



Crash on I-95 Southbound involving an RV pulling a truck that caused a multi-hour closure- Luckily No serious injuries. Inset, the back-up that ensued.



## Notes from the District 2 ITS Engineer

The beginning of 2011 has been an interesting and rewarding experience for the District Two ITS program and its TIM members. We kicked it off with a successful test on the Beta version of the Road Ranger Smart Phone application. We then had the chance to go deeper into discovery of Road Weather Information system devices that will be used on many of the northeast Florida bridges. As for the State Road 21 project, it is nearly complete and locals in the area are “chomping at the bit” to access the camera images as well as receiving traffic information on the arterial dynamic message signs. However, nothing could top the experience had by many of our members at the Transpo 2010 conference in mid-December.

Transpo 2010 attracted several hundred ITS and Traffic Signal professionals from throughout the southeast region of our nation. It was held at the TPC in Ponte Vedra, so as the “local host” I had countless inquiries on where the best places to eat were located. After a few seconds they realized I was a workaholic and had no clue on where to send them so they went to plan B by asking the Concierge. It was lucky for them because I would have directed them to the Burger King up the road.

This event provided an opportunity for our colleagues in ITS, Traffic Signals, Planning and Incident Management to share lessons learned

over the past two years. The bi-annual format of this conference creates a tremendous benefit since technology changes so rapidly in a short period of time. It’s sort of like the exponential aging of a dog in that one year actually equals seven in our industry. In this conference I left with two or three new concepts for projects that would aid motorists during major traffic delays while improving the performance of roadway equipment.

For me, the most beneficial point in the conference was the session led by our North Florida TIM members. We shared our experiences as veteran members of the team, addressing how our communication systems worked, how we share incident information, how we handle events and how we reach common ground on a number of decisions. We also talked about the tremendous monetary support received from the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization over the past several years and how it has taken us to the next level of performance. Proof positive is the TIMe4Safety Video and the new Road Weather Information System project currently in design.

There was one final portion at this conference that can never be matched by the Internet, brochures or webinars. At this event the ITS industry vendors set-up shop in the Expo hall to display their newest wares for attendees. I had

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### Notes from the D2 ITS Engineer continued

the chance to check-out the latest video wall controllers, network switches and H.264 CCTV cameras. All of these devices were designed with transportation management in mind while incorporating cost control measures to drive down the price. For instance, I recall paying \$6,000 for one CCTV camera in 2006 but now the price is a little more than \$3,000. This is all because the industry took heed to our demands thereby making their products more durable, less expensive and easier to acquire.

Well, enough about Transpo. I must now share some bad news with all of you regarding a key member of our North Florida TIM team. Mr. Kenton Brown of the Florida DEP announced his retirement during an Environmental Agency training session in mid-January. It will be a huge loss for our team since he was such an avid supporter of incident management and the **Open Roads** policy. Kenton “got it” when we stressed the importance of getting lanes opened quickly after an incident, thus keeping traffic moving and helping to avoid those terrifying secondary crashes. I know on several occasions Kenton bent over backward to help the Department, FHP and local agencies address incidents that involved hazardous materials, even going so far as to take the lead in directing participants at the event.

My first recollection of Kenton was over 15 years ago when I was a “wet behind the ears” Engineer

for the Department. If anyone knows Kenton you can attest to the fact that he is one imposing figure to stand next to on any occasion! Now, place my diminutive height next to him and “you know what I’m talkin’ about”. I recall at one TIM meeting around 1994 where Kenton was fired up about how the Department could have done better in handling an incident that involved environmental damage. As he spoke, Kenton got louder. As he got louder my chair inched a little further away. By the time he finished ranting I found myself a step out the door ready to run for my dear life if this Jolly Green Giant went haywire on all of us.

Luckily, my colleague, Alex Slaughter, pulled me aside and explained how harmless Kenton really was and how he just wanted to get a point across. Over the years I learned how true this was of Kenton and how committed he was to the overall goal of the North Florida TIM team. I always tell my staff that any of us are replaceable but I must now retract that statement when it comes to Mr. Kenton Brown. Personally, I will truly miss his vigor, dedication and concern for the safety of the traveling public and Florida’s environment. He is a “one and only” in my eyes who always brought that extra “oomph” to our team.

