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July 28, 2017

QUICK LOOKS

Expansion Plans
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Jobs Report


INDUSTRY


Another Week, Another Blockbuster Deal One word says it all: Foxconn. The talk for the past few weeks has crescendoed this week with an announcement from President Trump and Governor Walker that Foxconn would commit to a \$10 billion dollar investment in Wisconsin creating 13,000 jobs and building a massive campus in the Racine/Kenosha area. For Walker it was the biggest jobs deal of his political career. From the Associated Press: "Walk-off grand slam home run," said Brandon Scholz, CEO of the Wisconsin Grocers Association and a longtime Republican operative in Wisconsin. He called the Foxconn news the pinnacle of Walker's time as governor and a fulfillment of what he's been promising to do. For grocers, the proposal means job growth, economic development, new neighbors, new stores and new business for existing stores. "This is very encouraging for our area! I see the area potentially blowing up with development, not only from Foxconn but from all the peripheral businesses that go with it. I also see an influx of people, which for a grocer is never a bad thing!! This can only help all business in the area," said Racine area Piggly Wiggly owner Ralph Malicki. And grocers are ready and willing to help. Jim Hyland, Vice President Communications & Public Affairs for Roundy's said in a letter to Governor Walker, "Our Pick 'n Save stores in Southeastern Wisconsin stand ready to serve the employees and families of Foxconn with our Customer 1st service. As a 145 year old Wisconsin company, we at Roundy's take every opportunity to stress our maxim of "Wisconsin Proud" to our customers."


Casual Fridays Red's Piggly Wiggly customers coming to the Omro store for the next twenty Fridays will see some staff "going casual" and dressed in blue jeans. The casual work wear is part of the Pig's "Blue Jeans Friday" fundraiser. Sherry Salfai, co-owner with husband Red, came up with the Blue Jean Friday idea, as a way for employees to help make a difference. The funding goal is supporting the Omro High School Band's trip in November to the nation's capital, where the band's been invited to participate in this year's Parade of Heroes celebration during Veterans Day. Red's Piggly Wiggly employees can donate \$20 (or a buck a week), but non-donating employees wearing jeans on Friday will pay \$2 if not signed up as part of the promotion to foster awareness for this Omro High Band need. Customers can also make donations in one of the three cans found around the store, which will be available until November. Everyone is working together at the store to maintain the momentum of charitable giving to local music education.


Three to Change Hands Festival Foods announced today it has signed a definitive agreement to acquire three Gordy's Markets, including the Eau Claire locations at 2717 Birch Street and 2615 North Clairemont Avenue as well as the Tomah location at 701 East Clifton Street. The acquisition is subject to customary closing conditions and is expected to close in September. Following the acquisition, all three locations will be operated under the Festival Foods banner. Festival Foods operates 28 other locations throughout the state, including one in Eau Claire that opened in 2005. Mark Skogen, President and CEO of Festival Foods, said expanding into Tomah and increasing the company's presence in Eau Claire are key opportunities for Festival Foods to better serve the company's growing customer base throughout Wisconsin. "We look forward to becoming part of the Tomah business community and welcoming new guests there," Skogen said. "We're also excited to open two new stores in Eau Claire, which will give our guests in that town more options."


New Store Across the Border With all parties closing on a land deal, the Chicago Tribune reports that the proposed Woodman's Food Market in Buffalo Grove, Ill will begin to move forward. The Shorewood Development Group, which plans to build a gas station, convenience store, car wash and retail

 on the southwest corner, will manage the construction of a 240,000-sf Woodman's Food Market. Clint Woodman, president of Woodman's Food Market, said the parties were working to finalize the land deal, adding how the business was wanting to start construction by early August. Since announcing the project nearly a year ago, officials have said they were planning to break ground on the project earlier this summer on the long vacant site with an eye toward opening in summer 2018. Read more [here](#).



Expansion Plans The Willy Street Co-op is moving forward with plans to expand. A fraction of the co-op's more than 34,000 members have overwhelming approved plans to expand the Middleton store and to pursue further expansion. No sites or projects have been identified but it could include a fourth store or expanding the co-op's production kitchen. The work at Willy West would expand the 10,000-sf store into adjacent space currently occupied by the UPS store, which is moving to a different spot in Parkwood Plaza. Since opening in a former Walgreen's space, the co-op has reached capacity and has become cramped for space. The project would redesign the store, move the entrance and better configure the registers. It will also increase backroom storage, cooler and freezer walk-in space. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).


Down 8 Straight Quarters Amazon has its work cut out for itself as Progressive Grocer reports that Whole Foods has reported more rough news in its report covering Q3 earnings of fiscal 2018, as the natural and organic grocer moves closer to completing its anticipated acquisition by Amazon.com.


