

Wisconsin GROCER

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE WISCONSIN GROCERS ASSOCIATION

SHORT-STAFFED *Adapting to a Changing Workforce*



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SPRING ISSUE 2023

Inside

The President's Perspective.....	7
Government Affairs Report.....	10
Short-Staffed.....	14
Grocers in the Capitol Day Sponsors.....	18
2023 WGA Calendar of Events.....	24
Welcome WGA Business Partners.....	25
Around the State.....	26

Advertisers

Assoc. Wholesale Grocers.....	13	Prairie Farms.....	9
Bernatello's.....	20	Professional Supply.....	22
Certco.....	31	Russ Davis Wholesale.....	3
Dairy Farmers of WI.....	17	SpartanNash.....	6
DBS Group.....	8	UNFI.....	2
Federated Insurance.....	32	Valley Cooperative.....	23
Kemps.....	20	WI Dept. of Health Services.....	19
Krueger Wholesale.....	9	Zone Mechanical.....	13
Lipari.....	4		

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2023 Save the Dates



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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
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Stevens Point
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July 26, 2023
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The President's Perspective

Brandon Scholz
President and CEO, Wisconsin Grocers Association

It's the Workforce, Duh!

This column was originally written for the Wisconsin Bankers Association and was included in the annual Wisconsin Economic Forecast Report. The WGA is one of six business sectors to contribute to the WBA's Report.

For grocers, it has been an incredible gauntlet from the beginnings of the pandemic in 2022 to the peek over the 2023 precipice.

The challenges created for grocers and their suppliers as the pandemic erupted lodged itself into the daily business operations have only continued to create hurdles for the industry.

As most grocery store shoppers know, not all shelves are full of their favorite products – shoppers have had to deal with substitutes or alternatives.

Throughout all these topsy-turvy, head-spinning challenges, there is one common denominator that bears most of the blame for what drives grocers crazy.

WORKFORCE.

Simply put, there are not enough people available to fill the jobs open today, nor in the years to come. Reports have suggested the workforce population in Wisconsin is flat and likely to decline. Forward Analytics notes Wisconsin's youth population has declined 4.3% since 2010 and said a decline in the states under 18 population will cause economic problems. That same report forecasts by 2030 the working population will be down by 130,000 people.

Grocers, convenience stores and retail businesses report there simply

is not a pool of people in the workforce that can fill the gaps. And, for those who want to suggest otherwise that all is good because unemployment is low and UI applications are down, that's not necessarily the case.

There are all sorts of reasons why the workforce is running on empty. During the pandemic, people chose not to work; were let go by employers who couldn't keep their doors open; received state and federal assistance to make up for their non-employment status as well as other factors.

“It starts with the workforce and quality of life.”

Confounding the employment factor is the regressive impact of inflation that has chewed up most all the incredible and eye-popping increasing in wages and benefits.

Rolling into 2022, with the government giving assurances that the economy was in good shape (inflation notwithstanding) the expectations were that people would come back to their jobs, or any job.

Not so. Didn't happen. Not only did people not show up, but the pool of prospective employees was more like a very small pond.

The forecast for 2023 doesn't look much better. You may find grocers taking down a checkout lane and adding a self-checkout stand to help their customers move through the end of their shopping experience.

What's the solution? Wisconsin needs to bring people back to Wisconsin to work here. The question is how.

Let's target quality of life issues in Wisconsin and focus legislative, employer and community efforts on several key areas. Good businesses, strong communities, safe streets and less crime, day care, housing, public transportation, good schools and key components of attracting new workers to Wisconsin.

These changes will require funding solutions, regulatory relief and legislative initiatives in local, county and state governments.

Grocers and their customers are resilient. They've proved it since the pandemic started. It doesn't mean that things are hunky dory, but we're approaching critical mass. Changes must be made to solve our workforce crisis.

Winsight Grocery Business notes that inflation, technological advances and the pandemic have influenced grocery shopper habits. It's a common sight to see shoppers using smartphones to look up sales, product information, loyalty apps and more.

While these changes have become common place for the customer, they are not long-term solutions for the retail world.

It starts with the workforce and quality of life.



