

Tyler sponsors Round-Up Rodeo

By Delaina Mayer
Canton Maintenance Section

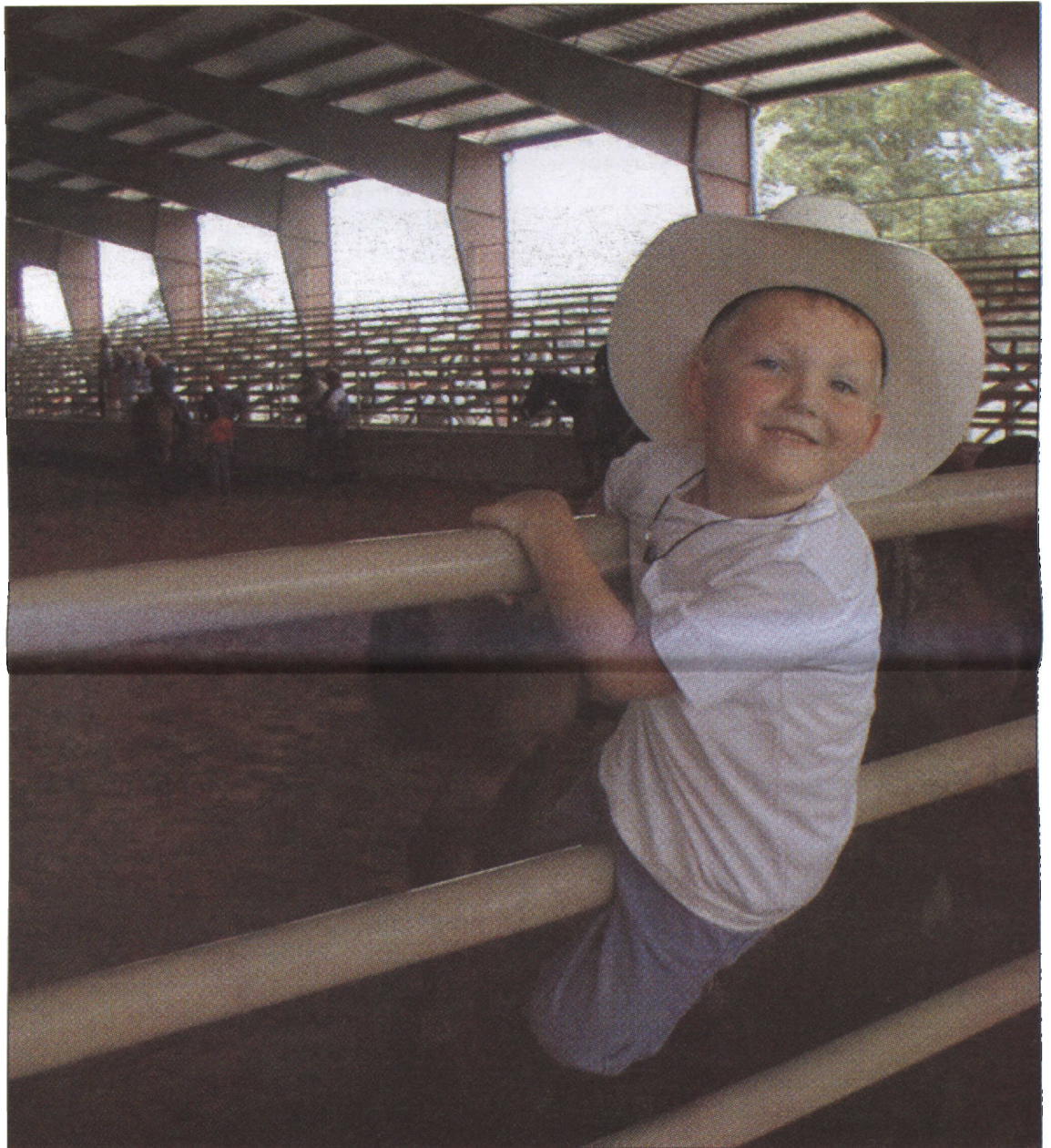
The gates of the Austin Rodeo Arena in Myrtle Springs, flew wide open for Tyler District's first ever TxDOT Round-Up Rodeo on June 9. By the time those gates closed, all agreed the event was a success and that everyone had a good time for fun, friendship and family.

The arena was transformed from an echoing, shaded maze of steel bars and dust into a booming showground. Packed with activity, the arena came alive with some of the finest ropers and riders, joined by their families and friends, from across Tyler and nearby districts. Cowboys and cowgirls gathered up their horses and spent the day offering up a great show of horsemanship and entertainment.

After the spectators began filing into the stands, the horses carried their riders around the final lap of the grand entry, the national anthem rang out, and a fitting cowboy prayer was said. Randall Redmond, Mineola Area Engineer, expressed a western welcome to everyone.

"We started calling this the TxDOT Round-Up early in the planning stages because the name seemed fitting for a rodeo. As the coordination progressed and — especially on the day of the event when the participants and spectators showed up — I realized we had really picked an appropriate name," Redmond said. "The event 'rounded-up' employees, families, friends, fun, fellowship, hidden leadership talents from all members of the planning committee, hidden talents from many employees, and basically fun had by all."

The roping events were the first to get



TxDOT photo

Hunter Redmond, son of Randall Redmond, Mineola Area Engineer, does his best impression of a young cowboy having a good time at Tyler District's TxDOT Round-Up Rodeo.

■ See **RODEO**, Page 7

Roundup

SMITH RECEIVES POLLARD AWARD: Elaine Smith, a 15-year TxDOT employee, has been awarded the 2000 Albert Harrison Pollard Award for Merit — a \$500 savings bond and framed certificate. The award was created in memory of Albert Pollard, formerly with Materials & Tests, to honor a Materials Section employee whose efforts directly support the section's goals. Smith supervised the four-year undertaking of rewriting and reformatting the Manual of Testing Procedures in a manner consistent with TxDOT guide-

lines. That manual, with the section's Operations Manual and other technical information, was then converted to an on-line electronic format. Due to Smith's work, district personnel and external customers can quickly access current test procedures, material specifications, approved material/producer lists, and other materials references through the TxDOT website.

GROUP HONORS BAT-SAVING EFFORT: TxDOT engineer Mark Bloschok has

received the Bat Conservation International (BCI) Distinguished Service Award. The recognition cites his leadership in conservation of the insect-consuming mammals. Bloschok is the first award recipient who is not a professional conservationist. Bloschok is credited with bringing Bats and Bridges research to TxDOT. The department funds the research project.

"We at TxDOT have had expert answers

■ See **ROUNDUP**, Page 4

Straight Talk

Challenges, opportunities await all of us

It has taken me every day of 30 years to get to today. I'm glad to be here.

While I'm the same Mike Behrens many of you have come to know over the years, you may have heard that I've taken on a new role — executive director of TxDOT.



Mike Behrens

Because we all work together to provide the nation's best transportation systems, I am honored and humbled to be in this position. I am honored because the mission of this department is exciting and because it demands the best from each of us.

I am humbled because I know that our shared mission is not about who is executive director, but more about the top-quality public service we provide every day to Texas and its guests.

As I begin this latest opportunity for professional development, please understand that, in the days ahead, the challenges we face are not about me. As executive director, my mission of service rests on the understanding that you are the skilled and mission-focused people who every day make TxDOT real in your communities.

First things first. Allow me to say thanks to everyone who had a part in helping to make this new role happen. I have had many mentors along the way. Yes, my gratitude includes the members of the commission for their confidence in my abilities to do the job. Yes, my thanks extend also to one of TxDOT's newest retirees, Wes Heald, who showed me every day by his professional actions what it means to be executive director of this department.

But most importantly, to all who are proud to be part of this organization, my thanks to you — for what you help this agency achieve

today and tomorrow.

The office of executive director is a place where big challenges and big opportunities meet. We are 14,500 employees strong with yearly resources of \$4.7 billion to build and care for transportation systems benefiting more than 21 million people.

Sounds big, doesn't it. Well, it is big. After all, this is Texas. That's why it will take all of our efforts, using all of the opportunities, to meet all of the challenges ahead.

I share with Wes Heald a sense of profound gratitude for your efforts in the name of TxDOT. It has been said many times, and it bears repeating: your work in service to Texas has worth. You honor our state with your efforts to make all of our lives better.

Again and always, Thank You. ★

Mike Behrens is executive director of the Texas Department of Transportation.

New legislation takes effect regarding license suspensions

Editor's note: The Substance Abuse Program Branch / Employee Relations Section of the department's Human Resources Division provides the following as a service to TxDOT employees.

During the past session, the Texas Legislature passed House Bill 63, which took effect Sept. 1. This legislation relates to the automatic suspension of a person's driver's license after an arrest for certain intoxication offenses. These offenses include driving under the influence (DUI) and driving while intoxicated (DWI).

The legislation does a number of things, including:

- increasing the license suspension periods for anyone who refuses to take the breath test (regardless of age);

- increasing the license suspension periods for persons age 21 and over who fail the breath test;

- requiring the arresting officer to confiscate the driver's license at the time of arrest and issue a temporary driving permit;

- requiring consideration of prior offenses within the last 10 years, rather than only in the last five years;

- increasing the driver's license reinstatement fee from \$100 to \$125.

Suspension periods: Anyone, regardless of age, who refuses to take a breath test and has no prior offenses in the previous 10 years will face a minimum suspension of driving privileges for a period of 180 days.

Anyone, regardless of age, who refuses to take a breath test and has one or more offenses in the previous 10 years will face a minimum suspension of driving privileges for a period two years.

Failing a breath test: Persons age 21 and over who provide a breath specimen of .08 or greater, but have had no prior offenses in the past 10 years face a minimum suspension of driving privileges for a period of 90 days.

