



Friends of Lake Kegonsa Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 173
Stoughton, WI 53589-0173
April/May 2024

President’s Message ~ George Corrigan

It has been two months since I put our pier in the lake. In 24 years on Lake Kegonsa this is the first time I was able to put the pier in before March! (February 29th, but February nonetheless). Given the warmth then, I expected to be boating in March. The weather didn’t cooperate, and while our pier is ready, our boat is still in our garage.

We still enjoyed the lake from shore in March, especially watching the large variety of migrating birds as they passed through. Our copy of Birds of North America is always handy, so we can identify some of the less common birds. **FOLKS** is delighted to help members enjoy observing migratory birds by hosting a seminar on migratory birds. By the time you get this newsletter the event will have been held, and it is discussed in more detail below. I hope I saw you there!

After enjoying bird migration my attention turns towards land. Every April a litter of fox kits is raised on Colladay Point. Their first den is the culvert under our driveway, and over the next 8 weeks they change dens several times before dispersing as young adults. Watching them play - wrestling, pouncing, and zooming about - is a privilege and a joy.

By the time the kits are gone our boat will be on our lift, and we will enjoy being on the water. **FOLKS** continues to work towards improving lake quality, and our projects are often discussed in these newsletters, so I won’t list them again. But we are always looking for new projects.

Our next big member event will be the annual summer meeting. One focus of the meeting will be collecting ideas for new projects from members. Please spend a little time between now and June thinking of what we can do collectively and individually to help the lake. (**FOLKS** cannot control the water level, so whether it happens to be too high this year, or too low this year, changing the water level is not a project we can undertake). But I do look forward to hearing your ideas for other great projects.

-George Corrigan

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FOLKS 2024 Membership Drive

It's time to send in your membership renewal forms for **2024**. For new members that you might recruit, membership forms are on our website at www.kegonsa.org. Prospective members can go to the website to learn more about **FOLKS** at the project and information pages and the archived newsletters. Please help us promote **FOLKS** by talking to your friends, neighbors and the businesses you frequent.

Lake Kegonsa Water Levels

As May 5, 2024 the Lake Kegonsa level is **843.17'** (ft above sea level). We've already had quite a lot of rain this spring and all lakes are currently in range between summer minimum and summer maximum levels. The dams are currently set to maintain or increase lake levels. The Tenney Dam (Mendota) is 24% open, Babcock Dam (Waubesa) is 40% open and LaFollette Dam (Kegonsa) is 25% open. Dane County's goal is to maintain the water level between summer minimum and summer maximum throughout the summer if possible. Based on rain amounts, this is a difficult task. For Lake Kegonsa, the summer target range is 6 inches.

Lake	5/5/2024 Lake Level (ft)	Summer Minimum (ft)	Summer Maximum (ft)	Inches Below Summer Maximum
Mendota	849.95	849.6	850.1	1.8
Monona	844.97	844.7	845.2	2.8
Waubesa	844.68	844.5	845.0	3.8
Kegonsa	843.17	843.0	843.5	4.0

Dane County Information

A letter was sent to all lake property owners from Laura Hinklin, Director of Dane County Land & Water Resources Dept. to connect people to information and resources on Dane County programs including:

- Lake Levels
- Navigation
- Aquatic Plant Management
- Pier Pick Up program
- Yahara River Sediment Removal
- Door Creek Restoration
- Native Plants for Schools and Community Projects
- Urban Water Quality Grant Program
- Contact Information

The Dane County Land & Water Resources Dept. website is: <https://lwr.d.countyofdane.com> and is a valuable source of lake information. You may access the letter from Laura Hinklin on the lwr.d website. Most of the county projects directly affect Lake Kegonsa and we're fortunate to be able to work with Dane County on these important initiatives.

Lake Kegonsa Record for the Least Number of Lake Ice Days

Our weather was so warm this year we had a record for the least number of days of ice across the lake. We sent the results in **FOLKS** "Ice On" and "Ice Off" emails but we thought it was worth repeating how short our ice season was this year. Lake Kegonsa had a new record for the latest "Ice On" on 1/14/2024 and almost a record for the earliest "Ice Off" on 2/28/2024 (earliest "off" was 2/26/1998). This gave us a **new record for the least days of ice in any winter - only 45 days**. This far surpassed our previous record of 57 days of ice in the winter of 2011-2012.

Our contest entries through the website worked very well this year. We had about 110 "Ice On" entries and 120 "Ice Off" entries. Such a fun contest! Thanks again to **Springers** for their generous donations of gift certificates for our contests.

