Municipal News

Diversity

Community

Progressive

Dedication
Based on information in a newly released year-end report, officials with the U.S. Cellular Coliseum have announced that records show pleasing numbers in both ticket sales and attendance.

According to the report, the coliseum grossed $3.9 million in ticket sales, and hosted nearly 300,000 fans and supporters from May 2012 through April 2013.

A record high operating profit for the coliseum was reached this past fiscal year at $176,759, without auditor’s adjustments.

The economic impact of the U.S. Cellular Coliseum over the past 7 years (opened April 2006) is over $98 million based on Bloomington-Normal Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Illinois Office of Tourism standard formulas used to measure economic impact from tourism. These formulas measure the total effects of direct and/or indirect recirculation of income.

“Despite a recovering economy, the U.S. Cellular Coliseum’s overall performance and economic impact to the local community was a success,” said Bart Rogers, Vice President of the Central Illinois Arena Management.

Detailed in the report, the City of Bloomington and its surrounding communities received an economic contribution of nearly $13 million due to the entertainment scene that the coliseum provides. This has been a consistent average since 2009.

Maintaining its track record over the past five years, the coliseum was able to host more than 200 events including sold out performances by various music artists, and sporting events.

Most notably, Luke Bryan, a Country and Western singer, broke the coliseum’s all-time single attendance record when nearly 15,000 fans flocked to the coliseum for Bryan’s two-day concert tour.

The arena also hosted five other sold out ticket events during the year.

“It is very exciting to see what this facility in seven years ultimately means to Bloomington and the surrounding area,” said Rogers. “We will continue to strive to increase the number of profitable events held at the Coliseum as being the largest entertainment attraction in the Bloomington / Normal metro area.”

Recognizing the success of Bloomington’s entertainment hub, “Venues Today”, a premier concert and convention industry publication, ranked the coliseum second as the busiest and most successful mid-size venue in the Midwest, just behind Toledo, Ohio’s Huntington Center.

Since the U.S. Cellular Coliseum was erected in Downtown Bloomington in 2006, it has hosted over 2.1 million fans and has created nearly $98 million in economic contributions.

“U.S. Cellular Coliseum’s Economic Impact Over $98M

Coliseum Recognized Nationally After It Plays Host to Hundreds-of-Thousands of Fans During the 2012 Season

Enjoy Serving Others, Produce Results, Act With Integrity, Take Responsibility, Be Innovative, Practice Teamwork, Show Spirit!
Automated Garbage Service Soon To Be A Reality

This is going to be a more cost efficient and safer means for our employees to collect residential trash.”

-David Hales, City Manager

Phase one of the city’s automated garbage service program is set to begin after city aldermen approved spending $950,000 for trash carts that will be used in a new automated trash service. The service is set to begin this Fall at no cost to the residents.

With the funds granted by the council, city officials will not only purchase the standard 95 and 65 gallon trash carts but will also purchase a 35 gallon size for individuals interested in a smaller option.

“This is going to be a more cost efficient and safer means for our employees to collect residential trash,” said City Manager David Hales. “Automated collection will reduce labor costs and avoid costly injuries to our employees.”

City officials expect the three man crew that is normally required to conduct manual trash operations would be reduced to a single person performing the automated service.

The terms of the contract between the city and Rehrig Pacific is for one year at which time officials may negotiate a renewal.

The final phase of the program, purchasing the remaining 7,000 carts needed to complete the project, has not been set.

The newly acquired carts are set to be added to the largest Monday and Tuesday routes.

Phase one of the program first began in the Spring of 2013 when the city first implemented the automated recycling service.

Trash cans will be designated with a black top and container, recycling carts are designated with a blue top and black container.

Refuse Trucks

With the approval of the city council in August, the Public Works Department purchased seven new garbage trucks specifically designed to provide the automated trash and recycling service at a cost of $290,000 each.

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City Retail Recruitment Campaign Seeking Community Votes

The City is seeking citizen input to attract new retail opportunities

The City of Bloomington has gone to the worldwide web as it seeks citizen input as a means to assist the community in retail attractions.

The Office of Economic Development has recently launched a new function within the department’s city website, one that will allow area residents to voice their opinions as to which retailers should enter the local market.

The site requests participants to “help bring new retail options to the community by sharing which stores you want to see open in Bloomington.”

According to the webpage, real estate professionals focus on demographic indicators such as population, household income and educational attainment when making decisions about where to locate.

While local statistics reflect a stable economy with improving retail sales trends, City of Bloomington Economic Development Coordinator Justine Robinson feels that a “proactive and tailored approach” can greatly enhance a municipality’s recruitment efforts. As such, and given that Bloomington is a growing community with evolving needs, she also feels that it is critical that its citizens play an active role in the retail attraction process.

“When new retailers open brick and mortar locations, residents stand to benefit not only from a greater shopping experience but also from an overall improvement in their quality of life…”

Justine Robinson, City of Bloomington Economic Development Coordinator

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“Retail recruitment is a competitive task and one that is best achieved when all parties - residents, developers, property owners, city staff and elected officials - Retail Survey- Continued On Page 6

Economic Development Online Survey!
Enjoy Serving Others, Produce Results, Act With Integrity, Take Responsibility, Be Innovative, Practice Teamwork, Show Spirit!
City council members were recently presented with an updated “Downtown Nightlife” report by the Office of the City Manager highlighting issues with the city’s local bar scene. The report comes after a November 2012 work session where aldermen identified an immediate need for action regarding the downtown area.

