

1 the Roadrunner

Nebraska ♦ Department ♦ of ♦ Roads

February/March 2002

Balancing Act...

A light dusting of snow hangs precariously on a strand of grass. Snow has been scarce through January across most of Nebraska, but wintry weather is never far away.

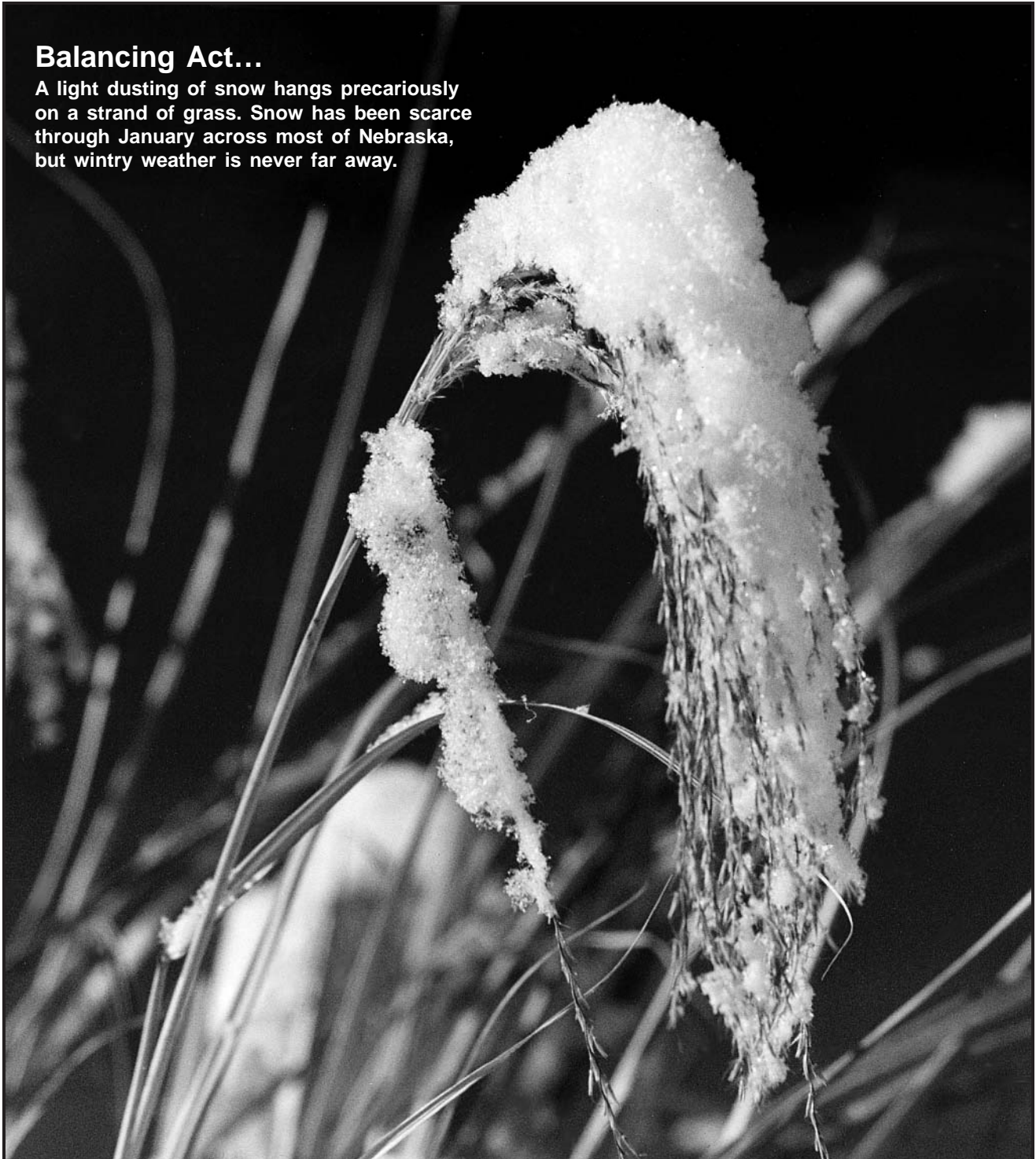


Photo by Jay Bailey

Governor and Other State Officials Say Fatality Rate Causes Concern and Urge Caution on Nebraska Roads

Governor Mike Johanns and representatives of four state agencies have joined forces to ask Nebraskans to do their part to reverse an alarming trend in 2002. From January 1 through January 10, 14 people were killed on Nebraska roads. If that rate were to continue, Nebraska could match or surpass the record number of deaths in January of 2000 when 35 people died on Nebraska roads.

Representatives from the Nebraska State Patrol, the Nebraska Department of Roads, the Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles Highway Safety Division, and Nebraska Health and Human Services System joined Governor Johanns at a January 17 news conference in Lincoln.

There are a few noteworthy similarities between January's fatal crashes. Eight of those killed were in crashes caused by the drivers losing control of the vehicles. Eight of the crashes occurred on county roads. Seven of the people killed were either unrestrained or thrown from the vehicles. Four of the drivers killed were ages 16 or under.

2001 Exceptional

The high number of fatal crashes comes on the heels of an exceptional year. In 2001, 245

people died on Nebraska roads. That's the lowest number since 1985 when there were 237 deaths and the second lowest in more than 50 years. There were 209 deaths on Nebraska roads in 1945.

"We want to continue last year's downward trend, and avoid topping the record set in January of 2000," said Governor Mike Johanns. "That's why we're bringing this to the forefront in hopes everyone who gets behind the wheel will think twice about their responsibilities as drivers."

The Nebraska State Patrol has asked troop area commanders in each of the six troop areas to identify high violation, high traffic areas and focus enforcement efforts in those areas. The Nebraska State Patrol's six community service officers are reaching out to communities and schools to increase awareness and encourage safe driving habits.

Promote Safety

Colonel Tom Nesbitt, Superintendent of the Nebraska State Patrol, said, "We will do our part, but we need drivers to do their part. We cannot possibly patrol every road in Nebraska nor reach every school with our message. But, we'll do everything we can to promote safety on our roads."

The Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles Highway Safety Division provided many grants to local, county and state law enforcement agencies in 2001 and pledges to make additional grant funding available in 2002 to agencies that identify problem areas such as specific county roads of concern.

Beverly Neth, Director of the Department of Motor Vehicles, said, "The fact is, if fatalities continue at this rate, we could lose another 15 lives before the month is over. We don't want that to happen and

that's why we're asking drivers to buckle-up and be responsible."

