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IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2004



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From my view

Mark F. Wandro, P.E., L.S.



As the DOT's budget has been developed the past several years, I have encouraged division directors to scrutinize not only what they do in their work units, but how they do it. This is partly due to the Governor's challenge that each agency be more accountable to the citizens and partly due to my desire to make the department as efficient as possible. This scrutiny is necessary as revenues are not being generated fast enough to stay ahead of increasing needs and costs. So, in order to maintain or improve the service we provide to Iowans, we have to look carefully at everything we do.

We've all been faced with times of belt-tightening in our personal lives, and the choices in the workplace are not any easier. It's difficult to decide what we're not going to do anymore or how we can cut back and still provide excellent service to our customers. DOT employees are known for going the extra mile to get a task done or for coming up with better ways to accomplish a project. I'm proud of all we do here at the department and of each of you.

However, the reality is divisions have had to reduce the number of employees and pare back the services they provide. Let me provide some background to help explain why this has happened.

The DOT receives money from the state and federal governments. Federal funds are provided through a six-year surface transportation bill (TEA-21) which expired in September 2003. As yet, Congress has failed to enact a new bill so we are uncertain how much money we will receive over the next few years. As you can imagine, this makes planning somewhat difficult since federal funds are used exclusively for transportation improvement projects such as the various highway projects completed around the state each year.

The state funds come from four primary sources: state fuel taxes (there hasn't been a gas tax increase since 1989), vehicle registration fees, use tax (the sales tax on motor vehicles and accessories), and driver license fees. State funds are used both for transportation improvement projects and to operate the department itself. That portion of the DOT's budget used for operating expenses pays for everything from our salary and support, to all the materials

and supplies we use, to all of the equipment we purchase and operate.

While the DOT has a reduced workforce today compared to four years ago (down from 3,613 FTEs in FY 01 to 3,149 in FY 04), the actual cost of salaries and benefits for employees has risen (up from \$170.9M in FY 01 to \$186.4M in FY 04). Bottom line is fewer employees are costing more money. We spend nearly one-third of our entire budget to operate the department (salaries, support, materials and equipment). And, the more we spend on these items, the less there is available for transportation improvement projects around the state.

Speaking of improvement projects, let's talk about that for a minute. All you have to do is talk with your neighbors or read the paper to know that most people can identify a road that needs to be replaced or repaired. We have lots of needs around the state that we have been unable to address with the limited dollars we have. The projects we have focused on since 1996 have been the priority corridors identified by the Iowa Transportation Commission. These include the Avenue of the Saints, Des Moines to Burlington corridor, Iowa 60, Iowa 5, U.S. 151, and U.S. 65/Iowa 330. We've also invested heavily the past few years in the reconstruction of I-235 in Des Moines. These projects, which will be completed in the next two to three years, represent about seven percent of the state's highway system and have required the majority of the remaining money allocated to the DOT.

In the big picture, we're not spending enough money on the entire system. In addition to completing the projects noted above, we need to spend more money on bridges and preservation of existing roadways. It's a never ending cycle—the longer we delay projects, the more they generally cost when we get to them.

Staff and equipment are vital components for getting transportation improvement projects completed. We all must continue to work together to deliver the best possible products and services to our customers in the most cost-effective manner.

I hope this information helps you understand some of the difficult decisions regarding staff, equipment, and projects that have been made over the past few years.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.

Bike helmets not just for children

Any bicyclist on the road, whether riding to a shopping destination, a morning commute to school or work, or just a leisurely jaunt around the neighborhood, should wear a properly fitted helmet. To ensure a proper fit for bicyclists of all ages, the National Bicycle Helmet Institute recommends the following advice.

Helmets are not hats!

They must be level on your head and strapped on securely to be protective in a crash. You want the helmet to sit level on your head, with the fitting pads inside touching all the way around and the strap comfortably snug.

First, adjust the fitting pads or ring

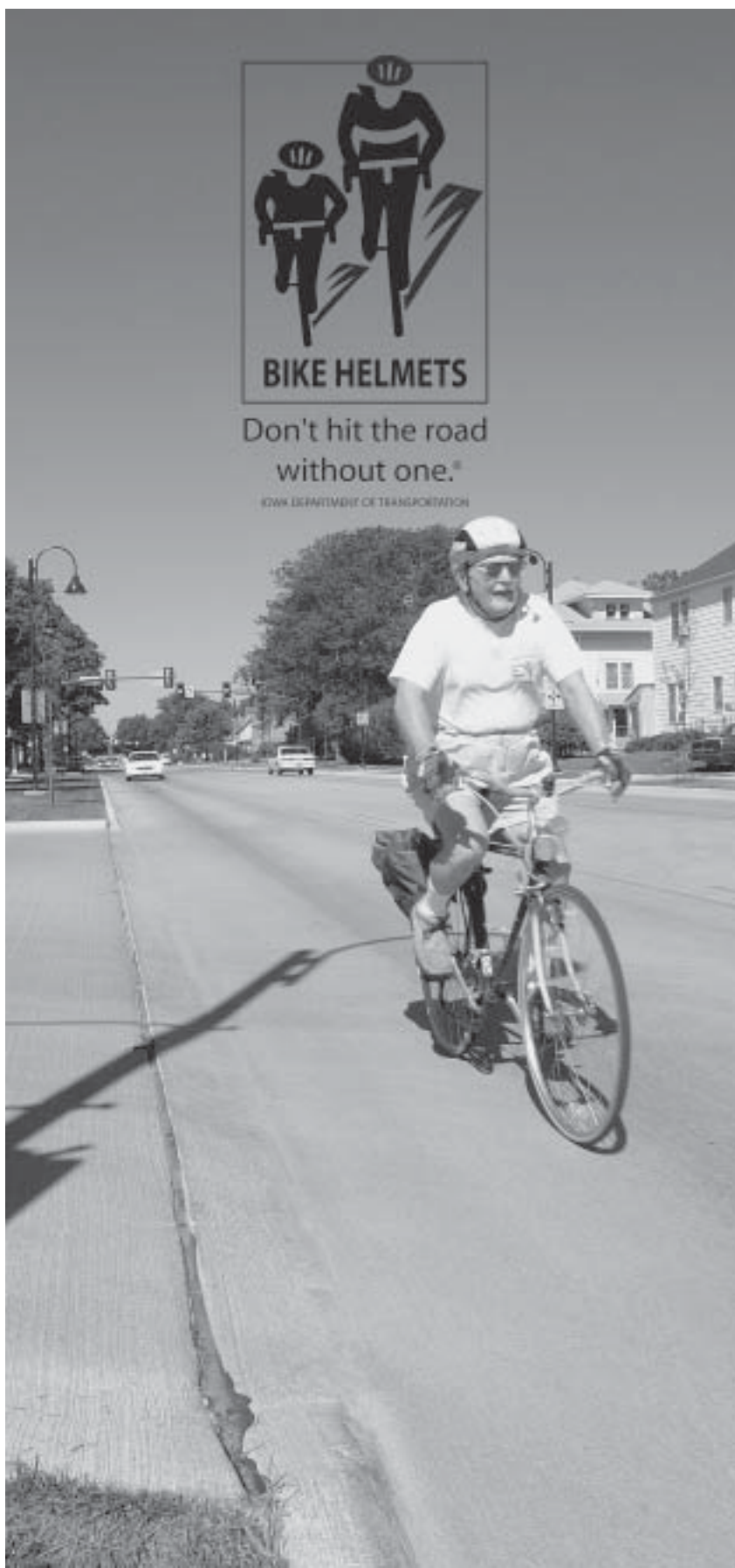
Most helmets come with extra foam fitting pads to customize the fit. You can usually remove the top pad or use a thinner one to lower the helmet on the head, bringing its protection down farther on the sides. Use thicker pads on the side if your head is narrow and there is a space, or add thicker pads in the back for shorter heads. Move pads around to touch your head evenly all the way around. If you have a model with a fitting ring instead, just adjust the fit by tightening the ring.

