

# FDOT DISTRICT TWO

Intelligent Transportation Systems Newsletter –  
November-December 2009  
Issue 27



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## ITS Announcements

First Coast TIM Meeting

Tuesday, January 19th

*Please contact the ITS Office at (904) 360-5465 if you would like to participate in the meetings.*

## Notes from the District 2 ITS Engineer

Well, the holidays have arrived and I still don't know where the time went! The months of November and December have been extremely busy for the ITS staff as we gear up for 2010. That was the year when I thought ITS activities would really pick up but to my surprise it has arrived much sooner. Part of the reason could be because I did not incorporate the impact of the holidays or another cause could have been because Donna was on the disabled list (DL) for a while.

Yes, poor Donna was on the DL for the month of November due to surgery on her left shoulder. Our guesses for the cause of the injury ranged from playing softball during her teenage years to WWF moves while penalizing disobedient piano students. Fortunately for us, she returned to the fold in early December. She is a little sore at the moment but we noticed that she's improving each and every day. Her return couldn't have come at a better time since we've had four RISC incidents since the October newsletter and each event requires a tremendous amount of time and coordination to assemble the facts.

Staying within the purview of her responsibilities I am happy to announce that we are one step closer to a new Road Ranger contract this coming April. The North Florida Transportation Planning Organization (NFTPO) graciously provided the additional funds necessary to maintain eight routes for the five-day work week. This coincides with an

improvement in the economy that's generated interest from prospective sponsors. It seems like we've been talking about this for ages but State Farm has already made an offer and actually begun to fund programs in South and Central Florida. This opportunity is in addition to three or four local firms that are willing to commit sponsorship money once the new contract is in place.

As for the ITS Maintenance staff, they continue to amaze me with the amount of work that gets done on a very lean budget. I will address their performance later in the newsletter but would like to commend Kevin for staying on top of equipment operability each day. Confirmation of his performance was noted during a meeting with Central Office in early December. During this session a discussion was conducted between Central Office Statistics and their ITS office in Tallahassee. The Statistics Office had been assessing the data generated for the Statewide Data Warehouse project and decided to assess equipment performance for several Districts. At the end of their conversation one of the Statistics personnel turned to me and asserted that the District Two information was the most reliable, consistent and accurate they have encountered. He then briefly explained the statistical software process they used to make this determination, thus sustaining my assumption on the ITS maintenance team's performance.

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**Notes from the ITS Engineer continued**

John Kell has been busy juggling projects but there is one, in particular, that stands out. He is directing tasks for the State Road 9A ITS design and followed through with my recommendation to address the needs of Jaxport in the Blount Island area. I had concerns about this region since two new ports were planned in the near future for Mitsui and Hanjin Shipping, thus generating a significant increase in truck traffic within the Jacksonville area. John was diligent during the design process and assisted in setting up a meeting with Jaxport. During discussions we found that we were right on target with their needs but the bonus was they had funding available to supplement the dissemination of traffic information to truckers entering and exiting the ports.

Since Jaxport had dedicated funding to tasks that could be handled via our State Road 9A design and local 511 system they asked for recommendations on how to utilize these existing funds they had in place. After a couple of meetings it was determined that they could shift this money to work around the port at Talleyrand Avenue. Since the City and ITS office had no immediate plans for ITS deployment in that area we felt Jaxport's funds could be better utilized to direct truck traffic entering and exiting this section of town via MLK Boulevard, Phoenix Avenue and 8<sup>th</sup> Street. Discussions have just begun but we hope to provide direction to Jaxport at our next NE Florida ITS Coalition meeting.

In early December I had the opportunity to attend the ITS Florida Technical Forum and learned a little about TSM&O (Transportation System Management & Operations) in the process. It is a new approach to doing business in the Transportation Industry and several of the presentations addressed the use of TSM&O. The practice utilizes traffic signals, ITS, construction MOT and other roadway management tools to get an optimum level of performance for the corridors. At the current moment, District Four is conducting a pilot study of TSM&O and so far has seen positive results. The process incorporates involvement from Planning and Design all the way through to Operations and Maintenance of the roadway system. Several tools are utilized to make our roadway systems more efficient and these will be presented to you within the next six-months (once the pilot study has matured a little more).

