

To give his plumbing factory workers a shot at the American dream, Austrian immigrant John Michael Kohler conceived one of the nation's first planned garden communities, the Village of Kohler, Wis. His son Walter J. made the first bathtub out of a pig's trough. The Kohler Co., based in the town that bears its name, now leads the country in plumbing manufacturing.

"The Kohlers were such visionaries," said Sean D. Pieters, senior sales manager at the American Club. "Their vision was all about gracious living, and it continues to be carried out. Even the plumbing manufacturing is all about gracious living."

Built as housing for workers in 1918, Kohler's American Club today is a AAA Five-Diamond resort hotel with 240 guest rooms and 25,000 square feet of conference facilities, including a ballroom for parties of up to 850 and a 12-person boardroom.

Available only to guests 16 years and older, the American Club's 55-room Carriage House is home to the Kohler Waters Spa. Just down the road, the American Club's sister property, the Inn at Woodlake, has 240 guest rooms.

In addition to the luxury hotels, what draws many are two championship golf courses: Whistling Straits, with 18 Irish link-style holes along Lake Michigan, and Blackwolf Run, site of the 1998 U.S. Women's Open won by 19-year-old Korean Se Ri Pak, who until 2008 was the tournament's youngest champ.

Spouses and attendees can tour the 36,000-square-foot, high-tech Kohler Design Center, where kitchen and bathroom fixtures are an art form; any of eight botanical gardens; and the Kohler factory.

Eating is a fine art in the village of



Courtesy Destination Kohler

The American Club is a AAA Five Diamond resort hotel.

Kohler, where seafood is flown in daily for its 10 eateries. Regional brewers star in the American Club's BeerMaker Dinner Series, which offers artisan-made wine, cheese and dessert tastings that feature Kohler's own line of handmade chocolates.

"The culinary delights," said Pieters, "are the cherry on top of our program offerings."

(920) 451-2102
www.DestinationKohler.com



Courtesy Destination Kohler

Among Kohler's culinary delights are its handmade chocolates.



Courtesy Osthoff Resort

Osthoff and Kohler:
Resorts worth remembering

On 286-acre Elkhart Lake, a short drive from Lake Michigan, the Osthoff Resort is the kind of place where meeting goes feel bad if they don't bring their spouses and children.

The resort looks like an elegant

Victorian, yet its 245 one-, two- and three-bedroom suites are spacious and practical for families, with kitchens and dining areas, living rooms, fireplaces and private balconies that look out at the lake or the woods.

The beachfront is active, with a bonfire pit, bike and boat rentals, and a picnic area. Guests can kayak or canoe; play tennis, golf or volleyball; hike or mountain bike; swim indoors or out; and play golf.

Up to 20 can learn cooking techniques from instructors at the Osthoff's Ecole de Cuisine.

"As a AAA Four Diamond resort, we have the quality, yet we're not remotely stuffy, and we still give really good value," said Lola Roch, general manager.

"We've found that niche — you'll see CEOs in the restaurants in Dockers."

One wing is devoted to 20,000 square feet of meeting space, ranging from a 7,526-square-foot ballroom to an intimate boardroom for 20. Lawns and other outdoor areas can be tented.

"Our ground-floor space has lots of windows and natural light," said Chad Buros, director of sales, marketing and conference services. "Attendees can be outdoors quickly after a meeting or take a break outside to grab a bit of fresh air. It sounds like a simple thing, but it's a very important part of our product."

At nearby Road America, the Skip Barber Racing School offers supervised driving in cars, all-terrain vehicles, four-wheelers and karts, and go-karting competitions. The Osthoff's Ecole de Cuisine puts 20 attendees in the kitchen for team play led by popular Public Broadcasting System cooking series host Jill Prescott.

At the resort's Aspira Spa, services range from in-meeting chair massages to total body treatments fireside in spa suites complete with an organic lunch.

