

Annual Report

Cedar Falls Tourism & Visitors Bureau

Fiscal Year 2020



CEDAR FALLS TOURISM

FISCAL YEAR 2020 | Annual Report

MISSION STATEMENT

To foster, promote, market and service our community as a quality destination.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	2	Printing & Grants.....	10
Major Accomplishments.....	3	Partner Organizations & Visitor Services.....	12
Hotel/Motel Tax Collections.....	4	Hospitality Services.....	13
Programming Expenditures.....	5	Who is involved?.....	14
Creative for Advertising.....	9	Envoys & Students.....	15

TOURISM DOLLARS...

2018 Domestic Travel-Generated Tax Revenue in Iowa

- Federal = \$489.1 Million
- State = \$517.5 Million
- Local = \$129.6 Million

2018 Domestic Travel Impact in Iowa - Top 5 Counties Local Tax Receipts (\$ Millions)

- Polk = \$35.2
- Linn = \$13.3
- Scott = \$10.9
- Johnson = \$6.9
- Black Hawk = \$5.2

Black Hawk County local tax receipts increased 3.3% from 2017-2018.

Source: U.S. Travel Association, September 2019



CEDAR FALLS

Tourism & Visitors Bureau
6510 Hudson Road | Cedar Falls, IA 50613
319.268.4266 | cedarfallstourism.org

Cedar Falls *We Know How To Weekend!*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FY20 was an interesting year, to be sure. March 2020 will forever be remembered as the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Schools closed and almost all hospitality-related businesses were shuttered. Everyone who could, worked from home. Our messaging quickly shifted from inspiring and welcoming visitors to promotion of take-out offerings, curbside pick-up and on-line ordering in support of local businesses to help them weather what we hoped would be a quick and temporary storm.

As the months rolled on, live performances and events of all sizes went from being postponed to virtual offerings, to being cancelled. At the close of the fiscal year, June 30, most all summer activities were cancelled or drastically altered with no end in sight.

We were having a banner year up until March – welcoming two new hotels and two new event centers – and we were poised for record growth in hotel/motel tax revenue. As it turns out, revenue for the year was down only 11% – a figure that in no way reflects the devastation to our industry during roughly half of the year. Luckily, we have intentionally built a reserve account to carry us through rough patches and/or seize special opportunities. Knowing the return on investment for tourism marketing efforts is almost immediate, and armed with a newly developed strategic plan, we are claiming our leadership role in helping the community recover by moving forward with plans to add a new full time sales and marketing coordinator to our team and increase our efforts to bring visitors to Cedar Falls.



Hampton Inn Downtown Cedar Falls
opened summer 2019



Hilton Garden Inn and Cedar Falls
Convention & Event Center
expansion to convention space
opened fall 2019



Holiday Inn & Suites and Bien VenU Event Center
opened fall 2019

Kim Manning
Kim Manning, Manager

FISCAL YEAR 2020 MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Meetings

1. Arranged for cooperative advertising in meetings publications with the Hilton Garden Inn and Holiday Inn.
2. Put a Familiarization Tour together for HelmsBriscoe planners.
3. Hosted UNI Overseas Recruiting Fair.
4. Attended Small Market Meetings.



Sports

1. Provided \$32,500 in assistance to Cedar Valley Sports Commission. \$10,000 of which was related to COVID.



Leisure

1. Brought production of the Visitor Guide in house with a vibrant new design and netting \$11,000 in income.
2. Hosted travel writers x2.
3. Hosted first annual Thanksgiving Weekend Bluegrass Festival.
4. Hosted Bands of America.



Coordination and Collaboration

1. Led effort to put a statewide post-COVID digital advertising campaign together valued at \$160,000+ by partnering with RAGBRAI. The campaign will run from July to September 2020 with placement in Minneapolis, Sioux Falls, Omaha, Kansas City, St. Louis, Chicago, Madison and throughout Iowa.
2. Produced an Event Planning Toolkit to guide volunteers through the process of planning a successful event.
3. Helped improve statewide tourism advocacy and communication efforts by establishing iTIP umbrella organization.



