



ARBOR HILLS
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
THE ARBOR HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD
ASSOCIATION, MADISON, WI

SUMMER 2025 NEWSLETTER

Neighbors Join For Earth Day Cleanup

By Madeline Urameck

Thirty neighbors, from ages toddler to senior, gathered on Saturday, April 26th to honor Earth Day and the desire to live in a clean community. Fueled by fresh coffee and donuts, volunteers tackled dried burrs and thistles to retrieve McDonald's throw-aways, plastic bags, and car accident remnants nestled from the gas station on Todd Drive, to the steep banks, fences, and rock piles of the Frontage Road, all the way up to the intersection with Seminole Road Highway. They parked a few full bags near a dead possum, in hopes city workers would notice and give it an appropriate burial.

Simultaneously, a crew trundled up and down steep banks along Cannonball Bike Path and behind the trash bins at apartment buildings to gather such treasures as old tires, a weed-picker, lots of bottles, dirty diapers, an old Ring doorbell, and lost toys. Each discarded item inspired reflections on America's manufacturing and consumption habits and the value of environmental education. Neighbors left behind around 70 filled plastic bags and greener, cleaner grass strips, bike paths and walkways.

Thank you to the Madison Parks Department for the cleanup equipment and the Madison Streets Department for coming to pick up the bags along the frontage road. And of course, a big shoutout to everyone who came out, gave their time, and helped make this year's cleanup a success. Your efforts make a visible and lasting impact in our neighborhood! We're already looking forward to doing it again next year.



Know Your Neighbors: Lakisha and Lonnie

By Jackie Cooper

Become Part of the Tribe

Who knew a chance meeting on a Madison Metro bus would lead to an almost 30-year love story for long-time Arbor Hills residents Lakisha Johnson and Lonnell “Lonnie” Richardson Sr. I met Lakisha (and Lonnie) after our boys became friends at Leopold Elementary School on their very first day of kindergarten (which happened to be shortly after they moved to the neighborhood). What started out as a weekly playdate for them, has turned into a 20-year friendship for us. Lakisha came to Madison in the 5th grade from Kankakee, IL. Lonnie moved to Madison from Chicago after graduating high school. They both happened to be on a Madison Metro bus - and something clicked. Lonnie gave Lakisha his number - her grandmother told her to call him (“what do you have to lose?”) - and the rest is history. They are proud parents to 4 children: Lachelle (age 27), Lonnell Jr. (24), Lachay (17) and Lachaun (14). All four kids attended Leopold then Wright Middle School. Lachelle and Lonnell Jr. graduated from West, and Lachay (after a few years of homeschooling with Lakisha) will graduate from West this June. Lachaun will be graduating from Wright Middle School this June and attending West High School in the fall.

The Growth of Two Entrepreneurs

After Lakisha and Lonnie had Lachelle and Lonnell Jr., Lakisha decided to open her own in-home daycare to stay home with their children - and earn some money. This was the “birth” of her first business: Rockin’ Rooster Daycare, LLC. And this entrepreneur didn’t just create a childcare business, she created a State of Wisconsin licensed family childcare that has been in operation for over 25 years, and is now primarily run by the one who inspired the business: her daughter Lachelle.

While still involved in her daycare business, Lakisha was looking for another challenge and in 2021 decided to start a second business: Unique Hair Accessories & More, LLC. Initially UHA started offering hair bonnets, combs, brushes, and accessories, but as the parent of a child with a sensitive scalp, Lakisha wanted to find a solution to easily detangle her child’s hair - and other children’s hair - without tears. So she created her first product, a shampoo bar. Once her customers started using the shampoo bars, they started requesting products to solve other problems (dry skin, oily skin,

sensitivity to traditional body products, etc.) - and now Lakisha’s business specializes in Homemade Natural Hair and Body Care Products for adults and children, men and women, anyone who has hair and skin (including bonnet wash, scrunchies/hair claws, combs/brushes, all-natural oils and mists for hair and body, lotions, shaving creams, body wash, bar soaps, and more). Lakisha’s business has been growing and thriving ever since - with new products always being developed, so she can focus her business on the needs of her customers (her Tribe). Coming soon per a customer request: almond oil-free oils and body mists!

