



Friends of Lake Wingra



Promoting a healthy Lake Wingra
through an active watershed community

Wingra Watershed News

Fall • Winter 2006 volume 3, number 2

Creating a Vision of a Healthy Lake Wingra

Jim Lorman & Anne Forbes

The Mission of Friends of Lake Wingra is “to promote a healthy Lake Wingra through an active watershed community.” But what do we mean by a “healthy” Lake Wingra? What do all of us, as Lake Wingra’s active watershed community, want our lake to be? What is possible for it to be? When citizens founded the Friends almost eight years ago, we understood that what’s in the water is a reflection of how we live on the land. It was a straightforward first step to work to reduce the excess nutrients, sediments, and other pollutants that are carried to the lake from storm water runoff.

Are we done with that yet? No, we continue to have lots of work to do to improve land use and storm water management in the watershed! While we continue to improve how we live on the land that drains to the lake, we are beginning a new focus on the Lake itself.

David Mollenhoff recently¹ challenged Madison citizens to develop a practical vision for our lakes. Mollenhoff believes this vision must:

- “have clearly stated rehabilitation goals
- “distill technical and scientific complexities into a comprehensive action plan, and
- “provide vivid and inspiring images about what we will experience when we get to our destination.”

Friends of Lake Wingra has taken on this challenge for our namesake lake, and we need your help. Over the next year we will be providing leadership in developing a community vision for the future of Lake Wingra.

While our members have come up with some ideas of what might be included in this vision (see sidebar), we are seeking input from all our watershed

partners to refine and crystallize these preliminary ideas. UW and DNR scientists are also working with us to make sure that the benchmarks we establish are realistic and achievable.

We want to include your vision of a healthy Lake Wingra. Please participate by:

1. Inviting us to your neighborhood, school, or other community group, to present the draft goals and facilitate a discussion so that all voices are heard.
2. Come to our next Windows on Wingra workshop, “A Community Vision for a Healthy Lake Wingra” on Saturday February 3 from 9-11:30 a.m. at Edgewood College’s Mazzuchelli Center. Watch for details just after the New Year.

¹ “Lakes of Silver and Green: The Intense City-Shaping Relationship between People and Water in Madison, Wisconsin,” *Lake-Line*, Volume 25 (4): Winter 2005. (Presented at the 2005 Annual Meeting of the North American Lake Management Society.)

What is our vision of a healthy Lake Wingra?

Here are examples of the ideas we’ve generated so far.

- The lake is healthy and attractive for swimming. There are no beach closings.
- The fishery, supported by populations of native species and natural reproduction, meets a range of fishing interests. Fish are safe to eat (and delicious!).
- The land surrounding the lake is recognized as a “dark sky preserve,” without obtrusive lights.

- The lake becomes predominantly spring fed, through increased flow from existing springs and by renewed flow from lost springs.
- Diverse aquatic and wetland communities are protected and restored. Lake, wetland, and terrestrial habitats provide an urban refuge for common, endangered, and threatened native species. Habitats and species (e.g., wild rice) that were lost as a result of European settlement are restored.

Friends of Lake Wingra, Inc.

Mission

We promote a healthy Lake Wingra through an active watershed community.

FOLW Board

Cheryl Bauer-Armstrong, Chair
Jim Lorman, Vice-chair
Steve Glass, Secretary
Katy Wallace, Treasurer
Steve Arnold
Matt Diebel
Anne Forbes
David S. Liebl

Advisors to the Board

Karen Andro
Roger Bannerman
Denny Caneff
Kevin Little
John Magnuson
John Nicol

Special Thanks To:

Karen Andro, Greg Armstrong, Peg Arnold, John Bayley, Paul Bielec, Robert Bohanan, Kristin Branch, Amy Callies, Denny Caneff, Sue Ellingson, Kay Gabriel, Rebecca Gass, Jeff Haberman, Hannah Harris, Marcia Hartwig, Mary Jo Hussey, John Eric Jacobson, Bob Liska, Jeri Mundon, John Nicol, El & Dee Ranthum, Alysa Remsburg, Betty Smith, Kirsti Sorsa, Jim Trumpy, Barb Voelker, Woody Wallace.

Become a Friend

To become a Friend of Lake Wingra, send your tax-deductible contribution to Friends of Lake Wingra, c/o Office of Advancement, Edgewood College, 1000 Edgewood College Drive, Madison, WI 53711-1977. Please make checks to Edgewood College – FOLW.

