



# FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION MODELING NEWSLETTER

Volume 28 ♦ April 2005

## TOPIC HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FEBRUARY 2005 MODEL TASK FORCE MEETING

A Florida Model Task Force (MTF) meeting was held February 23 and 24, 2005, in Orlando, Florida. The meeting included a Transit Committee Session on Wednesday, a full MTF meeting on Thursday, and reports from the Distribution, Freight, Data, Land Use, and GIS Committees.

This issue includes a summary of important issues from the two sessions. Several presentations were made over the two days, and highlights and recommendations have been grouped by topic. The Full MTF and Transit Committee minutes are available for review at the Model Task Force Web site: <http://www.dot.state.fl.us/planning/mtf>. All of the summary reports and articles included in this newsletter were presented at the two meetings.

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**Register Now for  
Freight Training in Clearwater  
April 11-12 or April 13-14**

## MODEL CONVERSION STATUS

As of the February meeting, nineteen FSUTMS models are scheduled for conversion and three have been completed; three are in progress; and the remaining 13 models are pending conversion. Models are either being converted to Cube Tranplan as an interim step or being converted directly to Cube Voyager.

## BUILDING THE NEW FSUTMS

The MTF meeting included an extensive discussion on building the new FSUTMS. It was agreed that a schedule needs to be put in place for model conversions, as well as setting priorities for research efforts. The schedule must incorporate the LRTP process. Most MPOs had an LRTP update in 2004, which puts the next round of updates due as early as December of 2008. The schedule needs to include 12-18 months to complete the LRTP, nine months to validate a model, and approximately 6-8 months for Citilabs to finish developing FSUTMS Cube. This leaves only 11 to 13 months to standardize and make decisions on new practices for the new FSUTMS Cube. **The Tri-Chairs asked that every model be converted to the new FSUTMS Cube (Cube Voyager with the FSUTMS standards implemented) and be validated by December 2007.**

Several conversion issues were listed and discussed: timeline, data needs, deadline for standards, research priorities, hardware and Windows requirements, unique difficulties during conversion, and needs for support/resources. The models that are converted early will need to be re-validated with new FSUTMS standards. Ten weeks should be allotted for each model conversion to be completed and finalized and it is assumed that multiple model conversions will be going on simultaneously. All models should be in draft state within the next 12 weeks, followed by a review/comment period. All models should be converted and in place within six months. **FDOT, Central Office has set up a Quality Assurance Team to review model conversions.**

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from page 1*

Voyager handles paths and skims and especially transit/mode choice different from Tranplan. Approximately 2-3 months should be allotted for re-validation of the Cube Voyager model. HOV and toll modeling will be coordinated between the Turnpike and Central Office. Posted speeds should be collected on highways due to questions about accuracy of speeds on highway and transit networks.

FDOT Central Office has earmarked funds for a one-year study of the full time-of-day modeling process to be completed by June 2006. A decision needs to be made on where the time-of-day model will be implemented in the four-step modeling process. In the short term, Central Office will provide a list of transit and time-of-day data needs to be included in a standard scope of work so that the districts and MPOs can include it in their Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Fifteen-minute interval counts will be required for time-of-day models.

### MTF MOTION

Systems Planning Office to recommend to MPOAC to encourage local governments and transit agencies to begin as soon as possible the collection of traffic counts on 15-minute intervals and transit ridership on a time-of-day basis.

### MOTION

Approved unanimously.

## FSUTMS INTERFACE AND FILE MANAGEMENT

*Presentation by: Mike Clarke, Citilabs, Inc.*

Mike Clarke introduced an FSUTMS interface that can be started with a browser as shown. An Internet connection provides full functionality, otherwise the Web site links will not be available but the models will still load. The interface is based on an HTML code and includes a map of Florida, which links you to the model you want to run in Cube Voyager.



Citilabs is working on standards for file naming conventions in FSUTMS Cube. The catalog file includes the model files and three sections: scenarios, applications, and data. A flow chart interface is opened by clicking on the

application and by selecting the file in the flow chart; the actual name of the physical file is shown here. Clicking on the file again will open the file and a right-click will find the file path, but Cube knows where the file is. The descriptors in the flow chart are most important to the user. After the presentation, the MTF emphasized the importance of maintaining metadata on models.

