INTERCHANGE
Transportation Operations Group Texas Transportation Institute
http://tog.tamu.edu Volume 4 Number 9 September 1998 http://tti.tamu.edu

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR MESSAGE
As summer comes to a close, we should have the southern equivalent of Ground Hog Day. We might establish Sept. 1 as Armadillo Day. If an armadillo sees his shadow, then there will be six more weeks of summer. I think September 1 was cloudy, so hopefully our very hot summer is nearly over! Besides, how likely is it that an armadillo will be seen during daylight hours?

On a more serious note, we effectively begin our new year in September. Although many new TxDOT research projects begin, more important is the new group of students who will work on our research projects. It is clear that our most important resource is our students. They are the reason we exist and they represent the future of transportation. Each of us should make an effort to make our new students feel at home. Each of us is part of a very successful program that hopefully improves each year through the important contributions of many individuals.

Let me extend an official Aggie welcome to all our new students and encourage each of you to take advantage of the many resources available at Texas A&M and the Texas Transportation Institute!

Tom Urbanik

TRANSLINK® BITS

A Volpe Center report prepared for the Federal Highway Administration on The Capability of ITS to Provide Systems Performance Data: The Use of ITS Data in Planning in the San Antonio Area is in publication. The report states that "...San Antonio is fortunate to have an agency like TTI involved in the TransGuide development and evaluation effort....TTI brings a fresh point of view to the situation..." Shawn Turner, Russell Henk, and Jennifer Ogle should be recognized for their effort in promoting the value of ITS data in transportation planning and representing TTI.

Leonard Ruback is moving to the TransLink® Research Center effective September 1, 1998. Leonard brings expertise in electrical engineering and advanced technologies. He will office in the TransLink® Roadside Equipment Laboratory. The move will still allow Leonard to continue to share time between TransLink® and the Rail Research/AAR Lab.

Stephen Moore, a Ph.D. Candidate in Electrical Engineering, is also joining the TransLink® Research Center as a Research Associate. Stephen will be working 3/4 time until he has finished his dissertation. Stephen will be working with Leonard Ruback on the Bryan/College Station ITS test bed and intelligent vehicle applications.

Chris Poe

DOUBOE TAKE!

When asked to describe this latest innovation, Division members provided the following suggestions:

b. "Organic Speed Bump"
c. "The final solution for Munson Avenue."

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.
VISUAL AID?

Do you have a good idea for developing electronic presentations for the classroom or that speech you have to give? Well, Beverly Kuhn has a video that might help you get the most out of your slides and visuals. The video, entitled Visual Design and Layout for the Modern Classroom, has lots of tips on developing visual aids that will easily convey your message. If you want to borrow the video or find out more about it, contact Beverly at (512) 467-0946 or b-kuhn@tamu.edu.

Beverly Kuhn

HELLO AND GOODBYE!

Goodbye and Best Wishes

The San Antonio office bid a fond farewell to Jennifer and Terry Ogle. Their last day at TTI was August 28. The Ogles are relocating to Atlanta Georgia. Terry plans to return to school and pursue a Master’s Degree in Electrical Engineering. Jennifer has accepted a position at Georgia Tech’s new Transportation Research Center. We wish them both the best of luck!

We also bid a fond farewell this month to Joseph Koothrappally. Joseph, an assistant research scientist, was a member of the Traffic Systems Program. While at TTI Joseph worked on numerous projects including the Smart Diamond Project. Joseph also served as a columnist for the Interchange and will be remembered for his cheerful disposition, great sense of humor, and refreshing perspective. Joseph, whose last day at TTI was August 31, has relocated to Houston and is starting his own business. BitsOfCode™ is a Software Consulting company. Joseph is being joined in this endeavor by his wife and former TTI employee, Lyla Pallan. We wish Joseph and Lyla a fond farewell and best wishes in this endeavor. They will both be missed as researchers and as friends.

Lizette Laguna of the DTA program, finished her bachelor degree this August. Lizette is now working for a consulting firm in San Antonio. Congratulations and best wishes from all of us!

Byungkyu Park finished his doctoral degree from Texas A&M University. He will be working for National Institute of Statistical Sciences and North Carolina State University as a Research Fellow. Byungkyu would like to say goodbye everyone at TTI. Congratulations and best wishes to Byungkyu from all of us!

Dr. Mark Hickman bid a fond farewell to two of his students. Jason Vaughn, who completed his ME degree in August, will be working for San Antonio VIA. Sung Woong Shin also graduated with his ME in August. Congratulations and best wishes to both of them from all of us.

