

Insider

For February 10, 2010

By Kim Burger

It's been an exciting couple of weeks in the Cedar Valley! Congratulations to Waterloo for being selected as an overnight host for RAGBRAI! Riders will visit our community on Thursday, July 29th, coming in from Charles City and heading out to Manchester. The Register's new format for announcing the route – via a party attended by bike teams, previous and hopeful hosts, and other interested folks, was a hit. The energy in the room was exhilarating and it was a fun way to receive the news. As was reported in an earlier edition of the Courier, T. J. Juskiewicz, the director of the ride, had some fun with Aaron Buzza, the submitter of Waterloo's invitation, by announcing the overnights out of order and saving us until the very last. It was tense, but a lot of fun!

A few days later came the announcement that Cedar Falls was selected as one of a Dozen Distinctive Destinations! What an incredible thing! Congratulations and THANK YOU to MaraBeth Soneson, Jan Andersen, Carol Lilly, (Community Main Street staffers), and all the volunteers involved in the program. To many, the thought that we are worthy of such an award may have seemed a bit heady, but we have proven we can stand proudly along side any town in the country.

This national designation recognizes the Cedar Falls for offering cultural and recreational experiences different from the typical vacation destination. The Cedar Falls Downtown District features dynamic shopping, dining, and recreational opportunities. It is a model arts and entertainment district with a rich architectural heritage, cultural diversity and a strong commitment to historic preservation and revitalization – all of which yield an abundance of character and an authentic sense of place.

Now that the announcement has been made, we're moving into the next phase of the project and that's where YOU come in. The National Trust is offering a friendly competition among honorees through an on-line voting system. Help make Iowa stand out by visiting www.cedarfallsdowntown.com and voting for Cedar Falls as your favorite. When you arrive at the Cedar Falls Downtown web site you'll find a link taking you to the National Trust for Historic Preservation web site. There's a three-minute video highlighting all twelve destinations. There is also a tab devoted to Cedar Falls that includes information that potential visitors will find attractive about our city and a short video of our own, highlighting our offerings. Thank you Kirk Eastman and others at Cedar Falls Cablevision for assistance with this portion of the project. You will also be invited to leave comments about why you think Cedar Falls is distinctive.

We're currently in fourth place among the Fan Favorites and that has never been good enough for us. Multiple votes are allowed and, indeed encouraged,

so we're working to spread the word and encourage additional voting through our personal and professional Face book pages. We are seeking your assistance in doing the same. Let's have some fun with this and show the country what lowan's are made of by pushing ourselves to the front! Please VOTE EARLY AND VOTE OFTEN!