



Midvale Messenger

July-August 2023

Calendar:

July 7: Summer Nights at Segoe, Segoe Park, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

July 14: Summer Nights at Segoe, Segoe Park, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

July 15: Friends of Sequoia Library Bookshop Sale, Market Square, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

July 21: Summer Nights at Segoe, Segoe Park, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

July 28: Summer Nights at Segoe, Segoe Park, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

August 5: Friends of Sequoia Library Bookshop Sale, Market Square, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

August 22: MHCA Board Meeting, Sequoia Library, 6:45pm

President's Message

We Need You

by Joy Cardin

We had a great turnout for the annual Midvale Heights Picnic in Segoe Park on June 22. At least 300 residents enjoyed the picnic fare and the company of their neighbors. A big thank you to MHCA board member Janine Veto and volunteer Cathy Rotter for planning the event this year. Cathy and MHCA Treasurer Ron Rotter also provided the picnic tables and signage and other supplies that make the picnic possible. Other MHCA board members and friends volunteered to set up and serve you. We couldn't do this without them. Would you like to help plan and produce the event next year? Do you want the potluck to return? Would you like to add other entertainment options? Read on to find out how.

Coming up next on the Midvale Heights summer fun calendar is "Summer Nights at Segoe" where you can enjoy popular local bands performing on Friday nights from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Segoe Park. You can pack a picnic, or grab dinner from a food cart (if available), visit with friends and neighbors, and kick up your heels to great tunes. Thank you to MHCA board members Denise Lamb and Lorie Raihala for organizing these concerts each year. Would you like to help them? You can. The Midvale Heights Good Neighbor Project is relaunching after a pandemic hiatus. Thanks to MHCA board member Bonnie Roe for taking on this effort to improve community relationships and public safety. The first event of the new MHCA Good Neighbor Project is a picnic in Westmoreland Park on Thursday, August 3 from 5:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. Everyone is invited.

MIDVALE MESSENGER

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MHCA board members and volunteers also organize Green Team environmentally-focused activities, staff MHCA blood drives at Sequoia Library, plan and promote the Labor Day weekend MHCA Garage Sale, lead the Christmastime Santa visits, compile the bimonthly Midvale Messenger, and much more. We could use your help.

To volunteer for any of these regular activities, to suggest a new neighborhood event, or to serve on the MHCA as an Area Director (we have a vacant board position for Area 7 and I am recruiting a co-director for Area 2 and eventually my replacement as President) you can contact reach me at cardinjoy@gmail.com. You can also get more information about the Midvale Heights Community Association, maps and activities and volunteer opportunities, as well as the Association's membership form at midvaleheights.org. Please join or renew your membership in the MHCA now even if you don't have time to actively volunteer. Your membership fee of \$30.00 for 2 years (2023-2025) benefits you and all who live in Midvale Heights. We need you and we thank you!

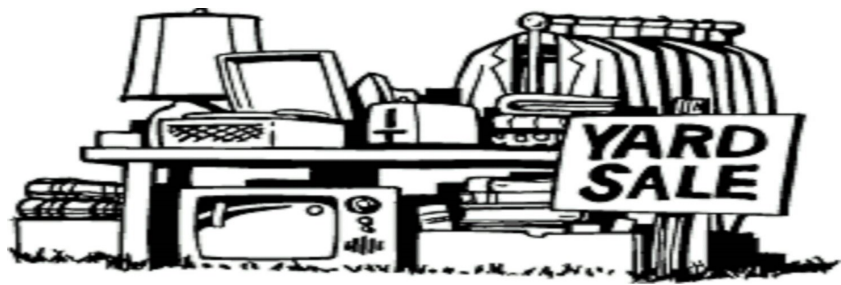
Neighborhood News Briefs

Summer Brings Live Jazz and Friends of Sequoya Library Sales

The Friends of Sequoya are celebrating summer by continuing to sponsor Jazz at Sequoya. On June 17 All That Jazz Quintet performed and on July 15 Subterranean Jazz Project will perform.

The Sequoya Friends are extremely grateful for the donations of books, CDs, DVDs, games and puzzles we receive from our generous community. Volunteers are at the Friends of Sequoya Shop in Market Square on Mondays and Thursdays between 10 a.m. and noon to accept donations. Donations are also accepted at Sequoya, but we request that large donations are brought to the shop. The next sales at the Friends of Sequoya Book Shop will be from 9 to 4 on July 15 and August 5.

We also have books at the Sequoya Branch on shelves and a cart near our work room. If you have any questions ask at the Sequoya Help Desk, come to the shop to talk with us on our donation days or leave a message on our shop phone: 608-288-9848. Also find us on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/friendsofsequoyalibrary/>.



Annual Neighborhood Garage Sale is Back Labor Day Weekend, September 1 and 2

By Michelle Kempf-Weibel and John Weibel

Start cleaning out those closets—the Midvale Heights Community Association (MHCA) annual garage sale is weeks away. Official dates and times for this year's sale are Friday, September 1, and Saturday, September 2, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Participants can choose to hold their sale on one or both days and set their own hours. Registration this year is just \$5.

