



Friends of Lake Kegonsa Society, Inc.  
 P.O. Box 173  
 Stoughton, WI 53589-0173  
**September 2022**

**President’s Message ~ Peter Foy**

As we head into fall your **FOLKS** Board’s attention starts to shift from projects like our lake quality monitoring and our barge debris pickup projects to our popular leaf vacuuming program. You will see detailed articles in the newsletter about most of our projects that will keep you up to date on our busy schedule.

There are a couple of articles about recent **FOLKS** education programs. On August 25<sup>th</sup>, we held a Native Plant Workshop with participation by experts from Dane County Land and Water Resources Department. It was well attended and we had great feedback from those present.

You will also enjoy a fun article about **FOLKS** Raptor Fest which was held at Fish Camp County Park on Sunday Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>. Our Wildlife committee did an outstanding job organizing and running the event. They had to stay nimble because many of the events that were originally scheduled to be outside had to be moved inside because, as you might remember, it poured all day that day. (By the time the weekend was over we had experienced about 5 inches of rain around Lake Kegonsa). Fortunately, we have access to the 1937 Net House at Fish Camp which provided a large, open area for the event. Once again, **FOLKS** was able to take advantage of the wonderful relationships we have with other organizations that showed up and helped to make this a success.

You will see articles that stress our increased emphasis on water testing. Rather than relying on casual observation of water conditions, these scientific measurements, particularly measured over time, will be invaluable. We are also monitoring runoff locations into the lake, but we don’t have test results back yet. We will be reporting on this project at a later date.

I want to thank all of you that took the time to respond to our Fall Survey. We always get a high percentage of replies and this provides your Board with valuable feedback from our members. In addition to the answers to the individual questions, we always receive many worthwhile comments. The results of the survey are in the newsletter.

After reviewing all of the information in this edition of our newsletter please contact me, or any of your Board members, if you have any questions, or suggestions.

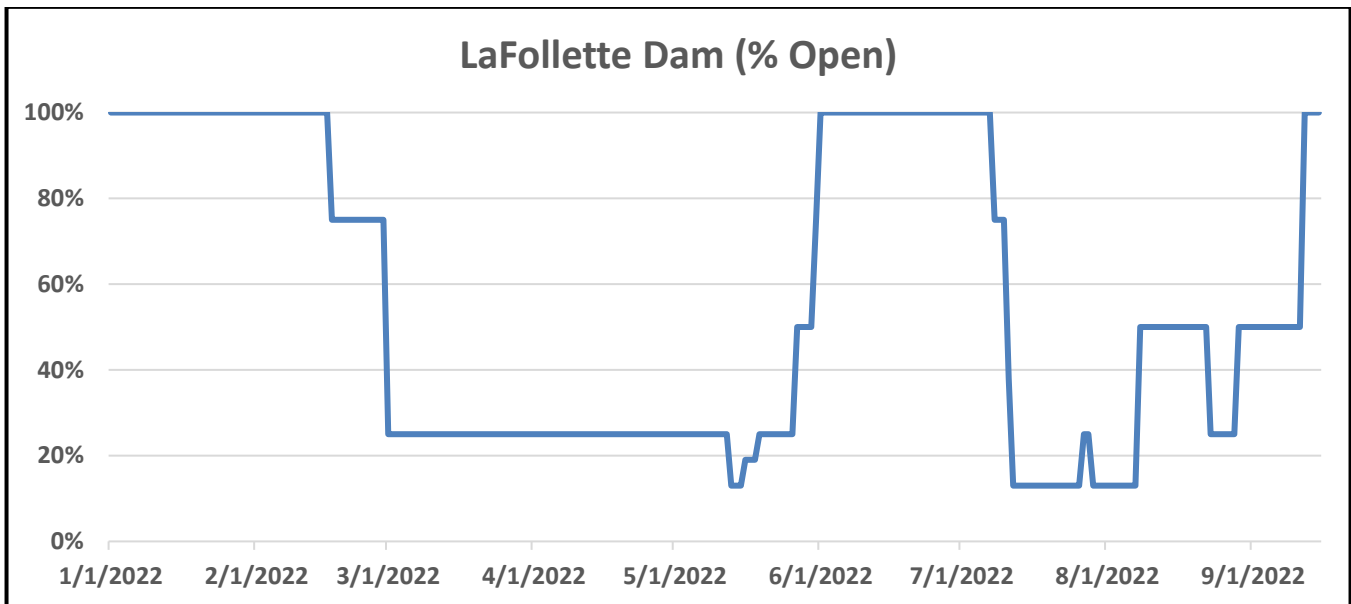
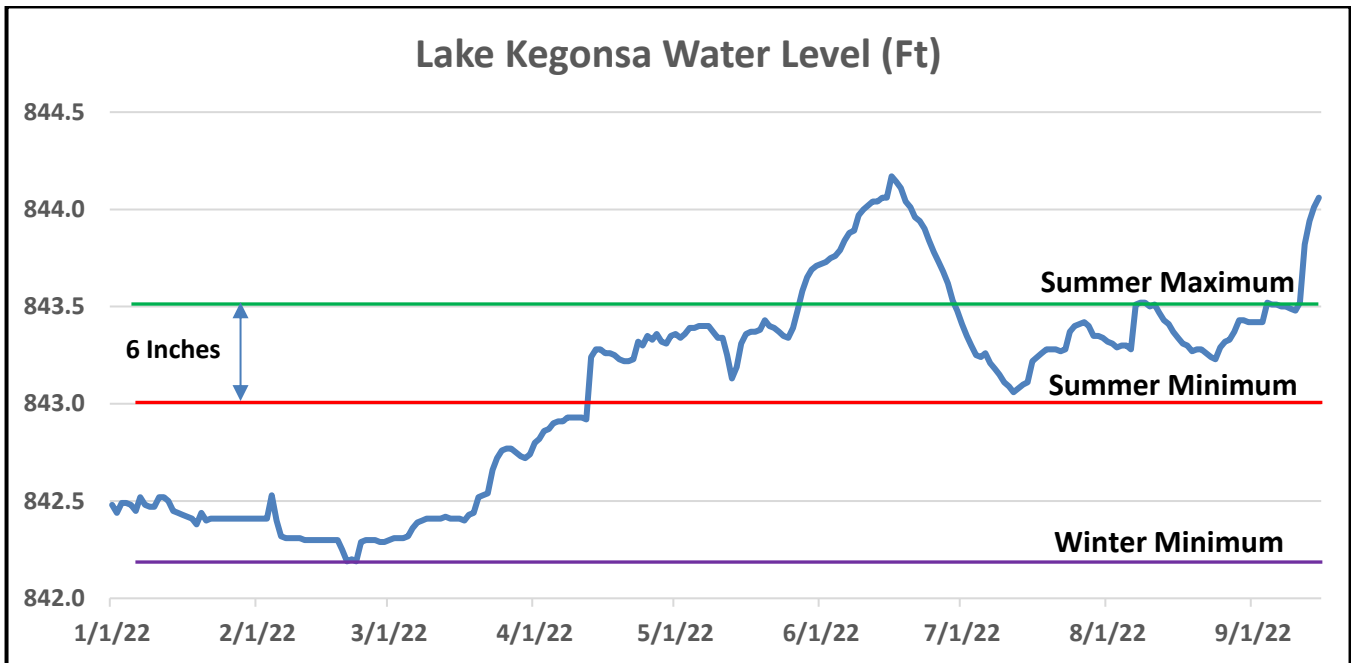
**-Peter Foy**

