

**NORTHSIDE TRENDS**

# Parkour hits the Northside

**By Stephanie Dar**  
*The Northside News*

The Kennedy Heights Community Center held an eight week parkour program this summer for kids ranging in ages from 10 to 14. The center also offers programs year-round for the center frequenters.

Approximately 20 boys and girls from the Kennedy Heights Community Center met Wednesday afternoons over the summer to practice "parkour," a French self-defense technique based off of the idea of escaping negative situations or emergencies as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Parkour focuses on balance, timing and efficiency. The goal is to overcome obstacles that may be encountered while escaping a negative situation, be that a wall or a rock. No fighting is involved in parkour; it is solely based on the idea of escape.

Local parkour practitioners Alissa Bratz and Chad Barrett taught the kids various parkour activities such as vaulting, balancing and climbing a wall. Both Bratz and Barrett are part of

MadParkour, an organization for parkour enthusiasts and free runners.

"They definitely seemed curious about trying it out," said Bratz, founder of MadParkour. "We were very proud of all of them for working so hard, because parkour is not easy. It was great seeing them rise to new challenges and many of them overcame fears and challenges during our sessions."

Some of the kids involved in the program had never had previous experience with parkour. This included Moniesha and Mahogany, two of the girls who participated in the summer program. Some of their favorite moves included rolling, rolling over your right or left shoulder and landing on your feet while squatting, and jumping, which involved jumping off of zigzag pole.

"I really like it!" said Moniesha, when asked how she felt about parkour. "Some things were way too easy, but other things were too difficult for me, but I still tried them anyway."

According to Lisa DuChateau, the Girl's Inc. coordinator at Kennedy Heights Community Center, in addition



Photo provided by Lisa DuChateau

**A Kennedy Heights youth tries a parkour-style jump over a bike rack. Local practioners brought the French self-defense technique to Northside youth this summer.**

to the parkour summer program, the community center offers a wide variety of other resources for families in the area. These include adult programming, computer classes, a food pantry, bi-annual family events, and an Asian outreach program.

Along with adult programs, Kennedy Heights offers an after-school program for kids from early childhood through elementary school through the Boy's Group and Girls Incorporated programs, said DuChateau. Girl's Inc. in particular offers "enrichment programming" including homework help, community service learning, science, math, cultural activities and field trips.

The center intends to have block party this spring, and perhaps another parkour program this summer. For more information about parkour, visit

**Q&A WITH PARKOUR KIDS**

**1. Have you had any experience doing parkour before?**

Moniesha: No, I have not.

Mahogany: No.

**2. How did you hear about the parkour program?**

Moniesha: I heard about it when I was in the summer program.

Mahogany: I hadn't heard anything before the summer program.

**3. Would you take part in the parkour program again were it offered next summer?**

Moniesha: Yes, because I like to do athletic stuff.

Mahogany: Maybe.

**4. What was your favorite part of the program?**

Moniesha: When we would run and vault/jump over the railing.

Mahogany: When we played "Simon Says" with all the moves we learned.

**5. What was your favorite move?**

Moniesha: When we had to do the rolls. You had to roll over your right or left shoulder and land on your feet while you were squatting.

Mahogany: Standing on the zigzag pole and jumping.

**6. How do you feel about parkour in general? Was it really difficult, did you enjoy it, did you hate it, etc.?**

Moniesha: I really like it! Some things were way too easy, but other things were too difficult for me, but I still tried them anyway.

Mahogany: Yes, I liked some of the activities and some were fun.



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SCHOOLS

**EDITOR'S NOTE: NEW SECTION**

Welcome to our new Schools section. This section replaces the former East High and School and Youth sections. All of our school related stories now appear in one unified section. Our hope is that this section unifies all of our students that attend our Northside schools. We will continue to try to group together stories from one school as much as possible.

We also welcome a new column from the Madison Metropolitan School Board, currently written by board member Lucy Mathiak.

## First Book and RSVP bring books to young readers

By Char Tortorice

A steady drizzle of rain couldn't dampen the children's spirits at the tenth anniversary celebration of First Book-Dane County. First Lady Jessica Doyle opened her lovely home on the lake to pre-schoolers from Goodman Community Center and Bayview Head Start on Oct. 15 to share in the delight of reading books. The children intently listened as Mrs. Doyle read a book about a family that sings together. Then the children got to pick out a hand-made book bag crafted by RSVP-Dane County volunteer Lona Annen and fill it with four books of their choice, to take home with them, to read over and over, and treasure forever.