Pete Vega  
District 2 ITS Engineer

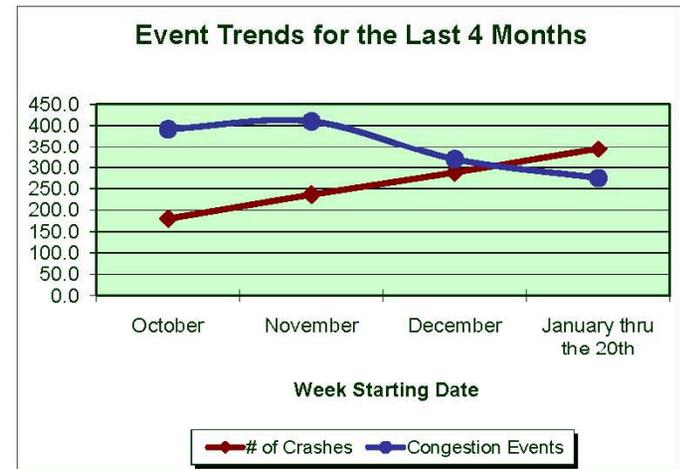
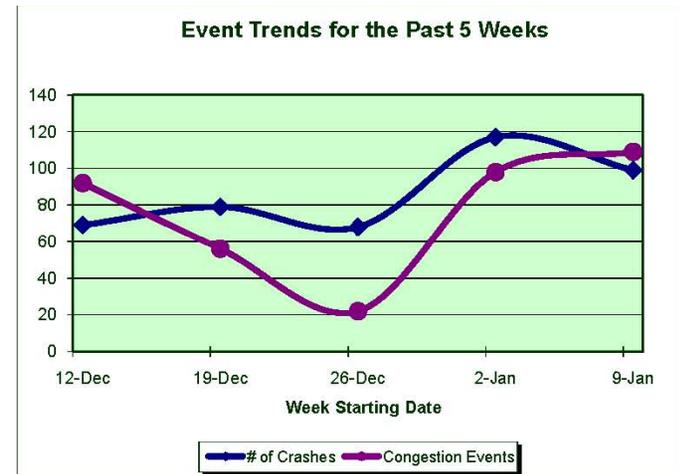
### Performance Measures

With shopping to do and family to see, the roads were full of cars these last couple of months. Not only congestion, but crashes were up too with an average of more than 70 per week in December, whereas the annual average is only 50 crashes per week. For January though, we've seen more crashes in the first 3 weeks than we normally see in an entire month. The average is over 110 crashes per week. The charts show the trends over the last 5 weeks and 4 months. Notice that there is a constant upward trend each month from October to January. The total number of events has not varied much over the last few months, so the increase could not be due to an increase in detection of events. Perhaps it is simply the increase in travel over the holidays combined with reactivation of work and school traffic.

Regarding the Performance Measures audits, these continue for both District 2 and District 3. Integration of FHP's Computer Aided Dispatch data is the trouble spot this month. Once this is smoothed out the overall system will be more robust and accurate. Performance Measures are now being incorporated into the Traffic Incident Management team meetings. The charts and data in the Performance Measures are a valuable asset to identifying causes of lengthy Open Roads durations or incident clearance times, and that's exactly why we're using them. The focus now is on how to decrease Open Roads durations and speed up incident clearance, without sacrificing safety of

course. Event chronology, average response times and average clearance times create the perfect combination of information to achieve this goal.

