



## *De's Dazzles* – DON'T SEEK NEW LANDS BUT SEE WITH NEW EYES.

Back in January, I met Sara Broers, owner of Midwest Travel Network, who spoke at the Corning Opera House on *100 Things To Do In Iowa*. From there we partnered with Adams Community Economic Development Executive Director, Raelynne Risser and scheduled a FAM tour for May 31 to June 2. FAM tours or familiarization trips are where a pre-vetted group of influencers & writers visit your community & write about it. We hosted six influencers who explored our county & shared their experiences through pictures & comments on Facebook and Instagram.

Our guests were Brian Abeling from Iowa Road Trip, Wanda Patsche from Minnesota Farm Living, Sage Scott from Missouri Everyday Wanderer, Tim Trudell from Nebraska Walking Tourists, Dannelle Gray from Wisconsin Traveling Cheesehead and Sara Broers from Travel with Sara. Each person specialized in different areas, such as photography, food, agriculture, culture and have various connections with authors, magazines, and television stations throughout the Midwest.



Raelynne and I took them on one-of-a-kind tours of Icarian Village, Corning Opera House, Johnny Carson Birthplace, House of History and Corning Hotel. We gorged on delicious food at Los Catrines, Primrose, Sweet Desires Bakery, and Backgrounds Coffee. Doodled at Corning Center for Fine Arts, relaxed on a boat tour of Lake Icaria, and enjoyed the First Friday BBQ and First Friday Friends speaker series at the opera house. Overall, the six influencers were impressed with how many things there are to do in Iowa's smallest and least populated county.

Brian Abeling took an interesting drone photo of Corning's Davis Avenue from the south looking north, where Davis Avenue looked almost flat. As the eight of us explored places I have been to hundreds of times, it was fascinating to see from their fresh perspective! To me, it is fascinating that different people can look at the same thing from different angles and see it in such totally different ways! They shared successful ideas they have experienced in other places and brainstormed things we could try right here!



So my advice, don't let the little pebble in your shoe wear you down. I discovered doodling is relaxing; gained knowledge about Lake Icaria's walleye; and inspired by the can-do-attitude of all the volunteers and movers & shakers in our county! If you haven't explored something locally it is the perfect time to learn something new, try something different, and convince yourself that you have no limits!

Sincerely,

De Heaton, Executive Director 6/14/2023