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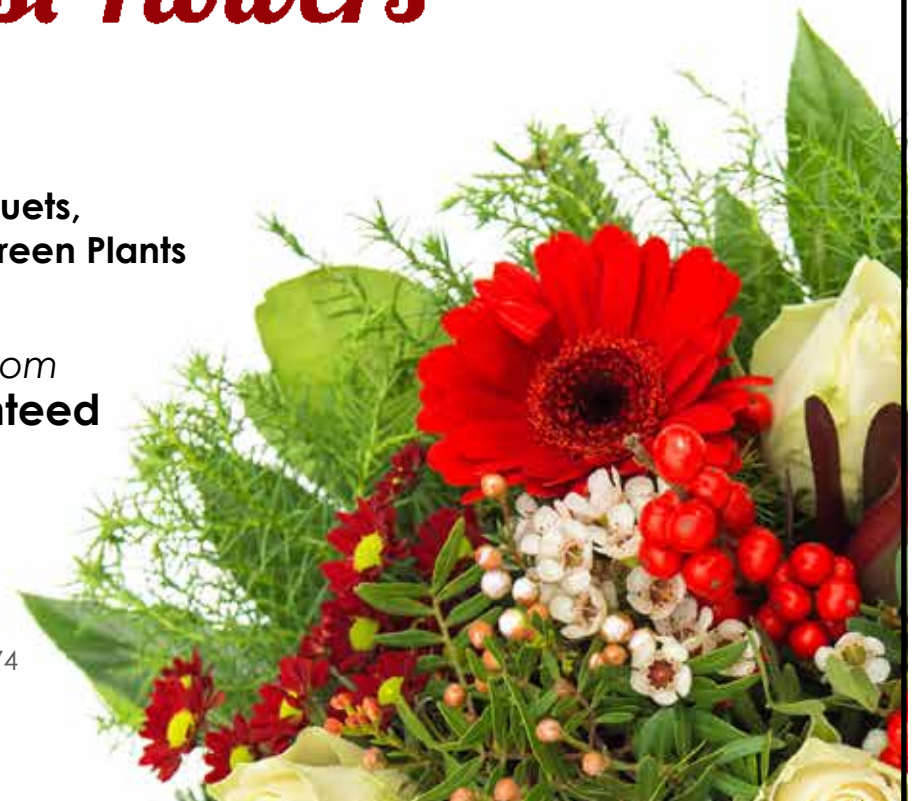
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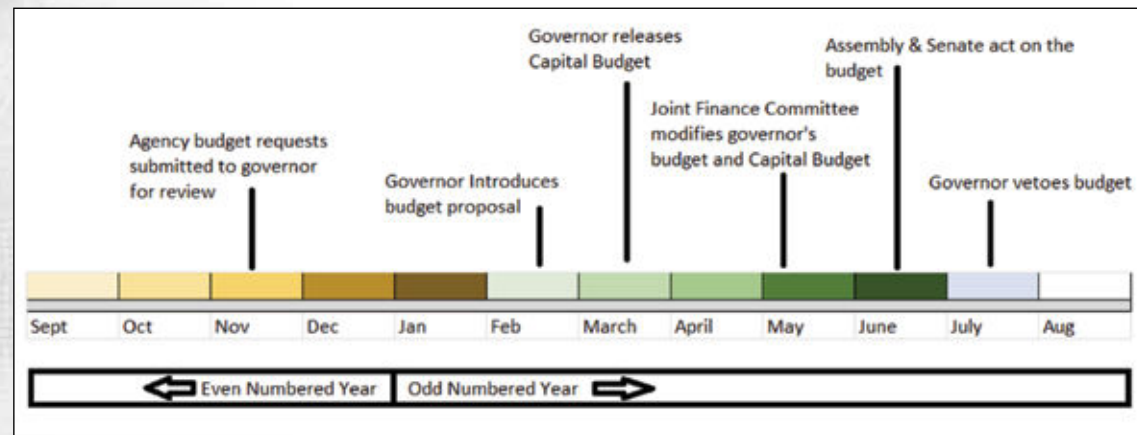
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Michael Semmann,
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2023-2025 Wisconsin Budget Process



Personal Property Tax: The Tax Everyone Wants to Eliminate, But Can't Yet Seem to Agree How

The Governor eliminated it in his 2023-25 State Budget and 2023 Assembly Bill 2/ Senate Bill 2 has over 50 co-sponsors to remove the onerous tax, so why hasn't the Personal Property Tax been removed from the statutes? All parties have yet to reach consensus on the details.

Existing prior to statehood, the tax has morphed over the years and is now riddled with exemptions. Some groups reporting the \$200+ million tax is now estimated to generate a small fraction of revenue from just a few decades ago.

In 2016, the WGA created a coalition of about 50 business groups that all supported the repeal of the personal property tax. In the 2017-2018 State Budget, the WGA, and the Coalition to Repeal Wisconsin's Personal Property Tax successfully advocated for a \$75 million exemption for machinery. The remnants of Wisconsin's personal property tax leave an extremely unfair tax on small and main street businesses. The most recent exemption on machinery was clearly defined by the Legislature, however interpretation was left up to municipal assessors and businesses. In the

2021-22 Legislative Session, the governor attempted to eliminate the tax but could not overcome policy differences. The effort ended with Governor Evers Vetoing the measure. Today, 57 groups have signed on to a coalition that support elimination of the tax.

The details being discussed include a new and narrower definition for the manufacturing and agricultural tax credit in Wisconsin along with utility (railroad and telecom) and other smaller provisions. The Governor's signature depends on how these issues are resolved and could take the form of direct resolution or agreements on other items that could outweigh the fiscal impacts of the incremental changes.

State Alcohol Bill Combines Delivery with Click & Collect Concepts



Senators **Duey Stroebel** (R-Saukville) and **Kelda Roys** (D-Madison) along with Representatives **Cindi Duchow** (R-Town of Delafield) and Representative **LaKeshia Myers** (D-Milwaukee) announced co-sponsorship of a bill that combines alcohol delivery with the click and collect provision.

This bill (which didn't have an official number at time of printing) allows most alcohol beverage retailers to make online or telephone sales of alcohol beverages to be picked up by the customer at parking spaces that are part of the retail licensed premises or to be delivered by the retailer or a delivery service. The bill also prohibits municipalities from imposing by ordinance additional restrictions on these sales for pickup and creates an alcohol delivery permit issued by the Department of Revenue.

WGA and eight other organizations wrote a memo to legislators asking for their sponsorship, stating "Our coalition: comprised of associations and businesses across Wisconsin representing hundreds of employers and thousands of employees are calling for safe and responsible service and convenience for our customers and Wisconsin-based consumers. Please support legislation that would allow Wisconsin to become the 43rd state to permit beverage alcohol delivery from on and off-premise facilities by co-sponsoring LRB-1140."



Sale Tax Discount: Could it be One Answer to Swipe Fees?

Could legislation that would provide an increase in the retailer's discount from sales taxes due be one part of an industry answer to high swipe fees paid by Wisconsin's grocers?

