wisconsingrocers.com | WINTER ISSUE 2024

Nisconsin

5

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE WISCONSIN GROCERS ASSOCIATION

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS / 10

()) GROCERS INNOVATION EXPOREVIEW / 20

 (\mathbf{n})

eview

Look inside to check out all the happenings at the 2023 WGA EXPO!

AROUND THE STATE / 38

Wisconsin Grocers Association 10 W. Mifflin Street, Suite 205 | Madison, WI 53703 CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

2023

NGA GROCERS INNOVATION

Stan Ba



WITH LIPARI FOODS



Increase your sales this holiday season by offering something extra to your customers. At Lipari Foods we offer exclusive brands, as well as national brands, to help make sure your holiday sales are merry and bright.

New customers contact Chris Lipari at Chris_Lipari@liparifoods.com



MEAL STARTER KITS

MEALS MADE SIMPLE WITH CRAZY FRESH STARTER KITS



TERIYAKI STIR FRY



SOUP STARTER



THAI PEANUT STIR FRY



CHILI STARTER

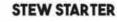




STUFFING MIX

WINTER WEATHER COMFORT FOOD

POT ROAST KIT



FOR RECIPES AND MORE VISIT WWW.EATCRAZYFRESH.COM



Better Food. Better Future. Better for All.

We proudly provide over 46,000 customers with:

- On-time delivery of the best products in conventional, fresh, wellness, natural and organic.
- Expertise in logistics, merchandising, store operations, retail technology and professional services.
- Superior Private Brands.
- Detailed data that help drive sales today and into the future.



For more information please contact our Central Region: BRAD MILLER Senior Director, Market Development, 630.743.9226 CHRIS MORTON Director of Sales, 312.497.6428 CRAIG LITTLE Director, Market Development, 262.357.4403



WGA Board of Directors

Chair

Bob Jaskolski / T.A. Solberg Co., Inc., Minocqua Vice-Chair Kevin Metcalfe / Metcalfe's Market, Madison

Secretary/Treasurer

Steve Burkhardt / Skogen's Festival Foods, DePere George Chomiak / Coborn's Inc., St. Cloud, MN Landon Godley / SpartanNash, St. Cloud, MN Diane Guerrero / Associated Wholesale Grocers, Kenosha Greg Hansen / Hansen's IGA, Bangor

Michelle Harrington / Albrecht's Delafield Market, Delafield

Mark Maloney / Russ Davis Wholesale, Hammond Jeff Maurer / Maurer's Market, Wisconsin Dells Chris Morton / UNFI, Pleasant Prairie Mike Olwig / Fox Brothers Piggly Wiggly, Hartland Beau Oshiro / Piggly Wiggly Midwest, Sheboygan Rick Roth / Great Lakes Coca-Cola, Plover Dave Ryman / Certco, Madison Marissa Smoyer / Lipari Foods, Warren, MI Matt Swentkofske / Molson Coors, Milwaukee Dan Williamson / Kemps, Cedarburg Emilie Williamson / Roundy's Supermarkets, Milwaukee Joe Zietlow / Kwik Trip, La Crosse

WGA Staff

President/CEO Brandon Scholz Vice President of Government Affairs Michael Semmann

Operations Director Sarah Decorah

Marketing & Events Coordinator Lauren Barnes



Innide

The President's Perspective7			
Government Affairs Report10			
Bob Jaskolski - A Long Career in the Grocery Industry			
2023 Foundation Report19			
WGA Grocers Innovation Expo 2023 Review20			
Seminar Summaries20			
Trade Show24			
Cake Decorating Championship26			
The Great Wisconsin Bag-Off27			
Awards Banquet28			
WGA Expo 2024 Prizes30			
Pallet of Products30			
WGA Events Calendar			
Around the State			



AWG42	Lipari2
Bernatello's	Prairie Farms35
Certco43	Professional Supply
Dairy Farmers of WI40	Reyes Coca Cola14
DBS Group8	Russ Davis Wholesale3
Federated Insurance	SpartanNash6
H.T. Hackney Company42	UNFI4
Kemps 15	Valley Cooperative Assoc35
Krueger Wholesale Florist9	Zone Mechanical 15



2024 Save the Dates



January 23, 2024 - Dinner January 24, 2024 - Legislative Meeting and Briefings Madison, WI



March 6, 2024 WGA Foundation Day in the Field Milford Hills



Spring 2024 - TBD Women's Networking Event



June 17, 2024 Northern Grocery Industry Golf Outing Stevens Point Country Club



July 24, 2024 Southern Classic Grocery Industry Golf Outing Evergreen Golf Course Elkhorn, WI



Madison, WI

Please help us conserve resources. If you are receiving multiple copies or wish to be removed from this mailing list, please call the WGA office at 888.342.5942.

Wisconsin Grocer Magazine is published four times a year by: Wisconsin Grocers Association, 10 W. Mifflin Street, Suite 205, Madison, WI 53703 wisconsingrocers.com • Toll free 888.342.5942 • Fax 608.244.9030

Materials in this publication may not be reprinted in any form without permission of the Wisconsin Grocers Association.

EDITORIAL INFORMATION: Publication dates; March, June, September, January. Please submit all press releases and stories to Brandon Scholz, Publisher, at the Wisconsin Grocers Association; toll free 888.342.5942; fax 608.244.9030. Wisconsin Grocer Magazine is designed by freelance graphic designer, Barb Kettler.

ADVERTISING INFORMATION: Please submit all advertising material and questions to Lauren Barnes, Wisconsin Grocers Association, 10 W. Mifflin Street, Suite 205, Madison, WI 53703, call 608.244.7150; fax 608.244.9030; email lbarnes@wisconsingrocers.com.

The Wisconsin Grocer Magazine is printed at Thysse Printing, Oregon, Wisconsin.



HERE FOR YOURS.

Our Far



V (726a)

- 2500+ SKUs currently available throughout the entire store
- Product quality guarantee for consumers
- Exclusive marketing support, including industry leading social media solutions
- Multi-tiered community support program
- Comprehensive merchandising program
- 🥟 Associate engagement plan





Contact John Paul, VP Sales (1-616-878-8161) | john.paul@spartannash.com or Greg Cross, Development Manager (1-320-292-0382) | greg.cross@spartannash.com for more information.

The President's Perspective



Brandon Scholz

President and CEO, Wisconsin Grocers Association

The New 3-Legged Stool

It used to be that the grocery industry's 3-legged stool stood for Competitive Prices, Quality Products, and Customer Service. That's still true today, but there is another stool in the room.

Inflation/Higher Prices, Supply Chain and Workforce are the issues that are driving how the retail food sector – grocery stores, convenience stores and other merchants that try to incorporate some food products in their aisles. Welcome to the other 3-legged stool in the room.

Grocers are entering the fourth year of Covid/ Post Covid and the devastating impact the pandemic had on the retail food sector, and consumers.

There's no question that pandemic-driven inflation rate of 8.9% is still crushing food and grocery prices even though inflation has started to settle back to familiar rates (around 3%+). Virtually every product that ends up on the grocery basket reflects at least a 3.2%price increase over the period according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Here's the kicker: consumers expect prices on the shelves to decrease accordingly when they hear reports that inflation has subsided back down to 'normal' levels. That's not going to happen real soon.

Traditional retail grocery businesses have between 15,000–75,000 products throughout the store. Every manufacturer, grower, producer and others have struggled to maintain their costs during this period. But with the impact of the third leg, the "workforce" crisis, raw materials, fuel costs and more, costs went up beyond their ability to control it and as a result prices on the shelves increased drastically. Once the supply chain is able to recover and get back to normal (whatever that may be), the expectation is that prices will go down. The change is hinged on wages and workforce as well as energy and fuel costs. However, that's going to take time. There's not really a magic formula that says prices will go down accordingly as inflation decreases. In fact, the USDA projects grocery prices could increase by 1% in 2024.

One of the most difficult post-pandemic challenges has been how to recover the workforce that the retail food industry relied on to stay in business. In February 2020 the unemployment rate shot up from 3.2% to 14.1% in April and then eventually crept down to approximately 3.1%. But that's not the whole story because as every employer knows, Wisconsin's base workforce changed. There simply weren't enough people who wanted to work or who were still in the workforce.

This is a major compounding issue as wages and benefits soared to new levels and drove expenses (and inflation) even higher. While every industry has had to face this situation, the retail food sector has not seen the return of the workforce to the levels needed to operate efficiently. And there has been no reduction in wages and benefits that were elevated during the pandemic.

The other 800-lb gorilla in the store is of course, the consumer whose attitudes, opinions, tastes and demands change. The pandemic accelerated those changes to occur more frequently giving grocers less time to react and plan.

