

RMJ

Rural Minnesota Journal

Taking the Helm:
How rural Minnesota's next
generation sees the future

2011



CENTER *for*
RURAL POLICY
and DEVELOPMENT

Seeking solutions for Greater Minnesota's future

**Center for
Rural Policy &
Development
Board of
Directors**

William McCormack
*Board Chair
The Schwan Food Co.
(retired)*

John Monson
*Vice Chair
AgStar Financial*

Nancy Straw
*Secretary/Treasurer
West Central Initiative*

Michael Brethorst
City of Melrose

Wade Fauth
Blandin Foundation

Amy Fredregill
*Midwest Renewable
Tracking System Inc.
St. Paul*

Rep. Bob Gunther
*Minn. House of
Representatives*

Richard Davenport
*Minnesota State University,
Mankato*

Neil Eckles
*Blue Earth Valley
Communications*

Timothy Houle
*Crow Wing County
Administrator*

Cynthia Johnson
Farmers' Union

Dave Ladd
RDL Associates LLC

Tony LookingElk
Otto Bremer Foundation

Lois Mack
Waterville, Minn.

Sen. Doug Magnus
Minn. State Senate

Kevin Paap
Farm Bureau

Tony Sertich
Iron Range Resources

Steve Wenzel
*Central Lakes College,
Brainerd*

**Rural
Minnesota
Journal
Editorial
Committee**

Jean Burkhardt
*Independent Consultant
Welcome, Minn.*

Richard Davenport
*Minnesota State University,
Mankato*

Tim Houle
*Crow Wing County
Administrator*

Sandy Layman
Layman Consulting

Wy Spano
*University of Minnesota,
Duluth*

Tom Stinson
University of Minnesota

© 2011 Center for Rural Policy and Development

The Center for Rural Policy and Development, based in St. Peter, Minn., is a private, not-for-profit policy research organization dedicated to benefiting Minnesota by providing its policy makers with an unbiased evaluation of issues from a rural perspective.

Any opinions voiced in the Journal are those solely of the authors and not necessarily of the Center.

Center for Rural Policy and Development
600 S. Fifth Street, Suite 211 • Saint Peter, Minnesota 56082
(507) 934-7700 • (877) RURALMN

RMJ can be found on the web at:
www.ruralmn.org

Acknowledgements

The Center for Rural Policy & Development gratefully acknowledges our friends who have made this issue of RMJ possible.



BLANDIN FOUNDATION

THE MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION



Bush Foundation

The State of Minnesota

Table of Contents

Editor's note i

The Glass Half Full: A New View of Rural Minnesota. 1

Ben Winchester, University of Minnesota Extension, Center for Community Vitality, Morris; Art Nash, University of Minnesota, Crookston; & Tobias Spanier, University of Minnesota Extension, Center for Community Vitality, Marshall
Census data indicates that the rural "brain drain" may not be as severe as once believed. Is there a trend of families moving back to their rural hometowns, and if so, what are they hoping to find when they get there?

Today's Youth, Tomorrow's Rural Health Care Workforce . . .31

Laurissa Stigen, Central Minnesota Area Health Education Center, Fergus Falls
As Baby Boomers age, ensuring an adequate health care workforce into the future is crucial to keeping rural areas livable. Various efforts are going on to connect kids with the many options in health care careers.

The Seventh Generation: The Future of Minnesota's American Indian Youth39

Priscilla A. Day, University of Minnesota, Duluth, Center for Regional and Tribal Child Welfare Studies
The higher-than-average rate of out-of-home placements among American Indian children is having lasting effects on not only the children, but their families, the community and the tribe.

You Can Be a Leader One Day59

Bryan Joyce, Windom Area Schools
Education plays a vital role in a child's future leadership potential. Joyce outlines four components necessary in education to create future leaders.

In Other Words: Sending the Right Rural Message69

Neil Linscheid, University of Minnesota Extension, Marshall

What’s so great about living in a rural community? That’s what rural residents need to figure out if they want to attract people to their town, then get that message out there.

“I Want to Own My Own Business When I Grow Up”:

Encouraging Entrepreneurship at a Young Age81

Michael Nolan, Small Business Development Center,
Minnesota State University, Mankato

Young people are the perfect candidates to be entrepreneurs, and there are a number of reasons they can and should be encouraged.

Reflections of a Young Farmer91

Tracy Gaalswyk, rural Nicollet County

A lot has changed in farming over the past few decades, and it will continue to change. Gaalswyk comments on the differences between farming in the past and farming today, and what needs to be considered for preserving farming into the future.

Shaping the Future of Local Government: How I See It . . .99

Jessica A. Beyer, Blue Earth County Government

As with everything, local government is also changing, adapting to new technology and new ways of doing things. Young people have distinct opportunities ahead of them in smaller communities that they may not have access to in an urban setting.

About the Authors111

About the Center119