Those age 21 and over who provide a breath specimen of .08 or greater and who have had one or more offenses in the previous 10 years, face a minimum suspension of driving privileges for a period of one year.

Note: The suspension periods for drivers under age 21 will not change.

Confiscation of license: Under the legislation, for persons arrested for DUI/DWI while driving their personal vehicle, the officer will confiscate their driver's license and issue a temporary driving permit to the driver.

The temporary driving permit is valid for 40 days from the date of issuance and expires on the forty-first day.

Employee responsibilities: Department employees are responsible for knowing the status of their driver's license at all times. Also, employees are expected to know the department's driving requirements and DUI/DWI policies.

Further, employees must report to their supervisor any loss of legal authority to drive within one day upon returning to work.

And they must refrain from driving on department business without the legal authority to drive.

Employees having any questions regarding this issue should contact the substance control officer in their respective district, division, or office. ★

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Got news?

Did your district newsletter run a story you think other TxDOT employees would enjoy reading? Do you know of a co-worker with an interesting hobby? We want your story ideas. To contribute, contact your district public information officer. He or she can pass it along to us. Or you can contact Editor Tim Cunningham by phone at (512) 463-8955.

Submission info

- District employees should discuss potential submissions with their public information officer.

- Submissions must be received by the second Friday of the month preceding publication.

- Copy: send as e-mail attachment to TCUNNIN as Microsoft Word document (.doc) files.

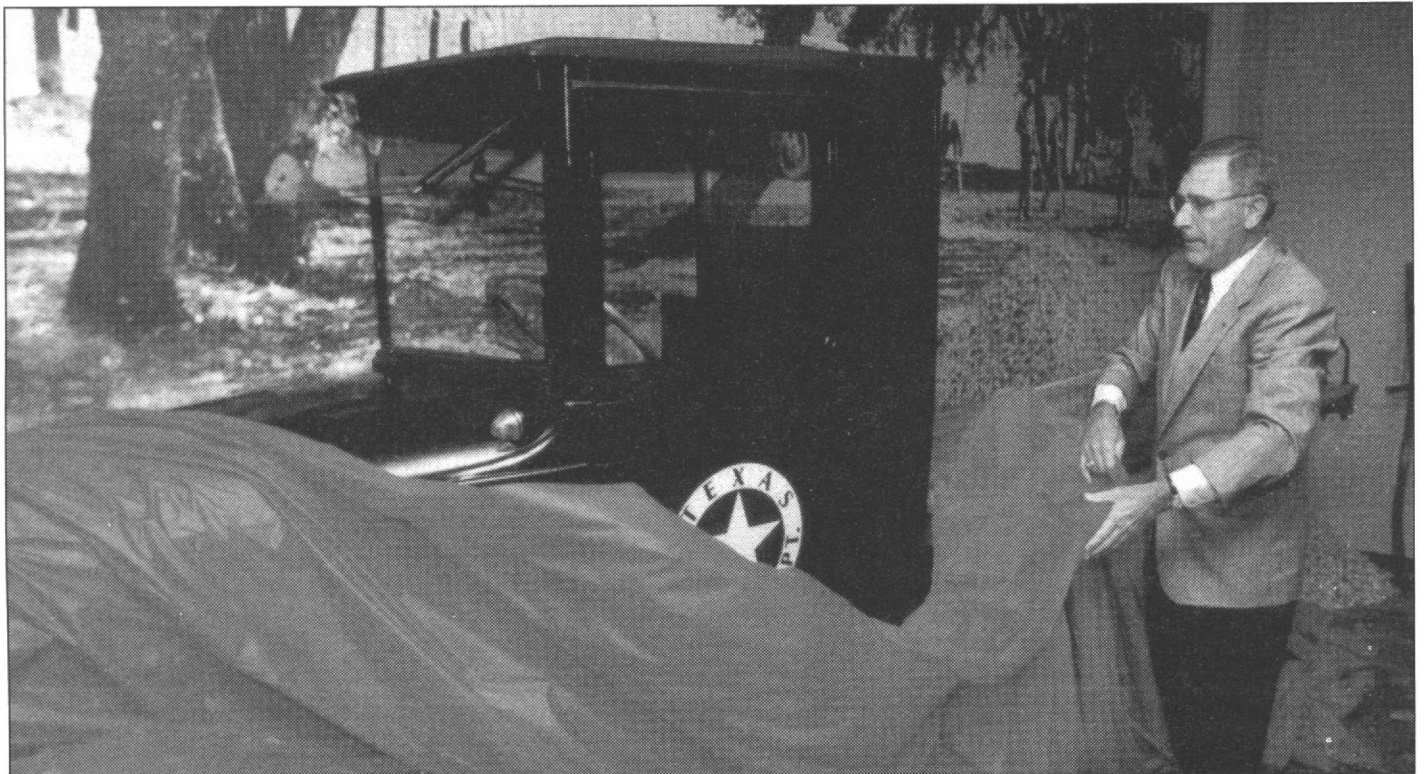
- Photos: send electronically in high resolution .jpeg or .tif format.



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Unveiled

Wes Heald, who retired from the department Aug. 31, unveils the 1929 Chevrolet truck at the Aug. 21 opening of The TxDOT Historical Exhibit in the Greer Building in Austin.

TxDOT photo / Geoff Appold

Historical exhibit opens; you're invited

Dear TxDOT employees and retirees,

The Texas Department of Transportation is, as you well know, an agency that is rich with tradition and history. I want to express my sincere thanks to you for being an important part of that legacy.

To celebrate our shared TxDOT heritage, I am proud to announce the opening of The TxDOT Historical Exhibit on the ground floor of the Dewitt C. Greer Building at 125 E. 11th St. in Austin.

The exhibit was officially opened on Aug. 21, 2001, and contains a fascinating collection of artifacts, historical photographs, and employee memorabilia. Some of the items have been donated to the exhibit and some are merely on loan. These treasures include a 1930s-era truck mounted on authentic Thurber brick, a "visible" gas pump, early highway maps, and the desk that was used by D.C. Greer himself.

There is even a display area that allows visitors to share their own TxDOT memories.

Although the exhibit is officially open, it remains a "work in progress." It is far from complete. The plan is to rotate items on a regular basis, and add even more historical items as they become available.

I want to personally invite you to visit The TxDOT Historical Exhibit whenever you have an opportunity. It will be open on non-holiday weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The exhibit is dedicated to you, and I hope you will come reminisce and celebrate TxDOT's heritage with us.

Sincerely,

Charles W. Heald, P.E.
Recent Retiree
Brownwood, TX - Sept. 1, 2001

Craftsmen

Employees from Support Services/General Services Division, who did much of the work on the historical exhibit, gather at the opening event.

BACK ROW: Toby Towery, Gordon Gregg, Wes Heald, Jeff Kushaney, Don Ekvall, Robert Campbell, Bruce Melde, Don Ray Walker, L.C. Smith and Charles Hooker.

FRONT ROW: Richard Garcia III, Frank Saucedo, Bobby Herrera, Wayne Heikkila, Ernest Smith and Mike Bird.



TxDOT photo / Geoff Appold

These people helped make The TxDOT Historical Exhibit possible with their many and varied contributions.

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Buddy Allison | Anne Cook | Wes Heald | Alvin Luedecke, Jr. | Bill Powell | Toby Towery |
| Geoff Appold | Lonnie Craven | Wayne Heikkila | Johnnie Machu | Patsy Rainwater-Maddux | Tim Traylor |
| Ralph Banks | Tonya Detten | Bill Henderson | Terry Martin | Jim Randall | Kathy Vicknair |
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| David Bryan | William C. Garbade | Jeff Kirk | Raymond Naivar | Ernest Smith | James Wilhelm |
| Roy Bullock | Richard Garcia, III | Mike Kopchick | Tommy Nanyes | L.C. Smith | Cathy Williams |
| Robert Campbell | David Gonzalez | Darin Kosmack | Kerry Neely | Larry Smith | Cheryl Williams |
| John Campbell | Gordon Gregg | Jeff Kushaney | Sandra Parker | Steven Sneed | Jimmy Wilson |
| Shannon Carr | Daniel Guterrez | Steve Landers | Robert Pennybacker | Larry Stephens | Robert Wilson |
| Carol Carter | Nancy Handrick | Joel Lehman | Kirby Pickett | Edwin Stotts | Larry Zatopek |
| Larry Cavaness | Helen Havelka | Carlos Lopez | Roger Polson | Robert Stuard | Ann Zeeck |

Thank you.

Central Station puts bus lines under one roof

By Graciela Cantu
Pharr District

Call it McAllen's version of Grand Central Station. More than one million passengers a year are expected to use McAllen's Central Station (La Central) as a focal point of bus travel in McAllen, the Rio Grande Valley, Texas, and Mexico.

The new \$4.9 million bus terminal is the only major facility along the U.S.-Mexico border that will house both American and Mexican bus lines and also serves as the city's primary station for its city bus service, McAllen Express.

Earlier this year, elected officials and other dignitaries from the United States and Mexico gathered to inaugurate the new terminal in downtown McAllen.

Popular Mexican bus lines Noreste, Americanos, Turimex, Autobuses Adame, Sendor, ADO, and El Expreso will join Valley Transit Co. and Greyhound to carry passengers just about anywhere in North America.

Each bus company has its counter in the 22,000 square-foot facility. In addition to the ticket counters for all the bus lines, Central Station is equipped with a 250-seat lobby, a restaurant, a news shop, a currency exchange booth, restrooms, vending machines, water fountains, storage space, and administrative offices.

In 1996, the Hidalgo County Metropolitan Planning Organization completed a transit feasibility study and implementation plan for the cities of McAllen and Edinburg. The study concluded that both cities, but mainly McAllen, had a definite need for public transportation.

