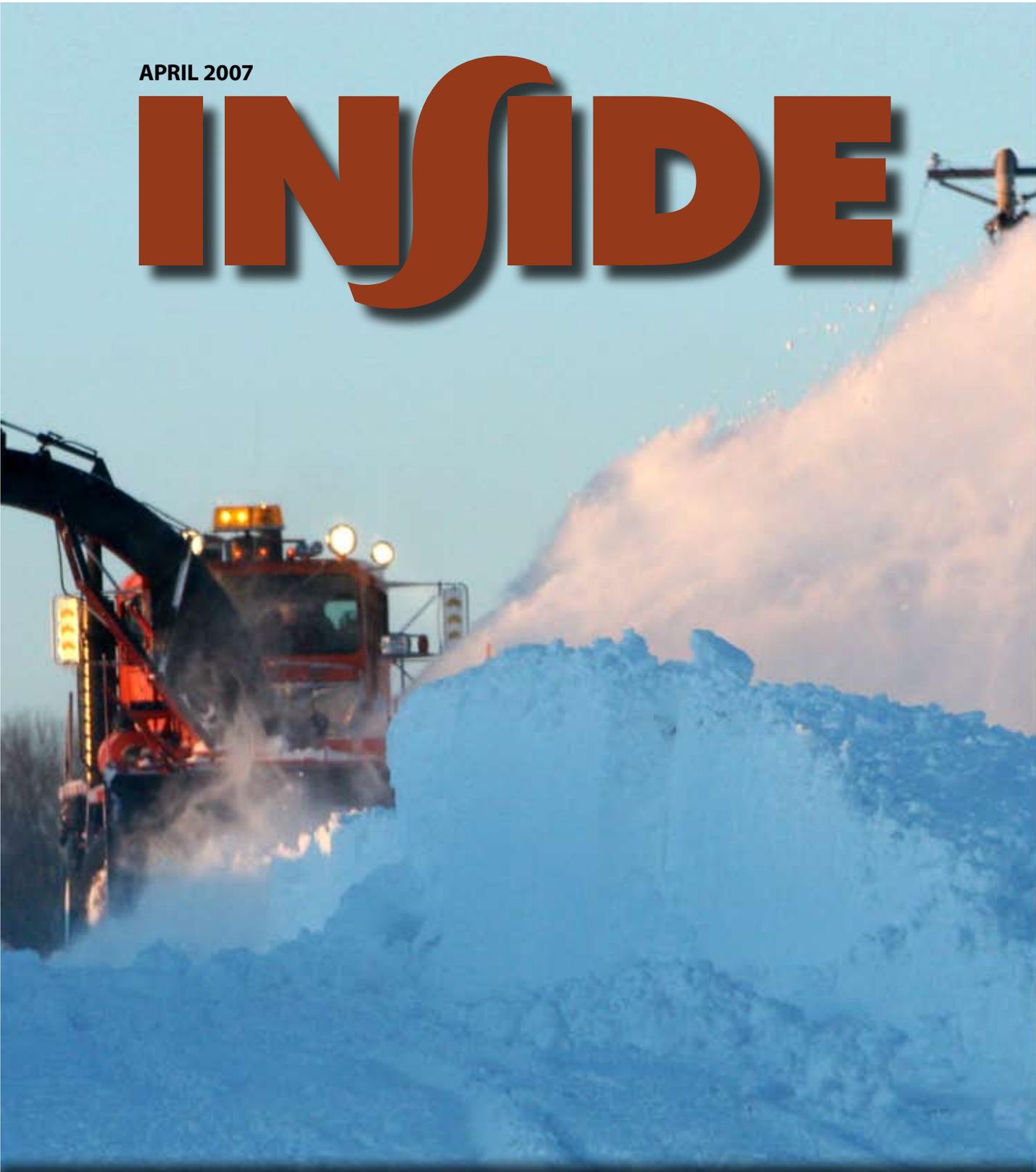


APRIL 2007

# INSIDE



## What's INSIDE

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**ONE 2 ONE**

WITH DIRECTOR NANCY RICHARDSON

**Y**ou know how columnists sometimes write columns about a number of different things rather than one topic? I've figured out why. They cannot think of a topic so they resort to writing the column about a bunch of unrelated things, none of which is enough to be a column by itself. That's me this month, so here is my column of a "little bit about a lot of things."

I made my first official field visits to three garages, one resident construction office and one driver's license station. It was an interesting experience! As luck would have it, the visits were scheduled for the Tuesday after "the storm" so that was a major part of the discussion at the garages. I learned something at every stop, such as:

- New equipment operators are trained on new equipment, but then usually assigned older equipment, while seasoned operators are assigned new equipment that they may not be trained on... sounds like a Murphy's Law.
- Interest is high in the new highway worker class negotiated in the last contract and how and when it will be implemented...we will keep you posted.
- The Junior Mint method of catching mice in a garage is very successful...for more info, check with the Carroll garage.
- Large projects can be managed out of small offices... just ask the Jefferson construction office.
- Staff is highly motivated to learn about and "go live" with the new driver's license issuance system, if the Carroll DL station is any indication.

I am passing along things I heard to the appropriate division directors for their information or action.

Speaking of field visits, I toured the new Motor Vehicle Division (MVD) facility being built in Ankeny. I have driven by it often and thought it looked small and plain. Boy was I wrong! I guess it looks small from the interstate because it is alone in an open field. Inside it has lots of space, lots of windows and lots of class. I think it will be a very pleasant place for employees and customers. I particularly liked the "fossil" tiles scattered among the bathroom tile...only to find out they're not fossil-like imprints but rather various tire treads. Transportation...motor vehicles...tire treads...get it? What a pleasant change it will be for the many MVD

employees who have been housed in a mall basement for so many years.

By the way, MVD staff is already on the move. Due to a water problem in the basement offices they inhabit, the mall has agreed that our offices can move upstairs to some empty mall space. This temporary move (until the move to the new building in June) took place last week with the help of DOT Facilities Support and Information Technology Division staff. I occasionally "hang out" at MVD when I have meetings in Des Moines, so they have a corner where I can work. I happened to be there the afternoon of the move. My role was three-fold: provide Girl Scout Thin Mint cookies for the workers, donate some toilet paper to the women's restroom and stay out of the workers' way. You never know what this job will entail!

