

HIGHWAY NEWS

For Texas Highway Department Employees - - Austin, Texas

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GOVERNOR Dolph Briscoe signs the House Concurrent Resolution commending the Travel and Information Division while State Highway Engineer Luther DeBerry and Travel Division Director Tom Taylor look on.

Legislature Praises THD's Travel Division

THE 63RD Legislature paid special tribute to the Texas Highway Department's 37-year effort to develop the state's rich tourist potential with a House Concurrent Resolution commending the Department's Travel and Information Division.

Governor Dolph Briscoe signed the official resolution sponsored by Representative Dave Allred of Wichita Falls and Senator Jack Hightower of Vernon at a ceremony Friday, April 13, attended by State Highway Engineer Luther DeBerry and Travel and Information Director Tom Taylor.

The resolution said the Highway Department pioneered the tourist industry

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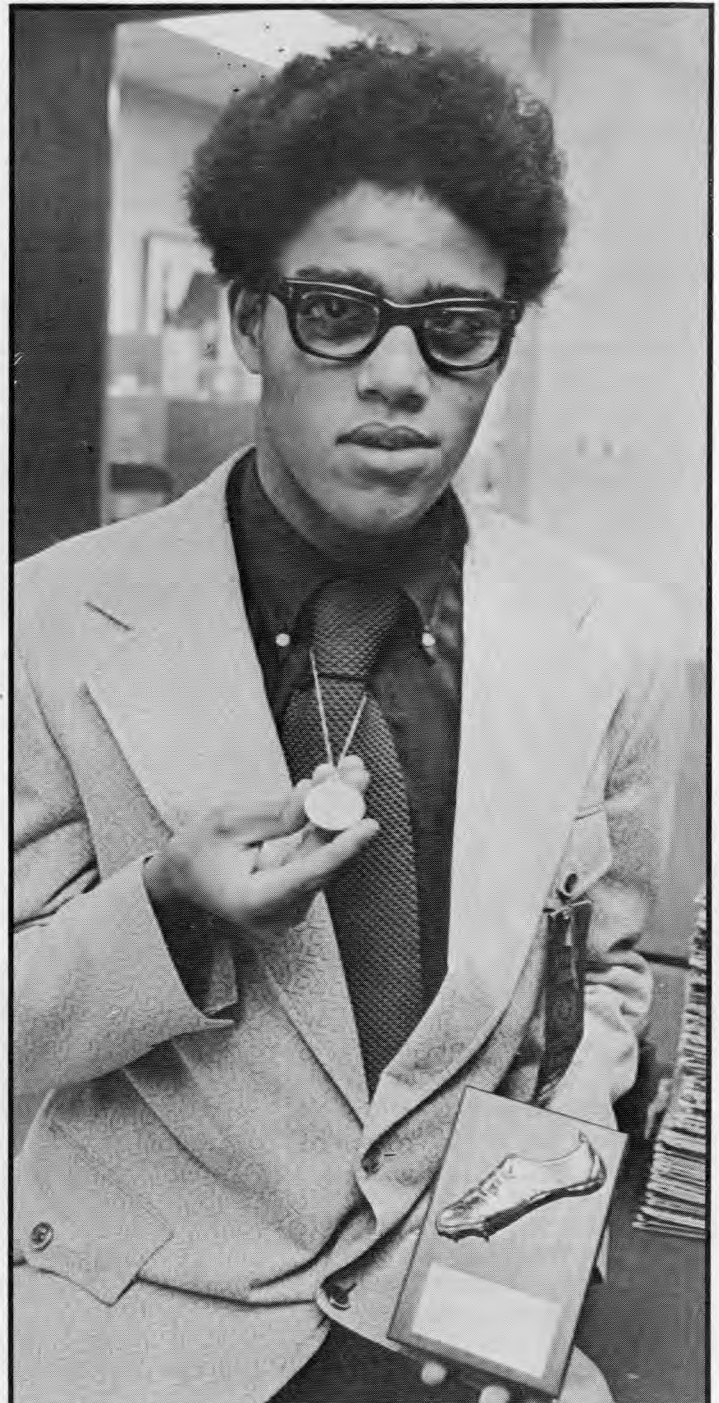
AS THE 1972-73 basketball season dribbled to a close, members of the Motor Vehicle basketball team, one of the four squads that formed the All Highway Department Basketball League, came out on top with a 10-4 season record. Team member Tony Reda, of D-12, said the league members were drawn from most divisions, but the teams were named Motor Vehicle, Finance, Planning and Survey, and District 14. A season consists of 14 games and Reda said he hopes to sign up enough players for seven teams next fall. The winning players are: (first row from left) Doug Beran, Tony Reda, Charles Allen, and Raymond Angelini. (back row) Ricki Roberts, Hal Richmond, Ronnie McKee, and Rodney Peschel. Mike Wright is not pictured. Anyone interested in joining next year's league can contact Reda at Ext. 224 or Monty Retallack at Ext. 4098. ■

