

By Alex Paniagua

Ken Thompson grew up in Stevens Point as one of eight kids. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in business from UW-Stevens Point, Thompson moved to Madison where he started his new job at First Federal Bank on State Street. Years later, he received a new opportunity from M&I Bank where he would work for 10 years with **Jim Dolister**, the founder of Capitol Bank.

New Chair: Ken Thompson

Capitol Bank president and CEO addresses year's priorities



"When [Dolister] had those plans to [start Capitol Bank], he recruited me and I joined in 1995," said Thompson. "I then went back and got an MBA and soon

thereafter I was named president in 2003. The rest is history."

Thompson has now been in the Madison banking industry for over 35 years. He completed

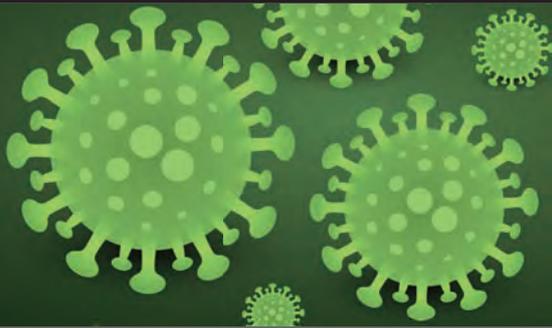
the Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2004 and Capitol Bank has since grown to about \$500 million in assets. In the fall of 2020, the bank celebrated the 25th anniversary of its founding.

Addressing his priorities for his year as WBA Chair, Thompson has a strong yet simple phrase at the top of his mind: it's time to take action.

"We've all just endured a year of the pandemic and things are opening up," Thompson said. "It's starting to feel good, businesses are doing better, and so I really think it's time to take action, to start doing some things we haven't really been able to do in the past year."

For Thompson, this call to action can be broken down into three sections, the first of which is advocating for the industry.

(continued on p. 4)



As Pandemic Ebbs, Bankers Cautiously Follow CDC Guidance

Bankers discuss their approach to updated guidelines

By Paul Gores

As COVID-19 cases recede in Wisconsin and rules about mask-wearing ease, banks are working to restore a feeling of pre-pandemic normality in their offices and branches. But it's hard to say exactly when – or if – banks will again

operate like they did back in 2019.

Following updated guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), many businesses have dropped requirements for face coverings by employees and customers. Banks in Wisconsin, while

remaining respectful toward the concerns of everyone who enters their indoor space, are among them.

Effective vaccines appear to be significantly reducing the number of new COVID-19 cases making bankers — and the

nation — hopeful the tide has turned. In Wisconsin, the seven-day average of new confirmed cases dropped from a high of more than 6,500 per day in mid-November to about 225 by the end of May.

"I would like to think at some point

we would go back to the carefree days that we used to know," said **Sonja Bjerkos**, senior vice president and human resources manager for Citizens First Bank in Viroqua. "But honestly, with what everyone went through, I think there will always be a little more

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Now is the Time to Take Action

By Kenneth D. Thompson

Wisconsin banks have always been catalysts for economic growth. Serving our communities is at the heart of what we do, and this seems to only grow more apparent each day. I believe it is important for us to take pride in these efforts, take in this new energy, and take action on behalf of our industry.

To encourage taking action, of course, is not an implication that bankers have not done so in the past year – in fact, just the opposite is true. Bankers have worked long nights and weekends to assure that their communities would rise above the surface of the challenges we have faced. We have been successful in this goal, and the assistance we provided continues to positively impact our communities in ways that we may never fully know.

This call for action is a



Message from the Chair

Kenneth D. Thompson

reminder of all the exceptional work bankers have done. As we step into a more hopeful outlook, our colleagues, our communities, and our industry will surely face new challenges. To take action is to ride this momentum into a new fiscal year by getting involved, exploring educational opportunities, and advocating on behalf of Wisconsin bankers. I recognize that many of you already dedicate your time to these objectives, but the ways in which these can be accomplished are always evolving and expanding.

Making Your Voice Heard

Demonstrating the different ways your bank engages with its community is one of the most effective ways to advocate for our industry, and it is also one of the easiest. Your voice plays a critical role in making change, and this can be done by sharing your positive stories with WBA so we can highlight our collective community impact. This is essential for emphasizing our goals and values, because no one can tell the story of Wisconsin bankers better than us.

Getting Involved

Continue to support your bank’s culture of giving back – not only through donations, but by serving on local boards, committees, or as an advocacy officer. These officers coordinate regulatory, legislative, and community advocacy efforts

for the bank by working with other bankers, WBA staff, state, local, and federal levels of government, and other state or national trade groups. About 60% of all member banks currently have a designated officer, and we are nearing closer to WBA’s goal of 70% to help further our priorities.

Supporting Our Advocates

Last year, 27 banks earned the BIGG (Bankers Involved in Grassroots and Government) Award, the highest achievement for bank involvement in advocacy for WBA. The list of Gold Triangle Award banks — those at the forefront of the industry’s political actions efforts — included 38 banks that contributed a specific threshold of support to the Alliance of Bankers for Wisconsin political conduit or WBA’s

(continued on p. 9)

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Based in Des Moines, Iowa, serving Iowa and Illinois



Tracy Peterson
480.259.8280

Based in Phoenix, Ariz., serving Arizona and Colorado



Putting a Bow on 2021 WBA Capitol Day

By John Cronin

Whether it be Washington D.C. or Madison, visits to our Capitol buildings are a bread-and-butter yearly activity for trade associations. They are a great way to accomplish numerous goals in a concentrated period of time, while also displaying that advocacy is a priority for our members and that we are active and engaged.

Meeting face to face with our elected representatives gives us the opportunity to convey the role and value of our industry in the communities they serve. That in turn sets the stage for relaying our legislative priorities; these may be law or policy changes we need enacted to remain successful or defense against threats that would negatively impact our members and industry. Capitol days also help establish or strengthen relationships



Advocacy Update

John Cronin

★ **WBA Capitol Day** ★
Our members were able to meet with over 85 legislators or staff members, and overall participation exceeded the last two years.

among our members and elected officials in ways that are mutually beneficial. In my role, I try to have positive connections with as many legislators as possible, but I have no problem saying legislators would much rather hear from you – the industry professionals and everyday banking practitioners – than me!

Needless to say, things were a little different this year for our 2021 Cap Day. The COVID-19 pandemic prevented us from being able to meet with legislators in person. In fact, the Capitol only just recently reopened to the public after being closed for over 13 months. Many bankers were also still facing travel restriction and would not have been able to participate.

Love or hate virtual meetings, they were our saving grace. They allowed us to adapt and did not let the pandemic spoil our Cap Day goals and opportunities. Through two phases, we gained valuable perspective and insight from legislative leaders and Department of Financial Institutions Secretary **Kathy Blumenfeld**. We then entrusted our members to schedule and facilitate virtual Phase II “in-district” meetings with their state senators and

representatives. It should come as no surprise that our meeting coordinators and participants knocked it out of the park!

Nearly all the meetings our members set up took place without a hitch and had great legislator and banker participation. As a result, our members were able to meet with over 85 legislators or staff members. Overall participation in our 2021 Cap Day exceeded the last two years, and the number of unique entities represented was the highest in at least the last four years.

I would like to sincerely thank everyone who participated in our 2021 Capitol Day—it could not have been successful without you! While the circumstances may not have been ideal, we hit the mark on what we set out to accomplish.

Cronin is WBA director – government relations. He can be reached at 608-441-1215 or jcronin@wisbank.com.

Chair Ken Thompson

(continued from p. 1)

Becoming engaged, learning the issues, and connecting with your local, state, and national officials is key to allow bankers’ voices to be heard. A collective approach to highlighting the challenges and achievements of Wisconsin bankers is a small task that carries powerful results.

Second on his list is education. After a year of working through all the curve balls thrown by the pandemic, there has been a greater appreciation for the complexity of banking. Having the mindset to be a lifelong learner and staying up to date on the latest information is one of the best ways to stay competitive and effective in this industry. With all the changes encountered in the

Read more about Thompson’s priorities on pgs. 2 and 9 of this issue.

past year alone, it has become more evident that the work of bankers is constantly evolving.

Finally, Thompson cites how necessary it is to get involved. He noted that while many bankers already do this in a myriad of ways, the economy and local communities receive unparalleled benefits from having the influence of a banker. This could be achieved in a wide variety of ways, including joining a board, a local committee, or volunteering for organizations.

These three items make up the itinerary for what taking action truly means during the new fiscal year.