On their own, however, consumers move to 'pocketbook' survival and change their shopping patterns and what's on their shopping list. Until there is relief, consumers will continue to back out of products based on price (whether they are high end products) and put fewer 'indulgent' items in their cart. They may begin to switch to more of a 'bulk shopping' trip with a bigger basket (purchase) but reduce the number of trips to the store.

One of the most difficult post-pandemic challenges has been how to recover the workforce that the retail food industry relied on to stay in business.

While consumers may be spending fewer dollars at their favorite restaurant and shifting those times to meals at home, it is still an exercise on shopping based on price. Excluding specialty events and holidays, the expectation is that consumers will stay on this path throughout 2024.

Consumers and others will notice subtle changes throughout the store. The most obvious is self-checkouts and robotics. Without a full workforce, empty checkout lanes will be converted to self-checkout stations. In addition, shoppers may start to see robots in the aisles working on stocking and inventory. Partstown notes, automation has recently become a growing trend in the foodservice world in general; in the grocery space though, it has the potential to become a new normal.

In 2024 the hope is that prices begin to come down as costs in the supply chain find ways back to pre-pandemic times. With that, and continued Fed-impacted controls on inflation, shoppers may see some relief and return to stable pricing.

Just don't expect to see this soon.

2024 Winter Issue // WISCONSIN GROCER

DBSGROUP

Breaking New Ground In Construction

dbsg.com

Welcome



MHOUSE

Store Planning Services Architectural & Engineering Services Preconstruction Services Construction Services

2700 National Drive, Suite 101 | Onalaska, WI 54650 | 608.881.6007



Providing the Freshest Bouquets, Blooming Plants, Tropical Green Plants and Fresh Cut Flowers.

The Freshest Floral Direct from the Farm to You - **Guaranteed**



10706 Tesch Lane Rothschild, WI 54474 1-800-275-6132 / 715-359-7202 www.kruegerwholesale.com

Government Affairs Report

Michael Semmann, Vice President of Government Affairs January 2024

POLICY & ADVOCACY TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF THE STATE'S GROCERY INDUSTRY

As the 2023-2024 legislative session is in its waning weeks, the Wisconsin Grocers Association (WGA) finds itself at the intersection of policy and advocacy, working tirelessly to shape the future of the state's grocery industry. With a keen focus on issues that directly impact its members, the WGA has registered positions both for and against over 50 legislative initiatives, each with the aim of fostering a conducive environment for the growth and sustainability of the grocery sector.



At the forefront of the WGA's legislative agenda is the support for measures that enhance the resilience of businesses within the grocery industry. As pillars of local economies, grocery stores play a vital role in communities across

Wisconsin. This session the WGA has advocated for policies that provide financial incentives, reduced regulatory burdens, and increased access to resources for these smaller enterprises.

In particular, the association has thrown its weight behind initiatives that address the challenges faced by independent grocers, such as streamlining regulation, providing targeted tax relief, and fostering partnerships between small businesses and local agricultural producers. By championing these causes, the WGA seeks to fortify the foundation of Wisconsin's grocery landscape and ensure that small businesses can thrive in a competitive market.

What's in Store for 2024? Hint: It involves the state Supreme Court and elections. WGA accomplished two of its multi-

session priorities (repeal of the Personal Property Tax and an increase in the Sales Tax Discount) and will focus on four of its remaining legislative items. However, changes



in the Wisconsin Supreme Court may create a new sense of urgency on policy items considered to be vintage (union labor, minimum wage, elections, municipal authority, environmental, health, etc.). If the Court focuses its time to systematically work through cases related to these items which will have a material impact on small businesses, WGA must respond with a new focus to defend its interests before both the legislature and the court system. One way to accomplish that task is to elect pro-grocery candidates to office.

Federal Reserve Fed Proposes to Reduce Debit Card Fees

The Federal Reserve noticed a proposed rule to lower the debit regulated rate, the swipe fee retailers pay for accepting debit cards as tender, and was formally published



in the Federal Register in November. Federal Reserve Regulation II implements a provision of the Dodd-Frank Act that requires the Board to establish standards for assessing whether the amount of any interchange fee received by a debit card issuer is reasonable and proportional to the cost incurred by the issuer with respect to the transaction. Under the current rule, for a debit card transaction that does not qualify for a statutory exemption, the interchange fee can be no more than the sum of a base component of 21 cents, and other fees based on a formula. The Fed developed the current interchange fee cap in 2011 using data voluntarily reported by large debit card issuers concerning transactions performed in 2009.

Since that time, data collected by the Federal Reserve Board every other year on a mandatory basis from large debit card issuers show that certain costs incurred by these issuers have declined significantly; however, the interchange fee cap has remained the same. For this reason, the Board proposes to update all three components of the interchange fee cap based on the latest data reported to the Board by large debit card issuers. Further, the Board proposes to update the interchange fee cap every other year going forward by directly linking the interchange fee cap to data from the Board's biennial survey of large debit card issuers. Initially, under the proposal, the base component would be 14.4 cents, the ad valorem component would be 4.0 basis points (multiplied by the value of the transaction), and the fraud-prevention adjustment would be 1.3 cents for debit card transactions performed from the effective date of the final rule to June 30, 2025. The Board also proposes a set of technical revisions to Regulation II.

WGA Formulates Comments on Debit Rate Proposed Rule to Federal Reserve

WGA is creating its formal response to the proposed rule through a comment letter. A federal comment letter is a written response to a proposed regulation or rulemaking by a federal agency. It is submitted by a member of the public or an organization during the public comment

continued on page 12...



WGA Legislative Agenda:

FOUR PRIORITIES

RETAIL THEFT

Consistency in law: This bill reduces the threshold for the two lowest theft crimes so that theft of property valued at no more than \$500 is a Class A misdemeanor and theft of property valued at more than \$500 but not more than \$5,000 is a Class I felony.

Aggregator: If a defendant commits more than one violation of theft of property or more than one violation of retail theft in a six-month period, the value of the property taken at each violation may be aggregated as one crime to determine the classification of the crime.

Escalator: Creation of a penalty enhancer for a felony level of theft of property or retail theft if, during the commission of the felony, the defendant's conduct created a substantial risk of bodily harm to another person.

Retail Theft Task Force Block Grants:

The Retail Theft Prevention Block Grant Program would be a competitive grant program designed to support local law enforcement agencies in an investigation, responding to and prosecuting organized retail theft, motor vehicle or motor vehicle accessory theft, or cargo theft.

2nd Chance: Establishing two new diversion programs

– "Second Chance" and "Re-Engaging Store Theft Offenders and Retail Establishments" (RESTORE) – to allow nonviolent offenders to avoid prosecution or incarceration by meaningfully engaging with services to help address underlying factors that lead to shoplifting.

Retail Theft Insight Center: Under the bill, the government would administer a contract with a vendor to operate a newly created Retail Crime Information Network, so the members of the network can connect through a platform and relevant interface(s) with other members of the network to provide information and advanced analytics from the Retail Crime Information Network as information is made available.

ALCOHOL DELIVERY

Online grocery shopping is continuing to evolve as consumer's shopping habits change. Customers want the ability to pick up alcohol legally and easily along with their groceries. In addition, As the demand for online

grocery shopping and delivery continues to rise, Wisconsin grocers will find themselves answering customers on why alcohol cannot be delivered along with their other groceries as it is done in 40+ other states.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Even with media reports of Electric Vehicle (EV) sales slowing, 20,000 new vehicles per month will be on the roads and Wisconsin will need to be ready for potential future demand and to be able and claim associated federal funds. Two years ago, the number of EVs reached 10,000 statewide. While electric vehicle registrations have increased, on average, by 51.9% each year since 2013, they still account for less than 0.2% of the more than 5.5 million total passenger vehicle registrations in Wisconsin in 2021.

SODA & BEVERAGE EQUIPMENT CONTRACTS

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection would be prohibited from regulating the terms of sale or rental of soda water beverage equipment generally or the terms of sale or rental of coin-operated vending machines by soda water beverage wholesalers to retail food establishments under the legislation. period and provides feedback on the proposed regulation. The federal agency is required to consider all comments received during the public comment period before finalizing the regulation. The federal comment letter is a valuable tool for ensuring that the regulatory process is transparent and accountable, and that the final regulation considers the views of all stakeholders. It allows members of the public to provide feedback on proposed regulations and to have a say in the regulatory process. The federal comment letter also helps ensure that the final regulation is well-informed and considers all stakeholders' views.

In November, the Wisconsin Supreme Court heard redistricting arguments challenging the state's legislative maps.

Clarke v. Wisconsin Elections Commission, related to Wisconsin Redistricting, had oral arguments on November 21 before the Supreme Court. Law Forward is the organization that filed a lawsuit asking the court to throw out the current maps



and that and all 132 members of the state Legislature in both the Senate and Assembly face reelection next year. Usually only half the 33-member Senate is up for reelection in even-numbered years.

