

Port plays host to Luxembourg summit

Written by MARK JAEGER

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New ambassador to United States takes part in conference on collaboration between state, country

The politics and economics of international commerce took center stage in Port Washington last week when Ansay & Associates hosted a Luxembourg-American Economic Summit.

The meeting was held Friday, Aug. 9, in the company's second-floor conference room in the Harbor Square building, overlooking Lake Michigan.

The presence of Jean-Louis Worlzfeld, Luxembourg's newly appointed ambassador to the United States, underlined the global significance of the gathering.



Mike Ansay, chairman and CEO of Ansay & Associates and a board member of the Luxembourg American Cultural Society, delivered the welcoming remarks. Serving as presenters were Lora Klenke, vice president of international development for the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, and Michael Shoys, senior vice president of Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce.

Representatives of the Luxembourg American Chamber of Commerce also participated.

The summit focused on ways Luxembourg and Wisconsin can form a stronger economic alliance.

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Toward that goal, Lakeland College President Daniel Eck detailed how his school has formed a sister-school relationship with the University of Luxembourg in Limpertsberg. The local school is also developing a fellowship program to promote business ties between Luxembourg, Wisconsin and the U.S.

In conjunction with the school's exchange initiative, economics professor Scott Niederjohn will teach in Luxembourg this fall through the Fulbright Scholarship Program.

State officials also discussed plans for a 14-member trade mission to Luxembourg next year.

Ozaukee County has had a long-standing connection with Luxembourg, due to the large number of families from the European country who settled in the area.

The summit was held in conjunction with the Belgium area's annual ethnic celebration, Luxembourg Fest.

Leading the push for cultural and business collaboration has been the Ansay family, which donated the land and a considerable amount of the cost for the construction of the Luxembourg American Cultural Center and Museum in the Village of Belgium.

Mike Ansay said the summit succeeded at opening doors between the small European country and the local marketplace.

"It was the first economic summit we have hosted, and I think things went really well. It was a really good showing," Ansay said.

Image Information: Port Washington Mayor Tom Mlada presented Luxembourg Ambassador Jean-Louis Worlzfeld with a replica of the city's lighthouse during the Luxembourg-American Economic Summit. Photo by Sam Arendt