

At the recent ITS America Meeting in Detroit, FDOT Marketing received a "Best New Innovative Practice-Outreach" Award. More on Page 13



NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS (TSM&O) PROGRAM MANAGER

The week of September 14th I had the opportunity to attend the ITS 3C Summit in Mobile, Alabama. The attendees consisted of members from the Gulf Region Intelligent Transportation Society (GRITS), the Intelligent Transportation Society of Florida (ITSFL) and the Intelligent Transportation Society of Georgia (ITSGA), who all came together for a joint annual meeting. DOT staff from North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi, Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia and Florida participated in many of the technical sessions and round-table discussions. There were over 50 ITS vendors showing off their products in the Exhibit Hall with many new innovations unveiled at this event. Top DOT Management from all the participating States led a round-table discussion plus Q&A to discuss their approach and use of ITS.

This particular session was an eye opener when each State went into full detail on what is being done with the use of ITS technology. It was shocking to hear that Jacksonville had a larger deployment than the entire State of Arkansas. It was also ironic to hear that Mississippi had just launched their 511 system, ten years later than when District Two began theirs! Of course, Georgia DOT tried their best to outdo everyone but admittedly had egg on their face when their management explained the communication failures during the recent ice storm that hit their State this past winter. The most low-key yet realistic conversation was led by Louisiana DOT. Their management went into detail on the impacts ITS has on a Transportation Program's budget and the need to consider technology changes, O&M, and staffing limitations when building the program. They hit the nail on the head because this is a challenge Florida will face in the coming years as our system begins to show its age.

I had the chance to be a speaker at two sessions. The first session I spoke at was a sell-out with standing room only in the audience. Our session discussed the use of ITS and traffic signal systems when considering an integrated corridor management (ICM) program. I was joined by speakers from San Diego and Dallas who are several steps ahead of Jacksonville with their ICM program. Each of these speakers went into great detail on the software developed for their systems and how its decision making process made it easier on operations personnel. They were quite different as well with the San Diego system being fully autonomous while implementing changes to field equipment in a matter of minutes. The Dallas software generated a decision matrix that was used by operations staff to make decisions on changes to the field equipment, however this usually took about 15 minutes to implement. After hearing about both I felt the San Diego software was a good one to investigate since our environment is so dynamic during an incident that 15 minutes seems like a lifetime in our business. By the time we go through 15 minutes of an event there is usually a one or two mile queue created, secondary accidents and a whole new set of scenarios to deal with due to this first event.

My discussion revolved around the equipment already deployed and the approach being taken by Jacksonville due to the generosity of the North Florida TPO. I explained our planned use of the Bluetooth devices, upgraded traffic signal controllers, transit signal priority, traffic signal preemption, arterial DMS and CCTV cameras for ICM in the near future. I also explained how the new RTMC will allow us to continually improve on staff performance as the system matures and operations staff get a handle on this new ICM approach. If you were



NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS PROGRAM MANAGER CONTINUED

not aware, our ICM project is utilizing the I-95/US 1 corridors in south Jacksonville for this first attempt. If we can pull it off, a similar approach can be taken along the I-10/Normandy Boulevard, I-95/Main Street in north Jacksonville and I-295/Southside Boulevard corridors. Not to be outdone, the third phase (if not second) is to use the same approach for the SR 15/SR 21 (Clay County) and US 1/I-95 (St. Johns County) corridors since a majority of the ITS and traffic signal system equipment is already in place.

Oh yeah, you are probably wondering what software I am considering. Since the reality is that we must operate our ITS program in seconds the San Diego software is where I am headed at this point. That is unless Florida DOT decides to try and implement their own software system utilizing SunGuide as common ground for all of the Districts. My goal is to have something in place one year after we move into the new RTMC since by that time there should be no excuses for it not to happen. It will either work or I'll need to find new employment in another type of industry (Thank God for my MBA degree!).

Overall, the ITS 3C Summit was an enlightening experience that allowed me to catch up on the latest types of technology available. It was good to spend time with my peers in the ITS consulting industry as well as the vendors that provide the goods. Of course, the topic of conversation was connected vehicles and the changes it would bring to the industry in the coming years. If you paint the picture, the network vendors will be a key player in what we deploy in the future. Likewise, the DMS vendors will need to find other markets within about 10 years since most communication between the TMC and motorist will be via the LCD panel in

the car. The cabinet manufacturers we use will also be impacted since new connected vehicle equipment (with unknown dimensions) will need to go into existing cabinets or have a supplemental cabinet attached to it somewhere. On a final note, if connected vehicles does take us by storm then "so-long" to our biggest maintenance headache since we will no longer need vehicle detectors to determine aggregate speeds and volumes along our corridor.

