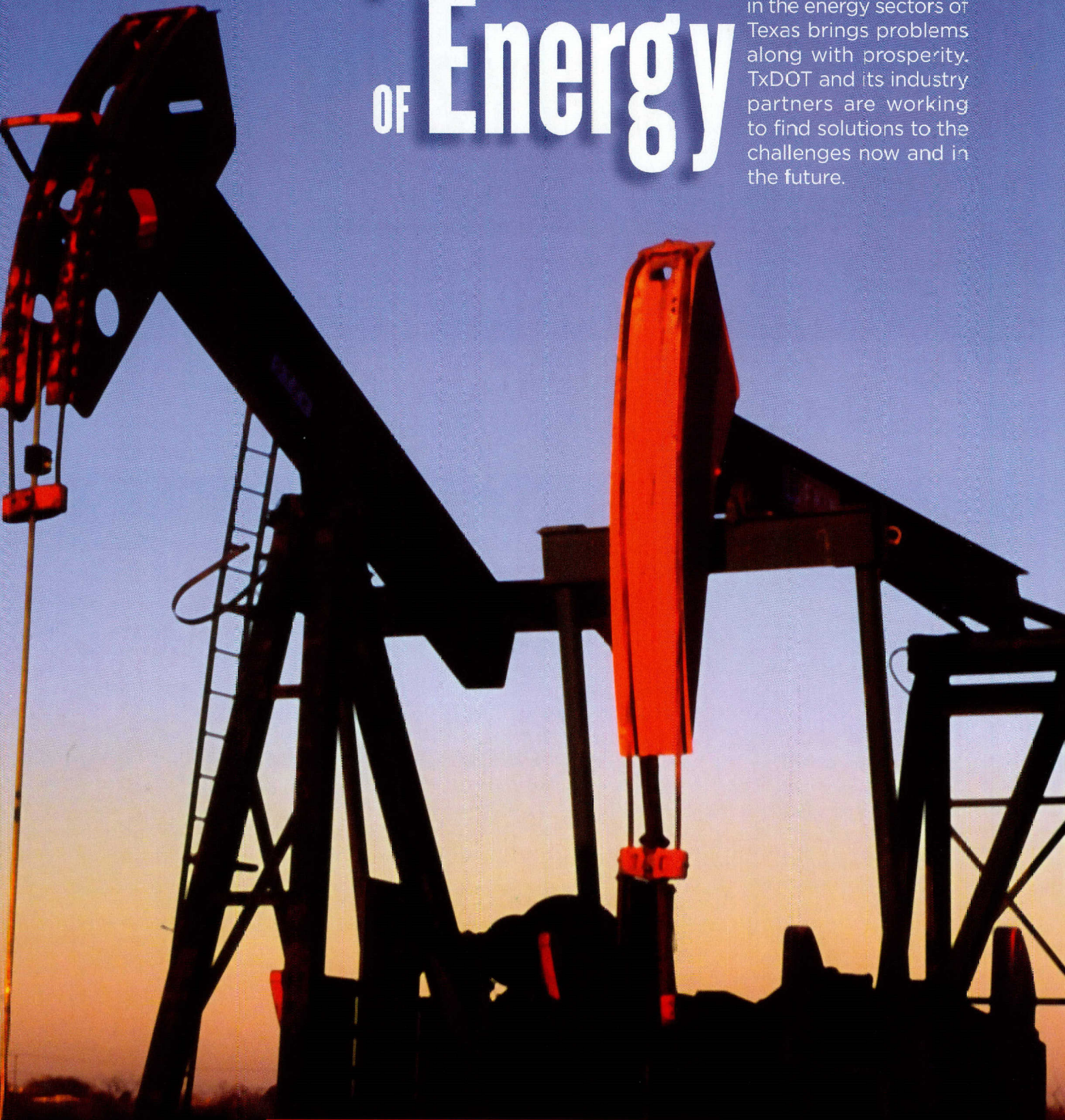




THE Ups and Downs OF Energy

Increased production in the energy sectors of Texas brings problems along with prosperity. TxDOT and its industry partners are working to find solutions to the challenges now and in the future.





JAMES BASS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I hope that you took the time to rest, enjoy family and friends, and rejuvenate over the holidays because it's a new year and we are going to hit the ground running.

In just a few days of my writing this, the 86th legislative session will begin.

And, like other state agencies, we'll be asking our state leaders for funding for the next two years of operations. In legislative parlance that's called a legislative appropriations request, and is the amount of funding that we've calculated we'll need to meet the department's mission. For the 2020-21 biennium, we're requesting just over \$32.6 billion.

If that sounds like a lot, it is because we have a lot of responsibilities to manage. Most of our requested funding will sustain our highway projects, with some \$25 billion of that request supporting project development and delivery, and another \$3.5 billion needed for routine system maintenance, including our ferry operations.


HAPPY 2019!

But as you know, TxDOT is about more than highways and ferries. We support rural and small urban public transportation operations, assist with the state's travel program, support the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway and Texas' general aviation system, and manage the state's only publicly-owned railroad, the South Orient. We estimate that supporting those activities will require another \$613 million over the biennium.

Of course, paramount to getting all these projects done is an appropriate staffing level. That's why we're also asking state leaders to increase our employee count by an additional 313.

And then, there are other projects on our list, like the completion of our Austin Consolidated Campus. We will be asking for funding to construct the new campus in south Austin, with a projected move-in date of 2022.

Just how much of our appropriations request we receive is a matter for our legislators to determine. But there's one thing we're certain of: our state leaders are extremely appreciative of the work you do. They recognize how essential it is to give you the resources you need to do your jobs. I think they've proven that with the additional funding and tools they've provided to this agency over the past few years. While we won't know what the final numbers are until the last gavel sounds, I am confident that TxDOT employees will meet the challenge. We always have.

Looking forward to serving with you in 2019. 



TN MAGAZINE
JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2019

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE
Bob Kaufman

COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION DIRECTOR
Beth Hallmark

EXECUTIVE AND EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR/EDITOR
Brent Dollar

MANAGING EDITOR
Shannon McIntire

ASSISTANT MANAGING EDITOR
Phyllis Chandler-Gordon
Kelly Matthis

FEATURE WRITERS
Tracey Lamphere
Ryan Self

CONTRIBUTORS
Christy Bird
Jennifer Brady
Sonja Gross
Joan Henderson
Julie Kelly
Martha Martin
Hernan Rozenberg
Darah Waldrip

PHOTOGRAPHY
TxDOT and
GDC Marketing & Ideation
Unless otherwise noted

DESIGN & PRODUCTION
GDC Marketing & Ideation

PRINTED BY
TxDOT Print Services
Austin, TX

TN IS PUBLISHED BY THE TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
125 E. 11th St.
Austin, TX 78701-2483

CONTACT TN EDITOR
Have questions or comments about TN? Email TNideas@txdot.gov and include "TN Editor" in the subject line.

© Copyright 2019



8 ON THE COVER

The energy boom in parts of the state is bringing prosperity — and challenges — to some communities. When it comes to infrastructure and road safety, TxDOT plays a big role in working with communities and industries to forecast and manage those issues.

FEATURED STORIES

- 12** Extra Mile Awards
- 16** Big Five Awards
- 18** 2018 Project Awards
- 22** 50 YEARS OF JUDGE ROY BEAN VISITOR CENTER

NEWS AND NOTES

- 5** TN Survey Results
- 17** Texas Highways Wins Big at IRMA
- 21** TxDOTCONNECT Released
- 21** El Paso Bridge Rebuilt Rapidly

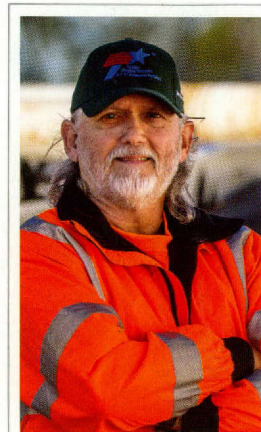
TN TRADITIONS

- 4** 5 Things You Need to Know Right Now
- 6** Talk Around the State
- 11** TxDOT 101 — RMAs
- 26** Employee Q&A

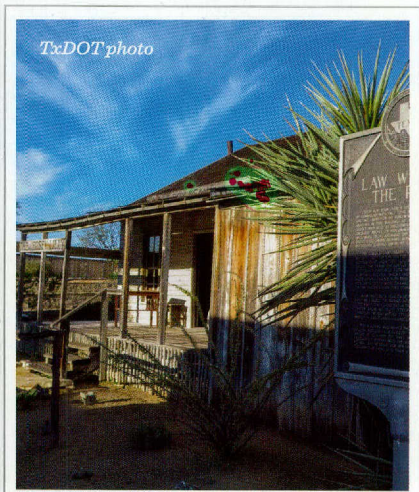
10 AMARILLO HELIUM PLANT TIME CAPSULE



24 I AM A... LONG-HAUL TRUCK DRIVER



- 27** Where Am I?
- 27** TxDOT Calendar
- 28** Milestones and Memoriam
- 31** TxDOT Chimes In
- 31** Bright Lights
- 32** Journey to Wellness



5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW RIGHT NOW

1 USDOT awards TxDOT \$50 million for road improvements in Permian Basin

TxDOT was recently awarded \$50 million in federal grants to fund much-needed safety and connectivity improvements in the booming Permian Basin. Thirty percent of the nation's oil and gas production occurs in the Permian Basin and the continued increase in energy activity has led to significant damage to roads. The Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development transportation grants provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation will go toward replacing four-way stops with overpasses in two rural locations, in addition to other improvements. For more information, read TxDOT's press release at txdot.gov and this issue's cover story.

2 Remember no lobbying rules as legislative session starts

The 86th legislative session starts on Jan. 8, and all employees should remember that legislative lobbying is not allowed while acting as a TxDOT employee. Lobbying is an attempt to influence the passage or defeat of legislation. In their capacity as TxDOT employees, staff may not testify in favor of or against a bill before a legislative committee, or engage in activity to attempt to influence the passage or defeat of legislation. Employees may use state resources to provide information and respond to legislative requests. However, always coordinate with the State Legislative Affairs Section in the Government Affairs Division when responding to legislative requests.


3 Texas Transportation Forum in January

The 13th Texas Transportation Forum will be held from Jan. 7 – 8 at the JW Marriott in Austin. The Forum brings together transportation leaders and advocates, industry innovators and local, state, and national policy makers to discuss the "state of transportation" and how to turn ideas into reality.

4 January highlights awareness and prevention of human trafficking

The month of January is National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. Human trafficking is modern-day slavery and involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain some type of labor or commercial sex act. It is a hidden crime as victims rarely come forward. This is where citizens and TxDOT can help. We can be the eyes and ears on the roads to help identify these victims. To report suspected human trafficking, call 888-373-7888.

5 TxDOT leads the way to help employees with safety credentials

TxDOT recently became the first agency in the United States to help its employees earn the Safety Certification for Transportation Project Professionals credential endorsed by the American National Standards Institute. A consortium of safety experts, operating under the name American Road & Transportation Builders Association, developed the credentialing test using institute guidelines. TxDOT has entered a partnering contract with the association's Transportation Development Foundation to enable 500 employees to sit for the professional certification exam in fiscal year 2019. As part of the contract, TxDOT employees will have access to online credentialing prep courses. 



