

OCTOBER 2009

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## ONE 2 ONE

WITH DIRECTOR NANCY RICHARDSON

**R**ecently I was reminded of the value of simplifying one's life. This thought was encouraged by two very dissimilar experiences this past month....moving and visiting a Buddhist monastery. It started with a move from a condo we owned to one we are renting/house sitting in Ankeny. As a result of the house sitting part of the deal, the condo we moved to is already furnished with the basics so we did not need most of the furniture from the other condo.

Because this is just a part-time home, the furniture was pretty much leftovers. It's the stuff you save over time that my husband and I kiddingly call cabin furniture. It was stuff we at one time no longer needed, but it was just too good to get rid of, so we said we would put it in storage "to take to the cabin." Only one problem—there is no cabin!

When we needed to furnish this part-time condo a couple years ago, out from the basement came all of the cabin furniture. This renewed usefulness totally reinforced the cabin furniture storage concept and, I fear, rewarded the wrong behavior...being a pack rat! Moving once again to a mostly furnished place raised the question of what to do with the cabin furniture. Since there is not, and will never be, a cabin, and we no longer see any long term potential use in our lives for the stuff, it was time to shed ourselves of the cabin furniture.

Admittedly, I am the one who feels connected to this stuff, not my husband. It's my mom and dad's old bedroom set, the first recliner I ever bought, etc. But, I decided time had run out on this furniture and that I do not want to see it again unless it's in someone else's house. I loaded it in a U-Haul and delivered it to a storage unit in Solon for my sister's children to use as they wish.

After fussing over what to do with it and whether I could part with it, what interested me in the end was how good I felt once I was rid of it...no more stuff I don't need cluttering up my basement storage and no more hauling it from place to place. Energized by that feeling, I decided to de-clutter other stuff, so cupboards and closets are next on the list! My goal is to get down to keeping only the stuff I actually use.... what a concept!

You may be wondering how the Buddhist monastery fits into all of this. A couple of weeks ago we returned to my hometown of Decorah for a visit. We met my brother and

sister-in-law at their farm retreat (her family farm) on the Winneshiek and Allamakee county line. One of the things we did was visit the Buddhist monastery a couple miles from the farm...who knew there was a Buddhist monastery in Iowa?

We went for Sunday morning services, although I don't think that is the correct term. After a quick tour of the monastery, the resident monk took us to a room where, with minimal explanation, 10 of us began a 40-minute silent meditation. There were no chants, no sermons, no scriptures or readings. The instructions were simple, although not necessarily easy with which to comply. Sit on a bun-shaped pillow with legs crossed underneath, right hand nested under left hand with thumbs barely touching, mouth closed, back molars barely touching and eyes half-closed....and clear your mind of all outside thoughts and concentrate on your inner self. While the physical requirements could get uncomfortable, it was the clearing my mind that proved most challenging. But I did it! Sort of. I have to admit that I did find myself thinking about trying not to think about anything, but surely that doesn't count!

What I took away from this experience was the benefit of de-cluttering my emotional space, in addition to my physical space. The process made me think about how I carry worry, stress and

sadness with me always—I think we all do to varying degrees—and I never take time to "clean that out." While I'm not the type to spend time meditating, this experience made me think that I need to try to get away from it all sometimes...no cell phones, no computers, no TVs, no conversation, no noise...just quiet and as clear a mind as I can muster. I have to admit I felt a bit mentally refreshed after the 40 minutes of meditation, but uncurling my legs was an uncomfortable challenge!

Writing these columns forces me to be more reflective than I ever used to be, and I think that has been good for me. Reflecting on these two experiences this past month has me thinking—and doing—more about getting rid of as much clutter as I can in both my physical and emotional world and I think I will be the better for it. Now, if I could just de-clutter things at work...that's the next challenge.

Somehow I've managed to complicate my life over time. I can't change the past, but I can certainly simplify things in my future. I want to close with a thought from a public speaker I heard this month...I think it fits with the idea of de-cluttering and simplifying life going forward and you might also find it meaningful. "We can't make a new start, but we can start to make a new ending." Sort of says it all...

*Nancy*



# 16 DOTers honored with U.S. Army Medal of Honor



*From left: Bonnie Castillo, statewide operations center; Bobby Dahl, District 4 Office; Larry Stuff, Davenport construction; John Hyink, Algona garage; John Haas, statewide operations center; Raleigh Altenhofen, Design; Gary Makovec, Contracts; Scott Wilson, Martensdale garage; Mark Dean, Cedar Rapids garage; Kary Green, District 5 maintenance; Shawn Havick, Avoca garage; Mike Pagel, Des Moines construction; Jerry Johnson, Charles City garage; Nancy Richardson, DOT director; Steve Benda, Dyersville garage; Kevin Mahoney, Highway Division; Tim Trick, Spirit Lake garage*

**A**t a ceremony held in Cedar Rapids Aug. 27, the Iowa DOT was recognized for its long-term involvement in the disaster recovery public assistance program, and 16 individuals were honored for their dedication to disaster relief and recovery during the past two years. Each person was awarded the Civilian Award for Humanitarian Service to recognize them for "hands-on" participation in assisting others in times of disaster. DOT Director Nancy Richardson and DOT Highway Division Director Kevin Mahoney assisted Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division Administrator David Miller in presenting the award ribbons and certificates signed by Brigadier General Timothy E. Orr, Adjutant General of the Iowa National Guard.

Bonnie Castillo, Iowa DOT's disaster recovery program manager, said, "The awards ceremony was pretty emotional. Working together in a disaster forms a very special bond between the workers and the people they are helping. Being part of that process is very rewarding. Iowa is unique in that we have state employees working with FEMA in this capacity. The last few years have shown how we can work as a team."

The DOT employees working as public assistance officers or supervisors had the responsibility to assist public entities such as cities and counties, in gathering information and completing project worksheets that were essential to gaining FEMA recovery funding. During the floods of 2008, 88 of Iowa's 99 counties were covered by a Presidential Disaster Declaration and, therefore, eligible for assistance.

Kevin Mahoney, DOT Highway Division director said, "With DOT's participation in the program, we hoped to create an opportunity for DOT staff to do what they do well and become more fully engaged in the recovery process. By having a number of project officers stationed around the state and coming from different job classifications, we believe that lends itself to an effective use of resources. For me personally, it is gratifying to see this collaboration turn out so well. In recognition of all the positives associated with DOT's role during one of the nation's worst national disasters, I will continue to encourage more staff to become a part of the program."

