

Guest Column

by Craig E. Hardy, Iowa County Highway Commissioner

Where have all the vehicle registration fee dollars gone?

In 2009, the Iowa County Highway Department refunded \$350,000 of local road improvement dollars back to the state region due to not having the local cost share matching funds to utilize the monies in the timeframe allowed by program rules. Those funds are provided to the county through various cost share mechanisms of the state highway fund; however, additional local funds must also be allocated to utilize them.

In 2003, the funds were awarded to the county for an improvement project but at the program's sunset date six years later (in 2009), the department was not able to utilize the funding due in part to a lack of matching funds. The \$350,000 dollars was returned to the region to be redistributed to another local county which could come up with the minimum matching dollars of \$350,00, which went to Columbia County.

In November of 2014, the Iowa County Board of Supervisors adopted a \$20/vehicle registration fee tax in compliance with state statute 341.35 authority. The decision was based upon a backlog of projects requiring improvement and repairs beyond general maintenance dollars.

Cost share matching funds were available to assist with funding the projects, but the county needed a source of funds for the cost share portion. Adoption of a vehicle registration fee was estimated to generate \$430,000 on an annual basis. This funding was to be leveraged by the highway department against other state-federal funding to complete improvements to five bridge projects on County Highway E, HK, G, Y and HH, along with three road projects on County Highway E, K and QQ. The estimated total costs for those projects was \$6.1 million.

In 2015, the first project was undertaken with vehicle registration fee dollars on County Highway QQ between State Highway 39 in Mineral Point Township. This project was an asphalt pulverization and pavement replacement project completed at a cost of \$747,000 for just under three miles.

In 2016, the department completed work located on County Highway E in Mifflin Township, a bridge and roadway improvement project and on County Highway HK in Moscow Township and a bridge replacement project. The costs for the County Highway E bridge replacement and 0.3 miles of County Highway E approaching Mifflin were \$1.8 million. The costs for the County Highway

HK bridge replacement were \$585,000. In total, since adoption of the vehicle registration fee for projects completed in 2015 and 2016, the department has funded \$3.132 million in road and bridge improvements. The vehicle registration fees have accounted for \$824,000 (26%) of the funding. Nearly two million (61%) of state and federal cost share dollars have been utilized. And, the balance of \$400,000 (12.8%) has been funded through annual highway appropriations and the highway fund balance.

For every dollar of vehicle registration fee dollars utilized, the department has leveraged another three dollars from other cost share sources to complete the projects.

On October 2 of this year, the Iowa County Highway Department undertook its fourth project utilizing vehicle registration fee funds. Due to the overall costs of the County Highway K pavement resurface project between Mounds Park Road and State Highway 14, the department had initially intended to perform the project over two years in 2016 and 2017. The south phase of the project from Mounds Park to Knight Hollow road was estimated at \$1.2 million. The north portion to State Highway 14 was estimated at \$575,000.

Due to some additional authorized borrowing by the County Board, the project will be completed wholly in 2017. The project consists of an asphalt pulverization process, spot culvert replacements and placement of a new four-inch asphalt pavement surface. Due to contractor scheduling and other department projects, the work began around October 2 of this year. Asphalt paving is currently occurring, with shouldering and pavement markings the road is anticipated to be completed by November 17.

The overall project carries a cost of \$1.7 million for just under six miles of improvements. Of this, \$415,000 will be vehicle registration fee funds, \$309,000 of county supported short-term borrowing, \$463,000 in state Local Road Improvement dollars and the balance, \$513,000, of annual highway appropriations.

