

FOCUS ON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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



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Dear Friends,

This month we celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King gave his life in service to and for the rights of others. He had a dream where neighbors would live together in harmony and love and support one another.

In the spirit of and commemoration for Dr. King, I encourage all to use the day as a call to service to others. Waukesha County is a very successful county with a household income higher than the state average and an unemployment rate lower than the state average; however, due to the current recession and high unemployment rate nationwide, more and more families in Waukesha County are in need of support.

Each of us has the opportunity to help our neighbors in need. I am very proud of Waukesha County and the countless organizations and individuals that give their time and their resources in service to others. It is because of these organizations and individuals that we are as successful as we are, but these organizations need your time, talents and resources to support their activities.

I encourage you to support our local organizations this month and always. The Volunteer Center of Waukesha County provides a listing of volunteer opportunities Countywide. You can access this list by visiting www.volunteerwaukesha.com.

Sincerely,

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Public Health nurses Michelle Skinner and Kim Babel at a recent H1N1 Vaccination Clinic.

H1N1 Vaccination Clinic Update

Over the course of the last several months, Waukesha County has immunized nearly 14,000 adults and children in Waukesha County with the H1N1 vaccine. Many months of planning, hours of hard work and hundreds of volunteers have worked to make these clinics a success. Faced with the difficult task of orchestrating such a large operation, these individuals put their best effort forward week after week and did it with a smile on their face.

Waukesha County residents have been very patient and cooperative during this process. At times, lines to receive the vaccine were long, but residents patiently waited and treated the clinic volunteers with courtesy and respect.

Waukesha County will hold additional public vaccination clinics on Thursday, January 21st and 28th from 2 to 6 p.m. Information on these clinics can be found on the County website at www.waukeshacounty.gov/pandemicflu.

Department of Veterans Affairs and the ADRC Merge with Health and Human Services

As of January 1, the Departments of Health and Human Services, Veterans Affairs and the Aging and Disability Resource Center have merged into a single department in order to make the delivery of services more efficient and provide citizens with a single entry point to receive access to services. By merging these departments, the County will be able to streamline service delivery to provide optimal coordination of benefits and services for County residents.

The fastest growing population in Waukesha County is residents over sixty; because of this, Waukesha County is taking necessary steps to ensure that we are in a position to serve seniors with the best care possible in the most efficient way. This reorganization will provide seniors and those with disabilities with even greater support. Additionally, it is estimated that we will be welcoming back home many veterans who served our county in Iraq and Afghanistan in the coming years. By merging departments, residents will have access to the full service offerings of the ADRC, Departments of Health and Human Services and Veterans Affairs. This merger is a step in the right direction for the continuation of providing outstanding care for Waukesha County residents.



County Executive Vrakas and Supervisor Paulson shake hands outside the Aging and Disability Resource Center Building.

“Waukesha County: Leading the Way ...”

WAUKESHA JANBOREE

On Saturday, January 23rd, **Eble Park Ice Arena** will host free ice skating. Skate rental is available for \$2.50, however, there is a limited quantity, so if you have your own, please bring them.

On Sunday, January 24th the **Minooka Park** entrance fee will be waived for the day. JanBoree activities include an ice-fishing clinic, a dog pulling competition and a children's cross-country ski race. The sledding hill and dog exercise area will be open as usual.

On Sunday, **Retzer Nature Center** is hosting indoor children's activities and will provide free use of snowshoes. There will be "Bird Feeding" and "Winter Animal Tracking" programs. You can also enjoy the Charles Horwitz Planetarium show "Legends of the Winter Sky". Show times are every hour starting at 9 a.m. with the last show at 3 p.m. The 45 minute show is free, and tickets will be issued in the lobby starting at 9 a.m.

Sunday will provide another opportunity for free ice skating at **Naga-Waukee Ice Arena** in Delafield from 3 to 5 p.m. Skate rental is available for \$2.50 a pair, but attendees are encouraged to bring their own.

For additional information about Waukesha County Park System JanBoree events call 548-7801 or log onto www.waukeshacountyparks.com.



Retzer Nature Center on a beautiful winter day.

ENJOY WINTER IN A WAUKESHA COUNTY PARK

Winter is a great time to get out and explore the different Waukesha County Parks. The County parks offer many opportunities for families to enjoy outdoor winter activities. Waukesha County Parks have over 25 miles of groomed and tracked cross-country ski trails, four sledding hills, and nine park locations that allow snowshoeing and winter hiking.

For cross-country skiing enthusiasts, ski trails are located within Menomonee Park in Menomonee Falls; Minooka Park, in Waukesha and Nashotah Park.

Snowshoeing is one of the fastest-growing winter sports. People are using snowshoes for a variety of activities - from hiking into pristine wilderness and aerobic conditioning to pure recreation with family and friends. Snowshoes are available for rent at Retzer Nature Center and snowshoeing opportunities are available at Fox River Park, in Waukesha, Muskego Park, and Retzer Nature Center in Waukesha.

Revert to your childhood and get that sled and snow tube out from hibernation and hit the hills at Menomonee Park, Minooka Park, Mukwonago Park or Nashotah Park.

All Waukesha County Parks are open from sunrise to 10:00 p.m. and the daily park entrance fee or annual sticker is required on all vehicles. The weekday entrance fee is \$3.00 and the weekend fee is \$5.00 per car. Visit www.waukeshacountyparks.com for more information.

“Waukesha County: Leading the Way ...”

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WAUKESHA COUNTY DRUG FREE COMMUNITIES

Waukesha County Drug Free Communities (DFC) is seeking community members with an interest in drug abuse prevention to join their coalition. The DFC program is a federal effort to reduce youth substance abuse of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Waukesha County received a federal grant to support the DFC's initiatives. The coalition is comprised of more than 80 members and residents representing a number of partnering agencies including schools, healthcare professionals, law enforcement, media, parents, youth, state and local agencies and civic and volunteer groups.

If you are interested in joining or learning more about the coalition you are encouraged to attend the group's February meeting or contact the group by emailing drugfreecommunities@waukeshacounty.gov. The February meeting will be held on February 12 from 8:30 to 10:00 a.m. in Room 155 of the Waukesha County Administration Building, located at 515 W. Moreland Blvd in Waukesha.



The Waukesha County DFC collected over 3,000 pounds of unwanted medication at a highly successful drug collection in October.

ARE YOU PREPARED FOR WINTER DRIVING?

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) provides the latest road conditions on their website www.511wi.gov. The DOT also provides a hotline with the same information. If you are planning to travel in winter weather conditions, call 511 in advance.

It is also important to make sure your vehicle includes a storm survival kit. Items to keep in your vehicle include a warm blanket, a flashlight with extra batteries, a first aid kit, shovel and windshield scraper. It is also recommended to keep non-perishable food in your car and sand or cat litter to use for traction.

For information on Waukesha County road closures and recommended alternate routes visit the Waukesha County website at www.waukeshacounty.gov and click on the "Waukesha County Road Closures" icon on the homepage.



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