

Important Dates This Month

FEBRUARY 5

TFI Legislative Showcase, Paul R. Knapp Learning Center, Iowa State Fairgrounds, Des Moines:

Join your tourism industry colleagues and "Talk Tourism" with legislators from across the state. For more information, visit www.travelfederationofiowa.org or contact Kathy Dirks at kdirks@harrisoncountyparks.org or 712.642.2114.

FEBRUARY 6

Iowa Group Travel Association, Central Iowa Tourism Region and Greater Des Moines Convention and Visitors Bureau Joint Education Session, Prairie Meadows Racetrack and Casino Convention and Event Center, Altoona:

Laurie Guest will share a thought-provoking perspective on ways to rescue yourself from stress and influence others at work and at home. For more information, call 800.285.5842.

FEBRUARY 18

Cultural Advocacy Day, Des Moines:

If you're in culture, you need to be at this event. The day's activities include advocacy training, meetings with legislators and workshops. Contact Tom Smull at tsmull@associationsinc.us for more information.

REGISTER ONLINE FOR UNITY DAY

Join hundreds of your colleagues from across the state on Friday, April 18 at the Hy-Vee Conference Center in West Des Moines for a legislative update, announcement of 2009 co-op options and networking opportunities. Featured speaker Chip Madera will share his seven critical policies that create WOWs for your customers and show secrets to World-Class Customer Service Excellence.



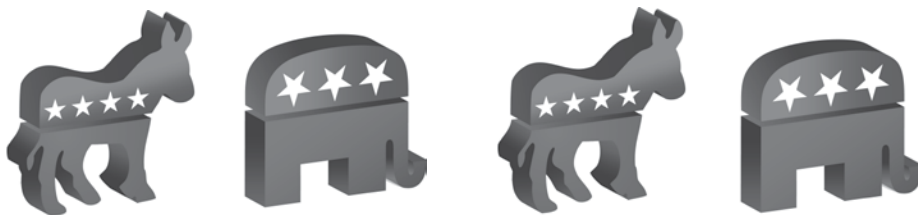
one-day educational event is \$30 if registered before April 1; \$40 after. The cut-off date for online registrations is April 7. Walk-in registrations will be accepted on the day of the event.

Nomination materials for the 2008 Iowa Tourism Leadership Award can be found in the Travel Industry Information section of www.traveliowa.com. Nominations are due to Lonie Mezera at the Iowa Tourism Office by March 21. The award will be

presented at Unity Day. Contact Lonie at lonie.mezera@iowalifechanging.com or 515.242.4727 for more details.

Thanks to Meredith Travel Marketing and Midwest Living for again sponsoring Unity Day. ■

As part of the Iowa Department of Economic Development's ongoing efforts to go "green," registration for Unity Day is now available online at www.iowalifechanging.com/register. (If you do not have Internet access, contact the Tourism Office at 515.242.4705 for registration assistance.) Cost of the



IOWA CAUCUSES IN THE NEWS

The Iowa Caucuses brought unprecedented national and international media attention to Iowa. The Des Moines Register reported 2,500 media personnel in the state to cover caucus night results. The New York Times, Los Angeles Times, CNN, MSNBC, Detroit Free Press, ABC, CBS, NBC, National Public Radio, Business Week, Washington Post, Roanoke Times, C-Span, Fox News plus Italian, Danish and British television crews are just a few of the media who carried some caucus coverage. ■

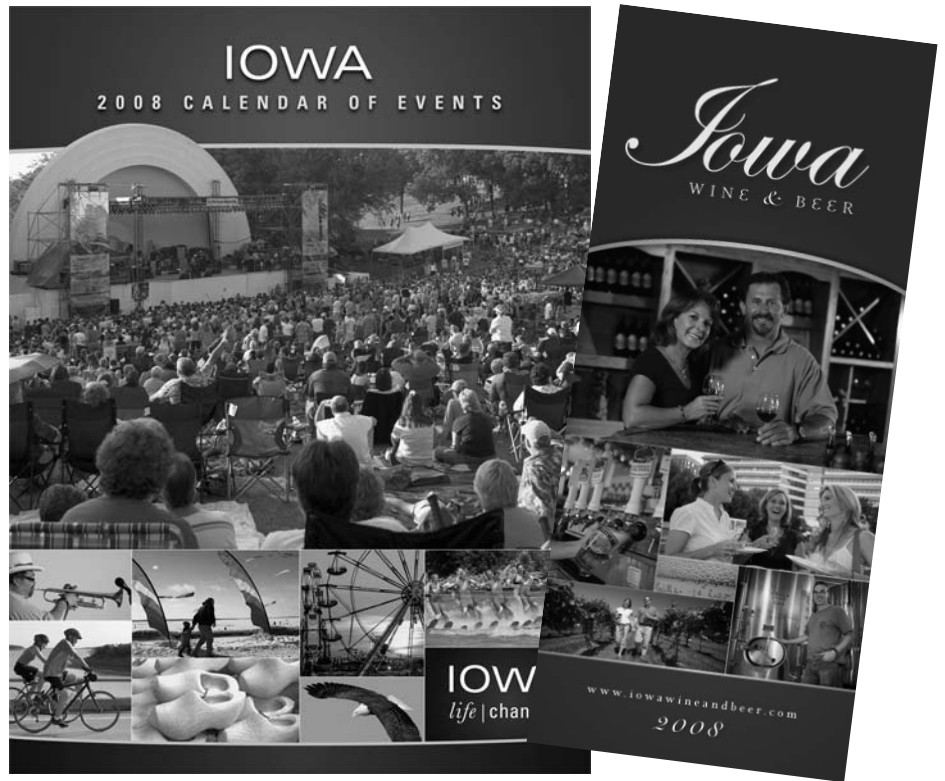


Affordable Meetings Mid-America Booth Share Winners

Congratulations to Catfish Bend/Fun City in Burlington and Meskwaki Casino and Convention Center in Tama on being randomly selected to participate in the Affordable Meetings Mid-America tradeshow booth share with the Iowa Tourism Office. The two-day tradeshow, attended by hundreds of Midwestern meeting and event planners, is set for April 9-10 in Chicago.

