ASSISTANT DIRECTOR MESSAGE

Steven Covey developed "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People." Some of you have taken his seminar. I would encourage all of you to considering taking it. I think it provides an insightful framework for work and life.

Steven’s seventh habit is "Sharpen the Saw." It is one of three issues (my 3C's) that I have advocated as important to our success: communication, cooperation, and continual improvement. TTI’s support of the professional development program is one means of sharpening the saw. However, I believe that it is also necessary for everyone to budget some time on a regular basis to sharpen the saw. It could be a couple of hours a every week or a day a month allocated to learning something new.

Make the commitment!

Tom Urbanik

TOG ANNUAL MEETING

The 1998 Transportation Operations Group Annual Meeting is scheduled for Friday, May 22 at Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historical Park. The theme is Something for Everyone.

Tired of the usual burger and fixings menu? Not a problem this year - we are having pizza and ice cream!

We are encouraging car pooling by everyone. Only those drivers who have a total of three or more in their cars will be reimbursed for the trip. It has even been suggested that there should be a prize for the most people safely transported in a vehicle.

The organizing committee is still in the planning stages of organizing the day's activities. If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact anyone on the committee.

The following people comprise the 1998 TOG Annual Meeting Organizing Committee: Robert Benz, Russell Henk, Beverly Thompson Kuhn, Beth Neilson, Sandra Schoeneman, Gerald Ullman, and Steve Venglar (chair).

Mark your calendars and make your plans to attend today!

The danger is not in a fall, but in failing to rise.
—anonymous

TOG’s Mission

Develop implementable solutions which promote a safer, more effective, more efficient, and sustainable transportation system by providing quality research, education, technology transfer, and leadership in transportation system operation.

CALENDAR MARKS

Apr 7-9  ITS PCB Workshop, entitled Deploying Integrated Intelligent Transportation Systems, Austin.
Apr 10 Ph.D. Student Seminar, 1:00-2:30 p.m., Room 304F, Julia Wilkie presenter.
Apr 10 Good Friday, (Optional TxDOT State Holiday)
Apr 10 Reading Day TAMU
Apr 11 Passover
Apr 12 Easter
Apr 15 Request for modifications sent
Apr 17 Ph.D. Student Seminar, 1:00-2:30 p.m., Room 304F, Donjoo Park presenter.
Apr 21 San Jacinto Day, (TxDOT State Holiday)
Apr 21 Aggie Muster
Apr 21-23 ITS PCB Workshop, entitled Deploying Integrated Intelligent Transportation Systems, Transtar Bldg., Houston
Apr 24 Ph.D. Student Seminar, 1:00-2:30 p.m., Room 304F, Mark Hickman presenter.
Apr 27 Islamic New Year
May 1 Ph.D. Student Seminar, 1:00-2:30 p.m., Room 304F, Paul Carlson presenter.
May 6-7 Reading Day TAMU
May 8-13 Finals
May 15-16 Commencement
May 10 Modifications due to RTT
May 10 Mothers Day
May 22 TOG Annual Meeting
May 25 Memorial Day, (TxDOT State Holiday)
May 28-29 Mentor Program: Advanced Surface Transportation Systems
Jun 1 First Summer Session begins
Jun 1-2 RMC 2, 6, and 9 Meetings in San Antonio
Jun 3-4 RMC 4, 5, and 8 Meetings in San Antonio
Jun 4-5 RMC 1, 3, and 7 Meetings in San Antonio
Jun 18-20 TEXITE summer meeting in Austin
Jun 19 Emancipation Day, (TxDOT State Holiday minimal staffing)
Jun 21 Fathers Day
Jul 4 Independence Day Holiday
Jul 7 Second Summer Session begins
IT PAYS TO READ THE INTERCHANGE!

Forty three people entered the March Interchange Newsletter secret contest. A hidden message, gave the reader instructions on how to enter. And the winner is... Renu Isaac from the Traffic Systems Program. She has won a gift certificate to Chili’s and a t-shirt. Congratulations Renu! Check out future issues for additional contests.