In all, since adoption in 2014, the vehicle registration fee has collected \$1.2 million, which has helped to fund \$4.83 million in road and bridge improvements by providing local cost share dollars. Without the vehicle registration fees, the Highway Department would not have been able to complete this projects or fully utilize the other funding sources

available. Over the next four years, the department has the following improvement projects planned: pavement replacement for County Highway E in the Town of Mifflin, bridge replacement and 0.3 miles of approaches for County Highway G in Mifflin Township, bridge replacement for County Highway Y in Mineral Point Township, bridge replacement for County Highway HH in Arena Township, bridge replacement for County Highway H in Arena Township and phase one of

three phases of pavement replacement on County Highway F in Moscow Township. The costs for these projects are estimated at \$4.9 million; of this amount, \$1.66 million is estimated as vehicle registration fee funds, \$2.95 million is estimated as state-federal cost share funding and the balance of \$294,000 of annual highway appropriations or fund balance. Source of projects and funding is the Iowa County Long Range Capital Plan dated 2014-2020, and is updated on an annual basis.

Your Opinion

Much to be found in newspaper's pages

Dear Editor;
In this noisy and increasingly more spirited and frightening world, I have been looking everywhere for peace and kindness, justice, spirituality, beauty, health, wellness, meaningful and fun activity, mediation and reason, freedom and liberty. I've been finding these qualities too, sometimes next door, often in stores or on the street corner. On October 26, I found them all wrapped in one issue of *The Dodgeville Chronicle*.

The front page was full of a Halloween schedule, preparation for a referendum vote for Barneveld and fundraising plans for a Dodgeville dog park, an invitation to a 4-H open house and a photo review of the successful Fall Art Tour.

On the Spotlight back page was an in-depth story about breast cancer, and throughout were many interesting articles of community interest on influenza, Drug Take Back Day, a marijuana bust, students honored for state music performances, blood donation opportunities, church news, local community news, license plates slogans, a new veterinarian, two NEW newspaper employees (!!!), public notices and obituaries. Then there was the local sports scene focusing on football, volleyball, bowl-

ing and hunting.
On the opinion page, Pat Reilly supported federal funds to combat the opioid crisis; Vortex's president supported the Barneveld referendum for new tech ed space. Senator Howard Marklein encouraged community members to suggest legislative ideas. A Barneveld alumni supported the gym referendum; flood risk disclosure was recommended by Jake Johnson; Sue Springer recommended help for those thinking of suicide; Paula Dail addressed the rape issue and both Bertrams outlined a "dream retirement."

All of the above, including Mike Reilly's "Along the Ad Routes" and Pat Reilly's football/Halloween story, came in one issue of *The Dodgeville Chronicle*. It made me happy and proud to be a Dodger - part of our great community.

You can spread all those good values listed in the first paragraph by gifting a subscription of your local newspaper to your family and friends. It's a "Made in America" gift that promotes our values and freedom 52 times a year.

Anne D. Bachner
Dodgeville

Legislator Notes

Locals know their community best

by Senator Howard Marklein, 17th Senate District

Darlington Police Chief Jason King knows his community. He knows the people, the streets, the businesses and the issues his community manages every day.

He knows that Darlington's ATV/UTV route through the city has been a huge boon for locals and visitors alike, with the exception of the small stretch of Galena Street that is also State Highway 23. This half-mile is off-limits to ATVs/UTVs because of state law.

Chief King emailed me early this year to see if there would be a way for municipalities to decide whether a small section of state highway within the boundaries of a municipality could be part of a larger ATV/UTV route system. He said that a small, half-mile stretch of Galena Street, which is also State Highway 23, cannot be included in the city-wide ATV/UTV route because it is a state highway.

The problem in Darlington is that this small section of road dissects the community and effectively locks entire neighborhoods from accessing the ATV/UTV route. Residents cannot, legally, drive on Highway 23 to access the rest of the route. To comply with state law, they need to trailer their ATV/UTV to the route across Galena Street in order to ride on the route. This is ridiculous.

This challenge is shared by other small, mostly rural, municipalities throughout the state where state highways are also main roads through town. As ATV/UTV trail riding grows in popularity, this issue becomes a challenge in more municipalities.

As a result, I authored Senate Bill (SB) 392, along with Rep. Todd Novak (R-Dodgeville), who authored its companion Assembly Bill (AB) 485. These bills authorize a municipality to decide whether ATVs/UTVs may be operated on



state highways within their territorial boundaries where the speed limit is 35 mph or less.

