



# VILLAGE OF MAPLE BLUFF

neighborhood news

*March 2025*



The 3-4th Grade Girls Basketball program had the opportunity to be anthem buddies at the University of Wisconsin Women's Basketball game on February 9th.



## Calendar of Events

### March 2025

- 11 Building Board
- 11 Village Board
- 20 Municipal Court
- 25 April Building Board Materials Due

### April 2025

- 8 Building Board
- 8 Village Board
- 15 Plan Commission / Public Hearing
- 17 Municipal Court

## Village Board

**President** Kevin O'Driscoll  
kodriscoll@villageofmaplebluff.com

**Trustee** Eric McLeod  
emcleod@villageofmaplebluff.com

**Trustee** Kristine Jaeger  
kjaeger@villageofmaplebluff.com

**Trustee** Ellen Reyerson  
ereyerson@villageofmaplebluff.com

**Trustee** Greg Engle  
gengle@villageofmaplebluff.com

**Trustee** Jim Schuler  
jschuler@villageofmaplebluff.com

**Trustee** Mike Wittenwyler  
mwittenwyler@villageofmaplebluff.com

## Trash/Recycling

MARCH '25						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
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30	31					

APRIL '25						
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MAY '25						
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25	26	27	28	29	30	31



## A Message from Village President Kevin O'Driscoll

I am honored and grateful for the opportunity to serve as Village President for another term. Thank you for your trust and support. I am also energized by the dedicated residents stepping forward to run for Trustee in this year's election. A special thank you to Jim Schuler, who continues his service to the Village and has dedicated tireless efforts to the Zoning Code re-write. Eric McLeod, who was appointed to fill Lindsay Campbell's seat until the election, brings valuable experience and leadership to the Board. With Jim and Eric—both past Village Presidents—we are fortunate to have their knowledge and passion guiding our community. Rounding out the list of five outstanding candidates are Lilly Bickers, Laura Peck, and Scott Robinson, each offering unique perspectives and a commitment to serving the Village.

Over the past six months, we have seen several long-term Village Hall staff members transition into new chapters. Rene Dopkins and Donna Schoor retired after many years of service, and we wish them both joy and fulfillment in retirement. Fire Chief Kris Loy and Recreation Director Curt Erickson moved on to new professional opportunities, bringing their talents to McFarland and Mazomanie. Their leadership has left a lasting impact, and we thank them for their dedication.

With new faces come fresh ideas and opportunities, and we are excited about the talented individuals stepping into these critical roles. Fire Chief Trent Brass is leading an assessment of our Fire and EMS services, ensuring we continue to meet the needs of the Village. Rachel Danz has stepped in as Deputy Clerk & Deputy Treasurer on an interim basis, bringing enthusiasm, a keen eye for detail, and a fresh perspective to front office operations.

Sarah Danz continues to be an indispensable part of our Village operations. Her knowledge, professionalism, and "can-do" attitude keep everything running smoothly, and she provides an unparalleled level of service to residents, the Board, and staff. Her dedication does not go unnoticed, and I want to take a moment to recognize just how much she contributes to the Village.

Our Police Department, led by Chief Tanner Nystrom, remains committed to keeping Maple Bluff safe. Sergeant Jay Sudgen, who has served for over 25 years, continues to lead with experience and dedication. While we said goodbye to Officer Matt DerManuelian, MBPD's reputation allows us to continue attracting highly qualified officers eager to serve this community.



Public Works, led by Tom Schroeder and Paul Elliott, continues to ensure the Village is well-maintained and beautiful. Tom's engineering expertise and deep knowledge of our infrastructure make him an invaluable asset, and Paul's dedication to service is evident in the care they put into every project. Their work may not always be visible, but the results certainly are.

This year also marks five years of service from Village Administrator & Police Chief Tanner Nystrom. Tanner continues to wear many hats—Administrator, Chief of Police, Zoning Administrator, and more—all while maintaining a steady focus on the well-being and security of the Village. His judgment and leadership have helped navigate challenges and position Maple Bluff for continued success.

I feel incredibly fortunate to serve alongside such dedicated staff, Board members, and candidates. The passion and expertise of those who step up to serve this Village are truly inspiring.

Best of luck to all our Trustee nominees—I look forward to working with you over the next two years!

Warm regards,

Kevin O'Driscoll,  
*Village President*

**Meet The Trustee Nominees  
towards the end of this  
newsletter!**



## Transitions & Exciting Changes Ahead *By Tanner A. Nystrom*

As we move further into 2025, I want to take a moment to recognize some important changes happening within the Village and express my sincere gratitude to the people who help keep Maple Bluff running smoothly.