Lonnie’s ah ha moment happened after a trip to Disney World after he designed and printed custom matching t-shirts to connect the family while on their vacation. Wearing his shirt to work one day, someone liked it so much that they asked Lonnie to create something custom for them - and they would pay for it. Then someone else saw the shirts and asked him to create one for him - and then more and more people started to ask - all offering to pay him for his products. In 2022 while on lunch break at his job as a maintenance technician at UW Hospital, Lonnie started doodling a logo idea - still not really thinking he would start a business. He came home and showed the family his doodle and Lonnell Jr. had an idea (and a little experience in logos, having attended the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design and MATC). He took Lonnie’s doodles and created a logo for the still yet-to-be-formalized business. Lonnie looked at the logo which got him thinking about his family and history, how everything takes a village, friends being more than family, plus all the connections he felt to his ancestors. And that was it - a business was born, along with its name: Ancestral Tribe. Lonnie uses different techniques to create his products: apparel and now mugs and tumblers. After MANY requests from customers (especially the partners of the women purchasing Lakisha’s products!) Lonnie now also sells his own formulas of beard oils, shaving creams, and more men-focused hair and body products through the Ancestral Tribe brand.

“Ancestral Tribe is a brand founded on the belief of bringing people together no matter their race, religion, social or economic status or ethnicity.”

Lakisha and Lonnie have taken Entrepreneurial Classes at Starting Block through the Madison Black Chamber of Commerce (they are also members). They have also acquired SBE, WBE (Lakisha), and MBE business certifications. They started selling their products at a One City Schools’ Mini Market - and now you can find them at 25+ events each year, including this summer at the Bodega Night Events at Breese Stevens Field and The Hub (2352 S. Park Street). If you see them in the neighborhood, say hi - and if you have a product request just let them know, because once you are a customer of either the Daycare business or of the brands they’ve created - you are now part of their family, actually “More Than Family” - you become part of their Tribe. Help them keep “Moving History Forward”.



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GS3429 4/30/2025



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Membership eligibility required. *APY= Annual Percentage Yield. Rate and offer are subject to change at any time. Round-Up balances of \$5,000 and over will receive our standard savings rate, which is currently 0.10% APY. Federally insured by the NCUA.

Helper's Corner

Need a Babysitter?

Hi, my name is Grace! I'm 12 years old and Red Cross certified in babysitting. My family has lived in Arbor Hills since I was 1, and I'm excited to offer childcare for kids of all ages.

- Available all day until 10:30PM

If you're looking for a responsible and friendly sitter, I'd love to help! You can reach me through my dad (Neil) at nrdinndorf@gmail.com.

Cool Pets – Neighborhood Kids You Can Trust!

Isaac and Owen Fletcher (Irvington Way) are ready to care for your pets while you're away—experienced with dogs, cats, bearded dragons, chickens, hamsters, and fish, and eager to learn about any pet you have! They also offer yard clean-up services; contact Erica Fletcher (mom) at 515-657-0199 to book your pet care today!

Are you a kid who lives in Arbor Hills and would like to offer your help to neighbors, OR are you a person in Arbor Hills who would pay a neighborhood kid to do yard work, house projects, babysitting, etc.? Reach out to info@arborhills.org with your offering or request and we'll include it in an upcoming newsletter and/or email!

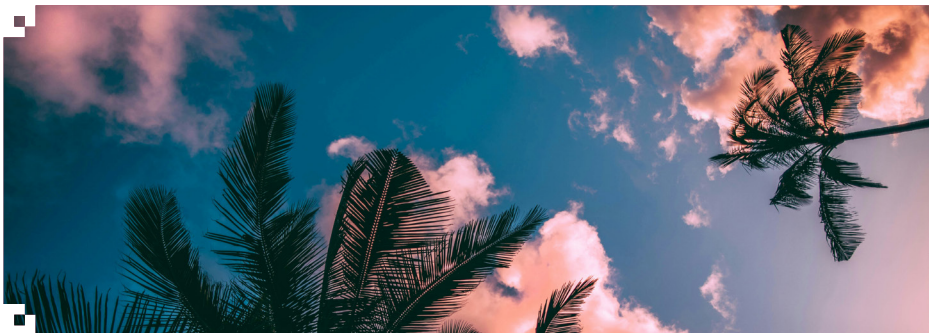
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Results From the Neighborhood Survey

Thank you to those of you who responded to the neighborhood survey! This is really valuable and important information that will help guide our priorities as an association. We thought it would be interesting to share some of the themes and ideas:

- 60 of you responded to the survey
- 15% have children who are 18 or younger living in your home
- There are many long-time residents in the neighborhood! 43% of respondents have lived here for 21 years or more, 33% have lived here for 6-20 years, and around 24% of you have lived here for 5 years or less.
- The printed newsletter is the most common way you keep up-to-date on neighborhood information (other common methods are through emails from the association and from your neighbors)

