



Labor survey data screams "help!"

Access complete 2011 Retirement and Departure Intentions Study online at www.fdlac.com.

When the results of the Retirement and Departure Intentions Study were presented in 2008 it was clear that within a very short period of time Fond du Lac County would be facing a significant labor shortage. Since then we have found that not only is the future of labor, specifically skilled labor, a major concern, but it is no longer an issue that we will be faced with in the future. Instead, it is here today and will likely remain a critical issue for the foreseeable future.

The 2010 US Census data shows that as workers leave the Fond du Lac County labor pool over the next 15 years, there will be a gap of almost 12,000 individuals available to replace said departures. If we factor in the departure of area high school graduates for post-secondary education, military service or for any other reason and our labor market penetration rate remains somewhat consistent at 72 percent, the gap in the number of retirees versus the number of available replacement workers grows to over 19,000 by 2026. *(Continued on page 5)*



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Upclose and personal - Project GRILL tours take-off

Students from eight area high schools were given the opportunity to get up-close and personal with area manufacturers during the Project GRILL Tour of Manufacturers in November. The purpose of the tour was to give students the chance to see manufacturing at work and interact with area professionals. Giving both students and instructors the opportunity to see what is getting made, and how, right here in Fond du Lac has proven to be very valuable.

"Some of my students have participated in these tours for three years," said Bill Stangl, Technical Education Instructor at Fond du Lac High School. "Whether it is their first or third time, this is something they look forward to from the beginning of the semester. Being able to see what opportunities await them and ask questions and simply take in all that these facilities have to offer is extremely beneficial to these students."

Additionally, manufacturers find great value in the event as well. Opening their facilities to members of the future workforce not only makes sense but is something that most find extremely valuable and enjoyable. "I am always amazed with the number of questions asked," said Jerry Wells, project manager at JF Ahern and guide for the November tours. "And even more than that, the caliber of questions is extremely high and demonstrates the interest and skill that these students have."

Wells went on to explain that the students asked numerous questions about robotics and how manufacturing facilities have approached technological advances. "It is great to see students intrigued and seeking out information about future career options."

This year, students from Fond du Lac, Laconia, North Fond du Lac and WLA high schools toured Mayville Engineering Co. (MEC), Kondex Corp., J.F. Ahern Co. and Mid-States Aluminum Corp. Meanwhile, students from Campbellsport, Lomira, Mayville and Oakfield high schools toured MAG, Manowske Welding, Mercury Marine and Nemesis Metals. In December, schools will tour the four companies not visited in round one.

Project GRILL matches high school tech ed programs with area manufacturers on a year-long quest to build a working charcoal grill from scratch. The students work with their business partners to design, test and build a grill by May that can cook a dozen brats in an hour.

Project GRILL aims to build relationships

between schools and manufacturers to open students' minds to careers in manufacturing. The Tour of Manufacturers will be followed in March by its complement – representatives from the partner manufacturers will visit the high schools to meet students and instructors and see how work on their grills is progressing.



Students from Fond du Lac High School listen as Jerry Wells of JF Ahern, right, explains the inner workings of the JF Ahern pipe fabrication facility.

Coffee Connection Dec. 7

Hosted by: A&E Jewelers
131 S. Rolling Meadows Drive
Time: 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

A&E Jewelers has been serving Northeastern Wisconsin since Rich and Corinne Meyer opened their first store in Oshkosh, 19 years ago. The company has grown from a very small coin and jewelry shop to a four-location Diamond Center and Pandora Concept Store. A&E Jewelers carries several designers, including Pandora, Citizen, LeVian, Benchmark and Frederic Sage. They also feature estate jewelry, precious gemstones, colored diamonds, sterling silver and gold fashions, a huge selection of engagement rings and they offer expert jewelry repair and insurance appraisals. It is A&E Jewelers mission to help celebrate the most precious moments in your life with the finest jewelry buying experience around.

