



Town of Oregon

NEWSLETTER

Fall / Winter 2007

TOWN OF OREGON OFFICIALS

Chairperson	Darryl Weber
Supervisors	Wayne Ace Phil Van Kampen Pen Beasley Chris Johnson
Clerk	Denise Arnold
Deputy Clerk	Jennifer Hanson
Treasurer	Rhonda LaFlash
Assessor	Andrew Blomstrom
Constable	Gary Wackett
Joint Municipal Judge.	Beth Cox
Road Patrolmen	Ron Outhouse Harlan Heller
Snow Removal	Romaine Ace Ross Elsing
TORC Attendants	Ralph Maher Ken West Sam Ace
Rep to Brooklyn Fire & EMS	Mark O'Brien
Rep to Belleville Fire & EMS	Sam Stuessy
Rep to Oregon Fire & EMS	Phil Van Kampen
Building Inspector	Brian Burkeland
Plan Commission	Darryl Weber, Chr. Andy Blomstrom Lloyd Klahn Dave Hagemann Brian Duffin Sharon Christensen Paul Morrison
Park Committee	Steve Root, Chr. Janine Jensen Robert Johnson Raandi Schmidt Mark Brylski
Cable Committee	Chuck Forster, Chr. Charles Stearns Pen Beasley Thomas Wiedenbeck Andy Blomstrom

www.town.oregon.wi.us

GREETINGS FROM YOUR TOWN BOARD!

This has been a busy time for your Town officials.

- The tax loan program was successful with approximately 100 residents taking advantage of the program with loans totaling \$38,000.
- An increase in vandalism at the Town Park resulted in closing the Town Park for the month of July to vehicle traffic.
- The Town's parks have benefited from several Eagle Scout projects.
- All elected officials that were required to be certified have completed the National Incident Management System (NIMS) courses required to receive federal funding in the case of a natural disaster.
- A moratorium on subdivisions was voted to extend until April 2008.
- Our Comprehensive Plan has been submitted to the County and is waiting approval.
- A new pick-up truck with a dump box was purchased.
- Brian Burkeland was hired as the new building inspector. His phone number is 574-4824.
- ATC has sponsored several informational Open Houses; the Board supports the shortest Beltline Route.
- Preparations are underway for the 2008 Presidential Election.
- Preparations are also underway for the 2010 Census.
- The Town is participating in The VOTE 2008 - Register Eligible Students of Oregon High School Project.

INFORMATION REGARDING PROPERTY TAXES

TAX COLLECTION DATES SET

The Town of Oregon Treasurer, Rhonda LaFlash will be available to collect your tax payments on Saturday, December 29th and Saturday, January 26th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Payments may be mailed to Rhonda LaFlash, at 5721 Bell Brook Road, Brooklyn, WI 53521. Please pay by check, money order or cashier's check payable to the Town of Oregon. Tax payments will also be accepted at the Clerk's Office during regular business hours from 8:00-12:00 and 1:00-4:00 Monday thru Thursday.

TAX LOAN PROGRAM

From March 23 to July 3, 2007 the Town of Oregon processed ninety-six interest free loans that were made available for residents to assist in payment of their 2006 taxes. The loan program was made available due to the Department of Revenue error. The loans ranged in amounts from .12 to \$1,354.37 and totaled

Continued on page 2

Information Regarding Property Tax Continued from page 1

\$37,761.06. The recipients of the tax loan will see a special assessment included on their 2007 tax bill. If you should have any questions regarding any special assessment on your tax bill please contact the Clerk's Office at 608-835-3200.

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP) ACRES

It is the responsibility of town residents with acreage in CRP to provide proof (contracts) of this acreage to Andy Blomstrom, Town Assessor, so that land is assessed appropriately. Failure to provide proof can result in the loss of CRP status for tax assessment purposes.

MANAGED FOREST LAW (MFL) CHANGES

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has made changes to the MFL program that may affect landowners currently in the program and those landowners thinking of entering it. These changes take effect on November 1, 2007. The three changes are: MFL Land Eligibility and MFL Petition Fees, Catastrophic Loss Provision and Severance and Yield Tax Rates. Also, the new MFL tax rates for 2008 – 20012 are available. For further information, please visit the website www.dnr.wi.gov.

