

Friends of Lake Kegonsa Society, Inc. P.O. Box 173 Stoughton, WI 53589-0173 September 2021

#### President's Message ~ Peter Foy

It's apparent that we are moving away from summer and into fall when you look at the articles in our newsletter. You will see that we are reviewing the fall schedule for our leaf vacuuming program.

I hope that many of you were able to attend our **FOLKS** Family Festival that was held on Saturday, August 21. Our Festival Committee worked on the event for two years because of canceling last year due to Covid-19. The event was a major success and **FOLKS** received good press in both the Stoughton Courier Hub and the McFarland Thistle Newspapers. This was another example of our Board working together for hours and hours to pull off a major undertaking.

We recognize that many of you have been frustrated by the poor water conditions on parts of the lake at times throughout the summer. Usually, when we have low precipitation, which reduces runoff into the lake, we don't have excessive algae blooms. But algae has been an issue throughout the Yahara chain of lakes this year. We were talking about this at a recent Clean Lakes Alliance Board meeting and although no one seems to know exactly why this has been occurring the feeling is that the cause might be a combination of legacy sediment in the lakes and the high heat levels over the summer.

The **FOLKS** Board is working on developing some water testing initiatives that you will be hearing about over the next few months. We will be focusing on testing both run off areas and lake testing.

I hope you enjoy the beautiful fall weather coming up. It is a wonderful time to be in Wisconsin. As always feel free to contact me, or any other Board member, with questions or comments.

#### -Peter Foy

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## **FOLKS** Membership Hits Another High

Our membership hit an all-time high this year for the 5<sup>th</sup> year in a row. As members of the Friends of Lake Kegonsa we currently have **420 households** helping our lake and the sponsorship of **39 businesses**.

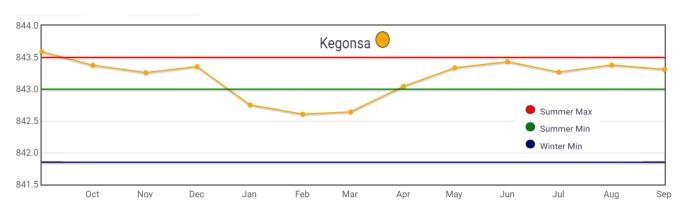
If you know of other friends and neighbors who might want to support our efforts on behalf of Lake Kegonsa and the surrounding watershed, please send them to our website <a href="www.kegonsa.org">www.kegonsa.org</a> for more information, membership forms and all our past newsletters or contact any board member.

## **Lake Kegonsa Water Levels**

#### **Lake Level:**

As of September 29, 2021, the Lake Kegonsa level is **843.32'** (ft above sea level) which is near the midpoint of the summer minimum/maximum target range. The lake level has remained within the prescribed target range from April through September this year.

The current Lake Kegonsa level is similar to the lake level last year at this time – it was 843.55' on October 1, 2020. LaFollette dam is now 20% open and Babcock dam is 100% open. The following chart is from September 29, 2020 through September 29, 2021.



Dane County Land & Water Resources Department website: lwrd.countyofdane.com/Lake-Levels

#### 2021 Curbside Leaf Collection Schedule

Be sure to notice the specific pickup dates for your area.

As summer draws to a close, the beautiful trees in your yard will soon be shedding their phosphorous laden leaves. So, it's time once again to inform you just how and what *FOLKS* plans to achieve.

The very popular Leaf Management Program initiated by **FOLKS** will run again this fall. The Town of Dunn and the Town of Pleasant Springs will both continue to vacuum leaves around Lake Kegonsa. This is an important initiative to help clean up our streets and lake. **FOLKS** is partnering with the Towns bordering the shores of Lake Kegonsa and the City of Stoughton to reduce the phosphorous entering our waterways from storm water flowing over the leaves. 93% of the respondents in our

**FOLKS** survey said they and/or their family deal with fall leaves themselves, while 25% use a lawn care service. 58% of the survey respondents used the leaf pickup service, so we are happy to be able to continue the program.

