



ABA Names Iowa Event in Top 100 Events in North America

2007 Top 100 Events Winner Des Moines Arts Festival

Congratulations go out to the organizers of the Des Moines Art Festival! The American Bus Association designated the Des Moines Art Festival as one of the American Bus Association's (ABA) Top 100 Events in North America for the year 2007. ABA's Top 100 Selection Committee evaluated hundreds of events and selected the Des Moines Arts Festival as one of the best events to experience via motorcoach next year.

Peter J. Pantuso, ABA's president and CEO, unveiled the 2007 Top 100 Events at ceremonies in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on Sept. 6. The 2007 Top Event in the United States is the Oklahoma Centennial, state-wide through December 31. The 2007 Top Event in Canada is the Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo held in Halifax, Nova Scotia, on July 1-8.

continued on page 3

Midwest Travel Writers Association Converges on Perry for Fall Conference



Nearly 50 members of the Midwest Travel Writers Association (MTWA) arrived in Perry last month for the association's fall 2006 conference. Held September 12 – 17, the meeting was hosted by the Hotel Pattee and Hometown Perry, Iowa. Several writers then stayed on to do post-tours in Des Moines and the Quad City area.

It is the first time in its 55-year history that MTWA has chosen a small town for its meeting, and only the second time the travel writers' group has been in Iowa.

MTWA is the oldest association of professional travel writers in the U.S. Its membership includes active writers and associates who represent state tourism offices, CVBs and travel-focused public relations firms. Active members write for local, regional and national newspapers, magazines, wire and feature services, and the Internet.

Apart from conducting the Association's business, MTWA's primary purpose for meeting is to visit a site that offers many travel and tourism stories that members can submit to a

continued on page 3



CITR/IGTA Marketplace Sponsors

Quad Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau - morning refreshment break; Okoboji Tourism Association - afternoon refreshment break; Iowa Tourism Office - luncheon; Northwest Iowa Transportation, Inc. - motorcoach transportation; Ames Convention & Visitors Bureau - shopping bags; Star Destinations - keynote speaker; Newton Convention & Visitors Bureau - name badge holders; Commercial Resources, Centerville - 3 ring binders; Iowa Gaming Association - bag check area.

FAM Tour Sponsors

Albia Area Chamber of Commerce - FAM tour activities; Commercial Resources - FAM tour activities; and Northwest Iowa Transportation, Inc. - motorcoach transportation; and Sleep Inn & Suites, Pleasant Hill - morning refreshments and registration.

Planning Committee Members

Planning committee members on behalf of CITR were Lee Ann Bakros (Chairperson), Dan Badger, Denice Gradeless, Laurie Lietz and Jill Vandervoort, and committee members on behalf of IGTA were Julie Allesee and Elaine Farwell.



CITR/IGTA Bank Club Marketplace Wrap-Up

The 11th annual CITR/IGTA bank club marketplace was a huge success. Held September 21 at the Iowa Events Center (Hy-Vee Hall) in downtown Des Moines, the show brought together bank club tour planners with Iowa destinations and group tour suppliers. Co-sponsored by the Central Iowa Tourism Region (CITR) and the Iowa Group Travel Association (IGTA), the 2006 marketplace featured 102 exhibitors representing communities, attractions, hotels, motorcoach companies, and group travel services.

This year's marketplace was attended by 101 bankers. Of these, 22 bankers were first time attendees, and only 52 of the 101 bankers that attended this year also attended the 2005 show. An additional 10 bankers registered for the show but were unable to attend for a total of 111 banker registrations.

An updated banker registration list will be sent electronically to exhibitors. Each banker attending the show is asked to complete a "planner profile" that includes specific information about the number and type of trips their groups take each year, the activities their groups enjoy doing while on tour, along with whether they overnight on their Iowa trips. Exhibitors will receive the "planner profile" results in mid-October.

A familiarization (FAM) tour is held the day before the marketplace and this year's FAM featured a mystery tour with Albia and Centerville as destinations. The mystery tour was a sellout, filling a 56-passenger coach.

Mark your calendars and plan to exhibit at the 2007 marketplace to be held Thursday, September 27 at the Iowa State Center in Ames. Booth registration materials will be mailed in the Spring. ■



Governor appoints Vision Iowa Vice Chair; Marshalltown project moved to negotiations at September board meeting

The Vision Iowa Board announced the appointment of board member Mary Ellen Chamberlin to Vice Chair of the Vision Iowa Board at the September Vision Iowa Board meeting held in Clinton. Fellow board member Cathy Reece was appointed Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) Committee Chair, the position that Chamberlin formerly held on the board.