MOTOR VEHICLE TOP TEAM

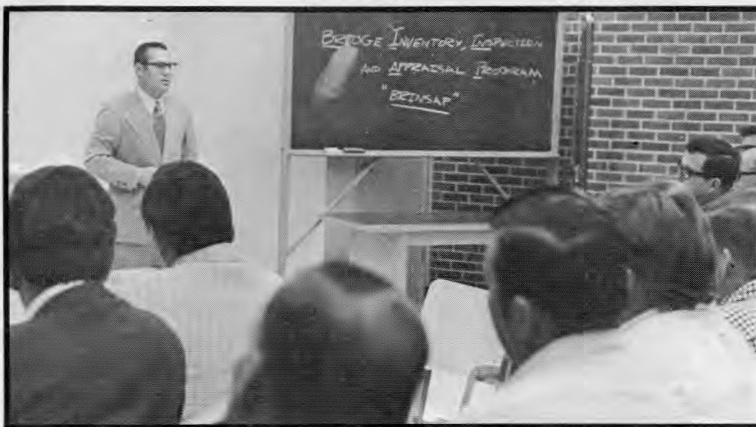


People in the News

A LONG RUNNING, but friendly, Aggie-Texas rivalry between D-14 Design Engineer Dink Looney and Lufkin District Design Engineer Lynn Hill has resulted in a revolutionary invention by Looney--the Aggie Special--a pistol with the barrel pointing backwards. "It all began last New Year's at the Cotton Bowl when Lynn gave me Texas and three points. Of course, he made a bad debt. So when he paid me back with a framed dollar and a poem, I had to come up with something. In order to never cheat an Aggie, I made the Aggie Special." Looney said the battle of wits has been "carrying on for quite a few years and Lynn has little mementoes from me all over his office. Like the time I made him a \$1 bet and he won. I got 100 shiny new pennies and had them put in a small block of concrete, painted it bright orange with a big white number one on the side and took it to him." Looney said he also has an "accumulation of \$1 bills I've won from him that are going toward my retirement fund." The secondary roads engineer says, "I've always believed in giving him his money's worth. He's eternally hollering about 'Wait until next year,' so I'm working on something right now." But after the "Aggie Special," what's left? ■



CHARLES LOTT, part-time employee in D-16 at Camp Hubbard, literally ran away with several medals recently which he won for running the mile and half-mile in a track meet at the State School for the Blind. Eighteen-year-old Charles, who has attended the school since 1966, became interested in track last year, but became a trophy winner this spring. He won a gold medal for running the half-mile in 2 minutes and 15 seconds and a plaque for participating in various track events. Charles, who also likes wrestling and swimming, said he started training in December and worked up to running eight miles a day within two and a half hours. As a runner who says he does it because he likes it, Charles said he plans to start training next September so he can get his half-mile running time down to 2 minutes flat. "I just love competition," he explains. ■



