ASSISTANT DIRECTOR MESSAGE

I am going to present some of my views on future opportunities in transportation operations over the next few months. This will be done in a variety of forums including this newsletter. I am also going to restart our brown bag lunch program and some afternoon seminars as a means to continue to strengthen our internal communications.

The first afternoon seminar will be October 8 at 4:00 p.m. in Room 304F. I will be speaking on the concept that I call Comprehensive Management of the Surface Transportation System (CMSTS.) This title is intended to avoid using terms such as ITMS, TSM, and others which have particular connotations. CMSTS is intended to be a holistic view of the surface transportation system. It is intended to portray from a user perspective that there is only one transportation system.

There are a number of practical issues surrounding the implementation of this holistic view. CMSTS is not really a new idea, however, it has never been achieved in practice. Furthermore, achievement of the goal was more difficult in the past from a technology point of view.

Today, ITS technology makes it practical to achieve an integrated transportation system. The challenge is to make it happen. The TransLink Program and the TransLink laboratories offer the opportunity for significant progress towards a truly integrated multimodal transportation system. Each of you has the opportunity to contribute towards that success. Keep in mind that while TransLink includes most everything we should be doing in integrated transportation management, it does NOT represent all we are doing. The key is to see TransLink as a resource and develop additional projects which would not be possible without the TransLink program.

Tom Urbanik

MEET THE DIRECTOR

In May of 95 Dr. Richardson set out to visit each of TTI's divisions/centers/areas. These visits give him an opportunity to meet and visit with each employee that is interested, and it gives everyone an equal chance to ask questions as a group or as an individual.

The Transportation Systems Division's opportunity to Meet the Director is scheduled for October 25, starting at 3:00 in room 217. Everyone in the division is invited and encouraged to attend.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

From the Working Communicator, September 1996. For those that are involved in preparing presentations, here are 8 don'ts for visuals:

- DON'T use a gradient template with a building scene, especially if you're showing charts and graphs. It's very difficult to read charts and see charts superimposed over the buildings.
- DON'T use too many colors. Have some consistency in color use.
- DON'T use too many different models and diagrams. You want your audience to remember at least one or two.
- DON'T include so many words that you have nothing left to say.
- DON'T use photos that take up too much memory for the size of your computer. And don't show photos on equipment that doesn't have good resolution. They'll look blurred.
- DON'T use a black background. It's best to use a blue background with white or yellow lettering.
- DON'T put so many numbers on a chart that your audience is unable to figure out the point of the chart.
- DON'T forget to look at your audience.

Claudyne Wilder,
President Wilder Mgt Svcs.

CALENDAR MARKS

Oct 8  Seminar on CMSTS, 4:00 p.m., Room 304F
Oct 14-16  TxDOT Transportation Conference, College Station
Oct 14-17  ITS World Congress, Orlando
Oct 25  Meet the Director, 3:00 p.m., Room 217
Nov 28-29  Thanksgiving Holidays
Dec 2-6  Fall RMC Meetings, Corpus Christi
Dec 11  TTI Day, Rudder
Dec 23-Jan 2  Christmas-New Year's Holidays
Jan 12-16  TRB Annual Meeting, Wash. D.C

If 99.9 percent is good enough, then.....

≈ 18,322 pieces of mail will be mishandled in the next hour.
≈ 888,000 credit cards in circulation will turn out to have incorrect cardholder information on their magnetic strips.
HELLO AND GOODBYE

Hello everyone!

Mark Hickman has joined the Design and Operations Program. Mark who is originally from York, PA. Mark made stops in Berkeley and Boston, where he collected three degrees from MIT, prior to joining TTI and Texas A&M. Welcome and Hello!

Micah Hershberg has also joined the Design and Operations Program, and will be working with Larry Rilett. Micah is from Albany, NY and received his undergraduate degree from Carnegie Mellon.

Rhett Gordon has joined the Transport Operations Program as a student worker. He is a sophomore Finance Major.

Goodbyes!

Paul Hawkins left TTI on Friday, September 20, 1996. Paul accepted a position as the Assistant to the County Engineer for Waller County.

Transport Operations bid farewell to Shannon Martinez. Shannon left September 20. She and her family are moving to Oklahoma.

MEANWHILE BACK AT THE RANCH

Dan Fambro, Kay Fitzpatrick, and David Noyce attended the ITE 66th Annual Meeting in Minneapolis. In addition to meetings, briefings, training, presentations, and exhibits, they experienced their first frost, learned some news songs and a dance or two.

