



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

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

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

As I write this, summer is just weeks away. The lilacs have bloomed, the tomatoes have been planted, the cranes are back at Vilas Park, and school is almost out for summer. The biggest change this spring, however, is that Covid vaccinations are well underway and for many of us that means that we can reemerge and resume “normal” life. As I look back at the past year and a half or so, I am saddened for those who have been lost and for missing the family and friends that I have not been able to see and hug for so long. I also look back with gratitude for the health care professionals, essential workers, and teachers who stepped up and worked so hard to keep us healthy, functioning, and able to learn. I am also thankful for all of you neighbors who looked out for each other, volunteered your time, put rainbows up in your windows, and offered a friendly wave of hello during those lonely days. For many of us, including myself, we spent more time outside this past year. We planted more gardens, and we took more time to enjoy walks and bike rides through our beautiful neighborhood.

As life returns to normal, there are lessons I hope we can hold on to post-pandemic. I hope we can remember to slow down every now and then to really enjoy time with those closest to us. I hope we can continue to enjoy time outside in the neighborhood and in nature. And for the Vilas neighborhood, I hope we can still look out for one another, offer a helping hand when able, and keep waving those hellos.

The VNA council has not met in person since February 2020, but in some ways, those 15 months “zoomed” by and we have gotten a lot accomplished and continue to work on future projects and events. Our VNA representatives, Wendy Fearnside and Ann Rivlin did a fantastic job representing our neighborhood throughout the Vilas Park Master Plan process. Our zoning committee, led by Ben Biltz and Wendy, worked up a survey to gather input on our neighborhood. Be on the lookout for a paper version on your doorstep or for the on-line version that will be posted on the listserv and our website. Our new social chair, Bethany Nelson, is thinking up new ways for us to connect – including an upcoming book club. Eileen Thompson is working with Parks to figure out best ways to protect the oak trees from slacklines and hammocks at Bear Mound Park. Sally Lehner is working on a storm drain mural project that will involve the kids of Vilas in painting and learning about the Lake Wingra watershed. These are just some of the projects we are working on! Please reach out to learn more or if you would like to get involved!

The VNA council will be figuring out when and where we can begin meeting in-person once again. I hope you will take the time to find out more about what is going on in Vilas by coming to a meeting or an event. In the meantime, I hope you all stay well and get vaccinated if you are able. I hope to see you all soon, either on-line or in-person! ♦



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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 August 20, 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)

Vilas Neighborhood Survey

The Vilas Neighborhood Association is conducting a survey of residents to gain information regarding your views of our neighborhood. Each house should have received a hard copy of the survey in recent weeks and received a notice via the VNA listserv. A reminder if you haven't yet filled one out, please do so by June 30 at: survey.alchemer.com/s3/6266046/VNA2021

Thank you for your input! ♦



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Dane County's Continued Commitment to Help Our Community Recover from the Impacts of COVID-19

By Dane County Executive Joe Parisi

With the help of the federal government's American Rescue Plan, Dane County and our dedicated partners are working to get COVID-19 relief funds into the community as quickly and efficiently as possible to help recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

We're infusing \$15 million into our Small Business Pandemic Support Grant Program with Dane Buy Local to help even more businesses rebound from the financial impacts of COVID-19. While recovery will not happen overnight, these grants play a crucial role in helping our local economy bounce back. To date, Dane County has put over \$29 million of funding toward this effort.

Putting food on the table remains a struggle for many in our community. Our recent \$10 million contract extension with Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin will ensure food security for another 12 months. The program not only keeps locally raised produce, meats, cheese, and milk on the shelves of our food pantries, but helps our local growers struggling economically due to COVID-19 as well.

Since the early days of the pandemic, Dane County has funded non-congregate hotel shelter operations and assisted with other congregate shelter expansions to create social distancing in the community's homeless shelter system. Now, as our community looks to the future, we plan to invest \$13 million over the next two years in housing resources to help ease the transition out of hotel shelter and into housing.

We're also awarding over \$1.3 million in federal stimulus funds to a dozen local school districts to help bolster mental health services for students. We know the behavioral health needs of young people will outlast this pandemic. This assistance will complement our current efforts and get extra supports in place prior to students heading back to school this fall.

The faces of the COVID-19 pandemic are many, but we are in this together. With these programs, we hope to help the Dane County community recover from the impacts of COVID-19 and see brighter days ahead.



