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Event Raises \$13,000 for Corridor 336

"By Alison McGaughey / Journal Staff Writer"

MACOMB -At a Chamber of Commerce Transportation Committee meeting yesterday city attorney Bruce Biagini announced that the 336 Rally held in Bushnell earlier this month raised in excess of \$13,000, after expenses.

"And the checks are still coming in," he said.

The 336 Coalition began in December of 1997, with the hopes of connecting Macomb and Peoria with a four-lane highway. The first phase of that idea will soon begin, after "Illinois First" funding set aside \$7.5 million for corridor identification for the proposed highway.

The money will be used to identify a corridor for the proposed highway, according to coalition President Mark Johann said at the Bushnell rally earlier this month.

According to coalition members, 336 would bring a long-needed connection between Macomb and Peoria, and would be a perfect finish to construction on 336 between Quincy and Macomb. It would also be very beneficial for towns all along the route.

"It would connect us to the rest of the people in Illinois," Johann said. "All the towns along the route of the road, and even the towns adjacent to it, would benefit by having ... the overall economic benefits of having four lane access to the interstate system."

Between 300 and 400 people attended the event to raise money and awareness for the 336 Coalition project. The 336 project was also discussed at the Tri-State Summit Oct. 6 in Hannibal, Biagini said.

In other transportation news, Biagini said that Iowa has targeted the freeway from Burlington to Des

Moines as one of its higher priority projects, with \$800 million to build 180 miles of road included in the plans.

"That could become the top priority for this region, and could mean a lot of pressure for the stretch of road between Monmouth and Burlington," Biagini said.

The committee also discussed the possible impact on the area when the new Mormon Temple in Nauvoo is built. According to the Associated Press, the Nauvoo City Council approved the Mormon church's plans for a \$23 million temple in the church-founded city.

The Nauvoo council originally balked at plans to rebuild the Mormons' historic temple because of fears it would bring more tourists than the town's 1,200 residents and its two-person police force could handle.

"We need to improve the infrastructure between here and there," Biagini said. "We have the most lodging and places to eat on this side of Nauvoo. This is a very positive thing, but we need to upgrade the two-lane between Hamilton and up, and between here and Carthage. It's well built, but we'll need to make sure it's well-maintained."

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