

# JULY/AUGUST 2011 **INSIDE**



*Interstate 29 north of Omaha, Neb., June 15  
© Image copyright Larry Geiger*

## **What's INSIDE**

**Big Muddy flooding • 3**

**Ticketing begins for Iowa's texting ban • 5**

**Moving forward in a resource-restricted reality • 6 | QR codes - an easy way to share information • 7**

**Rest area recycling • 8 | Earth Day can be any day • 9**

**International Roadcheck held June 7-9 • 10 | Law Enforcement Torch Run • 11**

**Iowa DOT health and wellness initiatives • 12 | Nutrition Notes • 13**

**Iowa's scenic and heritage byways get new signs • 20**



# PAUL'S PERSPECTIVE

DIRECTOR PAUL TROMBINO III, P.E.

## Iowa DOT flood response and farewell to a hero

On May 27, 2011, the Missouri River flows began to increase beyond anything we could imagine and impact the lives of thousands of Iowans and disrupt commerce across the Midwest. The Iowa DOT responded during May, June, and July by helping countless communities and people to deal with the impacts of the flooding. Unfortunately, we are in August and we have yet to complete the overall mission.

We have closed approximately 60 miles of roads including parts of interstates 29 and 680, conducted six emergency contracts to date, documented 40,000 plus person-hours in flood response activities, and have expended close to \$8 million. The department's 511 traveler information website has received 576,608 visits from June 1 through July 27 (during this same period in 2010, 511 received 28,262 visits), the Google flood map has been viewed 2,085,178 times since June 8, and the temporary flood-related road information call center handled 33,624 calls before being deactivated July 12.

The Iowa DOT has always risen to emergency response situations and the Missouri River flooding of 2011 has shown again the fortitude, creativity and just plain grit and determination the people of Iowa DOT have when it comes to emergency response. There is still much work to do as we approach the process of assessing damage and begin making necessary repairs. Our time line to get many of the needed repairs completed will be tight with fall and winter on the horizon. For an organization to respond to this broad an emergency issue requires an "all-hands-on-deck" effort and you have all done it well. Thank you for your efforts; Iowa DOT's public service and professionalism always beam brightly no matter the issue.

Recently, I had the opportunity to attend the "Celebration of Life" for Robert Briggs, a former District 5 employee who recently passed away from injuries received while serving in Iraq with the National Guard 224th Combat Engineers. His obituary is in this edition of INSIDE, and I encourage you to read it. The celebration for Bob was in Washington, Iowa at the English River Outfitters recreational area for veterans. I never had the chance to meet Bob, but feel touched by him and his wonderful family. On behalf of the Governor, Lt. Governor and DOT, I provided a flag that was flown at the State Capitol to honor Bob's service. We all get caught up in the many items of our daily lives both personally and professionally but, sometimes, life provides you beautiful perspective on the journey. The tribute to Bob, his dedication to his country and his family, and seeing the strength of his wife, Michelle, was special. Please take a moment during your day to provide a silent thought for Bob and his family.

Please be safe in all that you do.

# Big Muddy flooding

**H**istoric flooding along the Missouri's 384.6-mile course past eastern Nebraska — including parts of South Dakota, Iowa and Missouri — is washing across an estimated hundreds of thousands of acres of farmland, swamping rural homes, overflowing highways, and threatening cities, railroads, power plants and airports.

According to the National Weather Service, during the last half of May, the upper Missouri River Basin received nearly a year's worth of rainfall. In addition, the estimated snowmelt runoff was 212 percent of normal across the upper portion of the river system. These conditions resulted in Missouri River Basin reservoirs across eastern Montana and the Dakotas nearing their maximum levels. Record releases have continued at Gavin's Point dam located to the west of Yankton, S.D. Water releases were increased to 150,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) beginning Tuesday, June 14, and increased again to 160,000 cfs Thursday, June 23. As a point of reference, a release rate of 150,000 cfs would fill the dimensions of a football field 156 feet deep in one minute. The previous high release at Gavin's Point was 70,000 cfs in 1997.

Since the flooding event did have some advance warning, the Iowa DOT began preparations long before the water topped the banks of the Missouri River from Sioux City south into Missouri. In early June, the Iowa DOT began preparing for what has become the worst Missouri River flooding in recorded history.

## Preparing for the inevitable



*Iowa National Guard troops assisted with installation of flood mitigation along northbound I-29 near Hamburg. The large barrier is filled with sand using an earthmover, eliminating the need for individual sandbags.*

Equipment and supplies were packed up and moved to higher ground from the garages at Pacific Junction and Council Bluffs-north, as well as the weigh scales on Interstate 29 in Harrison and Fremont counties. The Onawa rest areas were closed June 22 to serve as a materials storage area for flood mitigation efforts along I-29 near Blencoe and U.S. 30 near Missouri Valley. DOT emergency managers held daily strategy sessions to set the course for a long and drawn out flood event.

Travel in the area became increasingly more difficult as major roads were closed and are expected to remain that way for several weeks. The Office of Multimedia Services put out a call for all hands on deck as the office activated a call center June 11 to assist travelers. Volunteers from a variety of Iowa DOT offices operated phones from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. to route travelers around closures on I-29 and I-680 in and north of Council Bluffs, I-29 in southern Iowa and south into Missouri and Iowa 2 at Nebraska City.

Western Iowa maintenance employees worked long hours hauling material for sandbag efforts and did all they could to mitigate flooding on Iowa's highway system. Mitigation efforts on I-680 were successful in mid-June, allowing a section of the previously closed roadway to reopen, making the connection for travelers from Sioux City to Council Bluffs much easier.

