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## President's Message

Greetings, ITS Texas members! First of all, I'd like to thank each of you for being a member of ITS Texas. Without your interest and participation, our organization wouldn't exist, let alone thrive as we do. We're one of the strongest and most active ITS State Chapters in the country! Let's keep it up!

Our organization enters our 11<sup>th</sup> year of existence in 2003 with lofty goals and aspirations. In addition to our regular programs (education outreach, quarterly newsletter, student chapter sponsorship, annual meeting, etc.), this year's Board of Directors has a full slate of new and challenging initiatives.

Our predominant focus in 2003 will be [increasing member benefits](#). Expect a new and revised [web site](#) to come on-line this year. In addition to our annual (and highly successful) fiber optic seminar, we'll be offering another [continuing education course](#) in 2003. We'll be [enhancing the quality and content of our Newsletters](#). We plan to implement a [student scholarship program](#). We hope to [expand our revenues](#) through Newsletter and web site advertising and sponsorship. (With more money, we can offer more benefits and value to our members.) We're actively involved in the planning for [ITS America's 2004 Annual Meeting in San Antonio](#). We're also [re-formatting our annual meeting](#) to include more practical applications of products and technology.

As you can see, our plate is full! Our Board of Directors is working hard towards these goals. I encourage each of you to get involved also! Attend the seminars. Respond to sponsorship requests. Contribute to the Newsletter. Attend the annual meeting. Provide input to the web site. It's all very much appreciated! Once again, thanks again for being members!

**Mark C. Conway, P.E.**  
**ITS Texas President, 2003**

### 2003 Membership Drive

2003 is here and it marks the 11<sup>th</sup> year of ITS Texas. 2003 will be an exciting year for ITS Texas. ITS Texas promotes and enhances public safety and welfare by fostering research, development and implementation of plan programs to reduce motor vehicle deaths and injuries, improve mobility and promote, encourage and advance a system of safer, more efficient and environmentally sound highway transportation through research development and implementation of advanced technology. Be a part of it. Being a member of ITS Texas brings the opportunity to network with your peers on the latest happenings in ITS.

- Membership in ITS TEXAS is only \$25 and gets you
- \$50 reduction in the annual ITS Texas meeting registration
  - Discounts to ITS Texas sponsored training classes and seminars
  - E-mail notification of specialty conferences and breaking news in the ITS field
  - Voting privileges on ITS Texas chapter business
  - Excellent opportunities to network with other transportation and ITS professionals, including ITS vendors
- Your paid dues are good through December 2003. Membership is easy. Just [click here](#) to access your ITS Texas registration form.

## 2003 Annual Meeting Awards

**Dr. Ed Seymour** was honored for his many ITS efforts including linking statewide software development with National ITS Standards, keeping Texas on forefront of the development of National ITS Standards, D/FW Regional ITS Plan, D/FW Center-to-Center project, and other significant and leading-edge ITS work.

**D/FW International Airport** was honored for their continuing efforts over the last several years in developing and implementing transportation technology solutions including smart garages, parking guidance and space

availability systems, motorist information systems, traffic management systems, and the largest and most sophisticated automated revenue and access control system of its kind.

**City of Richardson** was honored for an innovative partnership program with their local towing service. The program is designed to reduce incident response times, accident clearance times and overall traffic congestion. Wireless traffic surveillance video is transmitted to a towing dispatcher, who then determines, along with the City, the type, size and number of vehicles which

need wrecker service, and can immediately dispatch the necessary equipment.

**Houston TranStar** was honored for their groundbreaking efforts disseminating traffic information to mobile electronic devices with internet such as wireless phones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), and pagers. TranStar has also developed a personalized traffic E-mail alert system that notifies users of freeway incidents by transmitting to any device that accepts emails or text messages such as PCs, cell phones, PDAs, and pagers.

# 2002 Annual Meeting

If you missed the 10th Annual Meeting of ITS Texas in November, 2002, you missed two days of networking with over 100 other ITS professionals, over 15 exhibitors, and many excellent technical presentations. The meeting began with a half-day training course on "Traffic Signal Operations at Highway-Rail Intersections" presented by TTI. That same afternoon, some of the attendees chose to tour the TransGuide Traffic Management Center and the Southwest Research Institute

## ITS Facilities.

Throughout the 10th Annual Meeting, we were joined by ITS America CEO and President Neil Schuster, who addressed the Opening Session with his description of the state of affairs in ITS. He described the road ahead relative to ITS and the reauthorization of TEA-21. Joining him in the Opening Session was METRO Vice President and Chief of Police Tom Lambert, who is currently a member of the ITS America Board of Directors and a Past

## President of ITS Texas.

Tom gave an update on homeland security and ITS.

