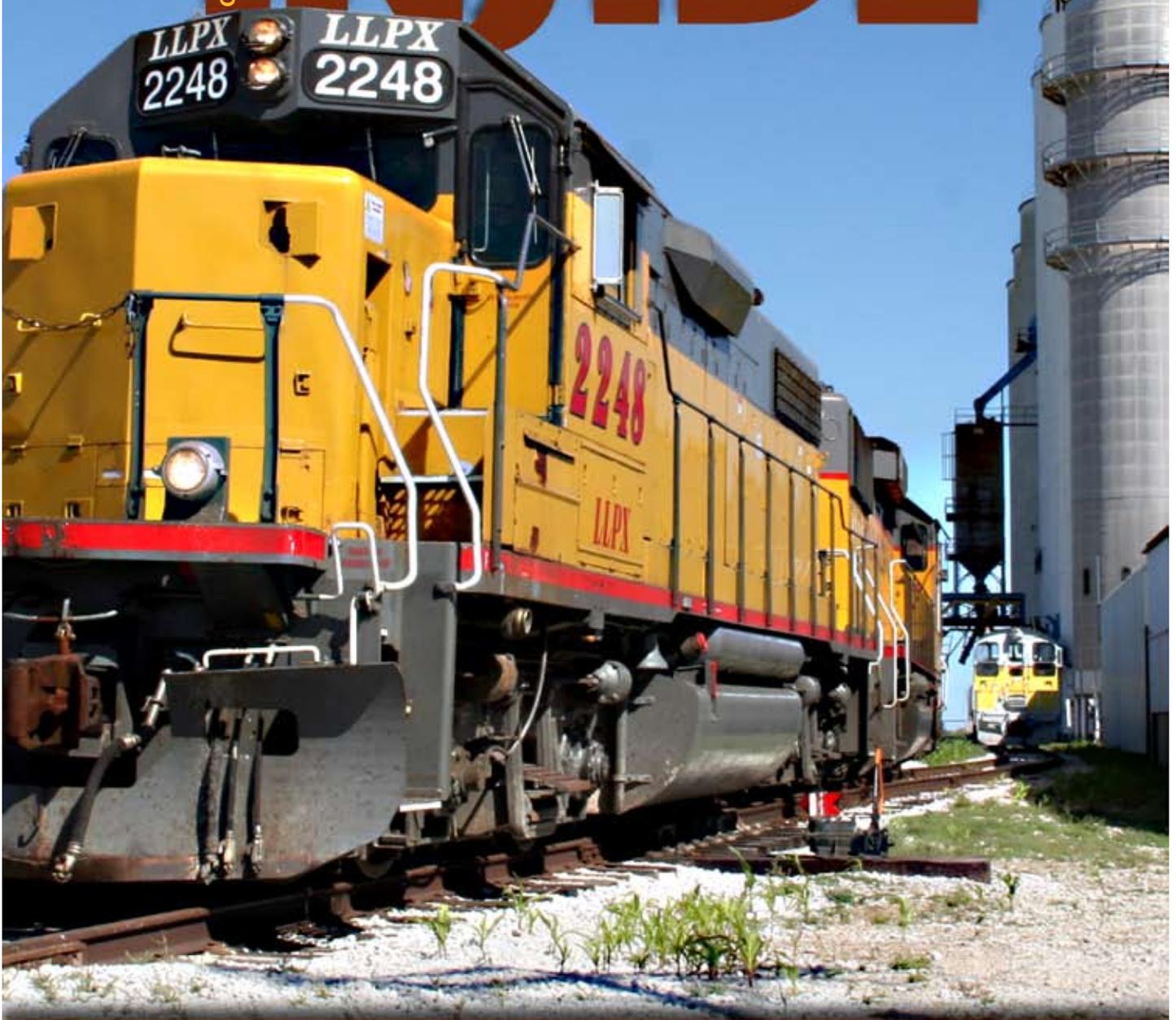


OCTOBER 2007

# INSIDE



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## ONE 2 ONE

WITH DIRECTOR NANCY RICHARDSON

**D**on't sweat the small stuff. Why? Because it is small! I recently experienced a number of "yin and yang" situations that highlighted this for me.

First, we moved into our new home Aug. 24...sort of. Silly me, I thought the new place would actually be finished by the closing date. But, to my surprise and frustration, movers were bringing in furniture and boxes while dry wallers were repairing and painters were doing touch-ups. My plans to unpack and settle in over a long weekend were shot and I was not happy.

That same day we got a call that my husband's daughter-in-law, pregnant with their first child, had to be hospitalized with complications three months shy of her due date. Amazing how that piece of news put everything in perspective. No counter in the laundry room, missing window blinds and no shower door did not seem very important anymore. Our thoughts were all with Rebecca, who about four days later gave birth to 2-pound, 3-ounce Mason William.

A couple weeks later, it was the big Iowa-Iowa State football game. I am an Iowa fan through and through. Graduated Iowa undergrad; long time season ticket holder; active supporter. Because the new condo didn't yet have TV service (unless you count a 9-incher with rabbit ears that got two local channels), we went to my sister's in a nearby town to watch the game with her and her husband.

Iowa stunk that day and lost. But, the importance of that was pretty diminished for me as I sat on the couch on one side of my brother-in-law holding his hand all game long. Jerry has been burdened with Alzheimer's disease for about five years; he's only 61. He can no longer carry on a conversation, rarely looks up and makes eye contact, and needs help doing most things. I took his hand to warm it up and he didn't let go, so we sat there and "watched" our beloved Hawks get whopped by the 'Clones, holding hands. Again, perspective came up and slapped me in the face. I just could not get too wrapped up in the outcome of a football game.

Most recently I went to the annual AASHTO meeting in Milwaukee. Because Mason and his parents live there, I had a chance to visit him again in the NICU at the hospital. Already

over three pounds, he has weathered every bump in the road so far. That night I was lucky enough to be there for his parents' first chance to get him out of the isolette without nurse assistance, to bathe him, and to dress him in his first onesie....all very exciting.

Compare that to the day of my return to Iowa. Up at 3:45 a.m. to catch a 4:40 a.m. airport shuttle to catch a 6:45 a.m. flight to Chicago only to find the flight—and many others—cancelled because planes had not arrived from Chicago the night before due to fog. United is putting the Denver passengers on Frontier and the Chicago passengers in a limo for the 1½-hour ride from Milwaukee to Chicago O'Hare. I and eleven others climb in knee to knee in a white stretch limo, the driver slowly collects the \$25 fee from each of us, and begins to slowly write receipts.... twelve of them! All of this while passengers were anxious about whether they could get to O'Hare to make connecting flights.

