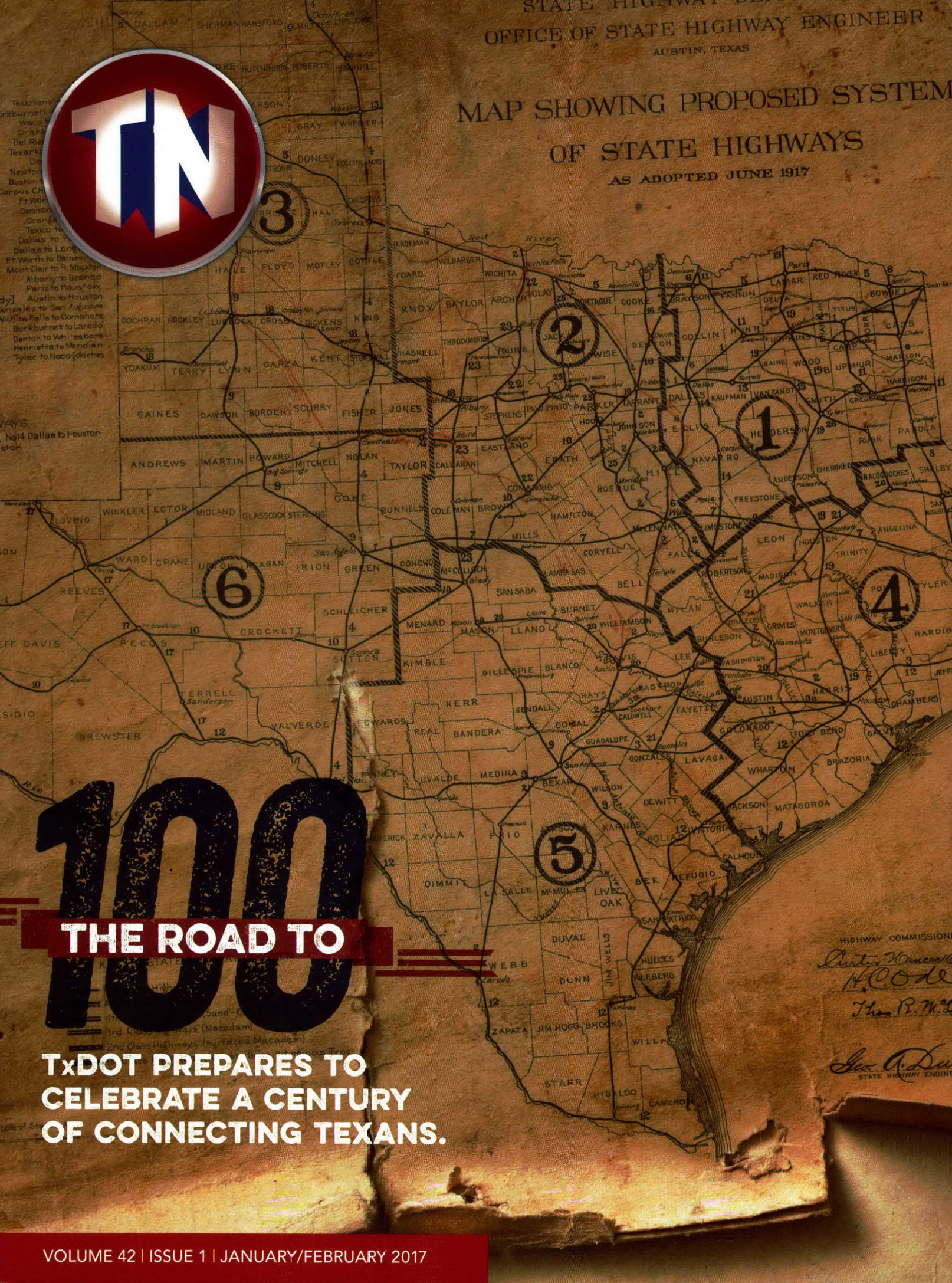


MAP SHOWING PROPOSED SYSTEM
OF STATE HIGHWAYS
AS ADOPTED JUNE 1917



100

THE ROAD TO

**TxDOT PREPARES TO
CELEBRATE A CENTURY
OF CONNECTING TEXANS.**

HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER
Arthur W. H. Code
THOS. P. W. L.
Geo. P. Davis
STATE HIGHWAY ENGINEER



JAMES BASS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As you've noticed by the cover, TxDOT is marking its 100th year of service to Texans. And throughout the year, in the pages of this magazine, in our districts and at other TxDOT-sponsored events, we'll be paying tribute to our department and our employees, and highlighting some of our accomplishments.

Even from the first day this agency was signed into law – April 4, 1917 – we were destined to leave an indelible mark on Texas – and the nation.

The department was created at a time when the state's system of roadways was, to put it mildly in rough shape. Most roads served local areas and needs, and were so bad that one turn-of-the-century Bell County farmer lamented, "Come to Texas if you want to see good roads. Good and rough, good and muddy."

Add to the mix Congress financial can't giving federal aid to states if they created "an organized, expert engineering agency," and Texas was on its way to a state highway department.

Just a few months after the ink dried on the bill that created the highway department, we were in business – with 10 employees, including three

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS!

division-engineers-at-large (today, we call them district engineers) setting up shop in Mount Pleasant, Abilene and Austin.


Back then, the Highway Commission's first order of business was to establish an 8,800-mile network of state highways. Task two for the newly minted department: to take care of statewide vehicle registration, the fee for which was 35 cents per horsepower.

Turn the page to 2017. Today, more than 11,900 employees in 25 districts are in service to the citizens of Texas. And the 8,000 miles of roads that were under our purview have increased to 195,000 lane miles.

Even our responsibilities have grown. While vehicle registration has been passed to our sister agency, the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles, we now manage the state-owned aircraft fleet, support public transportation and general aviation, control a state-owned railroad and oversee rail planning and safety, operate ferries and support the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway.

I think that says something about the caliber of the employees who've passed through our doors over the years. We don't just get Texans to and from their homes or schools or jobs. We've been entrusted with the lives and livelihoods of millions of our neighbors.

We have a lot to be proud of. But let's never forget that what we have accomplished was built on a foundation established by the employees who came before us. And it's our job to continue the legacy for the men and women who will usher in the next 100 years of this agency.

Happy anniversary and here's to our next great century. 



TN MAGAZINE

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2017

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

Bob Kaufman

COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION DIRECTOR

Jess Blackburn

EXECUTIVE AND EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR/EDITOR

Brent Dollar

MANAGING EDITOR

Shannon McIntire

ASSISTANT MANAGING EDITORS

Phyllis Chandler-Gordon

Kelly Matthis

FEATURE WRITERS

Tracey Lamphere

CONTRIBUTORS

Michael Amador

Wendy Arias

Dianah Ascencio

Andrew Carlson

Sonja Gross

Julie Kelly

Val Lopez

Tim McAlavy

Rhonda Oaks

Kelli Reyna

Sarah Stroman

Karen Threlkeld

Darah Waldrip

Kathi White

PHOTOGRAPHY

TxDOT and

GDC Marketing & Ideation

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CONTACT TN EDITOR

Have questions or

comments about TN?

Email TNideas@txdot.gov

and include "TN Editor"

in the subject line.

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8 ON THE COVER

A map of proposed highways from 1917 gives a look at the early beginnings of what would become the Texas Department of Transportation. *Photo courtesy of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission.*

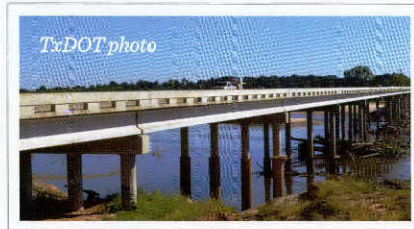
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5

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW RIGHT NOW

1 **Forum in February**

The Texas Transportation Forum will be held Feb. 5 - 7 at the J.W. Marriott in Austin. The Forum brings together transportation leaders and advocates, industry innovators and government policy makers to discuss the state of transportation. Visit www.dot.state.tx.us/ttf/ for more information.

2 **Smith named director of Transportation Planning and Programming Division**

Peter Smith was named director of the Transportation Planning and Programming Division in October. Smith started his career with TxDOT in 1981, as an engineering technician in the Houston District. He later became director of Hydraulic Design in the Design Division. Smith joined the private sector in 1997, working as a transportation consultant around the world. He holds a bachelor's degree in engineering from the University of Bradford in England and a master's degree in civil engineering from The University of Texas at Austin.

3

Top 100 congested roads in Texas

The Texas A&M Transportation Institute released a list of the top 100 congested roads in Texas in September. Houston's I-610 West Loop between I-10 and U.S. 59 topped the list, while I-35 through downtown Austin dropped to second place. Texans living in metropolitan areas lose approximately two hours and \$1,200 annually due to congestion. For more information on what TxDOT is doing about congestion, visit TexasClearLanes.com.


4

New Americans with Disabilities Act program administrator

Juanita "Nita" J. Webber is the new American's with Disabilities Act Compliance program administrator within the Civil Rights Division. Webber is a graduate of the University of Houston and Thurgood Marshall School of Law. She has 25 years' experience working with the American with Disabilities Act in many different industries, including human resources, finance and education. She has worked as a trusted ADA accessibility consultant, legal consultant and human resources leader. Webber will support districts, divisions and administrative leadership with up-to-date information on current accessibility requirements to ensure everyone is afforded an equal opportunity to employment, participation, benefits, services and contracts. *See the March/April issue of TN for more on Webber.*

5

State Employee Charitable Campaign a success

The 2016 State Employee Charitable Campaign raised more than \$200,000 by its end on Oct. 31. TxDOT employees had a variety of special events across Texas to raise donations. Events included fairs, chili cook-offs, horseshoe and domino tournaments and silent auctions. There were even Halloween costume contests and a pie-throwing contest. One-time donations and special events raised an additional \$35,000. Thank you to everyone who participated and gave to a great cause. 



READERS TELL US

TN MAGAZINE READER SURVEY RESULTS

At its heart, TN Magazine is a news publication, illuminating the work of our team members across the state, while bringing you important information. Key pillars of our mission are making this as accessible and as relatable as possible to our readership.

That was the focus of a recent reader survey, conducted to provide employee feedback that helps the Communications Division plan and improve the content that is featured in TN Magazine.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the survey.

WHAT YOU WANT TO SEE MORE OF:



Photos

56%



District News

47%



Employee Updates

46%



Featured Articles

41%



HR Updates

33%



Project Updates

30%

HOW YOU PREFER TO READ TN:

TABLET/SMART PHONE

2%

.PDF FILE

5%

INTERNET

(TXDOT.GOV)

10%

INTRANET

(CROSSROADS)

33%

HARD COPY

47%

READERSHIP

TN readership is back up to 84%, the highest level since the first survey in 2012 (84%). Also, the same percentage of readers believe TN adequately covers TxDOT's departments, districts and divisions statewide, the highest number to date. And the recently upgraded online publication software influenced 20% of readers to say it increased their online readership.

