

# T TRANSPORTATION NEWS

July 2003

Volume 28 Number 9



SPECIAL REPORT

78th Legislature — Pages 4 - 7

## New Transportation Tools

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**On the cover:**

Photo-illustration by Stan Williams,  
Geoff Appold and Buddy Allison

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**Straight Talk** **Boldly going where no DOT has gone before**

by **Mike Behrens**

Executive Director

Thanks to Gov. Rick Perry and the 78th Legislature, TxDOT and the entire state have a set of innovative tools to move transportation forward in a new way. The pay-as-you-go approach that defined TxDOT's operations in the past is now supplemented — through HB 3588 — by new resources that give local communities more say and responsibility in how their transportation needs will be met. The Legislature added an array of new financial and land-acquisition tools to the Texas transportation utility box that can bring about quicker delivery and completion of projects. Lawmakers also broadened TxDOT's oversight of all transportation systems in the state.

With the ability to issue bonds, for example, transportation planners in communities can generate the money in the present to start building roads for the future. In addition, right of way acquisition changes allow TxDOT or regional mobility authorities to buy options to purchase land for future transportation projects at today's prices — a huge saving in any transportation budget.

HB 3588 presents us with a whole new way of doing business, and that'll take some getting used to for all of us. In the coming months, we'll be getting together with you to explain how the new system will work. In addition, we'll send out educational brochures so that you can inform members of your communities, your fellow employees and potential partners on how these tools can be used to speed the delivery of transportation systems in Texas.

We'll keep sounding the message about these powerful mechanisms put into place by the Legislature to help keep Texas moving. They won't solve every mobility problem in Texas, but these new tools will make a big difference.

I have been involved in three legislative sessions, and I don't understate things when I say that this is the most significant legislation in the history of Texas transportation. Not since the department was created in 1917 has anything so completely refocused and revolutionized how we will do business and deliver infrastructure.

The timing is right. This state is growing by 30,000 people a month. We face congestion, pollution and the erosion of our safety on the road. With this new set of tools, lawmakers have taken the bold step of entrusting TxDOT with the means to do what it will take. We must push the department forward in providing transportation that assures all communities of greater mobility, safety and air quality. A whole world of private and public partnerships promises to help keep things moving in Texas. ★

# President Behrens gets 'piece of the rock' at WASHTO

by Mike Cox  
Editor

When Executive Director Mike Behrens took over on June 18 as the new president of the Western Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (WASHTO) he didn't get a gavel — he got a rock.

"This is an official Wyoming gavel," Wyoming DOT Director and outgoing president Sleeter Dover told Behrens. "The speaker of the house uses this in Cheyenne. You'll be able to call all meetings to order and help decide votes."

Behrens received the rock at the closing banquet of WASHTO's summer meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Being president of WASHTO —

which includes 18 Western states — also puts Behrens on the executive committee of the parent organization, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). Though his term as WASHTO president is one year, he will stay on the AASHTO executive committee for another year as WASHTO past-president, he said.

Behrens said he made two main points in his brief acceptance talk: The nation has a tremendous need for improved transportation, and those who provide it need to communicate with the public.

"We really need to tell our story," he said he told the delegates. "If people know what we do, that builds grassroots support. It will get them

talking to their elected officials and help us get the support we need."

With Congress currently considering reauthorization of transportation funding, getting the word out about the importance of transportation to America is doubly important, he said.

"I guarantee legislators and others will listen to our message a lot more if it comes from our constituents," he said in Utah.

TxDOT will host the WASHTO agency directors next spring in Austin, Behrens said. The summer 2004 WASHTO meeting will be in Kalispell, Mont.

"It's a good forum to exchange ideas," Behrens said of the organization he now heads. ★

## Letter from the editor



Did you enjoy your July Fourth? On holidays, we get a chance to do things we like, whether it's barbecue and fireworks in the summer or turkey and football in the fall and winter. One of the things I enjoy most about the big four holidays — July Fourth, Labor Day, Christmas and New Year's — is something I no longer have to do.

For more than a decade, I spent those holidays counting dead bodies. No, I was not working for the medical examiner's office or a funeral home. But what I did was just about as grim. I was in charge of a public awareness program at the Department of Public Safety in which we tried to promote traffic safety by estimating the number of people who might die on the state's highways during a given holiday period. Then, periodically throughout that holiday, we contacted the news media to release the latest death count.

My job was to read law enforcement reports containing the details

of traffic fatalities and condense the information for public release, trying to maintain a balance between shock value and taste. Needless to say, this was not a particularly uplifting way to spend a holiday. Over the years, I wrote of the senseless deaths of hundreds of people, from babies to great-grandparents.

Eventually, the program was phased out as we looked for better ways to impress Texans with the importance of watching their speed, wearing their safety belts, and not drinking and driving.

Sadly, Texas still leads the nation in alcohol-related fatalities. During 2000, the last full year for which statistics are available, 1,193 people died in alcohol-related crashes in the state.

TxDOT has begun a new anti-DWI effort called "Drink, Drive, Go to Jail." Coordinated by Traffic Operations, the campaign features radio and television spots in English and Spanish focusing on that short but important message.

The ads will air during programs typically watched or heard by men between 21 and 34, the age group most likely to drive and drink.

Let's hope they get the message.

★ ★ ★

As this issue of TNews went to press, the Legislature had convened for a special session to consider redistricting. On June 30 the governor expanded his call to include 28 other matters related to state government organization.

Legislators will consider some cleanup issues affecting TxDOT, but the heavy lifting occurred during the regular session. The biggest bill was House Bill 3588, the most comprehensive transportation bill since the passage of the measure creating a state highway department in 1917.

The 311-page bill still is being analyzed, but we know enough about it and other legislation affecting the agency to make that a major focus of this issue. It is a big deal for transportation in Texas.

