



DISTRICT TWO ITS NEWSLETTER



November-December 2013 Issue 73





NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS ENGINEER

The past two months have been an eye opener for me to say the least. It began in November when I had the opportunity to attend Florida's inaugural Automated Vehicle summit in Tampa. This event was sponsored by the Department, Tampa-Hillsborough Expressway Authority, Florida Institute of Consulting Engineers and USF's Center for Urban Transportation Research. The festivities kicked off on the afternoon of Thursday, November 14th, with presentations from multiple professionals involved in the autonomous vehicle research. There were representatives from the Florida Senate, Florida Transportation Commissions, GM, Google, Princeton, Southwest Research Institute and other academia providing very informative details on the progress of this technology. My favorite of all was the Google presentation provided by Andy Levandowski because it really touched on the biggest benefit of autonomous vehicles, those individuals that are currently restricted from being able to fend for themselves.

Mr. Levandowski spoke about the capability to provide seniors and physically challenged individuals with the opportunity to continue with a normal life due to this technology. He showed a video of a man who was operating the Google vehicle in an urbanized area. This individual went to a doctor's appointment, the pharmacy and the dry cleaners during the video. About two-thirds of the way through we finally learned that this motorist was blind and used voice commands to direct the vehicle to the proper destination by providing the location's address. At the end of the video the smile on his face said it all, "I'M FREE!!!" Of course there will be the legal and bureaucratic hurdles to overcome but can you imagine the impact this will have for our society and economy if the technology ever comes to fruition?

The most humorous presentation of the summit was a Princeton Professor who's been involved in autonomous technology for the past thirty years. Dr. Alain Kornhauser explained that autonomous technology is nothing new and has been used by airports, theme parks and universities throughout the world for several decades. Of course I am talking about a driverless monorail system that is guided by rail or predetermined pattern. The vehicle is basically given a route to follow with no possible deviations thereby removing the need for a driver. The fact of the matter was Dr. Kornhauser was much more entertaining than the presentation and it showed with every word coming out of his mouth. The man knows his stuff and kept it to the basics with an acknowledgement that until our country changes its way of thinking there could still be a long wait for this technology to advance to cars. The gist of it is that he stressed "autonomous vehicles are nothing new and has been around for over 40 years, so WHAT'S THE HOLD-UP?"

There were many speakers that were optimistic of this technology's availability in the next few years and others that countered it could be decades. Mr. Daniel Frakes (General Motors) stated that his company was a couple of years away from making autonomous cars available to the public. Mr. Chunka Mui (Devil's Advocate Group) questioned if society is ready for such technology on the roads. Mr. Steven Dellenback (Southwest Research Institute) countered that autonomous vehicle technology is here and ready for off-road applications that can be utilized by the military (i.e. drone vehicles) and construction industry. Ms. Jill Jamieson (Deloitte & Touche) explained that the advent of this technology will mainly revolve around money and the acceptance of motorists who would commit to purchasing such vehicles (i.e. money talks).

Continued on following page



NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS ENGINEER CONTINUED

Public agencies like the California Department of Motor Vehicles, Michigan Department of Transportation and Florida DHSMV focused on the governmental and legal aspects of this new technology and what needs to be done prior to allowing autonomous vehicles on our roadway system. It's not as simple as we'd think since autonomous vehicles provide opportunities for motorists who would normally be incapable of operating a motor vehicle. Questions like "what happens if the vehicle's computer fails?" or "Does this allow inebriated individuals to operate a vehicle as long as the car has control?" or "Who is legally responsible if the technology fails?" were some of the questions posed to the audience. Very tough questions that will require some dialog prior to allowing the technology on Florida's roadway system.

The most disappointing portion of the summit was when Jim Wright of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Office (AASHTO) stated that they did not know this technology was so far advanced and it would take about 10 years for his organization to develop some guidance for government agencies. This was unfortunate to hear since such technology has been a key topic at every ITS America Annual conference for at least the past 7 years and the expectation of delivery by 2016 was in the back of everyone's mind. Let's just hope that AASHTO can expedite the process to keep up with the fast changing world of technology.

