

Important Dates This Month

November 15-19: National Tour Association (NTA) Annual Convention, Pittsburgh, PA

Colleen Murphy from the Iowa Tourism Office will meet with group tour planners and suppliers during this five-day, one-stop shop event for the packaged travel industry. Leads will be available. For more information, contact Colleen Murphy at colleen.murphy@iowalifechanging.com or 515.242.4770.

Tourism Conference a Success!

What a conference! The Iowa Tourism Office would like to extend a big thank you to the sponsors, Silent Auction item donors and attendees for making the 2008 Iowa Tourism Conference memorable. The Silent Auction raised more than \$9,000 that will go toward future educational sessions. Photos from the conference can be found in the Partner Information section of www.traveliowa.com. Next year's conference will be October 21-23 (a Wednesday – Friday format) in Tama. ■



Redesigned traveliowa.com Launches

A redesigned www.traveliowa.com launched during the 2008 Iowa Tourism Conference. Features on the new site include:

- the enhanced use of photography (large images on the home page, smaller images throughout the site)
- addition of Google maps
- improved calendar of events
- an Experience Iowa section offering suggested locations for five travel themes
- Picture Yourself Here section highlighting selected destinations statewide (currently showcasing 2008 Iowa Tourism Award winners) ■



Honey Creek Resort State Park Grand Opening

Iowa's first destination state park, Honey Creek Resort State Park, held its grand opening event on October 17. The \$62 million project, which overlooks Lake Rathbun, includes a lodge with 105 guest rooms, convention center, restaurant, 18-hole golf course, boat ramp and docking facilities, indoor aquatic center and RV park and multi-purpose trails. Additionally, a team of Department of Natural Resources naturalists is on hand to provide classes and activities ranging from bird watching to nighttime hikes. In 2009, 28 cabins will be added to the park. ■



Congratulations to the 2008 Iowa Tourism Award Winners



Tourism Attraction
Population less than 10,000
 Danish Immigrant Museum (tie)



Tourism Attraction
Population less than 10,000
 University of Okoboji Athletic Events
 (tie)



Tourism Attraction
Population more than 10,000
 Reiman Gardens



Community
Population less than 10,000
 Adel



Community
Population more than 10,000
 Ames



Consumer Publication
Population less than 10,000
 Centerville-Rathbun Lake Area
 Chamber of Commerce



Consumer Publication
Population more than 10,000
 Council Bluffs & Pottawattamie County



Corporate Friend of Tourism
 Casey's General Stores, Inc.



County or Area
 Cerro Gordo County



Event/Festival
Population less than 10,000
 University of Okoboji Winter Games



Event/Festival
Population more than 10,000
 National Mississippi River Museum &
 Aquarium Ice Fest



Green/Sustainable
 Hitchcock Nature Center



Hospitality in Tourism
Pella Historical Village/Vermeer Mill



Individual Friend of Tourism
Diane Van Wyngarden



Legislative Friend of Tourism
Senator Bill Dotzler



Media Friend of Tourism
Roy Reiman



Natural Resources
Clay County Conservation Board



Technical Marketing
Population more than 10,000
Dubuque Convention & Visitors Bureau



Tourism and the Arts
1st Fridays Art Walk of Fairfield



Tourism Web Site
King's Pointe Waterpark Resort

Regional Sports Authority Districts Certified

Last month, Governor Chet Culver announced the certification of 10 Regional Sports Authority Districts. Ames, Cedar Rapids, Council Bluffs, Des Moines, Dubuque, Ft. Dodge, Mason City, Sioux City, Quad Cities and Waterloo/Cedar Falls were all named as certified districts.

Created during the 2007 Legislative session, the Regional Sports Authority District program was designed to certify up to 10 districts for the promotion of youth sports, high school athletics, the Special Olympics or other non-professional sporting events. Each certified district will receive \$50,000, an equal distribution of the \$500,000 appropriation. ■

Jumpstart Iowa Initiative Diverts RECAT/CAT Funds for Flood Relief

The new Jumpstart Iowa Initiative, created by Governor Chet Culver for flood recovery statewide, is being financed by reallocated funds from various state programs. Among the funds to be reallocated to this program are fiscal year 2009 funds from the River Enhancement Community Attraction and Tourism (RECAT) and Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) funds. RECAT had been funded for \$12 million; CAT had \$1.9 million remaining available. CAT and RECAT applications will not be taken until further notice.

At the Vision Iowa Board's October meeting, they approved amendments to Mason City's Vision Iowa application and the contract for the John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park in Des Moines. The Board will next meet on December 10; marketing grant recipients will be announced at that date. ■

Tourism

By the Numbers

2007 Tourism Numbers

6.3

Amount, in billions of dollars, spent by travelers in Iowa in 2007.

7.6

Percent increase in Iowa tourism-generated expenditures over 2006.
(National average was 5.7)

97

Number of counties who increased their tourism-generated expenditures in 2007.

766

Amount, in millions of dollars, in federal and state tax revenue generated by tourism expenditures in 2007.

Source: 2007 Travel Industry Association
Economic Impact of Travel on Iowa Counties

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

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Iowa Outdoors Calendars for Sale

Get ready for 2009 with the 13-month Iowa Outdoors calendar published by the Department of Natural Resources. The December 2008 through December 2009 glossy calendar features stunning nature photography. Historical and natural event happenings such as bloom times, migrations, hunting seasons, lunar cycles and other events are also included. Each calendar is \$3.50, including shipping and handling. Order at 515.281.5918 or www.iowanaturestore.com. ■



Reinders Recognized for CenStates TTRA Service

At the recent CenStates Travel and Tourism Conference held in Evansville, Indiana, LuAnn Reinders from the Iowa Tourism Office was recognized for her service on their Board of Directors. Her term expires December 31, 2008. Reinders served as chair of the newsletter committee. This was her second time serving as a Director on the Board.

LuAnn Reinders is pictured with Jim Epperson, another out-going Board member, and Dan Erkkila, President of CenStates TTRA. ■