

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Andrew Smigielski, PE, PTOE



As the summer heats up and another year of ITE Arizona draws to a close, I would like to thank all of our members for your support over the past several years as I finish my term as President of ITE Arizona. Many of our events and community projects would not have been possible without your involvement. Several of our members went out of their way to volunteer this past year.

Once again Seth Chalmers (Chalmers Engineering) and his team put together an excellent Spring Conference that did not see a drop in attendance due to the economic times. Christine Warren (CH2MHill) established our Active Member Group (AMG), which provided support and people power to the Future Cities Competition, Engineers Week, and Saint Mary's Food Bank. Christine and her group have already started planning for next year's schedule. With the help of the Southern Arizona Chapter and Jenny Grote, ITE Arizona was also able to reestablish ITE Student Chapters at both the University of Arizona and Arizona State University. Recent ACT research (<http://www.act.org/research/policy/index.html>), shows a decrease in students pursuing engineering degrees in the United States. While at first, this may seem like a good thing for salaries, in the long run, a continued shortage will inevitably hurt our industry. Programs such as Future Cities, Eweek, and Mathcounts expose young students to engineering.

The decline of students pursuing engineering is not the only trend that will be affecting Traffic Engineers in the future. A baby boom population, on the verge of retiring, have already affected the latest edition of the MUTCD. Lettering in signs needs to be bigger, specific colors cannot be seen clearly by older drivers, pedestrian crossing times are longer, and most difficult to deal with is the reaction times of older drivers. As study after study shows, as we become older, we become slower. While this may be a good thing for our bodies, when it comes to the task of driving, it is not a good thing. Most everyone has a story of almost being in an accident with an older driver not paying attention to traffic around them. I was surprised to see an article in Newsweek, reprinted in our newsletter, of an older driver recognizing the need to give up some of her freedom by parking her vehicle for good. Hopefully

other older drivers will follow her example. Regardless, transportation systems will need to be planned for this enormous amount of drivers who will be hanging up their licenses.

While the SUV craze seems to be waning somewhat with the popularity of smaller vehicles slowly coming back, the next trend in vehicles is slowly emerging – alternate fuel vehicles. The past year has seen innovations in propane, electric, hydrogen, water, and even compressed air vehicles. This new generation of vehicles will become more and more prevalent in the future, not only due to various state laws that require them and citizen concerns for the environment, but also the possibility of diminishing fossil fuels. Will these new vehicles be comparable to the ones currently on the road? Will they be faster? Slower? What kind of braking distances will there be? In any case, there will be impacts on how we design.

Yes there are Traffic Engineers out there who are involved in working with these trends. Nevertheless, as each year has gone by, and the number of legitimate practicing Traffic Engineers declines, another trend has emerged. City Councils, Mayors, Governors, and people with business degrees are controlling transportation and Traffic Engineering policies and planning, without any experience in what we do best. So is the sky falling? No. However, our profession has an excellent opportunity to make a positive impact on our future communities. With more opportunities than ever to be involved with, I encourage each of you to volunteer for at least one of our events in the future. Moreover, why not become involved with local planning or policy-making organizations including all government levels. I also challenge ITE International to move beyond a major focus on technical papers/training/registration (without eliminating these important contributions that ITE International provides its members) and become more than just a many times under used resource to communities, but an active participant in transportation events, planning, and policy making in the United States and throughout its reach in other countries.

As we head into our summer break, I would like to thank one more person – Joe Spadafino (Kirkham Michael and Associates). Over the past several years Joe has *(continued on page 2)*

President's Message (continued from page 1)

made this newsletter possible. His willingness to take some time from his busy professional, Deacon, and family life each month was always appreciated. Thank you Joe!

Our next meeting will be on Thursday September 25, 2003. We do not have the location yet, but your new Arizona ITE officers will be

- President – Sarah Joshua
- Vice President – Scott Nelson
- Secretary – Mark Poppe
- Treasurer – Kim Carroll

The Arizona ITE Board wishes everyone a safe and hopefully cooler summer. We hope to see you in September.

