



Former ENV deputy, Ann Irwin, dies

Ann M. Irwin, former deputy division director of ENV, died Dec. 9.

She retired from TxDOT in December 2004 after 27 years of service. Before becoming deputy division director of ENV in June 2002 she was director of the Cultural Resources Section (CRM), branch manager of the Archeology Studies Branch and a field archeologist. When she retired in December 2004, Ann went to work for Carter & Burgess, Inc.

Before joining TxDOT in 1978 she was curator for the Laboratory of Anthropology and laboratory operations manager at Washington State University; principal investigator on several projects, including excavations of important Paleo-Indian sites; research and editorial assistant and teaching assistant at the University of Pennsylvania; and laboratory supervisor for several projects. Ann was also the field foreman for the Hell Gap Archeological Expedition and had served as a consultant to both the Cheney-Cowles Museum and Rocky-Reach Museum. She was a published author of many papers dealing with

various archeological sites.

Ann received bachelor's degrees in anthropology and English from the University of Kansas. She received her master's in anthropology from the University of Pennsylvania and completed coursework at the University of Pennsylvania for a Ph.D. in Anthropology.

Ann received numerous awards over the years, including a Phi Beta Kappa. Her numerous fellowships and grants included a Carnegie Institute Stipend, Woodrow Wilson Graduate Fellowship, University Institutional Fellowship and Teaching Fellowships from the University of Pennsylvania and grants for her work on the Lind Coulee Site in Washington State.

Under Ann's leadership of the CRM

TxDOT gained recognition for its achievements in the cultural resources

field, including receipt of the Curtis Tunnell Award from Preservation Texas, and the inaugural E. Mott Davis Award for Excellence in Public Outreach from the Council of Texas Archeologists. She received one of the highest honors awarded by TxDOT, the Raymond E. Stotzer, Jr. Award, in 1999.

She was admired by her coworkers for her generosity, determination, optimism

and unflappability. She was known throughout the department as a skilled negotiator. She was supportive of her staff and brought out the best in people.

Ann was an example of goodness



Ann M. Irwin

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Mowing delayed to protect owls

By JENNY SADNICK

Environmental Affairs Division

The El Paso District temporarily halted mowing this past summer on a section of U.S. 54 in northeast El Paso to avoid disturbing the nesting season of burrowing owls. The district made the decision after it learned that these owls had nested in the right of way.

Burrowing owls are an endangered species in Canada and a Texas "watch-list" species, or species of concern.

Lois Balin, a biologist for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, brought the situation to TxDOT's attention after learning of the situation from Richard

Hermosillo, a member of the El Paso/Trans Pecos Audubon Society.

In response, El Paso District Director of Maintenance Leo Betancourt postponed mowing in the area to avoid damaging the nests and habitat. The heavy equipment used to mow could have compacted the soil, complicating the burrowing process for the owls or destroying their burrows altogether.

Mowing resumed in September, when the fledglings were old enough to fend for themselves and mowing no longer posed a significant threat. Betancourt said, "I certainly felt that delaying the

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Doug Mack beat paralysis

By BLYTHE JEWELL

Environmental Affairs Division

On the surface, Doug Mack seems like one of the guys. A project manager with ENV's Pollution Prevention and Abatement (PPA) Branch, Mack's work helps make Texas transportation safer for all of us, regulating roadways and structures built through contaminated areas like landfills, superfund sites and gas stations. His agreeable nature has made him well-liked among his coworkers, and his dedication to his job has made him well-respected.

But beneath Mack's easy-going professional demeanor lies a sense of determination that once saved him from life as a wheelchair-bound quadriplegic. This determination led him to a new life as a successful TxDOT project manager, inspirational author and proud father and husband.

Mack started working for ENV in March of 1998. In his current position with PPA, he provides a wide range of services and works with a varied group of TxDOT districts and divisions including Right of Way, Advance Planning, Design and Construction. Most recently, he worked with the El Paso District to locate and remove unexploded ordances, such as anti-tank rounds, grenades and bullets, on a former Fort Bliss shooting range before detention ponds could be built there.

Mack has great regard for his coworkers and a strong sense of respect for the work that TxDOT does. When asked about his favorite TxDOT memory, he said, "The one thing that will always stick with me is the manner in which TxDOT employees work together as a team... It's amazing to step back and realize the overall scope and grandeur of what TxDOT has actually accomplished."

This earnest answer does not exactly reflect the light-hearted Mack that his coworkers know. When asked about Mack, Terry Dempsey, a team leader for PPA, said, "Because of his entertaining nature and easy-going style, he adds a little bit of lightness to the office environment."

Former PPA team leader Dan Neal adds, "Doug's world revolves around two things: (1) Taco Friday and (2) [his son], maybe not necessarily in that

order."

Mack's engaging temperament may come from an unlikely source: overcoming paralysis. At the age of 19, the college freshman joined a group of friends to play basketball, a casual get-together that would suddenly and unexpectedly change his life. At the gym, the group came upon an open room with gymnastics equipment and decided to try some of it out for fun. Their amusement quickly turned to tragedy when Mack dove headfirst into a set of foam blocks, typically used to arrest gymnasts' movement during training. The impact broke his neck.

During his first month in the hospital, Mack was able to move only small facial muscles. Hope for further recovery was essentially nonexistent. Told by doctors that he was not likely to survive and certainly would never walk again, Mack refused to accept the hopelessness of his diagnosis and chose instead to fight. After months of painful rehabilitation, unblinking determination and intense hard work, he walked out of the hospital to resume his life.

Mack went on to receive a degree in Environmental Sciences from Texas State University and, after a five-year stint with the City of Austin, finally

found his place at TxDOT. He met his wife Julie a few years after college, and the two were married in a Las Vegas ceremony, where Mack opted to forego the tradition groom's tuxedo for an Elvis jumpsuit. They later had a son, Raleigh, who is now 3 years old and, according to Mack, "made of pure energy!"

After his recovery, Mack used his experience to write a book titled "The Walking Quadriplegic: Defeating Paralysis." Published in December 2005, the book tells his inspiring story and offers an inside look at life as a quadriplegic and beyond. It is now available online at many retail sites, including Amazon.com (www.amazon.com) and Barnes and Noble (www.bn.com). (Find the book's web site at www.thewalkingquad.com.)

With the successful release of "The Walking Quadriplegic," Mack has now written a second book, a work of fiction he hopes to publish soon.

Living in Austin with Julie and Raleigh, he continues to inspire those who know him and those he reaches through his writings.

His weighty past has not diminished Mack's sense of fun, however. He may even be harboring a secret identity. According to Dempsey, "Doug is an Elvis fanatic.

I've seen pictures – at his Las Vegas wedding, and wandering the streets on

Halloween – where he looks just like Elvis. Maybe he really is Elvis in disguise."



Sandbur Site decades in the making

By **JENNY SADNICK**
Environmental Affairs Division

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) presented its annual Award of Merit in Archeology to the Environmental Affairs Division's Archeological Studies Program in July 2005.

According to Mark Denton, Coordinator for State and Federal Reviews at THC, the award recognizes "superior quality archeological field investigations, artifact analysis and report production associated with Cultural Resource Management investigations performed at the local, state or federal level here in Texas."

ENV was recognized because of a project based in southeast Texas, near the banks of the lower Colorado River in Fayette County.

