

Davenport Awarded Brownfield Grant

Written by Joe Collins
Tuesday, 01 May 2001 18:00

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• Davenport has been awarded a \$250,000 grant by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to assess brownfields, areas of former industrial sites. The area to be studied includes most of west Davenport in the vicinity of the Mississippi River and the area surrounding Nahant Marsh – the largest urban marsh on the upper Mississippi and a recently completed EPA Superfund project. The project's objectives are to help make possible the appropriate expansion of industrial activity while enabling restoration of riverfront and marsh habitat. The EPA selected the Davenport application as one of approximately 30 to 35 awards from 75 applications for this program, which is part of a \$38 million project helping more than 90 communities with brownfield restoration.

• It seems Flood 2001 in the Quad Cities is the story of the day all over the world. What happens after the flood? One of the best resources I've found listing organizations that provide flood relief and recovery can be found at the United Way of the Quad Cities Web site (<http://www.unitedwayqc.com>). While you are at the site, look around at more than the flood-relief information because there are quite a number of resources and a lot of general information. You can also contact the agency the old-fashioned way by calling (563)355-4310.

• The \$15.3 million university center at St. Ambrose University has recently received an \$850,000 grant toward construction from The Kresge Foundation. Finishing touches are being put on plans for the 64,000-square-foot center that will include a ballroom, as well as spaces for lectures, conferences, dinners, meetings, and offices. Groundbreaking is tentatively set for spring 2002. The Kresge Foundation requires that St. Ambrose raise the balance of \$3.9 million in gifts and grants by July 1, 2002.

• The Iowa Department of Transportation and the Illinois Department of Transportation have joined forces with other agencies and local officials for an I-74 Iowa-Illinois Corridor Study, which will look at the area from 23rd Avenue in Moline to 53rd Street in Davenport. This project will evaluate transportation problems and recommend solutions that will improve traffic flow, respect the environment, and complement community goals and plans. You can keep track of the study on the project Web site at (<http://www.i74corridorstudy.org/>). The site not only has information on the study, but also contains links and contacts for all the concerned players, a glossary, and a mailing list. Some parts of the site are still under construction, and it's probably

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be a good idea to keep an eye on it for meeting schedules and more.

- The Putnam Museum of History & Natural Science has formed a partnership with River Action and the City of Davenport to start education programming at the Nahant Marsh. The Putnam and River Action have signed an Educational Services Agreement through which the Museum has hired a full-time naturalist to develop environmental-education programs and associated instructional materials relating to Nahant Marsh for school groups and general audiences. The naturalist will also monitor and assist with ongoing research projects at the marsh and coordinate the use of the Educational Field Station there. The Putnam has also entered into an agreement with the City of Davenport, owners of Nahant Marsh, to conduct educational programming at the marsh site. In addition, The Putnam has announced that Quad City native Jennifer Anderson will fill the position of naturalist and will be employed by the Putnam Museum's educational department. She will work closely with Putnam staff to develop programming at Nahant Marsh.

- Substance-abuse prevention is on every parent's mind. Free substance-abuse prevention packets are available from the ISU Scott County Extension and include a variety of materials and resources about helping kids to stay tobacco- and drug-free. You can pick up your free packet at the ISU Scott County Extension office at 875 Tanglefoot Lane, Suite B, Bettendorf. Or call (563)359-7577 for more information.

- Iowa State Senator Maggie Tinsman has announced that legislation has been passed in the Iowa Senate that will protect local governments from unfounded state mandates. Currently, the state can impose requirements on a city or county government without providing the necessary funding to support the program. The unfunded state-mandate legislation does identify several exceptions that are not considered state mandates, including federal-government requirements, various criminal-law sections, elections, and the Iowa Public Employee's Retirement System (IPERS).

- MetroLINK, the Rock Island County Metropolitan Mass Transit District, has announced the addition of 11 compressed-natural-gas buses to its fleet. Tentatively scheduled to arrive in January 2002, the buses will be powered by John Deere natural-gas engines and will replace current diesel-powered vehicles in an initiative to expand the positive environmental impact of mass transit in the Quad Cities community. In 1998, MetroLINK served as a pilot site for a new Cetane diesel blend that reduced emissions and fumes from diesel engines. Compressed natural gas seemed to be the next step, according to MetroLINK officials. While the fuel and buses are more expensive than traditional diesel fuel and vehicles, maintenance costs for the vehicles should be less.

- Spring, despite the floods, brings thoughts of lawn care and gardening. Take a look at (<http://www.organicgardening.com>) for information on alternatives to expensive, environmentally damaging pesticides. The site includes links, message and discussion groups, columns, the basics of organic gardening, lots and lots of information, an online bookstore, and more than one annoying pop-up. Well worth a look.

- The conservative CATO Institute has just released its review of the federal government's

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actions at Waco and what it considers a cover-up. It's called No Confidence: An Unofficial Account of the Waco Incident and is downloadable in Adobe Acrobat format from (<http://www.cato.org>). It lists, in a chronicle format, the events surrounding the Waco siege, then what it claims are the crimes committed by federal officials. It concludes by identifying questionable conduct warranting further investigation.