

# INSIDE

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2006



## INSIDE INSIDE

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# ONE 2 ONE

WITH DIRECTOR NANCY RICHARDSON

I am a dog person! I grew up with dogs. As an adult I had a beagle for about eight years, followed by a 16-year love affair with a Lhaso Apso named Benji.

Benji died about eight years ago and I have been dog less since. Recently I inherited a three-year-old Shih Tzu named Riley and I have been reminded of all the things I so like about dogs. As we've gotten to know each other these past five months, I've thought a lot about what we can learn from a dog.

1. Actions speak louder than words. Even though he can't speak, I always know what Riley is thinking, whether he's jumping at my knees with his front paws when I come home; dancing frantically at the door; standing by his bowl with pleading eyes and wagging tail; or laying along side me, belly up. There is no mistaking his messages. Words are so easily and often misunderstood in both our personal and work lives. In fact, poor communication is often the cause of problems. Maybe if we said less, and let our actions speak for us, we would encounter fewer problems.

2. Positive feedback encourages good behavior. Riley is a crate dog, so a simple "get in your house" and he runs into his crate and settles in. He learned this by being rewarded with positive feedback whenever he walked into the crate. A scratch behind the ears, a rub of his tummy, or a small dog treat when he does

something good is a great motivator for Riley to do something good again. Positive feedback - whether a simple thank you, a positive comment, recognition of a job well-done among coworkers (like Kudos in Inside) - can be just the incentive we need to keep doing something good.

3. Trust is fundamental to a good relationship. Fact is, Riley has to be a very trusting guy. He trusts that we will feed him, come home at the end of the day, take him outside, give him his allergy pill, take him for walks, get him groomed, and take him to the vet. In return we trust him to be a good boy! Because we trust each other - and live up to the trust we have in each other - the relationship works for both him and us. Sounds like a good model for relationships with people, too!

4. If you treat someone right, they'll be loyal to you. Riley is a very appreciative creature. Because we're good to him and live up to our end of the bargain, he is very loyal to and protective of us. He is always at our side - through thick and thin - and is intent on protecting us from the unknown, like someone at the door, a noise outside, or another dog near our house, all of which will illicit a warning bark. Those with whom we develop mutually respectful and helpful relationships will similarly be there with us in both good and bad times.

5. Don't mess in your own house - you'll have to live in it. Riley will -well, you know - "hold

it" forever in his crate. This same dog that wants outside to do his business every couple hours will hold it for 12 hours, maybe longer, in his crate. The moral for us is to do things right, keep things clean and well done, and don't make "messes" that we then have to live with. Said simply, do the right things the right way, even if it takes extra effort, so we don't have messes in our crates to contend with!

6. Always take time to play. I have never seen a dog that likes toys as much as Riley! His favorites are soft, plush things with a squeak inside. Throw in a rawhide chew bone and you've got a fun time! Riley will chew, squeak, toss and chase for as long as you'll let him. Clearly he understands that old saying about "all work and no play" not being healthy. A good thing for us to remember. We need to find ways to enjoy our time at work - the social aspect of work that I've talked about before - and to find time away from work playing with our own "squeaky toys" in order to refresh.

All this, and more, from a 14-pound Shih Tzu! I'm thinking life might be sweeter if we were more like dogs - if we let our actions speak for us, if we demonstrate our feelings, if we are on our best behavior, if we are trusting and trustworthy, and if we remember to lighten up and have some fun!! How about it, let's go to the dogs together!

By the way, by the time you read this I will have celebrated, or is the right word survived, my first year as DOT director. Thanks to all of you for your help and support; I couldn't do it without you!

*Nancy*

# Conflict of interest policy

Some Iowa DOT employees, while dedicated to their work at the department, also have second incomes outside state government. State employees need to be aware that second jobs might raise issues of conflict of interest with the work done at the DOT or those entities regulated by the department.

A revised conflict of interest policy (PPM 200.03) has recently been put in place to address the proper procedure that officials and employees of the department shall use to obtain consent to sell or lease goods or services to entities that are regulated by the

DOT. The details outlined in the policy are in line with mandates set by the Code of Iowa.

By definition, "sale or lease of goods or services" means the receipt of compensation for providing goods or services. In general terms, the sale or lease of goods or services to entities that are regulated by the department is prohibited in any instance that would cause that sale or lease to affect the official's or employee's duties or work functions, would give the buyer an advantage in working with the department, or would otherwise present a conflict of interest.

Listed in an appendix to PPM 200.03 are entities that are regulated by the DOT. A few examples include motor carriers, consulting firms, highway contractors, motor vehicle and travel trailer dealers, vehicle recyclers, people who move or escort over-dimensional or overweight vehicles, and owners of advertising devices located along primary highways.

According to the policy, if you are an employee or official of the DOT and want to sell or lease goods or services to a regulated entity, you must complete Form 105023 and submit it to the proper authority. The proper authority for most employees is the division director. This form should be submitted for signature at least 20 calendar days prior to the proposed sale or lease. However, there are specific instances when the form is not required because the Director of Transportation has granted blanket consent to employees and officials. The policy lists these specific consents, as well as details about other conflict of interest issues.

"The best advice I can give to a DOT employee who has a private business is to be aware that this policy could apply to them. You should complete the form if there is any question whether or not conflict of interest might be an issue," said Mary Christy, director of the Operations and Finance Division. "That would allow the employee's division director to research the situation and identify any possible conflicts."

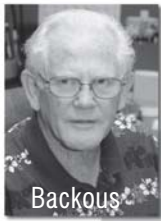
## The Blues online

Are you tired of completing insurance forms? A new Web-based solution may be the answer. Recently Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield and the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) teamed up to produce an electronic enrollment and eligibility system called Blues Enroll.

