



LIVING AND BREATHING SAFETY

THE ATLANTA DISTRICT IS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW SAFETY AND WELLNESS INITIATIVES GO HAND IN HAND.

Letter from Phil Wilson

This past August, the Legislature settled on a plan that could bring in up to \$1.2 billion a year for transportation. But Texans will have the final say. A public vote on the plan is scheduled for November 2014.

Most of the money we've appropriated pays for three things: projects that are already underway, debt service for bonds and maintenance. That leaves little for new construction, and with the population growing by an estimated 1,000 people a day, there's lots of competition for that highway real estate.

When we crunched the numbers, we estimated that TxDOT's unmet needs are \$4 billion a year – \$1 billion for maintenance and \$3 billion for mobility.


The energy boom that's pumped billions of dollars into the state economy has taken an additional toll on some of our roads. In those areas where energy production is at a peak, our pavements are crumbling. That adds another \$1 billion a year to the needs tab.

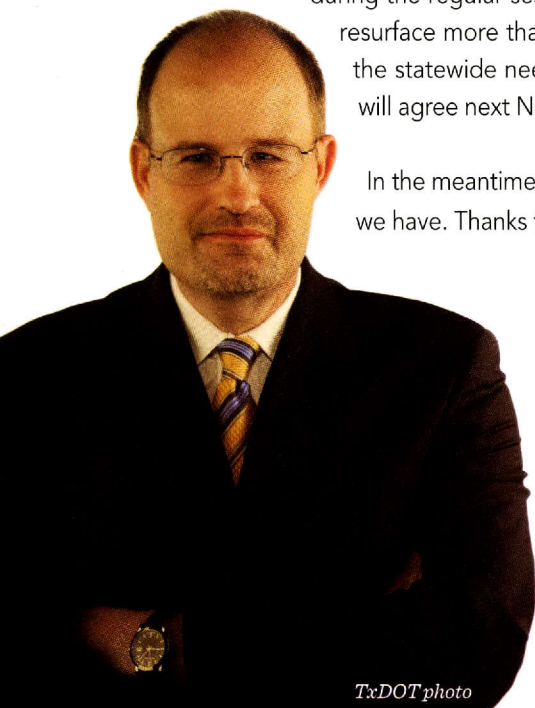
But this isn't just about getting more money to improve roads. This is also about our responsibility to maintain a safe transportation system.

In Goliad County, located in the Eagle Ford Shale area, the crash rate has risen 1,422 percent from five years ago. Winkler County in the Odessa District has had a 616 percent increase in crashes since fiscal 2008. We have to take action sooner, rather than later.

Last July, we recommended to the Texas Transportation Commission that we put stricter weight and width limits on some of these most damaged roads. And when they have been stressed to the point they can't handle the heavy traffic, our suggestion is to turn them into gravel roads, and lower speed limits. We didn't make the recommendation lightly. As builders and planners, it was a hard decision to make, but it was the most effective decision.

That's not to say it's the only action we're taking. With the \$225 million the Legislature appropriated during the regular session, we'll let a design-build contract to rehab, widen and resurface more than 320 miles of energy-impacted roads in South Texas. But the statewide needs call for a larger financial investment. Hopefully, Texans will agree next November.

In the meantime, we'll keep doing our job, making the most of the resources we have. Thanks for your hard work. We couldn't do it without you. 



TxDOT photo



Phil Wilson
Executive Director



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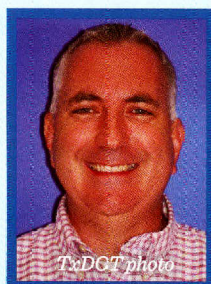
Daingerfield Maintenance Supervisor Carl Peters of the Atlanta District by the “360 Cone” he places on his truck as a visual cue for the 360-degree walk around and check he does as a safety measure before operating his vehicle—part of the procedures implemented with TxDOT’s “Stop Backing” campaign.

TxDOT Team Members Chime In
What was your favorite Halloween costume?



Sheree Norton-Ward
 Office Technician
 Fort Worth District

My favorite costume was a witch, but I was always a cute witch.



Mike Rhodes
 Environmental Specialist
 Waco District

Elaborate Raggedy Ann and Andy costumes my mother created for me and my sister when I was in the third grade.



Sarah Wyckoff
 Environmental Coordinator
 Houston District

The ghoul costume was my favorite because my friends and neighbors didn’t recognize me until I spoke.

5 THINGS

FIVE THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW RIGHT NOW

1 Jess Blackburn is the new Communications Division director. Blackburn directs and manages most external and internal division functions, including oversight of public information officers around the state. He has about 30 years of public relations experience, primarily in technology. Most recently, he managed financial communications at Dell Inc.

2 TxDOT and state officials recently designated 67 miles of roadways in the Rio Grande Valley as part of the new I-69 system. Drivers will now see sections of U.S. 77 and U.S. 281 with I-69 highway signs. Being developed on existing roadways as a critical artery for moving freight, I-69 will ultimately become a 1,600-mile-long highway stretching from Michigan to Texas.

3 In June, the department broke ground on the latest segments of the Houston-area SH 99/Grand Parkway. Construction on the new 38-mile stretch is expected to take two-and-a-half years to complete. Upon completion, motorists will be able to drive SH 99 from U.S. 290 directly to U.S. 59N.

4 The Texas Transportation Commission in July authorized the department to issue a request for qualifications for the design and construction of the Energy Sector Roadway Repair Project, comprised of roadway improvements in regions impacted by energy exploration and production. Regions impacted include the Yoakum, San Antonio, Laredo and Corpus Christi districts.

5 Mario Jorge became the new San Antonio District engineer on Aug. 19. A 29-year TxDOT veteran, Jorge oversees the planning, designing, building, operation and maintenance of the state transportation system for the 12-county San Antonio District in his new role. He had served as the Pharr District engineer since 2002.

BUTTERFIELD LANDS AT TxDOT

The New Director of Real Estate and Development



TxDOT photo

Scott Butterfield joined TxDOT in June and brings more than 10 years of real estate management experience to his position as director of the new Real Estate Management and Development Division. Butterfield has a Master of Science degree in real estate development from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and accounting and economics degrees from Rice University.

What have you done in the past that will help you in your new role?

I've always loved working in real estate. Most recently, I worked for private equity real estate fund management firms in Houston and Boston. Their portfolios were very diverse with properties in hospitality, industrial, land, office, residential and retail in the United States and overseas.

Why does TxDOT need a Real Estate Management and Development Division?

The department owns 4,000 business structures, representing 10 million square feet of facilities. We will also be assessing the value of vacant land that may no longer be needed for highway operations.


What are your first goals?

I will assess the department's real estate portfolio, prioritize and identify where the opportunities may be. I want to apply my real estate experience and knowledge to create value for the department.

What makes the property that TxDOT owns so valuable?

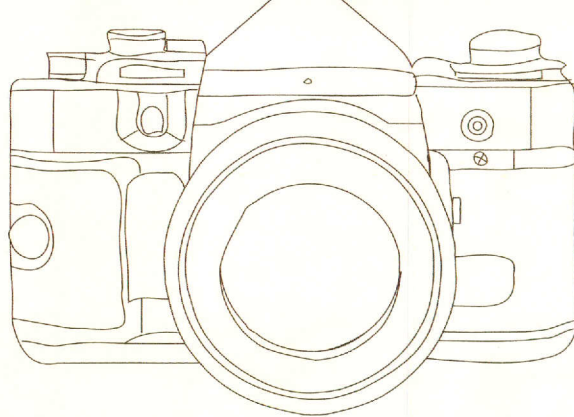
Decades ago, the department purchased property for facilities in cities and towns across Texas. The cities have grown around these prime parcels of land. For example, just before I arrived, the Commission approved selling the old Houston District headquarters, which is a five-story building on 16-acres of prime Houston property. The transaction is scheduled to close in two months for \$24.2 million.

Are you glad to be back in Texas?

Absolutely. I attended college here, and I got back as fast as I could. 

BE IN TN'S TOP PICS

Thank you to all the employees who sent submissions for this issue's Top Pics.




What I Did for My Texas Summer Vacation.

"Hundred-plus temperatures means it's splash time for my daughters Calissa and Kyleigh!"

Submitted by: Chad Marbut

Engineering Assistant / Fort Worth District

For the next issue (Nov/Dec), the theme will be **"First Day of School."**

From the first steps into elementary to the big first day on the university campus, students all over the state have started a new school year. Send us your pics related to that first day of school, and your photographs could be featured in the next issue of TN. Please send your submissions to TNideas@txdot.gov by Sept. 26. Be sure to include your contact information and share some details about the photo subject. 


NEIBLE PRAISED WITH POLLARD AWARD

Last spring, Administrative Manager Bunny Neible of the Construction Division was honored with the 2012 Albert H. Pollard Award for Merit. The award was established 21 years ago by the wife of former Materials and Tests Division employee Albert H. Pollard to recognize the contributions of employees of the Materials and Pavements Section. The recipient is awarded a \$500 savings bond.

In her 33 years at TxDOT, Neible has worn many hats, supporting and advocating for her colleagues by clearing the day-to-day obstacles that come their way. She has held or supervised positions in accounting, human resources, purchasing, travel, training, contract administration and information technology.

During the awards ceremony, colleagues praised Neible for her work:

"When the going gets tough, the tough run to Bunny for help!" — Project Management Office Transportation Engineer Lisa Lukefahr

"Bunny is one of the hardest workers I know, always making the employees' needs a priority." — Traffic Operations Division Administrative Manager Shelli Belser 



Left to right, Construction Division Administrative Manager Bunny Neible receives the 2012 Albert H. Pollard Award for Merit from Materials and Pavements Section Director Caroline Heinen.

AROUND THE STATE

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

Crews work on the demolition and reconstruction of the eastbound lanes of the Neches River Bridge.

TxDOT photo



TxDOT photo




Neches River Bridge Reconstruction Project

The Neches River Bridge, also known as the Purple Heart Memorial Bridge, located in Beaumont on I-10, is in its first of three project milestones as crews work seven days a week to demolish the existing eastbound lanes and begin the work on the new bridge. The work is part of the state's \$59 million project to build a new I-10 crossing at the Neches River.

"The Purple Heart Memorial Bridge is coming along great," said Beaumont District Engineer Tucker Ferguson. "It's exciting to see the progress."

Williams Brothers Construction of Houston has converted eastbound and westbound traffic on the bridge to two lanes in each direction on the westbound side of the bridge.

Reconstruction of the westbound lanes will occur in 2014. The bridge reconstruction project is expected to be completed in 2015. 

