

APRIL 2009

# INSIDE



## What's INSIDE

- Busy 2009 construction season begins • 3-6
- Window of opportunity wide open to explore passenger rail in Iowa • 7
- Shocking night at Lee County weigh scale • 8
- Multiple-blade plow shows promise • 9
- Stutzels set out to find their future • 10
- Uncertain economic times require a plan for financial stability • 11
- Two firsts at data collection site on I-35/80 • 16



## ONE 2 ONE

WITH DIRECTOR NANCY RICHARDSON

I did something this past month that I have never done before. I attended the NCAA Division 1 Wrestling Championships. Some of you may have known that I am a bit of a sports nut, following basketball and football and playing golf when I can. But I'm guessing few knew wrestling was also one of my favorites and as always, I had some "aha moments" while I was there.

Bear with me while I tell you a bit about the NCAA Wrestling Championships, for those who aren't familiar with them. The event is a four-day, day-and-night series of individual wrestling matches taking place on up to eight mats at once. Dozens of colleges and universities from across the nation have from one to several wrestlers competing for an individual national championship at their weight and there is a team champion. You have to keep winning to get to the finals, but it's a double elimination format so if you lose once you get to "wrestle back" to improve your final standing.

Fans sit in sections by school so every wrestler has a cheering section in the arena. As at most events, fans come in all shapes, sizes and types so the people watching is great. I went with my 6' 5" nephew and his eleven-year-old son. My nephew was definitely one of the few who skewed the average height. A lot of wrestling fans are former wrestlers and wrestling families and wrestlers are typically not known for their height!

Which brings me to one of the things I was reminded of at the tournament – you are likely wrong if you stereotype people. There are lots of definitions of the word "stereotype" but it generally means an oversimplified conception or standardized image of a person or group. The perceptions one has from stereotyping can be negative or positive. You can either reduce someone to less than they are or elevate them to more than they are by assigning to them preconceived ideas or fixed impressions often based on a single attribute or feature. People can be stereotyped because of many things such as size, gender, financial standing, hair color, race or ethnicity, education level, hometown, career or even what sport they participate in or follow.

During the tournament, in the next section over, I spotted a man I know from Iowa. He is head of an Iowa trucking company and has been president of the Iowa Motor Truck

Association, which is how our paths crossed – a great guy. Since this event goes on all day, there is ample time to socialize so I walked to his section and sat down beside him. His surprise was noticeable and he even commented that he would have never figured me for a wrestling fan.

We laughed about how you can never know about what peoples' interests are when you only know them in one context. A couple days after the tournament I even got an e-mail from him that said in part, "I must confess I could not have been more shocked to see you there." Of course, this example is an insignificant, light-hearted example of stereotyping. I haven't yet figured out whether it was a positive or negative stereotype that led to his shock – some might take it as a compliment to not be considered a wrestling fan but we wrestling fans don't care because we're individualists.

Which brings me to another observation about wrestling and what I like about the way it parallels other aspects of life. I really like the individual nature of wrestling – there is nowhere to hide, no teammate to

pick up the slack during your match. I believe there is no other sport that is as intensively one-on-one, competitive as wrestling. It's just two guys competing head-to-head in a very hands-on, physical nature. Yet it is in some ways the ultimate team sport. Every match matters because of the scoring system. Points gained in "wrestle backs" by competitors who can no longer go to the finals often are the difference between a team win or loss. In fact, this year's winner – Iowa – had no individual champions and relied on wrestle-back match points to claim the title.

The messages in that are many, but what strikes me most is that wrestling shows us the importance of always giving our best, even when the ultimate prize is no longer in reach. And the fact that the overall success of all of us depends on the individual effort and success of each of us. And, in those instances where it just isn't our day and we get "pinned," it helps to have others on our team who can step up and carry the extra load for us.

**ONE 2 ONE,**  
*continued page 14*



# Busy 2009 construction season begins

**T**his is an exciting year for road and bridge construction in Iowa. With the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 approved in February, the Iowa DOT's construction program has added more than 50 percent more funding for this season. According to Mark Swenson, project scheduler in the Highway Division, the 2009 highway construction program was set at nearly \$530 million. Federal ARRA dollars added \$227.8 million for state projects this year. In addition, Iowa's flood recovery efforts continue with more than 100 emergency relief projects on the primary system.

"The increase in federal funding provides us with an opportunity to begin to address some of the backlog in projects we have developed over the last several years," said Kevin Mahoney, director of the Highway Division. "Our focus is to move forward on rehabilitating pavement and tackling bridge projects that are ready to go. With the recent severe winter weather and past flooding, more bridges and roads than ever are in need of repair or replacement."

Statewide, the DOT has identified 165 flood- and weather-related damage sites on the primary system due to 2008 weather events. John Adam, director of the Highway Division's Statewide Operations Bureau, said, "While the department is fortunate that the repair projects are eligible for Federal Highway Administration emergency relief reimbursement, these immediate repairs do not address the longer term detrimental effects on pavement and structure performance caused by these events. ARRA funding can help address those long-term needs."

The Iowa Transportation Commission approved an amended five-year highway program in March to move many projects into the 2009 construction season. Mahoney said, "These projects were already being developed and are



ready to go; all we needed was the funding piece. Now we are able to get them out the door quickly. The additional funding also allows projects from upcoming years to be brought forward, especially interstate rehabilitation."

The increased construction load is not without challenges, especially in staffing levels. The additional projects will add much-needed construction jobs to Iowa's economy, but the number of Iowa DOT Highway Division employees will not increase, although some current vacancies will be filled. "This will be an extremely challenging year for everyone," said Mahoney.

With the ARRA funding, the updated 2009 highway program calls for \$327 million in interstate projects, \$184 million in projects addressing capacity issues and economic development, \$183 million for non-interstate projects, \$46 million for non-interstate bridges, and \$18 million for safety projects.

## Major projects for the 2009 construction season

### District 1

**Roadway:** I-35 rehabilitation

**County:** Hamilton

**Scope:** This 4.5-mile project from Iowa 175 to south of U.S. 20 consists of routing northbound traffic onto southbound lanes, then removing and replacing the concrete in the northbound lanes. This project has been identified for the June 2009 letting.

**Roadway:** U.S. 30 from Colo to Iowa 330

**County:** Story and Marshall

**Scope:** The project to expand U.S. 30 to four lanes from Colo to Iowa 330 began last fall with letting the grading project for two new westbound lanes. Work will begin in April. The State Center to Iowa 330 section is expected to be in the April 2009 letting.

