





NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS ENGINEER

March madness is upon us and boy has it been a crazy tournament so far in week one. Mercer over Duke!?! Did any of us even think that Stanford University would beat the extremely talented and well coached Kansas Jayhawks? It's safe to say that Warren Buffett's offer of one-billion dollars for perfection in the tournament picks is safe for years to come. Who would have thought? Hopefully, many of you are rooting for the number one team in the nation "THE Florida Gators," however even they have struggled during the opening week of the tournament. My pick for this year's champion has to be Michigan State. They are on a roll and surrounded by an experienced senior class with one of the best coaches in the country. Should be a fun few weeks of college basketball ahead!

The month of March has been challenging to say the least. Donna is back to working as much as she can during the week. She is still in rehab after her surgery with an anticipated return date to full-time work activities in May. It definitely made me appreciate what I have for personnel and especially when I have to run a program with as small a staff as we have in place. Fortunately, we have a supporting consultant staff that helped pick up some of the slack. Don't think I could have survived the past two months without them since work is busier than ever.

On a staffing note, we are working on adding a new person to oversee the TMC Operations and ITS Maintenance programs. Panic set in for many in District Two when they saw the advertisement seeking a new ITS Engineer. A majority thought I was headed to greener pastures however with the growth of the program I am now involved in TSM&O, as well as ITS. We just needed additional staff to manage the day-to-day operations so that I could focus on the bigger picture. In the next

few months we begin construction of the new RTMC, the ITS deployment along the SE quadrant of I-295 and the visibility sensor project on I-75 in the Paynes Prairie area. When you include the designs for the I-295 Express Lanes, I-75 from Gainesville to Georgia and I-10 from Jacksonville to Tallahassee there is definitely a justification on the need for additional staff.

I did get to take a vacation in early March. Went on a cruise through the Caribbean with a stop in St. Thomas and was pleasantly surprised by their roadway system. It was kind of weird because motorists drove on the opposite side of the road yet they had many American features common to our roadway system. I saw signals with pedestrian countdown, mid-block cross-walks and complex drainage systems that are considered rare in this region of the Caribbean. Many of the shops and restaurants were operated by transient Americans who fell in love with St. Thomas so they decided to relocate to the island. I can't say that I blame them after spending several hours in the downtown area and at the beach. Too bad I saw **NO** deployment of ITS anywhere on their roadway system. If there were some technology it might have made it tempting for me to try and relocate to the area.

The Department's ITS program has been going through some significant changes over the past several months. In an attempt to have the program become more consistent, predictable and reliable (CPR) throughout the Department we are evaluating each District's ITS program to see where some common threads exist. We have all learned that this will be a tough task since each program began at different times with different technology and different relationships with local agencies. Likewise,

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NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS ENGINEER CONTINUED

each fiber network evolved differently based on local conditions and needs, therefore the challenge will be how to achieve CPR without significantly impacting current relationships.

The importance of this effort revolves around the announcement made by US DOT Secretary Foxx earlier this month. His Department plans to begin pushing legislation for connected and autonomous vehicles with a goal of making it a requirement that all car manufacturers have at least the connected vehicle equipment in vehicles by 2016. This announcement is a dramatic step for the ITS program since we must now plan on incorporating the new technology into our infrastructure to make it work properly. I have spoken about some of the benefits of connected vehicle technology in the past so I will not delve into it during this article. Instead I will extend an offer to each of you to give me a call if you have any questions or interest in the subject matter. You can either do that or Google *connected and autonomous vehicles* to get the latest information.

So, the consistency, predictability and reliability of our statewide system are critical toward a successful deployment of connected vehicle equipment within our infrastructure. That's the reason each District has designated IP addresses, Research Lab approved equipment and one software system called SunGuide. These were the building blocks that will help expedite the deployment of any new equipment, technology or roadway feature. The bigger challenge will be getting the motorist acclimated to this new technology since it's a huge jump from their previous driving experience. I am confident that it should not take too long after seeing how this country transitioned to the internet, smart phones and social media in a matter of a few years.

On a final note, for those who caught the "bug" this month "I feel for you." Thought I'd avoided this "plague" only to have it hit me this past weekend. I am writing this month's newsletter with a runny nose, squirmy tummy and pounding headache. Thank goodness for Zicam, Nyquil and Emergen-C! Hope that many of you avoided this experience since it hasn't been very pleasant.

