



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

President’s Message ~ Peter Foy

I would like to thank our members who took the time to complete our annual survey. Your **FOLKS** Board pays attention to how you respond to the questions and also reviews all the comments that members were diligent about adding. A summary of the responses is included in this newsletter.

I would also like to thank the members that attended our annual meeting. We had a full house and a wonderful guest speaker, Darren Marsh, Director of the Dane County Parks. You will read more about it in an article in this newsletter. Our annual meeting serves two purposes. First, it allows us to update our members about our projects and to be able to answer any question people have. Second, it allows our members to socialize with their neighbors. We do a good job of keeping everyone up to date on our projects through our newsletter, but after having to skip last year’s annual meeting due to COVID-19 we were especially happy to be able to spend face to face time with our members.

The members of your Board all agreed to remain on the Board until we were able to have Board elections at our annual meeting. This allowed for great continuity and continued progress on all of our projects. After missing a year we were able to have Board elections at our annual meeting. Six of our current Board members agreed to run again: John Bottorff, Peter Foy, Pat Guiney, Tom McGinnis, Eric Olson and Cathie Taylor. Also, two new Board members were elected: George Corrigan and Claudia Quam. We welcome them to the Board and look forward to their involvement. Rick Thorstad left the Board because he and his wife Terrie are moving to Florida. Rick had been on the Board for 5 years. We want to thank Rick for his contributions.

It has been a great spring and summer so far. It is only early July and we should have some beautiful weather to look forward to in the months ahead.

As always feel free to contact me, or any other Board member, if you have any questions, or comments. Everyone’s contact information is in the back of the newsletter.

-Peter Foy

In This Issue:

President’s Message – Peter Foy	1
Membership Renewal Reminder	2
Lake Kegonsa Water Levels, Algae & Aquatic Plants	2
Aquatic Plants: Benefits and Ways to Manage Excessive Plant Growth	4
<i>FOLKS</i> 2021 Annual Survey Results	6
PFAS Fish Consumption Advisory	10
<i>FOLKS</i> Annual Meeting	12
<i>FOLKS</i> Family Festival at Fish Camp County Park	12
Wildlife Committee Update	12
<i>FOLKS</i> Business Members	14
<i>FOLKS</i> Officers and Board Members 2021 - 2022	16

FOLKS Membership Renewal Reminder

If you haven't yet renewed your membership for 2021, please remember to renew. Our dues are still only \$20 for households and \$30 for businesses. Send your check to:

FOLKS

PO Box 173

Stoughton, WI 53589

We are trying to grow our membership again this year so please talk to your friends and neighbors about supporting our efforts on behalf of Lake Kegonsa and the surrounding watershed.

Lake Kegonsa Water Levels, Algae & Aquatic Plants

Lake Level:

Babcock and LaFollette dams are now 100% open. As of July 8, 2021, the Lake Kegonsa level is 843.25' (ft above sea level) which is the midpoint of the summer minimum/maximum target range. The Lake Kegonsa level is close to the same as last year at this time – it was 843.84' July 8, 2020.

All four Madison lakes are now near summer maximum levels. You can find more information on Lake Kegonsa levels per the Dane County Land & Water Resources Department website at lwr.d.countyofdane.com/chartlakelevels.

Dane County Aquatic Plant Assessment:

Pete Jopke, Dane County Land & Water Resources, did a plant survey of Lake Kegonsa last week and says he believes the lake is in good shape except for some areas of heavy concentrations of aquatic plants. The vast majority of plants are sago pondweed which is a native plant species.



Sago Pondweed

Pete made aquatic plant cutting recommendations for harvesting, especially the northeast shoreline just south of Fish Camp to Pleasant Springs Boat landing. He also sent a reminder to county staff to make perpendicular cuts to deeper water every 4-6 piers so that boats are able to navigate to deeper water where plants are not a problem with motors.

Pete only saw some small patches of Eurasian Water Milfoil which is an invasive species. He did not see any active blue-green algae blooms and had a clarity reading of almost 15' in the deeper part of the lake. He indicated that the DNR would do plant biobase surveys later this summer.

