



# The Horizon

A Publication of the City of Menasha, Wisconsin

Fall 2009

## The Mayor's Corner

By Don Merkes, Mayor

As the leaves turn and there begins to be a little chill in the air, I think of all the great experiences of the last few months. Menasha is a great place to be. Where else could you participate in so many varied events within walking distance of your home? The parades, fireworks, markets, and music add that something special to this area that makes it more than just a place to hang your hat.

### Progress Throughout the Community

On the east side, there has been a raft of new business activity. Sliders new outdoor patio is one of the premiere dining spots in the valley. Lake Park Swim & Fitness has revitalized the facility with much buzz from patrons. On Oneida Street., Circle of Friends Daycare recently opened, and we are about to start a new marketing campaign for Lake Park Square with Core Development.



UW-Fox Valley recently opened its new communications art center. The intimate facility seats 361 and compares in both technology and beauty with facilities on much larger campuses.

Our downtown continues to be a center of attention. Three of our most historic buildings are under renovation. The Farm Fresh Market is set to go out with a "Boo!" with downtown trick or treating its last night, Thursday, October 29<sup>th</sup> from 4:00-7:00 PM.

In the heart of the city Third Street has just reopened. The \$2.2 million Department of Transportation project will give a new impression of Menasha as residents and visitors arrive in our community.

### Moving Beyond the Steam Utility

While there will likely be a few bumps along the way we continue our good faith effort to resolve matters with Steam Utility bondholders. The WPPI Energy Board's approval of an offer to purchase the distribution assets of the electric utility and lease them back to Menasha to operate is a substantial step forward in our efforts. This structure would also allow Menasha to retain the \$1.2

million payment in lieu of taxes currently made by Menasha Utilities to the city; where an outright sale would not. We look forward to resolving this entire matter and restoring the image of both the utility and the city.

### Protecting our Environment

From replacing inefficient lighting to the construction of the storm water retention pond to a move to single stream recycling, Menasha is continuing to take steps that will save money and reduce our environmental impacts.

### Comings and Goings

Once again we see some familiar faces go and some new people join our family.

Len Vander Wyst, our fire chief since 2003, becomes the new Appleton Fire Chief. First district alderman Jason Pamenter recently purchased a home outside the district; however, JDog Studios will remain a fixture downtown, and his input will continue to be valued.

Vince Maas has joined us as our new Park Superintendent and has hit the ground running. Pamela Captain joins us as our new City Attorney and we are very excited to have her be part of the team. We also welcome Joanne Roush as the new first district alderperson representing the island and greater downtown area.

### Stimulus Projects make for a Bright Future

We received word that our community has been awarded funding for two reconstruction projects in 2010. Reconstruction of Tayco Street from Third to Ninth, also, a joint proposal to resurface Manitowoc Road with the Town of Menasha. We just received notification that we have been awarded funding for the Manitowoc Street fire station that was put on hold a few years back. The \$1.2 million fire station will replace an aging station on Airport Road and will help equalize response times throughout the city.

### Menasha – what a great place!



## Stormwater 101

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By Amy Kester, Associate Planner

### What Is Stormwater?

When rain falls and snow melts, some water soaks directly into the ground; however, in urban areas much of the water runs off of impervious surfaces such as roofs or pavement and into the local storm drain system. This runoff is collectively known as stormwater and is carried through the storm drain system and emptied directly into our rivers and lakes, producing a negative impact on local water quality.

### Isn't Stormwater Already Clean?

Stormwater that doesn't soak into the ground travels over the landscape and into the city's network of gutters, storm drains, and pipes. En route, stormwater picks up a mixture of pollutants including sediments, bacteria, metals, toxic chemicals, motor oil, road salt, lawn fertilizers, pesticides, litter, pet waste, leaves, lawn clippings, nutrients, and other organic matter. Because it is untreated, stormwater runoff can create a multitude of environmental and health problems such as soil erosion, excessive algae and weed growth, murky brown lake and river water, destruction of aquatic life and spawning habitats, flooding, substandard drinking water, and even human health problems.

