

FEBRUARY 2013

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## REAL ID comes to Iowa

In response to acts of terrorism committed against the United States, and in an effort to ensure the safety of citizens, Congress passed the REAL ID Act of 2005. The Iowa DOT began issuing driver's licenses (DLs) and nonoperator's identification cards (ID) that are REAL ID approved on Jan. 15, 2013.

**What is a REAL ID-approved document?** A REAL ID-approved document is a state-issued DL or nonoperator ID card that meets the federal standards for physical security and verification of identity and legal presence in the United States. A REAL ID-approved document is also a valid form of federally issued identification, such as a U.S. passport book or card.

**What does a REAL ID-approved document look like?** In Iowa, a REAL ID DL or nonoperator ID card looks nearly identical to a standard DL or nonoperator ID card. It is made of the same material and contains the same advanced security features. The only difference is a star verification mark appearing in the upper right-hand corner of the card. The star indicates to federal screening officials that the person's identity has been verified according to the latest federal standards.

**Do you need a REAL ID-approved DL or nonoperator ID card?** A new applicant for an Iowa DL or nonoperator ID card is already required to present the documents necessary to obtain a REAL ID-approved card; and will be automatically issued a REAL ID-approved card with the star verification mark upon successful completion of the application process.

Existing Iowa DL or nonoperator ID card holders are not required to

get a REAL ID-approved card, but may apply for one if needed.

In the future, a REAL ID-approved card may be needed for certain federal purposes – specifically, to board a plane, enter a federal building that requires identification to enter or enter a nuclear power plant. If you don't plan to do any of these activities, or will do so infrequently, you may decide you don't need a REAL ID-approved card.

You do not need a REAL ID-approved DL or nonoperator ID card if you have another form of federally approved identification. Valid U.S. passport books and cards, as well as other forms of federally issued identification, are accepted forms of identification for all of the REAL ID purposes.

**There is no reason to rush out and get a REAL ID.** Most Iowans can wait until their driver's license renewal date to apply for a REAL ID, if they are interested in obtaining one.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has previously postponed compliance dates as states have worked to adopt the REAL ID requirements, and recently indicated that it intends to review the state and individual compliance dates, and then release a new and extended schedule this fall. The exact time this schedule will be released and new compliance dates it will propose are not yet known. However, these are the current compliance dates, which vary according to your date of birth.

- If you were born after Dec. 1, 1964, your federal compliance date is Dec. 1, 2014. Beginning Dec. 1, 2014, federal officials may ask you for REAL ID-approved identification when boarding aircraft, entering federal facilities that require ID to enter and entering nuclear power plants.

- If you were born on or before Dec. 1, 1964, your federal compliance date is not until Dec. 1, 2017.

**How do you apply for a REAL ID-approved document?** Applying for a REAL ID-approved DL or nonoperator ID card is just like applying for your first card. You must present documents that establish your identity and date of birth, Social Security number, residency and residential address, any name changes, and fact that you are lawfully in the United States.

It doesn't matter how long you've held an Iowa DL or nonoperator ID card, every applicant for a REAL ID-approved card must provide these documents. However, you do not have to take a drive test or knowledge test, unless you need one for another reason.

To help applicants identify and gather the required documents, use the Iowa DOT's Web application – "Prepare for Success" at <http://www.iowadot.gov/mvd/realid/success.html>.

**Is there an added cost for a REAL ID-approved document?** There is no additional fee charged to get an Iowa REAL ID-approved DL or nonoperator ID card. If you are applying for your first Iowa DL or nonoperator ID card or renewing one, you will be charged the same standard fee. However, if you want a REAL ID-approved card before your next renewal, you will be required to pay a \$1 duplicate fee.

**For more information:**

Log on to Iowa DOT's REAL ID website at <http://www.iowadot.gov/mvd/realid/faq.html>.

- Call the toll-free information line at 800-532-1121, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., except state holidays.
- Visit your nearest driver's license issuance site.