Other *FOLKS* Observations:

Water Clarity

- End of pier observations from 5 sites around the lake have been in the 'good' category and only the northeast shore was categorized as 'fair' for most of this summer. This can change depending on the wind direction and turbulence.
- Lake Kegonsa State Park Beach observations are very clear, no algae blooms reported
- Clarity readings at the deepest part of Lake Kegonsa have been good
 - 6/10/21 - 10.0'
 - 6/19/21 - 6.25'
 - 7/2/21 - 11.5'

Algae

- Some areas of filamentous algae but much less than last year
- A few instances of green algae in warmer, still weather
- **No** current active Blue-green algae blooms
- We are trying to identify and continue projects that will decrease the nutrient load (especially phosphorous) in Lake Kegonsa

Aquatic Plants

- Abundant aquatic plant growth (mostly sago pondweed and wild celery)
- Duckweed has been growing in large areas since last week. These small round plants look like tiny waterlily pads and are often confused with algae blooms.



Duckweed

Plant Harvesting

- Two harvesters have been on Kegonsa most days in the last two weeks.
- Per the Dane County website, excessive plant growth restricts water flow below Lake Kegonsa. Because of shallow water, plant harvesting in the river is currently limited to removing blockages.
- Current locations of harvesting equipment, dates of the pier pick-up program, plant harvesting priorities and harvesting maps for each lake are found at lwr.dane.gov/what-we-do/lake-management/aquatic-plant-management.

Pier Pick-up Program

- **FOLKS** is continuing to fund the Aquatic Debris Collection program through payments to the Dane County Land & Water Resources Department.
- The county brings a barge onto Lake Kegonsa and near Yahara River every two weeks to pick up debris that residents place on the end of their pier.
- This program helps lake and river residents deal with aquatic plants and other debris that they remove from the lake. It helps us keep the shorelines clean and the lake beautiful.
- Remaining **2021** schedule is:
 - July 12 thru 16
 - July 26 thru 30
 - August 9 thru 13
 - August 23 thru 27
 - September 6 thru 10

Thanks for participating.

Aquatic Plants: Benefits and Ways to Manage Excessive Plant Growth

FOLKS has had questions from members regarding ways to manage excessive plant growth around their shoreline.

It is important to remember that native aquatic plants are a natural component and vital link to a healthy and diverse aquatic lake ecosystem. Natural lakes are not intended to be sterile swimming pools with Caribbean sand beaches. When aquatic plants (including native species) interfere with human activities, the plants may be instantly viewed as “weeds” or nuisances that must be removed. However, complete removal of aquatic plants is not recommended. Not only is it costly, impractical and may need a permit, it is detrimental to a healthy lake ecosystem. In addition, if the lake is cleared of its native aquatic vegetation, exotic aquatic vegetation may start to colonize the lake at an even accelerated pace and the lake may shift to an algal dominated system in which clarity is low and the water is murky.

First, we should remember that native aquatic plants serve a lot of beneficial purposes:

- Lake bed stabilization
- Plant roots hold sediment in place
- It reduces resuspension and additional phosphorous entering the system
- Stabilize shoreline erosion
- Plants are a natural barrier to wave action
- Utilize nutrients that could otherwise cause algal blooms
- Removal of carbon dioxide and production of oxygen through photosynthesis
- Importance to Fish
 - Aquatic plants provide habitat for fish
 - Spawning habitat for fish such as Northern Pike, Perch, Black Crappie, etc. They have sticky eggs that they adhere to vegetation (critical to avoid chemical treatment in these sensitive areas)
 - Hiding spots for panfish/ young of the year gamefish
 - The zooplankton that live and hide in aquatic plants are a major food source for certain fish species and young fish
 - Ambush spots for predatory fish

But, if invasive aquatic plants become excessive what can you do? The possible solutions depend a great deal on the structure of the lake.

