



The Lake Forest Park Road Association Newsletter

Town of Sturgeon Bay, WI

Published twice yearly
Spring 2025

Acting President's Post

by David Wood (2810 LFPR)
vicepresident@lakeforestparkrd.org

As the sun shines across the snow-covered trees on this last day of March, the ice crystals sparkle brilliantly, and then swiftly melt away. It brings to mind the Old Testament verse: “To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose upon the earth.” Hopefully this will be the last storm of the winter season and the start of another beautiful Door County spring!

This time also marks the ending of another season. I have served as Vice President of the Lake Forest Park Road Association, helping my friend and neighbor Gary Wolkstein (2820 and 2822 LFPR) serve as President. Unfortunately, Gary’s health challenges continue to require his full attention and he has made the difficult decision to step aside so that he can focus on his recovery and on spending as much quality time as he can with Elizabeth and his family. As with last spring, I have stepped up to serve as acting-president in Gary’s absence. I have also agreed to run for President of the Association in the election that we will hold at this spring’s Annual Meeting. Please join me in wishing Gary the best for this next season of his life.

Another season that has come to pass is the winter road sign at the north end of Lake Forest Park Road. The sign appears to have been blown out by the high winds in an early December blizzard, with shattered plexiglass scattered all around. Unfortunately, the winter artwork was nowhere to be found and it is likely that someone decided to keep it for themselves. Paul Lutzke has repaired the sign and installed the summer artwork, but until someone is inspired to create some new artwork it will remain “summer” all year long. Perhaps a volunteer opportunity for a budding (or established) artist? Please join me in a big “Thank you!” to Paul Lutzke and Bob Brown for maintaining and repairing the sign!



The **Annual Meeting** will be held on **Saturday, June 7** at **Crossroads**. Social hour begins at 9 am, guest speaker at 10 am, with the membership meeting to follow around 10:45 am. This year’s guest speaker is Zach Wood-Doughty, Assistant Professor of Instruction in Computer Sciences at Northwestern University, who will speak on “Uses and Misuses of Generative AI.” Zach is an expert on artificial intelligence, an award-winning teacher (and is also my younger son!)

Acting President's Post (continued)

This is an election year for the Association and we are soliciting candidates willing to begin a season of service. We **especially** need a candidate willing to run for Vice President, which will otherwise become vacant if we have no new volunteers.

We also need a volunteer to take over snacks for the annual meeting. Bonnie and Dennis Connolly have decided that their long season serving in this role has finally come to a close. As with all volunteer organizations, many hands make light work, and without volunteers this Association's season may also pass. Please volunteer your time to help the Association thrive!

Finally, please join me in thanking Kim Krueger for pulling together another wonderful edition of *Between Lake and Forest*, our semi-annual newsletter. This issue contains another fascinating article on the history of Lake Forest Park Road by John Vincent (2794 LFPR), updates on Town of Sturgeon Bay news, the broadband expansion effort, and much more. Hopefully reading these articles will inspire you to submit your own content to a future edition.

The Picnics in Portage Park (PIPPs) will continue again on the 12th day of June, July, August, and September, from 5-7 pm. As in the past, I intend to bring a keg of homebrewed beer each time I can attend to facilitate the conversation. Paul Lutzke (3301 LFPR) and Bob and Eileen Brown (3110 and 3120) will again organize Octoberfest, scheduled for Saturday, October 4, 2024. Doug McGee (3268) will again organize the Winter Dinner, date TBD but usually scheduled for the third Saturday in January.

I look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming events, or just along the road!



Read on...

- 3: Annual Meeting-SOS Help Wanted!-Mahjong
- 4: Calendar-PiPPs-Dog Day
- 5: Officers, Committees, & Volunteers
- 6: The Social Scene
- 7: Changes
- 8: Third Thursday Book Group
- 9-10: Propane Contract Updates
- 11: A Message from our Fire Chief
- 12: Broadband Updates-Facebook
- 13: Town of Sturgeon Bay-Door County News
- 14: LFPRA Membership Form
- 15: The Sweet Life: Sugaring with Paul Lutzke
- 16: Photography and Poetry
- 17-22: Local History

LFPRA Annual Meeting

On **Saturday, June 7** the Road Association will hold its annual business meeting at **Crossroads at Big Creek**.

- **9 am:** Social hour (assuming we have a snack volunteer - see the urgent appeal at right).
- At **10 am**, we will hear from guest speaker Northwestern University Assistant Professor Zach Wood-Doughty, who will explore the topic of artificial intelligence.
- **10:45 am:** Business meeting. We MUST elect new officers this year. Could that be you? New voices are welcome & wanted!

Your annual dues of \$15 are DUE at this time. Please make checks payable to the Lake Forest Park Road Association. See page 14 for details if you need to mail it in.

New members or those wishing to update their Directory listing are asked to fill out the membership form on page 14 of this newsletter and submit it with your dues, either in person or by mail.

Please join us! Support your Road Association and help kick off summer at the lake.

Snack SOS!

We are in desperate need of a **SNACK VOLUNTEER** (or two) for the Annual Meeting!



Dennis and Bonnie Connolly have been masterminding this job for *many* years and it's time for someone new.

It's a **one-day job** and it's **easy**. Pick up coffee & pastries and/or fruit and bring them to the Annual Meeting. That's it! You can do more if you want to get fancy. The Road Association will cover the cost.

Can you help?

Contact David Wood
vicepresident@lakeforestparkrd.org

0 volunteers = 0 snacks, and that would be very sad. :(

Who's Up for Mahjong?

