

## Deadlines approach for CDBG, Housing and Homeless Assistance Applications

Communities interested in applying for funds from several Community Development Division programs should note that the applications will be due in the next two months.

**HOME Tax Credit** applications are due on November 24 and **Housing Fund** applications on December 10. Questions should be directed to Terry Vestal, email [terry.vestal@ided.state.ia.us](mailto:terry.vestal@ided.state.ia.us).

**Homeless Assistance Fund** applications are due on December 16. Diane Foss can be reached at [diane.foss@ided.state.ia.us](mailto:diane.foss@ided.state.ia.us).

**CDBG Water/Sewer** applications are due on December 4 and **CDBG Community Facilities and Services** applications on December 19. Contact Hank Manning at [hank.manning@ided.state.ia.us](mailto:hank.manning@ided.state.ia.us) for information.

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## THE DOWNTOWN RESOURCE CENTER

# Assessing Potential, Assisting Revitalization

"There's hope," says Lyn Schafer, Waukee business owner and participant in a recent community assessment visit by the Iowa Downtown Resource Center (IDRC). "There are things we can do," Schafer says, "and people are staying positive."

Waukee was one of five cities in which IDRC staff and consultants have conducted community assessments over the last several months.

Shafer was impressed with the team's work during the two-day visit. "They did a wonderful job in a short period of time," she said. "They talked to more than 60 people, heard a wide range of opinions, and their report reinforced our belief that the area has potential," Schafer said. "We felt our investment was validated."

**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT VISITS** are one of the services offered by IDRC as part of their purpose: to provide downtown development assistance to communities throughout the state. The assessments are fee-based.

Over the course of a two or three day visit, the Consultant Team examines information about the community, studies plans, meets with community leaders, discusses ideas and presents to the community observations and recommendations specific to the host community's central business district. A written report follows.

The Consultant Team usually includes a staff person from the Iowa Downtown Resource Center and a private sector consultant, both well experienced in downtown development. The Consultant Team reviews community information provided by the host community before the visit begins and comes prepared to make efficient use of the information. The Team works together to develop observations and recommendations, based upon the four areas of economic development activity which must be addressed in order to increase the value of downtown. These four areas, implemented comprehensively, increase the following values downtown: Physical (design); Social (promotion); Economic (business improvement); and Political (organization).

"Each community is unique in its priorities and challenges," says Thom Guzman, director of the Downtown Resource Center. "The observations and recommendations are specific to each community and reflect their priorities and challenges. The

**Continued on page 3**





“It seems very appropriate to feature the Downtown Resource Center team as Iowa wraps up Downtown Month promotions.”

*Sandy Ehrig, Division Administrator*

## The Iowa Downtown Resource Team

**Thom Guzman** manages the team and the activities of the Downtown Resource Center with nearly 16 years at IDED overseeing downtown development initiatives.

With his background in retail management and real estate brokering, along with a foreign language degree from California State University, it's no wonder Thom serves on department task forces for Century Business Awards, Diversity Team and the Iowa Excellence Project. His first experience with The National Trust for Historic Preservation was as a Main Street program manager for Grass Valley, CA prior to his Iowa position. He currently represents the U.S. Main Street coordinating programs on three National Trust committees.

Thom's leisure time activities include tending his tropical fish, going to live theater and travel. He volunteers time for downtown efforts including the Historic East Village organization and his downtown church, both located near IDED offices. Thom recognizes the value of mental health breaks away from work to refresh one's motivation and perspective.

**Jane Seaton** is the state coordinator for the 33 Iowa Main Street communities. She plans the quarterly training and application workshops, schedules consultants, manages contracts and facilitates special projects such as the Main Street Challenge Grant.

Prior to joining IDED staff in 1994, Jane worked in the travel industry owning an agency and then managing the Adams Community Economic Development organization including industrial and Main Street programs.

Jane hosts “kids’ camp” at her home for her grandson,

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nieces and nephews. Travel is a passion for the Seatons and a winter getaway on a sandy beach rates high on the list for fun in the sun!

**Tim Reinders** is the resident architect for the team, providing design training, design work for individual property owners, and streetscape with park and entry-way concepts.

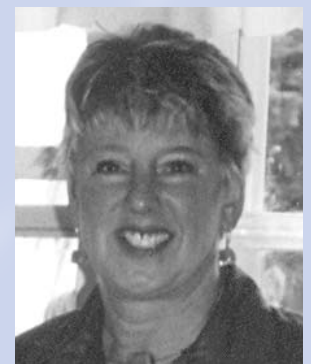
Tim worked in construction long enough to know he wanted to return to ISU to assist Professor Bill Boon with a class in creative problem solving and earn credentials for design architecture. Tim's introduction to Main Street was in Clinton as the Main Street program manager.

