

Happy Impending Spring!
The weather is supposedly going to get warmer. This issue will help you find ways to be out and active in the neighborhood. See you around!



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Get Involved in Your Community - by Nicky Morris

At our neighborhood watch meetings over the last year and a half, I've heard many of you asking our neighborhood officer, "What can we do to help." It's seems daunting when the police are dealing with drugs and other serious crimes in the neighborhood to even think that there's something we can do. But there are many things we can all do to help improve our neighborhood, including the crime. First I'd like to say that improving crime in a neighborhood isn't all about policing. Having a strong and active neighborhood association is key to neighborhood improvement, as Mayor Dave stated at the Response Session this past September. What does that mean exactly? It means that we need as many people as possible who live in Prairie Hills to come out for Neighborhood Watch events/meetings as well as fun events. Being active and visible (like having events in the parks) makes the "bad guys" a little leery of getting out and doing criminal behavior. This is where you come in. There are many things that we could do to improve our neighborhood, but we need people like you to help make them happen. Here's a suggested list of ideas that you could choose from to work on. Take a look through it and see if anything calls out to you.

1. Lucy Lincoln Heistand Park Renovation - A design of additional park equipment was put together for the

playground, and fundraising needs to be done in order to make the improvements. A lot of the work has already been done for this project. Someone just needs to pick it up and work on raising funds for the improvements. The improvements will make the park more of an attraction, getting families out into the parks more.

2. Prairie Hills Neighborhood Signs - It would be nice to have permanent signs around the neighborhood similar to Midvale Heights or Meadowood, so that people know when they've entered our neighborhood. We just need a couple of people to look into what needs to be done to make this happen and coordinate the efforts. Having a stronger identity makes us a stronger neighborhood.

3. Neighborhood Watch Coordinator - We need someone to help organize the Neighborhood Watch. This means meeting with MPD, helping set up safety information meetings and coordinating other safety info with the neighborhood. This is a very important role for our neighborhood. Don't feel overwhelmed if you're interested. We work together on this and there's a lot of info already available for you to use from MPD.

4. Secretary - One board member we are missing is the secretary. A secretary would keep minutes of meetings, keep an up-to-date

list of membership and help the newsletter editor with the newsletter/directory as needed.

5. Newsletter Editor - As much as I love doing the newsletter, I can't do it all. We will be going down to one newsletter a year, so all you need to do is help organize and create the newsletter, as well as coordinate advertising. This one issue is the issue distributed to all neighbors, so it's very important for getting out information to residents. The newsletter editor could also be responsible for putting together a neighborhood directory for members annually and collecting any advertising for this publication.

6. Events: We need people to help coordinate events. You only need to volunteer for one particular event, not all. Some ideas are: Earth Day park clean-up, Neighborhood Garage Sale, July 4th parade, Neighborhood Block Party, Santa Visits. In order to make these happen this year, we need to start working on them now. Let me know ASAP if you're interested in helping out with any of these events or if you have an idea for a new event.

7. Meadowridge Library Improvement - This was a suggestion from the SW plan. We need a group of people to look into the

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Green Spring Cleaning

Indoor air quality can be 100 times worse than outdoor air quality. This is because our homes trap in the fumes of products that are off-gassing such as paint, furniture and cleaning products. "Cleaning" with harsh, commercial chemicals actually adds to the indoor air pollution. Here are some ways you can do your spring cleaning and be healthier too.

1. Open up your windows to naturally air out the house.
2. Pass on air fresheners which are irritants to our eyes, skin and respiratory system. Use fresh flowers, cedar chips or dried flowers instead.
3. Use natural cleaning products at home such as baking soda, vinegar, lemon juice and borax. They cost less too. Many recipes can be found online or books at the library.
4. Don't use chlorine bleach. It is extremely toxic and dangerous. You can find many bleach alternative today.
5. Intall a clothes line.
6. Use sponges or rags instead of paper towels.
7. Don't put unwanted items in the garbage. Donate to thrift stores, community organizations or have a yard sale. The City of Madison has two full service drop off sites which accept large items, recycling, refuse, rigid plastics, electronics, and brush. Click here to find out more:
<http://www.ci.madison.wi.us/streets/dropLarge.cfm>

