



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

President’s Message ~ Peter Foy

Your **FOLKS** Board reviewed our projects for 2022 at our recent Board meeting. I am happy to report that because of our member’s tremendous support, including extra donations, and a wonderful grant from the Bryant Foundation we will not only be able to continue most of our popular projects, but also add some new initiatives. You will be able to read about our increased emphasis on lake monitoring, run off identification and the wildlife committee activities in this newsletter. Our popular aquatic debris removal and leaf collection programs will continue as well as our efforts to remove carp from Lake Kegonsa and maintain and improve Fish Camp County Park.

Welcome Kim Walz to our Board

Kim Walz has been appointed to our Board to replace Tom McGinnis who resigned after serving on our Board for many years. Kim’s term will run through June of 2023. Kim resides on the lake on Sunnyside St. She has a background in environmental science and civil and environmental engineering. She worked for over 36 years with the Department of Natural Resources at the central office in Madison. She has a deep love and appreciation for all of our lakes and rivers and spent her career trying to improve the quality of our waters. Our Board will certainly take advantage of her expertise.

Connie Hagen’s Award

There is a nice article about Connie Hagen at the end of the newsletter. Please join us in congratulating her on this well-deserved recognition.

-Peter Foy

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Fox at the Bryant Foundation

Thank you to the **Edwin E. and Janet L. Bryant Foundation** for their incredible support of **FOLKS**. We received a large grant from the Bryant Foundation for continuing projects in 2022. They are an amazing partner in helping us toward our goal of improving Lake Kegonsa and the surrounding areas.

They took these beautiful fox pictures this winter on the Bryant Foundation grounds.



2022 "Ice-Off" Contest

Cathie Taylor reported that Lake Kegonsa was ice free on March 27th. 116 members entered the contest. The winner is Jane Weber who wins a \$50.00 gift certificate to Springers. Congratulations!!

Lake Kegonsa Water Levels

Although lake levels are beginning to rise, all lakes are near summer minimums. In the winter Dane County allows lake levels to lower to build capacity for spring and early summer rains. As of April 20, 2022 the Lake Kegonsa level is **843.22'** (ft above sea level). The dams are currently set to maintain or increase lake levels. The Tenney Dam (Mendota) is 8% open while Babcock Dam (Waubesa) is 20% open and LaFollette Dam (Kegonsa) is 25% open.

Lake	4/20/2022 Lake Level (ft)	Summer Minimum (ft)	Summer Maximum (ft)	Inches > Summer Minimum
Mendota	849.79	849.6	850.1	2.28
Monona	844.63	844.7	845.2	-0.84
Waubesa	844.50	844.5	845.0	0.0
Kegonsa	843.22	843.0	843.5	2.64

FOLKS Membership Renewal

We've had a very good renewal response for 2022 so far. Thank you to everyone who has returned their membership renewal letter. If you haven't had a chance to return your renewal, please send your check to:

FOLKS

PO Box 173
Stoughton, WI 53589

We'd also be thankful if you could try to recruit your friends and neighbors to join **FOLKS** to support efforts on behalf of Lake Kegonsa and the surrounding watershed.

Membership contributions:

- \$20 per household for membership if the newsletter is emailed to you
- \$30 per household for membership, printing and mailing if you want a hard copy of the newsletter mailed.
- \$30 for business membership; Business name is included in our newsletters.

Save the Date (June 4th) for the **FOLKS** 2022 Annual Meeting

FOLKS Annual Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, June 4, 2022 from 6pm to 9pm at the Stoughton Country Club. We'll have project updates, financial reports and a guest speaker. Please join us for a fun and informative evening and meet your neighbors and other **FOLKS** members.

Carp Removal Project

FOLKS continues to work with the Wisconsin DNR to try to restart our carp removal project. The DNR has added a requirement that an accurate population estimate must be made prior to removing carp from a lake. 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 fish. The way

it works is that you capture a small number of individual carp, put a harmless mark on them, and release them back into the lake. You then capture a second sample and the total number of carp in the sample, and the number within the sample which are marked, are recorded. A formula is then applied to arrive at the estimated number of carp in the lake. This method has been used successfully by fishery biologists for many years. Research has shown that negatively impacting a carp population requires physical removal of at least 40-50 percent of the population.

