

PARKS & RECREATION

Madison's Northside hidden park gems

By Jacqueline O'Reilly – Madison Parks Intern

Northsiders are a lucky bunch: Of all of Madison, it is this neighborhood that features the highest concentration of parks. Within this green space are gems all Madisonians have come to explore and love, but there exist other, lesser-known features at these parks that are sure to please. From a park that is perfect for teaching your child to ride a bike, to a soon-to-be new playground, to a historical home, there exist numerous hidden gems on the Northside.

Sherman Village

Oftentimes all an afternoon with the kids needs to make it memorable is some time spent in the great outdoors. Two fun and unique parks can serve as the backdrop for just that.

Dubbed "Mushroom Park" by area children because of the park's unique structure, Sherman Village offers an array of amenities sure to amuse Madisonians young, old and somewhere in between. Located at 1226 Delaware Blvd., the just-over four acres of green space is marked with a playground, a full basketball court and an expansive open-play area.

A couple blocks west and surrounded on all sides by sidewalk, Northland Manor Park is the perfect spot to teach your child how to ride a bike. Once your son or daughter is capable of riding on their own, you can stand in the center of the park and watch them go 'round and 'round without having to worry about cars or crossing the street.

An interesting history tidbit is that Northland Manor Park includes a kettle pond. The pond is resultant from melted glaciers that once drifted over Madison. Identified from old photos, the pond sits on the northwest corner of the park underneath the park's tennis courts. Park users will notice that parts of the court are lower than others – and a little wetter. The courts are being resurfaced, a project that will be wrapped up by mid-June.

Caretaker's House

Most know that Cherokee Marsh is Dane County's largest wetland, home

to a spectacular variety of plants and wildlife, but on the property also sits a unique building: the Caretaker's House.

Situated on acreage originally owned by the Fauerbach family, Peter Fauerbach fondly recalls the year he spent living in the house with his family in the early 1960s.

"It's where I learned to hunt," he said. "Just surrounded by wildlife: ducks, deer. It's always been a favorite place to go."

When the Park Division acquired the marsh land in the 1960s, the house came along with it. The once hunting lodge's purpose was converted to house park employees responsible for looking after the marsh, including closing and opening the park's gate, cleaning the public restrooms and continued upkeep of trails. Over the years, the space has housed four different caretakers, including Dan Gill, the house's current resident.

"I enjoy the seclusion of the house," he said. "Especially in Madison, living in the woods and being involved with the natural surroundings is nice."

Because of its initial intended purpose, the Caretaker's House has a very traditional cabin feel, including a large stone, wood-burning fireplace. Over the years, however, numerous additions have been made, with each room constructed and finished with a different type of wood, including oak, pine, maple, hickory and walnut. What was once the full structure is now only the space of a single room. that can fit little more than a pool table.

Additionally, from the house stems a path down to the water. Once paved with bottlecaps from the Fauerbach Brewery, decades of limestone and fresh gravel have covered them up — though a few have maneuvered their way to the surface. Still, along the path is a conical effigy mound that dates back more than a thousand years. While this is a unique feature, please keep in mind it is the private residence of a city employee.

Cherokee Park

Situated on the edge of the Yahara River, Cherokee Park has been a beloved place for parents to bring their little ones for some quality activity time outdoors. Located at 1000 Burning Wood Way, the park boasts a beautiful vista, large open space, canoe launch and ample place for your family to play.

Because the space is a filled marshland so close to the shoreline, the park, and specifically the playground, continually settles. This leads to soggy ground and equipment damage, a problem the parks department has been addressing over the past year with a reconstruction effort.

Thanks in large part to more than \$25,000 donated by Northside neighbors, the Madison Parks Division will be relocating the playground to higher ground near the street, a project slated to be completed this year. Still open to the public, however, Cherokee Park is a picturesque place to take the children as we enjoy the transition into summer!

Explore Madison's Northside parks on a bike!

With summer just around the corner and Ride the Drive coming to the Northside this summer, there is officially no better way to explore your local green space than atop two wheels.

But there is no need to plan a tour yourself — we have you covered! While this is not the Ride the Drive route, this approximately four-mile route, roughly 25 minutes of biking, includes eight parks for you to hop off at, explore, take photos of or simply relax in.

A Begin your tour in beautiful South Cherokee Marsh.

Start at the little known boat launch and ride through Dane County's largest wetland to observe first-hand the wide array of plant and wildlife. Be sure to return to the marsh another day to hike its over three miles of trail.

B Riding south, you will come upon Northland Manor Park.

Take time to play tennis or ride around the sidewalks that surround the park.

C Heading east, you will come across Sherman Village Park: a perfect spot for you to rest your legs and the kids to enjoy the playground. If you are feeling active, play basketball on the park's courts.

Pedal the Parks



Ready for an outdoor adventure? It's easy! Grab your camera, hop on your bike, follow the route below, and take photos with the objects or landmarks mentioned in the Photo Scavenger Hunt clues.

Northside Advanced Route

4.1 miles, approx. 25 minutes of biking
This route uses some on-street paths. It is not recommended for young children or beginning bikers.