Then, adjust the straps

Put the helmet on, level on your head. Adjust the rear (nape) straps, then the front straps, to locate the Y fitting where the straps come together just under your ear. You may have to slide the straps across the top of the helmet to get them even on both sides. Then adjust the chin strap so it is comfortably snug. Now adjust the rear stabilizer, if the helmet has one.

Are you done?

Shake your head vigorously. Put your palm under the front edge and push up and back. Can you move the helmet more than an inch or so from level, exposing your bare forehead? If so, you need to tighten the strap in front of your ear. Reach back and pull up on the back edge. Can you move the helmet more than an inch? If so, tighten the nape strap. When you are done your helmet should be level, feel solid on your head and be comfortable. It should not bump on your glasses. If it does, tighten the nape strap. If it still does not fit that way, keep working with the straps and pads, or try another helmet.



MVE overview

Thousands of commercial motor vehicles lumber down Iowa highways each day transporting goods from far and near. The DOT's Office of Motor Vehicle Enforcement (MVE) is charged with assuring the safety of those vehicles.

Basic stats

The 98 uniformed motor vehicle (MV) officers perform more than 62,000 inspections each year at 20 fixed-scale sites and while on roving patrol. The main I-80 scales in Jasper (westbound) and Dallas (eastbound) counties are open at some point every day. The other sites are open approximately 10 days each month.



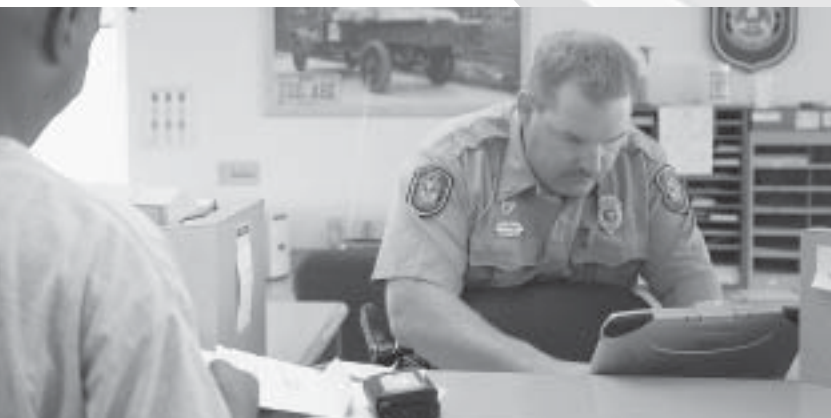
Officer Chris Boswell

we don't notice much difference in the amount of truck traffic between night and day."

Training

The officers' duties and training have changed a great deal since the early 1970s when this group began to be recognized as true law enforcement personnel. Each applicant as an MV officer must have a minimum of two years law enforcement experience or a degree in criminal justice and complete a 13-week training course at the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy, including basic law enforcement techniques, firearms training and defensive tactics.

Officer Boswell checks a driver's log book information.



The officers work a fixed schedule of three weeks on a day shift and one week on nights. "The transition from days to nights is a little tough to make, but we manage," said Officer Chris Boswell. "At the Jasper and Dallas county scales,

Commander Mike Benner is in charge of all DOT uniformed officers. "When we hire a new officer, we have a 12-week field training program. The new officer will be under direct supervision of a field training officer and will devote two weeks learning the North American standards for vehicle inspection, one week on hazardous materials training and one week on cargo tank inspection. These officers must know and enforce laws pertaining to registration, fuel tax agreements, and inter- and intra-state authority regulations. The training in these areas is on-going as the regulations change from year to year."

"More and better training produces a more professional officer," said Boswell, who is a field training officer. "Several of our new officers have law enforcement backgrounds. They often say they didn't realize how much more they have to learn once they start working for the DOT. Not only are there the routine law enforcement duties, there are the vehicle inspection laws to learn and enforce. The training promotes teamwork between our officers. We do our best to perform at our best, take a lot of pride in our work and stick together like glue."

MV officer duties

Since there are thousands of trucks through the scales every day and thousands more passing on routes not serviced by a fixed scale, Boswell says the officers first look for obvious violations. "When you spot a violation as the truck passes over the scale or passes you on the roadway, it's an indication to pull the vehicle over for a more in-depth inspection," he said.

Some violations make the commercial vehicle extremely dangerous to the motoring public. "Load securement is always a concern," said Boswell. "I tell my own family never to drive beside or directly behind a semi. You never know when that load might shift."

Aside from assuring the load is secure, officers check the overall mechanical well being of the vehicle, checking tires, brakes, lights, horns and other safety features. Any number of violations could place a vehicle out of service until it is repaired.

High-tech improvements assist the officers in their inspections. Several databases can be accessed to give a rundown on the vehicle by federal DOT number or the driver by commercial driver license number. Fuel stop records and points of entry from other states can be checked for specific vehicle information.



Officer Boswell shows the driver that his load of bricks is not secured well enough on the trailer.

MVE overview continued from page 4

Another infraction sure to stop a shipment in its tracks is a driver logbook violation. "A major cause of crashes is driver fatigue or inattention," said Boswell. "The logbook is the main way to track a driver and make sure the laws are being followed."

A computer program called PC Miler allows the officer to input information from the driver's logbook and map out the route the driver says has been taken. "There is just no way to fake a logbook with all the checks we have available. With the computers we have in our vehicles, we can run the same checks on patrol that we have available at the scale. PC Miler is the industry standard that trucking companies use, and we use it all the time to double check logbooks. Sometimes the driver would have to be doing 180 miles per hour to have that logbook be correct," said Boswell. "Any logbook violation will get the driver put out of service for 10 hours and yield a fine."

"It's rewarding when we inspect a vehicle and find it and the driver to be safe," said Boswell. "But it's a little frustrating because of the limited number of inspections we can perform. There are only so many officers and thousands of trucks going by each day."