FOLKS told the WDNR that we would finance the population study to get our successful carp removal program going again. We are disappointed that the WDNR has indicated that it is unlikely the study will take place this year because of limited resources. We have an excellent relationship with the WDNR and will continue to work closely with them on this.

Aquatic Debris Collection Program for 2022

FOLKS will be sponsoring the Aquatic Debris Collection program for the 4th year. This program has been popular and well utilized by lake and river residents. In 2021, residents disposed of 148 barge loads of material which is over 51 tons of debris removed from the lake. Thanks for such a great job and for your support! We hope you make good use of the program again this year to keep your shoreline clean and the lake beautiful!

The Dane County Land & Water Resources Department will bring a barge onto the lake and pick-up debris that residents place on the end of their pier. The 2022 schedule will be **every two weeks** as follows:

- **June 13 thru June 17**
- **June 27 thru July 1**
- **July 11 thru July 15**
- **July 25 thru July 29**
- **Aug 8 thru Aug 12**
- **Aug 22 thru Aug 26**
- **Sept 5 thru Sept 9**

Here is how the barge pick-up program works:

The barge will cover all of Lake Kegonsa and Yahara River residences on Orvold Park Drive, Alsmo Lane, and Fish Camp Road.

- Please have all debris on your pier by 7 a.m. Monday of the scheduled pick-up week. The barge crew will start on Monday and make **ONE complete pass around the lake and river**. It usually takes the barge crew three or four days to make a complete pass. So, please have all debris out by Monday morning or you may get missed. It may take a few days for the barge crew to get to your pier.
- Material **ALLOWED** - Aquatic vegetation (lake plants, vegetation, algae) and debris washed up on shore (trash, logs, sticks, dead fish, etc.).
- Material **NOT ALLOWED** - Yard waste or brush (grass clippings, leaves, tree limbs) and household waste (garbage, pet waste, etc.). In other words, the program only removes debris that comes from the lake.
- Place debris at the end of your pier so that the barge can safely and easily access it. If the water is too shallow at the end of your pier, the crew will not be able to pick up your debris. Maybe you can

- use your neighbor's pier with their permission. If you don't personally reside at your waterfront property, please inform those who live there of this program.
- It is possible that more urgent County work requirements may take priority over vegetation collection and the crew might be diverted during a given week.

Water Monitoring Project

FOLKS has expanded the Water Quality Monitoring Committee responsibilities for 2022. The objectives are to:

- Build a more extensive database of water quality data for Lake Kegonsa by expanding current data collection efforts.
- Work closely with Clean Lakes Alliance (CLA), Rock River Coalition (RRC), Dane County Land and Water Resources (LWRD) and UW Limnology water monitoring programs.
- Track status and report Lake Kegonsa conditions to **FOLKS** members

The water quality committee conducted initial meetings in early December with our water quality testing partners noted above and created a preliminary 2022 project plan.

1. "End of Pier" water quality monitoring

The End of Pier" program is an initiative started by the Clean Lakes Alliance (CLA). Volunteer monitors collect data from the end of their pier two or more times each week from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Water clarity, air temperature and water temperature readings are taken. 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. All data is included in the CLA lakeforecast.org database for summary and analysis. In prior years, Lake Kegonsa has had 8 observation sites.

The 2022 Plan:

- The monitoring committee has added 8 more sites and identified volunteers for each of them so that we have good coverage around the lake with a total of 16 monitoring sites.
- **FOLKS** purchased monitoring equipment (secchi water clarity turbidity tubes and waterproof thermometers) for each of the 16 sites.
- CLA agreed to conduct a separate training for Lake Kegonsa volunteers (veteran and new monitors) on May 4th at Springers. Monitors will meet each other and learn valuable information about the program and data collection.

2. Lake Kegonsa Deep Hole water quality monitoring

Observations are recorded on a weekly or biweekly basis from the deepest part of Lake Kegonsa designated the "Deep Hole" as part of another CLA monitoring program. Data collection includes general conditions (wave intensity, cloud cover, air temperature, water appearance, etc.), dissolved oxygen (DO) and temperature readings at 1/2 meter intervals from the top to the bottom of the water column, and water clarity using a secchi disk. The observations are recorded in the WDNR's Surface Water Integrated Monitoring System (SWIMS) database. This data can be accessed by researchers throughout the country.

