1. **Building Together — TTI Day Fosters Teamwork**

For the first time in TTI Day’s 14-year history, attendees were assigned to a group to build rail stations, shipping vessels and other transportation-related miniatures. The team project (using everyday items like cardboard and rubber bands) coincided with this year’s theme: *Building for the Future*.

From the transportation models to this year’s TTI Day charity — Habitat for Humanity — the idea of teamwork to achieve goals was the underlying message in each presentation.

“The last year was a tremendous success, thanks to you,” **Agency Director Dennis Christiansen** told the 397-member audience for his *Building TTI for the Future* address. “It is a good time to be in transportation, to be in Texas, to be at TTI.” Going forward, Christiansen emphasized the need to grow non-Texas Department of Transportation funding by 10 percent each year.

Guest speaker Dr. Peter Bishop of the University of Houston Futures Studies Program presented *The Future of Transportation — Why Business as Usual Isn’t Good Enough Anymore*. Saying that oil production peaked in 2005, Bishop told the crowd, “We will have to be more conscious in the way we use oil.” He addressed technology, telecommuting and greenhouse gases as he peered into the future. “We are entering a new era in air quality.”

A highlight of the day was a heartfelt, handwritten speech given by Jennifer Whittine, the recipient of the Habitat for Humanity home...
that TTI employees helped build. She thanked TTI, the people at Habitat for Humanity and the residents of Bryan, Texas, who helped after her Louisiana home was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. (See story 9 for more.)

Following the event, some employees toured the TTI State Headquarters Building, which is under construction and scheduled for occupancy this fall.

The 2009 TTI Day chair was Kerry Fillip. Next year, Jeff Arndt will take over those duties and is seeking volunteers.

Three employees who died during the last year, Sadler Bridges, Greg Richmond and Gordon Shunk, were remembered during the gathering.

View all TTI Day photos, courtesy of Jim Lyle: file://tti-bcs/com/comshare/TTIDay09

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2. Employees, Students Singled Out at TTI Day

Ten employees and three students received individual awards during TTI Day at the Brazos County Exposition Complex May 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Award Category</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TTI/Trinity Gregory P. Richmond Administrative Staff</td>
<td>Mary Cearley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTI/Trinity Administrative Support Staff</td>
<td>Becca L. Simons</td>
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<tr>
<td>TTI/Trinity Administrative Technical Staff</td>
<td>Mary Levien</td>
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<tr>
<td>TTI/Trinity Research Support Staff</td>
<td>Stacey Alejandro</td>
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<td>TTI/Trinity Research Technical Staff</td>
<td>John Holmgreen</td>
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<td>TTI/Trinity New Researcher</td>
<td>Adam Pike</td>
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<td>TTI/Trinity Researcher</td>
<td>Linda K. Cherrington</td>
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<tr>
<td>TTI/Trinity G. Sadler Bridges Senior Researcher</td>
<td>Katherine F. Turnbull</td>
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<tr>
<td>TTI/Trinity Charles J. &quot;Jack&quot; Keese Career</td>
<td>Don Bugh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Achievement Award for Agency Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>TTI/Trinity Charley V. Wootan Career Achievement</td>
<td>Richard A. Zimmer</td>
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<td>for Research</td>
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<td>TTI/Trinity Outstanding Undergraduate Student</td>
<td>Brent Kainer</td>
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</tbody>
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Mary Cearley was awarded the TTI/Trinity Gregory P. Richmond Administrative Professional Staff Award during TTI Day. The award was named after Richmond, who died last year. Pictured from left to right are Dennis Christiansen, Sharon Richmond (Greg’s wife), Mary Cearley and Anne Richmond (Greg’s
3. Dozens Receive TTI Day Team Award

The 43 employees who worked on the Texas 2030 Transportation Needs Assessment project for the 2030 Committee received the TTI/Trinity Herbert H. Richardson Team Award May 6.

“TTI was responsible for the mobility component of the 2030 project and, just as important, making sure the lengthy report produced for the Texas Legislature was clear, accurate and easily understood,” says Executive Associate Agency Director Bill Stockton, who was the project director for TTI. “The bulk of the mobility information was the work of Tim Lomax and Dave Ellis, but all of the 43 employees had pivotal roles and did a wonderful job.”

