

Closer to Home

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BRING THEM BACK HOME

Attend the 2nd Annual
Homer Get Together - Aug. 31

The 2nd Annual Homer Get Together will be held **August 31, 2006** from **5:30-7:00 p.m.** at the new **Northern Grounds Coffee Shop** in downtown Willmar at Centre Place, 333 Litchfield Avenue SW. The event is casual and attendees are welcome to come and go as they are available, with a **group photo** (see page 2) of attendees to be taken at **6:00 p.m.**

The event is being organized to build awareness for other locally-raised residents who are living elsewhere but may also want to move back to take advantage of the greater work and lifestyle opportunities available in Kandiyohi County. Last year's event drew more than 80 returned alumni.

"We are excited for the chance to bring as many of our homers together as possible," said Kathy Schwantes, Assistant Director of the EDC. "These people are success stories for us – it really says something about our quality of life when people who have their choice of where to live decide they want to come back home to work and live."

Life-Science Innovations is Changing Lives

Opportunities at the new MinnWest Technology Campus have brought two Kandiyohi County natives back home. **Chris Huisinga** joined Life-Science Innovations (LSI) as the Director of Business Development after 10 years with Wells Fargo in Minneapolis and Naples, FL. In his previous position, Chris was also Vice President and Regional Director of Consumer Credit for the Twin Cities metro area working as part of Wells Fargo's corporate office in San Francisco, CA. He brings extensive experience in finance, operations, marketing and management to LSI.



The pace of life, lack of traffic, boundless lakes and outdoor activities, proximity to family, and the quality of the school system were some of the major factors that drew Chris, his wife Joi, and their children Ethan (3) and Ella (2) back to Kandiyohi County. Most important, the overall quality of life and the family-friendly environment of Kandiyohi County made the decision to return an easy one.

"It's just a more friendly environment," Chris states. "You know all your neighbors and can feel comfortable letting your kids play in the neighborhood without many of the fears that accompany life in a larger city. Joi and I have lived in several cities and none rivaled the quality of living that we have experienced in Kandiyohi County."

Chris' current efforts include active involvement in process improvement and internal change in LSI's existing companies, as well as actively marketing the new MinnWest Technology Campus to companies outside the Willmar area.

Jonathan Huisinga also grew up in Willmar and recently returned after nearly a decade of living and working around downtown Minneapolis. After graduating from the University of Minnesota, he worked with the Star Tribune. He was then hired by Capella University's recruiting department and over the next two years completed his MBA.

A surprising phone call changed his life when LSI called to request that he interview for their newly opened HR Development Manager position. A few months later, he and his wife Karen moved back to the area. When asked about the change Jonathan said, "While we loved living in the city, we were getting tired of the fast-paced life. We wanted to slow down, and the suburbs were not an option. I've always said that I'd either live near downtown Minneapolis or out in Willmar." (continued on page 2)

MinnWest Technology Campus is Expanding Quickly

The MinnWest Technology Campus is home to several successful companies, now including Life-Science Innovations (LSI), Midwest Data, Nova-Tech Engineering, and Epitopix. MinnWest is actively recruiting technology businesses – particularly those in the bio-sciences and engineering arena – to the campus. The combination of on-campus amenities (i.e. day care, cafeteria, fitness center, walkways, etc.), a skilled labor force, collegial business atmosphere, and tax-free development through the JOBZ program are very appealing to prospective tenants. Professionals like engineers, biologists, technicians and IT specialists are in high demand.



Offices for LSI and Nova-Tech have largely been completed and the two companies have moved the majority of their employees onto campus. Renovations for Midwest Data's offices and an IT data center are currently underway with anticipated completion in the near future. Epitopix will be taking an incremental approach to moving its resources to campus to best facilitate production in their USDA licensed production facility while maximizing R&D on campus.

For more information on the campus and for periodic updates on progress, go to:
<http://www.minnwesttechnologycampus.com/>



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"It really says something about our quality of life in Kandiyohi County when people who have their choice of where to live decide they want to come back home to work, live, and play."

Willmar's Beautiful New Airport to Open This Fall

Excerpts from an article by David Little in the West Central Tribune

At the new Willmar Municipal Airport, the runway, taxiways and parking lots are striped; lights for the runway, taxiways, parking lots and road are installed; and security fencing is going up.