Finally, one man gets agitated and demands to be let out of the limo saying, "it's not worth it." He is insistent so the driver slowly gets out, slowly unloads all the luggage to get the man's suitcase from the bottom of the pile (Murphy's Law in action), and slowly refunds his money. All the while the agitated man is making a big, noisy scene and our departure is further delayed. At that moment, I turned to the very calm man whose

knees bumped up against mine and said, "This sure seems like a good time to go with the flow." He agreed. It struck me at that moment how little this glitch in my schedule mattered in the context of watching Mason develop and grow and survive.

So, I'm back at work and swamped—feeling overworked and underappreciated. But, you know what? I am not going to sweat the little things. And I encourage you to do the same. The work we do is important, but life outside here has it beat everyday.

I want to close with two other thoughts. First, I again learned to be careful what I wish for. I got a month off from the column last month—and a big thanks to Lee Wilkinson for the great guest column—but then I really missed writing it. I now realize it sort of feels like my baby so I am protective of it. So, I am glad to be back.

Finally, I have had some great field visits this past month, really enjoyed my time at the managers and supervisors conference, and have been made to feel at home as an occasional office mate at the Cedar Rapids Field Office. Thanks to all of you for your hospitality and for displaying so much passion for your work.

*Nancy*

# Safety upgrades for DOT apparel

The safety vests will remain the same, but those familiar orange T-shirts will be changing to fluorescent yellow-green with reflective stripes beginning next year.

A federal rule change designed to enhance the visibility of highway workers will be implemented next year at the Iowa DOT. The rule calls for all workers on foot in the highway right-of-way to wear high-visibility safety apparel that meets the American National Standard for High Visibility Safety Apparel and Headwear performance class 2 or 3 requirements. For Iowa DOT, that means a shift in shirt colors from orange to fluorescent yellow-green. The current high-visibility, fluorescent yellow-green vests are compliant and will not be changed.

DOT is currently preparing policy guidelines for employees. The policy will take effect Nov. 24, 2008, for all DOT employees working in the right-of-way and not in the cab of a vehicle. The change will also affect all contractors and city and county workers. New language requiring contractors to wear high-visibility apparel has been included in the October 2007 General Supplemental Specifications to be effective in November 2008.

The proposed PPM 230.05 will require all workers to wear high-visibility apparel while working within the right-of-way. High-visibility vests, shirts or jackets are acceptable, with only the vests being provided by the DOT. If an employee wants to purchase a shirt or jacket, look for a label inside the garment specifying compliance with the standards in the PPM.

High-visibility pants will be required for night work and recommended for other low-visibility conditions. These pants will be provided by DOT when an employee's work requires them. High-visibility headgear will also be provided by DOT when it is required. Fluorescent



*Beginning in November 2008, high visibility safety apparel similar to this will be required for all workers in the right-of-way.*

yellow-green facemasks, stocking caps and shirts will be available from the warehouse or can be purchased from private vendors.

DOT will also modify all current and future professional services contracts and permits to include requirements for the new apparel.

Mark Bortle from the Office of Construction says DOT wants to make sure all DOT employees know about the change in plenty of time to stock up on the new apparel. "Most importantly,

these changes are expected to better protect DOT employees. Aside from the color change, another big difference in the requirements calls for all shirts to be untucked. We know these are big changes for many of our employees, but we have to make the change to comply with federal regulations."

## 2008 benefit enrollment and change period – Oct. 26- Nov. 26

**F**all is in the air: The leaves are beginning to change, at times you can feel a slight nip in the air, the days are getting shorter ... and it's time for the annual benefits enrollment and change period. This is the time of year when you have an opportunity to elect to enroll in or change your benefits for 2008. The 2008 enrollment and change period will be Oct. 26 through Nov. 26, 2007.

Once again, the State of Iowa is providing a comprehensive benefits package that allows you to choose the coverage that best meets your needs and those of your family. Following are a few highlights of the changes for 2008.

### Dental Insurance Open Enrollment

You have an opportunity to enroll yourself and eligible family members in dental coverage during this enrollment and change period.

### Life Insurance Changes

Beginning in 2008, employees covered by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) contract and non-contract employees' basic life insurance will increase from \$10,000 to \$20,000, which is the current level for Iowa United Professionals (UE/IUP) employees. In addition, the amount of supplemental life insurance employees can purchase increases to \$50,000 from \$40,000. There will also be a change in the insurance carrier. The Hartford Life Insurance Company will be the life and long-term disability insurance provider beginning Jan. 1, 2008.

### Life Insurance Open Enrollment

If you currently purchase supplemental life insurance, you will need to re-enroll during the enrollment and change period. You can choose to remain at your current level of coverage or increase or decrease the amount of your life insurance. If you do not have supplemental life insurance, you can enroll in supplemental life insurance without providing evidence of insurability. Because you don't have to provide evidence of insurability during the enrollment and change period, this is a great opportunity to provide financial protection for your family. Once the enrollment and change period is over, you will be able to enroll in or increase the amount of supplemental life insurance, but you will have to provide evidence of insurability and The Hartford Life Insurance Company will have to approve any increase in coverage before the coverage becomes effective.

### Flexible Savings Accounts (FSA)

This is the only time in the year that you can enroll in the flexible spending account program. If you pay for health and dependent care expenses on a regular basis, flexible spending accounts provide a way to save money on these expenses. There are two different FSA accounts.

- Health Care Flexible Spending Account
- Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account

Contributions are made to one or both of the FSAs with pre-tax dollars (dollars not subject to state, federal and FICA taxes). Eligible expenses are paid out of pocket and then reimbursed with the pre-tax dollars.

### FSA Improvements

Beginning in 2008, the FSA plan has been improved. You can now elect up to \$3,000 for your health care FSA and you have 14½ months to incur eligible expenses for your dependent care FSA. If you wish to contribute to either of the FSAs, you must make a new election each year during the enrollment and change period. You must make a separate election for the Healthcare FSA and the Dependent Care FSA.

As you see from the above highlights, there are many exciting benefits in store for the next plan year. Over the upcoming weeks, additional information will be available about the 2008 enrollment and change period. For more information about state benefits, please visit the Department of Administrative Services' benefits Web site at [das.hre.iowa.gov/benefits.html](http://das.hre.iowa.gov/benefits.html).