NEW AGREEMENT FOR ITS DEPLOYMENT RESEARCH

Last month TTI entered into a four-way agreement with TxDOT, Caltrans, and California PATH for ITS Deployment Research and Professional Capacity Building. While there are differences between the states, there are also many common problems and challenges. Under this agreement, the agencies will meet at least twice a year to exchange information on ITS implementation and prioritize research needs on ITS deployment, education, and training. TransLink® will help facilitate these meetings; and over time, we hope to include several staff from TTI to participate as topics dictate. The first meeting is scheduled for June 1998 in Houston, Texas. Washington State DOT has agreed to join this first meeting with the expectation of becoming a more permanent member to this multi-state partnership. Through this collaboration, all agencies hope to leverage their expertise and funding to maximize the benefits of their ITS programs.

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

Beth Neilson recently attended a workshop on student employment hosted by the Student Employment Office. The Student Employment Office is launching a new online job database. The Millennium System allows departments to post and close positions, review applications, and contact potential student employees on-line. The service is available for all student positions as well as graduate assistant positions. The old bulletin board method of posting jobs at the Student Employment Office is no longer available.

Please take advantage of this easy way to post jobs instead of just relying on word-of-mouth or walk-ins. Contact me with information to post any job openings you may have.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Better Business Writing Techniques Workshop

Nada Trout recently attended a Better Business Writing Techniques workshop sponsored by TAMU Human Resources Department. The class was divided into three sections: 1) Deciding to write, 2) The Writing Process, and 3) Writing Tips. The objective of the workshop was to help the participant compete against our recent “information overload” (there are appropriately two and half million e-mails daily on campus at TAMU) by developing writing skills that will save time, speak to the reader, get notice, and get action. The most interesting tips were on salutations and complimentary closings, such as:

- Greet the reader by name (never use "Whom It May Concern")
- Choose a “dearless” greeting, dropping dear all together
- Avoid using overworked and outdated closings such as truly yours (recommend using regards and sincerely).

The course was a great refresher with lots of new helpful techniques in business writing.

Nada Trout

Revising and Editing Techniques Workshop

Nada Trout also recently attended a Revising and Editing Techniques workshop. This workshop focused on the following:

- to understand the difference between editing and revising;
- to revise writing for appropriate words, sentences, paragraphs, and overall tone;
- to proofread own writing as well as writing done by other; and
- to apply techniques of the course to written exercises.

The objective of the course was to improve technical skills on how to structure a sentence and a paragraph, how to choose a word, and how to organize ideas. I personally enjoyed the class. It was informative and successful in reviewing techniques to improve revising and editing skills.

Nada Trout

Intermediate Excel Workshop

Recently, Ken Giusti of the San Antonio office, attended a training class for Intermediate Excel at New Horizons Computer Learning Center in San Antonio. Although I was familiar with some of the topics presented, I obtained enough useful information to justify the investment of time and money in taking the class. The instructor's presentation was excellent while overcoming problems with equipment malfunctions and assisting students (not me for a change) who sometimes lagged behind the rest of the class. The classroom is located conveniently close to our office and several other classes are offered at various times and dates. Based on these factors, I plan to enroll in the New Horizons Club for additional computer training at a significantly reduced cost.

Ken Giusti

Confidence is a very fragile thing.

—Joe Montana
EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT TxDOT TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

TxDOT has provided us with a four tape series on each of the following areas:
- Ft. Worth Transvision Systems Overview,
- Houston Transtar Systems Overview,
- ATMS System Overview (Austin-El Paso)
Each series is over six hours long. The video tapes are available for checkout from Beth Neilson.

SIGN VANDALISM NATIONAL WORKSHOP

Dale Picha attended a planning committee meeting for a National Workshop on Sign Vandalism at the end of February in Ames, Iowa. The national committee is comprised of representatives from FHWA, several Departments of Transportation and local agencies, TTI, trade organizations, and professional societies. The committee has secured funding assistance from FHWA and several DOTs to help support the workshop and committee activities.

The objective of this national effort is to raise the awareness of the costs and safety implications associated with sign vandalism. The National Workshop on Sign Vandalism will be held in Kansas City, Missouri during the Spring of 1999. The primary focus of the workshop will be to determine a course of action to mitigate sign vandalism. Initial action items being considered include expanded educational and research efforts and possibly a national clearinghouse for vandalism issues.

A major impetus of this workshop has been the highly publicized court case in Florida last year in which 3 teenagers were convicted of manslaughter for their role in sign vandalism that resulted in three teenage fatalities. The committee anticipates that this workshop and subsequent activities will educate the public and raise the awareness of the safety implications of sign vandalism, and hopefully prevent such senseless fatalities in the future.

