Friends of Plum & Pilot Islands, Inc.

Where History and Nature Meet at the Door!

Founded in 2007

Forum

Spring 2022

www.plumandpilot.org

In this Edition:

Feature Articles

- *Donation Allows Purchase of* The Shoreline!
- *Native Plant Sale, August 20*
- *New Goodies at Online Store*
- *Refuge Manager's Corner*
- *Meet Some New Volunteer Leaders*
- *2022 Events and Workdays*
- *Special Sunset Cruises this Summer*
- *Annual Membership Meeting, July 23*

Island Inspirations

- *A Daughter's Memories of her Mom's Time on Pilot*

Light Lessons

- *Surfmen of the U.S. Life-Saving Service*

Book Review

Our Supporters

- *Washington Island Ferry*
- *Island Clipper*

Donors

New Members

Hello Friends and Supporters,

Fifteen years! That's how long the Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands have been working on preserving and restoring the historic maritime structures on Plum and Pilot Islands. I have had the honor of working alongside of some of the most dedicated volunteers on the planet. Together we have dreamed, planned, and implemented projects that have restored not only the physical nature of the structures, but the memories of those who served on the islands as coasties and lighthouse keepers.

Each time I have the opportunity to talk with our members and supporters, they revel at the fine work we are doing and what they have learned through our awesome newsletter and social media posts. Like you, I eagerly await the arrival of the FOPPI *Forum* and share it with my friends and family. I learn something new from each issue about the refuge, the folks who served on the islands, and the natural world that captivates us season after season. Each story challenges me to think more broadly about the impact our historic preservation and restoration efforts have done to honor those who came before us.

The work we do is from the heart. The money we receive from donations, membership, merchandise sales, and grants are used to fund these projects. Volunteers, like myself, are paid in memories, smiles, and lifelong friendships. Try it for yourself: We have many volunteer activities available for you to experience the joy that volunteering brings us.

With that in mind, please note some changes to our workday planning. We will have scheduled three workdays this season, with the potential of more being added as the need arises. We're doing this so you may have the best volunteer experience possible, return, and tell your friends. We will have an 'Explore Plum Island' event this year that has been on hiatus for the past couple of years due to COVID, and two Sunset Cruises! View our calendar of events in this edition and sign up! If the slots are full, please add your name to the waiting list. If there is enough interest, more slots may be opened.

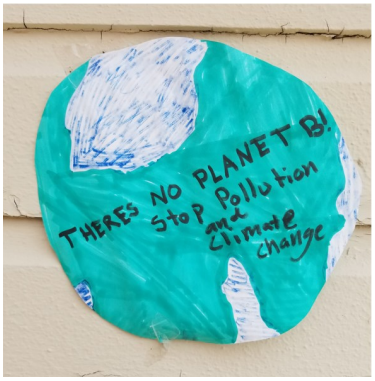
Enjoy this edition of the *Forum* and come out and visit us!

- Mary Beth

The FOPPI Forum is the membership journal published four times a year by the Friends of Plum & Pilot Islands, Inc., for people who care deeply about the restoration and preservation of the historic maritime structures of the Green Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

FOPPI Forum back issues

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



Artwork by a young concerned citizen!

Feature Articles—Odds and Ends



FOPPI to Receive $100,000 Donation for the Purchase of *The Shoreline!*

After plying the waters of Death's Door on tours and dive charters for more than 25 years, owner Jim Robinson has been searching for a new home for the former 16 passenger Navy Patrol boat.

Wishing to see the boat stay in the area, Jim recently offered the boat to FOPPI at a reduced price. Shortly after, an incredible private donor stepped forward with the offer of a $100,000 donation to cover the cost of purchasing the boat.

At FOPPI's quarterly board of directors meeting Saturday April 23, the board voted to accept the donation and go forward with the purchase!

This unlocks a world of possibilities for our future and we couldn't be more excited!

Stay tuned for more updates as we continue to grow!

- Mary Beth Volmer

Native Plant Sale Saturday, August 20
10am-2pm
Stone Silo Prairie Gardens
2325 Oak Ridge Circle, De Pere, WI 54115

FOPPI is excited to partner with Stone Silo Prairie Gardens in De Pere to offer Wisconsin native perennials at our first-ever plant sale.

Late summer/early fall is the perfect time for planting natives to beautify your backyard, provide food for our precious pollinators and raise funds for FOPPI!

Watch your inbox for more information, including a pre-sale order option. Event coordinator Sally Dery may be reached at saderyrdh@gmail.com if you'd like to volunteer.



New Goodies to Show Your True Colors!



Watch for new 100% Cotton T-Shirts (Sizes S to XXL) coming to the online store soon!

Monarch Butterfly T-Shirt **$20**
Colors: Turquoise and Gray







Plum Island Sea Glass Necklaces **$30**
These lovely necklaces are handcrafted for FOPPI using recycled glass and hang on a 18" satin cord.
Approximate size is 1" diameter/length.
Available online now!

Monarch Butterfly Hoodie **$40**
Color: Gray only

Refuge Manager's Corner



Joel Vos, Refuge Manager

Believe it or not, spring has arrived! Springtime might get you thinking "spring cleaning" of your home, preparing garden beds, or simply the anticipation of warmer weather and the waves washing over the white beaches of Lake Michigan. No matter what's on your mind, spring brings anticipation for what so many Midwesterners look forward to most: **Summer!**

We're looking ahead to several projects at the refuge this year, and much of that work wouldn't be possible without your help! I'm very excited to see that our volunteer dates are set, and folks are signing up to head back out across the water to get to work on Plum Island. Work this spring includes getting the island open for the season, biological surveys, and much more.