Asset Development

1. Secured necessary approvals throughout the county to sign Historic Route 20.
 2. Hampton Downtown Opened.*
 3. Hilton Garden Inn and Cedar Falls Convention & Event Center Opened.*
 4. Holiday Inn & Suites and Bien VenU Event Center Opened.*
- *We were not directly responsible for this, but it occurred and should be noted.



Group Tours

1. Sponsored and showcased at American Bus Association Marketplace.



Organization and Promotion of Events

1. CV365 was honored with the Iowa Tourism Office's Outstanding Collaboration Award.

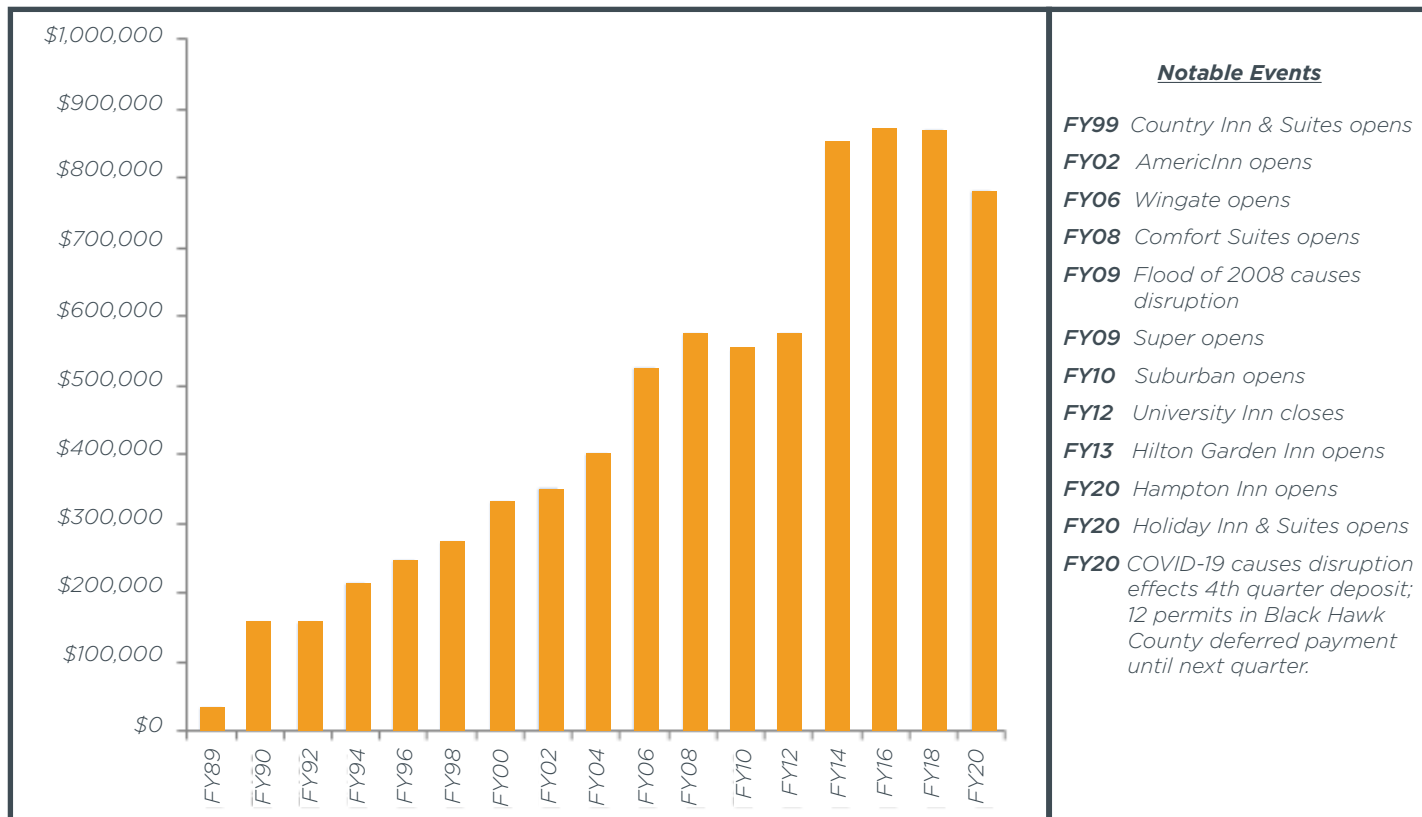


Increased Community Support

1. Did monthly News at Noon Interviews on KWWL.
2. Continued to send Hospitality Highlights to 561 subscribers, Weekender Newsletter to 313 subscribers, and maintained a robust presence on Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest and Twitter.
3. Pivoted messaging during COVID-19 to promote local restaurants and other businesses.

