

Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands, Inc.

Where History and Nature Meet at the Door!

Founded in 2007

Forum: Spring 2026

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FOPPI *Forum* back issues can be found at the Washington Island Archives, WI Marine Historical Society, Wisconsin Maritime Museum, Egg Harbor Public Library, Sturgeon Bay Public Library, and the Wisconsin Historical Society Archives.

Hello, Friends,

One of the things that I look forward to when visiting Plum Island is sitting on the dock, with my legs dangling over the edge, listening to the Lady of the Lake sing her song as each wave comes in. Each wave is unique, like the friends and memories I have made on this little island. When we first began this project (in 2008), the abandoned island was raw and wild. Mother Nature was slowly taking back what we had taken from her. We brought our own tools to tame the weeds coming up through the boardwalk and carefully watched our steps as we walked the overgrown trail, so we wouldn't disturb the wildlife. The eagles screamed at us to stay away from their nest, and we obliged. Fallen tree branches made shapes in the woods.

Today the buildings and structures shine brightly, thanks to your support. The boathouse recently underwent a major project to restore her pilings, assuring us that she will continue to stand over the water for future generations. This restoration makes it possible for us to dream of the future for this historic building. Imagine being able to hold workshops and presentations with access to the internet and lighting for citizen science projects. We'll have a spot for guest speakers, musicians, authors, and poets to enlighten us with their craft. An official space for a nature store is in the plan, along with a bookstore.

We are starting at the top and replacing the shingles that have stood their time since 1939. The next phase of the project is to restore the overhead doors and activate the electricity that was disconnected when the Coast Guard closed the station in the 1990s. The roof will cost \$392,000 and will breathe new life into this iconic building. We have reached out to potential donors for support and, if we are able to raise the funds, plan to complete the project this season.

There is still time for you to be part of this historic project. You can donate online at www.plumandpilot.org/donate or by sending a check to our post office box. Thank you for your consideration.

I invite you to come sit on the dock with me and listen to the waves break along the shore as they have over the years, capturing the thoughts and dreams of those who have stood before us.

—Mary Beth

In Memory: Peter “Pete” LeMere

In Memory

Peter A. LeMere, of both Green Bay and Egg Harbor, WI, passed away peacefully, Sunday, April 5, 2026 at his home, surrounded by family. He was born September 23, 1933 in Sturgeon Bay, WI, son of the late Joseph “Bub” and Margaret (Parent) LeMere and was a graduate of Gibraltar High School, Class of 1951.



Peter continued his education at St. Norbert College, earning his Bachelor's Degree. Peter later attended the University of Wisconsin and then earned his Master's Degree in Public Health at the University of Michigan.

He was united in marriage to Marian Honold, May 14, 1960. They were blessed to have 65 years as husband and wife, welcoming three children into their family.

Peter spent most of his career working in public health for the Appleton and Green Bay Health Departments before retiring from the Brown County Health Department. At the young age of 62, Peter earned his Commercial Driver's License and pursued his childhood dream of being a semi-truck driver. In his “retirement” he drove for the Clark Cartage Company, then Potts Transport for two decades.

Throughout his life, Peter's greatest passion was volunteering. Among the many organizations to which he donated his time, he was most recently involved with Egg Harbor Historical Society,

Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands, and Door County Maritime Museum.

Peter is survived by his wife, Marian; three children: Gail (Ed) Swiechowski, Jeff (Nikki) LeMere, and Mike (Stacey) LeMere; six grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

* * *



Lambeau Cleanup Crew: Jim Schwartz, Dallas Greetham, Sally Dery, Pete LeMere, and Scott Nelson.

A Note from Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands

We are deeply saddened by the passing of Pete LeMere. Pete was a long-time member of Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands. He was a crew member for *The Shoreline* (FOPPI's tour boat) and one of FOPPI's “Lambeau Cleanup Crew.” In addition to being very active with FOPPI, Pete was a member of the Coast Guard Auxiliary, a docent on the *John Purves* (Door County Maritime Museum's tug boat), and the Egg Harbor Historical Society. For the last several years, during Door County History Week, the Egg Harbor Historical Society featured a presentation titled “Pete LeMere's Egg Harbor.” Pete will be greatly missed.