“When I think of bankers, they quietly go about their business, they support and care about their customers deeply, and when you think about the influence that they can have collectively, it’s pretty impressive,” Thompson said. “We have 21,000 bankers working in the industry in the state of Wisconsin, and if we work together in doing all these things I mentioned previously, we really can make a difference.”

The difference that banks are making, Thompson continued, is one of many things that WBA is excited to share with the public. Giving credit where credit is due helps to further highlight the good being done and the change being brought to people, communities, and policy.

“To me, that’s the strength of the industry, and we’ve demonstrated that obviously in the past year,” Thompson concluded. “Now let’s just use that momentum to push ourselves forward.”

Thompson currently resides west of Madison with his wife, Kristine, and their two children. Much of his time outside of work is spent working with local nonprofits such as American Family Children’s Hospital, Agrace Hospice Care (treasurer), Catholic Charities, and the Breakfast Optimist Club of Madison. He serves on the board for Hy Cite Enterprises and Extreme Engineering, and in his free time he enjoys golfing, playing racquetball, and hunting.

Paniagua is WBA writer/editor –communications.

Surpassing Our Goals, Supporting Our Mission

A message from Rose Oswald Poels, WBA president and CEO

The mission of WBA is one that could not be driven without the support it receives. The association advocates for a variety of objectives to benefit you and your communities, such as PPP deductibility, ECORA, elder fraud legislation, and so much more. Not only does this support come from the membership – the WBA staff work to support this mission as well.

Each year, WBA holds a fundraiser for Wisbankpac and Alliance of Bankers for Wisconsin (ABW), two critical methods of promoting advocacy for the Wisconsin banking industry. Ultimately, the funds raised are used to help support pro-banking political candidates that are not “D” or “R”, but “B” for the “Banking” Party.

Contributions to the ABW Conduit and Wisbankpac go



Rose Oswald Poels and Daryll Lund compete in the chair-race event.

a long way in the defense of our industry. ABW is WBA’s registered conduit and allows an individual banker to direct contributions to the candidate or candidates of their choosing. Wisbankpac is the registered political action committee of WBA. The committee supports pro-banking candidates in Wisconsin by pooling

individual banker contributions to maximize their overall impact in the political process. Participants who helped support this cause chose from three possible options: A specified contribution from payroll, a check made out to one of the funds, or the purchase of one or more Jeans Day stickers for a casual dress day at the office. As a thank you for their generosity, WBA held a Summer Olympics-themed week of competitive chair races and Olympics trivia for all staff to participate in, giving the athletes and academics their own respective chance to prevail. My race against Executive Vice President and Chief of Staff **Daryll Lund** did not land me on the tri-level podium, but it was an exciting day that offered great weather and good fun.

The fundraiser welcomed any amount that staff was willing to donate, but participation in this fundraiser isn’t mandatory. However, I could not be prouder to state that collectively, the association of 45 people raised over \$9,590 to support these advocacy efforts, surpassing our goal of \$7,000.

Thank you to all staff members who participated in this advocacy fundraiser on behalf of the association. It is through such a passionate community of bankers, WBA staff, and associate members that we are able to extend beyond these goals we set out to achieve and carry out our mission of promoting a healthy environment for banks in Wisconsin through actively advocating, educating, and supporting our members.

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What it means to use deceptive marketing material

May a Person Use the Name, Logo, or Symbol of a Bank in Marketing Material?

Answer: Not if it is deceptive. More specifically, Wis. Stat. section 221.0404 provides, in summary, that no person may use the name, logo, or symbol of a bank, or such that is deceptively similar to that of a bank, in any marketing material provided to another person in a manner that a reasonable person may believe that the marketing material originated from the bank.

WBA is aware that potentially deceptive letters have recently circulated. Such letters often take the form of mortgage relief offers, solicited by individuals unassociated with the bank. Depending on



Compliance Q&A

Scott Birrenkott

the nature of these letters, they may violate section 221.0404. The Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions (DFI) has enforcement authority over this section, including the ability to issue cease and desist orders, and penalties. Banks that encounter such letters are encouraged to contact WBA and DFI.

Note that to be a violation, the letter must be deceptive, meaning that a reasonable person reading the letter could

Visit www.wisbank.com to learn more about this topic and other compliance-related issues.

believe it originated from the bank. A letter is not a violation if a reasonable person should recognize that it did not originate from the bank. This includes letters which display a disclaimer, such as to indicate that the sender is not affiliated with the bank.

Even if a letter is not deceptive, banks might hear complaints from their customers. In such situations, banks might consider discussing with its customers how and when it will issue correspondence. This way, customers can easily identify

what originates from the bank. Additionally, banks might consider discussing this matter with its customers at time of loan closing so they can be better prepared to identify these letters as not originating from the bank.

If you have any questions on this topic or other matters of compliance, contact WBA's legal call program at 608-441-1200 or wbalegal@wisbank.com.

Birrenkott is WBA assistant director – legal. For legal questions, please email wbalegal@wisbank.com.

Note: The above information is not intended to provide legal advice; rather, it is intended to provide general information about banking issues. Consult your institution's attorney for specific legal advice or assistance.

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Sen. Baldwin on Wisconsin’s Ag Industry, “Vital to a Strong Rural Economy”

By Alex Paniagua

The agricultural industry faces many challenges, and these have only been emphasized as a result of the pandemic. Through necessary reform such as the Enhancing Credit Opportunities in Rural America (ECORA) Act — legislation authored by Congressman **Ron Kind** (WI-03) to remove taxation on income from certain farm real estate loans made by FDIC-backed institutions — banks would be able to provide significant help by lowering loan rates and serving these borrowers in a more efficient manner. Advocating for the success of this industry requires a collective effort, and Senator **Tammy Baldwin** is one of these individuals making a powerful difference in Wisconsin’s ag community.



United States Senator

Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisconsin)

On April 29, Sen. Baldwin held her first hearing as chair of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies. The hearing, titled “Diversifying On-Farm Income: Opportunities to Strengthen Rural America” focused on how diversifying the operations of agriculture producers can result in more on-farm income as well as the challenges and opportunities of the industry.

“In Wisconsin and across the country, a strong agricultural economy is vital to a strong rural economy. As the pandemic continues to weigh on our rural communities and agriculture sector, we must deliver more support and solutions so our farmers and small businesses have the tools they need to get through this economic crisis,” said Sen. Baldwin.

Accessing newer and fairer markets has been a priority for Baldwin as well. As the discussion around climate change becomes more pressing, there is a growing number of farmers, ranchers, and agricultural workers looking to address this. Being able to assure profitability for these workers, who are also looking at solutions to climate issues, is a critical part of assisting

WBA looks forward to continuing its work with Sen. Baldwin to support Wisconsin’s agricultural industry by addressing these challenges and pushing for legislation.

the industry, though it has not come without obstacles.

Following the passage of the Economic Aid Act, farming partnerships were shut out from using a new and more generous loan calculation despite a co-authored provision by Baldwin and Sen. **John Thune** to allow sole-proprietor and self-employed farmers to use their gross income to calculate their maximum Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan. As a result of this,

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Congratulations, Graduates!

BankWork\$ Milwaukee Training Program for Bankers

The June BankWork\$ class has now graduated! WBA was proud to partner with Employ Milwaukee to bring this nationwide program to Wisconsin. BankWork\$ is a free, eight-week training program to prepare participants in primarily underserved neighborhoods for retail banking careers.

This graduating class of seven students included **Asjura Cole, Nakecia Dean, Alpha Jalloh, Lynn Kuester, Tionne Riley, Anthony Smith II, and Josiah Young**. WBA’s **Daryll Lund** attended the ceremony and congratulated the graduates on their achievement. Immediately after the graduation ceremony, a hiring event for students was held.

Over the eight weeks, these students learned the



hard and soft skills necessary for entry-level retail and operations positions. The program began in 2019 with the goal of training 400 students for positions in the banking industry over the next three years.



Thank you to the banks also sponsoring this program:

- » Associated Bank, Green Bay
- » Bank Five Nine, Oconomowoc
- » The Equitable Bank, Wauwatosa
- » First Federal Bank of Wisconsin, Waukesha
- » First Midwest Bank, Milwaukee
- » Johnson Financial Group
- » Spring Bank, Brookfield
- » Waterstone Bank, Milwaukee
- » Wells Fargo

- » Photo (left): WBA Executive Vice President—Chief of Staff **Daryll Lund** was on hand to congratulate the BankWork\$ graduates.
- » Top photo: BankWork\$ graduates (left to right) front row: Career Navigator **Dominique Webb, Nakecia Dean, Asjura Cole, Tionne Riley**, Instructor **Adriene Wright**, and **Josiah Young**. Back row: **Lynn Kuester, Anthony Smith II**, Employ Milwaukee Program Manager **Jovo Potkonjak**, and **Alpha Jalloh**.