A legislative concept circulating in Madison would increase the amount paid to retailers for administration of sales and excise tax through an increase in the discount rate and provide an elimination of the cap. In Wisconsin, retailers are mandated to collect excise and sales taxes from the public on behalf of the State. They are currently provided a "retailer's allowance" of .5% of the taxes they collect (capped at \$1000 per filing period) as compensation for the costs they incur in collecting the tax. Labor costs, utility costs, and other business costs all go into the total overall costs. This idea is gaining steam even though one of the most egregious



costs incurred to collect sales tax relates to credit card swipe fees. Credit card swipe fees are charged on the total amount, including tax, not just the sale itself. They range from 1.35% to 4% per transaction, with the U.S. average at 2%. Retailers are paying substantially more on the interchange fee for the sales tax than the retailer's discount provides.

Increasing the discount rate would allow grocers to recoup part of the administrative costs associated with acting as the sales tax agent for the state of Wisconsin.

State Budget Surplus Now Exceeds \$7 Billion; Determines Course of Legislature for 2023

With the state of Wisconsin now projected to finish the current fiscal year with a \$7.1 billion surplus, \$524 million more than on January 1, the battle lines are clearly drawn to determine who will get their share of this monetary pie.

VOTE April 4! Wisconsin Supreme Court Election Attracts National Attention, Donors

The race for the Wisconsin State Supreme Court features two candidates from very different backgrounds and with very different judicial philosophies. The April 4th Election highlights the differences between Liberal Judge **Janet Protasiewicz** and Conservative former Justice **Daniel Kelly** and will determine if conservative or liberal justices will have a majority on the court. If Protasiewicz wins, it would shift the balance of power of the state's seven-member high court, which has been controlled by conservatives since 2008.

Wisconsin's Spring Supreme Court Election has garnered national media attention from the *Wall Street Journal*, to the *New York Times*, to *CNN*, to *Fox News*, and almost every outlet in between. With liberal media



stating Protasiewicz will undo “unfair” legislative maps, overturn Act 10, and rule on other social issues, conservative outlets have called on Wisconsinites to “Put down the Old Fashioneds and go win an election.”

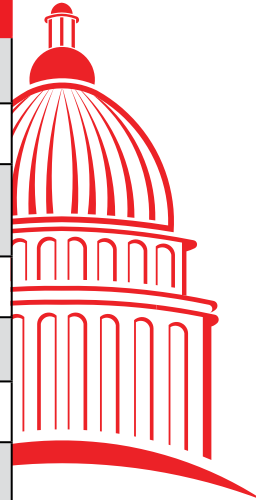
Big Money: Making History

This election has become the most expensive supreme court race in United States history. The state’s Democrats are working through a 3rd party called A Better Wisconsin Together, which is a Democratic super PAC that spent more than \$2 million on television ads before the primary attacking Judge Dorow. Fair

Courts America, spent \$2.7 million backing Mr. Kelly. Their cousin, Lynde Bradley Uihlein, who is a donor to some progressive causes, has been publicly behind Judge Janet Protasiewicz in what some are calling an “epic showdown.”

Wisconsin voters will have to carefully consider the records and positions of both candidates to make an informed decision. With several key court races potentially on the docket in coming years, the outcome of this election could have a significant impact on the future of Wisconsin’s legal system.

JUSTICE	PHILOSOPHY	JOINED	CHIEF JUSTICE	TERM ENDS	LAW SCHOOL
Annette Ziegler, Chief Justice	Conservative	August 1, 2007	2021 - Present	2027	Marquette
Ann Walsh Bradley	Liberal	August 1, 1995	—	2025	Wisconsin
Patience D. Roggensack (retiring)	Conservative	August 1, 2003	2015 - 2021	2023	Wisconsin
Rebecca Bradley	Conservative	October 12, 2015	—	2026	Wisconsin
Rebecca Dallet	Liberal	August 1, 2018	—	2028	Case Western Reserve
Brian Hagedorn	Conservative	August 1, 2019	—	2029	Northwestern
Jill Karofsky	Liberal	August 1, 2020	—	2030	Wisconsin



Friend of Grocers, Dan Knodl, Running in State Senate Special Election

WGA Friend of Grocers award winner Rep. **Dan Knodl** (R-Germantown) will face environmental attorney

Jodi Habush Sinykin

(D-Whitefish Bay) in the 8th Senate District Special Election to determine whether Republicans have a two-thirds majority. The 8th Senate District is just north and northwest of Milwaukee and includes Mequon, Menomonee Falls, Whitefish Bay & Grafton.



In a statement, Knodl said his win in the Primary showed that voters in the 8th district “want continued common sense conservative representation.” “We’re offering a vision of economic prosperity, safe communities and pragmatic solutions to the voters of the 8th Senate District,” he said.

The April 4 spring special election is being held to replace longtime former state Senator **Alberta Darling** of River Hills.

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SHORT-STAFFED

How are Wisconsin grocery operators and affiliates adapting to a changing workforce?

Written exclusively for the Wisconsin Grocers Magazine by Kate Larson, katelarsonwrites.com

Wisconsin's food retailers might as well have signs permanently installed this year that say: NOW HIRING. After the economic upheaval of the pandemic, we've emerged into a tricky combination of high inflation, low unemployment, and a bruising reality for many grocers and affiliated businesses: there just aren't enough applicants to fill open positions.

"We definitely have labor issues, no question, but we're not alone," says Doug Rinehart, president and CEO of Dick's Fresh Market, which operates six stores across northwestern Wisconsin. "We are short employees strictly based on, they're just not there." At Gempeler's Supermarket in Monticello, "we are operating with fewer staff, that's for sure," shares Co-Owner Connie Von der Heide. "These days I'm the backup cashier."

The trend is nationwide. According to FMI's *The Food Retailing Industry Speaks 2022* report, 87% of food retail businesses and 86% of food supplier businesses say that recruiting and employee retention are having a negative impact on their business. And in 2021, turnover rates were unusually high for both food retailers (48%) and suppliers (29%).

