



# Sac County Endowment Foundation Announces 2009 Awards

**FYI** February 2009

Word was received late Friday, Feb. 20th, that our parent foundation had approved our grant selections for this year.

Those receiving funding this year include: City of Early—chair lift for municipal building; Kids World—surveillance system; City of Lake View—restrooms for Speaker Park; City of Odebolt—pool renovations; Odebolt Museum—façade improvements; Sac County Conservation—storm shelter for their new office/interpretive center; Sac County Veterans Memorial; Sac Senior Center (Gen. Sherman Hall in the Monument Square)—building renovations; City of Sac City—Chautauqua Building restoration project; Sac City Library—building improvements; Sac City Museum—

gazebo for their historical complex; Sac Community Recreation Center—façade and entry improvements; City of Schaller—pool renovations; and Wall Lake Library—building renovations.

Thank you to all those making applications this year. It's always a difficult procedure to evaluate the applications and a great deal of emphasis is put on the proper completion of the applications, as well as the projects themselves.

All those receiving funding will be required to sign agreements with the Sac County Endowment Foundation and are subject to state audit at any time during or after their projects.

**Congratulations** to this year's recipients. We look forward to seeing these projects completed.

**The design above is for the new Popcorn Ball T-shirts. There is an order form attached to this newsletter.**

**If you would like to join in the fun and order a T-shirt, please see the attached.**

## World's Largest Popcorn Ball

Plans are wrapping up for the preparation of the 2009 World's Largest Popcorn Ball on Feb. 28th. Our goal is set—5,000 pounds—big enough to make sure no one will attempt to beat our record anytime soon. Volunteers are lining up, T-shirts have been ordered, the platform has been built (Thanks to EVAPCO Iowa), the ingredients have arrived, the media has been contacted and final plans are under way at the Noble Popcorn plant.

Bill Northey, Iowa's Secretary of Agriculture, will be on hand to verify the ingredients for our Guinness World Record submission. The Iowa Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Enforcement team will be verifying the weight again for us.

Tom Duncan, ISU Extension Sac County, guarantees another surprise during the process and he has also been working with us on ways to

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**Inside this edition:**

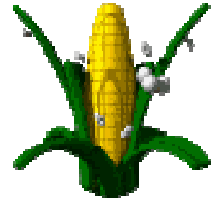
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## Visit [www.sacountyiowa.com](http://www.sacountyiowa.com)

We've finally had the opportunity to redesign our website and we would like to invite you to visit our site at the web address above. Although we haven't completed our work, some of the new features include the scrolling photos on the home page, the 2009 Sac Co. Calendar of Events and Parade Schedules, information on the Sac Co. Endowment Foundation as well as other foundations in the county, and some visitor information. Soon we'll be adding information such as visitor itineraries and attractions under Visitor Information; a virtual building tour under the Economic Development heading and more.

New features include our Message Board, our links page (if you'll send us the link to your web site we can add it to our list—all we ask is a reciprocal link); and our floating ear of "popping popcorn" (shown at right) where you'll find the latest on the 2009 World's Largest Popcorn Ball, as well as the adventures of the traveling 2004 popcorn ball.

We'd love to add more photos to a photo gallery, so if you have a photo of a Sac County event or attraction you would like to share with us, please send it to us at [email@sacountyiowa.com](mailto:email@sacountyiowa.com).



## Iowa Tourism Industry showcases what Iowa Has To Offer

Iowa Tourism Supporters hosted the 20<sup>th</sup> annual Tourism Showcase for Legislators at the Iowa State Fairgrounds on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009. More than 70 communities showcased their attractions, events and businesses to remind the 105 Legislators that attended about the abundance of "Things to Do" in our great state.

Shirley Phillips was among other tourism leaders who visited with Legislators to thank them for their past support of tourism development and promotion and to discuss the challenge of finding funds to promote Iowa.

