



Friends of Lake Kegonsa Society, Inc.  
P.O. Box 173  
Stoughton, WI 53589-0173  
**April 2020**

## President’s Message ~ Peter Foy

Your **FOLKS** Board hopes that all of our members are staying healthy during this strange period of our lives. COVID-19 has changed everything in just a matter of weeks and it is scary. Be careful and smart and we will live through this and enjoy better days ahead.

### Meetings postponed

As you probably expected, our **FOLKS** annual meeting that was scheduled for May 9, 2020 has been postponed. It will be rescheduled when we can all look forward to getting together to share each other’s company and laugh about the fun times ahead. It will happen, and we will give you plenty of notice when we have set a new date.

We have also cancelled the May 30<sup>th</sup> Rain Garden Workshop. We’ll try to reschedule this too.

### Projects

I’ve included a report on our carp removal project below – Not a great year for harvesting carp. You will see a number of positive articles in the newsletter about other **FOLKS** projects. As always, feel free to contact any of your Board members if you have any questions.

– Peter Foy

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## Spring Carp Fishing on Lake Kegonsa 2020

Once again the commercial carp fishermen were on Lake Kegonsa trying to harvest as many carp as possible. They began fishing two days after the ice was off the lake.

We're sorry to report that COVID-19, and even a muskrat, were working against us this spring. The live fish market in New York was not surprisingly slow this year due to COVID-19. The carp fishermen were still fishing and planned to ship live carp to NY on Friday, 3/27. For a reason that the DNR has still not determined the truck didn't show up. The fishermen decided to keep the carp in the pen until Monday 3/30, when another truck was scheduled to arrive. Over the weekend a muskrat ate through the net and they estimate that they lost 2/3 of the carp in the net. Based on what was probably the market price for live carp this amounted to a loss of over \$20,000 to the fishermen. They took out what they could, but it was not a lot.

In total, the fishermen removed only 62,700 lbs. of carp this spring and because of market conditions they told us they were through for the year. Last year they removed 162,000 lbs. and we were hoping for more this year. The *FOLKS* incentive plan that had been approved by the Board would have paid the fishermen \$27,500 if they had removed 200,000 lbs. of carp this year.

More bad news is that the fish processing company that had taken most of the carp that were not shipped live over the last few years has closed.

We'll work closely with the DNR and the fishermen in an effort to determine what changes have to be made to continue with our removal project in 2021. Unfortunately, most of the major factors are out of our direct control.



Hauling in the nets  
**Photo by Cindy Guiney**

## Spring Carp Fishing on Lake Kegonsa 2020, continued



Penning Fish - Closing up the pen



Sorting Fish - Throwing back a northern

Photos by Deb Weiss

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### ***FOLKS* Annual Membership Drive 2020**

Thank you to everyone who has returned their 2020 membership renewal. We've had a great response so far. About 75% of the households on Lake Kegonsa and the near Yahara River are members of ***FOLKS***, as well as a number of people from Stoughton, McFarland, Madison and the surrounding area.

Our dues have remained at \$20 for households and \$30 for businesses for 15 years – What a bargain!! If you haven't yet sent in your contribution for 2020, you can send your check to:

***FOLKS***  
**PO Box 173**  
**Stoughton, WI 53589**

Please talk to your friends and neighbors about supporting our efforts on behalf of Lake Kegonsa and the surrounding watershed. As always, thank you a ton for your ongoing assistance and encouragement!!

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### ***FOLKS* "Ice Off" Contest**

The lake was completely ice free on **Friday, March 20**. Cathie heard from many of you who thought it opened on March 17 in honor of St. Patrick's Day. We even had a water skier on Colliday Point Bay on that day, but the ice hung on the southeast shore until the 20th.

The winner is the first person to guess the correct date as well as being the first person to send it to Cathie. She tracks the date and time she receives the guesses as we can only have one winner. This year's winner is Jeff Newquist who will receive a \$50 gift certificate from Springers as soon as it re-opens. We hope it's soon!

## ***FOLKS* "Ice Off" Contest, continued**

Over 100 members entered the contest, 73 on the first day! 36 guessed it would be open before March 20. The earliest date was March 7 and the latest guess was April 15. The most popular date was March 25 with 10 people picking this day.

We thank **Springers** for their continued donation of gift certificates.

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## **Beavers Taking Down Trees at Fish Camp County Park and along the Yahara River**

Beavers have been razing trees along the Yahara River and the northwest shore of Fish Camp County Park and Lake Kegonsa. Some ideas for saving trees from Darren Marsh, Director of Dane County Parks, included surrounding the base of the tree with chicken wire and using Milorganite around the tree. Evidently the beavers don't like the human scent in Milorganite.