**Lighter Side**

In early July of 2005 our family's everyday life changed dramatically (for the better of course!) because I was too lazy to close the garage door. My wife and I had returned from an evening at the in-laws and her pounding headache made it an early night. During the evening I was startled when I heard the sounds of rustling paper in the garage.

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**Notes from the ITS Engineer continued**

Upon opening the door I noticed this striped gray tail sticking out of a bag of cat food and immediately thought a raccoon had hit the jackpot.

I soon learned “*this ain’t no ‘coon!*” and came to the conclusion that we were about to add another cat to our family. Initially, I tried to play hardball with the wife but pretty much knew there would be another mouth to feed at the table (if I only knew how much!). This six-toed kitty was a charmer, digging his head into our bodies as if he were trying to hide. So, with that habit the name “Tucker” was given to the newly adopted family member of the Vega clan.

Tucker is a polydactyl (or six-fingered) cat who has baseball mitts for paws. After deciding to keep him the first thing we needed to do was determine if the house was “constructed” well enough for this beast! Our first concern was how to keep the existing cats happy as we “operated” with an additional family member. The next item of concern was how to “maintain” the customs he’d learned while out in the wild. At first it was tough but he adjusted well to his new habitat.

Tucker was like any kitten, wanting love and attention 24/7 and eating everything in sight. He acclimated himself to our home environment very well, becoming the “leader of the pack” within just a few weeks and increased his mischievousness with each passing day. During the evenings his

favorite nesting spot was on the backrest of the sofa as we watched television. He could sit there for hours curled up in a ball, purring like a Porsche Carrera for hours on end. To him, “life was good” but every so often he displayed the feral side of his personality.

Around the time of Tucker’s arrival I’d decided to get laser surgery on both eyes since my vision was so terrible (20/800, need I say more?). The procedure was highly recommended by my eye doctor since her scale failed to give her accurate readings on my vision. After the laser surgery procedure it was determined that my vision improved to 20/15. Needless to say, a person’s eyes are one of the most sensitive organs of the body so I was forewarned by the doctor to take extensive precautions for several weeks (i.e. no swimming, sweating, boxing or stressful exercise).

Heeding this warning, I treated my eyes like they were a valuable pair of diamonds and took every safeguard necessary to avoid injury. One evening I was on the sofa having a bowl of ice cream and watching a television program while Tucker, as usual, was curled up in his spot just behind me. Somewhere between “Holy” and “Cow” this bundle of joy clocked me with his polydactyl and sent me shivering to the floor. Yeah, it hurt like heck, but I should have expected it due to his previous

**Notes from the ITS Engineer continued**

**Lighter Side of Things continued**

behavior (o.k., you can stop laughing now). Fortunately, no major damage occurred, he got the scare of his life from my screams and he was no longer allowed to sit in his favorite spot. Tucker is now three and one-half years old, actually has paws the size of a small catcher’s mitt and weighs 17.5 pounds. He no longer pops people in the eyes and instead goes for the head butt below the chin. Guess from now on I will have to watch television with a football helmet on my head.

If you hadn’t noticed, I was trying to have a little fun with this story by tying it to the subject of TSM&O in the previous section. If I’d planned properly and designed around this new arrival I may have constructed an environment that would allow our family to maintain some semblance of operability in our daily lives. I hope to have more for you this coming February.

Pete Vega  
ITS Engineer



A Key West Hemingway Polydactyl



A Jacksonville Vega Polydactyl  
(shown with sibling ,Yoshi, in background)

## Performance Measures

We are still awaiting Central Office's release of the new version of the SunGuide performance measures reports. The sample release of the Quarterly Performance Measures report indicates that there will be many improvements to the spreadsheets. The official release date of the new report is anticipated to occur in January. Another positive is that in the last few weeks, the weekly Performance Measures audit has been outputting fewer issues related to TMC operator inaccuracy.