Vision Iowa Board Chair Andy Anderson said, "Mary Ellen has been with the Vision Iowa Board since the beginning of this program in 2001. Mary Ellen brings her wealth of experience in both the public and private sectors to each meeting, and I'm happy to have her as Vice Chair. I'd also like to thank Cathy Reece for accepting the additional responsibility of chairing the CAT Committee. These two people, as well as all our board members, volunteer many hours to be on this board, and we're grateful for their continued participation!"

The Vision Iowa Board also heard presentations from the following projects:

New Century Library – Marshalltown

This project includes the construction of a 38,940 square foot state-of-the-art library facility located in the hub of downtown Marshalltown. This project was moved into the negotiation phase.

Independence Public Library – Independence

This project includes construction of a 14,200 square foot public library with an additional 5,950 square foot basement for storage and geo-thermal energy. This new library will replace the current three story facility built in 1895.

J.J. Hands Library and Community Building Expansion and Remodel Project – Lohrville

Lohrville and the J.J. Hands Library Board are proposing to complete a remodeling and expansion project at the J.J. Hands Library and Community Building.

Fross Park Expansion & Improvements – Center Point

The 44-acre Fross Park is the only park in the region that offers both ball diamonds and soccer fields. Improvements will be made to the existing picnic area, playground, concession stand, two soccer fields, and two ball diamonds. The project will expand the park by including a 1.2 mile walking trail, tennis court, basketball court, skate park and splash pad.

For more information, or to obtain a Vision Iowa Grant application, go to www.visioniowa.org. ■

Midwest Travel Writers Conference —

Continued from page 1

variety of media. Perry organizers asked professional Iowa news writers to help create a tour itinerary filled with places and experiences where travel writers can find stories.

In addition to Perry, writers could tour two small destination towns – Boone and Winterset – and a variety of other sites and attractions. These included Seven Oaks Recreation, Picket Fence Creamery, Reiman Gardens, Boone & Scenic Valley Railroad and Bridges of Madison County.

Look for stories featuring the many things to do in Iowa in national publications and newspapers from around the country as a result of this visit. ■

2007 ABA Names Iowa Event Winner —

Continued from page 1

During the past 25 years, ABA's Top 100 Events publication has become an internationally recognized event directory for bus and tour operators, the travel industry and the general public. The Des Moines Art Festival will be included in the Top 100 Events publication, published as a supplement to the September/October issue of Destinations magazine. In addition, the entire Top 100 list will be listed on ABA's website at www.buses.org. ■

Remember!

Remember!

**2006 Iowa
Tourism Conference
October 23-25**

**Schemen Building
Iowa State University – Ames**

Register at www.traveliowa.com

**Look for highlights in November's
*The Traveler!***

IOWA
life | changing®

Iowa Department of
Economic Development
200 East Grand
Des Moines, IA 50309

PRSRT STD
POSTAGE
PAID
Des Moines, IA
Permit No. 1195



Angie Watson; Teri Goodmann; Sen. Grassley;
Nancy Landess and Greg Edwards visit at dinner
in Washington DC as part of the Travel Leadership
Summit.

Iowa Delegation at Travel Leadership Summit

Fourteen leaders from Iowa's tourism industry attended the Travel Leadership Summit in Washington, D.C. on September 12 and 13. Sponsored by the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA), this event encouraged tourism professionals from each state to host a dinner for its congressional representatives to discuss the importance of tourism and travel with the elected officials of their respective states. The second day of the summit was set aside for state delegations to meet with Washington staff members to continue discussions. Attending from Iowa were: Kim Burger - Cedar Falls CTB; Sue Czeshinski - Dubuque CVB; Greg Edwards - Des Moines CVB; Carla Ferguson - Marion County Development; Teri Goodmann - Mississippi River Museum, Dubuque; Carrie Koelker - Eastern Iowa Tourism Region; Tom Kuhlman - Iowa Great Lakes Chamber; Nancy Landess - Iowa Tourism Office; Abbey Larson - Okoboji Tourism; Marilyn Monson - Storm Lake Chamber of Commerce; Shirley Phillips - Sac Economic/Tourism Development; Don Short - Silos & Smokestacks; Michele Walker - Western Iowa Tourism Region and Angie Watson - Ice Cream Capital of the World, Le Mars.

"The real value to this event is meeting and forming relationships with our state's congressional staff members," said Michele Walker. "By establishing this rapport, we can now pick up the phone and talk to the right person as issues that are pertinent to Iowa arise." ■