In 1998, RSVP was instrumental in forming the First Book-Dane County Advisory Board and has served as the sponsoring agency. Over the past 10

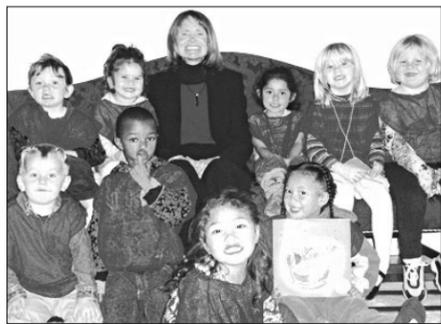


Photo provided by Char Tortorice

**Children pose with Jessica Doyle as they choose their very own books to take home.**

years, First Book-Dane County has raised nearly \$100,000 and provided over 43,000 new books to local literacy organizations, with several programs right here on the Northside receiving book grants annually. Each child in First Book programs is involved in a literacy activity and receives six to 12 new books to keep.

From  
**LUCY MATHIAK**



**MADISON METROPOLITAN SCHOOL BOARD**

**The Referendum Passed. What's next?**

Thank you to everyone who engaged – pro and con – in the conversation about our public schools. The “yes” vote meant a great deal to our neighborhoods and schools. Thank you for your vote of support at this critical time for our community.

The referendum is a beginning, not the end, and we will be coming back to the entire community for advice and positive engagement as we move forward to plan for the future of public education in our community.

The school board is not exempt from this process, and devoted the Nov. 11 meeting to the first of several conversations that will reshape how we work with district administration and the community. Superintendent Nerad suggested several changes that will focus board

committees on three core areas: student achievement and performance monitoring; planning and development; and operational support (including budget and human resources). He also proposed — and the board embraced — plans to link each board member to a specific set of schools each year. These are just a few of the ideas that we are working on to build stronger engagement between board, schools and community.

In December, the superintendent will propose the process for creating a long range strategic plan for the district. The plan will be developed through a combination of formal committees and community engagement/feedback sessions. And in early 2009, we will be holding community forums to gather input on the recently completed reports of the task forces on fine arts and on mathematics education.

The above list is just the beginning. We have a lot of work to do to address challenges facing our schools. We know that we must find new ways to work with you, and I encourage all of you to join the project to keep our neighborhood schools strong.

Research has shown that having books in the home increases literacy, and although our libraries do a great job, having books to keep adds a special component. Northsider Tanya Martinez-Knauer, coordinator of the pre-school at Goodman Community

Center, said, “The children had a great time and all they wanted to do when they got back was read the books. It was wonderful.”

To learn more about RSVP programs or First Book-Dane County, call 238-7787.

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KidStuff for kindergarten - 5<sup>th</sup> grade kids 9:45 a.m.

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**Christmas For Families Dec 13<sup>th</sup>**  
Preschool 8:30 – 11:30 Kindergarten – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade 12:30 – 3:30  
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SCHOOLS

## Shabazz students journey to Pine Ridge Trip leaves lasting, deep impression

By Emily Clinan

Shabazz City High School

On Sept. 19, 12 students and two teachers from Shabazz City High School began a journey that we will remember for the rest of our lives. Our destination was Pine Ridge, S.D., home of the reservation of the Oglala Lakota Sioux.

Pine Ridge is the poorest county in the U.S., with an 85 percent unemployment rate. When we learned this, we decided that we needed to take action. The spring and summer before our week-long trip, we read three books to help us learn about reservations and give us a background of Native American life and culture.

In class this fall, we discussed the many injustices indigenous people have faced and continue to face to this day.

When it came time to visit the reservation, we worked and lived with Re-Member, a non-profit organization to help the people of the Pine Ridge Reservation. During the week, we built a porch, skirted two trailers, laid a floor, cut firewood to heat a home, painted cupboards, installed soffit and picked up litter at two families' homes. Aside from working on the homes, we had Lakota speakers each night who taught us a remarkable amount about Pine Ridge history, as well as the problems that the reservation faces today.

