



Friends of Lake Kegonsa Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 173
Stoughton, WI 53589-0173
January 2025

President’s Message ~ George Corrigan

I’m excited to share that for your 2025 **FOLKS** membership, we are providing multiple ways for you to renew your membership or join for the first time. We are adding an online option this year, while also maintaining our mail in option.

Mail In Option

As in past years, members will receive a brochure this month with instructions to fill out the membership form and where to mail the form and a check.

Online Option

Members can also join or renew online at kegonsa.org under the Get Involved menu. Online renewal can be by credit card, PayPal or Venmo or check. We are charged fees by online payment services, and to recoup those fees we add a \$3.00 service fee. The website also allows you to mail a check and submit your membership info electronically.

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To renew and pay online:

1. Go to the Get Involved menu and select the join or renew option.
2. Choose the "Join Online (Credit/Debit Card)" option or the "Join by Mail (send a Check)" option
3. Complete the form (type of membership/name/email/address/phone/optional donation info)
4. Optional donation - many of our members include an optional donation in addition to their membership dues. The amount of the donation (if any) should be entered on the form (in the additional donation box).
5. Enter your total in the total box.
6. Click "Done" at the bottom of the page.
7. If you selected the credit/debit card option that will take you to the checkout page (screenshot below).
 - a. To pay by Venmo or PayPal simply click on the "PayPal" or "Venmo" button at the top of the checkout page.
 - b. To pay by credit card click on "Continue" at the bottom of the page. Then, complete the process with your card info (or PayPal/Venmo login).

If you have any questions or issues, please let me know by emailing corrigan@corrigan.pro. We hope the online payment options make it easier for the **FOLKS** members who prefer a paperless world!

George Corrigan, FOLKS President

Lake Kegonsa Water Levels

As of January 9, 2025 the Lake Kegonsa level is **842.85'** (ft above sea level). Dane County is trying to keep the water level below summer minimum and above winter minimum.

| Lake | 1/9/2025 Lake Level (ft) | Summer Minimum (ft) | Winter Minimum (ft) | Feet Above Winter Min | 1% Flood Level | 2018 High |
|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------|
| Mendota | 848.98 | 849.60 | 848.20 | 0.78 | 852.8 | 852.3 |
| Monona | 844.31 | 844.70 | 842.20 | 2.11 | 847.7 | 848.5 |
| Waubesa | 843.90 | 844.50 | 842.00 | 1.90 | 847.0 | 847.9 |
| Kegonsa | 842.85 | 843.00 | 841.85 | 1.00 | 845.8 | 845.8 |

In November, Dane County began to transition to winter lake levels as they do each year. The goal is to maintain the water level between winter minimum and summer minimum throughout the winter. Remember navigational and hazard buoys have been removed for the winter.

2025 **FOLKS** Annual Membership is Due

It's time to renew your annual membership to **FOLKS**. We've mailed renewal reminders to 2024 members this week. It's important to review your member information so we have your current email and address. We never share member information with any other organizations.

Our low membership fees remain at

- **\$20 for households** receiving email newsletters
 - \$30 for household receiving mailed newsletters
- **\$30 for business members** receiving email newsletters
 - \$40 for business members receiving mailed newsletters

Sending your payment early helps us reduce mailing costs for nonrenewing members.

This year you can submit your payment by cash, check or on our website (www.kegonsa.org). Many of our members put **FOLKS** in as a recurring January or February payment from their checking accounts. **Over 50%** of our members send us additional donations for our educational and project work.

Please help us grow our membership by talking with your neighbors and promoting **FOLKS** to your friends. Together is the only way we can make a difference.

Lake Kegonsa "Ice On"

December 13, 2024 was the official "Ice On" date for this winter. Over 100 households entered our contest this year. Mary Sherrick was our winner and she'll receive a \$50 gift certificate compliments of Springers restaurant. Congratulations!!

Save the Dates for Upcoming **FOLKS** Events

1. April 26, 2025 - "**Native Shoreline Gardens: Protecting our Lake**"
A family focused educational program on native plantings, shoreline protection and preservation of natural habitats. The event will be held at Springers Restaurant on Saturday morning 4/26.
 2. June 7, 2025 - **FOLKS Annual Meeting**, Stoughton Country Club
Annual update and social gathering for all **FOLKS** members.
-

Does Salt Make Our Lakes Green?