Pete Vega
District 2 ITS Engineer

NORTH FLORIDA TPO UPDATE

The North Florida TPO is patiently awaiting the construction of the new RTMC with a goal of accomplishing what the North Florida ITS Coalition set out to do several years ago. Once this facility opens Interstate ITS projects in north Florida will be in place, arterial deployments should be completed and operational staff will be working at an optimum level by the time they move to the building. There has been a slight delay by the Architect in providing 50% design development plans that can be used by the Construction Manager at Risk (CM@Risk) firm to set up construction contracts. Once these plans are provided the CM@Risk firm can begin moving "full steam ahead" on contracts for the earthwork, foundation, mechanical systems and building walls.

The overall size of the facility will be 25,000 square feet with over 17,000 of it dedicated to RTMC operations. The remaining square footage will be taken up by NFTPO staff offices, the Board Room and mechanical/electrical space. The RTMC will have enough space to accommodate 60+ staff on a daily basis and has incorporated room for



NORTH FLORIDA TPO continued

future activities like Express Lanes, Tolling and Connected vehicles. The video wall is estimated to be approximately 25’ wide by 8’ tall and the main RTMC floor has room to accommodate 36 Duty Officers, RTMC Operators, Traffic Signal Operators, Law Enforcement and JFRD Dispatchers.

Our efforts tied in neatly with the NFTPO hosted power breakfast held on March 25th that revolved around the future of transportation. This event presented an interactive panel discussion related to driverless vehicles and technologies. The moderator, NFTPO Director Jeff Sheffield, led the discussion between Chunka Mui, Richard Biter and Richard Wallace. All three of these individuals play vital roles in the future of the technology and transportation.

Mr. Chunka Mui is a Strategic Advisor and author of “The New Killer Apps: How Large Companies Can Out-Innovate Start-Ups.” Mr. Richard Biter is the Department’s Assistant Secretary over Intermodal Systems Development. Mr. Richard Wallace is the Director of Transportation Systems Analysis at the Center for Automotive Research. Each of these individuals provided insight and their perspective on technology’s role in transportation during the coming years. Also, new technology vehicles were on display at this event that was held at the Marriott Southpoint.

About eight years ago the concept of technology, transportation and autonomous vehicles was first introduced to the ITS arena. Within the next two years we should see it become a reality and the North Florida TPO is not sitting back and waiting for this to occur. They are and will always strive to be a leader in planning for the future of transportation so this event should not be a surprise to anyone. Let’s hope this is just the first of many opportunities for them to share similar type information with our team.

MAINTENANCE

The ITS Maintenance workload with regard to fixing ITS device issues has been fairly light this month. Traffic Control Devices (TCD) replaced a power service on I-295 that was damaged by a vehicle crash, re-wired a power service on I-295 that had JEA issues, and performed troubleshooting and repair to a few sites on the system, but as usual, no lightning means less problems. So, the TCD crews have been installing new BlueTOAD travel time devices on some of the arterial roadways around town and replacing some of the older model devices which have recently failed.

We are also noticing pixel board failures on the recently accepted Phase 8 Project DMS signs on the I-295 West Beltway northwest section. These pixel board failures seem to be the same type of failures seen on the Phase 7 Project, which is described in the Construction section of this newsletter. We will be working with the DMS manufacturer to determine the best course of action to repair/replace these boards and ensure that the DMS have very few issues moving forward.

Kevin Jackson
ITS Field Specialist

CONSTRUCTION

The testing of the Phase 7 Project has been completed and this project has received Final Acceptance. This project had quite a few setbacks including the default of the original contractor. Although the project has taken several years to finish, the project team worked through all of the issues and we finally have ITS devices on the northeast quadrant of the I-295 Beltway. The final hurdle of the project presented itself as pixel board failures on the DMS signs. Over the past few months the System Manager noted a significant number of pixel failures in the DMS signs and has been in

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CONSTRUCTION

contact with the manufacturer. The number of failures was significant enough that the manufacturer built pixel boards to replace all of the existing boards in all of the signs on the project. These boards were all replaced over the last two weeks of the month and have been working fine to this point. The manufacturer also extended the warranty on the DMS to ensure that there were no problems with the new pixel boards.

