



Water Trail Guide in Development

by Mindy Habecker, Dane County UW-Extension



The Dane County Environmental Council has put together a steering committee for the development of an educational water trail guide for the Yahara Lake system. The guide will include points of historical, archeological, natural resource features and landmarks that can be viewed from the water. The area of water to be covered in the guide includes Cherokee Marsh, the entire chain of Yahara Lakes (Mendota, Monona, Wingra, Waubesa, Upper and Lower Mud Lakes and Kegonsa) and the Yahara River from Cherokee Marsh south to the Rock County boundary.

It is the intent of the steering committee for this project that the guide will have both a printed and a more detailed electronic format. It will be developed over the next year with the hope that it will be both educational and a pleasure to use. The Dane County Environmental Council is a county committee designed to assist public and private groups in recognizing and protecting the natural areas in Dane County, and to assume an educational role in the environment's protection. For more information on this project, contact Mindy Habecker, Dane County Environmental Council staff at 224-3718.



For more information on the legends and history of the lower Yahara Lakes, including a preview of the 2nd printing of *Taychopera -- A Canoe Guide to the Dane County's 4 Lakes*, please see the LWCA Annual Meeting Insert.



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Capital Springs State Park & Recreation Area Planning Update

by Dana White-Quam, DNR Regional Park Specialist

Planning for Capital Springs State Park & Recreation Area is moving along nicely and will be continuing this summer and throughout the fall of this year. You may not hear much from us during this phase because most of the work right now is the 'behind the scenes' work of writing the master plan documents. The draft written master plan will be presented to the public for comment later this year.

Properties that have existing master plans within the Recreation Area will not be modified greatly. The E-Way, Nevin Springs Fishery Area, Capital City Trail, Mud Lake Fishery Area and Lake Farm County Park will stay for the most part as they are now. However, all plans will be incorporated into this new recreation area plan to provide a consistent management plan for the entire Recreation Area.

The Dane County & DNR planning team will be looking at possibilities, outside the current park boundaries, of developing a system of multi-use trails by way of easement on private lands. The planning team is also meeting with local government officials, user groups, neighbors and our partners to gather input.

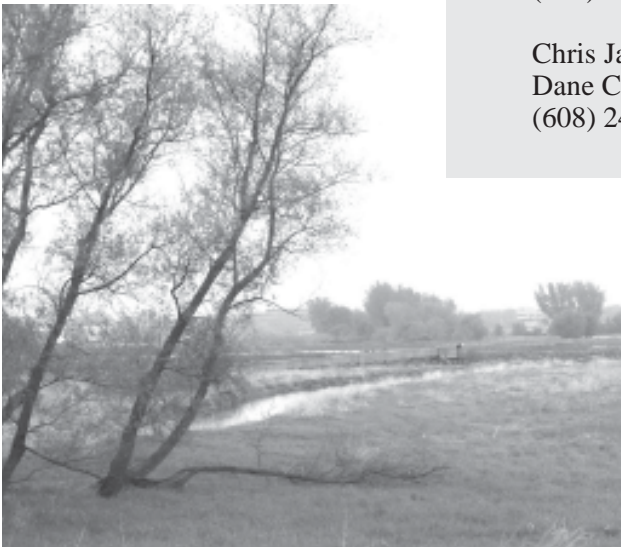
One major achievement is the completion and approval of the Joint Management Agreement between Dane County & DNR. The Management Agreement sets the administrative framework for how the two agencies will manage the property together.

If you have questions about the planning process please contact: Dana White-Quam, DNR Regional Park Specialist – 275-3302 or Chris James, Dane County Parks Planner – 242-4586.

For more information, contact:

Dana White-Quam
DNR Regional Park Specialist
(608) 275-3302

Chris James
Dane County Parks Planner
(608) 242-4586



Nine Springs E-Way - Photos by Kathleen Sitter, LWCA



Lake Waubesa Ice Openings & Closings

by Judy Plambeck, LWCA



Many of us have been asking whether Lake Waubesa ice has been coming on later and leaving earlier than normal. Apparently no Dane county agency keeps official track of Waubesa ice, but anyone interested in official records for Lakes Mendota, Monona and Wingra can check the web site at www.uwex.edu/sco/icesum.html

After a LWCA search, we found that Lake Waubesa westsider, Fritz Carstens, has been keeping track of ice openings since 1971, and closings since 1988. He and wife Laurine moved into the Waubesa Beach neighborhood in July 1969, and Fritz who enjoys working outside in his yard, soon became interested in the fluctuations of the lake.

