

The Front Line

For and About the City of Des Moines Employees



Volume 7—Third Quarter - July- August-September 2005

Amelia Hamilton-Morris, Editor

City of Des Moines Mission Statement

To provide and maintain essential services that meet the collective basic needs of the citizens of Des Moines and to identify and seize opportunities for a higher quality of life.



THIS ISSUE

**Citizen Survey:
Employees Do
Great A Job!**

**New
Wayfinding
Signs**

Career Moves

**Staff Honored
at Alice Rodine
Awards Dinner**

The Search for a New City Manager

The Des Moines City Council is in the process of recruiting and hiring a new City Manager and civic leaders as well as the general public are being asked to give their input. The City Council is gathering information from the community and the many stakeholders as to what the residents feel is the skill set needed in the next City Manager.

The council is requesting that local leaders also have a discussion within their groups to discuss the skill set the next City Manager should possess. **This information should be provided in writing to the City.** It should be sent directly to Tom Turner, Human Resources Director. Recom-

mendations may also be sent via email to TGTurner@dmgov.org. The City is also providing notice via the City's web page and on DMTV-City Cable Channel 7 requesting input.

The Council has sent a letter to the stakeholders listed below requesting their participation in this process.

Stakeholders

[Neighborhood Revitalization Board](#)
[Des Moines Neighbors](#)
[United Way](#)
[Neighborhood Development Corp.](#)
[Neighborhood Finance Corporation](#)
[Des Moines Area Religious Group](#)
[Greater Des Moines Partnership and Affiliates](#)
[Education Sector – Superintendent and](#)

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Rick Clark Appointed Acting City Manager

The Des Moines City Council appointed Deputy City Manager Rick Clark as the Acting City Manager to lead the city administration until a replacement for Eric Anderson can be hired. Clark was appointed on July 1 and given a base salary of \$160,000 during the term that he serves as Acting City Manager.

Among his first order of business, Clark has selected Finance Director Merrill Stanley an Acting Assistant City Manager. Clark said Stanley's financial expertise and former experience as a city manager makes him an ideal choice. Clark, who is also Director of the Economic Development Department and Stanley as Director of the Finance Department will both continue to run their respective departments as



Richard Clark
Interim City Manager

they manage the administrative duties of

(Continued on page 5)



Des Moines Neighbors Honors Staff at Annual Alice Rodine Awards Dinner

By: Kim Hansen

Most would modestly say they are just doing their jobs, but we know that some stand out for the little extras they do. Each year Des Moines Neighbors holds an awards dinner in honor of the late Alice Rodine, to honor those who do a little more.

Major Jim O'Donnell was nominated by Capitol Park and Magnolia Park Neighborhoods and won the overall award. Major O'Donnell really cares about the community and does a great job. He attends meetings and events, listens to the concerns of the community and follows through. His role in the patrol unit enables him to respond to complaints about speeding and his involvement with the Neighborhood Based Service Delivery (NBSD), which is vital to the City as a whole. Major O'Donnell's family also hosts an annual golf outing and donates the proceeds to charity.

Our men and women in blue always stand out. **Sgt. Cynthia Donahue and Sgt. Kervin Veasley** were both nominated by River Bend Neighborhood. Sgt. Veasley was also nominated by Cheatom Park. **Sgt. Larry Rogers** was nominated by Merle Hay and Meredith Neighborhoods. Capitol East Neighborhood nominated **Sgt. Paul Stout**. I think it goes without saying that all of the Des Moines police officers go beyond the call of duty and everyday they protect our city and they do it proudly.

South Park Association nominated NBSD team, Zoning Inspectors, **Jon Raleigh** and **Chris Heilskov** for their great strides in the clean up of our neighborhood. These gentlemen are always professional and courteous and their efforts make such a visible difference on the south side.

Martin Luther King Jr. Park Neighborhood nominated **Deanna Claussen** for her dedication to improving the parks in the ML King Park Neighborhood. Gray's Woods Neighborhood nominated **Skip Moore**. Skip is very dedicated to the Forestry Department, attends meetings and keeps everyone educated.

