



# Heart of Texas Chapter Newsletter

- 1 President's Message
- 1 FHWA Award
- 2 WTS Scholarships Winners
- 2 Membership Information
- 3 FEMA Wants Sally Victor
- 4 WTS Luncheon Update

Fall 2005  
Volume 2 Number 3

## IN LOVING MEMORIAM

Daniel L. Dippel



April 6, 1970 - November 3, 2005

The local and international WTS family extends its heartfelt sympathies to Michelle Dippel, WTS Heart of Texas Chapter Treasurer, who lost her husband Daniel, age 35, on November 3 after a 21-month battle against cancer. In lieu of flowers, a college fund has been set up for Michelle and Daniel's 5-year old son, Grayson. Donations can be made to:

Ameriprise Financial for Grayson Dippel  
c/o CJ Boggs  
TTC IH-35 Engineering Team—HNTB  
7745 Chevy Chase Drive  
Building 5, Suite 300  
Austin, Texas 78752  
512-334-3860.

## Member News

Each quarter we will publish information about what's going on with WTS members. If you have changed jobs, been promoted or are working on a new and exciting project, please send us your news! Address your emails to the HOT WTS Newsletter Chair: Asia Sobala at [joanna.sobala@hdrinc.com](mailto:joanna.sobala@hdrinc.com).

Sandra Allen received FHWA Administrator's Award for Superior Achievement.

Sally Victor, Scholarship Committee Chair has been helping hurricane victims in Louisiana over past several months.

### WTS MEMBER STATS CORNER

55 members of our Heart of Texas Chapter of the WTS! We are growing!

## Message From the President

- Liz Smith, P.E.

I am amazed at how quickly this year has flown by. Here at the HOT Chapter of WTS, we have made a lot of progress. We have several exciting events scheduled for the coming year (2006 - can you believe it?) :

- ◆ We will have a members-only meeting in January. Date and location will be announced soon. Save your "white elephants" or other unwanted gifts for "regifting" at our meeting.
- ◆ A Transportation Industry Panel Discussion will be scheduled in February, with several industry leaders as panelists. Watch for the announcement.
- ◆ We will have a speaker luncheon in March.
- ◆ Save the date for our Second Annual WTS HOT Transportation Gala on April 7, 2006. We will officially make our scholarship presentations to the 2005 winners. The Board is asking for volunteers to assist on Gala sub-committees with venue coordination, sponsorships, registration and VIP's, invitations, program & speaker and silent auction. Let's make this another smashing success!
- ◆ Also, don't forget about the WTS Conference in Dallas/Fort Worth May 17-19, 2006. "Find Your Solution" is the theme for the conference, and the HOT Chapter will be assisting the DFW Chapter in the event. We will need volunteers to help with the conference, so keep that in mind.



Early 2006 will be busy. Remember, we are always looking for new ideas to improve our HOT Chapter and to better serve our members. Contact a Board or Committee Chair and get involved by joining a committee. We need your input to make the Chapter reflect your needs and goals.

On behalf of the HOT Board, I wish all of our members Happy Holidays this season. I give thanks for the wonderful group of members we have, for the great things we have done for our transportation community and for students with our generously funded scholarship fund, and for the supportive and encouraging community that WTS provides to our members.

I want to personally and publicly thank our Board and Committee Chairs - they are the ones who are making this an excellent organization. Special recognition needs to go to Kathie Goldsmith and the scholarship committee for their efforts with this year's scholarships - we had 15 well qualified applicants this year due to their getting the word out to the universities in the area. Special thanks also goes to Asia Sobala, our tireless newsletter chair, for always putting together an excellent publication.

Thanks and warm wishes to all of you. See you in January!!

--Liz.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual WTS Transportation Gala

Save the date for WTS Transportation Gala, April 7, 2006. The Board is asking for volunteers to assist on Gala sub-committees with venue coordination, sponsorships, registration and VIP's, invitations, program & speaker and silent auction. With the potential relocation of the UP RR, the Austin-San Antonio Commuter Rail project and Cap Metro's Commuter Rail, 'Rail' has been selected as the theme.