Most of the recurring issues will be resolved with the release of the new version of the performance measure report. Over the past two months our understanding of the issues has also improved. Basically, the revised Performance Measures Audit will output two sets of data. One set is a list of "Flagged Events" or those that contain data outside a particular threshold set by Central Office. The second list of events is a "Full Detail Report" that shows all events used to compile the averages found in the Weekly, Monthly and Annual Performance Measures Report. Some of the "Flagged Events" have been corrected and no longer exceed the specified thresholds. These are then included in the "Full Detail Report" and in turn become part of the Weekly, Monthly and Annual Performance Measures Report.

In reviewing the Performance Measures report for the last few weeks it is seen that the number of events did not vary greatly from week to week.

However, it is expected that there will be more events in the next month since there are now eight patrolling Road Rangers, which began on Monday, November 23. Increased coverage of the roadway means increased detection of events that might otherwise go unnoticed since there are no cameras on many sections on the roadways. This increases incident management, one of the main goals of the TMC. More Road Rangers covering the roads also ensures decreased response times and decreased incident clearance durations. Decreasing incident clearance duration is another goal in regards to incident management. The data for the last four weeks shows that incident clearance for crashes has consistently been about an hour, which keeps the incident well within the Open Roads Duration goal of 90 minutes. Other event types vary from 20 minutes to over 3 hours. Attributing to the long duration times are generally disabled vehicles and vehicle fires where the event is of low severity and the vehicle is not blocking travel lanes. Overall, the data shows that the goal of increased incident management is being reached.

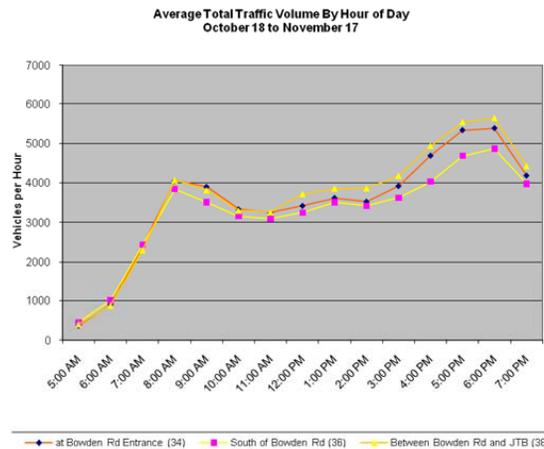
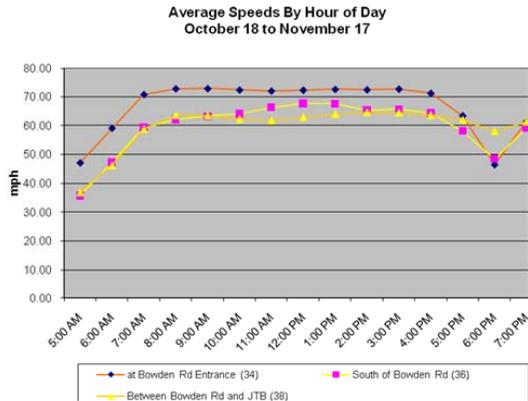
To sum up the latest traffic conditions on I-95 southbound at the JTB interchange, average speeds and volumes are back to normal. In fact speeds are better now than they were before construction. As expected, speeds are lowest during the rush hours and volumes are highest

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**Performance Measures continued**

from 5 PM to 7 PM. Also, the three detectors still standing in the area all gave data for nearly every hour of the four weeks. This is helpful in calculating more accurate averages. The following graph displays the average speeds and traffic volumes by time of day.

Jill Dawson  
Metric Engineering



**Marketing**

'Tis the season for holiday cheer and with so many travelers taking to the roadways, the 511 Marketing Team was ready to greet visitors with a smile and welcome them to the Sunshine State. Just before Thanksgiving we made trips to the I-75 and I-95 Florida Welcome Centers. A special thanks to Ms. Dot and Ms. Joyce for letting us bring the 511 message to motorists who were stopping by to enjoy a fresh glass of orange juice.

This month, we also made stops at PSS World Medical and the Suddath companies where we participated in their employee health fairs. It's always encouraging when we stumble upon a commuter who already uses the system and we hear them say to the others gathered around the 511 booth, "511 has gotten me out of a number of traffic jams, and I love it! I use it all the time." Word of mouth is one of the most effective ways to share the news about 511. If you use the system and you're happy with it, tell someone today! Spread the word about 511 and at the same time spread some holiday cheer!

