

MPI-WISCONSIN CHAPTER

Agenda

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VOL 47/NUM 3
2025


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Editor's Note

Hello There!



Can you believe we're already halfway through 2025? This year is flying by. How has the first half of the year been for you? Are you on track with your personal or professional goals? Are you planning any vacations, preparing for a big work event, or even gearing up for a major life event?

Personally, this year is special for me. I'm getting married in September! The countdown is on, and I truly cannot wait for the big day.

In the meantime, things have been nonstop at Generac. We have a packed schedule of events, from internal groups, external dealers, Summerfest, company picnics, golf outings, the list is endless.

Since Wisconsin comes with only a few weeks of warm weather our summer months are filled quickly with work events! All our channels enjoy bringing dealers in to entertain them throughout the Milwaukee area... which I can't blame them; it is a fantastic spot to be in the Summertime.

I'm also looking forward to seeing many familiar faces—and hopefully some new ones—at the upcoming MPI events. These gatherings are always a highlight and offer great opportunities to network.

And as always, don't forget to reach out to volunteer!

Tyler Priefer
Tyler Priefer

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President's Message



Liz Unruh
MPI - WI President



I want to take a moment to reflect on the momentum our chapter continues to build—and to thank you all for being a part of it.

As we transition from the final chill of winter into the renewal of spring, I want to take a moment to reflect on the momentum our chapter continues to build—and to thank you all for being a part of it.

We had a break during March so when we saw each other again in April it felt as if it had been forever since we had seen each other.

April was an exciting and energizing month for MPI Wisconsin. Our *Spring Spectacular* event at the **Hyatt Regency Milwaukee** was a true celebration—not just of the season, but of our vibrant community of meeting professionals. We had a great time seeing old friends and making new ones. The view was amazing!

We followed that up with *Spring Education* at the **Baird Center**, where we dove into great education all day long. The insights shared by our speakers and the thoughtful conversations that followed reminded me once again why MPI Wisconsin is such a valuable resource for professional growth and support.

Both of these events were made possible by the hard work of our volunteers, the generosity of our sponsors, and the participation of our engaged members. Whether you attended one or both, or supported from afar, thank you for continuing to invest in this incredible community.

Speaking of volunteers, did you get a chance to visit any of the volunteer tables at *Spring Education*? Not that there is any competition (wink, wink), but I would say the **Greta McCue** and **Lindsey Hess** blew it out of that convention center with their awesome outfits! They also did get the most volunteers to sign up. If you would like to volunteer, we can always find something for you to do.

As we look ahead to the rest of the year, I encourage you to stay involved, join a committee, attend an upcoming event, or reach out with your ideas. Don't forget we take a break from meetings during the summer, however we have WEC in June, summer social in July, and the gala in August. Together, we are creating meaningful experiences that elevate not only our profession, but each other.

Let's keep this spring energy going strong!

Liz Unruh
President, MPI Wisconsin Chapter



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Spring Education Day Recap

By: Kylie Helgestad

MPI's Spring Education Day was a great success! Thursday we were welcomed into the Baird Center where they transformed the space into a Vegas-inspired venue. The morning started off with a wonderful selection of breakfast items and a chance to network with everyone before settling in for a fun filled day of learning!



Leanne Calderwood, CMP led the morning keynote where she discussed *Branding for People Who Aren't Kardashians*. She shared her own personal journey on how she made a name for herself, helped bust some common myths about personal branding, and gave some insightful truths we should focus on instead! Leanne provided the group with empowering reasons as to why we all should build our brands and how they can work alongside our organization's brand and values. The real life examples she shared were great to help us all stand out in the competition.

After our break we split into two groups for the AM Breakout Sessions. One of the breakout sessions was presented by

Bill Elliott, President and CEO of Wisconsin Hotel Lodging Association, and **Laura Nelson**, Associate Director of Sales with Visit Milwaukee. They discussed the State of the Industry in Wisconsin. Bill shared the trends for Wisconsin in 2025 and what we can expect. Laura spoke on the trends for Milwaukee in 2025 and things that Visit Milwaukee is seeing. The other breakout session was led by **Sarah Maio**, Vice President of Marketing at the Wisconsin Center District, **Julio Henriquez**, Vice President of Hospitality Levy at the Wisconsin Center District, and **Ryne Harwick**, Executive Chef Levy Restaurants where they discussed *Beyond the Plate: Sustainable Trends in Food & Beverage*.



