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MAR 16 - APR 19, 2026 \* \$10.00

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## Room to grow?

After Baird Center expansion, Milwaukee must decide if convention center needs another hotel, and if the market can support it





In the business world, survival is an achievement worth celebrating. The statistics tell a sobering tale: 20% of small businesses collapse within their first year, half don't make it to year five, and barely a third reach the decade mark. But what about those exceptional few who defy these odds? The companies featured in these pages aren't just survivors. They have thrived and turned vision into legacy.

For 20, 50, even 125 years, these metro Milwaukee establishments have weathered economic storms, adapted to technological revolutions, and reinvented themselves while staying true to their core values. They represent the entrepreneurial spirit at its finest: courage to begin, wisdom to evolve, and determination to persist.

We're honored to share these inspiring stories of commercial longevity. Their journeys from startup to institution offer invaluable lessons in resilience and innovation. Turn the page and discover how today's business landmarks are building tomorrow's success stories.

**DAN MEYER**

*Publisher/Owner, BizTimes Media*

# anniversary

## 2026

### CELEBRATIONS

- |                  |                                 |                 |                                  |
|------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>125 YEARS</b> | Leader Paper Products           | <b>40 YEARS</b> | Beeler Construction, Inc.        |
| <b>100 YEARS</b> | Messmer High School             | <b>35 YEARS</b> | Hammes                           |
| <b>80 YEARS</b>  | Hausmann Group                  | <b>30 YEARS</b> | Ellenbecker Investment Group     |
| <b>80 YEARS</b>  | Wolf's Cleaners                 | <b>25 YEARS</b> | American Transmission Co.        |
| <b>70 YEARS</b>  | Lincoln Contractors Supply Inc. | <b>25 YEARS</b> | Annex Wealth Management, LLC     |
| <b>67 YEARS</b>  | Krueger Communications          | <b>25 YEARS</b> | Best Place at The Historic Pabst |
| <b>60 YEARS</b>  | Doral Corp                      | <b>25 YEARS</b> | Fiduciary Partners Trust Company |
| <b>50 YEARS</b>  | Hampel Corp.                    | <b>20 YEARS</b> | Antigua Latin Inspired Kitchen   |
| <b>50 YEARS</b>  | Lee Mechanical                  | <b>20 YEARS</b> | Mason Street Grill               |
| <b>50 YEARS</b>  | Wildek, Inc.                    | <b>20 YEARS</b> | Signature Bank                   |
| <b>41 YEARS</b>  | MyPath                          |                 |                                  |



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## EIG AT 30: A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP, INTEGRITY, AND IMPACT

Ellenbecker Investment Group (EIG) began in 1996 with a clear purpose: to build a financial advisory firm centered on education, integrity, and meaningful client relationships. Founder Karen Ellenbecker had spent years in the industry observing that many firms prioritized products over people. She believed there was a better way, one rooted in clarity, compassion, and active client engagement.

From day one, Karen was joined by her daughter, Julie Ellenbecker-Lipsky, who worked alongside her as the firm took shape and grew. Their shared commitment to a client-first philosophy became the hallmark of EIG's approach. Many of the firm's earliest clients remain with EIG today, a reflection of the trust built through transparency and consistent, thoughtful guidance.

Today, Julie leads EIG as President and Senior Wealth Advisor, carrying forward a legacy she helped build from the beginning. Her leadership is defined by intentional growth, high-touch service, and a disciplined commitment to maintaining the values that have shaped the firm for three decades.

EIG's reputation for integrity has been repeatedly recognized. The firm has earned the Wisconsin Better

Business Bureau's Torch Award for Ethics four times, most recently in April 2023, making it the only full-service advisory firm in the area to achieve this distinction.

In addition to its ethical leadership, EIG has been named a Best Place to Work in the Milwaukee-area, reflecting its dedication not only to clients, but to fostering an exceptional workplace culture.

Community impact remains central to the firm's mission. Through the EIG Charitable Foundation, employee-directed giving, educational seminars, and long running radio programs, *Money Sense* and *Milwaukee's Philanthropic Community*, now available as podcasts, EIG continues to deepen its connections throughout southeastern Wisconsin.

As Ellenbecker Investment Group celebrates its 30th anniversary in 2026, the heart of its work remains unchanged. What began as a belief that financial planning must be rooted in humanity has grown into a multi-generational commitment to service, stewardship, and meaningful relationships.

Three decades later, EIG continues to honor the principles on which it was founded: clarity, compassion, and a steadfast dedication to putting people first. ■