

R9 REGION NINE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

ANNUAL REPORT 2012

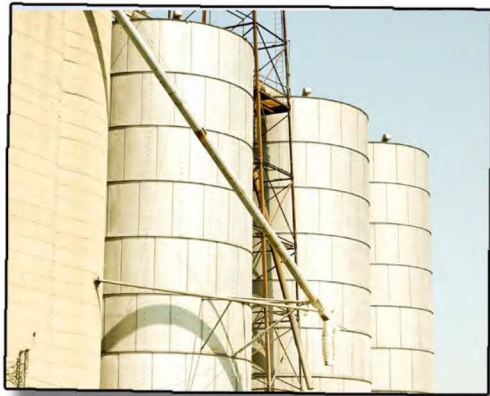
C
o
m
m
u
n
i
t
y
&
E
c
o
n
o
m
i
c
D
e
v
e
l
o
p
m
e
n
t

R
e
v
o
l
v
i
n
g
L
o
c
a
l
E
c
o
n
o
m
i
c
D
e
v
e
l
o
p
m
e
n
t

T
r
a
n
s
p
o
r
t
a
t
i
o
n

A
g
i
n
g

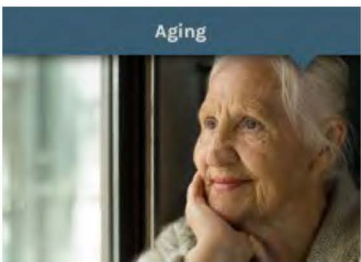




Your Regional Partner for Progress

Index

Letter from the Executive Director	4
Letter from the Commission Chair	5
History	6
Revenue and Expenditures FY 2012	7
Community & Economic Development	8-9
Hazard Mitigation	8
Renewable Energy Task Force	8
Faribault County Comprehensive Plan	8
Broadband Initiative	8
Technical Assistance	8
Federal EDA Grant Applications	9
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies	9
Local Foods	9
Transportation	10-11
Moving Ahead for Progress 21 st Century	10
Safe Routes to School	10
Active Living Plans	10
Highway Coalitions	10-11
Transportation Planning	11
Revolving Loan Fund	12-13
Delta-Waseca	13
Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc.	14-15
Seasonal Employees	14
Sally’s Story	14
Helping Others Create Their Own Personal Success	15
How MNRAAA Uses Volunteers	15
Region Nine Area, Inc.	16
2012 Staff	17
2012 Organization Chart	18
2012 Commission Members	19



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On behalf of the Region Nine Development Commission (RNDC), I am pleased to present the 2012 Annual Report. This report represents the efforts of our talented and dedicated staff and of local elected officials who serve as the board of RNDC.

Information presented in this report illuminates the activities and resources used throughout the region to make a difference in the lives of youth, families, seniors, workers, businesses, nonprofits, governments, and citizens at large.

RNDC continues to partner with groups such as the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc., South Central Economic Growth Collaborative, Southern Minnesota Competiveness Grant, Highway 169 Corridor Coalition, Renewable Energy Task Force, Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation, Brown County Economic Collaborative, Regional Economic Development Alliance, and many more collaborative efforts.

I personally would like to thank the board of directors, as well as the full commission, for their devotion and hard work. I remain enthusiastic and committed to advancing the programs and objectives of the RNDC and in helping our communities become stronger and well positioned to thrive.

I hope you will enjoy learning about how RNDC is successfully growing and how it serves the area, from reading this 2012 Annual Report.

Nicole Griensewic

Executive Director



Senator Franken visited Mankato in April 2012



NADO Policy Conference March 2012
From Left: Chairman Jim Swanson; Matthew Chase, NADO Executive Director; Nicole Griensewic, RNDC Executive Director; Steve Etcher, NADO Secretary

FROM THE COMMISSION BOARD CHAIR



This past year has been a growing experience for RNDC. Our executive director has been leading the organization for a complete year. We have added additional staff to keep up with the work demands, and we have a complete strategic plan in place to accomplish our mission in the region. We are definitely being thought of as one of the go-to organizations in the region.

Our financial picture continues to get even better as we have taken on more projects and new endeavors to assist our partners. Our staff has been creating great work that has helped our partners complete their needs and accomplish their goals. As RNDC chair, I have been personally gratified to see the greater engagement of our commissioners not only at RNDC, but also in their RNDC promotion activities in their local communities. All of this helps ensure success for this organization.

RNDC is a thriving organization in part, because of the excellent skills and leadership from our staff and from our engaged commissioners. Although there will always be challenges, I feel very confident in the abilities of our staff to get the job done.

Thanks to all for another great year.

Jim Swanson

Board Chair



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Back Row, From Left: Tim Strand; Gary Sturm, Treasurer; Jim Swanson, Chair; Eric Anderson; Steve Rohlfing; Gary Owens.
Front Row, From Left: Bob Roesler, Secretary; James Broich; Brad Ahrenstroff, Vice Chair; Rob Hammond.

HISTORY

THE CREATION

According to the Regional Development Act of 1969, “The legislature finds that problems of growth and development transcend the boundary lines of local government units and not a single unit can plan for their solution without affecting other units in the region; and assistance is needed to make the most effective use of local, state, federal and private programs in serving the citizens of urban and rural regions.” A solution was needed and Region Nine Development Commission (RNDC) was established.