“Our staff has done a terrific job in continuing to compile all of this information in order for the council to make a sound decision”, said City Manager David Hales.

In the report, which was presented during an August work session, various issues pertaining to criminal behavior were discussed in detail, most notably: fighting, illegal consumption of alcohol by minors, resisting arrest, and crowd control (large gatherings on public walk ways).

During the 2012 work session alderman directed staff to increase the amount of patrol officers from 4 to 6 in the downtown area on specific nights and also imposed a 6 month moratorium for liquor permits.

According to the report, the Bloomington Police Department responded to 297 calls in the downtown area in 2012 versus 78 calls thus far in 2013. The majority of which were in regard to physical altercations and minors consuming alcohol.

Also detailed in the recent report was the fact that 42 police reports regarding damage to downtown properties were received in 2012 versus the 9 reports taken by police this year.

After evaluating the report and hearing recommendations from city staff on how to continue to combat the criminal behavior in the downtown area, alderman gave the go-ahead for the City Manager’s office to begin evaluating the possible purchase of 15-20 surveillance cameras for the downtown area.

“The city’s Information Department and Police Department will begin looking into prices of several cameras through various vendors,” said Hales. “We anticipate having the required information for the council to make a decision within the next few weeks.”

A copy of the report can be found on the city’s website at www.cityblm.org.

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**Vehicles-For-Hire**

The city’s Legal Department was also directed to begin drafting a city ordinance that would layout repercussions for individuals consuming alcohol while traveling by taxi, bus or other vehicles-for-hire.

“The city’s legal department is working on a draft to present to the council as we speak,” said Todd Greenburg, City of Bloomington’s Chief Legal Council. “We hope to have a drafted ordinance in front of the Council to consider within the next few weeks.”

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**Retail Survey- Continued From Page 3**

After enough survey data is collected, the information will be utilized to show retailers that Bloomington is interested in helping their brand generate new revenue.

What’s more, a customized package can be sent to each representative demonstrating the potential revenue for their store type and introducing spaces that meet their specified needs. This too will prove helpful as the City strives to assist local property owners and developers in building more productive shopping centers.

“By providing our team with relevant data, attraction efforts can be targeted to particular sectors or retailers, thereby increasing the likelihood for success.

‘When new retailers open brick and mortar locations, residents stand to benefit not only from a greater shopping experience but also from an overall improvement in their quality of life with what is oftentimes an infusion of new sales tax revenue into the local economy.’

Those who wish to participate in the survey can visit the City’s website at www.cityblm.org/retailrequest. The survey will be an ongoing effort with new retailers being highlighted on a rotation.

For those seeking information about this topic, or to schedule an interview with Justine Robinson, call (309) 434-2611 or email jrobinson@cityblm.org.
**Mark Your Calendars For The Final Days Of Summer Fun!**

- August 23rd & 24th - Bruegala - Red Wanting Blue playing at the BCPA. $15 Entry Fee. Event starts at 6 p.m.
- August 25th - Music Under The Starts - Miller Park Band Stand. Starts at 6:30 p.m.
- September 2nd - Holiday and O'Neal Pools Close
- September 9th - Enjoy the Music Group - Good Lovelies at the BCPA
- September 9th - Golf Fundraiser, Ronald McDonald House, The Den at Fox Creek Starts at 9 p.m.
- September 28th - World Wide Day of Play, Anderson Park, Normal; YWCA McLean County; Uptown Block Party. Starts at 9 a.m.
- September 29th - Ball Room Dance, Miller Park Pavilion. Starts at 1:30 p.m.
- October 5th - Fall Festival, Miller Park. Starts at 2 p.m.

**City Council Meetings**

City Council Regular Meetings Are Held at 7 p.m. on the Second and Fourth Monday of Each Month in the Council Chambers at City Hall Located at 109 E. Olive Street.

**City Council:**

Mayor Tari Renner
Aldermen: Kevin Lower, David Sage, Mboka Mwilambwe, Judy Stearns, Jennifer McDade, Karen Schmidt, Scott Black, Rob Fazzini, and Jim Fruin

For more information on how to prevent becoming a victim of identity theft log on to the City of Bloomington website at www.cityblm.org and click on “In The News”.

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**Tips to Avoid Hotel Scams**

1. Walk down to the front desk to verify the information
2. When staying at a hotel do not give your financial information over the phone

**Other Common Telephone Scams include:**

- Prize Offers
- Travel Packages
- Investments
- Bank Alerts
- Working at Home
- Legal Claims

Charities - To find out if a charity is legitimate and registered, check with the Attorney General’s Charitable Trusts Bureau at 312-814-2595.

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**Scams - Continued From Pg. 2**

**Tips to Avoid Phone Scams**

1. Avoid wire transfers, cashier’s checks, and money orders and always
2. Verify the information!

**HOTEL GUEST SCAM**

The Bloomington Police Department received two reports regarding the following credit card scam at local hotels.

An unknown subject will call a guest’s room directly and pose as a member of the hotel's front desk staff. After stating that they are a member of the front desk staff, the suspect will then request credit card information. The suspect claims the hotel's computer system has crashed and the credit card information on record has been lost.

To help make their act more believable, the suspect will apologize profusely for the hour of the phone call and offer some sort of hotel compensation. The scam has been reported at two different hotels in Bloomington.