**Roadway:** U.S. 30 – Tama bypass

**County:** Tama

**Scope:** The U.S. 30 Tama work for 2009 consists of four grading projects, a box culvert project and construction of seven bridges. The grading projects started in August 2008 and will continue through the 2009 construction season.

**Roadway:** I-35 / I-235 / I-80 – northeast mixmaster

**County:** Polk

**Scope:** Work at this location consists of continued reconstruction of the I-35/I-235 north- and southbound ramp bridges over east- and westbound I-80, hot-mix asphalt resurfacing on east- and westbound I-80, and hot-mix asphalt resurfacing and signing on

*Construction, continued page 4*

## Construction, continued from page 3

southbound I-35 to add an additional inside southbound lane between the Corporate Woods interchange and the northeast mixmaster.

**Roadway:** U.S. 69 in Ankeny

**County:** Polk

**Scope:** Work at this location involves two separate grading and concrete reconstruction/widening projects. The first project, initiated last year and continuing this year, is located between N. 18th Street and N. 36th Street. A second project, located between N. 36th Street and N. 54th Street, is scheduled for construction this year. Through-traffic will be maintained in a head-to-head configuration during construction.

**Roadway:** Iowa 141 / SB I-35/80 entrance ramp bridge over the Iowa Interstate Railroad ("Ryder Corner")

**County:** Polk

**Scope:** Work at this high-traffic location consists of replacing the existing bridge deck in two stages, while maintaining one lane of traffic across this two-lane ramp bridge. The project also involves staged replacement of both approaches.

**Roadway:** Eastbound I-80

**County:** Poweshiek

**Scope:** Concrete patching and asphalt resurfacing on eastbound I-80 from 1.5 miles east of Iowa 146, east to 1.8 miles east of U.S. 63.

**Roadway:** U.S. 20

**County:** Webster and Calhoun

**Scope:** Paving of realigned, four-lane U.S. 20 from the Calhoun County line to the bridge over the Union Pacific Railroad/County Road D-20 in Calhoun County. This work is in the June 2009 letting.

**Roadway:** Iowa 926 over the Des Moines River and Chicago Central Railroad in Fort Dodge (Karl King Viaduct)

**County:** Webster

**Scope:** This two-year project, initiated last year, involved structural concrete repairs last year and completion of a bridge deck overlay this construction season.

## District 2

**Roadway:** U.S. 218/Iowa 27 – Waverly bypass

**County:** Bremer

**Scope:** Due to the large volume of traffic on the Avenue of Saints, the U.S. 218/ Iowa 27 Waverly bypass has already reached the number of heavy truck axle loads for which it was designed, causing deterioration in the pavement surface. Manatt's Inc. won a \$10 million contract to place a Portland cement concrete overlay, with 4-foot paved shoulders in each direction from near the 250th Street intersection north to just south of the 200th Street intersection. Work is expected to begin in April 2009 and be completed by Thanksgiving. The project will close both lanes of traffic in one direction and divert traffic from the closed lanes to run head-to-head with the traffic in the other two lanes.

**Roadway:** U.S. 63

**County:** Bremer and Chickasaw

**Scope:** Work continues on a concrete paving project to provide a four-lane facility on U.S. 63 from just south of the intersection of U.S. 63 and Iowa 188, north to approximately 1.3 miles south of the intersection of U.S. 63 and Iowa 346. During construction, two-lane traffic will be maintained with occasional one-lane traffic to be controlled with flaggers. The project is expected to be completed in the fall of 2009. Flynn Company Inc. of Dubuque is the contractor for this \$9.6 million project.

**Roadway:** I-35

**County:** Cerro Gordo

**Scope:** Hot-mix asphalt resurfacing of northbound I-35 will take place in Cerro Gordo County from County Road C-25 north to County Road C-13. Heartland Asphalt Inc. of Mason City is the contractor for this nearly \$1.7 million project. Construction is expected to occur this season, with one lane of traffic maintained at all times.

**Roadway:** Iowa 76

**County:** Allamakee

**Scope:** Hot-mix asphalt resurfacing of Iowa 76 from West Main Street in Waukon north to the Minnesota state line is scheduled for this spring. A second section of this project involves widening and resurfacing on Iowa 26 from Lansing north to the Minnesota state line. Mathy Construction of Onalaska, Wisc., is the contractor for the \$15.3 million project. Traffic will be controlled with flaggers and pilot cars in some locations. Other areas will have temporary traffic signals to assist motorists. Completion is scheduled for this fall.

**Roadway:** Iowa 27/U.S. 18

**County:** Cerro Gordo

**Scope:** This concrete replacement project at the Iowa 27/U.S. 18 intersection with Cerro Gordo County Road S-56 is designed to address ongoing void and sinkhole issues on this roadway. The project is expected to be let June 19 to remove and replace approximately 1,500 feet of concrete pavement in both the east- and westbound lanes of Iowa 27/U.S. 18 just west of the U.S. 18/Cerro Gordo County Road S-56 interchange. The replacement will involve placing 12

Construction, continued page 5



## Construction, continued from page 4

inches of double-reinforced concrete pavement and shoulders. A device will be placed beneath the new pavement to monitor subsurface conditions and give an early indication if a sinkhole is forming under the pavement. The project will close both lanes of traffic in one direction and divert traffic from the closed lanes to run head-to-head with the traffic in the other two lanes.

**Roadway:** U.S. 65

**County:** Worth

**Scope:** A concrete overlay project is scheduled for this construction season on U.S. 65 from Iowa 9 in Manly north to the east junction of Worth County Road 105. During construction, U.S. 65 will be closed and traffic detoured utilizing local roads.

**Roadway:** U.S. 218/U.S. 18/Iowa 27

**County:** Floyd

**Scope:** Milling and hot-mix asphalt resurfacing is planned for this roadway north of Nashua this construction season. At least one lane of traffic in each direction will remain open during construction.

## District 3

**Roadway:** I-29

**County:** Harrison/Monona

**Scope:** This project is estimated at \$56,780,000 to reconstruct pavement initially placed in 1967. The northbound lanes of I-29 will be reconstructed from Harrison County Road F-20 north to Iowa 175 in Monona County for a distance of 17.44 miles. The southbound lanes of I-29 will be reconstructed from County Road F-20 in Harrison County north to County Road E-60 in Monona County for a distance of 10.95 miles. The project is expected to take two full construction seasons to complete, with a target completion of fall 2010.