Waterbury Neighborhood nominated **Doug Olson**. Doug went above and beyond on his first project with the Waterbury streetscape. He was very attentive and kept the project moving along. North of Grand nominated **Kathy Kahoun**. Kathy has helped guide neighborhoods through the planning process and implementation stages. Many neighborhoods have completed their plans and many are waiting for their turn. Kathy has worked through thick & thin including many staffing cuts. Her dedication to the neighborhoods is greatly appreciated!

Cindy Christian nominated **Doug Romig** for the great job he's been doing with the Easton half pipe. The half pipe has been a controversy and Doug has been more than graceful at listening to everyone's concerns.

Every year it gets harder and harder to pick just one person to honor, so we tend to pick the people that we've worked with closely in the past year. We do not mean to forget anyone or think that one person does more or less than another. Many of the city employees never get to visit with the community and for those who are not well known by in the community, we applaud you too! This City would not operate so efficiently were it not for the people who run it.



Major Jim O'Donnell



Doug Olson



Skip Moore



Deanna Claussen



Kathy Kahoun



Chris Heilskov



Jon Raleigh

Thank You!



City Installs New Downtown Wayfinding Signs

By Gary Fox, Traffic and Transportation

City sign crews have completed installation of the first phase of new Wayfinding signs for downtown attractions. These signs provide directions to many new attractions, such as the Iowa Events Center, Science Center, East Village, etc. and are a great addition to the downtown area. The design of the signs was a joint effort by the City, Polk County and the Downtown Community Alliance, along with design consultant RDG Planning & Design in association with Mauck Groves Branding & Design. The goal of the new sign system is to assist visitors

and residents unfamiliar with the downtown area in finding their way to major attractions and associated parking facilities. The process of developing the Wayfinding system involved a variety of stakeholders, considered how people move through downtown to reach their destinations, and reviewed the advantages and disadvantages of other systems around the country.

The signs feature a distinctive new logo, which ties in both the traditional arches of the river bridges and the downtown skyline, including the State Capitol and a hint of the Skywalk System. The signs are constructed with high performance sign materials that accentuate their appearance and visibility during daytime and nighttime conditions, and provide long-term durability. The signs were fabricated by Hall Signs in Bloomington, Indiana and installed by City

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CRACK SEALING OPERATIONS

By Bruce Braun and Pat Kozitza

The Public Works Department initiated a street maintenance procedure in April that is designed to extend the life of City streets. This maintenance procedure involves sealing the transverse and longitudinal cracks that develop in hot mix asphalt (HMA) pavements as they age. The crack sealing operation involves the "routing" or cutting out of cracks to a specified depth and width, then cleaning them out using compressed air, and finally sealing the routed, cleaned cracks with a high performance rubberized, crack sealant material. Crack sealing is an economical maintenance activity that extends

the pavement life by keeping moisture and incompressible material out of cracks to prevent damage such as potholes from occurring.

To perform this maintenance activity, the Public Works Department obtained an air compressor crack router and a hot sealant applicator, and organized a four-person crew to perform the work.

This maintenance procedure will ensure that the many new pavement resurfacing projects being constructed with gaming revenues will provide the full service life that they have been designed for.



Joe Ernst prepares cracks in street for sealing operation



Search (Continued from page 1)
School Board Members
Downtown Community Alliance.

The City has made significant strides during Eric Anderson's tenure as our City Manager. He was hired at a time that the City was faced with difficult budget issues

and record setting development and growth. Anderson worked with the City Council to complete significant projects that will enhance the "quality of life" and have long-lasting impact on all citizens of Des Moines.

We encourage all citizens to have dialogue with their respective groups and

W A T C H



City Cable Channel 7

Lunch with J.A. Jance

World famous mystery novelist J.A. Jance will be the featured guest at a luncheon from 12:00 to 1:00 PM on Friday, **August 19**. Jance is currently touring the country promoting the most recent installment in her popular J.P. Beaumont series, *Long Time Gone*. The event is open to the public and will be held in Capital Square, Suite 100. An executive sandwich lunch will be served. Reservations are \$15 in advance, and can be made by credit card by calling the Foundation office at 515-288-5066.

Cokie Roberts Re-Scheduled!