Tim's “down time” revolves around athletics. He is the ISU fan of tailgating for all home games and more if his kids' schedules of soccer and basketball don't conflict. Tim's role has been coach for both son and daughter. He pretends to be a golfer, though considers hacker more accurate. Tim does his own “home improvement” projects!

**Darlene Strachan** joined IDED staff two years ago as a program consultant for Main Street Iowa. She works with training, communications, record-keeping, and provides technical advice for the local program managers. She also organizes the special events and activities such as the annual awards ceremony and the Iowa State Fair booth.

Darlene's experience in media advertising, along with her six years of local economic development and Main Street management have served her well at IDED. When Darlene has a spare moment she enjoys traveling to places where she can scuba dive, swim, and she enjoys walking.

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# Assessing Potential, Assisting Revitalization

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Consultant Team's report is as comprehensive as possible taking into account each community's uniqueness."

A typical downtown assessment visit includes tours of downtown and the community, visits to local businesses and interviews with city officials, development groups, members of the community, and representatives of community groups.

Time is reserved for a work session for the Team to begin defining its observations and recommendations. An evening meeting is held on the last day where the Team shares its preliminary observations and recommendations with the community. This can be a public meeting, inviting the entire community, or private with the entity who brought the Assessment Team to town, however, as downtown belongs to the entire community, a public meeting is recommended.

Obviously, an initial Downtown Assessment Team visit cannot in a few short days come up with a comprehensive plan to solve all the downtown's challenges. But the visit does result in recommendations for the local community that are focused, specific to the community's downtown, and possible to implement within the next year or two.

## IRDC Services

In addition to assessment visits, IRDC offers:

**Statewide Training** - Iowa Downtown Conference; regional/ICN workshops on specific downtown topics

**Promotion** - Iowa Downtown Month

**Downtown Information Exchange** - lending library with slides, videos, books and workbooks; one-stop shop for downtown questions; examples; sample contracts

**Consultant Exchange** - retail, historic preservation and marketing consultants; architects; structural engineers; landscape architects

## Specific Technical Assistance

The Iowa Downtown Resource Center is the first of its kind in the nation. Two years ago, the Main Street Iowa Staff recognized the need to offer services to a broader audience - the hundreds of Iowa communities that are not in the Main Street program.

"Main Street Iowa continues to be the premier program of the Center," says Thom Guzman, director of IDRC. "Not all communities want or need the Main Street comprehensive approach to downtown development. Those cities may seek assistance with a specific issue or access available resources on an ala carte basis."

FOR MORE INFORMATION contact Thom Guzman, 515.242.4733, email [downtown@ided.state.ia.us](mailto:downtown@ided.state.ia.us) or visit [www.mainstreetiowa.org](http://www.mainstreetiowa.org)

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**Debi Flanders** has been with IDED for nearly four years, but joined the Downtown Resource Center team this year. Debi is well suited to assist with downtown development initiatives after nine years of experience as the director for Main Street Sigourney and the area development corporation.



Debi's life outside of work revolves around keeping up with her husband and three children, who all attend different colleges. She's enjoying watching her son play football for Wartburg College. Debi says she tries to enjoy golf and exercise. She does enjoy time with family and friends along with several quiet activities like reading, music and crafts.

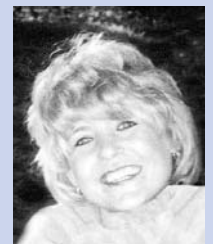
**Suzanne Davidson** works with the team as needed on special projects. She writes both Tools and Trends and Main Street Messenger and assists with the Downtown Summit,

Main Street Awards, and other events.

Suzanne was program director for Main Street Adel for six years so has a first-hand understanding of the work. She is a woman of many talents and interests - collecting, custom painting, art, fishing and relaxing at the Ozarks.



**Susan Drake** provides administrative support for the Downtown Resource Center, along with a couple of other teams at IDED. She has been on staff for four years and is known for her "sunny" disposition and ability to organize community visits and "Getting to Know IDED" sessions.



Susan enjoys canoeing, hiking, gardening, and hitting the "thrift shops" over her lunch hour. She lives in Hartford with her husband, Mike and two daughters.



## Iowa Film Office has busy season

Activity around the state was brisk this summer according to Steve Schott, Consultant to the Iowa Film Office.



