



2007 Award Recipients

Governor's Trailblazer Awards
for Women in Business

Wisconsin's home-grown businesses are really what drive our economy, and the role women play in these businesses is vital to the state's economic success. I am honored to help to recognize these women who have started their own businesses, and the great success they've had – strengthening our economy and building strong communities in the process.

Governor Jim Doyle

About the Awards

The Governor's Trailblazer Awards for Women in Business are awarded to women-owned businesses in recognition of the legacy of women's business ownership in Wisconsin and their deep roots in the business community.

Torch Awards honor family-owned businesses that are currently majority women-owned by a female relative of the founder and have been in operation for three generations or more.

Half Century Awards honor businesses with sole or majority ownership by a woman, or a series of women, for 50 years or more.

Quarter Century Awards honor businesses with sole or majority ownership by a woman, or a series of women, for 25 to 49 years.

Award winners are selected through an open nomination process announced each year. Businesses may be self-nominated or nominated by others, including business and professional organizations, elected officials, chambers of commerce, friends, colleagues and employees. Eligibility requirements and other award criteria are available on the WI Women's Council web site (www.womenscouncil.wi.gov).

*Award plaques generously provided by
The WIDGET Source, a woman-owned business
located in Middleton, WI.*

AWARD RECIPIENTS

TORCH AWARDS

Kreier's Hair Quarters Mary Kay Hauke	The Omaha Bar Shirley Hayes	Stanek Tool Corporation Mary Wehrheim
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QUARTER CENTURY AWARDS

Joan Collins Publicity Joan Collins	Malacological Consultants Marian E. Havlik
Concepts in Art, Ltd. Joan C. Blackburn	NSP Graphics Gwen Kober & Angie Kober Feucht
Cook Specialty Co., Inc. JoAnne Cook Aldridge	Pardeeville Gymnastics & Karate Club Linda Lytle
Country Treasures Joyce E. Pugh	SEEK Careers/Staffing, Inc. Carol Ann Schneider
Devenish Associates, Inc. Sharon Devenish	Waldmann Shoes Judy Waldmann
Elite Fitness & Racquet Clubs Kay Yuspeh	Wild Child Renee West
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SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Ballweg Chevrolet- Pontiac-Buick, Inc. Darlene Ballweg	Lammer's Food Fest Lucy Lammer	Lincoln Wood Products Jane Bierman
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TORCH AWARD

**Kreier's Hair Quarters
Mary Kay Hauke, Owner
Cudahy, Wisconsin
Founded 1927**

Nominated by

Senator Jeff Plale
Wisconsin State Senate
7th Senate District

Mary Kay Hauke is the owner of Kreier's Hair Quarters. Established by her grandfather in 1927, this third-generation, family-owned business has been a fixture in the community for 80 years!

Mary Kay attended barber school followed by a three-year apprenticeship with her father. Upon its completion, she worked at another of the families' shops in Oak Creek. After six months, she returned to her father's side on Layton Avenue where she worked with him for 20 years. Mary Kay's father ran the shop from 1964 to 1999, when she became the shop's owner.

Mary Kay is a dedicated businesswoman who also reaches out to those in need in her community. In nominating Kreier's Hair Quarters, State Senator Plale wrote:

"Not only does Mary Kay Hauke take deep pride in running the family business, she also contributes to her community in another way as well. As a two-time breast cancer survivor, Mary Kay reaches out to those in her community who suffer as she did. Mary Kay collects mastectomy bras, breast prostheses and lymph edema sleeves for women whose insurance does not cover these expensive and much-needed items."

Kreier's Hair Quarters ♦ 3524 E. Layton Ave. ♦ Cudahy, WI
Phone: 414-744-5005

AWARD RECIPIENTS

**The Omaha Bar
Shirley Hayes, Owner
Rice Lake, Wisconsin
Founded 1898**

Nominated by

Representative Mary Hubler
Wisconsin State Assembly
75th Assembly District

Established in 1896 by Shirley's great-grandmother, Mrs. Black, The Omaha Bar (now better known as The Big "O") was (and still is) located across the street from the Omaha railroad depot in Rice Lake. During prohibition, it was run by Shirley's grandmother, Agnes Bredesen Luth, and it was renamed The Omaha Lunch. When prohibition ended, the name was changed to The Omaha Bar & Lunch. Early pictures on the bar's walls track the community over the 20th century, including World War I troops at the railroad station across the street heading off to war.

