drawings just didn't work. We couldn't do it by just telling them."

"But when we showed them the model with trees, attractive retaining walls and other environmental enhancements, it made all the difference."

The project had been controversial since its inception, with intense public interest on how construction would affect businesses and residents along the route. The biggest obstacle to public acceptance of the 6.5-mile project was the one mile along the edge of the Tech campus.

The model is constructed in eight sections, each four to five feet long. Each section is protected by a covering of thick, clear plastic.

A single section can be taken to a neighborhood meeting where concern is focused on that segment of the project. When fully assembled, the model is 36 feet long.



Ivan Naranjo makes adjustments to the freeway model he has built the past two years. (Photo by Geoff Appold, Travel and Information Division)

Naranjo estimates he has placed 8,000 buildings and 6,000 vehicles on the model.

Not only has the model helped turn public opinion around, it has shown changes that will be needed in designing the freeway.

"We couldn't wait until the schematics were approved to do the model," Rantz said. "We had to do it early, knowing some changes would be made, to have something to convince Texas Tech the project was worthy."

"We've made a few changes because of what we've learned from the model. It's helped us rethink what to do in some areas."

Naranjo started with computer drawings and, simulating actual clearing of the project route, removed everything from the drawings, leaving only land contour lines so that elevations are accurate. Topographical maps and overlaid aerial photos pinpoint the location of the 8,000 miniature buildings.

He has also made revisions in the model to reflect design changes.

So, how much is the model worth?

Rantz estimates the cost of materials and salaries between \$40,000 and \$50,000. Compare that to the \$200,000 to \$300,000 a consultant would typically charge.

Naranjo quotes a former architecture professor as saying, "A picture can tell you a thousand words, but a model can show you a thousand pictures."

Working on the model motivated Naranjo to go back to school this spring semester.

"I'm working on a master's in urban planning," Naranjo said. "I enjoy working on a design that helps the environment — it's what I have in here (he touches his chest over the heart). It's my way of giving something back."★



# Department volunteers show spirit

By RONDA BAKER  
Travel and Information Division

Ken Mikesell has been tailed by an angry husband.

Juan Carlos Reynoso has charmed many an elderly lady.

Kenny Moore often cuts out of work for some hot action.

They are a few of the scores of department employees who volunteer their time for community service.

Many of us are Scout leaders, officers in the Lions or Kiwanis clubs or other civic organizations, participants in charity and community fund-raisers, Big Brothers or Big Sisters, Sunday-school teachers. But few donate as much of their time — much of it at odd times — as volunteer fireman Moore and women's shelter volunteer Mikesell. They are on call, ready to serve at a moment's notice.

Whatever their level of commitment, many highway family members are actively improving the lives of others.

Mikesell, a maintenance technician in the Odessa District, is on call about 12 hours a week to transport abuse victims to the Permian Basin Center for Battered Women and Their Children. He's come to the rescue on nights, weekends and holidays for about three years.

His service led him to being named by the United Way as Odessa's Hometown Hero in July.

Mikesell got married last month, and he and his new wife are considering driving the van as a team.

But both of them have to be careful, as Mikesell knows. Once he and the woman he was transporting were followed briefly by a van matching the description of the woman's husband's, just freed on bond. "After I saw him, I told the woman I was going to make the block, and after we did a police car showed up and the guy went away," Mikesell said.

Fellow maintenance technician Kenny Moore, of the Coleman maintenance office, also knows what it's like to rush to someone's aid in the middle of the night. He serves in the Coleman Volunteer Fire Department.

For the past 6-1/2 years, Moore has battled fires in this town in the Brownwood District.

To keep trained, the firefighters meet every Monday night. Three out of four times they hold a one- to two-hour fire drill.

As a member of the team that dons air tanks and rushes into burning buildings, Moore recalls one especially close call. Just moments after he left the second story of a burning building recently, the staircase collapsed in flames.

Moore fights fires because it's "one of those childhood things — everyone always wants to grow up to be a fireman." Some of his uncles are firefighters in big cities, he said.

His uncles would be proud. Moore was voted Firefighter of the Year in 1986 and has been an officer in the CFVD the past three years. He is currently the fire department's president. Moore also serves on the Jaws of Life rescue team.

"It gets in your blood — the excitement when the siren goes off," Moore said.

Buddy Morgan, Kyle Mosely and Ray Hall are among other volunteer firefighters in the Brownwood District. Department employees from small towns and rural areas in other districts also risk their lives to bring fires under control in their communities.

Jan Wagner works to control animal neglect in her community. Wagner, an engineering assistant in the Dallas Northside residency, volunteers as an adoption counselor for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in Dallas.

Since beginning work at the shelter 1-1/2 years ago, she has come to spend as much as 12 hours every weekend helping unwanted pets find good homes. "It gets addictive, spending time with puppies, kittens, cats and dogs," Wagner said.

As an adoption counselor, Wagner interviews potential pet owners to determine whether they have the commitment and the finances to raise a pet from the shelter. She also helps with office work and collects recyclables to raise money for the shelter.

Another department employee who has served many a Saturday for her community is Jimmie Stiles, design secretary in the Yoakum District. Stiles is a volunteer in the Main Street USA program.

As promotions manager for the Yoakum Main Street USA chapter, Stiles organizes special events on Main Street. The events promote the downtown area as a vital place and raise money for restoration grants and special projects, Stiles said.

Juan Carlos Reynoso is active in La Voz del Anciano (The Voice of the Elderly), a nonprofit organization in Dallas that informs and entertains Hispanic senior citizens.

Reynoso, photographer in the Dallas District, lost his grandmother when he was very young. "I miss my grandma, and I see her in them," he said. "Now I have about 20 grannies and 15 granddads!"

Many of the seniors have no family members outside of Mexico.

He meets monthly with the group to plan bimonthly afternoon events for the more than 2,000 seniors who have signed up. The events include medical and legal seminars and appearances by entertainers.

Reynoso drives the seniors from a nursing home to the event. He raises funds for the group. He has been the master of ceremonies, and he always dances with his "grannies."

"About six of them fight over me," Reynoso laughs.