Why grocers care: If the case is decided the way Law Forward wants, and the maps are redrawn, it means more elections (\$\$\$), more government uncertainty, more government risk, and more attention on politics in Wisconsin.

New Court to Determine Amazon Independent Contractor Case

Amazon Logistics, Inc. v. LIRC determines whether the Court of Appeals erred in construing three statutory conditions for determining independent-contract status to collapse into one in the context of gig workers in the modern economy. In addition, it considers 1) whether the Court of Appeals erred in deferring to LIRC's legal conclusions about whether evidence was admissible and sufficient to satisfy Amazon Logistics' burden of proof,



and 2) whether the Court of Appeals erred in holding that Amazon Logistics was required to present evidence about each of the 1,000-plus workers at issue during the single-day hearing set for its appeal of the underlying unemployment benefits Determination.

FEDERAL Food Cops: SNAP Federal Legislation Introduced

Senators Corey Booker (D-NJ) and Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Representatives Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ) and Lori Chavez-DeRemer (R-OR) have introduced the SNAP Nutrition Security Act (S.2326/H.R.



4909). These bills will force retailers to collect basket-level SNAP data from their customers and hand it over to the government. This would create a first of its kind consumer purchasing surveillance by the U.S. government's massive invasion of consumer privacy and will harm independent community grocers.

Evers vetoed a \$2 billion tax cut and childcare credit expansion, calling proposal 'completely unserious.'

Democratic Gov. Tony Evers rejected a Republican proposal to cut income taxes by \$2 billion and expand a tax credit parents may use to pay for childcare costs, calling it a "completely unserious" bill that "fails to meaningfully and sensibly address" the state's workforce issues. Evers in August called on lawmakers to take up his plan to funnel \$1 billion into childcare services and workforce programs in a special legislative session, but Republican leaders immediately sent their own legislation to Evers.

Dollar General Settles with Regulators on Pricing Inaccuracies

In late November, the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCAP) investigation concluded with Dollar General agreeing to pay more than \$850,000 in state fines for inaccurate pricing. Wisconsin's consumer protection agency announced the

settlement with Dollar General stores over hundreds of alleged violations of price accuracy and refund policy laws. DATCP said it was looking into 662 price accuracy complaints and 53 refund policy disclosure complaints. As part of the settlement, Dollar General



did not admit to violating any laws, but did agree to pay \$850,006.11 in civil fines, surcharges, and fees. DATCP says it conducted inspections at a total of 238 Dollar General stores in Appleton, Green Bay, Kenosha, Madison, Menasha, Milwaukee, Reedsburg, and South Milwaukee between January 30 and February 10, 2023. As part of the inspections, 7,344 products were scanned at the check-out counter to ensure the prices matched or were lower than those posted on the store's shelves. Of those, DATCP officials claimed 662 items – or about 9% of those scanned – were overcharged at the register compared to their posted prices, with those items averaging charges that were 17% higher than advertised.





January 23:	Evening Reception
January 24:	Capitol Day focusing on Legislative Leadership
Where:	Park Hotel in Madison

To register, visit: wisconsingrocers.com/grocers-in-the-capitol-days/

All grocers are invited to attend the WGA 2024



We need your help to define the industry, pass retail theft protections, to defend against unfair regulations, and to promote EV and Alcohol Delivery Legislation.

WGA is focusing on the relationship between grocers and legislative leaders on this day to advance its legislative agenda.

Why do members contribute to WGA's Political Action funds?

The Purpose of Supporting WGA through Advocacy (Participation through Contributions)

Advocacy Power: By contributing, grocers collectively strengthen the association's ability to advocate for their needs and concerns within the state legislature. This support enables the association to represent the collective voice of the industry, ensuring that the interests and challenges faced by grocers are understood and considered by lawmakers.

Policy Influence: Financial support empowers the association to actively shape legislative policies in favor of grocers. This includes addressing issues like regulatory challenges, taxation, food safety regulations, and other pertinent matters that directly impact the industry.

Unified Voice: With financial support, grocers contribute to a unified voice representing the industry's concerns. This collective strength amplifies the impact of the association's efforts and ensures that the grocers' perspectives are heard and acknowledged.

Industry Protection: The association's work helps safeguard the interests of the grocers against any potential legislative or regulatory actions that might negatively affect their businesses.

Visibility and Recognition: Members supporting the association can benefit from enhanced visibility and recognition within the industry and among consumers who value businesses involved in promoting industry standards and interests.



Participating with the WGA Advocacy efforts help our warehouse and the retailers we serve to stay ahead of the curve on critical issues. WGA needs every retailer and warehouse to contribute. You do make a difference when you support WGA.

WGA Board Member **Landon Godley**, SpartanNash

The WGA Political Support Program conduit is an easy way for me to donate to pro-grocer candidates and to strengthen the industry. It's a win-win situation." **Pam Coy**, Viking Village, Reedsburg



Thanks to the WGA Government Affairs Committee!

The following WGA members help create policy by providing input on advocacy items such as legislation, court action, politics, and grassroots activities. Thank you for your time and thought leadership. Nice work!

Greg Hansen, Chair, Hansen's IGA Landon Godley, SpartanNash Michelle Harrington, Delafield Sentry Jeff Maurer, Maurer's Market Chris Morton, UNFI Mike Olwig, Fox Bros. Piggly Wiggly Matt Swentkofske, Molson Coors Emilie Williamson, Roundy's Supermarkets Joe Zietlow, Kwik Trip



PROUD SUPPORTER OF WISCONSIN GROCER ASSOCIATION







We Focus On Your Success

Zone Mechanical is a leading provider of refrigeration, energy management, food service and heating ventilation and air conditioning solutions for supermarkets, warehouses and retailers of all sizes.

- Refrigeration/ HVAC Installation and Service
- Construction Sales and Installation
- Complete Turn Key

Master Service Technicians on call 24 hours/7 days a week

Zone Mechanical North 9645 S 54th Avenue, Suite N Franklin, WI 53132-9179 (262) 347-4180

NEW Location 11811 27th Ave. Chippewa Falls, WI 54729 (715) 450-0246

www.ZoneMechanical.com

A LONG CAREER IN THE GROCERY INDUSTRY

Written Exclusively for the Wisconsin Grocers Magazine by Maura Keller, Keller Ink

It was at the young age of 15 that Robert "Bob" Jaskolski, newly appointed Chairman of the Board of Directors at the Wisconsin Grocers Association, first began a long career within the grocery industry. For Jaskolski, the small grocer in Green Bay, WI where he first worked was the launching point for his industrious career.

"I was so fortunate to have a store manager that took me under his wing," Jaskolski says. "That mentorship created a passion to grow in the industry. Next year I will be celebrating my fiftieth year working in the supermarket business."



wisc

Currently, Jaskolski is the President and CEO at T.A. Solberg Co., Inc. (T.A.S.), where he is responsible for the organization's retail and manufacturing operations. Prior to joining T.A.S. in 2016, he held a variety of positions in merchandising, sales and operations at Supervalu for over 30 years.

Today, he utilizes his expertise and experience in leadership, marketing, business, and associate and guest relations in his oversight of T.A. Solberg's operations. This includes the full-service Trig's Grocery Stores (named after Trygve (Trig) Solberg who

founded T.A.S. with his wife Tula), Trig's Village Market, Shell Fuel Centers, Trig's Ace Hardware, an award-winning Smokehouse Production facility, an ice plant, a water plant, Postal Express stores, a salon, consignment shop, trucking operation, International Air Charter Company and rental properties.

"I focus on incorporating a high-level vision that keeps T.A.S. looking forward when it comes to innovative shopping trends and the development of unique programs for guests," Jaskolski says. He understands that grocery store design is critical for showcasing the retailers' products, making shoppers feel comfortable in the atmosphere of the store's locality, and ultimately enticing shoppers to want to spend time in the retail space.

As someone to strives to lead with passion and dedication, Jaskolski also strives to develop a culture of respect at T.A.S., while maintaining uncompromising ethical standards to build an atmosphere of trust and servant leadership.

And as a staunch supporter of coaching and training store associates, Jaskolski has introduced a multitude of training programs at Trig's, including the Store Director Institute, active shooter training, CPR/first aid training and leadership coaching. He has also helped Trig's earn numerous awards, including the Winsight Grocery Business (WGB) Remarkable Independents for Masterful Merchandising, Certified Angus Beef Retail Marketer of the Year, several National Grocers Association (NGA) Creative Choice and UNFI Master Marketer awards.

