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Christoph Stiller

# Challenges in ITS

his time I am writing my message from my vacations right at the Lago Garda, a beautiful lake with many small villages in Italy. Many renowned individuals have travelled here including Goethe. Among many conquerors, the Venetians have moved huge ships across the mountains surrounding the lake. Even though my own work on ITS is quite far, ITS is ubiquitous at the same time. Coming here led my way through the St. Gotthard tunnel, which is impressive 16.942 kilometers (10.527 mi) in length below the St. Gotthard Pass in the alpes. It is the third-longest road tunnel in the world after Norway's Lærdal Tunnel (24.5 km), and China's Zhongnanshan Tunnel (18 km). Looking at such great milestones in engineering skills forces me to philosophize about ITS in our daily life.

Individual mobility is precious to humans. It is a basis of our prosperity and directly contributes to our quality of life. On the flip side transportation is intertwined with damages like few other accepted technologies. These include environmental damages due to noise and exhaust, consumption of resources and space as well as loss of productive time in traffic congestions. Between the age of 15 and 29 the most likely cause of death is a traffic accident. Just in the European Union the economical damage caused by traffic accidents is estimated to the vast amount of 210 Billion US\$ every year.

In this situation innovations in ITS are more important than ever. We are currently witnessing strong advances of research in autonomous driving vehicles. Even though many experts consider it still takes several decades until unsupervised autonomous driving can cope with arbitrary situations of everyday traffic, systems are progressively introduced into the market that can cope with restricted situations, such as automated yet supervised low speed following on a congested highway. Extensions to theses systems are expected in next-generation automobiles. Personally, I am convinced that emerging car-2-x communication systems provide important contributions to solve ITS challenges. The Grand Cooperative Driving Challenge in 2011 in the Netherlands has shown that communication among inhomogeneous vehicles enables cooperative and safe traffic and leads to homogenized flow.

Excellent ITS engineers that work in an interconnected community are a prerequisite to approach these challenges. In this context I am very pleased with the growing number of student members in the ITS society. More and more young researchers willing to network on an international level in ITS make me confident that we will stay able to provide innovations in ITS that fulfill the needs of the people.

You read this message most likely just after the ITS conference that has taken place in the Hague, the Netherlands and I hope you have enjoyed meeting old friends and creating new contacts in an inspiring atmosphere.

Digital Object Identifier 10.1109/MITS.2013.2281006 Date of publication: 25 October 2013 Do not forget to listen to the latest ITS Podcast at http://itsp.cicei.com/ which also reports on latest advancements in ITS. Last but not least, this is the time to renew your IEEE ITSS membership to stay

connected with the world largest professional community in engineering for the sake of humanity. Sincerely,

Christoph Stiller President IEEE ITSS

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# **EDITOR'S COLUMN** (continued from page 3)

I think this is a tremendous way to conclude a great year for the ITS Society.

Since many of you have inquired as to the status of the *ITS Magazine* receiving an impact factor, I am pleased to let you know that this issue marks the end of a three year probationary period that is required before receiving an impact factor. Any publication with an impact factor must have on-time publication based on an agreed-upon schedule for at least three years before being eligible for an impact factor. This is the twelfth straight issue over the past three years to be published on-time, mean-

ing that we are now eligible for an impact factor. I have been in touch with the publication department at IEEE to make sure that we are on the list to receive one as soon as possible in 2014. I will keep you all posted as to the status in the 2014 issues.

We are adding another new column in this issue spotlighting an ITS Research Lab. Brendan Morris, a professor at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas, will be the editor of this column. Brendan is a very active member in the ITS Society, and he has started off this column with spotlighting the research lab at UC Riverside under the leadership of our next ITSS President, Matt Barth. I think this will be a very enjoyable column to read in each issue, and I'm looking forward to how this column develops in the future. I hope you all enjoy this amazing issue of the *ITS Magazine*. If you have any comments or suggestions, please feel free to let me know.

Read, research, and write...

Jeffrey Miller Editor-in-Chief

ITS

