



TEXAS' GROWING PROSPERITY BY



TxDOT's new Maritime Division gears up to oversee the ports and waterways that are vital to Texas' economic growth.



Thanks for your thoughts!

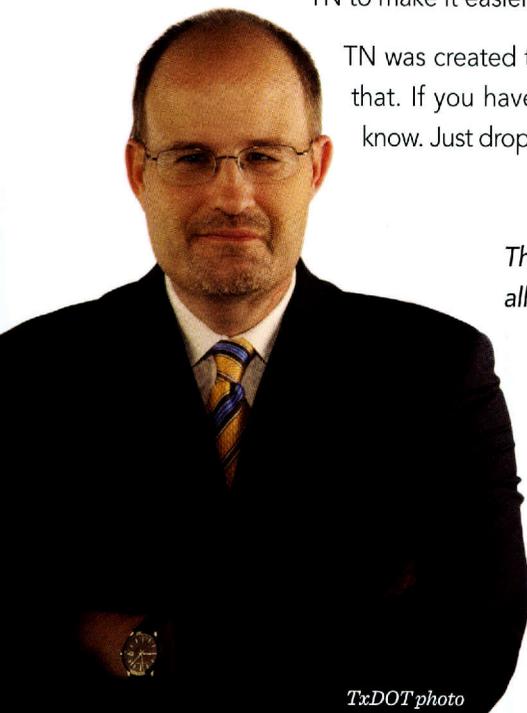
It's no surprise that we've made a lot of changes at TxDOT, but that's the nature of an organization that has to keep up with a growing state. We're constantly looking for ways to serve Texans better, to improve systems, to make our jobs safer and to keep you informed about what's happening.

That's the reason for TN. An employee magazine — or some version of it — has been a staple at the department since at least 1947. It's also changed over the years, but its mission to tell the TxDOT story remains the same.

Last year, we wanted to find out if we were meeting that mandate, so this past December, we surveyed employees to get their opinions. More than 1,600 of you responded. According to the results, 70 percent believe TN does a good job of covering all sectors of department news, from headquarters to maintenance offices to regional centers. Nearly 80 percent of the respondents feel they get the right amount of information about TxDOT news, and 77 percent like the bimonthly distribution.

But we're not perfect. Employees also told us that the magazine is too heavy on administrative news and project updates. Recurring features like "Bright Lights," "Where Am I?" and "I Am A..." are employee favorites. You can find more survey results on page 16.

Thanks for your feedback. We're listening and in the near future, we're going to improve the content, giving you more information about employees and their accomplishments. At your request, we've already improved the online version of TN to make it easier to navigate and print.



TN was created to serve you, and you can help the department do that. If you have an idea for a story, let Internal Communications know. Just drop them a line at TNideas@txdot.gov, subject line TN.

Thanks for helping us improve your magazine and for all you do for Texas. 

Phil Wilson
Executive Director

TxDOT photo



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CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Bob Kaufman

EDITOR

Brent Dollar

MANAGING EDITOR

Claudia Perez

FEATURE WRITERS

Rosemary Barnes

Phyllis Chandler-Gordon

Ann Hatchitt

Roman T. Hill

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Bill Powell,

Bobby Colwell, Rickey Dailey,

Blanca Del Valle, Donna Huerta,

Larry Krartz, Elizabeth Paradise,

Gene Powell, Marcus Sandifer,

Karen Threlkeld, Hazel Zepeda

PHOTOGRAPHY

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CONTACT TN EDITOR

Have questions or
comments about TN?

Email AskTxDOT@txdot.gov

and include "TN Editor"

in the subject line.

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on the cover

New Maritime Division Director Herman Deutsch (third from left) meets with port officials at the Port of Houston. Deutsch brings more than 23 years of public and private industry experience, and a vibrant outlook, to the new position.

— TxDOT Team Members Chime In —

What is your favorite spring break memory or destination?



Kyla McGuffin
Office Manager,
Abilene

In April 2011, my husband and I took a seven-day Western Caribbean cruise out of Galveston on the Carnival Conquest.

TxDOT photo



Allan Moore
Director of Construction,
Wichita Falls

I enjoy spending time swimming in the spring-fed waters of Balmorhea State Park.

TxDOT photo



Paul Schneider
Mineola Area
Engineer, Tyler

It's a toss-up between skiing in Colorado and sitting on the beach in Destin, Fla.

TxDOT photo

5 THINGS

FIVE THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW RIGHT NOW

1

Lauren Garduño has been named chief procurement officer and deputy administrative officer, overseeing fleet operations, human resources, procurement and consultant contract management. Garduño has been with TxDOT for 26 years, most recently as chief programs officer and previously as Abilene District engineer.

2

Two Communications Division employees, Denice Bettencourt and Ann Hatchitt, have been selected to participate in the Foundation of Women's Resources 2013 Leadership Texas Program. Leadership Texas is the longest-running women's leadership program in the U.S. and provides invaluable education and travel opportunities to Texas women who seek to improve their leadership skills.

3

The Texas Transportation Commission has selected AGL Constructors as the developer of the I-35E project from I-635 in Dallas County to U.S. 380 in Denton County. The project to rebuild one of the state's most congested highways will improve existing lanes of the interstate, provide continuous frontage roads and construct new, reversible managed toll lanes.

4

The department announced new federal designation of more than 28 miles of existing highway around Houston for the Interstate 69 corridor. A critical artery for moving freight, I-69 will ultimately become a 1,600-mile-long highway stretching from Michigan to Texas.

5

To better inform Texans about the extensive construction on I-35, TxDOT has added a new level to its DriveTexas mapping tool: a dynamic traffic map that provides real-time information about closures on main lanes, frontage roads, ramps and cross streets, as well as real-time speeds. To access the map, visit <http://i35-maps.tti.tamu.edu/>.

EMPLOYEES ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Employees' Advisory Committee (EAC) boasts a long tradition at TxDOT, established by Dewitt C. Greer in 1944. The EAC represents all TxDOT employees, including those in the district and region offices across the state.

The department benefits from ideas and suggestions from our most valuable resource, our TxDOT employees, and the EAC wants to hear from you. Leadership encourages suggestions from individuals to help the department improve.

EAC recently received a great suggestion to help TxDOT improve safety. Statistics show that new employees have a higher percentage of safety incidents in the field than experienced employees. It was suggested that new employees be easily identified with hard hat stickers allowing veteran employees to provide guidance for those with less than one year of field experience. Staff in the Occupational Safety Division, along with district and region safety officers, agreed and moved forward implementing this innovative idea.

Submit your suggestion or question to EAC by email at EmployeesAdvisoryCommittee@txdot.gov. EAC staff can respond directly to you and keep you updated on the status of your suggestion. Or you can remain anonymous and use the electronic suggestion box on EAC's home page on Crossroads. 

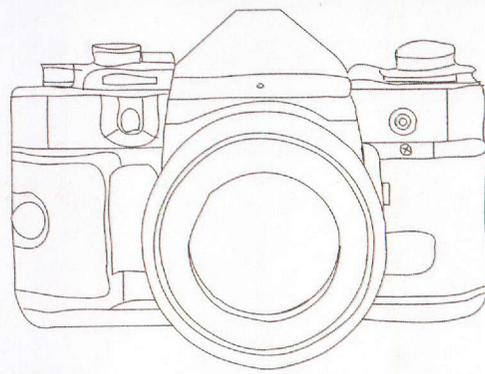


Front row left to right: Cindy Bordovsky-Stone, Cindy Northrup White and Pete Czczenski. Second row: Michael Becker, Kathy Garrett, Jennifer Crosby and Travis Hajek. Back row: Vickie Willis, Julie Dickerson, Lynette Phillips, Tray Turner, Monica Aleman-Schmoot, Eduardo Deleon, Geetha Chandar, Deirdrea Samuels, Marc Broadstock, Michael LeViseur, Susan Neumann and Lowell Choate. EAC members not pictured: Laura Perez and Tammy Cope.



TxDOT photo

BE IN TN'S TOP PICS



Send in pics of your favorite Texas burger for an opportunity to appear in TN Magazine's newest section.

In an effort to better reflect and represent employees and their interests, TN will be dedicating more space to employee-submitted materials in the issues to come.

One particular project we're excited about is an area dedicated to employee-submitted photography: Top Pics. TN will set a theme, then pick through the pics received and feature a select few in the next issue.

We hope to curate an entertaining and engaging showcase of different subjects, as viewed through the lenses and lives of our fellow TxDOT employees.

For the next issue (May/June), the theme will be "Best Burger in Texas."

Whether you've got a fully outfitted, professional camera setup, a camera phone, or want to send in a quality scan of an old photo, send in snapshots of your favorite Texas burger. Feel free to send a photo of the establishment that makes the burger or something that makes that establishment special to you. Please send your submissions to TNideas@txdot.gov by March 29. Be sure to include your contact information and share some details about the photo subject. 

SHARE SAFETY WITH ME

New field employees learn from the first day at TxDOT that safety is number one. Now they can receive extra safety training as a result of bright green and yellow stickers that ask experienced TxDOT crew members to "Share SAFETY with me."

"Veteran employees now know when crew members are brand new to TxDOT, and they can offer additional assistance," said Occupational Safety (OCC) Division Director Jerral Wyer.

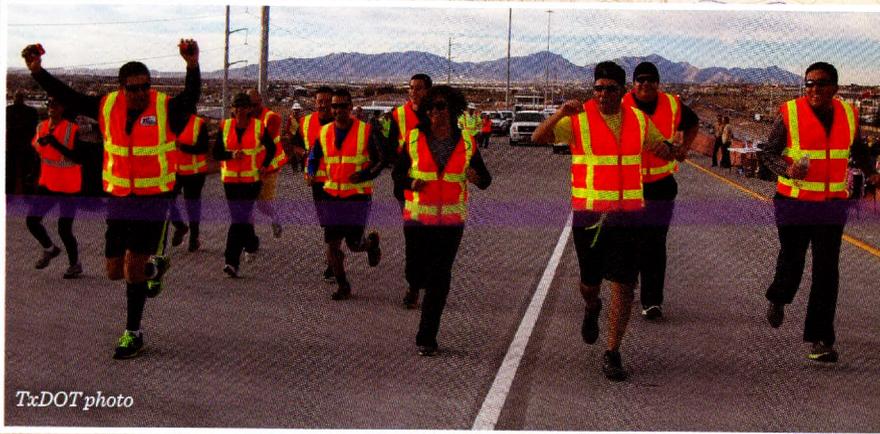
TxDOT employees from the La Pryor Maintenance Section in the Laredo District display bright green and yellow safety stickers created to identify team members with less than one year of field experience. Left to right: Jose Bermea and Gabriel Garcia.

TxDOT statistics show that new field employees have a higher risk of injury and incidents during their first year in a field environment. The green and yellow "First Year Employee: Share SAFETY with me" stickers create a visual means of identifying those team members. The intent is to remind seasoned employees to mentor new field employees to ensure the safety of the team.

The sticker suggestion came from the Employees' Advisory Committee and was implemented quickly. OCC asked safety officers to place the stickers on the backs of the hard hats, where they are visible from a distance. 

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.



TxDOT photo

A group of TxDOT employees run the entire I-10 bridge to the El Paso District's East Area Office, for a total of three miles.