(800) 876-3399
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Courtesy Osthoff Resort

The Osthoff is far from Victorian fuss, with guest rooms outfitted for families.



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Courtesy Osthoff Resort

Biking, beaches and boating keep families busy.

Waukesha and Pewaukee: Such an entertaining duo



Courtesy Waukesha and Pewaukee CVB

In addition to 40,000 square feet of meeting space, Waukesha's Country Springs Hotel Waterpark Conference Center has a golf course and nature trail.

In Wisconsin's southeast corner, just off Interstate 94 between Madison and Milwaukee, Waukesha and Pewaukee have a history of entertaining others.

On the Fox River, Waukesha, now a town of 60,000, was a resort area known for its healing spring water.

Pewaukee, on Pewaukee Lake, has long been a destination for fishermen. The area also has spawned many entertainers, such as Les Paul, the Bo Deens and impersonator Frank Caliendo.

Today, the two cities have a combined 100,000 square feet of meeting space and nearly 1,000 sleeping rooms.

Many of the amenities of a resort area remain, including a dozen golf courses, a winery and specialty shops from boutiques to antiques.

Meeting sites there cover many bases. The Waukesha County Exposition Center has a 21,000-square-foot arena and a 22,000-square-foot forum building, making it a perfect location for trade shows.

At Old World Wisconsin, 19th-century Wisconsin comes alive on 576 acres. An octagonal restaurant holds 200 for a meeting, and during breaks, attendees can try their hand at churning butter or watch costumed interpreters ply traditional trades.

One of the greatest acting teams in his-

tory, Alfred Lunt and Lynne Fontaine, left a 60-acre estate near Waukesha. Now a house museum, Ten Chimneys is an off-site venue enlivened with whimsical trompe l'oeil, original furnishings and art.

Waukesha's Country Springs Hotel Waterpark Conference Center provides an all-in-one meeting experience, with 40,000 square feet of meeting space that includes four executive learning centers.

The 187-room hotel also has a golf course, grassy grounds for tented events and a water park.

"While attendees are meeting, their families can be splashing around in the water park, walking the nature trail and relaxing in the spa," said Tiffany Zamora, marketing manager for the Waukesha and Pewaukee Convention Bureau.

More intimate is the 119-room

Radisson Milwaukee-Pewaukee, a luxury hotel with 2,400 square feet of meeting space in Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired decor.

Thanks to the Fox River, team building takes to the water in kayaks and paddleboats, or to land on bicycles and go-carts on the downtown Riverwalk that winds through formal gardens in Frame Park. Or teams can sleuth at a Waukesha Civic Theatre murder mystery.

(800) 366-8474
www.visitwaukesha.org



Courtesy Waukesha and Pewaukee CVB

Visitors can bike or walk the Riverwalk in downtown Waukesha. It winds through formal gardens in the city's Frame Park.



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Wisconsin's largest city on the Mississippi River, La Crosse mixes big-city shopping, dining and nightlife with a small-town feel that is a surprise in an area of 100,000.

"Our downtown has a number of convention hotels, 2,000 sleeping rooms, 23 restaurants, and 77 specialty shops and galleries," said Sharon Nerison, director of convention sales for the La Crosse Area Convention and Visitors Bureau. "La Crosse is very historic, with lots of brick-fronted buildings, old-fashioned street lamps, a beautiful park and

River Walk. La Crosse is very 'neighborhoody.' It's a clean, safe city."

Downtown, the city's La Crosse Center, a 100,000-square-foot convention center, makes the best of its position on the Mississippi with a terrace view from its 6,000-square-foot ballroom. "In 2000, the center nearly doubled its size," said Nerison. "Now a skywalk connects it to the Radisson Hotel La Crosse."