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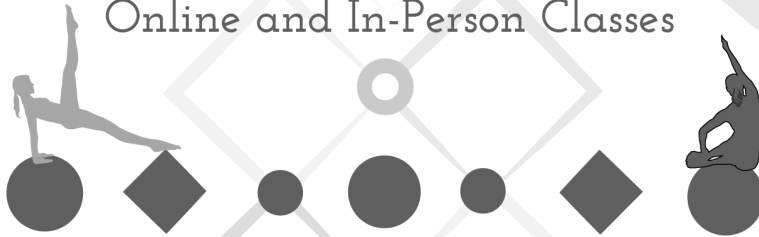
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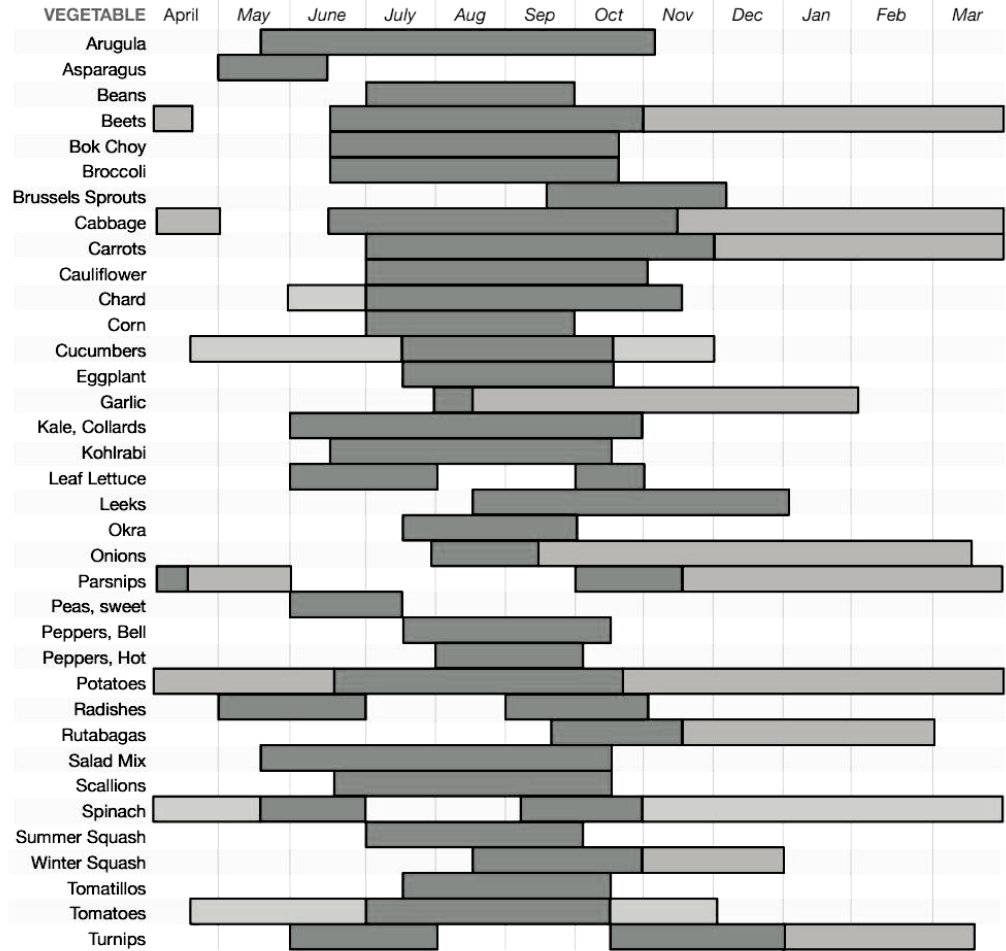
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Get Your Groceries Locally at the Monroe Street Farmers' Market

The 2021 Monroe Street Farmers' Market is every Sunday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm through October 24th. Located in the Edgewood High School parking lot, the The farmers' market has everything you need to supplement your weekly grocery shopping, including fresh apples and lettuces, eggs, meats, cheeses, baked goods, and more! To read a list of our vendors, visit monroestreetfarmersmarket.org. Stay in the know by following us on Facebook, Instagram @ [monroestreetfarmersmarket](https://www.instagram.com/monroestreetfarmersmarket) or sign up for our email newsletter at monroestreetfarmersmarket.org/newsletter-signup. There is also an option for businesses, families and individuals to sponsor the market this year as a friend of the market. Email theresammetzger@gmail.com to find out more about sponsorships. See you at the market! ♦

Seasonal Availability of Wisconsin Fruits and Vegetables

The bars represent average dates of harvest and availability which can vary with such factors as weather conditions, farm location and varieties grown.



Year round Wisconsin foods include meats, poultry, cheese, eggs, milk, dry beans, mushrooms, popcorn, hickory nuts, maple syrup, honey and sorghum.

