

JOHN ZASTROW

If you travel around campus to any degree, you have probably seen John Zastrow working in one of the academic buildings. He has been with UW-Whitewater for eleven years – all of those years working for Facilities Planning & Management. He is usually in one of the academic buildings on the west side of campus – Center of the Arts, Hyer Hall, McCutchan, Carlson, Hyland Hall, White Hall, the Log Cabin or the Schoolhouse. And one of the first things you will encounter is John's wide, friendly smile, which hints of a warm, easy-going personality. It's very easy to sit down and engage him in a relaxing conversation.

John and his wife, Denise, recently pulled up stakes in Jefferson and moved to a farm outside of Fort Atkinson. Denise is a Human Resource Manager at Polymer Technologies in Whitewater, so it is a shorter commute for both of them. However, the main reason for the move was to assist his son, Chris, who runs his own organic vegetable business – Wholesome Harvest. Chris was expanding the business and had purchased the farm, which included two houses. So, John and Denise moved into the extra house and help with the vegetable business in their spare time. Chris is the oldest of the children. He and his fiancée, Lisa, will most likely be planning a wedding in the near future. John laughs at this, indicating that he will probably find out a week or two in advance of the wedding date – that's just Chris' style. But, he takes it in stride and doesn't seem to be too concerned about carving out time for a major event on such short notice.

Two daughters round out the family. Their oldest daughter, Jen, is in her last semester at UW-Madison and is majoring in business. They are looking forward to her completing her degree and starting her career. Lindsay (Lin) is the youngest and is also attending UW-Madison. She is a junior majoring in education. Lin is also on the Badger Women's Basketball team. The family pet is Grumpy, a seven-year-old German short-hair. Since they have moved to a farm, with lots of space, they have also acquired a 15-week-old Bassett Hound named Monty. The two canines have already developed a great rapport and provide their own brand of humor in the household.

John has a wide variety of interests. He enjoys yard work and landscaping. Having just moved a month ago, remodeling is also on his list, but not necessarily at the top. He is very active in church activities and loves reading the Bible, noting that there are many great stories to capture one's interest. John and Denise also spend a lot of time traveling to Lin's basketball games. His goal is to try to attend at least one away game in each state of the five-state radius covered by her division. And, he likes to help Chris with his business activities. There's not much grass growing under John's feet.

John's territory is on the west side of campus and his responsibilities include all repairs and maintenance in his assigned buildings. Do you ever wonder who hangs all of those pictures and white boards and pieces of art? That would be John and his co-workers. He also takes care of repairs to floors, ceilings and others parts of the buildings. Maintenance is a job that never ends. But, John likes his work and he especially enjoys the interaction he has with fellow employees and customers (the people he works for on campus). And that is what he likes most about UW-Whitewater – the people; “working with good folks”, as he puts it.

Regarding the changes on campus, John notes that “You have to be progressive. It's important to create a safe environment for people who are here to teach, learn and study.”