First, I thank our residents who came to say a heartfelt farewell to Rene Dopkins, who dedicated 24 years of service to the Maple Bluff community. Over the years, Rene has been a key part of our front office, assisting residents, managing municipal court operations, and helping keep Village business moving – she even spent time as an EMT for the Village many years ago. We are grateful for her hard work and commitment, and while we will certainly miss her, we wish her all the best in her next chapter.

At the same time, I'm pleased to welcome Natalie Scheer to the team as our LTE Programming and Event Support Specialist. Natalie has been part of our Fire Intern Program, and we're thrilled she has stepped up to assist with managing events and recreation programming while we actively recruit for a Municipal Services & Recreation Director. Her experience, energy, and willingness to take on new challenges will help ensure that our community programs remain strong during this transition.

I want to also congratulate Rachel Danz on her interim appointment by the Village Board as Deputy Clerk and Deputy Treasurer. Rachel has already made a great impact in the front office, and we are incredibly fortunate to

have her at such a critical time. She has proven to be versatile, quick to learn, and highly capable, taking on responsibilities with confidence and professionalism.

These qualities are making an immediate difference as we work to fill this position permanently, and we are grateful for her dedication and assistance in ensuring a smooth transition.

With these multiple personnel changes happening at once, I want to thank you—our residents—for your patience and support as we bring new team members on board and work to strengthen our Village services. Change always brings challenges, but it also brings exciting opportunities. We are committed to ensuring a smooth transition, and I'm confident that the steps we are taking now will help build an even stronger future for Maple Bluff.

As always, I appreciate being part of this incredible community, and I look forward to all we will accomplish together in the months ahead.

Sincerely,  
Tanner A. Nystrom



### NEW HIRE: Natalie Scheer

Natalie Scheer has been hired as the Programming and Event Support Specialist for the Village. She will take on planning the Village programs and events including Concerts in the Park, Camp-Ya-Gotta-Wanna, Arts and Athletics, and Bocce Ball. Furthermore, Natalie will be overseeing facility rentals and Parks and Recreation's seasonal employees.

Natalie has worked for the Village for the past 1 ½ years as a Maple Bluff Fire Department Intern and attended Madison College as a full-time student in the Fire Protection Degree Program. She will be graduating from the Internship and Madison College in June of this year. In addition to working for the Village, Natalie has worked as a children's swim instructor and a lifeguard in pool and triathlon settings.

Born in Madison, Natalie has lived much of her life on Madison's West Side. Additionally, Natalie and her family lived in the Village on Kensington Drive from 2013 to 2014. When not at work, Natalie enjoys being outdoors and spending quality time with her family. She is excited to take on a new role within the Village and continue to serve the Maple Bluff community.

For questions regarding Parks & Recreation Programs, Open Gym, Seasonal Employment, Rentals, and Village Events, please contact Natalie Scheer at [nscheer@villageofmaplebluff.com](mailto:nscheer@villageofmaplebluff.com)



Natalie and her younger cousin  
Jackson Rehberg

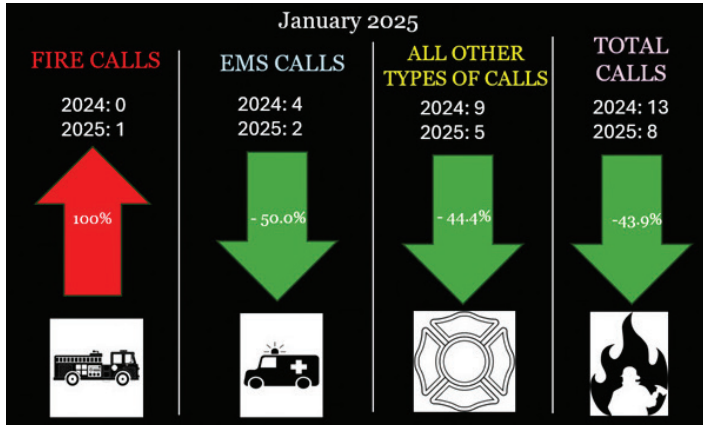
9-year-old Natalie at the  
Village's Beach Park





## Maple Bluff Fire Rescue

### By the Numbers



It's hard to believe that spring is just around the corner! Daylight saving time will begin on March 9, 2025. The Maple Bluff Fire Rescue Department wants to remind the community to check their smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.

