



Kiwaniis®

Kiwaniis Club of Madison West – Kiwanogram

Guests: Sara Key and Andrew Warnsing, parents of scholarship winner **Zoe Bogosh**, **Betty Keeney**, guest of **Dennis Keeney**, **Beverly Green**, guest of **Harold Green**, **Mary Ross**, guest of **Fred Ross**.

Program: “Kickapoo River and Lake La Farge-History and Controversy” - Dennis Keeney, PhD.



Dennis Keeney, Madison West Kiwanian and world-renowned soil scientist walked us through the history and results of a proposed dam on the Kickapoo River

near LaFarge, WI,

The Kickapoo is the world’s oldest river, and likely the most crooked. It is navigable its entire 126-mile length, as it runs through Wisconsin’s Driftless Area. The Kickapoo watershed has 500 miles of cold-water streams. It has excellent fishing as well as canoeing, kayaking, and tubing.

The Driftless Area is the result of three ice age glaciations over the last 2.6 million years going around it instead of “drifting” over it.

The area’s economy was characterized by beef and dairy farms, tobacco growing, some recreation, little industry, low population density, and low income. Local leaders thought the economy needed a big boost!

June 19, 2026

Presiding:	Dwight Gribble
Greeter:	Chris Shubak
Checkpoint:	Joseph Tevaarwerk
Opening Word:	Dwight Gribble
Setup:	Tom McCrill

Major damaging floods occurred with regularity. There were 10 major floods between 1907 and 2007. Floods became more severe as the climate changed and the last major flood in 2018 washed out many smaller dams on Kickapoo tributaries. That flood saw the river rise at Gays Mills from about 9 ft. to over 22 ft. in 24 hours. Flood stage is considered 11 ft., and 22 ft. was a new record flood by almost 2 ft.

Early discussions of a flood control dam started during the New Deal in the early 1930’s. The Army Corps of Engineers recommended a dam in 1938, but plans were derailed by WWII. Governor Gaylord Nelson pushed Congress for a dam in 1960. Final plans were completed for an earthen dam just north of LaFarge in 1967. Plans required the purchase of 9,000 acres by eminent domain. 149 farms were lost in the purchase.

There was strong support for and strong opposition against the dam. In 1969, The Environmental Policy Act required environmental impact statements (Cont’d page 2)

Date	Event
Jul 10	MWK Board of Directors, 10:00 am
Jul 17	Foundation Trustees, 1:00 pm

Up Coming Programs

Date	Program	Greeter	Check In	Opening Word
June 26	Community Grant Awards Program - Arlin Brannstrom	TBD	TBD	TBD
July 3	NO MEETING – July 4 th Weekend	NA	NA	NA
July 10	Get to Know Your Kiwanians	TBD	TBD	TBD
July 17	NO MEETING	NA	NA	NA

Meeting Time and Location

Every Friday, 11:45 am
Covenant Presbyterian Church
326 Segoe Road, Madison, WI 53705
Web site: www.madisonwestkiwanis.info
Email: KiwanisWest@outlook.com
Facebook: facebook.com/madisonwestkiwanis

(Cont'd from page 1)

for all federal projects. The Army sourced a study by the UW Institute of Environmental Studies. Dennis was part of the team that performed the study.

Many facets were evaluated, including water quality, endangered species, and socio-economic impacts. Dennis led the water quality evaluation. His report was not received well by the Army. They sent it to over 20 scientists around the world for review, but they all agreed with the conclusion that “the La Farge impoundment will produce a lake of relatively poor water quality as compared to Northern Wisconsin Lakes”.

As a result of the complete IES report, inflation, and the Vietnam War, the cost to benefit ratio was no longer favorable and political support was withdrawn. Construction stopped in 1975.

For the next 20 years, the 9,000 acres became the wild west with off-roading, poaching, moonshining, and marijuana growing activities. There were many proposals and studies about what to do during these years, while flooding issues continued.

In 1991, Governor Thompson funded an economic development project in the Kickapoo Valley. In 1995, the land transfers to the state began and the Kickapoo Valley Reserve was created.

The remnants of the dam and the outlet tower are now tourist attractions and can be seen in maps using satellite images. Flood abatement projects continue in the valley. Several towns have relocated to higher ground.



Jim Danner reports we packaged 9,723 servings of apples at **Second Harvest** on May 28th. Our next volunteer date is **June 25th**.

Club Officers (2025-26)

President:	Dwight Gribble
President-Elect:	Cody Kramschuster
Secretary:	Leroy Baker
Assistant Sec:	Thomas DuVal
Treasurer:	Randy Grobe
Past President:	Ken Saville
Board of Directors:	John Busby
Harley Skjervem	Jim Danner
Joseph Tevaarwerk	Ed Reisch



George Shook presents a Joseff-Endle Music Scholarship to **Zoe Bogosh** and her parents. Zoe plans to attend the Birch Creek Summer Music Academy in Door County.

George Shook reports **Richard Donkle, Case Dorresteijn, Jim Martin, Tom McCrill, George Skupniewicz, and George Shook** volunteered at **Habitat ReStore** on **June 18th**. Our next date will be **July 16th**.

We had about 25 attendees on June 13th at the **West Madison Little League** game between the West Kiwanis and Berghoff Soda teams. Attendees included about 11 Kiwanians, 4 members of Bill Battista's family, and about 10 spouses and grandchildren.

The Board approved purchasing **MWK embroidered hats and shirts** to replenish our inventory for new members. Leroy Baker will be polling existing members to see if anyone would like to purchase a hat or shirt for themselves.



Kiwanis
CLUB OF MADISON WEST