2008 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

IMPORTANT 2008 ELECTION DATES:

Tuesday, February 19 – Presidential Preference Primary and Spring Primary

Tuesday, April 1 – Spring Election for Justice of the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals Judge, Circuit Court Judge, County Nonpartisan Offices, Municipal Offices, School District Offices, and Referenda (if needed).

Tuesday, September 9 – Partisan Primary for Representative in Congress, State Senator, Representative to the Assembly, District Attorney, County partisan offices, and Referenda (if required).

Tuesday, November 4 – General Election for President and Vice President of the United States, Representative in Congress, State Senator, Representative to the Assembly, District Attorney, County Partisan Offices, and Referenda (if required).

There have been numerous changes in Election Law over the last few years. One major change is that everyone in Wisconsin, except military voters, must be a registered voter prior to being allowed to vote. If you have never voted in the

Town of Oregon, please contact the Clerk's Office at 835-3200 to register prior to Election Day. Registering on Election Day may require additional proof of residency. Another major change is the requirement that anyone requesting an absentee ballot must submit their request in writing. An application for absentee ballot can be obtained by calling the Clerk's office or available at the Wisconsin State Elections Board website <http://elections.state.wi.us/subcategory.asp?linksubcatid=1636&locid=47>. All electors are able to receive an absentee ballot upon request.

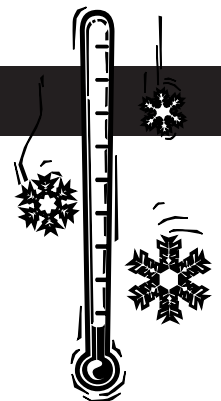
2008 TOWN OF OREGON ELECTION

The Town of Oregon will have two Town Board Supervisor positions up for election in April 2008. These positions are currently held by Supervisor Pen Beasley and Supervisor Phil Van Kampen. The Town of Oregon utilizes the caucus method for nominating candidates to be placed on the Spring Election ballot. The caucus is open to the public, but only residents of the Town of Oregon may nominate and vote for candidates. The caucus is generally held on the third Saturday in January, the exact date will be determined at the December Town Board meeting. Residents interested in running for a position would need to be nominated during the caucus.

WINTER TIME REMINDERS

Snow Removal: Remember to remove all vehicles from the road to allow snow plows to clear snow.

Mailboxes: Clear snow around mailboxes to insure safe and unimpeded mail delivery. Also, please keep snow away from obstructing your fire number because it is used by emergency personnel.



BE A BETTER NEIGHBOR

Being a neighbor means more than just living near another residence. Neighbors create the environment residents in a particular area live and raise their families. If a concern arises in a neighborhood, the first step to a resolution is for neighbors to talk to one another. We can all be better neighbors by acting responsibly.

Speeders: Observe posted speed limits and signs. Be particularly aware of school bus stops. Work with neighbors (form a neighborhood watch) and report license plate numbers of violators in residential areas.

Barking and Biting Dogs: The town has an ordinance regarding barking and biting dogs, allowing dogs to “run at large”, or dogs that habitually pursue any vehicle on any public street, alley or highway. The town constable is authorized to issue citations for violations of any provisions of this ordinance.

Burning: The town does not have a burning ordinance; however there are DNR restrictions as to what can/cannot be burned. For safety, material to be burned should be in a burning barrel, however, the Department of Natural Resources strongly discourages the use

of burn barrels, as they emit dioxin, acid vapors, carcinogenic tars, and heavy metals such as lead, cadmium and chromium as well as unhealthy amounts of carbon monoxide. Materials that may not be burned in a burn barrel or debris pile also may not be burned in a furnace, wood stove or similar home heating system. Remember TORC (Town of Oregon Recycling Center) has a burn area for your burnable refuse. Wisconsin law prohibits anyone from burning the following material:

- * Recyclable paper or cardboard
- * Wet, combustible rubbish, such as wet cardboard or paper
- * Oily substances, such as oily or greasy rags, oil filters, etc.
- * Asphalt, such as asphalt shingles or tar paper
- * Plastics of any kind, including plastic bottle and plastic bags
- * Rubber products, including tires and hoses
- * Painted or treated wood

Source: DNR Burning Regulations and Permits could also hang closer to list of materials.