*(Adapted from The DAS Difference, Employee Newsletter for the Department of Administrative Services)*

# Building a better mousetrap

by *Christina Anderson*

**N**ecessity may be “the mother of invention,” but at Iowa DOT it takes more than that these days to compete with tight transportation budgets, limited staff and all-season maintenance. The 2007 “Build a Better Mousetrap” competition, held Aug. 29 in Ames, revealed how DOT employees across the state are using their talents and ingenuity to make their jobs easier, safer and less costly.

“Build a Better Mousetrap” is an event held at the biannual Iowa Maintenance Training Expo sponsored by the Center for Transportation Research and Education (CTRE) at Iowa State University, in cooperation with Iowa DOT, and city and county transportation professionals.

The Iowa Maintenance Training Expo provides public sector transportation professionals with information on the latest research, technologies and techniques for summer and winter maintenance in one information-packed training opportunity. Jim Dowd, Office of Maintenance, said the Expo is very informative and well attended by DOT employees. Dowd said there were nearly 400 DOTers at the 2007 Expo. “It’s a great opportunity to discover how others are dealing with maintenance issues and find information from vendors on the latest products and services available,” said Dowd.

Pat Makovec, Office of Maintenance, said one of the highlights of the Expo was the “Build a Better Mousetrap” competition. Submissions from all public agencies include tools, equipment modifications and systems. DOT employees presented three innovative ideas in this year’s competition.

## Post puller

The “post puller,” submitted by Ron Wolf, Dyersville garage mechanic, is designed to enhance the safety of DOT workers during post-pulling operations. Previously, the equipment used to pull posts would often snap the post and project the broken piece erratically through the air, endangering nearby workers. Wolf’s post puller works by attaching it to a knuckle boom or skid loader using a chain. The post puller is then slid over the top of the post, even if the post is bent over. The “dog” inside the puller will pin the post against the back of the pipe and straighten it during extraction. If the post breaks, the puller will hang on to the broken piece to prevent potential injury or damage to property.

The post puller can be used on delineator, pipe and Telespar posts. For just \$193, Wolf was able to make post-



*The “post puller” designed by Ron Wolf from Dyersville*



pulling operations safer and less costly by increasing efficiency and eliminating the potential for damage to property.

Steve Benda, equipment operator senior, said that’s the type of guy Wolf is. He saw the potential for injury and found a way to make things safer and better. According to Benda, this is Wolf’s third entry in the “Build a Better Mousetrap” competition. “Wolf is an incredibly talented fabricator and welder. He’s always looking for ways to use his talent to make the garage better,” said Benda.

## Guardrail trailer

Tim VanBrogen and Mike Potter, Newton garage highway technicians, led the design of the “self-contained, guardrail repair trailer.” The guardrail repair trailer was created to streamline the process of guardrail repair. The portable trailer saves time by having all the parts, tools and miscellaneous items necessary for guardrail installation and repair in one place, ready to go when the need arises.

The base is constructed from an old skid-mounted sign trailer. The racks on the trailer were modified to securely and safely store and transport oxygen and acetylene tanks. A cabinet, made mostly from scrap material, including shelves built from scrapped wooden traffic signs, is used to organize and store hardware and tools. In addition, an air hose installed within the trailer and an accompanying compressor

**Mousetrap, continued on page 11**

## Von and Susie's excellent adventure

Von Richards thought surviving breast cancer challenged her. Ten years after that initial struggle, Richards hooked up with Susie McCullough, secretary 2 in the Office of Transportation Data, for the second most difficult physical test of her life, the Susan G. Komen Foundation 3-day walk in the Twin Cities. Along with McCullough, Sue Bastian from Minnesota and Julie Kordick from Boone, friends of McCullough's, the group formed Team Iowa Bosom Buddies and the Tagalong, and registered for the grueling 60-mile challenge to raise money for breast cancer awareness, research and treatment.

"We trained from April until the walk in August," said Richards, insurance program specialist in the claims management section of the Office of Finance. "Susie and I walked every Saturday morning starting about 5:30 a.m. or 6 a.m. We would do 10 to 18 miles each Saturday, in addition to walking several more days during the week, but it got us ready for the challenge of walking 60 miles over three days."

On the surface it makes sense why Richards would put herself through this. She's a 10-year breast cancer survivor with a very personal connection to the work done by the organization behind the walk. McCullough, who says she had no close ties to the disease prior to walking in the event last year, says she's still in awe of the people she met and was so touched by their stories, "I couldn't not do it again," she said.

Not only were Richards and McCullough in training during the spring and summer, they were also raising money for the cause. Through E-mails and letters the team requested support from friends and family. They also sold T-shirts, candy and candles,



Susie McCullough (left) and Von Richards (right) at the Minneapolis 3-day walk

and collected cans for recycling. Richards' co-workers held a free-will soup lunch to help raise funds, and McCullough's office donated \$200 in her honor for Administrative Professional's Day. Between the two women, they raised \$6,300. Richards says that even more than the money, the pair appreciate the prayers and support of co-workers, friends, family, and even strangers. "We just want to say thank you to everyone who played a part in this walk. We don't know everyone who donated or kept us in their prayers, but we truly appreciate your support. It was amazing."

So in late August, Team Iowa Bosom Buddies and the Tagalong made its way north. Richards and McCullough hit Minneapolis together, but without Kordick, who was sidelined two weeks prior to the event with a sprained ankle and was unable to walk. Richards had colored her hair pink for the event and was prepared for whatever was to come. "The weather

was beautiful," Richards said. "The opening ceremony with 2,600 walkers was very emotional. I saw one group with T-shirts that read, 'Last year we walked in her honor, this year we walk in her memory.' That one really got to me."

McCullough, talking about the opening ceremony, said, "Once I heard the first snuffle behind me, it was all over. The emotion at that ceremony is something I could never have imagined if I hadn't been there."

Once the walk started, the pair had a great first day. "We saw some people getting IVs because they hadn't kept themselves hydrated, but we were doing well. We laughed a lot and cried some, too. There were hundreds of people who came out to cheer on the walkers and the themed stops along the way were hilarious, especially the 'Mardi Bras' stop and the 'Wizard of Bras.' When you think that all these

**3-day walk, continued on page 15**

## Cyber security - password dos and don'ts

October is National Cyber Security Month as designated by the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA), a consortium of government agencies and private industry sponsors. National Cyber Security Awareness Month is a national campaign designed to increase the public's awareness of cyber security and crime issues, so users can take precautions to avoid these threats on the Internet.