Wisconsin companies across a wide range of industries are feeling the labor crunch. In January, 85% of businesses told the Wisconsin Employer Survey that they were struggling to hire. One-third of those companies said they planned to increase wages by more than 4% in 2023, with most (84%) planning to increase wages by 3% or more. Regardless of other economic indicators, workforce shortages are clearly putting a damper on business for retailers across the state.

To top it all off, census data indicates that the state's labor pool is shrinking: while Wisconsin's overall population grew 3.6% since 2010, the youth population declined 4.3%. And a report from Forward Analytics that analyzed migration trends suggests that, by 2030, when many of Wisconsin's younger baby boomers will have retired from the workforce, the state could have 130,000 fewer residents between the ages of 25 and 64.

In the face of these pressures, food retailers are finding innovative ways to adapt. "Labor shortages are definitely impacting our

business," notes Candie [Baker/Webster], president of Webster's Marketplace in Ripon. "We've made some operational changes; we've made some product selection changes, some production changes - we're just trying to do the best we can with what we've got."

"I thought people would be coming back" - the struggle to fill positions

It's clear that everyone - from large chains to one-store operators, rural and urban, grocers and suppliers - is facing workforce challenges. Leaders across the food industry are expressing concern about hiring, retention, training, and turnover. "The job shortages have gone on longer than I thought they would," notes Von der Heide. "I thought people would be coming back. But some people have just decided they can live on less, or more people are taking advantage of early retirement. Fewer people are moonlighting." It has been particularly difficult to hire high schoolers, she adds, who are a staple of Gempeler's part-time workforce.



At Roundy's, a Wisconsin-based subsidiary of Kroger's, labor shortages have "made it a little bit more difficult to attract a wide variety of candidates," explains Division HR Leader Nicole Fikau. When it comes to part-timers, "we're all bidding for the same worker," she says. And hiring and retaining salaried management poses its own challenges. "With the pandemic, there are so many different opportunities for remote work or hybrid work," she says, "But we're always looking for folks to be in our stores, closest to our customers, to serve them. So that's been a little bit of a struggle."

For Russ Davis Wholesalers, Inc., doing business as Crazy Fresh, retaining CDL delivery drivers "has been pretty tough," notes Sales Director Mark Maloney. "We've instituted a lot of incentives, a lot of stay-on bonuses, even hiring bonuses." Turnover is also high in the company's warehouses, he notes, where it can be difficult to find workers available for second- and third-shift jobs. With higher turnover, "you don't have a chance for employees to really grab on, to become entrenched with the company and understand the values and what we believe in and the quality we deliver," Maloney explains. "You're just not able to do that."

Focusing on the employee experience

To combat labor shortages, many food retailers are paying very close attention to the work environment they're offering employees, including training, advancement opportunities, wages and benefits, and the intangible qualities that make jobs satisfying and meaningful.

"We have worked a lot on our retention strategy for all of our associates - part time, full time, salaried management, pharmacy - over the last few years," says Fikau, "to ensure that they know that we're really an employer of choice." With a comprehensive assistant store leader training program "for folks that are either newly graduated or coming from different walks of life," she notes, "we're developing the future leaders of our company."

Many grocery leaders are beefing up training materials and programs to compensate for higher turnover. After all, less-experienced front-line employees need especially clear standards and procedures to follow in order to consistently take good care of guests. Thorough training also allows for hiring non-traditional candidates and candidates with no food retail experience. "I hire an attitude, and I train the rest," Maloney explains. "I can't train an attitude. I can't change someone's work ethic or sense of urgency, or their positive serving nature." But for the right candidate, he says, everything else is teachable.

One strategy to retain talented employees is more clearly tying their jobs to the impact that quality grocery stores have on their communities. "Whether you're a part-time cashier or a full-time department manager," notes [Baker/Webster], "giving people a voice and control and the power to create and make change within our store gives them a stronger purpose than bottles, boxes, cans, and jars."

This focus on employees is a distinct shift from the way that food industry leaders might have viewed the industry a few decades ago. "When speaking about the differences between my father's leadership and my leadership as a second-generation owner-operator," [Baker/Webster] says, "he took amazing care of the customers and good care of our team. And I feel the difference in our leadership is that my job and focus is to take amazing care of our team, because then they, in turn, take great care of

our customers." Maloney agrees. "If you celebrate the people you work with, they will celebrate the people that are paying the light bill," he says. "They will pass it on."

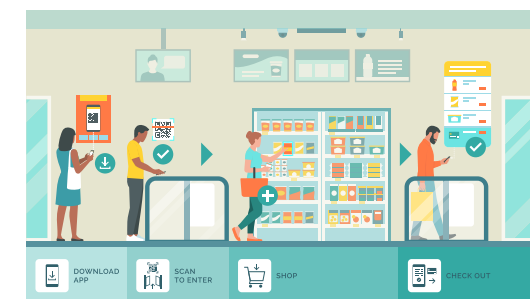
To automate, or not to automate? Operational shifts for a post-pandemic workforce.

Many food industry businesses are making or considering changes to their operations that could mitigate some of the impact of labor shortages - and potentially build resilience for longer-term challenges. For some stores, this means taking a hard look at opening hours. During the pandemic, Webster's moved their opening time forward an hour to 6 am and rolled back closing time from midnight to 10 pm. "We found that with that reduction in hours, we didn't lose sales and we were more able to find openers and closers," [Baker/Webster] notes. "So we're choosing not to go back to our previous hours." Similarly, Gempeler's shifted their weekday closing time back by an hour, noticing, Von der Heide says, that fewer shoppers were arriving late at night.

