

INSIDE

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2004

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From my view

Mark F. Wandro, P.E., L.S.



Highway Division - District Offices

Whether a relatively minor overlay project or a multi-year interstate reconstruction, I know our employees strive to stretch our limited resources to make Iowa's highways the best they can be.

Integration of staff among maintenance, construction and materials has been one of the major successes for the district offices over the past year. Engaging maintenance employees for construction during the warmer months and construction and materials employees for snow removal operations in the winter provides greater opportunities for employees and better utilization of resources for the department.

DISTRICT 1 U.S. 20

District 1 employees have been honored in the last year to be a part of some very successful projects. There has been much written in INSIDE and other media about the efforts on U.S. 20 in Hardin and Grundy counties with the completion of that four-lane corridor from Dubuque to Fort Dodge, including the award winning bridge over the greenbelt area. In August, at the opening of the last 26-mile stretch, nearly 1,300 people attended the ribbon cutting.

I-235

Now entering the third year of construction, communication continues to be one of the key issues with this massive rebuilding project. The \$429 million, six-year endeavour is the largest project ever undertaken by the DOT, and a matching communications effort is being accomplished. A team of DOTers from many offices has been working diligently with the public to get the word out on expectations, project status and route alternatives. I applaud their successful efforts and encourage that communication to continue as we have much work yet to do.

On the corridor itself, innovative construction techniques and unique design features, like the use of special delta piers and high performance concrete, will make a positive impact for many years to come.

The construction of a basket handle arch pedestrian bridge, to be dedicated in May, is another success story. Watch upcoming issues of INSIDE for more details.

The department is in the final stages on developing a project traffic management center (TMC). The TMC will use the latest intelligent transportation technology in assisting the motoring public through the construction project. The goal is to have the TMC operational before work begins on the mainline reconstruction later this spring.

DISTRICT 2 Partnerships

Several local partnerships highlight the District 2 accomplishments in 2003. An urban project in Postville combined reconstruction, resurfacing and city streetscape improvements. Excellent communication by the construction office, including a weekly radio show, kept citizens informed. Although there was disruption to local businesses, the community rallied around the project because of the open exchange of information among all those impacted.

Successful partnering with the city of Clear Lake on the first part of a project on U.S.18 converted the roadway from a four-lane to a three-lane and installed a temporary traffic light. The second phase planned for this year calls for construction of right turn lanes and installation of permanent traffic signals.

In Mason City, city officials managed a redevelopment project on Northbridge (U.S. 65). District staff actively partnered with the city to improve economic development opportunities on U.S. 65.

Other projects

The district's major DOT highway project this year was finishing the last leg of the northern section of the Avenue of the Saints. The Nashua Bypass on U.S. 218/Iowa 27 opened last fall to rave reviews from local residents and cross-state travelers.

The newest interstate rest area also opened last fall in District 2. The Civil War-themed rest area near Dows in Franklin County serves both north and southbound traffic on I-35.

DISTRICT 3 Prairie Bridge

In the January INSIDE you read about the opening of a special bridge on I-29 near Sergeant Bluff. This "prairie school" design welcomes visitors to Sergeant Bluff and the Sioux Gateway Airport.

Iowa 60

Work on one of Iowa's high priority four-lane corridors, Iowa 60, continues. The district is working with contractors on a pilot Contractor Quality Management (CQM) initiative where the contractors submit quality control plans and then construction staff monitor their progress. The project was let in October and work is beginning now. Iowa 60 is also the first corridor to incorporate "improved durability concrete" on all of the mainline bridge decks. This method was identified to extend the wearing surface for the bridge decks by using higher quality aggregates available to the area. District staff is expecting busy construction years in 2004, 2005 and 2006 for this corridor.

American Discovery Trail

The district recently completed paving the first section of "on-facility" trail for the American Discovery Trail on Iowa 141 in Carroll County. Normal paved shoulders on this route would have been two feet wide, but since this route is a part of the trail, the paved shoulder was widened to six feet.

DISTRICT 4

Projects large and small

Partnering with communities for improvements on primary extensions within the communities of Dexter (pop. 689) and Griswold (pop. 1,039) were successes in 2003. Additionally, the district will be letting a project in Red Oak (pop. 6,000). These were and will be cooperative projects with the communities to rehabilitate our highways along with adding improvements such as storm sewers, curb and gutters, sidewalks, and landscaping. While these projects are small in comparison to other efforts throughout the state, for these smaller communities, they were large in terms of the positive impact and sense of community pride generated.

On the other side of the spectrum, district staff are gearing up for several large projects in Council Bluffs and western Iowa that will total in the hundreds of millions of project dollars. Project development efforts are underway at three Missouri River crossings: Veterans Memorial Bridge on U.S. 275, a new U.S. 34 bridge south of Bellevue, and the existing U.S. 34 bridge at Plattsmouth. Additionally, efforts are also underway on the Council Bluffs interstate system to keep up with significant growth in the Omaha/Council Bluffs area.

Partnerships/cooperative investments

With these projects comes significant investment and impacts to the region. We are constantly looking for win/win situations in which we not only improve our transportation system, but aim at improving the environment because of our projects. One example is our effort to partner with the Department of Natural Resources. Significant fill is required for the interstate project and efforts are underway to investigate the possibility of dredging Lake Manawa, a recreational site in Council Bluffs, for this material. This action would improve the quality of Lake Manawa, plus allow us to avoid cost associated with acquiring property and avoid environmentally sensitive sites such as the Loess Hills. Another example is the potential to partner with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. They are currently looking at a Missouri River location adjacent to Council Bluffs to develop habitat that will enhance fish spawning, and they need to dispose of material that will be dredged. We could share in the cost of dredging and provide a close location for "disposal" of the material.