January Seed Sowing at Fish Camp Park

On a balmy January 31st, **FOLKS** members and volunteers aided **Lars Higdon, Dane County Naturalist**, to sow seeds in the native plant restoration area at Fish Camp Park where ash trees had been removed.



Volunteers formed a long line to distribute seeds throughout their adjacent areas. Seeds were sprinkled by hand from buckets atop the snow. Seeds were easily visible atop the snow making it easy to do a better job of covering the entire area. Some areas of Canary Grass will still have to be controlled before they can be replanted. Spreading seeds in the winter allows the seeds to embed in the soil as the freezing and thawing occurs in the spring that breaks up the soil.



The seeds were gathered, cleaned and sorted from existing native plant areas in Dane County. Chosen seeds were then remixed specifically for this (sometimes wet) area of Fish Camp Park. Chaffe is added as a filler for visibility and to control the quantity of seed used. The seeds spread were Virginia Wild Rye, Blue Joint Grass, Bristly Sedge, Canada Wild Rye, Fowl Manna Grass, Rice Cut Grass, Dark-Green Bulrush, Wool Rush and Cord Grass. Planting this area will not only help to make it a more attractive area but will also aid wildlife and control runoff.

Removal of invasive shrubs in the area continues and will be ongoing along with the seeding and planting of native species. Volunteers are most welcome to help with controlling invasives, seeding, planting starts and maintenance of this newly reclaimed area. Any and all help is greatly appreciated. Please contact Janice Kellogg or Connie Hagen if you are interested. You can also sign up online at the **FOLKS** website www.kegonsa.org.

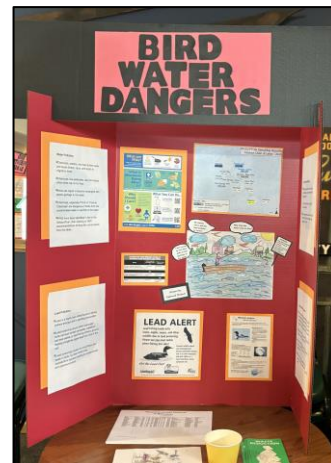
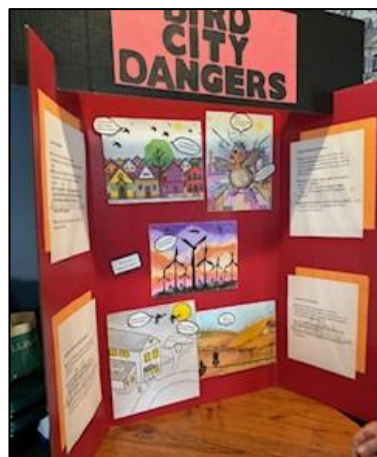
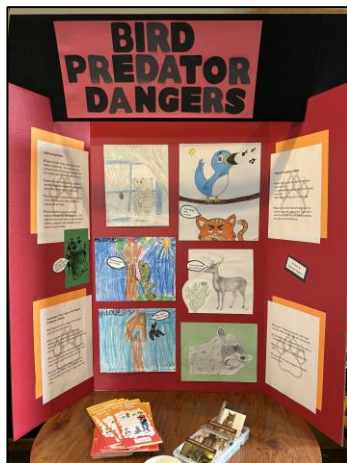
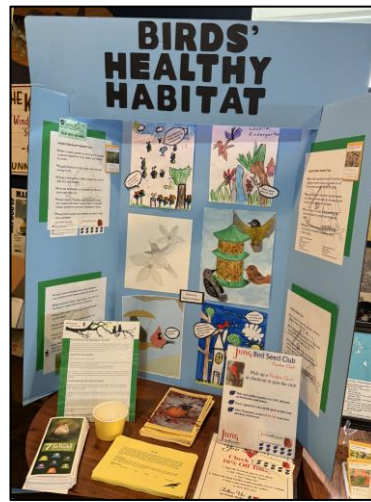
Spring Migratory Bird Event – April 27th

FOLKS held a fun event about the migratory birds of Lake Kegonsa on April 27th. The event was held at Springers and about 100 people came together for a fun educational morning. There were a number of displays about bird predators, water and city dangers, and how to establish bird habitats in your backyard.

The morning featured, Alissa Kakatsch, our speaker from the DNR, discussing Migratory birds in Wisconsin and our area.



Alissa Kakatsch, Wildlife Biologist, WI DNR



The **FOLKS** educational posters, teaching tables and sticker stations were very popular. As was the Purple Martin gourd birdhouse display by **Dave Woods**.



Informational tables were sponsored by **Save our Songbirds** and the **International Crane Foundation**.

The kids loved the crafts such as making bird masks and pine cone bird feeders, filling their sticker pages and selecting an egg from the prizes. You can see two adorable little ones below with the wingspans of a red-tailed hawk and a great horned owl.