If your home has battery-operated smoke or carbon monoxide alarms, it is time to change the batteries. Hard-wired smoke detectors may also have a battery backup, so it is important to change those backup batteries as well. Many new alarms come with batteries that last up to 10 years. After 10 years, the entire smoke detectors will need to be replaced. It is also recommended to test all detectors every month. While testing your smoke alarm, conducting a fire exit drill with all family members is a great practice. Ready.gov is an excellent resource for learning about creating a home fire escape plan and preparing for all disasters and emergencies.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, smoke detectors save lives and play a vital role in reducing fire-related deaths and injuries. Here are some important statistics regarding smoke alarms:

- Almost three out of every five home fire deaths occur in homes that lack smoke alarms or have non-working smoke alarms.
- The risk of dying in a home fire is cut in half in homes with functioning smoke alarms.
- Smoke alarms provide early warning and additional time to escape during a fire, increasing your chance of survival by 50%.

For additional information on changing your clocks and smoke detector batteries, visit the National Fire Protection Association's website at <https://bit.ly/2O3L6ff>. If you have any questions, please contact the Maple Bluff Fire Rescue Department at (608) 244-3048.

## SPRING FORWARD ONE HOUR Daylight Savings Time

**SPRING FORWARD SAFELY:** This is also a good time to test your smoke alarms and change replaceable batteries, if needed.





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PHOTO: Rudy Mamquist



## WELCOME TO MADISON'S STATE-OF-THE-ART PET CLINIC, ISTHMUS VETERINARY CARE

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## Department of Public Works

*By Tom Schroeder*

Dear Village Residents,

We have a significant water department project underway that will continue until completion. This includes the renewal of our aging water meter reading heads, field collection equipment, billing software, and more. While we've made good progress, we need to accelerate our efforts. You will receive detailed information on who, what, where, when, why, and how this project will unfold. The success of this upgrade depends on acquiring and installing the necessary hardware, and your participation in the installation process will be crucial. We appreciate your cooperation and look forward to improving our system.

Winter took an extended vacation through December and January, but February brought it back in full force. We've seen a modest amount of snow, some freezing rain, and plenty of cold. Thank you to those who keep your sidewalk and driveway snow on your own property. Unfortunately, some service providers push driveway snow into the street, creating problems for neighbors. Please remind your snow removal service that this is prohibited under Ordinance 192-6 B.

During the slower winter months, we focused on cleaning and restoring the appearance of the Village Center entrance floor and the Beach House floors, bathrooms, and kitchen. Regular maintenance is essential to keeping these spaces clean and inviting.

By the time you receive this newsletter, our tree maintenance and removal efforts should be underway. We've been pruning young trees and lifting the lower branches of struggling spruce trees. Colorado Spruce, in particular, don't thrive in our humidity, but raising the canopy should help—time will tell.

Though winter may linger a bit longer, we're already looking ahead to spring. Groundhog predictions are only 30-40% accurate, so don't put too much stock in them! We're likely to see more snow, but hopefully, more snow than black ice. And of course, we still have to get through Boys Basketball tournament season before spring officially arrives.

Think Spring!





## Parks & Recreation

By: Natalie Scheer, Programming and Event Support Specialist

### Renewals

The Village activated the 2025 pet licensing, key fob renewal, and marina renewals on January 2, 2025. Pet licensing and key fob renewals should be completed online through the Village's RecDesk Software.

Due to the County fees increasing, the Village's pet license fees will see an increase in 2025. This information will be available on the RecDesk software.



### Open Gym

Use of the gym is available through the key fob program or by exclusive rental. Please adhere to the below rules during your use:

- Key fob users may bring up to 3 guests per user.
- Users with more than 3 guests may reserve the gym. Same day reservations are not allowed.
- Users under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.
- **No food, drink, or gum allowed.**
- **No street shoes allowed.**
- No using foul/obscene language.
- No dunking/hanging on the rim.
- No lowering of Basketball hoops without written consent of Recreation Department.
- Put all equipment away and notify Village staff of any problems or broken equipment.
- Disposal of dirty diapers is prohibited.
- Violations of rules may result in the revocation of key fob privileges.
- Respect others and be courteous. If the gym is full, users may play games together or half court games. Limit half court games to one hour.

**Hours:** The gym is available 7-days a week from 8am – 9pm. Please check the Village's Parks and Recreation calendar for availability.

***The gym will be closed March 31<sup>st</sup> and April 1<sup>st</sup> for the Election.***

The gym will offer exclusive Toddler Open Gym Monday – Friday from 8:00am – 11:00am, unless schools are cancelled or scheduled off.

The gym will also offer exclusive Pickleball Hours from 11:00am – 1:00pm Monday – Friday, unless no school. The Village gym has pickleball lines and a portable net. Users are suggested to bring their own paddles and balls.



