



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

President’s Message ~ Peter Foy

Our **FOLKS** organization enjoyed another successful year in 2021. Although the lake wasn’t in as good a shape as we would have liked for part of the year, we are pleased to report that all the projects that we have control over were successful.

- Our leaf vacuuming program and our barge pickup program were heavily used by our members.
- We have been working with the County for a few years to renovate the 1937 net and corn buildings at Fish Camp County Park. To celebrate the completion of the exterior renovation, make people more familiar with the park and educate people about lake issues, we held a **FOLKS** Family Festival that included a lot of kid’s activities and a water ski show put on by the Mad City Ski Team. We estimated that approximately 200 people watched the show.
- We initiated a Wildlife Committee in 2021 that many of our members got involved in by providing material that could be used to help our wildlife around Lake Kegonsa.
- We are in strong financial shape thanks to our generous members and support from the **Edwin E. and Janet L. Bryant Foundation**.

President’s Message, Continued on page 2

In This Issue:	
President’s Message – Peter Foy	1
Thank You to Tom McGinnis	2
Help Wildlife at the Holidays	3
<i>FOLKS</i> Membership - Time to Renew	3
Lake Kegonsa Water Levels	3
Ice On Contest	4
Eagles and Other Incredible Birds on Lake Kegonsa	4
<i>FOLKS</i> Board Hosts DNR and Dane County Scientists	5
<i>FOLKS</i> Fall 2021 Survey Results	11
Leaf Collection Program	12
Aquatic Debris Collection Update	13
The Fish Whisperer	13
<i>FOLKS</i> Business Members	15
<i>FOLKS</i> Officers and Board Members 2022	17

President's Message, Continued

- We are in the financial position, and have the Board interest, to not only continue our current programs, but to add two new initiatives.
 - We have a new committee that is looking at all the water monitoring that is being done in the lake and what **FOLKS** might do to supplement the testing.
 - Another new committee is testing the water that is entering the lake from various runoff areas. Once we have a better understanding of what is entering the lake we can decide if further mitigation steps might be taken.
- We are fortunate to have wonderful working relationships with the County and the WDNR. You will find the article about their presentation at our last Board meeting of particular interest. There is a lot of information and it is all worthwhile.
- I want to thank our Board for all their hard work and dedication to **FOLKS** in 2021.
- My six-year term on the Clean Lakes Alliance Community Board is over and I am happy to report that our Vice President Janice Kellogg was recently elected to the CLA Community Board. We are excited that **FOLKS** will continue to have a representative on this important lake organization. Congratulations Janice.

As always feel free to contact me, or any of our Board members if you have any questions, or comments.

-Peter Foy



Tom McGinnis is retiring from the **FOLKS** board after 19 years of impressive service. He has been an indispensable part of the **FOLKS** organization for many years and a great friend to the lake.

Tom also worked on a number of other local lake related projects such as the Yahara Lakes Advisory Group 2 (YLAG2) and we'll continue to call on him for his expertise. Without volunteer board members like **Tom**, **FOLKS** wouldn't be the strong organization it is.

He and his wife Mary will continue to live on the lake and enjoy their family and the beautiful sunsets. If you see **Tom**, please tell him **Thank You, Thank You, Thank You** and please join us in wishing Tom & Mary the best on their continuing adventure.

Help Wildlife at the Holidays

Toss the tinsel and donate your live Christmas trees to the **Dane County Wildlife Center!** The **FOLKS** membership gave "**one ton in '21!**" Our Wildlife Committee partners with the Wildlife Center to help injured and orphaned animals from the Lake Kegonsa watershed to receive rehabilitation and then be released back to us!

You may donate your live tree through **the end of January**. Your donation provides recuperating birds and critters with perches, shelter, wind barriers and warmth.

Take trees to: Dane County Humane Society: **5132 Voges Rd., Madison WI**

- Remove all ornaments, hooks, wires, and tinsel.
- Wreaths and boughs are not accepted, due to wires/frames.
- You may leave the tree near the green Wildlife building.
- Please tell them you are from **FOLKS**, or leave a note on your donated tree.



FOLKS Membership – Time to Renew

It's time to renew your annual membership to **FOLKS**. Our donation request of \$20 per household has remained the same for almost 20 years. If you'd like us to mail you a hard copy of the newsletter we ask that you contribute an additional \$10 for printing and mailing (\$30 per household total). Business membership remains at \$30.

