Highlights from the Past 10 Years

2005 marks the 10th Anniversary of the TOG newsletter, INTERCHANGE. Since then we have made headway in balancing better communication within the division, organization and the research community.

The newsletter will carry “highlights” from the previous issues - some are rather humorous now that you look back, but all are about the desire of this group to grow in the fundamental principles necessary for success: Communication, Cooperation, and Continual Improvement. Sound familiar?

Enjoy a visit to the past with colleagues and friends throughout this year!

May 1995 - Name the Newsletter contest!

Considering schedule of a monthly Principle Investigators meeting...did that ever happen?

Beth Neilson joins the division

Ed’s Notes

There’s a new look to the TOG Newsletter this month on our 10th Year Anniversary. We first started publication in May 1995.

Not only is the layout different, but some of the features have changed.

“Special Points of Interest” highlights those items that may not be a full article, but are worth front page mention.

“Under The Lights” will spotlight what’s going on in the TOG family as well as new projects.

“Birthdays” are a major part of the newsletter. They continue to come around ever year!

As the monthly newsletter grows, just like the TOG organization has, please continue to watch for changes. Most of all continue to send your articles...it can’t get printed if we don’t have your news.

Speaking of change – we’re in the process of developing a new TTI Overview Brochure. The document should go to press soon. It will be a great help when discussing TTI’s capabilities with sponsors and new employees.

What were the qualifications for the Marco Polo Award?

April 1996 - Gene Hawkins, guest columnist, wrote “Keys to Successful Research with TxDOT”.

Paradox training!!!!

Do you recall “Transportation Trivia”?

“Live in such a way that you would not be ashamed to sell your parrot to the town gossip”

Will Rogers
TTI Team & TranStar - Award Recipients

The selection of the Houston TranStar Traffic Information Website as an Accenture/MIT Digital Government Award is a great honor for the TxDOT Houston District and TTI. The work that Mike Vickich, Kathy Tran, and Darrell Borchardt have all done (and continue to do) with TxDOT in developing and enhancing the TranStar website has been and will continue to be one of the most important and innovative endeavors in which we contribute to the continued success of the Houston District and TranStar.

Their work has been recognized before with awards and honors, but the Accenture/MIT recognition is special given the breadth of the award category. This award is for the most innovative digital-based state government initiative - and out of all 50 states and the thousands of programs that those states administer, the TranStar website was chosen as the best government sector digital innovation project - quite an impressive achievement!

Accenture and MIT Digital Government Awards continue their tradition of honoring and promoting high performance in government. Using the tools of technology, the organizations and individuals that earn these awards bring an increased value to citizens and staff. For more information about Accenture and MIT Digital Government Awards go to http://www.accenture.com

Congratulations - TTI Houston Office!

Under the Lights

Mike Pratt is a new employee in the Signal Operations Program (FSO). He comes to us from Northridge, California. Mike received his B.S. degree in civil engineering from UCLA and his M.S. in civil engineering from TAMU. Mike’s office is located in room 310E of the CE/TTI building.

The Signs & Markings Program would like to welcome back Jeff Miles as an Assistant Transportation Researcher effective February 2005. Jeff is located the CE/TTI Tower in room 411C.

James Williams started at the San Antonio - TransGuide office as a student worker. James is a Senior in Geography at Texas State University in San Marcos.

William Christie has joined the Dallas Office as a student worker. In addition to helping out in the office, William has been assisting TxDOT Operators at DalTrans.

Related congratulations to Edgar Kraus and Katie Mook who were married on Saturday December 4. The ceremony took place at the Hotel Valencia in San Antonio’s historic Riverwalk district. The ceremony and reception were quite beautiful and unique, and included a wonderful blend of U.S. and German traditions.

And congratulations to Jodi Carson and Joey Stubbs who were married in February in Las Vegas just prior to the ITE meeting.

Russell Henk has accepted the position as the Chair of TRB ABE40 Committee's (Critical Transportation Infrastructure Protection) Sub-Committee on Liaison & Public Policy. He will be assuming responsibility for related duties effective immediately -- this will be in addition to his duties as Secretary of the full Committee.

Jim Carvell has been appointed to the Engineering Alumni Council by the Vanderbilt University Dean of Engineering. Jim is a 19~~ graduate of Vanderbilt.