What Reynoso was unable to learn from his grandma, he's been learning in the two years he's volunteered in La Voz. "Every time I share my time with them, I learn something new from them," he said.

For Lona Reeves, public information officer in the Travel and Information Division, volunteering is a teaching experience. At lunchtime every Wednesday, she mentors two underprivileged students at Norman Elementary in Austin. She also tutors one of the students in math.

The fifth- and third-grade students Reeves mentors are members of minority groups, and Reeves' role is to "be a role model, a great cheerleader," she said. To motivate the students, Reeves asks them to do activities to stimulate thoughts and dreams of the future. She asked one student to read magazine articles about successful blacks and write about her dreams.

"Some days I think maybe I'm not doing them any good. But when things do happen like they're supposed to, you realize maybe you're not spinning your wheels," Reeves said.

Led by Sylvia Nunez, more than a dozen employees of the Construction and Contract Administration Division work monthly with 25 teen mothers at W. R. Robbins High School in Austin. The Pregnancy, Education and Parenting (PEP) program at Robbins provides child care and moral support to encourage the young women to finish school.

The employees also serve in the Austin Independent School District's functional skills program for mentally retarded students. They teach basic living skills to elementary special-education students, some of whom have physical disabilities.

The employees are working on a division cookbook to raise money for both programs. They've donated money for stepping stones they put on Blackshear Elementary School's playground to allow the students to cross without getting muddy. They threw a Valentine's Day party for the mothers at Robbins.

Just a few of the myriad indications that the highway family cares.★

## Volunteers teach employees valuable skills

By RONDA BAKER  
Travel and Information Division

One hour each week, usually on Fridays, 10 people in the Amarillo District don't have their minds on their work, or even on the weekend. Each is concentrating on improving the life of one fellow employee.

The 10 are tutoring district employees who cannot read, write or do math on a fifth-grade level. One employee cannot read or write at all.

Had literacy lessons not been offered in their workplace, those needing help probably never would have sought it, said personnel assistant Hazel Reinert. Reinert organized a two-day class in the district office in December that certified the volunteers to teach adult-literacy skills.

Although the students were matched with their tutors only a few weeks ago, the enthusiasm of both is paying off, Reinert said. By February, one student's supervisor had already noticed a change. "One supervisor who didn't know his employee was in the program noted in the employee's

evaluation that his writing had improved," Reinert said.

The identities of the 10 students are known only to others participating in the program or those who referred them. They are employed in offices all over the Panhandle: in the headquarters, a residency and several maintenance offices. The students receive instruction in their home offices.

Their tutors are Guadalupe Lovato, Tracy Boehning, Helen Crain, John Hudspeth, Marilyn Morrow, Joan Ross, Rhonda Clifton, Mary Kidwell, David McKee and Reinert. Other volunteers who took the certification course but don't have a student yet are Nelida Gonzalez, Ruth Hillier, Bill Deutschendorf, Louis Ruthardt, Randall Clark, Sue Geroux and Reinert's husband, Curtis.

They will volunteer an hour a week for several months, until the student has reached the fifth-grade level. The students take a test to determine which of four books to begin studying, and each book requires about three months of weekly instruction, Reinert said. Thereafter, students can continue learning through adult-literacy classes at Amarillo

Community College.

The Amarillo Area Adult Literacy Council provided the certification instructors and the textbooks.

Reinert decided to recommend tutor training in her district after learning that department administrators discussed the need for training employees who, like an alarming number of other Americans, are functionally illiterate. (Someone who lacks the basic skills needed to read and understand directions is defined as being functionally illiterate.)

During their meeting last spring, district engineers and division heads learned that an estimated 5 percent to 30 percent of employees in maintenance jobs alone may lack those skills. District Engineer Jim Moss, after consulting the Human Resources Division, gave Reinert the green light to arrange the training class.

Reinert became interested in employee illiteracy while researching a paper for an Amarillo College course several years ago. Now that all commercial drivers must pass a written test to be licensed, basic reading skills are even more crucial.

In fact, five of the students are seeking help for that reason. The other five are learning basic math.★

## Leadfoot drivers endanger federal funds

By JOEL CHARRON  
Dallas District

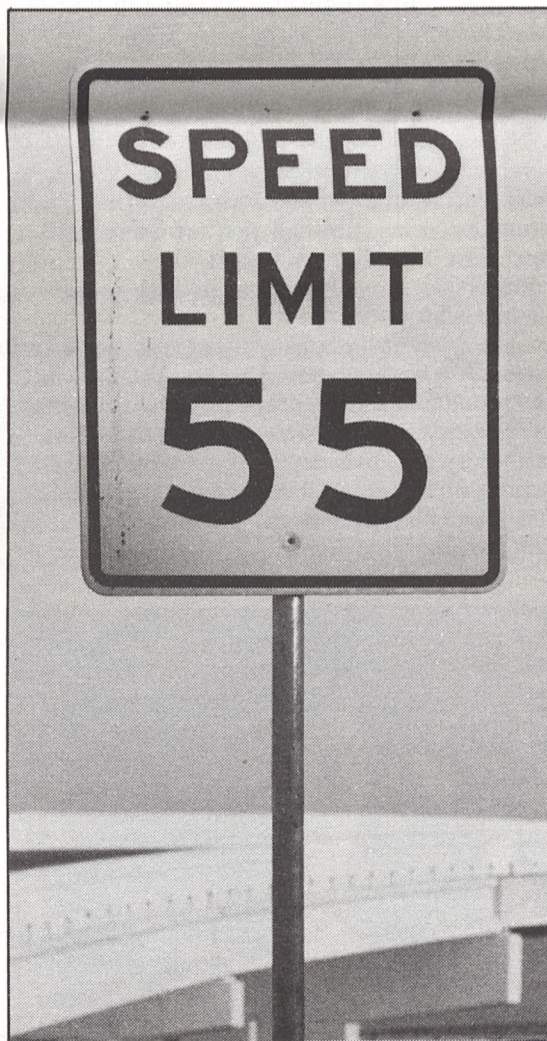
The BRAAAP! of an electronic police siren was the sound I heard as I mashed my brakes to slow from 70 mph to 55. It was too late; I had been nabbed. I slowly pulled to the shoulder and waited.