As for Mobile, I can see why Alabama DOT pushed so hard to have this summit held in their State. They were hit very hard by Hurricane Katrina and the BP Oil Spill which severely impacted their tourism industry. They had a fantastic hotel and convention center near the waterfront and downtown area, yet the crowds were sparse when we walked along the streets in the evening hours. I'd be safe to say that nearly 80% of the diners and shoppers in the downtown area after 7 PM were folks attending our conference. I learned that Mobile was the first location where Mardi Gras was created until New Orleans stole the idea from them. No wonder there were so many balconies and shotgun houses within the downtown area! It's too bad that Mardi Gras didn't make it there because it adds another two hours to my drive!

Pete Vega
District 2
Transportation System Management &
Operations (TSM&O) Manager





NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS/TMC PROGRAM MANAGER

I am just over a week removed from my whirlwind visit to Detroit and the ITS World Congress. This was certainly a journey, as it was both my first time to the city and my first ITS conference. As the Airbus A318 I was in touched down at Detroit Metropolitan Airport Sunday afternoon, I was wondering what I was getting into. As my taxi drove the expressway underneath the Cobo Center (where the conference was held) I was able to first realize the enormity of the conference.

The first night consisted of the opening ceremonies. It seemed more like an awards show to me, with a huge auditorium, effects lighting, huge World Congress banners hanging everywhere, and music being played between speakers. The beginning of many announcements were made this night. Most of them consisted of auto makers promising to aggressively roll out connected vehicle technology in their new models. This really set the tone for the whole conference, which had a focus on connected and autonomous vehicles.

I was finally able to meet a lot of the folks that I work with face to face. This included other FDOT employees, consultants and vendors. I feel that this was probably the most valuable aspect of the conference for me, and truly underscored the importance of networking. I probably learned just as much through talking with my peers as I did with the sessions. As probably most of the other folks did, I spent a lot of time in the exhibit hall. The scene was truly overwhelming to me. There were so many exhibits with so much technology that was mostly foreign to me. One of the things that did impress me was the Michigan DOT's TMC. They literally moved it into the exhibit hall for the duration of the conference! As I settled into the swing of things, I found that most vendors were really just offering the same

products that we have already been exposed to. They all had their one little product-specific aspect they were selling.

The sessions I went to varied in usefulness. I attended a truck parking seminar that shed light on some ways to expand this type of program past just signing for open truck spaces. A couple of states have even designed smartphone apps so that truckers can plan their route based on parking availability. Another session went into the constraints that will face autonomous vehicles. Let's just say it was an hour of hearing about how lawyers are on their haunches waiting for autonomous and connected vehicle-related incidents to occur. This is not to mention the public perception of giving control of their cars to computers, and privacy-related concerns. Another session I attended talked about integrated arterial management. I was excited about this one, but disappointed to find out that none of the presenters had any new information to talk about.

Overall, the ITS World Congress was a good experience. It not only allowed me to network, but also helped me to put many of the ITS pieces I have picked up over the last few weeks together. I also came back confident that Florida, and District 2 especially, is on the leading edge of all aspects of ITS. I got to see the "Best of ITS America" trophy that our state won for our 511 marketing efforts. The technology is present to vastly expand the way we commute, and District 2 will be on the forefront of a transportation revolution that will be occurring over the next generation.

Josh Reichert
ITS/TMC Program Manager



NORTH FLORIDA TPO UPDATE

I'll stick with the summit as my topic but need to clarify one bit of information. The attendees did not just consist of ITS personnel but also included individuals in Planning, Construction, Transit and FHWA. This is an important piece of information that I forgot to include earlier since a majority of the compliments I received about the ICM deployment in Jacksonville were from individuals in these specific fields. They were all extremely impressed with the proactive approach being taken by the North Florida TPO when investing in ITS deployments since this will be the tool that measures a region's performance in the coming years. In a sense, the North Florida TPO was the envy of our audience since they had the gumption and know-how to invest in something so very important at an early stage in the process.