In June 1997, McAllen Express began public transportation operations in the City of McAllen.

With funding from the FTA, TxDOT, and the City of McAllen, six fixed routes were implemented within the City of McAllen. The routes were focused on specified neighborhoods, and on commercial, medical, and social service destinations in the city.

McAllen Express exceeded the feasibility study estimates for ridership in less than one year. The system now averages more than 21,000 passengers a month.

In September 1997, the FTA approved a grant to the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council to provide capital funding for the construction of an intermodal transit terminal in McAllen. Funding was approved for land acquisition, architectural and engineering, construction, and construction management costs.

The facility was built in the heart of the downtown district and has become one of the main anchors of the district.



LRGVDC photo

McAllen's Central Station has become an international crossroads. The facility serves as the base for local bus operations as well as the border's access point for travel throughout North America.

The City of McAllen also invested local funds for landscaping and for a streetscape project downtown, which has enhanced the viability of its downtown. ★

Roundup

Continued from Page 1

to our toughest questions regarding bat habitation in bridges and structures. BCI has been able to further bat conservation in a partnership with transportation officials nationwide and worldwide beginning with our original collaboration on the Texas Bats and Bridges Study," said Bloschcock.

VOLUNTEERS ASSIST ORPHANAGE: Volunteers in the form of TxDOT employees and retirees again were an answer to prayer for the Sisters of Charity of the Casa Amparo a La Mujer Orphanage in Reynosa, Tamaulipas, Mexico. As in the past seven years, TxDOT took the lead in this year's Casa Amparo Orphanage Benefit BBQ, held in Pharr in late July. More than 2,500 chicken halves and fixings were prepared and sold, according to Celia Munoz-Badiozzamani, event founder and wife of Behrooz Badiozzamani, Pharr deputy district engineer. The goal of the volunteer effort is to provide a weekly allowance of \$200 for food to feed the 85 children throughout the year.

TxDOT BOOSTS BOOSTER SEATS: A campaign designed to put more car booster seats under children 4-8 years old has received TxDOT support. On Aug. 9th, Carlos Lopez, Bill Strawn, and Christine Willrich of the Traffic Operations Division represented TxDOT at the Texas kickoff of the Boost America campaign. Gov. Rick Perry and other notables were on hand to speak in support of the effort. The campaign is sponsored by the Ford Motor Co., Toys-R-Us, and United Way.

Crash-related fatalities have declined steadily for infants and younger children

because most ride in child safety seats. But there is no similar reduction in fatalities among children ages 4-8, because use of booster seats in the U.S. is only about 20 percent. More than 500 children in this age group die each year in crashes, and thousands more are seriously injured. In Texas, 65 children ages 4-8 died during 1999 (the latest year for which data are available).

The Boost America campaign, through local United Way offices or Ford dealerships will give away 25,000 booster seats to Texas families in need. Another 500,000 booster seats will be made available to purchasers of Ford vehicles.

SUCCESS SEEN IN CAREER DAYS: The first ever Laredo area-wide Construction Career Days recently resulted in the largest gathering of Laredo's leading construction firms. The three-day event welcomed more than 900 juniors and seniors from Laredo and surrounding school districts. The students were introduced to the construction industry through exhibits, displays, demonstrations, and hands-on activities for various trades.

Students met some of Laredo's leading construction experts to ask about educational requirements and job opportunities in the construction industry.

The Federal Highway Administration, the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Association of General Contractors of Texas with TxDOT's Laredo District, City of Laredo, Job Corps, and Communities In Schools made this event possible. Volunteers included Young Engineer Council, Maintenance Operators, personnel from Traffic Operations, Administration, Transportation Planning and Development, and district maintenance sections.

LANDSCAPING RECOGNIZED: The George West Area/Maintenance Office of the Corpus Christi District has been recognized for its landscaping and beautification efforts, not on the roadway but at the office. Unify to Beautify (the local Keep Texas Beautiful group) has awarded the office the "Yard of the Month." Employees, led by Charon Jones, have used their lunch and off-duty hours to plant, tend, and manicure the grounds of the complex into a showplace. Working with seeds, transplants, and donated plant materials, the project has been evolving for several years into a site worthy of community recognition.

GORILLA ENTERTAINS MOTORISTS: Motorists following the pilot car through the U.S. 77 construction project on the bluff above La Grange (Yoakum District) were treated recently to the sight of a 6,300 pound concrete statue of a gorilla dressed as a construction worker with an orange vest, hardhat, and caution tape.

Jody Mihatsch, owner of the statue named Magilla, bought him from D&D Statuary in Temple, about two years ago. "I got the idea of dressing up Magilla from a lady in Waco who used to dress her concrete gorilla in costumes for different holidays," Mihatsch explained.

In the two years the gorilla has been watching over the bluff traffic, it has been decked out in a hula skirt, graduation gown and hat, rabbit ears, a witch's hat and broom, and a Santa Claus hat.

"I am glad everyone enjoys watching to see what Magilla will wear next," Mihatsch said. "I have a lot of fun deciding what he will wear and making the costume."

Employees brace for post-Allison 'title wave'

Flood-damaged vehicles cause unexpected demands on salvage title personnel

By Roger Polson

Vehicle Titles & Registration Division

TxDOT employees in the Title Control Systems Input Unit are bracing themselves for a flood of paper work that must be processed in the wake of flooding from Tropical Storm Allison.

People in the unit, which is part of the Vehicle Titles & Registration (VTR) Division, work on the fourth floor in Building One at Camp Hubbard.

Generally, the people in the section go about their daily business, opening mail, and processing corrected or certified copies of vehicle titles and documents for salvage vehicles.

However, things began to get a lot more interesting for them in June after Allison camped out over Houston and surrounding counties and didn't leave until dropping more than 35 inches of rain in just a few days.

Dramatic photos of flooding were shown on the news and circulated over the Internet. Unit employees imagined another scene — mountains of requests for salvage documents that are issued for vehicles sustaining substantial damage from floods.

After all, estimates of 50,000 or more flood-damaged vehicles were supported by reality as waters receded from highways and parking garages. Fleets of tow trucks began clearing city streets and facilities so that the process of drying out and recovery could begin. Stranded, abandoned and ruined vehicles of all types were moved to temporary storage facilities.

While Houston residents scrambled to find their soggy cars and trucks, insurance companies began assessing damages. The Federal Emergency Management Agency dispatched its disaster response team to the area.

Meanwhile, the folks back at VTR began planning to deal with the new flood of title requests that were sure to begin pouring in over the next several weeks.

"I first realized we were going to get swamped with title requests when I saw pictures on television," said Deborah Ellison, lead worker in the input unit. "I have a cousin in Houston and called him. I knew that there was going to be a very big problem with flooded vehicles."

Generally, the input unit processes about 160,000 requests for salvage title documents each year. That works out to a little less than 14,000 documents a month.

Salvage and insurance industries must apply for these documents before damaged vehicles can be sold through auctions and other salvage channels. Until they get salvage documents processed, these vehicles are parked in storage until they can be moved along in the salvage market.

"Our work affects a lot of people. For the insurance companies, salvage dealers and individuals involved, time is money," Ellison said.

The job of processing salvage certificates and titles, a job that is usually routine and unnoticed by most, became a huge concern for a lot of people both inside and outside of TxDOT in a matter of a few very wet days.

Planning began while floodwaters still ravaged Southeast Texas. In early June, many of the VTR directors and key staff were attending the annual tax assessor-collector conference in Wichita Falls. Impromptu meetings sprang up as the interested parties explored ideas and procedures.

"From a planning aspect, the timing couldn't have been better," said Darrel Hunt, division deputy director. "We had all of the components of the team in one place. We discussed many different ideas, explaining the processes from the department's viewpoint, working our regional offices into the mix, and learning about the issues that county officials were dealing with. We were able to hammer out a thorough plan in just a couple of days."

Back in Austin the plan was put in place. Kelly Dailey, assistant branch manager for Title Control Systems, developed a framework for identifying and training additional people for the task at hand. The plan called for shifting some other routine processing to regional VTR offices around the state that

Estimates of 50,000 or more flood-damaged vehicles were supported by reality as waters receded from highways and parking garages.

were directly affected by the flooding, bringing in additional people from other division sections, training temporary workers, and mobilizing available employees.

"Everyone really came on board," Hunt said.

The challenge was compounded by the recent retirement of Rebecca McKay, who worked in Title Control Systems for 34 years and served as section manager for the past 11 years. Luckily, the remaining core group of employees averages 10 years of section experience. These folks know their business.

"We knew we were going to see a 'title wave' of requests," said Ellison, coining a phrase for the task ahead. Ellison stepped in after McKay's departure to oversee the effort. "We just made our plans and prepared to get the job done. We have faced similar situations in the past and, in many ways, its just business as usual."

VTR administrators set a goal to process all salvage document requests within one working day of receipt. Normally, processing takes up to five working days. The section is prepared to process up to 2,500 documents a day, more than double their usual workload.

The industry, including salvage operators, insurance companies, and county tax officials were informed of the procedures. Everything was in place.

By mid-August, daily counts of salvage requests had risen steadily. Figures show requests increased by more than 60 percent over the previous month. The real "title wave" was expected to occur in late August and in September.

Though the workload is growing, all systems are reported working smoothly. And everyone is hoping that, in a few months, the pace of work will return to normal after Allison's rampage across Texas. ★

Roundup



Continued from Page 4

TOASTMASTERS BUILD SKILLS: The TxDOT chapter of Toastmasters International offers a program in Austin that allows members and guests a chance to practice the skills of public speaking. Meetings include prepared speeches and presentations, speech evaluations, and "table topics," where members and guests respond to questions.