One of the true highlights of his career was when he received the Grocer of the Year Award in 2020 from the Wisconsin Grocers Association. At the time, WGA released a statement that said, "What sets Bob apart from others in the industry, according to his nomination, is



'his passion and dedication to serving the industry and leading our company through adversity and progressive change (planned and unplanned) while maintaining uncompromising ethical standards to build an atmosphere of trust and service leadership throughout." In fact, during his tenure at T.A.S., Jaskolski helped the company navigate a cyber-attack, a fire that destroyed the company's trucking facility and bakery production, a power outage that required full-store replenishment of all refrigerated product, and the challenges that emerged as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. He also tailors each Trig's store to meet the needs of the specific community they serve, all while embracing quality products, and introducing innovative events and service that further "wow" Trig's customers. Many customers have become long-standing brand ambassadors of Trig's thanks in part to Jaskolski innovative ideas. Quite simply, he understands the grocery industry and connects with customers in unique and profound ways.

When not leading the efforts of Trig's successful entities and operations, Jaskolski has set his sights on helping others. This is most evident in Trig's longstanding and extensive community involvement. Specifically, Jaskolski's passion lies in providing for the needs of the children facing food insecurity in the communities that Trig's serves. He further recognizes that the grocery industry is constantly afflux, requiring smaller, independent stores to embrace innovation like never before.

As part of his philanthropic efforts, Jaskolski has helped to create a long-term partnership with the backpack programs, where Trig's helps to fill hundreds of bags of food, donated by and many times distributed by Trig's associates. He has also been instrumental in Trig's annual sponsorship of the Howard Young Dragon Boat Festival, contributing materials and product, as well as spearheading two teams of associates to enter their annual fundraising competition.

"Northern Wisconsin-based Trig's stores are unique and tailored to meet the specific needs of the communities we serve," Jaskolski says. "Driving change and growth in these entities is challenging and rewarding."

Indeed, Jaskolski continually strives to lead the team by taking a hands-on approach to merchandising and leadership. "We have a commitment to creating a great, fresh guest experience that will keep the company relevant as a food retailer as they move forward through the changes in our industry." To stand on top of these changes, especially as customer expectations further evolve, Jaskolski prides himself

on listening closely to any customer feedback the company receives.

This commitment is further evident in Jaskolski's profound tenacity to serve the One of my goals has been to give back to the industry that has been so good to me. I couldn't think of a better way to give back than the opportunity to lead this organization.

grocery industry through a myriad of board positions, including serving in his new role as Chairman of the WGA Board of Directors and serving on the NGA Board of Directors. Previously, he served on the Board for the Independent Grocers Alliance (IGA) Northwest, Minnesota Grocers Association – Vendor Council Member and was an NGA Trading Partners member.

And while Jaskolski has served on the Wisconsin Grocer Association's Board of Directors for several years, his career took him to different areas of the country.

"But I've always found my way back to Wisconsin and the WGA," Jaskolski says. "One of my goals has been

to give back to the industry that has been so good to me. I couldn't think of a better way to give back than the opportunity to lead this organization. This is such a pivotal year for the WGA with Brandon Scholz' recent retirement announcement. He has been the leader for over 25 years and to find his successor will be my and the Board of Directors' first priority. These will be some big shoes to fill." And while Jaskolski will be focusing his efforts on finding the WGA's new president and CEO, his vision for the WGA is "an organization that is so aligned with its industry membership that our voice within the capitol is influential to bring positive legislation for the industry."

Specifically, Jaskolski has three goals as the WGA Chairman of the Board of Directors: the first is a smooth leadership transition; the second is to establish a solid a membership growth and alignment plan; and finally to develop a three-year financial growth



plan to carry the organization into the future. These initial goals will be the catalyst for WGA's future growth and ongoing presence in the Wisconsin grocery industry. Luckily, Jaskolski brings a tremendous amount of experience, aptitude, and eagerness to his new role with WGA.

He also has his finger on the proverbial "pulse" of Wisconsin's grocery store industry, as is evident by Skogen's Festival Foods recent purchase of Trig's southernmost stores in Stevens Point, Wausau, and Weston. "Festival Foods is a natural fit for us. They share many of our core values and have a strong commitment to their associates and the community. I know that our southern stores will be in the best hands, while we look forward to continued growth in Wisconsin's Northwoods," Jaskolski stated at the time of the sale. It is evident that Jaskolski has a keen understanding of the necessary steps required to grow the Trig's brand in the northern section of the state.

As any grocery industry professional knows, working within the industry, keeping tabs on growth opportunities, and evaluating segment and industry trends can be all-encompassing. When not hard at work helping to bring Wisconsin's grocery industry to the next level, Jaskolski enjoys spending time with his family, who have always supported him throughout his career. He has been married to his wife Peggy for 44 years and they have one grown daughter, Kristin (known by Bob, as "Chuck.") When he is not involved in his work with T.A.S. and WGA, he also operates his excavating and land management business (Little Diggers of Door County). He enjoys fishing, hunting, working on the family's 65 acres in Door County and, of course, operating heavy equipment.

"Put me in an excavator, skid loader or tractor and I'm one happy camper."



Bob Jaskolski, newly appointed Chairman of the Board of Directors for the WGA



Past Chairman of the Board of Directors for the WGA, **Jim Hyland**

WW WISCONSIN GROCERS ASSOCIATION



What the WGA has to offer, you can't get anywhere else!

The Wisconsin Grocers Association exists to serve its members by offering educational and networking opportunities and advocating on their behalf at the federal, state and local levels.

> 10 West Mifflin Street, Suite 205 Madison, WI 53703

(608) 244-7150 | Toll Free (888) 342-5942 WisconsinGrocers.com

2023 WGA Foundation Report



Sarah Decorah, Operations Director

The WGA Foundation Leadership Institute kicked off its seventh year and welcomed eleven 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 included different management techniques, problem solving, public relations/social media, grocery specific



human resources, ethics and omnichannel 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:

Paul Klinkhammer / Festival Foods Bob Jaskolski / T.A. Solberg Co., Inc. (Trig's) Joshua Gage / Dick's Fresh Market Landon Godley / SpartanNash Nick Lenzi / Lipari Foods Brandon Jacobson & Gary Menke / Federated Insurance Michael Semmann / WGA Joe Zietlow / Kwik Trip Ed Rueter / CliftonLarsonAllen Joe Wood / Sendik's Food Market

The WGA would also like to thank the vendors that hosted the Leadership classes, provided lunch, goodies and tours of their facilities: Valley Cooperative Association, Krueger Wholesale Florist, Kwik Trip and CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA).











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.

Seventeen students received a total of \$23,000 in scholarships for the 2023/2024 academic year, with several WGA member stores participating in this WGA program. If you would like to learn more about the program, contact Sarah Decorah at **sdecorah@ wisconsingrocers.com** for more details!

 Sara Logan / Woodman's Food Market, Oak Creek
 Logan Maass / Woodman's Food Market, Appleton
 Mariana Cardenas Rodriguez / Woodman's Food Market, Beloit

Aidan Sosnowski / Woodman's Food Market, Rockford

Ahyun Chung / Metcalfe's Market Madison, Hilldale Claire Chartier / Sendik's Food Markets, Grafton Lainee Grintjes / Sendik's Food Markets, Elm Grove Helen Hudson / Sendik's Food Markets, Germantown Abrianna Lehmann / Sendik's Food Markets.

Greenfield

Morgan Millard / Sendik's Food Markets, Franklin Kelsey Miller / Sendik's Food Markets, Brookfield Lauren Oppermann / Sendik's Food Markets,

West Bend

Willow Prost / Sendik's Food Markets, West Bend Paul Rawson / Sendik's Food Markets, Waukesha Rebecca Redlich / Sendik's Food Markets, Franklin Henry Riesen / Sendik's Food Markets, Mequon Dylan Watters / Sendik's Food Markets, Wauwatosa

SEMINAR SUMMARIES



WOMEN'S NETWORK FORUM

Speaker: Kristin Popp, Vice President of Woodman's Food Markets

The 2023 Innovation Expo began its Tuesday educational sessions with the introduction of the inaugural Women's Network Forum. The mission and purpose of this group is to support and empower women in their professional growth and development across Wisconsin's grocery industry.



Kristin Popp

Kristin Popp, Vice President of Woodman's Food Markets, shared her experiences as President of the Women Grocers of America, her work and life balance, and the importance of Creating Space for women in the industry to connect and support each other in their career growth.

In addition to Kristin Popp, Sue Bowden of Valley Cooperative and Liz Nerhus of Crystal Farms were instrumental in the creation of this first event of its kind for the WGA. We extend our gratitude for the many hours and efforts they contributed to its success!

Over 60 women representing retailers, wholesalers, manufacturers, and suppliers were welcomed to discuss the most important issues facing women in the industry and to bring forward their thoughts and ideas on how the WGA can develop the WGA Women's Network to help with their growth and career development.

The result of this will be forthcoming in 2024 as we develop educational and networking opportunities to further create space for women in the industry.

Want more information on the Women's Network? Please contact Lauren Barnes, Ibarnes@wisconsingrocers.com, to receive updates.

