

DECEMBER 2007

# INSIDE



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ONE **2** ONE

WITH DIRECTOR NANCY RICHARDSON

**'Tis the season!** Regardless of your background or beliefs, the time between mid- November and early January is a busy and festive one. It typically involves some combination of family gatherings, gift exchanges, faith expressions, social events, travel, food and generosity. It is the last of those – generosity – about which I would like to share some thoughts with you this holiday season.

First, let me give you some context about me and holidays, birthdays and the like. I am, fundamentally, not comfortable with them. I am an ACOA (adult child of an alcoholic) and the conventional wisdom is that growing up in that situation impacts people in certain ways – just as any environment impacts who we become. While I may not ascribe to all of the research about ACOAs and their characteristics (and, frankly, I've not spent much time looking into and analyzing it), I know one thing – when you grow up having holidays and special times often include unpredictability and disappointment, you may find it difficult to let yourself relax, have fun and be spontaneous at those times. I think I learned not to expect or hope for much at these special times in order to avoid being disappointed.

As an adult, I took this discomfort with the holidays, having fun and being the center of attention and used it as the rationale for trying to prevent anyone in my life from feeling the same discomfort. Again, typical ACOA characteristic of being highly responsible and concerned about others in order to avoid looking inward. Okay, enough self-examination for one column!

This translated into me always wanting to find the perfect, unusual gift; fix the meal with something for everyone; host the ultimate, relaxed gathering with no tension; etc. It was always about what made others in my life comfortable and happy. For example, I hated and avoided opening my gifts, but loved watching everyone else open theirs! Now, that sounds like, and can be, a good thing, but in the last couple of years, I've found something that I find more rewarding – doing something special for those I don't know.

This is the second holiday season since my daughter died...another Thanksgiving, Christmas, her December 26 birthday and New Year's without her. As you might suspect, my ability to enjoy the holidays in any meaningful personal way without Nicole here with me is pretty limited. But,

interestingly enough, what I am finding increasingly meaningful, fulfilling and emotionally doable is focusing on doing my small part to help others I don't even know have a brighter holiday season and future. And that is my holiday message to you.

Over time I have written checks to the standard causes – research to cure/prevent diseases, my church, my alma mater, and certain charitable groups – but I never felt very connected to most of those donations. I am now beginning to better understand what many DOTers already understood – getting more directly involved than just writing a check is very rewarding. As you will read in this issue, DOTers walk for the cure of breast cancer. A DOTer in District 2 sponsors an annual taco feed to buy toys for kids. Motor Vehicle Enforcement and others in the Motor Vehicle Division raise funds year- round for and get directly involved in the Special Olympics. A group of Ames-based DOTers goes to a former employee's home to assist with tasks he can no longer do himself. DOTers throughout the agency and across the state work hard on bake sales, auctions and other events to raise money for food banks, Toys for Tots and other worthwhile efforts. And these are just a few examples of DOTers who have invested not just money, but time and effort to help others.

I have learned a lot from these committed DOTers. I am trying to be a more activist giver. I thought about this again this weekend as I bought my ingredients for crab bisque and chocolate peanut butter fudge for the Toys for Tots soup luncheon and bake sale fundraisers at the Ames complex. I am also this year going in search of a family that I can help enjoy the holidays a bit more with some food, clothes and toys. And I hope to volunteer somewhere – a nursing home or shelter – at Christmastime to help others enjoy a meal and some social time. I am convinced these new efforts will get me further "hooked" on this helping strangers thing.

So, I have gone full circle regarding holidays, from the excitement and hope of a kid with the focus on me, to focusing on my family and friends, to focusing on generosity of spirit and substance to those I don't even know. Thanks to those of you who modeled this giving spirit for me. I hope all of you, like me, can be on the receiving end of giving to others – it not only does good, it feels good.

Have a safe, enjoyable and generous holiday season!

*Nancy*

## Ice and Snow ... Take it Slow



**T**he momentum builds as ice and snow season grips Iowa. The DOT's multimedia safe winter driving campaign, dubbed "Ice and Snow ... Take it Slow," is making its way through the media and to all areas of the state. The goal of the campaign, designed in cooperation with more than a dozen states, is to create a national winter driver safety message that sends a clear and consistent message to motorists to slow down when there is ice or snow on the roadway.

Twelve state public information officers (PIO) and 14 state winter maintenance personnel were involved in developing the campaign, logo, messages, radio scripts, and other elements. Dennis Burkheimer, Iowa DOT winter operations administrator who helped coordinate the campaign development activities, said, "This was really a collaborative effort between the PIOs who know how to market the message and maintenance folks who know the messages they want to get to motorists. There was quite a bit of back and forth work done between the groups that we had to facilitate, but through it all, I think it came together nicely."

Jari Mohs of the Iowa DOT's Office of Media and Marketing Services helped develop and coordinate the distribution of sample posters, key chains, tote bags, bookmarks, brochures, and a DVD filled with radio scripts, photos, artwork, and videos mailed to each DOT's state maintenance engineer and PIO to encourage participation in this national effort. Each kit contained enough materials to easily incorporate into each state's individual winter safety campaigns. Samples of all campaign materials can be viewed at [www.clearroads.org](http://www.clearroads.org).



Burkheimer said, "We want to build momentum in a number of states to push through a very important safety message that drivers can connect with and act on."

In Iowa, you will begin to see the message this winter in news releases, INSIDE articles and radio news service alerts, with continued expansion of the message in coming years. Some of the winter driving safety messages are as follows.

- Don't turn your vehicle into an "off-road vehicle" by driving too fast for conditions.
- Don't crowd the plow. Maintenance vehicles plow far and wide – sometimes very wide.
- Drive smart. Never drive into a snow cloud – it could conceal a snowplow.

The Iowa DOT is grateful for the opportunity to partner with AAA Minnesota and the Iowa Motor Truck Association in addition to other groups to get the safety messages to motorists. Burkheimer said, "We hope that our safety message reaches a growing number of drivers and helps get them home safely on winter roads."



## Opening I-235



Federal, state and local dignitaries cut the ribbon to officially open reconstructed I-235 through Des Moines.