**Thank you to all Iowa DOT employees who have assisted in the flood efforts. While the geographic range of the impacted area is relatively small, the impact is being felt around the country.**



*Hauling giant sandbags to U.S. 77 and Wesley Parkway in Sioux City*

*Big Muddy flooding, continued on page 4*

*Big Muddy flooding, continued from page 3*

## Flooding impacts are expected to last for months.



*Two vehicles were swept into the flooded right of way.*



*Velocity of the water forces a huge breach in the levee near Hamburg June 13.*



*Flood waters threaten Hamburg, Iowa.  
© Image copyright Larry Geiger*



*This photo of the Interstate 29 and Iowa 2 interchange was taken June 15.  
© Image copyright Larry Geiger*



*A rural homeowner took every measure possible to save home and property.  
© Image copyright Larry Geiger*



*Iowa DOT flood mitigation efforts along I-29 near Blencoe attempt to keep the river off the roadway.*

# Ticketing begins for Iowa's texting ban



**E**ffective July 1, Iowa drivers will pay the price for texting while driving – and we're not talking about overage charges. Ticketing has begun for the law enacted last year banning all drivers from text messaging while driving, and further restricting the use of cell phones and other hand-

held electronic communication and entertainment devices, such as iPods, by novice drivers.

## For adults

For drivers age 18 and older with unrestricted licenses, the new law makes it illegal to read or write text messages while operating a motor vehicle, except when the vehicle is parked and off the traveled portion of the roadway. While not recommended, adults are not restricted from talking on cell phones while driving or from using other handheld electronic devices.

This law is considered "secondary enforcement" for adults, which means a law enforcement officer must suspect another law is being broken to stop an adult driver who may be texting. A violation of the texting law is not considered a moving violation for an adult driver with a full license. It is a simple misdemeanor punishable by a fine of \$30, plus a \$10.50 criminal surcharge and \$60 in court costs, totaling **\$100.50**.

## For novice drivers

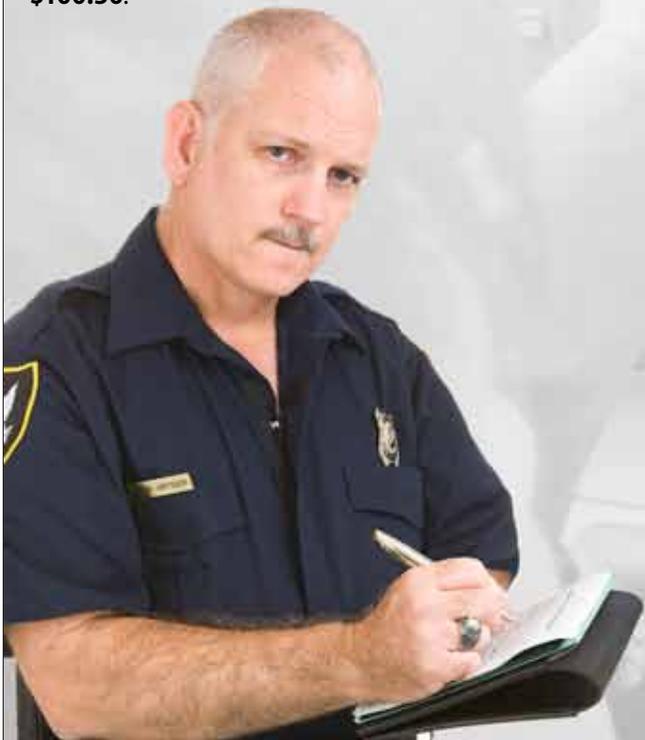
The law is quite different for drivers with restricted licenses. Drivers operating under an instruction permit, minor school license, intermediate license or license issued to teens not attending school are prohibited from using any electronic communication or entertainment device while driving, including cell phones and MP3 players, for any reason to talk, text or listen to music. This law is "primary enforcement" for holders of these types of licenses, which means a law enforcement officer can stop a young driver if a cell phone or other device is being used and no other laws are being broken.

While the violation itself is not a moving violation, it is a violation of the restrictions of the license, so the teen risks losing driving privileges for 30 days for the first violation. If convicted, the fine is \$50, plus a \$17.50 criminal surcharge and \$60 in court costs, totaling **\$127.50**.

## Seat belt use

Another highway safety law requires all drivers and passengers age 18 and under to be restrained in a vehicle safety belt, car seat or booster seat, depending on the age of the child. A person convicted of violating the Safety Belts and Safety Harnesses law is guilty of a simple misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of \$50, plus a \$17.50 surcharge and \$60 in court costs, totaling **\$127.50**.

A driver not ensuring the proper securing of all children in the vehicle is in violation of the Child Restraint Devices law. This simple misdemeanor is punishable by a fine of \$100, plus a \$35 surcharge and \$60 in court costs, totaling **\$195**.



# Moving forward in a resource-restricted reality

Practical solutions to everyday issues get more difficult to find when resources are low. To assist county engineers connect and share ideas, the Iowa DOT's Research and Technology Bureau recently hosted county engineers, staff from Iowa DOT's district offices and Office of Local Systems, as well as Federal Highway Administration officials for a one-day discussion about practical solutions to maintaining Iowa's county road systems.

Iowa's 99 counties have jurisdiction over the 90,004-mile Secondary Road System, nearly 80 percent of all roads in Iowa. With a wide range of county issues related to population, political climate and other factors, the 23 county engineers in attendance had a lot to talk about. Just a few topics for the day ranged from personnel issues to replacing bridges with culverts to gaining public support for controversial projects. The day began with presentations from a few county engineers, and then moved to a more open information-sharing session after lunch.

"This meeting provides the opportunity to brainstorm ideas on how to do more with less," said Brian Moore, Wapello County engineer. "Some ideas are general, others are more specific. It is nice to hear what has worked for others and weigh the potential success for my county."

Brian Keierleber, Buchanan County engineer, said, "The meeting is all about improving how we provide existing services with fewer resources. The focus is purely on methods and technologies. The other meetings we as county engineers attend are more rules and regulations oriented. This is a practical session where we can share ideas on day-to-day operations. New ideas are always helpful."