A low budget (around \$1 million) movie entitled "Iowa" was filmed in Centerville for four weeks in May and June. The film starred Matt Farnsworth, who also directed and produced, Rosanna Arquette, John Savage and Michael T. Weiss. The filming was very successful and the town enjoyed the experience.

Several other small films were shot as well: a 15-minute film, "Field Trip," shot in Burlington; a 30-minute film, "Magic Moment," filmed in Cedar Rapids; and two short films, "Freeze Frame," shot in Ames and "Burned" shot in Iowa City.

Scheduled in the upcoming months are a 15-minute film called "On Account of Amber," to be shot in Des Moines, a short film entitled "Sackers" to be shot in Cedar Rapids, and a full-length movie entitled "Vamoose" to be shot in Des Moines.

Hundreds of commercials, infomercials, videos, interviews and news stories were also shot all over Iowa this summer.

In addition, the Discovery Channel shot a segment for "Great Biker Build-Off" in Western Iowa as well as a segment at the University of Iowa car simulator to look at the effects of alcohol on a driver in the death of Princess Diana. The History Channel had two shoots in Ottumwa and "Forensics Files" for Court TV did a shoot in Eastern Iowa.

This summer has also seen several film festivals. The Cedar Rapids Independent Film Festival took place in April at Coe College; the Donna Reed Performing Arts Festival & Workshops were held in Denison in June, and the Hardacre Film Festival screened great movies in Tipton in August.

The Film Office has supported most of these events and continues to location scout, support and help many other upcoming productions.



# 2003 IOWA TOURISM CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW

## OCTOBER 20, 21 & 22

## DES MOINES MARRIOTT HOTEL

## TOURISM BUILDING



More than 100,000 people visited the Tourism Building during the 2003 Iowa State Fair and enjoyed exhibits from communities, counties and attractions throughout the state.

### Marion County is tops

Congratulations to Marion County whose exhibit was honored recently as the best in the Iowa Tourism Building at the Iowa State Fair. The regional exhibit was chosen for its creativity and the friendliness of the volunteers who staff it. In recognition of the honor, Marion County will receive a free exhibit space at the fair in 2004.

## iowarural.org

The Rural Development Council has introduced a new web site which can provide financial and technical assistance.



# 2003 IOWA TOURISM CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW HIGHLIGHTS

## Monday, October 20

Registration and Silent Auction open at 9:30 a.m.

Exhibits open at 10:00 a.m.

Opening Luncheon - Rob Stevenson  
"How to Soar Like an Eagle in a World Full of Turkeys"

Afternoon break-out sessions:

- Festival Planning
- Grant Writing Tips
- Marketing to Alternative Groups

Iowa Wine and Beer Tasting/Educational Session

Iowa Beer and Wine Reception

Dinner program with IDED

## Tuesday, October 21

Travel Federation of Iowa Legislative Breakfast

General session with Nate Booth,  
"Thriving on Change"

Iowa Tourism Industry Awards

AAA Four Diamonds Award Luncheon

Afternoon break-out sessions:

- Leading the Sales Effort in a Downtown Market
- Developing and Placing a Great Ad
- Growing Support for Tourism with Decision Makers

Evening reception

## Wednesday, October 22

Morning break-out sessions:

- How to Prepare Your Community for Film Production
- Marketing Packages and Partnerships
- The Write Stuff
- How to work Successfully with Group Tour Media

Final luncheon and closing session with Jan McInnis



**For registration information, call 888.872.6035 or visit [www.traveliowa.com](http://www.traveliowa.com)**



Iowa Department of Economic Development Director Mike Blouin stands with Marion County promoters George and Dee Wassenhaar. Marion County's exhibit was judged the best in the Iowa Tourism Building.

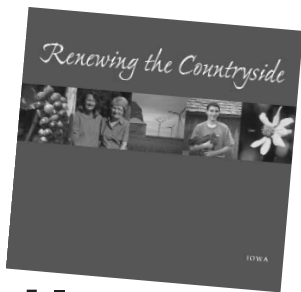
## TOURISM BRIEFS



Iowa was recently named as the site of the 2005 National Governor's Association Conference. Governors of more than forty states are expected to attend.

The Iowa Travel Guide recently received top honors from the National Council of Tourism Directors at the National Tourism Conference held in August. This is the third time in four years that the publication has been recognized.