El Paso I-10 Americas Interchange Project Update

The El Paso District held a ribbon cutting last December to celebrate the completion of two connectors from Phase I of the Americas Interchange project on I-10. Held jointly with the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority, city and state leaders joined to commemorate the improvements.

One of El Paso's largest highway construction projects, the Americas Interchange, was identified for expansions and upgrades in the 2008 Comprehensive Mobility Plan. Construction began in the summer of 2011.

The project addresses congestion and improves efficiency, expediting the movements between I-10 and Loop 375. Phase I targeted connectors residents use most.

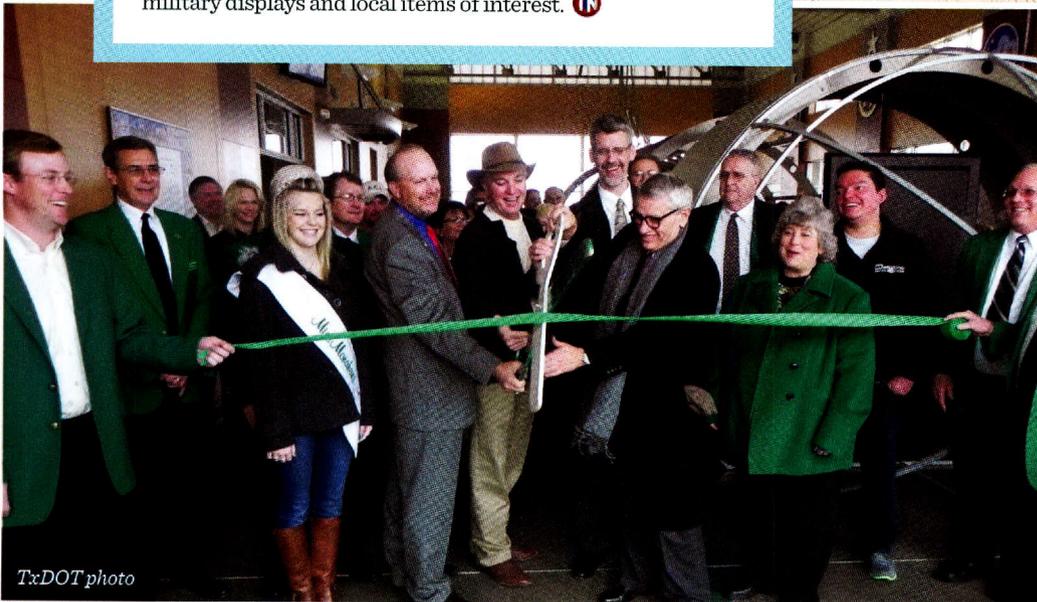
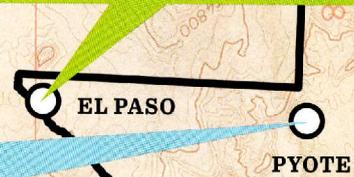
More connectors will be built, with construction expected to finish in early 2015. The project is a successful partnership between the city of El Paso, the El Paso MPO and TxDOT. 

Odessa District Opens New Safety Rest Area

Last January, the Odessa District celebrated the opening of a Ward County safety rest area on I-20 near Pyote with a ribbon-cutting ceremony, in a joint effort with the Monahans Chamber of Commerce.

This safety rest area, located between Pyote and Monahans, provides an important stop for motorists to rest, as the nearest safety rest area is more than 110 miles away.

The rest area was designed with the nearby World War II-era Rattlesnake Bomber Base in mind, featuring historical military displays and local items of interest. 



TxDOT photo

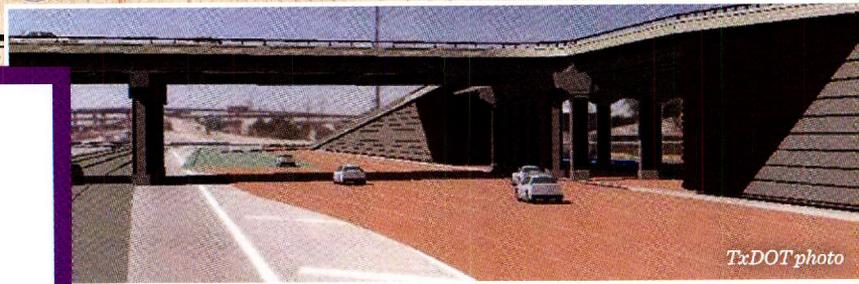
Those participating in the Ward County safety rest area ribbon-cutting ceremony include (fourth from left to right) Odessa District Engineer Mike McAnally, TxDOT Director of Maintenance Howard Holland, Ward County Judge Greg M. Holly, State Rep. Tyron Lewis and other community members.

Dallas I-35E Project Update

Gaining momentum, the I-35E Project in the Dallas District, to rebuild the 28-mile corridor, features managed lanes to move almost 200,000 vehicles daily. Currently in Phase 1, the project includes Dallas and Denton counties, and has been designed to alleviate traffic congestion and improve motorist safety.

The first phase of the project includes one additional general purpose lane in each direction and two reversible managed lanes in the center. A new bridge will be built over Lewisville Lake that will include an additional lane in each direction, as well as managed lanes and pedestrian and bicycle paths.

Phase 1 construction is planned to begin later this summer, with an estimated completion date of late 2016. 



TxDOT photo

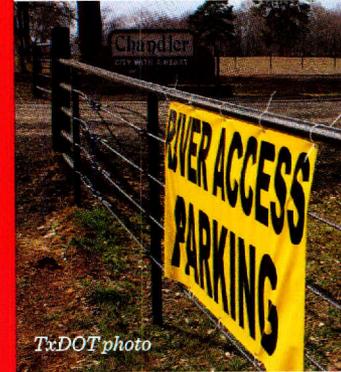
Tyler District Partners to Support Safety

The Tyler District partnered with Texas Parks and Wildlife, along with a private property owner, a local philanthropic organization, and additional state and local agencies to provide an overflow parking lot for fishermen in Chandler, as part of a safety measure for the anglers and motorists traveling through the area.

The project also supports tourism and economic development in the region. Area Engineer Jeffrey Harmon contributed engineering and design assistance, as well as supplied recycled asphalt for the project.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held in February to celebrate the grand opening — just in time for white bass season.

Hats off to Harmon and the employees of the Tyler District! 



TxDOT photo

Bryan District Angels Project

Organized five years ago by employees from the Bryan District office, the Angels Project Committee uses break room coffee fund proceeds and donated funds to help provide a memorable Christmas for children of employees who ask for assistance.

Last year, in addition to supplying gifts, there were additional funds allowing the committee to help with medical expenses for employees' children. The committee also donated \$300 to the Brazos Valley Food Drive.

Commendations are in order for the Bryan District Angels Project whose support of their team and community is inspirational. Kudos! 



TxDOT photo

Left to right: Bob Colwell, Catherine Hejl, Janice Robertson, Jennifer Mascheck, Lynn Bush, Jennifer Stanush, Ken Jones, Leigh Ann Greer, Doris Crow, Sheryl Petroski and Darla Walton.



Ready

FOR THE

WATER

The New TxDOT Maritime Division

Our nation's marine ports and inland waterways are critical links that drive international commerce, serving as gateways for more than 95 percent of all goods imported into the United States.

Texas ports and waterways generate \$277 billion in economic activity annually – 25 percent of the state's total economic output. The industry supports nearly 1.4 million jobs. Texas tops all other states in the amount of maritime waterborne commerce, handling more than 570 million tons of cargo last year. Four Texas ports – Houston, Corpus Christi, Beaumont and Texas City – are among the top 10 ports in the country. Houston is the top container port in the Gulf of Mexico. Texas ports manage more than 12,000 deep sea vessel calls and welcomed more than 500,000 cruise passengers to Galveston in 2012.



The department plays an increasingly important role in the success of Texas' maritime industry. In 2012, TxDOT took the unprecedented action of creating an entirely new division to provide more emphasis and devote increased resources to Texas maritime activities. The new Maritime Division will focus on assisting Texas' ports and waterways, ensuring that the freight, rail and highway systems that support our ports are ready to meet increased demands.

New Maritime Division Director Herman Deutsch

Continued on page 10

Those demands include the impact on Texas from the \$5.25 billion expansion of the Panama Canal, scheduled to be completed by 2015. Through the efforts of the new Maritime Division, TxDOT will work to ensure Texas is well positioned to capitalize on this opportunity.

Chief Strategy and Administration Officer Scott Leonard oversees multi-modal transportation divisions at TxDOT, including the new Maritime Division. Leonard believes in the importance of the new division and is enthusiastic about the selection of the new Maritime Division Director Herman Deutsch.

“The economic impact of ports and waterways represents a significant portion of the Texas economy and that will continue to grow with the expansion of the Panama Canal,” said Leonard. “The new Maritime Division and the experience of our new division director, Herman Deutsch, will increase TxDOT’s focus on the infrastructure necessary to support maritime commerce in Texas.”

With more than 23 years of public and private transportation industry experience, Deutsch served as director of numerous ports along the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific.

More recently, Deutsch directed maritime commerce activities across the globe, championing the powerful role the industry plays in facilitating trade and producing jobs.

“TxDOT will expand its role as a resource and partner for the ports, the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway and maritime stakeholders to increase economic activity and create more jobs in Texas,” said Deutsch. “We will build a professional and customer-oriented maritime division, and the entire Texas transportation system will benefit.”



The Maritime Division will coordinate with the 15 deep and 13 shallow draft ports along the Texas coast, the intermodal connectivity with rails and roads, and support the 423-mile Gulf Intracoastal Waterway.

Deutsch plans to work closely with the Texas Ports Association, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the maritime industry and other stakeholders. Many issues must be addressed such as ensuring appropriate funding for and adequate utilization of our maritime transportation system, and the Intracoastal Waterway.

One of the recommendations of the Panama Canal Stakeholder Working Group, which was formed last year, was the creation of a new, separate division within TxDOT to increase the department’s role as a resource for Texas ports and maritime interests. The department organized the working group to study the potential impact of the Panama Canal expansion on Texas ports and infrastructure including roadways, railroads and other intermodal facilities. The broad-based group included industry representatives, metropolitan planning organizations, public agencies and university research institutes.

“Maritime commerce plays an important role in the economic prosperity of Texas, and the opportunities are limitless,” said Deutsch. “A strong maritime system will continue serving our industry and improve Texas transportation connectivity to the world.” 

Herman Deutsch brings to TxDOT a broad knowledge of international ports and multi-modal transportation solutions including freight and rail. Deutsch served as port director in several locations on the Gulf and Pacific Coasts. He has worked with port authorities, ocean carriers, terminal operators, stevedoring, design and construction companies, as well as with rail and trucking industries.