For detailed route directions:
<http://fg.co/maps/tds28>
<http://www.cityofmadison.com/bikeMadison/planTrip/interactivemap.cfm>



DE Going further east then south, the next two parks you will pass are Linden Grove and Whitetail Ridge.

An aptly named park, the former features a linden grove on which very fragrant flowers will bloom in late June and early July. If there is a soccer fanatic in your family, be sure to bring a ball to Whitetail as there is a full soccer field available for resident use.

F Biking back west, Lake View Heights Park will be the next stop on your ride.

The perfect place to stop for lunch, Lake View Heights includes a fireplace, ideal for a summertime barbeque.

G Ride west for a few more minutes and you will pedal onto Lake View Hill Park.

A 41-acre conservancy and historical park owned by Dane County, the on-site buildings are on the National Register of Historic Places.

H Travel northwest for the final park of your tour: Wheeler Heights Park.

One of the city's smallest parks, it is the best place to sit down and sip some water after your adventuresome bike ride.

For more information on cycling in Madison, visit cityofmadison.com/parks.



Mary Lou Dzick and Bev Monigal have been walking together in Warner Park, five days a week for the past five years. "It's a great place to walk," Mary Lou said. They should know. After five years, they've walked over 1950 miles. If they'd headed west, instead of going round and round, they'd be just 100 miles shy of San Francisco by now.

An apple a day and a park for play

By Trish O'Kane
Northside News

You go get your annual physical. Then you wish you hadn't. The doctor reports that your blood pressure is up and your cholesterol levels are borderline dangerous. In a year you've gained 10 more pounds.

"Where do you live?" the doctor asks as she pulls up a map of the city on her laptop. She starts scribbling on a prescription pad: "A one-hour dose of Vitamin P (as in "park") five times a week in the form of a leisurely walk in Warner Park. Try a few jumping jacks while passing through the meadow or a pull-up on the exercise bars behind Sled Hill. Breathe deeply while walking. Stay focused on the green trees and plants."

Nationwide, more doctors are writing prescriptions like this fictional one because scientists have now measured and verified what 19th century park planners like Frederick Olmsted long suspected: city parks are vital to human health. The Center for Disease Control is establishing "prescription trails" for walking in communities with high rates of diabetes. The National Wildlife Federation recently launched a campaign to guarantee one "green hour" a day of unstructured play to all children. And public health experts are recommending

that volunteer "health guides" be stationed in parks to show people how to use natural spaces.

Remember taking a walk to "clear your head"? Well, that is exactly what you are doing. According to brain research, an outdoor experience can strengthen the right side of your brain and improve functioning of the entire organ. Do you just somehow "feel better" after a walk? Maybe it's because you are better. Medical researchers have measured improved immune system functioning after a person takes a walk.1

Scientists are measuring how trees, vegetation and natural green spaces calm our parasympathetic nervous systems, boost our immune systems and combat depression. Living near green areas can help us live longer and healthier lives overall, with lower rates of obesity and diabetes, according to large medical studies controlled for income.2 Hospital researchers have found that patients with even just a window view of a tree heal faster, require less medication and suffer fewer complications from surgery.3 Prison researchers reached the same conclusions: inmates with green cell views use prison clinics less frequently than inmates without a green view.4

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PARKS & RECREATION

The hidden park: Cherokee Marsh Mendota Unit

By Dana Erlandsen

Many people think of Cherokee Marsh as the wetlands visible to the north of Highway 113. Not as many people realize that an entire unit of the Marsh lies south of Highway 113, just off the northeastern coast of Lake Mendota.

Cherokee Marsh Mendota Unit consists of 121 acres of wood savannah, uplands and marsh. The north border is Westport Road and part of the railroad tracks; the east border is the lake and the Lighthouse Bay condominium development; the west is Green Avenue, Beilfuss Drive and Knutson Drive; the south border is Sauthoff Road.

Most of the Mendota Unit is wetland that is inaccessible to hikers. Although the wetlands may be viewed by paddlers, there is no dock or beach for watercraft.

However, the wooded portion of the park offers interesting short hikes. Hiking trails may be entered at three different points along Sauthoff Road, although there is no parking for cars there. Those arriving by car may park on Beilfuss Drive next to the entry point in Westport Meadows Park, or on Meadow Valley Drive next to Meadow Ridge Park.

Most of the wooded land in the Mendota unit was grazed or cultivated until the 1980s, when the City of Madison acquired it. Ten years later, the City also bought the land for the Meadow Ridge Park and Meadow Ridge Conservation Park, the striking hill and prairie just south of the Mendota Unit. This protected the uplands of the lake and marsh, as well as connecting to the state hospital grounds to the south.



Photo submitted by Dana Erlandsen

A view of Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park can be seen from Sauthoff Road.

A nice way to start a hike in the Mendota Unit is to park on Meadow Valley Drive, next to the playground for Meadow Ridge Park. One can pause to admire the small park (with its large modern jungle gym, swings, basketball court and picnic table), the nearby retention pond and the grassy plains that are perfect for kite flying.