Hello and Welcome

We would like to extend a warm welcome to Josias Zietsman. Sias, as he prefers to be called, was born in Bloemfontein South Africa. He graduated with a degree in civil engineering from the University of Pretoria. Sias then joined a major construction company, that funded his studies, and worked as a site engineer on a major toll road project. After two years, he decided that the field of transportation planning was more interesting and he joined a Metropolitan Planning Authority, situated directly east of Johannesburg. This metropolitan area has a population of 2.5 million people. During this period Sias studied part time and completed a post graduate degree in project management and a masters degree in Transportation Engineering. Before moving to College Station to pursue a Ph.D. he held the position of Manager: Transport System at the Metropolitan Authority. Sias is married to Magda and they have two children, Alexander and Maryshe. In his spare time he enjoys spending time with his family, traveling, and to play a round of golf.

The DDO program welcomes two new graduate students. Randy Carroll and Scott Harry are both graduates of Montana State University in Bozeman, MT. Randy is originally from Wyoming and Scott from Alaska. The burning question from all of us is why they would want to move to Texas in the middle of August? Welcome Randy and Scott!

Sholeh Mirmiran has joined TTI as a new graduate student researcher this fall. She completed her BS in Civil Engineering from Penn State last spring (1998). She will be working with Dr. Hickman on the evaluation of the Katy Freeway HOV Lane Pricing project, called QuickRide. The evaluation is looking at changes in travel patterns now that two-person carpools can "buy into" the HOV lane in the peak hours. Welcome Sholeh!

Another new graduate student researcher is Sung Shik Shin. He is now in his second year of graduate school at A&M, and is originally from Korea. He will be working with Dr. Hickman on a TCRP project (A-20A) entitled, "Strategies for Improved Traveler Information". The project is assessing the role of new technologies to provide travelers with the information they need to use transit. Welcome Sung!

The DTA program welcomes a new graduate student, Marcus Brewer. Marcus is from Topeka, Kansas. He will be working with Kay Fitzpatrick on projects investigating design speed and operating speed issues. Welcome, Marcus!

TransLink® welcomes two new graduate students, Debbie Burdette and Matt Estes. Debbie is originally from Worthington, Ohio. She received her B. S. in Civil Engineering from Clemson University. Matt is from Gainesville, Virginia, and received his B. S. in Civil Engineering from Virginia Tech. Both Debbie and Matt will be working for Chris Poe. Welcome Debbie and Matt.
CONGRATULATIONS

We would like to extend our congratulations to the following people on their recent promotions:

Edmond Chang  
Research Engineer

Hassan Charara  
Associate Research Scientist

Roelof Engelbrecht  
Assistant Research Scientist

Mike Elmquist  
Student Technician I

Beth Neilson  
Program Coordinator

Steve Venglar  
Assistant Research Engineer

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Paul Carlson recently attended a workshop on the Human Factors in Traffic Safety - Improving Safety Through Knowledge of Driver Limitations in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Dr. Alison Smiley (Human Factors North, Inc.), Mr. Gerson Alexander (Positive Guidance Applications), and Dr. Robert Dewar (Western Ergonomics Inc.) covered an array of topics that were focused on the following objectives: valuable insights into driver abilities and limitations which need consideration in highway design and traffic engineering; awareness of limitations in vision, attention, information processing, and perception-reaction time; assessment of traffic engineering countermeasures; and human factors analysis of accident case studies. The 42 participants of the workshop were from Canada and the U.S.

Beverly Kuhn attended "A Faculty Forum: Getting Started Using Technology," a workshop sponsored by the Office of Distance Education and the Academy for Advanced Telecommunications and Learning Technologies. It was held on August 25, 1998 in College Station. Anyone interested in learning more about using technology for classroom instruction and distance learning, contact Beverly by phone at (512) 467-0946 or by e-mail b-kuhn@tamu.edu.

MEANWHILE BACK AT THE RANCH

Kay Fitzpatrick attended the recent ITE Annual Meeting in Toronto where she made presentations on frontage road weaving, automated enforcement at highway-railroad grade crossings, speed zoning, and the current status of the ITE Traffic Engineering Council.

Dan Fambro chaired the mid-year meeting of TRB's Committee on Geometric Design in Cincinnati. He also attended ITE's 1998 Annual Meeting August 9-12 in Toronto.

Jon Collins, Kay Fitzpatrick, and Kevin Hall made a trip to the northwest at the end of July to investigate bus bulbs for their Transit Cooperative Research Program project. They traveled to Portland, Seattle, and Vancouver.

Rhett Gordon, Kollan Pillay, and Dan Walker made trips to Dallas, Ft. Worth and Houston collecting speed data for Kay Fitzpatrick and Paul Carlson.