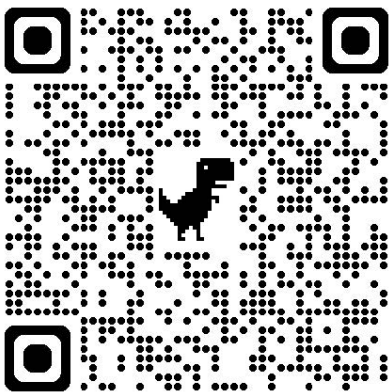
- 55% of you said you'd be equally likely to read a print or digital version of this newsletter. 20% said you prefer digital, and 25% said you prefer print. (Though we recognize respondents to a digital survey might skew toward preferring digital newsletters!)

- The things you said you most want to hear about are events in the neighborhood. Other popular topics are announcements (e.g. new neighbors, births, deaths, etc.), Volunteer opportunities, and local events outside of Arbor Hills.
- Half of respondents know their block captain, have met them, and/or receive communication from them.

We identified a few areas of focus: driving more connections with your block captains (as a way to facilitate more neighbor-to-neighbor community building), increasing the appeal of the October Annual Meeting with

some different types of speakers, and continuing to host events (these are popular!). There have been many other great ideas that we're following up on, too.

If you have not filled out the survey yet, you can do so here until it closes on June 30th:



Fitchburg Family Pharmacy

We're a pharmacy embedded in our community, where patients are part of the family, not just another customer.

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Calling all pets!

Do you have a furry, feathered, or scaly friend who's just too cute not to share? We want to hear from you! We'd like to feature your pets in an upcoming edition of this newsletter.

To make your pet famous across the neighborhood, send in a photo and the following details by August 23rd to info@arborhills.org OR in the mail to Ashley Gibson at 14 Leyton Circle.

- Pet's name
- Your name(s)
- Type of animal/breed (if known)
- Pet's age
- What's one fun fact about your pet that you'd like to share?

Look out for a spread of the most lovable residents of Arbor Hills in an upcoming edition!

2025 AHNA Board Members

President

Ashley Gibson

akgibson17@gmail.com

Vice President

OPEN - Contact Ashley if you're interested in getting involved!

Treasurer

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Events Coordinator

Aaron Eicher

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Communication Coordinator

Cathy Means

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Block Captain Coordinator

Chuck Friedrichs

chuck.friedrichs@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor

OPEN - Contact Ashley if you're interested in getting involved!

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(608) 266-1627

Representative Renuka Mayadev, Assembly District 77

Rep.Mayadev@legis.wisconsin.gov

(608) 237-9177

Alder Yannette Figueroa Cole, District 10

district10@cityofmadison.com

(608) 318-3838

Matt Veldran, Dane County Supervisors, District 4

veldran@countyofdane.com

(608) 235-8369

FOOD SCRAP DROP OFF



Take Climate Action
Bring your food scraps to Sustain Dane's farmers' market table

Farmers Market Locations

Tuesday Eastside 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM McPike Park (202 S Ingersoll St.)
South Madison 2:00 PM - 6:00 PM Madison Labor Temple Grounds (1602 South Park St.)
Saturday Westside Community 7:00 AM - 12:30 PM University Research Park (505 S. Rosa Rd.)

What To Scrap

- ✓ Raw Fruits
- ✓ Raw Vegetables
- ✓ Coffee Grounds
- ✓ Loose Tea
- ✓ Eggshells
- ✓ Corn Husks & Cobs

What Not To Scrap

- Meat & Dairy ✗
- Bread ✗
- Cooked foods ✗
- Paper Products ✗
- Compostable Bags ✗
- Compostable Tableware ✗
- Produce Stickers ✗



Learn more about this program through the QR code or at bit.ly/FoodScrap

Origins of Arbor Hills Park

By Jim Cortada

Our park has long been a popular space located in the center of Arbor Hills. When the neighborhood was laid out in the mid-1950s, local developers were required to set aside a piece of land for a park. Located at the highest point in Arbor Hills, it consisted of just over four acres of undeveloped land. Over time, it expanded to 7.9 acres with the addition of the sledding hill, considered by many for decades as the best hill in Madison.

In 1968, the developers sold the park to the City of Madison for \$9,600. In 1973, the City's Parks Division, working with neighborhood advocates, bought the sledding hill for \$73,000. If that had not been done, a dozen houses would have been built there. Some state legislators criticized the expense as a "luxury," but Arbor Hills won that fight.