NURTURING MENTAL HEALTH

Speaker: Sgt. Jared Prado, Madison Police Department & Mark Miller, Outreach Coordinator for 988 / WI Lifeline

In the pursuit of fostering a supportive and understanding workplace environment, our recent mental health seminar delved into crucial aspects of mental well-being. The seminar was inspired by James and Gilliland's definition of a crisis as a situation that is real or perceived and exceeds one's



Sgt. Jared Prado

current resources and coping mechanisms. It sought to empower participants with insights into recognizing, addressing, and supporting mental health challenges.

Understanding Mental Health: Beyond Disorders

Mental health encompasses a broad spectrum, extending beyond diagnosed disorders. Mayo Clinic defines mental illnesses as conditions affecting mood, thinking, and behavior. It's essential to differentiate between emotional reactions to stress and diagnosed disorders. While medical professionals use the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) for diagnoses, non-medical professionals can still be trained observers of behavioral cues.

Recognizing Behavioral Cues: A Vital Skill

The seminar highlighted various behavioral cues associated with mental health challenges, such as behaviors rooted in false beliefs, impulsivity, impaired reasoning,

erratic movements, and intense emotional expressions. Understanding these cues equips individuals to respond compassionately and effectively.

Company Policy and Protocol: A Compassionate Approach

Participants were encouraged to familiarize themselves with their company's mental health policies and protocols. Awareness and adherence to these guidelines ensure a supportive



Mark Miller

and empathetic workplace environment. The seminar emphasized the importance of proactive planning, citing "police plans" or "safety/response plans" as tools to align expectations for safety when dealing with individuals facing specific conditions.

Help Numbers: The Importance of 988

The 988 helpline – a free, confidential counseling service funded by SAMHSA and administered by Vibrant. Operating through call, text, and chat modalities, this nationwide network of over 200 call centers provides essential support during mental health crises.

Crisis Intervention: A Delicate Art

Understanding crisis intervention as a method to work with individuals who may not be thinking clearly, the seminar stressed the importance of empathy and patience. It acknowledged the challenges of reasoning with someone in crisis and highlighted the need for compassionate responses.

Empowering Participants for Proactive Planning

In the spirit of proactive mental health care, the seminar urged participants to inquire about local police department approaches to crisis calls. Understanding how law enforcement responds to individuals with mental health conditions facilitates a more informed and collaborative approach to crisis management.

WORKFORCE EFFICIENCY: THE IMPACT OF ESLS AND SELF-CHECKOUT IN RETAIL GROCERY

Speakers: Bill Hughes, Retail Data Systems; Chris Miller, Imagotag; Joe Nacker, North Country Business Products; & Paul Berry, Toshiba Global Commerce Solutions

In the ever-evolving landscape of retail grocery, two innovations, Electronic Shelf Labels (ESLs) and selfcheckout, have emerged as catalysts for transformative changes, delivering immense benefits for both retailers and their customers.

Instant Price Management for Additional Margin

One of the standout advantages of ESLs lies in their ability to facilitate instant price management. Retailers can dynamically adjust prices to capitalize on opportunities for additional margin without the hassle of manually changing traditional paper tags. This real-time responsiveness not only enhances profitability but also ensures that customers receive accurate pricing information at all times.

A Store Facelift without the Mess

ESLs bring a visual transformation to the retail space without the chaos of a traditional facelift. With these

digital labels, the store's appearance can be refreshed effortlessly, providing a modern and streamlined aesthetic. The elimination of hanging tags and signs contributes to a clutter-free shopping environment, enhancing the overall customer experience.



Chris Miller

Customization for Diverse Pricing and Promotions

ESLs offer a level of customization that goes beyond traditional pricing methods. Retailers can tailor labels to reflect different pricing structures and promotions, providing a dynamic and personalized shopping experience for customers. This adaptability ensures that



Paul Berry

the retail environment remains agile in response to market trends and consumer preferences.

Environmentally Friendly "Green Technology"

Embracing ESLs is not only a benefit for efficiency but also a step towards sustainability. Often referred to as "Green Technology," ESLs contribute to environmental conservation by significantly reducing the need for paper-based tags. This eco-friendly approach aligns with the growing consumer demand for businesses to adopt sustainable practices, enhancing the retailer's reputation and customer loyalty.

Substantial Labor Savings

ESLs are more than just a visual upgrade; they translate into substantial labor savings. The automation of price management and updates eliminates the need for manual adjustments, freeing up valuable employee time for more strategic and customer-centric tasks. This shift in focus enhances overall workforce efficiency and productivity.

The integration of ESLs and self-checkout technologies is proving to be a game-changer in the retail grocery marketplace. The benefits extend from dynamic price management and store aesthetics to customization and environmental sustainability. As retailers embrace these innovations, they position themselves at the forefront of workforce efficiency, providing customers with a seamless and contemporary shopping experience.

FOOD TRACEABILITY

Speakers: Derek Hannum, Chief Customer Officer & Brad Brayshaw, Partner, ReposiTrak

The USDA's food traceability rule for retailers, outlined in the Food Safety and Inspection Service's (FSIS) final

rule, aims to enhance the traceability of certain high-risk foods throughout the supply chain. Effective January 20, 2023, the rule focuses on facilitating swift and accurate tracking of food products in the event of a potential foodborne illness outbreak or contamination.



Under this rule, retailers are

required to maintain records for specific high-risk foods, such as raw beef products, ground beef, and ground turkey. These records must include key data elements related to critical tracking events, allowing for efficient traceability from the point of origin to the consumer. Retailers are obligated to store these records for a duration of two years and must be prepared to furnish the information to the FSIS within 24 hours upon request, utilizing an electronic, sortable format.

Compliance necessitates retailers to identify products falling under the rule, adapt their systems and processes to meet the new traceability requirements, and establish the necessary infrastructure for efficient data management. As a critical component of the broader food safety initiative, this rule emphasizes the importance of collaboration and data transparency across the supply chain to ensure consumer safety and mitigate the impact of potential food-related risks.

Critical Actions for Compliance

The pathway to compliance involves a series of strategic actions:

1. Identify products and suppliers requiring traceability under FSMA 204.

- 2. Assess and adapt DC/warehouse systems and processes to meet new requirements.
- 3. Understand the requirements for retail stores and adjust systems and processes accordingly.
- 4. Establish the necessary human and technological infrastructure to support traceability.
- 5. Implement the traceability program promptly.

Conclusion: Time to Act is Now.

SOBERLICIOUS: THE EVOLVING ADULT BEVERAGE CATEGORY

Speaker: Nick Lenzi, SVP of Marketing, Lipari Foods

The seminar provided a comprehensive overview of the shifting dynamics within the adult beverage category. From the rise of the sober-curious movement to the resilience of craft breweries and the burgeoning market for non-alcoholic alternatives, the industry is navigating an era of change and innovation. The key takeaway: adaptability and a keen understanding of evolving consumer pref-



Nick Lenzi

erences will be paramount in shaping the future of the adult beverage sector.

A Sobering Shift in Consumption Patterns

The seminar addressed a significant shift in consumer behavior, spotlighting the surge in the sober-curious movement and the flourishing alcohol alternative market, now valued at a staggering \$400 million. Sales data showcased a substantial increase in the alcohol category, with non-alcoholic beer leading the charge at 85.3% of sales, followed by non-alcoholic wine at 13.4%, and non-alcoholic spirits at 1.3%.

Craft Sodas: A Healthier Alternative

Craft sodas emerged as a focal point in the discussion, lauded for their health-conscious attributes. Craft soda, often crafted from high-quality, natural, and local ingredients, sidesteps harmful additives like high fructose corn syrup. With sales reflecting a positive year-on-year trend across various channels, the market's perception considers craft soda a healthier option compared to conventional soft drinks.

Functional Beverages on the Rise

The seminar also shed light on the surging popularity of functional beverages, attributing their growth to a consumer shift towards healthier lifestyles. Packed with nontraditional ingredients such as minerals, probiotics, and raw fruit, functional beverages are gaining traction, with the global market projected to reach \$140.7 billion by 2027, boasting an 8% Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR).

Craft Breweries' Resilience and Pop Culture Influences

As the seminar unfolded, the resilience of craft breweries became evident, with an optimistic outlook for recovery post-pandemic. A notable "buy local" approach was emphasized, predicting a quick rebound for smallbatch local breweries. Pop culture continued to wield influence, with American Whiskey/Bourbon leading the market, closely followed by Tequila and Mezcal.

A Glimpse into the Future: A Robust and Diverse Market

With 72 new non-alcoholic drink SKUs introduced to the US market within a year, the landscape remains vibrant and diverse. NielsenIQ reports highlighted the introduction of various non-alcoholic options, including 37 non-alcoholic beers, 17 non-alcoholic wines, and 18 non-alcoholic spirits, signifying a robust response to evolving consumer preferences.