One article suggested you should ask yourself these yes, or no questions:

- Does the lake have a history of excessive plant growth?
- Is the lake shallow?
- Is there a dam on the lake?
- Is there a river running through the lake?
- Is there a large nutrient-rich watershed draining into our lake?

If the answer is yes to some or all of these questions there may not be much you can do to curb plant growth. Some lakes are more prone to abundant plant growth. Shallow lakes, lakes with rivers running through them, lakes with dams, or lakes with large nutrient rich watersheds may have few viable remedies for abundant plant growth. **Unfortunately, the answers for Lake Kegonsa are pretty much all “yes”.**

So, what can we do if we want to reduce excessive plant growth on our shoreline?

The recommended method is manual removal of the aquatic plants

Pursuant to Wisconsin Chapter NR 109, riparian landowners may rake or hand pull aquatic plants without a WDNR permit under the following conditions:

- Eurasian water milfoil, curly-leaf pondweed, and purple loosestrife may be removed by hand if the native plant community is not harmed in the process
- Raked, hand-cut, and hand-pulled plant material must be removed from the lake
- No more than 30 lineal feet of shoreline may be cleared, however, this total must include shoreline lengths occupied by docks, piers, boatlifts, rafts, and areas undergoing other plant control treatment.
- In general, regulators allow vegetation to be removed up to 100 feet out from the shoreline
- Plant material that drifts onto the shoreline must be removed

Devices that may need approval from multiple programs:

- Aquatic plant blowers
- Aerators
- Weed Rollers
- Drum Harvesters
- Rubber, plastic, or straw mats

A WDNR Ch.30 permit from the Water Regulation and Zoning Program may be needed for most of the listed items and a NR 109 permit may be needed as well. Each is case specific depending on placement, quality of habitat in the area, if sediment is disturbed, etc. You can contact Weston Matthews at 715-460-4089, or the general website is: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Waterways/contacts.html>.

Least desirable option is Herbicides. It is illegal to put chemicals into any body of water in Wisconsin without a NR 107 permit

- Requires certified applicator from the Department of Agriculture, Trade, Consumer Protection-DATCP
- If commercial applicator, must also have a business license
- Treatment of 0.25 acre or less with granular chemical may be done by homeowner, but a Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) permit is still needed
- Commercial applicators have statewide WPDES coverage
- Signs must be posted that include the chemicals used at that location and any use restrictions (typically irrigation and swimming)

- Chemicals often disperse to non-target areas
- Public stigma against chemicals added into water
- Applying aquatic herbicides without a permit will likely result in a visit from a Warden who may issue citations (with associated fines) The Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection may also become involved.

An important consideration is that Lake Kegonsa is a 3,200 acre lake that flushes every four months. When considering whether to implement any small-scale chemical treatments for the possible control of invasive aquatic plant species, variability in successful results, difficulty in obtaining proper permits, and overall significant treatment costs must be examined and weighted vs. the limited possibility of success. Thus, this option is a questionable endeavor.

What other things can be done to limit nuisance growth of invasive aquatic plants in our lake?

As a **FOLKS** member you can try to be more aware of the activities that take place within the watershed. Nonpoint source pollution is the most common means of nutrient transport into any waterbody. This is certainly true for Lake Kegonsa. Runoff from roads, septic systems and agriculture often bring with it excess nitrogen and phosphorus. The lower the phosphorus levels entering Lake Kegonsa, the lower the growth of aquatic plants. That is why **FOLKS** has active projects linked to phosphorus reduction like our carp removal, fall leave pick-up, and lake barge aquatic weed pick-up programs.

The Bottom line

There are a lot of considerations and steps involved in pursuing any short-term solutions for controlling excessive invasive aquatic plants, except manually pulling those troublesome plants.

Rather than go into all of the detailed procedures someone would need to engage in to attempt other options, **FOLKS** will offer to work with you if you have questions and/or permits that you would like to pursue. Start by contacting Peter Foy at peterfoy49@gmail.com. We will work with our contacts at the WDNR to help get you the right answers.