By the numbers

For fiscal year 2003, which ended last September, 8,057 overweight violations were issued for a total of \$2,232,783 in fines deposited into the Road Use Tax Fund. Seventy-two percent of the violations were detected by officers on patrol, while 38 percent were found at fixed-scale sites.

BIG LOAD



With a state crisscrossed by two major shipping routes, Interstates 35 and 80, trucks hauling large loads are not unusual; hauling humongous loads is a different story.

A recent shipment originating in Springfield, Mo., traveled through Nebraska and into Iowa for a final destination in Cedar Rapids. This took a great deal of planning, some logistical magic, and several employees from different DOT offices and the trucking company working together.

Three loads containing fermenting tanks measuring 152 feet long, 20.5 feet wide and nearly 22 feet high were being shipped individually to the ADM ethanol plant in Cedar Rapids. Each load weighed 168,000 pounds.

The loads started on their journey Friday, July 30. Once they crossed the border from Nebraska, officers from Motor Vehicle Enforcement weighed and inspected the loads. The shipment was parked for the weekend, but continued on its way down county roads, state highways and even I-29 for a short time, flanked by enforcement officers who performed periodic safety checks and controlled traffic. Employees from the Sidney shop assisted with traffic control when I-29 had to be blocked for a short time to accommodate the loads.

The tanks finally arrived at their destination Monday, Aug. 9. Accomplishing this feat was a great team effort in the coordination of permits by Motor Carrier Services staff, safety checks by Motor Vehicle Enforcement, and traffic control by the Sidney shop, as well as cooperation from the shipper, receiver and the power companies along the way that had to drop or lift lines to get the tanks safely down the road.

Employees involved were:

Motor Carrier Services: *Larry Steckelberg* and *Bruce Schuck*
 Motor Vehicle Enforcement: *Sgt. Drew Johnson* and *Officers Phil Smith, Randy Moore* and *Jeff Franzen*
 Bridges and Structures: *Jan Wiley*
 Sidney shop: *Jeff McQueen, Bill Welchans, Andy Sheldon, Mark Hilger, and Dick Duncan*

New system enhances transit data entry

New technology will soon make one of the major tasks of the Office of Public Transit (OPT) much less cumbersome.

Since the OPT staff is responsible for managing and distributing federal transit funds for the Iowa transit systems, tracking transit vehicle information is an important and very time-consuming task. Currently each transit system submits information such as ridership, mileage and inventory updates to OPT staff. This data is then entered into a spreadsheet where analysis can be performed when needed.

Pam Lee, transportation planner 2, is most often charged with analyzing the data. She said, "The analysis gets complicated because not all systems report their information in the same way. Sometimes it's like comparing apples and oranges, and the data isn't always as complete as it needs to be. We work closely with the transit managers to get the most complete and accurate information, but having a new on-line database system allows everyone to report statistical information in the same way and make the analysis quicker to better serve the transit systems."

A new electronic form, designed with the assistance of Eric Abrams from the Information Technology Division and Diane Lange from Document Services as part of the DOT's eForms project, will soon be online to make both the data input and analysis much more efficient.

Once the eForm is available on the DOT's Web site, all transit systems will have an identification code and password to enable input of data in a uniform manner for inventory updates, odometer readings and disposition of vehicles. It will also offer a place for transit systems to advertise vehicles for sale. The data entered by the transit system is kept in an Oracle database that can be queried in a number of ways for analysis.

"We will still have to audit the input for accuracy, just like we do now," said Lee. "But the data will already be in the system, which will cut down on any inputting errors at this end. The queries will also be able to detect inconsisten-

cies in the data that might have been difficult to see from the manual analysis. I expect it to take about 40 percent less time to complete the analysis because of these tools."

In working with Lee and others in the OPT, Abrams designed reports for the standard items Lee was manually compiling before. Having the Oracle database also allows for data maintenance and exporting of data to other formats like Excel and .pdf files.

In the future the office plans to add a geographic information system component to allow public access to ridership and other data. Also in the planning stage for inclusion in this site is the Transit Improvement System.



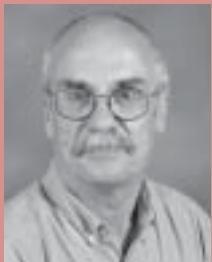
45 years of service **Ron Otto**

In 45 years at the DOT, Ron Otto says he's been very lucky to work with great people from the start.

Otto, now the director of the Office of Right-of-Way, began in the Ames construction residency back in 1957 as a rodman on a survey crew. After five years at the long end of the stick, Otto was named party chief, a job he held until 1969. A nearly 19-month break in service was followed by Otto rejoining the DOT as an engineering aide 2, again in the Ames construction office.

Outstanding Volunteer of 2004 **Harold Andersen**

Access (Assault Care Center Extending Shelter and Support), an Ames organization utilizing the services of up to 60 volunteers, has named Harold Andersen of rural Story City as their volunteer of the year for 2004.



Andersen, a maintenance repair supervisor at the DOT, volunteers several hours a week answering phones at Access. "Several years ago I volunteered at Open Line, a crisis hotline in Ames,"

explained Andersen. "While working with Open Line, many of our referrals went to Access. I got to know many of the Access staff through Open Line, so when that service closed about 10 years ago I started helping on the phones at Access."

Although the atmosphere is often emotionally charged, Andersen has been trained to keep calm and work through the issues as best he can with the clients. Andersen says he gets as much or more out of volunteering as the people he helps. "When somebody's in a bad place, I think it's great to be a person they can talk to. Many times I can help them talk through a situation, help them with problem solving. If they are calling Access, that means they might not have anyone else to talk to. It's cool for me to be there as someone they can use to work things out."

Andersen, a 26-year DOT veteran, and his wife, Marilyn, have three grown children: Micah, and his wife, Jen; Mischa; and Serena.



Lt. Gov. Sally Petersen presents Ron Otto with his 45-year service award.

Otto worked his way up to engineering technician and survey coordinator to a construction technician 3, where he supervised Ames construction employees for more than 20 years.

An opening in the Office of Contracts in 1997 brought Otto to the central complex as a public service executive 2, administering the disadvantaged business enterprise program. In 2000, Otto was named director of the Office of Right-of-Way.

"My construction background has been very valuable in my current position," said Otto. "Because I spent several years doing survey work, I can recognize how the layout of the highway will impact the properties."

Otto attributes his success in Right-of-Way to the teamwork of his employees. He said, "We have six different disciplines in our office with six different managers. Having us all on the same page, working together, has been a major accomplishment and makes it enjoyable to come to work every day. The people here make my job fun."

When he's not in the office, Otto enjoys golf, fishing and traveling with his wife, Sandra. The Ottos have three children and five grandchildren. Their oldest daughter, Julie, is the mother of Lindsey, 21; Lauren, 18; and Jacob, 11. Son Todd and his wife, Jill, have Braydon, 6, and Taylor, 10. The Otto's third child is son Chris.

When asked about retirement, Otto says he doesn't have definite plans. "I'll be looking at my options in the next few years."