North Florida is ahead of the game when it comes to having the proper equipment in place for performance measures tracking. Over the past two years we have been collecting data on travel time and speeds for a number of roadway corridors in our area. As we begin to implement ICM and move into the new RTMC we will track the performance of our operations staff who are managing these corridors. The data will tell us which corridors are under performing or getting worse, then it's up to me to see if we can implement any operational improvements in the RTMC. If these steps do not create some semblance of improvement then it's up to me to recommend some form of capacity improvement along the underperforming corridor.

This is not a difficult process since all the data is there and we just have to begin analyzing what's important. It could mean the addition of a few turn lanes, a change in the traffic signal sequence or extending the green time for a few seconds longer. It could also incorporate an improved incident response program in some

segment of a roadway that will help clear traffic faster and hence prevent those god-awful secondary accidents that usually lead to more severe injuries.

As you may have noticed, I am taking on most of the responsibility from this day forward to insure the plan works. Why? Because several years ago I shared my vision with Denise, Jeff and the rest of the NFTPO staff. Each and every one of them believed in me and understood this was the right thing to do as shown with the investment they've provided for technology improvements along arterial corridors. One of the key components in discussions with NFTPO staff was the need to have a multi-agency RTMC to run the equipment and properly respond to incidents. Their response was to provide over \$9 million dollars of NFTPO funds to make it happen.

I just read an e-mail from our CM@Risk Contractor stating that we break ground on the RTMC no later than October 6th. That's less than one week away so I'd better start getting the plan in place or have my bags packed because either way "It's Show Time!!!" in a matter of a few weeks. It should take about 10 months to complete but can be finished much sooner if things go our way. The key component in this project is to get it right because most Districts have only one chance to make this happen and then the opportunity fades away for another 20 years. So, keep your fingers crossed and say a little prayer for us because it's my goal to sweep up the awards at the ITS America 2015 conference.

Pete Vega
TSM&O Program Manager



MAINTENANCE

The number of thunderstorms is starting to subside, although we had a few this month that were pretty severe. With the decrease in thunderstorms, and associated lightning strikes, the ITS System has been seeing less damage this month. Every year, beginning in the Fall, the ITS Maintenance staff and Contractor are able to catch up with special projects and other work due to the decrease in lightning damage. So, we will begin working on projects to connect our fiber to City of Jacksonville fiber in several areas to allow for redundancy on both communications networks. We will also be troubleshooting and repairing existing BlueTOAD devices which have failed and will work on installing new BlueTOAD devices on arterial roadways throughout the city.

This month two vehicle accidents caused damage to ITS cabinets and power infrastructure. One accident destroyed the ITS cabinet and power load center at an ITS device site near Cole Road. The Maintenance Contractor has replaced all of the equipment and is waiting to be able to splice the fiber back to be able to get the site operational. The other accident destroyed the power service for the main communications hub at I-10 and I-295. Crews have replaced the items they had in stock and are awaiting delivery of one final part to get the power service repaired and the communications hub back on line.

A very interesting special project we are working on is called the Freight Parking Pilot Project. This project will install two MVDS (vehicle detectors) and one CCTV at the northbound rest area on I-95 in St. Johns County, north of CR 210. It also includes the installation of a combination static and dynamic sign which will be installed south of CR 210 in the northbound direction. The MVDS will count the number of vehicles entering and leaving the truck parking area and the CCTV will be used by TMC Operators to verify visually what the MVDS are telling them. A computer code will be

written which will add vehicles entering the truck parking area and then subtract them when they leave the truck parking area, thus constantly updating the number of available spaces. The number of spaces will then be sent to the dynamic display sign so that truckers will know the number of available spaces at the rest area. If successful, this may be deployed at rest areas throughout the state to help inform truckers of the availability of spaces when they need to sleep overnight.

Kevin Jackson
ITS Field Specialist

CONSTRUCTION

The Phase 9 Project began construction on September 15. American Lighting and Signalization personnel and subcontractors have installed Maintenance of Traffic signs and are in the process of installing erosion control. Within the next month their crews will be installing conduit and device poles. The project is scheduled to be completed before the end of 2015.

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 has completed design plans for all 3 sections. Work is currently progressing along the I-95 corridor in St. Johns County, as crews have been installing directional bore conduit along the southbound right of way. Conduit installation is expected to continue for several months. Once conduit installation is completed, crews will install the pull boxes and splice vaults along the entire conduit run.