READERS TELL US

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SEE MORE OF?

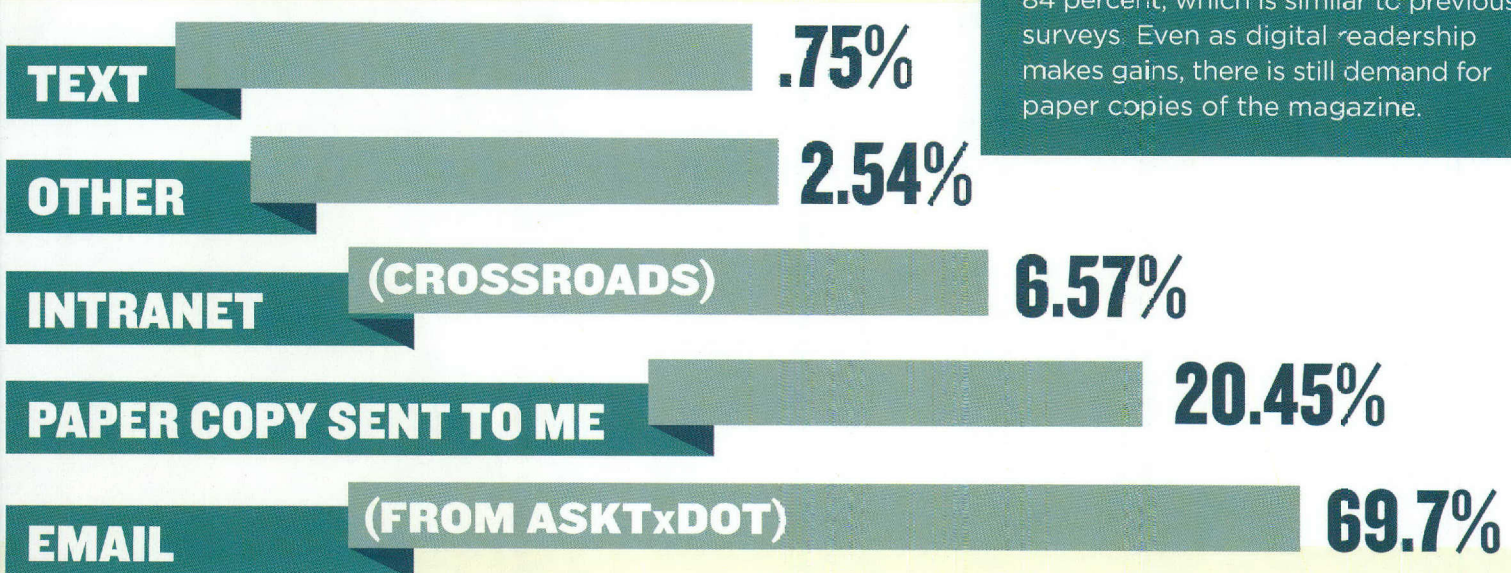
TN MAGAZINE READER SURVEY RESULTS

In order to better serve the department, TN Magazine regularly conducts reader surveys to collect feedback about the magazine. The survey features a variety of questions covering readership, how the magazine is presented and distributed, and what kind of content you feel needs to be included. Thanks to all who participated in the survey. The feedback obtained through the survey results helps fine-tune how we move forward delivering the news and celebrating our team's achievements.

HOW DO YOU PREFER TO READ TN MAGAZINE?



HOW DO YOU WANT TO BE NOTIFIED OF A NEW ISSUE?



Photos

51%



District News

48%



Project Updates

42%



Employee Updates

35%



Featured Articles

34%



HR Updates

32%

TN READERS

Across the department, TN Magazine readership is consistently high at 84 percent, which is similar to previous surveys. Even as digital readership makes gains, there is still demand for paper copies of the magazine.

AROUND THE STATE

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

PARIS



Hopkins County gets new safety rest areas

In October, the Paris District officially opened to travelers the new \$23 million Hopkins County Safety Rest Area on I-30 east of Dallas, near Cumby.

“The day has finally come when we can officially open this new safety facility for those traveling along I-30,” said Noel Paramanatham, Paris District engineer. “More than 31,000 vehicles travel on I-30 every day. There have been more than 740 fatigue-related crashes along I-30 since 2013. This new facility will provide a welcome break for travelers.”

The new facility replaces the aging rest area facilities in Franklin County, which are now closed. Both eastbound and westbound sites have restrooms, vending machines, a Texas Department of Public Safety office, playgrounds and picnic arbors, and walking and exercise areas.

The main lobby at each site features interpretive exhibits on natural surroundings, and plants and animals found in Hopkins County. **TN**



TxDOT photo

The new \$23 million Hopkins County Safety Rest Areas on I-30 east of Dallas are officially open to travelers.

AUSTIN



McCoy and De Misi honored by Heart of Texas

The Austin District saw two of its own honored as Man and Woman of the Year by the Women’s Transportation Seminar Heart of Texas Chapter last fall. Terry McCoy, district engineer, was the man and Lorena Echeverria De Misi, former director of transportation, planning and development, was the woman. WTS supports and encourages the advancement of women in transportation.

McCoy was recognized for his efforts to advance diversity within the district. In his career with TxDOT, McCoy has been an area engineer, director of transportation and development, and deputy district engineer. In presenting the award, WTS noted that McCoy provides a welcoming environment to minorities and women within the Austin District, resulting in a diverse district team.

De Misi was recognized for using her role with the district to promote a diverse staff and challenged individuals to pursue opportunities to expand their skills. She left the agency last August. **TN**



TxDOT photo



TxDOT photo

Terry McCoy, Austin District engineer, and Lorena Echeverria De Misi, former director of transportation, planning and development, were honored as Man and Woman of the Year by the Women’s Transportation Seminar Heart of Texas Chapter.

AEMA recognizes I-10 excellence

The Asphalt Emulsion Manufacturers Association, or AEMA, honored the San Angelo District, Kiewit Construction and Ergon Asphalt & Emulsions Inc. for their work on a 10-mile stretch of I-10 in Crockett County.

In late 2018, Lewis Nowlin, Junction area engineer, accepted the 2018 Past Presidents' Award for Emulsion Excellence on behalf of TxDOT. The award recognized a 2016 project that used asphalt emulsion to improve east- and westbound lanes on the interstate originally constructed in the late 1970s. Emulsion treatment allows the pavement to be more flexible and provides greater moisture resistance. The project substantially improved the ride quality on the treated roadway. **TN**

SAN ANGELO



TxDOT photo

Lewis Nowlin, Junction area engineer, with the 2018 Past Presidents' Award for Emulsion Excellence recognizing TxDOT's work on a section of I-10 in Crockett County.

Pharr District accepts Grit Award for flood response

In October, the Pharr District was the proud recipient of the Grit Award for the exemplary performance and selfless service provided to the people of Texas during what is coined as the Great June 2018 Flood of the Rio Grande Valley. Pharr District employees provided crucial support for high-water rescues and traffic control for flooded roadways. The flood caused an unprecedented amount of damage in just a few days. More than 200,000 residences and businesses were affected. With a total damage of nearly \$500 million, it rivals only the damage caused by Hurricane Beulah in 1967.

The Grit Award was established by the Texas Transportation Commission after Hurricane Harvey to honor employees for their exceptional efforts in extraordinary circumstances. The award is mobile and every district and division can earn its distinction. The piece is made from spare parts and is inscribed with the words "passion, spirit, perseverance, courage and heart." **TN**

PHARR



TxDOT photo

In October, the Pharr District was the proud recipient of the Grit Award for the exemplary performance and selfless service provided to the people of Texas during the flooding of the Rio Grande Valley in June 2018. Pictured (l to r): Pedro Alvarez, James Bass, Rex Costley, and Bill Hale.

THE Ups and Downs OF Energy

The Texas economy is robust, business is flourishing, unemployment is low, and opportunity is high. Population growth rates continue to rise. The Texas Demographic Center has reported that, in terms of number of people, Texas' growth exceeds that of all other states between 2010-2017. Texas' role as a major energy producer is contributing to this growth.

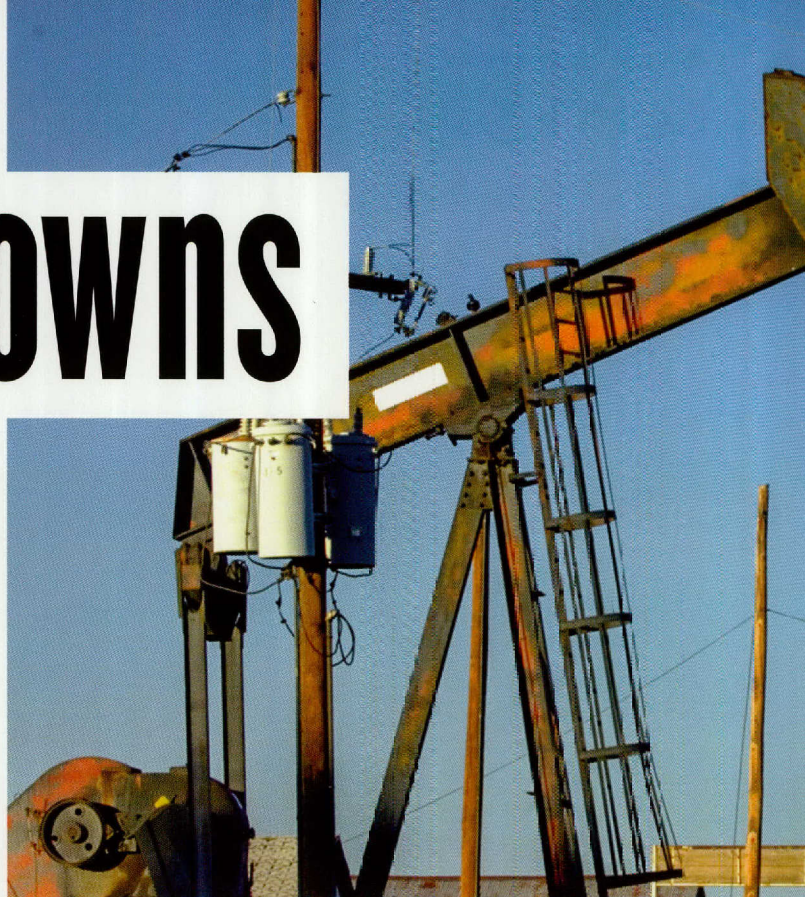
But this explosive growth comes with a cost. It puts more demands on our roads and bridges and causes greater traffic congestion. It also increases the number of distracted and impaired drivers on the road, which has led to a record number of fatalities, crashes, and bridge strikes.

Oil production is up. Pumping in the Permian and Delaware Basins, as well as the Eagle Ford Shale, has skyrocketed. Total Permian Basin oil production is now more than 3.5 million barrels a day. Industry professionals are forecasting 5.6 million barrels a day in the near future, which could make the United States the top oil producer in the world over Russia and Saudi Arabia.

