



Name: Steve Hansen
Title: Museum Director
Phone: 712-279-6174

**For Immediate Release
October 30, 2008**

Museum exhibit extended another week

By popular demand, the Sioux City Public Museum's temporary exhibit, "**The Original Corn Palace City**" has been extended for another week. The exhibit was originally scheduled to close on November 2, but will now remain on display through November 9. The featured photographs, documents and artifacts from the late 1800s examine how a national promotional campaign for Sioux City turned into one of the most unique chapters in local history.

"We have been very pleased by the positive response to the exhibit," said Steve Hansen, Museum director. "The public is continually fascinated by the originality that went into creating these distinctive symbols of Sioux City."

Though they were only temporary buildings, made of wood, corn and other grains, the Corn Palaces have lived on in Sioux City's historical memory. After years of drought, locusts and other natural disasters, the summer of 1887 boasted one of the best growing seasons for farmers in the region. A group of business and cultural leaders proposed holding a festival in the fall to celebrate the great harvest and to help bolster the settlement of Sioux City. Modeled after the great "Ice Palaces" of St. Paul, Minnesota, the World's first palace made of corn took six days and 350 workers to complete, costing approximately \$25,000.

The success of the 1887 Corn Palace led to the creation of a new structure each of the next four years. Each of the successive Palaces was bigger, grander and more spectacular than the last. The crowds also grew with special trains bringing people from Chicago and the East Coast. The 1891 Corn Palace cost nearly \$100,000 to complete (more than \$2 million in 2008 dollars). However, poor attendance, due to bad weather and competing festivals, cost the community in the end. Though there were plans to build another palace in 1892, it was never built. In 1893, a financial panic set in throughout the country and much of the Corn Palace's financial backing was lost for good. The era of Sioux City's grand palaces came to an end.

"**The Original Corn Palace City**" exhibit has been on display since August 16. The Sioux City Public Museum is housed in the historic John Peirce Mansion at 2901 Jackson Street in Sioux City. Regular hours are Tuesday through Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Admission is free. For more information, call 712-279-6174 or visit www.siouxcitymuseum.org.

###