



CELEBRATING  
**30**  
YEARS

ANNUAL REPORT  
FISCAL YEAR 2014

Inspired Service  
Exceptional Growth





CELEBRATING  
**30**  
YEARS

## LETTER FROM THE CVB BOARD CHAIR

### WHO WE ARE

The Iowa City/Coralville Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) is Iowa City, Coralville, and North Liberty's official area destination management organization.

### MISSION

To advance the economic vitality and quality of life for residents and visitors as Iowa's premier destination

### WHAT WE DO

The objective for the CVB is to increase visitor volume and spending by bringing conferences, meetings, leisure business, and special events to our community. Enhance our area quality of life.

### WE ACHIEVE THIS OBJECTIVE BY:

- Attracting conventions and events to the community
- Executing and operating events
- Providing service and support to conventions and area existing signature events
- Providing comprehensive information to visitors and prospective visitors



**Josh Sabin,**  
CVB Board Chair

For those of you who don't know me, I'm sometimes referred to within the CVB as the "other Josh," and I currently have the distinct privilege of serving as the CVB's FY15 Board Chairman.

My day job consists of serving as the Director of Administration for the Iowa Northern Railway on a team responsible for shipping thousands of freight cars each year over our 250-mile network. However, around here, I'm best known for what is represented in the remaining 1 percent of my duties, and that's helping move approximately 35-thousand people each year between Coralville and Kinnick Stadium on the Hawkeye Express. The "Train to the Game" just completed its 11th year of service and it has been an absolute honor to become a part of the game-day tradition here at the University of Iowa.

Unfortunately for passenger rail, air travel and the ability to move people efficiently over the road brought about a new era. We no longer consider the train station as the center of our community, but we do rely on the CVB to be that one entity that connects us all, residents and visitors alike, to the fabric of what we love about Iowa City, Coralville, and North Liberty. It's a group of people offering that zest we all have come to know and love when we share our community. They are able to do this because, like the train station used to be, they are virtually at the center of everything; uniting the components of events, lodging, dining, shopping, unique experiences and the aesthetics of what we as a community want to be each and every day. The CVB's leadership and importance in our area has created an environment that has us looking for their involvement.

The CVB excels through an unwavering dedication to all of our relationships. Even with those not always directly involved with tourism, like our world-class school district, the CVB knows how to facilitate and support a high level of engagement. The CVB knows we're competing in a global marketplace and we need a world-class community to support its mission; our mission.

Our CVB is in the midst of four-year strategic goal to transition from a membership-based CVB model to a Destination Management Organization. A plan you can learn more about in this report and/or by contacting board or staff. It's an exciting time to be part of this largely community betterment process and I am confident we have both the board and staff to continue setting the bar by which our competitors aspire.

Thank you for your commitment to bettering our community and quality of life through your continued investment into the Iowa City/Coralville Area CVB.

# HISTORY OF THE CVB

As the CVB completes its 30th year, and works toward becoming a Destination Management Organization, it is worth considering how it has developed into a premier purveyor of the region's diverse offerings.

## CVB Directors through the years

Renee Jedlicka: 1982 – 1989

Wendy Ford : 1989 – 2001

Josh Schamberger: 2001 – Present

The Iowa City-Coralville-North Liberty area has become a growing destination like few others- for recreation, sports, education, health care, and retirements. The breadth of its natural and cultural attractions stands out on its own. Yet it is hard to imagine life here without the City of Iowa City's Summer of the Arts, the UNESCO City of Literature designation, events like Herky on Parade, FRY fest, and much more. Nurturing and promoting the regional image, and creation of these great cultural events, has the fingerprints of the Iowa City/Coralville Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) all over them.

The history of the CVB is bound in the work of its directors. "The real foundation of the CVB was laid by Renee Jedlicka and Wendy Ford," Josh Schamberger, current president said. "I have been incredibly fortunate to have followed those two and just build upon what they created." Jedlicka served as director beginning in 1982 when the CVB was working as a committee of the Iowa City Chamber of Commerce, and called the Iowa City Convention and Visitors Bureau Association. She inherited the organization from its first director, Maria Kirk. "At that point it was part of the Chamber," Jedlicka said. "Then, once we passed the hotel-motel tax, we were able to spin off and be our own organization in 1984." In 1989, Jedlicka passed the mantle to Wendy Ford who served as director until 2001 when Josh Schamberger became president.

Jedlicka began with an annual budget of about \$18,000, of which \$11,000 paid her salary. While she worked within the chamber framework, revenues came from separate memberships. "All I really could do was to recruit and sustain members in the organization," she said. "Our first office was with the Chamber in a building that doesn't exist now across from The Mill on Burlington Street," Jedlicka said. "We then moved with the Chamber to Commerce Center at 325 E. Washington St."

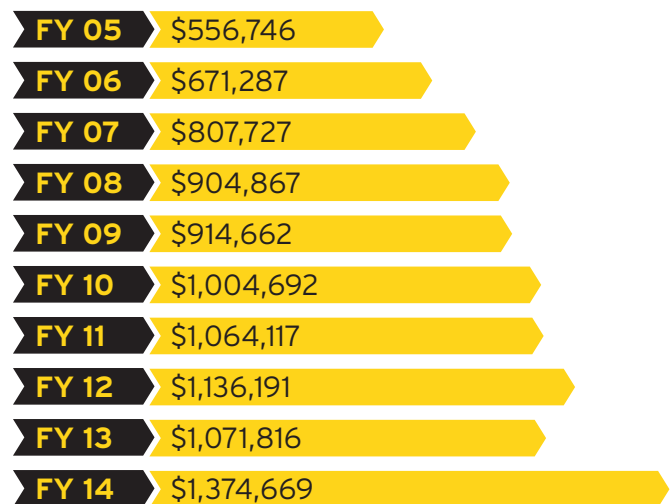
By the time she left the CVB, annual revenues had grown to about \$150,000 with most of it coming from the visitor tax. Jedlicka and her assistant were its sole employees. "The biggest accomplishment was just getting the organization together," she said. "We were busy trying to develop and print publications, promoting the area, organizing people to work together, and hosting events. And this was in the days before MS Publisher, or even MS Word. I think that is where I am the most proud of our efforts." Jedlicka worked to bring together Iowa City and Coralville businesses as well as the University of Iowa. She also included West Branch, Kalona and Amana in regional activities.

When asked what stood out among the events they organized, she pointed to the 35th World Ag Expo in September 1988. This four-day event was hosted by the Amana Society and the Greater Iowa City Area Chamber of Commerce in Amana. Billed as an agricultural contest to celebrate world peace, it was expected to attract more than 250,000 people to the area. She also mentioned hosting the Junior Olympics in 1985 as a highlight.

There were challenges during Jedlicka's tenure because the majority of the visitor tax revenues came from Coralville and they were located in Iowa City. "Leadership and Coralville were juggling for a bigger role," Jedlicka said. "To be exposed to this type of leadership, especially women leaders, and to be in my 20s was an incredible experience," Jedlicka said, reflecting on the early days of the CVB. "There was so much to learn from our own bureau leadership to the Chamber leaders, from the mix of leaders in Iowa City and Coralville, and working with the University of Iowa, with our tourism region attraction managers, and state tourism leaders." She remains appreciative of the support her board and community leaders provided.

"I did come back a few years ago when they celebrated hosting the Olympic wrestling trials," she said. "It is almost unreal for me to see the organization, from its staff and its promotions and programs. Of course I knew they had grown tremendously, but it was very impressive to see this 'grown adult' organization." Jedlicka currently serves as professor of communications at Iowa Lakes Community College in Emmetsburg, Iowa.

## CVB Budget change from FY 05 to FY 14: **192.62%**







CVB through the years

**HISTORY OF THE CVB (Continued)**

"I was hired as the CVB assistant director in June 1985," said Robin Hennes, whose service bridged the tenure of both Jedlicka and Ford. She served until 1997 when she took a position as executive director of the Amana Colonies CVB. Hennes now manages Guest Services at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics. "I was fortunate to work for and with two outstanding leaders," she said. "Both had a keen understanding that the bureau's mission was to not only promote the area for tourism, conferences and special events; it was to educate the community about the economic benefits of visitor spending." Hennes made three office moves with the CVB, including the Burlington and Washington Street locations and the move to Riverview Square in Coralville. "It wasn't so much an office as it was a 'nook,'" Hennes said, referring to her first workspace with the CVB. "I remember having a small desk between the photo copier and the coffee maker." Despite the workspace, the CVB was able to accomplish a lot during Hennes tenure. "I was proud of the larger events we hosted-

National Junior Olympics, NCAA Wrestling Championships, RAGBRAI and our collaboration with the Amana Colonies on the World Ag Expo to name just a few," she said.