More typical activities also filled my month, including my annual trip to Washington, D.C., with the Iowa Transportation Commission to meet with Iowa's members of Congress. We have two new Congressmen from eastern Iowa, and they are both very interested in transportation.

They are great additions to our already solid delegation. We also began the five-year program development process with the Commission in March. We will continue discussions and deliberations with them through May, with approval of the 2008-2012 program targeted for June.

And, of course, we continue to work with the Legislature on our highway funding initiative (TIME-21), our rail funding initiative (Access Rail), our budget bill, our policy bill and the many bills introduced by legislators on various transportation-related matters. Those bills run the gamut from allowing bigger, heavier vehicles on Iowa's roads to requiring the DOT to implement and monitor some rail worker safety measures to allowing certain memorial signs along roads to prevailing wage requirements for certain state-financed projects, just to name a few. Once the session ends, we will recap this activity for you.

**ONE2ONE,  
continued on page 13**

# The Blizzard of 2007

**O**ur real Iowa winter didn't show up until February 24. That's the day of "round one" when Governor Chet Culver issued an emergency declaration in response to an ice storm. Officials from Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management along with key state agencies --- Transportation, the National Guard, Utilities Board and Public Safety --- activated the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) in Johnston and began coordinating the deployment of state resources.

By Wednesday, Feb. 28, while many Iowans in eastern Iowa were still without power, state and local agencies began preparing for "round two" that would last through the weekend. The National Weather Service predicted a winter storm of a magnitude that Iowans had not experienced in more than 30 years, including heavy snow and winds of 35 to 40 mph with gusts of more than 50 mph. The blizzard conditions were predicted to start Thursday morning and continue through 6 p.m. Friday, and possibly into Saturday, March 3.

The forecasts proved to be all too accurate, but the dynamic storm track stalled as it spread through Iowa, sparing eastern Iowa from the brunt of the storm. However, that meant the snow kept piling up and blowing around in western Iowa.

Due to the predicted magnitude of the storm, the DOT was ready with a number of proactive measures to prevent thousands of people from becoming stranded, injured or killed on Iowa's roadways. Statewide emergency plans were developed, including the planned closure of several major routes (I-29, I-35 from Ames north to Minnesota, I-80, I-380, and others) if travel conditions warranted. Also part of the plan, Iowa National Guard troops and were deployed and stationed



*Just east of Glidden on U.S. 30, the blower had to weave around abandoned vehicles to clear any part of the road.*

at nine DOT maintenance facilities throughout the state, and readied for search and rescue operations. Additional troops were held in reserve at the state armories.

In addition to establishing the search and rescue teams, other proactive measures included early travel warnings and advice on what to do if stranded, use of the state's electronic message boards, continued updates on road conditions and physical closure of roads with barricades, vehicles and fencing where possible. DOT enforcement officers assisted with search and rescue and escorted blower crews as necessary.

## DOT crews risk it all, together

During this winter storm, most DOT crews worked 12-hour shifts. As one person got out of the truck seat, another driver took the wheel, at least on interstate runs. This kept most snow trucks in use around the clock when conditions permitted. Several crews on

roads in western Iowa were pulled off overnight due to poor visibility. Dwight Rorholm, District 3 maintenance manager said, "During this storm we would make some progress during the day, and then lose ground overnight. It was one step forward and two steps back for several days. Although we never pulled off the interstate, we did have to pull off some places overnight during this storm."

The lack of visibility and poor road conditions caused by this storm also prevented many DOT operators from driving to or from their work locations. Some employees fighting to get to work had to be brought to the shop by snowmobile. Just one example of the lengths DOTers traveled to get to work is that of Neal Torneten, equipment operator from Atlantic, who caught a series of rides --- first with a Pottawattamie County snowblower, then a county snowplow, and finally four different DOT plows before he ended up at his work location wearing

**Blizzard, continued on page 4**

## Blizzard, continued from page 3

a borrowed coat and boots. Then he worked a 12-hour shift.

Many others who had been working could not get home and were forced to find a corner in the garage to catch some sleep. Others were able to walk home in the snow and wind, only to walk back hours later and climb back into a truck.

## Timeline of the storm

By early Thursday morning, March 1, the storm began entering the state. As DOT crews began their snow removal operations, search and rescue teams prepared to respond to stranded motorists and other emergencies. Teams consisted of two Iowa National Guard soldiers in a Humvee equipped for medical emergencies, a DOT snowplow escort and an Iowa State Trooper.

The storm started in Sioux City around 5:30 a.m. and reached Avoca by 7 a.m. The weather started with rain, and then quickly switched to very heavy snow and high winds. By 9:30 a.m., the Avoca maintenance crews reported several vehicle crashes and

*Operators across the state updated dynamic message signs as road conditions changed.*

*The proactive closing of I-35 from Ames into Minnesota allowed crews to clean this roadway without the hazard caused by many stranded vehicles.*



*Photo by Sheri Anderson*

two inches of ice/snow pack.

At 8:30 a.m., the DOT announced that I-29 from I-80/Missouri Valley to the South Dakota border was closed, and tentative plans were in place to close I-35 from U.S. 30 near Ames to the Minnesota border and I-380 from I-80 to U.S. 20 at 10 a.m.

As the storm grew in intensity, the DOT announced at 11:15 a.m. Thursday that the northern half of I-35 was closed, as well as I-80 from Council Bluffs to Stuart, U.S. 34 from U.S. 59 to Avoca and U.S. 6 from Council Bluffs to U.S. 59. The remaining portion of I-29 from Missouri Valley to the Missouri

border was also closed. Search and rescue crews were deployed to I-29 and closed portions of I-80 to help stranded motorists.

The wide-open and rural stretch of I-35 from Ames to Minnesota is particularly vulnerable to whiteouts and drifting snow during winter storms. It is not uncommon for motorists to become stranded in this area or to be involved in crashes. As a result, the DOT installed gates on the entrance ramps along this section, which were used to close the road during this storm to ensure the safety of motorists.

Due to the life-threatening risk of traveling in the blizzard conditions, travel was not advised throughout the storm. For those who were en route, the objective was to safely divert them to the most populated areas where services were available. Unfortunately, many motorists underestimated the risks and severity of the situation and chose to travel anyway. They quickly found themselves in the ditch, stuck in a snowdrift, blocked by a jackknifed vehicle, or behind a multi-vehicle pile-up.

