



The Vilas Neighborhood Association's purposes are enhancement of the neighborhood's residential character and attributes, and the promotion of camaraderie among the neighborhood's residents. (Article 2, Neighborhood Association by laws)

# VILASink

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All issues of the newsletter can be seen at: <https://www.vilasneighborhood.com/vilasink>

## President's Message *by Sarah Babauddin, VNA President*

Remember when we used to have parties? I do! Some of my favorites are our neighborhood parties like the VNA Block Party; Halloween, Tailgate, and Holiday Parties. It was at these parties that I got to meet and know neighbors that I would not have had the opportunity to meet otherwise. I loved seeing the kids run around on a closed street at the block party on a summer day; where folks of all ages are sharing food, drink, laughs, and conversation. It was fun to get dressed up for the HotelRed holiday party and enjoy a more grown-up event. Not to mention how great it was seeing all of the fun costumes for Halloween and the school spirit for the tailgate party. This past year, I missed those opportunities to get together.

We will be able to gather again at some point, and when we do, we need someone to help organize these events. In this light, I want you to know that we are looking for a new Social Chair for the Vilas neighborhood. Maybe you really like planning parties or perhaps you have some fun ideas to create new ways for neighbors to meet – virtually for now or in-person soon. Maybe it is just you, you and a friend, or small group who want to take on this fun way to support the neighborhood. You will have the support of the VNA council

and we'll work with you with budget and logistics. If you are interested, please email me at [vnapresident@gmail.com](mailto:vnapresident@gmail.com). And if you see our past social chair, Lee Lazar walking around the neighborhood, please say "thank you" to him for his years of service and providing good times to Vilas!

Another way to be part of our community, but in a super easy way, is to join the Vilas Neighborhood listserv. It is a great way to find out about VNA meetings and other things going on in the neighborhood. Back in December, we switched from the old Yahoo account to a new io account. So, if you have not joined or made the switch yet, send an email to [VilasNA+subscribe@groups.io](mailto:VilasNA+subscribe@groups.io); it's helpful if you identify yourself by name and home address when you send the message.

Until we can see each other in person again (maybe at a fun party), I hope to see you virtually at our VNA council meetings that happen the fourth Wednesday of each month at 7pm. And please feel free to reach out to me at [the vnapresident@gmail.com](mailto:vnapresident@gmail.com) with any neighborhood concerns. ♦



**COUNCIL MEMBERS**

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**Social - Open**

**Pat Scheckel**  
Newsletter Editor

**Submission information for articles and advertising**

Vilas, Ink, with its circulation of 700 plus, is published quarterly for all residents of the Vilas Neighborhood. We welcome submissions, in particular letters, discussions of local issues, or services that might be of neighborhood interest. Deadline for the next issue is May 22, 2021. Please contact Pat for advertising availability. E-mail: pschecke@yahoo.com. Standard ad cost for 2020 is \$35 per issue or \$125 annually. The standard ad size is 2 1/4" x 3". We offer a double ad size when space permits at 3" x 4 1/2" at \$65 per issue or \$250 annually. (Ad size subject to change)

**A Message from Mayor Rhodes-Conway**

The City of Madison recognizes the need to invest in our small business community. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, many small businesses face a real prospect of permanently closing. We further recognize historic and current inequities when it comes to funding and supporting small businesses owned by people of color. That is why, myself with the support of the Common Council launched the Small Business Equity and Recovery (SBER) grants aimed at supporting businesses owned by people who are part of a historically underrepresented group, including: low income populations, people of color, immigrants, women, veterans and LGBTQ+ individuals.

The response was enormous. In fact, it was so large we had to deploy city workers from five different agencies to help support the Office of Business Resources review team. In addition, while the large amount of applications caused some delay in response we are happy to report the team has reviewed close to 500 applications and have approved over \$1,162,700.00 in grants to Madison Businesses.

Our small business community is the soul of Madison's neighborhoods. They contribute to the rich, vibrant texture and culture of our city. We recognize the losses many have experienced in the last year and are happy the City and community at large able to support as many businesses as we can.

Over the next several weeks, staff will be reviewing SBER grant applications and funding will be distributed. However, our work in supporting and advocating for our small business community will not end here. We have other programs that will be rolling out throughout the year.

If you have not done so already, please join the Office of Business Resources (OBR) e-mail list to receive updates of other programs that become available: <https://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/economicdevelopment>

I ask that you continue to mask up and maintain appropriate distances. We will get through this together!