"If you followed that river all the way down to the Gulf of Mexico, the site is about 100 miles from the coast. It's not really on the Colorado, but on a big tributary that flows into the Colorado River. The site is located near the historical La Bahia road crossing of the river and in an area containing many early sites associated with Texas history," explains TxDOT archeologist Al McGraw, who was involved in the project from its inception.

The site later came to be known as the Sandbur Site because of the many Sandbur weed plants found there.

Federal and state laws require TxDOT to identify any significant historic or prehistoric sites that might be impacted by transportation construction, so when plans were made to rebuild a highway across the Colorado River archeologists Frank Weir and Wayne Young were sent with a TxDOT crew to investigate the area in 1979.

They soon discovered that the site "consisted of a series of vertical layers of prehistoric occupations covering a span of at least 10,000 years, with occupants ranging from about 9500 B.C. or earlier to about A.D. 1400-1450," McGraw says.

Study of the Sandbur Site has shed new light on a poorly understood period of Texas prehistory. According to McGraw, TxDOT archeologists and consultants from PBS&J determined that large parts of the different occupational layers had mixed together, making analysis difficult. But one part of the site appeared to be relatively intact. Luckily, it was the most recent layer, a campsite that was repeatedly occupied from A.D. 1250-1450.

Those specific years marked an important time in Texas. As McGraw explains, "At that time, people with new technologies, including the bow and arrow and pottery, appeared suddenly across much of Texas. Archeological evidence shows that they often lived among, interacted with, and occasionally fought

other local groups in South and Central Texas."

Distinctive stone tools left behind during that time have been found at sites scattered from West Texas to the Gulf of Mexico, but little is known about where they came from or why the people who left them suddenly disappeared after A.D.

1600. It was a time of early European contact in northern Mexico, and archeologists suspect that some cultural patterns of later historical groups, especially those of inter-regional trade and interaction, may have originated with these early inhabitants.

"When people with a new technology, style and toolkits appear without precedence in a region's archeological record, their presence may be the result of significant influences in the cultural and natural environments.

As an example, the

abrupt appearance of these hunter-gatherers in turn roughly corresponds to evidence of increased bison herds across the state. This may be related to larger influences of climate change and regional migration patterns," says McGraw.

Ardi Kalter and Michael Smith, both PBS&J staff archeologists, conducted the majority of the analysis on the artifacts previously collected in 1979. PBS&J's work began in October 2002 and concluded with their March 2005 report on the Sandbur site. Kalter authored the report with help from Smith and Robert Rogers, the principal investigator of the site.

Kalter agreed with McGraw that the traditional view of the area as an archeological "transition zone" is likely flawed. Given the area's geographic location and proximity to the Colorado River, early people may have passed through the site, but it also probably held its own indigenous population.

McGraw agrees and says, "The TxDOT and PBS&J study provides new insights into the poorly understood history of early Texans. These findings will be used in the future as a challenging base of information when others encounter and investigate similar campsites within or beyond TxDOT's highways."

While honored by THC's recognition, McGraw maintains that this project was about more than an award. It is important shows "how you can use information...to advance the scientific understanding of archeology. And it reflects TxDOT's continuing commitment to address and finalize the requirements of what they'd set out to do."

McGraw continues, "More often than not, an archeological study isn't the glamorous version shown in the movies but as the Sandbur work shows, it can be a difficult, tedious and often lengthy process to better understand our common heritage."



Wayne Young (in cap) and Frank Weir at Sandbur site.

Archive photo

FHWA's Excellence in Highway Design Awards



'Black-eyed Susan' wildflowers beside a central Texas highway.

TxDOT file photo

By H.G. QUINN

Environmental Affairs Division

TxDOT was recognized for four projects in FHWA's Excellence in Highway Design Biennial Awards for both 2006 and 2004.

- The Brownwood District received a 2006 Merit Award for the Walker Street project in the Historic Preservation category. The restored section of U. S. 180 in Breckenridge is one of the few remaining brick roadways located on the U. S. Highway system. (See related article on page 8.)

- TxDOT's Wildflower Program won a 2004 Merit Award in the category of Environmental Protection and Enhancements. Texas is known for its magnificent wildflowers, with more than a million acres of roadside blooming in huge carpets of color from spring to early summer. The peak wildflower season draws tourists from around the world to see the rolling panorama of more than 5,000 species of wildflowers unfold each spring.

TxDOT's wildflower program not only beautifies the highways but conserves water, controls erosion and provides habitat for wildlife. TxDOT's Maintenance Division sows about 15 tons of wildflower seed each year and delays all mowing, unless essential for safety, until the wildflower season is over. This practice has stayed in place for more than 60 years and has expanded into today's full-scale vegetation management system.

- The relocation and rehabilitation of the Oak Forest Bridge won a 2004 Merit Award in the category of Historic

Preservation.

Built 11 miles upstream from Gonzalez in 1913, the 140-foot, pin-connected Parker through truss could no longer handle modern traffic loads.

Besides being one of the earliest settlements in the state, the city of Gonzalez also played a pivotal role in the earliest days of the Texas Revolution and Republic. It is home to many prominent monuments and sites.

The local historic preservation organization worked closely with TxDOT to have the bridge restored and moved into town to span Kerr Creek as part of a hike and bike trail linking the historic

sites throughout the city.

- At 44,620 square miles, the Brazos River basin is the largest watershed contained entirely within Texas. Flood levels between 20 and 30 feet are common. The outside stream where U. S. 59 crosses the Brazos was dangerously scoured.

The Houston District implemented strategies in more than 1800 feet of riverbank so that erosion is reversed, and new soils are being deposited with every river rise. This project won a 2004 Honorable Mention in the category of Highway Improvements on Publicly Owned Land.

This national award honors the most creative designs that apply context-sensitive solutions to transportation-related problems – safety, mobility, environmental enhancement, economic productivity, accessibility, aesthetics and security.

The next call for entries will be in September 2007.



U. S. 59 at the Brazos River near Richmond.

Houston District photo



Oak Forest Bridge relocated to Kerr Creek in the City of Gonzales.

Photo by H. G. Quinn

Former permits officer Remaley dies at 53

Thomas M. Remaley, former Environmental Affairs Division (ENV) permit assistance officer, died July 24, 2005 at age 53. Tom came to ENV from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), where he headed up the Standards and Assessment Section. He started work at TxDOT as an environmental specialist in ENV's Water Quality Branch. He was later promoted to supervise the Water Resources Management Branch.

Jean Beeman, Design Division's administrative manager, was a long-time friend. "The thing I really liked about Tom as far as work goes, was that it didn't matter how much stress he was under, and I know he was under a lot of stress, he never let it affect how he related to people," Beeman said.

"He also tried to make the job easier [by cutting] through the red tape in the bureaucracy to get at some kind of resolution or partnership that worked well for everybody involved," Beeman said. "He just really tried to work with people and establish good rapport and relationships, and working in Environmental in that kind of position, that's real important."



Tom Remaley

Remaley stayed with TxDOT for three and a half years before moving to Houston to work for Berg-Oliver in December 2002. At Berg-Oliver, Tom was a Vice President and Senior Project Manager, and opened the company's Austin office.

Tom's approach of putting others before himself at whatever cost remained with him through his transition into a new job. Ken Berg, the principal of Berg-Oliver Associates, also saw that part of Tom and added, "Tom was a patient and caring person with his co-workers and often took time to teach younger employees about aspects of our business that are gained from experience."

