

LEGISLATIVE SHOWCASE SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY

The Travel Federation of Iowa's annual Legislative Showcase takes place February 4 at the Iowa State Fairgrounds in Des Moines. All tourism-related organizations in Iowa are invited to participate in this event that attracts a majority of Iowa's legislators.

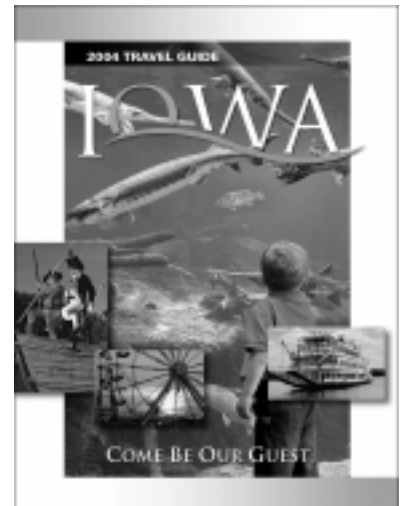
To learn more about how you can be a part of this event, contact Vicki Hughes at 319-286-5763 or vickih@cedar-rapids.org. ■

2004 IOWA TRAVEL GUIDE IS AVAILABLE

In late December, the Iowa Tourism Office released the 2004 edition of the *Iowa Travel Guide*, the organization's prize-winning annual publication. The trip planning book provides information about the state's communities, attractions, lodging facilities, recreation areas and much more over 176 pages divided into 10 travel regions. Of the hundreds of attractions that are featured in the guide, nearly 30 are new additions in 2004.

The publication's cover colorfully illustrates the diversity of activities and attractions in Iowa and specifically features the new National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium in Dubuque. It also pays tribute to several special events that take place in 2004. These include the Iowa State Fair, which celebrates its sesquicentennial in August; the Lewis and Clark bicentennial, which is being commemorated through 2006; and the Grand Excursion 2004 that will re-create an 1854 steamboat flotilla on the Mississippi River.

The *Iowa Travel Guide* is available free of charge by calling 800-345-IOWA or visiting traveliowa.com. Complimentary copies are also available at any of the state's 21 welcome centers. ■



TFI WELCOMES NEW LOBBYIST



The Travel Federation of Iowa recently hired Amy Campbell as the organization's lobbyist. While this month marks the start of Amy's eleventh session, it is the first time she will represent the Iowa Tourism industry. Amy has extensive experience in economic development issues, having lobbied over the last 10 years for the Councils of Governments and Professional Developers of Iowa. Also, she has served as the vice president for Government Relations at the State Public Policy Group, where she represented 23 clients. As an independent lobbyist, Campbell will represent 10 clients this legislative session, including TFI.

Craig Patterson, who most recently worked as a lobbyist and association manager with the State Public Policy Group, will assist Amy with her clients. ■

UNITY DAY IS APRIL 30

Mark your calendars for April 30, when the Iowa Tourism Office and the Travel Federation of Iowa will present Iowa Tourism Unity Day at the Hy-Vee Conference Center in West Des Moines.

Sponsored by the Meredith Travel Group and *Midwest Living*, the annual event will include a legislative update, the announcement of the 2005 cooperative advertising options, a buffet lunch and more. Motivational speaker Doug Lipp will provide a keynote address that focuses on customer service and leadership. Look for registration information to arrive by mail later this month. Or go on line now to register at www.traveliowa.com/travel_industry/.

An annual highlight of Unity Day is the presentation of the Iowa Tourism Leadership Award. Please feel free to use the format here to nominate a person you think is deserving of this honor. Nomination forms are also available in the Travel Industry section at traveliowa.com.



**Keynote speaker
Doug Lipp**

2004 IOWA TOURISM LEADERSHIP AWARD NOMINATION GUIDELINES

The month of May is Iowa Tourism Month! The Iowa Tourism Office and the Travel Federation of Iowa will again recognize an outstanding individual who has shown exemplary leadership within the tourism industry and who has contributed significantly to enhancing Iowa's tourism industry. Up to two awards may be presented.

The award(s) will be presented April 30, 2004 at Iowa Tourism Unity Day in West Des Moines.

Nomination information should focus on "leadership" characteristics: an individual who positively influences others by their actions and who leads by example. The following questions must all be addressed in the nomination. Nominations must be typed or neatly printed on a maximum of two (2) 8" x 11" sheets of paper. The only additional attachments allowed are up to three individual letters of recommendation (optional). Applications must be submitted with original plus three (3) complete copies of all materials.