As for the process of becoming a public assistance officer, Castillo says there is a significant commitment needed on the part of the employee for training and possible deployment. Cas-



tillo, who directs the program at the DOT, says when a request for assistance comes in, she makes the assignment and processes the paperwork for the employee to be paid through the DOT and for the DOT to then be reimbursed by the federal government.

This process is covered by the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act), which can allow state agencies and others to supplement local resources for disaster relief and recovery. The Stafford Act outlines the process to call in federal resources at a time of need when local and state emergency assistance has become or threatens to become overwhelmed. To access the federal resources, the Governor requests a Presidential Disaster Declaration under the authority of the Stafford Act. Once a presidential declaration is granted, one of the resources included in the Stafford Act is the ability to recruit state officials not already serving in an emergency capacity to work as public assistance officers.

If you would like to find out more about becoming a public assistance officer, contact Bonnie Castillo at 515-239-1678 or [bonnie.castillo@dot.iowa.gov](mailto:bonnie.castillo@dot.iowa.gov).



# After 14 months, Trick returns to his “real” job

***“If you don’t want to live in a hotel and work a lot of overtime, this isn’t for you.”***

Sage advice from Tim Trick, equipment operator senior in the Spirit Lake garage, who recently returned to northwest Iowa after spending 14 months doing disaster recovery work in Cedar Rapids. While he made the five-hour drive a couple times a month to mow and do other household maintenance chores, Trick says the majority of his focus since July 2008 was assisting public entities in Linn, Delaware, Buchanan, and Jones counties and cities including Cedar

Trick, along with several other Iowa DOT employees and others, was trained as state public assistance project officer. (See related story on page 3) Their duties, once deployed, included working with public entities such as cities and counties in completing paperwork for federal financial assistance to repair public infrastructure following a disaster.

Trick was not called into action until 2004 when he was deployed to Bradgate following a tornado in that small city. In 2007, Trick was sent to Newton following a major ice storm and to Creston and Fort Dodge

following flooding in those areas. Trick says he learned a lot at these short-term assignments that helped when the major disasters hit in May and June 2008.

“In late May and early June, I had been deployed to Parkersburg following the tornado there, but then the

flooding came and I was shifted to Cedar Rapids about the time the Cedar River crested,” said Trick. “My first task was to work out of the emergency operations center as a liaison for DOT activities such as debris removal.”

Dave Miller, administrator for the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (HSEMD) said, “Tim has done an outstanding job in coordinating the Cedar Rapids projects. We sincerely appreciated the help he provided and the support we receive from the Iowa DOT. The DOT is an agency we can always count on and Tim’s work exemplifies that partnership.”

After a period of time, Trick’s duties shifted to assisting public agencies with the paperwork needed to apply for federal disaster funding. Mark Dean, highway technician associate in the Cedar Rapids garage, worked alongside Trick and assisted public

agencies in Iowa and Benton counties. The two set up shop with FEMA officials and workers from Iowa’s HSEMD in a portion of a manufacturing facility on the west edge of Cedar Rapids.

When they were not out meeting with city and county officials, Trick and Dean spent 10 to 12 hours a day in the makeshift offices with temporary walls covered in maps and other documents. “After a disaster this widespread, I think people get a little overwhelmed by what needs to be done. That’s where we can step in, get the process started and walk them through what needs to be done to get all the assistance possible. The city and county employees really appreciate having someone available to explain what needs to be done. It’s rewarding to me to know we were here to help when they needed us most.”

Trick says some of the things he has learned in the 14 months spent in Cedar Rapids are going to be useful in his DOT job, too. “There is a lot that I can take back,” he said. “Report writing and project administration are just a few of the things I have had a lot of experience at lately, but probably the most beneficial will be the communications skills I learned.”

Trick, who returned to the Spirit Lake shop in early September, looks forward to a “normal” northwest Iowa winter. “I got to push a little snow around last year when I was home a few weekends and a few big storms when they needed me,” he said. “But I’m ready to get back home.” Trick, who says this assignment worked for him because he lives alone, stresses that, while the work is rewarding, it is not for everyone. “I don’t even have a dog, so I can just take off whenever I am needed somewhere else,” he added, “It’s also something I can do part time after I retire from the DOT. It’s very rewarding work.”



Rapids with obtaining federal disaster funding to repair infrastructure damaged in massive flooding.

So how does a guy from Spirit Lake end up working with flood victims in eastern Iowa? For Trick, the opportunity began in 2000 when his supervisor, Roger Vigdal, approved what he thought was a one-day training session provided through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The training turned out to be much more, with several one-week sessions on how to assist public entities in navigating federal disaster recovery assistance and disaster recovery project coordination.

“At first Roger and I weren’t sure this was right for me. It was a lot of time away from the shop,” said Trick. “But when I got into the training, I thought it was something that could be very beneficial in the event of a major emergency.”



# The plan is coming together



*The statewide emergency operations team. Front row, left to right: Ted Shipley and Greg Heck, duty officers. Back row, left to right: Stu Turner, planning program manager; Pebble Holland, disaster response program manager; Ray Halterman, duty officer; Kim Nobiling, lead duty officer; Tim Allen, duty officer; Jared Smith, duty officer; Cole Kern, duty officer; Bonnie Castillo, disaster recovery program manager; John Haas, (not pictured, Brent Paulsen, duty officer)*

During the past few years, technology has revolutionized the way the Iowa DOT communicates, both within our own organization and externally to other agencies and the public. With winter coming, one DOT work unit is continuing to harness that technology and bring a smarter way to do business when it comes to traffic incident and emergency response and notification.

John Haas, leader of the Highway Division's statewide emergency operations, says the need for a coordinated capability to address traffic issues, as well as incident response during both normal and emergency operational periods, was evident during the snowstorms of 2007. "The after-action report from those storms identified advantages of a centralized operations center, staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, working in coordination with the emergency management function," he said. "We started to develop a concept with input from DOT offices, district operations and other state stakeholders."

The format that emerged from this plan is a group fulfilling two core functions, operations support and homeland security/emergency management.

Haas said, "The startup costs for the center were relatively small. Working with the Information Technology Division and the Research and Technology Bureau, we were able to utilize existing intelligent transportation system (ITS) Web-based technology, building our capabilities around those applications. We worked with many of our internal stakeholders and external customers to identify how to leverage those capabilities to provide the most support to our operations, state and local agencies and especially the traveling public."

## Operations Support Center

The operations support center (OSC), located in the lower level of the administration building in Ames, is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week by a team of duty officers. "Depending on the situation we may have up to four duty officers per shift in the operations center," explained Kim Nobiling, lead duty officer. "In the event of a statewide disaster, there is technology in place to allow additional staff as needed."