DISTRICT 5

Priority corridors

The completion of many of the projects deemed priority corridors by the Iowa Transportation Commission is near in this southeast district. The final design hearing on the Burlington to Des Moines corridor was held last month for the bypass of Agency. The Iowa 5 corridor between Knoxville and I-35 was completed last year when the last segment in District 5 was opened in the fall. Iowa 27/U.S. 218, known as the Avenue of the Saints, is nearing completion as grading and paving are underway south of Mount Pleasant to the Missouri state line.

First roundabout

Modifying an old concept in a new way is expected to solve many traffic problems at the east junction of U.S. 34 and U.S. 63 in Ottumwa. You first read about the concept of our redesigned "roundabouts" in the April 2002 issue of INSIDE. Now designs are being finalized for Iowa's first roundabout, with construction to begin in about a year.

From my view continued on Page 9

Rear-end crashes endanger workers



Employees are in harm's way every time they are working on the roadway.

With nearly 20 rear-end crashes into DOT vehicles each year, the danger to employees working on Iowa highways is very real. Since Iowa Code section 321.323A, the “move over, slow down” law, took effect July 1, 2002, the Iowa Department of Public Safety has issued 871 citations for this infraction. The statute was supposed to increase the safety of workers on Iowa roadways by forcing drivers to move to another lane away from a stationary emergency or maintenance vehicle, or at least slow down and be prepared to stop.

“The law should have a positive impact for those drivers who are attentive and driving according to the conditions of the road,” said Rusty James of the DOT’s claims management section, the group charged with monitoring crashes involving DOT vehicles. “But from our investigations, the main cause of rear-end crashes with DOT vehicles is motorists who just aren’t paying attention to where our folks are working. The law won’t deter an inattentive driver.”

Dave Stutz of the Office of Driver Services explains that, while operating a motor vehicle is relatively simple, the challenge for drivers is to maintain focus on those driving tasks. “Environments outside the vehicle are constantly changing,” said Stutz. “If a driver isn’t paying attention to those changes, crashes can occur even in clear conditions. The probability of a crash by an inattentive driver is magnified if visibility is diminished or there are obstructions, like a stopped vehicle, on the roadway.”

While the “move over, slow down” statute is specifically aimed at protecting authorized vehicles stopped on the roadway, slower-moving vehicles are also at risk. According to 2003 records, 18 crashes

where DOT vehicles were rear-ended were recorded, five with stopped vehicles and 13 with vehicles in traffic. Seven of those 13 crashes involved snowplows, five of those in just a two-week period in December.

In that rash of December crashes, two were on U.S. 20; one involving Mark Fevold of the Iowa Falls shop and one involving John Blohm from the Grundy Center garage. Tractor-semitrailers struck both plows. Fevold’s plow was knocked off the road and rolled twice. After a few hours in the hospital, Fevold was released. In Blohm’s case, he wasn’t injured, and the preliminary information is that the driver couldn’t see his plow in the snow cloud.

Mark Black, District 2 maintenance manager, says, “This is a common problem that our operators see. They are plowing on the inside lanes of a four-lane facility and faster vehicles come up behind slower vehicles, move to the inside lane to pass and see only the cloud of snow, not the plow that is producing it.”

Another common problem is vehicles not allowing enough space for the wing of the plow. Jim Bane, District 4 maintenance manager, reported a Jan. 30, 2004, crash on Interstate 80 when a van pulled into the passing lane to pass a semi, not seeing Avoca equipment operator Dave Peterson’s plow working in that lane. Once the van driver realized there was a plow in the cloud of snow, he tried to steer into the median, taking the wing of the plow with him. “We get wings hit on a regular basis,” said Bane.

Robert Conyers, highway maintenance supervisor in Le Mars, reported that Mark Plueger’s plow was hit by a vehicle whose driver was looking for change in his console. The driver was cited for failure to have control and his vehicle received approximately \$1,000 in damage. The DOT vehicle sustained about \$400 in damages and was out of service for a day.

While snowplow season is over, construction season is just beginning. In any season, employee and equipment down-time due to crashes is significant, but most are also preventable if motorists would simply watch what is going on around them. Jerry Dickinson of the Director’s Staff Division says, “About 75 percent of work zone crashes are rear-end crashes attributed to inattentive drivers.”

Long trip or short jaunt, good weather or snow-storm, familiar route or new territory, as drivers we all need to remain diligent at all times when behind the wheel to protect our co-workers on the roadway.

Martensdale equipment operator saves woman

"I knew bleeding from the ear was serious. So I did what I could to calm her down until help arrived."

Wayne Oglesbee

Jan. 4 was a busy day. The crew at the Martensdale shop was in the midst of a severe winter storm. Equipment operator Wayne Oglesbee was at the north end of his route on Interstate 35, just south of West Des Moines. With several vehicles in the ditch, he was especially aware of his duty to get the road cleared. Near the Iowa 5 exit he saw a white car in the ditch and a woman with a cell phone standing by the vehicle waving at him.

"She said her mother was bleeding," said Oglesbee. "I radioed Gary Bowlin at the shop to get an ambulance and grabbed some gauze and other first aid supplies."

When Oglesbee reached the car, he found the front passenger door jammed, so he entered the vehicle from the rear passenger door. "When I saw the lady, the only bleeding I found was some dried blood in her ear," he explained. "I knew bleeding from the ear was serious. So I did what I could to calm her down until help arrived."

The injured woman, Elaine McEntaffer of Atlantic, was nearly hysterical when Oglesbee arrived. Her daughter, Glenna Von Weyhe, couldn't get her to stay still. "Before Mr. Oglesbee got there, I couldn't keep my mother calm. She wanted to move around. When he got there, he just crawled into the car and spoke so gently to my mother. That calmed her down," she said. "The doctors said one of the two bones she broke in her back could have killed her. If she had moved around, she would have surely either died or at least been paralyzed."