In 1959, Shirley's mother, Bev Jacobson, took over and she ran the bar with her husband, Cliff, until 1991. Shirley purchased the bar in 1991 and ran it with her husband until his death in 1992. Shirley owns and runs the bar — the fourth-generation woman in her family to do so — to the present day. She expanded the bar in 2000.

In nominating The Omaha Bar — The Big "O" — State Representative Mary Hubler wrote, "The Omaha, Rice Lake's neighborhood bar, is a fixture in the community. Since its inception, it has been a neighborhood meeting place. Without four generations of strong women owners, The Big "O" would not have survived. Shirley Hayes is also active in our community, raising money for many local charitable organizations."

The Omaha Bar ♦ 411 Tainter Ave., Rice Lake, WI
Phone: 715-234-6779

TORCH AWARD

**Stanek Tool Corporation
Mary Wehrheim, President
New Berlin, Wisconsin
Founded 1924**

Nominated by

Lynn Mahuta, CEO
Mahuta Tool Corporation
Germantown, Wisconsin

Stanek Tool Corporation is a leader in the tool and die industry, specializing in the design and build of complex hydraulic workholding fixtures and plastic molds, as well as the manufacture of close tolerance parts. The company was founded in 1924 by Edward Stanek. His three sons followed him into the family business. Today, Stanek Tool is led by Edward's granddaughter, Mary Wehrheim, a Purdue University graduate.

The tool and die industry is essential to the state of Wisconsin and our nation, manufacturing the tooling required to produce everything from cell phones to automobiles to rockets. Stanek Tool is proud to be the recipient of a Governor's Trailblazer Award for Women in Business.

In nominating Stanek Tool, Lynn Mahuta, CEO of Mahuta Tool Corporation, noted, "Stanek Tool has always been a leader in the industry. They are always willing to help and mentor smaller firms."

Stanek Tool Corporation ♦ 2500 S. Calhoun Rd., New Berlin,
WI ♦ Phone: 715-234-6779 ♦ www.stanektool.com

QUARTER CENTURY AWARD

**Joan Collins Publicity
Joan Collins, President
Madison, Wisconsin
Founded 1966**

Nominated by

Vickie Wenzel, Vice President
Target Commercial Interiors
Madison, Wisconsin

"Even as a child playing with dolls, Joan Collins played office, not house."

— *Greater Madison In Business Magazine*, February 2005

Joan Collins formed Joan Collins Publicity, Madison, in 1966 at age 25, with a \$75 investment and a used desk. The firm specializes in publicizing and promoting Wisconsin-based businesses and non-profits, ranging from financial institutions to tourism attractions.

Joan's entrepreneurship started at age 11 when she published a neighborhood newspaper, which gave her the background to form a part-time freelance writing business while attending Stephens College and the University of Missouri School of Journalism. She graduated in 1964 from the University of Wisconsin with a journalism degree.

In 2006, Joan created a \$40,000 grant program to celebrate 40 years in business. She has selected nonprofits that submitted proposals supporting self-esteem and entrepreneurship for girls and women in the Madison area.

Joan is a member of the Society of American Travel Writers, Midwest Travel Writers Association, Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce, and Madison Downtown Rotary. She is a charter member of TEMPO Madison.