"TxDOT Toastmasters provides an ongoing program for continually improving one's public speaking skills," said Jim Barta, chapter president and a supervisor in the Environmental Affairs Division's Hazardous Materials Management Section. "The ongoing nature of the program provides frequent reinforcement of good public speaking techniques."

Zellena Jay, administrative manager for the Motor Vehicle Division, joined TxDOT

Toastmasters in April 1994. "I have learned many valuable skills at Toastmasters," Jay said. "The managed speech manuals have assisted me with writing skills and presentations. Toastmasters methods are now part of my everyday life."

Membership is open to anyone, but is mainly composed of TxDOT employees. Dues are \$30 per six-month period. There is an initiation fee of \$16. Meetings are held at noon, Tuesdays (excluding holidays and the days immediately following holidays) at Building 118, Riverside Annex.

Tonia Ramirez (Legislative Affairs Office) has more information and may be contacted through Groupwise or at (512) 463-9957.

PHARR ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS: Aside from environmentally clearing \$2.38 million worth of transportation projects this year, the Pharr District's Environmental Section keeps

busy with community involvement.

On the KGBT-TV Team 4 News website you'll find Velma Garcia, Pharr District's environmental coordinator, handing out awards to the Environmental Champions of the Month.

Team 4 News, the Rio Grande Valley's CBS affiliate, held its first environmental contest this year. The contest encourages individuals, teams, groups, and schools to submit projects, which they feel help preserve the environment. TxDOT, through the "Don't Mess with Texas" campaign, was one of five participating sponsors. Garcia, with Mary Bolado (the district's public information officer), served as representatives at the quarterly awards ceremonies.

Garcia's community involvement also includes her participation as a guest speaker at the second annual Rio Bravo/Rio Grande

Roundup

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Environmental Conference held in April in Weslaco. The binational conference provided information for municipalities and agencies needing to meet the requirements of state and federal agencies.

Mark Iglesias, environmental specialist for the district, and Garcia received committee appointments to participate in a curriculum advisory committee at South Texas Community College in McAllen. The committee aims to develop a plan for a degree in environmental management. "It's a two-year degree, which would give students the knowledge, skills and abilities to gain employment with TxDOT and agencies and companies like TxDOT," Garcia said.

Community involvement also included participation at school career fairs, as well as school group tours of the district's complex. Juan Alcazar, another environmental specialist for the district, took the lead in these assignments.

Alcazar and section staff members developed a photo gallery displayed outside their cubicle walls. The gallery has captured the attention of students because it displays photos of threatened and endangered wildlife and plants found in South Texas. It also includes photos of wetlands and mitigation projects, and structures over navigable waters, which are items considered prior to the construction of any highway or bridge structure.

TxDOT educational material such as "Don't Mess with Texas" stickers, the "Texas Rocks and Fossils," and TxDOT endangered species posters are distributed at various events.

Garcia said the reason for staying involved in the community is "to make the public aware that an environmental section exists within TxDOT and to continue to promote TxDOT efforts to preserve the environment, while still continuing to provide the best transportation projects possible."

NEW SYSTEM AIDS EFFICIENCY: From a young couple purchasing a manufactured home, to folks enjoying the electricity provided by a giant wind turbine, Texans count on employees of Motor Carrier Division's Oversize/Overweight Permit Branch to help move their goods throughout the state.

These employees issue permits to transport an average 500,000 oversize and overweight vehicles and loads annually. When the time came to replace the division's old DOS-based central permitting system, the upgrade had to be carefully planned.

The division implemented the new central permitting system (CPS3) in early August. It is a Windows-based program that improves the ability to issue permits safely and efficiently.

CPS3 allows users to complete many tasks that were previously accomplished independent of the permitting program. Its features include automated faxing, semi-automated routing, and credit card authorization — all from the permit officer's desktop.

The new system also allows customers to apply for and receive 20 different types of permits over the Internet, and provides the

division with greater opportunities to take advantage of new technologies as the need arises.

CPS3 took more than two years to develop, with contracted and in-house programmers, as well as other staff from TxDOT contributing to the program's success. They tested the new system exhaustively.

The division already sees gains in efficiency under CPS3, and the new system is much less cumbersome than the original system. Curtis Wagner, branch manager, describes the experience this way: "The days leading up to implementation, and the actual implementation itself, were exciting, and at times frustrating. But now that things have settled down, we're all enjoying the enhanced features of the new central permitting system."

OFFICE HAS NEW DIRECTOR: Agustin (Gus) De La Rosa has been named director of the TxDOT International Relations Office. The appointment took effect Sept. 1. He began his TxDOT career in 1994 as the field operations director in the Automobile Theft Prevention Authority (ATPA), Vehicle Titles and Registration Division. He became ATPA director in 1997 where he planned and coordinated the bi-monthly board meetings of ATPA and oversaw the statewide auto theft program. He also planned and conducted meetings of the binational Border Solutions Committee, which identified auto theft issues and possible solutions affecting Texas and Mexico. Gus served in the U.S. Army from 1974 until 1994, when he joined TxDOT. De La Rosa is a native of Harlingen, and holds a bachelor's degree in business from Hardin Simmons University, Abilene, and a master's degree in government from Campbell University in North Carolina. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army Foreign Area Officer School with a specialization in Latin American studies. He and his wife, Diana, have two children, Manny and Veronica, and one grandson.

EL PASO ATHLETES: El Paso District employees continued to carry the flag of excellence as they squared off against other state agencies in various athletic events.

The TxDOT basketball team swept through the competition in capturing a second championship at the West Texas State Agency Basketball Tournament. Team TxDOT went undefeated, beating teams from the State Parole Office, the Ysleta Independent School District, and the Department of Human Services (DHS). TxDOT beat DHS again in the championship game. TxDOT members included Ricardo Romero, Edgar Fino, Rogelio Rodriguez, Javier Bustos, Larry Delgado, Carlos Martinez, Leonel Perez, Roman Gonzalez, Michael Armendariz and Gabe Carrera.

In volleyball, TxDOT team 1 placed second, while TxDOT team 2 and team 3, finished fourth and fifth, respectively. TxDOT 1 lost to Community College in the championship match. TxDOT 1 members were Haydee Contreras, Leonel Perez, Ricardo Romero, Margarita M. Palomino, Maricruz Arjon, Flor Sanchez, and Coach Vicente

Luna.

TxDOT 2 consisted of Elizabeth Reyes, Michael Armendariz, Ivan Avelar, Hector Pulido, and Carlos Lujan. TxDOT 3 members were Oscar Arzaga, Frank de Santos, Jesus Avila, Alfredo Sanchez, and Gus Sanchez.

Both tournaments, and golf and softball events, are held as part of the annual West Texas State Agency Picnic.

LABORATORY EXPECTS TO MOVE: The TxDOT/Texas Transportation Institute Hydraulics & Erosion Control Laboratory expects to move operations in September to a newly built facility on the Riverside Campus at Texas A&M University. TxDOT's Vegetation Management Section of the Maintenance Division oversees lab operations.

The erosion lab was the only outdoor facility of its kind in the United States when it was built in 1989. However, program leaders decided to build an indoor facility after harsh weather conditions damaged the lab's slopes twice in recent years, said John Mason, lab project director.

The new lab will feature improved equipment, including a greenhouse and adjustable sediment beds. A "flume" device will test channel liners using a special computer that will probe the soil at six-inch increments before and after the experiment to determine areas with the greatest sediment loss.

The lab was created to help TxDOT generate a list of approved erosion control products that could be used on the basis of proven merit, Mason said. Other states' transportation departments and organizations worldwide also use this list as a standard when choosing erosion control products.

PLATES AID SCHOOL LIBRARIES: As many Texans, young and old, return to school, what better time to feature the Read to Succeed specialty license plates. TxDOT and local county tax assessor-collector's offices can provide Texans with these plates, whose sales benefit public school libraries statewide.

The plates cost \$30 annually besides the regular registration fee. Of that amount, \$25 goes to a special fund set up to provide educational materials for the state's public school libraries.

Owners of fleets of 50 or more vehicles can obtain the plates for \$20 per vehicle (\$15 goes into the special fund). As of September 2000, more than \$60,000 had been raised for the fund through the sale of these plates.

There are about 1,700 sets of these plates on passenger vehicles and light trucks across Texas.

Motorists may obtain the Read to Succeed plates through applications made with county tax offices, by accessing TxDOT's website (www.dot.state.tx.us), by calling TxDOT's Fax-On-Demand forms line at 1-888-232-7033, or by calling the TxDOT Help Desk at (512) 465-7611. ★

Rodeo promotes family fun and competition

Continued from Page 1

underway. Under the direction of the rodeo announcer, Michael Turner (Mineola Area Office), the ropers fell in line, waiting their turn.

In action were participants such as the father/son roping team of Rodney English (Canton Maintenance) and Ryan English. They made the team-roping event a real challenge for all the cowboys involved.

Freddie Jones (Canton Maintenance) offered his competitive roping skill, making events like breakaway roping a thrill to watch.

Barrel racing attracted Dallas District employees Deborah Hicks (East Dallas Project Office), her daughter, Sarah Hicks (Northeast Area Dallas Office), and Ronnie Jenkins (Kaufman Area Office), and their families. They were a welcome addition, adding some friendly competition for the Tyler District.

Mary Owen, Tyler District Engineer, offered her enthusiasm for the rodeo: "We are very pleased with the participation in this first TxDOT Family Rodeo. I am encouraged by the Dallas District's representation in this year's event and look forward to more district challenges in the future."

Many participants came out for junior and senior barrel racing, straightaway barrels, and pole bending, which made for an interesting variety of performances.