Cost: \$2 and 2 Business Cards
Register by: December 6

Business Connection Dec. 20

Hosted by: Interior Systems, Inc. (ISI)
525 W. Rolling Meadows Dr.
Time: 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

In 1979 Lindsey Bovinet set out to bring his passion for art and craftsmanship together. That drive laid the foundation for Interior Systems, Inc., which has been bringing interior design solutions to leading companies around the globe for over 32 years. Specializing in restaurant, retail and education markets, the company serves clients including McDonald's, Harley-Davidson, Kohler and Famous Dave's. ISI proudly serves local businesses as well, such as Ala Roma restaurant located on Pioneer Road. From concept to completion, ISI consults, designs, builds and installs interiors unlike any other. Attend the December 20 Business Connection and get a behind-the-scenes look at where amazing projects take form and plans come to life. In addition to facility tours, plus a bevy of hors d'oeuvres and drinks, you'll have the opportunity to win a getaway to Moondance Bed & Breakfast, right here in Fond du Lac! To view ISI's work, visit www.isiamerica.com and get a further 'behind-the-scenes' peek on Facebook and Twitter at [isidesign](https://www.facebook.com/isidesign).

Cost: \$2 and 2 Business Cards (\$5 if not pre-registered)
Deadline to Register: Dec. 19

**YPF
Holiday Gathering**

**Thursday, December 8
Coliseum Bar & Grill**

6 p.m.
Cost: \$10

Join YPF as we ring in the holiday season! YPF members will be ringing bells for the Salvation Army from 2 - 6 p.m. at Pick N' Save (Pioneer Rd). Later in the evening YPF will be meeting for a Holiday Social at the Coliseum.

Visit www.ypdf.org for more information!

**FDL Area
Human Resources
Holiday Social**

Monday, December 5
Whispering Springs Golf Course

5:30 p.m. Cocktails and Hors d'oeuvres; 6:30 p.m. Dinner
Cost: \$20

Celebrate the season with the Fond du Lac Area HR Association and gather with a purpose! This year the group has chosen the Solutions Center - Warming Center as the beneficiary of its donations. Bring 2 items for the center and receive a free drink ticket at the social! Some items to consider include: paper plates, paper towels, toilet paper and paper cups.

Bring a wrapped gift (\$15-\$20 value) for a traveling gift exchange.

Soup's on!

Join the Leadership Fond du Lac Alumni Group for Empty Bowls to raise money for local food pantries.



When: 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.,
Wednesday, December 7

Location: Ramada Plaza Hotel

Cost: \$15 pays for soups, bread/roll, drink and dessert, plus a ceramic bowl handmade by area students. Reservations for tables of eight or more are accepted and encouraged. Tickets can be purchased at the door or in advance at the AC office, 207 N. Main St. For more information call (920) 921-9500.

Featuring soups by Boda's Restaurant, Cibo Steaks & Spirits – Ramada Plaza Hotel, Salty's Seafood & Spirits, South Hills Golf & Country Club, Trepanier's Backyard Grill & Bar and Tuckers.

Sponsored by:



DECEMBER COMMITTEE MEETINGS

1	YPF Program & Events	7:30 a.m.
	DFP Executive	Noon
5	HR Board	3:30 p.m.
7	DFP Design Review Board	Noon
8	YPF Marketing	Noon
	Ag Board	Noon
13	DFP Organization	8:30 a.m.
	YPF Executive	11 a.m.
	YPF Membership	Noon
14	Education Committee	7:30 a.m.
	DFP Board @ The Nielsen Co.	8 a.m.
	Leadership Alumni Board	Noon
15	DFP Events @ Library	8 a.m.
16	AC Executive	7 a.m.
19	Legislative Forum	8 a.m.
21	Ambassadors Club	7:30 a.m.
	Ag Ambassadors	Noon
23	AC Board	7 a.m.

2011 Departure Study Release and BIE Event

Date: Thursday, December 1, 2011

Time: 5 - 8 p.m.

