



NEW DEPUTIES, NEW ERA

Brandye Hendrickson and Brian Barth are
TxDOT's new deputy executive directors.



Putting Safety First Takes Relentless Focus

MARC WILLIAMS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Since becoming executive director, I've spent a lot of time listening to and talking with employees across the state. It's been productive, eye-opening even because you have given me a look into what's important to you. That helps me and our leadership team do our jobs better.

One thing employees and I have talked about is the importance of keeping you safe while you're on the job – whether that's on a roadside or ferry, in a warehouse

or a lab, your TxDOT office or your temporary workspace that has become your office.

We say that safety is our priority. Nothing we do is more important because nothing – no project, no program, no initiative – is more important than keeping you safe.

And we do a good job of that. On-the-job injuries over the past few fiscal years are decreasing, down from 150 in FY 2018. Better news: we've not lost any employees on the job in recent years. Our last on-the-job fatality was in 2018 when we lost our coworker, Cesar Martinez, a summer engineering technician in our Amarillo District. The safety gains that we have made are because of your dedication. I thank you for that.

We are making progress toward the goal of zero incidents, zero injuries and zero fatalities. Getting to zero will take relentless focus. While we track the statistics, safety is not about improving our numbers. It's about us all personally owning the goal, and the work it will take to get there.

A while back, I talked to Lance Simmons, our new director of engineering and safety operations. Lance came to Administration from the Bryan District, and while he was there, he and his crew developed Foundation 14. It's a system of 14 safety areas – like spotting, backing and parking – that employees talk about and practice every day. They've taken ownership of safety, and it's paying off. (You can find my conversation with Lance on TN+ on the Crossroads homepage.)

TxDOT has a responsibility to Texans, but our first responsibility is getting you home and to your families. Let's all continue to be careful out there. ■

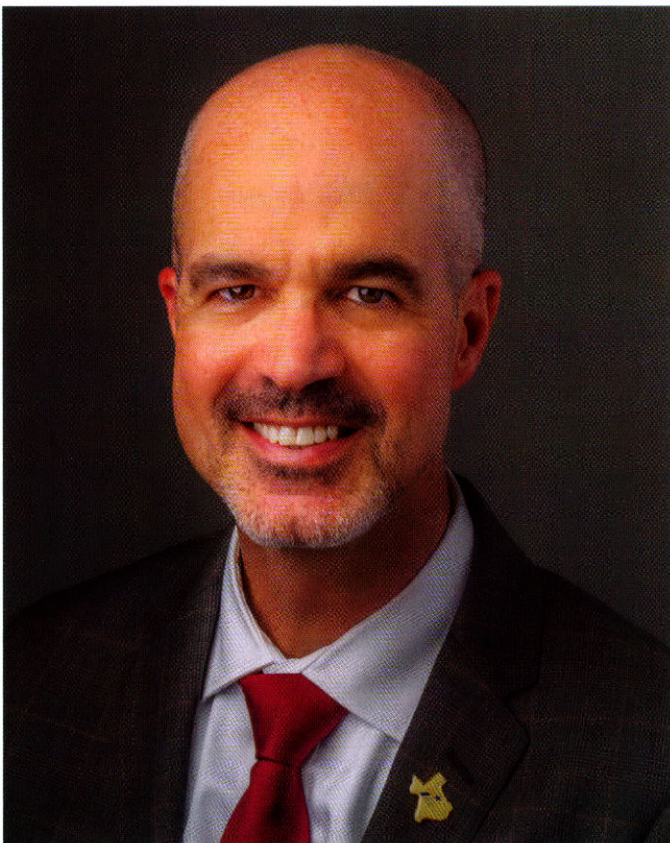




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COMMUNICATIONS
DIVISION DIRECTOR
Beth Hallmark

EXECUTIVE AND EMPLOYEE
COMMUNICATIONS
DIRECTOR/EDITOR
Brent Dollar

MANAGING EDITOR
Shannon McIntire

ASSISTANT
MANAGING EDITORS
Phyllis Chandler-Gordon
Ryan Self

FEATURE WRITERS
Tracey Lamphere

CONTRIBUTORS
Emily Black
Deidrea George
Sonja Gross

Luca'n Kuykendall
Adele Lewis
Laura Lopez
Debra Lyon

Tracie Mendez
Michael Peters
Jennifer Serold
Lisa Tipton

Will van Overbeek
Darah Waldrip
Brad Wheelis

PHOTOGRAPHY
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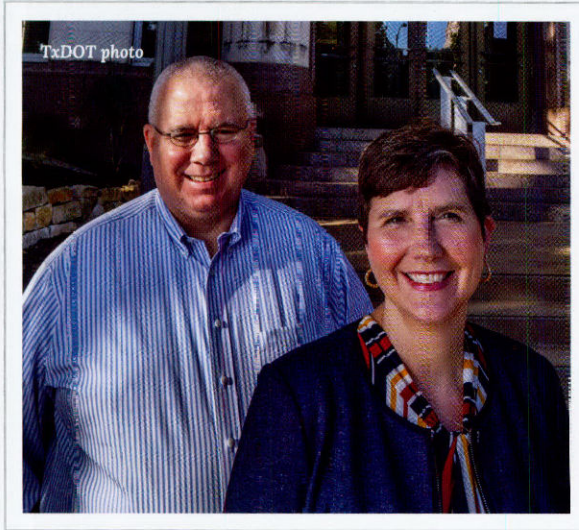
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CONTACT TN EDITOR
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ON THE COVER

Brandy Hendrickson and Brian Barth are TxDOT's new deputy executive directors.

FEATURED STORIES

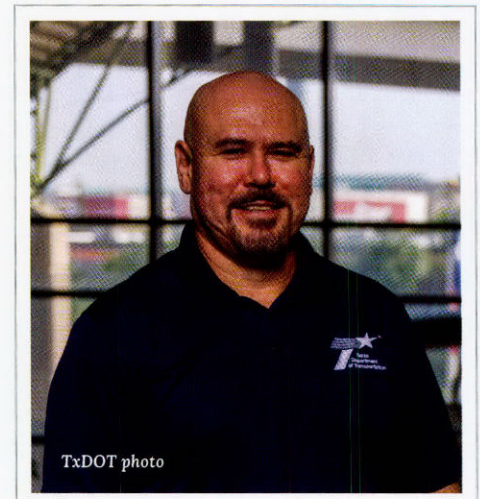
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6 I Am A... TransGuide Operator



Across the state, TxDOT employees go above and beyond.

Helping when others are really in a bind

BROWNWOOD DISTRICT

In a world of instant information and instant gratification, it is easy to not notice others' needs. We often see the mentality of "It's not my problem." Thankfully, that was not the case with the Brownwood District crews who assisted an RV stranded in a construction zone near Brady last May right before Memorial Day weekend.

Britton Waldron and his wife were driving home in their RV from a funeral in Abilene when he noticed the alternator wasn't "putting out like it should." The RV wouldn't shift past the fourth of its six gears. Suddenly, the vehicle came to a complete stop just before the intersection of U.S. 283 and U.S. 87, a few miles outside of town.

Other motorists quickly became impatient, shouting rude and vulgar statements to "move out of the way."

McCulloch County maintenance crewmen Billy Arista and Joel Medina were headed back to the office at the end of the day when they encountered the RV. They quickly acted when they saw the stranded motorists.

The TxDOT truck was a welcome sight for the Waldrons. In his job, Mr. Waldron has worked with TxDOT in the past and had friends that were employees of the department. He knew help was coming.

Waldron said the crewmen hopped out of the truck and began directing traffic around the stalled RV. They also helped locate a local heavy-duty wrecker service to move the RV to a safer location and let the Waldrons, who had no cellular service at this location, use their phone. Assistant Supervisor Daniel Queen also responded and provided more traffic control with his vehicle's flashing light bar while the RV sat immobilized.



Billy Arista (left) and Joel Medina helped a couple whose RV died in a construction zone.

Waldron stated that he was very grateful to Arista and Medina for helping them late in their workday.

"This is what we are all supposed to do," he said, referencing helping one another. "I'm thankful for these three guys and the entire system that allowed these crewmen to be helpful."

The local wrecker service the crewmen recommended was able to move the RV to safety and find a mechanic to fix the alternator. The Waldrons were able to get on the road back home by the next afternoon.

"There's something different about West Texas people," Waldron said. "They are always ready to lend a helping hand to someone in need. They take care of each other. If you're going to breakdown, Brady is the place to be." ■

Send information or any thank-you emails, letters or calls you or your co-workers receive to AskTxDOT@TxDOT.gov so we can recognize TxDOT employee achievements. ■

THE 87TH REGULAR LEGISLATIVE SESSION BRINGS NEW FUNDING, EMPLOYEES FOR TXDOT

Following a pandemic that limited in-person meetings and a winter storm that scrambled operations for several days, the Texas Legislature concluded the regular session of the 87th Legislature on May 31. Legislators passed more than 1,000 bills during the 140-day session and many will impact TxDOT.

One of the most critical bills passed was the state's biennial budget. Of the \$248.6 billion approved by state leaders, \$30.2 billion was appropriated to TxDOT for the next two-year cycle, fiscal years 2022-23. This session, state leaders provided TxDOT approximately \$375 million for capital facilities, vehicles and equipment, and \$359 million for capital information technology and resources – all critical tools for TxDOT in carrying out its day-to-day operations and supporting our mission of Connecting You With Texas.

State leaders also granted TxDOT permission to hire 281 additional full-time equivalents, which will help TxDOT more efficiently and effectively use Texas taxpayers' dollars to accomplish statewide transportation projects.

Many bills were passed to improve safety on Texas roads, including House Bill 3282, which allows TxDOT district engineers to temporarily lower speed limits for short-term maintenance projects. The new law will go a long way toward protecting maintenance workers and contractors working on or near a roadway.

Texas' "Move Over or Slow Down" law requires drivers to yield to police, fire and emergency vehicles, TxDOT work crews and other roadside workers. With the passage of House Bill 3319, the law must now be incorporated into driver education and driver safety course curriculum taught in Texas. HB 3319 will enhance TxDOT's continued efforts to increase public awareness about the law and improve work zone safety.

