



BRING THEM BACK HOME

The Best Place In The World

Chad Thompson grew up on Norway Lake and graduated in 1991 from New London-Spicer High School.

His main hobbies growing up were hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, and waterskiing with the **Little Crow Ski Team**. In 1995, he got a job skiing professionally at **Sea World of Orlando**. He worked there most of the year, but still came

home for the Little Crow Ski Team during summers. From 1995 to 2000, Chad worked skiing pro at Sea World of Florida, then Cypress Gardens, Sea World of Texas, and Sea World of Australia.

In 2001, he worked at a ski show near **Nagasaki, Japan** when he auditioned for a stunt performer role with **Universal Studios**. He was hired and began in November. "I loved it so much I was there nearly 6 years," said Thompson. "I was trained to do high falls, intense fight scenes, jet ski crashes, and a 45 foot dive...on fire."

Thompson moved back home in January, but got an offer to be the show manager of a ski show in **Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia** for 2 months. He finished there in April, and "will be home for good now...I think!" Throughout his career, Chad has lived in places from Orlando, San Antonio, the Gold Coast, Australia, and Nagasaki and Osaka, Japan. "I have traveled to Thailand, South Korea, Australia, Malaysia, Ecuador, Japan, Mexico, China, Jordan (where I did a ski show for King Hussein's birthday in 1998) and lovely Canada, eh,"

Thompson said. "My favorite places are the Gold Coast, Australia, Patong Beach, Thailand, and seeing the Great Wall of China," added Thompson. "Jordan was an amazing experience - doing a show for **King Hussein** and **Queen Noor**."



Chad Thompson at the Great Wall of China



Chad Thompson explodes into action



A "day at the office" for Chad Thompson

This summer, Chad is home as the show director (along with Mike Swenson) for the **Little Crow Ski Team**, one of Kandiyohi County's main **tourist attractions**. "Every summer I tried to come home for the 4th of July, and it was hard to get on a plane and leave again. **I have been around the world, and there is nowhere I would rather be than here.** It's good to be home near friends and family again; the lakes and golf courses are great, too! No more traffic jams, planes, and trains for me!" said Thompson.

Little Crow Ski Team continued on page 2



The Little Crow Ski Team will launch its 28th year in 2007

Kandiyohi County Honors Emerging and Elite Entrepreneurs

Article excerpts taken from the West Central Tribune staff reports

Awards honoring some of Kandiyohi County's top entrepreneurs were announced by the Economic Development Commission during an Oscar-themed event on April 18. Singled out this year for top honors were **Trista Tensen**, who received the **Wilt Croonquist Emerging Entrepreneur Award** and **John C. Christianson**, who received the **Earl B. Olson Entrepreneurial Award**.

Tensen became a business owner at age 21 when she bought the **Raymond Supermarket**. To boost business she has brought in more

convenience foods, expanded the variety of products available, and launched a once-a-week delivery service. Tensen comes from a family with a history of Raymond business ownership; her grandfather, Arie Tensen, is the founder of **Tensen Marine**.

Christianson is the principal partner in **Christianson & Assoc. PLLP**, a Willmar accounting firm that has been in business since 1994. Christianson & Assoc. consists of 41 employees, and is a leader in the national ethanol industry. Christianson graduated from the Univ. of Minnesota in 1982 and obtained his CPA license in 1984. Currently, his organization has several positions available, as detailed on page 2.



John Christianson and Steve Renquist



Betty Croonquist, Trista Tensen, and Steve

Pawlenty touts the investment, vision of local firms

Excerpts from an article by Carolyn Lange, West Central Tribune; Photo by Bill Zimmer, West Central Tribune

With a quick leap, Gov. Tim Pawlenty swung himself onto the steps of a one-of-a-kind self-propelled agricultural sprayer that was made at a Willmar manufacturing company. Pawlenty toured **Willmar Fabrication**, **Relco Unisystems**, and the **MinnWest Technology Campus** during a recent stay in Willmar at the invitation of the Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce.

"I wanted him to know about the fine people we have here in this organization and let him see how the workers of Minnesota are producing and competing in the world economy," said Loren Corle, president of Relco. At **MinnWest**, Pawlenty saw how buildings that had once housed patients at the Willmar Regional Treatment Center are now being converted for high-tech businesses that manufacture and market livestock equipment around the world.

Pawlenty said it was good "to see people taking risks with positive energy" and that **MinnWest** is "a nice innovation. It's a nice project and it's working." The governor praised all the Willmar companies he toured "for your investment, your jobs, and your willingness to take risks and be entrepreneurs." He called the company leaders "visionaries."



Little Crow Ski Team has a busy summer planned: 'Ski TV in HD'

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As show co-director, Thompson is proud to say that Little Crow has won numerous State and Regional tournaments and were **National Champions in 1994 and 1998**. For this summer, the ski team does "shows on most Friday nights, and will have some special shows over the 4th of July." The full **2007 schedule** is on the Little Crow Ski Team website at www.littlecrow.com.

The regional tourney is July 27-29, and if they qualify, the national tournament is August 10-12.



The Little Crow Ski Show starts on June 1

In closing, Thompson commented on the irony that **"I couldn't wait to get out of here, and I couldn't wait to get back! Sometimes the best place in the world is in your own backyard!"**



Architecture magazine to feature Willmar as a 'livable city'

Excerpts from an article by David Little, West Central Tribune; Photo by Bill Zimmer, West Central Tribune

Willmar will be featured as an example of a **livable city** in the summer edition of a state architecture magazine. Christopher Hudson, editor of Architecture Minnesota, says Willmar's downtown improvement and revitalization efforts mirror many of the American Institute of Architects' 10 principles of livable cities. According to Hudson, the magazine occasionally publishes stories illustrating the 10 principles.

"But this is the first time we've done an issue specifically devoted to it," he said. **"Willmar is the only...smaller town that we're focusing on."** Hudson said. Willmar's downtown master plan illustrates many of the 10 principles, such as preserving urban centers and encouraging mixed-use development. "Just the whole idea of what you're doing down here with community support illustrates the 10 principles really beautifully," said Hudson.



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Prinsco Inc. in Willmar

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Marketing Concepts in Spicer

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Jennie-O Turkey Store in Spicer

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