# Elijah Gansen

## 2012 Design Employee of the Year



**F**or Elijah Gansen, transportation engineer in the Office of Design, 2012 was a year of challenges. Gansen was the lead designer on several large projects and assisted with designs for many others. For his extra efforts, Gansen was named the 2012 Office of Design Employee of the Year.

"This past year was a little more intense than in previous years," said Gansen. "I have been used to getting one large project and working on all aspects of that project until it was ready to be let. Last year there were several large projects that all needed to be done at one time, so there was a lot more coordination involved. Luckily, our section is a close-knit group, and everyone is willing to jump in and help each other out."

Gansen, who worked for the Iowa DOT in college and has been with the agency full time for seven years, has a varied background, having worked in Materials and the New Hampton construction office, and a consulting engineering firm. Gansen is quick to point out, "The employees in the Office of Design work well together, but sometimes our office field staff may not get all the appreciation they deserve. We rely on them to gather survey data and soil data. The data that they collect is critical to our success in Design and they are often asked to rush the data collection to keep our projects on time."

Over the past year, Gansen has continued work he began on the Interstate 80/U.S. 6/U.S. 65/Hubbell Avenue interchange in Altoona, a rush design project of I-380 in Evansdale and a group of projects all moved up in the schedule due to additional available funds.

Paul Flattery, Gansen's supervisor, said, "Elijah was assigned the Black Hawk County I-380 reconstruction project that was needed to be completed

in three weeks to maintain the schedule. Understanding the urgency, Elijah was willing to put in the extra hours to accomplish this task. When the second stage of this project was also moved up in the program, he managed his workload and was able to get these large projects completed for the same letting. Now Elijah is assigned as the lead designer for the I-80/I-380/U.S. 218/Iowa 27 interchange project, and is doing all the necessary designs and staging layouts to keep this project on schedule. It is nice to know you can ask him to do certain parts of a plan and he can get it done with very little explanation or assistance. His knowledge in plan preparation has been an asset to the section, especially when we are short staffed."

"I like challenges, and these projects were definitely challenging," Gansen said. "The time constraints and traffic management piece of the I-380 project were especially difficult. Our goal was to build the best infrastructure with available funds, while minimizing the impact to the traveling public."

Gansen continued, "As an agency we have gotten more focused on keeping the road open during construction to minimize the impact to traffic. This isn't always the quickest way to get the improvement done, but it is often the best for the traveling public."

Gansen, a native of Riceville, was also nominated for the employee of the year honor last year. "Even though I had been nominated last year, it was a still a surprise to win this award. I don't think I'm doing anything differently, it is just the way I work."



## Winter crash study expands

If you've lived in Iowa any length of time, you just know that there are stretches of road that get worse than others during winter storms. Since 2006, the Iowa DOT has been working with the Institute for Transportation at Iowa State University to study the circumstances surrounding reportable crashes occurring in winter driving conditions on every mile of Iowa's interstate system. In the past few years, the data was expanded to all state-maintained highways.

Are there geometry issues with the road or possibly topography issues that cause blowing snow to be more of a problem in one place than in another? When the issues are identified, the job becomes finding mitigation strategies to reduce crashes in those areas.

Tina Greenfield of the Office of Maintenance said, "Last year three sites were chosen for further study, I-35 in the Williams/Dows area, I-29 near Sloan and I-80 east of Iowa City.

Because the winter was so mild last year, we couldn't gather much data on the effectiveness of the mitigation strategies we chose for these sites, but it was good practice for honing our crash investigation skills. This year the study has been expanded to include more than 10 sites to see if we can pinpoint causes of crashes during winter weather."

Greenfield continued, "We are looking at crash reports, weather records, crew logs, and observations from local maintenance crews and law enforcement to find common characteristics.

We hope the data will lead us to reasons why so many crashes occur at certain locations. We also want to find out what kinds of vehicles or drivers are more affected. From there we will investigate ways that we might prevent those kinds of crashes."