Sherri Byrd  
511 Marketing Manager

**Traffic Incident Management**

**Central Office Statewide TIM Meeting**

On November 16<sup>th</sup>, Central Office hosted a Statewide TIM video conference to discuss plans for the upcoming calendar year. The first item on the agenda was a discussion of the Road Ranger Responder survey. This survey is designed to receive input from our TIM partners on the performance of the Road Ranger operators. It will be distributed to TIM members this coming January. This information will then be included in Central Office’s upcoming fiscal year 2010 annual performance report.

Central Office also unveiled a new plan called TIM in '10 that will involve MOT training for all partnering agencies, including the Florida Police Chiefs Association, Florida Sheriff’s Association and the Florida Fire Chief’s Association. They will also begin providing State Law Enforcement Radio (SLERs) training for TMC Operators and Road Rangers as we begin to transition to the 800 mHz system.

A QAR process has been initiated for the Incident Management program and data will be assimilated from the SunGuide software reports. District Two will have its first QAR sometime in early 2011. The emphasis of this review will be an assessment of the RISC paperwork and Road Rangers.

The group then discussed an update to the Road Ranger procedure to determine if any changes

were necessary. One of the items that will be removed involves the annual background check for Road Rangers. This information is kept in the JTF Security database for perpetuity, thus an annual exercise will no longer be necessary.

One final subject to note is that the Southern Traffic Incident Exchange (STIX) is getting full support from Central Office and the Districts should be willing to support this program. The goal is to have major incident information shared across State lines so that motorists will have traveler information well in advance of their journey. These were the major topics addressed in this video conference.

**ALACHUA TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE**

On December 9, 2009, the Alachua Traffic Incident Management Team met with the following agencies represented: FDOT, SmartRoutes, City of Gainesville, Alachua Sheriff’s Dept, Alachua Police, University Towing, FDOT Central Office, FHP, and District 8 Medical Office. The incidents occurring since the last meeting in October were debriefed and lessons learned shared. Chris Dolan and Matthew Weisman with City of Gainesville gave a detailed update on traffic signal and ITS work being done in Gainesville. The Management Center is

### Traffic Incident Management

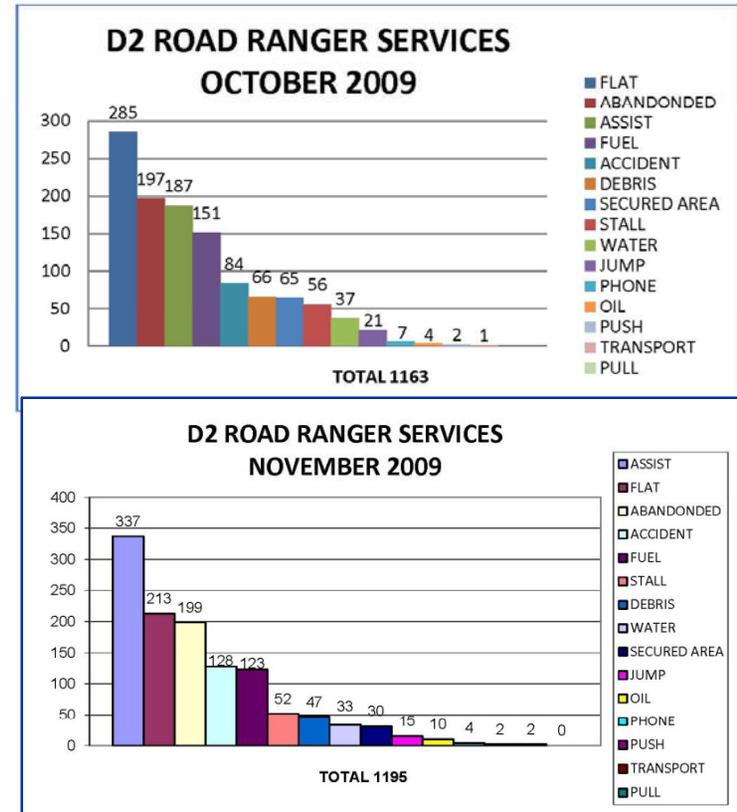
anticipated to begin construction soon. The Team worked on developing procedures to update the FDOT 511 information when there are incidents in Marion and Alachua Counties. It was announced University Towing will be assisting with monitoring and reporting crashes that occur and FDOT 511 will activate air coverage by plane whenever large crashes occur.

