

## You Designed It.....You Built It..... Now Come and Play on It!!

October 2011



Madison, WI | Hundreds of volunteers descended upon a quiet east side park in the early morning of October 6, 2011. Their mission – build a brand new playground from the ground up – and do it all before 2:30p.m.!

The journey to the new Wirth Court playground, 61 Waubesa Street, started several months ago when the Goodman Community Center was awarded a KaBOOM! grant. In August, children and their parents were invited to a “Design Day” where they drew up plans for their own dream park. Thanks to the generous donation of a \$75,000 KaBOOM! playground by Kraft Foods Foundation and the combined efforts of Kraft Foods/Oscar Mayer Madison employees, as well as Goodman Community Center employees, Madison Parks employees, volunteers, and neighbors, the new playground was built and installed in less than 6 hours.

Volunteers from all over the community came out on October 6 to assist with this updated version of a barn-raising. Erica from Kraft Foods, participating in her 2<sup>nd</sup> KaBOOM! Build Day said, “I’m planning on bringing my kids here, I think they will love it.” And 8 year old Jasmine added, “It sounded fun, and I’m excited to help out other kids to have their own park.” Kinaan, Jasmine’s older brother & neighborhood student added, “My mom signed me up and I was like OK!, It’s pretty cool!”

In addition to the play equipment being built, there were several other ‘side’ projects

that were completed that added a unique flair to the park: new benches, two new trees, playing boards painted and added to the picnic tables and mosaic tile river. The Hippo at Wirth Court Park (or known locally as ‘Hippo Park’) now has a river running around it. Thanks to the efforts of the Art teacher at Lowell Elementary School, and the students, 125 tiles were designed, decorated and installed.

Because the concrete needed to cure and set, the new playground needed 72 hours before the kids could play on it. On Monday, October 10 the partners and the neighborhood kids celebrated the grand opening of the park. It was thrilling for the kids to among the first to play on the new playground that was designed by them and built by their parents and friends!

Wirth Court Park is located at 61 Waubesa Street and on the web at [www.cityofmadison.com](http://www.cityofmadison.com).



Volunteers working on the October 6 - Build Day

play  
MADISON  
PARKS



Enjoying the new playground at Wirth Court Park

# HAY

# RIDES



## Bales of Fun - Madison Parks Hayrides

Enjoy a crisp fall evening with a hayride in Madison Parks. Madison Parks is offering hayrides in Elver Park, Cherokee Marsh and Olin Parks this October and November. Perfect for scout troops, community groups, or family outings – Madison Parks hayrides will treat your group to a tour of a beautiful park and enjoy friendly campfire with 'smores.

Each hayride trip is one hour: 30 minute ride, 30 minute campfire with 'smores. The wagon, pulled by a tractor, will take your group on a scenic tour of the park. *Please note that participants will need to enter/exit the wagon using a step ladder.*

**Registration:** Call Madison Parks Office at 266-4711

**Cost:** \$85 + tax per group (1-24 people). Advance registration required.

**Dates:** Thursdays – Saturdays, 6:00p.m, 7:15p.m.  
Sundays, 4:00p.m., 5:15p.m.

**More Information:** [www.cityofmadison.com/parks](http://www.cityofmadison.com/parks)



## Cherokee Marsh Fall Hayrides and Hikes

**Cherokee Marsh, 6098 North Sherman Avenue, Madison, WI**

**Saturday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> 2-5p.m.**

**Cost: \$2/person for hayrides**

Come out and join us Saturday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> for Fall Hayrides & Hikes at the very beautiful Cherokee Marsh. Free guided hikes will be provided by the Friends of Cherokee marsh. Hayrides will be given from 2-5p.m. and no reservations are needed! Hayrides will cost only two dollars a person. This is a great way to spend the afternoon with friends and family while enjoying Madison outdoors during its rustic fall season.

Cherokee Marsh is the largest wetland in Dane County and is home to a spectacular variety of plants and wildlife. Participants will get to experience the Marsh's breathtaking vistas first hand as they ride along a hay wagon, pulled by a tractor or participate in a free guided hike by Cherokee Marsh.



## Fabulous Fall at Olbrich

Check out fabulous fall at Olbrich Botanical Gardens any time! The outdoor gardens are always free and open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. in October. The tropical Bolz Conservatory features a special exhibit on Olbrich's eco-friendly pest control through October 30. Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily and until 5 p.m. on Sundays. Conservatory admission is \$1 for ages 6 and up; free on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to noon.

