



Building on a Solid Foundation

Atwater native Mike Kingery played professional baseball for 17 years, including stints with the Kansas City Royals, Seattle Mariners, San Francisco Giants, Oakland A's, Colorado Rockies, and Pittsburgh Pirates. But when his major league baseball career concluded, he moved back to the Atwater area with his family.

In 24 years of marriage, Mike and Chris (Rostad) counted that they had moved 54 times. They've lived in Florida, Tennessee, South Carolina, Nebraska, Missouri, Washington, Arizona, California, Colorado, Pennsylvania, and even Alberta, Canada. They really liked Denver, Seattle, and Kansas City.

Why did he move back to the area? "When we finished playing baseball we wanted to be close to family. All of our family members on both sides of the family are within 2½ hours of where we live," said Kingery. "We get to see each of our mothers weekly, and sometimes daily, which is a blessing to us and also our children." Mike and Chris are the proud parents of 8 children: Rachel (22), Anna (19), Michelle (15), Rebekah (13), Elizabeth (10), Abigail (8), David (5), and Joshua (2).

Since moving back, Mike founded and owns Solid Foundation Baseball School. "We get to work with many young ballplayers across the state of Minnesota. All of our instruction is done with a very small student-to-teacher ratio, which ensures that each student will get the attention that they so need and deserve," said Kingery. "It is a privilege to be able to work with these young players and help them improve. It doesn't matter how successful the students have been in the past, we believe if they come to SFBS with a teachable attitude they will improve their game. It is a very rewarding job."

"We love being back to the place that Chris and I have always called home. Thanks for your time on this. We believe it is a worthwhile newsletter and hopefully it encourages people who want to be back here to look a little harder."

Information about SFBS is online at www.solidfoundationbaseball.com.



Mike Kingery, Atwater native

Willmar Area Multi-Cultural Market

*Excerpts from an article written by
Anne Polta, West Central Tribune*

Developing a multicultural market in downtown Willmar will create jobs, boost the local economy and tap into the human potential of Willmar's increasingly diverse population, say project organizers.

Willmar Mayor Les Heitke says "It's another feature of an inclusive community... the potential is tremendous." Organizers envision a cross-cultural marketplace or bazaar-like mall where people can eat, shop, mingle and socialize.

For the business owners who decide to locate there, it could be far more — a training ground for launching a new business and a chance to gain entrepreneurial skills and become part of the Willmar business community.

The entire local economy stands to benefit when minority-owned businesses are encouraged and become successful, said Steve Renquist, executive director of the EDC.

Rice Memorial Hospital Building Project: *Our vision come to life!*

By Amy Kelleher, Rice Memorial Hospital

After over three years of construction, our vision of *The New Rice* is becoming a reality. We are very proud of what we have created: a healing environment that incorporates art, music, light, and nature. Our talented and experienced staff now has a state-of-the-art facility in which to deliver the excellent care our community has come to trust.

We want everyone to feel the Rice difference from the moment they step in the door. From the cascading water flowing in our Garden Court, to the artwork of local artists featured on many of our walls, *The New Rice* makes coming to the hospital a totally new experience.

The New Rice is a state-of-the-art, intelligently designed facility that is convenient and easy to use. It's an entirely new way of delivering health care, one that makes the patient the focus of all that we do. (Continued)



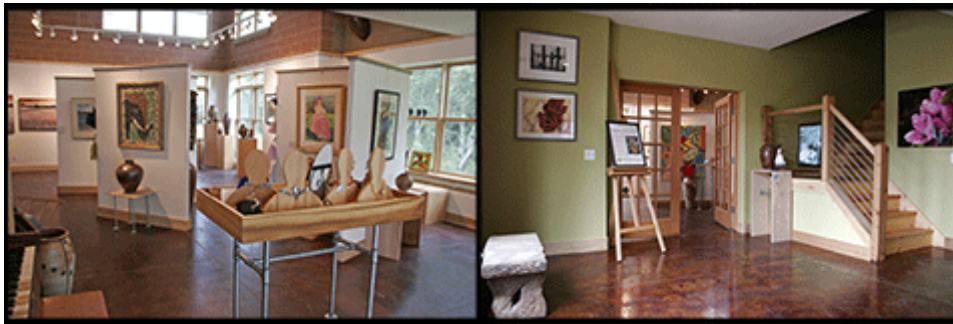
The Mezzanine in the new Rice Memorial Hospital

Buffalo Fish Fine Art

Buffalo Fish Fine Art, located on the north side of Willmar, abounds in original fine art by Minnesota artists. This modern, fresh art gallery has an urban feel, and is both warm and welcoming. Owners Allison (Rice) and Luke Geiger grew up in Willmar, lived in Minneapolis for eight years, and recently returned home to become part of the community that raised them.

Their gallery's warehouse style space features two-story ceilings, expansive windows and a loft. Artwork ranges from traditional landscapes to contemporary abstract, and everything in between. They also advocate arts by sponsoring events and speaking with local officials.

Allison and Luke are very humbled by the incredible talent that surrounds them in Buffalo Fish Fine Art, and are excited to share the stories and backgrounds of these artists with everyone visiting the gallery. Buffalo Fish is the perfect place to find an original gift for someone special, invest in valuable artwork for your home collection, or find beautiful additions for your office décor. Luke and Allison invite you to stop by Buffalo Fish Fine art today to enjoy a cup of coffee while you take in "art where you live." www.buffalofishfineart.com



Buffalo Fish Fine Art in Willmar, owned by Luke & Allison Geiger

Rice Memorial Hospital Building Project: *Continued from page 1*

The new, private patient rooms are almost twice the size of the former rooms. Each room is designed with a zone for the family and a separate zone for staff, and each room is equipped with a private bath. Labor and delivery suites feature a whirlpool tub for mom's relaxation.

Throughout the building project our goal has been twofold: to make it easier for patients to get the care they need closer to home; and to recruit and retain a top-notch healthcare staff. We feel that we have designed and built a facility that positions Rice as a regional referral center that can help us meet the healthcare needs of our community for years to come.

To view the progress that we have made at Rice, visit our website and take an online virtual tour of *The New Rice* at www.ricehospital.com

Are you a medical professional seeking to "come back home" to the Willmar area? We would love to hear from you! Visit the **Bring Them Back Home** website at www.kandiyohi.com



View from the Garden Court at the new Rice Memorial Hospital

Building a case for moving back home

The stories in this issue of "Closer to Home" share a common theme – **building** – on the growth occurring in the Willmar Lakes Area. It's an exciting time for the communities in Kandiyohi County – positive things are happening every day.

Retail continues to expand in the area, led by **Best Buy**, which will be starting construction this spring. 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

Spring Events in the Willmar Lakes Area:

Syttende Mai Celebration in downtown Willmar

Willmar Car Club Car Show & Swap Meet in Willmar

Memorial Day Spring Festival in New London

www.willmarlakesarea.com/