The year was 1957. The Des Moines City Council voted unanimously in favor of the Iowa Highway Commission's freeway construction plan, which envisioned a roadway capable of carrying 27,000 vehicles a day through the heart of the city of Des Moines. Though this roadway was to cut through the center of Des Moines, city leaders were convinced the corridor would spur growth and benefit the citizens of the metro. Fifty years later, we know they were right. The I-235 corridor, including its 71 bridges, has been entirely reconstructed and is now carrying nearly 125,000 vehicles a day. Pedestrian bridges link neighborhoods and the thriving metro area (boasting a minimal 19-minute commute) continues to attract new businesses and workers.

The I-235 Reconstruction Completion Commemorative Event held Oct. 18 at Hy-Vee Hall in Des Moines honored the fact that many of the ideals that distinguish and guide Iowans are woven into this 14-mile highway project, including Iowans' ingenuity and spirit, dedication to public service, a desire to provide the best products and services possible, and the ability to work together to resolve differences and adversities for a common good.

Citizens, dignitaries, contractors, consultants, and DOT employees gathered to celebrate overcoming tremendous challenges in reconstructing the state's busiest highway corridor, including constructing the road while maintaining traffic, working during early morning and late-night hours, and enduring the hot temperatures and humidity of the summer months and the cold, blistery winters. Attendees showed their appreciation of the determined group of individuals working tirelessly for the last six years to provide Iowa with the safest, most efficient and aesthetically pleasing roadway possible.

The event boasted the unveiling of a brand new Des Moines Area Regional Transit (DART) bus, a DART van, DOT Highway Helper vehicle, DOT snowplow, concrete mixer, and many vendor booths and displays.

### I-235 Kudos

**From: Pam**

*You are all doing a fantastic job on the freeway project, and I look forward to its completion. It makes Des Moines look so swanky with the great signature bridges, easy to read signs, wonderful exit and entrance lanes, and nice looking sound walls. Job well done!!!!*

**From: Charlie**

*Excellent work through this whole thing... It's hard to believe it's almost done already ...*

**From: Mary**

*I live on 2nd and University and would like to tell you what a beautiful job with the choreography of I-235, Congratulations! I drive it everyday from sunrise to sunset and can get to my church near Jordan Creek in 10 minutes with no problems. I am very pleased with the job that has been done.*

**From: Dawn, facility manager  
Des Moines Botanical Gardens**

*Congratulations on the completion of the I-235 project. We appreciate how we were contacted during construction regarding road closures.*



## Prime returns from military duty

**D**o you take electricity for granted? You wouldn't if you lived in Baghdad. Mark Prime, a highway transportation associate in the Spencer shop and member of the Air National Guard, recently returned from a four-month tour of duty in Iraq where he helped keep electrical power flowing to a large military base near the Baghdad airport.

Prime, a 30-year military man and 28-year DOT veteran, volunteered for the tour of duty, the first overseas deployment of his military career. "I belong to the 185th ARW out of Sioux City, but I went on this deployment with a unit out of Washington State.

The military asks for volunteers for jobs that are not filled, so four other guys from my unit and I volunteered," Prime said.

The five lowans joined the Washington State unit deployed to staff a power plant for a military base near the Baghdad International Airport. During Prime's time on the base from early May to mid-September, he worked six 12-hour days each week performing maintenance and repair on the 12 available 750-kilowatt generators. "The generators, which ran on airplane fuel, were large, but were designed to be mobile units," Prime explained. "We had up to eight running at a time to keep lights and most

importantly air conditioning running to Camp Sather. The temperatures were often 115 degrees during the day."

While being away from his wife and children was difficult for Prime, he said he learned a lot from the experience. "I was able to work on equipment we don't have around here," he said. "And we were very proud of our 98 percent efficiency rating in keeping the lights on and air conditioners running at the base."

Prime said the 13 power plant employees shared two "Alaska Shelter" tents, each with a floor, bunks and air conditioning. He said, "We had people from all over the U.S. bunking with us; men from Idaho, Illinois, Kentucky, Indiana, Washington, West Virginia, and the five of us from Iowa."

As Prime describes it, life on a military base during your free time is less than exciting. "On my day off I usually just did laundry," said Prime. "We were very lucky to have our own washer and dryer. Air Force barracks on the base were really pretty nice compared to what some of the Army troops had to deal with. We were far enough inside the perimeter that we didn't have any huge direct threats, just an occasional mortar or two."

This relative security is a far cry from what could have been Prime's assignment had he not transferred from the Army National Guard to the Air Guard a little more than nine years ago. "In the Army I was a forward observer. Those are the men who travel ahead of the troops and tell the Army where to find the bad guys," Prime said. "The life expectancy for those people in Iraq isn't great."

With a successful deployment behind him and military retirement on the horizon, Prime enjoys being back in Iowa getting ready for another winter at the Spencer shop.

*Members of the 185th met country singer Toby Keith (center) while in Iraq. Mark Prime, who was off-duty the day Keith arrived, is the male soldier wearing a white T-shirt on the right side of the photo.*