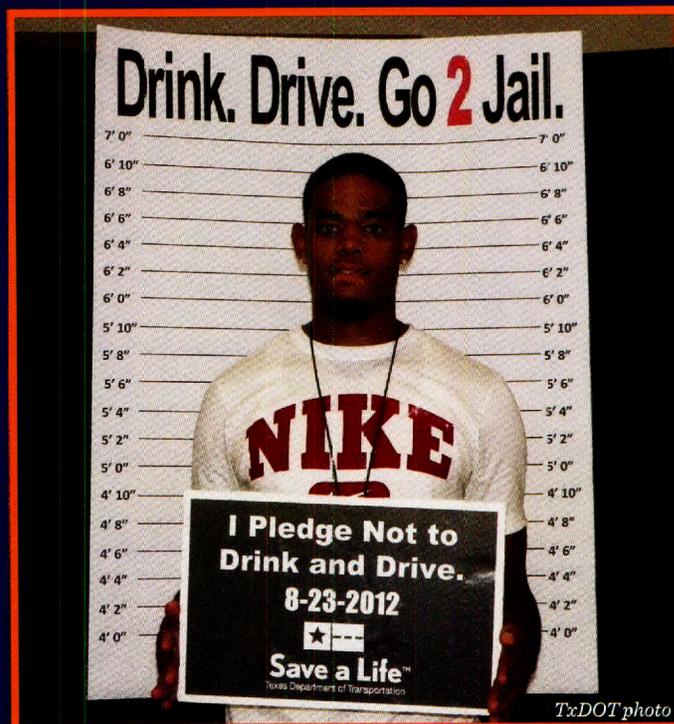
As a business leader, Deutsch has experience growing and connecting business opportunities in North and Latin America, Europe, the Middle East and Asia. His most recent position combined work on seaport and railway projects in the Middle East and North Africa, where he managed an annual budget of \$200 million. His job at TxDOT allows him to return to his home in Houston.

Additionally, Deutsch is a certified professional port manager from the American Association of Port Authorities. He holds a degree in port administration from the University of Antwerp, Belgium, a Bachelor of Science degree in civil engineering and a master’s degree in engineering-planning. He also holds other finance and commercial post-graduate degrees. In 2004, Deutsch chaired the Gulf Port Association of the Americas.



NO BREAKS FOR SPRING SAFETY CAMPAIGNS

A University of Houston college student in Victoria participates in the "Drink, Drive. Go 2 Jail." campaign activity, holding up a sign pledging not to drink and drive.



This spring, the Traffic Operations Division will be touring college campuses to spread traffic safety campaign messages about driving while under the influence and distracted driving.

"The Traffic Operations Division has the tools and a great team to provide valuable traffic safety education," said Zepeda. "It could be that one presentation that saves a life, and that makes our safety efforts worthwhile."

The division's traffic safety specialists around the state are responsible for providing leadership, oversight, communication and coordination of local traffic safety activities.

Traffic Safety Specialist Hazel Zepeda is happy to serve as the point of contact for the traffic safety grant program for the Corpus Christi and Yoakum districts.

During college campus tours, a "drunk goggles" exercise is one of the activities provided to students, where vision is blurred to simulate the danger of driving while inebriated.

Reflecting on what a student said to her after the drunk goggle exercise, Zepeda said, "She will never attempt to drink and drive as a result of a fatality in her family, and she volunteers to be the designated driver for her peers."

Additional campaigns are planned to continue the message later in the spring. The division will also host a "Break the Norm" event with the Driscoll Children's Hospital and the Texas Department of Public Safety focusing on seatbelt safety, child passenger safety, safe driving and bicycle safety. **TN**



Traffic Safety Specialist Hazel Zepeda helps secure a boy's bicycle helmet at the "Break the Norm" event. Held during spring break, the event focuses on bicycle safety, safe driving, seatbelt safety and child passenger safety.

TXDOT GETS PHYSICAL

Wellness Partnerships Help Promote Better Health

At the start of every year, employees across the state make New Year's resolutions to change habits, commit to getting a project started or finished, or improve their health. TxDOT understands the importance of having healthy employees. Healthy employees are more focused and productive at work and in their personal lives – and are also safer on the job – as incidents are more likely to occur when one's health is compromised. For this reason, the department launched a "Get a Physical" campaign, in January, to encourage employees to make their health a priority.

"Knowing your health status, maintaining a healthy lifestyle and getting routine physicals are important preventive measures you can control," said Human Resources Division Director Janine Mays. "It's also the easiest way to prolong your life and keep health care costs down, and gaining a little extra time off doesn't hurt either."

An employee's health directly affects job performance and can potentially affect safety and situational awareness. And, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, declining workforce health also contributes to an increase in health-related expenses for everyone involved. These expenses include medical payments and costs resulting from when employees miss work and come to work sick. Annual physical exams are a vital part of preventing illness for a long and healthy life, in addition to daily exercise, eating right, maintaining a healthy weight and not smoking.

Putting Resources to Work

The Occupational Safety Division (OCC) and the Human Resources Division (HRD) are working together to lead the "Get a Physical" efforts. As a partnership to make health a priority and for employees to gain a better understanding of their well-being, TxDOT awards eight hours of miscellaneous leave for receiving a physical exam and taking the health risk assessment.

"A healthy workforce will help create a safer workplace for employees and the traveling public. Completing the health assessment is the first step in identifying and improving our own health conditions," said Occupational Safety Division Director Jerral Wyer.

This spring, human resources representatives and safety officers in the districts are teaming up across the state to provide information about obtaining an annual physical exam and to help employees complete their health risk assessment. Employees, especially in the field, with the help of their safety officer, will have an opportunity to work one-on-one with their human resources representatives.

For years the department has offered the Employee WorkLife Balance Program, through HRD, to motivate employees to adopt a lifestyle that improves their health, fitness and well-being. Because employees spend a significant amount of time in the workplace, it is important to be healthy on and off the job.

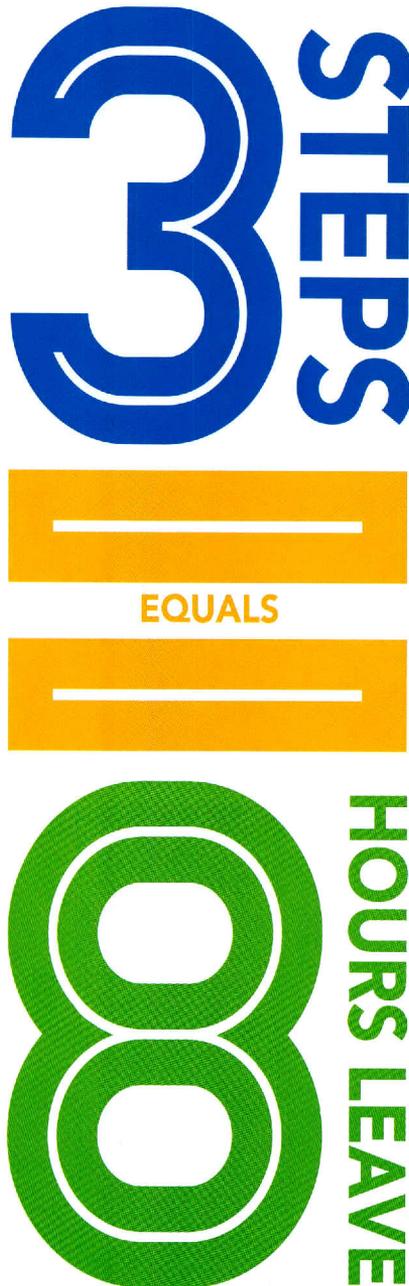
"I'm proud to share with people outside of TxDOT the wonderful opportunities we are able to create for employees to get healthier through the WorkLife Balance Program," said HRD Employee Outreach Section Director Tammy Calderon. "Every time I talk about the initiatives and benefits of the program, people comment how much this shows our leadership cares about their most valuable asset: us."

Get More Information

Employees can find more information about the "Get a Physical" campaign, view videos and find helpful links by visiting the Crossroads homepage and clicking on the 'Employee WorkLife Balance Program' under 'Quick Links.' On the "Get a Physical" HRD WorkLife Balance webpage, employees will also be able to see an image of a thermometer measuring the monthly percentage of physicals completed statewide. The goal of the department is 100 percent participation by the end of the year – for every employee across the state to make a commitment to better health.

The department strives to be a best-in-class agency, and that means having a healthy workforce to achieve that goal. Employees need to be healthy and safe in any environment or situation. Safety not only means being aware of one's surroundings, putting people first and having the proper training, but it also means being healthy to do the job effectively. Taking care of one's health is a part of the safety equation. When employees think about their

aspirations for 2013, the department encourages everyone to add obtaining an annual physical exam to their list of goals. It's easy, and takes a small amount of effort but can potentially add years to one's life. 





A doctor can use the annual exam to keep abreast of signs and symptoms that could lead to serious illness. And, the assessment is a short set of questions designed to educate a person about their health risks.

Employees can then turn the form and the printed certificate in to their supervisor and their human resources representative for credit.

All an employee needs to do to earn eight hours of leave is complete three easy steps

1

STEP 1

Schedule a physical exam with a doctor

2

STEP 2

Have the doctor sign Form 2313

3

STEP 3

Complete the health risk assessment on the insurance provider's website and print out the certificate





C-STAR: Replacing CRAFT and Refreshing Customer Service

Later this year, all Customer Relationship and Feedback Tracking (CRAFT) users will begin using a new system for citizen complaint tracking. TxDOT is replacing the current CRAFT system with a more robust, user-friendly system called Customer Service Tracking and Response, better known as C-STAR.

After extensive research and reviewing vendor demonstrations, the new C-STAR system was selected.

“C-STAR is the next important step to help us deliver even better customer service,” said Brent Dollar, Internal Communications manager.

Implemented to comply with the Sunset Review Committee’s June 2008 staff report and the Texas Administrative Code, Title 43, Rule §3.26, C-STAR will provide the tools required to provide better customer service for citizens as well as an easier system to navigate for system users.

The goal of C-STAR is to deliver improved customer service that is efficient, reliable and can identify trends and customer satisfaction through:

- ★ Better complaint tracking traceability and process compliance
- ★ Faster complaint resolution times through improvements to tool usability and process flow
- ★ More proactive and consistent customer communications
- ★ Improved ability to analyze complaint data and trends to generate business process improvements
- ★ Implementation of the capability to receive customer feedback through surveys

C-STAR utilizes cloud-based technology to increase efficiency. It also reduces manual entry and aims to eliminate redundancy, provide reliability of searches and reports, and allows for the use of mobile applications and the ability to gather customer feedback. The department is confident it will foster support across TxDOT.

Collaboration is under way to integrate data from CRAFT into C-STAR, and to design and build C-STAR to accommodate the agency’s needs and requirements. 

UT PAN AM STUDENTS Visit Pharr Testing Lab

When civil engineering students from the University of Texas-Pan American visited the Pharr District Testing Lab, TxDOT staff received similar feedback throughout the day: the students were impressed with the amount of materials testing involved in building the state’s transportation system.

“The students were amazed at everything that we test and what we go through to get materials approved around here,” said Pharr District Lab Supervisor Jorge Rendon.

Extensive lab testing is necessary to ensure TxDOT is getting materials that meet all design specifications, according to Rendon.

“The students had questions about everything,” he added. “For example, they didn’t realize that we could test all the different classes of concrete right here in the lab.”

Rendon is a 28-year TxDOT veteran who started on special job crews in the Pharr District and worked his way up to supervisor of the testing lab. 



TxDOT photo

Pharr District Lab Supervisor Jorge Rendon (second from right) explains flex base analysis to civil engineering students from the University of Texas-Pan American.

“It’s good experience for the students to know what kinds of work they will be doing if they join TxDOT after they graduate from college,” said Rendon.

NEW BOSTON EMPLOYEE FINDS A PIECE OF TxDOT HISTORY



While searching for lost treasures, one Atlanta District employee in New Boston found a small piece of TxDOT history.