For more information, contact Tina Walker, HOT WTS Vice-President/Program Chair at [walkert@pbworld.com](mailto:walkert@pbworld.com).



## Why Join WTS?

For many reasons! Joining Heart of Texas chapter gives you access to both local and national services and activities within WTS. As a WTS member, you will have the opportunity to network and interact with other professional in the transportation industry through the Local and National Membership Directory, the WTS Annual Conference and through local chapter monthly programs.

All this in addition to annual awards, job bank, scholarships and training programs that recognize, inspire and challenge members to advance their professional careers in transportation.

Don't wait any longer; join the HOT Chapter of the WTS today!

## Welcome New HOT WTS Members!

Stephanie Hansen, Carter & Burgess  
Samantha Tiffany Soules, PBS&J  
Lee Stone, Wilbur Smith Associates  
Charlotte Whitehead, University of Texas  
at Austin

*For more information on membership please contact Wendy Travis, HOT WTS Membership Chair at wtravis@hntb.com or go to [www.wtsinternational.org](http://www.wtsinternational.org)*

## Article Highlights

An article about "Liz Smith managing projects for Kleinfelder" was published in the Diversity Careers' website:

*"In eight years at Kleinfelder, Smith has moved extensively within the company. From her time in Sacramento and San Diego, CA and now Austin, she knows where to recruit staffers with the specific experience needed for the projects she leads.*

*Smith was offered the opportunity to buy into the employee-owned company after just two years on the job. She's now a senior associate, and the next step is to become a principal. "My goal, obviously, is to continue to move up in the company," she says.*

*Smith's experience makes her sensitive to the needs of women colleagues in her male-dominated field." To read more go to: [www.diversitycareers.com/articles/pro/05-augsep/managing\\_kleinfelder.htm](http://www.diversitycareers.com/articles/pro/05-augsep/managing_kleinfelder.htm).*

Have you or any of your colleagues written an article recently? Would you like to share it with the HOT WTS members? If so please send such articles to our HOT WTS Newsletter Chair Asia Sobala at [joanna.sobala@hdrinc.com](mailto:joanna.sobala@hdrinc.com).

## FHWA Administrator's Award for Superior Achievement

Each year a handful of FHWA employees are recognized for their sustained superior performance of their duties for FHWA. The Administrators Award honors a body of work well above that normally expected for people within their discipline and position. It is especially significant in that it recognizes contributions at that high level of performances well beyond one year's time, and the successful nominations almost always include special assignments and successes well beyond normal daily duties, frequently adding to FHWA corporately...

Louis K. Varnado, Financial Manager, DC Division  
Donald A. Wilson, Transportation Finance Manager, Kansas Division  
Robert Farley, Highway Engineer, Kentucky Division  
Karen Laney, Financial Manager, Maryland Division  
Joi Hamilton, Equal Opportunity Specialist, Tennessee Division

**Sandra A. Allen, Environmental Protection Manager, Texas Division**

This honor, highest within FHWA, was given to Sandra at the Administrator's Ceremony and Reception on Wednesday, November 9 in Washington.

Sandra, congratulations from all of us at the Heart of Texas WTS Chapter!

## Scholarships for Women Awarded!

**- Kathie Goldsmith, Student Liaison Chair**

Due to the enormous success of the Spring 2005 WTS Gala, the Heart of Texas Chapter was able to offer three \$1,000 scholarships to Central Texas women students.

Scholarship applications were reviewed by the scholarship committee, which consisted of volunteer members Bonnie Lister (TxDOT/Austin District), Jaclyn Hanifen (Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.), and Ann Irwin (Carter-Burgess, Inc.).