WELLINGTON

Bryan District employees stand in front of the vegetable garden they created to promote health and wellness in the workplace. From left to right: Bryan District Engineer Catherine Hejl, Human Resources Specialist Dena Todd, Contract Specialist Sandy Perry, Office Technician Lynn Bush, Material Inspector Zyna Polansky, Transportation Engineer Stephen Kasberg and Material Inspector Brad Albright.




TxDOT photo

TxDOT photo



Bryan District Employee Garden

The Bryan District implemented a suggestion box to collect ideas for activities for the WorkLife Balance program. From the box came the idea of a workplace garden. Several district employees volunteered to participate, organizing a meeting to discuss its details. With the help of the district's landscape architect, a location for the garden was chosen, comprised of two flower beds.

Tomatoes, a variety of peppers, squash, cucumbers, watermelons and cantaloupe were planted in the employee garden. Those who participated in its creation share the fruit and vegetables that are grown with other employees. Participants maintain the garden during lunch, breaks, before and after work and on the weekend. 



The Salt Fork of the Red River Bridge before it was demolished.

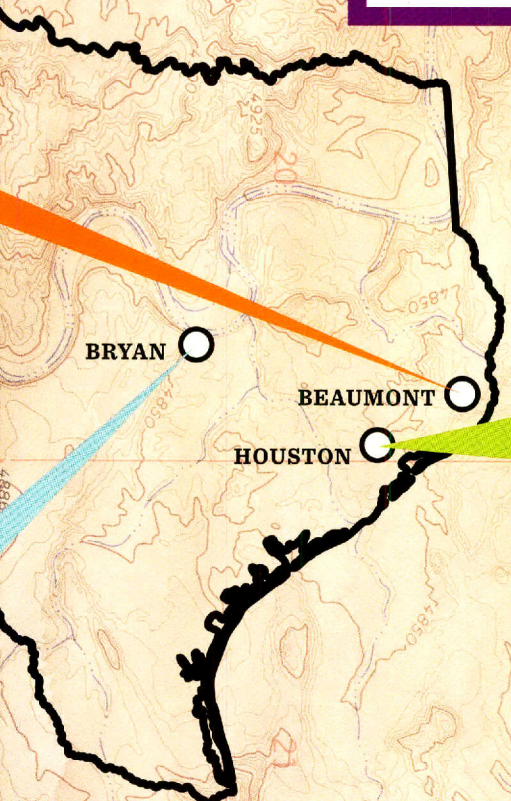


Salt Fork of the Red River Bridge Ribbon Cutting On June 3, a ribbon-cutting ceremony took place for the opening of the newly constructed Salt Fork of the Red River Bridge on U.S. 83 north of Wellington in the Childress District.

The bridge replaced a historic truss bridge built in 1939 near the site of the famous 1933 showdown between lawmen and outlaws Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow. The truss bridge was structurally deficient and permanently closed in February 2010. Construction on the \$2.9 million bridge replacement began in early 2012.

Attendees at the ribbon cutting included representatives from the department, Collingsworth County Historical Commission, Historic Wellington and the Collingsworth County Museum, as well as local officials and members of the public. 


Left to right: R.K. Hall Construction Company Project Superintendent Rex Foster, Collingsworth County Historical Commission Representative Rudie Tate, Collingsworth County Precinct 2 Commissioner Mike Hughes, Childress District Engineer Marty Smith, Childress District Construction Inspector Jeff Thomas and Childress Office Area Engineer Chris Reed perform the ribbon-cutting on the newly replaced bridge.



Transportation System Management Project Brings Relief to U.S. 290 Commuters

The goal of creating a safer, less-congested U.S. 290 roadway in Houston is off to a great start with the completion of the Transportation System Management project at the intersection of U.S. 290 and Barker Cypress Road. Most of the improvements were finished in May 2013 and were part of the program's final plans for the area.

Huge suburban growth along Barker Cypress Road, both north and south of U.S. 290, created gridlock at the intersection.

Two new loop ramps now allow motorists to travel between U.S. 290 and Barker Cypress Road without going through a signal, greatly reducing traffic volumes. 



TxDOT photo

At the Barker Cypress Road opening, left to right: Chris Burke (Triple B Services Contractor); Ernest Krolczyk (TxDOT); Tyler Newtren (U.S. 290 Program); Angie Stoddard (U.S. 290 Program); Darrell Elliott (TxDOT); Javier Cervantes (U.S. 290 Program); Jim Mims (TxDOT); Larry Blackburn (TxDOT); LeAnne Napolillo (U.S. 290 Program); Tony Landry (TxDOT); Joe Scala (H-E-B); Leslie Martone (Cy-Fair Chamber of Commerce).



KEEPING AN EYE OUT FOR SAFETY AND WELLNESS

IN THE ATLANTA DISTRICT

TxDOT's top priority is the safety and wellness of its employees and the public. The department improves its safety culture through "Safety: Mission Zero" and encourages employee wellness with its "Get a Physical" campaign. One Atlanta District employee credits these safety and wellness initiatives with two life-saving events: helping him avoid an accident that would have injured another person and discovering a serious health issue that saved his own.

In June, Daingerfield Maintenance Supervisor Carl Peters noticed kids playing across the street when he parked his car in Hughes Springs to visit the city manager. When it was time to leave, he performed a 360-degree walk around and discovered a little boy underneath the front of his vehicle trying to dislodge a baseball with a bat.

"When I saw the boy, I realized that our safety practices helped me avoid an accident that could have taken that little boy's life," said Peters. "I'll never forget that, so I am very cautious when backing and operating my vehicle."

Reducing the number of backing incidents is the focus of the Occupational Safety Division's "Stop Backing" campaign, which began in March. The campaign calls for every district, division and office to

carry out important vehicle backing procedures to prevent these types of incidents. They are the department's most frequent type of safety issue that can lead to fatalities.

Within the last seven years, two TxDOT employees have been killed on the job due to backing incidents. In July, Administration announced a zero-tolerance policy for backing incidents to increase employee accountability. The policy requires employees to follow backing safety procedures, including eliminating the need for backing, asking a co-worker to "spot" them as they back a vehicle and completing a 360-degree walk around.

The walk around gives the operator an opportunity to visually identify hazards associated with the positioning of the vehicle. By walking around the vehicle prior to operating it, the employee can recognize dangers, identify alternative measures and avoid an incident.

"It can be performed several different ways. One way allows the operator to start at the driver's door, walk counter clockwise around the piece of equipment looking for hazards until they reach the driver's door again," said Peters. "The most

Maintenance crew members of the Daingerfield Maintenance Office stand beside a piece of equipment with a "360 Cone" attached. From left to right: General Transportation Technician Elton Bolton, Maintenance Supervisor Carl Peters, General Transportation Technician Charles Barnard, General Transportation Technician Bernice Lockett and Transportation Maintenance Crew Chief Fred Crowder.



SAFE BACKING SAVES LIVES

The following must be followed to avoid backing incidents:

- Complete a 360-degree walk around before driving a vehicle
- Park vehicles in a safe location when performing a contract inspection
- Eliminate clustering of equipment in work zones and position equipment to eliminate the need for backing
- Use a spotter if backing is required due to the nature of the work
- Park away from main entrances and high-traffic areas
- Apply the Smith System and Defensive Driving Training techniques

BEST PRACTICES TO AVOID BACKING INCIDENTS

- Think about departure upon arrival
- Reconfigure facility parking lots to encourage pull-through parking
- If traveling alone, scan the area first

important thing is that the driver does a complete visual check around the vehicle." With zero lost-time injuries over the past year and a half, the Atlanta District sets an example, striving to improve its safety culture and promote employee wellness.

"Every maintenance employee contributes to our strong safety culture through a commitment to the Atlanta District's safety practices," said Atlanta District Engineer Bob Ratcliff. "Their exceptional attitude and dedication to safety allows us to avoid injuries."

In October 2012, the district held its first safety and wellness fair, complementing the department's "Get a Physical" campaign that was launched at the beginning of the year to promote good health habits among employees.

This year's fair included medical personnel from local hospitals, clinics and health-related businesses that provided blood pressure checks, flu shot vaccinations, as well as a variety of health information.

The event also gave employees the opportunity to sign up for an angioscreen. The exam involves a simple, noninvasive screening that provides information about circulation and risk of heart disease and stroke. A local hospital provided

the wellness check for employees and their family members for a discounted fee. Through the encouragement of his office manager, Peters decided to get checked. While the screening revealed no issues with his heart, the hospital staff noticed something unusual from the scan and encouraged him to get checked by a regular physician. After visiting his doctor, a problem with his kidney was discovered, requiring its removal. His doctor told him that the screening saved his life.

"Safety and wellness go hand in hand," said Ratcliff. "There's no question that safe and healthy employees are better employees. Carl Peters is living proof of this." **TN**



The Rotary Club of Paris' Group Study Exchange members on top of Mt. Tsukuba, overlooking the city of Tsukuba, Japan. Paris District Roadway Designer Jed Irwin was one of the participants, pictured third from the left.

From Paris to Ibaraki:

EXCHANGING IDEAS IN JAPAN

Jed Irwin, a roadway designer with Transportation, Planning and Development in the Paris District, traveled to Japan for four weeks last spring with a Group Study Exchange program through the Rotary International Club.


Irwin took part in a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to develop and share his professional knowledge with people in a different country. He also was able to share what he learned with his fellow TxDOT employees.

"This opportunity has enabled me to see things differently and to see solutions to some of our own challenges in the department, in the areas of road design, signage, drainage and construction," said Irwin.

Through the program, four applicants were selected for the trip to visit Ibaraki Prefecture, a jurisdiction of Japan located in the Kanto region on the main island of Honshu, about an hour north of Tokyo. Irwin was able to see the civil engineering profession in action abroad, as well as experience the unique Japanese culture.

"In the coastal city of Oarai, I met with a planning engineer who talked with me about an overpass that was constructed without closing the traffic underneath," said Irwin. "Their engineering, skill and accuracy of construction, simultaneously from both sides of the overpass, were amazing."