**Roadway:** Iowa 3 bridge replacement

**County:** Plymouth

**Scope:** The original 1950s-era bridge on Iowa 3 over the Big Sioux River at the Iowa/South Dakota border is being replaced. The nearly \$3.7 million contract was awarded to Dixon Construction. Traffic is being detoured during construction. The target completion date for this project is late fall 2009.

Iowa 3 bridge - Plymouth County



## District 4

**Roadway:** I-29

**County:** Fremont and Mills

**Scope:** 2009 marks the first year of a three-year project on I-29 in Fremont and Mills counties south of Council Bluffs. Work this summer will include replacing four sets of twin bridges and resurfacing 10 miles with asphalt in the southbound lanes and concrete in the northbound lanes.



**Roadway:** Council Bluffs Interstate System project (CBIS)

**County:** Pottawattamie

**Scope:** Work continues on the new westbound I-80 bridge over the Missouri River. Substructure work is nearing completion and the contractor will begin setting structural steel beams this spring.

**Roadway:** U.S. 275

Missouri River bridge

**County:** Pottawattamie

**Scope:** This project is being administered by the Nebraska Department of Roads. The new bridge is being constructed just upriver of the old bridge. The road will be closed this fall as the old bridge is removed and approach work is completed to connect to the new bridge. The project is scheduled to be completed by spring 2010.

**Roadway:** U.S. 71

**County:** Page

**Scope:** U.S. 71 from Clarinda to U.S. 34 will be resurfaced with asphalt this summer. Intermittent lane closures will be in place. Traffic will be assisted through the work areas by flaggers.

**Roadway:** U.S. 71/I-80 interchange

**County:** Cass

**Scope:** This is the third and final year of a project to reconstruct the I-80 and U.S. 71 interchange near Atlantic. The work includes reconstruction to provide a new diamond interchange, four new bridges and one-half mile of new concrete four-lane paving.

**Construction, continued page 6**

## Construction, continued from page 5

### District 5

**Roadway:** I-35 rehabilitation

**County:** Decatur

**Scope:** This 8.7-mile interstate rehabilitation project involves rebuilding southbound I-35 from U.S. 34 to the Decatur County line in 2010. The northbound lanes are programmed for rehabilitation in 2010. This year, traffic will be placed head-to-head through the project in the northbound lanes.

**Roadway:** I-35 rehabilitation

**County:** Warren

**Scope:** The hot-mix asphalt resurfacing will begin at the Clarke County line and go north to the Clanton Creek bridge. The project was let March 31, 2009.



**Roadway:** U.S. 61 – Fort Madison bypass

**County:** Lee

**Scope:** This project includes five grading projects for 10 miles of corridor, as well as construction of 10 box culverts and 13 bridges. Initial grading and culvert/bridge work will take place in 2009 and 2010, with paving being placed in 2011.

**Roadway:** U.S. 61

**County:** Des Moines

**Scope:** This project involves hot-mix asphalt resurfacing from just north of Burlington to just south of the Louisa County line (16.1 miles) with the addition of turn lanes at two county paved road intersections and safety-related improvements. The project was let in March 2009.

### District 6

**Roadway:** I-74

**County:** Scott

**Scope:** This 5.4-mile, hot-mix asphalt resurfacing project in both the east- and westbound lanes of I-74 will be in place from the Mississippi River approach bridges to I-80. The project was let March 31, 2009, and is expected to be completed by September 2009.

**Roadway:** I-74

**County:** Scott

**Scope:** The painting project on the I-74 Mississippi River approach bridges was let March 31 and is expected to be completed by October.

**Roadway:** I-80

**County:** Johnson

**Scope:** I-80 reconstruction is a continuation of work began in 2008 to widen I-80 to six lanes through the Iowa City/Coralville area. This year the project focuses on the westbound lanes, as eastbound lanes were completed last year. All traffic will be routed onto the new eastbound lanes while work is underway; however, two lanes of traffic will be maintained in each direction during construction.

**Roadway:** Iowa 1

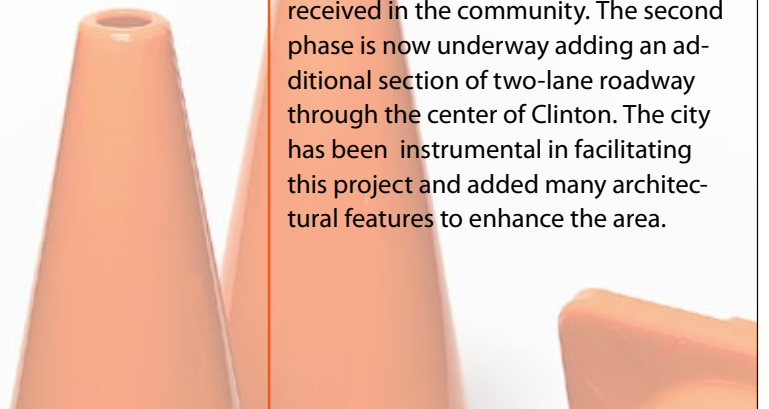
**County:** Johnson

**Scope:** The work on Iowa 1 from I-80 to Solon will include shoulder paving, resurfacing, and bridge and culvert work. The work will be done during off-peak daytime hours and nighttime hours.

**Roadway:** U.S. 30

**County:** Clinton

**Scope:** One phase of this rehabilitation project through the city of Clinton has already been completed and was well received in the community. The second phase is now underway adding an additional section of two-lane roadway through the center of Clinton. The city has been instrumental in facilitating this project and added many architectural features to enhance the area.



# Window of opportunity wide open to explore passenger rail in Iowa

[iowadot.gov/IowaPassengerRail/index.htm](http://iowadot.gov/IowaPassengerRail/index.htm)

Cautiously optimistic would be one way to categorize the attitude toward intercity passenger rail transportation in Iowa over the past decade. With limited funding to study the possibility of expanding passenger rail in our state, there was not a huge push to do so. Changing economic times and environmental concerns are encouraging transportation officials nationwide to take a closer look at passenger rail as a viable option.



The sharpening focus on passenger rail can be seen in the amount of federal funding for intercity passenger rail. This funding expanded from \$30 million in fiscal year 2008 to \$1.9 billion over five years in the Amtrak Reauthorization Act passed in October 2008. The ball game changed significantly once

President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) on Feb. 18, immediately opening up \$8 billion to passenger rail initiatives.

"This gives us an opportunity we have never experienced before," said Tamara Nicholson, director of the Iowa DOT's Office of Rail Transportation. "The ability to compete for a portion of the \$8 billion provides Iowa with an opportunity to advance our passenger rail program by many years."

