

# MEADOWWORD

Newsletter of the Meadowood Neighborhood Assn

[www.meadowoodneighbors.org](http://www.meadowoodneighbors.org)

Nov.-Dec. 2013

## President's Message –Krista Ralston

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**The Magic Little Library Tree:** Once upon a time, not long ago or far away, in the beautiful land of Meadowood, wonderful things began happening. Meadowood Park and the surrounding neighborhood became a vibrant hub of fun activities for both children and adults. Neighbors started getting together to meet each other and share meals and movies and festivals and sporting events and garden plots and plans for community improvement.

One morning, when all was still quiet in the Meadowood neighborhood, a Little Free Library [LFL] magically sprouted among the trees in Meadowood Park. It was a plain little house on a pole with some books inside and a sign saying "take a book, leave a book."

"What is this?" asked a child playing in the park. "Can I really take a book?" "Sure," said the grown-ups who helped to plant the LFL. "And if you have any books to share, you can bring them and leave them inside the LFL."

After a few days all the books in the LFL were gone, but soon others appeared to replace them. Sadly, however, one day the LFL got egged and a few books got destroyed and scattered around the park. Not surprisingly, this made some neighbors very unhappy. "I knew this LFL was a bad idea – it just causes more trash in the park," complained one neighbor. "No, it's a great idea!" countered another. "But we need to get the kids involved in decorating the LFL so they'll take pride in it and keep it from being vandalized. A third neighbor agreed this was a good idea and suggested: "Why don't we have a community decorating party to get ideas from children and adults on how to make our little free library look really special."

So a few weeks later the neighborhood magicians who planted the LFL held a decorating party and ice cream social right next to the LFL. They set up tables with art supplies for the imaginative and artistic party goers to draw their ideas. Before long colorful designs and pictures of birds and flowers and stars and a rocket ship and books and words for reading filled the papers. "Wow," said the artist magician, "these are really great. I can use them to make our little library house look like a beautiful and unique library tree!" And lo and behold, soon after she said those words a picture of a tree with lots of branches appeared on the little library house. But that's not all. The tree must be magic because it keeps expanding around the little house and the branches are growing birds, books, flowers--and stars a rocket, just like the pictures the children drew at the decorating party.

But the library tree isn't finished yet. It's still growing more beautiful every week, and more and more children and adults

stop by to watch the artist magician perform her magic. Sometimes she even lets the children help with the painting. And best of all, the children and adults who stop by keep taking and bringing books, just like the sign on the library says they should. **The End**

This story illustrates the growth and branching out of the community spirit and creativity in Meadowood. It also demonstrates how tapping into the talent of the community can result in the creation of a beautiful piece of public art, as well as highlight the joy of reading. The theme of the library as a growing tree full of branches containing art and educational materials mirrors what's happening at the "real" library located in the Meadowood Shopping Center. I'm referring, of course, to the exciting expansion project for the Meadowood Library and Meadowood Community Center.

The City of Madison, its visionary leaders and our representatives deserve praise and thanks for these and many of the other community improvement projects undertaken in recent years. But the Meadowood Neighborhood Association, other neighborhood organizations and individual community leaders also deserve a lot of credit for these initiatives. A recent case in point is the vote by the MNA Board of Directors to pick up sponsorship of the popular Community Suppers when the grant expired. Other neighborhood associations, churches and organizations quickly joined in to offer support. As a result, the Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup>. Spaghetti Supper at Good Shepherd Church was a great success, and became a springboard for promoting other worthy community projects. Fundraising for these suppers will continue and, if successful, may allow us to increase the number of suppers and add other community-building activities.

The media's sensationalist refrain is that the Meadowood neighborhood is "at risk" and "on the decline." But where's the proof? The various community-building efforts springing up all over the neighborhood belie the negative labels and bad publicity thrown at us. Yes, like other parts of the city, we have our share of economic woes and problems, and difficulties born from them. But we're striving to ameliorate these difficulties. Meadowood is a changing neighborhood, both economically and demographically - and change is never easy. Sadly, in dealing with these changes the ugly face of racial stereotyping and animosity often surfaces. Prejudice thrives on ignorance and fosters fear. We believe the first step to knocking down the wall of prejudice and fear is to get to know and trust each other. It may not be effortless, but we gotta keep trying. Active participation in our neighborhood association is a good start.