This all sounds good for the economy in Texas, with one exception: energy production exceeds infrastructure capacity. Existing pipelines are bottlenecked so oil producers have turned to trucking to move their product from West Texas oil fields to Gulf Coast refineries.

"There's a direct correlation between the price of a barrel of oil and the number of fatalities in our state and a lot of it is related to the increased truck traffic," said Randy Hopmann, director of District Operations. "The Permian Basin has 2 percent of the state's population but 10 percent of the fatalities. The number of trucks on the road makes a difference."

Portions of TxDOT's Abilene, El Paso, Lubbock, and San Angelo districts are in the Permian Basin. Virtually all of the Odessa District is in the heart of the Permian Basin. Except for I-10 and I-20,



most are farm-to-market roads that were not designed for the heavy loads they now carry.

"Roads that were originally designed to handle regular farm-to-market traffic now have some of the heaviest loads on any roadways anywhere," said Odessa District Engineer John Speed.

That volume of traffic on roads that were not built to handle it is dangerous. The mix of heavy, industrial trucks with local traffic is a hazardous combination. As the energy sector continues to flourish, we can expect more trucks and more damage to our roads. And that affects safety:

“There’s a direct correlation between the price of a barrel of oil and the number of fatalities in our state and a lot of it is related to the increased truck traffic.”

Director of District Operations
Randy Hopmann

In 2018, the U.S. Department of Transportation allowed state and local stakeholders to apply for \$1.5 billion in discretionary grant funding through the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development, or BUILD, program. Under the BUILD program, TxDOT was awarded \$50 million for road improvements in Winkler, Glasscock, and Reagan counties, all players in the energy sector.

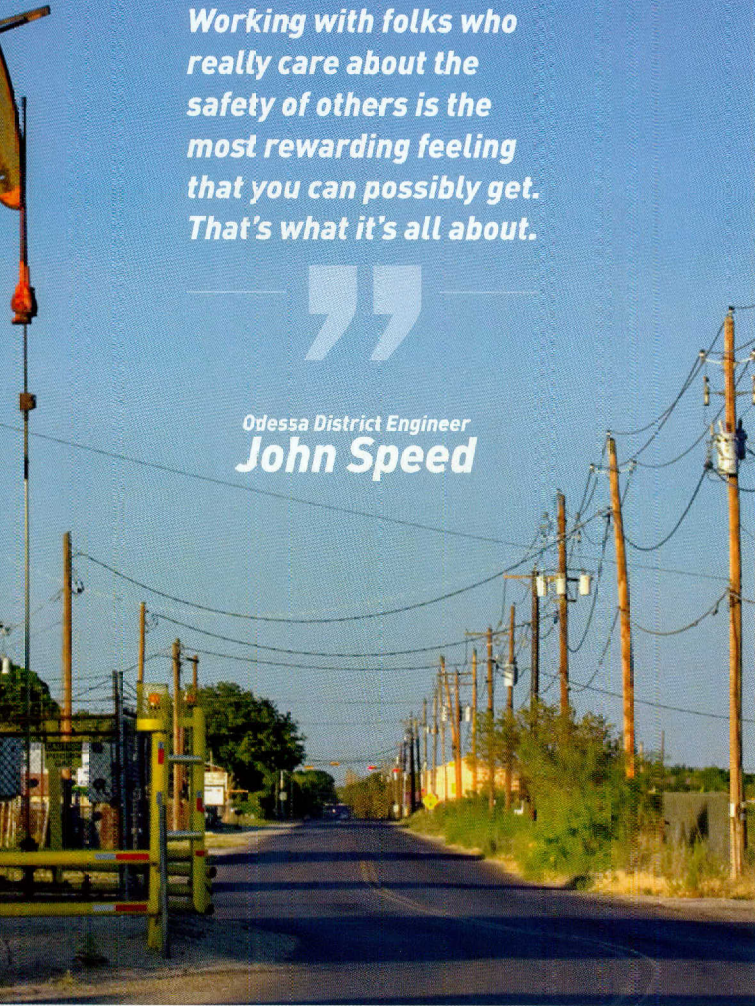
Although increased funding dedicated to the energy sector — more than \$3 billion combined over the next 10 years — will go a long way toward addressing these challenges, TxDOT also has been creative in developing other solutions.



Working with folks who really care about the safety of others is the most rewarding feeling that you can possibly get. That's what it's all about.



*Odessa District Engineer
John Speed*



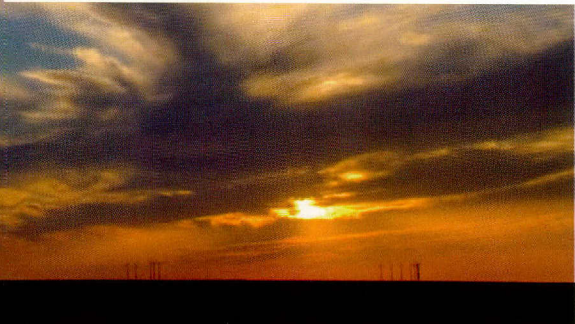
Districts in the Permian Basin are getting help from other TxDOT districts and the Design Division with project design work. They are using the consultant industry to assist with planning and design work. The Transportation Programs Division is assisting with managing consultant contracts. Combining all of these resources helps to successfully execute and deliver the transportation program for that part of the state.

Partnerships with the private sector are another solution. Expanding upon an established practice, the Odessa District is implementing donation agreements which allow for turnkey delivery of safety improvements by the private sector. Under these agreements, interested businesses fund, design, and build transportation improvements to dramatically shorten the time between project initiation and completion. Safety improvements constructed under these agreements are now routinely completed—concept through construction—in only a few months.

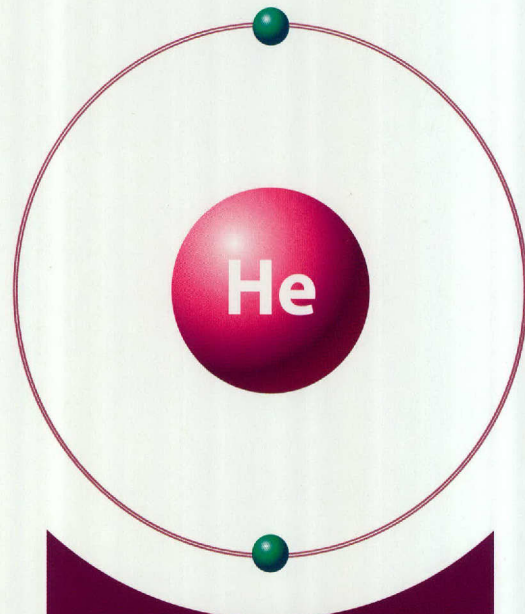
TxDOT actively participates in the Permian Roadway Safety Coalition, a cross-section of stakeholders addressing road safety and other issues resulting from development in the region. We work with the coalition to identify issues, challenges, and solutions throughout the Permian Basin region.

The agency works with safety experts, law enforcement, industry leaders, and public officials to make roads safer for drivers and passengers. TxDOT also advocates for responsible driving habits and increased awareness of simple but lifesaving actions to make the roads safer.

“Because it’s more than numbers — the people who drive our roads are our friends, our family, our neighbors. And in the Odessa District, and across the state, the TxDOT employees who take care of our roads are happy to do it. Working with folks who really care about the safety of others is the most rewarding feeling that you can possibly get. That’s what it’s all about,” said Speed. **TN**



LIGHTER THAN AIR: CELEBRATING THE DISCOVERY OF HELIUM



The TxDOT Historic Preservation Program partnered with the Texas Historical Commission and the Don Harrington Discovery Center in celebrating the 150th anniversary of the discovery of helium. The event took place last fall and drew hundreds of people, including retirees of the historic Amarillo Helium Plant, as well as their children and grandchildren.


The Discovery Center is home to the Helium Monument, which not only serves as a reminder of the importance of conserving natural resources and the strong cooperative effort between industry and government, but was also constructed as a time capsule. Each leg of the monument contains historical documents and mementos from 1968 that are designated to be opened in a specific timeframe from 25, 50, 100, and 1,000 years from its original dedication.

The first time capsule was opened in 1993. This year the 50-year time capsule was opened and the items were put on display for the celebration.

As TxDOT plans improvements to State Loop 335, a portion of land is required from the now-abandoned helium plant property, located west of Amarillo. When TxDOT builds roads and bridges, archeologists and historians review how transportation projects might affect Texas history, heritage, and cultural environments.

“Adding to that, the Amarillo Helium Plant is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places so it was a natural fit to partner with the Discovery Center for this special event,” says Mark Brown, a historian with the Environmental Affairs Division.

At least 15 retirees and affiliates came from all across the state to attend the event. TxDOT staff and volunteers captured oral history from the retirees while others scanned more than 500 images from scrapbooks that were proudly shared. Attendees brought memorabilia including commemorative coins and jewelry.

TxDOT goes “beyond the road” to share history along the highways in communities all over Texas. That is why the public’s participation in this event was crucial in helping ensure the Helium Plant’s story and significance are preserved for years to come. 

The Discovery Center is home to the Helium Monument which not only serves as a reminder of the importance of conserving natural resources and the strong cooperative effort between industry and government, but was also constructed as a time capsule.



Jimmy Downs (center) shares stories and scrapbooks from his years at the Amarillo Helium Plant with TxDOT Historian Mark Brown (left) and Justin Kockritz of the Texas Historical Commission.

TxDOT 101



PARTNERING FOR PROGRESS WITH RMAS

EDITOR'S NOTE: TxDOT 101 is a regular feature that focuses on explaining a common topic for the agency.


Regional Mobility Authorities, which are formed by one or more counties or certain cities, were created in 2001 to encourage local input into regional transportation. Two years later, the Texas Legislature allowed these political subdivisions to have more control over the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of transportation projects in general, and provided them with revenue streams to pay for them, allowing RMAs to issue revenue bonds and impose tolls, fees, and fares on projects.

And while RMAs allow for some local transportation control, they are not lone wolves. The Legislature gave the Transportation Commission the authority to create RMAs. That oversight means that counties or cities that want to form RMAs must first get approval from the Commission. Each petitioner must prove to the Commission that it will improve mobility in its region, get local buy-in from citizens, and identify the projects it wants to build. The Transportation Commission also has the authority to dissolve RMAs.

RMAs are governed by a board of directors made up of individuals who are appointed by the represented county commissioners courts and

RMAs work closely with TxDOT district offices and metropolitan planning organizations to prioritize mobility alternatives for federal and state funding programs and in project development.

a chair who is appointed by the governor. That board, like the Transportation Commission, sets policy for the RMA and hires its staff which handles the day-to-day operations. Unlike TxDOT, an RMA's reach is much broader, with authority to get involved in not only highway projects, but transit, passenger and freight rail, airports, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and utilities. RMAs work closely with TxDOT district offices and metropolitan planning organizations to prioritize mobility alternatives for federal and state funding programs and in project development.

RMAs are important partners for transportation planning in Texas. And today there are nine across the state. For more information about RMAs and to get links to the individual groups, visit txdot.gov and use the keywords regional mobility authorities. 



