



Growing Interest in North Dakota

LEE PETERSON NAMED NEW ED&F DIRECTOR; CRAMER TO HEAD U-MARY LEADERSHIP CENTER

ED&F director Kevin Cramer has left the department to head the Harold Schafer Leadership Foundation and oversee fundraising at the University of Mary in Bismarck.

Gov.-elect John Hoeven has named Lee Peterson, president of the Minot Area Development Corp., to head ED&F.

Gov. Ed Schafer appointed Cramer director of ED&F in June 1997. Before that, Cramer served four years as state tourism director. During his tenure at ED&F, the department managed more than 250 business investment projects, conducted nearly 500 on-site visits, helped to create more than 3,500 jobs, and invested more than \$230 million in communities across the state.

"I am grateful for this opportunity and humbled by the confidence Sr. Thomas Welder has in me," Cramer said. "The mission of the program is to build leaders modeled after a great North Dakotan: Harold Schafer. I can't think of a more exciting challenge."



Lee Peterson (left) says he is excited about the opportunity to work for Gov. John Hoeven as director of ED&F.

Photo Courtesy of Stephen Geffre, Minot Daily News

Peterson's background includes two years as an economic development professional for a two-county corporation in Nebraska, and 10 years as president of the Minot Area Development Corp. (MADC), a nonprofit with 375 dues-paying members who actively support job creation. Under Peterson's leadership, MADC has recruited a number of companies to the Minot area.

Hoeven has proposed combining ED&F with the ND Department of Tourism and the ND Division of Community Services, to create the ND Commerce Department. One of Peterson's first responsibilities is to help Hoeven create a plan for this combined agency to present to the Legislature in January. ■

LINDA BUTTS JOINS ED&F AS DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Gov. John Hoeven used his first day in office to announce key members of his cabinet and other top agency personnel, including Linda Butts, Fargo, as deputy director of ED&F.



Linda Butts

As deputy director, Butts will be responsible for daily administration of the cabinet agency. She brings a broad background in business, farming, insurance and accounting to the position.

"I admire Linda's tremendous energy, organization skills and grassroots knowledge of North Dakota's economy," Hoeven said. "Her skills will mesh well with Lee Peterson's as we target more, better-paying jobs."

Butts owned the Prairie Restaurant and Bakery in Carrington for 22 years and operated Taste of Dakota, a food consulting company showcasing North Dakota Food products.

As a CPA, she worked for Eide Helmeke and Charles Bailey in Fargo as an auditor. She holds a health and life insurance license and has served as an employee benefits consultant. Butts has also served on the Agricultural Products Utilization Commission.

The Butts family operates a farm and cattle feedlot in the Carrington area. ■

SERVICE PROVIDERS UNVEIL ONE-STOP WEB SITE

Thirteen ND service providers recently launched a web site designed to improve the delivery of workforce development services to clients.

The Customer Resource Information System for North Dakota—crisnd.com—warehouses information for workforce development services and contacts. The site lets users search a comprehensive database by type, group, or county to find needed services.

Crisnd.com began as a need to simplify case management and reduce duplication of services between similar providers. "In direct response to the Workforce Investment Act, Gov. Ed Schafer asked for a one-stop delivery system to offer customized, responsive, effective workforce development services. Crisnd.com makes it happen," said Fraine Zeitler, director of the ND Workforce Development Council.

For example, the site suggests what information clients should take to appointments with the service providers, and lists each program's eligibility requirements. "You don't need to know the name of the program. You just need to know what you need," Zeitler said. "This web site is another step toward streamlining services and putting the system to work for our customers, instead of making our customers learn the system."

Gov. Schafer praised the site, saying, "This shows how government can improve and simplify services to people through the effective use of technology. It allows different agencies to work together. I'm very pleased to add this web site to our state's online services."

The 13 partners submitting information to crisnd.com include: AARP Senior Employment Program; Burdick Job Corps Center; Department of Human Services; Department of Public Instruction; Division of Community Services; Green Thumb, Inc.; Job Service ND, Motivation, Education and Training, Inc. (MET, Inc.); ND University System; ND Workforce Development Council; State Board for Vocational and Technical Education; Veterans Employment and Training Services; and Vocational Rehabilitation Services. ■

ND DEVELOPMENT FUND HELPS COMPANIES IN DEVILS LAKE, LISBON, AND FARGO**Devils Lake**

Horon Research (CADgraphics) received \$60,000 to provide a revolving line of credit as part of a financing package to allow the company to relocate from St. Paul, Minn., to Devils Lake.