Outside of work, Tom's family was a top priority in his life. He really enjoyed spending time with his family and Beeman recollected a time "when his son had his first grandchild, maybe three or four years ago, he was so excited to be a first-time grandpa."

Tom left behind a son, daughter, two grandchildren, a sister, and other family members.

Alan Wormser, archeologist, with TxDOT ties, dead at 48

Alan Joseph Wormser passed away Aug. 12, 2005, in Inova Fairfax Hospital, located in Falls Church, Virginia.

Wormser worked as a TxDOT archeologist from 1986 to 1993.

ENV archeologist Barbara Hickman said that "he was always involved in something." This drive led him to accomplish many things, from writing a National Register of Historic Places nomination for Camp Mabry, to receiving a personal citation of merit in 1998 from William Cohen, Secretary of Defense.



Alan Wormser

Wormser launched the country's first cultural resources office for the National Guard. He was then awarded the Secretary of the Army 1997 Environmental Award and the Secretary of Defense 1997 Environmental Security Award for his notable deeds.

Wormser was also a ham radio operator. Fred Adsit with eHam, a ham radio organization, said "What I remember most about Alan was his passion for everything. Alan enjoyed living life to the fullest... Alan had also recently become

engaged to a lovely lady, Laura. Alan and Laura were planning a new life together ... Alan was struck down in his prime. It is seldom that we get the pleasure of knowing someone so capable of enriching our lives."

Irwin: Loved pets

(Continued from Page 1)

and loyalty to her friends. She was known for her wonderful personality; she was good hearted, kind, gentle, funny and unselfish. She and her husband Chuck always made their friends feel welcome in their home and shared everything they had unselfishly.

Ann had many interests, and many pets—dogs, birds and a cat. She showed Dachshunds for several years and met many of her friends through a shared love of dogs. Her pets brought her much love and comfort. She was an avid collector of antiques and enjoyed making jewelry for herself and her friends. She was well read and enjoyed traveling.

Ann was born in Kansas City, Missouri, on April 3, 1940. Her parents were I. T. Monseth and Mary Louise Rothwell.

She met her husband, Charles (Chuck) Johnson over a spilled pot of tea. They married on Aug. 26, 1985.

Ann was preceded in death by both parents. Her husband, Chuck Johnson, died earlier on June 21, 2006.

TxDOT protects endangered Big Red Sage

By JENNY SADNICK
Environmental Affairs Division

The Big Red Sage, a native Texas plant, was thought to be extinct a few decades ago. Little was known about this plant except that it only grows on the Edwards Plateau in Central Texas.

According to ENV biologist Karen Clary, the sage was first discovered in the 1800s by early naturalists, but was lost to history. It was only rediscovered by botanists in the 1980s. The recent efforts of the Boerne maintenance staff have made it possible for the sage to survive and thrive.

Soon after the plant was rediscovered in the '80s, a botanist found a small population of Big Red Sage under the Interstate 10 bridge at Frederick Creek in Boerne. According to Dennis Markwardt, director of the Maintenance Division's Vegetation Management Section, this was actually the first place the sage was found, making it an important historical site for the plant.

To protect the plants, the right of way was designated as a "non-mow" zone to keep contractors from cutting the plants down by mistake. When the Boerne maintenance staff reached the site in 2005 they found the area overgrown with scrub brush, which was beginning to choke out the Big Red Sage. The sage needs lots of light and limited plant competition to survive.

Marvin Hatter, San Antonio District vegetation manager, the Boerne maintenance staff - Chad Lux and his crew of Glen Henry, Kevin Fries, Russell Rust, Gary Jaimes, and Santos Munoz - and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department staff were concerned that if the site was not cleaned out, the Big Red Sage would be lost. They devised a plan to clear and protect the site, and they did the work themselves.

The Boerne maintenance staff proceeded despite the frequent flooding, abundance of poison ivy, and possible snake-infestation in the area. They cleared the brush and weeds, mowed the area, killed the poison ivy with an herbicide application, and added mulch chips to control erosion on the banks of the creek.

The biggest challenge was to do all this work without

disturbing the Big Red Sage plants themselves. "My crews had to do quite a bit of handwork as to not disturb or destroy the surviving plants," Lux said. "Within a few days, not only did my crews see the light, so did the Red Sage."

The plant now has a second chance. John Bohuslav, San Antonio District's director of maintenance, said he was "proud to be working with such fine folks that take such great care of our highways and roadsides."



Big Red Sage bush.



Big Red Sage flowers.

San Antonio District photos

Campus invaded by sons and daughters

By JENNY SADNICK
Environmental Affairs Division

Almost 200 children explored TxDOT's Riverside Campus for the "Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day" on Aug. 3, 2006.

The annual TxDOT-hosted event allows employees to bring their children to work for activities designed to teach them more about what their parents do for a living.

195 children registered to attend the event. TxDOT employees volunteered as tour guides to lead the children through a variety of activities.

The day started just before 8 a.m. with breakfast, and proceeded with presentations all morning. Lectures such as "Working for TxDOT" and "The Public and TxDOT in the News" helped familiarize the children with the agency and its purpose.

After lunch and a coloring contest, the children spent the afternoon at their parents' divisions for more activities.

Environmental Specialist Don Hill, who served as a tour guide, believes the event is a valuable tool for showing kids the important work their parents do at TxDOT. In many cases, it is the

first time a child is exposed to a parent's career first-hand.

Hill spoke with several of the children about their future career plans. A popular choice among the boys is computer gaming. The girls' choices were more varied. One little girl named Amy hopes to become an obstetrician one day.

None of the children mentioned wanting to work for TxDOT, but their minds may change after seeing up close the work the agency does. The hope is that this event will inspire them to follow in their parents' footsteps and one day join the TxDOT family.

2 TxDOT winners honored by Truett Latimer Award

By H.G. QUINN

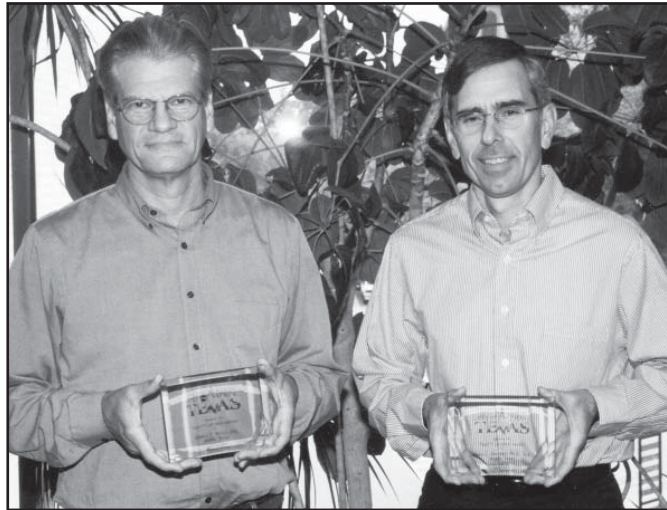
Environmental Affairs Division

For the first time, judges at Preservation Texas awarded the prestigious Truett Latimer Award to two recipients in one year.

Preservation Texas is a statewide organization dedicated to preserving the state's historic resources through education, advocacy, collaboration and communication.

According to their web site (www.preservationtexas.org): "The Truett Latimer Award is named for Texas' first State Historic Preservation Officer and executive director of the Texas Historical Commission. This award goes to working professionals who demonstrate a significant commitment and sustained involvement to preservation as part of their job responsibilities. Only one award is given in this category."