To watch Pete's interview with WBAY-TV, go to www.wbay.com/2024/12/23/go-pack-go-91-year-old-packers-fan-still-serves-stadium-cleanup-crew/

My Coast Guard Experience by Peder Schoenfeld

Back in 1969, the Army recruiter paid a visit to our high school, looking for prospective volunteers to go to Vietnam. Of course, I respectfully declined and went on to a tech school. Then, in 1970, I came to be something like number 33 on the draft list, which almost guaranteed I was going somewhere. The recruiter began calling to remind me of the deadline. I responded that a tropical vacation was not what I was interested in, and the following week I enlisted in the U.S. Coast Guard.

After boot camp in Alameda, California, I went to engineman school in Great Lakes, Illinois. From there, I went to my first duty station at Plum Island. This was an absolute dream for me because I had developed a severe dislike for big city life.

I spent my time on Plum Island as an engineer on the 40300 and 40574 boats. I was happy to learn that time in the Coast Guard, my duties were not limited to one thing. By the time my service commitment was fulfilled and I left the Coast Guard, I had about seven qualifications in addition to my engineman rating.



The CG40300 docked at Plum Island.



Rendering of the CG40574.

The crew got along well, but of course there were a few skirmishes. One memory I will never forget is the day someone in a small skiff tied up to the dock and ran up to the station to ask for help. At that particular time, the crew change was happening, and the 40574 boat was at Gills Rock waiting for the next crew members. We could not reach the 40574 crew on the radio. Only one other crew member and I were left at the station on Plum Island. The man asking for help was scuba diving off Pilot Island with a friend who got caught in a current and swept away. I put out a mayday call on the radio and headed with the man to Pilot Island on the 40300. We arrived at about the same time as the 40574; a few minutes later, some divers from Washington Island showed up to help. The water was very clear, and the diver in distress was located in a short period of time. However, it unfortunately turned out to be a recovery mission. The man who drowned was on his honeymoon in Door County and went diving with his best man while their wives were back at the motel.

After my stay on Plum Island, I was transferred to Sherwood Point Lighthouse in Sturgeon Bay. That was the end of the "choice duty." After my time at Sherwood Point, I went to Maine for four years, then to Milwaukee to the USCG Westwind, a wind-class icebreaker on which I traveled to Iceland, Greenland, and the Arctic Circle.



USCG Westwind in Greenland.
Photo courtesy of USCG Historian's Office.

Overall, I have to say that serving in the U.S. Coast Guard was one of the best experiences of my life. I went places and saw things that I will never be able to do and see again. I received the educational opportunities I asked for as well as some that I didn't.

DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge and the *Bertrand* by Mary Beth Volmer

If someone had asked me what the Green Bay National Wildlife Refuge and the DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge (in Iowa) have in common, I would have not thought the answer would be shipwrecks!

Located within the DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge is DeSoto Lake, an oxbow lake that was once part of a bend in the Missouri River. In 1968, two private salvagers uncovered in the lake the wreck of the steamboat *Bertrand*, which was buried beneath a cornfield and 30' of silt and gravel. As the discovery occurred on federal property, the individuals were required to comply with the Antiquities Act of 1906 and relinquished all recovered artifacts to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for permanent preservation. The excavation yielded more than 10,000 cubic feet of cargo and over 500,000 artifacts from the vessel's hold.



Excavation of the *Bertrand*.

The cargo recovered from the excavated *Bertrand* sheds light on daily life in Virginia City, Montana Territory. The steamboat carried clothing, tools, food, and consumer goods upriver, including dried meats, oysters, pepper sauce, fruit, French mustard, whiskey, brandy, medicine bottles, over 3,000 textiles, gloves, hats, trousers, coats, mirrors, clocks, silverware, and building supplies. Most goods were destined for retailers in Virginia City or local log cabin stores.

The *Bertrand* was part of an extensive water-based regional trading system that developed during the mid to late 19th century. When gold was found in Montana in 1863, streams of hopeful prospectors migrated to the area from other states. River routes were also integral to the fur trade between St. Louis and the Native American country that provided the furs. The *Bertrand* was a 161-foot paddle wheeler, typical of those in operation on the Missouri River in 1865.

Traveling the Missouri River was risky, with shifting channels, sandbars, and hidden submerged trees. On April 1, 1865, the steamboat struck a submerged log in the DeSoto Bend of the Missouri River, about 15 miles upstream of Omaha, Nebraska. In less than 10 minutes, it sank in 12' of water. No people perished, but almost all of the entire cargo was lost. The estimated combined value of the vessel and cargo was \$100,000.