With heart racing, I signed the ticket and began to weigh my options. Should I pay the ticket? No way. Go to court? Too much trouble. Well, I'll just take a defensive-driving class so my ticket won't show up on my record. With this in mind, I re-entered the highway to continue my journey home.

There was a chance that the police officer who had given me the ticket had been directly encouraged by my own employer. Since 1980, the highway department has been contracting with local governments to get motorists to comply with the national maximum speed limit (NMSL). In 1991, the Dallas District is working with the city of Dallas, Garland and Mesquite to enforce the 55 mph speed limit.

Dallas District Traffic Safety Specialist Mike West said that through these contracts, city police are paid to work overtime on 55 mph enforcement within their city limits at certain times of the day. "The department pays half the tab and the individual city pays the other half," West said. In addition to the Dallas District, the highway department has NMSL contracts with nine other cities and with the Department of Public Safety.

The time between my ticket and defensive driving class seemed to fly. Before I knew it, I was sitting on the front row on a Tuesday evening class at a local hotel. Then, time traveled slowly. After hours of safe driving tips and horror stories, it was finally time to go.



Driving home, a radio newscaster said solemnly, "Texas is in jeopardy of losing a portion of its federal highway funds if motorists don't slow down." I was shocked to have been part of the reason why Texas and my fellow employees could lose this substantial amount.

Texas could lose up to 10 percent of its federal highway funds if at least half its drivers don't comply with posted speed limits. If this penalty is enacted, highways

and roads can't be built or maintained at a normal rate.

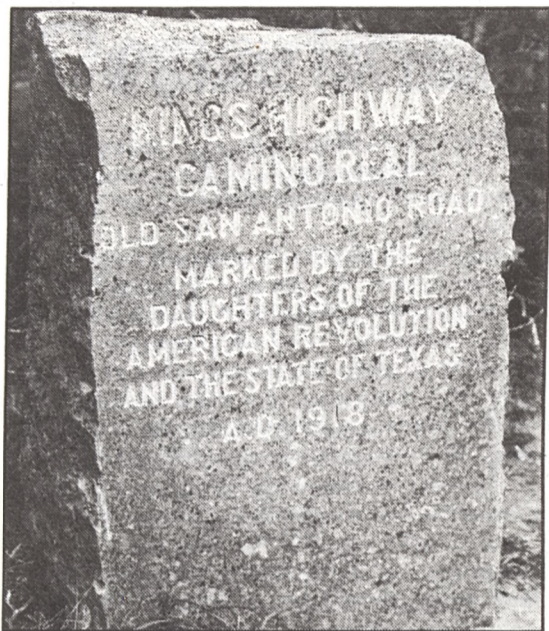
In 1990, Texas cleared the 50 percent mark by 1.2 percent. At the end of each year, the raw data is put into a formula to calculate the compliance rate. The formula takes errors such as faulty speedometers into consideration.

"The highway department is mandated to spend 20 percent of our federal traffic safety funds on 55 and 65 mph enforcement," West said. Approximately \$1.5 million will be spent in 1991 on NMSL enforcement and traffic safety education. Without an all-out, well-focused and effective effort, Texas could be sanctioned.

Therefore, I'm trying to slow down, for my sake as well as for Texas and the people who travel the highway system. But what else can be done?

In the Dallas District, many solutions are being considered. "We're continually looking for ways to improve compliance," West said. The best solution is enforcement that combines radar and photography. The radar and photographic equipment will be placed inside a van or a van-size vehicle beside a highway. "The radar activates the photographic equipment, which takes a picture of the license plate and vehicle exceeding the speed limit," West said.

My taking defensive driving solved one problem: my ticket. However, my speeding contributed to a larger problem — and so will you every time you speed. Driving the speed limit not only saves lives, but also millions of dollars.★



G.S.



G.S.



R.P.

As the noontime South Texas sun blazed down on Eagle Pass's historic Fort Duncan, a group of Texans gathered to begin a journey that would last nine days and cover more than 500 miles across the state, ending in Natchitoches, La.

The Old San Antonio Road Caravan was organized by a governor's commission appointed to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the first official Spanish expedition that mapped the route from the Rio Grande eastward.

On the way, the caravan stopped in 42 cities, parks and historic locations. Mariachis, fiddlers, barbershop singers, Alsatian dancers, square dancers, student actors, marching bands, mayors and state legislators greeted the caravan as it retraced the route of Texas' oldest road.

Progressing from the South Texas mesquite scrub, into the Hill Country's dramatic vistas, through rich farmlands and into East Texas' piney woods, the countryside proved to be as diverse as the people who inhabited it.

The road's true legacy is not contained in road surveys or scattered wagon ruts left in the woodlands. Only scant physical remnants of the ancient route are left. The true story is told by the diversity of the people who represent the many flags under which Texas has lived. **\*Roger Polson, Travel and Information Division**



R.P.



R.P.

Clockwise, from top left: One of the granite markers defining the Old San Antonio Road; this one is along Texas 21 through East Texas. A group of *charros* in authentic costume performs for the caravan party in San Antonio's San Jose Mission. A young girl, in the traditional dress of France's Alsace-Lorraine region, was with a group of dancers from Castroville who traveled to Lacoste to perform. Elementary school students from San Augustine, dressed in pioneer costumes, sing during a ceremony in the town called "the cradle of Texas." A mariachi singer from Palau, Mexico, serenades the caravan kick-off party in Eagle Pass. (Photos by Roger Polson and Gay Shackelford, Travel and Information Division)

# Great American Trash-Off set June 1

By **EMILY GUINAN**  
Travel and Information Division

Have you ever thrown a piece of trash out the car window? Come on, not even one *tiny* candy wrapper? Well, don't do it again. It takes thousands of dedicated people to pick up those little pieces of trash that millions like you toss out.

To illustrate what a big job trashbusting is, America is having a Great American Trash-Off. The event is on June 1, and the word is, "Be there. Show you care."

Thousands of volunteers plan to clean up roadsides, parks, beaches, even their own backyards in an effort to create one litter-free day in America. Most of the volunteers are regular members of state Adopt-a-Highway cleanup groups, but some are joining in just for this special day.