When burning brush and leaves, it is recommended that you get a burning permit from the

fire department. The Town of Oregon is serviced by three different fire departments; Oregon, Brooklyn and Belleville. Policies vary between the three departments. The Oregon Fire Department recommends that you obtain a burning permit on the day of the burn. The Brooklyn Fire Department recommends that you obtain a burning permit the day prior to the burn and the Belleville Fire Department recommends that residents call the fire department to inform them of a burn. Burning is always weather permitting. You may obtain a permit either in person at the fire stations, or by phone. The permit form is then kept on file. Burning of prohibited materials could result in a citation from the Town Constable. If property is damaged or destroyed as a result of burning, the individual is personally responsible for that damage. If the fire should get out of control and the fire department is used, there could be a charge. During drought conditions, there may be a State ban on burning. The phone numbers are: Oregon Fire Department 835-5587, Brooklyn Fire Department 455-3812 and Belleville Fire Department 424-3081.



TOWN BOARD MEETINGS/ WEB SITE INFORMATION

The Town Board holds their regular monthly meeting on the first Tuesday of the month. Meetings begin at 7:00 PM at the Oregon Town Hall. The Town Planning Commission meets on the last Tuesday of the month and the Park Board meets on the last Monday of the month, both meet at 6:30 PM. Agendas are posted at the Town Hall, Village of Oregon, and TORC and published in the Oregon Observer. All agendas can also be viewed at the Town’s web site:

<http://www.town.oregon.wi.us>. The web site is also a valuable source of information as there are updates regarding the town posted periodically in the web site.

FOOD PANTRY The town hall will gladly accept donations of non-perishable food items for the Oregon/Brooklyn Food Pantry. A container for donations is located in the foyer area of the town hall.

CONSTABLE REPORT

By: Gary Wackett, Town of Oregon Constable

For the past nine years I have seen a steady increase in calls for service. However, 2007 has exploded. During the first six months of this year 40 reports were written. This is 4 more than the total for all of 2006. As of the start of October 64 reports have been written. A large increase of animal related complaints have been received. These

complaints involve running at large, barking dogs, and dog bites. Damage to property calls have also increased this year, not only to Town property, but damage to Town residents property have increased. Only one of these incidents resulted in 8 citations being issued to 5 area juveniles. Some of you have asked why the Town Park was closed to vehicle traffic in July. This was done to slow the daily activity of damage that was

happening in the park. Since the park has reopened, only two incidents have taken place. I have received many calls about speeding in residential areas. I would remind all that residential areas are posted at 25 mph. These calls have been passed onto the Sheriff's Dept. and Oregon Police for extra patrol. Please slow down!

ROAD SAFETY

SLOW DOWN. One only has to drive around on the Town roads to observe the increase in traffic we are experiencing. With that increase in traffic we are also experiencing more speeding motorists. The speed limit on all Town roads is 55 mph unless posted otherwise. Speed limits in subdivisions are 25 mph. In addition to more motor traffic we are also experiencing more bicycle and pedestrian traffic. It is important to be aware of the cyclists especially on the commonly known bike routes. Pedestrian walking/jogging is **NOT RECOMMENDED** on the busy Town roads. In a continued effort to keep our Town roads safe, it is imperative that we all use caution and observe posted speed limits and traffic signs for the safety of all.

Some bicycle and pedestrian safety tips include:

- According to WI State Statues, a bicycle is considered a vehicle and the operator is to obey all traffic rules, signs and signals.
- Cyclists should ride on the right side of the road with traffic, not against it.
- Stop at stop signs, making sure traffic is clear before going.
- Always use correct hand signals before stopping or turning.
- Wear a safety helmet and bright/light colored clothes or clothes with reflective material.
- Both rural and urban pedestrians need to watch for motorists.
- Be aware of vehicles leaving driveways, and for turning and approaching vehicles.
- In rural areas, always walk on the left side of the road facing oncoming traffic.
- Wear light/bright clothing and at night always carry a flashlight.
- Always carry a form of ID on your person.

Avoiding Deer Collisions. The explosion in the deer population has lead to a continuing increase in deer-car collisions. This trend will only increase as the deer population grows and urban habitats continue to encroach upon rural environments.

