ARBOR HILLS
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION



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

FALL 2026
NEWSLETTER

OH, WHAT A SUMMER!

A Look Back At Our Recent Events & Neighborhood Gatherings


















Fiesta De Sabores, Photo credit: Erich George

Make Music Madison, Photo credit: George Roesch Johnson

Mallards Game, Photo credit: Ashley Gibson & Erich George

4th of July Parade and Picnic, Photo credit: George Roesch Johnson

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE AHNA ANNUAL GATHERING!

Tuesday, October 13, 2026, from 6 to 8 p.m. at Arbor Good Neighbor House

It's almost time for one of our biggest events of the year: The AHNA Annual Gathering! This meeting gives you a chance to shape the future of our association, hear from community leaders, ask questions, and voice what's most important to you.

This year, we'll have **pizza, snacks, and refreshments** available for attendees, giving you an opportunity to mingle and munch before we start the meeting. We'll also offer **free childcare**. There will be activities and toys in the room adjacent to the meeting, run by a few Arbor Hills teens.

Here's a Quick Overview of the Lineup:

6 to 6:30 p.m. – Mingle & Munch: Join early to grab a bite and catch up with your neighbors.

6:30 to 8 p.m. – Meeting

AHNA Business: We'll recap the year, hold elections, and vote on the budget. (Don't worry, we'll keep the business part brief!)

News & Updates from Community Leaders: A few speakers will join to share updates about our community that affect our neighborhood. Last year, we heard from our Alder, Madison Police Department, Madison Schools & Community Recreation, the principal of Cherokee Middle School, and more. Expect another great lineup of speakers this year!

Q&A: This is your chance to ask questions of your elected representatives, board members, and other community leaders.

Check **arborhills.org/events** for more information and a detailed agenda as the event approaches, and reach out to **info@arborhills.org** with any questions.

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Summer has a way of bringing us all outside. I've been on many walks around the block and taken trips to Arbor Hills Park with my husband Ean, our two little boys, and our dog Charlie, and it's been such a joy to run into so many of you along the way. Whether you're brand new to Arbor Hills or you've called this neighborhood home for decades, we're glad you're here, and we're glad you're reading this newsletter.

A Big Thank You to Our Volunteers

I want to start by saying thank you. To our board members, our volunteers, and everyone who showed up to help make this one of our busiest and most memorable event seasons yet. We couldn't do any of this without you.

Our Food Truck Nights were a hit once again, bringing neighbors together over great food and even better company. We also introduced a brand-new event this year: Sabores y Sonidos (Flavors and Sounds) celebrating Latin American culture with wonderful live music from Los Americanos and food from the Morales Family Food Truck, which is owned by Arbor Hills neighbors. We did have one disappointment: despite our best efforts, we weren't able to secure a food truck for our planned Food Truck night in August, so that event was canceled. But even with that one hiccup, we still wrapped up the summer with a wonderful slate of events that brought so many members of our community together.

Of course, no summer would be complete without our Fourth of July Parade and Picnic. This event always takes an extra-large team to pull off the picnic, and this year was no different. Turnout was fantastic, and those who joined us had a wonderful time celebrating together.

One more summer highlight: our very first Mallards game outing as a neighborhood association! It was a beautiful afternoon at the ballpark, filled with burgers, drinks, and great conversation.

As we start looking ahead to next year, we want to hear from you. Food trucks have become harder to book, and we're brainstorming other low-effort, high-fun ways to bring the community together. Do you have an idea for an event you'd love to see in Arbor Hills? We'd love to hear it. **Send your ideas to info@arborhills.org**. Your input makes a big difference in forming our event calendar for next year!

Get Involved in Arbor Hills

If you've ever thought about getting more involved with the neighborhood association, there are a few ways to plug in, depending on how much time you have to give.

First, consider joining our board. It's just one meeting a month, plus a few responsibilities outside of the meetings. It's a fun way to get more involved and get to know the neighbors around you a little better. If a role on the board isn't the right fit right now, we'd also like to continue building our volunteer list of neighbors we can reach out to when we need extra hands for a specific event or task. It's about as low-commitment as it gets, and it's a wonderful way to help out on your own terms.