Information comes from WI Salt wise (used by permission)

Most conservation practices that help clean up our lakes focus on phosphorus reduction. However, phosphorus isn't the only critical issue facing our water resources: elevated levels of salt also contribute to greener, murkier waters.

- **Salt Kills Off Zooplankton**

Tiny zooplankton that eat algae are the first to be impacted as salt concentrations increase in our lakes. More salt means fewer zooplankton and fewer zooplankton means more algae. Imagine zooplankton as tiny cucumbers in a brine solution. As the lakes become salty, their bodies lose water and they experience more and more stress. This pickling effect is driven by the chloride that is found in almost all deicing products.

- **Salt Makes Inactive Phosphorus Bioavailable**

Phosphorus fertilizes freshwater. When phosphorus levels rise due to inputs from leaves, manure, and soils, populations of algae and weedy vegetation can explode. Unfortunately, phosphorus that is currently bound up in lake sediment and unavailable to algae can be released as salt concentrations rise.

- **Salt Layers on Lake Bottoms**

Since salt water is denser than freshwater, salt inputs cause the formation of a cool, salty layer of water at the bottom of lakes. This dense layer inhibits natural lake mixing. Less mixing means less oxygen at lower depths, as well as anaerobic conditions that release bound phosphorus into the water.

What Can We Do to Keep Freshwater Fresh?

1. Easy on the Salt

Salt is important for keeping people safe in bad winter weather. But if it is overapplied, it can harm lakes, streams, and drinking water, and damage roads and bridges. Just 1 teaspoon of salt will pollute 5 gallons of water to a level that is toxic to freshwater organisms.

Use winter salt wisely. Salt is a powerful tool, but it's easy to over-apply. A coffee mug's worth of salt is enough to de-ice a 20-foot driveway or 10 sidewalk squares. Do your part to help protect Lake Kegonsa and other freshwater resources and make a pledge to follow the "4 S's" this winter: **Shovel, Scatter, Switch, Sweep**:

- **Shovel** (or snow blow) as much snow as possible before spreading salt
- **Scatter** salt so there is space in between the grains (no piles!)
- **Switch** from salt to sand (or a treated de-icer) if the temperature is under 15 degrees Fahrenheit
- **Sweep** up excess salt after the ice has melted

Follow the '4 S's' and you will save money, protect our community's infrastructure, AND keep salt out of our waterways!

2. Be a conscientious motorist.

When possible, stay off the roads when it's snowing. One fewer car on the road keeps everyone a little safer.

3. Help spread the word.

Talk to your family, neighbors, coworkers, local businesses and municipal officials. To learn more about salt pollution and how to reduce your impact on the environment, learn more at wisaltwise.com.

4. Winter Salt Week is January 27-31, 2025

All the salt that we apply to streets and sidewalks ends up in our freshwater. Excessive application of winter salt damages infrastructure, harms freshwater ecosystems, and threatens our drinking water.

That's why **FOLKS** is promoting **Winter Salt Awareness Week, January 27-31, 2025**: to educate residents on salt pollution, how it affects our health and freshwater ecosystems, what's being done, and how we can support local efforts.

Experts in ecology, winter road maintenance, advocacy, and policy solutions will discuss facets of this issue that impact your community. Register online at www.wisaltwise.com and tune in daily at 12:30 CT to this week-long series of YouTube live streams.

Other Important Ways You Can Help the Lake

Keeping additional phosphorus out of the lake and limiting resuspended phosphorus are the best ways we can help our lake back to robust, clean health. We can limit the suspended phosphorus, through the carp removal project and limiting stirring phosphorus with wakes. We can't do anything about the wind.