Blues Enroll will allow you access to your insurance benefit information online with just a few clicks of the mouse. The system will allow you to choose your benefit plan and update your benefits when you have a major life event like a birth or marriage. You may look up your plan benefits anytime from any computer with Internet access.

Kate Murphy, director of the Office of Employee Services (OES), is excited about Web-based access to insurance information. She said, "The ability to personally look up and make changes to your own insurance information is a great benefit for our employees. OES quickly makes the changes once they are submitted on paper, but this online resource will give each of our employees more immediate access to their personal information."

This program was rolled out to OES from DAS in September. Look for more information coming via E-mail on your ability to access the system. For employees with limited Internet access, paper forms will still be made available during the enrollment period coming later this fall.



Backous



Swenson

## Two DOTers celebrate 45 years of service

**D**arwin Backous, Office of Bridges and Structures, celebrates 45 years of service this October. In light of his 45th year, Backous describes his career as a great success. He's fortunate to be one of the few people who truly loves what he does for a living.

"I just love the work itself, detailing and designing culverts, culvert repairs and extensions," said Backous, design technician specialist. Backous enjoys his work so much that although he is currently eligible for retirement, he maintains full-time employment.

In addition to enjoying the duties of his job, Backous values his co-workers as well. "We've got good people up here. It's been a privilege to work for Bridges and Structures, and the DOT has been very good to me," said Backous.

Over the years Backous has adapted to the changing technology with ambition and aptitude. "When I first started working in Bridges and Structures everything was done with paper and pencils, then Mylar paper was used, and I can remember when the first CAD station was introduced," said Backous. Backous describes it as a good learning experience and enjoys keeping his mind active by continuing to learn new things.

Backous loves to analyze things to find a better and more efficient way, a passion which he now shares with his grandchildren. Backous and his grandson, Nathaniel, 20, are currently putting the finishing touches on their annual haunted house. The duo found a way to construct an electric chair for about \$250 in materials; and if they were to buy it, the value would be around \$6,000. Nathaniel donates the proceeds to different charities and non-profit organizations.

Backous grew up with two brothers and three sisters, and takes delight in being surrounded by family. Backous enjoys time with his wife, Sue, a librarian in Boone. "Whenever I want to know something I don't go to a dictionary; I just ask Sue," said Backous. The Backouses have been blessed with three daughters, Laurie, Christie and Annie. They are very much involved in the lives of their children and grandchildren, Nathaniel, Caleb, 14, and Cody 12. Last year the Backouses took all three grandsons to

Florida and spent two weeks visiting every theme park. In addition to spending time with family, Backous enjoys camping, working on vehicles, wood crafting, and attending craft and trade shows with Sue.

"When I first started working at the DOT in 1961, I planned on working for three months before attending college. Three months quickly turned into 45 years," said **Roger Swenson**, design technician specialist, who is celebrating 45 years of service this month.

Swenson has witnessed several changes throughout the years. "When I started at the DOT, very little of the interstate had been constructed, and it consisted of a mere three-mile stretch on the southwest side of Des Moines and a short section in Sioux City," said Swenson. He also remembered when the personnel office was a one-person operation with a file cabinet in a 12-foot by 12-foot office.

The most significant change Swenson has witnessed has been the increase in traffic. "I remember when the interstate was completed from Ames to Des Moines in the mid 1960s, and a person would rarely encounter other vehicles. That same stretch is now a steady flow of traffic, and other locations have much more," said Swenson.

Swenson said he enjoys the diversity of his employment with the DOT. Prior to his last 18 years in the Office of Bridges and Structures, Swenson worked in the soils section of Design, the Ames residency and Office of Contracts. His present duties allow him to interact with different people from various counties through his work in the processing and distribution of shop drawings. Additional duties include the coordination and review of secondary road system bridge and culvert plans containing unique details or features, and providing consultants with analysis of box culverts when size or fill heights are not standard.

When Swenson isn't keeping busy at work he's busy at home. He enjoys golfing, traveling, the outdoors, and anything that allows him to stay active. His wife, Virginia, is a mathematics instructor with the Ames schools and Iowa State University. Their daughter, Angela, and son-in-law, Mark, both teach in the Des Moines area and welcomed a daughter, Emma, last year. As first time grandparents, the Swensons are enjoying Emma very much.

## Civil service times two

**W**hat's makes small town life in Iowa so special? It's people like Phil Heinlen who pour their heart and soul into making the town the best it can be.

Rockwell City, where Heinlen is the DOT's highway maintenance supervisor and the town's mayor, is a small city of 2,224 located on U.S. 20 in Calhoun County.

"I carry two cell phones, one for DOT calls and one for city calls," explains Heinlen. Heinlen, a 28-year veteran of the DOT, has been mayor for almost seven years. "I try to stay neutral on the controversial issues in town and let the council do their job," said Heinlen. "They are the ones that make the motions and vote. We have a good council in Rockwell City. They are very up front with the citizens and work hard to make the community better."

Wearing both hats, Heinlen is constantly dealing with the public. As a life-long resident of Rockwell City, the town's people know who to call when there's an issue on a roadway or with a city service. "If I had one complaint it would be that I think there are so many qualified people out there who could help out; however, there is a small group of people doing the majority of the work. What would happen if everyone said 'I don't have the time?' You have to be willing to commit your time to the things that are important."

