



A Chronicle of Research and TRB Turns 50

Highlighting the Fifth Decade of TR News

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The web edition of TR News converted to full color in the March–April 2010 issue, and the print edition went full-color in March–April 2012. Photo coverage of the Annual Meeting expanded in 2006.

Feature articles in the November–December 2012 TR News chronicled the visionary momentum that was at work in 1962 in U.S. transportation policy, with the launch of metropolitan transportation planning, and at the Highway Research Board, with the start-up of the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP). TRB's bimonthly magazine itself had its origins in the same era—*Highway Research News* first rolled off the presses 50 years ago, in February 1963, to report on developments in research and policy nationwide and on activities at the Board.

Highlights of the past 10 years of the magazine—an article in the January–February 2003 issue covered the first 40 years in detail¹—include two theme

¹<http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/trnews/trnews224.pdf> —pages 43–45.

issues on transportation and climate change and others on security, environment, asset management, and highway safety; feature articles on TRB and transportation history, international initiatives, and technology transfer; editorial insights from transportation leaders; expanded photographic coverage of the Annual Meeting; a milestone for the Research Pays Off series; and some surprising cover images.

In addition, the web edition of the magazine converted to full color on the inside pages with the March–April 2010 issue, although the print edition continued to run photographs in black and white until moving to full color, cover to cover, with the March–April 2012 edition.

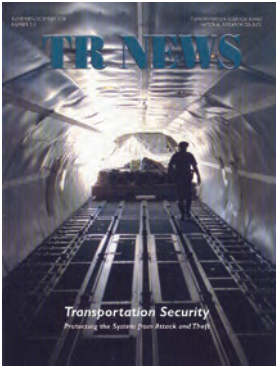
Playing Our Theme

Theme issues—collections of feature and sidebar articles focused on a topic—remained a mainstay of TR News, usually drawing on the vision and expert contributions of a Technical Activities committee or group. The Special Task Force on Climate Change and Energy produced two theme issues—the first, May–June 2010, presenting ways to curb transportation's contributions to climate change, and the second, July–August 2012, documenting exemplary transportation agency programs to adapt to the effects of climate change.

Three other theme issues examined environmental concerns: air quality, July–August 2003; measures and countermeasures for noise, September–October 2005; and the “mutual enhancements” of transportation and the environment, May–June 2009, with articles addressing the “goal of ‘making [both] better than before,’” according to the introduction by Mark S. Kross.

Transportation security also generated material for three theme issues: security training and education, May–June 2005; all-hazards preparedness, response, and recovery, May–June 2007, with a special foldout timeline of “major focusing events” between 1978 and 2006; and security and critical infrastructure protection,





July–August 2011. Innovative approaches to transportation financing received theme issue treatments in July–August 2009, on pricing road use to address congestion, and in May–June 2011, on public–private partnerships. Technical and engineering advances were highlighted with theme issues on preserving highway infrastructure, September–October 2003; visualization, September–October 2007; a “2020 vision” of highway design and construction, November–December 2007; and “Anatomy of Change in Winter Maintenance,” on the developing science of surface transportation weather and its applications, November–December 2009.

Several topics received first-ever theme issue coverage: aviation, in September–October 2011, and pedestrians and bicycles, or active transportation, in May–June 2012. The intermodal container era, theme of the September–October 2006 issue, offered an exemplary mix of history, with an article on pioneer Malcolm McLean; current issues, with articles on the global economy and security; and trends and challenges.

History Themes

History was the focus of the theme issue celebrating one of the major events of 2006—the 50th anniversary of the Interstate Highway System. “The Interstate Achievement: Getting There and Beyond” featured a vintage cover photograph of a family driving in a convertible on an overpass with a view of an Interstate below and offered “retrospects and prospects” under many distinguished bylines, including one of the last pieces written by the late, renowned transportation planner and engineer Alan M. Voorhees.

Transportation historians Bruce E. Seely and Jonathan Gifford wrote “How the Interstate System Came to Be: Tracing the Historical Process” and “The Exceptional Interstate Highway System: Will a Compelling New Vision Emerge?” respectively. Distinguished professor Lester A. Hoel examined “The Engineering of the Interstate Highway System: A 50-Year Retrospective of Advances and Contributions,” with coauthor Andrew J. Short. Other contributors included Joseph M. Sussman of the Massachusetts

Institute of Technology, past FHWA Executive Director E. Dean Carlson, former Assistant Executive Director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Lillian C. Borrone, and past Executive Director Thomas B. Deen. Alan E. Pisarski provided an introduction and conclusion.

