

Living Landscape—Iowa's Hidden Treasure 2nd Annual Conference a Success

Over 100 individuals attended the SSNHA second annual *Living Landscape—Iowa's Hidden Treasure* conference March 21 & 22 at the Hotel Winneshiek in downtown Decorah, Iowa.

The conference began with a sold out Silos & Smokestacks pre-conference workshop at the Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum, presented by Jeanie Lovell, Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations at Luther College. Attendees learned the



Participants enjoyed the Taste & Flavor of Decorah.

fundamentals of identifying grant opportunities and the steps for writing successful proposals to secure grant funding for their organizations.

Keynote speakers Chuck Offenburger and Cary J. Hahn entertained the attendees with

their insightful knowledge of Iowa's hidden treasures. Offenburger discussed his experiences as a

columnist for *The Des Moines Register* and his thoughts on how to attract visitors to the area. Hahn shared highlights from his career as *CBS 2's* Iowa



Lynn Alex discussed the State of Iowa Archeology Office's traveling trunks.

Traveler, uncovering hidden gems across the state and around the world.



The Junior Nordic Dancers performed for attendees.

Conference attendees had several education sessions on a wide variety of topics to choose from. Preparing for group travel, making artifacts available via the Internet, and developing an attraction from a grassroots effort were just a few of the sessions available.

The conference also included off-site activities. Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum opened their doors for the "Taste & Flavor of Decorah" event. Attendees

toured the museum and experienced a sampling of Norwegian pastries, while Wildberry Winery offered tastes of locally grown wines.

The last educational session was held at The Dairy Center in Calmar. In addition to insightful information about traveling educational trunks and school field trips, participants made ice cream and toured The Dairy Center's facilities.

The Golden Silo Award ceremony honored individuals and organizations whose contributions demonstrated outstanding service and perseverance. See the article on page two of the *Newsletter* for more information.

If you have suggestions for our next conference, contact Jodi Verbraken at 319-234-4567 or jverbraken@silosandsmokestacks.org.



Attendees made ice cream at The Dairy Center.

Heritage Area Expands Passport Involvement

Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area is proud to announce 15 partner sites now carry Heritage Area Cancellation Stamps as part of the National Park Service's (NPS) Passport to your National Parks Cancellation Stamp Program.

The following SSNHA Strategic Investment Partners (SIP) have NPS Passport Cancellation Stamps at their locations:

- Amana Heritage Society Museum, *Amana*;
- The Carl & Mary Koehler History Center, *Cedar Rapids*;
- Cedar Rapids Museum of Art & Grant Wood Studio (2), *Cedar Rapids*;
- The Dairy Center, *Calmar*;
- Fossil & Prairie Park and Center, *Rockford*;
- Gilbertson Conservation Education Area, *Elgin*;
- Grout Museum District, *Waterloo*;
- Hartman Reserve Nature Center, *Cedar Falls*;
- Indian Creek Nature Center, *Cedar Rapids*;
- Living History Farms, *Urbandale*;
- National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library, *Cedar Rapids*;
- National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium, *Dubuque*;
- Putnam Museum, *Davenport*;
- State Historical Building, *Des Moines*; and
- Vesterheim Norwegian American Museum, *Decorah*.

The Passport to your National Parks Cancellation Stamp Program is a voluntary program that nearly all parks within the NPS participate. Visitors can purchase their official NPS Passport and start recording their visits to NPS sites by stamping their passport with a rubber cancellation stamp. The cancellations, similar to those received in an international passport, record the name of the park and the date it was visited.



New Brochure and Website

The new 2006 SSNHA brochure has been published and 85,000 copies are being distributed across the Heritage Area. The brochure includes six new partner sites along with updated information for visiting all the SSNHA partner sites. The brochure also indicates which locations have the National Park Service Passport Stamps.

To request a brochure, email Beth LeVan at blevan@silosandsmokestacks.org.

The much awaited, newly

designed website will be available later this month. The new interactive map and an interactive event calendar will make planning trips in the Heritage Area easier.

In addition, the revamped website will feature tour itineraries, offering a suggested list of events and activities for a fun-packed day or long weekend. Be sure to check out the new website at www.silosandsmokestacks.org.



2nd Annual Golden Silo Awards

Outstanding Volunteer



Pictured from left to right: Don Short, SSNHA Executive Director; Geof Grimes, Waterloo; Bob Casterton, SSNHA Board of Trustees.

The Golden Silo Award for Outstanding Volunteer was given to Geof Grimes of Waterloo. Geof was involved with the Heritage Area from the very beginning. This year's award was given to Geoff for his volunteer service and continuous involvement as a committee member, a member of the Partnership Panel and an original Silos & Smokestacks Advisory Board member.