HOTEL/MOTEL TAX COLLECTIONS

Hotel/motel tax revenue has generally increased each year – averaging 6% - except for spikes caused by the 2008 flood and the 2013 opening of the Hilton Garden Inn, and the dramatic downturn in 2020 caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.



PROGRAMMING EXPENDITURES

Advertising Placement Expenditures

			2019							2020					
Publication/Event	Circulation	Cost	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
LEISURE ADS															
AAA Living - IA Display Ad	136,510	\$2,228													
Bikelowa.com	77k+	\$1,000													
CV365**	90k+	\$7,000													
Eastern Iowa Tourism Assoc. Travel Guide***	20,000	\$500	January 1, 2019-December 31, 2019*						January 1, 2020-December 31, 2020						
Facebook + other Social		\$1,195													
Have Fun Biking - MN Bike Hike Guide/Ad	50,000	Pd FY19	February 1, 2019-January 31, 2020												
Inspired Magazine	12,000	\$368													
Iowa Co-op - E-mail Marketing	70,000	\$500													
Iowa Co-op - Travellowa.com Ads within site	1.8m	\$2,500													
Iowa Co-op - Travellowa.com Leads****	1.5m	\$615													
Iowa Co-op - Travel Iowa Facebook Page	100,000	\$500													
Iowa Co-op - Truck Wrap		Pd FY18	18 months paid in FY18												
Iowa Travel Guide	60,000	\$1,593	January 1, 2019-January 31, 2020*						February-August 2020						
Iowa Public Radio		\$1,720													
Iowa Public Television		\$1,875													
Little Village		\$167 x2													
Midwest Living - Best of the Best	125,000	\$1,000									March-September				

* Indicates Paid in FY19 and ad overlapped FY19 and FY20.

**Indicates joint project with Experience Waterloo-website calendar expenses were shared using a 50/50 split.

*** Indicates co-op with Community Main Street and Cedar Falls Historical Society

****Indicates co-op with Experience Waterloo-advertising expenses were shared using a 41.4% Cedar Falls/58.6% Waterloo split based on the number of hotel rooms

PROGRAMMING EXPENDITURES (CONTINUED)

Advertising Placement Expenditures

			2019							2020					
Publication/Event	Circulation	Cost	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
LEISURE ADS															
Panther Sports Properties Extended Season		\$675													
Panther Sports Properties Web site & Radio		\$3,000													
ZLR - Development & Digital Campaign		\$24,652													
SPORTS ADS															
Iowa High School Football Program	5,500	\$200													
GROUP ADS															
IGTA - Iowa Tour Guide	20,000	\$1,355													
IGTA - Website		\$550													
MEETING ADS															
ISEA Directory**		\$464													
Midwest Meetings Guide Book	35,000	\$650	January-December 2018*						January-December 2019						
Midwest Meetings Magazine	28,500	\$1,650 x2													
Travel Midwest Magazine	306,787	\$1,500													
PUBLIC RELATIONS ADS															
Oster Regent Theatre Program		\$320													

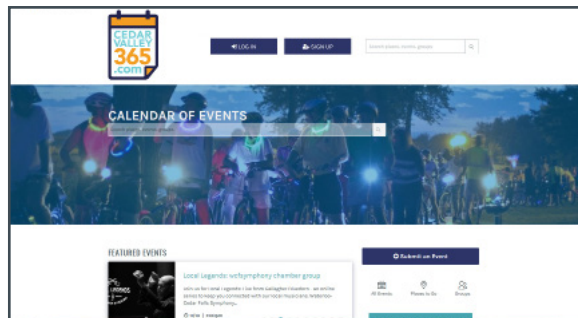
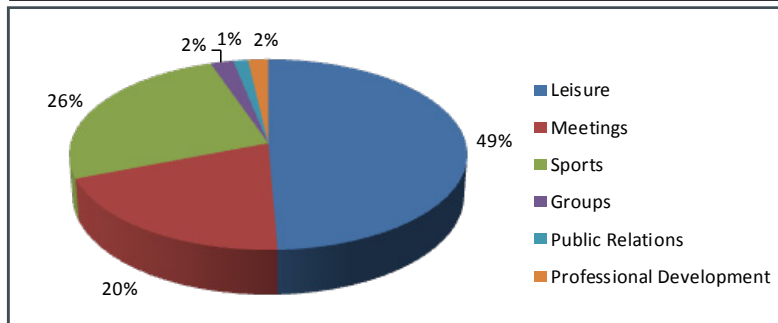
* Indicates Paid in FY19 and ad overlapped FY19 and FY20.