When visiting the refuge and artifact display, travel on the Steamboat Trace Trail where archaeologists have uncovered hotel foundations and bakery ruins. So much history lies beneath the surface of the ground and the water!



An artist's rendering of the *Bertrand*.

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Collaborations and Visions by Mary Beth Volmer

This year, Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands is partnering with The Ridges Sanctuary to monitor the threatened dwarf lake iris on Plum Island through their Forest School for 1st through 4th graders. We also plan to collaborate on more citizen science projects supporting the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

The boathouse is designated as base camp for these projects. If you have visited Plum Island recently, you may have concerns regarding its current condition. The building requires roof repairs, restoration of the overhead doors, and installation of electricity. The good news is we working on all that!

At the beginning of this year, we launched a capital campaign to replace the roof and add gutters and downspouts, with a fixed estimate of \$392,000. So far, we've raised over \$90,000 in donations and have approached local philanthropic organizations for support. Imagine updating the boathouse to provide space for workshops and programs, our "Boatique" nature store, a welcome center, and an entertainment venue for artists.

Although AI helps create a vision, your donation helps make our vision a reality.

You can donate via check sent to our post office box or electronically on our website: www.plumandpilot.org/donation. Remember, your donation is tax deductible. Thank you for your faithful support of our mission!



AI-generated vision of a hands-on learning space in the boathouse.



AI-generated vision of a classroom in the boathouse.



The boathouse in its current condition.



AI-generated image of a music event in the boathouse.

Save the date!

FOPPI Annual Membership Meeting and Picnic Saturday, July 25, 2026

Join FOPPI for a day on Plum Island* to learn about and celebrate our shared passion for the island and the accomplishments of our partnership with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

A light lunch will be provided. Please bring a folding lawn chair, your own non-alcoholic beverage or water, sunscreen, and bug spray, and wear appropriate footwear for walking over uneven surfaces.

For more details (coming soon!) and to register for this fun event, visit www.plumandpilot.org/events-work-days.

*In the event of inclement weather, the annual meeting and picnic will be held at the Community Center Gymnasium on Washington Island. FOPPI will pay for your round-trip walk-on ferry ticket from Northport and provide transportation to the event site. Just mention FOPPI at the ferry ticket booth in Northport to receive free walk-on passage, compliments of Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands!



View from the rear range light.



Some FOPPI volunteers at the 2025 picnic. L to R: Kimberly, Paul, Tim, Ginnie, and Deb. Brewer the lab had a great time, too!



Sally Dery, picnic organizer, heads out to Plum aboard *The Shoreline* to prep for the 2025 meeting.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

We are excited to announce our event schedule for this year. Receive a 10% discount by registering before May 15—just apply gift card or discount code **Prebook2026** when checking out. Members receive a discount year-round!

Register for these events online at our website (www.plumandpilot.org) under **Field Days & Special Events** unless noted:

May 22-24: Door County Festival of Nature on Plum Island sponsored by The Ridges Sanctuary. Register at www.doorcountyfestivalofnature.org/

June 5-6: Door County Lighthouse Passport Days with departures at 8:00am, 9:15am, 10:30am.

July 4: The Annual Boat Regatta
Board *The Shoreline* in Gills Rock to view the evening fireworks display: www.plumandpilot.org/events-work-days

July 10: Field Day—Birding 101
If you'd like to learn about the great sport of Birding but aren't able to identify a bird unless they're a Robin or Cardinal, then this Field Day is for you! Join The Ridges Sanctuary birding expert Dan Schieman as he guides you through the Plum Island birding sanctuary and helps you identify these little creatures by their size, color and song.

I would like to see all harmless wild things, but especially bird, protected in every way.

—Theodore Roosevelt

July 18: Field Day—Summer Photography Workshop

Famed Door County photographer Dave Heilman will share his craft with us during two photography field days on Plum Island.

July 25: Annual Meeting and Picnic

Learn about the work FOPPI is doing on Plum and Pilot Islands and explore Plum Island. Lunch will be provided. This is just one of the many benefits of being a member! Guests are welcome.