It was not long Thursday before there were several multi-vehicle blockages, including the one in the westbound lanes near Adair, and in



**Blizzard, continued on page 5**

## **Blizzard, continued from page 4**

both directions near Atlantic involving more than 120 vehicles. There were similar stories on other roadways.

Because of the magnitude of the closures, local fire departments were requested to help with diverting traffic off the highways. The process of closing the routes and diverting traffic was a risky operation for state and local personnel under the low-visibility conditions. Crashes and bottlenecks seriously hampered snow removal and towing operations and delayed reopening routes.

During the entire event, it was the DOT's aim to close the interstate for only the minimum amount of time it took to rescue stranded motorists, get vehicles out of the way and make the roadway passable. Under normal winter weather conditions, DOT crews will work day and night, as long as they can safely make progress. It is rarely necessary to close a roadway, especially an interstate.

On I-80, during the peak of the storm, 10 additional rescue teams were sent to Avoca to rescue motorists. The road closure was also extended to Des Moines. The situation was so bad in Cass County that the sheriff requested assistance from local snowmobilers to check on motorists. This eventually became the case in several other counties, as well. Media reports indicate more than 100 motorists were rescued from I-80 alone during the weekend. DOT crews assisted in several missions, including the escorting of a pregnant woman from Marshalltown to Des Moines to await the birth of her twins – a harrowing trip that took more than three hours. Another expectant mom was escorted from Breda to Carroll, one of the areas hardest hit by the storm.

Crews from all parts of the state came to assist western Iowa shops with this storm, including a truck-mounted



*It wasn't snow but ice causing downed powerlines that closed roads in northeast Iowa.*



*National guard troops assisted with search and rescue missions on the closed roadways.*

snowblower from Cedar Rapids. According to Jim Bane, District 4 maintenance manager, the snowblower operated on I-80 24-hours a day from Friday through Monday widening roads.

Efforts continued throughout the storm to open I-80, but crews faced many obstacles aside from the search and rescue operations, including fighting high winds that blew snow in behind their plows, operating in very low visibility, clearing enormous drifts,

towing vehicles out of the middle of the road and locating vehicle owners.

While eastern Iowa was spared the brunt of the snow, ice downed several powerlines and snapped power poles like toothpicks. Iowa 281 near Dewar in Black Hawk County remained closed until March 5 due to downed powerlines.

**Blizzard, continued on page 6**

*The sun was setting as the blower crew took on this drift on U.S. 169 north of Boxholm.*



### ***Blizzard, continued from page 5***

## **Daylight on Saturday reveals a brighter outlook**

By 7 a.m. Saturday morning, visibility had improved and I-80 was plowed down to where only three inches of ice/snow pack remained on the road surface, and only a few vehicles still needed to be towed.

Normally there are four snowplows operating between Des Moines and Stuart, six from Stuart to Atlantic and four from Atlantic to I-680. To get I-80 open as quickly as possible, additional crews from Neola, Council Bluffs and Osceola were diverted from their operations to concentrate on the major I-80 bottleneck between Avoca and Adair.

By noon Saturday, I-80 was reopened and motorists stranded in Omaha, Des Moines and all points between quickly hit the road. Many of the primary roads were still down to one lane at this time and some were still blocked. Crews continued to work around the clock. All state-managed roads in western Iowa were open by late Sunday night.

## **Amazing results**

Bane said, "There are so many people who were directly involved in this event who accomplished amazing things. Many people put their own lives at risk to save others. So many individuals and agencies were involved it is impossible to mention them all, but a few of note include the Iowa State Patrol, Iowa National Guard, local law enforcement, volunteer fire departments, local volunteers, church groups, tow-truck drivers, county road workers, and of course our own DOT forces including maintenance crews, motor vehicle enforcement, district office employees, and those in Ames who kept Iowans informed of what was going on in the field."

*(This report was compiled using information from Jim Bane, District 4 maintenance manager; Mark Black, District 2 maintenance manager; Mike Krohn, District 1 maintenance manager; Dena Gray-Fisher, director of the Office of Media and Marketing Services; and several media accounts of the storm. A special thank you to Jim Moreland, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; Sheri Anderson, Maintenance; Mark Black and Jim Bane for the amazing photographs. See more photos on [www.iowadot.gov/blizzard.html](http://www.iowadot.gov/blizzard.html))*

## More blizzard photos ...

Days after the snow ended, DOT crews were still hard at work clearing roads.



A livestock truck was stranded along U.S. 71 near Audubon.



This person attempts to climb a drift along Iowa 173 Sunday, March 4.

*The height of some snow drifts in rural areas caused them to appear more like retaining walls.*



*Downed powerlines caused the closure of several roads.*



*Tow trucks were called in from Carroll to remove vehicles abandoned or buried in drifts along U.S. 30.*



*Near whiteout conditions on Iowa 17 on the north side of Madrid made travel, even for snowplows, treacherous.*





*This drift near Jefferson was as tall as the auger.*



*The crews of this snowblower and v-plow took a break in Madrid where they dropped rescued motorists at the community building.*



*Ice on this sign shows the wind direction.*



*Blowing snow made conditions nearly impossible for plow operators.*



*Nightfall doesn't stop DOT crews. Many shops worked 24-hours a day for several days to make sure roads were safe for travelers.*

## Dependent health care eligibility examined

**T**he Iowa Department of Administrative Services-Human Resources Enterprise (DAS-HRE) is serious about its responsibility to serve employees and retirees by holding down health care costs. One way is to perform audits to identify errors, overpayments/underpayments and to make improvements in processes. One of the things that DAS-HRE has publicized during the last few months is one such audit - The Dependent Eligibility Verification Study. Audit forms were mailed beginning Feb. 16, 2007.

### Dependent Eligibility Verification

The state of Iowa began a dependent eligibility verification process early this year in an effort to hold down costs for employees and the citizens of Iowa. The audit is being done to confirm that all persons who are covered by a state of Iowa group health plan are eligible for coverage.

As an employee, you may be selected for eligibility verification and will be contacted by mail at your home address. Please be sure that you reply to any requests for information in a timely manner.

