

FOCUS ON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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



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Dear Friends,

As I reflect on the past year, I am quite proud of our accomplishments, and I am certain that 2012 will be equally as bright.

2011 was a year of great change in Wisconsin government. A new governor and legislature took office in January and passed Wisconsin Act 10, along with a two-year budget that eliminated a \$3.6 billion state budget deficit. The outstanding team of employees we have assembled at Waukesha County was very successful implementing the enacted changes.

Also this year we completed several major road projects including the widening of Silver Spring Drive in Menomonee Falls, and the roundabout at CTH V and Good Hope Road on the border of Lisbon and Lannon. In addition, we upgraded the signal and completed safety improvements at the Racine Avenue and Woods Road intersection and completed the much anticipated CTH X project in Waukesha.

In the summer, we launched a new County website. The changes were made to make the website more user-friendly and provide useful links in easy to find locations.

In the fall, the County Board passed my proposed budget, which froze the County portion of the 2012 tax bill for most residents. To do this, Waukesha County reduced the operating budget by 1.4% and personnel costs by 2%. Seeking partnerships between departments, other governments and the private sector to implement efficiencies and ultimately save tax dollars has been integral in maintaining Waukesha County's strong fiscal health.

I am very proud of Waukesha County and all of our accomplishments. We are one of the fastest growing counties in the state, we have the lowest per capita spending of any county and are AAA/Aaa Bond rated. We balance our budgets and respect the Waukesha County taxpayer. We can feel confident moving forward into 2012 and beyond that Waukesha County is on rock solid footing.

Sincerely,

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WAUKESHA COUNTY RECEIVES EXCELLENCE IN FINANCIAL REPORTING AWARD

Waukesha County has received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting Award from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for its comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR). This year marks the 24th consecutive year that Waukesha County has received this award.

The award, according to the GFOA, “is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.”

This award helps Waukesha County achieve a AAA/aaa bond rating, year after year, by Moody’s Investors Service and Fitch Ratings. This bond rating, the highest rating possible, helps the County save taxpayers money by allowing the County to pay lower interest rates on loans to fund highway and other capital projects each year.

The GFOA, located in Chicago, is a non-profit organization that assesses government financial professionals throughout the United States and Canada. The Distinguished Budget Presentation Awards Program is the only award of its kind in North America.

MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY

Waukesha County, in collaboration with several other organizations, will once again present a series of events, titled “Live the Dream,” celebrating and commemorating the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

A January 16th luncheon will celebrate, recognize, and share the best practices of our business and community organizations in championing Dr. King’s dream of diversity acceptance. It will be held at Waukesha County Technical College and will include a panel discussion of organizations who have exemplified these principles. Tickets for the luncheon are \$30 per person and attendees can register at: www.waukesha.org.

Prior to the Lead the Dream luncheon, at WCTC from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., a virtual tour titled “Riding with Rosa” featuring six local non-profits will be premiered. Participants will travel, via video, to non-profit agencies promoting Dr. King’s vision of service to the Waukesha County community.

On Monday, January 23rd, WCTC will host middle school leaders for a program exploring leadership and diversity issues that tie into Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s vision. This year’s program, titled Rachel’s Challenge, is about Rachel Scott, the first person killed at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999. Powerful video/audio footage of Rachel’s life holds students spell-bound during a one hour presentation that motivates them to positive change in the way they treat others. RSVP by January 16, 2012, by calling 262-691-5302.

A countywide food drive and service project around Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day will inspire youth to serve their communities and raise awareness about hunger in Waukesha County. The United Way in Waukesha County will be assisting school districts throughout the County as they coordinate food drives between January 9th and 27th. Through this project, youth will be empowered to solve community problems and create lasting change.

For more information on the Live the Dream initiative, or any of the events, please visit http://www.wctc.edu/live_the_dream.

“Waukesha County: Leading the Way ...”

RIBBON CUTTING

Last week, County Executive Dan Vrakas was joined by County Board Chairman Jim Dwyer, County Supervisors Dave Swan and Fritz Ruf, members of the Waukesha County Public Works Department and contractors for two ribbon cuttings for newly completed highway projects.

The first ribbon cutting was for the roundabout located at the intersection of Good Hope Road and County Highway V on the boarder of Lisbon and Lannon.

