

## Winners of Choice Hotels of Iowa \$150 Gift Cards

As the key partner of the Iowa Tourism Office's Iowa State Fair promotion, Choice Hotels of Iowa offered a daily drawing of 11 \$150 Gift Cards to any Choice Hotels location in Iowa. Thousands of Iowa State Fair attendees visiting the Tourism Booth entered the daily drawing for a gift card, good at any Choice Hotels affiliate in Iowa including Comfort Inn, Comfort Suites, Quality Inn, Sleep Inn, Clarion Hotels, MainStay Suites, EconoLodge and Rodeway Inn hotels.

Winners will receive the certificates directly from Choice Hotels.

Winners of the Choice Hotels of Iowa \$150 Gift Cards are:

- |                                    |                                       |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Melvin Fynaardt<br>New Sharon, IA  | Larry Barnett<br>Des Moines, IA       |
| Paul Boyum<br>Reston, VA           | Jack E. Brockway<br>Pella, IA         |
| Paula White<br>Creston, IA         | Norma Hill<br>Dows, IA                |
| Tim Wacker<br>Plainview, NE        | Diane Davidson<br>West Des Moines, IA |
| Carole Westbrook<br>Des Moines, IA | Phyllis Olson<br>Urbandale, IA        |
| Karen Megchelsen<br>Ainsworth, IA  |                                       |

## 2005 State Fair a Success: "America's Favorite Fair" Draws Over One Million People

More than 50,000 entries competing for ribbons, the largest foods department of any state fair and one of the world's largest livestock shows and contests drew more than one million people from all over the world to this year's Iowa State Fair, August 11-21, 2005, in Des Moines. From corn dogs to sea lions, this event was named the No. 2 choice for summer fun in America last year by *USA Weekend*.



"We had thousands of visitors to the Tourism Building this year," said Nancy Landess, Iowa Tourism Office manager. "And many that stopped by the Iowa Tourism booth were looking for weekend getaways, hidden gems and other travel ideas for themselves and for visiting relatives and friends from outside the state.

"More importantly, we'd like to thank all of the volunteers from across the state that came to Des Moines to work a tourism booth, greeting fair goers and giving them great information about local destinations. Without you, we could not make this work!" ●

## Boone & Scenic Valley Railroad Wins Blue Ribbon for Best Booth

Congratulations Boone! Governor Vilsack visited every booth in the Tourism Building on Friday, August 12. While the Governor enjoyed each display, he ultimately selected Boone County as this year's Blue Ribbon Booth! From the Thomas the Train display to a coin-operated train ride for kids, the booth was innovative and loads of fun! CONGRATS! ●



Accepting the Blue Ribbon from Governor Tom Vilsack (center) are (shown, from left) Cathy Addy, Ron Rindfuss, Fenner Stevenson, Governor Vilsack, Dean Briley and State Tourism Director Nancy Landess.



## ***Eight Projects get Vision Iowa Investments in August State board provides aid from CAT program***

**E**ight projects located across Iowa received more than \$2 million in investments at the August meeting of the Vision Iowa board. The board approved awards to projects in Edgewood, Beaman, Davenport, Mason City, Des Moines, Eldora, La Porte City and Decorah from its Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) program. Including August's awards, the CAT program has assisted 197 projects and invested more than \$65.7 million.

"We are in the process of speaking around the state encouraging Iowa's tourism industry to look at their communities and attractions and see how this program can benefit them," said Andy Anderson, Vision Iowa board chair. "Is there a local resort that could benefit from new cabins on property or a revitalization project that has great local support, but still needs that extra boost? Encouraging them to consider applying to Vision Iowa is our message."

### **Projects that received CAT funding**

Edgewood Community Dreams Recreation Area, Edgewood  
 Total Project Budget: \$741,557  
 Requested Funding: \$200,000  
 Awarded: \$150,000

The Edgewood Community Dreams Recreation Area is a phased project planned for the city of Edgewood. Funds are requested for Phase I of this project, which includes a soccer/football field; a walking/running track; two Little League fields; concession stands; a press box building and signing, lighting and bleachers.

Beaman Community Memorial Building, Beaman  
 Total project cost: \$301,000  
 Requesting: \$75,000  
 Awarded: \$70,000

The Beaman Community Memorial Hall project includes the demolition of two existing buildings and construction of a 5,760-square-foot facility that will include a meeting hall, Legion room, kitchen, storage area and restrooms. Once completed, the facility will be used for receptions, community meetings, reunions and other events.

Center for Active Seniors (CASI), Davenport  
 Total project cost: \$1,600,000  
 Requesting: \$400,000  
 Awarded: \$350,000

The Center for Active Seniors (CASI) is a non-profit organization that serves as a resource center for those over the age of 60. This project is Phase II of a larger expansion project. In this phase of the project, CASI plans to add 5,300 square feet to the building. This new addition will be used for new

or expanded programs including arts and crafts, ceramics and a music room. The interior of the existing building will also be renovated. These renovations include the expansion of Main Hall, removal of walls, addition of program support offices, volunteer office, gift shop and the north and west portions of the facility's main area, known as Main Street.

Eldora Aquatic Center, Eldora  
 Total project cost: \$2,084,600  
 Requesting: \$127,267  
 Awarded: \$100,000

The city of Eldora plans to construct a new aquatic center which will replace the city's existing pool. Plans for the new facility include a zero-depth entry area, diving area, lap swimming area, basketball goal, concession area, a grass deck area and play features. CAT funds are requested for a flume waterslide for the facility.

