

PROGRESS 2008

Garden & Associates: Going strong after 60 years



Garden & Associates, Ltd. is a local engineering and land surveying firm that is now celebrating its 60th year of operation in Iowa. Their Oskaloosa, Iowa, offices are located in the professional office complex at the Heartland Square Mall, but their business dealings reach throughout southern and eastern Iowa to over 150 different Iowa cities and counties. In fact the engineers, surveyors, technicians, and even the office staff are probably better known outside of Oskaloosa than here in town. Their engineering staff works primarily with mid-size towns in Iowa assisting them in their efforts to establish and/or maintain water and wastewater operations, streets and highways, and create new residential and commercial developments.

As engineers, Garden & Associates helps identify solutions to challenges, or methods to maximize opportunities, that occur in towns and in rural areas. Typically, the engineers are first involved in preparing conceptual plans and identifying possible project costs; then they proceed to completing the design; and finally the oversee construction of the project. This engineering process from start to finish can last for more than 5 years on a single project.

The Garden & Associates engineers have earned a reputation not only for the quality of their work, but also for their honesty, integrity, and a sincere dedication to helping to improve communities in Iowa. President Bob Nielsen leads the company along with partners, Mark Fincel, Vice President, Jack Pope and Brad Uitermarkt. Most of the company's employees have enjoyed long

tenures. Garden & Associates employs a full-time staff of 22, which includes seven licensed engineers, one engineer intern, and three licensed land surveyors. They are proud of their talented staff; most of which are native to the area and have chosen to practice their profession and raise a family where they grew up. Some key staff members were recruited to the Oskaloosa area and have found the community and company to be an excellent place to live and base their career. One new staff member in the Oskaloosa office is professional engineer Mike Lyons, who joined Garden & Associates at the end of 2007.

Some current local projects include the Oskaloosa Water Plant rehabilitation, the North I Street improvements near the fairgrounds, along with the design of the Mahaska Rural Water new water tower and pump station located just northwest of Oskaloosa along Highway 163. They also are working with the cities of Ottumwa, Eddyville, and New Sharon on street projects.

Garden & Associates opened a new office in Creston, Iowa in September 2007 to provide engineering and surveying services to cities, developers, and utilities throughout southwest Iowa. Since the opening of the Creston office, Garden & Associates has worked on several projects located between Interstate 35 and the Missouri River; the company is now providing engineering services in more than 50 percent of Iowa.

For more information about Garden & Associates, Ltd., including current job openings and listing of services, please visit their Internet site at www.gardenassociates.net or call them at 672-2526.

CELLULAR SPECIALISTS

Cellular Specialists: Experts in the field of wireless communications

Cellular Specialists has been serving the wireless needs of the people of southeast Iowa an authorized agent for US Cellular for more than a decade.

US Cellular is a super-regional wireless company serving more than 5.2 million customers in 25 states. US Cellular maintains one of the industry's highest levels of customer satisfaction by emphasizing customer support, quality network coverage and a comprehensive range of wireless services.

Cellular Specialists began life in 1996 as Carriker Cellular, selling analog bag phones to customers purchasing cars from Carriker Ford.

Cellular Specialists is currently operating 7 stores in Iowa and Illinois. Two of the company locations are still in Carriker Ford new and used car dealerships in Oskaloosa. Many dealerships in the 1990s sold bag phones as an extra service to their automotive customers. Cellular Specialists is one of the few who have grown and expanded in wireless business.

The Penn Central Mall location in Oskaloosa, opened in 1997 and is a US Cellular bill payment center as well as sales and customer service. The Ottumwa location at center court inside the Quincy Place Mall opened in late November 2002. The fifth location in the Muscatine Mall in Muscatine, Iowa, opened in May 2007. In June of 2007, Cellular Specialists opened 2 more locations in the Champaign/Urbana, Illinois, area.

The staff is diverse in age from 22 to 56, with the advantage of a variety of skills and experience to meet all customers needs. The company has three trained business account specialists on staff that currently serve the needs of local business accounts ranging in size from one line to our largest business account with over 700 lines.

The wireless industry has seen many changes during the company years of service to the community. We have seen the analog bag phone replaced by the analog brick phone of the 1990s, it was big bulky and battery life was very short, but we were all going wireless. Next, came the digital phones — smaller, clearer and able to do text as well as voice. The camera phone was next on the scene, now we could take pictures on our phones and even send them to our friends and family. When US cellular

launched their data service to their customers, a whole new world of possibilities opened.