Get Involved (cont'd) - by Nicky Morris

feasibility of expanding and improving programs at the library. This will probably include working with the library, the Alders and other neighborhood associations. Improving the library will help offer more services to residents in the area. (also see *Library article p.3*)

8. Welcome Wagon – It would be nice if we had a packet or a welcome basket for new residents to welcome them to the PHNA. It would also be nice if we knew of a family who had a new baby, or a newly married couple too and maybe provide them with a little gift from the PHNA. So we need someone to organize these services and be aware of these happenings in the neighborhood, probably working with realtors and landlords to learn of new residents.

9. Neighborhood Walks – We need someone to coordinate neighborhood walks. It would be nice if a group went out walking on a route, with families and/or dogs just to get out and get some exercise. This is by no means meant to be confrontational. Perhaps we have two groups, one for north of Raymond and the other for south. Again, this helps to make us more visible in the neighborhood and has been an effective tool for other neighborhoods.

10. June Newsletter Delivery – We need a group of about 30 residents who would like to deliver the June newsletter door-to-door. Doing one route is pretty easy – just a simple evening walk. Last year, though we had some volunteers we were still short with several people having to do three or more routes on their own. I'd like to have a

regular group doing delivery so everyone can have one route.

If after reading the SW plan you have other ideas or just have other ideas on your own, let us know. We are all busy and committing to something can be hard. I've tried to include tasks of varying degrees of commitment. Also know that we don't expect you to pick any of these tasks up as a full-time job. We ask for you to just do what you can on what ever project that you choose. I don't always have time to work on the PHNA, so I just put it aside until I do. Whatever you can contribute is better than nothing. And a large group all working together will be better at making things happen. I look forward to working together with you to make Prairie Hills the best neighborhood in Madison!

New Neighborhood Officer - by Mike Hanson

I am extremely excited to be working out of the West District as your Neighborhood Police Officer in the Hammersley, Betty's Lane, Loreen Dr, Park Ridge neighborhood. Having grown up on Chapel Hill Rd and attending Falk and Orchard Ridge Middle School (now Toki) I feel like this is somewhat of a homecoming. Something I noticed right away is that some of the stakeholders, from when I was growing up, are still passionate about the neighborhood and that is fun to see. Obviously times have changed in twenty-five plus years and with those changes in the neighborhood have also come changes in how we police. The challenge is to learn about what works and what does not work in this neighborhood and to apply

community and police resources appropriately. The issues surrounding any neighborhood cannot be solved by the police alone as it will take activism by many. The successful neighborhoods try new ideas, take chances, learn from the past and have fun doing it. I hope you take the time to participate in some of the events your neighborhood association plans throughout the year and I hope that we have an opportunity to meet, in a positive forum, to share your thoughts and to participate in an event. Officer Bedford and I were classmates in the Madison Police Department Academy and I have a great deal of respect for what he has done with his position as your neighborhood officer. I have had previous assignments within the department, prior

to coming to the West District. Those assignments have been largely working downtown as a patrol officer during the night shift on State St and as the Public Information Officer in the Chief's Office; both experiences were enriching for different reasons. My hours will vary, depending on neighborhood needs and meetings, but generally I will work an afternoon shift until late evening. My background includes a master's degree in human resource management and graduate work in public administration. I enjoy sports, working out and reading history. The best way to reach me is via my work cell: 209-9526 or via email at mhanson@cityofmadison.com

Prairie Hills Community Gardens

summer is coming!

Do you want to grow your own food and get to know your neighbors?

Prairie Hills Community Gardens are right here in our neighborhood, in Lucy Lincoln Hiestand Park.

Garden fees depend on the size of your garden plot, how much income your household has, and how many people live with you.

The gardens are for new gardeners and experienced gardeners, people of any race or ethnicity who speak any language, rich and poor, young and old.

Prairie Hills Community Gardens are for you!