Debbie Jasek was recently elected chairman of the College Station Historic Preservation Committee. The committee concerns include: gathering information and documentation of items of historic interest, and the approval of city historic sites. Their current project includes an anecdotal history of the city, which will be written by Jeff Carroll. Debbie was recently joined on the committee by another TTI'er, Dock Burke.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations and Best Wishes go out to Melissa Peoples Finley and Glen Finley! Melissa and Glen were married Saturday, August 22, 1998. Melissa is a graduate student in the Traffic Management and Information Systems Program under Gerald Ullman. She is currently working on evaluating experimental lane closure control devices.

B. J. Fritz-Lewis of the Traffic Systems Program is a new grandmother, who would like to brag a little about her grandson. Kaleb Evan Fritz was born Saturday, August 29th, in Mississippi. He weighed in at 11 lbs. 6 ozs. And was 22 inches long. Congratulations to B. J. and the whole family.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Sep 4  
Chris Poe

Sep 10  
Sang-Soo Lee

Sep 19  
Robert Benz

Sep 19  
Mark Hickman

Sep 20  
Michael Pacelli

Sep 22  
Conrad Dudek

Sep 23  
Garry Ford

Sep 30  
Gene Goolsby

Oct 1  
Dan Walker

Oct 9  
Mike Elmquist

Oct 9  
B.J. Fritz-Lewis

Oct 9  
Nitin Vaidya

Oct 11  
Omar Mata

Oct 13  
Randall Cable

Oct 19  
Gene Hawkins

Oct 20  
Shirley Kalinec

Oct 20  
Brenda Manak

Oct 27  
Srini Sunkari

Oct 31  
Roshini Paul

Oct 31  
Mike Pizza

Iron rusts from disuse; water loses its purity from stagnation ...even so does inaction sap the vigors of the mind.

—Leonardo da Vinci
CALENDAR MARKS

Sep 7  Labor Day (TxDOT Holiday)
Oct 12-16 Fifth Annual World Congress on ITS, Seoul
Oct 12  Columbus Day (TxDOT Holiday)
Oct 12-14 Transportation Conference, Rudder Center
Oct 25  Daylight Savings Time Ends
Nov 2-6  Fall RMC Meeting, San Antonio
Nov 11  Veterans Day (TxDOT Holiday)
Nov 16-18 SAE International Truck and Bus Meeting and Expo, Indianapolis
Nov 24  Bonfire
Nov 26-27 Thanksgiving Holiday
Dec 8   Last Day of Classes
Dec 9   TTI Day
Dec 11-16 Finals
Dec 18  Graduation
Dec 23-Jan 1 Christmas Holidays
Jan 10-14 TRB 78th Annual Meeting, Washington
Jan 18  M. L. King Holiday
Jan 19  Spring Semester Begins
Mar 17-19 Spring Break

BRAVO! GREAT JOB! TAKE A BOW!

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

TRIVIA QUIZ

Here are the answers to last month's trivia:

The Monongalela and Allegheny Rivers meet to form the Ohio River at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
Huckleberry Finn's playground was the Mississippi River.
The Colorado River runs through the Grand Canyon in Arizona.
The Suwannee River flows through the Okefenokee Swamp and was celebrated by Stephen Foster.
This month's trivia theme is school days. Good Luck.

In what states are the Ivy League Colleges of Yale, Princeton, and Harvard?
A school called, "The Collegiate College of America" was given it's present name between 1716 and 1718. What is its name today?
In what state was the first Kindergarten opened?
What is the oldest institution of higher learning in the U.S.?
The first coeducational college in the U.S. was founded in Ohio. Can you name this school?

COMPUTER TERMINOLOGY

486 - The average IQ needed to understand a PC.
State-of-the-art - Any computer you can't afford.
Obsolete - Any computer you own.
Microsecond - The time it takes for your state-of-the-art computer to become obsolete.
G3 - Apple's new Macs that make you say "Gee, three times faster than the computer I bought for the same price a Microsecond ago."
Syntax Error - Walking into a computer store and saying, "Hi, I want to buy a computer and money is no object."
Hard Drive - The sales technique employed by computer salesmen, especially after a Syntax Error.
GUI - What your computer becomes after spilling your coffee on it. (pronounced "gooey")
Keyboard - The standard way to generate computer errors.
Mouse - An advanced input device to make computer errors easier to generate.
Floppy - The state of your wallet after purchasing a computer.
Portable Computer - A device invented to force businesspeople to work at home, on vacation, and on business trips.
Disk Crash - A typical computer response to any critical deadline.
Power User - Anyone who can format a disk from DOS.
System Update - A quick method of trashing ALL of your software.