### What Can I Do?

Cumulatively, **small changes in your own household can help improve local water quality.** Here are some easy, affordable tips to help keep our water clean:

- ❖ Minimize impervious surfaces such as roofs, driveways, and parking areas
- ❖ Direct downspouts into lawns, gardens, or rain barrels, not onto paved surfaces
- ❖ Rake leaves onto the grassy terrace area for pick up, not into the street
- ❖ Limit fertilizer and pesticide use
- ❖ Clean up all pet waste
- ❖ Keep grass clippings on the lawn or use them for mulch or compost
- ❖ Direct sprinklers to water the lawn and garden only, not driveways and sidewalks
- ❖ Regularly sweep paved areas and keep them free of debris
- ❖ Wash your car on the lawn or at a car wash
- ❖ Maintain vehicles to prevent leaks and recycle oil

Remember: everything that goes down the stormwater drains along your street ends up in Lake Winnebago, the Fox River, Little Lake Butte des Morts, or similar waterway! The bottom line is that if you don't want to swim in it, fish from it, or drink it... keep it out of the stormwater system.

## Menasha Health Department Seeks Emergency Volunteers

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Here is your chance to make a difference in our community!

The Menasha Health Department is looking for volunteers for health related catastrophic emergencies for our emergency preparedness program. This kind of event may require a city wide mass vaccination or pre-medication clinic. The recent appearance of the novel H1N1 virus may warrant a possible mass clinic event if it were to increase to epidemic levels in the future. We want to be prepared because of the unknown nature of this virus.

Volunteers are needed for non-medical tasks (medical tasks also if qualified). No special skills are required. Tasks may include assisting in registration, helping clients fill out paperwork, greeters, security, and getting clients through the clinic process in a timely and orderly manner. One or two educational training sessions will be provided each year. You and your family, friends or neighbors are invited to become a part of this community effort.

Please call Loretta Kjemhus at the Menasha Health Department for an application or answers to your questions at 967-3520. You do not need to live in Menasha to become a volunteer for our health department. Thank you for your support!



## **Menasha's Farm Fresh Market off to a great start!!**

The Farm Fresh Market is all the buzz! With half of the season under our belts, we boast 19 amazing vendors selling the following:

- fresh produce, flowers and berries (Pumpkins in fall!)
- wooden benches and birdhouses
- jewelry, homemade soap, botanicals and pottery
- fresh cheese (curds too!), poultry, elk and bison meat
- fresh breads, cookies and pies
- egg rolls, rangoons and stuffed chicken wings

Located on the Main Street terrace in front of the marina, Menasha's farm fresh market has something for everyone! The market runs through Thursday October 29 from 2:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. If you have questions please contact the City of Menasha at 920-967-3600.

**Support your local growers and crafts people!!**

## **Radon Information**

By Todd Drew, City Sanitarian

Radon could be lurking in YOUR home and placing you and your family at risk for lung cancer. The U.S. Surgeon General has stated that radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer for non-smokers second only to second hand smoke. Radon is responsible for several thousand preventable lung cancer deaths each year. Breathing this invisible gas for many years in your home increases the risk of lung cancer. This odorless, colorless, tasteless radioactive gas is present naturally in the ground. It can enter homes through cracks or holes in the foundation.

The City of Menasha Health Department has tracked data obtained from local home testing. In previous testing years, results have shown that 50-60% of homes tested in the City of Menasha have radon levels above the US EPA's four picoCuries per Liter (4pCi/L) action guideline.

Radon exposure risk is based on the radon level in the home and the amount of time a person is exposed. Radon risk is based on exposures for 15-30+ years. If a home is identified to have radon levels above the EPA limit (> 4pCi/l) and occupants are exposed for many years the risk of lung cancer can be very significant. This consideration is especially important with children especially those with lower level bedrooms. If elevated results are found in a home the good news is that remediation is relatively easy. Remediation can be as simple as putting air tight seals on sump pump crocks and sealing cracks in the basement. A professional radon company may be required to install a radon reduction system in homes with higher levels. A properly installed radon reduction system can always successfully reduce radon levels below the EPA action level. A list of proficient Wisconsin Radon Contractors is available from the Menasha Health Department.