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WBA Holds Ceremony Installing New Board

Meet the WBA 2021-2022 WBA Board of Directors

To formally announce the 2021–22 Board of Directors, WBA held a ceremony at the WBA headquarters in Madison which was also livestreamed to members around the state. Board members and committee chairs completing their service were recognized, and new board members and officers were welcomed. Thank you to all who have served, past and present, for your contributions to Wisconsin’s banking community!

Serving as WBA Board chair for the 2021-2022 fiscal year is **Ken Thompson**, president and CEO of Capitol Bank.

“Ken brings decades of banking experience and a wealth of knowledge to the WBA Board,” said **Rose Oswald Poels**, WBA president and CEO. “He will do an excellent job of leading our Board and industry forward in the post-pandemic economy.”

Also serving as officers on the WBA Board are: Chair-Elect **Dan Peterson**, president and CEO of The Stephenson National Bank & Trust, Marinette; Vice Chair **Donna Hoppenjan**, president and CEO of Mound City Bank, Platteville; and Past Chair **Paul Kohler**, president and CEO of Charter Bank, Eau Claire.



Pictured are the 2021-2022 WBA Board of Directors: Front row: (left to right) **Timothy Kotnour**, **Paul Northway**, **Terry Rosengarten**, **Joe Peikert**, WBA President and CEO **Rose Oswald Poels**, **Jennifer Provancher**, **Paul Kohler**, and **Ken Thompson**. Middle row: (left to right) **Mark Wierman**, **Jay Mack**, **Donna Hoppenjan**, **Mark Erickson**, and **Daniel Ravenscroft**. Top row: (left to right) **Greg Ogren**, **Dan Peterson**, and **Jim Chatterton**. Not pictured: **Al Araque**.

Joining the board for three-year terms are **Greg Ogren**, president of Security Bank, Iron River; **Jay Mack**, president and CEO of Town Bank, N.A., Hartland; and **Dan Ravenscroft**, president and CEO of Royal Bank, Elroy.

Those continuing their terms on the board are: **Al Araque**, senior vice president, director of consumer and private banking,

Johnson Financial Group, Racine; **Jim Chatterton**, president and CEO, National Exchange Bank & Trust, Fond du Lac; **Mark Erickson**, regional president, MidWestOne Bank, Osceola; **Timothy Kotnour**, president and CEO, State Bank Financial, La Crosse; **Paul Northway**, president and CEO, American National Bank — Fox Cities, Appleton;

Joe Peikert, president and CEO, Wolf River Community Bank, Hortonville; **Jenny Provancher**, president and CEO, The Equitable Bank, S.S.B., Wauwatosa; **Terry Rosengarten**, president and COO, Unity Bank, Augusta; and **Mark Wierman**, president, Ixonia Bank. Learn more about this year’s board at www.wisbank.com/about/board-of-directors.

Chair’s Message

(continued from p. 2)

political action committee, Wisbankpac, for the support of pro-banking candidates. Earning one of these awards supports important banking legislation and spotlights your bank at the annual WBA Bank Executives Conference.

Expanding on Education

Now is the time to refocus on giving our employees the knowledge and training they

Chair Thompson’s Primary Goals:

- » Make your voice heard.
- » Get involved.
- » Support our advocates.
- » Expand on education.

will need for tomorrow and explore new ways to leverage these opportunities to develop the level of professionalism we are known for. Carving

out time to understand the important issues impacting Wisconsin banks can entail signing up for one of the many classes offered by WBA’s education department or be as simple as allocating a few minutes to checking on news and current updates.

There is no single correct way to take action, and it cannot be done alone. Gaining the momentum that we need to create the change we strive for is a collective matter requir-

ing the strength, innovation, and diversity of the industry. Only then can we double down on our past success and carry out our mission of helping our local communities. With such a bright outlook on the upcoming year, I am grateful to be joined by such passionate, knowledgeable, and dedicated bankers as we turn a new focus toward the path ahead.

Thompson is president and CEO of Capitol Bank, Madison, and the 2021–2022 WBA board chair.

WBA to Outgoing Committee Chairs...

Thank You for Your Leadership

June 1 marked the new term for WBA's committees and sections, resulting in a changing of the guard in the officers in those groups.

Our committees and sections are comprised of banker volunteers who provide perspective on issues affecting the industry, ideas for

new products and services, and input on existing WBA offerings.

We would like to thank the outgoing chairs of our

committees and sections (*listed below*) for their service in leading their respective groups for a truly unique term.

COMMITTEES / SECTIONS

We Need Your Expertise to Help Shape the Banking Industry's Future

If you want to influence your industry's future, consider lending your experience to one of these committees or sections, and find out for yourself how much you can impact Wisconsin's financial services industry.

To learn more about volunteering, please visit www.wisbank.com/community/get-involved.

2020-2021 Outgoing Chairs:

Agricultural Bankers

Section Board:

Darla Sikora

Senior Vice President
— Agricultural Banking
Citizens State Bank of Loyal

BOLT Section Board:

Derrick Hermann

Vice President—Lending
Waldo State Bank

Financial Crimes Committee:

Sarah Gasiorowski

Vice President—Internal Security and Investigations Mgr., Financial Intelligence
Associated Bank, Milwaukee

FIPCO Software Users' Committee:

Kathy Burg

Vice President
State Bank of Chilton

Government Relations Committee:

Gary Kuter

Senior Vice President
Capitol Bank, Madison

Human Resources Committee:

Gwen Schnitzler

Assistant Vice President/
HR Director
Forward Bank, Marshfield

Marketing Committee:

Natalie Adams

Vice President—
Brand Development
Royal Bank, Elroy

Mortgage Lending Committee:

Sherry Fickau

Assistant Vice President,
Compliance
Citizens Bank, Big Bend

Retail Banking Committee:

DeAnna Tittel

Senior Vice President
of Retail
Bank of Luxemburg

Technology/Operations Committee:

Mitchell Frydrych

Vice President—Information
Technology Officer
National Exchange Bank
& Trust, Fond du Lac

Trust Section Board:

Mike Glodosky, CTFA

Senior Vice President
—Trust and Investments
WoodTrust Bank
Wisconsin Rapids

2021-2022 Incoming Chairs:

The following banker volunteers will lead the association's committees and section boards for the 2021-2022 fiscal year:

Agricultural Bankers

Section Board:

Chris Schneider

Vice President,
Senior Ag Banking Officer
Investors Community Bank
Manitowoc

BOLT Section Board:

Loni Meiborg

Senior Vice President,
Organizational Development
Fortifi Bank, Berlin

Financial Crimes Committee:

Lenore Breit

Compliance Manager
BSA Officer
Prevail Bank, Wausau

FIPCO Software Users Committee:

Diane Retzlaff

Loan Administrator
Wolf River Community Bank
Hortonville

Government Relations Committee:

Tom Mews

President
FNC Bank, New Richmond

Human Resources Committee:

Ann Knutson

Senior Vice President and
Human Resources Director
Bank Five Nine
Oconomowoc

Marketing Committee:

Laura Wiegert

Senior Vice President—
Marketing
Investors Community Bank
Manitowoc

Mortgage Lending Committee:

Jennifer Stein

Assistant Vice President,
Retail Loan Operations Manager
Forte Bank, Hartford

Retail Banking Committee:

Shelley Edgington

Senior Vice President,
Retail Banking
One Community Bank, Oregon

Technology/Operations Committee:

Jeffrey Kurek

Senior Infrastructure Architect
Park Bank, Madison

Trust Section Board: (Past Chair)

Mike Glodosky, CTFA

Senior Vice President
—Trust and Investments
WoodTrust Bank
Wisconsin Rapids



**Wisconsin Bankers
ASSOCIATION**

The Wisconsin Bankers Association is a community of bankers dedicated solely to supporting and enhancing the banking industry in Wisconsin. Founded in 1892, our mission is to promote a healthy environment for banks in Wisconsin through actively advocating, educating, and supporting our members. Please visit www.wisbank.com for more information.

