



Friends of Lake Kegonsa Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 173
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October 2026

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President's Message - John Bottorff

New Board of Director members

I am pleased to welcome two individuals who joined the **FOLKS** Board of Directors in September – Mike Shanley and Brian Teigen. Both are residents of Lake Kegonsa and are enthused about sharing their talents to help **FOLKS** and lake residents with continued improvements for Lake Kegonsa. Please see the **FOLKS** website to learn more about Brian and Mike on the Board of Directors page. [FOLKS Board of Directors](#)

Membership Survey

FOLKS will soon be distributing a member opinion survey by October 1. Please see the article in this newsletter for further details. One survey will be distributed to each member household. The deadline for responses to the survey will be October 19. Survey results will be published in the January 2027 **FOLKS** newsletter. The **FOLKS** Board of Directors is interested in your input and opinions. We encourage you to respond to the survey.

Thanks to Members and the Board of Directors

As the summer season comes to an end and we move into the Fall, I want to thank all our members and the Board of Directors for your support and hard work for a broad range of FOLKS projects. We accomplished a lot this year, for example - member education & social events, improvements at Fish Camp Park as part of Dane County Land & Water Resources

Department (LWRD) effort to restore part of the park to native prairie, installation of Wood Duck houses and "fish stick" fish cribs, renewal of the leaf collection program to take place this Fall, and continuation of the pier pick-up program.

Everyone on the lake focuses on water quality. The lake was clear in the Spring and generally in good condition all year. Even though we had the usual algae blooms and aquatic plant growth, the lake is healthy. The "good news – bad news" story is that because the water was very clear through June and July, it allowed sunlight to penetrate deeply into the lake which contributed to abundant plant growth. On July 13th, the visibility at the "Deep Hole" was 7 feet. Other than very little rainfall in July, we had sufficient rain during most summer months which allowed the water levels to remain in the mid-range as managed by Dane County LWRD.

The amount of phosphorus in the lake continues to be a challenge on the entire Yahara Chain of Lakes. This is being worked on by a number of organizations even though it may seem like limited progress is being made – improvements are being made slowly. **FOLKS** is part of these efforts. Volunteers monitor lake conditions throughout the year. This includes "end-of-the pier" weekly monitoring from Memorial Day through Labor Day at about 16 locations around the lake. This information is reported to the Clean Lakes Alliance Lake Forecast website. This allows lake users to monitor lake conditions throughout the summer.

The other water monitoring program that **FOLKS** participates in is done on a monthly basis year-round (assuming the sites are not frozen over). This program is done in coordination with the Rock River Coalition and Yahara WINS. We monitor water conditions at the inflows (Yahara River & Door Creek) and outflow of the lake (Yahara River at the LaFollette Dam). Monitoring is also done from April through October at the "Deep Hole" which is the deepest point on the lake. Monitoring and reporting covers a number of conditions – air temperature, water temperature, dissolved oxygen, and water clarity with an instrument call a turbidity tube. Water samples are also taken to laboratories to measure the amount of phosphorus and nitrogen in the water. This data is then reported in the DNR Surface Water Information System (SWIMS). This data allows water scientists to study lake conditions. The data is also used by Clean Lakes Alliance to publish its annual "State of the Lakes" report each Spring.

Thanks to all of the volunteer water monitors.

**Preservation of Lot 3 Committee Concludes Property Acquisition
Ownership transferred to Wisconsin DNR
Will become part of Lake Kegonsa
State Park**

In the July FOLKS newsletter, we communicated about the Preservation of Lot 3 Sunnyside project and committed to keep you updated. We are pleased to report that the Lot 3 preservation group has reached their goal and has concluded the acquisition and transfer of the property to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Thanks to everyone who supported this project to protect this land and Lake Kegonsa. FOLKS provided a \$40,000 matching contribution of individual contributions to this project.

