



Coming Home to Home State Bank

After several years away, Kandiyohi native Laura (Behm) Warne and her husband, Dion, returned to Willmar in 1993. Prior to that, both worked as bank examiners for the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis and had spent time in North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, and Washington D.C.

It was Dion who initially encouraged Laura to consider returning to her roots in the Willmar lakes area to get involved in her family's banking business at Home State Bank.

Home State Bank had been purchased by Laura's parents, Ken and Alix Behm, in 1971 after they too had returned to the Willmar lakes area after pursuing careers elsewhere. Ken, a native of Atwater, had spent 8 years away working for the former Federal Land Bank and had moved at least a half dozen times. Having the vision to see that Kandiyohi County had tremendous potential for the development of small business and for growth in residential real estate, Ken returned his family to Willmar and started the Behm legacy at Home State Bank.

Home State Bank has seen significant growth since Behm's purchase in 1971. Upon Laura and Dion's return in 1993, Home State Bank was a \$28 million bank with two offices in Kandiyohi and Willmar. Today, Home State Bank boasts \$120 million in assets, with five offices covering trade territory from Willmar to Hutchinson and Litchfield. Laura was named bank President in 1998 and her brother, Matt Behm, later joined the bank after college and working for two years in sales and advertising. Matt has become one of the top real estate lender producers in the Willmar market.



Matt Behm, Home State Bank

Still today the Behm family is convinced of the area's growth and economic potential, and have shown their commitment by constructing a brand new 11,000 square foot bank building on Willmar's east side. (Continued on page 2)



Laura Warne, Kandiyohi native

Development Corporation announces Bioscience Fund

Excerpts from an article by Anne Polta
in the West Central Tribune

Through its new Bioscience Fund, the Willmar Area Dev. Corp. (WADC) has hired a consultant to help market the MinnWest Technology Campus to future tenants. "The MinnWest Technology Campus is here. How do we prime the pump to get businesses to come to the area?" said John Christianson, chairman of the WADC.

Harlan Jacobs, president of Genesis Business Centers Ltd., started his contract in May. Although Jacobs will focus primarily on recruiting high-technology firms for the MinnWest Technology Campus, officials also want to focus on prospects that might be a good fit for Willmar's industrial park, downtown Willmar, or for the city's new airport, which will be opening later this year.

"I think there's an opportunity to bring a lot of high-quality jobs through new employers to your community," said Jacobs.

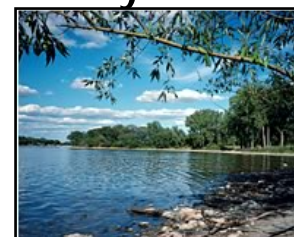
Summer Sizzles in the Willmar Lakes Area & Kandiyohi County



There are plenty of fun activities for individuals and families in the Willmar Lakes Area and Kandiyohi County. Many new recreational facilities were built and opened in 2005/2006, including Bill Taunton Stadium at Baker Field and the Dorothy Olson Aquatic Center.

The summer is also host to multiple community events and festivals including: SonShine Music Festival (sonshinefestival.com), the Little Crow Anglers Fishing Tournament, Kandi is Dandy Days, Atwater Festival Days, Willmar Fests (willmarfests.com), New London Summer Art Fair, Studio Hop (studiohop.org), Prinsburg 4th of July, Spicer 4th of July (spicermn.com), Cornstalk Fest (cornstalkfest.com), Pennock Fun Days, Lake Lillian Fun Days, New London Water Day (newlondonmn.com), the New London to New Brighton Antique Car Run, Kandiyohi County Fair (kandifair.com), and the New London Music Festival (newlondonmusic.org), among others!

For a full list of events, see: www.kandiyohi.com/visit/fairs.htm



Mike Pluimer Returns Home & Raises Family, Funds

With excerpts from an article by Diane Macht in the Raymond-Prinsburg News

In the midst of a successful career as an engineer at Toro Co., Michael Pluimer moved out of the Twin Cities so that his children could attend Central Minnesota Christian School in Prinsburg. The lure of returning home was strong for Pluimer, who was pursued and hired by a local company, and has since become an engineering consultant/lobbyist living in rural Raymond.

Pluimer wanted to give back to his community and the school that raised him, and decided to do some fund-raising by competing in the Ironman USA Triathlon, which consists of a 2.4 mile swim, a 112 mile bike ride and a 26.2 mile run. He finished in the top 500 among 1,800 competitors. That was good, but even better was knowing he met another important goal. He trained hard not only with the goal of finishing, but he wanted to raise money for a cause dear to his heart: Christian education at his alma mater, Central Minnesota Christian School.

Pluimer did both – in grand style. He finished 475th in a time of 11 hours and 43 minutes, and raised \$83,000 for CMCS. Since Pluimer was the top fundraiser in the Janus Charity Challenge, he earned an additional \$10,000 for the school, on top of the \$73,000 that was donated. He accepted the award at a ceremony in Idaho, where he spoke about his charity, saying he was “extremely humbled and blessed.” Pluimer said the next nearest fundraiser to him was at \$40,000. Janus gave him a free pass to any race in 2006, and Pluimer plans to race again. He wants to raise \$100,000 for CMCS at the Ironman in Lake Placid, New York on July 23, 2006.



Mike Pluimer, of rural Raymond, competes in the Ironman Triathlon

Coming Home to Home State Bank: *Continued from page 1*

The new Home State Bank building was completed in January 2006 and has further added to the positive growth Willmar’s east side has experienced during the past several years. This growth includes a three-year-old 50,000 square foot YMCA facility, several new commercial/



Home State Bank building, Willmar

retail mini-strip malls occupied by professionals and small restaurants, along with new housing developments. Laura states, “Many previous graduates from the Willmar area would be amazed and impressed with the changes that have occurred on the east side of Willmar. It is definitely not the same entrance to Willmar that it was in the 1980’s or 1990’s.”

Commenting on other opportunities in the Willmar community she’s seen since moving back home, Laura shares “I truly love and appreciate the community diversification; not only the ethnic diversity, but the business, social, and educational opportunities that the Willmar lakes area provides to young professionals and their families. It is a community where both the entrepreneur and experienced business person is respected and appreciated.”

Laura and Dion currently reside in rural Pennock and have two children and two foster care children that have been part of their family since November 2004. For more information about Home State Bank, visit www.hsbofmn.com/



Home State Bank lobby, Willmar

Raising Awareness to Bring Them Back Home

From raising a beautiful new bank building to a classy new baseball stadium to funds for a school, this issue of *Closer to Home* has focused on the idea of “raising” – including raising awareness for the many positive things happening every day in Kandiyohi County.

Opportunities for growth are everywhere, even while our residents maintain our better pace and quality of life.

Perhaps you’ve seen enough change that you’re ready to move here as well... If so, 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!

Local Job Opportunities!

- * www.ricehospital.com/careers/jobs.htm
- * www.jennieoturkeystore.com/company.asp?req=career
- * www.co.kandiyohi.mn.us/depts/HR/default.htm
- * www.acmc.com/careers.cfm
- * www.christianson.com
- * www.willmar-electric.com/employment.cfm
- * www.mnelectric.com/
- * www.marketingconcepts.com
- * www.employment-plus.com/
- * www1.mnworks.org/jobseeker/willmar_jobs.cfm

Summer Events in the Willmar Lakes Area:

www.willmarlakesarea.com

www.kandiyohi.com