In 2021, we had **426 members** which was another record year for **FOLKS**. We had incredible support from our membership - **46%** of our members gave us an additional donation above the basic membership. We can't thank you enough for being members of **FOLKS** and supporting projects to improve Lake Kegonsa and the surrounding area.

You'll receive your renewal letter in the mail soon. Please check that we have your email and mailing information correct and return as soon as you can. As you know we never share this information with any other organizations. If you have questions on membership you may contact any board member.

Lake Kegonsa Water Levels

Lake levels are expected to continue to lower during winter (ice) conditions. As of January 6, 2022 the Lake Kegonsa level is **842.45'** (ft above sea level). For Lake Kegonsa the winter goal is to keep the level between 843.0' (summer min) and 841.85' (winter min) to build capacity for spring rains. Tenney Dam (Mendota) is 8% open while Babcock Dam (Waubesa) and LaFollette Dam (Kegonsa) remain 100% open.

Lake	1/6/2022 Lake Level (ft)	Winter Minimum (ft)	Summer Minimum (ft)	Summer Maximum (ft)
Mendota	848.43	848.2	849.6	850.1
Monona	844.16	842.2	844.7	845.2
Waubesa	844.02	842.0	844.5	845.0
Kegonsa	842.45	841.85	843.0	843.5

"Ice On" Contest

Who would have thought we would have to wait for **New Year's Day** for the lake to completely freeze over? The "**Mistress of Springers**" did! **Laura Rowley** is our winner! She is the only person who guessed January 1. But just as she is a gracious hostess at Springers, she has donated her winnings, a \$50.00 gift certificate to Springers, to **Mark Femal**, who guessed January 2. (No one guessed 12/31.) Congratulations to Laura on the right guess and Mark on being a close second!

We had 115 folks enter the contest. Many of the guesses came in within 5 minutes of the email being sent out! The most popular date was December 22 with 16 guesses. The earliest guess was November 27. 13 of you guessed that the lake would not freeze over until January with the latest guess being January 20!

Thanks to all who participated. It is always fun to see how quickly the guesses come in as well as your comments on when and why the lake should freeze on the date you chose!

Our thanks to **Springers** for their continued support of the "Ice On" and "Ice Off" contests.

Eagles and Other Incredible Birds on Lake Kegonsa

The eagles on Lake Kegonsa enjoyed the late freeze and continued to fish on the edges putting on quite a show.



Eagle Photos from Deb Weis



Eagle Photos from Cindy Guiney

And as always, we enjoyed beautiful migrating birds all over Lake Kegonsa.



Migrating bird photos from Cindy Guiney

Thank you again to two of our **FOLKS** members, Deb Weis and Cindy Guiney, for the spectacular bird picture that make us all smile on these cold, cold winter days.

***FOLKS* Board Hosts Dane County and DNR Scientists**

The **FOLKS** Board of Directors held their final meeting of 2021 on Tuesday December 14th at the Stoughton Country Club. Invited to this meeting were three local scientists/engineers from Dane County and the Wisconsin DNR to make short presentations and address issues and questions raised by the **FOLKS** Board. Thank you to Pat Guiney for putting together this extensive summary of the presentations by the following three scientists.

Pete Jopke- Dane County Land & Water Resources Department, Water Resources Planner
jopke@countyofdane.com; 608/228-4202.

Pete is a long-time collaborator and partner with **FOLKS**. He gave a highly informative presentation on the current conditions in Lake Kegonsa focusing most of his comments on the benefits of indigenous

aquatic plants and Dane County's aquatic plant management program. Pete has over 30 years of experience working in lake and stream ecology and has spent many years working for the Wisconsin DNR in their aquatic invasive species programs and fisheries biology. He presented results of the 2021 plant sonar survey and GPS assisted maps of aquatic plant cutting efforts on Lake Kegonsa.

Pete first reviewed the numerous benefits of aquatic plant growth in a lake like Kegonsa. These include habitat and food source support for invertebrates, fish reptiles, amphibians, birds, and mammals. The right amount of natural aquatic plants in a lake ecosystem tend to increase water quality, protect shorelines, and increase aesthetics. Dane County had a diligent plant management program in place for Lake Kegonsa as well as the rest of the Yahara Chain of lakes in 2021. Their efforts were aimed at improving flood mitigation, recreational value, and navigational access. Their mantra for these efforts continued to be "Keep water moving through the system."