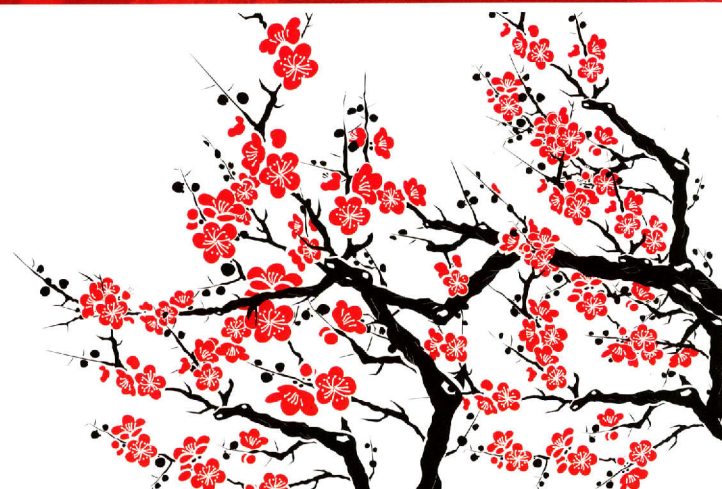
In addition, Irwin visited an engineering firm whose primary purpose is to design, test and construct earthquake-resistant roads and bridges. He was able to see several construction sites for new and existing roadways being repaired. He also discussed various project plans, time frames and schedules with one of the firm's designers.

"This experience has definitely allowed me to bring new ideas and perspectives to my work," said Irwin. "I'll never forget it." 



TxDOT photo

Jed Irwin (center) visited with other roadway designers in an engineering firm in Oarai, Japan.



CAUSING A RUMBLE IN EAST TRAVIS

**Innovative roller
system helps deploy
rumble strips**

"Necessity is the mother of invention," the saying goes, and that certainly was the case at the Austin District Travis East shop where, due to an injury, the maintenance crew invented a way to deploy the new rumble strips TxDOT crews are using in work zones.


At a total of 105 pounds (three 45-pound, 12-inch wide, thick rubbery strips are connected when used), the rumble strips are heavy. A maintenance employee hurt his back while trying to lift one out of his trailer. Because of this, the crew designed an apparatus to haul the strips more easily and without threat of injury.

Working with scrap poles in the maintenance shed, the team fabricated a pipe-in-pipe dual-roller system to help load and unload the rumble strips. The rubber strips slide easily over the rollers that are secured to the back of the truck.

"It's a true office innovation," said Austin District Public Information Officer Kelli Reyna. "We want other maintenance crews across the state to know about this easy and inexpensive way to install rumble strips."

Safety is the number one priority at TxDOT and the rumble strips are improving work zone safety for both the traveling public and highway workers. Construction projects throughout the state were experiencing a high level of rear-end crashes in work zones. Drivers were often unaware they had entered a work zone area and that traffic may have slowed significantly or come to a standstill.

The strips are used on temporary lane closures on roadways with speeds of 70 miles per hour or less. They provide an audible warning to drivers in advance of traffic backups, reminding them to slow down, pay attention and watch for slower traffic. Combined with additional highway signage, these devices help to significantly improve work zone safety.

TxDOT purchased 312 complete sets of the temporary portable rumble strip devices, one complete set for each TxDOT maintenance section throughout the state. By making this one-time quantity purchase and obtaining a lower unit price, TxDOT was able to save approximately \$250,000. 

TxDOT photo



Maintenance crew members in the Austin District load a 105-pound portable rumble strip onto their trailer using the new rumble strip roller invented by staff after a maintenance employee was injured trying to lift the strip onto his trailer.



Better Tools. Better Service. Lower Risk.

IT Transformation UPDATE

RECENT CHANGES

in the department's information technology organization positioned it to upgrade and improve service delivery. In June, IT announced its partnership with NTT DATA for an initial five-year contract. This was accompanied with reorganization of TxDOT IT to operate in the new environment. The new Information Technology Division (ITD) will focus on leveraging technology to better enable TxDOT business areas in fulfilling their goals. These milestones are major steps in advancing the iDriveIT vision of Better Tools, Better Service and Lower Risk.

On July 8, NTT DATA began assuming primary ownership of all services they will be providing TxDOT, including application maintenance and development, customer support, network and telecommunications systems support, professional support services (computer-aided design, geographic information system, global positioning system and surveying support), and IT security. During the course of this partnership, NTT DATA will upgrade processes and technologies to support TxDOT business operations. This partnership will help TxDOT realize greater efficiencies and allow the agency to reinvest savings into other strategic priorities.

All department IT employees were offered a position with the NTT DATA team or the new IT organization. Approximately 90 percent of those offered positions with NTT DATA accepted them and will continue supporting the agency. About 50 people remain in the new division with their main goal being to support the agency's IT needs.


ITD leadership is placing a strong focus on building what in many ways is a new IT organization. They are currently creating a new culture, developing new processes, establishing new roles for team members and improving communication to end users.

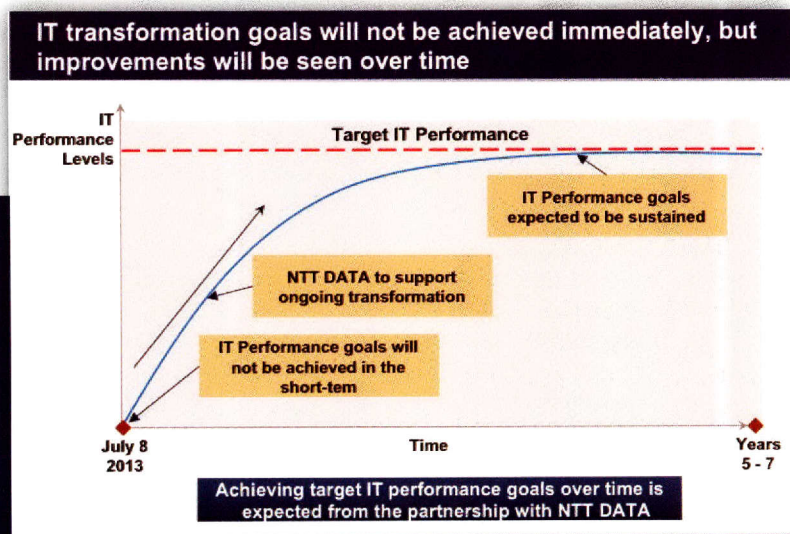
The transition process is progressing well to date. TxDOT IT leadership is working closely with NTT DATA to help them understand the department's needs and to help them meet the delivery goals of the contract. During the short term, IT is focusing on minimizing any negative impact of this transition on day-to-day operations. It is preparing for the long-term transformation this partnership will produce, providing substantially better IT service for employees moving forward during the next several years.

TRANSFORMATION EXPECTATIONS

When TxDOT decides to take on a roadway project, it does not happen right away. Engineers determine how to redesign the road. Contracts are awarded and managed to make sure contractors deliver. It can even require lowering the speed limit and redirecting traffic until the project is done.

This process takes time, and we ask the commuters of Texas to be patient with us — the road will be better than before.

Transforming TxDOT's IT department is similar in many ways to rebuilding a road. It will take time, but in the end, will be a major improvement from where we are now. This graph illustrates the plan for the IT transformation journey. 



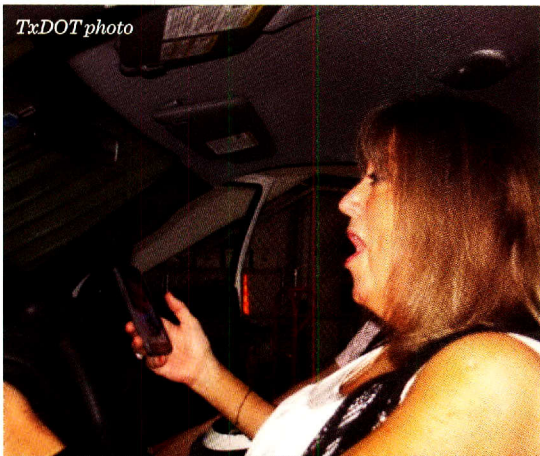
SO, YOU THINK YOU'RE A SAFE DRIVER...

TxDOT photo



Special Projects Public Information Officer Donna Huerta with the Dallas District seems to be having a "doomsday" crash on the ICW Simulator.

TxDOT photo



Donna Huerta pummels into another vehicle in the ICW Simulator. And this, folks, is why you should not text and drive.

The Dallas District's traffic safety officers partnered with AT&T in June for the "It Can Wait" campaign to alert drivers of the dangers of distracted driving.

TxDOT links distracted driving to 90,378 crashes in 2012. Of these crashes, 18,468 resulted in serious injuries, and 453 resulted in deaths.

To do its part, the Dallas Traffic Safety Coalition, spearheaded by Dallas Traffic Safety Specialists Robert White and Susan Clark, developed and promoted public events with an "It Can Wait" driving simulator, also known as the ICW Simulator, to help motorists understand the negative consequences of distracting driving. The simulator is accurate, helpful and pretty cool.


It is also proactive because it "allows motorists to have the opportunity to know what could happen if they are distracted while driving without the motorists actually having to be involved in a car crash," White said.

The simulator is a video game connected to a truck, and the driver can either wear a set of 360-degree goggles, or view a laptop screen inside the truck to see where they are headed while driving along virtual roads. The truck is stationary, but the feel of driving a vehicle is authentic. The goal is simple: do not crash!

The driving part is not as easy as it looks, especially if the driver tries to text or use a mobile phone, as Special Projects Public Information Officer Donna Huerta did. She crashed a few times before she left the driver's seat.

While AT&T sponsored the project and provided the equipment, the coalition partnered with Mothers Against Drunk Driving, the Injury Prevention Center of Greater Dallas, the Texas Department of Public Safety and other law enforcement entities.

"The program is important because it teaches motorists the dangers of distracted driving. The goal of this project is to make the simulator available to the whole state of Texas," White said.

To schedule the simulator for an event in your area, contact Robert White at robert.white@txdot.gov or Susan Clark at susan.clark@txdot.gov. 