#### FIRST COAST TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

The First Coast Traffic Management Team met on Tuesday, November 17, 2009 with the following agencies represented: Metric, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, Transfield, Jorgensen, Nassau County Sheriff's Office, Jacksonville Fire and Rescue, University, First Coast Road Rangers, HNTB, DRI Services, City of Jacksonville Traffic Operations, and FDOT. It was announced Jerry Ausher has been selected to fill the FDOT Traffic Operations Engineer position since Jim Scott has retired. Our Team is participating in the STIX (Southern Traffic Information Exchange) reporting incidents that might impact our neighboring states. All information is sent to the hub in Atlanta, Ga. It was announced the Road Ranger Service Patrol will be operating with 8 routes, 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM effective November 23, 2009. The revised diversion routes were introduced to the Team to review. After incidents occurring since our last meeting were reviewed and evaluated the meeting was adjourned.

### Road Ranger Update

The District 2 Road Ranger Service Patrol is actively patrolling providing incident assistance to motorists, FHP and JSO on I-95, I-295, 9A, I-10 and J. Turner Butler. As of November 23rd all routes are activated and service is back our normal eight (8) routes, 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM. As shown on the charts, Road Ranger Operators assisted 1163 stranded vehicles in the month of October and 1195 in November, proving how valuable this service is to our incident management program.



## RISC (Rapid Incident Scene Clearance Update)

We have had four RISC incidents in November and December.

The first incident occurred November 4, 2009, University Towing responded to our first RISC incident on I-75 southbound just south of I-10. Despite a fuel leak and sod pallets, University Towing managed to remove an overturned semi truck and van within the Open Roads Policy goal time of 90 minutes. Teamwork by all agencies – University Towing personnel, FHP, Columbia County Fire Department, FDOT Maintenance, and FDOT Bridge Department – was outstanding! Everyone assisted in opening the lanes.

The debrief meeting was held on December 9<sup>th</sup> at the Gainesville Maintenance conference room where suggestions were made for improvement discussed and added to our “lessons learned”. The following people were present: Paul Clark, Ed Ward, Marty Humphries, Bruce Strickland, Coby Fincher, John Harper, Scott Hedgecloth, Rick Moore, Ryan Crist, and Donna Danson.

The second incident occurred on December 8<sup>th</sup> at I-95 N and I-10 W and Walt’s Wrecker Service met the deadlines of the Open Roads Policy. More information will follow in our next newsletter.

The third incident occurred December 13<sup>th</sup> on I-10 near Chaffee with John’s Towing Service reporting. More details will follow in our next newsletter.

On December 18<sup>th</sup>, a fourth RISC also occurred near Chaffee Road within the construction zone. Southern Wrecker handled this incident for the Department and more details will follow in our next newsletter.

Donna Danson  
District 2 ITS Project Manager



## Maintenance

The absence of lightning during the months of November and December has been very beneficial to the maintenance of ITS devices. The DMS are one-hundred percent operational as of yesterday. There are two DMS on the I-95 south corridor that have been taken out of service until the ITS construction project is completed in a few months and two along I-10 that should be reinstalled within the next four months. As for CCTV cameras, all fiber connected devices outside of the construction zones mentioned above are operating properly but the two wireless CCTV cameras at the south end of town need some service. As for the Vehicle detectors, over 93% have been providing traffic speeds and volumes during the past two months.

The next major effort will be to upgrade our communication system to satellite offices around the Jacksonville area. First on the list is the FDOT Jacksonville Maintenance office located south of I-10 on Ellis Road. This office will receive video images from CCTV cameras that can be controlled by personnel at their facility. The objective is to provide their staff with the capability to clearly define equipment needs of incident responders when being contacted by TMC operators about an event. Likewise, during major crashes or emergency evacuations the Maintenance staff can monitor traffic to determine the best alternative for detouring traffic. This capability will be even more valuable once several

of the arterial roadways have CCTV capabilities in the near future.