BACKGROUND

RNDC was authorized by the Regional Development Act of 1969, and was organized by local officials in 1972. The purpose of regional development commissions “is to work with and on behalf of local units of government to develop plans and implement programs to address economic, social, physical and governmental concerns of each region of the state”. RNDC finds ways to help citizens navigate changes in the community by focusing on problem solving and creating value. RNDC is comprised of nine south central Minnesota counties including: Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Sibley, Waseca and Watonwan.

REGION NINE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Thirty-seven leaders from across the region serve on the Commission including:

- Thirty-four elected officials representing nine counties, 72 cities, 147 townships, and school districts.
- Representatives of special interest groups, including health and human welfare and minority populations.
- The Minnesota Valley Council of Governments is also represented.

Because of the strategic and collaborative approach to planning over the years, RNDC is well positioned to be a valuable resource for small business growth. RNDC’s vision and leadership will work to ensure the economic vitality of this region into the future.



RNDC office entrance

MISSION AND VISION

The mission of the Region Nine Development Commission is to promote the development of the region through intergovernmental cooperation, community and human development, long-range planning and technical assistance.

RNDC VALUES

RNDC is accountable to the public, funding agencies and each other for the quality of work that is provided by the organization. RNDC takes pride in promoting development of the region and being fiscally responsible.

RNDC encourages and provides opportunities for development, leadership and mentoring at all levels of participation within the organization. Professionalism is expected and demonstrated through our behavior and loyalty. Timely, open and honest communication enhances the organization’s effectiveness. RNDC is able to identify problems, look at the options and evaluate the consequences with a sense of purpose.

RNDC values and respects the diversity of the region and of the organization. To be successful and efficient, RNDC supports teamwork across the organization, lending knowledge and skill.



April 11, 2012 Full Commission Meeting



Intergovernmental Center
RNDC office located on third floor

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES FY 2012

REVENUE:		ACTUAL 2012	
FEDERAL	443,305	CONFERENCE REVENUE	8,663
STATE	236,849	CHARGES FOR SERVICES	94,798
TAX LEVY	486,350	INTEREST	51,989
OTHER SOURCES	120,315	TOTAL REVENUES	1,442,269

EXPENDITURES:			
PERSONNEL	736,176	LEGAL	9,400
FRINGE	247,310	AUDITING	24,500
COPYING/PRINTING	18,984	EQUIPMENT/DEPRECIATION	13,801
PUBLIC NOTICE	4,260	CAPITAL OUTLAY	18,625
POSTAGE	5,837	MARKETING	1,875
TELEPHONE	20,057	PROGRAM & STAFF DEVELOPMENT	1,562
TRAVEL—STAFF	43,443	FUND BALANCE RECOVERY	84,571
TRAVEL— OTHER	28,655	OFFICE SPACE	61,506
REGISTRATION	8,554	PRIOR YEAR ADJUSTMENT	12,844
SUPPLIES	18,911	TRANSFER TO RNAI	7,000
PUBLIC/SUBSCRIPTION/MEMBER	20,186		
MISCELLANEOUS	7,806	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	1,442,269
CONSULTANT	20,138		
INSURANCE	495		
ERRORS & OMISSIONS INSURANCE	19,989		
MAINTENANCE	5,784	<i>Indirect Rate for 2012 was 21.02%</i>	
		<i>Fringe was budgeted to be 36.22%, actual was 33.64%</i>	

LEVY HISTORY

YEAR PAYABLE	PERCENT BASE	LEVY INCREASE	LEVY AMOUNT	INCREASE
2012	475,583	3.00%	489,850	3.00%
2011	461,733	3.00%	475,583	3.00%
2010	448,284	3.00%	461,733	3.00%
2009	435,227	3.00%	448,283	3.00%
2008	422,550	3.00%	435,227	3.00%
2007	410,243	3.00%	422,550	3.00%

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

HAZARD MITIGATION

RNDC assisted three counties with hazard mitigation plan updates during 2012. Waseca, Blue Earth, and Martin counties all received funding through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to perform 5-year updates to their All Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Hazard mitigation is defined as: “any sustained action to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to human life and property from natural hazards and their effects.” RNDC completed the Waseca County Hazard Mitigation Plan update in 2012 and is in the process of finishing plans for Blue Earth and Martin counties in 2013.

RENEWABLE ENERGY TASK FORCE

The Renewable Energy Task Force is a dedicated group of citizens, elected officials, business owners, educational institutions, nonprofit agencies and governmental agencies that share a passionate interest in renewable energy and energy conservation. The Task Force actively pursues opportunities to develop the renewable energy industry in south central Minnesota. They promote the use of clean energy, which is advantageous both economically and environmentally.

Renewable energy has been identified as an industry where the region can compete in the global marketplace. Renewable energy offers not only a means of diversifying our regional economy, but also strengthening our local communities through an infusion of investment and an increase in job opportunities. Renewable energy also lessens our reliance on foreign resources by enhancing our self sufficiency through energy independence. RNDC provides staffing assistance to the Region Nine Renewable Energy Task Force.

For more information visit www.r9renewables.org



FARIBAUT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

In August, 1967, Faribault County adopted a Comprehensive Plan that helped guide the county in planning and land use issues. That plan has not been updated since the adoption. In 2012 RNDC entered into a contract to assist Faribault County with an update to their Comprehensive Plan. A final plan should be available in the fall of 2013.

