



# Midvale Messenger

March-April 2026

## Calendar:

**March 7:** Friends of Sequoia Library Bookshop Sale, Market Square, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**March 24:** MHCA Board Meeting, Sequoia Library and via Zoom, 6 p.m.

**April 2:** Let's Talk About Invasives, with Matt Wallrath and the MHCA Green Team, Sequoia Library, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

**April 4:** Friends of Sequoia Library Bookshop Sale, Market Square, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**April 25:** Friends of Sequoia Library Children's Book sale, Sequoia Library, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m..

**April 28:** MHCA Board Meeting, Sequoia Library and via Zoom, 6 p.m.

**May 2:** Friends of Sequoia Library Bookshop Sale, Market Square, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### MIDVALE MESSENGER

The *Midvale Messenger* is published six times a year by the Midvale Heights

Community Association. Copy deadlines are the 15th of February, April, June, August, October, and December.

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## President's Message

### Happy Midvale-Heights Spring

By Joy Cardin

President of the Midvale Heights Community Association

Winter weather is waning and while we still might see some snow and cold in March, we know spring is on the way! Soon the warmer temps will lure more of us outside to walk and bike, work in our gardens and play in our parks. Spring is also on the minds of the Midvale Heights Community Association. Area Directors are working with volunteers and in some cases nearby neighborhood associations on planning events for all of us to enjoy and working on policies to do them safely and sustainably.



We have a committee working with Alder Bill Tishler that is looking into ways to make it safer to walk and bike in Midvale Heights. Our Green Team is organizing educational events to help us live more sustainably. See details on page 5 about their April 2 presentation on how to control invasive plants in our yards. We are also supporting efforts to improve the Odana Hills Prairie restoration project and the Midvale Heights Bison Prairie.

We are also working on fun! We plan to celebrate the Midvale Heights youth baseball program and its longtime volunteer "Commissioner of Baseball" Michael Pressman. We'll share more details in our May newsletter. Plus, the date for the annual June picnic is also set - it will be Tuesday, June 23 at 6 pm in Segoe Park. Organizers are planning on bringing back the potluck! More info soon. There will be many more activities to enjoy this summer, but I'll save the updates on the July 4 celebration and our July Segoe Summer Nights park concerts for the next Midvale Messenger! We hope you'll join us for these activities and that you will join or renew your membership in the Midvale Heights Community Association when we ask you to do so later this spring.

Oh - and a gentle reminder to make a plan to vote in the Spring Election on April 7. We'll be voting for school board representatives, county board supervisors, and judges - including a Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice. You can go to [myvote.wi.gov](http://myvote.wi.gov) to check your registration status, register to vote, request an absentee ballot, find your polling place, see what's on your ballot and more.

## Neighborhood News Briefs

### Friends of Sequoya Library Wants Your CDs, DVDs

By Nadine Pfothenhauer  
Friends of Sequoya Library

Friends of Sequoya could not raise the money for books and library programs without your kind donations. With the increasing use of streaming services like Spotify and Netflix, we are finding a definite decrease in our CD and DVD donations. But our shoppers are still looking for them! So, besides books, if you have some CDs or DVDs or vinyl you wouldn't mind parting with, we'd appreciate those donations too. The Friends accept donations at Sequoya Library every



day. You can use the Friends' drop slot (not the book return) or give them to staff at the check out desk. We also take donations at the shop in Market Square on Mondays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to noon. For large donations we can arrange a pick up by leaving a message at 608-288-9848. If you have questions about donations or would like to volunteer with the Friends, ask at the Sequoya Help Desk, come to the shop to talk with us on our book sale or donation days or leave a message at the number above. Next sale dates at the Bookshop are March 7, April 4 and May 2. We will also have a special Children's Book sale at the Sequoya Branch April 25 from 9 to 1. In Find us on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/friendsofsequoyalibrary/>

### WIDE-LP Needs Talk Show Feedback by Bob Park

Your Midvale Heights low power radio station at 99.1 FM needs listener feedback on our talk shows. If there are talk shows you like to listen to, let us know by email to [radio@widelp.org](mailto:radio@widelp.org) by the end of April. Starting in May, we will begin phasing out shows that don't get a thumbs up

from at least one listener. Democracy Now! and Story Classics at Noon are keepers for sure, but for other shows, in the absence of listener support, we will broadcast a "last show" announcement just before we take it off the air. (This will give listeners who don't read this article a last chance to save the show.) You can see all the current talks shows, marked with white backgrounds, on our Program Schedule page at [www.madisonwi.us/WIDE-LP/schedule/index.htm](http://www.madisonwi.us/WIDE-LP/schedule/index.htm). Your talk show feedback will be valuable to our next Program Director, the volunteer position responsible for programming talk shows. Having just marked my 86th birthday, I plan to retire from that position by the end of the year.