The final plans have been submitted for the Phase 9 Project on the I-295 East Beltway from I-95 going north to Atlantic Boulevard. This project was previously put out for bid, but there was a protest of the proposed contract award and so the project had to be put out for bid again. The project is now scheduled to Let in May 2014.

The I-10 Interchange ITS Project, which includes the installation of fiber optic cable, CCTVs and MVDS within the area of the I-10/I-95 Interchange, is behind schedule but continues to progress. The contractor and their sub-contractors installed CCTV poles, MVDS poles and fiber optic cable this month. A section of bridge mounted conduit and a few other items remain to be addressed. This project is scheduled to be completed in April.

The SR 23 Toll Project, which is installing ITS on SR 23, I-10 from I-295 to just west of SR 23, and I-95 through St. Johns County is still under design. The fiber optic conduit and cable design for I-95 through St. Johns County is at the 100% design stage. This will be the first stage of construction and will connect District Two's ITS network to District Five's ITS network. This connection will allow for many of the FDOT District's ITS networks to communicate with each other as many of the networks in South and Central Florida are already connected. This

connection along with the I-10 fiber optic cable installation will allow Florida's Turnpike to collect toll Revenue once the SR 23 Toll Road is completed.

The I-75 ITS Project in Gainesville from CR 234 to SR 121 began construction on February 11, 2014. The contractor is currently installing conduit within the project limits. This project will install fiber optic cable, 3 DMS, CCTVs, vehicle detectors and Bluetooth travel time readers along the I-75 corridor within the project limits. The project will also install 2 DMS and 2 CCTVs on US 441 in the area of Payne's Prairie. In addition, FLIR infrared CCTVs and visibility sensors will be installed on Payne's Prairie on both I-75 and US 441. The contract duration for this project is 400 days.

John Kell
District 2 ITS Construction Project Manager



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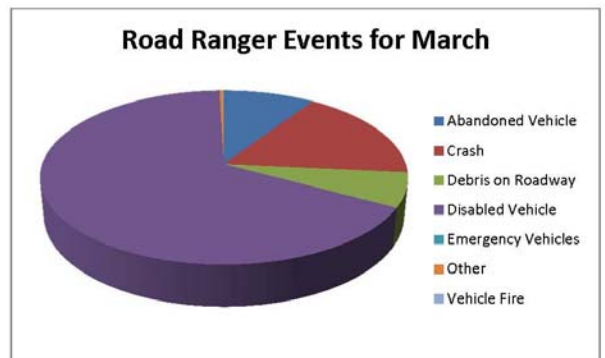
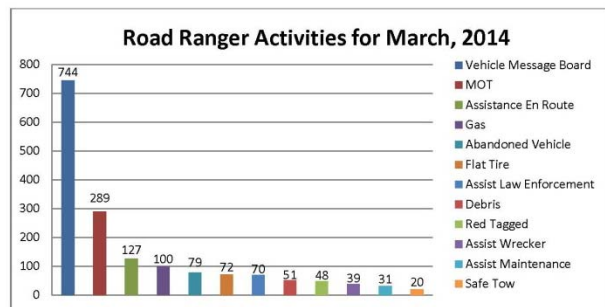
ROAD RANGER UPDATE

The District 2 Road Ranger Service Patrol Operators received outstanding comments on the Quarterly Comment Report Card Report. Overall satisfaction was rated as “excellent” for the services provided and 89% of all incidents had arrival times that were within 15 minutes.

In the month of March a Road Ranger Safety Meeting was held at the FDOT Urban Office Training Center at 11:30 A.M on March 5. Marshall Adkison started the meeting with a presentation addressing basic safety concepts, proper protocols and maintenance of traffic procedures to help keep everyone safe. Marshall also reviewed several incidents which the Road Rangers had responded to, as an open discussion, to provide a learning opportunity for the personnel to see real life occurrences. He reinforced that safety is everyone’s responsibility. When the Road Rangers are called upon to assist motorists and law enforcement on our interstates it puts the Road Rangers in an unsafe situation and we need to keep each other safe and lookout for one another.