AROUND THE STATE

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

AMARILLO

I-40 bridges get rebuilt

TxDOT began work this fall on a project that will make major improvements to bridges on I-40 in Amarillo. The \$36.2 million project will completely rebuild the bridges located at the Ross Osage Drive and Arthur Avenue intersections.




Work has begun on I-40 in Amarillo to completely rebuild the bridges located at the Ross Osage Drive and Arthur Avenue intersections.



“We know this project is going to affect a lot of motorists,” said Randy Hochstein, Amarillo area engineer. “The scope of the work — complete reconstruction of bridges on a busy interstate highway — is a huge task, but our goal is to make sure we get the work done in the safest and most efficient way possible.”

While traffic may be reduced to one lane in each direction for brief periods, plans call for keeping two lanes of traffic in each direction open throughout construction. Motorists should anticipate slow-moving traffic and delays once construction begins.

“Construction is set up to be done in phases, but work to rebuild the bridges at both locations will be done at the same time,” Hochstein said. “Improvements to entrance and exit ramps, including the eastbound ramp connecting to U.S. 87, are also part of the project.”

The project is anticipated to be completed in spring 2018. 

TYLER

George Richey Road Extension opens in Tyler District


Last October, TxDOT and its partners opened to traffic a portion of the FM 2275/George Richey Road Extension in the Tyler District with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The event was held at the intersection of George Richey Road and Mickey Melton Boulevard in Longview’s North Business Park and highlighted the completion of the first segment of the \$34.3 million project.

The George Richey Road Extension is being constructed in two phases as a new four-lane divided highway from U.S. 259 to SH 300 with a continuous center-turn lane. It includes dedicated bicycle lanes in the shoulders, as well as sidewalks on the south side of the new roadway. The project adds a long-awaited and necessary east/west thoroughfare into the area that will ease congestion, improve safety and yield economic benefits.

October marked the completion of Phase I from U.S. 259 westward to McCann Road which began in April 2014. Construction continues on Phase II from McCann Road westward to SH 300/Gilmer Road. Work started last summer with an anticipated opening in 2018.

The project is funded through a transportation partnership between the Longview Metropolitan Planning Organization, the City of Longview, Gregg County, the Longview Economic Development Corporation and TxDOT.

“Local elected officials and leaders saw a transportation need that has regional significance and found a way to address it,” said Tyler District Engineer Dennis R. Cooley. “Without the partnership, this project would still be years down the road.”

When completed, the FM 2275/George Richey Road Extension will add approximately 4 miles of new roadway to the area’s transportation system. 



A portion of the FM 2275/George Richey Road Extension in the Tyler District opened to traffic in October. A biking tour on the new road was one of the highlights of the ribbon-cutting event.




Groundbreaking for SH 199 project in Azle

Last October, the Fort Worth District broke ground on the \$56 million SH 199 project, which will complete a 3-mile section of SH 199 in Azle.

The project is adding six freeway lanes (three in each direction), ramps and three bridges. Texas Transportation Commissioner J. Bruce Bugg Jr., with North Texas officials, broke ground on the project that will improve mobility and safety on an important Tarrant County corridor.

The project is being funded as part of the \$1.3 billion Congestion Relief Initiative. The SH 199 project will improve mobility and drive times in northwest Tarrant County.

The project is estimated for completion in 2019 



FORT WORTH




Local and state officials move dirt on the SH 199 project in the Fort Worth District: (l to r) James Bass, TxDOT executive director; Kristin Vandergriff, district director for U.S. Rep. Kay Granger; Patrick Jacob, mayor of Lakeside; Alan Brundrett, mayor of Azle; State Rep. Charlie Geren; Texas Transportation Commissioner J. Bruce Bugg Jr.; Tarrant County Commissioner J.D. Johnson; Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley; Bill Jones, mayor pro tem of Azle; and Brian Barth, Fort Worth district engineer.

Yarrington Road bridge completed in Austin District

In October of last year, TxDOT joined Hays County Precinct 2 Commissioner Mark Jones, Hays County Precinct 4 Commissioner Ray Whisenant, officials from the cities of San Marcos and Kyle and the community as they celebrated the completion of the I-35 at Yarrington Road bridge replacement and improvement project with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The \$12.2 million project replaced the previous narrow bridge at Yarrington Road with a new, six-lane bridge structure with sidewalks and new U-turn bridges in both directions. The project also converted the two-way frontage roads to one-way frontage roads and realigned and widened segments of the I-35 frontage roads.

Work on the project began in June 2014. The contractor was OHL USA Inc. 

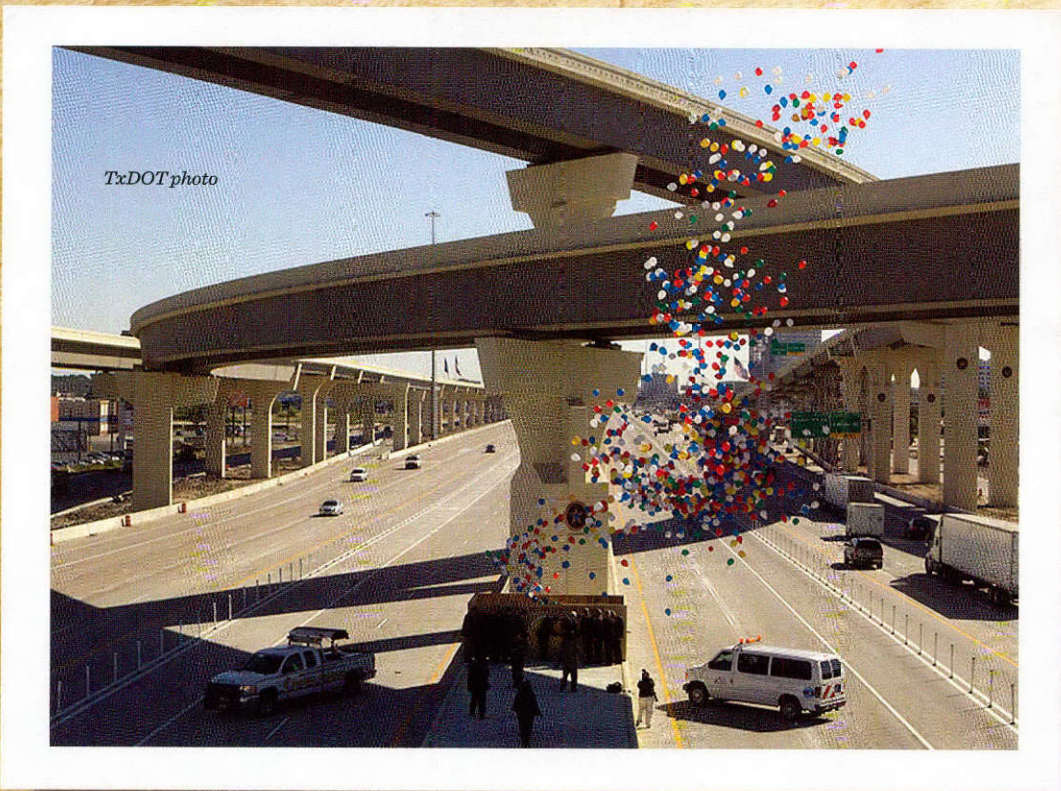


AUSTIN



Officials celebrate the completion of the I-35 at Yarrington Road bridge replacement and improvement project with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

A TEXAS-SIZED CELEBRATION: 100 YEARS OF TRANSPORTATION



TxDOT photo

As TxDOT celebrates 100 years of serving the people of Texas, we'll look back at the agency's history, such as the opening of the Katy Freeway expansion in Houston in 2008 shown here.

THIS YEAR TxDOT COMMEMORATES ITS 100-YEAR ANNIVERSARY.

While efforts to create a state highway agency began in the early 1900s, it was not until April 4, 1917, that Gov. James E. Ferguson signed House Bill 2 of the 35th Legislature that the Texas Highway Department was born. That bill became effective on June 4, and as they say, the rest is history.

On June 4, the State Highway Commission held its first official meeting. The first order of business was a motion by Commissioner H.C. Odle that George A. Duren be appointed as state highway engineer. Duren was chosen and his salary set at \$5,000 a year.

A few weeks later, the commission held its first public hearing in Mineral Wells and invited delegations from the counties. The main office of the department began operations in July.

Texas was the 45th state in the union at that time to create a State Highway Department. The year 1917 began a long and stellar history for what was to become the leading transportation department in the nation.

During these 100 years, tens of thousands of Texans have dedicated countless hours to connecting farms and ranches to markets, and creating the modern realities of multi-lane metropolitan highways. We've devoted a century to connecting Texans to what matters most. In other words, we've come a long way.

TxDOT's dedicated employees have accomplished too much to celebrate on just one day, or even one month. Instead, we're celebrating for an entire year.

But planning a celebration this big won't be easy and the work began early. The Centennial Celebration Planning Committee was created last year to help the department celebrate its history and honor employee contributions. The committee consists of a steering committee and ten subcommittees that include representatives from each TxDOT district and division.

The steering committee is made up of members of the Commission, Administration, the Communications Division and an external advisory group. The subcommittees

are history, partnerships, media, procurement, volunteerism, state and federal relations, logistics, branding, education and time capsule. Each subcommittee has been busy working on significant contributions to the centennial efforts being guided by the steering committee.

The centennial celebrations kickoff at the 2017 Texas Transportation Forum in Austin, Feb. 5-7. A centennial exhibit will be set up in the Texas State Capitol Extension in April. It will feature historical engineering tools, surveying artifacts and other significant items of interest. In addition, state and federal legislative resolutions will be introduced to commemorate the anniversary.

Plans are also underway for a centennial exhibit at the Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin. Many historical items will be on display along with a written history of the department.


In addition, TN Magazine will publish a special centennial issue

this summer.

Districts are also planning events. They will be hosting exhibits, forums and discussions highlighting some of TxDOT's most important work.

A focal point of the centennial events will be a refurbished TxDOT Liberty Truck that will become part of a traveling exhibit. The Liberty Trucks were originally United States Army vehicles used in World War I. After the war, the army gave away surplus trucks and TxDOT received more than 1,000 vehicles.

Please join us at one or more of these events to honor our history and legacy. We have been fortunate to serve Texans for more than 100 years. Let's take a few minutes to say thank you and celebrate this accomplishment.

For more information on all these events, please go to Crossroads or follow all the centennial happenings on Twitter at #TxDOT100. 



PARIS DISTRICT TEAM WINS AWARD FOR STATE HIGHWAY 37 BRIDGE

For a couple of years now, motorists have enjoyed a new “gateway” bridge across the Red River between scenic southeastern Oklahoma and historic Red River County in Northeast Texas.

Construction on the SH 37 bridge across the Red River began in February 2013 and is now considered complete, thanks to a team of TxDOT professionals based in the Paris District and contractor Austin Bridge and Road LP. Coming in early and under the \$14.5 million budget earned the team a 2016 Texas Project Award.

The Texas Project Awards were created by the Association of General Contractors and TxDOT to honor industry professionals whose work distinguishes them for upholding the special cooperative spirit it takes to complete complex transportation projects and solve difficult problems.