Lawmakers also provided TxDOT with an additional funding tool through House Bill 2219, which allows TxDOT to issue new bonds from the Texas Mobility Fund. This new funding tool unlocks a potential of at least \$3 billion in bond revenue to deliver highway projects and other non-tolled public transportation projects.

Other bills passed during the 87th Legislative Session offer TxDOT support in responding to and recovering from cyber security threats like the ransomware attack last year. Under House Bill 3390, TxDOT may purchase insurance coverage to protect against liability, and revenue and property losses that may result from a data breach or cyber-attack.

The 87th Legislative Session was another productive session for TxDOT. For a more in-depth review, check out the Summary of Enacted Legislation for the 87th Legislative Session on [txdot.gov](https://www.txdot.gov). ■

I AM A ... TRANSGUIDE OPERATOR

SAN ANTONIO DISTRICT

Mando Rodriguez, TransGuide operator with the San Antonio District, has been working for TransGuide since 1999 after deciding he wanted to expand his horizons and look for career opportunities outside the Rio Grande Valley. When not at work, he enjoys riding his Harley to Harlingen to visit family and friends. He has a four-year-old son he loves spending time with.

DESCRIBE WHAT YOU DO ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS AS A TRANSGUIDE OPERATOR.

One of our job duties at TransGuide is to locate traffic incidents on San Antonio highways using our closed-circuit TVs. We locate crashes, stalled vehicles and road debris. Next, we update our dynamic message signs to alert motorists to those incidents. Finally, we relay the information about the incidents to the San Antonio Police Department dispatcher, the towing dispatcher and the Highway Emergency Response Operator or HERO program dispatcher. [HERO is a free patrol service program to motorists that clears minor crashes from area roads and assists motorists in need.] The goal is to clear incidents as soon as possible so San Antonio motorists have clear roadways.

WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU WISH MORE PEOPLE UNDERSTOOD ABOUT YOUR ROLE?

We are constantly busy. Locating traffic incidents, entering lane closures, receiving reports of damaged TxDOT property from the city of San Antonio and law enforcement agencies, submitting maintenance reports, communicating with all the agencies in the operations room and looking for wrong-way drivers are just some of the job duties we perform here at TransGuide.

WHAT DO YOU FIND MOST REWARDING ABOUT YOUR JOB?

The wrong-way driver program is probably the most rewarding aspect of my job. When a wrong-way driver alert is activated, we let motorists know by posting wrong-way driver messages on our dynamic message signs. Then we try to locate the wrong-way driver and communicate the location to the San Antonio Police Department so the driver can be stopped before causing a crash. Since the wrong-way driver program started, TransGuide operators have located 87 wrong-way drivers before they caused a crash.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT WORKING IN THE SAN ANTONIO DISTRICT?

I think we have good leadership and good employees that make you look forward to going to work.



“

The wrong-way driver program is probably the most rewarding aspect of my job.

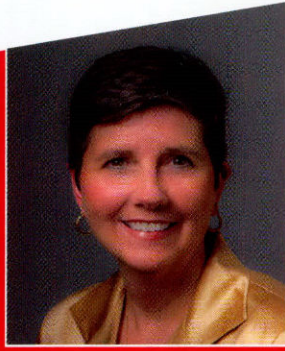
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MANDO RODRIGUEZ



EDITOR'S NOTE: We would like to thank Mando for following COVID-19 precautions when taking the photograph for this article. ■

A few questions with Brandye Hendrickson



TN Magazine: What did you know about the agency before you applied, and what influenced your decision to join the TxDOT Family?

Brandye Hendrickson: I am very excited to be here at TxDOT. I got to know people in the agency as I worked at AASHTO and the Federal Highway Administration. I know that TxDOT is a top-notch organization in so many ways. Our bridge program is state of the art. We are seen as leaders in strategy and innovation, particularly with autonomous and connected transportation. We're great at engaging on the national level. I'm excited to be able to work with Marc Williams and execute his vision.

TN: What have been some of your initial impressions of the agency in your first few weeks on the job?

BH: As I've gotten to know people, it's apparent that we have a high level of professionalism. Everyone has been very supportive and committed to their jobs. They come together and work as a team across divisions and districts. That has stood out.

TN: Is there something that has surprised you about living in Texas so far?

BH: The scorpions, the tarantulas and the torrential downpours! These are things I was not expecting when I arrived in the state, but I've already had the opportunity to experience.

One thing that is readily apparent is the pride that Texans take in being residents of the state. You see that pride everywhere you go. It's a wonderful thing to witness.

TN: What do you think are the biggest challenges currently facing the transportation industry?

BH: Workforce development and retention are definitely something we need to keep top of mind. The way we train and develop our employees for a 21st century transportation system is very important. We have to figure out a way to be efficient in how we conduct business and be nimble in adapting to changes in funding and technology. We have to be able to adapt because things are going to come at us very quickly.

NEW DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

TAKE THE REINS

EDITOR'S NOTE: See videos of the interviews with Brandye and Brian on TN+.

This past summer, TxDOT named Brandye Hendrickson and Brian Barth as the agency's new deputy executive directors.

Hendrickson, Deputy Executive Director, Planning and Administration, is filling the position vacated by Marc Williams, who became executive director on June 1. Barth, formerly the director of Project Planning and Development, was named Deputy Executive Director, Program Delivery. Both positions report to Executive Director Marc Williams.

Hendrickson, who has extensive transportation experience on the state and national levels, was most recently deputy director of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. She is the first woman to serve in the role of deputy executive director.

Hendrickson was most recently deputy director of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.

"We are thrilled to have Brandye join the TxDOT family in this important role," said Williams. "Her demonstrated experience in the areas of operations, policy, people and project funding are going to help us take TxDOT to a new level as we fulfill our mission of Connecting You with Texas. Her breadth of transportation expertise and leadership will serve Texas well."

A graduate of Indiana University, Hendrickson served much of her career within the Indiana Department of Transportation, including leading the agency as commissioner from 2015–2017. She successfully championed efforts to streamline and improve the delivery of transportation projects, fostered collaboration and promoted innovation.

From 2017–2019, Hendrickson served as acting administrator of the Federal Highway Administration. There Hendrickson led development of policy and programs around the administration's safety, infrastructure, innovation and accountability goals

"It is my honor to have the opportunity to join such an amazing and well-respected team of professionals. I look forward to working together to advance a transportation system that enhances the quality of

Barth's extensive transportation experience includes serving as the district engineer for the Fort Worth District from 2013-2018.

life of all Texans," Hendrickson said.

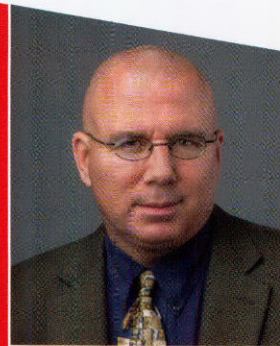
Barth will be responsible for leading TxDOT's program delivery overseeing all roads, bridges and maintenance throughout the entire state to ensure transportation projects meeting the needs of Texans are delivered efficiently and effectively. Barth's extensive transportation experience includes serving as the district engineer for the Fort Worth District from 2013–2018. Under his direction as district engineer, he oversaw over \$1 billion in construction work each year in addition to major projects on I-35W, SH 360 South and the I-30/SH 360 Interchange.

As director of Project Planning and Development, he oversaw the Transportation Planning and Programming, Right of Way, Environmental Affairs, Professional Engineering Procurement and Transportation Programs divisions.

"Brian is a proven leader with a strategic mindset and a commitment to follow-through to ensure we get our mission done," said Williams.

Barth began his career at TxDOT in 1988 as an engineering assistant in the Dallas District after graduation from the University of Texas at Austin with a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering.

"I look forward to serving in this new and critical role," Barth said. "I know firsthand that the women and men of TxDOT share my commitment to tackling complex challenges with rigor, dedication and meaningful results." ■



A few questions with Brian Barth

TN Magazine: What experiences have you had in your career at TxDOT that you think will help you most in your role as deputy executive director?

BB: I think the experiences I've had working in the districts — both the Dallas and Fort Worth districts — and my experience in project delivery in all aspects are going to serve me well in this new position. I know what the challenges and the obstacles are.

TN: What are your expectations for TxDOT employees? What can employees expect from you?

BB: My expectations are that we strive for excellence. Our customers, the taxpayers of Texas, expect that. We need to strive for excellence in everything we do. Just good enough is not good enough. That's what the employees can expect of me, too. I will be striving for excellence in everything I do to deliver the program the taxpayers expect.

TN: Is there anyone in your career who has inspired you?

BB: This will be awkward — and he'll get a big head — but [TxDOT Chief Engineer] Bill Hale has inspired me throughout my career. I worked with him early in my career in the Dallas District. It was a very difficult time in delivering our program. The way he fought through the issues of the time and his perseverance to get our work done really inspired me. I never knew what to call that quality but Commissioner [Laura] Ryan refers to it as grit. Grit explains Bill Hale perfectly.

TN: What do you enjoy most about working for TxDOT?

BB: I'm a big believer in our mission and the people at TxDOT who believe in that mission also. They are great public servants. The family atmosphere at TxDOT is very important to me.

I'm really looking forward to the opportunity that this new position affords and working with the great folks at TxDOT to deliver the program that we've been trusted to deliver.

BUSINESS MENTORING PROGRAM

DRIVEs success

The Professional Engineering Procurement Division, or PEPS, recently launched a mentorship program to support emerging disadvantaged firms through voluntary partnerships with more established firms. The Diverse Relationships for Informative Value Exchange, or DRIVE, Program reflects TxDOT's commitment to increasing the participation of disadvantage business enterprise firms in the procurement of professional services contracts.