For more information, call Karen Deaton at 278-8480



Prairie Hills Community Gardens Received Grant

The PHNA just received some very exciting news - we were awarded almost \$13,000 in grant monies for our community garden. Most of it will be used to install a water line to provide watering capabilities to the gardens. The remainder will be used for tilling to expand the gardens at it's present location to include another 30 lots and to create a compost area for unwanted plant matter.

This grant is the result of lots of hard work by Karen Deaton, along with Janet Parker of the CAC. Many thanks for all you have done!

Support the Meadowridge Library Expansion - Meadowridge Library

Our neighborhood library has an opportunity to expand in its present location as a result of the recent closing of Jacobsen's Deli. This newsletter reported in its last edition that the Southwest Neighborhood Plan will rely on Meadowridge Library to support certain programming initiatives, such as language instruction and employment information. If you believe that our neighborhood can be better served by an expanded library space, and that the initiatives set forth in the Neighborhood Plan can best be implemented by an expanded space, please make

your views known to those who will be deciding whether an expansion is feasible. You may contact various city officials, including the mayor and all of the alderpersons, through the City of Madison website, <http://www.ci.madison.wi.us>.

The Friends of Meadowridge Library holds used book sales three times per year. These sales are the major source of the Friends' fundraising. The funds are then used to add to inventory, to provide

programming and to purchase items such as chairs and tables. These are items that might not otherwise be purchased by the library system, due to lack of funding. The more used books that are donated to be resold, the greater can be the contributions that are made to Meadowridge Library. You can drop off your used books, videos, CDs and DVDs, marked "donations", at the library during library hours. Thanks!



**Contact Information for
Your Area Alder**

District 1 – Jed Sanborn

Home Address:
12 Cherbourg Ct
Madison, WI 53711
Phone: 608-278-9426
district1@cityofmadison.com

Common Council Office:
210 Martin Luther King,
Jr. Blvd, Room 417
Madison, WI 53703
Phone: (608) 266-4071
Fax: (608) 267-8669
TTY: (608) 267-8670

District 7- Zach Brandon

Home Address:
3526 Mammoth Trl
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Common Council Office:
210 Martin Luther King,
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Fax: (608) 267-8669
TTY: (608) 267-8670

District 20 – Thuy Pham-Remmele

Home Address:
5406 Denton Pl
Madison, WI 53711
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Common Council Office:
210 Martin Luther King,
Jr. Blvd, Room 417
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Fax: (608) 267-8669
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Updates from Area Alders

District 1 – Jed Sanborn



-No Response Received

District 20 – Thuy Pham-Remmele:



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Madison has already broken the seasonal snowfall record with more yet to come. I have been swamped daily with issues people experienced while coping with this unprecedented winter. The elderly and people with mobility issues are more severely affected. Madison does make allowances for those who are unable to comply with City snow regulations in a timely way. If a citation is received, please contact the number on the citation door card for special consideration or further assistance with snow removal. City staff will do their best to pair you with Independent Living (274-7900, 274-9181), South Madison Coalition for the Elderly (251-8405, 251-9082), or Westside Coalition for the Aging (238-7368, 238-1260). They may even ask the court to dismiss the citation, if deemed appropriate. I ask for your patience with and appreciation for City Streets crews who are working extremely hard to make our streets safe for all. I have already received some complaints about potholes, so please watch out for them

once snow melts, as consequences can be quite costly. Winter hardships also bring out the best Wisconsin traits that remind us how nice it is to call this community our home.

Our District’s listening sessions last August and September resulted in the Mayor making public safety his top City priority this year. It’s great that our concerns were publicly acknowledged, and our request for additional police officers was approved in the 2008 Budget. It takes time to prepare these law enforcement officers to serve in our community. In the meantime, please continue to participate in your Neighborhood Watch programs.

The Madison Police Department recognized our frustrations with the current self-report system and is fine-tuning the process to make it more responsive.

I am planning a small group meeting later in March for area representatives to meet with West Police Station staff to share concerns and implement the next steps for this ongoing partnership.

Recently, Caleb Bedford, our Neighborhood Officer for Theresa Terrace and Hammersley Road, said farewell to us as Officer Mike Hanson, a long time neighborhood resident, takes over this position by mid-February.