Aside from the engineering aspects being shared, Brad Skinner from Page and Montgomery counties presented his experience in gaining public buy-in for rural county road changes, including returning some seal-coated roads back to gravel. Skinner said the keys to success include:

- Have a logical strategy.
- Show people the logic behind the decisions (his area used data-driven rating system for county roads).
- Give the public an opportunity to provide input and receive the input with an open mind. He said people perceive they are being treated fairly when someone listens to them and they see that the county takes input seriously.



*Black Hawk County Assistant Engineer Nick Amelon shares information about his county's experience with bridge work.*

- Schedule periodic reviews of the road system because things change over time. Skinner noted that businesses come and go. His example was that a very large wind energy company moved in and needed a good road system, causing him to change the way he approached certain issues.
- Use all the resources available to you. Skinner especially noted the ability to connect with DOT research on low-cost solutions now underway.

Mark Dunn, from the Research and Technology Bureau, summed up the event, "Overall, this was a very successful meeting. The county engineers were able to discuss many of the issues that they deal with on a day-to-day basis and identified several possible research projects that may help them address those issues. I will be taking a few of the top project ideas to the Iowa Highway Research Board to see if we can fund them in the coming months. There was support for holding this meeting on a more regular basis so we will try to make this an annual event."

## QR codes - an easy way to share information

**H**ave you noticed a subtle change in the advertising you receive in the mail or the sale flyers in the Sunday newspaper? Look closely at the packaging on some of the products you buy and you may find a small image that looks similar to a bar code used by retailers to track inventory. The main difference is that these new "quick response" or QR codes can hold and potentially share much more information.

Traditional bar codes are linear and can hold up to 20 numerical digits. QR codes are designed as a two-dimensional matrix, allowing thousands of alphanumeric character combinations. Product marketers are using the codes to include links to everything from company contact information to recipes.

The Iowa DOT's Office of Multimedia Services is exploring ways in which QR codes can be used to easily share information with the public. Cherice Ogg, leader of the Iowa DOT's Web team, said, "Anyone with a smart phone and a free barcode scanning application can read a QR code. The information contained in the code can be almost anything, from someone's e-mail address to a Web address that can directly connect you to the intended website. Once you are aware of QR codes, you start to see them everywhere."

QR codes were developed by a subsidiary of the Toyota company in Japan more than a decade ago, but are just starting to catch on in the United States. While "QR code" is a registered trademark of the company, it has elected to encourage use of the technology as a free information-sharing tool.

Google's mobile Android operating system, Blackberry and Apple-based devices can all be equipped to read QR codes by downloading a free application. Generating a QR code is almost as easy as reading one, with many free applications available on the Internet. Ogg said, "Our office is planning to include a QR code on new signs at rest areas promoting a pilot recycling project. The QR code provides the e-mail address of the project manager for the pilot project



### Give it a try ▲

Download a free quick reference (QR) scanner application from the market/store on your smartphone and take a picture of the square code above.

to easily gather public input. We're also planning to use the codes as a way to share delegate contact information at an upcoming conference in August."

While the use of QR codes is still a bit of a novelty, Ogg expects them to be woven into the fabric of our "plugged in" world very quickly. "QR codes are such a simple, cost-effective tool to share information. We can see dozens of uses in the future."

*(Editor's note: See the March 2011 edition of INSIDE for an article about how QR codes are being used in Iowa City to assist transit riders.)*

## Rest area recycling

**T**ravelers stopping at eight central Iowa interstate rest areas can now recycle aluminum cans and plastic and glass bottles by placing them in new recycling containers conveniently located at these facilities.

In June, the Iowa DOT kicked off a year-long pilot project, Iowa Recycles on the Road, at rest areas located near Ankeny, Mitchellville, Story City and Waukee.

"More than 2.8 million people stop at these eight rest areas annually and many of them have beverage containers in their vehicles they would like to recycle. This pilot project will provide the traveling public with convenient recycling containers to collect them," explained Steve McMenam, Iowa DOT rest area administrator.

Additional goals for the pilot project include: increased public awareness of the environmental benefits of recycling beverage containers; reinforcement of the traveling public's established household patterns of recycling and shared responsibility in litter prevention and in keeping Iowa beautiful for all visitors to enjoy.

The comingled beverage containers collected at the rest areas will be transported by Waste Management of Iowa to the International Paper Co. in Des Moines, a regional material recovery facility. At this facility, the aluminum cans and glass and plastic bottles will be processed and shipped to end users, who will use the materials to manufacture new beverage containers and other recycled products.

"We anticipate a tremendous response from the traveling public to the recycling pilot project. The experience will also help the Iowa DOT identify best management practices for determining future expansion plans of the recycling effort to 32 additional Iowa interstate rest areas that serve 13.2 million people annually," stated McMenam.

McMenamin says while the program is expected to be popular, it will not generate any revenue for the Iowa DOT. "There is a fee charged for the collection of these materials. Any funds recovered from recycling will be used to pay collection costs."

In addition to the Iowa DOT, project partners include the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' Solid Waste Alternatives Program, Keep Iowa Beautiful and Waste Management of Iowa.



*Kamryn Ogg recycles her Bug Juice bottle at the Story City southbound I-35 rest area.*



## Earth Day can be any day

**A**pril 22, Earth Day, was first recognized in 1970 as a day to reflect and raise awareness and appreciation of the natural environment. In the last 41 years, Earth Day has also come to be a day of service for millions of people around the world.

While the weather in Iowa did not cooperate to make April 22 a good outdoor service day at Iowa DOT locations, several offices did muster the troops to gather recycled materials, clean up and tend to DOT grounds at various times during April and May.

On Monday, April 25, a team of nine employees from the Motor Vehicle Division picked up trash around the Ankeny facility. Event organizer Phou Baccam said, "Basically, we picked up paper and plastic around the facility, stuff that had been collecting over the winter."