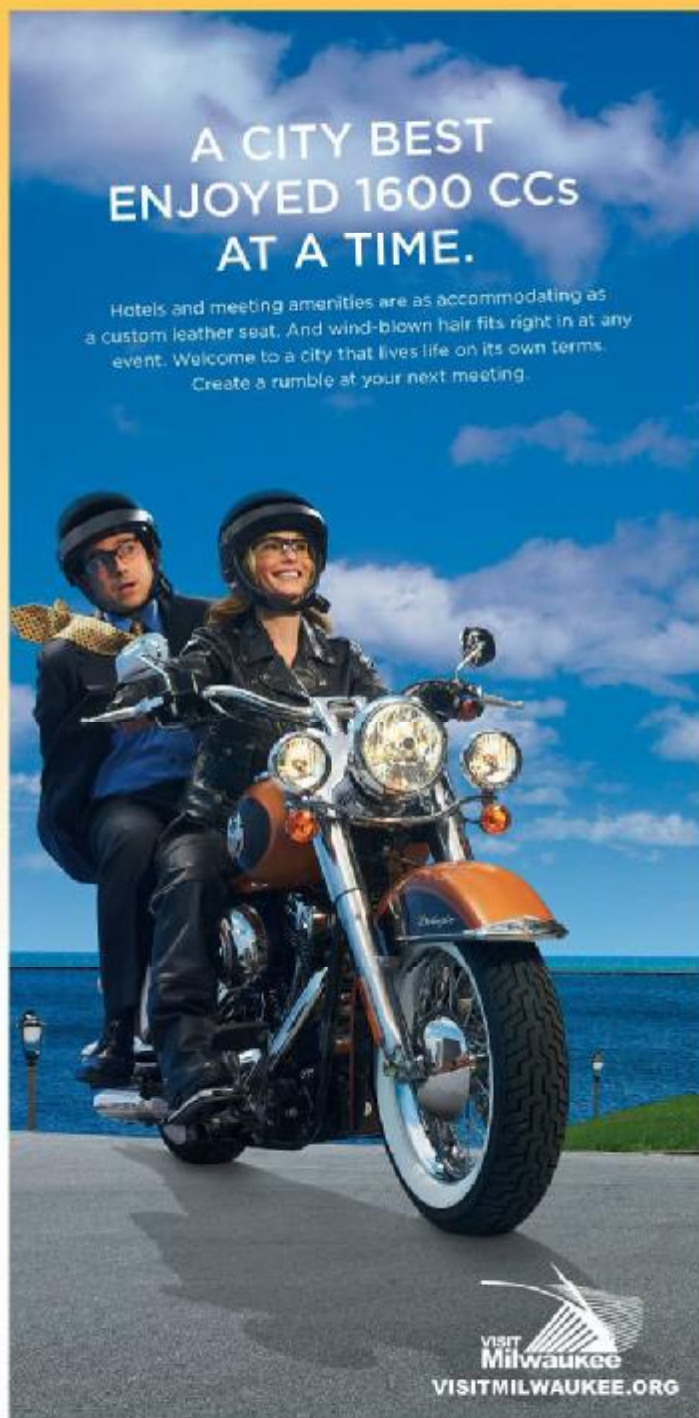
One of three downtown convention hotels, the 169-guest-room Radisson was designed for conferences, meetings and conventions of from 10 to 350, and its Three Rivers Lodge Riverview Restaurant

caters events for the La Crosse Center.

Groups can meet and eat on the water April through October aboard a replica of an old-fashioned paddleboat, the La Crosse Queen. The world's largest six-pack — actually six large silos — towers above gatherings at the La Crosse City Brewery.

Spouses can tour Amish country, stock up on well-made Amish products at Old Country Cheese and soak up Norwegian culture at Norskedalen Nature and Heritage Center.