FOLKS 2021 Annual Survey Results

183 of our **FOLKS** members (about 46%) responded to the spring 2021 survey. The survey was sent to one email address from each household or business. Thank you for your responses!

Your feedback helps us make **FOLKS** stronger and better for all of us and gives good direction for your Board of Directors. The **FOLKS** board uses the feedback in the surveys to determine our successes and failures and gauge interest in **FOLKS** projects. Thank you for your comments and ideas. It's important for us to know what you're thinking. We asked a few new questions this year and the results are shown below.

A few items to note:

- Last year (2020 season), 58% of our members thought the water level was fine, 28% said it was higher than they preferred and 7% said it was lower than they preferred.
- Due to a dry spring this year, we asked about lake levels at May25, 2021 (Q#9). 52% of our members thought the level was fine. 3% said it was higher than preferred and they'd like it lower, 45% said it was lower than preferred and they'd like it higher.

- 34% of members said there were a **lot** of aquatic plants near their property and another 28% said they had **abundant** aquatic plant growth that was a problem
- Past **FOLKS** projects such as carp removal, leaf management, aquatic debris pick up and park projects appear to be well supported.
- More than **50%** of our respondents think we should pursue the following projects:
 - Support phosphorus sediment removal (Suck the Muck) in Door Creek 80%
 - Support dredging the Yahara River below the LaFollette dam 77%
 - Identify and try to improve water run-off areas 73%
 - Support walleye study on ways to increase walleye in Lake Kegonsa 63%
- 55% of our respondents have owned their place on the lake or river for over 20 years!

2021 survey details:

Q#1- The **FOLKS** organization represents my interests regarding Lake Kegonsa

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
• Yes, FOLKS does a good job	97%	97%	98%
• FOLKS does a pretty good job, but could do more	3%	3%	2%

Q#2- I find the quarterly newsletters to be informative and worth reading.

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
• Yes, pretty much all the time	100%	100%	100%
• I don't usually read the newsletter	0%	0%	0%

Q#3- Social events

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
• I have attended at least one and will go again	49%	50%	49%
• Have not been able to attend, but believe they are worthwhile	49%	48%	48%
• Don't believe social events are worthwhile	2%	2%	3%

Q#4- **FOLKS** emails with updates and announcements

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
• Appreciate the FOLKS emails	98%	100%	99%
• I don't really pay attention to them	1%	-	-
• Most are worthwhile but there are too many	1%	0%	1%

Q# 5- **FOLKS** website: www.Kegonsa.org

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
• Use the website once in a while	51%	46%	48%
• Didn't know FOLKS had a website	16%	27%	25%
• Aware of website, but have not used it	33%	27%	27%

Q#6- **FOLKS** on Facebook

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
• I have accessed FOLKS on Facebook	16%	19%	15%
• Aware that FOLKS was using Facebook, but have not used it	19%	16%	22%
• I don't use Facebook	43%	42%	39%
• I didn't know FOLKS was using Facebook	22%	24%	24%

Q#7- **FOLKS** work with government agencies

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
• FOLKS working with government agencies is extremely important	99%	98%	99%
• These relationships are nice, but not that important	0%	2%	1%
• FOLKS board should spend their time on other activities	1%	-	-

Q#8- If you don't live on the lake or river, why have you chosen to belong to **FOLKS**?

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
• I/we are interested in being good stewards of Lake Kegonsa and the watershed and FOLKS helps with that effort	84%	92%	-
• We used to live on the lake but have moved and we still want to support FOLKS .	5%	3%	-
• Newsletters & other informational material/ presentations are of interest	25%	21%	-

Q#9- Water Levels - We would like to know how you feel the water level is for you right now (May 25, 2021). We realize members on different sides of the lake might have a little different opinion.

	<u>2021</u>
• Level is fine. We didn't have any problems.	52%
• Level is higher than we prefer. We would have liked it lower.	3%
• Level is lower than we prefer and we would like it higher.	45%

Q #10- Water Levels–Your opinion about the water levels last year.

