

What's Inside

If you have a gripe serious enough for the department to take action, you have new options in the official grievance process. **Page 2**

A department employee recently discovered a sister he never knew. Their joyous meeting is a tale to bring a tear to even the most jaded eye. **Page 8**

Two deaths sadden the transportation family: Edward Speer of the Fort Worth District was killed on the job Nov. 24, and Charles Simons, former commission chairman and supporter of good roads and aviation, died Dec. 25. **Page 11**

On our Covers

The blooms along Angelina County roadsides attracted attention from the Federal Highway Administration, which gave the Lufkin District an award for the wildflower seeding project. A Dallas District project and TxDOT's antilitter programs won national awards recently also, as recounted on **page 6**.

On our **inside cover**, project inspector Pat Pearson, left, Silsbee Area Engineer Edward Dominguez and Engineering Assistant Jason Parks review plans for an off-system bridge project in Hardin County. The three are on a temporary floating bridge that serves as a detour during construction.

TRANSPORTATION news

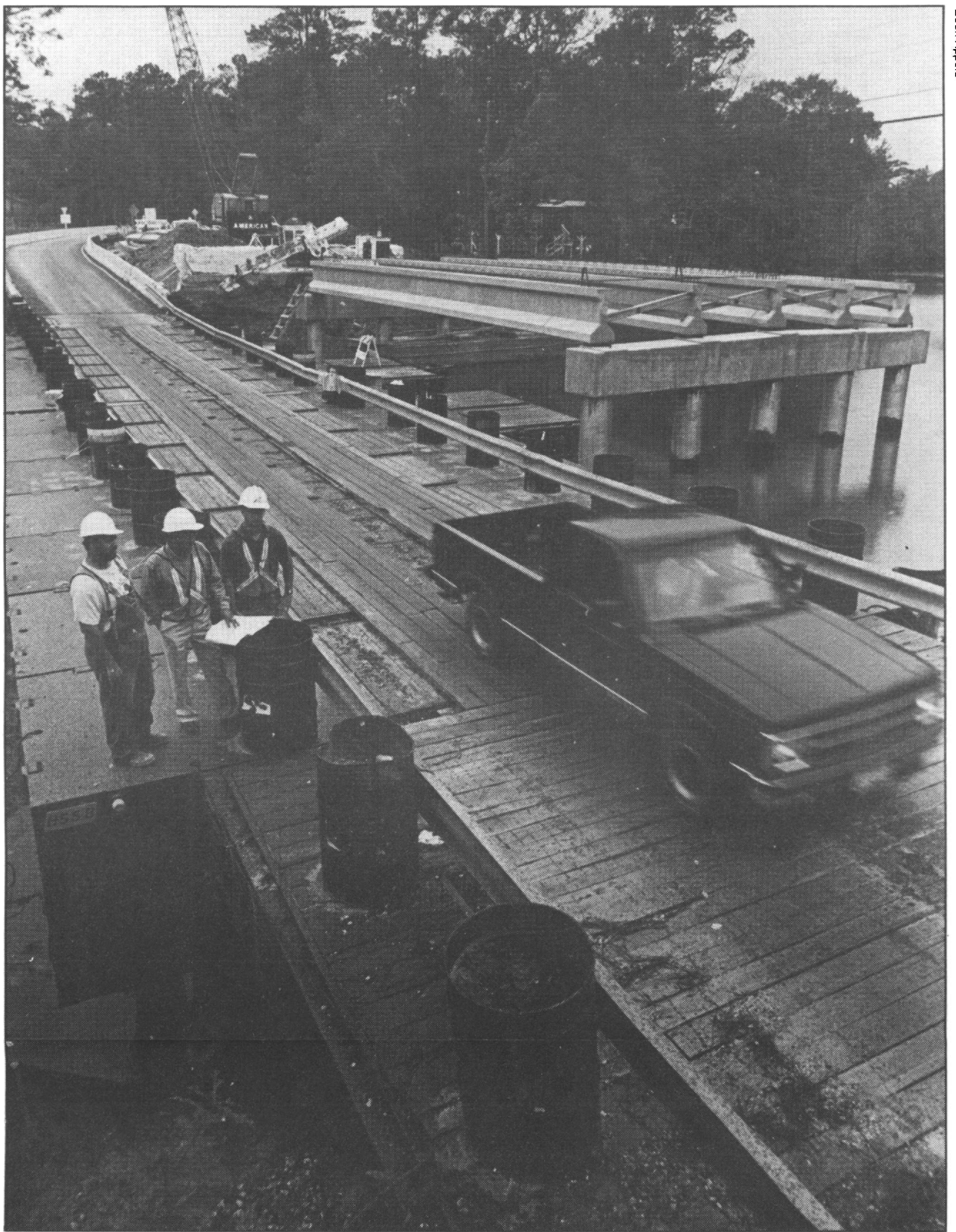
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Geoff Appold

Floating bridge over troubled waters aids rural motorists

A temporary floating bridge has brought relief to a small southeast Texas community.

For years, residents near Cooks Lake north of Beaumont have used a timber bridge to cross Village Slough. But flooding had damaged the bridge on Cooks Lake Road and prevented even school buses and fire trucks from crossing it.

"It had gotten to the point where the school bus would drop off kids on the west side, then they would walk across and another bus that was permanently placed on the east side across the slough would take them home," said Silsbee Area Engineer Edward Dominguez. "They also had to leave a fire truck on the east side of the bridge because it was dangerous to cross it."

Dominguez's office is supervising the replacement of the damaged bridge. But before the seven-month project could begin, a detour was needed for the nearly 2,000 vehicles that use the bridge daily. The road is the sole access to the community.

"The contractor recommended this Flexifloat bridge," said Dominguez. "They were able to install

it quicker and as cheaply as any other available solution, and it can handle any legal load."

In fact, Dominguez said a 200,000-pound crane was moved across the bridge during one phase of the construction.

"The sections are about 5 feet high," he said. "Under no-load conditions about 3-1/2 feet are above water. When we moved that crane, only about a foot showed."

The bridge is manufactured by a Houston company. It is made up of interlocking units and took about eight hours to install. The bridge spans 135 feet across Village Slough just above Pine Island Bayou.

If rain causes the slough to rise, the bridge will rise along with it. Cables anchor the bridge on each end and prevent it from being washed away.

"This floating bridge really saved the day on this project," said Dominguez. "There were a limited number of desirable and affordable alternatives and we are extremely satisfied with this one." ♦ **Roger Polson**



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Timed lights pay off big time

How about some good news to start the new year off right?

I'd say saving \$62 for every dollar invested in the Traffic Light Synchronization (TLS) Program is good news.

With funds allocated by the Governor's Energy Office for TLS, city and TxDOT staff retimed 2,243 signals in 44 Texas cities. The cost was \$7.9 million. The results were more than anyone expected.

As Commissioner Ray Stoker Jr. said, "No one loses with the TLS program. It saves time, money and fuel."

Fuel consumption went down 30 million gallons. Reduced delays added up to 43 million hours, or 5,000 years annually. The number of stops fell 1.7 billion. The total savings to Texans in reduced fuel, delay and stops will be about \$485 million in the next year alone. That's about \$62 for every dollar invested. Some cities saved even more.

Another benefit, one that department employees especially can appreciate, is that working together for the success of

From the Executive Director

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TLS reinforced partnerships among the cities, TxDOT and the governor's office.

TxDOT served as the administering agency for the TLS program, which was funded with oil-overcharge funds made of transportation-related programs to reduce energy consumption.

I hope we can continue to forge partnerships like this with all levels of government. TLS's success bodes well for a new year of cooperation and excellence. ♣



PDP programs get funding allocations from commission

At its December meeting, the commission allocated more than \$1 billion for 17 programs included in the department's Project Development Plan (PDP).

The PDP is a 10-year plan to guide and control the development of transportation projects.

The commission's action earmarks program funding for highway construction, rehabilitation and preventive maintenance; safety improvements; signs and pavement markers; and landscaping.

Specific projects for 1994 are not yet authorized and will be determined jointly by local highway officials and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs).

The commission must approve the projects, except for those in six areas: preventive maintenance, consolidated rehabilitation, traffic signals, landscaping, signs and pavement markings, and discretionary projects selected by a district engineer. Specific projects selected by MPOs and TxDOT will be included in a Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), scheduled for commission approval in August.