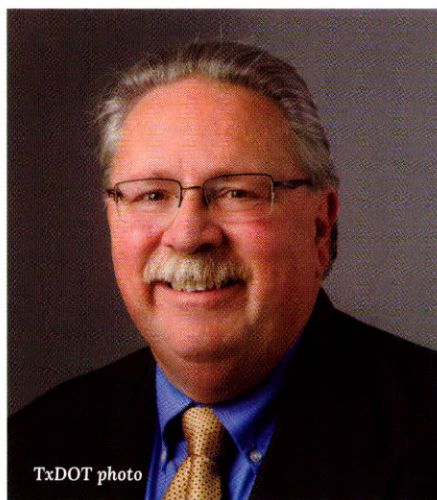
The DRIVE Program is designed to encourage and support DBE firms by pairing them with established businesses to gain insight and learn best practices. Firms are paired based on their strengths and needs. Once a mentor-mentee pairing is established, they work together to evaluate the mentee's business needs, identify mutually beneficial goals and create a plan to meet them. The goal is to build the mentee's capacity to compete on professional services contract opportunities whether with TxDOT, other DOTs or local governments.

"We are facilitating the mentorship between businesses," said Caleb Bryant, transportation engineer and director of the DRIVE Program. "TxDOT or any other agency can't know necessarily what hurdles an emerging DBE firm faces. I can only give them so much information as a TxDOT employee. It really needs to come from someone in their shoes."

Throughout the program, mentor-mentee pairs will participate in a 24-month program of one-on-one coaching. The pairs



*DRIVE Program Director
Caleb Bryant*



*Director of the PEPS Division
Martin Rodin*

will meet at least once a month and attend quarterly feedback meetings with all the program participants.

DRIVE is intended to enhance the capabilities and participation of firms that can perform work on transportation projects. It is also intended to allow businesses to build relationships with each other and TxDOT.

"A larger pool of qualified consultants is better for everyone," said Bryant. "It's better for TxDOT to have more choices and better for industry to have more options for sub-contractors and businesses."

Martin Rodin, director of the PEPS Division, was interested in creating a mentor program at TxDOT because of his experience with them in the private sector. Bryant and Pamela Mason, contract administrator, developed and administer the program. Bryant researched similar mentor programs at other agencies and municipalities in Texas and around the country.

"We wanted to bring the best attributes of those existing programs to TxDOT," said Bryant.

The program officially launched in July and response to it has been good.

"We have plans to continue to expand the program," said Bryant. "We will meet with the participants to track their progress and get their feedback so we can continue to improve."

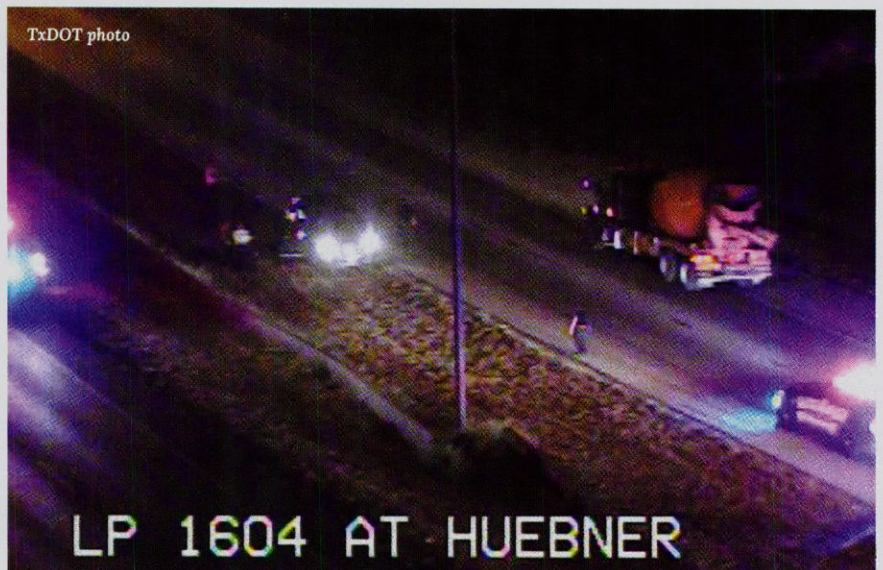
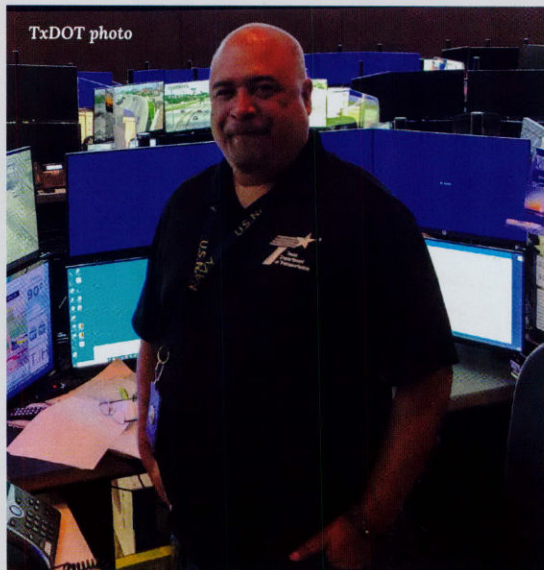
Hopefully, both mentor and mentee businesses will benefit from the program through expanded knowledge and stronger relationships.

"I'm so excited about the DRIVE Program because I know mentoring works," said Rodin. "I know how it can help a business turn the corner to be successful. Caleb and Pamela have done an excellent job in putting the program together and getting it off the ground in a very short time. I expect this program to be truly beneficial to businesses and TxDOT." ■

TRANSGUIDE EMPLOYEE HELPS STOP WRONG-WAY DRIVER IN SAN ANTONIO DISTRICT

In the early hours of June 22, an alert went out at TransGuide offices in San Antonio for a wrong-way driver on Loop 1604. ITS Analyst Ben Lopez quickly located the wrong-way driver on the TransGuide cameras and provided the information to the San Antonio Police Department. Within minutes, the driver was apprehended with no injuries or accidents reported.

Fast action like this is familiar to Lopez, who has located 25 wrong-way drivers on TransGuide cameras in his career. TransGuide is the San Antonio District's Intelligent Transportation System that provides information to motorists about traffic conditions, such as crashes, congestion and construction. With the use of cameras, message signs and fiber optics, TransGuide can detect travel times and provide that information to motorists. The system is also used to detect and alert police about wrong-way drivers.



Ben Lopez recently retired having helped stop 25 wrong-way drivers.

Police apprehend a wrong-way driver in June who was detected by TransGuide in San Antonio.

"Since 2011, we have located 87 wrong-way drivers on TransGuide cameras and used that information to help police stop these vehicles," said John Gianotti, transportation engineer supervisor.

Wrong-way driving crashes tend to be more severe than other types of crashes because they typically involve high speeds and head-on collisions. Stopping a vehicle going the wrong way almost assuredly saves lives. It's estimated that about 30 Texans a year are killed in crashes involving wrong-way drivers. Incidents of vehicles going the wrong way on a road also tend to happen late at night when they can be hard to see on camera.

Lopez, who retired in August after 26 years of service to TxDOT, developed a process for locating wrong-way drivers on camera that he shared with other operators. TransGuide's program has been so successful, in part because of Lopez, that it was awarded the Federal Highway Administration National Roadway Safety Award in 2015.

"Ben not only has a talent for this work, but he has taught our other operators his technique," said Gianotti. "His leadership has made our wrong-way driver program a national leader. I can't say enough about Ben's great attitude and his dedication to his job. It was truly an honor for me to work with him every day and help save lives!" ■

ON THE ROAD WITH EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MARC WILLIAMS

TxDOT photo



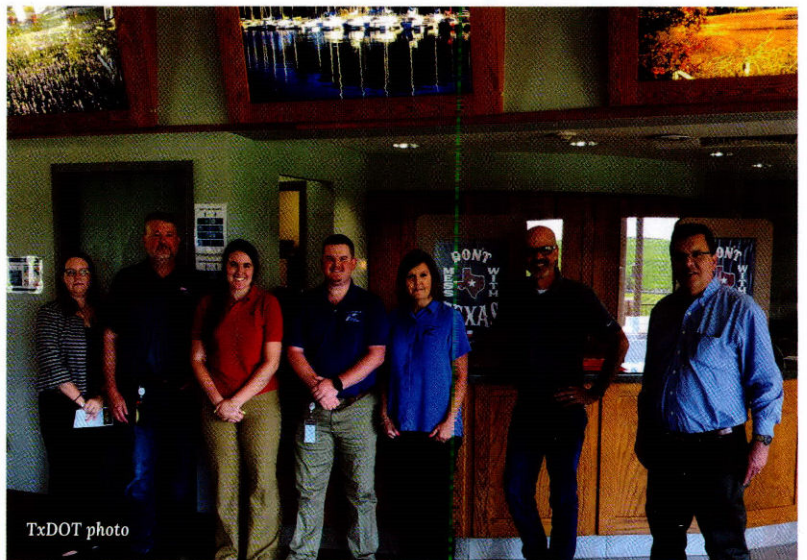
Williams with Julia Halfora, a 49-year veteran of TxDOT from the Dallas District.

Since taking the helm of TxDOT at the beginning of June, Executive Director Marc Williams has been traveling across the state to see firsthand how TxDOT is fulfilling its mission of Connecting You With Texas. From Lufkin to Wichita Falls to San Angelo, Williams met in June with frontline employees, district and division leadership, and others while sharing his vision for the future of TxDOT. Here are just a few highlights from his visits. See more pictures on TN+. ■

TxDOT photo



Williams with employees of the San Angelo District.



TxDOT photo

Williams visited the team at the Gainesville Travel Information Center in the Wichita Falls District. They do a great job welcoming and assisting travelers coming to Texas.



TxDOT photo

Williams chatted with Waco Director of Operations Jacob Chau about work in the district.



TxDOT photo

Williams shares a laugh with Striping Coordinator Randy Shelton (center) and Wichita Falls District Engineer Mike Beaver (right).



TxDOT photo

Lufkin District Engineer Kelly Morris showed Williams around an historic building built in 1935 that once served as the Lufkin District Office. The building is currently used as the Lufkin Area Office.



TxDOT photo

Williams and employees from the Dallas District at the site of the \$301 million Irving Interchange project, a Texas Clear Lanes project that kicked off earlier this year.