Among those "interesting performances" was Jackie Hopmann, Tyler District auditor, who made her grand entry around the barrels in the senior barrel-racing event. She rode the most obedient and highly trained of all horses — her very own hobbyhorse. This brought down the house and added just the right amount of hilarity to get the rodeo off into its second wind.

The calf and steer scrambles, as well as the "greased pig" events eventually ended with more than just scrambling children in the arena.

Needing a little help to hem up these animals, the announcer enlisted several TxDOT cowboys, including Preston Massey (Palestine Maintenance), Ladd Thompson



TxDOT photo

Chris Kilgo, from Grand Saline, entertained children and adults with his balloon creations.

and Marlin Cooper (Mineola Area and Maintenance offices). They came to the rodeo unaware that they'd have to make so many trips up and down the arena — without a horse.

An unexpected number of brave little ones entered the calf riding and mutton bustin' (sheep riding) events, hanging on with as much determination as any professional bull rider.

In the stands, Chris Kilgo from Grand Saline, was popular among children with his imaginative balloon creations.

Games and laughter filled the remainder of the rodeo, with children trying desperately to search out their boots from a pile, put them back on, and race back to the starting line.

Having begun the day with a trailride and

hayride through some beautiful East Texas country situated behind the arena — a time of enjoyment and relaxation among the employees, families and friends — it seemed just as fitting to end the day with more fellowship and a picnic under the shade trees.

The barbecue and all the fixings provided by the family of Rebecca Berry (Athens Maintenance Section) and Doug Berry (Athens Regional Supply Center) was delicious and greatly appreciated. They earned first place for every category in the barbecue cook-off.

The sun went down behind a few folks throwing horseshoes.

Several people in lawn chairs relaxed, pondering the day's events. Everyone agreed that Tyler's TxDOT Round-Up Rodeo was a success. ★

Dream home comes true for new TxDOT employee

By Gerl Bartel
General Services Division

Liza Rodriguez is a single mother of two. She's also a new TxDOT employee of the department's General Services Division. And she is one of the newest owners of a house built through Habitat for Humanity.

Many volunteers, including several TxDOT employees, were present to share in her "dream come true" when the home was dedicated in mid-June.

Habitat for Humanity volunteers donate the labor to build new houses for qualified people in need. An Austin-area church group adopted Rodriguez' dream home as its own special project. More than 360 people from the group took part in the project,

"No amount of sore muscles can compare to the sense of camaraderie this project elicited and the satisfaction gained from helping a co-worker achieve her dream." —Jesse Castilleja

with up to 50 people showing up each weekend to work.

Her TxDOT co-workers, compelled by her ongoing excitement about the project and their desire to be a part of such a special event, volunteered to help finish the house. They painted and did landscaping.

"No amount of sore muscles can compare to the sense of camaraderie this project elicited and the satisfaction gained from helping a co-worker achieve her dream," said Jesse Castilleja, a division employee and home-

building volunteer.

All labor used to build a Habitat for Humanity house comes from volunteers. This includes specialized work such as plumbing, electrical, and general management.

As the recipient of the house, Rodriguez is required to pay for all materials through an interest-free loan and to participate in all phases of the construction of her home so that she will be able to maintain it after completion.

Rodriguez says her house is extra special because "love" was

built into it.

She qualified for the house long before she came to work for TxDOT, and qualifying was not an easy process. She passed a rigorous screening and approval process, including an investment of 400 personal work hours in the program, 200 of which must be done on homes other than her own.

This project has inspired Rodriguez to continue her gift of time and labor. "I have seen and felt the compassion of others in my life by giving of their time and energy in the building of my home," said Rodriguez, "and I intend to show the same compassion to others by continuing to work for Habitat for Humanity." ★

Letters

City manager praises TxDOT for installation of guardrail

Thank you for your effort in getting the guardrail placed in front of the school playground. This rail system will greatly enhance the safety of the children at school.

The city of Hemphill and Hemphill Independent School District appreciate you, TxDOT, and a job well done!

Don Iles
City Manager
Hemphill, TX

This note was addressed to Rocky White, maintenance section supervisor at the Sabine County maintenance office, Lufkin District.

Ice water and cool truck bring letter of gratitude

I am sorry I do not know your name, but I want to tell you about your truck driver, Mr. Roy Harper.

I am an 82 year-old lady from Commerce. Today my friend and her eight year-old daughter took me to the doctor in Greenville. On our way home the car went out and we were stranded by the side of the road in the heat.

Mr. Harper stopped and called in for help for us, and he never left us. Help came and picked us up. He stayed behind us until we got to Commerce. He had ice water for us and offered to put me in the cab of his truck, out of the heat.

Thank you for the kind of people you employ.

Fay Little
Commerce, TX

Roy Harper is a Transportation Maintenance Technician for the Paris District.

Quick action on needed permits helps move critical shipment

Many thanks to Ms. Sandy Cox and Ms. Connie Noble for their effort in issuing oversize permits for an especially critical shipment. Your kind help is appreciated. Thanks for being there!

Robert J. Langley Sr.
Reserve, LA

This e-mail was received by Motor Carrier Division. Sandy Cox is a lead worker in the Permit Operations Branch. Connie Noble is a permit officer in the Permit Operations Branch.

Maintenance tech braves heat, changes flat tire, 'saves day'

A female co-worker and I were attempting to change a flat when Jeremy Taylor stopped and helped us with our problem.

Out in the terrible heat, he cheerfully tackled our hard-to-work jack and saved the day.

He works in Jacksonville and takes care of road signs, I think. Just wanted you to know. Thanks.

Angie Miller
Henderson, TX

This letter was e-mailed to Bob Eason, deputy division director of Human Resources. Jeremy D. Taylor is a Maintenance Technician II in Jacksonville, Tyler District.

Disabled El Paso woman wants to keep patrol on the road

The Courtesy Patrol is an invaluable service for all travelers. I hope the Courtesy Patrol continues to service our highways. If not for this service that was offered, there would be no telling how I would have managed on my own.

I have a physical disability and would not have been able to reach assistance without possibly creating a road hazard myself.

Keep up the good work.

Cecelia Rivera
El Paso, TX

Carlos Chavez, director of transportation for the El Paso District, received this letter.

Prompt roadside assistance helps get the troops to Kosovo

Please accept this letter of commendation for two of your fine employees, Paul Worlow III and Sean Golightly, Department of Transportation drivers in Fort Worth. I would appreciate it if you would place a copy of this letter in their personnel files.

The tire blew out on my Ford truck on I-35, just south of I-20. There was no danger. I limped off the freeway and into a convenience store.

To my great fortune, Mr. Worlow and Mr. Golightly spotted me from their Department of Transportation truck as they were beginning their shift.

With their help, we called and found a nearby tire shop that would be open for

another 45 minutes.

Mr. Worlow quickly lifted the jack from his truck and pulled my tire.

He drove me to the tire shop, waited patiently while the tire was repaired, and then returned me to my truck. He even reinstalled the tire.

Since I did not have a spare tire, had it not been for Mr. Worlow and Mr. Golightly, I would have been forced to spend the night at a local hotel and repair the tire Saturday morning with considerable delay.

As it was, they made it possible for me to reach Fort Worth Friday night, which in turn allowed me to reach Army Reserve duty on time the next morning where I assisted a team of Fort Worth soldiers preparing to deploy to Kosovo.

You should be very proud of Mr. Worlow and Mr. Golightly. They exemplify the best qualities of our state employees and are clearly dedicated to serving the needs of Texas motorists.

They handle themselves with a low-keyed, confident manner, which calms distraught drivers and solves problems quickly. I hope you will provide appropriate recognition for them.

James Volberding
Tyler, TX

Paul Worlow III and Sean Golightly are with the Fort Worth District Courtesy Patrol.

Tall roadside grass blocks view, TxDOT mowers respond quickly

I want to thank the state highway department for the work they did. Johnson grass was real high on the side of the road by my drive.

I had to get on the edge of the road before I could see the road.

I called Liberty and talked to Mr. (Myron) Broussard. He came out and checked and in about two hours sent a tractor and men to mow. They did a very good job.

I am too old to mow the side of the road. I am 86. I want to thank the highway department, Mr. Broussard, and the men that did the work.

Mrs. W. H. (Goldie) Shirley
Liberty, TX

Myron Broussard is a supervisor at the Liberty Maintenance Office (Beaumont District). This letter was addressed to Transportation News.

■ See MORE LETTERS, Page 10

Consumers benefit from Lemon Law; report released

Consumers who purchased or leased new defective vehicles received more than \$7.4 million in relief through the Texas Lemon Law in 2000.

The 2000 Lemon Law report, recently released by TxDOT, lists the number of complaints filed, defects reported, and how the complaints were settled.

Of all the complaints closed last year, nearly two-thirds of

consumers received measurable relief from defective vehicles — approximately 38 percent had their vehicles repurchased, replaced, or traded by the manufacturer. An additional 28 percent received repair, extended service contracts, or other remedies.

"The numbers indicate that the Lemon Law continues to do what it is intended to do — help consumers get relief from defec-

tive vehicles," said Brett Bray, director of TxDOT's Motor Vehicle Division.

The report lists the top five vehicles with the most complaints: Jeep Grand Cherokee, Chevrolet Suburban, GMC Sierra Pickup, Chevrolet Cavalier, and Ford F350 pickup.

The report also lists 13 of the most popular selling vehicles with the best complaint index rating.

From this group, the top five vehicles with the fewest complaints are Toyota Camry, Ford Focus, Honda Accord, Ford F150 pickup, and Chevrolet Tahoe.