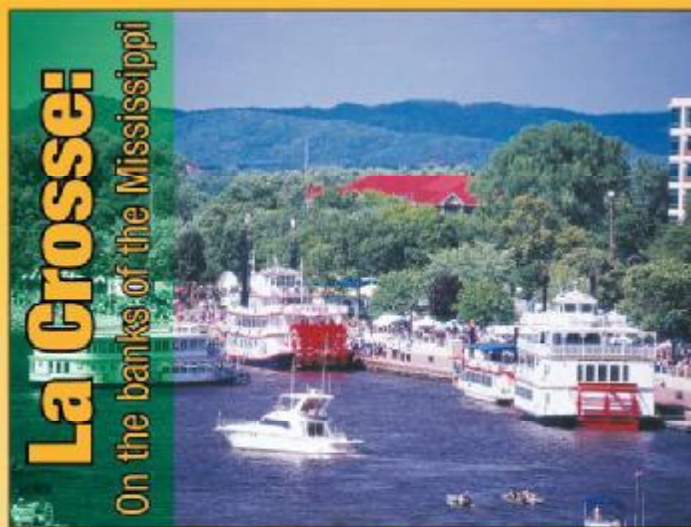
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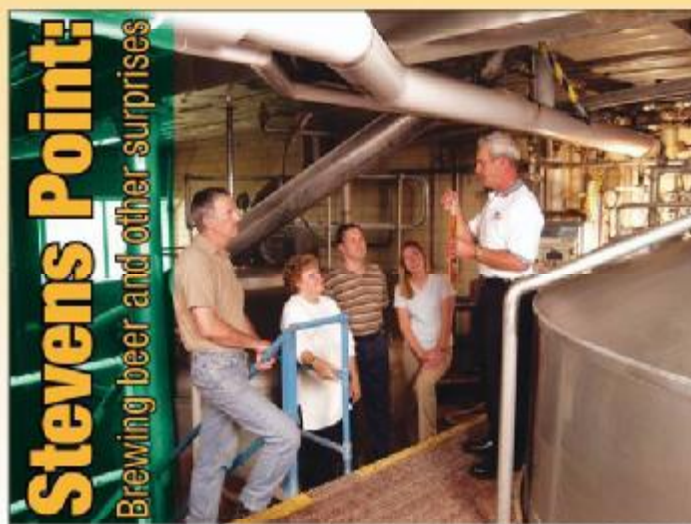
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Courtesy La Crosse Area CVB

Paddlewheelers and other boats swarm the waterfront during the Grand Excursion in La Crosse, the largest of Wisconsin's Mississippi River tows.



Courtesy Stevens Point Area CVB

In the center of the state, Stevens Point is a natural beauty, thanks to the Wisconsin River.

"We have so many nature-based opportunities," said Melissa Sabel, communications specialist for the Stevens Point Area Convention and Visitors Bureau. "You can fish, kayak and canoe. Local outfitters will drop you in the water and pick you up, and guides will take you to hunt the walleyes."

Hunting for meeting space is even easier with the arrival three years ago of the 193-room Holiday Inn Hotel and Convention Center, so popular that it added 22 guest rooms, including three VIP suites, last year.

Like many other Wisconsin hotels,

Stevens Point Brewery supplied beer to Civil War troops. It's still making handcrafted beers and gourmet root beers.

this one has an indoor pool and water park in addition to nearly 40,000 square feet of convention and meeting space.

As executive director of Severson and Associates Marketing and Consulting, Lori Severson has planned annual conferences at the Holiday Inn for the Wisconsin Association of Campground Owners the past three years.

"The hotel really helped us make this the No. 1-attended WACO convention in the country," she said. "The CVB helps keep our costs down, and they partnered with the YMCA to set up a

Three rivers flow through the Chippewa Valley, in west central Wisconsin 90 minutes east of the Twin Cities on Interstate 94. Logging was a major industry in the 1850s, and visitors learn about once-vast pine forests and rich Ojibway (or Chippewa) heritage at the Chippewa Valley Museum.

Eau Claire and Menomonie are the largest of six communities in the Valley, where 2,400 hotel rooms and 135,000 square feet of meeting space are available.

The Chippewa Valley's location and rates make it popular for regional meetings.

