

PACKERS HAMMER SEATTLE AND CLINCH A PLAYOFF BERTH

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KENOSHA NEWS

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Lack of job offers lead some to start their own businesses

Editor's note: This is the second part of a two-day series looking at the employment forecast for 2010. The first part appeared Sunday.

BY JOHN KREROWICZ
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The lack of job offers the past year was discouraging for Beth Gonnering, but it also prompted her to think about starting her own business.

The 48-year-old Kenosha resident received no response from hundreds of resumes sent out after being laid off in October 2008. The last time she was laid off, in 2003, she had five job offers within a month.

"But that was a different world," she said.

Gonnering, with 26 years in the construction project manager business, decided to take a 12-week small business planning course as well as other entrepreneurial classes in the

Woman opens Home Helpers business to assist those in need of non-medical care. Page A4

spring.

That led to the opening of Home-town Pro, 6201 75th St., offering home and business maintenance, repair and remodeling, in September.

Be your own boss

She's not alone in pursuing self-employment when jobs are scarce.

Attendance at the small business classes jumped 50 percent, to 40 people, between spring and fall in Kenosha County.

The courses, including marketing, business plans and cash flow topics, are arranged by the Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corp. and the Small Business Development Center of the University

of Wisconsin-Parkside.

"We're getting people who might have been laid off two or three times," said Heather Lux, project director for WWBIC's southeastern Wisconsin office, 600 52nd St. "They can't find a full-time job, so they decide to start their own business. Some are making 40 percent less in new jobs and want to fill that income gap."

Since 2007, when the Kenosha office opened, the agency has loaned \$300,000 to eight businesses in the county, creating 32 jobs. More than half the dollars — \$170,000 — was loaned in the past five months, Lux said.

In addition, approximately \$275,000 in loans for Kenosha County businesses are being considered.

Helping small companies

The agency aims to assist businesses with fewer than five work-

ers and those that need less than \$100,000 in start-up money.

Its target population is women, low- to medium-income people and minorities, but WWBIC will work with all who are interested.

The Development Center typically works with businesses needing more than \$100,000.

SBDC Director Matt Wagner said the number of people counseled and trained through his organization increased by 25 percent in 2008-09 compared to a year earlier. Many were unemployed.

"There's a theory that with high unemployment, you'll see the risk of going into business decrease, providing an opportunity to get into small business," he said.

SBDC plans to offer classes on topics such as business planning for technology-based companies



KENOSHA NEWS PHOTO BY BILL SIEL
Beth Gonnering prepares an estimate for replacing a storm door for a customer. After losing her job, Gonnering decided to start her own home-repair business.

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DEATHS

Barbara Romano-Garski, 71, of Minocqua, formerly of Kenosha, died Sunday at Aurora Hospital, Wausau. ProkoA4

Leone McDevitt Feryan, 89, formerly of Milwaukee, died Saturday at Hospitality Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. Piasecki-AlthausA4

LaVona H. Mink, 91, of Kenosha, died Saturday at St. Catherine's Medical Center. Kenosha Funeral ServicesA4

Lillian A. Bailey, 88, of Kenosha, died Friday at Kenosha Medical Center. Kenosha Funeral ServicesA4

Katherine "Kathy" Johnson, 67, of Kenosha, died Thursday at her residence. ProkoA4

BIRTHDAYS

Payton Leonardelli turns 8 today. A second-grader, he enjoys playing with Legos, Wii, his friends and sister.

Other local birthdays:
Ashley Hessefort, 21.

Celebrity birthdays:
Denzel Washington, actor, 55.
John Legend, singer, 31.

Check out more birthday photos in the Weekday Report at www.kenoshanews.com.

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Middle schools closing a gap

Minority achievement scores up new technology

BY TERRY FLORES
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In Keri Huesdens' classroom, Charles Scott doesn't miss the chalk dust.

And he can send text messages in his math class.

Needless to say, he is liking math a lot better this year.

This semester, the McKinley Middle School sixth-grader is earning a solid B, Huesdens said.

During a recent class, the students were studying number theory with the help of a Promethean Board, a virtual interactive learning screen. They drew Venn diagrams to chart the similarities between the factors used to arrive at the products of 24 and 36.