Von Weyhe had been trying to reach an ambulance by calling 911 on her cell phone at the time Oglesbee arrived, but she didn't know her exact location to tell the dispatcher, and there were many cars off the road. She says she and her mother are so thankful Oglesbee called in their location to the

Martensdale shop before he left his truck. "I couldn't tell them exactly where we were," said Von Weyhe.

Oglesbee's call to the shop set Maintenance Operations Assistant Gary Bowlin working to find who had jurisdiction at the location of the crash. "I had to make a few phone calls before I found which ambulance should be dispatched," said Bowlin. Keep in mind he was in the midst of orchestrating eight plows and drivers for a severe winter storm.

Oglesbee and Bowlin both insist the help they provided is just part of their jobs. McEntaffer and Von Weyhe disagree. "Wayne's amazing no matter what he says," said Von Weyhe. "He kept my mother calm and saved her life, and when the ambulance arrived, he just disappeared."

Larry Pottridge, Martensdale highway maintenance supervisor, said, "Wow, I am really touched to know that we have an employee like Wayne. When quizzing him about this incident he said he was just doing his job. I asked him what all he did and he said that he comforted her until the rescue team arrived. He said he knew her injuries were serious and knew she shouldn't move. While Wayne was on the scene, Gary spent a considerable amount of time locating the proper authorities. His diligence in finding the correct ambulance service was critical."

McEntaffer is recovering at her home in Atlantic, and she and her daughter say they will be forever grateful for the caring nature of DOT employees.



Martensdale employees Wayne Oglesbee (left) and Gary Bowlin (right)

From a Ford to a Chevy

The functions might look a little different, but folks in the Information Technology Division say the E-mail and calendar switch this month from Lotus Notes to Outlook will be similar to switching makes of cars. The software will operate basically the same and most of the current functions will be available, but they may appear under different menus or be called something a little different. There are also a few additions, including the ability to recall a message (if it has not been read) or individually retrieve deleted documents (in some instances).

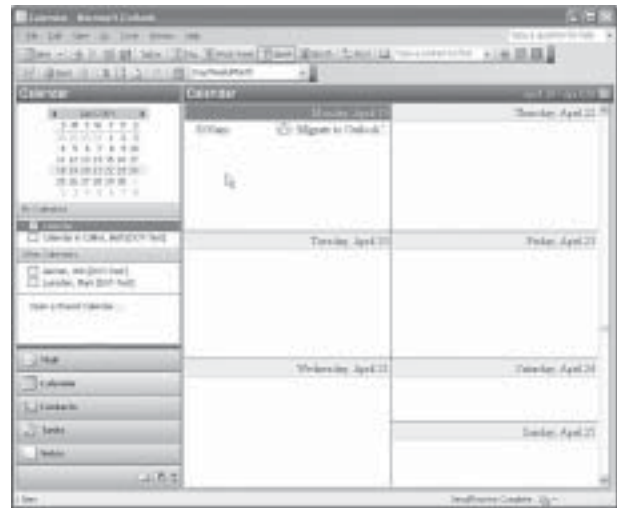
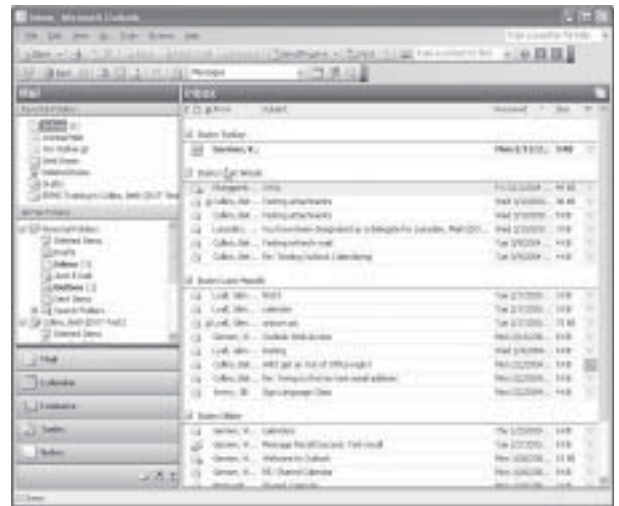
Cost

So why make the switch if the functions are basically the same? “Money,” explained Mark Lumsden of the Information Technology Division. “There will be a significant savings if we purchase our own servers and manage our own system. We have the knowledge, personnel and equipment to administer the majority of functions of Outlook here at the DOT.”

Currently the state’s Information Technology Enterprise (ITE) provides E-mail service, hardware, and support at a cost of \$9.76 per mailbox per month. “The move will free up time for ITE staff to work with smaller agencies that don’t have their own IT staff. We will still be connected to the state enterprise and will continue the spirit of cooperation we’ve enjoyed with ITE,” said Lumsden.

Types of access

Lumsden says the agency will use three types of access for Outlook. The first is Web-based and called Outlook Web Access (OWA), where users will point their browsers to a Web site. The second is a program, or client, on your computer much like Lotus Notes. The third is through Citrix, where users will access the client on a central server. Lumsden explains that the client access requires a level of operating system that some computers don’t have. Until those PCs are replaced, those machines will use either the Web access or Citrix. Although it’s not quite as robust as the client version, the Web access has most of the same functions as the client version. Users who have Citrix available to them will access the client through the Citrix window. These users will not notice a difference in the available features. As operating systems are upgraded, the client version will also be made available where it makes business sense.



These are screens you’ll see on Outlook 2003. The screens look similar for Outlook 2000 and Outlook 2002.