Friends of Lake Wingra, Inc.

1000 Edgewood College Dr.
Madison, WI 53711
608-663-2838
info@lakewingra.org
www.lakewingra.org

Wingra Watershed News

Fall/Winter 2006, Vol. 3, No. 2

Wingra Watershed News is published twice each year by Friends of Lake Wingra, Inc.



What do you think Lake Wingra should be like 1, 2, 5, 10 or 20 years into the future?

From the Chair

The Friends of Lake Wingra is taking a new direction that will be the primary focus of our outreach, education, and partner meetings over the coming months. We are developing goals for a healthy Lake Wingra. This is not a simple undertaking. What do you think Lake Wingra should be like 1, 2, 5, 10 or 20 years into the future?

We are asking this question of citizens; neighborhood groups; scientists and natural resource managers; city, county and state officials; and other stakeholders. Conversations with all our partners will help us articulate sound goals and measurable actions to meet them.

The lead article in this newsletter presents more detail on this 'theme of the year' and how you can get involved. Please take us up on our offer to meet with your neighborhood, school, or community group to be part of this continuous conversation. Or, join us for the February 3 Windows on Wingra event 3 to participate (See the Calendar for details).

I hope that you enjoy reading this issue of Wingra Watershed News with articles about local activities, events and projects that are possible only because Friends like you offer your support and participation!

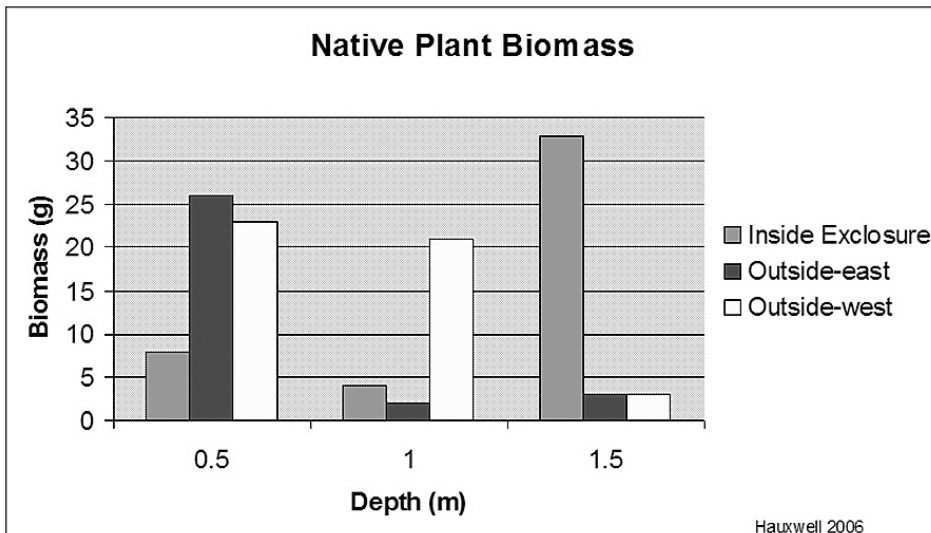
Thanks and best wishes,

Cheryl Bauer-Armstrong

Cheryl Bauer-Armstrong, Chair

We are looking for a few good Friends

As the Friends grow, opportunities for volunteers increase. Please turn to the back page to find out how to share your talents and interests to make a difference in your watershed community. Your contribution can take many forms—short-term, team-based, on-the-ground or hi-tech. Personally, I have found volunteering for the Friends of Lake Wingra to be worthy of my time and energizing for my spirit. I turn events into family time, have learned new skills, and have made new friends. Please give volunteering for Friends of Lake Wingra a try.



Aquatic plants grew more (as indicated by greater biomass) and at greater depths inside the enclosure as compared to outside.

Carp Enclosure Shows Possible Future of Lake Wingra

David S. Liebl

It is general knowledge among biologists who study shallow lakes that large populations of common carp disturb the lake bottom, uproot aquatic plants, and destroy aquatic habitat. Lake Wingra is a classic example of this syndrome.

To demonstrate what might happen in a Lake Wingra without carp, a carp enclosure was set up in summer 2005. Measurements of aquatic plant growth taken inside the carp enclosure by DNR researcher Jennifer Hauxwell and colleagues are raising expectations.

The quantity and distribution of the >20 aquatic plant species found inside and outside the enclosure indicate that plants responded positively to clearer water in two key ways. Plants were able to grow in deeper water within enclosure, and overall plant growth was 2-3 times higher inside the enclosure.