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Commercial Lending



Andrea Davenport
Litigation



Troy Giles
Real Estate/Environmental



Wendy Rusch
Trusts and Estates

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Wisconsin Bankers Foundation Scholarship Recipients Announced

Four Wisconsin students awarded \$2,000 WBF Scholarship

The Wisconsin Bankers Foundation (WBF) is pleased to announce that four Wisconsin students have each been selected to receive a \$2,000 scholarship. These scholarships are awarded annually to help current students further their education at an accredited Wisconsin college, university, or technical college.



Learn more at www.wisbank.com/foundation-scholarships.

The 2021 Spring Scholarships — which are available

to any Wisconsin high school senior as well as current college students and adults pursuing higher education who are employed by member banks — received over 160 submissions this year from applicants across Wisconsin.

A selection committee made up of bankers chose the four 2021 scholarship winners. Applicants were

to submit a video, digital presentation, written essay, or other creative way to explain the importance of financial literacy for students.

The Foundation begins accepting scholarship applications in early spring each year. For more information, please visit www.wisbank.com/foundation-scholarships.

Congratulations to This Year's Scholarship Recipients!

Good luck in your future endeavors!



Allison Anderson (left) will be attending her senior year at UW-Whitewater and has worked as a teller for almost three years at the Bank of Wisconsin Dells. Allison is joined by President and CEO **Scott Rockwell**, Bank of Wisconsin Dells, and WBF Chair **Rose Oswald Poels**.



Lily Brewer (left) is graduating from Albany High School and plans to attend UW-Madison in the fall. She is currently a teller at Capitol Bank. WBF Chair **Rose Oswald Poels** presented Lily with her scholarship.



Samuel Will (left) is a second-year marketing student in the Wisconsin School of Business at UW-Madison. A current employee at the State Bank of Reeseville, he has worked as a customer service representative, credit analyst, and marketing and advertising creator. Will is flanked by HR and Marketing Director **Jayne Adams** (far left), State Bank of Reeseville, and WBF Chair **Rose Oswald Poels**.



Nicholas (Cole) Hicken (left) is graduating from Waupun Area High School and plans to attend UW-Madison where he will study agricultural economics. WBF Chair **Rose Oswald Poels** presented Cole with his scholarship.

Baldwin: Ag Industry

(continued from p. 7)

Sen. Baldwin along with several other legislators introduced bipartisan legislation titled *PPP Flexibility for Farmers, Ranchers, and the Self-Employed Act* to extend more relief to farmers in Wisconsin through PPP changes. This also included a fix that allowed

self-employed farmers already receiving loan forgiveness to retroactively apply for another loan. The amount of the loan would be the difference between the former and latter loan, based on gross income.

“I’ve been working to make more resources and funding available for Wisconsin

farmers so they can access the relief they need,” said Sen. Baldwin. “And as chair of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture and Rural Development, I’m going to keep working across the aisle to ensure farmers and agriculture businesses have the tools they need to succeed and

strengthen our rural economy.”

WBA looks forward to continuing its work with Sen. Baldwin to support Wisconsin’s agricultural industry by addressing these challenges and pushing for legislation.

Paniagua is WBA writer/editor —communications



Your EDUCATION Calendar

Conferences | Summits

Schools | Boot Camps

Seminars | Workshops

WBA Webinars

Other Events

JULY 2021

- **Community Bankers for Compliance (CBC) – Session III**

27–28 Virtual half days; Membership (*pricing options vary*)

AUGUST 2021

- **Agricultural Lending School**

4–6 Madison; \$895/attendee
(*optional pre-school workshop available on Aug. 3*)

- **Chairman's Member Appreciation Golf Outing**

19 Wisconsin Dells

- **Family-owned and Closely Held Bank Strategic Retreat**

24–25 Galena, Illinois; \$295/attendee

SEPTEMBER 2021

- **Management Conference** (*including tracks for CEOs, CFOs, CCOs, HR, and other bank leaders*)

13–14 Green Bay; \$250/each first two attendees;
\$200/each additional attendee

- **Advanced Financial Statement & Cash Flow Analysis Workshop**

15 Virtual; \$245/attendee

- **Advanced Tax Return Analysis Workshop**

16 Virtual; \$245/attendee

- **Secur-I.T. Conference** (*including tracks for Security, Technology, Operations and BSA/AML*)

21–22 Wisconsin Dells; \$350/first attendee;
\$300/each additional attendee

- **Commercial Lending School**

27–30 Madison; \$1,295/attendee

- **Bank Directors Summit**

28 Stevens Point; \$195/attendee
29 Madison; \$195/attendee

OCTOBER 2021

- **Supervisor Boot Camp**

4–5 Madison; \$535/attendee

- **Auditing Real Estate Loans Boot Camp**

12–14 Madison; \$795/attendee

OCTOBER 2021 (*continued*)

- **Bank Investments and Strategies: Part 2**

14 2-Part Webinar; \$250/attendee

- **FIPCO Software & Compliance Forum: Loans & Mortgage**

19–20 Madison or Virtual; Cost TBD

- **Community Bankers for Compliance (CBC) – Session IV**

26 Stevens Point; Membership (*pricing options vary*)
27 Madison; Membership (*pricing options vary*)

- **Principles of Banking Course**

TBD Locations TBD; \$550/attendee

- **IRA Essentials Workshop**

TBD Locations TBD; \$245/attendee

- **Advanced IRA Workshops**

TBD Locations TBD; \$245/attendee

NOVEMBER 2021

- **BOLT Winter Leadership Summit**

4 Stevens Point; \$100/attendee

- **Personal Banker School**

8–9 Madison; \$495/attendee

- **Compliance Forum: Session 2**

9 Wausau; Membership (*pricing options vary*)
10 Madison; Membership (*pricing options vary*)

- **ABA National Agricultural Bankers Conference**

14–17 Cincinnati, Ohio

- **LEAD360 Conference**

16–17 Wisconsin Dells; \$350/first attendee;
\$300/each additional attendee

- **Consumer Lending Boot Camp**

TBD Madison; \$495/attendee

- **Deposit Compliance School**

TBD Madison; \$535/attendee

» Visit www.wisbank.com/education for more information and online registration.
» Or email WBA Education at wbaeducation@wisbank.com or call 608-441-1252.

Leaders in Banking Excellence Honored by WBA

Bankers in 2020 class recognized during celebration on June 4

Twelve individuals are being honored by the Wisconsin Bankers Association for their excellence in banking, community service, and civic involvement. The celebration for this inaugural class was held on June 4 at the WBA headquarters in Madison, where a newly built Leaders in Banking Excellence Wall installation displays a tribute to the selected current and former bankers. The event had been postponed from the fall of 2020 due to the pandemic.



» Nominations for the 2021 Class are being accepted through Aug. 10, 2021 (see p. 30 for details).



» Photos: (1) Paul Adamski (third from right) in WBA's Engagement Center. (2) Rose Oswald Poels and Tom Farrell. (3) Marian Kundert, wife of the late Jack Kundert, greets Jett (a future banker). (4) Oswald Poels, E. David Locke, and Past Chair Paul Kohler. (5) Fred Schwertfeger and Steve Schowalter. (6) Sandy Dolister, wife of the late Jim Dolister. (7) Jerry Smith. (8) The Eager Family, Chris, Anna, and Steve. (9) Rita Tubbs, wife of the late Tom Tubbs. (10) Jim Caldwell and Kohler.

"These leaders have helped shape Wisconsin's banking industry into what it is today," said **Rose Oswald Poels**, WBA president and CEO. "They exemplify the values of our association: highest ethics, professionalism, and enthusiastic service to our industry and to our state. It is my privilege to host an honor wall of this type at our WBA headquarters in Madison."

Past Chair **Paul Kohler**, president and CEO of Charter Bank, began the event with opening remarks on the legacy that the twelve individuals have left. Following Kohler, Congressman **Bryan Steil**, U.S. Representative from the 1st Wisconsin Congressional District and Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions Secretary **Kathy Blumenfeld** spoke at the ceremony commending

the lifetime of excellence that these bankers have provided the industry.

The honorees for 2020 are: **Paul C. Adamski**, The Pineries Bank, Stevens Point; **James K. Caldwell**, First Citizens State Bank, Whitewater; the late **James S. Dolister**, Capitol Bank, Madison; the **Eager Family**, the former Union Bank & Trust Company, Evansville; **Thomas F. Farrell**, Peoples State Bank, Prairie du Chien; the late **John F. (Jack) Kundert**, the former Bank One, Monroe; **E. David Locke**, the former McFarland State Bank; **Richard (Dick) Pamperin**, Premier Community Bank, Marion; **Steven R. Schowalter**,



» **Dick Pamperin** (above) was unable to attend.

