

Jeff Spence will be leaving the Iowa Tourism Office in June.

He has taken the Director of Sales position at the Embassy Suites in Des Moines. The Iowa Tourism Office thanks him for his hard work and wishes him well in his new endeavor.

Important Dates This Month

June 4-8: Midwest Travel Writers Association Spring Conference, Amarillo, Texas

Jessica O'Riley from the Iowa Tourism Office will promote Iowa and network with members of the Midwest Travel Writers Association.

June 6: Deadline for 2009 Travel Guide Submission and Updates

Forms were mailed in late April to attractions, communities, lodging facilities and campgrounds listed in the 2008 Travel Guide requesting updated information for the 2009 Travel Guide. If your community has a new attraction that should be considered for the Travel Guide, contact Kathy Bowermaster at kathy.bowermaster@iowalifechanging.com or 515.242.4708.

June 30: Deadlines for 2009 Travel Guide Advertising Space and TV Co-op

Ad materials for the 2009 Travel Guide will be due July 31. Information on all the 2009 co-op options can be found in the Travel Industry Information section of www.traveliowa.com.

Underwood Welcome Center Officially Open

In tribute to the wineries located in the Loess Hills, dignitaries cut a grapevine to signify the Underwood Rest Area and Welcome Center's official opening on May 1. Iowa Department of Transportation Director Nancy Richardson and Iowa Department of Economic Development Director Mike Tramontina participated in the day's events.



LaVonne Bahrke of Neola won a gift basket of items donated by several Western Iowa tourism organizations.

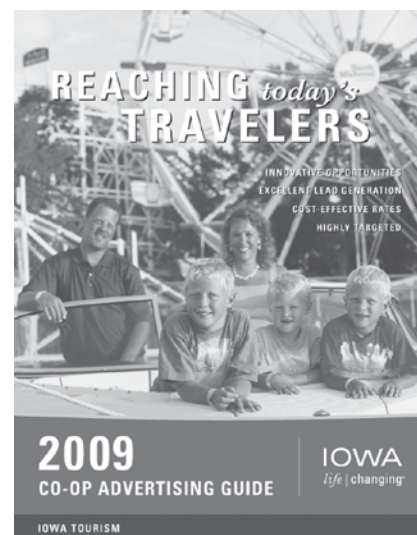
The Iowa Tourism Office would like to thank the following for their donations: Breezy Hills Vineyard; Pottawattamie County Conservation; Wells Dairy; Council Bluffs Convention and Visitors Bureau; Harrison County Historical Village and Welcome Center and the Western Iowa Tourism Region.

2009 Co-op Includes Print and TV

The 2009 Co-op program offers traditional print favorites along with two television options. Sixteen print publication opportunities include Midwest Living, AAA Living, The Iowan, Iowa Outdoors, USA Weekend, Midwest Meetings, Better Homes and Gardens, Ladies' Home Journal, Family Circle, Minneapolis Star Tribune, Des Moines Register and the Chicago Tribune.

A special 2-for-1 offer will allow advertisers to place ads in both Group Travel Leader and its sister publication Going on Faith for one price. The TV co-op has been expanded to include both Chicago and Minneapolis markets.

Find full details and a reservation form in the Travel Industry Information section of www.traveliowa.com.





PAPPAJOHN SCULPTURE GARDEN RECEIVES \$1 MILLION VISION IOWA AWARD

The Vision Iowa Board approved a \$1 million Vision Iowa grant for the John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Garden in Des Moines at their meeting in May. The grant marks the second Vision Iowa-funded project in 2008 and the 14th award since the inception of the program.

The John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Garden will include more than 20 works of art, valued at nearly \$30 million, on display in the Western Gateway Park. The donation of the pieces by John and Mary Pappajohn of Des Moines is believed to be the single largest public gift of art in the state and the single largest public gift in Des Moines history.

The Pappajohns are known worldwide for their passion of collecting art. They have been recognized in ARTnews magazine's list of the top 200 collectors in the world and sit or have sat on boards or committees for more than half a dozen of the most prestigious museums and cultural organizations in the United States.

At the same meeting, the following projects were approved grants from the Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) Fund:

Shelby County Wellness Center - Harlan
Amount Awarded: \$1,175,000

This project includes the construction of a 40,000-sq. ft. wellness center

that will include a gym, lap pool, zero depth pool, racquetball courts, physical therapy center with rehabilitation pool, fitness studio, cardiovascular area, weight room and meeting/classroom space.