Over two dozen speakers addressed the attendees on various ITS subjects including work zones, rural applications, Amber Alert, wireless communications, airport and parking applications, standards, transit applications, and the ubiquitous and popular "Low Cost Solutions That Work." During the course of the meeting, we managed to enjoy an outdoor evening reception in the Doubletree Hotel courtyard, complete

with pleasant South Texas November weather.

In our Closing Session, TxDOT San Antonio District Engineer John Kelly described the history of transportation including a tale of excessive vehicular operating speed which has stayed in his memory since his youth. ITS Texas appreciates the support of the 10th Annual Meeting's sponsors, exhibitors, speakers, and guests in making it a successful gathering and exhibition.

To review meeting presentations, click here: <http://itstexas.tamu.edu/meeting.htm>

## FY 2004 DOT Budget - \$54.3 Billion for a Safer, Simpler, Smarter Transportation System

The U.S. DOT unveiled its proposed fiscal year 2004 budget, requesting \$54.3 billion—a 6% increase over President Bush's 2003 request. A total of \$14.4 billion, or 27% is targeted towards supporting transportation safety, U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta's top priority.

"During the past year, we at DOT have been hard at work creating a safer, simpler and smarter national transportation system for all Americans: safer, because we are placing a greater emphasis on saving lives and reducing accidents; simpler, because we want to

consolidate and streamline programs and improve project delivery; and smarter, because we are improving system performance and enhancing program accountability," Secretary Mineta said.

Current laws authorizing both surface and air transportation financial assistance programs will expire at the end of 2003. In anticipation of this, the 2004 budget includes the foundation for proposed new legislation that will authorize these programs for the next several years, including increased funding flexibility, innovative financing tools, efficient

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environmental review processes, and expansion of the capacity and efficiency of freight transportation. In addition, the proposal includes an emphasis on consolidating and expanding federal transportation safety programs.

Further details on the budget are available from DOT's fiscal year 2004 "Budget in Brief" at <http://www.dot.gov/bib2004/bibindex.html>.



# Reauthorization Update

Recently at TRB, Emil Frankel, Assistant Secretary of the DOT, outlined six principles for TEA-21 Reauthorization. A renewed dedication to ITS was one of the six principles, which are:

1. Improve the safety and security of the Nation's transportation system.
2. Emphasize the importance of mobility by expanding travel choices and information available to transportation customers.
3. Expand the capacity and efficiency of our freight transportation system by improving intermodal links.
4. Take steps to speed up the approval and completion of all vital transportation projects.
5. Give further flexibility to state and local decision-makers.
6. Foster the development of innovative technologies and the implementation of Intelligent Transportation Systems to improve performance and operation of transportation systems in ways that directly benefit transportation customers.

Mary Peters, Administrator for the Federal Highway Administration also addressed TEA-21 reauthorization in some detail. In her remarks, Ms. Peters emphasized a continued dedication to intelligent transportation systems in the FHWA's vision for the reauthorization bill:

"An example of a smarter investment we plan to continue to emphasize is the ITS program. Over the past 11 years, and the last two reauthorization cycles, we have invested over \$2 billion

## 2004 ITS America is Coming to Texas

It's not too early to begin planning for the 2004 ITS America meeting coming to San Antonio on April 26-29, 2004. This will be the first time the national event has been to Texas since the 1996 Annual Meeting in Houston. ITS Texas members are encouraged/invited/urged to get involved. Pat Irwin, TxDOT San Antonio, is working on assisting the ITS America staff with the

Program Committee and Andy Ballard, City of San Antonio, is working with the Local Arrangement Committee. This is an excellent opportunity for ITS Texas members to contribute to the success of the national forum. Volunteers will be needed in a variety of roles. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Andy at [AndrewB@sanantonio.gov](mailto:AndrewB@sanantonio.gov).