Joan Collins Publicity ♦ 2812 Waunona Way, Madison, WI
Phone: (608) 222-2899

QUARTER CENTURY AWARD

**Concepts in Art, Ltd.
Joan C. Blackbourn, President
Janesville, Wisconsin
Founded 1979**

Nominated by

Vickie Wenzel, Vice President
Target Commercial Interiors
Madison, Wisconsin

Joan Blackbourn is the President and founder of Concepts in Art, Ltd. Established in Janesville in 1979 as an art gallery — featuring mainly local and regional artists — and frame shop, Joan's business quickly evolved into one of the premiere corporate art consulting firms in the region. The firm assisted the Parker Pen Company in creating one of the first significant corporate art collections in the state. Joan became sole owner of Concepts in Art, Ltd., in 1983 and, recognizing a market need, reorganized the business to serve corporate, health care, and hospitality industries.

The name, Concepts In Art, Ltd., is no accident. With a deep understanding of both art history and current art trends, and a small core staff with a combined 60 years experience, the firm places the highest priority on being more than just a source for generic framed art. Working with artists from around the country, and regional and local artists when requested, Joan's team is constantly looking for new talent. Joan and the other consultants try to understand a client's philosophy, customer base, locale, and history, so that the final artwork choices project something unique about that company.

Concepts in Art, Ltd., provides a vast selection of fine art, such as paintings, sculptures, and limited-edition and open-ended prints and posters. It also offers commissioned site-specific fine art and historical montage for corporate, health, and hospitality environments. In addition, the firm provides the finest quality framing, as well as full, professional installation and customer service.

Concepts in Art, Ltd. ♦ 310 East Milwaukee, Janesville, WI
Phone: (262) 385-0708 ♦ www.conceptsinartltd.com

QUARTER CENTURY AWARD

Cook Specialty Co., Inc.
West Allis, Wisconsin
JoAnne Cook Aldridge, Owner
Founded 1970

Nominated by

Rep. Peggy Krusick WI State Assembly 7 th Assembly District	Rep. Tony Staskunas WI State Assembly 15 th Assembly District	Former Senator Tom Reynolds WI State Senate
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"No one should ever go without a decorated birthday cake."

— *Cook Specialty founder Elaine Cook*

JoAnne Cook Aldridge is the owner of Cook Specialty Co., Inc., a retail and wholesale cake and candy supply store founded by her mother, Elaine Cook, in 1970. The store's roots, however, start earlier when Elaine signed up for evening cake-decorating class at Muskego High School to better create birthday cakes for her preschool-age children. Four semesters later, she signed up for a two-week professional cake-decorating class in Minneapolis while her husband took the kids on vacation to the New York World's Fair. Once home, she took over teaching at Muskego, then added classes at Brookfield and Franklin high schools.

Tired of traveling to Minneapolis and Chicago to stock up before each semester, Elaine started her own store. Cook Specialty opened for limited hours in 1970 in Hales Corners and sold supplies to her students. As business thrived, the company outgrew several locations before settling in its present site on Greenfield Avenue in West Allis in 1981. In 1976, Cook Specialty began its wholesale business, which has grown to account for about 70% of operations.

JoAnne took over ownership of the store in 2002, which she operates with her husband, Brad. Elaine, though technically retired, is still well-known to Cook's customers as "Grandma C" with her own feature on the web site and in-store hours to answer questions and provide tips and recipes. According to JoAnne, "Staying true to our original identity helps the family-owned business thrive."

Cook Specialty Co., Inc. ♦ 7321 W. Greenfield Ave., West Allis, WI
♦ Phone: (414) 257-1578 ♦ www.cookscakeandcandy.com

QUARTER CENTURY AWARD

**Country Treasures
Joyce E. Pugh, Owner
Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin
Founded 1979**

Nominated by

Patricia Popple
School Administrator (retired)

Country Treasures was founded by Joyce Pugh in 1979 when an office supply store moved to a new location, leaving behind its Hallmark department. The empty space was used to expand the card shop into one of Wisconsin's first "country" stores housing gifts and home décor.

Country Treasures moved to a new downtown location in 1984 with the purchase of a building and a vacant lot where Joyce built a new building. In 1989, a third adjacent building was purchased. The expanded retail space underwent a major historical restoration — the first as the city became a Wisconsin Main Street Community.