**Thanks to all of you who have joined the MNA and actively support our vision of peace and cooperation in the neighborhood.**

The Meadowood Neighborhood Association Board of Directors meets at 7:00 pm the first Wednesday of every month (except July when there is no meeting) at the Meadowood Neighborhood Center. **Meetings are open to the public.**

[www.facebook.com/Meadowood.Neighborhood.Association](http://www.facebook.com/Meadowood.Neighborhood.Association)

## New Owner for Meadowood Barber Shop



Don Grosen officially passed his clippers to Katie Swenson on October 1<sup>st</sup>. Katie and her family have been Meadowood residents for nearly 30 years. She is proud to be a part of her neighborhood community and will continue to offer traditional barber shop cuts and shaves, along with cuts/styles for the entire family.

Walk Ins are still the focus, but you can also make an appointment for a color/cut/style. Katie's aunt, Pam Morgan will be helping out on Monday mornings and you can still get a haircut and talk about fishing, golf and bowling with Don on Friday and Saturday mornings!

Please stop in and check out the newly "spiffed up" Shop. The coffee's on M-F 8:30-5, Th 11-7 p.m. and Sat. 8-Noon. Or, call for an appointment 608-271-6422. Check out their website [www.meadwoodbarbers.com](http://www.meadwoodbarbers.com) or Like them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/MeadowoodBarberShop](http://www.facebook.com/MeadowoodBarberShop)

## Fall Regent Resale

The West High School PTO is holding its fall resale on Saturday, November 23 from 8:00AM-1:00PM in the West High School Cafeteria. This popular resale will include gently used items contributed by the entire West High community. Items will include clothing, household items, sports equipment, furniture, games and more. West High School is located at 30 Ash Street. Please enter the resale by following the signs on Regent and Van Hise Street. All proceeds will directly benefit West High teachers, students and school.

## Animal Crackers Childcare Serves The Community

by Rachel Howard, Vice-chair Parent Board & Meadowood Resident

Animal Crackers is a childcare center located at 6402 Hammersley Rd. I recently spoke to Christie Howell-Yrios, the Director.

### What does Animal Crackers do, in a nutshell?

Animal Crackers, Inc., is a non-profit school that was established in 1987. We offer high quality childcare and preschool from 7:00am – 6:00pm for children 6 weeks to 5 years old. We also offer after-school programming and summer camp for children from kindergarten to 12 years old. We have been City accredited since 1989 and a 5 Star Provider (rated by the YoungStar program of Wisconsin's Dept. of Children and Families) since ratings began in 2011. We provide equal access for all families, regardless of their situation. For more information, contact Christie at 277-9990.

**The Madison Metropolitan School District has a relatively new 4-year-old Kindergarten (4K) program. Animal Crackers is one of a handful of sites that hosts this program. Tell us more about it.**

Animal Crackers works in collaboration with MMSD to provide a morning 4K program. We also offer wrap-around preschool for the 4K children if needed. Wrap-around care takes place before and after the hours of the 4K program. This diminishes the need for transportation and unnecessary transitions for the children needing full day programming.

### In what ways can families become involved with Animal Crackers?

We strongly encourage parent participation within our program and offer many ways for parents to serve as volunteers such as joining committees, serving on the Parent Board, chaperoning field trips and volunteering within the classroom.

### How does Animal Crackers serve as a neighborhood resource?

Animal Crackers, Inc. collaborates with neighborhood and early care and education agencies to stay current concerning available resources. We provide full-day childcare and education and work with families to provide part-time childcare if needed.

