

Important Dates This Month

**April 7:
Last Day to Register Online for Unity Day**

Register online at www.iowalifechanging.com/register. Cost of the one-day educational event is \$40 after April 1. (Walk-in registrations will be accepted on the day of the event.)

**April 18:
Unity Day, Hy-Vee Conference Center,
West Des Moines**

The day's agenda includes a legislative update, announcement of 2009 co-op options, presentation of the 2008 Iowa Tourism Leadership Award, networking opportunities and motivational speaker Chip Madera.

**April 21-23:
Welcome Center Training,
Northeast Iowa**

Iowa's Welcome Center personnel will hit the road for a three-day familiarization tour of northeast Iowa. Starting in Independence, the tour includes stops in Waterloo and Decorah.

**April 30:
Deadline for Out-of-State
Marketing Grants**

Applications (available on three region Web sites: www.traveliowa.org, www.iowatourism.com and www.easterniowatourism.org) for Fiscal Year 2009 out-of-state marketing grants are due in the Iowa Tourism Office by 4:30 p.m.



CO-OP ADVERTISING UPDATE

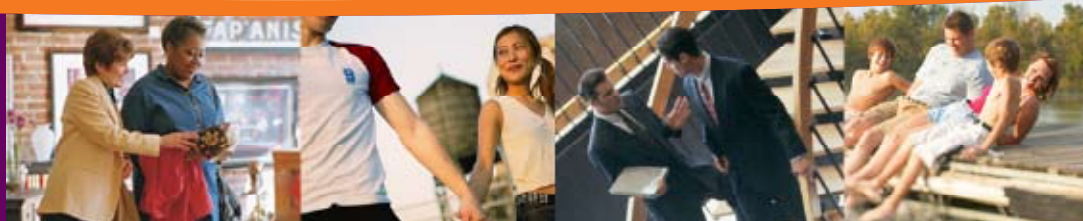
The Iowa Tourism Office's spring co-op ad campaign is underway, and ads are appearing in publications such as Midwest Living, AAA Living, Better Homes & Gardens, the Iowan and several Midwestern newspapers. Thanks to the nearly 100 participants who are investing more than \$450,000, allowing the Tourism Office to expand its reach much farther! The 2009 cooperative advertising opportunities will be announced at Unity Day.

Chicagoland residents will see Iowa's new TV commercials for seven weeks starting in mid-April. The spots feature Cedar Rapids, Council Bluffs, Des Moines, Dubuque, Okoboji and the Quad Cities, who all invested in the ads in cooperation with the Tourism Office.

FOUR NEW MAIN STREET COMMUNITIES

Congratulations to Belle Plaine, Mount Vernon, Washington and Woodbine on being named the newest Main Street communities during a ceremony March 4. Iowa now has 39 designated Main Street communities.

The mission of the Main Street Iowa program is to improve the social and economic well-being of Iowa's communities by assisting selected communities to capitalize on the unique identity, assets and character of their downtown area. Main Street Iowa is economic development within the context of historic preservation.





MASON CITY RECEIVES \$9 MILLION VISION IOWA AWARD

Lt. Governor Patty Judge announced a \$9 million Vision Iowa grant for Mason City at the Vision Iowa Board meeting in March. The grant marks the first Vision Iowa-funded project in more than a year and the 13th award since the inception of the program. The award is contingent upon the completion of fundraising in 180 days.

The cornerstone of Mason City's \$34 million project list is the renovation and rehabilitation of the Park Inn Hotel, the only remaining hotel in the world designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. Plans call for the hotel to re-open on September 10, 2010, the building's 100th birthday.

Also included in the city's plans are renovation and rehabilitation of the City National Bank (also designed by Wright), renovation and addition to the Mason City Public Library, construction of the East Park Performing Arts Pavilion, construction of recreation trails and greenway in the Willow Creek Development, construction of the Historic Architecture Interpretive Center adjacent to the Wright-designed Stockman House Museum, streetscape development on Federal Plaza, and construction of a parking structure to service the Park Inn Hotel and downtown area.



At the same meeting, the following projects were approved for grants awarded from the Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) Fund:

Watson Steam Train Restoration and Station/Museum - Missouri Valley **Amount Awarded: \$225,000**

This project includes the complete restoration of the 1948 miniature Ottaway Steam Train for the riding enjoyment of local and visiting children. In addition, a 3,400-square foot station/museum will be constructed in Missouri Valley City Park. Locally-designed for historic authenticity and education, the station will store and display the steam train, two miniature pump cars, a second antique train, a functioning train village and numerous museum quality items. The award is contingent upon the completion of fundraising in 90 days.

Lelah Bradley Active Living Campus - Appanoose County (Centerville) **Amount Awarded: \$190,000**

Phase One of the overall project includes the construction of the sports and recreation campus with multiple playing fields for public and school uses, a machine shed for maintenance materials and a combination concession, restroom and office building. The award is contingent upon the completion of fundraising in 90 days with the request for more monetary support from the city and county.