Prepared by Deborah Deacon and Biographica

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Monroe Street Merchants

“First Friday” Event on Monroe Street
Submitted by Monroe Street Merchants Association

Come visit Monroe Street from 4-7 pm on the First Friday of every month, starting June 4th, for an ongoing retail and restaurant event. Each event will feature different fun elements such as new product drops, food specials, collaborations, live music, and more. With a relaxing atmosphere, our lovely street is a great excuse to go for a stroll and kick off the weekend right.

For more information, please visit our social media pages on Facebook and Instagram or check out our website at monroestreetmadison.com. ♦



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News from the Monroe Street Library

Beginning May 24, Madison Public Library opened all locations to expanded in-person service (browsing, self-pickup holds, access to basic services). Your Monroe Street Library staff is thrilled to see friends and neighbors in the building again!

Monroe Street Library is open Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. By the time you read this we may be open for computer service - stay tuned.

All libraries except Monroe Street Library are open weekdays 10am-6pm and Saturdays 12-5pm.

If you would rather not come in the library, the staff will accommodate the request and bring your items to you outside the building.

If you would like to urge for expanded hours, contact the Library Board, its director, the Mayor or your alder. ♦



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We are first time buyers and excited to buy our first home in the neighborhood!

We are currently renting in the Greenbush neighborhood and love it! We are looking for a 3+ beds/1.5+ baths home with charm and character, up to \$600k in the surrounding area.

If you are planning to sell this year, (we are very flexible on closing date) please contact us at:
Brian and Emily,
bdstepping@frontier.com
or call **(309) 219-2590**.

◆◆ *Brian & Emily* ◆◆

Ten Easy Ways to Save Energy This Summer

From Madison Gas and Electric Company (MGE)

Stay cool and comfortable at home with these tips from MGE.

1. Use a qualified contractor to professionally maintain your central air at least every two years. And, be sure to clean leaves and grass clippings off your outdoor air-conditioning unit.
2. Run major appliances before 10 a.m. and after 9 p.m. or on weekends. This helps lower the demand for power during peak times.
3. Set your thermostat as high as is comfortable, preferably 78°F or higher when you are home and up to 85°F when you are away. Consider upgrading to a smart thermostat—they can adjust temperatures automatically based on your routine and can make saving energy easier!
4. Swap your lightbulbs with LEDs, which use up to 75% less energy than standard incandescent bulbs and last longer.
5. Unplug your phone chargers, printers, computers and other electronics when you are not using them. These devices can still use energy when not in use and can account for 5 to 10% of your total energy use.
6. Run a whole house fan, room or ceiling fans. Be sure to turn off ceiling and room fans when no one is in the room—fans cool people, not rooms.
7. Seal around your window air conditioner so cool air cannot escape. If you need to purchase a new unit, consider a Wi-Fi window air conditioner—you can control them remotely with smartphone apps, which allow you to adjust the temperature while you're away.
8. Keep your window coverings closed to block out direct sunlight.
9. Run full loads in your washer and dryer to cut down on excess energy usage.
10. Keep your water heater temperature set at 120°F, and if you go on vacation, remember to switch it to vacation mode.

By managing our energy use collectively, we can help manage energy costs and reduce carbon emissions as we work together to achieve net-zero carbon electricity by 2050. Find other features about saving energy at mge2050.com.



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A Message from Alder Tag Evers

Now that the public health orders have expired, there's a collective sense of relief -- we get to engage each other in ways that were denied to us for the better part of 15 months. We get to exchange hugs, share meals indoors, and take walks together unmasked.

I don't want to badger any holdouts, but in case you're still refusing the vaccine, please note the virus is still among us, looking for ways to spread. Let's shut this down and cross the finish line together, everyone doing their part.

The Vilas Park Drive Intermediate Traffic Management Plan was approved by the Parks Commission on May 12. The interim plan stipulates the closure of Vilas Park Dr. to cut-through traffic. Traffic will be blocked from the west at the historic bridge to the entrance of the shelter parking lot. The shelter parking lot will be accessible from the east via 2-way traffic. Pavement markings and signage will be added and pedestrian pathways adjacent to the Drive will be improved. This measure will greatly enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety along the Drive. Access to the Drive will be limited to park users, which will allow for greater activation of the Lake Wingra shoreline. Parks staff expects these changes to be implemented this summer.

Ground-breaking for the Truman Olson project is now scheduled for late June. This is a highly complex project that has endured multiple curve balls. The biggest one is that the tax credit investment community was NOT on the same page with the IRS with respect to the new income averaging rule that this project was attempting to implement. This was not and could not be known until just a month or so ago. The development team had to revise the deal and resubmit to attract and secure the state and federal tax credit investors needed to close.