Following the AM Breakout Sessions the group had the opportunity to check out the Volunteer Fair and have lunch before heading into the PM Breakout Sessions. Leanne Calderwood led the *I'm Just Following Up (And Other Things We Say That Compromise Our Value)* where she shared some real life email examples that should be avoided. Additionally, she provided the group with some insightful tips on how to reword your follow ups so you don't lose credibility and are left hanging with unread and unanswered communications. The second group was led by **Elizabeth Schlicht**, Association Accumen, where she discussed *Ethical Approaches to Solving Problems*. She shared ways in which we can navigate conflicts between personal values, organizational values, and how to empower our team members so that they can approach these situations with confidence.

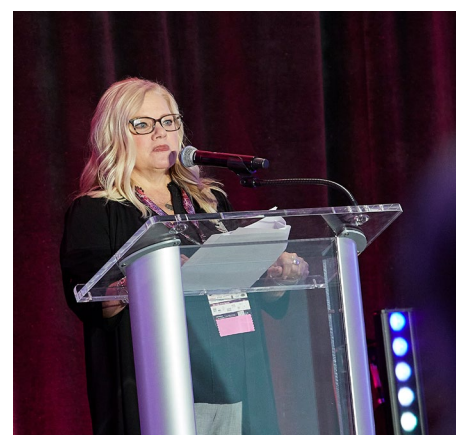


The day concluded with the NSA Wisconsin Speaker Showcase which was led by emcee **Roger Wolkoff** and featured seven expert speakers delivering 10-minute micro-keynotes.

Eliz Greene: *Master the Mayhem: Event Stress Survival Guide* gave us some great stress management tips and shared her 5-step strategy to help event professionals keep the stress from following us home. Following Eliz, we had **Jeff Kortez:** *Give 'em C.R.A.P. to Secure Client and Attendee Loyalty* where he discussed the importance of strong relationships with clients, vendors, and attendees. His five letter acronym is the key to building lasting connections and creating impactful experiences that keep clients coming back. After Jeff we had **Paula Houlihan:** *The ABCs of Choice: Reprogram Your Brain for Better Decisions* where she shared a four-step process to help professionals take back control and step out of autopilot so you'll be able to walk away with the tools to make better choices, reduce stress and navigate events with greater confidence. Following Paula we had **Roger Wolkoff:** *Beyond the Plate: Sustainable Trends in Food & Beverage*. Next up we had **Deborah Biddle:** *The Text That Changed Everything* where she shared the importance of creating spaces



where everyone feels valued. She shared real life experiences that redefine what belonging truly means. Following Deborah we had **Kathie Rotz:** *Letting Go Of Controls: Finding Balance in the Events Industry* where she shared a personal story about letting go of controls and how shifting your mindset can lead to greater



success and prepare you for any challenge. Our final speaker was **Patty Hendrickson:** *Fingerprints of Leadership: Leaving a Lasting Impact in the Events Industry* where we explored the shift from self-leadership to peer leadership and how to foster mentorship and collaboration in high-pressure event environments. ▴







Spring Spectacular Recap

By Nickie Rouleau

I had so much fun at Spring Spectacular this year! The Hyatt was the perfect setting for our Vegas speakeasy-themed night, and people really went all out with their outfits—it was such a fun vibe from the start.

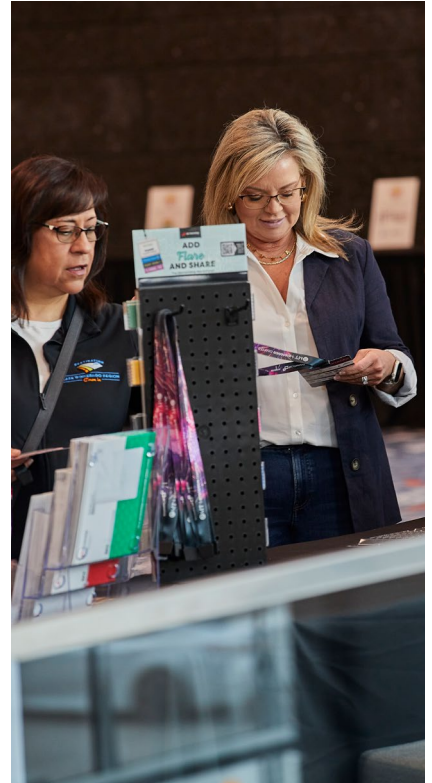
There were tasty bites all around (I definitely went back for seconds), and the team from Vegas on Wheels was amazing. They brought such great energy and kept the casino games running smoothly all night.

