

The Friends of  
Plum and Pilot Islands,  
Green Bay National  
Wildlife Refuge

**2017 Annual Report**



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# Letter from the President

Thank you for your support and inspiration this past year! Together we finally completed the requirements needed to fully open Plum Island to the public (daytime, from Memorial Day through Labor Day). Visitors may now walk in the shadows of legends, view wildflowers unique to the area (such as the dwarf lake iris), listen to the chatter of birds on their migratory path, catch a glimpse of the deer that call the island 'home' and sit along the shore to watch the freighters and ferries ply the waters of Death's Door.



The first project of 2017 was the completion of the dock, break wall and ferry trail. In partnership with the US Fish & Wildlife Service, we applied new roofs to the paint shed building, the Life-Saving Station and the Lighthouse Keepers Quarters. We completed the Historic Structures Report (HSR), which will guide our Island restoration project planning for many years to come. The non-native shrubs, that evaded the view of the Lighthouse Keepers Building, have been removed and a new Green Bay National Wildlife Refuge sign now welcomes visitors to this jewel of the Grand Traverse Islands archipelago.

2017 marks the 10-year anniversary of the Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands; with fondness, I look back at our humble beginnings:

- We no longer need to pump up the sidewalls of the old Coast Guard Zodiac before heading out to the Islands ... we now have the shiny silver 'Phebe' and 'Captain Dusty' to guide our way.
- No more guiding hikers over fallen logs on the trails ... we now have a team of patrol trail groomers, a chain saw (with a couple of certified operators) and tractor.
- Preservation materials no longer need to be cut with a handsaw ... a generator and circular saw do the trick much more efficiently.
- Remember that tent in the woods that covered the hole in the ground? Yep, progress!
- Placing the Aldo Leopold benches around the island is now done from the trailer instead of a two-wheel dolly, wheel barrow and the big blue tub on wheels.
- Trails are constantly mowed to keep the poison ivy at bay, and team of invasive eradicators have been specially trained to identify and remove hounds tongue, spotted knapweed and other invasive plants.

- Technology now connects us with board members that live as far away as Minnesota and Texas ... we can conduct board and committee meetings from the comfort of our home or a comfy lodge.

The next ten years will bring us closer to opening the buildings to the public; imagine walking in the footsteps of those bold mariners who risked their lives to save others! We have plans to restore the Life-Saving Station to its late 1930-40s grandeur, providing a base station for researchers, explorers and dreamers. We plan to set aside the boathouse as a maritime museum to share the wonderful discoveries that we've made, such as the pottery shards and toy pieces from the family that lived in the 1849 lighthouse which were found during the archaeological dig of 2010-2013. In time, the lighthouse keepers quarters will also be restored for those seeking out Plum for her rare avenues of solitude.

We ask for your continued support of our mission to preserve, restore and maintain the lighthouses, accessory buildings and other historic resources on Plum and Pilot Islands while providing opportunities for quality wildlife-dependent recreation on Plum Island. You can help by becoming a member, renewing your membership, volunteering your skills and talents, purchasing FOPPI branded merchandise, and through your financial support of the organization's programs and projects.

Thank you!

- Mary Beth Volmer  
President, Plum and Pilot Islands 2017 to 2020



# Board of Directors

Name	Position	Expiration
Rip Koken	Interim Treasurer	2020
Mary Beth Volmer	President	2020
Karen Ellery	Secretary	2020
Mike Brodd	Director	2018
Lew Clarke	Director	2018
Amanda Danforth	Director	2020
Matt Foss	Director	2020
Amy Lesnjak	Director	2020
Scott Nelson	Director	2018
Dan Nilsson	Director	2018
Hoyt Purinton	Director	2020
John Sawyer	Director	2020
Paul Schumacher	Director	2018
Jim Schwartz	Director	2019
Gordon Vieth	Director	2018
Gary Wilson	Director	2018
Frank Forkert	Emeritus Director	
Eric Greenfeldt	Emeritus Director	
Tim Sweet	Emeritus Director	

This year we made two amendments to our Bylaws:

- Increased classes of membership from four to six (Individual, Family, Patron, Keeper, Lifetime, Corporate).
- Set ultimate board term limits

# 2017 Progress



Time, high lake levels and storms seriously damaged the last 40 feet of the pier, the last 25 feet of the west break wall and the ferry haul road along the northeast side of Plum Island.

