

Wisconsin GROCER

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE WISCONSIN GROCERS ASSOCIATION



GROCERS INNOVATION

EXPO 2022

Review



GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS / 10



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2023 Save the Dates

GROCERS in the **CAPITOL** DAY
 Stay Tuned for Updates in 2023



March 21, 2023
 Wisconsin Center
 Milwaukee, WI



June 14, July 12, August 16, September 20, 2023
 Foundation Leadership Institute
 (See page 40)



June 19, 2023
 Northern Grocery Industry Golf Outing
 Stevens Point Country Club



July 26, 2023
 Southern Classic Grocery Industry Golf Outing
 Evergreen Golf Course
 Elkhorn, WI



October 17-18, 2023
 Grocers Innovation EXPO
 Hilton Appleton Paper Valley/FCEC

See page 40 for full event details!

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The President's Perspective

Brandon Scholz
WGA President and CEO

These Times They Are a Changin'

With kudo's to age old rock crooner Bob Dylan, yea these times, they've changed. As one grocer told me at the WGA's Expo and Trade Show, "It ain't my grandpa's grocery business anymore..." No, it ain't.

But it wasn't that long ago that we all thought the grocery biz was humming along nicely – a relatively fine-tuned industry.

Another grocer said before Covid, you put your order in, put your work schedule together, open the door and sell groceries. "We never even thought about ... the supply chain". OK, there are a "few" more things to worry about, but at least then, there was a certain amount of normalcy to running a grocery store.

Just about everybody I know is tired of talking about Covid. It's been ingrained into our lives ad nauseum. News, conferences, columns, podcasts, movies-to-come and more, have given us more than we've ever wanted to know about Covid. But there is one significant fact about Covid; it changed the way grocery stores do business.

Grocers proved they could handle all the challenges that Covid threw their way through 2020-2021. But the real impact is the post-Covid impact.

Workforce. Who knew the workforce would change as dramatically as it did.

Covid destroyed the fabric of the workforce that grocers, and frankly most every other business knew and relied on. Covid ripped it to shreds. From no-shows and people quitting to the myriad reasons that permanently reduced the number of people working and looking for work, the workforce decimation spiraled out of control.

And for some, it is still spiraling.

There are those in state and federal government who like to claim our economy is in good shape but forgetting to mention the devastating impacts of inflation on consumer buying power. They like to claim that workforce "participation" is close to 2019 levels and that unemployment is below the national average and really "isn't too bad" in Wisconsin.

To those folks I say, hooley! There's an open invitation to take anyone of those people on a tour of any grocery store and see if that bureaucratic assessment holds any credibility whatsoever.



Workforce. Who knew the workforce would change as dramatically as it did.

The workforce problem in Wisconsin isn't going to go away. In fact, some studies suggest that our workforce will decrease by 130,000 workers by 2028. People are moving out of Wisconsin and the state isn't drawing new families and workers to move into and live in our local communities.

Quality of life is one of the key anchors to build and keep a workforce. Our elected officials need to consider things like housing, transportation, neighborhood crime, day care and education for starters. Organizations like the WGA need to think about going outside their usual list of business issues and consider quality of life issues to rebuild our workforce.

What actions they will take to improve conditions in Wisconsin to make the state more attractive to the next generation of workers in grocery stores and other businesses that are vital to Wisconsin's economy.

That's a change we need in these challenging times.



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Michael Semmann,
Vice President of Government Affairs

Year End

WGA: Will the 2023-24 Session be Serendipity or Stagnation, Progress or Paralysis, Decision or Division?

As WGA looks forward to the 2023-2024 state legislative session, optimism is in plentiful supply that pro-business policies will prevail, but most trade organizations are entering with the understanding that policy perfection may be elusive. While the best laid plans are being vetted by interest groups, veterans of the Capitol are contemplating the lyrics of the 1969 hit written by Mick Jagger and Keith Richards; “You can’t always get what you want; But if you try sometime; You’ll find; You get what you need.”

\$6 Billion Surplus Will Define Early Portion of the Session

The state of Wisconsin is on solid financial footing, leading Governor Evers to proclaim state government in the “strongest position in state history,” including a record surplus of nearly \$6.6 billion to end this fiscal year.

Legislative leaders have already started managing expectations, with the Republican co-chairs of the Joint Finance Committee noting the surplus was due in part to an increase in tax collections. This sets the stage for a \$6 billion dollars surplus with perhaps \$10 billion in spending requests.

Macro-economic issues are equally at play with the Federal Reserve action on monetary policy, supply-chain dynamics, and the workforce defining the fiscal decision-making for the state. With bankers predicting economic recession, the policy-makers may want to consider the first rule of financial literacy: pay yourself first.

The administration is also projecting \$1.5 billion in revenue growth



over the next two years, which means the state would be in position to fund every single agency request over the next two years, and still have \$4.4 billion left in the general fund. Wisconsin state agency employees will be entering the session with visions of new staffing positions and higher wages dancing through their heads. Some of which may even come true.

The Wisconsin Legislature has indicated its strong preference for tax reform with Speaker Robin Vos stating that \$3.4 Billion in tax reductions is his minimum starting point, while Senate Majority Leader Devin LeMahieu remarked that a 3.5% flat income tax is a target with his caucus.

Both legislative leaders commented about the need for discussion and concession at a public forum in December, prompting the media to speculate about potential progress on some policy items.

The state budget will be introduced in February by Governor Evers followed by the release of his capital budget in March. The Joint Finance Committee modifies the governor’s budget from April through May and the full legislature will act on a budget bill in June. After passage the Governor will have the ability to sign and issues vetoes.

2022 Review

The Wisconsin legislative session ended last spring and ushered in a tumultuous election season capped off with incumbents remaining in the catbird policy making seat. Since January 2021, the Governor signed 267 bills into law, and vetoed 126 bills – more than any Governor since 1928 when Governor Fred Zimmerman issued 90 vetoes.

Among the vetoes were four items on WGA’s legislative agenda, including the personal property tax repeal, unemployment reserve fund, organized retail theft penalties, and the exemption on covid mandates/civil liability.

U.S. Senator Ron Johnson and Governor Tony Evers were both re-elected in elections that broke dramatically by geography and party loyalty. In the Wisconsin legislature, Republicans expanded margins in both the state Senate and Assembly. Gov. Evers remains in a strong position with house holding a super majority to override a veto as of Dec. 8.

Thank you to WGA members who took time to get involved this election year and support WGA’s political program. WGA is more than an industry. It’s a community.