*(Front row, from left) Billie Hoch, Jeanne Bornand, Tonya Bishop; (middle row, from left) Diane Martin, Bridgette Adams; (back row, from left) Donald Sharr, Alex Jansen, Phou Baccam (Not pictured, Julie Pike)*

In Ames, the DOT's Green Team organized a recycling day for computers and other electronics. Mary Kay Solberg, Green Team member from the Office of Location and Environment, had the contacts to make the event happen. Nearly 100 employees brought in a total of 211 items weighing 4,311 pounds for recycling. The recycling

of these items kept 55 pounds of hazardous material out of the landfill, according to the Iowa Waste Exchange. Solberg said, "I work with the Iowa Waste Exchange quite a bit. When I approached them about this project, they thought it was a great idea and we were able to join our recycling event with one already planned at the state capitol," said Solberg. Collection of computers, monitors and other electronics at the Iowa DOT outpaced the capitol event and included items brought in by Iowa State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Veterinary Services Laboratory employees.

"We took about anything that can be recycled instead of sending it to a landfill," said Solberg. The event went so well that organizers are already making plans for Earth Day 2012. She said, "I would like to thank all the employees who brought in items to recycle and those who helped at the event, especially Burt Chaska from the Materials lab who loaded the trucks for us at the end of the day."

Once the weather cooperated, several central complex employees raked leaves, trimmed brush, and cleaned and replanted green spaces around the buildings. Lee Hammer, director of the Office of Support Services, said, "I think it is important for employees to own a piece of the place where they work. By planting flowers, mulching and picking up the grounds, employees gain a sense of pride about where they work and it helps them feel good about being here."



*Office of Railroad Transportation Director Tamara Nicholson (left) and Rail Office employee Diane McCauley beautify the flower beds in the central complex courtyard.*

## International Roadcheck held June 7-9

The Iowa DOT's Office of Motor Vehicle Enforcement joined the Iowa State Patrol and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration in the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance's (CVSA) Roadcheck 2011 June 7-9. The agencies worked in Iowa as part of the 24th annual international truck and motor coach safety and security event consisting of 72 continuous hours of enforcement activity throughout Canada, Mexico and the United States.

Roadcheck is the largest targeted enforcement program on commercial vehicles in the world, with approximately 14 trucks or buses being inspected, on average, every minute from Canada to Mexico during Roadcheck.

Each year, approximately 10,000 CVSA-certified local, state, provincial and federal inspectors at 1,500 locations across North America perform the truck and bus inspections.

During the 2011 Roadcheck event, Iowa MV officers conducted 918 inspections and found 2,418 violations. Of the vehicles inspected, 166 were taken out of service for violations ranging from brake issues to bad tires to fuel system problems. Driver log books and other areas of driver responsibility were examined and 32 unqualified drivers were placed out of service, mostly for hours of service violations.

While the Roadcheck event draws attention to motor carrier inspections, the Iowa DOT's motor vehicle officers continually conduct commercial driver/vehicle inspections at locations throughout the state.



## Law Enforcement Torch Run

**“Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt.”**  
 – Special Olympics oath

**T**hursday, May 26, was a beautiful day all around for 19 Motor Vehicle Division employees to take part in the annual Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) to support Special Olympics Iowa. The torch began its journey at Nolan Plaza in Des Moines and continued on U.S. 69 to the opening ceremony in Ames. Iowa DOT employees received the torch from just west of Elkhart and passed it on south of Huxley.

Motor Vehicle Division Director Mark Lowe believes supporting Iowa DOT employee involvement with Special Olympics Iowa reinforces the DOT’s great tradition of helping people, both in our day-to-day work and charitable activities. He said, “Special Olympics Iowa has long been an important cause for the law enforcement community, and as both a member of that community through the DOT’s Office of Motor Vehicle Enforcement and as a partner with so many other members of that community, the Law Enforcement Torch Run is a great way to foster relationships in the law enforcement community and continue the helping tradition by raising funds and awareness for Special Olympics Iowa. I also enjoy the opportunity to spend time with our Motor Vehicle Enforcement officers who participate.”

Lowe continued that the benefits he receives are far more than professional networking, “As I always say when it comes to Special Olympics, I’ve always felt blessed to be physically active, and the Law Enforcement Torch Run is a great opportunity to build support for special needs athletes and help them share in that blessing. Special Olympics Iowa empowers individuals with intellectual disabilities to become physically fit, productive and respected members of society through sports training and competition.”

While LETR is a national effort, Iowa law enforcement began participating in 1987. Since that time, LETR has evolved into the largest grassroots fundraiser for Special Olympics Iowa. In addition to the Final Leg Run, LETR events include statewide Polar Plunges, Cop on Top activities, Tip a Cop events, T-shirt sales, truck convoys, car shows, dances, auctions and more. In 2009, the Iowa Law Enforcement Torch Run events raised more than \$420,000 to support Special Olympics.



*Iowa DOT LETR participants (from left) Dan Nelson, Blake Wittrock, Darren Reid, Kevin Steele, Joe Farnsworth, Joe Colman, Kim Maxwell, James Flattery, Steve Warner, Cindy Baker, Terry Aldridge, Marina Raku, Chris Boswell, Jason Heintz, Mark Lowe, Rod Rhiner*



*Iowa DOT motor vehicle officers run the torch from Elkhart to Huxley.*





HyVee.

# Nutrition Notes

*with Amy Clark*



## Ask Amy

The Iowa DOT is partnering with the Lincoln Center Hy-Vee in Ames to start a new column in INSIDE related to nutrition and health. Each month Amy Clark, a registered dietitian from Hy-Vee, will provide information on various health and nutrition topics.