REVOLUTIONIZING RETAIL: THE POWER OF AI IN OPTIMIZING THE SHOPPER'S JOURNEY

Speakers: Alex White, Data Scientist Manager: Digital & Brian Baumgart – Principal: Retail, CLA

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a game-changer in the retail landscape, reshaping the traditional shopping experience and driving unprecedented levels of efficiency. One of the primary facets where AI makes a profound impact is in optimizing the shopper's journey, creating a seamless and personalized



Left to right: Brian Baumgart & Alex White

interaction from browsing to checkout.

Understanding the Modern Shopper

In an era where consumers are more discerning and digitally connected than ever, AI enables retailers to gain deep insights into the preferences and behaviors of modern shoppers. Advanced analytics and machine learning algorithms analyze vast datasets, allowing retailers to tailor their offerings, promotions, and even store layouts to match the evolving demands of their customer base.

Enhancing Experience, Boosting Revenue

Al's prowess lies in its ability to enhance the overall shopping experience. From personalized recommendations based on past purchases to predictive inventory management, retailers can leverage Al to streamline operations and deliver a more satisfying customer journey. This enhanced experience not only fosters customer loyalty but also translates into increased revenue as shoppers find themselves more engaged and inclined to make purchases.

Savings, Sustainability, and Success

The implementation of Al in retail goes beyond just improving customer experience; it brings about tangible savings and contributes to sustainability. Smart inventory management powered by Al minimizes waste by accurately predicting demand, ensuring that products are stocked efficiently. This not only reduces costs for retailers but also aligns with eco-friendly practices, appealing to the environmentally conscious consumer.

Optimizing the Shopper's Journey

Al optimizes the shopper's journey at every touchpoint. From Al-powered chatbots providing instant assistance to virtual try-on experiences and smart checkouts, retailers are deploying Al technologies to create a more efficient and enjoyable shopping process. By understanding individual preferences and behaviors, Al ensures that the right products are showcased, prices are competitive, and the overall journey is tailored to meet the unique needs of each shopper.

The integration of AI in retail is not merely a technological advancement; it's a strategic imperative. By leveraging AI to optimize the shopper's journey, retailers can create a winning formula that combines savings, sustainability, and success. As the retail landscape continues to evolve, embracing AI is not just a choice; it's a necessity for those seeking to thrive in the dynamic world of modern commerce.





WISCONSIN GROCERY TRADE SHOW

The 2023 EXPO Trade Show was buzzing with excitement and new additions! We gave the floor a new look and feel with a layout more conducive to vendors and retailer ease. There were several new vendors to welcome this year, which combined with our long-supporting vendors, contributed to offer a wider variety of new products to bring to our retailers.

Many retailers stayed for the entire trade show, and who wouldn't want to? There were prizes galore for those who were present to win, including the thousands of dollars in Trade Show Cash, Bingo, and vendor booth prizes.

The energy was palpable, and the buzz was deafening! In addition to the WBA Cake Decorating Championship, there were "DIY" cupcake decorating demonstrations and lots of other product demonstrations, PLUS plenty of space and places for retailers and vendors to connect in our new Cart Corrals.



We always want to thank our friends at Krueger Wholesale Florist for bringing joy to attendees by sending them home with something from their gorgeous array of flower bouquets!

We can't wait to see you in 2024 at the Madison Marriott West in Middleton. Mark your calendar for October 15th-16th!



VENDOR APPRECIATION RECEPTION

One of the highlights of the WGA Innovation EXPO event is the Tuesday evening Vendor Appreciation Reception. The event has become a popular and effective way for industry professionals to network as well as to catch up with old friends while making new ones.



We want to extend our many thanks to Lipari Foods for another tremendous donation of deliciously delectable appetizers and desserts that were pleasing to the palate! Along with the scrumptious foods, the generous donations from Anheuser-Busch and Molson Coors rounded

out some great pairings.

This is always a great part of our EXPO event, providing our exhibitors, sponsors, and retailers a place to connect and refresh in preparation for the following day's festivities. A great way to energize before the big event!



EXPO Review



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 BRIAN HASS - Fox Bros. Piggly Wiggly

\$250 BOB EICKHOFF - Fox Bros. Piggly Wiggly



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

Jessica Hilgart - Trig's	Anheuser-Busch
Bill Ryerson –	
Albrecht's Sentry Delafield	Bernatello's
Steve Heise – Trig's	Dairy Farmers of WI
Brian Hass -	
Fox Bros. Piggly Wiggly	Designer Greetings
Andrea Miller - Miller and Sons	J&B Group
Bob Rentmeester – Trig's	Kemps
Charlotte Glass -	
Sendik's Food Market	Kickass Beef Jerky
Katrina Watkins –	
Metcalfe's Market	Krueger Whlsl Florist
Amanda Metcalfe -	
Metcalfe's Market	Lipari
Lester Halsted - Nilssen's Foods	Molson Coors
Kevin Metcalfe - Metcalfe's Market	Pep's Pizza
Kristie Maurer – Maurer's Market	Prairie Farms
Shawn Eggen – Nilssen's Foods	Professional Supply
Isaac Nilssen – Nilssen's Foods	Reyes Coca Cola
Mary Lewandowski –	
Metcalfe's Market	Russ Davis Wholesale
Terry Tryggeseth - Trig's	Valley Cooperative Assoc.
Branda Bendixen –	
Sendik's Food Market	Kickass Reef, Jerky

WISCONSIN'S 2023 CAKE DECORATING



Thank you, Wisconsin Bakers Association for bringing the cake decorating competition to the Expo floor! This year there were two themes: Lil' Monsters & Spooky Stories



The Great Wisconsin **BAG-OFF**

Christina Powers of Trig's - Tomahawk, WI, rose above the competition, earning her the title of Wisconsin's "Best Bagger" at the 2023 Great Wisconsin Bag-Off, a WGA Innovation Expo tradition.

Ashley Hagenow, the 76th Alice in Dairyland was this year's host, and kept the crowd entertained and engaged. Hagenow, of Poynette, grew up active in both 4-H and FFA, which set the foundations of her passion for Wisconsin's Agriculture!

Contestants were 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.



Competition was intense, with a 1-point difference separating the first and second place

From left: Sam Erickson, Alice in Dairyland, Ashley Hagenow, Christina Powers, and **Charity Julius**

scores. Eighteen (18) contestants participated in the event. Powers will be participating in the National Grocers Association Best Bagger Competition next March in Las Vegas.

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 March

2nd Place \$250 and trophy

3rd Place \$100 and trophy



The groceries were provided by Woodman's Food Market and donated to St. Joseph's Food Program in Menasha.



Results tabulated and certified by Baker Tilly.

🛛 Review SPONSORED BY PA **Great Wisconsin** Festival Foods at Wisconsin Metcalfe's Market Trig's



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

- Chris Geldon, Sendik's, Judge Weight Distribution
- Nick Lenzi, Lipari, Judge Bag Build
- Marissa Smoyer, Lipari, Judge Style, Attitude, & Appearance
- Chris Schmidt, Baker Tilly, Official Judge
- Maddy Knight, Sendik's, Bag Mover
- Amy Nash, Sendik's, Stager
- Joe Krajcik, Sendik's, Stager
- Melissa Mclaughlin, Trig's, Stager
- Jade Miller, Lipari, Timer •
- Joe VanZandt, Liapri, Timer
- Rick Roth, Reyes Coca-Cola, Timer

Winner: Christina Powers Store: Trig's, Tomahawk

Winner: Sam Erickson Store: Miller & Sons Supermarket, Mt. Hoerb

Winner: Charity Julius Store: Sendik's Food Market, Mequon

Awards

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.

The night started with the Award's Banquet Reception, where WGA members mingled before the Awards Banquet. At the beginning of the Awards Banquet, several of the 2023 Leadership Institute graduates in attendance received a certificate of completion and a leadership lapel pin. And then 11 individuals and teams were recognized for their achievements in the grocery industry with the 2023 WGA Awards. (See below)

Banquet

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

GROCER of the YEAR



JASON NILSSEN - Nilssen's Foods

VENDOR of the YEAR



BADGER INVENTORY

EXCELLENCE in OPERATIONS



ERIC BENDIXEN - Sendik's Food Markets



WOODROW NELSON – Trig's Minocqua



BILL RYERSON – Albrecht's Sentry Delafield



DAN WILLIAMSON -Kemp's Dairy



JEFF TEWES -T.A. Solberg Co., Inc.



NATE VOLLMER – T.A. Solberg Co., Inc.

R -Inc.

TERRY TRYGGESETH – T.A. Solberg Co., Inc.





MICK KNEELAND - Viking Village Foods



TIM & KEVIN METCALFE and AMANDA METCALFE -Metcalfe's Market

WGA Expo 2024 PRIZES!