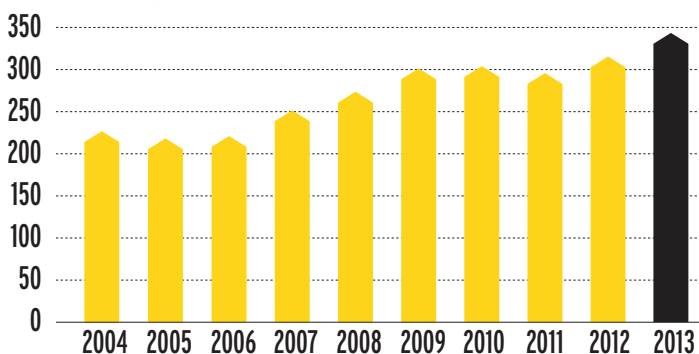
The CVB was instrumental in bringing hoteliers and attractions together to attract business, according to Hennes. "I'm proud of what we did to keep ahead of technology and stay cutting edge," she said. "When I started at the bureau managing our membership list meant a hard copy set of mailing labels and some white-out. When I left we were one of the first bureaus in the state to have a web site."

"Most importantly, we established credibility with our elected officials and stakeholders by being good stewards of visitor tax funds," she added. "I'm continually impressed with the vision and leadership of the bureau," Hennes said of the current CVB. "The development and promotion of events that reflect the tradition and personality of the Iowa City/Coralville area has been very well received by local stakeholders and visitors."

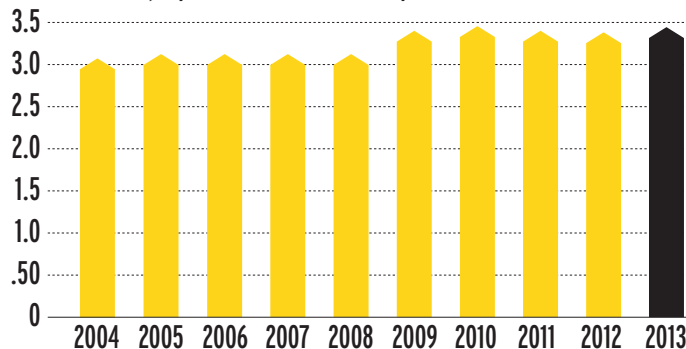
Wendy Ford described the CVB of 1989, when she was appointed director, as "small, focused on partnering with hospitality businesses and attractions." "My starting budget was in the \$150,000 range, most of which was 25 percent of the visitor tax collections in Iowa City and Coralville," Ford said. "I would say membership revenues were under \$10,000. When I left revenue was getting close to \$400,000." Because the budget was small when she started, the CVB did a lot of partnering with the hotel industry in promoting the area, according to Ford.

"We saw the budget increase four times what we started with and, grew from two full time employees to four full-time and two part-time," she added. While at the Chamber of Commerce offices on Washington Street, Ford had a big dark desk, a captain's chair, a credenza and a small conference table, but technology was more the challenge. "We had terrible computers to start," she said. "My first computer at the CVB was an IBM brand that required a 5-inch floppy

**Tourism Expenditures (millions)**



**Tourism Employment in Johnson County (thousands)**



disk just to run a simple word processing program. I don't think that computer even had a hard drive. It wasn't long before we purchased 2 Macintosh SE/30s with 9" diagonal black and white monitors which beautifully displayed exactly what you would print on a dot matrix printer- no more DOS programming language! We were in heaven."

The move to Coralville in 1994 proved to be a challenge because it was a big change for the CVB. There were challenges to equitably serve the (then) two cities with their somewhat uneven proportions of hospitality businesses, politics and revenue sources, said Ford. Among accomplishments during her tenure, she noted having opened a Visitor Center, and implementing a Volunteer Visitor Assistance program that served about 10,000 walk-in visitors a year. "We also had one of the first full sized visitor guides in the state and distributed about 100,000 of them per year before there were websites," she said. "I will always have a soft spot in my heart for the CVB, and am honored to have been a part of building such a good organization," Ford said. She currently serves as Economic Development Coordinator for the City of Iowa City.

Jean Newlin joined the CVB board in the late 1990s and described bureau activities at the time. "A fair portion of the staff energies were spent on providing visitor information to the leisure traveler- including soliciting bus tour groups," she said. "The larger reception area was lined with brochures and colorful racks of guides from neighboring areas of things to do and places to go. The Internet and cell phones were in their infancy, and a person generally had to 'be there' to get a taste of the local experience." As the CVB moved from the 20th into the 21st century, Wendy Ford took another position, said Newlin. "The board began to sense a need to see the CVB evolve into a more relevant economic development tool." Newlin, along with Debbie Bullion, David Grady, Ann Carruthers and Iowa City Mayor Ernie Lehman comprised a selection committee to interview candidates to lead the CVB forward. "I still recall the extensive/impressive portfolio that the young, enthusiastic and relatively unknown Josh Schamberger brought to the table...

This dynamic, creative, energetic and dedicated team has truly made its mark in the area as an economic development driver

literally," Newlin said. "The rest is pretty much history. This dynamic, creative, energetic and dedicated team has truly made its mark in the area as an economic development driver." Schamberger assumed responsibilities as president of the CVB in May 2001.

One challenge facing the bureau in 2001 was to overcome the visitor service image they had worked so hard to create, and transition to larger, more economically viable conferences, according to Newlin. Staff turned attention to attracting large conferences and encouraging repeat business. This change helped realize significant revenue from events the bureau helped sponsor and organize. It also helped governmental bodies that contributed funding see how the value of their investment was increasing.

Another focus became cultural programming, like the City of Iowa City's Summer of the Arts.

"The Iowa City Jazz Festival, Friday Night Concert Series, the Free Movie series, and the Iowa City Arts Festival had their own organizational structures," said Board Member Mark Ginsberg. By bringing these entities under one roof, the Summer of the Arts was created. It has become a distinctive area attraction. Ginsberg also noted CVB participation in garnering the UNESCO City of

Literature designation for Iowa City. Schamberger teamed up with Christopher Merrill at the University of Iowa and others to help Iowa City become the world's third City of Literature. The designation recognizes Iowa City's deeply elaborated cultural assets and its strong creative and economic foundations. "The CVB is a diplomatic core maintaining a focus on our communities, attractions, population growth and destination," said Ginsberg.

Schamberger inherited a team of three people when he was hired. "The CVB was small, resourceful, and very respected," he said. The organization operated on a \$360,000 budget of which 90 percent was derived from the visitor tax revenue. It had just expanded into the conference sales market. Since then, revenues have grown to \$1.8 million, of which roughly 48 percent was visitor tax income. Growing the organization by more than 400 percent over the past decade, by being collaborative, transparent, and accessible, is something Schamberger listed as a success. Diversification of revenue streams has also been important. "I am very proud of our organizations role in growing and leading area quality of life efforts," he said. "Helping to create the Cultural Alliance, City of Iowa City's Summer of the Arts, FRY fest, granGABLE, Herky on Parade, UNESCO City of Literature, Iowa City Downtown District, etc."

JEDLICKA BEGAN WITH AN ANNUAL BUDGET OF ABOUT \$18,000, OF WHICH \$11,000 PAID HER SALARY

## HISTORY OF THE CVB (Continued)

There were and continue to be challenges, including the fact that the CVB represents multiple cities which don't always agree. "It can be taxing at times when our cities are not seeing eye-to-eye on community development initiatives," Schamberger said. Dealing with such challenges is how Schamberger has provided value to the organization.

The CVB also got an office upgrade to its current facility under Schamberger. "In 2005 the current CVB office building became available after Country Kitchen closed its doors," said Schamberger. "I worked with Coralville to secure it and we spent about \$350,000 renovating the entire inside. Just this past year we finished the exterior... again thanks to Coralville. We have nine offices, a board room, and storage room in the current space. The office is home to nine staff members, including Schamberger, Vice President Laurie Haman, Director of Finance Nick Kaeding, three sales and service personnel, two special events personnel and a receptionist. "Josh Schamberger has taken the CVB from its adolescence to full maturity and done it with style," said former director Wendy Ford.