I can tell you that from my home office I can see tulips starting to poke through the mulch, waterfowl are arriving back to open water, and trees are showing the first buds and catkins of spring. Robins are trying to sneak into our garage to build a nest, and our neighbor's bird house has frequent songbird visits to see if it's suitable for their breeding season. As I begin my first full field season at the refuge this year, I'm feeling every spring shower and warm temperature on the thermometer filling me with anticipation for our field season!

The M/V *Phebe*, our refuge's boat, will get in the water before April showers bring those May flowers, and mark the beginning of the field season for our staff. Surveys of the buildings and grounds on Plum will occur and, as soon as we can confirm details, we should be seeing the ground broken in May for the new vault toilet building! I'm looking forward to welcoming the first volunteer trip on June 4 to help with housekeeping and an important project to get the door panels painted for the boathouse. We'll clear trails, clean things up, and be welcoming guests not long after for the Door County Lighthouse Festival.

I'm looking forward to seeing many of you again and getting to know the rest of you as we work together to accomplish great things this year.

Wishing you all fair winds and following seas.

- Joel Vos, Refuge Manager
Green Bay and Gravel Island National Wildlife Refuge

Meet Some New Volunteer Leaders!



Colleen Pilat

Lighthouses and volunteering have been two of my passions for decades and while I have only recently discovered Door County and all of its beauty (I'm originally from upstate NY and now live in MN), I fell in love with the area and became a FOPPI member last year. A few months ago, I jumped at the chance to volunteer with FOPPI when I saw an opportunity posted on Facebook!

As a Social Media Volunteer Leader, I create posts primarily for our Facebook page, while learning the rich history of the area and participating in the planning of various FOPPI events. A nice balance from my day job in IT, volunteering with FOPPI also allows me to indulge in my other hobbies of travel and photography, especially in winter!

I am really enjoying getting to work with such dedicated individuals to support the mission of our organization. I look forward to sharing information on our history, activities and future events with our friends and followers!

- Colleen Pilat



Chuck Scheckel

There are few topics more interesting to me than historic buildings and nature's beauty. The islands around Door County offer both. Plum and Pilot Islands captured our interest long ago!

I recently learned about the Green Bay NWR and FOPPI with their focus on protecting the environment and restoring those buildings we admired from afar during our frequent boating adventures.

Upon visiting Plum Island in 2021, I realized it was a special place and must be preserved for generations to come. I joined FOPPI to be part of a great group of dedicated people working towards those goals: maintaining the beautiful environment, honoring people who served there, and showcasing historic places for the enjoyment of future generations. My focus is with the Historic Preservation and Restoration Team.

My wife Sue and I want to contribute the time and effort to keep advancing the ambitious projects that are bringing the islands back to life. It is exciting to be part of something bigger than one's self!

- Chuck Scheckel

2022 Green Bay National Wildlife Refuge and FOPPI Events

For most up-to-date event status and any changes to its COVID-19 protocol, check online for details. Information is also available at http://plumandpilot.org/ and/or Facebook.



MAY

5/12-15 – Washington Islands Birding Festival
http://www.wianc.org/bird-festival

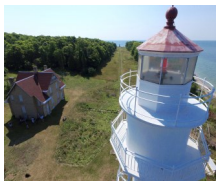
MAY into AUGUST

5/27 through 8/06 – Door County Festival of Nature

The Ridges Sanctuary will partner with local conservation groups, to offer hikes, workshops, and presentations highlighting the incredible beauty and diversity of Door County. http://www.ridgessanctuary.org/

JUNE

6/10-12 – 28th Annual Door County Lighthouse Festival



DCMM's annual event provides tours of area lighthouses. FOPPI conducts informative guided tours of Plum Island's nature trails. Learn more and buy tickets at http://www.dcmm.org/

6/26 – Farm and Field Bike Tour, Washington Island

Hosted by Gathering Ground, enjoy a family-friendly ~14-mile ride with stops to learn about agricultural projects happening on the island today. Visit FOPPI at one of the stops. Sign up at gatheringgroundwi.org

JULY



7/15 – FOPPI Sunset Cruise

Take a relaxing cruise aboard the *Island Clipper* enjoying views of Plum Island from the water. Sign up at plumandpilot.org

7/23 – FOPPI Annual Meeting and Picnic

FOPPI's annual membership meeting will be held on Plum! After a short business meeting, election of FOPPI board members and other messages, attendees can join in a picnic lunch and walk the island.



AUGUST

8/06-07 – Annual Door County Maritime Museum Classic & Wooden Boat Festival



This popular event is held at the Maritime Museum in Sturgeon Bay. FOPPI booth will have merch for sale, information, and friendly volunteers! www.dcmm.org

8/13 – Explore Plum Island



FOPPI and the USFWS plan a fun day for folks to hike and tour the rear range light. Bring a picnic lunch, participate in a scavenger hunt or beachcomb and revel in Plum's nature.

8/19 – FOPPI Sunset Cruise

An opportunity to sit back and relax aboard the *Island Clipper* taking in water views of Plum Island. Sign up at plumandpilot.org



8/20 – FOPPI's Stone Silo Plant Sale



Our premiere event is timed for planting Wisconsin native perennials in fall. We are excited to partner with Stone Silo Prairie Gardens in De Pere. Watch for details! plumandpilot.org

8/27 – Death's Door BBQ

FOPPI will be at this one-of-a-kind Washington Island event! https://www.deathsdoorbbq.com

OCTOBER

09/30-10/02 – Fall Lighthouse Festival



Door County Maritime Museum's annual event, offers tours of area lighthouses. FOPPI hosts guided tours of Plum Island's nature trails and the rear range lights as part of the festivities. See http://www.dcmm.org/

2022 Green Bay National Wildlife Refuge and FOPPI Events

Notes for all workdays: Personal protective equipment, personal floatation devices, and safety training will be provided by USFWS staff. Work includes travel in open water of Lake Michigan aboard a small watercraft (USFWS Service's M/V *Phebe*). Tasks may include heavy lifting, walking long distances over uneven terrain, and standing for long periods on hard surfaces. Dress appropriately for the weather (bring layers to prepare for rapidly changing conditions), wear closed-toe shoes, and plan to bring water, sunscreen, bug spray, and a sack lunch.

