

ITS Texas December 2008 Newsletter



Past President/Elect President's Message

Since the ITS Texas Annual Meeting was held early this year, we have teamed up to provide a combined President/Past President's Message. It is another first for our Chapter, so here it goes.

As we approach the holiday season, it is a great time to slow down or step back and appreciate all that we have. With that, we would like to thank the ITS Texas Board and the Membership for their contributions to the ITS Texas organization. We have completed another successful year. Some of our accomplishments include enhancements to our website, adoption of new bylaws, and a successful Annual Meeting with record-breaking attendance. The ITS Texas Board would like to thank the speakers, exhibitors, sponsors and membership for your participation at the Annual Meeting that helped make it a success. We appreciate your support.

Over the next year, **we encourage each of you to get involved with ITS Texas.** How can you do

this? Make an award nomination. Reply to a sponsorship request. Attend a seminar. Contribute to the newsletter. Provide input into the website. Speak at the Annual Meeting. There are a number of ways to become involved in the organization. Please contact the ITS Texas Board if you would like to become involved.

Thank you for being a member of ITS Texas. The New Year promises to bring change. With your participation, we look forward to the continued success of the ITS Texas Chapter.

Finally, don't forget to mark your calendar and plan to be in Galveston, November 11 - 13, 2009. Best wishes and thank you for your support of ITS Texas.

Happy Holidays.

Brian Burk, President
Natalie Bettger, Past President

Your Article Here

The ITS Texas newsletter is a great way for you as an ITS professional to **share your projects, plans or other ITS related items with the ITS community.** If you have information concerning any ITS project within the state that you feel may be of interest to the membership, PLEASE contact Andy Oberlander at aoberla@dot.state.tx.us. If you have an idea and are not sure of its interest go ahead and contact me so we can discuss. SERIOUSLY – the membership wants to hear about upcoming or

ongoing ITS projects. I look forward to hearing from you.

ITS Texas Annual Meeting Award Winners

The ITS Texas awards program recognizes individuals or a group of individuals for a project or other contribution in the fields of ITS policy, planning, design, deployment, research and education. At the 2008 ITS Texas Annual Meeting, one individual received the ITS Texas Wallace E. Ewell Lifetime Achievement Award for outstanding leadership, innovation, management and coordination of Intelligent Transportation Systems in the State of Texas. In addition, two individuals were selected to receive ITS Texas Outstanding Achievement Awards in recognition of outstanding leadership in development and implementation of ITS projects.

Al Kosik, P.E., received the ITS Texas Wallace E. Ewell Lifetime Achievement Award for his outstanding work within the State, building consensus and keeping Texas moving forward with ITS initiatives. Al is the manager of the Traffic Management Section of the Traffic Operations Division for the Texas Department of Transportation. Al began his career in the Department's Division of Automation in 1971 and was one of the first employees of the Traffic Management Section after its creation in 1990. He became the manager of the ITS Branch in 1991 and Director of the Traffic Management Section of the Traffic Operations Division in 1998. Al has consistently proven to be a dedicated, conscientious and innovative member of

the department. He has been a leader in the department's efforts to implement advanced traffic management and ITS since its inception and is a respected national expert.

Under Al Kosik's direction, Texas has developed one of the most advanced ITS programs in the country. There are currently over 1000 miles of state highways with operational freeway traffic management systems. TxDOT also has fourteen Transportation Management Centers in operation in Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, Fort Worth, El Paso, Austin, Abilene, Amarillo, Bryan, Corpus Christi, Laredo, Lubbock, Wichita Falls and Yoakum. These centers provide freeway incident detection and management, data collection, traveler information, and communications with our local partners. ITS infrastructure already in place includes approximately 500 dynamic message signs, 800 closed-circuit ITS-related cameras, and over 1000 miles of fiber optic cable backbone. These systems allow active traffic management of about one-third of our metropolitan freeways.