I believe that local leaders and law enforcement know best whether their community should include sections of state highway in their ATV/UTV routes. They will consider historical data, average speeds, average use and other details before they make this decision. The public, who will be directly impacted, will have the opportunity for input during the ordinance-making process. My bill allows locals to decide whether to enact this policy - or not.

This is another great example of legislation that was borne out of direct experiences in the communities of the 17th District. I appreciate Chief King's willingness to share his concerns and to offer a reasonable solution. Common sense, local ideas are an important part of the legislative process.

SB 392 received a hearing on October 4, 2017 in the Senate Committee on Transportation and Veterans Affairs. AB 485 should receive a hearing soon. I have received positive feedback on this bill from other legislators who have communities that are also impacted by this law. I am optimistic that we will be able to continue moving these bills through the legislative process.

Along The Ad Routes

by Mike Reilly



A huge congratulations to the Dodgeville-Mineral Point boys cross country team for bringing home the Division 2 silver trophy from Saturday's state championships in Wisconsin Rapids. As a point of information, Dodge-Point coach Denny McGraw was a member of the 1972 state championship Dodgeville team and also of the 1973 runners-up. Dave McGraw was also on the team in 1973. In 1967, when the Dodgeville boys won their first state title, Pat McGraw was a member of the team. This year, Dylan McGraw was a member of the runner-up team. It seems we need a McGraw to be running cross country every year for us to win a trophy - can that happen?!!!

But, in 2010, there wasn't a McGraw on the boys team that finished second in Division 2. That team was made up of Trevor Wunnicke, Brett Hottmann, Nick Day, Matt Dougherty, Joe Frank, Greg Hanson and Mark Schmitz. That was the first Dodge-Point boys co-op team to earn a state trophy.

Dodge-Point's Lindsay Johnston ran well as an individual runner in the Division 2 girls race, as did Iowa-Grant's Nick Connolly in the Division 3 boys race. It's great to be a part of a state tournament!

Mineral Point's football team won a thriller over Cuba City Friday night in the rain/snow on a blocked field goal attempt that was returned for a touchdown near game's end. They travel north to Markesan Friday night in Level 3. A win there puts them in what would be considered sectional finals the following week with a win then meaning a state tournament appearance in Division 6. Good Luck to the Pointers!

Good luck also to the Benton volleyball team of the Six Rivers Conference as they will be our area team representative at state next weekend!

This may just be a first for the Dodgeville Post Office. I don't have records from way back to "Pony Express Days," but Dodgeville's Mark Ludwig recently graduated from the Lakeland District New Supervisors Program, which I believe is a first for Dodgeville. Congratulations to Mark, who is also a member of the Dodgeville Knights Home Talent Baseball Team.

This issue starts out the month of November (November 2nd). That means that Christmas is just around the corner! But, this Saturday night/Sunday remember to turn your clocks back one hour for Daylight Savings Time. That means one more hour of sleep that night! It also means it will be getting darker outside earlier in the day!

earthbound

by Chuck Tennesen

Fair Food Fare

After grueling state and regional competitions, the four national finalists in The Great American Cook-Off had been selected. These accomplished chefs would prepare their most delectable dishes in hopes of winning the coveted Feed the World Golden Cornucopia.

Portney prepared his lip-smacking barbequed pork ribs. Baron's Beef Wellington emanated eloquent dining at its finest. For down-home comfort food Betty's Boston Baked Beans are unbeatable. And Chico cooked up his mouth-watering spicy chicken enchiladas.

The judges carefully sampled each dish - sniffing, tasting, delighting in the texture of every morsel then solemnly convened in the back of the auditorium. The contestants waited nervously and finally the head judge took to the podium. "Ladies and Gentlemen. After compiling the scores, it seems we have a 4-way tie! Tie-breaker rules will apply. The winner of the Golden Cornucopia will be the chef whose prepared dish feeds the world most efficiently."