According to his records, the latest opening for the lake was April 19, 1975. In the 1970's, the lake opened six years in April and four in March; the earliest being March 14, 1973. In the 1980's, the lake opened four years in April and six in March; the latest being April 4, 1980, and the earliest March 7, 1983.

In the 1990's, the lake opened late in April once - on April 10, 1993. The earliest it opened was during the El Nino year of 1998, when it opened on January 9, refroze and then opened for good on February 26. The earliest closing date in the 90's was November 27, 1996. The latest closing date was December 29, 2001.

So due to Fritz' diligence, we see that the trend for the last 30 years has been toward shorter ice seasons on Lake Waubesa, something the rest of us suspected but couldn't prove by our own reckoning! Our thanks to Fritz! If anyone has further records, we would be interested in adding them to our archive.

Fritz is retired from Monsanto.

Lake Waubesa Ice Openings and Closings as charted by Fritz Carstens

Year	Opening	Year	Opening	Closing
1971	April 10	1988	March 25	December 11
1972	April 18	1989	April 13	December 8
1973	March 14	1990	March 15	December 18
1974	April 4	1991	March 23	December 5
1975	April 19	1992	March 9	December 8
1976	March 20	1993	April 10	December 23
1977	March 23	1994	March 26	December 8
1978	April 10	1995	March 20	
1979	April 18	1996	March 26	November 27
1980	April 4	1997	March 27	December 14
1981	March 16	1998	Feb. 26	December 25
1982	April 2		(El Nino)	
1983	March 7	1999	March 17	December 18
1984	April 13	2000	March 6	December 8
1985	March 25	2001	?	December 29
1986	March 29	2002	March 12	December 3
1987	March 9	2003	March 25	December 12
		2004	March 20	



Take a Stake in the Lakes 2004

Dane County's Lakes Cleanup Event

by Rhea Stangel-Maier, Coordinator

The 17th annual Take a Stake in the Lakes volunteer cleanup of the Yahara Lakes will be held:

June 12 and June 19, 2004

Lakes Mendota, Kegonsa and Wingra Saturday, June 12 from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Information Center - Wingra Park, Madison

Lakes Monona and Waubesa Saturday June 19 from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Information Center - Law Park, Madison

Over the years, thousands of volunteers have removed hundreds of tons of waste from Lakes Mendota, Monona, Waubesa and Kegonsa. During Take a Stake in the Lakes, groups, individuals and families adopt a beach or shoreline, collect litter and rake aquatic debris from the shoreline and shallow waters. Some adopt boat launches, and some clean rivers while paddling their canoes or kayaks. Many groups then have a picnic in the park they've just cleaned up. **Garbage bags, T-shirts and door prizes are provided.**

SCUBA divers from the 4-Lakes SCUBA Club, Diversions and Crabby Hermit Dive Shop clean lake bottoms in late May and early June. Local businesses donate compressed air refills to SCUBA volunteers.

Volunteers can also stencil storm drains in their neighborhoods using a stencil kit and spray paint provided by Dane County Extension. The stencil is a reminder to keep leaves and grass clippings out of the gutters, which drain directly to the lakes and encourage the growth of lake weeds.

Shoreline residents: Dane County Public Works barges will conduct the annual aquatic debris pickup from your piers on Lakes Mendota and Kegonsa on Monday, June 14, and on Lakes Monona and **Waubesa** on **Monday June 21, starting at 6:00 AM.**

Note: Aquatic debris must be on your pier by the Monday after the perspective lakes clean-up event.

Take a Stake in the Lakes is sponsored by the Dane County Lakes & Watershed Commission and is part of Yahara Lakes Week, which celebrates and promotes public awareness of the Yahara Lakes. The event is held in cooperation with Dane County Parks, Dane County Public Works and Dane County/UW Extension, and is sponsored by many local businesses and organizations.



