



WEXFORD WATCH



Issue 138

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**THE WEXFORD
WATCH
IS FOR
NEIGHBORHOOD
EDIFICATION AND
DOES NOT SPONSOR
ANY PERSON OR
ACTIVITY LISTED
HEREIN, UNLESS SO
NOTED.**

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**SUBMISSIONS IN
WRITING BY THE
FIFTEENTH OF
EACH ODD MONTH
TO
wexfordwatch@yahoo.com**

Wexford Board News by Don Michalski

This is the time of the year that many residents are considering remodeling their homes. In accordance with our covenants, all building modifications that change the external presence of a home must be reviewed by the Architectural Review Committee. Darrel Fleming and Matt Thomas, who are on that Committee, will evaluate any plans for additions (decks, etc.). They would review for compliance with all Wexford Village covenants before final submission to the City of Madison for a building permit.

Our circle islands are a unique characteristic within our city. Our association is responsible for the financial and maintenance care of these areas. Typically, we perform a clean up and trimming of these areas every 4-5 years, if you have any concerns about their appearance, please notify any board member.

We ask residents that live adjacent to any of the bike paths, please trim all brush or shrubs that extend into those paths. Branches and overgrown shrubs impede walking and biking, and in some instances could be dangerous (consider the additional height of people on a bicycle when trimming low hanging branches).

Wexford Village has a couple social events each year; the Easter Egg Hunt and the July 4th picnic/party. Every year, 150-200 children participate in each of these events. The association pays for any expenses, but we need the participation of the hands and hearts of more residents. Please consider volunteering for one or both of these events. Contact a board member if you are interested or want more information.

At press time of this newsletter (January 31, 2006) the City of Madison is still planning on constructing the traffic calming circle at the intersection of Westfield and Sawmill. Construction is scheduled to begin this spring after the delay last fall due to the early winter weather.

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Alder News from Paul Skidmore

Greetings from your Alder,

After a snowy end to 2005, the weather has been unseasonably warm and dry. In one sense this is good; fewer snowfalls and warmer temperatures mean lower public works costs (snow plowing and salting) and lower heating bills. On the down side, dryer weather means that the moisture level in the ground is low. This is stressing the woody plants and perennials and could lead to unusually high plant mortality in the spring and summer.

Due to the holidays, the Common Council has not been very busy over the past two months. While City committees, commissions, and boards have continued to meet on a fairly regular basis, the Council meetings have been fairly short and uneventful.

One major item of interest that will be coming before the Council soon will be consideration of repeal of the City's controversial Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance. The IZ ordinance, as it is called, was approved about a year ago to be a mechanism to require developers to provide affordable housing (both rental and owner occupied) in new developments throughout the City. Opponents of the IZ ordinance claim that it is cumbersome, hurts developers, and is not producing the desired affordable housing. Proponents of the IZ ordinance claim that it is working, but there hasn't been sufficient time to see the desired results. Proposals to repeal the IZ ordinance or to significantly modify it will be debated and voted on by the Common Council in the near future.

After the IZ ordinance issue has been resolved, the Common Council will be discussing a couple of other significant items:

1. A local sick leave ordinance that would require business owners who have employees who work within the City limits to provide paid sick leave.
2. A keg registration ordinance that would regulate the number of kegs of beer that could be possessed in residential districts (I have sponsored this ordinance.) The purpose of this ordinance is to regulate the amount of alcohol available at unsanctioned house parties and reduce the number of problems associated with over-consumption and underage consumption. One example of these type house parties is currently under investigation by the Police Department. Specifically, there was a Halloween house party near Langdon Street that had approximately 600 attendees.
3. The City has approved a transit study that includes the Mayor's proposed trolley system downtown. Mass transit, and transit systems in general are an important part of our community, and we need to manage them effectively. There will be numerous opportunities for public input into this issue in the coming months. As I have stated before, I think we need to take a serious look at how to improve our city-wide bus system, which I feel can be our most cost effective mass transit solution.

Thanks to all of you who have called or e-mailed me with your comments or questions. Please feel free to contact me with questions, and concerns at:

E-Mail: district9@cityofmadison.com Phone: 829-3425

NOTE from Dane County Executive Kathleen Falk

Winter greetings! Safety is of the utmost importance every season of the year, and there are many ways that county government works hard to protect the safety of our citizens during the winter months.

One key area is road maintenance. Dane County can have more than 50 snowplows on the roads during large snowstorms. Our hard-working Highway Department staff has offered the following safe-driving tips: When you come upon a snowplow, **REDUCE YOUR SPEED**. Don't follow too closely. Try to avoid passing a snowplow. If you feel that you must pass, you need to do so with extreme caution and be sure you are able to see the road ahead of the plow. Keep your headlights on at all times when traveling during adverse winter conditions. Give snowplows and salting trucks plenty of room to operate. Remember, snowplows are wider than one traffic lane. Our wonderful Highway Department has taken additional steps to make our roads even safer by using a state-of-the-art salt brine system that causes snow and ice to melt faster with a lower environmental impact and at a lesser cost than the previous system used.