Deciding what to do can be tricky. Greenfield said, "Some areas have a combination of factors that can't be changed, so you have to find mitigation strategies that work with those elements. For example, on I-35 near Williams/Dows and on I-29 near Sloan, the areas are very flat and there are few windbreaks," she explained. "A snow fence would be an obvious choice, but they also have fairly narrow rights of way, so snow fences haven't been as effective or can even be detrimental. We decided to try a system of dynamic message boards to warn drivers of the conditions instead."

Other mitigation strategies may be considered in this study depending on the crash characteristics of the sites. Modifications to snow fence, snow plow routes, road design, signage and others may be options.

"We are gathering data for these problem locations," said Greenfield. "Then we need to continue looking at the crashes from every angle and do everything we can to minimize the loss of life and serious injuries."



## Iowa DOT testing new traffic speed dashboard

The Iowa DOT has begun using a number of dashboards to provide information on various performance measures in an easy-to-view and understandable way. One dashboard now in test mode will inform maintenance managers and supervisors as to how well traffic was flowing during a snow storm.

The new dashboard will be used following a snowstorm to allow maintenance managers and supervisors to gauge how the traffic speeds kept up with anticipated speeds during the snow event. The theory behind the dashboard is that traffic speeds are an indicator of roadway condition. Tina Greenfield of the Office of Maintenance said, "The traffic speed dashboard is intended to be a benchmark for how we did by looking at actual versus projected traffic speeds during and just after a winter storm."

The new dashboard will be driven by data collected from the Roadway Weather Information System (RWIS), traffic loop sensors and winter crew reports. She said, "In general, traffic speeds are reasonably predictable. Individual speeds will vary, but averages are pretty consistent for certain conditions. This dashboard will compare the predicted speeds to the traffic sensor actual speeds. "After a storm, this dashboard is a quick way to look at a roadway segment and get a feel for whether traffic speeds were better or worse than expected," said Greenfield.

As with all the DOT dashboards, weather is taken into account with the traffic speed dashboard. Greenfield said, "Weather hits us and we do our best to clear the roads. At a glance, the dashboard tells us 'this is what we estimate and this is what happened.' If there is a difference, our job is to find out why and then use that information to do better in the future."



While the traffic speed dashboard is intended to be a quick way to gauge actual traffic speeds related to expected speeds, the data behind the dashboard goes far deeper. Greenfield said, "The data is collected in 10-minute increments, so if someone wants to drill down to that dataset, they can find the fine detail. The initial view is all the data rolled up into a manageable package, but the detail is there if a supervisor wants to see it."

Because the time element is also included, the supervisors can see the percentage of time the road was below, at or above the expected speed. The dashboard can also relay information about how many miles per hour under or over the expected speed traffic was flowing.

This dashboard is based on a research project with Iowa State University and a consultant related to traffic patterns and weather conditions.



# Historic Iowa transportation milestones

**W**hile we celebrate the Iowa DOT's 100th anniversary in 2013, those who traveled into the wilderness should also be recognized for their transportation achievements. Prior to the formation of the Iowa State Highway Commission in 1913, all modes of transportation flourished in their own way, beginning with the earliest trails blazed by the native peoples.

**Rivers.** As the only state in the union bordered by two navigable rivers, it is fitting the first major form of transportation in Iowa was the steamboat. The first ship to pass along Iowa's eastern border was the Virginia in 1823. This mode of travel continued in popularity until the rise of the railroads in the mid-1860s.

**Ferries.** Because steamboat travel was mainly restricted to the north-south flow of the river, travelers wishing to cross the rivers from the east relied on ferries. In the 1830s and 1840s, man-powered ferry boats were a popular way to get across the Mississippi River. Horse-powered ferries soon followed. The first steam ferry was operated in 1852 in Davenport.