In addition to the mobility section of the report, TTI employees managed the logistics for six public hearings statewide, coordinated input from the general public via the web and managed project interaction with the 2030 Committee.

The 2030 Committee was formed last year to determine the fiscal requirements for the state’s future transportation needs. The estimate focuses on the investment that will be necessary to maintain the pavements and bridges on Texas roadways, to prevent worsening traffic congestion in urban areas, and to ensure rural mobility and safety.

The record number of employees receiving a TTI Day Team Award occurred last year when more than 50 people who worked on the Short Course project were honored.

2009 TTI Day Team Award recipients:
http://ttinet.tamu.edu/ttipeople/employee_awards/team_award.stm

Learn more about the 2030 Committee:
http://texas2030committee.tamu.edu/

Many of the recipients of the TTI/Trinity Herbert H. Richardson Team Award pose for a picture.
4. TTI Anniversaries

5 Years
Michael Kleiber, Research Librarian (KWE)
Duane Wagner, Senior Facilities Coordinator (SUP)

10 Years
Liz Holick, Business Assistant (SHR)

15 Years
Natilie Johnson, Production Services Coordinator (KDV)

20 Years
Jessica Franklin, Administrative Assistant (RRI)

25 Years
Marie Ethridge, Controller (BUS)
Jerry Ullman, Program Manager (FWZ)

40 Years
Dock Burke, Senior Research Scientist (EXP)
5. TTI Crash Testing Project Part of Safety Evaluation

When Americans change what they drive and how fast they go, the roadside safety devices that protect them from injury may also need to change. To help determine if any changes are warranted, TTI has wrapped up a series of crash tests for the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP).

“About every decade we revisit our crash testing guidelines to make sure they remain relevant in light of changes in the U.S. vehicle fleet and operating conditions on our highways,” says Roger Bligh, a research engineer and manager of the Roadside Safety Program. “Right now we are completing a series of crash tests to evaluate the effectiveness of our roadside hardware [guardrails, median barriers, sign supports, etc.] when impacted by a 5,000-pound, four-door pickup truck that has been proposed as a new design test vehicle.”

The last of the tests occurred May 15 at the Riverside Campus.

“The testing has identified several barrier systems that may need to be modified if the new testing guidelines are adopted,” says Bligh. “We will wrap up the project this summer.”


“We are in the beginning stages of adopting a new guideline and understanding its implications to our roadside safety hardware,” Bligh notes.
6. TDS Team Earns More Honors

The Teens in the Driver Seat (TDS) program is adding to its list of honors with a pair of Videographer Awards for television spots now airing across Texas.

The first public service announcement, *I’m a Teenager*, features a series of teens speaking directly to the camera, relating firsthand the dangers faced by young drivers and the urgency of the issue in general. The spot was produced in both English and Spanish. The second message, *Buckle Up, Dude*, is the program’s first music video spot, addressing the lower-than-average rate of seat belt use by teens -- particularly when teens are back seat passengers. Together, the two spots have aired more than 2,000 times on TV stations statewide through an agreement with the Texas Association of Broadcasters.

Considered one of the most coveted awards in the video industry, the honor recognizes efforts from network news operations, cable television, advertising agencies and a wide range of other organizations. Both of the TDS entries were recognized for their excellence.

David Martin and Clyde Hance were responsible for the shooting, editing and production of the projects, with production assistance from Morgan McKay, Krizia Martinez, Llubia Corella, Shawna Russell, Sam Holland, Jen Ross, Richard Cole, Russell Henk and Bernie Fette.

7. Rick’s Beat: RSS Is Not “Real Silly Stuff”

by Rick Davenport

(This month, we begin a new CenterLine feature: Rick’s Beat. As part of the new segment, Rick will be proactively searching for new stories for CenterLine, Researcher, and TTI’s website…and news to share with the media. He might be visiting you in person to drum up ideas. Some of the stories appearing in Rick’s Beat will be research related, profiles of our staff members or — like today’s entry — information about anything to do with TTI. Feel free to submit ideas to news@ttimail.tamu.edu.)