Each workday will have a ***maximum of 12 participants****.* There will be a wait list for each date. Supervised minors are welcome to sign up, but must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. Please plan to arrive at least 15 minutes before scheduled boat departure times from Washington Island to complete paperwork and receive boat safety briefings before boarding.

Participants will be confirmed by the FOPPI volunteer coordinator and USFWS staff in advance of the workday(s). Wait-listed volunteers will be notified of available slots no less than 24 hours in advance of the workday(s). Only confirmed volunteers can attend; no tag-alongs or drop-ins allowed aboard the M/V *Phebe* without prior confirmation and consent of USFWS staff in advance of the workday(s). Volunteers will be required to complete a USFWS Volunteer Service Agreement in accordance with federal volunteer policies.

Please note: Due to unsafe weather and wave conditions, cancellations of workdays may occur! USFWS staff will determine if travel is safe and communicate cancellation as early as possible. Cancellations may occur at the dock, so please plan your travel to Washington Island accordingly. The M/V Phebe will not return to Washington Island other than at pre-scheduled times, unless in cases of emergencies. Plan to be on the island workday for the entire duration outlined per session. Cellular service is unreliable, especially on Plum Island and at Northport ferry dock area.

SATURDAY, JUNE 4: Plum Island Opening Cleanup and Boathouse Door Painting
Come help get the island ready for the spring Door County Maritime Museum's Lighthouse Festival and other visitors this summer! Weather permitting, volunteers will travel from Washington Island to Plum Island to help clear trails, clean the historic boathouse, clear the boardwalks of debris, and paint the new overhead door panels for installation later this season.

Interested in contributing to important biological research? The first 2022 bat emergence survey on Plum Island will also occur the evening of June 4. Volunteers who sign up for the project workday will be contacted by USFWS staff to sign up for this special opportunity to stay overnight on the island. NOTE: Only those participating in the survey will be allowed to stay overnight. Plan on a long walk over uneven terrain in dark conditions.

SATURDAY, JULY 23: FOPPI Annual Meeting and Picnic
Volunteers will help set-up the meeting area, and cleanup afterwards for this special day on Plum Island. In case of weather cancellation, setup, meeting and picnic will occur on Washington Island.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 13: Explore Plum Island Event
Engage with guests as they explore the history, nature and interpretive sites of the island. Assist staff by helping with setup and takedown, acting as walking tour guides, leading a takeaway craft activity, and acting as historic site docents.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10: Plum Island Closing and Sidewalk Repair
Every field season comes to an end, and the USFWS staff could use help to close out the summer. Work projects will include general cleaning and closing of the island for the season, plus a unique opportunity to repair the concrete sidewalk near the historic crew quarters. If possible, we may try to tag migrating monarch butterflies!

No concrete form experience necessary, but previous experience with concrete form work is welcome. Closed-toe shoes are required (boots recommended), and work will involve walking over uneven terrain and carrying heavy objects.

Watch for possible additional workdays either online or FB!



Want to sign up? Please visit https://www.plumandpilot.org/eventswork-days.html and click on 'SignUp Genius' button.

Once there, you can find the day you're interested in, click the link, and add your information.

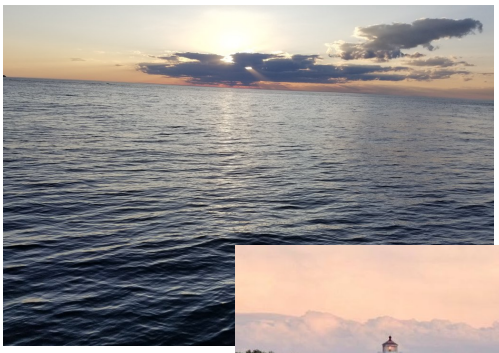
Volunteers will be confirmed via email for each workday, including details about what to bring, wear, and where to meet.

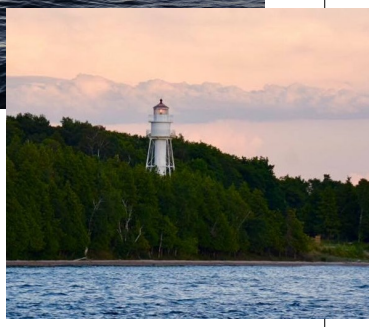
Questions? Contact:
Workdays — Jim Schwartz (FOPPI)
jrschwartz@new.rr.com
Refuge — Joel Vos (USFWS)
Joel_Vos@fws.gov

*** Work days are subject to change, as well as dependent on weather and safe boat access to Plum Island.***

Special FOPPI Sunset Cruises this Summer!







This summer there are not one, but two Cruises planned:

Friday, July 15
(weather date Saturday July 16)

Friday, August 19
(weather date Saturday August 20)

Come join us for a spectacular Door County Sunset Cruise aboard the sturdy *Island Clipper* based out of Gills Rock, Wisconsin.

We will slowly tour around Plum and Pilot Islands in Door County's famous Death's Door, giving you the opportunity to see the islands' historical Lighthouses, Life-Saving Station, and Fog Signal Buildings!