REPRESENTATIVES from each District met in Austin recently to attend the Second Biennial Bridge Inspection School. One of the instructor's, Ralph Banks, D-18 field engineer, said the primary intent of the course is to train the bridge inspectors to go into the field, to know what they're looking for, to understand what they see, and how to explain their findings to someone else. "This is important because we have already been able to find serious deterioration problems on bridges early enough that it doesn't cost us so much if we fix it now instead of later," Banks explained. With nearly 27,000 bridges in Texas, the inspectors have many bridges to cross. ■

WHEN LEROY MOORE, an administrative technician in Highway Design, resigned recently after 9 years with the Department, he had to "cut through red tape" to open his going away gifts. His co-workers had packed many yards of adding machine tape colored red around 10 boxes that were packed inside of each other. The last one held the "red dominoe award," which Leroy said is coveted by D-8 dominoe players. After he was presented his "real gifts," a tie clasp with a THD insignia and a pen and pencil set, his friends said they wanted him to be sure and have the "whole ball of wax." They handed him a grapefruit size ball of wax with a string tied to it. ■



ALTHOUGH APRIL 30 was Sam Roper's last day with the Highway Department after 37 years, his co-workers in D-18 stressed at his retirement party the "door is always open to you." The supervising traffic engineer was honored April 27 at a retirement coffee attended by not only D-18 employees, but Sam's wife, Mignon, his daughters Dayle Wilke and Bobbie Cameron, his son Mike, and his only granddaughter, Jessica Wilke. His sons-in-law Danny Wilke and Herb Cameron, were also present. The gift presentation included a copy of an official highway sign--State Maintenance Ends--followed by a framed sketch of the Neches River Bridge, one of Sam's early assignments. He was also given a reclining chair for his home. "I have enjoyed my association with all of you and I don't believe anyone could have found a better group of people to work with. I believe I'm the big gainer from our association rather than you folks," Roper told the group. ■

THE SAVINGS BONDS STORY--EMPLOYEES TELL IT BEST



AGNES INGRAHM

"... a good, systematic way to save"

WHAT'S THE best way to prepare for your children's education, retirement, a vacation, a new car, or a new baby?

It's as easy as buying U.S. Savings Bonds and right now is a good time to begin. That's because the 1973 Savings Bond Drive will be in full swing through June 6 in an effort to help state employees discover an easy, effective way to save money.

Governor Dolph Briscoe named State Highway Engineer Luther DeBerry as chairman and Department of Public Welfare Commissioner Raymond Vowell as co-chairman of the 1973 drive that hopes to sign up each of the more than 60,000 people employed by the state government.

DeBerry pointed out at the opening of the drive, the 1972 campaign results showed a "sizable increase" in bond purchases for Highway employees, but the total participation is still low with some 3,434 employees out of 18,000

purchasing bonds through payroll deductions.

Those 3,434 employees already buying bonds seem to be the best salesmen when it comes to giving good reasons for saving money through bonds.

An engineering technician in Bridge Division, Tom Judson, has been buying bonds for his four-year-old daughter's future since shortly after she was born.

"It's sort of a tradition in our families," he explains. "My parents and my wife's parents bought bonds for us ever since World War II, and then they gave them to us as a wedding present. The bonds made a good down payment on our home. So we decided to do the same thing for our daughter. It's really a convenient way to save."

Engineering Assistant David Wright, who works in an office next to Tom's, has \$225 deducted from his pay each month.

"It's a good thing from a tax standpoint, since I don't have to pay income tax on them until I cash them in. Besides, if the money is taken from my pay check before I see it, there's less chance I'll spend it. I think I could retire before I'm 50 and live on just the interest from these bonds."

Eleanor Prewitt, a computer programmer in Automation Division, is taking advantage of Internal Revenue Service's college education plan, to prepare for educating her two daughters who are now nine and seven.

