



Name: Kathy Meisner
Title: Welcome Center Supervisor
Phone: 712-279-0198

For Immediate Release
January 6, 2009

Welcome Center volunteers earn certification

(Sioux City) – Sergeant Floyd River Museum and Welcome Center volunteers Glenn Barnett and Carmen Major recently received designation as Certified Travel Counselors. To qualify for this recognition from the Iowa Tourism Office, travel counselors must successfully complete a 100-question test about Iowa.

"Iowa is known for its friendly and hospitable people," Nancy Landess, Iowa Tourism Manager at the Iowa Tourism Office said. "Welcome Center Travel Counselors are often the first people travelers meet when they enter Iowa. It's important that the staff and volunteers at each of our centers is knowledgeable about the state and is able to easily help curious visitors."

Iowa is one of only 11 states with a certification process that is endorsed by the National Council of State Tourism Directors, part of the Travel Industry Association of America. In Iowa, 111 Welcome Center Travel Counselors are certified.

In addition to Barnett and Major, the Sergeant Floyd River Museum and Welcome Center has 12 current staff and volunteers who are Certified Travel Counselors. Along with a certificate, Certified Travel Counselors receive a special name badge from the Iowa Tourism Office noting their designation.

Housed in a 1932 tow boat, the Sergeant Floyd River Museum and Welcome Center serves as an official Iowa Welcome Center, providing assistance and information to travelers. It is one of four sites of the Sioux City Public Museum.

Tourism is a \$5.8 billion industry in Iowa, employing more than 63,000 people statewide and generating more than \$291 million in state taxes. The Iowa Tourism Office is part of the Iowa Department of Economic Development.

###