

Local Leaders Lobby in Madison

About 45 leaders from St. Croix, Polk, and Pierce counties participated in the second annual United St. Croix Valley Legislative Days in Madison on February 13-14, 2007.

Ten teams comprised of three or four citizen advocates met with state representatives and senators or their respective staffs to discuss legislative issues of importance to the St. Croix Valley. Issues were grouped into three major themes—economic development, transportation, and workforce-education. The issues were published in a legislative booklet that was left at the end of each appointment.

The group's trek to Madison also coincided with Governor Jim Doyle's budget address on the evening of February 13th. He addressed the St. Croix Valley group during their lunch on Tuesday. He said, "The St. Croix Valley is the most rapidly growing, vital part of the state. It's at the center of what we are trying to accomplish with economic development in Wisconsin."

"Your part of the state faces some real challenges, but I hope you understand they are challenges that much of the state would love to have," added Gov. Doyle. "Yours are challenges based on growth. Yours are challenges of how to preserve a wonderful part of the state, but at the same time growing, and growing in a way that continues to assure the attractiveness of the region."

A reception for legislators was held on February 13th from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Inn on the Park prior to the budget address. Several St. Croix Valley delegates sat in the gallery and observed the address firsthand.

In addition to volunteering their time to the advocacy event, participants paid a registration fee and were responsible for their overnight lodging. Many traveled to Madison on a coach bus that was arranged as part of the event.

Many legislators encouraged the leaders from the St. Croix Valley to continue their annual journey to Madison with legislative issues. They said it was far more important to hear from citizens than professional lobbyists.

For additional information, contact William Rubin, St. Croix EDC at bill@stcroixedc.com or (715) 381-4383.

(right) Several community leaders from River Falls participated in the second annual St. Croix Valley Legislative Days event, including (l to r) Jim Munson, First National Bank of River Falls-Prescott, Rosanne Bump, River Falls Area Chamber of Commerce, Sarah Egerstrom, UW-River Falls, Dale Jorgenson, Riverland Laser, and Leslie Bleskachek, Chippewa Valley Technical College.



A team of citizen advocates from the St. Croix Valley stopped by the office of State Senator Sheila Harsdorf (seated) and discussed legislative issues of importance to the St. Croix Valley region. (l to r standing) Mike Welch, Polk County EDC, William Rubin, St. Croix EDC and Sarah Egerstrom, UW-River Falls.



Several community leaders from Hudson participated in the second annual St. Croix Valley Legislative Days, including (l to r) Trudy Popenhagen, Xcel Energy, Kim Heinemann, Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce, and Patti Robertson, WESTconsin Credit Union. Both Popenhagen and Robertson serve on the St. Croix EDC board of directors. Robertson chaired the 2007 Legislative Days planning committee.



Several community leaders from New Richmond participated in the second annual St. Croix Valley Legislative Days event. They posed in a photo with State Representative John Murtha while in Madison. (l to r): Joe Huftel, WITC-New Richmond, Mayor David Schnitzler, city of New Richmond, Susan Lockwood, WITC-New Richmond, Jerry Brown, New Richmond Area Economic Development Corp., State Rep. John Murtha, and Pete Kling, UW-Extension.