In a recent announcement from Jeff Zoeller, president of the Lot 3 Committee, he reported that the purchase of the Lot 3 Sunnyside property and the final transfer to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for Lake Kegonsa State Park was completed on

September 24, 2026. The 7.85 acre Lot 3 land will be converted to prairie and held in perpetuity by Lake Kegonsa State Park. Plans for the new prairie are to protect and improve it with trails, benches and native wildflowers. The Friends of Lake Kegonsa State Park, a volunteer organization that assists the park, will help prepare and maintain the prairie. Maintaining the property as prairie will help to prevent rainwater run-off carrying phosphorous and other harmful nutrients and sediment into Lake Kegonsa. The project was supported by many lake and conservation groups. Dane County and its Parks Department and its Land & Water Resources Department, Clean Lakes Alliance, the Town of Dunn (through a donation made possible by a private bequest), and FOLKS were strong supporters of this project. The Lot 3 Committee raised nearly \$1 million for the acquisition of the property from private donors, foundations, and public grants.

Jeff Zoeller thanked everyone for their amazing support to make this happen. The Lot 3 Committee will hold a celebration on Saturday, October 17, 2026. It will first convene at the Lot 3 land on Sunnyside Street at 1:00 p.m. for a brief program and then move to Springers Restaurant for refreshments and cheer until 4:00 p.m.

FOLKS congratulates the Lot 3 Committee for their success and hard work to make this a reality. We also thank everyone who supported the project.

New 2026 Leaf Collection Program

Each year the curbside leaf pick up program helps keep between 100,000 and 200,000 pounds of leaves out of the lake. That translates to about 40 to 80 pounds of phosphorus, which can produce 20,000 to 40,000 pounds of algae! The program has been a partnership between **FOLKS** and the Towns of Dunn and Pleasant Springs.

The Town of Dunn has purchased the used leaf truck from Stoughton and **FOLKS** paid half of the cost with a contribution of \$20,909. **FOLKS** is committed to the leaf pick program because it improves the health of Lake Kegonsa. When leaves decompose they create phosphorus which goes into the lake when rain water washes across the leaves and drains into the lake. Picking leaves up at curbside prevents this phosphorus from entering the lake. The Pleasant Springs Town Board recently voted to support the leaf collection program and approved \$3,660 to offset some of the cost. Both The Town of Dunn and Pleasant Springs will provide their own drivers and will use the truck to continue the leaf pickup program.

This year's pick up will be only two days. Leaves must be put out on the following two Mondays. The towns will rotate picking up the leaves during those two weeks. If your leaves have not been picked during that week, they will not be back around until the following leaf pick-up date. Their goal is to do one trip around after each Monday and try to not run the truck on the weekends to avoid potential overtime costs. Please support this program to benefit the lake by placing your leaves at roadside before these dates. Thanks for your support.

The 2026 schedule is as follows:

- Monday, November 9th
- Monday, November 23rd

Membership Update Meeting – October 8, 2026 at Springers

FOLKS will hold its Fall Membership Update Meeting at Springers on October 8th from 5-6:30 p.m. As in year's past we will provide appetizers and a cash bar. This is an opportunity for **FOLKS** members to hear a review of the accomplishments from the past year and to also hear about significant future projects including the annual leaf collection program. It is also a great time to visit with friends and neighbors on the lake. There is no charge for attending this event. However, so that we can plan for appetizers, please RVSP on the **FOLKS** website if you plan to attend. Thanks to Springers for helping us host this event. [Fall Membership Update Meeting](#)

Membership Survey – Coming Soon FOLKS Wants to Hear from You

FOLKS will soon be distributing a member opinion survey. One survey will be sent to each member household by e-mail. We expect this distribution to occur by about October 1. The deadline for responses to the survey will be October 19. Survey results will be published in the January 2027 **FOLKS** newsletter. The **FOLKS** Board of Directors is interested in your input and opinions. We ask you to respond to the survey. Thank you.

FOLKS Creates Fish Sticks Structures in Lake Kegonsa

This summer, **FOLKS** constructed and placed four Fish Sticks (fish cribs) in Lake Kegonsa. Fish Sticks are in-lake best practice woody habitat structures that create food, shelter and breeding areas for aquatic species, especially fish. According to the Wisconsin DNR, Lake Kegonsa benefits most by adding these habitats as compared to the other Yahara chain of lakes. Lake Kegonsa's sandy bottom, round shape, and shoreline development provides minimal natural habitat and diversity for aquatic species and fish.