*Prime's buddy Brett Robinson from Sioux City outside their "home" in Iraq.*





# Iowa Transportation Museum opens online with Heroes Center



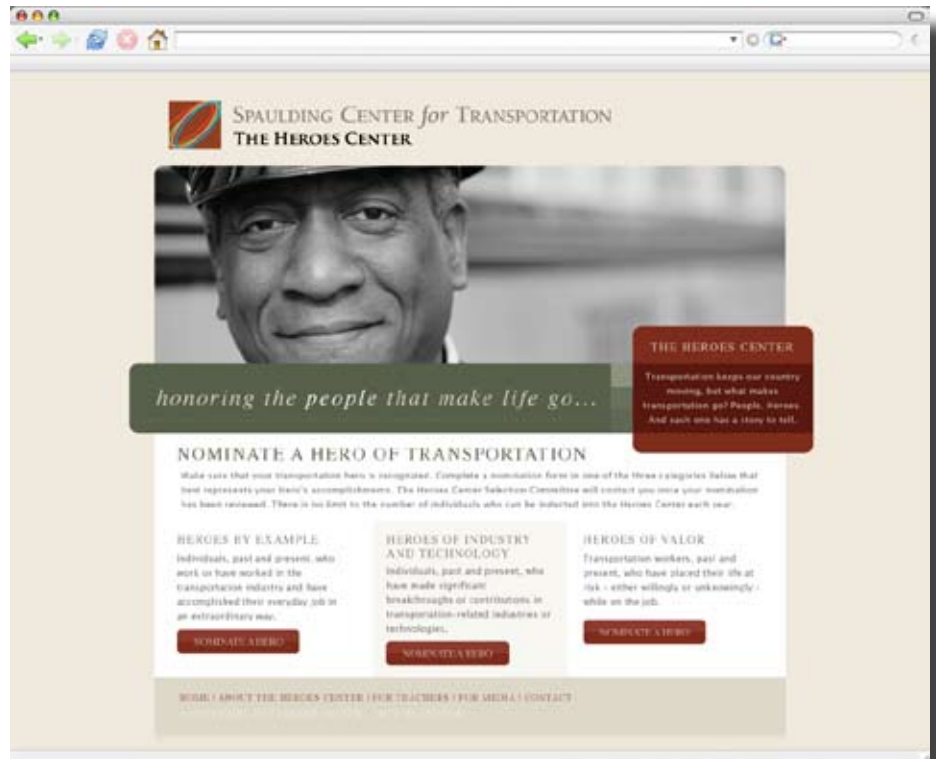
SPAULDING CENTER for TRANSPORTATION  
THE HEROES CENTER

Visitors, young and old, encouraged to nominate transportation heroes from their lives

As DOT employees, we're all transportation heroes in our own way. But now the Iowa Transportation Museum is giving you the opportunity to nominate your transportation heroes on its new Web-based Heroes Center, years before the museum officially opens its doors to the public.

At [TransportationHeroes.org](http://TransportationHeroes.org), visitors of any age can nominate heroes who have made a difference in the transportation industry or placed their life at risk while on the job. By early next year, an inaugural class of heroes will be selected, and the site will use a blend of personal interviews, videos, and written stories to shine a light on some of the people who have kept our country moving.

"The Heroes Center is all about honoring the people who make the wheels go round – assuring us of a better life," said Gerald Schnepf, president of the Iowa Transportation Museum's board of directors. "For too long many of these heroes have gone unrecognized, and it is time to tell their stories. We are thrilled to be opening this online version of the museum experience and we aim to use content from it to help develop future exhibitions at the museum and, more importantly, to provide role models to our youth that can inspire and motivate them into the field of transportation."



Nominations for the Heroes Center will be accepted year-round with no limit to the number of individuals who can be inducted each year. Visitors to the site will be asked to select one of three categories when nominating a hero.

- "Heroes by Example" include transportation workers who have accomplished their everyday job in an extraordinary way.
- "Heroes of Industry and Technology" include those individuals who have made significant breakthroughs or contributions in transportation-related industries or technologies.

- "Heroes of Valor" represent transportation workers who have placed their life at risk – either willingly or unknowingly – while on the job.

"The Heroes Center is breaking the mold by telling the stories of the unsung heroes, particularly those right here in Iowa," said the Honorable Gordon Canfield, treasurer for the Iowa Transportation Museum and mayor of Grinnell. "I hope that everyone takes advantage of this special opportunity to get the transportation hero in their life recognized on a national level."

## 'Tis the season for cyber theft

Shopping online offers lots of benefits that you won't find shopping in a store or by mail. The Internet is always open — seven days a week, 24 hours a day — and bargains can be numerous online. With a click of a mouse, you can buy an airline ticket, book a hotel, send flowers to a friend or purchase your favorite fashions. But just like shopping at the mall, shopping online has its own risks. The following tips can help you stay secure while doing your shopping online.

### **Know whom you're dealing with.**

Anyone can open a shop online under almost any name. Confirm the online seller's physical address and phone number in case you have questions or problems. Contact the seller promptly if you have any problems with your order.

**Beware of pop-up windows and sudden E-mails.** If you get an E-mail or pop-up message asking for financial information while you're browsing, don't reply or click on the link in the message. Legitimate companies don't ask for this information via E-mail. In fact, clicking on the pop-up window or clicking on the link in the E-mail might allow spyware on your system. Giving out confidential information via pop-ups or E-mail can also lead to fraud or identity theft. Delete any suspicious E-mails, and close unwanted pop-ups by clicking on the "X" box in the top right corner - never click inside the pop-up window itself.

**Know exactly what you're buying.** Read the seller's description of the product closely, especially the fine print. Words like "refurbished," "vintage" or "close-out" may indicate that the product is in less-than-mint condition, while name-brand items with "too good to be true" prices could be counterfeits.

**Calculate the cost.** Check out Web sites that offer price comparisons and then, compare "apples to apples." Factor shipping and handling — along with your needs and budget — into the total cost of the order. Do not send cash under any circumstance.

**Pay by credit or charge card.** If you pay by credit or charge card online, your transaction will be protected by the Fair Credit Billing Act. Under this law, you have the right to dispute charges under certain circumstances and temporarily withhold payment while the creditor is investigating the charges. In the event of unauthorized use of your credit or charge card, you generally would be held liable only for the first \$50 in charges. Some companies offer an online shopping guarantee that ensures you will not be held responsible for any unauthorized charges made online, and some cards may provide additional warranty, return and/or purchase-protection benefits.

