



July 1

Green team needed for state fair exhibit

Consider volunteering in the ISU state fair exhibit. The exhibit in the Varied Industries Building has a green theme, and those who've been involved in green projects on campus are needed. Volunteers also are sought to pass out football posters and apply I-State temporary tattoos.

July 1

Where's Bob?

Do you know where university photographer Bob Elbert spotted this warning?



Where's Bob?

July 1

Help keep university grounds clean during fireworks show

Campus services asks for the public's help cleaning ISU grounds July 4 following the fireworks show. Particularly hazardous for visitors and athletes who use those same areas soon after are the discarded wires from sparklers.

July 1

RIO retirements clear 300 mark

The application window is past on Iowa State's first two retirement incentive options. Enrollment still is open in two others. About 325 employees have been approved for one of the four plans.

July 1

New benefits of an old practice

Global experts gathered in Ames to examine the environmental impact of biochar. The organic byproduct adds to soil fertility and slows carbon emissions.

July 1

ISU shares green coordinator with city

Iowa State will share sustainability director Merry Rankin with the city of Ames for a year. Rankin will devote up to a quarter of her time heading an Ames task force on sustainability.



Biochar demonstration

July 1

Wind-generated electricity not yet up to speed

Four percent of the university's electricity is coming from a new wind farm near Zearing. University officials hope to raise that percentage to 10 percent once transmission lines are

Announcements

- University closed July 5 for Independence Day holiday
- Reminder: Appointment needed for Brunner, Christian Petersen museums July 6-Aug. 8
- Special Olympics torch departs from Ames July 11; public invited
- Reminder: New compensation structure for P&S takes effect July 1

Receptions & open houses

Retirements

- Kathy Hanson, July 6
- Carol Patrick, July 9
- Susan Roe, July 9 (no event)

Around campus

- Hall of fame inductees announced

Inside tools

[Print this edition \(PDF\)](#)

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upgraded to handle the additional power from the wind farm.

June 24

Share your tech tips

Got a Word shortcut that saves time? A Google tip that slims results? Share your tips for getting the most out of software and websites.

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July 1, 2010

Volunteers sought for state fair exhibit

by Diana Pounds

- You've been involved in some green campus projects
- You can roll posters and talk to Cyclone fans at the same time
- You're pretty handy applying tattoos (the stick-on kind, that is)

If you can yes to any of these questions and love the Iowa State Fair, consider volunteering for a stint at the ISU exhibit in the Varied Industries Building. Faculty and staff are needed to help staff the exhibit from Thursday, Aug. 12, through Sunday, Aug. 22.

Green theme

The theme of this year's exhibit is "Iowa State University Lives Green!" The exhibit will feature the university's **electric car** and **solar compactor**, and a model of the **Interlock House**, ISU's entry in the U.S. Department of Energy's Solar Decathlon.

The exhibit also will highlight campus projects in dining, green cleaning, composting, energy conservation, wind energy, serving local foods, recycling, alternative transportation and green building.

Those who've been involved in these or similar projects at Iowa State are encouraged to help staff the green portion of the exhibit.

For the fans

Volunteers also are needed to pass out football posters and apply I-State temporary tattoos.

"More than 500,000 people visit the air-conditioned Varied Industries Building and view the university's exhibit," said director of university marketing Carole Custer. "This is a great time to show our campus sustainability projects and build Cyclone spirit."

How to volunteer

The minimum time commitment is a 6- or 6.5-hour shift during one day of the fair, although individuals can volunteer for additional shifts. There are two shifts per day: 8:45 a.m.-3 p.m. and 3-9 p.m. The university marketing office will pay for volunteers' admission, parking in the fair's big lots, and a special Live Green T-shirt to wear in the exhibit.

To volunteer, contact Mara Schapman in the university marketing office,



College Creek cleanup

Economics professor Peter Orazem splashes into College Creek in search of trash. Orazem was among 30 volunteers who spent a steamy Saturday afternoon (June 19) pulling debris from the creek's bottom and banks. Sustainability director Merry Rankin said the crew filled 20 25-gallon trash cans in the second annual cleanup of the campus creek. *Photo by Shawn Wagner.*



T-shirt design

[!mrktgstd@mail.iastate.edu](mailto:mrktgstd@mail.iastate.edu), 4-3969, by Thursday, July 8.

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June 10, 2010



Where's Bob?

University photographer Bob Elbert captured this message on the south wall of the Beyer Hall pool room, home to the Cyclone women's swimming and diving team.

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July 1, 2010

Fireworks fans asked to carry out their trash, sparkler wires

July 4 revelers who admire the Ames fireworks from green spaces along University Boulevard are asked to carry home everything they brought with them -- including wires and other residue from used sparklers and hand-held fireworks. ISU campus services leaders said that the wire residue creates a hazard for teams and individuals who will participate in sporting events in those same areas after July 4.