Then, watch the sunset into the Green Bay waters where each twilight sky is unique! Hors d'oeuvres and nonalcoholic beverages will be included. Wine and beer will be available for purchase throughout each evening.

Ticket sales will be applied toward the general restoration and preservation efforts of these maritime buildings in coordination with the USFWS.

Tickets will go fast. Watch www.plumandpilot.org for details.









Annual Membership Meeting and Picnic on Plum Island—Saturday, July 23



Mark your calendar and plan to attend FOPPI's annual membership meeting and picnic on **Saturday, July 23**. This is just one of the many benefits of being a member! Transportation will be provided. Guests are welcome.

Here's the outline for the day, weather permitting: *

- **9:00am:** Depart Gills Rock on the *Yankee Clipper* (please be at dock at 8:45am).
- **9:30am:** Depart Washington Island on the *Yankee Clipper* at Detroit Harbor (please be at dock at 9:20am). The dock is across from the Visitors Center.
- **10:00am:** Arrive at Plum Island.
- **10:30-11:15am:** Business meeting and USFWS volunteers' recognition.
- **11:15am:** Picnic lunch provided. Please bring your own nonalcoholic beverages.
- **Noon-2:30pm:** Hike the Island, see the fabulous restoration work accomplished during the past 2 years, shop our merchandise area, and talk with FOPPI Board members and USFWS personnel.
- **2:30pm:** Depart Plum for Washington Island.
- **3:00pm:** Arrive at Washington Island.
- **3:30pm:** Arrive at Gills Rock.

Attendees must pre-register to help the Committee plan food and transportation.

Please register using SignUp Genius at www.plumandpilot.org by Friday, July 8, to reserve your spot. Space is limited to 60 passengers.



A big thanks to Charlie and Chris Voight, who are again transporting folks aboard their *Yankee Clipper*. A box lunch sponsored by FOPPI will be provided by Jackson Harbor Soup, Washington Island. A limited supply of lawn chairs are available on Plum – please consider bringing one along and donating it to Plum Island!

*If weather is inclement, the meeting and lunch will be held in Washington Island's Community Center Gymnasium. Transportation from Detroit Harbor to the Community Center will be generously provided by Washington Island Cherry Train. Cross your fingers for a bluebird sky with plenty of sunshine Saturday, July 23!





Upper right corner of page: Folks enjoyed ascending the rear range light. Above left: A warm welcome at the dock, 2019. Right: Good conversation and camaraderie on a picture perfect day, 2019. *- Photos by Tim Sweet*

Island Inspirations—A Daughter's Memories of her Mom's Time on Pilot by Jude Kuenn

Earlier this year, I had the pleasure of talking with Lois Krueger of Washington Island. Her mom Elaine spent a few of her formative years on Pilot Island when Elaine's father Robert Knudsen was assigned there.

Elaine Marion Knudsen was born April 14, 1916. She was the eldest child of Agnes and Robert Knudsen after they married in the fall of 1915. Three months after Elaine was born, Robert became Head Lightkeeper. As the only family on Pilot at the time, Agnes helped her husband with some of the duties.

Elaine's only sibling Vernon was born on Pilot in 1918. It was her main responsibility to watch over her little brother. As the kids grew, Elaine remembered her mom placing a rope around their small waists when the kids played outside.



Looking west toward the light station from the east dock, 1914. Photo courtesy of USCG.

In the summer months, the Knudsen's had a garden. When Robert went to Washington Island on errands, he brought dirt back in buckets to help supplement and enrich the soil.

Elaine remembered the family being on Pilot year-round. They took advantage of good ice in winter and/or calm water in summer to travel for groceries, and pickup/drop off mail on Washington Island. The Knudsen's wanted their kids to attend school, so they moved back to Washington Island in 1919.

As Elaine grew older, she attended community and school dances, meeting island boys and hanging out with her girlfriends. When a young woman, Arni Richter drove Elaine over the ice in 1933 to Port Washington to work as a house-maid cooking and cleaning for a family, in exchange for room and board.

Elaine got a job at Smith Brothers Fish Shanty in 1939. (The building has been restored and is still part of the Port Washington waterfront.)

After hearing welding paid well during WWII, she went to Chicago attending an aeronautical school. Afterwards, Elaine worked on helicopters for the war effort. At work, she met Walter Reichenbach and they fell in love. Walter and Elaine married September 16, 1944 and lived in Chicago. Walter Jr. was born 1946. The Reichenbach's moved to Lombard IL where Lois was born in 1950.

From Elaine's years in the kitchen, she was an accomplished cook and baker. These talents also became her daughter's area of expertise. Lois has written six cookbooks using her own recipes, plus those of her mom's and grandmother's. Two are *Kids in the Kitchen*, and *Washington Island's Best Recipes from the Heart.* They are available for purchase at Ships Wheel Restaurant, which is open seasonally.

Editor's Note: Thanks Lois, for your time by phone. I hope I got somewhat close to the information you shared when recounting your mom's memories. If there are errors, the fault is mine. Wishing you the best of health.

Smith Brothers Fish Shanty, Port Washington



Commercial fishing was once an important business in Port Washington. There were five operations. Each had a fishing shack and a boat.

The Smith Brothers Fish Shanty located on the west slip in Port Washington's harbor is a landmark to local citizens. It is the sole reminder of a once thriving fishing industry. Whitefish, chubs, perch, and trout were processed through Port Washington for distribution nation wide. The building was identified by a preservation consultant as eligible for the national register of historic places. Restored, it's another historic maritime gem. *Photo above taken before the building's restoration.*
Resource: Ozaukee County WI News



Looking toward the west dock from the Pilot Island lantern room, 1924 (note reflections in lantern glass). Photo USCG.