Customers using easyedge data service now can have turn by turn navigation on their phones, they now had access to accuweather, sports, news, maps, digital radio, Napster to go, and games, the list is almost endless.

Then along came Bluetooth and we can now connect to our wireless devices without wires from up to 30 feet away. Cellular Specialists carries a large selection of Bluetooth products including headsets and handsfree speakers for our cars.

With the new smartphones like the Blackberry and the Motorola Q customers can receive email, surf the web, manage their date book its like having a small computer in your pocket.

Today Cellular Specialists offers over 25 different cellphones to choose from in each of their locations, they carry the largest selection of faceplates

Leather cases and pouches, data products, memory cards, handsfree headsets in the area.

Cellular Specialists many years of customer service and experience in the ever changing wireless industry, allows them to say to their customers, we are Cellular Specialists, we know our business, we live and work in your community, we understand our customers and we truly offer wireless where you matter most.

Southern Iowa Fair heats up this July

The Southern Iowa Fair is a major attraction for the city of Oskaloosa in late July.

This year, the fair will be held July 21-27. It will feature a concert, livestock shows — horses, pigs, cattle, sheep goats, bucket bottle calves and lambs, chickens, rabbits and dairy. We will start the fair out on Monday with a car show and a free concert by the Good Time Oldies. Also, the regular Wednesday night races will be held, featuring the Deery Brothers Late Models, Demolition Derby, concert, draft horse show, Jack Russell Terrier races, Monster Arm Wrestling Tournament, cinnamon roll contest and a caricature artist.

The Southern Iowa Fair features many venues for activities.

The Southern Iowa Fair Livestock Pavilion is a versatile building — it has been used for events ranging from livestock shows to a wedding.

Oskaloosa building contractor P.W. Sparks built the Stock Judging Pavilion at the fairgrounds in 1919. The pavilion along with the Iowa State Fair pavilion in Des Moines and the Cattle Congress in Waterloo are the only ones in the state with a round shape.

The pavilion was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on April 12, 1984.

The 156-foot by 116-foot, 14-sided polygonal pavilion has a 115-foot by 69-foot show arena. According to the Aug. 18, 1919, edition of The Oskaloosa Daily Herald, the pavilion cost \$15,000. It was composed of concrete,

brick and steel, and it has wooden seats with a capacity for 2,000 people. The bleacher area has wooden floors, and the show arena has a dirt and sand floor.

During the pavilion's lifetime, fair board officials conducted some improvement projects. The cupola was removed in 1945. In 1989, steel siding was installed on the pavilion's exterior. Also, the windows around the top of the building were removed and hinged doors were added for better ventilation. Also, some rewiring work was done.

The Exhibit Hall and the Varied Industry buildings are hubs for fair activities with many 4-H projects placed in the Exhibit Hall and many booths for local businesses set up in the Varied Industries Building. When they are not in use at fair time, the buildings are rented out for weddings or reunions.

The Southern Iowa Speedway is another major attraction at the fairgrounds.

The half-mile race track and grandstand are the venue for regular Wednesday night car races, and some demolition derbies. The races have brought people from as far away as New York, California and Australia. The Front Row Challenge has attracted nationally known NASCAR circuit drivers. The grandstand has a capacity of about 3,000 people.

Be sure to check the Web site - www.southerniowafair.com - for all events taking place throughout the year at the fairgrounds.

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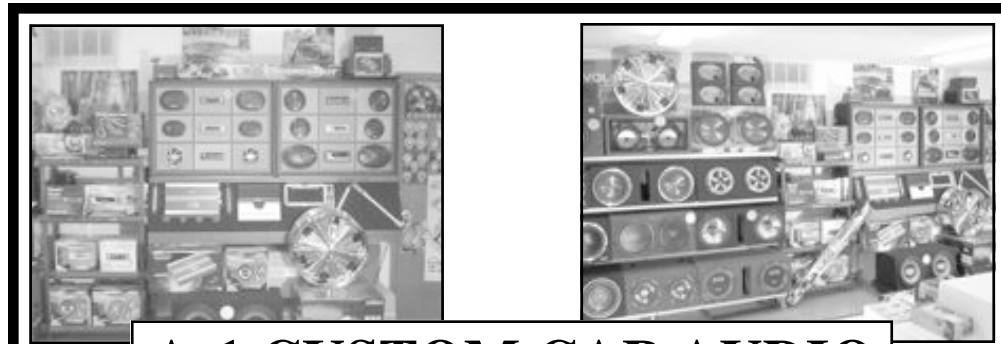
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