** Indicates co-op with Hilton Garden Inn and Holiday Inn.

PROGRAMMING EXPENDITURES (CONTINUED)

Travel Expenditures

Organization	Cost
GROUP TRAVEL	
American Bus Association - Omaha, NE (sponsorship included)	\$894
LEISURE TRAVEL	
Canoecopia Show - Madison, WI	\$720
Iowa Bike Expo - Des Moines	\$304
MEETINGS TRAVEL	
Small Market Meeting - Green Bay, WI	\$2,528
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
Eastern Iowa Tourism Association Meetings	\$46
Eastern Iowa Tourism Association Power of Travel Day	\$298
Iowa Festivals Conference - Coralville	\$314
Iowa Tourism Conference - Des Moines	\$1,451
Think Iowa City Annual Meeting	\$3
Upper Midwest Convention & Visitors Bureau Conference - Fargo, ND	\$557
PUBLIC RELATIONS TRAVEL	
Community Main Street Board Meetings	\$120



PROGRAMMING EXPENDITURES (CONTINUED)

Membership and Subscription Expenditures

Organization	Cost
GROUP MEMBERSHIPS	
<i>Iowa Group Travel Association</i>	\$250
LEISURE MEMBERSHIPS	
<i>Cedar Trails Partnership</i>	\$35
<i>Destination Development Association</i>	\$150
<i>Eastern Iowa Tourism Association</i>	\$165
<i>Iowa Bicycle Coalition</i>	\$60
<i>Iowa Festival & Events Association</i>	\$98
<i>Iowa National Heritage Foundation</i>	\$25
<i>League of American Bicyclists</i>	\$40
MEETINGS MEMBERSHIPS	
<i>Iowa Society of Association Executives</i>	\$130
PUBLIC RELATIONS MEMBERSHIPS	
<i>Cedar Valley Non-Profit Association</i>	\$400
<i>Greater Cedar Valley Alliance & Chamber Ambassador</i>	\$20
<i>Iowa Destination Marketing Alliance (IDMA)</i>	\$1,000
<i>Volunteer Center of the Cedar Valley</i>	N/C
SPORTS MEMBERSHIPS	
<i>Team Iowa *</i>	\$2,500

* Paid by the Cedar Valley Sports Commission

CREATIVE FOR ADVERTISING

**GRAB
THE GIRLS &
GET AWAY!**



CEDAR FALLS

CEDARFALLSTOURISM.ORG 800.845.1955 #WeKnowHowToWeekend

**WE KNOW
HOW TO
WEEKEND!**

**ALL WEEK
LONG!**

Work **and** play
in Cedar Falls!



Now Open



Now Open



**510 Hudson Road
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
800.845.1955
kim@cedarfallstourism.org
CedarFallsTourism.org**

**Hilton
Garden Inn**

CEDAR FALLS

**7213 Nordic Drive
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
319.859.3652
Leslie.Boucher@hilton.com
HGL.com**

**Holiday Inn
& Suites**

VENUE

**7400 Hudson Road
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
319.260.2600
dos@opendoorhospitality.com
BlenVenUEvents.com**

**MEETINGS MADE
SIMPLE**

**MEETINGS MADE
MEMORABLE**

**MEETINGS MADE
FUN!**

Three new and expanded facilities!

CEDAR FALLS

WHERE WE KNOW HOW TO WEEKEND!
CEDARFALLSTOURISM.ORG/MEETINGFACILITIES
800.845.1955

Cedar Falls TVB
Kim Manning
6510 Hudson Road
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
kim@cedarfallstourism.org

Cedar Falls is **THE** destination for meetings with outstanding service by the Ben VenU Event Center/Holiday Inn & Suites and the Cedar Falls Convention & Event Center/Hilton Garden Inn.

