

UNEXPECTED kenosha

Quarterly Newsletter of the Kenosha Area Business Alliance(KABA) | Summer 2016

Kenosha County's commercial real estate market stays in high demand

California-based Majestic Realty Co. broke ground in May on a \$20 million speculative industrial building in Pleasant Prairie. The 424,164-square-foot building—just south of Bain Station Road on the east side of 88th Avenue—will be its first development in Wisconsin.

"The greater Chicago industrial market is a prime location for us going forward and this development will offer our tenants remarkable access to a key business region in an extremely business-friendly environment."

– John Semcken, Senior Vice President, Majestic Realty

The building sits on a 87.5-acre site and is the first phase of a multi-phased development, although no further construction is yet planned. It will be divisible for as many as four tenants, will feature 36-foot ceiling clearance, 50-foot by 52-foot bay spacing, a combined 370-feet of truck courtyard, 111 trailer parking stalls and build-to-suit office space.

The building, being developed for warehousing and distribution users, has already received attention from interested parties, according to Majestic representatives. The building is expected to be complete by the end of the year.

Majestic Realty is the nation's largest privately held industrial development company.



"While this represents our first Wisconsin project to be developed, we clearly view this as a stepping stone for our future growth plans in the Midwest market. We see this at the first of many projects that we are considering in the state as a result of the positive and highly professional experience we've had working with local and state officials."

– Taylor Talt, Vice President, Majestic Realty

KABA is the lead business organization that drives economic development throughout Kenosha County and supports and provides services to its members and the community, helping to ensure growth, a robust economy, and a positive business climate for the Kenosha Area.



Representatives from Majestic Realty, the WEDC, the Village of Pleasant Prairie and KABA broke ground on a new development in Pleasant Prairie on May 6.

Inside...

- > Resources for employers that are hiring
- > The Kenosha County Attraction Initiative
- > Don't miss Inspire 2016 & the Kenosha County Business Excellence Awards!

Unexpected Kenosha (formerly Directions) is published quarterly by the Kenosha Area Business Alliance, Inc. (KABA). Archives can be found on our web site:

www.kaba.org

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From the President

New actors, additional options help expand Kenosha County's economic development capacity

KABA is partnering with the Town of Salem to develop a business park in Western Kenosha County. It is expected that the infrastructure necessary to serve the development will be completely installed by the end of the summer. Attention is now shifting towards identifying businesses that will invest in this location. We are optimistic that we will break ground on an initial building in the business park before the end of the year.

First Park 94 in the Village of Somers is also off to a positive start with a 600,000 SF speculative industrial building nearing completion.

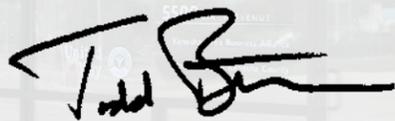
Majestic Realty is constructing a 424,000 SF speculative industrial building on a site in Pleasant Prairie adjacent to LakeView Corporate Park.

The Village of Bristol recently noted their interest in supporting the development of key properties near the I-94 and STH 165 interchange by establishing a tax increment financing district to help fund infrastructure and site development costs.

These projects provide additional development sites, give prospective companies expanded options, and help build the economic development capacity of local units of government throughout Kenosha County.

From my perspective these developments should not lead to unnecessary competition between local units of government, rather they should complement and build off each other. We need a healthy and vibrant central city, AND it is also healthy to see surrounding suburban communities adding industrial developments to their tax base. An economic development win secured anywhere in Kenosha County has positive impacts on the entire community. Let's continue working together to keep the positive momentum rolling.

Sincerely,



Todd Battle,
President, Kenosha Area Business Alliance



Thank you for investing in KABA!

AGAINST THE GRAIN

atgcc.net

Restoration, repurposing, and custom carpentry using reclaimed wood. Family-owned business opened in Kenosha in June.

GARLAND ALLIANCE, INC.

garlandalliance.com

A landscape architecture firm based in Milwaukee.

JS POKORNY COMPANY

jspokorny.com

Kenosha-based general contractor specializing in residential remodeling.

KENOSHA YMCA

kenoshaymca.org

Community-focused nonprofit with recreational programs & services for all ages.