Amy can't do this alone. She has asked for employee input about your interests related to wellness, health and nutrition. **If you have a topic idea for Amy, please either use the form to the right and mail it via local mail to Tracey Bramble, Office of Multimedia Services in Ames, or e-mail your ideas to [tracey.bramble@dot.iowa.gov](mailto:tracey.bramble@dot.iowa.gov).**

Thanks and be well.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Work location/office \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Description of topic idea/question \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Sauk Rail Trail now open

The Sauk Rail Trail celebrated its grand opening Saturday, June 11, with an inaugural Ride the Rail bicycle ride. Iowa DOT Director Paul Trombino was on hand to help with the initial ribbon cutting ceremony in Carroll and then he rode the trail later in the day. Other ribbon cutting ceremonies were held in each of the five communities along the trail. After Carroll the trail goes to Maple River, Breda, Carnarvon and Lake View.

At the inaugural ride, organizations welcomed riders with a variety of amenities. The Breda Savings Bank served a complimentary lunch to riders at the Breda shelter house. Representatives from Trees Forever, a nonprofit organization that plants and cares for natural areas, were on hand to showcase sketches showing proposed enhancements along the trail that are the result of a local visioning project in Breda, Carnarvon and Lake View. Lakeshore Cyclery of Storm Lake provided a support vehicle along the route and made generous donations for prize drawings held at each of the five community ribbon cutting ceremonies.

Paving on the 33-mile recreational trail from south of Carroll to Lake View was completed last fall and work has resumed this spring to ensure that final touches were completed in time to welcome riders to the area this summer.



DOT Director Paul Trombino (left) takes a look at a recumbent bike set to hit the new trail.

# Family happenings

## Motor Vehicle Division

Theresa Kern



### Operations and Finance

Sheri Anderson

**Craig Fink**, training specialist 2 in the Office of Employee Services, and his wife, Nancy, are the proud parents of a baby boy. Charles Lawrence was born March 16 weighing 7 pounds, 14 ounces and measuring 19 inches long. Baby Charlie was welcomed home by big sisters Sydney, 12, Olivia, 10, and



**Brandy Horsley**, clerk specialist in the Office of Vehicle Services, is proud to announce the birth of her daughter Saylor Bracey. Baby Saylor was born March 24, 2011, weighed 6 pounds, 1 ounce, and measured 19.75 inches long. Big sister Morgan, 12, is excited to have a little sister and

## District 3



Marybeth Banta

Congratulations to Cayla and **Jared Raymer**, proud parents of a baby girl. Jenna Karyl Raymer, born May 9, weighed 7 pounds, 7 ounces and measured 19 inches long. Jenna was welcomed home by big sister Brooke. Jared is a construction technician at the Sioux City construction office. Jenna's uncle **John Raymer** is an equipment operator senior at the Sioux City Hamilton Shop.



Maggie, 6, plus big brother Joshua, 20 months.

**Tiffany Marlow**, human resource associate in the Office of Employee Services, and her husband, Tony, welcomed a new baby boy. Greyson Anthony was born April 18 at 8:41 p.m. weighing 8 pounds, 7 ounces, and measuring 19.5 inches long. Three-year-old sister Emerson loves her new baby brother.



loves to help out.

Chad and **Jessica Brakeman** welcomed baby girl, Kennedy Ann Brakeman, Nov. 4, 2010, at 2 p.m. She weighed 6 pounds, 8 ounces and measured 17.75 inches long. Mommy Jessica is a driver's license clerk senior at the Davenport DL station. Kennedy joins big brother Peyton, 5, and big sister Autumn, 9, at home who are very excited to have a baby sister!

## Design



Judy Lensing

**Steve Messler**, design technician specialist, and his wife, Megan, welcomed Samson Nerak Messler, June 13, weighing 7 pounds, 12 ounces, and measuring 20 inches. Samson was welcomed home by siblings Jaxon, 7,

*Family happenings, continued on page 15*

**Family happenings,**  
continued from page 14

## Location and Environment

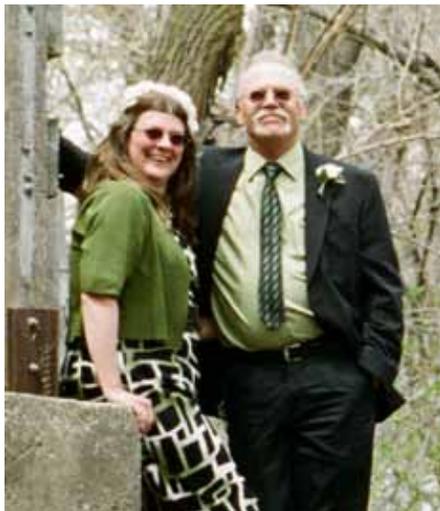
Susie McCullough



**Brad Hofer**, transportation engineer manager, and his wife, Tara, are the proud parents of a baby boy. Chase Bradley was born June 14 weighing 8 pounds and measuring 21 inches long. Congratulations to the Hofer family!

## Construction

Nancy McMenamin



**Rhonda Andresen**, engineering technician senior, and Michael Pecenka were married May 4 at Union Grove State Park. Congratulations to the Pecenkas!

## In memory



**Robert William Briggs**, 42, of Hillsboro, formerly of Keokuk, passed away Tuesday, June 28, in Washington County from injuries received April 16, 2005, while serving his country in Iraq. Briggs, a Purple Heart Award recipient for his injuries, was employed by the Iowa DOT from November 1999 to April 2005. He served with the National Guard 224th Combat Engineers Co. C in Keokuk and Mount Pleasant from September 1991 to December 2007 when he was retired due to injuries sustained in Iraq.

Briggs was born Jan. 14, 1969, in Keokuk, to Bob and Sandra (Steele) Briggs. He enjoyed staying active by hunting, fishing, skiing, golfing and helping other veterans and their families. Briggs enjoyed spending time with his family and friends, meeting new people and experiencing new challenges. He was in the first GIVE (Golf for Injured Veterans Everywhere) class in Riverside; a member of the VFW Post 1797; American Legion Post 94; an advocate for the Wounded Warrior Project and a life time member of AM Vets. He was also the vice president of English River Outfitters in Washington, an organization "Designed by Veterans for Veterans" that offers a safe, no-cost outdoor

experience with other veterans to help promote healing and closure. Briggs was very passionate about helping other veterans and their families. He and his wife spent many hours, and traveled extensively, to bring about the necessary changes to legislation on both the local and federal levels in support of veterans and both were instrumental in the development of the recently passed "Caregiver Bill" and the passing of the "Iowa Injured Veterans Grant," of which he was very proud.

