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Nestled off a major interstate in southwestern Waukesha County, Mukwonago offers visitors and its residents a small-town feel with big-city amenities a short drive away.

Large commercial developments such as Metro Market, Home Depot, and Walmart anchor the north and south ends of the village, offering easy shopping and numerous employment opportunities as the village and township grow.

The village is also home to the Mukwonago Community Library and a YMCA, both of which provide a variety of activities for people of all ages all year long.

With the abundance of community festivals and activities, there's always something to do.

The Mukwonago Area Chamber of Commerce and local non-profit organizations like the Lions and Rotary clubs and American Legion Post sponsor events throughout the year, including a Maxwell Street Days, a farmers' market, ice fishing jamboree, Easter egg hunt, Father's Day and Memorial Day parades, National Night Out, Croatian Fest, Summerfeste, Fall Fest, Jack-O-Lantern Jaunt and Haunt, and Midnight Magic – a winter festival.

Mukwonago is also home to the Mukwonago Village Players, L'BRI Pure N'

Natural, Mukwonago Area School District, The Elegant Farmer, and the Mukwonago River Nature Area.

A BIT OF HISTORY

According to the town website, the Winnebago tribe inhabited Waukesha County prior to the Potawatomi tribe arriving in the early 1700s to establish the Potawatomi Indian Village along the Fox River, where the Village of Mukwonago is now located. In 1832 the Potawatomi ceded their lands, opening the area to an influx of white settlers.

In the spring of 1836, Sewall Andrews and Henry H. Camp built their homes just northwest of the Indian Village, and Mukwonago's first plat was made. Soon after, more residents would begin developing homesteads and businesses in the area. The Andrews' house still stands today and is now home to the Mukwonago Red Brick Museum.

By the end of the decade, Mukwonago included a hotel built in 1837, two stores, a shoemaker, a blacksmith, and a post office. The first permanent bridge over the Fox River was built in 1843.

In 1905, the village was incorporated from the town.

The term "Mukwonago" is a Potawatomi word meaning "Place of the Bear."

Welcome to Mukwonago! It's a great place to call home, raise a family, run a business, stop by for a visit, or attend a special event.

Mukwonago,
Wisconsin 2024-25

OUR TOWN

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Creative Director: Heidi Schulz
Page Design: Jen DeGroot

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above: Mike Mlejnek, Tom Plochocki, Steve Plochocki, Dennis Richey, Dutton Plochocki, and Casey Noel gather around a roast during Croatian Fest, held at Field Park in Mukwonago in July. The annual event features a variety of activities and food (Croatian and other items) as well as live music.

BRADFORD PAULSON *Our Town*

on the cover: People of all ages began 2024 with a splash at Mukwonago American Legion Post 375's fundraiser for Camp American Legion. Participants gathered at Indianhead Park and jumped into the river. There was an after party at the legion with soup, chili, and a meat raffle.

LISA SMITH *Our Town*

OUR *Government*

VILLAGE OF MUKWONAGO

VILLAGE HALL

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Mukwonago held its annual Fall Fest in September. Many family-friendly activities were set up throughout the downtown area, including crafts and vendors, food trucks, bounce houses, live music, and a chili cook-off. Cameron Cruz (6) decorates his pumpkin. Carrie Hoppe, of Shorewest Realtors, brings extra fun to the day with creative face painting. Eylee (7), Elaina (10), and Emma (12) Olson are happy to show off their designs.



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Mud, fun and community

MUKWONAGO YMCA HOSTS ANNUAL MUDRUN

By **Bradford Paulson**

CORRESPONDENT

The Mukwonago YMCA celebrated its 11th annual Mudrun in late June 2024 at Mukwonago High School, drawing in hundreds of enthusiastic participants of all ages.

The event has become a staple in the community, known for its exhilarating and muddy obstacles that promise a day of fun and camaraderie.

The Mudrun features wave after wave of participants taking to the course. By the third wave, the once pristine grounds are transformed into a mud-laden challenge, with runners of all ages and abilities navigating through the thick muck while grinning ear to ear.

The event's design ensures that everyone, from seasoned athletes to families with young children, can enjoy the thrill of the race.

Participants wade through a massive mud pit, crawl under netting, and climb over walls, all while getting progressively muddier.

The highlight for many is the final obstacle: a soapy slip-and-slide provided by the Mukwonago Fire Department. This



top: Amanda Katzman, Deb Deuster, Kenley Metcalf, and Morgan Deuster, all of Mukwonago, jump into the mudpit during the 11th Annual Mukwonago YMCA Mudrun in June 2024. **above:** Natalie Los and Bethany Paulson, both of Mukwonago, stop for a quick photo while making their way through one of three mudpits at the event.