More than 20 Midvale Heights neighbors usually participate in the sale. There is strength in numbers: the more homes participating, the bigger the crowds shopping the sales! The MHCA advertises the sale on Craigslist, NextDoor, and other websites. Participants are encouraged to also advertise for added visibility.

A feature of the sale is an online map on the MHCA website (www.midvaleheights.org) that buyers can download to guide them through the sale. The \$5.00 registration fee covers advertising, neighborhood signs, and maps for participants to distribute to sale shoppers. A packet containing sale guidelines, a sign designating participants, and maps for shoppers.

Go to: <http://midvaleheights.org/GS2023Register> to download a registration form. Forms can also be downloaded from the Midvale Heights website. Michelle Kempf-Weibel and John Weibel are chairs of the garage sale and can be reached at mhcagaragesales@midvaleheights.org with questions. Forms are due back to Michelle and John by August 18 in order to be included in the online map.



Dane County Hits Green-Energy Milestone

by Joe Parisi
Dane County Executive

This Earth Month, I joined Alliant Energy and SunVest Solar representatives in Cottage Grove to cut the ribbon on our newly constructed Yahara Solar Project. Why is this site significant? When combined with the energy produced at our nearly 20 other solar installations, it allows Dane County to use 100% renewable electricity at all county government facilities. We're the first county in Wisconsin and only the fourth county in the nation to achieve this milestone.

Our 17-megawatt Yahara Solar Project will produce more than 36 million kilowatt-hours of renewable electricity per year—enough to power more than 3,000 Dane County homes. This 33,000 solar panel array utilizes the latest bifacial panel technology that produces energy from both sides of the panel, which increases energy production as sunlight reflects off the ground, especially when snow-covered, and as they track the sun throughout the day.

Our 100% renewable milestone has been years in the making and marks significant progress in Dane County's ongoing effort to combat climate

change. If we want to move the dial on the climate crisis, this kind of work cannot wait decades or it will prove too little, too late. We all have a responsibility to act now, and that's just what Dane County government is doing.



Thanks to President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act, there is an estimated \$369 billion in tax credits and financing for clean energy strategies. This is the single largest U.S. investment in climate action and makes pursuing clean energy solutions more affordable than ever. Individuals, businesses, non-profits, local governments, faith-based organizations, and schools can all benefit, and I encourage you to visit daneclimate-action.org/what-you-can-do/federal-funding to learn more. A cleaner, greener tomorrow is knocking on our door. It's on all of us to welcome it with open arms.

Catch Midvale Heights' Own Radio Station 24/7 at 99.1 FM

by Carl Wacker

Midvale Heights neighborhood radio station, WIDE-LP, 99.1 FM, hosted a Make Music Madison venue on June 21. Among the performers on the WIDE-LP outdoor stage on Orchard Drive were the Raging Grannies, Tite2Nite, the Folk Circus, and Vets on Frets. Individual performers ranged in age from five years old to one hundred. Neighborhood residents could tune in to WIDE-LP live to hear many of the performances. WIDE-LP airs progressive voices and music 24 hours a day. The station operates in Midvale Heights thanks to the generous help of neighborhood volunteers. If you'd like to learn more, please visit the "Friends of WIDE-LP" website (widelp.org/friends), where you'll find a list of volunteer opportunities and an email contact link.

Annual MHCA Summer Nights Concerts Series at Segoe Kicks Off Friday, July 7

By Denise Lamb

MHCA's annual summer concert series, Summer Nights at Segoe, will return on Friday nights in July with two new groups along with some old favorites. The series will open on July 7 with Gin, Chocolate & Bottle Rockets playing and singing pop, rock, and blues tunes. The group first appeared in the Segoe Park series two years ago, and we are glad to have this energetic trio of singers and musicians back.

Onadare, a traditional Irish band, will be playing on July 14. This group is new to our lineup but plays monthly at the Malt House on Madison's

east side. The Cajun Strangers, playing Cajun and Zydeco music on July 21, need no introduction to our concert audiences, as they have opened the series for the past few years. Our final concert will feature the Madtown Mannish Boys playing Chicago-style blues on July 28. We have had requests for this group in the past and are pleased that we can include them in this year's concert lineup.

Concerts will begin at 6:30 pm and run until 8:30. Bring your blankets, lawn chairs, picnics, and dancing shoes and enjoy the music.

Property Assessments and Taxation are Two Very Different Things

By Bill Tishler

Madison Common Council District 11 Alder

At a recent District 11 Town Hall meeting we had a very informative presentation about property assessments in Madison from the City Assessor Michelle Drea and Assessment Operations Manager Scott West. One takeaway I got from their presentation is that there is a misconception that higher assessments mean we pay more in taxes. Property assessments are designed to be revenue neutral. In other words, an increase in assessment is not meant to provide increased tax base for the municipality. Here in Wisconsin, the primary basis upon which a municipality can increase their levy (or budget) is new construction value as opposed to merely changes in the market. As assessments increase, the tax rate decreases. "It's the inverse of what you might think," Drea said.