— Mike Cox

# \$ incentive spurs TxDOT retirements

“We will continue to provide the means for safe and efficient transportation systems for all of Texas, even as we witness the departure of a great deal of TxDOT talent and knowledge.” — Mike Behrens

by **Tim Cunningham**  
Public Information Office

Hundreds of veteran TxDOT employees will decide in coming weeks whether to retire by Aug. 31. They are among a wave of nearly 11,000 state employees lured by a cash “carrot” figured at 25 percent of their annual pay — if they retire by the deadline.

The 78th Texas Legislature, facing a \$9.9 billion revenue shortfall, cut \$21 million in spending by approving HB 3208, which includes the incentive. The legislation, signed June 20 by Gov. Rick Perry, took immediate effect.

TxDOT has 2,139 employees eligible for the incentive over the next two years and 1,451 are eligible to retire with the bonus by this Aug. 31.

“For some, the incentive will be very attractive,” says Patti Ball, project administrator in the Human Resources Division.

Tax implications of the incentive payment loom large among the considerations affecting the decision whether to retire. “Many people will choose not to take the incentive because, in their view, the timing just isn’t right,” Ball says.

Retirement system planners estimate 30 percent of those eligible to retire will take advantage of the incentive, Ball said.

Besides reducing the number of employees working in an agency, the early retirements mean possible promotion opportunities for remaining employees — as well as the likelihood of greater workloads.

With more than 600 employees likely to take the retirement incentive over the next two years, TxDOT will lose centuries of accumulated experience.

TxDOT Executive Director Mike Behrens said the department would face the present challenge as it has so many others. “We will continue to provide the means for safe and efficient transportation systems for all of Texas,” Behrens says, “even as we witness the departure of a great deal of TxDOT talent and knowledge.”

Senate Bill 1370, signed into law on June 18, also affects many TxDOT employees. The law changes the minimum age for eligibility to receive health insurance through the Texas Employees Retirement System (ERS).

The minimum age for eligibility to receive full benefits (annuity and paid health insurance) had been 60. Under the new law, taking effect Sept. 1, the required minimum age for full benefits is 65. As in the past, a decade of service also is required.

An employee whose years of service and age equal 80 is still eligible to retire and receive full benefits. Legislation did not change the so-called “Rule of 80.”

No changes were made to retirement eligibility. Employees who have at least five years of service and are age 60 can retire and receive a retirement annuity. Under existing rules, however, employees with less than 10 years of service who elect to retire do not qualify for state-paid health insurance.

ERS confirms that the state will continue to pay all of the health insurance premiums for full-time employees and half of the premiums for dependents in the 2004 plan year beginning Sept. 1.

HB 2425 increases the accrual of vacation time by an additional hour per month based on length of service. For instance, an employee accruing eight hours of vacation per month now receives nine hours. In sum, employees receive an additional 12 hours of vacation accrual for the year. The law also provides for an increased carryover of vacation time.

Details of the legislative changes will be posted at the department’s intranet site for the Human Resources Division and at the ERS Web site. Employees with specific questions should consult with their work group’s human resources officer. Other consultations are available with advisers from ERS, which has scheduled a number of pre-retirement seminars across the state during the summer. ☆

# Additional new laws affect TxDOT workers

Several other laws passed during the 78th Legislature's regular session may affect TxDOT employees. They include:

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR DONATING ORGAN, BONE MARROW, OR BLOOD (HB 89):** Provides that a state employee is entitled to a leave of absence without a deduction in salary for the time needed to permit the employee to serve as a bone marrow or organ donor. Also provides that the leave of absence may not exceed five working days in a fiscal year to serve as a bone marrow donor. The limit is 30 working days in a fiscal year to serve as an organ donor. Also provides that a state agency shall allow each agency employee sufficient time off, without a deduction in salary or accrued leave, to donate blood. Provides that the employee may not receive time off unless the employee obtains approval from the employee's supervisor before taking the time off. After taking the time off, the employee must provide the employee's supervisor with proof that the employee donated blood during the time off. Provides that an employee may receive time off not more than four times in a fiscal year to donate blood.

**ETHICS OF PUBLIC SERVANTS (HB 1606):** Strengthens the ethics requirements for public servants and public employees. Prohibits state employees from knowingly soliciting, accepting or agreeing to accept anything the employee knows or should know would not be offered but for their position. Employees who violate this law will be subject to termination.

**EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT SYSTEM WAITING PERIOD (HB 2359):** Provides for a delay of 90 days before a new employee, or rehired employee (who has withdrawn previous retirement contributions) would begin to receive service credit. Applies to employees hired or rehired before Sept. 1, 2005.

**COMPENSATION AND BENEFIT PROVISIONS (HB 2425):** Allows agencies to increase the salary of an employee who laterally transfers within the agency by 3.4 percent.

**RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PAYMENTS (HB 3442):** Allows retention payments up to \$5,000 for eligible employees, as determined by the chief administrator. Considerations include how critical the position is, evidence of high turnover rates for the position, evidence of a shortage of employees qualified for the position.

**HUMAN RESOURCES STAFFING RATIO (HB 3442):** Requires agencies with 500 or more full-time equivalents (FTEs) to achieve a ratio of human-resources employees to staff of not more than one human resources employee for every 85 staff members. For agencies with fewer than 500 FTEs, the feasibility of contracting the HR function will be studied.

**MANAGEMENT-TO-STAFF RATIO (HB 3442):** Requires agencies with more than 100 FTEs to reduce the management-to-staff ratio to one manager for every 11 employees by Aug. 31, 2007. The ratios will be phased in: 1:8 by March 31, 2004; 1:9 by Aug. 31, 2005; and 1:10 by Aug. 31, 2006.

**CONTINUATION AND FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS (SB 277):** Specific amounts for licensing fees have been deleted and replaced with "amounts reasonable and necessary to cover the costs of administering." Fees likely will be increased, but the amount is not yet known. The board may waive any prerequisite to obtaining a license for an applicant after reviewing the applicant's credentials and determining that the applicant holds a license issued by another jurisdiction that has licensing requirements substantially equivalent to those of Texas. The board shall recognize, prepare, or administer continuing-education programs for license holders.