Trophy Case

Recent DOT Awards

Brochure wins award

The “Iowa Mississippi River Trail” brochure, produced for the Office of Systems Planning by the Center for Transportation Research and Engineering at Iowa State University, was recently awarded the APEX Award for Excellence for Public Relations and Information Publications. The excellence award was given by Communications Concepts, Inc., a company that provides communications training to public relations and public affairs professionals.

Marshalltown volunteer honored



(from left) Deanna Steveson, Geneve Wetherbee, Jane Andrews, Marcia Daily, Marcia Ziel, Mary Schaer and Norma Black

Marshalltown driver’s license station volunteer Geneve Wetherbee was honored June 25, 2004, for her service to the DL team and public. Dave Titcomb of the Office of Driver Services presented Wetherbee with a Certificate of Appreciation for supporting the mission of the DL station. Wetherbee serves as a greeter at the entrance door and directs people to the appropriate renewal, testing or records station, and is very proactive at answering basic questions and securing test materials for customers.

Kelly wins gold, twice



Jim Kelly, compliance officer 1 in Contracts, participated in the Iowa Senior Olympics in June and Iowa Games in July. He received gold medals in the shot put for the 55-59 year-old division at each competition. Kelly has participated each year since 1987 in the Iowa Games and has won eight gold, five silver and four bronze medals.

Varnum wins gold in Iowa Games



Christy Varnum, information technology specialist 5, received the gold medal for her age group in the Iowa Games mountain bike racing competition. The competition was held July 17 at Peterson Park north of Ames and was Varnum’s first mountain bike race.

Meeker takes home 10 ribbons



Rhonda Meeker, engineering technician senior in Construction, brought home 10 ribbons from the Iowa State Fair. Meeker entered 12 projects including eight crochet entries, two scrapbook items and two flower craft projects. The ribbons won were two first place, five second place, one third place, and two honorable mention.

District 2 golf tournament

If you were not one of the 44 golfers that took part in the June 12 District 2 four-person tournament, you missed a great time. The weather was perfect and the golf course was the best it's been in years. The greenskeeper did his best to keep the tournament a challenge as the pins were placed in some tricky putting spots. The 11 teams were paced by Doug Cox and Greg Tue of Britt, and Daryl Erickson and Willie Mohorne of Mason City with a nine under par 63. Some special contests were held with Greg Mulder getting the longest putt and Jon Narigon closest to the pin on a par three. We will have another three- or four-person tourney sometime in late September or early October, so keep watching for upcoming news. Thanks to the golfers and sponsors for their help.

Champ Flight

- 63- Doug Cox, Greg Tue, Daryl Erickson, Willie Mohorne
- 65- Mike Tjelmeland, Gary Schiltz, Ken Meimann, Nelson
- 66- Matt Schell, Jay Hovick, White, Schell
- 67- Ron Bunting, Barry Sieh, Phil Meraz, Joe Guckent
- 70- Lonnie Wilson, Clyde Bartel, Roger Balke, Cooper

First Flight

- 72- Dave Martin, Bob Buhl, Sean Passick, Greg Mulder
- 73 - Jon Tisor, Lynn Howieson, Jim Doeden, Ransom, Jon Hanson
- 74- Thor Highland, Al Kibsgaard, Wayne Irons, Hunt, Dave Little, Jon Narigon, Bill Tucker
- 76- Jon Arjes, Ted Nixon, Roger Marchant, Peterson
- 77- Dan Chipera, Dean Wiebke, Mark Picht, Roger Haxton

(Editor's note: Tournament organizers did not record first names for some of the golfers.)

Flood update

In July's flood coverage, the assistance provided by the Sidney and Red Oak garages was inadvertently omitted from the article. Employees from these two garages helped with the clean up of the damaged shop in Shenandoah. The employees in Shenandoah wanted to make sure everyone who helped them in their clean-up effort was recognized.

In memory

Harold L. Gillette, 78 of Council Bluffs, died July 2. He retired from the DOT in 1988 after 34 years with the agency serving as a materials technician in the District 4 materials lab. Survivors include a daughter, two sons, nine grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, a niece, a nephew, and their families.

EARLY OUTS

Alphabetical listing of DOT employees taking advantage of the third "Early Out" program

Merlin Allie, information technology administrator 2, Information Technology Division; **Saleem Baig**, transportation engineer specialist, Local Systems; **Kirk Bailey**, motor vehicle officer, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Arlis Bartley**, secretary 1, Jefferson construction; **David Berryhill**, transportation engineer, Design; **Gary Bickers**, automotive mechanic, Mount Ayr garage; **John Boehm**, engineering operations technician, District 2 Office; **William Bowles**, engineering technician senior, District 5 Office; **Robert Boyd**, equipment operator, Carlisle garage; **Donald Breniman**, public service executive 3, Finance; **Daryl Cooper**, highway maintenance supervisor, Waukon garage; **James Cranston**, automotive mechanic, Malcom interstate garage; **Rodney Culbertson**, motor vehicle officer, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Larry Dake**, equipment operator, Urbana garage; **Roger Allen Davis**, equipment operator, Ida Grove garage; **Lanny Derry**, equipment operator, Perry garage; **Jerry Dickinson**, information specialist 3, Media and Marketing Services; **Paul Durham**, highway maintenance supervisor, Ames garage; **Dennis Edwards**, equipment operator, Spirit Lake garage; **David Ellis**, transportation engineer specialist, District 5 Office; **Donna Flinn**, clerk specialist, Vehicle Services; **Ralph Giesman**, communication technician 2, Information Technology Division; **Allan Gilliland**, construction technician supervisor, Ottumwa construction;

William Gottner, construction technician supervisor, Des Moines construction; **Robert Hill Jr.**, transportation engineer specialist, Highway Division; **Katherine Hostetler**, secretary 2, District 3 Office; **Karol "Rusty" James**, public service executive 2, Finance; **James Randy Johnsen**, information technology specialist 4, Information Technology Division; **Lorna Kauzlarich**, information technology specialist 4, Information Technology Division; **William Kirk**, materials technician 4, District 6 materials; **David Martin**, construction technician senior, Jefferson construction; **Arthur McCracken**, garage operations assistant, Burlington garage; **Arlo Merritt**, transportation engineer intern, Traffic and Safety; **Arnie Meyer**, soils party chief, Design; **Christine Miller**, driver's license clerk senior, Council Bluffs DL station; **Donald Miller**, program planner 3, Systems Planning; **Robert Moad**, construction technician senior, Chariton construction; **Charles Moon**, construction technician supervisor, Chariton construction; **Dennis O'Brien**, survey supervisor, Design; **Stephen Olson**, construction technician, Ottumwa construction; **Leslie Peterson**, construction technician senior, Sioux City construction; **David Rutherford**, design technician, Location and Environment; **Bert Shaw**, equipment operator, Sabula garage; **John Shultz**, equipment operator senior, Malcom interstate garage; **Dennis South**, highway maintenance supervisor, Leon garage;