### Who is eligible for dependent coverage?

In general, the state of Iowa defines eligible dependents as a spouse or unmarried child/children to age 19. An unmarried child who is older than 19 is eligible for coverage if that child is a full-time student.

### How many employees are involved?

DAS-HRE analysis of claims data and other information indicates a need to contact approximately 785 current state employees (less than 3 percent of total health contracts) for further information to substantiate that certain dependents on employee plans should be on these plans. Employees who receive inquiries in the mail from DAS-HRE may contact the Office of Employee Services at 515-239-1921.



## 2007 Iowa Bicycle Summit

by Milly Ortiz, Office of Systems Planning

The 2007 Iowa Bicycle Summit was held Feb. 1-2, 2007, at the Downtown Holiday Inn in Des Moines. This two-day bicycle facilities workshop and conference, sponsored by the Iowa DOT and Iowa Bicycle Coalition, brought more than 85 planners, city and county engineers and bicycle advocates together to share and discuss bicycle transportation issues and experiences.

The workshop on Thursday provided information to engineers, planners and others interested in bicycle facility design concepts. The workshop was presented by Richard Moeur, a nationally recognized expert and traffic design engineer for the Arizona DOT. Moeur is a member of the Bicycle Technical Committee for the National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

The conference on Friday was geared toward bicyclists and advocates. Dominic Liberatore, from the League of American Bicyclists, shared 'complete streets' policies with the audience. Kathy Ridnour, Iowa DOT's Safe Routes to School program coordinator, talked about Iowa's efforts to increase safety and promote walking and bicycling among children from kindergarten through eighth grade. Tom Welch, state safety engineer at the Iowa DOT, talked about road diet concepts.

This year a mobile workshop was added to the Summit. Des Moines Area Regional Transit (DART) transported attendees to downtown Des Moines to view the bicycle racks at the Liberty Station parking ramp and around the East Village. Brian Litchfield, director of Program Development at DART, also demonstrated how to operate the bicycle racks on every DART regular, express and commuter bus. The bicycle racks are part of its Bike and Ride Program.

Other topics included bicycle level of service, trail funding, bike patrol and enforcement, and bike to work week. Presentations from the 2007 Iowa Bicycle Summit are posted at [www.iowabikes.com](http://www.iowabikes.com). For more information, contact Milly Ortiz at 515-233-7733 or e-mail [milly.ortiz@dot.iowa.gov](mailto:milly.ortiz@dot.iowa.gov).

# Chase Colton

## Materials employee of the year

**C**hase Colton says he was more surprised than anyone to be named the Office of Materials Employee of the Year. "I didn't even know I was nominated," said Colton, who has spent the majority of last year dealing with complicated maintenance issues on some of the materials lab's more sensitive testing equipment.

Jason Omundson, one of several materials employees who nominated Colton for this honor says, "This past year, we've had some ongoing maintenance issues with some of our more complex equipment, especially our Falling Weight Deflectometer testing unit. Chase had the initiative to take on the project and work closely and extensively with the unit's manufacturer to try to decipher what the problems were. In the end, the unit required a complete overhaul within the electronics as well as the software and calibration. Chase worked to clear up all the calibration and software issues and worked closely with co-workers to overhaul the electronic circuitry on the testing unit. With his hard work and dedication, the unit was returned to optimal operating condition. I'm certain it would have taken much longer to repair and adversely affected our testing season if not for Chase's efforts."

Colton, who has been with the DOT eight years, admits he put in long hours on the phone with the equipment manufacturer and spent a lot of time dealing with issues, but in the end he said getting the unit back online was a team effort. "I've been getting the credit," said Colton, "But this wouldn't



have been possible without Ron Stephens working on the mechanical and electrical components and Jon Arjes helping out anywhere he was needed."

Although the three men worked as an awesome team, Omundson said Colton's attention to detail was a main reason for his nomination. "Chase was our go-to guy for a lot of things that required a bit of technical know-how and attention to detail. He has a very meticulous approach to problem solving, which extends into a talent for documenting his work and results. It's very nice when you give Chase a project or problem to work on and in short order you're presented with a solid solution and all accompanying documentation of how that solution was arrived at. Chase has a very analytical mind and is very well respected and liked, not just in our section but throughout the entire

*"Chase was our go-to guy for a lot of things that required a bit of technical know-how and attention to detail. He has a very meticulous approach to problem solving which extends into a talent for documenting his work and results."*

Jason Omundson  
Office of Materials

laboratory. He's a modest fellow with little if any inclination to make any big deal out of his accomplishments. All the more reason his co-workers wanted to nominate him for Employee of the Year recognition!"

Once the FWD testing unit was running well, Colton moved on to new challenges in the Office of Document Services' electronic records management (ERMS) unit. "I started in ERMS Feb. 9 and I'm in training for something new everyday. Each day brings changes. I miss materials, but I'm looking forward to the new things I'll learn."

Colton, a graduate of the University of Iowa, and his wife, Jamet, live in Ames with their infant son, Tiago.

## Third time's the charm for Brian Cottrell

**H**air color, attached earlobes, a widow's peak --- these and many other genetic traits make each of us unique. Other genetic or hereditary tendencies are less benign, as Brian Cottrell of the Information Technology Division well knows. A hereditary kidney disease has caused Cottrell to recently undergo his third kidney transplant.

You might think three kidney transplants and several other surgeries for ailments such as prostate cancer might sour Cottrell's attitude and zest for life. Nothing is further from the truth.

"I've gone through a lot of challenges in my life with my health," said Cottrell. "But if the only reason I've gone through these times is to be able to help encourage others as they face tough times, then it's been worth it."

The first kidney transplant came in 1983 and the second in 1996. In December 2005, right after Cottrell and his wife, Cathy, bought a house outside Boone, doctors at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., read test results indicating the need for yet another transplant.

"We moved into our house the week after we found out about the third transplant," said Cottrell. "That was a little scary because there was quite a bit of work to be done."