PARALLEL EMPLOYMENT GROUP

parallelemployment.com

Provides employment, staffing, and temporary services in WI, IL, NY, and Nevada.

RFP COMMERCIAL, INC.

rfpcommercial.com

A commercial real estate agency headquartered in Milwaukee with developments throughout Southeast Wisconsin.

Upcoming Events

Info Session: Leadership Development Series

Date: Tuesday, July 26 & Wednesday, August 10
Time: 7:30 - 9:00 a.m. | **Location:** KABA Training Center

KABA is pleased to be offering its sixth, year-long, Leadership Development Series with Living As A Leader. The Series is a comprehensive, steady progress over time approach that equips leaders with depth and breadth of skill and knowledge.

The series consists of two critical elements for supporting the growth and development of leaders—skill building workshops and coaching sessions with a leadership coach.

Participants include supervisors, managers, other key leaders, and high potential employees. Join us at a free information session to find out more about this great leadership development opportunity.

Inspire Kenosha Workshop: Groom Your Emerging Leaders More Quickly

Date: Wednesday, August 3 | **Time:** 7:00 - 9:30 a.m.
Location: Kenosha Country Club | Register by July 29, 2016

The changing world of work will continue to press organizations to have systems in place to intentionally develop emerging talent. Join us as we review best practices to enhance your ability to grow your future leaders—a key strategy for attracting and retaining great employees.

Local Updates For Businesses In Lakeview Corporate Park / Pleasant Prairie

Date: Tuesday, August 9 | **Time:** 7:30 - 9:30 a.m. | **Location:** EMCO Chemical, 8601 95th Street, Pleasant Prairie | Register by contacting KABA at info@kaba.org.

Please join your neighbor companies as well as representatives from the Village of Pleasant Prairie and KABA for an information session. Attendees can look forward to meeting new companies and networking with other businesses. Included in the session will be an overview of a Kenosha County's labor market study and recommendations.

Please come ready to ask any questions and share your input and experiences.

Thank you for investing in KABA! cont.

SOUTHPORT MARINA

spsmarina.net

A public full service marina located in the heart of Kenosha's HarborPark development.

SPECIALIZED ACCOUNTING SERVICES

sas-cpas.com

A Pleasant Prairie-based accounting firm providing payroll, accounting, tax and other services to a variety of industries and organizations.



Join us to recognize some of Kenosha County's most successful companies and business leaders

Date: Thurs., Nov. 3, 2016
Time: 4:00 p.m.
Location: UW-Parkside



The Kenosha County Business Excellence Awards recognize excellence and achievement in business throughout Kenosha County. It is one of the premier business events in Kenosha County so please plan to join us as we celebrate some of the best and brightest companies and individuals!

The 2016 winners will be announced in late August - registration information will be available in early September. Questions? Interested in sponsorship? Contact KABA at info@kaba.org.

Investor News & Notes

Centrisys wins the EPA's Nutrient Recycling Challenge

Centrisys Corporation is helping livestock producers by developing reliable nutrient management solutions. By using decanter centrifuges instead of conventional manure solids separation equipment, dairy farmers are seeing more efficient separation and are meeting regulations and increasing profitability. Last month the company announced that its efforts had been recognized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as part of its Nutrient Recycling Challenge. The competition challenges companies worldwide to develop technological advancements that recycle nutrients from livestock manure more effectively.

Jockey launches brand campaign featuring wounded Marine vet, other heroes

Jockey launched a new media campaign: SHOW 'EM WHAT'S UNDERNEATH featuring three everyday heroes proudly wearing Jockey® underwear in a series of raw and personal videos and portraits showing "what's underneath" - literally and figuratively. The campaign's intimately told stories feature: Chris Van Etten, a U.S. Marine veteran who shows perseverance always wins; Lisa Cusimano, a firefighter who defines courage as serving something greater than yourself; and Michael Cottone, an adoptive father who exemplifies the gift of family.

Powerbrace receives supplier award; announces management promotions

Out of 300 eligible recipients, Powerbrace Corporation was one of only twenty awarded a Certificate of Achievement for reaching Gold Status on Aurora's 2015 Supplier Scorecard. Gold status winners maintained a 91% or higher supplier performance rating for the year. The award was presented at the Aurora National Dealer Conference held recently in Indianapolis.