"The Chippewa Valley convention bureau has been extremely helpful when booking our synod assemblies by providing flat rates for a variety of hotels," said Sue Hildebrand, event planner for the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Churches, which brought more than 600 attendees to Menomonie in June 2006 and used University of Wisconsin (UW) branch facilities.

"Our combination of booking experience, resources, location and competitive

rates makes our area an ideal destination for meeting planners in the Midwest, especially throughout Minnesota and Wisconsin," said Pam Haller, director of sales and marketing for the Chippewa Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Meeting facilities include the Plaza Hotel and Suites, with 233 guest rooms; a 28,000-square-foot conference center; and an indoor recreation center with a 20-person whirlpool. Two ballrooms with a combined theater-style capacity of 550 have views of the Chippewa and Eau Claire rivers.

As part of its total 24,000 square feet of meeting space, the 122-room Ramada Convention Center Eau Claire features a 7,344-square-foot Great Hall which breaks into six rooms, the largest of which can seat 300 theater-style.

Off-site meeting options run a folksy gamut, from White's Wildwood Retreat, a 4,500-square-foot, log-cabin-design lodge for 21 guests near Chippewa Falls to Eau Claire's Fanny Hill, a dinner theater with live comedy, a 2,100-square-foot ballroom and a garden for 300.

Corporate team building is available at

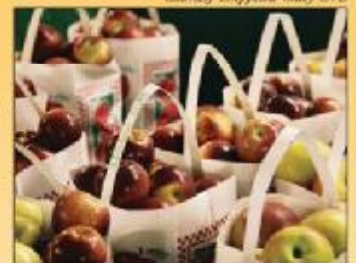


Courtesy Chippewa Valley CVB
The Chippewa Valley is 90 minutes east of Minnesota's Twin Cities.



Courtesy Chippewa Valley CVB

Wisconsin's extensive Rails-to-Trails system is a safe, scenic pathway for bikers. Apple orchards brim with fruit each fall.



Courtesy Chippewa Valley CVB

the UW-Eau Claire Eagle's View Challenge Ropes Course for groups of up to 200 and at Action City's 55,000 square feet of games and rides, where Play Therapy aids communication, time management, trust and thinking outside the box.

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terrific Kids Kamp, so more families could come.

"Several high-profile Green Bay Packers are WACO members, and because the hotel did such a great job, those players now hold their own fundraising events there."

The area's other full-service hotel, the 294-room Ramada Conference and Convention Center, has 35,000 square feet of meeting space and an indoor tropical pool.

"We have a 150-year-old brewery in our back yard, 10 hospitality suites and 20,000 square feet of poolside space for a Margaritaville event," said Mark Knight, director of sales.

A local favorite since 1847, the Stevens Point Brewery, one-time supplier of beer to Civil War troops, offers peeks into its process of beer and "gourmet" root beer-making, with refreshing samples to wet thirsty whistles.

Across from the Ramada, the SentryWorld sports complex has 55,000 square feet of meeting space, a traditional



Courtesy Stevens Point Area CVB
The golf course at SentryWorld has 50,000-bloom floral displays.

Wisconsin Friday-night fish fry and an 18-hole Robert Trent Jones golf course known for its 50,000-bloom floral displays.

SentryWorld was built and is owned by Stevens Point-based Sentry Insurance Co. In February, Sentry added a restaurant complex called @1800.

The facility houses a 650-seat theater and 65-seat gourmet eatery with a private dining space for 16 and walls decorated with pieces from Sentry's art collection.

Just off a \$1.2 million addition, a therapeutic haven called The Wellness Spa incorporates healing treatments and corporate team building.

"During a meeting, we include power breaks with on-the-desk drumming, line dancing, tai chi or yoga," said spa rep Myra Marrero. "We even conduct CEU [Continuing Education Unit] programs for physicians."

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Courtesy Stevens Point Area CVB

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