## Quilts in Bloom: Fall Quilt and Flower Show

Enjoy the fall season with more than 70 botanical art quilts by dozens of local quilters at this year's Quilts in Bloom: Fall Quilt and Flower Show. Colorful mums and asters complement the quilts, along with one-of-a-kind whimsical scrap metal sculptures by local artist Erika Koivunen who apprenticed with well-known Wisconsin artist Dr. Evermor. Quilts in Bloom is open September 24 to October 16 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily with a suggested \$2 donation. Select plants used in the show will be for sale on Monday, October 17 starting at 12 p.m., while supplies last.



## Olbrich Donates to Second Harvest

This summer, more than 130 underserved, urban children came to the Children's Kitchen Garden at Olbrich Botanical Gardens to learn about all the different ways people use plants. From food, to clothing, to shelter, Olbrich intern Cory Hayden says the goal was to make the kids realize that "you're always dealing with plants wherever you are." For six weeks, the children, ages kindergarten through third grade, got the chance to tend a kitchen garden by planting, watching things grow, and harvesting. They also got to see where their food comes from -- and it's not the grocery store!

A benefit of this program is that hundreds of pounds of vegetables from the Kitchen Garden are donated to the Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin each year. Olbrich volunteers and interns help tend the garden and they harvest vegetables as they ripen. The last harvest was completed at the end of September by eight volunteers from Edgewood High School as part of Edgewood in the Community Day.

The final tally for the 2011 growing season: Olbrich Botanical Gardens donated a total of 538.5 pounds of fresh, organic produce to Second Harvest! Most of the vegetables were from the Children's Kitchen Garden, with 60 pounds of lettuce and eggplant from Olbrich's Herb Garden. Vegetables donated included: tomatoes, green beans, spinach, carrots, beets, squash, broccoli, chard, basil, eggplant, and lettuce.

Olbrich's Children's Kitchen Garden also serves as an outdoor classroom for gardening classes for children and families offered by Olbrich throughout the summer. For a complete listing of Olbrich classes year-round, check [www.olbrich.org](http://www.olbrich.org).

The Children's Kitchen Garden was originally funded through a number of grants from local organizations. Today this annual program is partially supported through an annual gift from the Bolz Family Fund for Olbrich Gardens at the Madison Community Foundation with additional funding from Olbrich's general fundraising and other designated gifts.

"Kids get to learn how to grow the food we eat in a garden that's designed for function and beauty," says Connie Beam, Olbrich's Director of Development and Marketing. "That's what makes the Children's Kitchen Garden at Olbrich unique. Learning is enhanced by the beauty and art of the garden."







The fall *Ride the Drive* was held downtown on Sunday, September 25, 2011.

Although the rainy weather put a slight damper on the event, we still had many people come out and enjoy the five mile downtown loop by bike, foot, and roller blades.

Participants not only enjoyed the route but also plenty of fun along the way including live music on the square, a climbing wall, bike safety videos in the tunnel under Monona Terrace, and much more.

Over 100 volunteers helped make the event a success by assisting with set up, providing information and water along the route, and making sure all participants were safe. All in all it was another fun *Ride the Drive*.

For information on Ride the Drive, visit: [www.cityofmadison.com/ridethedrive](http://www.cityofmadison.com/ridethedrive)

## Big Rig Gig

On Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, the City of Madison Parks hosted the **Big Rig Gig** at the Goodman Pool parking lot. The event allowed children and adults alike to tour the various large vehicles the City of Madison utilizes, including fire trucks, buses, police cars, tractors, snow plows, garbage trucks, front loaders and much much more! The sounds of horns honking rang out through the day as kids climbed into the vehicles, posed for pictures, and learned about the marvelous machinery the City employees use every day.

The event was a tremendous success, with a turnout of approximately 2000 people. Kids loved all of the exploring they could do while the parents were treated to great photo opportunities, leaving wonderful memories for years to come. One parent mentioned that her son had been “waiting for weeks for this day” while another commented on how “great it is that Madison Parks went out of their way on a Saturday morning to provide such a fun event for the kids”. Both kids and parents eagerly await our next year’s **Big Rig Gig**.



## Employee of the Month

### Anne Whisner - Community Services

The Madison Parks Division Employee of the Month program recognizes employees who have exhibited outstanding performance in the areas of customer service, leadership, work ethic or have represented themselves as an exemplary Parks Ambassador. All employees are eligible for nomination by their peers, supervisors or by those they supervise.

