

OCTOBER 2010

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# ONE 2 ONE

WITH DIRECTOR NANCY RICHARDSON

I thought about using “the dog ate my homework” excuse for this month’s column, and just have them reprint a prior column, but I just couldn’t do it. I’m under the gun to get the column done and am experiencing the unfortunate combination of being really busy and having a mild case of writer’s block. But, as is almost always the case with me, I feel guilty about not following through or fulfilling my responsibility...so, here I am, pencil in hand, hoping for a flash of creative inspiration, but please go easy on me this month. Here is a little bit about what is going on right now...

This is an interesting time. Autumn is always a key time for us at DOT. With a chill in the air and the turning of leaves, we know winter is on its way. Winter is our most challenging, yet satisfying, time and the weeks leading up to winter are filled with anticipation. Like squirrels that store up nuts for the long winter, this is the time that we ready ourselves for winter. We prepare equipment, fill salt sheds and take steps to be fully staffed and trained for what lies ahead.

I know there is concern about being sufficiently staffed and trained in time for winter’s onset. The State Employee Retirement Incentive Program (SERIP) has left us with lots of positions to fill. We are working to fill the 176 SERIP positions (of the 355 total) that we are authorized to refill, but the approval process has not gone as fast as we had hoped. We will continue to do what we can to get positions through

the process, but parts of the process are out of DOT’s direct control. It was recently brought to my attention that another option would be to skip winter this year. In fact, recently a certain GOA from the Hanlontown garage predicted there will be no snow this winter; I am hoping he knows something the rest of don’t know!

This is also the time of year when we must finalize our legislative proposals, including our budget request for the next fiscal year. The divisions have worked hard to develop a budget proposal that funds our most critical operating needs, while meeting the Governor’s expectation that we hold the budget to status quo with—or no increase over—the current year’s budget. The proposed FY2012 budget funds us at the post-SERIP staffing level and shifts funding to try to address increased costs in areas such as salt. We believe it is a budget that will provide employees what we need to do our jobs and allow the DOT to continue to provide the services and programs that lowans depend on.

Every time of year seems to be a good time for the rumor mill, and now is no exception. I have recently heard there is a rumor making its way around DOT about there being furloughs and mandatory unpaid days (MUDs) planned again for this fiscal year. Of course, I cannot predict the future, nor am I so naïve as to ever say “never,” but I can tell you what I know—or, in this case, do not know. I have not been told, nor been involved in any discussions,

about furloughs or MUDs this year. I hope this continues to be the case, but if I become aware of any such discussions, I will let you know.

Finally, it is also election season. There is nothing we do as American citizens that is more important than vote. No matter what political party you align with, where you stand on the issues, or which candidates you support—VOTE! Vote, even if for no reason other than to preserve your right to complain!! And, one final thought about elections... regardless of the outcomes of elections, the DOT stays relevant. What we at DOT do touches every lowan in some way, and usually in many ways. What we do matters to people, before and after elections. And, even though this is a season of change, that won’t ever change.

*Nancy*

# Adam takes over helm of Highway Division

**R**enewing a focus on the Iowa DOT's most valuable resource - our employees - is what John Adam brings to the table as new director of the Highway Division. Adam had been serving as interim director since February. "Of immediate concern is refilling as many vacant positions as we can, as expeditiously as possible. After losing so many staff to the State Employee Retirement Incentive Program (SERIP), we need to quickly refill as many positions as is allowed, particularly the winter maintenance positions because our winter maintenance season begins Oct. 15, which is just around the corner. We also have numerous other critical vacant positions spread throughout the division that we need to aggressively fill," said Adam.

"Longer term, as demands on the Highway Division and the department continue to increase faster than available funding, we need to continue to find ways to deliver services to the public more efficiently. We need to expend our resources in the most efficient means possible, and through the efforts of many people across several divisions, we're positioned to take advantage of technological advances, such as the linear referencing system (LRS) and geographic information system (GIS), which will help us more effectively apply asset management principles, in a geospatial context, to both our physical infrastructure and operational resources," Adam said. "I'm strongly supportive of such advancements and will encourage staff to continue to develop and implement emerging technologies to help us meet increasing demands. With a static or even declining staff, and without substantial additional funding, we need to engage in technological advancements and applications to effectively deliver services and maintain the transportation system."

If the past several extreme winters demonstrate a trend and are not just outliers, then winter maintenance is an example of where we'll be challenged. "The recent retirement of 355 Iowa DOT employees and the pace at which we can replace some of those employees will make this winter season particularly challenging," he said. But Adam pointed out, "We're aggressively approving vacancies to have as many positions as possible filled by the start of the winter maintenance season. We're also planning to pilot Global Positioning System/Automatic Vehicle Location (GPS/AVL) technology in 20 maintenance vehicles this winter to assess how this technology might improve winter operational efficiency through more effective material application and management of snow removal operations."

Adam says the DOT must also continue to have a strong and capable presence in construction management in the field. "With the high number of recent retirements and issues related to span of control, maintaining the proper staffing levels and oversight for construction and materials contract administration on construction projects remains a priority," he said. "Although, due to timing, we won't be able to replace many



of the construction and materials vacancies until after this year's construction season, we want to get the positions filled and be ready with a full staff as we enter into construction season next spring."

Long-term funding availability for the highway

component of the five-year program is another area to which the Highway Division must respond. Adam said, "Current funding levels are not allowing us to keep up with system demands through our normal bridge and pavement rehabilitation cycles. We need to extend the life of our pavements and bridges as long as possible through timely and effective maintenance strategies. With our field staffing levels permanently reduced, I am supporting an increase in contract maintenance funding."

Boosting the contract maintenance budget for both bridges and highways will add preservation capabilities, despite our limitations in staffing and operational resources. Adam said, "We have received a commitment from the Iowa Transportation Commission to increase our focus on preventative maintenance and preservation of the existing highway system by an annual increase of \$3 million for contract maintenance. This increase will allow the districts to be more aggressive in scheduling preventative maintenance activities, such as crack sealing, slurry applications and thin-lift surface treatments. It will also allow more of our bridge repair needs to be addressed sooner. A relatively small investment in the correct maintenance application at the right point in the life of a pavement surface or bridge will pay for itself many times over in extending the life of that pavement or structure."

Prior to his appointment as Highway Division director, Adam served for eight years as the director of the Highway Division's Statewide Operations Bureau. Prior to the bureau appointment, Adam spent 19 years in various engineering positions with the department in contracts, materials testing and inspection, and construction. Before joining the Iowa DOT in 1983, Adam worked several years for PDM Corp., Des Moines, in various positions involved in the design, fabrication and construction of structural and specialty steel applications.

