



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

President's Message ~ George Corrigan

In July I briefly covered questions and comments from the Annual Meeting related to how members are chosen to be nominated for the Board, and why we haven't advertised vacancies. As I said then, if you want to be on the Board let us know now, and we will keep you in mind when a vacancy arises. Our Board is a working Board – we do not have any paid staff. Every event, every project and every committee is staffed solely by volunteers – usually Board members. Because we are a working Board we need to know new Board members will be engaged and are willing to do more than attend a few meetings each year. As I said in July, **FOLKS** members interested in being on the Board could volunteer to be on a committee or work on a project.

The President's message in this issue is a plea for help! Please consider joining a committee and/or volunteering. What interests you? What skills can you bring to **FOLKS**? Our committees are focused on a variety of issues, and I will mention a few now.

- The **Wildlife and Fisheries Committee** needs members who fish. Unfortunately, our lone Board member who fishes stepped down in June. We need help knowing what issues you face, and how **FOLKS** can help.
- Do you have an interest in the Parks near Lake Kegonsa? Then join our **Parks and Door Creek Committee**. This includes maintenance of gardens, benches and buildings.

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President's Message (Continued)

- Members that are website savvy could (should!) join our **Website Committee**. We regularly edit the website to keep members informed and up to date. Even if you have never worked on a website you could help. As I write this, we are trying to update the site with new committee information – but it takes time and we could use a helping hand.
- If you are a skillful writer perhaps you could help with the **Newsletter** – I'd love to have help writing this regular column.

Several committees focus on water quality.

- The **Monitoring Committee** takes water samples (year round) and in heavy rain events we monitor runoff.
- Another Water Quality Committee is the **Permanent Prairie** committee. This committee tries to encourage planting prairies or cover crops near the lake that reduce runoff.
- Do you have event planning skills? Join our **Social and Education** Committee.

If any of these committees sound interesting to you, please join one. Send an email to kegonsa@kegonsa.org with the name of the committee(s) you'd like to join, and we will let you know when the next meeting will be or you can contact the chairperson listed on the website.

-George Corrigan, FOLKS President

Lake Kegonsa Water Levels

As of October 1, 2024 the Lake Kegonsa level is **843.26'** (ft above sea level). It's been an unusual year with 21" of rain in the spring/early summer and a very dry spell in August/Early September. Dane County has done a good job of trying to keep the water level between summer minimum and summer maximum but as we all know it's a difficult task because the prescribed target range set by the DNR is very small (6").

Lake	10/1/2024 Lake Level (ft)	Summer Maximum (ft)	Inches Above Summer Max	1% Flood Level	2018 High
Mendota	850.32	850.1	2.64	852.8	852.3
Monona	845.24	845.2	0.48	847.7	848.5
Waubesa	844.91	845.0	-1.08	847.0	847.9
Kegonsa	843.26	843.5	-2.88	845.8	845.8

The dams are currently set to maintain lake levels but Dane County will soon be lowering the lakes toward winter lake levels. The Tenney Dam (Mendota) is 24% open, Babcock Dam (Waubesa) is 60% open and LaFollette Dam (Kegonsa) is 25% open.

Fall Leaf Pick Up

It's almost time for our annual fall leaf pick up! **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.

Important reminder of the rules and procedures:

Leaves should be in your yard ready to be picked up by noon on Friday of these weekends. Only one pass through the route will be made. The towns share the City of Stoughton's equipment and will be collecting leaves on the weekend.

Please be very careful to keep sticks or brush out of your leaf piles, including in the leaf drop off sites. The leaf vacuum truck will **not** pick up sticks or brush which clogs the machine and could damage the equipment.

For efficient vacuuming, remember the following guidelines:

- Rake leaves to an area by the roadside, but don't place them on the pavement.
- Place your leaves in a row not more than 4' wide, not in a large pile.
- Place leaves at least four feet from any mailbox or utility pole.
- Clear the leaves from the street in front of your home if you can. Phosphorus laden runoff from storm drains and through leaves from steep yards flow directly into the lake.
- Try not to park near any raked leaves.
- Keep rocks, animal waste, tall grasses, brush and other non-leaf material out of the leaves.

Schedule for the dates when the leaf vacuum truck will be on your street

Town of Pleasant Springs:

The Town of Pleasant Springs will be vacuuming leaves on the weekends of:

- **November 2-3**
- **November 16-17**

Town of Pleasant Springs Yard Waste Compost Site: Leaves can be dropped off at the compost site behind the Town Hall at 2354 County Highway N. The site is open on Thursdays, Saturdays, and Sundays 9:00AM - 7:00PM and requires residents of the Town of Pleasant Springs to purchase an annual \$10.00 Yard Waste Sticker.