In 2016 the awards honored Dan Perry, assistant area engineer in the Paris District, and his SH 37 bridge team for their cooperation, collaboration and engineering skills.

The SH 37 bridge team includes his wife, Ellen Perry, a transportation and maintenance engineer; Troy Scholl and Richard Floyd, construction inspectors; Randy Floyd, materials and process inspector; and Shari Coker, construction record keeper.

“Ellen designed the bridge so it can be lengthened in the future if need be,” Perry said. “She worked closely with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in getting the design done. Our team also worked closely with the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Lots of agreements were in play to get the bridge done.”

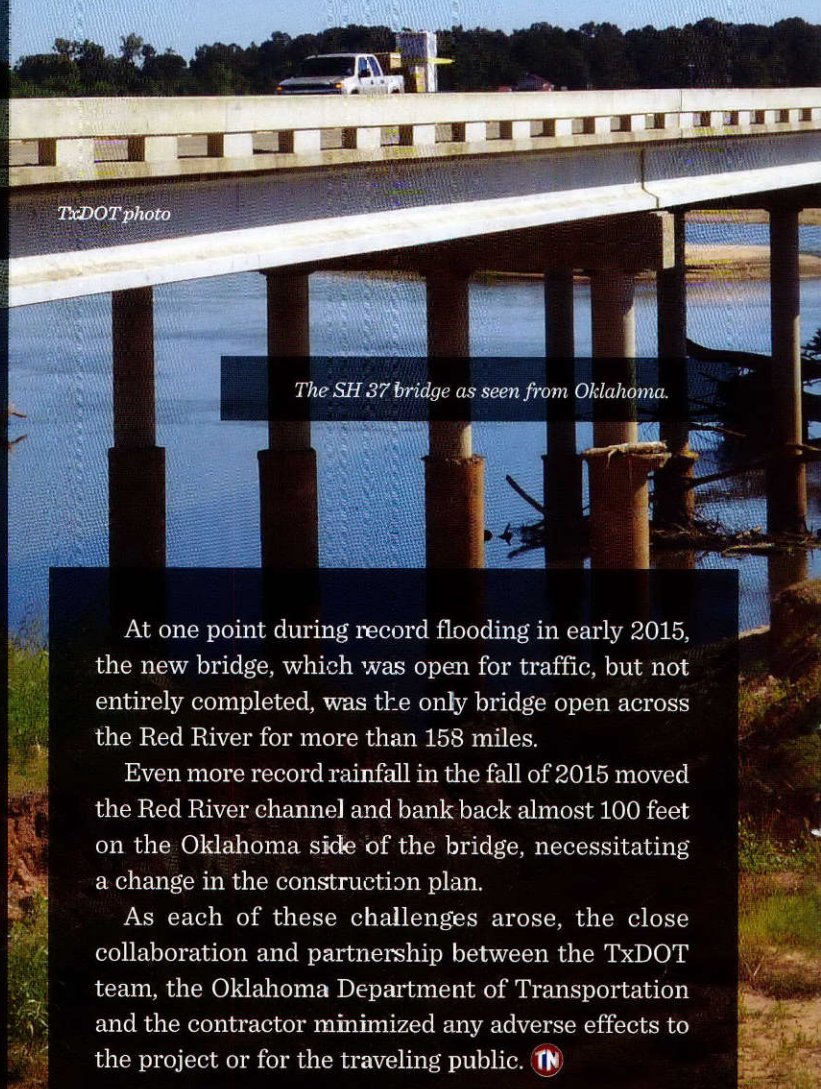
The SH 37 bridge across the Red River is an important conduit for trade and traffic between Texas and Oklahoma.

Building the new bridge was no cakewalk. Perry said abundant rainfall and flooding along the Red River was just one of many challenges his team and the contractor had to overcome.

“We first had to repair some damage to the old bridge, which ran parallel to the new bridge,” he said. “We also had to deal with graffiti, an issue with reflectors for the new bridge rail and some striping changes for the 12-foot main travel lanes. But the biggest challenge was the weather and the flooding in 2015.”




The Paris District's award-winning SH 37 bridge team includes: (l to r) Randy Floyd, Troy Scholl, Shari Coker, Richard Floyd and Dan Perry. Not pictured: Ellen Perry.



The SH 37 bridge as seen from Oklahoma.

At one point during record flooding in early 2015, the new bridge, which was open for traffic, but not entirely completed, was the only bridge open across the Red River for more than 158 miles.

Even more record rainfall in the fall of 2015 moved the Red River channel and bank back almost 100 feet on the Oklahoma side of the bridge, necessitating a change in the construction plan.

As each of these challenges arose, the close collaboration and partnership between the TxDOT team, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation and the contractor minimized any adverse effects to the project or for the traveling public. 



The Pharr District won the 2016 Environmental Achievement Award for its pelican poles project that keeps brown pelicans from being killed on state highways: (l to r) Pharr District Engineer Toribio Garza Jr., TxDOT Executive Director James Bass, Pharr District Environmental Coordinator Robin Gelston, Pharr Deputy District Engineer Hector Gonzalez and Pharr Director of Transportation Planning and Development Homer Bazan.

PHARR'S PELICAN PROTECTION WINS ENVIRONMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The Pharr District won the 2016 Environmental Achievement Award for its pelican poles project that keeps brown pelicans from being killed on state highways.


The Environmental Achievement Award recognizes projects that go beyond basic policy to protect and enhance the environment while meeting the state's transportation needs. The Environmental Affairs Division presents the award to districts or divisions whose efforts have produced outstanding results.

During winter cold fronts, brown pelicans try to land or leave the water area near the Bahia Grande cut along SH 48. In 2011, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service informed the Pharr District that the birds were being hit and killed by vehicles on the highway.

A concerned citizen also reported brown pelican fatalities during the numerous cold snaps in the winter of 2013-2014.

TxDOT met with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to discuss the situation and make recommendations to address it. Using the same approach as a successful project in Florida, TxDOT installed 8-foot poles on both sides of the bridges along SH 48 and SH 100. The poles provide visual clues to the brown pelicans so they can gain enough lift to clear passing traffic.

Observations, video footage and communication with the public suggest that the poles are working to keep the birds safe.

The runner-up for the Environmental Achievement Award went to the San Antonio District for its Seguin Avenue Project and an honorable mention went to the Dallas District for the Sylvan Avenue Bridge project. 

EXTRA MILE AWARDS

BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY

At the 90th Annual Transportation Short Course on Oct. 11, TxDOT recognized employees who went above and beyond the call of duty to help people in need. The Extra Mile Awards are presented to TxDOT workers who have helped save a life or prevented a situation from becoming life-threatening, either while performing their TxDOT duties or on their own time.



AMARILLO DISTRICT | Sammy Tijerina, Ernesto "Ernie" Garza Jr. and Cody Harris

On Dec. 27, 2015, with temperatures in the low 20s, a semitrailer on U.S. 60 in the small town of Black in the Lubbock District jackknifed in the middle of the highway. When it finally stopped, the truck blocked traffic on both lanes of the highway and 10-foot snow drifts blocked either side of the road. Traffic wasn't going anywhere anytime soon.

The Lubbock District called on the nearby Deaf Smith County Maintenance Office in the Amarillo District for help. Supervisor Cody Harris, Crew Chief Sammy Tijerina and Maintenance Assistant Ernie Garza Jr. headed out with a motor grader specially outfitted with a V-Plow.

When they arrived, they discovered more than 30 stranded vehicles. Harris and company started digging them out, but the snow would re-cover every cleared spot within minutes. Some people abandoned their cars in the middle of the road, making the rescue of others even harder. Several cars had families with children.

The TxDOT crew worked through the night and into the following morning, receiving help from the National Guard and the National Forest Service. Luckily, no one was injured or hurt and a lot of that can be attributed to three TxDOT crewmen who bravely fought back against winter.

TxDOT photo



During the Annual Transportation Short Course in October, TxDOT recognized employees who went above and beyond the call of duty to help people in life-threatening situations in the past year. Front row (l to r): Terry King, Jesse Ray Kyle, Chris Langdon, Sammy Tijerina and Ernesto "Ernie" Garza Jr. Back row: Chad Flores, Joshua Wilson, Dennis Krc, Martin Dyer and Cody Harris.



BRYAN DISTRICT | Chris Langdon, Dennis Krc, Martin Dyer and Joshua Wilson

The Tax Day Flood of 2016 dumped 10 to 20 inches of rain on the Houston area on April 18. By the time it was over, a thousand homes had been flooded and \$5 billion in property damage had been reported in Harris County alone. Roads became rainwater canals and residents evacuated by canoe and kayak.

The Houston District was virtually all-hands on deck and needed reinforcements. That help came from a special team of dedicated employees from the Bryan District: Chris Langdon, Dennis Krc and Martin Dyer from the district's Special Jobs Crew, along with Joshua Wilson from the Brazos County Maintenance Office.

In their TxDOT dump truck, the four joined police officers and volunteers to visit submerged homes looking for stranded residents to ferry back to drier ground. The team helped rescue an 80-year-old man and his dog who had managed to climb on the roof of his mobile home. They also rescued a family with five children from their roof. The team faced flooded waters to rescue people who had literally nowhere to go and kept them safe.

Continued on page 14

Continued from page 13



LUFKIN DISTRICT | Terry King

On March 1 of last year, heavy rains in Houston County caused flooded roadways. Terry King, a contract inspector in the Lufkin District, was monitoring a spot on FM 1280 known for flooding.

As King watched, creek waters rose fast and came over a bridge. Then, a small SUV stopped near his truck. King chatted with the elderly driver and told her the water rushing over the road made it unsafe to drive across. He cautioned her not to try. She was sure she could make it. King could do nothing to stop her as she got back in her SUV and drove on.

Almost as soon as she got onto the bridge, her vehicle began to disappear from sight as the water grew deeper. Then the SUV began to float. King watched as it ultimately became wedged against a fence.

With water filling the vehicle, the woman managed to get out, but couldn't move against the rapids. King knew that if she fell under the swift current, she could drown.

Acting quickly, he drove his truck into the middle of the road, in the shallowest part, and got out. He waded into the waist-deep waters and eventually reached her. The two of them slowly waded back to his truck and got out of the flood waters.

The woman was visibly shaken and thanked King for saving her life. Luckily, she walked away with a valuable lesson and King walked away a hero.



TYLER DISTRICT | Chad Flores and Jesse Ray Kyle

On a rainy morning in March of last year, General Transportation Technicians Chad Flores and Jesse Ray Kyle of the Henderson County Maintenance Office in the Tyler District headed to FM 315 to check out an area known to flood.


They found water covering the farm-to-market road, the shoulders and everything beyond. Fields on either side were now a swiftly rushing river.

As he evaluated the scene, Flores noticed a man stuck on top of the camper of a truck in the middle of the water. Two-thirds of the truck was underwater.

Flores and Kyle quickly moved to help the man. Flores, being the taller of the two, decided to wade out to the waiting driver while Kyle handled traffic control. Flores slowly made his way into the water. With each step, he sunk a little bit deeper until it was almost to his waist.

He finally reached the driver and helped him down. Aided by a volunteer firefighter, Flores and the driver eventually trudged back to the road to safety.

