



# NEWSLETTER

16607 Burlington Road  
Union Grove, WI 53182

262-859-3006  
townofparis.org

Open: 9am - 4pm  
Monday, Wednesday, Friday

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

- FEB 20** Plan Commission Meeting  
6pm - 8pm
- FEB 21** Spring Primary Election  
7am - 8pm
- FEB 28** Town Board Meeting  
6pm - 8pm
- MAR 18** Paris School Spaghetti Supper  
4pm - 6:45pm (Live auction at 7:15)
- MAR 20** Plan Commission Meeting  
6pm - 8pm
- MAR 28** Town Board Meeting  
6pm - 8pm
- APR 4** Spring Election  
7am - 8pm
- APR 17** Plan Commission Meeting  
6pm - 8pm
- APR 18** Annual Meeting  
6pm - 8pm
- APR 25** Town Board Meeting  
6pm - 8pm
- MAY 6** Paris Spring Clean-Up & Community Event  
8:30am - 11:30am
- MAY 15** Plan Commission Meeting  
6pm - 8pm
- MAY 20** County Household Hazardous Waste Collection  
8am - 1pm @Kenosha County Center
- MAY 23** Town Board Meeting  
6pm - 8pm

## Building Permits & Inspections

The process of obtaining building permits in the town is changing. Long time Paris/Brighton Building Inspector Don Fox is stepping back from his position as full-time inspector for the Town. The Town has partnered with the Kenosha County Office of Planning and Development to create a one stop process which will allow home and landowners to go on line and get all zoning and building permits in one spot. The County has retained Blue Stone Inspection Service to provide all building permits and inspections. For now, if you need a permit, contact **Justin Border at Blue Stone directly at 262-749-8777**. After February, you will be able to go to the County Website directly or follow a link from the Town's website.

The Town is grateful to Don for providing inspection service to the Town for many years and we wish him well as he supposedly slows down a bit!

## Taxes

Residents had questions about their tax bills this year and I thought we would try and share some answers!

Most people noticed that their overall tax bill was lower this year and wondered why. The primary reason is due to the increased valuation of commercial real estate in Kenosha County. When commercial real estate increases in valuation in comparison to residential or agricultural properties, a larger percentage of the tax levy is transferred to the commercial properties, reducing the tax load on other classes of real estate. The Westosha High School district also benefited from the fact that Pleasant Prairie retired a Tax Incremental District that included developments on the west side of I-94. The full valuation of that area was added to Westosha's valuation, allowing the district to spread the levy over a greater tax base. Paris Grade School has similarly benefited from the commercial growth along I-94 in the growth area.

It should also be noted that the County, Paris Grade School and Westosha High School all worked to keep their tax levy increases within the State mandated limits. All taxing bodies are dealing with caps that are significantly less than the current rate of inflation, so budgets were limited.

The Town of Paris continues to operate without assessing a town tax to pay for our government and fire and rescue services. Those services are paid for with revenues that come from the landfill and funds the town receives from shared revenues from the state. As the Somers Growth Area west of the interstate begins to develop, the Town will now receive some shared tax revenue from those properties. The Town Board budgeted for continuing to offset the majority of the county levy for Paris home and land owners for the coming year.

# TOWN OF *Paris* STANDING OVATION AWARD

On December 9th, 2022, an accident involving a car leaving the road in the Town of Paris changed a number of lives. Kaden Hentshel was out practicing for his driver's license with his parents Ron and Kristin Meigs when they discovered a vehicle off the road and on fire. The driver was unresponsive inside the burning car. While Kristin directed traffic, Kaden called 911 and accurately shared information with emergency dispatch while Ron approached the burning car, was able to open the door and remove the driver to safety. When Paris Fire and Rescue personnel arrived, they were able to attend to the

injured driver and treat Ron for smoke inhalation. Without the Meigs family intervention, the rescue personnel would have most likely been dealing with a fatality instead.

Paris Firefighter Elizabeth Hooper was on the call and realized the role the family had played and suggested that the Town and the department recognize their brave actions. Chief Hennessey got things started by sharing the concept of an award. Paris Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Leah Edquist created a design for an award. The Holloway Family donated the funds to have crystal awards created. A ceremony was held to present the awards. County Executive Samantha Kerkman, County Board Supervisor Brian Bashaw and Jill Rozell, Office Manager and Outreach Coordinator for the Executive's Office presented a proclamation on behalf of the county. Paris Assistant Chief Rich Perkins and Firefighter Elizabeth Hooper presented the awards on behalf of the Town and the Department. Department members attended to honor and thank the Meigs family.