Joyce opened a second store in Eau Claire in 1981 and a third in Maplewood, Minnesota, in 1994. Joyce's stores have all evolved into strong retail spaces with gifts, collectibles, and home décor, and they are now also all Hallmark Gold Crown stores, with a total staff of 30 part and full-time employees.

Joyce is a native of Chippewa Falls, and a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire, with a degree in elementary education. She taught school and became a mother of four children before starting her own business. She has served on several boards and is active as a volunteer in Chippewa Falls, most recently as President of Chippewa Falls Main Street, Inc.

Country Treasures ♦ 216 N. Bridge St., Chippewa Falls, WI
Phone: (715) 723-8883

QUARTER CENTURY AWARD

**Devenish Associates, Inc.
Sharon Devenish, President
Monona, Wisconsin
Founded 1979**

Nominated by

Vickie Wenzel, Vice President
Target Commercial Interiors
Madison, Wisconsin

Robin Douthitt, Dean
School of Human Ecology,
Madison, Wisconsin

Sharon Devenish is the President and Founder of Devenish Associates, Inc. Started as a partnership called the Design Factory in 1977, Sharon took full ownership of the company in 1979 and reorganized the staff and their design services under the new name of Devenish Associates, Inc.

Planning between 2.5 and 3 million square feet of space annually, Sharon focuses the firm's professional efforts to positively impact their clients' businesses by working with creative designs to save space, provide more efficient layouts, and increase productivity by providing staff with ergonomic solutions. With a team of professional interior architects and designers, Devenish Associates remains committed to providing the personal service, creativity, and knowledge essential to top quality design.

The firm provides interior design, interior architecture, and facility design and management services to corporate, medical, financial, professional, and hospitality clients located primarily through Wisconsin and the Midwest. Project work, however, has been carried out across the U.S. and into Canada, Mexico, and South America.

Under Sharon's leadership, the firm has received nationwide recognition, including listings in *Contract Design Magazine's* "Top 10 Firms/ Who's Who in the Midwest", and *Facilities Design & Management Magazine's* "Top 50 Interior Design Firms in the Nation" and "Top 100 Firms Nationally."

Devenish Associates, Inc. ♦ 5111 Monona Dr., Monona, WI
Phone: (608) 223-4055 ♦ www.devenishinc.com

QUARTER CENTURY AWARD

Elite Fitness & Racquet Clubs
Kay Yuspeh, President
Racine, Wisconsin
Founded 1986

Nominated by

Beth Bauer, Executive Director
Gathering on the Green
Thiensville, Wisconsin

Kay Yuspeh has over 25 years of experience in the Fitness & Racquet Industry. She purchased her first club, The Racquetball Club of Kenosha, in 1979. Since then, she has transformed the company, creating four state-of-the-art fitness centers: Highlander Elite and Bluemound Elite in Brookfield, North Shore Elite in Glendale, and Mequon Elite. With more than 12,000 members, Elite is one of the three largest fitness clubs in southeast Wisconsin. Kay serves as a mentor to her staff of more than 250 employees.

A community advocate and philanthropist, Kay supports national organizations, such as Special Olympics, The Leukemia Society, The Make-A-Wish Foundation, and The American Heart Association, as well as local groups, including The Karen Yontz Foundation, Prevent Blindness Wisconsin, and The MACC Fund.

In nominating Elite, Beth Bauer, Executive Director of Gathering on the Green, highlighted Kay's leadership and philanthropy: "Examples of Kay's civic leadership are too numerous to list them all. Throughout her 30 years of club management, she has organized programs and raised nearly \$1 million for area charities and organizations."

Kay's dedication to fitness as a way of life helps define her club's direction. She has participated in triathlons, cycling events and treks. A mother of three, Kay currently resides in River Hills with her husband, Richard.