"I get them in my children's names so they won't have to pay income tax when they cash them to go to college," she says. Eleanor said the parent is named beneficiary, not co-owner, and after one year she files a federal income tax return in her daughters' names, listing the increase in bond value as income to the child. This shows intent and no other returns need to be filed so long as the child's total income does not exceed the amount of his personal exemption.

Veteran employees Agnes Ingrahm and Bill Litton are going to use their bonds to supplement retirement income.



DAVID WRIGHT "... good thing from tax standpoint" **TOM JUDSON** "... It's sort of a tradition"



ELEANOR PREWITT

"... I get them in my childrens' names"



ANN GRADY "... I believe in my country, too, all the way"



BILL LITTON

"... you can't beat this savings program"

"I signed up in the fall of 1966 when we were getting a pay raise," Agnes says. She is a clerk typist in the correspondence section of Motor Vehicle who has been with the Department 32 years. "It's a good, systematic way to save, mainly because I don't get the money. A person is less likely to dip into bonds than he is cash. It's also a patriotic gesture. Bonds are as strong as your country."

Bill Litton, supervisor of the correspondence section, said nearly half of the employees in his section buy bonds. He began his savings plan when he turned 50 two years ago.

"I figured if I bought a \$100 bond a month for 15 years and 10 months, and

then covert them to H bonds when I retire, I will draw an average of \$104.44 per month for 10 years. Then I still have the value of the bonds. As far as security, you can't beat this savings bond program."

Ann Grady, an accounting clerk in Finance Division, is buying for three now.

"Three years ago, shortly after my granddaughter was born, I began buying bonds for her college education. Then last December my grandson was born so I took out a bond for him. And I also began buying one for myself at the same time. I believe in payroll deductions; it's the best way to save. I believe in my country, too, all the way." ■

Around the Buildings

AUTOMATION

Mary Eaton's grandson, Randall Tawater, born Feb. 27, underwent surgery and is reported recuperating well. Elsie McDaniel's husband was recently hospitalized, but is now back at work. Sandra Maderer was also hospitalized.

Sammye Bryant vacationed in Cloudcroft, New Mexico, and Richard Jamison went to Utah.

Charles Bradford's father-in-law passed away recently.

The 38th Street Tigers won their first two league softball games, a 19-3 victory over Larry Nix Garage and a narrow 13-11 victory over T. E. C.

BRIDGE

Vernon Harris' 10-year-old daughter, Holly, was second alternate in the Austin Little Miss Pageant.

Dutton Williamson vacationed a week in the valley.

Billy Hodon's 5-year-old daughter, Debra Kaye, had ear surgery and her tonsils and adenoids removed. Sam Fox was hospitalized with a leg infection.

Rhonda Duncan is a new employee. She is from Tulsa, Oklahoma.

EQUIPMENT AND PROCUREMENT

Leona Crawford is the new elevator operator, while former elevator operator Brenda Cleveland has transferred to Camp Hubbard.

LaVerne Steen has returned to work after the birth of her son, Eric Linn, born Feb. 25. He weighed seven pounds.

Fred Lee is back at work after suffering a heart attack.

Sherry Bisson and Dale Gentry were married March 24.

FINANCE

Joe Ware's son, Joe L. Ware, Jr., married Barbara Morrow April 13.

Ann Grady's daughter, Sheryl, married Pat Fowler on March 16.

George and Lana Adams are the proud parents of a daughter, Tiffany Michelle, born April 12.

Mildred Sternberg has been ill and was hospitalized. Jim Hodges' four-year-old daughter, Lisa, is recovering from recent eye surgery. Doug Fortune's wife,

Katherien, is also recovering from surgery.

Mike Borden transferred from D-3 to District 14 accounting office effective the first of April.

HIGHWAY DESIGN

Thad Bynum and his family vacationed in Big Bend. The Dave Hustace family also chose Big Bend for a vacation. Geraldine Biar visited friends in Oklahoma City.