2022 By the numbers

4 Vetoes by Governor Evers of WGA priority items
57 Bills lobbied by WGA in the 2021-22 Legislative Session

2022 Fall Election

- 7** New State Senators
- 1** New Lt. Governor
- 1** New State Treasurer
- 24** New state Assembly Representatives
- 25/26** WGA supported candidates were elected
- 57%** voter turnout in 2022 vs 59% voter turnout in 2018
- 85%** voter turnout in the 2nd Congressional District (D-Mark Pocan)
- 170k** Gov. Evers beat Tim Michels by over 170,000 votes in Dane County (which is roughly 30% of the total county population)

Thank You

WGA Government Affairs Committee:

A special thank you to the 2022-23 GA Committee for its efforts over the course of the last year. The committee helps shape and advise WGA on policy items:

Chair Greg Hansen, Hansen’s IGA

Landon Godley, SpartanNash

Michelle Harrington, Albrecht’s Delafield Market

Jim Hyland, Roundy’s Supermarkets

Steve Loehr, Kwik Trip

Jeff Maurer, Maurer’s Market

Chris Morton, UNFI

Mike Olwig, Fox Bros. Piggly Wiggly

Matt Swentkofske, Molson Coors

WGA Board Set 2023-24 Legislative Agenda

At its Dec. 7 meeting, the WGA Board passed the first iteration of the 2023-2024 legislative agenda. This agenda is the primary driver of WGA staff for the next two years on government affairs efforts.

- Personal Property Tax Repeal: Support
- Personal Income Tax Decrease/Repeal: Support
- Increase in Sales Tax & Repeal of Sales Tax Exemptions: Oppose, but details are important
- Home Delivery of Alcohol: Support
- Alcohol Curbside Pickup: Support
- Retailer Purchase of Alcohol (period of credit): Support
- Organized Retail Theft: Support
- Swipe Fees (reduce or eliminate): Support
- Unfair Sails Act – Exempting Certain Prescription Drugs: N
- NEW: Electric Vehicle Charging Stations: Support
- NEW: Workforce: 2022 Legislative Council Study Committee Suggestions on Increasing Offender Employment: Support

2023-2024 State Legislative Leadership

Notable changes include Representative Tyler August (R- Lake Geneva) as the new Majority Leader in the state Assembly and Senator Melissa Agard (D-Madison) as the Minority Leader in the Senate.

Senate Majority (Republican) Leadership

- Senate President – Chris Kapenga
- Senate President Pro Tempore – Patrick Testin
- Majority Leader – Devin LeMahieu
- Assistant Majority Leader – Dan Feyen
- Caucus Chair – Van Wanggaard
- Caucus Vice-Chair – Joan Ballweg

Assembly Majority (Republican) Leadership

- Assembly Speaker – Robin Vos
- Assembly Speaker Pro Tempore – Kevin Petersen
- Majority Leader – Tyler August

- Assistant Majority Leader – Jon Plumer
- Caucus Chair – Rob Summerfield
- Caucus Vice-Chair – Cindi Duchow
- Caucus Sergeant at Arms – Treig Pronschinske

Senate Minority (Democrat) Leadership

- Senate Minority Leader – Melissa Agard
- Senate Minority Assistant Leader – Jeff Smith
- Senate Minority Caucus Chair – Chris Larson
- Senate Minority Caucus Vice-Chair – Dianne Hesselbein

Assembly Minority (Democrat) Leadership

- Minority Leader - Greta Neubauer
- Assistant Minority Leader - Kalan Haywood
- Caucus Chair - Lisa Subeck
- Caucus Vice-chair - Jill Billings
- Secretary - Kristina Shelton
- Sergeant-at-arms - Lee Snodgrass



Welcome New WGA Board Members!



BEAU OSHIRO

**Vice President,
General Manager at
Piggly Wiggly Midwest**

Beau Oshiro has a long history in the grocery industry, beginning with Foodland Supermarkets Hawaii, then with Coca-Cola Enterprises Hawaii

and the Hawaii Food Industry Association, where he also served as Chairman. Prior to joining Piggly Wiggly Midwest, Beau served as Vice President, General Manager with C&S Wholesale Grocers Hawaii and C&S Wholesale Grocers Pennsylvania/Upstate New York. He is known for aligning cross-functional teams with differing goals and cultural representation to deliver and exceed expectations for customers. Beau has effectively responded to operational challenges with confidence, determination, and focus and has been recognized for perseverance in challenging an ever-changing business environment.

Beau enjoys traveling, having visited and worked in several states in support of the grocery industries complex business operations. He is married with seven children and ten grandchildren residing in Allenton, WI with his wife, Suzan. Beau enjoys sports, golfing, and is a member at West Bend Country Club.



MARISSA SMOYER

**Event Manager, Lipari
Foods, Warren, Michigan**

Marissa joined Lipari Foods in July of 2017 as the Marketing & Event Coordinator. She was promoted to Assistant Marketing Manager then Marketing Manager and now into her current role as Event Manager in just over three

years with the company. Marissa oversees the entire Lipari Foods event department that includes Lipari's annual food show held in Novi, Michigan, as well as regional and national trade shows and sales meetings. Marissa is a graduate of Concordia University in Ann Arbor, Michigan. She currently lives in Grosse Pointe, Michigan with her husband, Ryan, and dog, Knute.

**“
MANAGEMENT
is DOING
things RIGHT;
LEADERSHIP
is DOING
the RIGHT
THINGS
”**



Thank you to the out-going WGA Board Members!



MARK MCGOWAN

**Senior Vice President, Retail for
C&S Wholesale & General Manager,
Piggly Wiggly Midwest**



NICK LENZI

**Vice President of Marketing,
Lipari Foods**



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Sarah Decorah,
Operations Director



LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

The WGA Foundation Leadership Institute welcomed twelve future leaders from our industry who attended four, day-long classes from June - September. Grocery industry veterans and WGA members served as the faculty, a majority of whom have been teaching our classes since the Leadership Institute began in 2017! Topics taught ranged from management, leadership and problem solving to communications, human resources and marketing. A BIG thank you to the faculty who volunteered to invest their time to share their knowledge and expertise from their experiences in the grocery industry!

The WGA would also like to thank the vendors that hosted the Leadership classes, provided lunch, goodie bags and tours of their facilities:



storemasters



On March 23, 2022, 34 grocery retailers and vendors spent a day in the fields at Milford Hills Hunt Club to support the Foundation. The day began with a "5 stand

flurry" which attendees had a chance to hit 50 sporting clays, shooting two dozen shells in just a few minutes. The flurry was then followed by a delicious Milford Hills buffet lunch sponsored by Anheuser-Busch. After lunch, the teams took to the fields with their excited dogs and guides, and the hunt for pheasants and chukars was on! Once the hunt was completed, birds were collected, cleaned, packaged and ready to be taken home.

