



Friends of Lake Kegonsa Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 173
Stoughton, WI 53589-0173
May 2012

President’s Message ~ Bob Arndt

FOLKS members who attended the annual meeting in January heard a very optimistic presentation on the future of the Yahara Chain of Lakes by Don Heilman the president of the Clean Lakes Alliance (CLA). For what I believe to be the first time, we are seeing an energetic and insightful organization taking the lead in doing something about the quality of our lakes. Perhaps more importantly, this does not appear to be an organization that will be stalled by political agendas.

“The Clean Lakes Alliance is dedicated to improving and protecting the Yahara Watershed by raising funds for water quality improvement projects, education, public access and assisting in the exchange of technical and scientific information.” (Mission Statement). This group has obtained strong community, government, university, and corporate support since its inception. CLA has actively solicited input from numerous stakeholders including farmers, riparians and organizations such as FOLKS and the Stoughton Conservation Club.

The short history of this group, which was founded in 2009 to administrate the business end of the Clean Lakes Festival, indicates that the future of our lakes is in good hands. A new report by the Clean Lakes Alliance, the “*State of the Yahara Lakes*” released in conjunction with the first annual Save Our Lakes Summit, highlighted ways (or metrics) to evaluate conditions in the Yahara Lakes during the summer of 2011. The report details information about water clarity, phosphorus levels, beach closures, and more. For the first time the State of the Yahara Lakes Report pulls together information from a variety of scientific and government sources including Public Health Madison and Dane County, Dane County Office of Lakes and Watersheds, and the University of Wisconsin Center for Limnology. This information is presented in a very user-friendly form on the link above (or paste <http://www.cleanlakesalliance.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/State-of-the-Yahara-Lakes-2011-Online-Edition.pdf> into your web browser.

I strongly encourage FOLKS members to look at the report, follow the organization’s activities at the link, and support it in anyway they can.

The CLA has willingly offered support in current FOLKS efforts to reduce runoff into Lake Kegonsa. Bryan Thompson, a FOLKS board member, is currently serving as a Lake Kegonsa representative.

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Lake Kegonsa Buoy Upgrades – Courtesy of FOLKS

FOLKS worked closely with Dane County this year to pay for and install lighted buoys designed to add safety and navigational support for night boating.

Last year, a FOLKS member approached the FOLKS board and asked about the possibility of getting lighted navigational buoys on Lake Kegonsa. He reasoned that Waubesa, Monona and Mendota all have them, why doesn't Lake Kegonsa.

After researching this topic, we found that current buoys can be retro-fitted to add solar lights on top of the existing buoys at a very reasonable cost. Further research led us to Kevin Connor of the Dane County. Kevin and his team are responsible for the placement, removal and storage of the buoys on the Yahara Chain.

Dane County agreed to install the lights, and place the buoys for FOLKS, if we covered the costs. It was a huge win/win.

You will now notice that Lake Kegonsa has lighted buoys in the following locations:

1. Rockpile – 4 shallow area buoys marking the rockpile in the middle of the lake
2. Fish Camp – 2 lighted navigational buoys marking the entrance to the channel
3. Lake Kegonsa State park – 1 buoy marking the state park
4. Asmundson Landing – 1 buoy marking the landing and slow no wake area
5. Pleasant Springs Landing – 1 buoy marking the landing

We are excited about bringing a valuable upgrade to our navigation safety all based on the suggestion of a FOLKS member.

Do you have a suggestion or a project you think would enhance the water quality or recreational enjoyment of Lake Kegonsa? If so, let us know. We are looking for projects and other suggestions of making Lake Kegonsa a better, safer, more enjoyable waterway.



Yahara Lakes Water Level Advisory Group (YLAG2)

Over the past decade, flooding along the Yahara River Chain has become more frequent and more damaging. To address this issue, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources convened a group of key stakeholders to consider the DNR lake level operating orders which were written over thirty years ago, to determine if they were still effective for regulating and guiding the management of the water levels and flow through the Yahara River Chain and its lakes. This stakeholder group was made up of representatives from county, city, villages and towns touching the lakes as well as interest groups and agencies. The public was also invited. It met monthly and has been gathering information about the lakes. Information from the study of water levels in the lower Yahara River done by FOLKS in September-November 2009 was presented by Mike Amstadt at the June meeting. It can be found at: <http://www.countyofdane.com/lwrld/landconservation/yilag.aspx>

While lake levels prompted the initial discussion, it was clear that they could not be considered alone and the **Yahara Lakes Water Level Advisory Group (YLAG2)** mission expanded to explore and evaluate the operations of the Yahara River Chain and its lakes as an integrated system.