Tree Damage from Beavers



Chicken Wire Wrapped Tree

**Photos by Connie Hagen**

## Lake Kegonsa Water Levels

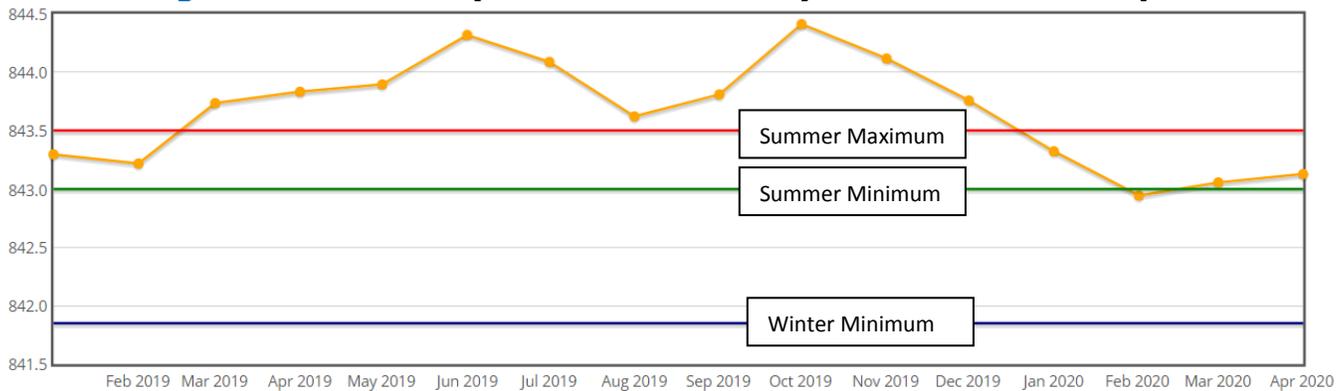
As of April 19, 2020 the Lake Kegonsa level is 843.15' (ft above sea level) which is near the summer minimum level of 843.0'. All four of the lakes are within their summer goals.

Per the Dane County website "Summer goals" (starting at the first run off event after March 1<sup>st</sup> and continuing through November 1<sup>st</sup>) are to maintain water levels between the summer minimum and summer maximum target levels." For Lake Kegonsa this range is between 843.0' (summer minimum) and 843.5' (summer maximum). This target range for summer is only **6 inches** (1/2 foot) and is very difficult to maintain, however the county has been trying to build capacity to accommodate the spring rains.

Lake	Date	Lake Level	Summer Min	Summer Max
Mendota	4/19/2020	849.61	849.60	850.10
Monona	4/19/2020	845.18	844.70	845.20
Waubesa	4/19/2020	844.79	844.50	845.00
Kegonsa	4/19/2020	843.15	843.00	843.50

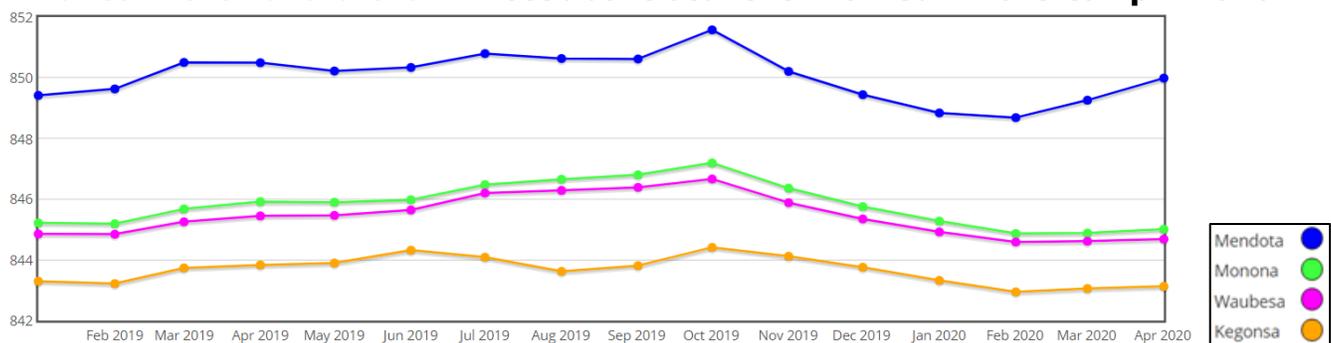
The graph below shows the 2019/2020 **Lake Kegonsa** levels per the Dane County Land & Water Resources Department website at (<https://lwr.d.countyofdane.com/chartlakelevels>).