This trip really changed our lives. Seeing the Third World-like poverty



Photo by Emma Urbas

**A Shabazz student paints a house on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Twelve students and two teachers spent a memorable week with the Ogalala Lakota Sioux in September.**

has made us appreciate things that we often take for granted, such as a front door and indoor plumbing. It has also made us aware of the extreme poverty that exists in this wealthy country.

If you are interested in learning more about Re-Member and the Pine Ridge Reservation, please visit [www.Re-Member.org](http://www.Re-Member.org).

## Shabazz provides unique learning experiences for students and community



Photo by Dana Slowiak

**Writer Erykka Fox shows off student art work to Ald. Satya Rhodes-Conway while touring Shabazz as Principal for a Day.**

By Erykka Fox

Shabazz City High School

I asked Satya Rhodes-Conway what she first noticed about the Shabazz community.

"Many things," she replied. And, "The couches."

I laughed. Everyone notices our couches.

Shabazz-City High School offers its students and fellow community members more than a place to sit and relax. Rhodes-Conway, who represents District 12 on Madison's Common Council, realized this upon visiting our Shabazz community as part of Madison Metropolitan School District's (MMSD) Principal for a Day program. Having attended an alternative high school herself, she knew that her experience would be very unique from those visiting Madison's traditional high schools.

Rhodes-Conway accurately described Shabazz's atmosphere as relaxed and noted that the students referred to their teachers by their first names. She had the privilege of visiting one of Shabazz's most defining classes, C.L.A.S.S., which stands for Community, Leadership, Action and Solutions in Schools. C.L.A.S.S. is one of Shabazz's service learning classes that allows students to receive credit for participating in community service. C.L.A.S.S. typically acts as a welcoming committee for new and prospective Shabazz students, as well as an outlet for students to give feedback on relevant matters by attending MMSD Student Senate meetings.

During Rhodes-Conway's visit, C.L.A.S.S. students gave enthusiastic responses to her questions about the school. "How do schools fit into the Madison community and work within the community?" she asked.

In response, students and teachers were quick to respond with descriptions Shabazz's service learning classes, including PGT, which stands for Project Green Teen. PGT is a rigorous semester-long set of classes which are geared towards teaching students about environmental consciousness, combining community activism with applied knowledge. PGT students take a week-long trip where they improve the lives of community members by performing various duties.

Shabazz students aren't shy when discussing the spectacular things their school does for them and others.

"The community we live in is amazing," said Carly Kubly, a sophomore. "Every school should be like ours."

"I love it," said Julia Rowe, a junior. "I like how it's different from the overcrowded, intolerant and bad vibes of mainstream schools."

Though most Shabazz students would be quick to remark that every educational program should mirror Shabazz's, Rhodes-Conway, when asked, "What did you dislike about our school?" replied, "I don't think it'd be for everyone."

Shabazz — whose population is estimated at 150 students — is a smaller, very tight-knit community. This is one of the reasons why Shabazz has been able to do what it has done for so long.

While interviewing Rhodes-Conway, I surmised that she was impressed by what she saw that day. I asked, "Do you consider Shabazz valuable to the community?"

"Absolutely," she replied. And it was then I knew that she was. I believed she was very impressed by our students, and that several others felt the same way.

## Sherman Middle School Pantry helps students and families

In an effort to help support students and their families, Sherman Middle School is starting a food and clothing pantry. Food and clothing will be distributed to Sherman families as needs are identified by the school's social worker and guidance staff.

The pantry will be stocked by quarterly food and clothing drives at the school as well as donation points at local businesses such as the Heritage Credit Union, Maurice's at East Towne Mall, TrendSetters Salon and St. Paul Lutheran Church. Northside businesses and residents interested in supporting the pantry through a donation can call Principal Hernandez at 204-2100 for additional information.

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## Mendota volunteers wanted!

Would you like to spend your extra time volunteering at Mendota Elementary School? During the school day, the Schools of Hope Program places tutors in classrooms to work one-on-one with students grades kindergarten to fifth. After school, the Safe Haven PLUS Program places tutors with groups of Kindergarten to second grade students. Both programs focus on improving literacy and math skills of students that need extra support.