To date, 13 Vision Iowa projects have been awarded a total of \$227,550,000. The CAT program has provided funding to 285 projects, awarding a total of \$95,586,777. The next Vision Iowa Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 9, in Waterloo. For more information, visit www.visioniowa.org.

IOWA TOURISM MONTH PROMOTION GETS MAKEOVER



Casey's General Stores, the 2007 Iowa Tourism Award winners and the Iowa Tourism Office have partnered to make this year's Iowa Tourism Month promotion bigger and better.

Throughout the month of May, visitors to each of Iowa's 20 Welcome Centers will be able to register to win a \$100 Casey's gift card and a gift basket featuring admission passes or other items from many of the 2007 Iowa Tourism Award winners. In addition, two \$500 gift cards and one gift

basket will be given away to visitors who register online at www.traveliowa.com. Watch the May Traveler for details on items included in the gift baskets.

2009 Iowa Travel Guide Forms Coming Soon

Work is already beginning on the 2009 Iowa Travel Guide. Attractions, communities, lodging facilities and campgrounds that were listed in the 2008 edition will soon receive information sheets to review and edit. Changes should be returned to the Tourism Office by June 6, 2008. If your community has a new attraction that should be considered for the Travel Guide, please contact Kathy Bowermaster at kathy.bowermaster@iowalifechanging.com or 515.242.4708.

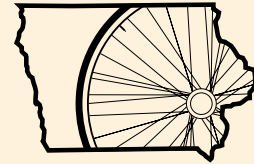
SECOND EDITION OF CALENDAR EVENTS

The Tourism Office will be printing a second edition of the 2008 Calendar of Events, which will include May-December dates. Please check the Events Calendar at www.traveliowa.com to make sure we have your community's festivals, fairs, performances and other celebrations for 2008. You can submit additional events online and they will be considered for both the printed calendar and the Web site listing. Contact Kathy Bowermaster at kathy.bowermaster@iowalifechanging.com or 515.242.4708 with questions.

2010 Tourism Conference RFPs Sent

RFPs for the 2010 Iowa Tourism Conference, to be held in Eastern Iowa, were sent from the Eastern Iowa Tourism Association's office last month. Bids are due by Friday, May 2. Contact Lonie Mezera at lonie.mezera@iowalifechanging.com with questions.

ASSOCIATION
Spotlight



**IOWA
BICYCLE
COALITION**

The Iowa Bicycle Coalition is a statewide non-profit organization with a mission to promote bicycling as safe and enjoyable recreation and transportation. Formed in 2003, the member-based Coalition has quickly grown from a volunteer-based organization to a staff of three working on bicycling issues across the state.

The hallmark event for the Coalition is the Iowa Bicycle Summit. The educational conference has sessions for the engineer, community official and even the grassroots cycling advocate. The bicycle facility design portion features a national expert that helps shape cities into more livable and accessible communities.

The Coalition provides training to communities across Iowa for Safe Routes to School, a federal program to encourage kids to walk or bike to school. In addition, the Coalition promotes safety education, Bike to Work Week and pedal-powered tourism and economic development.

Visit www.iowabicyclecoalition.org for more information.

Tourism

By the Numbers

3rd

National rank by highest number of golf holes per capita.

\$22.2

Charitable giving, in millions, by Iowa's golf industry.

\$100

Impact, in millions, of golf-related travel.

415

Number of golf courses in Iowa.

\$6,645

Revenue, per acre, generated by golf.

Source: The Iowa Golf Economy 2006

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

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



Think Green

The Iowa Department of Economic Development's Community Development Division launched a newly-developed "Green Streets" Web site. The new version of the Division's site highlights sustainable, environmentally-friendly approaches to each program within the Division. The site can be found at www.iowalifechanging.com/community. Additionally, tips on traveling green can be found on www.traveliowa.com.

Camping Kickoff Weekend

From May 2-4, campers using any of Iowa's state parks will receive a gift package from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) that includes a camping coupon good for one night of camping at an electrical site, a free issue of Iowa Outdoors magazine, recipes, camping tips and more. In addition, the DNR will be offering interpretive programs at each of their parks that weekend.

Iowa has 53 state parks that allow camping. The camping coupon may be used anytime after Camping Kickoff Weekend. Campers needing some of the add-on campsite amenities, such as full hookups or an equestrian site, may use the coupon but will need to pay the difference.

Campers will have to pay the appropriate site fees to camp during Camping Kickoff Weekend. Campsite reservations may be made online at www.reserveiaparks.com, or secured on a first come, first serve basis for a non-reservable site. For more information on state parks, visit the Iowa DNR Web site at www.iowadnr.gov.