Defensive driving tips to avoid hitting a deer:

- Be especially attentive from sunset to midnight and during the hours shortly before and after sunrise. These are the highest risk times for deer-vehicle collisions.
- Drive with caution when moving through deer-crossing zones, in areas known to have a large deer population and in areas where roads divide agricultural fields from forestland. Deer seldom run alone. If you see one, others may be nearby.
- When driving at night, use high beam headlights when there is no oncoming traffic. The high beams will better illuminate the eyes of deer on or near the roadway.
- Slow down and blow your horn with one long blast to frighten the deer away.
- Brake firmly when you notice a deer in or near your path, but stay in your lane. Many serious crashes occur when drivers swerve to avoid a deer and hit another vehicle or lose control of their cars.
- Always wear your seatbelt. Most people injured in car/deer crashes were not wearing their seat belt.
- Do not rely on devices such as a deer whistles, deer fences and reflectors to deter deer. These devices have not been proven to reduce deer-vehicle collisions.

If your vehicle strikes a deer, do not touch the animal. A frightened and wounded deer can hurt you or further injure itself. The best procedure is to get your car off the road, if possible, and call the police.

If a dead deer is located on your property, please call the DNR at 275-3266, press 0 for pick-up. The DNR will only pick up deer located near the road, they will not trespass onto private property.

Medicare Part D has been in the news an awful lot lately and there doesn't seem to be an end in sight. Enrollment changes are the most current newsworthy item regarding Part D. All Medicare beneficiaries have the option to make changes in their prescription drug plans beginning on November 15, 2007 and continuing until December 31, 2007.

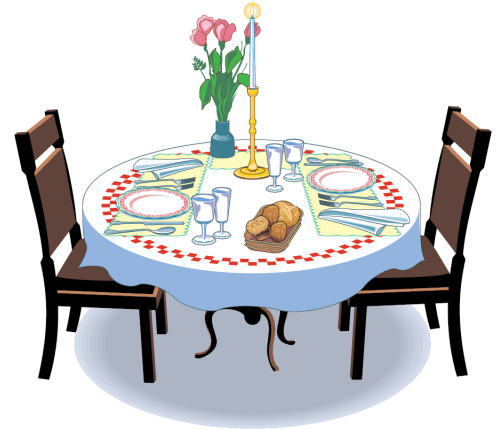
During that time, Medicare beneficiaries already enrolled in a Medicare Part D plan can switch plans or choose an alternate source of prescription drug coverage. Medicare beneficiaries who have not yet enrolled in a Medicare Part D plan will be able to join one during this time. Additionally, beneficiaries who receive their Medicare benefits through a Medicare Advantage plan can make enrollment choices as well. They can change plans or go back to original Medicare.

Medicare beneficiaries should evaluate their current health care coverage and needs including those related to prescription drugs. After evaluating coverage needs, beneficiaries can begin looking at which insurance option will best suit their needs and lifestyle. Those that are satisfied with their current coverage do not have to do anything and their enrollment should remain unchanged. Beneficiaries who want to make a change should begin comparing plans.

By October 31st, all current Medicare Part D and Medicare Advantage participants should have received an Annual Notice of Change from their insurance providers. These notices will describe what is changing about the coverage for the upcoming 2008 plan year. The notices will show if there are premium increases, changes in the deductible, shifts in cost-sharing amounts and new or altered coverage limits. Beneficiaries who have not yet received these notices should contact their insurance providers and request one. Beneficiaries who are content with their plans do not have to do anything and their coverage should remain in place. Those who do want to make changes can evaluate available plans and make enrollment decisions. Enrollment can be completed by calling the plan, filing an application or enrolling on the Medicare website at [HYPERLINK "http://www.medicare.gov"](http://www.medicare.gov)

To ensure a smooth transition from one plan to another, beneficiaries who want to make a change should do so by the middle of December. The last day to make choices in the annual enrollment period is December 31, 2007.

If you have questions about regarding the Medicare enrollment, please call the Senior Center at 835-5801.



