

Ten Travel Counselors Earn Certified Status

Ten Welcome Center staff members were recently recognized as Certified Travel Counselors. The newly-certified workers are Bryan Seward, Sergeant Bluff Welcome Center; Patsy Hume, Southern Loess Hills Welcome Center; Stacy Hubanks, Dubuque Welcome Center; Wyman "Andy" Anderson, Ron Craft, Sergeant Floyd Welcome Center; Geri Tuegal, Dubuque Welcome Center; Holly Ambrose, Dubuque Welcome Center; Cecilia Miller, Emmetsburg Welcome Center plus the father/son duo of Jeffery and Jacob Leigh, Mississippi Valley Welcome Center.

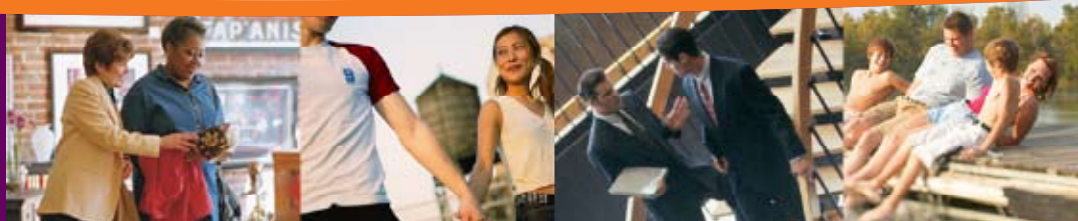
Welcome Center staff must successfully complete a 100-hundred question test about Iowa to qualify for the distinction. Iowa is one of only nine states with a certification process that is endorsed by the National Council of State Tourism Directors, part of the Travel Industry Association of America. In Iowa, 102 Welcome Center Travel Counselors are certified. ■



Tourism Projects Earn Awards

A direct mail piece created by The Integer Group (the Iowa Tourism Office's agency of record) has earned a Silver Addy from the Advertising Professionals of Des Moines. The three-part mailing encouraged attendance at the Midwest Travel Writers Association meeting in Perry held September 12-17, 2006. The Perry location marked the first year the event was held in a smaller community. The direct mail pieces were a series which included 1) a whistle from Boone 2) *Bridges of Madison County* book and bookmark and 3) a CD about Perry, as well as information about the conference. The pieces were sent to the travel writers throughout the months of June and July.

This year, The Integer Group held an internal competition called the "Innies" to recognize employee excellence on a variety of clients. The Iowa Tourism Office's Meredith Roundtable Event earned the "Smart, Very Smart, Bordering on Brilliant Strategy Award." Entries for the competition were judged by advertising professors at Drake University, Grandview College and Iowa State University. ■



Iowa Welcome Center Staff Participate in Training

Twenty-five travel counselors, representing Iowa's 20 Welcome Centers, explored central Iowa during the Iowa Tourism Office's annual Welcome Center Training and Familiarization Tour April 16-18.



Erin Roe, Okoboji Spirit Center, visiting the Floyd County Museum in Charles City.

"We wholeheartedly believe these people will become even better ambassadors for Iowa by getting out and experiencing many of the state's attractions first-hand," said Nancy Landess, Iowa Tourism Office Manager. "As the first point of contact for a majority of visitors, their depth of knowledge is invaluable. We have research that shows visitors spend more time visiting local attractions after interacting with welcome center staff."



Father and son duo Jeffrey and Jacob Leigh, Mississippi Valley Welcome Center, at the Hemken Car Collection in Williams.

This year's tour included stops at the Eagle City Winery in Iowa Falls; the Floyd County Museum and Mooney Collection in Charles City; the Rockford Fossil Beds; Music Man Square Complex in Mason City; Fort Custer Maze and Central Gardens in Clear Lake; the Top of Iowa Welcome Center in North-

wood; the Winnebago Visitors Center in Forest City; and the Hemken Collection in Williams.

The event, which rotates through the state's three tourism regions, will take place in eastern Iowa in 2008 and in western Iowa in 2009. Choice Hotels sponsored the event. ■

Vision Iowa Board Funds Four Projects at April Meeting



Lynn Kueck of Algona (left), Lorna Burnside of Storm Lake and Mike Edwards of Burlington (not pictured) completed their terms as Vision Iowa Board Members at the end of April.

The Vision Iowa Board approved more than \$2.5 million in Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) grants to projects located in Osage, Riverton, Guthrie County and Sioux City during their April board meeting.

PROJECTS RECEIVING FUNDING:

Cedar River Recreation and Fine Arts Complex - Osage

Total Project Cost: \$12,043,285
 Amount Requested:\$ 1,750,000
 Amount Awarded:.....\$ 1,600,000

This award is a challenge grant that is contingent upon all remaining fundraising being completed within 90 days. In addition, the Cedar River Recreation and Fine Arts Museum must be LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified.

Riverton Community Center - Riverton

Total Project Cost: \$216,702
 Amount Requested:\$100,700
 Amount Awarded:.....\$ 97,000

Guthrie County Fairgrounds Grandstand Project

Total Project Cost: \$534,440
 Amount Requested:\$200,000
 Amount Awarded:.....\$150,000

This award is contingent upon fundraising being completed by September 7, 2007.