BRADFORD PAULSON *Our Town*

exhilarating finish added a refreshing twist to the end of the race, leaving runners soaked and smiling.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The success of the 2024 Mudrun was made possible by the generous support of numerous sponsors and volunteers. Merit Asphalt led the way as the top-tier sponsor, playing a crucial role.

Other significant sponsors included VJS Construction Services, Citizens Bank of Mukwonago, Next Electric, Liberty Outdoor Services, and the local favorite, Fork in the Road restaurant. These businesses, along with many others, help ensure the event ran smoothly.

In addition to sponsors, the Mukwonago School District and Mukwonago Fire Department were instrumental in facilitating the event.

Behind the scenes, a dedicated team of volunteers worked tirelessly to coordinate the event, manage the course, and assist participants.

Through it all, the sense of community was palpable, as volunteers and participants

came together to support the YMCA and each other.

A GROWING TRADITION

The Mukwonago YMCA's Mudrun has grown over the years to become a beloved tradition in the community. It attracts a diverse group of participants, including residents, visitors, and families looking for a fun, active day out.

It not only promotes physical fitness and outdoor activity, but also fosters a strong sense of community spirit and togetherness.

As the mud settled and the final participants crossed the finish line, it was clear that this year's Mudrun was a resounding success. The laughter, camaraderie, and sheer joy of the day were evident on the faces of all who took part.

Mukwonago YMCA representatives extend heartfelt thanks to everyone who participated, sponsored, or volunteered for the annual Mudrun. It is through this collective effort that such a memorable and impactful event can take place, strengthening the bonds of the Mukwonago community.

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Official swearing in

Village of Mukwonago Administrator/Village Clerk/Treasurer Diana Dykstra is sworn in at a special ceremony before the regular September village board meeting in by Hon. Judge Cody Horlacher. "I want to personally thank everyone for the warm welcome this week. So many residents, community leaders, elected officials, and business owners turned out. I appreciate the trust you have placed in me. I look forward to working with you all," Dykstra said.

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Community partners 'raise the roof'

Local students, village staff, Lions Club members and Milwaukee Tool join forces on project

The roof has been raised on a special project at Miniwaukan Park in Mukwonago, built by Mukwonago High School students and supported by a number of community partners.

In the spring, MHS students and supporters from the Village of Mukwonago, Mukwonago Lions Club, and Milwaukee Tool Mukwonago gathered to celebrate a milestone on a building project at the park.

The building trades class constructed a storage garage for use by local soccer teams.

"With support and encouragement from great partners like the village, the Lions Club, and Milwaukee Tool, we were able to offer students a real-world and meaningful construction experience," Dustin Lehman said.

Lehman is the Mukwonago Area School District coordinator of college and career readiness.

Each year, students in the building trades class work on a special off-site project to hone their skills while they earn credits from the Waukesha County Technical College. The course is the capstone class in Mukwonago High School's construction program.

In recent years, projects included a new home collaboration with Korndoerfer Homes, an outdoor classroom at Eagleville Elementary Charter School, and garden sheds for community members.

The district works with local contractors to design and carry out the projects.

"The students have been eager to learn rough carpentry skills," said Paul Sadler, a member of the Lions Club and a retired carpenter. "It has been a real pleasure sharing my work experiences with these hardworking students."

The Miniwaukan Park project is unique in how it pulled in a variety of organizations throughout the process.

"This year's project was special in that it featured collaboration from public and private sectors," Lehman explained.

He said the Village of Mukwonago prepared the site, pulled permits, and poured the concrete foundation, while the Mukwonago Lions funded the construction materials. From there, Milwaukee Tool provided starter tool sets for students working on the site, including tool belts, many of the commonly used jobsite tools, and custom Mukwonago hard hats.

"Milwaukee Tool is proud to be a



The entire crew that had a hand in the construction of a storage garage for use by local soccer teams at Miniwaukan Park gathers in front of the building. The project was a partnership between Mukwonago High School's Building Trades Program and the Village of Mukwonago, the Mukwonago Lions Club, and Milwaukee Tools of Mukwonago.

SUBMITTED PHOTO *Our Town*

sponsor of the Mukwonago High School Building Trades Program," said Todd Neuser, group manager of manufacturing for Milwaukee Tool Mukwonago. "It is extremely rewarding to support educational opportunities and career paths within the trades for our high school students! Our Community Impact Teams are focused on giving back to the communities in which we work and live."

While the collaboration between public and private organizations resulted in a useful community project, the building trades students will be the real winners.

"It's a great partnership because the students are getting real life skills," Mark Soiney, MHS technology education teacher said. "This will be a project the kids will remember and enjoy for the rest of their lives."