**FOLKS** has been involved with the Towns and the City of Stoughton to help with the coordination of this project. **FOLKS** is continuing to provide significant financial assistance to both Towns to make sure this leaf project can be conducted for the 5<sup>th</sup> straight year.

To enhance the effort to help our lake we encourage you to remove the leaves from the street near your house and include them with your other leaves. 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.

#### **2021 Leaf Pick up Schedules:**

It is challenging task is to determine when the leaves will fall and when the leaf vacuum truck should be on your street. **FOLKS** will send email announcements if we have new information and also to remind members of scheduled collection dates. Leaf vacuuming is always subject to weather conditions and availability of staff. For example, an early snow would cause the Town employees to focus on that, rather than the Leaf pickup.

Both towns will be sharing the City of Stoughton's equipment on weekends this year and will be collecting leaves starting on **Friday** of the weekend. **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.** 

Announcement signs will be placed every few blocks around the lake with the dates of the next collection clearly marked.



#### **Town of Dunn:**

The Town of Dunn has asked residents to sign up for email notifications about their leaf collection program. To subscribe visit www.town.dunn.wi.us and search 'Leaf Management'.

Town of Dunn will be vacuuming leaves on the weekends of:

- October 23 24 and
- November 13 14

Leaves can be dropped off at the main Town of Dunn transfer site. 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.

Town of Dunn centralized leaf collection drop-off sites are

- Amundson Boat Launch
- Colladay Point Park
- Fish Camp County Park

- Barber Drive by Quickstop
- Dunn Heritage Park
- Goodland County Park Parking Lot

#### **Town of Pleasant Springs:**

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

- November 5 -7 and
- November 19 21

**Compost Site:** Leaves can be dropped off at the Town of Pleasant Springs compost site behind the Town Hall at 2354 County Highway N. The compost site is **open daily** from 7am to 5pm.

#### **Important Procedures for Leaf Vacuuming:**

The leaf vacuum truck is specifically designed to pick up leaves but it **will not pick up sticks or brush**. This clogs the machine and takes staff a lot of time to clear the vacuum tube and could damage this very expensive machine. To make the vacuuming process as efficient as possible, please:

- Rake leaves away from the lake 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.
- Keep brush, rocks, animal waste, tall grasses, and other non-leaf material out of the leaves.
- Place leaves at least four feet from any mailbox or utility pole.
- Clear the leaves from the street in front of your home.
- Try not to park near any raked leaves.
- If you can, cover leaves if rain is forecasted and remove cover when clear.
- If you're hauling leaves a longer distance, try raking them onto a large tarp or sheet. Dragging the tarp makes transferring leaves to the roadside much easier.

#### **Other Ways You Can Help:**

- Talk with your neighbors about the leaf management project.
- Remind your lawn maintenance service not to blow leaves into the lake or the road.
- **Don't burn leaves**. Burning leaves concentrates the phosphorus that may end up in the lake and contributes to air pollution.
- Volunteer to help rake leaves for people who need assistance.
- Check your Town's website for compost site days and hours.
- Show your support by displaying a "We Are Helping Our Lake" sign in your yard. Ask your nearest board member we have a few left.



Properly managing leaves helps reduce the amount of phosphorous entering our waterways. Thanks for your efforts to help Lake Kegonsa!!

## **FOLKS** Family Festival

## **FOLKS** Celebrates our Membership and Showcases Fish Camp County Park Improvements

On Saturday, August 21, **FOLKS** hosted a festival at Dane County's Fish Camp Park to celebrate, educate and hold a fun event for members and families. The event, attended by about 200 people, highlighted significant improvements already made at the park and explained future plans.