INSIDE is taking this opportunity to begin a series of articles on how to stay safe online. In the coming months we'll be working with Deb Covington, DOT's information security officer, to give you useful tips to keep information safe both here at DOT and on your home computer.

The first topic to tackle is passwords. There are several online resources devoted to helping you develop strong, safer passwords. If just one smart hacker deciphers a key password, your entire cyber life could be exposed. Here is one of many Web sites where you can check the security of your password, [www.microsoft.com/protect/yourself/password/checker.msp](http://www.microsoft.com/protect/yourself/password/checker.msp).

Here are some common tips for safer password development and use.

- Don't share your passwords with anyone via the Internet, over E-mail or on the phone. Your internet service provider (ISP), bank or any credible business should never ask for your password.
- Use passwords that have at least eight characters and include numerals and symbols.
- Avoid using common words. Some hackers use programs that can try every word in the dictionary, which can crack most common passwords in minutes.



- Do not use your personal information, your login name or adjacent keys on the keyboard as passwords.
- Change your passwords regularly (at minimum, every 90 days).
- Use a different password for each online account you access (or at least a variety of passwords with difficulty based on the value of the information contained in each). Using the same password for all accounts is one of the most dangerous things you can do.

One way to create a strong password is to think of a memorable phrase and use the first letter of each word as your password, converting some letters into numbers and/or symbols that resemble letters. For example, "How much wood could a woodchuck chuck" would become HmWc@wC.

Watch upcoming editions of INSIDE for more information on computer security.

## Reward fund being established for Snopek



Mark Snopek

On Aug. 8, 2007, our dear friend and colleague, Mark Lee Snopek, was killed by a hit and run driver while out for a bicycle ride near his Boone County home. Despite a thorough and on-going investigation by area law enforcement, a suspect has yet to be named. In an effort to assist in the investigation, a reward will soon be offered to the public for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the driver responsible for Mark's tragic death. The reward is being offered in the hope that someone with information will come forward.

Former DOT employee Kevin Griggs has offered to coordinate the collection of pledges for the reward fund. No money will actually be collected unless the perpetrator is convicted and all pledges will be kept confidential. To contribute your pledge, please e-mail [kevin@griggs-strategies.com](mailto:kevin@griggs-strategies.com) and include your name, address, telephone number and the amount you'd like to pledge.

## Clear Roads

*Working together, 14 states are now impacting winter maintenance research around the country.*

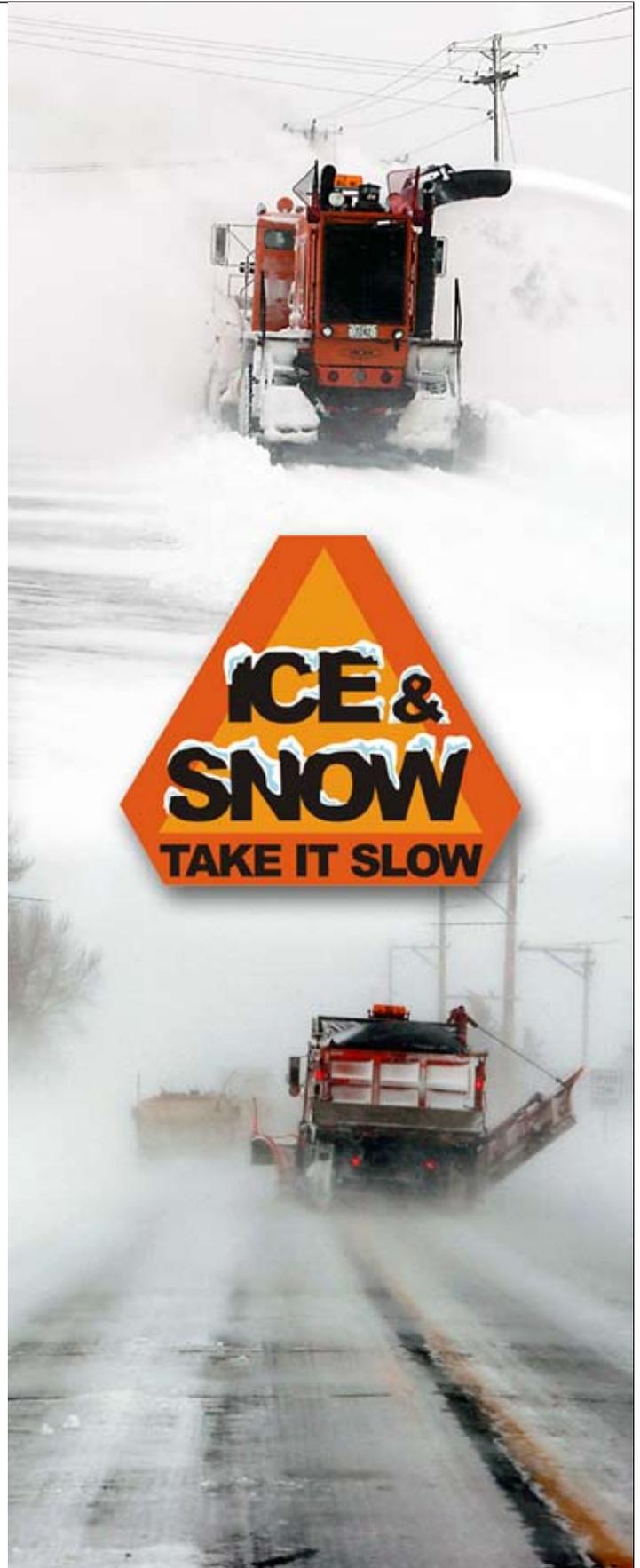
In the old days, it was every state for itself in the fight against snow and ice. With advances in technology sharing and a general attitude that a group of people with similar issues can formulate a better solution, the Clear Roads pooled-fund research movement was developed in 2004. With three initial DOT member states, Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin, the group began looking at best practices and winter research opportunities in materials, equipment and methods.

The word spread around to other cold-weather states and by the beginning of 2007, the group was 14 states strong. Dennis Burkheimer, winter operations administrator for the Iowa DOT, is Iowa DOT's representative to the group. "The Wisconsin DOT took the lead with Clear Roads, and they are doing a fantastic job. Iowa leads a similar group called Aurora, a pooled-fund program that studies weather and roadway weather information system technology. Clear Roads complements Aurora by providing comprehensive research on nearly all aspects of winter maintenance."