**CONDITIONAL GRANT PROGRAM (SB 1876):** Establishes eligibility for the program based on "economic disadvantage" and deletes statutory reference to women and minority applicants. ☆

## New law gives TxDOT unprecedented authority 'Tool kit' broadens funding, right of way, mobility options

# HB 3588

by **Judy Curtis**  
Managing Editor

**A**n array of new statutory tools has equipped TxDOT with unprecedented authority to deliver transportation to Texans faster, at better value and cleaner.

HB 3588, signed into law June 19 by Gov. Rick Perry, is the most important transportation bill in Texas since passage of House Bill 2 in 1917, an 11-page measure that created the state highway department. The new law, born of the 78th legislative session, is 311 pages long, divided into 20 articles, and contains some 77,750 words. That's nearly one word for every center-line mile of highway in Texas.

"The Legislature and governor have entrusted the commission with the most sweeping and flexible authority in the history of transportation in this country," says Transportation Commissioner Ric Williamson. "It is up to us as commissioners and employees to deliver transportation projects faster and cheaper than we ever have in the past, and we can do it. We have the tools. We have the people. We have the vision."

This tool kit — expanding funding, right of way and overall mobility options — will play a large role in the department's ability to fulfill many of the state's pending transportation needs.

The foundation for the law involves:

- Local control, giving communities the authority and flexibility they need to solve their own transportation

problems

- Toll roads, recognizing that they are the fastest way to improve mobility and safety in Texas
- The private sector, creating full-fledged partnerships on a scale unheard of in transportation implementation
- Rail, giving TXDOT for the first time ever the authority to build and manage rail infrastructure
- New privately funded transportation corridors, combining highways, rail and utilities to provide long-range transportation benefits while retaining funds for still more projects

"I appreciate the Legislature's placing transportation so high up on its list during a period when severe budget cuts had to be made," says Deputy Executive Director Steve Simmons. "While this new transportation legislation will change the way we do business, I know the employees of the department will take on these new challenges and responsibilities with the same enthusiasm and aggressiveness as they always do. You have to remember, we are TxDOT, and when our employees are asked to do something, they find the way to get it done."

Several key components of HB 3588 amount to a new business model for TxDOT. These include:

- **Regional mobility authorities (RMAs)**, which have new powers to construct, maintain and operate turnpike projects, giving local governments more control over highways within their jurisdiction. Parts of the

■ See HB 3588, Page 7

## HB 3588: TxDOT's tool kit for future

Continued from Page 6

state highway system can now be converted to turnpikes and transferred to an RMA by the commission. RMAs can now issue revenue bonds and have gained the authority of eminent domain. "Transportation decisions need to be made at the local level," says Simmons. "And RMAs are a key part of that."

■ **Toll roads**, considered the fastest way to improve mobility and safety in Texas, gained new clout through HB 3588. For instance, the law allows TxDOT to pour as much as \$800 million a year into toll equity, giving regional groups financial help when they are creating a toll project that hasn't yet produced revenue.

■ **Bonds**, a means of leveraging money in various transportation funds, would increase TxDOT's ability to pay for new projects. On Sept. 13, Texas voters will consider a constitutional amendment authorizing the commission to issue bonds secured by the state highway fund.

The new authority would free TxDOT of the "pay as you go" approach and replace it with the ability to pay for roads over time, just as home buyers do. If passed, Proposition 14 could generate \$3 billion for transportation in Texas, with at least \$600 million used for safety projects. If approved, the amendment also will give short-term borrowing ability to TxDOT. That will prevent a temporary cash crunch from delaying payments to contractors.

In addition, the Legislature took the historic step of capitalizing the Texas Mobility Fund. Ultimately, this could add up to an additional \$3 billion in bonds.

■ **Comprehensive development agreements (CDAs)**, giving TxDOT clear authority to partner with the private sector in financing, constructing and operating state highways. The agreements can combine design and construction of a turnpike, reducing costs and speeding project delivery. The new power will enable TxDOT to place project financing, right of way acquisition, turnpike operation or maintenance into a single agreement. RMAs also have the ability to enter into CDAs.

■ **New transportation options**, such as the Trans Texas Corridor, are now open to TxDOT. Instead of improving the transportation system one small piece at a time, Texas will gain through the Trans Texas Corridor more mobility and safety by building new road, rail and utility toll corridors parallel to existing highways.

In addition, the law gives TxDOT for the first time ever the authority to build and manage rail infrastructure. Rail is key to boosting economic prosperity in the state since companies seeking to relocate in Texas require reliable and cost-effective ways to ship their products.

Despite scores of changes, Simmons says, the basic role for TxDOT won't be all that different as the department moves forward. However, he says, "We'll have to change the way we think when we approach a project. It's a radically different way of doing business because we've never had all these tools." ☆

To view the bill, go to [www.capitol.state.tx.us](http://www.capitol.state.tx.us).

On first pull-down menu, click on "78th Regular Session - 2003". In the second box, type "HB 3588" and click "go."

