

LADCO's 37th Annual Meeting

December 10, 2008

Over 250 members and guests were in attendance for LADCO's 37th Annual Meeting held Wednesday, December 10, 2008 in the Radisson Center in downtown La Crosse.

This year's meeting was co-sponsored by Xcel Energy and Dairyland Power. The meeting also featured products provided by Coulee Coffee Roastery, Scotchwood Candy Company and Absolutely Edible. All three have been winners of the Coulee Region Entrepreneurial Initiative Business Plan Competition and two are current tenants at the Coulee Region Business Center.

Scheduled keynote speaker, Senator Russ Feingold, was unable to attend due to the automakers loan package in front of Congress. The new program "Perspectives & Priorities for the National Economy & 111th Congress" included presentations by: Matt Nikolay of Senator Russ Feingold's Office, John Medinger of Senator Herb Kohl's Office, Mark Seitz of Congressman Ron Kind's Office, and Joe Heim of the UW-La Crosse Political Science Department. The panel addressed the current economic situation facing our country and the automaker loan package, noting that the votes to pass the bill are in place in the House of Representatives but could be much harder to find in the Senate. All agreed that we will most likely see an economic stimulus package in the early days of the Obama administration that will be largely focused on infrastructure projects. The representatives also agree that programs focused on helping small business will be a pivotal factor in rebuilding our economy.



The Congressional panel listens to Executive Director Jim Hill.

The President's Award, given to someone who has recently made a large contribution to the business community, was presented to Barb Erickson of I.C. System. I.C. System began operations in La Crosse in 2007 and recently announced that the company will make a permanent home at Center 90 in Onalaska, growing to as many as 250 employees after investing over \$1 million in tenant improvements to the facility. La Crosse Manager Dave Spencer received the award on behalf of Barb Erickson.



Dave Spencer accepts the President's Award from Mike Herro on behalf of Barb Erickson of I.C. System



Ron Wessels addresses the crowd after being awarded the Distinguished Service Award.

Hill then took the podium to award the 2008 LADCO Distinguished Service Award, awarded to recognize a life time of good works in business and the community. This year's winner, former Community Bank President of M&I Bank Ron Wessels, served as a leader in the area banking community for much of his career and has been dedicated to creating positive outcomes for local business and the La Crosse Area economy as a whole.

LADCO's 37th Annual Meeting proved to be another successful event, bringing together business and community leaders. LADCO would like to thank everyone in attendance and the many others who help make LADCO a success.