La Porte City Aquatic Center, La Porte City  
 Total project cost: \$2,309,564  
 Requesting: \$100,000  
 Awarded: \$100,000

La Porte City requested CAT funds for the La Porte City Aquatic Center. The project includes a six-lane lap pool, zero depth entry, a single flume waterslide, a dragon tot slide, a one-meter diving board, a three-meter diving board, a new bathhouse and a concession stand.

North Iowa Ice Arena Addition Project, Mason City

Total Project Cost: \$570,275  
Requested: \$140,000  
Awarded: \$140,000

This project will expand and renovate the existing North Iowa Ice Arena. The project includes 2,870 square feet of new construction; renovation of approximately 2,700 square feet; installation of new dasher boards; parking lot improvements and landscaping.

Principal Park Stadium Improvements, Des Moines

Total Project Cost: \$6,206,600  
Requested: \$1,200,000  
Awarded: \$950,000 (\$700,000 – FY06; \$250,000 – FY07)

This project includes renovation of the Principal Park Baseball Stadium in Des Moines. Proposed improvements include extending the right field grandstand and adding 1,082 new seats, replacing all other seating in the stadium with new, uniform folding seats, construction of a new picnic area and bleacher seating section, replacing the scoreboard, adding a series of fountains and improvements to the facade of the Cub Club restaurant and left field skyboxes. Walkways and landscaping will also be enhanced.

Vesterheim Collections Study Center, Decorah

Total project cost: \$438,472  
Requested: \$219,371  
Awarded: \$150,000

The Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum plans to develop a new Collections Study area adjacent to the existing museum facility. Vesterheim will renovate an existing building for this purpose. The new Collections Study area will be used to store approximately 10,000 items, or 42 percent of the museum's artifacts. Work to be done includes electrical work and lighting improvements, replacement of the heating/cooling system, running a water main to the facility, installation of new fire and alarm systems, construction of two office areas and facade improvements. ●

## 2006 Calendar of Events Currently in the Works

The Iowa Tourism Office is now collecting information for the 2006 Calendar of Events. Submit your event information using the online form at: [www.traveliowa.com/travelapp/events/eventaddinfo.asp](http://www.traveliowa.com/travelapp/events/eventaddinfo.asp) or contact Kathy Bowermaster ([kathy.bowermaster@iowalifechanging.com](mailto:kathy.bowermaster@iowalifechanging.com) or 515.242.4708) to request a submission form. Event information is due on or before September 15, 2005, for the printed Iowa Calendar of Events. ●

## Tourism Award Nomination Deadline Extended to September 9

Want to be the "Attraction of the Year" or recognized in one of seven other categories? For a nomination form, contact Tonja at [tonja.richards@iowalifechanging.com](mailto:tonja.richards@iowalifechanging.com) or find it on line at: [www.traveliowa.com/travelindustry](http://www.traveliowa.com/travelindustry) ●



## Fall Foliage Feature on traveliowa.com

The Iowa Tourism Web site – [traveliowa.com](http://traveliowa.com) – will offer a fall foliage feature beginning in mid-September. Do you have special fall foliage events or seasonal events in your community? Be sure to check the online Events Calendar to be sure all your fall events are ready for people to peruse.

Please submit events at: [www.traveliowa.com/travelapp/events/eventaddinfo.asp](http://www.traveliowa.com/travelapp/events/eventaddinfo.asp) ●

# Great Places Event October 11

Are you and your community one of 145 places participating in the process of becoming an Iowa Great Place? Then mark your calendar for October 11, 2005, for the Great Places Conference at Hancher Auditorium in Iowa City. Those participating in the process will be invited to afternoon workshops at Levitt Auditorium in Iowa City. The evening event will celebrate all great places communities and Governor Vilsack will announce the three Great Places Pilot projects. Keynote speaker Richard Florida, author of *Flight of the Creative Class* and an expert on creatives in the workplace, will highlight the evening.

For more information on Iowa Great Places, visit [www.iowagreatplaces.gov](http://www.iowagreatplaces.gov)

For more information regarding Richard Florida, visit [www.creativeclass.org](http://www.creativeclass.org) ●



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Des Moines, IA 50309

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## 2005 Iowa Tourism Conference

October 24, 25 & 26 —  
Mid-America Center,  
Council Bluffs

Presented by: Travel  
Federation of Iowa and Iowa  
Tourism Office, Iowa  
Department of Economic  
Development

Hosted by: Western Iowa  
Tourism Region and the  
Council Bluffs Convention &  
Visitors Bureau

### Mark your calendars for this event! From networking to educational sessions, this is the Iowa tourism industry's biggest event!

Participants at this year's conference can expect many motivating and informational sessions. Four keynote speakers will present on wide ranging topics. Murray Banks, one of the nation's foremost speakers, will speak on "The Challenge of Change." Breakout sessions on topics such as Culinary Tourism and Online Marketing will be offered. In addition, both Governor Tom Vilsack and Mary Lawyer, IDED Acting Director, have been invited to present the AAA Four Diamond Awards.

Social activities are also part of the fun! There will be a silent auction, an Iowa Wine & Beer reception and the Iowa Tourism Awards. Additionally, karaoke night and dining dollars for local restaurants will give participants a chance to experience what the Council Bluffs area has to offer.

Sign up for the conference by visiting the Iowa Tourism Office's web site at [www.traveliowa.com](http://www.traveliowa.com) and click on the "Travel Industry" link. ●