#### *This month's winner is Anne Whisner*

Anne Whisner is the Recreation Services Coordinator for the City of Madison Parks Division. She coordinates new programs and events, works with volunteer development and management, and is responsible for major events in the City of Madison such as Ride the Drive, Big Rig Gig and winter recreation concessions and events.

Anne graduated from Appalachian State University and then proceeded to join the Peace Corps working in Lesotho South Africa. After that she moved to the Baltimore DC area where she worked for a few years before coming to Madison and working for the University. At the UW she coordinated campus wide volunteer programs as well as managing special events and partnerships with nonprofit agencies. In 2010, she then joined Madison Parks as the Recreation Services Coordinator and is quoted as saying that her favorite thing about parks is “the variety of the jobs and how we are able to engage the public” whether it be fun activities, recreation, or conservation.

Anne was nominated for and won the Outstanding Work Ethic category. “Anne’s leadership with Ride the Drive, Big Rig Gig and the winter ice skating and skiing shelter concessions have made our city a better place to live” says Kevin Briski.

When she’s not busy with Madison Parks, she enjoys both playing and watching sports. Anne is a member of multiple athletics leagues, and plays soccer, flag football, volleyball and golf. She also has a passion for traveling. Congratulations Anne!

## Downtown Madison Freakfest 2011

Organizers announced the lineup for this year's Freakfest, Madison's annual downtown Halloween celebration, set for Oct. 29.

The event, which will be held on State Street, will feature a mixture of music spread over multiple stages while revelers wearing their finest costumes parade up and down the city's main drag.

This year's talent lineup features both national and regional artists performing on three stages along State Street. The bands include All Time Low, Neon Trees, the Ready Set, MURS, Locksley, JC Brooks & the Uptown Sound, the Big Strong Men and Quiet Corral. DJ Will Calder spinning all night on Frances Street,

Advance tickets, costing \$8, are on sale at the Coliseum box office, Ticketmaster, by phone at 800-745-3000, online at [www.frankproductions.com](http://www.frankproductions.com), or at several businesses in the State Street area.

Tickets will be available on the day of Freakfest at booths near the entrances beginning at noon and continuing through the end of the event or when the street reaches capacity. Gates will open at 7 p.m. with tickets available at the gate for \$12.

For more information about Freakfest performers, visit [www.channel3000.com/freakfest](http://www.channel3000.com/freakfest)

## *historic* **MADISON PARKS**

### **This year's Forest Hill cemetery tour focuses on war between the states**

By Meg Jones of the Journal Sentinel - reprinted with permission

Madison - Dressed in a blue Union soldier's uniform, Edward Bridgman bent over a notebook and scribbled in pencil the horrors he had witnessed on the Civil War battleground.

Reading aloud from a letter he wrote to a cousin, Bridgman told of the dead and dying and his efforts to comfort the wounded. Bridgman, who served with the 37th Massachusetts Volunteers, wrote of his dream to survive the terrible war and go home.

"In this dream there are no cannons, no wounded and no war. When you pray tonight Sidney, don't pause on me, but instead pray for the end of this war and the safe and healthy return of its soldiers both blue and gray," said Bridgman, as he knelt under a large tree at Forest Hill Cemetery next to a rapt group of Verona eighth-graders.

Bridgman did survive the Civil War, and his letters survive in the archives of the Wisconsin Historical Society. On Sunday Bridgman - portrayed by Madison actor Cameron Shimniok - will tell his story as part of Talking Spirits cemetery tour in one of Madison's oldest cemeteries.

The event is a program of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum.

For the past 13 years, the Talking Spirits tour has featured actors dressed in period garb portraying the famous and the humble who are buried at Forest Hill Cemetery, the resting place of more than 30,000, including several governors as well as 140 Confederate soldiers who died at the prisoner of war camp at Camp Randall. This year in honor of the sesquicentennial of the start of the Civil War, all four vignettes focus on the war between the states.

This week the cemetery tours were open to school groups, with 2,200 students from the

Madison area expected to visit.

Shimniok portrays Bridgman, who participated in several battles in the Civil War; he also fought with infamous abolitionist John Brown. Bridgman died in 1915 at the age of 81.

"It's interesting because my little brother is in Afghanistan right now," said Shimniok, as he took a short break Tuesday afternoon. "The letters written by Edward Bridgman during the Civil War are analogous to the emails I'm getting from my brother."