Copies of the 2000 Lemon Law Report and a consumer handbook on the Texas Lemon Law are available through TxDOT at (512) 416-4800 or toll-free in Texas at 1-800-622-8682. ★

Service Awards

Ablene District

5 years
Lawrence W. Ekdahl
Kevin E. Hagan
Gwen A. Lee
Leslie A. Morgan
Erwin P. Session

Amarillo District

30 years
Billye J. Lloyd
20 years
Amado Arellano
Dawna R. Foster
James R. Garis
Susan L. Stockett
Mary H. Watson
15 years
Christophe P. Freeman

10 years

Derek S. Pope
5 years
Roger L. Batenhorst
Dennis W. Brazeal
Bryan A. Davis
Timothy B. Martin
Leonard R. Neusch

Atlanta District

30 years
Debra E. Williams
20 years
Randy N. Duke
15 years
Dennis J. Brown
Virge G. Heath
Allen L. Parr
Michael J. Ritter
5 years
Jose S. Abelardo

Austin District

25 years
Larry E. Jackson
10 years
Jamie D. Witten
5 years
Samuel M. Cox
Michael J. Dube
Gary W. Morris
Michael D. Schulze

Beaumont District

30 years
Huey Q. Bailey Jr.
20 years
Herbert O. Burrell
Mark L. Levy
Mark S. Rutledge
15 years
Bryan L. Pagel
10 years
Samuel Jackson
5 years
Ricky A. Walton

Brownwood District

35 years
Jimmy W. Sharp
25 years
Michael Kopchik
15 years
Thomas M. Dahl
Michael R. Smith
10 years
Laura J. Pierce

Bryan District

35 years
Bobby J. Paholek
20 years
Elaine D. Imhoff
Rodney P. Klawinsky
15 years
James E. Sanders
5 years
Scott H. Williams

Childress District

20 years
Jim L. Fox
David A. Henry
Robert M. Hosea
10 years
Arley L. Walker
5 years
Russell D. Favor
Donna K. Lively
Denny B. Sherrill
Larry L. Thompson

Corpus Christi District

35 years
Oscar Casanova
30 years
Teodoro Hernandez Jr.
Norman Zamzow
20 years
Luciano Martinez Jr.
Ricardo A. Padilla
15 years
John A. Hernandez
Max A. Lopez
Kandal W. Moff
10 years
Connie M. Avalos
5 years
Rosa M. Fletcher
Samuel M. Garcia
Juan Valenzuela

Dallas District

35 years
Earnest Betts Jr.
Robert P. McCormick
30 years
Billy R. Buchanan
Adnan M. Turk
20 years
Mark A. Marino
15 years
Rickey G. Ayers
Carl S. Harp
John E. Kelly
Kim C. Limberg
Keith A. McNamara
Patrick S. Poston
Jimmy Sanchez
Dale O. Wilkerson
10 years
James M. Palmgren
5 years
Arilyn J. Carter
Siddig M. Dali
Wayne D. Doakes Sr.
Joyce F. Gardner
Azeemuddin Husain
Osita O. Okoronkwo
Suzy A. Oviedo
Stephanie D. Powers
Nicholas Spencer

El Paso District

15 years
Ricardo Baeza
Aurelio Saldana Jr.
5 years
Francisco De Santos
Diana L. Diaz
Alberto F. Dominguez
Daniel L. Erwin
Yolanda Guerra
Ricardo Lopez
Veronica P. Lujan
Thelma G. Ramirez
Rudy Valdez

Fort Worth District

30 years
Ronnie Brady
David N. Oster
20 years
Glenn M. Franklin
Glen J. Liles
15 years
Scot D. Smith
10 years
Charles E. Fojtik Jr.
Mary E. Hobson
Steven E. Johnson
5 years
Sherri L. Duncan
Donna R. Fowler
Gary D. Gaitan
Tiffany N. Jackson
Robert D. Newell
Evans Thomas Jr.
George K. Weaver

Houston District

40 years
James H. Salmeron
35 years
Lonnie B. Johnson Sr.
30 years
Janet A. Kurtz
25 years
Tommie A. Bosley
20 years
Michael W. Alford
Juan L. Embil
Davis J. Ladet
Milton J. Lopez Jr.
Mohammad Mosaffa
Marion Noski
Gregory A. Ofield
15 years
Gordon J. Deslattes
Stewart R. Wusterhausen
Michael J. Warnasch
Sammie L. Wright

Houston District

10 years
Dana D. Cote
Lee H. Hamberry
Tracy D. Schiller
Andre L. Wilson
5 years
Sandra G. Flores
David Houston
Dean A. Linder
Joe B. Lindsey
Michelle E. Milliard
Jesus Olivas
Natthu S. Parate
Jerry A. Pruett
Boris Shurin
Mark E. Thomson

Laredo District

40 years
Jose G. Antu
30 years
Antonio F. Gonzalez
Robert C. Parker
20 years
Alfredo M. Esquivel
5 years
Oscar Balderas Jr.
Ricardo A. Perez

Lubbock District

35 years
Kenneth R. Sylvester
25 years
George L. Villarreal
20 years
J. R. Collins
Nicolas Guzman
Terry M. Jones
Luis M. Martinez
Wallace R. Posey
15 years
Dayne M. Golightly
Roger D. Locke
5 years
Joseph B. Dial
Brent Hillebrenner
James C. Jackson
Larry Valdez
Tracy L. Webb

Lufkin District

35 years
Billy E. Roberts
Chester R. Still
20 years
Edgar A. West Jr.
15 years
Larry W. Hensarling
Rory D. Perkins
Samuel V. Skrehot
5 years
Javier Hernandez
William H. Holcomb IV
Jerry K. Jasper
Doug Y'Barbo

Odessa District

25 years
Tommy M. Dominguez
20 years
Steve W. Esparza
Israel P. Rubio
Raul J. Rubio
15 years
Arthur L. Waguespack
5 years
Roy S. Garcia
Enrique Guerrero
Charles B. Hale
Deanne Hamilton
Henry C. Monroe III
Roberto R. Saenz
George R. Salcido
Mike Valenzuela

Paris District

30 years
Paul R. Hutchins
25 years
John C. Hodge
20 years
Kenneth W. Matthews
Tena B. Stinson
Mickey F. Workman
15 years
Gary L. Wideman
5 years
William S. Bolton
Jeffery B. Daniels
Dale L. Friddle
Kent D. Hall
Dale F. Moore
Michael S. Powers
Leann B. Watson

Pharr District

25 years
Nestor Garza
20 years
Debra A. Parr
15 years
Stanley Ramos
5 years
Gerardo Vallejo

San Angelo District

30 years
James L. Anderson Jr.
Shirley C. Anderson
25 years
Arnulfo G. Benavidez
5 years
Frank E. Munsinger
George L. Noriega Jr.

San Antonio District

35 years
Luis O. Alcala
Juan Fernandez
Robert P. Haley Jr.
James R. Mikesch
20 years
Linda S. Tomasini
Harold J. Stevens
Kenneth W. Zigrang
15 years
Pedro C. Abrego
Gregory A. Malatek
Jack E. Persyn
5 years
Ramon G. Benavidez
Jon W. Bielfeldt II
Carl N. Bishop
Israel Garcia Jr.
Maria H. Gloria
Lannie J. Ivy
Kathy L. Murray

Tyler District

5 years
Cornelia M. Haynes

Waco District

30 years
Thomas E. Brazzil
15 years
Terry P. Holt
Michael W. Vincent
10 years
Eddie W. Sleeper
5 years
William C. Chalfant
Duane D. Cowart
Tony R. Love
Charlie R. Phillips

Wichita Falls District

30 years
Ralph D. Self Jr.
25 years
Donald E. Thompson
15 years
Carole S. Cain
Alan D. Carter
Jack H. Robb
Billie H. Slaggle
Alden L. Tharp
10 years
Louis S. Smith
5 years
Leighann S. Goodwin
Richard B. Ross
Raymundo Torrez
Jimmie D. Westerman Jr.

Yoakum District

35 years
Cheryl A. Trott
20 years
Jimmy D. Borak
James S. Heard
15 years
David A. Kelley
Tommy D. Parr
5 years
Laurie S. Jaeger

Audit Office

25 years
Dalton M. Ritter
15 years
Raymond R. Martinez

Aviation Division

25 years
Charlotte E. Bergfeld

Bridge Division

5 years
Mahendra Patel

Construction Division

20 years
Gary L. Graham
Larry G. Miller
15 years
Mohammad F. Farhoud
Vivian R. Frisinger
Robert Grona
James E. Kosel
Elaine M. Smith
Juan F. Urrutia
10 years
Deborah M. Walker
5 years
Mark Filip
Rosemary R. Zamora

Design Division

30 years
Linda K. Olson
25 years
George F. Gold Jr.
15 years
Charles A. Riou

Environmental Affairs Division

5 years
Jenise K. Walton
Susie B. Watson

Finance Division

15 years
Glen T. Knipstein
10 years
Coleta D. Dille

General Services Division

25 years
Lina F. Devine
20 years
Laddie L. Bordovsky
Jerline Harden
Don R. Walker
Donald C. Washington
5 years
Arthur T. Leifeste
Betty J. Mott
Marta E. Ortiz

Human Resources Division

5 years
Martin E. Anderson

Information Systems Division

20 years
Brenda S. Kalapach
Lealean W. Peace
Robin L. Taylor
15 years
Suzanne Moses
5 years
Janet L. Hyndman
Barry L. Sylvester
Lewis L. Tsin
Kaye L. Wade

International Relations Office

5 years
Leocadio Matias

Maintenance Division

15 years
Ralph S. Hanson
10 years
Stephanie A. Kleiber

Motor Carrier Division

15 years
Lee Carter
Robert W. Frizzell
Trinea C. Moreno
Angel D. Oliver

Occupational Safety Division

25 years
Doris O. Finley
15 years
Martha G. Thompson

Public Transportation Division

5 years
Robert G. Williams

Traffic Operations Division

20 years
Terry A. Pence
10 years
Charles D. Koonce III
5 years
Judy A. Allen
John L. Johnson
Debra D. Vermillion

Transportation Planning & Programming Division

20 years
Victor J. Holubec
Herman M. Nelson
10 years
Jennifer L. Bierman
5 years
Janie S. Bynum
Rodney D. Coursey
Deardra C. Rohde - Sprott

Travel

20 years
John G. Appold
10 years
Teresa K. Carney

Vehicle Titles & Registration Division

30 years
Darrel R. Hunt
Cynthia W. McCelvey
25 years
Rita B. Foster
Carolyn G. Williams
20 years
Theresa G. Elliott
15 years
Sharon J. Allen
5 years
Carol L. Birdow
Charles K. Caldwell
Joan R. Minton

Note: Because of computer problems, the August Service Awards were incomplete. This corrected list represents August and September Service Awards.