EXTRA MILE AWARDS

TXDOT HONORS THOSE WHO HELP OTHERS

At the 92nd Annual Transportation Short Course on Oct. 16, TxDOT recognized employees who went above and beyond the call of duty to help people in need. The Extra Mile Awards are presented to TxDOT workers who have helped save a life or prevented a situation from becoming life-threatening, either while performing their TxDOT duties or on their own time.

ATLANTA DISTRICT | Fred Crowder

Last August, Fred Crowder with the Atlanta District was driving near the city of Omaha when he spotted a man slumped just inside a nearby ditch. Crowder pulled over and approached the man, who was conscious and obviously in pain. Between labored breaths, the man told Crowder that he thought he was having a heart attack. Crowder called 911 for an ambulance and made the man as comfortable as possible. While waiting for help to arrive, Crowder got the man some water and helped him drink. He also kept the man talking so he wouldn't slip into unconsciousness. When emergency personnel arrived, Crowder helped them get the man into the ambulance so he could get treatment.

ATLANTA DISTRICT | James Moore and Garrett Aslin

In September 2017, James Moore and Garrett Aslin of the Atlanta District were headed back to district headquarters when they noticed two women standing on the shoulder of SH 8 where a railroad track ran parallel to the highway. The women were frantically trying to catch the men's attention because something was wrong. As Moore and Aslin got out of their truck to help, they saw an SUV on its side on the other side of the railroad tracks.

The vehicle was a mangled mess of twisted metal and shattered glass. The driver was still inside and barely breathing. To make matters worse, a train was coming. They had to get him out quickly. But the driver's side door wouldn't budge. The man was trapped.

Moore and Aslin turned to the passenger's side door and were able to open it. Carefully, they moved the driver across the front seat as the train came relentlessly closer, its warning horn sounding in the distance. Finally, they got the man out of the vehicle and away from the tracks, bloodied and bruised but alive. First responders got the man to the hospital so he could recover from his injuries and the stroke that caused him to lose control of his car.

EL PASO DISTRICT | East, West, Van Horn, and Marfa Maintenance Sections

Normally, the Davis Mountains region is known for its peace and quiet. But last April, wildfires engulfed acres of trees and grass. Local firefighters and the Texas Forest Service rushed to fight the blaze. As the fire grew, they needed help. Fifteen employees from the El Paso District were dispatched to provide fuel and water support for the firefighters and their equipment.

Before the massive fire was extinguished, they would be asked to do much more. After bringing tankers to the fire zone, the group of TxDOT employees was heading back along the highway away from the existing blaze when they spotted a train coming down the railroad tracks nearby. As it passed, they saw sparks from the train's wheels igniting nearby dry brush, setting off a trail of fire for miles along the tracks. But no firefighters were nearby.

The TxDOT crews stopped and quickly set to work. Using a maintainer that had been left behind from a maintenance project, one group created a nearly 5-mile firebreak. It was important to keep the fires from spreading toward the existing wildfire. The rest of the crew went to work on the individual fires, dousing them before they could become infernos. For hours, the crews worked to put out a string of fires that eventually covered 400 acres. Their quick action saved lives and an entire region of landscape.

Continued on page 14

FORT WORTH DISTRICT | David Killingsworth

When David Killingsworth of the Fort Worth District was prepping the roads for Winter Storm Inga in early 2018, he found himself dealing with an unexpected emergency. As Killingsworth and his crew stopped for a moment while clearing I-20, he saw a truck pull up behind him. The driver was having chest pains and his breathing was short. Killingsworth called 911 and turned back to the driver. In pain, the man was stepping on and off the gas and brake pedals. To keep the car from moving and potentially hitting the TxDOT crew ahead, Killingsworth asked the man to put the truck in park. Then Killingsworth asked the driver if he could get behind the wheel and move the vehicle. The driver agreed and Killingsworth drove the truck off the road and onto the shoulder. Killingsworth talked to the man as they waited and even called his wife to explain what had happened. Paramedics arrived just as the man's heart stopped and rushed him to the hospital. Luckily, thanks to Killingsworth's help, the man recovered.

HOUSTON DISTRICT | Richard Turietta and William Hausman

On Aug. 27, 2017, the torrential downpour from Hurricane Harvey displaced hundreds of people from their homes in Dickinson along FM 517 near I-45. Heading north to place barricades, Richard Turietta and William Hausman with the Houston District came across hundreds of people and dozens of vehicles stopped on the interstate as they approached the exit near Dickinson Bayou. News crews were filming and trucks were pulling boats to the location. Multiple law enforcement and rescue agencies were also on the scene along with emergency medical service crews.

Evacuees stood there stranded with trash bags filled with clothing and other valuables. Some had babies crying in their arms.

Turietta and Hausman decided to help. Arriving near the top of the I-45 bridge, they saw FM 517 was completely submerged with only roofs of nearby houses poking out of the fast-flowing water. Rescue crews were bringing more people onto the bridge.

After speaking to law enforcement personnel, Turietta and Hausman went up and down the highway looking for those who needed priority evacuation, primarily the elderly, very young or those with medical issues. They directed people onto nearby buses, and then acted as spotters to get the buses on their way.

While they were working, Turietta found a man with only his two dogs and a small plastic bag of items. He was lying down barely able to move. Turietta helped him to his feet and walked with him to a bus, carrying his dogs for him. They were terrified and shaking. The man had spent the night cold and shivering in his attic with the dogs. Turietta never even got his name. But both he and Hausman helped many people that day who were struggling to get to safety.

TxDOT photo

At the 22nd Annual Transportation Short Course on Oct. 16, TxDOT presented Extra Mile Awards to employees who went above and beyond the call of duty to help people in need with the Extra Mile Awards.



LAREDO AND PHARR DISTRICTS

Cotulla, Freer, Laredo, Edcouch, Brownsville, Raymondville, and San Benito Maintenance Offices

Last summer, heavy rains brought severe flooding to the Laredo and Pharr districts. In Edinburg, as much as 6 inches fell in less than three hours. Evacuation orders went out for some parts of the Valley, and families found themselves looking for shelter somewhere. But getting to dry ground would be difficult.

TxDOT's Laredo and Pharr districts were called in to help. Ten, two-man teams from the districts were deployed to the area. For hours over a couple of days, TxDOT employees shadowed emergency personnel as they went door-to-door in flooded neighborhoods to check for people who had become trapped.

As soon as stranded residents were discovered, TxDOT employees loaded people and pets on the back of their TxDOT dump trucks and provided comfort, clean water, and hope that everything would be okay.

ODESSA DISTRICT | Ramon Sotelo

Ramon Sotelo of the Odessa District was driving on I-10 between Fort Stockton and Balmorhea when he noticed a lone car on the shoulder. The driver, an elderly gentleman, was standing beside it. Sotelo drove past the car, not really thinking much of it, but something prompted him to turn back. He came back to the car and found the elderly gentleman still there, walking back and forth. Sotelo asked the man if he was okay. The man said his car had stopped and he had been stuck there beside the road for five hours in the summer sun. Sotelo glanced inside the car but saw no cellphone or water bottle. He offered the man some water and asked where he was headed. The driver pointed to some distant mountains but he seemed disoriented. Sotelo contacted local law enforcement. They soon learned the man, who was diabetic and had dementia, had been reported missing in Corpus Christi. Because Sotelo acted on his instinct, the man was treated at a local hospital and reunited with his family.

TYLER DISTRICT | Robert "Eric" Tabraham

Last July, Robert "Eric" Tabraham was operating a patch truck ahead of a crew working on a 10-mile stretch of SH 198 in Van Zandt County. As the paving machine inched up the lane, traffic began to back up behind it. Suddenly, the sound of a crash filled the air as a speeding car slammed into another car. Tabraham and his coworker Bill Stewart turned their truck around and headed back. Twisted metal and smoke greeted them. Tabraham found the driver slumped back against her seat, going in and out of consciousness. He called 911. As the scene grew chaotic with other drivers stopping and getting out of their cars, Stewart took charge of traffic control.

Tabraham, a certified emergency medical technician and firefighter, and a nurse who stopped to help, turned their attention to the driver. Tabraham was afraid if she moved, she could injure herself further. He turned off the engine and tried to calm the woman. When the ambulance arrived, he helped the EMTs get her safely inside. Thankfully, no one from the TxDOT crew was hurt in all the confusion. **TN**

BIG FIVE AWARDS

TxDOT recognized outstanding achievements from the past year with the Big Five Awards at the 92nd Annual Transportation Short Course on Oct. 16.

GIBB GILCHRIST AWARD
Ceason Clemens, Dallas District

The Gibb Gilchrist Award, honoring an outstanding TxDOT engineer, went to Ceason Clemens, deputy district engineer for the Dallas District. Clemens worked her way up from an entry-level engineering assistant to designing and building some of the most complex projects in TxDOT history. From 2008 to 2011, Ceason managed construction of the first single point urban interchange in Texas.

DEWITT C. GREER AWARD
Theresa Poer, Fort Worth District

Theresa Poer, director of Transportation Operations for the Fort Worth District, received the Dewitt C. Greer Award recognizing the skill and dedication of TxDOT engineers. As a project manager for the \$2.5 billion North Tarrant Express – the state’s first concession comprehensive development agreement – she launched the largest and most complex transportation improvement project in the history of Tarrant County.

LUTHER DEBERRY AWARD
Duane Milligan, Dallas District

Duane Milligan, director of Construction for the Dallas District, received the Luther DeBerry Award, which recognizes outstanding contributions to transportation. Milligan’s accomplishments include the construction of the state’s first deck park over a highway and the building of two signature bridges that define the Dallas skyline.



TxDOT recognized outstanding achievements from the past year with the Big 5 Awards at the 92nd Annual Transportation Short Course on Oct. 16 (l to r): Ceason Clemens, Duane Milligan, Tim Powers, and Theresa Poer. Not pictured: U.S. Sen. John Cornyn.

RUSSELL H. PERRY AWARD
U.S. Sen. John Cornyn

The Russell H. Perry Award recognizes citizens for their leadership in transportation issues. U.S. Sen. John Cornyn was honored for his leadership in increasing public awareness of the need for and benefits of highway and transportation facilities in Texas.

RAYMOND STOTZER AWARD
Tim Powers, Dallas District

The Raymond Stotzer Award honors non-engineers and this year it went to Tim Powers, former Business Services supervisor for the Dallas District who retired last August. An organizational and administrative wizard, Powers developed the Engineer in Training program that has mentored hundreds of young engineers. In 2013, he served on a team that led the engineering procurement division’s transition from a regional group to the Professional Engineering Procurement Services, or PEPS, Division. **TN**

“

TEXAS HIGHWAYS

SCORES AGAIN AT IRMA

It's always a rewarding experience to measure your design successes against formidable competition. It's a great motivator throughout the year leading up to IRMA because you really want your magazine to perform well.



Texas Highways magazine once again scored big at the International Regional Magazine Awards, or IRMA.

At the awards ceremony last fall in Denver, Texas Highways took home 17 awards in editorial, design, and photography categories, and was a finalist for Magazine of the Year.

