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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR RELEASE

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Attracting Rideau Canal re-investment and leveraging 1000 Islands assets showcased at annual Economic Development Summit

KEMPTVILLE – Strong partnerships are being forged and a co-ordinated effort is being established between federal, provincial and municipal officials to focus on attracting international tour boat companies to the Rideau Canal as a top-notch global attraction.

A strategy to rejuvenate inland waterways, including a plan to enhance economic development on the Rideau Corridor, was outlined by government officials at the annual Leeds Grenville Economic Development Summit here Friday. More than 180 business owners, non-for-profit organizations and government representatives were in attendance at the seventh-annual summit themed “Economic Strength Through Diversity.”

Representatives from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport discussed their tourism investment attraction strategy with a focus on attracting European tour boat companies to the Rideau Canal. The presentation was given by Debbie Jewell, Director of the Investment and Development Office, and Noreen Cartwright, Senior Investment Consultant.

Darlene Upton, Executive Director of Waterways for Parks Canada, spoke about realizing our world-class potential through visitor experiences along the Rideau Canal and 1000 Islands/St. Lawrence Seaway corridors.

Government officials stressed the need to think big to bring the Rideau Canal to a worldwide audience through these leading canal boat companies, to introduce a new concept in boat sharing on the Rideau, and to attract international visitors to the water and land offerings on the Rideau Corridor.

“We have phenomenal tourism potential in our region and improving access and visitor options is a big step in the right direction,” said Ann Weir, Economic Development Manager with the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville and master of ceremonies of the summit.

where **lifestyle**
grows good **business**

synonyme de **qualité de vie**
et de **réussite** en **affaires**

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The event is hosted by the Counties Economic Development Department in partnership with Gord Brown, MP Leeds-Grenville, 1000 Islands and Rideau Lakes, Steve Clark, MPP for Leeds-Grenville, along with the 1000 Islands, Valley Heartland and Grenville Community Futures Development Corporations and the 1000 Islands Region Workforce Development Board. It was held at the North Grenville Municipal Centre.

The day featured a wide variety of speakers and presentations. St. Lawrence College representatives presented "3D Printing and its Future" and outlined how it will impact business. New this year to the summit was a speed-reporting segment "Industry Game Changer Updates," with the latest from the 1000 Islands Casino/Great Canadian Gaming, the new Scheuermann Vineyard, Tallman Group, Aquatarium, and Canopy Growth Corporation.

A format returning for its fourth year due to popular demand was the talk show panel segment. With the theme "Nourishing our Entrepreneurial Spirit," the panel featured Nigel Smith, of Bushgarden Farm, Janet Campbell of Mrs. McGarrigle's Fine Foods, Wendy Banks of Wendy's Country and Mobile Market, and Neil Kudrinko, of Kudrinko's in Westport. The host was Katie Nolan of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

The Bill Thake Memorial Award for Economic Development Leadership was presented. Nominees included George Tackaberry, Township of Athens, David Cybulski, Township of Augusta, and Bob Besharah, Municipality of North Grenville. All nominees were recognized by Warden David Gordon. Marlene Thake, Bill's widow, helped present the certificates and award.

This year's winner is George Tackaberry, a well-known, Athens-area businessman and philanthropist known for building a grassroots business into one of the largest, iconic construction firms in eastern Ontario. George Tackaberry received the award for his ongoing involvement in numerous community events which draw thousands of visitors to the region each year to boost the local economy. Mr. Tackaberry attended the event with his daughter June Knapp and his son Kevin Tackaberry.

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A partner media release is also available providing more background on all three award nominees and their volunteer work in the region.

Media inquiries:



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