Previously, this intersection was hidden by a hill which caused many accidents. The design team decided that a roundabout was the best solution to reduce the crashes and keep the traffic flowing for years to come. An estimated 10,000 cubic yards of earth was moved to lower the hill and raise up the elevation of the intersection to make it safer. The beautiful, new roundabout is complete with room for bike lanes and for pedestrians to cross.

The second ribbon cutting was for a newly reconstructed and widened Silver Spring Drive in Menomonee Falls.

During the reconstruction of this road, it was important to minimize disruptions to Kohl's corporate center employees, local businesses and the public using this very busy roadway. An interim 3-week closure allowed fast track construction of cross culverts and portions of storm sewers. A new traffic signal, sidewalks and bicycle paths were added for safety.

WAUKESHA JANBOREE

Waukesha County Parks will once again be partnering with the City of Waukesha to host Waukesha JanBoree events in County Parks the weekend of January 21-22. Below is sampling of some of this year's events. For a full list of events visit www.waukeshacountyparks.com.

- On Saturday, January 21, Eble Park Ice Arena in Brookfield will be hosting free ice skating from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Later that evening, from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., the Ice Arena will be hosting a Teen Skate Night geared for 13-17 year olds.
- Sunday, January 22, Minooka Park in Waukesha will waive the park entrance fee for the day. JanBoree activities include an ice-fishing clinic at the beach area from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- On Sunday at Minooka Park, enjoy a horse-drawn wagon ride around the Minooka Pond from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Also at Picnic Area 3, the Alaskan Malamute Club of Wisconsin will host a dog pull starting at 11.
- Picnic Area 1 of Minooka Park will host a 1 or 2 kilometer cross-country ski race for children ages 3 to 11, starting at 1:30 p.m. All skill levels and abilities are welcome. Awards will be given to all participants.
- Retzer Nature Center will host both indoor and outdoor activities on Sunday. From 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. there will be various indoor children's activities or you can hike the nature trails with free use of snowshoes for the day. A "Bird Feeding" program will be held at 11:00 a.m. & 1:15 p.m. and a "Winter Animal Tracking" program with slides and an outdoor activity will be held at noon and 2:30 p.m. The Charles Horwitz Planetarium will be playing the "Orion: The Great Hunter" show for free at select show times.



Waukesha County Parks have hosted JanBoree events for over 15 years.

“Waukesha County: Leading the Way ...”

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WAUKESHA COUNTY SUBSIDIZED TRANSPORTATION

The Aging and Disability Resource Center of Waukesha County is pleased to announce that there is a new shared fare taxi provider in Waukesha County. Waukesha Cab LLC can be reached at 262-613-8595. They cover greater Waukesha and operate Monday –Saturday. For complete details of their service, please call them directly. Waukesha Cab joins eight other taxi services in Waukesha County that partner with the ADRC to transport seniors over 65 and adults with disabilities. The ADRC helps with passenger subsidy for the rides. Please call the Aging and Disability Resource Center 262-548-7848 for an application or to ask questions regarding the Shared Fare Taxis, RideLine Program, or Shuttle Programs within the County.

In addition, the ADRC would like to announce that Ann Marie Ryan Taxi is no longer operating the shared fare taxi program.

If you have any other transportation questions, contact the Aging and Disability Resource Center of Waukesha County at (262) 548-7848.



**Follow County
Executive Dan
Vrakas on Twitter!**

**Username:
CoExecDanVrakas**

AUTOMATED VEHICLE LOCATION SYSTEM TECHNOLOGY

Last year, Waukesha County installed its snowplow fleet with an Automated Vehicle Location (AVL) System Technology. This unique unit has the ability to better control the use of vehicles, employees and salt when faced with a winter storm. Below is an outline of some of features provided by AVL technology.

- **Vehicle Information:** Truck Speed, Direction, Plow, Wing Up/Down, Salt Set Rate, Pavement and Air Temperature, Odometer, Hours, and Voltage
- **Mapping Abilities:** Specific information on vehicle location, truck proximity to an accident site, quickest route to an accident site
- **Material Usage Report:** Amount of salt, or another material, use on a specific road or during a specific event
- **Fleet Summary Report:** Total vehicle usage hours, vehicle idle time, plow up versus plow down time, time engine is spent on or off

“Waukesha County: Leading the Way ...”