Thanks to Steven Reiss from the Washington Island Archives for sharing Archives' Pilot history. And thanks to Richard Purinton for putting me in touch with Steven.— Jude Kuenn

Light Lessons—Surfmen of the U.S. Life-Saving Service by Jude Kuenn

The dangers of coast and other areas along the Atlantic coast were recognized shortly after colonial settlements were established in North America. However, it would be a long time before rescue efforts were organized under a federal agency. For many years, rescue efforts were left to local residents and volunteer crews. At the turn of the 19th century, the state of North Carolina established "wreck districts" with commissioners, or venue masters, and local residents who assisted ships in distress.

Origins of the Life-Saving Service

During the 1830s and 40s, Congress authorized, and funded, shipwreck rescue operations through the Revenue Marine Service and local, private rescue crews – but most of this money went to New England. A Congressional act in 1854 marked the beginning of facilities and crews established by the federal government as opposed to the previous facilities and crews which were simply funded by the government.

The outbreak of the Civil War stalled these efforts. The service was reorganized and improved after the war by the new head of the Revenue Marine Service, Sumner I. Kimball. It has been said that hiring Kimball in 1871 was "the single most important event" in the history of the service. Numerous new stations were built, staffed, and supplied during the 1870s. In June of 1878, the Life-Saving Service was officially established within the Treasury Department.

Daily Duties

Many people associate surfmen with daring rescues and unmatched heroism, and rightly so. But, much of their time was spent on drills. Sumner Kimball believed that only training and repetition sharpened a person's lifesaving skills.

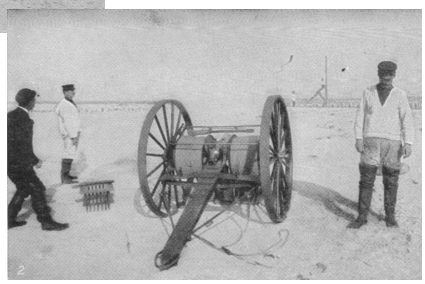


Surfmen with the beach cart preparing to practice the Beach Apparatus Drill.

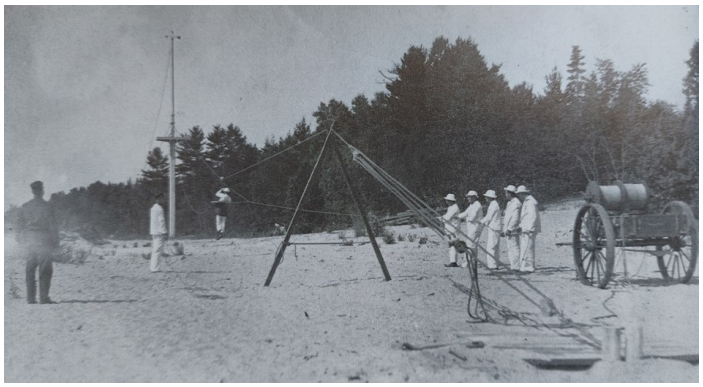
A lifesaver's week began on Monday with training in the Beach Apparatus Drill. This drill prepared the surfmen to rescue shipwreck victims close to shore using the breeches buoy. Lines would be fired from the Lyle Gun to the ship and secured by the passengers based on the instructions printed on the Tally Board. Then, the breeches buoy would be sent



Firing the Lyle Gun
Photos courtesy of USCG.



out and the passengers, one by one, would be transported to the shore. The drill had to be done in five minutes or less. Any crewman who was found to be delaying the drill's execution could be fired on the spot. Sumner Kimball claimed he had seen a drill done in two and a half minutes.



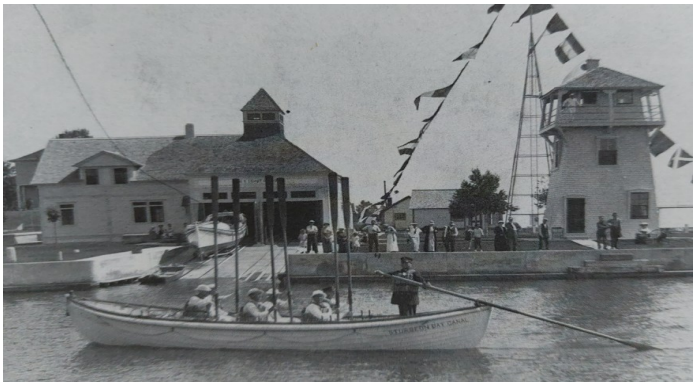
As most wrecks occurred in less than favorable weather conditions, the wind could easily carry the projectile and shot line away from its intended target. If the keeper made his target, the shot line was used to pull heavier lines over to be secured to the mast of the disabled vessel. Photo courtesy of DCMM and LPS.

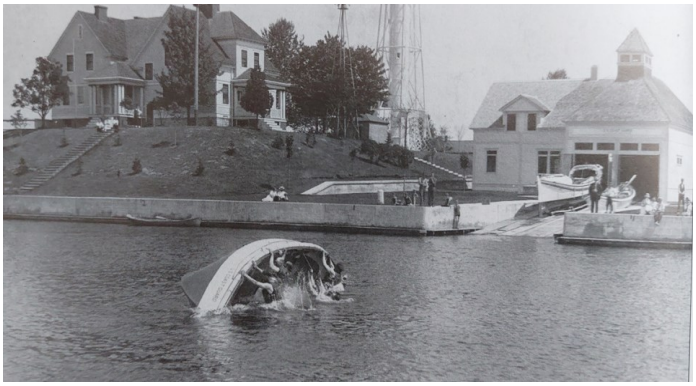
Tuesday was devoted to boat practice, including the righting of surfboats. The crew practiced signal flag techniques on Wednesday and repeated the Beach Apparatus Drill on Thursday. On Friday the crew could be found practicing first aid and rescue breathing techniques. Everyone pitched in to clean the station and quarters on Saturday.