August 25 is the rescheduled date for a visit by popular news analyst Cokie Roberts who was originally scheduled to visit Des Moines as part of the Library's AViD Author Series. A work assignment covering the Pope's funeral in Rome caused the postponement. Roberts will share highlights from her career and read from *Founding Mothers: The Women Who Raised Our Nation*, her most recent book that explores the lives of the women behind the men that wrote the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. The free program starts at 7:00 PM at Hoyt Sherman Place Theater and seating is first come, first served. A private reception in honor of Roberts will be held at the home of Jim and Roxanne Conlin from 4:30 to 6:30 PM. Contact the Library Foundation for details and to purchase reception tickets at 288-5066. Roberts books will be available for purchase and signing.

DES MOINES PUBLIC LIBRARY

Employee Wellness Program

Lunch And Learn Schedule

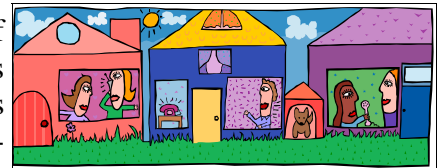
The City of Des Moines Employee Wellness Committee is pleased to announce the exciting line-up of FREE Lunch and Learns for the rest of the calendar year! Bring your lunch to eat and the Wellness Committee will provide you with a healthy snack and beverage to top it off while you listen and gain tips from the speaker. All Lunch and Learns will be held in City Council Cham-



bers from 12:00 to 1 :00 p.m. Registration is limited to 90 people for each Lunch and Learn, so register early by calling the Action Center at 283-4500. If you have questions, please call Carissa Hickok 248-6315.

Planning a Neighborhood Party?

A number of neighborhoods host block parties and ice cream socials every year to meet their neighbors and friends. It's not too late if your neighborhood wants to host a block party or social event this summer. There are just a few steps to take to ensure your party is not only fun but safe. Call the City Clerk's Office at 283-4209 or go online to the City's website www.dmgov.org to obtain an application. Send in your completed application, along with a diagram of the area to be closed and a copy of the flyer distributed to the neighbors. City departments will review your application and then a permit will be issued for a small cost. Barricades will be delivered for your event. If you have more questions contact Laura or Jody at 283-4209. Enjoy Des Moines' neighborhoods.



Date	Topic
August 17	What Does The EAP Offer ?
September 22	How to De-Stress and Relax
October 19	Preparing To Stop Smoking
November 17	Healthy Eating Tips For The Holidays
December 22	Planning A Great Vacation



Merrill Stanley
Temporary Assistant
City Manager

(Continued from page 1)

the City of Des Moines government.

On July 18th the Council approved the appointment of Mike Matthes as a permanent Assistant City Manager.

Acting City Manager Rick Clark has set some short-term goals for the organization. They include:

1. Evaluate the City's overall fiscal condition and identify financial strategies necessary to ensure the City's continuing financial viability.
2. In conjunction with Mayor and Council, develop a schedule for preparing and approving a budget that addresses Council priorities, ensures a balanced budget for at least 3 years, and is communicated effectively to the general public.
3. Improve communications with City Boards and Commissions.
4. In conjunction with Operation Downtown, complete a management and maintenance plan for downtown parks and recreational facilities.
5. Improve City marketing, including implementation of the City newsletter.
6. Complete major annexations to the south and northeast.
7. Complete Highway 5 corridor plan.
8. Complete Stockard and Engler evaluation of neighborhood improvement program and implement recommendations upon Council approval.
9. Implement all mutually approved resolutions of City/County joint work.
10. Achieve agreement with other metro cities for new Regional Transit funding mechanism using the transit levy as authorized in Iowa Code.
11. Economic development initiatives:
 - a. Develop collaborative economic development initiatives with Polk County for major projects such as parking, hotel, Courthouse expansion, transit transfer project, Eastgate, Southside/Raccoon River redevelopment program, etc.
 - b. Put in place an effective program for neighborhood commercial development.
 - c. Finalize Riverpoint redevelopment agreement and initiative project.
 - d. Resolve Court Avenue projects and proceed with development strategy.
 - e. Complete Gateway redevelopment plan and initiate one major project along Gateway West.
 - f. Develop parking strategy for eastside downtown including parking ramp on City Hall parking lot.
 - g. In collaboration with Polk County and DCA, prepare and submit application for New Market Tax Credits.
 - h. Propose and implement upon Council approval an extension of the tax abatement program.