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
• Level was fine. We didn't have any problems.	58%	21%	7%
• Level was higher than we prefer. We would have liked it lower.	28%	30%	17%
• Level was lower than we prefer. We would have liked it higher.	7%	-	-
• Level was really high. We pulled our pier boards at least once.	-	32%	33%
• This was as bad a summer as I can remember.	-	4%	29%
• Water level was so high that it affected our shoreline.	-	12%	23%

Q #11- Aquatic plant growth. How has it been near your property?

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
• Limited aquatic plants.	6%	3%	3%
• Some aquatic plants.	22%	34%	25%
• Lots of aquatic plants.	34%	64%	72%
• Abundant aquatic plant growth that was a problem	28%	-	-

Q #12- Lake clarity

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
• The lake clarity was good last year.	9%	7%	4%
• Lake clarity was not ideal, but was pretty good.	33%	51%	35%
• About the same as it has been historically.	31%	-	-
• Lake clarity was pretty bad at times.	22%	-	-
• Lake has not been clean enough to swim most of the year.	5%	42%	61%

Q #13- Carp removal project. What do you think about the project?

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
• I believe the project is worthwhile.	91%	97%	96%
• This is worthwhile project, only if we limit our spending.	5%	-	2%
• Time and money would be better spent in other areas.	4%	3%	2%

Q #14- Fish Camp County Park. *FOLKS* has adopted the park and has rebuilt and painted the picnic tables, planted several native plant gardens, and volunteers regularly clean up the park. We helped to finance the renovation of the deteriorating original 1937 Corn and Net buildings on the property. There will be other park projects come up as the Lower Yahara River Trail is extended into Fish Camp County Park and Lake Kegonsa State Park. **How do you feel about *FOLKS* involvement?**

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
• I believe these park projects are worthwhile.	73%	65%	71%
• These are worthwhile projects, only if we limit our spending.	22%	21%	21%
• Time and money would be better spent in other areas.	5%	12%	8%

Q #15- Aquatic Debris Removal 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.

What did you think of the project?

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
• I used the service and believe this project is worthwhile	43%	35%
• I didn't use the service, but believe this project is worthwhile	46%	53%
• This is a worthwhile project only if we limit our spending	9%	11%
• Time and money should be spent in other areas	2%	1%

Q #16- Leaf Vacuuming. *FOLKS* works with the Pleasant Springs, Dunn and the City of Stoughton to provide a leaf vacuuming program. **What do you think about the project?**

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
• I used it for all of our leaves and I think it is worthwhile	43%	58+%	53+%
• I used it for some of our leaves and I think it is worthwhile	28%	-	-
• I didn't use it, but I think it is a worthwhile program	17%	-	-
• Time and money should be spent in other areas	2%	-	-

Q #17- We would like to gauge your interest in new *FOLKS* projects.

Please check all that you think it would be worthwhile for *FOLKS* to pursue in **2021-2022**.

	<u>2021-2022</u>
• Support phosphorus sediment removal (Suck the Muck) in Door Creek	80%
• Support dredging the Yahara River below the LaFollette dam	77%
• Identify and try to improve water run-off areas	73%
• Support walleye study on ways to increase walleye in Lake Kegonsa	63%
• Educational / Social get-togethers	47%
• Support Humane Society Wildlife Center for wildlife around Lake Kegonsa	39%
• Support carp bow fishing tournament	38%
• Rain garden/shoreline buffer garden tour, education	35%
• Rain barrel education and distribution	30%

Q#18- Would you be interested in volunteering for a *FOLKS* project?

	<u>2021</u>
• I would help if the time and day worked for me	43%
• My schedule probably won't allow it	57%

Q#19- Residency

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
• Year-round resident	68%	67%	68%
• Only part of the time	32%	33%	32%

Q#20- Age Bracket

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
• 35, or under	0%	0%	0%
• 36-50	10%	9%	8%
• 51-71	54%	63%	63%
• Over 71	36%	27%	30%

Q#21- How many years have you had your place on the lake or river?