MHS band holds annual Field of Flags fundraiser

On each of four of the summer American holidays, Mukwonago High School band students and staff display hundreds of American flags along the grassy field located on East Veterans Way near the Mukwonago Area School District Office.

Since beginning the fundraiser in 2021, the band has had between 140 and 200 flags flying.

The Field of Flags display is erected on Memorial Day, Flag Day, the 4th of July, and Labor Day. Each of the flags is 3x5 feet and flown on a white pole internally anchored into the ground with rebar.

Attached to each pole is a tag that

includes the flag's number, the name of the supporter who sponsored it, and a custom dedication to a serviceperson or other hero who has served our country.

The cost to sponsor a flag has been \$50 per flag.

"We encourage you to visit your flag on Memorial Day, Flag Day, the Fourth of July, and Labor Day. The flags will be up by 8 a.m. and taken down around 7 p.m. on each holiday," representatives said. "The flags will be displayed in numerical order to make it more convenient for you to find the flag you sponsored."

Band students and staff appreciate help in spreading the word about the event with neighbors, businesses, family and friends.

"The more participants we have, the more impactful the display will be. Thank you for your support," they said.

For more information about the program, visit mukwonagobands.org/flags.



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OUR *Parks*

VILLAGE OF MUKWONAGO

The Village of Mukwonago parks and open space system consists of just over 380 total acres of public park land and special use areas under the care of the Department of Public Works.

The system includes a full range of developed facilities including neighborhood parks, community parks, and special use areas located throughout the Village of Mukwonago, as well as a wealth of preserved environmental corridor and natural area sites.

Field Park

Field Park is on the southwest corner of the intersection of highways 83 and NN and is the most widely used park in the Village of Mukwonago.

The park has a 3,000-square-foot pavilion, which includes a full kitchen, a baseball diamond, and an encompassing walking path surrounded by many large oak trees. It is home to several events, including Maxwell Street Days, Mukwonago Summerfeste, and Croatian Day Picnic.

An 800-square-foot open pavilion located near the children's play area provides shelter from the sun and rain as well as provides relaxation for those enjoying the park. The pavilion is host to many family, friends, and business picnics throughout the summer.

The park and pavilion may be rented out on a first-come-first-serve basis, starting Jan. 1 of each year. For the latest rates and application for renting Field Park, visit villageofmukwonago.gov.

Miniwaukan Park

Miniwaukan Park is at the end of McKenzie Road, behind the Mukwonago Industrial Park and Meadow Park Estates Subdivision, is mainly used by youth sports organizations such as Mukwonago Area Soccer Club and Mukwonago Tribe and Bears Baseball organizations.

Miniwaukan Park features one football field, six soccer fields, six baseball fields, a Frisbee-golf course, and a newly launched Born Learning Trail.

The Frisbee-golf course features 40 acres with more than 100 oak trees, 18 holes (two nine-hole loops starting/ending at the parking lot), dual tees, pin placements, and signs marking tee pads and baskets.

Minors Park

Minors Park can be found on Highway LO, just east of Highway I. Two softball diamonds and a wooded picnic area with a small open shelter make up Minor Park.

Beautiful oak trees and landscape draw many photographers to the park for wedding and class photos.

Indianhead Park

Indianhead Park is on Main Street (Highway ES), adjacent to Phantom Lake and to the north of the Village Hall.

The park lies along the Mukwonago River, and it features a small, open pavilion, a beach, and plenty of open space for frisbee and other sports.

A walking path cuts across the park for easy access to the Village Hall from Front Street. Large oak trees provide shade for those who just want to sit and relax and fish the river.

Indianhead also has Mukwonago's newest outdoor venue, Phantom Junction Stage. The stage is nestled between the village hall and the Mukwonago River. Families can enjoy music and refreshments. Kids can run freely in the greenspace and play on the newly developed playground. Check out the 2024 lineup for upcoming shows at www.phantomjunctionstage.com!

Phantom Glen Park

Phantom Glen Park sits at the end of Andrews Street, along Phantom Lake.

The small, quaint park consists of a fishing pier, municipal boat launch, and an open shelter with electricity – ideal for a small, intimate gathering of friends and family.

Washington Avenue Park

Washington Avenue Park is in the block bordered by Park Avenue on the north, Washington Avenue on the south, Franklin Street on the west, and Division Street on the east – directly next to the Mukwonago Community Library.

The park consists of a children's activity structure, offers a basketball court and a baseball diamond, and has plenty of open space for other recreational activities.

All village parks are rented on a first-come-first-serve basis and can only be rented during the current year.

For availability of a specific park and/or to place a reservation, call the village clerk's office at (262) 363-6420.