Mayor Satya ♦



# Spring into the Outdoors with Dane County

By Dane County Executive Joe Parisi

2020 will long be remembered for its many challenges. Yet, through those difficult times, one resource many of us turned to was the outdoors—where we could unwind and explore Dane County’s many natural resources. Even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dane County was able to make great strides in the areas of conservation, water quality, prairie restoration, and flood prevention. And as the weather warms and the pandemic wanes, we are eager to welcome Dane County’s many residents back outside to explore recreational opportunities.

In 2020, Dane County permanently protected 600 acres of property with the Dane County Conservation Fund. An additional 600 acres were able to be protected through our increasingly popular Continuous Cover Crop Program, designed to mitigate flooding and reduce erosion. We were also able to collect over 1,700 pounds of prairie seed to help restore more than 143 acres to natural prairie, including our expansion of the Pheasant Branch Conservancy near Middleton.

Dane County removed over 40,000 tons of sediment from the bottom of the Yahara River between Lakes Monona and Waubesa last year, reducing the risk of future flooding during periods of heavy rainfall. We were also able to complete our "Suck the Muck" project in Token Creek, which will help limit the frequency and extent of hazardous algae blooms. With each passing year, we are improving the water quality in our local lakes, rivers, and streams for future generations.

Our accomplishment in the outdoors—direct investments into the quality of life we enjoy here in Dane County—are many. Since the very early days of the pandemic, our natural resource areas have been everything from launching points for canoes to just a place to safely catch some fresh air. The return on our investment into these lands and protecting the neighboring lakes and streams could not be clearer. Like you, I look forward to warmer weather when we can get back outside and enjoy all that our incredible county parks and recreation areas have to offer. ♦



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# How to Handle Chlorides as Winter Ends

By Casey Hanson, Executive Director, Friends of Lake Wingra

Warmer weather brings snow melt and increased surges of chlorides entering Lake Wingra. Because Lake Wingra has the highest chloride levels of all the Yahara chain lakes, our community action to protect it remains important! Chlorides even appear in water samples from the springs surrounding Lake Wingra. This indicates they are infiltrating shallow groundwater aquifers.

These chlorides come from winter salt applications and you can help protect our lake as we transition to spring. Sweeping excess salt so it doesn't drain to the lake through the storm sewers is one easy action. In case winter decides to stick around a little longer, you can also use these easy resources linked below to salt safely for your neighbors and the lake.

In a broader picture to help raise awareness around chlorides impacting Lake Wingra, Friends

of Lake Wingra's has a public art piece currently touring the watershed. An artist converted an old water softener to a beautiful mural of Lake Wingra. You can currently see it at Henry Vilas Zoo by the otter exhibit and we have plans to move it to Wingra Boats this summer. This project is an exciting new spin on chloride outreach for us and we appreciate the support from Madison

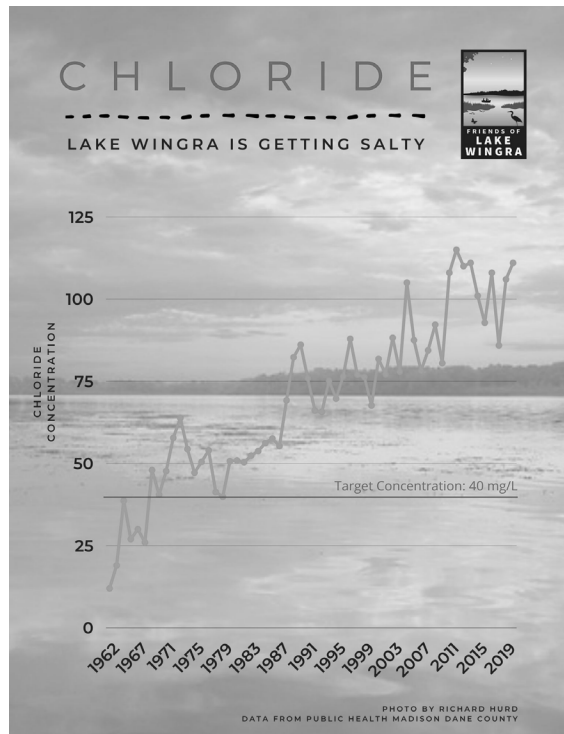
Metropolitan Sewerage District's salt innovation grant and WI Salt Wise staff.

If you'd like to learn more about how salt impacts our freshwater resources, how your water softener plays into chloride levels, and steps you can take at home to optimize your water softener,

Friends of Lake Wingra will host a webinar on April 6. To sign up, see event link below. Homeowners will have a chance to win a gift card to a local Monroe Street business!