The scholarship committee received 15 very impressive applications from a fine group of talented, dedicated women. After great deliberation, the committee decided to give the awards to the following students:

The Louise Moritz Molitoris Leadership Fund for Undergraduates was awarded to Rachael Stensrud, who is a civil engineering student with a business minor at Texas A&M University. Even though school is demanding of her time, Ms. Stensrud always finds ways to participate in Theta Tau, a professional engineering fraternity. In her free time, she loves to read, cook, and scuba dive. After her May graduation, Ms. Stensrud plans to return to her home in Universal City to work with a consulting firm and begin graduate work.

The Sharon D. Banks Memorial Undergraduate Scholarship was awarded to Lindsay Armstrong who is currently a senior civil engineering student at Texas A&M University. After graduating in May 2006, she plans to attend graduate school at Texas A&M to pursue a degree in transportation engineering. A resident of Austin, Ms. Armstrong plans to return to her hometown to pursue her career.

The Helene M. Overly Memorial Scholarship for Graduate Students was awarded to Xiaokun Wang. Ms. Wang is a doctoral student in the transportation program in the Department of Civil, Architectural and Environmental Engineering at the University of Texas at Austin. Her research is on specifying an integrated transportation-land use model that is capable of predicting urban future transportation patterns and facilitating air quality modeling. Ms. Wang's career goal is to serve as a research and teaching faculty member in the study of transportation.

Please feel free to post this newsletter in your lunchrooms or forward it to your colleagues in transportation (yes, men too!). We appreciate all of our members - new, old, and future!



## Heart of Texas WTS OFFICERS

Liz Smith, P.E., President  
Kleinfelder  
lsmith@kleinfelder.com  
(512) 656-0426

Tina Walker, Vice-President/Program Chair  
Parsons and Brinckerhoff  
walkert@pbworld.com  
(512) 347-3518

Susan Charles, Secretary  
Kleinfelder  
scharles@kleinfelder.com  
(512) 926-6650

Michelle Dippel, Treasurer  
HNTB  
mdippel@hntb.com  
(512) 334-3884

Susan Mooney, Public Relations Chair  
HNTB  
smooney@hntb.com  
(512) 334-3860

Wendy Travis, Membership Chair  
HNTB  
wtravis@hntb.com  
(512) 334-3898

Kathie Goldsmith, Student Liaison  
Michael Baker Jr.  
kgoldsmith@michaelbaker.com  
(512) 374-2307

Sally Victor, Scholarship Committee Chair  
HNTB  
svictor@hntb.com  
(512) 334-3800

Joanna (Asia) Sobala, Newsletter Chair  
HDR Engineering  
joanna.sobala@hdrinc.com  
(512) 334-3820

## Did You Know?

- ◆ The state gas tax is 20 cents per gallon and has not been increased since 1991.
- ◆ The federal gas tax is 18.4 cents per gallon and has not been increased since 1993.
- ◆ Texans drive more than twice as many miles on state highways today than in 1980.

**Congratulations to  
Scholarships Winners:  
Rachael Stensrud, Lindsay  
Armstrong, and Xiaokun Wang.  
Thanks to the committee for  
a job well done!**

Scholarships for Women - Awarded | Continued from page 2

The winners of the scholarships will be forwarded to WTS Nationals for consideration for the national scholarship award. Please join me in wishing our winners the best of luck in the national competition.

Please take a moment to congratulate to our winners and to thank the scholarship committee for a job well done!

We were delighted to have had the opportunity to get to know some of these students during the process. The quality and dedication that the next generation of professional women in transportation is impressive and inspiring!

*For more information please contact Kathie Goldsmith at [kgoldsmith@mbakercorp.com](mailto:kgoldsmith@mbakercorp.com)*

## FEMA Wants Sally Victor

*- Sally Victor, Scholarship Committee Chair*

I thought from the outset of September 2005 that the month was going to be different. I had planned to start traveling with my job to several Texas cities conducting historic resource surveys on various highway projects. My house was on the market and very soon to close. I still needed to find another house in Austin. I had lots of things to do.