BROADBAND INITIATIVE

RNDC, along with the other Regional Development Commissions throughout the state of Minnesota, were asked to be partners of the Blandin Foundation as a part of the Minnesota Intelligent Rural Communities (MIRC) broadband development effort. MIRC was a coalition of nineteen statewide partners and eleven demonstrated communities, funded in part through an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant. The work of the coalition focused on bringing the full promise of broadband technologies to rural Minnesota communities, businesses and people. Blandin Foundation served as the project administrator.



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

RNDC staff continues to provide technical assistance to local units of government in the nine-county region. For example, in the fall of 2012, RNDC assisted the city of Mapleton with a community survey. The city wanted to gauge the community’s interest in the possibility of a pharmacy opening in town. RNDC helped draft the survey questions, developed the on-line survey (the city also distributed a paper survey), tracked all the responses and provided a survey results summary to the Mapleton City Council.

RENEWABLE ENERGY TASK FORCE—FUNDING SERVICES AND USES

AMOUNT	FUNDER	PROJECT	TIME FRAME
\$21,900	SMIF	Community Wind	2009-2010
\$20,000	SMIF	Regional Energy Study	2010-2011
\$12,000	CERTs	Regional Energy Study	2010-2011
\$38,950	USDA-RBEG	Bulk Buy	2011-2012
\$29,880	Carolyn Foundation	Bulk Buy, Staff Time, Plotter, Teleconference Device	2011-2012
\$6,100	CERTs	Bulk Buy	2012
\$128,830	TOTAL AMOUNT		

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FEDERAL EDA GRANT APPLICATIONS

RNDC staff have assisted with two applications for Federal EDA funds. The first application, submitted on behalf of MnDOT, would provide funding to mitigate flooding issues on Highway 169 between Mankato and St. Peter. The second application for federal EDA funding would assist a local county in the development of an industrial park.



CEDS

Through a planning grant provided by the U.S. Department of Commerce and the Economic Development Administration, RNDC staff updated the 2012 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDs) document and prepared and submitted the 2013 CEDs Annual Performance Report. This annual planning effort is led by a group of local public and private sector leaders. Areas of focus include:

- Infrastructure
- Business growth/wages
- Workforce
- Good policy/government issues

A copy of the CEDs document can be found at:
www.rndc.org/CEDs.

LOCAL FOODS

RNDC is partnering with the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation and other partners to promote the initiative of local foods in the region. Although there is a rising demand for local foods in Minnesota, the current link between agriculture and economic development sectors is generally disconnected. The purpose of the local foods project is to expand the direct marketing relationship between farmers and institutional food buyers, wholesale and food service.

Local foods is an area that would strengthen regional relations by creating access to resources and an increased collaboration between farmers and buyers. Many farmers are interested in selling to restaurants, school food services, caterers and grocers. Through the project, increased awareness of resources to wholesale and institutional buyers who want to serve local foods will allow them to connect effectively and efficiently with specialty crop producers.

The four main goals of the local foods project are:

- To develop new and expanded markets for specialty crop producers.
- Increase volume and diversity of locally and sustainably grown specialty crops being served in school cafeterias, restaurants, catering services, grocery stores, and other institutions.
- Increase farmers' knowledge on post harvesting handling for wholesale markets.
- Expand demand for locally/regionally grown specialty crops.

A sustainable local and regional food system encourages innovation that results in at least 20 profitable businesses over the next 10 years.



 Southern Minnesota
INITIATIVE FOUNDATION

Community & Economic Development Committee

Eric Anderson
Pam Meyer
Rob Anderson
Steve Rohlfling
Peggy Evenson
Bob Schabert
Michael Fischer
Charlie Schmitz

Diane Halvorson
Karen Wagner
Connie Ireland
Linsey Warmka
Dan Kuhns
Molly Westman
Tom Loveall
Russ Wille

TRANSPORTATION

MOVING AHEAD FOR PROGRESS 21ST CENTURY

On July 6, 2012, President Obama signed into law a new federal surface transportation bill, *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century* (MAP-21). MAP-21 will fund surface transportation programs at \$105 billion for fiscal years (FY) 2013 and 2014. It is the first long-term highway authorization enacted since SAFETEA-LU in 2005.

MAP-21 took effect on October 1, 2012 and funding levels are maintained at FY 2012 levels, plus minor adjustments for inflation. MAP-21 starts the transition to a performance-driven and outcome-based program and emphasizes seven national goal areas:

- Safety
- Infrastructure Condition
- Congestion Reduction
- System Reliability
- Freight Movement
- Economic Vitality
- Project Delivery

For more information on MAP-21 visit the Minnesota Department of Transportation website at:
www.dot.state.mn.us/map

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program is an international program that promotes walking and biking to school. It focuses on teaching children bicycle and pedestrian safety along with healthy lifestyles. Not only does the program encourage students to walk and bike to schools, but it also seeks to improve the air quality around schools, reduce traffic congestion near schools, increase physical activity of children and increase community involvement.