Although monthly phosphorus analysis was conducted by UW Limnology in the past, the phosphorus data from the deepest part of the lake was not collected for the past two years.

The 2022 Plan:

- A volunteer will continue the data collection at the Deep Hole from May through September of 2022 to continue to build this database of information.
- The **FOLKS** Water Monitoring Committee is working with UW Limnology through LWRD to ensure that samples are collected for monthly phosphorus analysis in the current year.

3. Door Creek and Yahara River sampling

The Rock River Coalition (RRC) collects data from streams throughout the watershed in partnership with the Water Action Volunteers program including 6 Door Creek/Little Door Creek sites leading into Lake Kegonsa. The nearest site to Lake Kegonsa on Door Creek is at Highway MN.

- Door Creek/Hwy MN
- Door Creek/ Hope Road
- Door Creek/ Jahnke Road
- Door Creek/Old 2/18 Femrite
- Little Door Creek/ Natvig Rd
- Little Door Creek/ NorthStar Rd

Monthly data collection at each site includes general weather and flow observations, water clarity (secchi tube), dissolved oxygen, temperature, stream conditions and nutrient sampling (Phosphorus and Kjeldahl Nitrogen). Data is entered into the WDNR's Surface Water Integrated Monitoring System (SWIMS) and is open data which can be used by any researchers.

The 2022 Plan:

- The sites listed above will continue to be monitored by volunteers through the RRC program.
- To increase our understanding of phosphorus and nitrogen sources and outflow from the lake and other conditions, the following three new sites have been added. We have identified volunteers for each site.
 - Inflow to Lake Kegonsa
 - Door Creek – added a monitoring site nearer Lake Kegonsa by the mouth of Door Creek (May to September sampling)
 - Added a monitoring site near the Yahara River inlet to Lake Kegonsa at the northernmost part of Fish Camp County Park (12 month sampling)
 - Outflow from Lake Kegonsa
 - Added a monitoring site at the Yahara River outlet to Lake Kegonsa below LaFollette Dam (12 month sampling)

4. Historical Water Quality Information

If you've attended the annual meetings, you're familiar with data presented to **FOLKS** membership such as clarity readings, phosphorus concentrations and other water quality data. The Water Quality Committee is working on compiling much more historical data from the End of Pier, Deep Hole and Door Creek at MN sampling sites. We intend to not only present data at the annual meeting but to house data on the **FOLKS** website at Kegonsa.org to make it readily available to all members.

