

VILSACK, VISION IOWA BOARD ANNOUNCE MORE THAN \$68 MILLION IN GRANTS

Governor Tom Vilsack and Lt. Governor Sally Pederson joined Vision Iowa board chairman Michael Gartner on April 11 to announce more than \$68 million in awards through the state's Vision Iowa program.

"These projects will be a great boost to Iowa's tourism industry and provide new cultural, recreational and entertainment opportunities for Iowans of all ages," Vilsack said. "This is an investment designed to help create attractions and facilities that will help us bring people to Iowa, keep people in Iowa, and boost our economy."



The Vision Iowa grants are supported through bonds generated from the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund and not from the state's general fund. The Vision Iowa grants are not related to general fund programs such as education, human services, and public safety.

The Vision Iowa program is an initiative created by the Legislature in 2000 that provides financial assistance for development of major attractions costing at least \$20 million. Several awards were also granted through the Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) program. CAT is a component of Vision Iowa and provides financial assistance for smaller projects.

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"COME BE OUR GUEST" GAME HITS RETAILERS

People attending Iowa Tourism Unity Day on April 27 were the first to try out the Iowa Lottery's new scratch game, "Iowa Come Be Our Guest." Now the rest of the state has an opportunity to take a chance at winning up to \$1,846 or one of 1,000 Iowa vacation packages. The game is available at Lottery retailers statewide.

The game is a joint project of the Iowa Lottery and the Iowa Division of Tourism, although it would not exist without the generosity of hundreds of tourism industry partners who donated more than 500 vacation packages as prizes. The Iowa Lottery matched each donated package. More information about the game, including a list of donors, is available at www.traveliowa.com. ■

HUNDREDS ATTEND UNITY EVENT

Marking an all-time high, more than 250 people attended Iowa Tourism Unity Day at the Hy-Vee Conference Center in West Des Moines on April 27. During the event, which ushered in National Tourism Week and tourism month in Iowa, attendees enjoyed a keynote address, legislative update and the announcement of the 2002 cooperative advertising campaign.

Another highlight of the day was the presentation of two tourism leadership awards, one to a paid tourism professional and another to a volunteer. This year's winners were Eileen Armstrong from the Adair County Tourism Council and Joe Taylor from the Quad Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau. Eileen was recognized as a volunteer, and Joe was honored for his efforts as a paid professional.

Another important part of Unity Day was the release of the next year's cooperative advertising opportunities. Tourism Division Promotions Manager Mike Murwin announced that in 2002, the tourism industry has the chance to advertise to more than seven million adults through the program, which includes the following publications:

Midwest Living
The Iowan
New Choices
Home & Away (AAA)
Midwest Meetings
USA Weekend
The Des Moines Sunday Register
Minneapolis Star Tribune
Better Homes and Gardens
Ladies' Home Journal
Golf for Women
Iowa Travel Guide

Contact Mike at 515-242-4737 or e-mail to: mike.murwin@ided.state.ia.us to request a copy of the cooperative advertising reservation form. Or visit www.traveliowa.com where the information is available in the Travel Industry section.

TEAM IOWA LEADERS ATTEND TRAINING

In early April, several members of the Iowa Division of Tourism's TEAM Iowa Leaders program took advantage of the annual opportunity to network and get motivated about their role in the tourism industry. During a day-long training session in Des Moines, the group heard from motivational speaker Bill Withers and discussed ways TEAM Iowa Leaders can impact Iowa's tourism program. TEAM Iowa Leaders are tourism professionals who provide technical outreach support to communities, counties and other organizations. To find out about how you can participate in TEAM Iowa Leaders or to learn how TEAM Iowa Leaders can assist your organization, contact Lonie Mezera at 888-472-6035 or e-mail to: lonie.mezera@ided.state.ia.us.



TEAM Iowa training participants (left to right), were:
 Row one — Dr. Cevat Tosun, Ellen Erb, Renee Jedlicka, Carrie Koelker; Row two — Fenner Stevenson, Kathie Swift, Michele Walker, Elizabeth Reis, Jean Stowell; Row three — Barbara Hoenle, Dan McDonald, Leon Wilkinson, Shirley Phillips, Sandra Leininger, Carol Sinclair, Kathy Bearce, Tom Kuhlman

TRAVEL COUNSELORS EXPERIENCE CENTRAL IOWA

Travel counselors from each of the state's 23 Welcome Centers spent three days in April touring central Iowa as part of their annual training and familiarization tour. This year's route took the group to attractions, restaurants and lodging facilities in Des Moines, Van Meter, Marshalltown, Newton, Colfax and more. The event is intended to give the travel counselors a better idea of Iowa's tourism opportunities so that they can relay that information to their customers. The tour, which visits a different region in the state each year, travels to eastern Iowa in 2002.