**Lake Kegonsa water level (feet above sea level) from Jan. 2019 to April 2020:**



This graph shows the 2019/2020 **Lake Kegonsa** levels compared to the other lakes:

**Lakes in the Yahara Chain - feet above sea level from Jan. 2019 to April 2020:**



## ***FOLKS* Aquatic Debris Collection Program**

The first year of the aquatic debris collection program was a big success. This program was started by the ***FOLKS*** Board in May 2019 with the cooperation of Dane County Land and Water Management Resources Department. We had six pick-up weeks in 2019 from May through September. The cost of the program was funded by ***FOLKS*** from membership dues and contributions. Thanks to all of the lake residents who participated.

The ***FOLKS*** Board will continue the program in 2020 with six pick-up weeks during the season.

### **2020 Aquatic Debris Barge Pick-up Schedule**

June 15 through 19

July 13 through 17

July 27 through 31

August 10 through 14

August 24 through 28

September 21 through 24

The schedule and program may subject to changes that might be required by COVID-19 restrictions. The following is a summary of how the barge pick-up program works:

- The area the barge will cover includes all of Lake Kegonsa and the Yahara River north to the river bend at the west end of Orvold Park Drive. In other words, it will cover piers on the Yahara River for residences on Orvold Park Drive, Alsmo Lane, and Fish Camp Road.
- Please have all debris on your pier by 6 a.m. Monday of the scheduled pick-up week. The barge crew will start on Monday of the scheduled week and will make ONE complete pass around the lake and river (working through Friday if necessary). It may be a few days until the barge gets to your pier. Assure that the debris is placed in a location at the end of your pier so that the barge can safely and easily access it. If the water adjacent to your pier is too shallow to allow barge access from the water, the crew will not be able to pick up debris from your pier. Maybe you can use your neighbor's pier with their permission, of course. If you don't personally reside at your waterfront property, please inform those who live there of this program.
- A complete pass around the lake and river may require less than a full week. It is possible that urgent County work requirements may take priority over vegetation collection and would require diverting the crew during a given week.
- Material **ALLOWED** for collection - Aquatic vegetation (lake plants, vegetation, algae) and debris washed up on shore (trash, logs, sticks, dead fish, etc.). Only debris that comes from the waterway is allowed.
- Material **NOT ALLOWED** for collection - Yard waste or brush (grass clippings, leaves, tree limbs) and household waste (garbage, pet waste, etc.). In other words, the intention of this program is to remove only debris that comes from the lake.

This program improves the cleanliness of our lake, river, and shorelines. Residents are able to remove debris from the water that is ugly and annoying and that can cause boating hazards and problems as it floats downstream. This enhances the beauty and enjoyable use of our waterways. Thank you for utilizing the program again this year.

## **FOLKS Partners with the Kegonsa Sanitary District #2 in a New Run Off Reduction Project**

Town of Dunn, Kegonsa Sanitary District #2 asked **FOLKS** to assist them with a runoff reduction project near the office at 2240 US Hwy 51. A nearby drainage ditch runs straight into Lake Kegonsa. The district is hoping to plant native plants within this active ditch line to absorb rain water and slow the run-off. Native plants are expected to create a filter before the run-off water enters the lake. **FOLKS** formulated a project plan and will partner with the Kegonsa Sanitary District (KSD) to create native plantings in this runoff area.

Janice Kellogg and Connie Hagen from the **FOLKS** Board and Cindy Lehr from KSD will be heading up this project. KSD and **FOLKS** purchased 280 plants through the Dane Count "Plant Dane" native plant program which will be available May 30, 2020.

The Kegonsa Sanitary District #2 Native Plant Project is expected to be completed in phases over 3 – 4 years.

- We plan to begin the project near the culvert that drains into Lake Kegonsa and continue with phase 2, 3, 4, etc. until the entire drainage area up to Hwy 51 is planted with native plants.
- Plantings will be assessed each year before moving on with the project.
- **FOLKS** measured the ditch area and the cattail area in March 2020 to make a map of the area and provide information for planting plans
- **FOLKS** plans to provide the general planting plan for each projected phase of the project.
- **FOLKS** plans to assess the drainage line area by performing a general observation of the area and measuring the depth of standing water on a weekly basis, if possible
- There is a large stand of cattails in the drainage ditch near Hwy 51. Cattails are not native plants and currently seem to be slowing the drainage through the culverts. Volunteers will remove cattail heads in 2020 whenever they form. We plan to leave the cattail stalks for the first year and reevaluate for 2nd- 4th year. We'll discuss cattail removal with WDNR and plan to remove when appropriate.
- When cattails are removed, replace any rocks near the culverts and grade the area to have a continuous downward slope so it does not have standing water.
- We'll reevaluate the plantings on a regular basis and revise the plan based on this information.



## **FOLKS Partners with the Kegonsa Sanitary District #2, continued**

### **Phase 1 – Spring Planting, March to June 2020:**

We plan to start Phase 1 downstream near the rock pile and culvert where it drains directly into Lake Kegonsa.