For more information please contact:

**Dominika Malisz**  
Volunteer Coordinator  
Schools of Hope  
Tel: 204-7864  
[dmalisz@madison.k12.wi.us](mailto:dmalisz@madison.k12.wi.us)

**Michelle Becker**  
Volunteer Coordinator  
Safe Haven PLUS  
Tel: 204-7864  
[mlbecker1@gmail.com](mailto:mlbecker1@gmail.com)

## Purgolders shine in fall sports

### Girls teams lead the way to State

Jill Jokela

Another fall high school sports season has drawn to a close with completion of competition in girls golf, girls tennis, boys and girls cross country, boys soccer, boys and girls volleyball, football, and girls swimming. While all the teams competed hard, improved over the course of the season, and represented East proudly and well, special accolades are in order for those teams and athletes who reached the ultimate goal of competing at State this season.

The girls definitely led the way this fall with three East teams qualifying for their respective State tournaments.

It started with the girls golf team, which won the Big 8 conference regular season title with a record of 8-1, and went on to win regionals and sectionals and qualify for State as a team for the first time since 1991. The State team included seniors Angelina Parrinello, Grace Liu, and Melanie Whitcomb, sophomore Alex Douglas, and freshman Emma Taschwer. Just a few years ago, East didn't even have enough players to post a legal score, so this year's performance was truly a "Miracle on Spikes"! Congratulations to Coach Mark Buffat and all his fine girl golfers!

Next came the girls tennis team, who had an equally impressive season, qualifying four girls for Individual State and also qualifying as a team for Team State for the ninth consecutive year. Individual State qualifiers included Mara Weiner and Paige Schaefer in singles, and Hilary Schroeder and Anna Spiekerman in doubles. Joining these four girls for Team State were freshmen singles players Jessie Rodgers and Heidi Thiel and the doubles teams of Avery Young/Nellie Mitchell and Kelsey Kyle/Leah Schaefer. The girls put up a good fight against cross-town rival Madison West before falling 4-3 in the first round of the Team State tournament. Congratulations to all the girls and Coach Jamey Vorlander, who has stepped down from the coaching ranks after a very successful run as the East girls and boys tennis coach. Thanks, Coach Vorlander!

Representing the boys this year, sophomore Gabe Heck had one heck of a cross country season under the tutelage of first year coach Nancy Gritt, who formerly coached at St. Norbert College. The cross country



Photo by Dan Lickel

**East High girl tennis player Hilary Schroeder takes a flying power shot at the Team State tournament.**

boys had a successful season with strong finishes in several meets, culminating with Heck's seventh place finish at Sectionals to qualify for State. Heck ended up finishing seventeenth overall at the boys state cross country meet, posting some of the fastest times in East history next to running icon Gabe Jennings. Congratulations, Heck and Coach Gritt!

Last, but certainly not least, the East girls swim team returned to State this year as defending champions and came home with a well-deserved runner up trophy after some of the most amazing performances in State swimming history. The relay team of Aja Van Hout, Ivy Martin, Becca Soderholm and Ruby Martin broke all-time State records in both the 200 and 400 free-style relays. Van Hout lowered the State record in the 500 free-style by an amazing six seconds and narrowly missed setting a record in the 200 Individual Medley. Martin won the 50 free-style and 100 free-style with the second-fastest times in State history. Rounding out the team competing for East at State were Mara Lynch, Madie King and Chelsea Soderholm. Congratulations to Coach Matt Matteson and all his swimmers for an amazing and memorable team performance!



## East High Pride ~ Own It!



From  
**ALAN  
HARRIS**



**EAST HIGH PRINCIPAL**

### Dividends of Giving

In the fall, the Foundation for Madison Public Schools announced that East High was the first school to cross the \$100,000 mark in our endowment account. It is something the community should very proud of as it is a result of generous donations from a broad range of community members. Parents have made donations, staff from all aspects of the school have made donations and a broad range of community members have contributed.

As a result, annually we have \$2,200 dollars available to award teachers and students who submit grant applications to start innovative programs and projects. This year, a committee of two teachers, one community member and one student met and reviewed the

applications. It was a terrific discussion about goals, priorities and how the money available could best be distributed.

We are proud to announce that two grants were awarded. Our Family and Consumer Education Department is implementing a new culinary arts program that will allow students to complete internships in commercial culinary arts. The endowment grant will fund additional equipment for this innovative training. We also funded the development of a student leadership group to focus on alcohol and other drug addiction (AODA) issues.