Outstanding Preservation in Agriculture



Pictured from left to right: Don Short, SSNHA Executive Director; Marilu Wohlers, Phyllis Meyer and Susan Jacob, The National 19th Amendment Society; Bob Casterton, SSNHA Board of Trustees.

The National 19th Amendment Society of Charles City received the Golden Silo Award for Outstanding Preservation in Agriculture. This year's honorees are the amazing stewards of the Carrie Lane Chapman Catt Girlhood Home. This past summer marked the official opening of the site with new exhibits.

Outstanding Visionary



Pictured from left to right: Don Short, SSNHA Executive Director; Ross Christensen, Waterloo; Bob Casterton, SSNHA Board of Trustees.

The Alan Hutching's Outstanding Visionary Golden Silo Award was presented to Ross Christensen of Waterloo. Ross has demonstrated support for the Heritage Area for many years, created a legacy in heritage development that has made all the difference, and provided leadership in the heritage development movement. Ross cared enough to give of himself to ensure that Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area would not be ignored or forgotten.

Partnership Panel Service



Pictured left to right: Don Short, SSNHA Executive Director; Mary Ellen Warren, Waterloo; Rod Marlatt, Fayette; Geof Grimes, Waterloo; Bob Casterton, SSNHA Board of Trustees. Not pictured Bob Cole, Mason City.

Four SSNHA Partnership Panel members were recognized for completing five years of service. Each member provides Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area with a special talent. Mary Ellen Warren has remained focused on the importance of our mission in preserving the story of agriculture. Rod Marlatt always defends natural resources and their place in the Heritage Area. Geof Grimes unfailingly upholds the integrity of historic preservation. Bob Cole is an advocate for regionalism. SSNHA appreciates their service to the Partnership Panel.

L.I.F.E. Tours on Track for Year

Group travel is on track to have a very successful year. The L.I.F.E. (Living an Iowa Farm Experience) Tours program will likely see twice as many tours as last year. This will bring approximately 2,000 visitors face-to-face with farmers and other agricultural businesspersons at nearly 100 SSNHA locations.

In March, L.I.F.E. Tours was excited to host 90 Norwegian farmers as they visited Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area on a sold out tour of Iowa farm experiences. The visitors were part of a company that represents John Deere equipment dealers in Norway. This same group brought 28 visitors to the region in March

2004. Their excitement about the visit led to 150 people signing up for this year's tour. The group was limited to two motorcoaches, so 60 people were turned away. However, this tour will now be offered every year rather than every other year to accommodate the demand for this experience.

In addition to the group from Norway, travelers from France and Brazil are planning trips to the Heritage Area. A group of dairy farmers from England is considering an October tour and several other international tours are in the works for 2007. Numerous American groups are also planning travel to the Heritage Area.

Your Help is Needed at the State Fair

Planning for the Iowa State Fair booth is already underway and we are asking for volunteers. Making time to be a part of this event is a fantastic way to market your site to thousands of travelers. The benefits of volunteering include: free advertising for your site, general admission ticket and parking pass for the day along with networking opportunities.

Themed *Only at the Fair*, the event is August 10-20. SSNHA's theme will be *Only in the Heritage Area*. The booth will highlight some of our most unique points of interest that can only be found in our heritage area.

Each year, the Iowa State Fair

attracts more than a million fair-goers who can not get enough of the countless activities and sites to see during the 10 day span. *Midwest Living* magazine has named the event one of the "Top 30 Things Every Midwesterner Should Experience."



Sign up early to ensure you get the shift that works best for you—they will go quickly! Visit www.iowastatefair.org for more information.

If you would like to sign up for a shift or have questions, contact us by phone at 319-234-4567 or blevan@silosandsmokestacks.org. Please join us for an unforgettable day at the fair!

Silos & Smokestacks Partnership Profile

The Farm House Bed & Breakfast

Located in Fredericksburg, the Farm House Bed & Breakfast (B&B) offers comfort, casual enjoyment and a chance to experience a real working farm. Architectural styling of the late Victorian period was used when the Farm House was built at the turn of the century.

Restoration of the Farm House B&B began in 1993, when it was bought by the Engelbrecht family. They spent five years restoring the home and turning it into the Farm House B&B. In September 1998, the Farm House B&B hosted its first customers.

There are five guest rooms



One of the many activities to see during a stay at the B&B.



The Farm House B&B

at the B&B, each decorated uniquely to reflect the owner's eclectic interests. During a stay at the Farm House B&B, activities such as fishing in the farm pond to hiking on the adjoining Plum Creek

Nature Trail are available. The Red Barn Dairy gives guests the chance to watch the birth of a baby calf or cows being milked. Goats, chickens, peacocks, llamas, Jacob sheep, cats and two dogs all make up the unique experience of the Farm House B&B.