During his spare time, Henry Murray, a maintenance crew chief of the New Boston

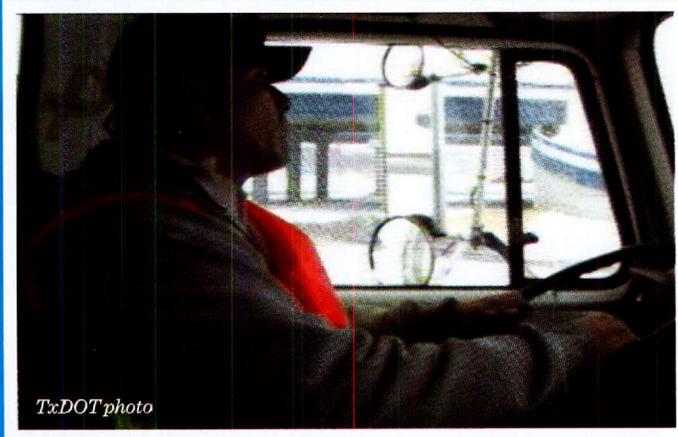
Maintenance Section, enjoys looking for items with his metal detector. One day, while scanning near the old maintenance barn, he came across a copper token.

TxDOT photo

It was a metal token employees would turn in to check out tools and equipment for the day's work. It's imprinted with the words "WORKMAN 43, DIV. 1, TEXAS HIGHWAY DEPT."

The highway department was first divided up into eight divisions in 1919. Division 1 covered all of northeast Texas, and its headquarters was in Dallas (although Dallas was actually in Division 2).

Research efforts to find the name of the employee who once used the token proved fruitless but found the token was probably used and lost before 1932. Murray plans on keeping the token as a good luck charm and a reminder of how things used to be done on the job. 



TxDOT photo

Bright Lights:

Let It Snow, Let It Snow, Let It Snow

TxDOT crews across West Texas, the Panhandle and North Texas put snowplows into service during hazardous winter weather events at the end of December and early January. They garnered appreciation from travelers who wrote to express their thanks.

Above: Like many other TxDOT crew members, Wichita Falls Maintenance staff member Moses Gonzales worked on Christmas Day to make roads safer for travelers. This still shot was captured from video of Gonzales that can be viewed on TxDOT's YouTube page.

Below: The piles of snow near Fort Stockton create a beautiful winter scene but cause dangerous travel conditions for drivers.



TxDOT photo

District Five State Coordinator David Solis, with the Texas Department of Public Safety, wrote to thank Childress District crews who cleared snow-covered roads on Christmas Day. "I appreciate all the work your guys did to make travel safer on U.S. 287," wrote Solis.

Wichita Falls Maintenance staff member Moses Gonzales also spent Christmas Day driving a snowplow. Wichita Falls Public Information Officer Ben Coker joined Gonzales to document his hard work and dedication. Coker's video can be viewed on TxDOT's YouTube page.

Fort Worth District crews received kudos from Sarah Shoaw of North Richland Hills, who forged out on a snowy Jan. 2 for her first day on the new job. "You made it possible for me to make it to work safely," Shoaw wrote.

Odessa District employees near Fort Stockton and Balmorhea pulled double duty with snow events in early January.

Jay Hagins of Abilene used social media shorthand to send thanks to TxDOT via Facebook on Christmas Day and 27 people agreed with his assessment, "If u r traveling Tx today, say a prayer for the TxDOT guys... They leave their families on Christmas to make the roads safe for the rest of us! Thanks guys and b safe!" 

Read words of thanks featured each week in **Bright Lights: Where Employees Shine on Crossroads**. From drivers who appreciate clear, safe winter roads to families who enjoy safety rest areas, many folks are thankful for TxDOT and all we do. Send any compliments you receive to AskTxDOT, so we can shine Bright Lights on your achievements as well.

SURVEYING THE LANDSCAPE

{ 1,616 }
number of employees who took the survey

TN Magazine Readers Weigh In

Every two months, whether by following a link on Crossroads, flipping through a printed copy or through another means, TxDOT employees learn more about current projects and the people who make up the agency here in the pages of TN (formerly known as Transportation News). At least, that's the intent and the goal.

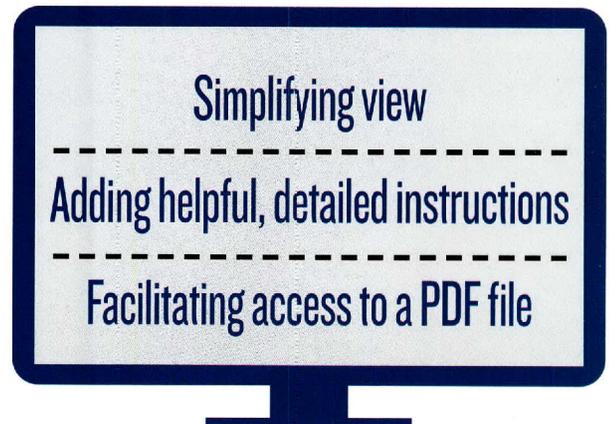
Late last year, the Internal Communications Section conducted a research survey across the entire agency to learn more about the value of TN Magazine to the TxDOT mission. In addition, the section was looking to find ways to enhance how TxDOT communicates information and news to gauge how relevant and interesting the magazine is to employees.

The survey was conducted online over seven days in December 2012 and contained questions about readership, content and delivery. TxDOT employees who do not typically use a computer at work were given a copy of the survey request letter and an online link to take the survey anywhere at their convenience. The survey was kept confidential, an effort to get sincere feedback from employees about the magazine.

Magazine Topics: Average Rankings, Most-Liked to Least-Liked



CHANGES TO DIGITAL publishing software



If you have a story idea, comment or suggestion for TN, email us at TNideas@txdot.gov.

So What's Next?

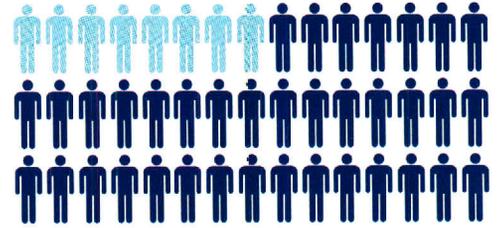
Critical feedback is invaluable. Much like TxDOT has to keep an ear to the general public, the department is responsible for listening to employee feedback, and TN Magazine is no exception.

Beginning with this issue, Internal Communications will implement some of the ideas, adding more employee input and shortening stories, with future plans to open the magazine up to more user-submitted materials. In addition to the magazine's improvements, the TN logo has been refreshed to look more dynamic and current.

The hope is that learning what employees need and want from the magazine, will help transform it to better serve the mission of TN: to inform and celebrate the people who make this a best-in-class agency. 

84%

OF EMPLOYEES READ TN



80%



77%



70%



50%



PREFER TO READ TN
VIA CROSSROADS

FEEL TN COVERS
ALL SECTORS OF NEWS

LIKE THE BIMONTHLY
DISTRIBUTION

LIKE THE AMOUNT OF
TXDOT INFORMATION

More than 30% still prefer to read in hard copy.

"I think more employees would read it if it was in paper copy. Most of the guys I work with don't have time for online reading or the supervisor gets upset if you're not on the road working."

-Tx:DOT Employee

Of the remaining 30%, sentiment suggests districts and rural areas are underrepresented.

"Never pertains to anything out in the rural sections. Not all of us live and work in the big city!"

-Tx:DOT Employee

Overall, employees preferred more timely information from the magazine.

"There is something to be said for monthly distribution. News is more current...5 Things You Need to Know and Phil's letter might be more relevant on a monthly distribution as well as project updates."

-Tx:DOT Employee

Most suggestions called for more employee focus.

"Would like to see more employees featured on their accomplishments. Let the employees know how valuable they are to the department."

-Tx:DOT Employee

About the RTI Office Q&A With Shannon Crum

Shannon Crum was named director of the Research and Technology Implementation Office (RTI) in 2012. Crum, who joined TxDOT in 2004, previously served as the director of data management in the Transportation Planning and Programming Division. She earned a doctorate in geography from the University of Texas at Austin.



RTI has a YouTube channel, at www.youtube.com/user/bestpracticesvrs, where people can watch video summary reports of some interesting projects that Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) has been doing for us.

Would you please describe RTI's function at TxDOT?

RTI is a support organization with a mission to foster strategic innovation within the agency by funding research that solves problems in the key areas of safety, connectivity, congestion and asset preservation. Most of our projects support improvements to the engineering functions of the department, whether they are related to pavement design, maintenance or structures.

Can you tell us about some research projects that led to innovative changes for TxDOT?

We are wrapping up work that develops a set of tools to completely automate crack detection on pavements which, when implemented, will result in more consistent data at a much lower cost to the agency.

Something that is completely new for us is a project we're about to kick off that examines ways to reduce the number of on-the-job injuries that are caused by sprains and strains. It's a move away from our traditional engineering focus, but is something that has the potential to positively impact every single employee.

After the wildfires last year, we contracted with Texas Tech University to document the lessons learned and develop training so TxDOT employees can respond to future wildfire situations safely.

What are some of the projects your team is working on now?

We have a very interesting project under way that will commercialize a number of native grasses for use in TxDOT's right of way. For decades we have used imported grasses, but this will enable the use of more drought-tolerant species, reducing TxDOT's maintenance requirements and preserving the state's natural heritage. It also provides ecological benefits to cattle ranchers with property abutting the right of way.

Another project we are working on will evaluate the effectiveness of performance-based contracts for pavement marking maintenance. The project assesses potential cost savings from this type of contract, keeping safety performance and long-term value to the state in mind.

How did you get into research?

Before coming to TxDOT, I was on the faculty of the Department of Political Science and Geography at the University of Texas-San Antonio. When I joined TxDOT, I traveled around the state collecting data about county roads. That was a really fun job because I had the opportunity to travel and meet a lot of the county judges and commissioners.

Later, I became the director of data management in the Transportation Planning and Programming Division. I worked with TTI to produce the "100 Most Congested Roadways in Texas" list every year.

The one thing I missed was being involved with the research process, and finding lasting solutions to problems. When the research office director job opened up, that was my opportunity to combine skills I had acquired during my academic career with what I have learned about transportation over the last few years.

Who are the people on your team and what are their responsibilities?

The office has two teams. Sylvia Medina is our program coordinator. Working closely with her are our accounting specialist, Ned Mattila, and two contract administrators, Sandra Kaderka and Frank Espinosa. The contract administrators work hand in hand with the project management team, which will ultimately have five people. Right now, Wade Odell is the only person in that group, but we are hiring and will be fully staffed by mid-March. Our newest employee is my executive assistant, Tiki Smith, who joined TxDOT in January. 



RTI's "Analysis of Large Truck Collisions with Bridge Piers" recommended revisions to AASHTO design specifications to make bridges better able to withstand collisions with large trucks.