Iowa has two existing Amtrak routes, both in the southern part of the state. Last year the Iowa DOT announced it was exploring new opportunities for rail service. The two new corridors being considered are Chicago to Dubuque and beyond Chicago to Omaha through the Quad Cities, Iowa City and Des Moines.

In 2007 and 2008, Amtrak, at the request of Iowa and Illinois, completed feasibility studies for new passenger rail service for the segments from Chicago to Iowa City (via Quad Cities) and Chicago to Dubuque. Iowa has also requested studies to look at the feasibility of future expansion to Des Moines and Waterloo. The Iowa DOT expects passenger rail service to grow in increments, building on successful initial routes.

Nicholson said the increased federal funding could jumpstart these initiatives. "Part of the ARRA process is that the federal share of a grant can be up to 100 percent," she said. "But these grants are going to be very competitive. There are many worthwhile projects across the country. With the groundwork that has already been completed, I think the Iowa routes stand a very good chance of being funded."

## Why is passenger rail a good idea for Iowa?

Expanded passenger rail is a key piece of a versatile, flexible way to move people—along with automobiles, air travel, buses, shuttles, and commuter services. Travel options that work in concert with or as alternatives to the other modes allow smart and easy choices for travelers. Passenger rail is an

especially popular choice for business travelers who can quickly board a train and utilize it as productive work time. Integrating passenger rail into the broader transportation system makes it a significant contribution to improved mobility, economic competitiveness, community revitalization, and reduced fuel use and emissions.

As baby boomers head into retirement, this group will require attractive alternatives to automobile travel. One in five Americans age 65 and older does not drive, and the population older than 65 is expected to nearly double by 2030. Whether aging Iowans can no longer safely drive or choose not to drive, the need will increase for travel options allowing retirees the ability to visit friends and family around the country.

On the other end of the age spectrum, university students will likely be frequent travelers, as many out-of-state students at Iowa's colleges and universities are from the Chicago area. Chicago is also a popular destination for weekend outings among Iowa's young adults.

## Where do we go from here?

The studies' estimated costs attributable to Iowa for each route and are listed below. Iowa and Illinois will negotiate actual cost sharing. In addition to ARRA discretionary funding, capital expenditures for infrastructure and equipment are eligible for a non-ARRA federal competitive grant program that could pay up to 80 percent of the expansion costs. Station costs are not included. Iowa intends to apply for both types of federal funds as appropriate once the program guidelines are published. State funding for passenger rail is also needed to match federal dollars and for an operating subsidy. Iowa DOT has this year requested up to \$3 million in state funding for passenger rail; an appropriation decision has not yet been made. Every passenger rail system in the world requires capital and operating subsidies to make up the difference between ticket revenue and actual costs of building, maintaining and operating the systems. Iowa's service will be no different. But the overall benefits provided to Iowans make an investment worthwhile.

### Iowa City – Quad Cities – Chicago

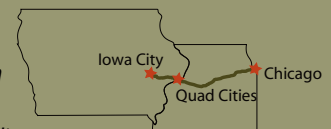
Daily frequency – Two round trips

Time/Speed – 5 hours 32 minutes/79 mph

Track improvements in Iowa – \$32.5 million

Iowa's equipment cost – \$1.9 million

Iowa's annual operating support – \$1.6 million



### Dubuque – Chicago

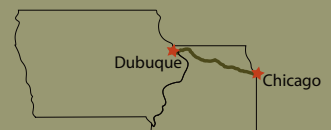
Daily frequency – One round trip

Time/Speed – 5 hours 10 minutes/49 mph

Track improvements in Iowa – None

Iowa's equipment cost – \$0.3 million

Iowa's annual operating support – \$0.5 million





## Shocking night at Lee County weigh scale

Ladies and gentleman, the story you are about to hear is true. The names have not been changed and everyone is innocent.

Feb. 18 – Motor Vehicle Enforcement Sergeant Jeff Dietrich and Officer Mike Davidson were working the night shift at the West Point scale in Lee County. The southeast Iowa weather forecast that night had been sketchy, calling for isolated thunderstorms, some possibly severe, a rarity during a typically frigid Midwest winter. Some weather experts put Lee County squarely in the bull's eye of the severe weather.

It was 5 a.m., near the end of a long night. As Davidson was working at his computer, there was a tremendous noise. "Instantly the building filled with smoke. Bits of ceiling tile were blown into the room. It was the loudest thing I've ever heard," comments Dietrich. "We soon realized lightning had struck the antenna tower, sending electrical current through the conduit and into the building, vaporizing everything in its path. The exploding conduit tore down ceiling tiles."

Once the dust settled, Davidson and Dietrich surveyed the damage. "All the electrical and computer systems were out," said Dietrich.

"But luckily, there was no sign of a fire and we were both fine. We called our captain about 10 minutes after the hit, once our hearts quit racing and we were fairly sure the building wasn't going to burn down."

The Office of Facilities Support estimates repair costs at approximately \$60,000.

"We're all very relieved Sgt. Dietrich and Officer Davidson were not injured," said Chief David Lorenzen, director of the Office of Motor Vehicle Enforcement. "Ceiling tiles and wiring are easily replaced, but our greatest assets, our people, are irreplaceable."