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when you're not around**



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**Rev. Sandra Ingham, Minister**  
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**uuprairie.org**

## Community Project Building Pillars of Art Beautifies the Meadowood Neighborhood

by Terri Bleck



A couple of years ago, a local community artist was hired to do mosaic pillars at the Meadowood Youth Garden in Meadowood park. This year, neighbors wondered if something could be done with two drab cement pillars in front of gardens at 5812 and 5814 Russett Rd. Residents decided to replicate the youth-inspired mosaic art

and partnered with Gardens for Empowerment (G4E) to write a proposal to Madison Arts Commission (MAC) to turn the pillars into art.

MAC provided partial funding and we also received funding from the Power2Give.org crowd sourcing web site (see donor list below). With the funding, the neighborhood was able to

hire a local artist, Marcia Yapp, who held workshops to teach the art of mosaics.

Four age-appropriate workshops were held. The first was for the young people hired by the G4E project. These youth are either 14 or 15 years old and help to maintain the Russett Rd. front yard gardens. After learning the art of mosaic from Marcia, these teens became the instructors and mentors in the other workshops. There was a workshop held for kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> graders, middle and high school students, and one open to all Russett families.

The G4E teens created two front and two top panels. Other participants created another **84** tiles to fill the six sides of the pillars. The pillars look amazing and have brought pride as well as added public beauty to Russett Rd. And the Meadowood neighborhood.

### Stop by to check them out!

Special thanks to our list of [www.power2give.org](http://www.power2give.org) donors to the Meadowood Mosaic Art Project: Todd Swisher, Lisa Veldran, Martha Howell, Kathyne Auerback, Frederick & Susan Neuschel, Rachel Martin, Susan Ramspacher, Emily Jones, Karen Odegaard, Kim Kaspar, Leslie Stephany, Rebecca Floyd, Jane Morgan, LeeAnn Glover, Pamela Andros, James Lorman, Kathryn Bissen, Judy Howard, Stephanie Ricketts, Laura Berger.

*Mmmmmmm...*  
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## Thanks and Caution from Officer Knutson

by Kraig Knutson

As 2013 is winding down, I would like to thank the hard work by many in the neighborhood. I have been privileged to witness this first hand with the Community Dinners, the Meadowood flag football program, landlord, NRT, and neighborhood association meetings and the first annual music fest in Meadowood Park. I would love to see more people get involved and continue helping to make a difference. I hope we can take this momentum and make 2014 an even better year.

There is still work to do but with the right attitude and hard work by the residents of the Meadowood Neighborhood, this can be achieved.

On the other hand, thefts from vehicles have, once again, been on the increase. Here are some reminders:

- Always lock your vehicles when you're not in it.
- Avoid leaving money or items of value in your vehicle. If you must leave them, be sure they aren't visible.
- Keep your garages closed and vehicles locked inside the garage.
- Call in suspicious persons or vehicles.

Contact Information: [www.madisonpolice.com](http://www.madisonpolice.com)

Emergency 911                      Non-Emergency 255-2345  
 West Station 243-0500    Self Reporting Unit 245-3662  
 Parking Enforcement 266-4275  
 Speeders Hotline 266-4624



**Officer Knutson protecting & "serving" at the October 22 community supper.**

## Madison–Racial Disparities & the Race to Equity

Mayor Soglin's Blog (edited)

October 2, 2013 4:12 PM

<http://www.cityofmadison.com/mayor/documents/WCCFR2EReport.pdf>

The Wisconsin Council on Children and Families has completed its much awaited report Race to Equity: A Baseline Report on the State of Racial Disparities in Dane County. The report confirms we have a lot of challenges as we work to improve our community for everyone.

This study confirms that while Madison is a wonderful City for many of us, particularly white families, it's not that great of a place for families of color, specifically black. It shows that while white individuals here do better on measures of health, education and employment than others nationwide, black individuals here generally fare worse than their counterparts nationwide.

The local jobless rate in 2011 nationwide, for blacks was twice the rate for whites. However, in Dane County it was 25.2% for blacks and only 4.8% for whites. That is a disturbing statistic.

We know we have work to do and although this report has some startling statistics, I am pleased that we have the data, and we know our challenge.