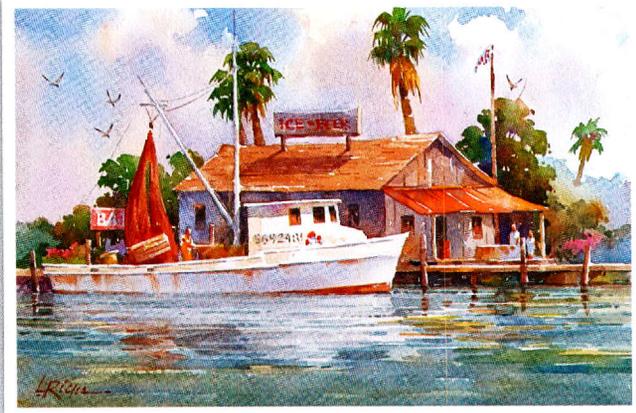
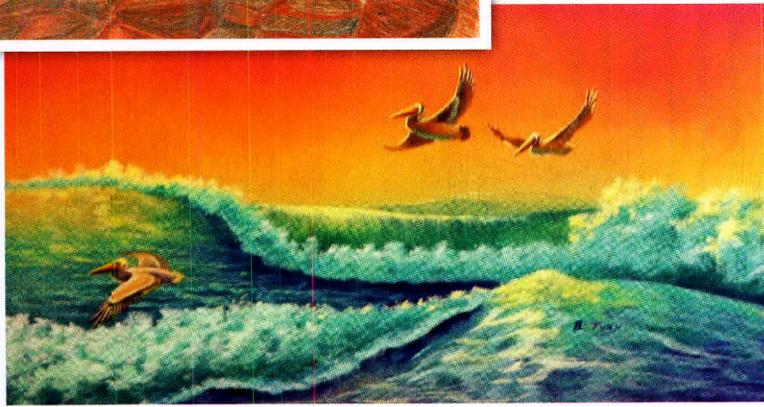
"Channel Dreams" by Xavier Benites; "Three Pelicans" by Buddy Turk; "Fresh Bait" by Lee Ricks and "Beautiful but Dangerous" by Gabriella Garcia (featured on the Table of Contents page) were among the 10 winners in the Third Annual Port Aransas Ferry Art Contest.

Ferry Art Contest

Declares Winners

TxDOT's Third Annual Port Aransas Ferry Art Contest produced 10 winners, including six adult and four youth artists. The artwork will be reproduced, enlarged and displayed on the sides of the William Burnett, the Mark Goode and the J.C. Dingwall ferry vessels for two years.

The winning artwork and artists in the adult division are: The Lighthouse and Fresh Bait by Lee Ricks; Channel Dreams by Xavier Benites; Three Pelicans by Buddy Turk; St. Joe's First Light by John Olvey; and Mustang Island, Gulls and Sea Oats by Mary Lib Thornhill. In the 18-and-under youth division, winners are: A Wavy Day in Port A by Alexandra Paulsen; Two to Tango by Chase Solimine; Sunset Jump by Noah Swindle; and Beautiful but Dangerous by Gabriella N. Garcia. 



TxDOT photo

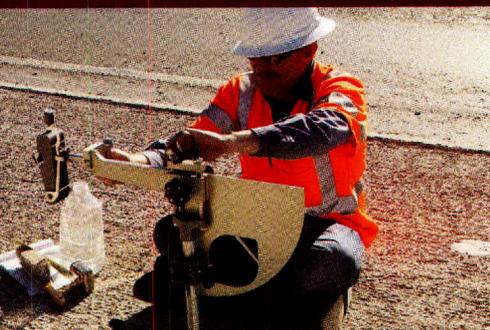
The San Angelo District Special Jobs Crew fills the Roto-Mill with water as they work on milling 500-foot sections of U.S. 87 north of Sterling City.

The water acts as a dust suppressant and cools the machine's drum during milling. Millings (the thin layer of removed road surface) are collected in the 10-yard dump truck and a sweeper follows to remove any remaining road debris.

MAKING MILLING

TOP OF MIND

Andre Smit, Ph.D., a researcher with the Center for Transportation Research at the University of Texas, uses a British Pendulum Tester to measure slip resistance on US 87 in Sterling County.



TxDOT photo

At the end of last year, the San Angelo District partnered with the Center for Transportation Research at the University of Texas and the University of Houston to kick off a research project designed to improve safety for the traveling public.

Five test sections of U.S. 87 north of Sterling City were milled by the San Angelo District Special Jobs crew to study ways to improve skid conditions on state highways. The crew milled a quarter of an inch of asphalt off the existing road surface, which had rutting and flushing due to damage by heavy oil field traffic.

The purpose of the research project is to find the optimum milling speed and the correct drum speed that will allow crews to remove rutting in the most economical way possible. Researchers will return to these five sections at three-, six-, 12- and 18-month intervals to measure the effects traffic has had on the road surface.

While some districts have used this process in the past to improve skid numbers and eliminate rutting, those improvements have not been studied for their long-term benefits. Also, if milling is not done correctly it can have the opposite effect, causing more immediate need for repairs.

The San Antonio and Yoakum districts are also participating in this study. Additional districts in various locations across the state will be added to the study in the coming months to gather best practices and provide recommendations. 

FUNDS & FUNDAMENTAL SHIFTS

★ *Transportation Talk at the Legislative Session* ★

For the next few months, folks who are drawn to that biennial event called the Texas legislative session will be watching for news from the Capitol. For those in transportation, this is especially true as this session could bring a sea change in the way the state funds transportation.

Transportation improvements are primarily funded with revenue from motor fuels tax receipts and vehicle registrations deposited in the State Highway

Fund (SHF). For years, roads have shared these dollars with other state priorities and programs, most notably the Department of Public Safety. During FY 2012-2013, for example, DPS was appropriated \$1.3 billion from the SHF.

But HB 106 by Rep. Lyle Larson would effectively eliminate that practice. Gov. Rick Perry endorsed the concept in his State of the State address this past January when he urged legislators to end diversions from the SHF.

While it's true that such a change could mean more money for transportation, the SHF is still a relatively stagnant source of revenue. Construction inflation has increased 62 percent since 2002, reducing the buying power of available dollars. Texans

are also driving more fuel-efficient cars, making fewer stops at the pump and putting fewer dollars into the fund.

That's why state leaders are also looking for more sustainable ways to fund transportation, according to Jerry Haddican, senior state legislative representative.

Gov. Perry has supported using \$3.7 billion from the state's Rainy Day Fund for a one-time investment in water and transportation programs. Some lawmakers, including former transportation commissioner, now Sen. Robert Nichols, have proposed using revenue from motor vehicle sales taxes to shore up the SHF. According to the Comptroller, vehicle

sales are expected to generate more than \$3 billion in sales tax revenue each year of the 2014-2015 biennium. Currently, these revenues go into the state's General Revenue Fund (GR), and the proposed funding shift may prove to be a difficult proposition for legislators, Haddican said.

"When they take money out of GR, they have to find a way to replace it, and there aren't a lot of sources to tap for revenue," he said.

That caution aside, transportation is still very much on legislators' radars this session, Haddican said.

"It's just too early in the session to predict what will happen. But the takeaway is that our legislators are looking for ways to fund transportation, and that's a good thing for Texas," he said. 



Tech Tools Drive COLLABORATION

*MiFi and tablets help keep
field workers connected*

The Information Technology Operations Division (IOD) has been busy reviewing IT communication devices offered by the department to reduce costs and increase efficiency. They are working closely with districts, divisions and offices to assess the use of each device – educating employees on the benefits of devices and encouraging employees to get the most out of them.



Tablet computers, available as Apple iPads, are one-piece mobile computers that are functional, lightweight and easier to hold and transport than the standard laptop. The device offers many common functions such as web browsing

and email, and can be loaded with an office suite that includes word processing, spreadsheet software and other tools.

Currently, the Construction Division has been successfully piloting a project using tablet computers in their Inspector Development Program. The devices will allow construction inspectors in the field to conveniently load a full construction plan set with embedded links to the specifications guide. They also give inspectors the ability to have testing requirements and training videos at their fingertips.

One of the device's best features for inspectors is the ability to use a video telephony software application that allows them to video chat from the project site back to the office. This allows inspectors to communicate directly with the project engineer and have the conversation displayed on the screen, observing the project in real time. In addition to this, they are using several applications to translate speech to text, enabling employees to upload notes into applications including one that quickly verifies volumes and heights of site objects.



Additionally, MiFi hot spots are wireless routers that provide open network connectivity for a laptop or tablet computer. MiFi stands for "My Wi-Fi" or "my wireless network." They provide Internet access for up to five Wi-Fi-enabled devices at a distance up to 30 feet.

These devices are best used by an employee or group of employees who travel frequently and need to connect to the Internet or the department's network. Instead of having the phone company provide communication facilities, a MiFi hot spot supplies quick, easy and cost-effective Internet access at a construction site.

MiFi hot spots and tablet computers have proven to be versatile tools that have useful functions within the agency. IOD continues to find ways to streamline IT administration products and services. The effort to educate employees about the benefits of these devices is one of many measures designed to decrease costs and maximize IT resources. 



PROUD MEMBER OF THE TXDOT FAMILY

When employees join TxDOT, it's not long before they hear someone refer to the department as a family. Employees can now show their TxDOT family pride in a visible way with "Proud Member of the TxDOT Family" stickers that are currently available.

Perhaps more than any other state agency, collaboration and commitment to quality are required to achieve our mission to provide safe and reliable transportation solutions. The work of the TxDOT family is essential to the economy of the state of Texas.

Deputy Executive Director John Barton suggested bringing the stickers back, which were part of the TxDOT culture in the 1990s, to emphasize the value of employees working together as a team.

"When you start working at TxDOT, you become part of the family," said Barton. "All of our agency's history is now your history, and we want you to feel that sense of pride."

According to Barton, that history includes our colleagues who go above and beyond each day.

"TxDOT employees are dedicated to the safety of the traveling public, they help Texans evacuate from dangerous hurricanes, they clear snow and ice from roads day and night, and they design and build the best transportation system in the nation," Barton said.

If you have not yet received a sticker, ask your supervisor for as many as you need.

"TxDOT has always promoted a family attitude," Barton said. "We have new faces around here, but we can all take pride in the service we deliver as a family." 

I AM A...

Landscape Architect

Pat Brinkman was raised in Hereford and graduated from Texas Tech University with a degree in landscape architecture. Brinkman joined TxDOT in January 2005 as the landscape architect and vegetation manager for the Amarillo District. Creating aesthetic spaces are important to him, however his number one joy is family life with his wife Denise and their four sons: Billy, Jonathan, Daniel and Taylor Paul.

WAS THERE A PIVOTAL MOMENT THAT LED TO YOUR CAREER?

As a youth, I was inspired by the beauty of nature. It made a deep impression on me. I believe as individuals, our minds are programmed for something great, but we must diligently seek it out. I almost missed the opportunity, but while a freshman at Tech, a good friend introduced me to the College of Park Administration and Landscape Architecture, which led to the career I have today.

WHAT ARE YOUR BIGGEST ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES?

My main role is to assist my district with aesthetic design and sustainable design knowledge. We plan for projects without sacrificing the natural land and construction resources — stated perfectly in the old Native American saying “Use them wisely.”

Known as sustainable design “system thinkers,” we also work with the Landscape Architecture and Vegetation Management Divisions. Vegetation loss due to natural disasters or construction practices increases runoff and erosion, the impact of severe droughts, floods and fires. The Texas Wildflower and Herbicide programs are very important in this respect. I have the best tools, processes and resources available to help prevent and restore future natural resource losses.

WHAT IS THE MOST INTERESTING ASPECT OF YOUR POSITION?