A native of Keota, Iowa, Adam is a 1980 graduate of Iowa State University with a bachelor's degree in construction engineering. Adam and his wife, Penny, a former DOT employee who now works in corporate real estate for Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, live in Ames. They have two grown children: Ryan, a graduate student in biomedical engineering at the University of Iowa, and Katie, who works in retail management for Eddie Bauer in Bozeman, Mont.

## Updates to Weatherview include DOT-only information to assist stormfighters

The Iowa DOT boasts a big improvement to an already popular Web site. This winter, Weatherview has been updated with even more useful features.

Weatherview has been in use at the Iowa DOT since 1999. Early versions of the Web site featured information gathered from the roadway weather information system (RWIS) and automated weather observing system (AWOS) stations around the state. By clicking on an RWIS or AWOS icon on a map, users could view all weather information provided by that station, including pavement temperature, air temperature, dew point, relative humidity and other data. More recently, stationary camera images were added at selected sites to show snapshots of weather and traffic conditions.

Tina Greenfield from the Office of Maintenance coordinates development of the Weatherview site with a consultant. "The changes to Weatherview this year are pretty dramatic. For the public side, we are in the process of adding a looping radar layer, additional traffic information and a photo gallery. But the biggest change will be seen internally where we've added an entire section just for DOT use."

### DOT-only features

Greenfield says one of the DOT-only features is designed to assist field personnel by alerting crews via E-mail or text message when weather stations observe high winds, low visibility, potential frost development or precipitation. Another DOT feature, the "crew on/off interface," will give maintenance garage supervisors the opportunity to graphically show when crews are on the roads for snow runs.

The DOT side of the site includes an archive of information. "Users can access a one-month archive of all data collected and used on Weatherview from the 'reports' tab," said Greenfield. "All RWIS and AWOS information continues to be archived on the Iowa Environmental Mesonet, just as it has been since 1996.

"Some field personnel were trained over the summer on the new features, with more training to come this fall," Greenfield said. "So far we have had very positive feedback."

### Changes to the public side

Some planned items on the public side of the site include a semi-transparent looping radar over the existing map. Greenfield said, "Users can turn several layers on or off, including the radar loop, to get the specific information they need."

A new traffic speed map layer will show whether traffic is moving at normal speeds by a green arrow on the map, slower than normal with a yellow arrow or much slower with a red arrow. "You will still be able to click on any site and get the full details, but adding the graphics for traffic speed will give people a way to tell at a glance where there are traffic issues caused by weather," said Greenfield.

The image gallery will show all of the current views from each RWIS camera. Just like the traffic information, each camera view will still be available by clicking on an individual RWIS icon for a location. This is one more way to consolidate the images in one place if someone is only interested in seeing the images.

Weatherview users who are not tied to a desktop or laptop computer will soon be able to access the site on any Web-enabled phone. Greenfield explained, "The site has had simple features for mobile phones before, but the new application will enable mobile users to see more of the other updated features of the site, although it will still be somewhat limited for Blackberry users."



1... 2 ... 3 ...

## new sign inventory system now in place

This is the one of a series of articles related to the Iowa DOT's geographic information system (GIS).

**D**rive down any state highway in Iowa and try to count the road signs. Imagine having to track the location, condition and history of every sign in an entire DOT district. Dave Matulac, transportation engineer specialist in the Office of Traffic and Safety, says, "In the past, each of the six districts had developed a different way to manage their sign inventory, including Access databases, spreadsheets or hard copies," he said. "There was no efficient way to retrieve statewide information. For example, to determine how many signs needed to be replaced when the interstate speed limit was changed to 70 mph, each district had to be separately contacted. Response times would vary based on how quickly they could search their inventory."

Jeff McQueen, equipment operator senior in the Sidney garage, was in charge of logging the sign inventory for his area. "For years we had a hard-copy list in a loose leaf binder. When that needed updating, I would drive the roads and make changes, and then write a new list. It was very time-consuming."

Nearly five years ago, a task force was assembled to develop standards for a statewide sign inventory system.

"We basically wanted a program that could inventory signs, query/search the data and edit it, create simple reports and track sign history. Having this system in place gives the DOT a method to meet the federal guidelines for maintaining sign retroreflectivity. It can also assist the districts in budgeting for signs because they now have a more effective way to evaluate which signs need replaced," said Matulac. "We tested the beta version in the field and then incorporated the maintenance employees' comments into the final product. Each district will decide how they will maintain their inventory list, but all the information will go into a central database to make analysis much easier."

Location is a key component in the sign inventory system designed by InTrans at Iowa State University. Utilizing laptop computers equipped with global positioning system (GPS) units to locate signs and collect attribute information for use in the inventory, information can now be seamlessly combined with other DOT GIS data resources. The current map-based sign asset management system can provide the user with all the pertinent information for a sign with one click of a mouse on an electronic map. Brad Cutler, executive officer 2 in Traffic and Safety, said, "The system brings together a ton of information that is going to have widespread impact throughout the DOT. Plus, by utilizing GIS technology

we're speaking in a language that is visual. We're looking at assets that are somewhere and putting this information on a map makes a lot of sense. I can't believe we ever did without this system."

McQueen says the new method of tracking sign assets works well. "Several of the maintenance staff in the districts have been trained on using the GPS units with our laptops. At first there were a few bugs, but Dave listened to our input and took our suggestions to make the new system even better," he said. "The sign inventory in District 4 is now all logged in and we can use the system to manage the inventory much more efficiently."



# It might not look like much now



SPAULDING CENTER for TRANSPORTATION  
Iowa Transportation Museum

**H**owever, supporters of the Iowa Transportation Museum (ITM) say the set of brick buildings on Spring Street in Grinnell will become a showcase of Iowa's rich transportation history, showing Iowans what transportation has contributed to Iowa's development, culture and economy.

Over the past several years, a group of transportation devotees, initially inspired by Iowa State University Professor Stan Ring (deceased) and DOT Local Systems Engineer Lowell Richardson (retired), established the ITM, a nonprofit corporation with tax-exempt charitable gift status. The museum, plus a collection of related programs and resources, is being developed at the former site of the Spaulding Manufacturing Co. in Grinnell. The four-building, full-city-block complex includes 125,000 square feet of floor space; is on the National Registry of Historic Places; and will be known as the Spaulding Center for Transportation.

At the groundbreaking ceremony held Sept. 1 for what organizers call "Phase 1" of the ITM's construction program, ITM President Gerald Schnepf introduced event attendees including Iowa DOT Director Nancy Richardson; U.S. Congressman Leonard Boswell; former Governor Robert Ray; State Senator Tom Rielly, chair of the Senate Transportation Committee; and Grinnell Mayor Gordon Canfield, who is also on the ITM Board of Directors. Others in attendance were former DOTers Ian MacGillivray, ITM vice president; Lowell Richardson, one of the initiators of the project, and Bonnie Vetter, former Iowa Transportation Commission member and current IMT board member.