Horon is a software company owned by Dan Horon and his wife, Corrine Kenner. The company's patent-pending CADgraphics software enhances building security and is used in skyscrapers, hospitals, hotels, shopping malls, and universities around the world, for clients such as 3M, AT&T, MCI, Harvard University, the Mayo Clinic, and Westinghouse. CADgraphics constantly monitors smoke detectors, fire alarms and security systems. In an emergency, it automatically displays maps, floor plans, and customized instructions for rescue workers.

"The state's incentives were a major factor in our decision to move," Horon said. "With North Dakota's help, we'll be able to expand our business much faster than we could anywhere else."

Lisbon

Harvest Board, LLC, received \$500,000 as part of a financing package for construction of a new wheat straw composite board plant. The lead bank for the project is Bremer Bank in Lisbon.

Company representatives said they believe rising demand for composite board products as a substitute for more expensive wood-based board will enable composite board producers to remain profitable throughout the commodity cycle. Harvest Board will produce agrifiber-based board, made from wheat straw. Agrifiber-based board is an annually renewable resource with a plentiful supply. It also uses a non-toxic bonding agent rather than the toxic bonding agent used in wood-based composite board, and is stronger and more water-tolerant than traditional wood-based products.

"Harvest Board has an innovative process to include North Dakota products in nontraditional manufacturing," said Gov. John Hoeven. "The company plans to offer more than 50 new jobs to the Lisbon community, which is considerable growth."

(continued on next page)



Fargo

Convexity LLC received \$150,000 to finance the startup of a high-tech business management organization for Internet business startups. Convexity will offer business and money guidance to Internet startups to increase their chances of success.

The company is run by founder Brent Teiken, along with his executive team at Sundog Interactive in Fargo. Teiken started Sundog in 1996 as a software development company specializing in high-end E-business solutions. The company is doing well, and Teiken decided to take on another startup and serve as CEO of both.

“Fueled by the skyrocketing number of Internet startups, Convexity will inevitably bring out-of-state dollars to North Dakota, as well as supporting a high-tech economy,” said Lee Peterson, ED&F director. ■

APUC APPROVES RESEARCH AND MARKETING GRANTS

Grants totaling \$112,000 will help 10 ND agricultural projects with research and marketing.

The grants, administered by the ND Agricultural Products Utilization Commission (APUC), a division of ED&F, will go to the following organizations and businesses:

- a. Commercial Vegetable Growers Task Force, Jamestown. \$35,000 for an executive marketer for the ND vegetable industry (vegetable producers, economic development professionals, Irrigation Caucus, High Value Irrigated Crop Task Force, and collective agriculture industry).
- b. National Sunflower Association (NSA). \$25,000 for a NuSun sunflower oil human nutrition study to determine if NuSun in a diet has a positive effect on cholesterol levels.
- c. ND Corn Growers Association (NDCGA). \$10,000 for marketing to increase the use of ND-produced ethanol from the current 13 percent market share to 30 percent of the motor fuel sold in North Dakota.
- d. Natural Meats Cooperative Project. \$5,000 to help organize a multi-state regional cooperative of

all-natural meat producers, to investigate the benefits of acquiring an existing natural meat processing and marketing company.

- e. Juneberry Patch, Velva. \$5,000 to help establish a commercial market for Juneberry production in North Dakota.
- f. KIP Farms, Grand Forks. \$2,000 for a study of U.S. markets for pre-processed vegetables, which could bring new markets for high-value vegetables to North Dakota.
- g. Dakota Country Meats, Jamestown. \$5,000 to help market ND-produced fresh bison portion cuts and frozen bison patties throughout the region.
- h. Lewis & Clark Bean Growers, Garrison. \$10,000 for financial and legal costs for the startup of the Lewis & Clark Bean Growers Group, a bean and field pea processing facility.
- i. South Central Dairy, Hague. \$10,000 to help dairy producers in south central ND determine whether organic dairy production is viable for the state and investigate market entry strategies.
- j. Whispering Spirit Meats, Manning. \$5,000 to help market and distribute buffalo and elk meat products.

APUC administers five grant programs for researching and developing new and expanded uses for ND agricultural products: basic and applied research, marketing and utilization, cooperative marketing, farm diversification, and agricultural prototype. The commission disburses about \$750,000 per year in assistance grants. Funding sources include the state's general fund and a portion of farmers' off-road gasoline tax refund. ■

“Phoenix has expanded twice; in 1995 we moved to a 55,000 square foot building. This would not have been possible without a dedicated workforce and strong support from the State of North Dakota.”

Sally Bosch, controller
Phoenix International Corp., Fargo