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**Business Pulse**  
Sean Krajacic

## Fish Window Cleaning

Christopher and Charlyne Straka opened Fish Window Cleaning, 28501 Wilmot Road, Trevor, on Monday. The business specializes in window cleaning services for commercial and residential customers in Burlington, Lake Geneva, Waterford, Elkhorn, Paddock Lake, Delavan, Twin Lakes, Salem, Trevor, Genoa City, Williams Bay, Kansasville and northeastern Illinois. The company has more than 240 locations throughout the country and has been ranked by various business publications.

## Chicken Palace Fiesta Garibaldi

Valdemar Escobar opened Chicken Palace Fiesta Garibaldi, 3907 52nd St., on Jan. 23. The restaurant offers traditional Mexican fare along with grilled and fried chicken. Within the restaurant is La Michoacana, an ice cream parlor, that has ice creams, yogurts, juices and snacks.

## Physical Therapy & Rehab Specialists

Larry Briand, of Kenosha, is opening Physical Therapy and Rehab Specialists at 2717 18th St. in March. The clinic, which has two other locations in Racine and Muskego, is an outpatient private practice physical therapy clinic. The clinic also specializes in sports medicine and offers work injury programs.

## IZON Global Media

Jim and Cherlyn Jensen of Kenosha are opening a franchise of IZON Global Media, an agency specializing in outdoor advertising. The office is at 5528 35th St., Suite 208. Jim has worked in large-scale advertising for a number of years. IZON will host an open house at the Kenosha Area Chamber of Commerce, 600 52nd St., Suite 130, at 3:30 p.m. Thursday.

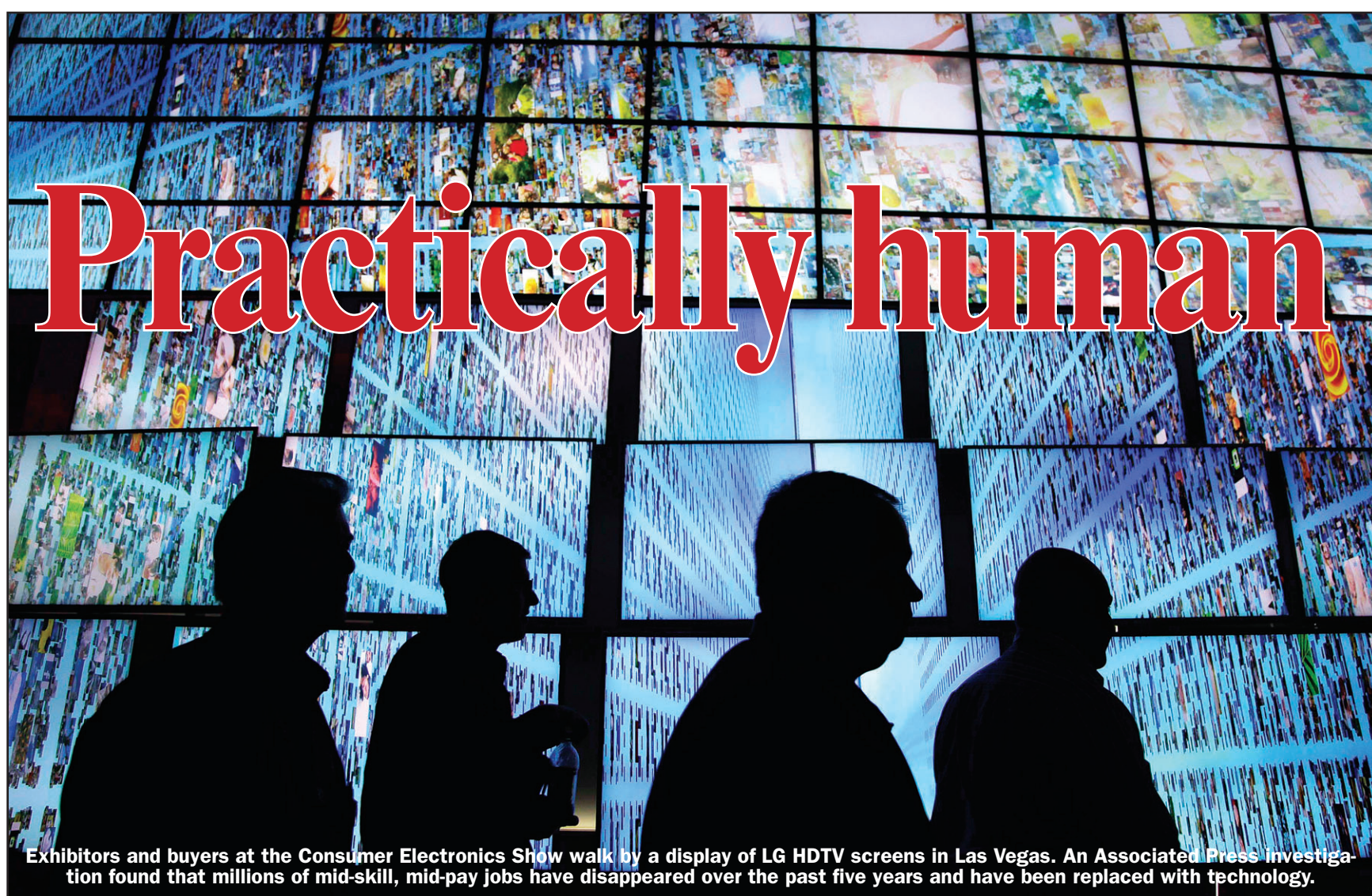
**Business Pulse** is a weekly column of openings, closings and personnel moves. If you have a business tip or promotion item, call Sean Krajacic at 262-656-6385 or email him at [skrajacic@kenoshanews.com](mailto:skrajacic@kenoshanews.com).

