



Scott Onson from Platteville, Wisconsin, and Alex Nitzman from Bradenton, Florida, were excited to see this old Iowa Highway 2 route marker located next to the Farmers Coop in Ainsworth. Both Onson and Nitzman were visiting the area and looked at various highways in Washington and Johnson counties Wednesday, December 31, 2014. (Photo by Bill Gatchel)

Putting some fun in a road trip

By Bill Gatchel

If you have ever taken one of those long drives across the country trying to figure out a way to make it a little more interesting, here is one way to do so-act like a road enthusiast.

What is a road enthusiast, you ask? Well, it's someone who has an interest in roads and especially going on long road trips as a hobby. There are many groups across the country who take to the roads not just to get to their destination, but rather how they get to the destinations and for the roads themselves. Over the New Year's holiday, two such road enthusiasts visited the Washington County area to absorb what some of the sights and roads in this part of the state and country had to offer.

Alex Nitzman, who is a co-webmaster for the website www.aaroads.com, says he has always had a love for roads. "I would be riding in the car with my parents noticing traffic lights and road signs. I also received a road map from an uncle as a Christmas gift in 1984, and I was hooked from that point on."

Nitzman who lives in the Tampa Bay, Florida area and was visiting his in-laws in the Quad Cities over the holidays says he always tries to take some time every time he visits someplace to get in a road trip, whether he is on a trip with his family or for business. "If I am some place where I have been a bunch of times, I won't go on a trip, but if it is to visit family in Iowa, my home state of Delaware or to see my dad in northwest Florida, yes, I will make time to get in a road trip."

"Since I run the website, I'm always keeping tabs of road projects all across the country. This could be an interchange upgrade or different highway number change. If it's fairly close to where

I'm going, then I'm going to make a trip. If it's daylight hours and I have my camera with me, then I'm going to make an update to the website or a blog post about the changes.

While there are only two people that update the website, there are some people who will provide updates of things around the country as well. Nitzman says he also receives photo contributions from people on social media. "Occasionally, people will share will articles about local highway upgrades and I will share that with others."

While the primary focus is interstates, Nitzman says because of time, he doesn't get on to the US and state highways as much as he would like. "I will focus on some of the other highways if there are old alignments to major routes (Vine Avenue in Washington County is an old alignment of Highway 218) but not always."

Nitzman didn't just happen to be in the Washington County area, he was invited by me as I have been "on the fringe" of becoming a road enthusiast as I have always loved taking the less-traveled roads to get to my destination if time allows. He says many times, people will invite him to come to a certain part of the country, just as I did, because of something interesting related to roads.

While there are road enthusiast conventions mainly in the Great Lakes and north-east parts of the country, Nitzman says he doesn't usually attend them since they are usually too far away for him to go. Instead, he will meet up with a couple of people and will go on a trip to learn about the local roads. Such as he did during our road trip, he invited fellow road enthusiast Scott Onson from Platteville, Wisconsin, to join us.

In terms of people from Iowa high school seniors to be used for their first year of education on the college level while pursuing programs of study in any field of agriculture or natural resources. The application chosen by the Washington Soil & Water District will be awarded a \$1000 scholarship and then submitted to the CDI Regional Director. Regional winners will each receive \$600. Three scholarships will be awarded on the state level in the amounts of \$4000, \$3000, and \$2000. Seniors living in Washington County may request additional information and an application form by contacting their high school guidance office or the Washington Soil & Water Conservation District at 319-653-6654.

Iowa, there aren't many who really take up the hobby of being a road enthusiast, however, Nitzman says there are a couple who do have websites devoted to Iowa highways. He says, "I'm always excited to learn about people who are into roads and different things about them, and I'm grateful to have someone from southeast Iowa like yourself who is willing to get the word out about us."

In terms of taking up the hobby of being a road enthusiast Nitzman says, "Sure. It gives you something to do while traveling and makes it more enjoyable while going from here to there. It's better than looking at a screen while going down the highway." When asked what his thoughts were about someone starting up a webpage or a blog about their interest, he says, "sure, why not? The more the merrier. It gives us more to read and to check out."