All in all the future looks promising. Since this summit I have actually decided to go car shopping since the 2016 autonomous model I've been imagining won't come anytime soon. I've had the chance to see some neat features in today's cars like back-up cameras, collision

avoidance systems and lane departure alarms while perusing the car lots but "DANG-IT it's just not the same as an autonomous vehicle!" I was so looking forward to eating my breakfast and reading the newspaper while commuting to work every morning. Guess it will still be hand position 2 and 10 for at least another decade!

On Sunday, December 1st, I received a huge surprise just after unpacking my vacation clothes from a long week of relaxation. That night I was checking my work e-mail and realized that a delegation of 14 mayors and government officials from China's Yunnan Province were coming to the TMC the following morning. Professor Zhong-Ren Peng, Ph D., from the University of Florida had made arrangements with me prior to my taking annual leave. It was quite hard to understand him during our original meeting but my take was that he wanted to bring some students for a tour of the facility and get a presentation on ITS. Guess I missed that one in translation.

Jeff Sheffield contacted me early on the morning of the 2nd to discuss the tour since he also was asked to be present. We were both a little confused but then we realized that they were expecting us to provide a 2 to 3 hour presentation on ITS, Regional Planning and coordination efforts between both agencies. Luckily, Jeff and I have been doing this for quite a time and pulled off the presentation without a hitch. Afterward I kept thinking "we should take this shtick on the road like Dean and Jerry!" In any case, we were ready when they arrived and realized we learned as much from them as they learned from us.

First challenge to overcome was our ability to communicate with the UF student that would

Continued on following page



NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS ENGINEER CONTINUED

be handling the Chinese translation. His name was Fei Yang and he did a wonderful job of sharing the information we provided with the Chinese delegates. Next thing to overcome was my inability to speak normally to a group of individuals who did not understand a word I said. My staff kept hand motioning to pick up the pace of my voice since I began to speak to them like they were a bunch of three year olds. After finally nailing it I passed the baton to Jeff so that he could cover the region's Planning process and role that the North Florida TPO played in roadway construction projects.

It was ironic to learn that China follows the same process when developing projects but at a slightly faster pace. They involve the public, government and regional partners in each project; **HOWEVER** they said there were still a bunch of government assigned **experts** who made the final call on prioritizing projects, funding levels and what would be done. I gathered that they had a mix of democracy tied in with some bureaucracy to get road projects under way. During part of Jeff's presentation it even got a little humorous as the Chinese audience reacted in dramatic fashion to the way we deal with Right-of-Way conflicts within project limits. Hands were flailing, heads were nodding and giggles were heard as they spoke in their native tongue about the differences in this process between our respective countries.

After 2 hours of presentation that seemed like only 10 minutes I came to realize that this was the most fun I've had in a while! The appreciation this audience showed on their faces made me realize that we can overcome any diplomatic hurdles if we'd just take the time to sit down and talk. During a tour of the TMC I even made a sleight of hand comment when they asked about the cost of the facility. I gave them the actual price but mentioned that they

could probably do it much cheaper since most of the equipment is manufactured in their part of the world so they could save about 75% of the cost if they desired to build their own TMC. I got a few laughs but they knew I was right!

The delegation hopped on their tour bus just before noon to continue their tour of US facilities. They still had to visit Washington (DC), Baltimore, New Orleans and Houston before they returned to China. I am hoping that their visit with us was worthwhile and educational since it the most dramatic feat I think Jeff or I had ever pulled off. The lesson learned is that next time I will pay closer attention to what Professor Zhong-Ren Peng, Ph D., says to insure I've captured all the information I need!

Pete Vega
District 2 ITS Engineer

NORTH FLORIDA TPO UPDATE

The North Florida TPO has been actively planning the Regional Transportation Management Center's ground breaking ceremony scheduled for January 10th, 2014. Marci Larson is coordinating the event with the assistance of her consultant and our support staff. It's going to be one heck of a show stopper with 3-D renderings of the RTMC, displays of the field equipment and detailed information on the facilities floor plan. Everyone reading this is invited to attend but I ask that you coordinate with Marci so that she will have an accurate head count of attendees.

We are hoping that the Governor, State Secretary of Transportation, Jacksonville Mayor and other government officials who had a part in this project attend this ground breaking. The event will be held at the job site located near



**NORTH FLORIDA TPO UPDATE
CONTINUED**

the FDLE building on State of Florida's Jacksonville campus. This location is on the property north of State Street between Davis and Jefferson Street. Festivities shall begin promptly at 9:30 AM and should end by 11:00 AM.