In the coming months you will hopefully see information about giving to the Madison Foundation for Public Schools. It is important to me that you know the money donated is used to improve opportunities for students. As our endowment increases, the annual amount available in grants increases as well. We are grateful for the community's generosity it continues to provide unique opportunities for East students.

## East High Math News

By Cynthia Chin

### A Penny for Your Keystrokes

The East High School Graphing Calculator Rental Fund is now a registered charity on [www.GoodSearch.com](http://www.GoodSearch.com) (a Yahoo-powered search engine) and [www.GoodShop.com](http://www.GoodShop.com). Advertisers and on-line merchants affiliated with these sites donate about a penny per search and a fixed percentage of purchases to charities of the user's choice. Visit the site for more information about searches that qualify (and are considered to be "in good faith").

To make a donation to the East calculator fund, enter "East High School—Madison" at the prompt "Who do you GoodSearch for?". True enthusiasts may wish to change their browser default search bars to Good Search at [www.goodsearch.com/Toolbars.aspx](http://www.goodsearch.com/Toolbars.aspx)

Thank you for trying out this service and encouraging friends to do so if you are pleased with the results. Every penny helps!

### Engineering Club

Our junior chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) has 29 members and has already taken one industry field trip and made four UW campus visits, including the opening session of a statewide bridge-building competition. Interested students of all backgrounds can see Ms. Chin, Mr. Cox or Mr. Lyons about joining the club.

Thirteen high school students attended the NSBE Fall Regional Conference in Detroit, Mich., accompanied by their collegiate mentors. This group included a robotics competition team—Xavier Buesing, Andrew Goldsby, Tenzin Khedup, Jonathan Martin—and a Science Fair presenter, Kiki Joseph. The robot team, coached by teacher Kelly Cox, won gold medals and will represent the entire Midwest Region in national competition this spring. Joseph's project on fuel efficiency won second place and she is also eligible to present at the national level.

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**POLICE**

*From*  
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**NORTH DISTRICT POLICE**

**Greetings from the North Police District!**

Throughout 2008, we have been working with stakeholders in the Brentwood Village Neighborhood area in an effort to decrease the amount of quality of life crime occurring in this area. While some progress was made, I felt that we needed to assign additional resources to this area to allow for more consistent enforcement and, more importantly, to help establish lines of communication with the residents living in this area.

Chief Wray supported the creation of a limited term position, which we refer to as a Neighborhood Intervention Officer. The purpose of the position is to promptly address issues emerging in the neighborhood to prevent the situation from becoming so unstable as to

require the full time presence of a Neighborhood Officer.

I am thrilled to announce that Police Officer Susie Gonzalez, one of our North District officers, volunteered for this position. She has approximately seven years of patrol experience with the Madison Police Department. She has primarily worked the night shift in the North, East and Central districts.

PO Gonzalez has many goals she would like to accomplish for the Brentwood Village Neighborhood. She has already made connections and change is underway for creating more street and park lighting in the area. She recently attended the 2008 Mayor's Roundtable as well as attended the Brentwood Village Neighborhood Association Landlord Liaison Committee meeting. PO Gonzalez has facilitated getting the city attorney, as well as other city officials, involved in certain projects to help benefit quality of life issues, pertaining to the Brentwood Village Neighborhood. She is eager to create a working relationship with area landlords/property owners to develop a consistent response plan, reference problem apartments

and complexes.

PO Gonzalez is also coordinating efforts and sharing information to the MPD task force, North Community Policing Team, patrol and North command staff. PO Gonzalez has hopes to write a police newsletter to share with the community, regarding news specifically pertaining to the Brentwood neighborhood. She hopes to incorporate a marketing campaign, as well, to let the neighborhood know that police have a zero tolerance for criminal behavior and are eager to improve the quality of life for the Brentwood Village Neighborhood.

It is my belief that this neighborhood is fortunate to have so many residents, property owners, and other Northside community stakeholders who are willing to get involved in helping improve the quality of life in this area. Working together, I am confident in our ability to assure that this remains a safe and vibrant neighborhood for many years to come.