## Multiple-blade plow shows promise

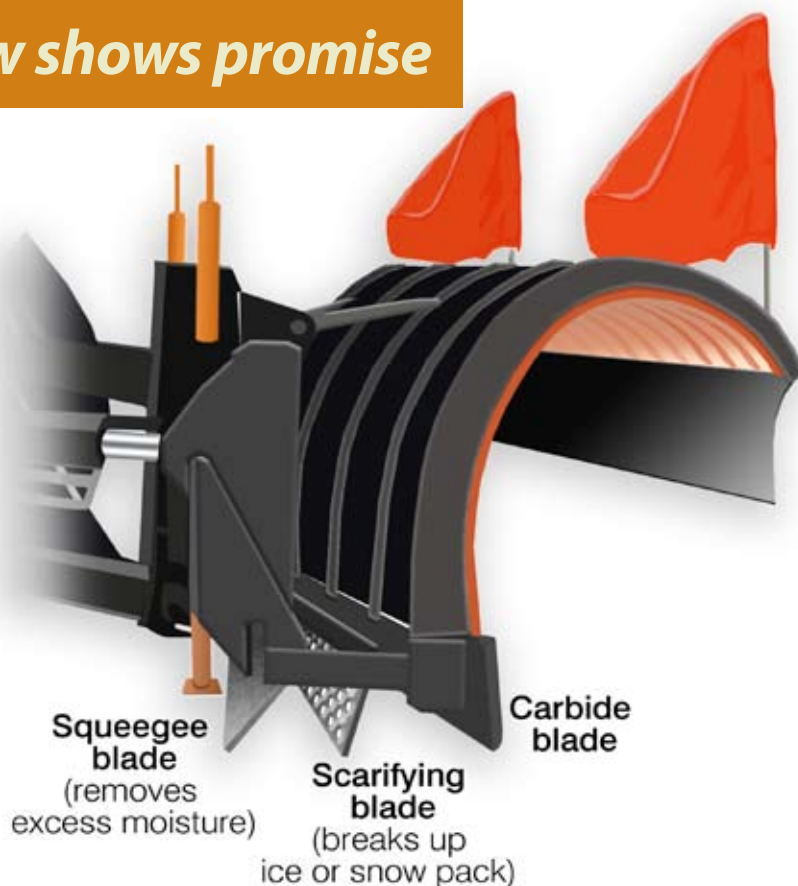
by Christina Andersen

**W**hen it comes to battling ice and snow, multiple blades are better than one. Just ask Duane Stromley, highway technician at the Hanlontown shop. Stromley was one of many DOTers participating in a multi-state winter research project to test the effectiveness of the multiple-blade plow concept. Stromley has been operating his truck with the multiple-blade plow since December 2008. "In my nearly 36 years working for the DOT, this is the best plow I've had the opportunity to test," said Stromley.

"A multiple-blade plow is something the Iowa DOT has experimented with internally for about three years," said Jim Dowd, Office of Maintenance. "Getting other states and vendors involved is simply taking this idea to the next level."

The project was sponsored by Clear Roads, a pooled-fund research group concentrating on testing winter equipment, materials and methods. The department's Winter Equipment Committee worked with representatives from DOTs in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Ohio, and Indiana to develop a plow design that incorporates multiple blades on one plow to handle different types of roadway conditions and precipitation.

Traditional plows typically have one blade with a carbide insert that removes snow and ice from the roadway. Multiple-blade plows have a flexible front blade with a carbide insert, a scarifying blade that breaks up ice and snow pack, and a squeegee blade made from thick rubber to remove excess slush and snow left by the front blade. Removing more ice, snow, slush, and water from the roadway in fewer passes improves safety for travelers and saves money, time and materials. In addition to



enhancing efficiency, operators like Stromley found the multiple-blade plow much quieter with less vibration, which improves safety by reducing operator fatigue and vibration stress on equipment.

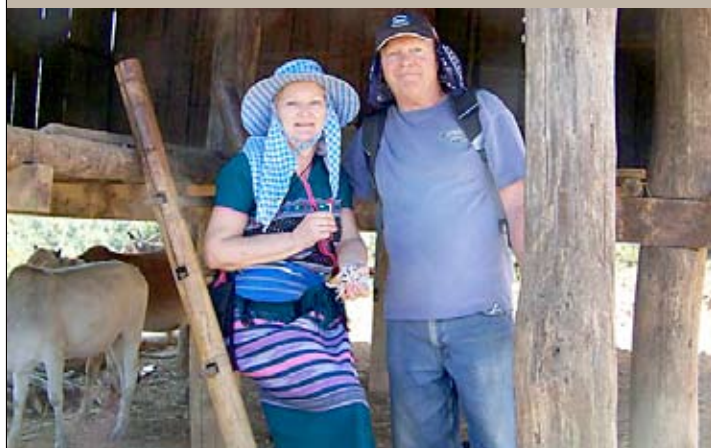
In early July 2008, the Iowa DOT issued requests for proposals to build multiple-blade plow prototypes for testing in the participating states. "We really pushed the industry on this project," said Dowd. "We basically showed plow manufacturers what the Iowa DOT had developed and experimented with, and what the collective states wanted for performance from the next generation snowplow. Then we told them, by the way, we need the prototypes by Nov. 1," said Dowd. Not only were vendors being asked to develop an entirely new design, but the front blade also needed to adjust to the contours of the roadway, operate at higher speeds and work on any truck.

The Iowa DOT plow was built by Flink Company from Streator, Illinois. The other states involved in the project received their plows from three other plow-manufacturing companies and are expected to have some experience with the plows this winter season.

"Initial findings from testing these blades have been promising, but as with many prototypes, modifications will need to be made in the multiple-blade plows before they are ready for mass production. This initial cooperation between the test states and manufacturers will lead the way to more efficient plows in the future.

"This project has allowed us to work with other states and plow manufacturers to develop a new plow concept to meet the needs of the winter maintenance community. The important thing is we got people talking and the industry to take notice of this new idea," said Dowd.

## Stutzels set out to find their future



*Ron and Bonnie Stutzel in Thailand*



*Bonnie Stutzel helps out at a medical clinic in Thailand.*



*Without assistance from groups like the Foursquare Church missionaries, simple infections and other minor illnesses are often fatal for Thai children.*

**R**on Stutzel sees a big change coming. Stutzel, the District 6 mechanic, and his wife, Bonnie, who works for the seventh judicial branch, recently returned from a mission trip to Thailand. "I'm trying to figure out what I want to do when I retire," said Ron. "Our former pastors, who are missionaries in Thailand, encouraged us to take this trip to see if this could be the way we spend part of our retirement time."

The Stutzels are part of the Calvary Foursquare Church in Tipton. "We are really involved in our church," said Ron. "Bonnie teaches adult Sunday school and I help out with building maintenance, help with children's ministry and tape services. The couple also teaches a marriage ministry class in their home and was able to use that material for teaching in the Foursquare Church in Mae Sot, Thailand.

Embarking Jan. 12 for a 15-day trip with four others from their Tipton church and seven from other Foursquare congregations, the group was bound for Thailand. Bonnie said, "I was scared. I'm 60 years old and did not know what to expect." Ron said the couple had read a book, *From Foreign to Familiar*, which helped prepare them for the trip.

After arriving at their destination, the group traveled around the country, first going to an orphanage under construction by the Foursquare Church in Mae Sot. "Right now there is a home with 17 kids," explained Ron. "The church is building a facility that will house 100. At the time we were there, they were out of money for supplies, but I was able to help do some electrical work, plumbing and fence building. Bonnie taught the children songs, spoke with the women's outreach and helped with medical clinics.