John Nixon went to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, for a Highway Research Board committee meeting. Leo Mueller and Ray Banks attended an environmental seminar at Arrowhead State Lodge in Oklahoma.

R. S. "Bubba" Williamson married Jeanne May on April 20. Richard Morgan married Sharron Montgomery March 30.

Frank Frey is back at work following surgery.

New employees include Shirlene Erickson, Karen Pelzel, Marshall Eiserer, David Brown and Jason Pavlovic. Mary Thompson transferred from D-4 to D-8.

Resignations include Leroy Moore, Betty Schuetzeberg, and Wayne Belyeu.

MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS

Ed Smith is a first time grandpa. Tasha Juliette was born March 23 to Ed Smith, Jr.

The new-old face in Traffic Safety section is Andy Crenshaw.

Archie Sherrod vacationed--"a little work, a little fishing"--at his place at Rockport.

MATERIALS AND TESTS

Mickey Cochran is the proud father of a daughter born Feb. 17. Richard Hamilton also had a daughter who was born Feb. 28. Bob Crowe became a grandfather for the third time on April 6 when his grandson was born.

Jaci Alley married David Harrell Feb. 27.

Fred Hanna, Linda Hutchinson, and Diana Fitch resigned. Larry Kitchens is a new employee.

MOTOR VEHICLE

R. W. Townsley, division director, became a very proud grandfather when Sean

Robert LaBounty was born April 3. Mr. and Mrs. Townsley visited California to welcome the new arrival and their daughter and son-in-law.

Dorothy Penksa and John Doran were married April 14. Bill Myler and Anita Yount were married the same day.

Jewel Conless resigned April 9 to await the arrival of her baby. Linda Garcia resigned April 13 after five years with the Department.

PERSONNEL

Betty LeVally is a new employee. Candy Tompkins resigned.

Betty Bailey accompanied her husband, J. D., on a business trip to Long Island and New York City.

PLANNING SURVEY

Wayne Arnold became a grandfather when his daughter, Jan, and his son-in-law, Tom Pilgrim, presented him with a granddaughter, Carley Maurine, born March 30. Ronnie Creppon and his wife are the new parents of a daughter born March 28.

Dan Smith has resigned to move to Michigan and John Wilkinson is going to work for Ralph Harris Surveyors.

RIGHT OF WAY

Jim McJunkin vacationed in Alabama.

Debra Ellis resigned to await the arrival of her baby. Marjorie Hamby was recently hospitalized, but is now back at work.

Jim Noton's daughter, Elaine, has been accepted at Vanderbilt.

ROAD BOND BOARD

Jennell Gibson vacationed in Brownsville.

SECONDARY ROADS

W. P. "Buzzy" Byer's grandfather passed away April 15 and was buried in Baytown.

Cherry Collier vacationed in Kansas.

TRAVEL AND INFORMATION

Tommie Pinkard recently moved to the first floor D-16 office to devote full time to travel promotion. Les Baker moved to the 6th floor offices.

Jane Weaverling's husband, Norman, recently returned from a tour of duty in Thailand. Gloria Deitrick's husband, Richard, was home for a month from duty in Thailand, but has returned. He is in the Air Force.

Teena Machock and Chris Conklin were married March 31.

Squirrels Find A Friend

By Sally Jenkins



CLICK, CLICK, CLICK! Squirrels come from everywhere. Rustling through tree branches, skittering down trunks, swishing through grass toward a small, neatly dressed woman. With a large green flowered vinyl bag full of peanuts, milo maize and sunflower seed, and a small brown paper sack of shelled pecan halves tucked into an already too full black purse, she walks slowly across the State Capitol grounds feeding her pets.

Generations of squirrels have gathered at her familiar clicking call before eight and after five for 12 years. In 1961, the state employee (who prefers to remain nameless) was walking to work when two squirrels ran out to meet her, begging for food. "I couldn't resist them," she said, and has fed them ever since.