A Job Well Done

By: Todd Dykstra



DSM Police Sergeant Paul Stout

Sergeant Paul Stout was transferred to the Detective Bureau as the evening Person's Section Supervisor in June, after spending 2 ½ years as the Neighborhood Based Service Delivery (NBSD) sergeant assigned to the Capitol Park, Capitol East and Martin Luther King Jr. Neighborhood Associations.

During his NBSD assignment, he enthusiastically performed his duties and was always prompt in his response to citizen concerns using innovation and good judgment when dealing with problems. He did so in a cheerful, helpful and approachable manner continuing to deal with neighborhood residents with respect and empathy toward their problems. He maintained a consistent, positive and professional image of the Police Department and the City of Des Moines.

Sgt. Stout made such a good impression that neighborhood leaders nominated him to receive a proclamation from the City recognizing him for his outstanding community service. As a result, Stout received a "Proclamation" signed by the Mayor T. M. Franklin Cownie, proclaiming that Saturday June 18th 2005 as Sergeant Paul Stout Day. Congratulations on receiving this outstanding recognition for a job well done.

New Training For Supervisors By: Marylee Woods

New supervisory training offerings are underway with short monthly topical training sessions, a book discussion group featuring popular professional management texts, and more training to come. If you're in a management position or have an interest in advancing to a management position with the City, these classes are a great way to gain information, improve insight, and hone your supervisory skills.

First on the list are the **Supervisory Update Meetings (SUM)** which are held the 2nd Thursday of the month at 9:00 AM, usually in the St. Etienne Conference Room in lower level of the Armory. Some topics have already been covered but you can still sign up for the remaining sessions, which include:

- [Performance \(August\)](#)
- [Improving Performance \(September\)](#)
- [Workplace Issues II \(October\)](#)

As with any training session, you may need to check with your supervisor before registering. If you have questions about the content of these sessions, there is greater detail and a sign-up form available on the City's web portal.

In addition to the topical SUM ses-

sions, **CLUB REaD** is a lunchtime book discussion group led by managers from various departments and featuring books picked by the group. CLUB REaD discussions are also held in St. Etienne and meet the 3rd Wednesday of each month from 12:00 to 1:00 PM. The group is currently discussing "The Power of Focus." Other suggested texts include "The Price of Government," and "Selling the Invisible." All you need to do to participate is sign-up, read the book, and then be prepared to talk about the text and how it might apply to our organization. This is a great opportunity to discuss business texts and meet other managers across the organization.

Watch for more management and staff development programs to come such as Creative Management, Mentoring, and City U. If you have suggestions for training topics, please share them via the discussion board on the HR Department/Training section of the web portal.

Sign-Up Info: Visit the web portal (<http://cdmportal>) for dates, times, and a sign-up form. Or contact Michele Bischof at mlbischof@dmgov.org (237-1307) or Marylee Woods at mlwoods@dmgov.org (283-4501)

Public Works Celebrates National Safety Month

By Rod Biondi and Pat Kozitza

On June 16th the Public Works Department celebrated National Safety Month with a department wide gathering at the supply yards. The Department has undertaken a system wide effort to improve their safety. The effort has included the establishment of an employee/management safety committee to look at our practices and establish safety procedures and policies. Much of the Solid Waste Division has been automated, improving both efficiency and safety. Front line supervisors conduct regular safety meetings and training. All motorized equipment is given both a pre and post safety inspection and if any safety deficiency is found, it is

corrected by Fleet Services.

Injuries and motor vehicle accidents are investigated and followed up with appropriate managerial action. Employees are recognized for their contributions. As a direct result of these combined efforts, the Public Works Department was able to celebrate a 75% drop in injuries.