Tiny beads of perspiration immediately popped out on Baron's forehead. He knew the delicious steer he was serving up was notoriously inefficient as a food source. On average, to make just one 4 oz. serving of his dish requires about 7 lbs. of grain and forage and over 50 gallons of water. About 96% of the protein that goes into a steer is lost before it becomes dinner on the table.

Meanwhile, Portney felt a glimmer of confidence. He didn't know about the other two contestants, but he did know that on average hogs are more than 3 times as efficient in converting feed into protein for human consumption than are cattle. But Chico's the one who couldn't suppress a grin. His beloved chickens, as well as other poultry, are efficiency experts. Poultry are about 8 times better at changing chicken feed into Sunday dinner than are beef cattle. In fact, at least one study shows that if the U.S. completely replaced cattle with poultry the additional calories and protein would feed about 130 million more Americans.

Not surprisingly, the Golden Cornucopia went to Betty and her humble beans. "I love a juicy burger on occasion," commented Betty. "But I also love exploring new recipes using chicken, beans and veggies. And while grass-fed cattle from Southwest Wisconsin undoubtedly beat the averages, just how many 50-gallons-of-water-per-quarter-pounders can Mother Earth afford to supply? It's something to consider because this is our only home. We're here forever... Earthbound."

(More at foreverearthbound.net)

The Dodgeville Chronicle, serving Iowa County since 1862. One of southwest Wisconsin's largest weeklies.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

The Letter to the Editor deadline is noon on Tuesday.

Your dream retirement

A guest column by Michelle and Beverly Bertram - Bertram Financial, Mineral Point

Mark from Verona asked this week, "I don't want to lose money; how do I protect my retirement accounts?"

As we move closer to retirement and beyond, losing money becomes a bigger concern for most people; you are not alone!

Many of the retirees and those preparing to retire tell us that they would rather give up a 20% gain than take even a 10% loss. I believe this is hard-wired into us. It stems from the fact that we know when we stop working, we will not be adding to our accounts, so the opportunity to make money back is lost. Plus, we may need to use those accounts for retirement income and losing money means possibly losing income.

When we talk about losing money, most people relate that to losing in the stock market. So for this article, let's focus on that.

There are a couple of things you can do to "protect" your retirement accounts from market losses. First, I would recommend using "the colors of money" as a guide to choose the right investment mix for yourself.

There are three main goals we have when investing money: safety, liquidity and growth. No magic investment meets all those goals completely. Yellow money is safe and liquid, but provides very little growth. Red money is liquid (most of the time) and provides growth, but there is no safety. Green money sits in the middle with safety (principle protection), but it has limited liquidity at least early on and limited growth potential (but also not sub-



ject to market losses). Have the right mix of these colors of investments is one of the first things you can do to protect your accounts. We often refer to the 'rule of 100,' which is simply subtracting your age from 100 and having that percent in red money and the rest in yellow and green.

The next thing I would suggest is having a risk assessment done on your portfolio. This should be run by third-party investment research and analytics firm such as Morning Star. This report is more than a snapshot of your portfolio; it analyzes the funds in your portfolio and can give you a probability of upside and downside return potential. A stress test to give you an idea of what would happen when new have another bear market. Everyone in or nearing retirement should have an updated risk assessment done on a regular basis and especially now when we are at an all-time market high.

For more information, to request a free copy of your book or to submit your questions, go to CreatingYourDreamRetirement.com

Letter To The Editor Policy

- All letters to the editor must be signed. Unsigned letters **WILL NOT** be published. Names will be published with the letter.
 - All letters should be short and concise. Letters may be edited for length.
 - Letters that are deemed libel or obscene will be edited.
 - Deadline for letters to the editor is **noon Tuesday**.
 - Letters of endorsements for candidates and referendums will be accepted up to two weeks prior to the election. We will not run letters of endorsements the Thursday prior to the election.
- Letters will be published as space permits.

Like us on Facebook
[@TheDodgevilleChronicle](https://www.facebook.com/TheDodgevilleChronicle)