Wakeboard Boats

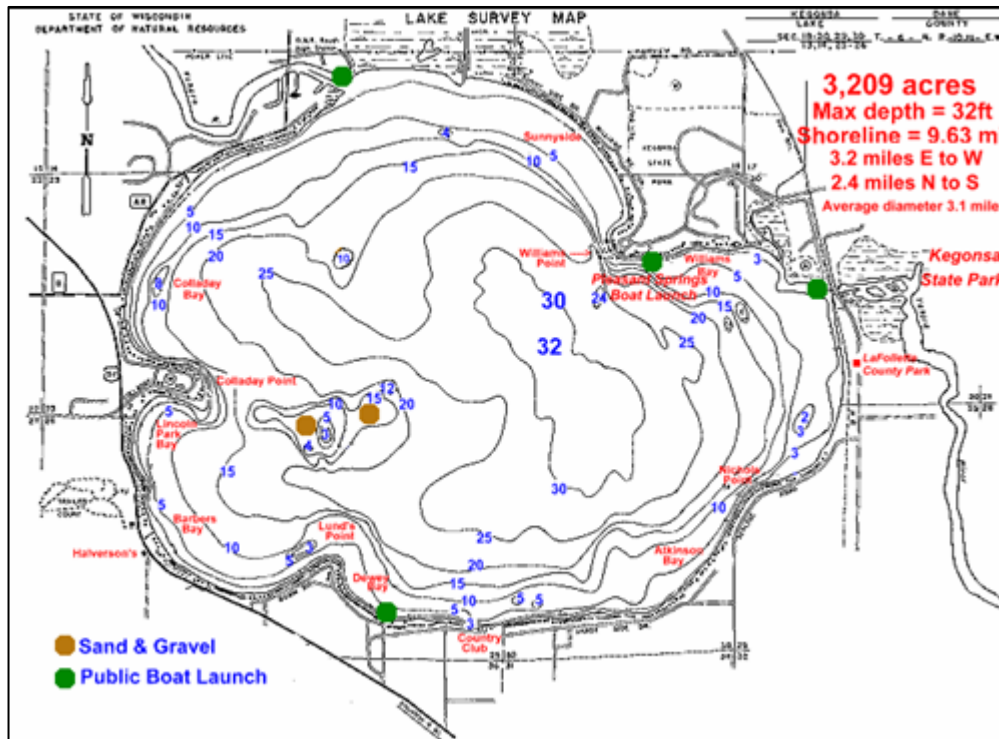
There are a growing number of large wakeboard boats on Lake Kegonsa. They are designed to create very large wakes so that people can surf behind the boats. In shallow lakes, like Lake Kegonsa, these wakes can cause significant damage and water quality degradation to our lake in numerous ways.

These large wakes can cause

- shoreline erosion,
- damage to fisheries and wildlife habitat by destroying spawning beds, fish habitat and shoreline nesting for waterfowl,
- create a very deep down current, commonly known as prop wash, which can extend down to 10 feet and can cause lake sediment to be resuspended releasing nutrients, particularly phosphorus and increasing water turbidity. As we know, releasing sediment phosphorus into the water column increases available phosphorus and causes increased algae and plant growth and eutrophication of our lake.

- the large ballast tanks are a huge source of invasive species being transferred from one water body to another and can't be thoroughly cleaned when moving from one lake to another. Invasive species cause irreparable damage to our lakes and the ecosystem.

If you own a large wake boat please try to stay only to the middle of lake where it is deepest.



DNR Survey Map of Lake Kegonsa with Depths

Leaf Removal

A majority of you participate in the fall leaf pick up around Lake Kegonsa. You can help your neighbors understand the importance of clearing leaves from the street and gutters that run to the lake. **FOLKS** continues to work with the City of Stoughton, the Town of Pleasant Springs and the Town of Dunn to provide leaf pick up around Lake Kegonsa. We appreciate your efforts to keep additional phosphorus from leaves out of the lake.

Other Ways to Keep Leaves out of the Lake:

- Remind your lawn maintenance service not to blow leaves into the lake or the road.
- Remove the leaves from the street near your house and include them with your other leaves.
- Please don't burn leaves. It contributes to air pollution and concentrates phosphorus that may end up in the lake.
- Volunteer to help rake leaves for people who need assistance.
- Talk with your neighbors about the leaf management project.

Plant a Shoreline Garden

Perennial native plants have long roots that slow run-off into the lake. Native plants are six times more effective in keeping rain from running off than lawns. Come to the **FOLKS** event in April to learn more about how shoreline gardens, rain gardens and rain barrels can keep phosphorus out of the lake. Please do your part to protect our lakes so that all of us and future generations may enjoy them.

Thank you for your efforts to reduce the excess phosphorus entering our waterways.

Door Creek Dredging Project Update December 2024

Work on the dredging and re-meandering of Door Creek moved along this year and a large portion of this project was completed. There are approximately 6000 feet of additional dredging remaining. That work is just upstream from Lake Kegonsa. The Project includes restoration of approximately 15,000 feet of Door Creek and the surrounding wetlands.

Elements of the project include:

- removal of more than 40,000 cubic yards (roughly 3 feet depth) of phosphorus rich legacy sediments and material
- realignment of the stream back into its historical channel
- improved wetland and aquatic habitat, and
- enhanced floodplain connectivity.