To participate or to discuss sponsorship opportunities, call Rhea Stangel at 608-224-3601 or go to www.stangel-maier@co.dane.wi.us. Volunteers may also come to the information centers, where stencil kits and garbage bags will be available.

Spotlight on LWCA Board Member: Mark Pernitz

by Judie Pfeifer, LWCA

Mark Pernitz has been a member of the Lake Waubesa Conservation Association Board for four years. As a Board member he has specialized in information and action concerning the entire Yahara River Watershed. His other conservation credits include director and past president of the Yahara Lakes Association, and a member of the Dane County Lakes & Watershed Commission. While he doesn't have a specific recollection of becoming interested in lake conservation, he says it always seemed to be the common sense thing to do. A long-time water enthusiast, Mark enjoys boating and sailing.



Mark resides in the McFarland area and has lived on Lake Waubesa for over twenty years. He has a daughter, Beth, who is a sophomore at Texas Christian University in Ft. Worth, TX. and a son, David, a sophomore at McFarland High School.

In addition to his conservation work, Mark has also served as president of the McFarland School Board. He has been involved in a variety of community activities, including chairman of the High School stadium project; founding member, officer and director of McFarland Youth Football; and a McFarland softball commissioner.

He has been a trial lawyer for over twenty five years and is with the Boardman Law Firm. He has represented insurance companies, corporations, manufacturers, municipalities, school districts, small businesses and injured individuals in a wide variety of cases across the state of Wisconsin.



Mark commented that “spring is my favorite time of year on the lake. The water is crystal clear; you can read the date on a dime on the lake bottom ! There are no weeds. The loons are swimming about. There is little to no boat traffic—very peaceful and quiet. If it weren't for the view of the Capitol Dome in the distance, one would swear they were in Manitowish Waters or Minocqua.”

A former distance runner, Mark now enjoys bicycle tours. He has completed a number of week-long rides across the states of Wisconsin and Colorado and has bicycled across the Continental Divide more than 12 times.

Mark Pernitz climbing the 850 ft. hill at Blue Mounds State Park as part of his training for the Horribly Hilly Hundreds Challenge ride, a 125 mile, 1 day ride on June 12. For more information: <http://www.horriblyhilly.com/home.html>



Dane County Watershed Groups

by Kate Wipperman, National Heritage Land Trust

Several of Dane County's watershed groups (including all water resource groups) began meeting last spring. This loose alliance gathers to talk about water-related issues around the county that affect everyone and to share other common concerns. On occasion, the group forms opinion statements to which individual organizations can sign on. These statements allow the group to have a larger voice than a single organization.

Through the fall and winter, the watershed groups met monthly and discussed a variety of issues:

Dane County Regional Planning Commission. The groups continue to stay up-to-date on the formation of an entity that may replace the Dane County Regional Planning Commission. They are interested in how this will affect water quality planning issues.

Dane County Phosphorus Ban. Several groups came together to create a statement supporting the county's phosphorus ban.

Dane County Comprehensive Planning. Those participating in the county's comprehensive planning effort have guided the group in writing opinion statements when water and land issues were discussed. Comprehensive Planning is the planning mandated by the state's Smart Growth legislation. It requires municipalities to adhere to approved land use plans.

Dane County's Comprehensive Planning efforts are underway, but you can still join in! Contact Brian Standing at Dane County Planning to get involved and have your voice heard: www.standing@county.dane.wi.us

The watershed groups are continuing to meet, but have decided to do so quarterly. Their first quarterly meeting was April 19, hosted by Pheasant Branch Task Force. The next meeting will be July 19, hosted by Friends of Starkweather Creek.

Subscribe to the DaneStewards list serve to get notices of these upcoming meetings and other water resource news in Dane County. To join, go to: <http://www.smartgroups.com/groups/danestewards>





REPORT FROM LAKES & WATERSHED COMMISSION

By Mark Pernitz, Yahara Lakes Association

County Budget. In 1998 a boat replacement program was established for the sheriff's lake patrol at the recommendation of the Lakes & Watershed Commission ("LWC"). For the replacement schedule to work, it must be followed each year. The 2003 budget included funds to replace boat #1. However, the County Executive froze these funds and a new boat was **not** purchased in 2003.