As far as the design of the RTMC it's been quite a challenge over the past couple of months but I think we've finally got it nailed down. Had to move a couple of rooms, walls and doors but all and all I feel we are finally at the point where the Construction Manager at Risk firm can take off and run with the project. I'm just keeping my fingers crossed that the economy does not suddenly rebound, thereby causing an impact to our current estimates for construction. That would definitely suck!

Other NFTP projects currently being handled by our office is progressing with the goal of having them complete prior to moving into the new RTMC. The biggest problem we have been encountering is the limited number of ITS contractors available to perform this type work in our region. It seems like the same two firms keep winning jobs and unfortunately it impacts their ability to keep up while performing to our highest expectations. It's been a struggle however I see the light at the end of the tunnel so keep your fingers crossed for us!

If you are interested in attending the ground breaking event please send me an e-mail so that I can pass the information along to Marci.

CONSTRUCTION

The Phase 7 Project on the I-295 East Beltway, starting at Atlantic Boulevard and going north to the I-95 Interchange, has completed construction. Since the last Newsletter, the System Manager has been integrating the devices into the overall ITS System, fine tuning the devices and troubleshooting device issues. The majority of devices were able to be used by the TMC for Thanksgiving Holiday and Black Friday traffic. The entire system will be integrated, tested and fully operational by the end of the year, in time for the next influx of travelers into the North Florida area.

As noted previously, the contract award for the Phase 9 Project, on SR 9A from Atlantic Blvd going south to the southern SR 9A/I-95 Interchange, will be re-advertised. The work to revise the contract plans and specifications to meet the new Let Date requirements has been underway and will be completed in late December. The project is now scheduled to Let in May 2014.

The I-10 Interchange ITS Project, which includes the installation of fiber optic cable, CCTVs and MVDS within the area of the I-10/I-95 Interchange, has started to fall behind schedule. The contractor is currently working on installation of power services and MVDS poles. Upcoming work will include installation of two CCTV poles, bridge mounted conduit over King Street, fiber optic cable installation, and ITS cabinet and device installation. This project is currently scheduled to be completed in February 2014.

The JaxPort Fiber Installation Project, which includes the installation of fiber optic cable to connect FDOT to the JaxPort Talleyrand and Blount Island Terminals, has completed installation of all bridge mounted conduit on the project. Crews have also been installing

Continued on following page





CONSTRUCTION continued

underground conduit throughout all areas of the project. This project has a contract duration of 120 days and is scheduled for completion in Mid-January.

The SR 23 Toll Project, which is installing ITS on SR 23, I-10 from I-295 to just west of SR 23, and I-95 through St. Johns County is still under design. The installation of fiber optic cable along I-95 through St. Johns County is anticipated to begin in early 2014. The ITS Section is very anxious for this fiber optic cable to be installed, because after the installation is completed the District Two ITS Network will be directly connected to the District Five ITS Network. District Five is already connected to other FDOT Districts in West and South Florida, so this connection will allow District Two to have direct connection with these Districts as well. This is a very important connection for Hurricane evacuations and other emergency operations.

John Kell
District 2 ITS Construction Project Manager

MAINTENANCE

The summer thunderstorms are over and we are out of Hurricane Season, which means that there are fewer daily device issues to address. During this time of year, the ITS Maintenance Section has a chance to catch our breath, catch up on preventative maintenance of the system, and work on any special projects that may be needed to enhance the system. Throughout the month of November we were catching up on all of the minor items that have been put aside to correct the more major system issues and in December we are installing BlueTOAD devices along the new ITS instrumented corridors of the I-295 East Beltway on the northern portion and the I-295 West Beltway on the northern portion.

This will complete the installation of the Bluetooth travel time readers along the Interstates in the Jacksonville area. We will also be installing these devices along several of the major arterial roadways around Jacksonville in December and the coming months. Once completed this will be the largest deployment of these devices in the country. These devices allow TMC Operations to have real-time travel time data, but also provide important origin/destination data for FDOT and North Florida TPO planners to help see trends in travel patterns.