After leaving the orphanage, the group spent three days with the Karen Hill Tribes, near the border of Myanmar (formerly known as Burma). "There are a lot of refugees in this area," explained Ron. The children are educated, even in the hill country, but they are very needy medically. A small wound that would be no big deal here, could be fatal there. We helped treat a child with a deep cut on the head. Had that cut not been treated, the infection might very well have killed the child. They don't have even the most basic medicines to treat infections, sprains or other minor injuries."

The group spent their days working and helping the people at the medical and dental clinics, handed out blankets for the cold mountain nights and played sports with the kids. The evenings were filled with gospel messages, dramas and worship songs (some in two or three different languages). Ron said, "This trip was life-changing for me. My heart is now for the less fortunate. It opened my eyes, not only to overseas, but now I see there is a great need right here. I now have a passion to help the less fortunate."



# Uncertain economic times require a plan for financial stability

**A**t the DOT, we are the lucky ones. We all have jobs and some level of stability in those positions. Yet, even with a steady stream of income, some of us have trouble with financial planning and seeing the light at the end of the financial crisis seems impossible. Dave Ramsey, nationally known financial planner and talk show host, sets out a list of seven "baby steps" to financial independence. The first three steps deal with establishing stability, the last four build a foundation for long-term security and wealth building.

For many people, accomplishing the first three steps requires a great deal of self-control and determination, but the steps can be accomplished, even in tough financial times. It is never too late to begin getting your financial house in order. Remember, if you are in financial trouble, you did not get into it overnight, nor will you get out of it quickly.

## Step 1 - \$1,000 in an emergency fund.

According to Ramsey and many other counselors, emergency funds are quite possibly one of the most important things you can do for yourself financially. An emergency fund will give you the funds to take care of these expenses as they arrive, and help you stay out of debt.

## Step 2 - Pay off debt in order of smallest balance to largest

Some people refer to this as "snowflaking," which refers to taking small amounts of money (snowflakes) and combining them into a larger amount (snowball). This concept has really taken off in the personal finance blogosphere, and has even spawned several snowflake Web sites and networks where members share how they have applied the snowflaking principle to debt reduction, investing or any other applicable financial goals.

## Step 3 - Three to six months of expenses in savings

So you have an emergency fund, and you have paid off all your consumer debt ... what's left? Extended savings. An emergency fund is great if you need new tires, need to fly cross-country to attend to a sick or dying relative, or need major car repairs. But what happens if you get laid off and are out of work for several months? Unemployment insurance will be of some assistance, but is not likely to cover all of your expenses.

Having three to six months of living expenses at your disposal will make it much easier for you to make it through an extended period where your income does not match your expenses.

## Step 4 - Invest 15 percent of income in Roth IRAs and pre-tax retirement plans

Now it is time to get your retirement funds in shape. Contribute the maximum amount you can, your target being contributions of a full 15 percent of your household's gross (pre-tax) income. Do not include expected Social Security benefits in your retirement calculations.

## Step 5 - College funding

If you have children, then you'll have college to worry about. The earlier you start, and the more attention and funding you are able to give to it, the better off you and your children will be. To assist with this, use tax-advantaged accounts (such as 529 plans or education savings accounts) to their fullest extent. These plans have certain income limits and other restrictions and/or fees, so be sure to check the fine print before diving in.



## Step 6 - Pay off your home early

For most people, the mortgage payment is the single largest monthly payment they will ever have. Just imagine what you can do with that money when you have paid it off. Imagine how you will feel when you make that last payment. Round up every spare dollar you can find and put it toward your mortgage.

## Step 7 - Build wealth and give

With every bit of your debt zeroed-out and your savings tanks on the full mark, you can finally reach for the "pinnacle point" — that moment in your life where your money works harder than you do. What would it be like to exit the rat race and live entirely off the returns of your savings and investments? Find out: Invest more, and more and more. Invest more to continue to grow your wealth and set a new path for your children and grandchildren.

(Information adapted from [www.daveramsey.com](http://www.daveramsey.com) and [www.das.iowa.gov](http://www.das.iowa.gov))

# Family happenings

## District 5

Brenda Hadley



Kary Sobaski, engineering office assistant 1 in District 5 maintenance, married Michael Green Feb. 14, 2009. Kary was escorted down the aisle by her son, Coy Sobaski. The couple will be joined by their family and friends at a bonfire reception in April and will be honeymooning on the Gulf of Mexico in July. Congratulations to the happy family!

## Thank you

*Thank you to all who have donated time to me through my illness the past six months. It has been greatly appreciated.*

Gina Rush  
highway technician associate  
Sloan garage

## In memory

**Donald Brenton Crinklaw**, 83, of Cedar Falls, died Tuesday, Feb. 3, at the Western Home Communities Standard Family Assisted Living Center. Crinklaw, the son of Blen Benton and Vesta (Wilson) Crinklaw, was born Sept. 3, 1925. He was a graduate of Cedar Falls High School and served in the United States Navy during World War II. Crinklaw retired from the Iowa DOT in 1988 after many years as a construction inspector in District 2. Survivors include his brother, Robert Glenn (LaWanda) Crinklaw, four nephews and a niece. He was preceded in death by his parents.

**Jim Reid**, 98, of Des Moines, died Thursday, Feb. 5, at his home. Reid was born in Boone, the son of John and Anna (Fairgrave) Reid. He graduated from Boone High School in 1928. In 1929, Reid began his career at the Iowa State Highway Commission (ISHC). In 1932, Reid married Helen Bayley. After time off from the state to serve in World War II and as assistant city engineer in Carroll, Reid returned to the ISHC. He earned his professional engineering license Jan. 1, 1949. He spent 30 years with the ISHC and Iowa DOT in Sioux City before retiring in 1976 with 44 years of service to the state. Reid was a member and past president of the Jefferson Country Club, a lifetime member of the American Legion, a past member of the Iowa Engineering Society, American Society of Highway Officials, American Public Works Association, Missouri Valley Institute of Traffic Engineers, and Sioux City and South Sioux City Eagles clubs. Reid enjoyed the finer things in life including chocolate, fishing trips to Canada and giving magic handshakes to his many grandchildren. Reid is survived by his daughter, Kaye Reid of Ankeny; six grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; two great-great grandchildren, and other relatives. He was preceded in death by his wife, Helen; his daughter, Shirley Reid French; and his parents.