(top photo) Brian Cottrell and his wife, Cathy  
(bottom photo) Brian Cottrell (left) and organ donor Hiram Philo



Working a little at a time on the house and undergoing tests to find a suitable donor took the Cottrells through the summer of 2006. A donor was found in a close friend from Boone, Hiram Philo, who works as a nurse at Mary Greeley Medical Center in Ames. "Finding the match was a miracle," said Cottrell. "Hiram was closely compatible and we both put our trust in God for this transplant to work out." "The high point of a promising donor match was quickly followed by a crisis in August when the doctors decided Cottrell's

***"I've gone through a lot of challenges in my life with my health ... but if the only reason I've gone through these times is to be able to help encourage others as they face tough times, then it's been worth it."***

**Brian Cottrell  
Information Technology Division**

body wasn't compatible. Cottrell said this discovery would have caused most institutions to cancel the surgery, but doctors at the Mayo Clinic had a new procedure they wanted to try. "We needed to do everything we could to make this work," said Cottrell.

***Cottrell, continued on page 19***

# Family Happenings

**Design**  
*Judy Lensing*



Shawn Goetz, design technician, and his wife, Vanessa, transportation engineer intern in Materials, are proud first-time parents. Evan Antonio Goetz was born Feb. 4 weighing 9 pounds, 11 ounces. The Goetz family currently lives west of Story City by Squaw Creek and daddy says he's happy to have a future helper around the acreage.

## Thank You

I want to thank all of you for making my 36 years of service so enjoyable. Thank you for making my retirement week so unforgettable by sharing your thoughts and memories. I will miss you deeply and want to emphasize that without you, the Iowa DOT would not be the organization it is today. All your hard work and dedication only proves that you care for all your internal and external customers greater than anyone else possibly could. As each of you go through the years toward your own retirement, I hope you take pride in all your life's work and enjoy the friendships you have been able to form along the way. I will never forget you - thanks for making my life so heart-warmly full!

Kim Kammerer, retired  
 Maintenance

## In Memory

Donald L. Peters, 78, of Emmetsburg, died Thursday, March 1, 2007. Peters was born Oct. 13, 1928, in Pocahontas County, the son of Pete E. and Lena (Klocko) Peters. He attended school in Great Oak Township. On June 30, 1949, Peters and Jane Truog were married. Peters was employed with the Conservation Commission, working on the dredge on the Five Island Lake project. He then worked for the Iowa DOT for 35 years, with 11 of those years as highway maintenance supervisor in Emmetsburg. He retired from the DOT in 1988. Peters was an active member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Mallard. He served on the Lakeside Lutheran Home Board of Directors. Peters was a big supporter of the home in Sheldon where he volunteered planting trees and doing yard work for their facility. Peters was an avid hunter and fisherman. He enjoyed playing cards with his family and friends, and feeding and watching the birds. Surviving are his wife, Jane, of Emmetsburg; children Sandra and Ken Buhl of Rockwell City; Dan and Cheryl Peters of Wichita, Kan.; Donna Rierson of Fairmont, Minn.; Pam and William Taylor of Burlington; Carla and Al Firkins of Emmetsburg; and Dr. Paul and Kim Peters of Madrid; ten grandsons and six granddaughters; and two great grandsons and three great granddaughters.

### ONE2ONE, continued from page 2

Finally, on a personal note...

- I had a root canal; what an odd procedure.
- Riley, my little Shih Tzu, ate a pair of knee-high socks. Well, I didn't see him eat them, but I know he did as they eventually came out, each in its own way! Okay, maybe that's more than you needed to know...
- My house is for sale. No, it does not mean I'm retiring, quitting or otherwise leaving this job. It means my house is for sale.

So what's this all mean?

- Seems you can teach an old dog new tricks. I'm learning something on every field visit.
- Although problems can dog you for a long time, good things do come to those who wait, like the employees at MVD regarding their facilities.
- Something worth having – like our state funding initiative – takes dogged determination.
- Don't ever leave your dog alone near the laundry room.

Have a good month.  
 Welcome to spring!

*Nancy*

## TROPHY CASE



### NPHQ award for I-235 project communications

The National Partnership for Highway Quality (NPHQ) has selected the Iowa DOT and its partners for the NPHQ "Making a Difference" award in the public communications category. The communications effort for the I-235 project was a joint undertaking by the DOT's I-235 communications team, 1040 WHO Radio, WHO-TV 13, KCCI-TV 8, WOI-TV 5, KDSM FOX 17, Total Traffic Network, and the Des Moines Register.

### Materials Bravo Zulu Awards

Each year the Office of Materials selects several recipients of the annual "Bravo Zulu" awards. The winners for 2006 are:

- Vanessa Goetz for her efforts on the activity committee.
- Jerry Deaton and Steve Upchurch for updating and improving the concrete beam breaker calibration process.
- Cliff Dalbey, Mike Coles, LeRoy Lutjen, Ken Kennedy, Steve Upchurch, Alan Annear, and Mike Lauzon for development of a test procedure for shear tests and flowable fill materials to help with the improved design of bridge approaches.

### Heitzman earns doctorate



Michael Heitzman, P.E., the Iowa DOT's bituminous materials engineer, was awarded a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in civil engineering degree by Iowa State University Dec. 17, 2006. Dr. Heitzman's research project culminated in a dissertation titled "New Approaches for Computing Film Thickness."

Dr. Heitzman first envisioned achieving his doctorate degree while working for the Federal Highway Administration in Washington, D.C. At the time, he considered studying with the National Center for Asphalt Technology located at Auburn University, but turned his dream into reality when he accepted a position at the Iowa DOT in the fall of 1998. "The Iowa DOT allows the flexibility to permit professionals to work towards advanced degrees" Heitzman said.

It wasn't an easy task, working full time at the DOT, attending classes, working on research, and writing a dissertation. But 3 ½ years later, his mission was accomplished! There is a "huge benefit for having professional

experience before going back for an advanced degree" Heitzman said. "My understanding of the technology enabled me to develop a research project that had practical application. Being in class allowed me to share 20 years of practical experience with the rest of the class."

The results of Dr. Heitzman's research are currently being implemented in the Iowa DOT. Congratulations, Mike!

### Nie receives land survey license



Duane Nie, design technician in the District 2 Office, recently earned his professional land surveyor license. Congratulations, Duane!

*Trophy Case, continued on page 15*

## *Trophy Case, continued from page 14*

### Hawkins inducted into hall of fame



Keith Hawkins, accounting technician 3 in Finance, was recently inducted into the Ames Area Bowling Association's Hall of Fame. Hawkins has been a member of the Ames Area Bowling Association (AABA) for 19 years, and a member of the national association for 38 years. He has served on the AABA board since 2000, and was president from 2005-2006. Hawkins participates in several bowling leagues and has attended the national tournament for the past 17 years, as well as many other tournaments around the Midwest.