I am attempting to tap Emerging Neighborhood Funds through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Office to rent the space recently vacated by Jacobson Bros. at Meadowood Mall. I hope to bring Madison School & Community Recreation’s satellite services to our

district. This site would provide space for youth activities after school, adult programs and neighborhood gatherings.

I was one of the two alders who voted against the Allied redevelopment. It is a \$28 million project, a tax burden that will be with us for a long time. I strongly believe all tax dollars – local, state, and federal – should be handled with great care and respect. In the rush to meet the federal deadline, this proposal didn’t provide enough details for me to be convinced that it is a wise investment for our city.

I continue working to remind people that Madison is more than just Downtown. I’m pleased that after much hard work by many dedicated friends and neighbors, the Southwest Neighborhood Plan was recently approved. Please take part in its implementation by discussing it with your neighbors, and encourage everyone to attend the several neighborhood meetings that will take place this spring.

It has been my pleasure to participate in each Neighborhood Association’s activities, whenever my busy schedule permits. I continue to rely on your feedback to faithfully represent you in City government. Please stay in close touch, and email me your concerns. I can also be contacted by letter or phone (contact info is at left).

District 7 – Zach Brandon



- No Response Received



FALK OPEN SCHOOLHOUSE

Every Tuesday 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Friends • Computers • Games • JFF • Library • Meeting Space

On Tuesday evenings, Falk Elementary School is open and staffed for Falk families and others in the neighborhood to enjoy these activities, free of charge:

Literacy Lighthouse: In the school library, look at the books, read together, and **check out materials** to take home.

Math Corner: Play with math toys and games in the Math Corner of the library, where **math is fun** for family and friends.

Computer Center: Use the computers in the school REACH computer lab to build your computer skills or **access the internet**.

Community Corner: Talk to Mike Bruce from Joining Forces for Families (JFF), who can **help your family** with connecting to community resources, housing issues, job searches, etc.

Meeting Space: Do you belong to a group that needs meeting space? During Open Schoolhouse hours, space for **meetings and classes** will be available free of charge to groups such as Madison Literacy Network, neighborhood associations, and scout groups.

Come share an hour or two with neighborhood families!

Just drop in! No reservation required to play games and read some favorite books with neighborhood kids.

Or volunteer to lead an informal activity - do you have special talents or interests to share with kids? Do you enjoy crafts or music? Maybe you know how to yo-yo or play cat's cradle.

To volunteer, contact Sara Knueve at 204-2203 or b705681@madison.k12.wi.us

responsibl**e**nergy



GS1166 02/28/2008

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Best Prevention of Tragedies from Fire- by Madison Fire Department

The greatest & easiest way to prevent tragedy in your home due to a fire is to have working smoke alarms/detectors. Smoke alarms provide an early warning of fire, giving you and your family more time to safely evacuate your home.

Often, home fires occur in the darkness of night when residents are fast asleep. One misconception is that a person will awake from the smell of smoke. This is WRONG...Smoke is a silent killer! Smoke contains many deadly gases, such as carbon monoxide, that will actually put a person into an even deeper state of sleep, causing a person never to wake up. A smoke alarms/detector is your first line of defense to get out alive.

A smoke alarm must be WORKING to be effective. Over the past decade, the number of residential homes having installed smoke alarms has steadily increased; however, a large percentage of these smoke alarms don't work. Why?...the batteries have either died or been removed. Smoke alarm batteries should be tested monthly and replaced at least once a year.

Choosing a smoke alarm/detector

Smoke alarms can be purchased at the majority of hardware and variety department stores. Be sure

that the alarms you buy carry the label of an independent testing laboratory.

In general, smoke alarms are either battery operated or are hooked up directly to your homes electrical system with a battery backup. Either type is effective as long as they are installed and maintained properly (follow the manufacturer's directions).

Some smoke alarms detect smoke using an ionization sensor while others use a photoelectric sensor. Again, both types are effective as long as they are installed and maintained properly (follow the manufacturer's directions).

Specialty alarms with emergency lights also exist for the hearing impaired.