If you're interested in helping out, email us at info@arborhills.org.

Thank You to Our Members!

Finally, a heartfelt thank-you to our roughly 130 paying member households. Your support is what keeps our neighborhood association running. Membership is just $20 per household per year, and those dollars go directly toward creating the newsletter you're holding right now, hosting the events that bring us together, and supporting initiatives that make Arbor Hills an even better place to call home. Unfortunately our membership has declined in recent years and we're finding it tough to recruit additional members, despite our best efforts. So if you haven't become a member in 2026 - now is your final chance before we start the new membership year in October!

Not sure if your household is currently a member? Just email us at **info@arborhills.org** and we'll happily check for you. To join or renew, visit arborhills.org to pay online, or mail a check to our treasurer, Jackie Bastyr Cooper at 3314 Heatherdell Lane.



Thank you, as always, for being part of what makes Arbor Hills such a special place to live.

Ashley Gibson

President, Arbor Hills Neighborhood Association



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GET INVOLVED WITH LEOPOLD ELEMENTARY

By Justin Purcell, parent and president of the Leopold PFO

Did you know that Leopold Elementary is the district's largest elementary school, with more than 600 students in pre-kindergarten through 5th grade? Leopold serves a diverse community and offers both an English-language program and a dual English–Spanish language program. As a community school, Leopold helps families access the programs and services they need by connecting them with health and service providers, community partners, and local resources all in one centralized location.

The Parent Faculty Organization (PFO) invites you to join us in supporting Leopold and its students. We welcome your time and talents, whether you can make a one-time contribution or a regular commitment, as well as monetary or item donations.

Time – One-Time Commitments:

If you can contribute an hour here or there for a specific event, we'd love to hear from you! Have a particular talent or skill you'd like to share? Even better! We'd love to build a group of volunteers we can call on when an event needs an extra pair of hands.

Below are some of the events that will need volunteers during the upcoming school year. Once an event has a confirmed date, it is added to our Facebook page (**facebook.com/PFOLeopold**) and/or the events page on our website (**leopoldpfo.org/events**).

Latinx Festival – September/October.

Community Walk – October. Stand along the route and cheer students on!

STEM/STEAM – Large event in November, with smaller drop-in sessions each month

Black History Month – February. Evening celebration event, as well as 'Read Your Heart Out' (read to students) during the school day.

Tito Fest – May.

Time – Regular Commitment:

If you're interested in volunteering regularly at the school, there are many ways to get involved! To get started, volunteers must complete a background check as well as a required building safety video. The background check can be completed online within about 15 minutes, followed by a roughly 15-minute safety video. Visit **madison.k12.wi.us/partnerships/volunteering** to sign up.

Literacy Tutor – Read with students for one hour each week, spending approximately 20 minutes with each of three amazing students.

Math Tutor – Work with students in small groups, supporting both advanced math and students who need additional help.

Library – Help shelve books, update the collection inventory, and assist with other library tasks.

Walking Bus Route – Walk a predetermined route to provide students who live along that route with a safe and secure way to get to school.

Money:

If you would like to make a monetary donation, please scan the QR code below or contact **LeopoldPFOTreasurer@gmail.com**. The PFO uses donations to support school and community events, including Latinx Fest, STEM initiatives and events, and Tito Fest; show appreciation for teachers and staff, including providing meals during parent-teacher conference evenings; and fund student activities such as the school musical.

To donate to the Leopold PFO, scan this QR code:

Items – Purchased or Cooked/Baked/Crafted:

If you prefer to donate items, we could use school supplies such as glue sticks, pencils, pencil sharpeners, scissors, markers, dry-erase markers, cleaning wipes, and tissues. We also have a specific Amazon wish list at **bit.ly/LeopoldWishlist**. Additionally, we can always use nut-free snacks such as granola bars, fruit snacks, graham crackers, pretzels, and Cheez-Its. Snacks do not need to be individually wrapped.

