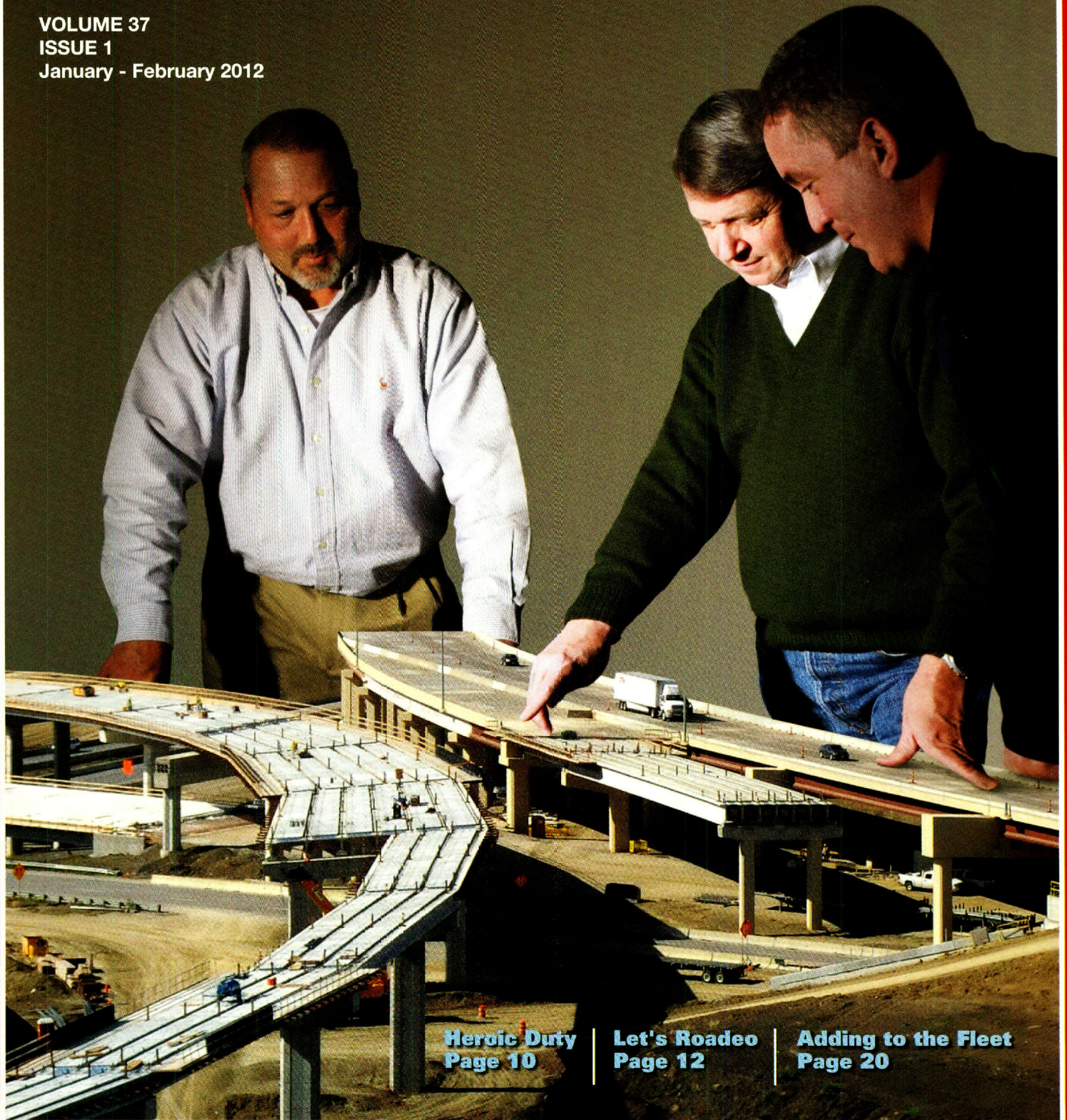




# Accelerating Public-Private Progress

TxDOT Advances DFW Connector Project

VOLUME 37  
ISSUE 1  
January - February 2012



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**Adding to the Fleet**  
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# Letter from Phil Wilson

## Executive Director

Happy New Year, and thanks to all of you who've made me feel so welcome.

In my short time here, I've discovered what you already know: This is a great place to work. The people here are selfless, dedicated and hard-working. This job is demanding. And it will only get more so. Modernization has become our call to arms: The tool we'll use to meet demands and become more accountable and transparent with each other and our stakeholders, the citizens of this great state.

But modernizing our operations alone will not create the atmosphere that will transform this agency and prepare us for the future. The truth is policies and procedures don't make a great agency.

Southwest Airlines is not one of the top airlines in this country because bags fly free. It's a plus for its consumers, but it is not the only reason for its success. Apple didn't revolutionize the cell phone and personal computer industry because it has a policy of thinking outside of the box. What those companies and others have in common is that they create workplaces where their employees are the most valued assets they have. And when employees matter, excellence is the result.


That's what we're building here at TxDOT: An atmosphere where every employee can and is expected to participate in improving and innovating our agency. We're creating a Culture of Excellence.

How do we do that? By reminding employees that they're not simply performing their jobs; they're meeting our mission and helping us realize our goals. You and I play a part in our success. That's why I need you to continue to suggest ways we can improve TxDOT. If you don't have the tools you need to do a job, let your supervisors know. At every level of leadership in this agency, we're learning to listen better to you, but you have to speak up.

Developing this culture means we're including some added responsibility and flexibility into all of our processes to help us become better. It also means we remain committed to safety. We have a great safety record, and our Safety: Mission Zero campaign keeps us focused. However, we must make sure we're always improving our safety efforts.

We've already made some other important improvements around the department. Our supervisors are now more empowered to make hiring decisions. Employees are entrusted to make appropriate decisions regarding their individual Internet and cell phone usage. We're expecting excellence from employees, and that will only translate into excellent service for the people of Texas.

I'm committed that TxDOT will be the best state agency — period. Not just in Texas. Thank you for helping me set the bar that other state agencies must meet.



**Phil Wilson**  
Executive Director



### TN Magazine

January – February 2012

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### TxDOT Goals

Prepare for the future.

Enhance safety.

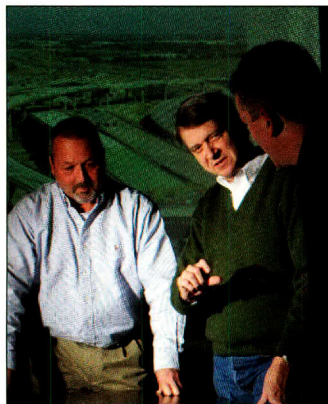
Maintain the transportation system.

Relieve congestion.

Enhance connectivity.

Work with our partners to identify funding strategies.

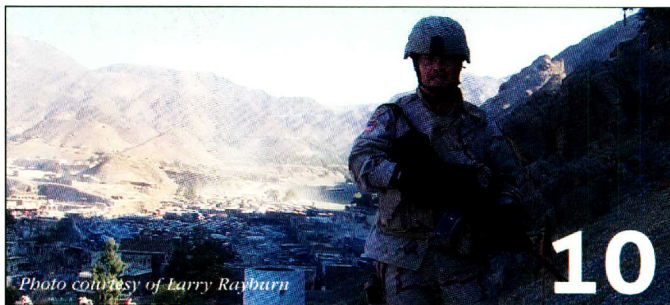
# Contents



## On the Cover:

(Left to right) DFW Comprehensive Development Agreement (CDA) Implementation Program Director Randy Redmond, Fort Worth District Transportation Engineer Sam Swan and CDA Public Information Officer Tony Hartzel take a look at the DFW Connector construction. Amazingly, this construction will double the size of the existing highway. As ambitious as this project is, a key point of success is in the “design-build” engineering process being used to get the \$1 billion project ready to roll.

# 6



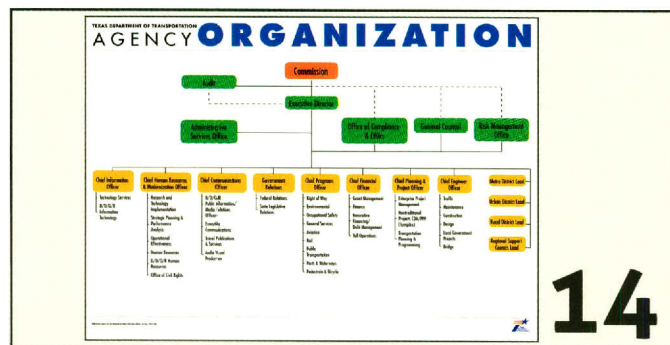
There is a true hero among TxDOT employees. A little more than 25 years ago, Larry Rayburn, TxDOT headquarters security chief, dove into an icy river to save a fellow soldier. The story is as chilling today as it was in 1985.

# 10



It's time to “Rodeo!” At the TxDOT Rodeo, you won't find any bucking broncos or steer wrestling, but you will encounter plenty of expert truck drivers and a lot of fun.

# 12



# 14

TxDOT employees know about many of the changes the department is undergoing to better serve Texans in the future. The organizational enhancements are reflected in a new transitional org chart which is similar to a “franchise model” that targets greater efficiencies.

## Features

# 5

Three ferries in Port Aransas will soon sport some new artwork based on TxDOT's Second Annual Port Aransas Ferry Art Contest. But TN readers can get a sneak peek of the winning pieces now.

# 16

Many of TxDOT's Modernization projects are well under way. Still in development is the revamp of the department's performance evaluation system. Find out how employees are contributing to this task.

# 18

It's almost Transportation Forum time again. This year's get-together of transportation experts from around the country will take place in San Antonio from Feb. 15-17. Spread the word!