**First "military" roads.** When Iowa gained territorial status in 1838, Gov. Robert Lucas approved a law requiring the establishment of a road from Keokuk to the territorial capital in Iowa City. Funding came in a bill from Congress appropriating \$20,000 for Iowa's first "military road" and extended it to Dubuque. When completed, the territorial road passed through Dubuque, Cascade, Monticello, Ivanhoe, Solon, Iowa City, Ainsworth, Crawfordsville, Mount Pleasant, Hillsboro and Keosauqua.

**Stagecoach.** Also in 1838, stagecoaches became a popular means of travel in the Iowa territory. The first regular stagecoach line in Iowa ran twice weekly from Burlington to Fort Madison and Montrose to St. Francisville, Mo. This 45-mile trip took an average of 18 hours. The standard fare was "10 cents per mile and a fence rail." (The rails were used to help the coach out of the mud.) Stagecoaches were also the early mail service to territorial towns. Stagecoach travel was eventually replaced by the relative comfort and reliability of the railroad. The last coach of the Western Stage Co. left Des Moines on July 1, 1870.

**Mormon Trail.** Iowa's borders were thrown wide open when statehood was achieved in 1846. Between 1846 and 1869, approximately 70,000 Mormons (seeking refuge from religious persecution) crossed southern Iowa using oxen-drawn wagons or handcarts. This corridor became the transportation route for successive waves of emigrants, trappers, soldiers, stagecoach drivers and Pony Express riders.



**Plank roads.** Iowa's initial attempt at structural road building came with 94 miles of graded, plank-covered toll road from Bloomington (Muscatine) in Muscatine County to Tipton in Cedar County and on to Vinton. During the years 1849-1851, the Iowa General Assembly authorized nearly 600 miles of plank roadway in the state. However, no more than 50 miles was actually built. The tolling experiment failed and the era of the plank road ended by 1860.

**Rail.** Railroad construction moved into Iowa in 1856 with the completion of the first railroad bridge over the Mississippi River near Rock Island, Ill. By 1860, there were 655 miles of trackage in Iowa. In 1867 the first railroad traversing the state to the Missouri River was completed. By the early 1870s, railroads had significantly altered the economic structure of Iowa, making significant contributions toward development of permanent communities.

**Horse and buggy roads.** Until the 1900s, early road-building efforts were under the jurisdiction of township trustees. In 1858, male residents of townships were required to do two days of work annually upon the roads. By 1900, Iowa had 104,000 miles of road open to travel – all rural mileage was dirt. There were no motor vehicles on the roadways yet, and 20 miles of travel was a long journey for a farm team and wagon.

**Motor vehicle registration.** On April 12, 1904, the 13th Iowa General Assembly first required the registration of motor vehicles and regulated their use on the roads. The registration fee was \$1. The certificate of registration was a round aluminum tag measuring 3½ inches in diameter. In 1904, there were 931 vehicles registered in Iowa.

With the explosion of the motor vehicle industry in the 1910s and 1920s, Iowa began its journey to bring road building out of the mud. With the creation of the Iowa State Highway Commission in 1913, systematic progress to provide a modern means to get people and goods moving had begun.

# Family happenings

## Systems Planning

Peggy Riecken



**Garrett Pedersen**, transportation planner in the Office of Systems Planning, and his wife, Dana, welcomed their second child Dec. 6. Caleb Garrett weighed in at 9 pounds, 6 ounces and measured 20 inches long. He joins big sister, Anna, 3, at home.



**Laura Hutzell**, transportation planner I in the Office of Systems Planning, and her husband, Ryan, welcomed their daughter, Rowen Lynne Hutzell, July 20. Baby Rowen was born four weeks early and weighed 4 pounds, 11 ounces and measured 17 inches long. Although Baby Rowen spent 16 days in the neonatal intensive care unit, she is now home, healthy and happy.

## District 2

April Concepcion



Employees from the **Mason City driver's license station, materials, annex and District 2 Office** donated gifts and money to help an older lowan have a merrier Christmas. Pictured with the gifts is Lori Brandt of North Iowa Community Action and **Duane Nie**, design technician at the District 2 Office.