Repair to the pier involved using white oak trees harvested and milled to 12inch by 12inch beams on Chambers Island. Death's Door Marine moved the beams to Plum Island and started repairs on the pier and break wall in early November 2016.

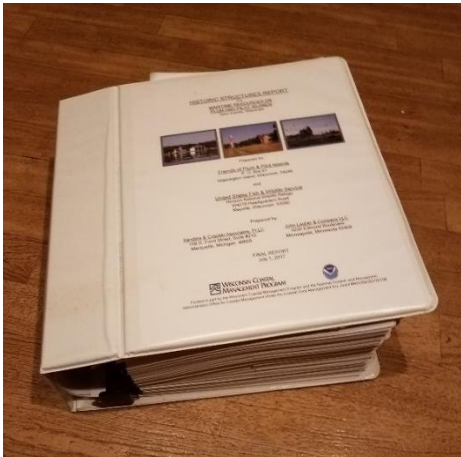


Volunteers applied ample sweat equity in the Spring of 2017 to smooth the rip rap that filled the crib to position the 40 feet of the pier with new cedar boards.



The haul road eroded to a point where equipment necessary to replace the roof on the Life-Saving Station (furnished by USFWS), Paint Shed and Lighthouse Keepers Quarters could not enter Plum Island. The road was rebuilt to its design width, making it possible to land the roofing equipment.

The total cost to repair these structures was \$35,510.90 and was financed by private donations.



In 2016 FOPPI, in conjunction with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, were awarded a \$52,000 grant by Wisconsin Coastal Management Program to develop a Historic Structures Report (HSR) for Plum and Pilot Islands. The grant was a 50/50 match, meaning FOPPI provided half of the funds (\$26,000).

Architectural firm, Sanders and Czapski Associates were contracted to prepare the document. John Lauber (USFW) performed the historical research and provided the historical section of the document.

The HSR provides documentary, graphic, and physical information about a property's history and existing condition. Broadly recognized as an effective part of preservation planning, a HSR also addresses management or owner goals for the use or re-use of the property. It provides a thoughtfully considered argument for selecting the most appropriate approach to treatment, prior to the commencement of work, and outlines a scope of recommended work. The report serves as an important guide for all changes made to a historic property during a project-repair, rehabilitation, or restoration – and can also provide information for maintenance procedures. Finally, it records the findings of research and investigation, as well as the processes of physical work, for future researchers.

The importance of a published HSR will provide the basis for restoration and preservation of the historical structures on Plum and Pilot Islands, and establish a long term programmatic agreement with the Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). A SHPO approved HSR identifies a significant historical period, which all future preservation activities and plans will be based upon. The HSR is critical to saving the facilities of both islands.

Having a HSR in place is appealing to grant writers, major donors and foundations and allows us to apply for funding that we didn't qualify for earlier.

Complete with appendices, the report totals 708 pages. Total cost of all recommended restoration and preservation is estimated at \$6.5 million. Yes, we our work cut out for us!



The paint shed shingles were removed and new shingles purchased by USFWS. FOPPI paid for the labor to re-shingle the paint shed roof.

Contractor, Chewy & Teo Roofing and Siding removed and replaced the old shingles on the lighthouse keepers quarters with new high wind load shingles. They installed a ridged vent and replaced the rotten decking and fascia board were needed. The chimney was flashed with copper to prevent water leakage.

The total cost to replace the roof on these buildings was \$38,180.00 which was financed by private donations.



Two Commercial Special Use Permits (CSUP) for transportation to Plum Island through Shoreline Charters and Lew Clarke. Vendors applying to USFWS for a permit submitted proof of insurance coverage, a US Coast Guard Operator of Uninspected Passenger Vessels License, State of Wisconsin business license, State of Wisconsin boat registration and a current CPR and First Aid training certificate.

The CSUP provide additional exposure to the Green Bay National Wildlife Refuge and the opportunity to increase our membership base.



# Committee Updates

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2017, FOPPI reorganized into various committees to grow our organization and leverage the strength of our board. Job descriptions were created, and the established committees began reporting on the activities they've completed, projects they're working on and areas that they need help with.