Students can use the special pen to write their answers on the screen. But if Huesdens wants to know whether the class understood the assignment, such as in a multiple choice quiz, students can text their answers. The answers are then immediately charted showing the percentage of students who answered a certain way.

For Huesdens it is a way to immediately assess whether the class should spend more time on a topic, or to pinpoint individuals having trouble grasping a concept.

"It's fun," said Charles, who along with his classmates took turns using the board to give answers. "I like it. It gets my attention."

That's half the battle, said



Sixth-grader Hailey Walters answers a question through a texting device at McKinley Middle School.

McKinley Principal Sharon Miller, whose school was one of two in the Kenosha Unified School District honored with the state's Promise Schools of Recognition awards. The other is Washington Middle School. Earlier this fall, each received plaques and \$2,000 grants to further their respective educational missions.

The two are also among 138 schools with high poverty yet high achievement compared with their peers in the state. Each school honored made adequate yearly progress over the last two years under the federal No Child Left Behind law. This is the first time either McKinley or Washington has won the award.



KENOSHA NEWS PHOTOS BY SEAN KRAJACIC
Washington Middle School math teacher Mary Ernst, left, helps seventh-grader Emanuel Merlos during a math class at the school.

Gap closing

Two years ago, both schools were among those not meeting No Child Left Behind standards because of low reading scores, according to a Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction report.

Just five years ago the gap was especially pronounced at McKinley, as only 56 percent of eighth-graders scored proficient or above in math and 71 percent proficient or better in reading.

Last year, however, 76

percent of McKinley eighth-graders registered scores of proficient or better in math, and 80 percent registered scores of proficient or better in reading.

"These were our highest math scores — ever," Miller said. "We are making significant progress."

Minorities make up 43 percent of the school population, and 54 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, a measure of poverty under federal guidelines.

Marked improvement

Among the reasons McKinley's scores rose last year is the progress made by African-American students, and the gap is closing quickly.

In less than three years, the percentage of black students scoring proficient or better in math grew 17 percentage points. By comparison, white students from sixth to eighth grade saw only a couple of percentage

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Security reviews under way after terror threat on airliner

WASHINGTON (AP) — Investigators piecing together a brazen attempt to bring down a trans-Atlantic airliner said Sunday the suspect tucked a small bag holding his deadly concoction on his body, using an explosive that would have been easily detected with the right airport equipment.

His success in smuggling and partially igniting the material on Friday's flight to Detroit prompted the Obama administration to promise a sweeping review of aviation security.

Adding to the airborne jit-

Attack stirs fears about Yemen; suspect belonged to Nigerian elite. Page B6.

ters, a second Nigerian man was detained Sunday from the same Northwest flight to Detroit after he locked himself in the plane's bathroom. Officials reported that he was belligerent but genuinely sick, and that, in an abundance of caution, the plane was taken to a remote location for screening before passengers were let off.

Investigators concluded

he posed no threat. Despite the government's decision after the attempted Friday attack to mobilize more air marshals, none was on the Sunday flight from Amsterdam, according to a government report obtained by The Associated Press.

Stiffer boarding measures met passengers at gates as authorities warned travelers to expect extra delays returning home from holidays. White House spokesman Robert Gibbs announced a review of air safety on two broad fronts, saying the government will investigate its

systems for placing suspicious travelers on watch lists and for detecting explosives before passengers board flights.

Both lines of defense were breached in an improbable series of events Christmas Day that spanned three continents and culminated in a struggle and fire aboard a Northwest jet shortly before its safe landing in Detroit. Law enforcement officials believed the suspect tried to ignite a two-part concoction of PETN and possibly a glycol-based liquid explosive, setting off popping, smoke

and some fire but no deadly detonation.

Nigerian Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, 23, an Islamic devotee once dubbed "the Pope" as a sign of respect by classmates, was released from a Michigan hospital in the custody of federal marshals Sunday after being treated for burns. He is charged with attempting to destroy an aircraft and placing a destructive device in a plane.

Abdulmutallab's lawyer said Sunday that he is now in a federal prison in Milan, Mich.