The fish stick building process began by notching spruce logs and connecting them. Large holes were drilled into the main log so the spruce treetops could be inserted and bracketed in place. Large boulders were anchored and attached to each of the four ends of each fish stick. Lastly, the fish sticks were lifted from shore with a barge crane and lowered into deep water in the lake at specific locations as identified by the DNR.

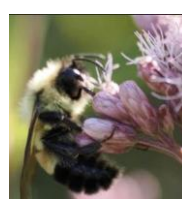




FOLKS would like to thank the many volunteers and businesses who made this project possible. Businesses providing time, equipment, and supplies include John Quam and Quam Marine and Motorsports, Manke Enterprises, Heartland Tree Company, and the Wisconsin DNR Fisheries Technicians, Mitch Trow and Josh Jonet. Volunteers include Mike Krueger, Mike Moss, Ken LePine, Bill Rupp, Tom Kellen, Fred Kundert, and Deb Kundert.

"Everything Bumble Bee – A misunderstood pollinator"

FOLKS sponsored an educational talk on Wisconsin Bumble Bees on July 14 featuring guest speaker Maggie Honig, Wisconsin DNR Bumble Bee Ambassador for the Bumble Bee Brigade. We not only learned how to identify the various Bumble Bee species but enjoyed hands-on experience viewing and photographing them in the beautiful Fish Camp native gardens. Maggie explained the life cycle of the Bumble Bee and the many ways we can protect them by providing a native garden habitat and avoiding pesticides.



Birding Your Way

Unfortunately, the **Birding Your Way** event was cancelled due to rain. We would like to thank Dane County Parks, Southern Wisconsin Bird Alliance and Alliant Energy Foundation for their willingness to sponsor this event. No rain date has been announced. As a reminder, there are many ways to enjoy birding; Fish Camp Park has paved walking surfaces and a boardwalk bridge offering excellent opportunities for birdwatching.

Native Plant Garden Created at Highway 51 and CR B and CR AB Roundabout

As a result of a unique and creative public-private partnership, a native plant garden now landscapes the roundabout located at the intersection of Highway 51 and County Roads B and AB. **FOLKS** was a partner in this project and promoted the idea with the Town of Dunn and Dane County Land & Resources Department (LWRD). This project was also aided and approved by the Wisconsin Highway Department (WisDOT).

The following were objectives for establishing the native roundabout garden:

- The native plant garden serves as a demonstration garden to display the attractiveness of native plants and their benefits to the environment. Amazingly, approximately 14,000 vehicles pass through this intersection every day. The roundabout provides drivers and passengers an opportunity to view an attractive native plant garden that is more unique than other roundabout landscapes. This will encourage individuals and organizations to consider and use native plantings in landscapes at their homes and places of business.
- Native plants have deep root systems that enable them to absorb about seven times more rainwater than turf grass. The deep root system is more effective at retaining soil to prevent erosion and runoff. This roundabout covers over 5,400 square feet and is a distance of about 220 yards from Lake Kegonsa. Even though the roundabout native garden is a small portion of the entire intersection, native plants are more effective than turf grass with regard to water absorption and soil retention. This will aid in protecting the surrounding area and Lake Kegonsa from runoff and pollutants.
- Native plant gardens are lower maintenance when compared to turf grass and other non-native plant landscapes. When fully established, the native plants will only require trimming once in the Spring to remove prior year's growth and weeding twice during the growing season to control invasive weeds.

To initiate this idea, **FOLKS** made a presentation and obtained approval from the Town of Dunn Board to landscape with all native plants. This is in keeping with the Town of Dunn's philosophy to protect its natural resources which are central to its rural identity and natural setting. Volunteers from **FOLKS** took a leadership role to develop the landscape plan and manage its implementation. A native plant expert from Dane County LWRD developed the landscape design using all native grasses. The plan was approved by WisDOT and complies with requirements for driver visibility and highway safety. The garden has been planted with four native grasses - switchgrass, little bluestem, prairie dropseed, and purple love grass arranged in a patterned design. This will provide a variety of colors and textures during the entire growing season - Spring through Fall. Funding for the project was provided through a cost-share grant from Dane County LWRD with funds also provided by the Town of Dunn and **FOLKS**.

