



MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, October 21, 2011

For Immediate Release

Dubuque Increases Tourism Impact to State of Iowa & Receives Awards

Okoboji, IA | **Art Market Dubuque received the Niche Marketing Award** at the Iowa Tourism Conference. In its second year of bringing in fine and functional art from highly skilled artists from around the Midwest, Art Market Dubuque has been able to bring in 500 to 600 visitors at each of its events, increasing attendance by 100-125 each weekend. This important event continues to assist with growing Dubuque's cultural scene.

Joyce Connors, City Council woman, also received the **Outstanding Elected Official** award at the event. Throughout her years of serving on the Dubuque Convention & Visitors Bureau Board of Directors, Connors was an avid supporter of many tourism related projects, including America's River Project Phase I, II and III.

The National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium and Blank Park Zoo also won the **People's Choice Awards in the Collaboration in Tourism** category for their partnership to raise awareness of both organizations through a Facebook competition. The "race" was to see who could attract the most new Facebook 'likes' at the end of the month. The marketing director from the organization with the least amount of 'likes' at the end of that month had to volunteer to do a dirty job at the winner's organization. This year's winner was the Blank Park Zoo.

At the conference, the **2010 ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TRAVEL ON IOWA COUNTIES STUDY** was released. Dubuque County increased the annual tourism expenditures by \$21 million. In 2009, the tourism expenditures in Dubuque County were \$254 million. In 2010 it increased to \$275 million. (Source Iowa Tourism Office)

The annual three day conference, sponsored by the Iowa Tourism Office and Travel Federation of Iowa, brings together more than 300 industry representatives from across the state to network, attend educational sessions and discuss emerging industry trends. This year's event took place October 19-21, 2011 at Arrowwood Resort in Okoboji.

Tourism is a \$6.6 billion industry in Iowa, employing more than 62,000 people statewide and more than 2,700 people in Dubuque County alone.

###

For more information, contact:

Keith Rahe, President
Dubuque Convention & Visitors Bureau
563.590.7240 | Cell
563.557.9200 | Office

John Sutter, Director of Marketing
National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium
563.599.9561 | Cell
563.557.9545 | Office