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
• 0-5 years	8%	15%	14%
• 6-10 years	16%	14%	11%
• 11-20 years	21%	17%	18%
• 21-30 years	24%	23%	22%
• 31 years, or more	31%	31%	35%

Q#22- Share with us the ways that you take advantage of being on the lake

(check all that apply)

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
• Pleasure boating	88%	88%	86%
• Swimming and other activities in the water	76%	70%	72%
• Tubing and/or skiing	62%	60%	55%
• Fishing	61%	65%	60%
• Just looking at the water and the activities on the water	79%	79%	79%
• Sailing	10%	8%	9%
• Kayaking/paddle boarding/canoeing	57%	57%	53%
• Other (mostly jet skiing or not on the lake)	5%	8%	8%

Q#23- If you checked fishing in #22, how often do you fish?

	<u>2021</u>
• Multiple times a week	22%
• A few times a month	24%
• A few times over the summer	55%
• I also go ice fishing	11%

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey. Let us know if you think of anything else. We appreciate your help to make *FOLKS* better.

PFAS Fish Consumption Advisory

Insights on the Recent PFAS Fish Consumption Advisories Issued for the Yahara Chain of Lakes by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and the Department of Health Services (DHS)

The WDNR and WDHS recently issued an updated fish consumption advisory (dated 6/9/2021) for selected fish species taken from the Yahara Chain waters from Wingra Creek to the Rock River, which includes Lake Monona, Lake Waubesa and Lake Kegonsa. These new advisory levels are based on elevated concentrations of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (collectively referred to as PFAS) measured in various fish species from a study conducted in 2020. A quick summary of these new fish consumption advisories has been excerpted below:

The DNR and DHS are recommending the consumption of one meal per month for the following species:

- *Crappie; Largemouth bass; Northern pike; and Walleye*

The DNR and DHS are also recommending the consumption of one meal per week for the following species:

- *Bluegill; Pumpkinseed; Yellow perch (Note: Consumption guidelines for yellow perch are changing from one meal per month to one meal per week.)*

For additional details and a direct link to this important health advisory please read "New PFAS Fish Consumption Advisories for Yahara Chain of Lakes and Waterways to the Rock River" at the following website: dnr.wisconsin.gov/newsroom/release/44806.

What are PFAS chemicals and where do they come from?

PFAS are a diverse group of man-made chemicals (>9,250 different substances) used in a wide range of consumer and industrial products. Some PFAS chemicals have been more widely used and studied than others. These chemicals have unique properties which makes them useful as fluoropolymer coatings and products that resist heat, oil, stains, grease, and water. Fluoropolymer coatings are used in such varied products as:

- Grease-resistant paper, fast food containers/wrappers, microwave popcorn bags, pizza boxes, and candy wrappers (usually to prevent grease from seeping through)
- Nonstick cookware (think Teflon fry pans)
- Stain resistant coatings used on carpets, upholstery, and other fabrics (think Scotchgard and Stainmaster carpets manufactured before 2008)
- Water resistant clothing (think Gore-Tex)
- Cleaning products
- Dental floss
- Many cosmetic products (to help make them waterproof and long-lasting)
- Biodegradable paper drinking straws (developed as an alternate to single use plastic straws)
- Some military-grade ammunition to decrease the likelihood of unintended explosions
- Aqueous film-forming foam (AFFF), firefighting foam that creates a blanket that cuts off the fuel from the oxygen it needs to burn (this use may represent one of single largest historical sources of environmental contamination from PFAS chemicals since at one time, these firefighting foams were widely used including thousands of pounds dumped out of aircraft to control wild forest fires and at various fire-fighting training centers around the world).

Should I be concerned about PFAS chemicals in my environment?

PFAS chemicals are now recognized as global environmental contaminants. They are often referred to as “Forever Chemicals” because certain PFAS can accumulate and stay in the human body for long periods of time and are not degraded naturally in the environment. As a result, as people are exposed to PFAS chemicals from different sources over time, the level of PFAS in their bodies may increase to a point where they may suffer from adverse health effects. This means that from a regulatory standpoint, they are classified as persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic (PBT) chemicals.