Some grocers and suppliers are (whether eagerly or reluctantly) exploring the possibilities of automation. From self-checkout to smart carts, electronic shelf labels, inventory robots, and

automatic ordering systems, AI seems poised for a breakthrough into grocery aisles and back-end operations. But operators are weighing the tradeoffs, both in terms of up-front costs and possible impacts to the customer experience. In approaching automation at Webster's, "I try to make sure that we're very cautious about that choice," says [Baker/Webster], "because, right down to our in-store bakery and the fact that our doughnuts are hand-cut and freshly prepared every day, I would hate to lose some of the essence of our products in our store."

For smaller operators, self-checkouts may be more trouble than they're worth. "You still have to have somebody supervising the folks going through the self-checkout," Von der Heide notes, "and



NOW HIRING

it still takes up space.” But economies of scale can make the benefits of self-checkout more appealing. “If you had asked me three years ago if I’d ever do self-checkouts, I’d have told you: never,” says Rinehart. “And now I’ve got self-checkouts in almost all my stores.”

Finally, many retailers are reevaluating freshly prepared offerings and making strategic choices to streamline their menus, create rotation schedules that limit how much needs to be prepared on a daily basis, and work with third-party manufacturers to outsource some in-house recipes. “We’re going to have to do a lot more buying pre-made items, especially in our higher labor departments,” Rinehart notes. At Webster’s, leadership is closely watching product movement and narrowing production to keep fresh-prepared options in-house. “We’ve been making production choices to get our customers what they want and yet still give our team the time and ability to produce that,” [Baker/Webster] says.

Increasing Wisconsin’s labor pool through government advocacy

But even as food retailers respond creatively to the current labor market, Wisconsin’s workforce is shrinking. “So what can the grocers do about this?” asks WGA President Brandon Scholz. “Well, one of the reasons why grocers and warehouses and allied members join the association is for government affairs. It’s complicated. It’s intricate, it’s politics – and they’ve got a grocery store to run. So that’s what we do.” Scholz notes that WGA’s government advocacy efforts are shifting into key areas that affect quality of life, in order to attract more workers to the state. These include lowering crime, housing, childcare, public transportation, and access to education at the K-12, community college, and university levels.

At the local level, food retailers are already playing a key role in improving the experience of living and working in their communities. Grocers are “supporting local clubs, local organizations, the local church, the food pantry,” Scholz says, “all of those things that a community relies on. They are a key part of the fabric of the quality of life.” Just the presence of a great grocery store can attract families to a community, Rinehart notes, along with “a strong labor force and a strong school system and a strong



healthcare system.” At Roundy’s, Fikau says, the company regularly recruits from out of state, and “we really want

to make sure that we’re leaning on our homegrown associates to help tell that story for us and make sure that folks know that Wisconsin is a great place to live and work.”

Advocating for change at the local, county, and state government level isn’t easy, and doesn’t move quickly. These kinds of changes will require funding solutions, regulatory relief, and legislative initiatives, Scholz says. But ultimately, he notes, “the WGA recognizes the serious challenges that grocers across Wisconsin have, and anything we can do through our legislative program to affect and improve the workforce or through regulatory efforts to make it easier and less cumbersome to hire people and keep them employed, those are the things that the Association can work on, on behalf of its members.”



The bottom line: workforce issues are likely to persist

Some food retailers and suppliers note that the hiring crunch is easing somewhat: “I think it’s actually loosening up right now,” notes Maloney, when it comes to driver retention. At Roundy’s, “in some of our markets, it does feel like we’re coming out of it a little bit,” says Fikau, “although we’re nowhere near where we would like to be as far as staffing goes, and as far as supporting our stores across the entire enterprise.”

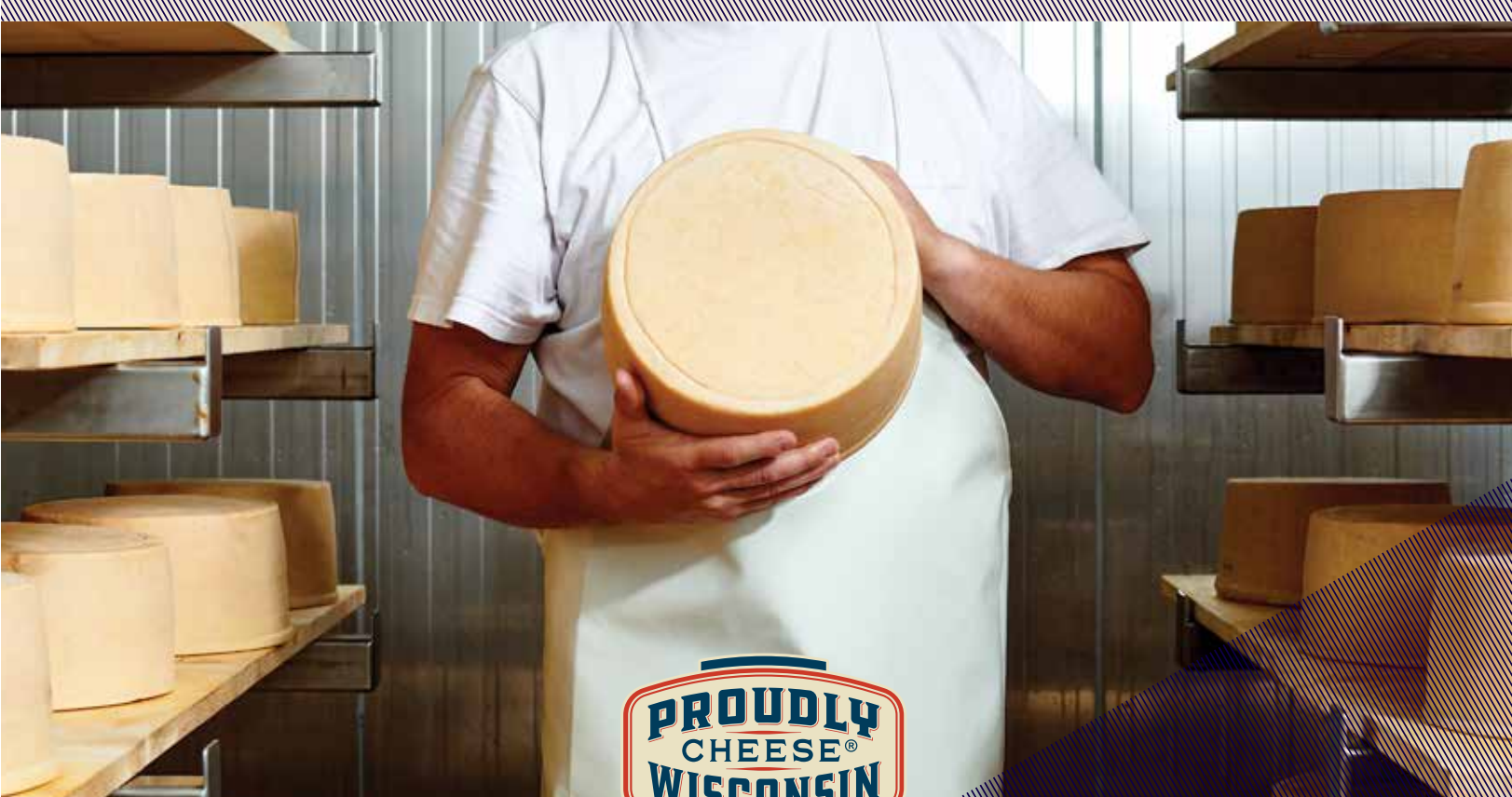
But in the face of a shrinking labor pool, “there’s no one, single simple solution, no silver bullet that’s going to end this workforce crisis,” says Scholz. “It’s going to go on for a long time and we have to continue to chip away at it.”