July 26: Field Day—Native American Presence on Plum Island

Learn about this important history and cultural heritage, so we may gain a better understanding of the customs, traditions, and ways of life of the indigenous peoples in northern Door County.

August 1: Field Day—Niagara Escarpment

Learn everything you ever wanted to know about the Niagara Escarpment but were afraid to ask! Join Don Mikulic, with the Niagara Escarpment Resource Network (NERN), to learn about the globally significant unique features of the escarpment—natural, cultural, historical and environmental. After the presentation, take a hike to see where the escarpment is present on Plum Island and learn about the plants that are dependent on this rare geologic formation. **Note:** In case of inclement weather, this Field Day will be held at the Door County Maritime Museum in Sturgeon Bay.



Scan the QR code to download your Heritage Trail Pass.

Door County Heritage Trail Pass

The Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands are proud to be a part of the Heritage Trail Pass, sponsored by Destination Door County. The Door County Heritage Trail consists of 28 historic and cultural sites across the peninsula—from iconic lighthouses and maritime museums to local history centers, churches, and preserved homes.

As you travel the trail and check in at each stop using your mobile pass, you'll earn fun rewards along the way. Visit 5 or more locations to receive a Door County-themed prize.

Whether you explore over a weekend or throughout the year, the Heritage Trail Pass is a meaningful way to connect with the people, places, and moments that shaped this beloved destination.

Start your journey today and discover the heritage behind the scenery. Download your pass at: www.doorcounty.com/experience/heritage-trail.

FOPPI Recent Happenings

Preparing *The Shoreline* for the 2026 Season

On Saturday, May 2, nine FOPPI volunteers gathered in Gills Rock to prepare *The Shoreline* for the 2026 season. They thoroughly cleaned *The Shoreline*, gave its lifeboats a new bright coat of paint, and reviewed and organized important information for the upcoming season.

In addition, former owner of *The Shoreline* Captain Jim “Robbo” Robinson helped install a radio beacon that automatically relays the boat's position to the Coast Guard in the event of an emergency. As defined by Google, an EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon) is a compact, battery-powered distress beacon used on ships and boats to alert search and rescue authorities in emergencies. When activated (automatically or manually), it transmits a 406 MHz signal to satellites, notifying rescuers of the vessel's ID and location to facilitate rescue.

Photos by Tim Sweet.



It was a beautiful Door County day to ready *The Shoreline*!



Volunteers on the dock. L to R: Scott, Barb, Vicky, Stiles, Tim, and Jim.



Volunteer coordinator Jim Schwartz organizing information for upcoming cruises.



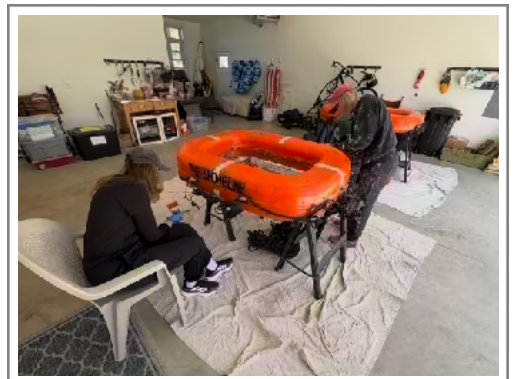
Captain Stiles is ready to welcome guests aboard *The Shoreline*.



Lunch courtesy of Deb and Stiles.



Barb cleaning the fenders.



Deb and Vicky painting the lifeboats.

FOPPI Recent Happenings



Captain "Robbo" installing the EPIRB.
Photo by Tim Sweet.



The EPIRB installed on
The Shoreline.
Photo by Tim Sweet.



The covered EPIRB.
Photo by Tim Sweet.



FOPPI Board President Mary Beth Volmer and
Erin Railsback.

FOPPI Spring Board Meeting

On Saturday, April 25, Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands held its quarterly Board meeting at Horicon National Wildlife Refuge (www.fws.gov/refuge/horicon) to discuss upcoming plans for Plum and Pilot Islands. After the meeting, FOPPI board members were treated to a tour of Horicon National Wildlife by Erin Railsback of U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

We're grateful for our partnership with U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service!



Jim Schwartz and Dawn Nelson
representing FOPPI at the
Ghost Ships Festival.