It is hard to disagree.



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# QUALITY OF LIFE: A WIN-WIN FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

**W**hen people hear the term, "quality of life" they tend to think about the aspects of a community that make it a fun and pleasant place to live. But a community's perceived quality of life has a big influence on visitors too, and the Iowa City/Coralville Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) has made enhancing quality of life a top priority as well as a unique selling point for the area.

"CVBs and DMOs are becoming less and less about convention sales and more about content. In fact, CVBs are curators of community content. They help tell the community's story and give it a personality. You have to have a new story to draw people to the area," explained Bill Geist of Zeitgeist Consulting, a firm specializing in strategic planning, governance, marketing and legislative issues for convention and visitors bureaus and other tourism organizations.

### Creating the Buzz

"Many people don't realize the leading role the CVB plays in creating the high quality of life we enjoy in the area. So many wonderful events and initiatives have been created due to the work of our team and our board. We truly are champions for fostering great livability for Iowa City area residents as much as creating great experiences for visitors," said Iowa City/Coralville Area CVB President Josh Schamberger.

This role is important for the CVB because a community will grow and thrive when visitors fall in love with it and decide to become residents. If the locals are happy, it shows and attracts others to the area. "The Iowa City/Coralville Area CVB helps create a buzz that residents can take pride in. If there's always something to do and people love living there, they become the best ambassadors for the area. Josh is helping our industry to see that success isn't about the effect an event or activity has on just one particular weekend. It's about attracting people to the area and helping them experience the community. This gets people to want to "test drive" the community and aids workforce development," added Geist.

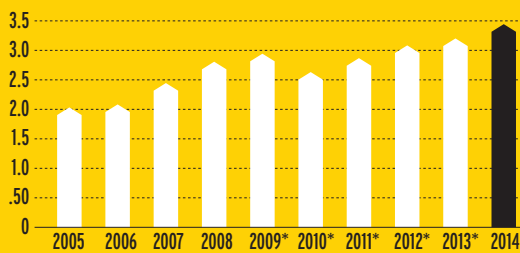
### An Inspired Vision

The ability to affect a community's day-to-day quality of life requires a big picture, long-term vision for what will encourage people to engage with the community over time. Often this means becoming a catalyst for other community groups or organizations to join forces and realize their combined potential.

WE ACTIVELY USE OUR EXPERTISE TO WORK WITH OTHER GROUPS  
IN THE COMMUNITY, WHETHER IT'S SITTING ON THEIR BOARDS  
OR ADVISORY TEAMS, PROVIDING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE OR  
DEVELOPING PUBLIC/PRIVATE SPONSORSHIPS FOR NEW EVENTS

In the vast majority of destinations visitor taxes collected by the hotel industry with municipal oversight remains the strongest and best financial resource for CVBs/DMOs

Iowa City/Coralville/North Liberty: Visitor Tax Revenue (millions)



\*NL Revenue included

Total % change from FY 05 to FY 14: 115.73%

Dan Brown is currently Director of Annual Giving and Communications for the United Way of Johnson and Washington Counties. He has been part of the fabric of the Iowa City area for many years, in several professional and volunteer capacities, and has seen the impact of the Iowa City/Coralville Area CVB on the community over the past decade.

"I've worked with the CVB on a lot of projects in different roles throughout my career, including Summer of the Arts and the SSMID (Downtown Iowa City's Self Supported Municipal Improvement District). The CVB has been able to leverage all of the wonderful aspects of our communities and the University. They've identified the "trees of opportunity" that have grown the whole forest. They have helped build a foundation of events and activities that people now wouldn't recognize our community without. That's a legacy," he said.

The Iowa City/Coralville Area CVB, under Schamberger's leadership, is recognized throughout the Midwest as a groundbreaking organization that strives to reimagine what is possible for a CVB or DMO to deliver to its community. John Groh, President of the Rockford (IL) Area CVB noted, "As a speaker at the Upper Midwest CVB Conference, Josh helped us rethink our citizen focus. His remarks led us to create a department focused on special events and destination development. As a result, we launched the "Stroll on State" event in Rockford that drew 30,000 people. I don't think we'd be there activating this idea if Josh hadn't spurred the thinking."

### A Valuable Community Resource

The CVB produces several high profile events during the year, and is an important gateway for groups and organizations looking to hold a meeting or conference in the area. But the CVB is also a critical source of expertise and funding for other groups, helping them more effectively deliver rich and varied experiences for area residents and visitors to enjoy.

"We actively use our expertise to work with other groups in the community, whether it's sitting on their boards or advisory teams, providing financial assistance or developing public/private sponsorships for new events," explained Laurie Haman, the Iowa City/Coralville Area CVB's Vice President. "We also keep an eye on the big picture and everything that is happening on the calendar to help local event planners so they don't overlap their events. In addition, we actively try to create opportunities to help our hospitality industry during key need dates, when business has

historically been slow," she said.

In recent years, members of the CVB staff have worked with special events teams throughout the area to help them realize their visions, from the North Liberty Centennial, to Brrr Fest in Coralville, to the Northside Oktoberfest in Iowa City. "The CVB extends their knowledge base to us and creates a resource to assist businesses. They help us get in touch with the right people and tie us into the community. One of the best examples for Backpocket is Brrr Fest, our wintertime beer festival. Their events team was an instrumental partner in helping us get this event started. Last year, over 2,000 people attended and we raised over \$120,000, which was split between Coralville's 4thFest and the Iowa Brewers Guild, which helps improve the environment for craft brewing in Iowa," said Jake Simmons of Backpocket Brewing.

## IOWA 2013 ECONOMIC IMPACT

\*Source: U.S. Travel Association's Travel Economic Impact Model

### TRAVEL GENERATED EXPENDITURES IN IOWA

2012: \$7.65 Billion  
2013: \$7.75 Billion

### TRAVEL GENERATED EMPLOYMENT IN IOWA

2012: 64.4 Thousand  
2013: 65.4 Thousand

### TOTAL STATE REVENUE RECEIPTS IN IOWA

2012: 345.4 Million  
2013: 353.9 Million

### TRAVEL GENERATED EXPENDITURES IN JOHNSON COUNTY

2012: \$357.3 Million  
2013: \$368.6 Million

### TRAVEL GENERATED EMPLOYMENT IN JOHNSON COUNTY

2012: 3.40 Thousand  
2013: 3.54 Thousand

### TOTAL STATE REVENUE RECEIPTS IN JOHNSON COUNTY

2012: 5.4 Million  
2013: 5.7 Million



## QUALITY OF LIFE (Continued)

The Northside Oktoberfest in Iowa City continues to grow and organizers credit the CVB for that success, according to Doug Alberhasky of John's Grocery. "The CVB has done an amazing job bringing together different groups to help in making the Northside Oktoberfest one of the best festivals in the Midwest. They also have given us insight to help us spread the word about Oktoberfest to a much larger geographical customer base and, most importantly, given us some hard data to share that highlights the impact of Oktoberfest on the Northside and the Iowa City area as a whole," he said.

In other cases, the CVB provides funding to help local festivals get started. Having recently completed its eighth year, the Landlocked Film Festival's Mary Blackwood appreciates the CVB's support. "The CVB has been with us every step of the way. Without their help, the festival wouldn't have got off the ground. With their help, we've grown year-by-year, bringing worldwide independent film and hundreds of film professionals to our audiences in Iowa City and the surrounding area, becoming an important part of the cultural landscape," she explained.

The historic Englert Theatre has been reincarnated into a beloved center for the arts in Downtown Iowa City and, over the past eight years, the Mission Creek Festival has become a force for entertainment and culture, drawing thousands to the area each spring. As Executive Director of the Englert and a founder of the Mission Creek Festival, Andre Perry has seen the CVB's effect on both. "The CVB's support of our efforts at the Englert and Mission Creek Festival has helped us better achieve our goals of presenting performing arts events that excite residents in the Corridor and bring national attention to Eastern Iowa's cultural prominence," he said.