In 2021, Dane County employed 5 full time employees (FTEs), 24 limited term (summer) employees (LTEs), used twelve weed harvesters, and three barges. Their plan for 2022 is to increase their effort even more with the acquisition of a brand-new harvester, one new FTE and \$50,000 for support for an additional LTE. The barge pick-up program in 2021 was highly successful. The barge operated in Mendota, Monona, Westport, Waubesa, and Kegonsa. The addition of the new harvester in 2022 is anticipated to increase the efficiency of weed harvesting even more. In 2020, the weed harvesters spent 303.8 hours on Lake Kegonsa. In 2021, the harvesters spent 178.8 hours on Lake Kegonsa, but Pete indicated that they were much more efficient in 2021. Plant densities were much higher in 2021 and harvesters typically operated in tandem with a lead harvester doing most of the cutting and a second harvester following directly behind it focusing on collecting the cut weeds. Pete reported that the harvesters did not spend much time cutting weeds in the river in 2021 although some celery grass (*Vallisneria*) was cut near Fish Camp. Pete showed and discussed the 2021 plant sonar survey and GPS assisted plant maps for Lake Kegonsa. He pointed out that there was no harvesting of any plants in areas where the water level was less than 3 feet. This was done by design to avoid disturbance of the lake bottom sediments and fouling of the weed cutting blades. Unfortunately, these areas often include spaces between piers and docks as well as known lake obstructions, hazard areas and sensitive ecological areas like just downstream from Fish Camp Park. In 2021, GPS units were added to all cutting machines which facilitated cutting on consecutive days because the operators always knew exactly where they stopped cutting the day before.

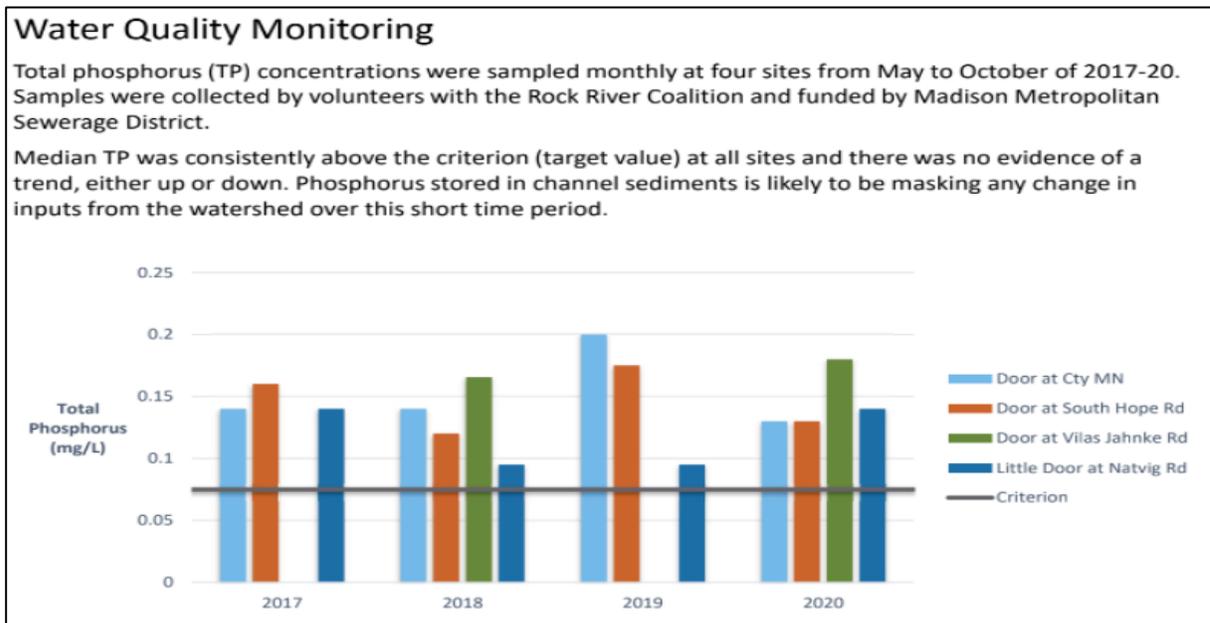
A review of the Lake Kegonsa aquatic plant "heat map" over the past 5 years clearly illustrated an increase in plant growth from 2017-2021. In an effort to help alleviate this increased plant growth Dane County increased its aquatic plant barge collection program. In 2020, Dane County spent 11 days and 86 hours on Lake Kegonsa collecting thirty-five barge loads of aquatic plant debris. This compared in 2021 to 27 days, 176 hours, and 148 barge loads of aquatic plant debris. Obviously, this **FOLKS** supported program was used by many residents around Lake Kegonsa in 2021.