Location: Marian University Stayer Center

* Keynote Speaker: William C. Symonds

SEATING IS LIMITED



Saturday, December 3

Downtown Fond du Lac

Downtown Fond du Lac will host Home for the Holidays, a day of holiday entertainment and old-fashioned fun. The following events will be taking place on Saturday, December 3.

Winter Market

New to the festivities this year is the Downtown Winter Market. Many of your favorite vendors from the regular season Farmers Market will be selling homemade goods, seasonal items and crafts. The market will take place in the Main Street Plaza (Sheboygan St. & Main St.) from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Stop by for last minute, unique gift items.



Breakfast with Santa

Enjoy a tasty breakfast with Santa and Mrs. Claus! From 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. the Ramada Plaza Hotel, along with Santa and Mrs. Claus will host breakfast in the Crystal Ballroom.

A children and adult breakfast buffet will include orange juice, donut holes, cookies, scrambled eggs, hash rounds, French toast sticks and sausage links. Coffee will be included in the adult price. Adults \$9.00, Children 3-12 \$7.00, under 3 free with paid Adult. Please make reservations, as space is limited.

Call the Ramada at (920) 923-3000.

Visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus

Capture the season! Have your picture taken with Santa and Mrs. Claus from Noon to 3 p.m. at the Children's Museum of Fond du Lac.

Cibo's Chili Crawl

In 2010, 90 participants crawled to 11 different downtown businesses, sampling chili and voting on their favorites. After the votes were tallied Cibo Steaks & Spirits took the title of Chili Crawl Champion. Who will be this year's winner? You be the judge!

Cibo's Chili Crawl will take place from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Participation costs \$10. Registration will start at 10:30 a.m. inside MidTown Pub (1 N. Main St.). Crawlers will receive a map and voting ballot, which also serves as a voucher for an "I survived the Downtown Chili Crawl" t-shirt.

Carriage Rides

Sit back, relax and enjoy a carriage ride through downtown Fond du Lac. Whispering Hills Clydesdales will be offering rides from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. during the Home for the Holidays event. The pick-up and drop-off point will be at the Main Street Plaza (Sheboygan St. & Main St.). Rides provided free of charge, tips appreciated.

Holiday Parade

The day finishes up with the KFIZ Holiday Parade at 4:15 p.m. and the lighting of Santa's Tree in Veteran's Park. Carolers will be singing at the park beginning at 3:30 p.m. entertaining the crowd while they await Santa's yuletide greeting.

For more information visit www.downtownfdl.com.

Don't take yourself out of the loop! "Unsubscribe" Carefully

Taking control of your inbox is easy! If you feel you are receiving too many emails and updates don't let frustration get the best of you and run the risk of being uninformed. Instead of "unsubscribing" to all AC emails and updates pick and choose what you want to receive. To do this, simply access an AC email from your inbox, scroll to the bottom of the email and click "[Update Profile/Email Address](#)" (NOT "SafeUnsubscribe"). You will be directed to submit your request to update and will be sent an email detailing your options.

Remember – by clicking unsubscribe at any time you are removed from all AC contact lists and will not receive beneficial AC notices including the AC Newsletter, Business Connection Updates, Coffee Connection Updates, Upcoming Events and more.

AC Closed Dec. 24 - Jan. 1

The AC office, 207 N. Main St., will be closed between the Christmas and New Year holidays. The office will be closed Saturday, December 24, through and including Sunday, January 1. The office will be open until 4:30 p.m. on Friday, December 23, and will reopen at 7:30 a.m. on Monday, January 2, 2012.



Agri-Business Council gathers to celebrate successful year

Alice in Dairyland Katie Wirkus served as the keynote speaker at the Fond du Lac Area Agri-Business Council Annual Meeting on Thursday November 3 at the Holiday Inn. Wirkus thanked the Agri-Business Council for the countless hours of work the group puts in to educate and promote agriculture throughout the Fond du Lac area.

Valuable Volunteers Make it Happen

During the evening, the entire Agri-Business Council membership was thanked for their support of the Agriculture Showcase by outgoing chair Becky Zivkovich of the Bank of Oakfield. Over 2,500 people attended the event in 2011. Rebecca Ries of Bluestem Bison, 2012 event co-chair, spoke about the 2012 event and the activities planned.

