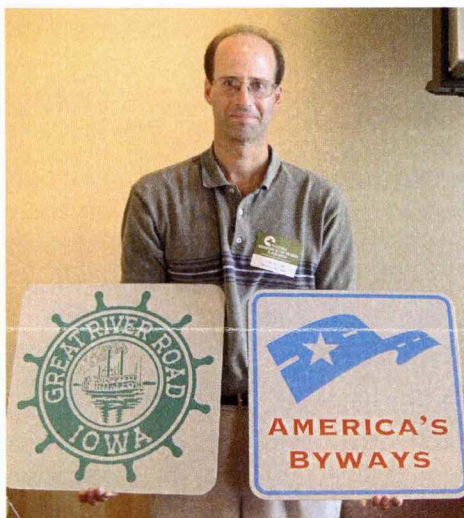


On a Sign Outside Your Door

The Iowa Mississippi Parkway Commission (MRPC) in cooperation with the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) and your city and county engineer have added reflective red, white, and blue America's Byway signs next to or below the Great River Road paddlewheel logo marking the Great River Road a National Scenic Byway. The route traversing ten counties in Iowa was designated a National Scenic Byway in September of 2000.

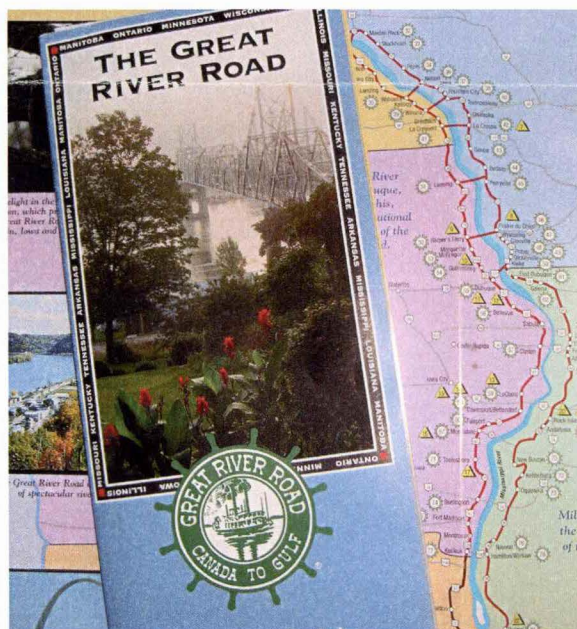


Iowa Department of Transportation Technical Advisor Craig Markley coordinated the America's Byway signage project for the Iowa MRPC.

consciousness. The MRPC mission serves both economic development and the protection of a natural resource."

MAP LOVERS ARE IN HEAVEN

New brilliant full color maps of **The Great River Road - Scenic Byway of the Mississippi River** are now available. The 10-state map highlights sites that each tell a unique story; helping travelers discover the river valley's great history, the blending of cultures and a host of recreational choices. Contact your county commissioner to obtain the maps for your visitor's bureau or business. (See names and phone numbers on page 4.)



CLINTON COUNTY COMMISSIONER NAMED

Arthur C. Ollie has been appointed by Governor Tom Vilsack to the Iowa MRPC to represent Clinton County. Ollie is a former Iowa Legislator and schoolteacher. He replaces Russell Clausen.

Art, who returns to the commission after seven years away, reflected on his advocacy role saying, "The river is always a part of our

INSIDE: DENISE KUETHE STRUDTHOFF SHARES RIVER PHILOSOPHY

COMMENTS AND SUBMISSIONS FOR THIS NEWSLETTER WELCOMED BY EDITOR

State Library of Iowa
State Documents Center
Miller Building
Des Moines, Iowa

AT: mjsmith@alpinecom.net

IN HER OWN WORDS

Denise Kuethe Strudthoff writes about...
An equality like no other

An equality like no other exists on the Mississippi River; I call it "river equity." This unique sense of being on a par with others isn't found anywhere else in America. We like to think it is. But only those of us who are "river people" really know what the framers of the Constitution hoped America would become.