Store Closing Gordy's Market closed its Hayward store on Tuesday, saying the company's expansion to 26 grocery stores in recent years was "just too aggressive," according to CEO Jeff Schafer. "It's time to get back to our roots and operate a smaller organization with the highest level of service to our communities," Schafer said. "This has been a very difficult decision for the Gordy's family. Our appreciation and sincere concern for both our employees and loyal customers is something that we take very seriously," he said. Read more [here](#).


Dog Bites Thanks to an anonymous contribution organized by a number of individual and WGA members, the Eisenhower Center in Milwaukee received a long term supply of peanut butter to help make "Ike Bites" dog treats. Each purchase of Ike

Bites provides job opportunities for people with disabilities. Every single Ike Bite is handmade from ingredients people would eat. David Ordan, Development Director of the Eisenhower

 Center says, "We are currently available in approximately 50 locations. We are also entering into a private label deal with another pet product company G.O.A.T. Pet products, which will be its own brand – so we are sure to need lots of peanut butter, garbanzo bean flour and goat milk for that project. Ike Bites Dog Treats is a subsidiary of Eisenhower Center, a

nonprofit organization helping people with disabilities earn money while gaining valuable life skills through vocational training. By working with Ike Bites, many individuals with disabilities have gained valuable work experience helping them get the most out of future opportunities. Successfully building a useful skillset is the most important goal of our employee-owners. For more information, visit their [website](#).



Indy Fruit's 30th Anniversary Indianapolis Fruit, a WGA Allied member, celebrated 30 successful years of customer appreciation events in Indianapolis, IN this week with

their trade show and golf outing. WGA's Cheryl Lytle attended the celebration and found seventy vendors showcasing their freshest products including Natalie's Orchid Island Juice Company (a WGA Allied Member) and Bushman's (member of the WI

Potato & Vegetable Growers Association) at the Crane Bay Event Center. The evening also included a delicious buffet dinner and casino night. Vendors enjoyed golfing at Eagle Creek Golf Course the following morning with a putting contest and an evening awards dinner. Many Wisconsin retailers attended the trade show in Indy including retailers from: Miller & Sons, Lake Mills Market, Capitol Centre Foods, Gemplers, Certco, Viking Village, Fresh Madison Market, Emberson's, Woodman's, Woodlake Market, Bills Market, and more! Congratulations once again Indy Fruit for "Producing A Fresh Experience Together!"

(L-R) Daniel Corsaro & Karen Murphy, Indianapolis Fruit and Rick Breeden, Natalie's Orchid Island Juice.



Reчек's Surprised and Bag-Off Info This week's Weekly Special included Brandon

Scholz surprising Brett & JoDee Reчек of Reчек's Food Pride in Beaver Dam with the announcement that they will be recognized

with a WGA Excellence in Operations award. This is also the time to be holding your store bag-offs to determine your contestant for the Great Wisconsin Bag-Off on October 18th. Click [here](#) to see the full profile on Brett & JoDee Reчек and bag-off information.



New WGA Business Partner Professional Supply has been a longtime WGA

Allied Member and recently upgraded to become a WGA Business Partner!

Professional Supply is located in Sheboygan, WI and can supply you with all

of your janitorial and maintenance products and along with floor cleaning equipment. They service all makes and brands of floor cleaning equipment. They are "the people who take care of you after the sale"! Professional Supply was founded and built on the principle of providing excellent customer service and the highest quality products at the most competitive price. If you'd like a free site survey and or would like to learn more about what Professional Supply can do to help your bottom line, please contact: Matt Bresser (920) 226-0578, Eric Bresser (920) 627-0084, our office at (800) 236-8675 or visit our [website](#).

COMMERCIAL BREAK



ECONOMY, WORKFORCE & REGULATIONS

Now Hiring (Who Isn't) E-commerce giant Amazon.com Inc. said Wednesday it is looking to fill more than 50,000 job openings across its U.S. fulfillment network, including at its facility in Kenosha. To find workers, the Seattle-based company will hold an Amazon Jobs Day event at the Kenosha fulfillment center, as well as nine other fulfillment centers across the U.S., on Aug. 2 from 8 a.m. to noon. The company will be making on-the-spot job offers at that event. Of the 50,000 openings, 10,000 are part-time jobs. An Amazon spokeswoman said the company has "hundreds and hundreds" of openings at its Kenosha facility. According to Amazon's website, a part-time fulfillment associate at the Kenosha facility earns \$11.25 per hour and a full-time associate's hourly pay rate ranges from \$12.25 to \$13.25, plus health care benefits. The Kenosha facility opened in 2015 with 1,000 jobs. The Amazon operations in Milwaukee and Kenosha currently employ 2,000 workers. Read more [here](#).