None of this would have been possible without the efforts of everyone involved. Each year, the Department honors the people who have worked a five-year period without injury, provided they have not previously received an award during the same five-year period. This year, the Department honored: Charles Burrell,

Signs—(Continued from page 3)

sign crews in the Traffic and Transportation Division. They are mounted on streetlight poles, using a unique mounting system of very high bond tape and special brackets so there are no bolts and washers to mar the face of the signs.

Construction of the overall Wayfinding Sign System is expected to cost \$625,000 with a \$500,000 federal grant from the Iowa Department of Transportation. The first phase of the project which is complete, included large Attraction Directory Signs, Attraction Directional Signs and Attraction Arrival Signs. The second, and much larger phase of the project, will include Parking Facility Directional and Arrival Signs, which will include real-time parking availability information, along with Pedestrian Directional Signs. Design of this phase is currently underway, and the signs are expected to be installed in late 2005 or early 2006.



[Public Works Director Bill Stowe presents safety award to Todd Lawless](#)

Anthony Chiodo, Carol Fallis, Joleen Farrell, Brion Fast, Clyde Ficek, Randy Figgins, Tim Jackson, Karey King, Tim Kingkade, Russ Kunze, Todd Lawless, and Randy Schooley.

Career Moves

Armstrong Resigns as Chief Information Officer



Michael Armstrong has accepted a position as the Chief Information Officer and Assistant City Manager in San Antonio, Texas. He began his career with the City in 1997 and under his leadership I.T. has transitioned the City into a more computerized organization. Des

Moines as won five Digital Cities Awards between 2000 and 2004. Armstrong's last day was July 15.

Al Ihde Named Acting I.T. Director



As the Network Administrator for the I.T. Department since 1998, Al has played an integral role in the expansion of the City's fiber network and computer systems as we moved strategically from a mainframe to a client server environment.

Ihde's career with the City began on October 5, 1970, as a Mainframe Computer Operator. He was named Acting Information Technology Department Director effective July 18, 2005.

Lisa Mickey, City Legal Department



Lisa Mickey has joined the City Legal Department as Legal Secretary in April 2005. Lisa joins us from the private firm of Huber, Book, Cortese, Happe & Lanz, P.L.C. She worked for the Huber Firm

for over six years, first as a legal secretary and most recently as a paralegal. Lisa is married and has three children.

Cheryl Tillinghast Promoted to Legal Assistant



Cheryl Tillinghast has been promoted to the position of Legal Assistant in the Litigation Division. Cheryl will work closely with the City prosecutor, City claims adjuster, as well as with the legal staff on Community Development issues. Cheryl has been with the City

of Des Moines for 14 years as a Legal Secretary and freelance court reporter.

Service Plus

Recognition of the extra effort given by City Employees.



Community Development

I received a voice mail from Des Moines resident Margaret Fox. Margaret is disabled (has M.S.) and has a window air conditioning unit, but needed someone to install it for her. I checked CIS and did not show her approved for Energy Assistance.

When I called her the next day, she informed me that she was over our income guidelines, but she had good news. In addition to calling our program, she had called her local fire station. Three firemen came to her house, spent a half an hour, and installed her air conditioner for her. Margaret said without the air conditioner, she was not physically able to do much but she is now able to do a number of things including her house cleaning.

Naomi G. McDanel, Community Services Administration

Public Works

Mr. George Flagg wrote to express his appreciation for recent work completed on Park Avenue. "The work that your personnel are doing on Park Avenue is exemplary. My wife and I were betting each other as to how many days would go by before someone would want to drill an opening in the pavement for sewer repair or some other such reason. When I first went into office in 1980, I asked Harold Smith the approximate cost of paving and upgrading every street in the City of Des Moines and the figure was \$100 million. The last time I asked, the figure was the same.

I do hope that the Polk County Board of Supervisors will continue to make payments to the City indefinitely and that all of the money will be used for street repairs and improvements.

Your people also did a marvelous job during the snowstorms we had. I never heard a single complaint from anyone, which is unusual to say the least. Thank you for all that you do for our fine City.

George E. Flagg

Mark Rothert, Management Analyst



Mark has accepted the position of Interim Economic Development Director for the City of Canton, Illinois, his hometown. Mark said he is excited for this great opportunity and to return

and contribute to his community. Mark has been with the City for past 3 years (2 in the CMO and 1 in PW). His last day of work was Friday, July 22.

