Fitzpatrick wins Outstanding TRB

The TRB paper “Safety Effectiveness of the HAWK Pedestrian Treatment” by Kay Fitzpatrick and Eun Sug Park received the TRB Pedestrian Committee 2009 Outstanding Paper Award.

The HAWK (High Intensity Activated Crosswalk) beacon is a pedestrian-activated device that creates a gap for pedestrians to use to cross a major roadway. Developed in Tucson, Ariz., the HAWK beacon is currently used in more than 60 locations. The paper documents the before and after study of the safety performance of HAWKs. The results of the study were a 28 percent decrease in all crashes and a 58 percent decrease in pedestrian crashes.

Dr. Varghese George visits TTI

Dr. Varghese George, Assistant Professor of the Department of Civil Engineering at the National Institute of Technology Karnataka, India, visited Texas Transportation Institute, mid November through mid December to deliver a lecture on Public Transportation in Developing Countries. While at TTI, Dr. George had the opportunity to visit with TTI researchers and learn more about the diverse research ongoing at TTI including, signal control and detection equipment used at test beds, the Air Quality Studies program, research in the Pavement Material Division, crash testing at Riverside Campus and meet with the civil engineering faculty from the transportation group. Dr. George visited the TTI office in Houston and visited some high occupancy vehicle (HOV) facilities, park-and-ride systems, and Houston TRANSTAR.

Upcoming Events

- Feb. 20 – Safety Proposals Due
- Feb. 23 – Semiannual Reports Due to Research Development Office
- Feb. 23-25 – 2009 Texas Transit Conference and Mini Expo (Austin, Texas)
- Feb. 24 – TTI Blood Drive
- March 16 – RMC Proposals Due
- March 19-20 – Spring Break

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Retroreflectivity team receives Federal Highway Safety Administration Safety Award

Retroreflectivity is the scientific term that describes the ability of a surface to return light back to its source. (Source: Federal Highway Administration)

Have you ever had a hard time seeing the road and/or road signs while driving at night? Research completed by the TTI retroreflectivity team is helping to make America’s roads safer by work done on a final rule implemented in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) providing additional requirements, guidance, clarification, and flexibility in maintaining traffic sign retroreflectivity.

United States Transportation Secretary Mary Peters presented Greg Schertz and the retroreflectivity team with the FHWA Secretary of Transportation Safety Award for the accomplishments associated with this final rule in November.

Paul Carlson and Gene Hawkins were additionally recognized with the FHWA Outstanding Service Award, “in recognition of outstanding dedication and commitment toward improving the safety and visibility of America’s highways.” Paul and Gene have been working on the FHWA Retroreflectivity team since 1999, serving as the key researchers and providing technical support.

F.Y.I.
RDO Assignments

CE TTI Tower and San Antonio: Kristen Maldonado 979-458-3956

Gilchrist: Jesus Palomo 979-458-3546

El Paso and Dallas: Susan Adams 979-845-9862

Houston: Justin Malnar 979-862-7172
Research & Technology Implementation Director at TxDOT

Rick Collins, P.E., is the director of the Research and Technology Implementation Office at the Texas Department of Transportation and will be visiting TTI on March 5. Anyone interested in meeting with Collins either in a group or individual setting can contact Mary Cearley. Polycom should be available for urban offices outside of College Station (please contact Mary Cearley.) Collins represents TxDOT as a member of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Research Advisory Committee and the state representative to the Transportation Research Board (TRB). He is also a member of the AASHTO Standing Committee on Research and serves on numerous National Cooperative Highway Research Program project panels.

Kudos

At the recent Awards Banquet of the College Station Fire Department, Srinivasa Sunkari was presented the “Community Ambassador of the Year” award for contributions to the department for being a member of the Community Action Response Team (CART) for three years. CART provides assistance to the residents of dwellings impacted by fire in the College Station area by providing necessary information, immediate supplies, and coordinating short term shelter needs.

Mike Pratt and Jeff Miles passed the Professional Engineering Exam for the State of Texas.
TRB Travelers

The following TOG representatives traveled to Washington D.C. for the Transportation Research Board’s Annual Meeting January:


Recent Travel

Christopher Poe made a presentation to the International Bridge, Tunnel, and Turnpike Association (IBTTA) on “Green Transportation Infrastructure at the IBTTA Transportation Finance Summit in Washington, DC in December. The financial impact of green transportation will be important to future federal, state, and local transportation project funding.

Rafael Aldrete, Arturo Bujanda, and consultant Bengt Bostrom, traveled to Monterrey and San Luis Potosi, Mexico, to start work on a feasibility study for the San Luis Potosi International Airport runway expansion and modernization project. They spent an entire week working with government officials, the concessionaire of the airport, custom authorities, regional companies and also corporate managers in Monterrey. Messrs. Aldrete, Bujanda and Bostrom represented TTI as a team led by the engineering firm PBS&J, and Infrastructure Management Group.

Rafael Aldrete traveled to Manila, Philippines to continue work on a project to build capacity in infrastructure project monitoring and evaluation for the National Economic Development Agency (NEDA).

Brooke Ullman, Sandra Schoeneman and Nada Trout spent the first two weeks of January in Cheyenne and Casper, Wyo. conducting surveys at driver’s license renewal offices. This was for the project “Use of Truck-Mounted Changeable Message Signs During Mobile Operations.” The project is sponsored by Wyoming Department of Transportation.