How many and where to install?

The total number of smoke alarms and where they are installed depends on the home. Follow these guidelines for determining the number of smoke alarms and where to install them.

Have at least one smoke alarm installed on every floor of your home, including the basement.

Have a smoke alarm installed outside of each sleeping area. If any residents sleep with their doors closed, making it

difficult to hear the alarm, or if residents are hearing-impaired, it is recommended that smoke alarms be installed in the inside the sleeping areas, as well.

On floors without bedrooms, alarms should be installed in or near living areas, such as dens, living rooms, or family rooms.

Smoke alarms are not recommended for kitchens, bathrooms, or garages where cooking fumes, steam, or exhaust fumes could result in false alarms. Also, do not install an alarm in an attic or other unheated spaces where humidity and temperature changes could affect the alarm's operation.

If your alarm continues to go off due to normal cooking in the kitchen, do not remove the battery. Physically move and reinstall the smoke alarm in a location where the alarm will not continually go off while you are cooking.

Install smoke alarms following the manufacturer's directions. Most battery operated smoke alarms can be easily installed using a drill, screws, and screwdriver. Alarms hard-wired to the homes electrical system should be installed by a professional. Never install an alarm to a circuit that can be turned off from a wall switch.

Mount alarms high on a wall or on the ceiling. Avoid dead air spaces. Wall-mounted alarms should be installed so that they are 4 to 12 inches from the ceiling. A ceiling-mounted alarm should be attached at least 4 inches from the nearest wall.

Only a functioning smoke alarm can protect you and your family.

Batteries and Maintenance of Smoke Alarms

- Never disable an alarm by "borrowing" its battery for another use.
- Test your smoke alarms monthly
- Following the manufacturer's instructions, install new batteries at least once a year.
- Replace batteries when your alarm is "chirping" or "beeping", indicating a low battery.
- Clean your smoke alarms using a dust brush or rag.
- Never paint a smoke alarm.
- Replace smoke alarms that are more than 10 years old

Free 9-Volt Batteries available at any Madison Fire Station from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm



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Mark Your Calendars



March 2008

- **Saturday, March 15th - West Madison Jaycees Easter Egg Hunt** - At Elver Park, activities begin at 10:00 and hunt is at 11:00. Appearances will be made by the Easter Bunny and Madison Firefighters. Free.
- **Monday, March 17th, 1:00 – 3:00 – Guitar Hero** – At Meadowridge Library. Be a rock star and play Guitar Hero with your friends. Refreshments provided.
- **Tuesday, March 18th 1:00-3:00 – Spring Break Nintendo Wii Party** at Meadowridge Library. For kids 16 and under. Snacks provided. Call 288-6160 to register.
- **Tuesday, March 25th, 7:00 pm at Falk Elementary School is our next neighborhood meeting. Join us to brainstorm some ideas to improve our neighborhood.**
- **March 28th, 6:30 pm – 7:45 pm – Open Mic Night** - At Meadowridge Library. Share your talent at Open Mic Night. Read a poem, sing a song, or play an instrument. For ages 16 and under. Call 288-6160 beginning March 14 to register.

April 2008

- **Saturday, April 12th, 1:00 – 2:00 - Nutrition Magician** –At Meadowridge Library. Join Donna Weihofen, "The Nutrition Magician," to learn about the magic of food.
- **Slow Down Yard Sign Campaign Kickoff Wednesday, April 16; 12:00 Noon,** sponsored by Safe Communities' www.safercommunity.net
- **Isthmus Green Day 2008 Expo - April 26, 2008**

Recycling bins –hybrid cars - bicycles - local produced food – canvas bags. Going green is the way to be! But, what else can we do? Let Isthmus|TheDailyPage.com show you the good way. Isthmus will produce the first Madison area Green Day, designed to help every person - no matter what their circumstances - become a little greener and have fun doing it.