Top honors, or gold awards, for editorial work went to Wes Ferguson, managing editor, for his article “The Big Empty” in the Travel Feature category and to “Eight Great Quirky Stays” in the Reader Service Article category, written by contributors E. Dan Klepper, Kathryn Jones, and Events Editor Jane Kellogg Murray. For design work, Dave Schafer’s photographs in “Hauntingly Jefferson” won gold in the Photo Series category with judges calling it “a truly haunting series that maintains the ability to bring forth feelings of warmth and curiosity.”

Other editorial winners included a bronze award for Senior Editor Matt Joyce’s “Big Bend Mining” for Historic Feature and a silver award for Contributing Writer Michael Corcoran’s “Take 2” for Art and Culture Feature. “Take 2,” a feature on restored movie houses in Texas, also won silver in the Art Direction of a Single Story category.

“I’m proud of the work our talented team does month after month and their passion for making each issue better than the last,” said Emily Roberts Stone, executive editor. “It’s wonderful to see their work rewarded on a national level against some steep competition.”

Founded in 1960, IRMA is a nonprofit association composed of 34 regional magazines from across North America.

“It’s always a rewarding experience to measure your design successes against formidable competition,” said Mark Mahorsky, creative director. “It’s a great motivator throughout the year leading up to IRMA because you really want your magazine to perform well.” **TN**

**Mark Mahorsky,
Creative Director**

”

HONORING EXCELLENCE AT

2018 PROJECT AWARDS

The Texas Project Award Program began in 1987 when Raymond Stotzer, engineer-director of the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation, asked Tom Johnson of Associated General Contractors of Texas to partner with him to recognize department and contractor project employees who have worked together to bring high-quality projects through difficult circumstances.

At a meeting last October, TxDOT and AGC of Texas recognized 11 outstanding transportation projects as 2018 Texas Project Award winners. Gina Gallegos, director of the Construction Division, and Michael Lee, director of Engineering and Safety Operations, assisted in the presentation of the awards. Nine construction projects and two design projects were highlighted for their excellence. The consistent characteristic among all of them is that TxDOT contractors and staff displayed high levels of collaboration and skill to achieve tremendous results.

CONSTRUCTION AWARDS



Chuck Goertz (left) and Forrest Word

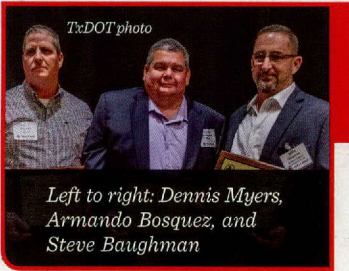
AUSTIN DISTRICT

U.S. 183 expansion

Chuck Goertz (left), TxDOT
Forrest Word, Dean Word Company

This \$14.5 million widening project included a five-lane roadway with two travel lanes in each direction and a continuous center-turn lane in Lockhart. The project delivered a beautiful urban section that improved overall safety and drainage.

CONSTRUCTION AWARDS (CONT.)



Left to right: Dennis Myers, Armando Bosquez, and Steve Baughman

CORPUS CHRISTI DISTRICT

Copano Bay Causeway Bridge replacement

Armando Bosquez and Dennis Myers, TxDOT
Steve Baughman, William Brothers Construction Co. Inc.

The existing bridge on SH 35 was built in 1967 and deteriorating in the harsh coastal environment. Work on this project included demolition of the old bridge and creation of a wider bridge with a higher clearance, wider shoulders and a second lane in each direction to allow passing.



Left to right: Ceason Clemens, Bob Stevens, and Dan Young

DALLAS DISTRICT

Horseshoe project

Ceason Clemens, TxDOT
Bob Stevens and Dan Young, Balfour Beatty

This \$798 million design-build project replaced the I-30 and I-35E bridges that cross the Trinity River, as well as reconstructed the interchange. It also redesigned the freeway intersection of two major highways.



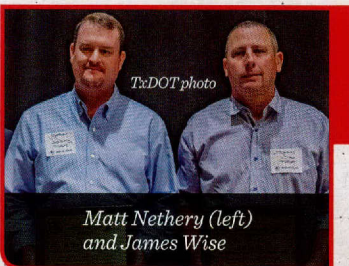
Michael Lee (left) and Kevin Mathis

DALLAS DISTRICT

Red Oak Road Bridge

Kevin Mathis, TxDOT
Jose Gonzalez, Hodges and Son Construction Co.

The Red Oak Road Bridge in Lancaster is a historic truss bridge that needed reconstruction. This project restored the truss while preserving its unique design. The result was an improved and safer structure.



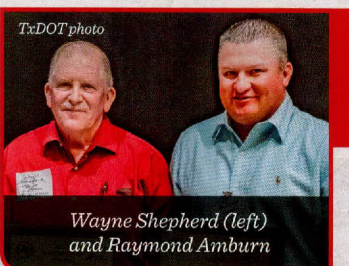
Matt Nethery (left) and James Wise

LUFKIN DISTRICT

Sabine River Bridges

James Wise and Matt Nethery, TxDOT
David Huckabay and Eric Lafitte, James Construction Group

This \$20.4 million project constructed two bridges over the Sabine River and demolished the existing bridge. It improved traffic flow through the towns of Logansport and Joaquin.



Wayne Shepherd (left) and Raymond Amburn

LUFKIN DISTRICT

SH 7 expansion

Wayne Shepherd, TxDOT
Raymond Amburn, Pinto Construction

This project involved widening the final section of SH 7. In addition to the usual construction obstacles, this project had to deal with natural spring water percolating through the top of newly paved surfaces.

Continued on page 20

CONSTRUCTION AWARDS (CONT.)



PARIS DISTRICT

SH 276 Bridge reconstruction

Martin Gonzalez and Jesse D. Herrera, TxDOT
David Casteel, Williams Brothers

This project replaced an existing two-lane bridge between West and East Tawakoni over Lake Tawakoni. The new bridge has four lanes with shoulders and a median with a continuous concrete safety barrier to improve safety.



SAN ANGELO DISTRICT

I-10 pavement reconstruction

Ben Mittel, TxDOT
Scott Roe, Kiewit Infrastructure South Co.

While rehabbing the outside lanes of I-10, crews found the inside lanes deteriorating rapidly due to severe rain and heavy traffic loads. Quick action from TxDOT and Kiewit Infrastructure South resolved the matter and kept the public safe.



SAN ANTONIO DISTRICT

I-35 at Solms Road project

Carlos J. Rodríguez, TxDOT
Michael Pruitt, Angel Brothers Holdings Corp.
Michael Acosta, HNTB

This project involved rehabilitating I-35 from Solms Road to the Guadalupe River. When the original plans proved unsatisfactory, a redesign was ordered. Even with the changes, the project was completed early.

DESIGN AWARDS



AMARILLO DISTRICT

I-40 at RM 2381 Bridge replacement

Jacob Tambunga and Sandra Sinton, Design Division
Victoria McCammon, Bridge Division
Kit Black, Amarillo District

This project replaced the westbound I-40 bridge at RM 2381 after a crash damaged its structural integrity. After coordinated efforts by the Amarillo District and the Bridge, Construction, and Design divisions, the bridge reopened just eight months after the incident.



DALLAS DISTRICT

SH 34 design

Pauline Morrel, Design Division

In a project to extend SH 34 from SH 243 around the city of Kaufman, the Dallas District and the city worked together on a bypass that allowed each to build part of the road that eventually connected in the middle. This resulted in almost the same completion date for the two projects. **TN**

ABRACADABRA:

TEAMWORK CONJURES NEW BRIDGE FOR EL PASO

Working together, TxDOT staff was able to quickly replace a utility bridge carrying crucial utility lines to downtown El Paso after it was badly damaged by a tractor-trailer.



TxDOT photo

In July 2018, a driver of a tractor-trailer slammed into a utility bridge that crossed over I-10 west in the city of El Paso. The utility bridge carried crucial electricity and fiber optic cable and a water line to downtown El Paso. The crash resulted in a partial collapse of the bridge, damage to the water line, and the closure of the main lanes of I-10. It was immediately clear that the existing utilities needed to remain in place until a bypass could be constructed.

Within hours of the incident, the El Paso District, the Materials and Tests and Bridge divisions, and the contractor, Sundt Construction, quickly developed a plan to safely reopen the road to traffic and temporarily shore up the existing bridge and utilities.

The Bridge Division immediately started designing a new structure that could be constructed without damaging the utilities. The design needed to provide support and protection to the utilities, while also allowing access for maintenance. Construction time was also a concern; the project had to be executed quickly. Within days of the incident, a design was finalized and accepted by all parties involved.

Throughout every phase of the fast-moving project, communication and collaboration among all parties was key to its success. It was all hands on deck. The El Paso District coordinated with the city of El Paso and Sundt Construction to shut down I-10 and set up traffic control for the project site. The Materials and Tests Division researched precast fabrication plants for material availability and made sure they had quality assurance inspectors overseeing the fabrication of the panels and girders. The contractor, Sundt Construction, was key in all phases of this project from accident cleanup to new bridge construction.

Within a month of the incident, a new utility bridge spanning over I-10 was planned, designed, and constructed. The El Paso District, Bridge and Materials and Tests divisions, and Sundt Construction demonstrated creative thinking, excellent leadership, and outstanding execution. This project was a huge win for the city of El Paso and TxDOT. **TN**

TxDOTCONNECT ROADSHOWS starting in January



DISCOVER TxDOTCONNECT

For many at TxDOT, 2019 will bring a leap forward in productivity with the introduction of TxDOTCONNECT, an enterprise solution for managing transportation programs, projects, and right of way.

TxDOTCONNECT is a web-based, automated system that will replace up to 40 legacy systems, beginning with the Design and Construction Information System or DCIS. The agency will host a series of roadshows throughout the state to present TxDOTCONNECT during January and February. The focus will be on projects currently entered in DCIS, including functionality for project information, geospatial mapping, and introducing workflow for all project types currently entered in DCIS.

Beginning in February, TxDOTCONNECT will be deployed in a series of releases, each with new capabilities that build on the previous releases. End users of TxDOTCONNECT will receive training and support as they transition from legacy systems.

District and division roadshows will feature interactive demonstration stations led by TxDOTCONNECT champions. Future end users will have an opportunity to explore TxDOTCONNECT and talk with people who are knowledgeable about the new system. All TxDOT staff members are welcome, but those who use DCIS should definitely attend.

Find out when the TxDOTCONNECT roadshow will come to your district or division on the project's Crossroads site at TxDOTCONNECT under Key Initiatives. **TN**

Judge Roy Bean Visitor Center CELEBRATES

50 YE

This past November marked the 50th anniversary of the Texas Travel Information Center at Langtry, also known as the Judge Roy Bean Visitor Center. During the 1800s the legendary Judge Bean was a saloonkeeper and justice of the peace in today's Val Verde County.

A colorful character, Bean was born in Kentucky in 1825 and left to seek his fortune in New Orleans at 16. He was jailed in San Diego for dueling in 1852, but escaped by digging his way out with knives hidden in tamales sent to him by local women. He went on to operate a saloon in the railroad camp of Vinegaroon.

Since Langtry and Vinegaroon were more than 100 miles away from the county seat, a local justice of the peace position was created at the urging of Southern Pacific Railroad and the Texas Rangers. Judge Roy Bean served in that position from 1882 until 1896, when he lost his bid for re-election. He didn't let that stop him and continued to try cases anyway.