The allocations for each of the 17 transportation programs are:

Consolidated Rehabilitation	\$403,000,000
Highway Safety Improvement	12,000,000
Federal Railroad Signal	6,000,000
Railroad School Bus Signal	6,000,000
1996-1997 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality	225,000,000
1996 On-State-System Bridge	83,500,000
1996 Off-State-System Bridge	28,000,000
1995 Farm-to-Market Road	23,000,000
Railroad Grade Crossing	
Replanking	3,500,000
1996-1997 City-County Railroad Signal	1,500,000
Interstate Sign Improvement and Pavement Marking	10,000,000
Preventive Maintenance	145,000,000
Non-Interstate Freeway and Conventional Highway Signing and Pavement Marking	10,000,000
Traffic Signal	10,000,000
Safety Improvement	5,000,000
District Discretionary	50,000,000
Construction Landscape	7,000,000

♣ Ronda Baker

Procedures offer new options

Employees urged to bone up on revised complaints, appeals process

By Cheryl Converse
Staff writer

Arnold Oliver's newsletters rarely usher procedures into place.

But in his Nov. 12 newsletter, the department's executive director pointedly states the revised complaints and appeals procedures merit such treatment.

The revised procedures allow for due process of complaints by employees and by job applicants. It outlines the steps individuals must follow to file two general types of complaints: improper actions or treatments and discrimination or sexual harassment.

"This policy follows the department's basic precept of resolving matters at the lowest level of management," said Michele Bibby, co-author of the revised policy. "Now complaints are handled on two tracks. Complaints about sexual harassment or discrimination can be handled at the lowest level, but that's not mandatory anymore. Employees have several options," said Bibby, who is director of the Employment Opportunities Section, Division of Civil Rights.

Bibby and co-author Leslie Pool, policy development and communications officer for the Division of Human Resources, agree that the most significant changes in the revision are the new ways sexual harassment and discrimination complaints can enter the resolution process.

"There are many avenues for these complaints. We kept hearing that employees were frustrated because they had to go through their own work unit to file civil rights complaints," Bibby said. "Now they have an 'out clause.' They can still file complaints at that level, but they also have the opportunity for a trained civil rights compliance specialist outside the work unit, someone impartial, to conduct the investigation."

The impartial investigator is called the civil rights compliance specialist. The revised policy identifies compliance specialists and their responsibilities. Bibby said there are six regional specialists and two assigned to cover the Austin divisions. Beside their investigative roles, the compliance specialists will act as advisors to management.

The compliance specialists will determine whether there is cause for finding discrimination. Complainants, respondents and the responsible managers can now request an appeal for the findings. The appeal request is submitted to the director of the Division of Human Resources, who can schedule a hearing.

The previous policy was written in October 1991. It addressed complaints about improper actions, such as an employee not following the non-smoking policy, and discrimination issues based on the civil rights legislation.

"This is a new stance for the department. There is an emphasis that every employee know this process is in place and every one of us understand how it works," said Pool.

In his newsletter, Oliver said the revised procedures were born out of an attempt to rewrite the department's process for settling sexual harassment complaints.

He wrote, "This rewrite is sufficiently important that I asked that a copy of the procedure be sent to each and every one of you. It is not enough that the department has a viable way to handle concerns raised by its employees: All of you must know that it exists and be familiar with how it works."

A blue card was attached to the revised procedure. Each track for complaints is outlined on the card along with references to the page where the procedure is set forth. Each new employee will receive a copy of Oliver's newsletter and the blue card, and will be shown the procedures. ♣

Transitions

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Executive Director Arnold Oliver appointed the following to the 1993 Employees Advisory Committee for Austin divisions:

Terms expiring December 1993

Charlotte Campbell, Administration (Chair)
Tony Compton, Division of Automation (Vice-Chair)
Marjorie Hamby, Division of Right-of-Way (Blood Drive Coordinator)

Dana Honganen, Division of Bridges and Structures
Laurie Kincheon, Division of Materials and Tests
Dorn Smith, Division of Public Transportation

Terms expiring December 1994

Cynthia Carter, Division of Travel and Information
Carolyn Flores, Division of Equipment and Procurement
Mark Hodges, Division of Transportation Planning
Baldemar Maldonado, Division of Construction and Contract Administration
Rankin Smith, Division of Civil Rights

Earth Watch

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Partnerships pushed in war on pollution

'Clean Texas 2000' relies on government, business, citizens

By Karen LeFevre
Division of Environmental Affairs

Cleaning up the great state of Texas seems like a monumental feat, especially when you consider that Texans dump enough trash every two weeks to fill the Astrodome. But like a lot of other dark and dirty jobs, somebody's got to do it, and that means us.

Luckily, Gov. Ann Richards and the Texas Water Commission (TWC) have created a program to help citizens focus on recycling and reducing pollution and waste. They've also set a deadline just seven years away.

Because every Texan has a personal stake in the state's environment, the Clean Texas 2000 program is built around partnership. The public awareness campaign's theme, "Take Care of Texas, It's the Only One We've Got," reflects the need for commitment from government, business and industry, and just plain folks.

Patti Everitt, coordinator for Clean Texas 2000, said, "The best way to implement the program is to use the resources of one organization to complement the resources of another." One example is a water quality monitoring team combining state agency expertise, industry funds and the interest and enthusiasm of school children.

Clean Texas 2000 provides funding and technical assistance, recognition for existing programs, and incentive for new programs. "We'll never have enough state resources to pay for the environmental quality we want, and that's why volunteer efforts are extremely important," Everitt emphasized.

"Anyone can become a partner—from an individual citizen to a Scout troop or a school, a civic group, a small business or a large corporation. All you have to do to apply is call 1-800-64TEXAS for more information," she added.

The program has six major goals, explained Everitt. The first is to reduce by at least 50 percent the toxins released or the hazardous waste generated in Texas by the year 2000. To participate in the voluntary Clean Industries 2000 program, businesses commit to reduce pollution by at least 50 percent by the year 2000. They must also ensure compliance with environmental regulations, sponsor an annual environmental community project, and form a citizens' advisory committee to encourage communication with the public on environmental issues.

On Dec. 9, Richards announced that 75 companies had signed up as the first

Clean Industries 2000 members and pledged to reduce their pollution by 60 percent, 10 percent beyond program requirements and far more than required by state and federal law. TWC Chairman John Hall said, "This program reflects a growing recognition that pollution prevention is more cost-effective than pollution disposal and more cost-effective than pollution cleanup. It also reflects a genuine interest by industry in Texas to play a leadership role in the protection of the Texas environment."

The second goal is to reduce solid waste in landfills by at least 50 percent by the year 2000. A pilot program called Clean Cities 2000 is under way to accomplish this goal. It involves eight environmental programs, such as recycling and developing markets for recyclables, in 28 target cities.

One push is aimed at composting the 4 million tons of yard waste buried in Texas landfills each year. Hall said, "Texans are paying about \$250 million a year to have their yard waste collected and buried in community landfills. Not only are we paying to bury something that makes an excellent fertilizer if composted, but we are needlessly using up landfill space that will cost four times as much to replace." With TWC's technical assistance and limited funding, the 28 cities should serve as models of solid-waste reduction for other municipalities.

Texas Watch, a set of citizen volunteer activities aimed at pollution control, is the third major goal of Clean Texas 2000. The Citizens Water Quality Monitoring program trains people to sample and test water, and report problems. The program boasts 1,700 volunteers. TWC staff also works with local governments to establish systems for collecting household hazardous waste. In 1992, TWC awarded grants to seven cities, and helped eight cities coordinate 11

collections. In addition, as part of a separate program, nearly 200 tons of unusable agricultural pesticides were collected. TWC also helps cities develop groundwater protection plans and conducts seminars in groundwater protection.

To achieve its fourth Clean Texas 2000 goal, TWC is revising the process for obtaining water quality, solid waste and hazardous waste permits. Operation Paper Chase will cut through the red tape and streamline the procedure. TWC is seeking comments from about 15 regulated groups on how to revise the process and how the agency can

help them.

The fifth goal is public education. TWC engaged an advertising firm to develop a campaign geared to the average citizen. Since last summer,

TWC has spent about \$1 million to communicate environmental messages: "If you're not composting, you're dumping on Texas." "Only a dipstick would dump motor oil on Texas." and "No room at the bin. Trim your holiday trash." The campaign includes a weekly column sent to newspapers statewide and a quarterly newsletter, *Clean Texas Report*.

As part of its public education effort, TWC is conducting an environmental trade fair April 5-7 in Austin. Information will be aimed at the regulated community, those whose operations involve municipal solid waste, hazardous waste, petroleum storage tanks and water quality programs. The Texas Air Control Board will work with TWC to develop training sessions for the fair. A number of other state agencies, including TxDOT, will conduct workshops.

The final goal for the program is to recognize the accomplishments of Clean Texas 2000 partners through the Governor's Awards for Environmental Excellence. These awards will be presented annually to the most outstanding projects in each of the categories of business and industry, local government, agriculture, community service, education, journalism and youth.