"The majority of the airport is moving along at a very nice pace," airport manager Melissa Galvan said. "We're on track for a September opening."

Willmar Air Service rents the fixed-base operator building, located next to the terminal, and provides fuel, sales and services to aircraft owners and operators. Also, Willmar Air Service is constructing its own hangar next to the fixed-base operator building for company business.



The terminal at the new Willmar airport

The terminal houses the main lobby and waiting area, receptionist area, pilots' lounges, manager's office and meeting room. Galvan said the lobby provides a comfortable area for people to sit and wait for aircraft, have a snack or view the ramp and runway. Two pilots' lounges are available, and a larger lounge will be equipped with weather computers, maps and television where pilots can plan their flights, relax and visit.

"We're very happy with how it turned out. It's a beautiful building," said Galvan.

Huisingas join Life-Science Innovations (continued from page 1)

Jonathan and Karen, who is from Nova Scotia, met while traveling in Europe (if you meet either of them, ask them for the story – it's a good one). They are looking forward to adjusting to a quieter life and starting a family. When asked about reactions to their move from friends and family, Jonathan replied, "Our family and friends in Willmar and in Canada thought we finally smartened up. Our city friends thought we were crazy until I told them about the great opportunities that are opening up in the area...then their eyes popped out of their heads when we told them how much we paid for our house."

Jonathan encourages the community to recruit family and friends back to the Willmar lakes area. "There are great opportunities for talented individuals to build a career in the area, and LSI is proud to be a part of the growth that is occurring. We are committed to building a world-class organization here. My responsibility is to find the best people possible for the positions that we open, and then to ensure that our employees know they are valued and are given opportunities to grow," added Jonathan about developing LSI's HR Department.

Open positions, along with complete job descriptions can be found at:

www.life-scienceinnovations.com/opportunities.aspx

* **Staff Mechanical Engineer & Staff Electrical Engineer** – Nova-Tech Engineering

Bachelor's deg. in Engineering; mold & machine design exp.; machine vision; CAD, SolidWorks

* **Accounting Supervisor** – Life-Science Innovations at FSE

Bachelor's deg. in Accounting; supervise small staff; product costing & cash accruals experience

* **Project Technician** – Life-Science Innovations

Assoc. deg. in technical field; CAD modeling, SolidWorks experience; engineering new products

FeedLogic Systems to move to the MinnWest Technology Campus

MinnWest Technology Campus is in the final stages of completing an agreement with FeedLogic Systems, Inc.

FEEDLOGIC
SYSTEMS INC.

of Seattle, WA to bring FLSI's research, development and other functions to the MinnWest campus. FLSI utilizes state-of-the-art robotic and software systems to maximize efficiency in livestock production facilities. Their proprietary robotic systems are in operation throughout the US and Canada in hog production and testing. MinnWest expects the FeedLogic team to relocate to the campus in fall of 2006. Along with the current FLSI team, several new positions in the areas of engineering, software development, customer service, and marketing will be available and in demand. Learn more about FeedLogic at:

www.feedlogic.com/

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has openings available:



Technical Analyst LAN/WAN
Spicer MN ~ \$52,000 - \$55,000

* Bachelor's deg. in IT; 2 years CISCO incl. IOS and QOS; telecom vendor exp.

Applications Analyst

Spicer MN ~ \$55,000 - \$65,000

* Bachelor's deg. in IT; 4 years of iSeries dev. exp.; RPG prog. exp.; COBOL & SQL exp.; teamwork

Senior Applications Analyst

Spicer MN ~ \$60,000 - \$70,000

* Bachelor's deg. in IT; 6 years of iSeries dev.; RPG prog. exp.; COBOL & SQL exp.; leadership & management

Production Supervisor, 2nd Shift

Willmar MN ~ \$32,000 - \$42,000

* Experience supervising people, strong org., written, & verbal comm. skills

www.jennieoturkeystore.com/company.asp

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<http://careers.bestbuy.com>

Ready to move home?

Opportunities for growth are everywhere, even while our residents maintain our better pace and quality of life. If you're ready to move here as well, please call the EDC at 320-235-7370 or 888-815-7370 or visit our website @ www.kandiyohi.com to learn how to get matched up with local employers!

Also check out www.willmar.com/!

Group Photo from the
1st Annual Homer Get Together