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## Lake Kegonsa Water Levels

Dane County tries to manage Lake Kegonsa within the target water level range of **843.0** to **843.5** ft above sea level throughout the summer. This very narrow 6-inch range is designed to protect fish spawning and prevent flooding as in 2008 and 2018. As you can see in the charts below, the county did a good job of managing the lake levels to achieve these goals. Although Lake Kegonsa was over summer maximum in June with historical spring rains and recently with the 5" rain event earlier this month, the county was able to avoid flooding with regulation of the Tenney, Babcock and LaFollette Dams.



With almost 5 inches of rain on Sept 11-12, lake levels took a large jump on all of the lakes. As of 9/17/2022, the Lake Kegonsa level was **844.08'** (ft above sea level).

Lake	9/17/2022 Lake Level (ft)	Summer Minimum (ft)	Summer Maximum (ft)	Inches > Summer Maximum
Mendota	850.76	849.6	850.1	7.92
Monona	846.08	844.7	845.2	10.56
Waubesa	845.81	844.5	845.0	9.72
<b>Kegonsa</b>	<b>844.08</b>	<b>843.0</b>	<b>843.5</b>	<b>6.96</b>

Lake level information is at the Dane County website - <https://lwr.d.countyofdane.com/Lake-Levels>.

## **FOLKS 2022 Members Survey**

Our **FOLKS** member survey was sent to one email per household on Sept. 9<sup>th</sup>. Your feedback helps the Board of Directors find new projects and direct funding. We had **186 households (46%)** respond which is a great response rate – **Thank you** all for taking the time to complete the survey.

This year we've asked a couple of questions by where you live, trying to identify the differences from one part of the lake to another.

- Northeast Shore (Sunnyside, Williams Point, nearby locations)
- Southeast Shore (Skyline, Shadyside, nearby locations)
- Southwest Shore (Aalseth, Brooklyn, Quam Pt, Quam Dr, Mallard, Barber Dr, Hwy 51, Colladay Pt)
- Northwest Shore (Co Hwy AB, Stoney Crest, Fish Camp Rd)
- Yahara River (Alsmo, Orvold Pk, Woodland, Edgewood, Nearby locations)

**Generally, our members thought the lake was pretty good this summer (>66%).** Although most members thought the weeds were quite plentiful, we had very few other complaints. Aquatic plants were considered abundant in all areas and 60% of our members thought there should have been more harvesting.

Our members seem to be behind **FOLKS** projects (especially the very popular leaf program and debris pick up project) and are taking a number of positive actions to help the lake. 50 – 80% of respondents in each area said Zebra Mussels were the same or more abundant than last year. 75% of those who fish said the fishing was about the same as last year but another 23% said the fishing was bad. The full survey results are below.