YLAG2 members represent a wide range of interests. Recognizing there were both conflicting and mutual interests, YLAG2 members committed to fully participate in a process that allowed them to make educated, informed, and reasoned recommendations. Now, after a year of study the YLAG2 has offered its draft recommendations to the public for comment.

Of the 40 or so recommendations was one to hold our lake 3 inches above summer minimum to make it easier for us to get our boats off their lifts. We have encouraged members to comment on this to the group.

The comments from the public will be included in further debate and the group will submit its recommendations to the DNR and any other body concerned.

New Pier Regulations - Most existing piers are now grandfathered

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has recently announced that the governor has signed a new law regulating piers in the state.

Here is the latest news article: The underlining I added. This was not in the news release.

Weekly News article published: April 3, 2012 by the Central Office MADISON - Most existing piers and wharves are exempt from needing state approval and can be placed in lakes and rivers the same as they've always been under a new law signed April 2, state natural resources officials say.

"Required registration of larger existing piers is eliminated," said Martye Griffin, Department of Natural Resources waterway statewide policy coordinator.

"This means that there are no size requirements to meet; no paperwork to fill out; no registration needed to grandfather your pier or wharf. If your pier was initially placed before April 2012 and doesn't block your neighbors' ability to access the water, you can repair and maintain your existing pier as is, into perpetuity."

Continued on Page 6

Lake Kegonsa Ice Season

By Bob Arndt

Last year we included an article on "ice over" and "ice out" dates along with a request that anyone who had data forward it to me. Thanks to the following members who kept records and those who forwarded information going back to 1957.

Harold Randecker, courtesy of Laura Borsecnik
Ardys Pfundheller, courtesy of Doug Pfundheller
Nellie Simmons, courtesy of Heather Gustafson
Jim Martin and Fanny Martin-Dahlk, courtesy of Gloria Jenkins

Member Steve Grant actually wrote an article in the FOLKS Newsletter with most of the data, back in 1999. Thanks, and I hope I didn't forget anyone.

There is no official source of data on Lake Kegonsa ice dates. There are also a number of ways to define "ice over" or "ice in" and "ice out". For example "ice out" has been defined as:

- Day that 90% is gone
- Day you can navigate from point A to B
- Day ice is broken up
- Day there is no ice on lake

So, there were a few discrepancies in the data I have collected to date (actually only 9 of not more than 4 days). I have arbitrarily decided to use the latest date, going on the assumption that someone may have seen some open water or ice on their part of the lake until the later date. The data are presented in the included table.

The 2011-12 winter ice season was the shortest in these records by at least 18 days. While the ice has disappeared earlier on a few occasions, the January ice in was the latest, although the ice actually broke up on January 1, 2007 and re-froze again a couple weeks later. Other records are highlighted in bold.

For data on Lakes Mendota and Monona going back into the 1850s you can go to the following sites:

http://lter.limnology.wisc.edu/about/lakes/mendota_ice_cover

<http://www.aos.wisc.edu/~sco/lakes/Monona-ice.html>

Data is provided on page 5.

YEAR WINTER STARTED	IN	OUT	DAYS OF ICE
1957	12/4/57	4/2/58	119
1958	11/30/58	4/14/59	135
1959	11/15/59	4/11/60	148
1960	12/13/60	3/26/61	103
1961	12/12/61	4/8/62	117
1962	12/12/62	4/2/63	111
1963	12/13/63	4/4/64	113
1964	12/2/64	4/14/65	133
1965	12/19/65	3/17/66	88
1966	12/3/66	4/2/67	120
1967	11/29/67	3/25/68	117
1968	12/8/68	4/9/69	122
1969	12/5/69	4/7/70	123
1970	12/14/70	4/11/71	118
1971	12/2/71	4/18/72	138
1972	12/2/72	3/13/73	101
1973	12/11/73	4/3/74	113
1974	12/3/74	4/19/75	137
1975	12/19/75	3/20/76	92
1976	11/29/76	3/23/77	114
1977	11/28/77	4/10/78	133
1978	12/3/78	4/18/79	136
1979	12/17/79	4/5/80	110
1980	12/11/80	3/16/81	95
1981	12/11/81	4/2/82	112
1982	12/16/82	3/6/83	80
1983	12/3/83	4/4/84	123
1984	12/23/84	3/28/85	95
1985	12/3/85	3/29/86	116
1986	12/12/86	3/14/87	92
1987	12/17/87	3/25/88	99
1988	12/11/88	4/3/89	113
1989	12/3/89	3/15/90	102
1990	12/8/90	3/23/91	105
1991	12/4/91	3/9/92	96
1992		4/9/93	
1993	11/12/93	3/27/94	135
1994	12/9/94	3/20/95	101
1995	12/3/95	3/25/96	113
1996	11/27/96	4/1/97	125
1997	12/16/97	2/26/98	72
1998	12/25/98	3/17/99	82
1999	12/19/99	3/5/00	77
2000	12/8/00	4/7/01	120
2001	12/29/01	3/14/02	75
2002	12/6/02	3/27/03	111
2003	12/13/03	3/20/04	98
2004	12/19/04	3/31/05	102
2005	12/5/05	3/13/06	98
2006	12/8/06	3/25/07	107
2007	12/5/07	4/9/08	126
2008	12/7/08	3/22/09	105
2009	12/12/09	3/27/10	105
2010	12/11/10	4/3/11	113
2011	1/13/12	3/10/12	57