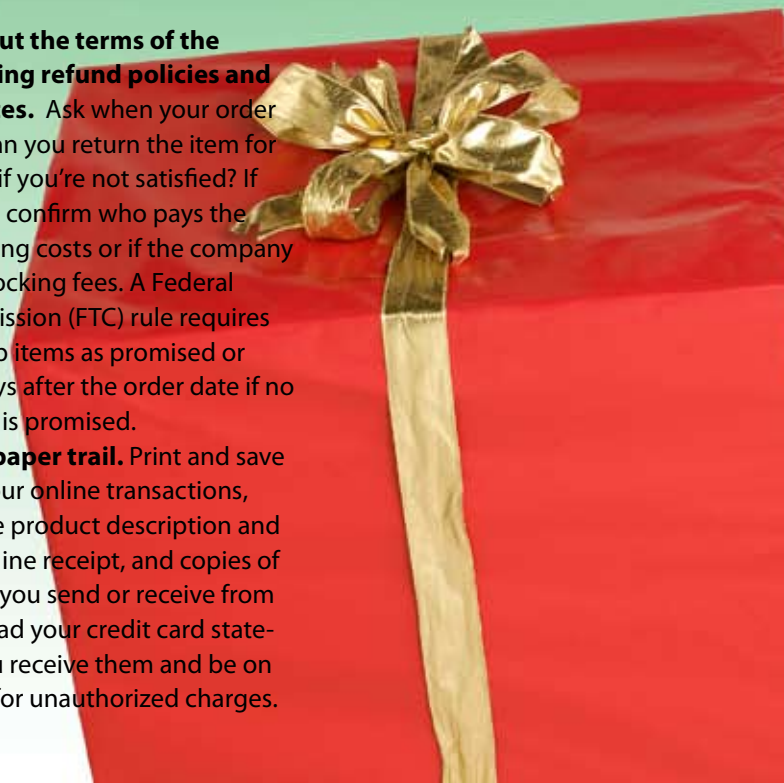
**Check out the terms of the deal, including refund policies and delivery dates.** Ask when your order will arrive. Can you return the item for a full refund if you're not satisfied? If you return it, confirm who pays the return shipping costs or if the company charges restocking fees. A Federal Trade Commission (FTC) rule requires sellers to ship items as promised or within 30 days after the order date if no specific date is promised.

**Keep a paper trail.** Print and save records of your online transactions, including the product description and price, the online receipt, and copies of every E-mail you send or receive from the seller. Read your credit card statements as you receive them and be on the lookout for unauthorized charges.

**Don't E-mail your financial information.** E-mail is not a secure method of transmitting financial information like your credit card, checking account, or social security number. If you initiate a transaction and want to provide your financial information through an organization's Web site, look for indicators that the site is secure, like a lock icon on the browser's status bar or a URL for a Web site that begins "https:" (the "s" stands for "secure"). Unfortunately, no indicator is foolproof; some fraudulent sites have forged security icons.

**Check the privacy policy.** The policy should let you know what personal information the Web site operators are collecting and why and how they're going to use the information. If you can't find a privacy policy — or if you can't understand it, consider taking your business to another site that's more consumer-friendly.

*Cyber theft, continued on page 14*





## Put one foot in front of the other

**J**ust put one foot in front of the other. Who would have thought the simple act of walking could help find a cure for breast cancer. As you've read in several articles in *INSIDE*, many DOTers are dedicated to the cause and prepared to put their feet in action to prove it.

More than 100 DOTers and their friends and family members joined a hoard of 20,000-plus participating in the 16th Annual Komen Race for the Cure® in Des Moines. Events of

the day included a five kilometer competitive road race for serious walkers and runners, a one-mile walk and a kids' race. Beyond the event itself, emotions ran high as the day served as a celebration of life for survivors or a remembrance event for those who have been taken by breast cancer.

The DOT's largest showing was the Motor Vehicle Division (MVD) team, which fielded a group for the fifth straight year, led by Lavonne Short. Of the 63 team members, the majority were from Motor Vehicle Division, with a few other DOTers joining the group. The Information Technology Division's (ITD) MVD Support Team broke off this year and started their own team, captained by Nancy Goecke.

The ITD team included Chris Jones, Kirsten Bandow, Mary Johnson, Lynette Leopold, Colette Simpson, Rita Warren, Linda Torgeson, Deb Kerns, Olya Arjmand, Deb Shafer, Nancy Goecke, Barb Espeland, Judy Gibson, Barb Weigel, Rose Bayless, Deb Corwin, Heather Sheehan, and Frank Leopold.

***Race, continued on next page***

*ITD team members*



*MVD team members*







**Race, continued from previous page**

DOTers joining the MVD team were Lavonne Short, Diane Sappenfield, Nancy Lacy, Thelma Huffman, Shirley Andre, Becky Sawatzky, Evelyn Mitchell, Pam Cook, Stacey Purscell, Laurie Rieck, Gloria Aswegan, Karen Ballard, Cindy Deerr, Kathy Ohorilko, Carol Cockerham, Tifani Armintrout, Rhonda Wernecke, Jody Johnson, Theresa Kern, Dee Merrifield (retired), Noralee Warrick, Tonya Bishop, Sue Reding, Melody Aswegan, Brandie McCuen-Burgos, Andy Lewis, Tina Lewis, Sherry Forrest (retired), Donna Kelso-Roush, Michael Littlejohn, Desiree Burrows, Audrey Croft, Tina Hargis, Larry Hargis, Karen Jackson, and Toni Pane.

Friends and family members joining the teams included: Dave Short, Melissa Short, Stefanie Short, Melinda Long, Kathy Davis, Kathleen Lefleur, Emily Shafer, Jenni Campbell, Marie Davis, Jennifer Robinson, Clint Robinson, (with Morgan Robinson and Kaylen Robinson), Lynne Thornton, Donna Grimm, Norma Kilmer, Melissa Deerr, Karin Strand, Diane Johansen, Craig Johansen, Gayle Lundak, Dennis Lorey, Dianne Armintrout, Becky Peters, Jessica Bishop, Jean Cook, Brandon Miller, Samatha Hargis, and Sabrina Hargis.

Other DOTers participating this year included: Judy Whitney, Office of Bridges and Structures, and her daughter, Dawn, and granddaughter, Kaitlyn, 2 1/2. Judy says a member of her family has participated in the event since it began in Des Moines. Susie McCullough and Mark Hansen from the Office of Transportation Data walked the course with two of Susie's friends. Susie said, "My 12-year-old daughter, Morgan, ran the whole thing...crazy kid!"

DOT family members participating included District 1 Engineer Scott Dockstader's wife, Maureen, and daughter, Kelsey and Grimes Garage Operations Assistant Bill Kreinbring's wife, Stephanie, and 12-year-old son, Jacob. Bill's 15-year-old son, Joshua, placed 84th in the timed 5K race at 23 minutes, 33 seconds.

According to the event Web site, money raised by participants goes to provide no-cost mammograms for women and men in need of financial assistance in the community. This program has provided mammograms to more than 5,000 lowans in the past 10 years. Data collected by the Polk County Department of Health indicates that, of these people, 10 percent have needed further testing or treatment. The funds also provide breast health education and grants to lowans throughout the Des Moines affiliate's 81 counties.