Mid America Transportation and Aviation Museum - Sioux City

Total Project Cost: \$2,092,333
 Amount Requested:\$ 700,000
 Amount Awarded:.....\$ 700,000

This award is contingent upon \$500,000 being raised for the endowment by September 1, 2007, and an additional \$500,000 for the endowment by May 1, 2008.

To date, 12 Vision Iowa projects have been awarded a total of \$218,550,000. The CAT Program has provided funding to 264 projects, awarding a total of \$86,752,671. For more information, go to www.visioniowa.org. ■

2008 Co-op Advertising Campaign Announced

The Iowa Tourism Office has announced the details of its 2008 cooperative advertising program. Selections include Iowa and regional magazines, newspapers and, for the first time, television. The Tourism Office has negotiated favorable advertising rates with nearly a dozen publications and is offering ad space to Iowa attractions and destinations at a reduced rate. Publications include magazines such as *Midwest Living* and the *Iowan*; newspapers in Iowa, Chicago, and Minneapolis; and niche publications for group travel and meeting planners.

The first-ever television component will be supported by funds allocated through gaming receipts. Beginning this fall, the Tourism Office is set to receive quarterly payments from the program that will be earmarked for regional marketing initiatives. Participating advertisers will be featured in 30-second spots in the Chicago market. The Tourism Office will shoot new video footage at the participating attractions or destinations, which will be available to the advertisers for their own use.

Advertising space reservations for the television co-op and the 2008 Iowa Travel Guide are due June 30, 2007. Information can be found in the Travel Industry Information section of traveliowa.com, or by contacting Kathy Bowermaster at kathy.bowermaster@iowalifechanging.com or 888.472.6035. ■

IDED Director Named, Division Administrator Hired

Mike Tramontina, who had been serving as interim director for the Department of Economic Development since January 2007, has been officially appointed to the post by Governor Culver.

Prior to working at IDED, Tramontina served as the Director of the Iowa Department of Management for two years during the Vilsack/Pederson administration. He moved into that position after serving four and a half years as Executive Director of the Iowa Finance Authority where he coordinated the State's housing policy.

Tim Waddell has joined IDED as Community Development Division Administrator. Tim has worked at the Iowa Finance Authority as administrator of the Affordable Housing Tax Credit program for the past 5 years. Prior to IFA he was in business as a rental property owner and manager. During his career he has also worked as PIO in the Secretary of State's office and in the State Senate. ■

ASSOCIATION
Spotlight

TRAVEL INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

The Travel Industry Association (TIA) is the national, non-profit organization representing all components of the \$703 billion travel industry. TIA's mission is to promote and facilitate increased travel to and within the United States.

TIA sponsors the Annual National Tourism Week, scheduled May 12-20, 2007. Tourism week, in its 24th year, is commemorated by states, cities and organizations across the nation with the goal of highlighting the powerful economic, social and cultural impacts of travel through events and celebrations. Activities and communication efforts in 2007 will highlight the theme: "Travel & Tourism: America's Front Door."

For more information, visit www.tia.org. ■



Iowa State Parks

By the Numbers

14,126,093
Visitors to Iowa's State Parks in 2006

24/7
Hours and days www.reserveiaparks.com takes
campsite reservations

\$16.00
State park camping fee per night for a modern
electrical campsite. A non-modern, non-electrical
site is \$9.00

55
State Parks in Iowa

900
Licensed vendors for hunting and fishing licenses.
Most can be purchased on-line at www.dnr.com

Source: Iowa Department of Natural Resources

IOWA
life | changing®

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

PRSR STD
POSTAGE
PAID
Des Moines, IA
Permit No. 1195

Tourism Office Partners with Kum & Go for Tourism Month Promotion

The Iowa Tourism Office has again partnered with Kum & Go for an Iowa Tourism Month promotion. While Iowa Tourism Month is May, the promotion will run from May 1 through June 30. Visitors to any of Iowa's 20 Welcome Centers can register to win a \$100 gas card (one per center). Web visitors can register online at traveliowa.com for a chance to win a \$500 gas card. ■

Kum & Go

2008 Travel Guide Information Due

Information is now being collected for the 2008 Iowa Travel Guide and web site. Attractions, communities, lodging facilities and campgrounds that were listed in the 2007 edition will receive information sheets to review and edit. Changes should be returned to the Tourism Office by June 1, 2007. If your community has a new attraction that should be considered for the Travel Guide, please contact Kathy Bowermaster at kathy.bowermaster@iowalifechanging.com or 888.472.6035. ■

Film Incentive Bill Passes Senate

Senate file 892, which would provide a 25 percent tax credit on local expenditures for purchases, rentals and services needed for qualified movie projects, has passed the Senate and, at press time, was awaiting Governor Culver's signature. It also offers investors a 25 percent tax deduction on their investment. The film must have at least a \$100,000 budget to qualify.

The incentive bill created quite a buzz at the Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI) Locations Trade Show in Santa Monica, Calif. Iowa Film Office Manager Tom Wheeler and Community Development Division staff member Jason Boten attended the show April 12-14. ■



**Photos printed
on multi-layers of
transparencies and
lights created an eye-
catching Iowa Film
Office display.**