



Along the Lincoln Highway



The Newsletter of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association

Volume 9, Number 3

Autumn 2004

Old Bridge Gets New Life.

*By Jeff LaFollette,
Clinton County Consul.*

Many of you are familiar with the pony truss bridge between Calamus and Wheatland in Clinton County. The bridge was threatened with demolition in 1997, but then-Consul Elmer Ketelsen was diligent in safeguarding it.

The plan was to make the area into a historic site. However, seven years have passed, and the danger has reappeared in area newspapers earlier this year.

To learn what was going on with the bridge, I contacted the Clinton County Conservation Board (CCCB), and spoke with Al Griffiths, Executive Director.

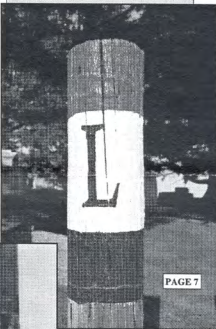
Al informed me that the CCCB owns the bridge and surrounding grounds. By "owns," he means it was essentially given to the CCCB in 1997 in a handshake agreement.

In June I asked for permission to work at the bridge site - primarily mowing, pulling weeds and general cleanup. Al contacted the Clinton County Engineers Office for their opinion, to which they responded, "You know, it's your bridge." Al concurred and the rest is history.

Imagine the surprise on my wife Annette's face when I came home from work to say, "Dear, I'm going to mow around

(Calamus Bridge, Continued on page 6)

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RECOGNITION, PUBLICITY AND AWARENESS OF THE ROLE AND ACTIVITIES FOR PRESERVING AND DEVELOPING... THE LH FACILITATE RESEARCH ABOUT THE LH AND PUBLISH A MAGAZINE FOR ARTICLES AND NEWS OF ACTIVITIES RELEVANT TO THE LH, WORK WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND BUSINESS TO PROMOTE THE LH AS A TOURISM DESTINATION, AND BE EXCLUSIVELY CHARITABLE AND EDUCATIONAL WITHIN THE MEANING OF THE NATIONAL REVENUE CODE.

Planners Visit Coe Conference Site.

On Saturday, August 14th, members of the Iowa LHA convened on the grounds of Coe College in Cedar Rapids for a tour and some Q&A with Dean of Student Life Greg Griffin. Coe is the site of the national LHA conference in 2006.

President Mike Kelly, Vice-President Bob Stinson, past Presidents Van and Bev Becker, Clinton Consul Jeff LaFollette, Charlie Kuester, and State Director Paul Walker participated in the walking tour. For several it was the first visit to the site. No one left the campus disappointed with the selection.

Greg fielded questions during the tour related to housing and meal costs, and suggested locations for events. The group was most impressed with the cost of on-campus housing - \$76 or \$104 for the entire conference depending on living arrangements - and access to Coe's exceptional seminar halls, which will be in full use during the conference.

Unconstrained by the nature of a hotel conference, Coe will be a very flexible host. Several ideas were proposed by the group on ways to break out of the traditional conference mold, and Coe was amenable to them all. This included a pig roast as an evening meal, serving of Iowa wines for the banquet, expanding the bookroom's function, working with Coe

(Coe College, Continued on page 5)



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Have Spare Tire, Will Travel

By Van & Bev Becker

Forget that it is Autumn 2004, and look squarely in the rearview mirror. We are going back 75 years.

What's going on in 1929? Well, the federal government has taken over numbering of our beloved highway. Here in Iowa, we now look for U.S. 30. The last official act of placing "memorial" markers on September 1, 1928, is over a year behind us.

The stock market crash of October 29, 1929 is a short two months away—no "Black Friday" yet. The Roaring Twenties still roar.

Henry's lady, the Model A, is in the middle of its production run (late '27-'31), and these lovable vehicles are everywhere.

Iowa Electric Light and Power Company's subsidiary, CRANDIC (Cedar Rapids and Iowa City) Railroad is busy pulling up the last of the trolley tracks in Lisbon, Iowa. The trolley service from Cedar Rapids to Mt. Vernon and Lisbon, the end of the line, will be never more. The trolley line operated from 1913 to 1928, almost paralleling the life of the Lincoln Highway Association. This pull-out also eliminated trolley service to the Palisades-Kepler State Park resort.