## Walk with a Doc: Affordable Care Act

[www.cityofmadison.com/parks/celebrate/walkwithadoc.cfm](http://www.cityofmadison.com/parks/celebrate/walkwithadoc.cfm)

**Date: Sunday, November 10, 10a.m.**

**Location: Elver Park**

**Topic: Affordable Care Act (ACA)**

Dr. Melissa Stiles is a UW Health physician with special interests in geriatrics, medical student education and violence prevention.

Join Madison Parks and Dr. Stiles for an invigorating walk through the trails at Elver Park to discuss the A CA. Dr. Stiles is also a professor with the UW Department of Family Medicine, in addition to being a steering committee member for the Wisconsin Chapter of Physicians for a National Health Program. With health care reform a hot topic in today's news, Dr. Stiles will address the upcoming changes with the new health care law, the Affordable Care Act, discuss the limitations of the law, and what it means for you.

## Watch this space!

The MNA board of directors voted at its June 5, 2013, meeting to pursue incorporating as a state non-profit corporation, a step in applying for non-profit status (referred to as "501(c)(3)") from the Internal Revenue Service. The incorporation and application for non-profit status will necessitate changes to the Meadowood Neighborhood Association constitution and by-laws. Such changes require a vote of the membership. Members will be notified and will be provided with the proposed changes in advance of a meeting and vote. If you have any questions, please contact your area representative or other MNA board member.



## University Houses Preschool

Parent Cooperative Preschool since 1968

Enjoy our FREE Parent & Child Events:  
Children's Story Time, 6:00pm, Nov 18, & Dec 16  
All are welcome!

Now Registering for our NEW location at  
6033 Odana Road  
for Fall 2013/Spring 2014

Ages 2 – 6

Morning Class: 8:45-11:45am  
5 days(MTWRf), 3 days(MWF), or 2 days(TR)

Optional Lunch Bunch: 11:45 – 12:45pm

Afternoon Class with MMSD 4K: 12:45 – 3:45pm  
5 days(MTWRf), 3 days(MWF), or 2 days(TR)

- Parent cooperative preschool with member and nonmember options.
- MMSD 4K openings in our 3-6 year old afternoon class
- Morning openings for children 2-6 years old
- Part-day program, morning or afternoon – optional lunch bunch to extend am or pm
- Mixed ages classroom
- Dynamic and gentle learning community with strong home/school partnership
- International population
- Play-based learning in a stimulating environment
- Qualified, dedicated teachers with decades of experience
- One of the first state licensed and city accredited preschools in Madison
- Convenient west side location at the intersection of Odana Road and Research Park

45 years...the neighborhood preschool  
for Madison Families!

238-3955, Karen Beck, Director

[kmbeck@uhpparentcooperative.org](mailto:kmbeck@uhpparentcooperative.org)

<http://uhpparentcooperative.org>

*UHP is a part-day program which means children can come in the morning or afternoon, not all day.*

## County Supervisor's Column

by Matt Veldran, District 7

608-235-8369; [veldran@countyofdane.com](mailto:veldran@countyofdane.com)

Hello Meadowood Neighbors!

As of the writing of this article, the Dane County Board has been reviewing County Executive Parisi's budget and will be voting on it soon. While the county is still under budget caps imposed by the state we have been able to deliver many services to the majority of citizens in Dane County by focusing on core services while continuing programs that make our county special.

There will be still much going on in the coming years for all citizens of Dane County.

Construction will be starting early next year on two major projects: There will be a major upgrade to the Alliant Energy Center's entire barn area. There will be new barns which will make it a world class facility, also called pavilions. This has been requested by two major annual events users; World Dairy Expo and the Midwest Horse Fair. They are both contributing to the construction. The pavilions will generate more business for Dane County and the Madison area.

The second project is at the other end of the spectrum. There has been a need to help homeless people in Madison and county-wide. Dane County will be rehabilitating a building in the downtown area east of the capitol as a day shelter for people who are in need of this service. Last year Dane County opened a temporary day shelter which was very successful and incident free. But a permanent site, that will provide basic services helping people work to try to get their lives in order, helps not only them but the downtown area as well.