## **RENEWING THE COUNTRYSIDE - Iowa Edition Books and Calendars Available**



If you're on the lookout for a very different kind of book that showcases Iowa and the people who are working to create wealth, *Renewing the Countryside - Iowa* is a must. The book is a blend of beautifully-written Iowa success stories and photography that lifts the stories through a series of images making it a beautiful coffee-table atlas.

The stories feature 'renewal' in Iowa that takes on many forms. *Countryside* features Iowans who are engaged in direct marketing in agriculture, new product lines, creative uses of sustainable resources, and community development. Energy and conservation, tourism and recreation ventures and a section on learning and personal growth are all included.

In a recent review of *Countryside*, First Lady of Iowa Christie Vilsack said, "This book is a must-read for those who conclude that small towns are dying as well as those who cherish small town life. *Renewing the Countryside - Iowa* is a human parade of rural success stories: people who are adaptable, resourceful and determined to find a way to live in harmony with the land and profit from it." To read Christie's entire review, go to [www.iowarural.org](http://www.iowarural.org) and click on the *Renewing the Countryside* link.

The book is a collaborative project of the Iowa Rural Development Council, the Leopold Center, the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and the Center for Trade and Agriculture at the University of Minnesota. The books will retail for \$39.95 hard cover and \$24.95 in soft cover. The Council will be offering the hardbound edition for a limited time at a 25% discount. The Council is also working with the Northwest Area Foundation to produce a companion 2004 calendar.

*Renewing the Countryside* books and calendars make great gifts to fellow Iowa lovers or as a reminder to Iowans living outside the state what a beautiful, resourceful and profitable place Iowa is!

To order books or calendars, contact Eve Palmer at 515-242-4830 or email the Council at [eve.palmer@ided.state.ia.us](mailto:eve.palmer@ided.state.ia.us). To learn more about the project visit the Council's website at [iowarural.org](http://iowarural.org).

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## **Assistance for Cultivating Entrepreneurs in Iowa**

Does your region or community have an interest in assisting and cultivating entrepreneurs? Help is on the way!

Iowa business and economic development leaders in four areas of the state recently had an opportunity to focus on rural entrepreneurship as an economic development strategy.

Workshops in Shenandoah, Creston, Bloomfield and Elkader set the stage for further entrepreneurial ventures in Iowa. Development staff and volunteers in these four communities hosted the sessions for anyone interested in creating an "entrepreneurial atmosphere" in rural Iowa.

The attendees received valuable information and inspiration from Don Macke, Co-Director of the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship based in Lincoln, NE. The Center is a national research and policy organization working throughout rural America. Mr. Macke presented strategies for identifying entrepreneurs and building stronger economies through entrepreneur development.

Participants in the workshops were challenged to assess the "entrepreneur readiness" of local regions and communities. This readiness "test" is based on the premise that entrepreneurial success depends on community/regional environment.

Fieldwork sponsored by the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship has identified six readiness factors:

*Openness to Entrepreneurship*—Are there service providers and leaders willing to help entrepreneurs achieve success?

*Balancing Business Attraction*—Does the community balance the "traditional" economic development efforts with a willingness to broaden the economic development strategy to support entrepreneurs?

*Entrepreneurship Programs*—Has the community had experience with networking infrastructure, mentoring programs, business counseling or other programs specific to the community?

*Leadership Team*—Is there a core leadership team committed to building and supporting an entrepreneurship program?

*Willingness to Invest*—How much will the community invest to ensure competitiveness for entrepreneurs?

*Beyond the Town Borders*—Is the community willing to create partnerships and collaborations necessary to create a regional effort to support effective economic development strategies?

The first step for Iowa communities interested in implementing an entrepreneurship program is to assess how well the community currently supports entrepreneurs through a review of these "readiness factors". Regional and community leaders interested in more information may contact: Cali Beals, Development Specialist; Email: [cali.beals@ided.state.ia.us](mailto:cali.beals@ided.state.ia.us); Phone: 515.242.4723