**Q# 1- FOLKS website: [www.Kegonsa.org](http://www.Kegonsa.org)**

- I use the website once in a while 52%
- I didn't know **FOLKS** had a website 15%
- I'm aware of the website, but have not used it 33%

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

- I used the leaf vacuuming service and I think it is worthwhile 70%
- I didn't use it, but I think it is a worthwhile program 27%
- I probably won't use the service and prefer other **FOLKS** projects 3%

**Q #3- Aquatic plant growth. We would like to know how it has been near your property. Please choose the answer for where you live and how much growth.**

<b>Aquatic plants</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Limited</b>	<b>Abundant</b>
• Northeast Shore	2%	12%	86%
• Southeast Shore	2%	44%	54%
• Southwest Shore	0%	24%	76%
• Northwest Shore	0%	22%	78%
• Yahara River	0%	14%	86%

**Q #4- Dane County Aquatic plant harvesting.**

- We felt there was enough harvesting this summer 39%
- We thought there should have been more harvesting 61%

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

- I used the debris pick up service and believe this project is worthwhile 52%
- I didn't use the service, but believe this project is worthwhile 42%
- I probably won't use this service and prefer other *FOLKS* projects 6%

**Q #6- Zebra Mussels. We would like to know how it has been near your property. Please choose the answer for where you live and the abundance of zebra mussels.**

	<b>We didn't notice any</b>	<b>Same as last year</b>	<b>Many more than last year%</b>
• Northeast Shore	31%	49%	20%
• Southeast Shore	21%	57%	23%
• Southwest Shore	20%	66%	14%
• Northwest Shore	22%	59%	19%
• Yahara River	50%	50%	0%

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

- We don't fish, so we don't have an opinion 62% of members
- Fishing was better than ever this year 5% of fishermen
- Fishing was about the same as last year 74% of fishermen
- Fishing was as bad as we can remember 21% of fishermen

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

- Very good this summer 5%
- The lake was in pretty good shape much of the summer 61%
- The lake was in bad shape much of the summer, which limited our use 15%
- This was as bad a year as I can remember 4%

**Q #9- Your interest in the following *FOLKS* projects and events. Please check all that you think it would be worthwhile for *FOLKS* to pursue.**

- *FOLKS* members social get-togethers 57%
- Identify and try to improve water run-off areas 76%
- Expand water sampling on Lake Kegonsa, Door Creek and the near Yahara River 60%
- Educational seminars (i.e. speakers from Dane County, DNR, etc., Native Plant Workshop, Raptor Fest, etc.) 46%
- Rain garden and shoreline buffer garden projects 40%
- Rain barrel education and distribution 32%
- Projects for wildlife around Lake Kegonsa (i.e. owl boxes, raptor nest platforms, etc.) 50%
- Identify ways to increase walleye and other fish in Lake Kegonsa and improve fishing (i.e. fish stocking, fish cribs, etc.) 62%

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

- Dane County phosphorus sediment removal (Suck the Muck) in Door Creek 89%
- Dane County dredging the Yahara River below the LaFollette dam to reduce flood risk 89%
- Dane County Humane Society Wildlife Center (i.e. donations and contributions of tree branches, foliage, seeds, etc.) 38%
- WDNR walleye study 37%
- Clean Lakes Alliance projects for area watersheds/lakes 79%
- Rock River Coalition projects for Door Creek watershed 33%
- Conservation Club projects (i.e. fish stocking, carp bow fishing tournament) 51%
- Univ of WI studies: PFAS levels in foam, microcystin (cyanobacteria toxin) levels 62%

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

- Removed leaves from my property to keep them and the high phosphorus leaf run-off out of the lake 87%
- Removed leaves from the street to keep them out of lake run off areas 48%
- Collected cut plants from the lake (for barge pick up, to compost, to dry and take to the Town sites) 52%
- Directed run off away from the lake through a shoreline garden, rain garden, redirecting a downspout to lawn or a downspout garden or installed a rain barrel 35%
- Volunteered for lake projects 11%
- Reduced fertilizer use 45%
- Reduced salt use in the winter 51%
- Home composting 16%
- Picked up litter & pet waste 55%
- Other: Mulched leaves in place on lawn, added native plants on steep hillside, wrote government agencies, installed drains and catch basins 3%

**Q#12 - Residency**

- Year-round resident 72%
- Only part time 28%

**Q#13 - Age Bracket**

- 35, or under 1%
- 36-50 6%
- 51-71 57%
- Over 71 36%

**Q#14- How many years have you had your place on the lake or river?**

- 0-5 years 12%
- 6-10 years 15%
- 11-20 years 19%
- 21-30 years 21%
- 31 years, or more 33%

**Other comments, suggestions and project ideas.**

We had a number of people say they'd like to volunteer for projects and a few ideas for the board to discuss. Once again, **Thank you** for contributing your thoughts and making **FOLKS** stronger and better.

## **FOLKS Native Plant Workshop – August 25<sup>th</sup>**

**FOLKS** sponsored an educational “Native Plant Workshop” for members on August 25<sup>th</sup> at Fish Camp County Park. We had very informative speakers and a large group of participants.

Two of our board members (Janice Kellogg and Connie Hagen) are volunteer growers for the Plant Dane program. The **FOLKS** workshop came together quickly because the Plant Dane program had a number of extra plants (of 6,000 + grown this year) after filling their requested projects that the county was able to offer to our participants.

Our speakers were: **Susan Sandford**, Dane County Land & Water Resources, Strategic Engagement Coordinator (sandford.susan@countyofdane.com) and **Christal Campbell**, Dane County Land & Water Resources, Stormwater Education Coordinator, (campbell.christal@countyofdane.com).