Thank you to everyone who attended, including those from Anthony Marano Co., Excel Engineers, Fortifi Bank, Gumz Muck Farms, Maurer's Market, Prophit Co., Roundy's Supermarkets and Webster's Marketplace.

A special thank you to all the sponsors of the event:



YOUR STORE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



Our turn-key program assists WGA member companies by providing a scholarship program for their employees without the administrative concerns connected with an internal program. You determine the amount of the scholarships and the number of awards; scholarships are then awarded based on your direction, within the judging criteria.

Over \$20,000 in scholarships were awarded to 16 students with several WGA member stores participating. If you'd like to learn more about the program, contact Sarah Decorah at sdecorah@wisconsin-grocers.com for more details!

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GROCERS INNOVATION EXPO 2022 Review

Another successful year!

SEMINAR SUMMARIES

Educational seminars help prepare and advance the professional acumen of Wisconsin's grocery industry and the 2022 innovation Expo held four high-quality events. Labor was a recurring theme, and each speaker brought a specialized approach to the audience. The topics in the 2022 Seminar Series included Cybersecurity, Consumer Trends, the Great Realization of the Labor Market, and 20 Great Sales Ideas.

Seminars are just one part of the membership value proposition made available only through your WGA membership.



CYBERSECURITY:

Presented by: **Matthew Specht, Federated Insurance**

If defense wins championships, Matthew Specht illustrated the grocery industry's path to cybersecurity victory. He articulated a multi-faceted approach to security and how to take steps to address risk through his presentation entitled Managing Risk Insurance: How Secure is Your Data?

The anatomy of a cyber event starts with the types and owners of data, and contains one fact: 95% of cybersecurity risk starts with an email.

One of the benefits of a WGA seminar is strong member participation. During the discussion, one member even surfaced that "IT is now one of our single largest expenses."

Key recommendations from Specht included rudimentary, but important suggestions such as keeping your firewall/defense systems up to date, developing a security protocol, inventorying and backing up systems, having a response plan, and considering a cyber risk policy.



"Having a cyber-buddy that walks you through different areas of can be very helpful," commented Specht. "One key question to ask your team is, what is our vendor risk?"

Additional technical recommendations included putting in place multi-factor authentication, additional employee training, and separating point of sale and financial servers.



WORKFORCE: THE GREAT REALIZATION

Presented by: **Jim Cinelli, Manpower Group**

The dynamics within labor markets have accelerated for varied reasons: some cyclical, some structural and as we have seen most recently, also because of the pandemic. While many people may think the bulk of the pandemic-related anomalies are transitory,

the timing of a new normal is uncertain. The data, insight, and discussions with clients reinforced structural changes and trends that are predicted to move at a rapid pace. Jim Cinelli from Manpower Group called this movement the "Great Realization" and detailed this a 2022 U.S. labor landscape and supporting workforce that fall into 4 major trend categories: What Workers Want, Talent Scarcity, Tech Accelerators, and How Companies Reset.

Cinelli pointed out that 8 in 10 workers expect employers to already provide training programs to help them keep their skills relevant and up to date. He asked the audience how they are training their employees.

According to the Manpower Group, "People Power" is on the rise and includes concepts ranging from reinvention of work (Flexibility, Location & Purpose) to prioritization of mental fitness, to the rise of voice and activism-IRL and virtual learning.

Not all changes will be easy and certainly not inexpensive to implement. Providing a seamless and scalable digital experience for employees will require changes in technology infrastructure, management practices, and employee and customer engagement models. A large hill to climb for some retailers.

Cinelli highlighted the emerging area of workforce and talent data/analytics to identify, a match, and predict potential performance, workforce engagement and satisfaction levels, assess worker well-being, and workforce sentiment/attitudes.

Leveraging data and analytics will enable organizations to make better people and workforce management decisions. Making investments in the right technology infrastructure will be key.



Additional trends require urgent attention on the part of employers. In general, they include a new "world of work" with people, sustainability, technology, and business operations. This is based on several macro-economic factors with a recovery unlike any we have seen. Top items include uneven economic growth with winners and losers, experimentation with a variety of new work and workplace models, employers seeking more flexible and strategic workforce solutions.

CONSUMER TRENDS:

Presented by: **Jerry O'Brien, UW Kohl's Center for Retailing**



Speaker Jerry O'Brien presented an interesting thesis: Gen Z and Millennial consumers should grow to 70% of the population by 2028 vs 60% today, and within the United States they will inherit an estimated \$60T of wealth into 2050. As a result they will have vastly different views on brands, channels of engagement and consumption relative to older demographics along with views on sustainability/ESG.

The Consumer Trends seminar focused on empathy, strengths, and authenticity. O'Brien explained that a successful business sells more than just products, and should also sell emotion and experience.

The Consumer Decision Journey is remarkably similar to the Employee Decision Journey, but in just a little different order of priority. These include, time and convenience, stretching the budget, health/wellness, entertainment, enlightenment. Family, environmental concerns, and broad economic concerns.

Does the marketplace have purpose driven consumers? 62% of consumers say they are willing to change their purchasing habits to reduce environmental impact.

O'Brien ended with a new potential definition of KPI (Keep people interested, informed, involved, inspired).

20 IDEAS TO DRIVE SALES:

Presented by: Nick Lenzi, Lipari Foods

Following up on last year's presentation "Solving for Shrink One Nickel at a Time," Nick Lenzi focused on the art of sales with 20 new sales ideas. "The idea that success consists of achieving a sustainable competitive advantage for long periods of time is no longer relevant in today's world—in fact it is nearly impossible," said Lenzi.

The impetus behind the 20 sales ideas is that the more one studies other companies to create benchmarks against them, the more all grocery competitors look alike. Specifically, the more that stores utilize third parties to perform certain activities in our

business, often the same ones each competitor uses, the less unique these activities become.

To deliver a unique value to our guests, retailers need to choose a diverse set of activities, or at the very least, do the same activities differently. These innovative ideas start with new strategic initiatives,

developing and exploiting many of them at once. While it is accepted that individually, some of the benefits provided will be temporary, taken as part of a portfolio, these initiatives can help separate us from our competition.

Lenzi emphasized that success in today's environment relies on deliberately being different. He listed 20 different ideas,



from unique Brewed for beers, to a \$5 program, to aspirational ideas such as enhanced QR code, Virtual malls and ecommerce. Developing and exploiting many new strategic initiatives at once not only achieved the goal of driving comp sales, but it also created a point of difference, one that is almost impossible to copy.