On the high end—E.L. Cord in 1929 introduced the new, low, long and expensive Model L-29 automobile. The L-29 is pictured here with the Graf Zeppelin. The sticker shock notwithstanding, the car still features

front-wheel drive. Despite Cord's good name and fine reputation, the American public is not sold on the unconventional drive system. It will be many years before the advantages are recognized and accepted.

And in late August 1929, two men from the Lincoln Highway city of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, have a bird's eye view of history in the making. The men, Dan Hunter and Howard Hall, flew

their airplanes (biplanes?) alongside the massive German air ship Graf Zeppelin as it passed slowly over Davenport, Iowa, the Rock Island Arsenal and Moline, Illinois. How did this futuristic airship look to the Cedar Rapids flyers? See photo at right.

For years Davenport residents wondered aloud if the Zeppelin flying over the U.S. Arsenal in the middle of the Mississippi River wasn't on some sort of spy mission. The flight was originally scheduled to fly over St. Louis.

About this time, Zeppelin fever bit like a new high-tech bug! From cast-iron toys to post cards, if you could somehow catch the magic of the big silvery lighter-than-air craft, it was somehow associated with being modern and in vogue.

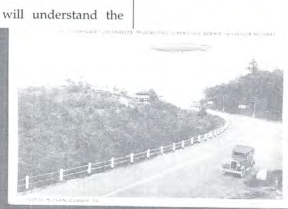
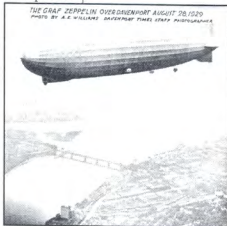
This big Graf Zeppelin, shown over Davenport, traveled 40 times around the world and more than one million miles. It flew for 9 years including 144 flights from Berlin to Rio de Janeiro or New York City. For lift, the Graf Zeppelin carried 16 giant "sausage" casings filled with highly flammable hydrogen gas.

The Zeppelin fever caught on with a few cabin/motel operators who felt the down-to-earth appearance would pull in more earth-bound customers. At right is a Zeppelin Park—Tourist Camp in Jennerstown, Pennsylvania.

Spending a night in this tourist camp had to be quite a contrast to the luxury of the real airship.

Post card collectors will understand the

allure of this photo. The U.S. Dirigible Los Angeles is shown passing over Scrub Ridge Summit west of McConnellsburg, Pennsylvania, floating above the Lincoln Highway through the mountains of Pennsylvania as if to say,



(Spare Tire. Continued on page 6)

Ramblings Along the Lincoln Highway.

*Minutes of the Summer 2004 Iowa LHA Meeting
City Hall, Ames, Iowa.
10 July 2004.*

Submitted by Su Aros, Secretary.

The July 10 ILHA Summer Board Meeting was held at the City Hall in Ames, Iowa with 22 members attending. Thanks to **Jeff Benson/Margaret Elbert** for hosting the event, providing coffee and pastries.

President **Mike Kelly** called the meeting to order at 9:33am. Iowa LHA member **JR Manning** of Germantown, WI, was introduced. JR traveled 350 miles to attend the meeting and be present for the July 11 Grand Opening of Reed/Niland's Corner. Motion was made and carried to accept the minutes of the April 10 Spring ILHA meeting as published.

Treasurer's Report

Bob Ausberger (in Joyce's absence) reported a checking account balance of \$1,778 and an investment account balance of \$4,714. The Lincoln Highway Walking Tour booklet of Ogden, Iowa has been printed and was paid for out of funds being held in the checking account.

Membership Report

Lapsed memberships were distributed to County Consuls after the Spring meeting by **Cecil Stewart**. Cecil will wait to hear back from the Consuls before removing any members. Tama County signed 7 new members. National membership now totals 1,191.

State Director's Report

Paul Walker thanked Consuls for their annual activity reports, which were compiled and submitted at the National Conference.

* Fisher Pass Monument Status: At the 2004 National Conference the Board voted to contribute \$2500 to this project. The Iowa LHA had pledged \$500 with restrictions. Motion was made and carried to drop the restrictions and release the \$500 Iowa pledge to the Fisher Pass Monument committee.

www.webspawner.com/users/fisherpass

* The lease for the LHA Headquarters at Franklin Grove, IL was renewed for 3 years, no cost.