Town of Dunn:

Town of Dunn will be vacuuming leaves on:

- **November 4 - 5**
- **November 30**
- **December 7**

Centralized **leaf collection drop-off sites** are located near Lake Kegonsa at Amundson Boat Launch, Colladay Point Park and Fish Camp County Park during the leaf pick up season.

Town of Dunn Main Compost Site: Leaves can be dropped off at the main transfer site at 4030 County Rd B. Normal operating hours:

- 1st and 3rd Saturdays of every month from 8 am to 3:45 pm
- Every Wednesday through the end of November from 2 pm to 4:45 pm.

Other Ways You Can Help:

- 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.

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

New Lake Kegonsa Fish Crib

On the sun-kissed day of July 17, 2024, a lively band of **FOLKS** members and volunteers embarked on an exciting adventure, marking the grand finale of a bold and innovative project! With hearts full of determination, they sunk a fleet of custom-designed fish cribs into the waters of Lake Kegonsa. The brainwaves behind this fantastic idea came from the collaboration of Pat Guiney, the spirited Chair of the **FOLKS** Fisheries Committee, and the enthusiastic Kim Van Brocklin, Chair of the **FOLKS** Wildlife Committee. They obtained a DNR Water Resources Permit to craft and sink four "state-of-the-art" fish cribs that would make any fish swoon! After the submission of data and paperwork, we were pleased when the DNR approved the **FOLKS** application on March 15, 2024, setting the stage for this aquatic wonder! The application required:

1. Wetland screening and delineation procedure evaluation
2. Endangered or threatened resources assessment
3. Narrative description of the **FOLKS** proposal
4. Detailed plans and specifications including design drawing and construction materials
5. Site map of Lake Kegonsa

The DNR also required several specific criteria for construction and placement of the fish cribs including:

1. Minimum of 5 feet water above each fish crib to avoid navigational hazards
2. Placement in approximately 10-15 feet of water to ensure adequate oxygenation during summer months
3. Design and use of natural construction materials
4. Proximity to existing fish cribs (or remnants of old fish cribs) was a bonus
5. Avoid large open areas of the lake which have been used by commercial fishermen in the past to set nets to remove carp. This last criterion was important if carp populations increase in the future so that commercial fishing nets would not become snagged in the cribs.

After approval from the DNR in mid-April, the real fun—and hard work—kicked off like a high-energy dance party! A steadfast crew of dedicated **FOLKS** members—Pat Guiney, Mike Krueger, John Bottorff, Ken LePine, Mark Herbst and John Quam—along with other enthusiastic helpers, dove headfirst into an adventure filled with twists and turns that left them tingling with excitement and at times, a bit bewildered! Every Tuesday, Saturday, and occasionally Wednesday (starting April 16, 2024), they gathered for epic construction sessions that lasted 4-5 hours, fueled by laughter and teamwork. Many thanks to the generous donation of hardwood logs from Brent Valentine (Heartwood Tree Company) and the construction site host John Quam (Quam's Marine & Motorsports) who provided a lake side space and equipment to construct the cribs. The crew rolled up their sleeves and created two

fabulous styles of fish cribs, including three contemporary “log cabin style” cribs that could make even the fussiest fish feel right at home and one “fish stick style” crib!



“Log Cabin” Crib



“Fish Stick” Crib

1. Constructed of 6' hardwood logs (maple, oak, or ash)
2. Constructed on-site at Quam's Marine & Motor Sports on Lake Kegonsa
3. The logs were bolted together at each corner using 7/8" threaded rebar rods (corners 3800 lbs. per rod) threaded through pre-drilled holes through each log corner.
4. The floor of each fish crib is constructed of seven, 6' hardwood logs equally spaced and perpendicular to the initial two base logs of each fish crib.
5. Secured to initial two base logs with 1/2" threaded rebar rods 24" long, sufficient to hold ~2,000 lbs. of natural boulders needed to sink each fish crib.
6. The assembled log cabin style cribs were stuffed with small trees and brush to create an enhanced fish habitat.
7. Deployed via barge and crane on open water after the June 15, 2024 fish spawning period.





One 20' long “fish stick style” structure recommended by DNR was also constructed. This type of fish crib is especially beneficial for perch spawning habitat whereas the log cabin style fish cribs are primarily for fish attraction and improved habitat.

On July 17, 2024, with the expert assistance of Captain Neil Manke and his crew, all four of the fish cribs were hoisted on to the barge, transported to multiple locations and lowered by crane into Lake Kegonsa.