Key take aways from Pete Jopke's presentation included:

- There were 124.2 hours less harvester use on Lake Kegonsa in 2021 compared to 2020 (i.e., 60% less time) however, the hours spent were more efficient in 2021.
- There were 131 more barge loads of aquatic plant debris collected in 2021 compared to 2020.
- **FOLKS** recent carp removal program likely contributed to increased water clarity.
- Low precipitation in 2021 resulted in fewer run-off events.
- There has been an increase in the amount of indigenous (natural) plant species like *Vallisneria* (water celery) and *Cerstophyllum* (coontail) which appeared to be flourishing in Lake Kegonsa. This was also in part probably due to the removal of carp from the lake that **FOLKS** has been supporting the past three years.

After his formal presentation, Pete Jopke answered a number of questions from the **FOLKS** Board of Directors.

1. **What have been the trends for phosphorus levels in Lake Kegonsa lately?** Water quality monitoring data from the **Rock River Coalition** funded by the **Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District** show no evidence of a trend for either increasing or decreasing phosphorus in four key monitoring sites related to the Yahara chain of lakes as reported in the SWIMS data base. This is the total phosphorus graph from four monitoring sites on Door Creek from 2017 – 2020 that Pete Jopke mentioned in his presentation. Door Creek flows directly into Lake Kegonsa.



2. **There were a lot of questions related to weed cutters/harvesters and the apparent poor efficiency at which they are able to pick up cut weeds.** Pete explained that their operators are now routinely running harvesters in tandem with a cutter going first followed by a primary collector barge. They feel that this approach allows them to collect 80% of the cut weeds. Some aquatic plants like celery grass end up getting “chop cut” and this makes it hard to collect because the paddle cutter wheels sometimes pull the celery grass out by the roots (especially if in shallower water) and then they are much harder to collect. Pete indicated that the County would continue to work on increasing the efficiency of cut plant collection from the harvesters.
3. **What is happening in Lake Kegonsa regarding zebra mussels?** Zebra mussels are a very efficient invasive mussel species. They are filter feeders that successfully out compete other natural microscopic, small aquatic invertebrates, and fish in freshwater lakes. They were originally found in Lake Erie in the 1980’s (contaminated from ballast water released from large sea-faring ships) but have now found their way into the Yahara chain of lakes. Dane County reported an increase in the numbers of zebra mussels found in Lake Kegonsa in 2021. Zebra mussels do not have any natural predators in the United States however it appears that several common freshwater organisms, such as diving ducks, crayfish, eels, common carp, pumpkinseed, and freshwater drum, have been found to adapt and can consume *zebra mussels*. He explained the difference between zebra mussels which are “restricted” in Wisconsin

and Quagga mussels which are present in Lake Michigan and the Mississippi River and considered "prohibited."

4. ***How is Dane County trying to combat the introduction of invasive species entering Lake Kegonsa and the rest of the Yahara chain of lakes?*** Dane County plans to dedicate one hundred staff hours in 2022, to monitor boater traffic at Fish Camp Park including interviewing boaters and educating them about invasive species and how to prevent them from entering our lake.

Dan L Oele- Fisheries Biologist, DNR Fitchburg Service Center, Daniel.Oele@wisconsin.gov; (608) 275-3225.

Dan Oele provided an update on commercial fishing for carp on Lake Kegonsa. He indicated that the effort that **FOLKS** has supported to remove carp has been successful but, the DNR does not know exactly how successful it has been because they really do not have a good estimate of the total carp population in Lake Kegonsa. The DNR is currently not going to issue any further commercial fishing licenses to remove additional carp from the lake until an accurate population estimate can be made. This will be a requirement to obtain a commercial fishing license on any lake in Wisconsin from now on. Estimating the carp population in Lake Kegonsa would be accomplished by using what fishery biologists call the "Mark and Recapture Method." The Mark-Recapture technique is used to estimate the size of a population where it is impractical to count every individual. The basic idea is that you capture a small number of individual carp, put a harmless mark on them, and release them back into the population. This often occurs in the spring. A second sample (typically in October or November) is then recaptured and the total number of fish in the sample, and the number within the sample who are marked, are recorded. The number of carp that you initially caught is then multiplied by the number of carp in the second sample that you caught divided by the number of marked organisms recaptured. This method has been used successfully by fishery biologists for many years. Research has shown that negatively impacting a carp population requires quick and physical removal. The previous carp removals conducted by WDNR and others partner organizations and municipalities at Wingra and Cherokee Lake removed approximately 20% to 50% of total population to achieve a clear water phase with abundant plants and healthy gamefish community keeping the carp numbers such that plants and clear water dominate.

