

Important Dates This Month

August 1 and 26: CAT/RECAT Technical Assistance Workshops, Des Moines

RSVPs were due at the end of July. The sessions will be held at the Iowa Department of Economic Development offices at 200 East Grand Avenue in Des Moines from 10 a.m. – Noon and 1 – 3 p.m.

August 7: Regional Sports Authority District Rules Public Hearing, Des Moines

A public hearing for the Regional Sports Authority program's rules will be held at the Iowa Department of Economic Development offices at 200 East Grand Avenue in Des Moines from 3 – 4 p.m.

August 7-17: Iowa State Fair, Des Moines

The Iowa Tourism Office staff will be promoting Iowa attractions and destinations through a booth in the Varied Industries Building south atrium. See related article in this issue.

August 29: 2008 Iowa Tourism Award Nomination Deadline

A nomination form can be found in the Travel Industry Information section of www.traveliowa.com. Contact Jessica O'Riley with questions at jessica.oriley@iowalifechanging.com or 515.242.4754. The awards will be presented during the 2008 Iowa Tourism Conference in Sioux City October 20-22.



CHOICE HOTELS INTERNATIONAL

Tourism Office to Give Away \$1,650 in Choice Hotels Gift Cards at Fair

The Iowa Tourism Office has partnered with Choice Hotels to give away \$1,650 worth of gift cards during the 2008 Iowa State Fair, August 7-17.

Visitors to the Tourism Office's exhibit, in the south atrium of the Varied Industries Building, can register to win one of the 11 \$150 gift cards. One winner will be drawn each day. People can also register on www.traveliowa.com during the Fair for the gift cards. Winners will be announced on www.traveliowa.com and in an upcoming Traveler.

Tourism Conference Online Registration Available

On October 20-22, more than 300 Iowa tourism industry representatives will meet in Sioux City for the 2008 Iowa Tourism Conference. Registration for the conference is now available online through the Travel Industry Information section of www.traveliowa.com.

The conference includes general and breakout sessions on travel trends, green meetings, building killer committees and more; a tradeshow (with more than 30 exhibitors); Silent Auction; 2008 Iowa Tourism Awards presentations; and unparalleled networking opportunities.

Registration costs \$200 if received by September 1; \$240 if after. Student registration is \$115. A detailed conference agenda can be found in the online registration materials.



Four Projects Receive CAT Grants

The Vision Iowa Board awarded nearly \$3 million in grants to four projects during their July meeting.

The following projects were approved for grants awarded from the Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) Fund:

Birmingham Park Shelter Project - Birmingham

Total Project Cost: \$152,350
Amount Requested: \$ 45,000
Amount Awarded: \$ 45,000

This project will replace the existing facility with a 2,508-square foot building. Amenities will include two handicapped-accessible restrooms, a kitchenette, dining/reception area and a freeze-proof drinking fountain outside. This award is contingent upon the completion of fundraising in 120 days.

Children's Discovery Center - Clinton

Total Project Cost: \$650,000
Amount Requested: \$325,000
Amount Awarded: \$325,000

Due to the expansion of Highway 30, the Felix Adler Children's Discovery Center must move from its current location. This project will include the purchase of a 17,000-square foot building and its parking area as well as the physical adaptation of its interior. Specific renovation will include the installation and updating of signage; a humidity chamber to preserve the collections; creation of two rooms equipped with sinks, refrigerators and furniture to support rental function; bathroom renovations; gift shop updates and renovations; installation of a climbing wall; upgrading the admis-

sions area and a security system with a closed-circuit television. This award is contingent upon the completion of fundraising in 90 days.

N.I.C.H.E.S. - Postville

Total Project Cost: \$2,165,550
Amount Requested: \$ 875,550
Amount Awarded: \$ 850,000

This two-story addition to the community's existing recreation center will include an indoor swimming pool, racquetball court, community center and classroom space for preschool and child care services. This award is contingent upon the completion of fundraising in 90 days.

Ankeny to Woodward Trail

Total Project Cost: \$12,490,432
Amount Requested: \$ 2,272,927
Amount Awarded: \$ 1,750,000

This rail-to-trail conversion project will start in Ankeny and run 25 miles in a north-northwestern direction to Woodward. The trail will incorporate Polk, Story, Boone and Dallas Counties and the cities of Ankeny, Madrid, Sheldahl, Slater and Woodward. The bridge over the Des Moines River will include six cantilevered overlooks and LED lights. 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 300 projects, awarding a total of \$103,066,780. The next Vision Iowa Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 13, in Storm Lake. For more information visit www.visioniowa.org.



VISION
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Vision Iowa Marketing Grant Applications Available

Legislation passed during the 2008 session allocated \$100,000 of Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) funds annually through fiscal year 2013 for tourism marketing. The money will be distributed through a grant program administered by the Vision Iowa Board. The only eligible applicants are previous CAT or Vision Iowa award recipients; information was sent to all eligible organizations at the end of July. The grant application and more information are available on www.visioniowa.org.