The ITS Maintenance contractor has also been given the “go ahead” with repairs to the DMS on I-10 that was damaged last Christmas. The location of this DMS was within a road widening project, thus we relied on the project’s Design Consultant, HNTB, to provide a set of plans for a new cantilever sign structure. The reinstallation was postponed for a few months while the realignment of the roadway was completed. Now that everything is in place, TCD can proceed with manufacturing the new structure and reinstalling the DMS.

One final note on maintenance is that the TCD is assisting the ITS office with a White Paper on four types of Department approved vehicle detectors along I-10. The ITS team learned that there was no existing study that compared these products side-by-side and this was critical information that could be used during the design of a project. TCD installed five of each type along I-10 separated by no more than 1/2 –mile in distance. The White Paper will provide valuable information to the ITS office on what type of detector will work best under certain roadway geometry and traffic conditions, thus saving money and increasing accuracy.

Kevin Jackson  
District 2 ITS Field Specialist

## Construction

The State Road 9A project in northeast Jacksonville recently had a 60% review of the plans, thus keeping us within the anticipated design schedule. The main items that still need to be addressed are utilities and interconnectivity to the ports along Hecksher Drive. Meetings have been held with Jaxport personnel and Metric has incorporated their existing infrastructure into the plans. A key benefit of this cooperative effort will be the dissemination of traffic information to and from the port. Thus, the trucking agencies can have immediate traffic information on available for all of Florida and the TMC operators will receive data on trucks leaving the port. This will be critical to the operators as they try to decide what message to post on the DMS. If there is an accident along State Road 9A that impacts port traffic they can now divert these trucks to alternate routes, thus freeing up some of the congestion caused by the incident.

Design of the I-295 project in northwest Jacksonville has begun and 30% plans should be completed within the next month. Central Office had to move some funds around and asked District Two to move this project up. The earliest initial Let date for this project was July 2011, however to fulfill this request we anticipate a project Letting date of March 2011, at the earliest. Once this Interstate project is complete there will only be one ITS project remaining on the 10-year ITS Cost Feasible

plan. This would be the State Road 9A project in southeast Jacksonville.

The State Road 21 project in Orange Park is moving along well with an anticipated construction start date of March 2010. The first items to go up will be the cabinets and CCTV cameras. This work should move along pretty quickly, however the seven DMS probably will not be operational until sometime in August. The Clay County Traffic Engineering office will be relocated in their new facility on College Drive by the start of this project, thus interconnectivity will not be a problem. Once the project is completed the goal shall be to monitor the existing timing plan to determine if improvements can be made for the flow of traffic along this corridor.

The Philips Highway project received bids in mid-December and the Technical Committee is currently reviewing bids for the project. It is anticipated that this project will begin no later than June 2010 and should be completed by December 2010. This project will be very beneficial in that the TMC will be able to balance the flow of traffic along two major corridors in south Jacksonville. This can be particularly valuable when an incident occurs on either corridor since the TMC operators can provide confirmed alternate route information for the very first time.

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### Construction continued

The State Road 15 project in Orange Park has been advertised and bids are due in February. This will be a compliment project to the State Road 21 effort that will provide alternatives for motorists in Orange Park. The scenario would be that if there is an incident on either roadway, the information will be posted on the new DMS and 511 systems. The motorist can then decide whether to change their route, readjust their plans or simply avoid the area entirely. It is expected that this project will be completed sometime in early 2011.

John Kell  
District 2 ITS Construction Project Manager



[www.fl511.com](http://www.fl511.com)

### Food for Thought

As the year draws to an end, the obvious learning curve of getting accustomed to writing 2010 on checks, letters, etc. is a given, but have you given any thought to how you will refer to the new year verbally?

Will you say “twenty-ten” or “two-thousand ten” (the two most obvious choices to me). Twenty-ten involves only 3 syllables, which, in these very busy, multi-tasking times would give us a bit of a time savings. Two thousand ten is a full four syllables, but it keeps with the “theme” of what we’ve been saying for the last nine years, “two-thousand one”, “two thousand two”, etc.