The Contractor is currently installing pull boxes and splice vaults along the already installed



CONSTRUCTION continued

conduit on the I-75 project, which runs from CR 234 to SR 121. They are also installing the conduit runs from the pull boxes and splice vaults to the device site locations. Work on the US 441 portion of the contract has also begun this month as crews have started installing directional bore conduit.

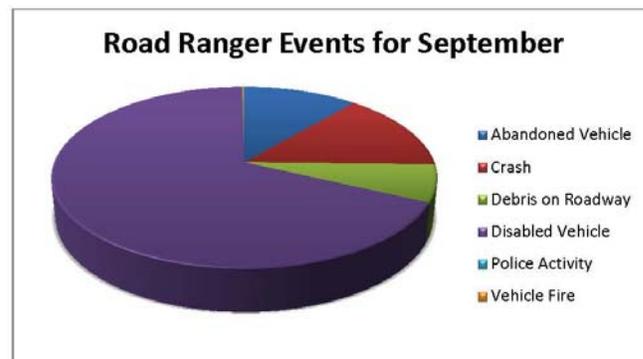
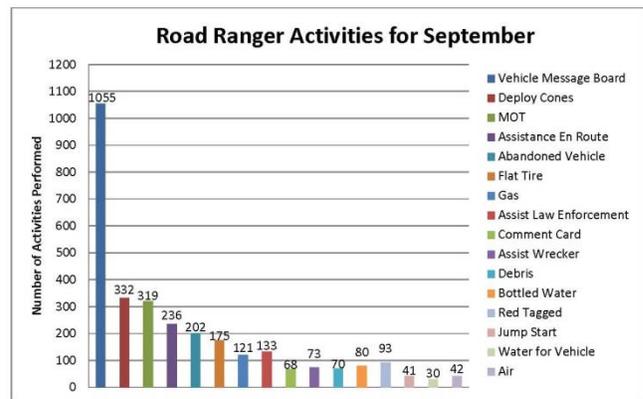
Craig Carnes
Metric Engineering

ROAD RANGER UPDATE

The Road Rangers held their monthly safety meeting on September 3, 2014 at 11:30AM at the FDOT Urban Office Training Center. Mr. Marshall Adkison started off the meeting by reminding all Road Rangers that safety is a top priority and that the purpose of the meeting is for everyone to learn from one another to provide a better overall service while assisting motorists on the roadways. During the meeting, FDOT also provided the Road Rangers with a brief overview on using the updated SPARR application and also provided support to any of the road rangers if they had questions or needed additional information regarding the newer model phones. District 2 is very pleased with the feedback on the updated phones in the Road Ranger vehicles, as it is proving itself to be more efficient and user-friendly.

The Road Rangers are an essential part of incident management as they play a large part in making incident scenes safer for our incident responders and motorists. So far, the month of September has been an extremely busy month for our Road Ranger service as the rangers have been involved in assisting with close to 1,300 incidents.

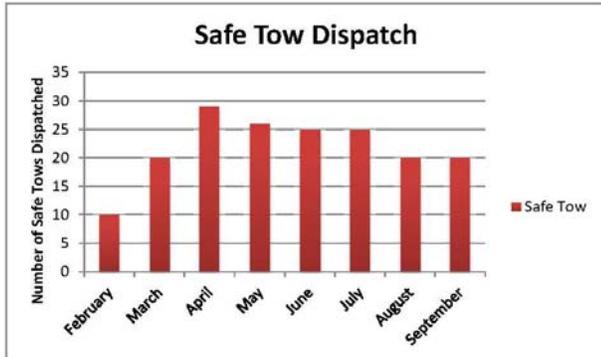
The charts following illustrate the Road Ranger activities for the past few weeks as well as the different types of reported events. So far this month the Road Rangers have provided a total of 3,090 services to motorists and incident responders. When comparing several of the past months, we can see how often the safe tow program is being utilized as time progresses, this shows how essential this program is and how the Rangers help motorists by providing an option for a safe tow.



Continued on following page



ROAD RANGER UPDATE continued



RISC – RAPID INCIDENT SCENE CLEARANCE - UPDATE

District 2 has not had a RISC incident in the last month, but our RISC Contractors remain ready to respond if needed.

FIRST COAST TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

The First Coast TIM Team meeting was held on September 16, 2014 at the FDOT Urban Office Training Center at 10:00 A.M. Ms. Donna Danson kicked off the meeting by welcoming everyone and reminded everyone that the purpose of the meeting is for each incident response agency to collaborate with one another with the goal in mind of improving incident management.