Ray Halbur, past president of the Agri-Business Council presented outgoing President Dick Schaefer of AgriPartners, with

the Harold Reinecke Memorial Award for his year of successful service.

Schaefer was also recognized as a retiring board member after serving seven years on the Board of Directors. Chris Costello (nine years) Fred Tidemann of Alta Genetics (six years) and Lisa Ferry of Fer-Li Farm (three years) were also recognized with plaques for their service on the board.

The Agri-Business Council elections were held to fill at least three of the open seats. An unanimous vote was held with

the following elected to the board: Kurt Petik of BMO M&I Bank, Tammy Wiese of Wiese Farms and Dan Flood of Flood Farms.

Committee chairs were also thanked for taking command of the many dedicated and valuable volunteers for each event. Jeff Montsma (golf outing), Tim Haack (Ag Ambassador), Becky Zivkovich (Ag Showcase) and Randy Kunsman and Katie Mattison (Breakfast on the Farm) were presented with certificates for their year of service.



The Ag Annual Meeting honored numerous volunteers, including 2011 committee chairs. From left, Tim Haack, Jeff Montsma, Dick Schaefer (back), Becky Zivkovich, Katie Mattison and Katie Wirkus (2011 Alice in Dairyland).

Teacher of the Year Award

Brenda Gudex, the AC's director of agricultural programs, presented two deserving teachers with the Agri-Business Council Teacher of the Year Award. Each of the teachers continued agriculture education in the classroom beyond the visits from the Agricultural Ambassadors. Both first grade teachers, Wendy Hayes, Friendship Learning Center and Kathy Parish, Waters Elementary School, incorporated agricultural-related field trips, science projects and other activities into their daily curriculum. Both teachers received \$100 for use in their classroom.

Successful Ag Ambassador Silent Auction

Spirited bidding had great results as the Agricultural Ambassador Silent Auction raised over \$7,000 to support the program. Profits from the silent auction will go directly into classrooms to benefit the Ag Ambassador Program, helping educate county youth about agriculture. Thank you to all donors and buyers who supported the auction! Some of the highly sought-after items included:

- Green Bay Packer tickets vs Tampa Bay, donated by Lake Breeze Dairy - \$600 to Mike Immel
- Two Milwaukee Brewer tickets for opening weekend, donated by Mike Rankin - \$125 to Jeff Montsma
- Two Ag Bags donated by Dave and Kim Butz - \$900 to Tim Haack and \$1500 to Dave Schmitz
- Bison Dinner for 12 prepared by Pat and Rebecca Ries to the DNC for \$1,010 (with heavy contention from some of our most well known political celebrities)
- Ron and Chris Schwenck will prepare a Dessert for each month in 2012 for the Ag Service Center for \$450. Badgerland Financial paid \$425 for a second dessert from the Schwencks.

Breakfast on the Farm

Katie Mattison, Badgerland Financial, co-chair for the 2011 Breakfast on the Farm thanked the members of the Agri-Business Council for the many hours of hard work spent planning the council's most successful Breakfast on the Farm. Mattison presented Bill Eberle and Clay Reese of Rosendale Dairy with a clock thanking them for inviting the Agri-Business Council and nearly 10,000 guests to their farm for the event.

The site for the 2012 Breakfast on the Farm was also announced. The event will take place at the Dave and Kim Butz farm near Fond du Lac; Dave and Mary Schmitz will serve at the co-chairs for the big event.

For more information on the Agri-Business Council visit www.fdlac.com or e-mail brenda@fdlac.com.

Training starts in February

Invest in SSS

Finding great workers is hard enough, keeping them is even harder. Oftentimes untrained supervisors learn this the hard way - but it doesn't have to be that way! Supervisory Skills Series (SSS) can make a real difference.