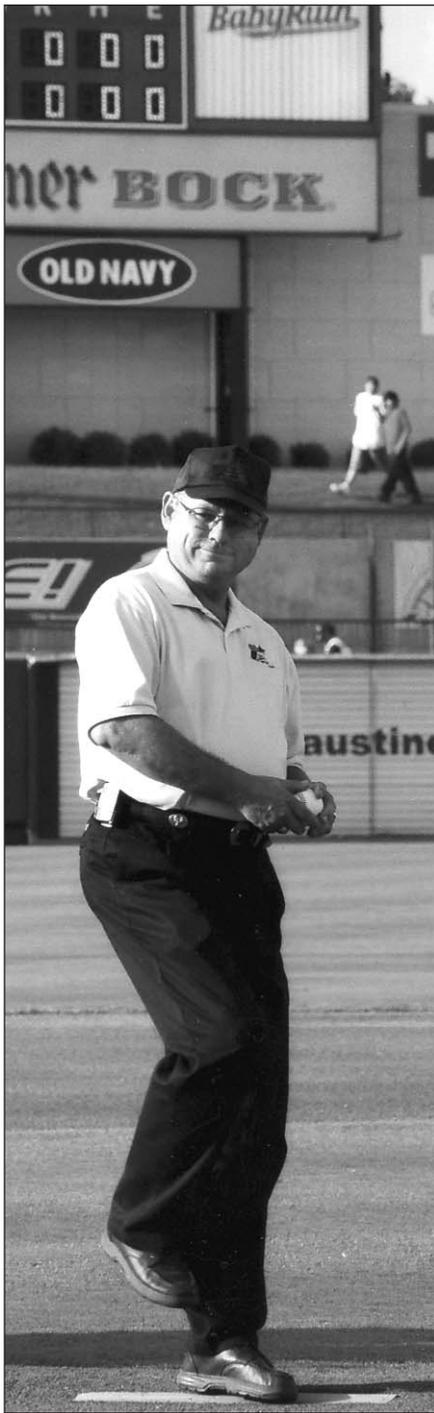
## Beyond HB 3588

While HB 3588 took the spotlight as the most transformative piece of transportation legislation to pass in decades, other bills that became law will also affect TxDOT and transportation in Texas. For example:

■ **Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP)**: This plan was authorized during the 2001 session to offer financial incentives for projects that will reduce emissions of nitrogen oxides — ultimately reducing ground-level ozone pollution. Now, TERP has a source of funding through increased fees for title applications for all motor vehicles and surcharges for some diesel-powered vehicles. Drivers in affected parts of Texas will pay \$33 for a title application — up by \$20. Affected counties are selected by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality based on their air quality. The fees are collected by county tax assessors and processed through the TxDOT registration and titling system. Title application fees will be \$28 in other, non-affected parts of Texas.

■ **Point of Collection**: The law now requires the collection of motor fuels taxes from the 44 terminal owners instead of the 2,374 distributors. By collecting the taxes higher up in the marketing chain, it is estimated that the state could generate an additional \$311 million a year from both state and federal sources for State Highway Fund 6 and education.

■ **Mobility Fund Capitalization**: HB 3588 funds the Texas Mobility Fund by redirecting approximately \$240 million in annual fees collected by the Department of Public Safety that are currently deposited into the general revenue fund. Those fees include driver licenses, vehicle inspections and driver's license records. Based on the estimated amount of funding, the fund could eventually be leveraged to allow the issuance of approximately \$3 billion in bonds. Provisions in HB 3588 delay this funding until FY 2006 to help resolve the state's current budget crisis. ☆



TxDOT photo / Kevin Stillman

**THE WINDUP — TxDOT Executive Director Mike Behrens threw out the first pitch at the Dell Diamond June 24 in front of a hometown crowd of 10,920 as the Round Rock Express honored transportation in Texas. The Frisco Rough Riders went on to ride rough over the Express, 8-4.**

## NICHOLS RE-APPOINTED

Gov. Rick Perry has re-appointed Transportation Commission member Robert L. Nichols, of Jacksonville, who has been a member of the three-member commission since 1997. His term expires in February 2009.

## 'DEAN' OF ENGINEERS: SO LONG

William C. Garbade will retire as district engineer for the Austin District effective Aug. 31. In the post since June 1987, Garbade currently has the longest tenure of any district engineer.

Garbade has guided the planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance of the transportation system in the 11-county district during a time of explosive population growth, particularly along the I-35 corridor in Travis, Hays and Williamson counties. His leadership resulted in the widening of I-35 from four lanes to six lanes throughout the district. Also, he led development and construction of two major freeway projects in Austin (U.S. 183 and U.S. 290/SH 71).

Beginning his TxDOT career in 1964 as a summer-hire in the Yoakum District's Victoria office, in 1965 he moved to the San Antonio District, where he worked in the Seguin and Pearsall areas. From 1980 to 1986, Garbade was resident engineer for Northern Bexar County. In September 1986, he was named director of TxDOT's Maintenance and Operations Division.

## LAWRANCE SMITH RETIRING

Lawrance R. Smith will retire as director of the Motor Carrier Division effective Aug. 31 after nearly 34 years with TxDOT. He has been the division's only director since it was created in 1995.

Smith developed a multi-agency "one-stop shop" approach to credentialing motor carriers and has been committed to customer service, innovation, and partnering with the trucking industry. He also has been a regional and national transportation leader in promoting uniform motor-

carrier laws, regulations and practices nationwide.

Beginning as a summer employee in 1967 with TxDOT's Motor Vehicle Division (later renamed Vehicle Titles and Registration), Smith came to work full time as a motor-vehicle title examiner in 1971. He advanced in VTR, serving as deputy director of the division from 1993 to 1995. His leadership was instrumental in developing TxDOT's registration and titling system with county tax assessor-collectors across the state. More than 18.7 million vehicles are registered annually.

## RALLS RECEIVES HEWES AWARD

Bridge Division Director Mary Lou Ralls received the Dr. L. I. Hewes Award at the June meeting of the Western Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. Presented in Salt Lake City, the award recognizes her contributions to the highway development program. She is the tenth engineer from Texas to receive the award since its inception in 1952.

## YOAKUM'S BAYLESS TO RETIRE

Melvin Bruce Bayless will retire as Yoakum District engineer effective Aug. 31 after more than three decades of service with the department. He was appointed district engineer in July 1998.

Joining TxDOT in 1965, Bayless worked as a summer-hire engineering aide in the Yoakum District. He began full time as an engineering assistant in Yoakum in 1970. He moved to the Del Rio District's (now Laredo District) Carrizo Springs Area Office in 1974, and then returned to the Yoakum District in 1978 as an area engineer in Columbus. He also served in the La Grange Area Office and the Wharton Area Office, holding a variety of other posts in the district during his career.