Would you like to learn to play Mahjong? Do you know how to play or could you teach Mahjong?

If you are interested in getting a group together to play and learn, please email Donna Janning at dwjanning@gmail.com.

Let's play!





LFPRA Calendar of Events

Thursday, May 8	Dog Day, 10 am, Shiloh Road Bark Park
Saturday, June 7	Annual Road Association Meeting, 9 am
Thursday, June 12	Picnic in Portage Park, 5-7 pm
Saturday, July 12	Picnic in Portage Park, 5-7 pm
Tuesday, August 12	Picnic in Portage Park, 5-7 pm
Friday, September 12	Picnic in Portage Park, 5-7 pm
Wednesday, October 1	Fall newsletter articles due
Saturday, October 4	Octoberfest Dinner
Wednesday, October 15	Fall newsletter distribution via email (might be earlier)
Saturday, January ?, 2026	Winter Dinner, exact date TBD

Picnics in Portage Park

In our neck of the woods, summer brings warmth, tourists, houseguests, and the Road Association's venerable institution: the PiPP!

On the **12th of each summer month** (June, July, August, and September), we meet up at Portage Park from **5 to 7 pm** for some fun and socializing. Bring a chair, your beverage of choice, and, if you so desire, a snack to share with everyone. You can even bring your houseguests! Come meet your neighbors and enjoy the beautiful view.

You will see friendly reminder signs posted on either end of the Road on PiPP days, but mark your calendar *now* so you don't miss out.

Cheers, and PiPP, PiPP, hooray!

Dog Day: We're Goin' to the Dogs!

Lake Forest Park Road dog owners are invited to bring their four-legged friends and hang out with their neighbors at the **Shiloh Road Bark Park, 1660 Shiloh Road.**

All interested dogs and their two-legged companions should meet at the park on **Thursday, May 8 at 10 a.m.**
(Rain date is May 9)



Lake Forest Park Road Association Officers		
President	Gary Wolkstein	president@lakeforestparkrd.org
Vice-President	David Wood	vicepresident@lakeforestparkrd.org
Treasurer	Annette Vincent	treasurer@lakeforestparkrd.org
Board Member	Bob Brown	skybob70@yahoo.com
Board Member	Eileen Brown	ebrown3@aol.com
Board Member	Paul Lutzke	paullutzke@hotmail.com
Board Member	Pat Nell	patnell1914@gmail.com
Committees and Volunteers		
Adopt-a-Road	Dennis Connolly	dconnoll@charter.net
	Paul Lutzke	paullutzke@hotmail.com
	Gina Morgan	gina3@charter.net
Broadband	Jeff Feuerstein	jefffeuerstein@hotmail.com
	David Wood	vicepresident@lakeforestparkrd.org
Directory/Database Manager	Jon Krainak	jonathan.krainak@gmail.com
Facebook Page Moderators	Kim Krueger	805shiva@gmail.com
Historian	Paul Lutzke	paullutzke@hotmail.com
Newsletter Editor	John Vincent	jsvco@sbcglobal.net
Octoberfest	Kim Krueger	805shiva@gmail.com
	Eileen and Bob Brown	skybob70@yahoo.com
PiPP Signs	Paul Lutzke	paullutzke@hotmail.com
	Jeff Feuerstein	jefffeuerstein@hotmail.com
	Gary Wolkstein	president@lakeforestparkrd.org
Propane Representatives	Mike Johnston	mlj.mike.johnston@gmail.com
	Rod Miller	roderickmiller@aol.com
Welcome Committee	Bonnie and Dennis Connolly	dconnoll@charter.net
	Jean Laundrie	dlaundrie@charter.net
Winter Dinner	Doug McGee	dpmcgee1925@charter.net

The Social Scene



Octoberfest Dinner

About 60 neighbors and friends enjoyed a catered dinner from Sonny's and a good time celebrating the Autumn season.



Thanks to Paul Lutzke and Bob and Eileen Brown for planning this event.



Photos by Annette Vincent



Winter Dinner

It was a lovely evening as neighbors and friends had fun shaking off the winter chill at the Nightingale Supper Club.



Many thanks to Doug McGee for coordinating this enjoyable event.



Photos by Kim Krueger

Changes

Please report any corrections to the print Road Directory to Jon Krainak at
jonathan.krainak@gmail.com

Need a Road Directory? Annette Vincent has a few left for \$5 each. Please contact her at
treasurer@lakeforestparkrd.org or at the Annual Meeting.

Send other news for the Fall Newsletter to Kim Krueger, Newsletter Editor,
at 805shiva@gmail.com

New Owners

The property at **3376 LFPR** formerly belonging to **Steve Cain** was sold in November 2024, and Steve has moved on.

The new owners are **Jenny and Adam Huffman** of Madison. Their email addresses are:
jenny.shult.huffman@gmail.com and adam.tyler.huffman@gmail.com
Welcome to the Road, Jenny and Adam!

Leslie Woodward has purchased the old schoolhouse at **2520 Canal Road** and plans to renovate it. Until that's accomplished, she's at her sister's home in Fish Creek. Leslie's email address is leslie@anamcharabarbet.com

Welcome to the Road, Leslie!

Email Address Update

John Orlock (2731 LFPR): His email address is johnnyo56@live.com

LFPRA Third Thursday Women's Book Group

by Kim Krueger (3364 LFPR)

The women's book group founded in 2023 by **Donna Janning (2680 LFPR)** continues to enjoy reading and discussing a wide variety of literary works.