Denise Kuethe Strudthoff of Postville represents Allamakee County on the Iowa MRPC. When she is not steering the main channel with her husband, Dave, she is a media specialist at Valley of Elgin High School.

Some would say that river equity is a fluke of language, that its source is in the nautical terms used. For example, although we call female food servers "waitresses" and male food servers "waiters," folks who either work or play on the river are simply referred to as "sailors," "boaters," or "mariners." In addition, there isn't a men's room or a ladies' room to be found on the River; but there are plenty of heads.

Being an idealist, I think that river equity comes from an undefined, more profound place than English usage. "No man is an island" and a watercraft is nothing more than a moving island. Although the muddy waters unite us, Old Man

River also separates us; and the separation makes us dependent upon one another. When the folks in the \$150,000 cabin cruiser "Pack My Stuff" complete with radar, satellite TV, A/C, and ceramic tile flooring wave at me as I chug along with a 60-horse Johnson on my used pontoon dubbed "Free at Last," I wave back. Not until I return the greeting do the cabin cruisers turn their faces away from me; they know I'm okay because I waved. Had I not reciprocated their gesture, the cabin cruisers would have altered their course immediately to assist me. When I see a battered bass boat leaving the marina at sunset as I make my way back to my slip, I wave and yell, "Hope the fish bite for you!" to which the captain responds, "If they're not, I know the mosquitoes will be!" I smile, knowing that the angler is already weaving a somewhat believable fish tale should his evening on the river prove unprofitable.

Had the cabin cruisers instead seen my VW and I stranded on the side of I-90 as they whizzed by in their 2003 Mercedes, I don't believe they would've waved nor checked to see if I had help on the way. As a lone female walking down the sidewalk in Dubuque or Davenport after sundown, I would cross the street if I saw an unfamiliar man approaching me. It seems that on the shore, we are untrusting; but on the Mississippi River, we are united and friendly Americans.

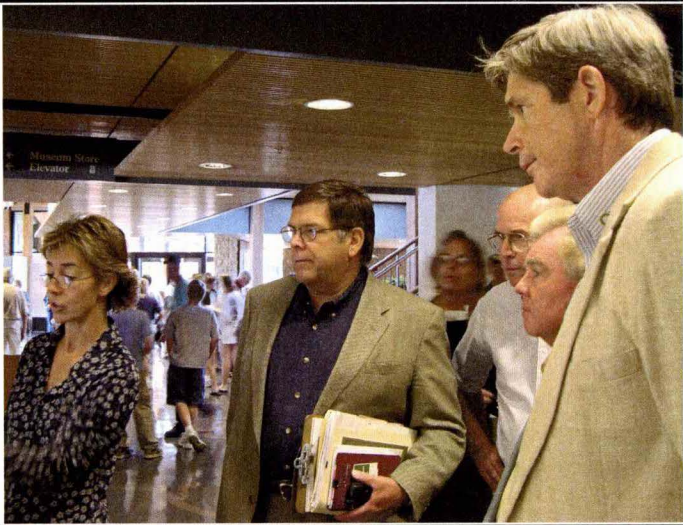
Imagine an America whose entire population had experienced river equity . . .

FRIEND OF CONSERVATION

Al Bohling, Louisa County Commissioner, was named the Louisa County Friend of Conservation this summer. Al was honored for his work at the Langwood Education Center, volunteering his talents to develop maps and floor plans for the interpretive site.

Al is a landscape architect with the Shive-Hattery design firm in Cedar Rapids. He is also a founding member of the Tri-Rivers Conservation Foundation.

INTERPRETIVE SITES NETWORKED



Kelly Warren, left, demonstrates the interactive site, which links interpretive centers along the river at the National Mississippi River Museum in Dubuque. Also pictured from left, Louisa County Commissioner Al Bohling, Muscatine County Commissioner John Oberhaus, Lee County Commissioner Gene Enke and Dubuque County Commissioner and Director of the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium Jerry Enzler.