RNDC worked with the Mankato Area Public School District to complete a SRTS plan for six elementary schools in the City of Mankato. The impacted elementary schools included:

- Franklin
- Jefferson
- Kennedy
- Roosevelt
- Rosa Parks
- Washington



ACTIVE LIVING PLANS

During 2012, RNDC assisted four cities (Wells, St. James, Madelia, and Butterfield) with Active Living Plans. Active living is a way of life that integrates physical activity into daily routines.

Communities that have Active Living Plans make it easy for people to include physical activity in their daily lives. Walking to work, school, and the store or just for fun is safe and convenient.

Bicyclists are accommodated and roads are built for all forms of transportation, not just the car. Overall, the goal is to promote development of environments that offer the opportunity to integrate physical activity into daily lives.



HIGHWAY COALITIONS

RNDC continues to remain actively involved with two area highway coalitions: the U.S. Highway 169 Corridor Coalition and the U.S. Highway 14 Partnership.

U.S. Highway 169 runs through Minnesota in a north-south direction. The U.S. Highway 169 Corridor Coalition’s mission is: “Working together to enhance safety, reduce congestion and maximize economic development along the U.S. Highway 169 interregional corridor.”

RNDC is a member of the Technical Advisory Committee and actively attends the regular meetings of the full Coalition.

Continued on page 11



TRANSPORTATION

Continued from page 10



U.S. Highway 14 travels in an east-west direction through southern Minnesota. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) has designated U.S. Highway 14 as a medium priority interregional corridor that connects the regional trade centers of New Ulm, Mankato, Waseca, Owatonna, Rochester, and Winona. These communities along the U.S. Highway 14 corridor rely on U.S. Highway 14 for commerce and the safe movement of people throughout the region and to other parts of the state and nation.

It is the mission of the U.S. Highway 14 Partnership to make Highway 14 a four lane road from New Ulm to Rochester.

RNDC serves on the U.S. Highway 14 Partnership Board of Directors and is actively involved in their meetings throughout the year.

For more information on Region Nine Development Commission's Transportation Department visit:
www.rndc.org/transportation

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

RNDC staff continue to provide local transportation planning assistance to the region through a contract with MnDOT. This annual planning grant between MnDOT and RNDC allows staff to assist with various transportation planning projects throughout the region. Some of the initiatives that staff were involved in during 2012 include:

- MnDOT's Minnesota GO 50-year visioning process
- The development of MnDOT's Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan
- MNSHIP—MnDOT's 20-year Minnesota Statewide Highway Investment Plan
- Corridor Investment Management Strategy—a corridor-based initiative that brought MnDOT together with local, modal, and state partners to identify opportunities for collaborative and innovative investment
- Area Transportation Partnership
- Region Nine Transportation Advisory Committee



Lisa Bigham, MnDOT
 Jim Broich, RNDC Commissioner
 Drew Campbell, RNDC Commissioner
 Peggy Evenson, RNDC Commissioner
 Al Forsberg, Blue Earth County Engineer
 Terry Genelin, RNDC Commissioner
 Jeff Johnson, Mankato City Engineer
 Steve Koehler, New Ulm City Engineer
 Dan Kuhns, RNDC Commissioner

Tom Loveall, RNDC Commissioner
 Brian Malm, Bolton and Menk
 John McDonald, Faribault County Engineer
 Darrell Pettis, Le Sueur County Administrator/Engineer
 Nathan Richman, Waseca County Engineer
 Phil Schafer, RNDC Commissioner
 Mark Scheidel, MnDOT
 Mary Safgren, MnDOT

REVOLVING LOAN FUND

IMPORTANCE OF REVOLVING LOAN FUNDS

RNDC welcomes partnering with other lenders to assist local businesses to succeed and thrive. To support existing businesses as well as new entrepreneurs in securing financing they are otherwise unable to secure through traditional channels, RNDC administers Revolving Loan Funds.

The goal of the program is to improve the economy of the region, mainly by adding jobs to the labor market. Preference is given to businesses that will add full-time skilled or semi-skilled positions. Funding for these loans is sourced from the Federal Economic Development Administration.

MICROENTERPRISE LOANS

The Microenterprise Loan is for any for-profit business in RNDC's nine county service area operating with five employees or less and not in direct competition with an existing business or trade in the area.

The loans can be used to fund several different categories of eligible businesses:

- Working capital
- Inventory
- Machinery and equipment
- Building
- Leasehold improvements
- Retail service and manufacturing costs

The maximum loan amount is \$25,000 and borrowers must meet with the Small Business Development Center before and after closing. The interest rates of the microenterprise loans are negotiable. There is a maximum loan term of five years with a required processing fee at closing. All applicants must sign a personal guarantee.

NINE COUNTY REVOLVING LOAN FUND



To be eligible for the Nine County Revolving Loan Fund any for profit business must be in the nine county area including: Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Sibley, Waseca, and Watonwan counties. The business must be engaged in manufacturing, distribution, retail and service or value-added agriculture to qualify. Usage and limitations:

- Working capital—5 years limited to 10% of RLF
- Real Estate—20 year maximum
- Machine and equipment costs—10 to 15 years of useful life

Loan amounts range from \$10,000 to \$100,000. The funded amount depends on the number of jobs retained or created. Up to half of the project costs may be financed. The remaining costs must be financed by other sources. The interest rates on a revolving loan fund are negotiable and principle payments may be deferred up to six months. Upon closing, an \$800 processing fee and 1 percent origination are due. All applicants for loans must sign a personal guarantee.