2026 Ghost Ships Festival

On March 7, some FOPPI members attended the 2026 Ghost Ships Festival, Wisconsin's premiere event for Great Lakes Maritime History, Archeology, Shipwrecks, Scuba Diving, and Underwater Technology, hosted by the Wisconsin Underwater Archeology Association (WUAA). This was the third year for this event, which featured 29 exhibitors (including FOPPI), multiple presentations, roundtable discussions, and music by the famed artist Lee Murdock.

One of the most exciting presentations was "Discovery of Door County's Ghost Ship: The *F.J. King*." Our boat, *The Shoreline*, and crew assisted the UAWW team in locating this ghost ship.

We're hoping there will be another event like this in 2027!

Life is a shipwreck, but we must not forget to sing in the lifeboats. –Voltaire

Quiz: How Can You Help a Hummingbird? by USFWS

Did you know that a group of hummingbirds is called a charm? Or that a red feeder is more likely to attract them than a blue one? Take this quiz to test your knowledge of these tiny charmers.

1. In the United States, hummingbirds can be found...

- a. Only in warmer areas, such as the South and Southwest
- b. Only in aviaries and zoos
- c. Only in photos and documentaries
- d. Across the country, depending on the region and time of year

Answer: d. More than 15 species of hummingbirds breed in the United States, and more than 25 species visit for part of the year. In the East, you're most likely to see ruby-throated hummingbirds. In the West, look for broad-tailed, rufous, and black-chinned hummingbirds, among others.

2. Hummingbirds pollinate plants by...

- a. Transferring microscopic insects between plants
- b. Transferring nectar between plants
- c. Transferring pollen between plants
- d. Telekinesis
- e. None of the above; they're not involved in pollination.

Answer: c. Certain animals help carry pollen from the male to the female parts of plants, allowing them to reproduce. When hummingbirds drink from different flowers, pollen hitchhikes a ride on their beaks and feathers. It's a win for the hummingbird, the plant—and us!

3. True or False: Hummingbirds are vegetarians.

Answer: False. Hummingbirds do consume nectar, a sugary liquid secreted by plants. However, they also snack on insects such as gnats and fruit flies. By planting a pollinator garden, you can provide both food sources and enjoy some natural pest control.

4. Hummingbirds prefer...

- a. Berries, such as beautyberry and winterberry
- b. Flowers, especially red, pink, yellow and orange ones
- c. Small fish and tadpoles
- d. Pizza

Answer: b. Check out the Pollinator Partnership's online guides to pollinator-friendly native plants for your region.

5. The best time to put out a hummingbird feeder is:

- a. Spring
- b. Summer
- c. Fall
- d. Winter
- e. It depends on where you live

Answer: e. Some areas enjoy hummingbirds year-round; others welcome them in the spring. For migrating hummingbirds, the best time to hang a feeder is a week or so before they arrive. Check out the

suggested timing for your region on the Audubon Society website.

6. The sugar solution in a hummingbird feeder should be made with...

- a. White sugar
- b. Honey
- c. Brown sugar
- d. Artificial sweetener
- e. Any of the above

Answer: a. White sugar
The Smithsonian National Zoo suggests one part table sugar to four parts water.

7. To maintain a hummingbird feeder, change the sugar solution regularly and clean the feeder with...

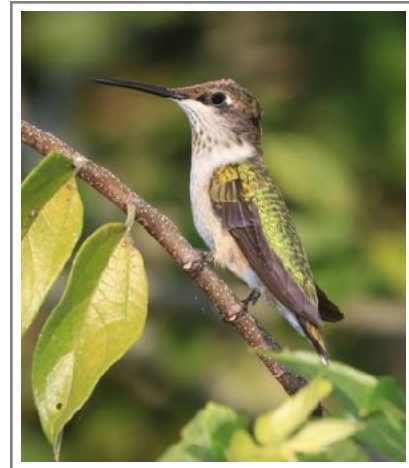
- a. Dish soap
- b. Plain water or a weak vinegar solution
- c. Bleach
- d. Nothing. There's no need to clean the feeder.

Answer: b. Cleaning products can leave harmful residue in feeders. Also note that the sugar solution should be changed regularly; spoiled solution can be toxic.

8. The following can pose a threat to hummingbirds that visit feeders:

- a. Cats
- b. Bees, ants, and other insects
- c. Too-cold nectar
- d. Spoiled nectar
- e. All of the above

Answer: e. All of the above.