Ben VenU Event Center features 14,000 square feet of meeting space in six ballrooms, 9,000 square feet of pre-function space and 19,300 square feet of courtyard space.

Cedar Falls Convention & Event Center features one large convention center, two grand ballrooms of 11,000 square feet, 4,000 square feet of pre-function space and 5,000 square feet of patio space.

Send us your RFPs—we want your business!



- Conveniently located on Highways 58 and 20, and served by the Waterloo Municipal Airport.
- 2,500 area guest rooms.
- Nearby entertainment includes a vibrant, historic downtown Arts and Entertainment District, University of Northern Iowa, 100+ miles of recreational trails, and more.

**WHERE EVERY
DAY FEELS LIKE
A WEEKEND**

CEDAR FALLS



CEDARFALLSTOURISM.ORG 800.845.1955 #WeKnowHowToWeekend

CEDAR FALLS

**WHERE EVERY
DAY FEELS LIKE
A WEEKEND**



**CEDARFALLSTOURISM.ORG
#WeKnowHowToWeekend
800.845.1955**

Only in

CEDAR FALLS

**100 MILES OF TRAILS
30+ UNIQUE SHOPS AND BOUTIQUES
20+ BARS, CAFES & RESTAURANTS
1 COOL ICE HOUSE MUSEUM**




**CEDARFALLSTOURISM.ORG
800.845.1955**

CFHISTORY.ORG

CEDARFALLSDOWNTOWN.COM

PRINTING

Brochures

Brochure	Quantity	Cost
<i>2020 Cedar Falls Waterloo Visitor Guide</i>	60,000	\$0
<i>Calendar of Events (Sep-Dec 2019)</i>	3,600	\$320
<i>Calendar of Events (Jan-May 2020)</i>	4,750	\$317
<i>Cedar Valley Metro Map Pads</i>	100	\$233
<i>Cedar Valley Trail Maps*</i>	20,000	\$3,127
<i>Other Misc. In-house publications**</i>	4,964	\$450

*Trail Map expenses were split with 15 partners - Cedar Falls Tourism & Visitors Bureau, Experience Waterloo, Cedar Trails Partnership, Black Hawk County Conservation, Cooks Outdoors, Crowdaddy's, Scheels All Sports, Andy's Bike Shop, Bike Tech, Hall Bicycle Company, The Runners Flat, Cedar Valley Bicycle Collective, Cedar Valley Cyclists, Cedar Valley Association for Soft Trails, Waterloo Bicycle Works

**Brochures and fliers printed at Visitor Center include Annual Report, Black Hawk Co. Barn Quilt Tour, Cedar Falls City Map, Events & Facility Guide, Fun Things, Group Tour Itineraries, Group Profile Sheet, Special Experiences for Groups, Pedal Fest, Specialty Shops, Visitor Guide 1/2 sheet, UNI Overseas Recruitment Fair, Volunteer Recruitment Brochure, Volunteers on Tap, Walking Tour

GRANTS FY20

Community Betterment Grants

Organization	Amount Awarded	Purpose
<i>Cedar Falls Historical Society</i>	\$2,500	<i>Development of a promotional video</i>
<i>College Hill Partnership</i>	\$5,000	<i>Improvements to Pettersen Plaza</i>
<i>FORTEPAN Iowa/UNI</i>	\$5,000	<i>Wheat pasting archival photos on the sides of buildings in the city</i>
<i>Hearst Center for the Arts</i>	\$1,873	<i>Hearst to You Outreach tent, banner, sign</i>
<i>Volunteer Center of the Cedar Valley</i>	\$2,500	<i>Cedar Valley's Partners in Volunteerism Program</i>
<i>Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony</i>	\$5,000	<i>Youth outreach programs and research</i>
Total Awarded	\$21,873	