If you prefer to bake, cook, or craft, we would love your help with teacher appreciation meals and gifts. It would be wonderful to have a group of volunteers we can call upon throughout the year.

If you're interested in any of these opportunities to support Leopold or want to learn more, please reach out to me at **LeopoldPFO@gmail.com**.

Thank you for your continued support of our community school. We greatly appreciate all the help that the Arbor Hills community has provided to Leopold over the years!

ARBOR HILLS ZOO?

A Brief Anecdote from Our Neighborhood's History

By Jim Cortada, neighborhood historian and former AHNA President

Yes, we could have had an elephant strolling up Grandview Boulevard or a giraffe eating oak leaves in our park.

In the 1950s, Arbor Hills was out in the country, across the road that would someday become the Beltline. The neighborhood was little more than a gleam in the eyes of a half dozen land developers, while cows grazed next to what would become Grandview Boulevard. Meanwhile, Vilas Zoo in Madison had been open since 1911 and had been popular for nearly forty years.

But by the 1950s, Vilas Zoo had some problems. Although the zoo was popular, it was running out of room and could not easily expand. It crowded nearby neighborhoods, and its long-term prospects seemed limited by its relatively small footprint. Meanwhile, Madison's population was growing, just as it is today, and the demand for a zoo capable of handling more visitors had become increasingly obvious.

Discussions about the zoo's future eventually led to consideration of whether it should be expanded at its existing location or relocated to a larger site. According to local accounts, Arbor Hills was one possibility considered in the 1950s. The area was much larger, had almost no houses, was inexpensive compared with developed neighborhoods, and would eventually be accessible from the Beltline at Todd Drive. It was close to downtown, easy to reach, and would allow plenty of room for future expansion.

Local officials explored the possibility of relocating the zoo, even considering what it might cost to move to a larger site. There were potential benefits for the Vilas area, too, because the neighborhood could eventually expand onto the zoo's existing land. But the cost of relocating the zoo competed with other urban development needs in the region, and the idea was ultimately set aside.

Before long, development in Arbor Hills and the surrounding area would make relocating the zoo there increasingly impractical. Construction of houses began near what is today's Frontage Road and Grandview Boulevard at one end of Arbor Hills, and almost simultaneously near Todd Drive and Churchill at the other end. By the end of the 1970s, Arbor Hills had built nearly all of its houses, duplexes, and apartments. Other neighborhoods and commercial centers near the Beltline continued to appear, closing off the options for relocating the zoo nearby.

The zoo remains where it is today. And that's why there are no elephants or giraffes in Arbor Hills—only squirrels, rabbits, and turkeys.

ONE TEAM–MANY SEASONS: UNDERSTANDING THE COMPLEXITY OF MADISON STREETS SERVICES

By Alder Yannette Figueroa Cole, District 10

Every season brings a different challenge for Madison's Streets Division. Residents often see one service at a time: garbage day, leaf collection, snow plowing, street sweeping, or brush pickup. What is less visible is that these services are performed by the same workforce, rotating throughout the year to meet changing seasonal needs.

A Fixed Workforce Serving a Growing City

Madison continues to grow, but the Streets Division still operates with a relatively fixed workforce. Rather than maintaining separate crews for every seasonal task, employees rotate between assignments throughout the year. This approach provides flexibility and allows the City to deliver dozens of services using one dedicated team. It also means that weather events, employee absences, and seasonal demands can quickly affect schedules.

One Team, Many Responsibilities

155 Staff

Out of 175 Fixed Budgeted Staff

- About 20 employees may be unavailable because of vacation, sick leave, family leave, training, or other absences.
- These services continue regardless of weather, season, or emergencies.

34 Staff

Routine Collection Services

- Garbage collection
- Recycling collection
- Large item pickup

30 Staff

Other Essential Functions

- Drop-off sites, Urban forestry operations, Transfer stations
- Right-of-way & Cart maintenance, Graffiti removal
- Parks work-sharing assignments

The Challenge of Seasonal Work

Workforce
As the seasons change, employees rotate to where they are needed most. The same employees perform many of these jobs throughout the year.