New Pier Regulations (Continued From Page 3)

Lawmakers in 2004 passed a law that set size standards for piers and in 2008 created a free, one-time registration system to grandfather in larger piers that did not meet the size standards. The registration deadline was extended last year, and now, the registration system is repealed under Senate Bill 326, which Gov. Scott Walker signed April 2 in Woodruff.

"Pier owners who already sent in a registration form to grandfather their pier and have not heard back yet from the DNR can place their pier in the water this spring the same as they've been doing in previous years. They will be notified shortly that their pier is good to go," Griffin says.

The new law does make some other changes to Wisconsin pier laws, but Griffin notes that they are not effective immediately. "When it's closer to the effective date of these provisions, we'll provide more information on our website and in news releases."

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Martye Griffin (608) 266-2997; Lisa Gaumnitz (608) 264-8942

So, what this means is:

- If you submitted the grandfather paperwork and received an approval back that is good. Save the approval someplace safe because it will protect you in case there are changes in the future.
- If you sent in the paperwork and received a notice that the DNR had received it, but have not received the approval, you will be receiving a letter from the DNR verifying that your pier is good to go and that you need no departmental approval for your pier and how the new law eliminates the need for registration.
- Likewise, if you submitted the paperwork and have heard nothing back you will be receiving a letter from the DNR verifying that your pier is good to go and that you need no departmental approval for your pier and how the new law eliminates the need for registration.
- Any pier placed any time prior to April 17, 2012 can be used just as before and can be maintained into perpetuity. It doesn't have to be in yet this year.
- The last paragraph in the news release mentions some other changes. These changes modify the rules for new piers and will go into effect on August 1, 2012. They will:
 - Modify the size of the pier platform to place an exempt pier from the current 8 ft. width, to 200 sq. ft. This is basically what the grandfather registration allowed, although in certain circumstances it allowed up to 300 sq. ft.
 - Modify the current statute (laws) that allow two boat slips for the first 50 ft. of shoreline to now allow for two boat slips and two personal watercraft for first 50 ft. of shoreline.

This is all good news. As long as your pier doesn't block your neighbor's ability to access the water you can continue to use your existing pier. Also, if you decide to buy a new pier in the future it can be larger than the size standards that were currently in place.

If you have any questions about this, please contact me, or the DNR at the numbers shown in the news release. Peter.foy@charter.net

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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 Kris Heckman at krish@Kegonsa.org or Peter Foy at PeterF@kegonসা.org

FOLKS monthly board meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month and the public is welcome to attend. Next Meeting June 12, 2012, 5:30 - 7:00 PM.

Halverson's Supper Club, 1965 Barber Drive, Stoughton, WI 53589

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Return Service Requested

FOLKS Business Members

Coldwell Banker Success Realtor	873-7731
Crown Point Resort	873-7833
Dean Thomas Homes, Inc	873-1935
Jim's Tree Service	838-8188
Kegonsa Cove	838-6494
Quam's Motor Sports	873-3366
Springer's	205-9300
The UPS Store	877-2679
Web-Net	alan@web-net.us
Brown's Boats and Bait	873-6770
The Utschig Group of Chiropractic Clinics	274-2266

For More About FOLKS, Visit Our
Website at WWW.Kegonsa.org