Work was wrapped up in Mid-December 2024 and will start again after the spring spawning season in 2025. You can check out the details of the work on the Land and Water Resources Department's website, <https://lwr.danecounty.gov/CurrentProjects/Detail/Door-Creek-Watershed>

Next spring you will be able to see the work being done from the new bike path/walking path between Kegonsa State Park and Fish Camp County Park.

2024 Pier Pick-up & Aquatic Plant Harvesting Programs

Pier Pick-up Results for Lake Kegonsa

Dane County Land & Water Resources Department (LWRD) reported final results to **FOLKS** for the Barge Pick-up Program on Lake Kegonsa in 2024. The barge crew worked 210 total hours on Lake Kegonsa and picked-up 47 total loads of aquatic plants and other debris. Using LWRD formulas, that equates to approximately 70,500 pounds of wet weight and 7,050 pounds of dry weight which diverted approximately 20 pounds of phosphorus from Lake Kegonsa. As you know, phosphorus is the major contributor to the growth of algae. Lake experts have determined that every pound of phosphorus generates 500 pounds of algae. Thanks to Lake Kegonsa residents who utilized the barge pick-up program. **FOLKS** also thanks the barge pick-up crews and the plant harvesting crews for their dedicated work during 2024.

Dane County LWRD Aquatic Plant Management Harvesting Results

In December 2024, Dane County LWRD issued their annual report to the Wisconsin DNR regarding results of the County's aquatic plant management harvesting program. This covers work done by the aquatic plant harvesters on Madison lakes and the Yahara River.

Focusing on Lake Kegonsa, the aquatic plant harvesters worked 530 hours in 2024. The harvesters removed a total of 170 loads of aquatic plants totaling 782 tons (wet weight) and 78 tons (dry weight). Based on LWRD calculations, removal of that weight of aquatic plants diverted 447 pounds of phosphorus from Lake Kegonsa.

The aquatic plant harvesters removed aquatic plants from four of the Madison lakes (including Lake Kegonsa) and the Yahara River. In 2024, the harvesters removed a total of 8,074 tons (wet weight) and

808 tons (dry weight). LWRD calculates that removal of that weight of aquatic plants diverted a total of 4,611 pounds of phosphorus. The following table summarizes details from the LWRD report.¹

| | Hours | Loads | Wet Weight (tons) | Dry Weight (tons) | Phosphorus (pounds) |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Kegonsa | 530 | 170 | 782 | 78 | 447 |
| Mendota | 910 | 193 | 886 | 89 | 506 |
| Monona | 2,083 | 852 | 3,917 | 392 | 2,237 |
| Waubesa | 1,003 | 412 | 1,893 | 189 | 1,081 |
| Yahara River | 196 | 130 | 596 | 60 | 340 |
| Total | 4,722 | 1,757 | 8,074 | 808 | 4,611 |

Access the **FOLKS** website to view the full LWRD report for further details.
https://www.kegonsa.org/_files/ugd/77deeb_fccda4b4b8aa4212901cef46a43d2e47.pdf

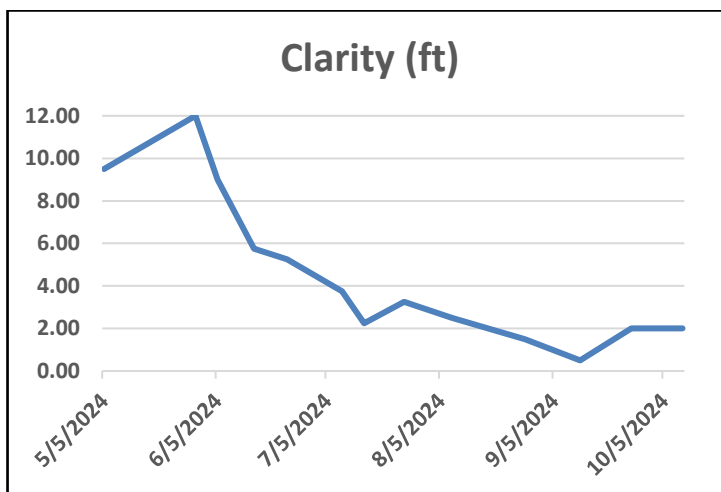
¹Source: Dane County Land & Water Resources Department Aquatic Plant Management Harvest Report

2024 Water Monitoring Results

FOLKS volunteers continue to work with Clean Lakes Alliance, Rock River Coalition, Dane County Land and Water Resources, and UW Limnology to build a scientific database of measurements for Lake Kegonsa such as nutrient (phosphorus) analysis, clarity, and other observations.