THE ACTIVE MEMBER GROUP
Providing a Forum for ITE Members
to be More Involved.

Last September the Active Member Group (AMG) of AZ ITE had their inaugural meeting with the full support of the AzITE Board. At the creation of the AMG, our goals were to get ITE members more actively involved in networking and with their community, and also to become more knowledgeable about our profession. The AMG has been meeting once a month separately from the ITE monthly luncheon to plan and coordinate events. Our events over the past year included:

- St. Mary's Food Bank with ASCE YMF
- ITE Future Cities Judging Team
- ITE Future Cities Golf Tournament (Benefiting the Phoenix Future Cities Competition)
- Coordinating the donation of items for the Chrysalis Shelter at our holiday social
- Spring Training Baseball Game
- American's with Disabilities Act Luncheon Topic (where a new ADA committee was formed as part of AZ ITE)
- Technical Tour of the Coyotes Arena

At our June 9th meeting, we reviewed the activities from the past year and planned additional activities for the upcoming year. The AMG plans to build on the success of the past year by adding a few more events to our schedule:

- To create, organize and host a booth at E-week
- Support the ASU/U of A student chapters
- Create a network of voluntary safety speakers to go to local elementary schools to talk about traffic safety
- Hold a contest for the creation of the AZ section logo
- Fundraiser - sell Polo shirts with embroidered AZ section logo

We are in need of volunteers to help with the events listed above. Please contact Christine Warren at cwarren@ch2m.com if you are interested or just come to our next meeting at Rosie McCaffrey's on Monday, September 8th at 5:30 PM. Rosie McCaffrey's is located at 906 East Camelback Road, Phoenix. For additional information, contact Christine Warren at cwarren@ch2m.com.

AND THE WINNER IS...NO ONE YET!



In the last issue of *ITE Arizona News*, readers were asked to identify this sign, which was spotted in northern Arizona. No one has responded with the correct answer yet.

The first person who identifies where this sign is, wins an ITE tote bag. Contact Andrew at smigielskiar@c-b.com with your answer.

ITE ANNUAL MEETING—AUGUST 24-27, 2003

The ITE 2003 Annual Meeting and Exhibit will be held in conjunction with the ITE District 6 Annual Meeting on August 24-27 Washington State Convention & Trade Center Seattle, WashingtonA. The deadline to get registration discounts is July 24, 2003. For details, including schedules and session topics visit the meeting website at <http://www.ite.org/AnnualMeeting>.

DOT-COM BUST REDUCES TRAFFIC

The results of a study, as reported by Gary Richards in the Monday July 7, 2003 issue of the San Jose *Mercury News* shows that the dot-com bust has freed up freeways. For details, see the entire article at <http://www.bayarea.com/mld/mercurynews/news/6248774.htm>.

ITE ELECTION UPDATE

Ballots have been mailed for ITE International and District 6 officer positions. If you did not receive any, please contact ITE International and don't forget to vote.

U of A LOOKING FOR RESEARCHER

The following e-mail was sent by Simon Washington of the University of Arizona.

The web site link below announces a research position I need to fill here at the University. If any of you know a capable person with strong analytical skills, interest in transportation safety, and who is seeking employment please direction them to the following web site: <http://www.hr.arizona.edu/26284-srxx.htm>.

CAPTION THIS PICTURE CONTEST

Have you a humorous caption to accompany the picture below?

Outgoing president Andrew Smigielski came up with "Hopefully not to be seen too soon again"

Your humble editor came up with "I bet this'll keep the snow-bird population down next winter..."

What do you think?

E-mail your caption to the editor, Joe Spadafino, at jspadafino@kmpfhx.com.



OLDER DRIVER CONFRONTS LOSS OF SKILLS

The following is a "My Turn" column that appeared in the July 7, 2003 issue of Newsweek magazine and posted on the MSNBC website, <http://www.msnbc.com/news/934701.asp?cp1=1>.

