



Another World Record Popcorn Ball

That's right - we can't let the State of Illinois have the World's Largest Popcorn Ball. Our 3,100 pound Popcorn Ball built in 2004 no longer holds the title of being the largest with the Guinness World Records. When our record in 1995 was beaten, we put together a plan to beat our contenders and once again hold the title.. And now the plans are heating up for the newest venture—on Saturday, Feb. 28th, volunteers will participate to build a 5,000 pound popcorn ball to challenge the one built in Illinois and create another attraction for Sac County and the State of Iowa.

Noble Popcorn Farm will be the location and the recipe has been calculated and refined. Ingredients have been secured from Nobles and J. W. Swank.

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Sac County's Winning Lifestyle Challenge

This is your life! You're it. Get fit! That's right, if you haven't signed up for the wellness movement in your community, there is still time. Volunteers in each community have been busy organizing a wellness program. Those interested in participating can register their teams of 8 — 10 with a registration fee of \$10 per person. Each participant will receive a t-shirt, packet of information to help guide them to a healthier lifestyle and a pedometer. Sponsors for the Challenge include Loring Hospital, State Farm Insurance, American National Bank, Bank Midwest, Citizens Bank & Insurance, Iowa State Bank, Sac County Pork Producers, and

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Sac County Endowment Foundation


The Sac County Endowment Foundation recently received requests for \$149,871. on projects totaling \$1,053,377. Grant applications are in the process of being reviewed and there is \$94,533 to grant this round.

Once a year state gaming funds are received by the foundation and 75% of these funds must be granted to non-profit organizations or city or county government for vertical infrastructure projects.

Projects funded over the past couple of years include community entrance signs, a fire station, building renovations, library improvements, museum renovations, permanent cemetery directories, signs for public buildings, way finding signs, information kiosks, trail improvements, and more.

The Western Iowa Tourism Region will be holding their February 18th meeting at the Community Center in Odebolt. This will include a visit from the State Tourism Staff and is also the meeting when the grant applications are disbursed. For more information, see inside on page 3.

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The mass must be edible to qualify for the Guinness World Records.

A platform to hold the mass is being assembled at EVAPCO in Lake View and we're asking for engineering tips from Lundell Plastics in Odebolt.

Our current popcorn ball, constructed in June of 2004, really never had a chance to cool out before it was placed in the barn on Main Street in Sac City. Throughout our hot and humid summers, the ball has started to deteriorate—providing us with the incentive to construct one while the weather is cool (or cold as it has been the past few weeks.)

There has been considerable interest in helping to construct this sticky mass of popcorn as people from thousands of miles away are planning to travel to help us. So we'll begin in the morning—packing, punching, molding and shaping another large mass. If you'd like to give us a hand, please call us at 712-662-7383 and we'll put your name on the list.

We'll have the appropriate folks on hand to verify the weight and recipe, we'll have fun T-shirts for everyone and we'll be creating an attraction that will make our county a destination by thousands for years to come.

Don't miss out on this fun! There is another surprise on the horizon—so stay tuned for more news.

Winning Lifestyle Challenge cont....

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Subway of Sac City. The Sac County Extension will be compiling a database as the team captains call or email in the points for their team members. (The packet includes all the information you need to calculate points.)

Contacts in each community include: Auburn—Nancy Janssen 712-688-2264; Early—Tami Hoepfner 712-273-5748; Lake View—Kay Montano 712-657-2220; Lytton—Leah Henkelman 712-466-2653; Nemaha—Laurie Schmidt 712-636-4570; Odebolt—Carol Auen 712-668-4860; Sac City—Chris Batz 712-662-4553; Schaller—Marcia Woodke 712-275-4742; and Wall Lake—Dawn Potthoff 712-664-2311.

The goal is to create healthy habits to last a lifetime for residents of all ages in Sac County! Points will be earned by exercising and losing weight plus attending events held by the committee. Proceeds from the registration will stay in each community to be used for a project of their choice.

People of all ages are invited to participate. There will be cholesterol screenings in February at the Loring Hospital. Please watch your local papers and emails for more upcoming events.

For more information, contact Chris Batz at the Sac Community Rec Center at 712-662-4553 or Laura Zimmerman at Chamber Main Street at 712-662-7316 or saccitymainstreet@prairiein.net.



The Infrastructure

The population of the United States is expected to double between 2000 and 2050, but its roads, bridges, and other public works aren't ready for the challenge. *The Economist* cites Robert Yaro of the Regional Plan Association in the Northeast, who warns that if America doesn't invest more aggressively, its infrastructure will resemble that of a third-world country in a few decades:

"Economic growth will be constricted," according to the magazine, "and the quality of life will be diminished."



Update

The US 20 Association met in Galva on Jan. 9th where Tony Lazarowicz, District 3 Engineer for the Iowa Department of Transportation, updated the group on the progress for expanding US 20 to a four-lane.

According to current time tables, by the end of 2010, US 20 will be a four-lane roadway from Dubuque to Hwy. 4, just west of Rockwell City. The bids will be let for paving in 2009 and at

the same time, the DOT will be letting bids for grading a seven mile stretch west of Highway 4. Right of way acquisitions are taking place in western Calhoun and eastern Sac Counties.

A concrete overlay project is planned on a stretch of US 20 from Hwy. 110 near Schaller to the southbound intersection of US 20 and US 59 near Holstein in 2010 as well. The DOT is currently meeting with communities along a proposed detour route. This resurfacing project includes a wider roadbed, shoulders, and drainage. Patching and repairs of the existing roadbed will occur ahead of the resurfacing, ensuring its integrity.

The area west of Hwy. 71 has been issued a "Finding of No Significant Impact" (FONSI) statement on the proposed four-lane US 20 from Early to Merville. With this statement, preliminary environmental and archeological work can be considered complete so design work can begin.