There are several factors that will determine the type of access each user will have. These factors include location, computer, business requirements, etc. Support teams will be working closely with their users to determine the appropriate access type.

Lumsden mentioned another benefit of the Web-based environments. “Because of Outlook’s use of Internet technology, all employees who have an Outlook mailbox will be able to access that mailbox using just an Internet browser like Internet Explorer,” he said. “This could be from another office, home or a laptop. It will be much more convenient to remotely access your mail, calendar and contacts.”

From a Ford to a Chevy continued from Page 6

Transfer of information

When the transition occurs in mid-April, all E-mail from Lotus Notes mailboxes will be automatically transferred to Outlook mailboxes. "This part will be transparent for users," said Lumsden. "They won't have to do anything to have mail and folders transferred." He adds, "Calendars and personal address books will have to be transferred from Lotus Notes to Outlook by each user, but that's not a difficult process. More information about how to do this migration will be published on DOTNET or is available through your support team. To help smooth the transition, Lotus Notes will be available for a month following the Outlook launch. Although users won't be able to send or receive mail in Lotus Notes after Outlook is operating, they will have complete access to their records."

Lumsden says while your E-mail address will change to a new mail extension (.dot.iowa.gov), the old extension (.dot.state.ia.us) will continue to work. "Once we're on Outlook, people who receive mail from me will see that the note came from mark.lumsden@dot.iowa.gov. However, I will still receive mail from anyone sending mail to my old address at mark.lumsden@dot.state.ia.us," he said. "People who send you E-mail will not have to change their address book entries and employees will be able to use up all their current business cards without changing the E-mail address. Both new and old extensions will work indefinitely."

Training

Beth Collins, the DOT's training coordinator in the Office of Employee Services, says she's ready to train users once the software is deployed. "When the transition is made, everyone will receive a Quick Reference Guide that should answer many of the most common questions. But I think users need to experiment with the software a little," she explained. "That way they can determine if they need more formalized training, and if they do, they can come to class with specific questions."

Collins adds, "Throughout the transition period, if users have questions not answered by the Quick Reference Guide, there is a complete user's manual on DOTNET, or they can contact their support teams or schedule a training session. Help will always be available for anyone who wants it. As Mark said, this transition is comparable to moving from one make of car to another. You know there are windshield wipers, you just need to find out how to turn them on."

Jones nabs drug runners on I-80



Officer Darrel Jones found a total of 24 soft-sided bags containing large bricks of marijuana, with a gross weight of approximately 1,095 lbs. and a street value of \$1.1 million.

While conducting a routine commercial vehicle stop on Interstate 80 Dec. 17, 2003, Officer Darrel Jones noticed that the vehicle's trailer was leaking. "I knew something wasn't right," said Jones, a three-year veteran of the DOT's Office of Motor Vehicle Enforcement. "The driver was very nervous and shaking, and he answered questions differently than the other person in the vehicle."

During the inspection, Jones noticed the produce boxes in the trailer were not stacked uniformly, and he spotted the handle of a dark colored bag along the left side of the trailer. At that point, the driver started running toward the cab of the vehicle. Jones subdued the driver.

After Jones read the driver and co-driver the Miranda warning, the driver told Jones there was marijuana in bags buried in the load of produce.

Jones contacted his supervisor, and additional MVE officers investigated the incident and placed the driver and co-driver under arrest. Also assisting in this incident were officers from the Iowa State Patrol, Iowa Division of Narcotics, and Drug Enforcement Agency.

Steve Upchurch

Materials Employee of the Year

After 20 years at the DOT, Steve Upchurch, materials technician 4 in the instrumentation section, says he generally doesn't need

plaques or awards to find fulfillment in his job. But this award was something special.

Recently named the Office of Materials Employee of the Year, Upchurch was honored for his work on the instrumentation for new freezers used by the soils and aggregate and geology sections.

"The freezers they were using were so old they had obsolete parts when I started working here

20 years ago," said Upchurch. "They really needed to be replaced, but we only had two bids, one for more than \$150,000 that covered the entire system, and one for \$46,000 for just the shell and refrigeration systems. Since we had only \$50,000 in the budget, we needed to do most of the work on these new freezers ourselves."

According to Kevin Jones, materials testing engineer, one key component of the freezer unit is the control for the cycling of the freezing and thawing process. Upchurch developed the control system to interface with the freezer unit.

Upchurch is quick to share the accolades. "There were several of us working on this. Other people did the electrical and plumbing systems. We worked together to put parts from different vendors into a unit that seems to work for the users."

Although this is Upchurch's most recent large challenge, he says he's been involved with many projects within the Office of Materials. "That's the pro and the con to this job, the variety," said Upchurch. "I feel like a jack of all trades, but master of none. But I guess pure persistence pays off."



Telspar Hand Driver

Installation of the new Telspar™ posts being used at the DOT for some smaller signs has been a challenge for shops around the state, especially in emergency situations where there may be only one employee available for installation.

Phil Brumm and Mark Mullenbach of the Osage shop came up with a solution. One person can use the hand driver to place the signposts into the ground. "It works in emergency situations," said Brumm. "You wouldn't want to drive posts with it all day long, but it works well for smaller signs that need to be replaced right away."

Osage shop employees had been using a manual cap with a sledge hammer to drive the posts. Keeping the post plumb was difficult using this technique. The Brumm and Mullenbach device drives the anchor straighter.

The hand driver uses the principle of a slide hammer with different heads. The head stays in contact with the anchor, therefore delivering square blows.

The device uses steel tubing, a slide hammer and hammer plate. It cost approximately \$80 and took about five hours to construct.

For more information on the Telspar™ hand driver, contact Phil Brumm or Mark Mullenbach at 641-732-3637.