In other cases, the CVB has been instrumental in getting organizations off the ground and then taking a hands off approach, while still providing support as needed. The

SSMID is an excellent example of such a relationship. "The CVB's support for passing the SSMID, which then became the Iowa City Downtown District, was key. And they have continued to be an ongoing source of support, including providing funding for our annual meeting," said Iowa City Downtown District Executive Director Nancy Bird. The two groups continue to work together to enhance visitors' experiences downtown. For example, Bird noted, "The CVB helped connect us with local hoteliers who are new to the area so that we could give them a Concierge Tour and familiarize them with Downtown Iowa City. This, in turn, will help the hoteliers to be better equipped to advise their guests about what we offer."

The CVB was instrumental in helping Iowa City garner its UNESCO City of Literature status and also in launching the One Book Two Book Children's Literature Festival. While the operation of these events has been turned over to the City of Literature, the partnership remains strong. John Kenyon, Executive Director, Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature, said, "The CVB Team provides assistance to the City of Literature in several meaningful ways. There are tangible things like helping with event planning and promotion, and more intangible things like serving as a sounding board for ideas and offering

guidance and advice. When we offer large events like the Iowa City Book Festival and the One Book Two Book Festival, some of the credit for that success goes to the CVB."

Relationships between universities and the cities that house them are not always positive but the bond the CVB has helped to nurture between local residents and the University of Iowa has been to the benefit of all involved.

C. Lindon Larson, Director of Creative Services at the UI Office of Strategic Communication explained, "We are always looking to introduce prospective students and faculty to the UI. The CVB is a great partner in that effort to create outreach and events that attract people to the community. A tangible collaboration between

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the UI and the CVB is the Visitor and Community Reference Guide, a holistic resource that reaches multiple audiences, both resident and visitor.” This Visitor Guide includes comprehensive information about how to get the most out of the Iowa City/Coralville/North Liberty area and surrounding communities, including festivals and attractions, parks and recreation, shopping, dining and nightlife, lodging and health care. An updated edition is currently in development.

Partnerships between the CVB and UI Athletics have led to some of the most beloved, high profile events for Hawkeye fans. “I’ve lived and worked in five different places during my professional career and this is truly a wonderful place to live. I can’t think of a community that has better

‘town and gown’ activities,” said UI Director of Athletics, Gary Barta. “UI Athletics and the CVB work so well together to create win-win activities such as Herky on Parade, FRY fest and granGABLE. Those of us who work closely with Josh and his team are always impressed by how positive, proactive and passionate they are.



People might not always stop to think about the hundreds and thousands of hours their staff and volunteers spend to bring these events to life for the community.”

Clarissa McPheron, Special Events Assistant at the CVB summed it up best. She said, “When I think about what ‘quality of life’ means, I think about what people will go back and remember. The work we’re doing here at the CVB contributes to the timeline of people’s lives.”



## THE VALUE OF “FEET ON THE STREET”

For years, the mantra and mission of convention and visitors bureaus across the country was to get “heads in beds.” After all, a significant portion of CVB funding has historically come from visitor taxes collected at area lodging establishments. While filling convention halls and driving hotel occupancy continues to be an important part of the mission, the Iowa City/Coralville Area CVB is actively looking for other ways to account for, and measure, the impact of their activities.

“Focusing on ‘heads in beds’ is limiting. It’s how we’ve always counted people, but it’s becoming more difficult to assign a value to them. We also need to consider the value of ‘feet on the street’ and ‘cheeks in seats,’” explained Bill Geist of Zeitgeist Consulting, a firm specializing in strategic planning, governance, marketing and legislative issues for convention and visitor bureaus and other tourism organizations.

While “feet on the street and cheeks in seats” is Seuss-ian in rhyme, it simply refers to the economic impact delivered by visitors who do not stay overnight in a hotel. Many of the area’s most popular special events attract day-trippers from across the region, in addition to those who come and stay overnight. “We focus on creating experiences that will draw people to the area from near and far. The potential to get ‘feet on the street’ is a big part of what we look at when we develop our events,” explained Allie Howarth, the CVB’s Director of Special Events.

CVB Vice President, Laurie Haman added, “You can’t just rely on conventions to drive people into your community. More and more CVBs and DMOs are starting to pay attention to this.”

# SPECIAL EVENTS TEAM CONTRIBUTES TO COMMUNITY SUCCESS



FRY fest, Herky on Parade, granGABLE -- none of these events would happen without the passion, hard work and dedication of the CVB Special Events team. Over the past six years, this department has grown from one part-time staffer to two full-time positions. While Director of Special Events Allie Howarth and Special Events Assistant Clarrissa McPheron spend countless hours bringing the CVB's high-profile events to life, they also work closely with other organizations throughout the area, helping them turn their visions into reality and assess the effectiveness of their efforts.

"We play a strategic role in the community," explained Howarth. "We manage the CVB-produced events but we also play a role in supporting events sponsored by other groups in Iowa City, Coralville and North Liberty." Howarth and McPheron provide special events advice and

assistance to a diverse array of local organizations, including the cities of North Liberty and Coralville, the UNESCO City of Literature, the Iowa City Downtown District and Backpocket Brewery.

## **Festival and Special Event Economic Impact Reports Measure ROI**

One of the most significant contributions from the past year is the development of a Festival and Special Event Economic Impact reporting system. The CVB recognized the need to more accurately measure the revenue generated by large scale events such as FRY fest, Brrr Fest, the Northside Oktoberfest and, the grand-daddy of them all, University of Iowa Football. "The economic impact reports will help us quantify how much ROI each event generates to both CVB and community. Most importantly, the reports will help us understand how much money stays in the community once these events are

over," said McPheron.

The CVB partnered with the Iowa Destination Marketing Association to engage two University of Iowa graduate students in their Urban & Regional Planning program to develop the reporting system, Adam Plagge (now Executive Director of the Fairfield Economic Development Association) and Charlie Cowell (currently a planner for the City of Sioux City). "We looked across the nation to see how other groups were measuring the impact of their special events, but we didn't find another model that did exactly what we wanted. So we pieced different measures together to consider several factors. Every event is unique, which presents challenges," noted Plagge.

The model separates the economic impact of local versus non-local attendees. Non-local is considered anyone traveling to the area who

## CVB STAFF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

UNESCO City of Literature  
Eastern Iowa Airport Commission  
Iowa City Area Golf Association  
United Way of Johnson & Washington Counties  
Iowa City Noon Rotary  
RAGBRAI  
Hawkeye Wrestling Club / USA Wrestling  
Iowa Special Olympics  
Boy Scouts of America  
Coralville Center for the Performing Arts  
Coralville Winterfest  
Native America Display  
Jingle Cross Cyclocross Races  
St Thomas More Catholic Church  
MPI/Heartland Chapter

IEDA Tourism Award review  
Iowa Society of Association Executives (ISAE)  
Community Leadership Program  
Christ the King Lutheran Church  
Tigers Youth Baseball Club  
Coralville BrrrFest  
Iowa City Downtown District Tree Huggers Project  
Iowa Children's Museum Gala  
International Festivals & Events Association  
Pomerantz Career Center (Adjunct Instructor)  
North Liberty Centennial Birthday Bash Committee  
Downtown Race Series  
Iowa City/Coralville Area Event Planners Association  
Iowa City Downtown District  
Northside Oktoberfest Committee

Old Capitol Mile Committee  
One Book Two Book Committee  
Event Planners Association  
North Liberty Centennial Committee  
Grace Community Church  
CCA Booster Club  
CCA Elementary Boundary Committee  
Eastern Iowa Tourism Association Board  
Travel Federation of Iowa  
CCA Clippers Blue Softball  
UI Living Learning Community  
Kappa Gamma Sorority at the University of Iowa



would not ordinarily be there. It also uses a multiplier effect, which accounts for the degree to which revenue generated by an event turns over multiple times within the community. The CVB is making this Economic Impact model available to event planners and groups from across the area to help them better understand the return they, and the community, are getting on their investments.

**Event Planners Association Provides Networking and Grants**

The CVB Special Events team also created the Event Planners Association (EPA) to help foster relationships between event planners from different organizations throughout the community. The CVB will convene the group on a quarterly basis to hear guest speakers and share knowledge and expertise. Most recently, welcoming Karen Freund with the state of Iowa’s Alcohol and Beverages Division.