TORNADO REVOLVING LOAN FUND

The Tornado Revolving Loan Fund follows the same guidelines as the Nine County Revolving Loan Fund.

SIX COUNTY REVOLVING LOAN FUND

Any non-profit business in Faribault, Le Sueur, Martin, Sibley, Waseca, and Watonwan county involved in manufacturing, distribution, service or value-added agriculture is eligible for the Six County Revolving Loan Fund. The usage and limitations are the same as the Nine County Revolving Loan Fund.

The loan amount for this type of loan range from \$10,000-\$60,000 and is determined by the number of jobs retained or created by the business. One job is created or retained per \$10,000. Up to one-third of projects may be financed, the remaining costs financed by outside sources.

As any loan funding from RNDC, interest rates are negotiable. There is an \$800 processing fee and 1.5 percent origination fee required upon closing. Applicants must sign a personal guarantee.

SUCCESS STORY

Over the years RNDC has experienced times in which their loan clients have been very successful, as well as times when their clients have struggled. An example of the types of businesses helped include:

- Manufacturing
- Trucking
- Food service
- Personal services
- Dance studios
- Fitness
- Automotive

The fact that these businesses exist is a benefit to their respective communities. It is that benefit that makes the RNDC Revolving Loan Fund most valuable. The health of the business and the health of the community are always included in elevating a project and actions related to it.

An example of this consideration and concern can be seen in the example of the Delta-Waseca story.

REVOLVING LOAN FUND

DELTA-WASECA'S STORY

Delta-Waseca has been manufacturing truck bodies in southern Minnesota for 40 years. Durable dry freight, refrigerated and curtain side custom van bodies are their specialty. Bruce Bean, President of Delta-Waseca, prides himself on the durability, longevity, and reliability of the company's truck and van bodies.

Delta-Waseca's truck bodies, though manufactured through a production line, are custom made with fine detail. Each body is unique because they are made to order. "Delta-Waseca is a craft business that happens to come down an [assembly] line," said Bean during an interview.

With business thriving in 2000, Bean decided it was time to enhance the company. He wanted to build an addition to the storage lot and purchase productivity enhancing equipment. After finding himself unable to secure the needed financing through traditional means, Bean contacted RNDC.

RNDC administers a number of Revolving Loan Funds (RLF) to assist existing businesses, as well as new entrepreneurs, in securing financing they are otherwise unable to secure through traditional channels. The source of RLF is a combination of funding from the Federal Economic Development Administration and matching funds supplied by counties in the region. Bean brought his proposal to RNDC's Revolving Loan Committee and was granted a loan.



In the years between 2008 and 2011, the recession going on throughout the country was felt at Delta-Waseca. Companies that typically replace their truck and van bodies annually began to hold off on their updates. Sales dropped by 70% during this time. As a result, Bean was forced to lay off half of the staff, leaving the company with only 16 employees.

During this tough time, Bean's cash flow situation was not improving despite the cost-saving measures he implemented. He was determined not to lose any more staff, and had to find another solution. Bean contacted RLF Loan Officer, LuAnn Vanderwerf, and set up a meeting. When the two of them had finished their meeting, Bean had a deferment on his loan payments, and Vanderwerf had a commitment from Bean to meet monthly to review sales orders, and cash flow forecasts.



RNDC's Finance Director, LuAnn Vanderwerf and Delta-Waseca President Bruce Bean

Bean faithfully provided very thorough monthly updates on his company regarding pending orders, sales, etc.; and this allowed Vanderwerf to maintain her comfort level with the deferments. This created a very strong bond of trust between the two. It was this trust and spirit of cooperation that was the key to the relationship being so successful.

Both Vanderwerf and Bean feel that their partnership played a key role in Delta-Waseca surviving the recession.

Through the recession, Delta-Waseca's truck and van bodies withstood not being replaced, which proved the longevity and durability of Delta-Waseca's products. Companies noticed this and business began to improve. Bean was even able to hire additional employees to accommodate the increase in orders. At the time of the interview Bean was in search of additional employees that could do the very fine detail work. He indicated that people who can do the fine detail work are often very hard to find.

In October of 2012, Bean was able to pay off the balance of his RLF loan. During an interview with Bean, he stated how grateful he was to RNDC and Vanderwerf for helping his business stay afloat during Delta-Waseca's challenging time.

Do you have a project that would help improve our region?

To find out if a RLF loan may be right for your business, contact LuAnn Vanderwerf at rlf@rndc.org or visit www.rndc.org/RLF.

To learn more about Delta-Waseca, visit www.deltawaseca.com.

MINNESOTA RIVER AREA AGENCY ON AGING®, INC.

SEASONAL EMPLOYEES

The Senior LinkAge Line® has been instrumental in helping to provide comprehensive non-biased counseling to Medicare beneficiaries since the start of the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan in 2006. The Senior LinkAge Line® system has evolved and its responsibilities have expanded over the past several years. This has made it more difficult to handle the call volume during the Medicare Open Enrollment Period. For the 2013 Medicare Open Enrollment Period the Senior LinkAge Line® contact centers hired seasonal employees to handle Medicare-related calls during the Open Enrollment Period.