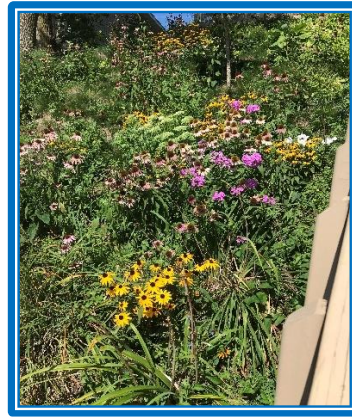
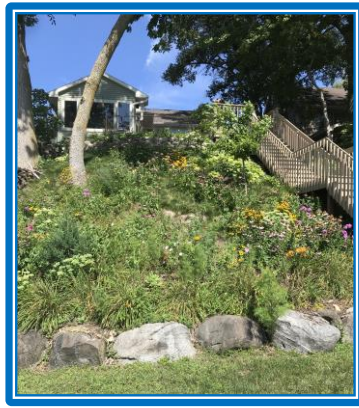
Our very informal general agenda was as follows:

1. **Introductions and Welcome** – Janice Kellogg & Connie Hagen, **FOLKS**
2. **Information and benefits of Native Plants** – Susan Sandford, gave us tons of information on why Native Plants are so great for our waters.
3. **Rainfall Simulator** – Christal Campbell, showed the amazing differences in run-off from regular pavement, permeable pavements, poor lawns, composted deep lawns, and deep-rooted native plants. We also discussed how to improve your lawns.
4. **Kinds of gardens to help protect our lake** – Susan & Christal
  - Shoreline gardens – along the water to slow run-off into the lake,
  - Rain gardens – to keep water on the landscape long enough to soak in,
  - Downspout gardens – to redirect rain water to a smaller area with long-rooted native plants,
  - Adding a few native plants to your current gardens – even a few native plants is a great start to help rain soak in and keep the run-off out of the waters.
5. **Tour of FOLKS Native Plant Shoreline Garden** – Janice & Connie, discussing species and identifying plants. Tons of plants were blooming on that day!
6. **Planning a Garden** – Tips on preparing your site and planning your garden.
7. **Native Plant and Seed Sources** – Susan & Christal
  - The Plant Dane program sells native plants in the spring at a very low cost (\$2.50@)
  - A number of nurseries in WI sell native plants and seeds at a reasonable cost.
  - Plants and seeds from other native plant gardeners.
  - You must have permission from the landowner to harvest seeds.

8. **Milk Jug Greenhouses:** Easy method for growing native plants from seeds – Susan

Susan briefly went over the method for overwintering seeds and growing plants for Plant Dane. Over 6,000 plants were grown for school and community projects in 2022. A FOLKS workshop is planned for fall to go over this method in more depth (See below).

9. **Share your expertise** – Participants shared their experiences with gardens, shoreline slopes, successes and future plans. One of our board members (Kim Walz) shared her experience planting a steep hill on her Sunnyside property from the house down to the lake.



**Kim and Tom Walz's hillside gardens**

10. **Free native plants** from Plant Dane - Each participants received a big packet of information and the following native plants: 4-5 Cardinal Flower, 1 Butterfly Weed, 3 Marsh Milkweed, 3 Blazing Star, and 1 Fox Sedge.

**Cardinal Flower**  
(*lobelia cardinalis*)



**Butterfly Weed**  
(*asclepias tuberosa*)



**Rose (Marsh) Milkweed**  
(*asclepias incarnata*)



**Meadow Blazing Star**  
(*liatris ligulistylus*)



**Fox Sedge**  
(*carex vulpinoidea*)



11. **Additional Q&A** with Dane County personnel

We had very positive feedback from our participants and plan to have more workshops to help our members use long rooted native plants in their landscapes to reduce run-off.



## Save the Date – Nov 3<sup>rd</sup>: Winter Native Plant Seed Sowing

Join us for a short (one hour) workshop on winter sowing to provide more in-depth information on using milk jug greenhouses to grow plants from seeds. Susan Sandford has agreed to spend her morning with us to go through the steps of the Plant Dane growers' method for overwintering seeds for native plants.

**FOLKS** will provide a few species of native seeds and potting mix for the activity.

Agenda for the workshop:

- Introductions
- Quick recap on the background on native plants
- Winter sowing – why we do this overwintering greenhouse process; show the steps
- Activity – everyone preps and plants a milk jug or two
- Spring and transplanting – caring for the jugs over the winter, what to do when the seeds start coming up in the spring and how to transplant
- Q & A with Susan Sandford

Please join us if you can.

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## **FOLKS Kids Raptor Fest - September 11<sup>th</sup>**

**FOLKS** sponsored an educational "Kids Raptor Fest" at Fish Camp County Park on Grandparents' Day, September 11<sup>th</sup>. Even with the rainy day, many of our members brought their families to the park for this exciting, informative day of learning about big birds. The canoe/kayak trip was cancelled and the fest moved indoors due to the weather but was successful in every way.

### **Educational talks -**

- DNR raptor specialist, **Rich Staffens**, talked about Osprey habitats and behavior. The Osprey population in Wisconsin grew to 535 nesting pairs in 2019. About 80% of the pairs build nests on manmade structures such as energy poles and cell phone towers.
- Bird expert, **Patrick Ready**, talked about kestrels, owls, osprey and rehabbed birds



**Rich Staffens**



**Patrick Ready**



**Kid's fest** was held from 9am to Noon. Children were allowed to touch talons, skins, skulls, feathers and other bird parts at the **interactive touching tables**. One of the most popular stops was trying on the **crane outfit** from the International Crane Foundation. They wear the white suits to feed and raise baby Whooping Cranes, getting them ready for release in the wild.



**Games** were fun – Kids won prizes for guessing the weight of birds, matching the x-ray with the animal, a scavenger hunt, opening Osprey eggs from a huge nest and choosing their favorite bird.