Clean Texas 2000 urges all Texans to change the way they spend their resources: time, money and energy. It also serves as a reminder that the turn of the century is not that far away. ♣



CLEAN TEXAS 2000

Club keeps road clean in Texas and Arkansas

A Texarkana club is really cleaning up by becoming the first organization to adopt a highway for litter control in two states.

The Pathfinders Club, sponsored by the Texarkana Seventh-day Adventist Church, adopted a two-mile section of US 59/71 north of Texarkana. Because this section of highway falls on the state line between Arkansas and Texas, the club had to enter into agreements with the Arkansas State Highways and Transportation Department and TxDOT.

"This is definitely a first for our state's Adopt-a-Highway program, and I would figure that there is not another like it

anywhere in the nation," said Orville Ball, Adopt-a-Highway coordinator in the Atlanta District. "The Arkansas highway department has been very cooperative with us in getting this adoption finalized."

TxDOT created the Adopt-a-Highway program in 1985 to encourage volunteers to adopt sections of highway for litter pickup several times a year. Since then, about 4,000 groups have adopted more than 8,000 miles of highway in Texas, and 47 other states have developed their own Adopt-a-Highway programs. ♣ **Marcus Sandifer, Atlanta District**

Cook manages office, dog breeding biz

By Margaret Sanders
Waco District

It's a dog's life for Angie Cook. But that's all right with Cook, office manager at the Hamilton County Maintenance Section in the Waco District. By day, the 20-year TxDOT veteran handles administrative duties. Because her co-workers are out on the road, she often works alone in a quiet office.

She faces a different world when she heads home, where she's greeted by barking and dozens of wagging tails.

For 11 years, Cook and her husband, Don, have raised registered Shetland sheepdogs—better known as shelties—at their farm northwest of Hamilton. “When we began farming, we were raising hogs,” Angie said. “In 15 years, we’ve gone from hogs to dogs.”

When they purchased their first sheltie, the Cooks had no idea the dog would lead to a new career. They were simply looking for a good pet.

The breed originated in Scotland in the early 1900s, but there are few shelties in this country. It took the couple two years to find Tonkawa, their first sheltie. He died after being bitten by a snake, but not before giving the Cooks a full-blown case of sheltie fever.

Within a few months, the couple had purchased a female sheltie, which they named Dongie. “She was the perfect pet, and was great with our grandchildren,” Angie Cook said. “We bred her the first time hoping we could give a sheltie to each of our five grandchildren.”

In 1981, Dongie obliged by presenting the Cooks with a litter of five puppies. A second litter was born just before Christmas the next year. The couple realized that people might buy the puppies as gifts and advertised in Houston newspapers. By the time the next litter arrived, they had a waiting list of prospective buyers.

They sold all the puppies within 24 hours. “We came home thinking this was a really easy way to make money,” Angie Cook said. “Like a lot of people, we thought all we’d have to do would be get a pair of adult dogs and let them do what came naturally.”

The Cooks soon realized that raising registered puppies involves a lot more work. They established

a business, DoAngie Shelties, and began buying healthy, purebred adult shelties registered by the American Kennel Club (AKC).

The couple had to learn how to perform their own health checks and veterinary procedures, and Don Cook supplemented his knowledge by taking classes at the Texas A&M Veterinary College. They discovered that raising puppies requires an extensive knowledge of genetics and keeping detailed breeding and registration records.

“We begin with registered parents and register each puppy,” Angie Cook said. “That’s the only way to establish a reputable and reliable breeding business.”

The farm now has nearly 50 adult shelties, and as many as six litters may be in the nursery at any time. Each year, dozens of puppies find their way from Hamilton County to new homes in Texas and other states.

Don Cook manages the breeding, daily care, health care and sales. Angie Cook’s duties are limited to what she can do in the evenings and weekends. She manages the farm’s financial records and AKC registrations, performs weekly health checkups and cares for new litters.

Her favorite chore is getting puppies ready to be family pets. “We bring the puppies into our den each evening and spend some time petting them,” she said. “By the time they are ready to be sold, they are used to being handled and are comfortable being in a home with people and furniture.”

Even though the puppies move on, the Cooks stay in contact with the owners. Angie Cook maintains a complete file of all puppies and their owners. Owners continue to write to the Cooks about their pets’ progress, and many have become good friends.

“We’re always getting photos of our puppies as they grow,” Angie Cook said. Snapshots of dogs with obedience certificates and show ribbons and of puppies with happy children form a growing gallery on one wall of the Cooks’ home.

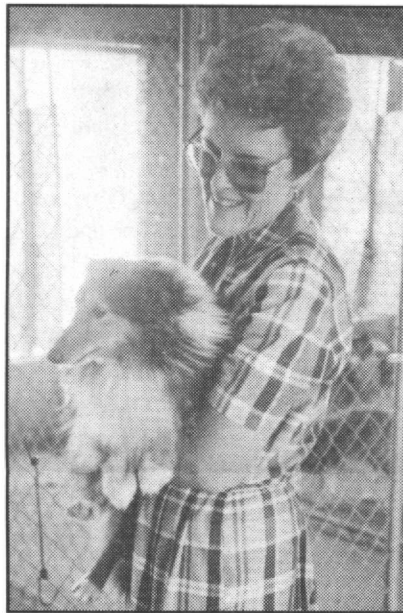
One of the couple’s greatest pleasures is finding homes for dogs too old to breed. “We love our dogs and want them to continue to live good lives,” Angie Cook said.

Rather than destroy the dogs, as some breeders do, the Cooks give them to older people who want companionship, but don’t have the energy to train a puppy. “These older owner, older pet pairings have been good matches and are very rewarding to us,” Angie Cook said.

“We want to know what kinds of homes our puppies are going into,” Angie Cook said. “When people contact us, we ask them to tell us a little about themselves. We’ve been doing this for so long now, we usually pick out the perfect puppy for each new owner’s home and personality.

“You really have to love animals in general and these animals in particular,” she said. “We do love our dogs.”

“And, yes, we know the name of every one.” ♡



Margaret Sanders, Waco District

Angie Cook, a Waco District employee and dog breeder, says Sig is one of her farm’s best fathers because “all his puppies have beautiful coats and sweet personalities.”

Paris employee volunteers for furry friends

By Jeff Carmack
Associate Editor

Ann Spencer’s professional life is fine. It’s her personal life that’s going to the dogs.

To be fair, it’s also going to the cats and other Paris-area animals in need. Spencer, who works in the Paris District automation section, is also president of the Lamar County Humane Association.

The association provides care for abused and neglected animals, finds homes for them, investigates complaints and, when needed, takes action through the courts.

Spencer has been working with the group for about five years. She said she started as a volunteer, “just sort of looked them up,” motivated by her love of animals. She became president in June.

Her work often results in amusing situations. One involved a Labrador retriever. “From time to time we provide temporary foster homes for dogs. I had a black Lab I was doing this for. She was a happy dog and everywhere she went, she ran,” Spencer said.

On one occasion, Spencer left her gate open and the dog escaped. “The last I saw of her, she was running north at a good pace.” A short time later, Spencer was working in her yard and what should she see but the Lab, now running south with a shoe in her mouth.

“It took me a week to find the shoe’s owner,” she said. “He didn’t know what to think when I asked him if the shoe was his. Said he’d been looking for it for a week.” The larcenous Lab was later adopted.

Some of the situations she encounters on the job are not so funny. “We recently had a complaint from an adjoining county. We checked it out and found a little poodle that was being abused,” she said. “The dog had apparently been caught in the middle of a dispute between a man and his wife, and he was abusing the dog to get back at her.” Spencer said the dog had an eye poked out shortly before they discovered it.

The job, she says, has its rewards. “It’s gratifying to be able to help the animals that can’t help themselves, and sometimes you also help people.” An example is a call she got

recently from a woman who was visiting Paris from Oklahoma.

As the woman was getting ready to leave town, her dog, a rare and expensive Rhodesian ridgeback, got away from her. She tried unsuccessfully for several hours to get the dog back, but finally had to leave town without her pet. “I alerted the city police, the animal control people, the radio stations and the newspaper. I also told all the humane association people,” Spencer said.

Three days later, the dog was found. A car had hit it and broken its leg. “We took him to the vet and, apart from the broken leg, he was OK. I called the lady and she was thrilled to get her dog back. Those kinds of things are really gratifying.”

Although Spencer loves animals, she doesn’t own a pet herself. Her Boston terrier died last January, and she didn’t find a new dog until June. “I soon found out I was away from home too much, so I gave him to some friends. But I still have visiting rights, kind of like a grandchild. He’ll stay with me if they go out of town. I guess you’d call him my step-puppy.” ♡

Radio man Marberry saw some funny sights

By Cheryl Converse
Staff writer

Imagine starting a new job and your first assignment is to build your own office.