**M. Dean Browning**, 84, of Mason City, died Friday, Feb. 6, at the Muse Norris Hospice Inpatient Unit. Browning was born Oct. 16, 1924, in Boone to Willis and Olive (Johnson) Browning. He was a Navy veteran of World War II and graduated from Iowa State University with a degree in civil engineering. On Sept. 1, 1948, he married Donna E. Hatham. Browning was a 35-year veteran of the Iowa DOT, retiring first in 1989 and then again in 1996 after working as a temporary employee. He was a member of First Congregational United Church of Christ and the Rotary Club, as well as being a 32nd degree Mason. He is survived by his son, Dean M. (Keri) Browning of Denver, Colorado; his daughters, Rozan (Ken) Lockart of Naples, Florida, and Cathy Browning (Mark Belich) of Duluth, Minnesota; one grandson; and other friends and relatives. He was preceded in death by his wife, Donna, in 2006.

**Bill R. Fagan**, 83, of Adair, died Monday, Feb. 9, at Guthrie County Memorial Hospital in Guthrie Center. Fagan first retired from the Iowa DOT in 1989 and then again in 1996 after working briefly as a temporary employee. He was most recently a rest area attendant in Adair. Survivors include his wife, Wilma of Adair; and his children, Rose (John) Meredith of Fort Calhoun, Nebraska; Robert (Diana) Fagan of Manning, Iowa; Rita (James) Frie of La Crescent, Minnesota; and Shirley Fagan of Urbandale.

**James F. Cobb**, 88, of Gilbert, died Tuesday, Feb. 17, at Israel Family Hospice House in Ames. He had served on executive staffs of Associated General Contractors and the Asphalt Paving Association of Iowa until 1971. He retired from the Iowa DOT in 1986. Cobb is survived by his wife, Leona; and three children: James R. Cobb, Curtis A. Cobb and Christine E. Pfohl.



## West Union garage hosts preschool group



**T**hirty-one students and five teachers from the North Fayette preschool visited the West Union maintenance garage Tuesday, Feb. 24. Warren Mittelstadt, highway technician associate at the shop, arranged the visit. Garage employees explained to the visitors how they plow snow and work on roads to keep them safe. All the children were given coloring books, crayons, booster seat info, and frisbees provided by the Iowa Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau and DOT. Roger Burns, highway maintenance supervisor, said the children were fascinated by the big trucks and the employees enjoyed sharing the morning with the enthusiastic preschoolers.

## DOT golf league forming



2008 Iowa DOT golf league winners, the Big Stix Six (from left) Tony Gustafson, Bob Mingus, Norm Miller, Al Treloar, Lorne Wazny, Scott Dockstader, Bob Butin

**T**he DOT League is looking for all who love the game of golf. League play begins May 6. All levels of experience welcome. Form a six-member team or contact Matt Law, if interested in joining a team.

E-mail: [matthew.law@dot.iowa.gov](mailto:matthew.law@dot.iowa.gov) or call 515-239-1211

## Ames Historical Society's 2009 Lecture Series features transportation topic

**T**he Iowa DOT has a wealth of historic images, many of which have never been on display to the public. Librarian Hank Zaletel will introduce attendees to the DOT's collection and share many of these images at a forum Tuesday, April 28, at 7 p.m. at the Ames City Auditorium, 520 Sixth St. Among the highlights from the 1910s through 1950s will be the Squaw Creek bridge collapse, construction of the Grand Avenue underpass and a 1958 film of the Lincoln Highway. If you cannot make it to the presentation, many of the images are available on the Iowa DOT's Web site at <http://historicalphotos.iowadot.gov>.



The Squaw Creek bridge on Lincoln Way in Ames, new in 1908, collapsed following the flood of June 3, 1918. A flood earlier in the month weakened the structure and it collapsed as the Goddard family car crossed it. The occupants of the car were not seriously injured and were rescued with ropes and ladders.

## Personnel Updates

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for Jan. 23, 2009, to Feb. 19, 2009

### New hires

**Mindi Balmer**, information technology specialist 4, Information Technology Division; **Thad Benskin**, parts worker, Procurement and Distribution; **Brandon Brimm**, highway technician associate, Grimes garage; **Steven Kenton**, design technician, Traffic and Safety; **Shawn Lawson**, highway technician associate, Williams garage; **Andrea McNamara**, information technology specialist 4, Information Technology Division; **Carrie Myers**, driver's license clerk senior, Davenport DL station; **Mark Nel**, highway technician associate, Mason City garage; **Amparo Ramus**, driver's license clerk senior, Des Moines DL station; **Jared Renfro**, program planner 1, Transportation Data; **Luke Shelton**, highway technician associate, Davenport garage; **Benjamin Wickman**, highway technician associate, Boone garage

### Promotions

**Donna Buchwald**, from transportation engineer specialist to senior transportation engineer, Local Systems; **Kevin Hockett**, from design technician to design technician senior, Design; **Todd Landtiser**, from equipment operator senior, District 5 bridge maintenance to garage operations assistant, District 5 paint crew; **Nicholas Paardekooper**, from highway technician, De Soto garage to highway technician senior, Creston construction; **Jorge Zamora**, from program planner 2, Transportation Data to program planner 3, Location and Environment

### Transfers

**Shawn Buckingham**, motor vehicle investigator, within Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Dennis Dobson**, right-of-way agent 2, within Right of Way; **Carolyn Hait**, clerk-specialist from Driver Services to Vehicle Services; **Jeff Whipple**, highway transportation associate, Knoxville garage to Martensdale garage

### Retirements

**Dale Buttolph**, motor vehicle investigator, Motor Vehicle Division; **Stanley Frost**, highway technician associate, Waterloo garage; **Rhonda Wernecke**, clerk specialist, Driver Services

### ONE 2 ONE, continued from page 2

Finally, being around kids is always an experience. My eleven-year-old great nephew, Forrest, is a treat. He loves sports as does his dad so he is pretty knowledgeable for a kid his age. That also means he is very engaged and patient at athletic events. There is very little up and down, or wondering if he can eat something, or when are we going to leave. He is a trooper.

Because he is so well-behaved and "adult" about sporting events and travel, I sometimes forget his age as I did on this trip...until the finals when his favorite, "there's no way he can lose, Aunt Nancy" wrestler got beat. Forrest fell silent, sunk down in his seat, and

tears welled up in his eyes. His dad and I just let him be – we let him grieve. But I remember thinking how I had told him the night before that he might not win and Forrest would hear nothing of it. I thought of how absolute the world of children can be, full of bests and worsts, nevers and always. Growing up teaches us the only absolute in life is that there are no absolutes.