My Turn: Those Hand Gestures Didn't Mean 'Hello'

It took me far too long to admit I was a danger on the road.
How many more like me are still driving?

By Ruth G. Nedbor, Floral Park, N.Y.

NEWSWEEK, July 7 issue — If cars are inspected periodically to be proved roadworthy, why aren't drivers? About two months ago I watched my car wag its bumper at me as it was dragged away by a tow truck, and I knew I was waving goodbye to my last car. The time had come to give up driving.

AT 88, AFTER MORE than half a century with a perfect record—well, one illegal U-turn in 1968 and three parking tickets—I finally accepted the fact that I had become a menace on the road. Macular degeneration, or blurred vision, had snuck up on me, and although I had started carrying a magnifying glass in my purse for reading menus, when it came to getting behind the wheel I refused to recognize that I didn't see very well anymore. For some time, I had been using my brain more than my eyes for driving. Mostly, I traveled along with the traffic. Whenever I was uncertain about the light and slowed down, the driver behind me always let me know with his horn when it was time to move on. If I got into any sort of confused situation, I simply put on my distress signal and everyone around glared at me and gave me wide berth.

By concentrating hard on the road, I felt I had the driving situation well in hand. I ignored the fact that I had, with increasing frequency, been getting unpleasant signals from fellow drivers. I just decided people were not as nice as they used to be. However, one man actually followed me into a parking lot, got out and proceeded to tell me in a rich string of fiery expletives exactly what he thought of me and my driving. When I realized how right he was, all I could say was thank you. Confused, he drove off in a hurry, leaving me feeling considerably less self-assured.

On the way home, I stopped to pick up a package and had to show my driver's license for identification. The clerk there pointed out that it had expired several months back. A new one, I knew, meant a new eye test, and the possibility that maybe I couldn't pass it. That's when I had a panic attack, something entirely new to me and something I couldn't pretend away. I didn't belong on the road. Before I could look for an excuse to buy myself a little more time, I got out the newspaper. I had heard the automobile section is full of ads by charitable organizations who will gladly give you a receipt for a tax deduction if you donate your car. For a brief moment I wavered, but then I made the call.

I got my first set of wheels, a beat-up old convertible with a rumble seat, when I was 18. What a sense of freedom it brought. That car, and all my ensuing ones, left me with very vivid memories—of taking my daughter to her wedding, of racing my nephew to the hospital after he fell out of a tree. And now, as I watched my car dancing along behind the tow truck, I knew part of me was leaving forever. As the taillight disappeared, I found myself whispering, "Goodbye, sweet freedom." It hurt to see it go.

Everyone tells me how much cheaper it is to take taxis. No more insurance to pay. Farewell to repairs, gas, oil, depreciation, everything. But the day before I gave up my car, I saw the dentist in the morning, went to Sears to exchange a heavy lamp that I'd stowed in the trunk, headed to the hairdresser for a haircut, stopped off for lunch, then continued on to Loehmann's, where there was a sale on blouses, and Pathmark for groceries, and finally home. How do you do all that in a taxi? There is other transportation available and people do manage, so I expect I will, too. But I'll miss many concerts, lectures, movies and visits to friends when I can't find someone who is going my way.

Recently, in the waiting room of the eye doctor's office, I compared notes with a large, bearded, fiftyish man who was healthy and hearty-looking. He had macular degeneration, too, worse than mine, and made his living driving a large truck from New York to Chicago. I asked him how he managed. With an easy shrug, he said, "I know the way."

It's not funny, or cute, that I stayed on the road as long as I did. Nor did I beat some system. I'm just an older person who should have known better. Luck was with me and I got away with it. What if I had had an accident, hurt someone or worse? There is no way I could have found any peace or joy in living the rest of my life after that. If I had been required to have a physical whenever my car was inspected, maybe I would have been forced to stop sooner. But there is no such requirement, and it's hard to admit the obvious about yourself when you don't want to. Meanwhile, I had gambled with my life and the lives of those around me.