Helping TxDOT and the state of Texas look its best!

WHAT WAS THE MOST COMPELLING OR CHALLENGING PROJECT?

That would be the landscape enhancement project for the city of Canyon, located at the entrance to Canyon and West Texas A&M University on U.S. 87. The project was rewarding especially since the outcome was important to the citizens of Canyon. The site itself wasn't very appealing at first glance and envisioning anything of value or beauty was tough. But Lawrence Halprin, FASLA, one of America's greatest landscape architects stated, “Always design wisely and never let your personal, wasteful design attitude precede you.”

I began the design by re-studying his theory of design and qualifying processes. With the assistance of the Amarillo District engineering staff, the project became a beautiful reality. 



CANYON, TX PROJECT BEFORE

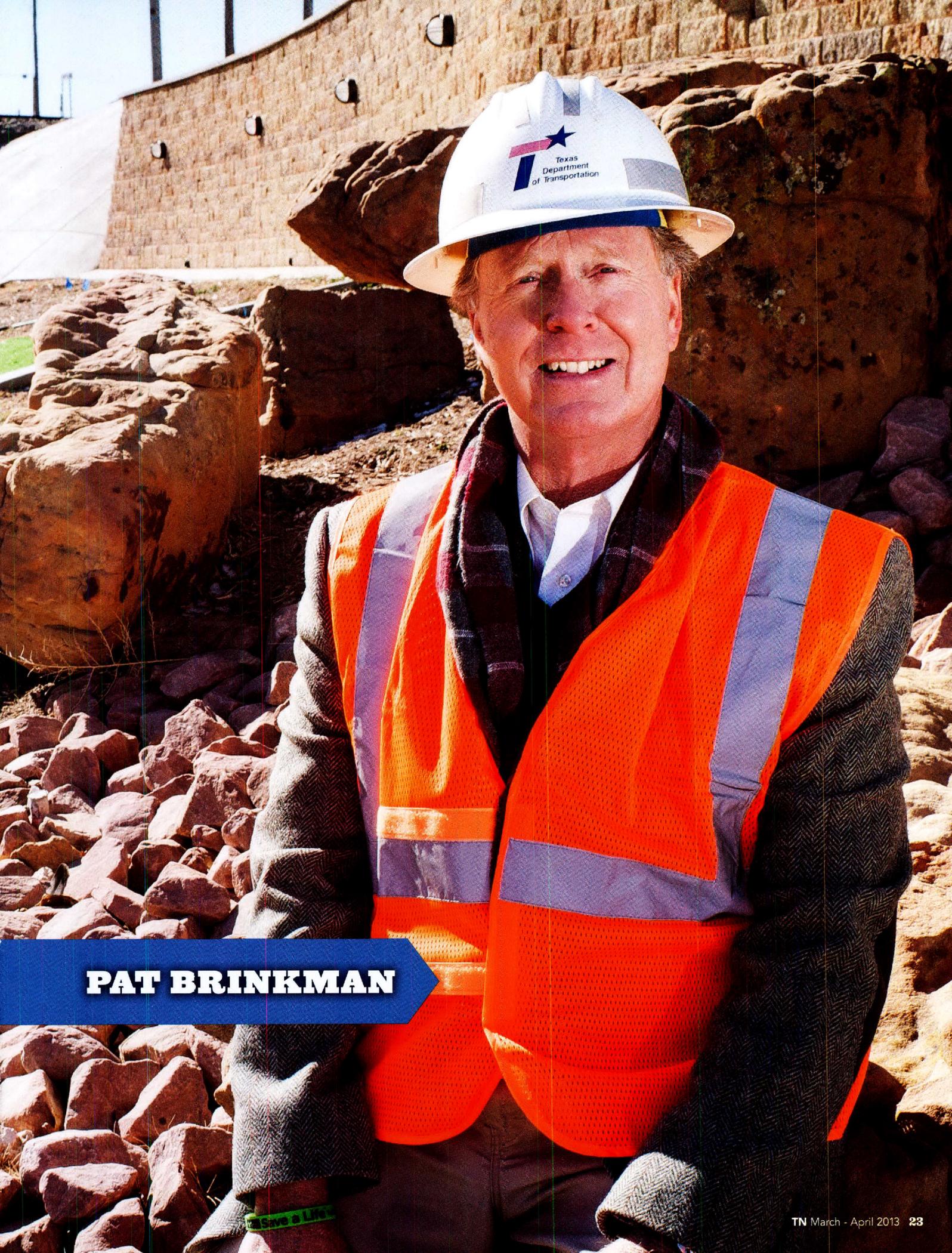


TxDOT photo



TxDOT photo

CANYON, TX PROJECT IN PROGRESS: PREPPING FOR SPRING PLANTING



PAT BRINKMAN

EMPLOYEE

Q&A

with Ricardo Gonzalez

What is a typical day on the job like for you at TxDOT?

My day involves a great deal of coordination between a lot of people to get the job done. I make sure city leaders and stakeholders are involved in work being done as well as provide information on future projects. I also ensure that everyone is putting safety first and handle issues as they crop up.

Steak sauce – a necessity or an abomination? I think it's an abomination. Sauces cover the flavor of the meat and are too sweet.

How does your district ensure safety is the top priority in everything you do? We make sure everyone understands safety is their responsibility and that they put safety as their first consideration in getting any job done.

If you could be anywhere in the world right now, where would it be? I'd be in Barcelona, Spain. I've always loved the culture and atmosphere I've read about. I thought I'd love to go on a running of the bulls. But, I don't believe I'm in good enough shape now for that, unless I'm watching from the sidelines.

What is your proudest TxDOT achievement? It's hard to pinpoint just one. However, I feel one of the biggest is working on our first comprehensive development agreement design/build project – the DFW Connector. I've coordinated with the developer and assured the best results through quality control and quality acceptance. I worked on that project for two years before moving to this job. The Connector is expected to be completed this summer, a year ahead of schedule.

When was the moment you realized you were a grown-up? I guess when everyone started calling me Mr. Gonzalez when I got this job.

What was the first car you ever owned? It was a 1997 Chevy Silverado truck I gave myself as a gift after I graduated Texas Tech.

Ricardo Gonzalez

North Tarrant County Area Engineer

Originally from El Paso, Ricardo Gonzalez is the North Tarrant County area engineer in the Fort Worth District. In 1997, he was awarded a TxDOT Conditional Grant, graduated from Texas Tech University with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering and began his career at TxDOT. Having served as a summer intern for two summers in the El Paso District, he went on to work for the district in a permanent position. He then moved to the Bridge Division and now works for the Fort Worth District. He and his wife Raquel have been married four years and live with their two dogs.

How many states have you visited, outside of Texas?

I've been to at least six, including Hawaii.

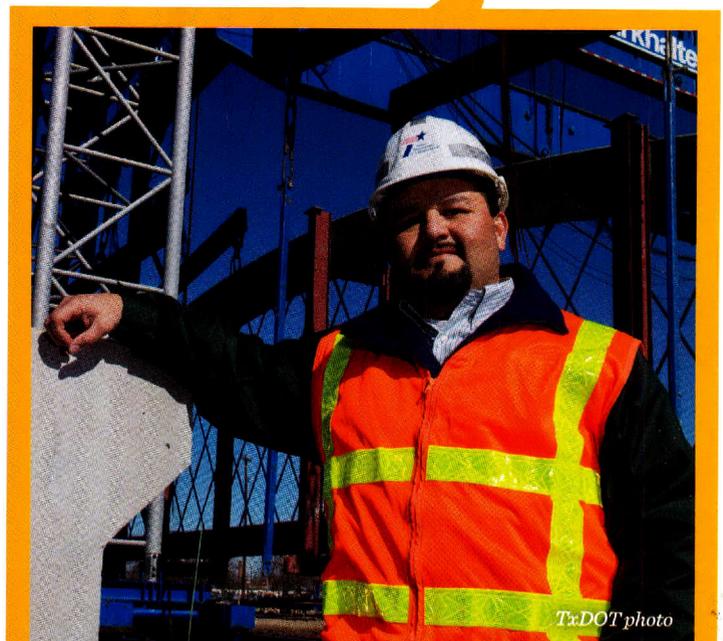
What is your district doing to be a responsible steward of state resources? We work to assure accountability and conservation of our materials. We also look for places we can improve through more efficient processes and procedures.

Chili – beans or no beans? This is really controversial in Texas. However, depending on the mood I like beans sometimes. I hope that doesn't offend anyone.

What did you want to be when you were a kid? My family used to joke, when I was younger, that I wanted to be a garbage collector because I hung off the cart at the supermarket. But, since high school, I can't remember wanting to be anything but a civil engineer. I think it's because my father was taking courses in architecture, and I found myself in civil engineering because I loved it so much.

In one word, describe what it means to be a TxDOT employee?

"Family." It's a part of our culture. We look out for one another. 



TxDOT photo

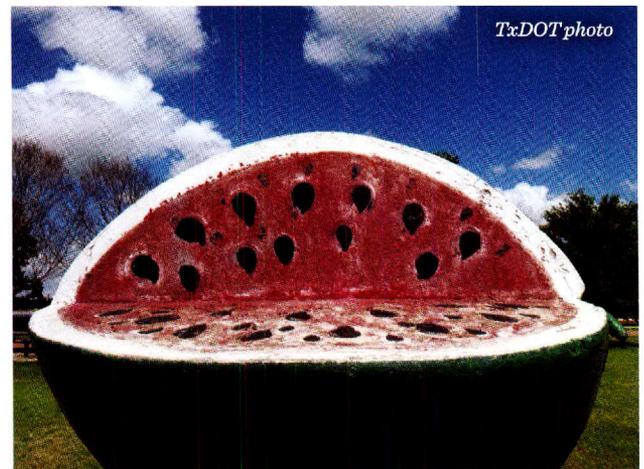
The Travel Information Division supplied this picture depicting an identifiable landmark you may have seen traveling around Texas. If you think you know what this is a photo of and/or where it was taken, contact Bill Powell at Bill.Powell@txdot.gov or (512) 463-8606. Deadline for guesses is March 29.



Identified:

Congratulations to our official first identifier: **Tracy Sult** of the Travel Information Division. She identified our picture of the Watermelon Statue at the city park in Dilley honoring their most important crop.

Other people correctly identifying the picture: Carmen Ramos (AUS); June Washington (BRG); Chris Cowen, Cozy Williams (BRY); Danny Williams (EWD); Ruben Aguillon (HRD); Kitty Powledge (RCN); Linda Williams (ROW); Melissa Romo (SAT) and Retiree Nino Villareal.



Keep Current with TxDOT's BLOG AND PODCAST

Have you had a chance to check out the recent discussion on the TxDOT Train of Thought blog? If you have, you've surely noticed our talented blog writers sharing opinions and thoughts about various topics ranging from big department initiatives to fun, heartwarming discussions. To participate in the blog, visit the Crossroads homepage.

TxDOT also produces the TxDOT Podcast, a series to keep you updated on the latest transportation news and issues. New podcast episodes are produced every Friday and are posted on www.txdot.gov and iTunes. Podcasts range from interviews with elected officials to discussions with experts from across the state and country.

Do you have an idea for a podcast or would you like to be one of our regular blog writers? We are looking for folks with interesting points of view that can add to our already diverse group of bloggers. Let us know by sending an email to AskTxDOT@txdot.gov. 

