

# Technology 25th Anniversary NEWS

Providing transportation technology transfer for Iowa's cities and counties

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*Editor's note: The "news" bits on the cover of this issue were adapted from several resources, including The New York Times online archives; first four issues of Technology News, 1983; and monthly issues of Iowa DOT's 1983 employee newsletter TransTopics (thank you, Tracey Bramble, editor, Iowa DOT).*

Iowa State University's Center for Transportation Research and Education (CTRE) is the umbrella organization for the following centers and programs:

Bridge Engineering Center  
Center for Weather Impacts on Mobility and Safety  
Construction Management & Technology  
Iowa Local Technical Assistance Program  
Iowa Statewide Urban Design and Specifications  
Iowa Traffic Safety Data Service  
Midwest Transportation Consortium  
National Concrete Pavement Technology Center  
Partnership for Geotechnical Advancement  
Roadway Infrastructure Management & Operations Systems  
Sustainable Transportation Systems Program  
Traffic Safety and Operations

**ctre**

Center for Transportation  
Research and Education

IOWA STATE  
UNIVERSITY

## 25 years of service for Iowa LTAP

What were you doing 25 years ago? Here's a little context from spring 1983:

### 25th Anniversary

**AN UNUSUALLY HEAVY** invasion of mayflies gives street and road crews along the Mississippi River headaches. At least one bridge is closed due to pileups of the sticky, stinky, inch-long pests.

**THANKS TO** increased federal fuel taxes, dollars for bridge replacement and rehabilitation in Iowa double this year. From 15 to 35 percent of the \$37.3 million must be spent on structures not on the federal-aid system.

**FUNDED BY** the U.S. DOT, Iowa studies the connection between tough drunk-driving laws and number of crashes [in 1983 lingo, "accidents"] linked to alcohol.

**RAGBRAI XI BICYCLISTS** prepare to test their mettle along southern Iowa's hilly terrain from Onawa to Dubuque.

**SHOTBLASTING** a pavement surface to prepare it for a bonded overlay is one of three pavement projects showcased on an Iowa tour. More than 400 people from 26 states and Canada attend this one-day event.

**ELIZABETH DOLE** becomes U.S. Secretary of Transportation.

**NEW, PORTABLE SCALES** (handheld and trailer-mounted) help Iowa's motor vehicle enforcement officers crack down on overweight trucks traveling the state's highways.

**BOB GIVEN** begins what will be a four-year stint as director of the Iowa DOT's highway division.

#### JANUARY 1983

**AMES, IOWA** – Iowa State University is selected to manage one of only 10 statewide pilot programs in the country to provide transportation technology transfer and related services to small urban and rural areas. Funded through FHWA's Rural Technical Assistance Program (RTAP) and administered through ISU's Engineering Extension Service, Iowa's new RTAP center is charged with meeting local agencies' needs through a free, quarterly newsletter; a toll-free "hotline"; a library service distributing publications, films, and other resources; and a variety of short courses conducted throughout the state.

**AN IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY** study suggests ways to reduce counties' potential liability from the use of low-water stream crossings on unpaved, rural roads.

**IOWA'S FARMERS** hope for a rebound in the farm economy after several years of low commodity prices and plunging land values.

**ROUSED FROM SLEEP** at 3:30 a.m. by the sheriff, equipment operators from Iowa DOT's Manchester garage check and re-check a section of Highway 13 in the dark using magnets to

pick up nails found scattered on the pavement. It cannot be determined who dropped the nails or when, or if they were dropped deliberately.

**NORTHWEST IOWANS** say goodbye to one of the state's largest cottonwood trees, a longtime landmark along Highway 10 near Sutherland. Carefully preserved during road reconstruction in 1971, but suffering the combined toll of lightning hits and ice and wind storms, the proud old giant is felled.

# 25th Anniversary

## 25 years of Iowa LTAP

*continued from cover*

In 1983, ISU was introducing its new RTAP center to towns and counties throughout Iowa.

Due to the success of pilot RTAPs in Iowa and nine other states, FHWA eventually funded technology assistance centers in every state, plus regional tribal centers. The “rural” in RTAP was later changed to “local.”