Phillip Spencer, construction technician supervisor, Cherokee construction; **Roger Allen Stensland**, motor vehicle sergeant, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Douglas Stoffer**, highway maintenance supervisor, Latimer garage; **Russell Stonehocker**, construction technician senior, Des Moines construction; **Neil Sutherland**, information technology administrator 2, Information Technology Division; **John Patrick Thomas**, equipment operator, Centerville garage; **Tommy Thomas**, design technician specialist, Design; **Mary Beth Thompson**, driver's license supervisor 2, Driver Services; **Jon Tisor**, engineering operations technician, District 2 Office; **Larry Van Rooyan**, construction technician supervisor, Sioux City construction; **Isaac Ver Meer**, automotive mechanic, Spencer garage; **Gary L. Warner**, equipment operator, Rockwell City garage; **Warren Wassmer**, construction technician senior, Cedar Rapids construction; **William Watertor**, right-of-way agent 2, Right-of-Way; **Roland Weiland**, design technician specialist, Design; **Mary Ann Whipple**, typist advanced, District 2 Office; **Lyle Wills**, equipment operator, Sheldon garage; **Russell Woods**, equipment operator senior, District 4 paint crew; **Andrea Wrage**, secretary 1, Mason City maintenance.

District 1



Bill Gottner's friends and coworkers

Bill Gottner, construction technician supervisor in Des Moines construction, retired July 8 after more than 36 years of service. On his last day coworkers, friends and family gathered to wish Gottner well.

Robert W. Boyd, equipment operator at the Carlisle garage, took retirement July 30 after more than 29 years of service. A coffee was held July 29 at the shop in honor of Boyd's retirement.

Paul Durham, highway maintenance supervisor at the Ames garage, retired Aug. 12 after 39 years of service. A coffee was held Friday Aug. 6 at the Ames garage.

David Martin, construction technician senior in Jefferson construction, retired July 9 after more than 20 years of service. A retirement party was held on his last day at the Ames garage conference room.

District 2

Doug Stoffer, highway maintenance supervisor in the Clarion and Latimer shops, retired July 29 after 40 years of service. A retirement reception held July 28 was well-attended by coworkers, friends and family.

Daryl Cooper, highway maintenance supervisor in Decorah and Waukon, retired July 29 after 30 years of service. At a retirement party July 29, many current and past DOT employees, friends and family attended.



(from left) Mary Ann Whipple, Jack Boehm, Andrea Wrage and Jon Tisor

A group retirement party for **Mary Ann Whipple**, typist advanced, 26 years of service; **Jon Tisor**, engineering operations technician, 38 years of service; **Jack Boehm**, engineering operations technician, 37 years of service; and **Andrea Wrage**, secretary 1, 20 years of service; was held July 19. More than 100 people gathered at the District 2 materials office to wish these employees well. Each was presented with a DOT retirement photo frame/clock. With more than 121 years of DOT experience among them, they will all most certainly be missed!

District 3

Roger Davis, equipment operator in the Rockwell City shop, retired Aug. 12 after 39 years of service. A retirement coffee was held July 30 in the Sioux City construction office.



Kathy Hostetler, secretary 2 in the District 3 office, retired Aug. 12 after 36 years of service. An open house was held Aug. 10 in the District 3 office. Hostetler's 36 years with the DOT were remembered and celebrated with current and retired co-workers, family and friends. The theme of the gathering was "Things that don't work anymore." Kathy was showered with gifts fitting this criteria. Elvis made a surprise appearance and treated everyone to a few numbers.



Michael Kruger (left) and Phillip Spencer

Phillip Spencer, construction technician supervisor in the Cherokee construction office, retired July 29 after 37 years of service, all in Cherokee construction. Spencer, who often ran the office in the absence of a construction engineer, was awarded the DOT's Employee of the Year in 2000. An informal coffee was held July 29, and a dinner July 30 was attended by more than 50 friends, family and coworkers. Spencer was sent off in style to enjoy many happy and well-deserved years of retirement.



Larry Van Rooyan, construction technician supervisor in Sioux City construction, retired July 30 after 38 years of service. A retirement coffee on his last day allowed many coworkers, family and friends to wish Van Rooyan a happy and healthy retirement.



Gary Warner, equipment operator in the Rockwell City shop, retired July 15 after 35 years of service. A party held July 14 with many current and former DOT employees, family members and friends honored Warner. Warner says he plans to spend his free time working in his wood shop and asks that anyone passing through Rockwell City stop by and visit.

District 5

Gary Bickers, automotive mechanic in the Mount Ayr garage, retired Aug. 12. A coffee honoring Bickers was held on his last day.

Bill Bowles, engineering technician senior, retired July 29 after 37 years of service. A retirement coffee was held July 28 in the District 5 materials training room in Fairfield.

Dave Ellis, transportation engineer specialist, retired July 2 after 40 years of service. A retirement coffee was held on Ellis' last day at the District 5 Office in Fairfield.

Al Gilliland, construction technician supervisor, and **Steve Olson**, construction technician in Ottumwa construction, both retired July 29. Both men had 40 years of state service under their belts as they celebrated their retirement at a party on their last day at the Ottumwa garage.

Arthur McCracken, garage operations assistant at the West Burlington garage, retired Aug. 12 after 28 years of service. Coffee and cake were served for friends and family on his last day.

Bob Moad, construction technician senior at the Chariton construction office, retired July 29 after 38 years of service. A retirement coffee was held at the office on Moad's last day. Another party was held Aug. 7 at the Chariton Eagles Club with a social hour and dinner.

Steve Olson, construction technician in Ottumwa construction, retired July 29. A coffee was held on Olson's last afternoon at work.

Dennis South, highway maintenance supervisor for the Leon and Centerville garages, retired July 29 after 35 years of service. A retirement party and open house were held Saturday, Aug. 7 at the Leon Golf & Country Club.

District 6



Bill Kirk (right) and family

William A. Kirk began his employment with the Iowa State Highway Commission Feb. 10, 1959, as an engineering aide 2 on a survey crew in Cedar Rapids. Kirk resigned in July 1960 and returned to work in May 1961. In February 1965 he transferred from Cedar Rapids construction to the District materials office, where he worked as an aggregate and steel inspector. In October 1969, Bill assumed the duties of the district Portland concrete cement (PCC) technician, the job he held until his retirement (except for a very brief stint as the District asphalt cement technician). He retired July 29, 2004.

With nearly 35 years of experience working with PCC, Kirk's knowledge and dedication will be sorely missed, not only by his coworkers in the DOT, but by anyone involved in the industry. Since Kirk has been involved with certification training since it started, he has trained many of the technicians involved in testing PCC. He has been all over the state trouble shooting problems and is widely recognized as the one to turn to if things aren't going right.

Bert Shaw, equipment operator from the Sabula shop, retired Aug. 12. Shaw started at the DOT in 1972 working as a toll operator at the Savanna/Sabula toll bridge and spent a short time working in Manchester construction. He started in the Sabula shop as an equipment operator 1 in 1988. In April 1991, he was promoted to equipment operator 2. There was a coffee honoring him Aug. 11 at the shop. Shaw plans to enjoy spending more time with his family and fishing at his houseboat on the Mississippi River.

