

BUSINESS

FIRST

News from THE CITY OF WEST ALLIS

Fall 2015

Renaissance Center receives Wisconsin Economic Development Association's 2015 Real Estate Redevelopment and Reuse Award



Photos by Jim Moy, Moy Photography

On August 28, WEDA (Wisconsin Economic Development Association) presented their 2015 Real Estate Redevelopment and Reuse Award to Van Buren Management for their excellent redevelopment and reuse contribution to Wisconsin's economy. Located at 801 S. 60 St. at the city's prominent northeastern gateway, the Renaissance Center (known to many as the former Sam's Club), has undergone a dramatic architectural transformation from a vacant, underutilized 120,000 sq. ft. space into a state-of-the-art office complex. The property owner, Van Buren Management, and the City of West Allis partnered through a creative financial package to allow for drastic building improvements and the construction of a 650-vehicle parking structure in order to attract Johnson Control's Unity Division. Financing of the project came through the use of \$18 million in private investment and \$26 million in New Markets Tax Credits (NMTCs), which equates to approximately \$6.4 million in equity from FIRE, which is the City's community development regional entity. The redevelopment of the Renaissance Center contributed an astonishing \$20.8 million of new taxable value over the last two years. The renovation also brought over 1,000 new jobs to the City between Johnson Controls and other tenants.

COMING SOON TO WEST ALLIS

Ka-Bobs

Mark Lutz, owner of the West Allis Cheese and Sausage Shoppe, purchased the property at 6801 W. Becher St. and is partnering with longtime West Allis resident Bob Nicholson to create "Ka-Bobs."



Ka-Bobs will offer a menu for sit-down dining, featuring American meals with a southwest and Mediterranean influence. The restaurant is expected to accommodate around 40 patrons.

A building renovation is being conducted to enhance the long-time vacant space, which consists of approximately 3,000 sq. ft. The City recently approved the plans and liquor license and is assisting the project through a Commercial Façade Grant under the City's Community Development Block Grant Program. The storefront will include new street to ceiling windows with canvas awnings. The façade improvements will create a welcoming destination enhanced through ornamental lighting.

WHAT'S HAPPENING



- The Hampton Inn & Suites will be opening in October.
- The Ultimate Salad Bar has opened at 10922 W. National Ave.



- Four new tenants have been secured for the former HUB Chrysler site on Hwy 100:
 - AT&T
 - Pie Five Pizza
 - Jersey Mike's Subs
 - Elements Massage

West Allis DOWN TOWN

TIMES ARE CHANGING

In the past year, West Allis Downtown has not only seen a lot of positive changes, we have welcomed two new antique shops to the area. Antique shops such as **Uncle Ned's** and stores that are "Do It Yourself Friendly" are up-and-coming, and we're happy to welcome them to our community.

We recently welcomed **Marvelous Mailboxes** to our eclectic group of businesses. Previously located in Downtown Menomonee Falls, Marvelous Mailboxes creates and sells unique mailboxes and provides mailing services.

West Allis Downtown also strives to make the atmosphere on Greenfield Avenue inviting and comfortable. Numerous property owners in our Downtown, including **Freese's Candy**, have made improvements to their buildings, including new facades and outdoor dining.



*Uncle Ned's
1412 S. 73 Street*



*Marvelous Mailboxes
1412 S. 72 Street*



*Proposed new façade for Freese's Candy and Kirby
Vacuum 7308/7312 W. Greenfield Avenue*

SPOTLIGHT BUSINESS

CORVINA
WINE COMPANY



Corvina Wine Company, which opened November 2012, is a unique retail wine source located at 6038 W. Lincoln Ave. A family run business by Frank LaSusa II and Joseph LaSusa, Corvina offers a wide variety of wine, both classic and contemporary from around the world.



Frank LaSusa II



Joseph LaSusa

The LaSusa's trace their history to three generations ago, when Francesco LaSusa and his wife Mary immigrated to West Allis from Sicily and opened an Italian grocery store to pursue their American dream. The LaSusa family became well known in the community, and like many neighborhood stores, offered personalized service with a sense of family.

In the spirit of their great grandparents' hard work and perseverance, brothers Frank and Joe LaSusa transformed the store into an extraordinary fine wine boutique. Wine is their passion, and for the LaSusa's, the Corvina Wine Company is a dream realized.

The City recently approved a planned fall expansion of the business that includes a private wine tasting room, a tasting bar and additional retail space. Outside seating is being added to offer a new experience to compliment a wine offering.

West Allis West Milwaukee Chamber of Commerce



*Diane Brandt with Chris Wood,
Bob Brill & Rick Tourtillott.*

Chr. Hansen, Inc.

Chr. Hansen, Inc located at 9015 W. Maple St. in West Allis, develops natural ingredient solutions for the food, pharmaceutical, nutritional and agricultural industries. The Wisconsin Safety Council and the West Allis/West Milwaukee Chamber of Commerce were present on July 22 to re-present the Corporate Safety Award Chr. Hansen, Inc. won for their outstanding safety achievements in 2014. The Corporate Safety Awards are put on by the Wisconsin Safety Council and the Department of Workforce Development. Chr. Hansen, Inc. was originally honored for their safety excellence at the 2015 Wisconsin Safety & Health Conference and Exposition held in Wisconsin Dells on April 22.



Shop To Carry On

Carrie Lenz is a creative individual, and that is reflected in her store, **Shop to Carry On**, located at 11045 W. National Ave. This fairly new business was welcomed to the West Allis business community and has quickly impacted the area. The business was recently honored with the West Allis 2015 Beautification Award for "Most Patriotic" by the City of West Allis Beautification Committee. Carrie Lenz offers over 39 years of custom floral design for all occasions for both homes and business interiors. Shop To Carry On is a "Shop Local, Shop Small" destination boasting 25 local artisans. The store provides an array of soaps, teas, jewelry, garden art, fine pottery and many other hand-made arts. Monthly, the store hosts Girl's Nites Out and will feature home-based businesses. Carrie Lenz was thrilled with the recent beautification award and is excited for everyone to see the store's Christmas decorations.