We meet on the **third Thursday of the month at Fifth and Jefferson Coffeehouse at 10:00 a.m.**

If you are a female resident of the road and would like to join us, please email Donna at dwjanning@gmail.com and she will add you to the contact list. Here's our latest book report.



October 2024: Absolution by Alice McDermott.

Historical fiction. A thoughtful novel offering a different perspective on the Vietnam War, focused of the wives of men serving in U.S. Intelligence Service in Vietnam. We investigated the title's meaning, which is from the poem "Absolution" by WWI poet Siegfried Sassoon. Thanks to Arlyn Lulewicz for the book review.

November 2024: This Time Tomorrow by Emma Straub. Speculative fiction. A 40-something woman time-travels back to her youth. We all enjoyed the story and the easy writing style. Could we go back in time, change the decisions we made at any given point, and alter the outcome of our lives? It's a lovely look at living through grief and choices made along the way.

December 2024: Unfortunately, our holiday lunch had to be canceled. Next year!

January 2025: The Good Lord Bird by James McBride. Historical fiction. A violent but often hilarious saga of abolitionist John Brown, from Bloody Kansas to Harper's Ferry, recounted by Henry Shackleford, an enslaved young man masquerading as a female. The author does not disappoint in this look at our nation's troubled past.

February 2025: Looking for Jane by Heather Marshall. Historical fiction. The Canadian women's fight for reproductive rights and the dark history of enforced adoptions is recounted in this novel. Interesting topic; some of the plot contrivances were hard to believe.

March 2025: The Frozen River by Ariel Lawhon. Historical fiction/mystery. A compelling fictionalized story of an actual American historical figure, 1780's midwife Martha Ballard. The challenges of post-colonial life and the fragile status of women were well-depicted. The twisty mystery story and courtroom drama were page-turning enjoyable read. Thanks to Leslie Murray for the book review.

Propane Contract Updates

by Rod Miller (5087 CTH TT) and Mike Johnston (2672 LFPR)

One of the benefits of LFPR Association Membership is the opportunity to participate in the special negotiated price for the purchase of LP Gas. Participation is completely voluntary, and it is the responsibility of the homeowner to contract with the recommended propane vendor, but it can provide savings to our homeowners.

The existing agreement with Ferrellgas is in effect until May 31, 2025, at \$1.59 per gallon. We did not sign an agreement with Lakes Gas, but their proposed pricing at \$1.749 per gallon is valid until June 30, 2025. Amerigas pricing at \$1.85 per gallon is valid until May 31, 2025.

Dan Biebel, Bay Shore Drive HOA, will once again be taking the lead on propane negotiations for next year's heating season. The process will get underway in April. Ferrellgas will be the primary focus as it is much easier for our Association members to stay with their current provider. We will be reaching out to Lakes Gas and Amerigas and also Gasco and Ritchie for proposals.

To better understand propane pricing for the upcoming heating season, I decided to ask AI (Artificial Intelligence) for some insight. Below are the questions and the responses.

What is the LP Gas price forecast for Wisconsin in 2026?

Forecasts for LP Gas prices in Wisconsin for 2026 are influenced by several factors, including crude oil prices, supply-demand dynamics, and regional market conditions. While specific projections for Wisconsin aren't readily available, trends suggest that propane prices may remain relatively stable, with potential fluctuations depending on inventory levels and export capacities. For example, U.S. propane inventories are currently at record highs, which could contribute to a more stable pricing environment. If you'd like, I can help you explore more detailed reports or related topics!

What factors influence LP Gas prices?

Several factors influence LP Gas (liquefied petroleum gas) prices, shaping the market at both regional and global levels. Here's a breakdown:

1. *Crude Oil and Natural Gas Prices: LP Gas is derived from crude oil refining and natural gas processing. Therefore, changes in these commodity prices have a direct impact on LP Gas prices.*
2. *Supply and Demand: Seasonal demand plays a significant role. For example, propane (a major component of LP Gas) sees higher demand during winter for heating, often pushing prices up. Industrial and agricultural usage can also create fluctuations.*
3. *Storage Levels: When inventories are high, prices tend to stabilize or decline. Conversely, low stock levels can drive prices higher.*

Propane Contract Updates (continued)

4. *Transportation and Distribution Costs:* The cost of moving LP Gas from production sites to consumers, especially in rural areas, influences prices. Weather disruptions can also raise transportation costs.

5. *Exports and Imports:* Global trade dynamics, such as the level of U.S. propane exports, can affect domestic prices. An increase in exports may lead to tighter domestic supply, pushing prices up.

6. *Geopolitical Events:* Political instability or conflicts in oil and gas-producing regions can disrupt supply and influence prices.

7. *Government Policies and Regulations:* Taxes, subsidies, and environmental policies regarding fossil fuels can impact the pricing structure.

These factors often interact, creating a complex and dynamic pricing environment. Let me know if you'd like insights on any of these aspects in greater detail!

I think the biggest factor affecting pricing will be the 45 percent increase in propane export capacity coming online in 2026. The increased export capacity will reduce the record high propane inventory levels. This could be offset somewhat by the projected 6 percent reduction in the average WTI crude oil prices forecast for 2025. The other unknown is the impact of the trade war with Canada and potential impacts to crude oil imports to the Upper Midwest.

More information will be forthcoming in the next couple of months as negotiations move forward.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Rod Miller at (972) 679-6332; email is roderickmiller@aol.com or Mike Johnson at mlj.mike.johnston@gmail.com

Fire Safety: A Letter from our Fire Chief

by Kalin Montevideo,
Chief, Sturgeon Bay Fire Department

Greetings from the Sturgeon Bay Fire Department. As the weather starts to warm up, we are all anxious to get outside and enjoy our beautiful community.