The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) is leading a public awareness campaign to encourage drivers to pay attention while on the road. The campaign will include television ads that deliver messages like, "When you're in the driver's seat—you make the difference... drive smart!"

Deputy Roads Director Monty Fredrickson said, "We want to help put the brakes on fatalities. We will continue to work diligently to design and build safe roads to do our part."

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of deaths due to injuries in the United States for people ages 1-34.

Deaths Preventable

Dr. Richard Raymond, Chief Medical Officer of the Nebraska Health and Human Services System, said, "Some of these deaths are preventable if we better understand the factors contributing to deaths from crashes. We can develop more effective interventions to prevent them. Reducing emergency response times, increasing use of seat belts, and placing limitations on youth's drivers licenses have produced favorable results."

State agencies are collaborating in an effort to evaluate the problem and find solutions through the Nebraska Crash Outcome Data Evaluation System (CODES). CODES is a multi-agency program that links motor vehicle crash data from the Nebraska State Patrol, emergency medical services, hospitals, death certificates and other sources. The result is a unique database to help policy makers and programs address the problem. ♦

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Fredrickson Honored By AGC

Monty Fredrickson, Nebraska Department of Roads' Deputy Director, was presented the first annual David Coolidge Memorial Award during the Nebraska Chapter of Associated General Contractors' meeting on January 25 at the Embassy Suites in Omaha. Fredrickson was recognized for extraordinary commitment and exceptional contribution to the State Highway System and the promotion of industry cooperation and harmony. Bud Dobson, outgoing President of the Nebraska Chapter of Associated General Contractors, made the presentation.

The award will be presented annually to a person either employed by or retired from NDOR. This person shall reflect the high standards represented by David Coolidge's years of service to the Department.

Fredrickson has served the State of Nebraska as an engineer at NDOR for 31 years. He started as an engineer in 1970 and worked as an inspector

in District 1 (Lincoln). He moved on to Roadway Design in 1972, where he stayed until 1988; he was then a section head. Fredrickson was selected to be the District Engineer for District 2, Omaha, in 1988, and went on to become a Deputy Director in 1992. He is a graduate of UNL's Civil Engineering program, where he received his bachelor's degree in 1969. Fredrickson and his wife, Sonnie, have two sons and four grandchildren.

David Coolidge, who passed away in March of 1999, was District Engineer in District 7 in McCook from 1948 to 1977. Governor Jim Exon appointed him State Engineer in 1977, and he served until retiring in 1983. He served on the Executive Board of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) from 1981-83. In 1983, he was honored with an award for his



Monty Fredrickson, NDOR Deputy Director (left), accepts the David Coolidge Memorial Award from Bud Dobson, outgoing President of the Nebraska Chapter of Associated General Contractors.

53 years of service to the highway construction industry by the Nebraska AGC. In January 1983, he was recognized as the first person to receive the honorary title "Commissioner Emeritus," presented by the Nebraska Highway Commission. ♦

Ford New District 5 Maintenance Superintendent

Chris Ford is District 5 Highway Maintenance Superintendent for the Nebraska Department of Roads. He replaces Larry Fisher, who retired in December with more than 34 years of state service, 12 years as the District's Highway Maintenance Superintendent.

Ford started as a Highway Maintenance Worker at Gordon in 1983 and was promoted to Highway Maintenance Supervisor in 1988. In 1993, Ford was promoted to Highway Superintendent at Chadron, the position he held until his most recent move.

Prior to his work at the State Department of Roads, Ford worked on a farm south of Gordon and as an equipment operator for Sheridan County.



Chris Ford

Ford has several goals he would like to achieve in his new position.

"First I want to help our District continue to move forward with being involved in the technology movement. District 5 has been very proactive in using technology to help us better perform our jobs and I want to promote more of that. I would also like to work on getting more training for our employees. All of the high-tech gadgets in the world

won't do us any good if we can't properly operate them."

Ford noted that he firmly believes in the employees of NDOR and the mission that is before them.

"It is very important to provide safe highways, but we need to not lose track of the idea that we also need to take care of ourselves. Happy people are more productive, and I want this to be the best place there is to work. I plan on working to achieve that."

Ford said he has enjoyed the challenge over the past 19 years, and he especially enjoys the people he works with.

"We have great people working here. Dealing with the public and providing the services they need is very satisfying. Solving problems and helping people is what NDOR does best, and I am proud to be part of that."

Ford and his wife, Peggy, have been married for 21 years and have two sons, Lucas, an engineering student at UNL, and Jacob, a senior at Chadron High School. ♦

Jerome & Betty Warner Expressway Dedicated

A dedication ceremony for the “Jerome and Betty Warner Expressway” was held on January 28 in the Warner Chamber at the Nebraska State Capitol Building.

Nebraska Highway 2 from Nebraska City to Lincoln was named in recognition of the extraordinary legacy of Jerome and Betty Warner. Their children, Jamie Warner, who lives in Phoenix, Arizona, and Elizabeth Warner, who lives in McCall, Idaho, attended the ceremony.

Senator Jerome Warner served 35 years in the State Legislature, seven more than any other legislator. His contributions were many, but for those involved in the transportation industry, he is remembered most for his legacy of highway legislation. His wife, Betty, wrote the actual legislation for the roads study and made significant contributions to other legislation. Thirty years later, this legislation is still working and it serves as an effective and nonpolitical model for other states.

In 1969, after he was elected speaker, Warner introduced 16 bills on highway legislation that, among other things, established a road classification system and a weighted formula for distributing state dollars to cities and counties.

In 1980, the Warner’s led efforts to stabilize highway funding through a state statute setting a variable rate that sets a variable fuel tax generating the revenues to meet the appropriation as set forth by the Legislature and as approved by the Governor.

Jerome and Betty Warner worked as a team; their selfless service and legacy has benefited and will continue to benefit Nebraskans for many years to come. ♦

JEROME AND BETTY WARNER EXPRESSWAY



Attending dedication ceremonies on January 28 for the “Jerome and Betty Warner Expressway” were (left to right): Jamie Warner, son of Jerome and Betty Warner; Governor Mike Johanns; Elizabeth Warner, daughter of Jerome and Betty Warner; State Senator Doug Kristensen; Nebraska Department of Roads Director John Craig; State Senator Roger Wehrbein; and State Senator Curt Bromm. The Expressway includes Highway 2 from Lincoln to Nebraska City.