Not only does the group dynamic bring different ideas and best practices from each state, the team approach also provides funding individual states couldn't manage on their own. Burkheimer said, "Each state puts in \$25,000 per year to the group. Any member state can bring forward a proposal for research. The proposals are then voted on and the research is initiated with the results shared among all members."

The group has completed research on best practices for eliminating fogging and ice buildup on the windshields of winter maintenance vehicles. Research now in progress includes a study of calibration accuracy of manual and ground-speed-control spreaders, and determining effectiveness of deicing materials and procedures in the field. This winter research will examine standardized test procedures for carbide insert snowplow blade wear and for evaluating deicing chemicals in a lab. The group is also partnering with Aurora, the Federal Highway Administration and American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials on other projects.

"This is a much more structured national research effort on snow and ice issues than we've ever had before," explained Burkheimer. "These are states conducting research to improve winter snow removal operations. With 14 states now on board and a couple more looking into joining us, we have the momentum to make changes that can benefit us all."



### Clear Roads member states

Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Utah, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming

## New span parallels Kate Shelley bridge



She served us well for more than 100 years. The historic 190-foot high Kate Shelley Bridge on the Union Pacific (UP) Railroad line west of Boone stands as a landmark and historic reminder of a brave teenager a century ago. But time marches on and railroad technology and load weights have changed to the point that the Kate Shelley Bridge is becoming obsolete as a mainline bridge.

A new bridge, now under construction 90 feet north of the old structure, will contain 25 spans on alternating 70- and 110-foot deck plate girders. Of the 110-foot spans, 23 are being reused from an abandoned bridge downstream near Madrid. To support the structure, a total of 60 shafts were drilled up to 10 feet in diameter and 100 feet deep to support cast-in-place concrete piers. Nearly 3 million pounds of rebar and 632 tons of steel cross-bracing and embedded plates will be used with 26,000 cubic yards of concrete for shafts, superstructure and deck panel. A new abutment and track bed will displace more than 480,000 cubic yards of soil. The price tag for the new bridge - \$43 million.

Union Pacific Railroad officials say the new bridge is needed to alleviate a bottleneck on the line that exists because of limits placed on the Kate Shelley bridge. The aging structure is approved for only 286,000 pound gross carload traffic and is limited to two trains at a time at 25 miles per hour. The new bridge will support up to 315,000 pounds gross carload traffic at speeds up to 70 miles per hour on both tracks.

Railroad historians need not fear. Because of its historic significance, the Kate Shelley bridge will not be torn down. UP officials have said it may be placed out of service or possibly used as a siding for the line, but the structure will remain as it has been for 105 years.

### Historical significance of the Kate Shelley bridge

*(details from the Chicago Northwestern Railroad Web site)*

On July 6, 1881, a violent storm washed out a railroad bridge and wrecked the train crossing it. A 15-year-old local girl named Kate Shelley, horrified at the sounds of the train wreck, braved the dark night and fierce elements to run to the railroad station and warn the agent about the bridge collapse and train wreck. Because of Kate's heroics, the agent was able to stop the incoming Atlantic Express and save many lives. The railroad began construction of the high bridge over the Des Moines River about a decade after the incident. In 1903, Kate took a job with the Chicago Northwestern, becoming one of the first female station agents. The high bridge was named in Kate's honor following her death in 1912.



## DOT

Staff in the Iowa DOT's Office of Media and Marketing Services swept four of the six categories they entered in this year's National Transportation Public Affairs Workshop sponsored by the American Association of State Highway Transportation Official's subcommittee on public affairs. Awards were presented to Dena Gray-Fisher, director of the Office of Media and Marketing Services, at the group's event in Tacoma, Wash., Aug. 9. Winning entries included the following: **illustration** - for the U.S. 63 roundabout; **issues/crisis management** - for the DOT's public relations efforts during the March blizzard; **special event planning and coordination** - for the Avenue of the Saints – Great Saints Weekend Adventure; and **internal newsletter** - for INSIDE.

## Personal

A historic day for Iowa Western Community College's track and field program was also a banner day for DOTer Ed Launderville, highway technician associate in the Denison garage. Launderville, one of the most prolific track and field athletes to come out of Iowa Western's Clarinda campus, celebrated the ribbon cutting of the school's new facility in Council Bluffs Aug. 27. The community college will share the sports venue with the Council Bluffs Community School system. These are the records set by Launderville as a student at Iowa Western and still standing today.



Ed Launderville (far right) helps other distinguished guests with cutting the ribbon on Iowa Western Community College's new track.

### Outdoor:

**880-yards** - 1 minute, 56.6 seconds set in 1972 at Central Missouri State University

**One mile** - 4 minutes, 42 seconds set in 1972 at Iowa Western Community College

### Indoor:

**880 yards** - 1 minute, 59.6 seconds set in 1973 at Mankato State College

**600 yards** - 1 minute, 54.9 seconds in 1973 at Graceland College

**Medley relay** - 3 minutes, 36 seconds in 1972 at Graceland College (Launderville ran the anchor leg while Bruce Jenner, who won Olympic Gold in the Decathlon in 1976, anchored the second-place Graceland team.)



Kay Ridgway, secretary 1 in the Des Moines maintenance office, entered five items in the Iowa State Fair's ceramics competition. She received one first-place ribbon, two second-place ribbons and one third-place ribbon.



## **Mousetrap, continued from page 5**

enable employees to use pneumatic tools, such as an impact wrench. "Before the guardrail trailer, we would spend nearly two hours getting all the tools located and loaded. Once we came up with the idea for the trailer everyone was contributing ideas on how to make it as compact and useful as possible. It was really a group effort," VanBrogen said. He added that what used to take them two hours is now accomplished in 10 to 15 minutes. Just hook up the trailer and go!

It took garage employees a mere 40 hours to build the trailer that cost \$300 in materials. The guardrail trailer has improved the efficiency of garage operations and increased public safety by greatly diminishing the time it takes to respond to guardrail incidents.

## **Slip-in weed sprayer**

Sioux City garage Senior Equipment Operator John Jepsen and Mechanic Kirk Montage conceptualized and designed the "slip-in weed sprayer."

"One day I was pulling Jepsen around on the back of an old sprayer when I thought ... there has to be a better way to do this," said Montage. That's how the evolution of the weed sprayer began.