Short said, "It was a gorgeous day. I hope even more people can join us next year. Our team gets bigger and better every year!"

# Got a problem?

## Maybe the Research and Technology Bureau can help

If you have an idea for a research project, or if you have a transportation-related problem that may benefit from research, please provide a brief description of the project or need. All topics submitted will be considered as the Iowa DOT develops its research program. Please provide enough background so someone not familiar with the topic area may be able to fully understand the project. Also, please include your contact information to gather further information, if necessary. The Research and Technology Bureau will work to develop the topics for submittal to various funding sources.

### Problem statement

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### Person submitting topic

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Office: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send project topics to:  
Mark Dunn  
Research and Technology Bureau  
515-239-1447  
mark.dunn@dot.iowa.gov



## 2007 National Roadway Safety Awards

### *Iowa's Local Roads Safety Initiatives pick up national honor*

The Roadway Safety Foundation and Federal Highway Administration recognized an Iowa initiative at a meeting held Nov. 7 in Washington, D.C. The initiative, developed by the Iowa DOT's Office of Traffic and Safety and Iowa Department of Public Safety (Iowa DPS), focuses on getting current crash data into the hands of decision makers on the local road system, helping them get their high-crash locations evaluated by an experienced engineering consultant and assisting them access funds through the Traffic Safety Improvement Program.

Approximately 50 percent of all highway-related fatal crashes in the United States occur on local roads not under the jurisdiction of state departments of transportation (DOT). Local governments are becoming active partners in the implementation of each state's strategic highway safety plan (SHSP). Although they are willing, local governments generally lack the crash data, safety engineering expertise, and resources state DOT's have available to identify candidate safety locations, cost-effective countermeasures, and project funding.

The following programs and services were established to assist Iowa's local governments in advancing highway safety. Use of these tools has been encouraging with more than 250 local government safety projects funded since the establishment of the local assistance safety programs. These projects have had a mean crash reduction of 21 percent.

1. Each local government can obtain free training to allow them to access crash data for their jurisdiction and do basic crash analysis. In coordination with the Iowa DPS, the Iowa Traffic Safety Data Service was established at Iowa State University to provide free, advanced crash analysis and geographic information system tools to local governments.

2. Local governments are provided a free traffic safety study at safety candidate intersections and roadways. These studies are limited to 100 hours and provided by on-call consultants. This is also a joint Iowa DOT/DPS initiative.



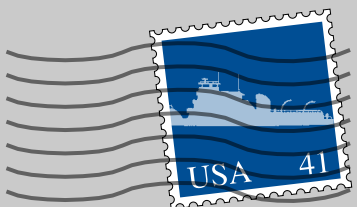
*Top photo: Frederick G. (Bud) Wright Jr., executive director, Federal Highway Administration; Mike Laski, director, Iowa Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau; Steve Gent, director, Iowa DOT's Office of Traffic and Safety; Gregory M. Cohen, executive director, Roadway Safety Foundation*

*Bottom photo: Mike Laski, director, Iowa Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau; Cathy Gillen, managing director, Roadway Safety Foundation; Steve Gent, director, Iowa DOT's Office of Traffic and Safety*

3. Proposed local government safety projects are eligible for a safety grant of up to \$500,000. This program draws support from a state safety program funded by 1/2 percent of the state Road Use Tax Fund and administered by the Iowa DOT.

4. Free safety engineering training classes and peer exchange are provided to all city and county engineers each year by Iowa DOT staff.





## Kudos!

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

To: Nancy Richardson, DOT director  
From: Gary J. Otting, Iowa assistant attorney general

It often seems that we in the public sector only are contacted when a customer wants to complain. I wanted to take a moment to write to you for the opposite reason.

I recently visited your new facility in Ankeny for the purpose of renewing my driver's license and also to get one of the state employee identification cards that are issued by your department. I do believe that I experienced some of the best customer service that I have ever encountered from a government agency. The woman who assisted me was pleasant and cheerful and friendly. She had never processed the state ID's before, and indicated that she needed to get some assistance in doing so. She apologized for the delay, although the delay was by no means unreasonable. She got the assistance she needed.

Since there were two cards that had to be issued, two photos needed to be taken. She walked over to the photo area to let them know that there were two cards being issued, so that they would know to do both pictures together, again to minimize any further delay. The photo guy got this all set up, and I was on my way.

Like many lowans, I can remember the days when going to renew one's driver's license was a dreadful experience. And I do not know what your agency has done to change that, but it is certainly working. I noticed that other customers were handled efficiently and politely by your staff as well.

Please accept these unsolicited comments from a very satisfied customer of your agency, and please pass on these compliments and my thanks to these employees and their direct supervisors.

To: Nancy Richardson, DOT director  
From: Susan Martinovich, director, Nevada DOT

We are in the process of kicking off our winter campaign and I was told that we "borrowed" it from you. Dennis Burkheimer of your staff has been very helpful in providing us the information and materials. Anytime we can utilize successful information from others is very exciting! Thank you. We expect a successful program and hopefully will educate our drivers... ICE AND SNOW ... TAKE IT SLOW.

(Editor's note: Dennis Burkheimer is the winter operations administrator in the Office of Maintenance. Read more about the Ice and Snow ... Take It Slow program on page 3 of this edition of INSIDE.)

To: Paula Moro, Motor Vehicle Division  
From: Bob Mueller

Dawn Hackleman is a wonderful person and very helpful. I can't stress enough, at least from my point of view, how Dawn went the extra mile to help me. It may not have seemed that big of a deal to her, but it was a huge task for me and I am very grateful to Dawn. I hope that you are aware of how helpful and polite she is. Her attitude is pleasant and it was truly a pleasure to meet her. Please let her know how grateful I am and what a privilege it was for me to meet her. You probably don't hear this often, but I hope I have the pleasure of seeing her again.

(Editor's note: Mr. Mueller went to the Ankeny DL station to renew his driver's license and was assisted by Dawn Hackleman.)

To: Nancy Richardson, DOT Director  
From: Audrey Carlson, Iowa Racing and Gaming Commission

Recently I drove to Ankeny (from Des Moines) to obtain a state employee ID card. I was quite impressed with the new facility and the way the licensing operation is set up. Your employees were quick, courteous and professional from the reception desk to the individual who took the photos.