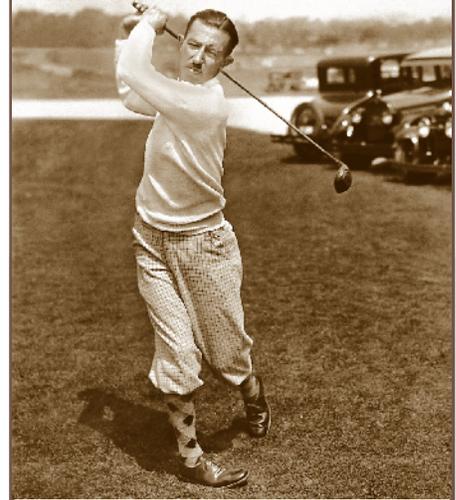
Hall of Fame inductees are chosen on the basis of leadership, promotion, organization, or deeds of good will. Bowling skill may also be a consideration, but is of no more importance than any other qualification.

### Wright wins bronze medal



Mark Wright, District 3 staff engineer, won a bronze medal in the cross country ski competition of the 2007 Winter Iowa Games. The eight kilometer event was held Feb. 3 in Dubuque. Eleven competitors braved -25 degree wind chills for the event. Congratulations, Mark!

## Time to think Golf!!!!



DOT League is looking for all who love the game of golf. League play begins on May 2, 2007.

All levels of experience welcome!!

Form a six member team or contact Paul Flattery if interested in joining a team.

e-mail:  
paul.flattery@iowa.gov  
phone:  
515-239-1863



## Kudos!

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

To: Governor Tom Vilsack  
From: David York, Tulsa, Okla.

I had occasion to travel on I-35 and I-80 last summer as I was moving a family member to Chicago. I was especially impressed with the cleanliness of and services available at the various rest areas I utilized on the trip. The real-time weather information and Internet access are certainly designed to ensure that today's modern automobile travelers have the latest information. I realize there are others in state government that have been and are responsible for all the many facets that result in the attractiveness of Iowa's rest areas. Please pass this letter to those whose efforts provide a very positive impression to travelers on your highways.

To: Nancy Richardson  
From: Mark Kushner,  
Iowa State University College of Engineering

As a regular user of I-235 in downtown Des Moines, I would like to compliment the Iowa DOT, its contractors and others involved with rebuilding I-235 for executing this project with, from my point of view, a minimal disruption to the driving public. Considerable effort must have been invested toward looking at this project from the road user's point of view, because I noticed that I was always able to get through the project, even though the road is being completely reconstructed. My understanding is that several separate construction contracts with different contractors were required to complete this work. Also, the project interfaces with the city of Des Moines, railroads, and undoubtedly, a number of utilities. Iowa DOT certainly is to be commended for its teamwork with all of these entities in order to rebuild an entire corridor and bring operations to a successful close at the end of each construction season. It appears this project is almost completed, and I am looking forward to driving on the finished product.

To: Iowa DOT  
From: Larry Ginger, Des Moines

The Iowa DOT is top notch. Your snow/ice removal is routinely performed to perfection. I own American Lawn Care (Des Moines), and we plow snow. I realize how difficult your job is. I have been in many other states, and there is none better than the Iowa DOT. So I "THANK YOU" for your fine job, because I am not one of those Iowans who take things for granted.

To: Connie Hasellhoff, Dawn Westrum and Tiffany Marlow  
From: Paul Fanhauser, retired DOTer

Thanks so much for helping me with all my retirement affairs. I know you all have been very busy. I'm sure you don't get the recognition you deserve. You were all glad to answer my questions and return my calls. Thanks again!

(Editor's note: The three women mentioned work in the Office of Employee Services.)

To: Iowa DOT  
From: Mike LaFever, Illinois DOT

REMARKABLE!! As an Illinois DOT employee in District 2-Dixon I have to commend your road maintainers on I-80. I traveled from Omaha to Des Moines on Saturday afternoon Feb. 24 and stopped for the night in Des Moines due to the three inches of ice on I-80 by 5 p.m. We left Des Moines at 11 a.m. Sunday expecting rough road conditions the rest of the way to Illinois. Your people did an amazing job of getting the ice off the road and handling the storm. We traveled at good speeds all the way to Illinois and we never felt the roads were slippery. From all the vehicles in the ditches it was obvious they didn't listen to the DOT warnings to stay off the roads. Again, remarkable job on the interstate and thank you.

To: Dena Gray-Fisher,  
Office of Media and Marketing Services  
From: Lynn Scarlett, United Way of Story County

On behalf of the United Way of Story County Board of Directors and staff, I would like to thank you for allowing our wood logo thermometer to be placed on your property on the southeast corner of Grand Avenue and Lincoln Way during our 2006 campaign. We have found logo thermometers to be very useful tools in keeping the community aware of our annual campaign progress. In 2006, we were able to raise a record \$1,391,271, which will help support programs and initiatives needed by more than 30,000 of your friends, neighbors and colleagues in Story County.

To: Iowa DOT  
From: Randy Derrig

My husband and I had to travel on I-29 from Council Bluffs to Brookings, S. Dak. on Jan. 21. I was amazed at how good the road conditions were already by 10 a.m. What a GREAT job crews did! I want to let you know how grateful (and proud) we were. Thank you for the great work that you do.

To: Shirley Andre, Director, Motor Vehicle Division  
From: John Gillispie, Des Moines

I wanted to pass along a "great job" to you and your team. I used the driver's licensing station this afternoon to renew and I was in and out in 15 minutes. I've lived in a number of states and by far and away you are the very best.

(Editor's note: Congratulations to the Park Fair DL team for excellent service.)

To: Iowa DOT  
From: Scott Cooper, Ankeny

With this latest winter storm that hammered many parts of Iowa, I was truly impressed with the condition of the interstate system, including I-235. Our entire family stayed indoors during this past weekend and did not feel the need to drive in this weather. When Monday came, we needed to get out into the world for work and school. This is when we saw the conditions of the roads, WOW!!!!!!!!!! A "Great Job" goes out to all your snowplow drivers and I hope they all did their jobs without incident. I wanted to make sure that all your hard work did not go unnoticed.