Kyle, meanwhile, directed traffic as drivers slowed to see the live-action heroics. Then, the wife of the rescued driver arrived and left her car partially blocking the road as she attempted to get to her husband, causing even more traffic to back up.

Fortunately, because of the TxDOT team's quick thinking, the driver was safe and a tragedy turned into a triumph. 



AWARDS

Honor Outstanding Achievement

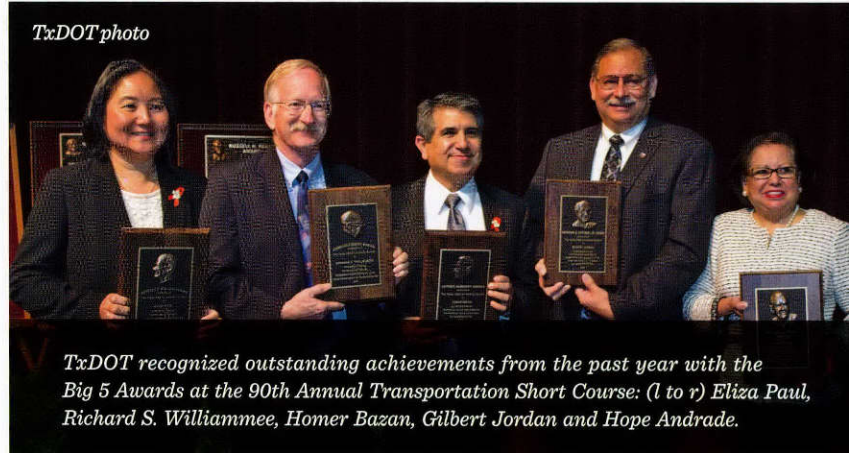
TxDOT recognized outstanding achievements from the past year with the Big 5 Awards at the 90th Annual Transportation Short Course on Oct. 11.

RICHARD S. WILLIAMMEE, FORT WORTH DISTRICT
Gibb Gilchrist Award

Fort Worth District Materials Engineer Richard S. Williammee was awarded the Gibb Gilchrist Award, which honors an outstanding TxDOT engineer. Williammee began his 32-year TxDOT career as an engineering assistant. He promoted the use of warm-mix asphalt, a product that provides a more even pavement and lowers energy consumption. He continues making improvements on highway and bridge construction methods that will affect the industry for years to come.

ELIZA PAUL, HOUSTON DISTRICT
Dewitt C. Greer Award

Houston Deputy District Engineer Eliza Paul won the Dewitt C. Greer Award, which recognizes the skill and dedication of TxDOT engineers. Paul has shown outstanding leadership, dedication and commitment to public service. She helped oversee the reconstruction of portions of the I-10 Katy Freeway project in Houston. The nearly \$1 billion worth of projects under her charge were part of a nearly \$3 billion reconstruction program.



TxDOT recognized outstanding achievements from the past year with the Big 5 Awards at the 90th Annual Transportation Short Course: (l to r) Eliza Paul, Richard S. Williammee, Homer Bazan, Gilbert Jordan and Hope Andrade.


HOPE ANDRADE
Russell H. Perry Award

Hope Andrade received the Russell H. Perry Award, which recognizes citizens for their leadership in transportation issues. Andrade is the chair of the VIA Metropolitan Transit Authority Board of Trustees in San Antonio. She has also served on the Texas Transportation Commission and was its chair as well. She has been a Texas Workforce Commissioner and a leader in the San Antonio business community for more than three decades.

HOMER BAZAN, PHARR DISTRICT
Luther DeBerry Award

Director of Transportation Planning and Development Homer Bazan of the Pharr District took home the Luther DeBerry Award, which recognizes individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the state in the field of transportation. Bazan started his career at TxDOT in 1986 and soon distinguished himself by his leadership skills. He helped develop procedures to manage all activities of the district's two regional mobility authorities and works with local governments.

GILBERT JORDAN, MAINTENANCE DIVISION
Raymond Stotzer Award

Gilbert Jordan, maintenance support branch supervisor/emergency management coordinator with the Maintenance Division, was presented with the Raymond Stotzer Award that honors non-engineers who demonstrate outstanding leadership and service to the department. Since 1977, Jordan has given TxDOT the benefit of his ability to negotiate, defend and set the standard for projects. As emergency management coordinator, he has logged countless hours organizing TxDOT's response to hurricanes, wildfires, floods and snow storms with multiple state agencies and organizations. 

IN THE ZONE: SMART WORK ZONES KEEP TRAFFIC MOVING



The smart work zone put in place on the improvement project along I-35 between Stassney Lane and William Cannon Drive in Austin includes side-scanning microwave radar that detects vehicle movement and sends data to a central processor.

When drivers see barricades, orange barrels and flashing arrows, they know a highway work zone is going to affect their trip. But what they don't know is by how much. The answer will soon be as plain as the sign in front of them.

The Austin District recently installed a smart work zone system on the Mobility35 improvement project along I-35 between Stassney Lane and William Cannon Drive. The technological system features real-time travel information, as well as message signs to help drivers be aware of the impacts of highway construction.


The smart work zone includes side-scanning microwave radar that detects vehicle movement and sends data to a central processor. Then, the equipment translates the information received into speeds and travel times through the work zone. These time estimates are then displayed on dynamic message signs. The signs can also advise drivers about detours, lane conditions, delays or other important travel information.

"This tool provides drivers with real-time information on traffic conditions in and around the work zone," said Austin District Engineer Terry McCoy. "Drivers can now make informed travel decisions on whether they want to

proceed through the work zone, exit onto the frontage road or choose to take an alternate route around the work zone. This helps alleviate work zone-related congestion and improves safety for motorists and workers."

Eight portable work zone devices will be installed at various locations throughout the Stassney/William Cannon project. Each device has a high-definition, closed-circuit camera mounted on a 30-foot mast pole to provide live views of the project and traffic conditions. The images will be streamed to TxDOT staff at the Combined Transportation Emergency Communications Center.

Data collected from the system will allow the project team to address problem areas within the work zone, such as analyzing the impact of traffic switches or contacting emergency services about traffic incidents. The system will be active full time for the duration of the project.

"With I-35 in central Texas being one of the most congested highways in the state, we have to keep looking for ways to manage traffic throughout this corridor," McCoy said. "Knowing there is no single strategy to reduce traffic, we're taking an 'everything including the kitchen sink' approach to improve mobility and communication on I-35." 

LUFKIN DISTRICT EMPLOYEE RECEIVES TEXAS PROJECT AWARD

TxDOT photo



Lufkin District Inspector Benjamin Sanders (left) and Drewery Construction Project Manager Charles Eberenz received a Texas Project Award for their work on SH 21 and U.S. 96 in San Augustine County.


The Associated General Contractors honored a Lufkin District employee and a project contractor recently when they were announced as recipients of the Texas Project Award in Austin.

Benjamin Sanders, Lufkin District inspector, and Charles Eberenz, Drewery Construction project manager, received the award for their work on SH 21 and U.S. 96 in San Augustine County. The \$3.3 million construction project began in March 2015 and was completed in November 2015 and included intersection improvements.

The Texas Project Award recognizes TxDOT project engineers and inspectors and project managers representing general contractors who have gone above and beyond in cooperation and partnership to do a quality job.

The project began with a groundbreaking ceremony attended by many state and local officials who promised minimal impacts to nearby businesses.

The outdated four-way stop at SH 21/U.S. 96 was reconstructed into a four-way signalized intersection. The project presented challenges from the beginning, such as the inconvenient location of water and sewer lines within the project limits and the need to accommodate nearby businesses.

Sanders and Eberenz worked closely with TxDOT's San Augustine County Maintenance Section to minimize disruption to travelers, be proactive and remain positive throughout the project. They were recognized by the mayor of San Augustine at the ribbon-cutting for the extra effort that was given by both Drewery Construction and TxDOT to ensure a smooth project through to completion. 

LITTLE ROAD BRINGS BIG SALE

TxDOT photo



The Fort Worth District recently set a TxDOT record for the largest amount of scrap metal salvaged in one sale when it sold several years' worth of accumulated steel beams from deconstructed bridges that had been stored in the right-of-way near Little Road.


No matter how challenging, any salvage sale that makes money for TxDOT is a good salvage sale. The Fort Worth District contacted TxDOT Green about salvaging an estimated 530,000 pounds of steel bridge beams secured in the right-of-way near Little Road. The resulting sale set a record for TxDOT.

The beams (approximately 155 pieces, including 73 actual beams) were parts of various deconstructed bridges, and had been accumulating in the right-of-way since 2005 as part of the County Assistance Program. However, many beams were damaged and needed to be scrapped.

In a salvage sale with such a large amount of high-quality steel, scrap dealers usually make several good bids. Unfortunately, these beams had issues. Some were as long as 83 feet and many were attached at inconvenient angles to other steel pieces. They wouldn't be easy to transport. Also, the beams were coated in lead-based paint, so, due to safety reasons, TxDOT staff did not cut them into pieces, which made the job even more difficult for potential buyers.

Undeterred, TxDOT Green worked with the Fort Worth District to plan the sale. After the Environmental Division was consulted about the rules regarding cutting and recycling of the bridge beams, the job was finally released for bid.

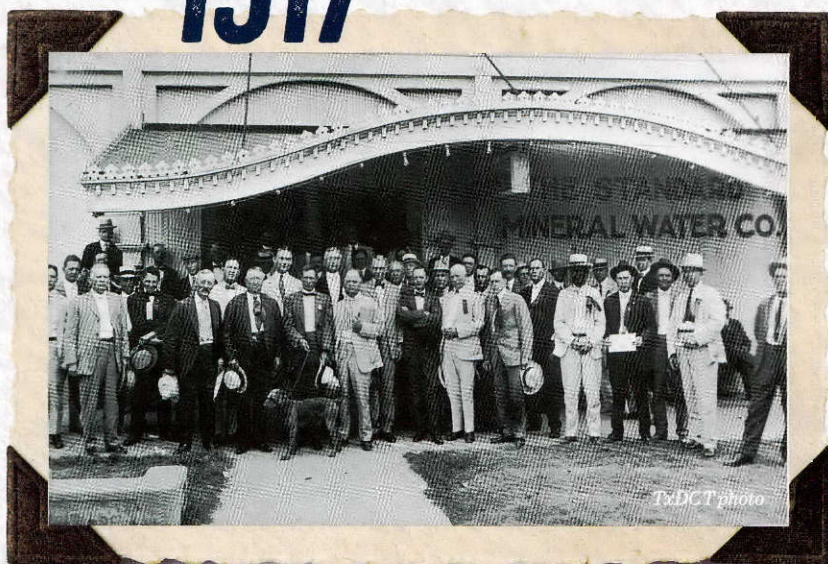
Several scrap metal buyers bid with Athens Iron & Metal winning the job. By August, Athens was on-site cutting the beams and bridge structures. TxDOT staff oversaw the work to safeguard TxDOT property.