For more than 16 years, the Supervisory Skills Series, sponsored by the AC, has been providing excellence in leadership development. Instructor Dave Podeszwa provides real life learning situations for new and seasoned supervisors.

SSS emphasizes training that is practical, informative, educational and readily applicable. Classes are conducted in Fond du Lac one day a month for 13 months, allowing participants to learn and practice between sessions.

Managers in SSS learn how to avoid unnecessary conflict and how to assign challenging and rewarding tasks while providing employees with a sense of job fulfillment and satisfaction. Class topics include Leadership Style and Versatility, Communication, Coaching, Problem Solving and Time Management.



The next SSS session will start on February 21.

Visit www.fdlac.com to read about the program, review the schedule and topics and view the contract - or contact Gerrie Andrew at (920) 921-9500 or e-mail gerriea@fdlac.com.

"Supervisory Skills Series, led by Dave Podeszwa, took my game to the next level. I thought he was going to teach us how to manage others, but, instead he taught us how to understand and better manage ourselves. I learned things I could use right away and the hands-on practice in the classes helped solidify the material. It's great that the Association of Commerce can offer this kind of high caliber training for leaders in the community through Dave's classes."

Mike Feudner
Project Management Supervisor
Agnesian HealthCare

"SSS is an investment in time and money that we have found valuable and worthwhile. Our attendees have ranged from unofficial team leaders to department managers, with different experience levels. All have walked away with sharpened leadership skills and an increased awareness of and confidence in their abilities. It's a win-win for us: the employees see that we're making an investment in them, and their skills are enhanced."

Jennifer Griffith
HR Manager
Genencor

All hands on deck

(Continued from page 1)

If that doesn't speak for itself, perhaps the following will. In 2011 there will be an estimated 1,555 retirements throughout Fond du Lac County with 782 individuals available to enter the labor force, resulting in a gap of 773. Clearly, the labor supply crisis is here and now and solutions and a commitment to act are needed today.

This dire reminder was shared with the public at an eye-opening presentation and discussion on December 1 at Marian University - thanks to presenting sponsors Agnesian HealthCare and Mercury Marine. The event was just the start of the discussion and action plan needed to ensure the continued success of local businesses and the community as a whole.

The 2011 Retirement and Departure Intentions Survey asked over 3,000 Fond du Lac County workers penetrating questions about their retirement and post-retirement plans. Additionally, 45 key employers within Fond du Lac County were surveyed and asked questions concerning their own recruitment and retention efforts. Survey results were captured in a 26-page report, copies of which were handed out at the event.

The report included "Recommendations" that challenge the business and education communities to form lasting partnerships in order to prepare for the looming labor crisis. Recommendations call for the strategic and immediate attention of leaders in both business and education. Stronger business involvement, as well as refocused educational goals and the promotion of all career opportunities is needed in order to prepare the work force of the future. Additionally, success will require more organizations to come to the table ready to work on and commit to implementing solutions that will set Fond du Lac apart from communities competing for a shrinking labor pool.

The 2011 Retirement and Departure Intentions Study was a joint product of the Association of Commerce, the Fond du Lac Area Human Resource Association and Moraine Park Technical College.

AC Members can access the complete 2011 Retirement and Departure Intentions Study online at www.fdlac.com. For more information call (920) 921-9500.

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MEMBER NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Keller Celebrates 25 years of employee ownership

Keller, Inc., a commercial and agricultural design/build construction firm with offices in the Fox Cities, Madison, Milwaukee and Wausau celebrates 25 years of employee ownership in 2011. The momentous occasion was celebrated at a company-wide event in late October.

The company, founded in 1960 by Walter Keller, was sold to an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) in 1986. As Keller contemplated retirement in 1985, he searched for someone to take over ownership of his company. After researching the benefits of an ESOP, he decided the best thing he could do for his employees was to sell his company to them. Through the next nine years, employees bought the remaining shares owned by the Keller family and took over 100% ownership of the company in 2005.