In 1985, Texas began the first Adopt-a-Highway program in the country. Today, 41 states have Adopt-a-Highway programs, and six states are in the planning stages. More than 40 states will participate in the Great American Trash-Off this year.

The primary goal of the Trash-Off is to involve the entire country in a national cleanup that highlights the need for a litter-free environment. On a broader scale, the event is designed to encourage worldwide participation in future Trash-Offs, and spread the word about the popularity and success of Adopt-a-Highway programs.

The U.S. Committee for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has endorsed the Trash-Off, emphasizing the

broad scope of the event. The Trash-Off will involve America's youth with the assistance of the Children's Alliance for Protection of the Environment (CAPE). This organization works with children all over the world to educate and interest them in protecting and preserving the beauty of their planet. UNEP has designated CAPE as the Regional Youth Focal Point for the United States.

In addition to UNEP's prestigious endorsement, the Trash-Off will receive a boost from public-private partnerships like the one forged by Coca-Cola USA, the Coca-Cola bottling companies and the highway department for the Great Texas Trash-Off.

Texas, the pioneer state for Adopt-a-Highway and Trash-Offs, is spearheading the nationwide event. This year marks the 6th Annual Great Texas Trash-Off, and with more than 4,000 Adopt-a-Highway groups in the state, the turnout is expected to be larger than ever. Last year's Great American Trash-Off drew the participation of eight states and three foreign countries. Volunteers collected more than 3.4 million gallons of roadside trash. With five times as many states participating this year, the numbers of volunteers and volume of trash collected will be unprecedented.

The success of the Great American Trash-Off depends on the hundreds of thousands of volunteers across the country dedicated to creating a cleaner, more beautiful America. "People of the '90s have found many ways to work toward creating a more equitable relationship with the planet

Earth," said J. Don Clark, chairperson of the Great American Trash-Off Task Force and director of the Travel and Information Division of the Texas Department of Highways and Public Transportation.

"Recycling, improving disposal methods and using recycled goods wherever possible are just a few ways," he added. "The most visible way of working with, rather than against, the environment is to go out and pick up trash. Every passerby, whether in a car or on foot, will see the volunteers and know what they are doing. Perhaps the sight will remind people that this planet is not ours to trash as we please — it belongs to everyone. Everyone shares the responsibility."

The final goal of the Great American Trash-Off, according to Al Zucha, director of the Information Services Section of the department's Travel and Information Division, is to "show potential litterers what it means to throw that 'negligible' piece of litter out the window. We want people to realize that more happens than just a piece of litter landing on the ground. Trash thrown onto the highway will never be recycled. It gives a bad impression to visitors and ruins the appearance of the landscape. People don't want trash in their yards because it ruins the beauty. We shouldn't litter our land for the same reason. We should show how much we care."

Show you care. Join in the Great American Trash-Off. And put that candy wrapper where it belongs — in the trash can. ★

## CALENDAR

### MAY

- 6-9 Transportation Alternatives During Highway Reconstruction, Austin, NHI
- 6-10 Basics of Bridge Inspection, Austin, D-5
- 6-10 Bridge Backwater Program, Austin, NHI
- 7-8 Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
- 7-8 Human Factors: The Role, Austin, NHI
- 7-8 Routine Maintenance Contract Inspector Training, San Antonio, Dallas, D-18M
- 13-14 Slope Maintenance and Slide Restoration, Austin, NHI
- 13-16 AASHTO-FHWA Cost Estimation Workshop, Austin, D-8A
- 14-15 Routine Maintenance Contract Inspector Training, Amarillo, Atlanta, D-18M
- 14-16 Texas Reference Marker System Workshop, Austin, D-10A
- 16-17 Rural Public Transportation Workshop, Austin, D-11
- 20-23 Econ. and Fatigue Res. Steel Bridge Detail, Austin, NHI
- 20-23 Access Management and Traffic Analysis, Austin, NHI
- 21-22 Routine Maintenance Contract Inspector Training, Houston, El Paso, D-18M
- 29 Commission Hearing and Meeting, Austin
- 29-30 Financial Management Conference, Austin, D-3

### JUNE

- 4-5 Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
  - 4-6 Freeway Operations Analysis (FREQ10) Training, Austin, D-18TE
  - 5 Accident Prevention Management Meeting, Austin, D-20
  - 5-7 Personnel Workshop, McAllen, D-13
  - 6 Hazardous Materials Coordinators' Meeting, Austin, D-20
  - 11-12 TEXAS Diamond Training, Austin, D-18TE
  - 11-12 Pavement Data Collection Coordinators Meeting, Austin, D-18PM
  - 12-13 Design Conference, Austin, D-8A
  - 24-28 Basics of Bridge Inspection, Austin, D-5
  - 25 Commission Meeting, Austin
  - 25-27 Personnel Workshop, Amarillo, D-13
  - 26 Profilograph Operator Training, Corpus Christi, D-18PM
- ### JULY
- 9-10 District Engineers/Division Heads Meeting, Austin, BCB
  - 10 Profilograph Operator Training, Austin, D-18PM
  - 24 Commission Hearing and Meeting, Austin
  - 24 Profilograph Operator Training, Beaumont, D-18PM
  - 30-31 Automation Administration and Planning Meeting, Austin, D-19 (continued Aug. 1)

### AUGUST

- 1 Automation Administration and Planning Meeting, Austin, D-19 (continued from July 30)
- 6-7 Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
- 7 Profilograph Operator Training, Lubbock, D-18PM
- 21 Profilograph Operator Training, Dallas, D-18PM
- 21-23 TRANSYT Training, Austin, D-18TE
- 28 Commission Meeting, Austin

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

## TECH TRADE

## High tech to displace 'rutometer'?

By MARCY GOODFLEISCH  
Travel and Information Division

The concept used by submarines to "see" their surroundings will soon help identify ruts in asphaltic pavements.

After many months of designing, testing, and comparing data, the Pavement Management Section of the Maintenance and Operations Division has nearly perfected equipment that uses ultrasonic technology to measure pavement ruts.

Rating teams from the districts now measure ruts with a specially designed but rather primitive tool. Department lore attributes the invention to an employee in the Waco District.