The Road Rangers provided a total of 1,332 roadside services to motorists and incident responders throughout the first three weeks of March. The importance of the Road Rangers program is shown every month when we can see how many services were provided and how the Road Rangers help keep our roads clear and maintain traffic flow. The charts illustrate the Road Ranger activities for the month of March as well as the different types of reported events. We can see that the safe tow program was utilized a bit more this month and essential activities such as providing gas to a stranded motorist or clearing debris are important tasks which are necessary to keep our roadways clear. The clearance of disabled vehicles is also very essential to maintain traffic flow especially

during peak hours. In the chart below we can see that the majority of events that the Road Rangers are called to are vehicles that are disabled in some way. Our Road Rangers provide an excellent quality of service and are doing a great job helping with incident management.



RISC – RAPID INCIDENT SCENE CLEARANCE - UPDATE

District 2 has been fortunate enough to not have any RISC incidents in the last month, but our RISC Contractors remain ready to respond in case there is an active call. We are fortunate to have our RISC Contractors to assist with the quick clearance of our interstates and help achieve our goal of having roads cleared of accidents within 90 minutes.



FIRST COAST TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

The First Coast TIM Team meeting was held on March 18, 2014 at the FDOT Urban Office Training Center at 10:00 A.M. The following agencies were represented: Metric Engineering, FDOT ITS, FDOT Traffic Management Center, Department of Environmental Protection, Atkins, FDOT PIO, FDOT EOC, Jorgensen Contract Services, DBI Services, Nassau County Sheriff's Office, St. Johns County Sheriff's Office, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, Florida Highway Patrol, Jacksonville Fire Rescue, FDOT Traffic Operations, Florida Forestry Service, Gainesville Traffic, FDOT Jacksonville Maintenance Office, FDOT St Augustine Maintenance, AAG Environmental, Allen's Towing, John's Towing and University Towing.

Pete Vega welcomed the TIM team members and reminded them that these meetings are extremely crucial for us to be a cohesive and well-coordinated unit. It is important for the Team members to know that we need to join forces and work together in order to improve our incident management from the field all the way to dispatching. Pete also reminded all of the agencies that the safe tow program is available in the construction areas for any disabled vehicles which may hinder traffic flow and present safety issues.

After a quick debrief from Construction and Emergency Operations, updates from ITS, 511 and the Road Rangers were given. The Team then reviewed the performance measures and studied several different incidents which occurred within the past two months. There was discussion among the group and the TIM Team learned from other agencies' points of view.

From these meetings it is great to look forward to the future with the TIM Team. It provides a

great opportunity for everyone to come together and learn from one another so that we can always strive for excellence.

We are looking forward to our next meeting on May 20, 2014 at the FDOT Urban Office Training Center and hope to see the TEAM there.

ALACHUA-BRADFORD TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

The Alachua-Bradford TIM Team will hold its bi-monthly meeting on April 19, 2014 at the FDOT Gainesville Operations Office at 5301 N.E. 39th Ave. at 10:00 A.M. Please mark your calendar to attend this meeting. Your attendance is valuable to the success of the Team so that we can provide a unified service to those who need us.

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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Traffic Incident Management Website:
<http://jax511.com/D2TIMwp/>.



PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Spring is officially here to stay and daylight savings time has begun! We all probably had that rough start on Monday, March 10 but spring is very much welcomed after the past couple of cold months that we have had here in District 2. Of course, the start of Spring means more travel on the roadways resulting in a substantial increase in incidents.

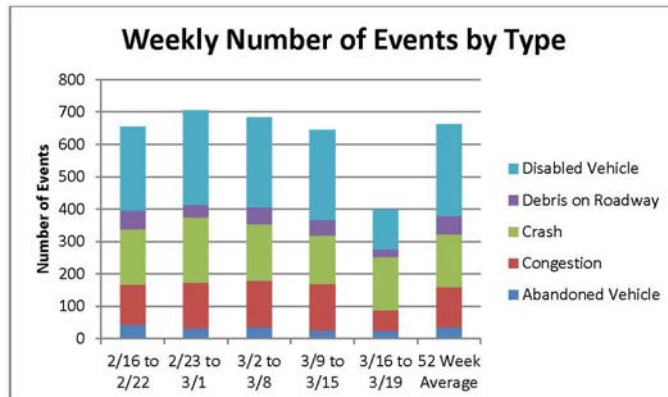
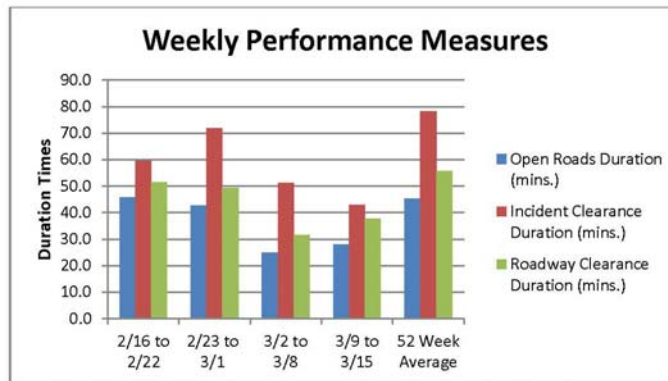
During the third week of March it was as if the sky opened up and the rain started to pour. This caused drastic changes in traffic flow. There were significant increases in the number of crashes and congestion events as Jacksonville received close to 4 inches of rainfall during the week of March 16. When comparing the month of February to the first three weeks of March, it can be noted that March has almost reached the same amount of crashes as that of February.