Kevin Jackson
ITS Field Specialist



Above, installation of device,
Below, schematic of process
(note: all information gathered
is anonymous)



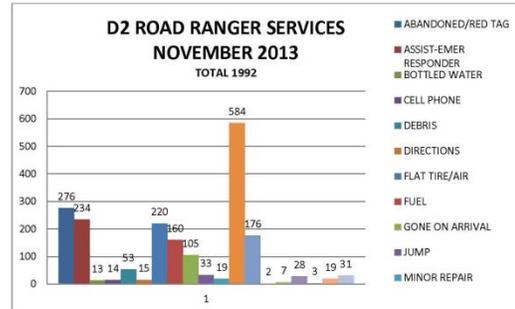


ROAD RANGER UPDATE

Greg Gaylord and Marshall Atkison remain vigilant in keeping our Road Ranger Operators safe while they are assisting with the incident management on our interstates. The Road Ranger Operators attend a monthly safety meeting where safe practices are continuously kept fresh on each Ranger's mind. There is no room for apathy with the First Coast Road Ranger staff. It is important that each Ranger realize they cannot help anyone else if they are not safe themselves.

As you may know the Road Rangers provide "safe tows" to remove motorists' vehicles if they become stranded in an unsafe area. Road Ranger Operators can call for a special tow to move a vehicle to a safe area if the motorists or Road Ranger would be in danger while corrections are made. This not only protects the stranded motorists and Road Ranger Operator but it also helps prevent possible secondary incidents.

On December 12th, the Road Ranger Operators joined the Traffic Management Center for a combined holiday luncheon. Along with enjoying a delicious meal all Operators were able to meet and get to know each other a little better. Greg Gaylord with First Coast Road Rangers, Ryan Crist with Metric (TMC), Peter Vega, ITS Engineer, and myself, ITS Operations Project Manager spoke and conveyed our thanks to all Operators for the outstanding Team Work shown in the last year. We are truly blessed to have such a TEAM!



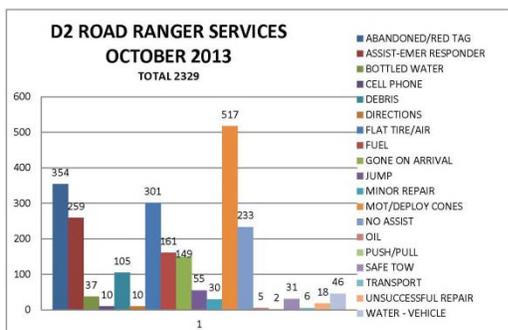
Remember, if you ever need a Road Ranger Operator on Monday thru Friday from 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM on I-10, I-95, I-295 or J.T. Butler Boulevard, you can call *FHP (*347) to ask for one.

We remain positive that the New Year 2014 will bring additional funding through sponsorships so our Road Ranger Service Patrol can extend to additional areas.

HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE !!

RISC – RAPID INCIDENT SCENE CLEARANCE - UPDATE

On Saturday, October 19, 2013, two semi-trucks collided on I-75 at CR 234. One of the semi-trucks overturned and completely blocked all northbound lanes so FHP called for University to respond as a RISC incident. Within 58 minutes after receiving the notice to proceed, University had removed both vehicles and were departing the scene. This program is truly an asset to our incident management program helping us maintain our goals set in the *Open Roads Policy* of clearing our interstates in 90 minutes. Thank you University Towing!





FIRST COAST TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

The First Coast TIM Team held its last meeting of the year on November 19th at FDOT Urban Office Training Center, 2198 Edison Avenue, at 10:00 A.M. In my absence, Craig Carnes with Metric Engineering conducted the meeting. Along with debriefing incidents occurring in the last 2 months and reviewing the Performance Measures, Craig reminded everyone the SHRP 2 Incident Responder Courses are needing to be conducted with our responder agencies. Craig reminded everyone he is our SHRP 2 Training representative and he is working with Grady Carrick to see that our responders receive the 4 hour training course.

Jill Dawson gave a presentation on Comm100, the new email software the TIM team plans to use to manage TIM members' contact information and send emails and explained we will be adding a tab to the TIM website that explains more about SHRP 2 training.

Your participation at these meetings is what makes our Team so successful. We can't have "TEAMWORK" without a complete "TEAM".

ALACHUA-BRADFORD TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

The Alachua-Bradford TIM Team held the last monthly meeting for the year on December 11th at the FDOT Gainesville Operations Office, 5301 N.E. 39th Ave. at 10:00 A.M.