As much as I wanted it to, that odd and annoying RSS graphic/button out in cyberspace (on numerous websites, blogs, etc.) was not going away. In fact, it hit close to home this spring when it suddenly appeared in the upper left-hand corner of every
page on TTI’s website. Now, I figured, I gotta care. (Years ago, I was wrong about the Internet being just a fad, so maybe this RSS thingy is something worth knowing about, too.)

Turns out, RSS is a time saver. Don’t take my word for it. Look at this Really Simple Syndication (oh, so that’s what RSS means) explanation: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0klgLsSxGsU.

So, if you search the same sites every day looking for new info (about transportation, of course), you can now have that stuff sent directly to you. It’s sorta like having your best restaurant food delivered right to your favorite recliner.

The folks at Network and Information Systems (Cash Williams, Cliff Murphy and others) tell me that once you set up TTI’s RSS, your folder will be filled with the latest TTI material — feature stories, research reports and Institute news — as soon as they are posted to our website. Now that’s cool.

Okay, I’m convinced about RSS. But, I absolutely refuse to jump on the Twitter bandwagon. After all, who wants to admit they are a Twittee (or is it Twitterer?)? Yes, I admit it’s been all over the news lately, but maybe it will simply fade away before I have to give a Twit.

8. TTI in the News

There have been numerous mentions of TTI and our experts in recent media reports. Here are links to some of the stories.

India’s congestion (World Streets) June 1
Wasting time on Charlotte highways (The Charlotte Observer) May 31
Safety belts for school buses (TexasISD.com) May 29
Click It or Ticket (Positive LEO) May 20
Safety belt enforcement (San Angelo Standard-Times) May 20
Funding road projects (Montgomery County Courier) May 18
Poor road conditions (The Desert Sun) May 18
9. Humanity Benefits from Agency-Wide Effort

The 2009 TTI Day Charitable Subcommittee organized the Institute’s first-ever agency-wide community service event with this year’s charity, Habitat for Humanity. TTI staff in Bryan/College Station and the seven urban offices all contributed to Habitat through work days, family pantry collections, lawn care donations and monetary contributions. The co-chairs of the committee were Terri Parker and Melissa Tooley.

TTI’s State Employee Charitable Campaign Committee last fall also chose to support Habitat in its fundraising efforts. Through the fall campaign, TTI raised $6,500 for Habitat through individual donations and fundraisers. This effort qualified TTI to participate in the Corporate Challenge build this spring in Bryan/College Station, along with several other local businesses. At TTI Day, about $2,000 more was raised.

“In true TTI style, our staff was extremely supportive of our charitable effort this year,” said Parker. “It was a tremendous endeavor that demonstrated our commitment to service and dedication to teamwork, as well as the camaraderie that we share.”

“The majority of TTI staff will never know what it is like to live in substandard housing, and the stress of living in a neighborhood where it is unsafe for children to play outside,” Tooley said “Some of Habitat’s families have never even been able to allow their children to have sleepovers! But TTI is full of extremely generous, community-minded people who enthusiastically embraced the opportunity to make a difference by supporting this initiative. It was especially gratifying that the urban offices could contribute to their communities in the same way that we did here in Bryan/College Station.”

Jennifer Whittine addresses TTI Day participants about the significance of owning her own home. An employee of Crestview Retirement Home, she and her four children will move into their new Habitat home this month.
About 40 TTI employees participated in working on two Habitat homes in the Angels Gate subdivision in Bryan. The group completed the interior painting for the Whittine family home, and almost completed the installation of the siding. On the house under construction next door, workers completed the exterior painting. The build went smoothly, thanks to crew chiefs Tim Lomax and Sue Chrysler. Martha Raney-Taylor led a food committee that provided breakfast, lunch and snacks for the workers, with assistance from Holly Crenshaw and the facilities staff. Michelle Wright led a team that collected pantry donations for the Whittine family, which will be presented at the family’s home dedication on June 20 at 10 a.m.

The Arlington and Dallas offices teamed up to organize a pantry item donation for two area Habitat families, adding fun to the activity by conducting a contest to see which office could collect the most items. Carol Court, Diana Wallace, John Overman and Lisa Palmer coordinated this effort. In Austin, Ginger Goodin and her crew of 12 TTI-Austin staff members worked on a Habitat home rehabilitation effort to clean, caulk and paint the exterior of a home.