One of my favorite parts was the playing card name tags—such a clever touch! I got really into trying to make the best poker hand... even though I had no idea what I was doing at first.

We ended the night with raffle prizes, lots of laughs, and just a really great energy all around. Huge thanks to everyone who helped make it happen—it was a blast! ▴







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MPI-WI May Education Event Recap

MPI-WI gathered in Green Bay on May 14th and 15th for a program filled with “power claps” and “Go Pack Gos” hosted by the Legacy Hotel, Discover Green Bay, and the Green Bay Packers. The event kicked off with a behind the scenes tour of Lambeau Field, highlighting the stadium’s history while showcasing some of the private event space and available suites. The tour ended with a walk through **THE** tunnel to take a full group picture (*see front cover*) on the field. The group returned to the Legacy Hotel for a reception in the Cardinals Crest Lounge with a delicious spread of food, access to the rooftop deck overlooking Lambeau, and a mixology class hosted by **Tony Oczus**.



The next day, the group reconvened for a networking lunch and educational session in the Atrium at the Legacy Hotel – an event space with endless natural light. **Bob Hornacek**, Assistant Executive Director of Paul’s Pantry, thanked the group in-person for donations collected. Paul’s Pantry was started as a result of a need to care for hungry people in the community who are unable to purchase enough food for their family. Bob shared that Paul’s Pantry is seeing record needs in their community in recent years. Members of MPI shared details of upcoming events and chapter sponsors were recognized before Pat Cavanaugh started his session.





Pat Cavanaugh is the Director of Growth and Performance at Jadin | Jones. Pat has a unique blend of leadership experience that spans nearly 20 years in roles within education, corporate, non-profit, and professional sports. His presentation, Building Growth and Performance through Communication and Trust, highlighted the essential skills needed to thrive amidst the challenges we face in event planning. The session demonstrated how the best event planners, hosts, and vendors lead by design, not default. The concept that your ordinary is someone else's memorable seemed to resonate with the room as we reflected about ways we can intentionally approach our mundane to create the best experience for those we're interacting with, both clients and colleagues. Whether you're picking up one of the many books Pat referenced, building

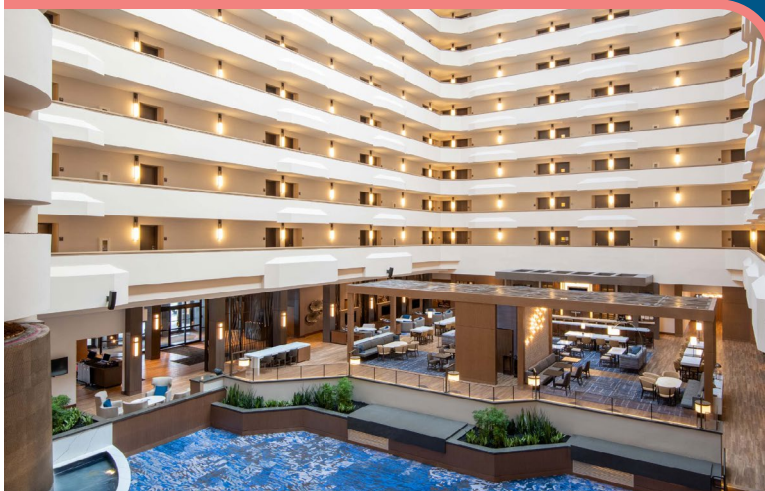


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out your deposit and withdrawal lists for the trust bank exercise, or planning your rounding routine, the session was filled with tangible takeaways for everyone in the room. The day ended with one more reception and a raffle in the Cardinals Crest Lounge. The May Education Event was a fantastic way to wrap up the spring season while looking ahead to summer. ▴



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**FOOD
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Executive Chef Aaron Morse

Legacy's Executive Chef, Aaron Morse, knew early on that restaurants were his calling. Raised in De Pere, Wisconsin, Chef Aaron's passion for being inside a professional kitchen started at the age of thirteen while working in his best friend's family restaurant. Seeking out every opportunity to expand his skills and share his love of Wisconsin food, Chef Aaron has one thing in mind: creating comfortable and memorable culinary experiences with exceptional local ingredients.