Wolford, Fagerland New Hwy. Commission Officers



Greg Wolford

Commissioner for District 3 in northeastern Nebraska. In 1999, Wolford was appointed by Governor Mike Johanns to serve for six years as the District 7 Commissioner.

Fagerland, a bank executive from Atkinson, will serve as Vice-Chair for one year, replacing Doug Leafgreen, of Gering, Commissioner for District 5 in the Nebraska Panhandle. In 1999, Fagerland was also appointed to serve six years as the District 8 Commissioner. ♦

Greg Wolford, Nebraska State Highway Commissioner for District 7, which includes 13 counties in southwestern Nebraska, was elected Chair of the eight-member commission during the monthly meeting held January 25. Jerome Fagerland, Highway Commissioner for District 8 in north-central Nebraska, was elected Vice-Chair.

Wolford, a licensed professional engineer from McCook, will serve as Chair for one year, replacing John Kingsbury, of Ponca,



Jerome Fagerland

Roca Spur Bridge Anti-icing System First in Nation

A new bridge anti-icing system scheduled for installation on the Roca Spur Project this spring will be the first of its kind on a U.S. roadway.

The new anti-icing system will be used on a continuous concrete slab bridge located off of Highway 77, south of Lincoln, and will be installed about 50 to 60 feet before a railroad crossing, where rapid deceleration is required, according to NDOR Assistant Bridge Engineer Gale Barnhill. Based on research conducted by Dr. Chris Tuan, professor at the University of Nebraska, and his associates, the system is designed to warm the pavement in advance of expected icy weather conditions, in much the same way as an electric blanket.

According to Barnhill, regular Portland cement concrete that is used on all NDOR bridges is laid as usual. Then angle iron is laid on top of the cured concrete in pairs at four-foot intervals transversely across the bridge. It contains wire with temperature sensors inside. Next, the angle iron is completely encased in a three-inch layer of conductive concrete, which contains metal shavings and is located on top of the concrete slab.

The wires from the angle irons are connected to a control panel. When

electricity is sent through every pair of angle irons and through all the fibers embedded in the concrete, the entire concrete bridge deck becomes a conductor, keeping the deck warm enough so ice won't form.

A weather-monitoring system tracks humidity and temperature of the air. When weather conditions are right, the system can be programmed to start the warming process and maintain an effective anti-icing system for the required length of time. Fully automated, the system can be activated in advance of expected weather changes. If needed, the system can also be manually operated.

In 1999, a test site was completed on I-480 to ensure durability of the concrete with metal shavings embedded in it. Barnhill said the material performed as well as regular concrete. He also noted areas where application of this system is highly favorable.

"This type of system is especially effective in areas where you would have to slow down rather quickly. It would work well in locations such as

off-ramps on Interstate exits going into downtown areas. Or, where geometry just doesn't allow you to have normal deceleration lanes, this could be used to keep pavement dry so you wouldn't have a problem of sliding around," Barnhill said.

Christensen Bros., Inc. of Cherokee, Iowa, was awarded the \$1.48 million project, over four other qualified bidders. Costs are higher than previously anticipated due to materials and labor associated with this new technology, in addition to several other factors, including required realignment of a nearby stream and requirements of working in the vicinity of the railroad tracks.

Barnhill said an application has been made to receive special federal research funding allowed for innovative material and to fund construction costs—an 80 percent federal/20 percent state match—to offset the additional bid cost for the project.

Anticipated construction start is May 2002, with an anticipated construction completion date of October 2002. In addition to bridge construction, the project involves roadway and landscaping work.

According to Barnhill, other than a pedestrian sidewalk in Shelby Ohio, there has been no other installation of this type of system in the country.

"Essentially it's a prototype; we're hoping this effort will demonstrate the feasibility of this function and, hopefully, demonstrate that it can be used in other areas," Barnhill said. ♦

Wanitschke Chair of National Committee



Donna Wanitschke

Donna Wanitschke, Nebraska State Highway Commissioner for District 4, which includes south-central areas of the State, was elected Chair of the Special Committee of Commissioners and Boards for the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), during the organization's annual meeting in December in Fort Worth, Texas.

Wanitschke, from Grand Island, is the first woman to serve in this position, which has a one-year term. She previously held

positions as Secretary and Vice-President during the past two years.

AASHTO is a nonprofit, nonpartisan association representing highway and transportation departments in the 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. It represents all five transportation modes: air, highways, public transportation, rail and water. Its primary goal is to foster the development, operation and maintenance of an integrated national transportation system. ♦

Intelligent Traffic Signs Help Drivers

The Nebraska Department of Roads, in partnership with the University of Nebraska, recently utilized new technology to provide valuable information about approaching road construction to drivers along Interstate 80 in the Omaha area. For several weeks in December and January, portable changeable message signs, one located on eastbound I-80 in advance of "L" Street, and the other located on westbound I-80 in advance of 72nd Street, informed drivers about current traffic conditions in the work zone on northbound I-680 between Pacific Street and West Dodge Road.

Sensors along I-680 around the construction near West Dodge Road measured the average speed of the cars on the interstate. That information was sent to a central computer. If the average speed dropped below 50 mph, the computers activated the road signs to inform motorists about the upcoming slowdown.

According to Dan Waddle, NDOR Traffic Control Engineer, the new signs

were installed to help ease traffic congestion.

"The purpose of the research was to give drivers information about vehicle speed as they approached the Dodge Street construction. Drivers could decide if they wanted to continue on to I-680 or if they wanted to choose another route," Waddle said.

The information was included on a temporary web site designed by University of Nebraska-Lincoln students, which was also accessible from NDOR's website, www.ndor.state.ne.us. An interactive map showed how heavy traffic was on I-80 and showed whether the traffic was moving at a normal rate or if it was congested. Also, an online survey was available to obtain responses from the public on how the signs were working.

This information was made available through the Work Zone Speed Advisory System (WZSAS), an experimental Intelligent Transportation System developed by

NDOR in conjunction with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The system was designed to give drivers an additional decision-making tool by providing current information about traffic conditions in work zones, resulting in reduced traffic congestion and increased safety.

Researchers at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln are gauging drivers' reactions to the signs. If the response is positive, the intelligent signs could become more common around construction zones in Nebraska.