To: Iowa DOT  
From: Thomas Fiegen, Clarence

Nice job on the roads this last weekend. I had to travel to Sioux Falls, S. Dak. for my brother's wedding reception. I traveled on U.S. 30, I-380, U.S. 218, I-35, and I-90. The Iowa roads were in the best condition both going to South Dakota on Saturday and especially returning on Sunday. Thanks for making Iowa's roads as safe and clear as they could be under the conditions.

To: Larry Jackson, District 5 Engineer  
From: David Miller, Libertyville

Thank you for getting back to me concerning the cost of fencing. Also, thanks to you and all of the others at the DOT for working with me during my eight years in office. The DOT has a lot of fine people and is one of the best run organizations in state government. I have seen great improvements with public relations over the years, and I appreciate what you do with limited funds.

(Editor's note: David Miller served in the Iowa Senate for eight years.)

To: Nancy Richardson, DOT Director  
From: Sharon Clausen, Grand Junction

I called the DOT Monday, Feb. 12, about my mailbox being knocked down after a snow storm. By 2 p.m. that afternoon my mailbox was back in working order. I want to thank the men who were so kind as I lost my husband and knew I couldn't repair this myself. My husband worked for the DOT for 21 years and I'm very proud to say that he did.

(Editor's note: Dick Ferguson, garage operations assistant from the Jefferson shop assigned equipment operators Don Bishop and Ron Mozena to assist Mrs. Clausen.)

To: Iowa DOT  
From: Teresa L. Powers, De Soto

I'm not sure who to contact concerning this, but I would like to take this opportunity to thank an officer that assisted me Friday, Feb. 16, 2007, on my way home. As you will recall, the weather was bad and the winds were terrible. I was westbound on I-80, at approximately 4:15 p.m. I was having difficulty seeing out my side mirror and rear window defroster wasn't keeping up. I pulled off onto the shoulder and used my cell phone to call home and let them know I would be late as visibility was so low.

I got out of my vehicle and cleaned off my windows. When I got back into my car, a DOT officer approached my vehicle. He asked if I was okay, if I needed assistance or had someone coming. I informed him I was terrified as I could not see out my side mirror and I couldn't see that far ahead of me. He stated he would clean off my windows and would follow me to De Soto. He stuck with me all the way. I couldn't even go more than 45 miles an hour as the visibility was so bad. He followed me all the way to my front door.

I thanked him, and was so grateful, but also I was still a little shaken, so much to the point that I forgot to get his name. I don't know if you give commendations for things like this, but I honestly believe this officer went above and beyond his duty to see me safely home.

(Editor's note: The DOT Motor Vehicle Officer involved in this incident is Darren Reid.)

To: Iowa DOT  
From: Shellie Sponsler, Osceola

Kudos to the Clarke County DOT personnel that clear the highways and interstates for people on the go like me. Keep on truck'n!

## Service Awards

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for April 2007

### 40 Years

**Randall Waterman**, Manchester construction

### 35 Years

**Phyllis Geer**, Research and Technology Bureau; **Douglas Ott**, Cedar Rapids construction; **Dorothy Schooling**, Vehicle Services

### 30 Years

**Desiree Asklof**, Document Services; **Michael Coles**, Materials; **Timothy Fouts**, Council Bluffs-north garage; **Michael Lauzon**, Materials; **Lance Meyer**, Williams garage; **Brenda Steenhard**, New Hampton construction; **Robert Whitman**, Document Services

### 25 Years

**Tim L. Anderson**, Boone garage; **Ted Daub**, Maintenance; **Kathleen Davis**, Materials; **Patrick Rouse**, District 1 paint crew; **La Donna Stuber**, Right-of-Way; **Sandra Weik**, Des Moines DL station; **Peter Wonders**, De Soto garage

### 20 Years

**Kristine Carritt**, Missouri Valley garage; **Richard Jessen**, Davenport garage; **Larry Knox**, Oskaloosa garage; **James Teig**, Information Technology Division

### 15 Years

**Ronald Schappaugh**, Design; **Trudy Schroeder**, District 3 materials

### 10 Years

**Cynthia Delp**, Driver Services; **Angela Owen**, Dubuque DL station; **David Pfantz**, Information Technology Division; **John Riddick**, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Cherrie Sabel**, Davenport DL station

### 5 Years

**Lorrain Bremer**, Sioux City DL station

## Personnel Updates

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for Jan. 26 to Feb. 22, 2007

### New Hires

**Bradley Box**, equipment operator, Donnellson garage; **Kim Buseman**, management analyst 1, Document Services; **Mildred Cowles**, driver's license clerk senior, Des Moines DL station; **Richard Frampton**, equipment operator, Bedford garage; **Diane Govi**, clerk-specialist, Motor Carrier Services; **David Harms**, equipment operator, Marshalltown garage; **Joseph Kilburg**, equipment operator, Dubuque garage; **William Kuntz**, equipment operator, Burlington garage; **Rob Strickler**, equipment operator, Grimes garage; **Ryan Sundine**, equipment operator, Boone garage; **Todd Tielbur**, equipment operator, Grimes garage; **Joshua Tostlebe**, management analyst 1, Document Services; **Lori Wilmes**, accountant 3, Finance

### Promotions

**Steve Banks**, from right-of-way agent 2, Right-of-Way, to executive officer 2, Rail Transportation; **Sandra Byers**, from secretary 1, Dyersville field staff, to secretary 2, District 6 Office; **Joseph Colman**, from motor vehicle officer to motor vehicle sergeant, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Robert Cornelis**, from design technician to design technician specialist, Design; **Thomas Doran**, from equipment operator to mechanic, Ames garage; **Daniel Gohlinghorst**, from motor vehicle officer to motor vehicle sergeant, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Clayton Henningsen**, from assistant survey party chief to survey party chief, Design; **Kirk Johnson**, from construction technician to construction technician senior, Cherokee construction; **William Kaller**, construction technician, Ottumwa construction, to construction technician senior, Chariton construction; **Nora Lind**, from construction technician, Ottumwa construction, to engineering operations technician, Fairfield field staff; **Dan Miner**, from equipment operator, Grimes garage, to materials technician 3, District 1 materials; **J. Chris Moline**, from motor vehicle officer to motor vehicle sergeant, Motor Vehicle Enforcement;

**Russell Neely**, from equipment operator to mechanic, Williams garage; **Gene Pavelka**, from construction technician to construction technician senior, Britt construction; **Gregory Tue**, from construction technician to construction technician senior, Britt construction; **Terry Weinfurtner**, from equipment operator, Council Bluffs-south garage, to garage operations assistant, Council Bluffs-north garage; **David Widick**, from management analyst 4, Traffic and Safety, to public service executive, Right-of-Way.