Meanwhile, Wisconsin’s food retailers will continue to take care of their employees, build meaningful workplaces, create efficiencies, and explore flexible solutions to day-to-day staffing issues. Because no matter how short-staffed, “we keep smiles on our faces as best we can and keep plugging,” says Von der Heide. “The people who shop here really appreciate it. They’ll say ‘Oh, we’re so glad you’re here. We don’t know what we’d do if Monticello didn’t have a grocery store.’ Hopefully they won’t have to find out anytime soon – because we don’t plan on going anywhere.”

Taste the Mastery of Wisconsin Cheese



The Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker program is one of only two in the world and our graduates are a major reason Wisconsin is the epicenter of the cheese universe.



2023

GROCERS in the CAPITOL DAY



Thanks to our sponsors for helping make WGA's Grocers in the Capitol Days possible in this new and innovative format.

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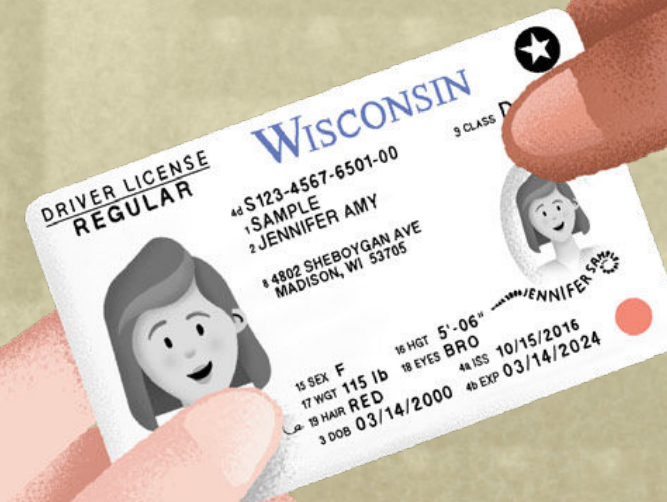
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Sheboygan Pasty Company
Key Contact: Maria Ranieri, maria.ranieri@sheboyganpasty.com
Sheboygan, Wisconsin / 920-226-3000
Production Location: 1313 S. 8th Street, Sheboygan, WI 53081
Restaurant Location: 811 Indiana Ave, Sheboygan, WI 53081
sheboyganpasty.com



Sheboygan Pasty Co. was opened in January 2021, as an idea to boost sales at Ranieri's Four of a Kind Bar & Grill during Covid for brothers Tony and John Ranieri and good friend Matthew Weber. Our grandparents were born and raised in the U.P. and introduced us to pasties before we can even remember! Immediately after opening, we received multiple requests from customers to sell our pasties in grocery stores throughout Wisconsin. In February 2022, Sheboygan Pasty Co. purchased a building that formerly housed a diner to serve as a production facility for our wholesale pasties. We currently have 4 pasty flavors available with additional in development. As of February 2023, our products are now available in over 70 stores throughout Wisconsin with more being added every week!



Kickass Beef Jerky
Key Contact: Chris Auerbach, Sales Director
Office 1.507.961.1180 (ext.2)
Direct 507.474.5646
kickassbeefjerky.com



- A family owned Midwest company founded in 2001 using family recipes.
- Kickass Beef Jerky is a supplier of premium beef jerky, snack sticks, pickled vegetables and award-winning bloody mary mix.
- Kickass Beef Jerky is all natural, very tender and packed with flavor. Our Jerky is gluten-free with no fillers. No nitrates or nitrites.
- Kickass Snack Sticks are non greasy beef and pork stick that come in 8 flavors.
- All of our products are made in the USA and guaranteed.
- Kickass also offers 2 meat and cheese combo snack sticks options both made with real cheese; jalapeno cheddar and cheddar cheese.