The Houston/Galveston Habitat initiative supported the Hammock family, which lost everything to Hurricane Ike. Lisa Patke coordinated an effort to purchase lawn equipment and supplies for the family’s new Habitat home. Staff from the San Antonio office worked on a Habitat build in mid-May, which was coordinated by Kandis Salazar and Linda Castillo. TTI-El Paso is preparing to support a Habitat build when one gets under way this summer, organized by Lupe Ramos and Arturo Bujanda. The El Paso office also participated in a community service event at a local daycare for the developmentally disabled, organizing transportation games and activities for the children.

Other members of the TTI Day Charitable Subcommittee who helped organize the agency-wide effort were Barbara Hein, Shanna Yates, Dolores Hott and Mary Cearley.

To view the slide show of the Habitat activities across the agency, click here. Tooley and Parker urge TTI staff to complete the TTI Day survey when it is released to provide some feedback on this year’s charitable event.
10. Editor's Corner: Right-of-Way the Wrong Way

Is there really a wrong way to write “right-of-way”? It’s a frequently used phrase in transportation documents, and it often gives authors difficulty. Let me give you the bottom line at the top of the article to avoid as much confusion as possible: You won’t go wrong if you use “right-of-way” and “rights-of-way” consistently. If you’re one of those people who like fine distinctions, read on.

To hyphenate or not to hyphenate
Most noun phrases don’t need hyphenation, but phrases that have become used to indicate a specific concept often evolve into a compound noun with hyphens. For example, “right of free speech” wouldn’t use hyphens because it simply describes a person’s right but doesn’t represent a specific concept other than its face value. The phrase “right of way,” however, has developed a specific legal meaning. Therefore both “right of way” and “right-of-way” are acceptable for the noun form of the phrase.

Hyphens do show up when “right-of-way” is used as a descriptive phrase. “Right-of-way acquisition,” “right-of-way requirements,” and “right-of-way utilities” are examples of the phrase used in a descriptive capacity.

Multiple rights might make a wrong
How to change right-of-way to plural is a controversial topic. Grammarians among us would automatically tell you to add an “s” to “right” to make “rights of way.” I’d agree that you can’t go wrong using it that way. However, there are times when “right-of-ways” does make sense.

Here’s the hairsplitting on that one:

- Both “rights of way” or “rights-of-way” would be correct in every case I can think of.
- If you use the phrase to refer to an area crossed, as opposed to the actual right of a person to cross it, then “rights of way” or “rights-of-way” or “right-of-ways” are all acceptable. “Right of ways” without hyphens wouldn’t work, however.

TTI’s technical editing staff use the Merriam-Webster dictionary as our first line of defense for editorial questions. That reference gives “rights-of-way” as first choice for plural and “right-of-ways” as
second choice. (By the way, it doesn’t give the choice to omit hyphens.)

**Consistency and proper names**
Whatever schema you choose for “right-of-way,” use it consistently throughout a single document and for documents within a project scope. Keep in mind that proper names should retain their original forms — such as “TxDOT Right of Way Division,” which does not use hyphens.

**Microsoft Word® tip**
I thought I’d pass on a recent discovery unrelated to this column’s topic. If you’re using a document file in Microsoft Word 2007® and discover that some functions are not available (grayed out on the menu ribbon), you might need to convert it from an earlier version to Word 2007. Notice I say “convert” not “save as” because I recently discovered those are two different functions. To convert a file to Word 2007:

- Click on the office button.
- If the file was created in a different version, you will see the “Convert” option just below the Open option.
- Choose Convert.
- When conversion is complete, save the file and ensure it saves as a .docx file.
- Close the file and reopen it. It should be completely functional in Word 2007.

*Editor’s Corner is written by Rhonda Brinkmann, research editor in TTI Communications. Rhonda is happy to accept requests for column topics.*
11. Reminders/Calendar

**June 23** — TTI Blood Drive
To set an appointment, contact Nancy Stratta

**July 3** — Independence Day holiday

**July 31** — Annual benefits enrollment deadline
Contact Wally Simpson

**Sept. 2-4** — 2009 Texas Ports and Waterways Conference
Corpus Christi, Texas
For more information:
http://tti.tamu.edu/conferences/pw09/

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