Isthmus Green Day at the LEED-certified Monona Terrace will include a wide variety of informative exhibits and fun activities appealing to everyone interested in a more

environmentally friendly lifestyle. At Isthmus Green Day, you can check out one of the new Madison Metro hybrid buses and Toyota's newest hybrid vehicle. Paint your face green at the Natural Way to Play Children's area, and view the latest in organic clothing at the Eco-Friendly Fashion Show. Mingle with the entertaining Jolly Giants as you make your way through the many green booths with products and information from area businesses and non-profits. You even have the opportunity to meet Kenneth Brown, the host of HGTV's "reDesign," discuss green-friendly remodeling with Sam Breidenbach, owner of TDS Custom Construction, and learn about the risks and rewards of opening America's first sustainable restaurant from Nora Pouillon. Feeling hungry already? Don't worry – there will be plenty of delicious and sustainable food available in the concessions area. Before you leave, measure your carbon footprint, discover safe biking routes, and rock out to Madison's self-proclaimed green band, The Kissers.

Can't wait until April to get started on your new green lifestyle? Do you have a fun green invention or creation you want to share with the world? You and your family can participate now by entering the Get Green Challenge, and vie for your chance to be on television, present on stage at Green Day and win prizes. For more information about the Get Green Challenge, visit www.thedailypage.com/green.

Opportunities to sponsor the event, buy booth space or even volunteer are available now! Please call Isthmus at (608) 251-5627 or visit TheDailyPage.com/Green for more information on how you can get involved.



Officers

President – Nicky Morris

Vice President – Mary Sullivan

Treasurer – Margie Schwantes

Secretary – Vacant

Neighborhood Watch – Vacant

PHNA Committee: Marge Liss, Margie Schwantes, Linda Stache, Nicky Morris, Chris Morris and Karen Deaton.

PHNA email:
info@prairiehillsna.org

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.prairiehillsna.org

Getting to Know You... - by Nicky Morris

How many of you know all the neighbors the live around you – across the street, on either side, behind you and at your corners diagonally? If you found that you don't know everyone, I encourage you to take the initiative and go out and meet your neighbors. Believe it or not, this can help make our neighborhood safer.

In the past, the neighborhood watch urged residents to have a block captain, but today they are encouraging what it called the "9-House Model" which is basically what I said before, knowing all the neighbors that live immediately around you. If you are out of town or simply not home, these are the residents who can help watch your home, see if anyone suspicious is walking around your property,

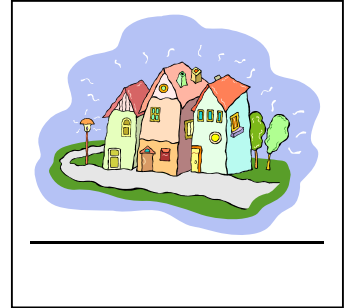
looking in your mailbox or breaking in. Having a relationship with your neighbors can help build this watchful eye. You don't need to give them a key to your house, but hopefully you can all trade phone numbers and/or email.

I realize our neighborhood has varying layouts. If you have apartments bordering you, you can get to know some of the tenants, but it's more important for you to get to know the landlord. Also, if you have a neighbor who makes you feel uncomfortable, then certainly do not share personal information. You just need to use your best judgment.

In all other cases, go out and meet your neighbors. I encourage you to host some

kind of gathering, in the backyards, front yards or in your house if you're comfortable. Take pictures and share your story with us. We'll post it and share what neighbors are doing in Prairie Hills.

Happy Spring Everyone!



PAY ONLINE
Credit card payments
are accepted at:
www.prairiehillsna.org

Welcome to Prairie Hills Neighborhood

To join the Prairie Hills Neighborhood Association, please fill out the form below and mail it with your membership dues to: Prairie Hills Neighborhood Association, P.O. Box 44674, Madison, WI 53744-4674.

Check One: New Member **OR** Current Member Renewal

Name: _____ Phone – Home: _____

Address: _____ Work: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Email Address: _____

Check the appropriate boxes below:

Membership for year 2008: \$5.00 per household

*Note: If your family is unable to afford membership, you can receive a free membership by attending a neighborhood watch meeting and speaking with the treasurer.

I would like to give more: \$ _____

I prefer to receive the newsletter by email or mail

I would like my newsletter to be in Spanish (we are working to try and get a Spanish version of this newsletter)