FUTURE ICW EVENTS SCHEDULED

Oct. 18

TxDOT Safety Day
(Atlanta)

Oct. 26

Ridgmar Mall
(Fort Worth)

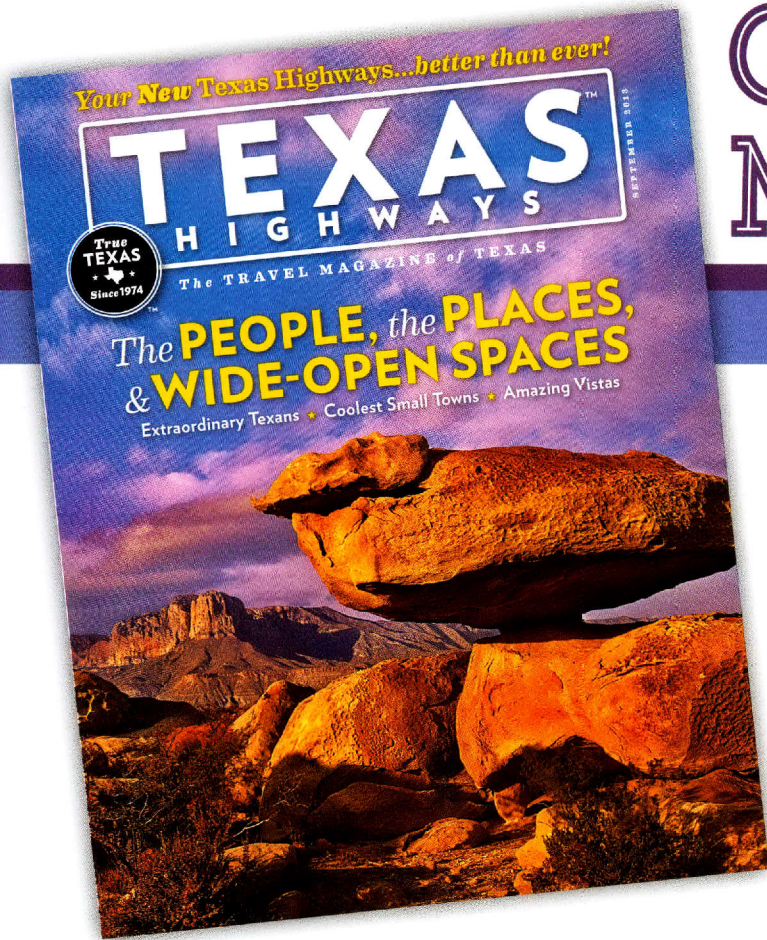
Nov. 2

5K Run
(Farmers Branch)

Nov. 7

TxDOT Wellness Fair
(Austin)

TEXAS HIGHWAYS GETS A MAKEOVER



“Texas Highways” is debuting an exciting redesign this September, offering a fresh look and feel to give fans a better-than-ever experience with the venerable travel magazine.

The magazine, which is published by the Travel Information Division, is launching the bold makeover to kick off the celebration of its 40th anniversary in 2014.

The loyal audience of “Texas Highways” is at the heart of the redesign. Reader feedback factored into the creative process, and the enhanced product is designed to engage readers in a greater sense of community.

“We’re following the trend in publishing which is to integrate the digital and print platforms so readers can share more information with an increasingly diverse audience,” said Charles J. Lohrmann, publisher of “Texas Highways.”

“The sense of community is essential, and ‘Texas Highways’ readers have always been both vocal and active.”

The redesigned magazine not only gets a visual makeover, but the editorial content of the magazine has been updated to attract more readers and boost the economic impact of the travel industry.

The magazine’s new masthead enhances the prominence of the word, “Texas” in the title, which is a nod to the state’s grand heritage and the magazine’s mission to inspire travel and tourism. The redesign also features a fresh, eye-catching and clean design that imbues the pages with a contemporary and exciting feel.

“We think the visuals will be more engaging to a broader audience, including younger readers, and will also be embraced by our current audience,” says Mark Mahorksy, creative director of “Texas Highways.”

The new magazine will also offer more diverse editorial content and innovative approaches to the subject of Texas travel. But readers will also notice a continued focus on longtime favorites, including big, vibrant photography, small towns, weekend road trips and Texas history.

“We’re not simply repackaging our offerings. This is a whole new editorial product,” said Jill Lawless, editor of “Texas Highways.” “Within each issue, we’re going to have a wider variety of topics, including regular content on out-of-the-way destinations, Texas-made products, adventure travel and family travel.”

The redesigned September issue of the magazine is built around the theme of “People, Places, and Wide Open Spaces of Texas.” The magazine’s feature stories cover the state’s coolest small towns, amazing vistas and extraordinary residents. Reader nominations drove the editors’ selection and reader comments are featured throughout the magazine.

Various elements of the redesign build on the magazine’s heritage as an authority on Texas travel. Readers will notice a new icon, or brand, throughout the magazine: “True Texas: Since 1974.”

“‘Texas Highways’ has been beloved for 40 years,” Mahorksy says. “This icon will be used with all of our communications moving forward, and will open new and different ways for the magazine to market and merchandise its brand.”

“Texas Highways” debuted as a travel magazine in May 1974 with a circulation of 25,000. Today, the magazine boasts a monthly circulation of 200,000 readers, including subscribers from across the United States and the globe.

HOGS & DOGS

Abilene Revs Up for Motorcycle Safety

Dozens of motorcyclists took to the streets in Abilene on June 17 for the city's third annual Motorcycle Ride to Work Day.


The Abilene Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) organized the event to coincide with the national Ride to Work Day. Each June, the national event draws attention to the benefits of commuting by motorcycle and safely sharing the road.

TxDOT's Abilene District supported the MPO by promoting the event and encouraging drivers to look out for motorcycles the day of the event — and every day. A few district staffers donned helmets and joined the group at City Hall for a safety talk and photo, then rode through town to a local motorcycle dealership.

Upstaging some of the tricked out, shiny rides was one of the participants. When Jake, a 9-year-old Chinese pug, rode in with his owner, Cindy Mundschenk, all eyes and cameras turned to him. Dressed in a leather jacket, a bandanna, shades and a tiny helmet, the four-footed rider shrugged off the attention as he settled down into a saddlebag to enjoy cruising the streets.

Riders have fun at the event, but raising awareness and improving safety are their main goals. One of their greatest concerns is distracted drivers. Sadly, about two weeks after the event, one of the participants was waiting at a red light and was hit by a pickup truck driver who barreled into his lane while texting. The motorcyclist is now recovering from a severe leg injury.

The MPO and TxDOT hope events like Ride to Work will help prevent similar incidents.

"It's hard to overlook a large group of motorcycles riding together," said Abilene Transportation Operations Director Roy Wright, who rode in the event. "But on a daily basis, most of us ride as individuals, and that's when we're most vulnerable to drivers who may not be looking out for us. If this event can cause a few more drivers to look twice and be more aware, we'll all be safer." 



TxDOT photo

Cindy Mundschenk and her dog, Jake, join about 60 other motorcycle riders in Abilene's Motorcycle Ride to Work Day.

Bright Lights:

Helping others find opportunities



Jim Sayre of Atmos Energy Corp. with TxDOT Utility Coordinator Brenda Richards.

Jim Sayre of Atmos Energy Corp. recently wrote to Fort Worth District Engineer Maribel Chavez with glowing praise for Utility Coordinator Brenda Richards, and the letter was featured in Bright Lights: Where Employees Shine on Crossroads.


"Utility Coordinator Brenda Richards deserves a pat on the back, because she is the best of the best," said Sayre. "You just don't know how much I appreciate Brenda for her quick solutions and great attitude."

"Someday I hope you work for me, because you are certainly everything a business needs to be a better business," Sayre wrote in his letter, adding a note to Richards. "TxDOT is very lucky to have you as you are smart and patient, and you have a generous spirit that you so wonderfully share!"

Richards helps Fort Worth-area businesses obtain utility installation permits. She started at TxDOT seven years ago, just in time to help the department launch the online Utility Installation Review Program.

Richards was involved in presenting more than 30 training classes for more than 1,000 business representatives and TxDOT employees. Prior to that, all utility installation permit reviews were processed through a paper system.

"Atmos is one of our busiest customers, and knowing that Jim took the time to write to our district engineer to compliment my work is just an incredible feeling," said Richards.

We hope you take the time to read **Bright Lights: Where Employees Shine on Crossroads** and learn more about great TxDOT employees who represent our department so well. Send any compliments or thank you emails and letters that you receive to AskTxDOT, so we can add your stories to Bright Lights. Check out Bright Lights at <http://crossroads/brightlights/index.asp>. 

KEEPING RURAL WORKERS *Connected*

For many Texas workers in small towns and rural communities, good paying jobs are a good distance away. Stories of 80-mile or 150-mile commutes are common and can drain the monthly budget. By supporting the state's public transit providers, TxDOT's Public Transportation Division plays a vital role by providing safe, convenient and inexpensive transportation solutions for workers in small towns and rural areas across the state.

"We continue to be impressed by the creativity and effectiveness of our public transit partners as they search for ways to support the Texas workforce," said Public Transportation Division Director Eric Gleason. "Whether commuters are traveling long distances for better jobs or trying to avoid traffic jams in urban areas, public transit can be the answer."

When the Plainview-based Cargill Inc. plant announced the shutdown of its facility in January 2013, an innovative public transit plan allowed about 200 of the Plainview plant employees to continue working for the company at a nearby plant in Friona.

South Plains regional public transit provider, SPARTAN Transportation, and the city of Plainview teamed up with TxDOT to help the workers keep their jobs with Cargill. TxDOT purchased two commuter buses for the 150-mile roundtrip route, and SPARTAN Transportation began commuter service between Plainview and Friona for Cargill employees on May 6, 2013.

"This unique collaboration has enabled Cargill employees to keep their jobs and reduce their transportation costs significantly each month," said Plainview City Manager Greg Ingham. "It also keeps dollars in our local economy."

Across the state in the Golden Crescent near Victoria, an estimated 35 percent of the 2,000 employees at the Inteplast Group manufacturing plant in Lolita use the Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission's Rural Job Access. The commute for workers from Victoria to the plant in Lolita is 40 miles one-way. TxDOT has supported the program since it was established in 2008.

Sherman-area Texoma Area Paratransit System (TAPS) has a long history of collaboration with TxDOT to offer transportation solutions to its North Texas workforce. When TAPS recognized that many Texas workers crossed the Red River each day heading north to Oklahoma for work, the Go Red River Route program was born and began rolling September 2012. Go Red River serves 2,000 riders a month shuttling employees to the Choctaw Nation Resort, Delaware North Hospitality, GAMCO General Accessories and Wal-Mart, as well as other companies.



TxDOT's Public Transportation Division provides funding to TAPS Public Transit in Sherman for the Go Red River Route, providing Texas workers with transportation to and from their jobs in Oklahoma.

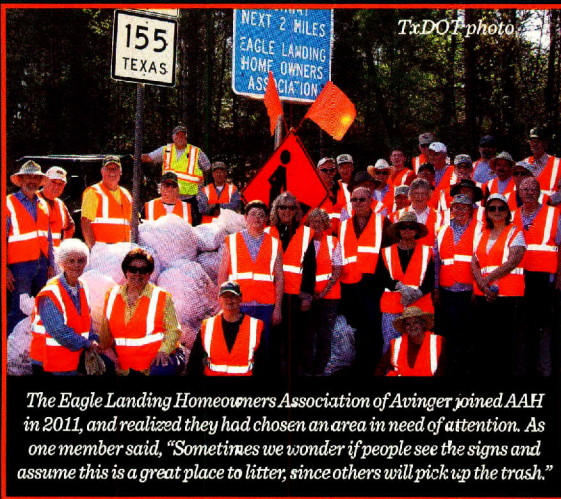


Representatives from the chambers of commerce of Denison, Okla. and Sherman, Texas along with the Sherman-area TAPS Public Transit celebrate the launch of the Go Red River Route. The program provides a boost for communities on both sides of the Texas-Oklahoma border.