Briggs was loved by many and has touched every person he met, never meeting a stranger and always offering his love and support to others. He was also extremely proud of his Native American heritage.

He is survived by his wife, Michelle, and their children, Ashlea, 11, and Cody, 7; his parents; sister, Brenda (Terry) Best and their children Chelsi, Lydia, Caleb, Tiffany, Sean, Alexis and Alex; and many other family members.

**James F. Forch**, 69, of Sioux Falls, S.D., formerly of Sioux City, passed away Tuesday, June 21, at his residence in Sioux Falls, comforted by his family.

Forch was born Oct. 12, 1941, in Anthon, the son of Albert R. and Margaret B. (Leahy) Forch. He graduated from Anthon High School in 1960 and was drafted by the U.S. Army in 1963, being honorably discharged in 1965.

He married Valta Oline Williams Nov. 27, 1968, in Dallas, Texas. They moved to Anthon in 1968, and to Sioux City in 1970. Forch was employed with for the Iowa DOT for 32 years, most recently as an equipment operator senior in the Sioux City- Leeds shop, retiring in 2003.

Forch was a member of House of Praise and Word of Life Church in Decatur, Neb., and Sioux City. He was saved in 1979 and baptized Dec. 31, 1979.

*In memory, continued on page 16*

**In memory, continued on page 15**

Forch was a deacon for both churches. He served on the board of directors for Word of Life from 1982 to 2011 and was actively involved with the Gospel Mission for 17 years in Sioux City, as well as the Food Bank of Siouxland.

Forch enjoyed fishing, working with his tractor, watching John Wayne movies and doing carpentry.

Survivors include his wife; daughter, Jill (Matt) Walker of Sioux Falls; granddaughter, Kaitlyn Oline Walker; three sisters, Mary Jo Dicks of Menomonie, Wis., CeCelia (Jim) Karhoff of Anthon and Kay Jane (Jim) Fredericks of Shenandoah; a sister-in-law, Opal Forch of Sioux City; and several nieces and nephews.

**Larry George Schwab**, 71, of Allison, died Sunday, May 22, at Allen Hospital in Waterloo.

Schwab was born Sept. 3, 1939, in rural Black Hawk County, the son of Adam John Henry and Dorothy Nina Barbara (Miller) Schwab. He was baptized Sept. 24, 1939, at the Finchford Church and was confirmed on July 26, 1959, at St. John Lutheran Church in Clarksville. He graduated from Finchford High School in 1957. Schwab was united in marriage to Alice Matilda Pines April 25, 1959. He started in maintenance with the Iowa State Highway Commission (now Iowa DOT) in 1959 and progressed to foreman and supervisor. He retired in 2001.

Schwab thoroughly enjoyed raising purebred Suffolk Sheep and game birds. He really enjoyed showing the Suffolk sheep. He enjoyed collecting toy tractors, especially Minneapolis Moline; attending garage sales and auctions with Alice. He loved being with his children, grandchildren and great grandson.

Schwab is survived by his wife, Alice of Allison; two sons, David (Tori) Schwab of New Hartford; Dale (Lisa) Schwab of Shell Rock; and daughter, Deanne (Roland) Martzahn of Greene; six grandchildren; one great grandchild; one sister; and many nieces and nephews.

## U.S. 18 bridge opens in Spencer



*A ribbon cutting ceremony was held July 2 to officially open the U.S. 18 bridge in Spencer. DOTers Tony Babcock, District 3 Office (cutting the ribbon), and James Sikora (far left), Cherokee construction office, joined local officials for the event.*

Friendship is unnecessary,  
like philosophy, like art ...  
It has no survival value;  
rather it is one of those  
things that give value to  
survival.

C. S. Lewis





IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
**TROPHY CASE**



**Jim Kelly**, compliance officer 1 in Contracts, participated in the Iowa Senior Olympics in June and Iowa Games in July. The Iowa Games celebrated 25 years, and Kelly has competed in the event since the beginning, winning medals in 24 of the 25 competitions. He has participated in the Senior Olympics since he became eligible at age 50.

In this year's Senior Olympics in the 60-64 age group, Kelly received a gold medal in shot put and a bronze in discus. In the Iowa Games he received gold medals in both shot put and discus.

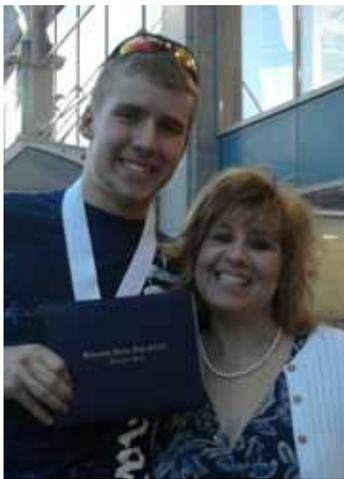


*Erwin Martin, Claude Frazier II and Pete Djordjevic competed in the Dam to Dam Race June 4.*

Three employees from the Carlisle garage participated in the 32nd Dam to Dam race June 4. **Claude Frazier III** finished the 20 kilometer race in 1:56.58, a 9.25-minute average mile. **Pete Djordjevic** completed the race in 1:58.12, a 9.31-minute average mile and **Erwin Martin** crossed the finish line after 2:01.14, a 9.45-minute average mile.

Frazier III finished 1,563rd, Djordjevic finished 1,667th and Martin finished 1,858th out of 7,037 total finishers.

Frazier III is the highway maintenance supervisor, Djordjevic is a highway technician associate and Martin is an equipment operator senior.