**Owl tattoos** and **crafts** were also popular. Children made Snowy Owls from pinecones and cotton and Bird Watching Binoculars from cardboard paper rolls, stickers and colors. Everyone took home paper and instructions to make Origami Cranes.



A new **"What's Your Wingspan"** sign was featured to check how you measure up to the big birds. This traveling sign will be used at other events to showcase the birds that live on Lake Kegonsa's shores. A permanent sign will be installed at Fish Camp Park in the future to let park visitors check their wingspan.

Two new **Osprey platforms** which will be installed around Lake Kegonsa were also on display.



**An Eagle, an Osprey and a Red Tail Hawk.**

**Information and educational booths** helped families learn about raptors and the big birds around Lake Kegonsa.

- The International Crane Foundation
- Wild Birds Unlimited
- Aldo Leopold Nature Center
- Dane Co Humane Society Wildlife Center
- E.D Locke Library with birding/nature books for all ages

The **Cool Mode Ice Cream Truck** made a sweet ending to a great day.

**Thanks** to the Wildlife Committee, Kim Van Brocklin, Cathie Taylor, Pat Guiney and George Corrigan, for organizing this fun day in the park for all of us and to all our great table sponsors and volunteers for their hard work. The Wisconsin State Journal had a nice article about the Raptor Fest by Pamela Cotant, "Kids Raptor Fest teaches students of all ages to care for land, water and wildlife".





## Alliant Energy Foundation Grant for Wildlife Projects

**FOLKS** recently received a grant from the **Alliant Energy Foundation** to cover the costs of designing and building a permanent “**What is My Wingspan**” structure to be placed at Fish Camp County Park. The temporary movable “What is My Wingspan” sign debuted at the **FOLKS** Raptor Fest at Fish Camp. The signs were designed for **FOLKS** by Sign Art of Mt. Horeb, WI.

This grant with additional funding from **Isthmus Engineering** also covers the material to build two big bird nest platforms on the top of poles near the lake and the labor cost to build and install the platforms. Each platform is 4x4 foot, and weighs 140 lbs. It was produced with high grade steel that would hold a nest weighing over 200 pounds with a width of 5 to 7 feet.



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## 2022 Leaf Collection Schedule

### Notice specific pickup dates for your town

**FOLKS** has arranged for leaf pick up around Lake Kegonsa to continue this fall for the 6<sup>th</sup> year in cooperation with the **City of Stoughton**, the **Town of Pleasant Springs** and **the Town of Dunn**.

As water flows over leaves, phosphorus is leached out of the leaves and into the storm water. Runoff from storm drains and through leaves from steep yards flow directly into the lake. Also, please remove the leaves from the street near your house if you can and include them with your other leaves.

It's difficult to guess when the leaves will fall but we have a tentative schedule for the dates when the leaf vacuum truck will be on your street. Both towns share the City of Stoughton's equipment 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.**

## Town of Pleasant Springs:

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

- **November 5-6** and
- **November 19-20**

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

## Town of Dunn:

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

- **November 12-13** and
- **November 26-27**

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

Normal operating hours:

- 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 has centralized leaf collection drop-off sites near Lake Kegonsa at Amundson Boat Launch, Colladay Point Park and Fish Camp County Park.

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**FOLKS** will send email announcements to remind members of scheduled collection dates and if we have new information about the schedule. You can also sign up for email notifications about leaf collection at [www.town.dunn.wi.us](http://www.town.dunn.wi.us) (search 'Leaf Management').

## Procedures:

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

## For efficient vacuuming:

- 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.
- 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.
- Try not to park near any raked leaves.
- Keep rocks, animal waste, tall grasses, brush and other non-leaf material out of the leaves.

## Other Ways You Can Help:

- Remind your lawn maintenance service not to blow leaves into the lake or the road.
- Don't burn leaves which 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.
- Talk with your neighbors about the leaf management project.

**Thank you** very much for your efforts in properly managing leaves to reduce the phosphorus entering our waterways.

## Yahara River Dredging and Sediment Removal Project Update

As we reported in our last newsletter, the Yahara River dredging and sediment removal project by the Dane County Land and Water Resources Department is moving forward. Dredging in the river immediately north and south of Lake Kegonsa are Phase 2B (below LaFollette Dam) and Phase 3 (between Mud Lake and Lake Kegonsa) of the overall project.

The dredging project was initiated by Dane County in May 2020 in response to the extensive flooding that occurred along the Yahara River in August 2018. That flood caused extensive damage and affected properties along the entire Yahara River and the Yahara Lakes area including Lake Kegonsa. The goal of the sediment removal project is to improve water flow, increase flood storage capacity, and improve fish and wildlife habitat in the Yahara Lakes. When completed, sediment removal will improve water flow so that the delivery of two inches of rain that currently takes about two weeks to travel through the Yahara Lakes system will take half as long – one week. This is a multimillion dollar and multiyear project comprised of five phases currently projected to extend into 2024 or 2025.

The construction work being done on Williams Drive started in May of this year is now complete. The dewatering pond site is located one mile south of LaFollette Dam, fills most of 15 acres and is being leased by the County for three years. Dredging work in the river is expected to start in the Spring of 2023 after fish spawning has ended and will extend about 3.2 miles from LaFollette Dam to the County Road B bridge.