Two smaller theme issues explored TRB’s history with a similar combination of features and brief articles by first-hand participants. Marking TRB’s 90th anniversary, Executive Director Robert E. Skinner, Jr., offered insights on “Trends and Fundamentals: Guiding TRB to Its 2020 Centennial—and Beyond,” in the November–December 2010 issue. Featured alongside was an article by Deen, “The Transportation Research Board at 90: Everyone Loves It, but No One Can Explain Why,” tracing the uniqueness of the organization, plus a timeline of TRB’s evolution, a list of significant policy studies, and a collection of testimonials from leaders.

NCHRP’s 50th anniversary was commemorated in the November–December 2012 magazine with feature articles by Senior Program Officer Christopher Hedges on the program’s origins and Cooperative Research Programs Associate Director Crawford Jencks on the program’s substantive legacy, supplemented with testimonials from leading participants and volunteers.

History as Hallmark

Largely through the efforts and example of Gifford, Pisarski, and their colleagues on the TRB Transportation History Committee, feature articles on transportation history have become a hallmark of the nontheme magazines. The AASHTO Road Test was the subject of two features in succeeding years; the first, by Kurt D. Smith, Kathryn A. Zimmerman,

Five theme issues have highlighted transportation security topics, starting in November–December 2000, all coordinated by Senior Program Officer Joedy Cambridge; Senior Program Officer Stephan A. Parker assisted with the three at the right.





TRB's 90th anniversary and NCHRP's 50th were commemorated in the November–December 2010 and 2012 issues, respectively.

In 2007, visualization in transportation and a 2020 vision of highway design and construction joined the list of technology topics that have received theme-issue treatment.

and Fred N. Finn—himself a participant in the landmark test—examined the “Living Legacy for Highway Pavements,” in May–June 2004; the second, in November–December 2005, looked at the program’s bridge testing and was authored by three participants: S. J. Fenves, J. W. Fisher, and I. M. Viest.

Thomas R. Jablonski of New York City Transit wrote on “New York City’s Subway Century,” in January–February 2006, and an accompanying feature by Tom Malcolm traced the career of William Barclay Parsons, the “transportation engineer extraordinaire” who was pivotal in the system’s development.

One history feature traveled back to Roman times—in July–August 2010, Sarah Murray wrote about the amphora containers used to ship and deliver oil throughout the ancient world; and a feature in November–December 2010 found “a distant mirror” in medieval times, as historian Alan Cooper and retired transportation executive Damian L.

Kulash explored instructive parallels for the post-Interstate era in the United States from the changes in financing, building, and maintaining bridges in the Middle Ages. Another history article investigated “The Future That Never Was: Lessons from Visions of Transportation,” by Christine Cosgrove and Phyllis Orrick, exploring why some inspirational predictions prove faulty.

Two history articles by Robert G. Cullen of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials explored transportation’s effects on society, with a biographical article in March–April 2008 on pioneer road advocate Roy Stone and the establishment of rural free delivery and a January–February 2010 examination of baseball and America’s streetcars in the 19th century, including the possible derivation of the Brooklyn Dodgers’ name from fans dodging the trolleys in front of the ballpark.

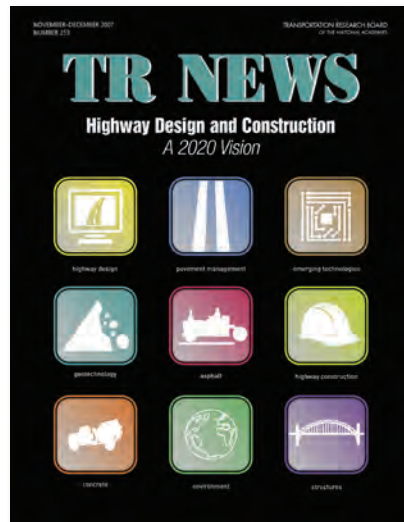
Features Global and Mega

Feature articles also traced the expansion of TRB’s international involvement. In a follow-up to the signing of a memorandum of agreement with the European Conference of Transportation Research Institutes (ECTRI), the magazine published a feature by two ECTRI leaders, George Giannopoulos and Pierre Médevielle on developing an international interface for innovation and another by Jorgen Christensen of the Danish Road Directorate on transport research cooperation in Europe, in the July–August 2007 issue.