Walk up the path to the top of the large sandstone hill that is the heart of the Meadow Ridge Conservation Park. There is a stunning view across Lake Mendota from the hilltop. Prior inhabitants enjoyed this view as well — the area near Veith Avenue was the site of a Native American village, and a restored Native American bear

mound — 77 feet long — adorns the crest of Meadow Ridge Hill. The Veith Avenue neighborhood was formerly known in the 1800s as the “Solid Comfort” neighborhood — perhaps for the comfort of its excellent lake views.

After descending the hill, cross to the beautiful red oak and basswood forest of the Mendota Unit that begins at the southern border of Sauthoff Road. Take a last, lingering look at the lake as you leave Sauthoff Road — unlike the other three units of the Marsh (North, South and Yahara), the Mendota Unit offers few water vistas except for what one can see at the end of Sauthoff Road.

Much of the invasive brush has been cleared away in the southern part of the woods, giving it a tall and spacious feel.

In the spring, the woods are carpeted with wildflowers such as Dutchman’s breeches, trout lily and cutleaf toothwort. Plenty of animals make their home in the park including deer, rabbits, squirrels, snakes, sandhill cranes and a variety of birds.

Proceeding north, there is a small meadow with the remains of a house foundation. This parcel in the center of the woods was acquired by the city in 2007. Even without the foundation, evidence of the house can still be seen in the shrubs and domesticated plants that grow there, such as large drifts of daffodils, onions, rhubarb and black raspberry bushes. The remnant of the old road to the homestead, Loeprich Lane (the sign is still posted), is another good entrance point into the park from Sauthoff Road. To the west of the meadow is a peat marsh with an alder thicket — something not frequently found in Dane County — which usually signifies the presence of nearby springs.

As one moves north away from the clearing, one crosses a small wooden bridge across a dry but mossy spillway. Large grapevines drape the trees on the left, while lovely hackberry and silver maple trees grace the right hand side of the trail. The hiking trail ends at Westport Meadows Park, at the corner of Beilfuss and Crownhardt Circle. The park has a slide, swings, small merry-go-round and basketball court.

This wetland was severely damaged in 1993 during a period of very high water on Lake Mendota. Five acres of peat marsh floated away from a peninsula of wetlands at the end of Sauthoff Road. This incident — and other, less publicized losses of floating peat marsh — is one of the reasons that members of the Friends of Cherokee Marsh and other groups continue to advocate for lower summer levels on Lake Mendota.

Parks from page 19

The growing medical evidence is why the American Public Health Association (APHA) now considers access to green space to be a major public health concern. The APHA is recommending more “green exercise,” gardening, “nature-based play” for children and “... the protection and restoration of nature in the environments where people live, work, and play ...”

Health experts are recommending park ranger and “health ranger” programs to better link people to their parks.⁵ Given the number and size of natural green areas on the Northside, this should be the healthiest place to live in Madison. Let’s work to insure that everyone has access to a daily dose of vitamin P.

1 *Ibid*, pg. 3.

2 “Parks and Other Green Environments: Essential Components of a Healthy Human Habitat,” by Frances E. Kuo, Director of Landscape and Human Health Laboratory, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2010.

3 “View Through a Window May Influence Recovery from Surgery,” by Roger S. Ulrich, in *Science*, 1984.

4 “Improving Health and Wellness through Access to Nature,” by Dr. Louise Chawla and Dr. Jill Litt for the American Public Health Association, 2012.

5 “Head Out for a Daily Dose of Green Space,” by Jane E. Brody, *The New York Times*, Nov. 30, 2010.

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PARKS & RECREATION

Wonders of Warner Park through the eyes of youth

By Marlene Hardick
Northside News

Enthusiasm and passion were key words describing the Nature Explorers panel of presenters at Lakeview Library on Saturday, Apr. 21. The panel was representing an after-school club from Sherman Middle School. Since school began in September, a group of Sherman students, each paired with a UW-Madison student, set out every Wednesday afternoon to explore Warner Park. Coordination of the group was provided by Trish O’Kane, PhD student and Julie Wilke, Sherman school social worker.

These six students had a lot to tell their audience. Boaz Fink has become an expert on bird migration. He talked about the birds of the world, showing how feathers keep them aloft. Carl Peterson talked about



Middle schoolers enjoy Warner Park.

the turkey vultures he had seen in the park. Levi Tupta told of his love for exploring the park. “I can’t let you touch this because it will make you itch. It is kind of gross.” He then showed off an owl pellet comprised of the fur and bones of the owl dinner.

Dakarai Gilbert lives near the park and has learned to love everything —

the reptiles, amphibians and painted turtles. He told of taking a turtle home, but then learned that he needed to return it to the wild. At home, he could not provide what a wild animal needed. Now he explained that to friends.

Emily Patzer enthused about her love of the plants in the park. She brought some from her garden at home to show off — mayapple and garlic mustard. Megan McHugh told of the special place each of the Explorers found. “I had a special tree that was hollow and I could crawl inside. I cried when it was cut down.”