# 22

In the Amarillo District, raising money for charity is easy as pie. Read all about this unique, “in your face” project that brought employees and supervisors together for a good cause.

# 5

## THINGS

### FIVE THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW RIGHT NOW

During its Dec. 15 regular meeting, the Texas Transportation Commission gave broader authority to the Port of Brownsville to issue permits for the operation of overweight vehicles on designated highways within the Brownsville Navigation District of Cameron County. The historic decision will significantly increase economic development opportunities for businesses in the area.

one

On Dec. 5, the Corpus Christi District unveiled the first I-69 sign in Texas at the intersection of SH 44 and the new I-69 in Robstown. The district installed 10 overhead freeway signs connecting highways to the new, 6.2-mile segment of the interstate, which is concurrent with U.S. 77 and connects to I-37 in Corpus Christi.

two

The TxDOT Aviation Division expects to provide grants totaling approximately \$60 million in fiscal year 2012 for planning, constructing and maintaining Texas community airports. The 275 community airports across the state provide facilities for agricultural, medical, business and commuter use — accounting for more than three million flight hours a year.

three

Road conditions can change quickly due to the weather, construction and natural disasters. Stay aware of road conditions in your area and throughout the state by calling (800) 452-9292 or visiting [www.txdot.gov/travel/road\\_conditions.htm](http://www.txdot.gov/travel/road_conditions.htm) for current road conditions. You can also follow any of TxDOT's 40 Twitter feeds, which provide important travel updates and news in 140 characters or less.

four

Through March 1, the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) is conducting an online survey of anonymous I-35 travelers to determine what information they like to receive about travel conditions, planning efforts and construction activities. The survey results will help TxDOT and TTI determine how best to communicate with I-35 users about potential traffic headaches during the five-year construction project in Central Texas. Find the survey at <https://tti-survey.tamu.edu/63999/lang-en>.

five

# Proposition 12 Update

All expenses for the development, administration and delivery of \$3 billion in Proposition 12 projects are being accounted for with a new financing program called Total Project Cost. The program, formulated by TxDOT's Finance Division (FIN), addresses the challenges of tracking and reporting project costs that include a complex blend of district Proposition 12 funds, metropolitan planning organization (MPO) dollars, traditional Fund 6 gas tax revenues and local contributions.

"Proposition 12 projects are considered 'all-in' in terms of costs," said Lanny Wadle, FIN funds management section director. "This 'all-in' philosophy, or total project cost, includes preliminary engineering, construction, right of way, change orders, construction engineering and consultant costs. Managing projects and programs from this perspective allows for efficient management of these phases of project delivery."

A special expenditure report has been created to track project expenses and is sent to districts and MPOs on a monthly basis for accountability, transparency and project administration. The report allows districts and MPOs to make better decisions in the management of their Proposition 12 allocations as projects move forward. Regular Proposition 12 project updates are posted on TxDOT's website ([www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov)) under "Project Tracker."

"Proposition 12 projects represent some long-awaited transportation improvements across the state," said Tyler District Engineer Randy Hopmann, who oversees the Proposition 12 program. "Texans are depending on us to get these projects done under budget and on time. It's imperative that we provide as much information as possible to keep the public updated on the status of each project."

More than 200 Proposition 12 bond-funded projects are in the final planning stages and scheduled for letting in the summers of 2012 and 2013. The Texas Transportation Commission recently approved the allocation of \$3 billion in voter-approved bond proceeds to address congested highways, rehabilitate roads and bridges, and improve connectivity between the state's metropolitan areas.

To stay up-to-date with the Proposition 12 program, visit: [http://www.dot.state.tx.us/project\\_information/prop12.htm](http://www.dot.state.tx.us/project_information/prop12.htm)

## Prop 12 Costs (Estimates)

Construction: \$2.14 billion

Engineering (in-house and consultant): \$182 million

Right of Way: \$89 million

Change Orders and Contingency: \$147 million

Go TxDOT Go!



# TxDOT Talk 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.

## Christmas Bears in El Paso

This past Christmas, El Paso District employees came bearing gifts and smiles for kids at El Paso's Child Crisis Center. The presents were cuddly teddy bears donated by employees and used to decorate the district's unique Christmas Teddy Bear Tree. Employees personalized the plush stuffed toys by having the name of a loved one printed on a ribbon and attaching it to their bear. Just before Christmas, the bears were gathered from the tree and donated to the Crisis Center's young victims of abuse and neglect. **TN**



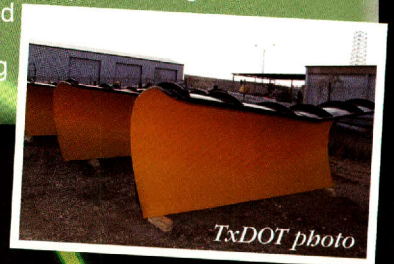
El Paso

## Winter Ready in North Texas

After a harsh winter in early 2011, TxDOT and the North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA) are prepared for the worst this year.

TxDOT supplemented Fort Worth's seven existing snow plows by purchasing eight more for the Fort Worth District and 15 for the Dallas District. When needed, snow plow blades will be attached to existing dump trucks, improving TxDOT's ability to respond quickly and keep roads open.

NTTA purchased nine new plows and will also begin using six new spreaders that will add a liquid de-icing material directly to a darker type of sand as it is spread. This combined operation will reduce sanding truck passes by half. **TN**



Dallas/  
Fort Worth

## Ferry Art Contest Winners

The B.L. DeBerry, R.E. Stotzer, Jr. and Arnold W. Oliver ferries in Port Aransas will soon be adorned with artwork by the winners of TxDOT's Second Annual Port Aransas Ferry Art Contest. Paintings by three adult and three youth artists will be reproduced and displayed on each side of the ferry towers. The winners were chosen from 60 entries.

The winning artwork and artists in the adult division are: *Flounder Run* by Dinah Bowman; *The Pleiades* by Mary Burnett; and *Deep Turtle* by Theresa Coppock. Youth division winners are: *Reflections of the Gulf Coast* by Kati Pina; *Magenta Spoonbill* by Rebecca Honeck; and *Squid* by Cennally Waight. **TN**

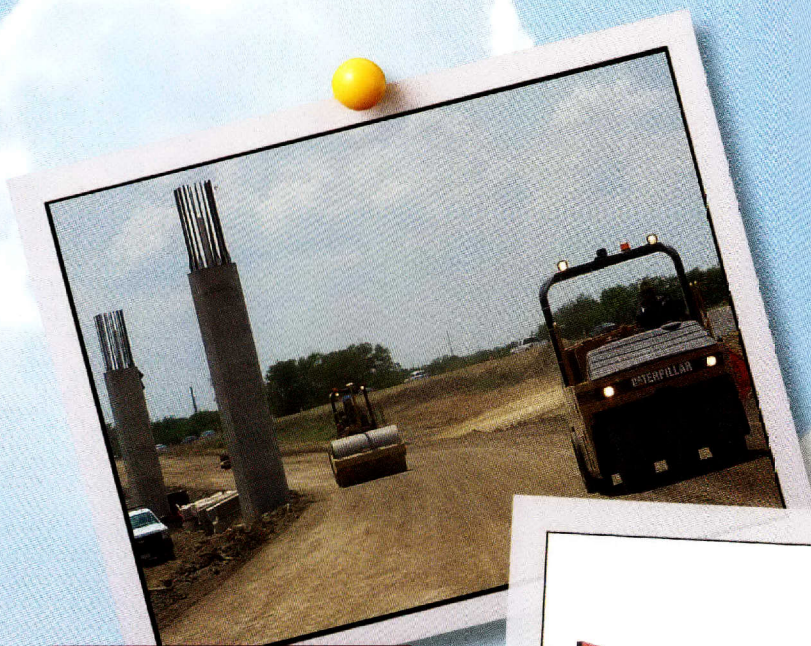


*Flounder Run* by Dinah Bowman



*Reflections of the Gulf Coast* by Kati Pina

# DFW Connecting in *Design-Build Process Speeds Up*



Heavy equipment operators excavated more than 2.1 million cubic yards of materials to get ready for construction. *TxDOT photos*



TxDOT officials joined dignitaries from North Texas to celebrate a DFW Connector milestone.



Looking west, DFW Connector construction makes major progress.

# Major New Ways

## *Project Delivery*

In less than two years of construction, the DFW Connector has become a “design-build success story.” When complete, the Connector will eventually smooth out the infamous “Grapevine Funnel” and add continuous frontage roads north of Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport. The project, built under a design-build comprehensive development agreement (CDA) between TxDOT and NorthGate Constructors, will improve mobility in a safe, efficient, reliable and environmentally sensitive manner.

Construction began in February 2010 on 8.4 miles of roadway along SH 114 and SH 121. The goal: to double the size of the existing highway system. At its widest point, the project

will feature 24 lanes, including 14 general-purpose lanes, six frontage road lanes and four toll-managed lanes.

The DFW Connector is entirely funded with public dollars, unlike sibling North Texas CDA projects the North Tarrant Express and the LBJ Express project in Dallas. Those projects involve public-private partnerships to accelerate construction through the use of private financing. In total, the \$1.1 billion project is using \$667 million in gas tax revenues, \$260 million in federal funds as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and \$107 million from Proposition 14 funds. Another \$32 million in Proposition 12 funds recently was added. In August, costs ran about \$1 million per day.

### **Coming Together**

So what — and who — are behind the success of the DFW Connector? “Many of the key folks have moved on, but they were instrumental in getting us started when things were less than smooth,” said Fort Worth District Transportation Engineer Sam Swan, who helps lead the project. “For example, Loyl Bussell and Ricardo Gonzalez have since been promoted to the Fort Worth transportation planning and development director and area engineer respectively, in part because the Department recognized their abilities. I think this shows CDA projects can be a way to advance.”

