



Friends of Lake Kegonsa Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 173
Stoughton, WI 53589-0173
September 2018

President’s Message ~ Peter Foy

This has been quite the summer, with more high water, blue green algae and weeds than most of us can remember.

On 6/22/18 the water level hit 845.75 feet above sea level. This was an all-time high lake level, surpassing the previous record of 845.73 set on June 16, 2008. The declaration of Emergency Slow No Wake that was issued on June 18, 2018 stated that the slow no wake would be rescinded when the water levels on Lake Kegonsa were at or below 844.70 for 5 consecutive days. It was actually rescinded on July 10, 2018, when the water level at 844.22.

Fortunately, we have hit a dry spell that has allowed us to see the lake drop a little each day. If heavy rain holds off then the lake level should be back below the 844.70 level within a week. If it stays there for 5 consecutive days the current Slow No Wake declaration could be rescinded again. Stay tuned. The other lakes are still close to a foot higher than we are, when comparing summer maximum levels.

John Reimer, Dane County Land and Water Resources, is the person at the county that is in charge of the dams and controlling the lake levels. We are trying to set up a time for him to come and give us an update on what happened this year with lake levels and what the plans are for the future. As you can imagine this has been a trying, busy year for John and others working to get the high water under control. I have found John to be very responsive and easy to work with. I’m sure they learned a lot during this unusual period of heavy rain and high water. Once we have a date and time established we will send out an email “Lake Alert” to let you know about it.

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President's Message ~ Peter Foy (Continued From Page 1)

As usual, we have a lot of projects going on that you will read about in this newsletter. Pay particular attention to the article on leaf vacuuming. This is the first time in history that leaves will be vacuumed around the lake and it is a real FOLKS success story. Gary Smithback and his committee have done an outstanding job coordinating all aspects of this ambitious project. This is just one of our many committees that are meeting on a regular basis and they are the reason we are making great progress on all of our projects.

Feel free to contact me, or any of our Board members with any suggestions, or questions.

For those who came and enjoyed the evening, spread the word to your neighbors. We will continue to hold our Annual Meeting and Summer Fling in June and hope more will join us. Next year, we will NOT hold it on Stoughton's Graduation Weekend!

Happy 30th (or maybe 31st) Birthday to FOLKS!!!

The Friends of Lake Kegonsa Society, Inc. (FOLKS) was started in 1987 and officially incorporated in 1988. We now have **431** household & business members. This is an all-time high membership for our organization.

In this issue of our newsletter, we'd like to celebrate our **30 Year** FOLKS members and send them a huge **Thank You** to for their continuing support of FOLKS for all these years.

Joined FOLKS in 1987

Vada Armbrust
Barbara Burns & R Goldsbury
Noel Halverson
Gloria & Norm Jenkins, Jr
John McPartland
Sylvia Potempa
Craig & Peggy Thompson

Michael Baldwin
Andrew & Kathleen Graham
Howard & Diana Hill
Judie Lehman
Mark & Lorna Kay Nussle
Joseph & Elizabeth Semerling

Joined FOLKS in 1988

Mary Lee Frahm
Neil & Lois McFadden
Lenore, Kelley & Teal Rowe
Bonnie Wojtas

Susi Haviland
Paul Nesson, Jr
Stan & Mary Salverson

FOLKS 2018 Leaf Management Campaign

Earlier in the year FOLKS was awarded grants from the **Bryant Foundation** and the **Clean Lakes Alliance** to expand our Lake Kegonsa leaf management project. FOLKS is partnering with the two Towns bordering the shores of Lake Kegonsa – the **Town of Dunn** and the **Town of Pleasant Springs** – to reduce the phosphorus entering our waterways from storm water flowing over leaves.

As we reported in the 2018 April newsletter, FOLKS leaf removal initiative will mean that this fall will be the first time in history both the Town of Dunn and the Town of Pleasant Springs will **vacuum leaves from all around Lake Kegonsa** – both homes on the shore and across the street. The Town of Dunn purchased a leaf vacuum in 2017 with partial funding from a Yahara WINS grant. The Town of Pleasant Springs will use the City of Stoughton's leaf vacuum on weekends as the Town of Dunn did last year with help from FOLKS through the CLA grant.