Four other states—Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Wisconsin—collaborate with Nebraska in deploying and evaluating work zone technologies to determine their impact on the safety and efficiency of traffic operations. The Midwest States Smart Work Zone Deployment Initiative is a research-pooled fund whose benefits include efficient use of resources by avoiding duplicative research and identifying effective technologies.◆

"National Work Zone Awareness Week" April 8-12

The third annual National Work Zone Awareness Week, scheduled the second week of April, is a national effort that hopes to increase public awareness of work zone safety needs from the driver as well as the highway worker perspective.

The awareness week is sponsored by the following groups: The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), American Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA), American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA),

Associated General Contractors of America (AGC), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and State Departments of Transportation (DOT's). The goal is to bring to light the hazards and dangers that can be encountered and avoided when driving through a roadway construction zone.

The 2002 national event will occur near the Woodrow Wilson Bridge work zone project on I-75 in Washington, D.C. The event will also host the unveiling of the National Work Zone Memorial.

Memorials have already been unveiled in Nebraska's eight highway districts during 2001.

Calendar year 2000 statistics reveal 1,093 men and women—both workers and motorists—were killed nationwide in work zones, a 26 percent increase over the previous record of 868 fatalities in 1999. Eight of those deaths were in Nebraska, compared to 22 deaths in 1999. According to many experts, the 2000 figures are alarming, as most states look forward to greater reconstruction of their highways in the years ahead.

On average, there is a work zone for every 50 miles traveled on U.S. roads. While work zones are here to stay for years to come, efforts in each community to increase awareness of work zone safety among motorists and highway workers may help lower these numbers across the nation.◆



Research Meetings Reap Responses

By Amy Starr, E.I.T.
Materials & Research Division

In an effort to obtain input from a variety of people for future research projects, the NDOR research staff traveled to all eight districts and met with over 200 NDOR employees. The main topic was how research could be focused to assist them in their daily responsibilities. The meetings were held during October and November of 2000, and November and December of 2001.

The District meetings proved very successful in generating new research ideas and promoting discussions of current problems that need to be addressed.

Here is a listing of the most common issues raised during the District meetings:

- ▶ How to establish vegetation quickly at the end of a construction project to minimize erosion. Fixing erosion problems can become a costly and time-consuming maintenance activity.
- ▶ What should be done with the stockpiles of millings that are accumulating across Nebraska?

Are these mountains of black gold or piles of worthless debris?

- ▶ Soils across Nebraska vary significantly. What steps can be taken to minimize soil distress due to different variables? Can a guideline be compiled to recommend best practices when unsuitable or unusable soils are encountered on a construction project?
- ▶ What are the best methods to seal or reseal joints and cracks in pavements and bridge decks?
- ▶ Issues related to the construction of concrete box culverts: How to mitigate unstable soils, compaction around wing walls, and uncontrolled concrete cracking.
- ▶ What are the best practices, methods, and materials for controlling ice on roadways? Many new methods and materials are available.
- ▶ Has the bump at the end of bridges been reduced due to using piling under the approach slabs?
- ▶ Shoulder rumble strips seem to be working as a safety feature for

motorists. How should these rumble strips be maintained to continue to be effective?

- ▶ Is signing for maintenance activities adequate? Or are there too many or too few signs? What are the best signs to use to keep the maintenance forces safe and not create a hazard for motorists?

These issues have been written as Research Statements of Need and have been submitted to the Nebraska Transportation Research Council (NTRC) to be discussed and prioritized as possible research projects for the upcoming Research Work Program.

If you were unable to attend these meetings, or if you have any ideas for research, please send your suggestions or comments to NDOR's Research Section. You can also submit a Statement of Need online at www.dor.state.ne.us/mat-n-tests.

NDOR's research staff appreciates the efforts of all the department's District personnel who contributed their time and efforts to share research ideas. ♦



District 7 employees shared their ideas about future NDOR research projects at a meeting held November 30, 2000 at McCook.

Below - District 6 employees, including, / to r, Tim Myrberg, David Hansen and Kitty Shaner, offered suggestions for NDOR research at a meeting held December 18, 2001 at North Platte.



New Transportation Enhancement Projects Announced

NDOR recently announced that a total of \$5,035,404 has been awarded to 20 community projects across the state through the TE Program.

"In 2001, communities in every corner of the state applied for \$11 million in funding from Nebraska Transportation Enhancement. This is the greatest response we've ever had in terms of dollars. It proves that this program is extremely popular and is adding to the quality of life across Nebraska," according to John Craig, Director of the Nebraska Department of Roads.

The Transportation Enhancement Program, part of the federal highway bill, provides funding to local, regional and state government entities for projects that encourage alternative transportation. The funds, administered through the Nebraska Department of Roads, are used for highway beautification, pedestrian and bicycle trails, and historic preservation.

The independent Transportation Enhancement Select Committee has recommended funding for the following 20 projects:

Nebraska Forest Service / UNL Statewide Arboretum

\$200,000 additional funding to communities and other public entities in Nebraska for landscaping projects that improve transportation corridors.

Nebraska Lied Main Street Program

\$75,000 for a set-aside fund to improve the downtown areas of Main Street program communities—Alliance, Bassett, Beatrice, Bellevue, Central City, Fremont, Gothenburg, Kimball, Lexington, McCook, Minden, Ogallala, Plattsmouth, Scottsbluff and Wayne.

Lincoln Saline Wetlands Bridge

\$134,991 in preliminary engineering and construction funds to remove, rehabilitate, and relocate a historic bow string truss bridge from Otoe County to the Lincoln Saline Wetlands at Capitol Beach in Lincoln.

Bassett Main Street Historic Lighting

\$123,391 for installation of 48 historic replica lights in a three-block area of the Bassett Lied Main Street District. The lights will be installed on Clark Street between Florence and Second Streets. Installation will be coordinated with a downtown improvement project.

MoPac West "Husker Link" Trail

\$291,817 for preliminary engineering and construction of the MoPac West "Husker Link" Trail. The 12-foot wide, one-mile long concrete trail will connect the existing MoPac Trail to the Rock Island Trail. The trail will start at the west end of the existing MoPac Trail near 30th and Y Streets and end at 18th Street.

Blair Deerfield Lions Trail

\$308,939 for preliminary engineering and construction of the Blair Deerfield Lions Trail. This project is the first segment of a multi-phase plan to develop a trail system in Blair. The trail will consist of 6,700 linear feet of 10-foot wide concrete trail and 400 linear feet of 8-foot wide concrete trail within the city limits of Blair. The trail will start near the intersection of 16th and Park Streets following an abandoned railbed connecting Lion's Park, housing developments, Arbor Park Middle School and the Deerfield development.