### Music Together: Spring Session

Dates: April 8 – June 3

Time: 9:00-9:45, 10:00-10:45 & 3:30p-4:15p

Fee: \$180.00

Location: Dailey Cabin

Instructor: Susan Cramer

Each Music Together class is an active music making experience designed to teach the way young children learn through play with the ones they love! In this mixed-age class, each child participates at their own level through singing, moving, chanting, listening, watching, and exploring musical instruments. Classes provide a variety of adult-child activities that are engaging and developmentally appropriate and offer new ways to play musically at home. For more information visit: [musictogetherwithsusan.com](https://musictogetherwithsusan.com)



## Parks & Recreation (continued)

By: Natalie Scheer, Programming and Event Support Specialist

### Seasonal Employment 2025

#### Camp-Ya-Gotta-Wanna Counselors

##### Qualifications:

- Minimum of 14 years of age or older
- Previous experience working with children as a babysitter.
- Successful completion of a Babysitter Training Course (preferred, but not required)

##### Description:

The Village of Maple Bluff is seeking multiple candidates who are eager to provide a fun, safe, and educational camp for youth between the ages of 3-7. Candidates are required to be available to work from 12:30pm-4:45pm, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday beginning June 11th through August 7th. Camp Counselors will be assigned specific groups of up to 6 participants to provide small group activities. For a complete job description, visit the Employment section of the Village of Maple Bluff Website.

Pay: \$13.00-17.00/hr., depending on experience

#### Beach Lifeguards

##### Qualifications:

- Current Lifeguard Training Certificate (Red Cross or equivalent)
- Current Standard First Aid Certificate and AED (Red Cross or equivalent)
- Current CPR Certificate (Red Cross or American Heart Association)
- State Law requires lifeguards working at a natural body of water to be a minimum of 16 years of age.

##### Description:

The Village of Maple Bluff is seeking multiple qualified candidates to fill open positions as a lifeguard at Beach Park. Interested candidates should be self-motivators, independent workers, energetic, compassionate, and have previous experience working with youth. For a complete job description, visit the Village's website.

Pay: \$17.00 - 19.00/hr., depending on experience



### 2025 Summer Programs

#### Camp-Ya-Gotta-Wanna

Days: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursdays

Dates: June 17 - August 7

Time: 1:00pm - 4:00pm

Fee: \$520 Early Registration or \$570 Regular

Early Registration ends 4/30/25

Location: Firemen's Park

Instructor: CYGW Director & Counselors

Ages: 3 - 7

Enrollment for this program is open to all Maple Bluff resident children between the ages of 3 and 7 (entering 2nd grade in fall of 2025). This afternoon playgroup program will offer structured and free play opportunities, as well as arts and craft projects. Groupings will be divided based on age of the children and the parent volunteers will try their best to group your child with their friends. Parents will need to provide cell phone numbers at the time of registration. Please be sure to verify you have the correct phone number listed on your account.

#### Arts/Athletics

Days: Monday - Friday

Dates: June 16 - August 15

Time: 2:15pm - 4:15pm

Fee: \$365 Early Registration or \$415 Regular

Early Registration ends 4/30/25

Location: Beach Park

Instructor: Lifeguard Team

Ages: 7 - 12

The Village's A/A program is available to residents between the ages of 7 - 12 (entering 2nd through 6th grade) and will provide a fun, safe environment at Maple Bluff Beach Park. Throughout the summer participants will participate in arts, crafts, games, sports and other exciting activities.



## Village Board Trustee Candidates



### LILLY BICKERS

Hello, I am Lilly Bickers, and I am excited to announce my candidacy for Village Board Trustee.

Since 1990, I've proudly called the Village of Maple Bluff my home. With a BA from The University of Wisconsin and a successful Project Management career in Chicago and New York City, I returned to our vibrant village in 2003. Our family—Annabelle

(15), Christopher (15), and Jack (18)—has flourished here, supported by loving parents, grandparents, siblings, extended family, and incredible neighborhood friends. The welcoming spirit of our community inspires me daily, reinforcing our shared commitment to making Maple Bluff the best it can be.

A passion for volunteering has fueled my journey in the Greater Madison community. I have had the honor of serving on the boards of The Dane County Humane Society, Henry Vilas Zoological Society, Madison Children's Museum, and my children's school, focusing on community engagement and capital campaigns. As a family, we cherish our membership at the Maple Bluff Country Club and TPC at Cherokee, where we enjoy golf, tennis, travel, and the myriad activities our beautiful Bluff offers. Three years ago, I returned to the workforce as a Training and Development Specialist at Woodman's Food Market, where I collaborate with stores across Wisconsin and Illinois to develop impactful programs and uphold a culture that values our associates, customers, and the communities we serve.

Why am I running for Village Board Trustee? I believe in the power of active participation in the community we cherish. I can empathize with all perspectives and the temperament to find common ground. Throughout my experience, I've made tough decisions for the greater good. I've honed my skills in listening and identifying underlying issues through thoughtful analysis. I recognize my strengths and value the expertise of others when needed. My approachable personality fosters positive connections with our neighbors, creating a collaborative environment essential for progress.