The students were concerned about bats. “We found a bat that was really skinny,” said Dakarai. “So we caught bugs and put them close so he could eat.” “I love bats,” added Megan, “But they are getting white

nose bat syndrome and in some states it has wiped out 90 percent of the bats.”

“We all found special places,” they explained. “We found a fairy glen where plants grew in a circle. At the mushroom grave we found our first puffball.”

Panel members spoke fondly of “my college student.” “Jen is one of my favorites.” “My college student is interested in aquatics like I am.” “Mary and I both like trees and birds.”

“The original plan was to pair one Sherman student to one UW student,” explained O’Kane. “In September, we had 15 UW students and 46 Sherman students signed up for the club. Over the winter some dropped out, so this spring we have 25 Sherman students paired with 15 UW students.

Sports group helps seniors stay active

By Jason Cuevas
Northside News

It’s not uncommon for people to do less physical activity as they get older. Those looking to get out of the house and get their body moving may be interested in Madison’s Sports for Active Seniors group.

Active Seniors host year around events for anyone that is 55 and older. They have a wide variety of both summer and winter sports. The fee for the group is \$17 a year. The fee includes subscription to a monthly newsletter where all of the group’s activities, dates and information can be found.

Those interested are welcome to

come try out a sport they might be interested in before paying the yearly fee. They have been around for over 20 years and routinely have up to 200 members.

“It’s a great opportunity for people who haven’t been active for a while to get involved and to meet people. To participate in a sport,” said Robert Brooks, the group’s president. “The sports are not that intense. It’s also a gathering.”

Each sport has its own group leader and schedule. If a member would like to add a new sport they are welcome to be a leader and try to organize events for it.

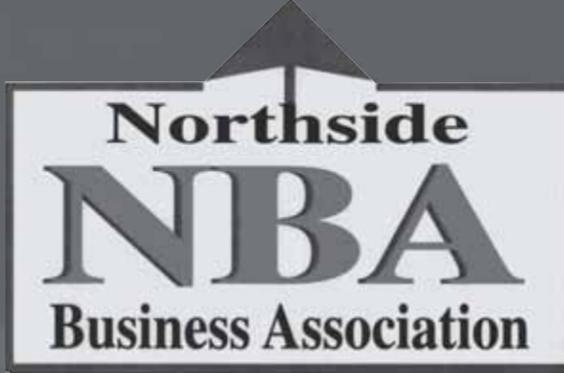
Sports on the schedule for this spring and summer include biking, canoeing, camping, golf, tennis, hiking, and the increasingly popular pickle ball. The winter schedule features skiing, snow shoeing and walks in the mall. Bowling and volleyball are active year round.

The group will be hosting a picnic on Aug. 1 at the John Wall Family Pavilion at Tenney Park. Locals are welcome to come check out the group at that event.

Anyone interested in joining is encouraged to head to the groups at website at sportsforactiveseniors.org. You may also receive more information by contacting Brooks at 608-244-5582.



Team Ale Asylum won the Merchants Bowling League Championship at Bowl-A-Vard Lanes in Spring 2012. Team members (front) are Chuck Oldenburg, (middle, l-r) Fred Krantz, Steve Oldenburg, Dean Smith, Troy Thill (back) Joe Oldenburg and Norbert Oldenburg. The team was able to achieve their goal of winning the playoff round so that a new trophy could be displayed in the new Ale Asylum Brew Pub being built on Pankratz Street. The team appreciates the sponsorship of Ale Asylum.



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YOUTH

Camps and adventures help Boy Scouts be prepared

By Justin Sargent

Spring and Summer are times of outdoor adventure for Madison's Northside. Whether it's paddling Cherokee Marsh, hiking Lake View hill or bird watching in Warner Park, the area is rich with opportunities.

The motto of the Boy Scouts is to "Be Prepared." These outdoor opportunities on our very doorstep offer Northsiders the chance to get out and enjoy remnant pieces of a once wild Wisconsin close to home. Even little adventures in our neighborhoods helps in developing skills and outdoor comfort, preparing us to venture to some of the pristine natural areas of our state.

In June the scouts of "Action" Troop 27 will journey off to summer camp deep in the northern forests of Wisconsin. Summer camp is one of the best adventures that scouts offer. Troop 27 goes

for a weeklong trip that fosters lifelong friendships and instills a confidence and comfort in our scouts that helps them succeed in school and life. Often scouts will even sign up for an additional week of camp to learn additional skills, earn merit badges and linger just a little longer in the outdoors.

There are specialty camps that the Scouts offer including such as wilderness first aid, waterfront and lifeguard training and leadership. This summer Troop 27 will be sending scouts James Hughes and Devin Sargent to the premiere "National Youth Leadership Training" weeklong camp.

Scouts learn an appreciation for the outdoors and, in keeping with their motto, they prepare to succeed in nature as well as the wilds of the work place.

The Northside's Cub Scout Pack, Pack 127, also participates in great outdoor ac-

tivities and camps. If you have a boy aged 6-11, they are ready to be part of the fun.