Epidemiological studies have revealed associations between exposure to specific PFAS and a variety of health effects, including altered immune and thyroid function, liver disease, lipid metabolism and insulin disruption, kidney disease, adverse reproductive and developmental outcomes, and cancer. Support for these findings in humans also has been established with experimental animal data for many of these effects.

How can I become exposed to PFAS chemicals?

There are a variety of ways that people can be exposed to these chemicals. For example, people can be exposed to low levels of PFAS through food, which can become contaminated through polluted soil and water used to grow the food, food packaging containing PFAS, and equipment that used PFAS during food processing. Another important potential PFAS food source for exposure is the one highlighted in the current WDNR/WDHS fish consumption advisory. This can be a particularly significant source of PFAS exposure because these PFAS chemicals are bioaccumulated up the food chain such that the concentrations that are measured in the game fish we catch and eat are much more concentrated than the smaller forage they feed on, which in turn are higher than the water those fish came from.

People can also be exposed to PFAS chemicals if they are released during normal use and disposal of consumer products that contain PFAS. People may also be exposed to PFAS used in commercially-treated products to make them stain- and water-repellent or nonstick. These goods include carpets, leather and apparel, textiles, paper and packaging materials, and non-stick cookware. People of course can also be exposed by drinking PFAS-contaminated municipal drinking water or private well water. The Yahara Chain of waters for example has been contaminated with PFAS likely from numerous sources but, it is highly probable that PFAS-containing firefighting foams used throughout the years at the Truax Field Air National Guard Base military facility located at Dane County Regional Airport were a major contributor. Another source of potential water contamination from PFAS in the greater Madison area is likely the Badger Army Ammunition Plant (BAAP) facility located near Baraboo, Wisconsin. The U.S. Army completed a study of PFAS contamination sourced from this facility and confirmed the detection of PFAS in soils, surface water, and well water samples in that area.

What can I do to avoid exposure to these toxic PFAS chemicals?

PFAS exposure is a global problem but, you can reduce your exposure to PFAS in a number of ways. If your drinking water is contaminated above levels specified by the EPA or your state government, use an alternate water source for drinking, preparing food, cooking, brushing teeth, and any other activities where you might swallow water. Activated carbon filtration, reverse osmosis (RO), and anion exchange water treatment have all been shown to be capable of removing PFAS from drinking water in your home. Follow local fish consumption advisories like the one recently released by the WDNR/WDHS which are aimed at reducing the amount of PFAS contaminated fish you eat, which in turn will decrease the amount of PFAS you accumulate in your body. Other things you can do to reduce your PFAS exposure include avoiding stain-resistance treatments, choosing furniture and carpets that are not marketed as “stain-resistant,” and avoid using Teflon™ non-stick cookware.

FOLKS 2021 Annual Meeting

Our **FOLKS** Annual Meeting and Summer Fling Party was held Saturday, June 19 at Stoughton Country Club. The Covid restrictions on the size of gatherings was lifted on June 2nd and we were excited to hold an "in person" meeting. What a wonderful way to celebrate the start of summer and renewing friendships with our neighbors.

We were fortunate to have Darren Marsh, Director of Dane County Parks, as our guest speaker. He reviewed the Fish Camp County Park Project which included **FOLKS** support for the preservations of the historic buildings, an update on the lower Yahara River Bike/Hike Trail from Fish Camp County Park to Kegonsa State Park, The Yahara River Sediment Removal Project and an update on the "Suck the Muck" sediment removal project which will include Door Creek in 1922/23. As you can imagine, there were many comments and questions from our **FOLKS** members.

The meeting was called to order by our President, Peter Foy, the 2019 and 2020 financial reports were submitted and updates on our **FOLKS** projects were presented. The meeting closed with the election of two new board members, Claudia Quam and George Corrigan.

Our thanks to Stoughton Country Club for supporting our event as well as giving away a Social Membership to the club. We also want to thank Springers and Quam's Marina for continuing to provide gift cards to the winners of our Lake Kegonsa Trivia Game.