Each fish crib was designed to reside in relatively shallow water (10-15 feet) to allow them to receive ample sunlight to support algae and other organic growth. They each sit firmly on a hard bottom with at least 5 feet of head water above them. Each log cabin style fish crib has spaces at the base which will allow fish to swim under the crib and they were each thickly packed with branches on all faces extending away from each crib.

The  on the map below (white cross) shows the locations on Lake Kegonsa which were selected and approved by the DNR for the new fish cribs. The  on the map (black cross) shows the locations of existing fish cribs.

- Ken LePine - Chief Sawzall Expert, Special Projects Coordinator, Workflow Innovation Expert, Heavy Timber Maestro, Deep Water Aquatic Equipment Retrieval Expert
- John Quam - On-site Logistics Wizard and Heavy Equipment Hero, Boulder and Barge Procurement, Equipment Manager, Action Planner Extraordinaire

Supporting Cast

- David Rowe (DNR Fisheries Supervisor for the Fitchburg Fisheries Team)-key advisor on the fish permit application
- Mitch Trow and Josh Jonet - DNR Fisheries Technician responsible for securing boulder anchors to the fish stick structure.
- Captain Neil Manke (and staff) - Manke Enterprises responsible for moving finished fish cribs to their pre-determined locations and lifting the ~5000 lbs. fish cribs into Lake Kegonsa
- Kim Van Brocklin - Chair of the **FOLKS** Wildlife Committee, project co-conceptualization, helped connect the team to free hardwood logs from Heartwood Tree Company
- Brent Valentine - Co-Owner Heartwood Tree Co. who donated all the logs used for the project.
- Kevin Hahn - K&D Stone and Nelson Excavating who for donated and delivered a large load of boulders used to weigh down the cribs
- Mark Herbst - volunteer laborer during construction of the fish cribs
- Debra Kundert and Anne Meisner - GPS-guided lake surveys helpers to find the best locations
- Alexis Krueger and Keaton Mertz - Two wonderful young people who helped move logs
- Rick Krueger - Scuba diver who provided many excellent underwater pictures of Lake Kegonsa bottom structure and remnants of existing and new fish cribs
- Cindy Guiney – Photographer who took shots of our progress throughout the project
- Roy Quam – Drove the tour boat during final placement and helped crew with equipment

Thank you to all for great teamwork on a really fun, productive project!

Volunteers Help Plant Rain Gardens at Fish Camp

A large new rain garden was installed at Fish Camp County Park on September 3rd. The installation was led by Dane County Water Resource Engineer, Theresa Nelson and Senior Landscape Architect, Alex DeSmidt. They were assisted by Operation Fresh Start participants, other Dane County staff and **FOLKS** volunteers.



The basin sites were weeded, prepped with barrier coco mats where needed and planted with 2.5" potted native plant plugs. Most of the plants were long rooted grasses, sedges and some other forbs.

Installation of **FOLKS** "What's Your Wingspan" Sign

Many of you have seen the **FOLKS** traveling wingspan sign we use at our events. We're happy to announce the permanent **FOLKS** "What's Your Wingspan" was installed at Fish Camp Park on September 18, 2024. Park visitors can now check their wingspan to see how they measure up to the big birds. The sign is located near the walking path by the shoreline garden and showcases the birds that live on Lake Kegonsa's shores. We hope you'll have fun taking kids and grandkids to check their wingspan!



Ribbon Cutting for the Lower Yahara River Trail

Dane County had the official ribbon cutting for the Lower Yahara River Trail that runs from Fish Camp County Park over Door Creek and on to Lake Kegonsa State Park on September 24th. Jamie Kuhn, Dane County Executive cut the ribbon on the trail and our **FOLKS** President, George Corrigan was one of the featured speakers.



If you haven't had a chance yet, stop by and see all the great improvements made to Fish Camp County Park and the completion of this section of the Lower Yahara River Trail. It's a wonderful enhancement to the shores of Lake Kegonsa.

FOLKS Update and Fall Social

FOLKS held their fall social and Project Update at Springers on Thursday, September 19th. **FOLKS** President, George Corrigan gave a brief update on our **FOLKS** projects and current happenings around the lake. It was very well attended and our members had a chance to meet new people and visit with old friends. Gorgeous fall mums were the door prizes.



Save the Dates

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. Fish Camp County Park, Times to be determined.

2. June 7, 2025 - **FOLKS** Annual Meeting, Stoughton Country Club

2024 Survey Results

Thank you for taking the time to respond to the short 2024 **FOLKS** member survey. Many members talked about aquatic plant and algae level which are ongoing lake quality issues that **FOLKS** continues

to focus on. Our members are behind our projects and are taking a number of positive actions to help the lake.