ROWDY THE SERVICE DOG MAKES AN IMPACT



October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month, a time to celebrate the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities. For Sabrina Bateman, training specialist with the Human Resources Division, her most trusted work partner is Rowdy, a service dog trained to help her manage her disability.

Bateman joined TxDOT in 2019 after spending 15 years in the Coast Guard and working at FEMA's Emergency Management Institute in Maryland. Coming to TxDOT meant a return home for Bateman, who is from Floresville, TX.

Bateman taught at the United States Coast Guard Academy during her service and brings a wealth of experience to the Human Resources Division's training program. However, she also deals with hearing loss, Post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD, and difficulty with memory and tremors.

"It's an invisible disability," said Bateman. "People wouldn't know by looking at me that I had any issues."

Bateman decided to pursue getting a service dog to help her and began volunteering with an organization that trains puppies to be service dogs. That's how she met Rowdy.

Rowdy is a five-year-old Goldendoodle born in West Virginia. Bateman helped puppy raise him and assisted with his training.

"When it came time to place him with a human partner, Rowdy decided to stay with me," said Bateman. "I got him officially in 2018."

Service dogs undergo intensive, specialized training that takes about two years. They are tested for emotions, sensitivity and unacceptable behaviors. They can be trained as guide dogs, medical alert dogs and psychiatric service dogs. Not every dog that enters the program will make the cut, either.

The people who get service dogs go through intensive training as well. They learn how to handle the dogs in varied situations and the rules and regulations that apply to having a service dog. A client will meet several dogs, but the dog picks the person. The trainer closely observes how the dogs react to make a good match.



Rowdy the service dog and Sabrina Bateman with the Human Resources Division make a great team.

Rowdy is very much Bateman's partner. He goes to the office with her and travels to the districts when she teaches classes. He's trained to remind her to take medications that she struggles to remember because of her condition.

"He'll bug me and bug me until I take it," she said. "He knows what the medication smells like and he won't stop until he smells it in my hand."

Rowdy helps Bateman with her hearing loss by alerting her to alarms when she is not wearing her hearing aids. Rowdy is also attuned to her body cues and physical patterns so he can alert her to psychological events before they get too advanced.

"He'll pick up on my heartrate, breathing and vocal patterns that let him know I'm getting overwhelmed, stressed or lightheaded," she said. "He knows what's happening with me before I do, and he'll put pressure on different parts of my body to distract me. When he does that, I know to stop and pay attention. It's amazing what he does."

Rowdy is also a hit with other TxDOT employees when Bateman visits the districts.

"People are charmed by him," she said. "They remember him more than they remember me. I've even had students in my public speaking classes say that he helps them overcome their stage fright. He's not just affecting my life; he's affecting a lot of people's lives."

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, a service dog is a reasonable accommodation for employment and Bateman found getting approval for Rowdy at TxDOT to be an easy process.

"Rowdy helps me manage my disability, but he also makes people aware of it and that can be difficult sometimes," said Bateman. "It is so important that we treat each other with respect and never make assumptions. Sometimes just a little accommodation is all a person needs to be an incredible asset in the workplace." ■

TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE RECOGNIZES AMARILLO DISTRICT MAINTENANCE SECTION



Canyon Maintenance Section Supervisor Devin White (left) and Palo Duro Canyon State Park Superintendent Joseph Allen. The Canyon Maintenance Section was awarded the Stars in Our Parks award for helping keep roads clear in Palo Duro Canyon State Park.



In mid-May, the Canyon Maintenance Section helped remove a rockslide that was blocking a roadway in Palo Duro Canyon State Park.

His name may be on the plaque, but the honor and recognition are really a reflection of the entire Canyon Maintenance Section in the eyes of Maintenance Section Supervisor Devin White. White was recently presented with a Stars in Our Parks Award by the Palo Duro Canyon State Park. The award program recognizes staff and volunteers across Texas who go above and beyond in their volunteerism and work ethics while caring for state parks.

Palo Duro Canyon is one of the busiest state parks and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is always looking to grow relationships and add to their partnerships to properly care for the park.

“One of these amazing partnerships is with our local TxDOT maintenance crew, led by Devin White,” said Park Superintendent Joseph Allen. “Devin started at the Canyon office about the same time I did several years ago, and he and I have been working together ever since to make sure visitors, volunteers and staff can travel to and through the park safely.”

At the start of COVID-19 restrictions, the Canyon Maintenance Section provided a digital message board at a major intersection in the park that provided visitors with information about COVID precautions. They also provided park staff with rock to fill in holes in areas like the Lighthouse parking lot and Soapberry Day Use Area. Crews can also be found regularly removing silt from flooded roadways after heavy rains. One of those rains occurred this past May.

“They came to the rescue with heavy equipment to remove the rockslide that was blocking much of the width of the road to the bottom,” Allen said. “The crew removed the debris and had traffic flowing again before lunchtime.”

From removing dirt and silt that washes onto the roadway to removing rocks that are sometimes bigger than the dump trucks, White says his crews respond to a variety of weather-related issues in Palo Duro Canyon.

“This past March, a tornado blew through, going right over the top of the Canyon,” White said. “We set up traffic control to help with shutting down the park due to the gate being demolished by the tornado.”

Devin added that his crews work closely with the park, scheduling routine maintenance during times less likely to affect a large number of tourists.

“We are lucky to have TxDOT as partners to keep the roads open and traffic flowing safely,” Allen said. “I was lucky enough to be able to present Devin with a Stars in Our Parks Award for service to state parks.” ■

NEW SYSTEM rates load capacity for bridges



The CIV system cameras are operated by a laptop computer. The system can measure the load-capacity of a bridge with great accuracy.

TxDOT's Bridge Division recently began using an easy, fast way to measure load carrying capacity for bridges that will save time and money. The new system was recognized by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials earlier this year with an AASHTO High Value Research - Sweet Sixteen Projects Awards for 2021.

Developed as part of a TxDOT research project at the University of Texas at San Antonio, the new technology uses specialized digital cameras, targets and software to compare digital images to help determine a more accurate load carrying capacity for existing bridges. Roughly 2,400 bridges in Texas have a load restriction

for vehicle weight. Load restrictions can affect the flow of goods and services in the state. In some cases, more accurate load carrying capacity calculations can make load restrictions unnecessary.

The UTSA research team leveraged emerging Digital Image Correlation, or DIC, technology to deliver a uniquely capable system, dubbed the Civil Infrastructure Vision system. This system uses principles of DIC and spatial triangulation to monitor surface deformations on large-scale field structures such as bridges. Measured deformations of in-service bridges are then used to back-calculate the load carrying capacity of a bridge and refine the load rating.

The CIV system consists of two high-resolution, low-noise digital cameras operated by a laptop computer using special software. It can track the 3D spatial movement of as many targets on the surface of a bridge as desired. In this way, measurements can be made for any point on the surface of a structure that is in view.

Targets are selected as sub-images within the images captured by the cameras. The powerful system requires only minimal contrasting features on surfaces to reliably track targets. High Contrast Physical Targets can also be attached to a surface to enhance tracking reliability and provide fixed points at key measurement locations. The system is accurate to almost 1/1,000th of an inch for large-volume bridge monitoring applications.

This unique system has several advantages over traditional methods:

- **Limited need for bridge access.** The system operates 40 to 110 feet away from a bridge and does not require direct access to the underside except to attach a target, which can be done in a matter of minutes. This feature makes deflection measurements on water-crossing bridges possible, while requiring minimum lane closures below a bridge for instrumentation.
- **Ease of use and fast load testing.** Setting up the cameras and selecting targets can be done in an hour with in-house personnel, meaning a bridge load test can be performed in as little as 2 hours.
- **Cost savings.** By shortening the duration of load testing, eliminating the need in many cases for scaffolding to install instruments and allowing in-house load testing, the new system cuts the cost of structural load testing and capacity assessment to a fraction of the cost of traditional means and methods.
- **Improved safety.** The CIV system improves safety for the driving public by eliminating many lane closures. In addition, safety is improved for highway workers with reduced exposure to traffic and working at heights.

TxDOT received a fully operational CIV system in early 2021. It will conduct load testing on up to 10 bridges within the span of one year as part of an implementation project to train TxDOT personnel. ■



The system tracks the 3D spatial movement of targets placed on the surface of a bridge.

NEW VAN HELPS engineer get to project sites safely

Many TxDOT employees drive a state vehicle at least occasionally. The department's more than 4,000 people movers include work trucks, SUVs, vans and sedans to meet almost every need.

For Transportation Engineer Ben Cox in the Lubbock District, none of the department's vehicles were suitable for his needs until recently. Cox, who uses a wheelchair, needs a ramp and special controls to operate a vehicle. For most of his eight years with TxDOT, he used his personal vehicle to visit project sites for his design work.

He thought about requesting an accessible vehicle a few times, but he didn't pursue it until Director of Maintenance Mike Stroope contacted him about a year

ago to ask if he wanted a TxDOT vehicle he could use. Cox decided it was a good idea due to the mileage he was putting on his personal vehicle and the enhanced visibility a TxDOT vehicle provides.

The district contacted the Fleet Operations Division to make the request. After communicating with Cox about his needs, Fleet staff looked for an existing vehicle that could be modified, but they found that it would cost less to buy a new vehicle outfitted exactly for Cox. Staff asked Cox about the types of vehicles he has used, and they determined that a Toyota van would be the best choice.

"Retrofitting an existing vehicle can be more expensive because it is not designed for the customized components," said Jamie Goldspink, asset specification



A specialized van allows Ben Cox to visit project sites in a TxDOT vehicle: (l to r) Cox, with James Harger and Jeremy Kimbrell with the Lubbock Fleet Operations Division shop.



TxDOT photo

This Toyota van in the Lubbock District has been specially fitted to accommodate Transportation Engineer Ben Cox, who uses a wheelchair.

coordinator with the Fleet Operations Division. Also, upfitters won't modify vehicles past a certain age because they can't ensure the vehicle would still meet crash regulations.