When the OSC is contacted by DOT operations, law enforcement or other agencies regarding incidents or condi-

tions impacting the state transportation system, the duty officer evaluates the information received and, depending on the situation, initiates actions to ensure the proper authorities and the traveling public are notified. This is done using current ITS applications such as dynamic message signs (DMS), the CARS system that feeds the 511ia.org public notification and a blog to alert subscribers, including the media, to the incident.

The duty officers monitor feeds from the National Weather Service; local news channels; statewide traffic cameras; including Des Moines, Iowa City, and other ITS capabilities.

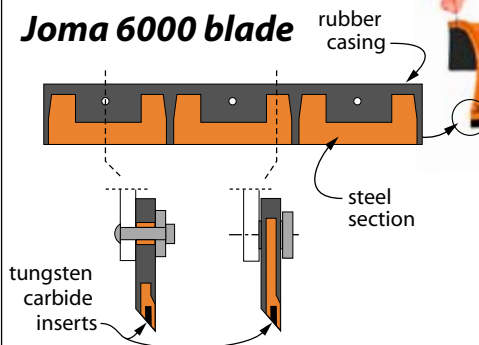
Using the mobile architecture for communications handling software, the duty officers serve as the dispatch for the Des Moines area's Highway Helper program, graphically tracking the location of the Helpers and their status, communicating with them via radio and supporting their efforts using the area cameras and message signs.

The duty officers are also responsible for activating message boards in the event of an Amber Alert. Another officer provide support and notification for railroad incidents and hazardous material spills. Notifications to DOT maintenance garages for bridge scour and bridge frost warnings are also processed through the center.

Mike Krohn, District 1 maintenance manager, said, "Having the operations center in place allows the highway maintenance supervisor to make one call to get the ball rolling in notifying the public and other agencies when there is a highway incident. That frees up supervisors to do the many other tasks they are called on to complete. We use the operations center regularly and are pleased with the level of service they provide."

*Plan continued on page 9*

# Updated snowplow blade technology



**T**hey are probably not the best invention since sliced bread, but a new type of snowplow blade is getting some attention from those testing it out on Iowa highways. "Joma 6000 blades have been tested on and off during the past 10 years, but the cost has always been prohibitive at five to six times that of traditional plow blades," said Jim Dowd of the Office of Maintenance. "The test results were always very positive, and now, with the cost of our standard carbide blades rising and the cost of Joma blades staying about the same, we're putting more of these blades out on the highways to see what our operators think."

Joma 6000 blades, developed in Sweden, incorporate tungsten carbide inserts brazed into specially profiled steel segments and then encased in rubber. Due to the design of the blade, operators can expect better road cleaning ability because the blade adjusts to the contour of the road better than a standard carbide blade. Another benefit is less noise and vibration when plowing roads. The blades also weigh less, so they are easier to change. Several Iowa DOT garages tested the blades last winter and will continue to use them for the upcoming snow season.

Roger Burns, highway maintenance supervisor in Elkader, said the blades worked well. "Highway Technician Associate Larry Lee ran a set of Joma blades all last winter on a concrete road that had recently had a diamond grind project done on it. We were seeing ice blades wear out about twice as fast on this new surface as before the project, so we assumed plow blades would wear out quicker also. This is why we chose this road to test Joma blades," he added. "Surprisingly, the blades lasted the entire winter and have some life left for this winter. We put between 5,000-6,000 miles on the truck last winter, which was a tremendous amount of plowing. Our operator thought they did a great job. They seemed to cut about as well as a standard set of carbides and helped remove slush and smaller particles of snow, which helps reduce salt usage. We are going to try additional Joma blades on our plows this year, as well as on underbody blades. Larry Lee is very impressed and would not want to go back to the standard carbides."

Burns said the only drawback they found was that the installation takes a bit longer and uses different bolts. "But that's a really minor negative," he explained.

In New Hampton and Charles City, John Mixdorf, highway maintenance supervisor, said his operators liked the quietness and decreased vibration of Joma blades. He said they were in use in his area for about two months. "They were very quiet," he said. "They seemed to work well and scrape the snow off better than carbide blades. We plan to continue using them this season."

Operators in the Algona shop also found that Joma blades seemed to work better than traditional carbides. Highway Maintenance Supervisor Scott Loge, said, "We used Joma blades on a front snowplow the entire 2008-2009 season. Joma blades contoured well to the road and cleaned the road better. They also lasted considerably longer than conventional blades. We plan to use three more sets this winter."

With such positive feedback, all of the districts have purchased additional Joma blades and approximately 200 sets will be in use throughout the state this winter. Dowd said, "The department is now paying around \$625 per 11-foot plow for standard carbide blades, and Joma blades are selling for \$1,200," Dowd stated. "This makes Joma blades a cost-effective option."



# Iowa Transportation Museum seeks input from Iowa DOTers



*Artist's rendering of the Iowa Transportation Museum*

## Be a part of history

Are you one of those people who fears that not enough is being done to preserve historical treasures? For those of us in transportation, an exciting opportunity to preserve and pass along our history is just around the corner in Grinnell.

According to Chuck Brooke, executive director of the Iowa Transportation Museum - also known as the Spaulding Center for Transportation - the building and exhibit space designs are nearly complete. He adds that, when the facility is complete, you should not expect a typical museum experience. "Relevant, informative, ever-changing, and fun are the watchwords for success with today's museums," said Brooke. "A rare artifact or a world-class collection isn't enough for the public to beat a path to our door. To capture people's fancy, museums must now compete with the 'immersion' experiences of theme parks or the action, realism and animation of computer games."

## How can you help

Perhaps the most important thing to be accomplished prior to opening the Iowa Transportation Museum is to identify, catalog and be able to communicate with organizations and individuals that possess unique, historic or otherwise

significant transportation-related memorabilia. This is an opportunity for long-time employees and retirees to share information. If you have a personal transportation collection or are aware of any historic transportation documents, artifacts and other related items, contact Brooke at the museum. He said, "We will keep all information confidential, but are merely seeking to catalog 'what is out there' at this time."