Dr. Mario Sanchez of the Environmental Affairs Division and **Charles Walker, P. E.**, of the Bridge Division were honored in April 2005 at



Charles Walker, P. E. and Dr. Mario Sanchez.

Photo by H. G. Quinn

the Austin Marriott Hotel.

Working closely with local interests, Dr. Sanchez laid the regulatory groundwork to save and restore the Old River Pumphouse on the Rio Grande River in Hildalgo, which won the esteemed 2003 National Trust for Historic Preservation Award.

to the historic town of Gonzales.

Among other significant bridge projects, Walker was involved with the restoration of the award-winning Regency Bridge. He currently leads a project to restore an exceptional suspension bridge outside of San Saba known as the Beverage Bridge.

He researched and produced a travel guide entitled *Los Caminos Del Rio (The Roads of the River)*, which chronicles the historic legacy of the multi-cultural Rio Grande valley.

Dr. Sanchez continues to examine the rich heritage of the Rio Grande Valley. He is currently involved with the Roma Restoration Project that has been designated as a National Historic Landmark.

Charles Walker has been instrumental in the preservation of numerous historic bridges throughout the state. Recently he was involved with the rehabilitation and relocation of the notable Oak Forest Bridge

Texas now recycling more scrap tires than generated

By H.G. QUINN

Environmental Affairs Division

Things look good for the scrap tire recycle effort jointly managed by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and TxDOT. The January 2006 Progress Report on Using Scrap Tires and Crumb Rubber in Texas Highway Construction shows that during calendar years 2004 and 2005, both TCEQ and TxDOT oversaw significant progress in the state's scrap tire situation.

Major developments include the following:

- The state disposed of or recycled 28.1 million scrap tire units (STUs) in 2004, 3.7 million more than were generated.
 - TCEQ and industry efforts reduced the volume of scrap tire material stockpiled at registered scrap tire storage sites by about 10.5 million STUs during 2004 and an estimated 10.6 million STUs during 2005, a 45 percent reduction in state stockpile volumes since 2003.
 - The number of Texas scrap tires consumed as tire-derived fuel continues to increase. In-state and out-of-state cement kilns and paper and pulp mills increased the volume of Texas scrap tires they consumed as fuel by 4.8 million tires, a 39.4 percent category increase in 2004.
 - The number of scrap tires used to manufacture crumb rubber products increased by 332,734 tires between 2003 and 2004. This is the first time TxDOT's recycling use has exceeded the number of scrap tires generated yearly.
- TxDOT's use of recycled rubber has increased each year since the Texas Legislature mandated the use of STUs in road construction. From 2001 to 2005 TxDOT has used 57,133 tons of recycled rubber for seal coats, 8,837 tons for asphalt

pavement, 1,412 tons for crack sealer and 563 tons for rubber products and tire bales (used to stabilize embankments).

Seal coat is a layer of asphalt covered with a layer of rocks to provide either a new driving surface or a waterproof layer under the surface layer. Engineers prefer seal coats with as much as 15 percent tire rubber in the asphalt to hold the rocks in place better and provide greater durability. TxDOT's 2005 contracts called for using about 13,400 tons of tire rubber for seal coats.

Hot mix asphalt pavements are compacted mixtures of rock and asphalt. TxDOT engineers choose the rubber option for pavement because it adds greater surface durability, improves ride quality and increases skid resistance.

The use of rubber in asphalt paving will continue to grow because TxDOT's 2004 standard specifications provide for expanded use of crumb rubber-modified asphalt over the 1993 specifications.

TxDOT and TCEQ have worked to encourage the development of scrap tire markets and products. As the volume of crumb rubber and other scrap tire rubber material processed in Texas increases, the potential for productive use grows.

For more information about tire recycling go to:

- <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/registration/tires/recycling.html>
- http://www.txdot.gov/services/general_services/recycling/tirefill.htm
- http://www.txdot.gov/services/general_services/recycling/tirebales.htm
- <http://www.rubberpavements.org/>

2005-06 Environmental Achievement Awards

District and division project and program achievements gain recognition

By H.G. QUINN

Environmental Affairs Division

In 2005–2006, numerous TxDOT projects went beyond observing basic environmental requirements. The most innovative projects were recognized with ENV's Environmental Achievement Awards.

Company was used to pave the street adjacent to the courthouse to alleviate this problem. The brick road was eventually paved over when the roadway became part of U. S. 180.

The need to rehabilitate this roadway, combined with a shared desire to preserve the integrity of a historic

highway.

The project was successfully completed without negative impacts to any of the 64 historic structures within the project limits. New sidewalks with brick insets established a backdrop for the landscaping details of period-piece decorative streetlights, returning downtown Breckenridge to its original historic context.

The finished project is unique and reaches far beyond local heritage. It is one of very few refurbished brick roads in the country that are part of the United States Highway System.

The Federal Highway Administration, TxDOT, the city of Breckenridge, the Texas Historical Commission, local business owners and the contractor all came together in a successful partnership. Thanks to their cooperation and the hard work of the Brownwood District, a part of Texas history and the national past has been preserved.

• 2006 Runner-up — Corpus Christi District for the “Elevation of the JFK Causeway Project.”

The JFK causeway is the only hurricane evacuation route from North Padre Island. At only three feet above mean high tide, the original causeway often flooded during storm surges, cutting the island off from the mainland. A new causeway was constructed nine feet above high tide to provide a secure



U. S. Highway 180 brick streetscape in Breckenridge.

Photo by Kevin Stillman

• Presented at the TxDOT District Engineer/ Division Director/Office Director meeting on Oct. 10, 2006, the 2006 Environmental Achievement Award was given to the Brownwood District for its “U. S. Highway 180 Brick Streetscape Project.”

Breckenridge was the sleepy county seat of rural Stephens County for several quiet decades until oil was discovered in 1916. Thousands of workers and speculators began to arrive in 1920. In the classic oil boomtown manner tents and shacks sprung up overnight. From a population estimated at 1,500 in January 1920, the town grew to 30,000 by the end of the year. Activity was frenzied as some 200 wells were put down inside the city limits.

The lightest of rains quickly turned the teeming, deeply-rutted dirt roads into treacherous quagmires. In 1923 locally-produced brick from the Thurber Brick

business district, created an opportunity for the Brownwood District to partner with the city of Breckenridge, local business owners and the Texas Historical Commission.

The work was done one block at a time, minimizing any negative impacts on the business district and improving safety with the shortened length of traffic exposure to the work zone and roadway equipment. The bricks were removed, cleaned and stored for later use.

The original Thurber bricks were used to pave the entire block in front of the historic Breckenridge courthouse, curb to curb. The travel lanes in the remaining three blocks of the project were paved with antique bricks, and new brick pavers were used in the parking lanes. A new sub-base was engineered so that the restored brick roadway could accommodate the current and future traffic volumes and loads of a major



JFK Causeway

Corpus Christi District photo

route.

With approval from the scientific community and regulatory agencies, a 2,550 foot bridge replaced the smaller Humble Channel Bridge at the west end of the three-mile project. The new bridge created better water circulation in the upper Laguna Madre, improving
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EAA: Runner-up

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overall conditions for marine life. The old landfill under the new bridge was removed to create 15.2 acres of sea bottom and expand the endangered sea grass habitat which was present on both sides of the causeway.