The sediment and water will be pumped through pipes for as far as two miles from the dredge in the river to the dewatering pond. In the dewatering pond, water filters out and sediment is contained. It is expected that **about 100,300 cubic yards** (which is the equivalent of over 7,700 dump truck loads) will be removed from the river below LaFollette Dam in Phase 2B.

**Phase 3:** Dredging from Mud Lake to Lake Kegonsa north of the lake (Phase 3) is currently in the engineering, planning, and specification phase. Permit submittal is anticipated to be complete in winter of 2022-2023. Phase 3 construction work is expected to begin in summer 2023 and extend into 2024.

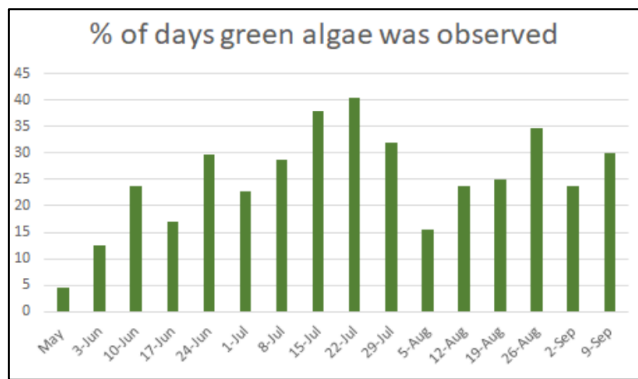
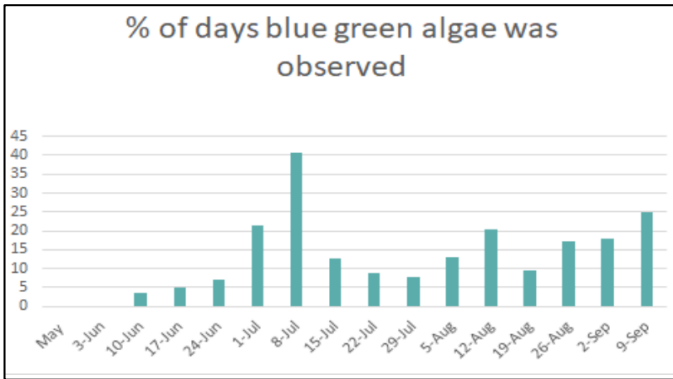
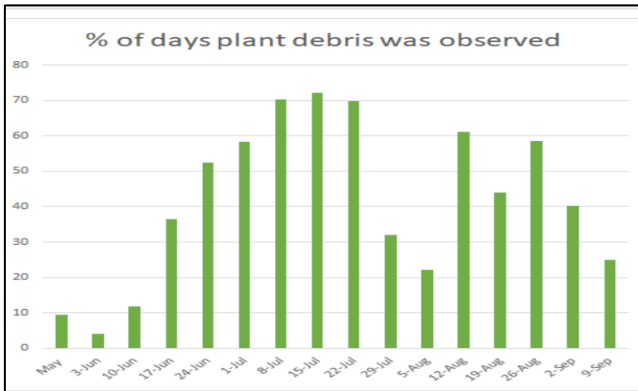
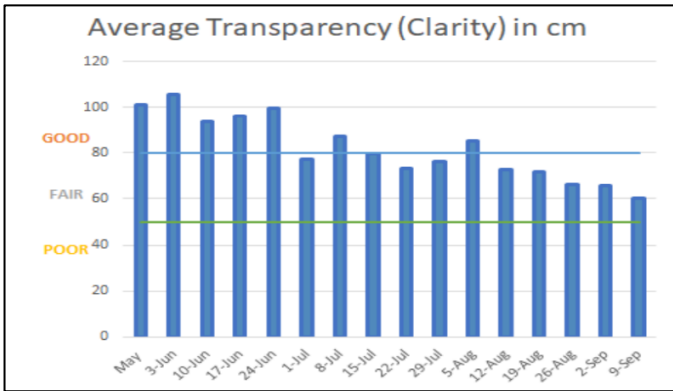
The Dane County website has further information on the Yahara River dredging and sediment removal project. <https://lwr.dane.gov/LwrProjects/Detail/1/1>

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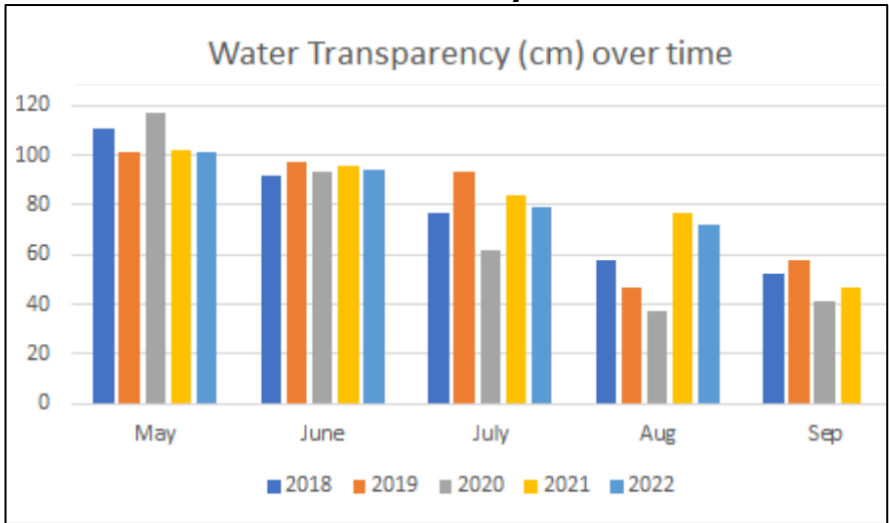
## End of Pier Water Monitoring

**FOLKS** expanded the Clean Lakes Alliance 'End of Pier' Water Quality Monitoring to 16 locations for 2022. Our volunteers collect data from the end of their pier or other sites two or more times each week. Water clarity, air temperature and water temperature readings, as well as general observations about wave intensity, presence of waterfowl, presence of green/blue-green algae, amount of floating plant debris, number of people in the water, and water clarity are recorded by each volunteer. Our Kegonsa volunteers will continue to gather observations through the end of September.