Road Ranger activity in March came close and sometimes even exceeded the yearly average. The most notable increased activity areas were in helping motorists with flat tires and deploying cones for Maintenance of Traffic. This increased activity may also be attributed to the Spring Breakers traveling through Jacksonville.

The Incident Clearance, Roadway Clearance, and Open Roads duration times were significantly lower this month than the previous month of February, and also substantially lower than the average for the past 12 months.

The following charts illustrate the Performance Measures data for the past few weeks as well as the different types of events reported.

Sherrell Lall, Metric Engineering





MARKETING

For most of us, Spring Break has come and gone, with the exception of a handful of private schools in the area. But some of our best festivals are yet to come. There's Springing the Blues April 4-6th as well as the Opening of the Beaches April 27th in Jacksonville Beach. Fernandina will once again host the Isle of 8 Flags Shrimp Fest May 2-4th. And there's the Blue Crab Festival Memorial Day weekend down in Palatka. But if you really want to know where it's happening, THE PLAYERS is where you want to be! Matt Rapp, Executive Director of THE PLAYERS, will join us at our Traffic Management Center Monday, May 5th to kick off this area's premier golf tournament! But I'm getting ahead of myself. Yes, plans are underway as we speak, and local news crews are preparing to descend on the TMC to interview Matt Rapp and our very own Pete Vega, but before that can happen, we'll head down to Ponte Vedra to take part in *their* media day at Sawgrass. In a recent meeting, Matt Rapp was asked what his top priorities were heading into the 2014 tournament, and he listed our joint Media Day as one of the top three things on his "must do" list. Stay tuned for more on this next month.

In the meantime, our calendar is looking full for the month of April. We'll pay a visit to Bishop Kenny as they "Zero in on Prevention." This has become one of our favorite events to participate in. We'll get to speak to 900 new and soon-to-be drivers. Having two teenagers in my own house, I appreciate all that goes into educating these young drivers. We stress the importance of minimizing distractions and checking 511 *before* hitting the roadways. That way, these young motorists can determine the best route(s) to take and reach their destinations safely.

We'll also visit our friends at the I-95 Florida Welcome Center the week before Easter. During

that week we typically see an influx of visitors to our state, due in part to the holiday and also the beautiful spring time weather we're famous for. And after that we'll make our way over to Checker Cab for their Employee Appreciation Luncheon, where we understand they have over 70 new employees since we last visited! We're looking forward to seeing some familiar faces and making some new friends as well.

See below for information on our great partnership with FSCJ and their promotion of 511!

Before you head out to enjoy this beautiful spring time weather, make sure your trip begins with a call to 511. You can also log onto www.FL511.com or, of course, download our free 511 Traffic App.

Know before you go and keep moving!

Sherri Byrd
Marketing Manager



<http://www.fscj.edu/discover-fscj/campus-safety-security>

(logo and link on left side of screen)

<http://www.fscj.edu/admissions-aid/counseling-advising/student-resources>

(under "T" for Traffic Information)



OPERATIONS

Last year I had the opportunity to participate in the SHRP (Strategic Highway Research Program) 2 Train the Trainer Program. After 2 full days of scenarios, table tops, lessons learned and discussing roles and responsibilities I was left with a greater understanding of not only what the Transportation Management Center (TMC) was trying to achieve but what each other responding agency was as well. Understanding the nuances of each Traffic Incident Management Team Member has only elevated what we are trying to accomplish in the TMC.