His work includes the design and construction of off-system and on-system bridges, and projects on SH 35, SH 71, U.S. 59, U.S. 77 and Interstate 10. ☼



## LUBBOCK DISTRICT

**From:** Chief Deputy Tommy Binford,  
Garza County Sheriff's Office

Please accept this letter of appreciation from my staff and myself. Your immediate assistance to a possible hazardous situation was greatly appreciated by this department and the citizens of Post.

This type of assistance proves your dedicated professionalism and has brought credit upon yourself and your department. We look forward to continuing the camaraderie between departments and would again like to say, "Thank you."

*(This letter was sent to Mackey Sappington, maintenance supervisor in Post, Lubbock District, in appreciation for maintenance technician Carlton Jolly's help with traffic control on the day the Space Shuttle Columbia crashed.)*

## MOTOR CARRIER DIVISION

**From:** Richard Laird,  
Baton Rouge, LA

I called to get a permit for a load we were hauling from Baton Rouge to Houston. I didn't have all the information that I needed to get the permit. Your permit officers were great. First I got **Karen Priebe** and she told me what I needed to get the permit. In addition to her being able to help me, her attitude was great! I appreciate her willingness to help and her refreshing attitude about doing a good job for the state of Texas.

Please tell Karen how much I appreciated what she did for me. I explained to her that I had never gotten a Texas permit and her willingness to be helpful really made my day.

When I called back, I got **Leah Aparicio** and it was a repeat of the first call. I can't say how much this meant to me to be walked through

the permit. The degree of professionalism these two employees exhibited is a credit to Texas and the department of transportation.

Finally, to the TxDOT crew I say "thanks" once again. I am looking forward to getting another permit!

*(Karen Priebe and Leah Aparicio are permit officers with the Motor Carrier Division. This letter was received as e-mail to the division's response line.)*

## ODESSA DISTRICT

**From:** Roger Langlie,  
Crystal, MN

The month of March my wife and I were going through your large state . . . when the driver of a passing car pointed to the fifth wheel we were pulling. I pulled over on the shoulder and got out to see what the problem was. To my surprise, I had a tire that was shredded on the trailer.

I got the jack out and started to jack the trailer up when a Texas highway truck pulled up and the two men inside asked if I needed help. I replied that I could use a hydraulic jack. They got out of the truck and told me that they would take care of the tire if I would get the spare for them.

At this time I informed them that I wanted to take the wheel off and drive to the next town that was a mile away to get a new tire. They informed me there were no services at that town.

So they called a tire repair shop they knew and gave them the information on the tire. The man at the store came back on the phone a short time later and said they had the needed tire and that they would be out there in about an hour.

I wanted to let you know what a great pair they were to stop and help me out, and call for a tire, and

the support they showed me. Their names are **Sam Jackson** and **Clay Monroe**, two of the best gentlemen in the big state of Texas.

*(This letter was sent to "Whomever it may concern" at TxDOT. Sam Jackson and Clay Monroe are maintenance technicians working in the Iraan Maintenance Section in the Odessa District.)*

## FORT WORTH DISTRICT

**From:** Sandra Magee

A few days ago, my 81-year-old mother was trying to obtain information for a disabled placard. After being transferred from one place to another, her frustration was mounting and so was her blood pressure. She told me she was going to try one more time. While searching the phone book, she came across the Texas Department of Transportation and called the number listed.

When a "real live" person answered the telephone, she began to have some relief. Although it was still the wrong number, the receptionist (**Karen Price**) assured her that she would help.

Upon explaining the process, your receptionist graciously offered to mail a copy of the form to my mother (which saved at least one trip). As promised, we received the form the next day.

You must have a very caring and most helpful receptionist to go out of her way to recognize when someone truly needs assistance. Thanks for having people who do care for the well-being of others. One person can make a world of difference, especially for someone as elderly as my mother.

*(Anthony Huggins, director of administration in the Fort Worth District, received this letter. Karen Price works in the district's human resources office.)*



# Mile Markers

## Abilene District

**40 years**  
John R. Allred  
**30 years**  
David L. Stinson  
**25 years**  
Larry E. Decker  
Benito C. Olibas Jr.  
**20 years**  
Doyce M. Lee  
**15 years**  
Gary D. Stevens  
**5 years**  
Carrie C. Hart  
Daniel L. Martin  
Michael J. Martin  
Roberto E. Rios

## Amarillo District

**25 years**  
Cody F. Cowden  
Anthony J. Naples  
Joe D. Prather  
Phillip T. Stevens  
**20 years**  
Louis D. Camp  
Thomas E. Nagel  
Patricia G. Wagner  
**15 years**  
Brenda P. Lowe  
Mark E. Peil  
Larry L. Wyble  
**10 years**  
Michael D. Cummings  
Jeffrey N. Ewing  
James R. Hammett  
Ray E. Leron  
Kenneth W. Prestidge  
**5 years**  
Joseph L. Hudson  
Roxanne Jennings  
Kevin K. Kerlee  
Gregory D. Mayfield  
Joellen K. Miller  
Marlon W. Mitchell  
John C. Tobias Jr.