The TIM TEAM then jumped right into the Construction, ITS and Emergency Operations updates which included the Overland Bridge Project that is currently affecting our District’s travel pattern. In the construction update, Mr. Ron Tittle also mentioned some future projects to make all incident response agencies aware so that as a TEAM we can all play our roles in helping decrease the congestion on the roads and respond effectively. Mr. Craig Carnes also

provided the TEAM with a detailed overview of the ITS projects that will be taking place in the area that may interrupt traffic flow.

After the updates were given, Mr. Greg Gaylord then gave the TEAM an overview of an incident that occurred on September 10, 2014 involving Road Ranger Mr. Jason Burney. Mr. Burney was involved in an accident where a motorist directly struck the back of the Road Ranger’s truck while assisting a motorist on I-95 Southbound in the left emergency lane. Mr. Gaylord mentioned that the Road Ranger was following safety protocol when a driver did not recognize that the traffic was slowing down ahead and swerved into the emergency lane to avoid hitting any of the vehicles in front of him. After swerving into the emergency lane the driver then struck the rear of the Road Ranger truck. Thankfully, the Road Ranger was aware of his surroundings, saw the vehicle coming at him and jumped over the median barrier wall to safety. The vehicle then flipped across three travel lanes onto the right side of the roadway and luckily did not hit any other vehicles. Mr. Burney is doing well and sustained no injuries. Mr. Gaylord also gave the TEAM an update on Mr. Mitchell Hayes who was struck by a motorist on July 2, 2014. We are glad to note that he is healing well. The TEAM then discussed the incident in depth going over scenarios and answering questions some had regarding the incident.

The First Coast TIM Team will hold its next bi-monthly meeting on November 18, 2014 at the FDOT Urban Office Training Center, 2198 Edison Avenue at 10:00 A.M. Please remember your attendance at this meeting is extremely important and we are looking forward to seeing everyone there.

ALACHUA-BRADFORD TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

The Alachua-Bradford TIM Team will hold its next bi-monthly meeting on October 8, 2014 at the FDOT Gainesville Operations Office, 5301

Continued on following page



ALACHUA-BRADFORD TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE continued

N.E. 39th Avenue at 10:00 A.M. Please mark your calendar to attend this meeting and remember your attendance at this meeting is important as we need representation from all incident responder agencies to continue to grow together as a TEAM.

District 2 TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM MISSION:

The Florida Department of Transportation District Two's Traffic Incident Management Teams through partnering efforts strive to continuously reduce incident scene clearance times to deter congestion and improve safety. The Teams' objective is to exceed the Open Roads Policy thus ensuring mobility, economic prosperity, and quality of life.

District 2 TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM VISION:

Through cooperation, communication and training the Teams intend to reduce incident scene clearance times by 10% each year through 2015.

Donna Danson
District 2 ITS Program Manager

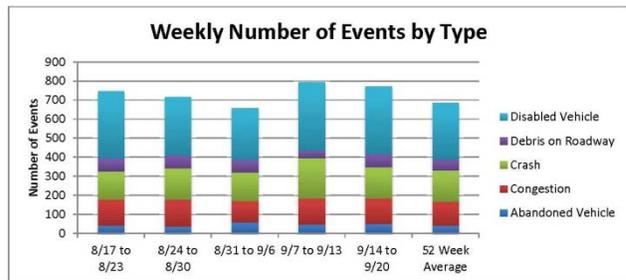
PERFORMANCE MEASURES

September has proven itself to be a very interesting month seeing as here in District 2 we've had more than 9 inches of rain so far for the month. We can definitely see this reflected in the charts below, especially during the week of September 7 where there was almost 4.5 inches of rain alone for that week.

Our Open Roads Duration, Incident Clearance Duration and our Roadway Clearance duration was significantly above our yearly average by approximately 8 percent in each category during that same week.

All Road Ranger activities have also increased significantly in the month of September when compared to the previous month of August with over 3,090 activities so far. Events such as abandoned and disabled vehicles have also significantly gone up which can most likely be attributed to the amount of rain that we have had in the area.

The following charts illustrate the Performance Measures data for the past few weeks as well as the different types of events reported.