In addition, each year the CVB will award a grant for one member of the Event Planners Association to attend the International Festivals & Events Association Convention.

This convention is one of the leading educational and networking opportunities for event planners. The grant covers conference registration fees, lodging and travel; providing significant assistance for local groups whose budgets are typically quite tight. The 2014 EPA Grant recipient was Betsy Potter, Operations Director of the Iowa City Downtown District.

**THE ECONOMIC  
IMPACT REPORTS  
WILL HELP US  
QUANTIFY HOW  
MUCH ROI EACH  
EVENT GENERATES  
TO BOTH CVB  
AND COMMUNITY**

Potter said, “I am very honored to have received the EPA scholarship support from the CVB to help me become a more skilled event professional. Receiving this scholarship not only gave me the opportunity to attend the IFEA, where I learned and networked with event specialists from all over the world, but it has given me a new motivation to

bring more experience-oriented elements to our future Downtown events. It is my goal to take the knowledge I received at the IFEA conference to continue to refine cultural events in a sustainable format for years to come in Iowa City. The Downtown District is very grateful for the support the CVB has shown both us and the community.”

**FY14 CONVENTION BOOKINGS, SALES AND SERVICING**

Our community continues to be one of Iowa’s premier destinations for state and regional conferences. In FY14, our sales team worked with our area hotel and city partners to book more than 45 future meetings and conferences. Groups that will bring more than \$1.8M in future spending. The team did this while servicing another 72 groups that met during the current FY. Those 72 groups brought in over 19,240 visitors who spent more than \$4.8M before leaving the community.

**A few of the groups booked or serviced during FY14:**

- Altrusa 2017
- American Contract Bridge League
- American Society of Heating Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers
- Animelowa
- Armbruster Open
- ASA Softball
- Bicycle Tour Network
- Big 10 Credit Union
- Capture Marketing/Advocacy Conference
- Central District Evangelical Free Church of America
- Children’s Center for Therapy
- College Board
- EntreFEST
- First Tech Challenge
- Gamicon Psi
- Green Party of the US
- International Flying Farmers
- Iowa Center for Public Affairs Journalism
- Iowa Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation
- Iowa City Hockey Association
- Iowa Conservation Education Coalition
- Iowa County Attorney’s Association
- Iowa Culture and Language Conference
- Iowa Dental Association
- Iowa ER Medical Services Association
- Iowa Family Child Care Association
- Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union (Tennis)
- Iowa Gymnast

- Iowa High School Athletic Directors
- Iowa Landlords Association
- Iowa Library Association
- Iowa Limestone Producers Association
- Iowa Nurses Association
- Iowa Public Defenders Association
- Iowa Society of Certified Public Accountants
- Iowa State Association of County Auditors
- Iowa Volleyball Region
- Mid Con Entertainment
- Midwest Bus & Motorcoach Association
- National Vision Professionals
- NCAA Women’s Basketball
- Old Sleepy Eye Collectors Club
- Open Bible Midwest Region
- Pilot’s Club
- Public Risk Management Association
- QC Heat Baseball Club
- Rockwell Collins Fall Retreat
- SCOPE Reunion
- Southeastern Iowa Synod
- Speedo
- Speedo 2014 Midwest Sr. Challenge
- State Federated Garden Club
- Tigers Youth Baseball
- UI Alumni Association
- UI Carver College of Medicine
- UI Center for Conferences
- UI College of Dentistry
- UI College of Engineering
- UI College of Law
- UI College of Pharmacy
- UI Community Medical Services
- UI Graduate College
- UI Hemophilia Treatment Center
- UI Recreation Services
- UI Tennis
- UI Tippie College of Business
- USA Wrestling
- USA Volleyball
- Vicious Golf
- YMCA Regional Swim Meet





# FRYfest VI

a celebration of all that is Hawkeye



## FRY FEST AND GRANGABLE: A FULL WEEKEND OF HAWKEYE FUN

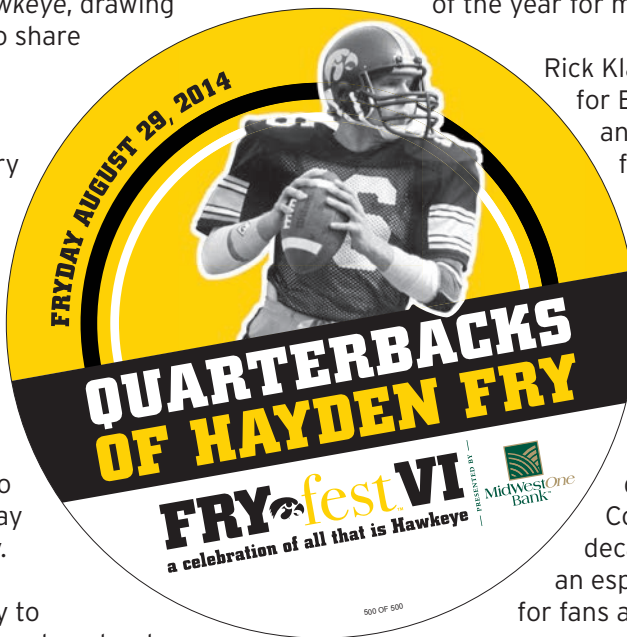
The University of Iowa is among a select group of schools that can claim two legendary, living coaches from different sports among their ranks. For the Hawkeye Nation, the names Hayden Fry and Dan Gable evoke the pride, passion and persistence of collegiate athletics at its very best. In honor of these two great coaches, the Iowa City/Coralville Area CVB has transformed Labor Day weekend into a *Celebration of All that is Hawkeye*, drawing thousands of visitors to the area to share their passion for Black & Gold.

Labor Day used to be a slower weekend for the hospitality industry in the Iowa City/Coralville area, explained CVB Vice President, Laurie Haman. This weekend traditionally kicks off the Hawkeye football season with a non-conference game. Since the Hawkeyes often play a non-conference rival, it was typical for only Hawkeye fans to attend and for those out-of-town guests to drive over for the game on Saturday and head back home the same day.

"The CVB identified an opportunity to create events that encourage visitors to extend their stay and spend more time in the area during a key need date for our hotels and restaurants," Haman said. The proverb tells us, "Necessity is the mother of invention." FRY fest presented by MidwestOne Bank and the granGABLE powered by SCHEELS are proving that, in the world of special events, the Iowa City/Coralville Area CVB invents with the best to meet the needs of our community.

### 10,000+ Attend FRY fest 2014

2014 marked the sixth year for FRY fest at Coralville's Iowa River Landing, and the party just keeps getting bigger. A collaboration between the CVB, MidwestOne Bank, University of Iowa Athletics and the City of Coralville, FRY fest is a one day celebration honoring Coach Hayden Fry that has quickly become a highlight of the year for many Hawkeye fans.



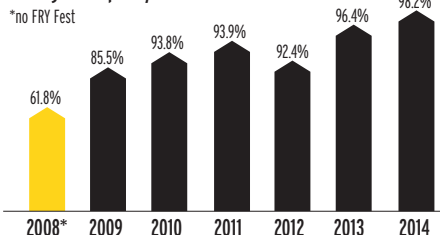
Rick Klatt, UI Associate Athletic Director for External Affairs, sees FRY fest as an important part of the Hawkeye football experience. "We love FRY fest as an event to kickoff our football season," he said. "We have tremendous respect for Coach Fry and what he has meant to our football program. FRY fest makes it great to be Hawkeye."

This year, FRY fest honored the quarterbacks who played for Coach Fry during his nearly two decades with the Hawkeyes. It was an especially meaningful experience for fans and former players alike.

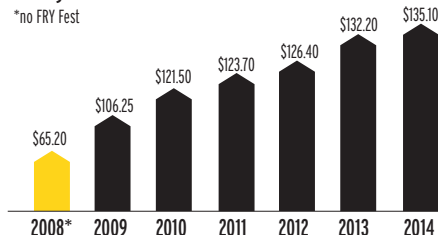
Mark Vlasic, who played for Coach Fry in the early-to-mid 80s, said of the event, "It was a great reason to get back together with Coach Fry and many of the quarterbacks who shared in a similar experience during their college years. Participating in FRY fest further validates my decision to become a Hawkeye in 1982. I'm proud to be a member of the Hawkeye family."