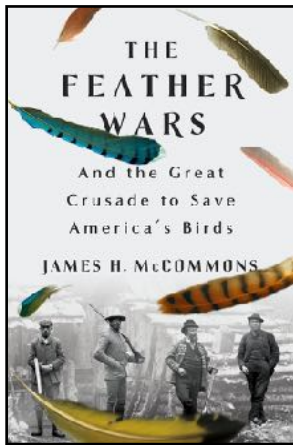
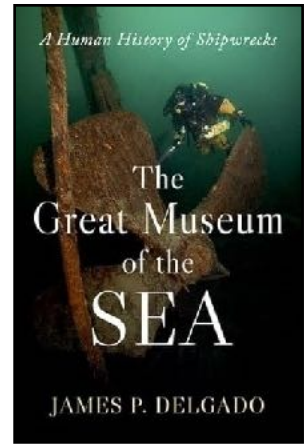
Ruby-throated hummingbird. Photo by Alan Schmierer, USFWS.

To learn more about how you can help these pollinators, visit www.fws.gov/initiative/pollinators.

The Great Museum of the Sea
by James P. Delgado

Have you ever wondered why folks (like me) are so interested in shipwrecks? This book is like having a cup of coffee with someone who has been asking (and answering) this question throughout their career. Could it be the archeology of the found items or the architecture of the ships that tells the story of our cultural advances and humanity's relationship to the sea?

While conflicted about raising and restoring shipwrecks, Delgado helps the reader to understand when it's a good idea and when we should just leave the shipwreck to the marine ecosystem. Did people perish when the ship went down? Does the wreck impede maritime traffic? Is there funding to preserve the ship for those to experience that are not divers? Using examples of the ships he has dived on, consulted on, or seen in museums he explains the process of documenting wrecks and researching their importance. While we're not always able to dive the ships of lore, the work he (and other maritime archeologists) have provided to us mere humans brings us closer to the answer. —Review by Mary Beth Volmer



The Feather Wars: And the Great Crusade to Save America's Birds
by James H. McCommons

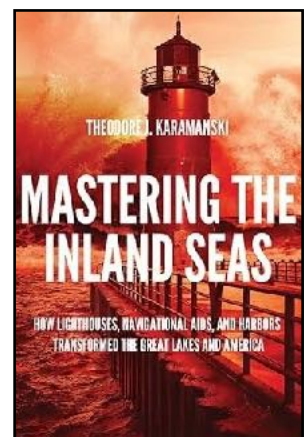
From the time the country was founded, early Americans assumed that the land's natural resources were infinite, including its birds, which were zealously hunted for food, game, and fashion. With the rapid extinction of the passenger pigeon—a bird once so numerous that its flocks darkened the sky in flight—many realized actions needed to be taken if other birds were to be saved. What followed was both a spiritual awakening and a great crusade to save birds and their habitat. The campaign took place on many battlefields: society teas in Boston, hunt clubs on the East Coast, the mangroves in the Everglades, and in the editorial pages of newspapers and periodicals. From many corners of the country the bird protection movement was born and brought together a remarkable coalition of people and organizations to save America's birds. —Review suggested by Jude Kuenn and courtesy of amazon.com

Mastering the Inland Seas: How Lighthouses, Navigational Aids, and Harbors Transformed the Great Lakes and America
by Theodore Karamanski

This book describes how our Great Lakes lighthouses, navigational aids (buoys and charts), harbors, and the lifesaving service all played a significant role in the expansion of our country. The author believes that the Great Lakes should be referred to as “Inland Seas” and hold the same, if not greater, significance as the coastal oceans. He equates lighthouses, nautical charts, and ports to the covered wagon of the westward expansion.

Karamanski has a great love for lighthouses and refers to them as symbols of hope and a commitment to the common good. These standing beacons are the ancestral reminders of how unique the Great Lakes are to our Midwest culture. Since 1789, when President George Washington signed the Lighthouse Act into law, these structures represented the national government's pursuit of the general good.