Homeowner's Guide to Safe Salting: <https://www.wisaltwise.com/documents/PDFs/Handouts/homeowners.pdf>

The Salt in My Water Softener Goes Where? Tuesday, April 6 2021, 7 p.m. <https://www.lakewingra.org/salt-in-water-softener-event>



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**The Monroe Street Farmers' Market will return for its 7th year!**

The 2021 Monroe Street Farmers' Market will kick off on Sunday, May 2 and will run every Sunday from 9:00am to 1:00pm through October 24th. Located in the Edgewood High School parking lot, the MSFM features a variety of local producers selling everything from fresh fruits and vegetables to meats, cheeses, baked goods, and more! The market also features free live music and family friendly activities each week. To stay up to date on market events for the season, follow us on Facebook, Instagram @monroestreetfarmersmarket or sign up for our newsletter at <https://www.monroestreetfarmersmarket.org/newsletter-signup>. There is also an option for families and individuals to sponsor the market this year as a friend of the market. Email [manager@monroestreetfarmersmarket.org](mailto:manager@monroestreetfarmersmarket.org) to find out more. ♦




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## Monroe Street Merchants

Thank you to all the businesses and individuals that donated to support the holiday decorations on Monroe Street this year. And thank you to our volunteers for the installation. We were able to cover the costs and make a \$500 donation to Second Harvest.

We are cautiously optimistic for the summer and warmer weather! Until then Monroe Street Merchants greatly appreciate your continued support. We have an updated list of businesses and their current pandemic operations on our website.

### NEW BUSINESSES

**Black Kettle Kitchen**, a meal-kit pick-up service, will be opening at 1835 Monroe St in the early spring.

**Berke & Benham Seafoods**, a specialty seafood store, will be opening up later this spring next to Good Day Shop.

Do you follow Monroe Street Madison on Facebook and Instagram? Please tag us (@monroestreetmadison) in your Monroe Street adventures and use #monroestreetmadison. Check out our website for more information about events, businesses, and more: [www.monroestreetmadison.com](http://www.monroestreetmadison.com). ♦



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## News from the Monroe Street Library

This year Monroe Street Library is open Monday, Tuesday and Friday 10-6 for curbside pickup. Call us at 266-6390 to schedule a time to get your holds, or schedule online at your convenience by searching “Madison Public Library curbside pickup.” Look for this month’s copy of Book Page near the curbside table, and let us know if your canine companion would like a dog treat. Call us or use our new intercom.

### New Titles - Too Good to Miss!

Arsène Lupin, Gentleman-Thief by Maurice LeBlanc (Netflix tie-in). The poor and innocent have nothing to fear from him; often they profit from his spontaneous generosity. The rich and powerful, and the detective who tries to spoil his fun, however, must beware. They are the target of Lupin's mischief and tomfoolery. A masterful thief turned detective, his plans frequently evolve into elaborate plots. These stories - the best of the Lupin series - are outrageous, melodramatic, and literate, and they sparkle with amusing banter.

The Duke and I by Julia Quinn (Netflix tie-in to Bridgerton ). By all accounts, Simon Basset is on the verge of proposing to his best friend's sister--the lovely and almost-on-the-shelf--Daphne Bridgerton. But the two of them know the truth--it's all an elaborate ruse to keep Simon free from marriage-minded society mothers. And as for Daphne, surely she will attract some worthy suitors now that it seems a duke has declared her desirable ...

Everywhere You Don't Belong by Gabriel Bump. A darkly funny and heartfelt debut novel about what it means to grow up young and black on the south side of Chicago when it feels like your choices are slim to none.

Interior Chinatown by Charles Yu. A stereotyped character actor stumbles into the spotlight before uncovering

surprising links between his family and the secret history of Chinatown. The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes by Langston Hughes

Unapologetic: A Black, Queer, and Feminist Mandate for Radical Movements by Charlene A. Carruthers. Unapologetic challenges all of us engaged in the social justice struggle to make the movement for Black liberation more radical, more queer, and more feminist.

### New Bestsellers

The Four Winds by Kristin Hannah. An epic novel set during the Dust Bowl era. In this uncertain and dangerous time, Elsa Martinelli - like so many of her neighbors - must make an agonizing choice: fight for the land she loves or go west, to California, in search of a better life.

Wintering: the Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times by Katherine May. An intimate, revelatory book exploring the ways we can care for and repair ourselves when life knocks us down.

Hamnet by Maggie O'Farrell. A short, piercing, deeply moving novel about the death of Shakespeare's 11 year old son Hamnet--a name interchangeable with Hamlet in 15th century Britain--and the years leading up to the production of his great play.

