



SHOP DOWNTOWN KENOSHA: A Place Where Friends Set Up Shop

Within blocks of the Lake Michigan shore lies Downtown Kenosha. As strong as the nearby lighthouse beacon draws boaters into port, the downtown business district has been pulling in entrepreneurs. Included among them are two sets of friends who have partnered to open their first businesses – together.

Janis Barnhill and Julie Zorn became owners of The Coffee Pot, at 4914-7th Avenue, in 2004. The diner is rumored to have the first neon sign in Kenosha - it still shines above the entrance. Many people have shared the rumor with them, “and we’re running with it,” Janis says. In the summer you can eat



Julie Zorn and Janis Barnhill, co-owners of The Coffee Pot in Downtown Kenosha. Top: Paperazzi.

outdoors on the patio, known as 'The Garden of Eatin'.

Janis and Julie, both from Kenosha, have been friends since high school. They have had eight jobs together and raised their sons together (Janis has two, Julie has one). This line of work is not new to them, as they had worked in the industry. They had talked of opening a restaurant together at some point, but nothing was planned when this opportunity presented itself. Formerly known as Bubba's Breakfast Club, the diner was called Keno Coffee Pot back in the fifties or sixties. Thus, they reverted to that, but call it just The Coffee Pot. The diner originally opened in the early 1930's.

Janis and Julie use words such as eclectic, casual, and fun to describe the atmosphere. Janis says it's a “classic American diner with a modern and healthier spin on older recipes.” They like to purchase local ingredients when they can, including from Kenosha HarborMarket and other markets in the summer.

Breakfast and lunch are served, including burgers. One can order a Mimosa or Bloody Mary with breakfast. The menu includes omelets with creative names. The

Godfather includes Italian sausage, garlic, tomato, mozzarella, and Italian seasoning. The Shroom was placed on the menu because Janis likes her omelet with breakfast sausage, mushrooms, and cheese.

Meanwhile, Paperazzi is a specialty store owned by long-time friends Joyce Murray and Krista Kurth. With the motto “express yourself with paper,” Joyce says, “We're hoping to bring back the art of writing.” The store is located at 5621-6th Avenue.

The two friends met in kindergarten in Chicago. As Krista tells it, they had always talked about opening a business together. In September 2010, they achieved that goal with Paperazzi. They were both looking for employment, and with the economy and job market the way it's been, it wasn't encouraging to be looking for a job. So they thought, why not work for themselves? If they didn't do it now, they knew they'd regret that decision years later. The store's name is a play off of the celebrity-chasing paparazzi.

They have received positive feedback from customers, who have said Kenosha has needed this type of store, so a drive to Milwaukee or Chicago isn't needed. The store

offers unique papers, cards, and stationery. Krista emphasizes they put a heavy focus on customer service. They try to provide items that customers can't find anywhere else. Joyce provides design services, for custom wedding invitations and announcements.

Joyce comes from a graphic design background, while Krista's original interest was fashion merchandise. The two fields are closer together than one may think. Joyce notes she has read that paper industry designers are leading the way, with their ideas carrying over to the fashion industry. They grew up being crafty in Krista's basement. Her mom, as a preschool teacher, had an assortment of craft items on hand. While papers and design has been more of Joyce's passion, Krista is learning more about the field.

Here is more proof of the entrepreneurial downtown spirit: They first met while working for the same florist. They named their daughter Lilli. Without a doubt, this couple knows the floral industry. And now downtown Kenosha knows them. Lyna and Kevin Postuchow have owned A Summer's Garden Florist, at 5617-6th Avenue, since July 1, 2008.

Lyna and Kevin have many years of floral experience in Kenosha under their belts. While Lyna has had a soapmaking business, neither had a storefront until now. It was now time and all the elements fell into place, Lyna says. They love downtown, and they thought the location was great. One can call it a multi-generational affection with Downtown Kenosha; Lyna's father once worked downtown.

A Summer's Garden Florist offers fresh flowers for weddings, parties, funerals, dances, holidays, corporate events, and every day needs. Most of the flowers come directly from the growers, so they are very fresh. They are artfully arranged, as Lyna takes great care in each order. Also offered are blooming plants; gourmet items like soups, crackers, and sausages; candies; gifts; bee catchers and hummingbird feeders; greeting cards; balloons; stuffed animals; jewelry; and garden décor. The shop is one of only two Wisconsin locations to carry Kusmi tea, which was the tea provider to the czar of Russia. Lilli has her mom's artisan-made soap line named after her: Lilli Soapworks.

"Pop'n Downtown Kenosha" is an accurate phrase used by Sandy's Popper, opened by David and Sandy Hawes at 5503-6th Avenue in May 2008. They got their start as a vendor at Kenosha HarborMarket. Their business started out as a hobby. "We never thought we'd be doing this," Sandy says. They sell fresh gourmet popcorn, ice cream, gift baskets, gourmet candies and nuts, and more.



Heim's Downtown Toy Store.

Meanwhile, Jeni and John Heim thought outside the box when they opened their downtown shops. Who says diabetics or vegans or kids allergic to dairy must be deprived of the year-long treat of ice cream? Not Scoops! Ice Cream (5819-6th Avenue). Here, gluten free cones, and non-dairy, no sugar added as well as vegan ice cream flavors are among the offerings. In the same historic Orpheum Building sits Heim's Downtown Toy Store. "It's about the science of having fun," Jeni has said to describe the store. They understand that play is the highest form of research and sell classic toys to enhance the home and develop young minds. Early in its existence, occupational and physical therapists would get ideas from the store. Once, when an employee placed a re-order for marshmallow shooters, explaining how they help strengthen muscles for kids in speech therapy (by blowing a marshmallow out through a pipe), the manufacturer said they had never even thought of that market for their toy.

If there isn't enough reason to visit Downtown Kenosha, once a month several businesses are open extended hours for an evening of music, art, food, and socializing. Second Saturdays happens each second Saturday of the month from 6 to 9 p.m.

For more information about things to see and do in the Kenosha Area, contact the Kenosha Area Convention & Visitors Bureau at (800) 654-7309 or visit the Bureau's web site at www.KenoshaCVB.com.



For more information about the Kenosha Area:

www.KenoshaCVB.com

[www.Facebook.com/KenoshaAreaCVB](https://www.facebook.com/KenoshaAreaCVB)

[www.Twitter.com/KenoshaAreaCVB](https://www.twitter.com/KenoshaAreaCVB)

(800) 654-7309