I should note that over the course of four hours, we covered over two hundred miles of highways in Washington and Johnson counties and Nitzman and Onson really enjoyed seeing the different highways and old alignments that I found. The best part of the day was seeing a very old highway marker in Ainsworth located next to the Farmers Coop. Nitzman said, "it's seeing things like that old sign that make my road trips worthwhile. I would have never known it was there had you not shown me." Onson agreed. That made my afternoon of driving around worth it. I invited both of them back to the area this summer to get in another road trip, who knows where we will go then.

If you want to know more about being a road enthusiast, you are welcome to contact Nitzman through his website or through the AA Roads Facebook page.

THE ATTIC FILES

by Phil Richman, Riverside History Center/Voyage Home

75 Years Ago Riverside Leader January 11, 1940

Herman Koenig, whose farm is the first east of No. 218 highway at the "Y," is announcing a closing-out sale for Thursday, January 25. More than 200 head of stock will be included in the sale. Next week's *Leader* will give details.

Names of three Riverside community residents figured in the registrations of new cars at Washington last week. There were: Donald Riley, Chevrolet town sedan; B. F. Walsh, Chevrolet town sedan and Carl Kos, Dodge sedan.

Knotek Bros. registered a Chevrolet pickup.

Two Washington county stockmen, Robert Stephens, who farms near Washington and Arthur Hora, of Riverside were among those reported with having made good cattle sales on the midweek market at the Chicago Stock Yards.

The Stephens consignment consisted of 31 head of 1065 pound steers that sold at \$10.75 per cwt.; and the Hora cattle numbered 22 head of 1280 pound averages that brought \$10.00 per cwt.

Hog prices also reached the high point of the week on Wednesday at \$6.00 per cwt., and the general level advanced 10 to 25 cents per cwt. on broad demands from numerous outlets.

Three Riverside men, Paul Yansky, Wm. Lukavsky, and F. W. Schnoebelen took part in a broadcast over station WMT Saturday at 12:30 p.m. All were grateful of the Quaker Oats Co. at Cedar Rapids, as were Floyd Fisher and Simon Metz, who, however, did not face the microphone.

The Riverside party was shown over the Quaker Oats plant at Cedar Rapids and later were guests of the company at dinner.

Melo Water Softener was 9 cents at Shradel's Grocery.

Hawkeye Crackers were 2 lbs. for 17 cents at R. A. Knittel.

Great Northern Beans were 3 lbs. for 18 cents at Riverside Merc. Co.

50 Years Ago Riverside News and Shoppe January 14, 1965

Miss Marie Eleanor Tener, Iowa City, became the bride of Mr. George F. Havel of route 2, Ainsworth Sunday, January 10 at 1:30 p.m. The Rev. Gilbert C. McDowell, pastor of Trinity Methodist church, Riverside, performed the double ring ceremony in the living room of the bride's home at 803 Rider St. in Iowa City in the presence of their families. The room was tastefully decorated with potted plants, cut flowers and lighted candelabra.

The bride wore a medium blue street length dress and a corsage of red roses. She was attended by her sister, Mrs. George B. Slawson of Indianapolis, Indiana, who wore a beige street length dress and a corsage of pink roses.

The bridegroom was attended by his son, Mr. Tom Havel of Clinton. A reception was held immediately after the ceremony in the basement recreation room at the bride's home. Decorations were pink and white streamers and white bells. The brides table was centered with the wedding cake. Mrs. Lyle Fox, daughter of the bridegroom cut the cake.

Mrs. Richard Swailes and Mrs. Wayne Strabala, daughters of the bridegroom poured coffee and punch. The reception hostesses included the Misses Kay and Ann Tener, nieces of the bride, Helen Holmes, Jean Hatch, Doris Levvinsen and Mrs. Delta Falvy of Iowa City. Mrs. Richard Swailes had charge of the guest book.

The bride has recently resigned from the position as Director of the Nursing Service at University Hospital, a position that she had held for several years.

After a short wedding trip, the new home will be on the groom's farm northwest of Ainsworth.

25 Years Ago Riverside Current January 12, 1990

The student of the week is Beth Simon, Group 1 Kindergarten student. Beth is the daughter of Dale and Linda Simon of rural Riverside. Beth has four older brothers,

Jim, Adam, Jon and Chris. At school Beth enjoys reading time, playtime and going to PE.

