

## 2016 Peer Group Conference Surpasses Expectations

We just wrapped up another fabulous Peer Group Conference. Check out the [Peer Group Newsletter](#).

Feedback from attendees indicates that the educational sessions and the new Travel Expo format is just what our members were looking for. The investment in their clubs was time and money well spent. In reference to the Travel Expo, Adrienne Williams of Farmers Savings Bank & Trust in Vinton, IA said, **"I absolutely loved this part!"**

**"The conference was really great! The variety and quality of speakers was excellent and I took something from each session!"** - Kim Knes, Elgin State Bank (IL)

**"Meeting other travel people makes you feel like what we're doing is worth the time. I would like to bottle up all the excitement of what we do to help our travelers and take them all back to work. The excitement is amazing."** - Becky Brower, Freedom Bank (Elkader, IA)

The Advisory Board is preparing to meet next month to begin plans for next year's event. We are excited to bring you another content-rich experience that you won't want to miss. We will be putting together task forces to address Club Directors' concerns and identifying one primary issue to address head-on at Fall Forum.

Make the most of your HCI membership and plan to attend both events.

## Farewell to the Ruhdes

Don and Jan Ruhde have been the Millennium Club directors at Iowa Falls State Bank for the past 16 years, a role that they assumed after their retirement from teaching. Throughout those years they have been pillars in the HCI organization. They have consistently supported the Preferred Tour Operators. They have provided leadership as the Advisory Board Chair (Jan) for the past 2 years, and the CBCD Chair (Don) since the program's inception in 2012. Their spirit and enthusiasm for their club and those that they have served has been contagious.



Don and Jan have announced their retirement from their positions as of April 30, saying, "We have certainly enjoyed our association with Heritage Clubs International - the peer conferences, networking with many of you, and arranging travels through PTOs and partners. We will miss seeing all of you, and we wish you well in your continued work and travels." All of us at HCI will certainly miss the Ruhdes, and will welcome them back to visit us any time. We wish them many wonderful years in their retirement.

## Roseville Visitors Association: Your Key to MSP

When planning a tour to the Minneapolis and Saint Paul area, the [Roseville Visitors Association](#) is a great resource for itinerary planning assistance, hotel research and restaurant suggestions. They have a lot of new additions to Roseville this year including the newly renovated Holiday Inn Express and two new hotels, the Hampton Inn &

Suites and the Home 2 Suites. Roseville is a great location for groups to stay due to its close proximity to Minneapolis and Saint Paul. The best part about working with the Roseville Visitors Association is that its services are complimentary and it offers a wonderful meet and greet for groups with a free rose for each guest!

Carrie Ford, Director of Sales & Marketing, first attended Peer Group when it was in Plano, TX (yes, that long ago!) and was impressed with the bankers and how friendly they were. "It's truly a show where you connect with the Club Directors and form lasting relationships," she says.

"This was my 15th HCI Peer Group and I always enjoy seeing familiar faces! Peer group has evolved over the years and I really like the new format of appointments. From a partner perspective, it's great to have time to meet with the Club Directors one-on-one to discuss upcoming tours and the needs of the Club Directors when visiting your area."

The Roseville Visitors Association is pleased to offer one of many different itineraries to your group and can also customize a tour for you. You'll find that Roseville is perfectly positioned to offer great fun any time of year.

Contact: Carrie Ford  
651-633-3002  
[cford@visitroseville.com](mailto:cford@visitroseville.com)  
[www.visitroseville.com](http://www.visitroseville.com)

## *We are pleased to announce the Newly Certified Bank Club Directors*

Certified Bank Club Director Program (a.k.a. CBCD)  
March 2016 Graduates:

**Vicky Bauer**, Century Bank - Shenandoah, IA  
**Mary Busch**, First National Bank - DeKalb, IL  
**Linda Cloutier**, Community National Bank - Derby, VT  
**Melanie Davis**, Farmers Savings Bank and Trust - Vinton, IA  
**Amy Evans**, D.L. Evans Bank - Boise, ID  
**Ann Howe**, FreedomBank - Monona, IA  
**Amber Thomas**, Central Bank Illinois - Geneseo, IL  
**Cindy Cullins**, Relyance Bank - Pine Bluff, AR

## **Member Spotlight: Linda Cloutier, CBCD**

Community National Bank  
Derby, Vermont

Linda Cloutier, CBCD has been with the Community Circle at Community National Bank in Derby, Vermont since 1998. She was the co-director with Jeanne Bonnell and then became its sole director after Jeanne's retirement seven years ago. Having been with the bank for 31 years, Linda remembers when the club started in 1988. The President and management team went to Iowa to attend training before opening the Club's doors. This allowed the Club to launch the program and it has continued to be a success. Since its start, the leadership has seen the value of the Bank Club. "I am very fortunate that my full-time job is running Community Circle," says Linda. She is blessed to have an assistant and includes Julie Mossa in all aspects of the Club. Together they have an open door policy which allows them to spend time with their members which is the most important part of the job. The thing that Linda loves most about the job is the people. She says, "Travelling is only a bonus. The best part is the people that we meet every day. We treasure the friendships and the special memories made along the way."

Both Linda and Julie attended the Peer Group conference in March where Linda received her Certified Bank Club Director certificate. (Congratulations to her and the seven others who earned their certification!) Linda considers Peer Group to be "priceless" because "everyone is on the same page and wants to help." She particularly appreciates the networking opportunities and educational sessions.

Community Circle hosts many day trips and mini trips throughout the year, in addition to a few larger ones. "We have had some wonderful tours with HCI's Preferred Tour Operators." Last summer they travelled to Northern California with Globus and visited Alaska with Islands in the Sun Cruises and Tours. One of their tours this summer

will be with Collette Vacations visiting the Canadian Rockies and Calgary Stampede. Another regular feature of their club is Movie morning which they host twice a month. They rent the entire movie theatre and offer pastries and coffee before the 9:30 show. Linda says, "These events are free to our customers. It is our way of saying Thank You." They also offer half-price theatre tickets to their members in addition to hosting bridge club and various seminars. Linda also states, "We are fortunate to be able to offer tours travelling far and wide and have the opportunity to experience new adventures. It is also a pleasure to support our local communities with a variety of events."



Hospitality Tours



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