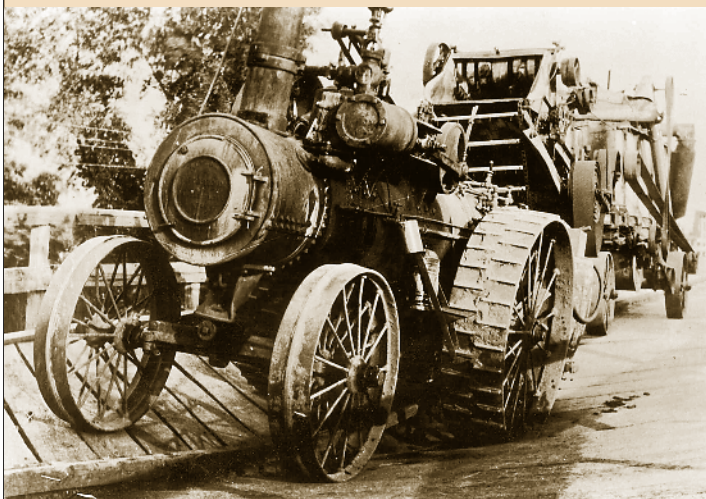
Brooke sees this cataloging function to be an extremely valuable asset for scholars and those with a serious need to research aspects of transportation history, most particularly transportation systems, such as highway construction, railroads or airports.

Once the documents, collections and artifacts have been located and cataloged, the museum will provide a service to researchers by making this information available for scholarly purposes. This will require the development of an interactive system, most likely Web-based, that can respond to inquiries and provide direct assistance to researchers.

Brooks said, "Currently, we have two large rooms with boxes and files that have already been given to the center. Presently, our greatest need is financing. We have the building plans for Phase One of our construction completed that would allow the museum to open. One million dollars is needed to start the project. A portion of that amount is needed as match for \$2.6 million in state and federal grants that has already been secured."

## Become a Founding Friend

If you would like to assist with financial support of the museum, a program called Founding Friends may be for you. With this financial support, you will receive timely updates on the museum's progress, invitations to special events and an opportunity to get sneak peeks on progress. To find out more about the opportunity to support the Spaulding Center for Transportation and how you can make it a reality, log on to [www.iowatransportationmuseum.com](http://www.iowatransportationmuseum.com).



## Finding a better solution

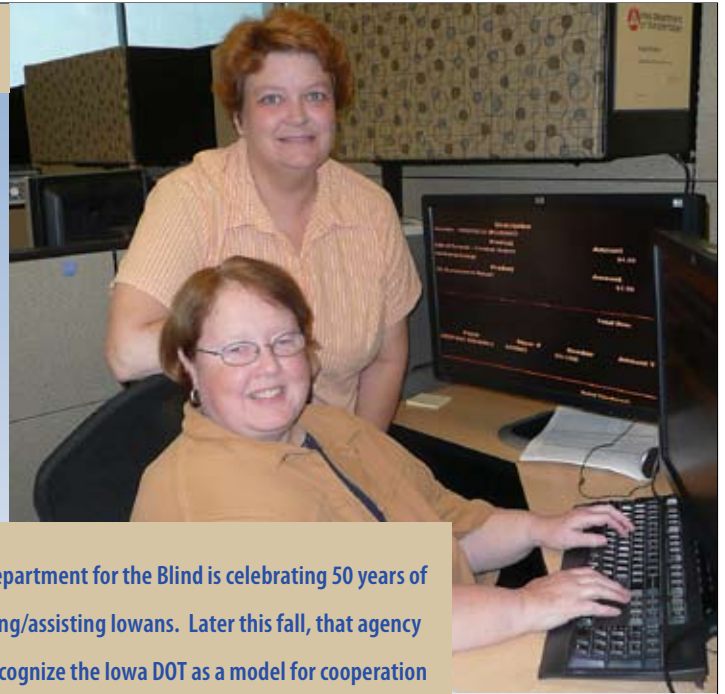
**F**or the past 30 years, Sue Hickey, information technology system support worker 3 in the Office of Driver Services (ODS), has done her best to keep up with her workload, which includes a lot of time in front of a computer screen. Hickey, who processes records requests, accomplishes all this with a challenge most of us do not face – she’s 100 percent blind in her left eye and legally blind in her right.

So how does she do all that computer work? “Over the years the DOT has been great to help find technology to help me in my job. They have always been on board with doing whatever they can to make my job easier. I had magnification on my screen and I also used another magnifier, and I thought I was doing okay, until a friend and co-worker, Diane Sappenfield, found a much better solution and my supervisors were 100 percent behind implementing it.”

Sappenfield had been at a doctor’s appointment at Lutheran Hospital and saw one of the office staff using a monitor with very large text to read an insurance card. The doctor’s office worker told her how using larger monitors, an image magnifier and specialized software made the screen easier to read. Sappenfield immediately thought of Sue and her struggles to read her computer monitor. “The woman at Lutheran told me they had worked with the Department for the Blind to get equipment to assist people with impaired vision. After I talked to Sue and she was interested in trying it out, I called the Department for the Blind and was connected to Rosie Thierer.”

Hickey said that connection was made in April 2009 and by June she was working with her new equipment. “Things just really snowballed,” she said. “At work, I have two new larger monitors, software called ZoomText that magnifies text and has audio playback and enhanced color and font selections. I was also provided a scanner with color choices and magnification to view paperwork without always having to pick up each piece of paper to read then placing it back down so I could type. At home, the Department for the Blind provided a talking typing program that is really great and they also send books on tape. Rosie Thierer from the Department for the Blind came and sat with me to evaluate and see what I do every day and then provided recommendations and training she knew would assist me daily, not only in my job but in my personal life as well. That was great. I didn’t realize how behind the times I was. About 25 years ago I used a portable magnification screen, but since then there have been so many advances in technology that I didn’t even know about.”

While Hickey says she is still learning how to use her new system, it has already helped in areas you would not expect. “I didn’t realize how much I leaned over in my chair to get as close to the screen as I could,” she said. “It’s so nice to be able to sit back in my chair and still be able to read



The Department for the Blind is celebrating 50 years of training/assisting Iowans. Later this fall, that agency will recognize the Iowa DOT as a model for cooperation and development of a win/win working relationship related to Sue Hickey’s adaptations.

*Sue Hickey (seated) and Diane Sappenfield (standing)*

the screen. I really enjoy using my computer now and I’m addicted to the ZoomText software. There are color choices to help reduce glare. Dark text on a light background has always been a problem for me and caused a lot of eye strain and headaches. That’s all gone now with the ability to have light text on a dark background. The training from the Department for the Blind has been great. They want me to use the mouse a lot less than I was used to, so having the talking typing program is helping me adjust to not using the mouse as much. I was always current on my work, but now I feel I can be a lot more thorough and hopefully a more productive employee. Lots of people come up to me now and want my system.”

