



Special Olympics Great Success!

The first ever USA National Special Olympic Games brought 20,000 attendees from across the United States to Ames, Iowa, July 2-7, 2006. Attendees included 3,000 Special Olympics athletes, 1,000 coaches and 9,000 family members. Competitions were held at Iowa State University and in other places around central Iowa.

The event garnered local, national and international press, but, more importantly, left glowing, lasting impressions with the athletes and their families of Iowa's wonderful hospitality. Even though most athletes traveled by air, many teams, family members and other attendees spent several days before and after the games traveling Iowa, visiting attractions from border to border.

Many thanks go to the Ames CVB for their great effort in hosting this event and to all tourism professionals across the state that welcomed these travelers during their stay. ■



“Only at the Fair” 2006 Iowa State Fair Approaching

■ The Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED) will sponsor the opening day of the 2006 Iowa State Fair Thursday, August 10. Visitors attending that day are urged to stop by the Grand Concourse and visit the IDED stage area. Throughout the day, activities will be underway for everyone in the family, including an Iowa trivia contest complete with game-show-style staging and prizes.

■ A special thank you goes out to the Amana Colonies CVB, Dubuque CVB, Greater Des Moines CVB and Iowa Great Lakes Chamber of Commerce for providing prize packages for the game show portion of the day. We appreciate your partnership and support!

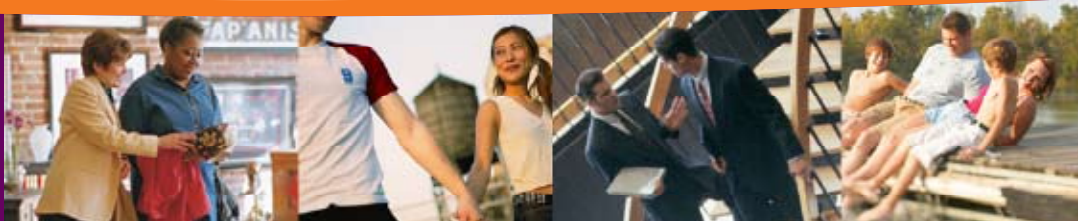
■ While enjoying this year's fair, if you see representatives from Choice Hotels of Iowa, be sure to say hello. Choice Hotels of Iowa has partnered again with the Iowa Tourism Office to offer fairgoers the chance to win one of eleven \$150 Gift cards good at any Choice Hotel location.

Look for more highlights from the 2006 Iowa State Fair in the September Issue of *The Traveler*. ■



One of many shining Special Olympic moments

Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Founder and Honorary Chairperson of Special Olympics, participated in a medal ceremony July 4, at the 2006 Special Olympics USA National Games. Visit the 2006 Special Olympics USA National Games Web site www.2006nationalgames.org for updated competition results and photo galleries.



Highlights from the Lt. Governor's Re-Discover Iowa Tour

From June 22 through June 25, Iowa Lt. Governor Sally Pederson and representatives from the Iowa Tourism Office and the Department of Cultural Affairs traveled to 18 locations around the state, making Iowans and other travelers aware of the cultural and tourism highlights offered throughout the state. From arriving with the national caravan in a 1951 Studebaker convertible at Living History Farms as part of the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Interstate System; to serving root beer floats at the Plymouth County Historical Museum in Le Mars; to throwing the first pitch at a Sunday afternoon Burlington Bees baseball game, Lt. Governor Pederson touched on only a few of the many things that makes Iowa a great place to live, work and raise a family.

We would like to thank each and every community that went above and beyond the call of duty to make each stop unique and successful. We'd also like to thank the Vision Iowa board members who took time out of their busy schedules to attend events along the way. To read more about the trip, go to www.governor.state.ia.us and click on the Lt. Governor's Rediscover Iowa Tour link. Below are a few tour highlights.



Lt. Governor Sally Pederson receives a commemorative Bonaparte Pottery crock from Marilyn Thomas, Old Bonaparte Pottery, in Bonaparte.



The Lt. Governor grills ribs at the 8th Annual Iowa State BBQ Championship in Marshalltown.



The DeWitt Junior Master Gardeners plant petunias with Lt. Governor Pederson at the Master Gardener's Garden in DeWitt.



LuAnn Reinders and Kathy Bowermaster staff the Iowa Tourism Office Booth at the 50th Anniversary of the Interstate celebration at Living History Farms, a stop on the Re-Discover Iowa Tour.



Rockwell City awarded \$250,000 CAT grant for library and community center

The Vision Iowa Board approved a grant totaling \$250,000 from the Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) Fund for a \$2.5 million, 15,000 square-foot public library and community center at the July Vision Iowa Board meeting in Des Moines.

Also during the Vision Iowa Board meeting, projects proposed for Wayland and Davenport were moved to the negotiation phase between the Vision Iowa Board and the communities. Projects currently in negotiations with the Vision Iowa Board include:

All-Weather Outdoor Walking/Running Facility—Wayland and WACO Community School - The All-Weather Outdoor Walking/Running Facility involves the re-landscaping and construction of an all-weather track that will provide healthy activities for the community as well as a place for local community school athletic activities.