The slip-in weed sprayer performs extremely well and is easy to slip in and out of the truck. It enhances efficiency by allowing operators to spray more acres per load and does not require use of a boom. The unit sprays left, right, center, and any combination of those directions. There is significantly less drift, and the operator is able to spray from zero to 54 feet with the flip of a switch. Operators are also

able to reload the unit easier and quicker than conventional sprayers. To operate the slip-in weed sprayer, simply remove the tailgate of any truck, slip the unit in, latch the tailgate, hook up the two hoses, insert the wiring into the trailer's electrical outlet, mix the weed spray, and go! The pump is hydraulically driven off the truck's spinner or anti-icer unit, so pressure can be adjusted from the cab of the truck. The valves are electric for each nozzle and operated by switches mounted in a box that is also located in the truck's cab. "The slip-in sprayer accomplishes weed spraying three times faster than before, and I'm not exaggerating," said Montage.

The total cost of the slip-in weed sprayer was \$1,748.50. Montage said most of the material used to construct the weed sprayer was already on hand.

These three garages will each receive a certificate, publication in CTRE's Technology News as a "tip from the field" and \$100 for the garage. The Newton and Sioux City garage employees aren't yet sure how they will use their winnings to celebrate. The crew in Dyersville used their previous award money to purchase a grill for the garage, and are planning to buy some grilling utensils with this year's money. The recognition and awards are graciously received. However, all the mousetrap participants agree that the most rewarding aspect of the competition isn't winning. It's the sense of accomplishment gained from creating a device that will benefit the transportation field and public we serve.

*(DISCLAIMER: All mousetrap entries are prototypes of equipment used for testing purposes. The equipment must be safety tested before approval can be given for statewide use.)*

# Family happenings

## Location and Environment

*Jean Jesse*



Brad Hofer, transportation engineer specialist, and Tara Brunsvold were married Friday, Aug. 3, at Cornerstone Church in Ames. The couple resides in Ames where the new Mrs. Hofer is an elementary school teacher.

## District 5

*Brenda Hadley*



*Leroy Robison (right) accepts his retirement plaque*  
Leroy Robison retired July 26 after 41 years with the Iowa DOT. Robison began his career with the Iowa State Highway Commission April 1, 1966. He worked in District 5 materials throughout his career. A retirement coffee was held in Robison's honor July 25, with many friends and family dropping by to wish him good luck in his retirement. Robison will be missed by co-workers and his "squirrely" friends, too!

## Design

*Judy Lensing*



Sally Bartlett, transportation engineer intern, and her husband, Joel, are the proud parents of a baby boy. Grant David Bartlett was born July 27 weighing 10 pounds, 1 ounce and was 22 inches long. Little linebacker Grant joins big sister, Reagan, 2, at home. Best wishes to the growing Bartlett family!

## Driver Services

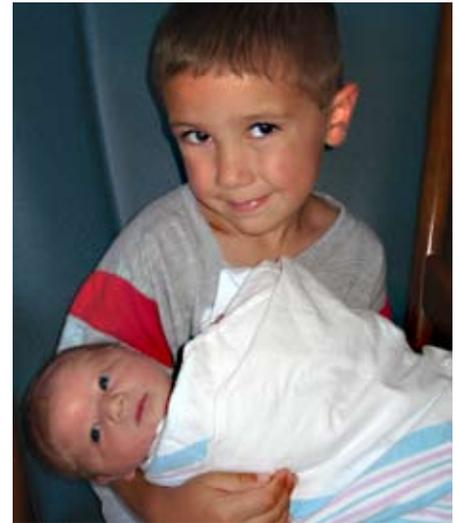
*Noralee Warrick*

Jamie Kilker, driver's license clerk in the Davenport DL station, and her husband, Steve, are proud to announce the birth of their second son. Cohen James was born July 27



*Camden Kilker holds his new baby brother, Cohen*

weighing 8 pounds, 2 ounces and was 20 inches long. Cohen joins big brother, Camden, 2½ at home. The boys' grandma, Cherrie Sabel, driver's license supervisor 1 in Driver Services, is very proud of her grandsons. Congratulations to the Killers!



*Baby Abby Patel with big brother, Nathan*  
Kevin Patel, field exam engineer, and his wife, Kristi, are the proud parents of a baby girl. Abby Marie was born Aug. 29 weighing 7 pounds, 4 ounces and was 20 ½ inches long. Baby Abby joins big brother, Nathan, 5, at home. Congratulations to the Patels!

## Bridges and Structures

*Judy Whitney*



*Jim Stoner (left) and his wife, Becky*  
Jim Stoner, bridge inspector 2 working out of Fairfield, retired June 28 after 35-plus years with the DOT. A catered retirement lunch was held for Jim at

**Family Happenings,  
continued on next page**

## Family Happenings, continued from previous page

the Ames complex June 18. Several retirees and current bridge maintenance employees attended to wish Jim well and present him with a retirement clock. A retirement coffee in Jim's honor was held on his last day at the District 5 Office in Fairfield. Congratulations, Jim, and best wishes in your retirement.

## Operations and Finance

Sheri Anderson



Employees in the Office of Procurement and Distribution and the sign shop enjoyed a sweet corn and bologna feed Aug. 9. About 30 eager eaters brought tons of side dishes, ate voraciously and went back to work well fed.

After 21 years with the DOT, Alvin Vetter, transport driver in the Office of Procurement and Distribution, decided it was time to retire. A farewell party was held June 28. Good luck in retirement, Al!

## Thank you

I would like to thank everyone who helped with my retirement party and everyone for coming to the party and for the cards and gifts. Thanks to everyone in the field for all they've done for me over the last 21 years.

Al Vetter  
Office of Procurement and Distribution

## In memory

Randy A. Jochims, 57, of Mapleton died Sunday, Aug. 19, in Sioux Falls, S.D. Jochims was born Sept. 3, 1949, in Oakland, Calif., the son of Elmer and Pearl (Marten) Jochims. The family moved to Mapleton while he was a child. Following high school, he went into the Armed Forces. He moved to Omaha, where he worked at Safeway Food Stores for a few years. He joined the Army National Guard and returned to Mapleton in 1978. He worked for Jacobson Brothers before taking on a career with the Department of Transportation. He retired in 1997 as the highway maintenance supervisor in Onawa after 16 years of service. He was a member of the American Legion Loren Hollister Post 496 and St. Matthew Lutheran Church, both in Mapleton. He had several hobbies. He loved collecting rocks, bottles and arrowheads that he found in the Maple River. He had several collections of antiques including signs, McDonald's toys, bobble heads, Disney items, and many more items. He loved his family foremost and often would sacrifice his needs for others. He loved camping with his family and friends. He was kind and generous with his time to everyone. Jochims is survived by his wife, Cindy, two sons, their wives and families, many other family members and friends.