Elite Fitness & Racquet Clubs ♦ 13885 W. Burleigh, Brookfield, WI
Phone: (262) 786-0880 ♦ www.elite-clubs.com

QUARTER CENTURY AWARD

**Full Compass Systems, Ltd.
Susan Lipp, President
Middleton, Wisconsin
Founded 1977**

Nominated by

Vickie Wenzel, Vice President
Target Commercial Interiors
Madison, Wisconsin

Susan Lipp is the President, majority shareholder, and co-manager, along with husband Jonathan Lipp, of Full Compass Systems, Ltd. — a jewel of a business and the employer of 145 people. Founded in 1977, Susan and Jonathan built the company into one of the nation's premier audio/video and lighting equipment companies and one of the nation's largest dealers of microphones. Even with a full-time human resources person on staff, Susan still takes time to interview all key personal, and this attention pays off. Take a walk with Susan around the 75,000-square-foot compound and it is clear the affection and connection Susan has for each of her employees — and they to her.

Full Compass's achievements have been recognized many times over, including being named the sixth-largest woman-owned business in Wisconsin, one of *Working Woman Magazine's* "500 Top Businesses," one of the "Top 100 Wisconsin Private Businesses," and "Dealer of the Year."

Susan Lipp has also received many personal awards for her business skills and community involvement. Susan sits on the Board or serves in an advisory capacity to many professional, community, religious, and charitable organizations including NAMM, University of Wisconsin School of Music, Arthritis Foundation, MS Society of Wisconsin, Jewish Federation of South Central Wisconsin, Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, American Diabetes Association, and the Women's Tzedakah Organization of Madison Jewish Committee Council. Amidst all that, Susan even shows up at work occasionally!

Full Compass Systems, Ltd. ♦ 8001 Terrace Ave., Middleton,
WI ♦ Phone: (608) 831-7330 ♦ www.fullcompass.com

QUARTER CENTURY AWARD

**Malacological Consultants
Marian E. Havlik, Owner
La Crosse, Wisconsin
Founded 1977**

Self-Nominated

Known as the "clam lady of LaCrosse," Marian Havlik has more than three decades of personal, financial, and emotional investment in the environmental issues affecting the Upper Mississippi and other area rivers. Marian began studying freshwater mussels in 1969 to help her daughter with science fair projects. Since then, mussel studies and big river environmental issues have occupied most of her time.

A 1976 grant enabled Marian to take a five-week study program at the Ohio State University Museum. In 1977, she was asked to do a project and, without outside financial support, she founded Malacological Consultants as a firm specializing in mussel field studies and other projects for the public and private sectors.

A mother of five, Marian worked as a part-time nurse to help fund her business. Since 1987, however, she has spent all of her time conducting large research projects, the findings of which have resulted in many changes in state and federal management of freshwater mussel resources. Her mid-career change took her from amateur to expert and head of her own consultancy firm where she used her business earnings to acquire the equipment needed for research — all without the customary degrees.

In 2003, the Freshwater Mollusk Conservation Society presented Marian with their prestigious William J. Clench Award "in grateful recognition of her longstanding commitment to the mussel fauna of the Upper Mississippi River system in the form of surveys, publications, and unwavering advocacy for this important national resource."

Malacological Consultants ♦ 1603 Mississippi St., La Crosse, WI
Phone: (608) 782-7958 ♦ www.fullcompass.com

QUARTER CENTURY AWARD

**NSP Graphics
Gwen Kober & Angie Kober Feucht, Owners
Campbellsport, Wisconsin
Founded 1977**

Nominated by

Julaine Roth, Secretary/Treasurer
Campbellsport Chamber of Commerce
Campbellsport, Wisconsin

NSP Graphics has been a family-owned business since it was founded by Gwen Kober's husband, Peter, in 1977. As his health deteriorated, Gwen took over the business, and her daughter, Angie Feucht, is slowly taking her turn as owner. Now Gwen is looking forward to retirement! Originally a silk-screen manufacturer, NSP has grown over the years to include silk-screen printing, embroidery, and offset printing.

NSP began in the Kobers' home. Eventually more space was needed and NSP moved to Campbellsport, first renting space and later purchasing a building on Main Street. Their Main Street Building now houses five local businesses.

Gwen and Angie are also known for their commitment to friends and colleagues, including ensuring support for other women business-owners, particularly those who work to maintain their businesses while fighting illnesses such as breast cancer. "How fortunate," notes Gwen, "for us to be all women, all in the same building, and all able to say, 'Just let me know what I can do for you today and it shall be done.'"