## ITS Texas Board of Directors

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## DOT Letter Marks "New Era" for ITS America

With a note of high praise for the Intelligent Transportation Society of America from U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Secretary Norman Y. Mineta, DOT has announced a restructuring of the external advisory function for intelligent transportation systems (ITS) program. Due to this restructuring, ITS America's designation as a utilized Federal Advisory Committee will not be renewed by DOT when it expires in March 2003. However, in the letter to ITS America chair Dr. C. Michael Walton, DOT Deputy

Secretary Michael P. Jackson expressed his conviction that ITS America will continue to make vital contributions to DOT projects in its new capacity. In response, Walton has echoed these sentiments, adding that the letter marks the start of a promising "new era" for ITS America in which it will be at liberty to pursue a wider range of programs and relationships. The letter commends ITS America for its decade of work with DOT and provides reassurance that DOT's relationship with ITS America will continue following this "natural and appropriate evolution."

# Dave's Rant

Transportation has played a dominant role in shaping human history. It is responsible for many aspects of civilization and culture and has given rise to a variety of human sub-cultures.

During the terrible economic depression of the 1930s there came to be a subculture in America of people who had nothing but their freedom. These people used their one asset, their freedom, to the fullest extent possible to survive and to enrich their lives. Then, as now, the principal obvious manifestation of freedom was travel. Then, unlike now, the principal mode of transport for this subculture of Americans was a stolen ride on a freight train.

Members of this unique society would dream of a different kind of life, one no less free, but one with less privation. These aspirations were recorded for all time in a song lyric a portion of which I am going to subject you to today:

On a summer day in the month of May a burly bum came hiking  
Down a shady lane through the sugar cane, he was looking for his liking.  
As he roamed along he sang a song of the land of milk and honey  
Where a bum can stay for many a day, and he won't need any money

Oh the buzzin' of the bees in the cigarette trees near the soda water fountain,  
At the lemonade springs where the bluebird sings on the Big Rock Candy Mountain

In the Big Rock Candy Mountains, all the cops have wooden legs  
And the bulldogs all have rubber teeth

and the hens lay soft-boiled eggs  
The farmer's trees are full of fruit and the barns are full of hay  
Oh I'm bound to go where there ain't no snow  
Where the rain don't fall, the wind don't blow  
In the Big Rock Candy Mountains

In the Big Rock Candy Mountains the jails are made of tin,  
And you can walk right out again as soon as you are in  
There ain't no short-handled shovels, no axes, saws or picks,  
I'm a-goin' to stay where you sleep all day  
Where they hung the jerk that invented work  
In the Big Rock Candy Mountains

The hobo's dream of a paradise included stew, cigarettes, lemonade (and the occasional alternative beverage), and an empty boxcar to sleep in. Prominent throughout the hobo vision of heaven is the continuing desire to travel freely. Even though the big rock candy mountains had everything they desired in abundance, they continued to place a high value on their freedom to move at will and unmolested, and to even leave if they so chose.

Now seventy years later, the surface transportation systems in our cities have made hobos of us all. Now in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the vision of free, unimpeded, safe unmolested travel is not just the unattainable dream of a few unwashed, it is the daily mass yearning of mainstream society.

Today, we can afford our stew and lemonade our homes and occasionally a shiner bock or two. We can even

afford to travel. We are not afraid of work, hell, we can't get enough of the stuff. Unlike the hobo, we do not, most of us, want for the necessities, but for one. The necessity we want for is our freedom and the manifestation of that freedom, our ability to travel freely.

Today, congestion is the railroad bull. Congestion imprisons us in our cars. Our hands grow weary not of shovels, saws and picks, but of gripping our steering wheels. With each passing year we serve longer and longer sentences in our upholstered cells of steel, glass and rubber. With our travel mugs in our cup holders, our radio playing, our air conditioner churning, stress clouding our faces, we modern hobos still dream:

On an autumn day a driver may decide to go out driving  
Down a freeway lane through an interchange, he goes struggling and striving,  
As he creeps along he sings a song of a land of bread and beers  
Where you're free to roam or you can just stay home, and there are no traffic engineers

Where the transit train stops, there's no traffic cops, and if you need it there's free towing  
Where you're free to linger and you never throw the finger,  
And the traffic's always flowing

Dave Davis  
2003 Annual Meeting

*ITS America News*, the monthly newsletter of ITS America, is now available online at:  
<http://www.itsa.org/newsletter.html>.

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