I envision local governments prioritizing the best interests of their constituents. Leadership needs to understand the community's challenges and their implications. Difficult choices made today must consider the legacy we leave for future generations. A steady, common-sense voice that transcends passing trends is imperative for an effective village board.

My top priorities for our village include supporting critical services to ensure every resident feels safe and secure. With my expertise in Human Resources and Training and Development, I will help attract and retain the most qualified village team members, ensuring they have the best possible support and benefits. I am committed to fostering the continued growth of our Village Community events and programs, ensuring there is something energetic and engaging for all ages. Additionally, I believe in a creative approach to budgeting and fundraising, striving to explore every avenue before placing any additional burden on our residents.

Together, we can maintain the Village of Maple Bluff as the most sought-after community to live in today and for generations to come. Thank you for considering my candidacy. I look forward to the opportunity to serve you with dedication and passion.



### ERIC McLEOD

Greetings! I'm very excited to be on the ballot for the office of Village Trustee this spring. I previously served on the Village Board from 2000 to 2019. During six of those years—2009 to 2015—I served as Village President. I was recently appointed to fill a vacancy on the Board, so presently I am serving as a Trustee once again. Why am I seeking another term on the Village Board after a six-year

absence? The answer is simple: I am passionate about the Village of Maple Bluff, and I still have much to contribute.

Maple Bluff is a special place and, as residents, we are fortunate to have our own municipal government so we can keep it that way. Village residents are active and engaged in this community. The Village is blessed with so many positive

attributes, from the parks, the lake, the country club, top-notch municipal services, the overall scenic beauty, among many others, and the job of the Village Board is to preserve all of the things that have drawn us to Maple Bluff.

My main priority when I was on the Board previously was to maintain our own high quality municipal services—police and fire, public works, parks and rec, and administration. That remains my priority. There have been discussions in the Village for decades about contracting out with another municipality for the provision of public safety services. Each time the issue has come up, we have made the right decision and kept our own services. Maple Bluff residents are better served and safer as a result. As Trustee I will be a consistent vote for an independent Maple Bluff that maintains its own services.

My wife, Jenner, and I bought our first home in the Village in 1992, and we raised our three daughters here. Jenner grew up in Maple Bluff and so did her father, Carl Weston. Carl's great-grandfather, John A. Johnson, along with his sons,



## Village Board Trustee Candidates (continued)

formed the Lakewood Land Company that developed Maple Bluff in the early part of the 20th century. So, while I grew up a west-sider and attended Madison Memorial High School, I feel a personal obligation to carry on that legacy and do what I can to keep Maple Bluff the exceptional community it has always been.

Finally, a brief resume: I attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison for undergrad and law school. I've been a lawyer for more than 30 years focusing primarily

on business and administrative litigation, as well as energy, mining and other industrial facility siting. I am a partner with the law firm Husch Blackwell LLP. I was a founder of Madison Country Day School and have served on the boards of other local nonprofits. During my prior terms on the Village Board, I chaired and served on a number of committees, most notably the Building Board.

I would appreciate your vote on April 1st.



**LAURA PECK**

Hello Neighbors! My name is Laura Peck and I am running for Village Trustee. I have lived in the neighborhood since 1999 with my husband, Greg Anderson. We raised our two children here and are proud to call Maple Bluff home. Over the last 25 years we have participated in many activities, valuing fun traditions that make Maple Bluff special such as Camp Ya Gotta Wanna,

Arts and Athletics, sports and rec teams, pool swims, Father's Day parades, Bocce and Fest on the 4th. I am a business attorney with the Axley Brynson law firm in Madison specializing in finance and real estate. Here in Maple Bluff, I previously served for years as the Chair of the Village Police and Fire Committee (back when it was one committee), and two stints on the Village Plan Commission, including currently. As part of the Plan Commission, we are now deep in the review of the draft updated zoning code. I am also very active in the Rotary Club of Madison, TEMPO Madison and the Overture Center for the Arts. In my spare time I enjoy walking, concerts, reading, and travelling. Ask me where our next trip is!

### ***How do you view the role of local government generally, what should it prioritize, and how should it operate?***

There used to be a saying, "All politics is local." These days, national politics often dominates the conversation, but there is still excellent value in local government. In Maple Bluff our politics remain grounded in local concerns, built on consensus, tradition, and mutual respect. Our local board reflects the relationships we share with our neighbors. Its primary responsibility is to be responsive to and honor our community, and to ensure the delivery of essential services in a fiscally responsible manner. Looking ahead, our priorities should focus on implementing the results of the recent referendum, updating our codes, using tools such as the Tax Incremental District (TID) to improve our quality of life, and fostering a sense of neighborhood pride

and a welcoming atmosphere for all. I would also prioritize ensuring our staff is compensated at competitive market rates while strengthening our administrative functions through technology and thoughtful hiring decisions.