Al has been actively leading the department's progress in this area by working closely with district partners. The Traffic Management Section provides close support to the districts in the ITS area through in-house development of both hardware and software systems, development of plans and specifications, assisting with project design, acting as a technical consultant, and acting as a liaison with contractors and vendors to ensure successful project completion.

Al has been at the forefront of every major traffic management initiative that

has occurred in Texas including the ITS Early Deployment Program, the Operational Test Program, the Houston Priority Corridor Program, the San Antonio Model Deployment Initiative and the implementation of the ITS Federal Earmark Program.

Al Kosik has directed many successful projects and has always exhibited a high level of professionalism, dedication and technical ability. Al is respected by the traffic management industry, his peers, superiors and those he supervises. He has a unique ability to work effectively with people at all levels of the department and the private sector. Al has also been a valuable asset to his community where he has donated countless hours of his time and expertise. In addition to being active in various youth sports organizations, Al has served on the City of Round Rock Planning and Zoning Commission for the last twenty-one years.

Al Kosik has proven to be an invaluable asset to TxDOT, the traveling public, and districts in the development of their ITS programs. He has worked tirelessly to improve transportation in Texas and is truly the "Father of ITS" in Texas.

Brian Moen, P.E., with the City of Frisco was selected for an ITS Texas Outstanding Achievement Award for his work leading the way in design, procurement, and implementation of the Advanced Transportation Management System (ATMS). The City of Frisco ATMS is the first totally broadband wireless ATMS in Texas that brings all traffic signal communication, video detection camera feeds, surveillance camera feeds, etc. from each intersection and surveillance camera

locations to the emergency management center. This system is the first in Texas to use unlicensed Motorola Canopy radios for all applications. Several cities in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and Texas have started to follow the similar design and procurement approach, since the successful implementation of Frisco ATMS. The City received federal funds for the system. The City of Frisco used the cooperative purchasing program with Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC) to procure and implement the communication system, and led the partnership efforts with TxDOT in ensuring that the HGAC contract met all the state and federal guidelines. This allowed the City to hire a Motorola value-added reseller to procure and implement the system without issuing an RFP, resulting in significant time and cost savings. Since then, several cities have used the HGAC contract to procure similar systems. Brian showed outstanding leadership by bringing the Frisco Fire Department, Police Department, and Information Technology (IT) department on-board and making them partners on this project. The ATMS is hosted at the Emergency Management Center built and operated by the Fire Department. The IT Department is managing all networking equipment including servers and work stations. The Police Department has access to the cameras and assists in traffic monitoring during special events. Since the initial success of the system, Brian Moen and city staff have invited several cities and consultants to share various aspects of the system and to transfer knowledge regarding how to procure and implement a similar system.

Rick Cortez, P.E., with the Texas Department of Transportation – Dallas District was the second individual selected for the ITS Texas Outstanding Achievement Award for his work on the Dallas District Traffic Management Center - DalTrans. On December 10, 2007, the Dallas District Traffic Management Center went into operation in Mesquite, Texas. The 54,700 square foot facility is the new home for the DalTrans ITS system which had previously been operated from a 2,100 square foot facility located in north Dallas for just over 10 years. Rick was the project manager for the DalTrans project which included many components consisting of locating and purchasing property, design and construction of the facility, and the smooth transition of the DalTrans software and staff into the new facility.

The new DalTrans facility houses all of the Dallas District's operations staff which over the years was spread throughout four separate buildings. The design team visited other large Transportation Management Centers within the state in pursuit of utilizing the best details of each facility while also attempting to foresee any potential shortcomings. The facility would house a state-of-the-practice training facility along with permanent residents for the TxDOT/Dallas County Courtesy Patrol Operations. The facility has been designed with an Emergency Management Room equipped to handle large incident scenarios that can extend over long durations.

The building went under construction in October of 2005 for a construction cost of \$8,911,000. Rick was responsible for the design and construction of this new

facility. Now open, in addition to TxDOT operations staff on the floor, Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) operates the high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes from the facility, and Courtesy Patrol is dispatched from the facility. The new DalTrans Traffic Management Center should handle the traffic of the Dallas metropolitan area well into the 21st century.