Powerbrace also announced several management promotions at its corporate headquarters in Kenosha:

- > Brian Senn, formerly Engineering Manager, is now Director of Business Development.
- > Christopher Gaydos has been named Director of Engineering.
- > Eric Briese has been named Director of Operations.

Riley Construction named to list of Fastest Growing Firms, Barb Riley Honored as a Women of Influence by the Milwaukee Business Journal

Barb Riley, Executive Vice President of Riley Construction, has been honored with a 2016 Women of Influence Award from the Milwaukee Business Journal (MBJ).



As second generation owners of Riley Construction Company, Barb Riley and her three brothers have grown the company into the \$168 million (annual volume) business it is today with more than 250 employees at three offices throughout the region.

Additionally, Riley Construction is one of 28 firms to receive a Milwaukee Business Journal 2016 Fastest Growing Firms award, which recognizes southeastern Wisconsin companies for significant growth over the past three years.

Village of Pleasant Prairie introduces new Director of Recreation



The Village of Pleasant Prairie recently announced the addition of Brian E. Smith as the new Director of Recreation. Smith officially began May 2, 2016. Prior to joining the Village, Smith served nine years with Provo City, Utah as Recreation Supervisor.

Group aims to develop a Creative Economy Strategic Plan for the City of Kenosha

The City of Kenosha Commission on the Arts was created by the office of the Mayor to encourage and support the arts as well as organizations and programs for cultural enrichment within the city. To further this aim, the Commission will be launching a process for the creation of a Creative Economy Strategic Plan. This two-semester process will be undertaken in conjunction with the University of Wisconsin-Madison Bolz

Center for Arts Administration. It will launch this September with a complete strategic plan available in May 2017.

The final plan will outline the community's strengths and opportunities in regards to supporting our local arts community and recommend action steps to strengthen networks and foster artistic and cultural development within the city.

Economic Development

EMCO Chemical to expand their facility in Pleasant Prairie

EMCO Chemical Distributors, Inc. is planning a 62,160-square-foot addition on the north side of their facility located at 8601 95th Street in LakeView Corporate Park.

The addition will be used for warehousing purposes and will feature twelve loading dock spaces, the installation of additional water infrastructure, fire hydrants and a small service road on the north side of the building.

EMCO relocated from Illinois to Pleasant Prairie in 2011 and has continued to grow its operations here. Edward Polen, who founded EMCO in 1971, was named the Entrepreneur of the Year at the Kenosha County Business Excellence Awards in 2014.



Kenosha County is No. 14 on Forbes' list of cities where manufacturing is thriving

The Kenosha County, WI - Lake County, IL MSA came in at No. 14 in Forbes magazine's list of U.S. cities where manufacturing is thriving. While Kenosha County continues to diversify its key industries and evolve from its auto plant roots, manufacturing still plays a vital role in its economy.

"Manufacturing remains critically important. Over the period from 1997 to 2012, labor productivity growth in manufacturing-3.3% per year-was a third higher than the rest of the economy. [In 2012, manufacturing accounted] for 68.9% of all R&D expenditures by U.S. businesses and employing 36% of the nation's scientists and engineers, the largest share of any industry. ...the impact of manufacturing on local economies remains profound. Manufacturing has the highest multiplier effect of any sector of the economy."

- from 'The U.S. Cities Where Manufacturing Is Thriving', Forbes.com, June 21, 2016.



No. 14: Lake County-Kenosha County, IL-WI Metropolitan Division

Share of Manufacturing Jobs in Local Economy: 14.8%
Growth in Mfg Employment, 2015: 1.07%
Growth, 2010-2015: 10.25%



FAQ: KABA's Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Program

KABA manages an extensive portfolio of community revolving loan funds. The purpose of including KABA RLF funds is to provide an opportunity for businesses that may not be eligible for financing through a conventional lender or private means. Each RLF has certain loan requirements that must be met in order for the business to be eligible. KABA will work together with the business to ensure loan compliance requirements are met. Learn more about these programs below:

- > **What is the financing available for?**
KABA financing can be used for:
 1. Acquisition of land and/or buildings
 2. Leasehold Improvements
 3. Equipment
 4. Working capital
- > **What are collateral options?**
KABA financing can be used for:
 1. Real Estate Mortgage
 2. Equipment
 3. Corporate and Personal Guarantees
 4. Inventory, Receivables, or Other Corporate Assets
- > **What are the loan terms?**
Loan terms and conditions vary by RLF and are tailored for individual projects. The RLFs are funded by a variety of sources, including the City of Kenosha, Kenosha County, Village of Pleasant Prairie, Community Development Block Grants, and other state sources.
- > **Can a company be located outside of Kenosha County?** No.
- > **What are the loan amounts?**
Loan amounts range from \$100,000 - \$800,000 per RLF.
- > **How do I apply for a KABA loan?**
Contact Brock Portillia - Director of Finance & Administration at KABA - for a quick pre-application discussion to determine fit: bportillia@kaba.org | 262.925.3468.

Learn about proven hiring strategies in the Kenosha Area Talent Attraction & Retention Toolkit

As the battle for talent grows, job seekers are being more discerning, simply because they can be. Gone are the days when hanging a 'Help Wanted' sign or placing a classified ad will result in a pile of applications or resumes to sort through. As recently as 2010, there were more than eight job seekers for every job opening in the Midwest—today there are only 1.3.

Employers need to be proactive about marketing their company and their open positions, using the latest tools and technologies and turning every one of their employees into recruiters.

The Kenosha Area Talent Attraction & Retention Toolkit features articles written by subject matter experts as well as local employers that are successfully attracting, onboarding and retaining talent. It's a great place for companies that want to refine their hiring strategies, including:

- > Culture and Employer Brand
- > Improving Company Culture
- > Your Website as Recruitment Tool
- > Job Postings that Work
- > Using Video & Photos to Communicate Your Brand
- > Turning LinkedIn into an Asset
- > Assess the Hiring Process
- > Recruiting Talent to the Region
- > Attracting and Engaging Millennials
- > Employee Referral Programs
- > Creating a Good First Impression with Interviewees
- > Onboarding

Read more insights in the full report, found online at: www.kaba.org/kaba/resource_room/misc_reports.asp



Let's Talk Talent!

The first of its kind Let's Talk Talent! Conference was held May 24 at UW-Parkside and featured a line-up of engaging sessions presented by talent and attraction experts. A few highlights included what current data tells us about the Kenosha Area labor market; how companies can create a culture that attracts people; what local companies are doing to attract and retain employees; and what Millennials want from their workplace and communities.



The conference also featured ongoing initiatives by KABA and its partners including the Gateway Promise, Strive Together Community Partnership, YLink and the Kenosha County Talent Attraction Initiative (see page 6).

Thank you to our sponsors - Express Employment Professionals and the University of Wisconsin -Parkside, our panelists, presenters and all who attended!

Pictured (top to bottom): Attendees network; Heather Wessling (KABA) presents the results of the Out-Commuter Analysis; panelists from local employers share their more innovative HR strategies; Angela Damiani from Newaukee talks about what matter to Millennials.

The Kenosha County Labor Market Study & Out-Commuter Analysis provide valuable data for local employers

Kenosha County is located in one of the largest labor markets in the country—the Chicago Metropolitan Statistical Area—which affords its citizens access to metro-city amenities and its industries access to suppliers and national and global markets. The county has a history of production and a workforce that has transitioned and re-skilled as industries changed. The workforce that was trained a half century ago or more for the manufacture of carriages and wagons, brass, hosiery, automobiles, and engine parts is now trained at Kenosha's educational institutions for jobs in food, lighting, plastics, and paper products manufacturing (to name a few), as well as for jobs in warehousing, distribution, and health care.

To better understand this transition and our current labor market, KABA commissioned the W.E. Upjohn Institute—based in Kalamazoo, MI—to provide an assessment of the current labor market environment in Kenosha County. Based on this analysis, the Upjohn team recommended actions that the county's economic and workforce development community can take to attract and grow tomorrow's workforce.

Overall Recommendations

W.E. Upjohn proposed the following recommendations to complement efforts currently under way in the region. Each recommendation is discussed in more detail in the full report.