Sherrell Lall, Metric Engineering



OPERATIONS

It has been a busy few months for the Transportation Management Center (TMC)! Last month we covered the partnership between the Florida Department of Transportation and WAZE that will supplement Operations. The WAZE partnership should improve the notification and verification process of the Traffic Incident Management Timeline for non-ITS device covered Interstates and provide valuable information to motorists on major arterials. More recently, on September 3rd all District TMCs implemented a new policy to help motorists throughout the state, Long Distance Traveler Information Dynamic Message Signs.

Each District will utilize their Dynamic Message Signs on the outskirts of their urban areas to assist motorists with their route decision making by posting for events that are outside of their immediate area. Jacksonville may be the gateway to Florida but many of the tourists will continue south past our beautiful city. In 2013 VISIT FLORIDA reported that 94.7 MILLION visitors made Florida their destination of choice. Pair that with the 19+ MILLION that already live in Florida and you'll see why traffic management and enhanced incident response is in such high demand. WAZE and the Long Distance Traveler Information DMS is an effort from FDOT to meet the needs of the locals and of the tourists.

Northeast	Duval	I-95	North	I-95 NB North of Dunn Ave	<p>NO REPORTED INCIDENTS TO GA STATE LINE TO JACKSONVILLE</p> <p>NO REPORTED DELAYS</p> <p>NO REPORTED DELAYS TO TALLAHASSEE</p>
Southeast	Broward	I-95	North	I-95 NB S of Broward Blvd	
Panhandle	Santa Rosa	I-10	East	before SR-281/Avalon Blvd	

I applaud the Department's effort to reach as many motorists in the state of Florida as possible. Balancing the needs of Floridians and of our visitors is a delicate balance. WAZE and Long Distance Traveler Information Messages are a step in the right direction. Tourists and arterials are two integral parts of traffic management on a daily basis which is captured in the 171 lane blocking events on 95 northbound in District 2 since August 1st, the 448 events managed by the TMC on State Road-202 during that same time period and the 2,852 floodgates posted for District 2 that are mostly for arterial roadway events. SR-202 and the floodgates benefit from WAZE for enhanced arterial coverage and the 95 northbound events with lane blockage will help

tourists headed home somewhere north of Florida. The benefit is there and finally, plan has met execution!

Without ITS devices outside of Jacksonville (and parts of Jacksonville) the TMC depends on FDOT and TIM Partners to assist us with traffic information reports. You can reach our 24/7 line at (904)359-6842 or our work day line at (904)360-5465. You can also leave feedback on the 511 system (Phone and smartphone applications) about road conditions and bugs you may find in the system that is relayed to our operators in real time. Know Before You Go! Use FL511.

Ryan Crist
TMC Manager



MARKETING

“See?” she nearly sang, as she pushed her phone in my direction. “I downloaded the 511 App and I use it every morning!” And right there in the conference room of the beautiful Deutsche Bank building, we exchanged high fives. This was just one example of positive feedback we received during our recent visit to Deutsche Bank on Jacksonville’s Southside. They have four area campuses in the Belfort and Deerwood Park areas, and we were fortunate enough to be invited to their annual Health and Vendor Fair September 12th. During the four hour event, we spoke to 232 people and even had a number of other vendors pop over to spin our prize wheel. With the focus on “health,” we were shoulder to shoulder with vendors from non-profit agencies, fitness and wellness organizations, and even restaurants and supermarkets, specifically those who cater to health food enthusiasts.



Prime real estate at Deutsche Bank for the 511 Marketing team to spread the news about being sure to “know before you go with 511”.

511 was proud to stand among this group. We’ve said it many times, and we’ll say it again here, traffic can be a big stressor. We want to save motorists time and money by helping them avoid costly traffic delays. And if your calendar is anything like mine, you know what it’s like to be sidelined by even one unwelcome delay.

And let’s talk for a minute about the impact traffic can have on your health. Studies have shown there’s a direct correlation between traffic jams and elevated blood pressure. At the 49th Annual Conference on Cardiovascular Disease Epidemiology and Prevention, the American Heart Association stated, “People who have had a heart attack are likely to report having been in traffic shortly before their symptoms began.” (Source: <http://www.news-medical.net/news/2009/03/15/46909.aspx>)

Ever feel your blood pressure go up while waiting in traffic? Watching your knuckles grip the steering wheel but knowing there’s no magic wand you can wave to free yourself from your current dilemma? On the flip side, I love watching motorists breathe a sigh of relief once they learn about 511. One particular Deutsche Bank employee told me she lives in Fleming Island and commutes more than an hour each way into the office every day. She downloaded our 511 App on the spot.