Jill Dawson  
Metric Engineering



## Construction

The Construction Contract for the Phase VII Project has been awarded to Southeast Underground Utilities and the Notice To Proceed has been issued. Construction is set to begin the middle of March. This project will install 96-fiber cable, CCTV cameras, Dynamic Message Signs (DMS), Vehicle Detectors and Roadside Weather Information Sensors along SR 9A from Atlantic Blvd North to I-95. The Project also includes two Arterial Dynamic Message Signs and two CCTV cameras on Heckscher Drive approaching SR 9A in each direction. This project is the first to instrument any portion of SR 9A with ITS devices. Anyone traveling the area knows that the Port traffic and ever-increasing daily commuters on SR 9A accounts for back-ups in many parts of the corridor. With these ITS devices in place, the TMC will be able to notify motorists in that region when incidents or congestion create significant delays along within this area.

The I-295 Phase VIII Project has submitted 100% plans and should be advertised for construction in the next few months. This project is installing 96-fiber cable, CCTV cameras, Dynamic Message Signs (DMS), Vehicle Detectors and Roadside Weather Information Sensors along I-295 from I-10 North to I-95. This project is important to the TMC because it will complete the fiber communications ring on I-295 around the western side of Jacksonville. This

means that if the fiber line is cut in another part of the City, it may be possible to use this completed ring to make sure that communications to all of the devices, in the area of the cut, do not lose communications. This project is important to this area of Jacksonville due to the large number of Logistic companies along the corridor and the proximity to Jacksonville International Airport. Anytime there is a lot of traffic, ITS is a great way to ease congestion by alerting motorists of conditions in advance of the problem area and allowing them to find alternate routes around the problem.

The Phase IX Project Designer has submitted 60% plans and is currently awaiting FDOT Review Comments. The project will install 96-fiber cable, CCTV cameras, Dynamic Message Signs (DMS), Vehicle Detectors and Roadside Weather Information Sensors on SR 9A from Atlantic Blvd south to the I-95/SR 9A Interchange. This project will complete the ITS fiber communications ring on I-295 and SR 9A around the City of Jacksonville and is also in the area of Jacksonville that is expected to have the largest growth over the next few decades. The project will also include Arterial Dynamic Message Signs (ADMS) on the major arterial roadways throughout the corridor to help relieve congestion caused by some of the larger businesses and retail areas on the East Side of Jacksonville and in Jacksonville Beach.

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**Construction continued**

Several projects are ongoing with Duval and Clay Counties. The SR 21 / Blanding Blvd Project, with project limits from Collins Road in Duval County to Old Jennings Road in Clay County, is at the burn-in phase of final testing. The Arterial Dynamic Message Signs (ADMS) and CCTV cameras are all operational and can be viewed and controlled by Clay County, Duval County and FDOT District Two TMC. This project not only installed ITS devices, but also installed new traffic controllers and software that allow real-time information and signal control to each of the County Operations Centers. Because each county has the same type of controller and software and are connected by the D2 ITS Network, each county can view the other county's cameras to assist each other with Traffic Management, making your travels a little easier.

The US 17 Project, with project limits from Collins Road in Duval County to Creighton Road in Clay County, has started construction and has installed 3 of 4 drilled shaft foundations for the ADMS on the project. This work is similar to the SR 21 Project, as all devices will be able to be controlled by both Clay and Duval Counties as well as the Department's TMC. The US 17 devices will also be able to be viewed and controlled by the Town of Orange Park at their Police Dispatch Center, thereby creating a symbiotic relationship between several agencies in Clay County.

John Kell  
 District 2 ITS Construction Project Manager

**Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Update**

**FIRST COAST TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE:**

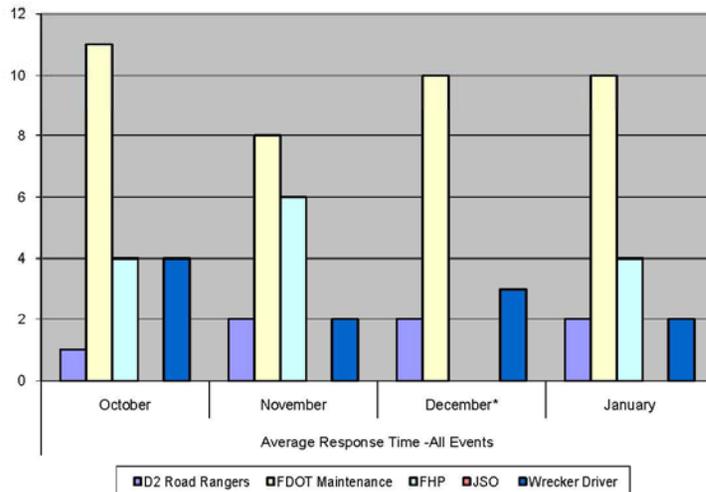
The First Coast Traffic Incident Management Team held its meeting on Tuesday, January 18<sup>th</sup> at the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization Office at 10:00 AM.