## PARIS FIRE & RESCUE

**We hope most of you are aware that our Fire/Rescue Department has a full-time chief now! Paris resident and department member, Colin Hennessey accepted an offer from the Town Board to serve as our Town's first full-time chief.**



Colin is rated both as a firefighter and an EMT and is bringing his knowledge, leadership and passion to lead the department at a time when the Fire and Rescue service is changing in Wisconsin and the nation. The amount of training and responsibility for a department has been increasing over time. At the same time, the availability of volunteers to staff departments is limited. Increasingly, in order to have staff available to respond to emergencies, communities are turning to a mix of full-time career staff, paid on premises staff (usually career fire and rescue personnel from other full-time departments who are willing to pick up additional service hours on their days off) as well as dedicated paid on call members.

Chief Hennessey's full-time presence at the station is improving our administration, maintenance, training and recruiting. Structuring the position as we did, gives us consistent command leadership on more calls as well as improving daytime staff availability and response. A full-time chief will improve our fire inspections at businesses and should help with issuing burn permits for our residents. We are already seeing the benefits of closer relationships with our surrounding departments.

The department is using this change of command as an opportunity to make some changes internally. The department is looking to more formally acknowledge events and create new traditions. The department recently conducted a pinning ceremony to honor Colin's appointment as a full-time chief for the department. This ceremony involved a formal swearing in with an oath of office, the presentation of the symbols of his office to Colin by his wife Tracy and his children Wyatt and Abby. The event was attended by Paris Department members, family, Town Board members, the County Executive Samantha Kerkman and the Chiefs and members of local fire departments. The Oath of Office was administered by Paris Clerk/Treasurer Diana Coughlin. The Department will be doing formal ceremonies when other officers are promoted. The public is welcome to attend these events.

You will notice the department is beginning to exhibit a higher profile as our members step into their leadership roles and take a more active role in the community. The department is having success in recruiting new members including several from our community. We hope more residents look to see if serving on the department fits into their lives and schedules.

## Leadership Development

The Town is always looking for people interested in serving on committees, to help with elections and serve on the Fire/Rescue Department. We are also looking to develop leadership skills in our residents, so they feel confident enough to serve in leadership roles in the Town and County if asked and quite honestly, I am hoping to help develop leaders who will consider running for the Town Board or School Board at some point.

I am in the process of working with leaders from the Town of Brighton and the Village of Bristol to create a leadership development program that would help train and encourage our residents to feel they have the skills and confidence to run for office and do a good job. County Executive Samantha Kerkman, County Board Supervisor Brian Bashaw, Paris Grade School, the Uline Corporation, UW Extension as well as others have expressed interest in helping create or contribute to the program. I hope to have a framework in place yet this year and be able to invite participation. We will share more information in the newsletter as we create the program. I hope you will consider participating.

## Internet Update

We want to share updates with you on the project to provide high speed internet to residents. Charter/Spectrum won the state grant to install fiber cable through most of the town. They have indicated that they will start installation this spring, but they have not provided any details yet. In the meantime, the Town continues to look for other options and solutions. Other fiber providers are considering small, localized projects in the town and we are working with them and encouraging them. Having multiple providers in the town should bring service more quickly and provide competition. Margaret Hefner and I continue to meet with the County and providers to seek solutions. Mid West Fiber is expanding their fiber route that passes through the town providing service to some municipal buildings and cell towers in the area. Mid West is in the process of creating a residential service and is considering several small, focused test areas in the town to begin service. These projects would be market driven rather than grant driven and would be able to develop more rapidly than the grant programs. I will be attending a regional broadband summit in Brookfield in January as we seek short and long-term solutions.

Residents are asking for short term solutions for service as they wait for the fiber project to roll out. Unfortunately, we have not been able to find an easy option. There are several satellite-based services, but it appears they have significant start up fees and uneven service. As most of us are aware, wireless broadband is limited to line of sight to the existing tower sites and does not offer the speeds that most of us need to achieve.

