

# PROGRESS 2008

## The Oskaloosa Area Chamber and Development Group: Bringing quality of life through community development

From left back row are, Deb Stevens, Deb Bruxvoort, Front row from left are Miranda Johnson, OACDG Director Jon Sullivan, Karen Hafner and Connie Bryan



The Oskaloosa Area Chamber and Development Group promotes and enhances the business environment and quality of life in Oskaloosa and Mahaska County throughout the year with a series of community events.

### Eggs & Issues

Eggs & Issues is a political forum the Chamber sponsors to provide citizens the opportunity to ask their lawmakers about matters pertaining to local and state issues. They are held every-other Saturday morning at 8:30 a.m. at Smokey Row Coffee shop in downtown Oskaloosa from January through April. The first Eggs & Issues forum features local issues where Oskaloosa city and Mahaska County officials answer questions. Then, the forums focus on state legislative issues.

### Town & Country Banquet

The Oskaloosa Chamber holds the Town and Country Banquet in March so people who live in rural parts of the county can gather with their urban counterparts for an evening of good food and fellowship.

### The annual Chamber banquet

The Oskaloosa Area Chamber and Development Group holds its annual awards banquet in May to honor dynamic businesses in the community and recognize its Citizen of the Year. Oskaloosa Mayor David Dixon was named the OACDG 2007 Citizen of the Year.

The Chamber also holds a benefit golf tournament in May in conjunction with the banquet to raise funds for its scholarship fund for local high school seniors.

### Oskaloosa Municipal Band

The Oskaloosa Municipal Band serenades the public in the historic Bandstand on Oskaloosa's city square on Thursday evenings beginning in June. The band begins to play at 8 p.m., but this year, the Chamber is organizing entertainment before the band concert, beginning at 7:15 p.m. There will be dueling pianos, a fiddle player, dance studio performers and entertainment from the George Daily Auditorium.

### Art on the Square

Art on the Square is a popular event that always draws a crowd to Oskaloosa's city square. This year's event is slated for Saturday, June 14, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

In 2007, 50 art vendors from all over the United States showcased their artistic mediums. There was food and entertainment such as music groups, clowns and children's activities to help entertain people.

### Friday After Five

The Chamber sponsors Friday After Five during June so people can come to the city square, enjoy some live music, grab something to eat and drink, and just kick back after the work week. But, the event also is a fund-raiser. This past year, Friday After Five celebrated another successful season by sharing almost \$10,000 of profit with local organizations.

The band line up for the 2008 Friday After Five includes:

- May 30: Standing Hampton
- June 6: Small Town Super Heroes
- June 13: Insane Jane
- June 20: Justin Kesterson and Rude Mood
- June 27: Cedar Island Band

### Celebration of Fellowship and Cultural Entertainment

This year, the Chamber is holding a Celebration of Fellowship and Cultural Entertainment in early June to coincide with local events. A representative of the state of Iowa will present Oskaloosa with a plaque and a sign on June 12 to commemorate Oskaloosa's designation as a cultural and entertainment district. The presentation will be made before the Oskaloosa Municipal Band concert on the square and the prelude entertainment — dueling pianos. Then, on Friday, Insane Jane will take the stage for Friday After Five, and on Saturday, Art on the Square will be held.

### The Southern Iowa Fair

During the Southern Iowa Fair in July, the Oskaloosa Chamber holds a breakfast and barbecue for FFA and 4-H members.

### Sweet Corn Serenade

The Chamber hosts the annual Sweet Corn Serenade in early August so people can gather for an evening of entertainment, togetherness, and of course, to enjoy the goodness of home-grown, roasted, succulent sweet corn. Besides the sweet corn, people can enjoy events such as a pie baking contest, a corn shucking contest, YMCA children's activities and live music.

### Student Meet & Greet

The Oskaloosa Chamber hosts a Meet & Greet night for William Penn and Vennard College students in September so they can meet representatives of local businesses.

### Trick or Treat Parade

The Chamber holds a Trick or Treat parade in Oskaloosa's downtown so children can don their favorite Halloween costumes and go around to local businesses in search of candy and treats. This past year, at least 1,000 children participated.

### Lighted Christmas Parade

The Chamber and Main Street team up for the annual Lighted Christmas Parade through downtown Oskaloosa at the first of December. The weather this past year was mild — lows in the 30s with little wind — and people lined the streets to watch the 65 parade entries.

### Holiday Auction

The Holiday Auction is a new event the Chamber sponsored to help make Oskaloosa your first choice for shopping. Eighty Red Start Oskaloosa merchants participated in the auction where people kept their holiday purchase receipts to auction off for merchandise.

### The Communicator

The Oskaloosa Chamber also publishes a monthly newsletter — The Communicator — to keep chamber members abreast of developments in the local business community.

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