*Capt. McLay can be reached at  
cmclay@cityofmadison.com  
or 245-3652*



**North District Police Officer Susie Gonzalez has been assigned to the Brentwood neighborhood as the Neighborhood Intervention Officer. PO Gonzalez is working intensively to build relationships with residents and property owners trying to stabilize the neighborhood.**

**REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY**  
**CONTACT THE MADISON POLICE**  
**DISPATCHER**  
**CALL 911 OR 255-2345**  
**(NON-EMERGENCY)**

**Don't take any chances!**  
*Follow these tips for safe home heating*

**By Lori Wirth**  
*Madison Fire Department*

The troubled economy has firefighters concerned that more people will put themselves and their families at risk as they try to stay warm with fewer dollars to pay for fuel.

Although there's been a decline in the number of home fires related to heating equipment since 1980, heating is still a leading cause of home fires and home fire deaths.

As your neighbors on the Northside, we at Firehouse #10 want to remind you to take special care to heat your home safely.

- ✓ Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from heating equipment, such as the furnace, fireplace, wood stove, or portable heater.
  - ✓ Only use heating equipment that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory, like UL.
  - ✓ Never use your oven for heating.
  - ✓ Have a qualified professional install stationary space heating equipment, water heaters or central heating equipment according to the local codes and manufacturer's instructions.
  - ✓ Maintain heating equipment and chimneys by having them cleaned and inspected annually by a qualified professional.
  - ✓ Turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.
  - ✓ For fuel burning space heaters, always use the proper fuel as specified by the manufacturer
  - ✓ If you have a fireplace, make sure it has a sturdy screen to prevent sparks from flying into the room and burn only dry, seasoned wood. Allow ashes to cool before disposing in a metal container, which is kept a safe distance from the home.
  - ✓ For wood burning stoves, install chimney connectors and chimneys following manufacturer's instructions or have a professional do the installation.
  - ✓ Make sure all fuel-burning equipment is vented to the outside to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.
  - ✓ Install and maintain carbon monoxide (CO) alarms to avoid the risk of CO poisoning.
  - ✓ If you smell gas in your gas heater, do not attempt to light the appliance. Turn off all the controls and open doors and windows. Call a gas service person.
  - ✓ Test smoke alarms at least once a month.
- Please keep your home safe this winter!

**EXPERIENCE THE JOY OF NOT PAYING TAXES.**

If you're in the 25% tax bracket, a tax-free North Carolina Medical Center Univ. Health System bond yielding 6.50%\* pays as much after-tax income as a taxable bond yielding 8.50%.

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\*Yield effective 11/18/2008, subject to availability. Yield and market value may fluctuate if sold prior to maturity, and the amount you receive from the sale of these securities may be more than, less than or equal to the amount originally invested. Bond investments are subject to interest rate risk such that when interest rates rise, the prices of bonds can decrease and the investor can lose principal value. Any bond called prior to maturity may result in reinvestment risk for the bond owner. May be subject to state and local tax. May be subject to alternative minimum tax (AMT). Municipal bonds may have original issue discount.

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**NEWS & VIEWS FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS**

*From*  
**SATYA RHODES-CONWAY**



**DISTRICT 12 ALDERPERSON**

**Dear Neighbors,**

As hopeful as I am about change coming at the federal and state levels, I'm thinking local.

I'm thinking about introducing myself to the woman who just moved in down the block. About baking cookies to share at holiday parties. About going to my neighborhood association meeting and working with my neighbors to make this part of the city a better place. I'm thinking about the people across our neighborhoods who take a moment to stop and talk, lend a hand, or keep an eye out. That's the kind of local I'm thinking.

I'm thinking about buying local. Local produce, local crafts, local beer, local chocolate.... Times are tough, but when I do spend money, I want it to help people here in Madison. There are plenty of Northside businesses nearby

(let's see – my yoga studio, my chiropractor, my hairdresser, my favorite cafe and favorite Italian restaurant, my hardware store, my supermarket...) and plenty more home grown Madison businesses to choose from. We've had a great conversation lately about how to support and grow our Northside business community, and I look forward to building on that. That's the kind of local I'm thinking.

I'm thinking about giving locally, giving my time and my money. There are a lot of people less fortunate than I here in Madison, and here in our neighborhood. So I'm thinking about giving locally, to a community center, the Timebank, a food drive or any of the other local organizations that help people. I've done what I can on the Council to support the infrastructure that serves people in need, but it comes down to each of us, as individuals, caring enough about each other; caring enough about our neighborhoods and our community, to support that infrastructure. That's the kind of local I'm thinking.

