



Kiwaniis®

Kiwaniis Club of Madison West – Kiwanogram

Guests: **Brandon Boyd**, Dickson

Scholar, **Karl Lettner**, guest of **Ed Reisch**,
David Schultz, guest of **Ron Schuler**,
JoAnna Richard, President of **Middleton**
Kiwaniis

Program: "How Cows Convert Grass into Milk" - Michel Wattiaux, UW-Madison, Animal & Dairy Sci Dept., Emeritus Professor



Michel Wattiaux

Originally from a dairy farm in Belgium, Michel came to the University of Wisconsin-Madison to earn a PhD in dairy science in the late 1980s. His US alma mater became his professional academic institution for the last 35 years.

Professor Wattiaux explained to us the processes of digestion and metabolism that cows use to turn grass (feed) into milk. Like all mammals, cows use nutrients in their food to maintain and develop their bodies, for growth, and for reproduction.

Cows are herbivores with a forestomach (not four stomachs) where food is fermented before moving into the glandular stomach and the rest of the digestive tract where acids and enzymes complete extracting nutrients. This is a distinction that defines cows as ruminants.

The forestomach has several chambers the digesta move through, including going back to

February 27, 2026

Presiding:	Dwight Gribble
Greeter:	Jim Wiederhoeft
Checkpoint:	Joseph Tevaarwerk
Opening Word:	Harley Skjervem
Setup:	Tom McCrill

the mouth for further chewing (which we know as a cow chewing their cud). A typical cow has 150–200 pounds of material in their forestomach, staying there for 18-48 hours.

Digested nutrients move into the cow's bloodstream. Milk is synthesized from nutrients extracted or transferred from the blood.

Dr. Wattiaux quizzed the group on facts of milk production. We learned that it takes 400-500 liters of blood flow to produce 1 liter (~2.2 pounds) of milk. Cows chew 3-5 hours while eating and another 6-8 hours per day chewing their cud. This totals almost 50,000 chews each day! The energy a cow uses to produce 100 pounds of milk is equal to the cow running 13 marathons! The rumen contains billions and billions of bacteria (10-100 billion). Milk from a cow producing 100 pounds of milk in a day (not uncommon) could make about 10 pounds of cheddar cheese.

As a ruminant, a cow's digestion strategy is the most elaborate that natural evolution has devised to allow animals to derive nourishment from a plant-based diet.

Date Event

Mar 6	MWK Board of Directors, 10:00 am
Mar 20	Foundation Trustees, 1:00 pm

Up Coming Programs

Date	Program	Greeter	Check In	Opening Word
Mar 6	Cheese: The Path from Dairy Producer to Consumer - Rob Rowbotham, PhD, Grande Cheese, Sr. Principal Data Sci.	TBD	Aspinwall	Tevaarwerk
Mar 13	WayForward Resources	TBD	TBD	TBD
Mar 20	Greenland Travelogue - Gary Theisen	TBD	TBD	TBD

Meeting Time and Location

Every Friday, 11:45 am
Covenant Presbyterian Church
326 Segoe Road, Madison, WI 53705
Web site: www.madisonwestkiwanis.info
Email: lebaker@chorus.net
Facebook: facebook.com/madisonwestkiwanis



Joanna Richard, Middleton Kiwanis President, attended our meeting to promote the **Middleton Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast**

Saturday, March 7th, 7:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. at the **Middleton Sports Bowl**. Tickets are only \$9. Kids below 5 years old are free.

Jim Danner reports there were five members at **Second Harvest** yesterday. They filled 19 boxes with twelve dozen cinnamon rolls each. The next date for volunteering is **March 26th**.

George Skupniewicz is volunteering at the **Midvale School Rhythm & Books / Specials Showcase** on Monday, March 2, 4-6pm.

Dwight Gribble reports the next Midvale School **Lunch Buddies** date is March 19th.

George Shook reports our next volunteer date at **Habitat ReStore** is March 19th, 9:00 am to Noon. Contact George if you need help signing up.

Arlin Brannstrom reports that the new **Community Grant** Application form is posted on our website. Please consider sponsoring your favorite organization for a grant this year. Applications are due **April 1st**.



President **Dwight Gribble** inducts new member **Dan Loichinger**.

Club Officers (2025-26)

President:	Dwight Gribble
President-Elect:	Cody Kramschuster
Secretary:	Leroy Baker
Assistant Sec:	Thomas DuVal
Treasurer:	Randy Grobe
Past President:	Ken Saville
Board of Directors:	
John Busby	Harley Skjervem
Jim Danner	Joseph Tevaarwerk
Ed Reisch	

2026 Dickson Scholar Award



Brandon Boyd

Brandon Boyd is a Junior from Watertown, WI majoring in Agronomy and Ag Business Management. Brandon serves as Vice President of the Collegiate Farm Bureau and President of the Badger Crops Club where he participates on the judging team and travels nationally for crop judging.

He also participates in the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers International Quarter-Scale Student Design Competition to design, build, and compete in a quarter scale tractor pull.



The **Wisconsin-Upper Michigan Kiwanis District Midyear Conference** is March 28th. Contact Dwight Gribble if you want to attend.

Memorials

Al Anderson was our last surviving Charter Member from the club's founding in 1959. Private services will be held. For the full obituary, [click here](#).

Bill Battista Visitation and Memorial Mass at Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Church on Tuesday, March 17, 2026. Visitation from 10 - 11:30 a.m. with the Mass immediately following. For the full obituary, [click here](#).



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CLUB OF MADISON WEST