Goldspink coordinated the vehicle purchasing process from start to finish, which required extensive communication with Cox, the district, the Human Resources Division, the Procurement Division and the vendor.

"At times I felt like I was bothering Ben by asking so many questions, but it's very important to communicate with the customer and with the vendor," Goldspink said. "We all have to be on the same page because it's customized equipment. Mistakes could be costly."

After getting estimates from a vendor on contract, Procurement staff issued a purchase order. The van arrived from the factory within a few weeks and was delivered to an upfitting facility in Beaumont. The upfitter worked with Cox to take measurements for customizations such as hand controls and a locking mechanism for his wheelchair. On the second visit, Cox took the van for a test drive. The upfitter then made final adjustments and shipped the van to Lubbock in June, where Fleet shop staff installed the light bar, decals and other safety equipment.

The van has several features that Cox especially likes. The ramp comes out of the floor by activating a switch, which gives the van a quieter ride than a fold-out ramp. In the event of an electrical failure, the ramp has a backup battery and a manual crank so he can always get out.

Having the standard safety features is also a huge benefit when he is parked on the roadside.

Cox also likes the flexibility of the van. It has enough space for him to drive teammates out to project sites or to sit in the back as a passenger with a standard seat installed for another driver.

"It's great that TxDOT was able to accommodate and allow me to get out into the field," he said.

He expects to use the new van weekly to look at sites for current and upcoming design projects, such as Lubbock's Lcop 88, which will create a six-lane freeway on the outskirts of the city. When construction begins in about a year, he will be able to take the van to see the progress. He says it's important to see the actual project site before the design phase and while construction is under way.

"Getting out in the field gives us the ability to be better engineers and better designers," Cox said.

When Cox was an engineer-in-training, he missed out on the typical field and lab work that most EITs experience. Having accessible transportation gives him a more complete experience as an engineer without limitations.

Goldspink, who previously acquired accessible vehicles for customers in the private sector, said it's a positive experience to help employees get the resources they need to do their best work.

"The end-user's reaction is always positive because they see it as an investment in them as an employee," he said. "It's always rewarding working with employees on projects like this." ■

Get back on track for better health

Many employees have delayed receiving preventative health care in the last year but now it's time to get back on track for better health. The Employee Wellness Program in the Human Resources Division and the Occupational Safety Division have partnered with the Employee Retirement System of Texas and Catapult Health to offer free and confidential preventative health screenings to eligible employees.

From October through December, new and improved preventative health screenings (previously known as biometric screenings) will be offered in each district and at division campuses in Austin. [COVID-19 may affect the scheduling of these screening services.]



The screenings have expanded from those in the past. New screenings include liver function tests and an A1C for those with diabetes, plus tests that cover physical and mental wellbeing.

Best of all, participants will have a private virtual consultation with a board-certified nurse practitioner who will review their results, personal health history and family health history. The nurse practitioner will also review their mental wellbeing and provide a personal action plan. Results can be sent directly to the participant's primary care physician.

Preventive screenings can provide insights about early disease risk so a person can take proactive steps to live a healthier life.

"You have to be able to measure your progress. I like to back up my activity and diet plan with data. I compare my results and watch for trends

You have to be able to measure your progress. I like to back up my activity and diet plan with data.

GONZALO PONCE
Program Manager

to see if my numbers change from year to year," said Gonzalo Ponce, program manager in the Public Transportation Division. "I delayed getting a checkup in 2020 so I'll get the screening done to see if I'm still on track."

Employees are eligible to participate in the screening if they are enrolled in a HealthSelect of Texas or Consumer Directed HealthSelect plan and must have a primary care provider on file prior to the appointment. Screening dates and times vary by location. Look for announcements in your area or talk to the Human Resources contact for your district or division.

Take advantage of this convenient opportunity to get back on track for better health.

For more information, visit the Human Resources Division Wellness website. ■

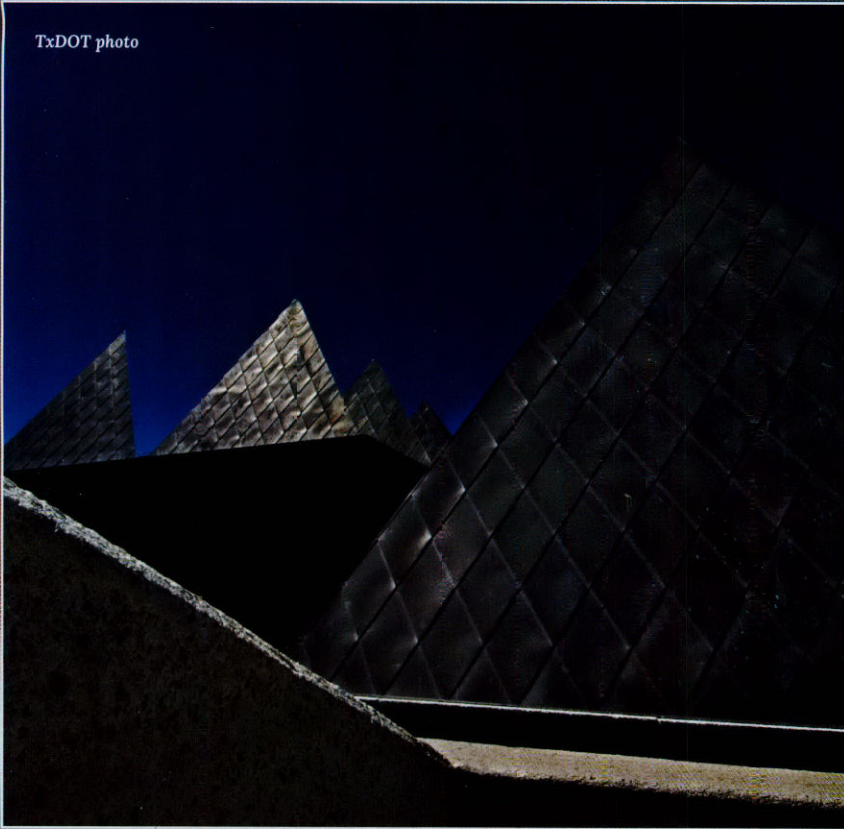


Contact your local Wellness Program Coordinator to learn about the wellness program and start your journey today!

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 Sept. 20.

TxDOT photo



Identified:

Congratulations to our first identifier Lyndol Irby (TRV).

Last edition's photo featured the Denison Travel Information Center in Denison in the Paris District.

Others identifying the photo were Meredith Worthen (ENV), Chris Cowen (SJT) and Joseph Hagler (LFK). ■

TxDOT photo



UPCOMING TxDOT EVENTS

Sept. 6

LABOR DAY

(Agency Closed)

Sept. 7-8

ROSH HASHANAH

(Optional Holiday)

Sept. 16

YOM KIPPUR

(Optional Holiday)

Sept. 30

**TEXAS TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION MEETING**

(Austin)

Oct. 28

**TEXAS TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION MEETING**

(Austin)

FEDERAL GRANT BENEFITS I-35 RED RIVER PROJECT IN WICHITA FALLS

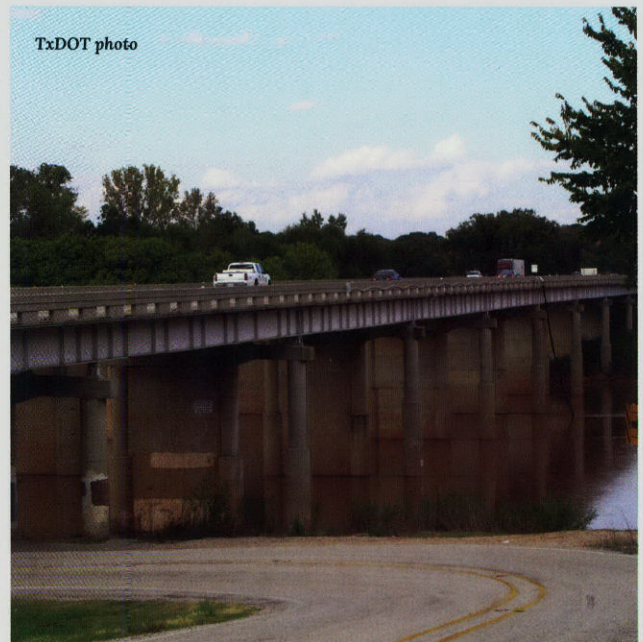
The Wichita Falls District recently received a \$50 million federal grant to support the \$280 million widening and reconstruction of two I-35 Red River bridges.

The bridges are part of planned improvements to the 7.42-mile Texoma Segment of I-35 across Texas, Oklahoma and the Chickasaw Nation.

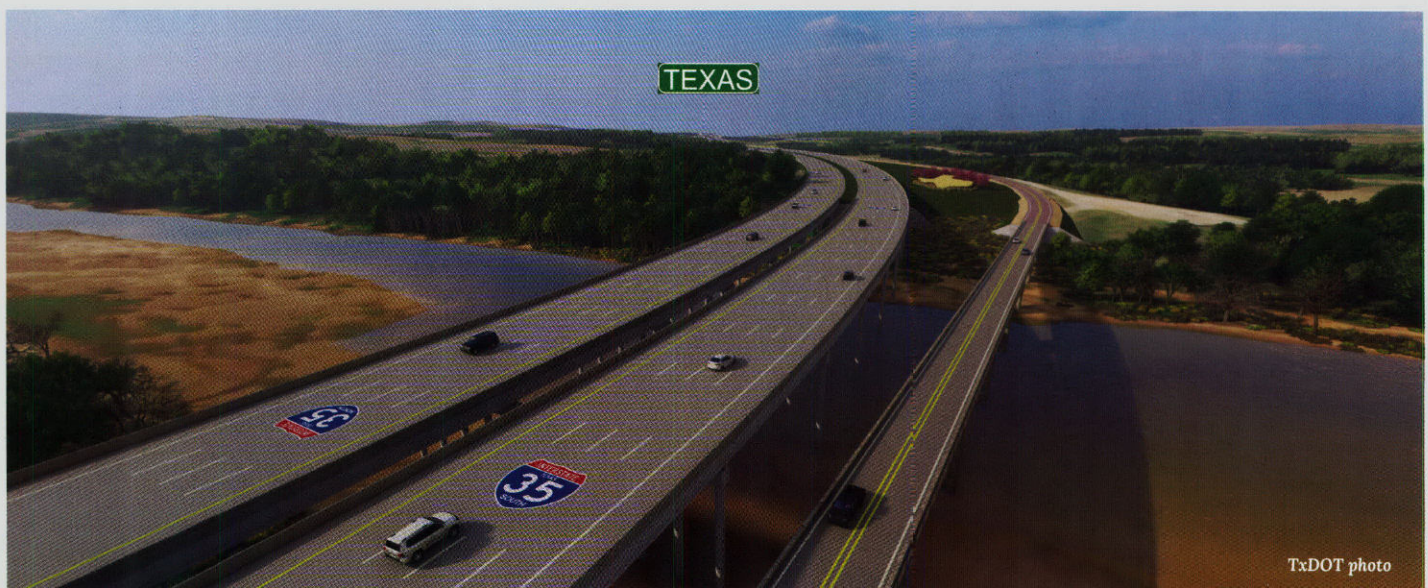
TxDOT applied for the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America grant to help finance the widening of I-35 with two new 12-foot travel lanes and 10-foot shoulders for a six-lane cross section. Plans for the Texoma Segment call for an eight-lane cross section.