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For more info, contact Kris Neilson at the Wisconsin Grocers Association.

Phone: 608.210.3304

Email: kris@wisconsin-grocers.com

Get into the Swing of Things This Coming Summer!



June 19, 2023
Northern Grocery Industry GOLF OUTING

Stevens Point Country Club
Stevens Point, WI



July 26, 2023
Southern Classic Grocery Industry GOLF OUTING

Evergreen Golf Course
Elkhorn, WI

Watch for more details at WisconsinGrocers.com/Events

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

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Russ Davis Wholesale, Inc.





Around the State



Sarah Decorah,
Operations Director

Member HAPPENINGS



WOWZA!
The luck of the draw was in the town of Luck, Wisconsin in January, according to a recent news release by the Wisconsin Lottery. A \$15.1 million Megabucks jackpot-winning ticket was sold at Wayne's Food Plus for the January 4, 2023, drawing. It is the largest winner ever sold by the Lottery retailer and the biggest Megabucks jackpot won since a \$22.2 million jackpot in 2015. "What a great way to start 2023. We can't wait to meet the lucky winner." Store Manager, Paul Wondra said, "We could not be happier for the winner. They truly got lucky in Luck." For selling the winning ticket, Wayne's Food Plus will receive \$100,000. Congratulations to all!

Congrats!

Sendik's co-owner Ted Balistreri met with the Mayor of New Berlin, Dave Ament, and other community members last week to receive the Business of the Month award from



the city of New Berlin. The Sendik's family loves to get to know the areas they serve and the passionate people who make these cities great to live in.

It's Official!

The Shelby Report noted SpartanNash has acquired Great Lakes Foods, an independent grocery wholesaler, including its 300,000-square-foot distribution



center in Menominee, MI. "This acquisition represents SpartanNash's ongoing commitment to optimize our supply chain network, drive growth through geographic expansion and serve our customers more efficiently," said Masiar Tayebi, EVP and chief strategy and information officer for SpartanNash. The warehouse serves about 100 independent grocery customers across the Midwest and employs 125 workers. SpartanNash will

continue to employ the Great Lakes Foods team while investing in capital and IT updates to the facility and expanding service offerings to customers.

Retailers of the Century

Progressive Grocer recently announced 11 food retailers with a Retailer of the Century Award, as well as to acknowledge some honorable mentions. Wisconsin connections are Kroger, Meijer, Costco, Hy-Vee and Aldi. PG notes grocery retailers have had to reassess and adapt nearly every facet of their operations. Changes to the grocery landscape will continue, shaped by both macroeconomic factors and those pesky, always-changing consumer preferences.



A Family Affair

Since 1991, there has always been a Koehler on the work schedule at Dick's Fresh Market according to The Sun, news publication in Osceola. Vicki started the tradition of working in the store back in 1991 and has had a number of positions over the years. Her son, Brandon Koehler, current Store Director, started working at Dick's when he was in high school in 1999. Richard, Brandon's grandfather, currently works in the maintenance and courtesy departments. Brandon stated, "Not only do we have three gener-



ations currently working at Dick's, but all five of my siblings worked here at one point in time as well. Two of my children already work here. I have three more children that I'm sure will work here once they are old enough...I feel very grateful to be a part of Dick's Fresh Market and part of the Osceola community for many years. I love my job and the community."

Electronic Tags Debut

Maurer's Market, Wisconsin Dells, began installing new electronic shelf labels that will replace the paper tags that grocers have used for decades. Working with RDS and Bill Hughes' team, the tags will help Maurer's ensure better price accuracy and also help cover many hours each week that they need to maintain shelf pricing. Tags with a red across the top relate to the weekly print ad sale and when it says Maurer's savings, that indicates the item is on a temporary reduction.



New Stores Opened

Hy-Vee recently opened two stores this week in Janesville and Oregon, reported Winsight Grocery Business. The Janesville location showcases a reimagined store design that includes a fireplace and large indoor seating area serving its food hall as well as all-digital shelf labels, and more than 50 televisions highlighting promotions, services and products. The store is over 97,000-sf and is the retailer's sixth "state-of-the-art" grocery store in its 8-state footprint. The store has tradi-



tional check-out lanes as well as new mobile payment technology with Hy-Vee Scan & Go and self-check-outs. An in-store Starbucks, floral, pharmacy and gift shop are just a few of the departments included in the Janesville location, along with a Joe Fresh clothing department, a Pair Eyewear kiosk, DSW footwear, a beauty department, candy shop, and a wine and spirits department. The second store opening in Oregon, which was previously Bill's Food Center, will feature grocery essentials as well as Hy-Vee's mealtime to-go offerings, natural, organic and gluten-free items, and a wine and spirits department.



Grocers in the **COMMUNITY**



Annual Holiday Fundraiser
Watertown Piggly Wiggly held their Annual Holiday Meal Fundraiser last November and nearly \$17,000 was raised, with over \$16,000 being donated back to the community. Organizations impacted by

this great fundraiser were: Watertown Food Pantry, Watertown Family Aid, The Bread Basket, Loaves and Fishes, Bread and Roses, Moose Thanksgiving Dinner, Elks Christmas Dinner, Salvation Army, and Santa Claus & Co.

Hope for the Holidays

Every year all Dick's Fresh Market stores do an annual collection of toys and monetary donations from communities that they call "Hope for the Holidays." This year, seven stores collected a total of \$20,597.83 that was donated to local charities and the toy boxes at each store were overflowing with donations.



StoneRidge Round Up

Each of the StoneRidge Piggly Wiggly stores held a Round Up event from November 20 through December 17, 2022, to help raise money for local food pantries. Congrats to everyone involved!