Some of the efforts Heinlen and other Rockwell City leaders have been devoted to lately include a new 10,000 square-foot playground for the park, coined Kid's Kingdom, (built with \$130,000 in funds raised by a civic group called "Mothers on a Mission") and a \$2.5-million library/community center project. With the council, Heinlen has worked to codify all the city's ordinances, and the town's police department is now beginning to enforce city rules on junk vehicles and dilapidated houses. "To be successful and bring in new residents and businesses, the town needs to have a good image. Junk cars and run-down houses don't fit with how we want to present ourselves."



Most people struggle with one challenging full time job, Rockwell City Highway Maintenance Supervisor Phil Heinlen has two; one with the DOT and the other as mayor of Rockwell City.

Sports are important to Heinlen, and even though his two children are grown, he still supports the Rockwell City-Lytton High School Booster Club. Although a few hundred miles from Iowa City, Heinlen is an avid Hawkeye fan who has made the trip to the state's original capital for 27 consecutive years of Hawkeye football games.

Heinlen and his wife, Jane, are the parents of a daughter, Krista, and son, Steven. Krista's daughter, Ellie Claire, almost 4, is the apple of grandpa's eye. The Heinlens have been known to make the trek to Council Bluffs often to visit their granddaughter.

# Political signs **Q&A**

If this fall campaign season is like so many before, a new crop of political signs will soon be popping up everywhere. Some of these signs are legally placed; others are set on public rights-of-way and other public land, which is a violation of the law.

Most sign violations are the result of efforts of ardent campaign supporters who are unfamiliar with the law. Here's a guide for political candidates, party chairs, campaign workers, and election officials to help them become acquainted with the laws as this year's signs are posted.

## What are political campaign signs?

Political campaign signs are any temporary advertising device or sign that is designed to influence the passage or defeat of any measure on the ballot or designed to influence the voters with respect to the nomination, election, defeat, or removal of a candidate from public office at any national, state or local general or special election.

## Where are political campaign signs NOT allowed?

There are state, county and municipal laws and ordinances that govern political signs. Iowa law states that political campaign signs are not allowed on any property:

- owned by the state or governing body of a county, city or other political subdivision of the state, including all property considered public right-of-way (examples include buildings, bridges, trees or other natural features, fire hydrants, traffic control signs or devices, utility poles, posts, gates, fences, and vehicles);
- owned by a prohibited contributor under section 68A.503 of the Code of Iowa (e.g. corporations, banks, insurance companies, etc.), unless the sign advocates the passage or defeat of a ballot issue or is exempted;
- without the permission of the property owner;

- on election day, either on the premises of any polling place or within 300 feet of any outside door of any building affording access to any room where the polls are held, or of any outside door of any building affording access to any hallway, corridor, stairway, or other means of reaching the room where the polls are held; and
- within 300 feet of an absentee voting site or satellite absentee voting station, during the hours when absentee ballots are available.

## What is the public roadway right-of-way?

The roadway right-of-way includes the roadway surface, the concrete or grassy median, intersections, entrance and exit ramps, and a strip of land, usually bordering either side of the road, which is reserved for shoulders, drainage ditches, sidewalks, traffic signs/signals, fencing, electrical traffic signal control boxes, utility lines, and future road expansion.

The right-of-way boundary is an invisible line that may not be possible to identify without detailed legal maps and a formal survey. When in doubt about the location of the right-of-way line, contact the transportation agency responsible for the roadway (DOT, secondary roads department engineer or city public works director).

## What happens to illegally posted signs?

State, county and city highway authorities; city and county law enforcement authorities; and the Iowa Ethics and Campaign Disclosure Board have the legal right and duty to remove or ensure removal of improperly placed signs.

If a sign placed or erected upon the right-of-way of any public highway constitutes an immediate and dangerous hazard, a representative of the highway authority or law enforcement agency shall, without notice or liability in damages, remove it and assess the associated costs against the owner of the sign. Normally, the DOT will simply remove the sign.

A political campaign sign placed or erected upon the right-of-way of any public highway that does not constitute an immediate and dangerous hazard will be removed without liability after 48-hour notice is provided to the person responsible for the sign.

Political signs,  
continued from previous page

## Where can campaigners recover signs removed by the DOT?

Highway crews are asked to make reasonable attempts to preserve campaign signs taken down, transport them to the nearest maintenance garage and provide campaign offices with an opportunity to claim the signs. Signs are typically stored for 30 days before being discarded.

## Where are political campaign signs allowed?

Political campaign signs may be placed with the permission of the property owner on:

- residential property;
- agricultural land owned by individuals or by a family farm operation;
- property leased for residential purposes (apartments, condominiums and houses);
- vacant lots owned by a private individual;
- property owned by an organization that is not a prohibited contributor under section 68A.503 of Code of Iowa; and
- property leased by a candidate, committee or organization established to advocate the nomination, election or defeat of a candidate, or passage or defeat of a ballot issue that has not yet registered pursuant to section 68A.201 of the Code of Iowa, when the property is used as headquarters or an office (the placement of the sign is limited to the space that is actually leased).

## When must signs be removed?

To reduce visual clutter, signs are to be removed within a reasonable time following the election or other event to which the sign refers. Signs for successful primary election candidates generally remain in place until a reasonable time following the general election. Iowa law does not establish a time frame for removal of signs.

## What can be done if signs are posted on private property without permission?

Property owners can contact the campaign's headquarters to ask to have the sign removed and advise the campaign about the error so it is not repeated. The DOT has no authority over signs posted on private property.