Iowa Travel Guide Promoted on Radio and in Print

Nancy Landess conducted nearly a dozen radio interviews across the state at the end of December and into early January to promote the release of the 2008 Iowa Travel Guide. In addition, the Iowa Life section of the Des Moines Register featured an article on the Travel Guide on December 31.



UPDATED PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

In addition to the 2008 Iowa Travel Guide, which was released at the end of 2007, other Tourism Office publications have been updated for the new year.

Calendar of Events

This piece contains thousands of listings for events, fairs, festivals and other activities across the state for the entire year. If you would like copies, contact Kathy Bowermaster at kathy.bowermaster@iowalifechanging.com or 515.242.4708.

All events are also included in the Events Calendar section of www.traveliowa.com. If your event was not submitted in time for the first edition of the printed Calendar of Events, you can still submit information for the Web site calendar and future printed publications. To access the online form, visit www.traveliowa.com, select "Events Calendar" from the left-hand navigation, then select "Submit an Event."

Iowa Wine and Beer Directory

A must have for any wine or beer lover. The directory includes location information for nearly 60 wineries and breweries across the state as well as information on Iowa's five wine trails. The directory will be available in mid-February.

A list of winery and brewery events can be found on www.iowawineandbeer.com.



Vision Iowa Board to Meet

The Vision Iowa Board will hold its next meeting on Wednesday, February 13, in Council Bluffs. The Board did not meet in January. Visit www.visioniowa.org for information on projects currently under review.

Thirteen Grants Awarded from Out-of-State Grant Program

Thirteen grants, totaling \$94,0123.25, were awarded from the Regional Tourism Marketing Grant Program last month. Congratulations to the recipients - Cedar Rapids Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB); Clayton County Development Group; Clear Lake Chamber of Commerce and Mason City CVB; Clinton CVB; Council Bluffs CVB; Dubuque CVB; Dyersville Area Chamber of Commerce; Glenn Miller Birthplace Society; Greater Burlington CVB; Greater Des Moines CVB; Northeast Iowa Tourism Association; Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area; and the Quad Cities CVB. A total of \$100,000 was available for the program in Fiscal Year 2008. Funds for the program come from a percentage of state gaming revenues.

Tour Operators Receive Tour Iowa Newsletter

Approximately 1,800 tour operators across the country received the latest edition of the Tour Iowa newsletter last month. The piece included information on Iowa's two American Bus Association Top 100 events, nine places to see before you die, ethnic sites, culinary tourism and attractions celebrating anniversaries.

If you know a tour operator that would like to receive the newsletter, contact Jeff Spence at jeff.spence@iowalifechanging.com or 515.242.4770.

The Raj Named a Life-Changing Escape

In an article on msnbc.com, Sherman Travel named The Raj in Fairfield a life-changing escape, recognizing it in the Health and Wellness category. The award-winning spa is known for Ayurveda, the ancient whole-body Indian health care philosophy and practice.

ASSOCIATION
Spotlight



Midwest Travel Writers Association

Started in 1951, the Midwest Travel Writers Association (MTWA) is the oldest association of professional travel writers in the U.S. Its purpose is to protect and upgrade travel writing as a profession by exchanging ideas, encouraging high professional standards, fostering communication between travel writers and readers and championing the cause of Midwestern travel.

Membership is by invitation; there are currently nearly 100 Active and Associate members. Active members are salaried or freelance writers, editors or contributors actively engaged in producing travel-related content for newspapers, magazines, the Internet or specialty publications. Associate members are public relations professionals working in the field of travel and tourism. Membership is limited to those living or working in the Midwestern states of Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, Missouri, Minnesota, Michigan, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Kansas.

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Tourism

By the Numbers

13

Height, in feet, of embossed tin ceilings at The Inn of the Six-Toed Cat, Allerton

22

Types of wines made at Eagles Landing B & B and Winery, Marquette

233

Bed-And-Breakfast Inns listed in the 2008 Iowa Travel Guide

4,300

Acres for canoeing, farm tours, astronomy, fishing and hiking at the Whiterock Resort, Coon Rapids

Infinity

The bottomless cookie jar at The Amber House B & B, Mount Pleasant

Source: 2008 Iowa Travel Guide

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Economic Development
200 East Grand
Des Moines, IA 50309

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Share Your News with Us!

Do you have a story idea that you think travel writers or reporters would find interesting? Do you send out news releases? Have something new you'd like the Tourism Office to know about? Send your information to Jessica O'Riley via e-mail at jessica.oriley@iowalifechanging.com.

Midwest Travel Writers Association *continued from page 3*

Members have been published in major Midwestern newspapers and national magazines as well as travel books.

Iowa currently has three Active Members – Shirley Davis of Davenport, Lori Erickson of Iowa City and Mike Whye of Council Bluffs – and two Associate Members – Charlotte Morrison with the Quad Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau and Jessica O'Riley with the Iowa Tourism Office.

A mailing including the 2008 Iowa Travel Guide was sent to all Active Members at the end of December.

A directory of MTWA members, which includes the names, addresses, phone and fax numbers, e-mail addresses and areas of writing specialization, can be purchased.

Visit www.mtwa.org for more information. ■