



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Microsoft Couple Enjoys Work and Life at the Lake**

**Battle Lake, MN, July 12, 2008** – When you think of high-tech companies, Microsoft surely comes to mind. Fortunately for the lakes area, Microsoft Corporation has embraced the concept of telecommuting – workers in remote offices – to support the lifestyle preferences of its workforce.

The Lakes Area Development Association, headquartered in Battle Lake, Minnesota is associated with two of Microsoft's best and brightest – Leif and Kristen Hemstad – as they live and telecommute from their home on Otter Tail Lake.

The telecommuting couple uses high-speed internet, along with Microsoft's mobility tools, to conduct global business from their home office. Kristen is a program manager in the Customer Technical Support organization at Microsoft. Leif currently oversees nearly 60 professionals in the Premier Field Engineering group that provides consulting services to Microsoft's largest clients around the world.

The move to lakes area from Fargo has been everything the couple expected and more. "We enjoy a healthy perspective on life," says Leif. "We've achieved a great balance in our marriage, work, friendships and hobbies, all while being productive Microsoft professionals. We're grateful everyday that we can work for a technology leader in the place we've dreamed about living".

Both Leif and Kristen grew up on farms in North Dakota. To them moving to the lakes wasn't about getting away, it was about getting back to a rural lifestyle with a strong sense of community.

Among the many things they enjoy about the area, Kristen quickly points out they love the wildlife. And with a coy smile she adds, "but not in the traditional sense. Our neighbors are wild and crazy. There are so many good and talented people here, and we are thrilled with the friends we've made."

The couple travels to the Microsoft campus in Fargo a few times per week, and even the commute is productive time. "By using a teleconferencing service, I can be in the car with Leif and on a phone call with team members in Fargo, Asia, and Europe before I get to the office", says Kristen.

Likewise, Leif hasn't wasted any time using the array of resources in the lakes area to serve Microsoft's interests. Later this summer he'll be hosting 50 Microsoft professionals for dinner

on Otter Tail Cruises, and 14 executives will join him for a retreat at Thumper Pond, two of which are coming from Asia. Leif adds, “this area is wired for business and a great life, what could be better!”

**About Lakes Area Development Association**

Lakes Area Development Association enables economic development in the lakes area with business expansion services, new investments, and community enhancements while preserving a superb quality of life. The association’s address is P.O. Box 895, Battle Lake, MN 56515.

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