## FSUTMS INTERIM STANDARDS: DESIGN CONCEPTS, CONSIDERATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*Presented by: Yongqiang Wu, Central Office and Mike Clarke, Citilabs, Inc.*

A MTF Working Group has put together recommendations for standardization of the new FSUTMS model. After initial review, comments will be incorporated into the working document and a draft white paper will be posted on the FDOT Systems Planning Web site. Final adoption of interim FSUTMS standards is scheduled for May 2005. During the presentation, three possible steps for conversion from the old FSUTMS were discussed: conversion to Cube Tranplan, to Cube Voyager, or to the new FSUTMS Cube. The standards address directory structure and file naming conventions, zonal data and network formats, model structure and logic, and standard reports.

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near future. Voyager's trip distribution, traffic assignment, and highway/transit network procedures can be implemented immediately. The trip generation, mode choice, and assignment processes will be further evaluated. Some special model applications, such as SUMMIT style model reasonableness checking programs, link-based traffic smoothing, land use checker, and subarea model extraction capabilities will be developed and implemented into the Cube Voyager suite.

Model parameters are not software-specific. All model parameters and coefficients that are currently used in the FSUTMS Tranplan will be retained but will be incorporated into Cube Voyager either in the form of Cube keys or a database file. Standard templates and color schemes displaying network characteristics will be developed and made available in future versions of Cube Voyager. Standard statistics that should be reported within each step of the model are listed. Special programs, such as HEVAL or RMSE, that will work with the new Voyager network files will be developed and incorporated into the Cube software package.

Software enhancements including improved documentation, a model setup program, interactive scripting, an "archive" button, and error message handling, will be forthcoming.

- Comments should be sent directly to Yongqiang Wu [yongqiang.wu@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:yongqiang.wu@dot.state.fl.us).

## INTEGRATION OF ARCGIS AND CUBE

*Presentation by Vidya Mysore, Central Office and Mike Clarke, Citilabs, Inc.*

A presentation was given at the Full MTF Meeting on the integration of ArcGIS and Cube. A core GIS working group was developed to participate in the integration. VIPER Plus and ArcGIS will be embedded into Cube. The design of the highway and network database format plus socioeconomic data format is scheduled for March 2005 and a basic set of functions to display and edit is scheduled for June 2005.

FDOT is in the process of acquiring a street database from GDT or NAVTEQ to develop a basemap, which will be available to all agencies in Florida. All Viper functions and the core GIS functions will still be available. The anticipated release of the new version of Cube will be Summer 2005. The SMP version of Cube Voyager is in beta testing phase, which will enable multiple licensed Cube machines to run one model after hours due to increased database size.

## NTI HOLDS WORKSHOP IN TAMPA

The FDOT Systems Planning Office served as the host agency for a National Transit Institute workshop in Tampa March 7-9, 2005. Nearly 30 modelers, including 16 from Florida, attended the three-day course called "**Multimodal Travel Forecasting.**" The course was taught by Jim Ryan of the Federal Transit Administration and Bill Davidson of Parsons Brinckerhoff. The workshop offered valuable insight into the keys behind developing successful models for both highway and transit travel forecasting.

The first day of instruction helped participants' understanding of the value of high quality multimodal fore-

casting procedures and provided a context for performing technical work. The second and third days focused on analytical tools and techniques for modelers, such as doubly constrained distribution models, logsum computations, and user benefit calculations. The course focused particular attention on applying tests of reasonableness to all model parameters.

Jim and Bill teach this course twice a year in different parts of the country. For information on this and other National Transit Institute courses, check NTI's Web site: [www.ntionline.com](http://www.ntionline.com).

## TRANSIT COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

A Model Task Force (MTF) Transit Committee meeting was held on February 23, 2005. Topic highlights from the meeting are provided below. For additional information on minutes from the meeting you may visit the MTF Web site: <http://www.dot.state.fl.us/planning/mtf>. The following summary minutes and articles were presented at the Transit Committee meeting.