Office of Driver Services’ Director Kim Snook says Hickey is a very positive person and a great employee and it is nice to see her looking more comfortable in her job. “We are very pleased with the outcome of this cooperation with the Department for the Blind. Sue has adjusted well to the new equipment. This is something that anyone with sight limitations who needs to work on a computer should look into.”

Hickey, who has had sight issues since birth, says she has always just rolled with the punches in life. “This is just a part of me,” she said. “You learn to adapt and just accept what you can’t change and ask for help when you need it. This new equipment and the way it has changed how I do my job is a tangible benefit that resulted from cooperation between the DOT and Department for the Blind. So many times organizations cooperate, but there is no tangible benefit. This is real and I hope it can open other people’s eyes to the possibilities that exist.”



**Plan** continued from page 5

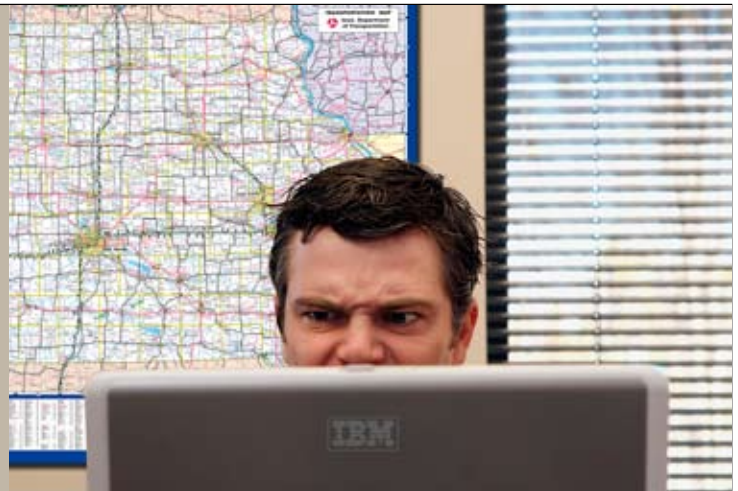
## Homeland Security/ Emergency Management

The three-person homeland security/emergency management unit addresses planning for, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters.

The planning and program manager is responsible for the development of the DOT's statewide emergency response plans, including the continuity of operations plan. The manager also participates in the statewide exercise group and coordinates the department's level of exercise participation.

The disaster response program manager is responsible for the transportation desk at the State Emergency Operations Center at Camp Dodge in Johnson including the training of personnel, developing and maintaining response documentation and coordinating the DOT's response during major disasters.

The disaster recovery program manager is responsible for identifying department costs associated with the disaster and seeking available reimbursement through the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Federal Highway Administration. This position also manages public assistance project officers during project assignments. (See related story on page 3)



## Double check your distribution before you hit send

**E**-mail is an awesome business tool when used appropriately. The Information Technology Division has developed many Outlook distribution lists for easy dissemination of information, but caution needs to be taken when using these lists.

- Use the correct distribution list.
- Verify that the information you are sending is relevant to everyone on the distribution list.
- If you receive a message in error, do not "reply to all."



## On-line auction Oct. 19 - 22

**T**his year's All for One auction will begin at noon Oct. 19 and run through Oct. 22. Photos of items up for bid can be viewed online from Oct. 12-16.

To donate items for the auction, contact Deanne Popp at 515-239-1527 or [deanne.popp@dot.iowa.gov](mailto:deanne.popp@dot.iowa.gov). All proceeds will benefit the Iowa DOT's Food Drive and Toys for Tots campaigns.

## Kautz family donates benches in District 6



In the photo are Sandra (Kautz) Echternacht, Rob Kautz; grandsons Ethan and Conner Echternacht with Pam Kautz.

**T**he family of Dick Kautz recently made a gift of two beautiful limestone benches to the District 6 Office in memory of the former District 6 engineer. Many current and former employees joined the Kautz family for a short dedication ceremony Aug. 28.

## Then and now



1954 JOHN DEERE  
"40" UTILITY  
STEVE RAUEN  
RAUEN'S ANTIQUE JOHN DEERE

**W**hat a difference a few decades can make. Steve Rauen, a highway technician in Dyersville, happened upon a John Deere Model 40 at his dad's place. Rauen said, "The tractor was painted yellow, but when I looked closer at the serial tag, it had orange paint. After a little research, we figured out this was a tractor contracted by the Iowa Highway Commission (IHC) back in the 1950s."

Rauen was interested in the old tractor and the comparison between it and equipment currently used by the Iowa DOT. "Now we have climate-controlled cabs, a 15-foot mower and much higher horsepower," he said. "Back then, the operator was out in the elements mowing five feet at a time."

Rauen, who is still attempting to track the serial number of the tractor to a specific IHC location, spent his nights and weekends for four months stripping the old paint and refurbishing

*Top photo: Steve Rauen and his revamped classic*

*Bottom photo: Modern mowing in a climate-controlled cab and a 15-foot mower*



the tractor. "Me and a buddy tore it basically down to nothing and rebuilt it. I think it's actually nicer than new," he says with a smile. "I have used it in a couple of parades this summer, it was a fun project."

If you have any information that might assist Rauen in tracking down the origins of this 1954 John Deere Model 40, please contact him at 563-920-5708.



# Family happenings

## District 3

MaryBeth Banta



Daniel Bishop, Coach Darwin Bishop and Alexis Stolen

Daniel Bishop and Alexis Stolen, two children of District 3 office staff, participated in the 9- and 10-year-old Little League baseball tournament in Urbandale this summer.

Daniel, the son of Darwin Bishop, District 3 construction engineer, and Alexis, the daughter of Tom Stolen, engineering technician senior in the District 3 Office, both played for Headid Little League, winning the championship game 10-8 over Davenport NW.

Darwin was the coach for the Headid team, and Tom was there to cheer the team on to the title.

## Planning, Programming and Modal Division

Cathy Mather



The third time's a charm for Milly Ortiz, transportation planner 2 in Systems Planning. Ortiz outdid herself at the Iowa State Fair this year, winning a blue ribbon (first place) in the decorated cakes division, amateur single-layer class. Her previous two entries both placed second.

## In memory



Jerry Ray Arn, 69, of Denison, died Monday, Aug. 24, at Immanuel Medical Center in Omaha. Arn was born in Atlantic July 22, 1940, to Raymond and Leona Fries Arn. He received his education in Atlantic and graduated from Atlantic High School in 1958. Following graduation, he began employment with the Iowa State Highway Commission as a rodman on a survey crew in Atlantic. In 1963, he graduated from Iowa State University and worked as an engineering aide 5 in the Marengo construction office. From 1965-1968, he worked in materials, first in Council Bluffs and later in Atlantic. He was promoted to assistant engineer in Red Oak in 1969, before being named to resident construction engineer in Denison in April 1978. From 1982 to 1996, he served in the capacity of both resident construction and resident maintenance engineer. After 38 years of dedicated service to the Iowa DOT, he retired in January 2001.