A metric commonly used in carp removal and shallow lake management is the <100lbs per acre threshold. That means for Lake Kegonsa, 3200 acres x 100lbs of carp per acre = 320,000 pounds maximum adult carp biomass. Adult carp are typically in the 5lb range (although some get much larger). **FOLKS** for example has been using an estimate of 8 lbs. per fish based on a sample of 20 carp taken when we initially started the carp removal project. 320,000 lbs. divided by 5 lb. per fish = target carp population of about 64,000 as a rough estimate goal to get to in future removals (the WDNR would collect new data on the adult carp weights to confirm the values, but just as an example). The plant and fish community along with water quality response would provide an insight of how close we are to reducing carp numbers to achieve clearer water conditions.

Dan indicated that removing carp is just one crucial factor in a variety of complex water quality issues facing Lake Kegonsa but, tackling it head on as **FOLKS** has done is a critical first step. The DNR has been working with universities and studying the efforts of other groups like "Carp Solutions" to learn more about how to develop better ways to remove large numbers of adult carp. When it comes to carp, Dan suggested that you need to think about the other end as well. Fertilized carp eggs drift far and wide as they develop. If biologists can learn what water conditions are best for carp egg and larval development, they can attack those places and kill carp before they mature. There is also research

being done to plant triploidy males to control carp populations since they cannot successfully reproduce.

For now, the next steps would be to accurately estimate the current carp population left in Lake Kegonsa. The DNR currently does not have the equipment or staff to complete this task, so they are looking to contract out this effort. The **FOLKS** Board offered our help to the DNR to accomplish the carp population estimates. As a final note, Dan mentioned that the DNR plans to repeat the Lake Kegonsa total fish population survey most likely again in 2023. Results from this survey can then be compared with the previous comprehensive Fishery Survey of Lake Kegonsa in 2016 to better determine the positive impacts that **FOLKS** projects have had on all species of fish in the lake.

John Reimer- Dane County Land & Water Resources Department, Assistant Director,
Reimer.John@countyofdane.com ; 608/224-3612.

John Reimer's technical background focuses on modeling and analysis of watersheds, rivers, and lakes. He is responsible for lake level management including aquatic plant harvesting and operation of the three dams in the Yahara Chain of Lakes. John presented a nice update on Dane County's dredging efforts in the Yahara chain. **Additional information on dredging can be found at:**
<https://lwrp.dane.gov/LwrpProjects/Detail/1/1>

John reminded us that currently, water is still coming into the Yahara Lakes faster than it goes out. Consequently, after cyclical and heavy rainfall events, the lake levels increase and can lead to flooding. The efficient movement of water through each lake is undermined by sediment build-up in the Yahara River. Dane County has a goal **to improve water flow** so that the delivery of two inches of rain that normally now takes two weeks to travel through the Yahara Lakes system will take half as long, or one week. John briefly reviewed the five phases of Dane County's dredging program. Phase 1 was located between Lakes Monona and Waubesa. Hydraulic dredging removed approximately 35,000 cubic yards of sediment. This phase has been completed. Phase 2 is on-going and targets the area located between Lake Waubesa to Lower Mud Lake and Lake Kegonsa to Highway B. The work between Lake Waubesa and Lower Mud Lake started in this past summer (i.e., 2021). The plan is to remove approximately 52,000 cubic yards of sediment. The work between Lake Kegonsa and Highway B is expected to start in spring of 2022 with an additional 65,000 cubic yards of sediment to be removed. Prior to initiating each phase of dredging, Dane County must obtain sediment core samples, which are sent to the laboratory for testing, which eventually leads to a permit of application and if successful the issuing of a permit to proceed.

In March of 2021, Dane County purchased the \$650,000 Ellicott Dredge Series 370 model workers call the Dragon Dredge to assist them in achieving their five phase, multiyear and multimillion dollar effort to decrease the risk of flooding along the Yahara chain of lakes. The sediment that very slowly gets sucked up in the Dragon Dredge gets pumped through about a mile of pipe into a large dewatering basin. The manmade pond was built off of Highway 51 across from the Babcock Park boat launch.