Mallard's Baseball mascot, **Maynard** posed for lots of pictures. Many thanks to Madison Mallards owner and **FOLKS** member, **Steve Schmitt**.



Thanks to the **FOLKS** social/education committee (Anne Meisner, Chairperson) for a great event and all the wonderful volunteers for making this a fun day out for all of us.

Save the Date (June 8th) for the *FOLKS* 2024 Annual Meeting

FOLKS Annual Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, **June 8, 2024** from 5:30 to 9pm at the Stoughton Country Club. Our meeting will include project updates, financial reports and a guest speaker. Please join us for a fun and informative evening and meet your neighbors and other **FOLKS** members. You'll receive more information and sign-up instructions in your email as we get closer to the date. If you have questions, contact Anne Meisner, Social/Education Committee Chairperson or check the website.

Pier Pick Up Schedule for 2024

FOLKS will sponsor the Pier Pick Up Program again this year in cooperation with the Dane County Land and Water Resources Department. In 2023, lake residents removed 29 barge loads of debris from the lake. This is an estimated 43,500 pounds of wet debris (4,350 pounds dry) which equates to 12 pounds of phosphorus removed from the lake which is the primary cause of algae. Lake experts tell us that one pound of phosphorus creates about 500 pounds of algae.

The **2024** schedule is as follows:

- June 3 through June 7
- June 17 through June 21
- July 1 through July 5
- July 15 through July 19
- July 29 through August 2
- August 12 through August 16
- September 9 through September 13

We added a September pickup week to deal with aquatic debris that may accumulate at the end of the plant harvesting season. It is possible that more urgent County work requirements may take priority over vegetation collection and the crew could be diverted during a given week.

Rules for the program are as follows. **Please note that the rules for material that is allowed and not allowed are a little more restrictive than in the past.**

- The barge crew will cover all of Lake Kegonsa and Yahara River residences on Orvold Park Drive, Alsmo Lane, and Fish Camp Road.
- The barge will be on the lake and start picking up on Monday of each week. However, on Lake Kegonsa, the deadline for having debris on your pier is not later than Tuesday at 7:00 a.m. for your material to be picked up. The barge crew will make ONE complete pass around the lake and river. It usually takes the barge crew three or four days to make a complete pass. So, please have all debris out by Tuesday morning or you may get missed. It will take the crew a few days to get to your pier, so be patient. The crew will end its work by Friday or earlier if it has covered the entire lake.
- Material **ALLOWED** – the pier pickup service allows property owners to place lake vegetation on the end of their piers for collection. The pick-up will collect only aquatic vegetation and other debris that have washed up on shore.
- Material **NOT ALLOWED** - Yard waste or brush, limbs, grass clippings, or other terrestrial material (growing on land and not the water). They will not pick up yard waste, brush or household waste (garbage, pet waste, etc.). This type of material interferes with and can damage conveyors used for the offloading. If any of this material is found, it will not be collected and the material will be left on your pier with a placard explaining why. In other words, the program only removes vegetation that comes out of the lake.
- Place debris at the end of your pier so that the barge can safely and easily access it. If the water is too shallow at the end of your pier, the crew will not be able to perform the pickup. We

suggest asking your neighbor for permission to use their pier. If you don't personally reside at your waterfront property, please inform the residents of this program.

We know gathering the debris can be a big job and we thank all lake residents for continuing to support this program! We hope to have a successful year to keep Lake Kegonsa clean and beautiful. We'll send messages throughout the season to remind members of pickup weeks. If you have questions, contact John Bottorff, Pier Pick Up Program Committee Chairperson.

2024 Water Monitoring Season - Openings for Volunteers

Would you like to become part of the **FOLKS** water monitoring group for the summer of 2024? We usually have 16 volunteers collecting data around Lake Kegonsa but we are losing 3 volunteers for this summer. This is called our "**end of pier**" monitoring program and includes collection of data such as clarity and turbidity readings, water and air temperature, presence or absence of algae blooms, wave intensity, number of waterfowl, and number of swimmers.

We like to have someone collect observations at Lake Kegonsa State Park and two other locations at the end of piers (especially along Hwy AB). This commitment is for data collection at least twice weekly. It only takes a few minutes to record observations and training is provided. If you would like to join the group please contact Kim Walz, Water Monitoring Committee Chairperson.

Water Information and Safety – Personal Water Craft



A few reminders on the **Personal Water Craft (PWC)** rules. PWCs are recreational watercraft such as jet skis, see-does and water scooters.