Marsha Anderson-Bomar co-chaired the Atlanta Introduce a Girl to Engineering luncheon which was the kickoff event for Engineer’s week. More than 120 girls attended. On Friday, March 4th, Marsha gave a brief presentation on the Transportation and Development Institute to the Atlanta chapter of ASCE. Marsha is the chair of the Operations and Safety Council of T&DI. Marsha was recognized by the Gwinnett County (GA) United Way Women’s Legacy. She is a nominee for the Time, Talent, Treasure and Legacy awards.

Jodi Carson, Dan Middleton and Montasir Abbas attended the two-day Coordinating Committee meeting of the Clarus weather initiative held in Las Vegas March 2 and 3. This was the second meeting of the committee whose purpose is to provide a mechanism for stakeholders in surface transportation weather to begin developing a national surface transportation weather data collection and management system which will complement the current National Weather Observation System. The goal of the Clarus initiative is to provide broader weather information support for...
On January 21, 2005, I attended a Franklin-Covey course entitled "The 4 Disciplines of Execution". The one-day course focused on using priority-setting, measuring progress, and accountability as the means by which goals are realized. The four disciplines from the course are:

1. Focus on the wildly important,
2. Create a Compelling Scoreboard,
3. Translate Lofty Goals Into Specific Actions, and
4. Hold Each Other Accountable - All of the Time

Guiding principles that were used to frame these disciplines are just as interesting as the material on achieving each discipline. Respective to each discipline, the principles/observations are:

1. Human beings are wired to do only one thing at a time with excellence,
2. People play differently when they're keeping score,
3. To achieve goals you've never achieved before, you need to start doing things you've never done before, and
4. Knowing others are counting on you raises your level of commitment.

Though the course seemed to be mostly geared toward business or sales staff, I could not help but consider the way our local TTI office organized itself around each of its project goals. In an environment where everything seems important, it is definitely going to be worth the effort to prioritize on something other than the closest approaching deadline, and to keep track of how well we are able to meet both our goals and our deadlines on the activities that are most important for our staff.

Included in the course materials was a computer program called "WorkCompass," which is designed to help keep you and your staff organized and focused on project goals. After a review of the software features I decided that it was not flexible enough to be used for the way we at TTI organize staff to meet the needs of our projects. However, our course instructor indicated that a new release of the program was due in the near future, and that this later version may fulfill our needs.

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Paul Carlson, Jerry Ullman, and Melissa Finley traveled to sunny Phoenix to attend ATSSA's 35th Annual Traffic Expo. Paul, Jerry, and Melissa collaborated on a presentation titled, "Bigger, Brighter, Better." The presentation highlighted recent and ongoing traffic control device research findings of interest to ATSSA members.

Feb. 3-5, Waco, Texas: Many from the Transportation Operations Group attended the TexITE Winter Meeting.

Feb. 27-Mar. 2, Las Vegas, ITE Technical Conference: Kay Fitzpatrick, Beverly Kuhn, Montasir Abbas, Ed Seymour, Jodi Carson, Dan Middleton and Gary Thomas attended the events. Jim Carvell attended the ITE Board of Director's meetings prior to the conference.

Russell Henk and Jim Carvell recently traveled to El Paso to present an operator's manual for Trans-Vista and an automated recordkeeping system using PDAs for HERO (TxDOT Courtesy Patrol).

Would the child you were respect the person you've become?
Anonymous

Under The Lights
(Continued from page 2)

surface transportation system operators in their efforts to improve safety, reliability and security of transportation users.

TOG Mission Statement

To facilitate innovations in transportation system operations through leadership in research, education and technology transfer.

April 2005

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<td>27 Administrative Professionals Day</td>
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Upcoming Events

- Urban Office meeting in Austin, April 12
- Administrative Professionals Day - April 27
- ITS America Annual Meeting - May 2-4, 2005; Phoenix, AZ
- TexITE Summer Meeting - June 23-25, 2005; Laredo, TX
- ITE 2005 Annual Meeting-Aug 7-10, 2005; Melbourne, Australia

New Projects

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<td>Paul Carlson</td>
<td>FHWA</td>
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<td>TxDOT</td>
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<td>Leonard Ruback</td>
<td>TxDOT</td>
<td>Use of Ethernet Technologies for ITS Field Communications</td>
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April Birthdays

- 7—Colleen Dau
- 8—Beverly Kuhn
- 10—Hassan Charara
- 16—Praprut Songchitraksa
- 21—Robert Pina
- 23—James Williams
- 25—Darrell Borchardt
- 26—Kevin Balke
- 26—Beth Neilson