MILESTONES

January 2013 Service Awards



District:

Abilene

- 35** Mike D. Poteet
- 15** Ronda L. White
- 10** Michael E. Benson
Don M. Burns
David S. Flash
Matthew L. Pecoraro
- 5** Victor Enriquez

Amarillo

- 25** Frankie E. Watts
- 15** Mark J. Roberson
- 10** David L. Betts
Justin D. Lawrence
Richard N. McDonald
Janice M. Stafford
Sammy V. Tijerina
- 5** Pablo Ibarra

Atlanta

- 25** David K. Neshyba
- 10** Allen D. Screws
Patricia R. Womack
- 5** Billy R. Tant

Austin

- 20** Patricia A. Perez
- 10** David C. Drew
Andrew R. Wanees
- 5** William E. Bonnell
Charles E. Schmidt Jr.

Beaumont

- 15** Jerry D. Bevil

Brownwood

- 15** Eric L. Lykins
- 10** David E. Abbey
Jeffrey S. Walker
Danny R. Williams

Bryan

- 15** William A. Lockett
- 10** Clifford W. Dawson
Terry D. Green

Richard E. Mueck
Stephen P. Ramirez
Joel E. Withem

Childress

- 30** Gary J. Mizer
- 25** Michael A. Breedlove
- 20** Randy E. Martin
- 15** Charles B. Steed
- 10** Jeremy Beck
Phillip R. Gray
Jamie D. Talley

Corpus Christi

- 30** Ricky L. Littleton
- 20** Nolan W. Holik
- 10** Mirko Latkovic
Marcos Ybarra
- 5** Joseph D. Greive

Dallas

- 35** Vernon D. Raney
- 30** Douglas R. Brock
Mark H. Wiley
- 25** Richard J. Gehring
Mark S. Harlan
Michael A. Renfrow
- 20** Sunil N. Patel
- 15** Tony Carrillo
Charles W. Hedrick Jr.
- 10** Mickey G. Bennett
Oscar M. Chacon
Tze-How H. Hwang
Timothy L. Mask
Duane S. Milligan
Billy R. Moon II
Alvin E. Smith
- 5** Michael A. Speer
Omid Eghbal
Cameron C. Hurley
Marlena J. Kelly
Nancy G. Peron

El Paso

- 20** Jack B. Applegate
Leticia Delira
Avelardo Ponce

- 10** Jaime A. Gurrola
Betzabel Lagunas

Fort Worth

- 45** Gary L. Phillips
- 30** Maribel P. Chavez
- 25** Jacqueline C. Broussard
- 20** William B. Henry
John B. Ward
- 15** Jaime Aparicio
Stacy S. Clack
Alton M. Davis
Robert B. Degarmo
Domingo V. Rivas
Jimmy W. White
- 10** Bahman Afsheen
Hugo E. Alcaraz
Douglas W. Barnard
Casey L. Elliott
Abraham Jackson
Raul Orozco
Millard B. Sadler

Houston

- 30** Thomas W. Zahn
- 20** Glen E. Cardiff
Rudy R. Damian
David D. Nitsch
Gerald L. Roberson
- 15** Nghia H. Doan
Dawn M. McGee
- 10** Ronnie L. Carlisle
Emilio Z. Deleon
Jack H. Englishbey
Ronald L. Horelica
Matthew J. Listvan
Eusebio M. Tovar
- 5** Spencer E. Jackson
Jesus A. Maldonado

Laredo

- 15** Juan Galvan
- 10** Luis G. Padilla

Lubbock

- 20** Tommy J. Alexander
Ricky C. Lawrence

- 10** Roy Flores Jr.
Tanner L. Stansell
- 5** Justin D. Helton

Lufkin

- 20** Carolyn B. Wilson
- 15** Stephen D. Stovall
- 10** Ana I. Mijares
Adam C. Sharp
- 5** Sylvia L. Badeaux
Virgil P. Shelley

Odessa

- 30** Hipolito G. Rascon Jr.
- 20** Raul M. Tijerina
- 10** Armando P. Franco
Jack R. Vincent

Paris

- 20** Jeff F. Roberts
- 15** Jimmy E. Herrera
Pamela G. Stout
- 10** Jason G. Mendez
Timothy K. Sparks

Pharr

- 20** Jody R. Ellington
- 10** Jose Alonso Jr.
Omar X. De Leon
Mauricio Diaz
Cesar Guiza
Santiago Hernandez
Lorenzo Leal
Roy Martinez
Santiago G. Vargas

San Angelo

- 15** Gregory A. Baldwin
Jesus I. Ortegon
- 10** Jerry W. Hoggett

San Antonio

- 25** Gerardo Carmona
Christian G. Chambers
David A. Mata
- 15** Daryl M. Mahula
- 10** Michelle R. Barton
Marcus T. Carleton
Kevin F. Fries
Francis A. Schell Jr.

Tyler

- 15** Francis G. Matthews
Cindy H. Millichamp
- 10** Tommy L. Hilton

Waco

- 30** Billy J. Watson
- 20** Paul F. Cepak
David D. Deleon
Anton A. Lopour Jr.

- 15** Kenneth R. Mynarcik
David C. Pollard

Wichita Falls

- 20** Rodolfo Leal Jr.
- 15** Ricky D. Shook
- 10** Doreen V. Ostermann
Haven O. Roe

Yoakum

- 40** Robert J. Mozisek
- 30** Donald E. Templin
- 25** Martin D. Ryman
- 20** Tana B. Brewer
Robert J. Pustka
- 15** Pedro P. Rocha
- 10** Bradley E. Polasek

Division/ Office/Region:

Civil Rights

- 25** Mary Wells

Construction

- 30** Byron K. Kneifel
- 25** Dale A. Rand
Gervase J. Szalwinski Jr.
- 20** David Gallegos
- 15** Andy Naranjo

Design

- 30** Thomas D. Beeman

Environmental Affairs

- 5** Christopher W. Ringstaff

Finance

- 10** Maria Maldonado

General Services

- 20** Rebecca A. Lucas
- 10** Alfred O. Bachor
5 Lyon E. Harris

Human Resources

- 25** Lori J. Morgan
- 15** La Tonja M. Jackson

IT Customer Relations

- 25** Richard W. Bentley
- 20** Suzanne R. Blaschke
- 10** Paul A. Ratliff
5 Nghia T. Quan

IT Operations

- 30** Keith R. Layton
- 10** Robert C. Gee
Darrell J. Thames

IT Services

- 40** Wayman H. Finch
- 10** Christopher L. Bunton
Zheng Huang
- 5** Steven M. Williams

Maintenance

- 20** Mark A. Morales

Project Management

- 25** Gabriel E. Flores

Rail

- 10** David C. McKinney

Right Of Way

- 25** Jesse R. Cooper
- 10** Laura M. Riley

Regional Support Center East

- 10** Syed M. Omar

Regional Support Center North

- 10** Kethenus T. Dixon
Carl S. Miller

Regional Support Center South

- 30** Donald L. Jirkovsky
- 10** Adolfo Garza
David M. Herbel
Ricardo Lopez
Daniel J. Muehlstein
Chad M. Shelton

Regional Support Center West

- 15** Susan I. Lassiter
- 10** Imelda Burch

Right of Way

- 25** Jesse R. Cooper
- 10** Laura M. Riley

Strategic Projects

- 25** Alvin D. Meyer

Transportation Planning & Programming

- 25** Catherine L. Wolff
- 10** Michelle L. Couden
5 Jennifer L. Sylvester

In the Sept./Oct. issue George W. Thornhill Jr. of the Atlanta District, retired in June 2010, was listed as completed 20 years of service, but it should have been 29.

MILESTONES

February 2013 Service Awards



Abilene

- 30** Blair W. Haynie
- 15** Gay N. Bradley
Jovelina R. Guerrero

Amarillo

- 25** Ronald A. Herr
- 20** Harold R. Bedell
Devin W. Cowart
- 15** Warren E. Miller
Janet A. Williams
- 10** Kevin W. Buranakitipinyo
- 5** Clayton H. Thompson

Atlanta

- 30** James G. Joslin
- 20** Randell E. Deloach
- 10** William Z. Kennedy

Austin

- 30** Miguel A. Ruiz
- 25** William W. Benningfield
John D. Murray
Robert E. Parker
- 15** James R. Williams
- 10** Jon L. Geiselbrecht
- 5** Joe Jimenez

Beaumont

- 15** Ruby A. Behannon
- 10** Sam B. Dowden
James D. Matlock
Ronald L. Murrell
Erik D. Salles

Brownwood

- 20** Lucinda F. Chesnut
- 15** Trey M. Rust
Micah N. Shaw

Bryan

- 30** John O. Page Jr.
- 25** Robert A. Appleton
- 15** Claude A. Cash

- 10** Phillip L. Douglas
Jennifer R. Trowbridge
- 5** John P. Katzenberger

Childress

- 30** Larry A. Davis
- 20** Mary Y. Marshall

Corpus Christi

- 25** Jesse G. Aguilar
- 20** Ricardo F. Benavides
Solomon P. Kahookooe
- 15** Leslie E. Crayton
Brian L. McKenna

Dallas

- 25** Joseph S. Jancuska
Suja G. Mathew
George B. Reeves
- 20** Jerry A. Dickerson Jr.
Fraydoon A. Nafissi
- 15** James R. Brand
- 10** Joseph J. Hunt
Brady A. Thornton
Tia R. Vaughan
- 5** Gretchen L. Zuvanich

El Paso

- 20** Roberto J. Cardona
Pete A. Cereceres
Larry A. Delgado
Thomas A. Murphy
Roberto R. Ramirez
Rogelio Valencia
- 10** Jose R. Hernandez
- 5** Rebecca Reyes

Fort Worth

- 25** Gordon C. Abbott
Kenneth R. Long
- 20** John F. Cordary Jr.
Jerry W. Hunter Jr.
Mayra R. Mitchell
Robert A. Spurlock

- 15** Edrean Cheng

Houston

- 30** Sharlene A. Rothen
Thomas J. Whitaker
- 15** Sabas U. Cagubcub
- 10** Steven C. Brock
Cristela M. Navarro
- 5** Carrie L. Richard
Henry E. Smith Jr.
Rita M. Thomas-Carrier
Hongmei Wang

Laredo

- 25** Mauro Galvan Jr.
Manuel Jaime Jr.
- 15** Juan A. Reyna Jr.
- 10** Pedro I. Gutierrez
Marco A. Ortega

Lubbock

- 30** John M. Craig
- 20** Richard L. Hutton
- 10** Dale A. Ballew
Michael De La Cruz
Roel F. Jimenez
Juan J. Rivera
Kendra E. Rodriguez

Lufkin

- 15** Anthony G. Fuller

Odessa

- 20** Saul Acosta
- 15** Gaylon C. Windham
- 5** Timothy M. Beckling
Samuel J. Willberg

Paris

- 30** Curtis M. Long
- 20** John R. Noe Jr.
Tom G. Roest
- 15** William E. Fesperman
James E. Lewis