## What are the costs and safety risks associated with illegally posted signs?

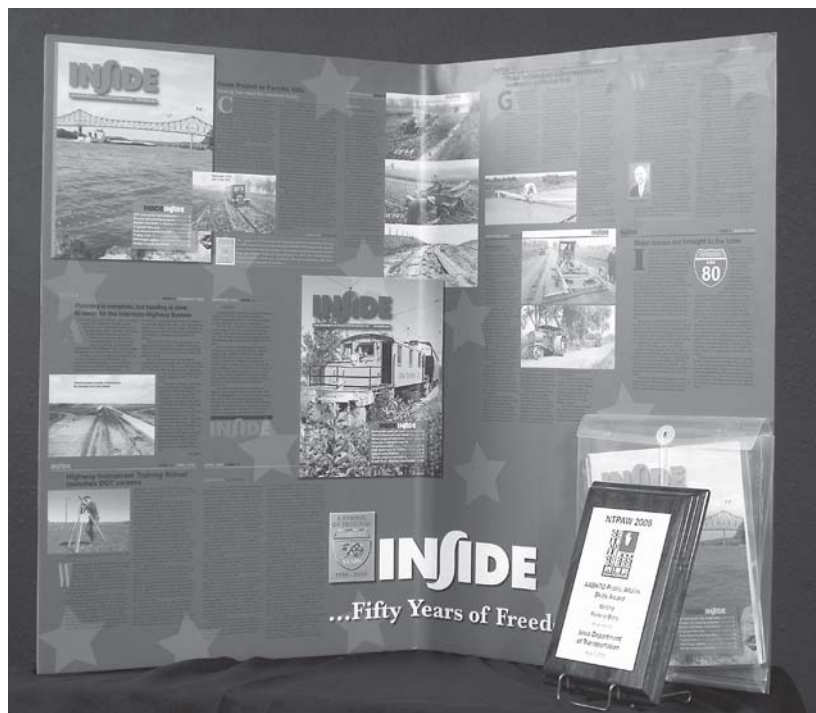
Improperly placed signs in the roadway right-of-way can reduce a driver's view, distract from his/her attention, compound damages or injuries in the event of a crash, endanger the safety of individuals who are erecting the signs along busy highways, present obstacles to crews who maintain roadways, and force pedestrians and bicyclists into dangerous areas close to the road edge or onto difficult terrain alongside the road shoulder.

Illegally posted signs also waste valuable taxpayer resources. Each year, the DOT receives numerous complaints about improperly posted signs, or discovers them during routine inspections, mowing or other operations. DOT crews must follow up on these complaints and remove illegal signs...time better spent maintaining our roadways.



## Trophy Case

### Recent DOT Awards



### Iowa DOT brings home three NTPAW awards

The Iowa DOT was a big winner again this year at the annual National Transportation Public Affairs Workshop held in Oklahoma City, July 29 – Aug. 2. The event, sponsored each year by a different member-state of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and coordinated by the AASHTO Subcommittee on Public Affairs, showcases the best in state DOT media relations efforts.

The Iowa DOT brought home three awards: electronic newsletter, CEO column and feature articles. The Office of Rail Transportation's electronic newsletter "Railroad Ties" was tops in that category. Nancy Richardson's "Johnny Cash" column from the May 2006 edition of INSIDE beat out the other CEO column competitors, and the INSIDE series of articles on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Interstate System was the winning entry for feature articles.

*Trophy Case, continued next page*



**Trophy Case,**  
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## Mallon wins gold and silver in Iowa Senior Olympics

Barb Mallon, employee safety coordinator in the Office of Employee Services, participated in the 20th Annual Iowa Senior Olympics, held June 8-11 in West Des Moines. The Senior Olympics is open to men and women age 50 and older. There are more than 50 events with competition in 10 age categories. The Iowa Senior Olympics is endorsed by the Iowa Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, and is a proud member of the National Senior Games Association.

Mallon entered the women's basketball competition and earned a first-place gold medal for free-throw shooting, making 11 of 15, and a second-place, silver medal for the Around-the-World shooting making 8 of 15 shots. This was Mallon's first time competing in the Senior Olympics, but she says she plans to enter again next year, and is working with friends to organize women's six-on-six player basketball games for this fall and winter. If you're a woman age 50 and older and are interested in playing basketball, contact Mallon at 515-239-1594.



## Rader garners team award for Iowa MVE

by Valerie Hunter

Iowa DOT Motor Vehicle Officer Michael Rader represented our state at the North American Inspectors Championship held in New Orleans, Louisiana, Aug. 14-18, 2006. The annual championship hosted 53 North American Standard Level I inspectors. In addition to the competition, officers attended training seminars on topics such as license fraud, logbooks, bus/motor coach inspections, and hazardous materials bulk/non-bulk inspections.

New at this year's competition was a team award. Participants formed teams to complete tasks. Mike's team was recognizing for best demonstrating camaraderie and accumulating the highest point average. Rader's team members were from California, Montana, New York, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, and Quebec, Canada.

Of his experience, Rader said, "I have never been treated so nice in my life. The Louisiana State Police needs to be commended on their hospitality to all the contestants and their spouses. The competition was fun. I feel honored that I was given the opportunity to compete in such a prestigious event and meet a multitude of officers from the state and federal level."

## Visitors in Mason City



Photo by Brian Squier, Office of Maintenance

These young deer are frequent visitors at the District 2 Materials Lab in Mason City.

## Family happenings

### Operations and Finance Division

Janet Kout-Samson



**Ashley Smelser**, architectural technician 2 in Facilities Support, and her husband, Andrew, welcomed their first child June 8. Isabel Renae weighed in at 6 lbs. 8 ozs. and was 21 inches long. Congratulations to the Smelsers!



Operations and Finance Division Director Mary Christy (left) congratulates Jerry Sabin

**Jerry Sabin**, motor pool mechanic, retired July 27 after 41 years of service. A coffee was held on his last day where he was given a clock, 41 gold Susan B. Anthony dollars and another monetary gift. Many DOT employees and friends came to wish Jerry a long and happy retirement.