Collaboration, communication and innovation are often mentioned regarding the project, and for good reason. The design-builders take pride in their work and personal ownership of the outcome, said DFW CDA Implementation Program Director Randy Redmond.

“TxDOT and NorthGate project teams share responsibility to ensure successful project delivery and work together to find solutions to issues,” Redmond said. “NorthGate organized into 15 task forces early on. This organizational structure allowed decisions and reviews to be made at the lowest possible level, while critical issues could be elevated to the TxDOT project manager’s level for rapid resolution.”

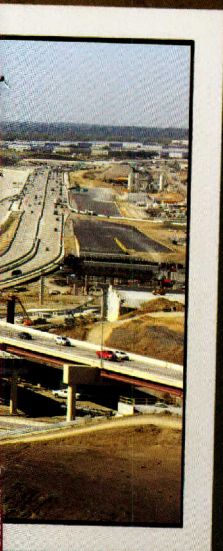
Allowing the design-build system to work and placing fewer constraints on the project ensured effective and efficient delivery of the project.

“There are always lessons learned in every new adventure,” Redmond said. “Probably the biggest challenge was adapting to this new method of project delivery and understanding the roles and responsibilities of the respective parties. That is where the early collaboration and partnering paid off.”

### **Sharing Our Story**

TxDOT has made a concerted effort to gain the support of the local governments and business owners with intense public outreach from multiple avenues. Through a monthly

*Continued on page 8*



Continued from page 7

business owner task force, project leaders briefed business representatives on impacts to daily schedules and work around their properties.

DFW CDA Public Information Officer Tony Hartzel helped with these efforts and said increased communication — which started six months or more before construction began — allows the public and local communities to feel a greater sense of partnership on this project.

“Meeting key groups before work began allowed us to get ahead of the curve, rather than playing catch-up,” Hartzel said. “Our goal has been to reduce the number of surprises, and we feel like we’ve done that. Also, some business leaders who initially had the loudest voices questioning the project have become our biggest supporters.”

Hartzel said task force attendees gain a better understanding of the project’s many facets, and it has allowed TxDOT to respond to concerns.

“For example, when the restaurant community learned lanes would close at 8 p.m. on the Saturday before Valentine’s Day, they asked if that could be delayed,” Hartzel said. “The contractor reviewed the schedule and complied, resulting in a win-win for everyone.”

Many businesses are receptive once they learn the compressed schedule allows the entire 8.4-mile project

to be built in less than five years, rather than 8-10 years. And the work has spoken for itself: Motorists and merchants are seeing progress literally overnight, and that goes a long way in the acceptance of the intense schedule.

“This project sets the standard for all TxDOT projects, big and small,” Hartzel said. “And we’ve learned



Left to right, Tony Hartzel, Sam Swan and Randy Redmond inspect DFW Connector construction site.

that a positive attitude toward public outreach can make the rest of the project substantially easier.”

Citizens can get information about the project via several outlets, including the DFW Connector website, Facebook, Twitter, subscription text messages, daily email alerts, a toll-free information hotline and the annual project open house. New mobile smart phone applications offer current traffic conditions, lane closure information and more.

“Two-way communication has given the motorists and residents a voice in the project,” Hartzel said.

## Working Efficiently

A project of this magnitude must make the best use of available resources, and TxDOT Administration strongly encouraged the use of innovation and technology on the DFW Connector. Numerous computer-based products are used for document control, design and construction. Redmond said it

touches every operation on the project, from initial surveying to the final punch-list. The benefit comes with real-time information, a central hub of data to increase accuracy and efficient use of manpower and equipment.

Some tools provide speed and efficiency. For example, using a master 3D model for design allows multiple designers to create the virtual project in sections or components.

“With one master and no paper copies, there is less chance for someone using old or outdated plan sheets,” Redmond said. “Less manpower is another benefit, as equipment operators and others in the field build according to a real-time 3D model, with no need for bluetops or other labor-intensive controls.”

Tracking equipment and material has gone high-tech. According to Swan, NorthGate utilizes a “just in time” method of material delivery, which maximizes efficiency and reduces waste. TxDOT uses Windows-based tablets, provided by the contractor, to look at photos, videos and maps from cameras and trucks equipped with GPS.





*Redmond, Swan and Hartzel check one of the major loop overpasses.*

Innovation can also happen in terms of simple efficiency. On this project, all existing concrete is crushed and reused with a mobile crusher, and NorthGate has set up a concrete batch plant for paving concrete.

“Our paving crew uses state-of-the-art paving equipment and is delivering excellent ride quality scores with very little grinding being required,” Swan said. “Also, we have a system to pump lime slurry and water under the road, so truck hauls were eliminated.”

Finally, environmental concerns were addressed with proactive strategies to protect air and water quality, recycle materials and protect wildlife.

The DFW Connector is scheduled for substantial completion in early 2014. Stay updated on this project by visiting [www.dfwconnector.com](http://www.dfwconnector.com). 



*TxDOT photo*


*Tons of rebar goes into reinforcing the 1.6 million square yards of concrete needed for this project.*

## What is Design-Build?

Design-build refers to a single contract awarded for both the design and construction of a complex project. The method provides a streamlined alternative to the traditional design-bid-build model. Contracting with one developer to integrate design and construction compresses delivery schedules, reduces risk and cuts costs.

With this one-stop shop approach to transportation projects, the contractor assumes responsibility for design, right of way, utility relocations and construction, which decreases the demand on TxDOT resources. The single-source contractors implement design changes and technical solutions during the construction phase, improving the overall project. The traditional design-bid-build model most often involves two separate companies working on a sequential timeline, making innovation difficult once construction begins.

TxDOT awards design-build contracts on best-value selection criteria, which contrasts with the traditional selection of construction contractors based on low bid. The Texas Transportation Commission authorized TxDOT to utilize the design-build concept for traditional highway projects in January 2009.

A comprehensive development agreement (CDA) is the tool TxDOT uses to enable private development projects in the Texas transportation system. There are no private sector funds being used to finance the DFW Connector Project, but rather a single entity (NorthGate Constructors) is responsible for developing, designing, constructing and potentially maintaining the project. 

# UNCOMMON VALOR

*TxDOT's Security Chief Recalls Day of Heroism*

One 20-degree day in 1985, Corporal Larry Rayburn plunged into an icy river in the German countryside. With no thought to his own safety, Rayburn rescued a fellow Airborne Ranger, who had parachute lines wrapped around his legs and was drowning in water so frigid, he couldn't move his hands.

Corporal  
Larry Rayburn

*Photos courtesy of Larry Rayburn*

"My friend was dying," Rayburn said to explain his swift action. "We heard him shouting and realized he was in a very perilous situation, freezing to death, dying of hypothermia. We were on autopilot."

He and another Ranger saved the lives of all three other members of their five-man jump team that day, with Rayburn swimming back across the river to get help at a nearby farmhouse. Both Rangers received the Soldier's Medal for Heroism.

Twenty-six years later, Rayburn was commended again for his actions in Germany with the Lone Star Medal of Valor, which has only been awarded 20 times. In all, Rayburn has received more than 30 decorations, awards and citations during

his 33-year military career, which includes tours of active duty in Germany, Bosnia, Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as service in the National Guard.

Rayburn's life was threatened to the highest degree in 2006 during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, where he and his team established a safe helicopter landing zone to transport Marines, artillery and supplies under dangerous combat conditions. Rayburn's Humvee

Planning and preparation are vital for success in military and civilian life, and Rayburn emphasized, "If you take care of all the details, the big things will happen correctly."

Rayburn conducts vulnerability assessments for TxDOT offices across the state and supervised the installation of cameras and operational gates to enhance security. He helped draft the comprehensive Homeland Security Elevated Threat Plan, which outlines emergency

Rayburn relayed to his team about how the Texas Farm-to-Market Road concept was essential to the growth of Texas' agriculture industry in the 1930s, and a more comprehensive transportation system became a higher priority for the PRT mission. Rayburn's infantry division began contracting with Afghan district chiefs and village elders to hire villagers as road builders who took great pride in enhancing development in their communities.

*Sergeant Major Larry Rayburn, TxDOT Austin Headquarters security manager, second from right, is joined by (from left) Headquarters Building Operation Section Director Randy Sakai, Headquarters Building Maintenance Branch Supervisor Rick Greer and Maintenance Division Director Toribio Garza at Camp Swift in Bastrop County. Rayburn's supervisors participated in "Operation Bosslift" in 2010, where they flew in a Blackhawk helicopter, shot M-60 rifles and 50-caliber machine guns and trained on a Humvee rollover simulator.*



hit a roadside bomb during the mission, and although the vehicle was destroyed, all aboard escaped serious injury. Superiors commended Rayburn's "tactical and technical excellence" and "effective and accurate use of air strikes" as vital to the success of the mission.

Rayburn, who has achieved the rank of Sergeant Major, serves as TxDOT's Austin Headquarters security manager. He supervises nine state employees and 30 contract security personnel. His extensive military skills and training weave its way through his duties at TxDOT.

preparedness for all TxDOT facilities. He also helped implement a comprehensive badge reading system, which identifies different levels of security access for TxDOT employees, contractors and outside visitors.

Just as TxDOT benefits from Rayburn's military training, his professional experiences contribute to his military service. As a leader of a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) during his tour in Afghanistan, his team worked to improve the medical system, build a power grid, establish an education structure and spur economic opportunities.

Rayburn's passion for his service to his country is evident in the enthusiasm with which he shares his experiences, but he is quick to give praise and credit to his wife of nearly 30 years, Melissa, who made it possible for him to pursue his passion.