"It used to be that the fields wouldn't be used for a number of days, allowing us to get out and ensure there were no hazards to sporting participants," noted Les Lawson, manager of campus services.

"Now those areas are so popular, it is challenging for us to get these areas cleaned the way we'd like to."

Maple-Willow-Larch intramural fields and the southeast intramural fields are used in July by ISU sports camps, Shrine Bowl football teams and various Iowa Games competitions.

Easy solution

Disposing of your sparkler wires can be very easy. Fill a coffee can, soup can or even a yogurt container part way with sand or dirt. You've created a holding container for your used sparkler wires until you can dispose of them at home. There also are trash containers throughout the university fields.

July 1, 2010

Incentive retirements clear 300 mark

by Anne Krapfl

Iowa State employees continue to apply to participate in a retirement incentive option, although the rate has fallen off.

By the June 1 deadline to apply for the second retirement incentive option (RIO2), 87 employees were approved, including 44 merit employees, 24 professional and scientific staff and 19 faculty. Twelve more employees originally approved for RIO2 were allowed to transfer into the RIO3 program. The requests of 14 employees to participate in RIO2 were denied.

RIO2 participants must retire from Iowa State by July 30.

RIO3

The application period for RIO3 ends Aug. 1. As of this week, 32 applications were approved, including 12 merit employees, 16 P&S employees and four faculty members. Participants in RIO3 may choose between a health/dental insurance benefit and a retirement contribution benefit. So far, 18 have opted for the insurance benefit and 14 for the retirement benefit.

Details about the retirement incentive programs are on the [HR Services website](#).

RIO3 participants must retire from Iowa State by Dec. 31.

Phased plus

The application window also is open, through April 30, 2011, for another retirement option known as [phased plus \(PDF\)](#). In it, an approved employee receives a reduced appointment for a maximum of two years. At the end of that appointment, the employee has the option of health/dental coverage or retirement contributions for the balance of the five-year phased period. To date, four applications for phased plus have been approved. The phased retirement period for participants in this program must begin by Jan. 1, 2012.

Summary

At the direction of university leaders, human resource services staff developed the retirement incentive plans, beginning in March 2009, as one strategy to help units deal with budget reductions.

The university's first two RIO programs produced 293 employee retirements (34 faculty, 121 P&S, 138 merit). A final tally of 206 employees (15 faculty, 97 P&S, 94 merit) participated in the first RIO program, which required retirement from the university by Jan. 31 of this year.

July 1, 2010



New benefits of an old practice

More than 250 people attended the U.S. Biochar Initiative Conference this week at the Iowa State Center. In its second year, the conference brought together global specialists from many fields to discuss the technology, science and policy of biochar.

Like charcoal, which is produced by burning wood, biochar is the decomposed residue left after burning -- via thermochemistry, not fire -- organic materials, such as switchgrass and corn stover. As an amendment to soil, biochar aids in nutrient and water retention, reduces acidity and density, and increases helpful microbes. As an added green bonus, applying biochar to soil is an excellent way to "sequester" carbon which releases carbon back into the environment very slowly over hundreds (or thousands) of years. Pictured above is one of two companies that demonstrated the process in the Scheman parking lot.

Conference participants enjoyed more than three days of lectures, discussions, demonstrations and exhibits. Tours were conducted at ISU's BioCentury Research Farm and neighboring biochar field plots.

ISU's Bioeconomy Institute, which boasts more than 160 affiliated faculty, helped organize and run the event. *Photo by Bob Elbert.*

July 1, 2010

ISU shares green coordinator with city

by Diana Pounds

Iowa State's green champion Merry Rankin will extend her territory for a year to help the city of Ames work on sustainability issues. The sharing arrangement is the result of a request by city officials.

In the fiscal year that begins July 1, Rankin, ISU's director of sustainability, will devote up to a quarter of her time heading an Ames task force on sustainability. The task force will initiate discussions with community groups and people and, ultimately, develop a city-wide sustainability plan, Rankin said.

The plan is part of the city's follow-through on its commitment to the [U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement](#). Ames is among 1,000 cities participating in the agreement, which includes a goal to reduce 1990 greenhouse gas emission levels 7 percent by 2012.

The city will fund a portion of Rankin's salary and expenses, paying \$25,000 under the one-year trial contract.

Ames and Iowa State have a history of working on green issues, and sharing a sustainability director is the latest partnership.

"We've already been doing things together," Rankin said. "Students and classes have assisted in growing sustainability programs in local businesses. And the community has been supportive of ISU's green efforts, through sponsorships and volunteer work. The new arrangement offers an opportunity to increase synergy and share expertise."

Rankin said she'll continue working out of her ISU office in 108 General Services. Two quarter-time student interns will join the sustainability office in the fall to assist with ISU projects.

July 1, 2010

Wind-generated electricity not yet up to speed

by Diana Pounds

When the turbines began turning on a new wind farm near Zearing in late December, Iowa State officials were looking forward to buying enough wind power to supply 10 percent of the university's electricity needs.