Bean charged \$5 for wedding ceremonies and ended every wedding with the words, "May God have mercy on your souls." Despite his reputation, there's no record of Bean ever sentencing anyone to be hanged. He did, however, take away a horse thief's money, gun, and horse, and banish him into the desert. It's unknown if the thief survived.

Bean was infatuated with English stage star Emilie Charlotte Langtry, nicknamed "The Jersey Lily" for the British Isle of Jersey where she was born. However, the two never met.

In 1939, TxDOT was tasked with restoring and preserving the site of Bean's exploits. The Judge Roy Bean Visitor Center and Texas Travel Information Center at Langtry opened its doors in November 1968. Located just off of U.S. 90 in the Big Bend region of Texas, it welcomes tens of thousands of visitors each year.

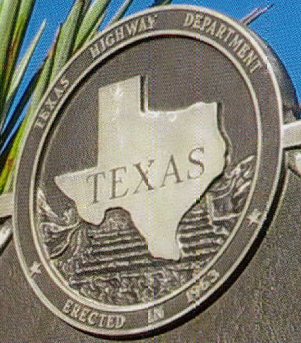
The visitor center offers not only restrooms, free Wi-Fi, and expert recommendations from travel counselors, but also a wealth of history. It is a museum with interpretive exhibits covering Bean's storied career. His original saloon and opera house are restored and open to the public on their original site. Travelers can also stretch their legs on the trails that wind through the center's beautiful desert cactus garden.

The 50th anniversary celebration included historical reenactments, demonstrations about 19th century life, and fun activities for all ages. **TN**

TxDOT photo



ARS



LAW WEST OF THE PECOS

JUDGE ROY BEAN LIVED A LIFE IN WHICH FICTION INTERMINGLED WITH FACT THAT HE BECAME A LEGEND. THE BASIS FOR HIS RENOWN WERE THE DECISIONS REACHED IN THIS BUILDING AS THE LAW WEST OF THE COURT WAS HELD AS FREQUENTLY ON THE PORCH, GROUPED ABOUT ON HORSEBACK, AS WITHIN THE BUILDING WAS BEAN ABOVE BREAKING OFF PROCEEDINGS LONG SERVED CUSTOMERS SEEKING SERVICES DISPENSED BY BUSINESSES CARRIED ON IN HIS COURTROOM-HOME.

THE JUDGE'S "LAW LIBRARY" CONSISTED OF A SINGLE COPY OF THE REVISED STATUTES OF TEXAS. HE CONSULTED IT, HOWEVER, CALLING INSTEAD ON HIS ABOUT THE BRAND OF JUSTICE WHICH SHOULD APPLY EFFECTIVELY DISPENSED TOGETHER WITH LIBERAL QUALITY BLUFF AND BLUSTER. SINCE LANGTRY HAD NO JAIL, ALL WERE DEEMED FINABLE WITH BEAN FOCKETING THE FINE PRISONERS OFTEN WERE CHAINED TO MESQUITE TREE OF THE BUILDING UNTIL THEY SOBERED UP ENOUGH TO S...

BEAN REACHED A PEAK OF NOTORIETY WHEN, ON FEBRUARY 1896, HE STAGED THE BANNED FITZSIMMONS-MAHER HEAVY TITLE FIGHT ON A SAND BAR IN THE RIO GRANDE RIVER. HE THREW FROM HIS FRONT PORCH, BY HOLDING IT OFF TERRITORY HE OUTWITTED TEXAS RANGERS SENT TO MATCH -- AND TURNED A HANDSOME PROFIT FOR HIS SH...

THIS BUILDING WAS NAMED THE "JERSEY LILLY" FOR THE ENGLISH ACTRESS LILLIE LANGTRY WHOM BEAN ADMIRE WHO WHOM HE CLAIMED TO HAVE NAMED THE TOWN. BEAN FREQUENTLY BURNED INTO THE NIGHT AS HE COMPOSED TO HER. BUT HE NEVER SAW HER SINCE HER ONLY VISIT TO OCCURRED IN 1904, LESS THAN A YEAR AFTER BEAN D...

This past November marked the 50th anniversary of the Texas Travel Information Center at Langtry, also known as the Judge Roy Bean Visitor Center.

I am a...

**Long-Haul
Truck Driver**



Wesley Price
Long-Haul Truck Driver
Tyler District



Wesley Price started his career at TxDOT in 1987 as a summer hire in the Tyler District's Special Jobs Section. Four months later, he was hired full time on the mill and inlay crew. In 2012, he joined the Fleet Operations Division in the Tyler District Shop as a long-haul truck driver. In his spare time, he likes to play guitar, ride motorcycles, and watch movies with his wife. They have three children and three grandchildren. He also admits to being a cat lover.

Describe your duties as a long-haul truck driver.

I'm either relocating equipment for surrounding sections or hauling broken equipment to or from a vendor. Sometimes I'll be sent to retrieve a strategic reserve unit from another district. A strategic reserve unit is a piece of equipment that is shared among districts.

The first thing I do before I leave on any haul is conduct a 360-degree walk-around on my truck and trailer to ensure my equipment is 100 percent. I make sure to have all my personal protection equipment on per requirement for my own safety. I then proceed to check all chains and binders, wide load signs, and magnetic red flags, in case I have to transport an oversized load. And, of course, I make sure my vehicle is fueled up.

When I load a piece of equipment, I line it up with the trailer, drive it on, and then bind it down good and tight. Then, I do a walk-around to make sure nothing can fall off.

When I'm not hauling equipment, I help the mechanics around the district shop with mechanic work, tracking down parts, and delivering or picking up vehicles from vendors. I also do my preventive maintenance on the truck and trailer.

What do you enjoy most about the job?

It feels great to deliver a critical piece of equipment to a section. It's gratifying when they say, "Thank you. We were waiting for this." I enjoy traveling through different towns and seeing the countryside. Most of all, I enjoy the people I work with in the Tyler District Shop, the Fleet Operations Division, and the surrounding sections and districts. I have made some good friends with drivers from other districts.

As a long-time TxDOT employee, what advice would you have for a new hire?

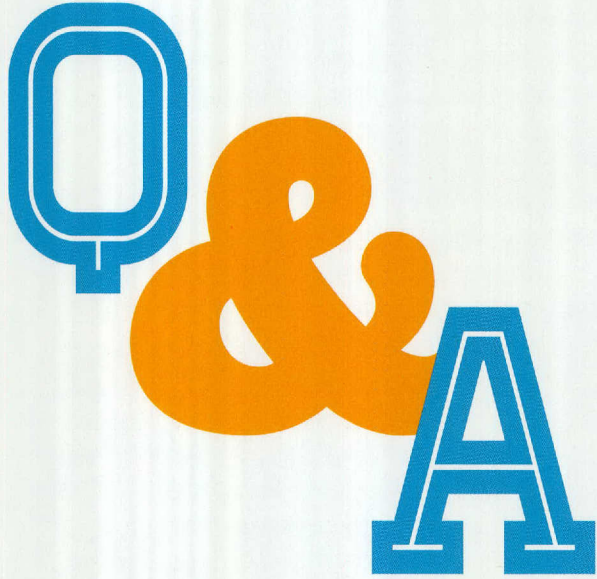
Keep on getting more education and training. Never get discouraged because problems usually have a way of working out. Be safe each and every day.

What was your most challenging experience on the road?

My most challenging experience would have to be after Hurricane Harvey in 2017. Numerous Gradalls, SkidSteers, trailer lighting, and heavy duty water pumps had to be loaded and hauled to different locations. After the worst was over, these pieces of equipment then had to be brought home. It was a big job going to Houston, Bryan, Yoakum, and other locations just to retrieve all of the Tyler District's equipment.

What advice do you have for other drivers out there?

Be safe! Be vigilant! Be careful of those who text and drive. Please slow down in work zones and watch out for school buses and kids. **TN**



Chassati Thiele

Maintenance Support Technician • Yoakum District

Chassati graduated from Texas A&M University in College Station and works as a maintenance support technician in the Yoakum District Office. When not at work, she enjoys spending time with her kids and extended family.

Chassati Thiele

Describe your typical work day.

In the mornings, I support our District Traffic Shop by creating work orders, entering time, and helping with various other tasks. I spend the rest of my workdays in the Yoakum District Office. My work days include a combination of processing damage claims, reviewing maintenance plans, preparing presentations, providing switchboard relief, reviewing permits, and filing.

What five words best describe you and why?

Kind, helpful, encouraging, grateful, and blessed. I have been blessed with God's grace throughout my life, and I try to extend the same to everyone I meet.

If you could pick up a new skill in an instant, what would it be?

I would love to be a skilled gardener.

What was your favorite band 10 years ago?

Alabama — and I still love them!

What was the first thing you bought with your own money?

A membership to the Chris LeDoux Fan Club, complete with an autographed 8-by-10 photo, limited-edition bumper sticker, and lapel pin.



What's your secret talent that nobody knows about?

I quilt and make many of my daughter's dresses.

What is your most used emoji?



You have to sing karaoke, so what song do you pick and why?

Hands down I'd pick "Walk This Way" by Aerosmith because I've actually already done that one and I killed it in the best way.

If you had to delete all but three apps from your smartphone, which ones would you keep?

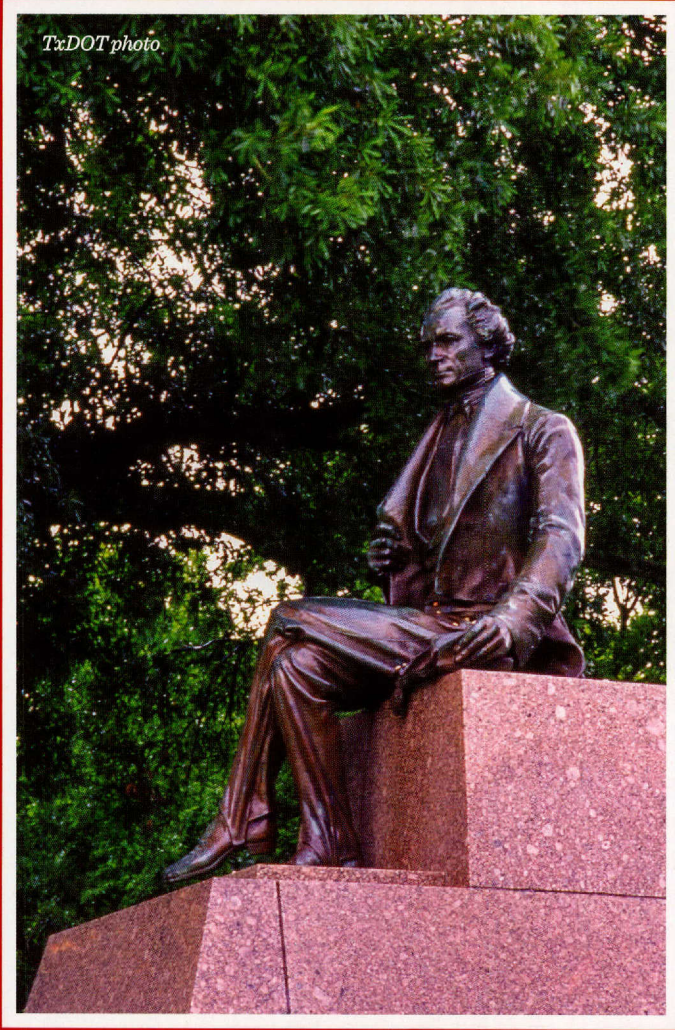
Marco Polo, camera, and Pinterest.