"She handled everything at home when I was away," Rayburn said. Those responsibilities included the demands of raising their two children, Emily, now a junior at St. Edward's University, and Sam, a freshman at Texas State University.

*Continued on page 26*



Mike Wiley, San Antonio District, observes the diminishing clearance skill test.



Lubbock District Rodeo Clowns David Barrera and Ted Moore watch the action.

# Hitch 'Em Up — It's TxDOT's Truck Rodeo

In this variation of a rodeo, you don't need your spurs. Participants earn points for spotting and precision traffic stops, not for roping and bull riding. And there are only two official clowns, because this "Rodeo" is serious business. It's all about safety.

Since 1994, the Occupational Safety Division has sponsored the statewide TxDOT truck rodeo competition. More than 4,500 drivers polished their safe operator skills for this year's contest, which aims to reduce equipment incidents through driving practice and friendly rivalry.

Randy Newton, from Regional Support Center North, won first place, and Ray Valverde, from the

Odessa District, won second place at the 2011 State Rodeo Drive-off, which took place Oct. 20. A total of 54 employees competed in the finals after a series of elimination rounds that started at maintenance section level. The two top finishers in each district, along with the top finishers in each of the four regions, advanced to the state contest.

The contest consists of eight skill tests, including an equipment inspection exercise that assesses each driver's observational skills. Competitors must find several safety defects that have been "planted" on a dump truck within a 12-minute time constraint. Five points are awarded for each safety defect identified.

An obstacle course is designed to simulate equipment maneuvers encountered on a typical workday. Points are assigned to each skill test, including backing up and stopping. Penalties are assessed for deficiencies, and the driver with the highest point total is declared the champion.



Occupational Safety Division Director Jerral Wyer, left, and Chief Human Relations and Modernization Officer Dee Porter, right, present the first place trophy to Randy Newton.



left, and



Lance Henderson, Dallas District; Bill Parrot, Atlanta District; John Housley, Fort Worth District; and Eddy Rentas, Odessa District, monitor the offset/backing exercise. TxDOT photos

# It's Time to Roadeo Newton Teaches Safety

Newton has worked at TxDOT for four years and earned his commercial driver's license shortly after arriving. He managed to beat a number of seasoned veterans to take home the top prize.

When asked about the driving tests, Newton said the inspection exercise

is the toughest. "No one ever gets all of them," he said.

His favorite is the "Serpentine," a wide-open course where operators weave through a series of cones — first in forward, then in reverse — and perform precision parking and backing maneuvers. "There are no time or distance measurements in that exercise, so it's less pressure," Newton said.

Valverde, participating in his ninth Roadeo, says the stopping distance exercises are very similar to real world driving skills. "They test us on skills we really need as an operator, so it's good to practice up on them."

TxDOT has a long-held commitment to developing skilled operator personnel. The Roadeo, which now takes place every other year, emphasizes the value of expert driving ability in attaining department safety goals. Performance goals are established by calculating a 10-percent reduction of incident rate for each division, district, office and region based on the most recent three-year history.

This longstanding commitment to safety is achieved through the hard work and dedication of our equipment operators, and all TxDOT employees. And that's no bull. **TN**



First place winner Randy Newton, left, and second place finisher Ray Valverde share the winner's circle.

# TxDOT Structures for Success

## *Transitional Format Focuses on Core Functions*

**W**hat does TxDOT now have in common with McDonald's, Days Inn, Supercuts and other big corporations? The new TxDOT transitional organizational chart reflects a "franchise model" to do business better, ensure consistency and use resources efficiently to best serve our customers.

TxDOT Executive Director Phil Wilson unveiled the agency's transitional organizational chart. The goal is to develop a structure that helps better address future transportation challenges and achieve our agency goals.

"The changes allow our employees to perform their jobs better as we build on a culture that honors the past while embracing the future," Wilson said. "The organizational chart is considered 'transitional' because I want to make certain all of the moves are the correct ones, but one can reasonably assume some minor adjustments will be required before it is declared final."

Under TxDOT's franchise model, districts, divisions and regions will work together to achieve agency-wide goals set by the Commission and administration. Austin headquarters functions are now aligned to provide districts with the resources and tools to deliver those goals. Headquarters will also provide guidance to districts to fulfill their obligations, freeing districts to focus on project delivery. However, the centralized reporting structure does not mean district employees will have to move to Austin.

Agency services are now grouped logically to reflect project and service delivery needs. The new organizational structure focuses on aligning core functions to ensure similar services and programs work together to maximize efficiency. For example, engineering functions at headquarters, like traffic operations, maintenance, construction and design, are grouped together and report to the chief engineer. Likewise,

human resources, finance and information technology functions are now centralized for heightened accountability.

For those services now reporting to divisions, rather than to districts, evaluations will be the responsibility of the division, but will include input from the districts. Public information officer (PIO) duties are also moving to an expanded and centralized communications function. District PIOs will be one of the functions that will report to a newly created communication office in Austin.

Also among the changes, TxDOT districts are now grouped as metropolitan, urban and rural districts. This move eases the sharing of best practices among common districts. Details for performance standards and best practices

sharing will be developed by the district/region leads in the months to come.

Fort Worth District Engineer Maribel Chavez, Tyler District Engineer Randy Hopmann, Paris District Engineer Bobby Littlefield and South Region Director Donna Hill will serve as district/region leads, handling this responsibility in addition to their regular duties. Leads will rotate every year to other district engineers and region directors.

Also, a new Risk Management Office has been created. This office will be responsible for assessing the department's financial and operational risks, and developing a plan to mitigate those risks.

A newly created Planning and Project Chief Officer position will manage TxDOT's comprehensive development and public-private partnership programs, and overall traditional planning and programming activities.

Wilson expects more refinements to the organizational chart over the next six to 12 months as leadership

**“The changes allow our employees to perform their jobs better as we build on a culture that honors the past while embracing the future.”**

— Phil Wilson

# ss with New Org Chart

ions



positions are filled and new chief officers align functions within their reporting structure. The new communications chief and planning and project chief are expected to be in place by January.

Going forward, the changes at TxDOT will increase collaboration and continue a strong focus on core functions.

TxDOT's new organizational chart is posted online at [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov), keyword "organizational chart."



## A Minute With... Jeff Austin III

I am truly honored and thrilled to be named to the Texas Transportation Commission and to have this opportunity to work with so many talented people. In my role on the Commission, I will seek creative partnerships and innovative methods to accomplish projects, and I always value and welcome your input. Anything we can do to streamline processes and work collaboratively with our transportation partners will help us to achieve our goals. I have had wonderful experiences with TxDOT staff at my local level in northeast Texas, and I look forward to working with our dedicated staff around the state to improve upon our great transportation system."

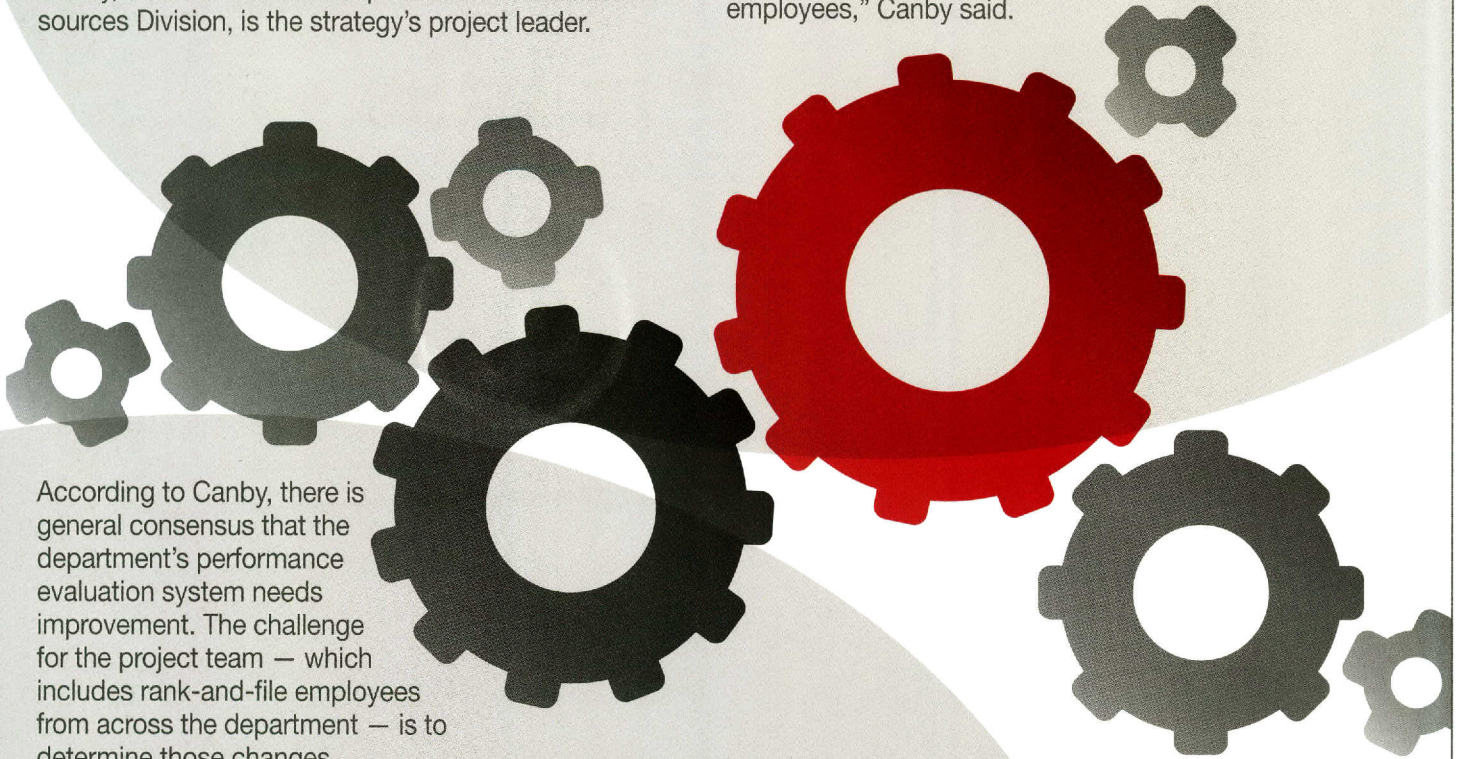
— Commissioner Jeff Austin III

## Employees Weigh in on Modernization Direction

**S**ince the Modernization initiative began, 20 of the 37 outlined projects have begun to improve department operations. Some of those projects, including those to centralize the Historically Underutilized Business and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise functions into one office, have been accelerated. And, of course, the modernization project that required some changes in our executive administration has already resulted in the hiring of a new executive director. Of the two dozen or so projects that are still in various stages of development, the project to improve the employee evaluation process has made substantial progress. Kate Canby, a human resources specialist in the Human Resources Division, is the strategy's project leader.