Mail call

On a cold, windy November day Grundy Center garage employees Larry Thede and Dicky Oltman were traveling on Iowa 14 near Grundy Center when they noticed what appeared to be a large amount of trash in the ditch. They stopped to clean up the mess and realized the trash was actually undelivered mail. They contacted the Postal Service and began picking up the lost mail.

In a letter thanking the DOTers, the Waterloo Postmaster, Bernie Engelhaupt, said a tray of mail had been lost off a mail truck, and cited the dedication of these two DOT employees to not only stop, but to have most of the mail collected by the time postal employees arrived on the scene. They also continued to assist postal employees in a search for additional mail in a five-mile radius.

Thanks to the efforts of Thede and Oltman, the mail was collected and delivered.

A success story

In February you read about new technology in cable barriers designed to prevent run-off-the-road crashes. Not long after the new barrier was installed on Interstate 35 near Ankeny, a first hand account was submitted proving the effectiveness of this barrier.

Brian Hood, son of Gary Hood in the Office of Location and Environment, was traveling southbound on this stretch in late January when he saw a sport utility vehicle traveling northbound. He witnessed the vehicle cross the median and hit the barrier.

This is Brian's firsthand account. "The SUV impacted the barrier hard enough that the front quarter panel tore off and three or four of the metal barrier posts either bent over or broke off," he said. "The SUV was disabled and ended up 30-50 feet north of the point of impact. There is no doubt there would have been several injuries and potential fatalities if this fence weren't there. The crash occurred during rush hour traffic, and there would have been no way for anyone to avoid a collision."

From my view continued from Page 3

DISTRICT 6

Way-finding signs

District 6 employees have been working with the Dubuque Chamber since 2000 to implement tourism district signs as a promotional aid for the city. Signs with color-coded patches in the upper left corner are now being installed to correspond to colored signs assigned to the city's districts. The district worked with the Office of Traffic and Safety to develop and produce the new signs and coordinated the city effort for a cohesive, easily understood system. Clinton, Davenport and Bettendorf have been working with DOT staff on way-finding systems of their own.

CARS group in the Quad Cities

In the past 12 years, DOT participation in Scott County's multidisciplinary traffic safety team called CARS (Community Awareness of Roadway Safety) has accomplished many goals. The group continues to work together on issues such as speed limits, warning signs, special construction signing, and high crash location reviews. They also discuss wideload and overheight vehicle issues, perform speed studies where recommended, and review emergency vehicle crossover requests.

DOT employees are able to provide monthly construction and maintenance updates, and hear what's going on with city and county projects.

Participants include law enforcement agencies, fire departments, city, county and metropolitan planning organization transportation officials, ambulance services, hospitals, railroads, schools, and public health agencies.

Project summary

Several projects in District 6 were accomplished in 2003 including: continuation of work on U.S. 151 in Dubuque and Jones counties with the entire route scheduled for completion in 2004; opening of Mississippi River Museum in Dubuque; completion of six-lane widening of Iowa 965/ I-80 bridge in Coralville; and finished I-380 bridge joint repair work through downtown Cedar Rapids with minimal traffic disruption due to scheduling flexibility and work performed on weekends.





Hats Off

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

To: Mark Wandro

From: Paula Armstrong, Fairfield

I'm writing to recognize an exemplary Department of Transportation employee, **Jon Mason**. Recently I was on my way to Ottumwa when I had a flat tire near Eldon on U.S. 34. As I was walking to the gas station to call for help, Jon was driving toward Fairfield and turned around to offer to call for help. When he found out I had a spare tire in the car, he said he would just change it for me. Within minutes the flat tire was off, the new tire was on and I was on my way. What would have been a long ordeal and a wasted afternoon turned into a day where I experienced the goodness of human nature. I was very, very grateful and feel Jon is a wonderful representative for your department.

*(Editor's note: **Jon Mason** is a maintenance worker in Fairfield, dividing his time between the District 5 materials lab and Fairfield shop.)*

To: Mark Wandro

From: Richard Degner, Ankeny

Late in the day on Wednesday, Jan. 21, I renewed my drivers license at the Park Fair location in Des Moines. On the drive to Park Fair, I was anticipating a lengthy, unpleasant experience. I even brought a book along to read while waiting. I arrived to a fairly full parking lot and expected the worst.

I was certainly wrong! At the entrance to the facility there was a line, but it moved quickly. I received my number and a form to complete. Before my form was completed, my number was called. I was quickly and pleasantly processed through the system. The process worked with such efficiency that I didn't read any of my book at the site.

Congratulations to the department for operating the facility in an efficient and pleasant manner. There was a large number of customers with varied levels of experiences and the DOT staff performed in a very courteous manner. The operation was focused on customer service.

To: Shirley Andre, Director, Motor Vehicle Division

From: Larry Johnson, Special Agent in Charge, Criminal Investigative Division, U.S. Secret Service

The U.S. Secret Service, Postal Inspection Service, Federal Trade Commission, and U.S. Department of Justice have coordinated a series of identity crime training seminars around the country to provide useable tools and resources to our local and state police counterparts. On behalf of the United States Secret Service, Criminal Investigative Division, I would like to thank you and the Iowa Department of Transportation for allowing Investigator **Paul Steier** to participate as an instructor in these training seminars.

The U.S. Secret Service has long recognized identity crime-related investigations as one of the greatest challenges to law enforcement. The sharing of resources and information is an integral component of combating this growing problem. I would like to commend Investigator Steier and the Iowa Department of Transportation for their dedication and support of our law enforcement outreach efforts.

Paul is a skilled and articulate instructor who has provided an invaluable service to this national training initiative. His block of instruction on identification document issues provides useful and relevant information to assist law enforcement with their investigations of identity crime. Thank you again for allowing his expertise to be shared with law enforcement from all across the country.