The absence of common carp within the enclosure is clearly contributing to a noticeable improvement in aquatic habitat.

Meanwhile, DNR fisheries manager Kurt Welke has been stalking the wily carp, using radio transponders attached to fourteen of the fish.

Combining tracking data with other fish census data, Welke estimates that there are about 33 carp/acre (or 10,000 total) in Lake Wingra. Significantly, he found that about 10% of the carp are in the Vilas Park lagoon during the spring spawning season.

Reducing or removing carp from Lake Wingra remains an important lake management goal, and DNR staff are making plans to use the lagoon as a "fish trap" for netting and removal of carp.

Be a Friend to Lake Wingra

Cheryl Bauer-Armstrong

You can help protect Lake Wingra using the City of Madison's new on-line "Report a Problem" Web page.

By using the Report a Problem service to alert the city to potential storm water impacts to Lake Wingra, we can create a "Watershed Watch" for our lakes.

Often the city learns about problems that negatively impact our lakes too late to act effectively. A citizen Watershed Watch can help keep sediment, leaves, and trash out of our lake.

And, you can post more than just problems! You can highlight positive watershed actions so we can keep track of the cumulative difference we make in water quality.

Things you can look for include:

- Failing erosion control measures at construction sites.
- Storm drains plugged with leaves, trash, and other debris.
- Spills and accumulations of road salt and sand on streets or public property
- Erosion on public property.
- Spills of petroleum products and other chemicals entering storm drains.
- The location of a new rain garden.

To access the City's Website go to www.cityofmadison.com/reportAProblem/, then click on "General Requests" at the bottom of the page, and submit a report. Be sure and include the location of what you've seen.

If you are interested in taking an additional step, adopt a storm drain and keep it clear of debris then let the City know. Hopefully, over time, the report of action steps will outpace problems and the lake will be healthier for it. Keep on the watch as a friend for the Lake Wingra!

Watching Fall and Winter Birds

Steve Glass



Great horned owl by Patrick Shea

Through December, those who rise early and/or stay up late may be treated to the soft and low mating calls of the barred, screech or great horned owls. After that, the birds are on the nest and silent. All three species are year-round residents of the woods, prairies, greenways and neighborhoods surrounding Lake Wingra...

Fall migration is a time for identification and imagination—a time to practice breaking the “confusing fall warbler” code and a chance to appreciate our watershed’s important role in, and connection with, the hemispheric phenomenon of songbird migration as habitat, and source of food and water.

Bring the binoculars and fall field guides and find a spot with a view along the lake edge or above one of Wingra’s springs to enjoy the fall spectacle. Pick a cold morning with north-west winds.

The action is not in the tree canopy but lower down, at eye level and below, as migrants forage for insects in the shrubs, and fallen leaves and sip water from the springs—local food and groundwater that will fuel their 600 mile-a-night flights south. The black-throated blue warbler for example, often lingers in Wisconsin until late October as it stocks up for its journey to Mexico and central America.

Migrating species seen near Lake Wingra springs in mid-October included black-throated blue warblers, white-throated and white-crowned sparrows, golden-crowned and ruby-crowned kinglets and cedar wax wings.

From now until Thanksgiving or so, alert observers might see migrating common loons on Lake Monona near the Monona Terrace convention center or on the leeward side of Picnic Point.

Through December, those who rise early and/or stay up late may be treated to the soft and low mating calls of the barred, screech or great horned owls. After that, the birds are on the nest and silent.

All three species are year-round residents of the woods, prairies, greenways and neighborhoods surrounding Lake Wingra, their hooting and cooing a delightful addition to the watershed soundtrack.

And then, long after the migrants have left, winter residents such as downy, hairy and red-bellied woodpeckers, along with chickadees, nuthatches, tufted titmice and cardinals will travel in mixed flocks and provide even casual

*“And silently, among the trees,
The thrushes flock and disappear;
We hear their notes upon the breeze,
And then—the singers are not here.*