FOLKS Water Quality Committee

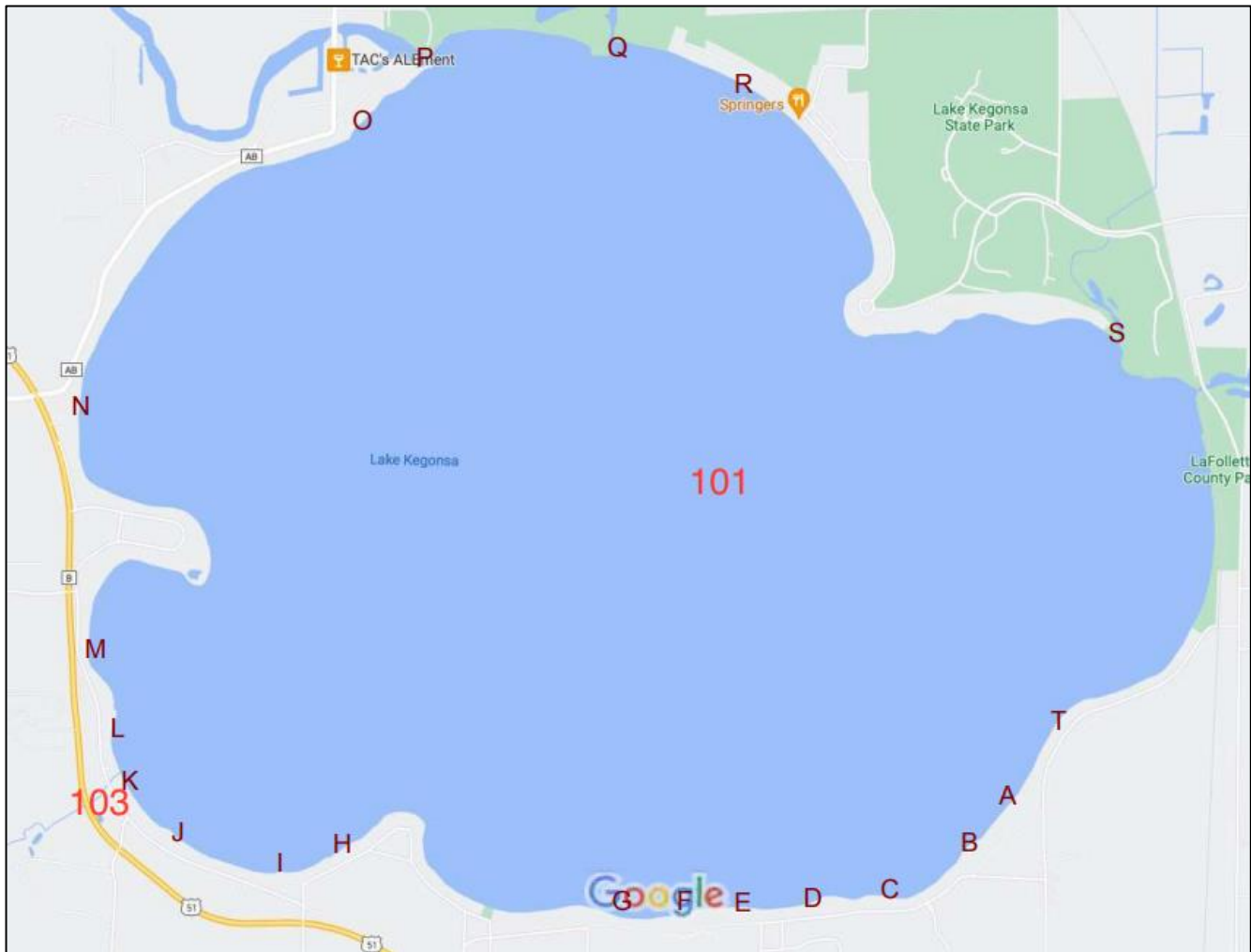
Members of the committee include Connie Hagen (Chair), Janice Kellogg, George Corrigan, Claudia Quam and new board member, Kim Walz. If you have any questions or comments, please contact any of these board members.

Run Off Identification Project

FOLKS Run Off Committee has completed a 4 step plan for 2022 as follows:

1. Identify sites on Lake Kegonsa where water is flowing into Lake Kegonsa on a regular basis or periodically after rain events.

The 20 sites below were identified by Eric Olson, Chair of the Run Off Committee, in late 2021.



A 2938 Tracy	8" drain	K 2074 Barber	Creek
B 2994 Shadyside	Culvert	L 2088 Barber	Duel drains
C 3016 Shadyside	Culvert	M 2140 Colladay	Storm drain
D 3034 Shadyside	Culvert	N 2042 Colladay	Storm drain
E 3118 Shadyside	Culvert	O 3417 Stony Crest	6" drain
F 3156 Shadyside	8" drain	P Fish Camp	Yahara River
G 3188 Aalseth	Drain	Q Door Creek	Creek
H 3424 Quam	24" steel	R 3149 Sunnyside	8" drain
I 1894 Quam	Creek	S State Park	Creek
J 1922 Quam	Creek	T 1955 Skyline	Creek

These sites are near the address listed and the type of run off is identified, i.e., River, Creek, Culvert, Drain.

2. Sample some of the run off sites to determine a baseline phosphorous level.

A sampling regime was identified and 3 run off sites were sampled in December to test the system and provide a baseline phosphorus level. The samples are being tested for total phosphorus content at the WI State Lab of Hygiene.

3. Sample selected run off sites after major rain events to determine phosphorous level.

The committee identified 12 of these sites for sampling of phosphorus content in the run off following large rain events: A, D, I, J, K, L, M, N, P, Q, S, T. Four committee members split up the sites and will gather samples after major rains.

4. Prioritize run off spots based on phosphorous analysis and estimated flows to design projects that will slow or alleviate the run off at sites contributing significant phosphorous to the lake.

This part of the project will commence after data has been collected on the phosphorus content in stormwater run off into the lake.