The construction will replace both the I-35 northbound and southbound bridges over the Red River with higher and wider spans and convert an interchange to have I-35 go over FM 1202.

In addition, TxDOT plans to modernize the corridor design to flatten curves, convert two-way frontage roads to one-way frontage roads near Gainesville and the Red River bridges and install intelligent transportation system improvements, including dynamic message signs.



The Wichita Falls District recently received a \$50 million federal grant for reconstruction of two I-35 Red River bridge.



Artist rendering of the planned new I-35 bridges over the Red River in the Wichita Falls.

Amanda Allen

FORT WORTH DISTRICT

Amanda Allen

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROJECTS COORDINATOR

Amanda Allen, local government projects coordinator with the Transportation Programs Division, has been with TxDOT since 2007 and works in the Fort Worth District. She is a graduate of LeTourneau University in Longview. In her role at TxDOT, she supports districts and local governments as they complete federal-aid transportation projects. She is also passionate about professional development and is active in the TxDOT Instructor Certification Program, serving as an instructor and a member of the board of directors. Allen and her husband Brian have two children and a menagerie of pets. They enjoy outdoor activities like fishing and hiking. Allen is also an avid *Star Wars* fan.



If you were to make the U.S. Olympic Team, would you compete in gymnastics, track and field or swimming?

Since this is a dream world, I'd have to go with rhythmic gymnastics. I practiced ballet for about 10 years as a kid and I remember loving the gymnasts with their ribbons swirling around. It is so magical.

You're the lead singer. Which band is supporting you?

Probably One Republic. I absolutely love Ryan Tedder's songwriting, but the whole band is so musically talented. They all play multiple instruments, including the viola and cello. I feel like they can play any style of music and make it sound amazing.

Choose your vacation trip: Yellowstone National Park, the Grand Canyon or Mount Rushmore?

I have to go with the Grand Canyon. I went there when I was 12. Something so immense occurring in nature is breathtaking. The grandeur of it changes your perspective. We're so small in comparison. It makes you wonder why you'd spend any time at all frustrated about things that, in the grand scheme of it all, feel so insignificant. It's powerful and beautiful.

Name your favorite *Star Wars* character.

I can't! There are too many that I love! But Jyn Erso from *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* is smart, strong and independent. She is also selfless and brave. She succeeds when everything feels impossible and she inspires others.

You're about to take the stage. What act do you want to follow: Jim Carrey, Eddie Murphy or Steve Harvey?

Ali Wong. She's someone that has life experiences that I completely identify with and makes jokes about it on stage without apologizing. She's hilarious and I love her.

It's pizza night: Pizza Hut, Little Caesars or Mr. Gatti's?

I'd pick a local place. I love local dives and giving my money to small business owners instead of corporate big shots. Plus, they are almost always more delicious!

To eat Spam or not eat Spam, that is the question.

Growing up, my family had Spam a lot because it was cheap. But my mother is an excellent cook and can make anything taste good. She would slice it, coat it in some seasoned flour and pan fry it. My kids love it when she chops it up and pan fries it a little before adding it to mac and cheese.

Ride a bull or run with the bulls?

I am in no way a daredevil, so I would politely decline. Both options would prove fatal. I choose life.

C-3PO or R2-D2 from *Star Wars*? Why?

R2-D2 because he's solutions minded! He never backs down from a fight, and he comes up with ways to fix things. He doesn't just wait to be told what to do. He gets in there and does his best to be helpful. ■

All Across TxDOT

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

AUSTIN DISTRICT

Austin District breaks ground on long-awaited Oak Hill Parkway Project

With the turn of shovels, the Austin District officially began construction on the Oak Hill Parkway project in July. Decades in the making, the Oak Hill Parkway project will accommodate current and future growth in Austin by adding lanes for drivers traveling through Oak Hill, as well as frontage roads for local traffic. The project will also remove traffic signals on the mainlanes and construct flyovers between U.S. 290 and SH 71.

“It’s taken more than 30 years of planning. Thirty years of discussing and talking about a traffic solution for this area,” said Texas Transportation Chairman J. Bruce Bugg Jr. “We’re here today because it’s time to stop planning to do. It’s time to do.”

At U.S. 290 and William Cannon Drive, traffic volume has increased by nearly 50% since 1990. The Oak Hill Parkway project will also include 15 miles of paths for bicyclists and pedestrians.

“During the decades of project planning, TxDOT listened to the community and implemented input where feasible,” said TxDOT Austin District Engineer Tucker Ferguson. “As a result, this community-focused design addresses the mobility and safety needs along with community values.”

The \$674 million non-tolled Texas Clear Lanes project is expected to complete in early 2026, weather permitting. The design-build contractor is Colorado River Constructors. ■



TxDOT photo

The Austin District officially began construction on the Oak Hill Parkway project in July.

FORT WORTH DISTRICT

I-635/SH 121 celebrates virtual ribbon cutting in Fort Worth District

In August, the Fort Worth District celebrated the completion of the I-635/SH 121 Interchange with a virtual ribbon cutting. Part of the DFW Connector, the \$370 million project reconstructed and widened SH 121 north of DFW Airport to accommodate a new interchange and direct connectors at SH 26 and FM 2499. “Because of this project, travel times should be reduced, and drivers should save more time on these roads,” said Texas Transportation Chairman J. Bruce Bugg Jr.

Improvements include added auxiliary lanes that move merging vehicles out of the SH 121 mainlanes to minimize weaving and eliminate bottlenecks.

“This project has enhanced safety and mobility, and will be an economic generator for our region,” said Fort Worth District Engineer Carl Johnson.

Completed six months ahead of schedule, the three-mile project was funded through the Texas Clear Lanes program to address congestion relief. ■



TxDOT photo

In August, the Fort Worth District celebrated the completion of the I-635/SH 121 Interchange.

Conservation agreement is great news for monarch butterflies

TxDOT is enrolling 1.238 million acres of land, consisting of 73,038 center lane miles of highways and interstates, in the historic nationwide Monarch Butterfly Candidate Conservation Agreement for Energy and Transportation Lands administered by the University of Illinois-Chicago with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Nearly 450,000 acres are being adopted in the agreement, which encourages transportation and energy partners to participate in monarch conservation by providing and maintaining habitat on millions of acres of rights-of-way and associated lands.

Texas is an important monarch migration site. The colorful pollinators visit each spring on their journey north to breed and every fall as they flutter to their southern overwintering areas in Mexico.

Conserving healthy habitat and plentiful milkweed plants supports monarchs and other native pollinators and can help reverse recent declines in monarch populations. ■



SAN ANTONIO DISTRICT

San Antonio District breaks ground on Loop 1604 expansion project

The San Antonio District broke ground on the Loop 1604 North expansion project in July, marking the formal start of construction efforts to alleviate congestion on San Antonio's outer loop.

The expansion work is a Texas Clear Lanes project aimed at increasing mobility and safety and reducing congestion on the state's most congested corridors.

Five segments of Loop 1604 are slated for construction under the plan.

"The Loop 1604 North Expansion is part of TxDOT's historic \$7.2 billion plan for upcoming and ongoing road projects to take care of future growth in the San Antonio area," said Texas Transportation Commission Chairman J. Bruce Bugg Jr.

Improvements include expanding Loop 1604 from four lanes to 10 lanes including one high-occupancy lane in each direction. The entrance and exit ramps will be reconfigured and the cloverleaf interchange at I-10 and Loop 1604 will be replaced with a five-level direct connect interchange.

There will also be accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians along with water quality protection.

Once fully complete, the project is expected to relieve congestion and improve traffic flow. It will also increase capacity with more lanes, including high occupancy vehicle lanes, and create a fully directional five-level interchange at I-10 and Loop 1604.

Segment 1 of the project began construction in May and is expected to be completed in 2024. ■



Texas Transportation Commission Chairman Bruce Bugg Jr. (fourth from left) kicked off construction on Segment 1 of the Loop 1604 North Expansion.

Johnson is new director of Toll Operations Division

In June, Tracey Johnson became the new director of the Toll Operations Division. Johnson comes to TxDOT from the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority and has spent more than 15 years in tolling operations. She values teamwork and transparency to ensure a collaborative organization and has a Doctor of Business Administration in leadership. ■

Horst is new district engineer for Yoakum

In June, Martin Horst was named the new district engineer for the Yoakum District. He will oversee the planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance of the transportation system for the eleven-county district. Horst started with TxDOT in 1986 in the Corpus Christi District and joined the Construction Division in 1993. He has also worked in the El Paso District and was most recently deputy district engineer in the Corpus Christi District. Horst and his wife Laurie have two children. ■

PeopleSoft has new look and functionality

In July, the Information Technology Division unveiled an upgrade to the PeopleSoft application that united the separate modules into one application and made it available on TxDOT-issued mobile devices. ■

Texas Transportation Commission approved most funding ever for transit

With help from federal COVID-19 relief funding, the Texas Transportation Commission approved \$89 million in transit funding in June. It's the largest amount of funding at one time for transit agencies across the state. This funding supports equitable, reliable transit services that are an essential part of life for many people across Texas. ■

— PANDEMIC DOESN'T STOP — ESPRIT DE CORPS IN TRAFFIC SAFETY

When the pandemic forced employees with the Traffic Safety Division into full-time teleworking last year, the Behavioral Traffic Safety Section rose to the challenge and created the BTS Development Group, known as the BTSDG, to keep the team connected and learning while working from home.