I have co-sponsored three resolutions in the upcoming budget that are also important to our area. The first is related to homeless issues as well, but it is for homeless youth who have no place for them to stay at night. This is a population that lives in the shadows and has been without any overnight facilities, either private or public. Dane County will be working with a non-profit group that is constructing a facility. The second is an increase in funding for our developmentally disabled population; there will be a federal matching grant which increases the value. Lastly I'm hoping to add another senior benefits person. As our population continues to age, with the expansion now of baby boomers, this need that will be growing for now and decades to come.

Another county-wide project I am also excited about is the continued expansion of our CNG fleet as well as exploring the possibility of converting the waste from our digesters (Springfield and soon in Middleton). By converting excess farm waste, the farmers have been able to manage their farms better and the lakes benefit from drastically cutting down on phosphorus that runs into them which is a major

contributor to making our lakes green and unusable. By expanding the use of CNG fleets we are cutting back on dependence on fossil fuels and reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

Finally, at this time I am planning on running for reelection to the county board. Please feel free to share any thoughts or

ideas with me. I have enjoyed my time on the board and have seen real differences in the citizens' quality of life throughout the county. That is why I continue to serve.

Enjoy your holidays and remember to keep those leaves out of the gutter.

## Getting Health insurance Under the Affordable Care Act

### 5 things to know:

#### 1. What is a Health Insurance Marketplace or Exchange?

A Health Insurance Marketplace or Exchange is a new way that Americans can compare and shop for health insurance. U.S. citizens and others who are legally in the U.S. can sign up for health insurance through the Marketplace. You cannot be turned down. You may even be able to get help paying for your new insurance.

Beginning **October 1, 2013 until March 31, 2014**, you can sign up for health insurance. To have coverage on January 1, 2014, you will need to sign up and pay your first monthly premium by December 15, 2013.

For more information or to sign up for health insurance go to [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov) or call 1-800-318-2596

#### 2. Do I have to sign up for health insurance?

- **You do need to sign up** if you have no insurance, or you are losing your coverage, or you are not eligible to be covered under an affordable, quality employer plan. If you don't have insurance that qualifies as minimum essential coverage, you may have to pay a fee when you file your taxes.
- **You do not need to sign up** if you are covered by Medicare, Medicaid for Elderly, Blind or Disabled, the VA health program, or good and affordable insurance through your job or your spouse's job.
- If you are currently on **BadgerCare (Medicaid)** and your coverage is ending, you will receive a letter from the State of Wisconsin telling you to go to the Marketplace to apply. If you do receive a letter, it will be important for you to apply through the Marketplace. If you are unsure about whether your coverage is ending, please call 1-888-794-5556.
- **Young adults** can stay on their parents' insurance until they turn 26, but they can also go to the Marketplace to see if they can get less expensive insurance or qualify for BadgerCare.

#### 3. How much does it cost?

- It does not cost anything to apply and learn what insurance plan options you qualify for, what they will cost per month, and what financial help you can receive.
- Once you know your options you can decide what health insurance plan is best for you and your budget
- You may qualify for a discount and/or tax credit from the federal government. The amount of financial assistance is calculated when you sign up and it can lower your monthly cost right away.

#### 4. What information do I need to sign up?

- ID information for all members of your family (age, Social Security numbers, or legal permanent resident/green card or visa numbers.)
- Income for all family members because you will have to estimate your 2014 family income to get your financial assistance (pay stub or tax forms, or other documents showing income.)
- Information about insurance offered through your job or your spouse's job, even if you don't take it, including how much it costs for a single plan.

#### 5. Important things to remember after sign up

- You must pay your premiums (the amount you pay for your insurance) every month to keep your coverage.
- Watch for information about the health insurance plan you select (such as membership card, new member letter, and more) which will help you get started with your new plan.
- Report any changes in family income or number of people in your family by calling the Health Insurance Marketplace at 1-800-318-2596.