As a grand finale, the Mad-City Ski Team performed a thrilling ski show on the lake. Guests enjoyed the ski show from the shore as well as from dozens of boats on the lake. *FOLKS* provided free snow cones, popcorn, and water to attendees. People who checked in at the registration desk were given a *FOLKS* tote bag filled with items donated by local businesses and community organizations. Several kid's games were popular stops where kids tested their skills and everyone left with a prize of their choice. Food trucks - Rise & Grind and The Jolly Frog – provided delicious beverages and food. Bruce Johnson entertained the crowd with his musical revue. The historic and newly renovated Net House was open for people to tour. Educational displays and talks explained the improvements that have been made at Fish Camp Park and the historic buildings. People were shown how run-off affects the lakes and learned about conservation methods, such as shoreline and rain gardens, that residents can plant to mitigate pollution in our lake and river.

#### **Education**







## **Games & Entertainment**















#### **Food & Conversation**







#### Fish Camp Park Improvements Recently Made

For a number of years, **FOLKS** has partnered with the Dane County Parks Department to provide volunteer support for Fish Camp Park. **FOLKS** volunteers planted and currently maintain a native plant shoreline garden to demonstrate effective rainwater run-off control methods. Volunteers have painted and fixed picnic tables. Several memorial benches have been installed. **FOLKS** and the County have also worked together on projects to restore and improve two historic buildings at the site – the Net House and the Corn House. Both buildings have been entirely re-roofed with new shingles; siding, which required customized carpentry to match the 84 year-old boards, was fabricated and replaced; and the buildings have been completely painted. As preparation for the August festival, old parking lot fencing was taken down and material stored both inside the Net House and in the parking lot was removed. The Net House and the parking lots were cleaned by **FOLKS** volunteers so they would look great for visitors during the festival. The other historic building, the Corn Building, is used by the Dane County Sheriff department to store the boat used for lake safety patrols and emergencies.





#### **Future Plans for Fish Camp Park**

The Yahara River Trail, a major multi-year Dane County project, is constructing a recreational trail for bicycling, walking, and jogging that will connect Madison, McFarland, and Stoughton. As Dane County completes the Lower Yahara Trail in the next couple of years, Fish Camp Park will serve as the trailhead for this portion of the trail. The trail will run through the park and along the eastern shoreline of Lake Kegonsa and through Lake Kegonsa State Park. During the event, Dane County officials Chris James, Senior Landscape Architect, and Alex DeSmidt, Parks Facility Planner, presented plans for the Yahara

River Trail and Fish Camp Park. John Reimer, Assistant Director for Dane County Land & Water Resources Department and other county staff were also in attendance.







The Lower Yahara River Trail phase 2 is currently in the final stages of planning and engineering with construction slated to begin in 2022. Phase 2 of the Lower Yahara Trail will build a boardwalk through the wetlands adjacent to Door Creek and a walking and bicycle bridge will be constructed across Door Creek. Both of these projects have been carefully designed and will be constructed to protect and preserve the ecology of that area. As the trailhead, Fish Camp Park will be enhanced with additional parking, bicycle racks and a stormwater rain garden and kiosk. Shoreline improvements at the park will add and improve accessible facilities so that fishing and boating opportunities can be enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities. This will include an accessible kayak launch, boarding piers, and fishing piers. During their presentation, County officials acknowledged and thanked several private individual donors and volunteer organizations, including *FOLKS*, for their support and contributions to these initiatives.

#### **History of Fish Camp Park and its Buildings**

You may ask "What is the history of Fish Camp Park and its historic buildings?" Fish Camp Park is named for a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources program that removed non-sport fish, especially carp, from the Yahara River and its associated chain of lakes and sold them in commercial fish markets. From 1934 to 1969, the Net House and the Corn House buildings were an important part of a work camp for that commercial fishing program. The Corn Building and the Net House were both built in 1937 by the WPA (Works Progress Administration, a depression-era federal work program). The Corn Building was used to store milk cans of corn used to feed carp while they were in a holding pond. The Net House was used for storage of nets and related equipment. The Net House also functioned as a workplace for "skilled net men" who repaired nets that were damaged as a result of seining for carp.