*Ald. Rhodes-Conway can be reached at 242-4426 or district12@cityofmadison.com*

*From*  
**MICHAEL SCHUMACHER**



**DISTRICT 18 ALDERPERSON**

This year's fuel costs are up 30 percent from \$5.9 to \$7.9 million; investment revenues down by \$1.25 million; building permit revenues down by \$1.5 million; debt maintenance up by \$4 million; and health insurance costs up by 7 percent or \$1.6 million. Despite all these woes, the property tax is going up by less than 3.3 percent or \$59 on the average house. How are we doing this? The City is investing in improvements and partnerships resulting in efficiencies and better or more service for our community:

The Madison Water Utility is exploring an Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) technology to improve billing, reduce staff cost, monitor for expensive water leaks, and collect usage data to design effective conservation policies. A low flush toilet rebate program is in the making.

We launched Alert Madison to inform residents about snow emergen-

cies, sidewalk snow and ice removal, snow plowing, alternate side parking, and winter activities. Please register at [www.cityofmadison.com/winter](http://www.cityofmadison.com/winter) to receive text messages/e-mails including info on Metro Transit rider and other weather alerts.

A new Neighborhood Indicators program will collect information relating to the quality of life at the neighborhood level. Such geographic-specific, timely data will give us a better understanding of our neighborhoods, help us tailor solutions, identify emerging trends, and give us early warning signs to address problems more effectively and less expensively.

The City partnered with Habitat for Humanity of Dane County to purchase 5.8 acres of land off Northport Drive (old Moose Lodge) with plans to construct at least 16 affordable homes, reserving five lots for market sale and one lot for commercial use, and build a neighborhood park.

Lastly, we approved a new 10 year lease with the Mallards that include commitments for stadium renovations starting at the end of the 2009 season.

Your City at work. Happy Holidays!

*Ald. Schumacher can be reached at 242-1779 or district18@cityofmadison.com*

**Upcoming Common Council Meetings:**

January 6 ~ January 20 ~ February 3

Tuesdays at 6:30 pm in Rm. 201 at the City-County Bldg. 210 MLK, Jr. Blvd.



*Happy Holidays from  
the Northside News!*



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*From*  
**DAVE CIESLEWICZ**



**MAYOR OF MADISON**

This fall, I was proud to announce the launch of the Neighborhood Indicators Pilot Project.

The Neighborhood Indicators Project is a battery of more than forty characteristics and indicators of neighborhood health that will help us better understand Madison's neighborhoods, tailor solutions to a neighborhood's particular characteristics and spot problems early so that we can address them quickly and effectively.

The goal of the current pilot project is to demonstrate the usefulness and look of a potential full scale system, while soliciting feedback from users to refine and improve the package for its full scale citywide version.

My 2009 operating budget, which the Common Council adopted, reduces neighborhood planning grants in order to grow the Neighborhood Indicators Project citywide next year.

Through Neighborhood Indicators, we will be able to see early warning signs of stress so that we can evaluate the problem and react early on - by spending a small amount of resources in the short term to avoid major expenditures in the long term.

When developing a new program or allocating funding, this project can also provide us with the details and direction to better target our limited resources. Over time, as more data is compiled, these numeric values can be used to illustrate trends.

Until now, the City of Madison relied on data only available for large geographies or Census data only available once every 10 years. For the first time, the Neighborhood Indicators Project provides both timely and accurate information about Madison's neighborhoods.

If you'd like to view the pilot data and give us any feedback, please visit [www.planning.wisc.edu/madison/Index.html](http://www.planning.wisc.edu/madison/Index.html).

*Mayor Cieslewicz can be reached at 266-4611 or mayor@cityofmadison.com*

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NEWS & VIEWS FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS

From  
**PAUL  
RUSK**



**DISTRICT 12 SUPERVISOR**

**2009 Budget Passes**

The \$493 million budget passed in one evening about midnight with prompt County Executive approval. This was my most difficult budget. As the economy declines, resources decrease and demand for government services increases. The board was fiscally disciplined and ended up with a 4.63 percent increase using the County Executive's inflation plus growth formula. Taxpayers will see a modest increase in the county portion of tax bills which is appropriate in a recession.