NSP's nominator for the Trailblazer Award, Julianne Roth of the Campbellsport Chamber of Commerce, highlighted the company's support of many organizations in the community, particularly youth organizations, such as the Campbellsport Athletic Association and the Campbellsport Wrestling Club, and their affiliations with many local groups, including the Campbellsport Chamber of Commerce and Fire Department.

NSP Graphics ♦ 511 E. Main St., Campbellsport, WI
Phone: (920) 533-8673 ♦ www.fullcompass.com

QUARTER CENTURY AWARD

Pardeeville Gymnastics & Karate Club
Linda Lytle, Owner
Pardeeville, Wisconsin
Founded 1980

Nominated by

Representative J. A. "Doc" Hines
Wisconsin State Assembly
42nd Assembly District

"I like to tell my students, 'If you can do gymnastics,
you can do anything.'"

— Linda Lytle

As a teenager, Linda Lytle was fortunate enough to live close to a well-established gymnastics club, and from there, she was able to compete for England in both European and world competitions. Linda's business originated from her passion for the sport of gymnastics and her interest in trying to find a way to teach her sport.

Linda and her husband built the building for the gymnastics center as well as some of the equipment, keeping debt to a minimum. She was able to pay off the building quickly, and she upgrades equipment as she can afford to do so. Pardeeville Gymnastics and Karate Club now draws students from a 40-mile radius of Pardeeville and no longer needs to do any advertising — the gym is doing great!

In nominating Pardeeville Gymnastics, State Representative J. A. "Doc" Hines highlighted Linda's skills and leadership, noting, "Linda Lytle is a coach who goes the extra mile to encourage her students, many of whom have won state and national awards. She also judges competitions throughout the United States."

Pardeeville Gymnastics & Karate Club ♦ N9910 Dalton Rd,
Pardeeville, WI ♦ Phone: (608) 429-2070

QUARTER CENTURY AWARD

**SEEK Careers/Staffing, Inc.
Carol Ann Schneider, Chair/CEO
Grafton, Wisconsin
Founded 1971**

Nominated by

MaryAnn Raasch
National Team Leader
Seek Careers/Staffing, Inc.
Grafton, Wisconsin

In 1971, Carol Schneider founded SEEK Careers/Staffing with just \$500 from her personal savings account. Today, the staffing services company enjoys sales of more than \$42 million from 14 offices throughout Wisconsin, as well as four regional offices across the U.S. Throughout its expansion, SEEK has remained a "family business" with Schneider's husband, a son, a daughter-in-law, and two grandsons all taking active roles within the company.

In 2006, SEEK won *The Milwaukee Business Journal's* "Beyond the Paycheck" award. Carol owns the seventh-largest woman-owned business in Wisconsin and the company was named the 337th-largest woman-owned business by *Working Woman Magazine*. In 2000, Wisconsin Women Entrepreneurs named Carol "Entrepreneurial Woman of the Year."

Carol gives back to her community in too many ways to mention. Here are just a few. As a member of the Ozaukee County Economic Development Corporation, she helped found the Ozaukee Workforce 2010 program, created Ozaukee Workplace Learning, and was the driving force behind the Ozaukee County Transportation Management Association, which resulted in public transportation for Ozaukee County. The U.S. Small Business Administration honored her for her efforts to train welfare recipients enrolled in Wisconsin Works. She is currently President of Tempo Envision in Waukesha, is on the Wisconsin Board of Junior Achievement, and was recently appointed to the Milwaukee 7 Regional Economic Development Committee.