The assessor's office is responsible for property values, not the taxes. It is the city assessor's responsibility to discover, list, and value each taxable personal property account. "We rely on a few different sources for that," Drea said, "but one is good relationships with property owners. We rely on you to tell us when we're getting it wrong." If you don't agree with your property assessment, you can appeal it before the assessor during what's called the open book period that takes place each year shortly after the assessment notices are mailed to property owners. If you don't think your assessment reflects the market value of your home, you can bring evidence to them like the sale price of homes in your neighborhood or the condition of your property. However, the city assessors cannot take your ability to pay property taxes into account when assessing properties. This is just a brief overview of the presentation. You can watch a recording of the May 22 Town Hall on the District 11 Blog at <https://tinyurl.com/2mbbv1vj> along with a link to download the handout and PowerPoint. You can also find more information and resources at the city assessor webpage <http://www.cityofmadison.com/assessor/>.

Restore and Pollinate with the MHCA Green Team

By Wendy Weber and The Midvale Heights Green Team

First, a **BIG** thank you from The Green Team to those of you median adopters and other volunteers who came out for the median cleanup on Saturday, May 20! There's always work to be done and anyone is also welcome to come join us for the fall cleanup. Remember, experience is not required!

Don't miss this prairie restoration site garden tour on July 22 at 6 p.m.

Marcel Wuethrich is giving a tour of the prairie restoration site next to the parking lot of the Odana Hills Golf Course on Saturday July 22 at 6pm. The restoration was started in 2017 with the seeding of 50+ native plant species to foster habitat and nectar for pollinators. July is the peak of the blooming time for native flowers so you can expect to see lots of pollinators including many species of butterflies, native bees, bumblebees, dragonflies and a few species of nesting birds. The Midvale Heights Neighborhood Association continues to support the maintenance of this 1.5 acres gem in the neighborhood.

Here's a favorite, Butterfly Weed *Asclepias tuberosa*, which can be seen blooming late spring through the summer in the prairie restoration garden:

Speaking of pollinators, two wonderful young neighbors reminded me again that June is pollinator month! Thank you wonderful, curious and informed ones! Let's get a head start on Pollinator Month 2024. **We still have time to add even a couple of pollinator plants to our gardens and yards! Here's a reminder for all of us.**

National Pollinators Month in June brings attention to the importance of the relationship between

pollinators and plants. Pollinators are insects and animals that transfer pollen from one plant to another. This pollen transfer leads to plants being able to produce fruits, vegetables, and nuts. Pollination, thus, is a crucial method through which humans and wildlife get their food resources. Research studies estimate that about 75 percent of the food sources in the world are dependent on pollination. However, due to increased pollution and invasive non-native plantations, [pollinators like bees and wasps](#) are in danger of extinction.



Flowers and plants on the Tokay median near the intersection with Segoe Road.



Dane County Jail Consolidation: An Update

By Cecely Castillo

Dane County Board District 7 Supervisor

I've been on the County Board since 2020, and the Dane County jail consolidation project has been a topic on which I hear from constituents regularly. This issue predates my tenure, as the County Board has been working on this for decades. In 2018 it appeared the jail project was moving forward but came to a screeching halt when the architectural and engineering firms discovered the current building would not support the planned additional floor. Then came the pandemic, which brought immediate health and safety concerns for people in custody. The Sheriff's office acted swiftly and efficiently to reduce the jail population. Seeing the reduced population led many to consider what the numbers could look like with adequate community investments in diversion programs to keep people out of the system. The pandemic also led to rapidly escalating costs and the price tag for the jail consolidation plan increased dramatically.

In 2021 the Dane County district maps changed post census, through a successful nonpartisan process, and brought a lot of new faces and increased diversity to the county board. There was interest amongst members, myself included, to look at how the jail project could fit into the bigger criminal justice reform picture for our community. And personally, my prior career as a prosecutor in Chicago has led me to prioritize investing in programs to keep people from being funneled into the criminal justice system wherever we can safely and effectively do so.

During last fall's budget process the Dane County Board's Black Caucus led a compromise for a smaller jail paired with smart investments in diversion and other programs, which I supported. This passed the county board but was vetoed by County Executive Parisi. While the veto was sur-



prising, the Black Caucus regrouped and reopened conversations with Dane County Sheriff Barrett. In April a compromise took shape for the board to support an additional \$13.5 million to fund the 6-story jail project. In exchange, Sheriff Barrett agreed to remove federal in-transit inmates from the Dane County jail, advocate for moving oversight of the Huber program to Dane County Department of Human Services, reduce the use of solitary confinement, support expanding the CARES program and to support establishing a mental health court. On April 20 Dane County board voted 32 to 5 in favor of providing the additional \$13.5 million in funding to complete the jail project, with construction slated to begin this fall.