Even with our limitations I'm pleased we were able to address some ongoing public safety problems. Based on the first phase of the independent 911 Center audit, nine new positions (eight communicators and a manager) were added. Early next year we'll have further recommendations in the management, training and technology areas. It appears overly complicat-

ed protocols have contributed to recent errors. The auditor said our 911 center is well-run and that the public should have confidence in its overall operations. In this past quarter a new healthy baby was delivered with 911 assistance, and nine individuals were saved through prompt emergency medical service. Although errors make headlines and further changes are needed, there is some good news.

My Public Protection and Judiciary Committee was responsible for an extensive amendment outlining how to proceed with further criminal justice enhancements. The budget adds a total of five new child protective services workers to help protect children. A one percent cost of living increase for human service agencies and substantial dollars for park and wetland purchases are included.

The County's budget process works well because much of the work is done in committee. Virtually no floor amendments adding cost end up passing. I wish we could do more, but by directing your dollars prudently we can save money over time while increasing services needed in tough economic times.

*Supv. Rusk can be reached at 249-9667 or rusk@co.dane.wi.us*

From  
**DOROTHY  
WHEELER**



**DISTRICT 18 SUPERVISOR**

**The County Budget**

On Nov. 17, the budget passed the County Board. Most of the work is done in committees that meet in public with stakeholders attending. I am a member of the Health and Human Needs Committee whose programs account for more than half the budget. The county has wide ranging programs for citizens who have special needs providing long term care. The County also provides mental health treatment, Alcohol or Drug Abuse (AODA) treatment and family supports that are needed to keep children safe.

Leading up to budget time, some of our POS (purchase of service) agencies lobbied for a raise in pay for their workers because they hadn't received a raise in years and were way behind on the COLA (cost of living allowance) which means, as inflation continued to climb, their salaries were

flat. One of the supervisors on Health and Human Needs answered the call and wrote a budget amendment to give these workers a one percent raise. Representatives lobbied hard with e-mails to us supervisors and by coming before our committee to tell us of their plight and how this small amount of money would help their agencies. I personally was very moved by their testimony. I am very happy this amendment passed the County Board.

The other powerful message we received was from the social workers in Child Protective Services. These social workers are stressed out from handling very tough cases that aren't easily solved so their caseload must be limited. This staff keeps getting many new, difficult cases but not more staff to handle them so our committee went a step further than the County Executive by approving three additional social workers to the three she had already approved. Those new social workers should ease the situation in Child Protective Services, which keeps children safe.

*Supv. Wheeler can be reached at 244-4711 or dorothywheeler@tds.net*

From  
**KATHLEEN M.  
FALK**



**DANE COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

**Opportunity Knocks After Fall Election**

Campaign signs are down and recorded political phone calls have stopped. Election '08 has come and gone and our new leaders have such great opportunities in the New Year.

Changes in leadership at both the state and federal level bring new hope for important public policy conversations that are long overdue.

New initiatives will be tough to come by in state and federal budgets, but given the new direction I'm confident basic services and needs will come first.

With new leaders at the federal level this could mean help paying heating bills for those falling behind. It means helping folks facing foreclosure and financial ruin get back on their feet. There's new hope for national health care and the return of grant programs to help local communities put more cops on the street and improve infrastructure like roads and bridges.

Those dollars will bolster our ongoing efforts in county government to protect public safety and human service programs, while helping cap property taxes.

Demand for public services is increasing because of the current economic downturn. That same difficult financial climate makes it tougher for families to pay more. That's why my 2009 county budget puts more into our shared priorities of public safety and human services at a cost of around only \$2 more on the average home.

At the state level new leadership means a fresh chance to change smoking laws in public places. There's new hope families across Wisconsin will be able to breathe clean air when they're out enjoying a Friday fish fry.

It means a greater focus on toughening Wisconsin's lax drunk driving laws and countering a culture that makes us less safe.

This fall's election offers our nation and state the opportunity to re-focus on what matters most for working families, kids, parents and grandparents. That's a New Year we can all look forward to.

*County Executive Falk can be reached at 266-4114 or falk@co.dane.wi.us.*

**Upcoming County Board of Supervisors Meetings**  
December 18 ~ January 22 ~ February 5  
All County Board meetings are on Thursdays at 7 pm in Rm. 201 at City-County Bldg. 210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.

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