Next month, we’ll be visiting the Adamec-Harley Davidson store at the intersection of I-95 and Baymeadows Road for their October Bike Fest Kickoff. Stop by and see us Sunday, October 12th from 11am-4pm. If you decide a road trip is in order for you – maybe a little trip to North Carolina to watch the leaves change along the Blue Ridge Parkway - make sure your trip begins with a call to 511. You can also log onto www.FL511.com or download our free 511 Traffic App available for Apple and Android. Know Before You Go and Keep Moving!

Sherri Byrd
Marketing Manager



SPOTLIGHT ON...James Bennett

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

I am a lifelong resident of Baker County. I grew up in the rural area of north Baker County. I built a house and moved my family to Macclenny about ten years ago.

Tell us about your former role in Transportation.

*Upon graduation from college (**UF – Go Gators!**), I joined FDOT as a PE Trainee. After the 18 months of rotation, I selected Roadway Design for my specialty phase and the Senior Engineer Phase of the training program. I remained in Roadway design and worked at increasing responsibility levels to finally being selected as the District Two Roadway Design Engineer. After 11 months in the role, I was promoted to the Urban Transportation Development Manager role. I served in that capacity for eleven and a half years.*

Let's talk a little about life on the Campaign Trail. What prompted you to run for County Commissioner in District 4 (Baker County)?

It's a rare opportunity to be able to take your educational background and your work experience to a political role and make a difference in your own community. In my case, I believe our county could benefit from my experience. My home county, Baker County, is predominantly rural with impacts from the adjacent urban areas of Duval County. I believe my understanding of planning and engineering provides me with a unique opportunity to implement changes that will allow our county to grow while maintaining the core rural values.

Was it a tough decision? Leaving your current position and jumping into the unknown?

The decision to leave my role was extremely difficult. Twenty-Five and a half years in the Florida Retirement System with the last 10 years

in a very dynamic role at FDOT and with no certainties of a successful campaign all contributed to the difficulties in making the decision to leave. The uncertainties of long-term employment further contributed to making the decision very tough.

What areas of interest will you focus on if elected?

I believe our county needs to revisit the current approach to our Land Development Regulations, the position on Impact Fees, and in developing a sustainable budget. My background with engineering provides me with opportunities to assist our Road Department (Public Works), my knowledge and experience in Planning provides for opportunities to make changes in our Land Development Regulations and Comprehensive Planning, and my skills in managing funding programs is beneficial to balancing the budget.

At the end of a long day, what keeps you going?

Being successful! I enjoy working hard and seeing the benefits of that work. I get great satisfaction in knowing that my efforts have made a difference. My family is also such a strong driving force. Providing for my family has always been a key goal for me personally.

What's the best advice anyone's ever given you?

Don't live life with regrets. You sometimes have to take great risk to get great gains.

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

I do not have a specific quote, but a simply philosophy. I believe that our blessings all come from God above. Many times we see difficulties and challenges as a burden. However, it is often times that these difficulties are what make us



SPOTLIGHT ON...James Bennett continued

stronger in the end. Trust in God to give you the strength and guidance and you can make it through any situation.

Describe a 'defining moment' in your career or personal life.

Career: Making the decision to leave Roadway Design and assume the role of Urban Transportation Development Manager. While I didn't recognize it at the time, it was the best move I could have made for my career. I was privileged to work under 4 different District Secretaries and one Director, each with a completely different management style. Each of them provided me with considerable opportunities and afforded me considerable latitude to accomplish the task at hand.

Personal: My defining moment that I clearly remember having such a tremendous impact was the birth of my first child! Life changes when you become a parent. It is no longer just you and Your spouse.

Do you have any funny stories (or even heartfelt moments) you've uncovered while on the campaign trail?

Campaigning was a real educational experience. I experienced several items that I did not anticipate:

There are many kind and considerate people that genuinely care about others. The day-to-day campaigning going door-to-door was exhausting, especially when the outside temperature exceeded 95 degrees. Although I remained well hydrated, there were many times when citizens would say, "Would you like to come in and cool down for a minute? Can I get you a bottle of water?" It was encouraging to see so many citizens willing to open their homes up to a stranger in order to be kind.