#### FOLKS - Looking to the Future

As the Lower Yahara River Trail proceeds, **FOLKS** and Dane County will continue to develop further plans to incorporate the historic buildings with the trail project. Peter Foy, President of the **FOLKS** Board of Directors, commented, "There is a lot to see and do at Fish Camp County Park and **FOLKS** recommends you stop by. You will be surprised how nice it is. We will protect and improve the natural beauty of the park for enjoyment by lake residents and the community. **FOLKS** will continue to volunteer and lead the way in these efforts."

#### **Photos of the Festival**

**FOLKS** thanks **Cindy Guiney** for volunteering her time and talent to take outstanding photographs at the August 21 Festival at Fish Camp Park. All of the photos in this article are Cindy's – We hope you enjoy them.





#### Thanks for a Great Job Well Done!!!

We would like to give a big THANK YOU to the following volunteers, organizations, and businesses who contributed to the success of the *FOLKS* Family Festival at Fish Camp Park on August 21, 2021.

#### Committee

Daniele Thompson, Chair	Janice Kellogg	Kim VanBrocklin
John Bottorff	Cathie Taylor	Connie Hagen

#### **Volunteers**

Volunteens		
Ann Benoit	Peter Foy	Paul Kristapoulu
Karen Bottorff	Mary Frahm	Tom McGinnis
George Corrigan	Dolores Gruca	Sarah Nelson
Tiffany Corrigan	Cindy Guiney	Bryon Thompson
Tim Custer	Pat Guiney	Hannah Thompson
Barb Dobbs	Grant Hone	Claudia Quam
Luke Fernholz	Sandy Hone	Greg Quam
Karen Foy	Max Kisting	3 0

#### **Organizations & Business Sponsors**

The Bryant Foundation	Rock River Coalition	Stoughton Trailers
Clean Lakes Alliance	Springers	The Dog Hut
Crown Point Resort	Stoughton Country Club	United Parcel Service (UPS)

#### **Special Thanks**

Dane County Parks Dept	Rise & Grind food truck
Dane County Land & Water Resources Dept	The Jolly Frog food truck
Mad City Ski Team	McFarland Thistle
Bruce Johnson	Stoughton Courier Hub

## **FOLKS** Wildlife Committee Update

The **FOLKS** Wildlife Committee would like to sincerely thank our membership! You are amazing and generous! Since May of 2021, you have collectively donated over one ton of: native plants, acorns/hickory nuts, downed branches and cut logs, Zebra Mussels, worms, and much more! Several dozen knitted bird nests have also been brought in to support our recuperating feathered friends. In January, they will be collecting Pine, Fir, and Spruce trees you wish to donate after Christmas. They provide a wealth of shelter and enrichment for the aviary patients.

Our partnership with the Dane County Humane Society Wildlife Center ensures that mammals, birds and reptiles from the Lake Kegonsa watershed are reported when injured or orphaned...and can be released back to their natural ecosystem when fully rehabilitated. If you discover an animal on your property that you are concerned about, go to www.giveshelter.org/wildlife-center (for injured or orphaned animals) or call 608-838-0413.



Bob Buser drills holes in logs to help rehabbing woodpeckers

Pictured above, **FOLKS** member Bob Buser drilled holes (1 inch deep, with a 1 inch drill bit) in 12 logs of two-foot length, for rehabilitating woodpeckers who needed to practice finding food again after their beaks were injured. The holes are filled with food or suet and placed in aviary pens. The logs are always welcome (with or without drilled holes).

Currently the Wildlife Center is in need of fresh berries! Elderberries, Raspberries or Blackberries from your property can be dropped off in small containers at the Dane County Wildlife Center at 5132 Voges Road, Madison WI. Even 1 cup of berries will help. Dane County Humane Society (DCHS) Wildlife Center has a list of natural items you can donate. Please tell them that you are from *FOLKS*.