## Atlanta District

**30 years**  
Bobby Ziedy  
**25 years**  
Teresa A. Willis  
**20 years**  
James G. Clark  
**15 years**  
William Holmes Jr.  
William T. Parrott  
**10 years**  
Gerald L. Hatten  
Loretta A. Huett  
Glenda K. Reese  
Cory Taylor  
**5 years**  
David K. Braley  
Charles W. Obenoskey  
Terry S. Stewart  
Laura E. Teague

## Austin District

**30 years**  
Leland R. Gebert  
**25 years**  
Floyd C. Karstetter  
Fernando R. Lerma  
Daniel L. Smith  
**20 years**  
Patricia L. Crews-Weight  
Johnnie L. MacHu  
**15 years**  
Robert A. Cochran  
Charles D. Jackson  
Rodney D. Stabeno

## 10 years

Barbara A. Daniels  
Jeffrey R. Gill  
Jimmy W. Hibler  
Roy C. Lueders  
Henry Ramirez  
Lucio Trujillo  
**5 years**  
Jose Caldera  
Pedro M. Gomez  
Lawrence E. Overfelt  
Bobby L. Schneider  
Ronald L. Schulze

## Beaumont District

**25 years**  
Betty B. Brown  
Terry K. Kimmey  
Charlotte K. Warner  
**20 years**  
Jay D. Kelley  
**15 years**  
Myron M. Broussard  
**10 years**  
Mattie T. Hawthorne  
Dustin E. Wilkey  
**5 years**  
Jason P. Brown  
Wayne A. David  
Gary L. Korns  
Gary C. Murphy

## Brownwood District

**15 years**  
Byron D. Burgess  
Jay Green  
**10 years**  
Earnest R. Cole  
Lindy J. Harrington  
Jerry G. Johnson  
Victoria Z. McKee  
William K. Munden  
**5 years**  
Edward R. Gillette

## Bryan District

**25 years**  
Katherine W. Hall  
**20 years**  
Michael J. Imhoff  
David W. Martin  
**15 years**  
Howard C. Elrod, II  
Jessie M. Glover  
Paul A. Mitchell  
**10 years**  
Maurice W. Jacob  
Roger D. Montgomery  
John Sifuentes Jr.  
**5 years**  
Larry R. Tanner

## Childress District

**10 years**  
Ricky D. Pruitt  
**5 years**  
Anita M. Thompson

## Corpus Christi District

**25 years**  
Jose A Vela Jr.  
**20 years**  
Mark A. Janysek  
Victor P. Lara  
Annirene S. Liberto  
Paula M. Sales-Evans  
**15 years**  
Jose M. Garcia  
Ralph G. Gustafson  
Victor E. Vourcos  
**10 years**  
Calistro Gonzales  
Karla D. Moczygamba  
**5 years**  
Joe D. Deleon Jr.  
Delfino Molina  
Guadalupe V. Villarreal

## Dallas District

**45 years**  
Billy B. Stewart  
**35 years**  
Douglas D. Fraley  
**30 years**  
Joseph L. Howard  
**25 years**  
Geary W. Burnside  
**20 years**  
Robert L. Belvins  
Larry L. Ferguson  
Sue F. Reid  
Raymond A. Schmidt  
Thomas R. Tomlin  
Andrew L. Wilhete  
**15 years**  
Jose P. Arriola  
John C. Beck III  
Robert E. Brown  
Tracey L. Friggle  
Fred T. Gober  
James E. Hill  
David T. Lott  
Ibrahim A. Musa  
Donald S. Stockburger  
**10 years**  
Susan E. Clark  
Gregory R. Denton  
Clyde D. Hatcher  
Candace G. Henley  
Chris T. Jordan  
James A. Lang  
Walter E. Terry  
**5 years**  
Chad A. Kirby  
Ernest D. McFarland  
Kent E. Rivers  
Demond L. Taylor  
Dana L. Watson

## El Paso District

**35 years**  
Manuel D. Murillo  
**25 years**  
Cesar Gonzales  
**20 years**  
Gilbert Cangas  
**15 years**  
Oscar A. Arzaga  
Jerry Moreno  
**10 years**  
Jesus Avila  
Ricardo Cortez  
Blanca G. Serrano-Rivera  
Gary L. Tarter  
**5 years**  
Alfonso Gamboa

## Fort Worth District

**30 years**  
Robert A. Hooks  
**25 years**  
Otto Lopez Jr.  
Jessie E. Pike  
Mark C. Schluter  
Andrew J. Williams Jr.  
**20 years**  
Monty W. Hale  
Donald R. Lynch  
Garland R. Parchman  
Aaron M. Pruitt  
**15 years**  
Jacob R. Dunbar Jr.  
Steven T. Murray  
Andrew J. Wimsatt  
**10 years**  
Eugene E. Steele Jr.  
**5 years**  
Leslie A. Mabry  
Donald J. Wright

## Houston District

**35 years**  
Dwight K. Eggert

## 30 years

Gary D. Hall  
**25 years**  
William H. Jarrell  
Peter Rodriguez  
Craig A. Rollins  
Larry D. Short  
**20 years**  
Irma C. Blue  
Rodney W. Saunders  
**15 years**  
Richard L. Adams  
Evelyn A. Bunac  
David T. Gibbons  
Elizabeth M. Keasling  
Kiting Kwok  
Sherry A. Spears  
Mike E. VanWinkle  
**10 years**  
Delbert W. Aldredge  
David S. Jeffreys  
Gail E. Morea  
Maylee H. Palmer  
Robbie J. Pugh  
Gary W. Skolaut  
Troy A. Wawarofsky  
**5 years**  
Cynthia A. Briskin  
Richard F. Carrier  
Darryl D. Cash  
John M. Elmore  
Curt Kamman  
Nhan T. Le  
Kiara D. McGregor  
Saeid S. Moradmand  
Sandra L. Sappington  
William D. Sims  
Keri L. Smith

## Laredo District

**25 years**  
Jose Gonzalez Jr.  
**10 years**  
Reynaldo Garza  
**5 years**  
Fernando Martinez

## Lubbock District

**30 years**  
Armando A. Perez  
**25 years**  
Bertha W. Gambrell  
Randell C. James  
Raymond Perkins  
**20 years**  
Victor J. Borrego  
David Huerta  
Michael T. Quisenberry  
**15 years**  
Arron R. Justus  
**10 years**  
Jarl J. Vanness  
**5 years**  
Bradley J. Cimental  
Scott P. Coffman  
Marvin Garcia  
Timothy L. Hogue  
Alexander Sanchez  
Gilbert Sepulveda  
Kenneth D. Wood

## Lufkin District

**30 years**  
Ronald D. McCarty  
**25 years**  
Steven K. Barton  
John H. Horace  
**20 years**  
Michael O. Myers  
**10 years**  
Jason B. Allen  
Sam A. Hankla  
Robert W. Mettlen  
John H. Parker  
Rocky D. White

## 5 years

Chester O. Dixon  
Maxey R. Wynn

## Odessa District

**25 years**  
Kenneth I. Mikesell  
**20 years**  
Nolberto T. Aguirre  
Mark A. McCollum  
Clemente Villa Jr.  
**15 years**  
Melissa N. Yates  
**10 years**  
Juan M. Flores Jr.  
Noel C. Ramirez

## Paris District

**15 years**  
Marsha L. Scholl  
John R. Ward  
**10 years**  
Charles R. Granstaff  
Ralph D. Hall  
Tracey L. Hankins  
Christopher E. Mountain  
Sydney N. Newman  
John R. Noe Jr.