There are many nice homes with well manicured yards, and then there are places that you cannot believe people would actually live in such filth!!! Unbelievable!!!! People really, really, really love their dogs! It was amazing how many homes had multiple large dogs in the home! Many times the pet parents couldn't even open the doors or talk due to the number of pets and the loud barking. You simply hand them a card and walk away!

Tell us a little about your family.

My wife, Kimberly Bennett, and I have been married for 22 years. We have two beautiful children. Colton Chase Bennett is 11 years old and Cloey Nicole Bennett is 5 years old. These two keep us, especially mom, very busy every day. My extended family are all from the same area. I enjoy being able to spend holidays with my parents, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins, etc.



James Bennett

Editor's Note: The only thing missing are the everpresent dark sunglasses.



SPOTLIGHT James Bennett continued

Any hobbies or special interests?

My family has a business for which I've been actively involved in for over 20 years. We've grown our business to over 4 times the original sales volume during this time. We are a very unique "Feed Store" with everything you need from gardening and farming, to livestock needs, to pets including birds, fish and hamsters. We even have western jewelry and home decorations for the ladies to browse. Our family continues to work together to grow our business. I enjoy the interaction with our customers and the loyalty they demonstrate to our family business.

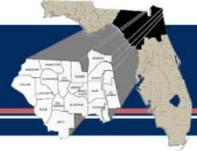
Anything else you'd like to add...

I had a tremendous career with the Florida Department of Transportation. I have many friends that I will continue to stay in touch with as a result of my employment at the Department. I will always be grateful to the many individuals at FDOT that assisted me during my employment. The employees at the Department, especially those that worked in my work unit, were absolutely fantastic. I will always remember their dedication, hard work and commitment to doing the right things and to do them well. FDOT is an agency for which you should be proud to be part of!

Cover Photo

The award on the cover from ITS America was won on behalf of FDOT Central Office, and a lot of work by some of the Districts. Sherri Byrd, our 511 Marketing Manager, was instrumental in this award. If there's a free event, she knows about it and goes out to teach people about 511 and all of the benefits of our mantra "Know before you Go". She also provides brochures to many municipal agencies throughout the District. Following is just a short list of some of the partnerships Sherri has made. Our sincerest thanks to Sherri for a job well done.

- Tom Coughlin Jay Fund
- Florida Blue
- Landstar
- Deutsche Bank
- Fidelity National Financial
- Sea Star Line
- Checker Cab
- Nemours
- Prudential
- Aetna
- Steinmart
- CITI Bank
- First Coast Service Options
- Suddath Company
- Adamec Harley-Davidson
- Teacher Supply Depot
- Duval County Public Schools
- Clay County Public Schools
- Bishop Kenny High School
- Duval County Special Olympics
- Jacksonville Equestrian Center
- Greater Jacksonville Kingfish Tournament
- Sweet Dreams Touch a Truck
- THE PLAYERS
- American Red Cross Volunteer Lifesaving Corps
- Jacksonville Sheriff's Office
- Jacksonville Beach Police Department
- St. Johns County Sheriff's Office
- Greyhound Bus Station
- Amtrak
- AAA
- JaxPort
- Jacksonville Public Libraries
- Columbia County Public Libraries
- Visit Florida
- Visit Jacksonville
- Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce
- Ponte Vedra Chamber of Commerce
- Downtown Vision
- City of Jacksonville
- City of Jacksonville Beach
- City of Atlantic Beach
- City of Neptune Beach
- Baldwin Town Hall
- Macclenny City Hall
- Orange Park Town Hall
- Green Cove Springs City Hall
- Fernandina Beach City Hall
- Callahan Town Hall
- Yulee Town Hall
- University of North Florida
- Florida State College of Jacksonville
- St. Johns River Community College
- Edward Waters College
- Jacksonville University



**TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT
2014 MEETING SCHEDULE**

FIRST COAST TIM TEAM MEETING

FDOT URBAN OFFICE TRAINING CENTER
2198 EDISON AVENUE- JACKSONVILLE
904-360-5400

NOVEMBER 18, 2014

ALACHUA/BRADFORD TIM TEAM MEETING

FDOT GAINESVILLE OPERATIONS OFFICE
5301 N.E. 39TH AVE- GAINESVILLE
352-381-4300

OCTOBER 8, 2014

DECEMBER 10, 2014

FDOT DISTRICT TWO ITS STAFF



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