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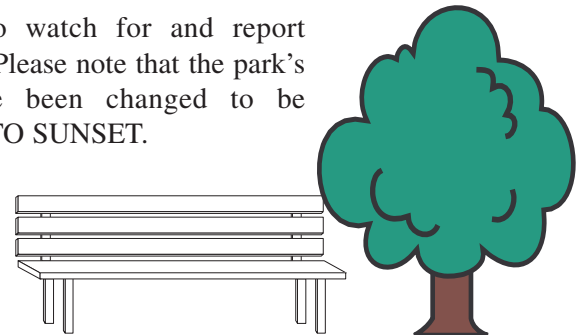
Are you thinking of retiring soon? Do you have questions about Medicare, Social Security, Medicare Supplement Insurance, Medicare Advantage Plans or Medicare Part D? You may want to attend a short seminar offered at the Senior Center on Tuesday, December 4th from 4:00 to 6:00 PM. Roberta Hershleb from the Social Security Office and Hollin Kennen, a Benefit Specialist from Dane County as well as a representative from the Office of Commissioner of Insurance will be covering these topics and answering your questions. To make a reservation, please call the Center at 835-5801.

Light supper will be offered. There is no cost.

TOWN PARK VANDALISM

Unfortunately the summer of 2007 has been one of increased vandalism in our Town parks. Underage drinking, broken glass, damage to playground equipment and violation of park hours resulted in the closing of the Town Park on Glenway Road to vehicle traffic for the month of July. In order to continue to have our parks provide a safe and enjoyable environment for all, it is very important for all

residents to watch for and report vandalism. Please note that the park's hours have been changed to be SUNRISE TO SUNSET.



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By State Representative, Brett Davis

Finally, a state budget has been approved. After far too much political posturing, enough state legislators understood that it was time to move Wisconsin forward. I am the first to admit this bi-partisan compromise isn't perfect, but Wisconsin must have a budget. This final budget compromise invests in Wisconsin's priorities: health care, education, economic development and the environment, and also keeps government spending in line with our families ability to pay.

More specifically, here are some of the highlights:

Highway 14 Expansion

Expanding Highway 14 to four lanes near Oregon has been on the list of Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) projects for several years. However, the project continued to be delayed by the DOT. Included in the budget compromise is a directive that the DOT is required to complete a reconstruction project of Highway 14 during the 2007-09 biennium, between County Road MM and Highway 138. This reconstruction project includes replacing worn pavement and constructing a new lane of traffic in either direction. Anyone who drives this stretch of road realizes the safety risk involved if nothing is done to expand the highway soon and under the new directive the DOT must complete the project no later than June 31, 2009.

Health Care

Access to affordable health care is one of the most important issues facing Wisconsin families. The budget compromise helps lower health care costs by making health insurance premiums tax deductible and focusing on wellness incentives. In

addition, through Badger Care Plus, 98% of Wisconsin residents will have access to health insurance. Finally, the state budget fully funds SeniorCare, which gives 107,000 seniors across our state access to affordable prescription drugs.

Education

The budget compromise invests significantly in K-12 education with an increase of more than \$524.8 million of new money. Our total K-12 education funding in Wisconsin is \$12.3 billion, making it the number one priority of our state. In fact, over 40% of our state general purpose tax dollars are invested in our public school students. The budget makes important changes to help rural school districts that have declining enrollment and increases funding for special education and smaller class sizes.

Taxes, Spending, and Budgeting

The property tax freeze, which has helped lower property taxes, was extended for another 2 years at 3.86%, plus new construction growth in our communities. \$210 million in tax cuts and tax credits for Wisconsin families and businesses will allow families to keep more of their hard earned money and grow our economy. The budget compromise also cuts the state's structural deficit nearly in half and is now at its lowest point in 12 years.

The bi-partisan work must not stop with the final state budget compromise. Many pressing issues still face families across Wisconsin. We must continue our work together if Wisconsin is going to keep moving in the right direction.

Please contact me at 608-266-1192 or Rep.Davis@legis.wi.gov if I can assist you, your family, or your business in any way.

State Representative Brett Davis

State Capitol - Room 308 North - Post Office Box 8952 - Madison, Wisconsin 53708

(608) 266-1192 - Fax (608) 282-3680 - Toll Free: (888) 534-0080

Email: Rep.Davis@legis.wi.gov

On the Internet: www.brettdavis.us

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECTS

Over the years many local Boy Scouts have performed service projects to earn the status of Eagle Scout, the highest honor in scouting. The Town of Oregon parks benefit from these service projects which include building wheel chair accessible picnic tables and creating and maintain-

ing walking trails. The most recent projects include: Justin Miller, who cut trees and worked on maintaining the prairie in the Bicentennial Park, Adam Beranek, working to create and maintain walking trails in the Bicentennial Park, Jake Butterfield, working on park improvements, and Tom Wollin, who designed

and installed the TOWN PARK sign that is erected at the entrance of the Town Park on Glenway Road, and another sign recognizing Eagle Scout candidates and their contributions to the Town that will soon be displayed outside the Town Hall on Union Road.