## District 3

MaryBeth Banta



**Tony Babcock**, resident construction engineer in Cherokee, and his wife, Annette, finalized the adoption of the three newest members of their family Dec. 17. Tony and Annette are now the parents of seven children: Ally, 13, Anna, 12, Andrew, 10, Austin, 6, Jose, 5, Christina, 4 and Manuel, 3. Congratulations to the Babcock family.

*Family happenings, continued on page 8*

*Family happenings, continued from page 7*

## District 4

Brooke Bissell



District 4 held a retirement coffee Dec. 27, for **John Carns** and **Delmar Gettler**. Carns, with 29 years of service, was the senior transportation engineer for the Council Bluffs Interstate System projects. Gettler, with 27 years of service, retired as a bridge inspector 2.

## Location and Environment

Susie McCullough



**Lindsay Edgar**, environmental specialist senior, and her husband, Brian, are the proud parents of a baby boy. Owen Eugene was born Nov. 21 weighing 8 pounds, 5 ounces and

measuring 20½ inches long. Baby Owen was welcomed home by big sister Norah, 2½. Congratulations to the Edgar family.

## Materials

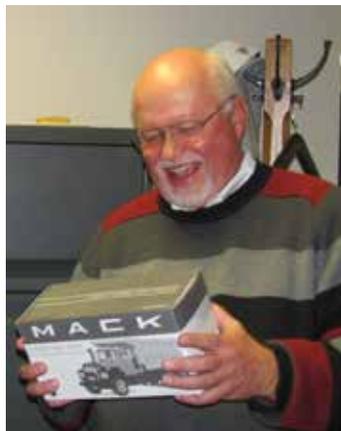
Adriana Reyes



On Dec. 9, **Roger Jones**, materials technician 3, and his wife, Teresa, celebrated the graduation of their son, Todd. Todd graduated from Wartburg College in Waverly with a bachelor of science degree in biology.

## Construction

Nancy McMenam



After 39 years with the Iowa DOT, **John Smythe**, director of the Office of Construction, retired Nov. 30. Smythe started with the department in 1973 as a highway engineer-in-training in traffic engineering. He moved on to become the Cedar Rapids resident construction engineer in 1978. In 1986, Smythe

became the bituminous field engineer in the Office of Construction and in 1990 became the assistant construction engineer. Smythe has been the director of the Office of Construction for the last 19 years.

A farewell open house was held for Smythe Nov. 30, with many co-workers, retirees and construction contractors from throughout the state attending to wish him farewell. Smythe plans to enjoy time with his family, golfing, woodworking, and just whatever is on his 'bucket list.' He leaves us with fond memories, and many good friends. We will miss him and we wish him a long, healthy and happy retirement!

## In memory



**Terrance Meimann**, 66, died Dec. 20, at Story County Medical Center in Nevada. Meimann was born Sept. 21, 1946, in Story City to George Bernard and Virginia (Rule) Meimann. He worked as a transport driver at the Iowa DOT until his retirement in September 2011. He was a

member of the Mississippi Valley Race Car Club and enjoyed fishing, golfing, camping and just loving people. Meimann is survived by Patty Valline of Nevada; and children Monica (Bob) Caldwell of Des Moines, Mike (Julie) Valline, Craig Valline both of Nevada, and Mary (Matt) Coughenour of Maxwell; grandchildren Bobby and Lauren Caldwell, Scott and Jenny Valline, Trever and Trent Coughenour along with great-grandchild Riley; two sisters, Theresa (Gary) Donald of Huntsville, Ala., and Cecelia (Kevin) Christianson of Zearing; and two brothers, Ken (Jacki) Meimann of McCallsburg and Gary (Ricki) Meimann of North Little Rock, Ark.



HyVee.