### FRY fest Weekend

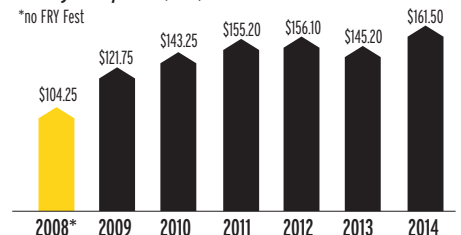
#### Average Occupancy



#### Average RevPAR



#### Average Daily Rate (ADR)





The CVB identified an opportunity to create events that encourage visitors to extend their stay and spend more time in the area during a key need date for our hotels and restaurants

Over 10,000 people attended signature FRY fest activities including the World's Largest Hawkeye Tradeshow and a gigantic Hawkeye Pep Rally. A fashion and product show was popular with style-conscious fans. The evening concert, featuring country music stars Jake McVey, Craig Campbell and David Nail, once again raised funds for the City of Coralville's annual 4thFest.

But FRY fest's organizers do not rest on their laurels. As Allie Howarth, the CVB's Director of Special Events, explained, "We're always challenging ourselves to come up with fun, new activities that we think the fans will enjoy."

New to FRY fest 2014 was the Ultimate Hawkeye Trivia Fan Game, for which the CVB partnered with UI Sports Marketing to create questions that would stump even the most die-hard fan.

And what would a Hawkeye celebration be without a good game of bags? Leave it to FRY fest to find a way to take this fun tailgate game and make it epic. Two cornhole (as its officially recognized) teams competed for 26 hours, 31 minutes and 44 seconds to set the Guinness Book of World Records record for the World's Longest Cornhole Marathon.

## FRY FEST GENERATES \$500K IN 24 HOURS OF COMMUNITY IMPACT

**FRY**fest™  
a celebration of all that is Hawkeye

In just a few years, FRY fest has become a beloved part of the Hawkeye fan experience. Estimates indicate that approximately 10,000 people attended the event on August 29, 2014. Of these, more than 50 percent were non-local, living outside of Johnson County. For the first time, the CVB was able to measure the economic impact of FRY fest on the Iowa City/Coralville area and the results are impressive.

Using a financial model developed by Adam Plagge (MA, MBA) and Charlie Cowell (MA), who were then University of Iowa graduate students in Urban Planning, the CVB determined that non-local FRY fest attendees spent an average of 1.9 days in the Iowa City/Coralville area over Labor Day weekend. Their financial activity generated nearly \$500,000 in incremental impact on the local economy.

After accounting for expenses and revenue taken out of the area after the event (e.g., out-of-area vendor revenue), total dollars spent locally from visitors from outside Johnson County are estimated at \$343,449. The model then uses a conservative multiplier effect of 1.45, which accounts for the way in which those dollars turned over in the economy in the form of additional wages and purchases not directly related to FRY fest. After applying this multiplier effect, the net community impact of FRY fest is estimated at \$498,001.



### FRY fest Economic Impact Summary

Non-Local Vendor Adjusted Expenditures  
\$573,980.00

Net Fees/Payments for Event  
(\$31,695.00)

Non-Local Vendor Revenue Leaving (\$205,903.00)

Local Hotel Tax Revenue  
\$7,066.59

Total Additional Dollars Locally Spent  
\$343,449.00

Multiplier Effect: 1.45

**Total Additional Dollars Locally Spent  
\$498,001.00**

# 25, 60 AND THE 100 MILE PEDAL FOR THE MEDAL

granGABLE  
POWERED BY SCHEELS

## granGABLE Grows in Second Year

One might not automatically think of wrestling and cycling in the same sentence, but Iowa has a long love for both of these sports that require strength, tenacity and commitment. "Both wrestlers and cyclists have to have endurance and mental toughness," explained CVB Special Events Assistant, Clarissa McPheron. "To us, it was a natural fit."

Named in honor of legendary Olympian and UI wrestling coach, Dan Gable, the granGABLE powered by Scheels is a collaboration between the CVB, the Iowa Bicycle Coalition, Hawkeye Wrestling Club and RAGBRAI. This distance cycling event, or fondo, offers riders a choice of 25, 60 or 100 mile routes, plus a youth ride for children. 2014 was the second year the granGABLE capped off the FRY fest weekend, with 730 riders from more than a dozen states participating. All finishers received a completion medal and a photo with Coach Gable.

Proceeds from the granGABLE benefited the Iowa Bicycle Coalition and the Hawkeye Wrestling Club. 2014 generated over \$15,000 for these two organizations. The 7th annual FRY fest presented by Midwest One will take place on Friday, September 4, with the third annual granGABLE powered by SCHEELS on Sunday, September 6.



Dan Gable and recently retired pro-cyclist, Jason McCartney

Proceeds from the granGABLE benefited the Iowa Bicycle Coalition and the Hawkeye Wrestling Club. 2014 generated over \$15,000 for these two organizations.





# HERKY ON PARADE 2 UNITES COMMUNITY, RAISES \$110,500 FOR UNITED WAY



Summer 2014 marked the second incarnation of Herky on Parade, the public art phenomenon that first hit Iowa City area streets in 2004. This year's event was bigger and better than ever, with 84 decorated Herky statues placed in high traffic areas throughout Iowa City, Coralville, North Liberty and the University of Iowa. Herky even traveled up to the Eastern Iowa Airport.

"Herky on Parade encouraged people to explore all of the area and go to places they haven't been or haven't noticed. It figuratively helped the whole community join hands," said Clarissa McPheron, CVB Special Events Assistant. The Herky statues attracted visitors from across Iowa and the United States from early May until Labor Day weekend, when they were auctioned off during FRY fest to benefit the United Way of Johnson and Washington Counties. The auction raised more than \$110,500 for the United Way and this money will help people in need in our community for years to come.

## Long-Term Support for United Way

"The money raised by Herky on Parade will help the United Way achieve its mission in perpetuity," said Dan Brown, Director of Annual Giving and Communications for the United Way of Johnson and Washington Counties.

"Of the \$110,500 donation, \$25,000 of this will support the United Way's 31 partner agencies through the Campaign for the Common Good. The remaining funds will help build an endowment at the Community Foundation of Johnson County. The proceeds from this endowment will annually fund 84 (one for every Herky) camp scholarships of up to \$250 each for children on Free and Reduced Lunch who otherwise could not

afford to go to a camp for academics, the arts, sports, debate, or other interests. These scholarships are intended to be available to 84 students per year for the foreseeable future," Brown explained.

IN 4 SHORT  
MONTHS  
1,378 PEOPLE  
DOWNLOADED  
THE HOP APP



#### WHAT VISITORS AND RESIDENTS HAD TO SAY ABOUT HERKY ON PARADE:

"I drove from Olathe, Kansas to get my Herky photos."

"I have officially found all 84 Herkys....twice!! So glad my parents could visit from Illinois to share this Iowan adventure with me!"

"I've lived in Iowa City most of my life, and I've found a few new places that I have never been to or didn't know existed. :)"

"Cole & Cael were visiting from Colorado and loved the Herky hunt! We got pictures with 21 Herkys. The "Army" Herky was Cole's favorite!"



#### HERKY ON PARADE (Continued)

Josh Schamberger, President, Iowa City/Coralville Area CVB, acknowledges that Herky on Parade was a significant undertaking, but one that was well worth the effort. "This was a huge logistical challenge but it can't be described as anything other than a home run. It was executed to perfection and is a testament to the relationship we have with the cities of Coralville, North Liberty, Iowa City, and the University of Iowa," he said.

#### A Team Effort

This year's event resulted from a unique partnership between the Iowa City/Coralville Area CVB, the University of Iowa Athletics Department and the University of Iowa Community Credit Union (UICCU), which was the presenting sponsor. "Herky on Parade was a great example of what can be accomplished by working together," noted Eadie Fawcett Weaver, Director of Business Development for the UICCU.

"The credit union was not only present for monetary support. Two of us sat on the steering committee and contributed ideas and resources, and were included in every step of the year-long process. The effort was top-notch and top-secret which is incredible, noting the far-reaching effect of this plan and the number of people involved. Everyone on the team from the CVB and UI contributed time and effort and went above and beyond, paying attention to the smallest details to insure Herky on Parade's success. UICCU is proud to have partnered with the CVB and UI Athletics, both first class organizations that bring our community together," she said. "Herky on Parade 2 would not have happened without the University of Iowa Community Credit Union. We've been very lucky that they have been so willing to step up and be such a big part of this event," Schamberger added.

