1. TTI at TRB

TTI was well represented at the Transportation Research Board (TRB) 86th Annual Meeting Jan. 21-25 in Washington, D.C. There were numerous presentations given by TTI researchers and staff detailing the latest information on topics that included asphalt, work zones, transportation pricing, air quality, and organizational structures.

Herb Richardson Honored

Director Emeritus Herb Richardson was presented the Roy W. Crum Distinguished Service Award Jan. 24 during the Chairman’s Luncheon. The prestigious Crum Award recognizes outstanding achievement in the field of transportation research.

Richardson retired from TTI last fall after 22 years of service to the Texas A&M University System, which included 13 years as TTI director.

Bligh Team Wins Award

Four TTI coauthors were recipients of the K.B. Woods Award for their paper entitled “Low-Deflection Portable Concrete Barrier.” The award was presented Jan. 22.
Roger Bligh, Nauman Mansoor Sheikh, Dean Alberson and Akram Abu-Odeh were recognized for best paper in the area of design and construction of transportation facilities. The paper describes a new barrier system developed for use in a highway work zone.

Bligh was also the recipient of last year’s K.B. Woods Award.

**Other Notable Events**

- **Ginger Goodin** was named incoming chair of the High Occupancy Vehicle Systems Committee.
- **Jerry Ullman** was named incoming chair of the Work Zone Committee.
- **Gene Hawkins** was honored for his six-year service as chair of the Traffic Control Devices Committee.
- A paper by **Dominique Lord** and Ravi Agrawal, a former student, was selected as the best paper by young researchers by the Statistical Methodology and Statistical Computer Software in Transportation Research Committee.

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### 2. Deer-Vehicle Research Set to Begin after Inaugural Meeting

Members of the eight-state Deer-Vehicle Crash Information and Research Center (DVCIR Center) Pooled Fund Project operated through TTI held their inaugural meeting Jan. 30-31 at the Minnesota Department of Transportation training facility in Shoreview, Minnesota. The group discussed the project organization and status and recent and ongoing deer-vehicle crash projects. They identified and prioritized potential research ideas for project funding. The Pooled Fund Project members decided to pursue four research projects that focus on defining and reducing the number of deer-vehicle crashes.

The members of the Pooled Fund Project are department of transportation employees from Connecticut, Iowa, Maryland, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio and Wisconsin. Those states, along with the Federal Highway Administration, have pooled their funds and have assembled more than $300,000. The Southwest Region University Transportation Center and Center for Transportation Safety at TTI are supporting sponsors of the project.

TTI's **Keith Knapp**, who is the director of the DVCIR Center, says...
the group started with more than 40 ideas and ultimately voted on nearly 20 potential projects. “This list of the top four projects will get us all moving in the right direction. Now, we have to develop the structure and focus for the projects and conduct the studies,” he said.

The potential projects are:

- Roadside management and policies including vegetation choices, mowing, etc.,
- Evaluation of crash data to pinpoint and prioritize trouble spots for countermeasures,
- Assessment of public opinion and development of effective outreach methods and messages, and
- Quantitative methodologies for the placement of existing or redesigned warning signs.

“The problem of deer-vehicle crashes is in almost each state and has been around a long time, so I’m happy that we will soon be moving forward with a plan of action,” Knapp said. Deer-vehicle crashes kill about 200 people a year and cost the traveling public more than $1 billion.

The group’s first meeting was sponsored by the Southwest Region University Transportation Center at TTI.

**Read news coverage:**


Visit the Deer-Vehicle Crash Information website:

http://www.deercrash.com/
3. Black History and the Transportation Industry

The lobby of TTI’s Gilchrist Building displays some of the first electric traffic signals used in the United States. That equipment, which evolved from a number of even more creative manual devices, has a rich and telling history. Part of it we owe to one of the country’s first Black inventors, Garrett Morgan, who some in the transportation business refer to as “The Father of Transportation Technology.”

The son of slaves, Morgan had only an elementary education. He left Kentucky in 1895 as a teenager searching for opportunity. He settled in Cincinnati, Ohio, and soon became well known for his talent as a sewing machine repairman, eventually starting his own tailor shop. In fact, much of the sewing in his 32-employee operation was done on machines he built. Morgan is also recognized as the inventor of a version of the gas mask eventually modified and used by the U.S. Army in World War I. He established a successful newspaper, and over his life held patents on a variety of personal grooming products.