WGA Expo Prize FMI Shopper Trends U.S. Grocery Industry Insights Winner: **Kristie Maurer**, Maurer's Market





Awards Banquet Grand Prize Two 2024 WGA Expo Registration Passes Winner: Leon Merck (2nd from left), Nilssen's Foods Winner: Jeff Tewes (3rd from left), Trig's/Cellar 70



WGA Government Affairs Summit Prize 2024 NGA Show/DC Fly-In, includes registration, airfare & hotel for two Winner: **Bob Jaskolski**, Trig's



2024 NGA Show Registration Winner: Greg Hansen, Hansen's IGA

PALLET OF PRODUCTS

A big WGA SHOUT OUT and THANK YOU to the three 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! \$4,775 was raised for the Foundation!

WINNER

COMPANY DONATED

Russ Davis Wholesale	Honeycris
Russ Davis Wholesale	WI Russet
Russ Davis Wholesale	Baby Peel
Kemps, LLC	2% Milk G
Valley Cooperative Association	Assorted E
Valley Cooperative Association	9" Half Bal
Valley Cooperative Association	Bake N Jo

PRODUCT

Honeycrisp Apples	Terry Tryggeseth / Trig's
WI Russet Potatoes	
Baby Peeled Carrots	Jim Meier / Metcalfe's Market
2% Milk Gallons	
Assorted Bakery Products	Greg Hansen / Hansen's IGA
9" Half Baked Pumpkin Pies	Greg Hansen / Hansen's IGA
Bake N Joy Muffins	Greg Hansen / Hansen's IGA
-	-



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 15 & 16, 2024 in Madison, WI.

WGA will be at the Madison Marriott West!







GROCERS in CAPITOLDAY

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

WGA's Allied members and Business Partners recognize and share the understanding of how advocacy, before all levels of government, is of critical importance to Grocer members.



LEGISLATIVE SPONSORS



Russ Davis Wholesale, Inc.







ADVOCACY SPONSORS

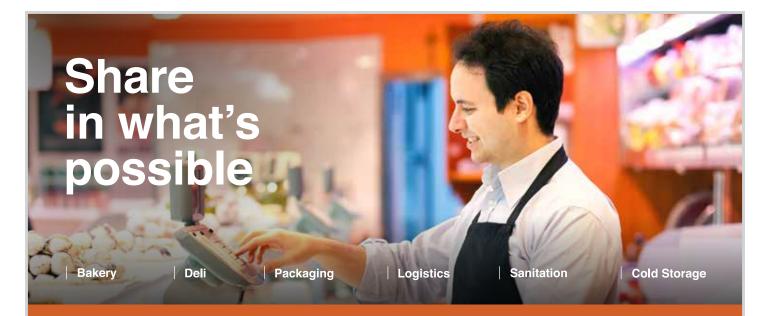








See page 13 for more information.



Committed to helping Wisconsin grocery stores grow by providing the best possible value for quality ingredients, products, packaging, disposables, and transportation.

Valley COOPERATIVE

800.242.6461 www.valleybakers.com



FIRST-CLASS DAIRY FIRST-CLASS CHOICE WORLD DAIRY EXPO CHAMPIONS



Farm fresh quality...from our family to yours.

FARMER



June 12th

WGA Foundation

Leadership Institute

WW WISCONSIN GROCERS ASSOCIATION

Education and Scholarship FOUNDATION



June 17th **WGA Northern Grocery Golf Outing** Stevens Point Country Club, Steven Point, WI



July 10th WGA Foundation Leadership Institute



WISCONSIN GROCERS ASSOCIATION



July 24th WGA Southern Grocery Golf Outing Everygreen Golf Course, Elkhorn, WI

 Witcould Green Anodation
 August 20th & September 18th

 Education and Scholarship
 WGA Foundation

 FOUNDATION
 Leadership Institute



October 15th & 16th WGA Innovation EXPO Madison Marriott West

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



brewpubpizza.com

Green Bay Packers





Lauren Barnes, Marketing & Event Coordinator





NEW STORE OPENS IN MILWAUKEE FOOD DESERT

Sentry Foods has added another location under its banner. The 14,000-sf location at 6350 W. Silver Spring Drive in Milwaukee, is the ninth Sentry Foods in Wisconsin and is expected

to improve food access in an area that's been considered a food desert. The grand opening was held on Oct. 20 and will



serve residents of the Westlawn Gardens, Silver Spring and Havenwoods neighborhoods. Congrats owner **Bharat Bansal**!



2023 EXEMPLARY EMPLOYER

On Oct. 17, **Lt. Governor Sara Rodriguez** joined Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) leaders and local partners in presenting Hansen's Market IGA with an Exemplary Employer Award. The award recognizes a company for their diverse and inclusive hiring practices throughout October. Congrats on the award!

CONGRATS!

30 years at Festival Foods and a 90th Birthday! The Festival Foods Baraboo team celebrated **Bob**, who was not only celebrating an extraordinary 30 years of service



as a Bagger and Cart Runner but also marking an incredible 90th birthday. Congratulations to Bob!

CONGRATS!

Coborn's Inc. has appointed **Kris Roberts** its next SVO of center store merchandising. Roberts will officially take on the role when current SVP of Center Store Merchandising **Andy Knoblauch**



retires on March 1, 2024. In her new position, Roberts will lead the company's strategic merchandising initiatives in grocery, dairy, frozen, health and beauty, and general merchandise.

NEW STORE OPEN

Skogen's Festival Foods opened a new location Oct. 6 at 1109 Chippewa Crossing Blvd. in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin. "We're very proud of the experience our management team brings to this location," said **Mark Skogen**, president and CEO. "It's an honor to join the Chippewa Falls community, and we're looking forward to providing

our newest guests with an enjoyable shopping experience, excellent product quality and exceptional value."



TAKING THE REINS



Mandi Hinrichs, President of Flash, the trucking firm in Green Lake that owns Crossroads Market (also in Green Lake), has taken over the reins of the family business. Hinrichs says, "We're so successful because we've always worked really

hard, but our people don't work for us. They work with us."



THE PICK N' SAVE IN OCONOMOWOC IS NOW METRO MARKET! In addition to celebrating the reopening, they donated to

three community organizations. The first was to their longtime partners at the Oconomowoc Food Pantry. Through the Pick n' Save/Metro Market food rescue program, this store has donated over 12,500 pounds of food including over 9,000 pounds of meat items in fiscal year 2023 thus far! That's roughly 10,400 meals to



feed community residents. During the event, they provided them with a \$2,500 financial donation to continue this partnership. Metro Market also donated \$1,250 in gift cards to both Lake Country Fire & Rescue and Village of Oconomowoc Lake Police Department to support their missions.



THE NEXT GENERATION

Albrecht's Delafield Market is excited to announce that **Jordan Jeanpierre** will be a 3rd generation owner! "Looks like another 30 years Albrecht's will be

serving the Lake Country area. Congrats to my son, Jordan!" says mom and co-owner **Kerry Jeanpierre**. Kerry notes, "As for me, after my hip replacement surgery next week...I will be reducing my role to part time...with very part time in winter so I can finally enjoy Arizona :) I have had a wonderful work journey over the years...making great friends along the way and involved in many events/projects that made a difference."



ROUNDING-UP



Watertown Piggly Wiggly donated **\$1200** to the Shared Community Missions Group after a weeklong round up in September. Great Job!

ROUNDING-UP

The Mayville Market Piggly Wiggly August round-up raised **\$5,300** for the Dodge County Emergency Response Team! Nice job!



THE RESULTS ARE IN!

The 16th Annual Great Steak Challenge sponsored

by **Pam Coy** and Viking Village Foods was a record setting success! **2,940 meals sold, \$8006.88 profit** as part of a \$36,309.88 Challenge! All cookout profits go to the Reedsburg area schools



activities departments for all students.

HELPING THE COMMUNITY

Fox Bros. Piggly Wiggly has donated **\$77,797** from the Charity of the Month program to 32 local communities. In the second quarter of 2023, the charity drives focused on: Organizations that



serve veterans, active duty, families and community with support specific to their military service while fostering camaraderie and patriotism; local nonprofits providing assistance to seniors so that they may maintain satisfying and independent lives; and area Rotary Clubs, whose motto is "Service above self," for their work on a huge variety of projects with local to global impact, including education, growth of local economies, protecting the environment, fighting disease, and more.

HyVee.

FAMILY MEALS MONTH
Hy-Vee gave away 150 meals
to customers with a drivethru event on Wednesday,

Sept. 13, at the Shopko Optical Corporate parking lot, just east of the Hy-Vee store, courtesy of ProVisions Investor's LLC. The donation was made in support of September's National Family Meals Month, an initiative in partnership with FMI – The Food Industry Association that focuses on nutrition and building strong family relationships by sharing frequent family meals.