FOLKS will also assist the two Towns with mailings and educational materials. You will soon be receiving a letter in the mail if your property is in the pilot program area that explains more about the specifics of leaf pick-up and the expected dates.

FOLKS provided the Towns with large signs to tell you when the next leaf vacuuming will occur. Watch for these signs along the leaf pick up routes this fall.



Why remove leaves?

As you know, higher phosphorous levels increase the algae in our lake and every bit we can reduce the phosphorous in runoff helps clear up our water. Leaves release phosphorus when they break down, representing one of the largest sources of urban phosphorus pollution. As water flows over leaves, phosphorous is leached out of the leaves and into the storm water. Storm drains and runoff through leaves from steep yards flow directly into the lake. Properly managing leaves can reduce the amount of phosphorous entering our waterways through storm water by 80% compared to no leaf removal.

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FOLKS 2018 Leaf Management Campaign (Continued From Page 3)

Ways you can help:

- Participate in the 2018 leaf management initiative:
 - Rake your leaves and have them ready for vacuuming,
 - Mulch leaves directly onto your yard or gardens using a lawnmower,
 - Compost your leaves, or
 - Rake leaves and take them to the Town's compost site.
- Show your support by displaying a "We Are Helping Our Lake" sign in your yard. You can get one from any FOLKS board member or at the Town Halls.



- Talk with your neighbors about the leaf management project.
- Remove leaves throughout the season and from the street as well as your yard.
- Remind your lawn maintenance service not to blow leaves in the lake.
- Don't burn leaves. Burning leaves is not permissible in all areas and it concentrates the phosphorous that ends up in the lake.
- Volunteer to help rake leaves for people who need assistance.

We hope this initiative will be the start of more easily and efficiently managing leaves at all 700+ homes around Lake Kegonsa. We applaud the incredible cooperation FOLKS received for our leaf management project from

- The City of Stoughton
 - Mayor Tim Swadley and the City Council
 - A.J. Gillingham, Director of HR and Risk Management
 - Brett Hebert, Director of Public Works
- The Town of Pleasant Springs –
 - Board: Chairperson, David Pfeiffer and Supervisors, Doug Larrison, Eric Olson, Jay Damkoehler, Janeice Bolender
 - Pili Hougan, Town Clerk
- The Town of Dunn –
 - Board: Chairperson, Ed Minihan and Supervisors, Jeffrey Hodgson and Steve Greb
 - Cathy Hasslinger, Town Clerk
 - Ben Kollenbroich, Planning & Land Conservation

Watch for more information coming from FOLKS, The Town of Pleasant Springs and the Town of Dunn on leaf vacuuming and how to manage your leaves this fall. FOLKS will continue to work with the Town Boards to expand compost site hours for homeowners who prefer to take their leaves to the compost sites. If you are unable to rake your leaves let one of your FOLKS board members know. We will try to put together a list of neighborhood individuals who will rake leaves or you may call a lawn services to mulch your leaves.

Toxic Blue-green Algae (Cyanobacteria) on Lake Kegonsa

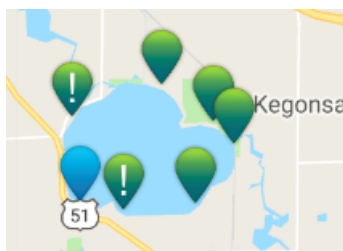
Many observations of blue-green algae were reported on Lake Kegonsa this summer. Most of the following information about blue-green algae was included in an email to FOLKS members but because of the increased incidence of algae blooms we thought we would repeat some of that information in this newsletter.

