

## FOLKS Business Members

Anchorbank, SSB	877-4100
Barber's Bay	873-6121
Coldwell Banker Sveum Realtor	873-7731
Crown Point Resort	873-7833
Dean Thomas Homes, Inc	873-1935
Evergreen State Bank	873-5363
Jim's Tree Service	838-8188
Kegonsa Cove	838-6494
Mike Jensen Taxidermy	838-4862
Quam's Motor Sports	873-3366
Quick Stop - Mobil	873-5321
RE/MAX Preferred	877-0871
Sonny's Bar & Grill	873-4422
Springer's	205-9300
Stark Company Realtors - Stoughton Country Club	Marjie Hanssen (205-3003) and Tony Hill (205-3030) 873-7861
The UPS Store	877-2679
Web-Net	alan@web-net.us
Brown's Boats and Bait	873-6770



Friends of Lake Kegonsa Society, Inc.  
P.O. Box 173  
Stoughton, WI 53589-0173  
**October 2008**

### President's Message ~ Bob Arndt

Lake dwellers have faced numerous challenges so far this year including sub-standard lot zoning issues, high lake levels with "no-wake" restrictions, weeds and blue-green algae, and most recently low lake levels. The FOLKS officers and board have been busy trying to gather and communicate timely information on these issues. This newsletter is the primary method of keeping members informed about lake related issues and events. The Lake Network (a list of member email addresses) is used to provide more timely information concerning issues such as "no-wake" restrictions and lake levels. Occasionally, special mailings are used to reach the entire membership.

It is readily apparent that these issues are very important to FOLKS members. A recent email communication concerning lake levels prompted many members to call, write and email county officials about the low levels. The numerous letters, emails and phone calls had an effect. The lake level was brought back to a navigable level. We were also afforded an opportunity to be heard at a meeting of the Dane County Lakes and Watershed Commission, thanks primarily to the response of Dane County Board representative Cynda Solberg. We also received quick responses to a survey concerning lake levels from 181 of the 264 members on our email list. The results were presented to the Commission.

While the FOLKS board is aware of many of the current concerns of members, in the coming months you will receive a survey asking you to tell us what you think are the most important issues for FOLKS to address in the next few years. We urge you to take the opportunity to let us know about your most important concerns.

FOLKS currently has 356 individual members. This represents about 55% of the lake parcels. About 40% of the members use an out of state mailing address. We also have 16 business members.

I hope to see many of you at our fall social on November 15. FOLKS had planned on having a family social at LaFollette Park this summer but the lake conditions forced us to delay and then eventually cancel the event.

For More About FOLKS, Visit Our  
Website at [WWW.Kegonsa.org](http://WWW.Kegonsa.org)

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Stoughton, WI 53589

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**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**FOLKS FALL SOCIAL**  
Saturday, November 15<sup>th</sup> 6-11pm  
Stoughton Country Club

- Cocktails (Cash Bar)
- Dinner
- Disc Jockey & Dancing

Have some laughs with friends and neighbors from  
around the lake!!

Look for your invitation in the mail  
&  
get all the details



**FOLKS OFFICERS 2008**

**Bob Arndt**  
**President**  
1960 Barber Dr.  
Stoughton, WI 53589  
877-8540  
BobA@kegonsa.org

**John Olsen**  
**Vice President**  
2164 Colladay Point  
Stoughton, WI 53589  
877-0845  
JohnO@kegonsa.org

**Joe Edgerton**  
**Vice President**  
3421 Stony Crest Drive McFarland, WI 53558  
838-9489  
JoeE@kegonsa.org

**Susan Luellwitz**  
**Secretary**  
2059 Skyline Drive  
Stoughton, WI 53589  
873-8519  
SusanL@kegonsa.org

**Marcia Gray**  
**Treasurer**  
1979 Skyline Drive  
Stoughton, WI 53589  
345-0096  
MarciaG@kegonsa.org

**Board Members 2008**

Ray Potempa  
3411 Stony Crest Drive  
McFarland, WI 53558  
838-9329  
RayP@kegonsa.org

Tom McGinnis  
2949 Tracey Ln.  
877-0462  
TomM@kegonsa.org

James Gray  
1979 Skyline Dr.  
345-0096  
JimG@kegonsa.org

David Luellwitz  
2059 Skyline Drive  
873-8519  
DavidL@kesonsa.org

Robbie Kritz  
3492 Orvold Park Drive  
576-6323  
RobbieK@kegonsa.org

Jim Schoeberl  
2126 Colladay Point Drive  
873-7043  
JimS@kegonsa.org

Brad Wagner  
2160 Colladay Point Drive  
877-8377  
BradW@kegonsa.org

FOLKS monthly board meetings are held on the last Monday of each month and the public is welcome to attend. Next Meeting October 27, 2008, 5:30 - 7:00 PM.

