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Jacobson's New Venture Aims To Assist Non-Profits

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Tim Jacobson has been a very busy man lately. In the past month he's gotten married, moved from La Crosse to Boscobel, finalized the sale of the McNamee property to the Mississippi Valley Conservancy, and started a new business—Visjonaer Consulting. Oh, and he's also working on several new books and is executive producer of a new documentary coming out Sept. 16, "Mysteries of the Driftless."

That hasn't left him much time for hobbies like flying, karate, scuba diving, international travel, taxidermy and blacksmithing.

"I'm a curious person with a lot of varied interests, some would say too many," says the West Grant High School graduate.

After graduating from what now is River Ridge High School, Jacobson, 46, attended Beloit College to study government. He received his law degree from Marquette University in 1992 and immediately went to work for the La Crosse law office of Parke O'Flaherty Lt. He left the firm in 2006 after winning several high profile civil cases, many environmentally-related.

So it was a natural fit for the avid outdoorsman to leave the law firm to take

the position of executive director with the Mississippi Valley Conservancy (MVC), even though his co-workers might not have thought so. The reaction, he said at the time, was, "utter shock and a lot of blank stares."

Nevertheless, Jacobson thoroughly enjoyed his time at the Conservancy, eight years, during which he led the organization to be named "Land Trust of the Year" and "Friend of Conservation—Outstanding Organization." Jacobson also led MVC successfully through the national land trust accreditation process—a feat achieved by only about ten percent of the 1,700 land trusts around the country. During his tenure, Jacobson led MVC from having 2,800 acres permanently protected before he started to 15,200 acres today—including the 400-acre McNamee site on the east side of Boscobel.

He still works with the Conservancy, but in a consulting role. Which brings us to Visjonaer Consulting, the name meaning "visionary" in Norwegian and a reflection on Jacobson's strong Scandinavian heritage.

"I felt it was time for me to move on to where I believe I can do the most good for the land trust and nonprofit communities," Jacobson says. "Fifteen hundred land trusts around the country may be considering the national accreditation process, for example, I

believe I can help a good number of them achieve their goals.”

Jacobson married Boscobel kindergarten teacher Lisa Toye on June 29 in La Crosse. They now live together in Lisa’s home on Doc Mac Drive—ironically, in the shadow of the former McNamee property bluffs.

“I thought this was a great opportunity, to use my marriage as an opportunity to do something new and help non-profit organizations through marketing, fund raising and strategic planning,” Jacobson says of Visjonaer. “It’s really ironic that I worked on that project for three years and now I’m living right across the street from the McNamee property. I couldn’t have planned it any better; it’s really a beautiful place.”

In addition to his new consulting and communications business, Jacobson is excited to be executive producer of the upcoming documentary “Mysteries of the Driftless.” It will premier Sept. 16 at the new Weber Center for the Performing Arts in La Crosse.

“It’s basically featuring the best of this area’s natural wonders,” explains Jacobson, “the bluffs, valleys, effigy mounds, caves, springs and rare animal species. It was a lot of fun making the film, which was about two years in the making.”

Jacobson plans showings throughout the Driftless Area, including Boscobel, and recently signed a two-year deal with Wisconsin Public Television to share it with viewers statewide.

“I’m getting my fingers in a lot of different things,” says Jacobson, “but my bottom line goal is to help strengthen non-profit organizations. They are so important for their communities and I’m hoping in my consulting business to help them along.”

For more information about Visjonaer, visit www.visjonaer.com or call (608) 386-2563.



Tim Jacobson delivers the keynote address on the topic of personal excellence at Phi Kappa Psi Founders Day dinner last February at Beloit College.