Lenzi summarized his presentation succinctly, "Deliberately being different is the key in today's Retail Reality."

THE GROCERY INDUSTRY TODAY

Presented by: John Ross, IGA

IGA CEO John Ross detailed the latest economic data and how it relates to the retail grocery industry. He highlighted trends for the total number of stores and the impacts over the last decade. He broke down how inflation will affect consumers and how retailers should be thinking about the next 12-24 months. Ross somberly noted, "When fears rise, trust becomes a key driver." These are concepts that spill over into the labor market, particularly when talking about ergophobia, which is the fear of going back to work.

Ross, who hosts a podcast called, For the Greater Good, emphasized that small businesses are the backbone of American entrepreneurship and how smart independent grocers are often isolated from what global leader are saying and doing. He encouraged the audience to look at several different macro-economic trends and data sources.

Prior to joining IGA, Ross was president of Inmar Promotion Network a global software, data services, analytics and strategic consulting provider for retailers and manufacturers.



WGA'S INNOVATION VENDOR APPRECIATION RECEPTION

The Ultimate in Industry Networking

The WGA's Innovation Vendor Appreciation Reception provided a great opportunity for a casual networking event which featured a high-end array of amazing food. Grocers and vendors from the industry worked the room meeting new prospective customers and renewed acquaintances from the past year.

Lipari Foods once again donated the marvelous spread of food for the Happy Hour guests, which folks could select as a snack or enjoy as a hearty meal! Molson Coors and Anheuser-Busch both donated adult beverages for attendees to enjoy at the event.

The Happy Hour has become one of the popular events of the Expo as it gives exhibitors the chance to relax after a long set up day and provides grocers with the occasion to visit with old friends and get ready for the annual Expo Trade Show the next day!



WISCONSIN GROCERY TRADE SHOW

TRADE SHOW



The Grocery Industry Trade Show was one of the biggest ever! Over 150 booths lined the trade show floor with tons of new products and goodies just waiting to be sampled. We also welcomed 17 new vendors to our trade show, a great sign that the WGA Expo continues to bring in new companies and products for our members to get to know.

Nearly everyone attending the trade show went home a winner. From booth prizes and samples to Trade Show Cash and Bingo, there were many ways to win at the Expo! And Krueger Wholesale Florist continued their tradition of sending attendees home with fresh flowers!



Trade Show Bingo is a challenge open to all attendees to visit and complete their Bingo Card. Congratulations to this year's winners!

- \$1,000** CANDIE BAKER - Webster's Marketplace
- \$250** KEVIN BRANSTAD - Nilssen's Foods
- \$250** KARI HANSEN - Hansen's IGA

TRADE SHOW Cash!



Cash prizes were handed out to attendees on the floor during the trade show. Thank you to all the sponsors for this fun activity. Below is a full list of sponsors and winners!

\$100 Winners	Sponsor
Amber Roach, Miller & Sons.....	Anheuser-Busch
Jacob Williams, Viking Village Foods.....	Bernatello's
Kari Hansen, Hansen's IGA.....	Dairy Farmers of WI
Paul Whaley, Randy's Neighborhood Mkt.....	General Beverage
Lester Halstead, Nilssen's Foods.....	JB Group
Mike Johnson, Trig's.....	Krueger Wholesale Florist
Kris Kleinert, Mayville Piggly Wiggly.....	Maglio Companies
Candie Baker, Webster's Marketplace.....	Molson Coors
Kristie Maurer, Maurer's Market.....	Lipari
Woodrow Nelson, Trig's.....	Old Dutch
Isaac Taplin, Nilssen's Foods.....	Prairie Farms
Mary Lewandowski, Metcalfe's Market.....	Professional Supply
Kevin Branstad, Nilssen's Foods.....	Reyes Coca Cola
Francis Audette, Coborn'ss.....	Kemps
Cindy Sharkey, Lee's Piggly Wiggly.....	Russ Davis Wholesale

Wisconsin's 2022 Cake Decorating Championship



Thank you
Wisconsin Bakers Association for
bringing back the cake decorating
contest on the trade show floor!
This year's theme was
"Celebrate Autumn"

Beginner/Student RETAIL BAKERY



Beginner/Student GROCERY



Advanced/Professional RETAIL BAKERY



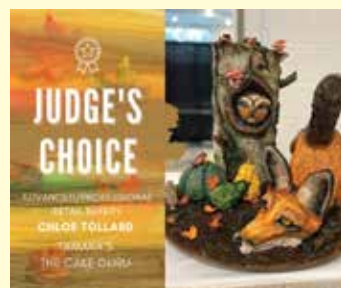
Advanced/Professional GROCERY



OVERALL PEOPLE'S CHOICE



OVERALL JUDGE'S CHOICE



The Great Wisconsin BAG-OFF!

Gabi Doers of Metcalfe's Market – West Towne, Madison, WI, sacked the competition earning her the title of Wisconsin's "Best Bagger" at the Great Wisconsin Bag-Off Event, a Wisconsin Grocers Association Innovation Expo tradition.

Competition was intense, with a 1-point difference separating the first and second place scores. Thirteen (13) contestants participated in the event, held during the WGA's Grocers Innovation Expo at the Fox Cities Exhibition Center in Appleton. Doers will be participating in the National Grocers Association Best Bagger contest in Las Vegas on Monday, February 27.



(From left: Ethan Larson, Gabi Doers, Jeffrey Glasgow, Taylor Schaefer)

Taylor Schaefer, the 75th Alice in Dairyland was this year's hostess and emcee, and kept the crowd entertained and engaged. Schaefer, of Franksville, grew up on her family's beef and crop farm, where raising livestock and serving as a youth leader for Racine County 4-H were just a few activities that helped shape her childhood.

Contestants are judged in five categories while bagging a 27-item order in reusable grocery bags. The categories were speed, number of bags used, placement of groceries in the bags, distribution of weight between the bags, and the style, attitude, and appearance of the contestants.

The WGA Great Wisconsin Bag-Off Best Bagger contest encourages development of the skills essential to successful bagging and customer service. It promotes good organization, equitable, and good sportsmanship through friendly competition. Demonstrating that spirit, audience members held up signs and dressed in costume to provide extra motivation to perform well.