### PUBLIC TRANSIT OFFICE (PTO) UPDATE

Tara Bartee, Central Office PTO, gave an update on recent PTO transit modeling efforts, which include a goal to develop more accurate projections resulting in more Federal Transit Administration (FTA) New Starts funds in Florida. Jim Ryan, FTA, would like to see improved transit modeling data from Florida.

PTO and Systems Planning (SPO) are coordinating transit-modeling efforts such as working on a speed and delay study regarding assumptions on transit speeds and their relationships to highway speeds by facility type. A similar speed delay study was completed in Tampa a few years ago using GPS units to compare auto and transit times along several corridors of different facility types. Results indicated that some assumptions about highway transit speed curves were wrong. Some facility types had a much smaller difference between transit and auto travel times.

PTO will consider doing a survey on transit service planning and may be able to derive data from short-term operations and service methods to use in the models.

The MTF was asked to formulate a plan to provide guidance to the MPOs on how to improve models

based on transit research. Although it is beyond the PTO's scope, model developers can incorporate findings from the research. The MTF could also come up with a boiler-plate scope for MPOs to address data needs based on previous discussions.

### TRANSIT DATA NEEDS

Frank Baron, Chairman of the Data Committee, invited participation on the new committee. **We are looking for interested persons to join the Data Committee; please contact Frank Baron at [fbaron@miamidade.gov](mailto:fbaron@miamidade.gov) or Huiwei Shen at [huiwei.shen@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:huiwei.shen@dot.state.fl.us).**

The need for quality data was discussed, including survey consistency, standardization, and archiving. Mr. Baron urged MPOs and Regional Planning Councils to make funding for data a higher priority. Mr. Baron suggested that the Data Committee make a recommendation on standard data outputs, as well as metadata and glossary formats for each dataset. Also, non-responses to surveys need to be addressed, particularly determining what is different about the non-responders (characteristics) and how we systemically attack that.

### Action items for Committee

Evaluate standard data outputs and research characteristics of non-responders to surveys.

### "T-BEST ARC 2.1: A COMPREHENSIVE STOP-LEVEL TRANSIT BOARDINGS ESTIMATION AND SIMULATION TOOL," FDOT PUBLIC TRANSIT OFFICE, 2005

*By: Ram Pendyala, USF, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering*

Mr. Pendyala provided a brief summary of T-BEST and some of the proposed enhancements that will be incorporated into the software. The previous January 2005 issue of the *Florida Transportation Modeling Newsletter* included a detailed article on T-BEST, Transit Boardings Estimation and Simulation Tool, as presented in Fall 2004.

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This article is available at the following Web site:  
<http://www.dot.state.fl.us/planning/publications/modnews/index.htm>

A bullet summary is provided below:

- Version 2.1 will be released in April at [www.t-best.org](http://www.t-best.org)
- T-BEST estimates the number of boardings at an individual stop defined by route, direction, and time period. T-BEST also differentiates between direct boardings (walk/bike/auto access) and transfer boardings (transit access).
- Other than the Census population, InfoUSA employment, and GDT highway network data already included with the T-BEST software, the only user data required is transit route and stop attribute data by time-of-day.
- Jacksonville T-BEST results were not compared to NERPM travel demand model since T-BEST focuses on short-term improvements. However, T-BEST results were validated at the daily route level compared to JTA's actual route ridership.
- Validation statistics will be included in the User's Guide distributed in April.
- ArcView as part of ArcGIS 9 or higher (\$1,500) is required.
- Enhancements for T-BEST 3.0:
  - Separate AM and PM peak periods
  - Automated calibration and scaling procedures
  - Refined set of equations for estimating boardings
  - Interface with FSUTMS Cube Voyager
  - Enhance stop-level accessibility measure using alternative methodologies
- Enhancements for T-BEST 4.0:
  - Develop sets of equations for different urban area sizes and trip purposes
  - Spatial distribution of boardings to develop stop-to-stop O/D matrix
  - Interface with FTIS to draw up-to-date census, employment, and transit network information
  - Greater sensitivity to route type, technology type, park-n-ride facilities, and special generators

The T-BEST software package is free and may be obtained from Ike Ubaka, FDOT Public Transit Office, by e-mail: [ike.ubaka@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:ike.ubaka@dot.state.fl.us) or Ram Pendyala, USF, by e-mail: [pendyala@eng.usf.edu](mailto:pendyala@eng.usf.edu). The software is available for download at [www.t-best.org](http://www.t-best.org).