**Reference assistance, holds, and help with resources.** Call the library’s centralized reference line at 608-315-5151 Mon-Fri 10 a.m.- 6 p.m., Sat 12-5 p.m. Schedule a computer appointment, place holds on library materials, ask questions about online collections like Libby/OverDrive/Wisconsin's Digital Library, etc.

**Let us browse for you.** Call the ref line, or do a Google search for “Madison Public Library Curbside Request,” then

fill out the request form. We’ll get a stack of materials ready for you to pick up. Picture books, board books, movies – Too Good to Miss, bestsellers – you name it.

### Online collections and programs.

With your library card, you have instant access to over 71,000 ebooks and audiobooks through Wisconsin’s Digital Library, over 50 online magazines through Flipster, as well as Mango Languages, Consumer Reports, the New York Times, and many more free online resources. We are also beginning to offer a few online programs - visit our calendar for upcoming events. If you don’t have a library card, you can get one online. Search “Madison Public Library Card.”

### Not happening yet

#### Appliance stickers.

The library previously served as a site for purchasing appliance recycling stickers for the City of Madison Streets department. You can still purchase these online, by mail, or by phone.

#### Events and meeting rooms.

All in-person public events are cancelled until further notice. MPL is not accepting room reservations at this time. We do not know when we will reopen. When we do reopen, we do not expect to be open at full capacity right away. ♦

## Behind on Your Energy Bill? Madison Gas and Electric Company Can Help.

*From Madison Gas and Electric Company (MGE)*

We know this is a challenging time for many in our community. It's important all of our customers know MGE is here to help.

Customers who are behind on their MGE bill can work with our customer service representatives to set up a personalized payment agreement and discuss financial assistance that may be available from our community partners. A payment, even if minimal, can help customers who are behind on their bills avoid potential collection activity, late fees or disconnection in the future.

### Contact MGE.

Our customer service representatives are available to help. Contact us Monday-Friday between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Please call us at (608) 252-7144 or (800) 245-1125.

### Need Financial Assistance?

Financial assistance may be available for your household. Energy Services, Inc. (ESI), is currently taking applications through an online portal at [energybenefit.wi.gov](http://energybenefit.wi.gov) or by phone at (800) 506-5596.

Visit [mge.com/resources](http://mge.com/resources) to find other community resources.



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## A Message from Alder Tag Evers

One of my primary goals upon being elected was to elevate the voices of those living on the Triangle. The Triangle is that part of the district bounded by Regent Street, South Park and West Washington and is home to low-income residents in the Bayview community and CDA apartment buildings.

Many of you are aware this area was part of the old Greenbush neighborhood, which was subject to urban renewal policies in the 1960s resulting in the tragic displacement of hundreds of low-income families.

The Triangle Monona Bay Neighborhood Plan was approved in 2019 to provide direction for the redevelopment of the Triangle. The Plan recommended a new north-south street from Regent to West Washington against the objections of Triangle residents. Working with these residents, I drafted an amendment to the Plan to limit the top half of the new street from Regent to Braxton to bike-ped only, with emergency vehicle access. The amendment was approved by three committees, including Plan Commission by unanimous vote, and then by Common Council earlier this month.

Voice is definitive of participatory democracy and making sure all voices are at the table is key to my work as your alder.

Why, then, you might ask, would I support the proposed zoning ordinance changes that would limit neighborhood input for those multi-family housing projects that are under the revised thresholds triggering discretionary review?

First, let me say that the proposed changes are modest and were among the recommendations included in the 2018 Comprehensive Plan. For example, along Monroe Street and Regent Street, any project above three stories would still require conditional use approval. The proposed changes are geared to activating small and medium-sized development projects to increase density and variety in the types of housing in our neighborhoods.

Second, we need more housing to meet steady increases in demand. These zoning changes coupled with forthcoming adjustments in the regulations around Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) will allow for much-needed infill development.

The changes will not solve all housing challenges, particularly those around affordability. That is why I am working with fellow alders to update the City's land banking policy whereby the City purchases parcels to remove them from the speculative real estate market for the purpose of building permanent affordable housing.

Change is difficult, but we cannot put a moat around our City and stop people from moving here. If we maintain exclusionary restrictions on multi-family housing, those projects will instead be built outside our boundaries -- in cities like Middleton, Sun Prairie and Verona -- exacerbating traffic congestion and increasing carbon emissions.

As we manage our City's growth, we must be careful to mitigate its impact on our natural environment. Accordingly, I am working with the Friends of Lake Wingra to draft a Heritage Plan to protect the Wingra watershed from further encroachments, focusing on light pollution emanating from illuminated signs and building interiors.