*Iowa DOT Director Nancy Richardson, (third from left) joins other dignitaries in a groundbreaking ceremony for Phase 1 of the Iowa Transportation Museum facility.*

In comments to the crowd, Mayor Canfield broached the idea of a passenger rail depot at the south end of the museum property adjacent to the Iowa Interstate Railroad (the former Rock Island Railroad) line. Congressman Boswell applauded the idea, and told the mayor and all in attendance that he would do whatever he could to assist with the project.

All the dignitaries who spoke complimented the city of Grinnell on coming together to protect the historic property. For its part, the Iowa DOT has provided more than \$1.8 million in transportation enhancement funds. Another nearly \$3.3 million has been obtained through federal earmarks. Phase 1 is expected to include restoration of the administration office building and constructing a two and one-half story glass atrium connector to the adjacent warehouse building. Phase 2 will include renovations to the warehouse building. Organizers say completing the entire project, including exhibits, requires an additional \$20 million.

## A little history

The Spaulding Manufacturing Company is one of about 100 Iowa car manufacturers that did not survive the transition to mass production. The original Spaulding Carriage and Automotive Works was founded in 1876. By 1909, when the company announced its intentions to build a car, it was producing 10,000 carriages and wagons a year, and employing up to 300 in its Grinnell factories.

The Spaulding automobile was produced from 1909 to 1916. As might be expected, it was a more popular car in Iowa than elsewhere - although it did establish dealerships as far away as California and Texas. In each of the better years, several hundred cars were produced, but by 1915 the handwriting was on the wall. While stronger, more powerful and more luxurious than Ford's Model T, the company was never able to achieve true assembly line production capability and could not charge enough for the cars to remain profitable. By 1929 Spaulding was no more and the buildings had become occupied by other businesses.

To learn how you can help this effort, log on to <http://iowatransportationmuseum.com/index.php>.

## Improvements made thanks to employee input

A survey is only as good as the follow through. In 2005 the Highway Division's Winter Equipment Committee conducted a survey of Iowa DOT equipment operators. The survey asked questions about the general cab environment and about specific equipment performance for front plows, underbody plows, wings, spreaders, liquid systems and anti-icing trailers. The Winter Equipment Committee made several changes based on this survey.

A new survey this summer showed improvement in several areas: the frame of the anti-icing trailer, the ability to keep snow off the windshield when using a front plow, increased ease of use for liquid systems, and more satisfaction with the operation of spreader spinners.

Items that rated low in the 2010 survey included the anti-icing trailer braking system and ability of the underbody plow to remove slush. A third item, benching by a wing blade, was rated low, but further analysis deemed wing performance acceptable.

The Winter Equipment Committee focused its efforts on the two lowest-rated items. The issues identified with the anti-icing trailers' braking systems related to rust building up on the brake components to a point where they had to be replaced on a yearly basis. To help reduce this problem, the committee had the electric system converted to an air-operated system on two trailers. While initial testing of the air braking system was promising, use in operations showed the brake components still rusted. The committee will continue to work on this problem.

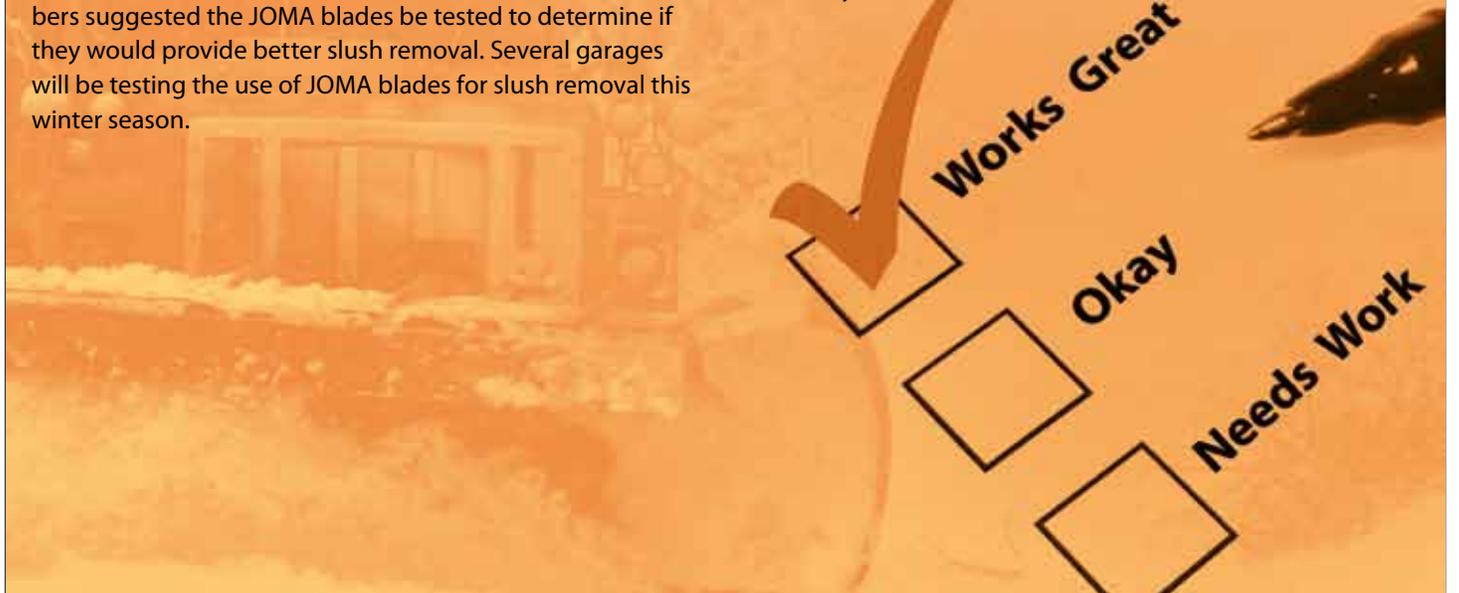
The second item that rated low on the survey was the ability of the underbody plow to remove slush. The committee decided that a standard carbide blade on the underbody plow was not effective for slush removal. Committee members suggested the JOMA blades be tested to determine if they would provide better slush removal. Several garages will be testing the use of JOMA blades for slush removal this winter season.

The wing's ability to bench snow was rated low in the survey, but the committee realized an error in the survey question led to the low rating because the front-mount, medium-duty wing is not designed to bench snow. The low rating on the survey confirmed this fact. Discussion on this item included researching a control for the wing, allowing it to follow the contour of the shoulder (similar to a combine head) so the wing would remain a set distance above the rock on the shoulder to save on rock being removed by the wing. This was deemed impractical due to snow covering the shoulder and the inability of a device to sense the contour ahead of the wing. It was also decided that the operating speed makes this fix impractical. The Elkader shop's adjustable wing wheel has also been discussed as a possible solution. If other shops have tried a solution to this issue, please contact Jim Dowd at jim.dowd@dot.iowa.gov.