1. Name and full address of nominee:
2. Where does this nominee work or volunteer their time:
3. How long has nominee been in their current position:
4. How long has nominee been involved in the tourism industry:
- 5.. Describe how this nominee is involved in local tourism activities:
6. Describe how this nominee is involved with their tourism region:
7. Describe how this nominee is involved with statewide tourism organizations:
8. Describe what makes this individual a leader:
9. Describe a special project or event coordinated by this nominee:
10. Describe any other areas of exemplary achievement outside of the normal job duties of this nominee:
11. Optional: Attach up to 3 (three) letters of recommendation in support of this nominee. Support letters are provided by:
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
12. Name and telephone number of person completing this nomination form:

If you have any questions please phone Lonie Mezera at 1-888-472-6035. Send your completed nomination to: Iowa Tourism Office, 200 East Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50309, Attn: Leadership Award Nominations, or fax 515-242-4718. Nomination deadline is March 26, 2004.

IOWA FEATURED AT SPORTS SHOW

Thousands of outdoor adventure-seekers will converge on the Varied Industries Building at the Iowa State Fairgrounds for the annual Des Moines Sports and Vacation Show.



lowa Tourism Office's booth for the duration of the show. ■

Held February 18 -22, the show provides a great opportunity to showcase Iowa's travel destinations. A special thanks is extended to members of Iowa's three tourism regions who will staff the



IOWA REPRESENTED AT BANK TRAVEL MARKETPLACE

The Iowa tourism industry will soon have another great opportunity to communicate with group tour planners.

From February 8 - 10, Iowa Tourism Office Group Travel Manager Mark Eckman will attend the Bank Travel Marketplace in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Here, he'll meet with people from around the country who organize tours for bank club members. Leads from that show will be available shortly after Mark's return. ■

IOWANS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN TWO MINNESOTA EVENTS

Iowans are heading to Minnesota for the second time in two years for the PlanIt Iowa Showcase, to be held April 1 in Brooklyn Center. Like last year, this event will promote Iowa's group tour offerings to tour planners from Minnesota and Wisconsin. Registration materials for the event were mailed in early December and space is available on a first-come basis. Learn more about how you can be a part of this exciting opportunity by contacting Mark Eckman at mark.eckman@ided.state.ia.us or 888-472-6035.

This year, participants in the PlanIt Iowa Showcase are invited to attend "Meet the Media" on March 31. Also held in Brooklyn Center, this event will be an afternoon discussion with Becky Beyers, travel editor of the St. Paul Pioneer Press, and Chris Welsch, travel editor of the Minneapolis Star Tribune. There is no fee to attend "Meet the Media" for those who are paid exhibitors at the PlanIt Iowa Showcase. To learn more, contact Shawna Lode at shawna.lode@ided.state.ia.us or 888-472-6035. ■

VISION
IOWAPEDERSON ANNOUNCES \$4 MILLION FOR
DES MOINES PROJECT

Lt. Governor Sally Pederson announced recently that the Vision Iowa board will invest \$4 million in the city of Des Moines' riverfront redevelopment project called "Rediscovering the Rivers."

The state's investment will assist the first phase of this project, which includes a 1.2 mile pedestrian promenade slated for construction on the east and west sides of the Des Moines River. A two-mile multi-purpose trail will connect the promenade to Gray's Lake. The project also calls for the creation of a fountain, civic gardens and ice skating rink. Officials are confident that these amenities will spur private development such as food stands and bicycle or boat rentals.

The Lt. Governor said the project is a prime example of a public/private partnership, as The Principal Financial Group has pledged a minimum of \$10 million to the \$26.4 million project. Downtown Des Moines' largest private employer, The Principal will celebrate its 125th anniversary in Des Moines in 2004. The company cites the project as an excellent way to celebrate this milestone.

Also at the December meeting, representatives from a Cedar Rapids project that received Vision Iowa money last January were on hand to discuss the status of their initiative. The state approved a \$10.5 million award for what was originally called "River Run." That award was contingent upon the completion of local fundraising, but a referendum that would have supplied the local match component of the project was defeated earlier this year. Project proponents have since reworked the project and made a presentation to the Vision Iowa board explaining the new and changed amenities and financing plan. Because of the vast differences between the original and updated project, the board voted to withdraw the award given last January. They encouraged representatives from Cedar Rapids to submit a new application by February 15.

With this decision, and with the investment in Des Moines, the Vision Iowa program has aided projects in 10 Iowa communities. About \$14 million is still available in the fund.

The board meets again February 15 in Des Moines. ■



200 East Grand Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50309



IOWA
COME BE OUR GUEST.

Happy New Year!

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