The following agencies were represented: Metric Engineering, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Highway Patrol, Florida Highway Patrol Commercial Vehicle Department, Florida Department of

Transportation Maintenance, Traffic Operations, Construction, Intelligent Transportation Systems, FDOT Public Information Office and Traffic Management Center, Florida Forestry Service, Atkins, University Towing, Alachua County Sheriff's Office Communications, Alachua Police Department, Alachua County Fire Rescue, Bradford County Emergency Management, Gainesville Police Department, Professional Wrecker Association, Gainesville Engineering Department and City of Gainesville Traffic Management Center.

By having representation from so many of our incident responder agencies several issues were addressed and finalized at this meeting. Thanks to everyone for attending and cooperating with our incident debriefing making our Team more productive.

Immediately following our regular TIM meeting, The Team held a Debrief Meeting for the October 19th RISC incident. Since all timelines were met, the bonus will be awarded.

Alachua County Fire Rescue Assistant Chief Larry Steward gave a presentation on the Alachua County Mass Casualty Bus and all Team Members were allowed to tour the bus. This vehicle is available for use if needed anywhere in Florida if permission is granted by the Alachua County Fire Department.





MARKETING continued

system. That's why we continue to do what we do. Day in and day out. Twenty-four hours a day. Three hundred sixty-five days a year.

As we branch out in the coming year, we'll be focusing more on some of the outlying areas. Areas like Baker, Clay, Nassau and St. Johns Counties, where commuters may spend hours getting to and from work, but haven't yet heard about the 511 system. And as more commuters invest in Smart Phones, we'll continue to spread the word about our new apps!

Victor Kiam, President and CEO of Remington Products became famous when he said, "I liked the shaver so much, I bought the company!" While we're not selling razors, the same could be said for us. We not only promote the 511 system, we're avid users!!! I rarely leave my house without first calling 511 or taking a quick peek at the app. I cannot even begin to tell you how many times I've changed my intended route based on the information I received while still sitting in my driveway. So shower your loved ones with a new Smartphone this Christmas. It's a perfect fit for that stocking hung by the chimney with care!

And a big Merry Christmas from all of us in the Traffic Management Center. Wherever *you're* headed this holiday season, make sure your trip begins with a call to 511. You can also log onto www.FL511.com or, of course, download our free 511 Traffic App.

Know before you go and keep moving!

Sherri Byrd
Marketing Manager

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

As expected, roads were quieter than normal the week of the Thanksgiving holiday. The number of congestion events created in SunGuide was about 30 percent less than the weekly average.

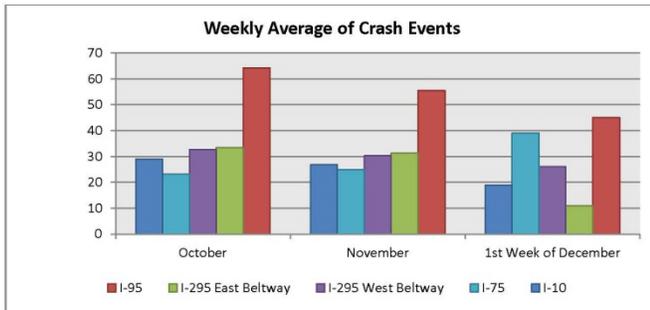
Congestion was higher the week before Thanksgiving though, with over 10 percent more congestion events reported in SunGuide than the weekly average. Perhaps motorists were busy running the streets in preparation for the holiday week. Road work also slowed down the week of Thanksgiving, at only 8 events posted in SunGuide rather than the average of 39 per week. Also, there were fewer Disabled Vehicle and Debris on Roadway events in SunGuide, but the Road Rangers were not on duty Thanksgiving Day, so this likely contributed to the decrease in events entered into SunGuide.

November was an improvement over October in terms of the crash rate. Most Jacksonville interstates reported an average of 7 to 8 percent more crashes in October than the average for the previous 12 months, while I-95 was even higher at 16 percent. However, November reported 710 crashes, which is just under the 12-month average of 713 crashes. This high number of crashes in October might be attributed to the closure of the Matthews Bridge which forced some motorists to take long detours for most of the month. For example, motorists who formerly commuted to Downtown via the Matthews Bridge would have to take I-95 from the north or south end. Thus, the Matthews Bridge closure increased traffic volumes on I-95 which easily contributed to an increase in crashes. Fortunately, the bridge has been repaired and traffic crashes were fewer in November. In looking at the data for the first week of December, crash rates are much lower than the 12-month average. Hopefully, this trend will continue as many travelers get on the road



PERFORMANCE MEASURES continued

this month to visit friends and family. The following chart shows the average number of crashes per week in October, November, and the first week of December.