UPDATE ON POWER LINES

Area Residents Involved in Power Line Discussions

By Sarah Justus

The Town of Oregon may be impacted by two electric transmission lines being proposed by American Transmission Co.

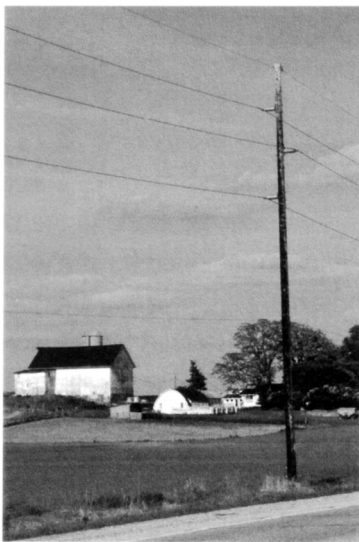
A project to serve local electricity needs involves the construction of a substation by Alliant Energy (called Sun Valley) in the vicinity of Fish Hatchery Road and County Hwy. CC, and a 69-kilovolt transmission line that ATC is proposing to connect the new Sun Valley substation to an existing 69-kilovolt transmission line located along Adam Road. The proposed transmission line route runs south from Adams Road, offset to the west of Fish Hatchery Road until it reaches a point due west of Netherwood Road. At that point the route heads east to the east side of Fish Hatchery Road and then heads south into the substation, crossing County

Highway D. ATC staff met with local residents at a second open house in October to discuss their plans and will soon be seeking local permits to build the line. According to ATC's representative, Sarah Justus, the next step after approvals would be to work with property owners to acquire easements. Construction would follow sometime in late 2008.

A larger ATC project that has been in the headlines during the past two years involves the construction of a 345-kilovolt transmission line through Dane County between the Towns of Middleton and Christiana. The final routes, which we're including in ATC's application to the Public Service Commission last month, follow two basic east-west corridors including a northern route that generally follows the Beltline and a southern route that uses mostly rural areas offset from county highways. The proposed southern route would run offset from County Highway A from Highway

MM to the Town of Montrose. The PSC will be reviewing ATC's application throughout 2008 and will render a decision in 2009, following a comprehensive review and public hearings.

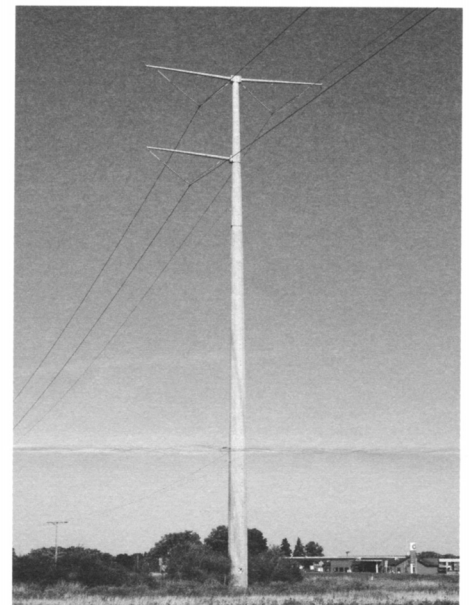
To view maps of these projects or stay current on developments you can visit ATC's website at www.atcllc.com. Direct comments or questions can be directed to Sarah Justus at ATC. Her email is sjustus@atcllc.com; phone number (608) 877-3624.



A 69-kV line on wood pole.



A slightly taller pole is used when electric distribution lines share the same structure as a 69-kV line.



The proposed structure design for the 345 kV line uses steel poles approximately 120 feet high. In some areas, the wires may be placed on only one side of the structure.

Season Greetings



from the Town of Oregon

***Town of
Oregon***



**1138 Union Road
Oregon, WI 53575**

**PRESORTED
FIRST CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Madison WI
Permit No. 953**