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PORTAGE COUNTY STARS IN TELEVISION BROADCAST

The bright lights are on Portage County, as the area stars in the next episode of Discover Wisconsin Television.

The program, titled "Portage County – By Our Very Nature," is scheduled for broadcast Feb. 21 and 22 throughout the Midwest. Locally it will air Saturday, Feb. 21 at 10 a.m. on Fox Sports North, and at 6:30 p.m. on WAOW TV-9 Wausau. (ABC.)

Many local residents are interviewed throughout the program, including Stevens Point Historical Society board member Anton Anday, County Executive Mark Maslowski, Whiskey River Guide Service owner Mike Wiza, Portage County Parks Director Gary Speckman, Ice Age Trail volunteer Bob Freckman, George W. Meade Wildlife Area Naturalist Pamela Stange, Schmeekle Reserve Director Ron Zimmerman, Sentry World Golf Course Superintendent Gary Tanko, Portage County Historical Society President Tim Siebert, UW-Stevens Point Planetarium and Observatory Director Dr. Randy Olson, SkyClub Supper Club Co-owner Eric Freund, Christian's Bistro Chef and Owner Christian Czerwonka, artist and potter Rick Foris, Director of Pointer Athletics Frank O'Brien, and Julie Birrenkott, Marketing Director for the Stevens Point Brewery.

The show was made possible through funding from Portage County. "Tourism is a 14 billion dollar industry in Wisconsin," said County Executive Mark Maslowski. "We know we have to compete for visitors with 71 other counties, so we thought this was a great venue to get the word out on what our county offers."

The television program is part of a two-year promotional campaign with the Discover Wisconsin Media Network. This partnership will include 3 broadcasts of the 30-minute television episode, five radio programs, which air on 44 affiliate radio stations, representation at sporting and trade show events throughout the state, and website exposure on www.discoverwisconsin.com.

Throughout the television show, viewers are encouraged to go visit the Discover Wisconsin website to link to the Portage County attractions and events they are interested in.

Tom Barrett, Executive Director of the Stevens Point Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, is pleased with the positive attention coming. "According to the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, approximately 53% of visitors to Wisconsin actually live here. This is an excellent way to spread the word on Portage County."

Stephanie Klett, who has been host of Discover Wisconsin Television for 16 years, was impressed with the area. "Portage County has everything you're looking for in a vacation, like fun events, hiking, biking, fishing, canoeing, kayaking, golfing, skiing, terrific restaurants and the nation's fourth oldest brewery. The question really is – what doesn't it have?"

To see a preview of the episode, visit www.discoverwisconsin.com.