Part of the removed landfill was used to build an island, providing an isolated nesting area for the endangered Black Skimmer. Previously, these ground-nesting birds were often disturbed by anglers moving through the area.

The Corpus Christi District coordinated with federal and state entities, as well as the scientific community, to go beyond the basic



SH 36 at Lake Belton.

Waco District photo

requirements of the road project to preserve and enlarge the natural heritage of Texas.

- 2006 Honorable mention — Waco District for the “State Highway 36 across Lake Belton Project.”

The new replacement bridge crossing Lake Belton at State Highway 36 is 3,840 feet long. Early in the design process the Waco District and Jim Cowan, the Bell County area engineer, realized that a project of this magnitude would require special environmental considerations.

To avoid disturbing the endangered Golden-Cheeked Warbler during its nesting season, the district coordinated with the contractor to delay right-of-way clearing activities.

For weeks a continuous stream of dump trucks hauled more than 180,000 cubic yards of soil for the bridge embankment from nearby land owned by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. Belton Area Office designers worked with the Corps to create a 20-acre wetland from the resulting borrow pit. Demolished columns from the old bridge were carefully placed in Lake Belton to provide cover for game fish, and the area was marked with buoys for use by

anglers.

The bridge has been named for Cowan, who passed away from a long-term illness during construction.

Thanks to early planning by Cowan and Waco District personnel, this huge project went beyond basic environmental



FM 2288 project.

Photo by Kevin Stillman

concerns to create new wildlife habitat while constructing a beautiful bridge.

- 2006 Honorable mention — San Angelo District for the “Upgrade of FM 2288 Project.”

This road was widened to four lanes to accommodate rapid residential and commercial development. The district confined the project to the existing right-of-way to reduce impact to San Angelo State Park, which borders the roadway on the east.

The project was designed to visually blend with the natural feel of the area. An exposed aggregate finish was used to avoid large expanses of stark concrete surfaces. The retaining walls were finished to resemble limestone, which echoes the historic structures inside the state park. Buffalo-head sculptural bas-reliefs were placed at each end of the retaining walls to draw attention to the buffalo herd at the state park.

The district worked with state park officials to improve the park entrance. Relocating the entrance away from a hill that limited sight distance improved traffic safety while leaving historic structures unaltered.

Thanks to the efforts of the San Angelo District, a context-sensitive, aesthetically pleasing roadway was built with minor impact to a historic state park.

- The 2005 Environmental Achievement Award was announced at the October 10, 2005, TxDOT District Engineer/ Division Director/Office Director meeting in College Station. The Lubbock District was declared the winner for its restoration project of the Silver Falls Rest Area on U.S. 82.

The Silver Falls Rest Area was built during the Great Depression by the Civilian Conservation Corps. The Corps created a haven for travelers on the slopes of the Caprock Escarpment in a vast and extremely dry area of West Texas, constructing a small spillway dam across the intermittently dry White River to create a detention pond. Skilled stone masons built picnic tables, barbecue pits, walls, steps, a pump house and a stone fountain.

The first phase of the project renovated the 60-year-old deteriorated stone structures. Next, with approval from the United States Corps of Engineers, the river was dredged to remove the sediments and invasive vegetation that clogged the waterway behind the low-water dam. The final phase replaced the 1960s rest area

structure overlooking the White River canyon with a well-designed facility including added parking, picnic tables and modern restrooms.

The importance of the Silver Falls Rest Area extends beyond its use by the traveling public. Surrounding towns have traditionally used the area as high school biology and history laboratories, and for social events such as community picnics. The rest area is of such importance to the history of these communities that it is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Due to the efforts of the Lubbock District, a refreshing oasis was made functional for the traveling public, stone structures that are very rare in this part of Texas were preserved, an important cultural resource was saved and a river system was revitalized.

- 2005 Runner-up — Houston District for the “Texas 87 Revetment Project on the Bolivar Peninsula.”

The only hurricane evacuation route for residents of Bolivar Point is S.H. 87, but at less than five feet above sea level, the highway was threatened by erosion. One of the few remaining Texas lighthouses was also endangered.

The project, a first of its kind for the district, created a breakwater and an artificial lagoon to stabilize the shoreline. Designed to submerge at high tide, the lagoon will eventually silt up. Consisting of a double row of five-ton granite blocks, the permanent breakwater protects the silting action, creating a sheltered coastline. Box culverts were installed at each end of the breakwater to

(See 2005, Page 10)

2005: Projects awarded

(Continued from Page 9)

provide a healthy water exchange between the lagoon and the Gulf of Mexico. Follow up surveys show that native plants and animals are thriving in the lagoon.

Thanks to the efforts of the Houston District a hurricane evacuation route is safer, a significant lighthouse is protected and the environment has been improved using zero-maintenance natural materials.

- 2005 Runner-up — San Angelo District for the “U.S. 87 Native Plant Preservation/Relocation” project.

Although under no regulatory obligation to do so, the district went to extraordinary lengths to save the seed stock of non-threatened native plant species. Concerned about the displacement of vegetation by the widening of U. S. 87, district personnel removed the plants by hand.

The district coordinated a plan with local and state agencies to relocate the plants to five new gardens at various sites and public access areas near U. S. Highways 87 and 83. Plants were also moved to the Paint Rock and Menard Elementary Schools using the guidelines of the *Texas Wildscape* program, a Texas Parks and Wildlife Department program that teaches young people to become good land stewards by giving them an opportunity to study and care for native plants.

The admirable efforts of the San Angelo district have preserved a part of the natural heritage of Texas.

- 2005 Honorable mention — Corpus Christi District for the “U.S. 181 Portland – Phase III” project.

U. S. 181 is a major hurricane evacuation route for the Corpus Christi area. This project expanded traffic capacity to six lanes and raised the roadbed by three feet.

Within the project 2.3 miles of road passes through the sensitive environmental area between Nueces Bay and Sunset Lake. The hydraulic exchange between the bay and lake was inadequate to maintain the lake as a healthy body of water. Large box culverts in the new design replaced the original 30-

inch pipe, vastly improving water exchange.

The project was carefully designed to avoid damage to the critical bird habitat of Sunset Lake and other sensitive marine habitats within the area. Off-road driving was a problem with the previous design. Retaining walls, railings and traffic barriers were incorporated into the new design to end driving in the habitat.

Due to the laudable efforts of the Corpus Christi District a safer evacuation route was provided and a sensitive natural area was improved and protected. The redesigned project also improved recreational opportunities by providing parking areas and boardwalks for bird watching.

- 2005 Honorable mention — Austin District for the “I-35 between Loop 150 and SH 123 Project.”

One of the world’s most fertile and unique rivers, the San Marcos rises entirely from cold-water springs. A major highway, Interstate 35, crosses the river not far from the springs.

While accommodating a daily traffic flow of more than 75,000 vehicles per day, the contractor was required to replace obsolete bridges without entering the river or allowing any material to flow or fall into the riverbed.

Unlike the original bridges, the finished project filters rainwater runoff before it enters the river. It also includes hazardous material traps where none existed before.

The project was finished on time without incident. Thanks to the worthy efforts of the Austin District an important natural treasure was protected and a safer crossing was built.

The Environmental Achievement Award recognizes the best TxDOT projects and processes that meet transportation needs while protecting and enhancing the environment. ENV presents the annual award to the district or division whose projects go beyond the basic environmental requirements to produce exceptional results.