The Fort Worth District not only saved taxpayers the cost of disposing of the bridge beams, it made \$51,804 from the sale. It took about four weeks to clear all 860,570 pounds of steel, a quantity that had taken more than 10 years to accumulate. It was almost triple the tonnage originally estimated and a TxDOT record for the largest amount of scrap metal salvaged in a single sale. 

100

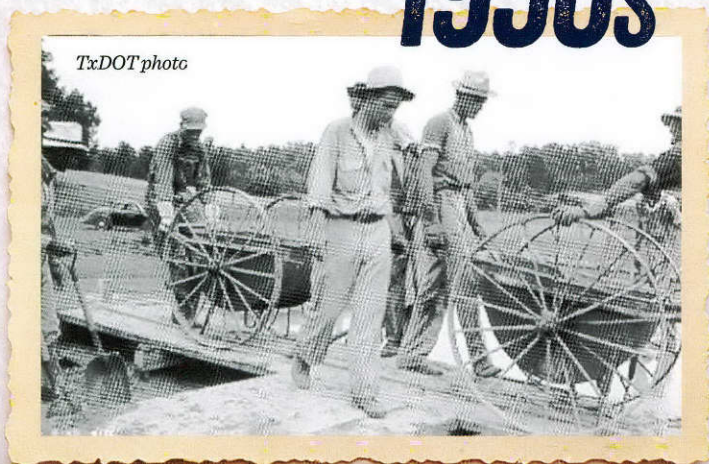
THE ROAD TO

1917



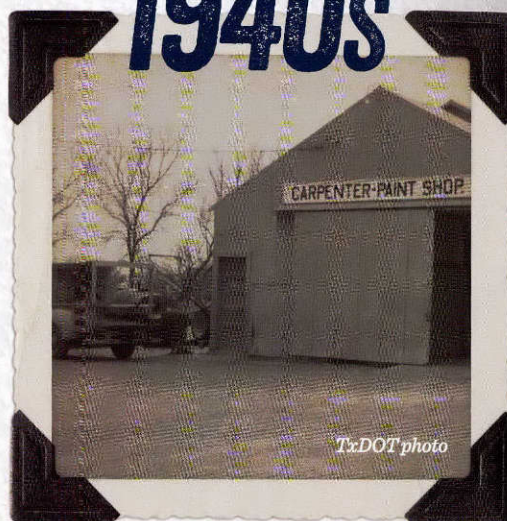
The Texas Highway Commission held its first public hearing on June 21, 1917 in Mineral Wells with county delegations in attendance. This occurred two months after Gov. James E. Ferguson signed House Bill 2 to create a State Highway Department on April 4, 1917.

1930s



Texas Highway Department employees in the 1930s haul cement for a new highway in Division 19, now the Atlanta District.

1940s



The Carpenter and Paint Shop at the Brownwood District headquarters complex sometime during the 1940s.

This year TxDOT celebrates its centennial and such an important milestone cannot be celebrated on just one day. TN looks back at the Road to 100.

1934



The arrival of new equipment in 1934 was a momentous occasion in Lubbock: (l to r) Resident Engineer Lon C. Ingram, Assistant Division Engineer George L. Carver and Division Engineer Guy R. Johnson welcomed Ben F. Owens of the Duplex Manufacturing Company and a shipment of five Duplex motor graders.

EARLY 1900s



An early century Angelina River Bridge that connects Angelina and Nacogdoches counties. It appears to be constructed of wood. Today, two concrete bridges span the Angelina River running north and south, and the roadway is designated as U.S. 59.

1956



Employees from the Corpus Christi District in 1956. 

BROWNWOOD DISTRICT TRANSIT SERVICE WINS SAFETY AWARD

TxDOT photo



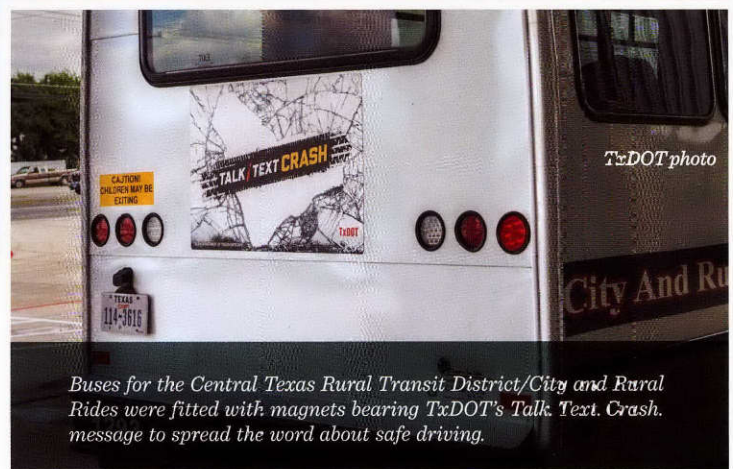
Brownwood District Traffic Safety Specialist Jeanni Luckey (second from right) and Traffic Operations Division Traffic Safety Program Lead Carol Campa (far right) pose with representatives from the Central Texas Rural Transit District/City and Rural Rides and the National Safety Council. CARR, a non-profit organization operating in the Brownwood District, was one of the 2016 honorees for the National Safety Council's Our Driving Concern Texas Employer Traffic Safety Awards.

Arural public transit service that works closely with TxDOT staff in the Brownwood District to spread safety messages has been recognized with a Texas Employer Traffic Safety Award.

Safe driving practices are a vital part of TxDOT's safety culture for our employees, and the agency also encourages traffic safety among all Texas drivers.

For the third year in a row, TxDOT has partnered with the National Safety Council to present the Our Driving Concern Texas Employer Traffic Safety Awards to 10 statewide employers who are committed to the safety and well-being of their employees in the area of traffic safety.


One of the 2016 honorees is the Central Texas Rural Transit District/City and Rural Rides, a non-profit organization that operates under the acronym of CARR. CARR is a rural public transit service based in Coleman in the Brownwood District that provides transportation services to the general public in 11 counties in West Central Texas. CARR provides continuing training to its drivers in order to emphasize safe driving habits and promote traffic safety.

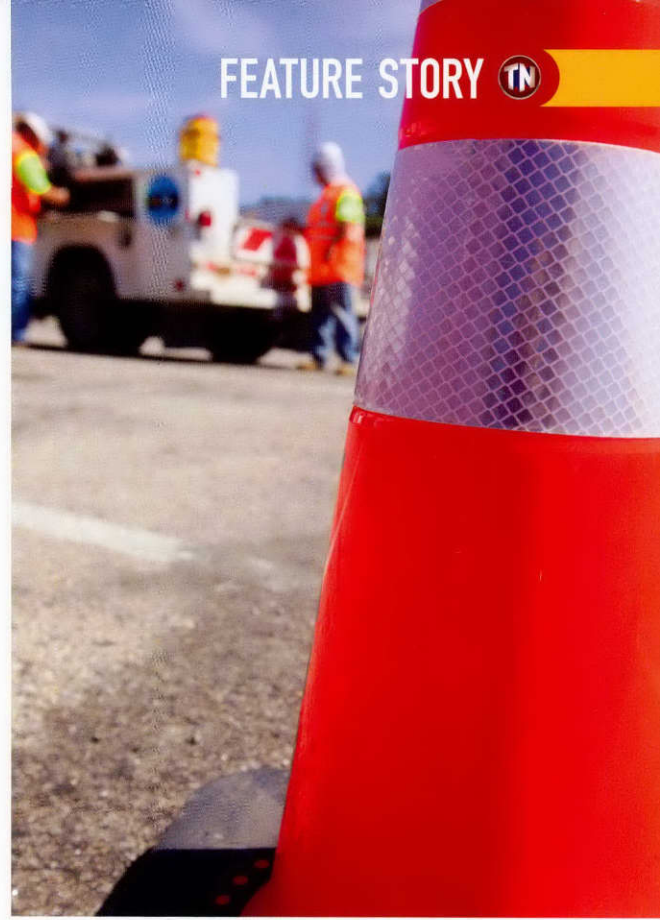


Buses for the Central Texas Rural Transit District/City and Rural Rides were fitted with magnets bearing TxDOT's Talk. Text. Crash. message to spread the word about safe driving.

Jeanni Luckey, Brownwood District traffic safety specialist, worked closely with CARR to help them win the honor. Not only did Luckey help CARR staff with the application process, she also partnered with the transit service to spread TxDOT's *Talk. Text. Crash.* campaign message. Large magnets emblazoned with the campaign slogan were fitted to the back of dozens of CARR buses. The magnets, printed by TxDOT Creative Services, remind drivers traveling behind the buses of the dangers of distracted driving.

Luckey also provided CARR with decals printed with the words "No phone zone" to be placed on the doors of each bus, reminding the CARR drivers that cell phone use while behind the wheel is against their company's policy.

This annual partnership with the National Safety Council is just one example of TxDOT's commitment to promoting safe driving habits and eliminating injuries and deaths on Texas roadways. 



WORKING TOWARD ZERO

SAFETY NUMBERS FOR 2016

TxDOT had another outstanding year for safety in fiscal year 2016. The agency set all-time lows for lost-time injuries and vehicle collisions.

“Zero continues to be our goal,” said Samuel Salazar, director of the Occupational Safety Division. “We have to aim for zero. Otherwise, we’re saying it’s acceptable for someone to get hurt. The numbers for this year show how our employees have embraced the mission.”

Five districts — Atlanta, Corpus Christi, Tyler, Waco and Yoakum — and the Construction Division met all four department safety goals. In addition, ten districts — Abilene, Atlanta, Austin, Beaumont, Brownwood, Pharr, San Angelo, San Antonio, Waco and Yoakum — and the Construction Division recorded zero lost-time incidents.

The number of lost-time claims dropped from 41 in 2015 to 30 in 2016, a new all-time low. A lost-time claim is anytime an employee sustains an injury that requires time away from work beyond the day the injury happened.

“We’ve been working hard at TxDOT to reduce lost-time claims,” said Salazar. “A little over 10 years ago, we implemented

a return-to-work program that has helped drop these claim numbers dramatically. With approximately 12,000 employees, having only 30 injuries that resulted in lost-time is a remarkable number, even if we haven’t reached zero yet.”

Lost production days also decreased substantially from 2015, down to 1,423 from 2,473.

“Because of our industry, we often don’t think about light duty or modified duty for injured employees,” said Salazar. “The return-to-work program increases awareness of these types of opportunities. Getting employees back to work at something they can handle is better for them and better for TxDOT.”

Individual districts also turned in some outstanding results. For the second year in a row, the Waco District had zero injuries, zero lost-time claims and zero lost production days. The Brownwood District achieved zero lost-time for the ninth year in a row.


“Results like these don’t just happen,” said Salazar. “Our employees have embraced Mission Zero and continue to set the bar higher every year. The types of results we’ve seen at TxDOT

require a commitment at all levels of the department. The leadership fully supports the process, and employees have truly embraced and championed these efforts.”

Salazar says employees should feel comfortable enough to speak up if they see something unsafe. At times, anyone can have a lapse in focus or conditions can change.

“Our culture should encourage everyone to say something if a situation is unsafe,” said Salazar.