Laurel Trail

\$280,364 for preliminary engineering and construction of a 90-foot long, 10-foot wide under crossing of U.S. Highway 20. The under crossing will connect Laurel School to an existing trail which accesses the school's recreation fields on the west side of the highway. Also included is a 745 linear foot, 10-foot wide concrete trail which provides a connection through the under crossing to residential areas east of the school.

Alliance Snake Creek Trail

\$257,928 for preliminary engineering and construction of the Alliance Snake

Creek Trail. The 10,200-foot long trail will provide users a safe, non-vehicular route between Bower Park in the southeast section of the city and Laing Park in the north portion of the city.

Hastings Pioneer Spirit Trail - Phase 1

\$499,998 for preliminary engineering and construction of a 2-mile concrete pedestrian/bicycle trail in northern Hastings. This trail would become the first phase of the new citywide "Pioneer Spirit Trail." This two-mile segment connects several high-use public areas in northern Hastings. Phase 1 of the trail begins near Hastings High School in Libs Park, a 29-acre park with public swimming pool and trailhead parking. The final segment will follow 19th Street to east Wayside Park with an exit/entrance from Tom Osborne Drive East.

Beatrice Big Blue River Trail - Phase 3

\$193,696 for preliminary engineering and construction of the third phase of the Beatrice Big Blue River Trail. The 6,500-linear foot, 10-foot wide concrete trail will begin in Chautauqua Park connecting with the Phase 1 trail constructed in 2001. The trail uses the existing Highway 77 bridge to cross the Big Blue River before turning east. The trail parallels Caldwell Street, then turns north on 11th Street, crossing the abandoned UPRR line, known as the Homestead Trail, which the City is purchasing for a future connection to Lincoln.

North Platte South Willow Street Trail

\$286,387 for preliminary engineering and construction of the North Platte South Willow Street Trail. The trail will be constructed within the South Willow Street right-of-way, south of Interstate 80, and consists of 8,200 linear feet of 10-foot wide concrete trail. The trail begins near Mid-Plains Community College and connects to

a trail previously constructed with Nebraska Department of Roads Transportation Enhancement funding.

Wayne Trail

\$499,313 for preliminary engineering and construction of the first phase of the Wayne Trail system. The concrete trail is 2.6 miles long and begins at a campground/park just west of Highway 15 at the southern limits of Wayne. The trail ends by connecting to a trail system within Wayne State College's campus.

Norfolk Levee Trail

\$500,000 for preliminary engineering and construction of the Norfolk Levee Trail. The 2.3-mile, 10-foot wide concrete trail will be constructed on a flood control levee located in east Norfolk and connects residential areas with schools, the YMCA and the existing Norfolk trail system. The trail will begin at an existing trail accessing Northeast Community College and extend south to a proposed trailhead at Omaha Avenue.

Chadron State College Trail

\$216,455 for preliminary engineering and construction of a one-mile long, 8-foot wide concrete trail. The trail is being constructed as a component of the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center. The trail will connect residential areas to the college at two locations; near the new Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center and near the recreation fields of Chadron State College.

Columbus Pawnee Trail

\$320,000 for preliminary engineering and construction of the Columbus Pawnee Trail. The 6,200-foot long, 10-foot wide concrete trail starts at an existing city-owned baseball field, concession stand, and parking lot near the intersection of 6th Street and 27th Avenue and ends at Pawnee Park on the west side of U.S. Highway 81.

Buffalo County Trails & Rails Museum

\$101,779 for preliminary engineering and construction to improve two historic transportation buildings located at the Trails & Rails Museum

in Kearney. The first building to be upgraded is the former Loup River Freighters Hotel built in 1884, and the second is the former Shelton Depot constructed in 1898.

Ashland Oxbow Trail

\$198,748 for preliminary engineering and construction of the third phase of the Ashland Trail system. The 4,300-foot long, 8-foot wide concrete trail begins at the intersection of 17th Avenue and Furnas Street adjacent to the Ashland-Greenwood High School and ends in Wiggenhorn Park.

Fremont Military / Johnson Park Trail

\$129,014 for preliminary engineering and construction of the Fremont Military/Johnson Park Trail. The trail will be located on the south side of Military Avenue near the existing pedestrian crossing at Howard Street and Military Avenue. The trail will parallel Military Avenue running east a total of .9 miles, connecting the eastern residential areas of Fremont to the new Fremont Middle School being constructed adjacent to Johnson Park.

Wakefield Logan Creek Trail

\$81,584 for preliminary engineering and construction of the Wakefield Logan Creek Trail. The 4,000-foot long, 8-foot wide asphalt trail will be located on top of a newly constructed flood control levee along Logan Creek. The trail begins in Graves Park and runs northeast along the newly constructed flood control levee. The trail ends at the west side of Highway 35 at a proposed turnaround area.

Cowboy Trail Surfacing Program

\$336,000 in conditional funding for 12 miles of crushed aggregate surfacing on the Cowboy Trail in Cherry County. The trail surfacing will begin approximately three miles southeast of Valentine where it connects to a completed section of trail across the Niobrara River Bridge. The trail surfacing will extend east 12 miles to a trailhead that is being established at Arabia Ranch next to U.S. Highway 20.◆

NDOR to Sponsor National Historic Roads Conference

The third national conference on historic roads will be held in Omaha, Nebraska, on April 11-14, 2002. The conference begins with afternoon tours and an evening opening reception at the Durham Western Heritage Museum on Thursday evening, April 11, 2002. The conference sessions will be held at the Embassy Suites Hotel in the Historic Old Market area of Omaha. The conference is sponsored by the Nebraska Dept. of Roads, Nebraska State Historical Society, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), National Trust for Historic Preservation, National Park Service, and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO).

Historic roads advocates, engineers and planners from across America will join together for four days of tours, educational sessions, dialogue and debate regarding the identification, preservation and management of historic roads. This conference will be an opportunity to catch up on the latest information on roadway liability; receive expert advice on developing roadway preservation plans; learn about modern engineering techniques used to advance the preservation of historic resources; and the use of context sensitive design techniques. Cost for the conference is \$260 if registered by March 1, or \$320 if registered after March 1. (Tours are priced individually). If you are interested in volunteering to help with the conference, the fee will be waived for the day you are present. For information about specific presentations and tours during the event, go on the internet to www.historicroads.org, or contact Cindy Veys at 402-479-4410 in Project Development, for a registration brochure or volunteer registration.◆

NDOR Engineer Aids Victims at Ground Zero

Calling it intense and emotional, yet also very rewarding, Jim Wilkinson recently returned from two weeks of volunteer work with the American Red Cross at Ground Zero, the site of the September 11, 2001 disaster at the World Trade Center in New York City. An engineer in the Location Studies Section of the Planning and Project Development Division, Wilkinson reflected on the experience and shared his thoughts and observations.