The 2014 Herky on Parade team enlisted a Chicago-based company to cast the 84 new Herky statues, each of which weighed 150 pounds and stood at just over six feet tall, before being decorated. The design and stance of

this year's Herky was carefully considered. Dale Arens, Director, UI Hall of Fame and Licensing explained, "Herky is an icon. He represents the University of Iowa and is an ambassador to the community. We worked with a respected designer to create a graphic depiction of Herky that is confident, active and engaging. It created a great canvas for the artists to work on."



The artists put in hundreds of hours designing Herkys as diverse as Hashtag Herky, Herky of the Corn, Bigfoot Herky and Herky of the Opera, just to name a few. The America Needs Farmers Herky is notable as it sold for \$11,000 at auction. Area school children participated in a Herky on Parade coloring contest and students from eight area junior high and high schools designed statues donated by Herky on Parade organizers. "The heroes of the project are really the artists whose visions brought the Herkys to life for the community," added Rick Klatt, UI Associate Athletics Director for External Relations. "I was even more

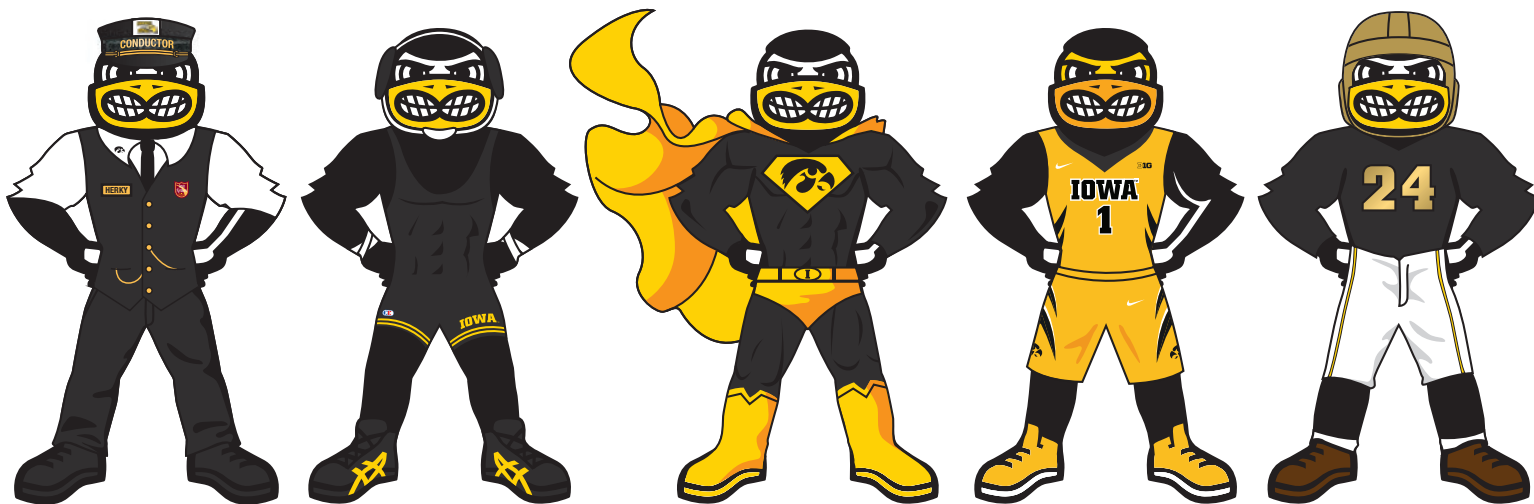
impressed than I expected to be with the creativity of the artists and their brilliant ideas that were so well executed."

Herky on Parade 2 helped the UI Athletics Department commemorate other significant events including the completion of the 125th football season, the 75th anniversary of the Ironmen Hawkeyes football team, and the 25th anniversary of the Varsity Club Athletic Hall of Fame.

#### HOP2 Draws New Visitors in New Ways

The Herky statues were installed throughout the community under cloak of darkness in the overnight hours of May 4 with help from more than 60 University of Iowa student athletes. They were literally kept under wraps until a big reveal at 9:00am that Monday morning and attracted visitors throughout the summer, many of whom weren't even born when the first Herky on Parade took place in 2004.





"Everywhere there was a Herky, there was a non-stop parade of families and kids all summer long. It was great to watch the kids engage with the statues as if they were the real Herky," said Arens. UI Director of Athletics, Gary Barta, noted the unique impact the Herky statues had on the community. "Athletics are not the most important thing happening on this campus or in our community, but they are a way to unite everyone with a sense of pride and fun, and Herky on Parade is a symbol of that. The program is specifically designed to bring people together. I smiled every time I passed by a Herky and saw people taking pictures." Graduation Herky, located at the entrance to the Pentacrest on the UI Campus, was a popular photo spot during the University's graduation weekend. It was so popular, in fact, that UI President Sally Mason plans to bring him back every year so future graduates can have their photo opportunity as well.

One big difference between this year's Herky on Parade and the original is the advent of social media. The CVB took full advantage of the opportunity to engage the community with the new Herkys in a variety of high tech ways, including a Facebook page, which has garnered over 2,700 "likes," and a smartphone app that helped people locate the Herkys and post pictures. CVB Vice President Laurie Haman explained, "We were able to open up a whole new, interactive conversation about the Herkys. It was great to see all of the comments and pictures from people." Arens added,

"Ten years ago social media was in its infancy, but this time Herky on Parade was a social media phenomenon. It grew exponentially and organically through people posting their pictures on social media."

#### A Win-Win-Win

Klatt describes Herky on Parade as a "Win-Win-Win" - an event that made a substantial contribution to the local United Way, fostered a rich collaboration between the CVB, the University, the UICCU, other local businesses and artists, and brought the community closer together. The UICCU's Weaver concurred, "Herky on Parade is truly a community art project that brings us all together. It is a huge effort and undertaking that appeals to the fun side of life in a college town while, at the same time, raises money and awareness for the United Way. It exceeded all

of our expectations. The CVB did an outstanding job of organizing, coordinating and implementing this playful project. Herky on Parade has been a great success as witnessed by looking at the thousands of Herky fans taking photographs of all 84, including our Basketball Herky outside the UICCU Financial Center. Every day it seems someone is snapping a photo of Herky."

While many are hoping for a Herky on Parade 3 in 2024, nothing is in the works just yet. But the 2014 Herky on Parade's impact and influence will live on for years and years in the community. Arens summed it up by saying, "Herky on Parade is a cooperative endeavor for the betterment of the whole area. It's an investment in the community, whose value goes beyond dollars and cents. It's about impacting lives."

*Total 2013 Iowa City Area Visitor Expenditures = \$368.8 million  
This is the equivalent of four years of out-of-state tuition costs at the University of Iowa for more than 13, 650 students!*



# FUTURE AS A DMO

In April 2013 the Iowa City/Coralville Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) began pursuit of a four-year strategic goal converting from a membership based organization to a DMO, or Destination Marketing Organization

In April 2013 the Iowa City/Coralville Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) began pursuit of a four-year strategic goal converting from a membership based organization to a DMO, or Destination Marketing Organization. A year and a half in, work remains to be done, however, the process is ahead of schedule, expected to launch in August of 2015.

## The as-is organization tells part of the story of the transition to DMO.

"The CVB has successfully moved through the 'visitor information' phase," said board member Jean Newlin. "We have mastered the attraction and retention of meetings, conferences and events. As we move toward a Destination Marketing Organization makeup, we become that vital impetus that creates the exponential drive in the third growth phase- partnering with other economic development groups to create synergy. We are unstoppable."

"Being a DMO encompasses what we do and what we impact throughout the destination," President Josh Schamberger said. The word "bureau" in the name denotes a bureaucracy or governmental organization. The organization is anything but that, shifting the focus to destination marketers, something the organization already is. "We are also evolving beyond the traditional definition of DMO into a Destination Management Organization," Schamberger said. That means taking an active role in bringing communities and stakeholders together to define the attractions of the destination served. This includes advocating for new hotels, attraction development, ground and air transportation, and political issues that affect the tourism industry. "We will continue to market the destination, but also take an active role in developing and defining it," he added.