* The LHA has paid \$700 (U.S. Patent Office and attorney fees) for a 5-year Declaration of Use and Incontestability of the LH logo.

2006 National Conference Update

* LHA insurance coverage confirmed to resolve the issue with insurance clause in Coe contract.

* Coe College charges for lodging based on use,

so number of dorm rooms required not due before June 2006.

* **Van & Bev Becker** to develop list of hotel options with rates for attendees who prefer hotel rooms to dorm rooms.

* 2006 presentation at 2005 NV conference: **Mike Kelly** will make DVD/VHS of presentation and give copies to take back to their states.

* Should we have a conference theme? **Jeff's** idea: "Back to the Mud"

* Conference group photo currently planned with Youngville as the backdrop.

Discussion Items

Benson reports on the NPS Report.

* He, **Bob Lichty**, **Jay Banta** will prepare a unified LHA response to the NPS study.

* Of the four alternatives for national involvement that the Secretary of the Interior will send to the U.S. Congress, the LHA voted for #1: No Federal designation of the highway but the government agrees to fund a non-profit foundation for 10 years with a set amount of money.

* Consuls generally support position but commented on need for federal transportation policy involvement, stressing type and location of signs Illinois is using, and that level of integrity in resource is similar to other corridor resources in which NPS has taken more of a direct role.

* Benson to draft Special Resources Studies letter and for review at October meeting.

* Benson and **Catherine Noble** are proceeding with October 1 application submission for Scenic/Historic Byway Designation for LH.

* Iowa had 14 members at 2004 Chester WV national conference. Tour into Ohio included diverting to Akron to see Frank Seiberling's estate (co-founder of Goodyear Tire & Rubber and a past president of the LHA). Dinner cruise on Allegheny, Monongahela and Ohio Rivers in Pittsburgh definitely a highlight.

* **Su Aros** has provided the 2004 Planning Committee with National Conference Attendance Survey to solicit feedback from 2004 attendees. National Board expressed interest in learning why members do not attend conferences. ILHA members present offered reasons such as time, money, family, involvement in other organizations, date conflicts and school in session. **Bob Ausberger's** response: "You should never let school interfere with the education of your children."

* **Jeff LaFollette** reports County Conservation Department owns the Clinton County (Calamus) pony truss bridge, again endangered. LaFollette asked for and received per-

(Ramblings, Continued on page 4)

(*Ramblings, Continued from page 3*)

mission to clean up the area. Jeff/Annette mowed, chopped and pulled weeds around bridge. Plan to put up an identification sign. Would like to see it as a pull-off site, part of a walking, hiking area.

* Kelly reports that the Youngville cabin fire investigation continues. Group suggested offering a reward for information. A Bella Plaine resident offered a cabin on his property that resembled those burned - from Tippy's Corner at Belle Plaine. Youngville needs more resources to be open more. It was repainted this year by volunteers.

* **Bob Stinson** reports October meeting will be held at North Warren Fire Station in Des Moines. Lunch and tour of Jefferson Highway sites to follow business meeting.

* October meeting will see election of Officers: VP/President-elect, Secretary and Treasurer.

Other Business

* The Linn County Seedling Mile's brochure is now available. Lyell Henry distributed copies. A standard Iowa LHA 'vehicle' for participation in parades (Tama Bridge Festival, Nevada LH Days, 4th of July Parade in Ames, Carroll Band Day Parade, Jefferson Bell Tower Days) requested by Consuls. **John Fitzsimmons** suggested "sandwich board" display to place in truck bed and drive parade routes with magnetic logo signs on vehicle. Members have been using classic cars, pick-up trucks with logos taped to the sides. Resolution needed.

* Greater Des Moines Volkssport Association is coordinating series of seven volkswalks in LH towns in 2005 and 2006: Clinton, Mt. Vernon/Lisbon, Tama, Ames, Boone, Logan and Council Bluffs. Kick-off was August 28, 2004 during the Nevada LH Days celebration.

* New LHA National membership brochures were distributed. Beckers to take to Amana.

County Consul Reports

Clinton - **LaFollette's** priority is to get Clinton LH marked; polepainting to start soon. Participating in the Wheatland and Clinton Summer Fests as well as the Clinton Co. Fair.