### Survey specifics

The 2010 survey yielded results from 575 individuals with an average of 15.3 years experience. All six districts were represented and nearly all respondents were full-time employees. Nearly two-thirds of respondents operate equipment that was purchased prior to 2002. Approximately 300 fewer respondents answered the 2010 survey compared to the 2005 survey. The survey asked operators to rate questions on a numerical scale with 1 being "needs work," 2 as "okay" and 3 relating to "works great."

Survey respondents provided information on the type of equipment they use and perceived effectiveness of that equipment. The full summary of the survey can be found on DOTNET under the maintenance section. The Winter Equipment Committee will continue to work on the items listed on the survey as "needs work" in the months to come.



# Material balance key to snowfighter success

Iowa DOT snowfighters gearing up for another winter season will have one more tool to help keep Iowa roadways safer. A new firmware program being installed into all existing Cirus – SpreadSmart spreader controllers in snowplows this season will assist operators in calculating just the right balance of liquid and granular snow and ice-fighting materials.

The transition from putting down salt in a granular form and prewetting it with brine to putting down a majority of the application in a liquid form has complicated the calculations each operator makes before each snow run. Brine has proven to work more quickly than granular materials in many cases. There is also less waste with brine compared to granular because brine cannot blow off the road. That said, the best snow and ice-fighting strategy is the proper balance of granular material and brine.

Jim Dowd of the Office of Maintenance said, "The previous practice of laying down the majority of an application with granular salt and then pre-wetting with a small amount of liquid is changing. "We're changing our practices now

to more prewetting; that is, the majority of the application will now be in a liquid form rather than granular. By doing this the operator can use less granular material because the salt that is contained in the brine is subtracted from the granular application rate. This saves the state money, while still keeping the roads as clear as possible."

Calculating just the right combination of salt and brine has been tricky, but the new firmware program in the controllers solves the complicated mathematics with the touch of a few buttons. Ron Wolf, District 6 mechanic out of the Dyersville garage, said, "When using the 'load-rate calculator' feature, you can enter the amount of dry material you want to apply and the length of the run. When you enter the amount of liquid on board, the controller will consider the amount of salt contained in the brine, 2.2 pounds per gallon, and reduce the amount of dry material being applied to keep the total amount of salt applied to the road at the desired rate. The program will also tell you how much dry material to load to make the route. It will count down how many miles remain on the route,



and the gallons of liquid and granular material that are left on board over the course of the snow run. The operator can watch all of this from the display screen."

Wolf also says the new firmware is user friendly. He said, "You can see the adjustments as you make them, and the rest of the calculations are still displayed while you are making adjustments."

The cost of the new firmware was minimal compared to the amount of money the department hopes to save using less salt. "We are always trying to find new ways to conserve salt, while providing the highest level of service we can to the traveling public," added Dowd.



*This controller will assist snowfighters in calculating the amount of wet and dry material needed for a snow run, saving on both time for the operator and materials due to over-application.*

## Iowa-Illinois peer exchange

**T**here is life across the Mississippi River. Sometimes as an Iowa state agency, we think our operations are contained strictly inside our geographic borders. While most maintenance activities are tied to a specific garage or district, much can be learned by sharing information between districts and even with other states.

On Aug. 3, 15 members of the Illinois DOT crossed the river with some of their equipment to attend a “snow and ice topics” peer exchange at the Davenport garage. From Iowa, 17 maintenance employees from Districts 2, 5 and 6 were on hand to discuss Iowa’s way of doing things.

Each group came prepared to share. The format of the day included presentations on a topic followed by a hands-on demonstration for equipment-related information. Both Iowa and Illinois DOTers presented information related to front plows, wings and underbodies. Dick Banowetz, highway maintenance supervisor in De Witt, presented information on Iowa’s living snowfence program. Sheri Anderson from the Office of Maintenance talked about Iowa’s updated roadway weather information system (RWIS) and the new Weatherview (see related article on page 4).

After a lively discussion over lunch, the demonstrations continued with both Iowa and Illinois discussing spreader technology and the use of liquids in winter operations. Banowetz said, “Because we are working on the east border

of Iowa and interact with several garages in Illinois, I think it was a good chance to meet with our counterparts across the river. The meeting and demonstrations gave us an idea of what kind of equipment they have available, as well as new things they are trying.”

Ben Hucker, an ISU engineering co-op student, organized the peer exchange between his home state of Illinois and the Iowa DOT. Hucker has been working with several offices within the Iowa DOT for several years and thought the idea of a peer exchange would be a way for Iowa to see how their neighbors maintain the roads on the other side of the river. Hucker comes by his interest in maintenance naturally; his father, Bruce, is the district maintenance engineer in Ottawa, Ill. Both Huckers thought the peer exchange would be a great way to share knowledge and experience. All participants agreed that was the case and are looking forward to future peer exchanges.



*The Iowa and Illinois DOTs shared equipment information at a peer exchange in Davenport Aug. 3.*

# What would you remember about Iowa?

Sometimes you only get one shot to make a good impression. Because Iowa is nestled in the heart of our country and is blessed with the intersection of two major interstates, millions of travelers visit our state each year, if only for a few hours. For some who are just passing through, a stop at one of 40 interstate rest areas might be the only glimpse they have into our “beautiful land.” For more than a decade, the Iowa DOT has been working to replace the 1960s vintage rest areas that serve interstate travelers. Steve McMenamin, rest area administrator in the Office of Maintenance, said, “These buildings have served the public well, but they were designed using traffic projections 20 years out. Most of these buildings are now about 40 years old and the needs of travelers have changed.”

Since the rest area reconstruction program began in the 1990s, 14 rest areas have been built using the “new generation” design. Most of the new buildings use the same basic footprint, but each rest area has a theme that incorporates local or historic information and public art representative of the geographic location. Mark Masteller, the Iowa DOT’s chief landscape architect, says a consultant design team is responsible to research and develop new rest area themes.

“The design team includes all the engineering disciplines, an architect, a landscape architect and an artist. This team researches local points of interest and puts together a concept that is brought back to the DOT for review and approval,” said Masteller.

Currently under construction, the westbound Interstate 80 rest area near Adair has a sustainable energy theme. Masteller said, “The focal point of this site is a giant wind blade positioned outside the building. When you see the wind generators on the horizon, it is difficult to get a perspective of just how massive the blades are. The sculpture at this site will show visitors the true size of the wind blade.” The site is scheduled for completion in early 2011.

Next on the construction list is the northbound I-380 rest area near Cedar Rapids set to begin in 2011. The emphasis for this facility is planned as a tribute to Grant Wood, a native of Cedar Rapids most famous for his “American Gothic” painting.