Home heating is another critically important winter safety issue. There is a moratorium on utility cut-offs from November 1 to April 15, but this winter Dane County Department of Human Services Joining Forces for Families social workers began working with families who had utilities disconnected, due to delinquent payments, prior to the moratorium. County staff worked very hard with Madison Gas and Electric and Alliant Energy to identify disconnected customers, restore service and devise payment plans. We are grateful to MG&E and Alliant for their early actions. During the summer, Energy Services Inc. worked with households that were at risk of being disconnected. Those who were cut off prior to the moratorium were referred to JFF. These cooperative efforts, on many levels, helped to heat the homes of people who have an especially hard time coping with the rising costs of energy. Contact the Energy Assistance Bureau, Wisconsin Division of Energy for eligibility guidelines for energy assistance and other information. The phone number is 1-866-432-8947.

Winter is also a time to have fun. If you are looking for a delightful winter respite please visit the Henry Vilas Zoo's amphibian exhibit in the Discovery Center. Treat yourself to a taste of South America without leaving Dane County. This new, permanent exhibit features plants and endangered frogs from Columbia, Ecuador and Peru. Besides seeing these beautiful little creatures, kids can learn about their biology and habitat. The exhibit even features simulated thunderstorms. This great addition to the zoo is made possible by very generous financial support from the Henry Vilas Zoological Society and Maddie's Foundation. You can visit many environments in one day at the Henry Vilas Zoo. Spend time with South American frogs then visit Arctic Polar Bears. And it's free. The Henry Vilas Zoo is one of a very small number of free zoos in the country. Enjoy.

I wish you a safe and enjoyable winter, and I look forward to writing you again in the spring

Library News

Some highlights of events at the Alicia Ashman Branch:

- ★ Monday's at 9:30am and 10:30am, Wednesday's 10:30am -- Toddler Time. **For children ages 16 - 35 months with an adult. One adult per child is recommended. 20 minutes. Call 824-1780 beginning Monday, January 23 to register for the entire series.**
- ★ Wednesday's 9:30am -- Book Baby. **For babies ages 0 - 15 months. One adult per baby is required. 15 minutes. Call 824-1780 beginning Wednesday, January 25 to register for the entire series.**
- ★ Thursday's 9:30am -- Preschool Story time. **For children ages 3-5, younger siblings welcome. Groups welcome. 30 minutes.**

Open Monday through Friday: 9:00 - 9:00 and Saturday: 9:00 - 5:00

See the website for full details: <http://www.madisonpubliclibrary.org/about/ashman.html>

Wexford Neighborhood Recycle Survey

By: **Suvai Gunasekaran (9th Grade, Memorial High School)**

This summer I received a grant from WCATY, Wisconsin Center for Academically Talented Youth, for a Young Scholar Research project. The title of my project was "Polymers: Using, Reusing, and recycling." Polymers, also known as plastics, are needed for pretty much anything nowadays. Rapid production of plastics was a 20th century phenomenon. Most of the plastics in the world are used in industrialized countries. About 200 billion tons of plastics are produced per year and of that 80 billion is made in the US. This large use of plastic materials has a negative effect on the environment. The production of plastics is releasing lots of toxic compounds which lead to the depletion of the ozone layer ultimately causing global warming. Therefore, it is important that we reduce and recycle our plastics usage.

To decide which plastics are recyclable, the Society of the Plastics Industry (SPI) created codes known as SPI codes. All of us have noticed the numbers 1 through 7 inside a recycle triangle on the bottom of most plastic materials, these are SPI codes. The plastics labeled 1 or 2 are the most readily recyclable.

Since I live in Wexford Village, I wanted to survey families in the neighborhood to learn about their recycling habits and how much they care about preserving the environment. The following is the summary of my survey results.

I was very pleased to find out that 94% of the people ranked "protecting the environment" very high, giving a score of 8 or more on a scale of 1 to 10. Almost all of the people, 97%, recycle always or most of the time. However, more than half the people did not know about the SPI codes, and among those who did, only about half followed the recommended procedures. This surprised me because SPI codes have been in use over 20 years. This shows a lack of awareness about plastics and recycling in the general public. Of those surveyed, 72% think that everybody should be responsible for keeping the environment clean and only 21% are willing to pay extra money to the government to organize recycling programs.

I thank all the families that participated in the survey and my mentor Dr. Padma Gopalan (who is also a Wexford resident). This has been a very informative and educational experience for me.

Other Info

★ SHARE YOUR MEMORIES WITH US!

The 2006 Wexford Village Homeowners Association Directory is getting ready for printing. We would love to include some of your special pictures from a picnic, egg hunt, ice-skating, or any other event to share with your neighbors. To publish your photos in the Wexford Village Directory, send a digital image (jpeg) to sabi@chorus.net by March 1st 2006.

- ★ If we get colder temperatures, we will flood the ice skating rink areas again, and maintain them while it stays cold enough to support them.
- ★ If you and your family enjoy the outdoors, consider visiting the UW Arboretum. They have many fun and fulfilling free events to enjoy by all. Check out their website for full details: <http://www.uwarboretum.org>
- ★ Be sure to check out the Wexford website for events, information, and pictures from neighborhood festivities. You can find this site at: <http://www.wexfordvillage.org>