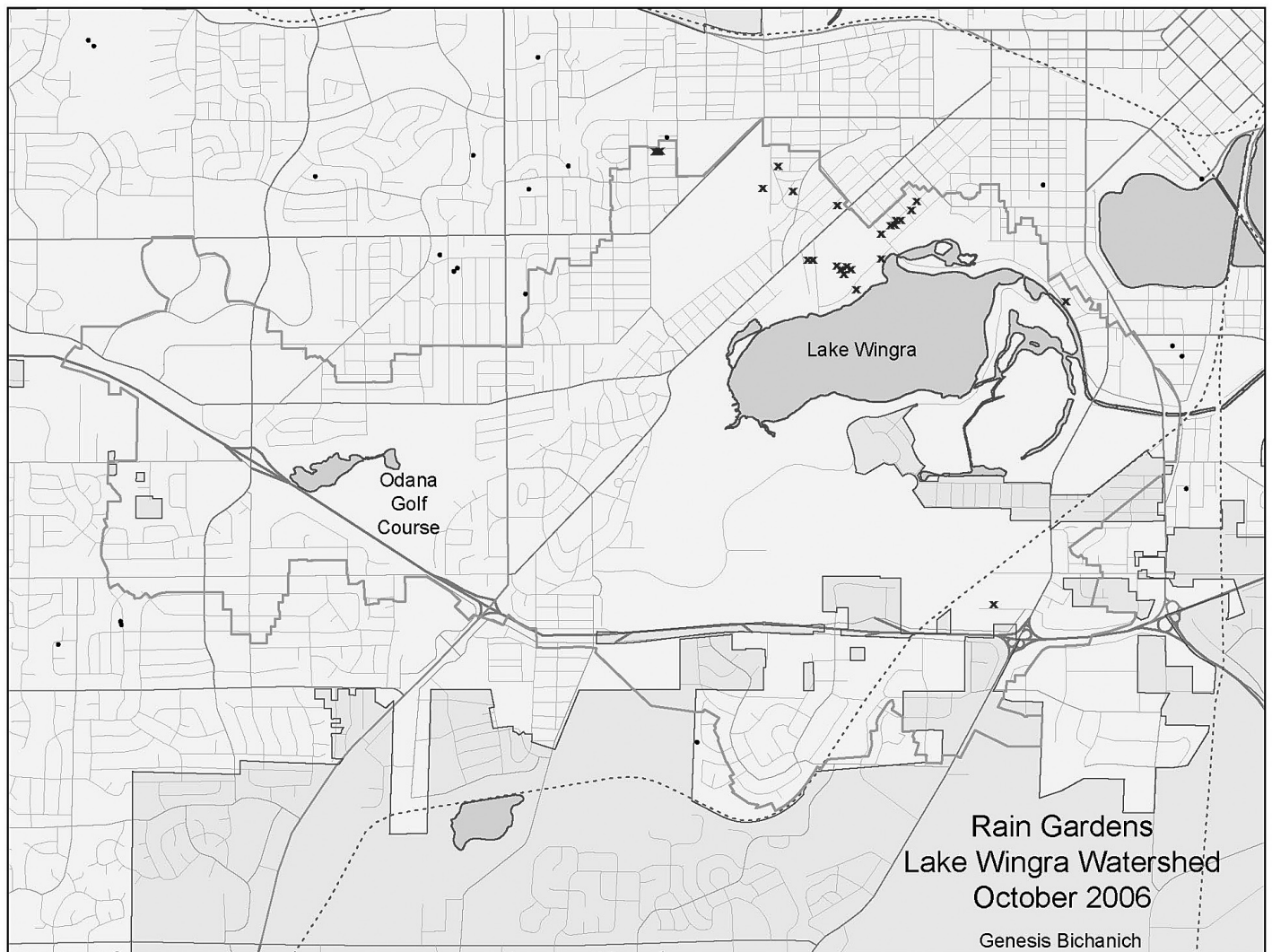
*The autumn wanes, and kinglets go,
Sweet-voiced and knightly in their way,*

*And all the birds our summers know
They flock and leave us day by day.”*

-Frank H. Sweet, “Flocking of the Birds.”

bird watchers with lots of enjoyment throughout the winter, whether in the woods, fields or at their birdfeeders.

Get out into the woods this fall and enjoy the spectacle. Remember, bird identification in fall is trickier than in spring, as adults have molted their colorful summer feathers; the chore is even more challenging by the immature markings of the millions of young birds that have joined the migration. The key to identification is in subtle variations in plumages and behaviors.



Rain gardens within the Lake Wingra watershed are marked with an X.

Wingra Watershed Rain Gardens Lead the Way

David S. Liebl

City of Madison Storm Water Resource Specialist Genesis Bichanich is promoting residential rain gardens through a new mapping project.

"My hope is that a map showing the geographical extent of current rain garden locations will encourage other home owners to add one to their property. I've received responses from so many people eager to share their rain garden stories," Genesis said.