A One Stop Shop for Minnesota Seniors



The Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc. (MnRAAA) hired five part-time temporary seasonal employees to work in the Mankato office during this period. They received extensive training on both Medicare and Medical Assistance, the internet tools necessary for documentation, and the protocols for answering calls through the Senior LinkAge Line® system. They began October 1st and concluded their service at the end of December.

The addition of the seasonal staff across the state was a great success. Callers experienced little to no wait times. The average speed to answer a call was approximately two minutes. This was a significant improvement over past years, where callers were often on hold for long periods of time. Many of the seasonal staff across the state have offered to stay connected to the Senior LinkAge Line® through volunteer service. Four of the MnRAAA seasonal staff stayed on as volunteers and are housed out of the Mankato office. They have all expressed an interest in returning as seasonal staff during the 2014 Medicare Open Enrollment Period.

SALLY'S STORY: CARING FOR A LOVED ONE

One of the core functions of an Area Agency on Aging is the distribution of Title III Older Americans Act funds. The purpose of this function is to:

- Develop or expand services for older adults and their caregivers
- Fill gaps in existing services
- Contribute to the development of a comprehensive and coordinated system of services for older adults
- Enhance the ability of older adults to remain independent in their own homes

MnRAAA distributes Title III funds by awarding grants/contracts to agencies and organizations that serve older adults and their caregivers. For the past eleven years Wellspring Faith in Action, located in St. James and serving Watonwan County, has been the recipient of Title III grant funding from MnRAAA for their Family Caregiver Project. The following is the story of one of the caregivers Wellspring has served:

Sally has been a registered caregiver with Wellspring since the spring of 2009. She is a caregiver for her husband who has Alzheimer's disease. Her first requests to Wellspring were for chore services. She needed some assistance with window washing and raking leaves in the fall. She also began attending Wellspring's Caregiver Support Group. As time went on and her husband's illness progressed, she became unable to leave him home alone. At that time, volunteers were able to provide respite service for her so that she could continue to attend the weekly Caregiver Support Group.

As the Alzheimer's disease progressed, Sally needed some assistance in helping her husband with bathing and other personal care. Wellspring Faith In Action helped her find individuals whom Sally could pay privately to help her with the activities of daily living. With Wellspring's help, Sally was able to have her husband continue to live at home until December of 2012.

Sally's story highlights the importance of family caregivers and how services provided by Wellspring through MnRAAA's Title III funding supported Sally in her role as a caregiver. The support provided to Sally helped to reduce her stress, increase her skills, competence and confidence as a caregiver. She also was able to extend the time she was able to care for her husband at home. MnRAAA is pleased the Title III funds awarded to Wellspring provided the support Sally needed to be a successful caregiver.



Did you know: Each 1% decrease in family caregiving has a \$30 million cost to Minnesota's budget!

MINNESOTA RIVER AREA AGENCY ON AGING®, INC.

HELPING OTHERS CREATE THEIR OWN PERSONAL SUCCESS

Sue was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis and began losing her mobility at age 18. She struggled with losing her independence, having to change her plans for the future, and realizing at a very young age that her life would no longer be the same. Despite this, Sue challenged herself and brought an energy and passion to all that she did throughout her years.

Now at 47 years old, Sue was faced with a new challenge. She joined a Living Well with Chronic Conditions class. The class participants were asked to create an “action plan,” a weekly component of the class that challenged each participant to do something that would benefit their lives. Sue decided that she did not want to become immobile anymore. At week one she announced to the group that though she had not been able to walk up a flight of stairs in years, she was ready to try again. Each week Sue practiced climbing the stairs and each week she grew stronger. By the end of the sixth week of the Living Well with Chronic Conditions class, Sue not only climbed one flight of stairs, but eight flights of stairs!

Sue’s story is one of many that highlight the power Living Well with Chronic Conditions can have. The class recognizes each participant’s potential for achievement and creating a platform for amazing personal success. Participants inspire each other along the way.

HOW MNRAAA USES VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are instrumental in the program operations of MNRAAA and the Senior LinkAge Line®: A One Stop Shop for Minnesota Seniors. They provide one-on-one health insurance counseling, educate new Medicare beneficiaries, facilitate Senior Surf Day computer classes, exhibit at outreach and senior fairs, and provide administrative support. So what does that mean for older adults in our service area? For consumers new to Medicare it means a Senior LinkAge Line® volunteer helping them understand their options for Medicare health insurance plans. For a disabled consumer making the switch from Medical Assistance prescription coverage to Medicare Part D, it means assistance in finding the best plan that covers their long list of prescriptions. For someone struggling to pay their costly

prescriptions, it means relief in having someone help them apply for extra help, research prescription patient assistance programs, and assist them in completing applications for those programs.

MNRAAA volunteers also help to spread the word about the Senior LinkAge Line® and the assistance that is available for older adults and caregivers. They reach people who are struggling to care for their spouse or parent, who often are not aware of

the services available in their community. Volunteers educate older adults on how to be comfortable with computers, so they can stay in touch with family or look up information on a favorite topic on the internet.



In whatever big or small way a volunteer provides assistance, without them the MNRAAA would not be able to serve as many people, in as many communities in the region that they do now.



Find out more about MNRAAA:



Facebook : www.facebook.com/MNRAAA27



Twitter : www.twitter.com/MNRAAA

Website: www.mnraaa.org



Volunteer Wayne Johansen & Volunteer Coordinator Sarah Reiman

Thank you from Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc.

