



WORD PASSER

A Monthly Newsletter For The Houston/Galveston Post

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 2018

March 29

Public Agency Update

Missouri City CIP Program and
Harvey Relief Efforts

April 2018

April 4

General Membership Meeting
High Speed Rail presented by
Central Texas Partners, LLC

May 2018

May 3

General Membership Meeting
USACE Galveston Area
Meeting

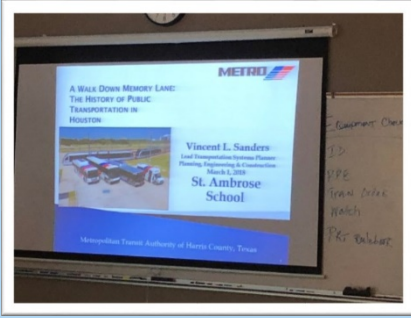
May 16

Sporting Clay Tournament
SAME's Annual Tournament at
American Shooting Centers



In this edition...

- ★ **March 1, 2018**
SAME STEM Committee – Houston METRO ROC Tour
 St. Ambrose Catholic School attended the Houston METRO Rail Operations Center Tour
- ★ **March 7, 2018**
SAME and TEXITE Joint Symposium
 Emphasize the need to improve Houston’s hurricane preparedness, coordination, response, recovery and mitigation in order to save lives and property. Harris County Judge Ed Emmett was the keynote speaker at lunch.



SAME STEM Committee Houston METRO Rail Operations Center St. Ambrose Catholic School 6th Grade

By: Maheshwor KC

On Thursday, March 1, 2018, the SAME STEM Committee, led by Committee Chair **Maheshwor KC**, organized the 2nd annual Rail Operations Center (ROC) Tour for 33 sixth grade students from St. Ambrose Catholic School to the Houston METRO Rail Operations Center.

Vincent Sanders, Lead Transportation Systems Planner for METRO, and **Sandra Strickland, Executive assistant to Scott Grogan, Sr. Director of Rail Operations**, arranged for the students to come and spend half a day learning the behind the scene actions that are done to keep Houston METRO operations running smoothly. The tour started off with a presentation on the history of METRO (The Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County), which was presented by **Mr. Sanders**. **Mr. Sanders'** presentation began with a description of what transportation in the Houston area was like in the early days with the horse and cart set up and continued up to the current rail system that is running today. Houston METRO has progressed so much over the years that they were rewarded the 2015 'Best Transit Agency' award from American Public Transportation Association (APTA). **Mr. Sanders** focused on how the students could possibly be future METRO employees and contribute in Houston METRO progress.

Following the METRO presentation, the students were taken on a tour of the Operations Control Room (Dispatch Center), where **Steve Gaston, Chief Rail Controller - Operations** explained how METRO monitors the rail cars running through the Houston area. The students were shown how the control operators communicate with the rail drivers and passengers at real-time while waiting at the stations, adjust rail switches to re-route trains around wrecks or problems on tracks, and how to tell if the trains are running on schedule. The students also got an insight on the education and skills one needs to be a control operator.

SAME STEM Committee

Houston METRO Rail Operations Center

St. Ambrose Catholic School 6th Grade

By: Maheshwor KC

After leaving the control room, the students were taken over to the maintenance center. **Bently Henderson, Rail Maintenance Trainer** showed the students where they brought the train cars in to do repairs like fix flat spots in the wheels and clean. He also took the students into the operator's area of a train car that was there being repaired and explained to them the set up inside.

Once all the tours had been completed, the students gathered together in the conference room and had lunch. Once the students had finished eating, **METRO officials** interacted with students on careers they would like to pursue.

The SAME STEM Committee would like to send out a big thank you to the METRO staff, **Vincent Sanders, Sandra Strickland, Steve Gaston, and Bently Henderson for giving the tour, and our Committee members Maheshwor KC, Liz Parent, and Holden McCollum** for helping out at the field trip. The SAME STEM Committee will be looking at scheduling Port of Houston Boat Tour for St. Ambrose in April 2018.



SAME and TEXITE Joint Symposium

By: Tom Martens

On March 7, 2018, our Post hosted a Joint Symposium with the Greater Houston Section of the Texas District of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (TexITE). The half-day Symposium was a collaborative discussion around our community's preparedness, coordination, response, recovery and mitigation regarding storm events, including the historic impacts from Hurricane Harvey.

Steve Costello, PE, City of Houston Chief Resilience Officer, moderated the early morning technical session focused on water, drainage and civil infrastructure. The panelists for this session were Matt Zeve, PE (Director of Operations, Harris County Flood Control District), COL Chris Sallase, PMP (Coastal Programs Coordinator, The Gulf Coast Community Protection and Recovery District), and Sheridan Willey, PE (Deputy Chief for Project Management US Army Corps of Engineers).

The later morning session was focused on storm-related transportation, traffic and ITS challenges, and was moderated by Alan Clark, Director of Transportation Planning with the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). The panelists for this session were Quincy Allen, PE (District Engineer, TXDOT Houston District), Loyd Smith, PE (Manager of Transportation & Planning Division, Harris County), and Jeff Weatherford, PE, PTOE (Deputy Director of Transportation & Drainage Operations, City of Houston).

The Symposium concluded with a luncheon and a candid message from our Keynote Speaker, Harris County Judge Ed Emmett. Judge Emmett challenged the attendees on what we can practically do to help obtain the funding necessary to improve our region's flood mitigation infrastructure. The Symposium provided four Professional Development Hours (PDHs).



UPCOMING EVENTS

March 2018

★ **March 29th**
Public Agency Update

Mr. Scott Elmer, the Assistant City Manager for Missouri City, will discuss the CIP Programs and an update on Harvey Recovery efforts. The presentation will be held at the City of Missouri City, City Hall.

April 2018

★ **April 4th**
General Membership Meeting

The April General Membership Meeting will feature a High Speed Rail Presentation by David Hagy, with Texas Central Partners, LLC. Texas Central Partners is developing a high speed train that will connect Houston, the Brazos Valley and Dallas, using proven, world-class technology.

May 2018

★ **May 2nd**
General Membership Meeting

The USACE will be presenting at the May General Membership Meeting.

★ **May 16th**
Sporting Clay Tournament

SAME will host the 3rd Annual Sporting Clay Tournament at the American Shooting Center. Proceeds benefit the SAME Scholarship Program.

National Events

For More information on upcoming National events such as elections, scholarship applications, and STEM camps, please visit the SAME National's calendar: <http://www.same.org/calendar>