## **Stoughton Whitewater Park & Dam Removal Update**

The City of Stoughton has been working on an initiative to create a Whitewater Park near the current dam at 4th Street in the City. This is part of a larger strategic river enhancement and development plan called the Yahara River Corridor Project. In 2018, Stoughton formed a committee called the Ad Hoc Whitewater Park Steering Committee to work on this project. This committee holds public meetings on the third Monday of each month. Representatives from the *FOLKS* Board of Directors regularly attend those meetings to gain information and monitor the project.

Part of the project involves partial removal of the 4th Street dam and construction of a Whitewater Park. This project would create a whitewater rapids area in the Yahara River to be used for kayaking, canoeing, and other water sports. Recreation Engineering and Planning, the engineering firm designing this project for the City, has successfully constructed a number of these whitewater parks in other locales. Stoughton has conducted studies projecting that people will use the Whitewater Park as a destination location which will, in turn, serve as an economic stimulus to Stoughton and the surrounding region. Advisors to the City have also explained that fish habitat, condition of the river, and safety will be improved by returning the river to its natural state. Stoughton has obtained approval from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to remove the dam. The dam, owned by Stoughton, was initially built years ago to generate electricity and no longer serves that purpose and it does not serve a flood control function.

At its August 2021 meeting, the Stoughton City Council approved the partial removal of the dam based on a recommendation from the Ad Hoc Whitewater Park Steering Committee. The recommendation was approved by the Stoughton Parks & Recreation Committee before submission to the City Council. Final engineering and bids for dam removal are scheduled for completion in 2021 and removal work would likely commence sometime in 2022. The City Council also approved moving forward with the design and engineering of the Whitewater Park. The design plans for the Whitewater Park are required to be submitted by Stoughton to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for review and approval, which would occur at a future time, before the project can proceed to the construction phase.

This will not impact the LaFollette Dam which controls water levels in Lake Kegonsa by controlling water flow into the Yahara River at the southeast end of the lake. LaFollette Dam is owned and operated by Dane County as part of the dam system regulating all of the Madison chain of lakes. DNR requirements mandate minimum and maximum water levels for Lake Kegonsa. The summer minimum is 843 feet and the summer maximum is 843.5 feet. The County tries to maintain the lake at the midlevel between that minimum and maximum. The winter minimum is 841.85 feet.

If you have questions, please contact **FOLKS** Board members John Bottorff or Daniele Thompson. For more information about the Stoughton Yahara River Corridor project, see the City of Stoughton website for the Ad Hoc Whitewater Park Steering Committee: stoughtoncitydocs.com/ad-hoc-whitewater-park-steering-committee

### Please Shop and Support FOLKS Fabulous Business Members

**Bunbury & Associates Realtors** 

City of Stoughton Clean Lakes Alliance Coldwell Banker Success

**Computer Management & Accounting** 

**Crown Point Resort** 

Eco-Resource Consulting, LLC Einstein Audio Systems, Inc. Finesse Public Relations, LLC Hammer It Construction Hanson Electronics US Cellular

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**Springers** 

Stoughton Conservation Club Stoughton Country Club Stoughton Trailers

**Sweeney's Aquatic Weed Removal LLC** 

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T.L. Home Finishing & Painting

Terry Kahl Plumbing Thane B Anderson, DDS

The Dog Hut LLC

The Edwin E. & Janet L. Bryant Foundation

The Shoe Box Town of Dunn

**Town of Pleasant Springs** 

T-Top Shop II, LLC Tully's II Food & Spirits UPS Store #3617

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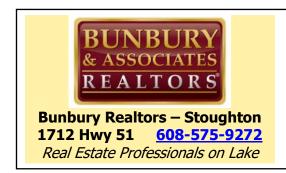
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## Please Shop and Support FOLKS Fabulous Business Members

















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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 Stoughton, WI 53589 or chagen001@gmail.com

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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.

#### **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 October 12, 2021, 5:30 - 7:00 PM, Stoughton Country Club Contact Peter Foy (peterfoy49@gmail.com) for more information

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