So for those of you who thought wrestling didn't have much to offer, think again – I learned a lot and had fun.

*Nancy*

## Service Awards

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for April 2009

### 40 Years

**Ernest Corbin**, Systems Planning; **Charles Williams**, Chariton construction; **James Wirtjes**, Sac City garage

### 35 Years

**Randall Faber**, Location and Environment; **Terry Waddingham**, Martensdale garage

### 30 Years

**Dale Eilders**, Design; **Irene Herr**, District 2 Office; **Rachel Lathrop**, Materials; **Doris Pickell**, Traffic and Safety

### 25 Years

**Karen Ballard**, Driver Services; **Steven Bellmer**, Manchester construction; **Jeffrey Fudge**, Design; **Karla Hockett**, Materials; **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 Troutt**, Design

### 20 Years

**George Kotlers**, Bridges and Structures; **Andrew Lewis**, Vehicle Services; **Salvador Lopez**, Davenport garage; **Kay Ridgway**, District 1 field staff; **Mark Swenson**, Highway Division; **Ingrid Teboe**, District 5 Office;

### 15 Years

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

### 10 Years

**Eileen Alff**, Council Bluffs DL station; **Roger Bendt**, Pacific Junction garage; **Patricia Borden**, Waterloo garage; **Richard Conner**, Motor Vehicle Division; **Darrel Folkens**, Spencer garage; **Gary Ford**, Pacific Junction garage; **Clayton Henningsen**, Design; **Sherrie McClanahan**, District 1 Office; **Kristin Weideman**, Cedar Rapids DL station; **Deborah Wignall**, Driver Services



# SEHARC



Photo courtesy of the Iowa Cubs

**W**hether you want to go to a ball game, Adventureland or spend a night at the theater, the State Employees Health and Recreation Committee (SEHARC) may have a deal for you.

There are so many special offers and events that the Iowa DOT is promoting the use of the SEHARC Web site rather than sending separate E-mails to all employees for each event or special offer. Some major events may still be promoted via E-mail.

Log on to [www.seharc.org](http://www.seharc.org) and check out the deals!

## Reaching the 35-year milestone

Policy 240.07 allows employees reaching 35 years of service to have a photo printed in *INSIDE*. Having a photo taken and printed is voluntary. Depending on when the employee chooses to have the photo taken, the photo will not necessarily appear in the same month the employee reaches the 35-year service milestone.



Mary Beth Kiner  
Right of Way  
March 2009



Steve De Hart  
Donnellson garage  
February 2009

# INSIDE

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

**Nancy J. Richardson**, Director

**Tracey Bramble**, Office of Media and Marketing Services, Editor  
**Lynn Purcell**, Office of Media and Marketing Services, Desktop Publisher  
**Christina Andersen**, Media and Marketing Services, Staff Writer  
**Keven Arrowsmith**, Media and Marketing Services, Photographer/Writer  
**Printing Staff**, Office of Document Services, Printing



800 Lincoln Way, Ames, IA 50010 • 515-239-1372



**PLEASE RECYCLE THIS ISSUE**

**On the cover:** The "Arlie" locking through at Lock and Dam No. 12 at Bellevue. The Lock and Dam No. 12 facility is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Service Area	Correspondent	Phone
District 1 .....	<b>Kay Ridgway</b> , Des Moines .....	515-986-5729
District 2 .....	<b>Lu Mohorne</b> , Mason City .....	641-423-7584
District 3 .....	<b>Mary Beth Banta</b> , Sioux City .....	712-276-1451
District 4 .....	<b>Marlene Jensen</b> , Atlantic .....	712-243-3355
District 5 .....	<b>Brenda Hadley</b> , Fairfield .....	641-472-6142
District 6 .....	<b>Sandi Byers</b> , Cedar Rapids .....	319-364-0235
Bridges and Structures .....	<b>Judy Whitney</b> , Ames .....	515-233-7917
Construction .....	<b>Nancy McMenamin</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1353
Contracts .....	<b>Peg Muxfeldt</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1422
Design .....	<b>Judy Lensing</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1469
Driver Services .....	<b>Noralee Warrick</b> , Ankeny .....	515-237-3253
General Counsel .....	<b>Chris Crow</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1509
Information Technology Division .....	<b>Colette Simpson</b> , Ames .....	515-233-7728
Local Systems .....	<b>Kathy LaRue</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1081
Location and Environment .....	<b>Susie McCullough</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1225
Maintenance .....	<b>Cindy Shipley</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1971
Materials .....	<b>Brian Squier</b> , Ames .....	515-233-7915
Planning, Programming and Modal Division .....	<b>Mary Kay Reimers</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1661
Motor Carrier Services .....	<b>Diann McMillen</b> , Ankeny .....	515-237-3250
Motor Vehicle Enforcement .....	<b>Anthony Batcheller</b> , Ankeny .....	515-237-3218
Operations and Finance Division .....	<b>Sheri Anderson</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1340
Research and Technology Bureau .....	<b>Tami Bailiff</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1646
Right of Way .....	<b>Linda Kriegel</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1300
Traffic and Safety .....	<b>Linda McBride</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1557
Vehicle Services .....	<b>Becky Sawatzky</b> , Ankeny .....	515-237-3182

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

## Two firsts at data collection site on I-35/80

With safety and innovation in mind, a few months ago the Office of Transportation Data placed new laser sensor technology on Interstate 35/80 in Des Moines. The installation was the first permanent site in the country for the AxleLight laser sensor, which allows the Iowa DOT to perform challenging traffic studies without venturing onto or crossing a hazardous roadway to install traffic sensors in the pavement. Karen Carroll from the Office of Transportation Data said, "Previous data collection technologies required a loop to be embedded in the road, putting workers in harm's way during installation and maintenance, and causing costly lane closures."

She said the new laser sensor is mounted in a cabinet, close to the ground on the roadside for easy access. The installation on I-35/80 uses two sensors with parallel beams 9.5 feet apart allowing complex vehicle classification studies in up to four lanes.

Once the sensor was up and running, a challenge was discovered in the way the unit was powered. Carroll said, "The majority of our data collection units are powered by solar energy, which we initially installed with the laser technology. But this unit requires more energy and there is a bridge very near this site, so the solar panel was unable to collect enough energy to continually power the lasers. We were very interested in finding another environmentally friendly power source at this site, so we looked into it and were able to purchase a small wind turbine and mast."

The 20-foot wind turbine was installed in mid-February with a rotor diameter of 46 inches. The wind turbine cost is approximately equal to that of a solar power unit.