More than 4,000 employees responded to the survey, and the responses were varied, Canby said, ranging from comments that the evaluation process should be simplified, to recommendations that they be consistent across job families. More in-depth suggestions included employees evaluating their peers. There was even some discussion about the merits of incorporating comments from the public in evaluations, Canby said.

"It's called a 360-degree evaluation, and some states use them. It basically allows supervisors to rate an employee's performance and include feedback from all stakeholders, from our customers to other employees," Canby said.



According to Canby, there is general consensus that the department's performance evaluation system needs improvement. The challenge for the project team — which includes rank-and-file employees from across the department — is to determine those changes.

"And what better way to answer those questions than to talk to employees," Canby said.

Last September, the team surveyed supervisors and employees to get their input on the department's current employee evaluation and performance plans processes.

"We wanted to know if the performance plans we use actually meet employee needs. Do evaluations clearly track what they do, and what's expected of them? How do they feel about the rating system we use? We need answers to all of those questions if we're going to retool the system to make it better," Canby said.

While the response to the employee survey provided some valuable first impressions, the project team will develop employee focus groups in January and February to further evaluate the suggestions it has received. That is the next step before the team redevelops the performance evaluation plan.

"It's important that we hear from as many employees as possible," Canby said. "We want to develop a system that's less cumbersome for supervisors and gives employees a better idea of how their individual jobs support the TxDOT mission, strategy and goals." **TN**



## I Am A... Bridge Engineer



**A**s a boy growing up in Falfurrias, Rex Costley drew roads on notebook paper and taped them together so his little brother could play with his cars. Carpentry also intrigued him, so majoring in engineering at Texas A&M University at Kingsville was an obvious choice. After working summers in the Hebbronville Area Office from 1994-97, Costley became a full-time TxDOT employee at the Pharr District in 1998 and has served as bridge engineer since 2007.


### What is something people might not know about bridges?

Every bridge, no matter what size, serves the same basic function of transferring the load from a vehicle throughout the bridge elements, down to the foundation. I believe all bridges are a work of art. An engineer understands what structural elements will be strong enough to carry people across water with no ground underneath. I also try to treat all Pharr District bridges the same, similar to how parents treat their children. If you asked me which of my bridges I love most, I'd say I love all my bridges equally.

### What's the most interesting project you've worked on?

Through TxDOT's young engineering program, I was given an opportunity to manage a section of the San Benito Express Reconstruction Project, a \$68 million job. I was in charge of all facets of the project. There were 14 bridges that included at-grade, stream and railroad crossings. I had face-to-face interactions with contractors and others involved. You experience weather delays, change orders, a little bit of everything. One business owner, a fortune teller, was upset with our construction schedule. She kept asking when the project would be completed. I had to bite my tongue not to ask her, "That's what I want to know! Can you tell me?"

### Tell us about something unusual that happened during a bridge inspection.

We were in brush country, inspecting one of the longer bridges in Zapata County. About halfway into the inspection, we noticed a tail dangling near the abutment cap on the far end, and it didn't look like a snake. I'm fairly sure it was a mountain lion, but we didn't stick around to find out. I told my crew, "I don't want to see what's on the other end of that tail, because it has sharp teeth and may be hungry, so this concludes our inspection." We left immediately! 

Rex Costley

## Transportation Forum

**T**he Seventh Annual Texas Transportation Forum is “going places!” The 2012 Forum will take place from Feb. 15-17 in San Antonio at the Grand Hyatt Hotel. Mark your calendars and spread the word about this highly anticipated event.


The Forum is co-hosted by the Associated General Contractors of Texas, the Texas Good Roads Transportation Association and TxDOT. With more than 1,000 participants each year, the Forum has created a unique environment for policy makers, industry experts and business leaders to examine and exchange ideas about the future of transportation.

As in the past, the Forum will feature a number of notable speakers and expert panelists discussing a range of issues, from statewide disaster

response to the modernization of the department.

TxDOT is excited about this opportunity to showcase the places we

are going. We hope you will join us February 2012.

**Regular online registration continues through Feb. 6, 2012.** 



## Innovative Ideas Streamline Business


**I**n an organization as large and diverse as TxDOT, bright and innovative employees must develop creative approaches to tackle their daily work. Austin District Business Services Accounting Specialist Alicia Carlile recently identified new ways to streamline processes and improve business.

maintaining documents that enhanced confidentiality, increased efficiency and saved paper.

Carlile scanned and saved each maintenance section's payroll unit data and other documents in separate folders on a secure, but shared, computer drive.

The data remains confidential and can be accessed only by authorized personnel. The Austin District engineer, deputy district engineer and safety officer have “read only” access if they ever need to view the data, and no unit can see the files of any other unit.

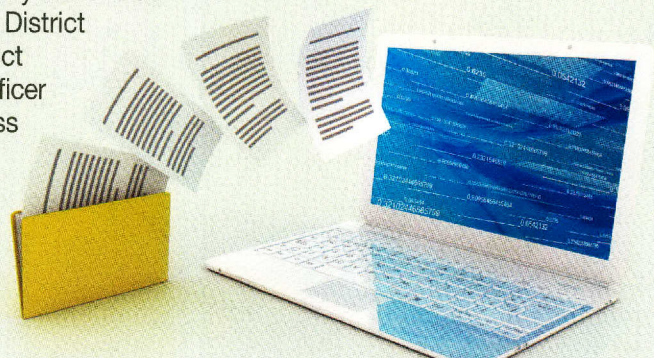
Carlile also received recognition for several other best practices, including the development of two vehicle usage record-keeping systems and a leave accounting form, which also increased efficiency at the Austin District.

Innovative solutions like these will help TxDOT zoom down the road to Modernization. 




Transportation Funding Specialist Polita Flemming contacted TN to brag about Carlile's outstanding work. She read about how Internal Auditor Kathy Baca

had praised Carlile in an internal audit report for developing a process for



## Final I-35/Ben White Flyover Opens

**T**he last of eight flyovers at the I-35/Ben White Boulevard interchange in Austin opened in December, completing a 15-year, \$135 million project to provide relief at one of the state's most congested intersections. The formerly gridlocked area serves more than 183,000 cars a day on I-35 and approximately 144,000 on Ben White. The three-phase project included a mile-long drainage tunnel, new frontage roads, a new underpass for Ben White and 15 bridges. The last phase of the project, which began

two years ago, added the last four flyovers and cost \$26 million. Three of the flyovers opened earlier this fall. The fourth flyover provides motorists a direct connection from westbound Ben White to southbound I-35. Numerous officials, including TxDOT Deputy Executive Director/Chief Engineer John Barton, Sen. Kirk Watson, Rep. Eddie Rodriguez and Austin Mayor Lee Leffingwell, celebrated the final flyover opening with a Dec. 12 ribbon-cutting ceremony. 



*The final of eight flyover bridges at Ben White Boulevard and I-35 opened to traffic on Dec. 12 at a ribbon cutting ceremony emceed by Sen. Kirk Watson, in conjunction with TxDOT and its transportation partners. TxDOT photo*

### A Minute With... Dee Porter

It is an exciting time for TxDOT and its employees! Change is all around us. We've relaxed our Internet usage policy, streamlined our hiring process and implemented a transitional organization chart. All of these activities are part of TxDOT's Mission to Modernize. In my new role as Chief Human Resources/Modernization Officer, I look forward to working with all of you to develop creative solutions that simplify policies, streamline operations and generate new avenues of communication."

— Chief Human Resources/Modernization Officer Dee Porter




# Ferry Dedication

The day was just right for a ferry christening. A slight breeze. Cool, crisp temperatures. A Texas flag waving proudly for a native son. And a very humbled former transportation commissioner standing watch over a new ferry named in his honor.

“To be surrounded by family, friends and co-workers, there’s nothing more special. If you can be honored like this, you’ve lived a rich, long life,” said John W. Johnson, who served on the Texas Transportation Commission from 1999 to 2007.

Johnson and about 300 of his closest friends were on hand in November to commission the newest vessel in the Galveston-Port Bolivar fleet. The boat is TxDOT’s most technologically advanced ferry. It runs on conventional diesel, but unlike other ferries in the fleet, this one has multiple rudders for better maneuverability. It is also equipped with sophisticated fire detection and fire suppression systems, and an advanced system that monitors all vessel operations.