Richland Community Center - Richland - This project involves the construction of a new 5,596 square-foot, multi-purpose recreation building in Richland. Components include a fitness and wellness center, senior center, kitchen, stage and multi-purpose room. The building will be the only facility in the community to offer such recreational and social opportunities.

RiverVision Project – Davenport - RiverVision Project - Phase I will focus on

developing anchor components in three key geographic areas within the city limits - the Downtown Waterfront, the Market District, and Centennial Park. Strategic first-phase components include construction of a waterfront pier, conversion of a historic freight house into a year-round public farmers market, modernizing existing park land and the creation of significant open public recreational spaces and uses.

Wartburg-Waverly Wellness Center – Waverly - The Wartburg-Waverly Wellness Center will be a two-story, 200,000 square foot facility with 97,000 square feet specifically designed to serve Wartburg residents, visitors and neighboring communities. The remaining square footage will serve Waverly College students and athletes. The center will provide opportunities to attract new regional and national sporting events and tournaments for youth as well as college-level competitions.

The Vision Iowa Program and the Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) Program provide financial incentives to communities for the construction of recreational, cultural, educational or entertainment facilities that enhance the quality of life in Iowa. To date, 236 CAT awards have been granted by the board, totaling over \$73 million. For more information, or to obtain a Vision Iowa Grant application, go to www.visioniowa.org. ■

Travel Leadership Summit Convenes

The Travel Industry Association of America is hosting the Travel Leadership Summit in Washington, D.C. on September 12-13. A highlight of the event is the opportunity for each state to host their congressional delegation at a dinner on Tuesday evening, September 12. Iowa's dinner will be held at the Monocle Restaurant.

Iowa's steering committee is chaired by Teri Goodmann with the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium. Other members of the committee include Sue Czesinski, Dubuque CVB; Greg Edwards, Greater Des Moines CVB; Carla Ferguson, Marion County Development; Tom Kuhlman, Iowa Great Lakes Chamber of Commerce; Joe Taylor, Quad Cities CVB; Angie Watson, Ice Cream Capital of the World Visitor Center; Kristie Wetjen, Amana Colonies CVB; and Don Short, Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area.

In addition to the dinner on September 12, the Iowans will attend an industry breakfast and schedule meetings with our congressional delegation on September 13. If you would like more information about the Travel Leadership Summit or are interested in attending, please contact Nancy Landess at nancy.landess@iowalifechanging.com or 888.472.6035. ■

Iowa Tourism Office and Kum & Go Announce \$50 Gas Card Winners

Congratulations to the 25 winners from Iowa and neighboring states who received \$50 gas cards redeemable at Kum and Go Convenience Stores as part of the Iowa Tourism Office and Kum & Go summer promotion. The two-month promotion prompted 5,300 people to enter the contest online, and 7,300 more entered at the Iowa Welcome Centers.



“We really wanted to give our visitors an added “bonus” to stretch their vacation budget. Thanks to our partnership with Kum and Go, we were able to make Iowa a travel destination for thousands of people this summer,” said Iowa Tourism Manager Nancy Landess.

We would like to thank everyone who “traveled Iowa” and stopped by an Iowa Welcome Center or traveliowa.com this summer! We’d also like to thank Kum & Go Convenience Stores for their wonderful support and look forward to working with them in the future! ■

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Economic Development
200 East Grand
Des Moines, IA 50309

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Congratulations to these \$50 Kum & Go gas card winners!

- Clayton County Welcome Center – Noretia Wilcox-Kramer, Strawberry Point, IA
- Danish Windmill Welcome Center – Ed Wiederstein, Audubon, IA
- Davis City Welcome Center – Dale Hull, Indianola, IA
- Davis County Welcome Center – Carolyn Reynolds, Oskaloosa, IA
- Dows Welcome Center – Kari Rodby, Washta, IA
- Emmetsburg Welcome Center – Kathy Newlon, Emmetsburg, IA
- Harrison County Welcome Center – JoAnn Voss, Omaha, NE
- Living History Farms Welcome Center – Wanda Brown, West Des Moines, IA
- Mississippi Valley Welcome Center – Judy Stoltenberg, LeClaire, IA
- Okoboji Spirit Welcome Center – Jerry Hunt, Manson, IA
- Port of Burlington Welcome Center – David Hainline, Good Hope, IL
- Port of Dubuque Welcome Center – Beverly Farr, Roscoe, IL
- Sergeant Bluff Welcome Center – Gert Kamies, Orange City, IA
- Sergeant Floyd Welcome Center – George Durand, Newton, IA
- Southern Iowa Gateway Welcome Center – Robert Ruehlow, Maysville, MO
- Southern Loess Hills Welcome Center – Rosemary Opbroek, Omaha, NE
- Top of Iowa Welcome Center – Sam Feldt, Denver, IA
- Unity Day – Tina Sanders, Marquette, IA
- Unity Day – Tom Hazelton, Cedar Rapids, IA
- Traveliowa.com – Stacy Love, Ankeny, IA
- Traveliowa.com – Briana Barron, Lawrence, KS
- Traveliowa.com – Michelle Goodvin, Sioux City, IA
- Underwood Welcome Center – Idalene Siedman, Brooklyn Park, MN
- Western Historic Trails Welcome Center – Margie Prior, Council Bluffs, IA
- Wilton Welcome Center – Dan Folk, Peoria, IL