*(Editor's note: **Paul Steier** is an investigator in the Office of Motor Vehicle Enforcement.)*

To: Mark Wandro

From: Carol Loretz, Coal Valley, Ill.

I recently drove from my Illinois home via Des Moines to Kansas City and back. I want to tell you how pleased I was with the condition of Iowa's portion of Interstates 80 and 35. They were smooth with well-maintained shoulders, and your crews had done an excellent job of removing snow.

When I passed the Iowa state line into Missouri, the change was remarkable. I-35 was bumpy, potholed, and its exits snow-covered. Missouri could learn a lot from you. Thanks for a job well done.

To: Michael Krohn, District 1 Maintenance Manager

From: Michael Cox and Ryan Young, Paramedic Specialists, Frazer Medical Ambulance Service

On Tuesday morning, Jan. 27, we responded to several motor vehicle accidents on Interstate 80/35 on the north side of Des Moines. These accidents occurred in a short amount of time near the east mixmaster due to the winter driving conditions.

Upon arriving on scene of the first accident, a highway helper was already there and doing traffic control. The highway helpers are a great asset and probably don't get thanked as much as they should be. Their service is invaluable to all of us in emergency services who work the interstate system around the metro.

The third accident to which we were called was the most serious. This accident occurred on the eastbound side of the interstate at N.E. 14th, up against the inside barrier wall. As we arrived on scene, we cannot tell you how much of a relief it was to see two DOT snowplows parked behind the accident, blocking the two lanes of traffic behind us, protecting us and our critical patient from traffic. Motorists that morning were not slowing down at all for the road conditions and the threat of getting hit was a great concern. We know the snowplow drivers don't often get the thanks and recognition they deserve.

*(Editor's note: The highway helper on duty that day was **Kevin Huss**, and the equipment operators who assisted with the crash were **Tom Prine** and **Khashi Reyes** from the Des Moines-north shop.)*

To: Mark Wandro

From: Lieutenant Mark Probst, District 15 Commander, Iowa State Patrol

I would like to take this opportunity to bring to your attention the outstanding service and cooperation given to troopers of the Iowa State Patrol by your DOT personnel working out of the Williamsburg Maintenance Garage. On Friday, Jan. 23, troopers under my command stopped a semi near the Victor rest area for a routine inspection. Four large duffel bags filled with 420 pounds of marijuana were located in this semi. We turned to the **Williamsburg maintenance garage** for assistance to move this semi off of the interstate, as well as a place to get out of the elements and process this vehicle.

Contact was made with shop supervisor **Jack Patterson** to assist us with our needs. Jack and his crew members from the DOT went above and beyond in all that we asked of them. They assisted us in the transportation of the illegal contraband to their shop. They opened up a bay for our use to take pictures. They assisted us in transporting the drugs to be weighed and allowed the semitrailer to be parked on their lot for the convenience of picture taking and inventory. Any and all requests were met without hesitation. They went above and beyond our expectations.

I have been informed by my local troopers that this type of assistance is provided on a daily basis and they are to be commended for the way they open up their shop and give of their time to those who are in need.

To: Terry Dillinger, Director of Driver Services

From: Monica Amber Foley, Iowa City

The level of professionalism and service I received today at the Iowa City driver license station is uncommon, deserving both attention and praise. I asked them for your contact information and was careful to get the names of those who helped me: **Mary, Connie, and Jenny**. I received my first and only speeding ticket right before moving out of state a little more than a year ago. I paid the amount of the ticket, but, regretfully, because I paid it late, the \$5 late fee resulted in my license being suspended for the past year. Imagine my surprise when I discovered this today as I was attempting to renew my license! These three women were very understanding and helpful. Although they were busy as always, they located the office in the county from which I had received the ticket and I was able to rectify the situation, take the written and driving tests, and reinstate my license in the very same day. I am so appreciative of their helpfulness. Employees like these should be duly recognized.

*(Editor's note: **Mary Ford**, driver license supervisor 1; **Connie Redig**, driver license examiner; and **Jennifer Miller**, driver license clerk, assisted Ms. Foley at the Iowa City DL station.)*

To: Mark Wandro,

From: Marian McNabb, Little Sioux Federated Garden Club, Linn Grove

I'd like you to know that the Iowa Department of Transportation worked with the Little Sioux Federated Garden Club about five years ago to put in a very successful wildflower area in front of Sioux Central School along U.S. 71 south of Sioux Rapids.

The project wasn't without problems, but this year it was absolutely beautiful. I'd like to thank the Iowa Department of Transportation for its help in working with the Little Sioux Federated Garden Club to develop this wildflower area. I would like to add that **Bob Soenen**, equipment operator in the Emmetsburg shop, was a big help on this project.

Family Happenings

Materials

Dawne Berner



Todd and Becky Hanson welcomed their new son, Zachary Jared, Feb. 19. Zach weighed in at 8 lbs. 1 oz., and was 20 inches long. Big brother Kyle, 3, is anxious to begin “big brother” duties because he thought Zach took forever to make his appearance! Daddy Todd is the PCC engineer and Mommy Becky is an engineering office assistant 2, both in the Office of Materials. Congratulations to the Hansons!



Jim Berger, director of the Office of Materials, and his wife, Stacie, were doubly blessed with the birth of their twin boys Feb. 20. William Owen weighed 5 lbs. 7 ozs., and Henry James weighed 5 lbs. 4 ozs. Both boys were 18 inches long. Congratulations times two to the Bergers!

District 1

Lori Morris

Tony Hildreth, construction technician assistant with the District 1 survey crew, and his wife, Shelby, are the proud parents of a baby girl. Baby Josie was born Feb. 28 weighing 7 lbs. 4 ozs., and was 19 inches long. Congratulations to the Hildreths!