Many residents inquire about outdoor burning. There are a couple different types of outdoor burning: open burning and recreational burning/campfires.

Open burning is defined as burning brush and vegetation debris on open land that is not contained. To conduct open burning on your property, you must obtain a burn permit. A burn permit can be obtained by calling the Town or Sturgeon Bay Fire Department.

Please be aware of a few things that we are looking for when the permit is issued:

- Wind/weather conditions. Don't burn in a drought or high winds.
- Conditions of surroundings
- Size of the pile / make-up of the pile
- Access for responding apparatus (fire trucks/ambulances)

Open burning is different than a recreational fire/campfire. A recreational fire/campfire is a small outdoor fire that is contained in a pit or barrier, intended for recreation or cooking; not intended for waste or refuse. A recreational fire/campfire does not require a burning permit. However, we would like you to take into consideration the following to ensure safety.

A recreational fire pit should be:

- At least 15 feet from any structure
- Clear from debris or tall grass
- Have a hose or water source accessible
- Remember to consider wind/weather conditions



All outdoor burning must be attended **at all times** and monitored until fully extinguished.

One other topic that I would like to call to your attention is access to and visibility of your property. We ask all property owners, as they are doing their spring cleanup, to consider the size of emergency apparatus and ensure that brush and overgrown weeds are cleared and that **addresses are clearly visible from the road**.

The Sturgeon Bay Fire Department is proud to serve its community and is always willing to answer any fire safety or related questions. Please feel free to contact me or an on-duty firefighter at (920) 746-2916.

Kalin Montevideo, Fire Chief, Sturgeon Bay Fire Department
(920) 746-2448 / kmontevideo@sturgeonbaywi.gov

Broadband Expansion Heats Up for Summer!

David Wood (2810 LFPR), Chair, Broadband Committee
vicepresident@lakeforestparkrd.org

The Town of Sturgeon Bay's broadband partnership with AT&T kicks into high gear this summer with a high-profile public event on **Thursday, June 5, at 10:00 am** at the **Kress Pavilion** in Egg Harbor.

Governor Tony Evers is slated to headline the event, with other federal, state and local legislators expected to attend as well. The Towns of Sevastopol and Egg Harbor partnerships will also be celebrated at this event. Stay tuned for additional details, and mark your calendars!

The broadband partnership will bring high-speed fiber-to-the-premises broadband service to each home and business within the Town of Sturgeon Bay. This service is expected to be faster, cheaper, and more reliable than other offerings due to the use of fiber optics all the way to the side of the building.

Engineering work began last fall and the project is expected to be completed by the fall of 2026. A \$552K grant from the Wisconsin Public Services Commission Capital Projects Fund (funded by the Federal American Rescue Plan Act) covers roughly 25% of the project cost with the remainder funded primarily from property tax revenues.

As of this writing, this grant does not appear to be at significant risk of being cancelled as part of the DOGE efforts in Washington, D.C.

Do You Have FOMO*?

FOMO* is the "Fear of Missing Out"!

Well, suffer no longer, my friends... join the LFPRA Facebook page!

Here's how:

1. Create a Facebook account if you don't already have one.
2. Search for "Lake Forest Park Road Association". Make sure it's in Wisconsin - apparently there is a pretender on the west coast! Look for our profile picture above.
3. **READ and AGREE** to the rules of conduct, and **ANSWER** a few simple questions. Admission is open to owners, extended family, and friends.
4. Post away! Pictures, comments, inquiries -- anything related to the Road and our environs.

Questions? Contact Kim Krueger or Paul Lutzke, co-moderators of the group page.



Town of Sturgeon Bay News

**by Jeff Feuerstein (2500 Canal Road)
Supervisor, Town of Sturgeon Bay Board**

Elections were held on April 1, 2025. I was elected Supervisor after stepping down from the Town Chair position. You may remember that I had been elected to a Supervisor position 2 years ago, but was asked to step up to fill the Town Chair position when the previous incumbent resigned suddenly. The Town government is very interesting and has allowed me to meet a lot more residents and key community members, but it was a bit more time-consuming than I wanted.

One of the previous Supervisors, Kent Moraga, is more than capable and ran for the Town Chair as a write-in candidate. The Board won't miss a beat. A supervisor from south of the canal was also elected as a write-in: Joey Torp.

Michelle Sternard was appointed Town Clerk, and Valerie Delair was appointed Town Treasurer. A giant "thanks" and "job well done" to Nancy Anschutz and Lynne Gustafson, former Town Clerk and Treasurer, respectively, for their long service and especially for staying around for another term to train and assist the brand new Board from last election.

If you haven't done so already, consider going to the Town of Sturgeon Bay website and signing up for notifications of upcoming meetings, meeting minutes, and other information of interest for Town residents. Visit <https://townofsturgeonbay-wi.gov>

The 2025 Annual Meeting will take place at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, April 21 at the Arle Memorial Hall (former Knights of Columbus Hall), 692 Tacoma Beach Road, in Sturgeon Bay.

Door County Emergency Notifications

Door County Emergency Management has created an official emergency alert and notification system. It's called *Door County Ready* and it's powered by an app called Smart911 that you can download from your App Store, or you can find it here <https://www.smart911.com/smart911/ref/reg.action?pa=doorwi>

The County will be using this system to notify residents of weather, traffic, power outage, and safety situations. It's free and should be helpful to most of us.