### Transfers

**Donna Banker**, accounting technician 3, transfer within Finance; **Thad Bloom**, equipment operator, Highway Helper to Carlisle garage; **Chase Colton**, materials technician 3, Materials, to management analyst 1, Document Services; **Richard Crawley**, equipment operator, transfer within Highway Helper; **David Younie**, right-of-way agent 4, transfer within Right-of-Way

### Retirements

**Butch Bowers**, maintenance repairer, Document Services; **Robert Conyers**, highway maintenance supervisor, Le Mars garage; **Roger Gould**, transportation engineer specialist, Highway Division; **Valerie Hunter**, executive officer 1, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **LeRoy Johnson**, equipment operator, Hanlontown garage; **Kim Kammerer**, management analyst 3, Maintenance; **Richard Kautz**, public service executive 6, District 6; **Melvin Tesch**, equipment operator, Spencer garage; **Joseph Villa**, equipment operator, West Union garage

## Cottrell, continued from page 12

While Cottrell seemed relatively nonchalant about the treatments he was about to receive, in the back of his mind he knew this new procedure was a last resort and could be fatal. He described the basic premise of the treatment as replacing all the blood in his body in an hour. Prior to each transfusion, Cottrell endured five to six hours in the infusion center while drugs were administered to prevent antibodies from growing back at a cellular level. He said his blood was then extracted from him and put through a centrifuge to extract all the natural plasma, which was then replaced with artificial plasma. The "clean" blood was then put back inside his body.

"My blood had developed antibodies to Hiram that would have doomed the transplant," said Cottrell. "I had a great deal of trust in the doctors at the Mayo Clinic. They developed this technique and traveled the world teaching it to others. Although several of the transplant patients undergoing the same treatment didn't tolerate it well, I became the poster child. I ended up with 17 treatments in all, 5 before and 12 after surgery. They said no one had ever done as well as I did."

On Aug. 23, 2006, Cottrell received his third kidney transplant. "Even on the day of the transplant the doctors said it was questionable that we could get it done," said Cottrell. "I had a blood treatment in the morning, we went into surgery at 3 p.m. and I was done about 8:30 p.m. By 1 a.m. the next morning Cottrell was beginning to wake up, several hours before he was expected to regain consciousness. "I was off the respirator early and was up and

walking in 24 hours," said Cottrell. "This was a good thing because there were tornados and we had to go to a tornado shelter."

In mid-September the Cottrells returned to their home in Boone. With more anti-rejection treatments and a bout with diabetes brought on by those treatments, Cottrell recovered slowly, but surely.

"While I was off work I got a few more things done around the house and had lots of help from friends," said Cottrell. "Cathy tried to make sure I didn't over do it."

On Jan. 12, 2007, Cottrell returned to the DOT after more than 18 months away from the agency. He said. "I've learned so much through all of this. I believe that God has a purpose and future for me. I hope to live my life and remind others that sometimes you need to stop rushing around and simply look and listen. That means being patient and waiting, something that's not easy to do. I also need to live my life on purpose, not just to mark or manage time, but to live wide awake to take notice of what is going on. I'm convinced the time I spent waiting taught me that the journey is at least as important as the destination. I spent a lot of time waiting, resting and healing during time in Rochester and at home this last number of months and God taught me a lot during that time, like how much I appreciate my co-workers. My time off of work was more than expected, but thanks to the generosity of my fellow DOTers, I only missed one paycheck in the entire 21 weeks that I was off. Even if they weren't full paychecks, there was always the reminder that someone cared enough to help."

# 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**

recycled paper

**On the cover: March roared in with severe winter weather that virtually shut down the western two-thirds of the state.**

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# Diggin' it in Muscatine



**F**ar from your typical project, the reconstruction of U.S. 61 between Muscatine and Burlington unearthed a wealth of information on the inhabitants living along the Mississippi River long ago. The site, referred to by local people as Eisele Hill, is in an area known to archeologists as the "McNeal Fan," an alluvial fan where sediment from the Mississippi River and deposits from the surrounding bluffs created a layered historical account waiting to be uncovered. As the name suggests, an alluvial fan contains layers of earth fanned out over each other, but one layer is not necessarily completely covered by the next. Because of the alluvial fan configuration, it is meticulous work to

determine the time period of the treasures contained in the layers of earth. The DOT hired Bear Creek Archeology, Inc. of Cresco to excavate the site. Bear Creek uncovered layer upon layer of historically relevant artifacts. Working through a very wet, muddy summer in 1998, the archeologists painstakingly worked through the site to uncover artifacts in an upper layer from the Early Woodland Period (approximately 2,500 years ago) and then remnants of a village from the Middle Archaic Period (up to 7,500 years ago).

From the Early Woodland Period, several pottery shards were found. Modern technology is able to use the pieces to project how the entire piece might have looked. The people of this

time period ground grain with stones and fashioned arrowheads and other tools from rocks.

The village uncovered below the Early Woodland Period layers suggests lodge-type houses and several pits used for cooking, garbage disposal, tool making, and other daily tasks. Joe Thompson of Bear Creek Archeology explains that exciting finds kept the excavation crews going through rough weather conditions. "Evidence of house locations from the Early Woodland and Archaic periods had never been found layered in this way in Iowa prior to this find. Also unique about this site was the evidence of seven or eight houses from the Archaic Period apparently centered around a common area. This suggests that several people, maybe dozens, occupied the area at one time. Again, this is something not found previously in Iowa for this time period."

A display of artifacts from the Eisele Hill excavation was created by Muscatine Art Center Registrar Virginia Cooper, Receptionist Pat Schaapveld and volunteers. The display not only showcased the artifacts, but included a model of how the village may have looked. The display ended March 31, but the artifacts are the permanent property of the Office of the State Archaeologist at the University of Iowa.



*A museum recreation of the early Archaic village at Eisele Hill*