That sounds funny, but it happened to Bennie Marberry more than 30 years ago. In 1959, Marberry went to work for the Beaumont District as a radio specialist. The district did not have a radio shop. They bought a portable building and looked for someone to build a radio shop.

Marberry turned out to be that someone.

"I didn't think it was so funny at the time, but it sure has become funnier through the years," Marberry said.

One of those funny days Marberry calls "The Day the Truck Ran Over the Radio Tower." It happened in the mid-1970s, shortly after the department took over the causeway bridge on Texas 82, from Port Arthur to Louisiana.

Marberry recalled that the radio at the bridge control house had an antenna mounted on the roof. Beaumont officials decided that four antennas, mounted on a 40-foot radio tower, would better serve their needs.

"The little gremlins that delay almost anything you need to hurry along were working real hard that day," Marberry said. "That was bad news because to work overtime meant a trip to see 'the man' (the district maintenance engineer).

"The mid-1970s was a time of many changes. It was in the middle of the energy crisis and everyone was looking for less expensive ways to do things. Money was really tight. Most of the changes turned out to be for the better, but it was hard to see that at the time," Marberry said.

Marberry said he and three other men worked throughout the day to put up the tower. When they left, the tower was fastened to a concrete foundation, but the support brackets, which attached to the house, were not installed. The crew intended to save the department overtime and would finish the job the next day.

The following morning brought two emergencies that split the crew between Liberty and Newton.

"About 9:30 a.m. I got a call: 'Bennie, an 18-wheeler ran over the radio tower at the causeway bridge.' All I could say was 10-4," Marberry remembered.

Marberry said it took about two hours to get from Newton to Port Arthur. He remembers trying to picture how a truck could run over a radio tower that sat next to a house and behind a guardrail.

"All I could think was, 'How did he hit the tower without hitting the house?'" he said.

Marberry did not know that a thunderstorm had passed through the night before. When winds gusted to 76 mph, the tower fell across the road.

"The Port Arthur police held the truck driver until I got there. He told me that he was going about 15 mph because of the rain, but he never saw anything. I

talked to the bridge tender. It had rained so hard the bridge tender couldn't see the truck from his house," Marberry said.

He also remembers that when all of the replacement parts came in, the four-man crew went back to the causeway to re-install the tower. Marberry said this time the crew stayed until all the work was done.

Four years later, Hurricane Bonnie blew through. And, although Bonnie had sustained winds of 80 mph, the tower did not fall.

"I didn't laugh a lot about it then," Marberry said. "I didn't think much about it, period. But now it's funny."

Since he retired in August, Marberry said he has spent some time thinking about the funny things that happened at the Beaumont District radio shop.

"To the best of my knowledge, I'm the only man in the history of the department to purposely cut four guy wires to a 300-foot tower," he said. "We couldn't leave a radio conference without someone asking about the time ol' Bennie cut the four guy wires."

It seems that the 300-foot tower was rusty. So rusty, Marberry remembers, that no one wanted to climb it to make repairs. Instead, Marberry and his crew decided to let the tower fall. They looked around and saw that the only thing in the tower's landing path was a fence. Marberry said they cut a 20-foot hole in the fence and then two welders began to cut the guy wires.

"In order to get the tower to fall through the 20-foot hole, the two welders had to cut through the guy wires at exactly the same time," Marberry said. And, in the same tone of voice he adds, "One was about half a second slower than the other, so we missed the hole in the fence. There wasn't any substantial damage. We had to fix the fence, but we didn't hit any cars, buildings or people."

Marberry said he does spend time thinking about the 33-1/2 years he worked for the department. He also said those memories often make him laugh. But, there is one that gives him respect for the forces of nature.

"We had a tornado go over a maintenance warehouse once. There wasn't anything funny about it. That's when I learned just how powerful those things are," he said.

The tornado hit in the early evening. What struck Marberry most was finding a telephone bell that had been nailed to the outside of the concrete warehouse. The bell hung from a seam between two of the 8-inch concrete blocks that made up the wall.

"When we saw the building it looked as if nothing had happened to it. Then, someone noticed a crack in the paint. That tornado pulled the roof off the warehouse, sucked the telephone bell into the building and then it set the roof back down on the walls," Marberry said. "We found the bell inside and it still worked."

"If you didn't see the cracked paint, you would've thought the tornado missed the warehouse," he said.

Marberry had many adventures during his tenure with the department. He was the communications superintendent when he retired in August 1992. He still visits with the folks in the radio shop.

"I'm just going to do what I want to do. I've worked all my life to reach this point," Marberry said.

Marberry wants to do volunteer work at church and at hospitals.

"I plan to work, but not for money. If I wanted to work for money, I would've stayed where I was. I really liked the work. I've had a lot of good times here," he said. ♣



Bennie Marberry, retired from the Beaumont District, with a radio tower like the one he and his crew erected the right way—the second time. The first time ... well, it was run over by a truck.



Michael Amador, Dallas District

The high-occupancy-vehicle lane on Interstate 30 in Dallas uses a barrier mover to switch the lane from incoming traffic in the morning to outgoing traffic in the evening. The project won an

Excellence in Highway Design Award from the Federal Highway Administration, as did the Angelina County wildflower seeding program in the Lufkin District.

Department nets 3 national awards

Lufkin, Dallas districts get FHWA kudos for wildflower seeding program, HOV lane

Cooperation brought the department two awards in the Excellence in Highway Design competition conducted by the Federal Highway Administration.

The Dallas District joined Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) to construct and operate a high-occupancy-vehicle lane along Stemmons Freeway. The Lufkin District coordinated a wildflower seeding program in Angelina County. Both projects received awards of merit in the biennial competition.

"These awards represent completely different types of efforts that were developed to achieve different goals," said Transportation Commissioner Ray Stoker Jr.

"The unifying aspect of both projects is that we couldn't have done them without close coordination with and support of local communities. The cooperation is the most satisfying thing about these awards," Stoker added.

The Dallas project uses a 31-ton machine to shift a chain of concrete barriers. The barriers create additional lanes to move vehicles carrying more than one person in and out of the city during peak traffic hours. This is the first project in the world to use such equipment on a daily basis. TxDOT built the project and DART manages its daily operation. TxDOT and DART shared the cost.

The Lufkin District received an Environmental Enhancement Award of Merit for an aggressive program to seed more than 300 acres of state right-of-way throughout Angelina County.

"This project succeeded only because of the broad-based community support we received," said District Engineer J.L. Beard. "We're happy to share this recognition with the Keep Angelina County Beautiful group and the local businesses that participated."

Beard said the flowers' beauty helps promote tourism, and the native vegetation reduces soil erosion and lowers roadside maintenance costs.

The awards were announced recently and presented to the commission during its November meeting in Austin. ♦ **Roger Polson**

Antilitter efforts honored by Keep America Beautiful

Texas was the big winner at this year's Keep America Beautiful (KAB) Awards.

Organizations across the Lone Star State took 23 of 85 awards presented at the Washington, D.C., ceremony in early December.

TxDOT won the first-place award from the Federal Highway Administration/KAB Inc. for superior progress in the prevention and collection of litter. The second-place award went to the Tennessee Department of Transportation, and the South Carolina Department of Highways and Public Transportation received a citation.

TxDOT's antilitter program encompasses an educational kit for middle school students, the "Don't Mess with Texas" campaign, the Adopt-a-Highway program and partnerships with Keep Texas Beautiful, the Lone Star Girl Scout Council and the public school system.

Since the program began in 1985, the state has seen a 72 percent decrease in visible roadside litter. ♦

Wootan took economical approach

TTI director set to retire at end of January after 40-year career in transportation research

By Cheryl Converse
Staff writer

Charley Wootan set out to be an economist. He has bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees in agricultural economics.

But when he retires Jan. 31 from his post as director of the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI), Dr. Wootan will have ended a career as a transportation researcher that spanned nearly 40 years.

During that time, Wootan helped build the largest research program in the world, a partnership between the department and TTI. His career paralleled construction of the Interstate system and creation of state departments of transportation (DOTs).

"Not bad for an economist," said Deputy Executive Director Byron Blaschke, who enumerated the many successes TTI has enjoyed since the late '50s.

"A significant number of safety and operational improvements and many cost-saving concepts evolved through this cooperative program. Charley Wootan provided strong leadership and guidance during much of TTI's history. He can be given credit for many of its accomplishments," Blaschke said.

"As a professional, as the director of the premier research center in the world, and as a friend, Charley Wootan is a super human being."

It was for his dedication to the research program that Texas Transportation Commissioner Ray Stoker Jr. presented Wootan with a Road Hand award at the 1992 Transportation Short Course. "Under his leadership, our relation-

ship with Texas A&M has evolved into the largest joint research program of its kind in the world. Not even the second-, third-, and fourth-largest programs combined are as big," Stoker said.