Port Washington State Bank; **Frederick F. Schwertfeger**, Horicon Bank; **Jerry Smith**,

First Business Bank, Madison; and the late **Thomas M. Tubbs**, Bank of Sun Prairie.

Bulletin Board

News about people working in Wisconsin's financial institutions

Promotions and New Hires

Madison

First Business Bank is pleased to welcome **James Barrett** (pictured) and **Gary Greenspan** to its Equipment Finance team. Both will take on respective roles as vice president – equipment finance.

Capitol Bank is pleased to announce that **Troy Mitchell** (pictured) has joined their team as SVP Commercial Lending.

Paul Cardarella has been hired as vice president – commercial relationship manager at the State Bank of Cross Plains.

Brookfield

Investors Community Bank announced the recent additions of **Nick Boyce** (pictured) as senior treasury management



Barrett



Mitchell



Boyce



Checkalski



Abney



Dennee



Schalow



Murawski



Hermann



Reichling

representative and **Tony Checkalski** (pictured) as mortgage loan officer.

Marshfield

First State Bank recently announced the addition of **Tony Abney** (pictured) to its business banking team. **Jeff Dennee** (pictured) has

joined Forward Bank as a vice president/commercial loan officer serving Marshfield and the surrounding area.

McFarland

One Community Bank welcomes **Jonathan Schalow** (pictured) to the bank as the director of client experience.

Middleton

Starion Bank has hired **Terry Murawski** (pictured) as a business development officer at the Middleton branch.

Milwaukee

PNC Bank, N.A. announced the appointment of **Chris Hermann** (pictured) as the regional president and head of Corporate Banking for Wisconsin.

Mineral Point

Mound City Bank is proud to announce that **Angie Reichling** (pictured) has been promoted to branch manager/retail lending officer.

Necedah

Bank of Mauston is pleased to announce the promotion of

(continued on p. 17)

Peoples State Bank Completes Remodeling Project in Marathon



Peoples State Bank has completed a four-month-long remodeling project at the bank's Marathon location at 314 Main Street.

One Community Bank Hosts Power of ONE Community Week Food Drive

One Community Bank was proud to host a community food drive in each of the communities they serve. Oregon, McFarland, Stoughton, Waunakee, Sun Prairie, Middleton, Adams, Oxford, and Grand Marsh were all participants in the food drive.



Erick Gorecki
262-369-7007

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Have good news? To submit a notice, please email bulletinboard@wisbank.com or mail entries to *WBA Bulletin Board*, 4721 South Biltmore Lane, Madison, WI 53718. Send photos as JPEG files. Questions? Contact WBA's **Cassandra Krause** at 608-441-1216 or ckrause@wisbank.com.

Bulletin Board

News about people working in Wisconsin's financial institutions

Promotions and New Hires

(continued from p. 16)

Karri Tessman (pictured) to branch manager/lender at their Necedah Branch.



Tessman



Albarran



Baur



Renk



Doolittle

Waukesha

Waukesha Investments, located at Waukesha State Bank, is proud to announce the promotion of **Alicia Albarran** (pictured) to financial advisor.

Retirement

Marshfield

First State Bank announced that **John Baur** (pictured), vice president – business banking, retired on June 1, capping off a 38-year career in banking.

Announcements

Fish Creek

Strengthening their commitment to the Door County community, Bank of Luxemburg opened their doors at a new location in Fish Creek.

Holmen

WNB Financial is pleased to

announce the transition of its current Loan Production Office in Holmen to a full-service office.

Wausau

Peoples State Bank has partnered with MC United Soccer Club through a multi-year jersey sponsorship that will significantly decrease the costs incurred by MCU families.

In Memoriam

Madison

Ralph Willard Renk (pictured) was born in Milwaukee on April 22, 1924 and peacefully passed away on Wednesday, April 28, 2021 at Agrace Hospice in Fitchburg, Wis. with family by his side.

Among many other positions for various organizations, Renk was a respected registered

lobbyist for the First Wisconsin National Bank, U.S. Bank, and its various successors.

Menomonee Falls

Richard I. (Dick) Doolittle (pictured), 88, passed away on Sunday, May 23, 2021, at Froedtert Menomonee Falls Hospital in Menomonee Falls, Wis.

Dick's professional career included roles such as associate secretary for the American Institute of Banking in New York, associate director/ chief operating officer of the Stonier Graduate School of Banking at Rutgers at the American Banking Association, rising to associate director/ chief operating officer of the Stonier Graduate School of Banking at Rutgers, and president and CEO at the Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Herbert V. Prochnow Foundation.

Bank of Wisconsin Dells Awards 2021 Educational Scholarship

Bank of Wisconsin Dells recently awarded its 2021 Educational Scholarship to Wisconsin Dells High School valedictorian, **Avery Palmer**. Bank president and CEO, **Scott Rockwell**, presented Palmer with the \$10,000 award to be applied to the scholar's first two years of college.



Staff Change? Address Change? Let WBA Know

Getting information to the right person quickly is critical in these challenging times. Has there been a personnel change at your bank, or are WBA's mailings targeted to the wrong staff?

Please send your address corrections and/or additions to our database administrator, WBA Assistant Director – IT **Randy Molepske**, at 608-441-1212 or requests@wisbank.com.

Community Bank of Portage Awards Outstanding Citizen Scholarships

The Community Bank of Portage's Outstanding Citizen Scholarship committee recently awarded its 2021 recipients. Portage High School graduates, **Morgan Fimreite** and **Emma Kreuziger**, were each presented their own scholarship of \$2,500. This scholarship is awarded each year to Portage High School seniors who demonstrate a strong commitment to improving the quality of life for people in his or her school and community.

Pictured (left to right) are: **Eric Czarnecki**, **Scott Rockwell**, Fimreite, Kreuziger, **Ben Brancel**, **Heather Meyer**, and **Anastasia Kinney**.



Developing an ISAP, ASAP

Five critical steps to maintaining a secure network

By Ken Shaurette

Keeping your network secure in the current climate of internet assault is no small job.

Think back – how little has changed. In 2001, server-based worms were estimated to have cost private industry almost \$3 billion. Code Red alone infected 359,000 servers in under 14 hours, and within 24 hours of Nimda, 50% of the infected hosts went offline. Fast forward to today and the exponential increase in breaches, how much is really that different?

These attacks reinforced the need for every organization to develop an information security action plan (ISAP). Doing this first involves



Contact Ken at 608-441-1251
or kshaurette@fipco.com.

evaluating, assessing, and auditing the existing security environment to identify major and minor problems (your inventory). Without knowing and understanding the current security posture, it is impossible to identify the most cost-effective solutions to deploy.

Veteran and well-trained security professionals realize there is no ‘silver bullet’ in information security. Following and adjusting to an industry security framework will keep you secure today and into the future. Using proper diligence to understand an organization’s security needs goes a long way in improving protection.

Below are critical first steps for building an ISAP to create a better defense in an increasingly dangerous cyberworld.

Creating Security Policy

First, create a clearly defined security policy that is strictly enforced. Understand that security goes beyond desktop PCs and ensure that the use of all laptops, copiers, fax machines, modems, and even printed information is included in the policy. Supply the policy to everyone in the organization, educate all employees about it, and enforce it consistently.

The policy is the roadmap to good security and every employee should review it annually, be provided with opportunities to ask questions, and fully understand the policy. They should acknowledge their understanding of the policy in writing. The policy must become a standard part of the company culture and be enforced at the highest level. Not consistently enforcing policy can be worse than having no policy at all, because it could be used against the company (in litigation) to show that policy is not taken seriously in all cases.

Identifying Risk, Deploying Security

Second, identify an acceptable level of risk and deploy the appropriate level of security. It is unacceptable for management to proclaim ignorance about potential vulnerabilities in the environment. Due diligence requires management to exercise sound judgment in protecting the environment consistent with the information being processed (i.e., the more sensitive the information, the more safeguards need to put in place).

After assessments have been performed, there are essentially three measures that

can be taken. They are to reduce the risk (perform remediation), transfer the risk (take out insurance), or accept the risk (identify cost justification).

If overall risk reaches an unacceptable level, appropriate remediation steps must be taken to get the exposures reduced in severity. If that cannot be done, documentation must be created to identify justification for accepting the risk, or possibly insurance can be purchased to transfer the losses associated with the risk to another organization.