If you had to teach a class on one thing, what would you teach?

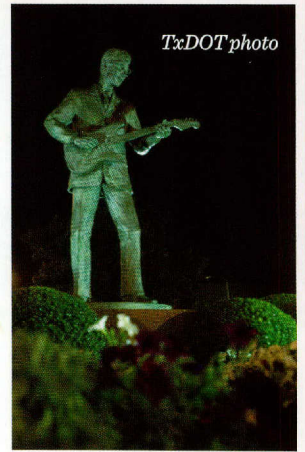
Surviving Life with Strong-Willed Children and Pets.

Where Am I?

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




Identified:



Congratulations to our first identifier, Eric Garcia (PTN).

Last edition's photo featured the Buddy Holly statue in Lubbock. The statue was created in 1980 by sculptor Grant Speed and sits across from the Buddy Holly Museum.

Others correctly identifying the photo were Gabe Flores (TPD), James Winsett (LRD), Joseph Hagler (LFK), Monica Perez (DAL), Buddy Hudson (MNT), Jaci Burton (LFK), Hector Siller (PHR), Bradley Peikert (BRY), Daniel Herley (SAT), Molly Berridge (ATL), Mandi Gipson-Mitchell (FIN), Elijah Zelenov (DAL), Vickie Jackson (DAL), Jeff Smith (CHS), Phillip Hays (FTW), Lorena Patranella (BRY), Pam Phillips (TYL), David Scheel (SAT), Jan Robbins (BRY), Sedrick Montgomery (TRF), Julie Puckett (RRD), Carlotta Knapo (IMD), KC Evans (ODA), Sharon Benson (WAC), Ann Wenske (YKM), Stephen Gipson (YKM), Lisa Lawson (DAL), Vicki Joy (AUS), Randee Shields (SJT), Arilyn Carter (FTW), D'ana Rodriguez Arzia (PRO), Kim Champagne (FIN), Matthew Heinze (MNT), Chris Cowen (BRY), Scott Serafin (AUS), Vicky Ribordy (EL), Lisa McDow (TYL), Austin Valentine (GOV), Sarah Blackburn (CIV), Jackie Ray (ABL), Lori Krolczyk (YKM), William Howard (SAT), Kristie Shackelford (FTW), David Mullins (retired), Kim Deal (LFK), Mario Jorge (PHR), Janice Craven (ODA), Nancy Leggio (DAL), James Hoover (DAL), Barbara Mills (LFK), James Grant (retired), Joe Lopez (retired), Steve Barbre (AUS), Jacky Hill (LFK), Herminia Gonzalez (ODA), Marcos Lujan (CMD), Richard Sliva (retired) Megan Lowary (FIN) and Denise Wall (PRO). 

UPCOMING TxDOT EVENTS

Jan. 1

New Year's Day
(All agencies closed)

Jan. 21

Martin Luther King Jr. Day
(All agencies closed)

Jan. 31

Texas Transportation
Commission meeting
(Austin)

Feb. 18

Presidents Day
(All agencies closed)

Feb. 28

Texas Transportation
Commission meeting
(Austin)

MILESTONES

NOVEMBER SERVICE AWARDS

DISTRICTS

ABILENE

- 15 Daniel Carrion
- 5 John C. Carter

AMARILLO

- 30 Ernesto Garza Jr.
- 20 Maurice D. Ferguson
- 10 Roy C. Neukam
- 5 Scott D. Campbell
- Billy J. Clayton
- Philip A. Woodward

ATLANTA

- 25 Edward Reddic
- Toby A. Whitehorn
- 10 Jimmy G. Cregg
- Brian S. Hughes

AUSTIN

- 10 Rose Marie P. Klee
- Daniel Mendez
- Jackie G. Volek

BEAUMONT

- 15 Tony W. Grimes
- Antonio J. Joubert

BROWNWOOD

- 25 Rojelio H. Bonilla
- 20 Jesse Cardoza

BRYAN

- 5 Christopher W. Alejandro
- Gilbert B. Janner
- Juan D. Quiroz

CHILDRESS

- 20 Norman W. Thompson
- 5 Jaime Lizama

CORPUS CHRISTI

- 30 Miguel A. Flores
- 20 Juan Carbajal

DALLAS

- 30 Shannon R. Corder
- David L. Seago
- 25 James M. Shaw II
- 20 Homayoon M. Asgari
- Darla Payberah
- 15 Brady A. Thornton
- 10 Jennifer R. Vorster
- 5 Romulo S. Bahamon

EL PASO

- 30 Hector J. Granados
- 20 Ruben Gonzalez
- 15 Alonso Hernandez
- 5 Edgar A. Garibay

FORT WORTH

- 20 Jared A. Browder
- Rubane Diaz
- Jose G. Salazar
- 15 Jesus A. Guadamor
- Timothy A. Lane
- 10 Robert P. Hunt
- 5 Robert H. Scivally
- Iffat Talukder

HOUSTON

- 40 Manny Francisco Jr.
- 30 Troy D. Shelly
- Richard Turner III
- 25 Clyde J. Alexander
- 20 Darryl D. Cash
- Samuel A. Kolawole
- Cesar E. Sanchez
- 15 Demez F. White
- 10 Ruben D. Libreros
- 5 Ana K. Ramirez Huerta

LAREDO

- 20 David M. Salazar
- 5 Victor H. Garcia Beltran

LUBBOCK

- 25 James K. Edwards
- 10 Jose M. Miranda Jr.
- 5 Eric C. Rodriguez
- Fabian Zapata

LUFKIN

- 25 Hoy J. Clark Jr.
- 15 Phillip D. McMillon
- David W. Wars
- 10 Tammie C. Bennett
- 5 Barbara E. Mills

ODESSA

- 20 Scott Benavidez

PARIS

- 20 Joel A. Blackwell
- David A. Blanton
- 15 Cornelia M. Haynes
- 5 Ashley S. Smith

PHARR

- 20 Juan R. Guerra
- Marcos R. Salinas
- 10 Ricardo Buentello Jr.
- Jose G. Castro
- Armando Garcia
- Esteban Martinez
- Juan J. Martinez

SAN ANGELO

- 5 Debbie D. Dunaway

SAN ANTONIO

- 25 Eduardo Reyes
- James A. Samford
- 20 Wilfred G. Jaimes
- 5 Kristy M. Long
- Brian E. Nentwich
- Austin F. Padilla
- Austin J. Porlier

TYLER

- 25 Clinton R. Corley
- 15 James C. Roach
- 10 Travis S. Goode

WACO

- 40 Martin G. Kuykendall
- 25 Timothy E. Meeks
- 5 Emzell Jones III

WICHITA FALLS

- 10 Steven H. Orr

YOAKUM

- 25 Mark A. Melnar
- Kenneth E. Wicks
- 15 Craig M. Wenske
- 10 Gary D. Reese
- 5 Logan N. Barton

DIVISIONS

CIVIL RIGHTS

- 5 Carlton D. Cooper

COMMUNICATIONS

- 15 Valentin Lopez III

CONSTRUCTION

- 5 Hubert L. Stewart
- Javier F. Torres-Herrera

CONTRACT SERVICES

- 5 Sammy Salazar

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

- 15 Stephen S. Troell

FLEET OPERATIONS

- 5 Billy P. Harris
- Annette M. Paden

HUMAN RESOURCES

- 15 Connie L. Hofmann
- 5 Angela R. Pratt

MAINTENANCE

- 15 Ray A. Issleib

PEPS

- 35 Sandra S. Frausto
- 20 Charles K. Davidson
- 15 Jaime Perales

PROCUREMENT

- 5 Katherine H. McDaniel
- Rebecca M. Wilson

RIGHT OF WAY

- 30 Rodney L. Murray
- 5 Marissa J. Montoya

SUPPORT SERVICES

- 5 Byron H. Tibbets

TOLL OPERATIONS

- 5 Lauren Lacivita

TRAFFIC SAFETY

- 5 Heather G. Singleton

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING & PROGRAMMING

- 30 Michael G. Lloyd
- 15 Jessica M. Smith

TRAVEL INFORMATION

- 5 Becky Ozuna

DECEMBER SERVICE AWARDS



DISTRICTS

AMARILLO

- 25 Jason W. Henson
- 10 Adam C. Red
- 5 Dennis G. Baker
David Branin
Jerome W. Rose

ATLANTA

- 10 Todd A. Peevy
- 5 Joshua E. Mayton

AUSTIN

- 20 John C. Peters
Carmelo C. Reyes
- 10 Jamie A. Cordell
Brett A. Walker
- 5 Vincent Nava

BEAUMONT

- 25 Jody C. Pitman
Patrick M. Ryan
- 10 Mitchell L. Hartsfield
- 5 Shay A. Brack
Kevin T. Frederick
Daniel A. Gibson
Mark A. Harris
Robert B. Josey
John A. McBeath
Curtis W. Simon
Archie M. Watts

CHILDRESS

- 25 Jimmy Hinojosa
- 5 Loys W. Jackson
Brandon T. Powers
Machele G. Walden

CORPUS CHRISTI

- 20 Valente Olivarez Jr.
Joseph K. Ramsey
- 10 Dustin D. Morgan
- 5 Krystal B. Cruz
Leonicio C. Garibay Jr.
Robert B. Poenisch Jr.