"We are thrilled to know the DOT maintains a high level of commitment to completing four-lane US 20 in western Iowa," remarked Shirley Phillips, executive director of Sac Economic and Tourism Development and president of the US 20 Corridor Association. "We celebrate the fact US 20 will be built as a four-lane from Moorland to Early by 2013 per the DOT Five Year Plan and we are very happy to know progress is being made on the remaining 42 miles from Early to Merville as well."

The US 20 Corridor Association will join other highway associations on Jan. 28th for Transportation Day at the State Capitol to inform and encourage lawmakers to increase funding in the TIME-21 program to the level requested by DOT. "The state, cities, and counties all benefit from improved transportation infrastructure," Phillips said. "Economic development happens only where good transportation exists."

"This effort is over 40 years long and to finally be at this point, when we will see four-lane US 20 come to Early by 2013, is rewarding for all of us," said Congressman Steve King, "Now it is a necessity to plug in the last 42 miles."

Western Iowa Tourism Region to Meet in Odebolt—

Join members of the Western Iowa Tourism Region at the Community Center in Odebolt on **Wed., Feb. 18th** for their annual "Town Meeting" with the State Tourism staff. The meeting will begin at 10:30 a.m., but prior to that at 9:30 a.m. you'll have the opportunity to tour the First State Bank (the former Odebolt State Bank) featured in the movie "Peacock" this past spring. (No word has been received yet on the release date for the movie, but we'll keep you informed.) You will also have the opportunity to visit the Odebolt Museum and their many displays.

You must register for the meeting by February 16th with the Region's office at witr@traveliowa.org or call toll free to 888-623-4232. Cost of the meeting is \$20 per person which includes lunch.

Those attending the meeting will receive the 2010 grant applications for Advertising, Promotion, Education and Scholarships and get some great tips on how to write a successful application. They will hear about the latest promotion updates on the region's website and also about the new fulfillment piece on "How to Have Fun" in

Western Iowa.

You will also learn about the plans for distribution of the annual Western Iowa Tourism Region's newspaper insert and the ad placements to promote this piece.

And you will receive tips on how to prepare for the fulfillment requests from this ad insert and participate in the region's budget discussion and project planning.

The group will be updated on the Legislative Issues and the priorities of the Travel Federation of Iowa—promoting more marketing dollars for tourism, the school start debate and transportation issues.

You'll also learn about another upcoming educational session (Mar. 31st in Denison) with Roger Brooks, who specializes in community branding, tourism development and marketing. His "tell-it-like-it-is", bottom-line approach, and tremendous enthusiasm for the industry has empowered tourism and community organizations around the world and has made Roger one of the most sought after tourism experts in North America.

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

New Rollback Figures

The Iowa Department of Revenue recently released the 2008 rollback numbers. The following percentages are applied to computing the taxable value of a property:

Residential—45.5893%
Agricultural—93.8568%
Commercial—100%
Industrial—100%
Railroad—100%
Utility—100%

This means that the taxable value of residential realty will be 45.5893% of the assessed value. This percentage also applies to farm dwellings. No adjustments are being ordered for commercial, industrial, railroad and utility property because there were not sufficient increases in values to qualify for reductions. These properties are assessed on the basis of their market value. Agricultural property will be limited to 93.8568% of the assessed value. Agricultural property, excluding agricultural dwellings, is assessed according to its productivity value.

To reference the entire media release, go to www.state.is.us/tax/locgov/08RollbackPressRelease.html.

Lake View's Restored Log Cabin

On the front cover is a photo of the restored Log Cabin in Lake View. The rear wall of the cabin had been caving in and the community raised \$10,775 through various fundraisers—donation drive, a pancake breakfast, and the raffling of a beautiful log cabin designed hand-made quilt - to restore the historical building.

Finding a contractor willing to work on the project turned out to be the difficult part, but eventually one was hired. With the help of the city maintenance folks, the project was completed—right down to the historical chinking. A new floor was installed in the loft and they will be building new steps in the future.

**Be not afraid of going slowly,
Be afraid of standing still.**



Sac City Chamber-Main Street brings back "the Morale Mechanic"

Gavin Jerome, the Morale Mechanic, will be featured at the Sac City Chamber-Main Street annual meeting on Saturday, Feb. 21st at the Sac County Fairgrounds 4-H building. Chamber Main Street is inviting all Sac Countians to hear his presentation. There will be a cash bar, courtesy of the Sac County Fair Board, and hors d'oeuvres will be served.

At the 2007 Chamber-Main Street annual meeting, Gavin kept the audience in stitches throughout his performance. He is a member of the National Speakers Association and travels as a humorous keynote speaker and also hosts all day workshops. He has been a professional entertainer for the past 20 years. He's worked with Jerry Sienfeld, Paul Reiser, Dennis Miller, Steve Harvey and Pat Paulson (remember him?)

For nearly a decade he has been providing humorous workshops for companies worldwide. He can be seen every Wednesday night on the Speed channel as the track announcer for the hit television show, "Pinks" (Lose the race, lose your ride!) His best selling book, The Comedy College handbook is now in its sixth printing. He's never had a day job and he's never sold Amway.

Gavin has put together a "Laughter Stimulus" package that is sure to help alleviate the stress (at least temporarily) that everyone is feeling about the economy. He'll provide stress busting tools to help communication. Want to blow off some steam with this humorous motivator? All these things and more will be included in Gavin Jerome's special humorous "Stimulus Package."

So join folks at the Sac County Fairgrounds for an evening of fun and laughter. Tickets sell for \$10 each by contacting 712-662-7316 or saccitymainstreet@prairieinet.net.