For more information, visit villageofmukwonago.gov and under the menu scroll down the page and select "Parks and Recreation."

TOWN OF MUKWONAGO

Town Park

Town Park is at W320 S8357 Beulah Rd.

The park has electricity, picnic tables,

soccer and baseball fields, a playground, pavilions (one with an indoor kitchenette), and horseshoe pits.

Lauren Park

Lauren Park is at W315 S8555 Highway EE.

The park has electricity, picnic tables, sand volleyball courts, baseball fields, a playground, a pavilion, and a hiking trail.

Oak Ridge Park

Oak Ridge Park is at W304 S8000 Oakridge Dr.

The park has soccer and baseball fields, picnic tables, a pavilion, and a hiking trail.

For more information on the township's parks visit www.townofmukwonago.us/parks-recreation.

WAUKESHA COUNTY

Mukwonago County Park (and Dog Exercise Area)

Mukwonago Park, S100W31900 County Highway LO, Mukwonago, is part of the Waukesha County Park system.

The 355-acre park site includes a high ridge formed during the last glacial period, which stretches nearly the length of the park. The oak opening ridge is covered with pre-settlement vegetation, including burr oak, shagbark hickory, and ground cover of prairie plants.

Mukwonago Park Dog Exercise Area, W325 S9925 Beulah Rd., is open daily. It features 34 acres, dog watering stations, and three areas – large breed, small breed, and 'Lazy Bones.'

Dog park rules include the following: no more than three dogs per handler in the park; dogs must be leashed (6 ft. maximum length when not in designated off-leash exercise areas); electronic leashes or collars are not considered a leash; handlers shall have control of their dog(s) at all times; dogs are not permitted on groomed cross country ski trails but are permitted on winter hiking and snowshoeing trails.

Park fees apply with annual park stickers available at a cost of \$40 for one vehicle, \$20 for senior or disabled veteran vehicle. Daily parks permits are \$7 per vehicle.

Waukesha County Parks are open sunrise to 10 p.m., daily.

For more information, call (262) 548-7801 or visit waukeshacounty.gov.





On stage

The Mukwonago Area School District Students Summer Adventure Program performed their summer musical, *The Second Act: A Cabaret Performance*, in July at the Greenwald Performing Arts Center. Soloists Sophia Berish, Audrey Ruesch, and Juliana Ziegler (center trio) along with other performers show their moves and vocals in "Fabulous" from *High School Musical 2*.

BRADFORD PAULSON *Our Town*

Mukwonago Summerfeste a special celebration

By **Bradford Paulson**

CORRESPONDENT

Mukwonago was alive with excitement as the Lions Club hosted Summerfeste events in June, a highlight of the summer for many residents and visitors.

The carnival opened on a Thursday, offering a plethora of rides and games that delighted both children and adults. As the sun set, the sounds of laughter and joy gave way to the rhythmic beats of Exit Plan, the band that capped off the evening with an electrifying performance that had the crowd dancing and singing along.

Friday saw an even larger turnout, with festival-goers arriving early. Food trucks were on hand, serving up culinary delights, while beverage stands ensured everyone stayed refreshed. As the evening approached, and the band Lunchmoney Bullies

took to the stage, packing the tent with hundreds of music fans.

The day had record attendance, with the evening's grand finale being a fireworks display that illuminated the night sky and left everyone in awe.

Saturday was dedicated as Youth Day. The day was packed with activities designed to engage and entertain kids of all ages. The Rock Shop allowed kids to create their own musical experiences, while face painting and balloon artists added a colorful touch to the festivities.

The Horseshoe Tournament attracted participants and spectators, in a competitive yet friendly atmosphere. One of the standout events was the Jackson Sparks Foundation Home Run Derby. The day's events were complimented by live music performances from Joe Gleesing and Sons of Scennie, who kept the energy high until the evening.

Sunday marked the culmination of Summerfeste with the much-loved Father's Day Parade, which brought hundreds of people to downtown Mukwonago. The parade featured a variety of groups, marching bands, cars from the car show, and local organizations.

Following the parade, many attendees made their way to Field Park for the car show, which



showcased a stunning array of classic and contemporary vehicles. The car enthusiasts mingled and admired the craftsmanship and history on display. Adding to the day's enjoyment was a performance by Boo! The Band.

Throughout the weekend, the community's spirit was palpable, with smiles and laughter echoing through the streets of Mukwonago. Summerfeste not only provided entertainment and enjoyment but also fostered a sense of togetherness and community pride.

Mukwonago's annual Summerfeste event was held in June at Field Park, including a Father's Day parade, carnival, live music, a car show, a petting zoo, numerous activities for kids and adults, sports tournaments, and the Jackson Sparks Foundation's Home Run Derby.

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