The 2007 call for entries went out in January and the deadline is May 11.



Burrowing owl.

Protected: Burrowing owls

(Continued from Page 1)
mowing until September was worth it.”

Burrowing owls are sandy brown birds, 10 to 13 inches tall, that live in the ground. As humans have developed more and more of their habitat, their numbers have declined drastically.

The owls are unique in several ways. They are “diurnal,” or active during the day, presenting ideal circumstances to view and study them. They also nest in burrows underground, and have very long, strong legs – both unusual traits in an owl species. They use their

legs and feet to improve burrows already dug by other mammals, such as ground squirrels.

“Opportunities abound to see a burrowing owl at the Rio Bosque Wetlands Park and along Highway 54 from McCombs to the State line. That part of El Paso is the best place to see...the burrowing owl,” Balin said. “Look for the birds perching on fences near their burrows or on the ground next to a burrow.”

These birds would not be so easily viewed if the El Paso District had not taken special measures to protect their habitat.

Brownwood Grain Elevator project recognized

By **KAREN HUGHES**
and **ANDREW CHISHOLM**
Brownwood District

The Great State of Texas Historical Transportation Complex is located on the former site of the Continental Grain Elevator and Warehouse in downtown Brownwood. A team associated with this project was awarded the inaugural Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) Founders award from the National Park Service.

Partially funded by TxDOT's Statewide Transportation Enhancement Program, the complex incorporates parts of the original agricultural facility, including the distinctive concrete grain silos that date to the late 1920s. A collection of historic railroad memorabilia will be showcased in the museum. The complex will adjoin the Santa Fe Depot and Harvey House, also TxDOT enhancement projects.

In June 2003, under contract with TxDOT, a team from HHM Inc. and the College of Architecture at Texas Tech University scanned the Continental Grain Elevator with a Cyrax 2500 laser scanner. The team consisted of Principal Investigator Elizabeth Loudon, of Texas Tech University, Karen Hughes, HHM Inc. project manager, and graduate students Dake Zhang, Rocky Diaz, Jennifer Widmer and Matt Jasper.

The team first developed a scan plan and strategically placed targets around the site. These targets were used as a frame of reference when the scans were combined later.



Continental Grain Elevator and Warehouse in downtown Brownwood.

Photo by H. G. Quinn



Left to right: front row - Dake Zhang, Rocky Diaz; back row - Jennifer Widmer, Elizabeth Loudon, Karen Hughes, Matt Jasper.

Photo by Bernice Hughes

Before scanning, the team established a horizontal datum using a laser level for use in data post-processing. They conducted exterior scans around the entire site perimeter and on the main storage building interior. For each scan, the technician defined the scan area, density, point spacing and scene distance through software used to operate the scanner.

Each individual scan holds a maximum of one million data points. The number of data points depends on the distance from the object and the size of the scan area defined by the operator. Each scan consists of a "cloud" of measured XYZ points.

The team spent five days in the field scanning the grain elevator. Additional field notes and measurements were taken to verify the scan data and help with some of the architectural details.

With the field work complete, the team began post-processing the data through "registration" - the process of transforming individual point clouds from each scan world into a common coordinate system. They registered the individual scans together to form one overall three-dimensional point cloud model.

After completing the registration process, the combined point cloud represented a measurable three-dimensional coordinate map of the scanned structure and site. The research team generated eleven large (E size) sheets of architectural drawings for the grain elevator from this data. The drawings showed all

(See HAER, Page 12)

Wichita Falls helps restore native prairie

By JILL HOLMES
Wichita Falls District

When brothers Leslie and Charles Finnell decided to donate 25 acres in Holliday for an environmentally-friendly purpose, such as outdoor education or conservation, the wheels were set in motion for the Wichita Falls District to complete an important project for TxDOT.

Native mid-grass prairie once dominated the Rolling Plains ecoregion of Texas that makes up much of the Wichita Falls District. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) estimates that today about 75 percent of the Rolling Plains have been converted to urban or agricultural uses, with only a half-percent of the land dedicated to preservation or conservation. For this reason, the guidelines of a Memorandum of

Agreement between TxDOT and TPWD include the consideration of compensatory mitigation if native prairie is impacted by transportation projects.

When the Finnell brothers contacted the Wichita Falls District about their idea, the district seized the opportunity to work on a native prairie mitigation project. They called Danny Allen, of TPWD's Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program, with the idea of establishing a mitigation bank. A new idea for unregulated habitat, the plan called for TxDOT to fund restoration work on the land in exchange for mitigation credit for future impacts from transportation

projects in the district. The only piece missing was a third party willing to take ownership and manage the land.

Midwestern State University (MSU) in Wichita Falls soon entered the picture. Former TxDOT employee and MSU graduate Julie Wicker recommended contacting Dr. Norman Horner, Dean of



Work continues on mitigation project.

Wichita Falls District photo

the College of Science and Mathematics, who was interested in using the land as an outdoor classroom for MSU's Environmental Science and Biology programs and graduate research.

The property, just 20 minutes from MSU, is north of Holliday in Archer County. It largely consists of degraded mesquite shrub land and a recently cleared sunflower pasture, and its primary uses had been grazing and oil production. Because the mitigation project had great potential to improve the quality of the land, MSU agreed to take part.

TxDOT, TPWD and MSU began by developing an interagency agreement to outline the responsibilities of each agency. TxDOT's job is to provide materials, equipment and resources to establish the native prairie. This includes clearing, seeding and maintaining the land to keep our invasive species for up to three years. The district set a funding limit for expenditures like seed and herbicide, and has used its own staff to perform the work.

Once the prairie is established, MSU will take over the land management for 20 years. The amount of acreage that has been successfully established as prairie when management transfers to MSU will determine the number of credits awarded to the TxDOT mitigation bank.

TPWD responsibilities include preparing a restoration and management plan for the site and assisting TxDOT in tracking the mitigation bank.

To date, MSU has accepted the land donation from the Finnells, the interagency agreement has been signed by all three parties and district Special Maintenance forces have begun work on the site. The mesquite is currently being grubbed and the sunflower pasture plowed under to prepare for seeding with native grasses in early spring. This project required cooperation and the willingness to try something new by all involved. Bill Butler, district survey technician, Tim Hertel, district director of operations, Brady Woolsey, district maintenance supervisor, and David Bates, Jim Simpson, and Tommy Veal of the Special Maintenance crew made significant contributions to the project – their hard work did not go unappreciated.



Award winning team (left to right) Elizabeth Louden, Jennifer Widmer, Rocky Diaz, Dake Zhang, Karen Hughes and (not pictured) Matt Jasper.

HAER: Grain elevator team awarded

(Continued from Page 11)

aspects of the grain elevator's physical makeup and operation. They included floor plans, elevations, sections, axonometric, perspectives, details, a history and a chronology of the building development.

The drawings were submitted to the Historic American Building Survey (HABS) for the prestigious Charles E. Peterson Prize national drawing competition in June 2004. The jury was so impressed with the entry they decided to give the drawings the first inaugural Historic American

Engineering Record (HAER) Founders award.

One jury member called the project "Godzilla compared to the rest." The drawings "set the high bar for subsequent entries to match similar to the Peterson Prize the first year, when Ann Weber submitted a set of drawings that would have competed well in every year since."