## NEW RESEARCH PROJECTS TO ADDRESS CRITICAL MODELING ISSUES IN FLORIDA

*By: Ram Pendyala, USF Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering*

The FDOT Systems Planning Office recently executed contracts with the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of South Florida in Tampa to kick off two new research projects that address critical modeling needs and issues in the state.

These projects directly address recommendations made by the FTA and the Florida Model Task Force for enhancing FSUTMS, particularly in the context of transit modeling in the state.

The first project is titled **Enhancement of Mode Choice Modeling Methods in FSUTMS: Development of Guidelines for Best Practice**. Transit systems modeling has often been regarded as a tedious and resource-intensive process; the transition of FSUTMS to the Cube Voyager modeling software engine provides an opportunity to make the process more user-friendly, transparent, analytically robust, and integrated with the highway modeling process.

The Transit Modeling Committee (Chair: Kevin Feldt, [kfeldt@jtafla.com](mailto:kfeldt@jtafla.com)) of the Florida Model Task Force is leading the effort to implement best practice in transit modeling in the state and will play a pivotal oversight role in the execution of this project.

The following are the specific objectives of the proposed study:

- To review best practices in mode choice modeling around the country in the context of the expectations, guidelines, and requirements articulated by the FTA

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- To identify best practices in mode choice modeling that should be adopted and incorporated in FSUTMS Cube Voyager as standard procedures
- To provide guidance on the development, specification, calibration, and application of mode choice models for transit systems modeling in the state
- To develop a long term plan and strategy for integrating new and enhanced state-of-the-art mode choice modeling procedures in FSUTMS Cube Voyager

The Enhancement of Mode Choice Modeling Methods in FSUTMS: Development of Guidelines for Best Practice project will result in the development of a guidebook for best practice in mode choice modeling together with a series of specific recommendations for enhancing the mode choice model in FSUTMS.

The second project is titled **Development of State-of-the-Art Resources for Florida Travel Survey Data Collection and Analysis**. The transportation modeling and planning community in the state relies heavily on travel survey

data for developing, calibrating, and validating FSUTMS models, evaluating alternatives, assessing impacts of policies and multimodal plans, and quantifying travel demand by purpose, time, location, and mode. The need for reliable and detailed data has been particularly felt in the context of transit modeling in the state.

The Development of State-of-the-Art Resources for Florida Travel Survey Data Collection and Analysis project is aimed at developing resources on travel survey data collection procedures, travel survey databases, and travel demand characteristics for transportation planning and model development in Florida. Specifically, the project objectives are as follows:

- To develop state-of-the-art data collection instruments and procedures for three types of surveys:
  - Household travel surveys
  - On-board transit surveys
  - External roadside surveys
- To develop an online archive of travel survey databases for these three types of surveys for use in Florida at <http://www.floridatravelsurveys.org>.

- To provide an online and offline resource book containing detailed statistics on household and passenger socio-economic and travel characteristics by geographic location and area type
- To develop a document providing guidance on the collection and use of travel survey data for travel demand modeling and forecasting, with particular emphasis on transit modeling

The Florida Model Task Force Data Committee (Chair: Frank Baron, [fbaron@miamidade.gov](mailto:fbaron@miamidade.gov)) will play a pivotal oversight role in the execution of this project.

For more information about these research projects, please contact the respective project managers at the FDOT Systems Planning Office: Yongqiang Wu at (850) 414-4931 or [yongqiang.wu@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:yongqiang.wu@dot.state.fl.us) and Terry Corkery at (850) 414-4903 or [terrence.corkery@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:terrence.corkery@dot.state.fl.us).

