

## ‘They are the ones who made samurai swords for the emperor’ Brookfield knife sharpener calls Japan trip ‘life changing’



Courtesy of Robert Remme/Alena Joling  
Alena Joling grinds a blade with Forging Master Mr. Tadashi Enami in Japan. Joling visited Kikuichi Cutlery, the world's oldest knifemaking factory in Japan.

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Yvette is honoring her mom's wishes to remain in her home

At 100 years old, Carolyn had been falling and Yvette had tried two other agencies prior to calling Comfort Keepers.

**INDEPENDENCE**  
Ashley's focus is to motivate Carolyn to dress herself, shower, exercise, and keep her strong so she is safe and independent in her home.

Carolyn is an avid sports fan and talented artist. She loves her year round Christmas Tree which Ashley decorates monthly to give Carolyn the joy she deserves.

**CARE MANAGEMENT**  
Care Manager Liz was able to build a 24/7 schedule with 3 caregivers to fulfill mom's needs. Yvette says "Liz goes the extra mile to make this all work. She is simply the best." Lead caregiver Ashley was trained by Yvette and in turn was able to train the other caregivers.

**IT TAKES A TEAM**  
Yvette gave up living in her own home to be with mom at night. She says, "The time caregivers spend with mom provides me with the needed respite to continue caring for her myself. Comfort Keepers service is as much needed for mom as it is for me." And we've cared for her for 4 years.

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A view of the Poplar Creek Town Center Residents Club, opened recently as part of the latest phase of the development.

Submitted photo

TOWN OF BROOKFIELD

# Poplar Creek Town Center advancing in stages

## Apartments, hotels opened as construction continues

By Brian Huber  
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TOWN OF BROOKFIELD — The Poplar Creek Town Center continues to come together in the Town of Brookfield, with hotels and apartment buildings opening recently while construction continues in the months ahead.

The property, at the northeast corner of Bluemound and Barker roads, has been under construction since 2022, with work expected to last well into next year, said Nick Wimmer, vice president of development for Wimmer Communities.

The first building, including Craig Husar Fine Diamonds, was opened in 2020. Since then, Wimmer acquired adjacent properties like the Elite Fitness Center, Motel 6, Bullwinkle's and a Quality Inn, intending that they be folded into the \$120 million development that includes two hotels, apartments, retail and office space.

The project includes two hotels, the Residence Inn and the Courtyard by Marriott, which Wimmer said opened to guests in November. It also sees ground-level retail stores fronting both Bluemound and Barker roads, a three-story office building at the northwest corner, and dozens of apartments ranging from one to three bedrooms in each residential unit. In retail uses, a nail salon, barbershop and anti-aging clinic are in the process of building out their spaces, Wimmer said.

Wimmer said five new apartment buildings were proposed as part of the overall project, each with parking spaces below and above ground. The WestTown building along Barker Road, consisting of 108 units, opened for occupancy in November, as well.

The CrossTown building at the center of the site has 113 residential apartments that opened in November, plus a 12,500-square-foot Residents Clubhouse including an outdoor pool, fitness center, yoga studio, pet spa, golf simulator, and several lounges with a billiards room and coffee bistro, Wimmer said. The NorthTown building with its 79 units opens is on the verge of opening, he added.

The Northbrook building farther north on Barker Road is now being built, with completion eyed in the fourth quarter of this year.

The final structure will be the Town Center building, located along Bluemound Road. It will feature dozens more apartment buildings and about 10,000 square feet of retail space. Wimmer said the timeline is to break ground on it this summer, with construction expected to take about 18 months. Wimmer said his company has been the construction manager for all the apartments and the Residents Club, with his firm working with Tri-North to build the hotels.

Tom Hagie, Town of Brookfield administrator, said from the town's perspective things have been positive.

"From our standpoint the project actually has been going very well with really no concerns from our end that have come up. Anything that has, we have been able to work with the Wimmer group to find a solution for very quickly," he said.

Wimmer agreed, saying the process has been a smooth one considering "a lot of moving parts and multiple large buildings under construction at the same time always presents a unique set of challenges in coordination but we've had a really strong construction team out there."

"We are very excited about it and very pleased that the vision we originally had which is not just seeing a residential community but an active neighborhood with multiple uses and interconnected sidewalks and pedestrian spaces throughout the development," he said. "We're really excited to see that coming to fruition and wrapping up the last couple of buildings."



Submitted photo

The Poplar Creek Town Center Residents Club includes fitness equipment for tenants.



Submitted photo

A lounge is seen in the Poplar Creek Town Center Residents Club.