# Nutrition Notes

with Amy Clark



## Hot and healthy Breakfast

**F**ebruary marks National Hot Breakfast Month and is the perfect time to focus on hot – and healthy – breakfast. Breakfast simply means to “break-the-fast.”

Your body tends to burn fewer calories as you sleep.

Burn more calories and jump-start your metabolism by eating breakfast. Researchers have consistently found that breakfast benefits people of all ages.

- Children who are hungry in the morning have reduced concentration abilities, problem-solving skills and muscle coordination, all important in reading, writing and math.
- Adults who consume breakfast have improved ability to perform tasks that require memory.
- Breakfast helps to prevent mid-afternoon cravings for sweets.
- One common behavior with people who have been successful at losing and maintaining weight loss is that they eat breakfast.
- Eating breakfast jump-starts your metabolism - the sooner your metabolism starts up, the more calories you will burn during the day.

Here are some tips to maximize your breakfast experience.

**Start with whole grains.** Whole grain carbohydrates provide energy, fiber and lots of vitamins and minerals. To add healthy carbs to your breakfast, try oatmeal and whole-grain products, such as bread, cereal, muffins, tortillas or waffles.

**Add protein.** Proteins contain amino acids that build, maintain and replace tissues throughout the body. Try lean proteins like an egg, slice of reduced-fat cheese, Greek yogurt, kefir, nut butters, cottage cheese, Canadian bacon or a sprinkle of wheat germ atop just about anything.

**Remember fruits and vegetables.** Fruits and vegetables are loaded with antioxidants, fiber, vitamins and minerals. It is easy to incorporate fruits at breakfast since Mother Nature packages many of them in a ready-to-go container. Before heading out the door, grab a banana, pear, apple, grapefruit or other seasonal selection. Frozen berries and tropical blends can be whipped into a smoothie. Chopped vegetables like spinach, broccoli, carrots and tomatoes can be added to your morning omelet or served up raw in a juice.

## Easy-to-make breakfast ideas

### Wrap it!

- Meaty burrito: One low-carb, multigrain tortilla with four slices of deli ham or turkey and a mozzarella cheese stick. Microwave 30 seconds; wrap while warm. Serve with low-sodium V-8 juice. (240 calories)
- Breakfast taco: One low-carb, multigrain tortilla topped with ¼ cup 2 percent milk shredded cheddar cheese. Microwave 30 seconds. Add salsa and shredded lettuce; roll while warm. (220 calories)
- Banana dog: One low-carb, multigrain tortilla smeared with 1-2 tablespoons almond butter; top with a whole banana. Wrap and go. (360 calories)

### Zap it!

- Waffle wedge: two Kashi waffles sandwiched with 1½ tablespoons of nut butter and sliced apples or pears. Microwave 30 seconds. (370 calories)
- Instant oats and more: microwave ½ cup quick oats and ¼ cup frozen blueberries in 1 cup water for 1½ to 2 minutes; stir in ¼ cup walnuts; sprinkle with cinnamon and pinch of sugar. (385 calories)
- Hot yogurt parfait: pour ½ cup frozen unsweetened blueberries or cherries in mug; microwave 30 seconds. Stir in one cup nonfat vanilla yogurt. Top with 2 tablespoons granola. (220 calories)

### Grab it!

- Breakfast-in-a-bag: whole almonds, dried cherries or cranberries; cereal and chocolate Chex Mix and pre-portion ahead of time in snack-size bags.
- Whole wheat toast with almond butter; Greek yogurt with fresh berries.
- Toasted bagel thin with low fat cheese; orange.
- Hard-boiled egg; tomato juice or spicy tomato juice.





**A**s part of their 2013 lecture series, the Ames Historical Society will welcome DOT Librarian Leighton Christansen Tuesday, Feb. 26, at 7 p.m. Christansen will present information about Iowa Department of Transportation's centennial and the agency's 100 years of contributions to Ames, our state and the nation.