Jill Dawson
Metric Engineering

OPERATIONS

The Holiday Season is upon us once again. There has been “Pumpkin” flavored everything for the last month and a half. My wife has started her annual baking marathon and the aroma of cookies in the oven fills the house. This is a season for family and visiting relatives. Over the last few years we have seen a decrease in traffic volume spikes despite the fact that more people are traveling and this year more people are spending. This decrease can be caused by several factors, including changes in the way we shop, the economy and the weather.

Cyber Monday! Early Black Friday Sales! Now open on Thanksgiving night! Small Business Saturday! By now, I’m sure you’ve seen all the advertising on radio, TV and the Internet. Retailers are starting to open their doors as early as 6pm on Thanksgiving to extend Black Friday and entice shoppers to spend more. Traditionally over the past decade or so, Black Friday Retailers would have their biggest sales of the year start early on Friday morning around 5AM or 6AM causing traffic problems on the

arterials. In the past year or two their one upmanship has lead to stores opening on Thursdays. This has lead to a decrease in traffic as the shoppers are not all out at once. Not to mention the fact that shoppers are starting to bypass all the hoopla and shop from home online. Internet sales were up almost 20% this year with people spending approximately \$2B, resulting in even less travelers on the roadway.

As the economy continues its recovery, travel continues to be a luxury for many Americans. Phone calls or video chats are substituting for visitations as gas prices remain well above \$3/gallon. AAA estimated 39.4 million motorists traveled by car over 50 miles over the Thanksgiving weekend, which is down 1.4% from last year. Not a large number but still significant. Just another factor.

Another reason that people are staying at home and not hitting the roads is the weather. Winter storms and fog have hit much of the country early this season causing cancelled flights and delaying travel plans. We have been fortunate here in Florida so far, as most of the country is freezing we have been experiencing temperatures in the 80s.. While this is pleasant for us, it put a lock down on many interstates further reducing holiday travel.

As Christmas and New Years approaches we should remain vigilant as travel picks back up. Even though travel has subsided recently, Americans will still hit the roadways. It will be interesting to see, with Christmas falling on a Wednesday this year, if that reduces travel. ITS deployment and operations will continue to monitor and meet the needs of the motoring public this Holiday season. Alert today, alive tomorrow. Be safe and Happy Holidays.

James Speed
TMC Supervisor



SPOTLIGHT ON..KARI BISHOP

Talk about your upbringing – where were you born / raised?

I am from a small town just outside of Cleveland, Ohio. I lived there with my parents and older sister until I was almost a teenager. We moved to Florida for a fresh start when my mom graduated college. My parents have always engrained a yearning for learning, so when I graduated from high school, I knew that was not the end. I was off to college, but for what, I still was not sure.

Early Career and/or brief job history:

I started college nearly five years ago. I went to Flagler College, Florida State College at Jacksonville and finally, found a home at University of North Florida. After changing my major four times, I started pursuing a Civil Engineering degree. The more I study, the more I like it. I interned at Manson Construction Company learning about the estimating aspect of bidding jobs and realized dredging was not for me. Recently, I started interning at FDOT. I have an interest in the transportation field; I want to learn how the roads are monitored, how they are designed, and everything in between. I will graduate in April with a Bachelors of Science in Civil Engineering. With that, I will be taking my Fundamentals of Engineering Exam, which when passed, allows me to officially be an Engineer Intern. I would really like to be a part of FDOT when this happens and enter the PE Trainee Program.

Job description - your current role in Transportation and/or Emergency Response.

As an intern under Pete Vega, I always feel busy. Since I started, I have been learning the ropes of what actually goes into running the ITS department and 511, realizing how much planning and effort it involves. What devices do what? What goes in a cabinet? Where do cabinets go? Wait, what is a cabinet? What does

this car accident mean for travelers? How many accidents occur in this area? Where traffic is usually backed up? I think you get the idea. I have been going to meetings to learn the business side and out in the field to learn the technical side. At first, the acronyms were very overpowering, since it seems that every other word used in conversations is one, but I am getting the hang of it and actually understanding. The knowledge I am gaining is invaluable and I am eager to continue this process!