"Jay Baker came in one day with a box of about 40 of them and began passing them out," said Bryan Stampley of D-18. "He said he'd made them himself." Baker's homemade measuring device is a small piece of wood measuring 1 inch by 1/2 inch and three inches long. Wrapped around it is the second, and very essential, element of the tool — a 12-foot piece of string.

To rate asphaltic pavement, two-person teams drive slowly next a stretch of highway and rate the most severely distressed lane. They look for seven types of distress — rutting (or depression in the wheel path) patching failures (such as potholes), and four types of cracking (block, alligator, longitudinal and transverse). Every half mile, the team stops to "calibrate" their eyes by examining a 200-foot stretch of pavement. During the stops, the raters measure the depth of the ruts by stretching the string across the lane and passing the small block of wood beneath the string. The depth of the depression is measured by determining where the string line crosses the the post. The team then makes a judgement call as to whether rutting and other distresses still exist between the stops. The teams' findings are recorded at the end of every section.

Fink and coworker Carl Bertrand agree that training and experience give the rating teams pretty accurate eye skills. And Baker's little "rutometer" (as it is affectionately known) works well enough that D-18 requests the Equipment and Purchasing Division to make a supply each year.

"We have D-4 make about 200 of these and we pass them out to people taking the rating course," said Fink.

But the method relies on subjective assessment, which leaves room for errors. And any time workers have to be on the roadway, there are safety considerations. So the staff at D-18 decided to develop an automated measuring device that would address both of these drawbacks.

Borrowing from an idea developed in South Dakota, the section has developed a device that attaches to vehicles used to rate pavement ride quality. The vehicles record



Van equipped with ultrasonic sensors uses sonar to measure rutting in asphaltic pavement. Old-fashioned yet fairly reliable "rutometer," right, uses string, stick to detect rutting. (Photos by Gay Shackelford, Travel and Information Division)

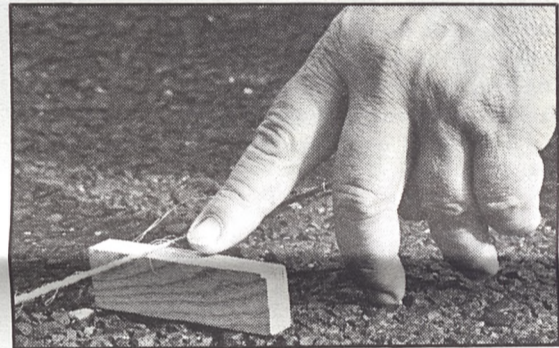
ride quality by using an automated road roughness device developed by Dr. Roger Walker at the University of Texas at Arlington and known as the Walker Roughness Device (WRD). The WRD, or SIometer as is referred to by the department, makes adjustments for vehicle suspension, and rates the ride of the roadway.

The new rut-measuring device ties into the SIometer's computer, and collects data from sensors that are attached to the vehicle. As the vehicle travels along, the SIometer estimates and records the overall roughness of the roadway. Five ultrasonic sensors are attached to a bar with retractable wings mounted on the front bumper. The sensors bounce ultrasonic signals off the pavement to measure the distance from the surface to the sensors.

"The data we're collecting on test runs is looking really good," said Bertrand. The new device, thus far, has a dynamic accuracy of about a quarter of an inch. Bertrand's next task is to develop a software program that will convert the data into a profile of the pavement's cross-section, including the rut. He hopes to have a prototype ready in time to run comparison tests early this summer.

Fink said two methods will be used to rate ruts on several sections of pavement, one using the string-and-stick method and the other using the ultrasonic equipment. The comparison tests will be used to calibrate the new equipment. This fall, several units with the new equipment will be sent to about 10 districts to compare the results obtained using the two methods and to determine what error rate results.

"Last year, rutting was the least precise of our pavement distress ratings," said Fink. About 10 percent of the audited sections showed data differences of 10 or more points in their ratings.



Both men expect the new method to save the department money, as well. The visual rating methods will still be used to measure six of the seven distress factors. But rating teams will no longer spend time walking the roadway and manually measuring the rut depths.

Although the department's sophisticated ARAN machine collects rutting data and other information in much the same way, at \$200 an hour for its use, it is cost-effective only in major urban areas where the traffic volume prohibits any manual distress surveys. The new automated rut bar will be safer, more cost-effective, and will help speed manual distress surveys.

Fink and Bertrand say the new equipment will be used on many of the department's automated road roughness measuring vehicles by September 1992. By 1993, they expect to have it installed on all such vehicles. ★

# SERVICE AWARDS

## MAY

### Paris District (1)

#### 35 years

Billy W. Arnold  
Clyde L. Rains  
Mark A. Roberts

#### 25 years

Jessie G. Fults  
Robert J. Loven

#### 10 years

Ali A. Esmailidoki

#### 5 years

Gary D. Stone  
Kevin W. Wilson  
Mykol C. Woodruff

### Fort Worth District (2)

#### 35 years

Frank J. Durda III  
Don E. Lee  
Barbara T. McNeil

#### 25 years

Rubén Flores

#### 20 years

William D. Roy III  
Michael G. Thompson

#### 10 years

Walter E. Goen  
Helen D. Sifford  
William D. Youngblood

#### 5 years

Ronald J. Abernathie  
Ben A. Asher  
August C. Bustos  
Dewon H. Cullison  
Michael L. Kuykendall

### Wichita Falls District (3)

#### 35 years

George M. Davis

#### 25 years

Billy L. Perry

#### 20 years

Aubrey E. Baker

#### 10 years

Doris A. Withington

#### 5 years

Gary W. Adams  
Kim C. Bryant  
Christopher C. Ulbig  
Linda R. Vanvacter  
Jeffery W. Warren

### Amarillo District (4)

#### 35 years

George V. Perrin

#### 10 years

Roy D. McCoy  
Tammy N. McWilliams

Johnny L. Roberts  
Ward C. Wall  
Thomas D. Weller

#### 5 years

Carolee Caldwell  
Rhonda L. Clifton  
Donald E. McQuitty  
Kelli S. Navarrette  
Janice K. Oakley  
Hazel G. Reinert  
Charles M. Rennie

### Lubbock District (5)

#### 30 years

Travis L. Copeland

#### 20 years

Gerald W. Patton  
Troy R. Williams

#### 15 years

Daniel G. Hernández  
Joe L. Lara

#### 10 years

Adrian Madera  
James R. Odom  
Grady L. Simmons

#### 5 years

Wiley G. Baker  
Charles R. Cox  
Fred A. McCraw  
David C. Perkins  
Todd J. Thompson  
Carolyn M. Williams

### Odessa District (6)

#### 25 years

Dale M. Tucker

#### 10 years

Martin P. Arredondo  
Tommy D. Rejino  
Scott L. Smith

### San Angelo District (7)

#### 40 years

John W. Mills Jr.