Within the city limits Genesis has found 97 rain gardens, with 26 in the Wingra watershed. She suspects that there are probably many more out there, so please contact her ([gbi-
chanich@cityofmadison.com](mailto:gbi-
chanich@cityofmadison.com) or 266-4059) if you have a rain garden story of your own. The map is updated routinely on the Web, so check in often to track the spread of rain gardens in the city at [http://www.cityofmadison.com/engineering/
stormwater/rgmap.pdf](http://www.cityofmadison.com/engineering/
stormwater/rgmap.pdf)

Featured Partner —

Matt Krueger, Community Organizer for Rain Barrel Installation

When Sustain Dane set up a Rain Barrel display at the Garden Expo in February 2006 and the *Wisconsin State Journal* picked up the story line, staff and volunteers were not anticipating the resulting flood of interest from the community.

The goal of 100 rain barrels installed in Dane County quickly grew as more than 400 orders came in. Fortunately, Matt Krueger's background in community organizing helped insure a well-coordinated effort for the exceptional cadre of volunteers ready to pitch in.



The cadre of volunteer crew leaders for rain barrel installation at their training in April 2006. Note that this residence has 2 rain barrels attached to a single downspout.

By the end of the summer, teams of volunteers had installed 45 rain barrels in the Lake Wingra Watershed, among a total of 305 throughout Dane County.

Matt joined Sustain Dane after growing up in an outdoor family near Minneapolis, earning an undergraduate degree in Communications from UW- Madison, and taking an Americorps stint in Portland Oregon, solidifying his passion for involving people in hands-on approaches to environmental issues.

What he values most in his current role with the Rain Barrel Project is the community building that occurs. "Crews of volunteers who are strangers at 9 a.m. come back 5 hours later, having

installed rain barrels at three different homes while becoming friends in the process. Out on the job, neighbors stop by to see what is happening—and the idea spreads. It's the best kind of education," Matt says.

Matt is proud of the project's success, and he is quick to point out the combination of people and resources that came together to make it happen (See sidebar). The Friends of Lake Wingra place high value on the project because it serves the needs of watershed and neighborhood groups that don't have

the resources to do this kind of project alone.

What's next? Over the fall and winter, continued work on the design of the rain barrel itself and the development of a business model for increasing its availability are underway.

The goal for 2007 is 1,000 new rain barrels installed in Dane County.

To volunteer for

an installation team or to put your name on a waiting list to have one installed at your home, contact Matt at 608.819.0689 or rainbarrel@sustain-dane.org

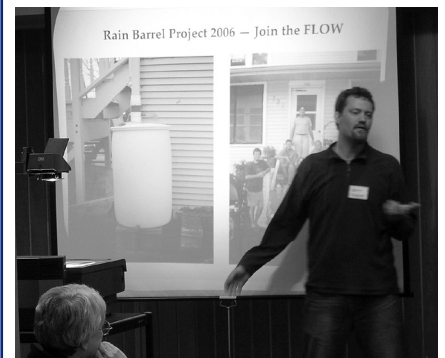
What is a rain barrel anyway?

It's simply a large collection barrel fed by a diverter from the downspout of a home's gutter system. It helps protect water quality in our lakes by reducing runoff to storm sewers and holding back a supply for watering lawns and gardens as needed. When a rain barrel is full to the top, the diverter closes and rain exits the downspout as normal.

The 2006 Rain Barrel Project

With Sustain Dane in the lead, volunteers provided essential resources:

- "Hands-On Team" - created and tested the original design
- Blue Moon Community Farm/Frank Paynter & Beth Hastings - hosted the initial assembly area
- Madison Water Utility - financial support & expertise in water resource issues
- Ace Hardware on Willy Street - discounted supplies, storage & assembly space
- Murphy Desmond Lawyers, SC - donated legal advice
- UW-Madison business students - systems to track inventory and finances
- UW-Madison engineering students - improved diverter design for 2007
- Dane County Office of Lakes & Watersheds - expertise in water resource issues
- Community Car - vehicle for installations
- Habitat for Humanity ReStore - donated installation materials
- Glass Nickel Pizza - donated space & pizza for volunteer recognition event
- 129 individuals donated 1010 hours to install rain barrels



Matt Krueger recruits volunteers for rain barrel installation days.