The current committees are:

- Fundraising – Team Leader: Mary Beth Volmer  
The Fundraising Committee is vital to the life and financial well-being of the Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands. Our fundraising campaigns are varied, but focus on building relationships and raising money to meet the special and specific ongoing needs of our organization.
  - 2017 Activities: Ran campaigns through Facebook and Website. Worked with Special Events team on fundraising cruise.
  - 2018 Plan: Create formal fundraising and donor relations plan. Implement a Monthly Giving plan with our bank.
  
- Historic Preservation – Team Leader: Paul Schumacher  
The Historic Preservation and Restoration (HPR) team works with the USFWS Regional Historic Preservation Officer/Archaeologist/staff and the FOPPI Board to plan and coordinate preservation and restoration projects to accomplish the goals set forth in the Historic Structures Report (HSR).
  - 2017 Activities: Completed the dock and break wall restoration, submitted the Historic Structures Report to the National Park Service, reroofed the paint shed and lighthouse keepers quarters
  
  - 2018 Plan: Ensure shingle repair is performed on the Life Saving Station (LSS), paint shed and Lighthouse Keepers Quarters (LKQ); Perform lead paint abatement removal and repaint the LSS and paint shed; finish the trim and gutters on the LKQ and tuckpoint all chimneys on the LSS and LKQ.

In addition, we'll be focusing on bringing potable water and better bathroom facilities to improve visitor experience; we are researching ways to re-energize the electrical grid to bring Plum Island back to life.

Pilot Island is on our radar too; we plan to reroof the summer kitchen and install bird deterrent grating to protect the lighthouse roof.

We learned the difficulty in government bidding for restoration work on a remote island in the middle of Lake Michigan and are working to address this by funding directly through FOPPI so we can employ local contractors to help stimulate the local economy.

- Marketing – Team Leader: Gordon Vieth

The marketing team builds awareness of FOPPI and its mission and achievements in the general public, with special attention to Door County and Washington Island. Marketing activities support merchandising, fundraising, volunteer and membership team.

- 2017 Activities: Regular submissions to the Washington Island Observer, “FOPPI Update”; Establishment of FOPPI Instagram account; Marketing of Sunset Cruise
- 2018 Plan: Release audio tour of the major stops along Plum Island. Publish book from the Historic Structures Report.

- Membership – Team Leader: Mary Beth Volmer

The membership team works with the treasurer to maintain membership lists, prepare donation thank you acknowledgments, and follow up with lapsed members to encourage renewals. Sends mailing list to printer for newsletter printing.

- 2017 Activities: Began meeting every three months; Updated Bylaws to reflect membership levels; Began quarterly phone calls to remind members their renewal is important; Updated membership packet to include a thank you card, membership card, latest newsletter, FOPPI brochure, wildlife brochures and a donation envelope; Began business membership campaign; Began identifying members by: How they joined (newsletter, website, Facebook, brochure) and how long they’ve been a member; note in newsletter
- 2018 Plan: Focus on building relationships with our members; Work to encourage free newsletter subscribers to become members; Increase membership rates; Remove renewal rate – everyone will renew at the same rate as a new subscriber; Build our corporate membership base.
- Gained three business sponsors:

**Our Distinguished Business Supporters**



Membership	As of 12.31.2017
Total members	317
Individual	55
Patron	27
Family	81
Keeper	29
Lifetime	43
Honorary	3
Business	3

Merchandising – Team Leader: Amanda Danforth

The mission of the merchandising team is to source and distribute high quality, cost effective apparel and accessories consistent with Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands branding.

- 2017 Activities: Sourced local vendor for our apparel needs.
- 2018 Plan: Introduce new merchandise and sell excess inventory.

● Newsletter – Team Leader: Mary Beth Volmer

The newsletter team works with the marketing team to coordinate and disseminate the Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands information to members and other interested parties, primarily by publishing and distributing the FOPPI Forum and posting in social media outlets. The newsletter is archived at the Washington Island Archives, the Wisconsin Maritime Historical Society, the Wisconsin Maritime Museum and the Wisconsin Historical Society Archives.

