
Rockford Area Economic Development Council

Hälsningar

från Rockford, Illinois, USA Global Partners Build Local Wealth

The RAEDC is a proud member of Swedish-American Chambers of Commerce/Chicago



Summer 2008 HALSNINGAR

See you in Stockholm!

The Rockford area will be sending its third consecutive trade mission to Sweden this year, when 13 people will attend the Swedish-American Chambers of Commerce Entrepreneurial Days in Stockholm, September 15-16.

Beginning with the 2007 trade mission, the trip has been called the "Jon W. Lundin Trade Mission" in honor of Lundin, a persuasive advocate of revitalizing Rockford's manufacturing industry who passed away in 2007. He was a member of the 2006 trade mission and was excited about exchanging Rockford goods and services with Sweden and other European countries.

"We are really looking forward to E-Days, to renewing friendships with our Swedish friends and making new friends," said Winnebago County Chairman Scott Christiansen who will be attending with his wife, Karol. "The programs and speakers arranged by SACC all sound great and I know we will learn a lot from talking to all our Swedish contacts, visiting facilities, and spending time getting to know each other better. I'm especially looking forward to visit their renewable energy facilities because Sweden has been leading the world in this field for years," he added.

The Christiansens' grandparents are from Boras and Göteborg, Sweden as well as Oslo, Norway. This will be the Christiansens' first trip to Sweden.

The Rockford delegation thus far includes:

- Gary Anderson, Gary W. Anderson & Associates/Architects; wife, Carol
- Rob Gary, Ingenium Testing marketing
- Winnebago County Board Chairman Scott Christiansen; wife, Kathy
- Russell L. Dennis, Jr., Leading Edge Hydraulics vice president
- Dale Falconer, Seward Screw Products president
- Jeffrey Gregory, William Charles Energy vice president; wife Allison Holmstrom Gregory
- City of Rockford Mayor Lawrence J. Morrissey
- Mark Podemski, RAEDC vice president for development
- David Preece, Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau chief executive officer
- Norman Walzer, Northern Illinois University senior research scholar

See you in Stockholm!



Hydraulics Executive Returns to Sweden for E-Days



Russ Dennis, Jr. is making his third trip to Sweden in two years, a strong sign of how much he values the friends and business relationships he's made since his first Rockford trade mission to SACC's E-Days in 2007.

As a vice president of Leading Edge Hydraulics, a manufacturer of hydraulic tube assemblies and fittings for the off-highway and mobile hydraulics industry, Russ is exploring business opportunities in Europe. "By participating in the Rockford Area Economic Development Council's trade missions to Sweden and in several E-Days, I've had the opportunity to meet some great people throughout Sweden," said Russ. "I've truly enjoyed these friendships and I am really looking forward to seeing my Swedish colleagues again and look forward to meeting even more people during the upcoming E-Days. They have been so genuine and hospitable to me throughout my visits," he added.

Will Learn About Sweden's 'Green'

One goal of Rockford's trade mission to Sweden will be to learn about energy-efficient home designs from our Swedish friends who are quite advanced in this field. Rockford Mayor Morrissey has made that a priority for this visit and Gary Anderson, architect, and Jeff Gregory, William Charles Energy, will help the Rockford group learn as much as it can.

"There are many partnership opportunities, in how we can learn from Sweden's successes in this field and how we might incorporate their technologies in the Rockford area to build more energy-efficient homes," said Anderson.



Lidköping Interns Think Rockford is 'Perfect Match'

As part of the Industrial Partnership Agreement signed in 2006 between Lidköping, Sweden and Rockford, Illinois, two interns from Lidköping are now in Rockford as international business development trainees. Rockford will reciprocate in the future.

Awareness

It is the job of Linnea Bengtsson and Marie-Louise Pettersson to encourage business development between the two cities by building awareness of Rockford and Lidköping to entrepreneurs and economic development people in both communities. To do that, the two are "networking" to meet people who can help them.

Linnea, a 25-year-old personnel management student from Karlstad University, feels that Rockford and Lidköping are a perfect match. "Rockford is very friendly, and with so many Swedish descendents in Rockford, there is already a very strong connection," she said. "If you want to do business in America, go to a place that is already aware of Sweden and has established relationships with communities like Lidköping and is so welcoming," she advised.

Marie-Louise, a 27-year-old economics and marketing student from the University of Växjö is excited to be part of the exchange program. "To be part of something larger, to build a foundation that will affect something further down the road is fulfilling," added Marie-Louise.

E-Days

Both women are recruiting Rockford people to attend E-Days in Stockholm this September, as part of Rockford's 2008 trade mission to Sweden. They are also planning a trip for the group to visit Lidköping after E-Days, where they will meet Mayor Kjell Hedvall and others dignitaries, visit many companies and participate in several tours that demonstrate Swedish technologies.



Marie-Louise Pettersson and Linnea Bengtsson

Lidköping Welding Students Visited Rockford

A delegation of high school welding students and education representatives from Lidköping visited Rockford in April as part of the Industrial Partnership Agreement between the two cities. Both communities are working to address their workforce shortage, particularly in the vocational fields. This exchange helped each community learn from the best practices of each other.

Lidköping School Board Director Jan Fransson said a combination of four factors are helping them attract students to vocational careers:

- up-to-the-date equipment to attract students and give them the best training;
- enthusiastic teachers;
- sound educational policies with the complete support of the administration; and
- combining regular education with vocational apprenticeship.



Caisa Ditts, welding student, and Jan Fransson, director of the Lidköping School Board at Rockford Process Controls

Export to Rockford and Save with FTZ and CES



Swedish companies that establish a Rockford-area business that has international shipments can enjoy cost savings through the Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) which is administered by the Chicago Rockford International Airport. When approved as an FTZ partner, businesses bringing in goods from Sweden and other countries may defer, reduce or eliminate duties that are normally imposed by U.S. Customs.

For more information on the FTZ, contact Marge Bevers, foreign-trade zone specialist for the Greater Rockford Airport Authority, at 815.969.4427 or mbevers@flyrfd.com

You can save valuable time at the new Centralized Examination Station (CES) established by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection for the inland Port of Rockford. Todd Special Services of Rockford operates the CES and examines imported merchandise in their high-security warehouse. Businesses that import from overseas can save one to three days by directing their containers to the Union Pacific's Rochelle Global III Intermodal Terminal near Rockford, rather than the terminal in Chicago.

For more information on the CES, contact Paige Peterson, general manager of Todd Special Services at 815.398.5115 or paigep@toddransit.com.

How to Access U.S. Market

If this topic interests you, be sure to connect with Mark Podemski of the Rockford Area Economic Development Council at the September 15-16 E-Days in Stockholm. He will again be part of the Rockford trade mission to Sweden.



Mark spoke on this topic when he was a presenter at the FokusInnovations conference hosted by Innovationbron in June in Göteborg. With his RAEDC experience and also his volunteer position as president of the Swedish-American Chamber of Commerce-Chicago Chapter, Mark is an excellent contact for Swedish companies and entrepreneurs who are interested in business opportunities in the United States.

"I especially welcome inquiries for business opportunities in Rockford, as we have a rich history of many Swedish descendents and Swedish companies in Rockford, so you will find us a very welcoming community," said Mark. "In fact, Rockford has the fourth highest concentration of Swedish people per capita in the United States," he added. Contact Mark at mpodemski@rockfordil.com.

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