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## **Seven tourist organizations to get funds from overnight hotel stays**

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CRYSTAL LAKE - The Raue Center for the Arts is one of **seven organizations** that will receive a portion of the \$145,000 in **hotel-tax** revenue that the city of Crystal Lake is distributing **to** promote tourism. Richard Kuranda, executive director of the Raue Center, said that he was looking forward **to** what his center would do with the \$49,000 award, the largest amount given **to** one **organization** by the city this year.

Kuranda said funding **from** the city also would allow him **to** launch new initiatives such as year-round programming and a Studio for the Arts center.

"We're quite excited that the city is continuing its support for us," he said. "Monies will be used **to** support marketing and development for the center."

The city's 2.5 percent tax on **hotel-room stays** was implemented in 2002. Each year, the council allocates money collected **from** taxes **to** the local **tourist** destinations.

Last year, \$160,000 was distributed among eight **organizations**.

This year, the council gave out \$15,000 less because of a decrease in revenue generated by **hotels**, Finance Director Mark Nannini said.

Mayor Aaron Shepley said **organizations** that encouraged tourism helped establish Crystal Lake as a destination.

The council awarded \$39,000 **to** the McHenry County Youth Sports Association for its annual Continental Amateur Baseball Association tournament, which has brought thousands of visitors **from** all over the

world.

The city council received 12 applications **from organizations** that requested over \$400,000.

Shepley said local **organizations** and events had a significant impact on tourism.

"Each **organization** is doing something **to contribute to** promoting Crystal Lake throughout the region," he said. "It's an opportunity for people **to** see the county and the people we have here."

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