Features of the updated rest areas include vending opportunities provided by the Department for the Blind; free wireless Internet service; motorist information kiosks that include weather data; changeable message boards for

*Rest areas, continued on next page*

*Artistic rendering of Adair rest area, which features a sustainable energy theme*



*Rest areas, continued on next page*

## *Rest areas, continued from previous page*

emergency messages; and tourism information and welcome centers at five locations staffed by volunteers from the Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED). McMenamin said, "We have long-standing relationships with the Department for the Blind and IDED. Our agencies work very well together and the services they are able to add at the rest areas are valuable to motorists."

Along with coordinating services with other state agencies, the rest areas support local businesses by hiring janitorial and lawn care services locally for each location. "We currently have 25 janitorial and lawn care companies," said McMenamin. "We support and promote the use of local businesses for these services. All of our rest areas are staffed by employees of Iowa-based small businesses."



*Underwood rest area featuring Loess Hills theme, which is reflected in the backlit columns located in front of the main entrance*



*Hand-painted tile mosaic of historic "Stuck in the Mud" photo on interior wall of the Story City rest area*

*(Below) Story City rest area featuring a transportation theme*



## Retirements

The following is information supplied by the retiree's work unit. All retirements are under the State Employee Retirement Incentive Program (SERIP).

### District 3



**John Wieck**, highway technician associate in the Spirit Lake garage retired June 24 after working for the Iowa DOT for 29 years. He said, "I am really going to miss the camaraderie with all the great fellow employees I have worked with over the years. Good luck to all in the future. Remember you serve the public and I am now the public. (John Wieck's photo was omitted from the August INSIDE by mistake.)"



**Irene Herr**, engineering operations technician in Waterloo, retired April 23,

exactly 31 years to the day after she began work in the Waterloo construction residency. She had worked as a maintenance operations assistant since 1991.

### Aviation



**Allen Sells**, planning aide 3 in the Office of Aviation, retired June 24 after 30 years of service.

### Document Services



(From left) **Mary Pat Crawford**, typist-advanced, 21 years of service; **Dale Larrew**, reproduction equipment operator 2, 27 years of service; **Joyce Platter**, reproduction equipment operator 2, 16 years of service; **Lorraine Johnson**, mail clerk 1, 23 years of service;

**Bruce Dutton**, public service executive 4, 42 years of services; **Dixie Magden**, reproduction equipment operator 2, 19 years of service; **Bob Whitman**, microfilm operator 3, 33 years of service; **Diane Lange**, management analyst 2, 36 years of service. Not pictured is **Lee Lawson**, driver, 27 years of service. Lawson retired April 29. Johnson retired May 7. Whitman retired June 1. Dutton retired June 23. All others retired June 24.

### Program Management

*No photo available*

Rynie Foss, transportation planner 3, retired June 24 after 37 years of service.



**Gene Jones**, transportation planner 4, retired June 24 after 38 years of service.

*Retirements, continued on next page*

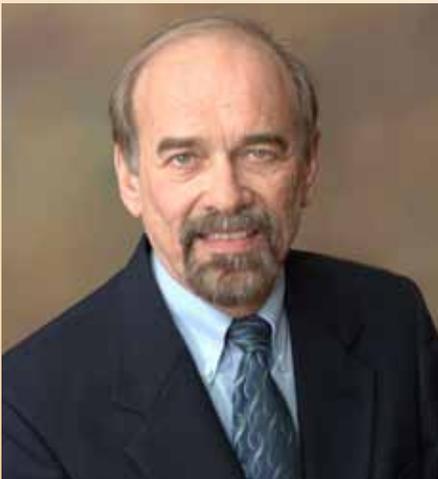
Retirements, continued from previous page

## Public Transit



**Ruth Vander Schaaf**, program planner 3, retired June 24 after 39 years of service.

## Policy and Legislative Services



**Dale Vander Schaaf**, executive officer 2, retired June 24 after 36 years of service.



Three employees from the Office of Public Transit retired June 24. Pictured with DOT Director Nancy Richardson are from left: **Samil Sermet**, transportation planner 2, with 28 years of service; **Peter Hallock**, executive officer 3, with 26 years of services; and **J.P. Golinvaux**, transportation planner 2, with 31 years of service.

## Rail Transportation



*Tammy Nicholson, Office of Rail Transportation director, Lindon Bowen and Peggy Baer, former director of the Office of Rail Transportation*

**Lindon Bowen**, track inspector, recently retired after 30 years of service.

## Systems Planning



**Nancy Anania**, executive officer 2, retired June 24 after 33 years of service.



**Ernie Corbin**, construction technician, retired April 24 after 41 years of service.

*Retirements, continued from previous page*

## Systems Planning (continued)



**Ralph Crawford**, transportation planner 2, retired June 24 after 40 years of service.

*No photo available*

**Bill Lutz**, program planner 3, retired April 24 after 37 years of service.



**Wendele Maysent**, transportation planner 3, retired June 24 after 37 years of service.



**Tara Narotam**, administrative assistant 1, retired May 24 after 37 years of service.



**Stan Peterson**, transportation planner 4, retired June 24 after 32 years of service.

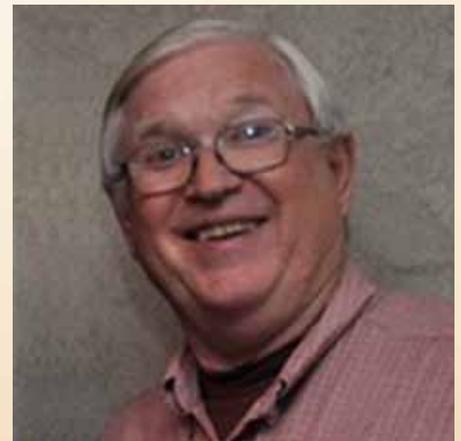


**Patrick Sell**, transportation planner 1, retired June 24 after 45 years of service.

## Transportation Data



**Wayne Gibbs**, planning aide 2, retired June 24 with 32 years of service.



**Tom Olson**, program planner 2, retired June 24 with 48 years of service.



**Bill Samuell**, program planner 2, retired June 24 after 45 years of service.

*Retirements, continued on page 17*



## Kudos!

*These are letters that have been submitted to the editor. They may have been edited for length and continuity.*

To: Iowa DOT  
From: Kelly Kretlow

I just wanted to send a brief message to say thank you for all the hard work the DOT did to get U.S. 65 reopened on Sunday, Aug. 15. It looked like it must have been a lot of work, and they did a great job to get it open and able to travel on in a short amount of time! I was traveling to the Tama County area on Saturday afternoon and was unable to travel on U.S. 65, but was greatly surprised to be able to drive it back home to Ankeny Sunday afternoon! So kudos to the crew that did the hard work. Thank you!