If anyone has any thoughts or questions about this workshop, please contact Dale.

GRAMMAR AND STYLE

Proper Use and Style of Citations

Generally, whenever you refer to information in a paper or report (that does not fall into a “common knowledge” category) that originally is from another source, you should give proper acknowledgment to that source in a footnote or list of references. The most common style used at TTI for citations in student and professional papers and reports is the list of references. In fact, most papers and reports follow the style and format that is required for TRB’s Transportation Research Record. Here is a summary of this particular style:

1. References should be cited in the order in which they appear in the paper.
2. References should be denoted at the appropriate place in the text where you cite the specific information. Only use an underlined or italic arabic numeral in parentheses. For example: (1) or (I). For multiple references, enclose all numerals (in ascending order) in the same parentheses. For example: (2, 4, 5) or (2, 4, 8).
3. The reference can be typically denoted anywhere in the sentence, but is commonly placed at the end. Here’s an example: According to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), “ . . . a traffic control device should . . . convey a clear, simple meaning” (I).
4. Do not repeat a reference.
5. Be sure that you include all pertinent information in the citation. Here are some common examples. Pay special attention to how you list the authors and how you format the title of the paper or report.


TRB has an “Information for Authors” brochure that can be downloaded from the Internet (Adobe Acrobat file) at the following web address: http://www.nas.edu/trb/meeting/index.html.

Dale Picha
DO YOU EVER NEED A RADIO?

TransLink has purchased some hand-held radios for communication for field work in College Station. Two units are located with Natilie Johnson. If you would like to check these out for use, please see Natilie.

BRAVO! GREAT JOB! TAKE A BOW!

Employee recognition should be an on-going process, not something that should just be done once a year at TTI day! With this in mind, we are starting a new feature to the newsletter. If you think someone has done an exceptional job, or gone above and beyond what is required in their job position, please write in. There are no rules or selection committee. The only thing that matters is if YOU think someone deserves recognition.

To recognize someone’s great job, send pertinent information to Debbie Jasek (Deborah Jasek@TRA@TTI) anytime during the month.

Mentor Program: Advanced Surface Transportation Systems

The Eighth Annual Symposium on Advanced Surface Transportation Systems will be held on May 28-29, 1998. The Symposium is part of a graduate course developed through the Advanced Institute Program of the Southwest Region University Transportation Center. Marsha Anderson, Ginger Gherardi, Tom Hicks, Colin Rayman, Doug Robertson, and William Spreitzer have agreed to participate in the program this year. TTI staff are invited to attend. There is no registration fee.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Jim Carvell, of the Dallas office, is a grandfather. Jim’s first grandchild was born Monday March 23, 1998. A little girl named Emily Lina Carvell. She was born at 6:00 AM and weighed 7 lbs and 13 ounces. Congratulations to the family from all of us.

HELLO AND GOODBYE!

Goodbye

The Traffic Analysis Program bids a fond farewell to Lewis Nowlin. Lewis has decided to seek applied design experience and has obtained a job with the TxDOT’s Area Office in Hearne. He will be greatly missed. We look forward to seeing him at future TxDOT soda breaks! Good luck and best wishes from all of us.

Goodbye

Tiffani Standridge has left the Transport Operations Program. Tiffani, Joey, and Jay will be moving up to Plano next month after Joey graduates. Joey has accepted a job with DSC Communications. Best of luck from all of us to the Standrides!

Hello

Tapan Karwa is a new graduate research assistant in the Transport Operations Program. Tapan will be assisting with software development to facilitate communication between the roadside trip monitoring systems and the smart police car (CVO project). Welcome Tapan!

MEANWHILE BACK AT THE RANCH

Dean Jackson, formerly a member of the TransLink Research Center and currently a member of the Design and Operations Program, was selected as the Texas Society of Professional Engineers’ Engineering Student of the Year for the Nueces Chapter. As a recipient, she received a plaque and a small stipend honoring her achievement. Congratulations to Dena from all of us for her selection!

Dan Fambro braved El Nino to attend ITE Board of Direction spring meeting in Monterrey, CA. He flew in on Saturday night, attended meetings on Sunday, and flew home on Monday morning -- not the best way to enjoy one of the prettiest parts of California.

TRIVIA QUIZ

Here are the answers to last months trivia:
The only state that grows coffee is Hawaii.
Grand Coulee Dam in Washington State is the largest concrete dam in the U.S.
Wisconsin, which is also known for cheese and cheeseheads, produces more beer than any other state.
Mt. McKinley, Alaska is the tallest mountain in the U.S. at 20,320 feet.