### ***What do you consider the top priorities for the Village of Maple Bluff, and how would you work with staff and officials to help pursue them?***

The top priority for the village remains fiscal responsibility. We are not alone there. Many municipalities have begun using referenda to finance the services they provide due to the constraints put on local governments by the state legislature. This tool is necessary but should be used infrequently and as a last resort, in my view.

The new draft zoning code is an example of how we can modernize our regulations to ease the administrative process while continuing to protect our village character. Most of us only have dealings with the village when we pay our taxes and want to put in a patio/shed/fence. Kudos to the task force that spent the last year meticulously updating the code that we are now reviewing. Look for a public hearing in the next few months to see the improved code. I encourage you all to review and provide feedback. Let's look for other opportunities to implement similar updates.

The last priority I'll address is the tension between the wonderful services provided by the village and the cost and organizational structure we use to provide them. I do not see any big changes needed here, but it is always a good idea to keep the big picture in mind when making incremental decisions.

### ***Why are you running for Village Trustee?***

I enjoyed my work with the Plan Commission and Police and Fire Committee. I am proud of the impact these groups have had on our community. I am at a place in my life where I can now devote more time to give back and hope that my skill set might be useful. I promise to listen thoughtfully, consider all sides and vote my conscience. I would be honored to represent my neighbors as a Village Trustee.



## Village Board Trustee Candidates (continued)



### SCOTT ROBINSON

***Introduction that includes educational, professional, civic, and volunteer experiences.***

My wife Amy and I were married in Madison in 1984. Amy grew up in Maple Bluff, and we moved back to her childhood home in 2019. We met at UW-Madison while I was in the Naval ROTC program, majoring in Economics. After graduation, I served in the Navy for 30 years, retiring as a Captain

in 2012, and then another three years with the military as a civilian Chief of Staff. The highlights of my Navy career were my command tours as captain, leading the Sailors of the destroyer USS SPRUANCE (DD-963) and the cruiser USS ANZIO (CG-68).

Between shipboard assignments and a dozen home moves, I earned an MBA in finance from the University of California, Irvine. I completed tours of duty in the Pentagon offices of the Navy Comptroller, Headquarters US Marine Corps, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Office of the Secretary of Defense, and Chief of Naval Operations, specializing in budget development and analysis, strategic planning, major acquisition programs, and contracting. I have six years of start-up and cyber warfare experience as the first Chief of Staff of Fleet Cyber Command/Tenth Fleet and also the first Chief of Staff of the Cyber National Mission Force, the operational force under US Cyber Command.

In the past few years, I was President of the UW-Madison Naval ROTC Alumni Association, during which we rewrote our bylaws, created a brand-new website, and grew our membership.

***How do you view the role of local government generally, what should it prioritize, and how should it operate?***

I believe the Village Board's primary responsibility is to promote and sustain the general welfare of the residents of Maple Bluff. The Village must maintain independence as a municipality, support an effective police force, balance tax levies with services, and address citizen concerns. My observation is that the governance of our Village, with policy set by the Board and execution by the Village staff, is functioning well and we have much to be proud of. I do, however, think there should be more discussion about the future Village and an annual town hall meeting.

***What do you consider the top priorities for the Village of Maple Bluff, and how would you work with staff and officials to help pursue them?***

To shape the future Village, I have three specific ideas.

First, the time is right to explore potential alternatives to our alignment with the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD). We don't appear to receive an educational experience that most Village parents support. Only about a dozen Maple Bluff children from an estimated K-12 population of over 220 attend MMSD, while most parents pay tuition for alternatives. This marks a complete reversal from the 1960's when most Village children attended MMSD schools, and the exception was a child enrolled in

a private school. A Maple Bluff school district would allow us direct control of the education of Village children, create a more cohesive environment for children, eliminate the expense of private tuition, effectively leverage and retain our property taxes, and establish a school board composed of neighbors. These potential benefits, in my view, outweigh any arguments in favor of maintaining alignment with MMSD.

Any initiative of independence from MMSD presents several issues.

- **Sentiment** - Does the Village support this concept or is the status quo acceptable? A referendum to determine this would need to be developed and placed on the ballot.
- **Fiscal** - With the approved MMSD referendum, we will be sending \$7-8 million in property taxes to MMSD for the next 25 years. This funding level would support the operation of a small school district and the construction of a school and facilities.
- **Legal** - We lack standing for independence without a Board of Education (BoE). If a referendum on school independence passes, a BoE must be elected.
- **Execution** - We would need volunteer support with legal, architectural, financial, educational, and planning skills to contribute to this effort. It's a multi-year process that is not simple but also not impossible. We have the expertise in the Village.