In addition to practicing daily drills each surfman walked a four-hour beach patrol in the evening. During this time they kept a watchful eye on the ocean looking and listening for the sounds or signs of a ship in distress. In other areas, beach checks were exchanged between the surfmen of neighboring stations to verify that the patrols were being completed.

Watchmen's clocks were used instead. Posts marked the ends of the patrol area. The clocks were installed on these

(continued on page 10)





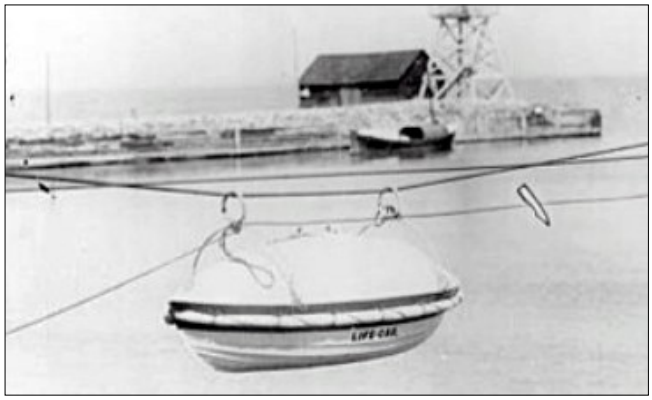


Top: The crew prepares for the capsize test. As this maneuver was very popular with locals, an audience could normally be found at any station conducting such drills.
Middle: Some surfmen and keepers became so skilled at rolling the boat over they would end up on top of the capsized hull hardly wet.
Bottom: After the boat was rolled, it would be righted by the crew standing on the hull and using their weight to flip it over. Sturgeon Bay LSS photos courtesy of DCMM and LPS.

posts along with a key for the clock. The patrolling surfman would insert the key into the clock and the patrol would be recorded.

Rescue Equipment

Surfmen had three basic methods of rescuing shipwreck victims: the surfboat, the breeches buoy, and the life car.



This boat on a rope was known as a life car.

The surfboat is possibly the most well-known method of rescue. The crew would row this small boat to the site of the wreck and load victims on the rescue boat to be taken to safety. The breeches buoy was essentially a pair of shorts sewn into a life preserver. Lines were sent out to the ship and victims were pulled back to shore while sitting in the breeches buoy. The life car employed a similar method: a line was sent out and individuals got inside the small metal tube, closed the hatch, and were pulled to the shore.

The Keeper of the station would select the method he felt would be best for each particular rescue. If that method failed several times, he would select another. If that method also failed, the crew would attempt the third. Only if all three methods failed could the Keeper declare that a rescue was impossible.

This requirement is, in part, why the unofficial motto of the U.S. Life-Saving Service was, "You have to go out; you don't have to come back."

Forty-one life-saving stations were established on Lake Michigan, including one on the Northwestern campus, crewed by college boys. Door County had three stations – the Sturgeon Bay Canal, established in 1886, and Baileys Harbor and Plum Island, both established in 1896.

For those who worked in the Life-Saving Service, risking danger to help those in peril was a job requirement. However, reports are frequently found of other individuals assisting the lifesaving crews out of a simple desire to help. To honor those people, including lifesavers, who rendered exceptional aid beyond what was expected of them, the Treasury Department created the gold and silver lifesaving medals.



Gold and silver Lifesaving medals.

Captain John Anderson, a native of Ellison Bay, received a gold medal for outstanding bravery in rescuing 17 men from the wrecked steamer *H. E. Runnels* in Lake Superior in 1919. He started the Plum Island Station and went on to serve 40 years in the Coast Guard, helping to save 4,700 people from drowning in Lake Michigan. His only son, John, Jr., died in the torpedoing of a U.S. ship in 1942, after rescuing seven shipmates.



Keeper Ingar Olsen, 1896
Photo courtesy of JHMM.

Ingar Olsen, appointed Keeper of the Plum Island Life-Saving Station No. 290 in 1896, had been awarded a Gold Lifesaving Medal while a surfman at the Milwaukee Life-Saving Station in 1893.

Appointed in February 1896, Keeper Ingar Olsen reported in March to prepare the station for duty. Olsen is shown here wearing the Gold Lifesaving Medal he received for an exceptional rescue while a surfman at the Milwaukee LSS in 1893. A 15-man work crew head been trapped by a gale in the air lock of a waterworks crib; all but James Miller perished. After the lifesavers arrived and put over a line, Olsen threw himself into the elements and made his way hand over hand. Finding the sole survivor, Olsen tied him to the line and, taking a firm grasp himself, they were pulled to safety.