## 2004-05 FSUTMS Cube WORKSHOPS & SCHEDULE

To aid transportation professionals in Florida, the Florida Department of Transportation Systems Planning Office will present the following workshops teaching FSUTMS powered by Cube Voyager. The workshops will present the transportation planning modeling methods currently accepted in Florida.

The following three courses will be offered throughout the year:

1. Transition to FSUTMS/Cube Modeling Workshop
2. FSUTMS Comprehensive Modeling Workshop
3. FSUTMS Model Scripting Workshop

In addition to these Systems Planning Office workshops, the FDOT Public Transit Office is developing the FSUTMS/Cube Advanced Transit Modeling Workshop, to be offered later. Please e-mail PTO's **Tara Bartee**, [tara.bartee@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:tara.bartee@dot.state.fl.us) or **Ike Ubaka**, [ike.ubaka@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:ike.ubaka@dot.state.fl.us) for the latest status on this workshop.

Please check the following Web site for courses to be scheduled throughout the year: <http://www.dot.state.fl.us/planning/systems/stm/training/training.htm>.

The current workshop schedule includes two comprehensive modeling workshops in Tampa and Daytona Beach. A description of the workshop is listed below.

### FSUTMS Comprehensive Modeling Workshop

This workshop will provide an overview of the transportation planning process, travel demand forecasting methodologies, and FSUTMS modules and data requirements. Participants will learn to install and execute FSUTMS powered by Cube Voyager, use the menu systems, interpret and create standard output results, and create and edit networks through a series of hands-on computer exercises. Previous Geographic Information System (GIS) experience is helpful for this workshop, but not required. This four-day workshop will be offered twice.

A new series of modeling workshops will be offered in the 2005-06 fiscal year, which begins July 1, 2005. The 05-06 workshop schedule will be developed in June 2005.

### Registration Information

For registration information, log on to the FDOT Systems Planning Office Model Training Web site: <http://www.dot.state.fl.us/planning/systems/stm/training/training.htm>, or contact **Ms. Sandy Colson**: [sandy.colson@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:sandy.colson@dot.state.fl.us), 850-414-4937.

### FSUTMS Comprehensive Modeling Workshop 4/4/05

Hotel: Embassy Suites Tampa  
 Dates: April 4-8, 2005  
 Rate: \$93.00 Single/Double  
 Address: University of South Florida –  
 Busch Gardens  
 3705 Spectrum Blvd.  
 Tampa, Florida 33612  
 Phone: 813.977.7066  
 (Reservations–FSUTMS  
 Comprehensive Workshop)  
 Fax: 813.903.6600  
 Starting Time: Monday 1:00 PM  
 Ending Time: Friday 12:00 Noon  
 Res. Deadline: March 20, 2005  
 Web Site: [www.embassysuitesusf.com](http://www.embassysuitesusf.com)

### FSUTMS Comprehensive Modeling Workshop 05/09/05

Hotel: Hilton Daytona Beach/  
 Ocean Walk Village (formerly  
 Adam's Mark)  
 Dates: May 9-12, 2005  
 Rate: \$95 Single/Double  
 Address: 100 N. Atlantic Avenue  
 Daytona Beach, FL 32118  
 Phone: 386.252.8678  
 (Reservations–FSUTMS  
 Comprehensive Workshop)  
 Fax: 386.253.8841  
 Starting Time: Monday 8:30 AM  
 Ending Time: Thursday 5:00 PM  
 Res. Deadline: April 17, 2005  
 Web Site: [www.hilton.com](http://www.hilton.com)  
 (After January 1, 2005)

## 2005 FREIGHT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (FPD) TRAINING COURSES

The following Freight Professional Development (FPD) courses are scheduled for April to June of FY 2004-2005. Please check the Web site listed below for additional courses throughout the year.