When I was in Dallas for a site visit I got an email dated 9-9-05 with subject line "FEMA wants Sally Victor." My first reaction was, this is obviously an error! I read on and they wanted a historic architect. Now I knew it was an error. I called my boss to discover that she was really excited and thought this was a wonderful opportunity. When I calmed down I thought it would be an amazing adventure. What FEMA wanted was a historic preservation specialist and I fit the bill. By the way, I was to be in Baton Rouge within 48 hours. So, I caught the first plane back to Austin and really got in gear. I needed immunizations, a vehicle, reference materials, clothing, supplies, and at least another 50 things to get going.

I arrived in Baton Rouge about 3:00 PM on Monday afternoon 9-12-05. I checked in, got a badge, filled out some forms, and asked about lodging (since FEMA was in charge of that item). Yes, camping was available next to the Intercoastal Canal in large tents. I elected to stay at the FEMA offices on a cot and air mattress. It took another 2-3 weeks to secure a motel room, but I had a nice place to stay in the meantime with another employee of HNTB.



I made two site visits with other environmental team members during the first week. One was a swing through three parishes and back to Baton Rouge. The closer we got to the eastern boundary of Louisiana and the Pearl River, the more intense the damage became. Pine trees snapped in pieces, trees fallen through houses, vehicles, and businesses. The photographs in the press had helped me to appreciate the damage, but seeing in with a 360 degree view was stunning.

My second site visit was to New Orleans when one of the museum specialists went to review damage to approximately five museums and/or archives in the downtown area. We stopped before entering the city to get a police escort, needed to enter the city at all. Driving in on Interstate 10 was I saw a deserted urban area with significant damage



## National WTS Highlights

*Our mission is the success of women in transportation.*

One of the goals of WTS is:  
**Establish credibility, so that both public and private sector transportation leaders recognize WTS as a "value added" resource**

From the WTS International President:

**Collaborative Agreement with CMAA** - It is with extreme pleasure that I announce the successful execution of a collaborative agreement between WTS and the Construction Management Association of America (CMAA).

The agreement provides great opportunities for both of our organizations to work together on areas of common interest—such as diversity, and advancement of women in our industries. Through this agreement, both organizations plan the following:

- ◆ To provide enhanced professional development opportunities to all members in our respective fields, and to facilitate and expand the dissemination of that information to one another's members
- ◆ To provide leadership in the development of industry and government recognition of minorities and women
- ◆ To promote the recognition and acceptance of certified construction managers (CCM)
- ◆ To promote and support each organization's professional development and continuing education programs
- ◆ To collaborate on topics of common interest
- ◆ To leverage our respective capabilities to benefit our members

CMAA is an organization dedicated to the interests of professional construction and program management. Their mission is to promote professionalism and excellence in the management of the construction process. For more information, go to [www.cmaanet.org](http://www.cmaanet.org).

In addition to CMAA, WTS has executed collaborative agreements with the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) and APTA.

*For additional information on membership please contact Wendy Travis, HOT WTS Membership Chair at [wtravis@hntb.com](mailto:wtravis@hntb.com) or visit our website at [www.wtsinternational.org](http://www.wtsinternational.org).*

FEMA Wants Sally Victor | Continued from page 3

to every single building or structure. There was a lot of silence as we exited the freeway, stopping at every street to look for potential traffic. Of course, there were no traffic signals working and most stop signs and street name signs were knocked down. There was so much silence.

We entered the D-Day Museum and saw a fully intact display, but the museum store had been sustained broken windows and was a ruin. The director was relieved because the store items could be replaced, but exhibits were more precious. Canal Street had mountains of debris on every curb. The parish mortgage records had been in a basement with 6 feet of water. Workers in tyvek suits and breathing apparatus were bringing up boxes of books that would be sent off for freezing and mold retardant application. The city really had been evacuated. In Plaquemines and St. Bernard parishes, the devastation was much worse. All that was left of most homes, was a slab and a pile of debris.

