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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Rep. Reinert to present Mayor Ness with official gift and invitation from Sister City of Petrozavodsk at 3 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 2**

Duluth state Rep. Roger Reinert, who in June served as the city of Duluth's official delegate on a Sister City visit to Petrozavodsk, Russia, will present Mayor Don Ness with an official gift from Petrozavodsk Mayor Nikolay Levin during a ceremony at 3 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 2, in the Mayor's Reception Room on the fourth floor of City Hall.

Rep. Reinert will also present Mayor Ness a letter from Mayor Levin inviting a delegation of Duluth business people to visit Petrozavodsk in the spring of 2010. The public is invited to the ceremony.

"We have a pleasure (sic) to invite a delegation of business people from Duluth to visit Petrozavodsk during late May-early June 2010 in order to have a closer acquaintance with our city and business opportunities here," wrote Mayor Levin. "We believe that in today's global world economic contacts are much less depending on geographical location, and our cities can find fields of mutual interest also in this important area."

Among the activities of June's Duluth delegation to Petrozavodsk were:

- Meeting with the owner of a construction company hoping to learn from research at the University of Minnesota Duluth and its Natural Resources Research Institute to make high-quality and more-affordable homes from his region's abundant wood products.
- Strengthening the partnership between the College of St. Scholastica and the university in Petrozavodsk.
- Coordinating a potential visit to Duluth by a watercolor painter from Petrozavodsk for an exhibition at the Tweed Museum. His works are from northern Karelia, an area very similar to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.
- Participating in the formal "Day of the City" ceremonies, Russia's equivalent of the Fourth of July, laying flowers at the memorial on behalf of all Duluthians.

Established as a Sister City in 1987, Petrozavodsk shares a mining and shipping history with Duluth. The city of 269,000, one of the biggest in Northwestern Russia, was founded by Peter the Great in 1703. Petrozavodsk is also situated on a large lake, Lake Onega, which has a similar waterfront lake walk with sculptures from its many Sister Cities. The idea of Duluth's lake walk was the inspiration for theirs. A sculpture from Petrozavodsk, "Green Bear," is located in Lake Place Park, while a sculpture from Duluth, "Fishermen," is located on Petrozavodsk's embankment.

In addition to Petrozavodsk, Russia, Duluth's other Sister Cities are Ohara-Isumi, Japan; Thunder Bay, Canada; and Vaxjo, Sweden.

The management of Duluth Sister Cities, established in 1986, was changed in 2007 from being a City of Duluth commission to now being independently managed by a Board of Directors. Duluth Sister Cities International promotes global understanding through mutual respect and cooperation with cultural, economic and educational endeavors. The organization's web address is [www.duluthmnsistercities.org](http://www.duluthmnsistercities.org).

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