The following agencies were represented: Metric Engineering, FDOT Emergency Operations, SmartRoute Systems, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, JFRD/EPD, JTA, COJ Environmental, FHP, FDOT PIO, FDOT ITS, DBI, Road Ranger Service Patrol, and JSC.

In keeping with our Team Mission to reduce incident scene clearance times, the Team actively monitored the incidents by reviewing incident reports compiled by Ed Ward and our TMC's SunGuide software. (see chart on following page)

A review of the annual performance measures data for 2010 revealed travel lanes were cleared faster as the year progressed proving our Local Open Roads Policy is in force. Our Team will continue to monitor the incidents in our area to achieve our goals.

**Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Update cont.**



**ALACHUA TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE**

Our next Alachua Traffic Management Team meeting will be on February 9, 2011. This meeting will be held at the Florida Department of Transportation’s Gainesville Operations Conference room at 10:00 AM.

*District 2 TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM MISSION:*

*The Florida Department of Transportation District Two’s Traffic Incident Management Teams through partnering efforts strive to continuously reduce incident scene clearance times to deter*

*Congestion and improve safety. The Teams’ objective is to exceed the Open Roads Policy thus ensuring mobility, economic prosperity, and quality of life.*

*District 2 TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM VISION:*

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

**RISC – RAPID INCIDENT SCENE CLEARANCE – UPDATE**

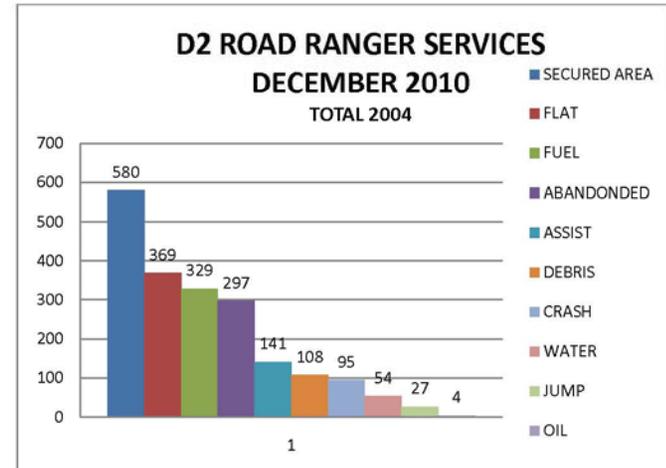
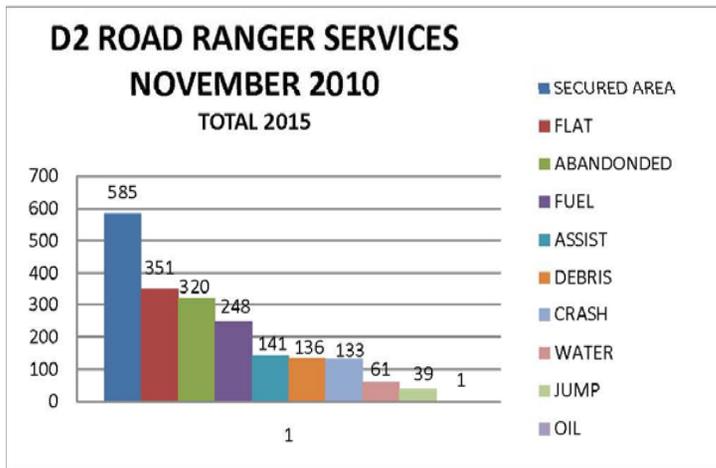
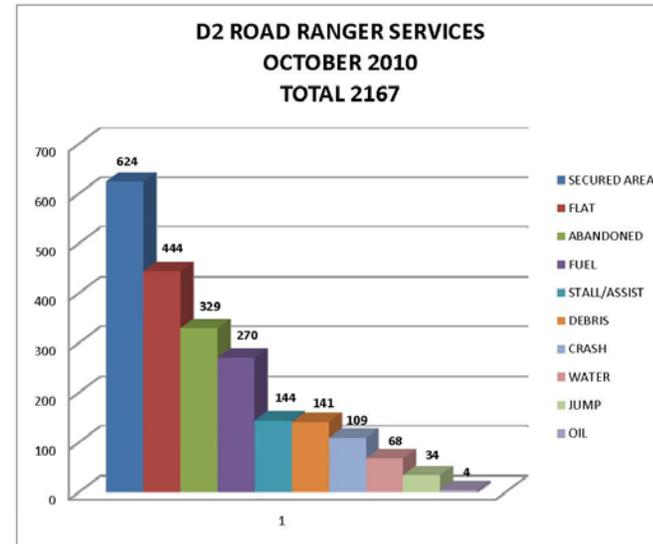
Our RISC Contractors, - Southern Wrecker and Recovery, LLC., Walt’s Wrecker Service, John’s Towing Auto and Truck Services, Inc., and University Towing and Transport, Inc. - are ready to be activated if the need arises. We have had no incidents requiring the Rapid Incident Scene Clearance Contractors since September 27<sup>th</sup>.