<http://www.dot.state.fl.us/planning/training/freight/default.htm>

### Integrating Freight in the Transportation Planning Process 04/11/05

Hotel: Homewood Suites  
 Dates: April 11,12, 2005  
 Rate: \$99.00 Single/Double  
 Address: 2233 Ulmerton Road  
 Clearwater, FL 33762  
 Phone: 727.573.1500  
 (Reservations – Florida DOT)  
 Fax: 727.573.5950  
 Starting Time: Monday 8:00 AM  
 Ending Time: Tuesday 5:00 PM  
 Res. Deadline: April 4, 2005

- \* Register online for the Integrating Freight in the Transportation Planning Process course
- \* Download, print and fax registration to Systems Planning (pdf file - 21 kb)

### Integrating Freight in the Transportation Planning Process 04/13/05

Hotel: Homewood Suites  
 Dates: April 13,14, 2005  
 Rate: \$99.00 Single/Double  
 Address: 2233 Ulmerton Road  
 Clearwater, FL 33762  
 Phone: 727.573.1500  
 (Reservations – Florida DOT)  
 Fax: 727.573.5950  
 Starting time: Wednesday 8:00 AM  
 Ending Time: Thursday 5:00 PM  
 Res. Deadline: April 4, 2005

- \* Register online for the Integrating Freight in the Transportation Planning Process course
- \* Download, print and fax registration to Systems Planning (pdf file - 21 kb)

### Freight Forecasting in Transportation Planning 06/28/05

Hotel: Homewood Suites  
 Dates: June 28-30, 2005  
 Rate: \$99.00 Single/Double  
 Address: 2233 Ulmerton Road  
 Clearwater, FL 33762  
 Phone: 727.573.1500  
 (Reservations – Florida DOT)  
 Fax: 727.573.5950  
 Starting time: Wednesday 8:00AM  
 Ending Time: Thursday 5:00 PM  
 Res Deadline: June 20, 2005

- \* Register online for the Freight Forecasting in Transportation Planning course
- \* Download, print and fax registration to Systems Planning (pdf file - 21 kb)

### IMPORTANT NOTES FOR EACH CLASS:

1. Please notice the cut off dates for registration and hotel reservations.
2. Participants must make their reservations themselves direct with the hotel.
3. Participants may sign up for only one of the listed sessions for the Integrating Freight Class.
4. **ALL COURSES ARE FREE.**

For more information, please contact:

**Sandy Colson**  
 Systems Planning Office  
 Mail Station 19  
 605 Suwannee Street  
 Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0450  
 E-Mail: [sandy.colson@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:sandy.colson@dot.state.fl.us)  
 Phone: 850.414.4937, Suncom 994.4937  
 Fax: 850.414.4876

## USERS' GROUP MEETING DATES

The **Panhandle Transportation Applications and FSUTMS Users' Group** meets at the Washington County Public Library in Chipley from 1:15 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. For additional information, please contact **Linda Little** 850.638.0250. Meeting dates for 2005 are provided below:

Wednesday, May (To be announced), 2005  
 Wednesday, August 3, 2005  
 Wednesday, November 2, 2005

The **Northeast Florida Transportation Applications Forum** meets at the new First Coast MPO location on 1022 Prudential Drive. The luncheon meetings are held from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. For additional information, please contact **Karen Taulbee** 904.360.5652 or **Jeanette Berk** 904.823.8982. Meeting dates for 2005 are provided below:

Thursday, May 19, 2005  
 Thursday, August 18, 2005  
 Thursday, November 17, 2005

The **Southwest Florida Users' Group** is in the process of establishing a new meeting location. Meeting dates and times will be announced as scheduled. For additional information, please contact **Jim Baxter** 863. 519.2562.

The **Southeast Florida Users' Group** meets at the FDOT-District 4, "Old Auditorium". For additional information, please contact **Phil Steinmiller** 305.377.5896. Meeting dates for 2005 are provided below:

Thursday, April 7, 2005  
 Thursday, June 9, 2005  
 Thursday, September 15, 2005  
 Thursday, November 17, 2005

The **Central Florida Traffic Data Users' Group** meets at the FDOT-District 5 Orlando Urban Office. For additional information, please contact **Simone Babb** 407.482.7876.

The **Tampa Bay Applications Group** meets at the FDOT-District 7 Tampa Office from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. For additional information, please contact **Danny Lamb** 813.975.6437. Meeting dates for 2005 are provided below:

Thursday, May 19, 2005  
 Thursday, August 18 2005  
 Thursday, November 3, 2005

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