Picture taken from article by [Abigail Becker | The Capital Times Sep 1, 2021](#)

The sludge that is pumped into the mile long pipe can take over 45 minutes to reach the dewatering basin so when the Dragon Dredge is finished sucking up sediment, the hydraulic pump itself must remain on to keep pumping the sludge already in the pipe down to the dewatering basin or it would harden within the pipe overnight and create a major problem the next day.

John also briefly responded to questions related to the difference between Dane County's dredging operation and their "Suck the Muck" project. The five-phase dredging program is strictly to increase water flow through the Yahara Lakes system. The "Suck the Muck" project is an additional \$12 million project overseen by the Wisconsin Land and Water Resources Department. This project is aimed at dredging about thirty-three miles of streams that feed into the county's lakes. It is expected to remove about 875,000 pounds of legacy phosphorus from sediments. A 2-mile stretch of Dorn Creek between county highways Q and M was the first waterway dredged during the summer of 2018. There were a number of questions from the **FOLKS** Board regarding when Door Creek would be dredged to remove phosphorus. Dane County used the Soil and Water Assessment Tool (SWAT) to determine which watersheds were contributing excessive amounts of phosphorus to the Yahara River Watershed. The SWAT analysis identified Door Creek as early as 2016, as one of the sub-watersheds with the highest agricultural phosphorus contributions to the Yahara River Watershed. John told the **FOLKS** Board that "Suck the Muck" efforts on Door Creek were now planned to begin in 2023-2024. One of the reasons for this delay is to allow Dane County to work with the DNR to create a meandering stream of Door Creek rather than the straight shot rapid water drainage system it is now. This approach worked well for Dorn Creek. Door Creek has been straightened and ditched to facilitate drainage and provide more agricultural land. Dane County wishes to alter Door Creek and create a series of bends. There are a variety of diverse habitats that are created by meandering streams including aquatic communities, such as insects, mussels, fish, and plants. Natural mussels and many aquatic insects can more easily filter the water while plants growing on the riverbanks prevent erosion and improve water quality by taking up phosphorus, nitrogen, and other nutrients. Once Door Creek becomes more of a meandering stream, sucking the phosphorus laden muck will have a much greater positive impact on Lake Kegonsa water quality.

The **FOLKS** Board of Directors would like to thank all of these professionals for spending their evening time to update us on the status of projects and work with us to find solutions to ongoing problems with phosphorus levels, aquatic plant growth, cut plant collection and invasive species in Lake Kegonsa.

FOLKS 2021 Fall Survey Results

The **FOLKS** board decided to send a very short survey this fall so people could respond to conditions soon after they occurred. The fall 2021 survey was sent to one email address from each household or business. About **47%** of our **FOLKS** members (**203**) responded to the survey. Thank you for your feedback, comments and ideas. These survey results and comments help us in our communication with county officials and other agencies when discussing projects and the needs of our members.

2021 Fall Survey Details - You will see a quick summary of results under each question.

Q#1. How did you think the condition of the lake was this summer?

Response: 44% said the lake was in pretty good or very good shape.

56% said the lake was bad or the worst year ever.

103 comments, mostly complaints about algae and plants.

Q#2. How was the plant growth this year?

Response: 33% said plant growth was limited or about the same.

67% said it was more than last year or the worst year ever.

43 comments, mostly about the huge amount of plants, algae and muck.

Q#3. Although FOLKS can't control the water level, we would like to know how you felt it was this summer. Due to a dry year, we asked about water levels. We should note that the water level on Lake Kegonsa was within the prescribed target range the entire summer.

Response:

58% said water level was perfect or pretty good all summer.

42% would have liked it a little higher.

Of 29 comments half were complaints about low levels.

Q#4. Zebra mussels on your property

Response: 32% said they didn't notice any zebra mussels. 13% said they noticed them for the first time or didn't have as many as last year, 22% said about as many as last year and 32% said they were much worse.

29 comments describing the concentration of mussels on individual properties.

Q#5. If you fish in Lake Kegonsa, how was the fishing this summer

Response: The majority of our members (66%) don't fish.

39% of those who fished said fishing was fine or great.

61% of those who said they fished said fishing didn't seem as good or was the worst year ever. There were 23 comments including a couple of comments about not eating fish from this lake due to the PFAS problem.