**Your Neighborhood Radio Station**  
Community Supported / Ad-free

Of course the station welcomes other listener feedback and suggestions as well. If a change in time of broadcast is needed for you to hear a show of interest, let us know. If you want to know who you heard in a piece of music or in a talk show, email us with the time that you heard them. Let us know any ideas you have for improvements in WIDE-LP programming.

### MHCA Baseball Registration is Open

By Michael Pressman  
Commissioner

Spring is in the air, so we are getting ready for another season of MHCA baseball.



MHCA is a fun league for players from 3 to 9 years old. It is a good way for players and parents to meet people. T-Ball is played on Tuesdays, Major Coach Pitch on Wednesdays, and Minor Coach Pitch on Thursdays. The games are played at Piper and Segoe Parks.

The season will begin the week of June 1 and end the week of July 20. The cost is \$50 per player, and each player receives a hat, T-shirt and baseball. Applications are available on the MHCA website. If you have questions or need more information, please contact Mike Pressman at [mmpressman@charter.net](mailto:mmpressman@charter.net) or 608-288-0993.

## Why a Public-Private Partnership for the Zoo Matters for All of Dane County

By Erin Welsh

Dane County Board Supervisor, District 7

One of the ways local government can stretch limited public resources while continuing to deliver meaningful services for our community is through strategic public-private partnerships. Late last year, as the Dane County Supervisor for District 7 and member of the Henry Vilas Zoo Commission, I was honored to co-sponsor a proposal authorizing a formal partnership agreement between Dane County and the Henry Vilas Zoo Foundation, Inc. (*see* [2025 RES-239](#)). This proposed partnership is an example of how collaboration between county government and the nonprofit sector can benefit residents while helping address our structural budget challenges.

The resolution authorizes a five-year agreement between Dane County and the non-profit Henry Vilas Zoo Foundation, Inc. to support capital fundraising efforts for the zoo's programs and facilities. Under this structure, the Foundation will solicit gifts, grants, donations, and bequests that will directly support the zoo's capital campaigns, while Dane County retains responsibility for ongoing zoo operations, programming, and animal care.

This kind of public-private partnership offers several benefits to our community. First, partnerships like this allow the county to leverage private philanthropic support for specific public priorities, such as capital improvements, without increasing tax burdens. By supporting a nonprofit entity focused on fundraising, the county can refocus on high-need services that would otherwise be limited by budget constraints. Second, a nonprofit partner like the Henry Vilas Zoo Foundation will often have connections to donors, volunteers, and supporters that go beyond what government alone can access. This expands the circle of community involvement and fosters deeper civic investment in places that many Dane County families enjoy. Lastly, with the county budget under the pressure of a \$31 million structural deficit, public-private partnerships help protect core services while pursuing future growth. By tapping into private resources for fundraising and targeted projects, the county can preserve taxpayer dollars for essential services like

human services and housing supports in ways that are fiscally responsible and aligned with long-term goals.

Dane County already successfully uses partnerships across a range of priorities. For example, county planning and development staff work with local internet provider, UpNetWI, to expand broadband in underserved areas—a public-private model that brings broadband access to more homes by combining federal funds with private sector expertise. Other collaborative efforts are underway in clean energy, where Dane County is working with regional coalitions to build markets for new sustainable projects that will create jobs, lower energy costs, and strengthen the county's resilience to the impacts of climate change.

As a County Board Supervisor, I support defining partnerships thoughtfully, transparently, and with clear accountability to residents. Public-private collaboration should enhance, not replace, the county's core obligations; it should bring new resources or capacities to the table while ensuring public priorities and oversight remain strong.

I also believe such partnerships are not just about dollars—they are about results. The Henry Vilas Zoo is a community asset that draws families, supports education and conservation, and contributes to Dane County's vibrant identity. By strengthening the zoo's ability to raise private funds for capital needs, we help ensure that this free community resource continues to thrive for years to come. At a time of fiscal constraint, partnerships like these can help us protect essential services, maintain quality community spaces, and innovate responsibly. They are one tool among many that we can use to make Dane County stronger, sustainable, and successful.



## District 11 Book Club to Discuss *Reefer Madness* April 20

By Alder Bill Tishler

Madison Common Council District 11

On April 20, the District 11 Book Club will explore one of the nation’s most enduring and debated policy issues: marijuana. For nearly a century, cannabis has functioned as a potent political symbol, cast either as a social threat or as a catalyst for reform and economic opportunity.