In another remarkable result, 2016 saw the fewest number of vehicle collisions ever recorded at TxDOT, down to 305 from 313 the year before. Also, the number of preventable vehicle incidents, like striking a fixed object, went down.

“We continue to move the dial closer to zero,” said Salazar. “Moving forward, we must continue this path of improvement. Split-second decisions can have life-changing consequences and safety starts with our behavior. We want to continue to give our employees the best opportunity to go home safe at the end of the day.” 



The Professional Engineering and Procurement Services Division took home the top Journey to Excellence Award in October. (l to r) Martin L. Rodin, Danny Neal II, James Bass and Roy Gonzales.

JOURNEY TOWARD EXCELLENCE AWARDS HONOR OUTSTANDING EFFORTS

TxDOT employees and teams were recognized for their leadership and commitment to improvement with the Journey Toward Excellence Awards at the senior leadership meeting in October. The Professional Engineering Procurement Services Division took home the gold award for its consultant contract administration improvements. The Dallas District got silver for its I-635 managed lanes team. Bronze went to the Local Government Projects Section of the Transportation Planning and Programming Division for its Local Government Projects Toolkit.

PEPS was recognized for outstanding efforts in both invoice processing and work authorization development. On invoices, PEPS increased its on-time payments from 60 to 95 percent in one year. The improvement reduced the amount of interest TxDOT paid on late invoices. PEPS also reduced the amount of time required to process work authorizations.


“I am proud of our team’s commitment to excellence and for their recognition in delivering best-in-class customer service to the districts and divisions,” said Lucio Vasquez, PEPS deputy division director. “In anticipation of an increased workload resulting from the approval of the 2017 Unified Transportation Program, we are looking at adopting new and innovative strategies to enhance our productivity.”

The Dallas District’s award recognized the efforts of a TxDOT team working on the I-635 managed lanes project that ultimately became part of the LEJ Express project to rebuild one of the busiest and most congested highways in North Texas.

“To place so high in the Journey Toward Excellence competition is quite an honor,” said Dallas District Engineer Kelly Selmar. “There were so many who contributed to this project for years to see it to fruition. Motorists in the region are the beneficiaries of what I consider one of the most innovative and successful projects in TxDOT’s history. The hard work of this strong and dedicated team of TxDOT professionals shines through in the successful LBJ Express project.”

The bronze winner is an online toolkit for use by TxDOT, local government and consultant personnel that provides organized access to rules, regulations and procedures for projects managed by local governments that include federal or state funding provided by TxDOT.

“The new toolkit’s documents, flow charts and checklists have significantly increased the efficiency of local government personnel developing projects and of TxDOT personnel reviewing and approving projects,” said David Milligan, director of the Local Government Projects Section. “Our relatively small group is thankful for the assistance of more than 50 employees from districts and other divisions who served on working groups during development of these improved tools.”

The Journey Toward Excellence Awards recognize TxDOT employees and teams who demonstrate leadership and commitment to improving services, products and processes and obtaining tangible results. Recipients must demonstrate results in a wide range of areas including customer service, process improvements and financial savings. 

CLEARING THE AIR:

DUMP TRUCK WITH CLEAN-BURNING FUEL TACKLES DIRTY JOBS



TxDOT photo

Fleet Operations recently rolled out its first heavy truck to run on dedicated compressed natural gas: (l to r) Fleet Support Manager Jose Clayton, Fleet Operations Division Director Dalton Pratt, TxDOT Executive Director James Bass, Metro Fleet Manager Keith Harris and Austin FOD Equipment Supervisor Ed Sanders.

The Fleet Operations Division recently rolled out a shiny new dump truck. Like other dump trucks, the goal is for it to go to work and get dirty — except for its tailpipe.

The 10-yard Freightliner Model 114SD is the first heavy truck in the department's fleet to run on dedicated compressed natural gas. TxDOT purchased the truck for a major pilot project to test the performance and practicality of the fuel in road work conditions.

CNG fuel produces fewer emissions than the diesel typically used in construction equipment. CNG vehicles also are known for quieter operation and less internal engine sludge than machines using traditional fuels.

Although some public and private fleets have been using CNG for years, state transportation agencies have not had much experience in using the fuel in heavy equipment due to the nature of their work.


“With this pilot, we want to learn how a CNG truck works under the extreme conditions of road work,” said Dalton Pratt, Fleet Operations director. “As the state's transportation agency, we have to be able to respond to emergency situations such as snow and ice or debris removal with short notice. To do that, we have to have constant, reliable access to fuel, and we have to be confident

the equipment will perform well.”

The truck will operate for approximately two months each in the Fort Worth, Dallas, Austin, Houston and San Antonio areas, where refueling facilities are most accessible. These cities are within the Texas Clean Transportation Triangle, an area designated for clean-air projects under the Texas Emissions Reduction Program.

During the pilot, operators will thoroughly test the truck in all types of working conditions, including the summer construction season and snow and ice operations. Operators will provide detailed feedback throughout the pilot.

Fleet Operations Division staff will analyze costs, long-term maintenance needs, operators' feedback on performance, fuel availability and quality and other data. They will then determine whether to keep the truck or sell it. Regardless of the truck's future place in TxDOT's fleet, it will help the agency develop solid specifications for any future CNG truck purchases.

The pilot will help TxDOT make smart decisions about alternative-fueled vehicles and how they fit with the department's fleet mix and the state's goals for diversifying fuel resources and reducing emissions. TxDOT will use the knowledge gained from the pilot to plan future alternative fuel projects. 



I am an...

Environmental Specialist

Matt Buckingham, an environmental specialist with the Lufkin District, grew up in Chicago. He fell in love with nature at an early age while exploring the woods around his home and on family trips to the western states. His parents introduced him to America's wilderness and encouraged his passions. He always knew he was destined to pursue a career working with natural resources.

Buckingham has a bachelor's degree in wildlife management and a master's degree in ecology and evolutionary biology. While working on his master's degree, he researched the bird communities of Iguazu National Park in Argentina where he lived for almost a year. While there, he met his wife, Carolina, a native of Argentina.

Buckingham worked for universities, government agencies and non-profit organizations before coming to TxDOT in 2014. He was happy for the chance to live and work in the beautiful Piney Woods of East Texas.

Tell us what an environmental specialist does and what kind of projects you work on.

Environmental specialists are responsible for ensuring that all of the district projects are in compliance with federal and state environmental laws and regulations. For example, we help monitor any impact to natural resources like threatened and endangered species or wetlands. Places of historical or archaeological significance are another area of concern. We obtain any necessary permits related to environmental regulations, and coordinate with other agencies like the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Texas Historical Commission. An environmental specialist reviews every project in the district.

Share an instance where your work made a significant impact on the traveling public.

While my work primarily ensures that our projects don't have a significant impact, at least on the environment, it does benefit the traveling public. For example, making sure projects don't affect valuable recreational opportunities like historic markers, roadside vegetation (especially native wildflowers), wildlife viewing opportunities and access to public lands.

What is the most rewarding part about being an environmental specialist?

Since I was a child, I have been passionate about nature. This passion has led to a lifelong pursuit of studying and conserving the natural world. I also understand the importance of maintaining a network of safe transportation facilities. As an environmental specialist, I am able to bridge the gap between these two needs, ensuring that our transportation infrastructure can continue to advance, while at the same time protecting the natural resources that are so important to me.

What do you like most about working in the Lufkin District?


I fell in love with the forests of East Texas many years ago. Living in Lufkin puts me in the middle of Texas' four national forests, providing many opportunities for nature observation and outdoor recreation. Beyond that, I feel like other groups within the Lufkin District really listen to the environmental specialists. It is encouraging to see that they are so willing to pursue the least environmentally-impactful possibilities early in the development process.

A man with a beard and glasses, wearing a white hard hat with a blue star logo and a high-visibility orange and green safety vest, stands in a forest. He has binoculars hanging from his neck. The background is a dense forest of tall, thin trees.

Matt Buckingham

**Environmental
Specialist
Lufkin District**

What are some of the more challenging aspects of your job and how do you handle them?

When it comes to transportation, there are many considerations and interests, both within TxDOT and with other entities. Finding a common ground between parties with such different considerations and interests can be difficult and frustrating. Meeting condensed timelines is also often difficult. We frequently consult with multiple third parties, which takes time and can only be initiated at advanced stages in the planning process. I have found that it is best to communicate with all parties early and often throughout the life of the project planning and development stage. 

Q & A

Clifford Dawson

General Engineering Tech

Bryan District — Burleson County Maintenance

Cliff Dawson, general engineering technician in the Bryan District, is a native of Waller County and moved to Washington County when he got married. He began his TxDOT career in 2003 in Washington County as a summer hire. He then worked as a maintenance technician until being promoted to his current position. He and his wife have three children. Dawson enjoys hunting and fishing when time permits.

Clifford Dawson

What are the five words that best describe you?

I only get five words?? Okay... honest, dependable, outgoing — never met a stranger — persistent, and did I mention funny? At times.

How do you spend your free time?

What's that? I'm married and have three kids! I don't get much free time. But when I do, I'm on the road watching our youngest daughter compete in high school rodeos and cuttings.

What is a skill you'd like to learn and why?

Taxidermy, so I wouldn't have to pay someone to mount my nine-point buck to hang on the wall.

What are you most proud of?

My family and where I come from. It's "cornbread and chicken and a lot of front porch sittin'" as the Alan Jackson song says.

Shark diving, bungee jumping or sky diving?

Bad knot in the bungee cord or it's too short? Jumping out of a perfectly good plane that's not on fire? I'm going shark diving. The odds of survival may be a little better.

Who is your role model and why?

Hands down, my grandpa. He was rough and tough.

What is the best vacation you've ever taken?

Disney Cruise or Disney World. They both made me feel like a kid again.

Describe a project or accomplishment that you consider to be the most significant in your career.

Having a clean safety record — no lost-time, no injury and no accident.



What makes you laugh the most?

My kids trying to pull something over on me. I tried most of it myself and then some. It also cracks me up to watch people who forgot where they parked their car after a big event, like the rodeo. And, of course, funny movies.


What is the best piece of advice you've ever received?

Say what you mean and mean what you say.

What do you do each day to ensure that you and your co-workers work in a safe environment?

Look up, down and all around. And pray!