Each workday she spends 30 minutes a morning and an hour in the evening making her designated rounds with food for squirrels, grackles and bluejays. Deeply concerned with the animals' health, she gives squirrels shelled pecan halves treated with medicine to cure a fungus shared by all Austin squirrels.

As she wanders slowly through the

grass tossing nuts and grain, she turns faucets on so that a drip is barely detectable. It is "not enough to run up the water bill," but enough to give her charges a leisurely drink.

"I have always loved animals. I was raised on animal stories. But I didn't know much about squirrels until I started feeding them," she said. She knows some of the furry animals by sight.

There used to be some white squirrels. One lived on the lawn of the Governor's Mansion, but she hasn't seen any this year.

One gourmet squirrel would not eat anything but English walnuts. A particular female was "haughty" about eating treated pecan halves. One male with a crooked tooth has a lot of difficulty eating. "I give him a handful of shelled pecans. I don't see how he's going to make it, though," she said sadly.

"I used to bring them pieces of overripe peaches, pears and apples," she said. But the treat became too messy to be a regular part of the day's feeding.

"I still bring them old corn-on-the-cob occasionally," she said, smiling from be-

neath a pert navy felt hat. "They just love it."

Sometimes visitors or Capitol regulars ask her for nuts to feed the squirrels. "Children especially enjoy that," she said, her green-brown eyes sparkling.

"They seem to come out more when there is snow on the ground," she said. "They even come out when it is raining. If it is raining too hard, I just leave the food for them. I carry a raincoat and shoes, so I don't get wet."

Some of the grounds people and Capitol parking supervisors have particular squirrels they feed every day, and she is always willing to share her pecan supply. A few of the animals "crawl up on the men's knees to be fed," she said. "When I wasn't feeding so many, I had them eating everything out of my hand.

"Squirrels bury nuts for a rainy day," she said. "I'm glad to see them do that. I don't come here on weekends."

Although most people are fascinated by the small, furry beasts, many have been killed by a whizzing rock thrown by a small boy. One of the guards told her a few of Austin's poorer citizens used to kill them for food.

"I'm glad to see they aren't spraying any more," she said. "I noticed the old live oak over by the fish pond has acorns this year." She hopes people will leave the acorns on the ground for squirrels to pick up.

Leaving fallen pecans on the ground would also be a kind gesture. She hopes the grounds people will plant more nut-bearing trees and berry-producing shrubs providing more food for the more than 100 squirrels that live on the south lawn. Another hope of hers is that pecans might be harvested from state land and saved for the squirrels.

A few people bring her their old pecans or put them out themselves. She is grateful for any help with the project, for her hobby is getting "quite expensive" with nut and grain prices soaring.

But she feels that most people would not have the time to or would care to go to the expense of feeding so many every day. "I didn't intend to embark on such a big project," she said, laughing softly. ■

By the Way . . .

TOMMIE PINKARD in D-16 accused people of swiping her lunch one day last summer. On April 6 she moved her desk downstairs to the Travel Development Section and guess what she found in her typewriter well---the remains of a liverwurst sandwich and banana. She must have had a pretty bad sinus condition not to have smelled something during those months.

HERMAN HAENEL of Maintenance Operations found what it would be like if his wife ran things recently when she was "boss for a day." She was precinct judge at West Lake Hill's precinct box, where Herman was a clerk.

Two D-18 employees, **BOB DENMAN**

and **DON STEARNS**, became political opponents when each ran for city a councilman spot on the Sunset Valley council. Denman beat Stearns by a whisker--three votes--and in truly political fashion, they claimed to have voted for each other.

HERMAN KELLY, Travel and Information photojournalist, recently helped judge the Intercollegiate Photo Solon at A&M University for the seventh straight year. It is the same photographic competition that he and his wife, Emma, used to enter when they were at Sam Houston in the late '50's.

"I'd rather be the umpire opposite Leo Durocher than face a photographer whose picture came in second," says Herman. "This year an articulate cameraman from East Texas State told me he'd fire me if I worked for him. Funny thing, I remember saying something similar to a judge in that same room 15 years ago."