Other features include The Engelbrecht Family Winery and Vineyards and the Farm House Antique Shop. In 2004, the first round of grapes, fruit trees, red raspberry and blueberry bushes were started. The Engelbrechts continued planting and will be making wine by the time summer and fall roll

around. The Farm House B&B is planning a Grape Stomp for August 2006. Anyone who wants to prune, plant or pick grapes is welcome to help!

The Farm House Antique Shop showcases beautiful oak, walnut and pine furniture. It is located in a remodeled farm shed right across from the B&B. Shop hours are Wednesday-Saturday, 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. The Farm



Enjoy a relaxing evening on the enclosed sunporch.

House B&B is on US Hwy 18 East at 2866 270th St.

For further information about the Farm House B&B, contact Dianna Engelbrecht at 563-237-5969 or visit their website at www.iabedandbreakfast.com.

Partner & Grant Applications Due June 1

Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area is accepting applications for grants to fund projects that preserve and interpret America's agricultural stories. Eligible grant projects must be located in one of the 37 counties within the Heritage Area and provide a 1-1 match to the grant request. There is a total of \$50,000 available for projects including exhibit development, educational programs, interpretation, marketing, signs and event programming.

SSNHA is also seeking agriculturally-related tourism sites to become partners of the Heritage Area. Through the SSNHA Partner Site Designation Program, recognized sites would join 91 other northeastern Iowa partners in telling the unique story of American agriculture.

Applications for both grant funding and partner sites are due postmarked June 1, 2006. For more information or for an application, please call the office at 319-234-4567 or visit www.silosandsmokestacks.org.

How to Prepare an Exhibit Plan

A workshop on preparing for a successful exhibit.



Tuesday, July 25, 2006

9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Grout Museum District's Conference Room
503 South St., Waterloo

Cost:

\$30 per person affiliated with a designated SSNHA site
\$40 per person for all other participants
Fee includes lunch, refreshments and materials.

To register, mail this form with payment to: SSNHA
P.O. Box 2845, Waterloo, IA 50704
Ph: 319-234-4567 Fax: 319-234-8228
Make checks payable to Silos & Smokestacks

Instructor:

Sue Pridemore, Interpretive Planner,
National Park Service
Midwest Regional Office



Registration due July 18, 2006

Limited to 30 participants.
Visit www.silosandsmokestacks.org/workshops
for more information.

Name(s): _____
 Organization: _____
 Mailing Address: _____
 Email: _____
 Phone: _____ Amount Enclosed: _____

UNI Intern Joins SSNHA

Beth LeVan joined the Silos & Smokestacks team this January. She is a junior public relations major at the University of Northern Iowa (UNI). As a program assistant intern, Beth does website development, creates flyers and brochures, prepares events emails, and assists in writing articles and press releases for the *Newsletter*, in addition to providing assistance to the grant



Beth LeVan
& Smokestacks

booth at the Iowa State Fair.



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Dates to Remember

- May 17, 2006** - SSNHA Trustees Annual Meeting.
- June 1, 2006** - SSNHA Partner Site Applications due postmarked (see pg. 3).
- June 1, 2006** - SSNHA Grant Applications due postmarked (see pg. 3).
- July 25, 2006** - How to Prepare an Exhibit Plan Workshop (see pg. 3).
- August 10th - 20th** - Iowa State Fair (see pg. 2).



Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area (SSNHA) is a federally designated heritage area and is an Affiliated Area of the National Park Service. Through the development of a network of sites, programs, and events in these 37 Iowa counties, SSNHA interprets farm life, agribusiness, and rural communities – past and present.



The Newsletter is published by Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area. Please contact Jennifer Peterson, Editor, at (319) 234-4567 or email at jpeterson@silosandsmokestacks.org to submit story ideas.

Legacy of John Deere Honored

Six hundred people from across the state gathered to recognize Iowa's humanitarian leaders and heritage at the World Food Prize's Third Annual Hoover-Wallace Dinner in April. This year's dinner honored the legacy of John Deere and featured guest of honor Robert W. Lane, the eighth chief executive officer of John Deere.

Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area was proud to be a sponsor of the Hoover Wallace Dinner. All proceeds for this

event support the Borlaug-Ruan International Internship Program for Iowa High School Students. Each summer, this program offers 12 participants from the Youth Institute an opportunity to attend an eight-week, life-changing experience with world-renowned scientists and World Food Prize Laureates at international research centers in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The students work to improve the quality, quantity and availability of food in the world.



Check out Silos & Smokestacks on the web at:
www.silosandsmokestacks.org

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