- > Work with county employers to be more aggressive and effective in their employment outreach efforts, especially with their online presence.
- > Kenosha area human resources professionals need to stay up to date with online talent platforms.
- > Prepare seminars that both present the findings of the Kenosha County employee survey and recommend best practices from human resources experts on creating a productive and rewarding workplace.
- > Develop targeted industry career fairs.
- > Increase the employability skills of the county's existing workforce.

DID YOU KNOW?

...career advancement is the most important job attribute to millennials working in Kenosha County?

...54% of employees think their employers offer a fair wage?

...44% of Kenosha County out-commuters work in Lake County?

...Educational attainment of people working in Kenosha County is lower than Lake County, but equal to Racine County?

- > Work to improve public school performance related to community engagement, community alignment, and school resource enhancement to promote a college and career going culture for K-12.

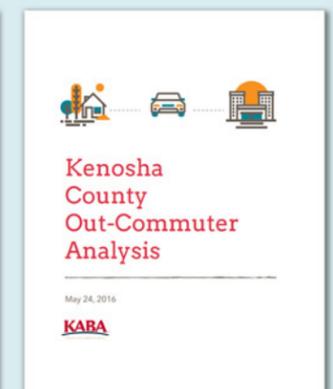
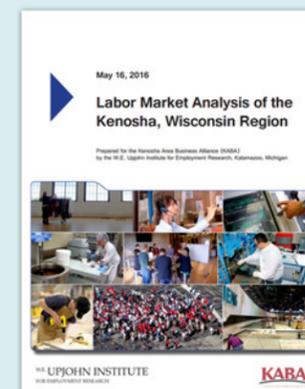
The Kenosha County Out-Commuter Analysis - which serves as a qualitative supplement to the Labor Analysis - conveys opportunities and challenges in the local and regional labor market specifically by examining the behaviors and attitudes of respondents that live in Kenosha County, but commute elsewhere for their jobs. It seeks to answer the following questions for employers and community leaders:

- > How can companies disrupt the commuting process and attract out-commuters to jobs in Kenosha County?

- > How can Kenosha County companies and community leaders use this information to capture those passive candidates in a more deliberate way?
- > What barriers are keeping companies from attracting the talent they need today to grow tomorrow?

KABA is currently developing an implementation plan to strategically tackle the recommendations in the reports and help area employers hire the talent they need.

Read more insights in the two reports, found online at: www.kaba.org/kaba/resource_room/misc_reports.asp



Talent Development

The Kenosha County Talent Attraction Initiative (KCTAI)

According to scores of recent demographic research, the Midwest is facing a talent crunch. Baby boomers are retiring at a faster pace than the millennials are entering the workforce - there just aren't enough people coming into the workforce to replace the people retiring.

“Job growth in southeastern Wisconsin over the next 35 years will depend on communities in the seven-county region competing directly with other metropolitan areas in the United States for workers. [Growth] will occur only if a significant number of the workers move here from outside the region. And keeping some employers here could depend on attracting workers for them.”

— Ken Yunker, Executive Director, Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC)

Many initiatives are underway in Kenosha County to expand the existing labor pool, but the fact remains that these existing efforts alone are not likely to get Kenosha County to a point where it will be able to meet the talent needs of our existing and future employers. Most Midwestern communities - including Kenosha County - will need to attract skilled and educated people from outside of their community to live and work here.

According to economic development marketing experts DCI, one of the most important strategies for attracting talent is to drive potential employees, residents, and other visitors to a one-stop-shop website that showcases what your community has to offer.

A community-wide effort is underway to create a website that showcases Kenosha County's recreational and cultural amenities, educational opportunities, lower cost of living, strategic location, great neighborhoods, shopping, dining and its many other positive attributes.

As the battle for talent grows, communities across the nation are creating sites like these to let people know about their community, including Omaha, NE (wedontcoast.com) and Peoria, IL (livegp.org). We hope local employers will find the site valuable as they seek to attract talent from across the region, nation and even across the world to live and work here.

KABA is excited to be involved in this initiative. To learn more, please contact Becky Noble at bnoble@kaba.org.