A federal grant from the National Scenic Byway program to the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium in Dubuque has led to the development of the Mississippi River Interpretive Network. The interactive touch-screen exhibit, located just beyond the gift shop in the new museum, takes visitors to over 50 sites along the Mississippi River from Minnesota to Louisiana.

Three interpretive sites in Iowa were just added to the network. Want to visit a 500-acre urban wetland? Touch the video screen for Nahant Marsh Education Center in Davenport. The site boasts diverse species of fish, plants, birds and wildlife and is staffed by a full-time naturalist.

Curious about shell buttons? The interpretive network includes the Muscatine Pearl Button Museum. Located in historic downtown Muscatine, visitors can study the button making process, from shell collection through cutting and dying. The National Historic Landmark known as the Mines of Spain at Dubuque is a 1390-acre

preserve of woods and prairie also new on the interpretive center inventory.

Other Iowa sites you will recognize in the Mississippi River Interpretive Network include:

- ~ Effigy Mounds National Monument north of Marquette
- ~ Upper Mississippi River Fish Hatchery and Aquarium in Guttenberg
- ~ National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium in Dubuque
- ~ Mississippi Valley Welcome Center in LeClaire
- ~ Putnam Museum of History and Natural Science in Davenport
- ~ Toolesboro Indian Mounds in Wapello
- ~ Old Fort Madison in Fort Madison and the
- ~ Keokuk River Museum in Keokuk

The Iowa MRPC will promote the interpretive sites in the ten counties of Iowa with uniform signage and a brochure. Goals of the network have been set by the national MRPC. These include staff to coordinate the network, a website, expansion of the network to emerging centers, and research repositories linking planners, interpreters, historians, and naturalists.



Iowa MRPC Commissioners front left, Jerry Enzler, John Oberhaus, Gene Enke, Elaine Baxter, Marian Meyer, Patsy Ramacitti, Denise Strudthoff, Al Bohling and M.J. Smith at the opening of the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium in Dubuque.

FULL STEAM AHEAD

Iowa MRPC members are proud of their forward-thinking Chair Patsy Ramacitti. She was named "Bettendorf Citizen of the Year 2003" as well as "Woman of the Year" by the Junior League for her sustained volunteer work. Patsy was the subject of a profile in the *Quad-City Times* July 8. She makes a big habit of helping her hometown, also serving on the Scott County Regional Authority and Bettendorf Centennial Committee.

WHAT ARE YOU PROMOTING?

The Iowa MRPC meets four times each year and will welcome visitors from nine other Mississippi River states to Iowa during the semi-annual meeting of the National MRPC in Dubuque set for April 2-3, 2004. If your business or community would like to tell its story or sample its product to our visitors from places like Kentucky and Mississippi, contact: **Commissioner Elaine Baxter** at 319-754-5477 or: elainbax@interlinklc.net

The Federal Highway Administration funds this newsletter.



Iowa Great River Road/National Scenic Byway
Iowa DOT - Office of Systems Planning
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL

The Upper Mississippi River was named the third most beautiful place to visit in America by *USA Weekend* on May 16, 2003. The national editor wrote, "To truly appreciate the Mississippi, we leave the familiar territory of Huck and Tom and take a spin on the Great River Road. One of the nation's most scenic routes, it winds over hills, atop towering bluffs, through one 19th-century river town after another. The sites along the way read like chapters in American history." You are a stakeholder on this ribbon of *America the Beautiful*. Treasure, keep and share it.

IOWA MRPC COMMISSIONERS BY COUNTY

Allamakee - Denise Kuethe Strudthoff, 563-864-7052
Clayton - M.J. Smith, 563-252-3283
Clinton - Art Ollie, 563-243-4377
Des Moines - Elaine Baxter, 319-754-4372
Dubuque - Jerry Enzler, 563-557-9545
Jackson - Marian Meyer, 563-872-4991
Lee - Gene Enke, 319-372-3325
Louisa - Al Bohling, 800-798-0227
Muscatine - John Oberhaus, 319-726-5395
Scott - Patsy Ramacitti, 563-332-5446

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