If you know or see these individuals, be sure to congratulate them for their efforts. Also, please be thinking all year about colleagues and co-workers that could be nominated for next year's awards. We will be requesting nominations in the July 2009 timeframe.

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New Board Members

At the 2008 ITS Texas annual meeting two new board members were elected by the membership to serve as at-large Directors. We want to welcome **Jeff Weatherford** and **Dave Carter** as our new board members.

Jeffrey Weatherford, P.E., PTOE joins us from the City of Houston where he serves as the City Traffic Operations Engineer/Senior Assistant Director of Public Works and Engineering. In that position he oversees the ITS and Signal Engineering groups as well as traffic maintenance and construction. Prior to joining the City of Houston, his experience has included working in both the public and private sector in Arizona. As a consultant, he has worked on ITS and traffic engineering projects in Arizona, California, and Nevada. He has a degree in Civil Engineering from the Illinois Institute of Technology.

Dave Carter, P.E., PTOE joins us from the City of Richardson where he serves as the City of Richardson's Assistant Director of Development Services overseeing the City's Traffic and Transportation Division. Prior to joining the City of Richardson in 2006, Dave was a Vice President with Parsons Transportation Group, an engineering consulting firm. While serving as the Texas Road and Highway Sector Manager for Parsons, Dave served as Program Manager and Principal in Charge for numerous roadway design, highway design and corridor planning projects. He also served as DART's principal transportation engineer providing Light Rail/Traffic interface design, traffic signal design, systems integration design, pavement marking &

signage design, and traffic signal timing for DART's light rail extensions to Carrollton, Farmers Branch, Irving, and Pleasant Grove. He also served in the same role for DART's initial LRT Starter System and the first light rail expansion to Richardson, Plano, and Garland. Dave received his Bachelor of Science and a Masters of Engineering, both in Civil Engineering from Texas A&M University.

We look forward to working with Jeffrey and Dave in the years to come and know that each bring a significant amount of knowledge and expertise with them. Welcome!

ITS Texas Scholarship Recipient

At the 2008 annual meeting **Ms. Beth Porterfield** was awarded the 2008 ITS Texas Scholarship. Beth earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from Rice University in May of 2007 and is currently beginning her second year of graduate studies in the transportation engineering program at the University of Texas at Austin. Beth was also offered a research assistantship at the University. She has worked internships for Walter P. Moore in Houston since May of 2005 and in that capacity has worked on a number of ITS projects for TxDOT. In her first year of graduate studies Beth worked on a project to recommend arterial ITS practices for TxDOT and currently is working on her thesis in which the subject is toll road revenue and traffic forecasting, each of which have strong ITS components. Beth is confident that wherever she works there will always be an aspect of

ITS involved. Congratulations to Beth on receiving the scholarship and the ITS community looks forward to her continued interest and enthusiasm in her upcoming endeavors.

2008 ITS Texas Annual Meeting Recap



The sixteenth annual meeting was held in Austin, Texas from September 3 – 5th, 2005. A total of 119 participants interacted with 26 vendors.



As is the custom, the meeting was preceded by ITS Texas sponsored training and tours. Corning Cable Systems provided an instructional session on fiber optic cable design and installation. A joint tour of the Combined Transportation, Emergency and

Communications Center (CTECC) and TxTAG Customer Service Center (CSC) illustrated the combined interaction of State, County, and Local responders, while TxTAG CSC offered participants a glimpse of what happens behind the scenes on that clever tag on the windshield. A tour at Samsung offered participants view of the technology and products manufactured by this giant and was topped off with a slick pen in a box. A chance to interact with the Xbox football on the large screen Samsung display was fun too.



The day was topped off with a special called meeting to approve proposed By-law changes. The changes were approved by unanimous consent.



The opening session provided perspectives from owner, designer,

room block has already been established so go ahead and make your reservations now. Additional information on the 2009 annual meeting can be found at [2009 Annual Meeting](#).