## Kenosha chamber sets Expo 2013

The Kenosha Area Chamber of Commerce has announced plans for the 2013 business Expo on March 9-10 in the Frank J. Petretti Fieldhouse on the University of Wisconsin-Parkside campus.

Reservations for booths are currently being taken. Sites will include free WiFi.

For more information, visit [www.kenoshanexpo.com](http://www.kenoshanexpo.com).



Exhibitors and buyers at the Consumer Electronics Show walk by a display of LG HDTV screens in Las Vegas. An Associated Press investigation found that millions of mid-skill, mid-pay jobs have disappeared over the past five years and have been replaced with technology.

# Can smart machines do your job?

BY BERNARD CONDON, JONATHAN FAHEY and PAUL WISEMAN  
AP BUSINESS WRITERS

Art Liscano knows he's an endangered species in the job market: He's a meter reader in Fresno, Calif. For 26 years, he's driven from house to house, checking how much electricity Pacific Gas & Electric customers have used.

But PG&E doesn't need many people like Liscano making rounds anymore. Every day, the utility replaces 1,200 old-fashioned meters with digital versions that can collect information without human help, generate more accurate power bills, even send an alert if the power goes out.

"I can see why technology is taking over," says Liscano, 66, who earns \$67,000 a year. "We can see the writing on the wall." His department employed 50 full-time meter readers just six years ago. Now it has six.

From giant corporations to university libraries to startup businesses, employers are using rapidly improving technology to do tasks that humans used to do. That means millions of workers are caught in a competition they can't win against machines that keep getting more powerful, cheaper and easier to use.

To better understand the impact of technology on jobs, The Associated Press analyzed employment data from 20 countries; and interviewed economists, technology experts, robot manufacturers, software developers, CEOs, and workers who are competing with smarter machines.

## Midskill, midpay jobs going away

The AP found that almost all the jobs disappearing are the midskill, midpay jobs — jobs with salaries ranging from \$38,000 to \$68,000 in the U.S. — that form the backbone of the middle class in developed countries in Europe, North America and Asia.

In the United States, half of the 7.5 million jobs lost during the Great Recession paid middle-class wages, and the numbers are even more grim in the 17 European countries that use the euro as their currency. A total of 7.6 million midpay jobs disappeared in those countries from January 2008 through last June.

Those jobs are being replaced in many cases by machines and software that can do the same work better and cheaper.

"Everything that humans can do a machine can do," says Moshe Vardi, a computer scientist at Rice University in Houston. "Things are happening that look like science fiction."

In the U.S., more than 1.1 million secretaries vanished from the job market between 2000 and 2010, their job security shattered by software that lets bosses field calls themselves and arrange their own meetings and trips. Over the same period, the number of telephone operators plunged by 64 percent, word processors and typists by 63 percent, travel agents by 46 percent and bookkeepers by 26 percent, according to Labor Department statistics.