The Mulder family has grown. Logan James, son of Kerry and **Greg Mulder**, transportation engineer specialist in the I-235 office, was born Jan. 21 weighing 7 lbs. 12 ozs., and was 21 inches long. He joins big brother Lucas, 4, at home.



Grandparents **Gary Mackey**, engineering technician senior in District 1, and his wife, Patricia, welcomed Joby Joseph Hull, born Jan. 3 to the Mackey’s daughter Julie. Joby joins big brothers Jackson, 6, and Jayton, 3. The boys’ great uncle is **Wayne Cameron**, design technician in Design.

Right-of-Way

Carolyn Cirksena



The fiscal and title section held a Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday) potluck Feb. 24. Some delicious items included gumbo, jambalaya and traditional King Cake. Mardi Gras theme decorations of beads and candles blended with the food and Zydeco music to make all who attended feel like they were in New Orleans! Thanks to **Maggie Suckow**, **Cheri Johnsen** and **Belinda Merritt** for the inspiration.

Design

Judy Lensing



Mike Kennerly presents Mike Jensen with his 40-year award.

Mike Jensen, design technician specialist in rural 1, celebrated his 40th anniversary as a DOT employee at a ceremony March 9. Following the event Mike regaled the crowd with stories of working on the interstate south of Osceola with former co-workers and current co-workers. He said he never imagined Osceola would have a riverboat 40 years later, or that he’d still be with the DOT!

Location and Environment

Jean Jesse



Melissa Lauterbach-Barrett, environmental specialist senior, and her husband, Rich, are proud first-time parents. Peter John was born Jan. 23 weighing 7 lbs. 2 ozs. Congratulations!



Mike Heller, environmental specialist senior, became an uncle Feb. 10. Garrett John Christensen weighed 9 lbs. 1 oz. He is the son of Mike's sister, Jen, and her husband, Jason.

Driver Services

Melanie Mathes

Miki LeFluer, driver license clerk at the Council Bluffs DL station, and her husband, Shawn, welcomed Darian Rose Feb. 5. Darian weighed 7 lbs. 6 ozs. and was 20 ½ inches long. Brother Dalton was excited to meet his baby sister.



Beth Fiala, driver license clerk senior at the Council Bluffs DL station is a very proud first-time grandma. Jacob Bradley Barreauther, son of Jolyn Schwarte and Bradley Barreauther, was born Feb. 16. Baby Jacob weighed 4 lbs. 15 ozs., and was 17 ¾ inches long. While mom and baby are doing fine, grandma is still floating on the clouds!

Thank you

I would like to thank all those who contributed sick leave time to me during my recovery from back surgery. I want you all to know how much I appreciated the kindness of all my DOT co-workers and understanding I've received from those in the Information Technology Division. I'm back to work full-time now and doing great, thanks in large part to your kindness and generosity.

*Liz Parr,
information technology
specialist 3*

In Memory

Freddy Earl Van Cannon, 57, of Boone, died March 2. Van Cannon was an automotive mechanic in the Ames shop.

Lyle Sharp, 74, of Corning, died Aug. 1, 2003, at his home. Sharp worked for the Iowa State Highway Commission and the DOT in Ringgold County and then later in Howard County. He retired from the Cresco shop in June 1991 after 34 years of service.

Robert L. Crouch, 83, of Spencer, died Jan. 17, 2004. Crouch began working for the Iowa State Highway Commission in 1961 in District 4. He transferred to District 3 as a materials inspector later that year. Crouch retired from the DOT in 1983. He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Adrienne, five sons, one daughter, 11 grandchildren and one great-grandson.

Lyle "Squirt" Russell, 80, of Monticello, died Jan. 23. Russell started with the Iowa State Highway Commission in 1954 and retired in 1986. All 32 years of service were dedicated to the Anamosa shop.

Timothy Ring, 47, of Neola died Jan. 25 after a long battle with cancer. Ring began his career with the DOT as an equipment operator in the Neola shop July 25, 1990. He was promoted to equipment operator 3 in January 2001, and left the DOT in July 2003, as an equipment operator senior.

SERVICE AWARDS

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for April 2004.

40 Years

John Gardner, Chariton construction.

35 Years

Ernest Roy Corbin, Rail Transportation; **Charles Ritts**, Information Technology Division; **Charles Williams**, Chariton construction; **James Wirtjes**, Sac City garage.

30 Years

Randall Faber, Location and Environment; **Jerry Gunderson**, Osage garage; **Paul Sailsbury**, Information Technology Division; **Terry Waddingham**, Martensdale garage.

25 Years

Dale Eilders, Design; **Irene Herr**, District 2 Office; **Rachel Lathrop**, Materials; **Michael Nutter**, Tipton interstate garage; **Doris (Shawn) Pickell**, Traffic and Safety.

20 Years

Karen Ballard, Driver Services; **Steven Bellmer**, Manchester construction; **Jeffrey Fudge**, Design; **Raymond Jones**, Cedar Rapids garage; **Barry Kinsey**, Chariton construction; **Anthony Lehman**, District 1 Office; **Randy Nees**, Rockwell City garage; **Jon Nymeyer**, Marshalltown garage; **Leonard Sargent**, Adair garage; **R. David Skogerboe**, Design; **Ronald Troutd**, Design; **Karla Vaubel**, Materials.

15 Years

Lanny Derry, Perry garage; **George Kotlers**, Bridges and Structures; **Andrew Lewis**, Vehicle Services; **Salvador Lopez Jr.**, Davenport interstate garage; **Kay Ridgway**, District 1 field staff; **Ingrid Ruddy**, District 5 Office; **Mark Swenson**, Highway Division.