The winter months are an optimal time to conduct home radon testing because windows and doors are usually kept closed during this time. Testing is easy to perform and it is the only way to determine if a potential radon problem exists in your home. Residents should not make assumptions based on results received by surrounding homes as results can vary house to house.

The City of Menasha has received a mini-grant from the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services Radiation Protection Section. The grant dollars are provided to the State of Wisconsin by the United States Environmental Protection Agency in order to provide information and assistance with home testing.

Radon home test kits are available at the City of Menasha Health Department office for \$6.00. To obtain a kit please contact Todd Drew, RS- Sanitarian, City of Menasha Health Department at 967-3520 or come to office at 316 Racine Street. Office Hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

For additional radon information, go to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services Radon web site at [www.lowradon.org](http://www.lowradon.org).

## Energy Drinks and Health Risks

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By Loretta Kjemhus,

Scientists at Wayne State University in Detroit warn that consuming two cans of an energy drink raises systolic blood pressure by 10 points and heart rate by five to seven beats per minute. These are significant elevations for people who have heart disease, high blood pressure, and drink these drinks regularly. The culprits appear to be the high caffeine and the amino acid taurine in the drinks.

Diet drinks are not the healthy alternative. Boston University conducted a study with over 6000 people who drank only **one** sugared or diet soda/day. Even 1 soda/day (either sugared or diet) increased the risk of high blood pressure, high triglycerides and other risk factors of heart disease and diabetes.

All sugared drinks (including diet soda) and flavored milk are fermentable carbohydrates that combine with the bacteria in the mouth to produce the acid that causes tooth decay.

Stick with water, white milk, vegetable juices, non-caffeinated and non-sweetened herbal teas. Green tea may actually improve the oral health of the mouth tissues because of the antioxidant catechin that reduces inflammation. (Journal of Periodontology March 2009). Fruit juice is acceptable but only 4 ounces at a time and no more than 1 cup a day. Whole fruit is easier on the pancreas and the natural sugars are released more slowly into the blood stream compared to fruit juices. Fruit juices tend to spike the rapid release of insulin into the blood stream like sugared drinks.

### Energy Drink Recipe

- Fill any bottle (only 1/3 of bottle) with reconstituted orange juice
  - Fill the rest of the bottle with pure or filtered water (tap water is ok)
  - Put 1-2 pinches of salt into bottle and shake. (you will not taste the salt)
- \*This will supply the potassium and sodium that your body needs to replace lost electrolytes, especially during physical exertion.



### UNITED WAY DENTAL CLINIC

If you do not have dental insurance and your child qualifies for the free or reduced hot lunch/breakfast program, you may qualify for funding for your child's dental treatment if your child has **cavities**. This program is for children enrolled in the Menasha Schools grade preschool through grade 12. For more information, please call Loretta at the Menasha Health Department at 967-3520.

**THIS PROGRAM IS NOT FOR CLIENTS WHO HAVE THE STATE MEDICAID INSURANCE.**

## Welcome New City of Menasha Businesses

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Be sure to welcome these new, expanding or relocated businesses to Menasha:

**Bolio**  
216 Main Street

**Bites and Bytes**  
430 Third Street, Suite B

If you have a new or expanding business or relocated business to the City of Menasha and would like your business featured in the spring edition of *The Horizon* newsletter, please contact the Community Development Department at 967-3650.

## Home Smoke Detectors

By Neenah-Menasha Fire Rescue



A smoke detector or smoke alarm is a device that detects smoke and issues an alarm to alert nearby people that there is a potential fire. Each residence should have a minimum of one detector on each habitable level. This includes having one in your basement, located at the bottom of the stairs, and in an attic that is tall enough to allow access. To increase the chances of waking sleeping occupants most homes should have at least one smoke detector near any bedroom, ideally in a hallway as well as in the bedroom itself. It is recommended that smoke detectors not be placed directly in the kitchen because small amounts of smoke and particles generated while cooking can set them off. Instead, place them just outside the kitchen. You should also not place one in a bathroom or right outside the door of a bathroom. Moisture can cause false alarms or damage the detector. Smoke detectors should be mounted on the ceiling or at the top of a wall, several inches from the top but no more than a foot.