If you want to help your son escape from summer television reruns and mindless hours of video games, maybe it's time for your family to explore being part of the scouting experience. For more information please contact Troop 27 by phoning 220-2342 or emailing iscuba@sbcglobal.net.

Scouts at Rhythm and Booms

Boy Scouts from all over Dane County will again be joining our Northside scouts in participating in the festivities of the Rhythm and Booms celebration. From parking cars to collecting event donations, scouts will be joining other volunteers to make this event as safe, clean and fun as possible. It's a great illustration of the importance scouts place on service to community.

Black Hawk Middle School garden activity continues to grow

By Kris Howard

Interest and activity in the Black Hawk Middle School community garden continues to grow. Since its first season, the garden has been a resource for Black Hawk students and staff, as well as their neighbors in the community. It provides opportunities for learning and teaching, growing and using fresh food and flowers, and bringing people together into a shared space.

Lynn Tofte, Black Hawk art teacher, and Rebecca Redelings, from the RestART Program, will be working with middle school students to design and

paint a mural on the shed.

The mural project is exciting, not just for the beauty it will add to the space, but also for the teaching opportunity it creates. Throughout the 50 hours planned for the project, youth will gain skills in design, painting and teamwork.

In addition to garden chores like mulching and weeding, classes also hope to use the central gathering space for class discussion, creative writing and teamwork activities. Spanish teacher, Matt Mulligan, took his classes to the garden in the fall for some hands-on vo-

cabulary activities, and other teachers used the space on nice spring days.

The garden has some plots rented by community members and other areas planted by Black Hawk. Individuals interested in learning more about how to rent a plot should contact Amber Ault at AmberAult@yahoo.com.

The garden mural project is raising funds through Kickstarter.com; search for Black Hawk Community Garden at the website. Principal Sean Storch said, "Any amount is welcome, and all of it greatly appreciated!"

MSCR Art Cart comes to the Northside

Madison School and Community Recreation (MSCR) Art Cart is a Madison tradition co-sponsored by the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art. The Art Cart is a free traveling art program that provides creative, outdoor art-making experiences to children ages three-plus and their families. Activities include both group and individual projects with a variety of materials. Drop in and enjoy art!

Art Cart begins Monday, June 18. For a complete schedule see the MSCR Summer Program Guide or go to www.mscr.org. Groups larger than eight participants are limited to one visit per summer and must pre-register at 608-204-3021.

Northside Art Cart stops:

- Wednesday, June 20 at Sandburg School, 5-7:30 pm
- Tuesday, June 26, at Warner Park, 1-4 pm
- Friday, June 29 at Warner Beach, 1-4 pm
- Monday, July 2 at East Madison Community Center, 1-4 pm
- Wednesday, July 25 at Sandburg School, 1-4 pm
- Monday, July 30 at Eken Park, 1-4 pm
- Wednesday, Aug. 1 at Windom Park, 1-4 pm and at East Madison Community Center, 5-7:30 pm

Nutritious meals available to children during summer

By Nicole Graper

The Madison School District Summer Food Program provides free meals to low-income children during school vacations. During the school year MMSD serves more than 12,000 children who qualify for free or reduced price meals due to low household income. The Summer Program offers those children nutritious food when school is not in session. Meal service takes place Monday-Friday, June 18-Aug.17 and about 30 different sites. Madison School District invites children who qualify for the summer food program to register.

Summer food sites on Madison's Northside are as follows: Mendota Elementary (breakfast and lunch)*, Lindbergh Elementary (lunch and snack)*, Packers Apartments (breakfast and lunch), Vera Court (lunch and snack) Northport Apartments (lunch and snack), Warner Park (breakfast and lunch) and Ho-Chunk Learning Center (breakfast and lunch). *Programs held in cooperation with MSCR.

To receive more information about eating meals at these sites or to see if a site qualifies, please call 204-4007.

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YOUTH



The Sherman Middle School Writers group (l-r) Emma Schell, De'Seanna McKinley, Destiny Underhill, Nicole Sandler, Jasmine Nolan and Ikra Ahmed.

Sherman Middle School Writers Group shares with community

By Nicole Sandler

What began as a desire to get involved as a Schools of Hope tutor at Sherman Middle School blossomed into a beautiful and prolific experience. Last year I contacted Sherman volunteer coordinator Betsy Peterson and asked her to connect me with a student. I was fortunate to meet Jasmine Nolan, a spunky seventh grader who really didn't need help with her math problems or social studies assignments. What Jasmine needed was an outlet for her expressive and honest writing, and so we began to focus our time on her craft. She asked if a few other classmates, also aspiring writers, could join us each week for an hour, and our official Sherman Writers Group was founded.

I've been meeting with Jasmine, De'seanna McKinley, and Emma Schell for over two years now. Destiny Underhill joined our group at the beginning of the girls' eighth grade year, and in more recent months Ikra Ahmed has been attending. Every Tuesday during their lunch hour we convene in the Sherman library to talk, share and write. While our writing time is often interrupted by discussion, these talented students manage to crank out meaningful work and more importantly share it with one another for some valuable critique. It has been a wonderful opportunity for me to get to know these girls and encourage them to continue writing. Here are some samples of their work from this year:

Jasmine **Define Pretty**
by Jasmine Nolan

To be pretty is not to be admired
It's more of a self-conscious thing.