A graduate of Fox Valley Technical College School of Culinary Arts, Chef Aaron was selected to be the Executive Chef of Black & Tan at just 21 years old and enjoyed that role for over 16 years before joining the team at Three Three Five. A regular television guest culinary talent, Chef Aaron's fondness for fine food brings him to lead one of Green Bay's new most exquisite restaurants, Heritage. ▴

LOBSTER ROLL

INGREDIENTS

- 4-6 oz Lobster Meat
- 1 oz Lemon Old Bay Aioli
- 1 TBS Fennel Stalk
- 1TBS Celery
- 3-4 Sliced Rounds Radish
- Salt to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Steam lobster for about 14 min or boil lobster for about 10 min.
2. Shock in ice bath about 10 minutes or till cold enough to handle.
3. If you can find already cooked lobster meat, you can use that as well.
4. Cut lobster in half, pull lobster meat, rinse, and cube into chunks. Crack claws and pull meat out as well.
5. Place lobster meat into bowl mix with lemon Old Bay Aioli.
6. Dice celery and fennel stalk and mix in with lobster.
7. Slice the radish and julienne mix in with the rest.
8. Taste for salt.
9. Toast New England style hotdog bun on both flat sides.
10. Make slice on top of bun and fill with lobster. Mix and enjoy!



Planner Spotlight: BECKY KOCH

BECKY KOCH



As an introvert, Becky Koch might prefer to stay behind the scenes—but she’s the kind of planner who quietly ensures everything runs seamlessly. “I love taking care of all the fires without others even knowing there were any,” she shares. It’s that calm, steady leadership that makes her such a valuable force in the world of events.

Becky is drawn to the organization and structure of event planning, but it’s the joy and energy of attendees that truly lights her up. She thrives on the buzz of a successful gathering and the impact events have—whether through education, networking, or just plain fun.

When working with partners and suppliers, Becky values transparency above all. “I don’t like playing games to get a deal. I believe in being honest about what my group needs, what we want, and what we can deliver in return.” It’s this straightforward and respectful approach that builds strong, lasting partnerships.

Outside of work, Becky is all about family. Time with her husband, daughter, son, and dad is what fills her cup and keeps her grounded.

And when she needs a mental reset? Her go-to anthem is “Fight Song” by Rachel Platten—a reminder that no matter the challenge, she has the strength to rise and move forward. ▀



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Supplier Spotlight: ED BUCHNER



ED BUCHNER

Majic Productions, Inc.

What are three unique things that set your company apart?

Three unique things that set Majic Productions apart from the competition:

- 1. Seamless Execution & White-Glove Service** – From pre-event planning to on-site execution, Majic provides top-tier service with a detail-oriented team that guarantees flawless AV performance for high-budget events.
- 2. High-Impact, Custom AV Solutions** – Majic Productions specializes in creating fully customized AV experiences, ensuring every event has a unique, high-end production that exceeds client expectations.

3. Cutting-Edge Technology & Innovation – Majic stays ahead of the industry by investing in the latest AV equipment, interactive technology, and creative design solutions to deliver unparalleled experiences.”

What is your business philosophy or approach to working with clients?

Majic puts the relationship with partners and potential partners ahead of anything else. We would rather be a good source of information than just another AV company trying to get your business.

What unique solutions or services do you offer to meeting and event planners?

One unique solution is that Majic Productions provides a seamless, turnkey AV production experience for meeting and event planners, handling everything from concept development to flawless execution. Our team specializes in custom stage and scenic design, ensuring every event is visually stunning and uniquely tailored to match the client’s vision. We utilize advanced 3D renderings and pre-visualization technology, allowing planners to see and refine their event’s look before it even comes to life. With meticulous attention to detail and a commitment to innovation, we transform spaces into immersive experiences that leave lasting impressions.

What’s something you’re passionate about outside of work? What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

I like to volunteer on the MPI-WI board. It is great to meet with peers in my field and come up with ways to better our experiences in the events world. I also like to camp with the family, and watch the kids participate in sports and theater productions.

What would your walk-up song be?