- For Phase 1 we anticipate completing a section of native plants approximately 8' wide and 40' long near the lake culvert.
- The native plants should be planted about 1' apart so KSD and **FOLKS** purchase 280 native plants in March that will be available for planting May 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Native plants purchased for Phase 1 include forbs (Milkweed, Wild Bergamot, Mountain Mint, Blue Vervain), grasses (Virginia Wild Rye and Prairie Dropseed) and sedges (Bebb's Sedge, Bottlebrush Sedge and Brown Fox Sedge).
- Coco matting will be used over the grass to hold native plants in place and impede the underlying vegetation until the native plants are established.
- Plants will be picked up Saturday, May 30<sup>th</sup> and we'll plant as soon as we can.
- **We need Volunteers for Planting** – 10-12 Total: 7-8 **FOLKS**, 3-4 KSD
- KSD will provide occasional watering and weeding in the first year as needed
- Evaluate plantings early August 2020 – **FOLKS** and Sanitary District. Additional fall plantings if spring plantings are thriving

### **Phase 2 - Fall Planting, August to October 2020:**

**FOLKS** and KSD will evaluate Phase 1 plantings in early August 2020. If spring plantings are thriving, we'll proceed with Phase 2 - Fall plantings.

- For Phase 2 we want to complete a second section of native plants approximately 8' wide and 30' long moving from the lake toward Hwy 51.
- This 30' long section will require an additional 210 plants (1' apart)
- For the fall planting we'll request free plants from the Plant Dane native plant program
- We'll also receive additional free plants from **FOLKS** Plant Dane growers (Janice Kellogg and Connie Hagen).
- We'll plan to plant approximately August 15, 2020 and again we'll need 8 to 10 volunteers for planting (6-7 **FOLKS**, 2-3 KSD)

Thank you to Cindy Lehr, KSD, Darren Marsh, Director of Dane County Parks, Christal Campbell, Stormwater Education Coordinator- Dane County LWRD, Theresa Nelson, Dane County Stormwater Engineer and the **FOLKS** Board of Directors for their assistance and expertise in helping to formulate this plan.

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## **The 50th Anniversary of Earth Day is Wednesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>**

While our own **FOLKS** Rain Garden workshop had to be cancelled we thought we'd include part of an article from last year on what you can do to help. The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Earth Day is April 22<sup>nd</sup> so anything you do to help our lake and our earth is a positive event. Collectively, we make a huge impact!!!!

## What You Can Do to Help Our Lake (from our April 2019 Newsletter)

Storm water runoff from roofs, driveways and streets carries phosphorous and other nutrients into our lakes, rivers and other waterways. As we know, the excess nutrients can fuel algae blooms throughout the summer.

### Things You Can Do

1. Increase storm water infiltration and keep as much runoff out of the lake as possible
  - **Rain Gardens** – Even a small rain garden will hold an appreciable amount of water during a storm that will then be able to soak in gradually and not run directly to the waterways
  - **Rain Barrels** – Capturing storm water in a barrel and using it to water lawns and gardens is an effective way of reducing runoff
  - **Downspouts** - Directing downspouts to gardens and grassy areas instead of impervious surfaces like driveways, sidewalks and patios allows the storm water time to infiltrate
  - **Shoreline Buffer Gardens** – Planting native plants with deep roots along the shoreline keeps the water from running directly into the lake or river
  
2. Keep storm water that goes into the lake and waterways as clean as possible
  - Keep leaves, grass clippings, soil and other debris out of the storm sewers. Use the Towns' leaf collection and compost sites, mulch leaves onto your lawn or start your own compost pile.
  - Try not to use chemicals or fertilizers in your yard and gardens
  - Dispose of oil or other chemicals properly and don't let them drain into the storm sewers
  - Monitor construction sites near you and notify Dane County Water Resource Engineering if you think there's a problem.
  - Work with farmers and other individuals to identify properties for buffer strip plantings, retention ponds and other clean water techniques.
  
3. Actively support work on lake quality issues by Dane County and other organizations such as **FOLKS**, Clean Lakes Alliance, Dane County Land & Water Resources and Ripple-Effects.

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

on Facebook  at facebook.com/kegonsa/

or on 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  
Peter Foy at peterfoy49@gmail.com

Send news of interest to **FOLKS** to:  
P.O. Box 173  
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Published four times yearly by The Friends of  
Lake Kegonsa Society, Inc. (**FOLKS**)

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**FOLKS Lost and Found**

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

**FOLKS** board meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month and the public are welcome.  
Next Meeting is May 12, 2020, 5:30 - 7:00 PM via Zoom -  
Contact Kim VanBrocklin ([kegonsakim@gmail.com](mailto:kegonsakim@gmail.com)) to join.

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