LWC recommended replacing boats #1 and 2 in the 2004 Capital Budget so that the boat replacement schedule could remain intact. The County Executive rejected this recommendation and did not include **any** funds for replacing either patrol boat. Supervisors Lyman Anderson and Brett Hulsey successfully introduced an amendment to the budget to include funding for the 2 patrol boats. Two patrol boats will be purchased in 2004 and the replacement schedule will be preserved. Thank you Lyman and Brett!

The budget also transferred the lake weed harvesting operations from Public Works to the Parks Department. LWC supported this change. Because the Parks Department has a larger employee pool and more experience with seasonal staffing challenges, it is believed that this will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the weed harvesting program.

The County Budget also transferred the responsibility for lake level management from Public Works to the Land Conservation Department.

Phosphorous Fertilizer Ban. At the request of the County Executive, LWC drafted a proposed ordinance limiting the use of lawn fertilizers containing phosphorous. A public hearing was held in December. The proposed ordinance was passed unanimously by LWC on January 20 and was introduced to the County Board on January 22 with 18 sponsoring supervisors.

At last word, some revisions were being considered to conform the county proposal with the recently passed City of Madison ordinance. The expectation is that the County ordinance will be passed this spring and will take effect in January, 2005.

Based upon the data and research available, it appears that the phosphorous fertilizer ban will assist in improving the water quality of our lakes by reducing the nutrient that feeds the growth of algae. However, one should not be misled into thinking that this ordinance will solve our water quality challenges or result in a dramatic overnight improvement in our lakes' water quality. Rather, like the erosion control and stormwater management ordinances, this ordinance provides another positive step in improving the water quality of our lakes.

Recently, some supervisors have proposed an amendment that would allow fertilizer containing up to 3 percent phosphorous. This amendment makes no sense and would dilute any benefits which would be accomplished by a phosphorous limit. Most lawns already contain adequate phosphorous. New lawns or lawns that need phosphorous are exempted in the original ordinance. Hopefully the County Board will pass the ordinance as originally drafted.

continued on next page



Pier Numbering. Lake residents who have not already purchased a pier sign will be receiving a letter this spring providing them with their pier address and information on where to purchase a pier sign. The sheriff's lake patrol has already had at least one positive experience where a pier address has dramatically improved the response time for their rescue unit.

Unfortunately, there has been some misleading information regarding the placement of pier signs. Some homeowners have mounted their pier sign on their boathouses or elsewhere along their shoreline, apparently so the sign would be displayed year around and would be available for ice fisherman, snowmobilers, etc. However, consistent placement is critical for law enforcement personnel and

it is important to place the pier sign at the end of your pier. Examples of how to do this can be found on the LWC website [www.co.dane.wi.us/commissions/lakes] or by calling Sue Jones at 267-0118.

Weedcutting. An ad hoc work group consisting of members of the LWC, Dane County and Madison Parks, Dane County Land Conservation, Public Works, DNR and UW Limnology has been meeting since January to explore ways to improve the effectiveness of the county's lake weed harvesting operations. Results are preliminary at this point but there is much reason for optimism. Details will be posted on the LWC website.

New Shoreland Zoning Proposal

By Mark Pernitz, Yahara Lakes Association

At the LWCA annual meeting in January, 2002, members heard a discussion of proposed changes to Dane County's shoreland zoning ordinance. Dane County was required to bring its ordinance into compliance with current state law. However, zoning staff proposed additional changes which were more restrictive of property owners than required by state statute.

Subsequent to our annual meeting, the Board of Directors of LWCA sent a letter to the Lakes & Watershed Commission opposing any changes in the Dane County ordinance which were *not* required by state law. Ultimately, this version is the one that passed and *only* the revisions which were necessary to comply with state law were enacted.

NOW the zoning department has proposed *new* amendments to the county's shoreland zoning ordinance. These changes were promoted as "housekeeping changes" to "simplify the rules" and to bring "consistency to erosion control rules." However, as proposed by the zoning department, a lake resident who wanted to construct a 15' x 15' patio, or a rain garden (or flower or vegetable garden) greater than 200 sq. ft. would have to pay a \$200 permit fee *and* submit written plans *signed* by a professional engineer!