Although the individual at the station had not processed a state employee ID request before (on the new system, I believe she stated), she was very conscientious about not taking too long. She and a few other individuals carefully went through the steps to determine exactly what to do and it wasn't too long before it was accomplished. All of the involved employees were friendly and apologetic that it may have taken too much of my time; but to be truthful, I didn't mind waiting because they made it pleasant for me. In addition, the gentleman who took my photo for my ID was just as courteous and friendly as the other employees who processed my ID card.

Your new facility is beautiful and I just wanted you to know that I came away from there very favorably impressed with the way I was treated and served. I know your licensing sites process hundreds of individuals and licenses each day, and for those employees to maintain their positive and cheerful attitudes such as today surely provides for a pleasant experience!

## Found: dog

**L**uke was lost. He had wandered away while his family was hiking and working their horses on the recreational trail about 10 miles from the Sidney maintenance garage. In all the commotion to pack up and continue a journey from Montana to Arkansas, the family noticed that Luke was lost. After spending half the day looking for their pet, they came to the conclusion that something had happened to Luke and they left for Arkansas.



Luke, a 13-year-old Australian Shepard, found his way to the Sidney shop and the Iowa DOT employees there. Jeff McQueen, equipment operator senior, says the dog immediately melted the hearts of his crew. "The dog could hardly walk, and as soon as he came in he went into the office and laid down. He had sticks in his fur and was hungry," McQueen

said. "A few of the guys started cutting the sticks out and brushing the dog. Someone else ran home and got food for him. We called around to the local shelters, vets and even the radio station to try and find his owners."

By the time Luke's family reached Arkansas, they were beside themselves at the loss of their dog, one they say was the best livestock dog in Montana. They tried one more time and called the Fremont County Vet Clinic in Sidney. Luckily staff at the clinic told them that the DOT shop had called in about Luke. The family contacted an animal shelter in Maryville, Mo, for help. "The lady from that shelter drove up here to get the dog," McQueen said, "I asked her how she was going to get the dog to Arkansas. She said that she just might drive him down, he was that important to his family."

"We were one happy group when Luke's family was found," said McQueen. "He was a great dog. Once we found out his name, he followed every command to sit, stay and lay down. Sometimes you think about a group of guys being hard-hearted, but not with this dog. He just melted everybody."

Members of the Sidney garage are Andy Sheldon, Bill Welchans, Dick Duncan, Rick Johnson, Terry Whitehead, Steve Carpenter, Mark Hilger, and Blaine Bengston.

## Family happenings

### District 3

Mary Beth Banta



Kelly Mulvihill, District 3 engineering operations technician, caught this huge flathead catfish in the Missouri River July 18. The fish weighed 67 pounds and was 54 inches long. The fish was released following this photo opportunity with Mulvihill and his children, Ryan, 12, and Taylor, 14.

### District 5

Brenda Hadley



A happy group of 11 preschoolers visited the Shenandoah shop recently. The group from Turnbull Child Development Center was hosted by equipment operator Bill Welchans.

## Enviro makes Halloween appearance



**E**nviro, the DOT's Enviro-Explorers Kids' Club mascot, made the rounds at Reiman Gardens in Ames Oct. 21 and 28, promoting the DOT to kids with the help of a little candy. More than 850 children flocked to the gardens on the two Sundays to collect candy and visit many area mascots at the "Spirits in the Gardens" event. Sponsor organizations in addition to the DOT, included: First National Bank, U.S. Forest Service, Iowa Cubs, city of Ames, Fox 17 Kids Club, the Iowa Games, Ames Public Library, and the Iowa Corn Growers Association.

*Family happenings, continued next page*



## Family happenings, from previous page

During their visit, the children were treated to activity books and lots of information about the DOT. The kids were very interested in the equipment and Welchens says he's surprised the neighbors didn't complain about the noise coming from all the air horns blowing!



Gary L. Bowlin, garage operations assistant at the Martensdale garage, retired Oct. 31, 2007. Bowlin began working for the Iowa State Highway Commission in August 1970, as an auto mechanic helper, and became a highway maintenance man 1 in September of that year. This position later was reclassified to equipment operator 1. He was promoted to equipment operator 2 in October 1981. He was temporarily assigned to equipment operator 3 in June 1992, and later that year assigned as temporary supervisor over the Indianola and Martensdale shops. Bowlin was nominated for the Proud Award in 1992 by his supervisor, Ron Chapman, due to the extra duties he took on that year. He was promoted to a permanent position of equipment operator 3 in October 1994 and reclassified to garage operations assistant in 1999.

A retirement party was held for Gary on Oct. 29 at the Martensdale garage with many co-workers, family and friends in attendance. Congratulations, Gary!

## In memory



Dennis E. Lange, 61, of Ames, died Thursday, Oct. 25. Lange was born Feb. 23, 1946, in Ames, the son of Fred and Mildred (Moser) Lange. He graduated from Ames High School in 1964. After graduating, Lange served in the Army Reserves. Lange farmed and worked as a cartographer for the Iowa DOT for 36 years before retiring in 2001. After retiring, Lange continued farming. Lange was a member of the Amateur Trapshooting Association, Iowa State Trap Shooting Association and Farm Bureau. He loved farming, trapshooting, hunting, racing, playing cards, and visiting with friends. He had a deep appreciation for Chevrolets, John Deeres and Vizsla hunting dogs. Lange was a great uncle, loved by his nieces and nephew. He was known as the caretaker of the Ames bald eagles. He is survived by wife, Michelle Flynn, of Ames; his mother, Mildred Lange, of Ames; his sister and brother-in-law, Diane and Larry Schulte, of Odebolt; two nieces, Kristin (Sherwin) Kuch and Tiffany (Darin) Mohr; and a nephew, Clint Schulte. Lange was preceded in death by his father, Fred Lange.