### District 5

Brenda Hadley



**Ron Thompson**, engineering technician senior at the District 5 Office, is one proud dad. His son, James, made his operatic debut Aug. 10 to a crowd of nearly 800 at Iowa Wesleyan College Chapel to a standing ovation. James' mentor, Simon Estes, also took to the same stage. Thompson, a former music teacher in Mount Pleasant, studied with Estes in Boston.

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. **Nick Wilkerson** on the birth of their baby boy. Garen Nicholas was born Aug. 11. He weighed 6 lbs. 7 ozs. and was 19 ¼ inches long. Daddy Nick is an equipment operator at the Wapello garage.

### District 3

Mary Beth Banta



**Garry Carlson**, mechanic in the Sac City and Rockwell City shops, and his wife, Chrystal, are the proud parents of their third child. Max Gerald Carlson was born July 25 weighing 8 lbs. 15 ozs. and was 22 inches long. He joins siblings Jacob, 7, and Megan, 5.

## In Memory

**Kenneth Williams Sr.**, of Des Moines, passed away Friday, Aug. 25, 2006, at the Iowa Health Hospice Taylor House. Kenny started working for the DOT in 1978 and was an equipment operator at the Des Moines-north garage and then Des Moines-west, retiring in 2002.

**Robert L. "Bob" Landreth**, 54, of Stratford, passed away Thursday, Aug. 10, 2006, at Israel Family Hospice House. Landreth began working at the DOT in March 1986 as a design technician in the Office of Design. He moved to the Office of Facilities Support



in 1990 as an architectural technician. When Landreth found out he had a brain tumor in March 2005, his goal was to hang around to celebrate his 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the DOT and his 54<sup>th</sup> birthday. He got his wish, and in March 2006, about 60 people helped him celebrate these milestones with dinner at Hickory Park. Landreth is survived by his wife, Katherine; two sons, Scott of Great Falls, Montana and Zach of Stanhope, Iowa; his mother, Delores, of Dayton, Iowa; and many other family members.

## DOTers bring home honors from the Iowa State Fair



**Kay Ridgway**, secretary 1 in the District 1 field office in Des Moines, is a state fair veteran. This year's ceramics entries include a 1<sup>st</sup> place for a "Pheasant Plate" in the plate and plaque class; 1<sup>st</sup> place for "Dancing Bunnies" in the "other than Christmas" holiday class; 2<sup>nd</sup> place for "Canadian Goose" in the dry brush class; and 2<sup>nd</sup> for "Pheasant" in the antique class. Ridgway also placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in the floral wreath/swag class for a small purple swag. "I felt really good about this one because I am not a professional florist, but I was able to compete with them," she said. Ridgway's other entry this year, a bouquet of orchids and lilacs did not place at the fair, but can be seen in the Ames area engineer's office.

**Diane McCauley**, policy analyst in the Office of Rail Transportation, weathered her third year of competition in the Fabrics and Threads category in high style. McCauley entered four categories. Her wool vest embellished with clematis flowers and vines won 1<sup>st</sup> place, a flower pin made of wool fiber brought home a 4<sup>th</sup> place ribbon, and a small hand-

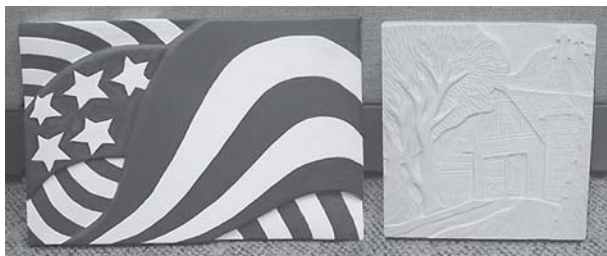


fetted and beaded bag of wool, silk and other fibers was accepted into the juried show and awarded 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the Fibers category.

McCauley

also participated in the style show of hand-crafted garments sponsored by the Ames/Central Iowa Sewing Guild.

"All around I have found the fair competition a good experience – interesting, and sometimes humbling, to stack your stuff against others and see how it fares. Probably more importantly, it forces you to hone your skills to prepare "fair-worthy" entries, which can't just get done, but must be done with a higher level of care, creativity and attention to detail in order to compete," said McCauley.

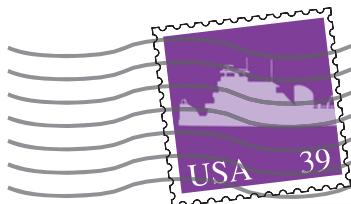


**Steven Schroder**, transportation engineer intern in the Office of Traffic and Safety, entered two wood carvings at the Iowa State Fair this year. He received participation ribbons for both.



Peggy Phipps and Ali

**Peggy Phipps**, and her husband, Phil, entered two horses in eight classes at this year's fair. They came home with three 3<sup>rd</sup> place ribbons, one 4<sup>th</sup> place, one 6<sup>th</sup> place, and one 8<sup>th</sup> place with nine-year-old stallion Zippo Scotty (Scotty) and three-year-old mare, Ladys All Star (Ali).



## Kudos!

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

To: **Delores Johnson**, driver's license supervisor 2, Council Bluffs DL station  
From: Christine A. Marsh and Patricia Orwig

I would be remiss if I failed to pen this note of appreciation to you for your assistance in allowing Patricia to prove her worthiness to receive her driver's license. She is so elated, and more than that, her self-perception has been elevated. She told me she was going to exercise and lose weight. She is affirmed that hard work and tenacity are rewarded. I wish to thank you again for your kindness, patience and professionalism. I know those with whom you work appreciate your abilities. You are a people person. We are so fortunate to have you here in Council Bluffs.