SEEK Careers/Staffing, Inc. ♦ 1160 Opportunity Dr., Grafton,
WI ♦ Phone: (262) 375-6646 ♦ www.seekcareers.com

QUARTER CENTURY AWARD

**Waldmann Shoes
Judy Waldmann, Owner
Jefferson, Wisconsin
Founded 1977**

Nominated by

Vickie Wenzel, Vice President
Target Commercial Interiors
Madison, Wisconsin

Jefferson, Wisconsin, has had a downtown shoe store for more than 54 years — and it has always been owned by a woman. In 1952, Ethel Nedow opened Grimsrud Shoes. In 1953, Alice Messmer took over the store and operated Messmer Shoes for 24 years. In 1977, Judy Waldmann became the owner, changing the name to Waldmann Shoes.

There have been many changes and challenges during Judy's 29 years on Main Street. The early 1980s brought the decay of many Main Street operations, with 12 businesses closing in 18 months. Waldmann Shoes needed to diversify its inventory, and one new addition was selling blue jeans for the entire family. The blue jean salesman was very dubious about selling to a shoe store until he met with Judy and saw her business plan. Waldmann Shoes ended up being one of his most active accounts for a long time. Additional items such as belts, gloves, and mittens were added as more Jefferson stores went out of business.

Judy Waldmann has had several women work for her as part-time clerks, including one for more than 20 years and another for more than 12 years, creating a shoe store family of sorts. In nominating Waldmann Shoes, Vickie Wenzel of Target Commercial Interiors highlighted Judy's community involvement, including the Waldmanns' long-time support of the community's annual "Gemuetlichkeit Days" — a three-day festival in September — where they sell German clothing on consignment to benefit the organization, donating their time and space on the sales floor. The Waldmanns also support other local business and charities.

Waldmann Shoes ♦ 111 South Main St., Jefferson, WI
Phone: (920) 674-4472

QUARTER CENTURY AWARD

Wild Child
Renee West, President
Madison, Wisconsin
Founded 1981

Nominated by

Vickie Wenzel, Vice President
Target Commercial Interiors
Madison, Wisconsin

In 1981, Renee West opened the original Wild Child in a tiny storefront on East Johnson Street in Madison, Wisconsin. Since that time, partner Bill West has come on board, two more boys were born, and the store moved to its present location on fabulous Monroe Street on Madison's near west side. Renee's goal has always been to carry natural fiber baby and children's wear and other truly unique and useful products. Wild Child's trademark is the store's own exclusive line of mix-and-match, garment-dyed clothing — much of it created in the store.

Wild Child is committed to selling non-sweatshop labor items, and consequently, most of its clothes are USA made and the toys tend to be from Europe or Canada. They also make an effort to carry organically grown cotton clothing because they feel it's important, especially for the next generation.

Wild Child is very much a family business. Oldest son Jonah put together the store's web site, middle son Dante has worked in the store, and baby Jules is involved in the store at present. Renee notes, "This store has been an adventurous and fun challenge. We love it!"

Wild Child ♦ 1813 Monroe St., Madison, WI
Phone: (920) 674-4472 ♦ www.wildchildclothes.com

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

**Ballweg Chevrolet-Pontiac-Buick, Inc.
Darlene Ballweg, President
Middleton and Sauk City, Wisconsin
Founded 1965**

Nominated by

Gary D. Williams, President
Wisconsin Automobile & Truck Dealers Association
Madison, Wisconsin

Darlene Ballweg is a dynamically talented and highly esteemed Dealer Principal. She attributes her success in the automotive business to her resilience, to her strong sense of determination, and ultimately to her employees whom she dearly respects and appreciates. She and her husband, Daniel, purchased their first Chevrolet dealership 1965 and a second in 1973. By 1980, they had added the Oldsmobile, Pontiac and Buick franchises.

Darlene was busy raising a family and working on the farm when, in 1984, Danny was killed in a farm accident leaving her responsible for four farms and the Sauk City dealership. Darlene took over as Dealer Operator and has since grown that business from \$10 million to over \$34 million. Since that time, she has purchased dealerships in Black Earth and Sauk City and opened a new state-of-the-art facility in Middleton. Total corporate revenue is now expected to exceed \$100 million.

"My biggest fear," recalled Darlene, "was that I wouldn't learn the business. I remember being in a workshop with all of these men and wondering, 'Do they think I deserve this?' I'm working hard now so I feel I have rightfully earned this place."