SURROUNDED by pert strutters from Southwest Texas State University, Bavarian costumed wurstmaids from New Braunfels, and saronged Aquamaids from Aquarena Springs in San Marcos, Commission Chairman Charles Simons presides at the opening ceremony of the Department's new InfoBords.

Infobords 'Mini Tourist Bureaus'

A NEW WAY to help tourists discover Texas was unveiled April 4 at a ceremony on IH 35 near New Braunfels when Highway Commission Chairman Charles E. Simons introduced InfoBords to Highway Department officials and tourist leaders from all over the state.

The opening of the new information display also attracted the attention of the state travel director from Indiana, Linda R. Jester, who flew to Texas for the ceremony.

Simons explained the InfoBords concept is important because "it deals with people who use the highways. Highways aren't for engineers, or contractors, or any other kind of special interest group--highways are for people."

Simons, who recalled he wrote about the first tourist bureaus in *TEXAS PARADE* magazine, called the InfoBords the "most significant development in highway travel information since the original highway tourist bureaus were established in 1936."

Since each InfoBord will be custom-designed for the area where it is displayed, State Highway Engineer Luther DeBerry dubbed them "mini tourist bureaus." He predicted the displays will help highway vacationers by filling the travel information gap left by billboards as they are taken down.

Travelers will be able to visit the

featured attractions shown on the InfoBords by driving only a few miles. The Department will receive suggestions about the contents of the boards from local authorities, directors of travel associations, and the Discover Texas Association. The composition, type, layout, and photographs to fill the 54 square feet of display space will be provided by the Department.

The boards will be black and white, unless the local people want color. Then, according to DeBerry, they can have it by paying the additional cost. Presently, the cost of color panels is \$1,250 which includes 10 duplicate panels. Four of them go to the Highway Department and

RESOLUTION

(Continued from page 1)

in Texas when it opened the first welcome stations in 1936 and has since initiated programs that have served as guides for other states.

The Legislature pointed out the international flavor of the Department's program that includes travel films in French, Spanish, and German, in addition to English, that have been shown to more than 62 million people throughout the world.

The Department's 11 tourist bureaus and visitor centers where trained counselors assisted over 1.5 million people last

six go to the local sponsoring authority. A local chamber of commerce, for instance, could display the extra panels in their office or on the town square.

The new displays climax years of study by the Department's Travel and Information Division to discover a display that would endure the sun and atmospheric conditions of the outdoor glass cases.

New Braunfels and San Marcos are the first localities to receive the new displays and they chose color. The new displays are a real breakthrough and no longer will visitors have to squint through brown water stains at faded images on paper that is peeling away from its mount.

Other states have run into these problems, that's why Miss Jester attended the opening of the new InfoBords.

Happy Shahan, president of the Discover Texas Association, told the group at the ceremony, "They copied our roadside parks and tourist bureaus from Maine to Mexico; both were original ideas of our Highway Department. And they're going to copy this," he said with a nod to Miss Jester, "but we're got a head start. Every state in the union is looking for a substitute for billboards and I think this is it. And I'm proud that it came from Texas."

Once the Interstate safety rest area program is completed, Texas will have 178 InfoBords throughout the state. Each will be different, containing information about its own specific locality, about its unique landscapes, tourist attractions, and the people who live and work nearby.

As DeBerry told the group that day, "The InfoBords will cater to today's passion for discovering America--the real down-home America." ■

year were also commended. In addition, the more than 300,000 mail inquiries from potential visitors to Texas that were handled by the Department last year, were answered with descriptive literature of which more than half was produced by the Department.

The resolution also cited the information displays at the major safety rest areas that provide additional information to the tourist. The legislators credited the Department with being largely responsible for attracting the 16.6 million out-of-state auto visitors to Texas in 1972, who contributed almost \$1.6 billion to the economy of the state. ■