To: Iowa DOT  
From: Benjamin Olejnik

I recently interacted with Cindy Watkins at the Clinton driver's license station. I am a former Illinois resident who recently moved to Iowa for a job. I must say, with all the experiences I have had with driver licensing personnel in Illinois, my experience with Cindy was delightful. While already enduring the stress of a move and a career change, I quite frankly dreaded going to the driver's license station. I arrived with all of the paperwork that was needed and was waited on promptly. Cindy was polite, knowledgeable and professional. It was a refreshing experience to work with someone who made the process of acquiring a driver's license seamless and stress free.

*(Editor's note: Cindy Watkins is a driver's license clerk in the Clinton DL station.)*

To: Dena Gray-Fisher, Multimedia Services  
From: Sue Brekke, Support Services

I want to thank you and your staff for the excellent service in getting the information ready for the Sept. 11 auction. I do not usually get information to your staff so late and the assistance I received from everyone was phenomenal. Please thank your staff for their excellent service.

*(Editor's note: The Office of Multimedia Services prepares a flyer, newspaper advertisement and Web site to support Iowa DOT auctions.)*

To: Iowa DOT  
From: David Hrycewicz

Thank you very much for the road condition updates made available via Twitter. This saved us time Sunday, Aug. 15, as we drove U.S. 30 west headed towards U.S. 65/Iowa 330 on the way to Des Moines. Just past Cedar Rapids we received a Tweet announcing the reopening of U.S. 65/Iowa 330 - meaning that we could proceed as planned without detour. Thanks, Iowa DOT!

*(Editor's note: The Office of Multimedia Services produces news releases that are sent to subscribers via Twitter and several other electronic media.)*

To: Tina Hargis, director, Office of Vehicle Services  
From: Jim Romar

I am writing a letter of appreciation for Carolyn Hait in your office. I have applied for a bond to acquire an Iowa title for a vehicle I purchased out of state. I was unfamiliar with the process and had a lot of questions, and Carolyn answered my E-mails and a phone call when I had a specific question.

I am a retired Des Moines police officer and know that sometimes it can be difficult to stay current with citizens considering the limited resources we have to deal with and an ever-increasing work load.

Please pass on to Carolyn Hait and her chain of command my thanks, she was helpful and professional with my case.

*(Editor's note: Carolyn Hait is a clerk-specialist in the Office of Vehicle Services.)*

## Family happenings

### District 2

*Lu Mohorne*



Monday, Aug. 2, was the date for the Sixth Annual District 2 Golf Party, hosted by Lisa and Bob Welper, District 2 local systems engineer. The event was held at West Hills Golf Course in Nora Springs. Thirty-one people attended the event this year that included golf, prizes, awards, and a picnic. Dan Christeson, mechanic in the Mason City garage, won the "highly coveted" team spirit award this year. Pictured with Dan (left to right) are his teammates and co-workers; Brad Huso, recently retired DOTer; Todd Mennega and Mark Nel from the Mason City garage.

### District 5

*Brenda Hadley*



Ziva Conger Green was born to Mike and Kary Green Aug. 2. Baby Ziva weighed 8 pounds 1 ounce, and was 19 inches long. Mommy Kary is an engineering office assistant at the District 5 maintenance office. Baby Ziva joins big brother Coy, 6, who is very proud of his baby sister!

## Thank yous

I wanted to thank everyone at the DOT for all their help and support during my 31 years at the DOT. I wanted to give a special thanks to Dawn Westrum in the Office of Employee Services for all her help assisting me get everything in order for an early retirement.

Eileen Nelson, retired  
Former information specialist 2,  
Information Technology Division

\*

I'd like to sincerely thank everyone who called, sent cards, stopped by, and donated time to catastrophic leave while I was ill and off work for seven weeks with two different surgeries. Your generosity and caring is overwhelming and greatly appreciated.

Mary Thompson, secretary 2  
Office of Contracts

## In memory



Donald "Duane" Littleton, 81, died Aug. 31 at the Cass County Memorial Hospital in Atlantic. Littleton was born June 11, 1929, to William Hobart and Beatrice J. (Atkinson) Littleton in Elliott. He lived in Elliott until the age of 14 when the family moved to Anita, where he attended high school. He served in active duty in the United States Army from 1951–1953 receiving the Korean Service

Medal, United Nations Service Medal and Combat Infantry Badge. Upon his honorable discharge, he returned to Anita and in 1953 married Bonnie Lou Christensen at the United Methodist Church.

For 38 years he worked as an equipment operator for the Iowa DOT until his retirement in 1991. Littleton was a member of the Anita Fire Department for 20 years, serving as chief for eight years. He was a member of the American Legion, and served as commander of the VFW. He was also a member of the Church of Christ in Anita. Littleton enjoyed fishing, as well as having coffee with friends at the Weather Vane Café in Anita, where he was considered a permanent fixture.

Most importantly of all was his love for his family. He is survived by his wife, Bonnie of Anita; his children, Kevin (Sandi) of Des Moines, Rebecca Ray of Anita, Delbert (Jodi) of Atlantic, and Darren (Jean) of Council Bluffs. He has 18 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren, and many other relatives and friends.



## All for One - here's your chance to get started.

The 2010 All for One Auction will be held Monday through Thursday, Oct. 25-28. To donate items, contact Deanne Popp at 515-239-1527 or [deanne.popp@dot.iowa.gov](mailto:deanne.popp@dot.iowa.gov). Then go online Oct. 25-28 to bid on items. Winning bidders are required to pick up and pay for their items no later than Thursday, Nov. 4. Proceeds will be split evenly between the Toys for Tots and Food Drive campaign, unless otherwise designated by the winning bidder.



**T**he All for One Committee invites all DOT employees to participate in the annual Toys for Tots and Food Drive campaigns. More lowans than ever are in need and the same ol' same ol' campaign events could use some updating. Your fresh ideas are needed in both the central complex and field offices.

### What you can do

- **Commit to the Committee.** Committee members volunteer their time to attend meetings and help plan campaign events.
- **It's hip to be a rep.** An office representative is the "go to" person in each office when employees have questions. The office representative also collects toys and food during the two campaigns, and makes sure they are brought to the collection area at the end of the campaign period.
- **You don't have to be in Tennessee to be a volunteer.** Volunteers do not have to be committee members or office representatives. Anyone can work at an event. The volunteer times are usually one-hour time slots.
- **Donate, donate, donate.** Donating is easy: make a crock pot of soup for the soup lunch; bring in those old books, puzzles and games for the book sales; donate food and personal care items during the Food Drive or toys for the Toys for Tots campaign.
- **Cash is king.** Cash donations to either campaign are always welcome.