Special thanks to Dick Amundson for providing his family pictures of carp seining in the early 1930's as well as the 1923 Directory of Lake Kegonsa which lists the numbers and owner of all the cottages and the corresponding "Camp" they lived in. These were a huge hit with our members and we sold all of our 50 copies! Let us know if you would like one (at \$5 each) and if there is enough interest we will print more copies.

FOLKS Family Festival @ Fish Camp

FOLKS is planning a fun family celebration on **August 21st**, 10am to 3pm at Fish Camp County Park. The day will include a variety of activities for all ages. We plan to have numerous educational stations about the park and other **FOLKS** projects, a fishing contest, yoga, games for the kids and an afternoon water ski show featuring the Mad-City Ski Team. There will be food trucks and beverages. Please mark your calendars, volunteer to help and plan to attend this fun **FOLKS** event! More info and sign-ups will come to your email.

FOLKS Helping Wildlife

In the Spring of 2021, the **FOLKS** Board approved a new Wildlife Committee to support the injured and orphaned animals of our Lake Kegonsa region. **FOLKS** partners with the Dane County Humane Society (DCHS) Wildlife Center, who perform physical evaluations or elective surgery on animals brought in, after caring citizens have contacted them. They rehabilitate the injured wildlife and release them. In 2020 they released 91 patients into Lake Kegonsa. The site also has a list of natural items you can donate www.giveshelter.org/wildlife-center.

Since May, **FOLKS** members have donated *over 800 pounds* of fresh or flowering tree branches, plants, nuts, berries, flowers, worms, and logs from the wish list of items. The staff at DCHS Wildlife Center has "been simply amazed by **FOLKS**." Hand-knit bird nests were created to provide a cozy

dwelling for injured fledglings. Even the invasive Zebra Mussel which hitches a ride on boats, trailers or lifts affords protein for baby fox, muskrat, or larger mammals at the Wildlife Center. A bucket of fresh mussels in water would be appreciated.

Susan and Gary Gimmestad were the first to champion our cause. After a beautiful Black Cherry tree fell in their yard in May, a neighbor mentioned that the **FOLKS** Wildlife Committee would welcome their donation. Susan said "I had no idea they would even want it, or that the Wildlife facility existed. The tree likely would have ended up at the Town of Dunn transfer site. It was a rewarding experience to know that it was helping the animals."



Gary and Susan Gimmestad pose near their fallen tree.

Their donation of several hundred pounds of fresh branches provided 3 weeks of food, shelter, and enrichment material for recuperating song birds. The 12-24 inch logs Gary cut, provided therapy for woodpeckers needing to practice drilling. They have since donated a second, chopped-up Basswood tree. When asked how we can help sustain the ecology and ecosystems around us, Gary notes: "*It's about being deliberate* and trying to minimize our carbon footprint." The Gimmestads have done this in numerous ways: creating compost, mulching, raking 2 dozen loads of leaves for the **FOLKS** leaf project, reducing their energy use, and driving a hybrid car.

Gary explains "The concept of Gaia is that Mother Nature says that we are all a part of something larger than ourselves." To promote sustainability, Susan continues with the thought that "nature is a gift, and we are the caretakers of it." They have especially enjoyed watching fox babies, owls, and eagles from their property and look forward to gathering "bucket-fulls" of acorn, walnut and hickory nuts to donate in the fall.

Other ways to assist us include: reporting bird sightings through the E-bird App, creating Kestrel nesting houses or bird perches or knit baby bird nests, or reporting turtle crossings and fox observations. We thank you in advance for your gifts of partnership, time, and donations. Please tell them you are from **FOLKS!**

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Steve Schmitt
Owner

We Love Lake Kegonsa and You!!

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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:
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FOLKS Lost and Found

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

FOLKS board meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month and the public are welcome.
Next Meeting is July 13, 2021, 5:30 - 7:00 PM, Stoughton Country Club
Contact Peter Foy (peterfoy49@gmail.com) for more information

Friends of Lake Kegonsa Society, Inc.
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