Design



Sharon and David Berryhill

David Berryhill, transportation engineer in the methods section, celebrated his retirement with coworkers, friends and family at a retirement reception Aug. 12. Berryhill's wife, Sharon, and his sister and brother-in-law were able to attend to celebrate his career which began in 1958 as summer help in Buffalo. He worked at the central complex while attending Iowa State University. With a civil engineering degree from ISU in 1963, Berryhill began work as a transportation engineer intern in Cedar Rapids. A two-year stint in the Army took him away, but Berryhill returned to the DOT in Ames and worked in the Office of Design's urban section from September 1965 to January 2000. He has worked in the methods section since 2000.



Dennis O'Brien, survey supervisor, retired Aug. 12, after 34 years with the DOT. During his career, surveying technology changed significantly and O'Brien was instrumental in applying these changes to preliminary survey practices. Among his achievements are participation in the High Accuracy Reference Network, standardization of preliminary survey field collection techniques using automated methods, and development of DOT global positioning satellite network procedures. His knowledge of surveying and dedication to his career will be missed.



Warren Wassmer, construction technician senior in Cedar Rapids construction, retired July 29 after nearly 48 years of service. A lunch was held July 28 and a coffee July 29 to honor Wassmer, who left for Florida with his family the day after his retirement.



Arnie Meyer (left) and Tommy Thomas

The soils design section recently wished happy retirement to three long-time coworkers and friends. **Bill Bishop**, design technician, retired June 30, just prior to the early out date of July 1. **Tommy Thomas**, design technician specialist, and **Arnie Meyer**, soils party chief, both retired July 29. All three left the DOT after careers in soils design that added up to about 135 years (yes, 135 years!). Large crowds, including their families, attended retirement coffees to congratulate them, converse about “old times,” and wish them the very best. All three are already missed in soils design not only for obvious work-related reasons, but also because of the many years of friendship we have had with Bill, Tommy and Arnie.

Roland Weiland, design technician specialist, rolled up his last aerial photograph July 29 after 46 years of service. Weiland’s friends, coworkers and family joined him for a celebration on the afternoon of his last day to wish him well before he flew off into the sunset.

Director’s Staff Division



Skip Nelson (left) and Jerry Dickinson

Jerry Dickinson, information specialist 3 in Media and Marketing Services, retired Aug. 12 after more than 26 years of service. An open house held Aug. 11 gave more than 100 current and former employees the opportunity to stop by and wish the DOT’s former Webmaster well as he begins a new chapter in his life.

Driver Services



Mary B. Thompson



Christine Miller

Mary B. Thompson, driver’s license supervisor 2, and **Christine Miller**, DL clerk senior, both at the Council Bluffs DL station, retired July 2. Employees celebrated with a potluck and gifts for each of their retiring friends. Thompson plans to spend time at her cabin with her family and Miller has already started a new career as the assistance manager of CJ Banks at the Mall of the Bluffs. She also enjoys motorcycle rides with her husband.

Highway Division



Mitch Dillavou(left) and Bob Hill

Bob Hill, transportation engineer specialist in project scheduling, retired July 30 after 39 years of service.

Information Technology Division



Merlin Allie (center) and family

Merlin Allie, information technology administrator 2, retired July 30. A coffee was held on his last day to wish Allie well in his retirement.

Ralph Giesman, communications technician 2, retired Aug. 12. A party was held Aug. 5 in honor of Giesman's retirement.

Local Systems



Larry Jesse(left) and Saleem Baig

Saleem Baig, transportation engineer specialist, retired July 30 after 34 years with the department. Baig worked in various DOT offices including Bridges and Structures, Research, Transportation Data, and Design. His last 10 years have been with the Office of Local Systems. At his retirement party July 26, Baig was presented with an Iowa DOT retirement clock, a travel bag and some "traveling" money from his fellow employees. We wish Saleem a long and happy retirement!

Location and Environment



Mark Kerper(left) and David Rutherford

David Rutherford, design technician, retired July 29 after 30 years of service. An office pizza party was held to honor Rutherford and three other OLE employees with more than 30 years of service.

Motor Vehicle Enforcement

Kirk Bailey, motor vehicle officer, retired July 29 after 20 years of service. A luncheon was held with his crew at the Cove Inn near Tipton on his last day.



Rodney Culbertson (left) and Roger Stensland

Rodney Culbertson, motor vehicle officer, and **Roger Stensland**, motor vehicle sergeant, both retired Aug. 12 after 38 years of service each. A joint retirement coffee was held Aug. 12 in Ames and attended by many family, friends and coworkers.

Operations and Finance

Karol "Rusty" James, public service executive 2 in claims management, retired July 29 after 29 years of service. Friends, family and coworkers honored James at a retirement farewell on his last day.

Planning and Programming

Don Miller, program planner 3, retired Aug. 12 after more than 40 years with the department. Miller spent nearly 39 of those years with Transportation Data prior to his transfer to Systems Planning. A retirement coffee held his last day celebrated Miller's accomplishments and gave coworkers the opportunity to wish him well as he plans to travel, fish and enjoy life with his wife.

Right-of-Way

Bill Watertor, right-of-way agent 2, retired July 29 after 38 years of service. A retirement reception was held July 26 in the conference center. Now a retired guy, Watertor plans to continue following his beloved Cubs and attend a car race or two.

Traffic and Safety

Arlo Merritt, transportation intern, retired July 6 after 33 years of service. An open house July 1 gave current and past coworkers the opportunity to wish Merritt well in the future.

Vehicle Services

Donna Flinn, clerk specialist, retired July 30 after 26 years of service. Her friends and coworkers gathered on her last day to honor Flinn.

Eula Burton, clerk advanced, retired June 30 after 15 years of service. A celebration of her career was held June 28. (Burton's retirement was not part of the state's early out program since she retired one day before the program began.)



Hats Off

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

To: Comment section of iowadotmaps.com

From: Jorge Rafael, Maia, Portugal

I want to give my congratulations for your work and the information that you make available to people who try to know your state of Iowa. After visiting through diverse Internet sites about the states of your nation, I have to say that your work is the best. We can travel your state through the magnificent maps and aerial pictures and learn the territory very well. I am a lover of geography. Once again, my congratulations.

(Editor's note: This note was translated from Portuguese to English.)

To: Mark Wandro

From: Jeff Carter, Marion

My wife and I wanted to take the opportunity to express our sincere gratitude for the assistance provided to us by two DOT employees. We were traveling to Cedar Falls for our daughter's registration appointment at the University of Northern Iowa when we experienced a flat tire. Shortly after we pulled off the road **Tom Geiger** and **Dennis Henry** stopped and helped us change to the spare. While Tom was assisting me with the tire, Dennis was helping keep us safe by monitoring the traffic. We are very grateful for their assistance. Without them we would have missed our daughter's appointment at UNI and she might not have been able to get the classes she wanted for the fall semester. Please recognize Tom and Dennis for their efforts; it's heartening to know that we have such caring employees working for the state of Iowa.