Lake Forest Park Road Association Membership Form

If you are NEW to the Association or if your information has CHANGED, please print out and submit this form with your \$15 annual dues by mail or in person at the Annual Meeting.

By mail (checks only):

Annette Vincent, LFTRA Treasurer
2794 Lake Forest Park Road
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235
(708) 917-1274

Your email address (preferred contact) _____

Last name(s) _____ First name(s) _____

Co-owners' names & email (if any) _____

Sturgeon Bay fire road/house number and street _____

House Name, if any _____

Alternate (Legal, winter, permanent address): Post office box# OR House#/Street

Alternate (Legal, winter, permanent address): City/State/Zip

Which address is preferred for postal mailings? (Please choose one)

Sturgeon Bay address Alternate address (provide above)

Sturgeon Bay phone # (if any) _____

Phone # 2 / Owner's name (###-###-#### / Name) _____

Phone # 3 / Owner's name _____

Phone # 4 / Owner's name _____

If there is any other information you wish to share, please add it below:

The Sweet Life: Sugaring with Paul Lutzke

by Kim Krueger (3364 LFPR)

Maple trees. Majestic, beautifully ablaze in autumn, and ... delicious? Well, maybe not the tree itself, but its lifeblood - the sap - creates what many of us know, love, and crave - maple syrup.



Our neighbor Paul Lutzke (3301 LFPR) is a maple syrup producer. I was privileged to read his *Maple Syrup Journal*, a log of his syrup production operation since 2009. Paul keeps meticulously detailed records of his work. Every day in sugaring season, he notes the temperature and weather conditions, the amount of sap collected, and the amount boiled.

Tapping the maple trees



Boiling the sap on the furnace

This work, like all farming and agricultural enterprises, is not for the weak, lazy, or faint of heart. Sugaring is a relatively short season - about 30 days, usually from March into April, but it is intense, to say the least. Dozens of trees spread out over many acres must be tapped and visited daily to check on sap collection. Wood must be split to stoke the furnace, which has to be maintained and repaired. One year, Paul notes that he used a propane turkey cooker to boil sap when the wood supply ran out!

It's farming, it's science, and it's art. Paul has experimented over the years; some years saving sap for beer making, with satisfactory results duly noted in the log. He has used cherries and blueberries to make concentrates to add additional flavors to his syrup. And this work is ALL Paul, with an occasional helper or two, names duly noted, with thanks, in his log.

It takes a LOT of maple tree sap to make those glass pints of syrup, which is why it's so costly in the grocery store. Paul records these ratios yearly, which can range from around 30:1 to 50+:1. This year's season just ended on March 28. Paul boiled 10 times and got 47 quarts of syrup from 553 gallons of sap, with a final ration of 47:1. A very good year with only 40 taps out!

Paul sells some of his product to individuals and to a local farmer, but much of it is given away to lucky friends and neighbors.
It's a sweet life, indeed!



The good stuff: Paul's finished maple syrup

Shades of Winter

by John Lundquist (3386 LFPR)



The Eagle

by Steve Zimmerman (3010 LFPR)

There used to be two
Eagles that is
Gliding over the big water
Looking for breakfast or dinner

Now we see only one
Sometimes flashing by
Or on the beach
Feasting on a fish

It has a perch
Atop a tree
Where it eyes
The open water

White head
Black body
Built to fly
Dive and catch

We have not found the nest
Perhaps across the road
Wish there were two
So they could renew

It makes your day
When you see
This majestic bird
Doing what eagles do



Local History: What Might Have Been

by John Vincent (2794 LFPR)

From the time that the Sturgeon Bay and Lake Michigan Ship Canal was first conceived in the 1850s¹, it was always presumed that the route for the canal would follow the existing Portage between the Bay and the Lake. After all, the Indigenous people had carried their canoes along this path for centuries, possibly millennia, thereby establishing a short and practical route connecting these two waterways.

When local politician, newspaperman and canal advocate, Joseph Harris, Sr., shepherded through Congress in 1866 a federal land grant of 200,000 acres of timberland to fund the project,² what had been only a concept became a reality. A company composed of Great Lakes businessmen from Chicago, Milwaukee, Green Bay and points East was incorporated to build the canal³, and construction bids were solicited.⁴ Harris, who was both secretary and treasurer of the new company, raised \$1800 locally to personally fund a preliminary survey of the canal route during the summer of 1867.⁵

To accommodate the surveying engineers, a swath of timber was cut adjacent to the Portage path for the entire 1.4 miles of the anticipated canal.⁶ The elevations above the lake level were precisely measured and recorded. The sandy substrate was probed to a depth of two feet below the planned 13 foot bottom of the canal⁷ to confirm that no escarpment or solid clay was present. This detailed survey culminated in the 1867 Plan and Map prepared for the proposed canal and shown in **Exhibit 1** below.



Exhibit 1: Proposed 1867 Canal Plan and Map

On this 1867 map, the prospective canal commences from the head of Sturgeon Bay, follows a southeasterly line, and enters Lake Michigan just north of the rocky point at what is now Portage Park. This shallow inlet was at the southern end of a larger bay, then known as Portage Bay,⁸ which 60 years later would become the southernmost bay of the new Lake Forest Park residential development. This location was highly sought after for the entrance to the canal, because the rocky point provided a natural shelter from the prevailing storms out on the lake.