If you see something green on the lake it is likely either green algae (which is not harmful to humans) or blue-green algae. Blue-green algae is actually a bacteria called cyanobacteria and can release toxins that can be harmful to children, persons with immune system deficiencies, and pets, and, in higher exposures, can be harmful to adults. Exposure can occur by swimming (skin exposure), water skiing (inhalation), or, most seriously, by swallowing contaminated water. If blue-green algae is present, you should avoid contact with the water and keep your pets out of the water.

Excerpt from the July 3rd Dane County Press Release: "When beaches are closed, Public Health Madison & Dane County (PHMDC) advises residents and their pets to avoid coming into contact with algal blooms which may cause illness for those who accidentally swallow or inhale water containing algae, or have prolonged skin contact with the algae. The blooms can cause symptoms such as stomach upset, rashes, and respiratory irritation."

Cyanobacteria is commonly referred to as blue-green algae and occurs in blooms on all of the Madison lakes, including Lake Kegonsa. Blooms typically arise between June and September and most often appear after several days of intense rain when the water is warm, temperatures are high, and there is little wind. Blue-green algae is the result of excess phosphorus which is present in all of the Madison lakes and river network.

Blue-green algae is reported by Clean Lakes Alliance and the Madison and Dane County Health Departments for all Madison lakes. You can find information when blue-green algae blooms are found and reported by checking <https://lakeforecast.org/#/map/site> (use the zoom out button to see Lake Kegonsa). The most recent observation for each of the seven data sites on Lake Kegonsa is shown on the map when you click on the corresponding balloon. An exclamation point (as seen in the screen shot below) means that blue-green algae has been reported. The two blue-green algae observations shown were reported 7/14/2018 on the west and south sides of Lake Kegonsa.



You can see beach closure data and sign up for email notification if Lake Kegonsa State Park Beach is closed at <https://www.wibeaches.us/apex/f?p=BEACH:HOME>.

Identification:

Following are tips about how to identify and distinguish blue-green from green algae. First, note the color. Both green and blue-green algae may appear as bright green, blue-green (turquoise),

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Toxic Blue-green Algae (Cyanobacteria) on Lake Kegonsa (Continued From Page 5)

or sometimes brown. However, blue-green algae has thick and extensive hues of blue and white and has a paint-like sheen or pea-soup appearance. Another way of telling the difference between blue-green algae and green algae is called the “stick test”. If you put a stick or paddle in green algae and pull it out of the water, the algae may appear as long, interconnected filaments – that is most likely green algae and is not harmful. However, blue-green algae will not cling together enough to hang off the stick – that is most likely blue-green algae, the harmful type.

Reporting blue-green algae blooms:

If you think you see a blue-green algae bloom, please take a photo and note the location and report that information to all of the following: Public Health Madison and Dane County (608-266-4821), Clean Lakes Alliance (608-255-1000), and Wisconsin Harmful Algal Blooms Program (608-266-1120).

Further information:

For more information about cyanobacteria (blue-green algae), visit <https://cleanlakesalliance.org/cyanobacteria/> or <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/water/bg-algae/defined.htm>

Source of this article and excerpts: “Clean Lakes Alliance – Cyanobacteria (Blue-Green Algae) FAQs” and the July 3rd Dane County Press Release.

Sadly, this is a photograph of the huge blue-green algae bloom at Lake Kegonsa State Park last week taken by CLA and another photo from Sunnyside Street taken by FOLKS members.



Aquatic Plant Growth in Lake Kegonsa

The plant growth has been very high in our lake this year. Although we've seen a significant increase in the amount and density of plants, we're not really sure about the scientific "cause and effect". Here are a few things we do know:

- The water was very clear this spring. Improved water clarity provides increased sunlight for the plants which promotes plant growth.
- The number of carp has been reduced over the last two years. We expected the reduction in carp to clear up the water and to increase plant growth.
- The nutrient levels required for plant growth are extremely high in our lake.
- The plant growth was also robust after the high water in 2008.
- Dane County identified plants in Lake Kegonsa in early July and determined that there was a significant increase in the amount of native species which is beneficial to the habitat.
- Dane County has been busy trying to harvest plants in the Yahara River both north and south of Lake Kegonsa to keep the water flowing through the system.
- Boating activity does not make any appreciable difference in the amount or density of aquatic plants.
- With the high water levels this summer, the aquatic plants continued to grow and once the water goes down the plants are more exposed than they normally are.