GRANTS FY20

Marketing & Tourism Development Grants

Organization	Amount Awarded	Purpose
ARTapalooza 2019	\$1,000	Promotion
Cedar Basin Music Fest	\$1,000	Promotion - CANCELLED DUE TO COVID-19
Cedar Valley Air Service	\$5,000	Consultant Expenses
Cedar Valley Sports Commission	\$22,500	Sponsorship
Cedar Valley Sports Commission	\$10,000	Emergency Funding due to COVID-19
Create{her} CF 2019	\$500	Promotion
Eastern Iowa Sports Show 2020	\$2,500	Promotion - Cancelled After 2nd Day - COVID-19
FIRST Robotics Iowa Regional 2020	\$3,500	Facility Expenses - CANCELLED DUE TO COVID-19
Holiday Hoopla 2020	\$3,000	OnMedia TV and Social Media
Iowa Association of REALTORS	\$950	Downtown Shuttle - Postponed to June 2021 due to COVID-19
MAYBT 2020	\$1,000	Promotion
Pink Ribbon Run 2019	\$500	Promotion
Pink Ribbon Run 2020	\$500	Promotion - Virtual due to COVID-19
Rod Con 2020	\$220	Promotion - CANCELLED DUE TO COVID-19
Sturgis Falls Celebration 2020	\$1,000	Promotion - CANCELLED DUE TO COVID-19
UNI Overseas Recruiting Fair	\$10,000	Facility Expenses
UNI Alumni Assoc.	\$3,000	Monthly Newsletter sponsorship
Total Awarded	\$66,170	



UNI Overseas Recruiting Fair @ Bien VenU



PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Served on the following boards and committees:

- Cedar Basin Music Festival
- Cedar Falls Community Main Street
- Cedar Trails Partnership
- Cedar Valley Non-Profit Alliance
- Cedar Valley Sports Commission
- College Hill Arts Festival
- Eastern Iowa Tourism Association Board
- Experience Waterloo
- Grow Cedar Valley Ambassadors
- Grow Cedar Valley Governmental Relations
- Grow Cedar Valley Affiliates
- Iowa Department of Transportation Tourist Directional Signage Committee
- Iowa Destination Marketing Alliance
- Iowa Group Travel Association
- Pedal Fest Planning
- Sturgis Falls Celebration
- Travel Federation of Iowa

VISITOR CENTER SERVICES

SERVICE PROVIDED	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20*
Visitor Center Traffic (Door Counter)	13,494	13,976	11,787	6,714
Visitors Using Amenities of Visitor Center - Non Local Visitors	3,044	2,812	5,646	3,734
Welcome Bags	2,564	1,431	1,111	1,163
Visitor Packets Mailed (Individual, Bulk Ad Mailing & Relocation Packets)	9,262	9,015	9,640	8,648
Visitor Center Meetings & Rentals	75	88	76	41
Host Motor Coach	12	8	8	6
Web Site Visits	95,678	93,247	98,621	93,267

* COVID-19 March through June

HOSPITALITY SERVICES

The bureau has developed an extensive volunteer database, which currently consists of 61 active volunteers. Volunteers, who are referred to as “Envoys” enable the Visitor Center to be open to visitors 7 days a week. In addition to staffing the Visitor Center, the Envoys were busy providing information to guests at the following events:

- Bands of America Regionals
- Bluegrass Festival
- Eastern Iowa Sports Show
- Hawkeye Farm Show
- Iowa High School Football Playoffs
- Iowa State High School Bowling
- Iowa State Trap Shoot
- Sportability of Iowa
- UNI Homecoming & Family Weekend
- UNI Overseas Recruitment Fair

The bureau also maintains several information centers around town and quarterly distribution:

- All Cedar Falls Hotels
- Behrens-Rapp Information Station
- Big Woods Campground
- Black Hawk Conservation Office
- Cedar Falls Historical Society
- Cedar Falls Library
- Cedar Falls Recreation Center
- Cedar Falls City Hall
- Community Main Street Office
- Cup of Joe
- Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center
- Grow Cedar Valley
- Hansen’s Dairy
- Hartman Reserve Nature Center
- Hearst Center for the Arts
- Iowa State Trooper’s Office
- John Deere Museum
- John Deere PEC
- Oster Regent Theatre
- Scratch Cupcakery
- UNI Sports & Event Complex
- University Book & Supply
- Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony Office
- Western Home Communities



Sportability of Iowa
Wheelchair Basketball Tournament at Fit Courts



Daily Sanitizing at Visitor Center



January-May Calendar of Events
2020 Waterloo-Cedar Falls Travel Guide

WHO IS INVOLVED?