That accomplishment makes Wootan the proudest.

"Our research program is the envy of other states. I'm proud of the dedication that built it. This

"As a professional, as the director of the premier research center in the world, and as a friend, Charley Wootan is a super human being."

Deputy Executive Director
Byron Blaschke

program will continue to grow as long as we address the problems outlined by those who work in the field and as long as we use the solutions generated here," he said.

Jon Underwood, the department's Engineer of Research and Development, has a theory about Wootan's success.

"Charley Wootan stands out in this state, and across the country, because of his consistent drive to do state-of-the-art research and produce state-of-the-art answers in a timely and efficient manner," said Underwood, of the Division of Transportation Planning. Underwood has worked with Wootan since the mid-1970s.

Underwood and Wootan witnessed many of the early successes born out of the research program, such as the Texas Twist—twist the guardrail ends and bury them in the ground. Other projects that still dot the nation's highways include breakaway signs, barrel crash cushions, multiple mailbox supports and another guardrail end treatment, called the Guardrail Extruder Terminal (see August 1992 *Transportation News*).

Frank McCullough, Wootan's counterpart at the University of Texas Center for Transportation Research (CTR), said Wootan significantly affected the way transportation business is conducted in Texas.

"He has a cooperative spirit and is ready to tackle problems," McCullough said. "He recognizes that to get something, first you've got to give. He recognizes that we are much stronger when we stand together."

And when the two directors stand together, Texas is the winner. So far, their efforts have brought to the state one of 10 University Transportation Programs. This research program, funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation, encourages idea-oriented instead of task-oriented research. The directors also worked to get funding under the Federal Highway Administration's Advanced Academic Institute. Funds from that program are used to attract graduate students to the transportation field. A third success is the Center for Aggregate Research, which is the only center of its kind in the country.

"These are just some of the



Charley Wootan

benefits from our long-term relationship," McCullough said.

He admits there is friendly competition between the two schools, and often there is spirited jesting. "Some years back I attended a big presentation at A&M. There was a slide projector on a heavy oak table and its image needed to be focused. So, a bunch of Aggies jumped up and moved the table back. I told Charley that maybe I should be paying more attention to the Aggie jokes," McCullough said.

"It's all friendly teasing. We have a lot of respect for each other," he said.

McCullough said Wootan has not changed much since the late '50s. The two met in 1958 while McCullough worked in the department's Highway Design Division and Wootan was the principal investigator for a department project.

"We've worked together a lot. He's still laid-back and relaxed, serious when he needs to be. Charley has always had life in perspective. He never got carried away with self-importance," McCullough said. ♣

Snippets help Santa bring toys, joys to 4 Paris girls

By Phyllis Chandler
Paris District

After several million house calls Dec. 25, Chris Kringle and his transportation companion Rudolph have returned to the North Pole to await another Christmas. Word is, however, that 400-year-old Chris may need some help this next yuletide.

Some Paris District employees have already taken up the challenge. Just ask four special little girls. This Christmas, their Santa didn't wear red or have a beard. Their Santa was 20 women who know the real meaning of Christmas.

As they did last year, the female employees of the Paris District, known among themselves as the "Snippets," have foregone gift swapping to spread seasonal joy to others.

Many Paris children, like 10-year-olds Lena and Christina and 11-year-olds Stephanie and Frances, faced a possibly giftless Christmas this

year. But through the efforts of a local department store, individuals and groups like the Snippets, St. Nick stopped for them after all.

"All of us were fortunate to be able to get the things we wanted for Christmas, and there really wasn't anything we could share with each other that would have meant Christmas more than giving to others," said Tena Border, the district's receptionist supervisor.

With that in mind, Border polled the district's women. She got an overwhelming response—and a hefty donated sum, about \$100.

Armed with her bounty, Border went to the local Kmart and selected four names from the store's Angel Tree. The tree displays names of area children whose Christmas would be less than merry without the intervention of others.

Selecting the right gifts was next. It wasn't hard to pick out apparel for four little girls. But with all the toys on the market, the real test was finding the perfect playthings.

Anita Tippit to the rescue.

Tippit, one of the district's accounting technicians, is also a dollmaker extraordinaire. In a spare bedroom converted into a workshop, she crafts foot-tall dolls that boast finely chiseled features and wear antique wedding clothes made from patterns she has collected.

Squirrelled away in her workshop were four dolls she'd made months ago. Four dolls without a home and four little girls without toys. The answer seemed apparent.

"I know the people we were helping probably wouldn't have a very good Christmas, and the girls' families probably couldn't afford to get them dolls," Tippit said.

So the four dolls and the other gifts, festively wrapped, made their way to Stephanie and Lena, and Christina and Frances. And on Christmas morning, there were four happier children. ♣

On the Job

Employee discovers he has long-lost sister

By Ronda Baker
Staff writer

Imagine finding out, at age 46, that you have a sister.

It happened to Rick Smith, an educational writer in the Division of Motor Vehicle Titles and Registration.

A few days before Thanksgiving, Smith got a surprise visit few of us could envision—from a sibling he never knew he had.

Imagine your reaction.

Smith's reaction? After the initial shock that led him to question, "I have a sister?," his sense of humor kicked in. "What took you so long to find me?" Smith replied. "Why didn't you find me while I still had hair?"

The sister Smith never knew he had is Carol Henslee of Houston. She is really his half-sister—they were born to the same mother.

In 1944, the year Henslee was born, her unmarried mother placed her for adoption. The next year, Henslee's mother, Kay Mifflin, married James Smith.

Henslee was adopted by a couple in Houston—her birthplace—and grew up within a few blocks of Smith. Their paths may have crossed often without their knowing it, Smith said.

They frequented the same neighborhood haunts, particularly the ice-cream parlor. At their first meeting, they pulled out the 1962 Lamar High School yearbook to find her senior photo in the same edition as a photo of Smith's older brother, Jim, as a sophomore. They also discovered that both families spent summer vacations in Wimberley.

Smith's family moved to Austin in 1962, the same year Henslee enrolled at the University of Texas.

Smith's mother never told him or his brother about having had a daughter. She died in 1986. Smith's father died in 1953, as did Henslee's adoptive father.

So how did the two ever come to meet?

Henslee, who is 48, decided to research her genealogy about a year and a half ago after her adoptive mother suggested it. "I thought about doing it about 10 years ago, but I didn't pursue it because I thought it would hurt my adoptive mother," said Henslee, an office manager for a software development company.

She hired an attorney to get a court order to unseal her adoption records, but the judge wouldn't sign the order. She dropped her mission until this fall, when she asked her doctor to give her a letter stating it would be helpful to know her medical history.

Henslee approached another judge, who at first refused the request. After Henslee made several phone calls pleading with the court clerk, the clerk persuaded the judge to sign, Henslee said.

The records showed she was originally named Margaret Kathleen Mifflin. Her birth mother had the same name. Her birth father was thought to have died while on his first mission as a Navy pilot in World War II.

Henslee began calling all the Mifflins she could find in the phone books for Houston,



"Why didn't you find me while I still had hair?" was Rick Smith's reaction when he got a surprise visitor—Carol Henslee, a half-sister he didn't know he had.

Austin (where the records showed Henslee's mother lived for a time) and smaller towns in Central Texas. She also called everyone named James E. Smith, the man shown to have married Mifflin in 1945. But it was all to no avail.

On Nov. 13, Henslee went to Austin to get a copy of her birth certificate and to visit the state genealogy library. She found an obituary for her birth grandmother, which said the woman had two grandsons. Because Henslee's birth mother was an only child, Henslee then knew she had brothers—her only siblings, as she was raised an only child herself.

The next day, while searching old phone books at another historical library, Henslee found a listing for Mrs. Kay Smith, widow of James E. Smith. More recent phone books no longer listed her and showed someone else was living at her former address.

Henslee went to the address seeking old neighbors who might know of her birth mother. The woman across the street, a longtime friend of Kay Smith, said Kay Smith had died. But Henslee learned much about what her birth mother was like and the names of her brothers.

The neighbor put Henslee and Rick Smith in touch. Henslee wouldn't reveal the relationship over the phone; she told him only that she was researching her genealogy and needed to visit him.

The first time they saw each other, each felt a bond—even though Smith didn't yet know they were related.

"From the moment she got out of her car, there was some sort of chemistry there," Smith said.

Henslee felt the same. "As he stood on the porch, I looked directly into his eyes as he invited me into the house," she said. "It was an instant bond."

It isn't as though they are the spitting image of one another. "We don't really look that

similar, but others say we do favor each other some," Smith said. He does see a striking similarity—as do relatives and friends—between their mother and Henslee.