## Prescription safety glasses

Employees whose jobs require eye protection have options in the type of eye protection available to them. The warehouse stocks safety glasses in several styles, including one designed to be worn over personal prescription glasses. Eligible employees may also purchase prescription safety glasses through designated eye care providers and apply for partial reimbursement on their expense sheets.

AOSafety is the contracted provider for all state employees for prescription safety glasses. Information about the program, including prices, provider locations and frame styles, can be found on DOTNET in the drop-down box under Employee Resources and Information, and also on the LAN at W:\EmployeeSafety\Personal-ProtectiveEquipment\safety glasses. Questions can be directed to Barbara Mallon, employee safety coordinator in the Office of Employee Services, at 515-239-1594.

## Personnel Updates

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for July 27 to Aug. 23, 2007

### New Hires

Amanda Armintrout, clerk-specialist, Driver Services; Eric Feldman, facilities management coordinator, Facilities; Brett Hambly, power plant engineer 3, Facilities; Kimberly Harris, driver's license clerk senior, Muscatine DL station; Karen Kontos, transportation engineer intern, Bridges and Structures; Piyamart Kumsaikaew, information technology specialist 4, Information Technology Division; Terry Martens, right-of-way agent 2, Right of Way; Donald Robinson, auto services worker, Repair Shop; Karen Rockingham, driver's license clerk, Marshalltown DL station; Leonard Scroggs, highway transportation associate; Shenandoah Garage; Ruth Simmons, driver's license clerk, Des Moines DL station; Eric Wright, management analyst 4, Traffic and Safety

### Promotions

Cheryl Bain, from senior driver's license clerk to driver's license examiner, Ottumwa DL station; Tim Carlson, from maintenance repairer to facilities management coordinator, Facilities; Colleen Chapa, from secretary, Right of Way, to administrative assistant 1, Policy and Legislative Services; Nichole Dugan, from information technology specialist 2 to information technology specialist 4, Information Technology Division; Brooks Glasnapp, from right-of-way agent 3 to public service executive 3, Traffic and Safety; Charles Hughes, construction technician assistant to assistant survey party chief, Design; Jeffrey Jones, motor vehicle officer to motor vehicle sergeant, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; Mark Kraayenbrink, from motor vehicle officer to motor vehicle investigator, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; Lynn Reese, from materials technician 4 to materials technician 5, District 5 materials; Scott Robinson, from equipment operator senior to garage operations assistant, Ames garage; Jason Ruter, from construction technician to construction technician senior, Britt construction; Mark Stephens, from equipment operator senior to garage operations assistant, Tama garage; Hale Strasser, from information technology specialist 4 to information technology specialist 5, Information Technology Division; Kelly Stratton, from clerk specialist to public service supervisor 1, Driver Services; Clinton Watson, from bridge inspector 1 to bridge inspector 2, Bridges and Structures

### Transfers

Jerry Andregg, construction technician, from Davenport construction to Manchester construction; Beth Collins, training specialist 2, Employee Services, to management analyst 3, Document Services; Christine Evans, secretary, from Location and Environment to Information Technology Division; William Federspiel, equipment operator senior, from Allison garage to Independence garage; Tamara Nicholson, transportation engineer specialist, Location and Environment, to transportation planner 4, Modal Division; Dennis Walker, design technician specialist, from Design to Bridges and Structures

### Retirements

James Andersen, design technician, District 1 Office; Robert Briggs, highway transportation associate, Mount Pleasant garage; William Cook, transportation engineer manager, District 4 Office; Jean Teasdale, custodial worker, Facilities

## Service Awards

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for October 2007

### 35 Years

Dynise Collum Jr., Cedar Rapids garage; Daniel Franklin, Policy and Legislative Services; Ralph Kester, Oakland garage; Christy Steinfeld, Cedar Rapids DL station; Ronald Stutzel, District 6 maintenance; Harold Thielen, Bridges and Structures

### 30 Years

Harold Andersen, Facilities; Elizabeth Baird, Policy and Legislative Services; Randy Barnhardt, Pocahontas garage; Thomas Brekke, Right of Way; Dicky Oltman, Grundy Center garage; Gerald Plambeck, Neola garage; Wes Swallow Jr., De Soto garage

### 25 Years

Brian Huizenga, Alton garage; Harold Phipps, District 1 maintenance

### 20 Years

Tamie Berry, Shenandoah garage; Richard Bees, Oakland garage; David Claeys, Williamsburg garage; Terry Crane, Tipton garage; Cynthia Deerr, Vehicle Services; Larry Erickson, Latimer garage; Dale Gahring, Williamsburg garage; Jacqueline Huffman, Driver Services; Kenneth Huseman, Dubuque garage; Judy Lensing, Design; Scott Loge, Garner garage; Cindie Mead, Sioux City construction; Sandy Jo Messingham, Right of Way; Richard Miller, Mason City garage; Manuel Paez, Mason City garage; Dennis Petersen, Tipton garage; Joseph Reutter, Bridges and Structures

### 15 Years

Lennis Harberts, Ashton garage; Christine King, Bridges and Structures; Larry Lynn, Independence garage

### 10 Years

Raymond Allen, Muscatine garage; Michael Carlson, Location and Environment; Jay Carolus, Oskaloosa garage; Jerry Farquhar, Spencer garage; Allen Harwood, Burlington garage; Jason Loving, Mount Pleasant garage; Christine Manzer, Council Bluffs DL station; Scott Marler, Location and Environment; Timothy Simodynes, Traffic and Safety; Marc Solberg, Location and Environment; Darrell Ver Heul, Newton garage; Terry Whitehead, Sidney garage; Julie Willenborg, Carroll DL station

### 5 Years

Robb Brechwald, Storm Lake garage; Shane Martin, Tipton garage; Timothy Meredith, Procurement and Distribution; Kip Siems, Waterloo garage; Lou Ann Stahl, Clinton DL station

## 3-day walk, continued from page 6

people, thousands of them, come out to donate their time and resources for this cause, and not just in Minneapolis, but in 11 other cities, it just amazed me," Richards said.