City of Carroll Aquatic Center
Amount Awarded: \$100,000

This project includes the construction of an 11,245-sq-ft. aquatic facility with zero depth entry area, six 25-yard swimming lanes, dual speed slides, 1-meter and 3-meter diving boards, water play fountains, floatable walkway, concessions area and bathhouse. This award is contingent upon the completion of fundraising in 90 days.

Jim Wood Aquatic Center - Logan
Amount Awarded: \$100,000

This project includes the construction of a 5,025-sq. ft. aquatic facility with zero depth entry, large spiral slide, six swimming lanes, shade umbrellas and bathhouse. This award is contingent upon the completion of fundraising in 120 days.

To date, 14 Vision Iowa projects have been awarded a total of \$228,550,000. The CAT program has provided funding to 290 projects, awarding a total of \$97,861,780. The next Vision Iowa Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 11, in Burlington. For more information, visit www.visioniowa.org.

Governor Culver Signs Bill Creating RECAT

On April 29, Governor Chet Culver signed Senate File 2430 authorizing the River Enhancement Community Attraction and Tourism Program (RECAT). The program, with a \$12 million first year appropriation, will provide financial assistance to communities in their efforts to reinvent and reinvigorate their riverfronts.

"Iowa's waterways have an important place in Iowa history," said Culver. "This legislation will allow riverfront communities to thrive and is a good investment for Iowa."

The new fund will be administered by the Vision Iowa Board. More details on RECAT will be available on www.visioniowa.org soon.

Vision Iowa Funds Depleted

The \$1 million award to the John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Garden marks the final award from the Vision Iowa fund.

The Vision Iowa fund was created during the 2000 Legislative Session to assist in funding of major tourism attractions (\$20 million minimum project cost). The state was authorized to issue bonds of up to \$300 million dollars to fund the program. The bonds are being repaid using revenue from Iowa's gaming establishments.

In total, the Vision Iowa Board leveraged \$228,550,000 into \$995,589,286 of investment among 14 projects in Burlington, Clinton, Council Bluffs, Davenport, Des Moines, Dubuque (two awards), Mason City, Ottumwa, Polk County, Sioux City, Storm Lake and Waterloo/Cedar Falls.



Welcome Center Staff Enjoy FAM Tour

The entire group poses at Pikes Peak State Park near McGregor.



Jacky Rosic, owner of Galleria de Paco in Waterloo, explains how his family arrived in Iowa from Bosnia.

Judy Riley, Jerry Reese and Kathy Dirks share a laugh while posing at Pikes Peak State Park near McGregor.



Dan Fenn, owner of Felicity Arts in Lansing, demonstrated the art of glass blowing.

ASSOCIATION Spotlight



Mississippi River Country, USA (MRC) was established in 1986 by the Mississippi River Parkway Commission, the organization behind the Great River Road.

MRC was designed to leverage the global awareness of the Mississippi River in order to market the ten states along the river, in their entirety, both domestically and to countries throughout the world. Representatives from the state tourism offices of the 10 Mississippi River states collaborate on a multi-state marketing program designed to bring visitors to the region. Nancy Landess from the Iowa Tourism Office is the current Chair.

The MRC works with tour operators, media and consumers to promote, stimulate and foster travel within the region. Currently, the MRC is focusing its international tourism marketing efforts on Japan.

The Isle of Capri Hotel and Convention Center in Bettendorf will host the annual meeting on September 25-28. Bettendorf's Patsy Ramacitti is currently serving as the first female Pilot/CEO of the National Mississippi River Parkway Commission.

For more information on travel along the Mississippi River and beyond, visit www.experiencemississippiriver.com or call 866.763.8310.

Tourism

By the Numbers

3.5

Maximum height, in feet, of waves at
The Beach Ottumwa in Ottumwa

8

Virtual reality action themes on the Discovery
Plunge at King's Pointe Resort in Storm Lake

60

Height, in feet (and straight down), of the Lost Soul
Falls slide at Lost Island Adventure Park in Waterloo

123

Different water jet features at Adventureland's
Kokomo Kove in Altoona (set to open this month)

350,000

Gallons of water in Huck's Harbor Lazy River
at Fun City in Burlington

Source: Adventureland, Fun City, The Beach Ottumwa,
www.kingspointeresort.com, Lost Island Adventure Park

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Tourism Feature Recognized by Public Relations Society

A feature compiled by The Integer Group (the Iowa Tourism Office's agency of record) on "Ten 'No Kidding' Iowa Travel Spots Worth a Visit" received a 2008 Award of Merit from the Central Iowa Chapter Public Relations Society of America. The award was presented during the organization's annual PRIME Awards Ceremony in April.