"The economic impact of tourism expenditures in Iowa continues to grow at a pace faster than the rest of the nation," said Kathy Dirks, President of the Travel Federation of Iowa. According to an economic impact study completed by the Travel Industry Association of America, Iowa tourism generated expenditures grew 7.6 percent in 2007, outpacing the national average of 5.7 percent.

**In 2007, travelers in Iowa generated \$6.3 billion in spending at local businesses in communities throughout the state. These dollars in turn, generated \$307.7 million in state tax receipts for Iowa.**

## It's time to think about your Downtown !



**When you think about your downtown, what are the first five IMAGES that pop into your head?**

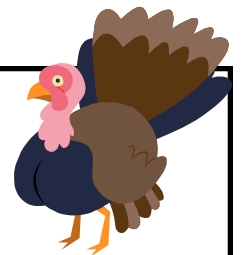
**When you think of your downtown, what are five unique attraction factors that come to your mind? These could be beliefs, ideas, impressions, etc.**

**Take this simple test, visit your downtown and work with your local city and organizations to improve your downtown.**

## Iowa Turkeys

Iowa processes more turkeys than it grows – according to a recent news article and statistics from the Iowa Turkey Federation. In a year's time Iowa will produce nine million birds, but will process 13 million birds by importing turkeys from surrounding states. Iowa ranks 9<sup>th</sup> in over-all production but fifth in processing. There were two good Iowa processors - Sara Lee in Storm Lake and West Liberty Foods in West Liberty. Practically any turkey served at many American restaurants is made with turkey processed in one of these two Iowa plants. In addition turkey sausage and other products sold by companies such as Jimmy Dean have their start with turkey from Iowa.

Iowa's turkeys eat a lot of corn and soybeans. It takes one bushel of corn and a third bushel of soybeans to raise a turkey to market rate. That translates into 62,000 acres of corn and 69,000 acres of soybeans needed to support the Iowa turkey industry.



# Highway Groups Lobby for Fuel Tax Increase

More than 50 individuals from Clinton to Sioux City joined together on January 28 to lobby state legislators regarding funding for Iowa's transportation infrastructure. Mayors, county supervisors and engineers, economic developers, along with representatives of business and industry representing several Iowa highway corridor associations and coalitions joined together to carry the message, "Fully fund TIME-21."

"Iowa needs good roads," remarked Shirley Phillips, president of the US 20 Corridor Association and executive director of Sac Economic and Tourism Development. "We appreciate the legislature's commitment to meeting these needs by passing increases in vehicle registration fees last session. Yet the needs remain greater than revenues. We must consider a fuel tax increase – a user fee – to fill the gap."

Iowa's aging transportation infrastructure requires significant investment for simple maintenance. At the same time, the need to expand the state's transportation network to accommodate new industries such as biofuels and wind energy, as well as addressing traveler safety, mean more money is needed.

As the delegation met with Rep. Brian Quirk, chair of the House Transportation Committee, Senator Tom Rielly, chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, Senate Majority Leader Mike Gronstal, and Senate Minority Leader Paul McKinley, they heard different versions of the same message. These legislators understand a fuel tax increase is the most equitable way to increase revenues because all users of Iowa roads participate and because it has minimal impact on the family budget.

"A large pizza. That's what it means for the average Iowa family each year," stated Edith Pfeffer, president of the US 30 Coalition. "By increasing the fuel tax just five to eight cents per gallon, it will cost the average Iowa family about \$25 per year. That's the cost of a large pizza." The result of this fuel tax increase will add about \$260 million annually to the Road Use Tax Fund in constitutionally protected funds. Raising Iowa's

fuel tax eight cents per gallon will bring Iowa to the national average rate.

Because fuel tax does generate constitutionally protected funds which can only be used for roads, members of the Iowa Motor Truck Association are supportive of the proposal, according to Dave Scott, lobbyist for the organization. And in an unusual position, the Iowa Farm Bureau also advocates for a fuel tax increase. Joe Johnson, state policy advisor for Farm Bureau, said their membership rarely takes a position in favor of a tax or fee increase of any kind. However, their membership sees the fuel tax as the most fair means to provide revenue to support transportation infrastructure. Iowans for Tax Relief officially holds a neutral opinion on the proposal.