1st Place

\$500, trophy and trip to Las Vegas in February



Winner: **Gabi Doers**
Store: Metcalfe's Markets, West Towne, Madison

2nd Place

\$250 and trophy



Winner: **Ethan Larson**
Store: Miller & Sons Supermarket, Verona/Mt. Horeb

3rd Place

\$100 and trophy



Winner: **Jeffrey Glasgow**
Store: Metcalfe's, Hilldale, Madison



Thank you

to all the volunteers who make the bag-off happen! Along with Taylor Schaefer, the following people helped make the Great Wisconsin Bag-Off possible!

- Tony Franchi, Lipari, Judge - Weight Distribution
- Dave Vandehey, Lipari, Judge - Bag Build
- Marissa Smoyer, Lipari, Judge - Style, Attitude & Appearance
- Kristy Kolpack, Baker Tilly, Official Judge
- Emily Barr, Lipari, Stager
- Scott Coenen, Conservative Energy, Stager
- Adam Rudolph, Lipari, Stager
- Nick Lenzi, Lipari, Timer
- Joe Van Zandt, Lipari, Timer
- Melissa McLaughlin, Trig's, Timer

Awards Banquet



The WGA's Annual Awards Banquet celebrates the best of what grocers, and the industry has to offer in several categories. It is the pinnacle of the WGA's yearly industry awards program recognizing individuals and companies for their contributions to the grocery industry in Wisconsin.

followed the WGA Member Cocktail Reception. The Leadership Institute recognized 12 individuals for completing the 2022 course with a certificate of completion and a leadership lapel pin.

Four categories of WGA Awards and eleven individuals or teams were recognized during the evening banquet which

Winners from the Expo Trade Show, the Bag Off Championship Winners and the Cake Decorating Championship were recognized and congratulated along with the Diamond, Gold, Silver and Bronze Expo sponsors!

Grocery Industry Winners!



Carl Miller / Miller & Sons



Bernatello's Foods



Brian Behnke / Festival Foods



Placek's IGA



Laura Curran / Metcalfe's Market



Steve Heise, T.A. Solberg Co. / Trig's



Paul Whaley / Randy's Neighborhood Market



Ernie Gempeler (center), Ken Gempeler and Connie Von Der Heide / Gempeler's Supermarket



Miller & Sons



Kevin Grunewald / Tadych's Marketplace



Brian Behnke / Festival Foods



WGA Expo 2023 PRIZES!



WGA EXPO PRIZE

FMI Shopper Trends
U.S. Grocery Industry Insights
Winner: Carl Miller, Miller & Sons



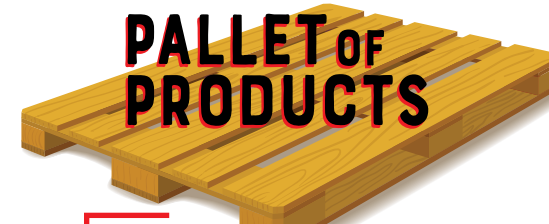
AWARDS BANQUET GRAND PRIZE

Two 2023 WGA Expo Registration Passes
Winner: Chris Kleinert,
Mayville Piggly Wiggly
Company Sponsor: WGA



WGA GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS SUMMIT PRIZE

2023 NGA Show/DC Fly-In, includes registration, airfare & hotel for two
Winner: Pamela Coy, Viking Village
Company Sponsor: NGA



PALLET OF PRODUCTS

A big WGA shout out and thank you to the six companies who donated their products for the recent WGA Foundation's Pallet of Product Silent Auction at the WGA Innovation Expo. And thanks also to the WGA members who bid on those items! Over \$4,225 was raised for the Foundation!

COMPANY DONATED	PRODUCT	WINNER	WINNING BID
Old Dutch	Potato & Tortilla Chips	Jim Meier / Metcalfe's Market	\$650.00
Russ Davis Wholesale	Medium Yellow Onions	Don Theisen / Trig's	\$475.00
Russ Davis Wholesale	Wisconsin Russet Potatoes	Candie Baker / Webster's Marketplace	\$425.00
Russ Davis Wholesale	Green Giant Baby Peeled Carrots	Don Theisen / Trig's	\$550.00
Kemps, LLC	2% Milk Gallons	Jim Meier / Metcalfe's Market	\$425.00
Valley Cooperative Association/HT Stark	Assorted Bakery Products	Don Theisen / Trig's	\$675.00
Valley Cooperative Association/ Rich Products	Assorted Bakery Products	Curt Schmidt / Mayville Piggly Wiggly	\$1,025.00



Thanks for your participation!

WGA thanks everyone who participated to make this year's Innovation Expo such a success! We hope that your takeaway from the conference was rewarding, and that the information provided in the educational topics will benefit your business.

See you next year on **October 17 & 18, 2023 in Appleton, WI.**
WGA will be at the Hilton Appleton Paper Valley/FCEC



Thank You

to all of our generous sponsors. Without you, the EXPO would not be possible!

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AWARD BANQUET FLOWER SPONSOR



REDUCING UNDERAGE TOBACCO SALES IN WISCONSIN

Paula Tran, State Health Officer, Wisconsin Department of Health Services

We have an opportunity to work together to help Wisconsinites live longer, healthier lives. Commercial tobacco use continues to be a leading cause of disease and death in Wisconsin. To address this, the U.S. Congress raised the national sales age for commercial tobacco products to 21 in December of 2019.

This has created confusion among state retailers, since Wisconsin law hasn't been updated to match the federal law. While Governor Evers tried to raise the age to 21 in Wisconsin, the measure didn't pass the state senate. However, Wisconsin retailers should follow the federal law of prohibiting sales to people under 21 years. By not selling to those under 21, you help protect the health of youth and young adults in our state.

The national tobacco sales age was raised because 90% of adult tobacco users say they started before turning 21. Raising the sales age to 21 also makes it harder for someone who is 18 to buy tobacco products for those that are in high school, disrupting the social supply of cigarettes and other tobacco products to young people.

We know that the later in life someone tries their first tobacco product, the less likely they are to get addicted. That means fewer young people in Wisconsin eventually dying from tobacco-related illness—currently the state's number one cause of preventable death.

Thank you to the retailers who continue to train their staff and post signs in their windows about their rules. Now, take the next step by refusing tobacco sales to people under 21 and creating a healthier future for generations of young people.

Aligning with federal law also helps you avoid costly fines. Despite the inconsistency between state and federal law, the federal Tobacco 21 law is



enforced by teams of FDA inspectors throughout the state. These inspectors perform checks to ensure retailers do not sell tobacco products to those younger than 21. They can also issue fines up to as much as \$300 or more in the case of multiple violations.