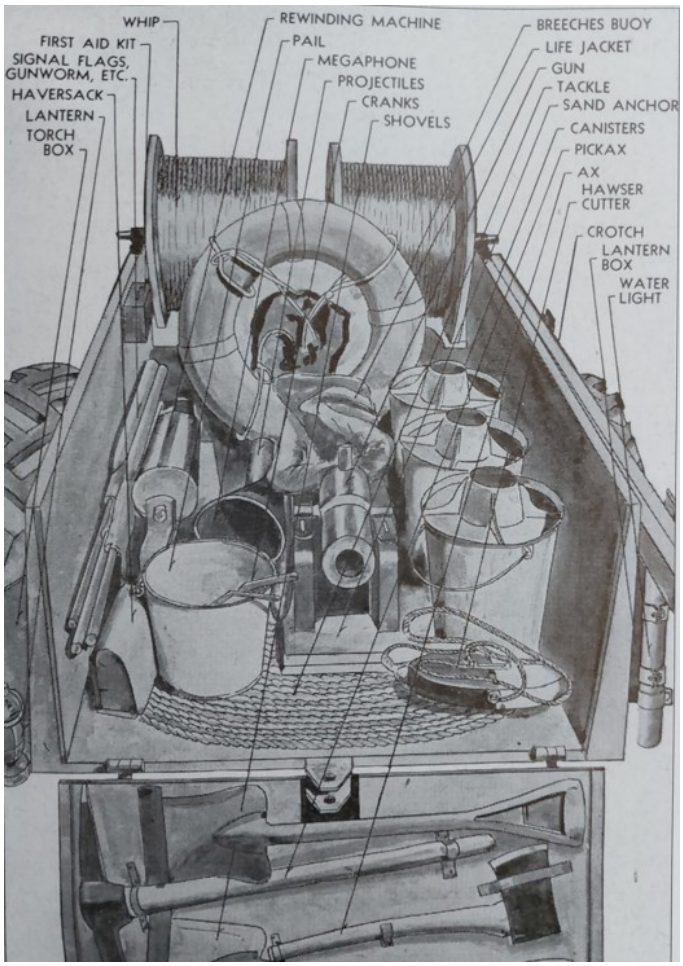
Olsen was originally to be appointed as Keeper of the Baileys Harbor Life-Saving Station, but this was changed to Plum Island LSS. No doubt Olsen's heroic Milwaukee rescue had helped him gain his promotion. As commander of Plum, Olsen's annual salary was $900. He served there from 1896 until 1901, when he transferred back to Milwaukee.

End of One Service, Beginning of Another

The Life-Saving Service merged with the Revenue Cutter Service in January of 1915 to become the U.S. Coast Guard, who would assume the charge of protecting those on coastal waters and enforcing maritime laws. In 1939, the Light House Service was absorbed into this organization as well. Although technology has advanced and rescue equipment has improved, the members of the U.S. Coast Guard still carry on the tradition started by the first volunteer crews and citizen rescuers by risking their lives to save others from the dangers of the sea.

Resources:

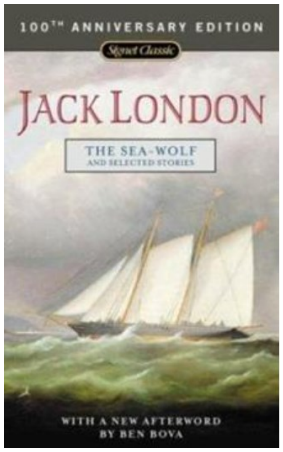
- Images of America: Guarding Door County Lighthouses and Life-Saving Stations
- Surfmen of the U.S. Life-Saving Service by National Park Service



This drawing from the Lifeboat Stations Manual*, 1949 edition, shows the numerous contents of the Beach Apparatus Cart. Courtesy of the USCG.*

On January 28, 1915, President Woodrow Wilson signed the "Act to Create the Coast Guard," merging the Life-Saving Service with the Revenue Cutter Service to create the United States Coast Guard . L-to-R: Old logo replaced with the new.

Book Review



The Sea Wolf
by Jack London

Interesting, timeless classic! Gentleman-bred Humphrey feels blessed when he is picked up by a passing schooner, on her way to hunt seals, after his ship has sunk only to find out that he's been plunged into a world that is foreign to him: one of hate, honor, brutality where only the strongest will survive. Humphrey finds himself learning to do things he never thought possible in fear of his life and earns a morsel of respect from the captain – the Sea Wolf. That morsel of respect is just enough to keep him on the right side of a fight for his life.

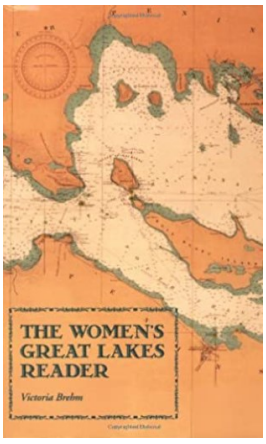
London writes from his experiences, and one may question if he embodied Humphrey, the Sea Wolf or one of the other mates in his time plying the waters in a schooner. He writes with an extreme handle on vision and passion... he takes 19 lines to describe the Sea Wolf's eye color. He debates the irony of life between Humphrey and the Sea Wolf, begging one to ask if these debates were done in public or within his own soul. - *Mary Beth Volmer*

The Lost Art of Reading Nature's Signs: Use Outdoor Clues to Find Your Way, Predict the Weather, Locate Water, Track Animals and Other Forgotten Skills
by Tristan Gooley



Turn every walk into a game of detection—from master outdoorsman Tristan Gooley, *New York Times*-bestselling author of *The Secret World of Weather* and *The Natural Navigator.*

When writer and navigator Tristan Gooley journeys outside, he sees a natural world filled with clues. The roots of a tree indicate the sun's direction; the Big Dipper tells the time; a passing butterfly hints at the weather; a sand dune reveals prevailing wind; the scent of cinnamon suggests altitude; a budding flower points south. To help you understand nature as he does, Gooley shares more than 850 tips for forecasting, tracking, and more, gathered from decades spent walking the landscape around his home and around the world. Whether you're walking in the country or city, along a coastline, or by night, this is the ultimate resource on what the land, sun, moon, stars, plants, animals, and clouds can reveal – if you only know how to look!



The Women's Great Lakes Reader
by Victoria Brehm

Women lighthouse keepers, North American Natives, fur traders, cooks on sailing vessels, missionaries, and fearless travelers all wrote of their lives on the Great Lakes. Their narratives, which span the centuries from 1789 to the present, are collected in this anthology for the first time. Some writers were well known. Others left their quiet testimonies in letters, log books, and diaries that have never before been published.