Exhibit 2 (below) provides an expanded view of the planned “harbor of refuge” at the Lake Michigan end of the canal. Note that the rocky point is utilized for a good portion of the southern breakwater, while the 1200 foot northern breakwater is built out from the beach to a terminal lighthouse, signaling the entrance to the harbor. The placement of these breakwaters and the narrow harbor entrance (300 feet) were designed to dissipate any wave energy from reaching the mouth of the canal. The dashed lines inside the harbor reflect an option for a larger harbor where smaller vessels could take refuge from the lake without proceeding through the canal.

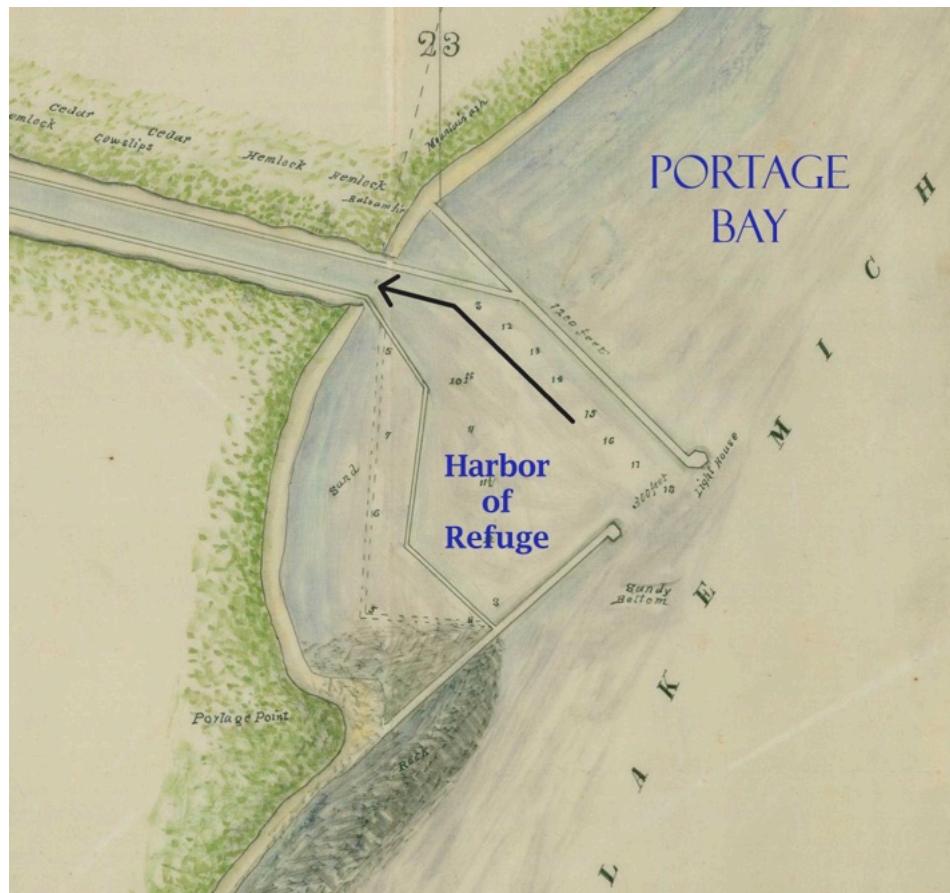


Exhibit 2: Expanded View of Planned 1867 Harbor of Refuge on Portage Bay.

In the years preceding this survey, Joseph Harris began acquiring acreage along the anticipated canal route, not unlike a speculator purchasing land along a prospective railroad route. As early as 1856, Harris acquired parcels at relatively low prices, directly from the State and Federal government through swampland patents⁹, and from the County through delinquent tax auctions¹⁰.

By 1871, he owned virtually all the land along the anticipated canal route, as highlighted in yellow on the **Exhibit 3** canal area map. During the summer following the 1867 survey, the Township “laid out a new road” from the “head of Sturgeon Bay to the Lake shore” providing a dry overland route to “cross the canal route near the Buffalo ridge”.¹¹ The **Exhibit 3** map (below) shows this 1868 road (today’s Buffalo Ridge Trail and Road) accessing the original 1867 canal route (in blue). The project would have likely culminated in a canal at this location, as rendered in **Exhibit 1**, had it not been for obstacles that arose at the national level.

The principal issue was that the 200,000 acre land grant was insufficient to fund the full cost of the project. The engineers who prepared the 1867 survey estimated the project cost at \$658,720¹² while a critical examination of the Federal timberland granted to the State of Wisconsin for the project, most of which was located in Marinette County, yielded estimated values as low as \$125,000.¹³ Even with the \$250,000 of cash authorized to be raised by the charter of the Canal Company,¹⁴ this source of funding fell woefully short.