To be beautiful is not a choice, but it is something that we are all born with, Even if we don't see it in the mirror, right away.

To be gorgeous depends on your confidence and belief in yourself. It doesn't matter how you look on the outside.

Defining pretty is simple...
To be pretty is to be a good person with a good heart, soul and mind.

Pretty is what you develop as you become aware of your own self-image, More and more each and everyday.

Emma **Wrinkled By Time**
by Emma Schell

As we sit on mossy rocks and talk
We splash our feet in the creek.

Under the green trees, over the muddy orange bottom of the creek, I look over at you, Eyes that have seen so much, wrinkled by time and memories.

Things I cannot imagine or be capable of knowing fill your mind,

A smile reminding me that after everything that happens,

You can still be happy.

The Loop of Despair
by Emma Schell

The outer cold surrounds my soul
The leafless trees are black and tired
All around me is damp and dreary
Nothing to look forward to
Nothing to want or wish for
I just sit and stare at the grey sky
At the crows
And the emptiness
And the cold
So much cold
The world seems to discourage
And you feel hopeless and meager
Alone and trapped in a loop
Day after day
The cold and the rain

Destiny **Stolen Words**
by Destiny Underhill

The thick salty air is silently blowing under a stark white moon, full and sincere in its luminescence. A secret stolen by the wind, can you hear it? Rocks hold hard against the murderous intent of the ocean, but you are not so strong if you happen to fall, I will always catch you. Let your sorrow take to me for my hands are open and willing. Look in these eyes of mine; tell me what pains you.

I will take them so you are no longer burdened. Let the history of these stars and this night rain upon you with good grace and take it in, let it overflow you, let there be nothing but happiness left, happiness and me. Forgive my greed and forgive my words, but if you let this night take you from this world I will let this water that you gazed upon with longing fill my lungs and bring me to you again. I whisper my secret once more and this time the wind does not dare to steal it. "I love you."

Da'seanna **Magnetic Force**
by Da'seanna McKinley

I'm drawn to you, but yet I'm not
If you step away I'll begin to rot
Stay with me, I need you
Can't you feel that pull
We're destined to be?

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YOUTH

Photo by Mary Ambrosavage



Photo by Mary Ambrosavage



Lakeview students rally for Earth Day

Over 300 students were on the march from Lakeview Elementary School to Warner Park to kick off Earth Day. The students helped out by planting a tree (with Maynard Mallard, of course), and picking up trash around the park.

Photo submitted by Black Hawk



Black Hawk's team was coached by school staff Marlon Banks and Tracy Drill. The students (left to right) are all seventh graders: Amadou Daff, Kendra Longoria-Myadze, Qazee Yang and Jane Ann Drill.

Black Hawk students savor big win

The team from Black Hawk Middle School took third place at the African American History Challenge Bowl competition in April. The contest, sponsored by 100 Black Men of Madison, features teams from Madison middle schools and is designed to increase awareness of the important role of African Americans in the history and culture of the United States. Black Hawk's team was coached by school staff Marlon Banks and Tracy Drill. The students (left to right) are all seventh graders: Amadou Daff, Kendra Longoria-Myadze, Qazee Yang and Jane Ann Drill.

Boys and girls keep America's favorite pastime swinging

By Peg Thompson

The East Madison Little League (EMLL) kicked off its 2012 season of baseball with a rainy and cold Opening Day on Apr. 28. Despite drizzling rain and temperatures in the low 40s, boys and girls from 20 EMLL baseball teams still overflowed with excitement over playing their first games of the season. Softball and Juniors baseball divisions got an early start to the season when they started on April 21. This year, EMLL is giving over 450 north and eastside boys and girls a chance to learn the fundamentals of baseball and softball while having fun and learning about sportsmanship and being part of a team.

The ball park, located across from the Oscar Mayer complex at the north end of North Street, promises to be full most days this season, with games scheduled on all weeknights and all day on Saturdays throughout the regular season, which ends in late June. In July and August, the facility hosts various tournaments, which draw championship teams from all over the area. The tournament season will kick off slightly early this year, with the "Rhythm and Booms Tournament" to be held on June 29 and 30 to coincide with the fireworks display. After the tournament games, patrons and players will be invited to stay and watch the fireworks from the outfields or the parking lot. EMLL's full-service concession stand will be open throughout the tournaments and fireworks.

After the tournament season, there is a short break before the third season of Fall Ball which begins in late August. Fall Ball is a development league, and players are offered the opportunity to 'play up' into the next age bracket if they desire more experience. Games are held only on weeknights, and the night games take advantage of the lights that were installed at the end of the 2010 season. Though it was something that will benefit the league for years to come, the addition of the lights was a huge financial undertaking, and the league is still engaging in various fundraising efforts to offset the debt incurred for the purchase and installation of the lights. Hy-Vee Grocery store, one of EMLL's sponsors, partnered with EMLL in late April to help raise funds for the "Light the Field" fund.