More Letters

Continued from Page 8

Leadership class gains insights about traffic monitoring system

Just a note to thank you for the time you gave the Northeast Leadership Class of 2001. Everyone was in total amazement over the traffic monitoring system you showed us.

The knowledge we gained that day regarding our community has already come in handy to me. I have used the website twice since meeting with you to get me to Dallas.

Thank you again for taking the time to teach us about a very valuable tool.

Martha Strain
Chairman Leadership
Economic Development and
Transportation

Tai Tan Nguyen of the Fort Worth Freeway Traffic Management Office received this note.

Driver recognizes helpfulness shown by TxDOT employee

I wanted to take a moment to extend my gratitude to a member of your staff, **Mr. Bob Smith**.

His kindness, professionalism, and lack of hesitation to help a stranger in need really speaks a lot for the type of personnel you have working for you.

While traveling east on I-40 over the Lakeside exit, I experienced a flat tire on my minivan and had nowhere to go but to the center median.

While waiting for my husband to return my call, Mr. Smith arrived in a TxDOT truck with the lights flashing, donned his safety vest, and proceeded to change my tire.

I tried to tell him that my husband could

come and help when he took his lunch break, but he wouldn't hear of it. He changed my tire and I was safely on my way in just a matter of minutes.

I really appreciate the courtesy shown to me by Mr. Smith and I am grateful for TxDOT allowing their employees to assist people on the highway.

Debbie Dempsey
Amarillo, TX

Bob Smith is the district Signal/Radio Shop supervisor in Amarillo. This letter was addressed to Chris Freeman of the Amarillo District.

Permit officer receives letter expressing thanks for helpfulness

I am writing to express my thanks to one of your employees, **Lee Gradney**. He was extremely helpful to me this morning and showed a great deal of patience. I appreciate his professionalism and would like him to be commended for this.

Bebe Gaines
Smithville, TX

Lee Gradney is a permit officer in Motor Carrier Division's Permit Operations Branch. Mike Warnken of the Motor Carrier Division received this faxed letter.

Mover provides settlement check; action prompts appreciation

Thank you for your phone call regarding resolution of our claim against our moving company.

This letter confirms that we have received a settlement check from the mover for the amount of \$800.

This check satisfies and closes our claim against them for damage to machine tools which occurred during a move from Plano, TX, to Sugar Land, TX, in June 2000.

I wish to express my deep appreciation to your department, and especially to you, for continuing to push for resolution of our claim.

Ken Stubbe
Sugar Land, TX

This letter was addressed to Terence Donovan, an investigator with Motor Carrier Division's Compliance and Enforcement Branch.

Customer: TxDOT comes through in dispute with storage company

I am extremely grateful for the thorough and expeditious manner in which you handled our complaint.

At the time of reporting the storage company to you we felt totally disgusted and helpless.

We had contacted every local law enforcement agency that we could think of and no one could help us. But after trying you as a last resort, you came through for us.

And, we would like you to know that we appreciate all of your efforts. Again, thank you very much.

Johnnie C. Carmouche
Delon Carmouche

This letter was addressed to Marcelo Perez following Motor Carrier Division's assistance with a non-consent tow and storage of a vehicle. Assisting with the investigation were Homer Vasquez and Doug Simmons, both with the Motor Carrier Division.

■ See MORE LETTERS, Page 11

Retirements

■ JUNE 2001

Houston District

Jose C. Martinez
Maintenance Technician III
15 Years

San Antonio District

Armando Hernandez
Engineering Technician IV
33 Years

Theodore E. Ozuna
Engineering Specialist IV
44 Years

James P. Anderson
Engineering Technician III
19 Years

■ JULY 2001

Fort Worth District

Carl G. Vossler
Maintenance Technician III
27 Years

Houston District

Marvin R. Ehlert Jr.
Engineering Technician V
43 Years

San Antonio District

Gordon D. Kirkland
Administration Technician III
31 Years

Wichita Falls District

Robert T. Garner
Area Engineer II
33 Years

General Services Division

Randy D. Hartsook
Administrative Technician III
24 Years

Traffic Division

Sherrill L. Schulle
Railroad Program Coordinator
33 Years

AUGUST 2001

Abilene District

Joseph N. Swinney
Engineering Technician III
37 Years

Amarillo District

Lonnie D. Parr
Engineering Technician V
38 Years

Phillip E. Cervantes
Trans Maintenance Specialist II
36 Years

Carl W. Robertson
Electrical/Air Condition Mechanic I
33 Years

Atlanta District

Waylon E. Thomas
Sign Technician IV
36 Years

Bryan District

Virgil M. Arnold
Equipment Repair Shop Supervisor II
37 Years

Edward G. Gaas
Asst Maint Section Supervisor III
33 Years

Helen K. Paul
Office Technician IV
30 Years

David L. McCannon
Area Engineer III
34 Years

Childress District

Carl L. Bruce
Maintenance Section Supervisor I
44 Years

Earlene F. Delaney
Management Auditor IV
23 Years

Corpus Christi District

Rebecca S. Kureska
Program Administration IV
35 Years

Dallas District

Robert E. Rust
Engineering Technician III
14 Years

Houston District

Kenneth W. Lehmann
Trans Maintenance Specialist I
28 Year

Elvis "Muddy" N. Lunsford
Trans Maintenance Specialist III
31 Years

Paris District

Freddy R. Millsap
Engineer Technician V
35 Years

Jerry D. Stone
Trans Maintenance Specialist II
36 Years

San Angelo District

Dolores J. Roe
Administration Technician II
17 Years

Larry R. Hasty
Engineering Specialist III
34 Years

San Antonio District

Wayne J. Pehl
Program Administration IV
31 Years

Wichita Falls District

Jerry A. Damron
Trans Maintenance Specialist IV
39 Years

Administration

Gene Adams
Spl Asst to the Executive Director
38 Years

Charles W. Heald
Executive Director
41 Years

Linda C. Pospisil
Executive Assistant
8 Years

Bridge Design Division

Richard L. Wilkison
Director III
35 Years

Construction Division

Albert L. Pozzi
Engineering Specialist II
33 Years

Joann J. Lins
Administration Technician III
12 Years

Leon Goss
Engineering Technician VI
32 Years

Tommy R. Etheredge
Engineering Specialist III
38 Years

Mickey R. Maxey
Engineering Specialist III
33 Years

Glenn A. Spann
Engineering Technician IV
32 Years

Information Systems Division

Clinton R. Hobbs
Program Administrator I
19 Years

Transportation Planning and Programming Division

Alvin R. Luedecke Jr.
Director V
30 Years

Vehicle Titles and Registration Division

Rebecca E. Swank
Office Technician III
28 Years

More Letters

Continued from Page 10

Help with emergency permits draws praise for quick response

Thank you, Dianna McIntosh. You did a great job helping me with these three emergency permits today. They need more people like you to help us stressed-out dispatchers/truckers.

Lonnie Shafer
Turner Brothers
Houston, TX

This note was faxed to Dianna McIntosh, permit officer in Motor Carrier Division's Permit Branch.

City official describes helpfulness of two who changed flat tire

These two gentlemen were a godsend. I had passed their truck about a mile back, when I heard what I thought was something hit my car.

I then noticed the car pulling to the right and finally decided to pull over on I-30 in Arlington. One of my tires was flat and it was dusk and getting dark quickly.

Unable to get a hold of someone to help me, I wasn't sure what to do. I had the courtesy patrol's numbers at work, but wasn't sure they were in my glove box. Before I had too much time to decide what to do, I noticed flashing lights in my rear-view mirror.

Gary Barnes and Reginold Cromwell quickly changed my tire.

They really don't know how thankful I was to see them, since I had envisioned sitting there in the dark wondering how I was going to get home to Richland Hills.

Although I expressed my gratitude to them at the time, please let them know again, that I truly appreciate the work they do.

Becky Null
Deputy City Secretary
Euleus, TX

Gary Barnes is a motor vehicle technician and Reginold Cromwell is a member of the Courtesy Patrol, both in the Fort Worth District.

Maintenance specialist helps couple who suffered flat tire

We just want to thank you again for stopping to help us when we had a blowout just north of Kress.

I don't know what we'd have done without your aid.

You hear about so many uncaring people, it's wonderful to find the truly "caring" ones. Of course, Texans are special!

Dick and Billie Ray

This note was addressed to Rodolpho Moreno, maintenance specialist in the Tulia maintenance office, Lubbock District.

Church's project manager praises responsiveness

We want to commend Travis Bartlow and the Grand Prairie Maintenance Section to you for their responsiveness and follow-through regarding our request for parkway bluebonnets.

They must really know what they're doing! This year's crop has been a delight to us at Church of The King.