Cedar - no report

Linn - The Seedling Mile plaque placed at the Bridge to the Past site is inaccurate. **Van Becker** working to correct this issue.

Benton - See **Mike Kelly's** Youngville report.

Tama - **Ron Cory** reported that the 25th Tama Lincoln Highway Bridge Festival attracted 3,000 visitors and included an hour and 20 minute long parade. Cory spoke to the Waterloo YMCA and provided a Tama tour; they want to

come back. The King Tower restoration is nearing completion. In Spring 2005 the bridge plaster will be touched up. Weather conditions must be just right for the special plaster to seal properly.

Marshall - **Watson's Grocery** has been added to the Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area as partner site. They are noticing increased numbers of visitors, getting folks from California and New York who have heard about us from the National Parks website, www.silosandsmokestacks.org or the NPS brochure. We always recommend they see Reed Niland as well. Carl Norman, a State Center artist has completed a painting of the Lincoln Highway looking from the east towards State Center on old 30. Prints will be for sale during the LH Art Tour.

Story - **Benson and Elbert** continue LH presentations with Green Hill Retirement Center. The Lincoln Highway Studio Artists Tour (October 16/17) brochure will be mailed by Jeff to ILHA members. The first 4th of July Parade in 24 years was held in Ames - LH parade entry would've been nice addition.

Boone - **Joe Moore** shared pictures of concrete panels (4' square) with dancers etched in the concrete from the old Nicolet Amusement area which was torn down many years ago. The panels were purchased by a Boone resident who may sell them. **John Fitzsimmons** painted 3 Colo poles for Reed/Niland's Grand Opening. During the Ogden Fun Days, John placed membership brochures on cars. The Ogden LH Walking Tour brochure is available for \$5.

Greene - **Ausberger** reported for **Bob Owens**. The clubhouse entertained a visitor from PA who joined as national LH member. The clubhouse is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons. Visitors are buying memorabilia.

Carroll - **Norma Berns** took membership brochures to Denny's in Carroll and promoted the LH to the coffee drinkers. Articles were written for the Carroll Today newspaper on the Chester conference, the World's Largest Teapot and The Point of Beginning. People are reading them but no new members yet.

Crawford - **Ardith Sporleder** considering a Lincoln Highway table display at the Crawford County Fair; however the cost is \$40/day.

Harrison - No report. **Kathy Dirks** from Missouri Valley reported seeing much interest in the LH from motorcyclists.

Pottawattamie - No report.

Meeting adjourned at 1:05 pm.

Remaining King Tower Cabin Nearing Completion.

By Ron Cory,
Tama County Consul.

Tama County's King Tower cabin restoration project—the sole remaining cabin on the site of the famous one-stop—continues into its third phase. The interior is 50% complete and the exterior is 85% complete. Many volunteers have been instrumental in making this possible, including LHA members Ed Draisey, Bob and Laura Etta Metz, Roger Hill, Joyce Wiese, Marie Vileta and Ron Cory.

Over 500 volunteer hours have been expended thus far. An attempt has been made to save as much of the original exterior and interior including the workroom, windows, doors, etc. We are anxious for the final touches and look forward to completion.

The 25th Annual Lincoln Highway Bridge Festival was a huge success on May 14 and 15. Crowds estimated between three- and four-thousand were on hand for the two-day celebration in downtown Tama. The weather was great, the parade bigger and better than ever, and wonderful entertainment and support were enjoyed by all. **L**



wonderful entertainment and support were enjoyed by all. **L**

(Coe College. Continued from page 1)

Food Service to customize a menu, and more. In fact, events will be more limited by members' imaginations than by Coe's ability to accommodate.

Invitations have been extended for speakers who want to take advantage of Coe's state-of-the-art presentation technology. Coe has three small auditoria equipped for any presentation format, and along with the support of the Coe staff, planners have high hopes for an exceptional conference! **L**



The plaza behind Coe's Gage Union - site of several activities planned for the 2006 conference.



Iowa LHA members are pleased with Kesler Auditorium's suitability as a seminar room.



The magnificent grounds and architecture of the Coe College campus!

See YOU on the Lincoln Highway! This issue's new members..

