

FOCUS ON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

MONTHLY UPDATE FROM THE DESK OF WAUKESHA COUNTY EXECUTIVE
DANIEL P. VRAKAS



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Dear Friends,

Every county and municipality in the state of Wisconsin is facing cuts to their shared revenue, transportation and human services departments, among others, from the state. Governments, at all levels, are looking for ways to cut overhead costs while maintaining the same level of service. Waukesha County is no different. In Waukesha County we are examining our core mission and services to identify where further cuts can be made.

In the private sector, business owners and employees are looking at “lean principals” and ways to do more with less. Waukesha County has embraced these same principals and is constantly striving to examine all options in cutting costs. The bottom line is we need to change the way we do business in the State of Wisconsin.

In Waukesha County we have a long standing history of efficiency. My motto is, and always has been, that we must provide outstanding services to our residents at a low cost to taxpayers, and this is achieved through efficiency. Consolidation and collaboration of services has been a key component of efficiency in Waukesha County.

As we move forward, it is important that we continue to seek out and encourage ways work cooperatively and deliver efficient services to taxpayers. It is truly vital to our success that we work together as a cohesive county, region and team.

Sincerely,



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CELEBRATE EARTH WEEK

Celebrate Earth Week at Retzer Nature Center on Saturday, April 23. Food will be available for purchase from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and all activities are free.

Family Bird Watch - Groups Depart at 9, 10, 11 a.m.

Join Naturalist Larry Kascht for an adventure in bird watching. Learn how to participate in this fascinating & fun activity through a guided tour of feathered wildlife. This program includes 1/2 hour discussion and 1/2 hour hike on wooded and open areas on gentle terrain, near the building. No need to register.

“The Wild World of Weather” Planetarium Show (every hour 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.)

Experience our fascinating world of weather as you ride out a thunderstorm, fall into a tornado and view storms from space. Bring the whole family, program is suitable for all ages. Free tickets for each show will be available starting at 8 a.m. at the Planetarium Ticket Office. Space is limited, so arrive early.

Family and Children Earth Day Activities - 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Kids will enjoy: Wiggly Worm Puppet, Play Dough Play, Rainbow Color Wheel origami, Pond Critter Search, and more!

Discover Compost – Family Activity - 11 a.m. – Noon

Visit the outdoor Discovery Tour and Field Lab at Retzer and find out how to turn kitchen vegetable scraps and yard debris into compost— “the living soil.” Find some cool “decomposer” bugs. Plant and take home a vegetable seed and get a start on your garden. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Noon - 3 p.m. - Meet the Editors of Metroparent and MilwaukeeMoms.com

Stop by to meet the editors of Metroparent magazine and MilwaukeeMoms.com while your children learn to make a newspaper hat.

Rain Gardens—Save Water, Save Money - 1 – 2 p.m.

In this program, we will learn about two great ways to capture your runoff—rain gardens and rain barrels. You will learn the basic design principles to design and install your own rain garden and rain barrel. Handouts will be provided.

Retzer Trees & Wildflowers Hike - 2 – 3 p.m.

Enjoy this guided hike on trails in wooded and open areas on moderately hilly terrain. No need to register.

Concert by Tom Pease - 3 – 5 p.m.

Campfire Songs and S’mores - 5 – 7 p.m.

Guided Twilight Hike - 7:15 - 9:00 p.m.

This nature area features frogs and peepers, woodcocks, coyotes, and constellations. Enjoy our own Treasure Hunt! This hike is on very hilly terrain, in twilight and darkness, so bring your flashlight. Recommended for older children.

“Waukesha County: Leading the Way ...”

PRESCRIPTION DRUG COLLECTION – MAY 14

Waukesha County Drug Free Communities will be holding a countywide prescription drug collection on Saturday, May 14th in an effort to reduce prescription drug abuse and accidental poisonings in Waukesha County as well as help protect local waterways.