By the end of Saturday's walk, Richards realized she had a real problem with her feet. Even though the pair had been fitted with good walking shoes, Richards developed a nasty blister on the ball of her right foot and under a toenail. "On Saturday night I didn't think there would be any way I would walk on Sunday," said Richards. "Once I took my shoe off, I couldn't put any pressure on my foot and couldn't even get my flip flop on." McCullough added, "This year, unlike last year, I avoided blisters and was able to keep all 10 toenails."

"We saw a shopping cart sitting along the side of the road and thought about grabbing it and pushing Von around in it," said McCullough. But when the sun came up over their tent village on Sunday, Richards was able to get her walking shoes back on and the pair set off for the last 20 miles with their new 2,600 best friends. "I wish I could have slowed it down to visit more," said Richards. "Especially on Sunday, I had to concentrate on walking and didn't get to share with others as much as I would have liked."

That's not to say the pair didn't encounter some interesting individuals or share heart-warming stories. Richards said, "We met one man who was walking. He was very down-do-earth and friendly. After talking to him awhile we found out he was an oncologist at the Mayo Clinic. It really struck me that he would take the time to participate in this event. It made me realize just how important this weekend was."



Richards' sore feet couldn't stop her from finishing the 60-mile walk.

Once the 60 miles were behind them, the duo attended the closing ceremonies. The organizers announced that more than \$6.5 million dollars had been raised during this event. That was moving enough, but then Richards was chosen from hundreds of participating survivors to stand as one of nine in the survivors' circle on stage. Richards haltingly described the scene, "That part is all still a blur to me. It was all so emotional. Two of the ladies in the circle were very young and another woman was on her third bout with cancer. I don't know why I was chosen to be up there, but I know I'll never forget it."

McCullough has saved her spot for the 2008 3-day walk and Richards is still contemplating next year's walk, but they want to encourage everyone to get involved in some way with this wonderful cause. To find out more, go to [www.the3day.org](http://www.the3day.org).

# 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  
**Printing Staff**, Office of Document Services, Printing



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



**PLEASE RECYCLE THIS ISSUE**

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**On the cover:** Rail transportation to the Knierim Coop in Calhoun County.  
 Photo by Roger Larson, Office of Systems Planning

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 .....	515-239-1564
Construction .....	<b>Nancy McMenamin</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1043
Contracts .....	<b>Peg Muxfeldt</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1422
Design .....	<b>Judy Lensing</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1469
Driver Services .....	<b>Noralee Warrick</b> , Des Moines .....	515-237-3155
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>Jean Jesse</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1225
Maintenance .....	<b>Cindy Shipley</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1824
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> , Des Moines .....	515-237-3250
Motor Vehicle Enforcement .....	<b>Kerry Kirkpatrick</b> , Des Moines .....	515-237-3260
Operations and Finance Division .....	<b>Sheri Anderson</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1340
Research and Technology Bureau .....	<b>Phyllis Geer</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1646
Right-of-Way .....	<b>Linda Kriegel</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1135
Traffic and Safety .....	<b>Linda McBride</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1557
Vehicle Services .....	<b>Thelma Huffman</b> , Des Moines .....	515-237-3182



## Joel comes home

**A** lot can change in two years. Just ask Joel Bryan, bridge inspector 2 working out of the Cherokee office. Bryan returned to work Aug. 13 after serving 22 months with the 133rd Infantry of the Iowa National Guard. Most of his deployment was spent stationed at Camp Korean Village (CKV) in the extreme western part of An Bar Province, Iraq.

Sergeant First Class Bryan spent his first six months away from Iowa training at Camp Shelby in southern Mississippi. Bryan said, "We went to Mississippi right after Hurricane Katrina, so we were dealing with a lot of issues that weren't a normal part of training, like clearing hurricane debris from the base."

Once their stateside training was complete, Bryan's unit was deployed to Al Asad Airbase, one of the largest air bases

in western Iraq where they trained on convoy operations and vehicle recovery. Bryan said the airbase was once one of Saddam's largest facilities. He said the runways were so long that you could stand in the center of the flight line and not be able to see the end of the runway.

After a month at Al Asad, the troops were sent to CKV in the high desert. "We used to joke that Columbus had been wrong, the world was flat, or at least that part of the world. It was either really hot and windy with sandstorms, or very cold. It did snow twice for about five minutes, just enough to make snowballs, and rained three times while we were there, but that was about it. The sky was so clear at night and the stars brighter than any I've ever seen," said Bryan.

Bryan and the other 19 Army soldiers worked alongside 700 Marines at CKV. The post was a stopping place for supply convoys coming into Iraq through Jordan. "The convoys were usually about 150 trucks," said Bryan. "The drivers were usually contractors from Jordan and Sudan, but no Iraqis. Many of the contractors working as cooks, carpenters and equipment operators were from Kuwait and Pakistan. That was probably the best part of being where we were, we were able to talk to people from all over the world. When you never get a day off and you see the same people week after week, you begin to gain each other's trust. Once they gained our trust, they shared openly about their lives and beliefs. We learned a lot about the Muslim culture and that the people in this region do not hate Americans, although they didn't have much nice to say about our government. They shared a lot about their holy month of Ramadan and were worried about us Christians having to spend Christmas away from home. I told them not to worry, Christmas is in our hearts and thanked them for their concern."

Even though Bryan and his unit made friends in Iraq, he says it wasn't difficult at all to come home to his wife, kids, grandkids, and his job at the DOT. "My support back home was good," said Bryan. "I just felt bad being gone so long knowing that the guys I worked with were already short-handed."

Bryan is settling back into his job and his life with his wife, Patti. The couple have three grown children and four grandchildren. The Bryan's son, Jason, is married to Heather. The couple have two children, Chase, 15, and Hunter, 9. The Bryan's daughter, Jessica, is married to Nathaniel Beers and has two children, Keeley, 9, and Mykenna, 2. Joel and Patti also have a son, Brandon. Bryan said, "The grandkids have changed the most. I did get to see Mykenna when she was very little and I was home on leave. Now she's running around everywhere and says, 'No!' all the time."

While he says he does not regret his military service, Bryan does think his deployment was too long. "We all knew we were in for a big adjustment back to our normal lives," he said. "It's going to take a while to get back to normal."



Joel Bryan (center) and his new-found friends at Camp Korean Village, Iraq