But the differences don’t end there. Conventionally, ferries are white and bear a singular color of the honoree’s alma mater. The *John W. Johnson* pays homage to two of Johnson’s former educational homesteads: Vanderbilt University in Tennessee and St. John’s School in Houston. One end of the salon, the section of the boat that houses the pilot house, is painted gold for Vanderbilt; the other end is painted scarlet, in honor of St. John’s.

The \$25 million vessel is the sixth ferry in the Galveston flotilla and the first addition since the late 1990s. At more than 260 feet, the boat is a double-ended ferry, meaning that cars and cargo can access it from either end without the need for the boat to turn around. It can carry as many as 70 cars and light trucks or six to eight 18-wheelers and can accommodate up to 500 passengers. 



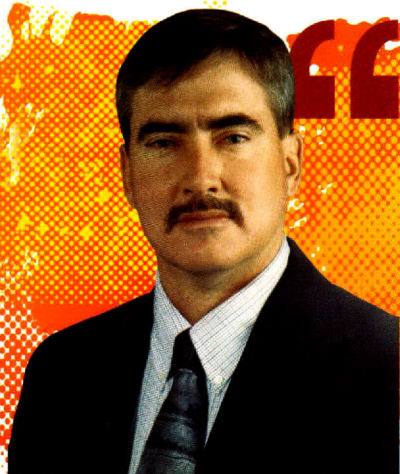
*John Johnson*



*Johnson's family members christen the new ferry.*



*Johnson says thanks to TxDOT's Houston District employees. TxDOT photos*



## A Minute With... Bill Hale

Looking around the state, it is impressive to see the transportation system that TxDOT has had a hand in providing to the state of Texas. From the farm-to-market roads to the interstate highways, the state has arguably the best roadway system in the nation, if not the world. And, looking back through the 94 years of its existence, it appears that there has never been a time when adequate funding was available to accomplish what was needed. However, it also appears that in the spirit of Texas, the department has always achieved considerably more than what would be expected from ordinary folks. So, it is a heck of an honor to be part of an organization that is such a world leader... and a tribute to the extraordinary folks that TxDOT always seems to attract.”

— Dallas District Engineer Bill Hale

# The Future of Farm-to-Market

**T**exas has more than a few transportation bragging rights. Some 310,000 miles of highway crisscross the Lone Star State; that's more miles of roadway than any other state. And with I-35 and I-10, among others, stretched across the Texas landscape, the state also has the country's largest interstate network.

But for all those ribbons of commerce that primarily connect our urban population centers, the state's rural network system still is the backbone of the state. Farm-to-market roads and ranch-to-market roads – those gems that first gave the state character – comprise more than 44 percent of Texas' entire system of roadways. Rural counties, in fact, have the most roadway mileage in Texas.

"We can't afford not to plan for such a large component of our transportation system," said Peggy Thurin, project manager for the Texas Rural Transportation Plan (TRTP) 2035.

That's why, for the first time in the state's history, TxDOT is developing a separate transportation plan that will focus on rural areas of the state and transportation projects that

connect users in our less populated areas to urban markets, jobs and services.

Ultimately, the TRTP is an assessment of the state's rural transportation needs through the year 2035. To develop that assessment, Thurin and her team are working with transportation stakeholders, elected officials and the public to determine the state's rural transportation needs, both for highways and other modes.

"The state's rural transportation needs are different from our urban areas," Thurin said. "We don't need major interchanges or 12-lane roadways to handle the traffic in those regions, but just like the rest of the state, our rural areas will increase in population, and we need to plan for that increase," she said.

Planning for that growth, in terms of highway needs, may mean expanding our rural, two-lane highways to four lanes. Other solutions include "Super 2" lanes, which add periodic passing lanes on existing roadways, and two-way, left-turn lanes.

"That's the kind of information we are analyzing and will present to talk to Texans and get their feedback," Thurin said.

But rural residents don't just depend on highways to get from point A to point B or to transport products from rural farms to grocery stores.

"While we'll assess what those non-highway needs may be – whether they're rail or public transit or airports – we'll have to put them in the context of how the state, not TxDOT alone, can meet them," Thurin said. "The goal is to determine a broad plan that will help our decision makers, at every level, provide a more efficient rural transportation system for the state."

For the next several months, TxDOT will continue to meet with Texans across the state to get their input on the plan. Public meetings are scheduled for early March. Dates and times for the meetings will be posted on the TxDOT website, [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov), keywords, "rural transportation plan." The Texas Transportation Commission is scheduled to formally adopt the plan in the summer. 



# Employee Q&A with Buddy Witcher

Alva "Buddy" Witcher started his 25-year TxDOT career at the Lubbock District in 1974. This followed graduation from Littlefield High School in 1971, a year in Levelland at South Plains College and a series of odd jobs. He left TxDOT in 1979 for other career opportunities, but came back to TxDOT in December 1986 at the Brownwood District, where he has served since.

**Why do you feel Brownwood District employees are the best at TxDOT?**

As a smaller district, Brownwood employees know each other, and we work well as a team. They are excellent workers who do super jobs.

**My number one "bucket list" item is...?**

For my sister and I to set up a restaurant and cook together for the fun of it.

**What does a construction project inspector do?**

He serves as the engineer's eyes on a project. He checks construction details such as concrete inspection and approves project acceptance or rejection.

**Where do you want to retire?**

Brownwood. I've always liked it.

**Who makes you laugh?**

My wife and children clowning around and laughing together. We have the biggest time.

**Is Aquaman really a superhero?**

My answer would be "no."

**Who should portray you in a movie about your life?**

John Goodman. He's an oversized guy who shoots from the hip and is really comical and lighthearted.

**What was the first car you ever owned?**

It was a 1962 Chevrolet Impala Super Sport. It was never fixed up the way I wanted because money was tight. I still wish I had that car.

**Do you Facebook or Twitter?**

I Facebook for keeping up with friends, I'm not sure what to do with Twitter.

**What was your favorite subject in high school?**

I just wanted to get out of high school... but I think I warmed up to math the most.

**Why did you choose to work for TxDOT?**

Road building always looked interesting from beginning to end. The big equipment seemed more like Tonka Toys.

**What's the best part of your job?**

The independence I'm allowed to get the job done and do it right.

**Regular or electric toothbrush?**  
Regular

**What does "One TxDOT" mean to you?**

We're one gigantic force that builds and maintains miles and miles of the best roads in the nation. It's an amazing effort for a state this size.



**Buddy Witcher**

## Amarillo Pie

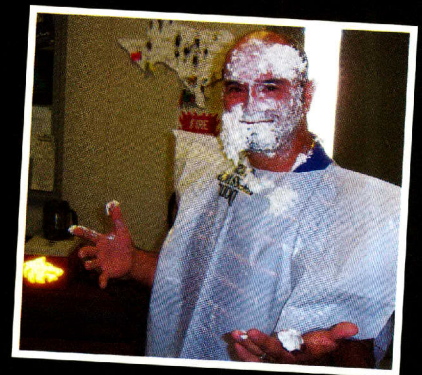
**A** pie in the face for charity: that was Amarillo District Engineer Howard Holland's fate to signal the end of the district's State Employee Charitable Campaign (SECC) campaign.



*Amarillo District Engineer Howard Holland gets a cream pie in the face from his executive assistant Brenda Lowe. Howard was one of five supervisors who "lost" the "Pennies for SECC" contest.*

District leaders had jars on their desks for the "Penny Wars" competition to raise money for the campaign. Employees took part by dropping pennies into the jar of the person they would most like to see pied. District leaders with jars had to contribute nickels, dimes and quarters, but if the pennies from employees added up to more than the other change, they got pied.

Brenda Lowe, Amarillo District executive assistant and the district's campaign coordinator, came up with the idea and was given the honor to mush a pie in the face of her boss... all in good fun for a good cause. The competition raised nearly \$600 in change for the SECC. **TN**



*The Amarillo District raised \$549 in change during the contest. TxDOT photos*



## District:

### Abilene

- 25** Lauren D. Garduno; James E. Washington
- 15** Joseph P. LeBlanc; Rodney D. Wright
- 5** Jody W. Smith

### Amarillo

- 10** Gregory L. Reynolds
- 5** Ray H. Ousley Jr.

### Atlanta

- 15** Brent D. Doddy; Donnie L. Lowry
- 10** Kimberly D. Garner
- 5** John D. Neuville III

### Austin

- 30** Daniel E. Crenwelge; Timothy S. Nicholes
- 15** Christopher R. Bishop; Celso A. Harper
- 10** Douglas D. Beran; Holly L. Elder; Guy A. Freeman; Tisha G. Lyda
- 5** George W. Boeker III; Marvin E. Burgess; Gerald W. Creamer Jr.

### Beaumont

- 30** Charles J. McClellan
- 15** Joseph D. Sterling
- 10** Robert C. Higgins Jr.; Ronald D. Smith
- 5** Willie R. Pickens

### Brownwood

- 20** Elias H. Rmeili
- 10** Alan L. Ogden

### Bryan

- 20** Michael D. Bairrington
- 15** Bradley W. Albright
- 5** Ronald P. Davis; Melva Smith-James; Robert S. Talafuse

### Childress

- 15** Oscar P. Huerta
- 5** Jack D. Cox; Michael W. Franklin

### Corpus Christi

- 30** Guillermo Cabello
- 20** Thomas C. Trevino
- 5** Clesheon J. Brown; Nicholas Brown; Maria L. Cruz; Alfredo Gaona; Jose A. Garcia; Stephanie E. Ruiz; Robert L. Vega

### Dallas

- 25** Donald L. Carmichael
- 15** Jaime L. Recer; Raymond B. Wells
- 5** Christine N. Luther; Fred Moore; Noraima E. Perez

### El Paso

- 25** Joseph D. Lindsey; Mario A. Martinez
- 15** Ronald E. Groves
- 5** Juan F. Esparza; Aracely Olmos; Emilio B. Tarango

### Fort Worth

- 15** Ricky L. Crotwell; Jeremiah L. Lerma; Agustin T. Zapata
- 10** James E. Armstrong

### Houston

- 40** Janet A. Kurtz
- 30** Michael W. Alford; Severo Basquez Jr.; James C. Blankenship; David J. Wleczyk
- 25** Richard L. Brown; Fernando J. De La Garza; Thomas E. Lev; Darrell W. Lindemann
- 15** Michael D. Lopez; Kathy S. Sellars; Josiah Yuen
- 5** Christy J. Freeze; Robert C. Gerbig; Reuben O. Gonzales; Jose M. Gonzales II; Andrew L. Johnson; Heather M. Mitchell; Lien K. Nguyen; Rafael A. Polanco; Herminio S. Santiago; Steven L. Schultz; Oscar Vargas Jr.