Keller was named the Wisconsin ESOP Association ESOP Company of the Year in 2008 and maintains an active membership in the Association. For more information on Keller, Inc., Top Metal Builder in the Nation as reported by "Metal Construction News", visit www.kellerbuilds.com

Moondance Enterprises, LLC expands services

Moondance Bed & Breakfast now offers its 3.5 acre property as a wedding venue. Small wedding ceremonies may be held on the property with limited parking available for guests. For more information contact Susan Fiebig at (920) 251-2713 or e-mail info@moondancefdl.com.

Society President and CEO joins National Exchange Board

National Exchange Bank & Trust Chairman of the Board Peter E. Stone recently announced the election of Rick W. Parks, president and chief executive officer of Society Insurance, to the National Exchange Bank & Trust Board of Directors.

Parks joined Society Insurance, a mutual company, in July 2005, as senior vice president and chief operating officer. He was elected to the firm's Board of Directors in March 2008 and was named to his current position in August 2011.

Parks has more than 30 years of property-casualty insurance company experience. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Indiana State University.

National Exchange Bank & Trust, based in Fond du Lac, Wisc., operates out of 27 offices in East central Wisconsin and is an independent bank with more than \$1 billion in assets.

Society Insurance, founded in 1915, serves the insurance needs of businesses and is based in Fond du Lac, Wisc.



Rick W. Parks, President and CEO of Society Insurance

SAVE THE DATE ...

The AC Annual Meeting will be held Thursday, February 9, 2012, at the Holiday Inn of Fond du Lac. Members should watch for invitations in the mail and e-mail.

... AND START 2012 OFF RIGHT

Update your AC account with any new contact information, new associates, new web links that may have changed in 2011. Just send an email to info@fdlac.com with your changes.



Members eligible for healthcare discount

AC members with 2 to 50 employees are eligible for discount group health insurance plan, Chamber Plus Plan, through Network Health.

Designed specifically for small businesses, the Chamber Plus Plan provides a 10 percent discount and is based on a local health care network system with a large number of "in plan" local providers.

It offers a wide variety of plan designs, eight separate HMO plans, six separate POS plans and the ability to create your own consumer-driven plan. All agreements are for one year, and all plans are underwritten individually.

Network Health Plan was recently rated one of the top commercial health plans in the United States, ranking 31st in the nation according to U.S. News

& World Report. For nine consecutive years, the National Committee for Quality Assurance has granted an "Excellent" level of accreditation to Network Health Plan for its commercial HMO product line. The company is headquartered in Menasha.

The Chamber Plus Plan is sold exclusively through AC member insurance agencies. To receive the list, call the AC at (920) 921-9500.



Job network free to AC members

Finding the best candidates for your company and our community are important. The AC and NationJob provide a top-rated internet job board to help attract and retain a quality work force. Using the power of the internet, we can connect your company with the people you've been looking for.

AC members receive access to www.nationjob.com for free.

For details, call the AC at (920) 921-9500 or NationJob directly at (888) 256-0919.

Fond du Lac Business Barometer

Fond du Lac Business Barometer		2011	2010
October			
Building permits	Monthly one-family homes / Year to date	4 / 20	3 / 36
	Monthly one-family value / Year to date	\$ 583,000 / \$ 4,854,500	\$ 820,000 / \$ 5,447,400
	Monthly multiple units / Year to date	0 / 3	0 / 7
	Monthly multiple units value / Year to date	0 / \$ 2,150,000	0 / \$ 2,463,000
	Monthly commercial industrial / Year to date	1 / 11	0 / 10
	Monthly commercial industrial value / Year to date	200,000 / \$ 4,501,580	0 / \$ 4,989,590
Employment*	Number employed City / County	21,104 / 51,942	20,948 / 51,628
	Number unemployed City / County	1,850 / 3,653	1,862 / 3,694
	Percent unemployed City / County		8.2 / 6.7
Parking utilities revenues		\$26,393.72	\$ 26,072.71
Real estate transfers*			60
Utilities	Industrial power (KWH)		10,943,800
Sanitation permits (outside city)		3	3

* Results from Sept.