Does technology also create jobs? Of course. But at nowhere near the rate that it's killing them off — at least for the foreseeable future.

Here's a look at three technological factors



AP PHOTOS

Rosser Pryor, co-owner and president of Factory Automation Systems, sits next to a new high-performance industrial robot at the company's Atlanta facility. Pryor, who cut 40 of 100 workers since the recession, says while the company is making more money now and could hire 10 people, it is holding back in favor of investing in automation and software.

reshaping the economies and job markets in developed countries:

## Big data

At the heart of the biggest technological changes today is what computer scientists call "Big Data." Computers thrive on information, and they're feasting on an unprecedented amount of it — from the Internet, from Twitter messages and other social media sources, from the barcodes and sensors being slapped on everything from boxes of Huggies diapers to stamping machines in car plants.

According to a Harvard Business Review article by Andrew McAfee and Erik Brynjolfsson of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, more information now crosses the Internet every second than the entire Internet stored 20 years ago. Every hour, they note, Wal-Mart collects 50 million filing cabinets' worth of information from its dealings with customers.

No human could make sense of so much data. But computers can. They can sift through mountains of information and deliver valuable insights to decision-makers in businesses and government agencies.

"What's different to me is the raw amount of data out there because of the Web, because of these devices, because we're attaching sensors to things," says McAfee, principal research scientist at MIT's Center for Digital Business and the co-author of "Race Against the Machine."

"The fuel of science is data," he says. "We have so much more of that rocket fuel."

Software entrepreneur Martin Ford says "organizations are collecting huge amounts of data about

their internal operations and about what their employees are doing." The computers can use that information to "figure out how to do a great many jobs" that humans do now.

## The cloud

In the old days — say, five years ago — businesses that had to track lots of information needed to install servers in their offices and hire technical staff to run them. "Cloud computing" has changed everything.

Now, companies can store information on the Internet — perhaps through Amazon Web Services or Google App Engine — and grab it when they need it. And they don't need to hire experts to do it.

Cloud computing "is a catch-all term for the ability to rent as much computer power as you need without having to buy it, without having to know a lot about it," McAfee says. "It really has opened up very high-powered computing to the masses."

## Smarter machines

Though many are still working out the kinks, software is making machines and devices smarter every year. They can learn your habits, recognize your voice, do the things that travel agents, secretaries and interpreters have traditionally done.

Microsoft has unveiled a system that can translate what you say into Mandarin and play it back — in your voice. The Google Now personal assistant can tell you if there's a traffic jam on your regular route home and suggest an alternative. Talk to Apple's Siri and she can reschedule an appointment.

# Owners remain cautious despite report small business hiring edged up in January

NEW YORK (AP) — Small businesses nudged up their hiring during January for a second straight month, according to a survey released Thursday.

The survey by the National Federation of Independent Business showed that the average payroll per company rose by 0.09 workers after rising by 0.03 workers in December. The lobbying

group questioned 2,033 of its members for the survey.

The majority of owners surveyed — 80 percent — said they made no changes in their employment levels in recent months. Eleven percent said they had added workers and 9 percent said they had cut their payrolls.

NFIB Chief Economist William Dunkelberg said that the slight improvement, which

brought hiring levels back to where they stood in April 2012, was a good sign but that owners remain cautious.

Although Congress agreed to lock in tax rates for 2013 at the start of the year, there are still many uncertainties for small business including the possibility of federal budget cuts. Dunkelberg noted that the government's report Wednesday that the economy

shrank at an annual rate of 0.1 percent in the fourth quarter was likely to be discouraging for business owners.

The NFIB survey found that the number of owners planning to create jobs rose 2 percentage points; 3 percent of the owners now say they're planning to hire.

The survey ended on Jan. 28, two days before the fourth-quarter economic

report was released.

The NFIB findings came a day after the payroll company ADP said businesses with fewer than 49 employees added a robust 115,000 jobs in January.

That brought employment at the smallest businesses to the highest level in six years. The differing results were likely due to the fact that the surveys were based

on different groups of small businesses — ADP drew its numbers from payroll data of its clients.

The government releases its report on small business employment on Friday. The Labor Department's figures aren't broken down by company size, but 99 percent of companies in the country are considered small businesses, with fewer than 500 workers