Dunn utilized all Wisconsin area vendors for plant procurement and landscaping work. Plants were purchased from Agrecol Native Nursery in Evansville and Taylor Creek Restoration

Nurseries in Brodhead. Field & Stream Ecological in Cottage Grove was the landscape firm that performed planting and summer weeding. The roundabout was planted in June 2025 and is just over one year old and maturing nicely. Thanks to everyone that made this project possible!



Fish Stocking Programs on Lake Kegonsa

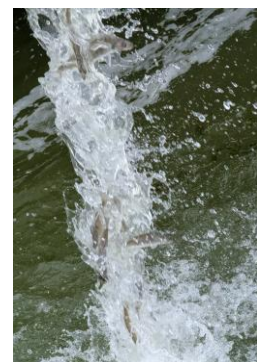
The WI DNR has stocked fish for several years in Lake Kegonsa. Today, it has a goal of maintaining a fishable adult walleye population of two adult fish per acre in the lake. This is accomplished by stocking approximately 112,000 small fingerlings (1.5 inches) from Lake Mills Fish Hatchery. While the DNR stocks the lake on odd numbered years (last stocked in 2025), the Stoughton Conservation Club (SCC) stocks the lake on even numbered years with large fingerlings (6-8 inches) from the Gollon Bait and Fish Farm near Dodgeville. At 8 inches, these fish have a better chance of surviving. Roy Quam originally started the SCC fish stocking program, and Bill Rupp now oversees it. The funds used to purchase the large fingerling walleye comes from the annual Ice Fisheree. Recently, the SCC released 6,000 large fingerlings into Lake Kegonsa.

Walleye are consistently stocked into Lake Kegonsa for multiple reasons. The lake receives heavy angling pressure due to its proximity to Madison. Natural reproduction of walleye is also variable on Kegonsa based on weather patterns and conditions each spring. Walleye prefer to spawn on rocky, cobble substrate near windswept shorelines which are limited on Lake Kegonsa. Stocking is therefore needed to support the walleye population and to improve the fishery that exists on Lake Kegonsa.

The DNR no longer stocks northern pike in Lake Kegonsa. Historically, each spring fisheries staff would collect eggs and milt from adult northern pike in Lake Kegonsa and use them to breed pike throughout the WI DNR hatchery system because the pike in Lake Kegonsa have excellent growth and growth potential. Ultimately, it didn't make sense to stock northern pike with Lake Kegonsa genetics right back into the same lake. Northern Pike are generally very prolific and do well in terms of natural reproduction and recruitment. The DNR genetics study in 2021 resulted in the discontinuation of pike stocking on many area lakes, but this was not the case for Lake Kegonsa.

The WI DNR hatcheries do not raise panfish as most lakes do not need panfish stockings as populations are well established. Habitat improvements such as tree drops, fish sticks, and fish cribs (as recently completed by FOLKS) can positively

influence panfish populations. Adding habitat structure can provide new refuge for panfish to avoid predators, find food, and successfully reproduce. The WI DNR plans to do another comprehensive fish survey on Lake Kegonsa in 2028. This will involve early spring fyke netting targeting northern pike and walleye, and multiple sets of electrofishing surveys in the spring and fall. Further information on fish stocking and fishing in Wisconsin can be found at <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Fishing/stocking>



***FOLKS* 2026 Calendar of Events**

Date	Activity
October 8	Membership Update Meeting at Springers
November 9	Leaf Pick-Up Week
November 23	Leaf Pick-Up Week

Next *FOLKS* Board meeting: October 13, 2026

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Email kegonsafolks@gmail.com to
connect with the Board

Friends of Lake Kegonsa Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 173
Stoughton, WI 53589

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Visit our website at www.Kegonsa.org and

on Facebook  at facebook.com/kegonsa/

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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 send a message to
kegonsafolks@gmail.com

Send news of interest to **FOLKS**:

P.O. Box 173
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publication are for general information only. Its
authors and publisher do not represent that
information herein is the official position of any
agency or governmental unit.

FOLKS Lost and Found

List lost and found items on the Website
(www.kegonsa.org) or Facebook page

FOLKS board meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month except for
a couple of months in the winter. The public is always welcome.

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