

## **LITTLE CHUTE WINDMILL AIMS TO BE CATALYST FOR ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT**

By Robin Dekker

Little Chute Windmill, Inc. hopes to have a positive economic impact on Little Chute and the surrounding area by tapping into the already thriving local tourism market. According to *The Economic Impact of Expenditures by Travelers on Wisconsin 2005*, a study by the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, Outagamie County ranks eighth for traveler spending in the state. In 2005 travelers spent \$317 million in Outagamie County, up 94% from 1994. In 2005 \$195 million in wages were generated in Outagamie County from this spending, which supports the equivalent of 8,125 full-time jobs. The study also states, "Without the state and local government revenues generated by tourism, taxpaying Wisconsin households would face nearly \$900 in additional taxes annually to maintain existing government services". Clearly tourism isn't just about vacation; it is about the health of our economy.

There are already many people traveling to this area because of all the fun things to do. The Little Chute Windmill and Van Asten Visitor Center is going to position itself as a unique cultural attraction to draw more of that travel spending to Little Chute. By building an authentic 100 foot-tall grain grinding Dutch windmill and visitor center, Little Chute Windmill, Inc. aims to encourage economic prosperity and cultural enrichment. I don't view it as just a windmill; it's an icon and a symbol of this wonderful community that differentiates Little Chute from the rest of the world.

Travelers to Wisconsin are not always from far away places. They can be from another state or another country, but more likely they are from a few towns over. The same study mentioned above shows that in 2005, 55% of travelers in Wisconsin who stayed in hotels, motels, resorts or bed & breakfasts were from Wisconsin. This means 45%, or less than half of travelers were from out-of-state. Wisconsin residents are truly interested in their state and want to discover what communities big and small have to offer. Let's show them what Little Chute has to offer!

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