John Satariano
David McNaught
Keith Light
Dick and Sharon McQuillen
Michael & Laura Saylor
Edwin Draisey
Hoffmans Amiel, Inc.
William Schweitzer
Marlys Messingham
Allan Richards
D.W. Bill Smith
William Spring
Mike & Terri Chapman
Faye Fuller
Bryan Osberg
Kitty Sheehan
State Center Main Street
City of Wheatland, Mayor Jerry Bopp

Tama, Tama Co.^L
Corona, California
Perry, Dallas Co.
Jefferson, Greene Co.^L
Convoy, Ohio
Tama, Tama Co.^L
Tama, Tama Co.^L
Crystal Lake, Illinois
Waterloo, Black Hawk Co.
Montour, Tama Co.^L
Jefferson, Greene Co.^L
Jefferson, Greene Co.^L
Des Moines, Polk Co.
Jessup, Maryland
Urbandale, Polk Co.
Carroll, Carroll, Co.^L
State Center, Co.^L
Wheatland, Clinton Co.^L
Des Moines, Polk Co.
Ames, Story Co.^L

Jeanne Wheeler
James Graham

Iowa Lincoln Highway County

The President's Corner

by Mike Kelly,
ILHA President.

Plans for the 2006 LHA conference are well underway and we'll be spending a great deal of time at future meetings brainstorming, planning, and delegating to make this a memorable event. Please contribute your ideas and suggestions. Even though the conference is in eastern Iowa, a statewide effort is needed to assure success. During my term, the west-enders have displayed quite a knack for hosting well-planned and well-attended events, and their input is indeed welcome and necessary.

As we toured eastern Ohio at the 2004 conference, our hosts were especially proud of their recently designated Scenic Byway status. We are grateful to Jeff Benson and Cathy Noble for their efforts to bring this overdue recognition to Iowa's Lincoln Highway. Hopefully all County Consuls were able to find the support needed from community and county officials.

This is my last *President's Corner* and I close with a story about a passion of mine: the power of documentary film. Four years ago some old films from the 1930s were found in Belle Plaine. The footage includes scenes from the original Lincoln Highway as well as numerous businesses that are long gone. Following a showing of the footage, a group of civic-minded citizens had an impromptu brainstorming session on how to preserve aspects of local history.

On September 11, 2004 the dedication ceremonies for the recently completed *Belle Plaine Area Museum* building were held. This million-dollar facility is located on the original Lincoln at the east end of downtown Belle Plaine and is accepting displays and exhibits. Plans call for a grand opening when filled out later this year.

Congratulations to not only the organizers but the entire community for recognizing the importance of historic preservation.

I encourage everyone to attend the fall meeting as host Bob Stinson will provide an informative tour of the Jefferson Highway. Following the business meeting, Bob and I will partake in a great American tradition - the peaceful and orderly transfer of power. **L**

(*Calamus Bridge, Continued from page 1*)

some concrete. Do you want to come along?" The look on her face said it all..."What have you got yourself into now?"

So now I mow the bridge area once a week. I've pulled the weeds at the barricade [photo] and weeded the pavement on the east and west approaches. I'll share an "after" photo in the next issue. The photo at bottom shows the bridge in 1996, still open to vehicular traffic.

I secured an OK from the CCCB to place a post close to the bridge, on which a Lincoln Highway logo will be painted.

Future plans include nomination for National Register of Historic Places status, and possibly some interpretive Lincoln Highway signage, as well as signage pertaining to the nature of this important wetland area. I believe the plans can be completed in time for the conference in 2006.

Support from Lincoln Highway Association members toward my endeavors at this historic site will be most appreciated. The bridge is getting its recognition, and with any kind of luck will get a new lease on life. **L**



(*Spare Tire, Continued from page 2*)

"Out of the mud and into the air—flying is the way of the future."

The Zeppelin craze came to a halt, of course, on May 6, 1937, when the German Airship *Hindenberg* exploded and burned while attempting to land at the U.S. Naval Station in Lakehurst, New Jersey.

On-the-scene radio news broadcasters uttered, "Oh, the humanity and all the passengers!" as the highly flammable hydrogen caught fire and crashed in 32 seconds.

Now, eyes back on the road, and watch your driving! **L**

Upcoming LHA State Meetings

January 9 '05	State Center
April 9 '05	Clinton
July 8 '05	Tama
October 8 '05	Lowden
April 8 '06	Coe College

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(COUNTY CONSULS),
AND STAFF.