10 Dana L. Speed

Pharr

25 Benito Campos Jr.

San Angelo

25 Terry J. Martin

10 Michael E. Vanwinkle

San Antonio

25 Alfredo V. Alvizo
William L. Capeheart

15 Jeffrey W. Smith
Troy D. Witt

10 David L. Ablin
Kevin A. Kotara

Tyler

15 Juanita L. Daniels-West
J P. Garcia

James M. Massey
Sheryl S. McQuitty
John L. Powell

10 Georgia N. Eades

Waco

15 Brian W. Lamb

10 Susan J. Neumann
5 Steven D. Starnes

Wichita Falls

25 Jon P. Leary
James R. Shelton

Yoakum

25 Barbara J. Barton

20 Ernest Trevino

5 James Q. Joines

**Division/
Office/Region:**

Administration

10 Jennifer L. Crosby

Aviation

20 Greg L. Miller

Bridge

15 Scott T. Dziekan

10 Jamie F. Farris

Communications

5 Raquelle R. Lewis
Mark J. Pettit

Construction

30 Karl J. Janak

20 Claudia F. Kern

Design

30 Howard J. Nelson

10 Jason A. Pike

Environmental Affairs

20 Donald W. Hill

Finance

25 Brad E. Gatlin

20 Connie D. Chesshire

15 Leigh A. Greer
Delilah M. Hernandez

General Services

30 Joseph D. Santos

10 Gracie Saucedo

5 Emilio R. Hernandez III

Human Resources

20 Catherine M. Hostetler

10 Lazara L. Hepburn

IT Customer Relations

25 Bryan C. Davis

20 Victor A. Martinez

10 John P. Ramirez

IT Operations

25 Jerry R. Jones

15 Jeffrey W. McCoy

IT Services

20 William D. Gee

Noreen K. Ozment
Billy E. Snyder

Occupational Safety

35 Mary M. Marciel

20 Austin Taylor Klotz

**Regional Support
Center North**

10 Shannon D. DeMoss

**Regional Support
Center South**

15 Matt D. Jordan

10 Japheth Suarez

Right Of Way

15 Linda S. Morgan-Doss

Larry D. Wann

Strategic Projects

15 Diana L. Jackson

Traffic Operations

30 Shirley J. Ashbrook

**Transportation Planning
& Programming**

25 Angie R. Gardner

**UPCOMING
TxDOT
EVENTS**

March 28

Texas Transportation
Commission Meeting
(Austin)

March 29

Good Friday
(Skeleton Crew Day)

April 25

Texas Transportation
Commission Meeting
(Austin)

Retiree Report November 2012



District:

Abilene

15 Judy M. Kazda

Amarillo

24 Brenda P. Lowe

Austin

30 Timothy J. Weight
28 Steven O. Sylvester
26 Blake A. Dommert

Brownsville

15 Randy G. Moran

Bryan

31 Michael M. Bahm
26 J. T. Anthis Jr.

Dallas

30 Roland Paredez
22 James L. Hood
20 Vickie K. Hodges

Fort Worth

25 Joe M. Woodard

Houston

32 Sara E. Moreno
31 Milton J. Lopez Jr.
28 Michael G. Rayne
27 David B. Vinson
16 James D. Worchesik

Laredo

31 Jaime G. Ledesma

Paris

5 Denise C. Robinson

San Angelo

35 Conrad J. Hillert
26 Myles S. Theis
16 Enrique C. Escobar

Waco

18 Robert G. Lund
16 Mary L. Howell

Division/ Office/Region:

Construction

27 Thomas C. Jennings Jr.

Federal Affairs

19 Agustin De La Rosa

Finance

13 Charlotte L. Holweger

General Services

16 Charles W. Neyland

Retiree Report December 2012



District:

Amarillo

26 David A. Davis

Atlanta

19 Aubrey G. Hill

Austin

22 Hazel B. Reinert

Beaumont

23 Paul A. Smith

Bryan

25 Jessie M. Glover

Childress

28 Phyllis A. Mills
27 James L. Bettis

Corpus Christi

27 Irenio Martinez

Dallas

30 Andrew L. Wilhite

El Paso

24 Lazaro T. Tarango

Fort Worth

27 Kum S. Ho
26 Oscar R. Chavez
14 Teddy R. Phillips

Houston

31 Don W. Brotherton
28 Fred E. Farnham
27 Luis E. De Los Santos
27 Clifford W. Halvorsen
10 Stephen V. Lowery

Laredo

31 Ricardo E. Pena
11 Francisco G. Rodriguez

Lubbock

30 Floyd D. Baldwin

Odessa

28 Miguel L. Erives

San Angelo

33 Ricardo Martinez

San Antonio

26 Aloys J. Dziuk
14 Ronald A.
Johanningsmeier

Tyler

30 David P. Frick

Waco

30 Marvin R. Pankonien
26 Rex L. Reid
20 Leslie W. Thompson
17 Kenneth R. Burke

Yoakum

29 Guadalupe Gomez Jr.
29 Rodney G. Strait

Division/ Office/Region:

Administration

14 Madalyn G. Marabella

Communications

18 Penny L. Mason
10 Richard L. Williams

Contract Services

12 Diana W. Dodd

Finance

23 Jane Gray

General Services

12 Nancy A. Keosayian

IT Services

28 Thelma Garcia
25 Roland B. Merz Jr.

Strategic Projects

29 Denise J. Baxter

Regional Support Center West

24 Regan T. McNeely

Travel Information

29 Tonji B. Thomas
24 Russell W. Haas

IT Customer Relations

28 Debora K. Zamorano

IT Operations

29 Paula H. Brown

IT Services

31 George M. Shields

Maintenance

8 Curtis Childers

Regional Support Center East

27 Arlee G. Boring

Regional Support Center West

10 Gary M. Love

District:

Bryan

Thomas S. Berger
Maintenance Technician
Years of Service: 35
Retired: 1990
DOD: 1/10/2013

El Paso

David W. Lewis
Maintenance Section Supervisor
Years of Service: 25
Retired: 1988
DOD: 12/3/2012

Guillermo "Bill" Dutchover Jr.

Roadway Maintenance Technician
Years of Service: 30
Retired: 1979
DOD: 1/8/2013

Fort Worth

Robert W. Nobles
Maintenance Technician
Years of Service: 36
Retired: 1987
DOD: 12/30/2012

J. W. Renfro

Traffic Engineer
Years of Service: 30
Retired: 1987
DOD: 1/9/2013

Houston

William H. Davis Jr.
Maintenance Specialist V
Years of Service: 6
DOD: 12/13/2012

Delbert W. Aldredge

Maintenance Section Supervisor
Years of Service: 19
DOD: 1/22/2013

In Memoriam

Yoakum

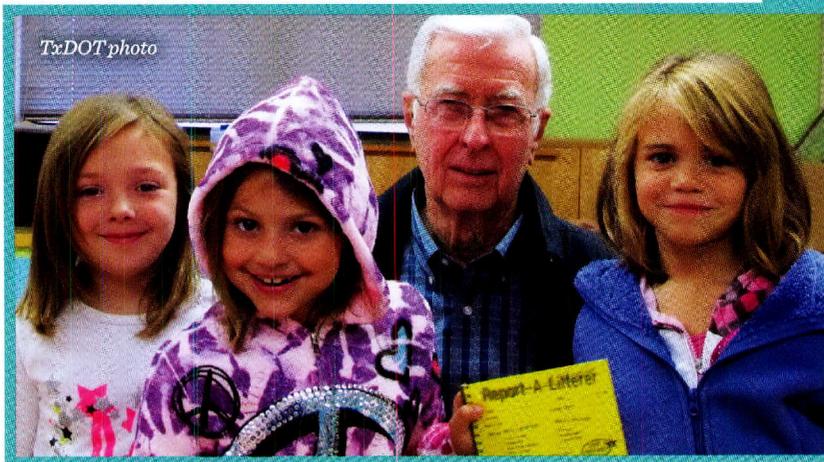
Elgin F. Shupak
Austin County Maintenance
Years of Service: 29
Retired: 1987
DOD: 4/2012

Division/ Office/Region:

GSD

Howard C. "Mickey" Cochran Jr.
Staff Services Section Director
Years of Service: 38
Retired: 2001
DOD: 12/22/2012

Where are they now?



Bobby Evans visited Fort Concho Elementary School on Nov. 13 to talk with first and second graders about litter and why he helped start the Adopt-a-Highway Program.

TV, newspapers and magazines devote time and space frequently to detailing where celebrities have gone and what they're doing today.

At TxDOT our celebrities are the retired workers and administrators who have made our agency what it is today. This feature highlights people who have faded from sight but not from our memories.

Bobby Evans retired as Tyler District engineer in 1995 after 40 years of service. Evans was a co-creator of TxDOT's Adopt-a-Highway (AAH) program which began in 1985 on a two-mile stretch of U.S. 69 just north of Tyler. The AAH program currently involves 90,000 groups in 49 states and several foreign countries.

These days he enjoys spending time with his wife Billie Jean in San Angelo. His daughter Susan is an attorney in Fort Worth, and his son Mark works for TxDOT in Austin.

Luis A. Ramirez retired in 2005 after 30 years with TxDOT and served as the first Laredo District engineer from 1991 until retirement. He was also the youngest district engineer appointed at that time.

The first state-owned toll road, the Camino Columbia Toll Road or SH 255, came into being in his district under his supervision.

He's currently employed as facilities manager at the Diocese of Laredo. He enjoys ranching and is working on visiting every state in the union.

If there's a retiree you think might be a noteworthy subject for "Where Are They Now?" please send an email to Bill Powell at Bill.Powell@txdot.gov or call him at (512) 463-8606.

Please include a contact phone number for the person you want to recommend. Also include the district and what the individual did while at TxDOT.

With your help, maybe your favorite former TxDOT employee will be in our next issue. 📞



125 E. 11th St.
Austin, Texas 78701

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TN Online (TxDOT computers only):
<http://crossroads/>



Barbara before the wellness program.

WATCH THE RESULTS OF WELLNESS

A LIFE-CHANGING PROGRAM AT WORK.

I'm Barbara Brown, human resources specialist and wellness coordinator in the El Paso District, and this is my journey to wellness.

Everything may be bigger in Texas, but that's definitely not always a good thing, especially in regard to the current obesity problem in our country. The city of El Paso currently ranks in the Top 10 Fattest Cities on several polls. It must be all that good Mexican food we have out here!

The El Paso District is doing something to combat this problem. As part of the department's new wellness initiative, it started a Weight Watchers at Work program one year ago. The great news: the 24 employees that have participated have lost a total of more than 300 pounds.

The way it works is simple: our Weight Watchers representative visits district headquarters every Wednesday during the lunch hour and weighs each participant privately with a calibrated scale. Afterward, she gives the group a 30- to 40-minute class while they eat lunch.

As the wellness coordinator for the El Paso District, I set up the program at the request of one of our employees, but did not personally join until the second session when I saw how well some of my co-workers were doing. I'm now in my fourth 12-week session, have lost more than 25 pounds and cannot believe how easy it has been.

Weight Watchers is not just a weight-loss program — it's a lifestyle change. I have learned about nutrition, portion control, activating my life, transforming my habits, I could go on and on. These are all things I will use for the rest of my life, helping me maintain my new look as long as I continue to follow them.

Losing weight has made me look and feel better, and I have more energy. I'm a more productive and healthier employee — the reason why workplaces are now adding wellness programs. And I, for one, am glad TxDOT is one of those places! 

TxDOT photo



Barbara after losing weight in the wellness program.

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