Spring
Spring brings yard waste collection, brush pickup, stump work, and street sweeping.

Summer
Summer focuses on mowing, street repairs, tree work, and brush collection.

Fall
The City's largest seasonal operation: leaf collection.

Winter
Shifts large portions of the workforce to snow and ice operations.

Why Leaf Collection Is So Complicated

Leaf collection may appear simple from the curb, but it is one of the most complicated operations the Streets Division performs. During October, approximately 70 employees are assigned to leaf collection. In November, that number grows to approximately 86 employees.

At the same time, the City must continue:

- Garbage collection
- Recycling collection
- Large item pickup
- Transfer station operations
- Street sweeping
- Tree work
- Emergency response
- Equipment maintenance

In November Alone, Staffing Demands Can Include:

- 86 employees collecting leaves
- 15 employees street sweeping
- 5 employees performing street repairs
- 34 employees collecting garbage, recycling, and large items
- More than 30 employees supporting other essential services

These demands can exceed the number of employees available on a given day.

When Winter Arrives Early

Leaf collection becomes even more difficult because it occurs during Wisconsin's most unpredictable weather season. Early snowstorms often arrive before all leaves have fallen. When winter storms occur, employees assigned to leaf collection must immediately transition to snow and ice operations. Streets must prioritize:

- Keeping roads open
- Treating icy conditions
- Clearing snow routes
- Responding to emergencies

Leaf routes may be delayed, interrupted, or adjusted because public safety becomes the highest priority. **This is why leaf collection schedules sometimes change after major weather events.**

How Residents Can Help

Residents can play an important role in reducing pressure on fall collection operations.

Compost Leaves at Home

Leaves can be composted in backyard bins or used as mulch around gardens and trees.

Mulch Leaves with a Lawn Mower

Shredded leaves return nutrients to lawns and reduce the volume that must be collected.

Use Leaves in Garden Beds

Leaves provide insulation and organic material for gardens and landscaping

Bring Leaves to Drop-Off Sites

Residents can transport leaves directly to Streets Division drop-off sites during the fall season.

Reduce Yard Waste

Leaving grass clippings on lawns and composting organic materials helps reduce collection demands.

One Team. Many Tasks. One Goal.

Behind every garbage cart, leaf pile, snowstorm, and swept street is the same dedicated workforce.

The Streets Division adjusts continuously throughout the year to meet changing seasonal needs, respond to weather events, and maintain essential services for residents.

The work changes with the seasons, but the goal remains the same: keeping Madison clean, safe, and moving forward every day of the year.

It is my sincere hope that this [article] helps put into perspective the complexity of the services provided by the Streets Division. [Compiling this information] was a fun learning experience, but no easy task, and it would not have been possible without the many conversations I had with a couple of seasoned Streets veterans who patiently answered my countless questions.

Please join me in extending an enormous thank you for their knowledge, guidance, and support.

The Streets & Urban Forestry website (**cityofmadison.com/streets**) is an excellent source of information about services, schedules, and seasonal operations. I encourage everyone to subscribe to their updates and stay informed throughout the year.

Gracias for reading and sharing!

Yannette




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2026 GENERAL ELECTION VOTER INFORMATION

Tuesday, November 3, 2026 | Polls Open: 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Polling Location: Visit myvote.wi.gov/Find-My-Polling-Place

It's time to start thinking about how you want to complete your ballot, whether it be on Election day, mailed absentee, in-person absentee, or absentee drop box.

myvote.wi.gov is the resource for all election-related things!

Check the Status of Your Registration

Ensure that you are registered to vote for the upcoming election
myvote.wi.gov/My-Voter-Info

Register to Vote Online

Change of name? Move recently? Register to vote online! It's a quick and simple process
myvote.wi.gov/Register-To-Vote

Voting Absentee

It's ok to prefer to vote on your own time. Skip the lines and have your absentee ballot mailed to you,
myvote.wi.gov/Vote-Absentee-By-Mail.

