

instrumental in the continued success and growth of the restaurant and catering services. But don't expect many changes.

"Joe Pepowski will continue to be involved in daily operations. We know our success is partly fueled by the consistency of our service and our menu items," said Luedtke.

With their renowned chefs and familiar staff, restaurants create memorable ties to the community and keep customers coming back for more. And the must-have menu items are varied. For some, it's oysters on the half shell at Ciao, fajitas at Jalapeno's, Pad Thai at Lemongrass or craft brews at Red Eye.

In addition to offering a range of cuisine options, restaurants support tourism and contribute to the local economy by providing jobs and supporting other industries, such as agriculture and food production. Choosing to dine locally puts money right back into the hands of the community.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE REVITALIZATION OF DOWNTOWN WAUSAU:



"In terms of impact, a study by Civic Economics found that local restaurants recirculate an average of 79% of their revenue locally," said Blake Opal-Wahoske, executive director of the Wausau River District. He added that downtown restaurant spending was \$6,649,779 in 2022 among the 24 downtown restaurants.

A thriving restaurant culture requires many ingredients, including a supportive community that values dining out.

"Wausau is all about relationships. It really is," said Adam Pellett, food and beverage manager of CHAR Grillhouse in the Jefferson Street Inn. "Opening CHAR, we've been blessed with renewed acquaintances within Wausau and the business community."

Pellett said he's looking forward to being a part of Wausau's unique foodscape and growing with the downtown district.

"Wausau's success story includes the creative and collaborative efforts of the downtown business owners. So much planning and care have taken place over the years and it shows," said Pellett.

To Pellett, the dining atmosphere emanates style and sophistication in an inviting atmosphere.

"Bring friends, share real time together, relax. And come see us often," said Pellett.

A photograph of a window looking out onto a historic house with a brick chimney and a garden. The text "WELCOME HOME TO HISTORY" is overlaid in large white letters. At the bottom left is the logo for The Yawkey House Museum, which includes a stylized 'YH' monogram and the text "THE YAWKEY HOUSE MUSEUM 715.842.5750 www.marathoncountyhistory.org".

A collage of images showing various library buildings and a bookshelf. The text "MARATHON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY" is centered, with "Locations in Wausau, Athens, Edgar, Hatley, Marathon City, Mosinee, Rothschild, Spencer and Stratford" listed below. At the bottom, the phone number "715-261-7200" and website "www.mcpl.us" are provided. A vertical bar on the left contains the words "LEARNING", "COMMUNITY", "IDEAS", and "INFORMATION" in different colored boxes. At the bottom right, there is an image of a laptop and a smartphone.

MAKING A CAREER MOVE

Greenheck Group employs some of the finest people and hardest workers in eight states and three countries. The company began in 1947 when brothers Bob and Bernie Greenheck made a splash in the commercial air movement industry.

Now more than 75 years later, Greenheck Group has made its name as a global industry leader, a billion-dollar company, and one of America's best employers.



ARTICLE AND PHOTOS
BY GREENHECK

An organization like Greenheck Group doesn't develop without quality talent. The workforce in central Wisconsin is very familiar with the business that Greenheck Group does, and the track record they have as an employer. But did you know that a large number of its Wisconsin workforce are transplants? One such rising star is Udara Dharmasena.

Born in Sri Lanka, Udara came to the United States to attend college. With full support of her family, she set out to live the American dream envisioned while growing up a world away. That dream led her in pursuit of higher education and a career to varied American locales such as New York, South Carolina, Texas and finally Wausau.

"I have my American dream," Udara said. "And every day is another step to my American dream here."

Udara came to Greenheck Group to join the company's college co-op program in 2019, where she was able to utilize her industrial engineering degree. She worked in the summer and continued into a full-time role as a manufacturing engineer in the fall while attaining her master's degree in industrial management. In short time, her work ethic and dedication led her to transition to her current role as production supervisor, where she has a direct impact on the day-to-day success of the organization.



"It's exciting to see all the big changes and growth at Greenheck Group," Udara said. "It's so great to be a part of this company that gives both opportunity and challenge to anyone who wants it."

Udara considers the greater Wausau area her home for her family, where they interact with the friendly faces that make the community such a thriving place. A place where she and her family are making memories. A place where her career is entirely in her hands. A place for growth and success.

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GET CONNECTED TO THE GREATER WAUSAU AREA



ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY CHERYL WOLKEN

New residents in the Greater Wausau region wanted an easier way to make connections in their new community and that's how Wausome originated. Wausome is an initiative that breaks down the barriers to belonging by giving both those new to the area and current residents the resources they need to find their niche.

Wausome amplifies residents' ability to connect in a number of ways. First, individuals are invited to browse Wausome's comprehensive list of clubs and choose one to join:

- If you like mountain biking, join the Central Wisconsin Offroad

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Cycling Coalition!

- If you like curling, join a league with the Wausau Curling Club!

If sports aren't your thing, don't worry! There are cultural clubs, bands, gaming groups, service clubs and more.

Second, there's an opportunity for additional connections by communicating with others in Wausome's Wausau Area Connectors group. This group of local experts can answer your questions about living and working in the area. Are you looking for advice about activities for kids, places to take your dog, or rental options in the area? Simply ask one of the Wausau Area Connectors and they will offer their recommendations!

Third, Wausome offers connections to all of the other great resources in the area. The aim of this resource is to make those new to the area feel like a local in no time through videos about Wausau's history and by educating them on where they can find the best information about dining, outdoor recreation, events, arts and culture.

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For decades, Wausau's riverfront has captivated the imaginations of many who envision its possibilities encompassing housing, recreation and commercial ventures. The picturesque area — stretching south of Bridge Street to Thomas Street — is a source of inspiration for residents and visitors alike. With its potential for development, the riverfront draws the attention of city planners, entrepreneurs and residents who recognize the opportunity to create something exceptional in the heart of the city.

Dotted along the riverfront are success stories of how public parks and buildings went from concept to creation, such as Whitewater Park, Riverlife Park, the Dudley Tower and WOW. Developers and dedicated citizens invested years and capital, bringing these worthy endeavors to fruition.

“The ongoing improvements to the riverfront are becoming increasingly important as more residents will depend on these amenities in the coming years,” said Dave Eckmann, president of Wausau Opportunity Zone.

Here are some of the latest riverfront developments:

The Great Pinery Heritage Waterway is a shining example of Wausau's commitment to being a prominent water sports and recreation destination. The 108-mile-long water trail consists of

three rivers winding through central Wisconsin, starting at the Hat Rapids Dam in Oneida County and ending in Portage County at the Lake DuBay Dam. Hadley Landing on Clark Island will be a handicapped-accessible canoe and kayak launch for paddlers near downtown Wausau.

“It's part of an effort to enhance accessibility and make the whitewater course more recreational,” said Bill Bertram, president of the Wausau and Marathon County Parks and Recreation Foundation.

The River Edge Parkway project is intended to link parks, walkways and multiuse trails along the Wisconsin River. The trail network is a conduit for alternative transportation, allowing bicycles, pedestrians other non-motorized modes of travel access to and from residential and commercial areas throughout the corridor.

“This has the potential to increase activity and commerce along the riverfront and attract young professionals to the area,” said Eckmann.

Shared bikes are currently available between two stations — River Drive underneath Bridge Street near Riverlife Park and the other station south of the parking lots. Users can access the bikes for a minimal rate using an app on their smartphones and scan a QR code on the bike.

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