In 2021, Wisconsin saw its highest rate of underage tobacco sales in years, with 14% of retailers selling tobacco products to minors. That's an increase of over 150% from the number that made underage sales in 2019. You can help Wisconsin do better.

You don't have to do it alone. Free training on tobacco sales law is available at witobaccocheck.org. At the site, employees can review study guides and take a quiz on how to avoid underage tobacco sales. After passing the quiz, employees and their manager receive a certificate stating that the employee has completed the state-required training.

You can also order resources to remind customers of the law and support your staff in complying with the law at dhs.wisconsin.gov/tobacco/tobacco21.htm. These tools include window clings stating that tobacco products can't be sold to those under the age of 21, and a digital age calculator to help employees avoid accidental underage sales.

Thank you for stepping up to keep youth and young adults tobacco free. We know your job isn't easy, and it's only made more challenging through inconsistent state and federal laws. That's why we appreciate you putting young people first and doing your part by not selling tobacco products to anyone under the age of 21. Together, we can reduce the underage tobacco sales rate in Wisconsin and make our state healthier.

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TO ALL.**

**TOBACCO
CANNOT BE
SOLD TO
ANYONE
UNDER
21**

Wisconsin's tobacco retailers are verifying age by checking IDs.

CHECK IDs FOR 21

According to federal law, tobacco products cannot be sold to anyone under the age of 21. Retailers across Wisconsin are stepping up by checking IDs to make sure tobacco purchasers are 21. Ask to see that ID — it's that easy!

Learn more about the federal law at: dhs.wisconsin.gov/tobacco21 →



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One day. One location. One complete trade show.

FreshEx 2023 will be held at the Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee on March 21st, 2023.

The 2022 FreshEx show drew more than 700 people and 160 exhibitors featuring hundreds of products that "fit" into the "fresh" world. FreshEx is a one-day event of product sourcing, networking, new opportunities, checking out the competition, planning new approaches, and discovering what's next for your business and your customers!!

Looking at the retail venues, restaurants, grocery stores, c-stores and bakeries it's not hard to imagine how each of these is looking for new ways to expand and appeal to new customers. FreshEx highlights the changes in the retail food world, manufacturing, production, foodservice, marketing, and merchandising.

Customers can see the changes and opportunities as the channels are blending and they have more and more options.

The last three years have caused all sorts of changes in the retail food world. Varying demographics, supply chain challenges, workforce shortages all have had an impact on these channels. FreshEx is the place to go to re-think how you'll approach these changes in your business and find that one new thing that you didn't have when you walked in the Wisconsin Center on March 21st.

FreshEx offers buyers and suppliers a more condensed, comprehensive business-to-business event. As consumers see the lines blurring between grocery stores, restaurants, convenience stores, bakeries, and more, it is a great opportunity to feel the pulse of what's happening in 2023.

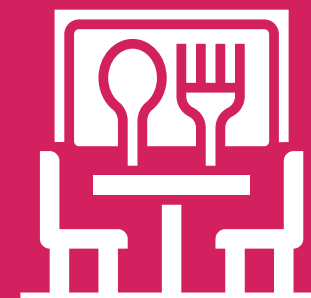
Join in with those looking for new ideas and directions in the fast-changing retail food business in Wisconsin.

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Register NOW for your spot at <https://freshex.org>.

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WISCONSIN LOTTERY

Check out the events happening in 2023!



2023 EVENTS CALENDAR



Stay tuned for updates in 2023!



February 28
(cancelled due to Avian Flu)
WGA Foundation Day in the Field
Milford Hills



March 21st
FreshEX
Wisconsin Center
Milwaukee, WI



April 5th
WGA Board Meeting
Wollersheim Winery, Prairie du Sac



June 7th
WGA Board Meeting
Location TBD



June 14th
WGA Foundation Leadership Institute
Valley Cooperative Association,
Appleton



June 19th
WGA Northern Grocery Golf Outing
Stevens Point Country Club
Stevens Point, WI



July 12th
WGA Foundation Leadership Institute
Krueger Wholesale Florist,
Rothschild



July 26th
WGA Southern Grocery Golf Outing
Evergreen Golf Course, Elkhorn



August 9th
WGA Foundation Leadership Institute
Pan O Gold Baking, Sun Prairie



August 16th
WGA Board Meeting
Location TBD



September 20th
WGA Foundation Leadership Institute
StoreMasters, Pewaukee



October 17th & 18th
WGA Innovation EXPO
Hilton Appleton Paper Valley/FCEC



December 6th
WGA Board Meeting
Location TBD

10 West Mifflin Street, Suite 205, Madison, Wisconsin 53703
608.244.7150 • Fax: 608.244.9030
WisconsinGrocers.com

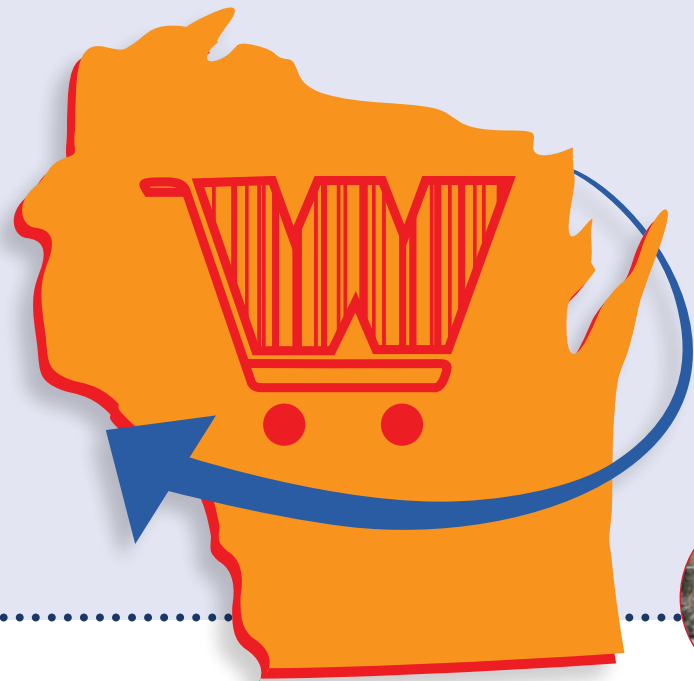
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Russ Davis Wholesale, Inc.





Around the State & Member Happenings



Ellen Breunig,
Marketing & Events Coordinator

New Store!

New Store Coming!