At 7 p.m. April 30, Jeff Benson, Lincoln Highway historian, will present information on the 100 year anniversary of that corridor, the first transcontinental road in America.

Both presentations, two of four on the Ames Historical Society schedule for this year, will be held at the Ames City Auditorium, 520 Sixth St. A \$3 freewill donation is requested at the door to assist with auditorium rental fees.

## eFile for a fast income tax refund

**N**early 90 percent of Iowans filed their income tax return electronically last year. Join your friends and neighbors in getting your Iowa income tax refund in 10 days or less when you file electronically. eFiling is fast, safe and easy.

You may qualify to eFile for free. The Iowa Department of Revenue's website ([www.iowa.gov/tax](http://www.iowa.gov/tax)) features links to software companies offering online filing of income tax returns. File your federal and Iowa income tax returns together from the department's website.



**T**he Toys for Tots committee would like to say thank you to everyone who participated in the charity fundraising events this year. Over the course of the last year, there were several events, including an auction, bake sale, soup lunch, present wrapping event and popcorn sales.

Thanks to your generous donations, \$7,596.81 was raised and 342 toys collected in the central complex. These donations certainly made a difference in the lives of central Iowa kids at Christmas.

In Ankeny, Toys for Tots fundraising events netted \$934.50 and 240 toys collected.

Thanks again to everyone who participated!

## Calling all quilters ... and nonquilters too!



### What you need to do:

**Commit:** to help in any way you can

**Create:** cut and sew block(s)

**Donate:** a little time; sewing, quilting or finishing materials (fabric, batting, thread, etc.); money for supplies

If you are interested in participating, or if you have questions, please contact Deanne Popp, Office of Local Systems, at 515-239-1527 or [deanne.popp@dot.iowa.gov](mailto:deanne.popp@dot.iowa.gov) by March 1.

More information will be provided to anyone committing to join in the effort.



## Service awards

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for February 2013

### 35 years

**Jeffery McQueen**, Sidney garage

### 30 years

**Monty Shuey**, Information Technology Division

### 25 years

**Melody Aswegan**, Driver Services; **Brenda Boell**, Local Systems; **Daniel Clawson**, Local Systems; **Rebecca Hanson**, Materials; **Gregory Perkins**, Oskaloosa garage; **Kelly Popp**, Information Technology Division; **Barney Thomsen**, Sigourney garage; **Barbara Weigel**, Information Technology Division

### 20 years

**Gregory Fratzke**, Independence garage; **Chris Grimm**, Grimes garage; **Paul Radmaker**, Emmetsburg garage; **Khashi Reyes**, Des Moines garage; **Mark Turkal**, Coralville garage; **Kevin Uthoff**, Urbana garage; **Michael Willis-Hollister**, Driver Services

### 15 years

**Troy Clouse**, Le Mars garage; **Brian Smith**, Chariton construction

### 10 years

**MaryBeth Banta**, District 3 Office; **Dwaine Berte**, Algona garage; **Jeremy Blue**, Chariton garage; **Jeanne Bornand**, Vehicle and Motor Carrier Services; **Alex Crossgrove**, District 3 materials; **Myron Fox**, Design; **Patrick Haynes**, Mount Pleasant garage; **William Lane**, Highway Helper; **Milly Ortiz-Pagan**, Systems Planning; **Hugh Payne**, District 3 materials; **Richard Pross**, Bridges and Structures

### 5 years

**Linda Anderson**, Employee Services; **Christopher Collison**, Onawa garage; **Robert Ellis**, Williams garage; **Susie Hall**, Support Services; **Michael Kingery**, Knoxville garage; **Mark Lowe**, Motor Vehicle Division; **Joel Monroe**, Waukon garage; **Michael Roller**, Rockwell City garage; **James Rushman**, Bloomfield garage; **Russell Schmidt**, Jefferson garage; **James Sikora**, Spencer garage; **Jodi Voss**, Davenport DL station; **Jeff Whipple**, Martensdale garage; **Nick Witte**, Allison garage

## Personnel updates

Due to a computer upgrade, the personnel report is not available this month.