Donna R. Danson  
FDOT District 2  
ITS Operations  
Program Manager

## Road Ranger Update

In preparation for the extra traffic during the Thanksgiving holidays, our Road Ranger Service Patrol extended the hours of patrolling our interstates. Not only did they patrol until 9:30 PM on Wednesday before Thanksgiving, they worked from 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM on the Sunday after Thanksgiving.

During the month of November, 2015 services were rendered. December was a busy month, also, as the Road Rangers assisted 2004 motorists.



## North Florida TPO Update

This will be more of an update on existing projects and the status of newer ones. I will begin with the State Road 21 project that is nearing completion. It is in the final days of burn-in with some minor issues left to address in a supplemental agreement. One key step in this project is to connect Clay County Sheriff's office to the system so that they can assist the Clay Public Works Department with monitoring the cameras and putting up messages. We hope to put this issue to rest in the next 30 days.

The State Road 15 project is well under way with three of the four drill shafts for the dynamic message signs completed. Pretty soon the structures and signs will be in place, the CCTV cameras will be mounted and all that will remain is the communication network. After this it's just a matter of setting up the network so that all Clay and Duval County agencies have access to this information.

In early January the procurement process began to acquire equipment for the Road Weather Information System (RWIS) project and BlueTooth technology deployment. There are a very limited number of vendors for each of these projects so it's just a matter of getting the Scope right to get cost effective pricing. The RWIS projects involve proven devices that can be installed in a matter of about a half day each. The biggest challenge will be setting up the

communication to the NOAA satellites above the Gulf. Fortunately we are bringing in experts to handle that part because my talents with this type of technology only go as far as aiming those rabbit ears on the television.

The BlueTooth project should also move pretty quickly. We have narrowed down the deployment to approximately 150 locations throughout Northeast Florida. Each installation should take less than ½ hour per location so I anticipate this project taking less than one calendar month to complete. The largest amount of work will be setting up the data tables and communication systems for use by the local municipalities, law enforcement, planning agencies and Department.

There are several purchase and install projects still on the books that are making headway as we speak. We have a couple of work orders to tie-in communication infrastructure that are the key to utilizing the field equipment properly. Our goal is to complete all of this work by mid-Summer at the latest. With limited manpower and growing demand for their services I can't pitch a fit with the local agencies on the progress they've made so far. This is a team effort that involves contributions from everyone, thereby allowing us to control costs while delivering a quality product.