The book I selected for us to read on this topic is *Reefer Madness* (2003) by Eric Schlosser, which blends investigative reporting with social and economic history. Although written years before the wave of state level legalization, the book remains relevant for its examination of the underground cannabis economy and shows how decades of prohibition fostered a multibillion dollar illicit market shaped by enforcement strategies, consumer demand, and the economic incentives created by criminalization. His work raises questions that still resonate: How do laws structure markets? Who profits from prohibition? What unintended consequences follow long term enforcement?

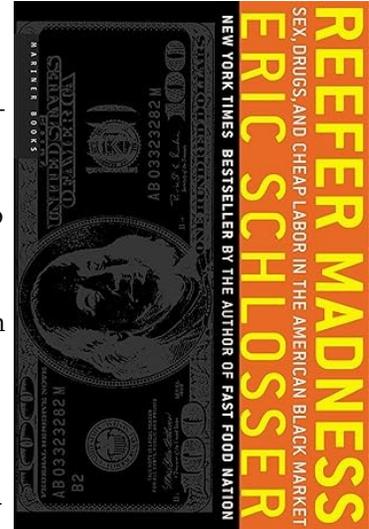
Our book club discussion will connect Schlosser’s historical analysis to current debates in Wisconsin. While neighboring states have adopted medical or recreational legalization, Wisconsin continues to prohibit marijuana under state law,



though cities like Madison have decriminalized possession of small amounts—allowing adults to possess up to about 28 grams. Today’s policy conversations center on regulation, product potency, impaired driving enforcement, and economic opportunity. Supporters of legalization argue that regulated markets could improve safety, keep revenue within the state, and generate tax benefits, while opponents express concerns about youth access and public health risks.

Meanwhile, hemp derived delta-9 THC products remain widely available due to federal definitions that classify low THC cannabis as legal hemp. This loophole in the law has created a significant market for intoxicating products even without full legalization of cannabis. In 2025, Madison’s Common Council responded with an ordinance restricting the sale of hemp derived THC to adults 21 and over, requiring ID checks and limiting product placement to reduce youth exposure.

Schlosser’s book places today’s policy debates in a broader historical frame, showing how marijuana has long served as a shifting political symbol. If you’re interested in criminal justice, economics, or the future of legalizing the sale of cannabis, I hope you’ll join me on Monday, April 20, from 7:00 to 8:30 PM in the main meeting room at the Sequoya Library. A limited number of books will be available to borrow on a first come, first served basis at the Ask Desk.



## Let's Talk about Invasives (like Creeping Bellflower, Creeping Charlie, Goutweed) with Matt Wallrath

By Wendy Weber  
The MHCA Green Team

- Thursday, April 2
- 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
- Sequoia Library Rooms A and B
- 4340 Tokay Blvd, Madison

Be sustainable and bring your own coffee mug!

Matt will present about some of the worst offenders in our gardens - creeping bellflower, creeping Charlie and goutweed (bishop's weed) and more. What about trees and shrubs? What is beautiful yet harmful and is recommended to plant instead? What might be the economic and environmental impact of invasives? He will also share about plant ID, invasive management, and restoration.

**Q&A will follow.** Bring your questions about the challenges you face in your own garden and yard and hear what is of concern beyond our own yards.

*This event is presented by the Midvale Heights Green Team and Sequoia Library.*

### Matthew Wallrath – Wisconsin First Detector Network Coordinator / Outreach Specialist

The Wisconsin First Detector Network (WIFDN) is a community science program that empowers people to take action on invasive species through invasive species monitoring, management, and outreach. WIFDN provides training and resources in addition to providing volunteer opportunities to community scientists.

<https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/wifdn/learn/invasive-species-i-d-and-impacts>

### Wisconsin Regulated Invasive Plant Identification Resource Page



Matt is happy to continue his career as a conservationist with UW-Madison as of May 2023. A Milwaukee born and Wisconsin educated ecologist, he started working in the environmental field in the Pacific Northwest when he served two terms as an AmeriCorps member doing wetland habitat restoration with the Washington Conservation Corps. Matt also served with the Washington State Department of Ecology, taught outdoor education on Orcas Island in the Salish Sea. There he owned and operated his own landscape contractor company, helped found the Orcas Island Youth Conservation Corps, and served as an appointed Commissioner for the San Juan County Land Bank.



Photo (c) Katy Chaka

Matt completed a professional M.S. in Environmental Conservation in August 2018 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Nelson Institute and then worked for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. When Matt is not at work, you will find Matt teaching modern board games, on the Ultimate Frisbee field, hiking, canoeing and playing the tuba!

**Our next event? Watch for bumblebees arriving later in the spring - more specifically TheBumble Bee Brigade with Judy Cardin!**