Iowa DOT Director Nancy Richardson encouraged the delegation to continue their lobbying and said she has been meeting with legislators to share much the same message. She, and an aide to Lieutenant Governor Patty Judge, will carry the delegation's message to Governor Chet Culver and Lieutenant Governor Judge.

Transportation Day on the Hill has become an annual event with representatives of US Highways 20, 30, 44, 61, 63, 69, along with county and city officials.



**For every \$100 million invested in road construction, it can mean 5,000 jobs.**



**Additional funds would be constitutionally protected to be used for roads & bridges only.**



**Additional funds would be used for the primary road system and county and city roads as well.**



**It makes more sense to impose a gas tax or user fee than to bond and pay for repairs with property tax.**

**The fuel tax rate in Iowa has not been raised since 1989.**

**Nearly 100% of the revenue generated as a result of TIME 21 last year is paid by Iowa drivers.**

**From Jan. 2007—Dec. 2008, the construction cost index in Iowa increased 26%.**

**Large Truck Travel in Iowa continues to increase as well as total miles by all vehicles.**

**A raise of 8¢ per gallon would bring Iowa's gas tax to the national average!**

## Sac Economic & Tourism Development

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*"Things are always popping in Sac County!"*



Photo of the 3,100 pound popcorn ball built in 2004.

## World's Largest Popcorn Ball

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continue promoting popcorn using the old record setter. (Watch for more this spring and summer on the antics of the 3,100 pound ball—it's sure to be a lot of fun.)

Our Iowa magazine will be sending area photographer and writer, Don Pogensee, to cover the event. Area and statewide newspapers have said they will be on hand to cover the event, as well as television station reporters. Duane Murley (Sac City native), DJ for Hot Country K97, will be joining the fun.

Chesterman Co., local restaurants and other people have contributed food for the day. There will need to be volunteers throughout the day to assist with the ball as not everyone can work on it at the same time.

When completed the necessary paperwork will be submitted to Guinness World Records for verification.

After a cooling out period, we will try to seal the ball to keep it protected and then it will be moved to its resting place in the red barn at the Sac City Museum site on Hwy. 20—just across from Casey's. We are hoping to get an interpretive panel completed with the history of the popcorn balls and the popcorn history of Sac County for all visitors to view.

So stay tuned as we attempt our 3rd World Record Popcorn Ball !!

## National Speaker to Bring Ideas to Western Iowa

Make sure to mark March 31st on your calendar as the Western Iowa Tourism Region is bringing Roger Brooks to the Boulders Conference Center in Denison to offer tips on economic development, tourism, and marketing to those attending.

Well-known for his step-by-step instructions in helping communities make something happen, Roger has assisted major destination resorts and communities throughout the U.S. and Canada in developing themes, creating branding and repositioning programs, and building tourism development plans. He has recruited more than \$2.8 billion in new tourism development projects to rural communities and resorts.

With his expertise in marketing, advertising and public relations, Roger has developed a series of highly entertaining and educational marketing workshops which are extremely popular.

Who among us couldn't use some expertise in "making the sale" on our websites, learning more marketing tips, and discovering how other communities capitalize on tourism opportunities?

To find out more about the session and to register, contact witr@traveliowa.org or call 888-623-4232. You can also visit the Western Iowa Tourism website at visitwesterniowa.com.



### Another Future Job Opportunity

"The national nursing shortage could reach 500,000 by 2025, as many nurses retire and the demand for nurses balloons with the aging of baby boomers," according to Peter Buerhaus of Vanderbilt University of Medical Center. The nursing professor is author of a book about the future of the nursing work force. Nursing schools have been unable to churn out graduates fast enough to keep up with the demand, which is why hospitals are trying harder to retain them. The federal government has jumped on the bandwagon. Since 2003, it has awarded \$17 million in grants for 75 hospitals to start first-year training programs.