However, five months in, only about 4 percent of ISU's electricity is coming from the wind farm. Assistant director of utilities Jeff Witt said the reduced output is a temporary setback, stemming from transmission lines that can't handle the additional power that the wind farm will add to the electrical grid.

So wind farm operators are curtailing some of the output of the 100-turbine wind farm until new transmission lines are in operation. Some transmission upgrades will be completed in August, and that should allow operators to boost output, Witt said. Other needed transmission upgrades may not be completed till 2012 or 2013.

Witt said that wind farm construction often necessitates transmission line upgrades. The wind farm firms pay for work, which can include replacing poles, installing cables and upgrading substations.

"It can take more time to do that work than to build a farm," he said.

Under a long-term joint contract with the wind-generating company NextEra Energy Resources, the city of Ames will buy 30 megawatts of wind-generated electricity to meet approximately 15 percent of its electricity needs and Iowa State will buy an additional six megawatts. At full capacity, the wind farm should produce 150 megawatts of wind-generated electricity.

June 24, 2010

Share your tech tips

by Diana Pounds

In all those years working on the keyboard and staring at pixels, you've likely accumulated a trick or two that makes you more productive. Perhaps it's a Word shortcut that saves time. A Google tip that slims results. Or a PowerPoint technique that improves presentations.

If you've got a favorite tip that's useful on the job and might help the rest of us work a little smarter too, send it to inside@iastate.edu. The tips, which should pertain to software programs and websites in common use on campus, will be added to the list below.

Thanks to: *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, from whom we borrowed this idea. See [Chronicle readers' tips](#).

To get you started, we offer a few favorites from your colleagues.

- **A good sharer:** PDFs are an easy way to share almost anything -- photos, web pages, PowerPoint presentations, Word files -- with others. I use Adobe Acrobat to convert files to PDF, but there are number of free PDF converters. And many programs, like Word and Photoshop, will allow you to save a file as a PDF.
-- *Char Hulsebus, registrar's office*
- **Better Googling:** When you use Google, put words in quotation marks to find the right site. For example, the words Northern and Iowa will yield information about the state, the region and other topics, but "Northern Iowa" brings fewer and better results. Also, typing site:.edu along with the search items restricts the responses to educational sites. You can also search using site:.org or site:.com.
-- *Susan Yager, English and University Honors Program*
- **Smaller screen captures:** It's possible to do a screen capture on just a portion of your monitor. On a PC, simultaneously hit the "alt" and "print screen" keys to capture just the active window. On a Mac, hit CMD-shift-4 and drag the crosshair cursor to highlight exactly what you want to capture.
-- *Shane Palmer, Information Technology Services*
- **Sorting in Excel?** Click the "Select all" key (the small box at the outside corner of row 1 and column A) to make sure all the data has been selected. CTRL-a (CMD-a on Mac) also will do this.
-- *Deb Schroeder, mechanical engineering department*
- **Social media functionality:** For those of you using Windows, Shareaholic is a great way to add social media functionality to your browser. After adding it to your browser toolbar, simply click on the Shareaholic button to send a web page to e-mail, Facebook, Twitter, Evernote, LinkedIn, Delicious, and many other services.

-- *Scott McLeod, educational leadership and policy studies*

- **Dropping low scores in Excel:** Situation: You wish to drop the lowest 2 values for each student from a series of weekly quiz scores. Solution: Use Excel's SMALL function. Its format is SMALL(first cell:last cell,#) where # is a number that indicates which lowest place value to drop, i.e. 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc. in the defined range of values. Begin by filling in all blank score cells with a zero (can do this with a global search and replace). Then define a function which is the sum of the cells range, minus the first smallest number in the range, minus the second smallest number in the range. So your formula might look like: =SUM(B2:F2)-SMALL(B2:F2,1)-SMALL(B2:F2,2) .
[Details.](#)

-- *Karla Embleton, distance education and educational technology*

- **Print PowerPoint speaker notes without slides:** Want to reduce your printing costs when preparing for a speech? Print out your PowerPoint speaker notes with either a thumbnail of the slides, or remove the slide images altogether. [Follow these steps.](#)

-- *Karla Embleton, distance education and educational technology*

- **Forward WebCT Email:** While you cannot send email into WebCT from an external mail program, you can have WebCT forward WebCT mail to your ISU email account. Each user can set this up from their My WebCT screen as follows: click the "My Settings" link in the upper right corner, click "My Tool Options" tab, scroll down and check the "Forward all mail messages to the e-mail address in my profile" box, then scroll down and click the "Save" button. To return to the regular My WebCT screen, click the grey "My WebCT" tab. [Details.](#)

-- *Karla Embleton, distance education and educational technology*

- **Bibliographies:** Use bibliographic software, such as Zotero or EndNote, to organize your sources and write your papers. As an added bonus, these programs will create the bibliography for you.
-- *Frank Montabon, operations and supply chain management*