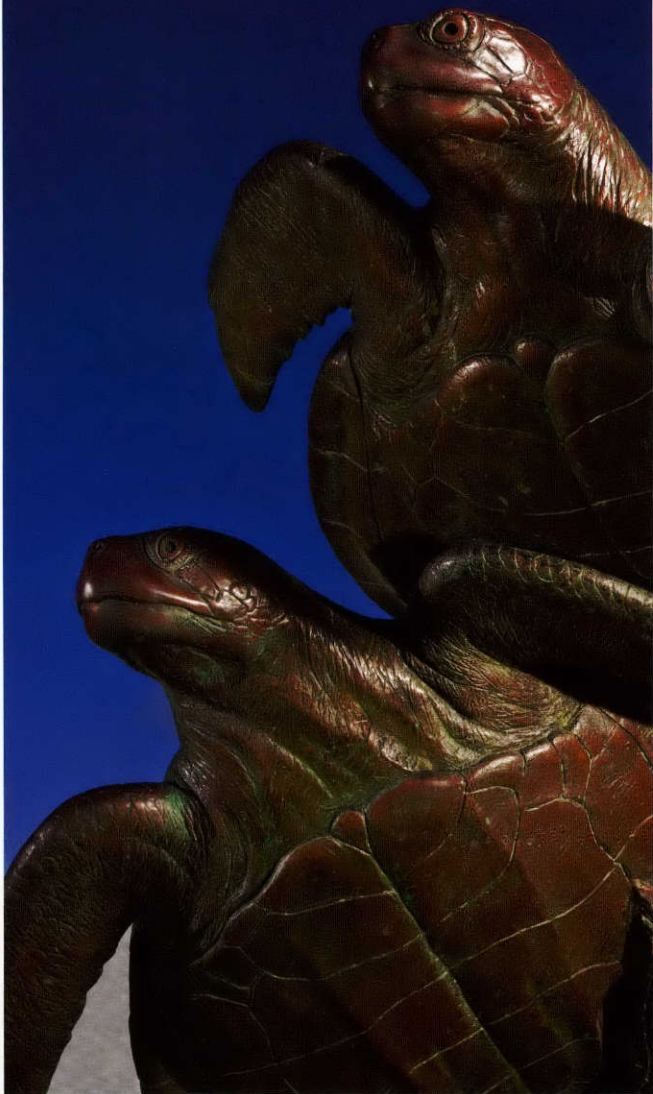
Why is the Bryan District the best district in TxDOT?

Come see for yourself. You'll come around! 

Where Am I?

Here is a photo depicting an identifiable landmark you may have seen in your travels around Texas. If you think you know what this is a photo of or know where it was taken, send an email to TNideas@txdot.gov. Deadline for submissions is Feb. 8.

TxDOT photo




Identified:

Congratulations to our first identifier, Randy Smith (AMA).

Last edition's photo featured a statue of a bull buffalo standing in the West Texas wind in downtown Abilene at the Frontier Texas western heritage center. "Testing the Texas Wind" is hollow-cast bronze, meaning that there is a cavity in the center of the sculpture. It contains a bronze heart inside the buffalo, a trademark of sculptor T.D. Kelsey. The landmark sculpture is nine feet tall.

Others correctly identifying the photo were Chris Cowen (BRY), Walter Barfield (AUS), T.P. Holt (WAC), Rhonda Schmid (DAL), Kitty Powledge (SSD), Andrew Carlson (CMD), Traci Graham (ABL), Shelly Garner (AMA), Vanessa Patterson (CRP), Timothy Collins (BMT) and Albert Garza (TRV).

Note: Partial credit goes to Jessie Yzaguirre (TYL) who identified the picture as being of a very similar buffalo statue in front of Buffalo High School in the city of Buffalo. 

TxDOT photo



UPCOMING TxDOT EVENTS

Jan. 16

Martin Luther King Jr. Day
(All agencies closed)

Jan. 26

Texas Transportation Commission Meeting
(Austin)

Feb. 20

Presidents Day
(All agencies closed)

Feb. 23

Texas Transportation Commission Meeting
(Austin)

MILESTONES

NOVEMBER SERVICE AWARDS

DISTRICTS

ABILENE

- 20 Joseph P. LeBlanc
- 10 Jody W. Smith
- 5 Robin D. Bradley
- Pamala D. Hise
- Jesse Kruger

AMARILLO

- 5 Stacy L. Miller
- John M. Stoughton

ATLANTA

- 20 Brent D. Doddy
- Donnie L. Lowry
- 15 Kimberly D. Garner
- 10 John D. Neuville III

AUSTIN

- 15 Guy A. Freeman
- Tisha G. Lyda
- 10 George W. Boeker III
- Gerald W. Creamer Jr.
- 5 James P. Williams

BEAUMONT

- 20 Joseph D. Sterling
- 15 Robert C. Higgins Jr.
- Leanna F. Sheppard
- Ronald D. Smith
- 10 Willie R. Pickens
- 5 Jacquelyn F. Parsons
- Lyndell K. Powell

BROWNWOOD

- 25 Elias H. Rmeili
- 15 Alan L. Ogden

BRYAN

- 25 Michael D. Bairrington
- 10 Robert S. Talafuse

CHILDRESS

- 10 Jack D. Cox

CORPUS CHRISTI

- 35 William C. Adkins
- Guillermo Cabello
- 25 Tomas C. Trevino
- 10 Clesheon J. Brown
- Maria L. Cruz
- Alfredo Gaona
- Jose A. Garcia
- Robert L. Vega
- 5 David H. Brink
- Christopher R. Mata
- Jerry Munoz
- Harold D. Pearson

DALLAS

- 20 Jaime L. Recer
- 15 Martin N. Gonzalez
- 10 Christine N. Luther
- Noraima E. Perez
- 5 Christopher R. Bewley
- Steven R. Hance

EL PASO

- 30 Joseph D. Lindsey

FORT WORTH

- 20 Ricky L. Crotwell
- Jeremiah L. Lerma
- 10 James Chapa
- 5 Rodney T. Brown
- James P. Greenhill

HOUSTON

- 35 Wayne A. Rentschler
- 30 Thomas E. Lev
- 20 Michael D. Lopez
- Kathy S. Sellars
- 10 Christy J. Bushnell
- Robert C. Gerbig
- Jose M. Gonzales II
- Ruben O. Gonzales
- Andrew L. Johnson
- Lien K. Nguyen
- Heather M. Town
- Oscar Vargas Jr.

LUBBOCK

- 20 Shirley K. Jackson
- 10 Christopher P. Farrell
- Gonzalo S. Prieto Jr.
- Jose L. Rodriguez
- 5 Shelby J. Duncan

LUFKIN

- 20 Clinton L. Norton
- 15 Richard E. Smith
- 10 Scott D. Duffey

ODESSA

- 20 Joel M. Ponce
- Thomas H. Zarate

PARIS

- 15 Aaron R. Bloom
- 10 Robert L. Cook III
- Quentin H. Wallace
- Malcom J. Weemes
- 5 Melody S. Williams

PHARR

- 30 Jose C. Solis
- 20 Juan J. Aguayo
- 10 Juan Sanchez

SAN ANGELO

- 25 Ricardo L. Sanchez
- 10 Josue C. Hernandez

SAN ANTONIO

- 30 Michael A. Coward
- Gilbert B. Hernandez
- Michael D. Jaeger
- 15 Javier O. Esparza
- Michael L. Felts
- 5 Randall M. Biediger
- Brandon W. Bienek
- Mario A. Guzman Jr.
- Rodney J. Koenig
- Jarred R. Miller
- Miles T. Rihn
- Nathan W. Velasquez

TYLER

- 30 Donald E. McQuitty
- 20 Mark A. Cincar
- Cedric W. Pierson
- 10 Johnny R. Jennings
- 5 Eric L. Fisher

WACO

- 15 Robert L. Blakley
- Chad C. Blansit
- Victor J. Goebel
- Wesley H. Wooley
- 10 Jimmy R. Cantu
- Ronald P. Davis
- Richard A. May
- Tracy R. Martinez
- Kim H. Thomas
- 5 Garry A. Diaz
- Brian R. Trussell

WICHITA FALLS

- 5 Justin D. Smith

YOAKUM

- 30 Andrew C. Brzozowski
- David J. Kallus
- 20 Sheila M. Brugger
- 15 Martin J. Vancura
- 10 Larry J. Fisher Jr.
- Scott A. Sparks

DIVISIONS

ADMINISTRATION

- 30 Lauren D. Garduño

BRIDGE

- 15 Patricia A. Coronado

COMMUNICATIONS

- 20 Christopher R. Bishop
- 5 Roman T. Hill

CONSTRUCTION

- 15 Clifton E. Coward Jr.
- Joseph D. Woods
- 10 Patricia K. Douglass

FLEET OPERATIONS

- 20 Gary D. Allen
- 15 James D. Harger
- 5 Christopher D. Berg
- Ben E. Tiemann

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

- 5 Cory L. Henrickson

HUMAN RESOURCES

- 10 Kristy J. Collins

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

- 20 Kevin D. Wagner

PROJECT FINANCE, DEBT & STRATEGIC CONTRACTS

- 15 Carol S. Luschen
- Patrick J. Marotta

RIGHT OF WAY

- 15 Manuel A. Kilpatrick
- 10 Aracely Olmos

RAIL

- 20 Jo Ann B. Trevino

SUPPORT SERVICES

- 15 Lola Lee-Amador
- Gregary L. Reynolds
- 10 Edna I. Eilerts
- Lourdes M. Fulton
- Gregory G. Northcutt

TOLL OPERATIONS

- 30 Lee H. Stone

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING & PROGRAMMING

- 5 John T. Stott

TRAFFIC OPERATIONS

- 30 Susan E. Hausmann

TRAVEL INFORMATION

- 5 Annette Mata

DECEMBER SERVICE AWARDS



DISTRICTS

ABILENE

5 Michelle B. Alcorn

AMARILLO

20 Ryan E. Diaz
Raymond S. Skaggs
10 Donald R. Bradley
5 Andrew M. Davis

ATLANTA

25 Shirley H. Lightfoot
10 Keith W. Burns
Daniel L. Lawrence

AUSTIN

25 Clay L. Brown
15 Shelly D. Eason
10 Michael L. Garrett
5 Rudy J. Olmos II

BEAUMONT

20 Penny A. Buller
Luther A. Willey
15 Cleveland D. Rogers
10 Cynthia J. Ervin
Scott A. Parker
John L. Stockwell

BROWNWOOD

25 Bradley K. Swenson
10 Thomas L. Ischy III

BRYAN

10 Brian M. Brown
David W. Rinn
Larry R. Smith Jr.
Daniel L. Vines
5 Jesse H. Flake
Ricardo Tobias

CHILDRESS

15 Mark A. Rocha
Gary L. Simpson
Kevin L. Urbanczyk Jr.
10 Jacen M. Lemons

CORPUS CHRISTI

20 Steven L. Ellison
Joe A. Pena
Roel Rivera
Alventor F. Rodriguez
5 Antonio Garcia Jr.
Sanmiguel M. Garcia
Manuel C. Garza
Benino Martinez
Felix C. Sanchez

DALLAS

25 Christopher D. Blain
20 Richard C. Edwards
Jahor L. Roy
James A. Wilhoite
15 Valarie E. Ashmore
David E. Watson
10 Yachi Chen
Teresita M. Sarmiento
Douglas G. Seeds

EL PASO

20 Lucio F. Santos
Godwin I. Ubanyionwu
10 Juan F. Esparza

FORT WORTH

25 Laura D. Hartmann
20 Lou A. Parker
Hector Solis
Randy R. Stevens
Holly E. Vinson
10 Jubal F. Betonio
Ram P. Dhakal
Kimberley A. Smith

HOUSTON

30 Earnest M. Broadus
Kenneth W. Hill
20 Rodney D. Atchley
10 Janet K. Exum
Nzinga M. Jones
Carlos M. Luna
Vinh V. Nguyen