*(Editor's note: **Tom Geiger** and **Dennis Henry** are both equipment operators in the Urbana garage.)*

To: Mark Wandro

From: Dave Smetter, Director of Marketing Communications, Wells Blue Bunny

On behalf of myself, Wells' Dairy, the Ice Cream Capital of the World Visitor Center and the community of Le Mars, we would like to thank you and your staff and commissioners for satisfying our request to place Le Mars on the Interstate 29, exit 144A directional signs in Sioux City and other directional sign locations in the area. Le Mars' identification on that sign provides a clear direction to travelers wanting to utilize the bypass as a connection to U.S. 75 north to Le Mars.

*(Editor's note: **Ray Ringgenberg** and **Arlo Merritt** (retired), from the Office of Traffic and Safety and **Richard Michaelis** and **Roxanne Seward** from District 3 were involved in accomplishing this signing project.)*

To: Mark Wandro

From: Doug Duncan, West Liberty

A note of big thanks to **Terry Crane** and **Danny Wagner** for their welcomed help on Friday, June 4, when I had a blow-out on I-80 east of Wilton. I would really have been in trouble if they hadn't come along! They changed my blown tire under tough conditions of poor jack equipment, and terrible traffic nearby. I appreciate them and want to thank them once again!

*(Editor's note: **Terry Crane** and **Danny Wagner** are equipment operators from the Tipton shop.)*

To: Mark Wandro

From: Marci Baldwin, Allstate Insurance

I am writing this letter to tell you how grateful I am for the help I received this morning from **Scott Robinson** and **Jeff Rumbaugh** who work for the DOT's Ames office. I ran over some metal on the interstate and immediately got a flat tire. I had just stopped to call my husband on the cell phone, but he was some distance away in Ankeny. Scott and Jeff pulled right up behind me and just took over. They worked hard changing my tire, even telling me how fast I could drive on the spare. They put the damaged tire in the trunk and put the jack back together for me. I was very thankful! I offered to pay them, but they wouldn't take any money. I truly appreciate their help.

*(Editor's note: **Scott Robinson** and **Jeff Rumbaugh** are both equipment operators in the Ames garage.)*

To: Mark Wandro

From: Genene and Glenn Moss, Nichols

We would like to thank **John Lyle** and the staff at the **Washington shop**. We have been experiencing drainage problems with the ditch along our section of Iowa 22 that has affected our tile lines. Within two hours of a phone call to John, one of his staff was here to look at the problem. Three days later the job was completed. We have called twice before regarding gravel in the drop off between our driveway and the highway. Both times we have had immediate help. We realize that sometimes state employees get a bad rap, but the Washington shop is first class. These guys are courteous and efficient and their response time is fantastic. We applaud them and their impeccable work ethics. They do a great job 365 days a year.

*(Editor's note: **John Lyle** is the equipment operator senior in the Washington garage.)*

To: Mark Wandro

From: Gregory G. Milani, Ottumwa

I have had two recent opportunities to deal with the customer service department at the driver's license station. On both of these occasions I was fortunate enough to have **Nathea Johnson** as my contact person. As a result of these contacts, I felt compelled to write this letter to let you know that Nathea was very accommodating. Her temperament over the phone is nothing less than extraordinary when you consider the likely large number of inquiries she has to answer per day. Nathea does an excellent job in contradicting the stereotype attached to state employees.

*(Editor's note: **Nathea Johnson** is a clerk specialist in the Driver Services information center.)*

To: Gary Pickett, highway maintenance supervisor, Newton

From: Patricia White, Sioux City

On June 8 I was on I-80 and I hit something on the road that cut my front tire. Two men came along, changed my tire and followed me to Grinnell. I offered to pay them or buy them lunch, which they refused. We don't see this often anymore. These men got me out of the heat (94 that day) and were very gracious. I have health problems, so was very grateful to these men. Thanks to their help I was on my way to Davenport.

*(Editor's note: The two men involved in this incident were **Ron Rigby** and **Bob Doty**, equipment operators in the Newton interstate garage.)*

To: Richard Kautz, District 6 Engineer

From: Michael C. Van Milligen, City Manager, Dubuque

I would like to take this time to express appreciation to you and your staff for your assistance in completing the city of Dubuque wayfinding signage program. We embarked on this effort several years ago with representatives of the DOT, Dubuque Area Chamber of Commerce Convention and Visitor's Bureau and city of Dubuque staff attempting to create a wayfinding sign program for the city that would assist visitors and residents alike with navigating their way through our community. This sign program has become a critical component of the more than one million tourists that will visit Dubuque and the America's River project. We are nearing completion of the more than 100 signs in our city and along our freeway corridors, and the public reaction has been overwhelmingly supportive. This would not have been possible without the financial commitment and close working relationship we have had from the DOT. Please extend our thanks to all involved. We are looking forward to working with you on future projects.

*(Editor's note: The employees involved in this project were **Steve Wilson**, District 6 traffic technician; **Dave Shanahan**, Dubuque area highway maintenance supervisor; **Tim Crouch**, traffic engineer, Office of Traffic and Safety; and **Kurtis Younkin**, transportation engineer specialist, Office of Traffic and Safety.)*

To: Comment from DOT Web site

From: Tom and Claudia Carroll, Lee's Summit, Missouri

We were passing though Iowa on Interstate 35 going to and from Minnesota when we stopped at the rest areas near Davis City and Dows. We enjoyed the ability to check the weather. Both facilities were very comfortable and you should be commended in your efforts to assist the traveling public. Also, we want to thank whoever came up with the idea for your state road map in large print. It is an excellent idea and I only wish our state folks would pick up on it.

SERVICE AWARDS

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for September 2004.

40 Years

Dennis Meyer, District 4 Office; **Judy Thomsen**, Davenport construction.

35 Years

David L. Lee, Davenport interstate garage; **William Lounsbury Jr.**, Rail Transportation; **Gary Mackey**, District 1 Office.

30 Years

James F. Boyd, District 6 Office; **Jimmy Christensen**, Greenfield garage; **Bruce Chrystal**, District 6 field staff; **Merlin Hutchinson**, Fort Dodge garage; **Gerald Madison**, Design; **John Popelka**, District 1 Office; **David Shanahan**, Dubuque garage; **Steven Vannoni**, Oskaloosa garage.

25 Years

Shirley Andre, Motor Vehicle Division; **Mark Steven Black**, District 2 Office; **Richard Hedlund**, Grimes garage; **Richard Kirby**, Dubuque garage; **Roger Metzger**, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Mark Prime**, Spencer garage; **Kurt Reason**, Avoca interstate garage; **Daniel Reed**, De Soto garage; **Steven Sedlacek**, Cedar Rapids garage; **John Wilson**, Marshalltown garage.