In addition to water clarity the rains and the huge amount of run-off into our lake contributed to the plant growth. The run-off from any significant rain event is very phosphorous rich. In general, about 70% of the phosphorous load from run-off is from agricultural sources while 30% is from urban sources. This includes run-off from lawns and all the impervious surfaces such as roofs, driveways, etc. In addition, because of so many years of phosphorous loading, the phosphorous level in the lake bed is also very high.

Aquatic Plant Harvesting

The county has done a lot of navigational cutting on Lake Kegonsa this summer. Because of the large volume of plants, it took the harvesters two weeks to make it all the way around the lake. It is a slow process because in addition to cutting, the harvesters have to make numerous trips back to the collection site where the cut plants are off-loaded and taken to a compost site. It may seem like there is quite a bit of cut plant debris but the harvesters try to pick up as many of the cut plants as they can. They sometimes even make passes with the cutters turned off and the pickup conveyers still on.

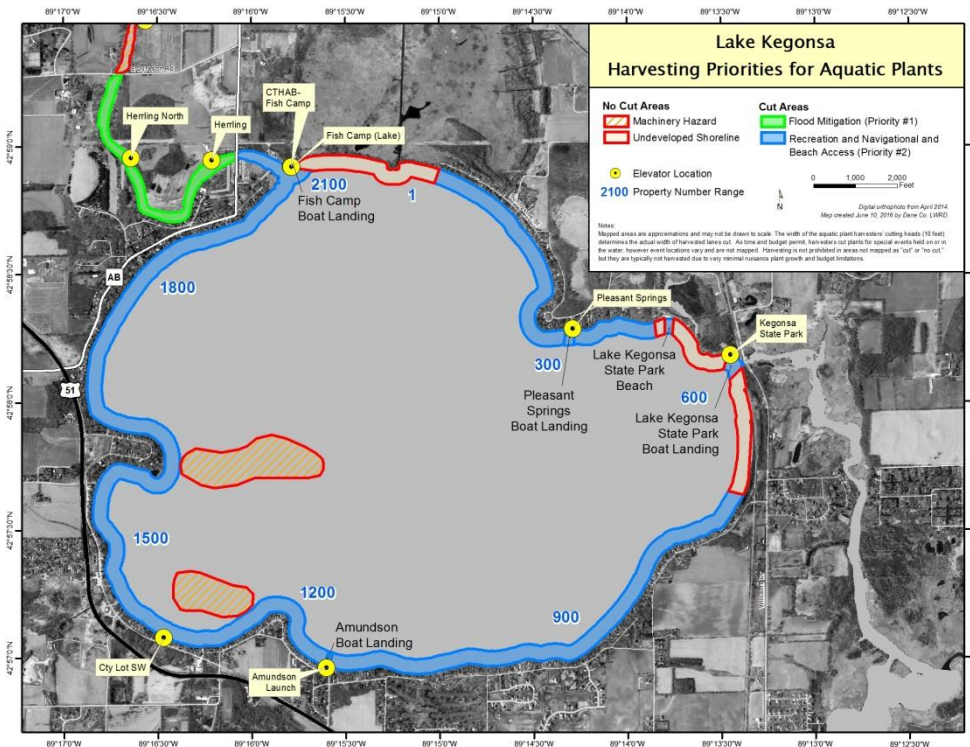
Continued on Page 8.

Aquatic Plant Growth in Lake Kegonsa (Continued From Page 7)



The phosphorous in cut plants is not new phosphorous going into the system as it is when leaves or phosphorous-rich runoff goes into the lake. Phosphorous is taken up from the lake system and incorporated in the aquatic plant tissues. The amount of phosphorous taken out of the lake during aquatic plant cutting is by far larger than anything left in the cut plants that are not removed.

