

# Looking to set sail in Red Wing

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Capt. Rusty Mathiasmeier has spent most his life working on the Mississippi River, manning boats of one kind or another.

For 30 years, he worked on towboats traveling from St. Paul to New Orleans. And for the past 10 years he's worked on excursion boats.

Now he's looking to open his new business — Rusty's River Rides — in Red Wing.

"The most beautiful place on the Mississippi is Red Wing," Mathiasmeier said. "I always thought why don't they have (an excursion) boat up there?"

Mathiasmeier is renting a dock from the Red Wing Port Authority and is planning to give sightseeing tours, wildlife cruises and to charter his boat for weddings, reunions and other parties. Within the next couple of weeks Mathiasmeier hopes to have his business up and running, he said, adding he has a few loose ends to tie up.

Myron White, Port Authority executive director, said a number of people have considered bringing tour boats to Red Wing, but often back off because of numerous regulatory hurdles. Mathiasmeier, however, seems undeterred, White said.

If everything goes right, Mathiasmeier expects to be up and running by October. He said he's interested in working with schools, retirement homes, groups looking to charter the boat and others.

"Whomever I can get to do whatever," he said.

For more information on Rusty's River Rides call (612) 859-6655.