Deep Hole:

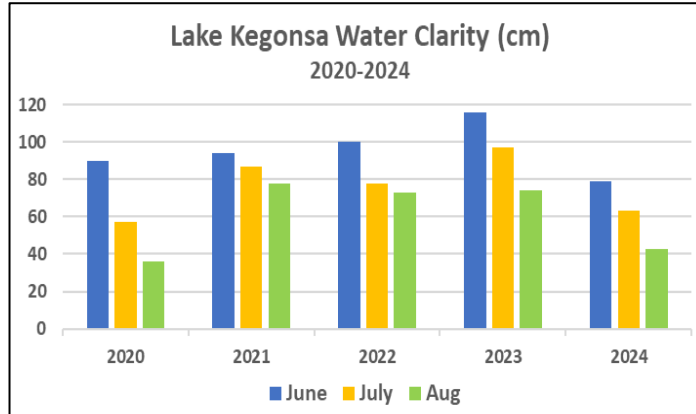
Clarity, dissolved oxygen and temperature are measured at the deep hole on Kegonsa ever week or two throughout the summer and the phosphorus concentration is measured at this location once each month. We try to coordinate these sample days with the days the satellite goes across Kegonsa. The intent is to use the data collected by our volunteers to correlate to the satellite data so that clarity can be estimated for lakes throughout Wisconsin that don't have clarity data collected.



The clarity at the deep hole is measured with a Secchi disk and typically decreases throughout the summer but in 2024 the summer offshore clarity was very low. Phosphorus levels at the deep hole were typically around 0.07 mg/l in 2024.

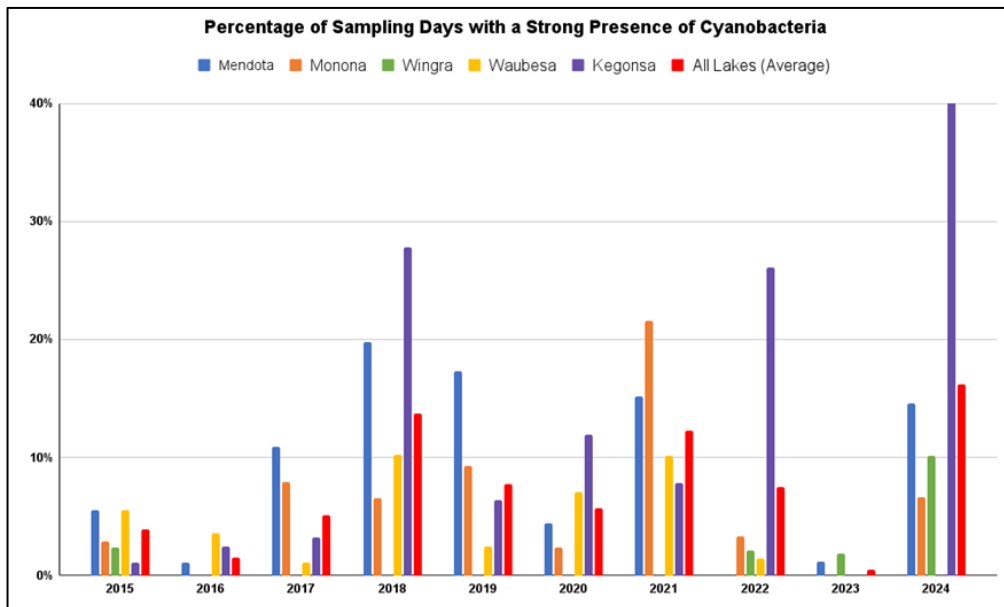
End of Pier:

Clarity is measured by our volunteers at the end of their piers using a transparency/clarity tube with centimeter markings from 0 to 120 cm. The 120 cm level is very clear water. The graph below shows you the average nearshore clarity over the summer months from June to August at the 16 sample locations on Kegonsa for 2020 to 2024. As you can see clarity in 2024 was lower than in the last three years.



Other measurements at these locations throughout the summer include observations such as temperature, presence/absence of waterfowl, people in the water, and algae blooms.