Giannopoulos and coauthor O. A. Elrahman reported on a joint working group’s findings about “Expanding International Research Collaboration” in March–April 2010, and Sandra Rosenbloom, Jorge Prozzi, Martine Micozzi, and Russell Houston contributed an overview titled “Research Without Borders: The Growing Role of International Cooperation and Collaboration at the Transportation Research Board.”

A memorable international feature in May–June 2007 by Thomas Jilek, Antonin Fedorko, and Jiri Subrt reported on the flood protections developed for the subway system in Prague, Czech Republic, after disastrous river surges in 2002—a problem encountered in the United States in 2012 with Superstorm Sandy.

Several articles have drawn practical insights from megaprojects, particularly on communicating with the public and coordinating the components to achieve on-time, cost-effective delivery. “In This Together: Collaboration and Communication During the Marquette Interchange Project,” by Joseph Schmidt, Toby Peters, Lori Bysong, and Jim Koster, in



September–October 2008, described an \$810-million project's community-sensitive design and construction approach. In March–April 2011, project engineer John R. Bowman wrote about the realignment of the I-40 Crosstown Expressway in Oklahoma City, and Linda Wilson described Missouri's approach to reconstructing an expressway "in the heart of St Louis," avoiding a predicted "carnageddon."

A Point of View editorial in March–April 2007 by Zachary M. Schrag extolled the political and financial risk taking that led to the construction of the Washington, D.C., subway system in "Thinking Big: Lessons from the Washington Metro."

Encore Authors

TRB's volunteer leaders have proved generous contributors of articles. In addition to coauthoring the article on TRB international activities, past Executive Committee Chair Sandra Rosenbloom has written features on such topics as the changing demographics of rural America and the implications for transportation providers (March–April 2003); the equity implications of financing the nation's surface transportation system (March–April 2009); and the safety and mobility patterns of older women in 2030, coauthored with Susan Herbel (September–October 2009).

Technical Activities Council Chair Katherine F. Turnbull has covered market research for transportation agencies (January–February 2004); coordinated a theme issue and contributed a feature on transportation in the national parks (July–August 2004); contributed two sidebar articles on changing demographics (September–October 2009); and revisited the topic of mobility needs in the national parks (March–April 2010).

Past Executive Committee Chair Michael D. Meyer has written on the research foundations of the Interstate Highway System (March–April 2006), the freight transportation industry roundtable (September–October 2006), and a second Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP 2) tool for incorporating greenhouse gas impacts into decision making (July–August 2012). Other multiple-article contributors include Pisarski, Daniel Sperling, Mary R. Brooks, Jonathan Upchurch, and Richard M. Weed, who in a March–April 2008 Point of View revealed "The Most Important Question in Engineering": how good is good enough? Weed wrote: "Engineers face diverse challenges that often require striking a balance between theory and practicality....Asking the question, 'How good is good enough?' expresses a penchant for practicality that will almost always prove beneficial in the practice of engineering."

The late Thomas D. Larson, 2003 recipient of the Frank Turner Medal for Lifetime Achievement in Transportation, contributed a November–December 2004 article on what he called the Roberts Management and Leadership Model, which "can ensure the cost-effectiveness of a major investment in strategic planning." According to the model, the intersection of vision, organizational capacity, and authorizing environment is necessary to produce the working space for a plan's success.

Prolific staff writers have included SHRP 2 Director Ann Brach, who has offered insights into the then-incipient SHRP 2 renewal program (May–June 2004); described a "Framework for Stakeholder Involvement: Managing Research with a Focus on Users" (July–August 2004); analyzed surface transportation reauthorization and the outcomes and prospects for research (July–August 2005); and identified trends in federal transportation research funding (November–December 2005). SHRP 2 Senior Program Officer Kenneth L. Campbell has written about the program's safety focus area, "Developing Measures to Improve Highway Safety," with Linda Mason, in March–April 2008, and about the naturalistic driving study in September–October 2012.