Lyle Benjamin Wills, 65, died Oct. 19. He was one of the triplet sons of Logan and Winnie (Kruse) Wills born February 5, 1942, in Sibley. He attended country school by Little Rock and later Sibley High School. After high school, Wills was employed by Dan Osterman in Ocheyedan. He served in the Army from 1964 until being discharged in 1966, one of those years was spent in Korea. On March 21, 1969, he was united in marriage to Sharon Vogel in Sheldon. The couple settled in Sheldon, where he started working for the Iowa DOT's Sheldon maintenance shop in January 1971, until his retirement in August 2004. He then worked for Tim Pedersen Excavating until his death. He was a member of the St. Paul Lutheran Church in Sheldon, enjoyed watching NASCAR races, going to coffee, and spending time with his family and friends.

Left to cherish his memory are his wife, Sharon, of Sheldon; two daughters and their husbands, Stacey and David Bonello of Ames; and Krista and Brian Parks of Sheldon; and two grandchildren, Kiley and Mason Parks. Three brothers, Delbert and his wife, Frances Wills, of Sibley; and triplet brothers, Lynn and his wife, Gloria Wills, of Sibley and Lorn and his wife, Joan Wills, of Sanborn; two sisters, Dorothy Schilling of Westminster, Colo.; and Marlys and her husband, Alvin Jurens of Sibley; along with nieces, nephews and other relatives and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents, a brother, Russell and a brother-in-law, Leroy Schilling.

# Personnel Updates

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for Sept. 21 to Oct. 18, 2007

## New Hires

**James Armstrong**, transportation engineer specialist, District 5 Office; **Keven Arrowsmith**, information technology specialist 2, Media and Marketing Services; **Terra Case**, motor vehicle officer, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Peter Hjelmstad**, executive officer 2, District 2 Office; **Alexander Jansen**, clerk specialist, Driver Services; **Kimberly Maxwell**, motor vehicle officer, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Kimberly Nissen**, driver's license clerk senior, Iowa City DL station; **Dennis Pingel**, construction technician, Cherokee construction; **Angela Poole**, program planner 3, Location and Environment; **Jason Prindle**, design technician, Design; **Norbert Shoumaker**, motor vehicle officer, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Allyssa Sweeney**, secretary 1, Right of Way; **Jennifer Teymer**, driver's license clerk, Council Bluffs DL station; **Jeremy Trenez**, information technology specialist 4, Information Technology Division; **Marci Whitacre**, driver's license clerk senior, Des Moines DL station

## Promotions

**Cathy Aplara**, from materials technician 3 to materials technician 4, Fairfield materials; **Stephen Bain**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Mount Pleasant garage; **Cindy Baker**, from driver's license examiner, Des Moines DL station, to motor vehicle officer, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Douglas Clemenson**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Ames garage; **Martin Coughenour**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Ames garage; **Alan Downs**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Martensdale garage; **Gary Erickson**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Clarion garage; **Mary Ford**, from driver's license supervisor 1, Iowa City DL station, to public service executive 1, Driver Services; **Kurtis Grubb**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Ottumwa garage; **Randall Haag**, from highway technician associate, Carlisle garage to construction technician, Chariton construction; **Timothy Halbrook**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Bloomfield garage; **Joseph Hovey**, from highway technician associate to highway technician,

Washington garage; **Brian Iles**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Mount Pleasant garage; **Brian Kingery**, from highway technician associate, Knoxville garage to highway technician, Martensdale garage; **Michael Loyd**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Waterloo garage; **Jon Mason**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Fairfield garage; **Ryan Masters**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Waterloo garage; **Raymond Meyer** from highway technician associate, Waterloo garage to highway technician, Waverly garage; **Steven Milligan**, from land surveyor, District 3 Office to executive officer 2, Design; **Todd Netley**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Martensdale garage; **Harold Parke**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Donnellson garage; **Christopher Poole**, from transportation engineer to transportation engineer specialist, Design; **Duane Prange**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Allison garage; **Richard Sammons**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Oskaloosa garage; **Traci Sharr**, from driver's license clerk to driver's license clerk senior, Des Moines DL station; **Timothy Tedrow**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Fairfield garage; **Jeffrey Webb**, from highway technician

associate to highway technician, Osceola garage; **Eugene Welter**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Waterloo garage; **Jeffrey Wesley**, from highway technician associate, Albion garage to highway technician, Chariton garage; **Lawrence Wheeler**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Waverly garage; **Martin Wiegard**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Burlington garage; **Nick Wilkerson**, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Wapello garage; **Jeffery Zimmerman**, from highway technician associate, District 5 bridge crew to highway technician, Ottumwa garage

## Transfers

**Lester Mahlstedt**, highway technician associate, from Waukon garage to Charles City garage; **Sherrie McClanahan**, design technician, from Right of Way to District 1 Office

## Retirements

**Craig Boyington**, highway technician associate, Williams garage; **John Hey**, transportation planner 4, Modal Division; **Philip Larson**, right of way agent 3, Right of Way; **Patricia Magoon**, administrative assistant 1, Highway Division; **Jose Ponce**, highway technician associate, Knoxville garage; **Richard Rotherth**, administrative assistant 2, Driver Services

## Cyber theft, continued from page 7

**Keep your computer protected.** Protect your computer by using anti-virus and anti-spyware software, a firewall, and an E-mail spam filter. It is important to keep these programs updated on a regular basis to keep your system safe from the latest threats. Keep your operating system and browser up to date with the latest security patches as well. That way, if you do stumble onto a malicious or compromised Web site, your computer is less likely to become infected.

Employees are reminded that it is against DOT policy to shop online during worktime.