I remember well my maternal grandfather, Big Daddy, who would always refer to zeros as “aughts”. Although he has been gone for many years, I wonder if he would have thought that two-aught-one-aught would have a certain ring about it.

Here’s wishing you and yours a safe and happy 2010, however you say it!

Penny Kamish  
Editor

## North Florida TPO Update

The arterial projects funded by the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization are well on their way. The ITS office has one minor setback in that the equipment needed by the local agencies is still involved in the Traffic Engineering Research Lab (TERL) approval process. The TERL is providing us with weekly updates on the status of the approval and plans are underway to get the work done once certification has been given. One item under review is the digital CCTV camera that utilizes very low bandwidths, thus providing improved capabilities since most of the local fiber is multi-modal. The other item is the network field switch currently being used by the City of Jacksonville. Having multiple types of network devices is not desirable due to maintenance and repair issues, thus the city would rather stick to the brand they are currently using throughout their system.

Another bit of news is that during December our very own Clay County Commissioner Doug Conkey won the ITS Champion Award given annually by ITS Florida. This award is given to an individual who has made significant contributions to advance the cause of ITS in Florida. This award is given only for rare and conspicuous service. Commissioner Conkey displayed his trust in ITS technology by agreeing to utilize over \$2.5 million in Clay

County funding to upgrade the traffic signal system and deploy ITS along two corridors (SR 21 and SR 15) within the Town of Orange Park. Once completed, there will be nearly 30 intersections with upgraded controllers, over 25 CCTV Cameras and 11 Dynamic Message Signs to alert motorists of traffic conditions that may impact motorists in their community.

In the January the North Florida TPO will be scheduling another Northeast Florida ITS Coalition meeting to discuss the progress of current projects, present plans for upcoming ventures and will seek input on possible joint efforts. The hope is that by that time the region will receive word on results of the TIGER grant application for funding of the Phase I portion of the Transportation Center. If the region is successful the project may begin sometime near the end of 2010.



## Operations

The Holiday Season is upon us and new traffic patterns will emerge. As schools let out and procrastinating shoppers dash out for last minute deals, motorists will find lighter rush hours but heavier traffic near malls, accompanied by the long lines that await them inside. Shorter days will also contribute to more cautious, delayed commutes while motorists adjust to night driving. Remember to Dial 511 and know before you go so you stay ahead of the traffic.

511 users are utilizing the “report an incident” function of the phone system to assist us in providing the most up to date information on traffic conditions. We have had days where over 200 tips come in statewide that help TMCs verify and update changes in conditions. We encourage all users to use this feature to assist our operations, especially outside our ITS device coverage areas. While in the 511 phone system say “feedback,” then answer “yes” to wanting to provide feedback, then “report a new traffic incident,” to provide this information.

November was a busy month as 511 experienced its 4<sup>th</sup> busiest month of the year in District 2 logging over 18,000 calls. On Thanksgiving over 2,000 calls were placed that assisted motorists to get to home to their meals while still warm. The TMC worked 1,600+ events that month with 352 lane blocking incidents. The Road Rangers are back up to full force (8 drivers) and assisted over 1,000 events in November.

The total amount of 511 calls for District Two was 21,393. During the month of September the Statewide 511 system received 859 feedback messages. District Two’s portion of this total was 55 (or 6%). The TMC Supervisors determined that 6 of the 55 calls did not have an event posted on 511.

Further examination determined that these 6 calls were related to incidents in the Alachua County area along I-75 (due to an accident in Marion County). Overall, the total number of feedback calls compared to total calls was only 0.2%, therefore we can safely assume that over 99% of the callers were fairly satisfied with the information they received.

With the Holiday Season really going now we expect December to surpass the above numbers while we work to get motorists to their destinations safely.

Without ITS devices outside of Jacksonville (and parts of Jacksonville) the TMC depends on FDOT and FHP personnel to give us traffic information reports. You can reach our 24/7 line at (904)301-3700 extension 122 or our work day line at (904)360-5465. You can now also leave feedback on the Next Generation 511 system about road conditions and bugs you may find in the system that is relayed to our operators in real time.

Remember: Know Before You Go! Dial 511 and have a safe Holiday!