#### 25 years

Martin Deanda Jr.

#### 20 years

Walter G. McCullough  
Macario S. Muñoz Jr.

#### 15 years

Delbert W. Dietz

#### 5 years

Paul R. Chevalier III  
Jerry D. Gartmen  
Roger J. Nolder  
William J. Parris  
Carol M. Scoggins

### Abilene District (8)

#### 30 years

Jack C. Cox

#### 25 years

Kenneth G. Douglass  
Elsie T. Reid  
Raymond R. Smith

#### 10 years

Daniel P. Leonhard

#### 5 years

Willie J. McKinney  
Danelle N. Wyatt

### Waco District (9)

#### 25 years

William M. Leach  
Alvin J. McGhee

#### 20 years

Tommy A. Gaskamp

#### 5 years

Sondra D. Dieterich  
Norman D. Hammons  
John A. Lee

### Tyler District (10)

#### 15 years

Gerald Smith

#### 5 years

Brian M. Allen  
Bernard Fears Jr.  
Robert J. Hidalgo  
Jimmy D. Williamson

### Lufkin District (11)

#### 35 years

Roy B. Sanders

#### 25 years

Bobby T. Vaughn

#### 10 years

Jeffrey L. Weatherford  
James T. Yarbrough

#### 5 years

David L. Bruno  
Steven R. Ekstrom  
Rhonda R. Walker  
James E. Williams

### Houston District (12)

#### 35 years

Jesse G. Humphreys

#### 30 years

Russell E. Knapp  
Louis E. Von Woglom II  
Robert G. Yeaman

#### 25 years

Charles L. Barker  
Richard D. Pitts  
Frank L. Prihoda

#### 20 years

Deanna K. Ivey

#### 15 years

Leslie F. Cameron

#### 10 years

Larry R. Bowen  
Billy S. Chance  
Ronald W. Corley  
Cynthia G. Gloyna  
Fredrick L. Harris  
Michael N. Murphy  
Maxine T. Neely  
Louis A. Petry

#### 5 years

Patrick J. Brzozowski  
Hao T. Bui  
Dan S. Cearley  
Charles W. Dawson Jr.  
Jorge A. Garcia  
Angela L. Gross  
Juan M. Montano  
Terry L. Platt  
Jeffery D. Thomson  
Paul E. Wenzel

### Yoakum District (13)

#### 25 years

Jimmy W. Kirby  
Leonard R. Mikesch Jr.

#### 20 years

Ethel C. Schafer

#### 10 years

William D. Barthels  
Ervin E. Edwards  
Michael J. Martínez

### Austin District (14)

#### 35 years

Bernard J. Seidel

#### 30 years

Curtis E. Stabeno

#### 25 years

John Dimery Jr.

#### 20 years

Pamela M. Mikulencak  
Henry J. Ward Jr.  
Bobby W. West

#### 10 years

Lonnie V. Doyle  
Katherine H. Hargett  
Elizabeth Hilton  
John D. Jones  
Marvin D. Riedel  
Frank Zapata

#### 5 years

Ben M. Casey  
Sharon B. Holt  
Cheryl A. Lovell  
Ronnie B. Parker  
Mark W. Taylor

### San Antonio District (15)

#### 40 years

William A. Geiger

#### 35 years

Lawrence P. Groff  
John W. Kithman

#### 30 years

John Cooper

#### 25 years

Ronald J. Beath  
Dennis A. Bloch  
Gerald P. Burell  
Felipe P. Cerda  
Jesús C. Cuevas  
Melchor Pacheco Jr.

#### 15 years

Gilberto Limón

#### 10 years

Joseph A. Rohmer Jr.  
Jimmy D. Sarabia  
Dwayne S. Smith

#### 5 years

Alberto Galan  
Dave H. Gregory  
Fred R. Martínez  
Mark R. Mosley  
Gary A. Peña  
Dan D. Peña  
Lisa W. Rainosek  
Jeffrey A. Syrell

### Corpus Christi (16)

#### 25 years

John W. Stewart

#### 20 years

Harry E. Carter

#### 10 years

Laura B. Ashcraft  
John E. Dippel Jr.

#### 5 years

Toribio Garza Jr.  
Irenio Martínez

(Service Awards  
continued next page)

## Briefs

### Lufkin holds awards banquet

Sixty employees representing 1,015 years of service to the department were recently feted at the Lufkin District's seventh annual awards banquet. Awards for more than 2,400 total years of safe driving also went to 170 employees.

"I am pleased that our district is a leader in accident prevention," said Assistant District Engineer Morgan Prince. "We have a very aggressive safety program and the statistics show that our efforts are paying off."

Frank Holzmann, deputy director for project development, delivered the keynote address.

### Softball tourney set for July 6-7

It's that time of year again: the third annual SDHPT softball tournament is set for July 6 and 7 at Austin's Pleasant Valley Sportplex. The tournament format remains the same as last year's, with three divisions of play: Men's Competitive, Men's Recreational and Co-Rec.

Entry fee is \$100 per team, with a three-game guarantee. Tournament packets were mailed to all districts and divisions by May 1.

### Employees help women's center

Six Austin-area employees recently participated in the 1991 Walkathon fund-raiser for the Center for Battered

Women in Austin. Walking in the rain for a good cause were Tonna Polk and Jean Oliver, D-18; Mike Monnig, D-8; and Maria Burke and Cathy Cates, District 14.