Solutions used for run off problems in the past included prairie restoration, retention pond construction, and shoreline or drainage ditch native plant gardens to slow the run off.

FOLKS Run Off Committee

Members of the committee include Eric Olson (Chair), Peter Foy, Janice Kellogg, Gary Smithback, Connie Hagen and Kim Walz. Contact any of these board members if you have comments or ideas.

Lake Kegonsa Wildlife

The fox photos on page 2 of this **FOLKS** Newsletter were provided by the Bryant Foundation. They are great examples of the abundant wildlife that call Lake Kegonsa home. In addition to foxes, we have many raptors, cranes, swans, great blue herons, pelicans, abundant duck species, other waterfowl, opossums, toads, turtles, and river otters living here. Muskrats also live in Lake Kegonsa and although some people think they are pests, they actually serve a valuable ecological function by eating aquatic

plants, which tends to open other areas of the lake, giving ducks and other birds clear places to swim.

Recently a bobcat was even caught on camera (the picture was taken in March on Colladay Point). A short video is linked at kegonsa.org/wildlife.html.



Lake Kegonsa Wildlife continued

Returning birds and the sounds of frogs and toads are sure signs warmer weather is just around the corner. Another sign of spring is young wildlife. For the past few years, trail cam videos of fox kits near Lake Kegonsa have been shared online. A link to local wildlife photos and videos is provided at kegonsa.org/wildlife.html. The **FOLKS** Wildlife Committee would like to share updates of fox kit videos and other wildlife videos and photos with anyone interested. Send an email to wildlife@kegonsa.org and we'll add you to an email distribution list for wildlife updates, including links to local wildlife videos. Also, we'd love to post *your* videos and pictures – please send them to wildlife@kegonsa.org. Please let us know if you want credit for the pictures you send. We hope to be adding to the collection with eagles, otters, pelicans, and osprey pictures.

A variety of raptors can be frequently seen, including ospreys, bald eagles, golden eagles, great horned owls, screech owls and many species of hawks. Bald eagles can be seen fishing especially in the early spring and late fall. White pelicans usually spend time here in April on their way to their nesting grounds. The large knob on their beak is a sign it is mating season. Trumpeter swans have stopped in Lake Kegonsa as they migrate. Loons can often be seen, especially in the spring, riding low in the water or diving underwater (sometimes for a surprising duration). Loons are good indicators of water quality because they need clean, clear water to catch food. Their presence is an indication that the effects of contaminants like mercury and lead in the environment may be better than other water bodies. They are of course also very enjoyable to watch! Coots are very common, and it is not unusual to see a tightly packed raft of coots form as a bald eagle flies above.

Many species of ducks can be found on Lake Kegonsa, including mallards, wood ducks, northern shoveler, American widgeons, buffleheads, blue winged teal, common goldeneye, hooded merganser and lesser scaup. In addition to the very common Canada goose, Lake Kegonsa was briefly home to a barnacle goose a few years ago. The barnacle goose is typically seen in Greenland or Iceland, and the first (and perhaps only) time it was spotted in Wisconsin was right here on Lake Kegonsa! A barnacle goose is slightly smaller than a Canada goose, and looks similar but with a white head.



All of the wildlife mentioned in this article has been spotted near Colladay Point, but most can be seen many places around the lake. Please let us know what you've seen on the lake, as well as where you've seen it. Send photos and videos to wildlife@kegonsa.org.

Connie Hagen - Wisconsin Volunteer Stream Monitoring Award

This article is reprinted with permission from the **Rock River Coalition** March newsletter. Although as Connie says in the article "It's all about teamwork", we'd like to share the recognition of one of our **FOLKS** Board members for winning the 2021 Wisconsin Volunteer Stream Monitoring Award.

Volunteer Spotlight: Connie Hagen, Recognizable Dedication ***By Garrett Hopkins***

Conservation action is often an unsung undertaking. For Connie Hagen, that's perfectly fine. Like many environmentalists, winning an award was perhaps the very last thing on Hagen's mind each time she pulled out her water monitoring tools or stepped into a creek. "Either you have the conservation gene or you don't," says Hagen. "I'm a composter; a gardener; a volunteer stream monitor. It's just what I like to do with my spare time." This selfless dedication is what makes Hagen such an effective volunteer, and was, undoubtedly, a driving force when she did win an award this past February.