Stoughton Country Club 3165 Shady Side Drive Stoughton WI, 53589

**Send news of interest to FOLKS to:**  
**P.O. Box 173**  
**Stoughton, WI 53589 or**  
**DavidL@kesonsa.org**

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## Update on 2007 National Lake Survey

Reproduced from <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/nls/index.htm>

The EPA-sponsored 2007 National Lake Survey examined ecological, water quality, and recreational indicators for lakes across the country. Lake Kegonsa was included in this survey.

In Wisconsin, a team of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) staff sampled the selected lakes throughout July and August of 2007. Samples collected included standard water quality constituents (nutrients, pH, color, chlorophyll-a), water clarity, physical profiles, phytoplankton and zooplankton, a sediment core, algal toxins, pathogens, and benthos (lake-bottom organisms). In addition, a comprehensive shoreline assessment was conducted at 10 sites around each lake. These core indicators will be examined to diagnose the lake's water quality, ecological integrity, and recreational value. Lake Kegonsa results are shown below.

In addition to the standard protocol, in Wisconsin we also performed several enhancements:

**Aquatic plant surveys:** Using funds from the National Lake Survey, most of the randomly selected lakes were sampled for their aquatic plant community using the point-intercept sampling approach. The data will tell us about the maximum rooting depth, distribution of aquatic invasives, and the diversity of the plant community.

**Enhanced physical habitat assessment:** An additional habitat survey was conducted on expanded shoreland plots to provide more detail on woody debris for fish habitat, invasive species specific to Wisconsin, and to better document the presence and density of human development.

**Surface water mercury sampling:** As part of an Upper Midwest mercury study conducted by the USGS, National Lake Survey sampling crews for Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota, and Michigan collected water samples for total and methyl mercury from approximately 200 lakes. The data will be used to better understand how internal mercury loading rates and ecosystem factors such as water quality, hydrology, and food web characteristics control the magnitude of mercury levels in fish.

The EPA hopes to have a draft report available to the public for review and comment by 2008 and a final published report by 2009.

Secchi Depth (m)	Hit Bottom	Chlorophyll a (µg/L)	Total Phosphorus (mg/L)	TSI (Secchi)	TSI (Chl a)	TSI (TP)
1.45	NO	23.6	0.056	55	62	62
			pH	Diss. Si (µg/L)	Alkalinity (mg/L)	
			8.72	8.65	181	

Secchi = Secchi disc transparency in meters (m); Chl a = chlorophyll a in micrograms per liter (µg/L); TP = total phosphorus in µg/L; TSI(Secchi), TSI(Chl a), TSI(TP) = Wisconsin trophic state index based on Secchi, Chl a, and TP, respectively; Diss. Si = dissolved silica in µg/L; Alkalinity = alkalinity as total CaCO<sub>3</sub> in milligrams per liter (mg/L);

## Lake Level Problems

The Department of Natural Resources has established maximum and minimum levels for all of the lakes in the Yahara chain. In 1972, the levels for Lake Kegonsa were set at:

Summer Minimum Water Level: 843.0'  
 Summer Maximum Water Level: 843.5'  
 Winter Minimum Water Level: 841.85'

Water levels are given as feet above mean sea level.

DNR Lake Level Orders state that these levels are to be adhered to as closely as possible by reasonable and proper operation of the LaFollette County Park Lock & Dam. Summer is defined as the period between the first spring runoff occurring after March 1 and October 30. The orders also call for the lowering of the lakes after November 1, to 841.85 ft above sea level. The Dane County Land and Water Resources Department (under the direction of Kevin Connors) is responsible for controlling the level.

### High Levels

Unfortunately, Lake Kegonsa was between these target levels for only a few weeks this summer. Problems started early when the lake level never dropped to the winter level, even though the LaFollette locks and dam were fully open. This caused problems for some since the ice was much higher. Then melting snow and record rains raised all of the lakes to record highs. Lake Kegonsa peaked at 845.72' on June 16<sup>th</sup> (more than two feet above the target summer maximum).