How long have you been at your current job?

It has been only a few short months since I started and I've learned more than I could imagine! In this short amount of time, I have been able to learn how the operators run the show for travelers by alerting them of congestion and accidents. I was able to go out with a Road Ranger to see what it is like for them and get a feel for that side of ITS. Mr. Vega has allowed me to attend meetings from preconstruction to financial aspects of transportation. Being an intern, I have been able to see the whole show to gain the best understanding possible.

Do you have any funny stories relating to your career? Such as a foot-in-mouth moment or a bad day at the office story?

While at the FDOT, I have not had too many opportunities to have a bad day (thank goodness!). The best story that is worth anyone's time didn't actually happen to me, but is still worth sharing. Part of running ITS is ensuring all the devices that read the speeds of cars is making sure the device is actually reading a car's speed and not a "shadow". To do this, the devices need to be calibrated. This entails FDOT having someone manually go to each device, hook up, run the simulation and go to the next one. A couple of weeks ago, I was able to ride along on one of these trips. Some other employees wanted to go out and see the



SPOTLIGHT ON.. **KARI BISHOP continued**

action, too, and ended up meeting us there. The first few went smoothly and there were no complications. There were even whispers of hope that the next device would be a little more complicated. The bucket truck drove off to the next site, followed by the other employee, who happened to drive a Ford Fusion, and us, in the F150. The bucket truck drove off the road to go behind the guard rail and, in retrospect, even blew up a little mud. The Fusion was next, but the poor car was in too deep! It got stuck in the mud and was flinging up dirt everywhere! Honestly, I'm not sure which made me happier I wasn't in the car. Whether it was being on the slope of the overpass or being a girl for the guys to shake their heads at me for getting stuck! The guys had to dig out the car and borrow a tow rope to get the car out. The whole time I was thinking, "Please don't let the F150 pull her out and get stuck, too!" Although, that would make the story a little bit funnier, it wasn't the case. The Fusion was pulled out and was safe and sound. I was just happy I wasn't driving!

Do you have a favorite quote? Something that inspires you?

"Let it be."

Best job ever / worst job ever... or both?

My best job ever, besides working for the DOT, of course, was tutoring math at Florida State College at Jacksonville (FSCJ). My worst job ever was manning a concession stand for soccer on Saturday mornings in high school.

Tell us a little about your family.

Half of my family still lives in Ohio and the other half lives in other parts of Florida. So, we only get together occasionally, but when we do, it's always a party. My immediate family and I are very close. My parents are very supportive of my education and career. I only have one sister, but she's enough. Most of my endeavors are done with her by my side.

Do you have any hobbies?

Between work and school, I barely have any time. Most of my spare time is dedicated to the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) and Society of Women Engineers (SWE). ASCE hosts a Southeastern Student Conference every March. This consists of several competitions from design and testing a model steel bridge to the construction and racing of a concrete canoe. This year, I have signed up for a hydraulic competition which consists of making a model car from a soda bottle and having its power source be from water. With SWE, I like to volunteer. Usually, the events I volunteer at are some form of student competitions that deal with elementary to high school students getting involved with STEM learning. Recently, I coached a LEGO League team by helping middle school kids build an autonomous robot from Legos. They programmed the robot using simple computer coding techniques and competed on a regional level with other students.

Favorite vacation spot?

I am all about cruises. I love to travel and what better way than on a boat with all-you-can-eat, free food! So far, my favorite place I've been to is Jamaica. I was able to do an excursion and climbed Dunns River Falls. It was an exhilarating experience



Kari
Bishop



DISTRICT TWO ITS NEWSLETTER



November-December 2013 Issue 73



www.fl511.com

FDOT DISTRICT 2 ITS STAFF

Donna Danson
ITS Operations Project Manager
904.360.5635
Donna.Danson@dot.state.fl.us



Kevin Jackson
ITS Field Specialist
904.360.5454
Kevin.Jackson@dot.state.fl.us



John Kell
ITS Construction Project Manager
904.360.5455
John.Kell@dot.state.fl.us



Peter Vega
District 2 ITS Engineer
904.360.5463
Peter.Vega@dot.state.fl.us