Standards and Departments

The first issue of each year regularly includes a report from the Technical Activities Division summarizing findings from the annual field visits to state departments of transportation (DOTs) and other transportation agencies; these were renamed state partnership visits in the 2011 installment. Headline phrases tell the ongoing stories, as transportation agencies "meet fiscal challenges" (2004); "test out solutions" as "laboratories for addressing critical issues" (2006); transform "transportation institutions, finance, and workforce" to "meet the needs of the 21st century" (2007); form "partnerships for progress" (2008); "enhance customer service despite cutbacks" (2011); "lead in lean times" (2012); and serve as "implementers of innovation" (2013). The 2006 state visits article introduced the "Did You Know?" sidebar, harvesting unique items of interest about state agency endeavors.

The Profiles column, a regular feature since the magazine's early years, traces the career paths and professional contributions of volunteer leaders in TRB. Many selections proved prescient—for example, Robert M. Johns, profiled in November–December



The January–February 2006 *TR News* featured articles on the 100th anniversary of the New York City subway system and on transportation engineer William Barclay Parsons. New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg appears in the cover photograph in the center window, at the right.



The first Research Pays Off article appeared in the January-February 1983 issue of *TR News*; the 150th article of the series ran in the March-April 2011 issue.

Distinctive covers have included animal subjects: a San Joaquin kit fox and a herd of bison crossing a North Dakota road.



ber 2005, later chaired the TRB Technical Activities Council and became head of the U.S. DOT's John A. Volpe National Transportation Systems Center; Susan Hanson, profiled in March-April 2008, rejoined the TRB Executive Committee in January 2013 as Division Chair for National Research Council Oversight; May-June 2008 profilee John Broomfield delivered the Thomas B. Deen Distinguished Lecture in January 2013; and Joseph L. Schofer, who became the rare two-time Profile subject in March-April 2011, received the Roy W. Crum Distinguished Service Award in January 2012; his first Profile appeared in the January-February 1983 issue.

The coverage of the TRB Annual Meetings, a staple of the March-April issues, switched to a new format in 2006, emphasizing photographs to convey

the energy, interchanges, and presentations at the five-day event.

The Research Pays Off series of articles, which began 30 years ago in the January-February 1983 issue at the request of then-Executive Director Deen, marked its 150th installment in March-April 2011, with an article by Khaled Ksaibati, Matt Carlson, and Don Beard on Wyoming's rural roads safety program. A task force chaired by Senior Program Officer G. P. Jayaprakash recruits and develops the articles to document the cost savings and benefits achieved by transportation agencies through the implementation of research findings. The articles are posted separately on the TRB website as a resource of exemplary practices.²

Covers Coverage

Photographs of animals provided unusual covers—the cover of the May-June 2009 theme issue on transportation and the environment showed a closeup of a San Joaquin kit fox, an endangered species threatened by vehicle traffic, and a herd of bison crossed Route 10-Scenic Drive in North Dakota, on the cover of January-February 2010, a photograph taken by Kimberly M. Fisher, Technical Activities Associate Director-Planning, during a state partnership visit.

A rare celebrity sighting on the cover occurred when New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg appeared riding an early replica subway commemorating the 100th anniversary of the city's system, in January-February 2006. Other memorable cover images included a traffic signal with a satellite view of the earth in place of the red light, for the May-June 2010 issue on curbing transportation's contributions to climate change, and the May-June 2012 image of the bicycle lanes along the center of Constitution Avenue in Washington, D.C., looking toward the U.S. Capitol.

At the Helm

Neil Hawks, appointed chair of the *TR News* editorial board in late 2000, relinquished his role at the end of 2008 to devote full attention to SHRP 2 before his retirement in January 2011. Frederick D. Hejl, Technical Activities Associate Director-Materials and Construction, succeeded Hawks as chair, heading up the oversight, development, and review of content for the magazine. A member of the editorial board since 1993, Hejl is acknowledged as the "father of the theme issue" for championing the approach and for personally coordinating the development or serving as adviser for many theme issues in the past 20 years.

²www.trb.org/Publications/PubsResearchPaysOff.aspx.