The Arbor Hills Garden Club took on the development of the park, beginning in 1967. That occurred after the City's planners had given up the idea of buying all of Arbor Hills for relocating the Henry Vilas Zoo. The Club cleared some of the land, their husbands built the first playground swing sets and a climbing tower, and children quickly began to enjoy the land. For the next half century, children now grown reflected back on how wonderful the park had been during their childhood. The Club paid for the lumber and for the sandlot through bake and plant sales in the late 1960s-early 1970s.

The case was always made to the city that demand for use of the park warranted further attention. An example from 1970 illustrates the tone, when the Garden Club wrote, "We presently have 280 primary school children and again as many pre-school children who need this park area. I am sure you are also aware that we are at a disadvantage with the Beltline cutting our neighborhood off from other possible areas. Therefore, we feel that the need is urgent and 'now' at hand." The same letter reminded officials that the community had already raised \$1,171 to help defray costs of development, which "should give you some idea of the tremendous desire to have this park."

The city's parks department built the shelter in 1974. The department replaced the playground equipment in 1992, partially funded, as with the first installation, through neighborhood - donations. In the 1980s when it was proposed to add a basketball court to the park, another round of debates took place. The alder - himself a resident - representing Arbor Hills, Tim Bruer, called for residents to "make their recommendations directly to the City's Park Commission and the Park Department staff." They did, with letters and meetings. In time, the Parks Division brought in lighting, electricity, and a water fountain.

Since the 1970s, this park became the focal point for neighborhood events, beginning with 4th of July picnics, concerts, and in the past decade, food truck events. While a major feature of Arbor Hills, it is only one of three natural facilities. The Arbor Hills Greenway is a nearly nine-acre stretch of land sandwiched between the backs of properties facing Todd Drive and Churchill Drive almost from Frontage Road to Post Road. It was created as part of a much larger county and city/ town and Fitchburg area program dating to the late 1950s to address storm water drainage problems all over the city and to protect the Arboretum's eastern wetlands.

There is also the nearly 15 acre Knollwood Conservation Park. Knollwood anchors Arbor Hills to the south along Cannonball Trail. Unlike a regular park that has swing sets and other amenities, conservatory parks were a response to growing interest in preserving the natural environment, beginning in the late 1950s, and to preserve for the enjoyment of residents. Since the 1960s it was left in a natural state, with bits and pieces added to it, largely from the railroad company that originally owned the right of way in the area, but with significant restorations to its natural state in the 1980s, a process continued into the 2020s.



Arbor Hills Park Conservation

Curious about the signs around the Arbor Hills Park talking about Prairie and Forest restoration efforts? The City of Madison has received funding to contract out prairie and woodland restoration to supplement other work they do - and chose Arbor Hills this year because it has such a great potential to be high quality habitat. The large oak trees and southern facing hillside make it a good candidate for prairie and woodland restoration. Field and Stream won the bid and will be out doing weed management in the form of herbicide treatments for perennial invasive weeds, spot mowing, pulling and prescribed fire. The Parks Department team will follow up with seeding after the burn. Any questions? Contact Megan McCrumb, Ecology Leadworker, Madison Parks Division, Mmccrumb@cityofmadison.com



MADISON PARKS

Thank You to Larry Kruger

Have you noticed the beautiful blooms surrounding the sign as you drive into our neighborhood on Grandview Boulevard from the frontage road? They're there thanks to Larry Kruger, who plants, waters, and maintains the plants each spring and summer. If you see Larry around the neighborhood, thank him for his work!



BECOME A MEMBER FOR 2025

We hope you will consider becoming a member of the Arbor Hills Neighborhood Association in 2025! Membership dues pay for this printed newsletter, lighting of the neighborhood sign, insurance, neighborhood events, and more! Annual Budgets can be found on our website (arborhills.org).

To become a member: pay online at arborhills.org, use the PayPal App (just scan the QR code), or pay by cash or check and mail with payment to: Jackie Cooper, AHNA, 3314 Heatherdell Lane, Madison, 53713.

Thank you for supporting our neighborhood!



Membership year is October 1 through September 30

Seed - \$20



Covers the printing of 8 newsletters
OR half of the ice cream for our annual Independence Day picnic
OR 5% of the annual cost of lighting our neighborhood sign

Sapling - \$30



Covers the printing of 12 newsletters
OR a quarter of the hot dogs for our annual Independence Day picnic
OR three signs to advertise our events

Tree - \$50



Covers the printing of 20 newsletters
OR a quarter of the cost of a musician for Food Truck Night
OR a third of our annual website cost

Please complete and return this form with a check payable to **AHNA**.

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Last Name	Last Name
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Email Address	Email Address
Street Address	