This is a map of areas where the county is allowed to do navigational cutting on Lake Kegonsa.



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Aquatic Plant Growth in Lake Kegonsa (Continued From Page 8)

You can find the full Aquatic Plant Management Plan for Lake Kegonsa, and the distribution of aquatic plant harvesters on the Yahara chain of lakes at: <https://wred-lwr.d.countyofdane.com/Aquatic-Plant-Management>.

Aquatic Plant Species in Lake Kegonsa (From the Aquatic Plant Management Plan, Amendment 2)

Dane County LWRD staff conducted surveys of the aquatic plant community of Lake Kegonsa on August 16-17 and August 21, 2017. In this plant survey, Lake Kegonsa had nine submersed native aquatic plants:

Filamentous algae	Coontail	Muskgrass
Common waterweed	Water star-grass	Leafy pondweed
Clasping-leaf pondweed	Sago pondweed	Wild celery

Only one invasive species, Eurasian water-milfoil, was identified in Lake Kegonsa. Wild celery and coontail are the most prevalent species. The maximum depth to plants was 12 feet.

High Water and Great Neighbors Found on Lake Kegonsa Again

Due to more significant rainfall in the area, the water level in Lake Kegonsa was very high for the second time this summer. On August 23rd the lake level was 844.44 ft (11.3" over summer maximum) and by September 7th it was 845.47 ft (23.6" inches over summer maximum). Although this was lower than our highest June 22nd lake level of 845.75 ft (27" over summer maximum), many people had to take their pier and boats out and/or were sandbagging their property. Once again throughout the area neighbors were helping neighbors, the Townships responded immediately and others came to volunteer. We truly have a great community!



Sandbagging help on Sunnyside from the Cottage Grove Fire Squad and the Stoughton Football Team.



Volunteers filling sandbags at Goodland Park including FOLKS members Tom & Jayne Sandine and Rick Thorstadt.

Please Shop and Support FOLKS Fabulous Business Members

Bunbury & Associates Realtors	Eric Olson (608) 575-9272
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Clean Lakes Alliance	james@cleanlakesalliance.com
Coldwell Banker Success	Peter Sveum (608) 575-1054
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Finesse Public Relations, LLC	finessepr.net (608) 695-6510
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Springers	springersonthelake.com (608) 205-9300
Stoughton Conservation Club	stoughtoncc.com
Stoughton Country Club	(608) 873-8464
Stoughton Trailers	stoughtontrailers.com (608) 873-2600
T.L. Home Finishing & Painting	(608) 873-9266
Terry Kahl Plumbing	305 Industrial Circle, Stoughton WI 53589
Thane B Anderson, DDS	drthaneanderson@tds.net
The Edwin E. & Janet L. Bryant Foundation	3039 Shadyside Dr., Stoughton WI 53589
Town of Dunn	4156 County Hwy B, McFarland WI 53558
Town of Pleasant Springs	2354 County Rd N, Stoughton WI 53589
T-Top Shop II, LLC	ttopshop@frontier.com (815) 335-7058
Tully's II Food & Spirits	6401 Monona Drive, Monona WI 53716
UPS Store #3617	2364 Jackson St, Stoughton, WI 53589
Web-Net	webdesign@web-net.us
Yahara Lakes Association, Ltd.	info@yaharalakes.org

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FOLKS monthly board meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month and the public are welcome to attend. Next Meeting is October 10, 2018, 5:30 - 7:00 PM. At Springers, 3097 Sunnyside St., Stoughton, WI 53589

**Send news of interest to FOLKS to:
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dluellwitz@gmail.com**

Published four times yearly by The Friends of Lake Kegonsa Society, Inc.

The opinions and information expressed in this 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.

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 Peter Foy at peter.foy@charter.net

FOLKS Lost and Found

List lost and found items on the FOLKS Facebook page or contact Eric Olson at eolson@bunburyrealtors.com

For More About FOLKS, Visit Our Website at

WWW.Kegonsa.org and on Facebook



at facebook.com/kegonasa/ or

on Twitter



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