### District 10 ceremony has '50s flavor

Bobby socks, poodle skirts, and pink Cadillacs set the mood for the eighth annual Safe-Driver Awards Ceremony in District 10. The theme of this year's ceremony was "The Nifty Fifties," and more than 400 people attended the event.

Engineer-Director Arnold Oliver delivered the principal address, and assisted District Engineer Bobby Evans and Assistant District Engineer Gene Adams present safe-driver awards to 343 employees. Awards for 40 years of safe driving were given to James R. Monk and Billy J. Rushing.

## SERVICE AWARDS

### Bryan District (17)

**30 years**  
Roger D. Murray  
**25 years**  
Danny M. Spillers  
**20 years**  
Patricia S. Jaster  
**15 years**  
James H. Curry  
**10 years**  
Bonnie B. Loehr  
Calvin H. Snider  
Shelton S. Webb  
**5 years**  
Richard L. Krenek  
George W. Smith  
Richard L. Walston

### Dallas District (18)

**25 years**  
John F. Weatherly Jr.  
**20 years**  
James L. Blair Jr.  
James L. Godwin  
**10 years**  
Melvin P. Lusk  
**5 years**  
Jerry C. Boatwright  
Timothy P. Boleyn  
Brenda B. Callaway  
Richard L. Darrell  
Patrick J. Haigh  
Jesús Oltivero  
Thomas D. Purcell  
James K. Selman

### Atlanta District (19)

**10 years**  
James A. Thornton  
**5 years**  
David S. Cooper  
Deborah L. Crenshaw

### Beaumont District (20)

**40 years**  
Elmer I. Cox  
Tom J. Simmons  
Odis Wood  
**30 years**  
Edward F. Seymour Jr.  
**5 years**  
John C. Cannatella  
Marcus D. Magee  
Pauline Sharp

### Pharr District (21)

**25 years**  
Juan A. Hinojosa  
Rafael Montalvo  
Acención R. Pérez  
Ramiro A. Ramírez  
Manuel Saldaña  
**5 years**  
Jody R. Ellington  
Ruben Laguna Jr.  
Jorge L. Ramírez  
Omar Soto

### Brownwood District (23)

**10 years**  
James E. Smith  
**El Paso District (24)**  
**35 years**  
Alfred A. Klement  
**10 years**  
Mark C. Longenbaugh  
**5 years**  
Graciela Concha

### Childress District (25)

**35 years**  
Preston Price  
**15 years**  
Rita K. Butler  
**10 years**  
Delbert W. Love  
**5 years**  
Andy L. Zarate

### Administration

**10 years**  
Owen Whitworth  
**5 years**  
Steven E. Rice

### Finance

**30 years**  
Bonnie J. Schaefer  
**5 years**  
Earl G. Gatlin

### Equipment and Procurement

**35 years**  
Robert E. Flaherty  
**20 years**  
Jerry J. Broz  
**5 years**  
Scott D. Koczman  
Wayne L. Wells

### Bridge

**35 years**  
Edwin D. Sanders  
**10 years**  
William R. Cox

### Construction and Contract Administration

**5 years**  
Frank Huerta III  
Robert D. Manly

### Highway Design

**5 years**  
Michelle L. Conkle

### Materials and Tests

**35 years**  
Weldon E. Burklund  
**25 years**  
Vernie F. Swartz Jr.  
**10 years**  
Laura K. Benningfield

### Transportation Planning

**30 years**  
Euel D. Barrett  
**10 years**  
Sylvia R. Medina  
James M. Robertson

### Motor Vehicles

**30 years**  
Jackie W. Walker  
**10 years**  
Elizabeth K. Hales  
Calvin J. Morrow

### Human Resources

**10 years**  
Rose D. Vargas  
**5 years**  
George C. Herrick

### Right of Way

**25 years**  
Gary W. Bernethy  
**20 years**  
Nancy E. Johnson

### Travel and Information

**20 years**  
Deborah D. Thompson  
**5 years**  
Dawn C. Bartholomew  
Daniel K. Perrine

### Maintenance and Operations

**20 years**  
George W. Reid III  
**10 years**  
Edna S. Carter  
**5 years**  
Carol T. Rawson

### Automation

**20 years**  
Robert C. Conner  
**5 years**  
Troy C. Bryant

## IN MEMORIAM

### February

#### Bridge

**H.D. Butler**, 28 years  
Director II

#### Equipment and Procurement

**Elsie M. McDaniel**, 27 years  
Micrographics Technician II

#### Right of Way

**Charles E. Clinger**, 37 years  
Director I

#### Paris District (1)

**Earl Abbott**, 37 years  
ROW Agent IV  
**Dewey W. Vanderburg**, 35 years  
District Roadway Maintenance  
Superintendent I

#### Fort Worth District (2)

**Edward C. Daley**, 28 years  
Roadway Maintenance  
Supervisor IV

#### Lubbock District (5)

**Norma F. Gilbert**, 32 years  
Accountant III

#### Odessa District (6)

**Pedro S. Celaya**, 18 years  
Maintenance Technician II

#### San Angelo District (7)

**Thomas C. Atchison**, 37 years  
Engineer V

#### Waco District (9)

**Walter Sohns Jr.**, 31 years  
Maintenance Technician III  
**Daniel L. Thomas**, 34 years  
Maintenance Technician III

#### Tyler District (10)

**Charles A. Gage**, 23 years  
Maintenance Construction  
Supervisor I

#### Houston District (12)

**Robert W. Burns**, 30 years  
Maintenance Technician III  
**Samuel E. Carter**, 36 years  
Marine Supervisor II

**Charles F. Coombs Jr.**, 18 years  
Maintenance Technician III

**Benito R. Santellana**, 12 years  
Maintenance Technician III

**Larry W. Thomas**, 30 years  
Engineering Specialist III

#### Yoakum District (13)

**Howard E. Krock**, 10 years  
Marine Technician III  
**Floyd M. Porter**, 23 years  
Maintenance Technician III

#### Corpus Christi District (16)

**Juan Franco**, 20 years  
Maintenance Technician III

#### Bryan District (17)

**Vannas V. Pickens**, 33 years  
Maintenance Construction  
Chief III

#### Dallas District (18)

**Samuel C. Bryan Jr.**, 29 years  
Maintenance Technician III  
**Jimmy H. Phillips**, 36 years  
Engineering Specialist II