Early navigators lacked navigational charts and relied on the stars, winds, rudimentary instruments, and lights on the horizon to assure they were on the right path. To lose a lighthouse, a community would be severed from its connection to its maritime past. —Review by Mary Beth Volmer

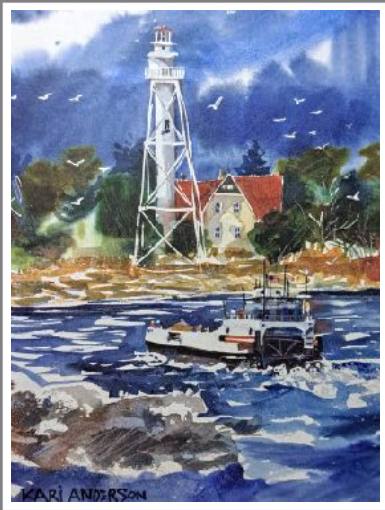


Supporting FOPPI

An outing on *The Shoreline* is a gift to remember—whether it's for a new graduate, newlyweds, or yourself and your family. Book your cruise on *The Shoreline* today! FOPPI members save 10%.

Merch Alert!

Visit foppistore.square.site/s/shop to check out these neat items in our FOPPI shop and to view our selection of tee shirts, glasses, hats, and so much more!



Print by Kari Anderson.



Bandana designed by FOPPI volunteer Karen Ellery.



Cool Plum Island patch.



Mug featuring Plum Island Life-Saving Station.

NOR'DOOR CRUISES by "The Shoreline"

BOOK NOW 10% OFF

FOR FOPPI MEMBERS

WWW.NORDOORCRUISES.COM

When the world is so complicated, the simple gift of friendship is within all of our hands. —Maria Shriver

Supporting FOPPI

Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands welcomes these new members:

- ◆ Mary Frances Cloe, Sturgeon Bay, WI
- ◆ Michael Dedek, Willowbrook, IL
- ◆ Patrick Foerster & Autumn Jun, Chicago, IL
- ◆ Nancy Herschberger, Peotone, IL
- ◆ Capt. Mike & Linda Loescher, Grafton, WI
- ◆ Joseph Saelens, Ellison Bay, WI
- ◆ Peder Schoenfeld, Chaseburg, WI
- ◆ Janice Thomas, Ellison Bay, WI

Thank you for your membership!

Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands, Inc. (FOPPI) was established in 2007 to preserve the unique island ecosystems and foster partnerships to preserve their heritage for future generations.

Your membership dues and charitable gifts help to restore and preserve the historical maritime structures on these islands and support education in the areas of conservation, natural history, and environmental protection.

Members who receive our quarterly newsletter, *FOPPI Forum*, are invited to attend the annual meeting and to join us for our seasonal cleanup, trail maintenance, invasive species removal, and light repair work.

Whatever your interest, there are events and projects that will benefit from your talent and support! Visit www.plumandpilot.org/foppi-volunteer to learn more.

To view FOPPI's financial records,
scan the QR code below.



Follow FOPPI on social media!
Download our audio tours at
www.plumandpilot.org/audio-tour.

We cannot live only for ourselves. A thousand fibers connect us with our fellow men [and women]. –Herman Melville

It's always "that time of year" to consider your charitable distributions! Are you dealing with your Required Minimum Distribution from your IRA? Tax-Free Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) can benefit you and Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands' work.

Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs), also called IRA charitable distributions, enable individuals to fulfill their required minimum distribution by a direct transfer to support a charity/charities, as long as the sum of the distributions is within the \$100,000 limit. And because QCDs don't increase taxable income, they can help you avoid higher tax rates. You can use this strategy if:

- You are 70½ or older at the time of the gift.
- You direct distributions in the amount of your choosing, up to an annual limit set by the IRS from your traditional or Roth IRA to Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands (other types of retirement plans are not covered by the law).
- To count for the current tax year, QCDs distribution must be made before December 31.

Contact your IRA custodian and ask them to send the check for a "qualified charitable distribution" to: Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands, EIN 74-3226051.

**Is your organization or nonprofit hosting a community event?
Let us know if you would like FOPPI to come share our story!
Email us as friendsofplumandpilot@gmail.com, and we will arrange for one
(or more) of our knowledgeable and passionate volunteers to attend.**

Supporting FOPPI

FOPPI is an affiliate of the Wisconsin State Historical Society (wisconsinhistory.org), Washington Island Chamber of Commerce (washingtonisland.com), Heritage Alliance of Door County, U.S. Life-Saving Service Heritage Association (uslife-savingservice.org), and Wisconsin Underwater Archeology Association (wuaa.org), and United States Lighthouse Society (uslhs.org), and a partner with Wisconsin Marine Historical Society (wmhs.org).