Be sure to comply with all instructions to complete and return your ballot in a timely manner,
myvote.wi.gov/Vote-Absentee-Guide.

The City Clerk's Office recommends voters to utilize the drop boxes located throughout Madison. If returning your ballot by mail, plan to send it at least one week beforehand. A list of drop box locations are available on the Clerk's website, **cityofmadison.com/clerk.**

For updates, be sure to follow
@MadisonWIClerk

What's on the Ballot?

Visit **myvote.wi.gov/Whats-On-My-Ballot** for the most up-to date information.

- **Executive and Federal Offices**
  - Governor and Lieutenant Governor.
  - Attorney General, Secretary of State, and State Treasurer: All constitutional executive offices are up for election.
  - U.S. House of Representatives: All 8 of Wisconsin's seats in the U.S. House are up for election.
- **State Legislative Races**
  - Wisconsin State Senate: The 17 odd-numbered district seats are up for election.
  - Wisconsin State Assembly: All 99 seats in theState Assembly are on the ballot.
- **Statewide Constitutional Amendments**
  - Three legislatively referred constitutional amendments are certified for the November ballot.

Election Deadlines at a Glance

OCT 14 — **Deadline to Register to Vote by Mail or Online – 11:59 p.m.**

Online and mail-in registration must be completed by this date. Afterward, you must register in person at the municipal clerk's office or at your polling place.

OCT 20 — **In-Person Absentee Voting Begins**

Vote absentee in person at the clerk's office or another designated location up to 14 days before an election. Locations and hours vary. Check with the City Clerk or visit
myvote.wi.gov/Vote-Absentee-In-Person

OCT 29 — **Absentee Ballot Request Deadline – 5 p.m. (CST)**

Regular and overseas voters must request an absentee. Requests may be submitted by mail, online, email, or fax.

OCT 30 — **In-Person Voter Registration Deadline – 5 p.m.**

Voters must register by this date at the municipal clerk's office or another designated registration location.

NOV 3 — **2026 General Election Day – 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.**

As long as you are in line by 8 p.m., you have the right to vote.

WHO ARE MY REPRESENTATIVES?

Senator Kelda Roys, Senate District 26
legis.wisconsin.gov/senate/26/roys
sen.roys@legis.wisconsin.gov
(608) 266-1627

Representative Renuka Mayadev, Assembly District 77
legis.wisconsin.gov/assembly/77/mayadev
Rep.Mayadev@legis.wisconsin.gov
(608) 237-9177

Alder Yannette Figueroa Cole, District 10
cityofmadison.com/council/district10
district10@cityofmadison.com
(608) 318-3838

Matt Veldran, Dane County Supervisors, District 4
board.danecounty.gov/supervisors/detail/4
veldran.matt@danecounty.gov
(608) 235-8369

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UPCOMING AHNA EVENTS

arborhills.org/events

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13

Annual Gathering & Celebration
Arbor Good Neighbor House | 2509 McDivitt Rd.
6 to 6:30 p.m. – Pizza, snacks, refreshments
6:30 to 8 p.m. – Meeting

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1

Holiday Decoration Contest
Arbor Hills Neighborhood
- Throughout the month of December
- Judging by the 14th

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25

Halloween Parade & Trunk-or-Treat
Corner of Grandview & Kingston to Arbor Hills Park
4 to 5 p.m.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5

Cookie Decorating
Arbor Good Neighbor House | 2509 McDivitt Rd.
2 to 4 p.m.



BECOME A MEMBER FOR 2027

We hope you will consider becoming a member of the Arbor Hills Neighborhood Association in 2027! 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	Sapling - $30	Tree - $50
☐	☐	☐
Covers the printing of 8 newsletters	Covers the printing of 12 newsletters	Covers the printing of 20 newsletters
OR half of the ice cream for our annual Independence Day picnic	*OR* a quarter of the hot dogs for our annual Independence Day picnic	*OR* a quarter of the cost of a musician for Food Truck Night
OR 5% of the annual cost of lighting our neighborhood sign	*OR* three signs to advertise our events	*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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Street Address	