Bureau Staff

Kim Manning, Manager
Bonita Cunningham
Deb Lewis
Linda Maughan
Becky Wagner

Advisory Board

Leslie Prideaux (Chair), University of Northern IA Alumni Assoc.
Kim Bear, Community Main Street (Mar-Jun)
Mary Carlson, Volunteer
Brooke Croshier-Sidebotham, University of Northern IA
Amy Dutton, UNI Small Business Development
Annie Gougler, Humble Travel Service
Tavis Hall, Experience Waterloo
Ashley Johnson, Cedar Valley Sports Commission
Brent Johnson, BikeTech
Doug Johnson, UNI Book Store
Carol Lilly, Community Main Street (Jul-Feb)
Jim Newcomb, Volunteer
Jim Schaefer, Grow Cedar Valley
Stephanie Sheetz, Community Develop. City of Cedar Falls
Andy Woodrick, Hilton Garden Inn

***Meet at 4 pm the third Wednesday of each month*

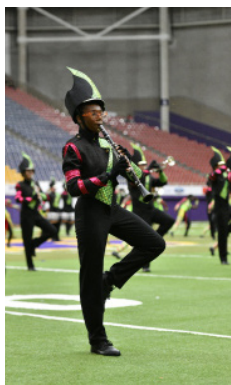
Marketing Committee

Luann Alemao, Luann Alemao & Associates
Blake Argotsinger, Gallagher-Bludom Performing Arts Center
Rosemary Beach, Volunteer
Carrie Eilderts, Cedar Falls Historical Society
Kirsten Jergsen, Hilton Garden Inn
Jay Koweil, KWWL Television
Maria Murphy, Western Home Communities
Gayle Pohl, University of Northern Iowa
Sandy Thomas, Open Door Hospitality
Andy Woodrick, Hilton Garden Inn

***Meet at 12:30 pm the second Thursday of each month*



Cedar Falls Friend of Tourism
 Carol Lilly



Cedar Valley
 Outstanding Event
 Bands of America - Cedar Falls



Cedar Valley Outstanding
 Attraction
 Black Hawks Hockey



Cedar Valley Outstanding Customer Service
 Rodney's Kitchen



Cedar Valley Outstanding Restaurant
 Wilbo's Burgers, Brats & Beers



Cedar Valley Outstanding Lodging Property
 Holiday Inn & Suites and Bien VenU Event Center



Waterloo Friend of Tourism
 Main Street Waterloo

ENVOYS & STUDENTS

We are grateful for the approximately 75 volunteers that are on our contact list. Thank you to the following Envoys and students for their assistance during fiscal year 2019. Our volunteers help make many of our accomplishments possible.

ENVOYS

Steve Adams
Komivi Amekedzi
Bob Beach
Rosemary Beach
Mary Bozik
Dick Brammer
Carol Brown
Bertha Caballero
Mike Caballero
Phyllis Carter
Dorothy Clausen

Rich Congdon
Rita Congdon
Larry Durchenwald
Richard Eades
Sue Eastman
Marcella Ericson
Sharon Fackler
Donna Falk
John Falk
Bobbette Fortney
Judith Harrington
Ron Heth

Bob Hewlitt
Doris Hewlitt
Fred Hoffman
Patrick Igou
Jane Jackson
Carlyn Juhl
Doris Lang
John Lang
Bev Michael
Alvira Morris
Sid Morris
Troy Olson

Ginny Poppen
Cathy Reindl
Jim Reindl
Dori Ressler
Larry Ressler
Carol Schaffner
Mary Smith
Gene Theis
Joy Thiel
Mike Tompkins
Ron Van Der Meide
Libby Vanderwall

Rick Vanderwall
Bob VanGorp
Wendy VanGorp
Lee VerMulm
Kurt Wiethorn
Lois Wishmeyer

Total Envoy Hours
912.5

STUDENTS

Interns:
Sydney Schoentag

Total Student Hours
270



2020 Iowa Tourism Awards
Outstanding Marketing Collaboration
Cedar Falls Tourism & Visitors Bureau
and
Experience Waterloo



Cedar Falls is part of Historic Route 20, the Great American Rail-Trail and the American Discovery Trail