Results:

Q# 1- How well does our website meet your needs (helpful information, ease of use, visually appealing?)

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
• The FOLKS website meets my needs very well	57%	41%
• The FOLKS website meets my needs somewhat	13%	16%
• The FOLKS website doesn't meet my needs very well	0%	1%
• I don't use the FOLKS website	30%	43%

Q #2- Leaf Vacuuming. FOLKS works with the Town of Pleasant Springs, the Town of Dunn and the City of Stoughton to provide a leaf vacuuming program. Do you use this service?

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
• I used the leaf vacuuming service and I think it is worthwhile	77%	61%
• I didn't use it, but I think it is a worthwhile program	18%	34%
• I probably won't use the service and prefer other FOLKS projects	5%	5%

Q #3- Aquatic plant growth. We would like to know how it has been near your property. % of respondents is shown beside each location.

	<u>2024</u>			<u>2023</u>		
Aquatic plants	None	Limited	Abundant	None	Limited	Abundant
• Northeast Shore (24%)	4%	40%	46%	0%	2%	98%
• Southeast Shore (23%)	0%	33%	67%	3%	26%	72%
• Southwest Shore (32%)	0%	12%	88%	0%	29%	71%
• Northwest Shore (17%)	0%	18%	82%	0%	3%	97%
• Yahara River (4%)	0%	25%	75%	0%	9%	91%

Q #4- Dane County Aquatic plant harvesting.

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
• We felt there was enough harvesting this summer	43%	43%
• We thought there should have been more harvesting	52%	57%

Q #5- FOLKS Aquatic Debris pick up project. FOLKS runs a project providing regularly scheduled collection days for aquatic debris on Lake Kegonsa and the near North Yahara River in cooperation with Dane County.

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
• I used the debris pick up service and believe this project is worthwhile	50%	47%
• I didn't use the service, but believe this project is worthwhile	37%	44%
• I probably won't use this service and prefer other FOLKS projects	9%	9%

Q #6- Zebra Mussels. We would like to know how it has been near your property.

% of respondents is shown beside each location.

	<u>2024</u>			<u>2023</u>		
Zebra Mussels	None	Same as Last year	More than Last year	None	Same as Last year	More than Last year
• Northeast Shore (25%)	4%	40%	46%	53%	42%	6%
• Southeast Shore (21%)	0%	33%	67%	38%	56%	6%
• Southwest Shore (32%)	0%	12%	88%	26%	70%	4%
• Northwest Shore (16%)	0%	18%	82%	33%	63%	4%
• Yahara River (6%)	0%	25%	75%	50%	25%	25%

Q #7- If you fish in Lake Kegonsa, how was the fishing this summer

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
• We don't fish, so we don't have an opinion (% of respondents)	57%	67%
• Fishing was better than ever this year (% of fishermen)	0%	7%
• Fishing was about the same as last year (% of fishermen)	35%	44%
• Fishing was worse than last year (% of fishermen)	65%	49%

Q #8- How did you think the condition of the lake was this summer?

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
• Very good this summer	1%	14%
• The lake was in pretty good shape much of the summer	36%	57%
• The lake was in bad shape much of the summer, which limited our use	63%	29%

Q #9- Your interest in the following FOLKS projects and events. Check all that you think it is worthwhile for FOLKS to pursue.

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
• Reduce run-off into the lake	71%	72%
• FOLKS members social get-togethers	57%	56%
• Identify ways to increase fish in Lake Kegonsa and improve fishing	53%	51%
• Expand water sampling (Lake Kegonsa, Door Creek, Yahara River)	52%	47%
• Educational seminars (Dane County, DNR, Native Plants, Wildlife)	38%	45%
• Projects for wildlife around Lake Kegonsa	34%	48%
• Rain garden and shoreline buffer garden projects	32%	39%
• Rain barrel education and distribution	20%	27%

Q#10 – Do you think FOLKS should continue to support the following area projects?

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
• Dane County sediment removal (Suck the Muck) in Door Creek	91%	90%
• Dane County dredging Yahara River to reduce flood risk	85%	82%
• Clean Lakes Alliance projects for area watersheds/lakes	80%	78%
• Dane County Lower Yahara River Trail	68%	64%
• Rock River Coalition projects (Door Creek watershed into Lake Kegonsa)	65%	57%
• Fish Camp County Park (Gardens, tables, historic building improvements)	61%	61%

Q#11 - How have you improved lake conditions? Mark all that you've done.