### Lubbock

- 15** Shirley K. Jackson; Breland W. Ledbetter
- 5** Christopher P. Farrell; Joel P. Owen; Gonzalo S. Prieto Jr.; Jose L. Rodriguez; Michael L. Self

### Lufkin

- 15** Clinton L. Norton
- 10** Richard E. Smith; Alexander C. Zienko
- 5** Scott D. Duffey

### Odessa

- 15** Joel M. Ponce; Thomas H. Zarate
- 5** Kristy J. Collins

### Paris

- 10** Phillip D. Grose Jr.
- 5** Robert L. Cook III; Shane T. Mears; Jimmy J. Phelps Jr.; Quentin H. Wallace; Malcolm J. Weemes

### Pharr

- 25** Jose C. Solis
- 15** Juan J. Aguayo
- 5** Oscar Cancino; Juan Sanchez

### San Angelo

- 20** Ricardo L. Sanchez
- 15** Marion H. Bingham
- 5** Josue C. Hernandez

### San Antonio

- 30** Kane P. Mattke
- 25** Aida C. Chapa; Michael A. Coward; Gilbert B. Hernandez; Michael D. Jaeger
- 15** Enrique C. Escobar
- 10** Javier O. Esparza; Michael L. Felts

### Tyler

- 25** Donald E. McQuitty
- 15** Mark A. Cincar; Cedric W. Pierson
- 5** Johnny R. Jennings; Larry K. Stojanik

### Waco

- 25** Jimmy W. Barton
- 15** Ricky G. Hegefelf
- 10** Robert L. Blakley; Chad C. Blansit; Victor J. Goebel; Wesley H. Wooley
- 5** Joseph D. Allen; Jimmy R. Cantu; Tracy R. Martinez; Richard A. May; Kim H. Thomas

### Wichita Falls

- 30** Daniel E. Brown; Walter T. Hertel
- 10** Aaron R. Bloom; Martin N. Gonzalez; Heather D. Hollingsworth

### Yoakum

- 25** Andrew C. Brzozowski; David J. Kallus
- 15** Sheila M. Brugger
- 10** Martin J. Vancura
- 5** Larry J. Fisher Jr.; Scott A. Sparks

## Division/Office/Region:

### Administration

- 25** Carolyn P. Icard

### Bridge

- 25** Michael F. Gesch
- 10** Patricia A. Coronado

### Construction

- 15** Roxana Garcia-Zinsmeyer
- 10** Terry L. Cost Jr.; Clifton E. Coward Jr.; Joseph D. Woods
- 5** Patricia K. Douglass

### Design

- 20** Cynthia Landez

### East Regional Support Center

- 15** Michael M. Beitler

### General Services

- 10** Lola Lee-Amador
- 5** Gregory G. Northcutt

### Government & Public Affairs

- 10** Patrick J. Marotta

### Human Resources

- 5** Lourdes M. Fulton

### Maintenance

- 5** Edna I. Eilerts

### Motor Carrier Division

- 25** Charles C. Bennett

### Public Transportation

- 30** Susan L. Stockett
- 5** Ivonne H. Garza

### Rail

- 25** Susan E. Hausmann
- 15** Joann B. Trevino

### Right of Way

- 10** Manuel A. Kilpatrick

### Technology Services

- 25** Darryl L. Zercher
- 20** David J. Smith
- 15** Kevin D. Wagner

### West Regional Support Center

- 15** Gary D. Allen; Peter H. Herres; Teresa K. Spraggins
- 10** James D. Harger
- 5** Regina L. Van Dyke



## District:

### Abilene

**25** Ray D. Underwood

### Amarillo

**25** Timothy L. Sorrells; Gregory C. Welch

**20** William D. Sintas

**15** Ryan E. Diaz; Raymond S. Skaggs

**10** Willie K. Turner Jr.

**5** Donald R. Bradley

### Atlanta

**25** Angela L. McCasland

**5** Keith W. Burns; Daniel L. Lawrence

### Austin

**25** Sylvia A. Bockholt

**20** Clay L. Brown

**15** Alcie C. Peterson Jr.

**10** Shelly D. Eason

**5** Michael L. Garrett; Steven W. Kelley

### Beaumont

**25** David W. Bell; Earlton A. Hadnot;

Janet K. Manley; Jeffrey W. Vayon

**10** Penny A. Buller; Luther A. Willey

**5** Cynthia J. Ervin; Ralph D. Kirkland;  
Scott A. Parker; John L. Stockwell

### Brownwood

**30** Inez R. Dimas

**20** Bradley K. Swenson

**5** Sarah S. Horner; Thomas L. Ischy III;  
Cody J. Petty

### Bryan

**30** John D. Kempenski

**15** Carolyn K. Dobos

**5** Brian M. Brown; David W. Rinn;  
Larry R. Smith Jr.; Daniel L. Vines

### Childress

**10** Stanley H. Adams; Mark A. Rocha;

Gary L. Simpson; Kevin L. Urbanczyk Jr.

**5** Jacen M. Lemmons; Barbara J. Sims

### Corpus Christi

**25** Clinton R. Baacke

**15** Steven L. Ellison; Severo Hernandez Jr.;

Joe A. Pena; Roel Rivera;

Alventor F. Rodriguez

**5** Maida Garza; Kami L. Hale;

Russell J. Maddalone

### Dallas

**25** Ezell Brown; David J. Jessup;

Larry J. Welch

**20** Christopher D. Blain

**15** Richard C. Edwards; Jahor L. Roy;

James A. Wilhoite

**10** James C. Crisp; David E. Watson

**5** James F. Brockermeyer; Tachi Chen;  
Teresita M. Sarmiento;

Douglas G. Seeds

### El Paso

**15** Robert Rodriguez; Lucio F. Santos;  
Godwin I. Ubanyionwu

### Fort Worth

**30** Robert A. Hammett; William F. Nelson Jr.

**25** Johnny D. Wall

**20** Laura D. Hartman

**15** Lou A. Parker; Hector Solis;  
Randy R. Stevens; Randal G. Threadgill  
Holly H. Vinson

**5** Jubal F. Betonio; Ram P. Dhakal;  
Roger A. Farmer; Kimberly A. Smith

### Houston

**25** Earnest M. Broadus; Robert C. Cantrell;

Kenneth W. Hill; Joseph A. Waring;

Larry L. Wong

**15** Rodney D. Atchley

**5** Janet K. Exum; Rodrigo A. Jimenez;  
Nzinga M. Jones; Carlos M. Luna;  
Justin C. Williams

### Laredo

**5** Thomas Castillo; Amelia Y. De La Garza;

Irasema De Leon; Guillermo A. De Leon;

Enrique A. Gonzalez

### Lubbock

**25** Darral H. Bryant; George Deleon

**5** Lucas T. Deleon; Wyatt R. Webster

### Lufkin

**20** Andrew K. Smith

**15** George T. Wilson Jr.

**10** Timothy C. Broach; Steven L. Meyers;  
Michael D. Parrish

**5** Bobby G. Riley; Charles G. Steele

### Odessa

**30** Rebecca P. Bragg; Kathleen I. Schlegel

**25** Benny P. Carrasco; Omar M. Flores;  
Jovenal S. Hinojos; Daniel Reyes

**15** Adan R. Garcia; Vincent Granado;  
Fred G. Herrera

**10** William R. Wilson

### Paris

**5** Jeffrey A. Galewaler;

Damon R. Rocha

### Pharr

**5** Sergio Coronado; Joel A. Solis

### San Angelo

**10** James C. Davis III

**5** Gary A. Hanusch

### San Antonio

**25** Aloys J. Dziuk; Henry Felix Jr.;

Leon D. Henk; Cecil E. Loman Jr.;