Iowa's travel counselors stopped for a photo outside Stone's Restaurant in Marshalltown. During their visit to Stone's, everyone enjoyed a piece of the restaurant's famous "mile-high lemon chiffon pie."

VISION IOWA — CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

VISION IOWA PROGRAM AWARD RECIPIENTS INCLUDE:

Mid-America Recreation & Convention Complex, Council Bluffs — \$24 million grant, \$7 million loan

The state's investments will fund a portion of this \$114 million project that includes construction of a multi-use arena, multi-use fieldhouse/exhibit facility, and convention complex. The complex will also include recreational, entertainment, shopping and restaurant venues.

America's River at the Port of Dubuque, Dubuque — \$40 million grant

This initiative is a joint venture of the city of Dubuque, the Dubuque County Historical Society's Mississippi River Museum and the Dubuque Area Chamber of Commerce. Once complete, the \$188 million project will feature a Mississippi River Discovery Center, the Mississippi River National Education and Conference Center, the Riverwalk and Amenities, and the Riverfront Hotel and Indoor Waterpark.

CAT AWARD RECIPIENTS INCLUDE:

Heart of Iowa Cultural and Recreational Center, Marshalltown — \$3.215 million grant

The highlight of the 22-acre development is a state-of-the-art wellness facility capable of hosting local, state and regional athletic events. The state's funding supports the completion of phase I of the project, a nearly \$26 million initiative.

Atlantic Area Wellness and YMCA Center — \$700,000 grant

This facility will serve Atlantic and the surrounding area by providing 42,000 square feet of recreation space. Construction should begin on the project in the fall of 2001.

Montgomery County Family YMCA, Red Oak — \$400,000 grant

The state's award will help offset the cost of constructing an indoor tennis center in the Legion Park Recreational Complex directly adjacent to the new YMCA. Along with the YMCA, the tennis center will have a strong impact on expanding regional economic development revenue for many businesses and tourism attractions in southwest Iowa.

"These projects will enhance the state's already large inventory of public facilities accessible to both residents and travelers. We need these developments in order to stay competitive in our efforts to make Iowa the ideal place to live, work and visit," Lt. Governor Pederson said.

To learn about previous Vision Iowa and CAT program awards, visit www.visioniowa.org or contact program coordinator Susan Judkins at 515-242-4870 or e-mail to: susan.judkins@ided.state.ia.us.

The Vision Iowa board is scheduled to meet again on May 9 in Des Moines. The meeting is open to the public.



TOURISM AND CASEY'S JOIN FORCES IN MAY

Again this year the Iowa Division of Tourism is teaming with Ankeny-based Casey's Corporation to distribute *Iowa Travel Guides* in each of the company's 300-plus Iowa stores. Tourism Division Administrator Nancy Landess said she is pleased to partner with Casey's for the third consecutive year. "Many of the people who visit Casey's are already visiting Iowa or are our potential travelers," she said. "While they are in the convenience store purchasing gas, soda or pizza, we hope customers will also pick up a *Travel Guide* and use it to learn about the many exciting communities and attractions around Iowa." ■

REGION BOARDS MEET TO DISCUSS CONTRACT



Shirley Phillips, Sandra Leininger and Lana Pals were among representatives from the Western Iowa Tourism Region at the annual contract discussion.

In late March, board and staff members from each of Iowa's three tourism regions met in Des Moines to prepare for the upcoming fiscal year. As part of the annual meeting, each region was given an opportunity to share success stories from the last year and priorities for the upcoming year. The Iowa Division of Tourism uses the information to update and refine its contractual agreement with the regions. ■

TRAVEL GUIDE UPDATES SOUGHT

Iowa Division of Tourism Publications Manager Kathy Bowermaster is currently seeking information for the 2002 edition of the *Iowa Travel Guide*. Submission forms for updating attraction, lodging and camping information was mailed in April. Those forms are due by May 15. Please contact Kathy at 515-242-4708 or e-mail to: kathy.bowermaster@ided.state.ia.us to learn more about the *Travel Guide* update. Also, please remember that the Division's Web site — www.traveliowa.com — includes the same information that the industry provides for inclusion in the *Travel Guide*. ■

IOWA
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