Implementing Verification

Third, access to internal hosts must be controlled and monitored. Are employees only given access to what they need to perform their specific job? Are logs reviewed daily for inconsistencies and abnormalities?

Since many security breaches can be attributed to ‘insiders,’ or exploit by a bad actor of an insider, trust no one. “Zero Trust”; it is important to live by an access philosophy of ‘least privilege’. Verify everyone and everything. Only give users the access they need to do their job. Not only must the data be protected and accountability of who is accessing it be maintained to ensure privacy, but simply tracking problems and events that occur in an environment are easier if it is possible to determine who has access to specific information. Even though incidents of access from outside a company get all the publicity, the most critical protection remains inside. Insider abuse of email or unmonitored internet access can cost in several ways beyond the lost employee time, bandwidth, and potential for viruses or worms.

Supplement the authentication and authorization system with audit trails and intrusion

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Developing an ISAP

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detection systems and use an incident response plan to follow up on suspicious activities and anomalies. Logs can be very large and contain enormous amounts of extraneous information. It is important to install tools that help sift through the abnormalities or make it possible to identify what a normal log looks like and flag unusual activity. Regular review of system logs can mitigate risk. This can include the implementation of modern extended endpoint detection and response solutions.

Testing Upgrades and Patches

Fourth, vendor upgrades and software/hardware patches should be tested adequately before migrating to production. Anti-virus tools should be deployed and automatically updated with new signature files.

Changes are constantly occurring in the environment. New software can introduce new vulnerabilities and it is well known that some software companies do not create secure applications or operating systems. Be sure to have clear documentation to migrate all changes to production and a contingency plan should problems occur.

Malicious code continues to be a major problem for organizations. It is no longer adequate to simply install an antivirus tool and assume your problems are alleviated. It is not adequate to assume the user will behave properly to protect their desktop and company data. Today's generation of protection must not be dependent on signatures and needs to consider other layers of information: users, files, hosts, and the network. Throw in deception technology and you have a robust solution.

Handling Any Defaults

Fifth, be sure default accounts, passwords, and settings have been appropriately handled in operating systems, routers, databases, and applications.

Keep in mind that almost all operating systems, including third-party applications, come with sample files, many of which are extremely dangerous. Almost any operating system and many application system installations require a powerful 'administrative' or privileged account to complete installation. This account is shipped with a default password, which often is not changed by the network, system, or application administrator. It should be changed immediately at initial installation even on test systems. If the account needs to remain in existence, it should be tightly locked

down, audited, and, if possible, have its default name changed. In addition, it should not be used on a routine basis for administration. Individual administrative accounts should be assigned to authorized users with proper access requirements granted, training provided, and responsibilities understood.

In summary, there are numerous measures that can be taken to ensure a company's infrastructure can protect its information assets. This all creates the requirement for a thorough information security action plan. A certified, qualified, well-trained chief information security officer can usually lead a corporation along a path to protected information assets and a secure business environment.

Shaurette is FIPCO director infoSecurity and audit. Contact him at kshaurette@fipco.com or 608-441-1251.

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Managing Burnout at the Bank

By Alex Paniagua

At some point, everyone faces the burdens of stress. Whether it's caused by an increased workload or personal struggles, the potential for stress to become habitual poses risks of its own. This stress can become part of a pattern, and this is when burnout begins.

Tellers, mortgage loan officers, CFOs, personal bankers, and every position in between have all likely dealt with burnout at some point in their career. Catching it early and mitigating its impact is ideal, but knowing how to treat it as it occurs and understanding the complexity of it can be equally as important.

"I think too many people have this idea that the solution to burnout is variety," said **Rachel Sheerin, CPBA**. "When we think about burnout at its core, burnout happens when joy begins to leave your work. It used to be that burnout happened as a result of doing too much of one thing, but that was in a different kind of world. When joy leaves your work, it becomes easier for joy to leave your life. And that is the real danger of it."

» Managing Burnout Before it Happens

The most impactful time to manage burnout is as soon as the symptoms begin to show. Just a few of the common signs noted were irritability, frustration, and anxiety, but **Candy Allard**, assistant vice president/human resources specialist at Badger Bank, Fort Atkinson, noted that signs might be less obvious, like calling in sick more frequently or being a bit more quiet than usual.

"Always encourage employees to ask for help," said Allard. "Make sure you're paying attention and see if

there are any noteworthy signs that an employee is acting a little abnormal. Most of them aren't going to immediately tell you what they're going through. Many of them choose to just work through it."

For those who decide to ignore their stress, HR and executive leadership are in positions to be observant and help employees facing these challenges. **Kelly Heroux**, president of Peshtigo National Bank, stated that a key indicator

someone might be dealing with this stress is that they're making reactive decisions rather than taking a proactive approach. As a result, these individuals will begin to lose focus on their long-term goals.

"Aside from employees outwardly telling us, what I've noticed is short-term thinking rather than long-term vision," said Heroux. "This past year has been all about thinking of the day-to-day, and now we are reaching that point where we have to reprogram our thought process and get back to thinking of that long term."

Heroux added that those in leadership positions play major roles in this type of rethinking, and one of the best ways they can assure overall success is by staying honest and inviting open communication. An article published in *The Wall Street Journal* cited a study conducted by Harvard Medical School faculty that found 96%

of senior leaders claimed to have dealt with burnout at some point in their career. Few of the CEOs, however, ever admitted to anyone that they were facing this level of stress. "Everyone can talk about failure after the fact, but no one does until failure is in the rearview mirror," Sheerin said. "They feel comfortable

because they've already worked through it. We need to address our failures

while we're going through them because success doesn't work like the American Dream. Part of progressive executive leadership today is about identifying when you've burned out and sharing stories about it."

When someone at the top acts as though everything is fine, Sheerin noted that this trickles down and that discussing the negatives while working toward the positives comes with benefits. Sharing these challenges and explaining how to best handle the situation only reminds staff that everyone is in the scenario together, everyone is human, and everyone is striving for the best possible outcome.

"I'm sure I speak for every bank when I say we have a very open-door policy," said Heroux. "I think communication is key and it's

"You really see personality change from [burnout], and I've noticed that it tends to be those that have kids at home. It's tough to watch the parents go through this challenge of being teachers and workers and so much more."

— **Candy Allard**
assistant vice president/
human resources specialist
Badger Bank, Fort Atkinson

important to make yourself available when someone needs to talk about these concerns and to be honest when they do. If our employees are comfortable enough to discuss it, that's a major portion of the solution right there."

» Identifying the Source of Burnout

In an ideal world, the elements of stress could be spotted and resolved before they ever begin to have an actual effect. In the real world, however, dealing with burnout means finding the source of your stress.

"You can really see personalities change from [burnout], and I've noticed that it tends to be those that have kids at home," said Allard. "They're going back and forth with whether they're in person or virtual and if something gets shut down then it becomes a matter of this class being virtual while their other kids are in school, and it's tough to watch the parents go through this challenge of being teachers and workers and so much more."

Allard noted that although she sees many parents experiencing burnout, high levels of stress affect everyone for a variety of reasons.



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Managing Burnout

(continued from p. 21)



“Burnout has been around for a very long time. But this past year has accelerated the cause and heightened the effects.”

— Kelly Heroux
president
Peshtigo National Bank

Because of this, some of the biggest stressors might not be coming from work at all,

but from the unpaid jobs that are being done outside of the office.

“Unpaid work is something we don’t talk about nearly as much, and I think it’s one of the easier ways to burn out,” said Sheerin. “You love your family, and your kids, and your significant other, and you want what’s best for them, so you’re always willing to go that extra mile.”

One of the biggest misconceptions surrounding burnout is that you can only experience the symptoms by taking part in monotonous routines. Sheerin noted that it’s much more complex and nuanced than many believe and that people can burn out from just about anything. Heroux added that with all the tasks we take on as workers, she isn’t surprised that sources of stress are coming from more

unexpected places.

“There are a lot of distractions in everyone’s life,” said Heroux. “I don’t think we pay enough attention to how much those distractions take away from our well-being and our focus. It’s important to determine what those distractions are on an individual level, because there’s a good chance that will bring you a great amount of calm. Life can be a lot when you let it happen all at one time.”

For Sheerin, burnout can happen in the simplest of ways, but it can have lasting effects. Since stress is often likened to difficult, constant, or tedious work that an individual is not interested in doing, I asked whether it might be possible to burn out while working on something someone truly enjoys.