For questions regarding how you can help during All for One committee events, go to the All for One page on DOTNET [http://dotnet/all\\_for\\_one/af\\_o\\_index.asp](http://dotnet/all_for_one/af_o_index.asp); or contact All for One Committee Chairperson Danielle Griggs at [danielle.griggs@dot.iowa.gov](mailto:danielle.griggs@dot.iowa.gov) or call 515-239-1919 or All for One Committee Co-chairperson LaDana Sogard at [ladana.sogard@dot.iowa.gov](mailto:ladana.sogard@dot.iowa.gov) or call 515-239-1305.

### Retirements, continued from page 14

#### Vehicle Services



**Elaine Kunzman**, accounting clerk 3, retired June 10 after 22 years of service.



**Nancy Lacy**, (left) secretary 2, retired June 24 after 30 years of service.

**Deb Kizer**, (right) administrative assistant 1, retired June 24 after 33 years of service.

## Personnel updates

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for July 23 to Aug. 19.

### New hires

**Bryan Archer**, highway technician senior, Chariton construction; **Benjamin Clausen**, highway technician associate, De Soto garage; **Randy Conard**, highway technician associate, Carlisle garage; **Kyle Halligan**, transportation engineer intern, Research and Technology Bureau; **Carl Johnson**, highway technician associate, Rock Valley garage; **Deborah Kraft**, secretary 1, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Tim Theilen**, highway technician associate, Hanlontown garage; **Kevin Wheatley**, highway technician associate, Avoca garage

### Promotions

**David Bartlett**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Council Bluffs-south garage; **Michaele Cooper**, from driver's license clerk senior to driver's license examiner, Des Moines DL station; **Kurt Estrem**, from design technician, Design to engineering technician senior, Contracts; **Jarrold Green**, from communications technician 2 to communications technician 3 within the Information Technology Division; **Daniel Vallier**, from motor vehicle officer to motor vehicle investigator, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Ronald Wolf**, from mechanic, Dyersville garage to District 6 mechanic

### Transfers

**Phillip Davis**, highway technician associate from Grimes garage to Highway Helper; **David Hellwig**, from mechanic to highway technician, Donnellson garage; **Eric Lack**, equipment operator senior within the Des Moines garage; **Bryon Kuehl**, highway technician associate from West Union garage to Elkader garage; **Erwin Martin**, equipment operator senior, from Altoona garage to Carlisle garage; **Micheal Potter**, highway technician associate, from Newton garage to Altoona garage; **Caleb Wilson**, highway technician associate, from Des Moines garage to Carlisle garage; **Dennis Witte**, highway technician associate, from Newton garage to Grinnell garage

### Retirements

None

## Service awards

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for October 2010

### 40 Years

**Robert Younie**, Maintenance

### 35 Years

**Janet Mortvedt**, Information Technology Division; **Rita Warren**, Information Technology Division

### 30 Years

**Vicki Germer**, Information Technology Division; **Larry Moore**, Repair Shop

### 25 Years

**Tom Gettings**, Right of Way; **Ronald Hardee**, Waverly garage; **Dean House**, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Rodney Kennedy**, Neola garage; **Robert Moffitt**, Jefferson construction; **Joseph Putherickal**, Materials; **Craig Riecken**, Traffic and Safety; **Michael Sheets**, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Matthew Swanson**, Finance; **Cheryl Williams**, Finance

### 20 Years

**Debbie Cox**, Driver Services; **Garry Dickey**, District 5 materials; **Don Dietz**, Waterloo garage; **Luella Funnell**, Location and Environment; **Ronald Hoffman**, New Hampton garage; **Larry Hostetler**, Information Technology Division; **Jeff Huston**, Transportation Data; **Amy Maeder**, District 4 Office; **Jeffrey Nielsen**, Waterloo garage; **Von Richards**, Finance; **Steven Scott**, Chariton garage; **David Titcomb**, Driver Services

### 15 Years

**Kirk Bailey**, Charles City garage; **Steve Borcharding**, Latimer garage; **John Chrencik**, Hanlontown garage; **Joseph Hovey**, Fairfield garage; **Lynn Kilburg**, Davenport garage; **Paul Myers**, Emmetsburg garage; **Kurtis Shackelford**, District 1 Office; **Michael Small**, Dubuque garage; **Carrie Tietz**, Driver Services; **Pamela Tinta**, Information Technology Division; **Brad Tobey**, De Witt garage; **Steven White**, Jefferson garage

### 10 Years

**Scott Fix**, Muscatine garage; **Gerald Irwin**, Fairfield garage; **Ronald Lauer**, Mount Pleasant garage; **James Schoening**, Pacific Junction garage; **Lamont Sutter**, Burlington garage; **Brian Williams**, Burlington garage

### 5 Years

None

## Green team tip - change to computer power policy

Several months ago, the Iowa DOT's Green Team and Information Technology Division (ITD) staff began exploring the feasibility of powering off computers overnight and during weekends. These off-peak hours are used by ITD staff to update software and security features on staff equipment. Having the computers powered on was necessary to complete these tasks, but there were also cost- and power-savings possible with shutting down these devices.

With upgrades to the DOT network and new tools that allow remote activation of computers that have been turned off, the power policy related to computers is changing. Effective immediately, ITD staff are asking all Ames employees to shut down their computer workstations and laptops each night. To do this, choose "shut down" and not "log off" or "restart" when turning off your work station. If there are reasons why the workstation must occasionally be left on after normal working hours, contact the workstation support team (extension 11075) to get the computer on a "no shutdown" list.

In addition to each computer, please consider shutting down all monitors and printers using the on/off switch of the device. Do not turn off any power strips or other power sources.

As long as power strips or other power sources are left on, ITD staff can use tools to remotely turn on workstations to load updates. Staff will only be able to turn on and load software to desktop workstations, not to laptops. The current software used for encrypting laptops does not allow delivery of updates to a shutdown laptop over night. Therefore, laptops are to be shut off at night and updates will be received when the laptop is powered up during the day.

DOT field locations are to continue to leave computers powered on, but logged off, each night. Additional network changes are expected this fiscal year to allow field computers to be shut down at night. If you have any questions, please contact the Call Center at 515-239-1075.



# INSIDE

INSIDE is developed to help keep all Iowa DOT employees informed about critical issues affecting them, recognize DOT employees for their excellent service and share interesting aspects in the lives of our co-workers. For more information, contact Tracey Bramble, Office of Media and Marketing Services, at 515-239-1314 or e-mail [tracey.bramble@dot.iowa.gov](mailto:tracey.bramble@dot.iowa.gov).

**Nancy J. Richardson**, Director

**Tracey Bramble**, Multimedia Services, editor  
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**Printing Staff**, Multimedia Services, printing



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**PLEASE RECYCLE THIS ISSUE**

**On the cover:** The I-35 rest area in Story County has a transportation theme.  
**October I-Spy clue:** Halloween ahead  
**September I-Spy solution:** The yellow hot air balloon on the right casts an orange reflection.