The environmental benefits of public transit solutions for workers are significant as well, reducing the number of vehicles on the road, fuel consumption and carbon emissions. Employees say they are thankful for the low-cost, dependable transportation option, while employers credit the service for increased success in retaining employees, and driving down turnover and absenteeism costs.

From the South Plains to the Golden Crescent to the Red River, TxDOT's Public Transportation Division provides financial, technical and coordination assistance to the state's public transit providers. There are 14 large-urban, 30 small-urban and 38 rural transportation systems in the state. Expanding employment opportunities for Texans in small towns and rural areas is just one more way the Texas transportation system drives the state's economy. **TN**

2013 ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY PROGRAM WINNERS



The Eagle Landing Homeowners Association of Avinger joined AAH in 2011, and realized they had chosen an area in need of attention. As one member said, "Sometimes we wonder if people see the signs and assume this is a great place to litter, since others will pick up the trash."

Each year, hundreds of individuals and volunteer groups from around the state participate in TxDOT's Adopt-a-Highway (AAH) Program. Since the early 1990s, TxDOT has presented an award to an outstanding volunteer group, an individual and a Maintenance Division employee who works with the AAH program.

The 2013 winners are: the Eagle Landing Homeowners Association of Avinger, Lester G. Adams Sr. of Waco and David Bauer, a supervisor for the Austin District's Travis North Maintenance Office. **TN**

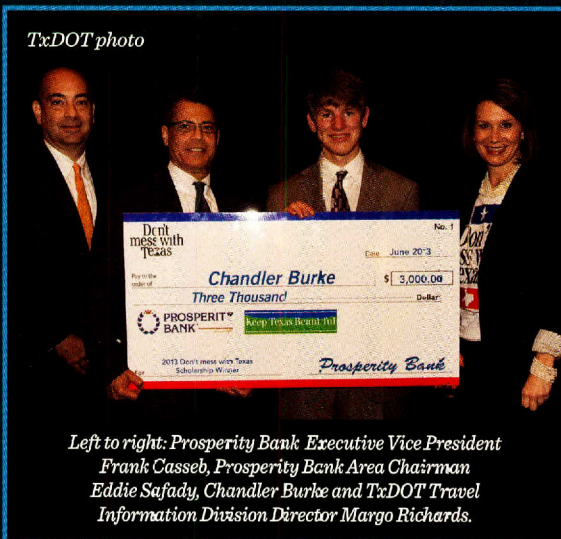
AWARDING COMMUNITIES FOR KEEPING TEXAS BEAUTIFUL

The 2013 Governor's Community Achievement Awards honored 10 exemplary communities during the 46th Annual Keep Texas Beautiful Conference on June 19 in San Antonio. Collinsville, Port Aransas, Graham, Katy, Alvin, Copcoeras Cove, Grapevine, Longview, Midland and Austin all received recognition for cultivating the best grassroots environmental programs in the state throughout the previous year.

The competition distributed \$2 million in funding from TxDOT to the communities, with the award to each city based on population size. The funds go toward landscaping and beautification projects that enhance the state's rights of way. When completed, the projects conform with the winning city's aesthetic expectations while upholding the department's rigorous standards of safety, maintenance and design. **TN**



Keep Graham Beautiful (KGB) was awarded the coveted \$130,000 Governor's Community Achievement Award for first place in its population category. Front row, left to right: Carol Lee Robinson, Anne Schultz, Keep Graham Beautiful Director Ed Hinson, KGB Secretary-Treasurer Eva Hoffman, Susie White and Mayor Barry White. Back row, left to right: KGB President Roy Robinson, KGB Director Jerry Schultz, City Manager Larry Fields, Judy Fields, Susan Hinson, KGB Director Dorthiea Henderson, Texas Department of Transportation Travel Information Division Director Margo Richards, Public Works Director David Casteel, Betsy Casteel and Texas Highway Commissioner Fred Underwood.



Left to right: Prosperity Bank Executive Vice President Frank Casseb, Prosperity Bank Area Chairman Eddie Safady, Chandler Burke and TxDOT Travel Information Division Director Margo Richards.

LITTER CLEANUP IDEA WINS SCHOLARSHIP

Chandler Burke, who graduated from St. Mark's School of Texas in Dallas last spring, is the 2013 "Don't mess with Texas" first-place scholarship winner. Burke, who received a \$3,000 scholarship, set himself apart from the more than 600 applicants with his project that focused on litter cleanup and the conservation of the Blackland Prairie in North Texas. He proposed a comprehensive solution to litter and pollution problems affecting the tall-grass prairie ecosystem unique to the region and plans to attend Rice University this fall to study biomedical engineering.

Ryan Falcona of St. Thomas High School in Houston and Alana Zamora from San Marcos High School in San Marcos are this year's \$2,000 scholarship winners. This is the tenth year "Don't mess with Texas" has rewarded the hard work and ingenuity of the state's young people in their efforts to prevent litter on our roadways and preserve the beauty of the Texas environment. **TN**



NorthGate Constructors breaks down concrete and recycles it for use as a base with new pavement. Since this process occurs on site, it saves time, requires fewer trucks and diverts less material to landfills.

Environmental Protection Efforts Result in Two Globe Awards


Building a safe and reliable transportation system can go hand-in-hand with preserving the environment. Two Dallas-Fort Worth area projects received national recognition for achieving that sensitive balance.

The American Road and Transportation Builders Association Transportation Development Foundation awarded the DFW Connector project its first-place Globe Award in the category of Major Highway Projects more than \$100 million.

According to the foundation, the DFW Connector's outstanding design improves mobility and air quality for the highway's 250,000 daily commuters.

The \$1 billion DFW Connector is constructed using methods to manage hazardous materials, emissions and environmental pollution, while also recycling up to \$1 million tons of construction materials. Six acres of wildflowers and more than 50,000 new plants will be planted to improve air quality. The DFW Connector is a public-private partnership with NorthGate Constructors.

A second-place Globe Award went to the LBJ Express, a collaborative partnership with LBJ Infrastructure Group and Trinity Infrastructure. The \$3.2 billion project reconstructs nearly 17 miles of Dallas-area highway, while recycling soil to nearby cities, managing hazardous materials and redirecting groundwater to drought-stricken areas.

"We are honored and extremely proud to receive these awards," said TxDOT Executive Director Phil Wilson. "Building safe and reliable roads is always our top priority, but we also feel a strong sense of obligation and responsibility when it comes to preserving the environment and engaging the surrounding community through meticulous planning and thoughtful design. These awards are a testament to the diligence of our engineers, construction workers and other TxDOT team members who make these roads a reality." 



TxDOT photo

Millions of cubic yards of soil excavated during construction of the LBJ Expressway were recycled for use within the project and in projects in nearby cities.

TxDOT's web-based Crash Reporting and Analysis for Safer Highways (CRASH) application, developed by the Crash Records Information System (CRIS) team, won a 2013 Best of Texas Award from the Center for Digital Government that recognized TxDOT's efforts to enable law enforcement officers to process crash reports electronically via a secure, public Internet connection.



TxDOT photo

Left to right: CRIS Project Manager Margo McCormick, Crash Reporting and Support Supervisor Lesley Trevino, Crash Data and Analysis Interim Section Director Debra Vermillion and Traffic Operations Division Director Carol Rawson.

CRASH WINS BEST OF TEXAS AWARD


Traffic Operations Division Director Carol Rawson said they are very proud to have won the award.

"The Best of Texas Awards program was established to recognize state and local governments for their accomplishments in the information technology arena," she said. Rawson added that CRASH merited the award because the system produces more accurate crash data which benefits the entire state.

"CRASH eliminates the need to print and mail paper crash reports, and reduces report processing costs, the time it takes an officer to fill out a report, and the time between the crash and the availability of the crash data," she said.

CRASH was launched on Oct. 3, 2011. TxDOT took over the crash reporting function from the Texas Department of Public Safety in October 2007.

TxDOT realized cost savings of \$151,875 in processing paper crash reports by the end of fiscal year 2012 and is expected to save a total of approximately \$372,000 by the end of the second quarter of fiscal year 2013. TxDOT projects 89 percent of the crash report volume will be submitted electronically by spring 2014.

Rawson said her team is in the process of designing and developing a new CRASH Mobile Application for deployment to pilot agencies in early 2014. The application will allow officers who do not currently have access to a laptop to collect crash data at the crash scene, and can be deployed to motorcycle officers, officers who ride horses and bicycles, and officers who patrol on foot. 



TxDOT photo

During their last class, participants of the HEED program in the San Antonio District had a healthy food competition. From left to right: Ishmael Trevino, Chris Delazerda, Randi Quintero, Sandra Diaz, Pat Nolasco, Mary Helen Aguilar, Iris De La Rosa, Johnnie Tennie, Audrey Thompson, Christine Jauregui, Christen Longoria, Dolly Garcia, Laura Lopez, Jack Dugas and Crystal King.


HEALTHY EATING EVERY DAY

Reaching 12,000 employees spread out across the state can be challenging. However, TxDOT's Wellness Program staff in the Human Resources Division offer a variety of programs, and use a combination of in-person and virtual delivery methods to educate employees statewide on how to be healthy. One of their newest programs is called Healthy Eating Every Day (HEED).

Launched last spring as an addition to the department's WorkLife Balance program, HEED is designed to teach employees how to choose the proper balance of the right foods for optimal health, set realistic goals and rewards, and cope with triggers for unhealthy eating. The 10-week program is a streamlined version of a 20-week program based on research that demonstrates that healthy eating reduces the risk of many chronic diseases.

Participants in the program learn to consider making healthy eating choices while shopping for food and dining out, and learn how to make sense of nutritional information. The program teaches that course goals can be achieved without having to eliminate entire food groups or sacrifice meals. The information presented in Healthy Eating is about making gradual changes that are in line with and also complement the United States Department of Agriculture's dietary guidelines.

Employees can participate in the program during their lunch hour. Wellness coordinators across the state are able to provide information about the program. In order to reach as many TxDOT employees as possible, it is offered in-person as well as through video teleconferencing, an effective way to make HEED available to anyone who would like to participate.


Employees interested in learning more about the program can find additional information on the Crossroads HRD-Net site or by contacting Statewide Wellness Coordinator Audrey Thompson at audrey.thompson@txdot.gov or (512) 486-5358. 



HOUSTON'S U.S. 290 PROGRAM RECEIVES NATIONAL RECOGNITION

TxDOT's comprehensive public involvement effort on the U.S. 290 Program in Houston received notice in a big way, garnering the PRIDE Award from the American Road and Transportation Builders Association for public and media relations in the public sector.