Common types of smoke detectors are battery operated. New construction homes may have hard-wired smoke detectors with a battery back up. Smoke detectors sold today are designed to provide a visual indication of a missing battery. One popular brand will not allow the user to close the battery door until a battery has been placed in the alarm. Remember to replace your batteries at least once a year. An easy way to remember is during daylight savings time in the spring.

Testing your smoke detector should be done once a month. An easy way to remember to test your detector is on the first day or the last day of the month. To test your smoke detector you can either push the test button or blow out a match or candle and wave near the smoke detector. It is recommended that you replace your smoke detectors every ten years so make sure you write the date you purchased your detector on the inside cover.

If you have any questions regarding smoke detectors, please call Neenah-Menasha Fire Rescue at 886-6200.

## Menasha Senior Center Receives Accreditation

By Menasha Senior Center Staff

In May, the Menasha Senior Center received accreditation through the Wisconsin Association of Senior Centers.

This accreditation is a self assessment process that satisfies a desire for self-improvement, provides direction for current and future services and programs and brings clarity to the center's operations (we "have all of our ducks in a row"). It also is an evaluation highlighting the center's accomplishments and is official recognition that MSC has met certain criteria or standards of excellence (we're "top dog").



We proudly display on our wall a plaque received from WASC, and next to it, hanging with equal pride, is a framed certificate presented to us from Mayor Don Merkes and the Common Council for achieving this statewide status. The certificate states, "Very few Senior Centers in the state of Wisconsin reach this goal, and with a two person staff this is especially impressive. Menasha is proud to have such an active, hard working senior group woven into the fabric of our community".

Special thanks go to the Accreditation Committee: Joyce Klundt, Mary Lueke and Lee Murphy, members of MSC's Committee on Aging along with Sylvia Bull, MSC Supervisor, Jeff Jorgenson, Menasha Police Dept., Sue Wisneski, City of Menasha Alderwomen and Sue Ruck, Menasha resident.

If you have any questions, please call us at 967-3530 or stop in anytime and join us for the many activities available Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. -4:00 p.m.



**Trick or Treat Hours:**  
**Saturday, October 31<sup>st</sup>**  
**4:00 – 7:00 PM**



## **Meet K-9 Gommez – The Latest Edition to the Police Department**



December 13, 2008 marked the first working day for the new police K-9 unit for the Police Department. Over the past seven months, Officer Scheppf with his partner Gommez, a 3 year old pure breed German Shepard have been working hard to make Menasha a safer place. In this short time they have seized over \$15,000 in value of marijuana, heroin, cocaine, ecstasy, drug paraphernalia, and currency. These activities have accounted for 90 arrests in approximately 120 working days.

Gommez has also proven his value in tracking suspects involved in various crimes. For example, he helped determine the path of attempted robbery suspects who fled from a fast food restaurant and found an intoxicated driver who fled from the scene of a traffic crash.

In addition to the success of the K-9 team on patrol, Gommez has also been a valued public educator. Gommez has attended a variety of public forums. He has gone to schools for presentations, such as Jefferson Elementary and recently stopped in at a children’s camp at the Fox Valley Humane Society. During these presentations they have been able to help educate the public on a police K-9 unit’s responsibilities. While serious about his police duties, Gommez’s softer side is shown in these community contacts. Gommez loves the interaction with children, allowing them to give him hugs and a pat on the back.

To prepare the unit for patrol, Officer Scheppf and Gommez completed approximately 320 hours of rigorous training to prepare for their new assignments. They also continue to train approximately 4 hours a week to maintain Gommez’s certifications and skills.

Officer Scheppf ensures that Gommez’s training doesn’t end in the classroom. With the high level of energy required from Gommez for tracking and drug detection it is imperative that exercise is a part of his daily training. Gommez loves running along side Officer Scheppf on his bicycle. His speed has even been clocked at 20mph! Gommez has also become quite ardent at shaking hands too, but that is reserved solely for the good guys!