The second issue I want to address is the structure of tax referendums. Last fall's referendum did not clearly communicate the anticipated duration of the initiative. I believe future property tax referendum should be proposed for five years duration before a new referendum is considered. I would work with Village staff to craft any future tax referendum to accomplish this. Tax referendums with a defined minimum duration benefit the common good by providing relative stability, especially to those on relatively fixed incomes.

Finally, we need to create a tree management policy for Village-owned trees. In 2023, the Village paid for a comprehensive tree inventory, but the policies that should guide our canopy and tree management remain unwritten. I would work with Public Works to draft a policy document for public comment.

Why are you running for Village Trustee?

I am grateful to live in Maple Bluff. Amy and I enjoy tennis in the summer and paddle in the winter, and we volunteer/donate at the Bocce event each year. I enjoy music (Radio Paradise!) and riding a Tacx trainer with Rouvy.

Serving as a Trustee would continue a family tradition of service. Amy's grandfather, George, was the second Village Clerk and served from 1931 to 1951. Amy's father, Bill, was the longest-serving Village President from 1971 to 1979. He also served as the Village Attorney from 1987 to 2007 while concurrently holding office as the President of the Village EMS District from 1979 to 2011.

While I will never reach those levels of tenure, I ask for your vote this April and look forward to shaping the future of Maple Bluff.

## Village Board Trustee Candidates (continued)



### JIM SCHULER

***Introduction that includes educational, professional, civic, and volunteer experiences.***

I grew up in Golden Valley, Minnesota within sight of downtown Minneapolis in a neighborhood a lot like Maple Bluff. After getting my BA at Carroll College and MFA at the University of Massachusetts, I moved to

Madison, met Marvel (who grew up on the northside and went to East High School) and a few years later moved from the Atwood neighborhood into our home at 340 Lakewood Blvd. That was 1988: our daughter Zoe was 4 and our son Sam, who would be born in 1990, was still in R&D.

What drew us to the Bluff was its proximity to Lake Mendota, our parks and visual openness, and the sense of community we saw as we watched neighbors stopping to talk to each other as they walked through the neighborhood. We loved Madison—but Maple Bluff felt different, family-friendlier, better. That's what I've worked to maintain with many of you to in my over 30 years on various committees, as a past village president and as a trustee. I also represent the Village with the Dane County Cities and Villages Associate (DCCVA) and I am also a DCCVA-appointed commissioner on the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission (CARPC)

### ***Why are you running for Village Trustee?***

I'm running again because I enjoy working with my neighbors to make a difference. And we do. I think I've been a particularly productive trustee and committee chair because I'm good at identifying and enlisting neighbors with particular skill sets—whether that's an architect to design the Dailey Cabin or a cross country skier (who's also a longstanding member of the MBCC Greens Committee) to plan and groom the winter trails.

I also get things done. My first proposal to the Village Board in 1989—even before I joined the Parks Committee—showed how adding a pier and in-water storage spaces at the Marina could generate revenue for that and other parks. That led to me joining and ultimately chairing the Parks Committee, and tackling a parks infrastructure that hadn't been updated or improved in half a century. In order to fund those, we initiated the Fourth Fest Fun Run in 1999, and the Bocce Beach Bash in 2003. Over the past 25 years, we've rebuilt the Beach House, the Marina building and the Dailey Cabin. We've raised more than \$250K to redesign and reequip all our parks and rec facilities, finance the grooming equipment for the cross country and snowshoe trails, and develop more programming for all age groups.

When we created the Tax Incremental District in 2014, I assumed the chairmanship of the Plan Commission and helped lead us through a difficult but productive three years of getting Lakewood II and the Gordon approved, developed and generating incremental revenue. During the same period, I also initiated discussions with Maple

Bluff Country Club as to how the Village could help its fundraising efforts to rebuild the pool in exchange for getting more residents access to the pool and, ultimately, raise the percentage of Village households with country club memberships. That was formalized in the new lease I signed as Village president in 2015. While we still haven't reached our goal of 50% plus of Village households with country club memberships that involve pool access, we're much closer than we were ten years ago.

For the past two years, I've chaired the "Zoning Ordinance Update Steering Committee" that's gone through the painstaking process of reviewing, analyzing and updating our 100 plus pages of zoning ordinance. The Steering Committee had its final meeting in January and the Public Hearing will be April 15th. I hope you'll get a chance to review the proposed changes on the Village website.