How did Henslee break the news? "She sort of beat around the bush," Smith said. "I asked who she was related to, and she would say, 'I'm looking for medical history.'"

Henslee said, "They (Smith and his wife) asked me again, and I said I didn't want to hurt anyone or change their feelings about a loved one, and that there was no other way than to just lay the cards on the table."

Smith's wife, Patsy, "started crying right away," Smith said. "I looked at her and said, 'What are you crying for?' Carol and I talked for a minute, and we started hugging and crying."

Henslee said, "My heart was beating so fast, it was pumping all the tears out of my eyes. It was a beautiful bond—better than my wildest dreams."

The siblings pored over Smith's old photo albums, birth and death certificates and memorabilia. Smith told her what their mother was like.

The second time they met, a week later, Smith gave Henslee a red rose and a gold charm that says "Big Sister." He gave her a card on which he'd written, "They were all out of new-sister-that-I-didn't-know-I-had-cards." Henslee gave him a card and a poem she'd written about what it was like to find him.

Henslee's family came to visit the day after Thanksgiving, and Smith's family went to see her the day after Christmas. During the Thanksgiving visit, Smith gave his sister their mother's engraved gold locket with a picture of their grandparents inside.

The siblings plan a trip to Kountze, their mother's birthplace.

When Henslee found her brother, she also found a sister-in-law, a niece and a nephew: Smith's wife Patsy, and their children Rick and Christy. Rick's and Christy's new cousins are Henslee's children Carol Ann, Kristin and Russell.

"We talk a little bit every day, sometimes more than once a day," Smith said. "A thought about her will pop into my head, and along about then she'll call. It's weird."

Smith was too proud of his sister not to share the news with his co-workers in the Operations Section. He called them together to announce the discovery and showed them a photograph from her yearbook. Later he shared Henslee's Christmas letter breaking the news to relatives. "The letter gave almost everybody a lump in their throat or made them grab their Kleenex," Smith said.

Hung in front of his desk is his first office phone message from "your sister."

He cherishes her poem, which ends: "It's a bond and a love like absolutely none other. It's a bond and a love between a sister and a brother."

Said Henslee, "I think Ricky is fabulous. I couldn't have hand-picked a better brother. Though we've known each other only a few weeks, it feels like forever." ♦

Quality automation to lead to quality info

By Emily Willingham
Staff writer

Department employees have heard a lot about continuous quality management lately. When you hear that term, automation probably is not the first thing you think of. But you'd be surprised.

Automation and information resources are such an integral part of continuous quality management that the department has an Information Resources Advisory Team. The team supports TxDOT's continuous quality management efforts by making sure every employee has access to continuous quality information.

The team is chaired by El Paso District Engineer Bill Burnett. The other five members are Bob Flaherty, director of the Division of Equipment and Procurement; William Garbade, district engineer in Austin; Bob Templeton, director of the Division of Construction and Contract Administration; Luis Ybañez, director of the Division of Bridges and Structures; and Nino Gutierrez, district engineer in Corpus Christi.

Burnett said that Executive Director Arnold Oliver gave the

team several directives. The team's first instruction was to create a uniform set of terms to use departmentwide.

"For instance," Burnett said, "if you were to ask someone in a division or district how many lane miles are in a certain area, you'd get a different set of answers because everyone has a different definition of lane miles. To aid implementation of continuous quality management, we need a unique and uniform set of department terms.

"The main problem with the systems in the department today is that when we've automated, we've automated processes rather than needs," Burnett said. "Everyone was developing their own data bases, and they had nothing in common with one another. We want to create a central repository and open systems. With numerous, closed systems, you get redundant data."

The team is also creating a business plan and identifying TxDOT's most critical information needs. It will also assist the Information Resource Management office in a comprehensive review

of the Division of Automation as required by functional review.

"Right now, we really need to get at the critical areas," said Burnett. "The districts and divisions have recognized needs for many systems, and the backlog of projects we'd like to develop would take tens of thousands of staff days.

"We'll also be adding accountability as a factor, as part of continuous quality management," Burnett said. "We will be examining savings and other results of implementing certain systems as required by functional review. We don't want redundancies in the system, and we need to know that a particular system is absolutely necessary," Burnett said.

According to Burnett, the business plan will indicate what system the department should choose and decide what TxDOT's information needs are.

For help with the business plan and identifying TxDOT's needs, the team has gone to the private sector and to other states. Information Resource Manager Diane Wacker is requesting information from Texas companies to help the

department create a business plan. The team is reviewing other state DOTs with structures similar to TxDOT's to see what information can be gleaned.

"We chose states that have divisions of automation and information resource management offices," said Burnett. "We visited Wisconsin and Pennsylvania because they've achieved more in this area than any other state. We also looked at Arizona and Florida."

The team will finish reviewing other DOTs in January or February, and make a business-plan recommendation to Wacker based on its results.

"We have a couple of ways we can create this business plan," said Burnett. "We could hire a consultant, but other states have used them only as facilitators. After getting help from consultants, the DOTs implemented their programs using regular department staff.

"We will borrow ideas from other states the way Arizona borrowed from Kansas," Burnett said. "After all, if we try to recreate the wheel, it'll just end up round anyway." ♦

Superstar pitcher Ryan winds up on expressway sign

By Victor Tsai
Houston District

Nolan Ryan is more popular with baseball fans than was mighty Casey of fictional Mudville. If he becomes even more popular, he might have to run for president.

Houston District employees added to the legend of the "Ryan Express" by unveiling a new sign designating Texas 288 in Brazoria County the Nolan Ryan Expressway. Ryan and his wife, Ruth, attended the brief ceremony on the roadway's shoulder. Motorists honked their horns in appreciation of the future Hall of Fame member as the cover was removed from the sign.

"I've driven this highway many times coming to the Astrodome from Alvin when I was a member of the Houston Astros," Ryan said. "It's a real honor to have it named after me." Although he is now a member of the Texas Rangers, Ryan lives in Alvin during the off-season.

Formerly known as the Brazoria Parkway, Texas 288 connects Houston, Angleton, Lake Jackson and Freeport. State Sen. J.E. "Buster" Brown asked TxDOT to have the sign up in time for the unveiling of a statue of Ryan in front of Alvin City Hall.

The quick pitch went to the Eureka Maintenance Section, headed by Jerls Hancock and Irvin Ramirez, which erected the sign in only four days. T. Rebagay, a district traffic engineer, coordinated the sign's placement.

"When a sign goes up in four days," said Rebagay, "it means that you've dropped



State Sen. Buster Brown, left, and baseball phenomenon Nolan Ryan unveil a sign honoring the pitcher in Brazoria County, where Ryan lives during the off season.

everything and concentrated on just getting that sign up. We had to get the signposts from the Beaumont District because we were out of them." The sign was in place only hours before the unveiling ceremony and just in time to greet visitors.

The statistics and records that define Ryan's career are phenomenal. He has an astonishing six no-hitters; many pitchers achieve superstar

status with two or three. He leads the major leagues in career strikeouts with more than 5,000, and he won his 300th game last year.

But Ryan's true identity can't be found in the statistics on baseball cards. For all his fame and achievements in baseball, he is still a rancher from Alvin. During the off-season, he lives in the town where he grew up, married his high-school sweetheart and learned to throw his scorching fast ball. ♦

Service Awards

Paris (1)

25 years
E.J. Cates
James L. Lawrence
15 years
Gary L. Baird
Gerald E. Jackson
Odeas J. McPeak
5 years
Monty R. Cupp
Larry D. Stone

Fort Worth (2)

35 years
Weldon R. Davis
Rexal L. Roye
30 years
Jerry W. Grubis
25 years
Gary W. Shields
20 years
Allan D. Farquhar
Donald R. Williams
15 years
Mortezza G. Movassaghi
10 years
Everett L. Parker
Ronald J. Robinson
5 years
David W. McWhirter

Wichita Falls (3)

40 years
James E. Ansohn
30 years
Charles W. Ulbig
25 years
Howard G. Gaines

Amarillo (4)

25 years
Larry G. Miller
10 years
David B. Stribling Jr.
5 years
Christian G. Chambers
David W. Hart
Frankie E. Watts

Lubbock (5)

35 years
Tina F. Deshazo
James H. Trimble
25 years
Johnnie W. Howard
20 years
David A. Parker
15 years
Doyle W. Driver
Fidencio Moreno
10 years
Raul Arismendez
Rickey D. Hill

Odessa (6)

10 years
Elpidio S. Baiza
Brenda K. Pierce
Hipolito G. Rascon Jr.

