

Waterloo & Cedar Falls
Insider Column
April 23, 2008

Next month marks National Tourism Month, and included in this year's celebration is the 25th Anniversary of National Tourism Week. Tourism week was first celebrated in 1984 as a week in May to collectively promote the impact of travel and tourism in communities across the nation.

As part of the Tourism Month celebration, and as a preview of Tourism Week, the Waterloo Convention and Visitors Bureau and Cedar Falls Tourism and Visitors Bureau present the Cedar Valley Tourism Awards Luncheon.

This year's luncheon will be presented on Thursday, May 8 at 11:30 a.m. at the UNI Commons Ballroom. As we have in the past, we will be presenting awards in the following categories: Event of the Year, Attraction of the Year, Business/Organization of the Year, Hotel of the Year, Friend of Tourism-Waterloo, and Friend of Tourism-Cedar Falls.

These awards will be going to businesses, organizations, people and events who make the Cedar Valley a great place to live and to visit. Last year, awards went to the Greater Cedar Valley Bowling Association, Gallagher Bluedorn Performing Arts Center, Barmuda Corporation, Holiday Inn, Dorothy Sallis, and the Cedar Falls Tourism and Visitors Bureau Marketing Committee. These winners showcase the great things happening in the Cedar Valley and showcase the wonderful things we have to offer visitors.

Tourism's impact stretches far beyond what comes to mind when people think of tourism and travel. It touches retail stores. It reaches professional industries like accounting and construction that do work for tourism related businesses. In fact, according to the Travel Industry Association (TIA), 1 out of every 8 non-farm jobs in the United States is created directly, indirectly or is induced by travel and tourism. So many of us are touched or impacted by travel and tourism. We should all be celebrating the businesses, organizations, events and people who are nominated for and winning these awards. They help add the tourism dollars to our community and make our communities great places to live and visit.

In addition to the awards presentation, we are very pleased to be presenting Rob Bell as our Guest Speaker. Rob's message will help you transform and elevate the level of customer service personally and in your workplace, keeping customers happy and coming back for more. Rob wants us to "Make 'em say WOW!" No matter what your profession or business, the customer service message will help you make your business even better.

Tickets are still available for the luncheon by calling the Cedar Falls Tourism and Visitors Bureau at 268-4266. We would love to see the room full as we learn how to

serve our customers better and as we honor those who have had a huge impact on our industry and our community this past year. See you on the 8th!