Photos by Peg Thompson

During their Minors Division game on opening day, Tommy Knauff of the Visual Image Photography team prepares to swing at a pitch thrown by Kaden Zimmer of the Madison Media Institute team.



Photos by Peg Thompson

Kaden Zimmer of the Madison Media Institute team pitches.

For game schedules, more information about Fall Baseball, or to contribute to EMLL's "Light the Field" fund, please visit the league website www.emll.org. And be sure to visit the park this summer for a wonderful family-friendly activity: watching a game or two of baseball, America's favorite pastime.

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Jim and Mary
Northside residents

YOUTH

Photo by Greg Anderson



Black Hawk and Sherman Middle Schools line up for the challenge.

Northside Middle School Challenge Run

By Kristen Nelson

Q: How many miles can Northside middle-school students run in one afternoon?

A: Over 2,600 miles!

On May 18, students at both Black Hawk and Sherman Middle Schools simultaneously ran a one-mile course at their respective schools for over an hour. Volunteering to help out were three Madison East High School graduates, Marquis Mason and Drew McAdams of the University of Wisconsin at Black Hawk and Chris Davis of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater at Sherman.

PTO families also donated more than \$1,000 in sponsorships — including Emily Patzer — a sixth grade Sherman student who raised \$500 through plant sales.

With the money raised, Black Hawk will fund the 14,400 square-foot Growing Together School and Community Garden. Sherman will fund the Cooking Healthy Options in Wisconsin

(C.H.O.W.) program that L'Etoile Chef Tory Miller runs at the school.

Generous northside businesses helped sponsor the event and donated prizes.

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Young artist-inventor scholarships

By Cynthia Chin

Scholarships are now available for a full summer of access to the facility, equipment/safety instruction and mentoring services of Sector 67, a community workshop located at 2100 Winnebago St., Madison.

Creative, motivated individuals 18 years or younger may apply with an idea for an art project, toy or practical invention that would make use of any of the shops contained in the center, which include metalworking, 3-D imaging, printing and prototyping, woodworking, an electronics lab and art studio.

This is a great opportunity to indulge

a hobby, develop a new one, or take the next step in bringing a project from imagination to reality. Even if students haven't figured out all the details of how an idea will work, they should go ahead and apply — it really is the thought that counts. The "Makership" award also includes \$100 for materials.

The deadline is June 18. For more information go to www.sector67.org/blog/2012/sector67-2012-summer-makerships/.

If you have questions, or are an individual or business interested in sponsoring a young person, contact Chris Meyer at team@sector67.org or 608-241-4605.

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COMMUNITY CENTERS



Photo by Sue Gleason

Northsiders came together for Sunday Supper on May 20 at Warner Park Community Recreation Center.

Community meal shows Northside has real neighborhood feel

By Cindy Crane
Northside News

We live in community. That's what a group of about 60 people from throughout the Northside experienced breaking bread together at the Warner Park Community Center (WPCRC). The May 20 event was the first informal Sunday dinner and open gym hosted by the WPCRC, Northside Planning Council (NPC) and the Northside Farmers Market (NFM).

During the meal Police Captain Cam McLay was overheard saying, "I like the Northside because it has a real neighborhood feel. People don't just get isolated in their own houses as much as in a lot of areas."

And so with a little advertising through a few channels, the sharing of a tasty meal and good conversation happened.

Volunteers helped with the cooking and cleaning (a special shout out to Dale Matthews of NFM for his organizing and cooking), making it a time for everyone else who attended to just relax and enjoy a dinner with their neighbors. A big thanks to Brad Weisinger of WPCRC for offering WPCRC on Sunday and to Janet Dyer of Madison School and Community Recreation (MSCR) for coming in on her day off to help with the gathering.

During good economic times and challenging ones, periods of calm and turmoil, participating in community grounds us. Stay tuned for the next opportunity to share a meal and good conversation with your fellow Northsiders at the Warner Park Community Center. Another Sunday dinner is in the works for August.

Getting into the swing of summer at Vera Court Neighborhood Center

By Patrick Schrank

Kids at Vera Court Neighborhood Center are excited. Children show up in shorts and tank tops, going straight to the playground as soon as they arrive after school. And you can overhear excited conversations about summer, "Are you going to be in the summer program?," "I'm a great swimmer, just wait till we race." Older students are finishing their end of year projects, excited to sleep in maybe just as much as they are to go on fieldtrips.

This summer Vera Court Neighborhood Center will serve 55 children in its elementary summer camp and 25 youth in its middle school camp. Staff has planned a wide array of activities, making sure to keep kids active, healthy and learning throughout the summer. Children and youth will be busy five days a week with arts activities, field trips, sports and much more. Through the Troy Kids' Gardening Program Vera Court kids will have the experience of gardening, learning science while getting their hands dirty. Through generous support of

scholarships, kids will receive swimming lessons at Goodman Pool every Friday throughout the summer. There will also be swimming at nearby Warner Beach, fishing trips, leadership development and volunteerism for teens and field trips throughout Madison and Dane County.