If you have questions or concerns, please email me at [district13@cityofmadison.com](mailto:district13@cityofmadison.com). Take care and stay safe. ♦



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## **Update from Chuck Erickson, Dane County Supervisor**

As we welcome warmer weather after our 'February deep freeze', we can't help but notice the extreme shifts in temperature and radical weather shifts from one season to another. Combine that with more ice rather than snow during our winters, and extreme rainstorms during the non-winter months, it's obvious to an average person like me that the climate is changing. Facing these changes, Dane County continues to implement policies and take actions to address climate change and our warming climate.

Since I was first elected I have always supported environmental conservation and sustainability policies for Dane County, from promoting biking for non-recreational uses to introducing a resolution for Dane County government to integrate sustainable principles into it's day to day operations.

For this issue's article, I am highlighting some recent Dane County government achievements and progress in addressing climate change, all happening here in our own county.

### **Biking**

The PARC & Ride grant program is back and the County is now accepting grant applications. This grant program provides matching grants to communities or organizations interested in developing new regional bicycle playgrounds or regional bicycle/pedestrian trails. The 2021 Dane County Budget has \$500,000 in matching funds available through the PARC & Ride grant program. Towns, villages, cities, other governmental units and non-profit organizations are eligible to receive up to 50% of the project costs to offset bike trail or playground design, engineering, and construction costs. Grant applications to the PARC & Ride program are due Tuesday, June 1st, 2021. The grant guidelines and application forms are also available online at: [www.danecountyparks.com/Information/Grants](http://www.danecountyparks.com/Information/Grants).

In 2011, Dane County started the PARC (Partners for Recreation and Conservation) grant program, which the PARC & Ride program was built on. Since the inception of the programs, over \$4 million in County funds have been awarded to local municipalities and non-profit organizations for developing bike facilities.

### **Sustainability Leaders Collaborative (SLC) of Dane County**

The Sustainability Leaders Collaborative (SLC) was created by County Exec Joe Parisi and Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway in 2019 and is a first-of-its-kind collaboration to bring together elected officials, administrators, and staff who work on sustainability issues from nearly two dozen cities, villages, and towns in Dane County.

On February 24 the full SLC membership, now also including school district officials, will reconvened to showcase local success and highlight collaborative opportunities, which include the following:

- Cottage Grove, Cross Plains, McFarland, Shorewood Hills, Sun Prairie, and Verona establishing sustainability committees, joining Fitchburg, Madison, Middleton, and Monona that had committees previously.
- More than 50 solar installations on local government and schools across Dane County (see Dane County's Clean Energy map for details - <https://daneclimateaction.org/maps#CleanEnergyMap>).
- Oregon School District opening the first net-zero energy school in the State of Wisconsin.
- Residents in the Town of Vermont working with other stakeholders in Western Dane County to facilitate a solar group buy in 2020, resulting in 17 installations.
- Seven communities achieving Climate Champion recognition for their efforts from Dane County in 2020.

### **HVAC and replacement windows grant**

The U.S. Department of Energy will give Dane County, the City of Madison, and the local nonprofit Slipstream approximately \$1 million to retrofit the City-County Building with high performance, triple-paned windows and LED lighting systems. With this funding, the new windows and LED lighting, including lighting controls will be integrated into an overall building automation system. This project will demonstrate 'whole-building' energy efficiency, with the HVAC part saving 10% and the LED lighting system saving 60%.

The project is expected to total about \$1.5 million, with Dane County and the City of Madison allocating approximately \$500k in matching funds. Implementation of the project will begin in the spring of 2021 and continue through 2023. In addition to installing the efficient technologies, the funding will enable the City and County to measure energy usage before and after the installation and use the project as an educational opportunity. Technical expertise will also be provided by Focus on Energy and MG&E. ◆

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## JOIN THE DISCUSSION

The VNA sponsors an online listserv for  
our members:

<https://groups.io/g/VilasNA>

The neighborhood email list has moved but is still very much alive. You can ask to join by sending an email to: [VilasNA+subscribe@groups.io](mailto:VilasNA+subscribe@groups.io). Please identify yourself by name and address to facilitate this process, since this listserv is primarily for those who live within the VNA boundaries.

**Renew & Join for 2021!** Annual Membership runs from January 1 - December 31 - - - - -

## VNA Membership Form

 Membership dues are \$20/household or \$10/individuals.

- I wish to renew my VNA membership (It is not necessary to fill out the form unless there are changes)
- I / we would like to contribute \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the VNA
- Add my name as a new VNA member (Please fill out the following)

**Names** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_ **Telephone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Children's name(s)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home email address(es)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Year moved into VNA area** \_\_\_\_\_

Checks should be made out to Vilas Neighborhood Association and mailed to Pat Scheckel  
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