

## MENASHA'S RED CABOOSE GETS A SPRUCE

POSTED ON DECEMBER 23, 2014 BY JESSICA MORGAN

This past summer, multiple organizations in the Menasha area worked together to patch up a red caboose residing in Menasha's Smith Park. While this little engine will never "choo choo" down the railroad again, it has a shiny new paint job to boast about. The funds to restore the caboose came entirely from the Menasha Historical Society's budget, costing \$14,000 in repairs. Though the restoration process was expensive, it was important to the members of the historical society to preserve this piece of history.

Before being spruced up, the interior and exterior of the caboose were in need of some TLC. "The paint was all cracked and peeling and the metal parts rusted. We were faced with the choice of either maintaining it and keeping it, or letting it go," says Dick Loehning, board member of the Menasha Historical Society.

LeksIII Construction met with city officials and the Menasha Historical society on July 31 for project planning. On Sept. 18, the caboose was wrapped in two layers of reinforced polymer on the ground, a layer all the way along the outside, and a layer in the inside to ensure a safe removal of the paint. Since the original layer of paint contained lead, its removal required the cooperation of Menasha's Parks and Recreation, and the Menasha Health Department. "Lead being in the paint changed the whole process ... there are stringent laws against lead paint removal because its toxic," says John Leksander, owner of LeksIII Construction. "So basically we entirely encapsulated the whole thing so that it was in a big bubble."

The project was a unique learning experience for LeksIII Construction. "We build homes, work on apartment remodels, and are involved with electrical and building contractors ... we do just about everything for businesses, franchises and commercial residences," Leksander says, explaining his typical work. "For us it was a fun and interesting project. We had never done anything like it before, and we appreciated the opportunity to be involved with it," Leksander says.

Before 2