“I think that’s the only

“There is no single correct way to beat burnout. The important part is that you understand when it’s happening and identify the source of it. Treating it properly will vary between individuals and could require an afternoon off or something larger like the reconsideration of a project.”

way you can burn out,” Sheerin stated. “If you’re not passionate about what you’re doing, you can’t burn out. No one has ever gotten too stressed from passively working their way through life. People in these positions are either passionate about their work, their job, their team, or something that leads to an eventual burning out.”

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ANNOUNCING

A New Hire and Staff Promotion at WBA



The Wisconsin Bankers Association (WBA) is pleased to announce the hire of **Ryan Pettersen** to its subsidiary, WBA Insurance Services. Pettersen will serve as account manager for the WBA Employee Benefits Corporation, Inc. and will assist Wisconsin banks with insurance options to fit their unique business needs, including health, life, and disability coverages

Pettersen comes to WBA from the Wisconsin Restaurant Association, where he worked for over 20 years, most recently in the role of supplier services specialist and Wisconsin Restaurateur Magazine advertising director. Working with members is the aspect of the trade association profession he enjoys most. Pettersen is a native of Richland Center, Wisconsin and earned his bachelor’s degree at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville.



WBA is also excited to announce that **John Cronin** has been promoted to director – government relations. Cronin joined WBA in December of 2020 as assistant director – government relations.

As director – government relations, Cronin will work primarily at the state level to further WBA advocacy priorities, which include preventing elder financial exploitation, supporting rural communities through ECORA (Enhancing Credit Opportunities in Rural America) legislation, and regulatory modernization.

Cronin spent the first eight years of his career in the Wisconsin State Assembly where he worked for Rep. **Mark Born** from 2013–18 and for now-former Rep. **John Nygren** from 2018–20. Both Representatives were members of the budget-writing Joint Finance Committee, so Cronin’s primary focus over four years was state budget policy. He has extensive research and consensus-building experience and in-depth knowledge of the legislative, budget, and rulemaking processes.

Managing Burnout

(continued from p. 22)

» Other Tips to Tackle Stress

There is no single correct way to beat burnout. The important part is that you understand when it's happening and identify the source of it. Treating it properly will vary between individuals and could require something as small as an afternoon off or something larger like the reconsideration of a project.

"We try to be flexible in our scheduling, which is what you have to do when school becomes virtual and parents suddenly can't work in the same capacity that they've been doing," said Allard. "This kind of flexibility is going to be crucial as we look at our work moving forward."

Along with checking in with employees, Allard has found success in encouraging mental health by advertising an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to staff. This voluntary, work-based program offers resources such as short-term counseling, free and confidential assessments, and follow-up services for employees facing work-related or personal problems. Reminding employees of similar resources can be an enormous benefit when considering the uncertainty of the pandemic people continue to navigate.

"Burnout has been around for a very long time," said Heroux, "but this past year has accelerated the cause and heightened the effects."

With so many factors

outside of any one person's control, Heroux finds it helpful to step back from the world for a bit and self-assess. Her method of managing stress includes unplugging from social media, limiting distractions, and determining a good length of time to recharge. This could be an hour, an afternoon, or a full day, and truly depends on the source of burnout. If nothing else, Heroux joins the minority of leaders who find relief in simply talking about their stress.

"When you're in the thick of a job, it can be impossible to see outside of what you're doing," said Sheerin. "I think the fact that more people, especially those in executive leadership positions, are willing to talk about this issue

"We need to address our failures while we're going through them because success doesn't work like the American Dream. Part of progressive executive leadership today is about identifying when you're burned out and sharing stories about it."

— Rachel Sheerin, CPBA

is a sign that we're moving in the right direction."

Paniagua is WBA writer/editor —communications.

Disclaimer: This content refers to burnout in a broad sense and is not intended to substitute medical advice. For serious health concerns, please seek the advice of a qualified medical professional.

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WBA extends its gratitude to all our Associate Member companies for standing by and supporting the banking industry and the association during these difficult times. Despite addressing their own challenges, these companies also provided services, information, and products that helped Wisconsin banks serve their customers and communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Thank you.*

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Following Updated CDC Guidelines

(continued from p. 1)

social distance in just the way we interact with our customers. We've all realized things can be changed in an instant."

In mid-May, the CDC revised its COVID-19 guidelines to state that fully vaccinated people can go back to activities they did prior to the pandemic.

"You can resume activities without wearing a mask or staying six feet apart, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance," the CDC stated.

The use of apps and other banking technology probably advanced three to five years during the pandemic.

A sampling of Wisconsin banks showed they are eager to see the unmasked smiles of customers and fellow employees again, but they are being careful, realizing there are divergent opinions about masks and COVID-19 itself.

After the CDC offered its latest guidance, Denmark State Bank declared masks no longer were necessary if people were fully vaccinated.

"Obviously we are still cautious with our customers who come in," said **Scot Thompson**, president and chief executive officer of the 110-employee bank. "If they are wearing a mask, we are asking our employees to wear a mask in front of them because their safety is one of the things that we want to make sure we're cautious of."

Rochelle Mitchell, vice president and public relations

In mid-May, the CDC revised its COVID-19 guidelines to state that fully vaccinated people can go back to activities they did prior to the pandemic.

officer at PremierBank in Fort Atkinson, said if a customer comes in wearing a mask, employees ask whether the customer would be more comfortable if the employee wore one, too.

"We do have about half of our staff still wearing them," Mitchell said. "But it's their choice, and we're just really promoting respect."

PremierBank also has about 110 employees.

Lindsay Spitzer, chief operations officer for Bluff View Bank, said her Galesville-based financial institution dropped its mask mandate for employees back on May 10, when more than 70% of the staff had been vaccinated. That was about a week before the new CDC guidance was issued.

"But we were sensitive to our customers, so if someone did come in wearing a mask, we would put one on," Spitzer said. "But generally, when our customers would come in the door they would see we weren't wearing them and they would ask, 'Do I have to wear a mask?' And our response was 'it's up to you.' And they would generally take it off."

Like many banks, however, Bluff View Bank still has its Plexiglas shields up in its teller lines. If a customer is sitting down with a banker to open an account or apply for a loan, the banker will ask whether the customer prefers the employee wore a mask during the meeting.

At Citizens First, the bank is following CDC guidelines, Bjerkos said.

"We still have our Plexiglas screen at the teller lines, and likely will for the foreseeable future, anyway," she said.

She estimated about half of employees still are wearing masks at work.

"We are not asking an employee who is not wearing a mask, 'Have you had both your shots?' We are not the vaccination police," Bjerkos said. "Likewise...if a customer comes in without a mask, that's their right."

The pandemic has changed customer behavior overall, and that already is affecting how banks and their clients interact. The number of customers coming into bank lobbies has dropped not just because of COVID-19 safety rules, but because many more have started using digital channels to do their banking during the pandemic.

"It's increased the adoption of digital services for sure," said Mitchell.

Thompson estimated that the use of apps and other banking technology probably advanced by three to five years during the pandemic. Banks found that more people of all ages have adopted financial technology.

Remote work by employees has increased — perhaps permanently for some. Although it was prompted by social distancing efforts, remote work has opened employers' eyes to the fact that staffers working from home and collaborating via Zoom can be productive. It also has widened the list of potential candidates for certain types of bank positions.

"We've been able to branch out throughout the United States to have people work for us who we probably didn't think about before," said Thompson. "So we've actually had a couple of our mortgage underwriters — one's in Florida and one's in Georgia — work for us.

That has opened up the door for the talent pool."

Banking attorney **John T. Reichert** said remote work is a big topic among bankers.

"Literally for the last two months I haven't had a conversation with a banker where they don't say, 'hey,' we're trying to figure this out and find the right 'balance,'" said Reichert, a shareholder in the Banking and Finance Practice of the Milwaukee firm Reinhart Boerner Van Deuren.

Precisely when people will be completely untroubled being part of indoor crowds or working conditions again can't be known, but Reichert said that with guidelines loosening, he doesn't think it's far off.

"Clearly the people who know what's going on are comfortable or they would never have let this happen," Reichert said. "There's going to be all kinds of cultural easing into it."

I think the worst is behind, but there's still going to be issues and concerns going forward.

Denmark State Bank's Thompson is hopeful but still cautious.

"I think the worst is behind, but there's still going to be issues and concerns going forward," he said.

Gores is a journalist who covered business news for the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel for 20 years. Have a story idea? Contact him at paul.gores57@gmail.com.