#### Atlanta District (19)

**Weldon R. Gibson**, 33 years  
Director I

**Roy D. Wood**, 21 years  
Electrical/Air Conditioning  
Mechanic III

#### Beaumont District (20)

**Wilbur L. Ouzts**, 31 years  
Engineering Technician IV  
**Allen Trahan**, 15 years  
Maintenance Technician III

#### Pharr District (21)

**Bette H. Arnold**, 26 years  
Administrative Technician IV  
**Dorothy D. Gates**, 20 years  
Administrative Technician II

#### El Paso District (24)

**Orn G. Brooks**, 25 years  
District Roadway Maintenance  
Superintendent II

#### Childress District (25)

**Lonnie E. Lynn**, 37 years  
Right-of-Way Utility Agent IV

## RETIREMENTS

### Employees

**George W. Turner Jr.**, Fort Worth District, 9 years service, died Jan. 25, 1991.

**Randy D. Marek**, San Antonio District, 6 years service, died March 19, 1991.

**Vernon R. Fannin**, Lubbock District, 18 years service, died April 1, 1991.

### Retirees:

**H.M. Ables**, Devine, resigned from Lubbock District in 1975, died Dec. 6, 1990.

**Orgel B. Bramblett**, Austin, retired from Corpus Christi District in 1968, died Feb. 26, 1991.

**Dave Casterano**, Goliad, retired from Corpus Christi District in 1982, died Dec. 29, 1990.

**Lanzaro S. Castillo**, El Paso, retired from Del Rio District in 1968, died Jan. 13, 1991.

**Ora A. Chilcutt**, Lubbock, retired from Lubbock District in 1967, died Feb. 10, 1991.

**Ernest C. Clay**, Weatherford, retired from Fort Worth District in 1977, died Jan. 2, 1991.

**Arvel Edmonds**, Granbury, retired from Fort Worth District in 1986, died Feb. 4, 1991.

**Carl C. Finke**, West Monroe, La., retired from Houston District in 1966, died Feb. 4, 1991.

**Roy S. Franklin**, Tucson, Ariz., retired from Amarillo District in 1975, died March 2, 1991.

**Inez Garcia**, Alvin, retired from Houston District in 1987, died Dec. 25, 1991.

**Claude Groves**, Wellington, retired from Childress District in 1972, died Feb. 4, 1991.

**Glenn D. Hall**, Houston, retired from Houston District in 1978, died March 5, 1991.

**David W. Hogan**, Tyler, retired from Tyler District in 1987, died Jan. 23, 1991.

**Burnon L. Howell**, Bonham, retired from Lubbock District in 1976, died Nov. 27, 1990.

**Reuben C. Ivy**, Jasper, retired from Beaumont District in 1969, died March 11, 1990.

**Highie R. Lancaster**, Buda, retired from Austin District in 1979, died Feb. 2, 1991.

**William E. Macek**, San Angelo, retired from San Angelo District in 1972, died Feb. 27, 1991.

**Antonio B. Madrid Jr.**, Presidio, retired from El Paso District in 1979, died Jan. 16, 1991.

**Leon E. Martin**, Decatur, retired from Fort Worth District in 1984, died Feb. 9, 1991.

**Adam Mikolajewski**, Hempstead, retired from Houston District in 1990, died Feb. 17, 1991.

**Chester N. Parsons**, Del Rio, retired from Del Rio District in 1972, died Feb. 28, 1991.

**Samuel B. Pearson Jr.**, Duncanville, retired from Fort Worth District in 1973, died Feb. 16, 1991.

**Glenn W. Reid**, Buna, retired from Beaumont District in 1984, died Jan. 8, 1991.

**Sidney L. Richards**, Silverton, retired from Childress District in 1966, died Feb. 15, 1991.

**Olustee H. Roberts**, Gainesville, retired from Paris District in 1977, died Feb. 17, 1991.

**Leon C. Steelman**, Paris, retired from Paris District in 1972, died Feb. 27, 1991.



# LETTERS

On Oct. 12, another lady and I were carpooling home south of Dallas on Interstate 20 when my car overheated and the heater hose broke. I walked to the nearest phone and got help from home, but during the interim, we were fortunate to have the Courtesy Patrol stop and offer assistance. **Doug Brock** and **Richard Carrier** were both extremely courteous and helpful, and waited with us until help arrived. It was very comforting and even though I did everything possible to pay them, tip them, or buy their dinner, they wouldn't accept, so I asked where I might send a letter of commendation.

These are the men and women that help make our state what it is in offering friendly assistance to stranded motorists, and if I had been from out of state, I would have certainly been impressed with them both. They are fine examples of the caliber of employee anyone would be proud to have on their team, and I am glad as a taxpayer that they are working on the Texas team.

**Teddi A. Behr**  
Dallas

*Brock and Carrier are maintenance technicians with the Hutchins Maintenance Section, Dallas District.*

One office never closes during a winter storm — the state highway maintenance department.

Granbury's highway crews work around the clock during ice and snow to make driving conditions safer. They've had plenty experience this season. Thursday was the third Arctic blast we've had already.

During icy weather, the department's 17 workers are divided into 12-hour shifts,

said assistant foreman **Tommy Bishop**. That's 8 to 8.

However, the dedicated crews sometimes tally many more hours than that. "A lot of times we'll work 15, 16, and sometimes 17 hours at a time," said Bishop. "We'll do whatever it takes to get it done."

The work usually begins when most of us are sleeping in our warm beds. The crews brave frigid weather by spreading "chat" on bridges and intersections in trying to battle the ice. "Chat," Bishop explained, is a mixture of fine gravel and salt.

The highway workers also assist stranded motorists and help with traffic control after accidents.

Thanks, guys and gals, for your dedication! You're all appreciated.

**Hood County News**  
January 1991

This note is to express my appreciation for **Mario Martinez**. I was struggling with a flat tire on my Suburban, and Mario stopped long enough to finish the job for me. I would have been out in the cold wind for a long time without his help.

**Tom Lockhart**

*Martinez is a maintenance technician with the Alpine Maintenance Section, El Paso District.*

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