- Operation of a PWC is prohibited at a speed faster than "**slow, no wake speed**" **within 100 feet of any other vessel on any waterbody, and within 200 feet of shore.**
- A PWC may not be operated between sunset and sunrise.
- A PWC that is towing a skier or tuber must be designed to seat at least **3 people.**
- A person **younger than 12 years** old **may not operate** a PWC.
- A person **older than 12 years** old may operate a PWC only if he or she has completed a WDNR approved **boating safety course.** (Exempt from safety course requirement if born before January 1, 1989.)
- It is illegal to operate a PWC without properly attaching the **Emergency Engine Cutoff Switch (ECOS)** lanyard between the PWC and the operator. If the operator is thrown, the ECOS shuts off the engine.
- **Every person** on board a PWC must wear a USCG – approved personal flotation device (life jacket).

For more information you can find the full Wisconsin Boater Safety Regulations at dnr.wisconsin.gov.
Happy boating – See you on the lake!

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Eric Olson (608) 575-9272
207 S Forrest St, Stoughton WI 53589
201 Bus Park Circle, Stoughton WI 53589
james@cleanlakesalliance.com
PeterSveum@coldwellhomes.com (608)575-1054
PO Box 301, Stoughton WI 53589
crownpointresort.com (608) 873-7833
Steve Hjort (608) 432-0113
201 Bus Park Circle, Stoughton WI 53589
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kari@sprinkmanrealestate.com (608) 516-3758
mcginnity.kate@countyofdane.com
lksc.com
rep.ratcliff@legis.wisconsin.gov
engelberger.michael@countyofdane.com
noshortselectric@gmail.com
(608) 873-5197
2401 Jackson St, Stoughton, WI 53589
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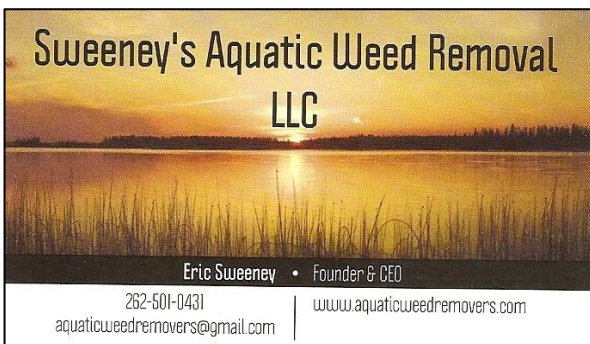
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Fax: 608-873-7692
Email: theran@terrykahlplumbing.com



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ECO-RESOURCE CONSULTING, INC

PO Box 730
2554 CTH N
Stoughton, WI 53589

Office: (608) 877-9372
Mobile: (608) 432-0113
Email: shjort@eco-resource.net
www.eco-resource.net

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Lake Kegonsa Sailing Club

Come and see what the club is all about and go for a sail!

Lake Kegonsa Sailing Club Open House
Saturday June 8th - 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM @ Springers
<https://lksc.org/>

For questions, reach out to dmmuto1@gmail.com

**FOLKS OFFICERS AND
BOARD MEMBERS
2024**

George Corrigan, President
corrigan@corrigan.pro

Janice Kellogg, Vice President
kelloggja7@gmail.com

Connie Hagen, Treasurer
chagen001@gmail.com

Patrick Guiney
pdguiney@gmail.com

Eric Olson
eolson.folks@gmail.com

John Bottorff
jbott53511@att.net

Kim VanBrocklin
kegonsakim@gmail.com

Claudia Quam
claudiakquam@gmail.com


Kim Walz
kwalz99@gmail.com

Anne Meisner
meisnera16@gmail.com

Deb Kundert
dakundert@aol.com

John Quam
john@quamsmotorsports.com

For More About **FOLKS**,
Visit our website at www.Kegonsa.org and

on Facebook  at facebook.com/kegonsa/

or on X (Twitter)  @LakeKegonsa

Please Support Your Lake Association - Renew
Your **FOLKS** Membership.

This year's dues remain \$20.00 for households
and \$30.00 for businesses.

If you have any questions regarding
membership, please contact:
Connie Hagen at chagen001@gmail.com
or George Corrigan at corrigan@corrigan.pro

Send news of interest to **FOLKS**:
P.O. Box 173
Stoughton, WI 53589 or
chagen001@gmail.com

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publication are for general information only. Its
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agency or governmental unit.

FOLKS Lost and Found

List lost and found items on the Website
(www.kegonsa.org), Facebook page or contact
Eric Olson at eolson.folks@gmail.com

FOLKS board meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month except for a
couple of months in the winter. The public are always welcome.
Next Meeting is May 14, 2024, 6:00 – 7:00 PM, Stoughton Country Club

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