

2010 Home Grown Economy Conference

U.S. Rep. Collin Peterson announced that United States Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack will be in Marshall on February 15 and 16 to attend and give the keynote address at the 2010 Home Grown Economy conference at Southwest Minnesota State University (SWSU).

“Having Secretary Vilsack come to Marshall to attend and participate in this year’s conference is a big deal for us,” Peterson said. “He knows agriculture and he knows that local foods are an important component of economic development for us. I think people are going to be very interested to speak with him and to hear what he has to say.”

The Home Grown Economy Conference will kickoff on Monday, Feb. 15, with a Local Food and Wine Sampler Showcase catered by Dr. Michael

Cheng’s culinary students at SWSU. Rep. Peterson and Secretary Vilsack will also be there to welcome conference attendees and Rep. Peterson will play his guitar and sing with a local band. Registration for Monday’s event will be limited to the first 120 people who register.

“Changing attitudes about food, its impact on health and well-being, and growing opportunities for small farmers have sparked a movement across the country and in Minnesota of consumers seeking out locally grown foods, Peterson said, “and I’m hosting this conference to help get the word out and link people to the available resources.”

“With this demand for more locally grown foods, farmers and rural communities can benefit from a variety of new opportunities. The farm to school program, linking local

agricultural producers to school lunch and breakfast programs, is growing in Minnesota. Farmers markets and food co-ops are springing up all over the state and in grocery stores; “Minnesota Grown” and “locally grown” labels are being sought out by shoppers.”

“On Tuesday, Secretary Vilsack will be our keynote speaker,” Peterson said. “As people know he’s a former governor of Iowa and he knows from first hand experience how agriculture generates economic growth in rural America.”

In addition to the Marshall location, Secretary Vilsack’s keynote address and other sessions on Tuesday, Feb. 16 will be broadcast to other locations in the district through interactive video.

The following college campus locations will be participating: University of Minnesota, Crookston, University of Minnesota, Morris, Bemidji State University and Minnesota State Community and Technical College in Fergus Falls.

For more information on the 2010 Home Grown Economy Conference or to register, go to www.regionalpartnerships.umn.edu, or contact Congressman Peterson’s office at 218-847-5056.



Sno Daze candidates

Candidates for this year’s Sno Daze king and queen were selected Tuesday, Jan. 26. The royal court included, from left, Kenny Burton, Annie Gillespie, Ryan Carter, Ashley Miles, Nick Westlerlund, Kelley Hagenson, Beth Hoyt, Jason Johnson, Savanna Hill, Brandon

Haglin, Katlynn Ulring and Trevor Wentworth. Savanna Hill and Jason Johnson were crowned queen and king Monday afternoon in a program at the high school gym. (Staples World photo by Ken Klose)

Increased enforcement Super Bowl weekend

Todd County Sheriff’s deputies will step up DWI enforcement patrols Super Bowl weekend Feb 5, -7, to intercept impaired drivers on the roadway. The enforcement will also include added seat belt patrols. The Todd County Sheriff’s office is advising motorists to have a game plan for sober ride for Super Bowl festivities and to always buckle up.

During Minnesota Super Bowl weekends 2006-2008, alcohol-related crashes accounted for five of the seven motorists killed and all five were not buckled up. During this same period, 1,474 motorists were arrested for DWI.

“Super Bowl parties often start early and run late, so designate a sober driver in advance of kick-off,” says Todd County Sheriff Peter J. Mikkelsen. Sheriff Mikkelsen adds that officers will also enforce seat belt laws. Each year, 75 percent of the impaired drivers killed are not belted. “It’s critical that everyone in the vehicle

buckles up. A seat belt is your best defense on the road against impaired drivers.”

During 2006-2008 in Todd County, there were nine traffic deaths and of those, four were alcohol-related. During this same time period, 589 were arrested for DWI through the Todd County Sheriff’s office. Each year in Minnesota, alcohol-related crashes account for up to 200 traffic deaths and more than 35,000 motorists are arrested for DWI.

Sheriff Mikkelsen says Super Bowl party hosts should set ground rules for their guests prior to the first coin toss:

Use a sober driver, cab, public transportation or plan to crash at the party — not on the road.

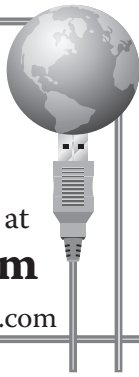
Protect your team: every driver and passenger should be buckled up, before and after the game.

Do not attempt to drive home if you are impaired — a DWI can put your life in very poor field conditions.

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Initiative Foundation '09 Economic Recovery

Responding to economic challenges, the Initiative Foundation invested about \$2.8 million to strengthen central Minnesota communities and businesses in 2009.

The foundation awarded \$805,000 in grants in the areas of children and families, economic development community planning, environmental preservation and nonprofit effectiveness. Responding to economic hardship and unemploy-

ment, about 60 percent of its total grants were tabbed to help distressed families, displaced workers and small businesses.

Another \$2.1 million in foundation business loans helped to start or expand 25 locally owned companies that secured 410 quality jobs. The foundation defines “quality jobs” as those that pay an average of \$18 per hour including benefits—the living wage for a family of four. Its

business loans are targeted to manufacturing, technology and “green” businesses.

“Early in 2009, we realized that the economic situation called for a major response from those of us who had the resources to respond,” said Lee Hanson, Initiative Foundation board of trustees chair. “We have hundreds of generous donors who invested in us in the good times so we could respond in the bad times.”

The foundation also grew its leadership programs that rally citizen volunteers around community planning, healthy lakes and rivers, early childhood, and effective nonprofit management. More than 1,100 citizens participated in the programs.

Hanson said that planning regionally, helping working families, creating jobs, and serving donors will remain the foundation’s priorities for 2010.

“We have to stay the course,” he added. “We’re the only central Minnesota foundation that prioritizes economic development to raise the tide for all people, and we’re not out of the woods yet.”

Based in Little Falls and serving central Minnesota’s 14 counties, the Initiative Foundation offers loans to businesses, grants to nonprofits, and a variety of leadership programs that enable citizens to build stronger communities.

Dig out your fire hydrant

Given that residential fires are most common during the heating season, the State Fire Marshal encourages everyone to know where their nearest fire hydrant is and keep it clear of snow and ice all winter.

As an incentive to care for your hydrant, the State Fire Marshal has made this offer — dig out the fire hydrant, take a picture of it, and send the photo to dps.facebook.state.mn.us. Selected photos will be posted on the SFM Facebook site.

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