"I wanted to go because the magnitude was so great. I figured if I were to go anywhere to help, this would be the one. It provided the opportunity both to help and to assess the situation firsthand," Wilkinson said.

Wilkinson has volunteered over the past few years with the Lancaster County chapter of the Red Cross, helping with several local disasters. This was his first experience with a national disaster.

Upon arrival at Ground Zero, Wilkinson attended orientation and training sessions. For the most part, volunteers train and supervise other volunteers, with some paid staff involved. The Red Cross has a family assistance center and several service centers there. Wilkinson, along with about 100 others, was assigned to Service Center 2, located about ¾ mile from Ground Zero.

During his two weeks at Ground Zero, Wilkinson met volunteers from almost all 50 states. He also met a volunteer from Alliance and heard of someone who was there from Omaha. He said Nebraska sent 55 people to help in the aftermath of the disaster.

Assigned as a caseworker, Wilkinson interviewed people affected by the 9-11 disaster and determined how the Red Cross could help them. They processed around 140 clients per day just at Service Center 2, were open seven days per week, and worked 10 to 13 hours per day. Volunteers

were given one day off per week. He also helped register incoming clients and handed out checks. Besides caseworkers, the Red Cross provided physical health and mental health services, translators (mainly Chinese and Spanish) a kitchen and many other internal support staff.



NDOR Engineer Jim Wilkinson volunteered at Ground Zero with others from across the United States, including, left, Della McAtee, Pittsburgh, and, right, Ira Thomas, Brooklyn.

Wilkinson noted that in addition to over 3,000 lost lives, there was a tremendous toll taken with loss of jobs and homelessness, since several other buildings, including apartment buildings, were affected in addition to the twin towers. Also, many buildings that had no structural damage still had to be cleaned, and people who worked in those buildings couldn't return for many weeks afterward. Thousands of workers had to relocate, and thousands of others lost their jobs.

Wilkinson said the statistics provided by the Red Cross indicated 30,000 to 40,000 people were initially displaced from their homes and more than 125,000 were unemployed as a result of the disaster. Recent published estimates indicate that number could eventually increase to 1½ million (nationwide) unemployed. In addition, 80 nations lost citizens.

The mental trauma for those who lived and worked in the area, and for emergency workers, has been tremendous, according to Wilkinson.

"There are people who still have not come out of their apartments, and the Red Cross is sending Outreach teams to these buildings to visit with people."

Wilkinson said 343 firefighters were lost to the 9-11 tragedy, the biggest loss in any one event in history.

"One day while I was there, they found several bodies of firefighters. They sounded sirens, and firefighters from all over the city arrived to recover the bodies. They put the bodies in coffins draped with the American flag. Then they lined up for a farewell. They did this every time they found a lost brother."

According to Wilkinson, much has changed at the site since September 11. Demolition crews have made tremendous progress. Four contractors are working at the site around the clock. They cleared away an incredible

amount of material, with an estimated 1 million tons of steel and concrete and 15 acres of glass to be hauled away. The Marriott Hotel just reopened, and it was recently announced that Seven World Trade Center would be rebuilt starting this year, to be finished in 2005.

Wilkinson said volunteering at Ground Zero was a great way to get directly involved and to help victims of a disaster. He is thankful for the support of his wife, Susan, and two daughters, Nicole and Kristin, as well as his supervisor, Steve McBeth, and co-workers for helping make this experience possible. Wilkinson thinks it's important for Nebraskans to get the training and experience needed to be ready for disasters that could happen in our state.

"Locally, the Red Cross responds to an average of one or two disasters per week. Nationwide, the Red Cross responds to over 60,000 disasters per year. My hope is that Americans will continue being generous with their time and money," Wilkinson added. ♦

Service Awards

Congratulations to these dedicated individuals for their work and continued service with the Department of Roads. They celebrate their service dates in *February* and *March*.

40 Years

Harold Francis, District 4
Richard Gray Jr., Roadway Design

30 Years

Gary Forman, District 2
Larry Koves, Materials & Research
Rodney McNeel, Materials & Research
Steven Pojar, District 3
Lyle Stabenow, District 7
Francis Sullivan, District 4

20 Years

Francisco Arroyo, Traffic Engineering
Roger Conn, District 2
Virginia Nielsen, District 4
David Workman, District 1

10 Years

Jason Adkisson, District 8
Ryan Hobelman, District 1
Jay Rogers, District 5
Ronald Tenney, District 3
Debra Thompson, Traffic Engineering
Nadine VonSeggern, Traffic Engineering
LeRoy Wyre, District 3
Todd Wythers, District 4

A Rewarding Thought

*"Compensation is a right;
recognition is a gift."*

- Rosabeth Moss Kanter
Author & Management Consultant

Brought to you by the Rewards & Recognition
Agency Panel.

Nomination forms can be found on the
Intranet at <http://www.dor.state.ne.us>
on the Human Resources page.

Rewards & Recognition

October, November, December 2001 Employees & Managers of the Quarter

Employees

Managers

District 1

Dan Lange
Hwy. Construction Tech III
Lincoln

None

District 2

Mike Bradley
Hwy. Maintenance Crew Chief
Omaha

Mo Farivari
Hwy. Project Manager
Omaha

District 3

Lisa Sudbeck
Construction Management Tech.
Hartington

None

District 4

To Be Announced

To Be Announced

District 5

Dave Shafer
Auto/Diesel Mechanic
Bridgeport

Russ Frickey
Hwy. Project Manager
Bridgeport

District 6

Chris Hasenauer
Hwy. Construction Tech II
North Platte

None

District 7

Bill Drake
Auto/Diesel Mechanic
Holdrege

Larry Peterson
Hwy. Maintenance Dist. Supt.
McCook

District 8

Shad Thompson
Hwy. Construction Tech II
O'Neill

Mike Rudnick
Hwy. Project Manager
Ainsworth

OE 200 Divisions

Barb Biffle
Public Information Officer II
Communication

None

OE 300 Divisions

Bob Bettenhausen
IT Business Systems Analyst
Project Scheduling

Jim Wilkinson
Engineer IV
Planning & Project Development

*Awardees receive a certificate, pin and a
monetary award of \$250 before taxes.*

We Get Letters ...