On June 3, 1967, Arn was united in marriage to Shirley Schwenneker at St. John Lutheran Church in Adair. The couple was blessed with the birth of six children. Arn was a loving husband, father and grandfather. He especially loved spending time with his grandchildren, taking them on vacation and for rides in his Model A Ford. He enjoyed outdoor activities such as hunting, fishing and camping. Other favorite activities included playing cards, making homemade wine, raising and caring for exotic pheasants and quail, and restoring Model A Ford cars. He enjoyed socializing over coffee with friends at Cronk's Restaurant. Jerry was active in church where he served as elder, usher and member of the men's club. He served on the school board and was a member of the Optimist Club. Two of Arn's sons are current Iowa DOT employees. Larry is a right-of-way agent 3 in the Office of Right of Way, and Jason is an assistant survey party chief in the Office of Design.

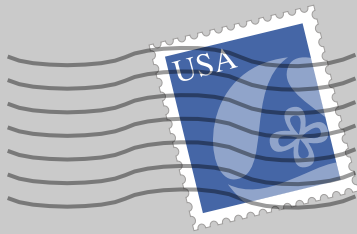
Survivors include his wife, Shirley, of Denison, along with three sons: Larry of Ames; Jeff of Denison; Jason of Denison and his special friend, Jean Clementz of Geneseo, Illinois; three daughters: Lori (Mike) Wright and Staci (Jim) Neumann of Denison; and Kristi (Tim) Herbst of Harlan; six grandchildren; two sisters; his mother-in-law; two sisters-in-law; other relatives and friends.



Robert Eugene "Geno" Young, 67, of Sioux City passed away Sunday, Aug. 2, at his residence, comforted by family, following a brief battle with pancreatic cancer.

Young was born Feb. 24, 1942, in Sioux City, to Wilbert Young and Annie Baker. He received his elementary education at St. Joseph in Sioux City. He graduated from Boytown in Omaha in 1960. He lived in California for a short time before moving back to Sioux City. He worked several jobs before starting with the Department of Transportation in 1983 and retired as a highway technician associate in the Sioux City-Hamilton garage in May 2009.

He was a martial arts instructor for more than 30 years and had obtained his sixth-degree black belt grand master in Tae kwon do. He continued his love of martial arts by obtaining his second-degree black belt in Hapkido as well as a second-degree black belt in Judo. He used his talents to train both Sioux City and Le Mars, Iowa, police department officers, concentrating with the gang units. He is survived by his sons, Sterling and Joe, both of Sioux City; a daughter, Angela of Maple Grove, Minnesota; his girlfriend, Denise Holiday of Sioux City; and numerous friends.



## Kudos!

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

To: Nancy Richardson, Iowa DOT director  
From: T.J. Juskiewicz, RAGBRAI® director

Each year we work with many people with the Iowa Department of Transportation to bring to the people of the State of Iowa one of the largest tourism events in the state. A recent study conducted by the University of Northern Iowa found that \$24 million of direct spending takes place during the week of RAGBRAI®. This could not happen without the state's support of this annual event.

Key to our partnership is the safety of the people involved. Thanks to the involvement of the Iowa DOT, we have consistently been provided the assistance to ensure the safest event possible. We at RAGBRAI and The Des Moines Register wish to express our thanks and appreciation for your efforts to once again fulfill our mission.

RAGBRAI truly could not continue without the Iowa Department of Transportation's and the Iowa State Patrol's input to help select the bicycle route in early winter, to map the support vehicle route and to assist whenever and wherever safety plays a role. We believe the safety of our guests is of the utmost importance to the ride.

For the past several years, Troy Jerman, a transportation engineer senior in the Office of Traffic and Safety, has been instrumental in helping RAGBRAI avoid your department's planned construction, as well as major projects at the county level, before we decide our publicized route. Once the route is made public, the district planners in the proposed areas help determine the safest possible routes that will not conflict with scheduled construction. Scott Suhr, Mike Clayton and Andy Loonan were a huge help with this year's route.

RAGBRAI continues its standing as the oldest, longest and largest bicycle touring event in the world. We appreciate the support and the resources from the Iowa DOT and the many state agencies that help make RAGBRAI a success!

Once again, thank you for the tremendous support and I look forward to working with you and the Iowa DOT to continue to make RAGBRAI a safe event for all to enjoy.

(Editor's note: As indicated, Troy Jerman is a transportation engineer senior in the Office of Traffic and Safety. Scott Suhr is the District 4 planner. Mike Clayton is the District 1 planner and Andy Loonan the District 5 planner.)

To: Iowa DOT  
From: Renaye Johnston, Skiatook, Oklahoma

I want to compliment the state of Iowa on the lovely wild flowers planted along the highway. Hats off to you for not wasting tax dollars on mowing and using beautiful flowers for miles and miles to enhance your roads. I so enjoyed traveling through a few weeks ago. Thank you.

To: Stuart Anderson,  
Planning, Programming and Modal Division director  
From: Francis Boggus, Iowa Great Places coordinator,  
Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs

I want to let you know that after we did all our exit interviews with the three pilot communities, all agreed that Iowa DOT is the most helpful and engaged of all the state agencies participating with Great Places. That is a comment on your commitment and encouragement of this program. All three places stated they feel that the help they got from Iowa DOT has been invaluable in making this process work. And it is a revolutionary process.

(Editor's note: Many employees from the Planning, Programming and Modal Division were involved in Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs' Great Places initiative. This note is to thank those employees. As part of their program, Cultural Affairs' staff visited with the original three Great Place communities (Sioux City, Clinton and Coon Rapids) and received very positive feedback about the Iowa DOT.)

To: Vicki Dumdei, District 2 engineer  
From: Mark Moran

Wow! I was shocked to receive your voice message and E-mail today about my bike wheel. I cannot tell you how excited I am that the wheel was recovered and in good shape.

Please pass on my thanks to those involved in locating the wheel. I know it is a trivial issue for a department the size of the DOT, so I really appreciate your efforts to follow-up on my original inquiry. What great customer service!

(Editor's note: Mr. Moran lost a custom tire and rim from his bicycle along I-35. Bill Federspiel from the Independence garage found the item and returned it to Mr. Moran.)