Totals raised at the stores were: Kaukauna- \$5506.70 to Loaves and Fishes; Winneconne - \$1883.28 to the Winneconne Area Assistance Center and \$1883.28 to Ruth's Pantry; De Pere - \$5552.99 to De Pere Christian Outreach; Little Chute - \$4001.69 to St. John's Food Pantry and Wautoma - \$2275.00 to the Local Food Pantry.

"Our Customers Rock!"

Albrecht's Sentry Delafield held a couple of fundraisers this past holiday season to help those in need. They finished as the #1 store in Waukesha County for their annual Christmas Red Kettle Campaign with a donation to the Salvation Army of over \$26,000! The store also held a fundraiser for the Kettle Moraine Food Pantry and donated over \$15,000.



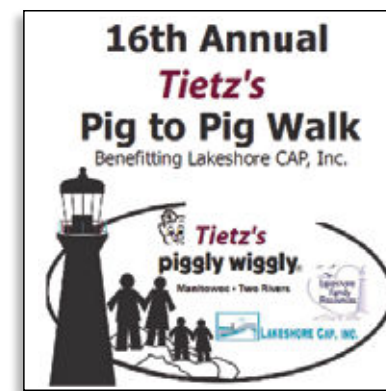
Giving Back

Witt's Food in Crivitz held their big roundup from November 15, 2022 through January 3, 2023, and raised over \$9,139 from their customers for the Crivitz Food Pantry and Witt's rounded up the donation to \$12,000.00!



16th Annual Pig to Pig Walk

2022 marked the 16th annual Tietz's Pig to Pig Walk from the Manitowoc Piggly Wiggly to the Two Rivers Piggly Wiggly, according to the Herald Times Reporter in Manitowoc. Participants made the trek between the two stores and raised a whopping \$18,500 for the Lakeshore Community Action Program, who serves the homeless community and those in need.



Awesome Fundraisers!



"Fox Bros. Piggly Wiggly Charity of the Month" program raised a total of \$369,341 in 2022, benefiting 52 different local nonprofit organizations and helping countless families and individuals across South-eastern Wisconsin.

Each monthly campaign focuses on a specific area of need, identifying local nonprofit organizations serving each of the communities that Fox Bros. Piggly Wiggly serves. Customers are given the opportunity to round up their total when checking out, add to change jars placed in each store, or to donate any amount.

Giving Back

Associated Wholesale Grocers, in partnership with its member retailers, contributed \$138,250 to nonprofits through its Save-A-Label program in 2022. The community-giving project benefits schools and nonprofits, while encouraging consumers to support local independent grocers. In Wisconsin, AWG supported New Life United Methodist Church Women, Lakeland Baptist Church, Trinity Lutheran School and the Dwight T. Parker Public Library.



Giving Back

Roundy's Pick 'n Save and Metro Market team recently donated over 25,000 units of premium cat food to Middleton Outreach Ministry (MOM) (pictured) and to the Wisconsin Humane Society (WHS), who supports pets with pantry connections across all campuses. Milwaukee was selected for this donation (WHS) as this campus is the highest need with the pantry available seven days a week (when there is supply available).



5th Annual Holiday Open House

Miller & Sons (Verona & Mt. Horeb) hosted their 5th Annual Holiday Open House & Silent Auction in December and it was their biggest year ever! The Verona and Mt. Horeb stores together raised \$16,782 and



Badger Honor Flight was the main recipient. The non-profit provides veterans with a once in a lifetime trip to Washington D.C. to explore the monuments and meet other veterans.



Milestones & CONGRATULATIONS

Congrats on 50 Years!

Tom Bonesho was just 16 years old when he was offered his first job at a grocery store in Milwaukee. "I started out as a bagger, bagging groceries and then I moved my way up," Bonesho said about how he got his start. He now works at Albrecht's Sentry in Delafield. If that's where you get your groceries, you may know him better as what his name tag says, "Manager Tom." After five decades he can tell you just about everything there is to know in the grocery business. "He's definitely one of our hardest-working people; he'll do anything we ask and we're gonna have some big shoes to fill," said Jordan Jeanpierre, of Albrecht's Sentry.



Congrats on 20 Years!



Metcalfe's owners Tim & Kevin Metcalfe recently celebrated Rich Lewandowski's 20 years with Metcalfe's Market at their Wauwatosa store. Rich had been the store director there

for many years and recently decided he wasn't quite ready to play golf full time yet. So, he stayed on as the manager of the beer, wine & spirits department.

Congratulations to Ted Balistreri, co-owner of Sendik's Food Market, celebrating 22 years with the company!



22 Years!

Anniversary Celebration!

Recently, Eric Wichmann, Assistant Store Director from Metcalfe's Market West Towne location, celebrated his 30th anniversary! From the Metcalfe gang: Simply put, Eric is one of the nicest and most helpful people you'll ever meet. He is always calm and collected with a smile and is always willing to help others no matter how busy he is.



Congratulations!

Sentry Delafield shared a very special anniversary, writing on Facebook: He hates attention, but we have



25 Years!

to give a huge round of applause to our "Fearless Leader" Bill! He's the store director that makes this ship run like a well-oiled machine!! When you see him make sure to make a big deal out of 25 years!

Happy Retirement!

Terry Everett has retired after 28 years at Certco, Inc. We wish you well in your next chapter, Terry!



28 Years!

Celebration X 9



9 employees - 20 Years!

Metcalfe's Market recently celebrated NINE 20-year anniversaries at their Wauwatosa location! Says Amanda Metcalfe, Director of Employee Development:

"We're so lucky to have such longevity at that store!"



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Ted Balistreri
Co-Owner
Sendik's Food Market, 18 locations in the Greater Milwaukee, WI area

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