DALLAS

- 25 Frank L. Jett
- 20 Polita C. Flemming
- 10 Corrine M. Chandler
Fred Moore
Morgan A. Neill
Jerod A. Stanley
Sandra J. Williams
- 5 Tracey J. Zapletal

EL PASO

- 25 Monica C. Dubrule
- 20 Maricruz Saenz
- 15 Gerardo Galvan
- 5 Martin E. Espino

FORT WORTH

- 30 Rafael Garza Jr.
- 20 James R. Burks Jr.
Thomas D. Hickey
Robert L. Hill
Mickey M. Meacham
Jody G. Richards
- 10 Randell G. Brown
Peter D. Ross
- 5 Korey D. Coburn
Francisco Estrada III
Shannon K. Hawkins
Billy E. McCoy

HOUSTON

- 30 Alan D. Moreau Jr.
- 25 Anthony C. Mullins
- 20 Jayantha Lorensuhewa
- 15 Ruben Guajardo Jr.
Ivory L. Levigne
- 5 Edmond L. Thomson

LAREDO

- 5 Rogelio Ramos

LUBBOCK

- 10 Manuel De La Cruz
- 5 Sharla G. Hamblin

LUFKIN

- 25 Edward W. Faires
Archie R. Phillips
- 20 Jennifer H. Adams
- 5 Cynthia A. Broyles

ODESSA

- 30 Javier H. Molinar
- 5 Alejandro Guillen
Francisco Mora

PARIS

- 20 Danny C. Brown
Larry D. George
Marvin W. Gibson
Daniel J. Perry
Jason S. Shannon
Rock L. Thurston
- 10 Daryl C. Hutchison
- 5 William J. Edson

PHARR

- 30 Abel Corona Jr.
- 25 Sandra Flores
Maricela P. Salinas
- 20 Elsa I. Morfin-Ibarra
- 15 Jorge E. Espinoza

SAN ANGELO

- 5 Nicholas J. Greenly

SAN ANTONIO

- 35 Joseph M. Meneley
Kyle W. Richter
- 15 Richard De La Cruz
Gilbert Perez Jr.
- 5 Casey A. Groff

TYLER

- 35 Louis K. Sanders
- 10 Michael P. Tompkins
Mike B. Venoy

WACO

- 25 Anton A. Lopour

WICHITA FALLS

- 25 Cosme Solis III
- 20 William H. Council
Randy A. Sumpter

YOAKUM

- 30 Randall S. Berger
- 15 Carlos L. Taylor
- 10 Tony Francone Jr.
David N. Smith
- 5 Justin W. Pesch
Paul A. Wells

DIVISIONS

AVIATION

- 15 Eusebio B. Torres

BRIDGE

- 10 Jason W. Copenhaver

COMMUNICATIONS

- 20 Adele M. Lewis
Kenneth R. Roberts
- 5 Tracey A. Lamphere
Octavio O. Saenz

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- 30 Sheila K. Craven

FLEET OPERATIONS

- 30 Joe P. Cornett
- 25 Lydia V. Sterling
- 20 Robert V. Cole Jr.
- 15 Robert L. Smith
- 10 Cassandra M. McKibben
- 5 Zachary A. Bridgman

MAINTENANCE

- 10 Cody R. Tanner

PEPS

- 20 Kori L. Rodriguez
- 15 Elizabeth F. Rice
- 5 Idelice A. Haack

PROCUREMENT

- 25 Kim L. Trammell
- 5 Gustavo A. Taborga

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

- 5 Vicki Aldrighetti-Mata

RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY IMPLEMENTATION

- 25 Veronica Tello

RIGHT OF WAY

- 25 Gabriel G. Lopez
- 5 Matthew R. Childers
Irvina M. Holland

TRAFFIC SAFETY

- 20 Ruby Martinez

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING & PROGRAMMING

- 25 Noel C. Didear
- 10 Travis L. Scruggs
- 5 Farideh Dassi
Jason B. Ferrell
Julia J. Jerome
Samuel C. Norman

TRAVEL INFORMATION

- 15 Valerie A. Eaves
- 5 Joan Henderson

MILESTONES 2018

SEPTEMBER RETIREE REPORT

DISTRICTS

AUSTIN

18 Gary J. Hilgenberg

DALLAS

22 Richard C. Edwards

EL PASO

17 Auden A. Natividad

FORT WORTH

13 Roy Glenn Rosson

HOUSTON

16 John F. Cato

LAREDO

20 John R. Aguilar

LUBBOCK

21 Sherlani E. White

5 Celia Quintana

PHARR

22 Elma Henriksen

SAN ANTONIO

31 Christine C. Jauregui

30 Melvin T. Farrow

29 Farren S. Basse

WICHITA FALLS

11 Jimmy C. Lester

DIVISIONS

AVIATION

29 Tracy S. Bryan

COMMUNICATIONS

30 Jodi K. Hodges

7 Roman Trumble Hill

CONSTRUCTION

26 Suzanne R. Blaschke

DESIGN

36 Howard J. Nelson

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

22 Jody A. Shaw

FLEET OPERATIONS

19 Hector Garcia

MAINTENANCE

33 Juan I. Gonzalez

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING & PROGRAMMING

20 Manuela A. Ortiz

OCTOBER RETIREE REPORT

DISTRICTS

AMARILLO

24 Jeffrey L. Merkel

BEAUMONT

19 John D. Barron

BRYAN

26 Karl R. Nelson

CHILDRESS

18 Jerry R. Jones

CORPUS CHRISTI

8 Richard Bellows

DALLAS

34 Michael R. Chavez

20 Vicki N. Farmer

10 Bradley B. Borstad

EL PASO

26 Leticia Delira

FORT WORTH

14 Robert C. Rogers

HOUSTON

33 Paul I. Tannous

23 Cindy S. Smith

22 Kathy S. Sellars

LUFKIN

27 Louis C. Parten

20 Bradley J. Rosetta

PARIS

26 John R. Noe Jr.

17 Stephen C. Hodges

SAN ANGELO

25 Bentley D. Mittel

24 James F. Palacio

SAN ANTONIO

32 Ronald W. Lemmons

19 Ahmed A. Kadi

WICHITA FALLS

20 Miles W. Roberts

YOAKUM

34 Howard G. Callis Jr.

DIVISIONS

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

33 Maureen M. Wakeland

MATERIALS & TESTS

19 Michael T. Olsze

PROCUREMENT

26 Maria R. Olvera

20 Joan E. Dragon

17 Fernando Herrera

TRAFFIC SAFETY

27 Brian A. Stanford

TRAVEL INFORMATION

25 Albert Garza

IN MEMORIAM

DISTRICTS

BROWNWOOD

William "Bill" Glaze

Building Maintenance

Supervisor

Date of Death: 10/31/2018

Years of Service: 26

Retired: 2000

BROWNWOOD

Alva "Buddy" Witcher Jr.

General Engineering

Technician

Date of Death: 11/1/2018

Years of Service: 38

LUBBOCK

Martha Palmer

Engineering Technician

Date of Death: 10/6/2018

Years of Service: 9

ODESSA

Julian Fuentes

General Transportation

Technician

Date of Death: 10/17/2018

Years of Service: 8

SAN ANGELO

Donald C. Ratliff

General Engineering

Technician

Date of Death: 11/18/2018

Years of Service: 8

Retired: 2015

DIVISIONS

ADMINISTRATION

Marcus Yancey Jr.

Deputy Executive Director

Date of Death: 11/16/2018

Years of Service: 36

Retired: 1993

TRAVEL INFORMATION

Frank Lively

Texas Highways Editor

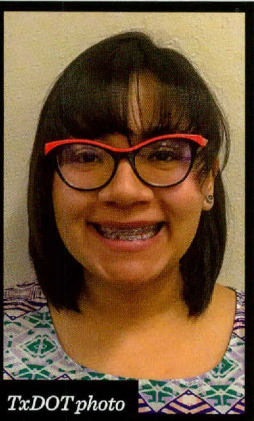
Date of Death: 11/18/2018

Years of Service: 28

Retired: 1990

TxDOT Family Members Chime In

What do you hope will be your greatest accomplishment in 2019?



MELODIE JIMENEZ

**INSPECTOR I
EL PASO DISTRICT**

“I have been an inspector for three years, one of them with TxDOT. In 2019, I hope to become an entry-level project manager. I recently took the professional engineer exam, and once it’s official, I will pursue a mentorship with my supervisor.”



MICHAEL RAMIREZ

**GENERAL TRANSPORTATION
SPECIALIST II
LAREDO DISTRICT - COTULLA
MAINTENANCE SECTION**

“With a positive attitude, I want to take ownership in leading the Laredo District and our Cotulla Maintenance section with Mission Zero safety efforts year-round.”



PAT HARRIS

**RESOURCE SUPPORT SPECIALIST
STRATEGIC PLANNING DIVISION**

“Professionally, my greatest accomplishment in 2019 will undoubtedly be passing the Project Management Professional exam. This accomplishment will allow me to expand my role not only within the Strategic Planning Division, but it also will provide me with better tools to support the goals, vision, and mission of the department.” **TN**

Bright Lights

ROCK 'N' ROLL FOR VETERANS



Several Fort Worth District employees are part of the band Dirt Cheap which performs to raise money for the Arlington Heroes Veterans Day Parade. Standing (l to r): Scott Floyd, Robby Wayne, Allen Shelly, and Kurt Ohnesorge. Sitting: Anthony White.

Fort Worth District employees have taken to the stage with music to honor veterans for their service. Dirt Cheap, an AC/DC-style rock band that includes TxDOT employees and contractors, has performed at a benefit concert for the Arlington Heroes Veterans Day Parade for the past two years.

Special Jobs Coordinator Anthony White, Transportation Specialist Kurt Ohnesorge, and contractor Allen Shelley use the performances as a way to give back and have a lot of fun.

The idea came together when White was planning the first Arlington Heroes parade in 2017. He connected with Shelley, who had a Kiss tribute band, and they combined to form Dirt Cheap. The band’s debut benefit concert was a success so they returned in 2018 and added Ohnesorge.

The second concert expanded to a larger venue and added three more bands. But the reason for the event is at the heart of every practice and performance.

“We do this so the veterans can be celebrated,” Shelley said.

*Send information on any thank-you emails, letters, or calls you or your co-workers receive to AskTxDOT so we can continue to shine Bright Lights on TxDOT employee achievements. **TN***



125 E. 11th St.
Austin, Texas 78701

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Copies of this publication have been deposited with the Texas State Library in compliance with the State Depository Law.
Printed on recycled paper by TxDOT Support Services Division.



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

Jumpstart your wellness goals with Get Fit!

Freddy Lopez of the Pharr District lost weight, improved his health, and got stronger by participating in the annual Get Fit Texas! challenge.

“I had my annual physical and my weight had gone up to 342 pounds,” said Lopez, a record keeper in the Roma Construction Office. He signed up for the Get Fit challenge last January and he and his wife started walking every day.


“[It] motivated me to keep up with my physical activity. I was doing more house chores, swimming, and walking a lot,” he said.

Lopez lost 53 pounds, went down two shirt sizes, and lost 30 inches all over.

“People don’t recognize me sometimes,” Lopez said. “Get Fit motivated me to make these changes.”

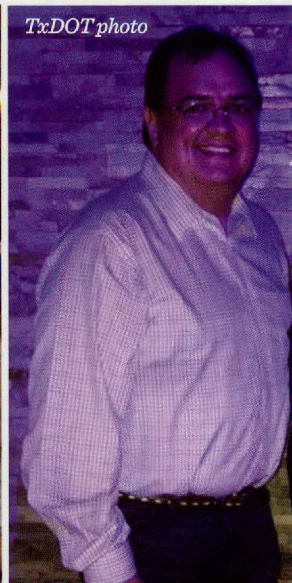
Now’s the time to start your own wellness journey! January 2019 marks the beginning of the 7th annual friendly agency-to-agency competition of Get Fit Texas! The challenge runs from Jan. 21 to March 31.

TxDOT offers 4 hours of wellness leave to employees who meet the challenge’s minimum goal of being active for 150 minutes per week for six weeks. TxDOT will offer 8 hours of wellness leave to employees who complete the entire 10-week challenge. In addition, TxDOT will host its own internal competition for fittest district and division.

Visit the wellness website on Crossroads to sign up for the 2019 Get Fit Texas! challenge to start your own wellness journey. 



TxDOT photo



TxDOT photo

Freddy Lopez lost weight and improved his health as part of Get Fit Texas!

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