### ***How do you view the role of local government generally, what should it prioritize, and how should it operate?***

The role of our government, besides providing basic services, is to deliver on the vision documented in our Comprehensive Plan and our Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan as cost-efficiently as possible. Because of our size, we have and should set the standard for responsiveness to neighbor needs, whether that's with snow removal, EMS response, or clarifying contradictory zoning regulations.

If we're going to continue to be an independent village for another century (we'll celebrate our 100th birthday in 2028), we need to not just prioritize, but commit to finding ways to continue to provide the same quality and range of all services without raising property taxes more than the rate of inflation.

That means continued fundraising for parks and recreation, researching more grant opportunities, exploring more equipment savings by participating in shared purchase agreements and, maybe most importantly, continued and enthusiastic volunteerism.

One of the reasons we've been so successful is because there's not a hard line between our residents and our government. While "many hands make light work," many neighbors working together also build relationships that make for a tighter, more cohesive and prosperous community.

### ***What do you consider the top priorities for the Village of Maple Bluff, and how would you work with staff and officials to help pursue them?***

1. "Beta-test" the new zoning ordinance and tweak as necessary. Help develop the necessary forms to make applications as clear and simple as possible.
2. Strategically plan and manage our budget to stay at or below the rate of inflation without sacrificing the quality of our services or over-extending staff.
3. Make sure the new front-office reorganization is successful. Replacing two valuable and long-serving employees is tough, but it's also an opportunity.



## Village Board Trustee Candidates (continued)

4. Get the Gateway Plan going. The benefits aren't just aesthetic—they could also help solve some of our traffic safety issues and help fund some necessary infrastructure improvements.
5. Put together an ad-hoc grant-writing group. I've learned a couple of things since becoming more active with DCCVA and CARPC: there's a lot of money out there and our staff doesn't have the time to go after it. If you have any grant-writing experience—or are willing to learn—give me a call.
6. Doing all of the above while keeping our growth in property values above surrounding communities, keeping our property taxes at or below those of neighboring municipalities and maintaining our AAA bond rating.

I'd appreciate your support—and encourage you to get involved. If you have any questions or ideas, please reach out.

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## Water Meter Transition

As you may know, our Public Works Department is working diligently to upgrade the meters in over 500 homes in our community. Given our small team and the administrative burden of the existing meters, we are looking to expedite installations with resident support to ensure a more efficient process. We appreciate your patience and cooperation as we proceed with this important project.

### Why Are We Replacing Water Meters?

- The new meters improve accuracy, reliability, and efficiency in water usage tracking.
- They eliminate the need for manual readings, reducing administrative time and costs.
- They enhance leak detection, helping residents monitor water usage more effectively.
- The DNR requires the replacement of meters within 20 years of installation.

### Addressing Concerns About RF Signals

Some residents have expressed concerns about radiofrequency (RF) emissions from the new meters. Please know:

- The RF exposure from these meters is extremely low—far lower than that of common household devices like Wi-Fi routers, cell phones, and baby monitors.
- The meters transmit data for only a few seconds per day, meaning exposure is minimal.
- The National Cancer Institute and CDC have conducted extensive studies on RF exposure, and there is no conclusive evidence linking low-level RF emissions to health risks.
- For further details, we encourage you to review the linked fact sheets from the National Cancer Institute and CDC:



<https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/radiation/cell-phones-fact-sheet>

<https://www.cdc.gov/radiation-health/data-research/facts-stats/cell-phones.html#:~:text=Do%20cell%20phones%20give%20off,an%20agent%20that%20causes%20cancer>

### You Can Help Us!

Our Public Works team will be contacting residents directly to schedule meter replacements as their schedules permit. When ready, a member of our Public Works team will send you an email with instructions on how to set up an appointment in Calendly. This is a large project, so please be aware that it may be some time before our team is ready to install in your home, but when they do, we sincerely appreciate your quick attention to setting up an appointment.

We understand that scheduling an installation can be an inconvenience, but your assistance will help keep this project on track. The installation process is quick, safe, and minimally disruptive—they take approximately 30 minutes and require brief indoor access.

Thank you for your support in helping us modernize our infrastructure and improve service for all residents.

## 2025 MAPLE BLUFF



### EGG HUNT

**Saturday, April 12th | 10am  
at Johnson Park**

All ages ensured a chance for goodies with our staggered start times. While the kids hunt for eggs, enjoy Greenbush Bakery donuts and a complimentary coffee courtesy of Ancora Cafe!  
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### Pay ONLINE

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1. Click "Utilities"
2. You will go to our payment processor's website where you should register and make your payment

### Or CALL

1-877-885-7968 (have your bill handy to provide your account number)

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