To: Mark Lowe, Motor Vehicle Division director  
From: Gretchen Cluff, Genesis Medical Center,  
Davenport

I am writing to compliment two of your driver's license supervisors, Deb Carney from Davenport and Lisa Hennessey from Cedar Rapids. Both have become involved with the CarFit events (drive-through events for seniors designed to promote safe driving) we have sponsored here at Genesis Medical Center in Davenport. I have really enjoyed working with them at these events. They represent your department and the state of Iowa well.



To: Vicki Dumdei, District 2 engineer  
From: Anthony McConnell, Missouri

Thank you so much for finding the missing cowl-ing for my motor home. When I e-mailed the Iowa Department of Transportation to report the missing equipment, I really didn't have much hope of you finding it.

I don't think travelers appreciate the efforts of the Department of Transportation in each of the states. Of course, I think Missouri is best, but I must admit that Iowa runs a close second or maybe a tie for first place.

Your roads were clean and well attended. I know that is very difficult in Iowa because of the harsh winter weather. The same comment applies to the rest stops along the way. Although most travelers don't comment, I know that they appreciate well maintained roadways.

I guess you should thank your legislature for providing the funds with which to maintain the roads. I know that road equipment is very expensive to build and keep up.

To: Mark Lowe, Motor Vehicle Division  
From: Carmela Chiafoss,  
Darrah's Towing and Recovery, Hiawatha

I'm sure in a job where you have to enforce traffic laws, DOT officers probably don't make many people happy. I want to take a moment of your busy day to tell you about one of your commanders who went out of his way to help me.

A complicated situation arose with a rotator tow truck we recently purchased. This truck weighs too much to legally be on Iowa roads. As soon as the problem was brought to our attention, I immediately contacted Motor Vehicle Captain Kevin Steele for advice.

Captain Steele has worked so hard to help me find a solution. He has gone way above what I consider to be his routine work duties. He came to my business to personally look at the truck and weigh it for me. Captain Steele made numerous phone calls to make sure he had given me accurate options. He even helped me to call the manufacturer of this truck and explain the weight problem. Ultimately, Captain Steele had to give me "bad" news, but he did it in a professional and positive manner.

Captain Kevin Steele is an asset to your division. I appreciate that you have a commander who is fair and represents your department in such a positive manner.

To: Iowa DOT  
From: Rob Eldred, Rockford, Michigan

I just returned from our trip to Montana and have to compliment you on your roads and rest stops. This was the first time for me to visit Iowa and I just love the place. I wish Michigan was as nice.

PS: Your people are friendly too.

To: Nancy Richardson  
From: Ron Gazlay, Des Plaines, Illinois

I know that in your capacity, you receive your share of unhappy comments. This is not one of those. I travel by car a great deal. I sell industrial machinery to food and beverage companies in the Midwest and spend about 1,000 miles a week behind the wheel. I have been doing this for the past 30 years. Last week was Wisconsin, western Indiana and northern Kentucky. The week before was Michigan and northern Indiana. Because I am on the road all the time, I have come to appreciate certain things, especially when traveling in Iowa.

For me, traveling across I-80 is a luxurious almost hedonistic experience. It is a very comfortable trip! For example:

- Your roads are maintained very well. Smooth surface with very few potholes. The potholes in Chicago ruined my front tires this past spring and messed up the alignment altogether. Until they fixed it, driving eastbound over the state line into Illinois was a shock on I-80. It about took your wheels off.
- You have beautiful, safe, clean, well maintained rest stops at convenient intervals. You don't know how nice this is! I was mugged in a rest stop in central Illinois last fall. Your rest stops are amazing. The westbound rest stop near Davenport is gorgeous. My wife is an architect and she was really impressed with the bridge motif. It says a great deal about how your state presents itself.
- No tolls- I don't know how you do this- but I am so jealous! I have an I-pass on my dash and it is a pain. Better roads and no tolls - what a concept!
- Iowa seems to be able to handle road construction intelligently. Delays are minimal and traffic flow is maintained.
- I don't know if this was intentional or just a benefit of the natural landscape, but what meets your eyes while you travel is very nice. The gently rolling hills and green fields are really soothing after a long day.

Iowa is a pretty state. If you don't believe me, I was in Hammond and Gary last week! Indiana roads are pretty good, but not as good as Iowa's. Keep up the good work and I look forward to safely traveling your roads in the future!

To: Nancy Anania, Systems Planning  
From: Tracy Hadden Loh,  
National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse

Thank you so much for your great contribution to this year's Transportation Enhancement Professional Seminar. Your presentation on a topic that is of significant current interest among transportation enhancement managers nationwide. We're sure that the presentation from your session will be read by a key audience. We also thank you for drawing the Hale Bridge to our attention; it is truly a national treasure.

(Editor's note: Nancy Anania spoke at the conference about transportation enhancements in Iowa. One highlighted project was the Hale Bridge (see May 2006 edition of INSIDE). Highlights of that project are now listed on the National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse Web site.)

## Personnel updates

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for July 10 to Aug. 20, 2009.

### New hires

**Robert Bucklin**, sign fabricator 1, sign shop; **Elizabeth Finarty**, transportation engineer, Chariton construction; **Kevin Galloway**, accountant 2, Finance; **Raymond Halterman**, executive officer 1, Maintenance; **Justin Sencer**, bridge inspector 2, Bridges and Structures; **Rick Skinner**, right-of-way agent 2, Right of Way; **Larry Smith**, engineering technician senior, Contracts; **Joshua Weber**, mechanic, Ashton garage; **Daniel Wickersham**, highway technician, Sloan garage

### Promotions

**Raleigh Altenhofen**, from design technician associate to design technician, Design; **Linda Anderson**, from executive officer 1 to executive officer 2, Employee Services; **Yvonne Diller**, from transportation planner 2 to executive officer 2, Systems Planning; **Matthew Dingbaum**, from motor vehicle officer to motor vehicle investigator, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Rebecca Law**, from transportation planner 1 to executive officer 2, Systems Planning; **Steven Messler**, from design technician associate to design technician, Design; **Bradley Nelson**, from motor vehicle officer to motor vehicle investigator, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Ryan Ridout**, from motor vehicle officer to motor vehicle investigator, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Donald Sharr**, from motor vehicle officer to motor vehicle investigator, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Tom Strabala**, from highway technician, Coralville garage to highway technician senior, Mount Pleasant construction

### Transfers

**Wade Bartz**, design technician associate, within Design; Chad Curnes, highway technician associate, from Grimes garage to De Soto garage; **Mary Beth Kiner**, right-of-way agent 2, within Right of Way; **Jacquie LeClair**, clerk specialist, within Driver Services; **Thomas Norem**, highway technician associate, from Des Moines-north garage to De Soto garage; **Garrett Pedersen**, transportation planner 2, from Public Transit to Systems Planning; **Gordon Port**, from transportation engineer manager to transportation engineer specialist, within Bridges and Structures

### Retirements

**Garry Leahy**, mechanic, Osceola garage; **Judith Lugiano**, highway technician associate, Burlington garage; **Edward MacDonald**, equipment operator senior, Des Moines-north garage; **Barbara Slagle**, information technology specialist 4, Information Technology Division

## Service awards

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for October 2009.