ROUNDING-UP

Watertown Piggly Wiggly had another successful week-long roundup. This time for the American Legion Post 189 of Watertown. Just over \$1500 was raised and was rounded up to **\$1700**!



PICNIC IN THE COMMUNITY

Miller and Sons Supermarket held their 3rd Annual Community Picnic where they serve a free meal to people in the community! This year about **500 meals** where served, which included pulled pork sandwiches, coleslaw, potato chips, apple slices, a bakery cookie and a drink. This year was extra special for Miller and Sons because their mural was finished! The store designed a mural focusing on community and the history of Verona. It also includes the Miller's marquee and a shopping cart to take selfies.



DONATIONS AND DIVERTING FOOD

Pick n Save

The Marshfield Pick n' Save has diverted close to 33,000 pounds of food from going to waste in the past year. The diverted food was donated to different organizations throughout the community. When they celebrated the achievement they also donated **\$6,000** to three organizations. The donations went to Saint Vincent de Paul of Marshfield, Wildwood Wildlife Park Zoo & Safari, and Soup or Socks.





Our Condolences

Richard (Dick) Vanden Wymelenberg



On October 8, 2023 Dick entered eternal life at the age 94. For many years Dick owned and operated Dick's Family Foods as a third-generation grocer in Wrightstown, where he taught his children his strong business ethics. A man of great faith, Dick was involved in many offices and duties at St. Paul Catholic Church (St. Clare Parish) and a regular attendee of Bible study on Monday mornings. Dick loved anything that was fun! Some of those hobbies included: hunting, fishing, camping, sledding, skiing, playing backyard football and baseball with his kids. His children have many fond memories of time spent together on Sundays, the only day that Dick took off from the store during each week. Dick is survived by his wife, Bonnie; and a number of children including Rick (Mary) Vanden

Wymelenberg and John (Ann) Vanden Wymelenberg, 32 grandchildren, and 46 great-grandchildren.

LaVonne Beverly, Zietlow



On March 4, 2023 LaVonnewas welcomed into the heavenly mansion Jesus prepared for her. She attended Mormon Coulee School and graduated from Central High School, LaCrosse in 1952. There she met the love of her life, Donald Zietlow. They married on May 14, 1955 and were blessed with

a daughter, Vicky, and sons, Scott and Steven. Over the years, Don became a successful businessman, and LaVonne was right at his side, providing support, hosting parties, and giving her ever-present encouragement. She also found her own niche in the community, volunteering faithfully for the American Red Cross. She was recognized by the national president and CEO in 2015, for over thirty years of organizing and running its local blood drives. Most importantly, LaVonne loved being with her family. She and Don hosted countless family gatherings throughout the year.

Bernard, Charles (Bud) Miller



On March 4, 2023 LaVonnewas welcomed into the heavenly On February 22, 2023 at age 91 Bud passed away at his residence with his loving family by his side. Bud was born June 22, 1931 the fourth of five children of Charles and Esther (Hagen) Miller at home in Summit Township and attended the Sarnow Country

School. Bernard worked for a time at area farms, and later worked at Ray-o-Vac in Wonewoc until he enlisted into the U.S. Navy on Dec. 28, 1950. He served during the Korean War as a signalman on the minesweeper U.S.S. Epping Forest and achieved the rank of Quartermaster 3rd Class. In addition to an Honorable Discharge from the U.S. Navy, Bud received the Navy Good Conduct Medal, Korean Service Medal with Five Stars, National Defense Service Medal and The United Nations Service Medal. Bud returned to military service with the U.S. National Guard and received an Honorable Discharge in 1966. He married Frances Treml in September of 1957 and they settled in Hustler, Wisconsin where Bud began working as a butter maker. In 1960 he began operating the Transport Gas Station in Lyndon Station and worked at Badger Ordinance in Baraboo. In 1977 he and Frances bought Miller's Grocery Store in Lyndon Station which the family still operates today.

Maria, Johanneson



On July 27, 2023 Maria passed away at her home.wife of Keith Johanneson passed away. Maria was born June 18, 1970 in International Falls, MN, the daughter of Albert Renollet and Evelyn Rentz. In 1993 Maria gave birth to her only child, Braden. She found a wonderful husband who also shared her love of adventure and married Keith Johanneson on July 18, 2009 aboard a cruise ship. The Johanneson family are

long-time grocers with stores in the Midwest and Wisconsin/ KJ's Fesh Market in Chetek.

Ted. (Salvatore) Francis Balistreri



May 29th, 2023 at the age of 88, Ted was Born to Eternal Life. Ted was born on May 25th, 1935, in Milwaukee, the son of Gaetano (Tom) and Margaret (Quartullo) Balistreri. Ted was a graduate of Whitefish Bay High School and was well known in the community as the proprietor of Sendik's Food Market in Whitefish Bay. He married the love of his life, Patricia (Patty) Thompson

of Whitefish Bay on August 20th, 1965. Together they raised four children in Fox Point and Bayside. He had many hobbies and interests. He loved woodworking and was a master craftsman and artist. He loved to garden and grew beautiful flowers and vegetables. He loved to cook and was always busy in the kitchen creating amazing meals. Golf was his passion. Ted had an amazing career and impact on the Wisconsin grocery industry.

Esther E. Rondeau



May 5, 2023 at the age of 90 Esther passed away peacefully at the Northern Lights Health Care Center in Washburn, WI. Esther and husband Tom operated Rondeau's Shopping Center in Cable for many years. Esther is survived by her husband of 68 years, Thomas; her children, Carol (Randy) Fredrikson of Sebring, FL, James (Cheryl) Rondeau and Brett (Bonnie) Rondeau both of Cable, WI; son-in-law, Al

Lang of Drummond WI; nine grandchildren; many great grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.





HACKNE

More Than A Distributor. We're Your Partner.



Distributing and Servicing Candy, Spices and Tobacco for Supermarkets in Wisconsin and the Mid-west !

Contact: Craig Diepenhorst, Supermarket Sales Manager, cell: 616-581-1986 or email: craig.diepenhorst@hthackney.com



Certoo Has Everything to Fill your Stockings!

Friendly, Qualified Staff with Retail First Mentality
 High Service Level
 Huge Selection of Items



SERVING THE REAL INDEPENDENT GROCER.

IT'S NOT JUST A MEMBERSHIP, IT'S A PARTNERSHIP!

Full service wholesale grocery distributor exceeding the needs and expectations of our customers.

BEST AVAILABLE SERVICE • GREATEST VARIETY OF PRODUCTS • LOW DELIVERED COST

CERTCOINC.COM

MADISON, WISCONSIN • PAUL FREY • 608-963-7910 • PFREY@CERTCOINC.COM



Help Your Employees Make it Home Safe Today

Federated DriveSAFESM Telematics helps your employees improve their daily driving habits and return home safe at the end of the day.

ΔN ASSOCIATION MEMBER RENEEIT FOR 119 YFARS DIRECT. LOCAL MARKETING REPRESENTATIVES **AUTO** PROPERTY AND CASUALTY SELF-INSURED RETENTION POLICYHOLDER SURPLUS LIVE VOICE CUSTOMER SERVICE **MYSHIELD®** TAILORED, **INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC COVERAGE** BUSINESS SUCCESSION AND ESTATE PLANNING STABLE FACE-TO-FACE RELATIONSHIPS **FINANCIAL** STRENGTH MUTUAL COMPANY DIRECT CLAIMS REPRESENTATIVES 500+ EXCLUSIVE ASSOCIATION RECOMMENDATIONS PLANNING ATTORNEY NETWORK ANNUITIES

IT'S OUR BUSINESS TO PROTECT WGA MEMBERS

WE'RE BETTER TOGETHER LIFE AND DISABILITY INCOME PRIVATE BONUS PLANS KEY PERSON COVERAGE WORKERS COMPENSATION HIRING PRACTICES FEDERATED DRIVESAFESM TELEMATICS SOLUTION RISK MANAGEMENT RESOURCE CENTER EMPLOYMENT RELATED PRACTICES LIABILITY EMPLOYMENT RELATED PRACTICES LIABILITY EMPLOYMENT LAW ATTORNEY NETWORK BONDING EMPLOYEE SAFETY TRAINING RISK MANAGEMENT ACADEMY CLIENT CONTACT CENTER FIELD RISK CONSULTANTS CERTIFICATE CENTER SURETY SPECIALISTS MANAGED CARE CYBER



The content of this publication is for general information purposes only. Consult with a qualified professional when you have detailed questions regarding any topic in this publication.

Commercial Insurance Property & Casualty | Life & Disability Income | Workers Compensation | Business Succession and Estate Planning | Bonding Federated Mutual Insurance Company and its subsidiaries** | federatedinsurance.com

23.01 Ed. 1/23 *View A.M. Best Rating Guide information at www.ambest.com. **Not licensed in all states. © 2022 Federated Mutual Insurance Company