All data is included in the CLA lakeforecast.org database for summary and analysis at the end of the year. A summary of Lake Kegonsa data is reported on the **FOLKS** website, [www.kegonsa.org](http://www.kegonsa.org), each Friday, including updated graphs of clarity/transparency, presence of plant debris, blue-green algae, and green algae. Data averaged per site, then per site average is averaged across all sites. Our board member, George Corrigan, updates the data each week.



**Lake Kegonsa 5 Year Historical Water Clarity Data for End of Pier Observations**



Readings at the deepest part of Lake Kegonsa and data from the Door Creek watershed (especially Door Creek locations that run into Lake Kegonsa) are also included at the **FOLKS** website: [kegonasa.org](http://kegonasa.org). In addition, **FOLKS** continues to monitor runoff locations into the lake after heavy rain events. We will report on the runoff data when we have results from the testing.

**Thank you** to our 'End of Pier' volunteers for their dedication in helping expand data collection on Lake Kegonsa.



## Microcystin Testing on Lake Kegonsa

Two of our **FOLKS** Water Monitoring committee and Board members (George Corrigan and Connie Hagen) have joined a UW study evaluating microcystin levels in lake waters headed by Professor Paul Block, and Ph.D. Student Max Beal, Civil & Environmental Engineering, Water Systems & Society Lab at UW- Madison. The study is operated in conjunction with the Water Quality Monitoring Program run by the Clean Lakes Alliance.

Microcystins are a type of toxin sometimes produced by certain species of cyanobacteria (blue-green algae). Rapid growth of cyanobacteria can form cyanobacteria blooms, which may be visible on the lake surface. While the visible evidence of a cyanobacteria bloom doesn't mean that microcystins have been produced, visible blooms indicate large numbers of cyanobacteria which may increase the potential for toxin production.

The microcystin results in the UW study are reported in part per billion (ppb) and are correlated for each lake with the presence/absence of visible algae, if there is some evidence of algae or strong evidence, and identification of the type of algae (cyanobacteria (blue-green), green or both). The study is designed to monitor microcystins in Madison lakes and investigate the relationship between cyanobacteria toxin levels and visible algal blooms to potentially improve lake management and safety.

The EPA currently recommends "people should stay away from water where concentrations of microcystins exceed 8 micrograms per liter."

According to the EPA, it is unsafe for people to swim in water with levels at 8ppb or more (the limit for pets is 2ppb) (1 micrograms per liter ( $\mu\text{g/L}$ ) = 1 ppb). Our involvement in the microcystin level study may lead to possible increased microcystin testing (both frequency and locations) and sending out alerts to our members when the level is above 8ppb.

Following is an excerpt from the **US EPA** website:

### **"What are algal toxins?"**

Algal toxins are toxic substances released by some types of algae when they are present in large quantities (blooms) and decay or degrade. High nutrient levels and warm temperatures often result in favorable conditions for algae blooms to form. These blooms can be identified as floating mats of decaying, bad-smelling and gelatinous scum. One type of algae, cyanobacteria (also referred to as blue-green algae), naturally occurs in all freshwater ecosystems. When algae blooms form and cyanobacteria degrade, many release algal toxins that can be harmful to aquatic and human life.

### **Why is it important to evaluate algal toxins?"**

Although there are relatively few documented cases of severe human health effects, exposure to cyanobacteria or their toxins may produce allergic reactions such as skin rashes, eye irritations, respiratory symptoms and in some cases gastroenteritis, liver and kidney failure or death. The most likely pathway to exposure for humans is through accidental ingestion or inhalation during recreational activities in lakes, rivers and bays. While many varieties of cyanotoxins exist, the one believed to be the most widespread of these toxins is microcystin. Microcystin is a potent liver toxin and possible human carcinogen. Cyanotoxins can also kill livestock and pets that drink affected waters. Fish and bird mortalities have also been reported in water bodies with persistent cyanobacteria blooms.

## What can algal toxins tell us about the condition of water?

There is much still to be learned about algal toxins in lakes, rivers and bays. Their presence tells us that a waterbody is most likely stressed by high levels of nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus, that risks to the recreational uses of the waterbody and to human and animal health are possible and that related problems, such as low dissolved oxygen due to the decomposition of algal blooms, are likely to also occur.”