I wonder how many of me there are out there on the road?

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WTS TRAINING PROGRAM—July 24, 2003 Community Outreach In Public Transportation Projects - Why is it important?

You are invited to participate in a special training program sponsored by Women's Transportation Seminar in Partnership with the Arizona Department of Transportation. The program was developed especially for public- and private-sector planners, engineers, construction resident engineers, community relations and public involvement professionals that work on transportation planning and construction projects in Arizona.

The program will be held on Thursday, July 24, 2003 at the Encanto Park Clubhouse @ 2605 N. 15th Ave. in Phoenix (between Thomas & Encanto). It runs from 7:30 AM to 10:00 AM and the cost of \$25.00 per person includes continental breakfast. The deadline to register is noon on Monday, July 21st and you may pay at the door. No shows will be billed. To register, call WTS Program Organizer Sue Lewin at 602-744-5547 or e-mail her at slewin@valleymetro.org.

Please see attached flyer for further details.

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MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

SEPTEMBER MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

The Monthly Meeting of the Arizona Section of ITE will be held on
Thursday, September 25, 2003 at 11:55 A.M.

at

a location To Be Announced

Cost: TBA

(Menu: TBA)

Speakers: TBA

Topic: TBA



RSVP by noon, Monday, September 22 to Sue Lewin,
Phone: 602-744-5547

E-mail to: slewin@valleymetro.org



C/O Dan Hartig
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This newsletter is a bi-monthly publication of the Arizona Section of ITE. Send, e-mail or fax your articles to Joe Spadafino @ Kirkham Michael. (fax: 602.944.6592, jspadafino@kmpfx.com)



COMMUNITY OUTREACH IN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS – WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

You are invited to participate in a special training program sponsored by Women's Transportation Seminar in Partnership with the Arizona Department of Transportation. The program was developed especially for public- and private-sector planners, engineers, construction resident engineers, community relations and public involvement professionals that work on transportation planning and construction projects in Arizona. Topics include:

- **How Can a Partnering Philosophy Migrate to Internal & External Customers & Stakeholders so All are Part of the Team?** – Ginger Murdough, Executive Partnering Administrator, ADOT Partnering Office, will give an overview of partnering and how that philosophy migrates into the internal customer and external customer and stakeholders, to get everyone working as a team.
- **Tribal Involvement in Statewide Transportation Planning & Programming** – Don Sneed, Senior Planner/Tribal Coordinator, ADOT Transportation Planning Division, will provide an overview of the Tribal government consultation process and Tribal community public involvement methods used in the development of the SR 264 Corridor Profile Study. He will also discuss the establishment and accomplishments of the ADOT Tribal Strategic Partnering Team, including implementation of a series of State-Tribal Regional Transportation Forums currently underway.
- **Public Involvement & the NEPA Process for Transportation Projects** – Tammy Flaitz, Program Manager with ADOT's Environmental & Enhancement Group (EEG), will talk about how EEG has integrated Community outreach into the environmental and development process and provide examples of how ADOT has handled neighborhood issues and concerns. She will also discuss some of the specific regulations that must be addressed.
- **Getting the message out: ADOT's Public & Media Outreach Efforts** – ADOT Community Relations Manager Doug Nintzel will discuss the role of ADOT's Community Relations Office in media relations and community outreach throughout the State.

When: Thursday, July 24, 2003; Registration from 7:30 AM to 7:45 AM;
Program starts at 7:30 AM and runs until 10:00 AM.

Where: Encanto Park Clubhouse @ 2605 N. 15th Ave. in Phoenix (Between Thomas & Encanto)

Cost: \$25.00 per person – includes Continental Breakfast (You may pay at the door. Please make checks payable to WTS. No shows will be billed.)

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