San Angelo (7)

25 years
Larry R. Hasty
Bobby C. Hepburn
Jose H. Rendon
5 years
Debra J. Miller
Ray C. Murr

Abilene (8)

20 years
Steven W. Edwards
Guadalupe R. Garcia
Donald G. Jordan
Dewey L. Nichols
Leonard E. Posey
15 years
Jackie L. Holcomb
Loyd R. Walker
10 years
Stephen A. James
Maribel P. Jaso

Waco (9)

35 years
Lester G. Fisseler
10 years
Richard P. Guthrie
Barbara J. Schilling
Billy J. Watson

Tyler (10)

30 years
Charles C. Jacobs
10 years
Larry G. White
Bobby J. Williams

Lufkin (11)

35 years
Robert W. Walker

Houston (12)

40 years
Jasper N. Harris Jr.
35 years
Charles A. Frey
Salomon A. Zambada
30 years
Carl H. Patton
Stanley T. Poer Jr.
25 years
Hans C. Olavson
15 years
Bobbie D. Baker
10 years
Sheila R. Corson
David R. Elster
Sandra B. Hebert
Shivinderp S. Randhawa
Robert L. Spaw Jr.
Thomas W. Zahn
5 years
Gabriel E. Flores
Gary D. Lyke
John P. Vogel
Troy K. Walker

Yoakum (13)

35 years
Robert L. Kaiser
30 years
Melvin L. Otto
25 years
Juan Castro
20 years
Robert J. Mozisek
15 years
John H. Ellsworth
Reinhold W. Gerbert
10 years
Donald L. Jirkovsky
5 years
Martin D. Ryman

Austin (14)

35 years
Alvin W. Brown
Robert W. Nauert
25 years
Marshall D. Voight
15 years
Terry J. Brussel
Gregory K. Haley
Carlos H. Strand
5 years
Harold G. Bunch
Tony S. Krauss
Gary W. Walthall

San Antonio (15)

25 years
Carl D. Wenzel
20 years
Roger D. Armstrong
Rodney R. Roberts
Robert D. Scheel
15 years
David R. Balli
10 years
Scott L. Hunt
5 years
David A. Mata
Sharon S. Woodall

Corpus Christi (16)

35 years
Bert M. Asensio
Secundino Gutierrez
25 years
Lonnie J. Urban
20 years
Paula C. White
10 years
Ricky L. Littleton

Bryan (17)

20 years
James D. Richter
Robert Vanvolkenburg
15 years
Eddie J. Muston
5 years
Jesse R. Cooper
Vincent R. Lawrence
David K. Neshyba

Dallas (18)

30 years
Noel M. Chamberlain
25 years
Fred T. Callaway
20 years
Harlan E. Moore
Joseph R. Stephens
15 years
Bobby E. Walker
Erman J. Woodall
10 years
Douglas R. Brock
Mark H. Wiley
5 years
Richard J. Gehring
Waid D. Goolsby Jr.
Mark S. Harlan
Sandra J. Wesch-Schulze

Atlanta (19)

25 years
Glen R. Busby
20 years
Donald M. Hill
15 years
Lucille T. Hinojosa
10 years
Joe D. Gage
5 years
Fred E. Pattison
Charles W. Russell

Beaumont (20)

30 years
James E. Kimbrough
20 years
Shirley H. Decuir
15 years
Terry K. Kimmey
5 years
Lori J. Morgan

Pharr (21)

35 years
Melvin D. Greenhill
Santos Zavala
30 years
Esteban Montemayor
Peggy H. Neill
20 years
Guillermo Cuellar
15 years
John L. Solis III
5 years
Ramiro Robles

Brownwood (23)

15 years
Donnie B. Gifford
5 years
Paul W. Maples
Larry G. Smith

El Paso (24)

30 years
Sergio I. Aguilar
15 years
Jose L. Almanza
Ricardo Sotelo
10 years
David W. Head

Childress (25)

35 years
Kenneth W. Young
15 years
Emmit E. Skelton
10 years
Gary J. Mizer

Automation

35 years
Tommie F. Howell
30 years
Helen K. Horn
25 years
Roy L. Mills Jr.
15 years
Gary B. Perrenot
10 years
Clinton R. Hobbs
Keith R. Layton
5 years
Carol A. Rogers

Bridges and Structures

35 years
Luis Ybáñez
30 years
Ralph K. Banks
15 years
William E. Kohutek Jr.
10 years
Daniel Ortegon

Construction and Contract

Administration
10 years
Ronald R. Smith

Equipment and Procurement

30 years
Gordon H. Miller
15 years
Sharon R. McCallum
5 years
Sharon E. Golden

Finance

25 years
Philip A. Fredericks

Highway Design

5 years
Andrew J. Wimsatt

Maintenance and Operations

25 years
Craig A. Steffens
Carol S. Whittenbaugh
10 years
James A. Countryman

Materials and Tests

10 years
Byron K. Kneifel
5 years
Gervase J. Szalwinski Jr.

Motor Vehicle Titles and

Registration
25 years
Jose Ruelas Jr.
20 years
Kenneth W. Carey
Shirley H. Pavolich
Estela D. Vela
10 years
Linda K. Clynch
5 years
Marva P. Gillespie
Tammy F. Sedgwick
Michael A. Van Straten

Public Transportation

5 years
Mary W. Hodges

Transportation Planning

35 years
Donald B. Dial
5 years
Sharon L. Debaun

Travel and Information

30 years
Reva R. Keltner
25 years
Patsy D. Lee
20 years
Ann G. Kelton
5 years
Regina S. McAskill

Division head seeks people to join new Toastmasters chapter

Does the thought of speaking before a crowd make you want to turn and run? Well, you aren't alone.

Ed Sims, director of the Division of Occupational Safety, is organizing a chapter of the Toastmasters Club to help those who would like to conquer their fear of speaking before a group.

Sims said that Toastmasters teaches participants to speak effectively and conduct meetings, as well as lead, delegate and motivate. Members also have access to Toastmasters International's wide range of educational materials.

Sims has scheduled an introductory "brown-bag" meeting for noon to 1 p.m. Jan. 26, in the cafeteria of the Riverside Annex's Building 200.

Anyone interested in attending can call Sandy Thornton at 512/416-3397. ♣

Transportation leader Simons dies at 86

Charles E. Simons, former Texas Highway Commission chairman and the first president of the Texas Aeronautics Association, died in Austin Dec. 25 of diabetes complications. He was 86.

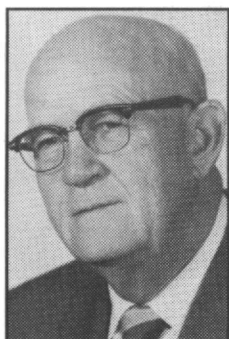
Simons was appointed to the commission in 1971 by Gov. Preston Smith. He served as chairman in 1972 and 1973, and as a member until 1978.

Simons came to Texas as a correspondent and political analyst for Associated Press. He was one of the organizers and first editor of *Texas Parade* magazine and served simultaneously as public relations director of the Texas Good Roads Association.

From 1941 to 1946, he was executive vice president of the association, and devised and managed the first "Good Roads Amendment" campaign in 1945 and 1946. This effort succeeded in getting a constitutional dedication of vehicle registration fees and three-fourths of state fuel taxes to highway construction and maintenance.

Simons also was a leading sponsor of the constitutional amendment establishing a retirement system for state employees. He was one of the organizers of the Texas Aeronautics Association and served as its first president.

Survivors include his wife, Mary, two daughters and a son. ♣



Charles Simons

Employee killed in the line of duty

Fort Worth District employee Edward A. Speer, 55, was killed in a traffic accident Nov. 24. He was a 15-year department veteran.

"Eddie was a dedicated, loyal employee," said Cecil Isbell, roadway maintenance supervisor. "I could call on him whenever I needed to."

Speer was a Maintenance Technician III. Throughout his tenure with the department, he had done mechanical and sign work. During the summer, Speer was the herbicide sprayer operator.

"With his many talents, it was hard to keep Eddie doing just one thing. We had to keep him moving to use all of his skills," Isbell said.

The Texas Transportation Commission signed a resolution of sympathy for Speer's family on Dec. 22.

According to Department of Public Safety trooper R.M. Tacquard, a truck driver failed to change lanes as he approached Speer's road crew. The three-

person crew was repairing potholes on Interstate 20, near Gordon.

One crew member flagged traffic to move toward the inside eastbound lane while the other two crew members filled potholes with asphalt, according to the DPS report. The two crew members worked between a dump truck and a pickup that towed a changeable arrow sign.

Tacquard said it appeared the truck driver did not see the flagger directing traffic to the left eastbound lane. Speer and his co-worker saw the semi-trailer approaching and ran toward a ditch.

The truck then hit the arrow sign, pushing it into the pickup, which then ran over Speer, Tacquard said. Speer died at the scene shortly before noon.

The trucker was arrested and charged with criminal negligent homicide, a misdemeanor.