While there will be plenty of fun outings and time spent outdoors, academics will not be on hold for the summer. In fact, the activities planned help students make connections between classroom lessons and the real world. Kids at Vera Court will have plenty of opportunity for hands-on activities, test their skills, and get involved on the Northside, as well as focusing on improving their reading abilities and confidence through the Reading Buddies program. For children at Vera Court, this summer will provide great opportunities to learn, grow, and of course, have fun.

If you would like to volunteer at Vera Court this summer or make a donation to support children in summer camp contact Patrick Schrank at (608) 246-8372, patricks@veracourt.org

Become a Reading Buddy this summer

The Reading Buddy program is a great way to mentor a kid and make sure that their skills don't just remain steady through the summer, but that they improve, and are able to enter the next school year confident in their abilities.

Reading Buddies are volunteers who read to elementary school aged kids, or have the kids read aloud to them. Sometimes making a difference in a

kid's life involves taking very little of a person's time. Reading Buddies is a one-and-a-half hour, twice a week commitment during late mornings for the summer program. This takes place on Tuesday and Thursday throughout the summer. Volunteers work one-on-one, one-on-two, or in small groups.

To volunteer or for more information, mail patricks@veracourt.org or call 246-8372.





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COMMUNITY CENTERS

Introducing Patrick Schrank at Vera Court Neighborhood Center

By Lauri Lee
Northside News

Do I wear a costume or not? That's what Patrick Schrank thought on his first day as Fund Development and Program Assistant for the Vera Court Neighborhood Center (VCNC). A valid question, since Schrank started his job last year on Halloween. And not a bad idea for a guy who wears two very different "hats" every day as he seeks to fulfill the requirements of his diverse position.

"In this job I have the best of both worlds," Schrank said. "I can enjoy tutoring and working with the kids at the Center as well as cultivating connections with the surrounding community so we can get the resources necessary to meet kids' needs."

Schrank's job is all about making connections between the Greater Northside community and the people of Vera Court. On a practical day-to-day basis, his job involves everything from grant writing to correspondence with volunteers, supporters and donors, from meeting with families and kids to picking up donations from the businesses that supply VCNC with what they need.

Sometimes the two facets of his job overlap to everyone's benefit. For in-



Patrick Schrank

stance, tutoring kids isn't just about helping them with their schoolwork anymore. It often extends to making sure they are getting the resources they need to succeed in school and in the community. After months of tutoring the kids, Schrank learned one of their main concerns is finding summer employment. So his tutoring sessions began to focus on helping students find jobs and gain entrance into the local workforce.

Putting on his Fund Development hat, Schrank discussed this issue with local business leaders and a side project began to bud. Some businesses were willing to help by providing part-time jobs. Now the tutoring group concentrates on hon-

ing soft skills like how to talk to people, what to say in an interview, and why it's important to show up for work — basically, the skills needed to survive in a competitive job market.

Schrank is coordinating with the Northside Business Association to make business owners aware of the need for jobs for kids from the Vera Court neighborhood. A business with an opening can call or email Schrank and he will match the available jobs with students who are eager to work and acquire job skills.

If individuals or businesses would like to find other ways to meet the needs at VCNC, a variety of opportunities exist — and it's about more than just financial support. Creatively connecting with the VCNC mission could encompass anything from volunteering to collaborating with some of the programs and kids. For instance, kids can benefit from experiencing a field trip to a business or taking a class that teaches a hobby or skill. Those who don't know how they can help, but would like to find out, can tour VCNC to see what's going on, meet some of the families and find a match to their own area of interest. A variety of programming fills the Center from Monday thru Friday. Some offerings are even available on Saturday.

"It's packed! We have great kids' programs that support families, as well as adult education programs, such as Latino Academy," said Schrank. "There are a lot of opportunities for those who want to better themselves and are looking for ways to support their family."

The programs of VCNC extend to others beyond Vera Court, Schrank said, to those who live on School Road, Troy Drive, in the Woodlands apartments, a few blocks down in any direction and sometimes even further.

Because he is proud of the positive influence VCNC is having in the Northside community, Schrank wishes everyone could know about all that is going on at the Center. In addition to programs for job-searching teens, there are after-school programs for kids as young as six. There is also a Play and Learn program on Wednesdays and Thursdays where parents and preschoolers come together and meet with educators to learn skills the kids will need to be ready to enter school.

"The Northside is a very supportive community," Schrank said. "The business community has been supportive, the Northside media is supportive, and individuals from the community have stepped up. I came to Vera Court at a time of tragedy and difficulty in dealing with the violent loss of a young man. Here was a whole community response that was coordinated and collaborative. They wanted to form something strong that wouldn't allow a similar tragedy to happen again. There are a lot of people wanting to help and support, a lot of neighbors providing good will."

Whether you would like to become involved as a volunteer, or have a part-time summer job to offer, or just want to know more about the good things that are happening at the VCNC, Schrank is the person to contact. Email patricks@vera-court.org or call 608-246-8372.

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