Specifically, Hagen won the 2021 Wisconsin Volunteer Stream Monitoring Award from the UW-Madison Division of Extension and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, an annual acknowledgement that distinguishes a Water Action Volunteer for their commitment to protecting and restoring Wisconsin's waters. Hagen was nominated for the award by Addie Schlusel, Rock River Coalition's Stream Monitoring and AIS Program Coordinator, and says she feels honored by the recognition.



*Connie Hagen is a recipient of the 2021 Wisconsin Volunteer Stream Monitoring Award.
Photo credit Susan Clark.*

Hagen has monitored the same site on Madison's Door Creek since 2014. She first began monitoring this location with her husband, Bill Lamm. When Bill passed away in 2019, she continued the work on her own. "It used to be our site," says Hagen. "Now, it's my site." Door Creek, which flows into the 3,200-acre Lake Kegonsa, was initially built as a drainage ditch for farmers, and holds generations worth of phosphorus in its stream beds. Based on bore sample analysis done by Dane County, Door Creek is now on the list of streams that have been assessed for potential inclusion in Dane County's \$12 million "Suck the Muck" legacy sediment-removal initiative.

While "stream monitoring" is in the title of the award Hagen won, nominees must meet a broader set of criteria, including a commitment to developing partnerships, the participation in a wide

range of water-related activities, and a record of sharing skills and information about water quality with others. Hagen's resume, which includes work with Friends of Lake Kegonsa Society (**FOLKS**), Dane County Land & Water Resources, Clean Lakes Alliance, Plant Dane Native Plant Program and Rock River Coalition, is staggering.

Her volunteerism home base is with **FOLKS** where she serves as a board member, treasurer, grant writer, membership services coordinator, recruiter and head of the Water Monitoring Committee. In partnerships with the other organizations mentioned above, she is involved with **FOLKS** in the following projects: aquatic debris removal programs for Lake Kegonsa; a leaf collection initiative in the towns of Pleasant Springs and Dunn; a demonstration shoreline garden at Fish Camp County Park; planned native plant-growing tutorials for **FOLKS** members and the public; and phosphorus data analysis. Hagen also regularly collects water monitoring data at the end of her pier and at the deepest part of Lake Kegonsa.



Native plant garden at Fish Camp County Park. Photo credit Connie Hagen.

Hagen's belief in giving back is rooted in practicality. "If we want to see improvements in our water resources, we need long-term data," she says. "The only way to collect the sheer volume of data needed is through volunteerism. It's all about teamwork. There are so many people that want to help, that want to do something. If you can channel those people together, amazing things get done."

Rock River Coalition takes pride in creating opportunities for people of diverse interests and backgrounds to get involved, and recruitment is currently underway for spring and summer programs. Reach out to Addie Schlüssel at addie@rockrivercoalition.org to learn about Rock River Coalition's volunteer stream monitoring program.

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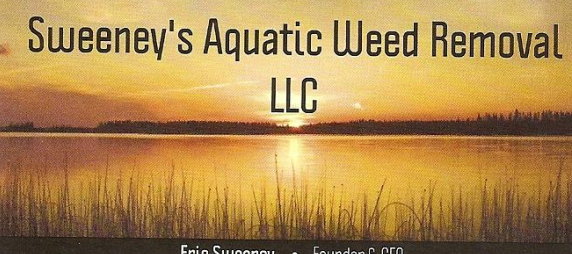
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For More About **FOLKS**,
Visit our website at **www.Kegonsa.org** and

on Facebook  at facebook.com/kegonsa/

or on Twitter  @LakeKegonsa

Please Support Your Lake Association -
Renew Your **FOLKS** Membership.

This year's dues remain \$20.00 for
households and \$30.00 for businesses.

If you have any questions regarding
membership, please contact:
Connie Hagen at chagen001@gmail.com
or Peter Foy at peterfoy49@gmail.com

Send news of interest to **FOLKS** to:
P.O. Box 173
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agency or governmental unit.

FOLKS Lost and Found

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

FOLKS board meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month except for a
couple of months in the winter. The public are always welcome.
Next Meeting is May 10, 2022, 5:30 - 7:00 PM, Stoughton Country Club

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