The team traveled to Washington, D.C. in November 2005 to receive their honors during the annual meeting of the American Institute of Architecture Historic Resources Committee.

Clean Air Plan recognizes employees, districts

By **JENNY SADNICK**
Environmental Affairs Division

In March 2002, TxDOT partnered with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to create the Drive Clean Across Texas (DCAT) campaign, the first state-sponsored public awareness program designed to motivate individuals to change driving habits. DCAT asks the public to drive less, maintain their vehicles, avoid unnecessary idling, buy less-polluting vehicles and drive the speed limit to reduce pollution.

The Clean Air Plan (CAP) is TxDOT's internal effort to take the kind of action that DCAT asks of the public. Launched by ENV in 2005, a designated Air Quality Coordinator (AQC) runs the program for each district, division and office. Individual employees are asked to report their commute-related activities, such as carpooling, use of public transit and reduction of workday outings.

In October, ENV presented awards to some of its own employees for their participation in the CAP program. The first place winner was Dan Neal, whose many trips to and

from work by public transit earned him the top spot. Second place went to Jeff Richardson, an avid bicycle commuter.

As part of the CAP, districts were asked to follow guidelines designed to reduce the amount of air pollution generated by their activities. Measures they were asked to take included limiting mowing activities on Ozone Action Days, using cleaner diesel fuel, purchasing solar-powered sign boards, limiting idling of vehicles, and the use of night construction to alleviate peak traffic congestion.

Several districts participated in clean air activities outside of the required CAP measures. The Forth Worth District, for example, encouraged employees to reduce trips with further incentives. For its efforts, the district was presented with the "2006 Best Workplaces for Commuters – Clean Air Partner Award" at the North Texas Clean Air Coalition Luncheon.

The Corpus Christi District participated in a "Clean Air Fair" in August 2005, and the San Antonio District conducted a lunchtime carpool contest in September 2005.

These actions show that TxDOT districts and employees are environmentally responsible.

Drive Clean TV commercial nets Telly Award

A public service announcement (PSA) produced in 2004 for the "Drive Clean Across Texas" (DCAT) campaign has captured a first place national 2005 Telly Award, which recognizes non-network and cable television commercials.

DCAT is the nation's first statewide public outreach and education campaign that aims to improve air quality by convincing individual drivers to change their behavior and maintain their vehicles. The campaign is a partnership between TxDOT, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the Federal Highway Administration.

The first place silver 2005 Telly was awarded to "Creatures," a 30-second

spot that features a series of animals heard coughing instead of making their usual sounds.

The award is DCAT's third Telly Award. In 2003, a first place, or silver Telly also went to "Butterfly Valves," featuring an elderly woman discussing the importance of car maintenance. Also in 2003, the "Singer" PSA, in which country music performer Rick Trevino sings near a busy highway, but periodically takes a breath of oxygen from a mask to emphasize the health effects of automobile exhaust, earned a bronze, or finalist, Telly.

All three PSAs were produced by Sherry Matthews Advocacy Marketing of

Austin.

The Telly Awards nationally showcase outstanding non-network and cable television commercials. Entries do not compete against each other, but are judged based on a high standard of excellence.

Each entry is rated on a ten-point scale, and those that receive a score of 7.0 to 8.9 are bronze finalists. Entries that receive a 9.0 or higher are first place silver winners. In the past several years, more than 10,000 entries have been received. Approximately 7 to 10 percent have been named winners, and 14 to 18 percent have been named finalists.

AASHTO spotlights MNT's Rest Area Program

TxDOT's Safety Rest Area Program won AASHTO's 2006 'Best Practices in Context Sensitive Solutions' award.

The 21 rest area facilities

built so far fit into their regions with attractive structures that reflect local architecture. Each facility houses exhibits that feature regional themes and history.

The new Donley County Safety Rest Area on U.S. 287, for example, has a railroad design theme that reflects nearby Hedley's role as a 'railroad hamlet' where cattle were loaded onto rail cars for transportation to distant markets.

The new Hardeman County facility is designed to reflect the farming and ranching culture of northern Texas, while further south the Medina County facility

emphasizes preservation of the Cypress groves along nearby streams.

The context sensitive design approach gives each facility a unique identity with safe, comfortable convenient features that are inviting to travelers. The statewide network of rest areas encourages drivers to make regular stops, and local citizens take pride in the facilities that represent their towns.

Don't peek before trying puzzle on Page 15!

Answer to Rebus Ruckus on Page 15:
 "N-fly-run-mint-oil ass-s-ment" = environmental assessment.

Environmental Affairs welcomes new staff

Many changes have taken place at ENV since the last issue of ENVision. Here is a recap of staff additions and promotions in 2005-2006.

Dorothy Nowlin became ENV's division director administrative assistant in February 2005. She came to ENV from the Austin District. Before joining TxDOT, Nowlin worked for several state agencies, including the Texas Youth Commission and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Nowlin also served in the U.S. Marines from 1984 to 1988 and joined the Air Force Reserves in 1988.

Jimmy Tyree became ENV's deputy division director in June 2005. Tyree had been ENV's planning specialist for 2½ years before assuming his new position. Prior to joining TxDOT, he was a planner and project manager for the Coastal Projects Division of the Texas General Land Office. Tyree replaced Ann Irwin. (See related story on page 1.)

Sarah Stroman, a project manager for ENV's Project Management (PM) section since October 2004, replaced Tyree as the environmental planning specialist in September 2005. Stroman previously worked for the Governor's Office in the Research Division. Her background also includes technical writing and social work.

Blythe Jewell joined ENV as a contract communications specialist in April 2005. Jewell was previously an administrative manager at National Instruments and a project manager in the high tech industry. She holds a bachelor's degree in history and English from the University of Texas at Austin.

Jenny Sadnick (nee Cho) joined ENV in August 2005 as an information specialist for the Communications branch. She came to TxDOT as a recent graduate from the University of Texas at Austin with a bachelor's degree in advertising. Most recently, she worked as a marketing representative at an Austin agency and interned at the Texas Department of Agriculture.

Phillip Garcia joined ENV in August 2005 as a systems support specialist. Garcia's 13-plus years of experience in information technology include stints with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and TxDOT's Bridge Division.

Warren Grannis joined ENV in April 2005 as a contract cultural resources database manager for the Cultural Resources Management (CRM) section, tracking historical information for bridges. Grannis has previous experience as a mechanic, professional speaker and program manager for a non-profit organization. He continues to pursue his education while working at TxDOT.

Sharon Dornheim became an ENV archeologist in August 2005. She worked at Hardy Heck Moore before coming to TxDOT. She holds a master's degree from the University of Texas, and she has completed the coursework for her doctorate.

In November 2005, ENV welcomed Historian **Carolyn Nelson**. She previously received her master's degree in geography - historical preservation with a specialty in architectural conservation from Eastern Michigan University.

Mark Brown joined ENV in November 2005 as a historian. He holds a doctorate in American art and architectural history from the University of Pittsburgh and a master's degree in art history from SUNY-Binghamton.

Before joining ENV in November 2005, Historian **Renee Benn** obtained her master's degree in historic preservation

from Eastern Michigan University. Benn's background in rural properties comes from a childhood spent on a sesquicentennial dairy farm in Michigan.

Jason Barrett joined ENV as an archeologist in December 2005. His archeological experience includes work in American Samoa, Belize, Guatemala, Mexico, New England and Texas. He previously taught anthropology courses at Texas A&M and Blinn College.