SHRP 2 was authorized by Congress to address the most pressing needs of our Nation's highway system. The 4 main components are Safety, Renewal, Reliability and Capacity. Safety in preventing or reducing the severity of highway crashes. Renewal addresses the need to look at aging infrastructure through means with minimal disruption. Reliability focuses on reducing congestion through incident reduction, management, response and mitigation. The Capacity area is working on developing a web-based tool to provide more accurate data and collaborative decision-making in the development of new highway capacity in order to expedite the provision of that capacity while simultaneously addressing economic, community, and environmental objectives associated with new construction. **Courtesy of TRB** Quite the challenge to tackle!

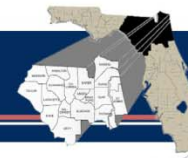
With all of that knowledge I just had to share! This month a SHRP 2 training course was provided at the FDOT District 2 Jacksonville Urban Office and I sent a TMC Supervisor, a District 2 TMC Operator and a City of Gainesville Signal Operator. I was looking forward to getting feedback on the shortened training from various positions throughout the TMC. I was delighted to hear the conversations that took place immediately following the training and during a visit to Gainesville shortly after.

I heard all about the D Drivers (Drunk, Distracted, Dumb, etc), ideas for ways to improve TMC Operations, a more complete view of the BIG picture and a better understanding of what the role of the other Responders are doing. The insight that was gained already sparked tweaks in the TMC's Standard Operating Procedures. I feel like a proud dad when I overhear conversations taking place in the TMC about real-time events and explaining why things are occurring to others. This was such a success I look forward to sending even more people the next time Craig Carnes (hat tip) puts together another one of these training sessions.

Without ITS devices outside of Jacksonville (and parts of Jacksonville) the TMC depends on FDOT and partnering agencies to give us traffic information reports. You can reach our 24/7 line at (904)359-6842 or our work day line at (904)360-5465. You can also leave feedback on the Next Generation 511 system about road conditions and bugs you may find in the system that is relayed to our operators in real time. Remember to **"Know Before You Go! Dial 511"**.

Ryan Crist,
TMC Manager





SPOTLIGHT ON...JIM BYARD

This month's spotlight falls on Jim Byard, Production Manager at Renda Broadcasting and one-third of Lite 96.1's morning show, along with fellow broadcasters Arthur Crofton and Yvonne Velasquez. Fueled by 2 – 3 cups of coffee, Jim gives us our daily dose of news and keeps us up to date on current events with his Inside Jacksonville program. Jim arrives at the station around 4am every morning and usually doesn't leave until around 4pm. (sometimes later!) Just having celebrated his 36th year at Renda, he gives us an inside look at his early career and his vision for the future of Transportation in Jacksonville.

Tell us a little about yourself.

I was born and raised in the small town of Clarksburg, West Virginia. I went to Marshall University, in Huntington, WV (it became a University while I was there) majoring in speech and minoring in Journalism. I got a part-time job at the top 40 station (right place-right time). They then offered me full time in the middle of my Junior year so I dropped out and the rest, as they say, is history. Really should have taken classes part time to complete a degree, but never did. After a few years there I got the opportunity to go to the capital city, Charleston, WV and worked there for a number of years, doing sports play by play and a morning show at the same time.

As Production Manager, what is your role at Renda?

I'm responsible for assigning commercials to be produced or scheduled into the system for all 4 of our stations (WEJZ/WGNE/WMUV/WSOS). I write some spots and voice others. The bulk of the hands on production, however, is done by my assistant Suzanne who is terrific. I also have some other duties (don't we all in this day and age). I am part of the morning show on WEJZ, LITE 96.1, and I've been hosting Inside Jacksonville since 1985. Love doing that. I've

been at WEJZ since late 1977. Along the way there have been several ownership changes, managerial changes, and the addition of 3 other stations (mentioned above). I've been down here a little over 36 years, but total years in the business (full or part time) goes back to 1963 (you do the math, I'd rather not). As you might expect I've seen a lot of changes in broadcasting. Mostly for the better.

You're a healthy guy, but I know that a back injury sidelined you from running a few years ago. What do you do now to stay in shape? And how do you find the time?