# INSIDE

INSIDE is developed to help keep all Iowa DOT employees informed about critical issues affecting them, recognize DOT employees for their excellent service and share interesting aspects in the lives of our co-workers. For more information, contact Tracey Bramble, Office of Strategic Communications, at 515-239-1314 or email [tracey.bramble@dot.iowa.gov](mailto:tracey.bramble@dot.iowa.gov).

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**On the cover:** First place photo taken by Nate Burrows in the airshow category of the 2012 Aviation Photography Photo Contest

**February I-Spy clue:** Love is in the air.

**January I-Spy solution:** "DOT 4EVR" carved in the tree

## Pat Harmeyer named hospice volunteer of 2012

**Y**ou've heard it a thousand times, the only sure things in life are death and taxes. But even though death is inevitable for every one of us, the thought of those last days of life are often very frightening.

Pat Harmeyer of the Motor Vehicle Division sees death a bit differently. "Death should be about a celebration of a life lived," she said. To help people through this very difficult time, Harmeyer has volunteered the last several years doing hospice work in Des Moines.

According to Internet research, hospice in the United States has grown from a volunteer-led movement to improve care for people dying alone, isolated or in hospitals, to a significant part of the health care system. In 2010, an estimated 1.581 million patients received services from hospice. Much hospice care is delivered at home, but a growing number of services are now provided in home-like hospice residences, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, veterans' facilities, hospitals and prisons.

Harmeyer first found that she had the temperament for helping the sick and elderly early in her life. "For years, I have taken care of the sick and elderly in my family," she said. "So working with hospice care comes naturally to me."

While she has been involved in hospice care for several years, for the past two years, Harmeyer has worked with a group at Iowa Health Hospice called No One Dies Alone (NODA) at the Taylor Hospice House in Des Moines. This specially trained group of volunteers is called on to sit with terminally ill patients when family members cannot be present or when the patient has no family. Harmeyer said, "Many times, if the family is near, they have been down a long road with the patient. Sometimes the end of life is too much for them to handle, that is where one of the NODA volunteers can step in and be there for the patient, and give the family peace of mind."

She continued, "For those with no family close by, the thought of dying alone is so sad. With societal changes and people out living their family members, extended families are smaller and more geographically spread out. Sometimes the hospice timeframe is very short and family members don't have time to get to the patient. Whatever the reason that the patient is alone, NODA volunteers are there to provide compassionate care, dignity and support if the patient desires that service."



*Pat Harmeyer (right) was honored with the "Heart of Hospice 2012" volunteer of the year award from Iowa Health Home Care. She is pictured with Reed Flood (left), the recipient of the teen version of the award.*

For some patients, the end of life takes longer to arrive. "When I get to spend more time with a patient or family," said Harmeyer, "It is very rewarding to get to know them and then to be there at the end if they want me to be. Although the family often thanks the NODA volunteers, I get as much out of the experience as we hope the patient and family does. On my worst day, I can go sit with a patient and realize the larger picture is that this world isn't about me or the 'crisis' of the workday."

Over the past two years, Harmeyer says she has been a part of NODA hospice care for more than 30 patients from infants to the elderly. She said, "Some are unresponsive, but some talk to you right up to the last. They tell you their stories and beliefs. There is nothing I can do for them but listen and provide a comforting presence. They talk about experiences and people in their lives. Some of the stories they tell me have never been shared before."

The volunteers provide companionship to the patient and family in many ways from playing cards to reading or writing letters for the patient. If the patient wishes, the volunteers will even record their stories on audio or video tape for the families. "There are so many ways volunteers help," said Harmeyer. If you are interested in volunteering, Harmeyer says the training takes about 14 hours for regular hospice care and then another five hours for NODA. For more information about Iowa Health Hospice Volunteer opportunities, contact Iowa Health Hospice at 515-557-3287.