The association noted in its comments the importance of several features used by the program's outreach team, including a dedicated program office for stakeholders to visit, call or email their questions, frequent public presentations, a program website, Twitter updates on construction closures and detours, as well as 3D visual animations of proposed interchanges.

The U.S. 290 corridor in Harris County runs 38 miles from I-610 in Houston to FM 2920 in Waller, which in 2010 had a population of 688,000. That's estimated to increase to 964,000 by 2040, underscoring the need for improvements on a road that is already one of the most heavily congested in Texas. The U.S. 290 Program is another example of TxDOT's commitment to safety and addressing congestion. The program's public involvement work will continue to keep those who live and travel this roadway informed of the construction progress. 



American Road and Transportation Builders Association Chairman Steve Wright (left) of Wright Brothers Construction presents the PRIDE Award to TxDOT Chief of Staff Scott Haywood.

SAN ANTONIO DISTRICT Boasts Healthy, Fit Employees

With the benefits of exercise in mind, Chief People Officer (CPO) Dee Porter challenged San Antonio District employees to run a marathon. A whole marathon? Really?



Members of the San Antonio District Design "Red Team" won the Golden Shoe Award for top scores in the Chief People Officer's Marathon Challenge in June. From left to right, shown walking together around the San Antonio District offices during a morning break: General Engineering Tech David Scheel, Design Technician Rebecca Fox, Transportation Engineer Amy Ramirez, Summer Engineering Technician Benjamin Bryce and Transportation Engineer Eric Hernandez. Design Section "Red Team" participants not pictured: Corey Benavidez, Andres Garza, Malcolm Gonzales, Diana Rogerio, Noelle Wheeler and Daniel Worden.

The 26.2 mile trek wasn't as daunting as it sounds, because the participants had the whole month of June to accomplish the goal by adding up mileage each day after walking, jogging or running.

Thirty-one teams, including local division employees, maintenance offices, district administration, transportation operations and traffic management, rose to the challenge. The "Red Team", comprised of design employees, won the CPO Marathon Challenge and received the first-ever Golden Shoe Award for the highest percentage of participation.

"I am floored by the 119 San Antonio district, region and division employees who walked, jogged or ran to complete a marathon for a total of 5,729 miles during the month of June," said Porter. "Congratulations to all for the

Continued on page 25



Beaumont District Transportation Specialist Steve Rutledge, his sons and other volunteers, unload the truck carrying supplies to victims of the May 20 tornado in Moore, Okla.

BEAUMONT BRINGS OUT THEIR BEST

TxDOT employees are known to be hard-working and often put in long hours. But that doesn't stop many of them from volunteering in their communities or going the extra mile at work. Employees in the Beaumont District are among those who step up to fill a need or lend a hand during a crisis.

Beaumont District Transportation Specialist Steve Rutledge traveled with his sons, Paul and Chris, and other members of the Jasper community to Moore, Okla., on May 25, to bring bottled water, cleaning supplies, dog food, canned goods and diapers to the victims of the May 20 tornado.

The Rutledge men, all of whom are volunteer firefighters, felt compelled to help after the aid they received following Hurricane Rita in 2005.

"We remember how it was for us," said Steve Rutledge. "The people who restored power at my house after 23 days were from Oklahoma."

Donations were loaded on Rutledge's sons' 18-wheeler at the First National Bank of Jasper parking lot and were transported to Harvest Church in Moore. So many supplies were donated that 250 cases of water had to be transported on a gooseneck lowboy pulled by a Jasper fire truck.

"You get more when you give than when you receive," added Rutledge.

Employees of the Beaumont District rolled up their sleeves on June 5 to help save lives by donating blood. Administrative Assistant Heather Halligan organizes the quarterly blood drives in Beaumont. She's been donating blood since she was 16 years old so it is a good match for her job duties.


"It's easy, and you can save lives," Halligan said.

Eleven people came to the latest blood drive, and Halligan hopes to increase that number by offering incentives such as a gift card drawing or providing homemade baked goods.

The next Beaumont District blood drive is Nov. 20, the same day as the district's Safety Expo. Halligan says the Lifeshare Blood Center bus will be able to handle staff from all over the district who attend the expo and want to donate blood.

The fourth annual Orange Safety Day was held June 7 at the Travel Information Center (TIC) in Orange. TxDOT partnered with local agencies to make the day possible, including the Texas Department of Public Safety, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the local sheriff's department. Hundreds of people stopped in to learn more about safe summer travel.

Orange TIC Travel Counselor Laura Allen enjoys helping to organize the annual event. She said it is a real team effort to put together Safety Day and working with the entire TIC staff is incredible.

"We have a lot of family friendly activities," said Allen. "It's great to see everyone get excited about the events." 



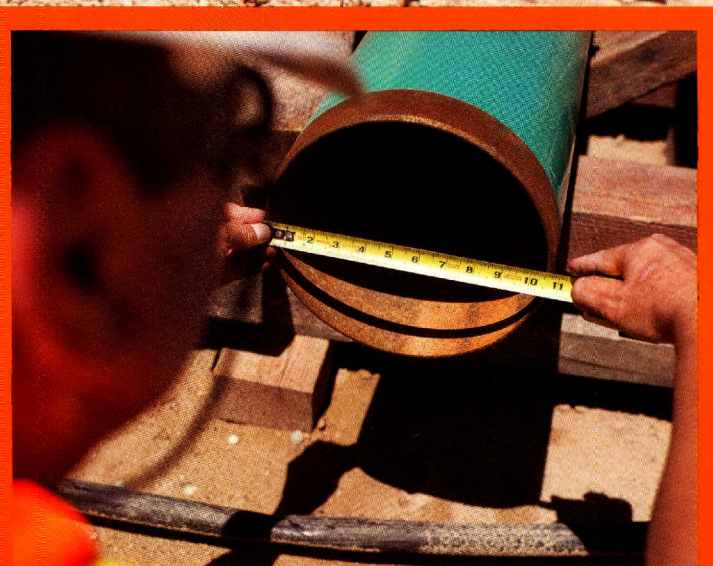
TxDOT photo

Beaumont District Administrative Assistant Heather Halligan donates blood at the quarterly blood drive in Beaumont on June 5. She encourages everyone to donate blood because "it's easy, and you can save lives." Halligan has been a blood donor since the age of 16.

I AM A...

Utility Coordinator





ALBERT MARTINEZ

Albert Martinez, who can be described as reliable and hardworking, has served as a utility coordinator for the El Paso District for the past 16 years. He learned of the position while collaborating on a state project as a gas company representative and has 38 years of combined utility experience.

Also a dedicated family man, Martinez enjoys softball and camping, and has been married to his wife, Patricia, for 34 years. They have two sons in college and a daughter who served in the Army for 10 years including a tour of duty in Afghanistan.

WHAT DOES A UTILITY COORDINATOR DO?

I review and route utility permits for companies and private individuals for processing and approval. The permits allow for the placement of utilities within TxDOT's rights of way. I review plans and schematics and also work with design employees when coordinating utility issues. I also meet with utility companies to facilitate the relocation of utility systems for construction projects, work with utility company inspectors on related issues, as well as inspect utility line placement to make sure installation complies with the department's standards.

ONE WORD TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF? Wise!

HOW DO YOU MAKE DECISIONS? I assess the situation, reflect on what the department requires and needs, consider safety aspects, evaluate the customer's needs and make decisions that will benefit everyone and will work for the department.

WHAT'S THE ONE CAREER ACCOMPLISHMENT YOU'RE MOST PROUD OF?

The respect and good working relationships I've established with the agencies I've worked with. These good relationships are important because when you get the cooperation of other agencies, people are willing to help you when you need it.


WHAT QUALITIES IN YOUR CO-WORKERS AND MANAGEMENT DO YOU APPRECIATE MOST?

Respect for co-workers, honesty and dependability. I appreciate that all my co-workers are willing to lend a helping hand.

IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT ARE IMPORTANT ATTRIBUTES OF SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE?

Dedication, commitment and loyalty.

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO COME TO WORK EACH DAY?

Plain and simple, I enjoy my job. I look forward to the new challenges each day has to offer. 

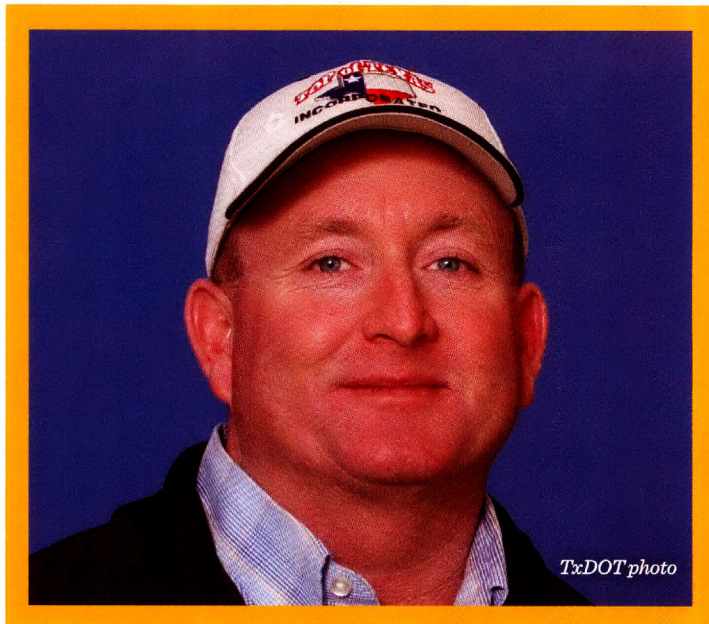
Q & A

with Heath Cave

Heath Cave

Amarillo District County Supervisor

Heath Cave is a 28-year TxDOT veteran and the Amarillo District's Deaf Smith County supervisor. He's been married for 17 years to his wife, Angie. They live in Hereford with their two children Jaicie, 13, and Britt, 10. He started his career with TxDOT as a summer hire in 1985, after graduation from Groom High School. Two years later, he got his first job as a maintenance technician in the Groom Maintenance Office.



What does a county supervisor do? I supervise 12 people, and we maintain 700 miles of Deaf Smith County roads and bridges in all kinds of weather in the Panhandle.

Your office is known for its emphasis on safety. How do you set the example for your team to ensure safety is the highest priority every day? We start and end our day with a safety briefing. Safety is first and the work follows. If we find something we can't resolve safely, we'll figure out how to accomplish the mission in another way that is safe. It helps to be surrounded by intelligent and hard-working individuals who watch out for each other as well.

Deep-dish or thin-crust pizza? The older I get, the thinner I like it.