This winter has played havoc with my workout routine. Cold and drizzly weather isn't good for an announcer's voice so I haven't gotten out much. But when I do, I try to walk a couple of miles at least 5 days a week. I go after work and on the weekend. I know, you might ask why I don't join a gym and go there during the bad days? With my schedule, that leaves very little time at home, so I make time for Mrs. B and bypass the gym. Also, when it gets warmer, I try to swim a lot. And even though I don't play as much golf as I used to, I try to go to the driving range a couple of times a month. Swinging that club is a good workout.

We understand you're a big community advocate, especially as it relates to Transportation. You've had Peter Vega and Sherri Byrd as guests on your Inside Jacksonville community affairs radio program. Mike Goldman has also made a few guest appearances. What do you envision when you think of "the future of transportation in Jacksonville?" And how does your show help Jacksonville residents embrace this vision?

I've also had Marci Larson from the N.E.F.T.P.O. on the show. I don't try to create a vision for transportation on Inside Jacksonville,

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SPOTLIGHT ON.. Jim Byard continued

but just have the guest present the current status and what we can look forward to in the future. Those visions come from Mike, Sherri, Peter, and Marci. And if the finances can be put in place I see a terrific road system. I already believe we have a very good one and it's getting better. Many people say "we don't want to be an Atlanta". Well, I've talked with people from there who now live here and we aren't anywhere close. I think the transportation plans of this day (with the advance planning of the aforementioned organizations) are making this town easier to get around (after construction of course). We do talk about different modes of transportation (high speed rail, express lanes for buses, car pooling, etc). But, as so many have told me, we're in love with our cars. (Chicago the L, New York the subway, Portland bicycles and trolleys, are some with good alternative transportation). But Jacksonville is such a large area that it's hard to accomplish that here. Would be nice, but I don't see that happening on a large scale. So, I think we'll just have to use good judgment in where and when we build. And, most importantly from a pollution standpoint, we're going to have to have more vehicles on the road with alternative fuels. The JTA is going to have some buses with natural gas soon so that's a great step.

Ever played golf with Mike Goldman?

Mike and I run into each other on occasion (Edwin Watts golf and golf demo days) but we haven't ever played golf together. Although we have talked about it a lot. If I ever retire (a standing joke) then I'm sure we would.

Ever have a foot-in-mouth moment on the air?

Oh, I'm sure I've put my foot in my mouth on more than one occasion. But I can tell you about one incident. One of the morning show people (not current) brought in their large dog...going to

take it to the vet after the show... well I had been petting the dog (I love animals) and it liked me. Now you have to try and vision this. Between the on air studio and my newsroom is a double plate glass window. The dog is in the control room and here's me talking about the news that's coming up (a news tease). He heard my voice. I hadn't seen the dog walk behind the control board and the next thing I know he's standing on his hind legs with his paws on the glass, looking at me with his tongue hanging out. I totally lost it....laughing so hard I had tears in my eyes. Good thing there was a song before the newscast or I'd never have gotten through it.

What's the best advice anyone's ever given you?

My dad always told me to take notes and make lists. I do that to this day. I also believe I got my attention to detail and work ethic from him.

What motivates you to keep going?

I enjoy what I do, enjoy the people I work with and never want to stop learning. I look forward to each day.

Jim Byard, the face behind the voice



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SPOTLIGHT ON..Jim Byard continued

Any job related awards or special recognition you've received?

I've received a couple or three plaques, and a special mention or two and I've been appreciative of them. But I don't dwell on that. Any accomplishments that are credited to me have to include those I work with currently and over the years. Programmers, consultants, and associates. .. my immediate boss (programming), the morning team, my production assistant, etc...they all have to share in any accolades I have gotten, or may get. I've been very fortunate over the years to have worked with some really terrific people.

Describe a 'defining moment' in your career or personal life.

No defining moment just a lot of great moments. Working with numerous entertainers back in the 60's and 70's, doing play by play sports for 9 years, working as a voiceover announcer for the old channel 17 (before they became the WB), PA announcer for the Suns for a number of years, and, of course being here in Florida and at my current job.

Tell us a little about your family.

Married with 2 daughters, 1 stepdaughter, 1 stepson and 4 grandchildren. Proud of all of them!



PHOTO GALLERY



Above, and below: First Coast Traffic Incident Management Meeting at the FDOT District 2 Training Center