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
• Removed leaves from my property to phosphorus out of the lake	89%	86%
• Picked up litter & pet waste	60%	64%
• Mulched leaves with mower to leave on the lawn	58%	n/a
• Collected cut plants from the lake (pick up, compost, to Town sites)	54%	48%
• Reduced salt use in the winter	52%	58%
• Removed leaves from the street to keep them out of lake run off areas	48%	46%
• Reduced fertilizer use	48%	59%
• Directed run off away from the lake through a shoreline garden, rain garden, redirecting a downspout, downspout garden or rain barrel	29%	37%
• Home composting	15%	19%
• Volunteered for lake projects	14%	9%

Q#12 – Residency	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
• Year-round resident	71%	71%
• Only part time	29%	29%
Q#13 - Age Bracket	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
• 35 or under	1%	1%
• 36-50	7%	9%
• 51-60	18%	17%
• 61-70	31%	36%
• 71 or over	42%	38%
Q#14- How many years have you had your place on the lake or river?	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
• 0-5 years	15%	18%
• 6-10 years	13%	15%
• 11-20 years	18%	19%
• 21-30 years	21%	19%
• 31 years, or more	33%	29%

Once again, **Thank you** for your feedback. Giving the board your thoughts helps the Board of Directors find new projects and direct funding and it makes our organization stronger and better.

Water Monitoring and Zebra Mussel Study

Sixteen **FOLKS** Members living around the lake are involved in the end of the pier monitoring that measures water temperature, turbidity (water clarity) and the presence and absence of algae and lake weed among other things. This data is helpful in assessing the health of our lake. Thank you to all our lake monitors.

This summer 11 of our 16 end of pier monitors also participated in a study by UW Limnology Dept. to look at the presence of zebra mussels around the lake. Each monitor hung a brick off the end of their pier and checked it every week or 2 throughout the summer. They checked for the presence of zebra mussels. If they saw zebra mussels on the bricks they would take photos of the brick and send it to the Limnology professor doing the study. All of the bricks were taken to the limnology lab on Sept. 19, 2024 for further analysis and to quantify the zebra mussel population in Lake Kegonsa. We will get a report later this winter when the results are complete. Other Madison lakes also participated in the study.

Zebra mussels are an invasive species of small mollusk that have no real predators in our lakes and can quickly multiply and cover all of the hard surfaces on the lake bottom and also piers, boats, and other structures in the water that they can attach to. Their shells are very sharp and can cut feet if you walk on them. Zebra mussels are transported from lake to lake through ballast tanks, live fishing wells and by attaching to boat trailers and boats. The infestation of zebra mussels can have devastating effects on the fisheries and lake water quality.

For more information you can check out this site <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Invasives/fact/Zebra>

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Eric Olson (608) 575-9272
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201 Bus Park Circle, Stoughton WI 53589
james@cleanlakesalliance.com
PeterSveum@coldwellhomes.com (608)575-1054
PO Box 301, Stoughton WI 53589
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lksc.com
rep.ratcliff@legis.wisconsin.gov
engelberger.michael@countyofdane.com
noshortselectric@gmail.com
(608) 873-5197
miles@countyofdane.com
(608) 873-3366
327 South Division St., Stoughton, WI 53589
springersonthelake.com (608)205-9300
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aquaticweedremovers@gmail.com
(608) 873-9266
305 Industrial Circle, Stoughton WI 53589
drthaneanderson@tds.net
doghutcare.com (608) 838-2470
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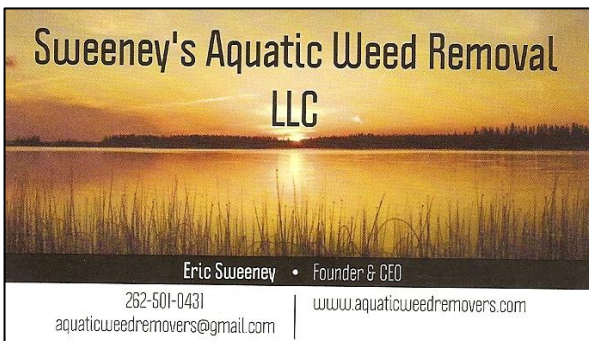
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262-501-0431 | www.aquaticweedremovers.com
aquaticweedremovers@gmail.com

Theran Kahl
General Manager



305 Industrial Circle
Stoughton, WI 53589
Phone: 608-873-7651
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 THE HUB REALTY

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Lake Kegonsa Resident / Realtor

(608)345-8500

sue@thehubrealty.com



Join us for our 2024 Annual Meeting on Sunday
October 20th from 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM. Details at
<https://lksc.org/event/lksc-2024-annual-meeting/>

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

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

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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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 October 8, 2024, 6:00 PM, Stoughton Country Club

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