Luckily, as a team with members in every district, section employees were already proficient in using technology to connect virtually. BTSDG developed a variety of virtual offerings. They held meetups called Catalyst Cafes to share program knowledge, experience and strategies. Program Manager Showcases highlighted statewide program areas and projects. More structured training sessions strengthened knowledge of program policy and processes.

Since its formation, BTSDG has offered 45 Catalyst Cafes, nine Program Manager Showcases, 12 program trainings and two panel discussions. In addition, the group focused their efforts on two important Traffic Safety Division events. First, they brought some holiday magic to the division's holiday celebration in December. Then at the Virtual Safety Meeting last spring, the group collaborated with the division's safety points of contact to present the game show Jeopardy with a safety focus.



The BTSDG brought the fun to the Traffic Safety Division's holiday celebration last year.

As a team of TxDOT certified instructors, the BTSDG is also able to support the TxDOT training team by offering trainings for the state. Original members were Karen Peoples, Freddie Summer, Jolie Person, Monica Yates and Nicole Tyler. LaViza Matthews and Jessica Son joined the BTS Development Group earlier this year. ■

CORKSCREW BRIDGE HAS RIBBON CUTTING IN YOAKUM DISTRICT

The Yoakum District held a ribbon cutting in July for the \$43 million FM 457 Sargent "Corkscrew" Bridge which replaces one of the last swing bridges in Texas. The new bridge has been open to traffic since April. Construction began in 2018.

The bridge will provide safety and mobility to the community of Sargent and the many visitors to the area. ■



The Sargent "Corkscrew" Bridge opened to traffic in April. Photo courtesy of Brian Gaskamp.



The Yoakum District held a ribbon cutting in July for the Sargent "Corkscrew" Bridge.

FIRST WOW AWARD recognizes outstanding women at TxDOT



In June, the Women at TxDOT Employee Resource Group presented its inaugural WOW Award to Mildred Litchfield in the Transportation Planning and Programming Division.

In June, the Women at TxDOT Employee Resource Group awarded its inaugural Wanted: Outstanding Women, or WOW, award to Mildred Litchfield. The award recognizes and honors recipients for one of the following categories: Leadership, empowerment, mentoring, sustained excellence, creativity, customer service or safety.

Litchfield is the Unified Transportation Program/Portfolio performance director for the Transportation Planning and Programming Division. She oversees programming and activities in support of the UTP, which is TxDOT's 10-year plan that guides the development of thousands of roadway projects for Texas.

She is also responsible for managing the statewide portfolio of planned construction projects ensuring a balance in planning, development and fiscal constraint. She is responsible for providing districts with support and resources to deliver the right projects on time and on budget. She joined the department in 2012.

Litchfield provides direct consultation to the executive director, members of TxDOT's Administration team as well as the Texas Transportation Commission.

As a director, she empowers her staff with leadership opportunities and provides a supportive framework that fosters innovation. She constantly strives to connect people and information through her work. She is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin.

Honorable mentions went to two women from the Traffic Safety Division. Irene Webster is a transportation funding specialist and Tracie Mendez is the Behavioral Traffic Safety Branch supervisor.

The next WOW Award winner is scheduled to be announced in September. The award is open to women employees who have been at TxDOT more than a year.

For more information about the award, email OutstandingWoman@txdot.gov. For more information on the Women at TxDOT ERG or to become a member please visit the Employee Resource Group page on Crossroads. ■

MILESTONES

JULY SERVICE AWARDS

ABILENE

- 25 Scott E. Darrow
- 20 Jerry F. Houghton

ADMINISTRATION

- 5 Laura R. Heizer

AMARILLO

- 40 Alvin Kabetzke
- 15 Aaron C. Johnson
- 10 Mark Hubert

ATLANTA

- 15 Adrian D. Williams
- 10 John M. Stewart
- 5 Juan C. Gomez

AUSTIN

- 20 Michael M. Caddell
- 10 Lance A. Richter
- 5 Brady Schroeder

AVIATION

- 10 Eric W. Blanton

BEAUMONT

- 25 David G. Rebert
- 15 Paul A. Brown
- Joe A. Mendoza

BRIDGE

- 15 Courtney E. Holle

BRYAN

- 40 Donald Mikolajewski
- 35 Henry Schroeder
- 15 Craig A. Haley
- 10 Jason Lange
- Jason R. Martin
- Bruce L. Stulting

COMMUNICATIONS

- 30 Phyllis R. Chandler-Gordon

DALLAS

- 20 Michael K. Mosley
- 15 Kisha Fears
- Rhonda R. Maddox

DESIGN

- 15 Edoardo Espinoza
- 10 Stephen A. Zack

EL PASO

- 20 Victor E. Garcia

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

- 15 Larry D. Nuckels Jr.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- 10 Therese L. Ludes-Meyers
- Tanya L. Michel
- Debra D. Nuckols
- 5 Roopa Yarlagadda

FLEET OPERATIONS

- 20 Tony J. Dillon
- 15 Marlon G. Pustka
- 10 Lawrence W. Barnett

FORT WORTH

- 15 Richard Armendariz
- 10 Heather D. Collie
- Kimberly A. Umanos

HOUSTON

- 25 Martin L. Anders
- Subreana J. Bach
- King Yuen
- 20 James R. Keener
- Jonathan P. Ryza
- 15 William G. Barton
- Lynn F. Champagne
- Colan D. Dishman
- Yongqian Lin
- Vonceia Pearce-Reece
- Mohammed Zubair
- 10 Leonardo V. Gonzalez
- Myat Thinn
- 5 Prasanna R. Chebbi

HUMAN RESOURCES

- 30 Jennifer L. Pennington
- 25 Angela L. Carrizales
- 10 Barbara A. Raines-Evard
- 5 Rebecca C. Soliz

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- 15 Michael D. Adams

LAREDO

- 15 Anthony S. Aldaco

LUBBOCK

- 35 Shi Dotson
- Stevan Perez
- 10 Roel Robledo

LUFKIN

- 15 Stephen R. Thornton
- 10 John R. Mathews

MARITIME

- 25 Stephanie M. Cribbs

MATERIALS AND TESTS

- 20 Claudia A. Izzo
- 10 Charles T. Schwarz

ODESSA

- 40 Robert R. Martinez
- 25 Ricardo C. Betancourt
- Noel C. Ramirez
- 10 Elizabeth A. Deitch

PARIS

- 20 Willie Bolden II
- 15 Tommy L. Henderson
- 10 Ustorjio Cortez
- Charles C. Fletcher
- Mike E. Lappin
- James V. Smith

PHARR

- 25 Gerardo Vallejo
- 20 Ismae I. Contreras
- 15 Jose A. Serrato

PROJECT FINANCE, DEBT AND STRATEGIC CONTRACTS

- 15 Jennifer L. Wright

RIGHT OF WAY

- 15 Charon L. Williams

SAN ANGELO

- 25 Diane M. Burnett
- 20 Raymon C. Cedillo

SAN ANTONIO

- 35 David R. Scheel
- 25 Robert B. Hartmann
- Veronica Saavedra
- 20 Ryan F. Dreibrodt
- Javier C. Rodriguez
- 20 William J. Thomas
- 15 Miguel V. Hernandez Jr.
- Clayton T. McCulloch
- 10 Jose M. Carrillo
- Jacob A. Lutz
- 5 Cody Lemmons

SUPPORT SERVICES

- 25 John P. Hummell

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING

- 30 Jennifer L. Bierman

TRAVEL

- 10 Allen W. Phillips

TYLER

- 20 Paul C. Burnett
- 15 Iris B. Brown
- 10 Joyce J. Callahan
- Michael Cochran
- Michael T. Matlock
- Mark A. Smith

WACO

- 25 Craig Reavis
- 25 Dale M. Sinkule
- 20 Donna K. Smith

WICHITA FALLS

- 15 Christopher L. Peters

YOAKUM

- 35 Tommy D. Parr
- 15 Kimberly R. Macek
- 10 Adam L. Gomez Jr.
- Justin L. Pekar

AUGUST SERVICE AWARDS



ABILENE

- 15 Cody M. Jones
- 10 Jim W. Vaughn

AMARILLO

- 45 Charles E. Smith
- 20 Bernardo G. Ferrel
- 15 Diego Ruiz
- 10 Anthony Mora
- Michael W. Turner

ATLANTA

- 20 Dana C. Moore
- 15 Michelle G. Hall

AUSTIN

- 20 Anson K. Haynes
- 10 Harold L. Ferguson Jr.
- Brandon W. Kruse
- Sonia A. Mercado
- Rodney B. Persall

AVIATION

- 30 Stephanie A. Kleiber

BEAUMONT

- 15 Renwick Z. Byerly Sr.
- Darrin D. Lee
- Ronald A. Willmon
- 5 Marty Thompson

BRIDGE

- 15 Debra A. Lyon

BROWNWOOD

- 20 Dale B. Spurlen
- 5 Blake G. Stemberge

BRYAN

- 35 John D. Kempenski
- 10 Johnny W. Jackson
- Everett W. James
- Jace M. Lee
- Rhonda M. Willis