Will you please pass along our appreciation to Tony Lucido as well? These two men have made a huge department in the state system not only accessible, but just downright nice.

Thank you!
Marty McMillan
Landscape Project Manager
Church of The King
Dallas, TX

This letter was addressed to Butch Jones, Dallas Southwest Area Engineer, and Craig Miser, assistant area engineer. Travis Bartlow is the Grand Prairie maintenance supervisor and Tony Lucido is a district landscape architect.

Assistance with storage company spurs expression of gratitude

Thank you for your assistance in settling our claim with the relocation and storage company.

You were very professional, knowledgeable and helpful. We also appreciate you keeping us informed as needed.

Thank you and best wishes in your continued work at TxDOT.

Lorenzo Fitzpatrick
Austin, TX

This letter was addressed to Homer Vasquez, an investigator in Motor Carrier Division's Compliance and Enforcement Branch.

■ See MORE LETTERS, Page 12

It's time to renew

Persons receiving *Transportation News* by mail must make a request to remain on the mailing list.

Here's your chance. Please fill out the form below and send it to *Transportation News*, attention: Monica Reyes-Guerrero, 125 E. 11th St., Austin, Texas 78701.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

ZIP code: _____

In Memoriam

Amarillo District

Willie B. Hughes
Maintenance Technician III
retired in 1990
died May 21, 2001

Austin District

Herbert M. Wisian
Maintenance Technician III
retired in 1992
died June 24, 2001

Brownwood District

John E. Townsend
Engineering Technician V
retired in 1987
died June 4, 2001

Childress District

Ralph W. Shipman
Maintenance Technician III
retired in 1983
died February 19, 2001

Corpus Christi District

Almus J. Brown
Purchasing and Supply Officer II
retired in 1987
died May 29, 2001

Lucille C. White
Administrative Technician I
retired in 1991
died June 12, 2001

Dallas District

Thomas J. Allen
Administrator of Technical Programs
retired in 1982
died June 04, 2001

Arnold A. Green
ROW Appraiser III
retired in 1979
died March 29, 2001

Clovis A. Holley
Engineering Technician IV
retired in 1984
died June 24, 2001

Volney J. Meeks
Maintenance Technician III
retired in 1976
died June 27, 2001

Fleming A. Phillips Jr.
Administration Assistance
retired in 1985
died April 12, 2001

Fort Worth District
Freddie L. Mushinski
Maintenance Technician II
retired in 1986
died June 2, 2001

Houston District

Leonard Law
Maintenance Technician III
retired in 1979
died December 21, 2000

Laredo District

Cecil J. Tidwell
Engineering Technician V
retired in 1975
died May 27, 2001

Lubbock District

Joe E. Green
Maintenance Technician III
retired in 1981
died June 26, 2001

Joe B. Moore
Maintenance Construction Supervisor II
retired in 1975
died June 13, 2001

Norris D. Philpot
Maintenance Technician III
retired in 1991
died April 28, 2001

Lufkin District

Bruce W. Modisette
Maintenance Technician III
retired in 1974
died June 5, 2001

Paris District

Delbert L. Smith
Maintenance Technician III
retired in 1984
died July 14, 2001

Pharr District

Francisco A. Saucedo
Maintenance Technician III
retired in 1976
died October 8, 2000

San Angelo District

Rafael Gonzales
Maintenance Technician III
retired in 1993
died June 5, 2001

Tyler District

Raymond D. Hawkins
Maintenance Technician III
retired in 1988
died May 4, 2001

Waco District

Joel A. Williams
Chief Accountant I
retired in 1975
died May 24, 2001

Yoakum District

Lee Roy E. Hartmann
Maintenance Technician III
retired in 1987
died June 29, 2001

Curtis L. Jacobs
Maintenance Technician III
retired in 1988
died May 26, 2001

Vehicle Title and Registration Division

Morris J. Butts
Investigator II
retired in 1997
died May 16, 2001

More Letters

Continued from Page 11

Two men draw recognition for work at accident scene

I wanted to thank the Texas Department of Transportation for your professionalism and assistance.

Saia Motor Freight Lines, Inc. was involved in a single-vehicle rollover accident with one of our tractor-trailers at the Loop 12 and I-30 interchange. Fortunately, no one was seriously injured.

I arrived at the accident scene to find that the on-ramp to East I-30 was closed due to the accident. Saia Motor Freight Lines was attempting to offload the freight. This was a time-consuming task.

Travis Bartlow and Danny Clanton of the Grand Prairie Maintenance Office arrived minutes after TxDOT had already set up traffic control devices to move traffic around the accident safely.

At this time Travis Bartlow and Danny Clanton assisted to speed up the freight removal so we could clear the on-ramp for the traveling public.

On behalf of Saia Motor Freight Lines, Inc., I would like to thank TxDOT and all the employees from the Grand Prairie Maintenance Office who assisted in this matter.

Darvin D. Brinkley
Grand Prairie, TX

Dallas chief of police expresses gratitude for maintenance work

I would like to take this time to thank you and your staff for assisting Officers V. A. Lozada and R. B. Garcia in all the hard work and effort in cleaning and maintaining the Cedars area.

These officers have advised me of the interest that you have in developing the Cedars by assisting them in all aspects of appearance, as well as improving the quality of life of the citizens of Dallas

Terrell Bolton
Chief of Police
Dallas, TX

Oscar Ruiz, transportation maintenance technician in the Hutchins Maintenance Office, Dallas District, received this letter of commendation.

Exemplary customer service draws agency manager's praise

I am writing to commend Larry Shorts and Lucy Galvan for the exemplary assistance given to me earlier this year.

On my way to Cleveland, I experienced a car problem at the Rankin exit, adjacent to your office. Mr. Shorts stopped and offered me a ride to TxDOT, where a telephone and directory were made available for me to contact AAA Motor Club and my office.

Mr. Shorts handed me over to Ms. Galvan at the reception area, in order to continue his work.

All through the wait for AAA and my staff, Ms. Galvan ensured that I was comfortable and that all calls regarding my

dilemma were routed to me. I could not help but admire the extreme courteousness and professionalism with which she answered the phone.

Mr. Shorts and Ms. Galvan are enough proof that your operation indeed provides quality customer service.

Jas Okoroafo
Regional Business Manager
Texas Department of Human Services
Austin, TX

Doug Stephens, area engineer of the Houston District North Harris Area Office, received this letter. Larry Shorts is an engineer technician III in the North Harris Maintenance Office, and Lucy Galvan is an administrative technician II in the North Harris Area Office.

Helpful action for consumer draws praise from physician

I have just received a phone call from my wife, who is in San Antonio. She has inspected our furniture and there does not appear to be any damage.

The moving company is treating this as a misunderstanding and will be transferring the sensitive items to cold storage.

I would like to thank you for the rapid response. I feel you were largely responsible for resolving this matter.

A William Bell, M.D.
Weslaco, TX

This letter was addressed to Larry Simcox, a transportation investigator in the Motor Carrier Division.

Driver urges use of left lane for passing only, not 'camping out'

Just a note of thanks and appreciation.

My wife and I were returning to our home in Wyoming along I-20 between the Louisiana line and Dallas and I saw several highway signs that read something like this: "USE LEFT LANE FOR PASSING ONLY."

Motorists "camping out" in the left lane (the passing lane) have been one of my pet peeves for many years. It's unsafe and impedes the orderly flow of traffic.

And there's a reason why we are seated on the left side of a vehicle in America and we are supposed to pass others on their left. That is the side the driver is nearest to his or her rear-view outside mirror and they should be most aware of what's approaching from the rear.

I thank those of the Texas Department of Transportation for recognizing that many motorists either don't know what is proper, or choose to disregard.

Use of cruise control has made "camping out" in the left lane even more popular.

And, most state highway departments have signs which read, "Slower Traffic Use Right Lane," which does not at all convey the same message. Who wants to go slow these days?

Thank you for saying, and doing, it right.
Drive Friendly!

Doug Hays
Buffalo, WY

This letter was sent to the Austin District Office.

Calendar

SEPTEMBER

- 11** Prefabricated Bridge Systems for Rapid Construction, Austin, BRG
- 13** Texas Turnpike Authority Board Meeting, Austin
- 14** Managing The Government Supply Chain, Austin, GSD
- 18** Rosh Hashanah (holiday)
- 19** Rosh Hashanah (holiday)
- 19-20** Consultant Contract User Group Meeting, Austin, DES
- 24-26** Human Resources Conference, Austin, HRD
- 27** Commission Meeting, Austin

OCTOBER

- 3-4** District Equipment Supervisor Meeting, Austin, GSD
- 4-5** Bid Letting, Austin, CST
- 8-9** Partnering - A Strategy for Excellence, Austin, GSD
- 11** Texas Turnpike Authority Board Meeting, Austin
- 25** Commission Meeting, Austin
- 27** Yom Kippur (holiday)
- 31-11/2** State Rodeo Competition and APM Meeting, Waco, OCC

NOVEMBER

- 1** Texas Turnpike Authority Board Meeting, Austin
- 1-2** State Rodeo Competition and APM Meeting, Waco, OCC
- 5-8** Research Management Committee Meeting, CST
- 6-7** Bid Letting, Austin, CST
- 15** Commission Meeting, Austin
- 22** Thanksgiving Day (holiday)
- 23** Day after Thanksgiving (holiday)
- 27-28** Negotiated Contract Conference, Austin, CSO

DECEMBER

- 4-5** Bid Letting, Austin, CST
- 6** Texas Turnpike Authority Board Meeting, Austin
- 13** Commission Meeting, Austin
- 24** Christmas Eve (holiday)

The complete TxDOT Calendar is on the Intranet at <http://crossroads.org/plo/articles/calendar.htm>

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