Survivors include his wife, Linda; his parents; two daughters; three sons; a brother; and three grandchildren. ♣

Calendar

JANUARY	
1	New Year's Day (Holiday)
12-13	Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
12-13	Highway Safety Planning Meeting, Austin, D-18
14	Information Security Awareness Introduction, 25 sites (teleconference), D-19
18	Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Holiday)
19	Confederate Heroes Day (Holiday)
26	Commission Hearing and Meeting, Austin
FEBRUARY	
4-5	Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
15	Presidents' Day (Holiday)
25	Commission Meeting, Austin
MARCH	
2	Texas Independence Day (Holiday)
3-4	Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
8-11	Achieving Service Excellence, Boerne, D-16
10-11	District Laboratory Meeting, San Angelo, D-9
16-18	Construction and Contract Administration Spring Meeting, D-6
23-25	Maintenance Conference, Austin, D-18
24	Commission Hearing and Meeting, Austin
APRIL	
5-9	Texas Travel Counselors Conference, El Paso, D-16
6-7	Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
21	San Jacinto Day (Holiday)
27	Commission Meeting, Austin
MAY	
6-7	Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
25	Commission Hearing and Meeting, Austin
31	Memorial Day (Holiday)
Looking Ahead	
June 2-3	Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
June 29	Commission Meeting, Austin
July 7-9	Transportation Planning Conference, Corpus Christi, D-10
July 20-21	Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
July 29	Commission Hearing and Meeting, Austin
Aug. 12-13	Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
Aug. 24	Commission Meeting, Austin
Aug. 27	LBJ's Birthday (Holiday)
Sept. 14-15	Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
Sept. 28	Commission Hearing and Meeting, Austin
Oct. 13-14	Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
Oct. 18	District Engineers and Division Directors Meeting, College Station, BCB
Oct. 19-21	Transportation Short Course, College Station
Oct. 28	Commission Meeting, Austin
Nov. 16-17	Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
Nov. 25	Thanksgiving Day (Holiday)
Nov. 26	Holiday
Nov. 30	Commission Hearing and Meeting, Austin
Dec. 14-15	Highway Construction Lettings, Austin, D-6
Dec. 24	Christmas Eve (Holiday)
Dec. 29	Commission Meeting, Austin

In Memoriam

William H. Bradbury, Waco, retired from Waco District in 1990, died Oct. 23, 1992.

Reyes Carrillo, Fort Stockton, retired from El Paso District in 1972, died Oct. 19, 1992.

Harrell F. Cook, Graham, retired from Wichita Falls District in 1977, died Sept. 27, 1992.

Dayton M. Everson, Crowell, retired from Childress District in 1985, died Sept. 27, 1992.

Hester A. Hall, Benjamin, retired from Childress District in 1975, died Oct. 20, 1992.

Aaron J. Hardwick, Meridian, retired from Waco District in 1971, died Oct. 18, 1992.

Carl W. Kurz, Center Point, retired from San Antonio District in 1983, died Sept. 26, 1992.

Frank M. Matejka, Caldwell, retired from Bryan District in 1981, died Oct. 27, 1992.

Clifton E. Moore, Austin, retired from Austin District in 1969, died Oct. 19, 1992.

John T. Murphy, Dallas, retired from Wichita Falls District in 1978, died Oct. 9, 1992.

Herbert Ottmer, Tomball, retired from Houston District in 1971, died Nov. 7, 1992.

James C. Roberts, Abilene, retired from Abilene District in 1974, died Oct. 8, 1992.

James E. Seals, Houston, retired from Materials and Tests Division in 1988, died Oct. 17, 1992.

Ivy G. Smith, Ozona, retired from San Angelo District in 1954, died Sept. 24, 1992.

Cecil H. Spires, Austin, retired from Equipment and Procurement Division in 1976, died Oct. 15, 1992.

Billy S. Stanley, Conroe, retired from Houston District in 1987, died Oct. 14, 1992.

Woodrow H. Steinbring, San Antonio, retired from San Antonio District in 1977, died Oct. 23, 1992.

Paul R. Toups, Newton, retired from Beaumont District in 1992, died Oct. 4, 1992.

Lonnie D. Turner, Floydada, retired from Lubbock District in 1980, died Oct. 20, 1992.

Wilton A. Walker, Colorado City, retired from Odessa District in 1974, died Oct. 28, 1992.

Richard M. Welch, Waco, retired from Waco District in 1984, died Sept. 29, 1992.

Retirements

October

Amarillo (4)
Paul E. Tolbert, 31 years
Maintenance Technician III

Odessa (6)
Emil J. Raschke, 30 years
Engineering Technician V
James A. Wilborn, 30 years
Engineering Technician V
William N. Yeary, 35 years
Engineering Technician IV

San Angelo (7)
Toribio P. Mata, 24 years
Maintenance Technician III

Waco (9)
Lanny L. Beverly, 23 years
Maintenance Construction Chief III

Tyler (10)
Roland R. Attaway, 36 years
Maintenance Technician III

Lufkin (11)
Bobby T. Vaughn, 26 years
Maintenance Technician III

Houston (12)

Edward M. Hamilton, 31 years
Maintenance Technician III
Lloyd Robinson Jr., 27 years
Senior Marine Captain
Edward J. Rood Jr., 30 years
Engineering Specialist II

San Antonio (15)
Clyde W. Burkett, 32 years
Engineering Technician II
Robert J. Graff Jr., 40 years
Engineering Specialist I
Roy A. Haecker, 35 years
Maintenance Construction Chief III
Elton C. Orth, 30 years
Maintenance Technician II
Levi O. Peese, 25 years
Maintenance Technician III
Guy E. Scogin Jr., 28 years
Maintenance Technician III

Beaumont (20)
Jimmy L. Graham, 33 years
Maintenance Technician III

Pharr (21)
Martin H. Michalk, 23 years
Maintenance Technician II

El Paso (24)

Malcolm L. Steinberg, 40 years
Director I

Childress (25)
Billy G. Stewart, 31 years
Maintenance Technician III

Highway Design
Mary S. Byers, 32 years
Administrative Technician II
Anita A. Ross, 25 years
Administrative Technician II

Motor Vehicle Titles and Registration
Dick K. Childers, 31 years
Chief Investigator
Joyce B. Hoermann, 35 years
Accounts Examiner I

Letters

I would like to thank **Kenneth McMillan** for kindly changing a flat tire I had en route from San Marcos to Huntsville on July 3.

Mr. McMillan came to the rescue and refused to accept any payment from me. My two girls were with me and I told them, "He is an honest man."

Debbie Garza
Huntsville

McMillan is an engineering technician with the Bastrop Area Office, Austin District.

* * * * *

I am writing this letter in relation to one of your employees.

Dewayne Carter, who was working between Olney and Windthorst on Sept. 16, helped me out of a big bind. I broke down because my step on my motorhome was dragging. I had bumped one of the dividers and ruined my step.

Mr. Carter stopped and rendered aid. I am in bad health and could not get down to take the step loose from the motor home.

It renews your faith and hope in the human race to have someone like Mr. Carter come along. He should be commended for being such a fine, helpful employee.

Buster G. Pendleton
Burkburnett

Carter is an engineering technician with the Graham Area Office, Wichita Falls District.

* * *

I wish to take this opportunity to comment favorably upon the volunteer efforts of one of your construction inspectors.

While traveling on Aug. 18 from Temple to San Antonio, my automobile stopped running just off

I-35 on the outskirts of Round Rock. One of your pickup trucks passed, turned around, and the driver stopped to offer assistance. He was **Harold Bunch**, who works out of the Georgetown Area Office.

Not only was he able to diagnose the problem, but he was able to correct it, provide a jump start, check the mechanicals for operation and send me on my way. He did all this with such a cheerful disposition that he really seemed to enjoy helping a motorist in distress. Although the time was well past his normal working hours, he refused payment and asked only for a handshake.

I consider this an extraordinary and exemplary trait of kindness. Certainly it reflects creditably upon the character and attitudes of Mr. Bunch. It does likewise upon the qualities of the personnel, and their direction, as employed by Texas Department of Transportation.

George W. Baehr
San Antonio

On Oct. 5, I had a blowout on US 59 about five miles west of Freer, and while I was changing the tire the car rolled off the jack, which then was stuck under the car.

One of your employees, **Juan O. Garcia**, drove by and saw my predicament and was kind enough to stop and assist me. With his jack we were able to get the car jacked up, remove my jack and replace the tire without any further problems.

I realize what a valuable asset your employees can be, and Mr. Garcia is one that I owe a great deal of thanks to. Keep up the good work!

Randy C. Steward
Corpus Christi

Garcia is the assistant foreman at the Freer Maintenance Section, Pharr District.

TRANSPORTATION news

Texas Department of Transportation

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January 1993



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