ENV welcomed Archeologist **Scott Pletka** in December 2005. Pletka previously worked as an archeologist for a consulting firm and taught at several colleges and universities.

Also in December 2005, **John Arnn** joined ENV as an archeologist. His previous archeological investigation experience includes everything from acting as a field tech to working as a principal investigator for a variety of research institutions, government agencies and contract firms. Arnn also taught anthropology and archeology for three years at the University of Kentucky.

In August 2006, **Lisa Hart** was named the new director of CRM. Hart replaced **Nancy Kenmotsu**, who retired in May. Hart has been with ENV since 1998, most recently serving as the supervisor of Historical Studies. Before that, she spent ten years with the Texas Historical Commission.

In January 2005, **Erin Foster** joined ENV as an environmental specialist in Biological Resources Management (BRM). She was recently selected as the USACE liaison for the Water Resources Management (WRM) branch. Foster previously worked as an environmental consultant.

Environmental Specialist **David Nuckels** transferred from the Bryan District to ENV in June 2005 and now works for WRM. In Bryan, he served as the district environmental quality coordinator. He has been with the state for nearly six years-two with TxDOT.

Greg Sengelmann joined ENV as an environmental specialist with Pollution Prevention and Abatement (PPA) in October 2005. He had 22 years of environmental consulting experience before coming to TxDOT.

Rodney Concienne became the new supervisor of PPA in January 2006. Concienne began working for TxDOT in 1998 with WRM. He has over 14 years of environmental experience, which include working for TCEQ as a project manager in the Remediation Division and as a project geologist for environmental consulting firms.

In April 2006, **Emily Cuellar** became an environmental specialist with BRM. She now works for WRM. Cuellar received her degree in Biological Science from Colorado State University in 2004 and worked with the Colorado Mosquito Control before joining TxDOT.

Holly Brady came to ENV in April 2006 as an environmental specialist with BRM. She now works for WRM. She previously worked in a lab while she pursued her studies at the University of Texas. She continues to work toward her graduate degree while working for TxDOT.

In May 2006, **Mary Perez** assumed the position of director of NRM. She had spent the previous twelve years serving as the Corpus Christi district's environmental coordinator. Perez replaced Duncan Stewart, who left ENV in January 2006 to join TxDOT's Research and Technology group.

(See STAFF, Page 15)

Staff: New faces join ENV

(Continued from Page 14)

ENV welcomed **Monica Scott** in May 2006 as an environmental specialist with PPA. Scott has over 14 years of experience in the environmental field, including eight years in the regulatory field.

In October 2006, **Chad Burrows** joined ENV as an environmental specialist for BRM. Burrows previously worked for Geo-Marine, Inc. as principal investigator for the Fish and Fisheries section.

Jasmine Gardner came to ENV in July 2005 and worked as an administrative assistant for three months before becoming a project manager. Before joining TxDOT, Gardner received her master's degree in International Relations from the University of Chicago.

Colleen Harvey joined ENV in July 2005 as a project manager. She came to us from the Michael Baker Corporation. Her previous work experience includes working for the Nature Conservancy and the Texas A&M DeWitt Fish Lab.

In August 2005 **Mario Mata, Jr.** joined ENV as an environmental specialist. After assisting with air quality and water resources projects for several months, Mata became

an ENV project manager. Mata holds a bachelor's degree in physical geography from Texas State University, and is pursuing his master's degree there in applied geography. Most recently, he worked as a grant technician through a partnership with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and Texas State University's Geography Department.

Jim Barta became the new director of the Project Management Section in October 2005. Barta had been the supervisor of ENV's Pollution Prevention and Abatement Branch (PPA) for nearly seven years. Before joining TxDOT, he was with the Texas Railroad Commission's Site Remediation Section, Oil and Gas Division. For 16 years, he worked with what is now known as Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. He has also worked for seven years as an environmental engineer.

Lindsey Capps joined ENV as a project manager in October 2005. She now also serves as the contract manager for PM. She came to ENV from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, where she worked in the Air Permits Division for five years. She holds a bachelor's in environmental science and recently earned a master's degree in business administration from Texas State University.



Jamandre's Jumbly Word Jambalaya

by Orlando Villa Jamandre Jr.

Unscramble the four jumbled words (one letter to each circle or square) to form four ordinary words and arrange the letters from the squares to form the puzzle answer below.

ONHIDLP



PETTORC



PIESSCE



VEVURIS



A vital statement for environmental documents when analyzing impacts to marine mammal habitat...

Print your answers in the squares below.

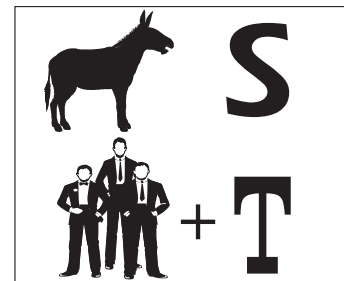
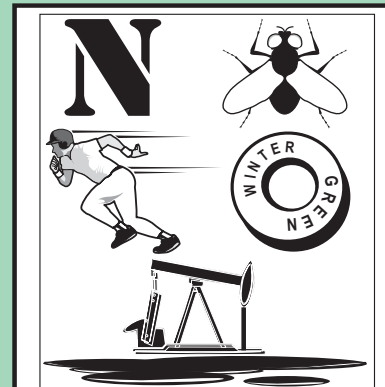
A "XXXXXXXXXX" and XXXX

Answers on back page.

Rebus Ruckus

By H.G. QUINN

Decipher the environmental term!



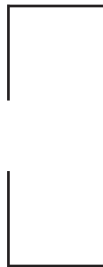
_____ : a documented study of all environmental factors affected by a project.

A "rebus" is a representation of words in the form of pictures or symbols, often presented as a puzzle. Good luck! Answer on Page 13.



Environmental Affairs Division
125 East 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78701-2483

Address correction requested



Jumbly Word Jambalaya Answers

'A vital statement for environmental documents when analyzing impacts to marine mammal habitat' ... 'PORPOISE and NEED'
DOLPHIN – PROTECT – SPECIES – SURVIVE

The Purpose and Need statement is essential in establishing a basis for the development of the range of reasonable alternatives required in an environmental document. A clear, well-justified purpose and need section explains to the public and decision makers why a proposed project should be undertaken and assists with the identification and eventual selection of a preferred alternative.

Dear readers: Miss us?

Editor's note: No, you didn't miss an issue of ENVision, this really is the first in almost two years. Time has flown and so did half our staff. After nearly a decade of stability, ENV's Communications Branch fell to two, while the workload compounded. ENVision hit the backburner while we focused on major tasks like the Environmental Coordinators' Conference and the web redesign project. But we're back to a four-person team, counting our trusty contractor. ENVision is back on track, and we plan to keep it that way. So keep an eye out for future issues - we'll keep them coming!

ENVision is a publication of the Environmental Affairs Division, Texas Department of Transportation, 125 East 11th Street, Austin, Texas, 78701-2483.

We welcome ideas for stories and standing features. Submit those to the above address, attention Richard Goldsmith, phone 512.416.2743; via GroupWise to "rgoldsmi" within TxDOT; "rgoldsmi@dot.state.tx.us" for e-mail from outside TxDOT.

Does ENVision reach the right

person within your organization? Contact us to correct or to suggest additions to the mailing list.

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RECYCLED PAPER
SOY-BASED INK