Dan Fambro and Rick Bartoskewitz traveled to Washington, D.C. to attend a kickoff meeting for a new FHWA research project to evaluate the use of highway traffic signals at highway-railroad intersections.

The retirement dinner for Don Woods was held on Saturday, September 6 and was thoroughly enjoyed by all in attendance. Charlie Wooten, Jack Keese, Newton Ellis, Nelson Evans, and Neil Rowan shared their favorite stories about working with Don over the past 34 years.

Shirley Kalinec was featured as the “Smile for the Day” in the Bryan Eagle on September 15th.

Debbie Jasek completed a Hazardous Materials Handling Certification Course. One of the benefits of course is access to an Environmental and Hazardous Materials Answer line for the next year. If you encounter questions, keep in mind that this resource is now available.

Alaska has the longest coastline (33,000 miles.) Rhode Island has only 40 miles of ocean coastline and yet it is called the “Ocean State.” Passamaquoddy, Maine has the highest tides.

This month’s trivia features questions about National Parks.

Where is Hot Springs National Park?
Name the four faces on Mt. Rushmore.
Noted for its rock formations “The Garden of the Gods” is in what state?
Where is the Grand Canyon?
You might come face to face with an alligator in what national park in Florida?

Happy Birthday

Oct 1 Dan Walker
Oct 8 Mark Shafer
Oct 17 Kevin Gee
Oct 18 Angel Gonzalez
Oct 19 Gene Hawkins
Oct 20 Shirley Kalinec
Oct 23 Vicent Li
Nov 1 Ivan Lorenz
Nov 1 Firoze Shams
Nov 2 Lyla Pallan
Nov 5 Dongjoo Park
Nov 8 Mark Wooldridge
Nov 8 Nelson Irizarry

ON A LIGHTER NOTE

More headlines from the “you have got to be kidding me category”

Court Rules Boxer Shorts Are Indeed Underwear
Journal of Commerce, April 20

Biting Nails Can Be Sign Of Tenseness In A Person
The Daily Gazette of Schenectady, New York, May 2

Lack of Brains Hinders Research
The Columbus Dispatch, April 16

Chick Accuses Some of Her Male Colleagues of Sexism...Accusing some of her male colleagues of sexism, Los Angeles Councilwoman Laura Chick lashed out at City Hall of Thursday as [sic] the "most sexist good-old-boys work environment that I've ever been > in."

The Los Angeles Times, June 23

How We Feel About Ourselves Is The Core Of Self-Esteem, Says Author Louise Hart
Boulder, Colorado, Sunday Camera, February 5
TIP OF THE MONTH
Pressing Alt-Tab will take you to other programs that may be running concurrently under the Microsoft Windows environment.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:
What is Java? Why is it interesting?
Java is a new programming language developed by Sun Microsystems. It is similar to C++, and is specifically designed for Internet based systems. Java based programs are very secure and portable, because they are not stored as machine code but as a platform-independent "byte code". This means one version of the program can be run on ALL machines that support Java. Currently, if Microsoft does not support Excel in Unix, we cannot run that program in Unix. But, if it was made using Java, it could theoretically run on any machine that supports Java, and even machines with operating systems that have not even been built. Byte code based programs tend to be slower than programs stored in machine native code. This problem may be solved soon, because many vendors are supporting Just-In-Time Compilation. By this technology, byte codes are converted into machine native code just before the program is run on the machine. Fasten your seatbelts, because network computer is here. If everything goes well, very soon we will be working with NC's than PC's - and that would mean most computers will be running more Java applications than any other type.

Advanced Word-Processing Sessions
Please contact josephk@cs.tamu.edu or Joseph Koothrappally@TRA@TTI if you would like to take part in Advanced Word-Processing Sessions. Topics like document automation, use of styles, fields, autonumbering, outlining, etc. will be covered. Times and locations will be determined later based on demand.

Interesting Web-Sites
www.msnbc.com - for news and views.

QUIZ-TIME
This months question:
Which program was the grand-daddy of all spreadsheets?

Last month's question:
In 1955, She unveiled a prototype programming language of 20 ordinary words - common business terms like inventory, price, and product - that the machine called UNIVAC could understand. This breakthrough ultimately lead to the COBOL language. She was a dynamic computer evangelist who foresaw the necessity for compilers and language standardization. Who was this "Amazing Grace" of Computer Industry?
Grace Hopper. Lyla Pallan@TRA@TTI was the first one to provide the correct answer. Congratulations!!

(Send your questions/comments/answers to Deborah Jasek@TRA@TTI by e-mail).

JOSEPH KOOTHRAPPALLY@TRA@TTI