*(Editor's note: Christine Marsh is the mother of Patricia Orwig. Patricia has just recently begun to live on her own and had experienced difficulty in the past when taking the behind-the-wheel driving test. Delores Johnson personally worked to make Patricia more comfortable and relaxed prior to taking the test so she could prove that she is capable of driving safely on her own.)*

To: Iowa DOT  
From: Ralph Kitterman, Fort Dodge

The public service rendered at the Fort Dodge office of driver's license renewal deserves a letter of commendation. On Aug. 11, I appeared for the renewal of my auto driver's license. This was not a new experience for me, as I am certainly classified as a senior citizen. Gracious hospitality and helpfulness greeted me at all points in the process of renewal. The service I received when reporting in and assistance at various steps was laden with caring helpfulness. During the waiting period, I witnessed a high quality of professional assistance to all ages, varied ethnic backgrounds and socio-economic strata. Very clearly one could detect the staff people were sensitive to our needs as well as affirming that we were people. With gratitude I left your office with my renewal and feeling of pride in the quality of helpfulness extended. I rejoiced again in being an Iowan and observing our public servants' high quality of service. Thank you for the grace of service which you revealed. I salute you!

To: **Captain Donald Page**  
From: Thomas R. Wardlow  
Chief of Police/Interim City Administrator

Dear Captain Page,  
I want to take this opportunity to thank you and your staff for assisting our department during the RAGBRAI event on July 26-27. By working together, we all ensured the safety of our visitors and enhanced their enjoyment of our community. Your assistance allowed us to reallocate resources elsewhere where it was also needed.

*(Editor's note: The officers involved in this event were Jennifer Bell, Jason Maahs, Randall Rice, Ryan Ridout, and Ronald Schipper.)*

To: **Diane Sappenfield**, Driver Services  
From: Don Lovasz, Des Moines

Thank you for the phone call and follow up. I shared with several of your colleagues at the Office of Driver Services (ODS) that you have been a most pleasant group with which to work. Having recently moved here from Missouri, and having lived in Illinois and Ohio prior to that, I can say from experience that the Iowa ODS staff are the most courteous and professional of those I've dealt with.

*(Editor's note: Diane Sappenfield is an administrative assistant in the records management section of ODS. She assisted Mr. Lovasz in his request for a temporary restricted license.)*

To: **Bradley Steinhart**, Highway Maintenance Supervisor, Washington garage  
From: Don and Beverly Gray, Montezuma

Recently, as we were traveling from Montezuma with our fifth-wheel, we blew a tire. As my husband and brother-in-law were preparing to change the tire on the RV, two young men clad in orange and both named Mike passed us and saw our problem. They turned their vehicle around and came back – not only to help, but to change the tire for us. Our world and news are so full of all the bad going on that we want you at the DOT to know you have two very special young men working for you. We need so many more "Mikes" in the world! Our thanks to them and to all of you at the DOT.

*(Editor's note: The DOT employees who stopped to help the Grays were Mike Winters and Mike Todd, both equipment operators in the Washington shop.)*

To: Iowa DOT  
From: Peter Olson, Des Moines

I want to say thanks for the comforting presence that a Highway Helper brought to my situation today on I-235 in West Des Moines at 1 p.m. He was about 6'1", dark hair, short beard/mustache and driving a brown S-10-type pickup. My foot is in an immobilization boot, and when getting out of my truck today, I must have caught the hood release. Six miles later, my hood nearly flew open at highway speed. I stopped near an entrance ramp and was sandwiched between speeding cars. On crutches, I'm not as fast or responsive, so it was a joy to see him pull up behind me just as this happened. That gave me the confidence to get out, check the hood and get going again. I thanked him, and I thank you for the service. Much appreciated.

(Editor's note: The Highway Helper mentioned in this note is **Joe Salazar**.)

To: **Milly Ortiz-Pagan**, Office of Systems Planning  
From: Steve Libbey

I recently bicycled back to Ames from the end of RAGBRAI in Muscatine relying almost exclusively on the state's *Transportation Map for Bicyclists* to go where I wanted to with minimum traffic issues. In spite of having some serious doubts about a few of the ADTs indicated, I found the map to be right on - not only helpful, but accurate. As a long-term bicyclist - both for daily errands and long-range touring - I think this map is an excellent use of bicycling-related transportation monies. In terms of touring, I would suggest that this map is more beneficial from an immediate bang-for-your-buck standpoint than building separate trails (which is not to say bike trails are a waste). So, I just wanted to write and express my appreciation for DOT's bicycle maps.

(Editor's note: The *Transportation Map for Bicyclists* is produced by the **Office of Systems Planning**.)

To: Iowa DOT  
From: Deanna Retzlaff, Westmoreland, Kansas

I would just like to say thank you to Doug at the Iowa DOT. We left our diaper bag in the ladies restroom while traveling. When we realized we no longer had it - we were already to Minnesota! Thanks again **Doug Dewaele** for taking the initiative to contact us and be sure we got our bag back! Great job!!!

(Editor's note: **Doug Dewaele** oversees the Adair, Underwood, Pacific Junction, and Loveland rest areas.)

To: Cheryl Williams, Office of Finance  
From: Matthew Robinson, Crystal Clean

I am writing to commend your employee, **Jerry Howell**, for outstanding customer service. I was calling in regarding a payment, and from the moment he answered the phone to the moment our phone conversation ended, his customer service skills were outstanding. Thank you for employing and training excellent employees.