20 Years

Allen Bock, Carroll garage; **Ronald Bunting**, Transportation Data; **Gregory Callanan**, Cedar Rapids garage; **Jeffrey Grimm**, Maintenance; **Terry Wayne Guy**, Procurement and Distribution; **David Oesper**, Materials; **Kathryn Remley**, Waverly garage; **Judy Whitney**, Bridges and Structures; **Cheryl Wolf**, Information Technology Division.

15 Years

Calbert D. Clark Jr., Ottumwa garage; **Allen Cooper**, Centerville garage; **Bryce Feldhoff**, Information Technology Division; **Barbara Johnsen**, Bridges and Structures; **Janet Maldonado**, Driver Services; **Patricia McNamara**, Finance; **Corinne McQuillen**, Dyersville garage; **Roquel Oldfield**, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Roxanne Seward**, District 3 Office; **Amy Sievers**, Driver Services; **N. Bryan Tollefson**, Council Bluffs construction; **Lee Wilkinson**, Maintenance; **Linda Lou Wright**, Driver Services.

10 Years

Brad Becvar, Marshalltown garage; **Janet Blair**, Driver Services; **Edward Engle**, Materials; **Michele Jacobs**, Driver Services; **Brian Kiewiet**, Allison garage; **Craig Sinnwell**, Charles City garage; **Donald A. Wells Jr.**, Leon garage.

5 Years

Heidi Coney, Ames DL station; **Mathew Gogerty**, Right-of-Way; **Craig Greer**, Mason City garage; **Lisa Leftridge**, Council Bluffs DL station; **Lowell Martin**, Williamsburg garage; **Dennis Pitkin**, Mason City garage; **Jimmy Pitts**, Carlisle garage; **Robert Porter**, Burlington garage; **Joe Profera**, Sioux City construction; **Michael "Charlie" Purcell**, Local Systems; **William Wagner**, Grimes garage.



William Lounsbury Jr.
Rail Transportation

PERSONNEL UPDATES

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for July 2 to July 29, 2004.

New Hires

None.

Promotions

Rodney Ferguson, administrative assistant 1, Driver Services; **Amy Gibbons**, driver's license examiner, Des Moines DL station; **Kerry Morris**, equipment operator, Highway Division Highway Helper; **Michael Murray**, construction technician, Cherokee construction; **Daniel Stokes**, engineering technician senior, Contracts; **Dennis Ward**, construction technician supervisor, Jefferson construction; **Jeffrey Weir**, automotive mechanic, Ames garage.

Transfers

David Hawker, bridge inspector 1, Bridges and Structures.

Retirements

See pages 10-15 for early out information.

Know your Iowa DOT

ACROSS

- 2 Acronym for Federal Highway Administration
- 5 New Hampton is in this district
- 6 RCE in Davenport
- 8 Who do we serve?
- 12 Materials Office Director
- 14 Office in charge of rest areas
- 15 Traffic and Safety Office Director
- 16 Cedar Rapids is in this district
- 17 Central complex office in charge of testing aggregate
- 18 Correct abbreviation for Iowa Department of Transportation
- 19 Humeston is in this district
- 20 Bridges and Structures Office Director
- 22 Division with most employees
- 23 District 6 Engineer
- 25 Transportation Data Office Director

DOWN

- 1 District I Construction Engineer
- 2 Clarinda is in this district
- 3 District 5 Materials Engineer
- 4 Driver Services Office Director
- 7 Operations and Finance Division Director
- 9 District 4 Maintenance Manager
- 10 District 2 Field Services Coordinator
- 11 The business we're in
- 13 Number of permanent driver's license stations
- 21 District 3 Local Systems Engineer
- 24 Ida Grove is in this district



Solution will appear in the October edition of INSIDE, or find it now on page 21 of the September edition of INSIDE under the Publications pulldown on DOTNET.



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.state.ia.us.

Mark F. Wandro, Iowa DOT Director

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PLEASE RECYCLE THIS ISSUE



On the cover: Regional transit organizations assist hundreds of Iowans each day.

Service Area	Correspondent	Phone
District 1	Lori Morris, Ames	515-239-1635
District 2	Pam Cox, Mason City	641-423-7584
District 3	Mary Beth Banta, Sioux City	712-276-1451
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
Contracts	Peg Muxfeldt, Ames	515-239-1422
Design	Judy Lensing, Ames	515-239-1469
Director's Staff Division	Lynn Purcell, Ames	515-239-1730
Driver Services	Melanie Mathes, Des Moines	515-237-3153
General Counsel	Sheri Anderson, Ames	515-239-1509
Information Technology Division	Colette Simpson, Ames	515-233-7728
Local Systems	Kathy LaRue, Ames	515-239-1081
Location and Environment	Jean Jesse, Ames	515-239-1225
Maintenance	Cindy Shipley, Ames	515-239-1824
Materials	Dawne Berner, Ames	515-239-1919
Modal	Mary Kay Reimers, Ames	515-239-1661
Planning & Programming Divisions	Mary Kay Reimers, Ames	515-239-1661
Motor Carrier Services	Diann McMillen, Des Moines	515-237-3250
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

Rollin', rollin', rolling...



150 years ago, when the Iowa State Fair was held in Fairfield, horses and wagons were the usual mode of transportation.

The first Iowa State Fair was hailed as a success and described in the local media as the largest gathering of people in Iowa's history. Fair history continued for the next 22 years as the fair was held in various cities until it reached its final destination in Des Moines.

In 1954 a hearty group came up with the idea of a horse caravan from the original fair site in Fairfield to the modern site on Des Moines' east side. This year, the 150th celebration of the fair and 50th anniversary of the first horse caravan sparked the idea of another horse trek from southeast Iowa.

Logistics of moving 400 people, 45 teams of horses pulling wagons, 150 saddle horses and several support vehicles over busy roadways filled with vehicles traveling 55 to 65 miles per hour took much effort to coordinate. Because of the increased highway traffic, the route was slightly different from the one taken 50 years ago. Coordination with District 5 personnel found a route (mostly on county roads) that would be safer and not tax the horses and riders. The riders found the amenities provided by ride organizers more advanced than in 1954, including catered meals and portable toilets. Still, a sense of nostalgia permeated the ride as many dressed in 1850s garb.

The caravan's journey began in Fairfield on Saturday, Aug. 7. It continued to Ottumwa on Sunday, Oskaloosa on Monday, Monroe on Tuesday and through Pleasant Hill Wednesday to join the Iowa State Fair Parade 120 miles from Fairfield.

The overnight stop in Oskaloosa brought riders to the Oskaloosa maintenance garage where the parking area and an adjacent pasture turned into a corral for the night. Highway Maintenance Supervisor Steve Vannoni reported that the group was well-mannered and cleaned up after themselves. "We provided water and an open area. They asked to cut open a fence to access the pasture, but they came back the next week and repaired it."

This historical event is one not soon forgotten by those on the ride, those who helped plan it or anyone who witnessed a line of horses and wagons stretching off in the distance almost as far as the eye could see.



Crossword solution for September