Q#6. Aquatic Debris Removal Program

Response: 44% said they used the aquatic debris pickup.

89% said this project is worthwhile whether they used it or not and another 9% said it was worthwhile if spending was limited (which it is) for a positive total of 97%.

32 comments on the program including a number of comments about how many weeds and how much work.

Q#7. FOLKS works closely with the county on aquatic plant harvesting on the lake

Response: 79% thought there could have been more or considerably more plant harvesting. 21% thought there was enough. 43 comments on plant harvesting, almost all of which were complaints.

Q#8. FOLKS Family Festival at Fish Camp County Park (check all that apply)

Response: This was a confusing question - We were really asking two questions - did you go to the Fish Camp event? and is this kind of program worthwhile?

- Attend: Overall 18% said they attended, 63% said they were aware but couldn't come.
- Worthwhile: Anyone who attended said it was worthwhile. 31% said these educational/social events were worthwhile and 5% said they were worthwhile if funding is limited.

We had 15 comments, generally positive.

Q#9. Do you have any additional comments?

Response: We received 78 additional comments.

- 17 general comments with a few requests for information such as shoreline plants, river dredging project and effects on Lake Kegonsa, information on how to improve water quality and a few ideas such as solar floating devices to inhibit algae, a boat parade, installing more fish cribs.
- 18 other general comments, mostly complaints about the state of the lake
- 43 Thank You's to the board.

We appreciate those who took the time to complete the survey and send feedback. Thank you for trying to make **FOLKS** and Lake Kegonsa better.

Leaf Collection Program

Although our beautiful trees hung onto their leaves later than usual this year, our members made a great effort to shred, compost, take their leaves to the town collection or compost sites or prepare their leaves for curbside collection. **FOLKS** once again facilitated the vacuum truck collection efforts between the City of Stoughton and the Towns of Dunn and Pleasant Springs. We helped the Town of Dunn extend the service for an additional pick-up.

Vacuuming leaves around Lake Kegonsa has become an important effort to reduce the phosphorus entering our waterways from storm water flowing over the leaves. 58% of **FOLKS** survey respondents used the leaf pickup service. Your board of directors had a volunteer day of leaf raking at sensitive areas where there are no homeowners so those leaves could also be collected. Areas such as wetlands near the lake and spots accumulating leaves near culverts and drains were included.

This is a brief history of the program from 2019 - 2021:

Year	No. of Loads	Weight Shredded Leaves (Lbs)	Phosphorus Diverted (Lbs)
2021	34*	325,000	129
2020	50	481,250	191
2019	45	366,500	146
2018	44	365,200	145

* Curbside pick-up only, doesn't include leaves from general collection sites.

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

Aquatic Debris Collection Update

For 2021, **148 barge loads** of aquatic debris were removed over 27 days. This is a significant increase in usage by lake residents in 2021 compared to 2019 and 2020. These numbers indicate that the barge pick-up program was very well utilized by lake residents which is consistent with the reported survey answers about this program. Once again – Thanks for your efforts!

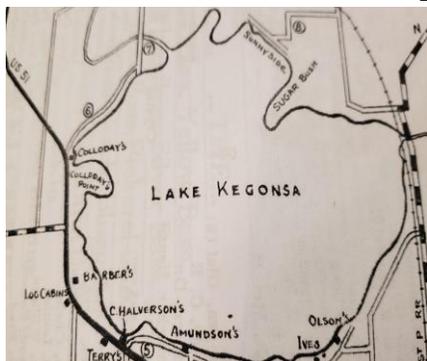
This is a brief history of the program from 2019 - 2021:

Year	Barge Days	No. of Loads	Hours	Dry Weight (tons)	Phosphorus Removed (lbs)
2021	27	148	176	100	571
2020	11	35	88	35	200
2019	17	84	136	67	381

The Dane County calculation of Phosphorus content of the plant solids is assumed to be ~2900 ppm, (i.e. ~1lb of P for every 350 lb of plant solids). Per Dane Co., the 2020 report is not completely accurate due to dept. reporting anomalies.

The Fish Whisperer

By Kim VanBrocklin



At a very early age, George Thode's grandfather took him fishing...and he's been 'hooked' ever since! By mid-elementary school, he was independently launching boats on the lake. He intentionally studied the nature, topography, and nuances of Kegonsa...whose Native American name means "water of many fish." By age 10 his reputation as a successful angler was so vast that Ansel Severson (*then-owner of Sunnyside Resort*) would tell visiting fishermen to "**follow the kid!**"

Being observant taught George to respect the waves and count the cycles when they would break and build. He heeds: "don't ever get caught in the rollers, and know how to steer a boat in wavy conditions."