#### Living history

When the living history program started 13 years ago, it focused on a variety of people buried at Forest Hill, which opened in the late 1850s. But in the past few years attention has turned to contributions of Wisconsin soldiers and citizens during the Civil War, said Jennifer Kaye Kollath, curator of education at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum.

Each year, museum officials walk through the cemetery looking for interesting people and then check Wisconsin Historical Society archives for letters, diaries and photos. A packet of information is sent to Madison playwright John Sable, who writes the scripts. His favorite this year is Bridgman's story, which he pieced together from several of his Civil War letters.

"He just writes so beautifully. He captures those experiences as only you wish somebody would in the moment," said Sable.

As the Talking Spirits tour has grown in popularity, organizers have added days for school groups - this year a fourth day of student tours is on the schedule. Last year, about 500 people showed up for the one day of public tours. Volunteer tour guides walk through the cemetery pointing out interesting sights and grave markers and stop at four spots where costumed actors portray three Civil War veterans as well as Wisconsin Gov. Louis Harvey and his wife, Cordelia, portrayed by local actors Scott Rawson and Amy L. Welk.

Harvey, who helped launch the Republican Party and draft Wisconsin's constitution, served as governor only a few months. In April 1862 he brought medical supplies to Wisconsin soldiers wounded at Shiloh but drowned when he tried to jump onto a moving steamboat on the Tennessee River. Cordelia



Harvey was instrumental in opening a hospital in Wisconsin for wounded veterans.

Also portrayed on the tour are Civil War veterans Mark "Peg Leg" Smith, who lost his leg at the Battle of the Wilderness and later became caretaker of the famous Civil War eagle mascot "Old Abe," and Hugh Lewis, a Welshman who lost his arm at Bull Run.

As actor Tom Collins, who wore a long brown jacket with the left sleeve pinned up, explained to students, part of Lewis' left arm was preserved in a glass jar and displayed at the Smithsonian. Each winter, Lewis and a friend who had lost his right arm in the war bought one pair of gloves together. When Lewis asked for his arm so it could be buried with him, Smithsonian officials told him it had been misplaced.

"How can you lose a severed arm? I can tell you where it wasn't," he told the students.

Lewis' arm was eventually located at a museum in Canada. He managed to get it back, a small coffin was built for it, and when Lewis died in 1919 at the age of 93, the arm was interred with him at Forest Hill Cemetery.

**VISION:**  
To provide the ideal system of parks, natural resources and recreation opportunities which will enhance the quality of life for everyone.

**PARKS DIVISION**  
210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Ste. 104  
P.O. Box 2987  
Madison, WI 53701  
(608) 266-4711  
[www.cityofmadison.com/parks](http://www.cityofmadison.com/parks)

**MADISON MAYOR**  
Paul Soglin

**MADISON PARKS SUPERINTENDENT:**  
Kevin Briski

**MADISON PARK COMMISSIONERS:**  
Bill Barker  
Emanuel  
Scarborough  
David Wallner  
Madelyn Leopold  
Nancy Ragland  
Alder Mark Clear  
Alder Joe Clausius

*play*  
**MADISON PARKS**

Wisconsin Veterans Museum  
30 W. Mifflin Street, 608-267-1799  
<http://museum.dva.state.wi.us/>

Forest Hill Cemetery, 1 Speedway Road,  
608-266-4720.  
Free historical self-guided walking tour brochures available on-line at  
[www.cityofmadison.com/parks/parks/cemetery/](http://www.cityofmadison.com/parks/parks/cemetery/)

## Downtown Madison Family Halloween Friday, October 28, 2011

The Downtown Madison Family Halloween will offer a day of fun on State Street and the Capitol Square on Friday, October 28, 2011. Afternoon activities for families and kids 12 and under include Halloween magic shows, hayrides around the Capitol Square, ghostly songs and stories, festive Halloween family portraits, trick or treating at participating businesses, and more. Stay into the evening for "Beakers and Broomsticks" at the Madison Children's Museum. Information is at [visitdowntownmadison.com/FamilyHalloween](http://visitdowntownmadison.com/FamilyHalloween) or at (608) 512-1342.

These Halloween family fun events are presented by Madison's Central Business Improvement District (BID), with support from the Greater State Street Business Association, IsthmusParents.com, and The University Book Store. Programming partners include Madison Children's Museum, Madison Parks, Madison's Central Library, Overture Center for the Arts and the Wisconsin Historical Museum.



*play*  
**MADISON PARKS**