- Special Events – Team Leader: Mike Brodd  
This team focuses on coordinating our annual events such as: Birding on the Bay, Explore Plum Island, Fundraising Cruise, Lighthouse Festival, Nature Conservancy Tour and Annual Picnic.
  - 2017 Activities: Newly established
  - 2018 Plan: Build team to assist with planning, leading and writing articles for our newsletter and media outlets
  
- Volunteer Coordinator – Team Leader: Jim Schwartz  
The volunteer coordinator works with the USFWS Visitors Services and the FOPPI board to plan and schedule the special events and work day programs, lead and train volunteers to accomplish the goals of the organization.
  - 2017 Activities: Newly established
  - 2018 Plan: Volunteer Interest Survey, Docent Training
  
- Website – Team Leader: Amy Lesjak  
The website committee works with the president, board members and FOPPI membership to maintain the plumandpilot.org website and enhance its use by keeping information current and pertinent so as to encourage high usage of the site.
  - 2017 Activities: Newly established
  - 2018 Plan: Increase website hits; partner with social media to bring more traffic to site

# Program Highlights

## Environmental Education

The Environmental Education Program's mission is to bring recreational and environmental wonder to the lives of youth. The Program was created to provide transportation to the Islands where youth may experience the beauty of one of the last 'wild' islands in the Grand Traverse archipelago.

## Speakers Bureau

The Bureau offers informational presentations on the Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands and the Green Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

In 2017 the Bureau made the following presentations:

- Jonathan Ringdahl presented at Canoecopia in Madison
- Jim Mergener presented to the Great Lakes Rendezvous in Port Washington
- Paul Schumacher presented to the Ridges Sanctuary in Baileys Harbor

In 2018 the Bureau is scheduled for the following presentations:

- Mary Beth Volmer and Mike Brodd will be presenting to *The Clearing* on January 19<sup>th</sup> and January 26<sup>th</sup>.
- Jonathan Ringdahl will be presenting at the *Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Network Conference* in Eau Claire March 22-24
- Paul Schumacher will be presenting to *The Door County Maritime Museum* as part of their Speaker's Series on April 8<sup>th</sup>.

## Women in Preservation

Founded in 2013, the Women in Preservation (WIP) continue to be a driving force in membership recruitment with their goal for each woman to leave the refuge with *dirt under their fingernails and knowledge within their soul*.

The total 'WIP Groupies' in 2017 were 28, with 7 being new. In 2017 WIP worked on the following projects:

- Built toolboxes
- Created GBNWR sign post on the south side of island and uncovered the historic walkway to Death's Door
- Established the first Plum Island monarch count and began a bat survey

Projects planned for 2018 include: Planting pollinator plants, making bat houses, established a purple martin habitat and assisting with preservation projects.

# Special Events



## Birding on the Bay

This new event was organized to celebrate International Migratory Bird Day. The team captured, weighed, measured, logged and released many different bird species