Shoreline Habitat Restoration



Odana Infiltration Project

Watershed Updates With so many watershed improvement projects underway, it's easy to lose track of everything FOLW is involved in. Here are brief summaries of some recent activities:

Shoreline Habitat Restoration - Vilas Lagoon's native vegetation shoreline buffer is now nearly 600 feet long. This summer, volunteers planted an additional 60-foot section of shoreline that was left open during last year's planting while the City replaced a collapsed storm drain outfall. Work parties also removed reed canary grass and other invasive weeds from the buffer area. Project contact: Jim Lorman

Odana Infiltration Project - Infiltration of storm water runoff from the western Lake Wingra Watershed has reached a rate of 50 million gallons/year, and habitat restoration of the Odana Ponds is underway. Meanwhile FOLW and neighbors have installed a new rain garden and informational kiosk. Funded by MG&E they are located along the bike path. Project contacts: Cheryl Bauer-Armstrong, David S. Liebl

Wingra Park Dredging - Delayed dredging of accumulated street sediment that is clogging the Lake Wingra marina is now scheduled for winter 2006-2007. We hope that improved storm water management will reduce the buildup of sediment at the marina, and prevent the need for future dredging. Project contact: David S. Liebl

Lake Wingra Bike Map - A great way to explore the Lake Wingra watershed is to tour it by bicycle. The Friends of Lake Wingra have a new bicycle map to guide you along several routes and point out features of interest. The map will be available soon from the FOLW website. Project contact: Matt Diebel

Fall Leaf Cleanup Campaign - For the third year in a row, volunteers placed Love Your Lakes, Don't Leaf Them yard signs on commuter streets in the watershed to remind residents to keep leaves out of the streets and therefore, out of the storm sewers and Lake Wingra. Project contact: Anne Forbes or Bob Liska

Wings Over Wingra Workshop Features Dragonfly and Damselfly Antics

Alysa Remsburg

Black and white skimmers zoomed after flies. Delicate damselflies sought mates in the safety of grasses. Red, newly-emerged meadowhawks gathered high over the park. Younger generations stalked prey amongst lily stems in the bay.

Friends of many ages used binoculars to watch adults flying over the water, and aerial nets to catch some for a closer look. Several participants were happy to learn how dragonflies can easily be held without damaging their wings. Others were particularly interested in catching larvae with nets and viewing them under microscopes. There was also time for a slide presentation and lots of questions and answers.

At least nine different dragonfly and damselfly species were spotted, including: common green darner, eastern amberwing, twelve-spotted skimmer, widow skimmer, black saddlebags, eastern pondhawk, eastern forktail, meadowhawk



With so much to see and learn, the two-hour workshop flew by too fast for the 25 eager participants!

Fall / Winter Calendar

See our online calendar at www.lakewingra.org for more details on these and other upcoming events.

Monthly Friends of Lake Wingra Board Meetings.

November 30, December 21, January 25, February 22, and March 22, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Mazzuchelli Center, Edgewood Campus. All are welcome. Contact info@lakewingra.org or 663-2838 to confirm the location and agenda

Monthly Southwest Bikepath Work Parties.

The work parties are over for the fall season. Check on the start of the 2007 season by visiting our website.

Our 5th annual Winter Party

Saturday, December 9. Join the Friends of Lake Wingra to celebrate good friends, a great cause, and the work we've done. New friends and old everyone is welcome! Please bring an hors 'd oeuvre or beverage. 7:30 at 318 Evergreen Avenue.

WoW! Windows on Wingra: A Community Vision for a Healthy Lake Wingra.

Saturday, February 3, 9:00 - 11:30 a.m. Mazzuchelli Center, Edgewood College. Come and add your ideas to our draft goals for the future of Lake Wingra. People in all generations and from all walks of life are invited. Mark your calendar and watch for more information after the new year.

We are looking for more good Friends!

Who doesn't appreciate new friends? We sure do! Here are some current volunteer needs. Don't be shy. Give us a call, and we'll buy you a cup of coffee just to talk about your interests and skills! Contact: Cheryl Bauer-Armstrong

- Anyone who loves Lake Wingra and has time and energy!
- Fundraising & development expertise
- Web site maintenance
- Kiosk designer and coordinator
- Writing and editing
- Graphic design
- Events logistics & publicity
- Archivist/Historian
- Shoreline caretakers
- Watershed watchers

Friends of Lake Wingra, Inc.

c/o Office of Advancement

Edgewood College

1000 Edgewood College Dr.

Madison, WI 53711-1977



printed on recycled paper