INSPIRE 2016

Be sure to save the date for the Inspire 2016 one-day leadership summit:

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28th, 2016 @ JOURNEY CHURCH

Inspire is designed to inspire and empower you to take action on what you believe in to drive your business and our community into the future. This must-attend leadership event will feature a line-up of nationally-recognized speakers and inspiring local leaders, including:

Keynote presenter **Jeff Shinabarger** - a social entrepreneur and the author of *More or Less* and *Yes or No*. Jeff is the Executive Director of Atlanta-based Plywood People, an innovative community addressing social needs through creative services. His work has been featured by CNN, USA Weekend, Atlanta Journal Constitution and the Huffington Post.



Greg Tehven, curator of TEDxFargo and co-founder of Emerging Prairie, an organization focusing on expanding the entrepreneurial ecosystem

in the Midwest. His true passion is introducing projects, organizations, and companies to improve the lives of the people in his community.

Look for more information and registration to be available soon!

If you are interested in supporting the event through sponsorship, please contact Brooke Infusino at binfusino@kaba.org.



ON LEADERSHIP

Set Employees Up For Success



In my previous column, I provided a framework for the annual performance conversation. The key word is 'conversation.' Employees want to talk WITH their leaders! Employees also have an interest in talking with their leaders regularly about their performance, not just once a year. We are seeing more and more of our customers shifting toward a continuous coaching model, in lieu of the annual review.

With this in mind, ongoing conversations (as well as the annual review) will be more meaningful if they are tied back to intentional planning. Planning is the first step in maximizing the performance and fulfillment of your employees. During the planning phase, you will want to create clarity around two things;

1. What are the **roles and responsibilities** this employee is intended to fulfill? Take a look at your position description for each role? How detailed is it? Is it written in such a way that your employees can go home each day confident in what they have accomplished? Beyond a written description, it is also helpful for your employees to know you expect a "whatever it takes" approach to serving both internal and external customers. The written description is a guide for the major part of the role.
2. What are the **goals** for this employee for the year? Goals can be written for special projects, for professional development and for correction of something that is currently below expectation. You will want to ensure your goals are **SMART: Specific; Measurable; Agreed-Upon; Realistic; Timed.**



An example of a goal that is not SMART: Improve your communication skills.

An example of a goal that is SMART: To improve your communication with customers, effective immediately, return all customer calls and emails within 24 hours or receiving them, and have zero typos on all written documents.

Make sure to schedule time for planning. Employees appreciate this intentional leadership!

Aleta Norris provides an ongoing column on developing better leadership skills. She is a leadership expert and Principal at Living as a Leader LLC.

Leaders: Bring your passion | By Annette Stich

What is Leadership? From my perspective, it's a state of mind. One that starts with passion. Passion drives inspiration and with good leadership, the result is the ability to create a vision and have it become reality.

Leadership comes in many forms; leaders can be the CEO of an organization or a first year employee who leads a team to success behind the scenes. When driven by passion, no vision is too great or too small.

Having grown up in Kenosha, I've watched our community grow and evolve, and have developed a passion and belief that young professionals like myself have a lot to offer the community and that our community has a lot to offer young professionals. The perception that Kenosha is a great place for young professionals to live and work is something that I'm proud to have an impact on.

As president of the Young Leaders in Kenosha (YLink) advisory board, I've had the experience and privilege to lead our organization and its mission of connecting young professionals to each other and to the community. With

the help of very talented young leaders who share my passion, we have developed and are executing a three year strategic plan to achieve our mission.

As part of the leadership team, I hope my passion inspires others to build on our existing ideas for the future. My vision is that through a shared passion, we work to create a bridge for young professionals and our community, while developing a comprehensive talent network in Kenosha for the area's workforce.

It's difficult to inspire others if you're not inspired yourself. So if you want to do something really well, do something that you believe in. YLink is something I believe in. It's one of my passions. What's yours?

Annette Stich is a Quality Assurance Manager at Fair Oaks Farms. She also serves as President of YLink, Kenosha County's young professional association.



YLink College-to-Career Mentor Program seeks YP mentors

YLink, in partnership with UW-Parkside, will be piloting a mentoring program for the 2016-17 school year where experienced young professionals will be matched with motivated and talented college juniors and seniors to build career readiness skills that prepare students for careers in Kenosha. Young professionals who mentor in the program will have the opportunity to hone their leadership skills, share their organization's brand with soon-to-be graduates, and brush up on career essential skills by teaching others what they've learned in the workforce.