The Wisconsin State Journal reported after an 11-month search, the city has identified a grocer to be the anchor commercial tenant in a \$42 million, six-story redevelopment underway on the South Side. The city is finalizing negotiations with Maurer's Urban Market, which is based in Wisconsin Dells, to fill the 24,000/sf commercial space in the Truman Olson redevelopment, called Fourteen02 Park, on 3.5 acres of what had been long vacant, city-owned land at 815 Cedar St. "I am thrilled to be working on this project," Kristie Maurer said in a statement. "This has been a dream of mine, and I could not be more excited to be opening my first grocery store in my hometown." You will be able to find all your everyday staples, plus a large selection of fresh produce, meat and seafood, and a large deli/bakery offering," she said.



Congrats & Thank you!

Great Lakes Foods Retail Consultant and former President Gene Mylener was celebrated for his 47 years at Great Lakes Foods, at the GLF Fall Food Show Dinner on Tuesday, September 20th. Retailers, vendors and GLF employees thanked Gene for his years of service with the company. Gene plans to continue as a consultant for Great Lakes Foods through April 2023. He looks forward to having more time with his family and grandchildren. The WGA's Brandon Scholz extends



his thanks to Gene for all of his support over the years and his efforts to have Great Lakes be more involved with the WGA. Thank you, Gene!

New Store!

New Store in the Plaza!

Titletown and the Green Bay Packers kicked off the season by welcoming a new partner – the employee owned Hy-Vee grocery store. After several months of construction, Hy-Vee opened its Ashwaubenon location not far from the iconic Lambeau Field. This is Hy-Vee's sixth store in the state of WI, following the recent opening of the LaCrosse location.



Store Purchased

Fox Bros. Piggly Wiggly, a 100% employee owned company, has purchased the Piggly Wiggly store in Beaver Dam, from Daryl and Brenda Schoenfeld, who are retiring after owning the store since 2008. Piggly Wiggly President, Mike Olwig commented, "We are excited about the opportunity to serve our new customers in Beaver Dam and wish Daryl and Brenda the best in retirement. We look forward to providing



piggly wiggly

Beaver Dam customers the same superior customer service and highest quality products. As an employee owned company, we welcome our new Beaver Dam team members, who will join us as owners of the company."

We Have a Winner!

Dave & Jeanne Schommer (recently retired owners of Cottage Grove Piggly Wiggly) were awarded the Legacy Award from the Cottage Grove Chamber of Commerce for making a remarkable impact on their community. Congratulations!



Back Together Again!



The Trig's/T.A. Solberg Company recently came together to celebrate the TAS Awards, their annual leadership conference and awards banquet, for the first time in two years! The day kicked off with a "The Band is Back Together" icebreaker exercise, followed by a Keynote, company update, and culminated in an awards banquet celebrating the many successes of the team. Associates from all T.A. Solberg Company entities were celebrated for Excellence in Operations, Guest Service, Servant Leadership, Outstanding Department Leader, Outstanding Business Leader, Spark Award, and tenure with the company. The "Solberg Award," is the final award given for the evening and is the highest honor one can receive for their service to the company. The award is presented to one individual who is a true ambassador of the company, a prime example of what Servant Leadership looks like, has impacted our guests, the community, and peers in a positive way, and is a true team player. This year's "Solberg Award" was presented to Steve Heise.



It's A Grand Opening!

Sendik's recently opened its newest store in Oconomowoc. The ten-month project was a quick turnaround and occurred despite pandemic-related supply chain issues that continue to plague many industries. The store is the first completed portion of the Olympia Field development/the former Olympia Hotel and Resort. "We're so grateful and happy to be here in Oconomowoc," said Sendik's co-owner Ted Balistreri. "From the city officials to our neighbors, they have all been very supportive and we've attended art fairs and they've been so welcoming." Inside, customers familiar with (Sendik's) will find much of its usual fare, from a fully-stocked grocery store to the reusable red bags with new features unique to the 60,000-sf store. One



BIGGEST FUNDRAISER YET!

Albrecht's Sentry Delafield recently held one of their biggest fundraisers, stating, "Our customers are AWESOME! Between your donations and what we chipped in, we raised over \$17,000 for the Waukesha County Sheriff K9 Unit! This will go a long way towards their unit." Way to go!

\$17,000



of the centerpieces is in the produce department: a nearly 10 foot tall, hydroponic garden with lettuce growing inside. Balistreri said the hope for the in-store unit will be for it to supply fresh lettuce for the salad bar. "It's pretty cool," he said. "It takes about four weeks for it to fully mature. We hope it can do a lot for our store. We've never tried it before, and we're excited for what it could do."

New Store!

New Store Open!

Hy-Vee has opened its reimagined store format in LaCrosse on October 18th, featuring a convenient grocery experience with a focus on foodservice, expanded departments, high-tech shopping and other amenities. The new store layout marks the second of its kind in Wisconsin and the fourth for the retailer overall. Hy-Vee's three other store prototypes have opened over the past year including the Eau Claire store. The approximately 105,000/sf LaCrosse store offers a new dining experience with a large, open Food Hall dining area for fast-casual dining, which includes Hy-Vee's expanded breakfast menu; a pub with a full sit-down bar, 32 taps and an outdoor patio.



Inaugural Meeting

Women Grocers of America (WoGA) held its first convening of the new Executive Female Leaders Network (EXFL), a professional peer group that is designed for female executives in the independent grocery industry, in Washington, D.C., ahead of the NGA Executive Conference & Public



Policy Summit held in late October. Created by the WoGA and supported by the NGA Foundation, the ExFL Network provides the opportunity for women in the retail, wholesale, supplier, manufacturer and vendor communities to meet in person, share ideas and experiences, and face complex issues in the independent grocery industry. WGA member, Kristie Maurer, Maurer's Market; Kristin Popp, Woodman's Markets and Amy Neimetscheck, Certco, Inc., attended this inaugural event!

Food for Neighbors

Festival Foods celebrated Family Meals Month in September with a variety of programs, insights and recipe ideas to encourage families to enjoy meals together and help others achieve family meals as well. Festival Foods, their vendor partners and guests were able to donate over \$30,000 to Food for Neighbors, which will help local food pantries stock their shelves with items that they most need. Festival Foods also donated over \$720,000 worth of various food items to local food pantries across the state throughout the month.



Store Opening Update

Festival Foods celebrated the grand reopening of its Stevens Point location with a \$2,500 donation to revitalize Emerson

Park's playground and basketball court. The gift was presented during a ribbon-cutting event at the Stevens Point Festival Foods. The first phase of the revitalization project will focus on updating playground equipment, and the second will involve reconstruction and relocation of the basketball court. Renovations are expected to begin in November upon arrival of the playground equipment. "We're honored to be part of the Stevens Point community and to assist with the repair and reconstruction of such a popular attraction," said Mark Skogen, Festival Foods president and CEO.