RECAT Application Available

The River Enhancement Community Attraction and Tourism (RECAT) application is now available on www.visioniowa.org. The first deadline will be Friday, September 19.

The program, created during the 2008 Legislative session, is designed to fund projects that promote and enhance recreational opportunities and community attractions on and near rivers or lakes within cities across the state. Examples include, but are not limited to, pedestrian trails and walkways, amphitheaters, bike trails, water trails or whitewater courses for watercraft and any modifications necessary for the safe mitigation of dams.

For more information visit www.visioniowa.org.



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Tourism Office Places Ads Promoting Summer Travel

Starting in mid-July, the Iowa Tourism Office ran a three-week ad schedule in state and regional newspapers promoting summer travel in Iowa. In addition to a 2x2 ad in a statewide network of newspapers, larger ads were placed in the Burlington Hawkeye, Cedar Rapids Gazette, Chicago Sun Times, Chicago Tribune, Council Bluffs Daily Nonpareil, Davenport Quad City Times, Des Moines Register, Dubuque Telegraph Herald, Fort Dodge Messenger/Webster City Daily Freeman Journal, Iowa City Press Citizen, Kansas City Star, Mason City Globe Gazette, Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel, Minneapolis Star Tribune, Omaha World Herald, Ottumwa Courier, Sioux City Journal, St. Louis Post Dispatch and Waterloo Courier.

AAALiving Gas Giveaway

AAA's 60-day Gas Giveaway promotion continues through September 1. Members and non-members who visit www.aaa.com/savings can register to win a \$50 gas card good at any gas station. People can register each day to win one of the daily gift cards.

Regional Sports Authority Applications Due October 1

The Regional Sports Authority program has been funded at \$500,000 for a second year. Up to 10 districts can be certified for the promotion of youth sports, high school athletic activities, the Special Olympics and other nonprofessional sports. The money will be distributed equally among the certified districts.

Convention and Visitors Bureaus are the only eligible applicants. The total budget for the promotion must equal \$75,000 with \$50,000 in state funds matched by \$25,000 in local funds.

Applications are now available in the Travel Industry Information section of www.traveliowa.com and will be received on an ongoing basis and reviewed quarterly by the Iowa Department of Economic Development. The first deadline is Wednesday, October 1.

Contact Nancy Landess at nancy.landess@iowalifechanging.com or 515.242.4702 with questions.

ASSOCIATION
Spotlight



Created in 1988, the Iowa Off Highway Vehicle Association (IOHVA) is a non-profit organization that promotes safety and education for off-road enthusiasts.

Their mission includes providing a voice in local and state government to support laws that protect families' recreational riding opportunities; being an information source on current local and state laws, including off-highway vehicle (OHV) registration requirements; a source of support for the development of new and existing recreational areas; proponents of educational programs relating to safe off-road motorcycle and all-terrain vehicle operation; and a source for starting and supporting local clubs.

By working with volunteers from 20 plus local OHV clubs, the organization has opened and maintains eight OHV parks in the state. These parks are funded through an annual volunteer registration program administered within the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. The annual economic impact from OHV recreation is \$126 million in Iowa.

For more information on IOHVA or the OHV parks, visit www.iowaohv.com.

Tourism

By the Numbers

Iowa History

January 27, 1921

Birth of Donna Reed, one of America's favorite "television mothers."

February 3, 1959

Ritchie Valens, Buddy Holly, and the "Big Bopper" die in airplane crash near Clear Lake.

April 11, 1847

Pilgrims bound for Pella leave Europe.

May 30, 1988

Filming of "Field of Dreams" begins in Dyersville.

December 19, 1957

Meredith Willson's "The Music Man" opened on Broadway.

Source: www.iowahistory.org

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Scholarship Available for Student to Attend Tourism Conference

Applications are now being accepted for the Flora A. Schmidt Scholarship, which covers the registration for a college student to attend the annual Iowa Tourism Conference. The application can be found in the Travel Industry Information section of www.traveliowa.com. Deadline is Friday, September 19. Contact Lonie Mezera at lonie.mezera@iowalifechanging.com or 515.242.4727 with questions.

2008 Co-Op Update

It has been a successful year for Iowa's co-op advertising program. More than 4,300 leads have been received from the response cards in Midwest Living, AAA Living and the four newspapers. Leads were sent to the participants on a weekly basis from mid-March through July.

Advertising information and space reservation forms for the 2009 cooperative advertising program can be found in the Travel Industry Information section of www.traveliowa.com. Contact Kathy Bowermaster at kathy.bowermaster@iowalifechanging.com or 515.242.4708 with questions. Space reservations are due Monday, November 3.