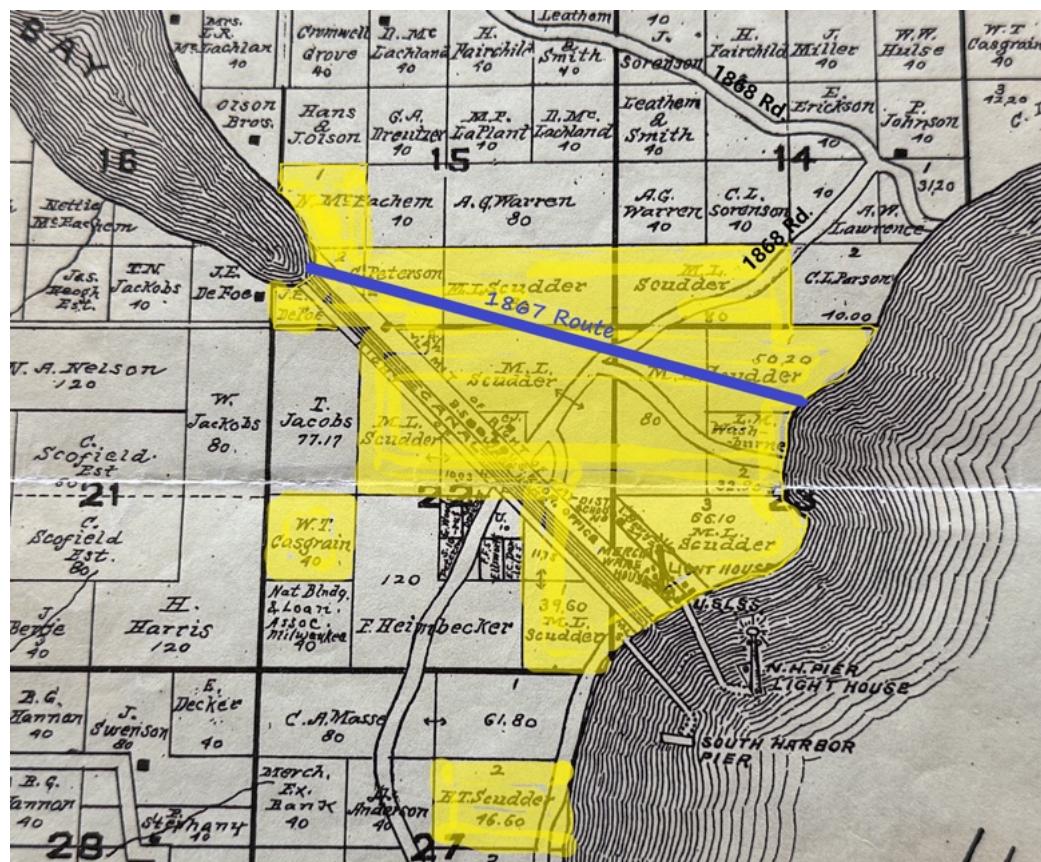


Exhibit 3: Joseph Harris' canal area land holdings (in yellow) and the new 1868 road, superimposed on the 1899 Township plat map.

Joseph Harris returned to Washington and lobbied for five years to obtain an additional land appropriation but came away empty-handed. What he did obtain was a commitment from the U.S. Government to fund the harbor of refuge component, as was the practice in other Great Lakes ports, and a \$40,000 appropriation for a new Government survey;¹⁵ this time to be performed by the U.S. Engineering Corps.

Lieutenant William T. Casgrain of the Corps conducted an intensive canal survey during the summer of 1871, and then continued on to serve as chief engineer for the project. He measured the elevation and took borings along the original 1867 route, but also along a second route three-quarters of a mile to the south.

Perhaps it was the wisdom of the Indigenous to portage on higher and dryer ground that prompted him to consider this alternative route. The map on **Exhibit 4** (below) shows this second route as a completed canal in 1908 and compares it to the original 1867 route (blue line). The 1871 survey revealed that the southern route was on average 2.1 feet *lower* in elevation, and was some 250 feet shorter in length.¹⁶ This difference resulted in estimated savings of approximately \$65,000 in excavation costs.¹⁷

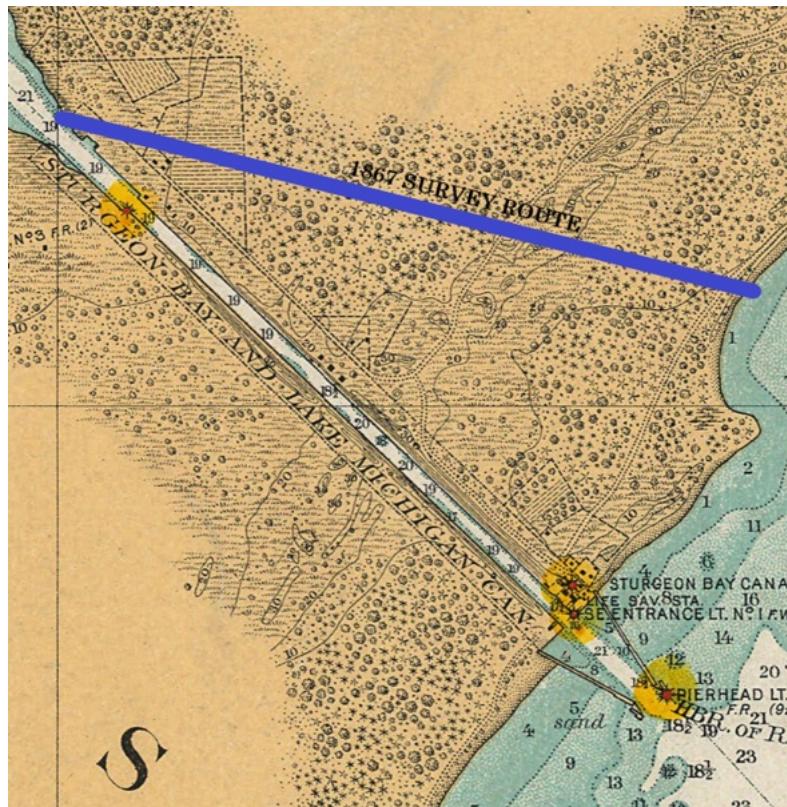


Exhibit 4:
Comparison of the Proposed 1867
Canal Route with the actual Canal, as
shown on the 1908 U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers' Survey Map

Perhaps more compelling was a profound difference in the resulting harbors of refuge at the Lake Michigan entrance to the canal. In **Exhibit 2**, a ship entering the harbor configured in the 1867 plan would need to make a turn to the left in order to enter the canal proper. Upon exiting the canal at the bay end, this same ship would be required to make a second turn to the right in order to align with the dredged channel in Sturgeon Bay. The harbor of refuge shown for the completed canal in **Exhibit 4** does not require any turns for a ship entering the harbor and allows it to proceed on a single bearing through the harbor, canal and into the channel. Casgrain's rationale for the alternative southern route swayed the principals of the Canal Company and the rest was history.