Piggly Wiggly Earns State Recognition

Congratulations to Iverson's Piggly Wiggly in Oconto Falls for being recognized as an Exemplary Employer! Representatives from the State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation presented store owner, Bryce Iverson with an Exem-



plary Award for "outstanding efforts to connect talented workers with disabilities to employment" creating a culture of support for all workers. The state Department of Workforce Development recognizes businesses similar to Iverson's every year during October, which is designated as National Disabilities Employment Awareness Month. "All of us at Iverson's Piggly Wiggly appreciate being recognized here by the state of Wisconsin." Bryce said. "Everyone has a role to play in this business and we couldn't do it without anyone here today."

Congratulations!



Two members of the Trig's leadership team have received national awards from Progressive Grocer. Kindl Furtak has been selected for the 2022 Senior Leadership Honorees top Women in Grocery and Nate Vollmer was awarded the GenNext for emerging leaders under 40 in the grocery industry. Congrats to the honorees!

Celebrating 15 years of the Turkey Trot

Festival Foods marked 15 years of the Turkey Trot run and walk Thanksgiving Day to benefit local Boys & Girls Clubs and YMCAs at 11 state locations. Festival Foods has had more than 30,000 participants statewide to help raise over \$3.6 million along with about 1,700 volunteers over the years.



Thank You and Congrats

After 52 years with Kwik Trip and 22 years as CEO and president, Donald P. Zietlow is retiring, effective at the end of the year. Scott Zietlow, chair of the board of Kwik Trip and second-generation owner, will become Kwik Trip's next president and CEO on Jan. 1, 2023. Scott will retire from his role as a professor of surgery in the Trauma, Critical Care and General Surgery Division of Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. The company now operates more than 800 locations in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois and Michigan and is considered a leader in the convenience store industry. During his tenure, Don was the driving force behind sharing 40% of the pre-tax profits with all the coworkers and Kwik Trip's successful food programs.



The company has grown its vertically integrated Support Center in La Crosse, including major capital investments in the dairy, kitchens, bakeries, and distribution center.

Shopping Spree

As part of its Very Merry Meijer event, the grocer gifted one in-store customer a \$1,000



shopping spree and two pickup shoppers \$250 coupons and bags full of Meijer products at all 262 of its stores. This year, the company extended its giving event by offering three employees in each store a \$200 gift card. Since the program's inception in 2014, Meijer has given more than \$1.8 million worth of toys, clothes, electronics, groceries and small appliances to about 4,200 customers.



Our Condolences



Walter "Wally" Bohrer

Oconomowoc - Born to Eternal Life on March 21, 2022 at age 90. Beloved husband of the late Patricia. Loving and devoted patriarch of David (Patricia), Michael (Susan), Christine (Douglas) Young, Daniel (Cindy), Dennis (Tracy), Debra (Ken) Vaichinger, DuWayne (Lisa) and Denise (Scott) Portz. Dearest grandfather of 22 grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren. Dear brother of Ron (Hannelore), Gary (Melody) and the late Gordon. Further survived by nieces, nephews, other relatives and many friends. Wally is preceded in death by his wife Patricia and his grandson Joey.

Wally proudly served in the United States Army during the Korean War 1950-1953. He was awarded with the Purple Heart for his courageousness. For many years he worked alongside his father Walter at Bohrer's Meat Packing. In 1963 his first juke boxes were purchased from Hastings Distributing. In 1969 the purchase of Hasting Distributing began his life of a juke box and amusement game operator. He is the past President of WAMO and AMOA which are industry trade associations. He was a dedicated Board Member for the Governor's Blue Ribbon Live Stock Auction. He was the Wisconsin Souvenir Milk Cap Founder starting a small retirement business to stay active. He worked until the day of his death.

He was an icon and beloved by everyone who knew him, met him or ever just interacted with him. He will be forever missed and a legend to many.

"It's never so bad it can't get worse."



Dennis (Denny) Wautlet

Algoma, WI - On the morning of March 3, Dennis was embraced in the loving arms of Jesus. It is hard to capture every minute of his full life of 79 years, 7 months, and 9 days in this short space. Born July 22, 1942, the second child of Louis and Frieda Wautlet, Dennis spent his young years in downtown Algoma while his parents owned various small businesses. He graduated from St. Mary grade school in 1957 and Algoma High School in 1960. At the recommendation of his good friend Larry, Dennis attended the National School of Meat Cutting in Toledo, Ohio. Upon graduation, he accepted a job with Hal's Red Owl in Wisconsin Rapids as a meat cutter. He moved up to other supervisory positions in the company, but his life's dream was always to own his own business. This opportunity came along in 1968, when he had the opportunity to purchase the grocery department of Katch's

Department Store in his hometown of Algoma, and Denny's Red Owl was born! That set the tone for the rest of our lives. He loved all those years, especially the people who worked with us, and those who shopped - they became more than customers - they became friends. Our daughter Jodi purchased the business in 2008, but you couldn't keep him away. He was there every day to help and to see all the people who he came to love over the years.

Dennis and Karen Kersten were married at St. Mary Catholic Church in Algoma on November 3, 1962. They were soon joined by their 3 daughters, Jodi, Jill and Jane. Over the years, business and family were united as one, as we all worked together and played together. Dennis loved all people, so there were many, many gatherings at our home where everyone was welcome and "be sure there is plenty of food!"

Missing him so much already are his loving wife, Karen, his daughters Jodi Wautlet (husband Mark Sauter), Jill Wautlet, and Jane (Mike) Haase. He cherished all the time he spent with his five precious grandchildren and only great grandson, Brooks (Gena) Renard and son Ronin, Blair Wautlet (Max Schlise), Will Haase, Isabelle Haase, and Jady Coughlin. Also surviving are his siblings, David Wautlet, Steve (Sue) Wautlet, Julie (Joe) Annoye and Ann Lenz, sister-in-law Vi Wautlet, nieces, nephews, and many, many dear friends. He was preceded in death by his parents, Louis and Frieda Wautlet, brother Paul Wautlet, and mother & father-in-law Mary & Harry Kersten.



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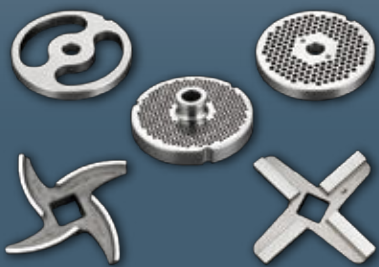
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