Significantly, these new amendments *only* apply to lake residents. There are no equivalent rules which apply to homeowners who do not live on the lake. Yet, a construction activity which causes soil to wash into the gutter results in that sediment flowing directly into our lakes, which is precisely the purpose of the rules for lake residents.

Lakes & Watershed Commission will be meeting with the zoning department to discuss revisions to these proposed changes. We will keep you updated on this dialog. It may again be necessary for the Board of Directors to share our members' concerns with the Lakes & Watershed Commission.

FAQs: DNR Permit Requirements

An excerpt of article by Ray Potempa, FOLKS

(Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resource's Web site: www.dnr.state.wi.us)

State officials are developing emergency administrative rules ensuring that 2003 Wisconsin Act 118, which is in effect as of February 6, 2004, is implemented to streamline the permitting process for construction projects along lakes and streams while maintaining a high level of protection for those waterways. The new regulatory reform law continues to require many construction activities to undergo individual permit applications and review, but also establishes activities that could be eligible for exemptions from the permit process unless these activities would occur along a trout stream, a state natural area, or other sensitive water. (See DNR Permit Exemptions As Contained in Act 118.)

Here are some frequently asked questions about permitting:

Q. I want to grade, fill, remove or disturb soil on waterfront property. Do I need to obtain a permit and/or pay a fee?

A. A grading permit from the DNR is required for any project that physically disturbs more than 10,000 square feet on the bank of a navigable waterway. Disturbances include the addition, removal, or redistribution of topsoil.

The new law defines "bank" as either:

- the land surface that extends 75 feet from the ordinary high water mark of any navigable waterway or
- the land surface extending landward from the ordinary high water mark to the point where the slope is less than 12 percent, whichever is greater.

Grading projects that reshape topography and change vegetative cover dramatically over large areas will typically require engineering analyses and/or landscape design as part of the application. A 30-day public notice and a fee are required.

Q. I want to construct a retaining wall along my shoreline or do erosion control work on my shoreline. Do I need to obtain a permit and/or pay a fee?

A. Retaining walls or sea walls require permits, except as provided by 2003 Act 118 (see exemption article 7). A fee is required. Because of their potential for harming fish and wildlife habitats and other public rights, the construction of retaining walls along a shoreline is rarely permitted. It is recommended that you consider alternatives such as vegetative erosion control, or other structural methods such as rock riprap.

For more information on erosion control methods, please see DNR's Lakeshore and Streambank Erosion Control Information page.

Due to the complex nature of the erosion control permitting process, DNR requires information from you beforehand in order to supply you with the correct permit for your project.

Here's a sampling of other questions about permitting that you will find answers to on the LWCA website: www.lakewaubesa.org

Q. I want to construct a new boathouse. Do I need to obtain a permit and/or pay a fee?

Q. I want to repair an existing boathouse. Do I need to obtain a permit and/or pay a fee?

Q. I want to place a swimming raft or water trampoline in a lake or flowage. Do I need to obtain a permit and/or pay a fee?

The entire Q&A can be found on the web site: www.lakewaubesa.org



P.O. Box 6521 • Monona, Wisconsin 53716
www.lakewaubesa.org

Annual Meeting Insert

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LWCA MISSION STATEMENT

To engage in informational and educational activities required to preserve and enhance the land, air, and water resources in and surrounding Lake Waubesa to ensure a quality environment.

Lake Waubesa Conservation Association, Inc.

P.O. Box 6521 • Madison, WI 53716 • (608) 221-8423
LWCA website: www.lakewaubesa.org

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MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership in the Lake Waubesa Conservation Association is free. However, what we do to further the objectives of the association is not. We continue to operate with an all-volunteer effort in furthering LWCA goals.

The Lake Waubesa Conservation Association is a non-stock, non-profit corporation. Your contributions are tax-deductible.



We encourage new people, new ideas, and talent to get involved with LWCA activities. If you have ideas to share, or would like to become more involved, please call Jan Zimmermann at 221-8423.

Visit our Web site at www.lakewaubesa.org for the latest information and current opportunities.