10 Years

Kelly Bunting, Finance; **Larry Hostetler**, Marshalltown garage; **Scott Neubauer**, Bridges and Structures.

5 Years

Eileen Alff, Council Bluffs DL station; **Roger Bendt**, Pacific Junction garage; **Kristin Bennett**, Cedar Rapids DL station; **Patricia Borden**, Waterloo DL station; **Richard Conner**, Motor Vehicle Division; **Darrel Folkens**, Spencer garage; **Gary Ford**, Pacific Junction garage; **Clayton Henningsen**, Design; **Sherrie McClanahan**, Right-of-Way; **Deborah Wignall**, Des Moines DL station.

35 YEARS



(Left top to bottom) **Terry Love**, Jefferson construction (March); **James Wirtjes**, Sac City garage; **Ernest Roy Corbin**, Rail Transportation. (Right top to bottom) **Charles Ritts**, Information Technology Division; **Charles Williams**, Chariton construction.

PERSONNEL UPDATES

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for Jan. 30 to Feb. 26, 2004.

New Hires

Zhaia Wineinger, clerk advanced, Equipment Support.

Promotions

Anthony Batcheller, motor vehicle investigator, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Jason Sallach**, equipment operator senior, Red Oak garage; **Sandra Weik**, administrative assistant 2, Des Moines DL station; **Rianna Zirkelbach**, driver license examiner, Des Moines DL station.

Transfers

Ryan Wyllie, transportation planner 1, Transportation Data; **Tammy Jeanes**, equipment operator, Chariton garage.

He's headed home



Staff Sergeant Scott Smyth, an electrician in the Grimes shop, has been serving in Afghanistan since July 10, 2003. His wife, Deanna, an engineering operations technician, also in the Grimes garage, says Scott is due home in April after serving as a nuclear biological chemicals specialist and door gunner on a military helicopter designed to move troops.

This is Scott's third deployment since he began working for the DOT in 1990. During this deployment, the president of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai, has twice been a passenger on the helicopter Scott protects as a door gunner.

Watch upcoming editions of **INSIDE** for more information on the struggles in Afghanistan and the photos taken by Scott while he was on active duty.

Spring cleaning - it's coming sooner than you think!



These Moose fraternity members do their share of roadway clean up near Ames. (back row, from left) Jeff Barton, Vern Duke, Shannon McKinley, Jeremy McKinley, Larry Hadaway, Quentin Toresdahl, Ben Noland, Brian Hauge, and Bobbie Toresdahl. (front row from left) Dylan McKinley, Chuck Clatt and Mike Beardsley. Photo by Art Borton.

If you haven't seen them already, you'll soon notice the spring wave of Adopt-A-Highway groups out for their semi-annual roadside cleanup. To find out more about Adopt-A-Highway in your area, contact your district office.

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, 515-239-1314 or e-mail tracey.bramble@dot.state.ia.us.

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PLEASE RECYCLE THIS ISSUE

On the cover: Working along a roadside presents dangers for DOT employees.

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District 4	Marlene Jensen , Atlantic	712-243-3355
District 5	Brenda Hadley , Fairfield	641-472-6142
District 6	Jeanne Heeren , Cedar Rapids	319-364-0235
Bridges and Structures	Judy Whitney , Ames	515-239-1564
Construction	Nancy McMenamin , Ames	515-239-1043
Contracts	Peg Muxfeldt , Ames	515-239-1422
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Location and Environment	Jean Jesse , Ames	515-239-1225
Maintenance	Cindy Shipley , Ames	515-239-1824
Materials	Dawne Berner , Ames	515-239-1919
Modal	Mary Kay Reimers , Ames	515-239-1661
Planning & Programming Divisions	Mary Kay Reimers , Ames	515-239-1661
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Motor Vehicle Enforcement	Val Hunter , Des Moines	515-237-3218
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Vehicle Services	Thelma Huffman , Des Moines	515-237-3182

Regional pavement forum comes to Ames

For the past 15 years pavement professionals from the Midwest have gathered once a year to discuss topics and share new information about the work being done in their states. The meetings are held in a different state each year and topics alternate to cover pavement design and engineering one year and pavement management the next.

This year was Iowa's turn to host 29 experts from eight Midwestern states and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for a three-day pavement design and engineering forum, and lab tour Feb. 10-12 in Ames.

"This is an especially important time for pavement professionals to get together," said Mike Heitzman, DOT bituminous engineer. "The new American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) pavement design guide is set to come out sometime in 2004. This forum provided an

opportunity to discuss this major change with our counterparts from other Midwestern states and to showcase some of the cutting-edge pavement research we're conducting here in Iowa."

The meeting topics cover both concrete and asphalt paving issues, although Lee Gallivan from the FHWA office in Indiana says the upcoming changes in the asphalt portion of the pavement design guide are generally the center of conversation.

Keith Herbold from the FHWA's Chicago-based Resource Center also made the trip to Ames. "This meeting is primarily for the states to share ideas, but it also gives the FHWA people the opportunity to hear first-hand what is going on in each state and to share the federal perspective."

Chris Brakke, pavement design engineer in the Office of Design, says, "You just can't get this type of interaction any other way. It's great to have representatives from each state go down the line and speak about how they are handling a certain issue. Although most Midwest states have similar concerns about things like pavement texture and thickness, rehabilitation strategies differ somewhat, and it's very helpful to all be in one room comparing notes."

Gil Hedman, pavement design engineer from the South Dakota Department of Transportation, says, "We hold these meetings to see how other people are handling issues. For the most part we find we all do things pretty much the same. Nobody seems to be out in left field. It also helps to be able to put a face with a name when contacts need to be made in the future."



Visitors from midwestern states toured the Materials Lab in Ames while in town for the pavement forum.