David A. Shedrock

**15** Jonathan A. Bean; Carl N. Bishop;  
Laura M. Lopez; Hector R. Ortiz

**10** Blake A. Bierstedt;  
Heather T. Castelazo; Rafael C. Garcia;  
David Gonzales

### Tyler

**15** Freddie R. Jones

**5** Ronnie L. Taylor Jr.

### Waco

**25** Kenneth W. Bennett; Jimmy L. Busby;  
Rex L. Reid; Robert G. Scott

**15** William L. French

### Wichita Falls

**15** James C. Simpson

**5** Jeremy R. Hansen; Mike W. Tischler

### Yoakum

**25** Albert C. Grahmann

**15** James P. Pohl

## Division/Office/Region:

### Administration

**15** Russell T. Poer

### Audit

**20** Shirley H. Lightfoot

### Commission

**5** Ned S. Holmes; Fred A. Underwood

### Design

**25** Maria G. Burke

**10** Danny M. Neal II

### East Regional Support Center

**15** Charles H. Walton

### Environmental Affairs

**15** James T. Abbott

**10** Jeffrey L. Richardson

**5** Sonya Y. Hernandez

### Finance

**25** Robert D. Ramirez

**5** Donna H. Bullard; Zoeya Saeedi

### General Services

**25** Johnny Burke

**15** Charles W. Neyland

**10** Clint L. Lafont

### Human Resources

**5** Kathleen A. Mahan-Michaud

### North Regional Support Center

**15** Tammy R. Hudson; John A. Jackson

**5** Joseph M. McCarthy

### Public Transportation

**10** Richard D. Neill

### Right of Way

**5** Tara K. Crowley

### South Regional Support Center

**15** Tad P. Nichols

**10** Joanna R. Franks; Dale W. Pfeil

### Strategic Policy & Performance

#### Management

**5** Mary L. Conley; Gretchen I. Stoeltje





## MILESTONES

SERVICE AWARDS - DECEMBER 2011

### Texas Turnpike Authority

**15** Doug H. Booher

### Transportation Planning & Programming

**25** Louis W. Clampitt

**15** Margaret N. Ortiz

### Travel Information

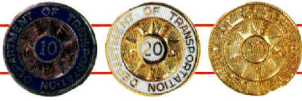
**20** Debra B. Snyder

**10** Julie M. Stratton

### West Regional Support Center

**10** Sundi D. Barrera

**5** Fred P. Guiliano



## RETIREE REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2011

### District:

#### Amarillo

**22** Albert L. Fulcher

#### Austin

**38** Danny R. Stabeno

#### Childress

**30** Jim L. Fox

#### Dallas

**24** Kelly D. Davis

**23** Jeanne E. Roddy

**9** Roger D. Kirkpatrick

#### El Paso

**30** Rebecca B. Najera

#### Fort Worth

**24** Donald R. Lively

**17** Phil D. Armstrong

#### Houston

**27** Bennie H. Onken

#### Odessa

**27** Jesus M. Machuca

#### San Angelo

**18** Manuel Pina

#### San Antonio

**26** Gary C. Mendoza

#### Tyler

**26** Peggy S. Craft

#### Waco

**31** Leesa C. Brueggeman

### Division/Office/ Region:

#### General Services

**6** Penny J. Farias

#### Motor Carrier

**5** Carol B. Shultz

#### Office of Civil Rights

**18** Jerry Jackson

### Regional Support Center North

**27** Stephen M. Barackman

**25** Tommy J. Mitchell

**21** Susan S. Saghian

### Regional Support Center West

**28** Roy L. Isom

### Technology Services

**27** Daniel E. Walsh



## RETIREE REPORT

OCTOBER 2011

### District:

#### Amarillo

**28** David B. Stribling Jr.

**28** Craig A. Ash

**25** Karla H. Boissenet

#### Atlanta

**35** Lonnie R. Hutsel

#### Brownwood

**12** Dale D. Carmack

#### Bryan

**8** Bruce T. Dolan

**6** Jimmy J. Pletzer

#### Corpus Christi

**33** Carl R. Mayberry Jr.

**29** Daniel G. Gonzalez

**18** Jenise K. Wilson

**17** Billy R. Karnei

**12** Gary D. Stolte

#### Dallas

**39** Claud Smith

**27** David C. Montelongo Sr.

**21** Angel A. Velez

**11** Robert D. Lambert

#### Fort Worth

**29** Aaron M. Pruitt

**13** Calvin W. Radford

#### Houston

**30** David J. Wleczyk

**29** Scott E. Scholz

**28** Wayne S. Matthews

**26** Juan C. Gonzalez

#### Laredo

**34** Eduardo Garcia

**27** Alberto Quintanilla

#### Lubbock

**30** Alan K. Beyer

**28** Arthur D. Melton

**24** Harva A. Finley

#### Odessa

**30** Arturo R. Gonzales Jr.

**26** Daniel L. Dalager

#### Pharr

**32** Ramiro Cano

#### San Antonio

**31** Joseph A. Rohmer Jr.

**28** Joe L. Espinoza

### Division/Office/ Region:

#### Administration

**27** David B. Casteel

#### Aviation

**12** Josephine Jarrell

#### General Services

**12** Brenda W. Watkins

#### Government and Public Affairs

**21** Danna K. Kemble

**15** Leocadio Matias

#### Maintenance

**14** Jack C. Mathis

### Regional Support Center South

**25** Gary B. Ondrusek

**District:**

**Childress**

**Floyd W. Belcher, Jr.**  
 Transportation Maintenance  
 Specialist II  
 Years of Service: 15 yrs, 8 mos  
 DOD: 11/4/11

**El Paso**

**Jesus J. Gonzalez**  
 Sign Technician  
 Years of Service: 29 yrs.  
 Retirement Date: 8/31/09  
 DOD: 10/21/11

**Houston**

**Louis Rychlik**  
 Materials and Test Supervisor  
 Years of Service: 35 years  
 Retirement Date: 8/31/95  
 DOD: 8/28/11

**Pharr District**

**Bonnie P. Robertson**  
 Administrative Tech III  
 Years of Service: 25 yrs, 1 mo  
 Retirement Date: 12/31/91  
 DOD: 9/8/11

**Yoakum District**

**Howard E. Krock**  
 Matagorda County Swingbridge  
 Retirement Date: 2/28/91  
 Years of Service: 10 yrs, 3 mos  
 DOD: 11/2/11

**Division/Office/  
 Region:**

**Environmental Affairs**  
**James R. Hankamer**  
 Environmental Protection  
 Specialist V  
 Years of Service: 4 mos  
 DOD: 10/18/11

**Luther DeBerry Remembered**


Former Texas Chief Highway Engineer Bannister Luther DeBerry passed away Nov. 10 in Lufkin at the age of 97. TxDOT Lufkin District employees and retirees served as honorary pallbearers during his Nov. 13 memorial service.

DeBerry was born in Bogata on May 7, 1914. He earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering in 1937 from the University of Texas at Austin and began his career with the Texas Highway Department in the Paris District.

He served as district engineer at Lufkin and Dallas and assistant state highway engineer. While serving as state highway engineer from 1973 to 1980, he received numerous professional honors, including the American Association of State Highway Officials' highest award, the Thomas H. McDonald Award.

During his career, DeBerry guided the department through budget cuts, employee reductions, reorganization and merging of the Texas Highway


Department and the Mass Transit Commission into the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation.

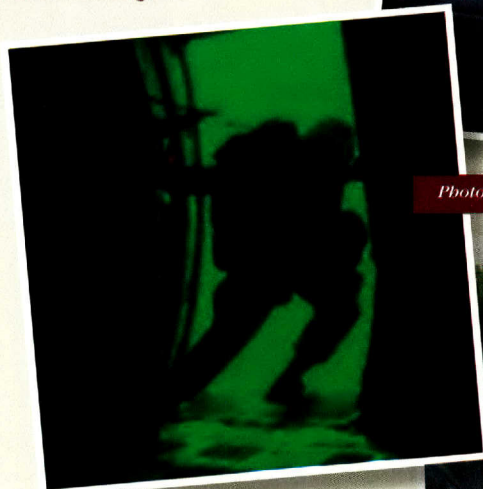
Known for achieving excellence over a long career, an award was established in 1980 bearing his name. The Luther DeBerry award honors individuals who have made outstanding contributions to Texas transportation and is presented annually at Short Course. 

**Uncommon Valor** *continued from Page 11*

Rayburn reflected, "Hitting the roadside bomb in Afghanistan was my closest call, but I didn't show Melissa the photo until I got home."

Rayburn enjoys both his jobs and considers his military service his hobby, too.

"It's been a great experience. I have been able to shoot machine guns, walk through the woods with heavy stuff on my back and jump out of planes all over the world with some of the finest people I've ever known." 




*Photo courtesy of Larry Rayburn*





This month, we're changing our contest slightly to highlight identifiable landmarks — rather than roads — you might see while traveling across Texas. The Travel Information Division supplied this picture. If you think you know where it was taken, please contact Bill Powell at [Bill.Powell@txdot.gov](mailto:Bill.Powell@txdot.gov) or (512) 463-8606. Deadline for guesses is Jan. 31.

## Identified:

Congratulations to the Austin District's Walter Barfield, who was the first to identify our picture as the I-10/I-37 interchange, looking northward, in San Antonio. Other readers who guessed correctly include Stephen Stoval (LFK), James Browne (SAT), Wesley McClure and Deborah Blechert (FIN). 



## A Minute With... David Fulton

The Aviation Division provides grant funding and construction management oversight for improvement and maintenance projects for general aviation airports throughout Texas. We have spent a great deal of time and effort over the past 20 years, as well as more than \$1 billion dollars in federal and state grants, in transforming what was previously one of the worst state airport systems in the nation into one of the best. These airports provide a vital air service connection to all points throughout Texas. They also provide a huge economic benefit for our state. The Aviation Division also manages the State Flight Department, which provides air transportation for state officials and maintenance services for all state owned aircraft.”

— Aviation Division Director David Fulton



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Austin, Texas 78701

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<http://crossroads/>

## Upcoming TxDOT Events

**Jan. 16**  
Martin Luther King Day  
(Agency Closed)

**Jan. 19**  
Confederate Heroes Day  
(Skeleton Crew)

**Jan. 25**  
Texas Transportation  
Commission Workshop (Austin)

**Jan. 26**  
Texas Transportation  
Commission Meeting (Austin)



**Feb. 10**  
Northeast Tarrant  
Transportation Summit (Hurst)

**Feb. 15-17**  
Texas Transportation Forum  
(San Antonio)

**Feb. 20**  
Presidents Day (Agency Closed)

**Feb. 22**  
Texas Transportation  
Commission Workshop (Austin)

**Feb. 23**  
Texas Transportation  
Commission Meeting (Austin)