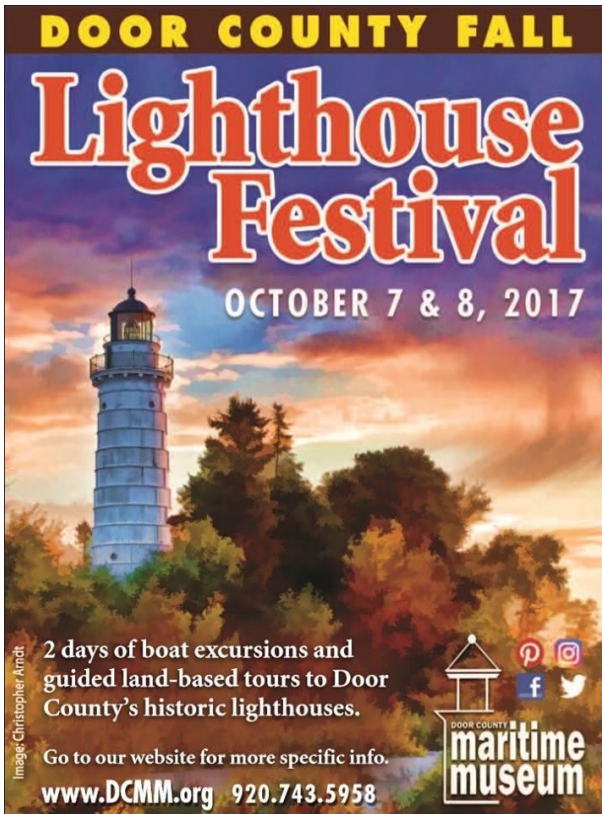
## Explore Plum Island

Many people participated in the numerous activities on Plum Island during FOPPI's Explore Plum Island Days event. Nine intrepid paddlers kayaked and canoed to the island from Northport. Besides kayaking, folks learned more about the Niagara Escarpment, snorkelers explored the Grape Shot, and later they hiked the island and enjoyed the view from the top of the lighthouse tower.



## Fundraising Cruise

The second annual cruise raised \$5000 for restoration and preservation projects and signed up 18 new members to assist in the effort. We didn't think we could top the eagle flying out from Plum Island on last year's cruise but the rainbow over the Range light and Keepers Building as we cruised past Plum Island gave everyone pause to reflect on the importance of restoring these historic structures.



Lighthouse Festival

The Door County Maritime Museum has offered Plum Island as a guided land-based tour since 2010 for their Spring festival. In 2017 they offered a Fall festival which brought 10 potential new members to the Island despite the cool weather.



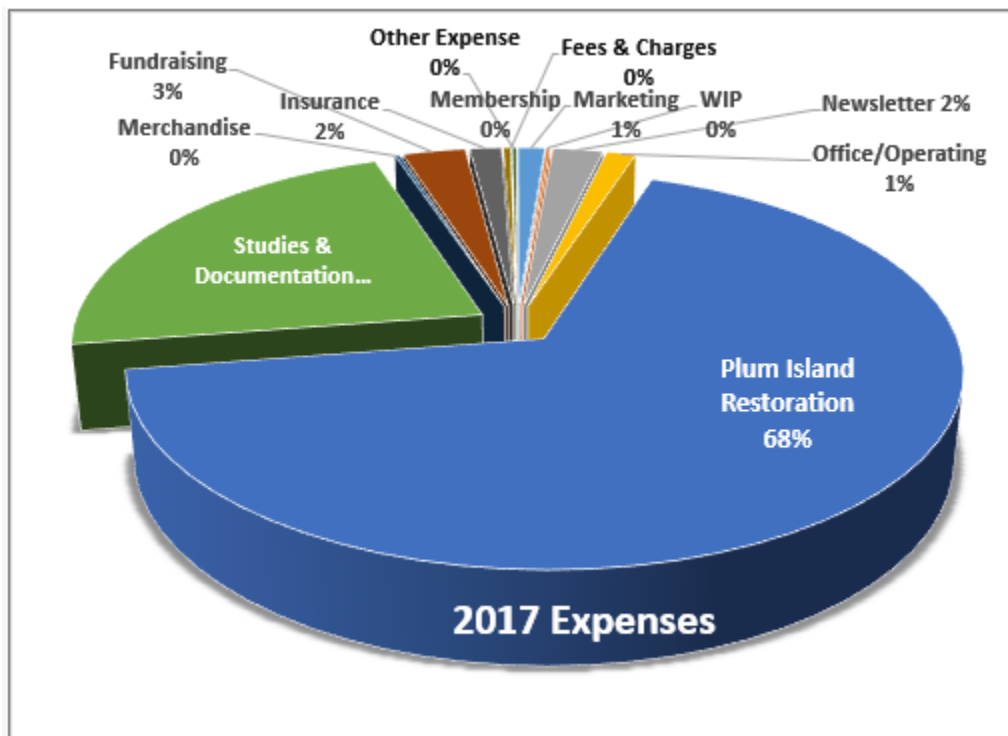
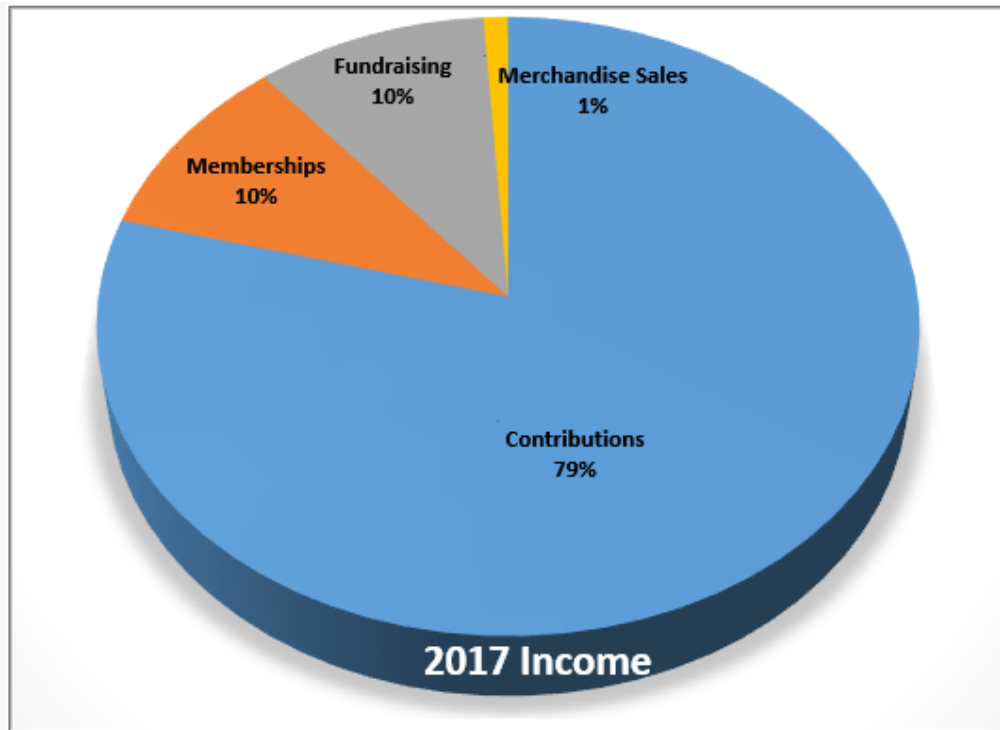
Annual Membership Meeting