The chart below is from Clean Lakes Alliance and includes the Kegonsa end of pier observations for the last 10 years of when there was a strong presence of blue-green algae (cyanobacteria). Kegonsa had the most blue-green algae blooms in 2024 of any of the Madison lakes. Blue-green algae blooms were observed on 40% of sampling days (more than twice as often as on any other of our lakes).



This year the phosphorus levels were also measured at two locations on either side of the lake. This will provide a baseline for future data collection and analysis. These concentrations ranged from 0.1 to 0.6 mg/L.

In a program with the Rock River Coalition, **FOLKS** volunteers take clarity, temperature, dissolved oxygen and phosphorus samples at locations where water is coming in/out of Lake Kegonsa on most months if the location isn't frozen. These locations are the Yahara River Inlet coming into Kegonsa sampled at Fish Camp Park, Door Creek sampled at Hwy MN, Door Creek sampled where it comes into Kegonsa, and the Yahara River outlet sampled at LaFollette Dam. The table below shows clarity (C) and phosphorus (P) results for 2024.

| 2024 | Yahara River Inlet | | Door Creek @ MN | | Door Creek @ Kegonsa | | Yahara River Outlet | |
|------|--------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|----------------------|----------|---------------------|----------|
| | C (cm) | P (mg/L) | C (cm) | P (mg/L) | C (cm) | P (mg/L) | C (cm) | P (mg/L) |
| Jan | 78 | 0.07 | 115 | ND | | | 85 | ND |
| Feb | 106 | ND | | | | | 120 | ND |
| Mar | 62 | ND | 120 | ND | | | 76 | ND |
| Apr | 90 | ND | 106 | 0.06 | | | 102 | ND |
| May | 120 | ND | 120 | 0.06 | 114 | ND | 120 | ND |
| Jun | 120 | 0.06 | 112 | 0.34 | 115 | 0.25 | 120 | ND |
| Jul | 120 | 0.11 | 120 | 0.34 | 116 | 0.51 | 78 | 0.2 |
| Aug | 75 | 0.11 | 120 | 0.21 | 120 | 0.11 | 61 | 0.09 |
| Sep | 88 | 0.14 | 69 | 0.09 | 96 | 0.06 | 41 | 0.11 |
| Oct | 78 | | 100 | | 86 | | 52 | |
| Nov | 106 | | 82 | | 47 | | 79 | |
| Dec | 120 | | | | 11 | | 120 | |

ND = Not detectable

Per the UW Center for Limnology, the P goal for a shallow lake such as Kegonsa is .052 mg/l or lower. Clarity over 80 cm is considered good when measured with a turbidity/clarity tube.

FOLKS continues to emphasize water monitoring and a wide variety of projects to further enhance the quality of our lake including phosphorus and salt reduction projects, fish habitat improvements, plant harvesting and clean up and public education projects.

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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
201 Bus Park Circle, Stoughton WI 53589
www.finessepr.net (608) 695-6510
hammeritconstruction@gmail.com(608)205-7669
jdhellenbrand@yahoo.com (608) 513-0690
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lksc.com
rep.ratcliff@legis.wisconsin.gov
engelberger.michael@countyofdane.com
noshortselectric@gmail.com
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miles@countyofdane.com
(608) 873-3366
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springersonthelake.com (608)205-9300
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aquaticweedremovers@gmail.com
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305 Industrial Circle, Stoughton WI 53589
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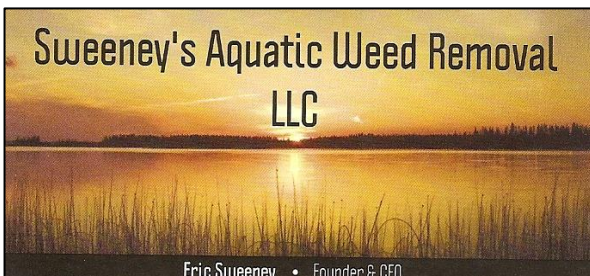
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FOLKS OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS 2025

George Corrigan, President
corrigan@corrigan.pro

Janice Kellogg, Vice President
kelloggja7@gmail.com

Connie Hagen, Treasurer
chagen001@gmail.com

Eric Olson
eolson.folks@gmail.com

John Bottorff
jbott53511@att.net

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

Melissa Whittinghill
melvettr@gmail.com

Mike Krueger
kruegermikea@gmail.com

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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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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 January 14, 2025, 6:00 PM, Stoughton Country Club

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