City staff have been in communication with Welton Enterprises, the owner of the Pick 'n Save property. Welton, in turn, is in close communication with Kroger's, the corporate owners of Pick 'n Save. I've received assurances that all parties remain committed

to avoiding a gap in grocery services for south side residents.

Common Council voted against siting a much-needed permanent men's shelter at our May 4 meeting. I voted in favor of the shelter. I did so in response to the universal support the Zeier Rd location had from homeless services providers. It's important in my mind to trust the experts, those whose vocation provides them the experience to speak authoritatively on these matters. Along these lines, I also take seriously the feedback from the outreach workers who are providing services to those dwelling in temporary encampments, like the one at Reindahl Park on the east side. It's concerning to me that the City and County have not yet come up with better solutions. How we treat the most vulnerable in our midst defines who we are, and by that score we have considerable room for improvement.

Take good care and enjoy the summer!



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Update from Chuck Erickson, Dane County Supervisor

Since joining the County Board, my focus has been environmental conservation and land use. Three areas related to that focus have been renewable energy, parks and open space and our lakes. I'm now in my second year as being chair of the Dane County's Lakes and Watershed Commission. However for this issue I'm going to highlight two areas, renewable energy, and parks and open space.

On May 20th, Dane County joined the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Green Power Partnership. Dane County is using nearly 21 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) of green power annually which is enough green electricity to power 45% of county-owned facilities. This clearly proves that Dane County is a leader in the State for using renewable energy and promoting a transition to a clean energy future.

With renewable energy Dane County will reduce the negative health impacts of air emissions, including ozone, fine particles, acid rain, and regional haze. According to the U.S. EPA, Dane County's renewable power use is equivalent to the electricity use of nearly 2,000 average American homes annually.

A Dane County and MGE Airport solar project began operating late last year providing 9 MW of electricity. Dane County now owns more solar systems than any other county in the state, generating more than 800 kW of power at 16 county facilities. These renewable energy projects generate enough electricity to supply Dane County with 45% of the energy used by all county-owned facilities. Last fall, Dane County announced a new partnership with Alliant Energy to develop a 16 MW solar project on 140 acres of County-owned land in the Town of Cottage Grove. When this 16 MW project is completed, Dane County will get 100% of the electricity for its operations from renewable energy sources.

In addition to the environmental benefits and cost savings, solar systems also create jobs. According to the Solar Jobs Census, solar employment in Wisconsin saw a slight improvement from last year, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Jobs were up from 2,871 in 2019 to 2,910 in 2020. The solar industry is projected to reach 400,000 solar jobs nationally by 2030, but employment will need to exceed 900,000 workers by 2035 to reach the 100% clean electricity goal set by President Biden, according to the Solar Energy Industries Association.

The next area I wanted to mention in this article is parks and open space. People have used these parks and open space resources in record numbers. Dane County parks has 3 million visitors annually and manages over 12,000 acres of land including 26 recreation parks (seven are dog parks), 20 wildlife areas, 14 natural resource areas and more (see the Dane County Parks page at countyofdane.com for more details).

Back in 2007, when I was a member of the Environment, Agriculture and Natural Resources (EANR) committee, Joyce Baer and George Socha completed an agreement with Dane County to donate their 140 acres just outside of Marshall to Dane County for open space. I had the privilege of meeting Joyce at an EANR meeting and seeing part of this land first hand. Two weeks ago this land officially became the latest Dane County open space and became the Joyce M. Baer & George J. Socha Nature Conservancy. With a small parking area and hiking trail recently developed, visitors can now experience the conservancy's solitude and beautiful setting along the Maunsha River.

The 140-acre conservancy offers quiet, nature-based outdoor activities such as hiking, canoeing, bird watching and more. Additionally, there is over one mile of frontage along the Maunsha River and several drumlins formed by the last glaciation. Future enhancements will include a canoe landing, additional hiking trails, pedestrian bridges, a second parking lot and prairie and woodland restorations. The conservancy is located at 5784 Cherry Ln., about 2 miles east of the Village of Marshall and 3 miles west of Waterloo, within Dane County's Maunsha River Natural Resource Area. To learn more, visit the property webpage at danecountyparks.com/park/Joyce-MBaer-George-JSocha-Conservancy.

Areas such as renewable energy, and parks and open space will continue to receive my support. If you have questions about any Dane County government issues please email me at erickson.chuck@countyofdane.com or call me at 608-212-8753. ♦

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<https://www.paypal.me/VilasNA>

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. 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 1915 Jefferson Street, Madison, WI 53711. Or use PayPal: <https://www.paypal.me/VilasNA>

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