Ryan Crist  
TMC Supervisor

## Spotlight on...Jerry Ausher

This month's spotlight is on Mr. Jerry Ausher, the newest member of the District Two Traffic Operations office. Jerry replaces Mr. Jim Scott who retired in October after a distinguished career with the Department and Traffic Ops. Jerry has spent the past 16 years working for the Jacksonville Maintenance office. In a sense, the transition will be much easier for the ITS office since a majority of our issues also impacted Maintenance as well.

Jerry was the first Department employee I got to know when I began working for the Jacksonville Maintenance office. He was about six-months out of college and I was three years into my engineering career. Both of us were a little "wet behind the ears" however we often were alike by thinking outside the box. I thoroughly enjoyed working with Jerry back then because I fed off his ideas and would hope some of mine stuck with him as well.

As the years passed we went in separate directions. Jerry gained experience in other areas of Maintenance (Contracts and Permits) while I headed to the State Maintenance Office for a few years before returning to District Two as the ITS Engineer. So, we've come full circle 16 years later and it seemed like just yesterday when we first met. During that time, Jerry and I got married, he had kids while I had cats, we both had a residence in Julington Creek, and now we both work for the Traffic Operations office.

There will be a period of adjustment as Jerry gets acclimated with the nuances within the ITS Program but I think in a few months he will be up to date on all the challenges we face. The dynamic nature of the program makes it a little tough to keep track all the issues but I intend to spend as much time as possible with Jerry to make it easier on him.

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

*Born in Pittsburgh, PA moved to Rochester, NY when I was in elementary school. Attended college the State University of New York at Buffalo. Obtained a Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering in 1993. Obtained a Master's degree in Civil Engineering at the University of Central Florida 1999*

### **Early Career and/or brief job history:**

*Worked for the City of Rochester as an Engineer Intern. Relocated to Jacksonville, Florida in 1993 and began career with Florida Department of Transportation's Jacksonville Maintenance Unit that same year. Have worked for the Department in various capacities since 1993 with the most recent being the Jacksonville Maintenance Engineer from 2002-2009.*

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**Spotlight on...Jerry Ausher continued**

**Job Description – your role in transportation:**

*District Two Traffic Operations Engineer. Responsible for the District 2 Intelligent Transportation System, Highway Safety Program, Pedestrian and Bike program, Traffic Operational Studies & Community Traffic Safety Teams.*

**What’s the best advice anyone’s ever given you?**

*A project is only as good as the project manager*

**How long have you been at your current job?**

*Just a few months.*



Mr. Jerry Ausher, the newest member of the District 2 Team

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

*Current job is the best one – never had a job I didn’t like*

**Tell us a little about your family.**

*I have two younger brothers one lives in Tampa and the other in Chicago. Married for 16 years to Sara have two daughters Haille and Alexandria.*

**Do you have any hobbies?**

*Enjoy spending time with family and running.*

**Anything else you’d like to add...**

*I look forward to working with the ITS team.*

# Photo Gallery



511 at PSS World Medical



511 meets Holiday travelers at the I-75 Welcome Center



511 visits the Suddath Company

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**Peter Vega**  
**District 2 ITS Engineer**  
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TMC Desk at FDOT **360-5465** Mon-Fri 6a-6p  
 TMC Desk at FHP - **\*FHP (301-3700) x 122** -24/7/365  
 Penny Kamish, Project Manager  
 Derrick Odom, TMC Supervisor  
 Ryan Crist, TMC Supervisor  
 Jason Summerfield, Network Manager  
 John (Sean) Wilcox, TMC Assistant Supervisor  
 Sherri Byrd, 511 Marketing Manager

<b><u>D2 Day Operators</u></b>	<b><u>D2 Night &amp; Weekend Operators</u></b>	<b><u>D3 Day Operators</u></b>	<b><u>511 Probe</u></b>
Brian Deiter	Jason Evans	Santos Morin	Sherri Byrd
Jesse Gilmour	David Rolfe	Adrienne Catapano	Kristen Kirk
Jessica Lakey	Sarah Stephenson	Jessica Vazquez	
Mike Pirrone	Adam Page		