It was his experiences driving on the streets of Cleveland, however, that prompted Morgan to enter the transportation arena. Early twentieth-century vehicle crashes were frequent, and after witnessing the death of a young girl in a collision between an automobile and a horse-drawn carriage, he crafted a T-shaped pole unit that featured three positions: Stop, Go and an all-directional stop position that halted traffic in all directions to allow pedestrians to cross streets more safely.

In his 1923 U.S. patent for the manual traffic signal, Garrett Morgan stated “This invention relates to traffic signals, and particularly to those which are adapted to be positioned adjacent the intersection of two or more streets and are manually operable for directing the flow of traffic.... In addition, my invention contemplates the provision of a signal which may be readily and cheaply manufactured.”

Morgan’s hand-cranked semaphore traffic management device was in use throughout North America until all manual traffic signals were replaced by early models of the automatic red-, yellow- and green-light traffic signals currently used around the world.

Even though he received national attention for his inventions, some reports say many people cancelled orders for his gas mask when they learned it was invented by a Black man.

Shortly before his death in 1963, the United States Government awarded Morgan a commendation for his traffic signal.
4. TTI-India Partnership Could Lead to Research

Texas A&M University, the Texas Engineering Experiment Station (TEES) and TTI are exploring a long-term research partnership with the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras (IIT Madras). Texas A&M’s Dr. Kumbakonam Rajagopal from mechanical engineering, a graduate of IIT Madras, has been actively leading these discussions and assisting each agency with staff interactions and development of mutual strategies.

In January, IIT Madras hosted an Indo-U.S. workshop on “Recent Advances in Transportation Engineering.” Vice Chancellor of Engineering Dr. Kem Bennett, Forsyth Chair Professor Rajagopal, Associate Professor Dvahg Swaroop, Associate TTI Agency Director Ed Seymour, Research Engineer Kevin Balke, Senior Research Fellow Dallas Little and Researcher Eyad Masad participated in the workshop or are involved in developing the partnership.

“India is making great investments in its transportation systems,” Seymour said. “Teaming the expertise of these premier organizations creates a platform for innovative research and development that benefits the organizations and their countries.”

Seymour also attended another international safety workshop while in India. The New Delhi workshop was sponsored by the Institute of Road Traffic Education (IRTE). One aspect of that program involved road safety education for villages. While touring a village, Seymour and others were highlighted in the local papers.

“This joint effort between India and TTI is an example of the initiatives we need to pursue going forward,” said TTI Director Dennis Christiansen. In an Institute-wide email Feb. 7, Christiansen detailed his Research Funding Diversity Program, which calls for growth in non-TxDOT projects.
“TxDOT will clearly remain our #1 sponsor, and we will continue to work hard to strengthen our relationship with them. Our goal is also consistent with feedback we have received from TxDOT leadership—they value highly our relationship with them, but they also do not want us to become overly dependent on their funding. Our program historically grows at about 5%/year, so if most all of our growth comes from non TxDOT programs, the goal we have set is attainable,” wrote Christiansen.

5. National Geographic to Feature TTI

TTI will be featured on a National Geographic Channel segment entitled Crash Science: Runaway Vehicles, tentatively scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 22, at 8:00 p.m. Eastern, 7:00 Central.

The hour-long segment will include an interview with Research Engineer Roger Bligh and TTI crash test video.

In part, Crash Science: Runaway Vehicles is expected to examine the science behind guardrails including interviews with survivors of crashes.

The production company that put together the segment says the title of the piece was originally Out of Control, but has been changed to Crash Science: Runaway Vehicles. The old title might appear when you check the channel listing.

View National Geographic Channel schedule:
http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/channel/ET/daily/20070222.html
6. Environmental Management has Storey Promotion

Beverly Storey has been promoted to program manager of the Environmental Management Program, replacing Harlow Landphair, who retired last year.

Storey began her career with TTI in 1993 as a graduate research assistant and joined the staff as a full-time researcher in 1995. She holds two Texas A&M University degrees: Bachelor of Science in forestry and Master of Landscape Architecture. Storey is a registered landscape architect in Texas.

7. TTI Experts Urge Continued Use of Child Safety Seats

TTI senior research scientist and child safety seat expert Katie Womack urges parents to continue the proper use of their child safety seats despite the confusion caused by a recent Consumer Reports test showing failures of virtually all the seats tested. Consumer Reports has retracted those test results.

“The confusion over this issue will hopefully be settled once all the information is made available on how the misleading testing was done,” says Womack. “The tests required by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) that all seats made in the U.S. must pass are much more representative of the vast majority of traffic crashes. But, meanwhile, I hope everyone continues to use their seats as directed by manufacturers. The use of properly installed child safety seats has been shown to be highly effective in saving lives.”