Residents are invited to bring unwanted prescription medication, over the counter medication, ointments, sprays, inhalers, creams, vials, herbals and pet medications to the Waukesha County Drug Collection.

Drop off your items on Saturday, May 14 at the following locations:

- Community Memorial Hospital, Menomonee Falls (9 a.m. – 12 p.m.)
- D.N. Greenwald Center, Mukwonago (9 a.m. – 12 p.m.)
- Oconomowoc Memorial Hospital, Oconomowoc (9 a.m. – 12 p.m.)
- Ruby Isle, Brookfield (9 a.m. – 12 p.m.)
- Waukesha State Bank, Downtown Waukesha (9 a.m. – 12 p.m.)
- WCTC, Pewaukee (9 a.m. – 1 p.m.)

For more information visit:
waukeshacounty.gov/drugcollection

WAUKESHA WEST BYPASS UPDATE

Waukesha County's Department of Public Works, through consultation with the West Waukesha Bypass advisory group and the project study team, has eliminated the following proposed Waukesha Bypass routes:

- Golf Course East Alternative—eliminated because of its impacts to homes along Merrill Hills Road and high cost compared to the other alternatives.
- Pebble Creek mapped route—eliminated because of its high impact on wetlands.
- Pebble Creek far west alignment—eliminated because it would not provide a substantive reduction in wetland impact compared to the Pebble Creek west alignment and would have an additional residential displacement.

The Pebble Creek west and Sunset-to-County Trunk Highway (CTH) X alternatives are still being considered.

The team also decided that, based on factors such as traffic volumes and safety concerns, a 4-lane roadway, as opposed to a 2-lane roadway, in the entire corridor is the best long-term plan for the roadway. This plan will meet future mobility and safety needs while minimizing overall impacts to adjacent properties and environmental resources to the extent practicable.

The section of road from I-94 to Summit Avenue will be built first and is currently targeted for construction in 2013. Construction between Summit Avenue and WIS 59 would occur later.

A public hearing will be held in late summer to allow the public an opportunity to review and comment on a more detailed look at the remaining alternatives and to provide feedback prior to selection of a preferred alternative.



Above is a section of the proposed Waukesha West Bypass route.

“Waukesha County: Leading the Way ...”

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JOURNEY HOME BUS TOUR

Community leaders in Waukesha County and the state of Wisconsin have been invited to participate in a special program titled Journey Home on Friday May 6th. This program is designed to provide participants with an experiential trip, through the eyes of a child in need of permanency and safety in their lives.

Children often come into the foster care system due to abuse and neglect. The role of the system is to help families become safe and stable, or to find other permanent solutions that enable children to grow and become productive adults. This event will bring together the social workers, legal system experts, medical professionals and the foster/adoptive families to share their roles. The program will take participants through the process from neglect or abuse to permanency as they travel throughout the County getting a first-hand look at the programs and providers available to children in Waukesha County.

For more information on the event, please contact Antwayne Robertson in the Department of Health at Human Services by calling (262) 548-7241.



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SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS MONTH

Governor Walker has proclaimed April 11-15 as Tornado and Severe Weather Awareness Week in Wisconsin. Are you and your family ready for the storms? Tornadoes and Severe Weather happen in Wisconsin every spring and summer. Here are some facts you may not know about severe weather in Wisconsin:

- Wisconsin has an average of 21 tornados each year.
- Last year, 46 tornados in Wisconsin were confirmed by the National Weather Service.
- Tornados are most common April – August, however, they can happen any month of the year.
- Tornados can occur any time, day or night, but they most commonly occur between 4 and 9 p.m.
- Not all communities have outdoor tornado sirens.
- Outdoor tornado sirens are not meant to be heard indoors – they act only as a warning for individuals outside their home.
- The best way to find out about severe weather warnings is with a weather radio or by signing up for Waukesha County's emergency alert system online at www.waukeshacounty.gov and clicking on "Emergency Alert Signup."

"Waukesha County: Leading the Way ..."