FOPPI thanks its distinguished
community and business associates!



Thank you, Donors!

The work done on the Green Bay National Wildlife Refuge is funded in part by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands. The projects and programs we have worked on would not be possible without your financial support.

Your donations and inspiration help us to preserve and restore this important part of our heritage within the Green Bay and Gravel Island National Wildlife Refuge. Our gratitude is great.

Norma & Dan Beaty
John & Judy Fritsch
Mark Replogle
Peder Schoenfeld
Paul Schumacher & Deb Logerquist
George D. Smith
Chris Smithka
David Stack
Thrivent
Tom & Judy Vonck
Rod & Sheryl Waage

And all who donated at one of the many other events where FOPPI was represented!

Thanks to Jeff Heal of Washington Island for assisting with FOPPI's mail pickup!



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"Where History
and Nature meet
at The Door."



www.PlumandPilot.org

*It is spring again. The earth is like a child that knows
poems by heart. —Rainer Maria Rilke*



Trillium, Plum Island. Photo by Nancy Hoefs.

Membership Form



Where History and Nature Meet at the Door!

FOPPI Membership/Donation Form

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City/State/Zip: _____
 Email: _____
 Phone: _____
 Name as I wish it to appear in appreciation materials: _____

Please do not list my name in your materials.

Do you have a connection to the islands? _____

I would like to receive my newsletter: by mail; by email; both.

Please choose a Membership level to join us in our mission to preserve and protect Plum and Pilot Islands.

- \$30 Individual
- \$50 Family (two or more family members)
- \$75 Patron
- \$100 Keeper
- \$1000 Lifetime

Gift memberships are available!

Please use this section to mark this membership as a gift.

Gift Membership for:

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City/State/Zip: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

Your support is critical to the Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands (FOPPI). Restoration and preservation of these beautiful Wisconsin islands and structures require a group like FOPPI to make it happen.

Fun Fact: Plum Island is home to the only Duluth-style Life Saving Station on the Great Lakes!

If you would like to donate to a specific FOPPI cause, please let us know:

- Environmental Education \$ _____
 - Historic Preservation \$ _____
 - Special Events \$ _____
 - "Float the Boat" donation for *The Shoreline* \$ _____
 - Gift Membership (\$30 each) \$ _____
- Total Amount** \$ _____

The Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Your gift is tax deductible as allowed by law.



FOPPI Members Receive:

- ◆ FOPPI Forum Newsletter
- ◆ Invitation to FOPPI's Annual Meeting
- ◆ 10% off in-person merchandise sales
- ◆ 10% off *The Shoreline* cruises
- ◆ Priority access to programs and Refuge volunteer opportunities

MAIL TO:
Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands
PO Box 61
Washington Island, WI
54246

OR VISIT US ONLINE!
www.plumandpilot.org/membership

OR USE OUR QR CODE:



Friends of Plum & Pilot Islands/Membership

Is it time to renew your membership?

Mailing label includes membership expiration date above your name. If membership has expired, please renew using the form on page 15. Mail it along with your payment to: FOPPI, P.O. Box 61, Washington Island, WI 54246. If you receive the *Forum* electronically, watch for an email that tells you it's time to renew. For membership questions call Mary Beth Volmer: (262) 613-4680.



Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands, Inc.
P.O. Box 61
Washington Island, WI 54246

Help Us Be Green!

To help save paper, printing, and postage expenses, please consider receiving your newsletter via email. Just contact us at friendsofplumandpilot@gmail.com.

Previous issues of the *Forum* are available on our website to download or read.



The mission of Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands is to partner with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to support the preservation, restoration, maintenance, and contemporary use of the historic resources on Plum and Pilot Islands, and to conserve and protect wildlife resources while providing opportunities for quality wildlife-dependent recreation.

Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands, Inc.

President: Mary Beth Volmer, 2026
The Shoreline Director: Stiles Meredith, 2028
Treasurer: Kimberly Wells, 2026
Secretary: Karen Ellery, 2026

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Membership: Open
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Volunteer Coordinator: Jim Schwartz, 2028

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Volunteer Coordinators: Sally Dery, Bob and Sue Griem, Jim Schwartz*

*Denotes team leader