Thode says he's "been sunburned, windburned and sat through 20 mph winds at 10 below zero while Ice fishing...kept warm only by the heat of a one-lung Coleman lantern in a hand-built, insulated shack." He once watched the ice split right between his feet, and also witnessed a fifteen foot wall of

ice climbing over the shoreline embankment to stop just three feet from his father's home. He fished in all temperatures, conditions, and seasons. His largest catch was a 46 inch Northern "caught with a sucker," and added that "if you know where the natural springs in the lake are, you will discover a place that Northerns love." He favored fishing off of Lund's Point very early in the morning at a depth of 19-20 feet, and recalled how beautiful it was at sunrise.

He insists that "nature, location, and the weather will dictate your fishing," and he shares some examples. "The lake was so clear in the 1940's, but by the 1960's the algae was so thick that birds walked on top of it. I don't think the fishing is as good now, but if you take all of the weeds out of the lake you will also take out the habitat and places for small fry to hide.

Many years ago, there were clams in Lake Kegonsa and you saw more Pumpkinseed fish because they ate the eggs of the clams." With water quality changing on Kegonsa, George devised a homemade 'clarity tester,' (a plastic saucer with a weighted line that dropped into the lake...similar to a modern-day Turbidity tube). He could then determine which tackle and approach he would use, based on the depth of clarity.

Many decades ago he watched Carp seiners pull their nets at Fish Camp and Williams Bay, where 40 inch Northern were thrown back to ensure the good fish stayed in the lake.

As for bait, he found success with *suckers, minnies, hellgrammites and shrimp*. He gathered his own hellgrammites (the pupa of a four-winged Dragonfly)... "and they could really pinch!"

Dorn Outdoor Proshop still sells them, if you don't like collecting your own. When he brought out the hellgrammites, it brought out the Perch "who love silt and the bugs at the bottom of the lake." His combination of 1/2-inch weighted bead chain and a cube of shrimp on the hook was sure to land him a basket of Stripers. For Bluegills, he'd notice spawning grounds were most often at 6-8 feet of water, when the water was just warm enough for the fry to survive. He had casting techniques as well. "I'd put a sucker on a bobber about 1 1/2 feet down on one side of the boat, and put another rod with a Daredevil to fancast on the *other side of the boat*. Anytime you cast, you get a follow. Fish follow but don't strike right away, so they would *go under the boat to the rod with the sucker and then strike.*"

He shared his view on the invasive Carp population. "Carp are weed spawners that lay eggs by the 100's. If you want Carp out of the lake, find their predator or what eats their eggs." During his childhood, Carp from seining in Lake Kegonsa were sent to New York. And once while traveling to New York on a vacation, then-owner of Sunnyside Resort (Ansel Severson) spotted a product he instantly recognized: a can of lake carp that boasted the name "**Kegonsa Tuna!**" He bought 3 cans and brought them back to Stoughton.

Lake Kegonsa has afforded George Thode many memories and milestones in his life...from lurching alone in grade school, to his first date with his wife Kathy, and thousands of fishing hours since. We are the eager beneficiaries of his angling prowess. I can hardly wait for Spring, to fish with hellgrammites and shrimp...just the way the fish whisperer did!

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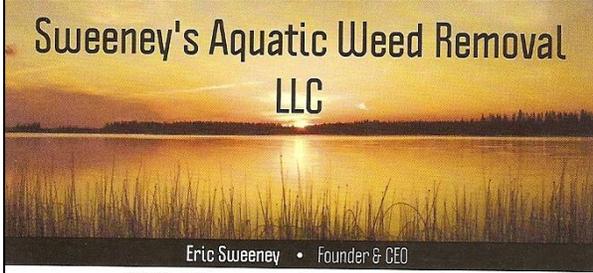
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This year's dues remain \$20.00 for
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If you have any questions regarding
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or Peter Foy at peterfoy49@gmail.com

Send news of interest to **FOLKS** to:
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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**
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eolson@bunburyrealtors.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 January 11, 2022, 5:30 - 7:00 PM, Stoughton Country Club

Friends of Lake Kegonsa Society, Inc.
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