Service Area	Correspondent	Phone
District 1 .....	<b>Christine Hood</b> , Ames.....	515-663-6371
District 2 .....	<b>Lu Mohorne</b> , Mason City .....	641-423-7584
District 3 .....	<b>MaryBeth Banta</b> , Sioux City.....	712-276-1451
District 4 .....	<b>Marlene Jensen</b> , Atlantic.....	712-243-3355
District 5 .....	<b>Brenda Hadley</b> , Fairfield .....	641-472-6142
District 6 .....	<b>Sandi Byers</b> , Cedar Rapids.....	319-364-0235
Bridges and Structures .....	<b>Judy Whitney</b> , Ames .....	515-233-7917
Construction .....	<b>Nancy McMenamin</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1353
Contracts .....	<b>Peg Muxfeldt</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1422
Design .....	<b>Judy Lensing</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1469
Driver Services.....	<b>Theresa Kern</b> , Ankeny.....	515-237-3253
General Counsel.....	<b>Chris Crow</b> , Ames.....	515-239-1509
Information Technology Division .....	<b>Colette Simpson</b> , Ames .....	515-233-7728
Local Systems .....	<b>Gail Nordholm</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1528
Location and Environment .....	<b>Susie McCullough</b> , Ames.....	515-239-1225
Maintenance.....	<b>Cindy Shipley</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1971
Materials.....	<b>Brian Squier</b> , Ames .....	515-233-7915
Modal offices.....	<b>Cathy Mather</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1140
Motor Carrier Services .....	<b>Diann McMillen</b> , Ankeny .....	515-237-3250
Motor Vehicle Enforcement.....	<b>Anthony Batcheller</b> , Ankeny ..	515-237-3218
Operations and Finance Division .....	<b>Sheri Anderson</b> , Ames.....	515-239-1340
Research and Technology Bureau.....	<b>Tami Bailiff</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1646
Right of Way .....	<b>Mary Netten</b> , Ames.....	515-239-1216
Systems Planning.....	<b>Peggy Riecken</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1664
Traffic and Safety .....	<b>Stephanie Anderson</b> , Ames.....	515-239-1746
Transportation Data .....	<b>Jodi Malin</b> , Ames.....	515-239-1289
Vehicle Services .....	<b>Becky Sawatzky</b> , Ankeny .....	515-237-3182

Federal and state laws prohibit employment and/or public accommodation discrimination on the basis of age, color, creed, disability, gender identity, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or veteran's status. If you believe you have been discriminated against, please contact the Iowa Civil Rights Commission at 800-457-4416 or Iowa Department of Transportation's affirmative action officer. If you need accommodations because of a disability to access the Iowa Department of Transportation's services, contact the agency's affirmative action officer at 800-262-0003.

# Finding a “new normal” -

Jon Bronemann’s story

**W**hen Jon Bronemann’s wife Angi was killed in a car crash on U.S. 30 near Ames in 2001, he found solace in sharing positive messages learned from the experience. The most positive of these was his young son, Michael, then 17-months old, who was saved from death or serious injury because Angi had properly restrained him in his car seat that day.

Bronemann said, “I got involved with the effort to educate people about the importance of proper safety restraints just five weeks after Angi was killed. I spoke at the Capitol for the kickoff of the Buckle Up Baby campaign in May 2001. I was joined there by Officer Al Lavender of the Ames Police who pulled Michael from the wreckage that day. Al took great care in ‘ministering’ to me the days and weeks after the accident. He was careful to make sure that I was spared as many of the gory details as possible and he even went back to find my son’s sock monkey and cleaned it up prior to bringing it to us at the hospital. You can imagine what he was cleaning off of it. This particular accident hurt Al deeply. I know this because he admitted he carried Angi’s driver’s license in his uniform shirt pocket each day for several months. It was hard for him to let go and he finally mailed it back to me. Al has become a great friend. We speak every few months and see each other once a year or so. He even attended my wedding to my new wife, Tammy, five years ago. I am honored to call this man my friend.

“I met several of the other first responders from the accident that day at the Buckle Up Baby kickoff. Meeting the young fireman who did CPR on Angi was very hard. To see his own sadness and grief is something I will never forget. Our first responders are victims of these crashes, too. They carry the images of these crashes with them daily, but continue to respond to the next call and the next sad set of circumstances with such dedication and compassion for others. These are the true heroes.”

Since the crash, Bronemann has been able to move on in his life, due in part to a grief support group he and his wife, Tammy, started through their church in Cedar Falls. He said, “My wife, Tammy, who lost her husband to cancer, and I found that this was needed as there wasn’t anything locally for young grieving spouses when we started our own grief journeys. We also lead a grief support group for preretired people at Cedar Valley Hospice.”

Through this experience, the Bronemanns have learned a valuable lesson to share, “All that you have, and means the world to you, really can be taken from you in an instant,” said Bronemann. “The things that you most cherish in your life can and will be taken from you if you don’t take the right precautions and act accordingly, and this includes buckling up, among other things. I have helped families in the grief process who have lost children in car accidents. The guilt and questions of ‘why’ are so hard to help them deal with. If something as simple as taking a second to click a seat belt can save a person from a lifetime of grief, I sure think it is worth it to do.”

In addition to one-on-one and small group counseling, Bronemann has continued his lobbying efforts to improve seat belt laws by working closely with the advocacy group from Blank Children’s Hospital. He said, “I personally wrote each member of the legislature that was either leaning toward voting against or was definitely against the changes to the [Iowa] laws we were proposing. This law came up several times over the last nine years; and sometimes it wouldn’t even make it out of the subcommittee or would be killed by leaders of the house or senate before it would even come up for debate. I made trips to Des Moines to meet personally with a few legislators at some informal gatherings to educate them on why these changes were necessary.”

Bronemann said, “It really helps to know that after almost nine years of shar-



*John Bronemann (right) and his son, Michael, with Governor Chet Culver following the signing of the new seat belt law.*

ing a very painful story with hundreds of people firsthand, and thousands through the media and commercials, that we have this new law that will guide parents in what to do and why it is so important. I would not have Michael today if my wife wasn’t so cautious about how and where he was buckled up. I wanted to share this story with others to possibly spare them even a portion of the grief I’ve experienced. There isn’t a time that my own children get in the car that they don’t buckle up.

“Being involved with this allowed me to heal. My grieving process was public as a result. In our grief support ministry, both my wife and I will say that you need to tell your story a thousand times before you can begin to heal and move on to your ‘new normal.’ If you can’t share your story, it is almost impossible to move forward. The body needs to grieve. If you don’t let it out, it will eventually come out on its own, and many times in unproductive and hurtful ways.

“To see this law in place has helped me have a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction knowing that publicly sharing my grief and pain wasn’t done in vain; and for Michael, that losing his mother wasn’t in vain either. Something very, very good has come from all of this.”