If you or a YP you know is interested in serving as a mentor, please fill out an online application: www.surveymonkey.com/r/YLinkMentorApp

Application deadline is August 12.

Questions? Email the Professional Development Committee at develop@ylinkenosha.com.

We're awakening the force at YLink's Movie in the Park

> Wed., Aug. 10 | 8:00 p.m. | Petrifying Springs Park, Pavilion #3 | Free to attend!

We love summer in Kenosha - and we're soaking in the beautiful weather and outdoor amenities at Movie in the Park night! We'll be viewing Star Wars: The Force Awakens at Petrifying Springs Park. Bring your own lawn chairs, blankets, food and drink, and - of course - your family and friends.

A link to register is at ylinkenosha.com.



YP Week was a success!

April 23-30 was YPWeek across Wisconsin and Y-Link celebrated with a lot of great programming that drew more than 150 young professionals. Fun events included a style and branding workshop at Pleasant Prairie Premium Outlets, Trivia Night at Public Craft Brewing, learning about the Kenosha Creative Space, a trolley ride info session about Downtown Kenosha and volunteering at the Dairy State Beer & Cheese Fest.

Thanks to all who attended throughout the week!



What's up in Downtown Kenosha

Look what's cooking! Plans move forward for community kitchen downtown

A coalition of downtown supporters is exploring the feasibility of bringing a community commercial kitchen to Kenosha's downtown area. According to the ongoing project's master plan, the mission is "to increase the production of local, healthy and affordable food products, support area farmers and food entrepreneurs, and enable the development of food-related jobs."

The coalition of supporters includes the City of Kenosha, Kenosha County, Kenosha Common Markets, KABA, Downtown Kenosha Inc., the Kenosha County UW-Extension, Kenosha County Health Dept. and Gateway Technical College. A feasibility study to consider the viability of an indoor fresh market is currently underway.

Interested local vendors can give their opinion about the project via an online survey: <http://fyi.uwex.edu/kenoshakitchen/2016/05/16/kitchen-user-survey>.



Kitchen Chicago is an example of a shared use kitchen that serves Chicago's culinary community (kitchenchicago.com).

Downtown Kenosha, Inc. offices to relocate; KABA reallocating funding to explore additional downtown development initiatives

Downtown Kenosha, Inc. (DKI) will be relocating to the Kenosha Area Convention and Visitors Bureau building in August. DKI has been housed in office space provided by the Kenosha Area Business Alliance for its initial three plus years of existence.

DKI's sole staff person is an Executive Director, currently Christopher Naumann, who has worked out of the KABA offices at 5500 6th Avenue in downtown Kenosha and has been considered a KABA employee. In 2013, a funding agreement for the DKI Executive Director position was entered into by five partnering community organizations. The City of Kenosha, the Lakeshore Business Improvement District (BID), KABA with economic development funding from Kenosha County, the Kenosha Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, and the Kenosha Area Chamber of Commerce each provided funding for the position.

The initial funding agreement was for a period of three years - considered an incubation period to get the new organization on its feet. This incubation period ended on December 31, 2015.

KABA remains committed to the revitalization of Downtown Kenosha and is exploring alternative ways to aid its continued development.

"This is a great opportunity for our organization to grow and evolve," said DKI Executive Director Christopher Naumann.

"Our goal from day one has always been to become an independently funded organization, we really can't accomplish any of the things we want to do if we have to constantly come to other organizations with our hat in our hand looking for money," remarked DKI Board President Kevin Ervin. "Now don't get me wrong, if people or groups want to give us money we'll take it, but to be a viable group on our own, we have to have our hands on our own resources. This is a positive move for DKI and something that we've been planning for."

New contact information for Christopher will be announced soon. In the interim, he will continue to be reachable at the KABA office: 262.925.3463 or cnaumann@downtownkenosha.org.

"KABA remains committed to Downtown Kenosha's revitalization and continued implementation of the Strategic Plan developed by the Lakota Group in 2012. Establishment of a Main Street organization was one of several major recommendations put forth in the plan. There are several additional recommendations in the plan that remain priorities and we intend to continue to invest our resources toward achieving those objectives,"

— KABA President Todd Battle



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Kenosha, WI 53140-3752

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