**Deanna Smyth-Peters**, utility and access coordinator in the Grimes field office and her son, Trae Smyth, both graduated this year. Deanna graduated from Upper Iowa University with a degree in Public Administration and a minor in Emergency Management and Psychology. Trae graduated from Urbandale High School and is getting ready to take a trip to Indianapolis, Ind. to attend

Lincoln Tech for diesel mechanics. Trae's dad is **Scott Smyth**, electrician in the Des Moines maintenance office.

Rhonda Pecenka, Office of Construction, relayed this story from her friend Jerry in Oklahoma.

## kidisms!

So the other night my grandson Gabe gets very serious and tells me he has a question about Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny.

I sigh, thinking, uh oh ... here it comes ... the big question.

"Yes, Gabe," I answer.

Then he says, "Do you think they know each other?"

I love that he still believes in a magical world.

## Personnel updates

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for April 15 to June 23, 2011

### New hires

**Jared Abbott**, highway technician senior, Sioux City construction; **Michael Abbott**, motor vehicle officer, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Josefina Bartley**, driver's license examiner, Spencer DL station; **Robert Caviness**, motor vehicle officer, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Edward Craig**, motor vehicle officer, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Rita Eichhorst**, materials technician 3, District 1 materials; **Ryan Glade**, motor vehicle officer, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Timothy Horihan**, motor vehicle officer, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Chandler Johnson**, highway technician senior, Des Moines construction; **Justin Mack**, motor vehicle officer, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Timothy McFarland**, motor vehicle officer, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Shanon McDonald**, highway technician, Sioux City-Hamilton garage; **Jacob Sohn**, highway technician senior, Chariton construction; **Brett St. John**, highway technician, Altoona garage; **Paul Trombino III**, DOT director, Director's Office; **Wade Weiss**, transportation engineer manager, Jefferson construction; **Robert Wittkowski**, motor vehicle officer, Motor Vehicle Enforcement

### Promotions

**Travis Adair**, from highway technician, Creston garage to highway technician senior, Creston construction; **Jerry Andregg**, from construction technician to construction technician senior, Manchester construction; **Marshall Berg**, from construction technician assistant to assistant soil party chief, Design; **Marcia Buthmann**, from materials fabrication inspector 1 to materials technician 4, District 4 materials; **Barbara Espeland**, from information technology administrator 3 to transportation division director, Information Technology Division; **Kirk Johnson**, from construction technician senior to engineering technician senior, Cherokee construction; **Brenda Kramer**, from driver's license examiner 2, Des Moines DL station to administrative assistant 2, Cedar Rapids DL station; **Jared Laermans**, from construction technician to construction technician senior, Des Moines construction; **Mark Muxfeldt**, from construction technician assistant to assistant soil party chief, Design; **James Norris**, from highway technician, Mount Ayr garage to highway technician senior, Creston construction; **Benjamin Pasker**, from construction technician to construction technician senior, Manchester construction; **Jason Schroeder**, from highway technician, Davenport garage to highway technician senior, Davenport construction; **Charles Seeland**, from construction technician senior to engineering technician senior, Manchester construction; **Travis Tinken**, from garage operations assistant, Williams garage to engineering technician senior, Rail Transportation; **Cedric Wilkinson**, from construction technician senior to engineering technician senior, Davenport construction

### Transfers

**Angela Bozeman**, driver's license clerk from Iowa City DL station to Cedar Rapids DL station; **Russell Helle**, highway technician, from Manchester garage to Dyersville garage; **Lori Platt**, driver's license clerk, from Davenport DL station to Clinton DL station; **Pamela Tinta**, information technology specialist 2, within Information Technology Division

### Retirements

**Roger Boydston**, environmental specialist senior, Location and Environment; **Robert Huffman**, program planner 3, Motor Vehicle Division; **Carey Lewis**, transportation engineer manager, Manchester construction; **Frederick Mazzella**, environmental specialist senior, Location and Environment; **Jennifer Miller**, driver's license clerk, Iowa City DL station; **Brian Morrissey**, public service executive 6, District 5 Office; **Joseph Reutter**, transportation engineer, Bridges and Structures; **Nancy J. Richardson**, DOT director, Director's Office; **Randall Roethlisberger**, garage operations assistant, Cedar Rapids garage

## Service awards

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for August 2011

### 40 years

**John Chester**, Design

### 35 years

**Carolyn Hait**, Vehicle Services

### 30 years

**Stanley Collins**, Neola garage; **Mark Dolash**, Marshalltown garage; **Dale Sexton**, Cedar Rapids garage; **Jeffrey Tjaden**, Cedar Rapids maintenance

### 25 years

**David Doolittle**, Support Services; **Steven Flockhart**, District 6 Office; **Shirley Morse**, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Charles Shipley**, Red Oak garage

### 20 years

**Renee Holub**, District 6 Office; **Bill Luko**, District 5 maintenance; **Paul Steier**, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Vivian Streit**, Mason City DL station

### 15 years

**Douglas Heeren**, District 6 Office; **Bryan Nedved**, Britt construction

### 10 years

**Kristi Miene**, Sioux City DL station; **Kathi Simenson**, Sioux City DL station

### 5 years

**Timothy Elliott**, Bridges and Structures; **Don Huntrods**, Grimes garage; **Agata Janus**, Design; **Karen Meeks**, Driver Services; **Jason Page**, Charles City garage; **Jed Roe**, Perry garage; **Phillip South**, Finance

## Service awards

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for July 2011

### 30 years

**Don Carter**, Coralville garage; **Ken Depuew**, Decorah garage; **Pamela Houseman**, Vehicle Services; **Colleen Kenkel**, Council Bluffs DL station

### 25 years

**Duane Bunning**, Bridges and Structures; **Brian Cottrell**, Information Technology Division; **Timothy Dunlay**, Bridges and Structures; **Douglas McDonald**, Marshalltown construction; **Michael Pagel**, Des Moines construction; **Kathie Rustad**, District 2 Office; **Kurtis Younkin**, Traffic and Safety

### 20 years

**Nathea Johnson**, Driver Services; **Patricia Schwarz**, Bridges and Structures

### 15 years

**Richard Baker**, Information Technology Division; **Renee Devine**, Ames DL station; **Yanxiao Jia**, Design; **Donna Matulac**, Location and Environment; **Rene' Miller-Bunce**, Cedar Rapids DL station; **Benjamin Sourwine**, Mount Pleasant construction

### 10 years

**Scott Liddell**, District 4 Office

### 5 years

**Melissa Simmons**, Des Moines DL station

## Ducks on the move

DOTers in Ames have been caring for a family of ducks recently. Originally the mother duck nested in the landscaping west of building 5. After the ducklings hatched, employees concerned over their wellbeing coaxed the family across South Fourth Street to a safer location near the river.