As we begin 2008, Iowa’s RTAP-now-LTAP has been helping local jurisdictions address their transportation-related challenges through training and technology transfer for 25 years.

During those years, LTAP has seen many changes. For example, Iowa LTAP has been housed in at least six different office spaces on and off the ISU campus. During its first year, Iowa LTAP offered fewer than a dozen workshops. In 2007, it offered 144 training opportunities, including 55 related to safety topics.

One thing that’s remained constant, however, is the staff’s loyalty to the program. With the exception of newcomer Bob Sperry (see page 4), everyone on staff has been with LTAP for at least 10 years.

Jan Graham has been Iowa LTAP’s bean counter and whatever-needs-to-be-done right-hand-woman almost since the

program’s beginning. Duane Smith has been director and Marcia Brink has been newsletter editor for more than half the program’s 25-year history. Together, Graham, Smith, Brink, Tom McDonald (safety circuit rider), Georgia Parham (secretary and event coordinator), and Jim Hogan (librarian)—are personally invested up to the eyeballs in Iowa LTAP, and Sperry promises to be equally dedicated. We care about helping you make a difference in Iowa.

Iowa LTAP was the foundation program that eventually grew into CTRE, a major university transportation research and outreach center. Today LTAP is one of several long-term funded programs managed by CTRE, but many people in Iowa’s towns and counties know CTRE best for its LTAP workshops, newsletter, and library.

Throughout 2008, *Technology News* will cover various aspects of Iowa LTAP’s history. We’ll highlight some achievements and point to future goals. We’ll ask you what LTAP services you find useful, and what kinds of additional help you need.

While telling you a little about LTAP’s past, we hope to encourage you to take advantage of its present and help plan its future. ■



In 1994 Stan Ring introduced a hot new training technology: interactive CDs.

roads bridges transit

# technology news

April 1983

Local Transportation Information Center  
Iowa State University Engineering Extension Service

**Introducing the Local Transportation Information Center**

Iowa State University was recently designated as "Technology Transfer Center for Local Transportation" by the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Iowa Department of Transportation.

Most of you are probably aware of the major transportation problems facing our small cities and rural areas. Streets and roads are in disrepair or obsolete, with no improvement funds available. Bridges require a large dollar investment. The new construction and reconstruction funds received have not been available for the past four decades.

Communities also have seen the decline of private bus and transit operations. In many areas, the local services have a reputation for the elderly or disabled in the only public transportation available. The deterioration of the state's highway industry has had and will continue to have a major effect on public transportation services between communities. Only if the communities are aided by industry.

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PHWA  
Technology Transfer Program  
Iowa DOT  
ISU Engineering Extension Service  
Local Transportation Information Center

Technology News Workshops Technical Manuals

A slightly dog-eared copy of the first issue of Iowa LTAP's *Technology News*, April 1983.

## Shop focus: Personal protective equipment

With the construction and maintenance season approaching, now is a good time to assess your shop's personal protective equipment (PPE). PPE is defined by OSHA as any equipment worn to minimize workers' exposure to hazards.

To maximize the effectiveness of PPE, both employers and employees have roles to play.

According to OSHA, employers are responsible for

- Performing a “hazard assessment” of the workplace to identify and control physical and health hazards;
- Identifying and providing appropriate PPE for employees;
- Training employees in the use of PPE;
- Maintaining PPE, including replacing worn or damaged PPE; and
- Periodically reviewing, updating, and evaluating the effectiveness of the PPE program.

To ensure their own safety, employees should

- Properly wear PPE;
- Attend training sessions on PPE;
- Care for, clean, and maintain PPE; and
- Inform a supervisor of the need to repair or replace PPE.

Following is a brief overview of OSHA's guidelines on the use of personal protective equipment.

### Eye and face protection

Employees exposed to eye or face hazards from flying particles or harmful chemicals should wear eye and face protection. Adequate eye and face protection should fit properly, be reasonably comfortable, and provide unrestricted vision and movement.

### Head protection

Head protection, such as hard hats or protective helmets, should resist penetration by objects, absorb the shock of a blow, and be water-resistant and slow burning. Protective headgear should fit properly and should be worn by all construction and maintenance workers.