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GREAT GRADES.

An LHA project to mark the eastern Iowa Lincoln Highway before the 2006 national conference is underway. Clinton County Consul Jeff LaFollette and wife Annette have spent weekends and evenings painting telephone poles.



Wherever the driver has to make a route choice, the LaFollettes are painting the traditional red, white and blue tri-color, complete with directional arrows. Jeff reports the folks in Wheatland are especially proud to have their route marked. The community of Wheatland recently joined the LHA.

At the Clinton/Cedar County line, Jeff handed off to State Director Paul Walker, who with Linn County Consuls Van and Bev Becker, have painted a path to Youngville, 10 miles west of Cedar Rapids. The project has closed down for

the year, but may re-start with warm weather in the spring.

The markings are intended to replace the multitude of poles painted by Bob and Joyce Ausberger, leaders of the fledging LHA in 1994. The cover photo shows both a new pole and the old, still hanging in there after ten years. Some of the old markings have been covered, others left as is.

Before starting, the group decided on some ground rules. Paint would lie on top of a liberal layer of primer, to keep the paint looking fresh for years. The paint would be oil-based, again for longevity. Jeff selected the correct shades of blue and red, so all poles would have the same coloring. "Ladder-climbers" are relying on the painting guide of long-time Boone County pole-painter John Fitzsimmons, following it with little revision.



One point on which they purposely diverge is the logo. Poles were originally maintained by localities. In keeping with that tradition, the "L" logo and arrows will vary somewhat from county to county, which drivers may notice crossing county lines.

Where there are multiple routes of the Lincoln, the more historically interesting route has been selected. Both routes may be marked, with dates indicating the years of the alignments. Occasionally drivers will spot a pole in front of a Lincoln Highway landmark, like the Hillside Cabin Court in Cedar Rapids, or the Ced-Rel Supper Club.

Paint for this project was made possible by a grant from the Diamond-Vogel company that provided 20 gallons free. Time and labor are volunteered. So far, about 85 poles have been painted, reaching through four counties.

A report on the project and a demonstration of the Iowa process will be part of a panel discussion at the 2006 conference for persons interested in marking their own Lincoln Highway. **L**

The Year of “the Jeff” Continues—Part II: Des Moines.

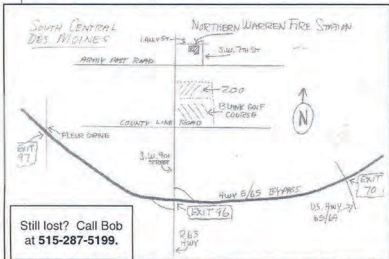
President-elect Bob Stinson invites everyone to the Autumn Iowa LHA meeting and tour of Iowa’s “other” historic highway. Festivities are at the **Northern Warren Fire Station** located at **6304 SW 7th Street in Des Moines**. Coffee and high-carb firehouse treats (hey, cops aren’t the only donut-eaters) will be available at 9:00 a.m. Outgoing president Mike Kelly will call the meeting to order at 9:30.

Lunch will be served by the Northern Warren Fire Department and the ladies auxiliary. In addition to saving lives, firemen love to eat, so be ready for some good firehouse chow! Lunch will be a goodwill donation—please be generous since anything above the food cost will go to the all-volunteer department.

After lunch, we depart for a tour of the Jefferson Highway south of Des Moines. Highlights include the original route through south Des Moines that hasn’t changed much since the JH days; an old bridge abutment; a bypassed stretch of wonderful 18-foot lip curb paving nestled in the woods; and a piece of original route in service since at least 1875.

To get to the south side of town, use the south bypass—IA Hwy 5 from the west and U.S. 65 from the northeast. This bypass is accessed from I-35 at Exit 68, and from I-80 on Exit 141. Make your way to Exit 96 R63 Hwy / SW 9th Street. Exit there and proceed north, per map at left. Make sure you don’t use under-construction I-235 through town.

On SW 9th Street, proceed north to the stop sign at County Line Road. Continue past Blank Park Zoo on right. Cross Army Post Road, turn right at Lally Street—firehouse is on right. Parking is in the lot to north or in the field to the south. **L**



In This Issue...

Calamus Truss Bridge in ICU, Big Mo at Coe!

FIRST CLASS

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