Mark and Maureen Schneider of rural Riverside are the parents of a son, Erik Robert. He was born Tuesday, January 2, 1990, at Mercy Hospital in Iowa City. He weighed 7 pounds, 6 ounces.

Grandparents are Robert and Irene Schneider of Riverside and Frank and Mary Fachman of Fort Dodge. His great-grandfather is F. W. Schnoebelen of Riverside.

He has one sister, Hanna.

10 Years Ago Riverside Current January 14, 2005

The Riverside City Council authorized \$5,000 for designs for a new fire station. Approval came at the January 3 meeting. According to City Clerk Tina Thomas the council also discussed the possibility of adding a new city hall building onto the fire station plans.

The design phase is the next step toward a possible new building, a project that was initially researched more than two years ago. The issue arose at the December 20 meeting when Brian McDole said that the previous council had verbally approved the study, but was halted when the subsequent council would not provide funds for obtaining designs.

Part of the plan will include a location for the new building. Two years ago, rough estimates for the project were \$700,000 for plans and materials.

The council also discussed improvements for the Community Building and in fact toured it last month. Councilman Sam Torrey asked for a more detailed list of what is needed for the building before seeking bids.

Members of Buck 'n Scratch performed at Murphy's Bar & Grill New Year's Eve, debuting five original songs inspired by the Invasion Iowa experience. The members are Jim Pickering, Eryca Duwa, Kim Lyle and Dustin Duwa. One of the songs, Billville, derives from actor Bill Shatner and Mayor Bill Poch finding that aside from them, there are a lot of Bills in the town. It led to one of the running gags in the entire reality TV sci-fi movie hoax.

WASHINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S BLOTTER

January 5: There was a two vehicle accident on Highway 92 at Underwood Avenue, Ainsworth. No injuries. Ainsworth Fire Chief responded in his personal vehicle and advised a vehicle had died in the roadway. No accident actually. Vehicle pushed off to side of road. No further response needed.

January 6: There was a report of a two vehicle accident near Casey's, 200 East 1st Street, Riverside. Drivers involved were Victor Matveyuk of Riverside and Erdener Erozan of Kalona. More than \$1,500 damage. Matveyuk cited for failure to maintain control.

There was a report of a green Pontiac in the ditch on G36 west of Tulip Avenue. Responded. Less than \$1,500 damage.

January 7: Caller reported she rear ended another vehicle at Highway 22 and Highway 218. Requested deputy. Drivers were Rebekah Jane Northup of Kalona and Sara Nicole Young of Kalona. Young was responsible due to icy road conditions she was not

able to stop and rear ended other vehicle. No citations.

A caller reported another vehicle backed into his father's truck on private property at 3320 262nd Street, Ainsworth. Information exchanged. Documented.

January 8: A caller reported the theft from his vehicle at 1092 Walnut Avenue, Riverside, of muzzle loader, hunting pack with jacket and camo items, shooting sticks, 2 knives, hunting tags and license. Broke back window to gain entry.

January 9: There was a report of vandalism to grass at 1715 Vine Avenue, Riverside, from a vehicle. Report to be filed.

January 10: There was a report of an accident with no injuries at 2394 Highway 218. Rear tire of semi struck front of caller's vehicle causing damage.

Caller reported hitting a deer on Highway 22 near west edge of Riverside. Vehicle is drivable.

January 11: There was a report of a vehicle in the ditch at 3294 170th Street. No injuries. More than \$1,500 damage.

Deputy reported being out with intoxicated subject at Highway 218 ramp, Riverside. Wesley Joseph Holtkamp, 27, of Fort Madison was charged with public intoxication.

A caller reported spray paint vandalism yesterday and today to their driveway at 240 N. Washington Street, Riverside. Footprints in snow. Responded and Bryan Brownfield, 16, of Riverside was advised to stay off caller's property.


Julie May Spears, 33, of Washington was charged with driving under suspension following a report of a vehicle in the ditch near 2875 220th Street, Ainsworth.

Jail count

As of January 12, there was a total of 21 inmates with 13 males, three females, one in holding, one in work release, one at another facility and one female contract inmate in the Washington County Jail. Total income from contracting inmates, to date, is \$2,057,316. Since January 9, there were 8 incarcerations and 7 releases.

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