Membership survey results

At the 2008 annual meeting a membership survey was distributed to collect information on how our members feel the organization is going and look for ways to improve. 26 members responded and the overall comments were positive though there were some good recommendations for the future. To see the complete survey results for all 16 questions with comments, please visit the [survey results web site](#).

Bylaw changes

During 2008, the ITS Texas Board of Directors completed the update of the ITS Texas bylaws, thereby bringing the bylaws up to date with the state of the practice. A draft copy of the bylaw modifications was provided to ITS Texas membership to review in July 2008, and a special meeting was held during the 2008 ITS Texas Annual Meeting in September to discuss and vote on the proposed bylaw modifications. During

this special meeting all modifications to the bylaws were approved and are now in effect. These bylaw modifications included three major changes including the addition of general definitions; updates to outdated language that only applied to officers during the initial startup of the ITS Texas Chapter; and updates to the election procedures.

General definitions were added to define references to meetings and mail. The reference to meeting in the bylaws is defined as any meeting held in person, by phone, Internet, or combinations thereof. In any case, the meeting venue must provide live, real-time interaction for all attendees. The reference to mail in the bylaws is defined as postal, electronic, or any combination thereof. These general definitions were added to clarify the meaning of meetings and mail correspondence and to add flexibility to the quarterly ITS Texas Board of Directors' meetings.

The changes to the language under the Section IV - BOARD OF DIRECTORS was to remove language that is no longer needed and was only applicable during the first few years of the ITS Texas Chapter initiation. These changes included the removal of a sentence under Section 2. Membership: "During the first year of operation (1994), there will be only eight (8) Directors, as there will be no Immediate Past President." In addition, under Section 3. Terms, the following language was removed; "For the year 1999 only, two (2) Directors at Large shall serve for one (1) year and two (2) directors shall serve for two (2) years. The length of the terms for said Directors at Large shall be determined by drawing lots. Thereafter, two

directors shall be elected each year, with each serving a two-year term."

The last major change to the bylaws was an update to the election procedures to allow more options as to when the vote can occur, and membership voting options. Language was also added to provide more structure and accountability during elections. There were and are still two ways to hold an election; at the annual meeting, or by sending a ballot to request membership to vote should an annual meeting not be held. Updates that were made to election procedures for voting at the annual meeting included the opportunity to hold an election at the annual meeting no matter what time of year the annual meeting is held. In the previous bylaws, voting could occur only if the annual meeting was held in November or December. Changes that were made to election procedures held outside of the annual meeting were to allow for voting to take place electronically. In the past bylaws, this was not an option. The Board felt this will allow for elections to be more streamlined if they need to be held outside of the annual meeting. To view the updated bylaws please visit the [bylaws web site](#).

ITS UT Student Chapter

ITS Texas is very pleased to have a strong Student Chapter at the University of Texas at Austin. The Chapter was established in 1995 and has a current membership of 25 students. ITS UT has always been involved in promoting the goals and objectives of Intelligent Transportation Systems and applications, as well as serving the

student community of the University of Texas at Austin in a variety of ways. The chapter's officers and members have traditionally participated and continue to participate in many university-wide events such as Explore UT, Introduce a Girl to Engineering and the Engineering EXPO to name a few. Active representation has been sought in most Student Organization Fairs, where ITS UT maintains a booth and distributes informational material. Regarding the contribution of the organization to the students of the Transportation Engineering program of the Cockrell School of Engineering, the chapter has traditionally organized plenty of academic and social events, including but not limited to guest lectures, field trips and orientation activities for new, incoming students. Last but not least, ITS UT traditionally participates in community service activities such as Habitat for Humanity and Adopt-A-Highway (the latter one in conjunction with our sister organization UT ITE). Please visit our [student chapter section](#) to learn more about the UT student chapter and how to start other student chapters.

ITS Texas presentation at the 15th World Congress on Intelligent Transportation Systems



The State Chapter Council asked ITS Texas to present how ITS Texas plans and conducts its annual meeting as part

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