January 28, 2002

The Nurse!

I want the people of the Department of Roads to know how fortunate and lucky we are having LoyAnn Rossel as our nurse by sharing my experience.

I got burned on my ankle recently to which I had not paid proper attention, thinking it would heal on its own. But, in a couple days it got worse and I started feeling pain. It was a Friday before a three-day weekend when I decided to consult the nurse about treatment of my wound.

Loy asked me if she could see the wound, asked how I got it and then explained to me that it was a second degree burn, which gets deeper in the flesh for three days after one gets burned. She said I should see a doctor about this wound, all the while treating my wound and giving me supplies to treat it until I saw a doctor.

I was surprised and touched the next morning when I received a call from her at my home. She again strongly suggested I see a doctor, that burns are hard to treat and they could get worse. But my wound looked better and I thought I could get by just by treating it myself. She insisted though that I show her the wound first thing Tuesday morning. During our phone conversation she told me a great deal about the dangers of this type of wound and the procedures I need to do and supplies I need to buy. But with my wound looking promising that day, I did not follow up the procedures exactly.

Tuesday morning Loy examined the wound very carefully (it did not look too promising), asked me if I followed the procedures that I was told and again recommended that I see a doctor. I hesitated again, promising her to follow her instructions exactly from this time on. She treated the wound again and made me promise to show it to her the next day.

I did exactly what I was told this time and the wound looked better the next day.

Still, Loy very tactfully and gently asked me to let her know about the wound the next day, saying that she was just curious.

The wound was getting better and better, so I managed one day without showing it to her. But on Friday, when I was passing by her office she saw me and asked if she could take a look at the wound, just to be sure that it was OK before another weekend went by.

I am deeply touched by the care, tactfulness and gentleness of Loy. Thinking back now, I realize the seriousness of my wound, and how I could have easily got gangrene or even lost my foot if I did not see her just in time. Being thoughtless and stubborn as I am, I could have paid dearly this time if not for Loy.

Thank you so much LoyAnn! I know that a lot of people are good by nature and every one of them would help his neighbor at a time of need, but when you meet such a person as LoyAnn, who meets one's needs, that makes you appreciate it much more.

Alex Golubow,
Engineer III
Roadway Design

December 11, 2001

Samir Sidhom, P.E.
NDOR Bridge Division

We greatly appreciate your help in locating the girder standards used for our project. Your effort was above and beyond your duties. It was refreshing to find someone so willing to help with a question.

Thanks again,

Jerilyn Hassard
Modjeski and Masters, Inc.
Consultant Engineers
Edwardsville, Illinois

Editor's Note: The thank-you note was sent in regard to a project built with prestressed girders with old (1959) Nebraska standards.

The Department of Roads receives numerous complimentary letters. The letters printed here are representative of those often sent praising the many fine and deserving employees of the Department of Roads.

December 4, 2001

John L. Craig, Director
Nebraska Dept. of Roads

Dear John Craig,

I would like you to know how much we appreciate the state employees in Broken Bow, Nebraska. Our first winter storm was November 26. We live 20 miles south of Broken Bow on Highway 21. I have to drive these roads every day just like a lot of other people do. I'd like to thank these guys because they do such a great job on keeping the roads as clear as possible. You should be very proud of these guys—they work very hard.

Jason & Sheri Evans
Eddyville, Nebraska

Editor's Note: Good work, District 6 maintenance crews.

December 31, 2001

Anne White
NDOR Communication Division

Dear Anne White,

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the staff at the Food Bank of Lincoln, I want to thank you for your donation of 172 pounds of food. Your support makes it possible for us to collect and distribute food to 80 agencies in Lincoln/Lancaster county and Southeast Nebraska.

The Food Bank had a record year in 2001. By year's end we will have distributed over 2 million pounds of food. We depend upon people like you to help us continue to serve thousands of less fortunate individuals and families in our area.

During this season of giving, we want you to know how much we appreciate your gift.

Happy holidays,

Scott Young, Exec. Director
Food Bank of Lincoln

Editor's Note: Food was donated by NDOR Central headquarters employees as part of a Holiday celebration and visit by Santa Claus, December 19. Anne White, Communication Division, made all the arrangements.

December 17, 2001

From the 511 comments line:

This is David Hossin. This system's great! I'm really glad somebody finally came out with it. I hope you're going to include road closures when the weather starts getting bad. As a truck driver, I travel across Nebraska and it helps me figure out what's really going on, how far I can get, if the road's closed or not—because you hear everything out here. You never know what's true and what's not. I'm really impressed with this system. I've played around with it for the last day or two, coming out across Nebraska both ways, and I really like it. If you guys want to talk about it some more, I'd certainly be happy. But I have several suggestions. One, put a few more signs up and two, going into some of the trucking magazines and putting the word out that this system is operating, because I think it will help the transportation industry tremendously as far as finding out what's really going on. The word's got to get out. That's the big thing. Anyway, thanks.

David Hossin
Area Code 501

January 17, 2002

To Whom It May Concern,

On January 16, around 8:50 a.m. I was on Highway 83 and struck a deer between mile markers 79 and 80. Two of your men were setting signs up and witnessed my accident. I didn't get their names but would like to tell them thank you for stopping and making sure I was okay and for also contacting the State Patrol. They were the only ones that offered their assistance as well as they were driving a white Dodge truck and were very helpful. Once again thank you so much for helping me, your kindness is very much appreciated.

Suzanne Miller
North Platte

Editor's Note: The helpful Roads employees are Dan Dailey, and Klint Saner, temporary Hwy. Maintenance Workers at District 6 in North Platte.

TURF & GARDEN

By Dick Gray
Agronomist



Dry Winter, Wet Summer Ahead

Turf - Unless things have drastically turned around, water the grass on nice days. Do not be in a hurry to do the spring clean-up yet, wait until mid-March. Procrastination is good for you this time of the year. You can seed bluegrass in mid-March. Ryegrass can be seeded in late March and fescue can wait until late April. Consider giving your lawn a new lease on life—give a compost boost. Apply compost after the spring aerifying and rake it in. You will have better color and the compost will not make you mow as much until the spring

application of fertilizer. When to fertilize and premerge? Purchase when the sales are on, but delay applying until late April. Take the mower to the repair shop for its spring tune-up.

Trees - We want water, too. Dry winters are very hard on us. Plan your new landscaping look now for later planting. Want to prune that overgrown hedge and get it to fill in again? Mid-March is the perfect time to do that. No procrastinating on this one, time to do it.