## CVB revenues tell another part of the as-is story.

"In the vast majority of destinations visitor taxes collected by the hotel industry with municipal oversight remains the strongest and best financial resource for CVBs/DMOs," said Scott Beck, president and CEO of Visit Salt Lake, and keynote speaker at this year's annual meeting. Only 48 percent of CVB revenue comes from the visitor tax, which sets the organization apart. This revenue is strong, as Beck indicated, but it comprises less than half of the total budget, providing both diversity and flexibility. The balance of income is from special events like FRY fest and granGABLE (22-23 percent), partnerships (20 percent), and other program revenue sources.

The University of Iowa is and will continue to be critical to destination management. It is the region's economic engine, and without Hawkeye sports and university cultural attractions, much of the organization's work wouldn't be possible according to Schamberger. That makes working closely with the University of Iowa critical as the CVB transforms to DMO.

Sally Mason, Athletics Director Gary Barta and other key leaders programmed in his mobile phone for easy and direct access.

"If all of our eggs are in one basket, you are living in a fragile basket," said board member Mark Ginsberg. "Spreading the risk and buy-in to the CVB is a viable component of our marketing efforts. We seek a transition to a larger basket with less risk." That means diversification of revenue and population growth partly attributable to effectively marketing the destination. "We can't ever become complacent," he added. The organization must maintain the great events it has and continually seek new ones. There is a philosophy shift involved with changing from



a membership organization to a DMO. While providing the same services and benefits to partners as previously, movement toward DMO includes a shared and more collaborative marketing and sales effort. Businesses will be investing in marketing and sales, not in an annual membership agreement. This leaves some unanswered questions to which the strategic planning committee formed last year is seeking answers.

**Is our organization the community all-inclusive visitor information resource, or only representing those community members that pay to play?**

**Are we everything to everyone or are we something to everyone?**

**What do we provide that no one else does?**

**Are businesses willing to pay for something they can get for free?**

**What DMO service or function could we be providing that's needed, irrespective of traditional CVB roles?**

"The organization is part of a great town and gown community," Schamberger said. He found opportunities and constraints in the future. Part of the future includes doing what the organization does best: maintaining a strong visitor component. The rest of the picture includes adding to the quality of life for region residents and community betterment. The best return on investment for the CVB is in meetings and conferences. They currently book about 40 conferences per year and service more than 100. There is plenty of room to grow conference sales and services with the current destination capacity.

The special events segment of business is constrained, but it plays a significant role in enhancing quality of life and community betterment. Roughly 65 percent of the community's economic engine is based on government-sector employment. That means limited available funds in the private sector to host and sponsor special events. While there is room in the calendar to add more special events, the community financing capacity is already stretched pretty thin, according to Schamberger. That means the focus will be on making already great special events even better.

A key challenge for the future will be bringing the municipalities, economic development groups and businesses together to better share a vision for the region as a destination. Schamberger has worked to get municipalities to look beyond their borders, but it hasn't always been easy. "Community development can be difficult at times with the various municipal agendas but the more we can focus on community as opposed to city the better we will fare. With community, everyone wins."

**On the horizon are other opportunities with which the CVB turned DMO expects to be involved.**

"There's nobody in this town that truly leads with relocation services," Schamberger said. "Based on our infrastructure and resources, that may be an opportunity for us." Schamberger also noted the Iowa River Landing and Riverfront Crossings District, which both present significant community betterment opportunities for the CVB. "What exactly is the mark or brand that we present?" asked Schamberger. "The biggest challenge we have is that we are not just Iowa City or Coralville. We are Iowa City, Coralville and North Liberty and Johnson County, and that doesn't just roll off the tongue." "How do we go about concisely representing that?" Schamberger asked. Answering that question will be part of continuing the success of the organization during coming years.

## BEING A DMO ENCOMPASSES WHAT WE DO AND WHAT WE IMPACT THROUGHOUT THE DESTINATION

### CVB -> DMO Advisory Committee

Dale Arens, University of Iowa

Nancy Bird, Iowa City Downtown District

Dave Davis, Holiday Inn/Hampton Inn

Verne Folkmann, Lepic Kroeger Realtors

Wendy Ford, City of Iowa City

Geoff Fruin, City of Iowa City

Ellen Habel, City of Coralville

Ritu Jain, Textiles

Lin Larson, University of Iowa

Tracey Mulcahey, City of North Liberty

Jean Newlin, United Fire & Casualty

Nick Pfeiffer, MidwestOne Bank

Mark Rugeburg, Brown Street Inn

Joshua Sabin, Iowa Northern Railway

Naftaly Stramer, Oasis Falafel

Matt Swift, Red's Alehouse, 30Hop, Big Grove

Matthew Traetow, Homewood Suites

Nick Westergaard, Brand Driven Digital



## Iowa City/Coralville Area Convention & Visitors Bureau Staff

Laurie Haman  
Vice President

Allie Howarth  
Director of Special Events

Donna Jondle  
Visitor Services Assistant

Nick Kaeding  
Director of Finance

Lyndsey Kent  
Convention Sales & Servicing Manager

Nicole Kroul  
Director of Marketing & Communications

Clarissa McPheron  
Special Events Assistant

Jillian Miller  
Director of Partner Development

Josh Schamberger  
President

Anissa Wolfe  
Director of Sales

### 2014 Award Winners

Nick Pfeiffer, MidwestOne Bank  
Hospitality Person of the Year

Brrr fest  
Attraction of the Year

University of Iowa  
Community Credit Union  
Partner of the Year



Iowa City/Coralville Area  
Convention & Visitors Bureau

900 1st Avenue/Hayden Fry Way  
Coralville, IA 52241 • 800.283.6592

[www.iowacitycoralvillearea.org](http://www.iowacitycoralvillearea.org)

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Iowa Northern Railway Co.

Coleen Chipman, Vice Chair  
Council Member, North Liberty

Ritu Jain, Treasurer  
Textiles

Dale Arens, Secretary  
UI Athletics Hall of Fame

Mark Ginsberg, Past Chair  
M.C. Ginsberg Jewelers

Debbie Bullion  
Heartland Inn

Dave Davis  
Holiday Inn & Hampton Inn

John Etheredge  
Johnson County Board of Supervisors

Tom Gill  
Council Member, City of Coralville

Matt Hayek  
Mayor, City of Iowa City

Jean Newlin (FY14)  
United Fire and Casualty

Steve Parrott  
UI Strategic Communications & Marketing

Neal Roth  
Holiday Inn Express

Mark Rugeberg  
Brown Street Inn

Naftaly Stramer  
Oasis Falafel

## FY14 Annual Report

Editor  
Laurie Haman

Designer  
Cody Ash

Writers  
Paul Deaton  
Amy Sundermann  
Rob Cline

## 1979-1983 Iowa City Area Chamber of Commerce Tourism & Convention Committee

Dave Haney (Chairman), KRNA  
Dean Borg, University of Iowa Hospitals  
Don Crum, Younkers  
Pat Wells, Iowa State Bank  
Tom McKinnon, Coachman Inn  
Bob McGurk, Highlander Inn  
Dean Moore, Heritage Management  
Dorothy Vincent, Queen's Ransom Boutique  
Bernie Wright, Nesper Sign  
Wes Llewellyn, Iowa River Power Restaurant  
Dottie Kozik, Hawkeye World Travel  
Ermal Loghry, Carousel Restaurant  
Emilie Rubright, Mall Merchants Association  
Jack Huttig, University of Iowa  
Howard Bond, Ironmen Inn  
Dick Brown, Hilltop DX

## 2014 Community Accolades

University of Iowa ranked #29 for  
The Top 30 Public National Universities  
U.S. News & World Report, September 2013

Iowa City ranked #13 (Small Cities) for  
The Best Small Places for Business and Careers  
Forbes, August 2013

Johnson County is a  
"top 50 healthiest county" for kids  
U.S. News & World Report, June 2013

The University of Iowa Children's Hospital  
ranked in seven specialty categories  
U.S. News & World Report "Best Children's  
Hospitals" rankings, June 2013

Iowa City West High School and Iowa City High  
School ranked among Top 10 High Schools in Iowa  
U.S. News and World Report, April 2014

Twenty-three University of Iowa graduate pro-  
grams and colleges among the 25 best  
in the nation  
U.S. News & World Report, March 2014