So, what does a historian do to help speed the recovery of an area that was hit by such an enormous storm? I have worked with terrific folks in school systems, small towns, park systems, and state government. FEMA assigned me to Public Assistance in the "Eastern Parishes" north of Lake Ponchartrain. Throughout this process I have met with applicants to document damage to historic buildings, bridges, parks, museums, schools, and other types of public properties. I have met some wonderful people in my profession that I would not have been likely to meet in the normal course of business from Washington, Maryland, Missouri, Pennsylvania, and other states.

My term with FEMA is almost over and I'll return to Austin in mid-December to take up my regular life again. But, of course, this experience has changed my life and will stay with me for the rest of my days.

I am including a photograph that says so much in my mind about the force and ferocity of Hurricane Katrina. - Sally

*For more information contact Sally Victor at [svictor@hntb.com](mailto:svictor@hntb.com)*

## WTS Luncheon Updates

### September 20, 2005 - Status of Austin-San Antonio Regional Commuter Rail System

During our September 2005 luncheon we welcomed the Austin-San Antonio Regional Commuter Rail System Board of Directors Chair, Sid Covington, who gave us an update of the study process, the results of the public meetings, and status of the application for Federal Transit Administration New Starts funding for the Locally Preferred Alternative. Created in 2002 in response to enabling legislation passed in the 1997 Texas Legislature, the Austin-San Antonio Intermunicipal Commuter Rail District is responsible for developing a plan for commuter rail service extending from Georgetown to San Antonio. The presentation feedback received from the participants was excellent.

### October 26, 2005 - Constitutional Amendment No. 1 on the November 8th Ballot to Create the Rail Relocation and Improvement Fund

Mr. Langmore, an independent transportation consultant, spoke on the constitutional amendment no. 1 on the November 8th ballot to create the Rail Relocation and Improvement Fund. Approval by the voters would authorize the State of Texas to make grants and issue bonds to relocate rail lines outside of the major urban areas. Mr. Langmore served as policy director for the Texas House of Representatives Committee on Transportation during the 2003 legislative session that included the HB 3588. The luncheon and follow-up question and answer session was very informative.

As further information, below are results of the November 8, 2005 **election - Rail Relocation and Improvement Fund** will be created:

PROPOSITION 1	Total Votes	%
FOR	1,110,419	53.78
AGAINST	954,222	46.22
Precincts Reporting	7,429	100

*Contact Tina Walker at [walkert@pbworld.com](mailto:walkert@pbworld.com) if you would like to recommend a guest speaker.*

*Survey*

*Tell us about yourself so that we might better serve your interests:*

**Gender:** Male Female

**Age:** <25 25-35 36-55 >55

**Years in Transportation:** <5 5-10 11-15 16-20 >20

**Highest degree attained:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sector:** Public Private Private/Non-Profit

**Mode:** Transit Aviation Freight Passenger Rail  
Highway/Auto Maritime/Port Non-Mortorized  
Multimodal Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Profession:** Engineer Planner Management  
Marketing/Sales Environmental Public Relations Law  
Finance/Economics Construction HR Academia  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Race/Ethnicity:** Caucasian African-American Hispanic  
Asian-American Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Does your employer reimburse your:**

**WTS membership dues?** Yes No

**WTS event fees?** (luncheons, conference) Yes No

*Questions?*

*For further information, please contact:*



*Advancing Women in Transportation*

1666 K Street NW, 11th Floor  
Washington, DC 20006

202.496.4340 • 202.496.4349 fax

wts@wtsnational.org

www.wtsnational.org

*Rates effective December, 2004.*



*Become an Individual Member*

*Membership in WTS is for twelve months beginning on the payment date. Applications are accepted all year round.*

Individual dues are based on one's income level. WTS membership dues are tiered in order to allow a larger level of diversity in our membership and to encourage a wider range of transportation professionals to join the organization, from entry level to senior and executive level, and from the public sector as well as the private sector.