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## North Florida TPO Update continued

There are a few major NFTPO projects scheduled for fiscal year 2011/2012 that should begin in October involving network communication, arterial dynamic message signs and CCTV cameras. These will be handled via small construction projects that should be completed before the 2012 Hurricane season. Overall, the North Florida TPO has been keeping us busy as we try to tie-up all the loose ends to our regional network

Pete Vega  
District 2 ITS Engineer

### Marketing

The 511 Marketing Team closed out 2010 on a positive note, having made visits to the I-75 Florida Welcome Center and the Jacksonville Convention and Visitors Bureau. We look forward to continuing these relationships in 2011 while adding some new friends along the way.

On New Year's Eve Day we teamed up with an old friend, the First Coast Road Rangers, to participate in the 2010 Gator Bowl Parade in downtown Jacksonville. We had a great spot in the parade lineup, right next to the Budweiser

Wagon and their beautiful team of Clydesdales. Nearly 30,000 fans lined the streets to show their support for their favorite football teams and the 50 plus parade participants who were hand-selected to be a part of this year's festivities. We felt very fortunate to be invited back as the Gator Bowl Association made the decision a few months earlier to limit the number of parade participants. The First Coast Road Rangers and 511 are definitely making an impression on Jacksonville residents and have already become fixtures in the local community.

But December has come and gone, and with that, we're setting our sights on the new calendar year. The 511 Team will be making appearances at local festivals, sporting events and various community outreaches throughout the year. In fact, next month we'll be attending the 26.2 with Donna Marathon Expo and the Jacksonville International Car and Truck Show at the Prime Osborn Convention Center. For more information or to purchase tickets to the Car and Truck Show visit [www.JaxAutoShow.com](http://www.JaxAutoShow.com). And as always, for up-to-the-minute traffic updates call 511 or visit [www.FL511.com](http://www.FL511.com).

Sherri Byrd  
511 Marketing Manager

## Maintenance

The ITS Maintenance Contractor, Traffic Control Devices (TCD) has continued monitoring the ITS devices daily and fixing devices as they fail. TCD also installed a CCTV at the US 17 interstate on-ramp just south of I-10. The installation of this CCTV will allow TMC Operators to see the area around the I-10 off-ramp to US 17, which has seen quite a few incidents in the past few months. Since the TMC Operators will have a better view of the incidents, this should speed up response times of the first responders to the scene and mean less traffic congestion along I-10 to let you get home sooner.

TCD has also been coordinating with the J Turner Butler Blvd Interchange contractor, Superior Construction, in an attempt to get the devices within project limits operational as soon as possible. The vehicle detectors in this area have not been in operation for quite some time, which limits the TMC Operator's ability to detect traffic delays and/or possible incidents. With these vehicle detectors coming back on line soon, the TMC will once again have full functionality along that area of I-95.

Since our last newsletter, TCD also finished the installation of 511 Service signs on ITS devices throughout Jacksonville. These small blue informational signs can be seen on portions of I-95, I-10 and I-295. The intent of these signs is

to market a larger population to the free 511 traffic information service provided by FDOT. Besides cost savings, the reason that the signs were mounted on the ITS device structures was to bring more attention to the ITS device poles to help people associate 511 with the CCTV images they see on the News channels and help them to realize the purpose of these devices. So, next time you're "out and about" look for the signs and show them to others in the car, so that they will know to call 511 for free traffic information.

Kevin Jackson  
District 2 ITS Field Specialist



## Operations

What an exciting Holiday Season for travelers in Northeast Florida! Events, 511 Calls and Road Rangers assists were way up from 2009 to 2010. As the economy has started to rebound more people have hit the road. According to AAA, Thanksgiving Holiday weekend travelers raised 11% from 2009 to 2010. Of the 42.2 million people who traveled over 50 miles this Holiday weekend it seemed District 2 in Florida saw a good share of them.

District 2 saw an even greater increase during that same period than AAA's 11%. District 2's number of events increased from 1613 to 1997 in 2010 (over 20%). Of those travelers our 511 call count increased 18% to 21895. Road Ranger hours were expanded to help ensure traffic moved smoothly and safety was put first. Road Rangers assisted on over 1364 events over the month of November.