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Enhancing Member Engagement

Reimagining member experience in challenging times

By Daryll Lund

At WBA, a constantly evolving objective is to enhance the experience we provide our membership. As an association that is focused on being member-led, we welcome our bankers to participate in the various opportunities WBA has to offer, whether this be for the purpose of peer-to-peer engagement or volunteerism on behalf of the industry. I am proud that many bankers continued finding ways to engage with the industry since the onset of March 2020, and I anticipate the new ways we will enhance these opportunities as we progress further into the optimistic half of 2021.

The benefit that many have told me they personally missed the most this past year was the



Association Update

Daryll J. Lund

ability to meet with their peers at WBA’s events and conferences. This is where connections form, ideas grow, and people realize the actual depth of the industry. To read about the 21,000 member employees on paper is one thing – seeing connections made between these people is something many have come to know as an entirely different story.

Just a few of these advantageous opportunities that have shifted back to this

peer-to-peer association include WBA Connect (a new program for bankers to connect with members in various bank positions), the Building Our Leaders of Tomorrow (BOLT) Summit, and our CEOnly and CFOnly Network for idea sharing among Wisconsin bank CEOs and CFOs.

Those who are members of committees will also once again have the opportunity to convene with fellow bankers in person at the WBA headquarters in Madison.

As we ease into a new chapter of WBA’s history, we are excited to make this important membership value even more prevalent through options such as increased hybrid events and education. The ability to choose between

an in-person or virtual experience while still having multiple ways to connect with your peers allows for a level of engagement that is hard to remember a time without. The in-person events are certain to be a breath of fresh air, and many virtual options will offer the option to invite several members of your bank staff. For many upcoming events, deciding which route to take will ultimately depend on what works best for you and your colleagues. Looking at a long list of conferences, classes, and outings, we hope to see you there, in person or on screen, engaging with the association in new and exciting ways.

Lund is WBA executive vice president – chief of staff and president of EBC and MBIS.

HEALTH PLANS THAT SAVE SERIOUS BANK

BANKERS KNOW THAT THERE'S POWER IN NUMBERS.



With the WBA Association Health Plan (AHP) and UnitedHealthcare, small businesses can achieve the same benefits as the big guys. Your group may see 10% or more savings¹ by moving to an AHP, available only to WBA members.

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[1] Small businesses with up to 50 employees can obtain 10-20% savings with an AHP when compared to UnitedHealthcare’s adjusted community rating offering.

Questions? Don’t hesitate to contact Brian Siegenthaler at bsiegenthaler@wisbank.com

Paving the Way to Economic Empowerment

Providing safe and affordable bank accounts for all

Wisconsin is ranked as one of the top states for households that have savings or checking accounts. In 2016, a survey found that 3.4% of its residents were considered unbanked compared to a 5% national average. While our leadership is something to be proud of, we can't stop here. There are still many people who could benefit



Learn more about BankOn at <https://joinbankon.org>.

from the financial security of having a bank account. As part of WBA's goals related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

(DEI) set by our Board and DEI Advisory Group, WBA continues to promote Bank On as an effective way for banks to offer unbanked individuals and families with financial services.

Bank On was created by the Cities for Financial Empowerment (CFE) Fund to support the efforts of financial

institutions and coalitions in connecting consumers to safe and affordable bank accounts. The reasons that someone may not have a bank account or is underbanked are widely varied, from issues with credit history to an overall distrust of financial institutions. Banks are in a unique position to turn these obstacles and misconceptions around.

Part of this solution has been the development of National Account Standards, which provide a benchmark for account partnerships with financial institutions. These standards include ways of eliminating socioeconomic barriers such as the omission of fees surrounding overdraft, account activation, closure, dormancy, inactivity, or low balances. For those banks that already meet the standards listed, you can apply for the free national certification to raise awareness of your offerings. For those just shy of marking off the core features, please consider reviewing the potential steps toward meeting these requirements. It will undoubtedly offer a life-changing solution for unbanked and underbanked members of your community.

Nationally, nearly half of all Black households are unbanked or underbanked, and Hispanic households currently fall at 42%. Aiming to bring more people into the banking system might not feel groundbreaking at first, but it is a crucial part



Wisconsin Bankers Association

LEADERS IN BANKING

Excellence



WBA is accepting nominations for the second class of the WBA Leaders in Banking Excellence from now through Aug. 10, 2021.

The Wisconsin Bankers Association Leaders in Banking Excellence Wall honors current and former banking leaders who have helped shape their bank and/or our state's banking industry with recognition as a fixture in the WBA headquarters building in Madison.

\$10,000 contribution

You will honor your approved banker by making a \$10,000 contribution to WBA (may be tax-deductible as a business expense) or WBA's public charity foundation.

Note: Family nominations for the Wall of Excellence are also available for a contribution of \$15,000 to WBA (may be tax-deductible as a business expense) or WBA's public charity foundation.

Applications

WBA will accept applications from all member banks and individuals who have worked in the Wisconsin banking industry. Recognition on the Wall of Excellence is open to Wisconsin bankers who have demonstrated excellence in one or more of the following areas:

- Banking
- Civic Involvement
- Community Service

Nominate yourself or another banker today.

Visit www.wisbank.com/Excellence | Questions? Contact Rose Oswald Poels: ropoels@wisbank.com | 608-441-1205

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Bankers Marketplace

HELP WANTED

Financial Advisor

Premier Community Bank has an opening for a full-time financial advisor to provide an exceptional experience to assist clients to achieve their financial goals. On the team, you will build relationships with new and existing clients in NorthEast/NorthCentral Wisconsin. This position will work from one primary office preferably Waupaca, Marion, Shawano, or Pulaski. Primary responsibilities include meeting with current and potential clients to maintain customer relationships, gathering details about client goals and objectives and evaluate their risk tolerance, preparing comprehensive and personalized planning strategies and educate clients; provide financial advice according to client needs, demonstrating a high regard for all compliance requirements to include paperwork processing and closing procedures.

An ideal candidate possesses a Series 6, as well as having current health and life insurance licenses, is a self-motivated professional, understands complex financial

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needs and family dynamics in order to build strong relationships with clients, has strong communication skills and work ethic, and works well in a team environment and independently. Interested applicants should apply through Premier Community Bank's website at www.premiercommunity.com under "Careers."

Loan Officer

Shell Lake State Bank is seeking an experienced loan officer for their Shell Lake, Wis. office. They are replacing a long-term retiring loan officer that maintains a large loan portfolio.

This position will be responsible for soliciting, negotiating, underwriting, and coordinating the closing for all types of real estate, consumer, small business, and agricultural loans in compliance with the bank's lending policies and

Advertise Your Next Job Opening with WBA in Wisconsin Banker

Are you looking to get the word out about a career working at your bank? The best way to attract dedicated and highly skilled employees is to post in *Wisconsin Banker*!

Wisconsin Banker goes out to an estimated readership of 9,000 people every month, and each published advertisement includes a digital posting on WBA's website as well. WBA makes it easy to advertise your new job opening along with its responsibilities, requirements, and location, so you can find the perfect candidate for every new position at your bank.

To find out more about advertising career opportunities at your bank, email bankersmarketplace@wisbank.com or go to www.wisbank.com/classifieds.

procedures. Preferred education is a bachelor's degree in business, finance, or accounting and/or five or more years of work experience in a financial institution or loan office setting.

The bank offers competitive compensation, generous 401k match, paid holidays, paid vacation,

paid sick time, health insurance, dental insurance, life insurance, and long-term disability insurance. If you believe you are qualified and are interested in joining our team, please forward your resume to shanew@shellakestatebank.com. Equal Opportunity Employer.

Post Open Intern Positions for Free

WBA member banks can post open internship positions in the *Bankers Marketplace*, free of charge. If you have questions, email bankersmarketplace@wisbank.com or visit www.wisbank.com/classifieds.

Bank On: Economic Empowerment

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of bridging a gap and striving toward equity in our financial institutions. In doing so, we can assure that everyone has access to the support, security, and peace of mind that a bank can offer. It is important for banks to be on lists such as the one associated with the Bank On certification as the media, elected officials, and members of the public pay attention to them. Participating in Bank

On helps close the economic gap and demonstrates the leadership role your bank and the industry are taking in this important effort. Thank you for considering this certification and contributing to the positive impacts it will have on individuals and the economy throughout our state.

For any questions about WBA's diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, please contact Rose Oswald Poels at ropoels@wisbank.com.

WISCONSIN BANKER

WBA Mission Statement | We promote a healthy environment for banks in Wisconsin through actively advocating, educating, and supporting our members.

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