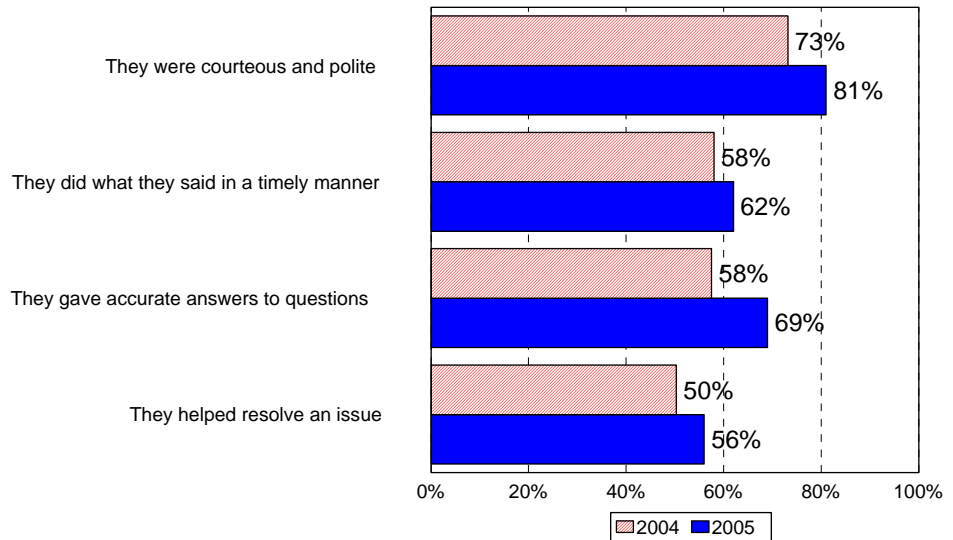
Citizen Survey Says Employees Do a Great Job !

By: Tansy Hayward

On July 13, 2005, ETC Institute out of Olathe, KS delivered the results of the City of Des Moines 2005 Direction Finder Citizen Satisfaction Survey. Overall, City of Des Moines employees should be happy with these results. The survey showed that the City of Des Moines is providing exceptional service when compared to other large cities. The City scored above average in five of the eight major categories of the survey, and even more impressive, scored in the top 25% of all cities in the quality of our fire department, police department, animal control, walking and biking trails, swimming pools, and park and recreation service registration. The Survey also found that 82% of residents in the City are satisfied with the overall quality of life in Des Moines. This satisfaction is nearly the highest rating for any city. This demonstrates that we all should be proud to live and work in Des Moines. Some of the

How Often City Employees Displayed Various Behaviors - 2004 vs. 2005

by percentage of respondents who rated the item as a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 5 was "very satisfied" (excluding don't knows)



Source: ETC Institute (2005 - Des Moines, IA)

improvements in satisfaction from the 2004 survey included:

- Satisfaction with mowing and trimming along City streets increased by 5%.
- Satisfaction with garbage collection increased by 5%.
- Satisfaction with yard waste collection increased by 6%.
- Satisfaction with the City's planning for growth increased by 8%.
- Satisfaction with children's library programs increased by 8%.
- Satisfaction with the number of public access terminals at the library increased by 10%.
- Satisfaction with customer service increased dramatically. In 2004, 63% survey respondents found it easy to contact staff. In 2005, 78% of respondents found it easy, an increase of 15%. Satisfaction also increased by 8% on how polite City employees respond and by 11% on the accuracy of information provided by City employees.

These results exhibit the hard work that City employees are doing every day. Rick Clark, the Acting City Manager, wants to recognize City of Des Moines employees for their outstanding service to the City. On August 13th, City of Des Moines Employees and their families are invited to join Rick at Teachout Aquatic Center, 2601 Hubbell Avenue for an evening of swimming and an outdoor movie. More information will be coming, but be sure to save the date!

To learn more about the Citizen Satisfaction Survey please visit the City's website or contact Tansy Hayward, CMO at 283-4218.





Front Line

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