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## Be a Better Neighbor

We have about 550 properties on Lake Kegonsa and a number of the lots are quite small with 50 feet of lake frontage. We have another 50 or more properties along the Yahara River and many, many nearby. **FOLKS** has received a number of suggestions on how to be a **better neighbor** from our members:

- **Light Pollution**
    - **Flag lights** – It’s beautiful and patriotic to see flags around the lake during the day but at night the lights can be bothersome to neighbors. It would be better if you could take your flag down at night instead of illuminating it.
    - **Pier & Yard lights** – Think about your neighbors when adding a ton of solar lights on your pier or in your yard. It might be best to have lights on timers so that they are not shining throughout the night when others are sleeping.
    - **Carp Fishing boat lights** – The high intensity lights on the carp boats are very intimidating when they shine lights so close to shore that people think the lights are shining into their houses. If you or someone you know fishes for carp with light boats, please aim the lights away from shore and try to move a bit further away from shore.
    - **Snowmobile headlights** - It’s the same problem with lights from the lake aiming in your living room. It’s unusual to have headlights on the lake but in the winter, night time driving of snowmobiles can be a problem.
  - **Pick up** after your dog – There are a number of ordinances about picking up after your dog but it’s only polite to not let your dogs relieve themselves in someone else’s yard. If they do, you must pick up after them and should apologize to the homeowners. Some pet urine kills grass which can be very problematic if it’s not your yard.
  - **Ski further from shore** to reduce backwash on the shoreline and protect bathers in the water. We have a calm, quiet lake and it shouldn’t be a hardship to ski closer to the middle of the lake.
  - **Lawn Service** - Make sure your lawn service doesn’t blow leaves or clippings into the lake.
  - **Hello waves** across the lawn 😊 – As many as you can.
-

## Buy a Low-Cost Rain Barrel and Receive a \$30 Rebate

Dane County is selling 50-gallon rain barrels for \$74 (typically retails for ~\$150). This program is open to all Dane County residents and businesses. **Since our initial email, rain barrels are currently out of stock but a new shipment is expected soon.** **FOLKS** will send another email notice when they are received. The Dane County Ripple Effects order link (<https://ripple-effects.com/Rain-Barrels>) has a notification list which is now working.

Your **FOLKS** board has voted to offer our members a **\$30 rebate** on the purchase of a rain barrel in 2022. This is similar to the rebate you'll see on the order website but unfortunately, the Town of Pleasant Springs and the Town of Dunn are not currently among the participating municipalities in the reimbursement program so **FOLKS** will offer the rebate.

The **FOLKS** rebate is limited to one per household. This would mean our members could get a 50 - gallon rain barrel for \$44 (\$74 - \$30 **FOLKS** rebate) through the Dane County Ripple Effects program.

There is only one more shipment in September for this year and quantities are limited so sign up now. If you purchase a rain barrel, please let us know so we can report how many were added around Lake Kegonsa. To apply for your rebate, reply to this email or send a note with the following information to **FOLKS**, PO Box 173, Stoughton, WI 53589:

I would like to apply for my \$30 rain barrel rebate (one per household):

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Date Rain Barrel purchased \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / 2022 \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you** for doing your part to slow run-off into Lake Kegonsa.

## Please Shop and Support *FOLKS* Fabulous Business Members

Bunbury & Associates Realtors  
City of Stoughton  
Clark Heating & Cooling  
Clean Lakes Alliance  
Coldwell Banker Success  
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Crown Point Resort  
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Michael Engelberger, Dane Co. Sup. Dist. 35  
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The Shoe Box  
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UPS Store #3617  
Yahara Lakes Association, Ltd.

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(608) 873-8464  
stoughtontrailers.com (608) 873-2600  
aquaticweedremovers@gmail.com  
(608) 873-9266  
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305 Industrial Circle, Stoughton WI 53589  
drthaneanderson@tds.net  
doghutcare.com (608) 838-2470  
3039 Shadyside Dr., Stoughton WI 53589  
1605 Monroe St., Madison, WI 53711  
1314 Canal St., Black Earth, WI 53515  
4156 County Hwy B, McFarland WI 53558  
2354 County Rd N, Stoughton WI 53589  
ttopshop@frontier.com (815) 335-7058  
6401 Monona Drive, Monona WI 53716  
2364 Jackson St, Stoughton, WI 53589  
info@yaharalakes.org





Please Shop and Support **FOLKS Fabulous Business Members**



**Steve Schmitt**  
(Owner)

**We Love Lake Kegonsa and You!!**



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**Stephen J. Hjort**  
Senior Biologist/Principal

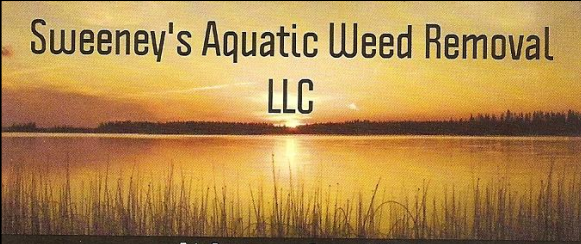
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(815)262-0818 (Cell)

**ttopshop@frontier.com**

**Sweeney's Aquatic Weed Removal LLC**



**Eric Sweeney • Founder & CEO**  
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aquaticweedremovers@gmail.com | www.aquaticweedremovers.com

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2022**

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Visit our website at [www.Kegonsa.org](http://www.Kegonsa.org) and

on Facebook  at [facebook.com/kegonsa/](https://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](mailto:chagen001@gmail.com)  
or Peter Foy at [peterfoy49@gmail.com](mailto:peterfoy49@gmail.com)

Send news of interest to **FOLKS** to:  
P.O. Box 173  
Stoughton, WI 53589 or  
[chagen001@gmail.com](mailto:chagen001@gmail.com)

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**FOLKS Lost and Found**

List lost and found items on the **FOLKS**  
Facebook page or contact Eric Olson at  
[eolson.folks@gmail.com](mailto: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 11, 2022, 6:00 – 7:30 PM, Stoughton Country Club



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