Here are this month’s questions:
What state leads in harvesting oysters?
What state leads in beef cattle production?
What state leads in lumber production?
What state produces the most potatoes?
What state produces the most cotton?

Good luck. Look for the answers next month.

You have to expect things of yourself before you can do them.

—Michael Jordan
HAPPY BIRTHDAY

April 3: Michael Dixon
April 4: Carroll Messer
April 8: Beverly Kuhn
April 10: Hassan Charara
April 10: Rhett Gordon
April 17: Marc Jacobson
April 20: Dena Jackson
April 23: Tapan Karwa
April 25: Kerry Williams
April 26: Kevin Balke
April 26: Beth Neilson
April 30: Danny Morris
April 30: Devang Patel
May 1: Monye Brookover
May 4: Jeannette Montufar
May 6: Michael Thomadakis
May 10: Bob Brydia
May 14: Ramon Labrador
May 15: Kelly Blume
May 15: Jim Carvell
May 16: Mike Davis
May 16: Steve Venglar
May 16: Jack Webb
May 18: Brooke Durkop
May 18: Terry Ogle
May 19: Joseph Koothrappally
May 27: Stephen Moore
May 29: Kenneth Giusti, Jr.
May 31: Julia Wilkie

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

A bunny rabbit is sitting in a clearing in the woods, typing away on his laptop computer. A fox comes along, and asks the bunny rabbit what he is doing. The rabbit replies, "I'm writing my Ph.D. dissertation."

"What are you writing about?" asks the fox.

"The title of the thesis is: 'Predation by Bunny Rabbits on Foxes and Wolves,'" said the rabbit.

Predation by rabbits on foxes and wolves? exclaimed the fox, "But rabbits don't prey on foxes and wolves--that's counterintuitive!"

"Well" said the rabbit "perhaps you would like to come down into my burrow, and see my data!"
The fox follows the rabbit down the rabbit hole, and a few minutes later the rabbit emerges brushing fox fur from his arm and picking bits of fox out of his teeth. He returns to his typing.

GET AN ATTITUDE!

"The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company...a church...a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past... We cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude... I am convinced that life is 10 percent what happens to me and 90 percent how I react to it. And so it is with you... we are in charge of our Attitudes."

--- by Charles Swindoll

Nobody climbs mountains for scientific reasons. Science is used to raise money for the expeditions, but you really climb for the hell of it.

---Sir Edmund Hillary
## PROJECT AWARDS AND PROPOSALS

### Project Award

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kay Fitzpatrick, Kevin Hall</td>
<td>Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP)</td>
<td>Evaluation of Bus Bulbs</td>
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### TxDOT FY 99 Proposals

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Project Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Beverly Kuhn, Bill Frawley</td>
<td>1830</td>
<td>Determine the Employee Skill Sets Required by Privatization and the Training Required to Satisfy These New Requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark Woolridge</td>
<td>1844</td>
<td>Operational Flexibility for Controlled Access Facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dan Fambro, Paul Carlson</td>
<td>1845</td>
<td>Geometric Guidelines for At-Grade Intersections Near Railroad-Highway Grade Crossings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kay Fitzpatrick</td>
<td>1846</td>
<td>Development of Design Guidelines for the Provision of Median Access on Principal Arterials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Carlson</td>
<td>1848</td>
<td>Geometric Design Guidelines to Accommodate Incident Management Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan Middleton</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>Synthesis Study of Current Truck Configurations Used in Texas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gene Hawkins</td>
<td>1879</td>
<td>Investigation and Evaluation of Newly Developed and Innovative Traffic Control Devices for Application at Construction Work Zones to Alert Drivers and/or Workers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dan Fambro</td>
<td>1881</td>
<td>Enhanced Traffic Control Devices for Highway-Railroad Grade Crossings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mike Ogden</td>
<td>4907</td>
<td>Functional Process Specifications for Improving Incident Response</td>
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<td>Nadeem Chaudhary</td>
<td>4913</td>
<td>Signal Timing and Management Strategies for Congested Frontage Road Environments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dan Middleton</td>
<td>4918</td>
<td>Investigation of Freeway Loop Detector Characteristics: Failure Mode and Optimal Life Cycle Performance</td>
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