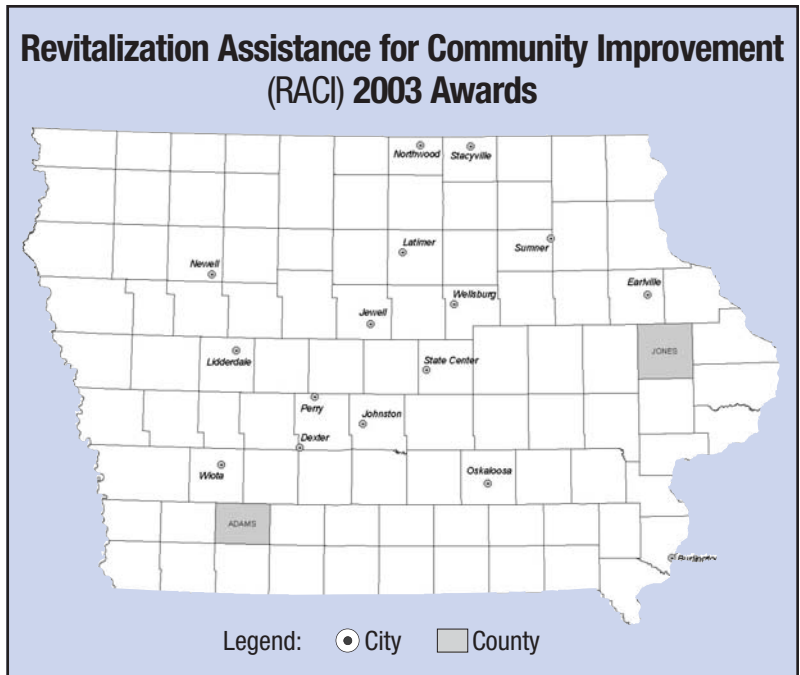
# RACI Announces 2003 Awards

Prairie Meadows Racetrack and Casino and the Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED) have again partnered in the Revitalization Assistance for Community Improvement (RACI) Grant Program.

Since the inception of the program in 1997, the RACI grant has given over \$2.5 million dollars, providing funds to boost the economic well being and vitality of Iowa communities with populations less than 30,000.

In 2003, the RACI grant program will reach out to 18 Iowa communities awarding a total of \$163,133.

The goal of the grant program focuses on community development opportunities including childcare centers, community centers, restoration and rehabilitation of buildings and downtown improvements. It provides opportunities to support strong economic development initiatives which enhance the community's viability for the future.



## RACI 2003 Awards

Applicant	Project Organization	Project Description	Awarded
Adams County	French Icarian Colony Foundation	Rehab Downtown Building	\$10,000
City of Burlington	South Hill Neighborhood Assn.	Neighborhood Revitalization	\$10,000
City of Dexter	Dexter Community House Board	Rehab facility	\$10,000
City of Earlville	Earlville Board of Education	Child Care	\$12,000
City of Jewell	Jewell Area Development Enterprise	Rehab facility	\$10,000
City of Johnston	Johnston Historical Society	Senior Center	\$6,000
City of Latimer	City of Latimer	Senior Center	\$1,200
City of Lidderdale	City of Lidderdale	Community Center	\$15,000
City of Newell	Newell Child Care Center Board	Child Care	\$15,000
City of Northwood	TUNE, Inc.	Rehab facility	\$10,000
City of Oskaloosa	City of Oskaloosa	Youth Entrepreneur	\$9,000
City of Perry	Nudgers, Inc.	Downtown Revitalization	\$10,000
City of Stacyville	Kids Care, Inc.	Child Care	\$12,000
City of State Center	State Center Main Street	Historic Preservation	\$10,000
City of Sumner	Uptown Sumner	Rehab facility	\$10,000
City of Wellsburg	Wellsburg Community Betterment	Child Care	\$12,500
City of Wiota	Wiota Community Boosters	Rehab facility	\$1,857
Jones County	Jones Co. Historical Society	Historic Preservation	\$1,045
<b>Totals</b>			<b>\$165,602</b>



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION **2003 - 2004 PLANNER**

OCTOBER		NOVEMBER		DECEMBER	
6	Homeless Fund Application Workshop	12	Homeless Application Study Hall	4	CDBG Water/Sewer Applications Due
15	Business Development Workshop - "Products, Trends and Display Techniques" - Marshalltown	24	HOME Tax Credit Applications Due	10	Housing Fund Applications Due
20-22	Tourism Conference - Des Moines	27	Thanksgiving Day	16	Homeless Assistance Fund Applications Due
23	Main Street Iowa Application Workshop - Story City			24	CDBG Community Facilities and Services Applications Due
<b>HAPPY HOLIDAYS!</b>					
JANUARY		FEBRUARY		MARCH	
27	Small Business Development Workshop - "Customers, Service and Your Employees" - Des Moines			23	Small Business Development Workshop - "Keeping Your Business Alive" - Pella
27 & 28	Main Street Iowa Workshop - Des Moines			25	Housing Fund and CDBG Recipient Workshop

**For changes to the Tools & Trends mailing list, contact Jason Boten at 515.242.4797 or [jason.boten@ided.state.ia.us](mailto:jason.boten@ided.state.ia.us).**



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