Why did you choose to work for TxDOT? I worked for a great supervisor named Randall Patterson. He saw me work and told me to stick with the job because I had the skills. When I became a maintenance supervisor, he was very proud of himself and me.

What was your favorite Halloween costume as a kid? I loved Superman. I liked the whole look with the cape and the tights.

What talent do you possess that very few people know about (e.g., singing, juggling, etc.)? I don't really have any of those talents, but I can cook. My wife and kids agree on that.

How is your district helping TxDOT accomplish its mission? We work long hours to assure safe roads through all kinds of weather. After a snow fall, we find there are a lot of issues caused by the weather that need patching and fixing, and hot weather causes pavement problems as well.


Chicken wings: mild, Buffalo or super spicy? Spicy. I definitely like to feel the burn.

What makes your district the best in TxDOT? I believe a former district engineer said it best when he said the Amarillo District has the friendliest, hardest working people in the state.

Is bowling a sport...really? I actually know people who went through college on a bowling scholarship and who went pro after they graduated. So, yes it is.

Where did you meet your spouse? I met her on a blind date arranged by one of my friends. She must be blind because she's still married to me.

Solve the classic rock riddle: Beatles, Rolling Stones or Led Zeppelin? It's definitely Led Zeppelin. "Stairway to Heaven" is a great song, and my high school prom used it as the theme.

Why is TxDOT the best state agency in Texas? Here in the Panhandle, we get compliments on the quality of our roads because we have two states on either side who most say don't even compare. Of course, that's true across the rest of the state. We all have the exact same mission to guide us: we work with others to provide safe and reliable transportation solutions for Texas. 

Where Am I?

The Travel Information Division supplied this photo depicting an identifiable landmark you may have seen in your travels around Texas. If you think you know what this is a photo of or where it was taken, contact Bill Powell at Bill.Powell@txdot.gov or (512) 463-8606. Deadline for guesses is Sept. 26.



TxDOT photo

Identified:

Congratulations to our official first identifier: Jennifer Johnson of the San Antonio District. She identified our picture of the statue of Juan Seguin in the heart of downtown Seguin. She says she was there when the statue was dedicated. Chris Cowen (BRY) also correctly identified the photo.



TxDOT photo




TxDOT photo

In August, members of the Bexar Metro Maintenance Office road crew were honored for having 100 percent participation in the CPO Marathon Challenge. Chief People Officer Dee Porter challenged San Antonio District employees to walk, jog or run a marathon in June.

Continued from page 20

commitment to good health and making activity part of your daily routine.”

Some “Red Team” members walked during morning and afternoon breaks on a route that went through the district complex and circled the neighborhood behind the complex. Many of the “Red Team” members continue to walk the route.

To encourage participation, San Antonio District Design Supervisor Diana Rogerio offered an Academy gift card to the individual with the most miles. Eighty-four percent of the “Red Team” logged more than 26.2 miles, with the winner, Rebecca Fox, logging 84 miles. 

MILESTONES

July 2013 Service Awards

District:

Abilene

15 Roberto E. Rios

Amarillo

5 Wesley D. Kimmell

Atlanta

30 James G. Clark
20 Gerald L. Hatten
15 David K. Braley
Charles W. Obenoskey
5 Robert L. Jones

Austin

25 Danette R. Palenske
Lydia A. Ramirez
20 Jeffrey N. Ewing
Bruce R. Merrill III
15 Jose Caldera

Beaumont

25 Myron M. Broussard
20 Mattie T. Hawthorne
Dustin E. Wilkey
15 Gary L. Korns
10 Darlene M. Alexander
5 Chad M. Helton

Brownwood

20 Earnest R. Cole
William K. Munden
5 Gary L. Bearden

Bryan

30 David W. Martin
20 Maurice W. Jacob
Roger D. Montgomery

Childress

20 Travis H. Bateman
15 Anita M. Thompson

Corpus Christi

30 Mark A. Janysek
25 Rudolph A. Leos
15 Joe D. DeLeon Jr.

Dallas

25 John C. Beck III
Tracey L. Friggle Logan
David T. Lott
20 Gregory R. Denton
15 Demond L. Taylor
Dana L. Watson
5 Nnenna A. Eke

El Paso

35 Pablo V. Ramirez
30 Gilbert Cangas
15 Abel F. Galindo

Fort Worth

30 Donald R. Lynch
25 Steven T. Murray
David C. Perkins
20 Hector Marquez
10 Korin W. Adkins
Anthony W. Malone
Roel D. Rodriguez
5 Jason B. McWright
Benjamin Soria

Houston

25 Kitping Kwok
20 David S. Jeffreys
Gary W. Skolaut
Troy A. Wawarofsky
10 Deborah A. Lively
Valerie K. Taylor

5 Ivan Davidson III
Patrick M. Lutta
Guadalupe C. Nieto Jr.

Lubbock

15 Timothy L. Hogue
Gilbert Sepulbeda

Lufkin

20 Robert W. Mettlen

Odessa

30 Doyce M. Lee

Paris

25 Jose P. Arriola
20 Sydney N. Newman
15 Bobby L. Phifer

Pharr

20 Jesus Lara
5 Rigoberto Tobar

San Angelo

25 Romeo V. Perez Jr.

San Antonio

40 James M. Hubbard
35 Dennis W. Goodall
30 Dee B. Smith
25 Ronald E. Korzekwa
Brent W. Rainosek
20 Marvin D. Hatter
15 Kyle W. Richter
Joel U. Sanchez
10 Charlie L. Haggerton III
Justin W. Schaefer
5 Corey D. Crisp
Jerry C. Ellis
Leonard M. Jonas
Joe C. Zulaica Jr.



Tyler

20 Stanley D. Traylor

Waco

20 Roger F. Brooks
10 Allen L. Lassetter
5 Clayton T. Zacha

Youkum

15 Andrew Esparza

Division/ Office/Region:

Bridge

25 Rodney D. Stabeno
10 Yuan Zhao

Construction

20 John E. Barrett
Gerald D. Peterson Jr.

Design

20 Madhukar M. Kamble
Shawn D. McMahon
Ramin Z. Thomasian

Enterprise Resource Planning

15 Lynn M. Giusto

Environmental Affairs

15 Lisa J. Hart
5 Troy D. Sykes

General Services

25 Adna R. Johnson
20 John R. Chambers
10 Guadalupe Cruz
5 Charles R. Harding

Human Resources

20 Stephanie B. Dewitt
15 Lori A. Klaus

IT Customer Relations

20 Sam A. Hankla

IT Services

15 Yuning L. Lin

Maintenance

20 Mark W. McDaniel

Occupational Safety

25 Bessie H. Mayfield

Regional Support Center East

20 Gail E. Morea
10 Mike H. Stollings Jr.

Regional Support Center North

20 Loretta A. Huett
5 Jerry F. Martin

Regional Support Center South

15 Ruben D. Leal

Regional Support Center West

15 Alexander Sanchez

Right of Way

15 Jesus Esquierdo

Travel Information

5 Toni G. Garrison
Sherry L. McFerran

UPCOMING TxDOT EVENTS

Sept. 2

Labor Day Holiday
(All Agencies Closed)

Sept. 5-6

Rosh Hashanah
(Optional Holiday)

Sept. 26

Texas Transportation
Commission Meeting
(McAllen)

Oct. 14

DD/OD/DE/RD Meeting
(Texas A&M University,
College Station)

Oct. 15-16

Transportation Short Course
(Texas A&M University, College Station)

Oct. 31

Texas Transportation
Commission Meeting
(Austin)

MILESTONES

August 2013 Service Awards



District:

Abilene

- 30** Daniel A. Kierepka
- 15** Stuart H. Jeffrey

Amarillo

- 25** Nick N. Martinez
- 20** Harrel E. Hardy
- 15** Harold B. Cave
- 5** Billy J. Hollowell

Atlanta

- 15** Kevin P. Camp
- 10** James A. Walton

Austin

- 25** Doyle D. Moellering
Kenneth N. Shaffer
- 20** Dixie L. Duncan
- 15** Ricardo Calzoncit
- 10** John B. Taylor

Beaumont

- 25** John E. Sudela
- 20** Adam Ceasar
Cynthia L. Halligan
Garry R. LeBlanc
- 15** Elton W. Marshall
James D. Wilson
- 10** Kevin M. Grissom

Brownwood

- 20** Shelley L. Schuman

Bryan

- 20** Chad M. Clossin
- 10** Stephen M. Kasberg
- 5** James K. McDade

Childress

- 15** Bill T. Warren

Corpus Christi

- 25** Jose R. Gomez
- 20** Antonio S. Cortez
Alberto Perez
- 15** Richard A. Chauvette
- 10** Kevin M. Butler

Dallas

- 35** Geary W. Burnside
- 30** Darlene K. Grooms
- 25** Tony L. Seals
- 20** David L. Widmer
- 15** Jennifer J. Choate
Tad E. Eudy
Jackie L. Haley

El Paso

- 40** David A. Torres
- 15** James D. Gresham

Fort Worth

- 40** Peggy C. Cooper
- 30** Judith J. Anderson
- 20** Steward Van Haasen
- 15** David J. Moore

Houston

- 40** Donald M. Cathey
- 25** Darrell R. Elliott
Robinson C. James
Clyde R. Jatzlau
Lovey M. Reynolds
Steven B. Troy
- 20** Henry E. Kellumen
- 15** Michael A. Chadick

Saeid S. Moradmand

- 10** Grady B. Mapes
Karen G. Sepeda
- 5** William R. Flores
James W. Milligan

Laredo

- 15** John R. Aguilar
John C. Sell

Lubbock

- 35** James M. Combes
- 20** Barry D. Teafatiller

Lufkin

- 20** Emilio Delva Jr.
Rocky D. White
- 15** Charles L. Currie
- 5** Koby B. Youngblood

Paris

- 25** Glen A. Williams
- 20** Nancy L. Russell
- 15** Charles D. Evans
Micheal A. Faulks

Pharr

- 30** David L. Garcia
Vidal Quintanilla
- 15** Dagoberto Salinas

San Angelo

- 20** Bentley D. Mittel
James W. Whitlock Jr.
- 15** Thomas R. Johnston

San Antonio

- 25** Joe T. Cantu

- 15 Mario C. Juarez
- 5 Brian S. Compton

Tyler

- 20 Karen S. Gardner
- 20 Jeffrey W. Williams
- 15 Daryl J. Daigle
- Thomas A. Reid
- Wendy L. Simmons

Waco

- 30 Nathan S. Whitley
- 20 Shawn M. Uschan
- 15 James E. Bailey
- Eddy L. Pruett
- 10 Bernie J. Finnegan Jr.