## Pharr District

**25 years**  
Reynaldo R. Cantu  
Hector R. Carreon  
Esequiel Perez  
**10 years**  
Danny Espinoza  
Joseph E. Leal Jr.  
**5 years**  
Jesus Esquierro  
Fernando Herrera Jr.  
Ruben D. Leal  
Armando Mora  
Armando S. Rodriguez

## San Angelo District

**40 years**  
James R. Alexander Sr.  
**25 years**  
Samuel R. Gebara  
**20 years**  
John R. Dewitt Jr.  
**15 years**  
Romeo V. Perez Jr.  
**10 years**  
Stephanie B. Dewitt  
**5 years**  
Michael D. Beech  
Ricardo Benavidez  
Dionicio S. Fuentes III  
Antonio F. Gonzales  
Donnie F. Overstreet  
Ruben Ybarra

## San Antonio District

**30 years**  
Martha G. Borth  
James M. Hubbard  
**25 years**  
Thomas L. Bohl  
Robert A. Bohlen  
Lorin M. Brehmer  
Patrick C. Brown  
Dennis W. Goodall  
Tim J. Haass  
Conrad J. Hillert  
Travis A. McDaniel  
Isaac H. Reno  
Maria C. Trevino  
Dennis M. Vackar  
Kenneth H. Wilson  
**20 years**  
Dee B. Smith  
Marie E. Williams  
**15 years**  
Joel K. Davenport Jr.  
Ronald E. Korzekwa  
Brent W. Rainosek

## 10 years

Marvin D. Hatter  
Lonny R. Williams  
**5 years**  
Odessa H. Rivers  
Eugene M. Trevino  
Velinda Viesca-Garza

## Tyler District

**25 years**  
John W. Lehmann  
James R. McCasland  
**20 years**  
Mark D. Wyatt  
**15 years**  
Bruce E. Johnson  
John W. Wickware  
**10 years**  
Stanley D. Traylor  
**5 years**  
James R. Garrett  
Dennis J. Greeson  
Sheena K. Stern  
James D. Walton  
Vernon M. Webb

## Waco District

**25 years**  
Richard J. Skopik  
**20 years**  
William A. Fitch  
Alfred L. Husak  
**15 years**  
Donna C. Culverhouse  
Charles W. Manske  
Marvin R. Shilling  
**10 years**  
Roger F. Brooks  
Howard H. Ellinger  
Steven L. Hill  
**5 years**  
Guy G. Hilliard  
Lori A. Husak  
Tracey M. Love  
J.T. Massingill  
Layton D. Nehring  
Richard E. Simons

## Wichita Falls District

**15 years**  
Mickey L. Marlow  
Kevin C. Nichols  
**10 years**  
David S. Duck  
Daneena L. Hoban  
Tamera H. Marlow  
Bobby R. Marshall  
Perry A. Provence  
Harold L. Rutherford Jr.  
Richey L. Willis  
**5 years**  
Erin N. Wilson

## Yoakum District

**35 years**  
Diane G. Havlik  
**30 years**  
Raymond L. Renken  
David S. Schneider  
**25 years**  
Rudolph Garcia  
Donald G. Johnson  
D. Rogers  
**20 years**  
Alberta T. Garley  
Donald E. Templin  
Michael W. Valenta  
**10 years**  
Darrell W. Gajewski  
Lance E. Muenich  
Johnny C. Novak