# 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 Multimedia Services, at 515-239-1314 or e-mail [tracey.bramble@dot.iowa.gov](mailto:tracey.bramble@dot.iowa.gov).

**Paul Trombino III, P.E.**, Director

**Tracey Bramble**, Multimedia Services, editor  
**Christina Andersen**, Multimedia Services, desktop publisher  
**Printing Staff**, Multimedia Services, printing  
**Keven Arrowsmith**, Multimedia Services, photography



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



**PLEASE RECYCLE THIS ISSUE**

**On the cover:** Another summer of flooding in Iowa. This time the Missouri River is taking a toll on western Iowa.

**July/August I-Spy clue:** New marine life finding its way into western Iowa.

**June I-Spy solution:** Look for the gray gremlin on the front tire of the motorcycle.

Service Area	Correspondent	Phone
District 1 .....	<b>Lori Wilkens</b> , Des Moines .....	515-261-9500
District 2 .....	<b>Lu Mohorne</b> , Mason City .....	641-423-7584
District 3 .....	<b>MaryBeth Banta</b> , Sioux City... ..	712-276-1451
District 4 .....	<b>Marlene Jensen</b> , Atlantic.....	712-243-3355
District 5 .....	<b>Brenda Hadley</b> , Fairfield .....	641-472-6142
District 6 .....	<b>Sandi Byers</b> , Cedar Rapids.....	319-364-0235
Bridges and Structures .....	<b>Judy Whitney</b> , Ames .....	515-233-7917
Construction .....	<b>Nancy McMenamin</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1353
Contracts .....	<b>Peg Muxfeldt</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1422
Design .....	<b>Judy Lensing</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1469
General Counsel.....	<b>Chris Crow</b> , Ames.....	515-239-1509
Information Technology Division .....	<b>Colette Simpson</b> , Ames.....	515-233-7728
Local Systems .....	<b>Gail Nordholm</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1528
Location and Environment .....	<b>Susie McCullough</b> , Ames.....	515-239-1225
Maintenance.....	<b>Cindy Shipley</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1971
Materials.....	<b>Brian Squier</b> , Ames .....	515-233-7915
Modal offices.....	<b>Cathy Mather</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1140
Motor Vehicle Division .....	<b>Diann McMillen</b> , Ankeny .....	515-237-3250
Operations and Finance Division .....	<b>Sheri Anderson</b> , Ames.....	515-239-1340
Research and Technology Bureau.....	<b>Lori Pflughaupt</b> , Ames.....	515-239-1646
Right of Way .....	<b>Tami Bailiff</b> , Ames .....	515-239-1216
Systems Planning .....	<b>Peggy Riecken</b> , Ames.....	515-239-1664
Traffic and Safety .....	<b>Stephanie Anderson</b> , Ames....	515-239-1746
Transportation Data .....	<b>Jodi Clement</b> , Ames.....	515-239-1289

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

# Iowa's scenic and heritage byways get new signs

Uncovering the treasures along Iowa's state and nationally designated scenic byways is getting easier. Larger, more eye-catching signs are currently being installed on these routes. Scenic and heritage byways have been developed to allow visitors the opportunity to travel the state and experience Iowa's natural beauty, history and culture.

Troy Siefert with the Office of Systems Planning says, "The Lincoln Highway between Clinton and Council Bluffs was the first of Iowa's byways to get the new signs. Signs will be installed along the nine other byways by mid-November." The design phase of the project began in 2006, and Siefert secured a \$580,000 federal grant for the signs.

## Iowa's two national scenic byways

### Great River Road National Scenic Byway

Throughout history, the Mississippi River influenced many lives: the Dakota, Chippewa and Hopewell cultures; early French voyagers; African-Americans seeking freedom on the Underground Railroad; and many more. Through its charming river towns and metropolitan cities, historic sites and cultural artifacts, today's Great River Road still links resources, people and history. New byway signage along this route may be installed at a later date.

### Loess Hills National Scenic Byway

The Loess Hills National Scenic Byway weaves through the rugged landscape of windblown silt deposits along the Missouri River Valley. This unique American treasure possesses natural features found only in one other place in the world: the Yellow River Valley of China. Accordingly, the landscape supports many rare plants and animals.

## Iowa's nine scenic and heritage state-designated byways

**Delaware Crossing Scenic Byway** – Delaware County

**Driftless Area Scenic Byway** – Allamakee County

**Glacial Trail Scenic Byway** – O'Brien, Clay, Cherokee and Buena Vista counties

**Grant Wood Scenic Byway** – Jones and Jackson counties

**Historic Hills Scenic Byway** – Wapello, Appanoose, Davis, Van Buren and Lee counties

**Iowa Valley Scenic Byway** – Tama, Benton and Iowa counties

**Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway** - The main route is on or near modern U.S. 30 across Iowa.

**River Bluffs Scenic Byway** – Fayette and Clayton counties

**Western Skies Scenic Byway** – Harrison, Shelby, Audubon and Guthrie counties



Delaware crossing

Image © 2011 Kenneth G. West Jr., all rights reserved



Driftless area overlooking the Mississippi River

Image © 2011 Kenneth G. West Jr., all rights reserved