When Consumer Reports made its child safety seat results public, the magazine’s article indicated that most of the seats failed a side-impact crash of 38 mph. NHTSA discovered the tests were conducted under conditions representing impacts of 70 mph. When NHTSA conducted its own tests under conditions representing 38 mph, the seats passed. Consumer Reports is retesting the seats under new conditions and will soon make its updated results known.
8. How Many Lives Have You Saved?

Nancy Stratta practices what she preaches. One of four TTI Blood Drive organizers, Stratta donated blood Jan. 30 at TTI’s most recent blood drive. During her life, Stratta estimates that she has donated nearly 50 gallons. Experts say every pint of donated blood has the potential of saving three lives. If true, Stratta has saved the population of a small town.

“I got in the habit of donating years ago. I know it’s something little I can do to potentially make a big difference,” Stratta says. “I plan to keep doing it as long as I am healthy.”

TTI has organized several blood drives every year beginning in 2003. “With each event, there are always a couple of first-time donors. That’s good. I encourage others to join our effort,” Stratta says.

9. TTI Anniversaries

5 Years

Susie Catalina, Office Associate (KLI)
Robert De Roche, Senior Research Specialist (DIT)
Yimin Gao, Post Doctoral Research Associate (EXP)
Anol Mukhopadhyay, Associate Research Scientist (BPS)
Nauman Sheikh, Associate Transportation Researcher (CHS)

10 Years

Brenda Lichti, Accounting Assistant II (KDV)
Kimberly Phillips, Associate Transportation Researcher (AEM)

15 Years

Rodney Jackson, Engineering Technician II (AEM)

20 Years

Poonam Wiles, Research Engineer (HSO)
10. Changes in TTI COM

Recently, two people from TTI Communications have taken on different responsibilities. **Rob Robideau** has been asked to take on a leadership role in strategic marketing for TTI and has relocated to 601K in the CE/TTI Building for that effort. Rob can be reached at his old phone number (845-7935) and email address.

**Bernie Fette** has taken a leadership role in the promotion and expansion of Teens in the Driver Seat, an initiative spearheaded by **Russell Henk**. Bernie has transferred to the Traffic Operations Group, but remains in his original office at 262 Gilchrist and his contact information is the same.

11. 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.

**Low-speed pedestrian barriers** (ASTM International) Feb. 2007

**Texas roads** (AAA Texas—you might be asked to type in your zip code)

**Montgomery, Alabama, approves red-light cameras**
(Montgomery Advertiser) Feb. 7

**Bicycle safety urged in San Marcos** (The University Star) Feb. 7
http://star.txstate.edu/content/view/2640/
12. Editor's Corner: Reduce Your Capital Liability

Using capital letters seems like a simple thing, doesn’t it? Well yes, the basic rules are. But beyond basics it can get complicated, so it might be a capital idea to talk about capitals.

Most editorial styles these days lean toward “downcasing,” which means using lowercase letters whenever possible. Using lowercase letters makes text easy to read. Avoid putting words in all uppercase letters, even for emphasis. If you’re going for emphasis, use bold or italic font instead of all uppercase letters.

Basic rules for capitalizing the initial letter of a word include:

- The first word of a sentence,
- Proper names, and
- Each word in a heading or caption except for articles and prepositions.
A few basic rules for using all lowercase letters include:

- Position titles,
- Acronym definitions that are not proper names,
- The words “state” and “federal” unless in quoted material or referencing a specific governmental entity, and
- The words “district,” “region,” “east,” “west,” “north,” and “south” unless part of a proper name.

But then things get complicated. For example, what do you do if you have a hyphenated word – which parts of it rank capital letters? How about an abbreviated cross-reference to a publication’s title? Or a software menu item you want recognized throughout a document? As with many other grammatical issues, consistency holds a lot of weight with capitalization. Use a consistent approach to capitalization throughout your document and the editor won’t have much to mark.

For rules on capitalization, see TTI’s *Guidelines for Preparing, Editing, and Submitting TxDOT Technical Reports* (page 34), *The Chicago Manual of Style*, or other editorial style guides. For more information, contact Rhonda Brinkmann in TTI Communications.

13. Calendar/Reminders

(Please contact CenterLine with items for this section)

**RMC proposals due to TTI’s Research Development Office** — March 9

**Spring Break** — March 14-16

**TTI Day** — May 2

CenterLine is a production of TTI Communications. We
encourage your comments and suggestions for articles about TTI people and research efforts. Please send email to news@ttimail.tamu.edu or call Rick Davenport at (979) 862-3763.