It seems that over this Holiday Season more travelers were informed of the increased traffic and were able to plan accordingly. Time and money were saved and travelers arrived safely at their destinations. A Smart Traveler makes a Safe Traveler and we are all thankful for that, especially during the Holidays.

Since we had December off from the Newsletter the following numbers combine November and December. Our two month total for events worked

was a staggering 4,177 which is amazing for how many weekdays schools and workplaces were off. The Road Rangers continued to work hard assisting on 2,885 events and performing 4,537 activities. The busiest routes were 205 (95 south end) and 208 (9a south end up to Buckman). Lane Blocking events continued to drop over the holidays (thankfully) with only 631 events blocking a lane over November and December. That is something we all can be thankful for.

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 will be relayed to our operators in real time. Remember during this Holiday Season: **Know Before You Go! Dial 511.**

Ryan Crist  
TMC Lead Supervisor



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

**Spotlight on... Greg Gaylord**

Meet Greg Gaylord, Owner/Operator of Southern Wrecker & Recovery, LLC and Lead Supervisor of the Road Ranger Service Patrol. This is his story.

*Describe your upbringing.*

I was born in Miami, Florida and raised in Allapattah where I attended Miami Jackson High School. After graduation I served in the U.S. Army as a Recovery and Evacuation Specialist.

*Tell us about your early career.*

After the Army, I worked in the shipping business at the Port of Miami with Concorde Lines. We handled the temperature controlled cargo for the Caribbean and Central America. After the company was sold I created Southern Refrigeration Engineers to support all the clients that serviced the Caribbean, Central and South America. I was then contracted by Crowley Liner Services in Jacksonville to support their effort to ship bananas from Honduras to Gulfport Mississippi. I took one look at Jacksonville, fell in love with the city, and never went back to South Florida.

*Have you ever had a bad day at the office?*

One time when I was working in Honduras I had to take a short flight to Guatemala. When I boarded the plane I noticed that the pilot in the cockpit was wearing a set of headphones. When I asked him what the weather conditions were for our flight to Guatemala, he pulled the headset back and told

me we didn't have weather service on this flight. It was about that time I noticed the headphones were connected to his Walkman cassette player. Needless to say I had to put all my trust in the Almighty that we would arrive safely.

*Any good advice you want to pass along?*

The best advice I ever got was from a Drill Sergeant in boot camp. He said, "Whoever said that the pen is mightier than the sword never encountered automatic weapons."

*Tell us about your family.*

I have been married to my wife Michelle for twenty years. We have two children, Garrison is 18 and Evelyn is 16.

*Tell us about your current role in the Transportation Industry.*

I have operated the Southern Companies since 1982. I also currently hold the position of Region Chairman for the Professional Wrecker Operators of Florida.



Greg Gaylord

## Photo Gallery



First Coast TIMs meeting at  
The North Florida TPO



Once again, 511 heads to the Florida  
Welcome Center to...WELCOME Visitors  
and teach them about 511!



511 and Road Rangers in the  
Gator Bowl Parade



Road Ranger Jamie Scarberry and Sherri  
Byrd standing next to the 511 Banner at the  
Jacksonville Landing

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

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Ryan Crist, TMC Lead Supervisor  
 Jason Summerfield, Network Manager  
 Derrick Odom, TMC Assistant Supervisor

John (Sean) Wilcox, TMC Supervisor  
 Santos Morin, TMC Assistant Supervisor  
 Sherri Byrd, 511 Marketing Manager

**D2 Day Operators**

Jesse Gilmour  
 Kristin Kirk  
 Donavan King  
 Jessica Lakey

**Fill-In Operators**

Rob DeMello

**D2 Night & Weekend Operators**

Jason Evans  
 Rebecca Reid  
 David Rolfe  
 Tyler Sowers

**D3 Day Operators**

Ed Capps  
 Adrienne Catapano  
 Joanna Garcia  
 Jessica Vazquez

**511 Probe**

Sherri Byrd  
 Michelle Warren