LUBBOCK

30 Darral H. Bryant
15 Sundi D. Barrera
5 Randy S. Davis

LUFKIN

20 George T. Wilson Jr.
15 Steven L. Myers
Michael D. Parrish
Bobby G. Riley
10 Charles G. Steele
5 Larry L. Hill
Alton G. Jones
Forest B. Shoemaker

LAREDO

10 Tomas Castillo
Guillermo A. De Leon
Irasema De Leon
Enrique A. Gonzalez

ODESSA

30 Benny P. Carrasco
Jovenal S. Hinojos
20 Adan R. Garcia
Fred G. Herrera
15 William R. Wilson
5 James P. Duncan

PARIS

10 Jeffrey A. Galewaler

PHARR

10 Sergio Coronado
Joel A. Solis

SAN ANGELO

15 James C. Davis III
Jeffrey W. Timms
10 Fred P. Guiliano
5 Eddie Hernandez

SAN ANTONIO

30 Henry Felux Jr.
Leon D. Henk
20 Jonathan A. Bean
Hector R. Ortiz
15 Rafael C. Garcia
10 Amelia Y. De La Garza
5 Patricia T. Nolasco
James M. Real

TYLER

20 Freddie R. Jones
5 Phillip D. Dew
Billy W. Stewart

WACO

30 Robert G. Scott
20 William L. French
10 Sarah S. Horner

WICHITA FALLS

20 James C. Simpson
10 Jeremy R. Hansen
5 Anthony D. White

DIVISIONS

ADMINISTRATION

5 Robert S. Kaufman

COMMUNICATIONS

25 Debra B. Snyder
20 Laura M. Lopez

DESIGN

30 Maria G. Burke

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

20 James T. Abbott
Doug H. Booher
15 Jeffery L. Richardson
10 Sonya Y. Hernandez

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

10 Donna H. Bullard

FLEET OPERATIONS

20 John A. Jackson
15 Dale W. Pfeil
5 Jason D. Jupe
Ernesto Leija

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

5 Melanie A. Alvord
Gerard J. Haddican II

HUMAN RESOURCES

5 Nancy A. Shiring

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

5 Earl D. Wells

PROFESSIONAL PROCUREMENT

10 Joseph M. McCarthy

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

15 Richard D. Neill

RIGHT OF WAY

20 Tammy R. Hudson
10 Tara K. O'Neal-Crowley
5 Maria R. Leon
Daniela Raisovich

RAIL

15 Joanna R. Franks

SUPPORT SERVICES

30 Johnny Burke

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING & PROGRAMMING

30 Louis W. Clampitt
Robert D. Ramirez

TRAVEL INFORMATION

15 Julie M. Stratton
5 Tracy L. Sult

MILESTONES 2016

SEPTEMBER RETIREE REPORT

DISTRICTS

ABILENE

16 Debra D. Paylor

AUSTIN

20 Stephen D. Talbott

BRYAN

35 Sandra D. Perry

DALLAS

30 Debbie L. Adams
Bernard Fears Jr.

29 Terry W. Bruce

28 Hayley M. Pierce

FORT WORTH

22 Janice L. Aslin

HOUSTON

28 Ricardo D. Davidson

18 Jesus R. Garcia Jr.

LAREDO

9 John A. Charles

WACO

3 Sandra E. Webb

DIVISIONS

AVIATION

27 Michelle Hannah

23 Sheri D. Quinlan

CONSTRUCTION

11 Richard E. Knowles

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

26 Elsa O'Connor

18 Robert R. Snipes

RIGHT OF WAY

15 Douglas J. Wilson

TRAFFIC OPERATIONS

18 Alesia S. Gamboa

3 Jerry Allen Burford

TRAVEL INFORMATION

28 Jose Sermino Jr.

OCTOBER RETIREE REPORT

DISTRICTS

ABILENE

30 Maxie W. Allen

28 Richard C. Parkhill

21 Joey M. Walker

ATLANTA

20 Micheal A. Roberson

14 Patricia R. Womack

AUSTIN

29 Mark G. Meuth

BRYAN

27 Darlene C. Goehl

24 Lionel Colvin

3 Deborah Sue Eckert

DALLAS

26 Christopher E. Gregory
John D. Nguyen

24 Elliott Stovall

21 Dianne H. May

18 Jackie L. Haley

10 James F. Brockermeier

EL PASO

24 Avelardo Ponce

HOUSTON

24 David G. Wolford

22 Duc P. Tran

16 Robert G. Smoot

12 Alfred K. Vyoral

10 Linda S. Vance

LUFKIN

31 William M. Sloan

ODESSA

30 Omar M. Flores

PARIS

22 Robert C. Graves III

WACO

29 Christine E. Simons

23 Timothy E. Grusendorf

YOAKUM

23 Emery L. Mascheck

DIVISIONS

CONSTRUCTION

36 Jay D. Tarwater

29 Mark A. Crawford

FLEET OPERATIONS

15 Manuel M. Sanchez

GENERAL COUNSEL

6 Rebecca B. Bronson

HUMAN RESOURCES

27 Suzanne M. Latimer

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

22 Donanne G. Williford

RIGHT OF WAY

37 Deborah S. Menefee

22 William S. Abernathy

IN MEMORIAM

DISTRICTS

ATLANTA

Allen Screws

General Transportation
Specialist

Date of Death: 10/30/2016

Years of Service: 14

DALLAS

Paul Hurt

General Engineering
Technician

Date of Death: 11/1/2016

Years of Service: 27

Gregory Roach

General Engineering
Technician

Date of Death: 10/01/2016

Years of Service: 2

LUFKIN

Kevan D. Simpson

General Transportation
Specialist

Date of Death: 11/3/2016

Years of Service: 17

SAN ANGELO

James W. Whitlock Sr.

Date of Death: 11/12/2016

Retired: 1994

Years of Service: 27

TYLER

Michael L. Norman

General Transportation
Specialist

Date of Death: 11/21/2016

Years of Service: 16

DIVISIONS

MAINTENANCE

Ralph S. Hanson

Architect Assistant

Date of Death: 11/29/2016

Years of Service: 30

TxDOT Family Members Chime In

TxDOT is developing a time capsule in honor of our 100th anniversary. What would you put in it?



TxDOT photo

JACY BUTLER

**OFFICE TECHNICIAN,
AMARILLO DISTRICT**

"I would put a document from each of the different types of software that help us do our jobs every day, including PeopleSoft, FleetNow and Compass. The software is ever-changing and this would be just one way to show how technology has evolved over the last 100 years."



TxDOT photo

REGINA KRESGE

**DISTRICT ENGINEER
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT,
DALLAS DISTRICT**


"A sketch of the U.S. 75 – Central Expressway project at Fitzhugh in Dallas that John Kelly drew and signed on Sept. 4, 1981, while he worked in the Dallas District. Mr. Kelly later went on to become the San Antonio District Engineer."



TxDOT photo

PAT MCKENNON

**ENGINEERING
TECHNICIAN,
ABILENE DISTRICT**

"I'd include a Russell Pony Grader. A predecessor to the motor grader, the pony grader dates back to the early years of the department and was an integral part of building and maintaining roads throughout the state." 

Bright Lights

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK



TxDOT photo

Nacogdoches Maintenance Office workers touched a grieving family with their sign of respect during a funeral procession: (l to r) Issac Mings, Michael Bryant, Michael Hensarling and Michael Manchack

Showing respect in the workplace is a daily occurrence among TxDOT employees, but nowhere in the employee handbook does it address what occurred recently in Nacogdoches County.

On Sept. 20 of last year, a maintenance crew was working between Nacogdoches and Martinsville when traffic slowed as a funeral procession slowly passed by.

The motorcade of vehicles carried the grieving Hopper family. At the head of the procession was the hearse carrying their mother Viola "Vi" Martin Hopper. What happened next was completely unexpected for the family and spontaneous for the maintenance crew.

Staring out car windows, the family was surprised as they saw the maintenance employees momentarily stop what they were doing, turn and face the motorcade and place their hard hats over their hearts in a show of respect.


The Nacogdoches workers did not realize that not only were they showing respect to Mrs. Hopper and her family, but Mrs. Hopper's husband, Garvis "Scotty" Hopper, who had worked for TxDOT. Mr. Hopper spent 37 years in the engineering department in the Nacogdoches County office of the Luckin District.

Mr. Hopper's son, James, said he could not miss the opportunity to let TxDOT know how proud he was of the show of respect.

"It was very impressive and respectful and we appreciated it very much. [My dad] would have been really proud of the crew," Hopper said in a handwritten note to Nacogdoches Maintenance Manager Michael Moore.

Area Engineer Shannon Famos said she is not surprised by the actions of her team.

"It makes me so proud to work with the men and women of the Nacogdoches Maintenance Office," Famos said. "They take such pride in their work and have just as much pride for their community. Showing respect for a total stranger is part of who they are."

Read more about the good work employees are doing in Bright Lights on Crossroads: <http://crossroads.txdot.gov/brightlights/>. Send information on any thank-you emails, letters or calls you or your co-workers receive to AskTxDOT so we can continue to shine Bright Lights on TxDOT employee achievements. 



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<http://crossroads/>

Exercise and eating right can make a difference

At 28 years old, Casey Upton, a transportation technician for the Amarillo Loop maintenance office in the Amarillo District, received a Type 2 diabetes diagnosis. Years of a poor diet and being overweight had taken their toll. About two years later, he developed gout, a painful condition where the body cannot process uric acid. It is often triggered by diabetes.

Since then, Upton has followed a low carb diet and ramped up his workouts to five days a week. He has lost 50 pounds and reversed the gout and diabetes. But it's taken years of dedication and unwavering support from his wife. This is his journey to wellness.

"I knew I had to make a change and it was pretty much up to me to do that," Upton said, recalling his diagnosis in 2009. At that time, he worked for a different company. He noticed he felt sleepy all of the time. He also felt thirsty, despite drinking liquids all day long. When he got his blood glucose checked, it was over 500, a level considered to be dangerous.

"I went on a strict diet of veggies and meat, cut out the sweets and all of the junk. I also cut the fats and sugars and joined a gym," he said.

But it wasn't until 2012, when he was at his highest dosages of medications for the diabetes and gout, that Upton got serious about exercise

and his blood glucose readings began to decrease. He had decided to work for TxDOT and wanted to keep his commercial driver's license.


"I have my wife to thank for pushing me," he said. They work out together at the gym every weekday morning.

"I want to make sure that I live a long time," Upton said. "Everyone is motivated to be healthier by something. I think about the future."

Upton now strictly controls his diet.

"What you eat is a choice," he said. He eats lots of chicken, fish and sweet potatoes, but rarely any sweets.

By 2015 he was no longer on medication. At his latest doctor's appointment, he was told he could wait a year for his next visit for the first time since his diagnosis.

TxDOT is offering free health screenings in 2017. See the Wellness page on Crossroads or contact your Wellness Program Coordinator. 



Exercise and eating right helped Transportation Technician Casey Upton with the Amarillo District control his diabetes and get off medication completely.

Contact your local Wellness Program Coordinator to learn about the wellness program and start your journey today!