To calculate your dues, follow the instructions on the "Membership Worksheet" on the back of this panel to determine your membership level (based on your annual salary) and dues rate.

*WTS Chapters*

Atlanta	Orange County (CA)
Baltimore	Philadelphia
Boston	Metropolitan Phoenix
Central Florida/Orlando	Middle Tennessee
Central Illinois	Portland
Central Pennsylvania	Puerto Rico
Greater Chicago	Puget Sound
Colorado	Sacramento
Columbus	San Diego County
Connecticut Valley	San Francisco
Greater Dallas/Fort Worth	South Florida
Heart of Texas/Austin	Metropolitan St. Louis
Houston	Strait of Georgia (BC, Canada)
Los Angeles Area	Tampa Bay
Michigan	Tucson
Minnesota	Washington, DC
Greater New York	Wisconsin
North Carolina	



*For more information, please call 202-496-4340 or visit [www.wtsnational.org](http://www.wtsnational.org).*

## Membership Worksheet

- Find your dues level based on your income/status.
- If you would like to be a member of more than one chapter, add an extra \$30 for each additional chapter affiliation.
- New Members** (or if you did not renew last year); add the \$10 New Member processing fee [C].

### 1 DETERMINE YOUR DUES LEVEL

Find your dues level based on either your annual salary [A] or membership type [B].

*NOTE: Except for the Member-At-Large level, all membership dues listed below include the dues for your primary chapter affiliation.*

#### A Regular Membership

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL	ANNUAL SALARY	MEMBERSHIP DUES
Level 1	\$0 to \$49,999	\$ 95
Level 2	\$50,000 to \$74,999	\$ 130
Level 3	\$75,000 to \$99,999	\$ 170
Level 4	\$100,000 and above	\$ 210

#### B Other Membership Types

Member-At-Large / International <i>(50 miles from nearest chapter)</i>	\$ 150
Retired	\$ 100
Full-time Student	\$ 210

Primary Chapter Affiliation (included in dues):  
*[Does not apply to Members-At-Large]*

Your Membership Dues Rate: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

List Additional Chapter Affiliation(s):

# of Additional Affiliations  x \$30: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### C Add \$10 if you are a new member or you did not renew last year: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Your Total Membership Dues: \$

### 2 ENTER THE INFORMATION ON THE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please enter your membership level and rate information on the attached application. You may detach this worksheet from the application before returning.

APPLICATION CONTINUES ON THE BACK OF THIS PAGE

PLEASE PRINT

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE/POSITION \_\_\_\_\_

EMPLOYER \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/ STATE/ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Directory Listing  
If different from above

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/ STATE/ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter Affiliation

PRIMARY CHAPTER *(Included in Dues)* \_\_\_\_\_

ADDITIONAL CHAPTER(S) *(See Worksheet)* \_\_\_\_\_

Dues, Fees and Donations

Membership Level or Type *(See Worksheet)* \_\_\_\_\_

Calculated Dues *(See Worksheet)* ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### OPTIONAL FEES & DONATIONS

Listing in W/M/DBE Firm Directory .....  Yes  
*(IF CHECKED, YOU WILL BE BILLED \$100 SEPARATELY)*

WTS National Scholarship donation\* ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

WTS Chapter Scholarship donation\* ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

CHAPTER: \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL DUE** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Payment

MC  VISA  AMEX  Discover  Check PAYABLE TO WTS

CREDIT CARD NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

CARD HOLDER SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. DATE \_\_\_\_\_



WTS offers secure online registration. Visit our web site at [www.wtsnational.org](http://www.wtsnational.org) and click on "Membership" or mail form with payment to: WTS National, P.O. Box 18993, Washington, DC 20036. You will receive confirmation within four weeks of receipt.

*\*Donations to WTS Scholarship, an independent charitable organization, are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.*

REMOVE AND RETURN APPLICATION : RETAIN WORKSHEET FOR YOUR RECORDS