Paul Carlson, Gene Hawkins, Sue Chrysler, Tony Voigt, Jonathan Tydlacka, Kay Fitzpatrick and Jerry Ullman attended the annual National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (NCUTCD) meeting in January.

Holiday Travel

Paul Carlson traveled to St. Lucia with his family for a Christmas getaway in paradise. “While there are only a few paved roads on the island, I noticed that most did not have pavement markings. Maybe that is because they use rollers to apply their markings. They cover a few hundred yards per day.”

Roberto Macias visited Norway for a Christmas vacation with his family.
TOG’s Holiday Angels

The holidays for many are a time for joy, family, friends and gift-giving. However, there are many people, most of which are children who deserve hope during these economically challenging times. TTI employees from many of the regional offices donated time, money and service to make this past holiday season brighter for those in need.

SAN ANTONIO - ONE CASTLE HILLS

Over the holidays the One Castle Hills San Antonio TTI office participated in an Angel Tree Project to benefit children of the San Antonio Youth Center. The project granted the wishes of 32 children all under the age of 10. TTI employees collected five bicycles, bicycle helmets, scooters, books, toys, shoes and much more for these special children. Eleven TTI volunteers donated more than four hours of their time to help organize, purchase and distribute gifts.

DALLAS

In early December the TTI Dallas office brought warm clothing and blankets to be distributed for the homeless in downtown Dallas, in time for the below freezing temperature. Jim Carvell, a retired employee of TTI, distributed the items to THE BRIDGE, a facility part of the First Presbyterian Church of Dallas.

Sofia Ramirez, Christie Madsen, Kathy Tran, Lisa Palmer, Minh Le, Curtis Beaty, Roberta Macias, Ed Seymour and Jack Antebi of the Dallas TTI office also spent some time sorting Angel Tree gifts at the Salvation Army Christmas Center as part of their “behind the scenes” service project.

HOUSTON

Jim Kruse, Tony Voigt, Darryl Puckett, Jeff Arndt, and Lisa Patke (L-R) from the Houston office volunteering their time by sorting and packaging toys at the Salvation Army Secret Santa Warehouse.
Brenda Manak is a grandma for the 2nd time. Julianna Marie Manak was born 2:53 p.m. on Jan 29, weighing in at 6 lb 2 oz, and 18 ¾” in length, with beautiful brown hair. Congrats to Brenda!

Julianna Marie Manak made her way into the world on January 29, 2009.

Beverly Kuhn’s sister – Saralyn Cepak recently died of cancer. In lieu of flowers it is preferred that a donation be made to Wings Cancer Foundation in Memphis.

http://galvestondailynews.com/story.lasso?ewcd=095f6414533dff1f

Newcomers

Please welcome Lindsey White to the Houston office. Lindsey is originally from San Diego, California and is a Junior CE student at Rice University. She will be working on several projects but should have some available time. If you need her assistance, please let me know. - submitted by Robert Benz

We would like to welcome Jon Re to TOG’s growing family. Jon joins the Operations & Design Division as a Graduate Assistant Researcher. Jon received his Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Michigan State and will be graduating from Texas A&M with his Master of Science in Civil Engineering in May 2009. Jon worked with a consultant and state DOT before coming to Texas A&M to study. Jon will be working closely with Paul Carlson on several TxDOT research projects.
-- submitted by Stacey Alejandro

Where are these signs from?

Photos courtesy of Adam Pike

Do you have some interesting traffic photos? Send them to Jen Ross for the next TOG Newsletter.

ANSWER:

Jamaica
The Office of the Chancellor has asked that TTI employees closely review all travel. Here’s the current travel guideline that TTI will follow:

- Decisions on travel will be left up to associate/assistant directors.
- Travel that conforms to our TRB guidelines and other travel considered strategically important should continue.
- International travel may require a secondary review, so please take that into consideration when asking about travel.

Give blood, Safe a Life

Here are the TTI blood drives scheduled for this year:

Tuesday, February 24
Tuesday, June 23
Thursday, October 29

These are all at the Gilchrist Building, Room 103 from 9 am – 3 pm.

The drive is open to TTI, relatives, friends and anyone who you know that wants to donate.

You may contact any of the following people to schedule an appointment:

Nancy Stratta – 845-9955 or n-stratta@tamu.edu
Mary Cearley – 847-8719 or m-cearley@tamu.edu
Linda Chatham – 845-6150 or l-chatham@tamu.edu
Lance Bullard – 845-6153 or l-bullard@tamu.edu

Happy Birthday to you.....

Jan 1 - Edward Seymour  Feb 9 - Lisa Patke
Jan 9 - Noel Chavez     Feb 12 - Kathy Tran
Jan 17 - Edward Brackin  Feb 13 - Gabriel Valdez
Jan 19 - Melissa Finley  Feb 15 - Jerry Ullman
Jan 20 - Michael Vickich Feb 17 - Morgan McKay
Jan 24 - Heather McNeal  Feb 22 - Nada Trout
Feb 6 - Michael Pratt    Feb 23 - Paul Adamson
Feb 8 - Lori Gray       Feb 25 - Mandeep Pannu
Feb 9 - Nadeem Chaudhary Feb 26 - Bryan Miller

TOG Mission Statement

To facilitate innovations in transportation system operations through leadership in research, education and technology transfer.