This meeting is held in accordance with our bylaws. The Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands arranges transportation from Gills Rock and Washington Island for our members and esteemed guests. The USFWS supplies sandwiches for our guests.



A short business meeting is conducted and USFWS recognizes volunteers who have gone over and above their call of service. A plaque is mounted in the boathouse for all to see the recipients over the years.

# Financial Summary





# A Special Thank you!

As a 501(c)3 Not for Profit Organization we could not accomplish the things you read about in this report without the continued support of our Friends members, volunteers, community partners, foundations, donors and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. 2017 was a remarkable year and will be a challenge to keep that momentum going! Your financial support of The Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands allows us to do what we do best – preserve history and wildlife for future generations.

Together we raised \$63,513.21 for restoration and preservation of the historic maritime structures on Plum and Pilot Islands.

2017 Donors: Anonymous • Abdul Farook • Amy Lesnjak • Archie & Kathe Budzak • Ben Williams, Robin Cannon, Holly Thomas • Bill Krueger & Joan Scott • Bob Lindahl & Wilma Van Arragon • Carson Mettel • Door County Carpet One • Door County Maritime Museum • Dr. Ralph & Beverly Laurell • Elizabeth Wallman • Emily & Dave Small • Gary and Cindy Wilson • George D. Smith • Helen Roberts • Jean Fox • Jeannette Hutchins • Jefferey Francik • John Lauber • John Sawyer • Judith & Phillip Loy • Laura & William Eggert • Margaret Prindle • Mark Witmer • Merlin & Carol Lange • Michael Street • Mike Brodd • Orv & Deb Langohr • Paul Schumacher & Deb Logerquist • Peter & Marion Lemere • Rodger Bodart • Ronald & Patricia Dascher • Sandy and Ed Miller • Scott and Crystal Johnson • Scott Nelson • ShoreLine Charters • Stephen L Capp • Thomas Greelis • Tim Sweet • Twin Cities United Dsg Q • Washington Island Ferry Line • William and Mary Stegemann • William Bell

On behalf of the 2017 Board of Directors, we THANK YOU for giving of your time, treasures and talents to preserve the memories of those that came before us and the Islands that we have been entrusted to protect for nature's bounty.