### Low Levels

With the locks and dam still wide open the lake level fell about a half inch per day from the middle of July until it reached the summer max on August 9<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately, with the locks and dam still open, it continued to fall until it was 1.7 inches below the summer minimum on August 28. At this point the LaFollette locks were finally closed.

Lake Kegonsa was intentionally lowered this far by the Dane County Land and Water Resources Department in attempt to create a greater "head differential" between Lakes Waubesa and Kegonsa. In theory this should have increased the flow out of Lake Waubesa, which remained well about its summer max. Under normal conditions the level of Lake Kegonsa is 1.5 feet below Waubesa. At one point the difference reached 3.3 feet. However, it is clear that this was ineffective because the real problem was weeds in the channel between Waubesa and Kegonsa. Finally, in August, as many as five weedcutters were operating trying to clear the jam.

Based upon the results of a FOLKS email survey sent out on August 26, the low levels caused considerable navigation problems on Lake Kegonsa. 55% of the 151 responders indicated they had trouble getting boats on and off lifts or had hit bottom at some point.

### What Can Be Done

It is difficult to determine whether anything could have been done about any of the high water situations. At the same time it is clear that the low levels could have easily been avoided by closing the locks at LaFollette one week earlier. (Continued on Page 4)

## Lake Level Problems

Continued from page 3

It appears that complaints about low levels start when the lake level is 2-3 inches above the summer minimum target. This suggests that the current established minimum is too low. DNR representatives have indicated that they will be holding a meeting concerning levels for all of the area lakes. FOLKS representatives will be attending these meetings. Changing the established levels is a slow process.

In the short term, a presentation was made to the Dane County Lakes and Watershed Commission on September 11. The results of the FOLKS survey and concerns about the delays in closing the locks, as well as problems related to contacting county officials were conveyed. FOLKS is also planning to issue/publish a public letter to the County Executive and to the Lakes and Watershed Commission explaining member concerns and proposed solutions to these problems.

You can voice your opinion by contacting Kevin Connors, the Director of the Dane County Land and Water Resources Department.

1 Fen Oak Ct  
Madison WI, 53718  
(608) 224-3731

connors.kevin@co.dane.wi.us

To contact other county officials, please see our web page ([www.kegonsa.org](http://www.kegonsa.org)).

## New Members

FOLKS wishes to welcome the following new household members:

Daniel & Lynene Wagner-Harmon  
Herbert & Carol Wilson  
Joseph & Carol Stanek  
Bill Lamm & Connie Hagen  
Tom & Susan Bush  
Margie Martin  
Tim & Laurie Wagner  
Jeff & Karen Loster  
Byron & Danielle Thompson  
David Lewis & Lucy Harr  
Douglas & Beth Koss  
George & Susan Krass  
Rob Peters  
James & Lynne Pope  
Julie Schellschmidt  
Carol Conboy & Dolores Gruca  
Ron Wells

## Kegonsa Cove—A Brief History

Kegonsa Cove, the current business located at County Highway AB and the Yahara River, has a long and interesting history. Tom and Debbie Ellis purchased the property in December, 1989 and have successfully revamped the facilities and the business. Kegonsa Cove features bait, beer, pop, ice, snacks and candy. They are currently the only outlet on the lake that pumps gas. Kegonsa Cove also rents canoes and pontoon boats, offers prop repair, and winterizes and stores boats. (Tom and Debbie also serve original Chocolate Shoppe ice cream - a refreshing summer afternoon treat). Since acquiring the property, the Ellises have fully sewered the 40 site seasonal campgrounds that is open from April-October. They provide a convenient outlet for folks who want to enjoy the water and not have to travel into town.

Many of you will recall that the previous owners, Tom and Dorothy Lewis, ran Tom-A-Dot Landing from 1965-1989. Tom-A-Dot's was a bar and grill that also offered beer, ice and a seasonal campground. Most concur that Tom-A-Dot's had "character" – both in the facility and the revelry. It's possible that the establishment wouldn't have been up to code today, but they had a definite crew of regulars.

Tom and Dorothy purchased the property formerly known as Butch's Landing. Butch owned all the area now known as Stony Crest Drive all the way to the river. He raised his own bait in minnow ponds and also sold beer and ice in addition to his campgrounds. In the 1950's, Butch also dug the three channels that run perpendicular to the river—a project that likely wouldn't have occurred in today's DNR regulatory environment!

One thing is certain, there's been a long history of campfire storytelling and good times "down by the river"!

For more information visit [www.Kegonsacove.com](http://www.Kegonsacove.com)