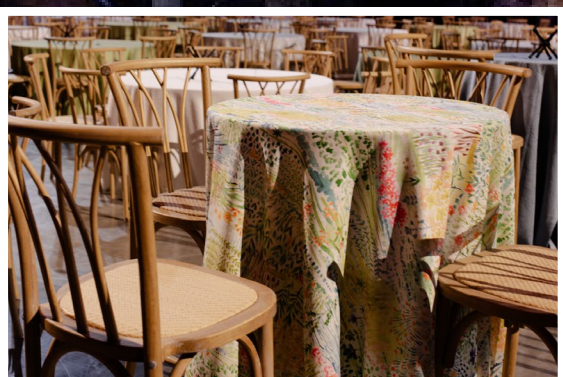
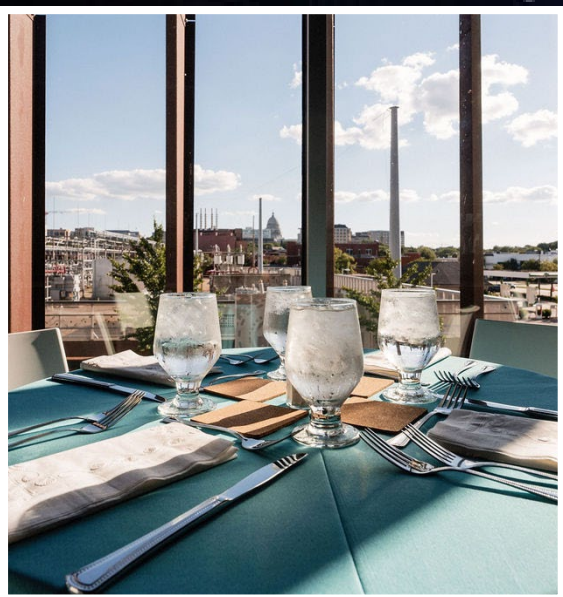
Dream Weaver by Gary Wright speaks to me, but if I were walking up to a stage, Genesis (about 38 seconds in) by Justice (a French electronic music duo). It has such a tight beat.



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Volunteer Spotlight: AMBER FARINA

If you're interested
in volunteering,
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admin@mpiwi.org



We're sending a **HUGE THANK YOU** to Amber Farina for going above and beyond to support Spring Education Day for MPI-WI!

Amber's bright attitude, willingness to jump in wherever needed, and positive energy made a big impact on the day's success. Whether it was behind the scenes or greeting attendees with a smile, she brought her A-game (as always!).

Thank you, Amber, for your dedication and positive spirit—you make our events stronger and our community better!





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WHO'S IN THE NEWS

Compiled by Nickie Rouleau



LINDSEY HESS – I am now 60% part of UW Madison Department of Sociology and 40% High Road Strategy Center, with a slight title change to Events and Administrative Coordinator.



NOTE: if you have any news to share in this column, please contact Nickie Rouleau, Director - Publications & Community Outreach, nrouleau@wcd.org.