(Editor's note: **Jerry Howell** is an accounting technician 3 in the Office of Finance, project accounting and payables section.)

To: Iowa DOT  
From: **Curtis McIntosh**, Equipment Operator, Fairfield garage

In the "Inside" magazine I often read letters that the public has sent to thank employees for roadside assistance they've received. Well, my letter is to thank fellow employees for their roadside help to me.

Back in July I was patrolling U.S. 34 between Fairfield and Ottumwa, when I came across some severe edge-rutting that needed immediate attention. In the process of getting off the road and turned around, I ran over a broken off steel post just sticking out of the ground a few inches and blew a tire on my pickup. Two DOT employees out of the Fairfield materials office, **Gary Dickey** and **Tim Tedrow**, stopped and changed the tire for me while two other employees, **Tim Halbrook**, Bloomfield maintenance, and **Jerry Irwin**, Fairfield maintenance, helped me get equipment around and helped work on the shoulder. They are both shared workers with the construction office. Without all their willing help, it would have taken me several hours to address the problem. With their help it took less than an hour.

To: Manchester garage  
From: The Blakemans, Okauchee, WI

A big thank you to a DOT worker on U.S. 20. We were coming home from vacation and had a flat. She saw us unloading the trunk, pulled over, helped us, and then led us to a station that fixed our flat. We were on our way within an hour. She went above and beyond. Thank you, Iowa!

(Editor's note: The employee who helped the Blakemans was **Judy Recker**, equipment operator from the Manchester garage.)

## Personnel Updates

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for July 28 to Aug. 24, 2006

### New Hires

**Carol Carpenter**, driver's license clerk senior, Iowa City DL station; **Timothy Elliott**, design technician, Design; **Diana Heck**, driver's license clerk, Cedar Rapids DL station; **Agata Janus**, planning aide 1, Transportation Data; **Kimberly Johnson**, information technology specialist 2, Information Technology Division; **Monica McCroskey**, mail clerk 2, Driver Services; **Karen Meeks**, driver's license clerk senior, Des Moines DL station; **Jason Page**, construction technician, District 2 Office; **Jed Roe**, construction technician assistant, Design; **Phillip South**, accountant/auditor 1, Finance

### Promotions

**Larry Christiansen**, from engineering operations technician, District 4 Field Staff, to engineering technician senior, District 4 Office; **Kelly Sharp**, from mail clerk 1 to mail clerk 2, Driver Services

### Transfers

**James Albers**, equipment operator, from Ida Grove garage to Correctionville garage; **Alan Clayton**, equipment operator, from Bedford garage to Mount Ayr garage

### Retirements

**Fred Cirksema**, executive officer 2, Right of Way; **Ivan Lemley**, equipment operator, Donnellson garage; **Lawrence Lewin**, equipment operator, Manchester garage; **Darrell Weyen**, equipment operator, Akron garage

## Governors's lifesaver awards



You read about the rescue of Chris Domeyer in the January 2006 INSIDE. Here is the crew involved following the Governor's Lifesaver Award ceremony at the Iowa State Fair. (From left) Charlie Dighton, Erich Eggers, Gov. Tom Vilsack, Chris Domeyer, Jeff Rissler and Penny Holtz

## Service Awards

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for October 2006

### 45 Years

**Darwin Backous**, Bridges and Structures; **Roger Swenson**, Bridges and Structures

### 40 Years

**William Kreinbring**, District 1

### 35 Years

**Timothy Haynie**, Shenandoah garage; **Alvin Robert Price**, Tama garage; **Dennis C. Smith**, Design; **Ruth Vander Schaaf**, Program Management

### 30 Years

**Christopher Domeyer**, Manchester garage; **Barbara Espeland**, Information Technology Division; **Rex Lee Evans**, Newton garage; **Lawrence Lewin**, Manchester garage; **Katherine Martin**, Design; **Steven Poshusta**, Decorah garage; **Jeffrey Rissler**, Manchester garage; **Kathleen Robinson**, Media and Marketing Services

### 25 Years

**Larry Hopkins**, Bloomfield garage; **James Myers**, Carlisle garage; **Paula Whitten**, Cedar Rapids DL station

### 20 Years

**Donald Carlson**, Davenport construction; **Trev Cook**, Des Moines construction; **Gary Detrick**, Mount Pleasant construction; **Joseph Foreman**, Information Technology Division; **Jack Goodale**, Osage garage; **Mark Hansen**, Transportation Data; **Kurtis Lawler**, Fort Dodge garage; **David McFarland**, Maintenance; **Gail Nordholm**, Local Systems; **John Reid**, Ottumwa garage; **James Rost**, Location and Environment; **David Smith**, Martensdale garage; **Ron Stephens**, Materials; **Dan Vasquez**, Mason City garage; **Dallas Walter**, District 4 paint crew; **Clinton Watson**, Bridges and Structures; **Daniel Wolfe**, Osceola garage; **Gary Zidlicky**, District 2 materials

### 15 Years

**Kevin Adams**, Waverly garage; **Mary K. Blake**, Burlington DL station; **Pamela Sue Kendrick**, Carroll DL station; **Rodney Lilly**, Donnellson garage; **Cheryl Ann Meyer**, Fort Dodge DL station

### 10 Years

**Harold Adcock**, Bridges and Structures; **Brad Agan**, Carroll garage; **Cheryl Bain**, Ottumwa DL station; **Theresa Fox**, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Patsy Freerks**, Waterloo DL station; **Jeffrey Harness**, Chariton construction; **Scott Knudtson**, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Lori Morris**, Des Moines construction; **Jack Parsons**, Leon garage

### 5 Years

**Brenda Kramer**, Sioux City DL station

# 35 YEARS

Iowa Department of Transportation

## September and October



Ruth Vander Schaaf  
Program Management



Al Price  
Tama garage



Carl Fenceroy  
Information Technology Div.