On behalf of the Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging®, Inc., I would like to thank the Board, Advisory Councils on Aging, Senior LinkAge Line® volunteers, as well as all of our volunteers and staff for the work they do on behalf of older adults and caregivers. Your help is very much appreciated.

-Linda Giersdorf, MNRAAA Executive Director

REGION NINE AREA, INC.

MISSION STATEMENT

“To serve citizens of the region by accessing resources in support of Region Nine Development Commission, local governments, and other community organizations that serve those in need.”

Region Nine Area, Inc. (RNAI) strives to sustain and increase services of the RNDC through writing grant proposals to private foundations and by accepting charitable donations.

WHAT IS REGION NINE AREA, INC.?

RNAI serves as a mechanism for RNDC, local units of government and small organizations to access resources that support the mission of RNAI. RNAI partners with regional organizations to access resources for programs, projects and endeavors that support the mission.

RNAI is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that can act as a fiscal sponsor for local communities and other philanthropic groups.



Darwin Olson, Faribault County
Clarence Mager, Le Sueur County
Terry Genelin, Nicollet County
Bob Schabert, Nicollet County
Brenda Pautsch, Sibley County
Gary Owens, Waseca County
Belva Peterson, Martin County

WHAT IS FISCAL SPONSORSHIP?

Fiscal sponsorship is a formal arrangement in which a 501(c)(3) public charity sponsors a project that may lack exempt status. This alternative to starting your own nonprofit allows you to seek and solicit tax-deductible donations under your sponsor's exempt status.



WHY RNAI?

RNAI works with community and business leaders in the region to develop strategies to better retain, sustain, develop and improve the quality of life in rural communities in the region. The organization develops and advances community capacity.

Ultimately, the organization serves the clients of RNDC by ensuring continuation of valued programs. These clients include:

- Local jurisdictions
- Older adults
- Small businesses
- Youth

RNAI has provided assistance to:

- Community projects
- Veterans Awareness Project
- Youth programs
- Theatre projects

Learn more at: www.rndc.org/RNAI

STAFF

ADMINISTRATION

Nicole Griensewic, Executive Director
507.389.8872 / nicole@rncd.org

Cheryl Weston, Administrative Assistant
507.389.8885 / cheryl@rncd.org

FINANCE

LuAnn Vanderwerf, Finance Director
507.389.8878 / luann@rncd.org

Linda Wallace, Senior Financial Accountant
507.389.8889 / ljwall@rncd.org

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Ronda Allis, Director & Transportation Coordinator
507.389.8886 / ronda@rncd.org

John Considine, Community & Economic Development
Coordinator
507.389.8871 / john@rncd.org

Jon Hammel, Economic Development Specialist
507.389.8863 / jon@rncd.org

Isaac Kerry, Resource Development Specialist
507.389.8880 / isaac@rncd.org

Danielle Walchuk, Regional Development Planner
507.389.8863 / danielle@rncd.org

MINNESOTA RIVER AREA AGENCY ON AGING®, INC.