The Police Department would once again like to thank members of the K9 Corp who so generously donated their time by raising the required funds to make this valued asset a reality. The support of the community has been outstanding. The Department is excited about the difference the team is making and looking forward to many great years of service to the community.

## City of Menasha Residents: Get Prepared for the Flu Season (H1N1 and Seasonal Flu)

Polly Anderson RN, BSN, PHN

### Tips for Staying Healthy

Take common-sense steps to limit the spread of germs. Make good hygiene a habit.

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze
- Put used tissues in a waste basket
- Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve if you don't have a tissue
- Clean your hands after coughing or sneezing; use soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- If you get the flu stay home from work, school, and social gatherings; in this way you will help prevent others from catching your illness
- Do not smoke
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth; germs often spread this way

It is always a good idea to practice good health habits.

- Eat a balanced diet
- Be sure to eat a variety of foods, including plenty of vegetables, fruits and whole grain products
- Exercise on a regular basis
- Get plenty of rest

### Vaccination

Vaccines are used to protect people from contracting a virus once a particular threat is identified. After an individual has been infected by a virus, a vaccine generally cannot help to combat it. Get a flu shot when available. For the 2009-2010 flu season there may be two flu shots offered (seasonal and H1N1). Please take advantage of both.

### Stay Informed

Knowing the facts is the best preparation. Identify sources you can count on for reliable information. If the H1N1 pandemic continues, having accurate and reliable information is critical. Reliable, accurate and timely information is available at [www.pandemic.wisconsin.gov](http://www.pandemic.wisconsin.gov).

Another source for information on pandemic influenza is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Hotline at 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636). This line is available in English and Spanish, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Look for information on the City of Menasha website: [www.cityofmenasha-wi.gov](http://www.cityofmenasha-wi.gov).

Listen to local and national radio, watch news reports on television and read your newspaper and other sources of printed or we-based information.

Talk to your health care provider or call the City of Menasha Health Department at 967-3520 if you have any questions.

### Airing of Common Council Meetings

City of Menasha Administration Committee, Board of Public Works and  
Common Council meetings are aired on Channel 2-Cable Access  
on Thursdays starting at 8:30 p.m.



**City of Menasha**  
140 Main Street  
Menasha, WI 54952

PRSRT STD  
Carrier Route Sort  
US Postage Paid  
Menasha, WI 54952  
Permit No. 39

**CAR-RT-SORT**  
Postal Customer  
Menasha, WI 54952

***Important RECYCLING INFORMATION ENCLOSED... save for future reference!!***



It's as easy as 1-2-3

Step up to the challenge and begin a lifelong habit that will improve your health, help you maintain or lose weight, enhance your mental sharpness and add energy to your day.

We are pulling for all participants to reach the goal so they can improve their health and fitness and also be eligible to win great prizes in our drawing at the end of December!

You can reach the goal of 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity at least 5 days a week in more than one way. It's as easy as 1-2-3:

- 1) Walk for 30 consecutive minutes at a brisk pace daily.
- 2) Walk for 15 consecutive minutes at a brisk pace twice per day.
- 3) Walk for 10 consecutive minutes at a brisk pace three times per day.

If you and your family are ready to kick start being physically active, join Walk to Win! Our program runs from August 27<sup>th</sup> – December 1, 2009. Register online at [www.walktowin.org](http://www.walktowin.org) beginning August 10, 2009 or pick-up a registration form at any of the four YMCA of the Fox Cities locations, Oshkosh Community YMCA or at area public health departments.

Walk to Win partners are the Public Health Departments from the cities of Appleton, Menasha, Neenah and counties of Calumet, Outagamie and Winnebago as well as the YMCA of the Fox Cities, Oshkosh Community YMCA and the Neenah Joint School District. Walk to Win 2009 is sponsored by Activate Fox Cities, YMCA of the Fox Cities, Affinity Health System, and Theda Care.