Wichita Falls

- 20 David S. Duck

Yoakum

- 15 Jennifer L. Bishop
- Steven C. Gartman Sr.

**Division/
Office/Region:**

Administration

- 15 Yolanda Guerra

Aviation

- 10 Gregory Allen
- Carol A. Basey

- David L. Morgan
- Don W. Ramsey
- Timothy J. Wilhelm
- Randy W. Zumbahlen

Civil Rights

- 5 Alta Y. Alexander

Construction

- 30 Francisco Guevara Jr.
- 20 Joseph M. Roche

Contract Services

- 45 Joseph R. Matesic
- 15 Monica Y. Scott

Design

- 25 Peter B. Krause

Finance

- 25 Dianna L. Foreman
- 15 Mary L. Amaya
- 15 Robert R. Snipes
- 10 Deborah L. Blechert
- 5 Edwin L. Whiteside

General Services

- 40 Mary M. Otahal
- 5 Carolyn M. Brooks
- Daniel A. Bynum
- Catherine A. Stephens

Human Resources

- 20 Barbara L. Brown
- Debra D. Key
- Patricia J. Murphy
- Eloisa Torres

Maintenance

- 35 Anthony H. Compton
- 25 Dennis K. Markwardt
- 10 Brandye P. Munn

Occupational Safety

- 15 Beatriz M. Alvarado

Rail

- 25 Guy W. Godfrey
- 5 Don R. Traylor

**Regional Support
Center North**

- 35 Rosalie V. Svrcek

Right of Way

- 15 Kathy K. Walton

Traffic Operations

- 20 Garry B. Rand

**Transportation
Planning &
Programming**

- 15 Bertha Arellano
- 5 Claudio Nunez

In Memoriam

District:

El Paso

Ciro Lozano
General Technician I
Years of Service: 6
DOD: 6/25/2013

Kenneth "Jack" Rutledge
Maintenance Contracts
Administrator
Years of Service: 26
Retired: 1993
DOD: 7/28/2013

Richard E. Webb
Welder
Years of Service: 34
Retired: 1989
DOD: 6/23/2013

Fort Worth

I.W. "Van" Vanderford
Maintenance Technician
Years of Service: 30
DOD: 6/23/2013

Oscar Slaughter
District Maintenance
Years of Service: 30
Retired: 1995
DOD: 7/4/2013

Yoakum

Alvin W. Kolodziejczyk Sr.
Maintenance Technician
Years of Service: 23
Retired: 1983
DOD: 5/25/2013



District:

Amarillo

34 Russell C. Luther

Atlanta

39 James E. Kyle

Austin

28 Darrell G. Anglin

25 John D. Murray

25 Calvin R. Thomas

Beaumont

8 Claudie R. Scott

Brownwood

34 Richard L. Walker

Bryan

36 Robert L. Richardson

20 Sonia L. Vernon

18 David L. Brackens

Childress

28 Gregory C. Cheyne

20 Mary Y. Marshall

Corpus Christi

29 George V. Cavazos

28 Carlos Salgado Jr.

Dallas

35 Vernon D. Raney

19 Vijaykumar G.
Deolapure

6 Daniel J. McGee

El Paso

17 Robert Rodriguez

Fort Worth

28 Vicki W. Martin

17 Albert W. Stein

Houston

30 Sharlene A. Rothen

24 Matthew K. Nguyen

24 Jeana P. Glasgow

18 Stephanie L. Custer

12 Norman W. Dean

Laredo

28 Rogelio F. Garcia

Lubbock

21 Terry L. Crutcher

Odessa

20 Raul M. Tijerina

19 Joe W. Bumpus

Paris

26 Ray R. Crabtree

23 Cynthia G. Pitts

19 Paul D. Skidmore

Pharr

29 Teresa S. Solis

28 Roberto Tovar

San Angelo

34 Karl J. Bednarz

San Antonio

32 Kane P. Matthe

31 Carl G. Friesenhahn

28 James D. Gonzales

27 Rogelio Chavarria

26 Roland G. Krellwitz

24 Irene C. Ugarte

7 John A. Sawyer Jr.

Yoakum

33 Charles M. Nobles

13 Jesus De Leon Jr.

Division/ Office/Region:

Administration

25 Connie L. Bohuslav

Aviation

10 Billy L. Wittie

Communications

30 Laura Y. Sammons

Finance

24 Leticia Cruz

General Services

31 Glenda M. Bentley

30 Sandra A.
Radosavljevic

Human Resources

28 Ralaine N. Greene

20 Barbara J. Franks

IT Operations

24 Joseph G.
Poepelmeyer

IT Services

27 Sandra D. Nichols

21 Jerry D. Thompson

20 Charles R. McDonald

15 Beth A. Risley

Occupational Safety

1 Allen C. McDonald

Regional Support Center North

35 Melvin D. Harris

19 Vicki E. Rodriguez

Regional Support Center South

35 Diana P. Martinez

34 Phillip Cisneros Jr.

Regional Support Center West

25 Arron R. Justus

Right of Way

19 Joan C. Clayton

Strategic Projects

27 Gary L. Moonshower

Toll Operations

6 Ana R. Munoz

Travel Information

27 Daniel K. Perrine



District:

Abilene

16 Reginald Titus

Atlanta

31 Daniel M. Griekspoor

29 Michael W. Sharp

Austin

28 Mark R. Petrusek

Beaumont

29 John T. Choate

Brownwood

27 Jeffery T. Jones

24 Richard L. Cook

Bryan

32 Bonnie B. Loehr

17 Roy G. Latham

Childress

21 Ricky M. Diggs

Corpus Christi

34 Theodoro M. Garza Jr.

17 Severo Hernandez Jr.

Dallas

27 David J. Jessup

26 Stephen N. May

20 Hassan Moghadassi

Fort Worth

32 Harlan K. Stucker

24 Karen L. Hicks

Houston

29 Charles P. McLachlan

28 Su Jen Hwang

Laredo

28 Hector Chapa

Lubbock

30 Nathan S. Chrisman

30 Michael T. Quisenberry

24 Charles S. Renfro

Lufkin

31 Richard L. Jordan

Odessa

27 Daniel Reyes

Paris

29 David M. George

Pharr

26 Jody R. Ellington

San Angelo

33 Rocky E. Youngblood

San Antonio

29 Russell J. Soike

28 Hugh J. Fleming III

28 Mario G. Medina

Wichita Falls

26 Alisa M. Browning

Yoakum

25 Robert Lopez

Division/ Office/Region:

Bridge

27 Brian D. Merrill

Construction

25 Dale A. Rand

Design

18 Craig S. Dunning

General Services

23 Judith A. Mitchell

Human Resources

7 Katherine B. Canby

7 Nancy-Ellen Soteriou

IT Customer

Relations

33 Sheryl O. Petroski

28 David G. Norris

28 Earl T. Anderson Jr.

28 Juan F. Leal

28 Gilabert R. Herndon

28 Dorceia J. Smart

26 Richard W. Bentley

24 Robert W. Lindley

6 Amy S. Harper

IT Operations

38 Sandra T. Jackson

36 John A. Goth

35 Dennis L. Schultz

28 Adrienne C. Carter

26 John L. Adams

25 Stephen E. Anderson

23 Michael S. Calogridis

23 Steven B. Newman

19 Justine M. McGrady

16 Christopher W. Burford

IT Project

Management

10 Ellen E. Boughter

IT Services

35 William E. Kokas

34 Adrian J. Janak

28 Terry L. Marcus

28 David E. Norman

24 Ted W. Wilson

23 Cynthia E. Gendron

22 V. Denise Brown

20 Jay R. Edwards

17 Joseph A. Musil

15 Yuning L. Lin

Regional Support Center East

30 Michael M. Greig

Regional Support Center North

30 Royce F. Trojacek

28 James K. Barnes

22 Glenn D. Williams

17 Jimmy D. Bingham

Maintenance

27 Timothy L. Hazlett

Right of Way

32 Brenda E. McKinney

26 Roxie R.

Foster-McKinney

Traffic Operations

6 Tony N. Small



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TxDOT photo

OUR JOURNEY TO WELLNESS

We are Beverly and Joe Hecker, and we work in the Traffic Operations Division. This is our journey to wellness.

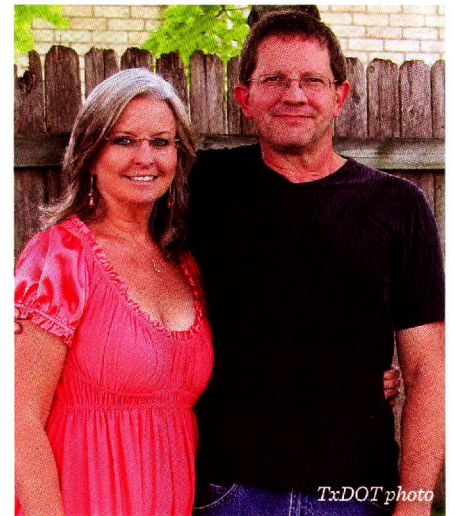
Beverly "I've been a state employee for more than 29 years. I spend a lot of time sitting behind a desk, and food has served many purposes. The heavier my body got, the more I ached. I thought I was much too young to feel this old. My need to make a change finally sunk in when several doctors told me that the answer to all my aches and pains was to lose weight."

Joe "I had been neglecting my health for quite some time and when the scale tipped over 200 pounds, I realized I needed to make a change. Beverly and I had been talking about changing our eating habits and making a healthy lifestyle change for a while. We decided that it was time to put those thoughts into action."

Joe and Beverly signed up for a class in the Healthy Eating Every Day program (HEED) offered at TxDOT. It was easy for them to commit since the class was only once a week during the lunch hour. They both had the basic knowledge of what it took to be healthy, but the class reinforced what they knew and provided several new insights into being healthy. The program also encouraged them to discuss their experiences and obstacles with other people. For them, having a support group and a spouse with similar health goals made the journey much more bearable.

In addition to the HEED class, Beverly started walking the hike and bike trail near her workplace. She walks at least three miles each work day, even when it's raining. Joe plays drums in a local band and does a lot of weekly yard work. They both enjoy hiking at various Texas state parks and kayaking at lakes, ponds and even in the ocean on occasion. They also both use phone applications to track their daily eating, exercising and grocery shopping. They log every food item they consume each day with an app called MyFitnessPal, use Runtastic Pedometer to keep track of their daily steps and use Shopwell to scan food item barcodes for nutritional information.

Since Feb. 1, Joe has lost 30 pounds, and Beverly has lost 27. Their journey continues. 



TxDOT photo

Contact your local WorkLife Balance Coordinator to learn about the wellness program and start your journey today!