Linda Giersdorf, Executive Director
507.389.8866 / lindag@rncd.org

Gail Gilman-Waldner, Program Developer
507.389.8869 / ggwaldner@rncd.org

Rhonda Hiller Fjeldberg, Grant/Contract Manager
507.389.8862 / rhonda@rncd.org

Erica Gahlon, Administrative Assistant
507.389.8879 / erica@rncd.org

Heather Lincoln, Community Living Specialist
507.389.8864 / heather@rncd.org

Stephanie McCabe, Senior Outreach Specialist
507.389.8894 / stephanie@rncd.org

Joyce Prahm, Fiscal Manager
507.389.8894 / joyce@rncd.org

Sarah Reiman, Volunteer Coordinator
507.389.8870 / sarahr@rncd.org

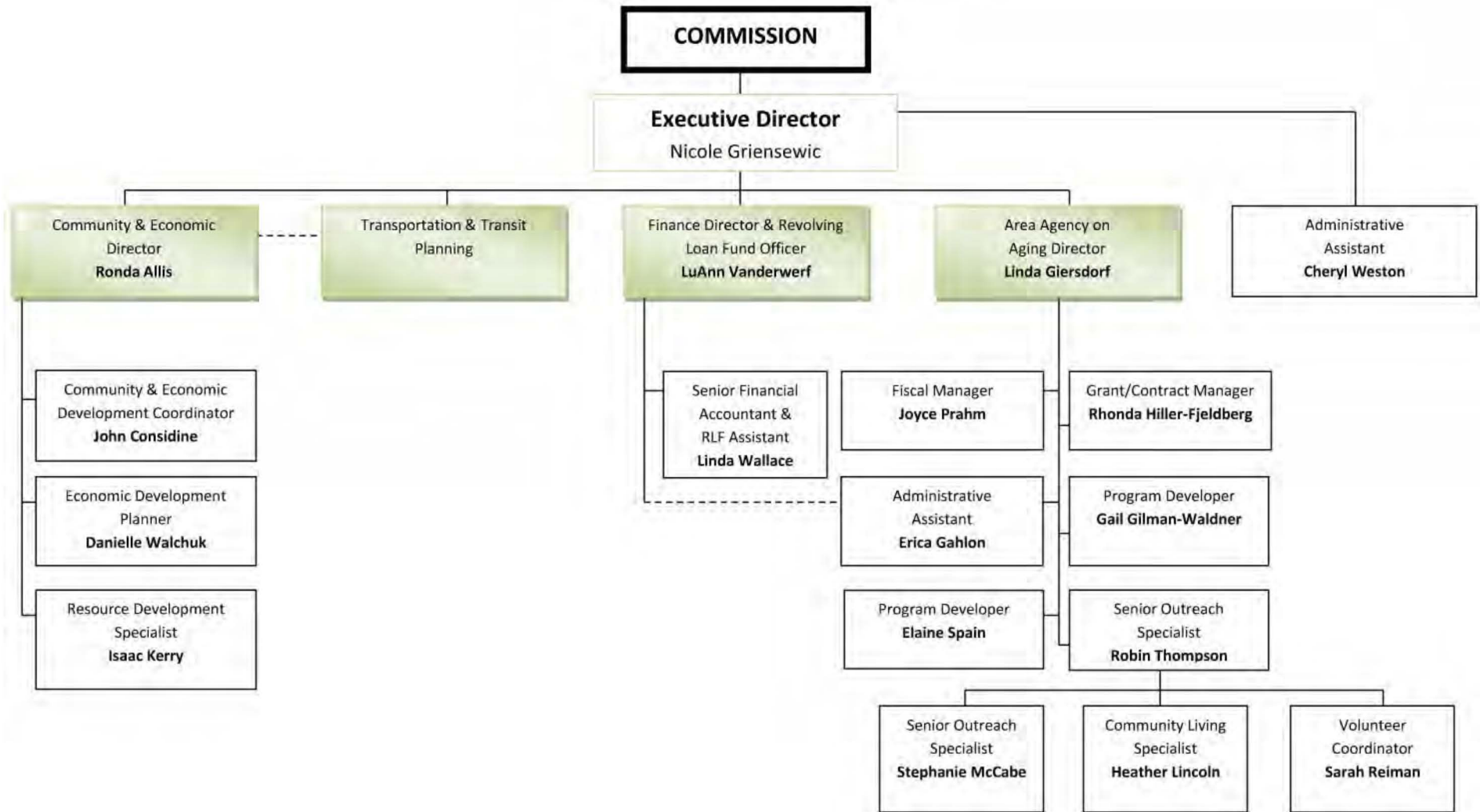
Elaine Spain, Program Developer
507.389.8860 / espain@rncd.org

Robin Thompson, Senior Outreach Specialist
507.389.8876 / robint@rncd.org



2012 RNDC Staff

REGION NINE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION ORGANIZATION CHART



COMMISSION MEMBERS

BLUE EARTH COUNTY

Ahrenstorff, Brad (R9 Vice Chair) Cities under 10,000
 Anderson, Eric City of Mankato
 Campbell, Drew County Commissioner
 Hendricks, Ann School Boards
 Sabrie, Abdi Minority Populations
 Schaller, Doug Township Board

BROWN COUNTY

Berg, Jim County Commissioner
 Broich, James Cities under 10,000
 Juni, Frederick Township Board
 Schmitz, Charles New Ulm City Council

FARIBAULT COUNTY

Hammond, Rob (Treasurer) Cities under 10,000
 Loveall, Tom County Commissioner
 Olson, Darwin Township Board

LESUEUR COUNTY

Heldberg, Kermit Township Board
 Rohlfing, Steve County Commissioner
 Wencl, William Cities under 10,000

MARTIN COUNTY

Belgard, Elliot County Commissioner
 Gorath, Harlan Fairmont City Council
 Roesler, Bob (Secretary) Cities under 10,000
 Schafer, Phil Township Board

NICOLLET COUNTY

Dranttel, Marie County Commissioner
 Genelin, Terry Township Board
 Meyer, Pam Cities under 10,000
 Norland, Diane North Mankato City Council
 Strand, Tim City of St. Peter

SIBLEY COUNTY

Evenson, Peggy Township Board
 Pautsch, Brenda Cities Under 10,000
 Swanson, Jim (R9 Chair) County Commissioner

WASECA COUNTY

Coy, Cindy Cities Under 10,000
 Elvebak, Laura MN Valley Council of Governments
 Kuhns, Dan County Commissioner
 Owens, Gary Township Board

WATONWAN COUNTY

Fenske, Candace Health & Human Welfare
 Gustafson, Ray County Commissioner
 Sturm, Gary (Treasurer) Cities under 10,000
 Yock, Bill Township Board



2012 Commission Members



REGION NINE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

ANNUAL REPORT | 2012

REGION NINE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

10 Civic Center Plaza Suite 3 | P.O. Box 3367 | Mankato, MN 56002

Phone 507.387.5643 | Toll Free 800.450.5643 | www.rndc.org

Region Nine Development Commission is excited to be a part of the social media world. We use social media as a outside communication channel. Our organization is now more accessible to those we serve and those interested in finding out more about RNDC. With your help, we can use social media as a tool to build, improve and strengthen the connections within our region. To learn more about the services we offer, local resources and events, initiatives and opportunities, connect with us on:



facebook.com/RegionNine



[@RegionNineDC](https://twitter.com/RegionNineDC)



linkedin.com/company/region-nine-development-commission

Scan to visit our newly designed website.



Your Regional Partner for Progress