Darlene ranks fifth in the "Top 50 Wisconsin Women in Business." Among her many honors, in 2007 she was named "Wisconsin Dealer of the Year" and nominated for a "National *TIME Magazine* Quality Dealer Award." She has gifted hundreds of thousands of dollars for education and charitable organizations in her community. She has also worked to found and serve on the Boards of many organizations.

Ballweg Chevrolet-Pontiac-Buick, Inc. ♦ 783 Phillips Blvd,
Sauk City, WI ♦ Phone: (920) 674-4472 ♦ www.ballweg.com

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

**Lammer's Food Fest
Lucy Lammer, President
Menomonie, Wisconsin
Founded 1860**

Nominated by

Michelle Kussow, Vice President
Wisconsin Grocers Association
Madison, Wisconsin

Lucy Lammer is the co-owner of Lammer's Food Fest in Menomonie. For four generations and more than 140 years, the Lammer family has been involved in the grocery business. Lucy's great-grandfather and his brother moved from Germany and settled in Menomonie, Wisconsin, in the late 1850s. They expanded their tailor store into a grocery store by 1860. Lucy's grandfather ran it from 1919 to 1958. Her father purchased the store in 1958 and ran it until Lucy and her brother, Pat, purchased the business in 1997.

Lucy began working for her father at an early age; her first "job" was running an outdoor chicken stand with Pat for a weekend promotion. She managed the shopping center attached to the supermarket for 20 years. When she and Pat purchased the store in 1997, Lucy gave up her outside management role to devote her full attention to the business.

In order to maintain the respect and economic standing that Lucy and Pat have built up in the supermarket, they constantly work to change and improve the store. They are devoted to keeping produce fresh and providing an enjoyable shopping experience for their customers. The store has had an immense impact on the community through special events and participation in community activities.

In the Trailblazer application, Lucy noted, "I have a passion for this business and I try not to steamroll people as I strive for excellence. I always tell my employees my job is to keep everyone happy. Realistically, I know that on any given day, there are employees who may not like me, but my goal is always to gain their respect for the job I am trying to do. "

Lammer's Food Fest ♦ 1408 9th Street E, Menomonie, WI
Phone: (715) 235-2134 ♦ www.lammersfoodfest.com

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

**Lincoln Wood Products
Jane Bierman, President
Merrill, Wisconsin
Founded 1947**

Nominated by

Jane Ann Savaske, Executive Director
Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce
Merrill, Wisconsin

In 1947, Carl and Jane Bierman realized a dream. With the purchase and renovation of an old dairy, Lincoln Wood Products began. At the time, Carl had ten years of experience in the millwork industry, and he and his wife, Jane, shared very firm ideas on how the business should be run. Lincoln's finely crafted windows and patio doors reflect the company's long tradition of quality craftsmanship.

As the company grew, the original building was expanded and new facilities were purchased and built. Today the company employs close to 500 people and covers more than 500,000 square feet in four separate facilities, including state-of-the-art woodworking equipment and testing facilities.

Almost 60 years after forming the company, serving on its Board of Directors, and providing her skills and leadership, Jane Bierman took over as President in 2002. Jane has a strong belief in and commitment to her employees. Under her leadership, the company continues to strive to produce quality products and provide superior customer service.

Jane has an impressive history of supporting the community and has served as director on numerous community boards. In her nomination, Jane Ann Savaske of the Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce noted that, "[Jane's] generosity has improved the quality of life for all of the residents in the Merrill area. Jane is a very caring and genuine person. I think her commitment to her business and to Merrill has helped to shape Merrill as an outstanding community with a future she can be proud of."

Lincoln Wood Products ♦ 1400 W. Taylor St., Merrill, WI
Phone: (715) 536-2461 ♦ www.lincolnwindows.com

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Wisconsin Women's Council
Trailblazer Award Program
101 East Wilson, 8th floor
Madison, Wisconsin 53714

phone (608) 266-2219
fax (608) 267-0626
web: womenscouncil.wi.gov

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