For more information on safe online shopping, please visit:

<http://www.onguardonline.gov/shopping.html>

<http://onguardonline.gov/quiz/>

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/edcams/holiday/>

[http://www.staysafeonline.info/news/press\\_nov17\\_2005.html](http://www.staysafeonline.info/news/press_nov17_2005.html)

<http://www.safeshopping.org/tips.shtml>

Article adapted from <http://www.onguardonline.gov/shopping.html>



## Service Awards

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for December 2007

### 35 Years

**Duane Dewaele**, Maintenance; **John Bruce Schuck**, Motor Carrier Services; **Robert Twit**, Information Technology Division

### 30 Years

**James Dudley**, Independence garage; **Keith Frideres**, Algona garage; **Marvin Harrison**, District 3 Office; **John Neiderhiser**, Bridges and Structures; **William Ott**, Creston garage; **James Trede**, Neola garage; **Margery Wadle**, Ottumwa DL station; **Barbara West**, Driver Services; **Lyle Wiezorek**, Knoxville garage

### 25 Years

**Ronda Barker**, Adair garage; **Robert Edgar**, Waverly garage; **Thomas Geiger**, Urbana garage; **David Hellwig**, Donnellson garage; **Jeffrey Laing**, Tipton garage; **Laverne Schossow**, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Diane Sturtz**, Cedar Rapids garage; **Mark Voss**, Driver Services

### 20 Years

**Rex Allen**, District 4 Office; **David Ehrhardt**, Elkader garage; **Michael Hagen**, Hanlontown garage; **Nancy Halvorson**, Right of Way; **Steven Klunder**, Design; **Linda Kofoot**, Mason City maintenance; **Mark Stephens**, Tama garage; **Dennis Walker**, Bridges and Structures; **Myron Wanatee Jr.**, Marshalltown construction; **Tim Zeimet**, Maquoketa garage

### 15 Years

**Peter Andera**, Mason City garage; **Stephen Bain**, Mount Pleasant garage; **Randy Barz**, Garner garage; **Vernon Keith Benson**, Iowa Falls garage; **Ronald Burnes**, Tama garage; **Joseph Colman**, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Roy Guyer**, Avoca garage; **Michael**

**Jorgensen**, Traffic and Safety; **Vicky Dien**, District 3 paint crew; **Glenda Sandahl**, Sidney garage; **Bill Shuler**, Bedford garage; **Leana Shull**, Onawa garage; **Mary Kay Solberg**, Location and Environment; **Mary Thompson**, Bridges and Structures; **Timothy Timmins**, Sioux City-Leeds garage; **James Wright**, Newton garage

### 10 Years

**Jon Best**, Sioux City construction; **Roy Heggen Jr.**, Fort Dodge garage; **Kevin Johnson**, Waterloo garage; **William Kruse**, Council Bluffs-north garage; **Aron Liebe**, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Ryan Masters**, Waterloo garage; **Thomas Minahan**, Neola garage; **Mary Netten**, Finance; **Kenneth Robertson**, Davenport garage; **James Surber**, Facilities Support; **Charles Thompson**, Altoona garage; **Timothy Van Brogen**, Newton garage; **Kent Vrieze**, District 2 paint crew; **Charlene Waller**, Ottumwa DL station; **Stefani Wonders**, Transportation Data

### 5 Years

**Ronald Adams**, Grinnell garage; **Kendall Anderson**, Ashton garage; **Kenneth Bean**, Muscatine garage; **Garry Carlson**, Sac City garage; **Sandra Choate**, Procurement and Distribution; **Nicole Cuva**, Right of Way; **Peter Djordjevic**, Carlisle garage; **Andy Eckels**, Osceola garage; **Michael Hebl**, Oakdale garage; **Rebecca Law**, Right of Way; **Matthew McCann**, Osceola garage; **Ryan Miller**, Design; **John Mohr**, Williamsburg garage; **Dolan Olson**, Facilities Support; **Randy Reifschneider**, Ames garage; **Timothy Rozeboom**, Ashton garage; **John Schnebbe**, Williamsburg garage; **Daniel Stokes**, Contracts; **Tom Strabala**, Oakdale garage; **Margaret Suckow**, Right of Way; **Brent Terrell**, Carlisle garage; **Keith Vlademar**, District 5 Office; **Mark Weyen**, Akron garage



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.

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**On the cover:** The corn harvest in Clay County - Photo by Roger Larson, Office of Systems Planning

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# Marcia Fischer

## Iowa's first female DL examiner retires

The year was 1971. If you wanted to get a driver's license, you would have to prove your driving skills to a local highway patrolman during a drive test. That year Marcia Gritton had only been out of Clarence high school a few years, but she knew how to handle herself. She also knew interviewing for a job to administer drive tests for the Iowa Department of Public Safety wasn't something women did. That was even more reason to go to the interview.

"I was just sure I didn't get that job," said Marcia Gritton Fischer. "I was pretty direct with my answers to some very interesting questions from the troopers." Those direct answers



**"They said they'd try having a woman examiner for a year. I was out to show them I could do it."**

opened the door for the young woman. "They said they'd try having a woman examiner for a year. I was out to show them I could do it," she says now with a chuckle, after recently retiring from the DOT with 36 years of service.

"The hardest part was coming in as a woman and a civilian. Drive tests had always been administered by law enforcement. Here I was getting in the car with no uniform and badge. There was a lot of explaining to do the first couple of years," said Fischer. "One truck driver refused to drive test with me. I just got out of the truck and thought, 'Ok, that's your problem, not mine.'"

In 1975, when the task of administering drive tests was transferred to the DOT, Fischer came on board. She continued as a driver's license examiner until 1982, when she began traveling as a hearing officer. "Back then the hearings were face to face. You could sit and talk to someone and really get a feel for their situation," said Fischer. "Later we went to phone hearings to cut down on windshield time. That was really draining because I did a hearing every half-hour all day long. By the end of the day, I would be mentally exhausted," she said.

Five years ago, the DOT implemented document review only for hearings. Fischer was the only

hearing officer retained at that time for this task. "While it is less draining on me to do strictly document reviews, I personally think we've lost the driver improvement goal that was part of the face-to-face and even the phone interviews. In my opinion, these reviews don't have the same effect on the driver. Some people just don't express themselves well in writing," Fischer said. "People are more concerned about telling you why they need their license back, not on finding a solution to the problems that got them suspended in the first place."

So, will Fischer miss the drama involved with some of the cases? "I have some great stories," Fischer says. "They're too long to print here, but some people have suggested I write a book."

Maybe she'll become an author in retirement, but Fischer says it's more likely you'll find her playing guitar and singing. She plans to improve her music skills on the fiddle, mandolin and banjo too. Once summer hits, you'll find Fischer and her husband, Dennis, who is retired from the insurance industry, at the best fishing spots in eastern Iowa and Minnesota.

Even though two of Dennis' three grown kids live out of state, Fischer says, "We probably won't do much traveling. We both traveled for our jobs and we're going to be content to just sit tight for a while."



*Marcia Fischer was Iowa's first female DL examiner.*