CHILDRESS

- 20 Jerry R. Jones
- 15 Randy L. Crump

CORPUS CHRISTI

- 15 Paul J. Alvarez
- Joseph Briones
- Juan G. Delarosa
- 10 Esgar O. Guerrero

DALLAS

- 30 Lynn E. McKinney

25 Azeemuddin Husain

- 15 William C. Dodson
- Brian A. Richards
- Zina White

DESIGN

- 20 Christopher G. Lindsey

EL PASO

- 25 Rudy Valdez
- 15 Luis Cleto
- 10 Higinio Salinas Jr.
- 5 Elva P. Ortiz-Enriquez

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- 10 Pamela A. Jongeling

FLEET OPERATIONS

- 20 Charles A. Pate
- 15 David A. Alvarado
- 10 Christopher T. Dickson
- Pablo Rubio

FORT WORTH

- 20 Kathryn L. Leatherwood
- 15 John J. Martin
- Juan M. Rodriguez
- Herman D. Tarin
- 10 Christopher J. Lanoue
- Jim B. McDonnell
- Ron O. Neal
- Matthew R. Robberson

HOUSTON

- 25 Dana D. Cote
- Lee H. Hamberry
- Osita O. Okoronkwo
- Boris Shurin
- Mark E. Thomson
- 15 Hungchieh Chou
- David M. Gilbert
- James E. Henske
- Marian R. Jamandre
- Sheila R. Rhodes
- Cynthia C. Rodriguez
- 10 Richard V. Turietta
- Krystal D. Wilson

HUMAN RESOURCES

- 5 Billie Simpson

LAREDO

- 20 Alberto Chavez Jr.
- 5 Gerardo Rangel

LUBBOCK

- 25 James C. Jackson
- 15 Clay W. McClellan
- 10 Daniel A. Cruz

LUFKIN

- 25 Javier Hernandez
- 10 Joseph C. Hagler
- 5 Kevin D. Lenox

MAINTENANCE

- 20 Stanley R. Hensley
- John E. Wirth

ODESSA

- 25 George R. Salcido
- 15 Miguel G. Gonzales
- 5 Jose Ramirez

PARIS

- 20 Cynthia E. Smith
- 15 Roddy J. Lord

PHARR

- 15 Maria A. Cottagama
- Antonio Limones
- Tomas D. Ochoa
- Domingo Rodriguez

PROCUREMENT

- 15 Vilma I. Pantlitz

RIGHT OF WAY

- 25 Daniel L. Erwin
- 20 Siamak Saeedi
- Kent S. Thayer
- Hazel M. Zepeda
- 15 Julia Borrego

SAN ANGELO

- 20 Ralph Gonzales
- Cathy C. Jinkins

SAN ANTONIO

- 25 Rodney D. Coursey
- 20 Eliza G. Reyna
- 15 Daniel A. Hinojosa
- 10 Derrick A. Charlton
- Duane A. Hofferichter
- Michael G. Hubertus
- Toby L. Keeling
- Sergio C. Martinez
- Raul G. Montoya

STRATEGIC PLANNING

- 10 Ezekiel A. Reyna

SUPPORT SERVICES

- 40 Carl W. Lundgren
- 20 Abel G. Davilla
- James D. Sprouse
- 15 Bradley H. Smith

TRAFFIC SAFETY

- 25 Sherri L. Robelia
- 20 Cecil M. Johnson
- 15 Derryk L. Blasig
- 5 Sedrick J. Montgomery

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING

- 25 Janie S. Temple

TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS

- 15 Danielle M. Johnson-Robinson

TRAVEL

- 10 Lyndol D. Irby II

TYLER

- 10 Robert S. Garza

WACO

- 25 Tony R. Love
- Charlie R. Phillips
- 15 Kenneth R. Hampton

YOAKUM

- 15 Ronald L. Gips
- 10 Jonathan W. Dudensing

MILESTONES

MAY RETIREE REPORT

ADMINISTRATION

33 James M. Bass

AMARILLO

26 Johnny J. Cordova

ATLANTA

33 Jay B. Green

23 Harold E. Naasz

AUSTIN

14 Elia Lopez

BEAUMONT

23 Billie J. Mays Jr.

17 Elvin D. Land

BRYAN

17 Dilip D. Goradia

CONTRACT SERVICES

5 Louis Ojeda

CORPUS CHRISTI

16 Rene Garcia Alvarado Jr.

DALLAS

36 Milton T. Marr

29 Tina G. Massey

14 Yachi Chen

EL PASO

28 Andres J. Pacheco

10 Mohammad Moabed

FLEET OPERATIONS

16 Jimmy P. Booth

FORT WORTH

17 Rebecca Soria

HOUSTON

31 Ronald M. Mueller

26 Mark D. Wooldridge

23 Teresa L. Hanson

HUMAN RESOURCES

8 Lisa R. Majors

LUBBOCK

25 Jose M. Garza

20 Rodolfo Gonzales Jr.

14 Zosimo Liban Agrimor

Pamela Kay Redman

LUFKIN

24 Daniel J. Holman

ODESSA

9 James P. Duncan

PEPS

27 Elizabeth F. Rice

PHARR

34 Basilio R. Aguilar

PROCUREMENT

3 Elise Dawn Wells

RIGHT OF WAY

14 Anna Lydia R. Benavides

SAN ANGELO

31 Douglas F. Roberts

7 Walter W. Gaston Jr.

SAN ANTONIO

25 Ronnie R. Barron

22 Brian C. Enloe

18 Marcus T. Carleton

TRAFFIC SAFETY

40 Terry A. Pence

TRANSPORTATION

PLANNING AND

PROGRAMMING

20 Faustino Martinez Jr.

TYLER

18 Michael Lackey

6 Sharon Holley

WACO

35 Terry P. Holt

21 Sharon L. Benson

JUNE RETIREE REPORT

AMARILLO

20 Chris L. Davis

BEAUMONT

20 Darlene L. Boles

BROWNWOOD

28 Rojelio H. Bonilla

27 Louis A. Coronado

CONSTRUCTION

36 Jorge R. Besa

DALLAS

30 Christopher D. Blain

26 Felicia R. Cortez

FORT WORTH

17 Jerry L. Sadberry

13 Donald R. Wonner

HOUSTON

34 Lucio F. Ortiz

32 Carlton J. Allen

29 Jim F. Teltschik

27 Anthony C. Mullins

10 David M. Martinez Sr.

HUMAN RESOURCES

4 Louise Armstrong

LUFKIN

22 Paul D. Lakey

MATERIALS AND TESTS

27 Carmen S. Iglehart

PHARR

23 Dagoberto Salinas

22 Jose L. Garcia

21 George M. Guadiana

20 Edelmiro Perez

14 Christoval Villarreal Jr.

RAIL

16 Randy Craig Caldwell

RIGHT OF WAY

25 Michael S. Powers

SAN ANGELO

23 Joe S. Gomez

20 Joe Rebelez Jr.

14 Troy A. Wellmann

SAN ANTONIO

36 Cary C. Lloyd

SUPPORT SERVICES

15 Larry W. O'Brien

TRAFFIC SAFETY

23 Haydee C. Cannon

TYLER

27 Michael Q. Parker

23 Sheryl S. McQuitty

WACO

29 Duane E. Biels

26 Jimmy L. Mullings

21 Thelma E. Nolen

YOAKUM

10 Larry Wayne Frick

IN MEMORIAM

AMARILLO

Michael Brown

General Transportation Technician

Date of Death: 7/11/2021

Years of Service: 23

Nadine Pope

Maintenance Support Technician

Date of Death: 08/10/2021

Years of Service: 9

DALLAS

Patricia Eifert

Transportation Specialist

Date of Death: 7/27/2021

Years of Service: 21

Aldric Ramsey

System Analyst

Date of Death: 8/01/2021

Years of Service: 1

HOUSTON

Mark Sinden

Transportation Engineer Specialist

Date of Death: 7/11/2021

Years of Service: 7

HUMAN RESOURCES

Charlene Shirley

Human Resources Specialist

Date of Death: 08/10/2021

Years of Service: 22

PRESERVING TEXAS PLANT SPECIES IN HOUSTON DISTRICT

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hile conducting field surveys along SH 225 at Beltway 8, environmental specialists Hollaway Environmental + Communication Services, consultants for the Harris County Toll Road Authority, identified the Indianola beakrush plant along TxDOT's right of way. The plant is designated as a species of greatest conservation need by Texas Parks and Wildlife. The plants were discovered within the footprint of the proposed construction of a project to add direct connectors to the highway.

The plant is a sedge that loves light and poorly drained soils. Wet prairie is its native habitat but the right of way along SH 225 and Beltway 8 became a substitute.

According to Texas Parks and Wildlife, Texas hosts over 1,300 species that are considered Species of Greatest Conservation Need. These are species with limited distributions and/or declining populations that lack legal protection.

While no action was required, Hollaway, TxDOT and the HCTRA wanted to go the extra mile to relocate some of the plants to the Houston Arboretum. After ensuring the



A cluster of Indianola beakrush plants was found in TxDOT's right of way and moved to the Houston Arboretum.

appropriate habitat was available at the facility, crews went out last May to collect and rehome the plants.

Hollaway, HCTRA and TxDOT staff worked together with the Houston Arboretum to collect a total of 27 specimens which will be protected and propagated at the Arboretum.

This was a great effort by everyone involved to help preserve this Texas species. ■

EMPLOYEES CHIME IN

What is a talent or skill you have that few people know about?

LAREDO DISTRICT



KAREN MARTINEZ
ENGINEERING ASSISTANT

"I come from a family with a long lineage of Escaramuzas, a Mexican national sport for women. Eight women ride side saddle on horseback in synchronized fashion performing various uniform and intricate formations on the dirt arena floor."

BRYAN DISTRICT



BRYAN DUBOIS
TRANSPORT ENGINEER TECHNICIAN

"When I was 14, my aunt handed me paints and brushes and said, 'Find something to paint on.' Ever since I've loved painting. When I lived in Hawaii for four years, I met some of the best painters who have influenced me."

CORPUS CHRISTI DISTRICT



TOD JOHNSON
TRANSPORTATION ENGINEER

"I have traveled across the country and around the world chasing large fish from a kayak, both inshore and on the open ocean."

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we can keep
Texas litter-free.

▶ dontmesswithtexas.org

Photo by Renee Dominguez