## Town Hall as a Shelter

The Paris Town Hall has a large generator that can keep the Town Hall functioning at times of emergency and power outages. We can maintain lights, heat, water and sanitary service for the building. Chief Hennessey and I are working to develop plans to make sure the Town can provide shelter, sleeping accommodations, food and care in times of disaster. We are looking at partnering with community-based relief organizations to provide for rapid supplying of basic food and shelter if needed. The Fire/Rescue Department does have access to the Wagner Family Fire fund program that provides support and gift cards to families that have been displaced by a fire in their home. In the event of a community wide disaster or a sustained power loss, community members can reach out to the Town for shelter, a warming space, a place to recharge phones, etc. by contacting the Town Hall, Town Officials or the Fire/Rescue Department.

## Trevor Albrecht Memorial

On January 16, 2021, Paris resident Trevor Albrecht passed away from injuries suffered in a snowmobile accident. Trevor was a sergeant with the Kenosha Police Department. He was an Army Veteran as well as a father, husband and friend to many. Trevor's friends and family have approached the Town about the possibility of planting a tree in memory and honor of him. A site at the Town Hall has been selected and a tree has been reserved. The tree and a plaque will be dedicated on Saturday, May 13th. The Town is providing the space for the tree. The funds for the tree and plaque are being raised separately. The Kenosha County Sheriff Deputies Association, the Kenosha Police Supervisors Association and the Kenosha Police Officers Charities are already generous donors. Several other groups and individuals are donating as well. If you or a group would be interested in donating to this project, **please call John Holloway for details. (262-914-5407)** The Town is considered a 501(c)(3) organization and contributions may be recognized on your tax return. Contributions can be dropped off at the Town Hall. Checks can be made payable to the **Town of Paris Memorial Fund.**

## Community Garden

The Paris Happy Workers 4-H Club is looking to continue to provide for a community-based garden located at the town hall. This garden is meant to be a community project, not just a 4-H project. Nikki Niccolai is looking to involve more community members to help with the daily maintenance of the garden. She is looking to create more diversity in the gardens. We are encouraging community members to stop by and get involved. The produce raised is shared with the community. Paris firefighters and EMTs are known to help out in the gardens and some of the fresh produce has found its way into some of their meals. The club is working to continue to improve the soils, is hoping to add some additional raised beds and with additional volunteers – keep the ever-present weeds under control! There is a tab on the town website devoted to the garden – we will try and keep it updated and post successes and needs on the website.

## Solar Project

The Solar Farm Project continues to move forward. We Energies, along with other utility partners has purchased the project from the developer, Invenergy. They have purchased the project only. The land itself remains in the ownership of the individual landowners and is rented to Paris Solar. The construction phase is scheduled to be completed in 2023. The installation of the actual arrays, the inverters and perimeter fencing are yet to be started. Town and County Representatives meet regularly with We Energy and Paris Solar officials to discuss challenges and schedules.



## COUNTY HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE, E-WASTE & REFRIGERANT COLLECTION

**Saturday, May 20  
8am - 1pm  
@ Kenosha County Center**

For More Info: [www.kenoshacounty.org](http://www.kenoshacounty.org)  
Extension Kenosha County Office: 262-857-1945

## Paris • Spring CLEAN-UP & COMMUNITY Event

**Saturday, May 6  
8:30am - 11:30am  
@ Paris Town Hall**

**SHRED DAY • TIRE COLLECTION  
MEET THE CHIEF & SEE THE FIRE TRUCKS  
MAKE & TAKE CRAFT - CREATIVE MEMORIES  
KR CATHOLIC QUILTERS WILL BE TAKING  
DONATIONS FOR COTTON FABRIC AND YARN  
PARIS HAPPY WORKERS 4-H SELLING DRINKS & TREATS**

*...More Details to Come*

## Memorial Bricks

*Order a memorial brick for a resident or former resident of the Town of Paris.*

Your cost will be **\$50.00 per brick** and must be received by January 31<sup>st</sup>, for installation in the Spring. Orders received after January 31<sup>st</sup> will be installed the following year.

There is no charge for any brick memorializing a former or present Paris Town Resident who served in any of the armed forces or who served as an elected Town Official. There is also no charge for memorializing any fire and/or rescue squad volunteers who have served five (5) years or more. Each of these three groups has place of honor within their group's section of the memorial circle.

**CONTACT: Joan Murphy 262-914-3855 Cheryl Poisl 262-859-2591 Marylln Zirbel: 262-857-2417**