John Heggen  
Jefferson construction



Steve McCauley  
Materials



Joe Cook  
Britt construction



Ed Bergeson  
Fort Dodge garage

# 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 coworkers. For more information, contact Tracey Bramble, Office of Media and Marketing Services, 515-239-1314 or e-mail [tracey.bramble@dot.iowa.gov](mailto:tracey.bramble@dot.iowa.gov).

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District 4 .....	Marlene Jensen, Atlantic .....	712-243-3355
District 5 .....	Brenda Hadley, Fairfield .....	641-472-6142
District 6 .....	Jeanne Heeren, Cedar Rapids .....	319-364-0235
Bridges and Structures .....	Judy Whitney, Ames .....	515-239-1564
Construction .....	Nancy McMenamin, Ames .....	515-239-1043
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Maintenance .....	Cindy Shipley, Ames .....	515-239-1824
Materials .....	Dawne Berner, Ames .....	515-239-1919
Modal and		
Planning & Programming Divisions .....	Mary Kay Reimers, Ames .....	515-239-1661
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Motor Vehicle Enforcement .....	Val Hunter, Des Moines .....	515-237-3218
Operations and Finance Division .....	Janet Kout-Samson, Ames .....	515-239-1340
Research and Technology Bureau .....	Phyllis Geer, Ames .....	515-239-1646
Right-of-Way .....	Linda Kriegel, Ames .....	515-239-1135
Traffic and Safety .....	Linda McBride, Ames .....	515-239-1557
Vehicle Services .....	Thelma Huffman, Des Moines .....	515-237-3182

On the cover: The Iowa Interstate Railroad line runs through the heart of Des Moines.

# The walk was worth the effort . . .

**F**or some, it's unusual that a person from Iowa with no close relationships affected by breast cancer would work diligently for months raising money to travel to Minnesota for a



grueling three-day walk to raise awareness for the disease. When asked why she decided to do this, Susie McCullough from the Office of Transportation Data says that everyone she knows has some connection to a breast cancer victim or survivor.

The Twin Cities Breast Cancer 3-Day walk took place

Aug. 18-20. Walkers gathered in the Twin Cities with their walking shoes ready. A tent city was erected in a school yard as home base for two nights, as the walkers made their way around Saint Paul and Minneapolis.

McCullough explained the atmosphere, "It was three days of kindness and Minnesota 'nice.' The weather cooperated and the opening ceremonies were held outside at the Saint Paul Zoo. Despite a little wind and light rain Friday night, it was perfect walking weather for three days."

The mood at the walk was definitely festive as themed stops along the way lifted the spirits of walkers with sore muscles and blistered feet. "It's difficult to describe to someone who has never been there," said McCullough. "It was obvious the superstar crew had spent months preparing for this event. The themes at every stop were amazing. We experienced a Christmas-themed lunch on day one, including the original Mall of America Santa. There was a circus-themed lunch on day three, including a clown on stilts and a pirates of the Cure-ibbean pit stop, including a pirate ship named the SG Komen that 'misted' the walkers. Another stop was a Route 66 'grab and go'. It was all thought out and planned so well."

The local community came out to form the world's largest cheering stations over the course all three days. They passed out candy, popsicles, stickers, and friendship bracelets, in addition to cheering the walkers on. Melo-o-glaze Bakery baked ribbon-shaped donuts and passed them out to hungry walkers. In camp, the walkers and crew also proved that dancing heals blisters, and helps aches and pains, when they danced to Disco Nights (including a conga line around the dining tent).

To sum up her three days in Minnesota, McCullough said, "I have never had a more positive experience in my life. Looking back, the one thing I notice in pictures is that people are smiling. I had a crew guy tell me 'you are always smiling.' What else am I going to do? I can smile through the pain of a few

**blisters and all.**



blisters and sore muscles because I know I am making a difference. My pain is nothing compared to the pain of those dealing with breast cancer. At the end of day one, I didn't know how I was going to be able to make it two more days. The answer was plain and simple, you just do. Everyone was hobbling around camp in the mornings, then after about the first mile on the route something or someone gives you a boost, and away you go. All along the walk you heard 'you are doing great, way to go! WHOO HOOO!' I've never had so many high-fives in my life, and from total strangers. The support from the community was awesome. There were designated cheering stations for local people to gather, and they came in droves. Constant clapping, cheering, whistling, and words of encouragement really helped us make it through the days."

McCullough walked with "The Eradicators," which consisted of McCullough, and Julie and Ken Fogelsong/ of Boone. While planning the trip McCullough contacted Sue Bastian in Minnesota, another walker who offered a place to stay on the night before the walk began. "We hit it off from the start and her kids had a little party for us the night before the walk. It was such a great way to meet other people all for the purpose of making a difference," said McCullough.

McCullough has already started fund-raising for next year's walk and she's inviting any other DOTer to join her. She says, "To truly understand this event, you need to participate!"

According to figures given at the closing ceremonies, approximately 2,500 people walked at the Twin Cities event raising more than \$6.2 million. For more information on the three-day walk, please contact Susie McCullough at 515-230-1597 or 515-432-2285 or e-mail [susieben9289@yahoo.com](mailto:susieben9289@yahoo.com).

Another opportunity is coming soon to support breast cancer research and the Susan G. Komen Foundation. The Des Moines "Race for the Cure" will be held Oct. 28. Go to [www.desmoinesraceforthe cure.org](http://www.desmoinesraceforthe cure.org) for more details.