It was not all smooth sailing for the canal project, though. What was expected to be done in three to four years took a decade to complete. Work on the project stopped for three years (1874-1877) due to a mid-decade recession, which rendered the timberlands under the land grant unsaleable. The Canal Company responded by structuring a \$350,000 bond issue,¹⁸ secured by the pledged land and the future revenue of the completed canal, but it could not attract investors.

In October 1874, Joseph Harris sold all of his land holdings in the canal area (800+ acres) and other acreage in the County to M.L. Scudder, the Fiscal Agent and Land Trustee of the Canal Company, for \$15,000, thereby realizing a healthy profit.¹⁹

The work stoppage irritated the locals, precipitating rumors and allegations questioning the intent and integrity of the individuals behind the Canal Company; accusing them of pocketing the land grant.²⁰ The motives of the Company proved honorable, however, and in 1877 its timberlands were released for auction and the digging recommenced. On June 28, 1878, the cut was complete and the waters of Lake Michigan commingled with those of the Bay.²¹ Further dredging and revetment resulted in a fully navigable harbor, canal, and bay by 1882.²²

At the lake end of the new canal, on its harbor of refuge, a lifesaving station was established by the predecessor to the U.S. Coast Guard. A small surrounding settlement with a public schoolhouse supported this “canal station” community, which was then primarily accessible by boat. During the 1920s & ‘30s, a new Canal Road was built and improved, running parallel to the canal, connecting this isolated community to town.

From the perspective of that “passed over” bay a mile to the northeast, apart from the white Ship Canal light poking above the tree line and the breakwater extending behind the rocky point out to the red North Pier light, the shoreline remains as pristine and nearly undisturbed as it was 160 years ago.

Acknowledgements

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Notes

¹ Prospectus for the \$350,000 First Mortgage Gold Bonds of the Sturgeon Bay and Lake Michigan Ship Canal and Harbor Company, 1874, p 6. (the “1874 Bond Prospectus”). This document is available on the Door County Public Library Website under “Genealogy / Local History – Books & Articles – Sturgeon Bay and Lake Michigan Ship Canal (1894)”.

² Hjalmar R. Holand. *History of Door County Wisconsin – The County Beautiful (Volume I)*; pp. 148-149, (Chicago, S. J. Clarke, 1917).

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ A testimonial titled: *Sturgeon Bay, Wis, and Lake Michigan Ship Canal and Harbor of Refuge – Its importance, practicality, and necessity demonstrated*. p. 3, (ca 1869), (the “1869 Testimonial”). This original pamphlet was donated to the Door County Museum and Archives by Charlie Calkins. A copy is on file at the Museum.

⁵ Holand. p. 149

⁶ 1869 Testimonial. p. 2.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Door County Advocate (“DCA”) 8/1/1867, p. 4, under “The Ship Canal – Progress of the Work”.

⁹ Swampland Patent #6101 of State of WI to Joseph Harris for the NE 1/4-NE 1/4 Sec. 22 Township 27N, Range 26E (40 acres) awarded on 7/25/1856; Vol. B, pp. 477-478; recorded on 8/7/1860 at the Door County Register of Deeds.

¹⁰ Tax Deeds of Door County to Joseph Harris for 10 described parcels of land in Sections 14, 15, 22 & 23 all in Township 27N, Range 26E (476.8 acres) that were for non-payment of taxes sold at public auction on 4/13/1860; Vol. C, pp. 259-260 and Vol. C, pp. 276-277; recorded and conveyed by Tax Deed on 8/7/1863 & 9/9/1863, respectively, at the Door County Register of Deeds.

¹¹ DCA 7/2/1867, p. 4, under “New Road”.

¹² 1869 Testimonial. p. 3.

¹³ 1869 Testimonial. p. 4 (See J.J. Dull 9/13/1867 letter to Jesse Spaulding).

¹⁴ 1869 Testimonial. p. 3.

¹⁵ Holand. p. 150; and 1874 Bond Prospectus. p. 13 (See “The Harbor of Refuge”) & Appendix B-4 on pp. 23-24 of the “Official Reports and Surveys – Sturgeon Bay and Lake Michigan Ship Canal and Harbor (1874)”.

¹⁶ DCA 2/15/1872, p. 3, under “Ship Canal Survey – Report of Wm. T. Casgrain, Assistant United States Engineer, to D. C. Houston, Major of Engineer”.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ 1874 Bond Prospectus. pp. 3-4.

¹⁹ Warranty Deed of Joseph Harris & Wife to Moses L. Scudder Jr. of substantial Door Co. real estate, including 14 described parcels of land in Sections 14, 15, 22, 23 & 27 all in Township 27N, Range 26E (803 acres); Vol. K, pp. 207-209; recorded on 10/26/1874 at the Door County Register of Deeds.

²⁰ Holand. pp. 151-152.

²¹ DCA 7/4/1878, p. 3, under “Meeting of the Waters”.

²² Holand. pp. 152 & 154.