Wisconsin's Strong GDP WisBiz.com reports that Wisconsin's GDP grew by 2.1% in the first quarter of 2017, according to data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

This is 0.9% higher than the 1.2% national GDP growth rate for this quarter. Only a few states had higher GDP increases in the first quarter: Washington with 2.7%, New Mexico with 2.8%, West Virginia with 3.0%

and Texas with 3.9%. Idaho tied Wisconsin's GDP growth rate. While most states saw a positive change, some had poorer performances in the first quarter. South Dakota and Nebraska were among the worst, with 3.8 and 4.0% decreases in GDP, respectively.



Consumer Confidence Near 16-Year High Reuters reports that U.S. consumer confidence jumped to a near 16-year high in July amid optimism over the labor market while house prices maintained their upward trend in May, which could boost consumer spending after recent sluggishness. The reports on Tuesday underscored the economy's strong fundamentals, expected to keep the Federal Reserve on course to raise interest rates for a third time this year. Read more [here](#).



Jobs Report In June, Wisconsin won private-sector jobs, lost government jobs, preliminary Bureau of Labor Statistics show. The state actually gained 3,600 private-sector jobs, but lost 4,900 government jobs. The majority of those [4,500] were state jobs. Surrounding states generally fared better in June, with Illinois gaining 8,600 jobs, Iowa gaining 11,200 and Minnesota gaining 4,400. Michigan lost 300 jobs. Read more [here](#).



HEALTHY MATTERS

Meal Kit Demand Growing Blue Apron rules the roost when it comes to the most purchased and most desired meal kit brands, but consumers show a tremendous desire for grocers to develop their own kits for purchasing in-store, according to new research from Field Agent. Among the brands ordered online by meal kit users, Blue Apron got top ranking (64%), trailed by Hello Fresh (46%) and other brands much further behind, Field Agent's research reveals. Among those who don't purchase kits, Blue Apron is by far the most likely brand of choice (46%) if they did start doing so. However, if given the option, users and nonusers alike may drop these services and run to their local grocer for kits. Some 78% of consumers – 76% of nonusers and 78% of users – want, to some extent, grocery stores to develop meal kits they could purchase in stores. And they don't want just some national-brand kits, nor do they really desire locally focused brands: 69% of consumers – 68% of nonusers and 75% of users – desire kits that contain a combination of local or private brands and well-known name brands. Read more [here](#).



Dietitians and Wellness Goals The NGA Blog noted grocers were utilizing dietitians to help shoppers meet their wellness goals. As consumers are increasingly browsing supermarket shelves for food that will help them achieve their individual health and wellness goals, supermarkets are introducing a variety of resources to help shoppers, including introducing in-store dietitians to provide one-on-one guidance. In fact, according to NGA's "The Independent Consumer," having a dietitian in the store is of strong importance to consumers and health is a top reason why most shop at an independent supermarket. Shoppers at

Wisconsin-based Festival Foods stores don't have to visit the supermarket to get tips from a dietitian, however. The grocer's team of registered dietitians developed an Eat Well program to promote the services they offer, including ideas for healthy and affordable meals consumers can make at home. Watch the video for more information.

SOCIAL MEDIA & TECHNOLOGY

Go Or No Go Amazon.com will know by Aug. 25 whether or not it will face a long antitrust investigation over its \$14 billion deal to acquire Whole Foods Market (WFM). That's according to a securities filing the company made Friday, July 21. More and more consumer advocates and other critics of Amazon, Google and other dominant online platforms say the online shopping giant should face heat from competition enforcers. But despite the vocal complaints from some consumer advocates and lawmakers, many U.S. antitrust experts largely dismiss the notion that the merger faces a serious threat from antitrust officials. One antitrust lawyer called the complaints "a tempest in teapot." Read more [here](#).



Come and Click It Pick 'n Save is the latest grocery store to have online ordering. Green Bay and Appleton customers of select stores can now order online [here](#) by selecting items, setting a pickup time and then submitting their customized order. In the store, a Pick 'n Save employee will carefully pick the items off the shelves and store it in a temperature-controlled zone until the customer arrives. The groceries will then be brought fresh and loaded into customers' vehicle curbside. Final payment is made at the time of pickup. "The feedback from customers in our Green Bay store has been overwhelmingly positive since our initial launch two weeks ago," said Jim Hyland, VP communications and public affairs Roundy's Supermarkets, Inc. "This service gives us the opportunity to continue to offer an easier, more convenient shopping experience." Pick 'n Save will continue to launch ClickList at select locations across the state of Wisconsin.



FINAL NOTES

Happy Birthday Wishes to Tim Metcalfe of Metcalfe's Markets

Congratulations to Laura Strange for starting a new position as Vice President of Industry Relations, Communications and Marketing at the National Grocers Association

Stay updated on the latest counterfeit coupons and food safety alerts and recalls by

clicking on the links below each week which will remain in our "final notes".



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