Brian Huber / Freeman Staff

The Polar Creek Town Center, at Bluemound and Barker roads, has been undergoing construction for two years. Two hotels on the property are now open, with apartments being leased as well.



# Joann Fabrics closing all 3 Waukesha County locations

**By Katherine Beck**  
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WAUKESHA — Joann Fabrics announced it will be closing 500 of its stores across the country, including all three in Waukesha County.

On the list of store closures are the locations in Pewaukee, 2020 Silvernail Road, Brookfield, 16800 W. Bluemound Road, and Menomonee Falls, N78-W14531 Appleton Ave.

Other nearby store locations also closing are in Watertown, Beaver Dam and Cudahy. One of the few stores in Wisconsin remaining open is in Greenfield at 4950 S. 74th St.

The move to close the 500 of its 800 stores was a result of Joann Fabrics filing for chapter 11 bankruptcy.

Joann previously sought Chapter 11 in March 2024 and later emerged as a private company. But after operational challenges continued to pile up, Joann filed for bankruptcy again in January. It's now looking to sell the business — and maintained in a filing Feb. 12 that closing “underperforming” locations is necessary to complete that process.

“This was a very difficult decision to make, given the major impact we know it will have on our Team Members, our customers and all of the communities we serve,” the company said in a statement sent to The Associated Press. “(But) right-sizing our store footprint is a critical part of our efforts to ensure the best path forward.”

**Customers to turn to other stores, online**

With the pending closure of the local stores, area sewers and crafters will need to look for a new source of goods.

Cheryl Gonring said on The Freeman Facebook page that there are several quilt shops in Waukesha County that would be happy for the increased business.

“Not many offer garment fabric or home (decorative) fabric though. But that may change if there is a need to fill that niche. Walmart thinned out their fabric departments years ago. Otherwise, online fabric stores,” Gonring wrote.

Amy Zimmerman said she tends to do most of her fabric shopping online. She said she did get some notions at Joann and some holiday décor.

“For almost everything else, I shop online,” Zimmerman said. “I’m a garment sewist, and we don’t have a single store in SEWI for garment fabrics. I host a sewing club at the Brookfield Library, and most of our garment sewists buy their fabrics online; our quilters have a few local stores they frequent, though one of those recently closed, too.”

For Heidi Wightman, she would go to Joann for its yarn selection, fabric and beading supplies. She said while she shops at Hobby Lobby and Michael’s, Joann was always her first stop.

Several other Facebook commenters said they will drive to the Joann location in Greenfield, or seek out other local stores like Sew Much More in Waukesha, Esa’s Quilt Shop in Hartford or Herschnerrs, which has an online retail presence and a physical store in Stevens Point.

Kim Hoesly expressed sadness at the news on the Enterprise Facebook page.

“As a young quilter this is a huge loss for me. Bargain shopping at Joann allowed me to give and donate more quilts to friends, fam-



Katherine Beck/Freeman Staff

The Joann Fabrics store at 2020 Silvernail Road in Pewaukee is one of 500 that will be closed across the country.

ily, and organizations for fundraisers,” she said.

Lisa Eske, a regular Joann customer, said she prefers to buy her fabric in person versus online.

“That is horrible, I am there regularly. It is so hard to buy fabrics online, there is always a minimum cut and it is so hard to verify the colors. We need our JoAnns!” she said.

No closing date or going out of business sales had been immediately announced.

**Also contributing:** The Associated Press

## Marty’s Pizza in Brookfield closes

BROOKFIELD — The Delafield location of Marty’s Pizza is working to make the news of its sister location in Brookfield closing easier on its customers, said manager James Flath.

The last day of operation for the pizza, pasta and sub restaurant at 16680 W. Bluemound Road, Brookfield, was Jan. 31.

Flath said that it has been reaching out to customers who had placed catering orders with Marty’s in Brookfield and that the Delafield location will expand its delivery radius. He said if customers had placed a catering order has not been contacted yet, they will be soon.

Flath said there were some overlap in operations of the two locations, but the day-to-day operations were run separately.

The Brookfield location had previously closed from May 2022 to August 2022 due to staffing shortages.

Flath said it would welcome Brookfield employees at the Delafield location, 2580 Sun Valley Drive. Marty’s has been in business since 1957.

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James E. Conley Jr.

**Brookfield location of Badger Burger Company closes**

BROOKFIELD — Citing high rent costs, Badger Burger Company announced its Brookfield location has closed at 12455 W. Capitol Drive. Its locations in Mukwonago and Oconomowoc will remain open.

“We appreciate the years that we have operated here and our dedicated employees and customers,” reads a Facebook post.

The restaurant serves hamburgers, wings, wraps, salads and bloody Marys.

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