■ See Mile Markers, Page 11

## Exit Ramp



**May 2003  
Austin District**  
William R. Ashabranner  
Construction Inspector  
45 Years

**Beaumont District**  
John S. Jones  
Engineering Technician  
27 Years

**Fort Worth District**  
Larry G. Pack  
Transportation  
Maintenance Technician  
30 Years

Billy C. Page  
Public Information  
Supervisor  
30 Years

**Houston District**  
Anthony W. Mapp  
Engineering Specialist  
26 Years

Lewis L. Lawrence  
Engineering Technician  
37 Years

**Laredo District**  
Joe Diaz  
Maintenance Crew chief  
40 Years

**San Antonio District**  
James V. Carr  
Transportation  
Maintenance Specialist  
39 Years

Raul H. Salas  
Motor Vehicle  
Technician  
33 Years

**Wichita Falls District**  
Clinton D. Neth  
Design Technician  
19 Years

**Construction  
Division**  
Gerald D. Lankes  
Director  
20 Years

**Motor Carrier  
Division**  
Kathy Hunt  
Executive Assistant  
33 Years

**Public Transportation  
Division**  
Margot D. Massey  
Director  
29 Years

**June 2003  
Abilene District**  
Doyle L. Donham  
Maintenance Section  
Supervisor  
37 Years

**Bryan District**  
John B. McClellan  
Engineering Technician  
19 Years

**Fort Worth District**  
Luis Rodriguez  
Survey Specialist  
32 Years

**Houston District**  
Henry L. Jones  
Engineering Technician  
26 Years

**Waco District**  
Barbara A. Ashley  
Maintenance Support  
Technician  
5 Years

**Fort Worth District**  
Robert A. Hooks  
Maintenance Section  
Supervisor Manager  
30 Years

**Pharr District**  
Gilberto Garza  
Engineering Technician  
30 Years

## Calendar

**2003**

**JULY**

**1-3** DE/DD/OD meeting, Austin  
**1-2** Bid Letting, Austin, CST  
**4** Independence Day (holiday)  
**9** Research Oversight Committee Meeting, Austin, RTI  
**15-17** PMIS Visual Rater Certification Class, Corpus Christi, CST  
**16** PMIS South Region Pre-work Meeting, Corpus Christi, CST  
**16-18** Public Procurement Management, Austin, GSD  
**22-24** PMIS Visual Rater Certification Class, Austin, CST  
**23** PMIS NE Region Pre-work Meeting, Austin, CST  
**29-31** PMIS Visual Rater Certification Class, Lubbock, CST  
**30** PMIS West Region Pre-work Meeting, Lubbock, CST  
**31** Commission Meeting, Midland/Odessa  
**31** Lake Belton Bridge Precast Bent Cap Demonstration Workshop, Temple, BRG

**AUGUST**

**5** Process & Evaluate Bids, Austin, GSD  
**5-6** Bid Letting, Austin, CST  
**5-7** PMIS Visual Rater Certification Class, Austin, CST  
**6** PMIS NW Region Pre-work Meeting, Austin, CST  
**12-14** PMIS Visual Rater Certification Class, Beaumont, CST  
**11-14** 2003 Design Conference, Corpus Christi, DES  
**19-21** PMIS Visual Rater Certification Class, Austin, CST  
**20** PMIS East Region Pre-work Meeting, Austin, CST  
**20-21** Alternate Dispute Resolution, Austin, GSD  
**26-28** PMIS Visual Rater Certification Class, Dallas, CST  
**27** LBJ's Birthday (holiday—minimum staff)  
**28** Commission Meeting, Austin

**SEPTEMBER**

**1** Labor Day (holiday)  
**5** Public Procurement, Austin, GSD  
**9-10** Bid Letting, Austin, CST  
**10-12** Advanced Public Procurement, San Antonio, GSD  
**18** Government Supply Chain, Austin, GSD  
**25** Commission Meeting, Austin

The complete TxDOT Calendar is on the intranet at <http://crossroads/org/pio/articles/calendar.htm>

## Mile Markers



Continued from Page 10

**5 years**

Andrew Esparza  
Jeffrey W. Gerdes  
David B. Hanzelka  
Bob C. Harraid Jr.  
Gay L. Keene  
David L. Mansfield  
Darrell G. Phelps

**Aviation Division**

**30 years**  
Donald R. Brown

**Bridge Division**

**5 years**  
William R. McCarthy

**Civil Rights Division**

**25 years**  
Victor M. Garcia

**Construction Division**

**40 years**  
Herbert W. Smart  
**20 years**  
Michael R. Murphy  
Terry L. Personett  
**15 years**  
Judith J. Barrada  
**10 years**  
John E. Barrett  
Mark W. McDaniel  
George E. Okwumo  
Gerald D. Peterson Jr.  
Vijayan Pillai

**Design Division**

**30 years**  
Joe T. Denton  
**10 years**  
Madhukar M. Kamble  
Shawn D. McMahon  
Ramin Z. Thomasian

**Environmental**

**Affairs Division**  
**10 years**  
Patricia A. Tiger

**5 years**

Daniel V. Harris  
Lisa J. Hart

**Finance Division**

**30 years**  
Brenda L. Nilsson  
Connie H. Spears  
**25 years**  
Sylvia A. Antle

**General Services**

**Division**  
**25 years**  
Mary R. Rendon  
John B. Tijerina  
**20 years**  
Alejandro S. Aviles  
Daniel H. Rosado  
Laura Y. Sammons  
**15 years**  
Adna R. Johnson  
**10 years**  
John R. Chambers  
Rodney J. Polivka  
Freddie L. Standley  
**5 years**  
Lynn M. Giusto  
Jack C. Mathis

**Human Resources**

**Division**  
**15 years**  
Patricia E. Callaham  
**10 years**  
Katherine S. Harrison  
Nelson Rios Gonzalez  
**5 years**  
Eleonore G. Atwood  
Clem T. Bullock

**Information Systems**

**Division**  
**35 years**  
Carolyn P. Veselka  
**25 years**  
Truc T. Tran  
**10 years**  
Judy B. Skeen

**15 years**

Karen M. Mills  
**10 years**  
Isidro R. Contreras  
Howard A. Wolfson  
**5 years**  
Ronnie G. Fewell  
Jenho C. Huang  
Yuning L. Lin

**Legislative Affairs**

**Office**  
**15 years**  
Jefferson M. Grimes

**Maintenance**

**Division**  
**10 years**  
Steven G. Prather  
**5 years**  
Yolanda J. Enriquez

**Motor Carrier**

**Division**  
**15 years**  
Pamela M. Carter  
James M. Dewbre  
**10 years**  
Bruce R. Merrill III  
**5 years**  
Mark A. Lupercio

**Occupational Safety**

**Division**  
**15 years**  
Bessie H. Mayfield  
Philip J. Pellegrino

**Texas Turnpike**

**Authority Division**  
**15 years**  
Danette R. Palenske

**Traffic Operations**

**Division**  
**30 years**  
Jerry W. Tallas  
**15 years**  
Bruce G. Hallock

# backtracks



**Somewhere, TxDOT played a part in making it easier for folks to get to church. But where? If you know anything about this photo, please let TNews know by calling Quevarra Moten at (512) 463-6397 or e-mailing her at [qmoten@dot.state.tx.us](mailto:qmoten@dot.state.tx.us).**



## **Last month unsolved...**

**For the first time since TNews began publishing a mystery photograph in each issue, we still have a mystery a month later. One retiree thought he knew where this bridge was, but the district in question checked it out and concluded it must have been somewhere else. Any other ideas? 🗳**



**T** RANSPORTATION NEWS 

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Austin, Texas 78701

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