

## **2011 LADCO Distinguished Service Award**

### **John Hansen**

LADCO's 2011 Distinguished Service Award recipient defines the term "self-made man." It is not an unusual story in the La Crosse Area when you stop and think about it, which is very good news indeed for all of us.

John Hansen was raised on a dairy farm near Bangor, one of five children. He took an early interest in all matters to do with animal husbandry and business. After graduating from UW Madison with a degree in Meat and Animal Science John began work travelling across the country, first with the National Livestock and Meat Board and then with John Morrell Company.

A crucial moment came in 1965 when John and family began the first Kwik Trip store in Eau Claire, WI. He took on partners in 1970 and when the family sold their interests in Kwik Trip in 2000 there were over 300 stores across the Upper Midwest.

John and his family were not done by any account for they have since then created Nesnah Ventures. Nesnah Ventures has interests in food, fuel, renewable energy and agri-business stretching across the United States. Literally thousand of people have worked for John Hansen and his family over the years.

What has been mentioned so far is John Hansen, businessman and entrepreneur. The essential John Hansen though is a strong family man, a community volunteer, philanthropist and a man of deep religious convictions. He has had leadership

positions in the University of Wisconsin College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the Viterbo Board of Advisors, the St. Francis Hospital Foundation and the Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine Board of Directors to name a few.

We in the La Crosse Area are extremely fortunate for good businessmen and citizens like John Hansen. Please join me in welcoming the winner of the 2011 LADCO Distinguished Service Award, Mr. John Hansen.