Beginning with Native stories and continuing through writings by women pioneers, travelers, and working women, more than three dozen selections of autobiography, fiction, newspaper accounts, and poetry chronicle what it has meant to live on the lakes from childhood to old age.

A sequel to this classic 2000 edition will be available in 2023. The author promises many more interesting stories and discoveries shared in next year's book.

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Thrivent Choice Program: Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands are enrolled in the Thrivent Choice program and we appear in the catalog https://www.thrivent.com/what-we-offer/generosity/thrivent-choice.html. Anyone can make an online personal donation through the Thrivent Choice catalog page. Thrivent will cover all processing fees so FOPPI receives 100% of the donation. Eligible Thrivent clients can also direct Thrivent Choice Dollars to FOPPI, thereby recommending that Thrivent provide additional funding for our organization.

Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands is proud to be a GuideStar Platinum Participant.



FOPPI is an affiliate of the Wisconsin State Historical Society (wisconsinhistory.org), members of Washington Island Chamber of Commerce (washingtonisland.com), Door County Historical Society (doorcountyhistoricalsociety.org), U.S. Life-Saving Service Heritage Association (uslife-savingservice.org), Door County Visitor Bureau (doorcounty.com), and a partner with Wisconsin Marine Historical Society (wmhs.org).

Feature Articles—Odds and Ends



L to R: Jude Kuenn, Patti Zarling and Kim Krueger. Photo by Paul Kuenn

FOPPI was just one of many March booths at Canoecopia 2022 in Madison. Rutabaga sent this insightful email: "…and it happened because you were all there. Let us share just a few comments some customers gave us:

"This is the first normal thing I've done in two years!"

"I know it wasn't easy, but thank you for bringing us all together again."

Attendee: "Everyone here is so helpful and nice."
Rutabaga : "Well, we are in the Midwest..."
Attendee: "No, even nicer than that."
And the favorite: "We're back! WE'RE BACK!!!"

"Thank you for being a part of the show and making the event what it is! You bring your products, your knowledge, your wisdom, your enthusiasm, and your love for all things paddling. You make our lives richer, and for that we're so thankful. With gratitude, Rutabaga Staff"



Plum Island LSS Beach Drills. Photo dates unknown.



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 (USFWS) and the Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands (FOPPI).

The USFWS relies on funds allocated through their annual budget. They are unable to apply for grants or solicit donations. That's why government agencies often partner with non-profit entities like us.

Through you, FOPPI has been able to work on projects benefiting the island buildings and grounds. We have developed programs like Women in Preservation, Environmental Education, which introduces children and young adults to the natural resources on the island, and a Speaker's Bureau. This program brings speakers to organizations so they can learn about FOPPI. Please email friendsofplumandpilot@gmail.com if you would like us to talk to your group of interest.

These projects and programs could not be possible without your financial support, that of our local friends and followers. Your donations and inspiration help us to preserve and restore this important part of our heritage within the Green Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Thank you!

Paul Schumacher and Deb Logerquist
William and Cheryl Surbaugh
Kristin Wegner and Eric Howe
Daryle Wragge and Joan Anderson

Businesses/Organizations:
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Event Donations:
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Every Day is Earth Day, Egg Harbor

Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands Membership Form

Your membership entitles you to receive:

- FOPPI *Forum* newsletter
- Invitation to FOPPI Annual Meeting
- Opportunity to volunteer on the islands

FOPPI is a 501c(3) Charitable Organization.
Your gift is tax deductible, as provided by law.

Please make your check payable to:

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



Page from 1910 Washington Island Souvenir Business Directory.

Date _____ Email Newsletter? _____ Yes

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Membership Categories:

$30 Individual
$50 Family—2 or more people
$75 Patron Donor
$100 Keeper Donor
$1,000 Benefactor (Lifetime) (Includes signed and numbered print by Door County artist Cathy Meader.)
* Additional Contribution _____

Are you interested in volunteering on the islands?

_____

In what area?

_____

The **Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands, Inc**. (FOPPI) was established in 2007 to preserve the unique island ecosystems and foster partnerships to preserve its 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, the FOPPI *Forum*, are invited to attend the annual meeting, join us in seasonal clean-up, trail maintenance, invasive species removal, and light repair work.

Whatever your interest, there are projects and events that will benefit from your talent and support!

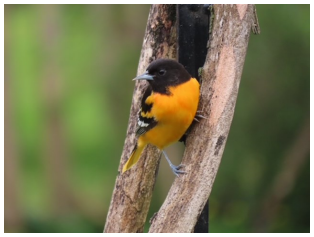
The Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Please visit our website or follow us on:

Download our audio tours!
https://www.plumandpilot.org/audio-tour.html#/

The Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands welcomes these new members:

- Angie Houston, Tomahawk, WI
- John and Joni Pagel, Oshkosh, WI
- Dianna Stampfler, Gaylord, MI
- Kim Szatkowski, Hudson, WI
- Michael Walters, Washington Island, WI



Left: Baltimore Oriole
Below: Scarlet Tanager



- Photos by Elaine Hilmer

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 receiving the *Forum* electronically, you'll receive a separate email advising it's time to renew.

Thanks for helping save on the cost of mailing renewal reminders!

Help Us Be Green With Newsletters:

The FOPPI Forum newsletter is sent four times a year. To help save paper, printing, and postage expenses, please consider receiving your newsletter via email. Previous newsletters are available on our website to download or read.

Contact Jean Fox at jeanfox215@gmail.com

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

The mission of the 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.

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