Lexi Potts • 2nd
Event Sales & Service Coordinator
3w • Edited •

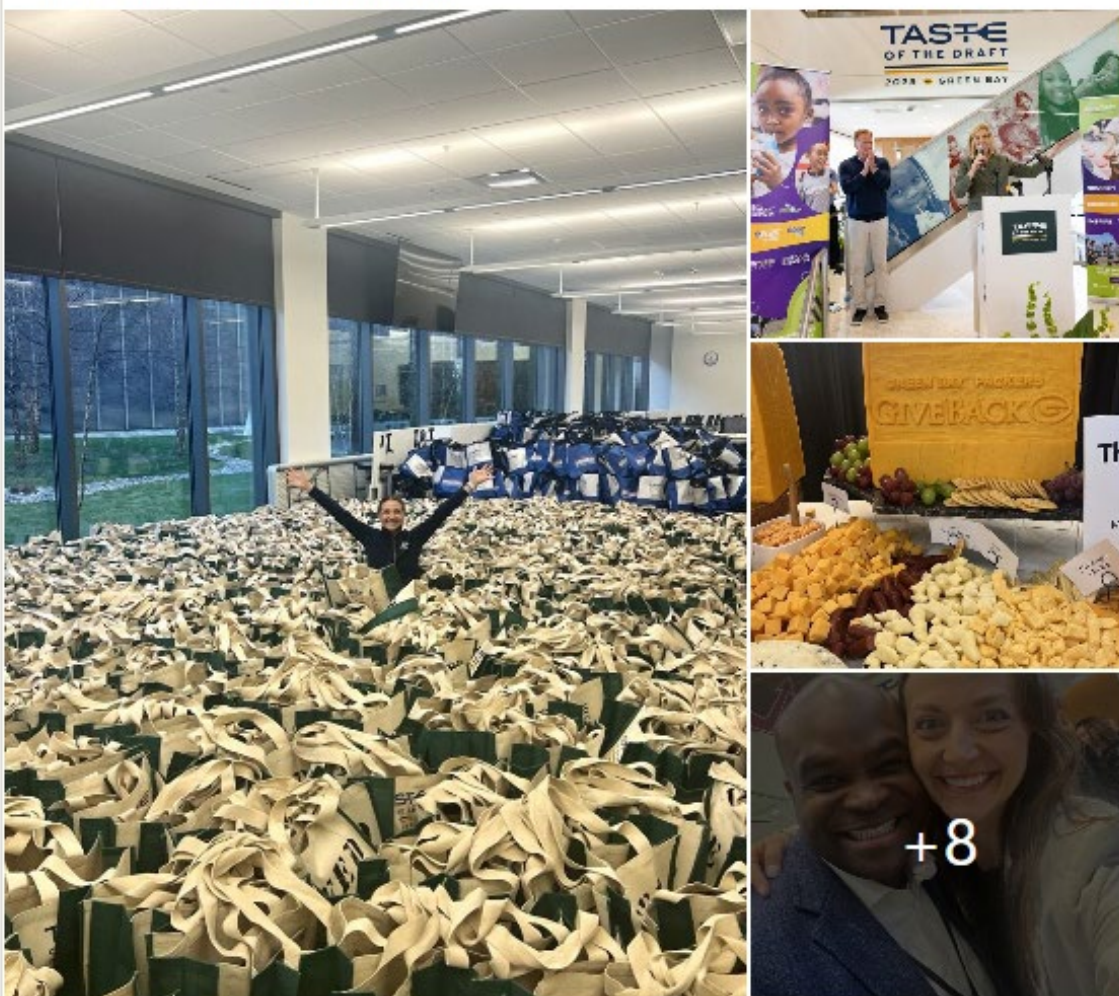
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What a night to remember! Taste of the Draft was the perfect pre-draft celebration for Green Bay.

From 20 Wisconsin supper clubs, 28 **Green Bay Packers** alumni to 4 celebrity chef's, 4 stages of live entertainment, a beer garden, Miss America, old fashioned's and even ice cream drinks - too much fun!

But beyond the great food and festivities, the night had a powerful purpose -to raise critical funds for **GENYOUth**'s mission to combat student food insecurity. In honor of the 90th **National Football League (NFL)** Draft, up to 90 schools across the state of Wisconsin will receive nutrition grants — funding Grab and Go meal carts, milk coolers, and more to help ensure every student has access to healthy meals.

Big thanks to everyone who came out and made this night a success. Now it's time for the 2025 NFL Draft - Let's go!!



478

24 comments • 1 repost





Nickie Rouleau • 2nd
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Feeling incredibly honored and grateful today 🧡

Thank you to Milwaukee County Supervisor [Jack Eckblad](#) for recognizing me at today's Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors meeting for my community work with the Bay View Neighborhood Association and Bay View Bash.

I love Milwaukee—and especially Bay View—so much. It's truly the people, the passion, and the energy of this neighborhood that keeps me showing up, volunteering, and creating spaces for connection.

This recognition means a lot, but the real reward is getting to work alongside so many amazing neighbors who care just as much.

[#MilwaukeeProud](#) [#BayViewLove](#) [#CommunityMatters](#) [#BVNA](#)
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 Maria Peot, CMP and 131 others

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2025 CHAPTER EVENTS

07 2025 JULY

JUNE AUGUST

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1	2

July TBA // Summer Social

08 2025 AUGUST

JULY SEPTEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	1	2	3	4	5	6

August 21, 2025 // Annual Awards Gala
Sheraton Milwaukee Brookfield, Brookfield, WI

09 2025 SEPTEMBER

AUGUST OCTOBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	1	2	3	4

September 18, 2025 // Chapter Program
Lake Lawn Resort, Delavan, WI

10 2025 OCTOBER

SEPTEMBER NOVEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1

October 23, 2025 // Chapter Program
Madison Marriott West – Middleton, WI