### 35 Years

**Bobbie Reed**, Des Moines DL station; **Dale Williams**, repair shop

### 30 Years

**Denny Eppert**, Bridges and Structures; **Alan Freidhof**, West Union garage; **Dennis Howe**, District 1 bridge crew; **Lu Mohorne**, District 2 Office; **Timothy Nelson**, Davenport garage; **Raymond Saathoff**, Clarion garage; **John Shirk**, Emmetsburg garage; **David Stutz**, Driver Services; **Rodney Swailes**, Muscatine garage; **Jeffrey Switzer**, Anamosa garage; **Darwin Williams**, repair shop

### 25 Years

**Stephen Armstrong**, New Hampton construction; **Tracy George**, Policy and Legislative Services; **Jo Glover**, Mount Pleasant construction; **Karen Jackson**, Vehicle Services; **Cheryl Jessen**, Davenport DL station; **Jaraine Mohs**, Media and Marketing Services; **Kim Powell**, Information Technology Division; **Diane Sappenfield**, Driver Services; **Norman Thomas**, Pacific Junction garage; **Frank Wagner**, Davenport garage; **Ronald Wolf**, Dyersville garage

### 20 Years

**Tom Bruun**, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Richard Garcia**, Burlington garage; **William George**, Information Technology Division; **Shawn Havick**, Avoca garage; **Stephen Lampe**, Storm Lake garage; **Charles Schultz**, New Hampton construction; **Richard Wolff**, Storm Lake garage

### 15 Years

**Bruce Barr**, Waukon garage; **Dennis Keller**, Osceola garage; **Charles Lee**, Document Services; **Dennis Peperkorn**, Research and Technology Bureau; **Martin Scharff**, Ottumwa garage; **Jeffrey Webb**, Osceola garage

### 10 Years

**James Cornelius**, Perry garage; **Gary Erickson**, Clarion garage; **Jerilei Harms**, Iowa Falls garage; **David Havard**, Centerville garage; **Jodi Mann**, Facilities Support; **Steven Mariner**, Mason City garage; **Ralph Miller**, Osceola garage; **Lynn Reese**, District 5 materials; **Carol Watters**, Davenport DL station

### 5 Years

**Gregory Anderson**, Information Technology Division; **Jason Arn**, Design; **Cindy Baker**, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Joshua Cedar**, Cherokee construction; **Sheila Cowles**, District 3 Office; **Erich Eggers**, Information Technology Division; **Charles Hughes**, Design; **Teresa Huntley**, Document Services; **Malinda Johnson**, Location and Environment; **Craig Van Der Wilt**, Newton garage; **Rachelle Wright**, Cedar Rapids DL station; **Mary Zimmerman**, Procurement and Distribution



## TIPS FROM THE GREEN TEAM

**Don't push the button ... take the stairs.** Instead of calling for the elevator, take the stairs. Climbing the stairs burns 10 times more calories than pushing the button and standing in the elevator. Annual electric consumption for a typical elevator would power seven homes.

Source: Ideal Bite.com



## 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.



Diane Lange  
Office of Document Services  
July 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).

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**PLEASE RECYCLE THIS ISSUE**

**On the cover:** Disaster recovery has been a big part of the DOT's workload over the last year. I-Spy clue: That's some front-wheel drive!

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>MaryBeth Banta</b> , Sioux City .....	712-276-1451
District 4 .....	<b>Marlene Jensen</b> , Atlantic .....	712-243-3355
District 5 .....	<b>Brenda Hadley</b> , Fairfield .....	641-472-6142
District 6 .....	<b>Sandi Byers</b> , Cedar Rapids .....	319-364-0235
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Construction .....	<b>Nancy McMenamin</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1353
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Design .....	<b>Judy Lensing</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1469
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General Counsel .....	<b>Chris Crow</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1509
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Local Systems .....	<b>Kathy LaRue</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1081
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Maintenance .....	<b>Cindy Shipley</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1971
Materials .....	<b>Brian Squier</b> , Ames .....	515-233-7915
Planning, Programming and Modal Division .....	<b>Cathy Mather</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1140
Motor Carrier Services .....	<b>Diann McMillen</b> , Ankeny .....	515-237-3250
Motor Vehicle Enforcement .....	<b>Anthony Batcheller</b> , Ankeny .....	515-237-3218
Operations and Finance Division .....	<b>Sheri Anderson</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1340
Research and Technology Bureau .....	<b>Tami Bailiff</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1646
Right of Way .....	<b>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.

Iowa Governor Chet Culver  
Iowa Lt. Governor Patty Judge



# Fight the Flu.

Remember the 3 Cs



**Cover your cough.**  
Use a tissue or your elbow.



**Clean your hands.**  
Use soap and water or hand sanitizer.



**Contain germs.**  
Stay home when sick.

**A**ccording to the Iowa Department of Public Health, the spread of 2009 H1N1 virus is thought to occur in the same way that seasonal flu spreads. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing by people with influenza or by touching a surface contaminated by the virus.

## Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

**Clean** – clean your hands with soap and water, or use a hand sanitizing gel when water is not available.

**Cover** – cover your coughs and sneezes with your sleeve or elbow.

**Contain** – contain germs by staying home when ill. Don't go to school, work, shopping or other outside activities while you are sick.

Another step is what is becoming known as “social distancing.” This term refers to avoiding crowds or close contact with others.

The H1N1 virus spreads from person-to-person, just like seasonal flu, usually by a sick person coughing or sneezing on or near another person.

Sometimes people may become infected by touching something – such as a surface or object – with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose. This is one reason why hand-washing is so important.

While the vast majority of H1N1 cases are mild and do not require a trip to the doctor, there are warning signs suggested by the Centers for Disease Control on when to seek urgent medical attention.

### In children

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish or gray skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve, but then return with fever and worse cough

### In adults

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Flu-like symptoms improve, but then return with fever and worse cough

**Iowa DOT management has recently approved a pandemic response plan that includes a section on employee health and safety. The plan is available on DOTNET.**