Garden - A new flower for spring—Coreopsis “Limerock Ruby” has abundant, large, 1½-inch wide, red-ruby daisy flowers with yellow centers that bloom all season. Requires full sun to part shade and moist, well-drained soil. Looks great in the magazine! A new ornamental grass for this year—Miscanthus sinensis “Huron Sunrise” has full burgundy flowers (seed heads) in late summer. Requiring full sun and well-drained soil, this is a clump-forming plant 5 to 6-foot tall and 5-foot-wide at maturity. This will be a striking specimen. Both Limerock Ruby and Huron Sunrise will grow in Nebraska.

General - ABC reported in January that “El Nino” was reforming. If it does, we should have a wet summer. ♦

Follow Steps For Child Passenger Safety

In observance of Child Passenger Safety Week, February 10-16, 2002, parents and caregivers are reminded that all children should be placed in child safety seats, booster seats or seat belts—every time they ride in a car or truck. In addition, child safety seats should be inspected by a certified child passenger safety technician.

Children, as they grow, should progress through three types of child safety seats before using the seat belt alone: from rear-facing seats to forward-facing seats to booster seats.

- ▶ Infants must always be placed in rear-facing seats until they are at least one year old and 20 pounds.
- ▶ Children between 20 and 40 pounds should be placed in forward-facing safety seats.
- ▶ When your child outgrows his or her forward-facing safety seat, use a booster seat until your child is at least 8 years old or over 4-feet-9-inches tall. Seat belts alone are made for adults. A booster seat raises a child up so the seat belt fits. This will prevent your child from being thrown from the car, or thrown around inside it, during a crash. ♦

Our Top Twenty

NDOR employees with the most *total state service* as of December 2001.

Name	Office	Service Date
1. Andreasen, Merritt A.	Elkhorn (D-2)	05-28-51
2. Hausman, Larry J.	Hartington (D-3)	08-15-51
3. Wenzl, Louis P.	Lincoln (HQ)	05-01-53
4. Bumanis, Osvalds O.	Lincoln (HQ)	12-04-53
5. Voss, Ernest W.	Lincoln (HQ)	03-22-54
6. Regelean, Irene G.	Lincoln (HQ)	05-28-54
7. Henning, Arnold H.	Lincoln (HQ)	08-04-54
8. Norris, Barbara K.	Lincoln (HQ)	09-12-55
9. Schaefer, E. L.	Norfolk (D-3)	04-12-56
10. Swett, Marvel L.	Ainsworth (D-8)	10-01-56
11. Henning, Loren E.	Lincoln (HQ)	10-08-56
12. Henning, Ronald R.	Lincoln (HQ)	12-17-56
13. Engel, Barbara K.	Lincoln (HQ)	03-28-57
14. Eglite, Andrejs	Lincoln (HQ)	06-07-57
15. Sharp, Daniel J.	Lincoln (HQ)	06-10-57
16. Shafer, Larry G.	Lincoln (HQ)	09-07-57
17. Pavel, Leland D.	Lincoln (HQ)	09-09-57
18. Yonkey, Arthur B.	Lincoln (HQ)	12-01-57
19. Freemon, Lyman D.	Lincoln (HQ)	01-20-58
20. Smets, William N.	Lexington (D-6)	04-01-58

NDOR Events Calendar

— February —

- 5 New Employee Orientation Program**
NDOR Central Headquarters
contact Steve Olson @ 479-3601
- 7 Letting** 1:30 p.m. NDOR Auditorium
contact Karl Fredrickson @ 479-4528
- 8 Project Scheduling Meeting**
8:30-11:30 a.m., NDOR Auditorium
contact Craig Anderson @ 479-4666
- 10-16 National Child Passenger Safety Week**
- 15 Bd. Public Roads Class. & Stds.**
9:00 a.m., NDOR Auditorium
Contact Andrew Cunningham @ 479-4569
- 15 Hwy. Commission Meeting**
10:00 a.m. Hwy. Commission Meeting Rm.
Contact Shirley Schafer @ 479-4530
- 18 State Holiday – President’s Day**
- 22 Bd. Examiners for Co. Hwy. & City Street Supts.**
10:00 a.m. Hwy. Commission Meeting Rm.
Contact Andrew Cunningham @ 479-4569
- 26 NTRAC Meeting**
10:00 a.m. NDOR Central Headquarters, Rm. 103
Contact Bev Vonasek @ 479-4515

— March —

- 8 Project Scheduling Meeting**
8:30-11:30 a.m., NDOR Auditorium
contact Craig Anderson @ 479-4666
- 12 New Employee Orientation Program**
NDOR Central Headquarters
contact Steve Olson @ 479-3601
- 14 Letting** 1:30 p.m. NDOR Auditorium
contact Karl Fredrickson @ 479-4528
- 22 Hwy. Commission Meeting**
10:00 a.m. Hwy. Commission Meeting Rm.
Contact Shirley Schafer @ 479-4530

- 22 Bd. Public Roads Class. & Stds.**
9:00 a.m., NDOR Auditorium
Contact Andrew Cunningham @ 479-4569

— April —

- 5 Bd. Examiners for Co. Hwy. & City Street Supts.**
8:45 a.m. Hwy. Commission Meeting Rm.
Contact Andrew Cunningham @ 479-4569
- 8-12 National Work Zone Awareness Week**
- 11-14 National Historic Roads Conference**
Embassy Suites Hotel, Omaha
Contact Cindy Veys @ 479-4410
- 12 Project Scheduling Meeting**
8:30-11:30 a.m., NDOR Auditorium
contact Craig Anderson @ 479-4666
- 16 New Employee Orientation Program**
NDOR Central Headquarters
contact Steve Olson @ 479-3601
- 18 Letting** 1:30 p.m. NDOR Auditorium
contact Karl Fredrickson @ 479-4528
- 19 Hwy. Commission Meeting**
10:00 a.m. Hwy. Commission Meeting Rm.
Contact Shirley Schafer @ 479-4530
- 19 Bd. Public Roads Class. & Stds.**
9:00 a.m., NDOR Auditorium
Contact Andrew Cunningham @ 479-4569
- 22 Earth Day**
- 26 State Holiday – Arbor Day**

If you know of key events you would like included on upcoming calendars, call the Communication Office 479-4512 or e-mail lwilson@dor.state.ne.us. Information for the April/May Roadrunner should be received by March 15.